Facts sheet

February 10, 2005

- **Fort McMurray has the highest Cost of Living in Alberta.** [Resort communities excluded] Both boards have consistently stated that the cost of doing business here is 30% higher than in communities further south. These costs are passed on through services and products.

- Deductions take about 40% of a teacher's earnings; therefore to calculate gross income required one has to use a multiplier of 1.67. Or in other words in order to have $100 to spend the teacher must earn $167. **The numbers inside ( ) refer to gross pay above Edmonton's pay required**.

- Gross pay: Beginning teacher - $48 215.00 per year $4 017.92 per month.
  4^{th} year at max. - $71 813.00 per year $5 984.42 per month.

- Take home pay: Beginning teacher - $2 651.15 per month.
  4th year at max. - $3 581.54 per month.

- Last fall the media reported that rents in Fort McMurray are the highest in Canada. The vacancy rate is under 1%. Contractors subsidize their workers at a rate of $125.00 per day – Tax free $$$. Rents are more than double Edmonton's. One bedroom: $1100+ **($11 022)** vs $550 in Edmonton.

- The average cost of a house in Fort McMurray is almost $350 000.00. This is triple what it was 10 years ago. This cost is about $150 000.00 more than the average cost of a house in Edmonton.

- In Fort McMurray even a two income teaching couple is finding it extremely difficult to buy any house.

- In McMurray the cut off line for Affordable Housing for Lower Income People is $65 000.00. A teacher with **4 years university and 7 years experience** is still considered a **Lower Income Person.**

- Heating costs are 20% to 30% higher than Edmonton's because of harsher winter conditions – estimated at $420 per year. **($700)**

- The average Alberta teacher's salary has gone up 29% in the last 10 years, while the average Fort McMurray teacher's salary has gone up **only** 26% in the last 10 years.

- In 1989 Fort McMurray teachers were paid 11.41% above provincial average. By 2002 the differential had dropped to **only** 6.06%, **a loss of $3622 from the 11.41%** .

- Many teachers have to travel to Edmonton for medical treatment not available in Fort McMurray. These trips cost over $600.00 each. **($1002)**

- Any trip to Edmonton will cost between $600.00 and $1 200.00. **($1002 to $2004)**

- Some teachers must work at a second job just to make ends meet. This impacts the quality of teaching and most of all the quality of learning for our students.

- **Fort McMurray teachers are the lowest paid teachers in Alberta when The Cost of Living is considered.**

- **For the Fort McMurray teacher to have the purchasing power comparable to that enjoyed by the Edmonton teacher the salary paid locally would have to be at least $15 000 above the amount paid to the average Alberta teacher.**