

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

June 19, 2001

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Dosdall, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Alberta Language Enhancement Project

ORIGINATOR: M. de Man, Department Head Designate

RESOURCE

STAFF: Jutta McAdam, Valerie Leclair, Stuart Wachowicz

INFORMATION

**Background:** In late May, the Alberta School Board Association (ASBA) sent a survey out to all Alberta School Boards to obtain a response on the **Directions and Issues** paper. The paper identifies several key issues related to second language education, and suggests a direction for the ASBA on that issue. The Boards of the province are asked to respond to the stated direction.

The paper is largely in response to Alberta Learning's **Enhancing Second Language Learning Project**. Alberta Learning is soon to release recommendations arising from the project.

The responses developed by administration reflect the historical position of the district as well as the views of many district language teachers and administrators. Additionally the knowledge of what makes for successful implementation as provided by international experts at the recent Language Symposium.

The key issues focused on in the response are:

- ♦ Importance of sufficient lead time to allow staff and support to be in place prior to any mandating of languages.
- ♦ The need to honour the place of Canada's official languages in any language program.
- ♦ The need to have a supply of linguistically competent teachers prior to any mandate.
- ♦ The need to reject "earmarked" funding for language education, as districts are best placed to make local decisions.
- ♦ The need to ensure equity of access throughout the province if a mandate is to be successful.
- ♦ The need to redesign subject time requirements and graduation requirements prior to a language mandate.
- ♦ The need to stress the importance of second language ability has on the scholastic, intellectual, economic and global potential of an individual.

SW:dh

APPENDIX I: Alberta School Boards Association – **Second Language Education in Alberta: -Issues and Directions-**

APPENDIX II: Response to Alberta School Boards Association – Second Language Education in Alberta: -Issues and Directions