

MINISTER'S Youth Council

Frequently Asked Questions

1. General Information for Students

What is the Minister's Youth Council?

The Minister's Youth Council will be a team of 32 Alberta junior and senior high students who will provide input to the Minister and Alberta Education on provincial education initiatives. Council members will bring diverse interests, identities, backgrounds and perspectives from all across Alberta.

What is expected of members of the Minister's Youth Council?

The Minister's Youth Council will have an important role in the education system. Working at the provincial level, all Council members will:

- Be active and responsible members.
- Be available to attend **all** meetings.
- Share the diverse student perspective with the Minister of Education and Alberta Education staff.
- Work with one another and Alberta Education staff to provide input on education issues. Interact with each other outside of meetings to discuss ideas, gather input from their communities to inform education issues, and upcoming activities.

What is the time commitment for Council members?

Council members will serve a ten-month term, aligned with the school year. They will attend up to three meetings to be held:

- September 28-October 1, 2018
- February 1-4, 2019
- May 3-6, 2018

Note: Dates are subject to change.

Each meeting will begin Friday evening and run through to Monday lunchtime. Council members will also be expected to stay in touch between meetings, using technology, to discuss ideas and upcoming activities.

Where will the meetings be held?

The three meetings will be held in Edmonton with the specific venue to be announced at a later date. All overnight accommodations, meals and snacks, meeting rooms and outdoor activity areas are provided to council members.

Do I have to take care of my own travel arrangements?

No, all of your travel and accommodation needs will be taken care of by the Government of Alberta through chartered bus and air travel. Students living in the Greater Edmonton Area are expected to be transported by their parents or legal guardians to and from meeting locations. The government will book and pay for your travel.

School or school district representatives are not required to accompany or chaperone council members.

Will someone meet me at the airport or bus station when I arrive in Edmonton?

Yes, an adult chaperone will meet you and ensure that you get to the meeting site safely. At the end of the meeting on Monday, an adult chaperone will accompany you to the airport or bus station for your return home.

Will there be chaperones with us at all times?

Government of Alberta staff, which may include certificated teachers, will provide supervision at all times. There will be 1 adult chaperone for every 6 students.

Will there be guidelines and expectations to ensure welcoming, caring, respectful and safe environments for all Council members?

Yes, all council members and their parents or legal guardians will be made aware of expectations for student behavior and conduct, including the responsible use of digital technologies. Council members will be provided training to understand their responsibilities and with their parents or legal guardians be required to sign an acknowledgment of behavior and conduct expectations.

What will I do at the meetings?

The council members will work along with the Minister and ministry representatives to provide input on education issues that impact students. As authentic partners, council members may act as planners, advisors, researchers, participants, respondents, facilitators, and presenters.

Am I an official student representative for my school district?

No, the members of the Minister's Youth Council will form a representative group of Alberta students, not of their school districts.

Will there be accommodations for special needs and/or circumstances?

Yes, accommodations will be provided by Government of Alberta staff, according to your specific situation.

Will there be free time?

In addition to the work of the council, a variety of recreational activities will be included. Supervision will be provided at all times.

If I am selected for the Minister's Youth Council, what happens next?

The selected council members will be notified by the end of June 2018. Information packages will be sent to council members, and their parents or legal guardians, with more information to help prepare for the meetings.

2. Application Process for the Minister's Youth Council

How do I apply?

There is a link to the application package on the Alberta Education website at education.alberta.ca/myc.

The process includes 4 steps for you to complete:

1. Read these Frequently Asked Questions carefully to understand the role and responsibilities of the Minister's Youth Council.
2. Share the information and discuss your interest to apply with your parents or legal guardians. If you are younger than 18 years old, your application must include signed parent/guardian consent.
3. Complete the application package online.
4. If you are unable to complete online, print and mail the completed package, to Alberta Education.

Alberta Education Strategic Engagement Branch
Attention: Student Engagement
2nd Floor, 44 Capital Boulevard
10044 – 108 Street
Edmonton, AB T5J 5E6

What is the deadline to submit my application?

Application packages must be sent by mail and must be postmarked by **March 30, 2018**. Late applications will not be accepted.

How long will it take me to fill out the application?

Please plan to spend a few hours to work on your application to ensure that it is the best possible, and most accurate, representation of yourself. This is the information that Alberta Education will use for the selection process. The system times out after 20 minutes so please save your work every 15 minutes.

Can I put forward someone else's name?

No. Each applicant must complete and submit their own application.

I need more space to answer the application questions. What should I do?

The questions are not meant to be long essays, please use the character limit provided to complete your concise answer. The character limit is 2000.

What happens if I need to withdraw from the Council?

If you feel you are unable to meet your obligations to the council, contact us at 780-638-3153 or 780-644-8328, or education.alberta.ca/studentengagement. We do not replace students who withdraw from the council.

Can I apply again another year to become a member of the Minister's Youth Council?

If you have already applied and you were not selected, you are welcome to apply another year as long as you will be attending junior or senior high school. A maximum of 8 students from the current council will be selected for the 2018/19 council.

3. Selection Process for the Minister's Youth Council

What happens to my application once I submit it?

After the application deadline of March 30, 2018, Alberta Education staff will review and evaluate the applications received.

How will you ensure an open, transparent and inclusive selection process?

The Minister is committed to a transparent process for selecting members to this council. He wants you to know what he is looking for and to feel welcome to apply.

To ensure that the selection process is open, transparent and inclusive, students will be selected for the council based on the principles set out in *Alberta's Public Agency's* selection criteria:

- **Diversity:** The recruitment and selection process will honour and promote diversity on the council. If you are reading this, and you are a junior or senior high school student attending school in Alberta, you are eligible to apply.
- **Competency:** The criteria for selecting council members will be based on creating a council that collectively, has the skill-set and the mind-set needed to meet the needs and nature of the council as a whole. If you can demonstrate a passion for education and a strong desire to share your voice, you are encouraged to apply. You can read more about the competencies the Minister is looking for below.
- **Consistency:** The recruitment and selection processes will be applied consistently for all individuals selected by the provincial selection team to the council.
- **Transparent & Openness:** The recruitment and selection process will be clear, publicly available and communicated to students, parents, teachers and our education partners. The Minister will take steps to ensure that as many students as possible are invited to apply to the council and that the final 32 students selected to the council will be disclosed to the public by a public announcement and online publication.

How will Alberta Education select the members of the Minister's Youth Council?

For this council to be meaningful, the Minister needs a team of students who have a broad and diverse range of life experiences, knowledge, and skills. To make this happen, he will be using the competencies listed below to identify members for his Minister's Youth Council.

To help with your application, some of the qualities, knowledge and skills are provided that the Minister hopes to see. You may also identify other qualities and the Minister is very interested in hearing about those, too. Remember, his goal is to have a well-rounded Minister's Youth Council that can provide him with advice and opinion about your education experience in Alberta.

Competency Area	Description
Commitment to Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has experience contributing to the community (could be the school community or communities outside of school).• Mobilized community members to take positive action.• Demonstrates the ability to build networks and foster relationships with those they interact with.• Demonstrated ability to inspire, motivate, and offer direction to others.

Experience and Knowledge - Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated the ability to apply critical thinking to creatively assess situations and to generate new or innovative solutions to challenges. • Demonstrates the ability to identify potential risks and devise plans to minimize the impact of those risks.
Leadership and Teamwork Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated accountability in interactions with those in a group/club, school or community • Active involvement in a group, a club, or a team (at work or in a volunteer capacity). • Making connections between their own accountability to their group/club, school or community and the accountability that elected officials have to their constituents.
Strategic Thinking and Planning Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to think strategically about opportunities and challenges they face. • Can anticipate what might happen and plan accordingly.
Critical Thinking and Problem Solving Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates an understanding of the importance of teamwork (i.e. an ability to inspire a shared vision, recognizing and valuing the contributions of others, role modeling). • Experience with leading a group, a club, or a team (at work or in a volunteer capacity).

What happens after the applications are reviewed?

The provincial selection team will select applicants to be interviewed. If you are chosen to proceed to this second stage of the selection process, you, and your parents or legal guardians, will be contacted by early May 2018.

What will the interview be like?

You will be asked more questions related to your relevant experience, knowledge of the education system in Alberta, and personal effectiveness skills. The interview will be conducted via phone or a virtual meeting interface and be under 30 minutes in length.

How do I prepare for my interview if I am selected?

Most importantly, be yourself. Similar to your completed application, we want to learn as much as we can about your unique interests, identities, background and perspectives, so that we are able to create a diverse Minister’s Youth Council.

How will I be notified if I am selected for the Minister’s Youth Council?

The students chosen as council members will be contacted by Alberta Education staff by the middle of June 2018. All applicants will receive notification by the end of June that the process has been completed and council members have been selected.

Will I get paid to be a member of the Minister’s Youth Council?

No; however, all meal, accommodation and travel costs will be covered when you attend the meetings.

4. Information for Parents and Legal Guardians

How is the personal information in the application used?

As stated in the collection notice included in the application package, the personal information provided by students in this application will be used for two purposes:

1. Selecting members of the Minister’s Youth Council.

2. Administering the Minister's Youth Council program, including communicating with members of the Minister's Youth Council about events.

If my child is selected for the Minister's Youth Council, will their personal information be publicized?

This information is included in the authorization and declaration information that is included in the application package. By signing, parents or guardians understand that if their child is selected to participate in the Minister's Youth Council a public profile limited to name, photo, and brief description of their child's skill set will be publicly disclosed by Alberta Education through department newsletters, websites, and social media accounts to promote and advertise the Minister's Youth Council and its activities. A Media Release form will be required for all selected council members.

Do I have to sign an authorization form in order for my child to travel and attend the Minister's Youth Council meetings?

Yes, you will be provided with detailed information prior to the first meeting. Your consent is required for your child to participate the meetings.

As a parent, can I accompany my child on their way to their meetings with the Minister's Youth Council? Can I stay for the meetings?

You can travel with your child before and after the Minister's Youth Council meetings; however, you will have to assume all of your own travel and accommodation costs (hotel, meals). Parents may not attend the meetings.

Do I have to pay anything for my child to attend the Minister's Youth Council meetings?

No, all costs associated with travel and accommodations (meal and transportation included) will be covered by the Government of Alberta.

Will there be adult supervision for my child at all times during the Minister's Youth Council meetings?

Students will be supervised from the time of arrival in Edmonton, until they are safely underway to travel home. Adult supervisors will be onsite throughout the meeting from Friday evening through to Monday afternoon. A ratio of supervisors to students will be 1 for every 6 students. Council members will be required to remain onsite at all times.

Will students have unsupervised time or be able to leave the meeting site?

No, adult supervisors will be onsite from Friday evening through to Monday afternoon.

If my child has special accommodations/needs, will those be addressed?

For those students who meet the criteria and are selected for the council, every effort will be made to accommodate the students and meet their unique needs in order to participate in the council meetings. In the welcome package, there will be an opportunity to identify any dietary, medical, or other unique needs that need to be considered.