

## ASBA response to ATA date announcement

The Alberta Teachers' Association today announced it would be recommending February 4, 2002 as the start date for possible strike action.

The full ATA media release is posted at <http://www.teachers.ab.ca>

The ASBA responded to this announcement with the following statement, issued to the province's media January 17, 2002:

### **Strikes hurt kids – don't disrupt student learning – says Alberta School Boards Association**

Responding to news the provincial Alberta Teachers' Association has named February 4, 2002 as the start date for possible teacher strikes, Alberta School Boards Association President Michele Mulder today called on teachers not to take any action that would hurt Alberta's students and their learning.

"Please don't leave the students we serve behind – they are the ones who lose when there are strikes," said Mulder. "I urge all parties involved to keep students in mind as they make decisions in the days and weeks to come."

Notwithstanding the ATA timeline released today, Mulder held out hope teachers would not choose to hurt student learning now or in the future.

"Right up until the last moment, I will hope teachers don't choose a path that disrupts students' education." Mulder acknowledged the ATA for its decision to not interrupt diploma exams.

"Last week, on behalf of the students we all serve, I wrote ATA President Larry Booi asking that Alberta teachers not take job action that would disrupt

diploma exams. We are pleased the ATA has made this decision," said Mulder.

"Diploma exams culminate years of study and preparation by students and the teachers who have taught them. The outcomes on these exams have a huge impact on a student's future course."

As of January 17, 2002, six teacher locals in school jurisdictions serving more than 124,000 students, are in a position to strike.

## ASBA in the media about labor issues

January 14, the ASBA, in keeping with its communication plan, started speaking out in the media about the labor relations situation.

Over the past week, the ASBA issued media releases: (1) calling on the ATA to not disrupt diploma exams; (2) providing an overview of the labor situation and the ASBA's key messages vis a vis labor disruptions and (3) the above release responding to the ATA decision regarding possible labor disruptions.

Copies of the ASBA's media releases have been circulated to school board offices and are posted on the web page at [www.asba.ab.ca](http://www.asba.ab.ca). Go to the News and Views section.

### *ASBA meets with Edmonton Journal editorial board*

In a first for the ASBA, President Mulder met with the Edmonton Journal editorial board January 15.

This one hour on-the-record session proved to be a very frank discussion about the labor issues school boards currently face.

Education reporter **Jeff Holubitsky**, and **Ron Chalmers**, **Susan Ruttan** and **David Evans** of the Edmonton

Journal's editorial board were present. Mulder meets with the Calgary Herald editorial board on January 23.

### *On the radio*

Shortly after the ATA's January 17 news conference, President Mulder was featured on the Leslie Primeau show, taking calls from Albertans for about half an hour.

## 2002 ASBA awards package en route

Zone chairs met in mid January to review the ASBA's 2002 awards booklet. A package will be mailed to jurisdiction offices before the end of January. As well as finalizing the awards package, Zone chairs shared news from their respective Zones and compared notes about meeting formats and ASBA resources available to Zones.

## What's new on the ASBA web page?

- ◆ The ASBA's 2001 audited financial statements are posted. Go to the Business and Bylaws section and choose Financial Information
- ◆ The final report about small rural schools is posted. Go to the News and Views section and choose Research Reports.
- ◆ Current information about which school boards are facing possible strikes or are in mediation and how many students could potentially be affected is posted on the front page of the ASBA web site -- under Headline News. This will be updated regularly.