

Alberta Schools Alternative Procurement (ASAP II) Project

Fact Sheet

- Government announced the ASAP II new schools public-private partnership (P3) project in 2008.
- The project will result in 14 new schools in Edmonton (Edmonton Catholic Separate School District and Edmonton School District), Calgary (Calgary Roman Catholic Separate School District and Calgary Board of Education), Sherwood Park (Elk Island Catholic Separate School Division), Spruce Grove (Evergreen Catholic Separate Regional Division), Langdon (Rocky View School Division) and Okotoks (Foothills School Division).
- The project includes K-4, K-9, 5-9 middle schools (opening September of 2012) and senior high schools (completed by January 2013).
- Locations for the new school sites were determined in consultation with the eight school boards.
- The 10 new elementary and middle schools will be built and maintained using a made-in-Alberta P3 model while the four high schools will be completed through a design-build approach.
- Education programming for students is the responsibility of school boards. New schools will be owned, controlled and operated by school boards. Use and access to the new schools will be managed like existing schools.
- All schools will be built to provincial standards and will be built to achieve LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver certification.

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**Government
of Alberta ■**

ASAP II School Infrastructure Project

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the details of ASAP II?

Government will consolidate the design and construction of 14 new schools into a “combined procurement approach”. The 10 elementary and middle schools bundle will be built using a public-private partnership (P3) approach and the four high schools bundle will be built using a design-build approach. ASAP II includes K-4, K-9, middle and senior high school configurations.

Why has government moved to a combined procurement approach?

Government’s analysis of the economic climate and rigorous evaluation process determined that a combined procurement is the most effective delivery approach for the ASAP II project. The combined approach provides the best value to taxpayers and is of greater interest to industry and lenders in light of today’s economic climate.

How will this combined approach impact the delivery of the schools?

Government is on schedule to deliver the new schools to school boards as per the January 2008 announcement. The elementary and middle schools will be open by September of 2012 and the high schools completed by January of 2013.

What is a design-build in the context of the ASAP II project?

Through a design-build approach a single contractor will oversee the design and construction of the four high schools using designs already in development in consultation with school boards and municipalities.

How can cost savings be achieved through a design-build?

Similar to a P3, savings can be achieved through economies of scale, such as one contractor responsible for building all four schools, a guaranteed fixed price, and, after tender, protection from inflation in construction cost and weather-related delays, which are the responsibility of the contractor.

What are the major differences between a P3 and design-build?

Through a P3 approach, the contractor arranges a portion of the project financing and provides a 30-year maintenance warranty on the schools. Through a design-build, government finances the design and construction and makes progress payments until the completion of the project. School boards, through government funding, are responsible for the long-term maintenance of the schools.

What is the process for awarding the contracts for the two approaches?

Government issues Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to gauge interest from industry. Following the RFQ, the selected proponents will be invited to submit Request for Proposals (RFP), which includes financial bids. For the P3 elementary and middle schools bundle, government will compare the bids against a Public Sector Comparator to determine if the project provides value for money. If it does, government will sign a Design, Build, Finance and Maintain contract with the successful proponent.

The design-build contract for the four high schools will be awarded to the lowest bidder. Submissions for all 14 schools must meet stringent technical guidelines.

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Is government funding the design-build high schools directly?

Yes. Funding for the high schools, as part of the ASAP II project, was earmarked in Alberta Education's 2009-12 Capital Plan.

Why doesn't government fund the construction and delivery of all 14 schools?

Government's rigorous analysis indicated that there would be value for money in procuring the 10 K-4, K-9 and middle schools through a P3 arrangement rather than through a design-build approach.

Is government taking over responsibility of school boards to build schools?

Government is looking at the most effective way to build a large number of schools and is in a unique position to assist school boards in consolidating a project of this magnitude.

The province will continue to work closely and consult with school boards to ensure the school facilities meet the needs of teachers and students.

Who will own and operate the new schools?

The new schools will be owned, controlled and operated by the school boards. Use and access to the new schools will be managed like existing schools.

Will this approach result in private industry leasing schools to the province?

No. This is not a lease agreement.

Are there any specifics to offer on the quality of construction?

All schools will meet high-quality provincial standards and will be built to achieve LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver certification, an independent rating system used to measure environmental efficiency. LEED-based construction will result in greater energy efficiency, up to 45 per cent, and provide a healthier environment through improved air quality and the use of natural light.

The new P3 elementary and middle schools will use a standard core school design.

What is a core school design?

Core school designs incorporate a permanent central space that includes a gymnasium, library, administration offices, classrooms, specialty classrooms, such as a music room, art room and Career and Technology Studies labs. Additional classroom space is provided through the use of high-performance modular classrooms, that can be added and removed in response to changes in enrolment.

The use of core school designs can improve the efficiency of construction and as a result will be used in the P3 project. As well, school jurisdictions planning a new school under a traditional-build will be encouraged to use the core designs when planning their new facilities.

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Why is Alberta moving ahead with another P3 schools bundle?

We have built on the lessons learned by other jurisdictions, which translated into the success of the made-in-Alberta ASAP I new schools project (18 schools). ASAP I resulted in a \$118 million (Net Present Value) savings to taxpayers and 18 new schools will be delivered to Edmonton and Calgary's metro school boards by June of 2010.

Rigorous evaluations done prior to ASAP I and again for ASAP II shows positive results and that value for money can be achieved by moving forward as a P3.

Last year, ASAP I was recognized with three awards, including the 2008 National Awards for Innovation and Excellence in Public-Private Partnerships panel awarded the ASAP I project the Award of Merit, for Social Infrastructure Procurement.

How were the school sites selected?

The school site locations were determined in consultation with the eight school boards and based on their high priority needs.

Will these new schools reflect the Class Size Initiative?

The government remains committed to the class size initiative. Funding for the small class size initiative is now in its fifth school year and is an ongoing financial commitment by government to school jurisdictions.

When it comes to class sizes, schools and school boards have the flexibility in classroom organization that supports parent and student educational choice. This means that some classes will be higher and some will be lower than the recommended averages. Government does not specify a maximum class size because there is no "one size fits all" solution.

ASAP II schools will be complemented by modular classrooms, which will allow jurisdictions to increase or decrease capacity if student enrolments fluctuate.

What's the difference between school space used by a community group through a joint-use agreement and leasing space to a non-educational partner?

Joint-user space is usually on a temporary basis. Leasing of space is much more permanent and long term due to the established renter/owner relationship for the entirety or duration of the lease.

Will school boards have the option to lease school space?

A school board will be able to lease space to third parties (i.e., day cares, etc.,) that may be outside of its traditional joint-use agreement. School boards will assume or be responsible for all associated risks through such an arrangement.

It is the jurisdiction's decision whether or not to make these facilities available for other community uses outside of its traditional joint-use agreements.

School boards are encouraged to consider joint school and community use in its planning to ensure that its schools are child and community focused.

Visit: www.education.alberta.ca/asapii

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