



The Board of Trustees of Edmonton School Division
One Kingsway, Edmonton, Alberta

Via Zoom
Tuesday, January 26, 2021
2:00 p.m.

Board Meeting #09

AGENDA

- A. Roll Call
- B. Approval of the Agenda
- C. Communications from the Board Chair
- D. Communications from the Superintendent of Schools
- E. Minutes:
 - 1. DRAFT – Board Meeting #08 – January 12, 2021
- F. Comments from the Public and Staff Group Representatives
(NOTE: Pre-registration with the Board Office [780-429-8443] is required by 4:30 p.m. on Monday, January 25, 2021, to speak under this item.)
- G. Reports:
 - 2. Board Policy GGAB.BP Multicultural Education
(Recommendation)
 - 3. Board Policy GGAJ.BP Early Years
(Recommendation)
 - 4. Annual Update on Operational Efficiencies 2019-2020
(Information)
 - 5. Data on Frequency of Seclusion and Restraint Use
(Information – Response to Request for Information #089)
- H. Other Committee, Board Representative and Trustee Reports
- I. Trustee and Board Requests for Information
- J. Notice of Motion
- K. Meeting Dates
- L. Adjournment

**BOARD OF
TRUSTEES**

Trisha Estabrooks
Board Chair

Shelagh Dunn
Board Vice-Chair

Sherry Adams
Michelle Draper
Ken Gibson
Nathan Ip
Michael Janz
Bridget Stirling

MINUTE BOOK**Board Meeting #08**

Minutes of the Board Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Edmonton School Division of the Province of Alberta held via Zoom on Tuesday, January 12, 2021, at 2:00 p.m.

Present:**Trustees**

Sherry Adams
Shelagh Dunn
Michelle Draper

Trisha Estabrooks
Ken Gibson
Nathan Ip

Michael Janz
Bridget Stirling

Officials

Angela Anderson
Todd Burnstad
Grace Cooke
Ron McNeil

Karen Mills
Leona Morrison
Kathy Muhlethaler
Kent Pharis

Nancy Petersen
Darrel Robertson
Carrie Rosa
Liz Yule

Board Chair: Trisha Estabrooks

Recording Secretary: Shirley Juneau

The Board Chair called the meeting to order with recognition that we are on Treaty 6 Territory, a traditional meeting grounds, gathering place, and travelling route to the Cree, Saulteaux, Blackfoot, Métis, Dene and Nakota Sioux. We acknowledge all the many First Nations, Métis and Inuit whose footsteps have marked these lands for centuries.

A. Roll Call: (2:00 p.m.)

The Superintendent advised that all Trustees were present.

B. Approval of the Agenda

MOVED BY Trustee Draper:

**“That the agenda for the January 12, 2021, Board meeting be approved as printed.”
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

C. Communications from the Board Chair

The Board Chair wished everyone a Happy New Year and hoped that staff, administration and the Board of Trustees were able to find some much needed time to rest, relax and rejuvenate. The Board Chair stated there is a need to continue to work hard, lean on each other and continue to advocate for what the Division needs in the coming months.

MINUTE BOOK

The Board Chair said that as of yesterday, all students who chose in-person learning are back in Division classrooms and shared that students, teachers, and parents all want the same thing: to have children back in schools – safely. The Board Chair stated that she believes what students, teachers, parents and families also want is to get off of the “COVID coaster”. The on again, off again disruption to student learning that happens when students return to classes during a pandemic is a difficult transition for everyone. The Board of Trustees has faith in the Division’s re-entry plan as laid out by the Division and shared that staff are doing their best to reduce the spread of the virus as much as possible.

The Board Chair stated that the reality is that Division schools continue to reflect case counts in the general public. She advised that the Board of Trustees will continue to request access to provincial data, including in-school transmission and information about the metrics underlying provincial decisions. The Board Chair explained that data around in-school transmission of COVID-19 has not been shared with school divisions, which is unfortunate since this data could assist staff to adapt and change safety measures as required.

The Board Chair advised that the Division has asked the Province for in-school transmission data, but has yet to receive it. The Board Chair stressed that transparency and clear information remain very important. The Board said the Division also looks forward to hearing more information about supports for teachers and schools, including contact-tracing support for schools from the Alberta government. She stated these are both items Premier Kenney mentioned during his Facebook Live event.

The Board Chair announced that Maintenance Employees’ Appreciation Day is on Wednesday, January 20, 2021. She said that maintenance employees and CUPE Local 784 bring so much skill and creativity to the Division and that everyone relies on these employees to keep buildings safe, healthy and running efficiently. The Board Chair shared the Division will be doing a social media campaign to recognize their work and contributions.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, the Board Chair thanked the maintenance employees and CUPE Local 784 for their hard work and dedication in supporting staff and students.

D. Communications from the Superintendent of Schools

The Superintendent wished everyone a Happy New Year and expressed his sincere appreciation to students, staff and parents who have done a tremendous job in keeping teaching and learning moving forward during a global pandemic. He noted that staff have gone above and beyond in many areas and pointed out the amazing work that is being done to maintain effective communication with families when there is a case of COVID-19 in a school. He explained that during part of the winter break, Division staff worked diligently to ensure families were notified if there were COVID-19 cases and potential close contacts that the Division became aware of after December 18, reinforcing the Division’s collective commitment to the safety of its students and staff, and the community.

MINUTE BOOK

The Superintendent advised that the Division is working to keep stakeholders informed about the realities of COVID-19 by providing regular updates to the media, publishing the number of cases on the Division's website daily and providing weekly updates to Division staff. The Superintendent reported that on November 30, 2020, students in grades 7 to 12 moved to online learning; however, there were a number of students that required specialized supports that remained in schools for face-to-face learning during that time. The Superintendent said that all students, excluding those requiring specialized supports, shifted to at-home learning for the first week after winter recess. On January 7, 2021, the Province confirmed that all students would return to face-to-face learning on January 11, 2021.

The Superintendent stated that the Division's safety protocols remain in place and it continues to exercise caution in notifications to families of COVID-19 cases in schools asking that all staff and students in a cohort that have had potential exposure self-isolate for a 14-day period. The Superintendent reported that the Division has had 1,044 cases of COVID-19 since the beginning of September 2020, resulting in 24,786 students and 2,790 staff that were required to self-isolate. The Superintendent reported that from November 11, 2020 to January 11, 2021, the Division had 672 individuals test positive for COVID-19.

The Superintendent shared that Dr. Hinshaw has stated that in-school transmission is not a main driver of COVID-19 cases amongst school age children. The Superintendent has asked for COVID-19 in-school transmission data specific to the Division. The Superintendent said that feedback he has received from Alberta Health Services and Occupational Health and Safety inspections shows the safety protocols within the Division are good; they are supportive of the Division's re-entry strategy and the safety protocols are being applied in the Division's schools effectively.

The Superintendent shared that a concern moving forward is the Division's ability to provide enough supply teachers and supply educational assistants when there are increased cases of COVID-19. He advised that the Division is working on a survey of the supply staff to ensure the Division is doing everything it can to make them accessible for temporary assignments.

E. Minutes

1. Board Meeting #07 – December 8, 2020

MOVED BY Vice-Chair Dunn:

"That the minutes of Board Meeting #07 held December 8, 2020, be approved as printed."

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

F. Comments from the Public and Staff Group Representatives

There was one registered speaker who spoke on behalf of the University of Alberta Black Youth Mentorship & Leadership Programme.

MINUTE BOOK

G. Reports

2. Report #21 of the Caucus Committee (From the meeting held December 8, 2020)

Information was provided regarding actions taken at the December 8, 2020, Caucus Committee meeting.

3. First, Second, Third and Final Reading of Board Policy EM.BP Alcohol, Tobacco and Cannabis on and in Division Property and at Division Functions

MOVED BY Trustee Stirling:

**"1. That Board Policy EM.BP Alcohol, Tobacco and Cannabis on and in Division Property and at Division Functions be considered for the first, second and third time at this meeting."
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

**"2. That Board Policy EM.BP Alcohol, Tobacco and Cannabis on and in Division Property and at Division Functions be considered for the first time."
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

**"3. That Board Policy EM.BP Alcohol, Tobacco and Cannabis on and in Division Property and at Division Functions be considered for the second time."
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

**"4. That Board Policy EM.BP Alcohol, Tobacco and Cannabis on and in Division Property and at Division Functions be considered for the third and final time and be approved."
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

4. Update on the Model for the Collection of Race-based Data

Administration provided an update on the Division's progress in creating a model to collect race-based data.

H. Other Committee, Board Representative and Trustee Reports

Trustee Draper stated that the nomination process, coordinated by the City of Edmonton for the next municipal election to be held on October 18, 2021, opened early this month and runs until September 20, 2021. She said the election includes Edmonton Public School Board Trustees.

Trustee Draper advised that after careful consideration she has decided not to seek re-election as Trustee for Ward B. She thanked the constituents for the honour and privilege to serve in this role for the past seven plus years.

Trustee Draper encouraged those who live in the northeast part of Edmonton or who are connected to it, who are interested in promoting public education and this form of service to consider this

MINUTE BOOK

position. Trustee Draper expressed that she hopes to be a resource for interested candidates and welcomed those who would like information to contact her directly. Other resources include Edmonton Elections and the Alberta School Boards Association.

Trustee Draper also thanked the Edmonton Public Schools' students, families, staff and stakeholders for the memorable opportunity to serve on the Board of Trustees and to represent the northeast part of Edmonton for two terms.

I. **Trustee and Board Requests for Information** - None

J. **Notices of Motion**

Vice-Chair Dunn requested that the Board grant waiver of notice of motion to consider two recommendations:

MOVED BY Vice-Chair Dunn:

**"1. That the Board of Trustees grant waiver of notice of motion to consider two related motions at the January 12, 2021, Board meeting."
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

**"2. That, in accordance with the *Education Act* and the Superintendent of Schools Regulation, authorization for the Board Chair to seek the approval of the Minister of Education to reappoint the Superintendent of Schools for a new five-year term effective September 1, 2021 to August 31, 2026 be approved."
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

**"3. That, subject to the approval of the Minister of Education, authorization for the Board Chair to sign on behalf of the Board a new five-year contract of employment with the Superintendent of Schools effective September 1, 2021 to August 31, 2026 be approved."
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

K. **Next Board Meeting**: Tuesday, January 26, 2021, at 2:00 p.m.

L. **Adjournment**: 3:05 p.m.

The Board Chair adjourned the meeting.

Trisha Estabrooks, Board Chair

Karen Mills, Director of Board and
Superintendent Relations

DATE: January 26, 2021

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Trustee Sherry Adams, Policy Review Committee
Trustee Michael Janz, Policy Review Committee
Trustee Bridget Stirling, Chair, Policy Review Committee

SUBJECT: Board Policy GGAB.BP Multicultural Education

ORIGINATOR: Karen Mills, Director Board and Superintendent Relations

RESOURCE

STAFF: Youssra Badr, Marnie Beaudoin, Rachel Foley, Amanda Lau, Ann Parker, Nancy Petersen, Elizabeth Shen, Jt Tehara, Munira Wazir, Gail Wilson

REFERENCE: Board Policy CH.BP – Framework for Policy Development and Review

ISSUE

The Policy Review Committee is bringing Board Policy GGAB.BP Multicultural Education to the Board of Trustees at public Board for first reading.

BACKGROUND

Edmonton Public Schools' Board of Trustees is committed to high quality learning environments that are welcoming, inclusive, safe and healthy. The Board values diversity in its schools, staff and communities and affirms its commitment to ensuring students have a sense of belonging and ability to participate fully in their learning and as members of a school community through Board Policy GGAB.BP Multicultural Education. This policy is currently up for review.

RELATED FACTS

The revision of the policy reflects a significant shift in the tone and intent from the original document. The previous policy, which was very progressive in its day, was developed to focus more around teaching and learning and was located in the curriculum and instruction area of Board policies. The new draft being presented for first reading reflects a shift to a more holistic view and is intended to sit in section H of Board policies, reflecting students.

To support the work to review the policy, the Board invited community members to participate in a Policy Review Advisory Committee. The committee met several times throughout 2019 and 2020 to discuss the policy and refine its scope and intent. Members of the committee provided their perspectives through in person conversations, online meetings and feedback forms. Additionally, other educational institutions' anti-racism and equity policies were reviewed to help inform developing the updated direction of the first draft.

As a result of this work, there have been substantive changes to the first draft of the policy to more clearly reflect the Division's commitment to anti-racism and equity. This policy recognizes the important role of public education in reflecting, influencing and driving positive systemic change and understands school communities are critical to the development of students' personal and cultural identities. This

first draft of the policy clearly acknowledges that racism exists, both in schools and the broader community, that it can be perpetuated at the individual, institutional and systemic levels and affirms the Board's commitment to addressing racism.

After first reading of the policy, it is the intent of the Policy Review Committee to proceed with further stakeholder engagement to inform the work to finalize the final draft of the document. This engagement will include the traditional online survey as well as focus group type dialogue with parents, staff, students and community members.

This work by the Board of Trustees supports the following areas of the 2018-2022 District Strategic Plan:

- Priority 1 Goal 2: Success for every student.
- Priority 2: Provide welcoming, high quality learning and working environments.
- Priority 2 Goal 1: Our learning and working environments are welcoming, inclusive, safe and healthy.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Board Policy GGAB.BP Multicultural Education be introduced.
2. That Board Policy GGAB.BP Multicultural Education be read for the first time and approved for consultation for further stakeholder feedback.

OPTIONS

Based on the information provided in this report, the following options are considered most appropriate:

1. Approve first reading of the policy.
2. Provide the Policy Review Committee with feedback to inform revision of the document to support approval of first reading at an upcoming Board meeting.

CONSIDERATIONS and ANALYSIS

Board Policy GGAB.BP Multicultural Education is up for review. The draft policy being presented for first reading has been informed by working with an advisory committee and a review of other public school and post-secondary anti-racism and equity policies.

After first reading, the Policy Review Committee will be embarking upon additional engagement with stakeholders to help inform final work on the policy prior to bringing it to the Board of Trustees for second, third and final reading.

In the Policy Review Committee's work plan the intended timeline to have this policy work completed is the 2020-2021 school year.

NEXT STEPS

The Policy Review Committee will take their next steps based on feedback from the Board of Trustees.

ATTACHMENTS and APPENDICES

ATTACHMENT I Draft Board Policy GGAB.BP Multicultural Education

BS:rf

CODE: GGAB.BP

EFFECTIVE DATE: (09-06-2009)

TOPIC: Anti-Racism and Equity

ISSUE DATE: (11-06-2009)

REVIEW YEAR: (2016)

PURPOSE

To affirm the Board of Trustees' (the Board) responsibility for providing a welcoming, inclusive, safe and healthy learning and working environment throughout the Division that is respectful of and responsive to students' life experiences.

To affirm the Board of Trustees' commitment to addressing racism and inequity in the public school system.

To promote a division culture that recognizes diversity as a strength and values diversity in its schools, staff and communities.

To affirm the Board's commitment to developing positive relationships with staff, family and community members and working together in support of student success.

DEFINITIONS

Anti-racism is the proactive and consistent process of identifying, challenging, preventing and eliminating racism. It uses direct action to acknowledge where privilege exists, raise awareness, advocate for change and challenge beliefs (such as prejudice, bias and stereotypes) at the personal and institutional level to create and implement action to fight racism for individuals and within an organization, workforce or group.

Racism occurs in the context of a power imbalance and is prejudice based on social constructs, lack of knowledge or personal beliefs of superiority resulting in advantage of one race over another. Racism can be experienced at the individual, institutional or systemic level. It includes conscious and unconscious discriminatory or derogatory attitudes, comments or actions derived from assumptions and perceptions relative to race or culture.

Cultural diversity refers to the presence of all diverse groups in an organization and acknowledges and values their socio-cultural differences and their cultural expressions and contributions within the organization.

Discrimination is negative differential treatment of a person or group on the basis of race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status, gender identity and/or gender expression or sexual orientation.

Diversity refers to the uniqueness of human differences. It includes ways of being, doing and knowing.

Equity in an educational institution is achieved when students are fully able to participate in the benefits of an education, including the opportunity to experience success and human dignity while developing the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to contribute as citizens in society.

Implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions and decisions in an unconscious manner.

Inclusive An inclusive education system is a way of thinking and acting that demonstrates acceptance of, and belonging for, all students - regardless of their backgrounds, needs or abilities. It is founded on the belief that all children can learn and reach their full potential given opportunity, effective teaching and appropriate resources. An inclusive education system supports every student to be included and feel represented within their greater school community.

Intercultural understanding, learning from and engaging with diverse cultures in ways that support commonalities and differences, create connections with others and cultivate mutual respect.

POLICY

All members of the school community have the right to learn and work in an environment free of discrimination, prejudice and racism. This right is guaranteed under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, *Alberta Human Rights Act* and *Education Act*. The Board confirms its commitment and role in achieving racism-free Division schools and recognizes that working toward this vision is for the benefit of all students, staff and the community at large.

The Board recognizes the important role of public education in reflecting, influencing and driving positive systemic change and understands school communities are critical to the development of students' personal and cultural identity.

The diversity of students, staff and their families is a strength of Edmonton Public Schools. The Board recognizes that respect for diverse cultural perspectives, traditions, languages, beliefs and values enriches the learning and working environment for everyone. The Board is committed to honouring cultural diversity, promoting intercultural understanding to enable reflection and growth and fostering a sense of belonging.

The Board recognizes that racism exists and can be perpetuated at the individual, institutional and systemic level. The Board further recognizes that individuals experiencing racism at any level encounter barriers to positive relationships, learning, academic success and personal fulfilment. The Board acknowledges the complexity of how racism may be experienced by students-and commits to openly and immediately addressing incidents of racism.

A. EQUITY AND INCLUSION

The Board understands that a sense of belonging for students enriches the learning environment for all students. The Board commits to equity and inclusion through:

- a. Establishing and implementing an environment that reflects the cultural diversity of the school community and that is responsive to students' life experiences and cultural backgrounds.

- b. Supporting staff through professional development that is focused on helping staff understand the diversity within their school, in their responsibility to respect cultural diversity and promote intercultural understanding.
- c. Actively establishing community relationships that reflect the diversity of the school and broader community.

B. ANTI-RACISM AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Board recognizes that racism exists in the education system and the broader community and that the efforts to eradicate racism and discrimination from our learning environments is an ongoing and collective responsibility. The Board commits to this through:

- a. Developing healthy relationships that strengthen open and respectful dialogue to resolve racial inequity, conflicts and misunderstanding rooted in unknowing, implicit bias, prejudice and/or racism.
- b. Providing professional development and capacity building for Division staff to better understand their role in mitigating biases and barriers caused by racism and discrimination that affect students and families in the school system.
- c. Engaging with members of the community who have experienced systemic and institutional racism and marginalisation to help inform the Divisions deliberate efforts to eradicate racism and discrimination within the school system.

C. STUDENT SUCCESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

The Board believes that every student can reach their full potential, and acknowledges that deliberate and strategic efforts are required to ensure the success and achievement for all students. The Board commits to this through:

- a. Using evidence and data to inform decision making that enables equity of access to educational opportunities.
- b. Supporting schools to identify and use resources that represent the cultural diversity of the school community.
- c. Engaging with staff, family, educational institutions, community members and cultural groups to support student success and provide opportunities to learn in a way that brings the unique voice and lived experience to the curriculum and their learning.

EXPECTATIONS

The Superintendent of Schools will implement this policy by assigning roles and responsibilities, and developing administrative regulations, processes and best practices.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Superintendent will provide an annual update to the Board around progress made in support of student success and achievement within a welcoming, inclusive, safe and healthy environment.

The Division will identify goals and strategies that support the diversity of our school communities, including English Language Learners, through the Three Year Education Plan and will provide an annual update on progress and priority strategies through the Annual Education Results Report to Alberta Education.

REFERENCES

ACB.BP National Anthem and Flag
FA.BP Human Resources Framework
FBCA.BP Respectful Working Environments
GI.AR Teaching and Learning Resources
GGAB.AR Multicultural Education
HAA.BP First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education
HEGD.AR Exemption of Pupil from Instruction on Religious Grounds
HF.BP Safe, Caring and Respectful Learning Environments
Teaching Quality Standard
Leadership Quality Standard

DRAFT

DATE: January 26, 2021

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Trustee Sherry Adams, Policy Review Committee
Trustee Michael Janz, Policy Review Committee
Trustee Bridget Stirling, Chair, Policy Review Committee

SUBJECT: Board Policy GGAJ.BP Early Years

ORIGINATOR: Karen Mills, Director Board and Superintendent Relations

RESOURCE STAFF: Rachel Foley, Ann Parker, Nancy Petersen, Natalie Prytuluk

REFERENCE: Board Policy CH.BP – Framework for Policy Development and Review

ISSUE

The Policy Review Committee is bringing Board Policy GGAJ.BP Early Years to the Board of Trustees at public Board for first reading.

BACKGROUND

Edmonton Public Schools' Board of Trustees is committed to high quality early learning opportunities for children across Edmonton. The Board sets direction for early years programming through Board Policy GGAJ.BP Early Years. This policy is currently up for review.

RELATED FACTS

As part of its policy review process, the Board invited families, staff and community members to provide their perspectives through conversations about early childhood education in the spring of 2019 and reviewed current research related to early years programming. The draft policy also reflects the role of the Division as an early childhood service provider as set out by Alberta Education and the provincial funding manual.

After first reading the draft policy will be posted and a survey opened for final input from staff, families and members of the broader community. Feedback from the survey will be used to inform final work on the document prior to bringing it to the Board of Trustees for second, third and final reading.

This work by the Board of Trustees supports the following areas of the 2018-2022 District Strategic Plan:

- Priority 1: Foster growth and success for every student by supporting their journey from early learning through high school completion and beyond.
- Priority 1 Goal 1: An excellent start to learning: More children enter Grade 1 reaching emotional, social, intellectual and physical developmental milestones.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Board Policy GGAJ.BP Early Years be introduced.
2. That Board Policy GGAJ.BP Early Years be read for the first time and approved for posting on the Division website for final stakeholder feedback.

OPTIONS

Based on the information provided in this report, the following options are considered most appropriate:

1. Approve first reading of the policy.
2. Provide the Policy Review Committee with feedback to inform revision of the document to support approval of first reading at an upcoming Board meeting.

CONSIDERATIONS and ANALYSIS

Board Policy GGAJ.BP Early Years is up for review. The draft policy being brought forward for first reading has been informed by stakeholder engagement, a review of current research for the early years and contextualized within the Division's role as one of many service providers within the community. After first reading at public Board, the policy will be posted for stakeholder feedback through an online survey.

In the Policy Review Committee's work plan, the intended timeline to have this policy work completed is the 2020-2021 school year. First reading is the first step towards achieving this timeline.

NEXT STEPS

The Policy Review Committee will take their next steps based on feedback from the Board of Trustees.

ATTACHMENTS AND APPENDICES

ATTACHMENT I Draft Board Policy GGAJ.BP Early Years

BS:rf

CODE: GGAJ.BP

EFFECTIVE DATE: (24-11-2009)

TOPIC: Early Years

ISSUE DATE: (29-06-2015)

REVIEW YEAR: (2016)

PURPOSE

To affirm the Board of Trustees' (the Board) role in supporting the provision of early childhood services programs.

To support the Division's youngest learners to thrive within a welcoming, inclusive, safe and healthy learning environment.

DEFINITIONS

Early Years Programming is the continuum of programs offered in Edmonton Public Schools for children under the age of six and for children as young as two years and eight months in alignment with requirements for Early Childhood Services under the *Education Act*.

- **Pre-Kindergarten** serving children who meet eligibility criteria as outlined by Alberta Education. Based on Alberta Education eligibility criteria, children may be eligible for funding for one or two years of Pre-Kindergarten before their Kindergarten year.
- **Kindergarten** serving all children in the year prior to Grade 1. In Edmonton Public Schools, Kindergarten is typically offered five half days per week though some full-day programs may be available to serve children living in socially vulnerable neighbourhoods.

POLICY

Research in the field of early childhood recognizes that the early years of a child's life have a profound and lasting impact on children's future learning and development. Young children thrive when they have secure, positive relationships with adults who are knowledgeable about how to support their development and learning.

All children are curious and eager to learn. Children's families are their first and most important teacher. The Board recognizes that families play a significant role in children's learning, health, development and well-being and is committed to building strong relationships with families as critical partners in their children's learning.

The Board acknowledges that early childhood educators also have an important role in nurturing relationships among children, staff and families and is committed to providing positive experiences in the early years of a child's life. Additionally, the Board recognizes the effectiveness of early years programming for children and the positive long term impact this investment has for the broader society.

Early childhood programming provides early intervention, especially in key areas such as language, self-regulation, empathy, social skills, gross and fine-motor skills and early literacy and numeracy. The Board is committed to providing an excellent start to learning through the provision of early years programming that is responsive to the needs of all children.

Early childhood educators support the growth and well-being of young learners through a range of developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive experiences using research and evidence-based approaches to learning. The Board is committed to providing early years programs and learning environments that are inclusive, nurturing and strength-based and support the diversity of languages, cultures, social circumstances and abilities of the children served. First Nations, Métis and Inuit ways of knowing, being and doing will be reflected in both the learning environment and activities that support learning. The Board recognizes that the provision of high quality early years programming is supported by staff that have knowledge, skills, attitudes and expertise to work with the diverse needs of young children.

Strong early development and learning requires a relationship-based approach to nurture young children's sense of belonging as members of a community. Community stakeholders serve as important partners in the provision of early years programming in the Edmonton community. The Division values stakeholder's expertise, services and resources and collaborates to provide additional support for children and families.

The Board acknowledges the importance of strategic collaboration with various levels of government, including municipal and provincial, to advance funding, access and guidelines to support the needs of children and families in the community.

EXPECTATIONS

The Superintendent will implement this policy by assigning roles and responsibilities and through developing administrative regulations, processes and best practices.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Superintendent will provide updates to the Board around progress made in support of early years programming in Edmonton Public Schools.

The Division will provide an annual update on progress and priority strategies that support early years programming through the Annual Education Results Report.

REFERENCES

AA.BP Stakeholder Relations

AE.BP Welcoming, Inclusive, Safe and Healthy Learning and Working Environments

HAA.BP First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education

Education Act Section 21

Early Childhood Services Regulation (Alberta Education)

DATE: January 26, 2021

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Annual Update on Operational Efficiencies 2019-2020

ORIGINATOR: Todd Burnstad, Chief Financial Officer

RESOURCE

STAFF: Lea Beeken, Marnie Beaudoin, Terry Korte, Delia Kuzz, Geoff Holmes, Roland Labbe, Amanda Lanctot, Robert Mah, Ann Parker

REFERENCE: N/A

ISSUE

This information report contains the 2019-2020 update, which is presented to the Board of Trustees annually, on the operational efficiencies undertaken to maximize the amount of education dollars directed to the classroom.

BACKGROUND

For purposes of this discussion, the following information includes: efficiencies that were continued from 2018-2019, new efficiencies that were realized during the 2019-2020 school year, and other efficiencies currently being explored.

The Provision of Educational Facility and Capital Planning Services to School Jurisdictions (continuation from prior years)

Infrastructure provides educational facility and capital planning support to school jurisdictions through contracted services.

- A school viability study was completed on Grassland School for the Aspen View School Division.
- Support was provided to the Northland School Division in doing site readiness analysis studies for school capital projects in both Fort Chipewyan and Conklin, Alberta.
- Ongoing support planning is being provided for a potential replacement school project in Fort Chipewyan.

Development of a Ten-Year Facilities and Three-Year Capital Plan for Northlands School Division is currently underway, in advance of a submission to Alberta Education prior to April 1, 2021.

Collaborative Transportation Service with Edmonton Catholic Schools (continuation from prior years)

Following discussions between Edmonton Public Schools and Edmonton Catholic Schools in the spring of 2018, a shared transportation arrangement was pursued to expand existing shared bus routes and also find efficiencies. While students from each jurisdiction will ride separately, the buses operating these routes will be shared with the costs and efficiencies split between the divisions.

In the 2018-2019 school year, administration implemented 25 bus routes using the shared transportation arrangement, which resulted in approximately \$650,000 in savings for the Division. In the 2019-2020 school year, an additional three routes were added bringing the total number of shared routes to 28.

Bus Pass Reporting (continued from 2018-2019)

The joint initiative between Financial Services began in 2018-2019 to simplify the way in which schools submit their monthly bus pass summary reports and remit their bus pass fees to Financial Services.

Since the initial rollout in May 2019, changes for bus pass fees were implemented in the system for the February 2020 bus fee increases, as well as the 2020-2021 update to the transportation fee schedule.

School Fee Reporting

The *Education Act* came into effect on September 1, 2019, resulting in changes to the school fee regulation that would reduce the level of detailed reporting required by schools and Financial Services. Although the amount of information required to be reported to Alberta Education was reduced, leadership determined that some of this information remains useful from a Division standpoint and is important for public accountability. Former reporting requirements that were of little value were eliminated.

For example, Alberta Education no longer requires a report to the minister of education for every fee charged with an explanation for fee increases greater than five per cent. However, schools continued to report this to ensure that they are mindful when fees increase.

In prior years, schools were required to post (on their websites):

- their current year's projected maximum fees
- the prior year's projected fees
- percentage change
- and the reason for the increase

This made the reports cluttered and difficult for the public to read. Reports posted on school websites now show fee name and amount, as required by the current *School Fee Regulation*.

Through consultation with several school principals, additional tools were posted and made available:

- A fee calculator, modified from a design used at Svend Hansen school, so that schools can calculate school fees in a systematic fashion.
- A comparison of optional fees by general category to provide guidance to principals in setting fees.
- Templates were created to provide clarity around the fees that are being charged.

The due date for reporting expected school fees was moved to June from the previous April due date as it is a less busy time in schools. This was accomplished due to diminished reporting requirements to Alberta Education. The fee reporting tool was also streamlined in response to feedback from schools.

School Generated Funds (SGF) Financial System Review

Financial Services is in the process of reviewing its SGF financial systems and processes with the intention of investigating options that can create efficiencies and respond to school needs. The COVID-19 pandemic, technological advances, and evolving e-commerce solutions have necessitated changes in how financial transactions are conducted in schools.

Fee Management Solution

Edmonton Public Schools is the only major school division that is using a Fees Management System (FMS) that is internally developed and maintained. For the past 20 years, the Division has used FMS which was developed by Division Technology in order to manage school fee collection and receipting. The system has served the Division well with training and support provided by Division Technology and as it is an internally developed system, there are no external costs associated with its use.

The increase in the number of fees and types of fees being charged in schools, the provincial school fee regulations, fee refunds and reliance on ecommerce has necessitated the consideration of using a professionally designed fee solution. Investing in a commercially developed solution will save time and work at school level while increasing the potential for online fundraising, donations, and sales.

A request for information (RFI) was issued in August 2020. Out of the five responses received, three of the systems can potentially be used to increase efficiency in our schools. However, conversion is not feasible for the 2021-2022 school year as originally conceived due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, Financial Services will draft a business plan in early 2021 to discuss possible next steps.

Banking

Currently, each school is responsible for its own bank accounts and treasury function. They have complete autonomy in managing their bank account within the restrictions of Financial Services policies and practices. This has been identified as a risk by our external auditors as internal control safeguards can be circumvented, resulting in fraud or theft that can go undetected until the next internal audit.

Furthermore, current systems rely heavily on manual cheques in order to ensure that all disbursements from the bank account are reviewed and approved by two members of each school staff. Cheques are being used less by businesses and individuals in favor of electronic transfers. Furthermore, the increased number of cheques generated at school level as a result of school fee refunds has resulted in more fraudulent transactions occurring in the schools from altered or counterfeit cheques.

In order to mitigate some of the banking risks that currently exist, we are investigating banking options that would allow the schools to continue having an independent bank account which would fall under a Division master bank account. With the help from one of our schools, the plan is to test this type of banking platform in February 2021. The results of this test will help inform our Division banking requirements as our current agreement with Scotia Bank expires on August 31, 2021.

School Accounting

Schools currently use QuickBooks Online (QBO), an easy-to-use accounting system that does not require an in-depth knowledge of accounting. However, this does involve keeping track of school generated funds (maintained by schools) and Division funds (maintained by Financial Services) on two different systems with a lot of manual entry into QBO.

This could potentially be the most complicated process to change as replacing or merging the school accounting program may have a significant impact on how work processes are managed as well as staffing levels. Administration will continue to review this potential initiative to determine if any efficiencies can be achieved.

Enhancements to SchoolZone (continued from 2018-2019)

Enhancements to SchoolZone were added to the pre-enrolment selection for the 2020-2021 school year to assist schools in meeting the Alberta Education regulation that requires a parent to annually confirm, in writing, their child's enrolment. This reduced staff workload with the Student Information Correction Form process, starting in the 2020-2021 school year.

The Provision of Instructional Support Services to Alberta Education, School Jurisdictions and Organizations

Several departments within the Division provide supports to Alberta Education, school divisions and outside organizations, either through partnership agreements, or informal collaboration, enabling access to professional learning services and events or contracted services. Examples include:

- In response to the pandemic the Resource Hub at Edmonton Public Schools was launched ahead of schedule. As of August 31 2020, 171 teaching and learning resources had been posted; the Hub received over 52,000 visits and approximately 11,500 downloaded resources from over 50 countries around the world. The ready availability of these resources allows other school divisions to access our materials easily without having to go through Division staff, saving a considerable amount of time that would have been spent fielding these queries.
- Scope and Sequence documents that show the distribution of all outcomes from the program of studies in a monthly format were developed and provided to all Division schools from Kindergarten to Grade 9 along with many school authorities across the province. To date, 38 Alberta school authorities have been provided with Scopes and Sequences. These documents support efficiencies in teacher planning time as well as increased efficiency in the process to support students transitioning between in person and at home learning.
- Teacher Support Packs, designed to support teaching and learning in face-to-face, online and at-home learning contexts were developed for Kindergarten to Grade 9. To date, 38 Alberta school authorities have been provided with Teacher Support Packs. Development of these packs will continue through 2020-2021, with new packs released every week. These resources support efficiencies in teacher planning time, support continuity of learning for students transitioning between in person and at home learning and support reduced teacher planning time for supply teachers.
- In response to the pandemic, in partnership with Alberta Metro School Boards, resources were developed to support the implementation of mental health strategies for school re-entry which included learning activities, videos, tips sheets and a principal toolkit. This collaboration resulted in efficiencies in provincial education funds as well as staff time.

KEY POINTS

As noted above, Edmonton Public Schools continues to collaborate with other school divisions, organizations and working committees. This collaboration not only maximizes provincial education funds, but also creates efficiencies resulting in cost and time savings and the ability to provide supports and services for students across Alberta.

TB:ja

DATE: January 20, 2021

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Data on Frequency of Seclusion and Restraint use
(Response to Request for Information #089)

ORIGINATOR: Kathy Muhlethaler, Assistant Superintendent

**RESOURCE
STAFF:** Ann Parker, Natalie Prytuluk

REFERENCE: HAH.AR Division Seclusion Rooms and Use of Physical Restraint

ISSUE

Trustee Dunn requested data on the frequency of seclusion and restraint use since the Division implemented the new administrative regulation and training modules.

BACKGROUND

In the fall of 2019, Alberta Education released a Ministerial Order for Standards for Seclusion and Physical restraints in Alberta Schools. These standards and guidelines are the basis for our Division's Administrative Regulation HAH.AR Seclusion Rooms and Use of Physical Restraint.

One of the requirements of this regulation is mandatory training and certification in Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (NVC) for staff working with students presenting with significant emotional/behavioural needs. In addition, three complex behaviour professional learning modules were developed for staff to support positive behaviour interventions and strategies through all tiers of the pyramid of intervention. To date, 1,083 Division staff have been certified or recertified in NVC, and 2,982 Division staff have attended one or more of the complex behaviour modules. For 2020-2021, the complex behaviour modules have moved to online access, and NVC instructors are developing an online training process for new staff to roll out in early 2021.

Alberta Education also requires school divisions to track and provide data each month on the use of operational seclusion rooms for each school that continues to have a seclusion room in their building. There are 63 schools that currently have one or more operational seclusion rooms.

Students using a seclusion room would typically have this listed as a strategy on their Individual Behaviour Support Plan (IBSP). The IBSP is reviewed and signed by the student's parents/guardians as part of the student's Individual Program Plan (IPP). Data collection for physical restraint is new this year and processes are still being refined to ensure we are collecting accurate information.

CURRENT SITUATION

The following chart shows data for non-self-selected and self-selected seclusion room use from September 2019 onward. The records show that data is trending downwards in use of seclusion rooms in the Division.

No data was collected during the pause on in-person learning from April 2020 to June 2020 as students were not physically in school.

Data for 2020-2021 reflects students attending in-person learning.

	Monthly Seclusion Room Use					
	Non-self selected	Unique Students	Self-selected	Unique Students	Total Use	Total Unique Students
2019 - 2020						
September 2019	267	93	538	146	805	239
October 2019	391	89	816	119	1207	208
November 2019	282	36	329	50	611	86
December 2019	250	15	144	25	394	40
January 2020	240	17	255	14	495	31
February 2020	205	29	132	15	337	44
March 2020	76	5	77	6	153	11
TOTAL	1711	284	2291	375	4002	659
2020-2021						
September 2020	60	28	104	52	164	80
October 2020	90	21	94	28	184	49
November 2020	84	15	88	5	172	20
TOTAL	234	64	286	85	520	149

Analysis of the data will be ongoing as part of Division work, as will the continuation of NVCi certification and recertification, and the recommended complex behaviour professional learning modules. The seclusion room data will be shared in the Monthly Superintendent Trustee Update.

KEY POINTS

- Data collected on use of operational seclusion rooms shows a decrease in usage from September 2019 to present.
- Data collection on physical restraint is new for the 2020-2021 school year and a record collection process is being reviewed and refined.
- There are 1,083 Division staff that have been certified or recertified in Nonviolent Crisis Intervention, and 2,982 Division staff have attended one or more of the complex behaviour modules. All training will be accessible online for the 2020-2021 school year.

AP:lb