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April 9, 2025

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

Dear Minister Nicolaides,

**Re: Charter School Application - Rocky Mountain Charter School**

The Calgary Board of Education (CBE) received notification from Alberta Education of a charter school application in Calgary, namely the *Rocky Mountain Charter School*. The CBE Board of Trustees are concerned with the duplication of existing programming provided by CBE and the implications for funding as a result of this redundancy. Given the current fiscal strain across the province, the creation of a new Charter School focused on areas already well-covered by the Calgary Board of Education (CBE) represents a significant duplication of resources. At a time when every education dollar is crucial to maintain and improve the quality of education for all students, redirecting resources to a redundant initiative would not only stretch the province's limited resources but also detract from the effectiveness of proven, existing programs. This approach risks undermining the broader educational system in favor of inefficient duplication.

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 Rocky Mountain 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 Rocky Mountain Charter School aims to promote industry-relevant skills through applied, inquiry, and mastery-based learning. In this, the charter school:

*intends to offer Kindergarten to Grade 12 programming with a focus on STEAM, agriculture, health, wellness and nutrition.*

A review the proposed Charter School website provided additional information regarding the proposed program. In this,

*Rocky Mountain charter school integrates steam education with health nutrition global technology and sustainable agriculture to prepare*

*students for 21st century challenges. Our holistic approach supports physical mental emotional and social health through the Comprehensive School Health Framework. Students engage in hands on agricultural and nutrition education, fostering careers in these fields. Teacher training ensures the latest steam techniques while project-based learning enhances real world problem solving. Partnerships with local businesses and community organizations support student well-being. Our curriculum equips students with essential skills for academic and career success in a technology driven world.*

The Calgary Board of Education (CBE) already provides comprehensive programs in these areas, making the introduction of such a school redundant.

The CBE's commitment to student well-being is evident through its Student Well-Being Framework, which emphasizes the importance of health and wellness in the educational environment. This framework supports healthy eating, active living, supportive social environments, and positive mental health. The Comprehensive School Health Framework has been a foundational framework of well-being initiatives, student support services, and staff training. CBE approaches student well-being through a whole-school approach to health and wellness, tailored to the specific needs of each school community.

CBE has been a leader in [career and technology studies](#), [digital futures pathways](#), and the development of school-post-secondary partnerships that equip students with essential skills for academic and career success in a technology driven world. One opportunity that we would like to highlight is the CBE partnership with Olds College. This partnership offers students with access to agriculture technology courses and career pathways enabling students to explore design thinking processes and methodologies in agriculture technology, bridging the gap between urban students and agricultural careers. Students attending CBE currently have the opportunity to enroll in a range of agriculture-based programs such as the [dual-credit Veterinary Technical Assistant \(VTA\) certificate program](#), an entry-level program that introduces students to the veterinary industry and animal care practices among others. On completion, students are certificated and fully employable as a Veterinary Technical Assistant upon graduation.

Furthermore, the Calgary Board of Education has a considerable legacy of leadership and success in environmental stewardship on both an individual school level and at the system level as demonstrated in the [CBE's Sustainability Framework 2030](#). This framework addresses social, economic, and environmental aspects of sustainability, guiding policies and initiatives that promote a sustainable future. Sustainability and sustainable development is based in values, attitudes, and actions that develop an ecologically aware, social just, and economically sustainable society.

Given these existing programs and commitments, the proposed Rocky Mountain Charter School's focus areas appear to overlap significantly with the CBE's current offerings. Establishing a new institution with similar objectives may lead to unnecessary duplication of resources and efforts. It would be more



beneficial to enhance and expand the CBE's existing programs, ensuring all students have access to quality education in health, nutrition, global technology, and sustainable agriculture.

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 24, 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





ALBERTA  
EDUCATION

*Office of the Minister  
MLA, Calgary - Bow*

AR 129574

May 7, 2025

Ms. Patricia Bolger  
Chair  
Board of Trustees  
Calgary Board of Education  
1221 8 Street SW  
Calgary, Alberta T2R 0L4

Dear Ms. Bolger:

Thank you for the letter regarding the public charter school application from the Rocky Mountain Charter School.

I appreciate the detailed response you provided regarding the notification of this charter school application and its similarity to program offerings currently available through the Calgary Board of Education. In addition to the materials submitted by the applicant, the department will consider the information you have provided, along with responses from all stakeholders, as outlined in section 3.2(2) of the Charter Schools Regulation.

Thank you once again for taking the time to write. The government remains committed to working alongside our education partners to ensure the highest quality education for Alberta's students.

Best,

Demetrios Nicolaides ECA PhD  
Minister of Education