

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, February 6, 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
Kathy Muhlethaler
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 Vice-Chair Sawyer to provide a land acknowledgement.

Vice-Chair Sawyer shared that during her daily walks she is continually grateful for the beauty and peace of our river valley. She is most profoundly reminded that this land is not ours when she thinks about the stories told by Dwayne Donald. She is reminded that our work about hearing the truths of those who were harmed by our settlement of these lands, as well as our work towards reconciliation, will never be complete.

A. O Canada

B. Roll Call: 2:02 p.m.

The Superintendent advised that all Trustees were present.

MINUTE BOOK**C. Approval of the Agenda****MOVED BY Trustee Estabrooks:**

**“That the agenda for the February 6, 2024, Board meeting be approved as printed.”
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

D. Communications from the Board Chair

The Board Chair shared that last week the Premier made an announcement that will have an impact on students across this province. She shared that the Board of Trustees met this morning to share their reactions to the announcement with one another and how they plan to navigate it, as a Board, in the coming days, weeks and months. They have significant concerns about what the Premier announced and how it will impact the safety, inclusion and wellbeing of students in schools. The Board will be writing a letter to the Premier outlining these concerns.

The Board of Trustees believes that the voices of those most impacted need to be heard and emphasized, especially the voices of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. They value and respect the right for 2SLGBTQIA+ students to be themselves and to exercise the full range of their humanity. They accept students for who they are and how they come to school every day. The Board Chair said, “To the 2SLGBTQIA+ students in our schools: The Board of Trustees wants students to know that we care about you and your wellbeing. The Board will continue to advocate for you.”

The Board Chair stated that the Division has a strong sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression (SOGIE) policy in place. The Superintendent shared a letter with families late last week, articulating that the Division’s policies and protections for students remain in place until further notice.

The Board Chair stated that the Board of Trustees were not consulted ahead of last week’s announcement. There will be significant impact to students, staff and school boards as a result of this announcement. It’s essential that the voices of school boards are at the table when it comes to any proposed changes in education before an announcement is made. This proposal is a significant change.

The Board Chair expressed that the Board commits to keeping families and the community informed on our advocacy for safe, welcoming learning environments and for the rights of all students, and at this time especially the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

E. Communications from the Superintendent of Schools

The Superintendent welcomed all of the staff attending the meeting in person, including SCOPE principals Debbie Petkau and Christina Jones, and those who are watching online today.

The Superintendent shared that registration and pre-enrolment opened on February 1 and end on March 22. He said this is the first year that they’ve combined both dates so that students who are new to the Division and students who will remain with us next year can register and pre-enrol on the same day.

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The Superintendent said that as the Division grows, every school has their level on the Growth Control Model posted to their website, which outlines whether they have open boundaries, are nearing capacity or have reached capacity and have implemented a lottery process. This is important information for families to have, as they decide what school their child might attend next year.

Superintendent Robertson explained how the Division determines utilization rates and the Growth Control Model. At a Board meeting earlier this school year, he was asked about how a school, like Westglen, can have a higher utilization rate, but remain at Level 1 on the Growth Control Model. The Division calculates utilization rates based on a formula provided and required by the province. It represents a “one-size-fits-all” approach to measuring the amount of instructional space within a facility where students are. Instructional classroom capacity is calculated by taking the total instructional area, less the areas associated with gymnasiums, physical activity rooms, learning commons (libraries), Career and Technology Studies (CTS) labs and non-profit and administrative spaces. This total is then divided by a predetermined Instructional Area per student. It’s a universal formula that works well for many schools, but isn’t as accurate in all cases, like the Westglen example, where they have unique and different spaces. Our schools are not a one-size-fits-all; we have some older schools and a number of new ones. For example, Westglen has some smaller than average classrooms at 66 square metres, compared to the average classroom size in the Division at 75 square metres and there is less open space that cannot be used for instruction. Based on the formula, Westglen School is calculated at above 100 per cent utilized. The principal works with staff centrally to manage enrolment. Historically, Westglen’s resident attendance area student and siblings have been accommodated, which leaves few spaces for other families who would like to have their children attend school. And while utilization rates factor into determining what level a school is at on the Growth Control Model, it is not the sole consideration. If parents have specific questions about their school’s placement on the Growth Control Model, they are encouraged to speak with their principal.

The Superintendent shared that it’s also open house season within the Division. Open houses give families and students a chance to learn a little more about what a school has to offer, from alternative programming, to complementary courses, extracurricular activities, sports teams, a taste of school culture and a chance to see the space. These open houses happen throughout this month and into March. Everything needed to know about registering, pre-enrolling or attending an open house is available on [epsb.ca](https://www.edmontonpublicschools.ca). If families have any questions, reach out to the school principal for more information.

The Superintendent shared that staff, students and families are invited to participate in the Division Feedback Survey, which provides information to the Division and schools. It’s important the Division hears from staff, students and families about how we’re doing and what they value in a quality education system. The Division uses feedback to help us measure our progress on achieving our goals and understand how to best support students, staff and families. The Board of Trustees is also inviting participants to answer a few questions in the Division Feedback Survey about perceptions of school safety. The survey is open to staff, students in Grades 4-12 and families from February 1 to March 22.

The Superintendent provided an illness data update. One Division school, Glenora, is currently under respiratory outbreak. The school has shared information from Alberta Health Services.

MINUTE BOOK**F. Approval of the Minutes**

1. Board Meeting – January 23, 2024

MOVED BY Trustee Hancock:

**“That the minutes of the Board meeting held January 23, 2024, be approved as printed.”
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

G. Comments from the Public and Staff Group Representatives

There were no registered speakers for this item.

H. Reports

2. Report #05 of the Caucus Committee (From the meeting held January 23, 2024)

Information was provided regarding actions taken at the January 23, 2024, Caucus Committee meeting.

3. Revised 2024-2025 School Year Calendar

MOVED BY Trustee Hole:

**“That the attached revised 2024-2025 School Year Calendar be approved.”
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

4. Second, third and final reading of Board Policy AB.BP Dispute Resolution and Appeals

MOVED BY Trustee Sumar:

**“That Board Policy AB.BP Dispute Resolution and Appeals be read for a second, third and final time and be approved.”
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

5. Board Policy GCA.BP Approval of the School Year Calendar

MOVED BY Trustee Sumar:

**“That Board Policy GCA.BP Approval of the School Year Calendar be read for the first time and be approved for stakeholder feedback.”
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

6. 2022-2023 Division Feedback Survey Report

An update was provided on the 2022-23 Division Feedback Survey, which was administered to students, Division staff and families. The results from the surveys have been compiled into a Division summary report that provided the results for all respondent groups (students Grades 4 to 12, Division staff and families).

MINUTE BOOK7. **Bereavements**

Vice-Chair Sawyer reported on the passing of Miss Meghan Woollam and Mrs. Dalays Shire.

I. Other Committee, Board Representatives and Trustee Reports

Trustee Estabrooks shared that she attended the rally in support of trans rights being human rights on the weekend. There were hundreds of people there, including representatives from all levels of government. While there was certainly a lot of anger, she also saw, heard and felt a lot of hope from the 2SLGBTQIA+ community alongside allies. She thanked the Board Chair for the statement earlier in this meeting.

Trustee Estabrooks expressed gratitude to the City of Edmonton for working with not-for-profit agencies to provide free after school activities at now seven recreation centres across the city. She said this is a great example of how the city is supporting students and families at Edmonton Public schools. She wanted to share the gratitude she has heard from families for this initiative.

The Board Chair shared that February is Black History Month, a time for students, staff and community members to celebrate and learn more about the lives, histories and accomplishments of Black Albertans and Canadians. From art projects and social studies lessons, to visits from influential Black Albertans, schools are engaging in activities throughout the month.

The Board Chair said one of the highlights of Black History Month is the Melisizwe Brothers tour. This is the second year they have performed and given a presentation at more than a dozen Division schools. Through their performances and dialogue, they will help us all better understand and appreciate the diversity and vibrancy of Black culture.

The Board Chair invited students, families and community members to join her on Thursday, February 15, anytime between 6 and 8 pm for coffee and conversation at La Bosco Cafe. Information was shared on the last Ward F Newsletter, and she'll be posting to her social channels and website later this week.

J. Trustees and Board Requests for Information

Trustee Estabrooks submitted a Request for Information regarding 2023-2024 Refugee Student Data:

Could Administration please provide a breakdown of the number of students fleeing persecution and/or global conflicts who are new to the Division for the 2023-2024 school year. Specifically, include data on the number of refugee students and their countries of origin. Include a breakdown of those who arrived on or before the September count date and those who arrived afterwards and include information regarding the funding of these students.

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K. **Notices of Motions** - None

L. **Next Board Meeting**: Tuesday, March 5, 2024, at 2 p.m.

M. **Adjournment**: 3:53 p.m.

The Board Chair adjourned the meeting.

Julie Kusiek, Board Chair

Karen Mills, Director Board and
Superintendent Relations