

From the President's Pen



With the provincial election behind us and a new cabinet in place, I thought it would be appropriate and timely to write about how these changes may affect education and mathematics educators.

We have a new education minister for the first time in five years. Gene Zwozdesky, a former teacher, took over the portfolio from Dr. Lyle Oberg. It was encouraging to hear him speak about wanting to address issues in education, including class size concerns, Grade 12 completion rates, the Learning Commission's recommendations and the stresses that teachers face in doing their jobs. This was very refreshing, and we hope that teachers in all subject areas and all grade levels will see a more cooperative and less adversarial relationship with the provincial ministry.

It is also worth noting that advanced education has again become a separate ministry, after having been combined with basic education only a few years ago. The new minister is Dave Hancock, who is considered to be approachable and very aware of education issues. The reasons for separating the departments are not clear, but as a mathematics educator, I am concerned that this will add distance to the relationship between secondary education stakeholders and postsecondary institutions. More dialogue with postsecondary officials is needed, especially in the areas of acceptance of mathematics courses at the postsecondary level and the use of technology in mathematics education.

Despite these reservations, I feel positive about the changes in general and I think mathematics educators have reason to believe that our working relationship with the provincial ministries will improve. Let's see what the new school year brings. Thank you.

Len Bonifacio