

# Task Force for Teaching Excellence

Response of the Alberta School Boards Association to the  
Task Force Report

June 2014



# Introduction

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The Alberta School Boards Association thanks the Task Force for Teaching Excellence for its work on the important topic of teaching excellence and for placing a comprehensive set of recommendations for consideration before all Albertans, each of whom is a stakeholder in our education system. We endorse the Task Force's desire to ensure that "for every child, in every class, there is an excellent teacher". Pursuit of excellence in every facet of the education system and taking action which focuses on what is best for students has long been central to school board governance; school boards are heartened and encouraged by a system wide effort in this regard.

In structuring the Task Force, the Minister stated his desire for the membership to represent a broad cross-section of Albertans. The consultation undertaken by the Task Force to inform its recommendations further sought input, in multiple forms, from interested Albertans. The Task Force considered each recommendation through the lens of Inspiring Education and always with the student in mind.

It remains crucial that first and foremost in this initiative is that which is best for students. Hearing directly from Albertans is vital to assuring their interests are addressed. As locally-elected representatives responsive to the communities they serve, school boards consider engagement core to their governance role. The input provided to the Task Force through its consultations seems to verify the interests articulated and advanced by school boards.

Specifically, we note the Task Force report offers the following key themes as emerging from their consultations:

- Define expectations for teaching excellence
- Enable teachers to achieve excellence
- Define the role of leaders in teaching excellence
- Assuring teaching excellence

The Alberta School Boards Association suggests those key themes are complimentary and supportive of the core elements of the Alberta School Boards Association submission to the Task Force:

- Preparation for teaching excellence
- Support and development for teachers during their career
- Supporting and protecting the teaching profession

Alignment of the central concepts considered in the Alberta School Boards Association submission and the Task Force report offer a strong foundation for collaboration on future action in support of the expressed desires of Albertans and that which is in the best interest of students. It is noted however, that the Task Force report offers a number of recommendations that extend beyond the introduction of a concept which could be explored with education stakeholders, to proposing specific actions and implementation. School boards welcome the opportunity for further dialogue around both the conceptual and implementation elements of the Task Force report.

Commentary provided in the Task Force report elucidates the input, dialogue and thought which guided the development of the recommendations. Further dialogue is required for school boards, and other education stakeholders, to gain full appreciation for the context which led to the offering of these solutions. School boards see this as a crucial next step.

The Alberta School Boards Association appreciates the opportunity to consider how this important work can be advanced, ever mindful of the necessity to respect the needs of local communities. School boards are responsible for addressing local needs and circumstances and are prepared to consider how best to advance our mutual interests in further bolstering teaching excellence.

## Stewardship role of school boards

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Alberta's locally-elected school boards are entrusted with the responsibility to deliver excellence in public education and to ensure all students receive the best possible education. Fulfilling this crucial governance role, school boards connect with and respond to their local communities. Theirs is the voice most reflective of local context. Theirs are the decisions made in the best interests of the students and communities they serve.

School boards are stewards of public education. Preparing for a future where all students are engaged thinkers and ethical citizens with an entrepreneurial spirit, in an education system centered on the learner and ever-more responsive to local direction, this stewardship role has never been more important.

Building on the solid foundation of Alberta's world-class education system; school boards are uniquely placed to ensure the very best outcomes for all students in a future shaped by Inspiring Education. A key way school boards achieve these outcomes is by employing and supporting excellent teachers.

## Employment relationship

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School boards employ teachers, and recognize that excellent teachers are an integral component of excellence in public education.

School boards foster opportunities for unique and innovative responses to challenges facing their local communities; to the benefit of students. In promotion of teaching excellence and facilitate a culture of lifelong learning, school boards work collaboratively with their staff to provide various support mechanisms including both formal and informal mentorship programs, professional development opportunities, and the considered assignment of teachers new to the profession.

In fulfillment of their role as the employer, school boards recognize the need for balance between promoting system improvement and assuring excellence in the system with the flexibility to deliver services responsive to their local context.

## Commitment to transformation

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Teaching excellence is not solely the result of mandated action or legislation. Teaching excellence is achieved through coordinated, intentional commitment, at all levels of the education system, to excellence.

Where systemic change is required to attain excellence, school boards require that transformation:

1. Is student-centered and provides enhanced opportunities for student success;
2. Is financially sustainable now and in the future; and,
3. Retains flexibility for school boards to shape the delivery of education in order to meet the needs of their local communities.

Many of the recommendations made by the Task Force contemplate centralization, at the Ministry level, of various functions currently within the purview of school boards. On first blush, this contemplation of centralization does not meet the test of the third lens which requires flexibility for school boards to address their local context. The Education Act, which received Royal Assent on December 10, 2012 and is awaiting Proclamation, has been touted as more enabling and less prescriptive for school boards, respecting their role as locally-elected governors of the education system.

While there is strong commitment by all school boards to teaching excellence and ensuring that “for every child, in every class, there is an excellent teacher”, school boards necessarily bring diverse perspectives reflective of their local context around how this is best achieved. As locally-elected governors of the system, responsive to their communities, school boards welcome further dialogue on how teaching excellence can be assured in every classroom and how current barriers to excellence can be addressed proactively and collaboratively.

In consideration of the second lens which requires financial sustainability, school boards note that many of the recommendations would have resource implications and require that any mandated action be appropriately funded.

The Alberta School Boards Association compared the Task Force recommendations to the Alberta School Boards Association's initial submission to the Task Force. This document, included as **Appendix A** for information, also references various governance, labour and legal considerations with respect to the recommendations. This chart was circulated as a resource for information and context as school boards considered the Task Force report.

While elements of many of the recommendations align conceptually with the Alberta School Boards Association submission to the Task Force and the views of school boards, stakeholders must have the opportunity for rich dialogue reflecting various perspectives, the complexity associated with many of these issues, and opportunity for consensus-building prior to implementation.

To ensure an excellent education system, excellence must be present at all levels: teachers, school and system administrators, school boards and the provincial government. As we seek to define the role of a teacher and articulate teaching excellence, so must we define the roles of all who contribute to the education system with a focus on those fundamental elements which contribute to excellence.

As leaders implementing the principles of Inspiring Education, school boards recognize transformation has the potential to change many facets of the current system, and believe future action must be determined through continued and ongoing dialogue on to transform the system collaboratively.

## Continued dialogue

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As locally-elected governors of the system, responsive to their communities, school boards welcome further dialogue on how teaching excellence can be assured in every classroom and how current barriers to excellence can be addressed proactively and collaboratively.

School boards employ teachers – it is important school boards' voices be heard. What is certain is that their collective voice will reflect and retain the central focus on what is in the best interest of all students.

Building on the solid foundation of what is already a world-class education system, school boards are uniquely placed to ensure the very best outcomes for all students. School boards foster opportunities for unique and innovative responses to challenges facing their local communities; students benefit. School boards are committed to leading the informed transformation of the education system.

## Appendix A – Comparison of Task Force Recommendations to ASBA Submission

Task Force Recommendation	Comparison to ASBA Submission	Governance/ Labour/ Legal Considerations
<p>1 Teaching Practice Standards</p> <p>That the Teaching Quality Standard be revised to align with Inspiring Education and with the recommendations of this report.</p>	<p><b>Consistent with submission.</b></p> <p>ASBA submission further suggests stakeholders including school boards, teachers, students, parent organizations, system administrators, Alberta Education, and post-secondary teacher preparation institutions need to come together to define a new standard.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ASBA submission reference: p. 5, para. 1; ASBA recommendation 2</p>	<p>Any changes to the Teaching Quality Standard will impact school board obligations (e.g. under Teacher Growth Supervision and Evaluation policy, Certification of Teachers Regulation) with respect to teacher evaluation.</p> <p>Potential implications for enforcement of standards (i.e. continuing competency, performance evaluations, etc.). This may require additional responsibilities and authorities being assigned to bargaining unit members.</p> <p>Implementation of a revised Teaching Quality Standard will likely require additional resources.</p>

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<p>2 School Leader Practice Standards</p> <p>That the Ministry of Education adopt practice standards for school leaders.</p>	<p><b>Elements aligned in concept with submission but warrants further discussion prior to implementation.</b></p> <p>ASBA submission notes to ensure an excellent education system, excellence must be present at all levels: teachers, school and system administrators, school boards and the provincial government. The submission further notes where teachers are referenced, comments were also made in consideration of the various roles teachers play in our system, including school administration; and as we seek to define the role of a teacher and articulate teaching excellence, so must we define the roles of school administrators and articulate excellence for these roles.</p> <p>ASBA submission does not contemplate the centralized implementation reflected in Task Force’s recommendations.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ASBA submission reference: p. 3, para. 3</p>	<p>Boards have the authority and autonomy (subject to the School Act) to set performance expectations and evaluate school and district leaders according to local needs and circumstances. As locally-elected governors of the system, responsive to their communities, school boards are best positioned to manage the employment relationship with their staff. To the extent any aspect of this authority vests in the province it will be shifted away from boards. Further, this recommendation goes beyond matters related to teaching excellence and crosses over into matters of management (which should properly rest with boards).</p> <p>The Task Force report references <i>The Professional Practice Competencies for School Leaders in Alberta (2011)</i>, which have informed school boards and senior administrators when establishing policy and procedures regarding administrator supervision and evaluation.</p> <p>Potential implications for enforcement of standards (i.e. continuing competency, performance evaluations, etc.). This may require additional responsibilities and authorities being assigned to bargaining unit members.</p>

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<p>3 District Leader Practice Standards</p> <p>That the Ministry of Education adopt practice standards for district leaders.</p>	<p><b>Elements aligned in concept with submission but warrants further discussion prior to implementation.</b></p> <p>ASBA submission notes to ensure an excellent education system, excellence must be present at all levels: teachers, school and system administrators, school boards and the provincial government. The submission further notes where teachers are referenced, comments were also made in consideration of the various roles teachers play in our system, including school administration; and as we seek to define the role of a teacher and articulate teaching excellence, so must we define the roles of school administrators and articulate excellence for these roles.</p> <p>ASBA submission does not contemplate the centralized implementation reflected in Task Force’s recommendations.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ASBA submission reference: p. 3, para. 3</p>	<p>Boards have the authority and autonomy (subject to the School Act) to set performance expectations and evaluate school and district leaders according to local needs and circumstances. As locally-elected governors of the system, responsive to their communities, school boards are best positioned to manage the employment relationship with their staff. To the extent any aspect of this authority vests in the province it will be shifted away from boards. Further, this recommendation goes beyond matters related to teaching excellence and crosses over into matters of management (which should properly rest with boards).</p> <p>Potential implications for enforcement of standards (i.e. continuing competency, performance evaluations, etc.). This may require additional responsibilities and authorities being assigned to bargaining unit members.</p>

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<p>4 Review of Practice Standards</p> <p>That the standards for teachers, school leaders and district leaders be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.</p>	<p><b>Consistent with submission.</b></p> <p>ASBA submission references a commitment to transformation, recognizing that transformation is a process. Submission also references continued and ongoing dialogue on how we transform the system together.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ASBA submission reference: p. 3, para. 4; ASBA recommendation 7</p>	<p>Boards have the authority and autonomy (subject to the School Act) to set performance expectations and evaluate school and district leaders according to local needs and circumstances. As locally-elected governors of the system, responsive to their communities, school boards are best positioned to manage the employment relationship with their staff. To the extent any aspect of this authority vests in the province it will be shifted away from boards. Further, this recommendation goes beyond matters related to teaching excellence and crosses over into matters of management (which should properly rest with boards).</p> <p>Potential implications for enforcement of standards (i.e. continuing competency, performance evaluations, etc.). This may require additional responsibilities and authorities being assigned to bargaining unit members.</p>

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<p>5 Admission to Teacher Preparation Programs</p> <p>That Alberta’s teacher preparation programs be encouraged to look beyond grades, when making decisions, to consider other relevant criteria in the spirit of Inspiring Education.</p>	<p><b>Elements aligned in concept with submission but warrants further discussion prior to implementation.</b></p> <p>ASBA submission references the overarching interest as ensuring that any teacher instructing students is capable of providing excellent teaching. Submission further articulates relevant questions to guide future discussions on teacher training, one of which was whether there should be a screening process for admission to a teacher preparation program, which goes beyond high school marks, which ensures those individuals with the greatest chance of success are admitted.</p> <p>ASBA submission reference: p. 8-9; ASBA recommendation 3</p>	<p>Important for school boards to be involved in discussions about development of teacher preparation programs. Boards see the issues and qualities that are present or lacking in teachers that result in discipline, conduct, competency concerns. Boards can help inform as to what can be done at the front end to minimize problems down the road.</p>
<p>6 Alignment of Teacher Preparation Programs with Inspiring Education</p> <p>That the Ministry facilitate an annual discussion among Alberta’s teacher preparation institutions on alignment of their programs with Inspiring Education.</p>	<p><b>Consistent with submission.</b></p> <p>ASBA submission references that it is essential that teacher education programs be practical, prepare teachers for success in the classrooms of today, and instil a commitment to continually develop excellent teaching practices to meet the needs of the classrooms of tomorrow.</p> <p>ASBA submission reference: p. 8, para. 3; ASBA recommendation 3</p>	<p>Such dialogue must include school boards to ensure the continuum of teaching practice from pre-service to in-service is reflected. The school and classroom context must ultimately determine what skills and attributes teachers require for teachers and students to succeed. Requisite skill and attributes not acquired during preparation programs will be the responsibility of school boards.</p> <p>Presently there are two groups who can recommend certification: Dean’s of prep institutions (interim) and superintendents (permanent). This may impact Board/Superintendent obligations with respect to recommendations re teacher certification.</p>

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<p>7 Alternative Pathways to Teaching and Letters of Authority</p> <p>To bring people with diversity of skills, expertise and background into Alberta classrooms: (7.1) That alternate pathways to teaching certification be developed; and (7.2) That the use of Letters of Authority be revised to increase their effectiveness and to facilitate the employment of non-certified instructors in an area of specialization.</p>	<p><b>Beyond scope of submission.</b></p> <p>While the concepts contained in this recommendation were not specifically explored in the ASBA submission, the stated overarching interest of ensuring that any teacher instructing students is capable of providing excellent teaching would not preclude further exploration of this recommendation.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ASBA submission reference: N/A</p>	<p>School boards, as employers, must have the flexibility to shape the delivery of education in order to meet the needs of their students and of their local communities.</p> <p>Boards have a legal obligation under s. 92 of the School Act to employ, as a teacher, only individuals holding a certificate of qualification as a teacher. Supervision of uncertificated personnel has cost and administrative implications.</p> <p>This may be problematic due to existing provisions in some collective agreements and may lead to increased grievance activity and challenges to management decisions.</p>
<p>8 Practicums</p> <p>That practicums in Alberta’s teacher preparation programs: (8.1) Provide exposure to the field of teaching in the first year, or prior to entering a program; and (8.2) Provide high-quality opportunities throughout with an extension beyond the current minimum of 10 weeks, leading to greater professional independence and awareness.</p>	<p><b>Consistent with submission.</b></p> <p>ASBA submission references providing access to legitimate classroom experiences throughout the teacher education program as serving the dual purpose of ensuring the very best are attracted to the profession and that they are prepared to achieve success as an excellent teacher.</p> <p>ASBA submission does not address the specifics of when in the preparation program the practicum(s) should occur nor the desired length of such practicum(s).</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ASBA submission reference: p. 7, para. 2; ASBA recommendation 4</p>	<p>To the extent that supporting and managing practicums will be the responsibility of teachers and school leaders, expectations and accountabilities must be clearly articulated.</p> <p>Potential cost and administrative implications associated with increased supervision requirements which would flow from additional and longer term practicums.</p>

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<p>9 Internships/Articling</p> <p>That the Ministry consider the introduction of a mandatory one-year paid internship/articling program for all beginning teachers on completion of a teacher preparation program.</p>	<p><b>Elements aligned in concept with submission but warrants further discussion prior to implementation.</b></p> <p>ASBA submission references accountability processes which include probationary and temporary contracts, progressive discipline, evaluation processes, and interim certification.</p> <p>ASBA submission reference: p. 13, para. 2</p>	<p>To the extent that supporting and managing internships will be the responsibility of teachers and school leaders, expectations and accountabilities must be clearly articulated.</p> <p>Potential cost, administrative (supervisory), employment and insurance implications associated with internships.</p> <p>Implications for teacher evaluation and teacher contract status. Thought must be given as to how this might be reconciled with legislative provisions related to probationary teaching contracts.</p> <p>Implementation of a this recommendation would likely require additional resources.</p>
<p>10 Mentorship</p> <p>That a provincewide mentorship framework be introduced to support teachers in the first three-to-five years of their career.</p>	<p><b>Elements aligned in concept with submission but warrants further discussion prior to implementation.</b></p> <p>ASBA submission references that to promote teaching excellence and facilitate a culture of lifelong learning, school boards provide various support mechanisms including both formal and informal mentorship programs, professional development opportunities, and the considered assignment of teachers new to the profession.</p> <p>ASBA submission does not contemplate the provincewide component reflected in Task Force’s recommendation.</p> <p>ASBA submission reference: p. 10; para. 3</p>	<p>To the extent that mentorship will be the responsibility of teachers and school leaders, expectations and accountabilities must be clearly articulated.</p> <p>Boards (and their principals), in keeping with responsibilities under the School Act are already doing this in accordance with local needs and circumstances. As locally-elected governors of the system, responsive to their communities, school boards are best positioned to manage the employment relationship with their staff. To the extent any aspect of this authority vests in the province it will be shifted away from boards.</p>

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<p>11 Teacher’s Annual Professional Learning Plan</p> <p>That the teacher’s annual professional learning and growth plan is jointly developed with the principal or designate, is aligned with the goals of the school, the district and the community, and demonstrates professional growth, currency, and competency, leading to teaching excellence.</p>	<p><b>Consistent with submission.</b></p> <p>ASBA submission references teaching, and more importantly teaching excellence as requiring an ongoing commitment to continuing education and constant improvement; a concept integral to maintaining the integrity of the teaching profession. The submission further references carving out time and opportunities for professional development as falling to both the teacher and the teacher’s employer. An intentional plan must be established to ensure teachers, already made aware of the expectations for their role as a teacher, have the supports and resources which enable them to successfully meet those expectations. The plan must strike a balance between the needs of the teacher, the needs of the school, the needs of the school jurisdiction, and the needs of Alberta’s K-12 education system.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ASBA submission reference: p. 9, para. 3; p. 10, para. 1; ASBA recommendation 7</p>	<p>Resource and cost implications. Any change to Teacher Growth, Supervision and Evaluation Policy will impact board obligations.</p> <p>This recommendation has great potential to affect teacher growth, though the employer, through the Superintendent/ CEO, must also be involved.</p> <p>Potential implications for continuing competency and performance evaluation processes. This may require additional responsibilities and authorities being assigned to bargaining unit members.</p>

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<p>12 Recognizing and Motivating Teachers</p> <p>That the Ministry recognize teachers who consistently demonstrate teaching excellence and mastery according to the Teaching Quality Standard. These individuals would be invited to contribute their expertise in areas such as: mentorship of other teachers, leadership in teacher collaboration, support of student teachers during their practicum and/or articling/internship, and citizenship roles which advance the interests of students.</p>	<p><b>Elements aligned in concept with submission but warrants further discussion prior to implementation.</b></p> <p>ASBA submission notes that excellent teachers are engaged and build genuine rapport with students to help each student realize his/her full potential. Facilitating student learning, in a collaborative, empathetic and nurturing learning environment is critical to ensuring greater opportunities for student success. The submission further references processes which serve to inspire and recognize the significant efforts and investments teachers make in educating their students.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ASBA submission reference: p. 4, para 2-3; ASBA recommendation 7</p>	<p>Potential resource, cost and collective agreement implications due to impact on duties for select group of teachers.</p>

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<p>13 Teaching Support</p> <p>That the Ministry improve the availability of technology and related support, access to and adequacy of specialized supports and services for students (particularly during the early grades) and increased efficiency of process and access supports.</p>	<p><b>Consistent with submission.</b></p> <p>The guiding principles, or lenses which guide school board advocacy with respect to transformation include the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Student-centered and provides enhanced opportunities for student success;</li> <li>2. <u>Financially sustainable now and in the future; and,</u></li> <li>3. Retains flexibility for school boards to shape the delivery of education in order to meet the needs of their local communities.</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: right;">ASBA submission reference: p. 2, para. 2; ASBA recommendation 1</p>	<p>Potential resource, cost and earmarked funding implications.</p>

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<p>14 Supports in the Learning Environment</p> <p>That teachers be provided appropriate time for planning, collaborating, sharing best practices, and empowering innovation.</p>	<p><b>Consistent with submission.</b></p> <p>The guiding principles, or lenses which guide school board advocacy with respect to transformation include the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Student-centered and provides enhanced opportunities for student success;</li> <li>2. Financially sustainable now and in the future; and,</li> <li>3. <u>Retains flexibility for school boards to shape the delivery of education in order to meet the needs of their local communities.</u></li> </ol> <p>Submission also references learning communities and the sharing of learning by one teacher promoting the learning of other teachers.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ASBA submission reference: p. 2, para. 2; p. 10, para 2; ASBA recommendation 1</p>	<p>Potential cost and resource implications. Thought must be given as to how this might be reconciled with legislated limits on teaching days/instructional hours.</p> <p>The goals of Professional Learning Communities are an important factor (versus legislated instructional time). It would seem this is best accomplished at the local level.</p>

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<p>15 Selection Process for School Leaders</p> <p>That the Ministry collaborate with school authorities and education stakeholders to develop a provincewide framework for the selection process of school leaders, reflecting best practice and aligning with the competencies defined in the practice standards for school leaders.</p>	<p><b>Beyond scope of submission.</b></p> <p>A theme reiterated throughout the ASBA submission is that additional dialogue on other elements of transformation of the education system would be welcome to ensure that <i>for every child, in every class, there is an excellent teacher.</i></p> <p>ASBA submission reference: N/A</p>	<p>As locally-elected governors of the system, responsive to their communities, school boards are best positioned to manage the employment relationship with their staff. To the extent any aspect of this authority vests in the province it will be shifted away from boards and impact local board autonomy related to these decisions.</p>
<p>16 School Leadership Preparation</p> <p>That new school leaders complete a mandatory leadership program with a core curriculum based on the practice standard for school leaders and the responsibilities defined in legislation.</p>	<p><b>Beyond scope of submission.</b></p> <p>A theme reiterated throughout the ASBA submission is that additional dialogue on other elements of transformation of the education system would be welcome to ensure that <i>for every child, in every class, there is an excellent teacher.</i></p> <p>ASBA submission reference: N/A</p>	<p>As locally-elected governors of the system, responsive to their communities, school boards are best positioned to manage the employment relationship with their staff. To the extent any aspect of this authority vests in the province it will be shifted away from boards and impact local board autonomy related to these decisions.</p>

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<p>17 Mentorship Program for School Leaders and District Leaders</p> <p>That a provincial mentorship framework be introduced for school leaders and district leaders.</p>	<p><b>Elements aligned in concept with submission but warrants further discussion prior to implementation.</b></p> <p>ASBA submission references that to promote excellence and facilitate a culture of lifelong learning, school boards provide various support mechanisms including both formal and informal mentorship programs, and professional development opportunities. ASBA submission does not contemplate a provincewide framework.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ASBA submission reference: p. 10, para. 3</p>	<p>To the extent that mentorship will be the responsibility of teachers and school leaders, expectations and accountabilities must be clearly articulated.</p> <p>As locally-elected governors of the system, responsive to their communities, school boards are best positioned to manage the employment relationship with their staff. To the extent any aspect of this authority vests in the province it will be shifted away from boards and impact local board autonomy related to these decisions.</p>
<p>18 Growth, Supervision and Evaluation for School Leaders and District Leaders</p> <p>That the Ministry of Education develop a framework for “Growth, Supervision and Evaluation” for school leaders and district leaders aligned with the competencies defined in their respective practice standards and Inspiring Education.</p>	<p><b>Elements aligned in concept with submission but warrants further discussion prior to implementation.</b></p> <p>ASBA submission notes to ensure an excellent education system, excellence must be present at all levels: teachers, school and system administrators, school boards and the provincial government. The submission further notes where teachers are referenced, comments were also made in consideration of the various roles teachers play in our system, including school administration; and as we seek to define the role of a teacher and articulate teaching excellence, so must we define the roles of school administrators and articulate excellence for these roles.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ASBA submission reference: p. 3, para. 3</p>	<p>As locally-elected governors of the system, responsive to their communities, school boards are best positioned to manage the employment relationship with their staff. To the extent any aspect of this authority vests in the province it will be shifted away from boards and impact local board autonomy related to these decisions.</p> <p>Potential implications for continuing competency and performance evaluation processes. This may require additional responsibilities and authorities being assigned to bargaining unit members.</p>

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<p>19 Separation of Review of Conduct and Competence</p> <p>That conduct and competence be dealt with through separate structures, including separate practice review processes. This would apply to both teachers and school leaders.</p> <p>20 Assuring Proper Conduct of Teachers and School Leaders</p> <p>That the practice review process for addressing issues of teacher and school leader conduct be significantly revised to assure greater openness, transparency, timeliness and efficiency.</p>	<p><b>Consistent with submission.</b></p> <p>ASBA submission recognizes that both the teaching profession, and most importantly students, deserve protection from teachers that are incapable of providing, or unwilling to provide excellent teaching.</p> <p>The submission notes that an effective and enhanced teacher education program in partnership with sustained commitment to supporting teachers in their continual development and pursuit of excellent teaching would minimize instances of unacceptable teaching.</p> <p>Nonetheless, there must be mechanisms and procedures for addressing instances where a teacher is unable to meet the expectations set for all teachers, or is otherwise unwilling to teach at that standard.</p> <p>ASBA submission calls for reformation of the present practice review process characterized as ineffective and largely unresponsive to marginal or incompetent teaching skills and abilities.</p> <p>The submission also envisions the Board of Reference process as a component of a system where ample, fair and necessary supports and considerations are afforded teachers, such that any continuing unacceptable performance is addressed in a manner which is collaborative (where appropriate), timely, cost effective, efficient, and ultimately serves the best interests of students.</p> <p>The submission notes that ASBA believes such a model can be developed and supported by all stakeholders.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ASBA submission reference: p. 14, para. 5; p. 15, para. 3; p. 16, para. 4; p. 17, para 1; ASBA recommendation 8</p>	<p>Any changes in process around addressing teacher conduct and competency concerns will have potential employment, disciplinary process and legal implications for school boards. School boards must be part of these discussions.</p> <p>This may require additional responsibilities and authorities being assigned to bargaining unit members.</p> <p>As locally-elected governors of the system, responsive to their communities, school boards are best positioned to manage the employment relationship with their staff.</p>

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<p>21 Maintenance of Certification for Teachers</p> <p>That the Ministry of Education introduce a system of maintenance of certification for teachers to assure career-long professional growth, currency and competency. Evaluation for the purposes of maintenance of certification would occur every five years (following the interim certification period).</p>	<p><b>Elements aligned in concept with submission but warrants further discussion prior to implementation.</b></p> <p>ASBA submission supports the certification of teachers being retained by the provincial government. The submission further states that the concept of ongoing recertification is worth exploring (though did not specify frequency). Consistent with the concepts of accountability and maintaining competencies as a professional, is the notion of supporting the evaluation and professional development priorities of educators through a model linked to an ongoing recertification process.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ASBA submission reference: p. 11, para. 1; ASBA recommendations 5, 6, 7</p>	<p>Implications for school boards in terms of dealing with the outcomes of these more frequent evaluations. Concerns that arise in relation to dealing with teacher competency concerns may still be present but at regular intervals. Boards need efficient, cost effective means to deal with teachers not meeting and maintaining certification requirements.</p>
<p>22 Maintenance of Designation for School Leaders</p> <p>That the Ministry of Education establish a framework for the maintenance of administrative designation for principals every five years to assure leadership excellence.</p>	<p><b>Elements aligned in concept with submission but warrants further discussion prior to implementation.</b></p> <p>ASBA submission notes to ensure an excellent education system, excellence must be present at all levels including school administrators. The submission further notes where teachers are referenced, comments were also made in consideration of the various roles teachers play in our system, including school administration; and as we seek to define the role of a teacher and articulate teaching excellence, so must we define the roles of school administrators and articulate excellence for these roles.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ASBA submission reference: p. 3, para. 3</p>	<p>See comment above re recommendation 21. Also, to the extent any aspect of this authority vests in the province it will be shifted away from boards and impact Role of Superintendent and local board autonomy related to these decisions.</p> <p>This may impact collective agreement provisions which address the administration of school leadership positions.</p>

## Appendix A – Comparison of Task Force Recommendations to ASBA Submission

Task Force Recommendation	Comparison to ASBA Submission	Governance/ Labour/ Legal Considerations
<p>23 Principal Performance</p> <p>That the Ministry of Education develop a provincewide system to provide principals with annual written feedback on their practice to assure leadership excellence in accordance with the school leader practice standard. While the system should be provincewide, it should accommodate any unique circumstances of the individual school or school authority.</p>	<p><b>Elements aligned in concept with submission but warrants further discussion prior to implementation.</b></p> <p>ASBA submission notes to ensure an excellent education system, excellence must be present at all levels including school administrators. The submission further notes where teachers are referenced, comments were also made in consideration of the various roles teachers play in our system, including school administration; and as we seek to define the role of a teacher and articulate teaching excellence, so must we define the roles of school administrators and articulate excellence for these roles.</p> <p>ASBA submission does not contemplate the centralized implementation reflected in the Task Force’s recommendation.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ASBA submission reference: p. 3, para. 3</p>	<p>As locally-elected governors of the system, responsive to their communities, school boards are best positioned to manage the employment relationship with their staff. To the extent any aspect of this authority vests in the province it will be shifted away from boards and impact Role of Superintendent and local board autonomy related to these decisions.</p> <p>This may impact collective agreement provisions which address the administration of school leadership positions.</p>

## Appendix A – Comparison of Task Force Recommendations to ASBA Submission

Task Force Recommendation	Comparison to ASBA Submission	Governance/ Labour/ Legal Considerations
<p>24 Empowering Principals</p> <p>That principals be empowered to effectively undertake the human resource function related to teachers in accordance with the recommendations in this report.</p>	<p><b>Elements aligned in concept with submission but warrants further discussion prior to implementation.</b></p> <p>ASBA submission notes to ensure an excellent education system, excellence must be present at all levels including school administrators. The submission further notes where teachers are referenced, comments were also made in consideration of the various roles teachers play in our system, including school administration; and as we seek to define the role of a teacher and articulate teaching excellence, so must we define the roles of school administrators and articulate excellence for these roles.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">ASBA submission reference: p. 3, para. 3</p>	<p>This recommendation requires careful consideration. It points to the present difficulty of a principal, who is in the same profession, taking action toward a teacher who is not meeting the TQS and the fact that the professional code limits the principal's ability to do so. Human resources falls within the employer's purview, and, while employers need the support of their school based administrators, action regarding certification or employment remains a board function.</p> <p>This would require significant legislative change as well as change in ATA code of conduct.</p> <p>This may require additional responsibilities and authorities being assigned to bargaining unit members.</p>

## Appendix A – Comparison of Task Force Recommendations to ASBA Submission

Task Force Recommendation	Comparison to ASBA Submission	Governance/ Labour/ Legal Considerations
<p>25 The Regulatory (Governance) Model</p> <p>That the professional regulatory model for teachers be modified to implement the recommendations of this report. The Task Force believes that this can be achieved through collaborative transformation of the existing model in which the Alberta Teachers' Association continues to have both union and professional functions.</p>	<p><b>Beyond scope of submission.</b></p> <p>A theme reiterated throughout the ASBA submission was that additional dialogue on other elements of transformation of the education system would be welcome to ensure that <i>for every child, in every class, there is an excellent teacher.</i></p> <p>ASBA submission reference: N/A</p>	<p>Any change in the model would have significant implications for boards and their legal responsibilities, policies and processes.</p>