



How to Save YOUR Public Schools

The Angus McBeath North American Tour

2008

The Story of Edmonton Public Schools Authority, Accountability, and Results

SETTING THE STANDARD

As superintendent of the public schools, Angus McBeath lead the ongoing effort to improve student achievement in the public school system of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Edmonton has approximately 81,000 students, 7,000 staff, 203 schools and an annual operating budget of \$611,000,000.

After studying 223 schools in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Edmonton, Seattle and Houston, UCLA management professor William Ouchi calls Edmonton one of the most decentralized and effectively managed public school systems in North America. Throughout North America, Edmonton is being held up as the example of what the public schools can and should be. Essentially, Mr. McBeath (pronounced "McBeth") and his team have established that a vigorous programme of school choice is entirely compatible with a well-functioning and flourishing public school system.

SPREADING THE WORD

Mr. McBeath became the AIMS Fellow in Public Education Reform on his retirement from the Edmonton public school system, reserving a portion of his time to travel to think tanks and education-related audiences around the United States and Canada, talking about how Edmonton works and how they achieved these remarkable reforms and enviable results.

While individual visits will be considered, every effort will be made to maximize efficiencies and impacts by coordinating efforts on a regional basis (Kentucky-Ohio for example, is one "region" where a tour is currently being discussed). The ideal would be regional trips involving 3-4 "tour stops" in various cities. Each "stop" would involve not only a major public event but also media interviews, small group and one-on-one sessions with key stakeholders, decision makers and media commentators and other visits/events as appropriate for the local environment. Of course, the ultimate success of each tour stop will depend to a great extent on the local partner. AIMS will work closely with them in deciding the number and types of events that will be most effective for their marketplace.

AIMS AND LOCAL PARTNERS

AIMS will provide overall coordination of this effort, print and electronic material to support Angus' message, national and international exposure of the message and the tour, plus of course Angus himself.

Given the critical role that local partners will play in the success of this tour, and the potential impact for the message and the overall project, local partners will be asked to contribute:

- marginal travel costs for Angus;
- advice and direction on the types of events and exposure that would be most effective in using this tour to leverage change in their region;
- identification of other natural "regional partners" to work collectively on a 3-4 day barnstorming tour;
- high quality public events;
- communications plan including public and private media events; and
- opportunities for relevant and high-impact private events with business and community leaders, education stakeholders and policy decision makers.

INSTITUTIONAL BENEFITS FOR THE ORGANIZERS

As the intent of the tour is to be a catalyst for ongoing change, AIMS will work with local partners to use each tour stop to achieve three institutional objectives:

- use the experience of Angus McBeath, AIMS Senior Fellow, to demonstrate the reforms that can take place;
- use AIMS' work in education reform and accountability as experience for partners looking to emulate the Edmonton experience; and
- similarly build bridges to the ongoing efforts of the local partners that are complimentary to, or builds upon, AIMS' work and profile.

For more information or to arrange a tour stop in your community, contact:

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