

February 13, 2008

Mr. Gordon Murrie, President
Alberta Whitewater Association
13804 - 119A Street
Edmonton, AB T5X 5B7

Dear Mr. Murrie:

At the meetings held in November with the Presidents of the Provincial Sport and Recreation Associations, discussions were held regarding the priorities for the Alberta Sport Plan and access to schools for recreational use.

As promised at the meetings, we have rolled up the feedback that we received from the various groups and are providing you this information. We have also included input that we have received from other submissions recently.

The Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation Board of Directors sincerely appreciates the input that we received into these key strategies and we will be giving your suggestions careful consideration as we determine ways to move forward with the Alberta Sport Plan and the Alberta Active Living Strategy.

I would like to wish you all the best in the upcoming year as you continue to provide excellent services to Albertans in activities that contribute to their quality of life

Sincerely,



Orest Korbutt
Chairman

Enclosures

cc: Mr. Mike Pugh, Administrative Director

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Sport Development Plan – Feedback from Presidents Meetings and other consultations

All items were viewed to be priorities and work should continue

#1 Facilities

Increase availability of safe sport and recreation facilities through upgrading the aging existing infrastructure, as well as developing programs to build new facilities to accommodate population growth and to encourage optimum utilization of school facilities during non-school hours.

- Strong feelings that this should remain the number one priority.
- Increase the budget significantly for the new Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Program to meet the required needs and extend it beyond 2 years.
- Positive feedback regarding use of funding programs. i.e. CFEP, CIP
- For some groups building their own facility is not feasible and they are always going to have to rent, state of the art facilities may become cost prohibitive. These groups need operating support.
- It is felt that municipalities and communities, who venture to build facilities, must consult with sport groups regarding functional requirements.
- Need to address the competitive nature of sport and the high performance needs of facilities. Most facilities are directed to the grassroots and recreational users.
- Collaboration of organizations with similar needs.
- Ensure that facilities have appropriate equipment and staff to offer necessary programming at all levels.

#2 Support to Provincial System

Increase funding to provincial sport and recreation associations to enable them to provide quality services for all Albertans and to address the gap between current programs of the provincial associations and their national counterparts.

- Develop a funding program aimed at existing staff, i.e. need to be competitive in the market to retain staff considering Alberta's vibrant economy.
- Associations very appreciative of increased funding and the new Association Support Grant (ASG). Would like more funding for associations that did not receive grant. Concerns about sustainability of new ASG program.
- Associations very appreciative of the Percy Page Centre but would like to see an increase in size.
- Provide financial support to LTAD implementation.
- More funding is needed for coaching.
- Additional Support for PSO success (growing membership, achieving medals @ games)

3 Athletic Excellence

Increase provincial support for an athletic excellence development program including increased support for individual athletes as well as increased funding to provincial associations for identification, selection and training of athletes and teams for interprovincial games.

- Provide information related to Ethical Conduct in Sport.

#6 Physical Education & Core Programming

- Continue to include K-12 physical education as a part of core programming for Alberta students.
- Provide support for teacher implementation of the current Physical Education Program.
- Concern that teachers are not properly trained for the Daily Physical Activity Initiative; there should be a physical education specialist in every elementary school. Quality control and implementation of this type of programming is necessary. (Question current programming being offered in many jurisdictions at this time.)
- Physical education is important as a foundation for sports. We would like to see LTAD promoted and taught in schools since this supports healthy child development. Government of Alberta needs to be the link between Provincial Sport Associations, Municipalities and schools for LTAD
- This is an important initiative however; in practicality a school may have one gym and too many classes to be able to complete this initiative.

7 Underrepresented Groups

Encourage and support the participation in sport and recreation of underrepresented groups i.e.: girls and women, indigenous people, economically depressed and disadvantaged individuals and people with disabilities.

- Access to funding through the Bilateral program appreciated but programs in this area take a lot of time to see results
- ASRPWF has done a very good job in ensuring that groups with a disability are included in the games program
- ASRPWF should consider the addition of under-represented group members on the Board of Directors based on the current make-up of the Board
- Women in Coaching, Officiating and Leadership should be a primary focus moving forward.
- Maybe too targeted to access funding. i.e. 1 in 10 participants fit the category of underrepresented groups
- More partnerships would be useful ie. Sport centres and active living could coordinate/facilitate partnerships and program development.
- Approach to date has been somewhat ad hoc – need overall planned approach to guide development of programs for women, aboriginal people, and persons with a disability.

8 Sport Sciences Network

Develop a Provincial Sport Training and Sciences Network in partnership with government, municipalities, facility owners, education systems and provincial sport associations. This involves establishing a provincial network that provides enhanced training opportunities and improved access for coach/athlete support services that include medical, biomechanical, psychological, and physiological, that links with the National Sport Centre Network.

- Associations positive about the Alberta Sport Development Centres

in sport and recreation as well as information that assists Albertans in accessing opportunities to participate.

- The Live Outside Program is perceived as a program in which posters are sent to schools, need to sell and promote it better. Many delegates were not aware of the Live Outside the Box campaign. We have not seen the posters outside of the Percy Page Centre.
- Suggest more promotion in the schools.
- Suggest more targeted marketing.
- Has an external evaluation been done on the Live Outside the Box program?
- Is it meeting its needs and intentions?
- More awareness of programs. What is it? How can we use it?
- Currently 2 books and 2 posters are allotted per school; increase the number of posters, i.e. 1 per classroom, and maybe the books
- Expand to all age groups so individuals become active
- Require a coordinated effort of all of the public initiatives that are available and which ones to support and promote
- Is the impact being measured?

#13 Support Teacher Learning Opportunities

Provide ongoing support for teacher implementation, specifically related to the teaching of sport. Collaboration with Alberta Sport organizations and provincial professional development consortia to facilitate planned and coordinated learning opportunities for teachers.

- Interest in LTAD and the NCCP Accelerated Delivery Program for Teacher – Coaches with PE background as well as the Coach 25 program (Edm.Public)
- We need more collaboration and resources for teachers. ie. Facilities, insurance, transportation, 1 day lesson plans
- Teachers need more awareness of non-traditional sports

#14 Collaboration for Intramurals

Explore collaboration for intramural development /implementation support with Health and Physical Education Council, Schools Come Alive and/or Ever Active Schools

- Associations would be supportive for collaboration for intramural development
- Sports could be approached to do presentations at schools
- Partnership with schools can be difficult because their human resources are maxed out. Needs education buy in.
- Support required re-developing intramural programs in schools. Seem to be very sporadic throughout Alberta at this time especially at post-secondary colleges.
- Would like to see more collaboration and linkage between schools and sport associations
- This is a challenge because the schools don't have the equipment/facilities

#15 Enhanced Collaboration

Develop joint projects for sport that feature collaborative efforts by government departments impacted by sport (i.e.: the ministries responsible for sport, tourism, Alberta Gaming, health, justice, economic development etc.)

Access to Schools - Feedback from Presidents Meetings

1. **What successes have you and/or your groups/clubs had with accessing and using schools. For example, where in the province are you using classrooms or gymnasiums after school and/or on weekends to conduct your programs? How often are you accessing/using schools? Any costs associated with accessing/using schools?**
 - Good success by Rhythmic Gymnastics in accessing schools for in-school programming (which is considered essential for the growth of the sport). RG is in school gyms throughout the province (concentrated in Red Deer, Edmonton and Calgary).
 - AB Hockey has success accessing schools via elite athletic programs or sports academies – ie. Donnan School. However, there is nothing in place for average students to participate. The trend towards specialized sports academies in Alberta (ie. Warner) are giving sports definition and profile in a limited number of schools, targeting elite athletes from across Canada. (This marketing of sports academies to gifted athletes across Canada is perceived as being problematic for other provinces in jeopardy of losing top athletes.)
 - AB Fencing has localized success in accessing schools in Red Deer through the Red Deer Fencing Club's effort to market its mini-fence program to teachers/administrators in individual schools. This success is attributed to the hard work by the president and coaches of the local club to individually target its programs to schools during school hours. There is no coordinated provincial effort.
 - Yoga Association of AB finds that many schools (especially high schools) proactively contact AB Yoga for teachers to provide in-class instruction (usually because the teacher is familiar with the benefits of yoga). The YAA provides certified teachers to schools when asked/approached on a fee-for-service basis. Sometimes as a service to the community (especially underprivileged schools), a teacher will provide classes for free.
 - (Other issues faced by the YAA is that teachers/the public are generally unaware that the certification/recertification process is long and demanding; education around credentials is part of the learning process they hope to instill.)
 - AB Underwater Council has had success through visits to school assemblies and/or classrooms to talk and present about scuba diving and underwater sports like underwater hockey.
 - On the flip side of school access issues, schools contact AUC to book 'Discover Scuba' experiences at their local pools for phys ed programs – usually grades 8 – 12. Schools have problems booking small community pool facilities.
 - SHAPE (supporting walk/bike to school) notes that sport and rec associations can send flyers to every school in many school divisions. For Edmonton Public School Division, contact 429-8000 (Communications) and ask about

programs but now includes some meeting rooms. In Edmonton, most groups want the big gyms, however, there are many smaller gyms that are underutilized. Cost in Edmonton through Community Services: youth groups – free; adults – larger gym \$15.00/ hour weekends - \$35.00/hour for 3 hour minimum. Now a days in Edmonton some casual groups such as dance groups may use a school gym once per week

- AB Rec. Canoe in Calgary – Bowwaters Canoe Club instructors instructed canoe course for Calgary Public and in turn get use of pools in the winter months. In Medicine Hat – YMCA Pool free to Canoe Club to do pool lessons. Club leaves canoe equipment at pool for YMCA to use in exchange. Sundre – Canoe Club access to school pool – Canoe Club leaves equipment for schools to use.
- Rhythmic Gymnastics runs school clubs at lunch time. After school programming is the feeder for competitive programming offered in major centres in facilities with high ceilings. Access to schools is essential.
- The Yoga Association of AB runs some evening community classes in school facilities after hours, noting that it is not always possible to find access to schools.
- For ten years Slave Lake has had a good Joint-Use Agreement that includes agreements with the public, separate and Christian schools as well as the College in the community. The school has identified grade 3 and grade 10 students in Slave Lake to receive free swimming lessons. Free ice time is also provided to schools in Slave Lake. Town of Slave Lake is responsible for booking gym facilities after hours. They charge youth \$8 an hour and adults \$16 an hour for use of a gym. The climbing wall in Slave Lake at the College is included in the Agreement. The Town of Slave Lake assumes the liability for College facilities for after hours use. The College has a security guard on staff until 11:00 pm each night. The Separate schools have a janitor on site during after hours use while in the public schools user groups have a separate entrance with an access code and sign in procedure. The Town of Slave Lake maintains the municipal fields while the College maintains their own fields.
- The Swim Association supplied the coaches for one program that was operated.

- In smaller communities the availability is there but will get bumped for community events such as elections.
- Alberta Infrastructure is taking a long time to build facilities in new communities and not building schools with gyms. As well, the schools they are building do not have the capacity to build additions.
- No consistency in who has access and who cannot access schools. Sometimes the schools are double booked or the school does not give notice that the organization cannot use the school for that particular night due to another event.
- A penalty is given to an organization if they do not use the schools in the allotted time as per of the joint use agreement.
- Not sure who to complain to if there is a problem with accessing schools.
- Is it possible to get access to schools that have been closed although it was noted most of these schools are being used by private schools.
- It is difficult to get access to schools on the weekend. Schools are not accessible when the school is closed i.e., holidays, professional development days. Cancelling at the last minute. Locked out, no one there, no keys for us to let ourselves in. Schools often block off large chunks of time, however, do not use it. Times the schools are available limit us. Schools cancelling community access times for special events etc is also an issue.
- The requirements to use schools are getting stricter.
- Equipment not accessible.
- Shortage of gyms to rent.
- Usually only been able to access smaller or older gymnasiums in Elementary Schools. Elementary sized gyms are not suitable for male adults sizes
- Provincial sport associations and local sport associations would like to get their programs into more schools but overall access remains an issue.
- There may be more issues to address in larger urban centres.
- Loss of the availability of gyms in urban areas is a concern as are number of new neighbourhoods that do not have schools yet. Demand has exceeded supply.
- The lack of caretaking staff is limiting community access in some schools. Caretakers also have to have certain qualifications to work in schools. Schools are not available as they do not want to have to pay caretakers.
- Schools in many cases have a shortage of facilities for their own needs let alone the community and they need access to community/municipal facilities as well. They are often facing the same issues with a shortage of gym facilities.

- **Challenges in Accessing Municipal Facilities**

- Schools can't get access at convenient times and low cost to municipal facilities. They are displaced if the paying public appears. Ie. pools – Underwater Council
- There is also a lack of community facilities to access. Most of the new community facilities that are being built are being done by groups such as soccer – groups with a large membership get facilities.
- Joint use agreement between schools and community facilities don't always work for example, a school is slotted to use a pool during the day but the public comes to use it at the same time, the schools cannot use the pool as long as it is being used by the public.
- Pools are available but the hours are often too late and unreasonable.
- Soccer Centres are mainly for Games and Soccer Teams are told to go to school gyms to practice.
- As Edmonton grows, certain areas of the city do not have enough gyms and other facilities.

- **Sport Specific Issues and Schools**

- Many sport and recreation associations don't know the process to communicate with schools to have their issues resolved.
- Fencing is on the “banned list” and can't get into elementary schools because equipment is considered a combative weapon. How can this be resolved? The ACICR provides sport specific statistics on injuries which school boards use. Calling the phys ed consultant/specialist in each school board takes time and is unrealistic with a one person office...
- AB Hockey has liability/ insurance issues that involve risk, injury and equipment. Storage of equipment is an issue for school programs.
- Gymnastics and Bowling would like to be a part of the Physical Education program. They both would like to be in the gymnasiums or have the schools come to their facilities (joint use agreement). Storage of our equipment is a problem. ie. Gymnastic mats
- Insurance, liability & waivers seem to be issues.
- Like to include our sport in the curricula to promote it in schools (table tennis)
- Not many schools have swimming pools that are operated by the schools, most are municipal facilities which may impact their accessibility. At one time swimming was in the education curriculum but has since been taken out. Would like to see more swim programs in the school setting. Children should learn to swim and be aware of water safety. In the town of Innisfail the school does have access for swim programs in the municipal pool.
- Schools primary purpose is delivery of the school curriculum and that is the where the funding goes- that does not include school sports.