Report to the BCCPAC Board of Directors

Submitted by: Ron Broda, President and Kim Howland, Past President

Learning Roundtable

Date: June 11th, 2008
Location: Harbour Center, SFU, Vancouver, BC

In Attendance:

Name	Organization	Position
Honorable Shirley Bond	Ministry of Education	Education Minister/Deputy Premier
James Gorman	Ministry of Education	Deputy Minister
Jeff Jopson	BCSSA	President
Sheila Rooney	BCSSA	Past President
Connie Denesuik	BCSTA	President
Mike McEvoy	BCSTA	Vice President
Les Dukowski	BCPVPA	President
Marilyn Merler	BCPVPA	President - Elect
Ron Broda	BCCPAC	President
Kim Howland	BCCPAC	Past President
Irene Lanzinger	BCTF	President
Susan Lambert	BCTF	1st Vice President
Jim Iker	BCTF	2nd Vice President
John Wadge	BCTF	Member at Large
Rick Davis	Ministry of Education	Superintendent of Achievement
Staff Members		
Lisa Dominato	Ministry of Education	Ministerial Assistant
Steve Hansen	BCSTA	Executive Director
Wendy Lee	BCSSA	Executive Director
Ken	BCTF	Executive Director

Background & Highlights:

Members of the Learning Roundtable meet on June 11th, 2008. The four items on the agenda where:

1) BC's vision for public education - Looking Forward - A review of the Throne Speech Commitments - Minister Bond
2) Class Size Analysis - further detail and Breakdown - Minister Bond presented by Rick Davis
3) Data base available for analysis
4) Further comments from Roundtable members

Minister Bond opened the meeting with introductions as we had a new member at the table, Mike McEvoy from the BCSTA.

Minister also highlighted that at noon today Prime Minister Stephen Harper, on behalf of the federal government and all Canadians, will be issuing a statement of Apology to former students of Indian Residential Schools. Upon encouraging support of this statement from Chief Ed John, Minister Bond has

sent a memo to all school districts to encourage them to take time at noon to what this historical moment and to use it as a teaching moment in classrooms across the province.

Minister Bond began with a summary of throne Speech and update, highlighting:
Program Certificate in Leadership for Teachers - working with the ABCDE (Associate BC Deans of Education) is ongoing. These discussions are in the early stage but ABCDE is showing lots of interest into the proposal. Comments were shared that though the BCTF has expressed concerns over program with Min of Ed, this program is not meant to be in connection with supporting teachers in taking on leadership roles as Principals or Vice Principals but actually about supporting leadership for teachers who would like lead from a teacher position.
College of Teachers had requested the right to remove certificates from Teachers who have been proven incompetent due to issues like mental illness, who are addicts and unstable.
Early childhood - Government is still working on the goal of having by 2010, 400 strong Start programs across the province. The aim is to have 100 new ones next year to bring the province up to 200 by end of this year. They have had more requests for Strong Starts then they will be able to fill this year.
All day Kindergarten - Still looking into the feasibility study of full day kindergarten, and early kindergarten for 4 year olds by 2010 and 3 year olds by 2012. The team doing the feasibility study include Early Learning Staff supported by academics society and MCF Staff. Early learning is important to help support closing the gab, including with Aboriginal students. Though there are studies like this being done in other countries, not to the level of this study. A letter of consultation will be going out to members, *Minister Bond commented on the importance of hearing from parents on parents choice and thoughts on 3 – 4 year old and all day kindergarten and hoped that BCCPAC would be able to promote the importance of parents get their input into the study.*
Deputy and Minister commented on the fact that this study has to take into account the economic investment for the province, space, labour and trained staff. 1st phase will take 6 – 8 weeks high level concepts with the 2nd phase being details on the implementation.
Research & pedagogically is being done by ministry staff with a few other staff members, with a mandate to look at a universal program and the report will be based on this. The government supports parent choice and with a work force that has 2 parents working, this is meant to be a complementary program to child care programs, not replacing them. Government is also looking at the capital implications, as there is space needed and would be good to us space in schools.
Post Secondary – Still continuing to work with Ab Ed while supporting quality programs to ensure quality is in choice schools, while expanding public education system to meet the demands within our province ie: funding target to meet skills demand – nurses, skill workers.

FSA's - upon reviewing the results from the tests which is about to be released, they are supporting the essential to invest in early learning. 20% still not doing well in school, and we know that for every $1.00 spent in education saves us $17 in future costs as a society.

The Throne Speech is the road map now government is working on how to get to the end of the road.

Rick Davis presented LRT members with the latest data on class size gathered for 2008 – 2009 school year. He also added a second break out sheet on further states related to the Special education student states. Ministry is going deeper into the data around numbers that show more then 5 students in a classroom with 20 – 28 students, 5 or more in class rooms with 29 – 30 students, 4 or more in classrooms with 31 – 33 students and more then one student in a classroom with 33 or more students. The ministry team will be looking at individual classes, looking for the stories and education rational behind these decisions and the actual classes this represents. Hold people acct for choices made – educational sound check off. Work is important to ensure that we have the data to support the conversation as well as the stories, don't want to jump to conclusion, will be asking question to dig deeper.

Ron asked; what about count with 0 kids with special needs in classrooms, how come and can we share the load more.

In closing Minister asked all the education partners to forward to Rick any further comments by members of the LRT on the data presented, as well as what would you like to have the Learning Roundtable look at and discuss in future meetings. Expressed was the desire to get to other items presented by the partner groups, and though class size composition is important, that we have the data, now we need to start to use the data to support ways to closing the gap for our students.

No new date at this time has been presented for the next meeting.

Attachments:

(Items that you might have brought back that would be of interest, pictures, info, handouts etc.)

Documents from the LRT – breakdown of data
Website of Ministry for back minutes
Website of BCCPAC for back reports of LRT