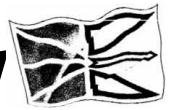


OCTOBER 5, 2001

# Noteworthy



## Minister continues

### *to address fiscal imbalances*

Fiscal imbalances between provinces and the two levels of government topped the agenda at a meeting of Atlantic finance ministers in Charlottetown this week. Finance Minister Joan Marie Aylward and her Atlantic counterparts renewed their commitment to speak with a united voice on behalf of the Atlantic region in upcoming national and federal/provincial meetings.

Realizing that current circumstances will likely have negative impacts on government revenues, ministers were united in their opinion that present fiscal arrangements need to be addressed now more than ever.

Ministers reiterated the unanimous position of all Canadian premiers for immediate removal of the equalization ceiling and development of a strengthened and fairer equalization program.

The finance ministers continued their discussions on the strategic investment plan for the Atlantic region and committed to further advance this work and deliver a framework report to premiers. But they noted that economic growth strategies are not alternatives to the improvements in fiscal arrangements that the region has been seeking.

Meanwhile, Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Tom Lush continued to gather support for offshore fiscal fairness. Minister Lush met with his counterpart in Alberta to discuss the province's push to seek a better deal from the federal government on offshore resource royalties. Minister Lush intends to meet with intergovernmental affairs ministers across the country in an effort to further advance the province's position. ¶

## Read and Succeed

Education Minister Judy Foote and Senator Joyce Fairbairn, special advisor on literacy to the Minister of Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), have launched the Read and Succeed provincial literacy campaign to make reading the family thing to do.

"It is no secret that our ability to do well in school and in life begins at home with an early introduction to the joys of reading and learning," Minister Foote said. "The reading habits we develop early set the stage for our success in the future."

A number of activities have taken place since the announcement of this program, including the launch of a new website at [www.gov.nf.ca/readandsucceed](http://www.gov.nf.ca/readandsucceed); development of literacy packages for schools, family resource centres, adult literacy centres and licenced childcare programs; and television and radio announcements. Furthermore, posters, bookmarks and other various promotional materials will continue to be circulated to reiterate the importance of literacy in our province, as well as government's commitment to the effort.

Funding for the Read and Succeed campaign was provided by the National Literacy Secretariat, HRDC. ¶

## Youth Employment Funding

Funding approval that will help over 200 youth in the province find employment in their communities was announced earlier this week by Minister of Human Resources and Employment Gerald Smith.

Approximately \$1.4 million will be invested this year in the Department of Human Resources and Employment's successful Linkages Employment Program. Linkages is specifically designed to provide work experience and career planning supports for young people age 18 to 24 who are having difficulties making a transition to the labour market. This year's funding will create 237 jobs for youth, resulting in approximately 6,162 work weeks.

Through the program, the department provides funding to community agencies to provide up to 26 weeks of career-related employment. Youth also take part in regular career planning workshops and earn a completion bonus toward the cost of post-secondary tuition and books.

"We are very excited to once again offer our Linkages Program to youth across the province for the coming year," said Minister Smith. "Many of our young people are faced with the challenge of securing a first-time job with little professional experience. Linkages provides youth with the professional experience they need as they continue to develop their career path, as well as help with the cost of education." ¶

