

## ASBA Board of Directors Meeting

*Board Highlights are circulated to the Board of Directors and ASBA staff after each meeting. Board of Directors members are asked to circulate Board Highlights to their respective constituencies. The draft and official minutes are available on the ASBA website at [www.asba.ab.ca](http://www.asba.ab.ca). For more information contact **Marian Johnson** at 1.780.451.7101.*

### **Improving student achievement – new strategic priority for ASBA**

At its annual planning session in Jasper, the ASBA Board of Directors added a new strategic priority – helping school boards improve student achievement – to the 2009-2012 strategic plan and clarified the other five priorities. The proposed priorities – subject to final board of directors' approval in March – are:

- ASBA advocates provincially and nationally on public education issues, with a strong voice, on behalf of locally elected school boards
- ASBA provides timely, well-researched information on public education issues to school boards and key stakeholders
- ASBA initiates, builds and maintains key partnerships to improve public education and/or advance the advocacy efforts of the association
- ASBA builds leadership capacity of individual school boards
- ASBA addresses the matter of labour relations
- ASBA provides leadership support to school boards in closing the student achievement gaps where they exist

This is how the strategic plan is developed each year:

- School boards are invited to make suggestions about what the ASBA should focus resources on – this year 18 school boards responded
- The board of directors meets in January to identify strategic priorities – this year the board added a new priority
- Association staff flesh out the how's of achieving the board's goals
- Draft strategic plan presented to the board of directors for approval in March

### **Note change of date for 2009 FGM**

A mix-up at the Westin Hotel means this year, the ASBA FGM will take place a week later as follows: Fall General Meeting November 22 to 24, 2009 Westin Hotel, Edmonton.

## **Feb 5 issues forum to prep boards for special education review (Phase 2)**

Funding and programming for special education will be the focus of the ASBA's February 5 issues forum. The consultants, who are managing the review process of education, will facilitate the first part of the forum which will culminate with school boards developing common key messages about special education. The meeting takes place at the Royal Glenora Club 11160 River Valley Road, Edmonton. The agenda is posted on the ASBA website at [www.asba.ab.ca](http://www.asba.ab.ca). For more information contact Elaine Pallister at 1.780.482.7311.

## **Update: Putting the public back in public education project**

The ASBA's effort aimed at engaging the public in public education began in earnest January 9 with a telephone opinion poll asking 800 Albertans about their attitudes and perceptions regarding public involvement in public education. Further research is being gathered through nine focus groups, involving people without children in school and people with children in school. These will take place: in and around Calgary (2), Edmonton (2), Grande Prairie, Athabasca, Stettler, Wainwright, and Lethbridge. The findings from this research will serve as a foundation for this initiative.

January 19, the ASBA posted an online survey on its website. To increase traffic to the survey, school boards have been asked to include a link to the survey on their local websites. The goal is to have as many Albertans as possible share their views about opportunities to participate in public education.

School boards have also been asked to identify and sponsor four citizens to attend a summit – to be held March 13 and 14 in Edmonton. Given that 70 per cent taxpayers don't have children in school, the association has set a goal of having 300 non-parents participate in the summit. Two representatives of each school board are also welcome to attend.

This initiative will raise the profile of school boards and the ASBA and the work they do. It will also generate solid information about how taxpayers want to be involved and engaged in the work of school boards and public education.