



# *2009 Annual Report*



*"The Voice for Publicly-Funded Education."*



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# Message from Your President



**Roy Challis**  
President

One year ago, in my Annual Report message to you, I presented to the membership your SSBA Executive's Strategic Plan for 2008-2009. In visits to 27 of 29 member boards of education the top priorities identified by the membership were effective Association services, membership engagement and advocacy.

As a result, the three strategic goals of the plan were:

1. Services: To ensure Saskatchewan school boards benefit from effective and responsive Association services.
2. Membership Engagement: To ensure school boards benefit from belonging to, and feel ownership of, the Saskatchewan School Boards Association.
3. Advocacy: To ensure Saskatchewan school boards benefit from the collective actions of the Association and boards in strengthening public education.

In this Annual Report you will find the results of the progress made over the past year in achieving these objectives. SSBA services have been reviewed and renewed, membership engagement has been enhanced, and a new approach to advocacy has been adopted by your Association. I hope you will find that the Executive has listened to the membership and has acted upon the priorities identified by boards.

I welcome trustees who are continuing in their school board service as well as trustees who are newly-elected. The SSBA is your Association and the Executive and staff are here to help and support you in any way possible. We hope you will find great satisfaction in trusteeship, in serving children, youth, parents and communities. You bring the local voice of the public to publicly-funded education, carrying on an important and valued tradition that has been with our province since its inception.

I look forward to a positive and productive Fall General Assembly. Together, we can and will continue to "Build Our Learning Community."

Regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Roy Challis". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Roy Challis,  
President

# Association Executive



**Roy Challis**  
President



**Sandi Urban-Hall**  
Vice-President



**Keith Koberinski**  
Catholic Constituency



**Duane Favel**  
Aboriginal Constituency



**Simone Couture**  
Conseil scolaire fransaskois  
Constituency



**Larry Pavloff**  
Central Constituency



**Dan Danielson**  
Urban Public Constituency



**Janet Foord**  
Southern Constituency



**Larry Ahenakew**  
Northern Constituency

# Message from the Executive Director



**Ernie Cychmistruk**  
Executive Director

It has been my pleasure to serve as your Executive Director over the past 18 months.

When I first came to the SSBA, my overarching goal was to help reassert the importance of trusteeship on the provincial education stage. Trustees across this province bring a unique and tremendously important perspective to publicly-funded education. You are the individuals who put the “public” into this province’s K-12 education system.

The Saskatchewan School Boards Association is your Association. Administrators have their voice heard through LEADS and SASBO. Teachers have their voice heard through the STF. It is the trustee voice that is articulated through the SSBA. We speak for you by communicating the messages that are important to trustees and boards of education.

To this end we have worked very hard at engaging the membership, in changing the dynamic from one of “our Association” back to “your Association”. I hope that you will see the renewed commitment to membership engagement reflected throughout the pages of this Annual Report, particularly as illustrated on page 6: “We Asked – You Said – We Did”. The SSBA exists to involve, listen and to act upon the direction provided by the membership.

At the 2008 Fall General Assembly, three strategic goals were presented to and approved by the membership. The Accountability Reports which have been developed attest to your Association’s success in achieving those goals and are posted on the SSBA website.

Over the past year, for the first time ever, Performance Appraisals were conducted on the Executive, Executive Director and Management Team. Ultimately, we are accountable to you, the members, and have adopted this open and transparent approach to ensure appropriate monitoring processes are in place.

Finally, I want to express my deep appreciation for the support and encouragement given to me, and all Association staff, over my term as Executive Director. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with all boards of education/CSF, and know that under the leadership of the Executive, membership and staff of the Saskatchewan School Boards Association, the future of publicly-funded education in Saskatchewan will indeed be bright.

Thank you and best wishes,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Ernie Cychmistruk". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Ernie Cychmistruk,  
Executive Director

# Association Staff



**Ernie Cychmistruk**  
Executive Director



**Dave Jackson**  
Director, Employee Benefits  
Plan & Insurance & Risk  
Management



**Bonnie Ozirny**  
General Counsel & Director,  
Legal Services & Employee  
Relations



**Barry Bashutski**  
Director, School Board  
Development Services



**Leslie Anderson**  
Director, Communications  
Services



**Patti Blackburn**  
Administrative  
Officer



**Leona Baun**  
Supervisor, Employee  
Benefits Plan



**Geraldine Knudsen**  
Solicitor



**Jamie Lerat**  
AEDP Coordinator



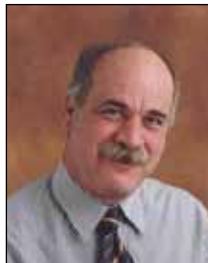
**Andrea Ashton**  
Communications Officer



**Virginia Davidowich**  
Administrative  
Assistant



**Chris Petford**  
Benefits Administrator



**Jim McLellan**  
Solicitor



**Scott Sibbald**  
Communications Officer



**Leanne Petford**  
Benefits Clerk



**Krista Lenius**  
Legal Assistant



**Christopher Schwan**  
Employee Relations  
Policy Analyst



**Debby Beriault**  
Receptionist



# Introduction

## ***“The Voice for Publicly-Funded Education”***

Over the past eighteen months the SSBA provincial Executive has listened and responded to the membership’s desire that the Saskatchewan School Boards Association become a recognized and respected voice for boards of education.

Following extensive consultation with boards, the Executive identified three strategic goals which they determined would be at the front and centre of all their undertakings and activities this past year.



### **Strategic Goals:**

1. **Services:** To ensure Saskatchewan school boards benefit from effective and responsive Association services.
2. **Membership Engagement:** To ensure Saskatchewan school boards benefit from their collective actions.
3. **Advocacy:** To ensure Saskatchewan school boards and the Association strengthen public education through advocacy.





# Goal One: Services

The first goal of the Strategic Plan was to provide effective services that respond to the needs identified by boards in this new “amalgamated world”. Boards have undergone major change over the past several years and the membership expressed the view that the Association must be willing and able to change as well.

In developing and executing this portion of the Strategic Plan, the Executive’s aim was to ensure that the services being provided by the SSBA were in sync with the services the membership wanted and valued most. Very helpful in determining what mattered most to trustees were the Executive Director’s meetings with individual boards and their senior administrators during the fall/winter of 2008/2009. After meeting with 27 of the Association’s 29 boards, the Executive Director reported that the services most valued by the membership were: Legal Services, the Employee Benefits Plan and Insurance Program, School Board Development Services and Communications Services. One common theme emerging from the board visits was that the Association should focus on providing those services which boards would have difficulty providing on their own in a cost effective manner, but which could be effectively provided through the umbrella of the Association. The Executive also reviewed Convention resolutions and have included their response in the work plan of the Association.

As a result of this feedback, all SSBA services were reviewed and renewed in 2008-2009.



*The aim of the 2008-09 Executive was to ensure the services provided by the SSBA were in sync with the services the membership wanted and valued most.*

# Legal and Employee Relations Services

Employee Relations Services was combined with Legal Services this past year. The number of Association lawyers (three) remained the same. However, trustees expressed the view that the Association was overstaffed in the Employee Relations service area and that boards were building capacity to look after their local bargaining needs themselves. Therefore, in the period March 2008 to July 2009 the Employee Relations staff component was reduced from 4.3 to 2 staff members. Currently, a Consultant and a Policy Analyst, reporting to the Director of Legal Services and Employee Relations, comprise the Employee Relations staff.



*Trustees and administrators discuss issues at a Legal Services seminar in September 2008.*

The usage by boards of education of legal services is monitored and tracked in two ways:

- By specific issue and board seeking advice during each month.
- By number of contacts from each board on a daily basis during each month.

Since January 2009, Employee Relations Services usage is also tracked but the tracking method continues to evolve in order to ensure the right kinds of information are being collected – not just for the purpose of identifying usage but also for identifying trends and the issues on which boards are seeking advice. As with Legal Services, this information is also useful in determining which Employee Relations written resources and/or inservices should be developed and offered as supports to board administrators.

On average, in a specific month, 25 to 27 boards access Association legal services. Services are also provided to affiliate members.

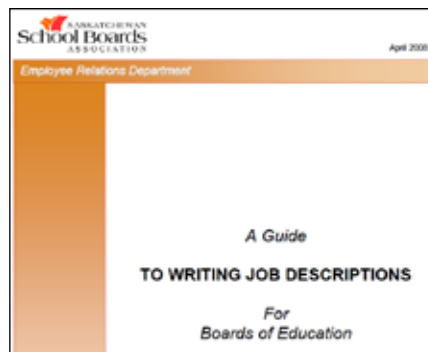
Legal Services and Employee Relations provide inservice opportunities for administrators and board members that address current issues and that are tailored to the publicly-funded education setting.



*Representatives of the SSBA's Affiliate Members (Luther College, Cornerstone Christian School and Rosthern Junior College) meet with Executive Director Ernie Cychmistruk to discuss Association services and supports (May 2009).*

Audio-conferences for timely, cost-effective and easily accessible inservice for administrators have been added to the Legal Services offerings for the fall of 2009 and into 2010.

The Association's Employee Relations Consultant served as the lead negotiator in 2009 at the bargaining table in six school divisions at which agreements were successfully reached. Advice was also provided to other school division bargaining teams during the preparation for and negotiation of local collective agreements. Written resources to support boards' HR practitioners are available on the Association website. These include *A Guide to Writing Job Descriptions* and *A Guide to Managing Employee Attendance*.



## Employee Relations Provincial Data Warehouse



In order to view these reports you will need to have Adobe Reader installed on your computer. If you do not have this program currently installed go to [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com) to download the most current version of Adobe Reader.

- [Average wages by classification](#)
- [Average wage increases](#)

In response to requests from school division HR professionals and senior administrators a *Provincial Data Warehouse* continues to be developed to support informed decision-making at the local bargaining table. A *Collective Agreement Library* that contains the local teacher agreements and non-teacher collective agreements of all boards has also been updated and posted on the website.

The Director of Legal Services and Employee Relations also serves as General Counsel for the Association. A part of the General Counsel role is to review proposed changes to legislation, regulations and Ministry policy to determine implications for boards and when necessary, to provide suggestions for other approaches which would enable the government to achieve its objectives without negatively or inadvertently impacting boards of education, and identify issues of provincial concern.



# School Board Development Services

The opportunities provided by the Association for trustee and board growth and development were also highly valued by the membership.

Under the guidance of a Board Development Advisory Committee initiated in 2009 and chaired by Keith Koberinski (Light of Christ RCSSD and Catholic Constituency Representative), many board development services and activities were offered this past year. The committee brings a “trustee” perspective to planning Association activities and helps ensure that programming is in keeping with the wishes of the membership.

Association events in 2009 included the President’s Academy (February), the Spring General Assembly (March) and two Members’ Councils (May and October). Members’ Councils provide an opportunity for information sharing and discussion among board chairs, one other trustee from each board and all directors of education.



*President's Academy 2009*



*Members' Council Fall 2008*



*Spring Assembly 2009*

The SSBA also facilitated two School Community Council provincial networking meetings to support boards of education in their work with School Community Councils.

A wealth of trustee/board development resources is available on the SSBA website. These include the updated *SSBA Handbook for School Board Members*, 18 updated *Modules for Effective School Board Governance*, and an online data base to provide board members with handy information regarding student achievement.



A resource document and data base has been created to support board of education strategic planning and will be presented to the membership at the 2009 Fall General Assembly.

The Director of Board Development also worked directly with boards and their senior administrators in areas such as policy governance, board/director performance reviews and individual coaching.



*SCC Networking 2009*



*Fall Assembly 2008*

# Communications Services

Communication – or lack thereof – was cited in a Member Census conducted in the Spring of 2007 and again during the Executive Director’s 2008 board visits as the number one problem facing the Association. The membership said they felt disconnected to and did not feel a sense of ownership of their Association.

In a survey conducted at the March 2009 Spring Assembly, members were asked:

- *Overall: How would you rate the level of communication between the Association and its members?*

All responses identified communication as “Good”, “Very Good” or “Excellent” with the vast majority of respondents selecting “Very Good”. The written comments accompanying the survey were extremely positive.

Many efforts were made this past year to continue to improve communication with the membership.

A new Association website was unveiled in January 2009. It took less than 16 weeks to go from inception to development to successful launch. The entire project was completed for less than \$7,000. The membership has given excellent ratings and feedback regarding the new site.



The membership has also continued to respond very positively to the return of “The School Trustee” newsletter and to the President’s “E-News”.

Summaries of Group Discussions have also been sent to the membership. The views of the membership through these summaries are also provided to Ministry of Education officials and



have led to requests for meetings with SSBA representatives to discuss the views of trustees with the Ministry in greater detail.



Communications and Legal Services also collaborate to work directly with boards and senior administrators to provide advice regarding effective communication with parents, public and the media when dealing with sensitive legal matters.

Boards also have access to the Director of Communications to serve as a speaker, workshop leader and school division project facilitator (for example, building a school division Public Engagement Plan).



*All respondents to a survey conducted at the 2009 Spring General Assembly rated Association communication overall as "Good," "Very Good" or "Excellent," with the vast majority selecting "Very Good."*



# Employee Benefits Plan and Insurance Program

The Employee Benefits Plan has demonstrated steady growth over the past year.

In a survey conducted with participating boards of education in the Spring of 2009, 21 of 21 boards who responded said they found value in the services being provided by the Employee Benefits Plan.

Communication with school division benefits plan administrators and employees has been enhanced through the publication of *FOCUS*, the SSBA Employee Benefit Plan's newsletter.



In an effort to improve communication, a memo was sent in September 2009 from the Director of Employee Benefits to all 7,200 plan members at their home addresses. This undertaking allowed for direct contact with the plan's membership to inform them of changes to the plan for the coming year and to bring them up to date on future plans.

The Employee Benefits Section of the website has been expanded to include a “Plan News” section where plan members have instant access to any plan changes and developments.

The Property and Casualty Insurance Program continues to provide claims management, loss control, and risk management services to all school divisions. This year the department was heavily involved with the development of Emergency Planning Preparedness/Business Continuity Planning and Pandemic Preparedness projects with Saskatoon Public Schools, Prairie Valley School Division and Good Spirit School Division. A template was developed for use by all school divisions in the province. The department was also involved in strategic planning discussions with Safe Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan Emergency Measures Office.



*An Insurance and Risk Management seminar was held in May 2009 to assist trustees and administrators.*

A workshop was conducted in April for Facility Managers and Superintendents and attendance at the annual Council of Education Facility Planners International (CEFPI) conference in North Battleford provided an opportunity to consolidate efforts. This year the Insurance Program workshop will be offered in conjunction with the CEFPI conference in Saskatoon in January 2010. Loss control inspections will be completed in more than 60 schools throughout the province by December 31, 2009.

Operational Risk Management and Emergency Preparedness Plan information and direct support were also provided to several boards in 2009.



# Services Summary

In summary, over the past 18 months the services offered by the Association have been reviewed, renewed and tailored to meet the needs identified by the membership. The SSBA Executive and staff will continue to work to ensure the Association is listening and responding to the wishes of member boards.



*Mel Gill addresses delegates at the President's Academy, February 2009.*



*Delegates take advantage of the opportunity to demo some of the equipment at the Insurance and Risk Management Seminar in March 2009.*

# Goal Two: Membership Engagement

Association efforts have been directed toward ensuring boards of education benefit from belonging to, and feel genuine ownership of, the Saskatchewan School Boards Association.

This goal has been interpreted to mean that boards will feel helped or strengthened by participating in Association activities and that the Association serves as a vehicle to encourage dialogue which will guide the Executive's decision-making.

Boards demonstrate a high level of participation in Association events – normally 27 or 28 of 29 boards. Evaluations and feedback concerning 2008/2009 Members' Councils, Fall and Spring Assemblies were very positive.

Group discussions and dialogues are now routinely scheduled into Association events. These sessions are led by trustees and focus on inviting ideas and feedback from the membership.

Six Regional Meetings were held in the Spring of 2009 – similar to the “Branch Meetings” which had not been held for five years. A majority of board members participated in the Regional Meetings and provided positive feedback on the meetings.



*Melville Regional Meeting, March 2009*

In order to engage the membership in the work of the Association, trustees have been appointed to represent the SSBA on a wide range of provincial committees and panels (for example, the Provincial Bargaining Committee and Board of Teacher Education and Certification) to ensure the voice of boards is heard at these important tables.

Trustees also represent the Association at other activities where board of education presence is requested, for example, at five University of Regina Fall Internship Seminars for interns and cooperating teachers in August/September 2009.



*Holy Family RCSSD board member Karen Melle speaks at a University of Regina Fall Internship Seminar, September 2009.*

Three Working Advisory Groups were established in 2009 to engage the membership in the SSBA's advocacy efforts. The work of these groups is described in greater detail in the next section of this Annual Report.

Boards also benefit in recruiting and retaining First Nations and Métis employees through the provincial Aboriginal Employment Development Program. This program is funded by the Ministries of Education and First Nations and Métis Education and is administered and delivered by the SSBA. The services and resources provided by this program would be difficult for any one board to offer on their own.

The same applies to the School Board Elections Package developed by the SSBA this past year. Individually, some boards would find it difficult to develop a package with the degree of information provided in the SSBA Package. The fact that boards work together through their Association makes such projects possible. And the package is now endorsed and posted on the websites of the Ministries of Education and Municipal Affairs as well as the Public and Catholic Sections. When it comes to providing candidates and the public with accurate and consistent information, the parties are now all singing from the same school board election song sheet.

During the Executive Director's round of meetings with boards, trustees expressed a desire to improve the relationship between Catholic and Public boards in Saskatchewan. In addition to efforts undertaken internally at the Association level, the SSBA President and Executive Director have been actively involved in the Public/Catholic Section mediation process introduced by the Minister of Education and facilitated by the Ministry of Justice Dispute Resolution office. Information on progress is shared with the membership through the "Section News" posted on our website.



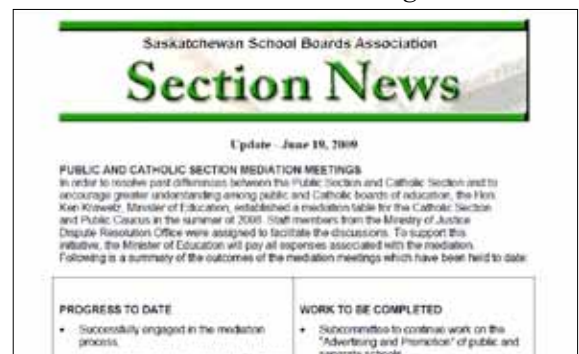
*SSBA Representatives on the Provincial Bargaining Committee (l to r) Ronna Pethick, Janet Foord, Barbara Young and Sandi Urban-Hall*



*AEDP Northern Signings, October 2009  
Duane Favel, Hon. Bill Hutchinson, Minister of First Nations and Métis Relations, Bernadette Hillier, Frank Durocher, Roy Challis*



*2009 Elections Package*



*Public & Catholic Section News*



# Goal Three: Advocacy

The third priority is that of advocacy – engaging in strong and effective advocacy efforts focused on a limited number of areas. Trustees expressed the view in 2008 that the Association should not continue to try to be all things to all people but that instead, resources and energy must be focused on the top priorities of the membership. Education Funding, Facilities Funding and Student Achievement were the priority advocacy areas identified by the membership.

In 2009, three Working Advisory Groups (WAGs) were established to inform and support effective Association advocacy. These groups focused their work on Education Funding, Facilities Funding and Student Learning. Trustees and administrators from across the province were invited to submit their names for nomination to these three WAGs. Response to the call for nominations was very positive; in fact, not all who were nominated were able to serve, but it is the Executive's hope that these individuals will have the opportunity to serve on future Working Advisory Groups.

During 2009, the Education Funding and Facilities Funding WAGs developed recommendations and reported to the Executive at their September 24-25 meeting. The Executive approved the recommendations of both WAGs and the work of these advisory groups was then considered to be completed.

The Executive based their draft Education Funding and Facilities Funding Position Statements on the recommendations of the WAGs. These draft position statements were presented at the October 22-23 Members' Council for feedback and will be brought forward for the consideration of the membership at the Fall General Assembly. The reports of the WAGs have been posted on the Association website for background information (under Communications – Advocacy).

The Position Statements debated and voted on by the membership will become the positions that will be communicated by the Association at the Ministry of Education's Advisory Committee and subcommittee meetings regarding the new Pre K-12 Education Funding Model. The SSBA President and Executive Director represent the Association on the Advisory Committee. In addition, the Chairs of the Education Funding and Facilities Funding Working Advisory Groups – Dan Danielson and Larry Pavloff - serve on the Ministry subcommittees working in



*Education Funding Chair Dan Danielson speaks at a Working Advisory Group Meeting, April 2009.*

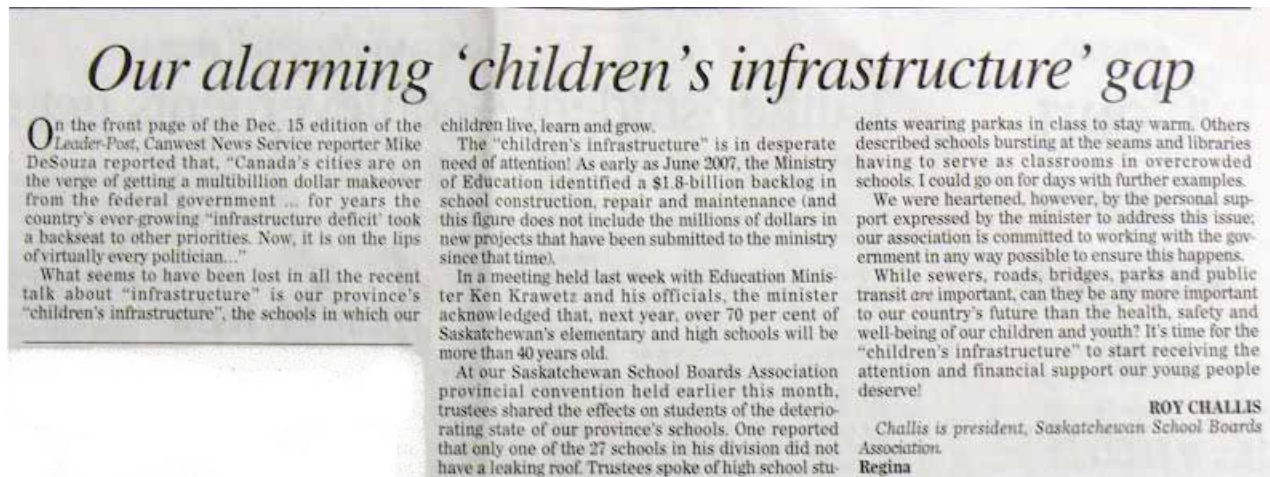


*President Roy Challis with Education Minister Ken Krawetz at the "Children's Infrastructure" announcement.*

each of those areas. Executive members Janet Foord and Larry Ahenakew serve respectively on the Programs and Initiatives, and Accountability, Evaluation and Reporting subcommittees.

Through the WAGs, your Association was already working to improve education operating and capital funding – well before the March 18 provincial budget removed boards’ ability to levy a local property tax mill rate. The provincial budget was met with mixed reaction from board members as was evidenced when the Minister of Education attended our Spring Assembly.

As an example of proactive advocacy undertaken in 2009, the Association introduced the concept of the “Children’s Infrastructure” when advocating on the issue of the need for more school capital funding. This terminology was picked up by the media and helped advance our cause.



Ministry officials have indicated that this approach – framing the issue in terms of the needs of “children” rather than “buildings” - influenced the unprecedented \$259 million contribution to school capital funding announced in February 2009. Even with the recent “hold” on \$30 million in unallocated capital funding, boards have done very well in securing capital funding dollars over the past 18 months. Collectively, boards of education received more in one year than they did in total over the past 7 years.

Your Association also worked with the provincial government to encourage and support the \$10 million contribution to Education Technology across the province.

The Association also encouraged a research based and measurable outcome approach to advocacy efforts. This approach was used to successfully achieve board of education advocacy objectives around Minimum Age/Maximum Hours of Work legislation.

# Education Funding: Working Advisory Group Recommendations



*Education Funding Working Advisory Group (l to r)  
Chair Dan Danielson, Urban Public Constituency Representative, and Vice-Chair  
Simone Couture, Conseil scolaire fransaskois Constituency Representative.*

## **Education Funding Working Advisory Group Members:**

*Carol Flynn and Lionel Diederichs, South East Cornerstone SD; Lisa Lambert and Don Lloyd, Greater Saskatoon RCSSD; Vance Sanderson and Liam Choo-Foo, Chinook SD; Jack Rowsell, North East SD; Garry Benning, Saskatoon Public SD; Ralph Pilz, Northern Lights SD; Lawrence Viala, Prince Albert RCSSD; Gilbert Hautcoeur, Conseil scolaire fransaskois; Rob Currie, Regina RCSSD; Shirley Owen, Creighton SD; Ron Ford, Living Sky SD; Rod Luhning, Prairie Valley SD.*

## **Introduction**

On March 18, 2009, the Saskatchewan provincial government announced that individual school boards will no longer set education property tax rates for property within division boundaries. Instead, the provincial government will set province-wide education property tax rates for each of the three major classes of property – residential, agricultural and commercial. The education property tax will be collected by municipalities and provided to school divisions except for the conseil scolaire fransaskois (CSF). The balance of school division funding will be provided through the Government of Saskatchewan's General Revenue Fund (*Financing Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education, 2009*).

This change in the way education is funded creates a new relationship between Saskatchewan's elected school boards and the provincial government. The principles that have been developed by the Working Advisory Group are intended to provide a foundation for that relationship. These principles are important to school boards/ CSF. They serve as a framework for discussions between elected school boards/ CSF and the provincial government and provide a context for decision making and action. These principles apply to capital funding as well as to operational funding, because both types of funding have an impact on student achievement.

The principles of education finance are all focused on the same end – realizing Saskatchewan's Goals of Education, developing the potential of all students, affirming the worth of each individual, and laying the foundation for learning throughout life. Saskatchewan's elected school boards/CSF believe that

educational goals and priorities should drive all decisions about educational finance.

The nine fundamental principles of education finance are:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adequacy</li><li>• Autonomy</li><li>• Balance</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Equity</li><li>• Involvement</li><li>• Predictability</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reciprocal Accountability</li><li>• Sustainability</li><li>• Transparency</li></ul>
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Each principle is important in its own right, but is also interrelated with and interdependent on the other principles (*Nova Scotia Regional Schools Boards, 2004*). All principles are of equal importance and all have equal relevance to education finance in Saskatchewan.

The Saskatchewan School Boards Association requests that the Ministry of Education include these principles in the annual *K-12 Operating Funding Manual/Guide* and in guidelines relating to capital funding.

The Saskatchewan School Boards Association will be taking action to ensure these principles are reflected in the way it does business. The principles will be shared with the Minister of Education and the Minister of Finance who play key roles in all education finance decisions. The principles will be posted on the SSBA website, incorporated into documents and featured in workshops for new and returning school trustees.

## Adequacy

### Definition

- As much as is needed; fully sufficient
- Suitable (*Gage Canadian Dictionary, 1983*)

### Description

The amount of funding that is provided to elected school boards/CSF by the provincial government must be adequate to respond to provincial goals and priorities, to provide a high quality core program to all students, and to accommodate local innovation and initiatives. It must be adequate to meet the expectations that parents and community members have for the education of their children. Funding must also recognize the actual cost of education which includes not only program costs but also transportation costs, technology costs and the cost of maintaining, upgrading or replacing aging facilities.

Adequacy will differ from one school division to another because of geographic, student and cultural diversity. It is a provincial government responsibility to define and fund core educational programs. In addition, it is a provincial government responsibility to fund local needs and priorities as identified by locally-elected school boards/CSF.



It is a provincial government responsibility to establish an audit function to ensure that similar expenses are described and coded in the same way by every school board/CSF and thus facilitate consistency and comparability across the province.

In addition, the CSF has obligations stated in section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms which has a significant impact on funding French minority language education in Saskatchewan.

## **Autonomy**

### **Definition**

- Self-government; independence
- A self-governing community (*Gage Canadian Dictionary*, 1983)

### **Description**

School boards/CSF derive their authority from *The Education Act, 1995* which gives school boards significant authority to manage the school division in a way that reflects local needs and priorities. In addition, the CSF also derives authority and obligations from section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Saskatchewan is a diverse province and school divisions differ greatly in terms of student body, local priorities and local circumstances. School boards/CSF must have autonomy in order to respond to educational needs and expectations in their division. They must be able to establish their own spending priorities and set their own levels of expenditure.

School boards/CSF must receive the major portion of their funding unconditionally, so that they have a high capacity to respond to local needs and priorities.

## **Balance**

### **Definition**

- An even distribution of weight or amount
- Bring into or keep in equilibrium
- Establish equal or appropriate proportions of elements in [a formula]
- Have debits and credits equal (*Gage Canadian Dictionary*, 1983)

## Description

Balance in educational finance means:

1. All nine principles are reflected in funding formulas and checks and balances are established to ensure this occurs.
2. An appropriate balance between conditional and unconditional funding from the provincial government. This balance may vary from year to year and may also vary from one school division to another. For all school divisions, the greatest proportion of funding should be unconditional; conditional funding should be based only on need or special circumstances.
3. For boards of education, an appropriate balance between the amount of funding that might be desirable and the amount the tax base can reasonably be expected to provide.
4. For the CSF, it is recognized that it has no power of taxation.

## Equity

### Definition

- Fairness; justice
- What is fair and just (*Gage Canadian Dictionary*, 1983)

### Description

Equity means fairness; it does not necessarily mean equal (Nova Scotia Regional School Boards, 2004; *Our Children...*, 1997). Student learning is at the heart of equity. Funding must be allocated so that all elected school boards/CSF have the resources they need to achieve equitable student outcomes.

Equity in education funding is central to producing equity of outcomes for all students ensuring that all Saskatchewan students achieve at high levels regardless of where they live in the province and their personal circumstances.

Two types of equity are important:

1. Horizontal equity – means that the quality and availability of core programming in each community is equivalent. A provincial definition of “core” programming would provide a foundation for this type of equity.
2. Vertical equity – means that students and communities who have different or special needs are provided with different or special approaches to programming and service delivery in order to maximize their learning (Nova Scotia Regional School Boards; 2004). Because the number and type of students with different or special needs varies from one community to another and one

area of the province to another, the amount of funding that is needed to achieve equitable student outcomes will also vary.

Funding formulas need to accommodate both types of equity.

The following points need to be considered to achieve equity:

1. Differences in school divisions' geography, students and culture which may affect student outcomes.
2. The actual cost of operating small schools of necessity which will always exist in some areas of the province and play a vital role in student learning.
3. The actual number of students enrolled in the school division during the current school year.
4. In addition, the CSF has obligations stated in section 23 of the Charter that have a significant impact on funding needs and equity.

## **Involvement**

### **Definition**

- Cause (a person or thing) to participate, or share the experience or effect (of a situation, activity, etc.)
- Include or affect in its operations (*The Canadian Oxford Dictionary*, 1998)

### **Description**

School boards/CSF must be equal partners, along with the provincial government, in meaningful decision making that supports education finance. They must have significant input when funding formulas are established and accountability processes determined. School boards/CSF must also have significant input when funding decisions are made in response to evolving issues and unexpected circumstances.

There must be involvement at both the administrative and the political levels; There must be shared decision making between school board/CSF administrators and Ministry of Education administrators and between elected school trustees and elected members of the provincial legislature, particularly the Cabinet Ministers responsible for the Ministries of Education and Finance.

## **Predictability**

### **Definition**

- To state, tell about, or make known in advance, especially on the basis of special knowledge
- To foretell something (*The Free Dictionary*, 2009)

## Description

Predictability in education finance means that:

1. School boards/CSF can offer consistent and ongoing programming which is determined by provincially-defined programs and services, that recognizes diversity.
2. Funding formulas are clearly defined and published, so that school boards/CSF can insert their own data in order to estimate income for up to three years and plan for the future.
3. Changes in funding formulas are planned well in advance and in consultation with school boards/CSF.
4. Long-term plans are developed to provide for systematic renewal or replacement of items such as technology, buses and facilities

## Reciprocal Accountability

### Definition of Reciprocal

- Mutual
- Expressing mutual action or relation
- A thing corresponding in some way to another; an equivalent or counterpart (*Oxford Canadian Dictionary*, 1998)

### Definition of Accountability

- Responsible; required to account for one's conduct (*Oxford Canadian Dictionary*, 1998)

## Description

Reciprocal accountability in education finance means that:

1. Elected school boards/CSF are responsible for achieving educational goals and objectives set by them and the government in order to maximize student achievement. The provincial government is responsible for providing the resources needed to achieve those goals and objectives.
2. The provincial government and elected school boards/CSF must be accountable by maintaining a cordial, collaborative working relationship and ensuring that the nine principles of education finance are reflected in all of their actions and decisions.
3. The provincial government and elected school boards/CSF have a responsibility to provide a complete accounting of the use of its educational resources.
4. Elected school boards/CSF have a responsibility to provide a comprehensive description of the

amount and type of revenue received from the provincial government. The provincial government is responsible for facilitating the release of this information.

## **Sustainability**

### **Definition**

- Endure
- Maintain or keep (an action or process) going continuously
- That may be maintained, especially at a particular level (*Canadian Oxford Dictionary*, 1998)

### **Description**

Sustainability means that elected school boards/CSF receive funds to achieve provincial and local educational goals and priorities to maximize student achievement. Sustainability requires a regular review of funding formulas to ensure they reflect changing educational goals and priorities.

Sustainability also requires reliable, factual data to establish funding formulas and to calculate funding allocations for each school division, based on actual reserves and expenditure requirements.

Sustainability for the CSF requires a specific funding formula to recognize its additional section 23 Charter obligations.

## **Transparency**

### **Definition**

- Easily seen through or detected; obvious
- Free from deceit or guile; frank (*Gage Canadian Dictionary*, 1983)

### **Description**

Transparency in educational finance means:

1. Providing information about funding formulas and processes available to the public along with the rationale for these formulas and processes.
2. Providing funding formulas and processes that are understandable and straightforward.
3. Establishing monitoring processes that meet the needs of both school boards/CSF and the provincial government.
4. Providing accurate, timely information to the public about resources allocated by the provincial government and resources utilized by school boards/CSF.

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Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, section 23

## Facilities Funding: Working Advisory Group Recommendations



*Education Funding Working Advisory Group (l to r)  
Chair Larry Pavloff, Central Constituency Representative, and  
Vice-Chair Janet Foord, Southern Constituency Representative.*

### **Facilities Funding Working Advisory Group Members:**

*Donna Ziegler and Rodd Hoffart, Regina RCSSD; Lois Smandych and Teresa Korol, Good Spirit SD; Jim Carriere, Greater Saskatoon RCSSD; Wayne Steen and Mike Hurd, Saskatchewan Rivers SD; Ronna Pethick and Ray Kopera, Living Sky SD; Randy Beler and Kim Redekop, Chinook SD; Aline Kirk, Prairie South SD; Mark Nerland, Prairie Valley SD.*

The Facilities Funding Working Advisory Group met on April 8-9 in Regina, on May 20 in Saskatoon (as part of the Group's Provincial Facilities Think Tank) and on June 9, 2009 in Warman.

Following are the key recommendations of the Facilities Funding Working Advisory Group. The SSBA and boards of education/CSF are fully committed to working with the Ministry to ensure publicly-funded education is delivered in quality facilities that best meet the learning needs of Saskatchewan students. The Working Advisory Group is also of the firm belief that if adequate facilities funding is provided, the details of how that funding would be fairly distributed could certainly be worked out.

***Recommendation # 1: Facilities funding in Saskatchewan should be determined according to the following five categories:***

**1. Major Capital**

The province should continue to approve major capital projects which would include new schools, major renovations, roofing and portable classrooms. However, there is a need to create a “level playing field” and a shared understanding of the rules when it comes to the approval process.

There is a need to develop a common template or application form for funding for new school construction. Currently, the best crafted written proposals are more likely to be successful. A transparent, detailed and consistent application form should be developed to ensure all applications are being considered fairly.

**2. Infrastructure Renewal**

Each year, the province should allocate 2% of Current Replacement Value to school divisions for the purpose of ongoing infrastructure renewal.

A formula for the distribution of this funding should be developed in consultation with school boards/CSF. The formula must provide for funding which is adequate, predictable and sustainable.

School divisions should develop *5-Year School Division Facilities Plans* which provide comprehensive rationale for specific renewal capital projects, education programming, operating capacities, and current condition of facilities, land use, demographics, local community and economic development strategies.

As well, for all projects considered to be of high priority by the division, a detailed *Project Report* should be developed and updated annually. This report would outline project rationale, cost estimates and a comprehensive business case.

Some of the factors which should be considered in the infrastructure approval process include: Student enrolment, age of building, eligible school space, geographic location and other pertinent factors.

This recommendation addresses the need for school board/CSF accountability. As well, it speaks to the need for an adequate, dedicated amount of funding for boards/CSF to use at their discretion for annual infrastructure renewal. Such renewal would reduce the need for major capital projects (new schools) and would result in cost savings over the long term. The Ministry should provide provincial guidelines regarding how this money could be spent, but boards/CSF should retain the autonomy to make the final decision regarding infrastructure renewal expenditures within the school division.



### **3. Ongoing Operation and Maintenance**

Ongoing operation and maintenance accounts for approximately 11-13% of school divisions'/CFS's total budgets. There is a need for the Ministry and boards/CSF to jointly develop a formula to distribute adequate funding to operate and maintain facilities.

The specific facility needs of particular grades and class-size should be considered in the development of this formula, as well as such factors as special needs students, sparsity, distance and travel, and small schools by necessity.

### **4. Non-School Facilities**

The province will need to develop a formula to distribute adequate funding to construct and maintain non-school facilities such as transportation and administration facilities.

### **5. Provincially Protected Schools**

Restrictions have been placed on schools divisions with respect to their ability to close schools. The province must continue to fund the operation and maintenance of these schools and where needed provide funding to decommission space that is no longer required.

### ***Recommendation #2: Capital Funding Backlog***

There is a need to develop a specific, long-term, sustainable plan to address the current capital funding backlog, estimated to amount to \$1.5 billion. The fact that we are creating a new funding model provides an opportunity to develop a specific plan to address this shortfall. A minimum of 10% of the shortfall should be allocated annually to address this backlog.

### ***Recommendation #3: Ministry Support***

The Ministry must maintain sufficient staffing levels to provide support for school divisions around school capital projects including: project management, technical, site development and cost management.

# Student Learning: Working Advisory Group



*Student Learning Working Advisory Group (l to r)  
Chair Sandi Urban-Hall, Vice-President, and Vice-Chair  
Larry Ahenakew, Northern Constituency Representative.*

## **Student Learning Working Advisory Group Members:**

*Vicky Bonnell, Regina RCSSD; Alice Risling, St. Paul's RCSSD; Gary Shaddock, Chinook SD; Karen Melle, Holy Family RCSSD; Cheryl Ross, Lloydminster SD; Aboriginal Caucus representative Lorna Black, Northern Lights SD; Robert Bratvold, Creighton SD; Sandi Kitts, Prairie South SD.*

The Student Learning Working Advisory Group was established to advise the Association regarding advocacy and strategies for supporting boards of education in strengthening student achievement. A focus on 'Student Achievement' is a key priority for advocacy in our Association strategic plan. This Working Advisory Group also provided a forum for the Association's representatives on the Provincial Panel on Student Achievement to ensure boards of education/CSF have a strong voice in providing direction for what needs to be done to strengthen student achievement in Saskatchewan. Members of the Working Advisory Group and the Association's Representatives on the Provincial Panel on Student Achievement facilitated "focused conversations" with students and representatives from School Community Councils. The Working Advisory Group shared its preliminary recommendations with the Association Executive at its October meeting, with the final report to be submitted in November. The Association Executive will determine the Association's response to the Provincial Panel on Student Achievement at its December 2009 meeting.

# Finance and Administration

## Milton & Associates CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

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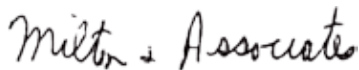
### AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Members of  
The Saskatchewan School Boards Association

We have audited the balance sheet of The Saskatchewan School Boards Association as at December 31, 2008, and the statements of revenue, expenditure and net assets and cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Association's management. Our responsibility is to express our opinion based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatements. An audit includes examining on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates used by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

In our opinion, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Association as at December 31, 2008, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.



Chartered Accountants

March 16, 2009

**THE SASKATCHEWAN SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION**

**BALANCE SHEET**

**DECEMBER 31, 2008**

(with 2007 figures for comparison)

	<b><u>Operating Fund</u></b>	<b><u>Benefits Fund</u></b>	<b><u>Insurance Fund</u></b>	<b><u>Total 2008</u></b>	<b><u>Total 2007</u></b>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>					
Accounts receivable	\$ 10,568	\$ 321,705	\$ -	\$ 332,273	\$ 647,613
Prepaid expenses	<u>37,686</u>	<u>450</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>38,236</u>	<u>38,203</u>
	48,254	322,155	100	370,509	685,816
<b>INVESTMENTS</b> (Note 3)	2,622,004	1,238,803	10,004,338	13,865,145	14,335,513
<b>PROPERTY</b> (Note 4)	<u>389,206</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>389,206</u>	<u>421,340</u>
	<b><u>\$ 3,059,464</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 1,560,958</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 10,004,438</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 14,624,860</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 15,442,669</u></b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>					
Bank indebtedness	\$ 693,322	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 693,322	\$ 1,316,413
Payables	2,396	-	1,808,558	1,810,954	1,957,309
Revenue received in advance	<u>277,244</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>277,244</u>	<u>275,263</u>
	<u>972,962</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,808,558</u>	<u>2,781,520</u>	<u>3,548,985</u>
<b>NET ASSETS - Schedule</b>					
Appropriated	977,835	906,510	8,195,880	10,080,225	10,361,608
Unappropriated	<u>1,108,667</u>	<u>654,448</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,763,115</u>	<u>1,532,076</u>
	<u>2,086,502</u>	<u>1,560,958</u>	<u>8,195,880</u>	<u>11,843,340</u>	<u>11,893,684</u>
	<b><u>\$ 3,059,464</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 1,560,958</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 10,004,438</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 14,624,860</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 15,442,669</u></b>

Approved by the Board



President



Executive Director

**THE SASKATCHEWAN SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION**

**STATEMENT OF REVENUE, EXPENDITURE AND NET ASSETS**

**YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2008**

**(with 2007 figures for comparison)**

	<b><u>Operating Fund</u></b>	<b><u>Benefits Fund</u></b>	<b><u>Insurance Fund</u></b>	<b><u>Total 2008</u></b>	<b><u>Total 2007</u></b>
<b>REVENUE</b>					
Membership fees	\$ 2,271,696	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,271,696	\$ 2,206,180
Premiums	-	10,803,237	2,341,920	13,145,157	9,619,219
Investment & sundry	112,800	26,707	110,511	250,018	787,252
Association events	61,403	-	-	61,403	11,575
Building	156,548	-	-	156,548	152,129
Convention and board development	113,870	-	-	113,870	126,638
CSBA congress	214,262	-	-	214,262	-
Special projects and partnerships	354,604	-	-	354,604	200,666
Research contributions	103,518	-	-	103,518	95,249
	<u>3,388,701</u>	<u>10,829,944</u>	<u>2,452,431</u>	<u>16,671,076</u>	<u>13,198,908</u>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>					
Governance executive	373,963	-	-	373,963	525,664
Executive director/administration	309,987	-	-	309,987	305,198
Association events	48,083	-	-	48,083	17,291
Association operations and building	333,363	1,603,658	111,483	2,048,504	935,360
Communications	216,352	-	-	216,352	253,818
Education services	140,036	-	-	140,036	141,381
Convention and board development	87,810	-	-	87,810	80,588
CSBA congress	156,504	-	-	156,504	-
Special projects and partnerships	354,604	-	-	354,604	196,511
Research	120,337	-	-	120,337	61,442
Corporate services	467,015	-	-	467,015	523,161
Legal services	496,985	-	-	496,985	486,189
Claims/carrier	-	9,831,004	2,038,102	11,869,106	9,396,839
Depreciation	32,134	-	-	32,134	32,134
	<u>3,137,173</u>	<u>11,434,662</u>	<u>2,149,585</u>	<u>16,721,420</u>	<u>12,955,576</u>
<b>NET REVENUE</b>	251,528	(604,718)	302,846	(50,344)	243,332
<b>NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR</b>	<u>1,834,974</u>	<u>2,165,676</u>	<u>7,893,034</u>	<u>11,893,684</u>	<u>11,650,352</u>
<b>NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR</b>	<u>\$ 2,086,502</u>	<u>\$ 1,560,958</u>	<u>\$ 8,195,880</u>	<u>\$ 11,843,340</u>	<u>\$ 11,893,684</u>

**Saskatchewan School Boards Association  
2009 ASSOCIATION BUDGET**

**ASSOCIATION SUPPORTS AND SERVICES**

	Actual <u>2008</u>	Budget <u>2009</u>	Projected <u>2009</u>
<b>REVENUE</b>			
Membership Fee	2,271,697	1,982,576	1,982,576
Research & Development Fee	103,518	0	0
Board Dev Services/Assemblies/Events	389,535	139,680	178,142
Building	156,548	157,754	160,675
Investment & Sundry	<u>112,800</u>	<u>129,000</u>	<u>102,000</u>
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$3,034,098</b>	<b>\$2,409,010</b>	<b>\$2,423,393</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Executive Activity/Mbrship Engagement	373,961	359,882	443,075
Executive Director/Administration	309,987	321,500	333,000
Association Operating Expenses	143,921	157,975	157,075
Building	221,576	161,551	158,928
Member Services			
- Communications	216,351	267,500	266,500
- Board Dev Services/Assemblies/Events	552,771	301,080	319,040
- Legal&Employee Relations Services	963,999	731,300	709,500
Reserve Allocations	<u>0</u>	<u>108,222</u>	<u>108,222</u>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b><u>\$2,782,566</u></b>	<b><u>\$2,409,010</u></b>	<b><u>\$2,495,340</u></b>
<b>NET SURPLUS(DEFICIT)</b>	<b>\$251,532</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>-\$71,947</b>

**SSBA BUSINESS SERVICES**

<b>REVENUE</b>			
Employee Benefit Plan	10,829,944	12,042,000	12,700,000
Insurance/Risk Management	<u>2,300,000</u>	<u>2,685,000</u>	<u>2,685,000</u>
	<b>\$13,129,944</b>	<b>\$14,727,000</b>	<b>\$15,385,000</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Employee Benefit Plan	10,829,944	12,042,000	12,700,000
Insurance/Risk Management	<u>2,300,000</u>	<u>2,685,000</u>	<u>2,685,000</u>
	<b>\$13,129,944</b>	<b>\$14,727,000</b>	<b>\$15,385,000</b>

**SSBA PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIPS**

Aboriginal Employment Development Plan	\$217,462	\$300,000	\$167,485
Breakfast for Learning	\$58,000	\$150,000	\$9,000
School Community Councils	\$48,000	\$5,000	\$0



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