



## Issue Resolutions Preview 2015

Dear Alberta School Councils' Association Parent Members,

The Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) advocacy efforts are informed and shaped by provincially relevant resolutions that parents on school councils bring forward, debate, and pass into policy each year at the ASCA Annual General Meeting.

### **Step 1:**

Parents of member school councils draft and submit issue resolution ideas and explanations to the ASCA provincial office. (Draft resolutions may be submitted to the office any time from the first call for resolutions that is issued at the close of one AGM, up to the submission deadline date for the upcoming AGM, which was December 17, 2014.)

### **Step 2:**

Using this Resolutions Preview document, parents, through their ASCA member school councils may review and provide input to the proposed draft issue resolutions. (The Preview will also be available on our website at [www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca](http://www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca) so more of your parent community can review it if they wish.)

### **Step 3:**

Further drafts of the issue resolutions that may reflect member input will be returned to your council in March as part of the complete AGM package. Your school council parent members decide how your AGM parent delegate or proxy delegate will vote to represent your council.

**Please take time to review this year's attached preview. The comments and/or questions of clarification your council parents may have about the proposed resolutions should be forwarded directly to the sponsoring council contact and you may choose to cc ASCA also.** Contact sponsors through email using the addresses provided on the Summary Table.

Your input/questions/comments may be considered by the sponsors with respect to their next drafts.

if your council is seeking additional information, some links related to the draft resolution topics are provided in this package.

**All input must be sent to sponsors by March 10, 2015.**

ASCA thanks you for your valuable participation in the policy setting process.

Summary Table  
 First draft proposed issue resolutions 2015 ASCA AGM

#	Title	Sponsoring ASCA Member	Email Use these email addresses to contact the issue resolution sponsors with your council's questions and feedback on the draft proposed issue resolutions.
P15-01	Provincial Dual Credit Strategy	Horizon Council of School Councils	cbtams@yahoo.ca
P15-02	Wireless Technology Safety in Alberta public schools	Jennie Letwin – Individual Member	jmletwin@yahoo.ca

Information Links provided by ASCA

2014-15 Funding Manual, Accountability Pillar

<http://www.education.alberta.ca/admin/funding/manual.aspx>  
<http://www.education.alberta.ca/admin/funding/accountability.aspx>

Education Legislation and Initiatives

<http://www.education.alberta.ca/department/policy/legislation.aspx>

<http://www.education.alberta.ca/department/ipr/dualcredit.aspx>

<https://inspiring.education.alberta.ca/initiative/learning-and-technology-policy-framework/>

ASCA Current Policy Statements

<http://www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca/?page=Policy>

*Possible conversation starters for your council about the proposed draft resolutions*

- *Is this issue something we are aware of/familiar with in our school/district or other schools/districts in Alberta?*
- *Does the resolution reflect the parent perspective on the issue?*
- *What suggestions do we have for the sponsoring council that could make the parent perspective stronger?*
- *Does the issue resolution wording reflect a provincially relevant position for school councils?*
- *Without changing the intent, what suggestions could our council provide to the sponsoring council that might make the position provincially relevant for school councils?*
- *Are there any time constraints with respect to action on a proposed issue?*

Sponsors of draft proposed resolutions are responsible for ensuring links to information provided in their submission are current.

**Please direct your council's questions or comments about any proposed resolutions to the sponsoring council/COSC's contact person, you may cc ASCA on your comments if you wish at [parents@albertaschoolcouncils.ca](mailto:parents@albertaschoolcouncils.ca).**

## P15-01 **Provincial Dual Credit Strategy**

Sponsor: Horizon Council of School Councils

### Background:

Between 2008 and 2011, the Alberta government funded dual credit pilot projects while, at the same time, individual school jurisdictions and post-secondary institutions negotiated separate non-government funded dual credit agreements. Through these dual credit opportunities, high school students participated in apprenticeship training and/or post-secondary, college or university courses while earning both high school and post-secondary credits for the same course. In 2012, The Government of Alberta identified six priority initiatives, including education and entrepreneurship, as the cornerstones of a dynamic Alberta economy. The Provincial Dual Credit Strategy contributes to and aligns with the Government's priority initiatives and creates more opportunities for students to earn credits in high school and post-secondary institutions at the same time, as well as opportunities for preferred placement (post-secondary course exemption) and workplace certification.

The Provincial Dual Credit Strategy saw the province invest millions over a three year period to be available to local partnerships for dual credit programming over and above existing funding to assist school jurisdictions, post-secondary institutions, and business and industry or community partners in expanding or creating dual credit opportunities that:

- Engage students in their learning through pathways that open their possible futures
- Motivate students to finish high school
- Inspire students to learn, work and live in the local community
- Give students the confidence to transition from high school to post-secondary and/or the workplace

Building upon local practices, lessons learned, and the expertise of key stakeholders, the Strategy is a 'Call to Action' for school jurisdictions, post-secondary institutions, business and industry to expand their collective effort to develop and expand engaging and relevant learning experiences for Alberta students so they can reach their full potential in becoming ethical citizens and engaged thinkers with an entrepreneurial spirit.

WE Request that to ensure students have more access to dual credit programming opportunities and to personalize their high school experience and build on or discover their career passions and interest that the government implement sustainability practices that ensure students are assured choice and mobility throughout their lifelong learning.

### Reference

Alberta Education. (2014). Provincial Dual Credit Strategy. Retrieved from <http://education.alberta.ca/department/jpr/dualcredit.aspx>  
<http://www.albertadualcredit.ca>

## P15-02 **Wireless Technology Safety in Alberta public schools**

Sponsor: Jennie Letwin ASCA Individual Member

Because wireless technology is increasingly available in schools to enable students to meet curricular outcomes using a variety of wireless devices;

Because the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), a division of the World Health Organization (WHO), (Press Release 2011 [http://www.iarc.fr/en/media-centre/pr/2011/pdfs/pr208\\_E.pdf](http://www.iarc.fr/en/media-centre/pr/2011/pdfs/pr208_E.pdf)) classified the microwave radiation from wireless devices as a Class 2B “possible” human carcinogen in the same category as lead, DDT and diesel exhaust, and advised “it is pragmatic to take measures to reduce exposure”;

Because members from the IARC panel involved with the previous WHO classification now share that new research (*Pathophysiology*, 2013, <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23664410>) highlight the fact that the dangers are greater than originally thought, and that a higher risk classification 2A “probable” human carcinogen category is warranted (Dr. Anthony Miller, 2013 <http://www.c4st.org/dr-anthony-miller?highlight=WyJhbnRob255IiwibWlsbGVyIiwYw50aG9ueSBtaWxsZXliXQ==>);

Because the dangers of Wi-Fi and wireless technologies are now a part of accepted Medical Education offered as Continuing Education (CE) credits Physicians may take as part of licensing (*Integrative Health Forum*, 2014 [http://www.ihfglobal.com/emf\\_education.html](http://www.ihfglobal.com/emf_education.html)) and hospitals are treating patients from adverse effects (*Ontario Women’s College Hospital*, 2014 <http://www.womenscollegehospital.ca/programs-and-services/environmental-health-clinic/>);

Because the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health, a body appointed to oversee Health Canada, examined the potential health effects of wireless technologies (“*An Examination of the Potential Health Impacts of Radiofrequency Electromagnetic Radiation*”, 2010, p.11, <http://www.parl.gc.ca/content/hoc/Committee/403/HESA/Reports/RP4834477/hesarp10/hesarp10-e.pdf>), and acknowledged that some studies reported negative health effects and recommended a “comprehensive risk awareness program” and the “provision of information promoting the safe use of wireless technologies”;

Because the Canadian Teachers’ Federation (*The Use of Wi-Fi in Schools*, 2014, <http://www.ctf-fce.ca/Research-Library/wifi-final-2014-ENG.pdf>) warned that Health Canada’s current guidelines on microwave radiation (Safety Code 6), do not include biological effects, and recommended on/off switches along with resources for the public regarding strategies to reduce exposure;

Because Canadians for Safe Technology (C4ST) [www.c4st.org](http://www.c4st.org), led by former President of Microsoft Canada, have expressed concern that Safety Code 6 (SC6), has not kept up with the science and does not provide Canadians adequate protection (*C4ST Letter To Minister Ambrose Summarizing Public Input Re:SC6*, 2014, <http://www.c4st.org/MOHSubmission/>);

Because a recent Physicians Call to Health Canada urges them to update their outdated 40 year old standards on microwave radiation, to reduce exposure in schools, and to provide Physicians with resources to recognize health related problems related to microwave radiation exposure (*Declaration: Doctors Call for Protection from Radiofrequency Radiation Exposure*, 2014, <http://www.c4st.org/images/documents/hc-resolutions/medical-doctors-submission-to-health-canada-english.pdf>);

Because the Bioinitiative Working Group 2012, prepared by 29 authors from 10 countries, published 1800 new studies which demonstrated serious multigenerational health effects such as DNA damage, genetic and neurological effects, childhood cancers, breast cancer, Alzheimer’s, fetal effects, autism among others, and recommended “wireless laptops and other wireless devices should be strongly discouraged in schools for children of all areas” (*Bioinitiative Report*, 2012, <http://www.bioinitiative.org/conclusions/>);

Because over 1000 peer reviewed studies document serious adverse effects below current Canadian guidelines (*Parent for Safe Schools, Collection on Studies, Videos and News Releases*, 2013, <http://parentsforasafeschool.blogspot.ca/2014/01/2013-collection-of-studies-videos-and.html>, *Citizens for Safe Technology, Electrosmog Bibliography Collections*, 2014, <http://citizensforsafetechnology.org/Electrosmog-Bibliography-COLLECTIONS,28,3376>);

Because a growing number of governments and organizations (*Cell Phone Task Force*, 2015, *Governments and Organizations that Ban or Warn against Wireless Technologies* [http://www.cellphonetaskforce.org/?page\\_id=128](http://www.cellphonetaskforce.org/?page_id=128)), Teachers’ Unions (*Safe in Schools*, 2014, *Teacher’s Unions in UK, Germany, UK, USA, and Canada Who Have Done Their Homework Do Not Support the Use of Wi-Fi in Schools* <http://www.safeinschool.org/2013/03/why-teachers-unions-dont-support-wifi.html>), Schools and Organizations (*Wi-Fi in Schools*, 2015, *A List of Schools and Organizations That Have Taken Action Regarding Wireless Technology*

[http://wifiinschools.com/uploads/3/0/4/2/3042232/schools\\_and\\_organizations\\_wifi.pdf](http://wifiinschools.com/uploads/3/0/4/2/3042232/schools_and_organizations_wifi.pdf)), around the world are taking action to ban and remove Wi-Fi and wireless devices due to the growing body of evidence that calls for precaution;

Because the BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC), representing 500 000 parents across BC, due to health concerns, <http://www.bccpac.bc.ca/> has passed resolutions calling on boards of education to:

- Stop installing Wi-Fi and other wireless networks in schools where other networking technology is feasible
- Have one school at each education level (elementary, middle and secondary) free of Wi-Fi, cordless phones and cell phones to give parents options. Those schools would only be equipped with wired computers and wired telephones for personal, educational and administrative use
- Ensure wireless routers have on-off switches, develop protocol to ensure they are turned on only when needed, and ensure schools follow safety instructions in the user manual of iPads;

Because the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health Complimentary NDP Report (*"An Examination of the Potential Health Impacts of Radiofrequency Electromagnetic Radiation"*, 2010, p.23,

<http://www.parl.gc.ca/content/hoc/Committee/403/HESA/Reports/RP4834477/hesarp10/hesarp10-e.pdf>), shared "Concerned parents who fear their children are being exposed in classrooms to a dangerous technology, when less-contentious options exist that can deliver the same benefit, must have public options available to them";

Because Electrohypersensitivity (EHS) is recognized as a disability according to the Canadian Human Right Commission (*The Medical Perspective on Environmental Sensitivities*, 2007, [http://www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca/sites/default/files/envsensitivity\\_en\\_1.pdf](http://www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca/sites/default/files/envsensitivity_en_1.pdf)), *Policy on Environmental Sensitivities*, 2007, <http://www.aseq-ehaq-en.ca/policy-doc.html%20>), and students are entitled to have their medical needs accommodated at school ; Because anything that might negatively affect student health and safety is a priority for school boards in Alberta (Dr. Mallery-Blythe-Electromagnetic Radiation, Health and Children, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sNFdZVeXw7M>, On Our Watch, 2014, <http://www.spin37.com/admin/ul/On%20Our%20Watch%20-%20Kliparchuk%20%28final%20new%29.pdf> Our Children, Our Future, Our Responsibility, 2014, <http://c4st.org/news/item/educate-yourself/our-children-our-future-our-responsibility.html>);

I/We request that Alberta School Councils' Association advocate the following to the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) and Alberta Education for review and support with respect to action(s) that can be taken to ensure students are as safe as possible in school when exposed to Wi-Fi systems and configurations:

Recommendation 1: That on/off switches be installed in classrooms so that when access to the internet is not required, Wi-Fi routers and wireless devices can be and are turned off.

Recommendation 2: That Wi-Fi levels in classrooms and schools be set so that the radiation levels are as low as reasonably achievable while maintaining fully functioning signal coverage.

Recommendation 3: That Alberta Education and Alberta School Boards Association, in cooperation with other partner organizations as they deem appropriate, develop an education and safety program on how to use wireless technologies more safely, to be incorporated into the Learning and Technology Policy Framework 2013, and in the interim, recommend that safety warnings provided by product manufacturers of all Wi-Fi devices such as tablets and cell phones, be posted in all classrooms.

Recommendation 4: That all school staff and students participate in the education and safety program on safe use of technology identified in recommendation 3.

Recommendation 5: That Alberta Education and Alberta recommend that school boards in the province of Alberta make available at the request of the requisite number of parents in any City, a school(s) for children at any grade level, that is free of wireless technology and devices, to give parents a choice and to accommodate students with Electrohypersensitivity (EHS).

Recommendation 6: That Alberta Education and Alberta school boards monitor the ongoing developments and research with respect to Wi-Fi frequencies, systems and use of devices in schools and adjust their policies accordingly.

Recommendation 7: That ASCA partner with interested parties such as the Alberta School Board Association, the Alberta Teachers Association, and Canadians for Safe Technology (C4ST), to give scholarly consideration regarding the safe use Wi-Fi in schools.