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| ***Province*** | ***Législature*** | ***Session*** | ***Type de discours*** | ***Date du discours*** | ***Locuteur*** | ***Fonction du locuteur*** | ***Parti politique*** |
| Sasketchawan | 25e | 3e | Discours sur l’éducation | 25 Avril 2006 | Debra Elaine Higgins | Ministre de l’éducation | NPD |

**Saskatchewan: Education Speech, Third session of the twenty-fifth legislature, April 25, 2006**

Thank you very much, Madam Chair. To my right is Wynne Young, deputy minister of Learning. To my left is Larry Steeves, associate deputy minister. Sitting directly behind Wynne is Karen Allen, executive director of corporate services. Directly behind myself is Gillian McCreary, assistant deputy minister. And to Gillian’s left is Naomi Mellor, executive director, education finance and legislative services.

And also sitting to the left of Naomi is Nelson Wagner, executive director of facilities. And directly behind Gillian is April Barry, executive director, early learning and child care

Thank you very much, Madam Chair. First off, I guess, to talk about the restructuring and what has happened over the last couple of years and to give people a general overview of where we are. After the Boughen Commission report was released, the Boughen Commission in 2003 . . . I think it was May of ’04 we began to move into the period of restructuring. And there was really three points that come out of the Boughen and were announced by the minister after that.

The first and foremost was a restructuring to move to larger divisions, to go to regional pooling of resources and address many of the issues that were there. The next point was the redesign of the foundation operating grant. There’s been a fair bit of work that’s been done on that, and I would say we’re about halfway through the factors so far.

The new changes have been put in place this year. There is still a number of factors that need to be reviewed and work done on that, and we’re looking at it being done in two stages. So first

stage implemented this year with the ’06-07 budget and next stage looking at the next budget year. Also to the issue of education property tax and equalization which looks at the bigger picture of funding for education and the commitment of this government and our Premier to work towards a better equalization deal with the federal government and to address the situation and some of the inequities with education funding and the reliance on property tax. So that was the basic premise of where we are today.

For many people, the new boards took effect on January of this year so they are working. There’s been overlap from the previous boards into the new boards so there has been a bit of a

transition period. For many people, they talk about the restructuring being done, but what I would say is that at this point in time while the physical boundaries of the new school divisions are drawn and the new boards are in place, there is still a great deal of work to do. Many of the school divisions are working through the programs in the amalgamated divisions, what’s available, what services are there, what the needs are within the division, and of course the funding and what will need to be done within that school division. So on paper, boundaries are drawn, new boards are in place, but now I think a great deal of the work begins at this point in time getting everything settled in and getting the new boards up and running. What I have is a listing of all of the previous school divisions with the mill rates, ’04 and ’05, and the variance. Now I would assume though what you’re looking for is . . . Do you want just a straight listing or do you want a broken down, previous school divisions into the new divisions?

Is that what you’re looking for?