



Board Chair

Patricia Bolger Wards 6 & 7

Vice-Chair

Nancy Close Wards 11 & 13

Trustees

Board of Trustees Wards 1 & 2

Laura Hack Wards 3 & 4

Marilyn Dennis Wards 5 & 10

Susan Vukadinovic Wards 8 & 9

Charlene May Wards 12 & 14

March 5, 2025

Honourable Demetrios Nicolaides
Minister of Education
10800 – 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Dear Minister Nicolaides,

**Re: Charter School Applications
Academy of Business Literacy and Entrepreneurship Charter School**

The Calgary Board of Education (CBE) received notification from Alberta Education of a charter school application in Calgary, namely the Academy of Business Literacy and Entrepreneurship Charter School. The CBE Board of Trustees would like to provide information regarding the current Business Literacy and Entrepreneurship [programming in CBE schools](#), as we are concerned with the duplication of existing programming provided by CBE and the implications for funding as a result of this redundancy.

Section 3(1) of *Charter Schools Regulation* states that the Minister of Education will “consider any information received from any board of a public or separate school division, Francophone regional authority or charter school that receives notice under section 24 of the Act, including information about any alternative programs that currently exist in the geographic area.”

The notification of application by the Academy of Business Literacy and Entrepreneurship Charter School, proposed the school would open in the 2025 – 2026 school year and would be located in Calgary, Alberta. As described in the notice, the Academy of Business Literacy and Entrepreneurship Charter School aims to promote academic excellence with real-world, hands-on experiential learning. In this, the charter school:

Intends to offer Grades 7-12 programming with a focus on empowering students to excel in diverse career pathways. The proposed charter school would promote academic excellence, creative problem solving and hands-on, real-world learning within the framework of foundational business knowledge.

The Learning Excellence Goal of the CBE Education Plan includes three distinct learning objectives:

1. Students achieve excellence in literacy and mathematics,
2. Students learning improves through fair and equitable assessment practices, and
3. Learning opportunities prepare students for future learning and success.

The third learning objective requires all CBE schools to:

- Provide students with curricular experiences that create awareness of career pathways.
- Provide access and instruction to technologies that enhance student learning and personal development.
- Maintain and enhance partnerships with post-secondary and industry partners to support dual credit and exploratory career pathway opportunities.

To advance the Board's mission and this specific area of priority, each of our 251 schools, in collaboration with their local school community, develops, implements, and monitors the impact of this goal within a School Development Plan. These plans include specific actions that will be taken to achieve these goals mentioned above.

Business Literacy and Entrepreneurship at CBE High Schools

The CBE offers a robust array of [Career and Technology Studies \(CTS\)](#) and [Knowledge and Employability \(K&E\) Occupational Pathways](#) that are directly aligned with Business Literacy and Entrepreneurship. The CTS program is designed so students develop skills that can be applied in their daily lives, are provided with opportunities to personalize their learning, explore interests, and develop the necessary attitudes and behaviours necessary to participate in today's dynamic world of work.

CBE students in 25 high schools have access to CTS programming in the Business, Administration, Finance and Information Technology (BIT) occupational areas, across 6 different programming pathways. Examples include courses in Financial Management, Management and Marketing, Information Processing, Networking, and Entrepreneurship and Innovation. Additionally, CBE offers students access to CTS programming aligned with Business Literacy and Entrepreneurship in Leadership, Legal Studies, Communication Technologies, and Design Innovation.

Beyond the courses mentioned above, students have access to CTS programming that includes coursework, advanced placement, or credentialing in the following occupational areas:

- Business, administration, finance, and information technology
- Health, recreation, and human services
- Media, design, and communication arts
- Natural resources
- Trades, manufacturing, and transportation

In addition to CTS programming, [the Unique Pathways](#) and [Digital Pathways](#) team within CBE offers 53 different experiential off-campus opportunities accessible by all CBE students in partnership with four post-secondary partners or nine local training facilities or business partners. Specifically connected to the goals of the Academy of Business Literacy and Entrepreneurship, Calgary youth can access a CBE Unique Pathway program in Business Management with SAIT (Southern Alberta Institute of Technology). In this program, students build foundational knowledge of business functions including management, human resources, marketing and finance. They can explore options for starting and growing a business, learn the importance of business ethics and social responsibility. Students in this program work through the basics steps of building a business plan and career plan. In this program, prior to leaving high school, students can earn post-secondary credits. Instructors in the dual credit program are experienced in the field and remain connected to industry to support students in making meaningful connections to career pathways.

My Blueprint is a software tool CBE students can access to support career exploration and planning. Within this tool students can explore self-assessment tools, goal setting plans, financial planners, and job readiness supports to help each student build and export competitive resumes and cover letters. In the 2023-2024 school year, 130,214 student log-ins were recorded in My CBE Blueprint. Of these, 63,000 students completed interest inventories as an initial step in future planning, and subsequently nearly 16,000 portfolios were developed.

CBE high schools work closely together to support students accessing pathways that may not be available in their neighborhood school. A student is not limited by their



resident location in the city, CTS programming, Unique Pathways, and Digital Futures Pathway are available to all CBE students.

Business Literacy and Entrepreneurship at CBE Middle Schools

Career and Technology Foundations (CTF) are offered to our younger students. [CTF programming](#) provides students grades 5 to 9 the opportunity to explore their interests within various occupational areas and technologies. Students may plan, design, create, and implement solutions for relevant real-life programs through hands-on experiences.

Additional opportunities for middle school students are also provided. Students explore occupations programs such as the Jill of all Trades event, Try a Trade events, Elevate Aviation exploring aviation or Honour the Work. CTF programming is available in our middle schools and provides a strong foundation for further exploration at the high school level.

It is our position that the charter school application identified is in fact duplicative of programming and opportunities already available within the CBE. Further, we have repeatedly provided evidence of duplication of programming linked to proposed charter school applications in the past and observe that despite strong evidence, charter schools continue to be approved. This fragmentation of programming and cost is of great concern.

To maximize the impact of education funding across the province, avoiding the approval of duplicate charter school programs allows Alberta to maintain what is already accessible to all. We encourage focused funding in a manner that leverages our existing partnerships, infrastructure, and programming in the areas identified and look forward to continued collaboration.

Should you have further questions regarding details of CBE programming, we are happy to provide additional information. We look forward to receiving information regarding your decision regarding the preliminary applications as stated in the notice, on or before April 17, 2025.

Sincerely,



Patricia Bolger, Chair
Board of Trustees

cc: Tania Brudler, Executive Director, System Support and Student
Records Sector
Joanne Pitman, Chief Superintendent
Jennifer Turner, Superintendent, School Improvement
Michael Nelson, Superintendent, School Improvement

