



## Useful Web Links

# November 30, 2007



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Hello everyone:

Today I hosted the 2nd Annual Teachers Congress in Vancouver. I was joined by approximately 150 teachers and education partners for a day filled with presentations, discussion and experience sharing – all focused on ensuring student success. This was a great opportunity for me to hear directly from educators across the Province who teach at our public, independent and band schools.

The theme of the 2nd Annual Teachers' Congress was "Reaching higher for students." An appropriate theme, because enhancing student achievement is a priority for our government. While our goal for our students is continuous improvement, British Columbia's students already have one of the highest literacy levels in the world according to the latest international student assessment. The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study found that for Grade 4 reading, B.C. is one of top 5 jurisdictions in the world.

Since 2001, the government has invested over \$125 million in literacy for British Columbians through the Province's literacy strategy, ReadNow BC. These programs have delivered approximately \$32 million in literacy funding for schools, teachers, parents and others; \$25 million for new textbooks; \$30 million for early learning; \$25 million for adult literacy; and \$15 million for libraries.

I appreciated the opportunity to hear challenges and

Ask Your MLA.

### **Useful Phone numbers**

BC Nurseline: 24 hour,  
Toll free 1-866-215-4700

PharmaNet Hotline: Mon-Fri  
(8:30-4:30pm) 1-800-387-4700

Health Info Line: Mon-Fri  
(8:30-4:30pm) 1-800-465-4911

Victim Link: 7 days a week,  
24 hours, 1-800-563-0808

success stories at the Teacher's Congress today.

The Fall sitting of the Legislature wrapped up yesterday – and what a sitting it was! A step toward real reconciliation was made with B.C.'s First Nations. The Tsawwassen First Nation and Maa-Nulth First Nations Final Agreements were passed. His Honour Steven L. Point was installed as B.C.'s 27th Lieutenant Governor and first aboriginal Lieutenant Governor. As Minister of Education, I was proud to bring in The First Nations Education Act, which recognizes First Nations' jurisdiction over education on First Nations' land and supports Aboriginal student achievement and lifelong learning.

The Fall 2007 sitting of the Legislature will also be remembered as the session when B.C. became the most aggressive jurisdiction in North America in dealing with greenhouse gases. Passing of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Targets Act ushered in laws to bring greenhouse gas emissions to at least 33 per cent below 2007 levels by 2020. The law further establishes an emission reduction target of at least 80 per cent below 2007 levels by 2050 and contains a yearly reporting mechanism.

Now that the sitting of the House is over, I look forward to once again focusing most of my energies on my constituency – working to meet your needs and concerns right here at home.

Good news this week as the provincial government is providing a \$5-million grant to the Early Childhood Development Partnership for Success By 6. Success By 6 works in local and Aboriginal communities to develop comprehensive, integrated service delivery systems that support children and families. Programs include early learning and literacy, nutrition, children's play, outreach programs, parenting and family skills development. Here in Prince George, Success By 6 recently provided \$10,000 for the Salvation Army's "Growing Successful Families" pilot program.

As well this week, the Ministry of health is introducing a new, more secure and durable birth certificate. So if you know anyone with a due date after Jan. 2, their baby (or babies) will be among the first British Columbians to benefit from new birth certificates – helping to protect them from identity theft and fraud. The new certificate is made of high-security plastic, making it extremely durable and enabling more than 20 security features.

Environment Canada reports that this winter is expected to be the coldest in almost 15 years and with the weather we've been having it certainly feels like it! Happily, this cold spell we're having should lift a little early next week. Despite chilly temperatures, Bill and I are looking forward to numerous community events this weekend. We are very excited about celebrating the dedication of our great niece Alyvia on Sunday morning. So have a happy and safe weekend and we look forward to seeing you out and about.

Until next week . . .  
Shirley

## Question of the week:

### **What Steps Has BC Taken to Reduce Exposure to Second-Hand Smoke?**

British Columbia is taking steps to reduce the health effects of tobacco use through new regulations that restrict the promotion and sale of tobacco products, as well as a ban on smoking in all indoor public spaces and workplaces.

The province is working to reduce tobacco use across the province and ensuring that British Columbians are protected from the deadly effects of second-hand smoke. Stricter regulations about public and workplace smoking are part of our strategy to reduce the impact of tobacco on the health system and prevent chronic diseases associated with tobacco use.

The new regulations fall under the Tobacco Control Act and will take effect on March 31, 2008. The new

tobacco regulations will ban:

- Smoking in all indoor public spaces and work places, with exemptions made for the ceremonial use of tobacco by Aboriginal people;
- Smoking within three metres of public and workplace doorways, open windows or air intakes;
- Tobacco sales in public buildings including: hospitals and health facilities, universities and colleges, athletic and recreational facilities, and provincial government buildings;
- Display of tobacco products in all places where tobacco is sold that are accessible to youth under 19; and
- Tobacco ads that hang from the ceiling, countertop tobacco displays, self-serve tobacco displays and outdoor tobacco signs.

These new provincial regulations will establish a baseline of regulation that landlords, businesses, municipalities and health authorities can choose to exceed to fit the needs of their community, clients and population. Unless prohibited by municipal regulations, smoking will still be allowed on the outdoor patios of restaurants and bars. The new regulations will take effect on March 31, 2008, allowing retailers and other businesses four months to ensure that their premises comply with the changes required by the Tobacco Control Act. In June 2007, the Province held a six-week public consultation to allow the general public and stakeholder groups, such as retailers, the hospitality sector and health advocacy groups, the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed tobacco regulation.

Eliminating smoking in public spaces and all workplaces will have a positive impact on indoor air quality and the overall health of British Columbians. Most smokers start before the age of 18 and limiting youth access to advertising is also an important step in protecting the public health of this province. Tobacco use kills over 6,000 British Columbians each year, and is estimated to cost the B.C. economy \$2.3 billion every year. Cigarette smoking is the primary risk factor for diseases of the circulatory system, cancers and respiratory

diseases, and exposure to second-hand smoke kills approximately 100 people in B.C. each year.

Tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of disease and death in British Columbia and, unfortunately, the number of new cancer cases is estimated to rise this year in the province. Exposure to second-hand smoke increases the risk of cancer and implementing regulations that restrict exposure to the harmful effects of tobacco use is a significant step in our fight against cancer.

In September 2007, legislation took effect that banned tobacco use in schools and on school grounds and in October 2008, implementation of smoke-free premise policies in all health authorities will be complete. The Ministry of Health currently funds smoking cessation programs such as QuitNow.ca and QuitNow by Phone, which are available, with translation services in 130 languages, 24 hours a day, seven days a week to all British Columbians. The new legislation supports the Province's larger tobacco control strategy and programs such as ActNow BC. This tobacco strategy aims to further reduce B.C.'s smoking rates and to improve the health of British Columbians. ActNow BC works with provincial government ministries, the health sector and a variety of health promotion partners to deliver programs designed to encourage healthy choices by all British Columbians.

The new tobacco control regulation will be available on-line at [www.health.gov.bc.ca/tobacco/](http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/tobacco/).

## **News Around the Province**

### **EXPANDING SKILLS TRAINING FOR OIL AND GAS GROWTH**

The Province and the oil and gas industry are providing more than \$714,000 for oil and gas training programs that will provide people with the skills to help companies grow, compete and build a stronger economy. These training programs will help create the high skill levels to support greater productivity in the oil and gas sector. These programs are an

important part of our plan to make B.C. one of the most competitive oil and gas jurisdictions in North America and to enable more British Columbians to participate and benefit directly, right in their own communities.

Ten projects were selected for funding according to recommendations in the B.C. Oil and Gas Education and Training Consortium's 2006 report. The programs target a range of skills, such as heavy equipment operation, safety training and land reclamation, and are directed at diverse groups, including entry-level oil and gas employees, high school students, women, aboriginal people and First Nations.

The programs will be funded through the Education and Training Initiative. For three consecutive years, the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources and oil and gas companies each contributed \$500,000 annually to the Initiative for a total of \$1 million per year. Because some projects came in under budget and some funds were unallocated, approximately \$714,200 is being awarded now.

Including the 10 projects announced today, the Education and Training Initiative has funded a total of 39 programs delivered by 11 educational organizations. The 21 companies that partnered with the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources on this initiative were Action Services Group, Anadarko Canada Corporation, Burlington Resources Canada Ltd., BV Land Consulting Ltd., Canadian Natural Resources Limited, ConocoPhillips Canada, Devon Energy Corporation Canada, Dominion Exploration Canada Ltd., Enbridge Inc., EnCana Corporation, Ensign Energy Services Inc., Fedderly Transportation Ltd., Nexen Inc., North East Native Advancing Society, Penn West Energy Trust, Petro-Canada, Progress Energy Ltd., Spectra Energy Transmission, Surerus Pipeline Inc., Talisman Energy Inc and Trinidad Drilling Ltd.

**This week's bouquet of recognition  
goes to...**

Winners announced a project to help lift women from poverty. The fashion chain is raising money to support the Canadian Women's Foundation. The net proceeds from sales of a special candle will go to fund programs providing skills and on the job training for women in need.

The goal is greater independence for women and their families.

Thanks for the work you do in our community!!

## **Community Announcements**

Initiatives Prince George Luncheon at the Civic Centre with guest speaker Craig Phillips, Secretary General of the Australian Olympic Committee. Tickets \$20 Craig will present ways of creating value through international team acclimatization, hosting, tourism and business opportunities. Sports reception and Workshop Thursday evening.

For more information [www.pgspiritbc.com](http://www.pgspiritbc.com)  
or call 250-614-3766

## **Mark your calendar...**

- ❖ Nov 28 – Jan 1 - **FREE PARKING DOWNTOWN**
- ❖ Nov 30 – Meet the Pack game – Cougars home game against Vancouver Giants- the Citizen and Prince George Cougars giving away 1000 tickets to the game! Visit Cougar Website for info [www.pgcougars.com](http://www.pgcougars.com)
- ❖ Nov 30 – McBride Festival of Lights & Santa Claus Parade
- ❖ Dec 1&2-Blackburn Community Centre- Hollyberry & Mistletoe Craft Fair from 10-4pm,for more info call 963-3292
- ❖ Dec 6 – 7pm- Keepers of the Lost Art, a spinning and weaving exhibit at Exploration Place, a fashion show featuring hand woven clothing.
- ❖ Dec 6 – Initiatives Prince George Luncheon Speaker is Craig Phillips; Secretary General of the Australian Olympic Committee, at the Civic Centre tickets \$20.

- ❖ Dec 6- CNC Craft & Bake Fair- 9am to 3pm
- ❖ Dec 7-Cougars Burgers for Kids-The team will be spread out at all five A&W locations. 50% of sales during that hour will go to Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Prince George.
- ❖ Dec 7 – 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Kris Kringle Luncheons at the Coast Inn of the North at 11:30AM Tickets: \$35.00 per person. Call Mary Jarbeck 563-7168
- ❖ Dec 7 – Valemount Late Night Christmas Shopping.
- ❖ Dec 7 – St Michael and All Angels's Anglican Church present a dramatic reading of Charles Dickens' "*A Christmas Carol*" at 7:30 pm. Tickets \$10.00, Proceeds to Prince George Public Library
- ❖ Dec 7 & Dec 9 – Santa Train Leaves CN Rail Station at 7:45pm and 8:45pm - Four one hour trips when Santa comes aboard to hand out treats. \$5 for 12years and under, \$10 for Adults. Proceeds to Salvation Army. Call Barbara at Salvation Army for more info.564-4000 ext. 227
- ❖ Dec 8 – Rotary Food and Clothing Drive. Bring donations of food and clothing to the Cougars game tonight, donations for the Salvation Army.
- ❖ Dec 8 & 9 – 6pm - A King is Coming to Town, a musical Christmas dessert theatre event at Gateway Christian Ministries, 2055 – 20<sup>th</sup> Ave. Tickets \$5 for more info 563-1003
- ❖ Dec 10 – International Human Rights Day! check out what's happening at Books & Co and CNC. Join the worldwide events, for more info contact George Harding, 561-0092
- ❖ Dec 12 – Big Brothers-Big Sisters - A Celebration of Magic at the Civic Centre - pre-dinner visit from Santa and after dinner show by hypnotist JayDee. Tickets are \$20 for more info call 563-7410
- ❖ Dec 14-SPCA Food and Supplies Drive-Bring donations to the Cougars game tonight against Kamloops Blazers.
- ❖ Dec 15- Annual Teddy Bear Toss – Cougars

- game against Kamloops.
- ❖ Dec 20 - 22 – Bel Canto Choir presents A Christmas Carol at Prince George Playhouse tickets \$15 at Studio 2880 or Call 962-1663
  - ❖ Dec 21 –23 - The Nutcracker- presented by Judy Russell' Enchainment Dance Centre at Vanier Hall. Tickets available at Studio 2880
  - ❖ Dec 31 – A New Years Night at the Museum – family sleepover at the Exploration Place on December 31. For more info call Jennifer at 562-1612 ext 242

***If you are a non profit organization and would like to advertise an upcoming event or share a story please email [Shirley](#)***

Thank you for taking the time to read my newsletter. If you would like to see something specific in the next edition of Ask Your MLA, please [email me](#). If you know someone who would like to receive our newsletter, email their name so we can add them to our list.



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