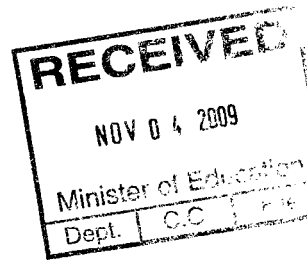


October 30, 2009

The Honourable Dave Hancock  
Minister of Education  
Legislature Office  
#224 Legislature Building  
10800-97 Avenue  
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6



Re: School Act Recommendations

Dear Minister,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the new School Act for Alberta. It is our understanding that the new act be an enabling, overarching framework. However, due to not knowing or understanding what this may mean until the act is drafted we feel it is important to touch upon a number of specific items in the current School Act. The Fort Vermilion School Division Board of Trustees respectfully submits the following:

1. The School Act should reflect a strong connection to the needs of special education students and the corresponding responsibilities of both school divisions and government. The importance of different approaches to educating special education students was evident in the Setting Directions for Special Education process. How will the special needs review impact changes in the School Act?
2. The School Act should support and strengthen the role of publicly elected school boards. One of the critical responsibilities of the School Board is to hire its Chief Executive Officer and then hold this officer accountable. We believe that this responsibility should be fully restored to School Boards and that the selection of the Chief Executive Officer not require the approval of the Minister of Education.
3. Present provisions for expulsion of students does not provide for appropriate protection of students and school staff. Expulsions allow for the removal of students for the remainder of school year. Unfortunately, if the expulsion occurs at the end of a school year, then the student could return to school in September, without the opportunity for appropriate programming and interventions. We would like to request consideration for a range of time in which an expulsion could be in effect.

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Honorable Dave Hancock  
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4. The current School Act provides the ability for the School Board to delegate the authority to terminate teachers but not for teacher transfers. Our request is that the School Act be adjusted to allow School Boards the ability to delegate the authority to transfer teachers to the Superintendent.

Thank you for considering our thoughts in the drafting of new legislation.

Sincerely,

Wally Schroeder  
Board Chair

Cc: Trustees, Fort Vermilion School Division