



November 2, 2009

Hon. Dave Hancock
Minister of Education
Government of Alberta
224 Legislature Building
10800 97 Ave
Edmonton, AB
T5K 2B6

Dear Minister Hancock:

Re: Request for input on School Act Changes and Charter School Concept Paper

Thank you for the opportunity for our charter school board to provide input on each of these important topics:

1. Changes to the School Act and regulations, particularly those pertinent to charter schools, and,
2. Charter School Concept Paper (distributed by Deputy Minister Henke)

The context in which charter schools will operate in the future is of very important interest to our charter school board and the community served by New Horizons. Our school is arguably the longest-standing charter school in Alberta, and thus our earlier parents were pioneers in the development of charter education in Canada. Our journey has been one which continues to be successful, based on indicators from Alberta Education, our families, current and former students and staff. We believe that our school continuously strives for improvement in its programming for serving gifted students, and that our charter, our education planning and our annual results reflect that forward approach.

We are aware that The Alberta Association of Public Charter Schools (TAAPCS) has offered input to you on each of the above-named topics. Our board concurs fully with the responses that TAAPCS has prepared, and our representatives participated in the determination of the points set out in our association's responses.

The community at New Horizons is very highly supportive of the programming and educational environment afforded to students who have attended, are attending and will attend our school. We feel strongly that our school is constantly striving to apply relevant research and practice in effectively meeting the needs of gifted students. We have, and will continue to seek connections with universities in Alberta and beyond. Further, we believe that the formal evaluation of New Horizons School currently underway will confirm these beliefs and assist us in moving forward in meeting our charter goals.

We appreciate the opportunity to respond to your questions and concept paper through our association. At the same time, we would welcome an opportunity for you to visit our school and to see firsthand that our school does provide an atmosphere of excellence that is unique and valuable, and works well within the resources that are available.

Yours truly,

Nicole Vanwieren
Chair, Board of Directors