



Date: December 18, 2024 **Agenda Item:** 9.3.1
To: Board of Trustees
From: Shawna Warren, Superintendent
Originator(s): Committee of the Whole
Shawna Warren, Superintendent
Subject: **CASA Classroom Targeted Funding Advocacy Letter**

Recommended Motion:

THAT the Board of Trustees directs the Superintendent to work with CASA to draft an advocacy letter for the Board to advocate for targeted funding for the teacher FTE in the CASA Classrooms effective 2025-2026.

Background:

On July 28, 2022, the Government of Alberta announced an additional investment of \$87 million over three years to enhance child and youth addiction and mental health supports and pediatric rehabilitation services. This new funding will enhance the wide variety of supports and services already available in schools.

In partnership with the Government of Alberta, community partners and school divisions, CASA Mental Health has committed to delivering mental health care in classrooms. CASA Classrooms address the need for services closer to students by bridging a child’s mental health and school needs.

The first 2 classrooms in the province were opened in Sturgeon Public Schools:

Opened February 2023:

Sturgeon County: Gibbons School (Grades 7 to 9)

Sturgeon County: Sturgeon Composite High School (Grades 10 to 12)

August 2024, the Jr. High Program was moved to Guthrie School because CASA was struggling to find medical professionals willing to drive out to Gibbons. Guthrie School, being closer to Edmonton, helped to address that barrier.

One of the challenges for the Division since the opening of the CASA classrooms has been the cost incurred for the teacher in each classroom. CASA is responsible for all other staffing costs to support the students in the classroom, but school divisions are responsible for the cost of the teacher. It is expensive to have a teacher assigned to a low enrolment classroom. CASA classroom enrolment numbers - maximum number of students is 12. The Division has yet to reach 12 students in a class.

- [CASA Classrooms Publication](#) (updated February 2024)
- [Information for Physicians and Primary Care Networks](#) (updated February 2024)
- [Information for Families](#) (updated February 2024)
- [CASA Classrooms Caregiver Handbook](#) (updated August 2024)

Status & Relationship to Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard (SLOS):

This report aligns with the [SLOS](#) in the following way:

COMPETENCY:	(1) Building Effective Relationships
INDICATORS:	a. collaborating with community and provincial agencies to address the needs of students and their families; and e. establishing constructive relationships with students, staff, school councils, parents/guardians, employee organizations, the education ministry and other stakeholder organizations.
COMPETENCY:	(3) Visionary Leadership
INDICATORS:	c. promoting in the school community a common understanding of and support for the school authority's goals, priorities and strategic initiatives.
COMPETENCY:	(4) Leading Learning
INDICATORS:	e. ensuring that staff have access to resources, programs and expertise to support them in meeting their professional responsibilities and in addressing the learning needs of all students.
COMPETENCY:	(6) School Authority Operations and Resources
INDICATORS:	a. providing direction on fiscal and resource management in accordance with all statutory, regulatory and school authority requirements; and e. establishing data-informed strategic planning and decision-making processes that are responsive to changing contexts.
COMPETENCY:	(7) Supporting Effective Governance
INDICATORS:	d. ensuring that the board's plans, resource allocations, strategies and procedures lead to the achievement of its goals and priorities; and k. supporting the board in its engagement with the school community to develop a vision of a preferred future for student success.

Governance Implications:**Education Act**

Responsibility to students

(4) Subject to section 40, a student who is determined by a board to be in need of specialized supports and services is entitled to have access to those supports and services in an education program provided in accordance with this Act that will give the student the opportunity to meet the standards of education set by the Minister.

Board responsibilities

33(1) A board, as a partner in education, has the responsibility to

- (a) deliver appropriate education programming to meet the needs of all students enrolled in a school operated by the board and to enable their success,
- (f) collaborate with municipalities, other boards and community-based service agencies in order to effectively address the needs of all students and manage the use of public resources,

Policy 225: Role of the Board

Collaboration

- 20. Represents the community's needs, hopes and desires for education;
- 21. Supports the schools' programs, needs and desires to the community;
- 23. Identifies issues for advocacy on an ongoing basis.

Policy 700: Superintendent of Schools

The Superintendent of Schools provides the Board with information, advice, and support required for the fulfillment of its governance role.

Administrative Procedure 716: Comprehensive School Health

Comprehensive School Health is an integrated approach that provides students and staff with opportunities to observe and learn positive health attitudes and behaviours. It includes a broad spectrum of programs, activities, partnerships and services that take place in schools and communities in order to enhance health and build productive and satisfying relationships across their community.

Administration is prepared to respond to questions at the December 18, 2024, Public Board meeting.

Attachment(s):

1. Public Board Memo: August 22, 2022
2. Public Board Memo: December 21, 2022



DATE: August 24, 2022

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Shawna Warren, Superintendent

ORIGINATOR: Superintendent's Office

GOVERNANCE POLICY: [Policy 110 – Welcoming Inclusive, Safe and Healthy Environments](#)

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE: [AP525 – Counselling Services](#)
[AP711 – Welcoming Inclusive, Safe and Healthy Environments](#)
[AP716 – Healthy School Communities](#)

SUBJECT: Mental Health Service Classrooms February 2023

PURPOSE:

For information.

BACKGROUND:

July 28, 2022, the Government of Alberta announced an additional investment of \$87 million over three years to enhance child and youth addiction and mental health supports and pediatric rehabilitation services. This new funding will enhance the wide variety of supports and services already available in schools.

An investment of \$14 million per year for three years will integrate and expand child and youth recovery-oriented addiction and mental health supports in schools and communities. Child, Adolescent and Family Mental Health (CASA), along with other partners, is supporting the development of a school-based services model to integrate and expand access to addiction and mental health services for children and youth from elementary to high school. The integrated services model will offer clear connections to existing community resources to make it easier for Alberta's families and children to access the services they need.

Sturgeon Public School Division and Edmonton Public School Division have been selected to participate in the mental health in schools pilot, which will see \$10 million per year for 2022/23 and 2023/24 to pilot the delivery of new and innovative supports and services through collaboration between community mental health providers and school authorities.

CASA has chosen Sturgeon Composite High School and Four Winds Public School as the sites to pilot Mental Health Services Classrooms beginning February 2023.

CASA's plan for mental health services in classrooms will include:

- Embedded classroom teams with a mental health therapist, classroom behavioural therapist, and psychiatrist. Support teams with a social worker, nurse, assessment psychologist, occupational therapist, and speech and language therapist.



- Ongoing services will include: evaluation and assessments to inform care plans; individual and group therapy; medication trials and management; family therapy and parenting support; and consultation, education, observation, and recommendations for transitions.

Sturgeon Public Schools is honoured to be selected to partner with CASA in this pilot to bring mental health services closer to Sturgeon Public students and families.

Administration is prepared to respond to questions at the August 24, 2022, Public Board meeting.

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. CASA – Mental Health Service Classrooms Announcement

CASA CHILD, ADOLESCENT AND FAMILY MENTAL HEALTH

QUOTES FOR MEDIA MATERIALS

Bonnie Blakley, CEO

“CASA Child, Adolescent and Family Mental Health is pleased to partner with government to bring mental health services closer to Albertan Kids,” says CASA Chief Executive Officer Bonnie Blakley. “CASA has delivered specialized mental health treatment to kids aged three to 18 for more than 30 years. Expanding these services aligns with our vision of a community where all kids have access to timely care and are empowered to thrive.”

Janet Hancock, Board Chair

“As a lifelong educator, I’m grateful the province is making mental health service in classrooms possible,” says CASA Board Chair Janet Hancock. “In my career I was able to pioneer mental health classrooms with wraparound services. I have lived their effectiveness to support children and families. I have seen firsthand how specialized mental health services such as those provided by CASA can save young lives.”

ABOUT CASA’S PLAN FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN CLASSROOMS

- By removing barriers to access, intervening early, educating and up-skilling our partners, and providing step-up from community-based services, we aim to prevent more intensive services later in life. Providing a step-down from intensive services, we will also address gaps and issues in the mental health system for more seamless and easier-to-navigate services.
- Three to six classrooms will launch February 2023, including in Edmonton and Sturgeon County. The goal is for 20 operational mental health service classrooms serving 360 children per year by 2024.
- Classrooms will be a mix of elementary, junior high and high schools.
- Embedded classroom teams will include a mental health therapist, classroom behavioural therapist, and a psychiatrist. Support teams will include a social worker, nurse, assessment psychologist, occupational therapist, and speech and language therapist.
- Ongoing services will include: evaluation and assessments to inform care plans; individual and group therapy; medication trials and management; family therapy and parenting support; and consultation, education, observation and recommendations for transitions.



CASA

Child, Adolescent and Family
Mental Health

ABOUT CASA

CASA is an Edmonton-based non-profit organization that has delivered holistic, culturally safe wrap-around mental health services to children (age three to 18) and their families for more than 30 years in Alberta. We do this through a team of specialized mental health professionals who are trauma experts committed to delivering outcomes-based programming in collaboration with community partners. CASA's vision is a community where all children, youth and their families are provided timely mental health care and empowered to thrive.

OUR FIVE-YEAR ROADMAP (2022-2027)

CASA will focus on the following areas over the next five years:

1. Leaders in delivering child-centred, family-inclusive mental health services.
2. Programming efficacy and relevance.
3. Financial health.

HOW IS CASA LEVELING UP SERVICES TO KIDS AND FAMILIES?

- Expanding services in our own footprints and moving to evening, weekend and summer programming;
- Enhancing online services;
- Going to where kids are, by working with community partners to find spaces in their facilities and organizations to provide service.

Learn more about CASA programs at casaservices.org.



CASA

Child, Adolescent and Family
Mental Health



DATE: December 21, 2022

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Shawna Warren, Superintendent

ORIGINATOR: Superintendent’s Office

GOVERNANCE POLICY: [Policy 110 – Welcoming Inclusive, Safe and Healthy Environments](#)

ADDITIONAL REFERENCE: [AP525 – Counselling Services](#)
[AP711 – Welcoming Inclusive, Safe and Healthy Environments](#)
[AP716 – Healthy School Communities](#)
Assurance Domains – Learning Supports, Governance & Local and Societal Context

SUBJECT: Mental Health Service Classrooms Update

PURPOSE:

For information.

BACKGROUND:

At the August 24, 2022, Public Board Meeting, the Superintendent shared information about Mental Health Service Classrooms coming to Sturgeon in February 2023.

Background - On July 28, 2022, the Government of Alberta announced an additional investment of \$87 million over three years to enhance child and youth addiction and mental health supports and pediatric rehabilitation services. This new funding will enhance the wide variety of supports and services already available in schools.

An investment of \$14 million per year for three years will integrate and expand child and youth recovery-oriented addiction and mental health supports in schools and communities. Child, Adolescent and Family Mental Health (CASA), along with other partners, is supporting the development of a school-based services model to integrate and expand access to addiction and mental health services for children and youth from elementary to high school. The integrated services model will offer clear connections to existing community resources to make it easier for Alberta’s families and children to access the services they need.

Sturgeon Public School Division, Edmonton Public School Division and Edmonton Catholic School Division were selected to participate in the mental health in schools project, which will see \$10 million per year for 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 to launch the delivery of new and innovative supports and services through collaboration between community mental health providers and school authorities.

Originally, CASA had chosen Sturgeon Composite High School and Four Winds Public School as the sites to launch Mental Health Services Classrooms beginning February 2023, however, due to increased enrolment at Four Winds and lack of space, the program is now going to be moved to Gibbons School. Gibbons School was the alternate choice in the original proposal.



CASA's plan for mental health services in classrooms will include:

- Embedded classroom teams with a mental health therapist, classroom behavioural therapist, and psychiatrist. Support teams with a social worker, nurse, assessment psychologist, occupational therapist, and speech and language therapist.
- Ongoing services will include: evaluation and assessments to inform care plans; individual and group therapy; medication trials and management; family therapy and parenting support; and consultation, education, observation, and recommendations for transitions.

Sturgeon Public Schools is honoured to be selected to partner with CASA to bring mental health services closer to Sturgeon Public students and families.

Administration is prepared to respond to questions at the December 21, 2022, Public Board meeting.

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. Letter to Stakeholders CASA Classrooms



December 2, 2022

Hello,

I am writing to provide you with information on the Government of Alberta's recent announcement regarding the additional investment of \$87 million over three years for child and youth health supports under the Child and Youth Health Services Initiative. This funding includes \$14 million annually to enhance addiction and mental health supports for children and youth, including students, in the province. Please find attached frequently asked questions and a fact sheet about the addiction and mental health component of this initiative for your information. The annual investment of \$14 million is being allocated to CASA Child, Adolescent and Family Mental Health and the Calgary Police Youth Foundation (CPYF) to implement recovery-oriented, school-based supports in high priority communities across the province.

CASA will be implementing new and expanded specialized clinical services, including CASA Classroom Teams that will be supported by a team consisting of a mental health therapist, psychiatrist or physician with mental health training, and a classroom behavioural specialist, and supported by an allied health team of a nurse, social worker, educational psychologist, speech and language therapist and occupational therapist.

The CPYF will be implementing an expansion of its Integrated Schools Support Program (ISSP), which is a comprehensive health model that provides children and youth with prevention and early intervention supports in elementary schools. These supports include access to a mental health professional, as well as other community supports such as meal programs, after school care, and structured physical education based on resources in the school community.

This initiative also includes improving access to mental health and additional services for communities across the province by supporting additional mental health pathways through Alberta 211 and other community networks so that children, youth and families can more easily connect to existing services and resources in the community.

The CASA Classroom Teams and ISSP will be implemented in select high priority communities across the province over the next two years. Planning for the initial communities in the Edmonton and Calgary Zones is underway and we may be reaching out to you to discuss opportunities or to solicit your advice regarding the implementation of these new supports. Final decisions on selected communities will be made by the Ministry of Mental Health and Addiction (formerly Alberta Health) and Alberta Education.

We look forward to working with new and existing partners on this important initiative.

Sincerely,

Dena Pedersen

Dena Pedersen, Clinical Director

Enclosures:

CYHSI FAQ

Overview of CASA CT ISSP

FACT SHEET

DESCRIPTION OF ISSP AND CASA CLASSROOM TEAMS

BACKGROUND

Child and Youth Health Services Initiative Funding: Addiction and Mental Health

The Ministry of Mental Health and Addiction (formerly Alberta Health) announced \$87 million over three years to expand and improve the accessibility of child and youth mental health and addiction services and pediatric rehabilitation supports through a new initiative, the Child and Youth Health Services Initiative (CYHSI).

Almost half of this funding includes an annual investment of \$14 million which will go towards integrating and expanding child and youth recovery-oriented addiction and mental health supports in schools and communities. These supports include the introduction of new and expanded clinical services and supports, including CASA Classroom Teams, to be implemented by CASA Child, Adolescent and Family Mental Health and the expansion of the Calgary Police Youth Foundation's Integrated School Support Program (ISSP).

Initial implementation will commence in the Edmonton and Calgary Zones, as part of the plan to scale up and expand these services across the province over the next two years.

CASA Classroom Teams

CASA's Classroom Teams support students with intensive or specialized treatment needs who require more help to succeed than a regular classroom with added mental health supports can provide.

CASA Classroom Teams will be supported by a team consisting of a mental health therapist, psychiatrist and classroom behavioral specialist, with support from an allied health team of a nurse, social worker, educational psychologist, speech and language therapist and occupational therapist.

The Classroom Teams are designed as a 'step down' service from more intensive supports, such as residential treatment, and a 'step up' service from what is currently offered in some schools. The classroom-based services will be available to students in a geographic area from a range of school authorities and not just a particular school community.

Initial Classroom Teams are expected to begin operations by February 2023.

Integrated School Support Program (ISSP)

ISSP is a comprehensive health model that provides children in elementary schools with prevention and early intervention wraparound supports such as meal programs, after school care, structured physical education, access to a mental health professional, and other community supports including police, social workers and health care professionals.

The new investment will fund mental health professionals in the ISSP. The other supports in the program will be provided by the school/community based on existing or new resources.

The initial expansion of ISSP programming is anticipated to be in place by fall 2022. The ISSP supports children in schools that are located in higher need communities.

Child and Youth Health Services Initiative Funding: Addiction and Mental Health

The Ministry of Mental Health and Addiction (formerly Alberta Health) announced \$87 million over three years to expand and improve the accessibility of child and youth mental health and addiction services and pediatric rehabilitation supports through a new initiative, the Child and Youth Health Services Initiative (CYHSI).

Almost half of this funding includes an annual investment of \$14 million which will go towards integrating and expanding child and youth recovery-oriented addiction and mental health supports in schools and communities. These supports include the introduction of new and expanded clinical services and supports, including CASA Classroom Teams, to be implemented by CASA Child, Adolescent and Family Mental Health, and the expansion of the Calgary Police Youth Foundation's Integrated School Support Program (ISSP).

Questions and Answers:

How is this funding being allocated?

Child and Youth Health Services Initiative (CYHSI) funding is allocated over the next three years as follows:

- \$15 million annually to enhance pediatric rehabilitation services and programs. For more information, visit ahs.ca/pedrehab.
- \$14 million annually to enhance recovery-oriented school-based mental health and addiction supports and services.
 - \$10 million annually is being provided to CASA to support the introduction of new and expanded clinical mental health services and supports for school-aged children and youth, most notably CASA Classroom Teams.
 - \$4 million annually is supporting the expansion of the Calgary Police Youth Foundation's (CPYF) ISSP to provide school-based prevention supports for children and youth in elementary schools, including access to a mental health professional.

What services will be provided through CASA Classroom Teams?

CASA Classroom Teams will support students with intensive or specialized treatment needs who require more help to succeed than a regular classroom with added mental health supports can provide.

Mental health classrooms will be supported by a team consisting of a mental health therapist, psychiatrist and classroom behavioral specialist, with support from an allied health team of a nurse, social worker, educational psychologist, speech and language therapist and occupational therapist.

The classroom teams are designed as a 'step down' service from more intensive supports, such as residential treatment, and a 'step up' service from what is currently offered in some schools. The classroom-based services will be available to students in a geographic area from a range of school authorities and not just a particular school community.

Are CASA Classroom Teams currently operating in Alberta?

Although CASA has existing experience and success in the delivery of mental health services to students, the concept of bringing coordinated clinical mental health supports to community classrooms is new and innovative. Initial classrooms are expected to begin operations by February 2023.

What services will be provided through ISSP?

ISSP is a comprehensive health model that provides children in elementary schools with prevention and early intervention wraparound supports such as meal programs, after school care, structured physical education, access to a mental health professional, and other community supports including police, social workers and health care professionals.

The ISSP supports children in schools that are located in higher need communities.

The new investment will fund mental health professionals in the ISSP. The other supports in the program will be provided by the school/community based on existing or new resources.

Is ISSP currently operational in Alberta?

Yes, ISSP has been operating successfully in two schools in Calgary and will be expanding provincially with this funding.

When will the ISSP expansion and CASA Classroom Teams become operational?

The initial expansion of ISSP programming is anticipated to be in place by fall 2022 and CASA Classroom Teams by February 2023 for the initial implementation phase of this initiative.

What communities will these CASA Classroom Teams and ISSP be available in?

The CASA Classroom Teams will initially be established in the Edmonton zone, and planning is underway for the Calgary and Central zones, followed by North and South zones.

The ISSP is currently operating in Calgary. The program will be initially expanded within the Calgary zone, as part of the plan to scale up and expand these services across the province over the next two years.

It is anticipated that the ISSP and the CASA Classroom Teams will be expanded to all zones in the province by September 2024.

How were communities and schools selected to receive CASA Classroom Teams or the ISSP?

Communities were selected based on identified need that was informed, in part, by data from government ministries and others. A provincial implementation committee was established by the Ministry of Mental Health and Addiction to support the identification of potential communities.

Provincial Implementation Committee partners include:

- Ministries of Education, Children’s Services, Seniors, Community and Social Services, and Justice
- CASA Child, Adolescent and Family Mental Health
- Calgary Police Youth Foundation
- Alberta 211 (Canadian Mental Health Association, Edmonton Region)
- Alberta Health Services
- Central Alberta Child Advocacy Centre and;
- Kickstand.

CASA and CPYF will work collaboratively with school authorities to identify schools within the selected high priority communities.

Impact of CASA Classroom Teams and ISSP

How many children and youth will school-based supports help annually?

It is anticipated that 8,000 children, youth and families will be supported annually in addition to those already being served by ISSP and CASA.

How will these school-based supports improve health system navigation?

These services are a key part of an integrated service delivery model that strengthens and supports clear and accessible pathways so that children, youth and families can easily navigate and connect to the services they need.

Improving mental health pathways will also increase awareness and knowledge of mental health and addiction supports through Alberta 211 and other community networks, as well as ensure 'warm referrals' to services and support smooth transitions between services.

How will these school-based supports address increased mental health service wait times caused by the COVID-19 pandemic?

This initiative supports the introduction of new services and the expansion of existing services and supports in the province to help meet the increased demand for service.

It will also support enhancing existing local capacity through training, tools and resources, thereby enabling children and youth to access services closer to home.

The expansion of services will align with other recently announced provincial initiatives, including virtual and in-person counselling services through [Family Resource Networks](#) and [Counselling Alberta](#), as well as Education's new funding for [Mental Health in Schools Pilot Project](#) to improve the delivery of mental health supports and services for students, and tools training and resources for the school community.

Will rural Albertans be supported through school-based supports?

Yes, the ISSP and CASA Classroom Teams will be implemented in all zones across the province, and include rural communities.

Will these school-based services support high need groups such as Indigenous communities?

Yes, programming includes targeted supports for under served youth populations, such as youth who are in care, homeless, Indigenous, LGBTQ2S+ and new to Canada.