

ASBA High School Completion Task Force

Recommendations to ASBA Board of Directors

June 12, 2008

The ASBA High School Completion Task Force, was assigned the responsibility of:

- identifying the unique contributions school boards can make to improving high school completion rates; and,
- identifying and developing resources to assist school boards in their efforts to improve high school completion rates.

In contemplation of these responsibilities, and with the view of contributing to improving Alberta's high school completion rates, the task force was to develop a plan for consideration by the ASBA Board of Directors which could help direct the ASBA's advocacy efforts on this initiative.

Largely resulting from the contributions made by representatives of Alberta Education, the task force has received and reviewed a significant amount of research and data and now is seeking direction from the ASBA Board of Directors in how best to proceed with this initiative. The following details the recommendations of this task force:

RECOMMENDATION	COMMENTS
<p>It is recommended that ASBA facilitate a survey of Alberta school boards to assist in identifying students at risk and boards' current efforts to improve high school completion rates.</p>	<p>A needs assessment ought to be conducted in order to identify the current efforts expended on this issue and to determine the effectiveness of these initiatives. Boards ought to be surveyed with respect to current practices, related and supporting policy amendments, success/non-success experiences, cultural challenges (ie. ESL and FNMI), etc. The information would be of great use in determining students at risk, the most efficient use of resources and further assist in minimizing the duplication of efforts between school boards.</p>
<p>It is recommended that the ASBA assist Alberta school boards in strategic planning and policy development efforts in support of improving high school completion rates.</p>	<p>The research reviewed demonstrated a greater success where school boards demonstrated greater management and support of the efforts related to improving high school completion rates. Integral to implementing supportive initiatives is the strategic planning for the desired outcomes and the adoption of related policies and</p>

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	<p>procedures. This task force is positioned well to assist in lending guidance to such strategic planning exercises and the creation of sample policies and procedures.</p>
<p>It is recommended that ASBA support the efforts of Alberta school boards in contributing to improving high school completion rates by showcasing their success stories.</p>	<p>It is recognized that many school boards currently are engaged in a number of varied efforts contributing to improving high school completion rates. Alberta school boards would benefit from understanding and promoting the successes of one another; both at the jurisdictional and program delivery levels. This greater awareness would also assist in adopting successful initiatives (and perhaps bypassing less successful initiatives) based on each others' experiences. There may be a benefit to result from sharing the experiences of boards in building commitment or influencing the culture in their jurisdiction in support of these efforts. The 'showcases' could be scheduled to coincide with ASBA's SGM & FGM or through a professional development tailored to High School Completion (hosted by ASBA and scheduled on an ongoing basis). As has been done for AISI, professional development dedicated to this priority would help generate interest and support for the desired outcomes along with providing an opportunity to showcase some of the related programs already experiencing success. Additionally, presentations could be offered to school boards wherein education partners could present relevant information to school board representatives (ie. Keith Bowen's presentation on the calculation of high school completion and drop out rates).</p>
<p>It is recommended that ASBA help in collating information pertaining to the efforts of Alberta's school boards in contributing to improving high school completion rates.</p>	<p>In order for Alberta school boards to benefit from the experiences of one another, a listing of programs/initiatives, identifying the board and their representative, ought to be accessible to all boards. ASBA could assist by maintaining an online information repository the ASBA website (ie. papers, programs, support services, professional services, etc.). Additional resources could be linked on the website from education partners (ie. Alberta Education).</p>

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TASK FORCE MEMBERS:

ASBA Board of Directors' Members:

Jackie Swainson (Zone 4 Director) - Chair
Carol Bazinet (Calgary Public)
Marilyn Bergstra (Edmonton Catholic)
Clayton Jespersen (Zone 2/3 Director)
Kerry Milder (Zone 6 Director)

Zone Representatives:

ZONE 1 - Bryan Imray (Peace River School Division)
ZONE 2/3 - Bernie Huedepohl (Buffalo Trail Public Schools Regional Division)
ZONE 4 - Ken Checkel (Clearview School Division)
ZONE 5 - Rosemarie Goerlitz (Calgary Roman Catholic Separate School District)
ZONE 6 - Karen Bartsch (Grasslands Regional Division)

Department of Education Representative: Mike Walter, Executive Director, Field Services and Capital Planning

* With additional representations by:

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John Burger, Learning System Quality Manager, System Improvement Group
Keith Jones, Director, Zone 2 / 4 Services
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