

Achieving a Fairer Balance **Update #1**

July 2009

School division budgets confirmed for 2009-10

The Ministry of Education sent letters to school divisions on June 26 to confirm their 2009-10 budgets. During April and May, the Education Panel made up of ministry staff from the Education Finance and Facilities branch met senior management from each school division to analyze 2009-10 budget requirements in detail. School divisions were also asked by the ministry to respond to a request for information about projected enrolments, projected staffing, property tax cash flows, capital expenditures, and debt.

The budget for each school division was based on their 2008-09 final budgets, 2007-08 audited financial statements, and adjustments based on discussions after school divisions met with ministry staff.

All school divisions are receiving an increase in funding from last year that includes a 3 ½ percent increase for teacher salary increases and a 4 percent increase for inflation of expenditures other than teacher salaries.

In early October, discussions will begin with school divisions regarding the 2010-11 budgets.

Advisory committee meets for the first time

Representatives of education stakeholders were invited by the Ministry of Education to serve on an advisory committee that will provide advice to the deputy minister in the development, integration, and implementation of the new funding model for the province's education system. Ministry of Education Deputy Minister Audrey Roadhouse chaired the meeting that was attended by representatives from Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations; League of Educational Administrators, Directors, and Superintendents; Saskatchewan Association of School Business Officials; Saskatchewan School Boards Association; and the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, along with ministry staff.

Topics of discussion included principles to guide the new funding model, an overview of education funding across Canada, and an overview of funding methodologies.

The committee is expected to meet again in September.

This publication is produced by the Ministry of Education to inform school divisions and stakeholders as we move forward on changes to how education is funded in Saskatchewan.

Please email suggestions, submissions, or comments to dianne.shannon@gov.sk.ca

Strategic framework for education

Since *Directions* in 1984, Saskatchewan has undergone numerous reviews and new directions in policies such as the success of School^{PLUS} or the substantial work involved in restructuring, and more recently, the Continuous Improvement Framework.

The ministry will work with stakeholders in the development of a strategic framework that will serve as the compass to guide the province's education system, including current and new directions and initiatives, into the future.

The development of the new funding model at the same time as the strategic framework creates an opportunity to align how education is funded, and the delivery of programs and services in our schools with overall goals, principles, and objectives.

Statement and forms corrections

The March information bulletin sent out by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs to all municipalities contained incorrect information about the monthly school remittance form and the school liability statements that indicated the Ministry of Education now has these forms. As a result, school divisions may have received questions about changes to processes and forms.

A correction was sent out by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs to inform municipalities that until the new forms and statements are developed by the Ministry of Education, existing processes and forms are to be used.

Education property tax collections

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs issued an information bulletin in June to advise municipalities of some important changes regarding how they collect education property taxes. For example, the monthly remittance of education property tax revenues by the 10th of the following month and the removal of adjustments to education property taxes.

Visit the Municipal Affairs website at <http://www.municipal.gov.sk.ca/publications/> for this and more information.

Important dates:

2009-10 budgets released	June 26
Estimated budget PSSR	August 31
Enrolment adjustment	October 15
Audited financials	October 30
	December 30

Ministry contact information:

School division budgets	787-4658
Advisory committee information	787-9892
Information data management	787-7856
Facilities	787-5631
Communications/media	787-6291
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Answers to your questions

Since the provincial budget in March was announced, the ministry has compiled school divisions and stakeholder questions that have been submitted to the ministry and that were recorded during dialogue meetings between the ministry and school divisions in April and May. The deputy minister's office emailed three groups of answers to questions that cover topics such as program delivery, financial operations, education property taxes, capital, the new funding model, and many more. You can find the Qs and As on the ministry's website in the [school division section](#) under "Education Property Taxes."