

## Karine Keys

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**From:** Tyler Gandam <president@abmunis.ca>  
**Sent:** June 17, 2025 1:48 PM  
**To:** Karine Keys  
**Subject:** Feedback on School Site Ownership  
**Attachments:** K-12 School Ownership –word version of survey.docx; Discussion Guide.pdf; Real Property Governance Fact Sheet.pdf

Dear Mayors, Councillors, and CAOs:

Alberta Municipalities would like to hear your municipality’s perspective on the Government of Alberta’s decision to take ownership of real property related to new schools.

### Background

Alberta Infrastructure invited municipalities to participate in a stakeholder session on Real Property Governance, which took place on June 12. The purpose of the session was to discuss how recent changes to the Municipal Government and Education Acts enable the province to own all land including buildings, playgrounds, sports fields, and parking lots related to new, or replacement schools announced in Budget 2025 onwards. The attached fact sheet and discussion guide shared by the province provide further details.

### Feedback requested

Following the session, Alberta Infrastructure distributed a [survey](#) requesting feedback by June 27. The ABmunis Board meets that day and will consider a submission and advocacy approach on this topic. What follows is our administration's initial high-level assessment of the issue. We would like your feedback to validate this assessment and, in particular, your thoughts on the potential impacts of the new ownership model – positive or negative. **Share your perspective with us by emailing [advocacy@abmunis.ca](mailto:advocacy@abmunis.ca) with “School Site Ownership” in the subject line.** To further our understanding of the impact on municipalities, we have attached a word version of the electronic survey to allow you to share your response to the online survey with us.

### Initial Analysis

- Municipalities understand that schools are essential to thriving communities. Municipal governments should receive greater recognition for the role they play in supporting schools in their communities.
- The province’s decision to take over ownership of school sites does nothing to address the challenges that municipalities have been flagging for years, namely the need for:
  - Better coordination in site [selection and servicing](#) (with resolutions on this topic going back to 2009).
  - Funding support for [site servicing](#) as well as [playgrounds](#).

- It would be helpful for the province to provide a clear rationale behind the decision to take ownership of school sites and how this will tangibly benefit schools, municipalities, and the communities they serve.
- Municipalities and School Boards are investing time and resources in the development of [Joint Use Planning Agreements \(JUPA's\)](#). Some JUPAs are complete while others are in progress ahead of the June 2026 deadline. The province indicates that municipalities and school boards should continue to develop JUPAs as currently legislated. It is unclear how the new ownership will impact planning and use of school sites. ABmunis emphasizes that municipalities will need support and guidance to make any necessary updates to JUPAs.
- It is essential that municipalities be fairly compensated for any costs incurred in land acquisition for schools.
- One size does not fit all. This mantra applies to school sites, which apply to a wide variety of different contexts, especially in relation to who builds, operates and manages use of playgrounds, sports facilities and other community amenities.
- Municipalities were not consulted in advance of the legislative changes to the school ownership model, but must be meaningfully consulted on the development of regulations the Minister of Infrastructure has been granted authority to develop related to:
  - Ownership transfer of newly built school properties
  - Compensation related to transfers and
  - Leasing school properties to school jurisdictions.

Again, we welcome your feedback on our initial analysis, as well as any additional insights you can share. We also welcome your feedback in the current review on setting a level of service for [fire services](#).

Email [advocacy@abmunis.ca](mailto:advocacy@abmunis.ca) with feedback on either or both engagements.

**Tyler Gandam** | President

E: [president@abmunis.ca](mailto:president@abmunis.ca)  
 300-8616 51 Ave Edmonton, AB T6E 6E6  
 Toll Free: 310-MUNI | 877-421-6644 | [www.abmunis.ca](http://www.abmunis.ca)



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