

**DATE:** May 22, 2012  
**TO:** Board of Trustees  
**FROM:** Edgar Schmidt, Superintendent of Schools  
**SUBJECT:** Alberta School Councils' Association District Membership  
**ORIGINATOR:** David Fraser, Executive Director, Corporate Services  
**RESOURCE STAFF:** Janice Bell, Cheryl Oxford, Cory Sinclair  
**REFERENCE:** Board motion May 10, 2011

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#### **ISSUE**

The complimentary District School Council Membership in the Alberta School Councils' Association will expire on June 30, 2012.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Administration renew the ASCA district membership for a further two year term.**

#### **BACKGROUND**

At the May 10, 2011 public board meeting, the Board passed a motion to support school council membership in the Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) for a one-year free trial period. Membership was granted on a district-wide basis, meaning that all individual school councils had the opportunity to obtain free membership in the ASCA for the 2011-2012 school year. On April 30, 2012, the ASCA sent all school divisions a letter offering a special rate of 50 per cent off the cost of district membership fees when a district committed to membership for a two year period.

#### **RELATED FACTS**

- Of 198 district schools, 141 have established school councils and 57 have either not established a school council or have a parent group that functions solely as a fundraising society.
- Following the May 10 board motion, 129 of the 141 district school councils registered their contact information with ASCA.
- During the 2011-2012 school year, the ASCA has delivered, at no cost:
  - 18 workshops, with 175 participants, directly to district school councils. Of the participants who completed evaluations, 98 per cent indicated the workshops were either successful or very successful.
  - 16 workshops, with 44 school councils represented, through the School Council Training sampler held at the Centre for Education in November 2011.
  - 4 workshops, with 64 participants, to ward councils of school councils; 1 additional workshop was held for Ward H on April 24.
  - 4 school councils have booked 5 workshops for the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year.
  - 4 school councils sent representatives to the ASCA Conference/AGM held April 20-22, 2012.

**OPTIONS**

The following options are selected for consideration as they are deemed the most admissible:

1. Direct the Administration to renew the ASCA district membership for the next two years at the reduced rate of \$4,000 per year.
2. Direct the Administration to renew the ASCA district membership for one year only at the regular rate of \$8,000 per year.
3. Direct the Administration not to renew the ASCA district membership and to invite school councils to obtain and pay for their own memberships.

**CONSIDERATIONS & ANALYSIS**

- Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) is recognized as an expert in school council related matters/issues.
- The District has the opportunity to renew district membership in the ASCA at a discounted rate of 50 per cent off the regular cost, when committing to a two year membership.
- There is no guarantee that individual school councils would purchase an individual membership in the ASCA at a cost of \$40 per school council.
- School councils without a membership in ASCA would not have access to free support from the ASCA.
- A district membership in ASCA would offer:
  - a cost-effective way to deliver advice and expertise directly to individual school councils in a timely manner;
  - a way to deliver consistent, effective, efficient training to school councils at a district level; and
  - an efficient, effective, equitable way to provide ASCA membership to all district school councils, regardless of their individual ability to pay.
- Comments from district school councils regarding the ASCA:
  - “I want to thank you for the incredible support and advice you have shared with me (and the group) over the last few weeks. I think the school will be off to a great start with a good structure in place.”*
  - “Have very definitely found the information and programs that ASCA provides to be helpful to me and our school council.”*
  - “Thank you very much for offering membership to all EPSB schools - I can attest to the benefits of ASCA membership and am thrilled to see that more schools will have access to your services.”*
  - “Having this workshop available to us through our free membership this year was a big reason we decided to do it.”*

**NEXT STEPS**

Once the Board has decided how to proceed, the Administration will share the Board's decision with the ASCA and district school councils.

CO:jb