Learning Round Table report June 2010

Attendees included representatives from BCSTA, MoE, BCSSA, BCPVP and BCCPAC.

Items on the agenda included 21st century learning, BC College of Teachers and Newsworthy items from organizations.

21st Century Learning:

Student Voice publication has a very good article entitled "Learning in the 21st Century" (attached). Government envisions the future of education will include: technology, teachers as facilitators (role change), be student driven and individually catered. Opportunities for high quality hands on learning, in a less rigid environment with less regulations and rules of conformity, focus will be on teaching students to learn how to learn.

It was acknowledged that the current system has a lot of irrelevant information in the current curriculum. John Abbott's ideas for 21st century learning and Ken Robinson were discussed.

Main concepts for 21 century learning (powerful motivation to make change)

- Critical thinking and Problem Solving
- Creativity and Innovation
- Collaboration, Teamwork and Leadership
- Cross – cultural understanding
- Communications, computing and IT literacy
- Career and learning self-reliance
- Caring for personal health and planet earth

An important question: Why and how would we do things differently than we do now?

Concerns were raised on the challenges with regards to union contracts.

Parent led schools was mentioned as an option. Government has looked at models that have been successful with parent led schools. (Alberta, New Zealand, Sweden, Britain)

Secondary school system will need to be restructured and re-cultured for renewal; as well the need for high level assessment dialogue was mentioned. Questions remain in areas of strategic training plans, and delivery and sharing of information.

Change to a 21 century model will need to build from strengths and what is working now. Moving forward it will be important to have deep dialogue on important ideas. We will need to think differently. Build awareness and agreement through engaging parents and community along with business.

Leadership at the provincial level will need to participate in different kinds of relationships – efficient and effective with provable results – not adversarial. While this will mean changes it does not mean the elimination of Trustees but rather the system.

Interest has been expressed in a Royal Commission on education however the Minister has stated that this would be too expensive and take years to complete. Government wants to see action now.

Government remains committed to expanding to include the addition of 4 and 3 year olds in the education system when the economy allows for this. Many communities and community partners already are working together in this direction. In fact many districts already do this.

Adapting and changing will require all partner groups to learn and be open to being challenged. BCCPAC articulated the need for the parent role to be understood and supported by principals at the school and district level for this new model to be successful.

What happened with the economy was not good but has learned many things to streamline as a government and want to encourage more collaboration between ministries and community

BC College of Teachers

Minister expressed that she had received and considered the partner group letters expressing concerns around the BC College of Teachers.

Sharing:

BCPVP: upcoming conference (first in 10 years) – October 22 – 23, 2010 Connecting Leaders – Schools for the Future. Keynote: Tony Wagner

BCSSA: Upcoming Leadership Academy in Kelowna – August 19 – 20, 2010 - for members only. Fall event in Victoria, November 19 – 20, 2010. Strategic plan to survey members/partners. BCASBO/BCSSA are now located in the same office – partnership – shared services initiative.

BCSTA: upcoming trustee academy in December 9 – 11, 2010. Provincial council is October 22 – 23, 2010 .

BCCPAC: Latest edition of "Our Voice" is now out. The first meeting of the new board is happening this weekend. Spring Conference/AGM (April 2010) was a huge success. Fall Conference dates, November 12 – 14, 2010.

Closing comments for Minister:

We need to be educating ourselves. We need to improve the level of conversation and knowledge, so that we can be confident in what we do and say. We have a real desire to work together. It has been a couple of very difficult years. There is lots of goodness and talent and that is recognized and appreciated in the contributions you all make. It is not always easy to remain positive. Thank you for your great commitment and devotion to education.

Next meeting date: to be announced