

Choice in Education Act Update

ASBOA Bootcamp
September 23, 2020



Context

- Government committed to bring forward a Choice in Education Act, which builds on the *Education Act* to:
 - Affirm parents have primary responsibility for the education of their children
 - Recognize that “parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education the shall be given to their children”
 - Protect the status of independent (private) schools

Engagement

- In 2019, Alberta Education engaged with key groups in a variety of ways:
 - Discussions with students via the Summer Student Advisory Panel (August 2019) and Minister's Youth Council (October 2019);
 - Webinars and individual in-person meetings with representatives of provincial partner organizations and interest groups; and
 - An online public survey, which was available in English and French, and received more than 50,000 complete responses

Overview of Changes to the *Education Act*

Choice in Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognition of all school and education program choices• Reference parents' right to choose the kind of education that is given to their children
Private Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Protecting the status of independent (private) schools
Charter Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supporting vocation-focused charter schools• Revision of application process to establish a charter school
Home Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adding a notification-only, non-funded option for home education

Implementation

- The *Choice in Education Act, 2020* amends the *Education Act*. Changes come into effect on September 1, 2020
 - Posted online at: <https://www.alberta.ca/K-12-education-legislation-and-regulations.aspx>
- The *Charter Schools Regulation*, the *Early Childhood Services Regulation*, and the *Home Education Regulation* were amended to align with the amendments to the *Education Act*

Regulation Amendments

Overview of Regulation Amendments

Charter Schools Regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Removal of the requirement that applicants first approach their local public board about operating an alternative program;• The inclusion of “vocation based education” as a category of charter school;• Elimination of the enrolment cap.
Home Education Regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adds details on the new non-supervised option for home education;• Enabling the department to investigate a notification-only program if there are concerns and, if necessary, to terminate a program;• Technical amendments to enable the use of electronic notification forms in the future.
Early Childhood Services Regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Technical amendment to correct an omission from the regulation. The section on common age of entry included boards but excluded private early childhood services operators.

Next Steps

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- Updating government websites, policies and reference documents
 - This is an ongoing process; if you have questions about the currency of a document, please speak to your Field Services contact

Where to find information

- Queen's Printer
- Alberta Education website and extranet
- Alberta Education staff
 - Your usual Field Services contact will be able to provide information on changes
- Guide to Education
 - The updated version is now available in English, with French to follow shortly.

Questions or Comments

