

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

November 16, 2010

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Trustee C. Johner, ASBA Zone 2/3 Representative

SUBJECT: Alberta School Boards Association's (ASBA) Request for Input from EPSB

RESOURCE

STAFF: Brian Smith, Tash Taylor

RECOMMENDATION

That the responses to the ASBA's questions about "Sustainable Predictable Funding" be approved for submission to the Zone 2/3 ASBA Advocacy Committee.

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The ASBA Zone 2/3 Advocacy Committee polls their membership annually for issues relative to the Zone, which they present to the Members of the Legislative Assembly at an annual event. Through this work, the ASBA is able to provide Alberta Government Leaders with a better understanding of commonalities that affect the education of students in Zone 2/3.

At the September 24, 2010 zone meeting, the membership voted in favour of advocating for "Sustainable Predictable Funding" for the 2010-2011 School Year. The ASBA acknowledges the breadth of the topic, and is therefore seeking input from its members to assist them with the preparation of their presentation.

Trustee Johner, as the new ASBA 2/3 zone representative, requested the assistance of the administration to prepare a draft response to the two questions below.

Question 1: Describe what sustainable predictable funding means to your School Board.

Response:

Sustainable predictable funding means: funding that does not tie recurring expenditures to one time funding sources. One time funding should only be provided for one time projects. Funding that is maintained for more than one year but less than four years creates expectations that are difficult to eliminate once the funding disappears.

Sustainable funding does not have to be a percentage but could be a concept. For example, the province would agree to fund all increases in negotiated settlements for each year or; agree to fund increases in utility costs each year. Funding details must be provided in advance of the budget process. There should be no budget process until the funding is announced. Funding can be announced in advance for several years but there is a risk with this, as costs could increase to greater than the preannounced funding, resulting in significant shortfalls occurring.

Question 2: Provide us with one or two examples of how having sustainable predictable funding could assist your School Board.

Response:

A key component of all school divisions is its infrastructure. This would include all new buildings and all capital modernizations of existing buildings. The province currently funds some of this using Infrastructure Maintenance Renewal (IMR) funding and will sometimes arbitrarily add funds for new capital construction or building modernization. A more effective method of funding would be for the province to allocate consistent funding on an annual basis, to allow boards to accumulate funds to upgrade school buildings or modernize buildings based on their needs, not the needs of the province. All capital and modernization funding should be based on a regular, guaranteed amount that would let school boards plan for their jurisdiction. This also could be achieved using an expanded scope of IMR, as long as the funding is guaranteed and sustained.

cj:ee