

Medicine Hat Public School Division601-1st Avenue SW, Medicine Hat, AB T1A 4Y7 | Phone 403.528.6700 | Fax 403.529.5339 | www.mhpsd.ca

10 February 2021

Office of the Premier
Honourable Jason Kenney
307 Legislature Building
10800 – 97 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2B6

Via email: Premier@gov.ab.ca

Dear Premier Kenney,

The Board of Trustees of Medicine Hat Public School Division is deeply concerned for the teachers of Medicine Hat Public Schools (past, present and future) regarding the security of the Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund (ATRF).

As you know, Bill 22 transferred management of the ATRF from the ATRF Board to the Alberta Investment Management Corporation (AIMCo), with the assurance that the Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund (ATRF) would maintain full control of the fund's investment strategy. In December of 2020, Finance Minister Hon. Travis Toews signed a Ministerial Order which effectively sidesteps ATRFB's input into how the fund is invested, granting a veto of investment decisions to the Minister. This decision has caused quite understandable concern among teachers, past and present, who have served the children of our community well.

Both Bill 22 and the ministerial order were opposed by the ATA and the teachers they represent. The ministerial order is especially alarming as it is seen as a betrayal of the promise made by government.

Retired teachers and many of the current teacher cohort remember with great horror the debacle that existed in the late eighties and early nineties when the retirement fund was in jeopardy due to the government's dismal management of the of fund. The unfunded liability created because of this mismanagement, resulted in a massive increase in premiums for teachers and an equally huge financial burden for government. More so, the anxiety caused by this dilemma was devastating to hundreds of teachers who envisioned their retirement security being eradicated. The ATRFB was created to ensure that this would not happen again. The erosion of confidence in the government of the day is being resurrected in the actions of the government of today.

Additionally, it is worthy of note that under the management of the ATRFB, the teachers' pension fund has done exceedingly well; to the point that it is almost entirely self-sustaining. On the other hand, AIMCo's performance has not been nearly as stellar and, in fact, due to some rather dubious investments of late, confidence in the corporation is a major concern.

We, the Board of Trustees of Medicine Hat Public Schools, respectfully and urgently request that you take the necessary actions to reverse Hon. Mr. Toews' Ministerial Order and that the management of the teachers' retirement fund be returned to the ATRFB.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. We look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Board of Trustees

Medicine Hat Public School Division

cc: Alberta Retired Teachers' Association
Adriana LaGrange, Minister of Education
Alberta Teachers' Association
Medicine Hat Local No. 1, Alberta Teachers' Association
Michaela Glasgo, MLA for Brooks-Medicine Hat
Drew Barnes, MLA for Cypress-Medicine Hat