

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

January 13, 2009

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Schmidt, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Response to Trustee Motion Regarding Continuation of Early Education Funding for Students with Severe Disabilities

ORIGINATOR: D. Barrett, Assistant Superintendent

RESOURCE
STAFF: Gloria Chalmers, Heather Raymond

INFORMATION

This report further responds to a motion made by former Trustee Hansen on September 11, 2007. The motion states:

That the administration develop a plan to advocate for students aged 2-5 currently enrolled in our early education programs such that they will continue to receive the same level of support from all government ministries once they reach 6 years of age in order to continue their education.

An initial response was provided by Transmittal Memorandum (TM) on May 23, 2008. The TM indicated that additional information was necessary before the administration could develop a plan to advocate for equal funding support. At the time of the response, Alberta Education was in the process of completing a review of services and funding for students who have severe disabilities. The outcome of the review was seen as necessary to give direction to the District's advocacy plan. We are now aware that the review did not resolve the funding question. However, the outcome of the review is the two year Alberta Education consultation called "Setting the Direction for Special Education in Alberta" which provides the context for Board and District advocacy.

Advocacy has begun through the Board's input to Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA), which has representation on the Setting the Direction for Special Education in Alberta Stakeholder Working Group; and the jurisdictional response to the Setting the Direction for Special Education in Alberta questionnaire. These responses were provided by TM on December 19, 2008. Although the province has indicated that the review involves Grades 1 to 12, both responses mention need to address funding and seamless service between early learning and Grade 1. The intent is to continue to develop a jurisdictional response to all phases of the review, including advocating for seamless service from early education to Grade 1 and, in fact, through to post secondary and/or the world of work.

GC:ch