

Board input core of ASBA submission to Education Commission

A workbook asking school boards for input on key issues and a Nov. 18 provincial meeting (as part of the FGM) will give school boards an opportunity to shape the ASBA's submission to the Education Commission. The ASBA's six task forces are asking boards to set aside time now to discuss the workbook which will be sent to board offices **September 17**. The deadline for responses to the ASBA office is **October 21**. Boards are welcome to conduct local consultations as they prepare their responses.

"The experience and knowledge of school boards will serve as the foundation of the ASBA submission," said president Michele Mulder.

Based on board input, the task forces will develop draft position papers which will be presented to school boards for further feedback at the November 18 meeting in Edmonton.

Mark your calendars September 17

Consultation workbook e-mailed to all boards and zones. Hard copy to follow.
October 21

Deadline for board submissions.

November 18 (as part of FGM)

Boards meet to consider draft submissions and provide commentary and feedback to task forces.

For more information contact Erin Quinn at equinn@asba.ab.ca.

The ASBA's six task forces are focusing on the following six issues identified by school boards:

- ◆ What do Albertans want and expect of the system which serves 500,000 students in Alberta?

- ◆ How do we decide what and how teachers are paid? What is the role of the union? What do we expect of teachers and others who work in our schools?

- ◆ Funding the public education system: Is there enough money in the system given Albertans' expectations? Where should the dollars come from?

- ◆ Should school boards have the ability to tax?

- ◆ Who runs the system? What role does each party play?

- ◆ How do we respond to the societal issues and pressures of the coming years to best educate students?

Ontario board removal tops summer headlines

Ontario government removes major school boards

The Ontario government's decision to remove a number of school boards in recent weeks dominated headlines in Ontario and generated local media interest. The government appointed an auditor to review the Toronto School Board's finances after the board failed to submit a balanced budget for 2002-2003. A copy of the auditor's report is posted at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/tdsb.pdf>. At 290 pages it's a lengthy read – you may wish to focus on the executive summary.

Rural development focus of new MLA committee's work

MLAs Doug Griffiths and Luke Ouellette will co-chair a committee developing a cross-ministry rural development strategy. The committee will look at the challenges and opportunities facing Alberta's rural communities and will develop a

framework to link a rural development strategy with Alberta's economic development strategy. Jim Armet, editor of the Armet Report notes the departments of Learning and Health will have a role to play in this project, "if rural schools and hospitals are closed, who would want to relocate in or near the communities affected ?" asks Armet. Rural education has been a focus of the ASBA's strategic plan over the past two years.

Alberta education gets top marks from *Today's Parent* magazine

Alberta's education system came out on top in a national magazine article comparing school systems across Canada. The *Today's Parent* articles are available online at:

<http://www.todaysparent.com/education/article.jsp?cId=1064506>

<http://www.todaysparent.com/education/article.jsp?cId=1064167>

<http://www.todaysparent.com/education/article.jsp?cId=1065010>

Committee consults re Labour Code -- should it be changed?

A committee of MLAs – Richard Marz, Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills, Harvey Cenaiko, Calgary Buffalo and Brent Rathgeber, Edmonton Calder – has been established to determine if Alberta's Labour Relations Code should be reviewed. "We are contemplating limited changes," said Clint Dunford, Minister of Alberta Human Resources and Employment. "The Code is currently working quite well and Alberta workplaces are among the most stable in the country."

The deadline for written submissions is September 15, 2002. E-mail labourcode@gov.ab.ca.