

ASBA RESPONSE TO PROVINCIAL BUDGET

Against the backdrop of a huge government surplus, today's hold-the-line budget was a disappointment for school boards, who need much more funding to build and repair schools, said Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) President **Maureen Kubinec** in a March 22 media release. See www.asba.ab.ca for the full text.

PHASE 2 OF METRO STUDY UNDERWAY

Phase 2 of the metro board study, examining the four metro boards' (Calgary Catholic, Calgary Public, Edmonton Catholic and Edmonton Public) relationship with the ASBA, is underway, under the chairmanship of **Bev Esslinger**, Edmonton Public Schools. The study will focus on:

- ◆ identifying ways the metro boards' relationship with ASBA can be enhanced including identification of metro boards' future within ASBA
- ◆ identifying how ASBA can advocate for metro boards
- ◆ considering metro representation (voice) options within ASBA (internally within ASBA)

See page 7 of the draft minutes for the March Board of Directors meeting for more info.

www.asba.ab.ca/people/minutes/min_draft_mar06.pdf

TWO DIRECTORS OPTION FOR ZONE 23

Pending the outcome of an upcoming review of the ASBA's governance structures, the ASBA Board of Directors has offered Zone 23, on an interim basis, two directors but a single vote at the provincial table.

The 2005 Organizational Review; recommended Zone 23 be given two directors; however the Zone disagreed with the proposed model for electing the two directors and subsequently no changes were made to the association bylaws last June.

With Zone 23 elections coming up in April – and in an effort to honor the intent of the 2005 Organizational Review – the board of directors offered Zone 23 this temporary solution. See page 5 of the February Board of Directors minutes for more info.

www.asba.ab.ca/people/minutes/min_feb06.pdf

EXTERNAL LAW FIRM TO HELP ASBA LEGAL

In response to school boards' requests for faster turn-around on legal files, the association is now able to access supplemental legal services through the law firm of **Reynolds Mirth Richards & Farmer LLP**. Under its agreement with this Edmonton-based firm, ASBA lawyers may offer to bring in – on a school board's behalf – RMRF lawyers in those instances when ASBA lawyers are not available or for matters that are outside the ASBA legal department's core practice areas.

School boards will be billed for services provided by RMRF lawyers at the provincial government rates plus disbursements such as filing, copying and courier costs. These rates are available only to school boards that access the services of RMRF through ASBA legal counsel. If RMRF lawyers travel on behalf of a school board, the school board will be billed for travel costs from Edmonton or Calgary, whichever is closer. For more information contact **Debra Tumbach**, Senior Lawyer dtumbach@asba.ab.ca

Two per cent membership fee increase in proposed 2006-2007 budget

BOARD OF DIRECTORS PROPOSES 2006/07 BUDGET TO MEMBERS

The ASBA Board of Directors approved a 2 per cent increase in the membership fee for consideration by the membership at the association's 2006 Spring General Meeting. The proposed 2006-2007 budget is posted on the front page of the ASBA website with a chart outlining how a 2 per cent membership fee increase will affect each jurisdiction. **Karen Holloway**, Director Zone 4, will give a detailed budget presentation at each of the Zones on the following dates.

Zone 1	May 18
Zone 23	April 28
Zone 4	April 24
Zone 5	May 19
Zone 6	May 10

ASBA INTRODUCES VALUE STATEMENT

By now every trustee, superintendent and secretary-treasurer has received an ASBA Value Statement outlining how much their respective jurisdiction spends on ASBA fees and the benefits they gain from ASBA membership.

As well as estimating each board's savings – as a result of the association's competitive rates for legal and other consulting services and participation in the Alberta School Employee Benefit Plan -- the desk-top Value Statement is a quick reference to member services and contacts.

The Value Statement was developed in response to a recommendation from the Financial Options Task Force, chaired by **Rob Reimer**, Chair Wetaskiwin Public Schools.