

MINUTE BOOK**Special Board Meeting #20**

Minutes of the Board Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Edmonton School Division of the Province of Alberta held via Zoom on Tuesday, October 5, 2021, at 9:00 a.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: (9:00 a.m.)

The Superintendent advised that Trustee Gibson was absent. All other Trustees were present.

B. Approval of the Agenda

MOVED BY Vice-Chair Ip:

“That the agenda for the October 5, 2021, Special Board meeting be approved as printed.”

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

C. Communications from the Board Chair

The Board Chair began by saying that calling a special Board meeting is not something that she, as Chair, takes lightly.

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She thanked her colleagues who spoke to her about calling this meeting and for pushing it to happen. The Board Chair thanked them for their continued service to kids, to families and to the Division during this incredibly challenging time. The Board Chair explained that she called this meeting because, as much as the Board has advocated for more support and for clear information about COVID in Division schools from the provincial government, it has not yet happened. She said the communities we serve are asking us to do more, to continue to speak out. And that's why a special Board meeting was called.

D. Reports**1. Update on COVID-19 Impact on the Division**

The Superintendent provided the number of COVID-19 cases in schools as of 4:30 p.m. on October 4, gave an update on the number of schools with outbreaks, and summarized the mandatory vaccination policy for staff, contractors and volunteers he announced on October 4.

Trustee Ip left the meeting at 9:15 a.m. and returned at 9:31 a.m.

There was a short break in the meeting.

The Board stood at ease at 10:02 a.m. to confirm waivers of notice of motion were required for the next report and reconvened at 10:18 a.m.

2. Proposed Advocacy Initiatives Regarding COVID-19 Mitigation Measures

MOVED BY Trustee Stirling:

**"1. That waiver of notice motion be approved."
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

MOVED BY Trustee Stirling:

"1. Whereas the provincial government has yet to reinstate positive notification of cases in schools, contract tracing and mandatory quarantine for close contacts of positive cases; and whereas the number of COVID-19 cases among Alberta children has hit record highs, particularly among school-aged children age 5-11; and whereas the number of self-reported positive cases in our schools continues to increase; and whereas we are concerned the increase in cases in our schools is leading to an increase of household spread and therefore adding to the burden on our health care system; and whereas the Canadian Medical Association is advocating for a firebreak using any and all measures to control the fourth wave of this pandemic and curb the rate of mortality, including the closure of schools; that the Board of Trustees ask the Government of Alberta to implement a "firebreak" including the shutdown of all schools and non-essential services to control community transmission of COVID-19, including:

- a) A shutdown of in-person learning for a minimum of two weeks and until community transmission has substantially reduced**

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- b) A continuation of in-person learning for students who need specialized supports and require in-person supports
- c) A staged return that prioritizes schools as an essential service that will re-open well before non-essential services such as entertainment and hospitality industries
- d) Financial supports for families to offset the impact of disruption to work and any childcare needs
- e) Provision of childcare and learning supports for the children of frontline healthcare workers
- f) Clear notice to families and teachers of impending school closures and a transition period to allow for an orderly transition to online learning
- g) The use of the time during closure to implement measures such as contact tracing, mandatory quarantine, and other public health measures to ensure safer operation of schools
- h) The establishment of a clear and transparent metric for school closures and school re-opening, including single school, regional, and provincial closure thresholds."

IN FAVOUR: Trustees Draper, Dunn, Estabrooks, Ip, Janz and Stirling

OPPOSED: Trustee Adams

(CARRIED)

MOVED BY Trustee Stirling:

"2. That waiver of notice motion be approved."

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

MOVED BY Trustee Stirling:

"2. Given that providing clear, transparent data to parents, families and staff about COVID-19 cases in our schools remains a priority for our Division, and given that the provincial government is currently not sharing data about COVID-19 positive cases in our schools, be it moved that the Board of Trustees advocate to the Provincial Government for the real-time release of this critical information. Furthermore, be it moved that we will continue to advocate for the reinstatement of Alberta Health Services contact tracing and the mandatory quarantining of close contacts of positive cases in our schools."

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

There was a short break in the meeting.

MOVED BY Trustee Stirling:

"3. That waiver of notice motion be approved."

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

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MOVED BY Trustee Stirling:

"3. Given the determination by the WHO, the CDC, and Public Health Canada that ventilation is important in addressing transmission of SARS-COV-2, be it moved that the Board of Trustees request provincial ventilation standards and resources to include:

- a) Clear provincial ventilation and air filtration standards for the management of airborne viruses, developed in partnership with APEGA.**
- b) The provincial purchasing and provision of HEPA units suitable for classroom air filtration, to be approved by qualified APEGA engineers.**
- c) Resources for building ventilation assessments, including room-level assessment of all student and staff spaces by qualified APEGA engineers."**

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

Trustee Janz was not present for the vote.

MOVED BY Trustee Stirling:

"4. That waiver of notice motion be approved."

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

Trustee Janz was not present for the vote.

"4. That the Board of Trustees advocates on behalf of families to the provincial government to make at-home rapid testing kits approved by AHS available to families at no cost."

IN FAVOUR: Trustees Adams, Dunn, Estabrooks, Ip, and Stirling

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

Trustees Draper and Janz were not present for the vote.

E. Adjournment: 12:40 p.m.

The Board Chair adjourned the meeting.

Trisha Estabrooks, Board Chair

Karen Mills, Director of Board and
Superintendent Relations