

MINUTE BOOK**Board Meeting**

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of Edmonton School Division of Alberta held in the Centre for Education McCauley Chambers on Tuesday, April 9, 2024, at 2 p.m.

Present:**Trustees**

Trisha Estabrooks
Dawn Hancock
Marcia Hole

Julie Kusiek
Marsha Nelson

Sherri O'Keefe
Jan Sawyer
Saadiq Sumar

Officials

Angela Anderson
Todd Burnstad
Grace Cooke
Andrea Cooper

Karen Mills
Kent Pharis
Nancy Petersen
Cliff Richard

Darrel Robertson
Carrie Rosa
Ron Thompson
Liz Yule

Board Chair: Julie Kusiek

Recording Secretary: Catherine Angeles

The Board Chair called the meeting to order and called upon Trustee Estabrooks to provide a land acknowledgement.

Trustee Estabrooks said with spring returning to Edmonton or amiskwaciwâskahikan, she is reminded of the beauty of this land and the changes that are underway as we celebrate a new season. In change, we can often find new perspectives and she is grateful for this new practice as Board of Trustees, where they are each sharing a different land acknowledgement at the beginning of Board meetings. She has learned a lot from and about colleagues as they have each done their own land acknowledgement.

Trustee Estabrooks acknowledged this land that we are on, this land that so many now call home, and this land that has been home and will continue to be home for the original caretakers of this land, who include the Nehiyawak, Anishinaabe, Siksik-aits-i-tapi, Saulteaux, Stoney Nakoda and Metis from the North Saskatchewan River Territory. Our words matter, as do our actions. Treaty promises were made to last as long as “the sun shines, the grass grows, and rivers flow,” and so as the sun shines and the grass is slowly growing outside and the river flows through our city, she is reminded of those promises and the actions needed to live up to the Treaty that was signed.

A. O Canada

MINUTE BOOK**B. Roll Call: 2:00 p.m.**

The Superintendent advised that Trustee Sumar was participating remotely and all other Trustees were present.

C. Approval of the Agenda

MOVED BY Trustee O'Keefe:

**"That the agenda for the April 9, 2024, Board meeting be approved as printed."
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

D. Communications from the Board Chair

The Board Chair thanked Trustee Estabrooks for a beautiful land acknowledgement and noted the celebration of spring. Chair Kusiek expressed her gratitude to the Division school staff and to all the students celebrating spring with concerts and projects.

The Board Chair shared that last week, she attended the Career Booster Germany event. The initiative aimed to provide our students with valuable opportunities for growth and development. She extended her heartfelt thanks to the following dignitaries who attended this event:

- Marlin Schmidt, MLA for Edmonton-Gold Bar;
- Ruth Schwab, Honourary Consul for the Federal Republic of Germany;
- Andreas Meckes, German Language Advisor for the Federal Republic of Germany posted to Alberta Education; and
- Berit Bein, Educational Liaison with the Goethe-Institut in Toronto.

The Board Chair expressed gratitude to staff and Division partners who joined them for this event and said she was filled with enthusiasm for the possibilities that lie ahead for our students.

The Board Chair stated that the Alberta Government visited M.E. LaZerte School this morning and announced that \$4.45 million in funding, as part of Budget 2024, will go toward dual credit programming across the province. The Board Chair thanked Trustee Nelson, who attended the announcement, as well as staff and students at M.E. LaZerte who showed off what the Division has to offer to so many students. Division schools are proud to offer a number of dual credit courses that allow students to earn industry credentials, giving them a leg up as they think about a career and next steps after high school.

The Board Chair encouraged all parents/guardians to participate in the Board of Trustees' Parent Appreciation Night on April 16 from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Telus World of Science. This event is an opportunity for the Board of Trustees to celebrate and express their gratitude for all parents'/guardians' unwavering commitment to their child's education. All parents/guardians are invited to join them for a night of exploration and fun, including visits to the Arctic Journey gallery, the Dinosaurs exhibit, and the Legends of the Northern Sky at the Zeidler Dome. No RSVP is necessary, and they hope to see everyone there.

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E. Communications from the Superintendent of Schools

The Superintendent welcomed staff and students back from Spring Break and said he hoped everyone had an opportunity for rest and relaxation. He also welcomed everyone watching online and those who were attending the Board meeting in person today.

The Superintendent expressed thanks to all of the families, staff and students who took the time to fill out the Division Feedback Survey. The survey closed on March 22 and the final numbers were really strong:

- 51,677 students
- 5,833 staff
- 7,483 families filled out the survey

The Superintendent said this was an increase of about 3,600 participants compared to last year. The feedback is essential to the Division, as we look to continuously improve.

F. Approval of the Minutes

1. Board Meeting – March 19, 2024

MOVED BY Trustee Hole:

**“That the minutes of the Board meeting held March 19, 2024, be approved as printed.”
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

G. Comments from the Public and Staff Group Representatives on Items on the Meeting Agenda

The Board of Trustees heard from one registered speaker, who spoke in favour of the recommendation report H-7 - Revision to School Nutrition Framework Letter.

H. Reports

2. Oliver School Renaming

A short video presentation was shared acknowledging the new name for Oliver School as wíhkwêntôwin (pronounced *WEE-KWEN-TO-WIN*) School, meaning ‘Circle of Friends’.

3. 2024-2025 Budget – Staff Group Presentations

Mr. Peder Vinge and Ms. Meghan Sievwright, representatives for the Exempt Staff, presented the Exempt Staff’s brief.

Ms. Mandy Lamoureux, President of CUPE Local 3550 (Support Staff), Ms. Shelley Lavalee and Ms. Janice Kube, representatives for CUPE Local 3550, presented the Local’s brief.

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Mr. Barry Benoit, President of CUPE Local 474 (Custodial Staff), presented the Local's brief.

4. Report #04 of the Special Caucus Committee (From the meeting held January 9, 2024)

Information was provided regarding actions taken at the January 9, 2024, Special Caucus Committee meeting.

5. Division Centre Establishments Projected Deficit

MOVED BY Trustee Sumar:

"That authorization to direct up to \$2,000,000 of the Division's 2023-2024 operational budget to support the construction of Division centre classrooms required for the 2024-25 school year be approved."

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

6. Letter Supporting Alberta School Boards Association's Policy Statement on *Local Authority Election Act*

The Government of Alberta conducted a survey, in November and December 2023, to gather input on potential changes to local elections. Trustee Estabrooks suggested that the letter include a request to the Government of Alberta to release the data collected from the survey in the interest of transparency. She also requested that the Public School Boards' Association of Alberta be copied on the letter.

Board Chair Kusiek acknowledged Trustee Estabrooks' suggestions and said should the motion pass, she will include them in the letter.

MOVED BY Trustee Hancock:

"That the Board authorize the Board Chair to send a letter to the Ministers of Education and Municipal Affairs in support of the Alberta School Boards Association's policy position statement, 'School trustee elections should remain free from a political party system'."

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

7. Revision to School Nutrition Framework Letter

Board Chair Kusiek noted that acknowledgement of the April 1, 2024 announcement would be included in the letter.

MOVED BY Board Chair Kusiek:

"That the following be deleted from the letter supporting a National Framework for a School Food Program Act:

Additionally, it can also contribute to the development of a more sustainable food system by supporting local and sustainable food production, and local economies through the creation of jobs.

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The Policy should be followed up by the rollout of a National School Nutritious Meal Program, and with it the \$200 million per year that the Government of Canada committed to in 2021. An investment in Budget 2024 in a national school food program will support both families and school food providers, who have been struggling due to the affordability crisis.”

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

8. Bereavement

Vice-Chair Sawyer reported on the passing of Mrs. Mhairi Anne Rueb.

I. Other Committee, Board Representatives and Trustee Reports

9. Public School Boards’ Association of Alberta Update

Vice-Chair Sawyer submitted a written Public School Boards’ Association of Alberta (PSBAA) update report.

Trustee Estabrooks thanked Forest Heights Elementary School for inviting her to their 75th anniversary celebration. She said it was a wonderful celebration and she was happy to be a part of it.

Trustee Estabrooks said it has been wonderful to attend a number of iftars during Ramadan. The conversations with community at these gatherings have left her filled with hope. She also received great feedback from people around the Division’s inclusive school calendar. She wished everyone who celebrates a happy Eid al-Fitr.

Trustee Estabrooks thanked everyone who did the Division Feedback Survey. She really appreciated the update on the survey response rates from the Superintendent. This is such critical data not just for staff in our Division but for the Board of Trustees when they make policy decisions and other decisions as a Board. She appreciated everyone who helped get the word out and by connecting the survey to the enrolment date, she thinks it really increased the response rate.

Trustee Sumar expressed his gratitude for invitations to community iftar events, some of them organized by Division schools, some of them organized by members of the community, and they were all gracious enough to invite him to attend as a Trustee. Upon reflecting, he couldn't recall that many iftar events being organized even just a few years ago. Our schools and our communities are really driving a lot of work in the area of anti-racism. Trustee Sumar recognized that April 10 is Eid al-Fitr and wished those who were observing Eid Mubarak. Trustee Sumar recognized that just a few days ago was Holi. He said Happy Holi to all those who were celebrating. He also said that in a few days is Vaisakhi and wished happy Vaisakhi to all those who are observing that as well.

Trustee Sumar shared that he had the privilege and opportunity to attend the National School Boards Association Conference in New Orleans. He connected with a number of school boards across Canada as well as in the United States in some important professional development that included topics on 2SLGBTQIA+ rights, advocacy for students with disabilities, and anti-racism and equity programs and

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initiatives. He will prepare a report to bring to public Board, where his colleagues can ask questions as well. Lastly, he recognized that April is World Autism Month or Autism Acceptance Month.

Board Chair Kusiek shared that it was great to connect with school council leaders in Ward F last week. She thanked Strathcona School Council Chairperson Megan and Principal Van Ginhoven for hosting. The meeting participants discussed an update from the Board of Trustees and shared things they were proud of in their school council, as well as things they'd like to learn from one another. The next meet-up will be focused on succession planning for school councils. The Board Chair expressed gratitude to school council volunteers for the important work they do in partnership with schools.

J. Trustees and Board Requests for Information - None

K. Notices of Motions - None

L. Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, April 16, 2024, at 2 p.m.

M. Adjournment: 3:44 p.m.

The Board Chair adjourned the meeting.

Julie Kusiek, Board Chair

Karen Mills, Director Board and
Superintendent Relations