Enclosure No. 10

PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARDS'
ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA®

Oct. 29, 2026

Honourable Demetrios Nicolaides
Minister of Education and Childcare
228 Legislative Building
10800-97 Ave.
Edmonton, AB. T5K 2B6

Dear Honourable Minister Nicolaides:

Re: Flag Regulations: Request for extended timelines and implementation support

On behalf of the Public School Boards' Association of Alberta (PSBAA), I am writing about the implementation of the new flag regulations under the *Education Act*. Representing public school boards across the province, we appreciate the opportunity to share our members' perspectives as the regulations move toward implementation.

Our commitment to compliance

The PSBAA supports a co-operative approach to implementing the regulations. Our members intend to meet the requirements, and we are committed to helping them understand their obligations and prepare accordingly. This letter is not intended to challenge the purpose of the regulations. Our aim is to work with the Ministry to identify a practical and achievable pathway to compliance.

Financial considerations

For a number of our members, the requirement to fly the flags of Canada and Alberta outside school property may mean acquiring and installing flagpoles that are not currently in place. This can be a significant and unplanned expense.

Costs may include:

- the flagpole and flags themselves;
- foundations and mounting hardware;
- site preparation, including utility locates and grading;
- professional installation; and
- engineering or structural assessments where required.

These costs fall on organizations that already operate within established budgets and funding constraints. Members need adequate time to assess their site-specific requirements, obtain quotations, secure the necessary approvals and plan for these expenditures responsibly. A compressed timeline would make that process difficult.

Winter installation and timelines

Our members' concerns are not only financial. With the regulations coming into force on Jan. 4, 2027, installation would need to occur in the depths of an Alberta winter. Frozen ground makes excavation and foundation work difficult or impossible, and snow cover and extreme cold affect site access and worker safety. Contractor availability is limited and seasonal pricing is often higher. Rushed winter installations can also compromise the quality and durability of the work, which creates safety and maintenance risks later.

Even school authorities who are fully committed to compliance may face logistical and financial pressure under the current timeline. We respectfully request the Ministry consider an extended implementation deadline, or a phased approach that allows installations to be completed during the next suitable construction season. Where a flagpole is not yet in place, an interim arrangement could also help bridge the gap while permanent installations are completed. Examples include temporary or building-mounted displays, or a written confirmation of a school authority's installation plan and schedule.

Financial and technical support

We also respectfully ask the Minister to consider what support the provincial government could provide to help members implement the regulations successfully.

Options could include:

- one-time grants or financial assistance to offset flagpole and installation costs;
- cost-sharing arrangements between the province and affected members; and
- a single point of contact within the Ministry to answer implementation questions and confirm how flexibility will be applied in practice.

Guidance of this kind would give public school divisions confidence in their planning and reduce the risk of duplicated or avoidable expenses.

Moving forward together

We appreciate the Ministry's attention to these practical considerations. The PSBAA would welcome the opportunity to meet with you or your officials to discuss them in more detail, share what we have learned from our members, and work toward a timeline and support framework that serves everyone's interests. We can also help distribute guidance and communicate Ministry expectations to our membership.

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Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to your response and to working with the Ministry on a smooth and successful implementation.

Sincerely,

L. Stewart

Dr. Lorraine Stewart
President, Public School Boards' Association of Alberta

cc: Lora Pillipow, Deputy Minister of Education and Childcare
James Johnson, Chief of Staff, Minister of Education and Childcare
Board of Directors, PSBAA
Member Boards, PSBAA
Troy Tait, Chief Executive Officer, PSBAA