

MINUTE BOOK**Board Meeting #01**

Minutes of the Edmonton School Division Board of Trustees public meeting held in McCauley Chambers on Tuesday, November 9, 2021, at 2 p.m.

Present:**Trustees**

Trisha Estabrooks
Dawn Hancock
Marcia Hole

Nathan Ip
Julie Kusiek
Marsha Nelson

Sherri O'Keefe
Jan Sawyer
Saadiq Sumar

Officials

Angela Anderson
Todd Burnstad
Ron MacNeil

Karen Mills
Leona Morrison
Kathy Muhlethaler
Nancy Petersen

Kent Pharis
Carrie Rosa
Liz Yule

Board Chair: Trisha Estabrooks

Recording Secretary: Karen Mills

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.

The Board Chair advised that in the event of a fire alarm, individuals in McCauley Chambers would be directed to the nearest emergency exit and should proceed to the muster point in the northwest surface parking lot.

The Board Chair advised that Superintendent Robertson was not able to attend the meeting and that Assistant Superintendent Muhlethaler would be acting in his place.

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

The Assistant Superintendent advised that all Trustees were present.

B. Approval of the Agenda

MOVED BY Trustee Hole:

**"That the agenda for the November 9, 2021, Board meeting be approved as printed."
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

MINUTE BOOK

C. Vimy Ridge Academy Remembrance Ceremony

A recorded ceremony produced by Vimy Ridge Academy was shared to commemorate Remembrance Day.

D. Communications from the Board Chair

The Board Chair noted that November 8 was National Indigenous Veterans Day. Indigenous veterans overcame and continue to face many challenges to serve our country and the Board Chair said we thank them for their service. She added that on Thursday, we will also recognize Remembrance Day and the service of all veterans as well as those currently serving our country.

She noted that a number of schools are holding Remembrance Day services this week, and that these are an important part of knowing our history and showing gratitude to those who have served and continue to serve Canada both in times of war and in peace.

The Board Chair observed that COP26, the United Nations Climate Change conference, was continuing in Glasgow this week. She said that the commitments and actions made at this conference will impact students who are currently enrolled in our schools. In the same way, actions not taken will also affect generations to come.

She went on to note that school divisions have a role to play in mitigating climate change and advocating for greener transportation solutions, buildings and decreasing our carbon footprint. She shared that Edmonton Public is proud to be a partner with the City of Edmonton in its Corporate Climate Leaders Program, with the goal of reducing our greenhouse gas emissions and increasing our climate resiliency. She added that there is certainly more work to do, and we as education leaders have a lot to learn from students, many of whom are at the forefront of advocating for climate change solutions.

The Board Chair shared that earlier this fall, Division administration, under the leadership of Superintendent Robertson, made the decision to put in place a vaccine policy for all Division staff, contractors, on-site partners and volunteers in our schools. She clarified that this regulation does not apply to students in our Division.

She stated that, as Board chair and one Trustee, she absolutely supports this regulation as it is an effective way to ensure a safer working and learning environment for our staff and students. She noted that the COVID-19 vaccines are safe; they have and will continue to save lives. She shared that she looks forward to when the vaccination will be made available to children under the age of 12 and ways in which our Division can continue to support vaccine clinics in our schools.

MINUTE BOOK

The Board Chair closed her remarks by wishing a happy Diwali to all those who celebrated last week. Diwali is an important Hindu holiday which celebrates, among many other things, victory of light over darkness and knowledge over ignorance.

E. Communications from the Superintendent

Assistant Superintendent Muhlethaler noted that the Division had a start to the school year like no other, with many students rejoining in-person classes for the first time in 17 months. Despite the challenges still presented by COVID 19, the incredible hard work and commitment of our staff has kept the focus on teaching and learning and building relationships with students and families.

She shared that, in addition to all the safety measures outlined in the Back to School Plan, our Division is taking many steps to support our students, such as:

- the Canadian Achievement Test, Fourth Version – to help support programming for all students in grades 2 to 9, the Canadian Achievement Test, Fourth Version—referred to as the CAT4—has been used as a baseline assessment this fall. Results from the CAT4 will provide teachers and schools with information about student achievement that helps inform programming and interventions. The CAT 4 will be administered again in the spring and serve as an indicator of growth.
- The Equity Achievement project - intentional use of surplus funds has enabled the Division to support lead literacy and numeracy teachers in all schools and support the building of capacity through committed consultant support for the project. Collaboration is key to the project, as staff come together from across the 41 participating schools along with central leaders to support the implementation of the project.

Initial feedback from teachers participating in the project has been very positive, as they feel supported in their work with students and can already see the impact of this work on student engagement and learning.

- Student Resiliency - to gain a better understanding of student well-being and engagement, the Division is working in partnership with Dr. Michael Unger of Dalhousie University around student resiliency. This work includes professional learning for school staff in the area of youth resilience and a survey with students in grades 4 to 12.

The survey provides schools with a better understanding of their students as a group and the well-being of individual students. Schools are supported in this work by staff from Supports for Students.

MINUTE BOOK

The Assistant Superintendent noted that she, Trustees and senior administration had a chance to hear directly about all the initiatives in our Division during catchment conversations in the last week of October.

Assistant Superintendent Muhlethaler congratulated Atif Hirjee, Department Head of Student Leadership at W.P. Wagner High School, on being named to Edify magazine's 2021 Top 40 Under 40 list. Mr. Hirjee has researched and curated a series of anti-racist resources for students and staff and helped create and facilitate a session called Anti-Racism 101. The session has been delivered over 14 times to over 1,000 educators and requests are still coming in.

Assistant Superintendent Muhlethaler also congratulated Grade 11 W.P. Wagner student Grant Pritchard who was awarded the Beaumont Youth of the Month award for his involvement in the community on various levels. In the award presentation, Mr. Pritchard was acknowledged for bringing a positive attitude and maturity while attending a variety of programs at the Chantal Bérubé Youth Centre, as well as playing football, working towards a plumbing career through Wagner's Registered Apprenticeship Program, volunteering at a local church, helping out with Movie in the Park night, and spending time with other youth.

Assistant Superintendent Muhlethaler shared that the Division's Anti-racism and Equity Action Plan was shared last week with staff. The Plan builds off of the Board's commitment to anti-racism and equity and the voices of staff, students, families and community members. The plan outlines three key areas of focus for this year: Human Resource policies and practices, support for schools and developing a model to support the collection of extended student data.

She explained that the Division will be developing materials for our outward facing website that highlight this important work to support communicating with families and the broader community. There will also be information translated to help us reach as many people as possible.

The Assistant Superintendent reminded families about the upcoming November break and the fact that there will be no classes from November 10 to 15. She said that she hoped this break gives everyone time to reflect with gratitude on the peace and freedoms we currently enjoy and to rest, reconnect and re-energize.

F. Minutes

1. Organizational Board Meeting #00 – October 26, 2021

MOVED BY Trustee Hancock:

"That the minutes of Organizational Board Meeting #00 held October 26, 2021, be approved as printed."

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

MINUTE BOOK

G. Comments from the Public and Staff Group Representatives

There were five registered speakers who spoke in opposition to the Division's vaccination policy and masking requirements.

There was a short break in the meeting.

J. Reports

2. Recommendations on Voting in Advance of the ASBA Spring General Meeting

MOVED BY Vice-Chair Ip:

That the following recommendations be approved as the voting direction for the Edmonton Public School Board at the ASBA 2021 FGM:

**"1. Approve the proposed omnibus bylaw amendments."
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

**"2. Support the proposed position statement on accumulated surplus."
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

**"3. Support the proposed position statement on environmental education."
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

3. COVID-19 Impact on the Division

There were 2 registered speakers who spoke to this agenda item. Both spoke in opposition to the Division's vaccination policy.

Assistant Superintendent Muhlethaler provided a verbal update on the Division's response to COVID-19 and measures to mitigate transmission.

4. Board Chair Discretionary Expense Allowance Report 2020-2021

A report of the expenses incurred under the Board Chair's discretionary allowance for the period of September 2020 – August 2021 was provided for information.

5. Bereavements

Vice-Chair Ip reported on the passing of Ms. Carrie Johnston, Ms. Constance (Connie) McLaws, Ms. Michelle Tymchuk, Ms. Sonya Gordon, and Miss Tracy Wright.

MINUTE BOOK

I. Other Committee, Board Representative and Trustee Reports

Trustee Kusiek provided the following written comments: I want to express gratitude to my Trustee colleagues and to administration. We're off to a great start. I had the opportunity to participate in catchment conversations. They really solidified for me how excellent our Division is and the commitment Division staff and leaders have to the success of our students.

Regularly communicating with constituents is important to me. My Trustee website and mailing list are set up, including a couple of blog posts. Please join via sign up on the website at www.juliekusiek.ca.

I have been meeting with constituents, did a classroom presentation on local government, and have one more later this month. I am also communicating through community league newsletters and meetings. I have several school council meetings booked and I'm looking forward to meeting school communities.

I attended the Healthy Communities Workshop hosted by the U of A School of Public Health. I am looking forward to continuing to explore the ways that school communities can promote and enhance health. I am also looking forward to getting started on Trustee committee work.

J. Trustee and Board Requests for Information

Board Chair Estabrooks requested information from administration on the following questions:

- What impact has a bus driver shortage had on our division?
- How does this year's bus driver shortage compare to previous years?
- What are the bus contractors doing to rectify the bus driver shortage?
- How can we as a division help contractors find solutions to the bus driver shortage problem?

K. Notices of Motion

Trustee Kusiek gave notice that she would be making the following motion: That the Board of Trustees affirm advocacy for a re-write of the proposed K-6 draft curriculum. We advocate for a curriculum development and implementation process that is well supported, transparent, and that brings together curriculum experts, teachers and other educational stakeholders. We also advocate that it is unnecessary for all subjects in the K-6 curriculum to be developed and implemented at once.

Trustee Hole gave notice that she would be making the following motion: That the Board of Trustees adopt a COVID-19 vaccination policy for Trustees based on the Division's Administrative Regulation [CIA.AR: COVID-19 Vaccinations](#), and that this work be delegated to the Policy Review Committee for immediate action.

MINUTE BOOK

L. **Next Meeting Date:** Tuesday, November 30, 2021, at 2 p.m.

M. **Adjournment:** 4:14 p.m.

The Board Chair adjourned the meeting.

Trisha Estabrooks, Board Chair

Karen Mills, Director of Board and
Superintendent Relations