

**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 4, 2023, 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  
Grace Cooke  
Andrea Cooper

Karen Mills  
Kathy Muhlethaler  
Kent Pharis  
Nancy Petersen  
Cliff Richard

Darrel Robertson  
Carrie Rosa  
Ron Thompson  
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.

**A. O Canada**

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

The Superintendent advised that all Trustees were present.

**C. Approval of the Agenda**

**MOVED BY Trustee Sawyer:**

**“That the agenda for the April 4, 2023, Board meeting be approved as printed.”  
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

## MINUTE BOOK

### **D. Communications from the Board Chair**

The Board Chair expressed thanks to Edmonton city councillors, government MLAs and opposition MLAs who attended the Trustee Infrastructure bus tour earlier this month. Gratitude to the Infrastructure Committee and staff who helped make this event a success. She used the word success because she believed we were able to share the story of Edmonton Public's growth and critical need for new schools. She thanked the staff at Dr. Anne Anderson school who warmly welcomed them into the school and shared what's possible when we can collaborate with the City of Edmonton and the province at the same time.

The Board Chair thanked the Advocacy Committee for their work on a pre-election campaign.

The Board Chair said we are in the midst of the holy month of Ramadan. On behalf of the Board, she wished Ramadan Mubarak to all those who are celebrating. At recent school council meetings, and at an anti-racism event hosted by the Division, Ramadan was both acknowledged and celebrated in a way that helped those who are not Muslim learn more and honoured the importance of the month for those who are Muslim.

The Board Chair acknowledged that March 31 was the International Transgender Day of Visibility. Transgender people have historically been marginalized, often facing discrimination, harassment, and violence. She said that recognizing the International Transgender Day of Visibility is critical in combating this discrimination and raising awareness of the challenges faced by transgender people.

The Board Chair also acknowledged that the United Nations-sanctioned World Autism Awareness Day was on April 2. Autism spectrum disorder affects about 1 in 50 children and youth in Canada aged 1 to 17 years. There is still much to learn and understand about autism, and neurodiversity in general. She said what we do know though, is that by strengthening inclusion and acceptance, we can create more opportunities for Canadians on the autism spectrum to thrive and reach their full potential.

The Board Chair shared that April is Sikh Heritage Month. She said this month first began in 2019 with the proclamation of the *Sikh Heritage Month Act*. She thanked staff in schools who are honoring the lives, histories and accomplishments of Sikh Albertans and Canadians in Division schools throughout the month of April.

### **E. Communications from the Superintendent of Schools**

The Superintendent advised that there are only 10 days left in the pre-enrolment period for the 2023-2024 school year. Families can find information about the options on SchoolZone or the Division's website and social media channels. The final day to pre-enrol is April 14.

The Superintendent congratulated music teachers Nicole Schutz and Connie Ohlman are being recognized by the Alberta Music Advocacy Alliance this month. Both are featured in the Spotlight Series which celebrates music within Alberta communities. Ms. Schutz teaches at Parkallen School. Ms. Ohlman teaches at David Thomas King School. He said both music teachers create rich environments where students are

**MINUTE BOOK**

encouraged to realize their own potential as learners. Their passion, expertise, and love of music are having an important impact on student outcomes and experiences. Both teachers were nominated by their peers at the Alberta Kodaly Association.

The Superintendent announced that the following principals have been confirmed, effective September 1, 2023:

- Angela Blanchette, McKee
- Anne Jordan, Dunluce
- Shelley Kotyk, York
- Michael Lam, James Gibbons
- Janette Pethick, Athlone
- Britt Petracek, Kirkness
- Chris Simpson, Homesteader
- Jennifer Taylor, Beacon Heights

The Board Chair asked if Trustees had any questions regarding COVID-19. The Superintendent shared that student absence rates have gone down slightly following spring break and staff absence rates remains unchanged. There is still a shortage of Education Assistants.

**F. Approval of the Minutes**

1. Board Meeting – March 21, 2023

**MOVED BY Trustee O'Keefe:**

**“That the minutes of Board Meeting held March 21, 2023, 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. Division Energy and Environment Strategy Update and Emissions Reduction Targets

The following staff provided a brief presentation showing highlights and action items from the Strategy and Emissions Reduction Targets report:

Mr. Cliff Richard, Chief Infrastructure and Technology Officer

Mr. Christopher Wright, Managing Director Infrastructure

Ms. Coreen Moccia, Director Infrastructure Supports and Operations

**MINUTE BOOK****MOVED BY Trustee Hancock:**

**“That the Division’s greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets of five per cent by 2025 and 45 per cent by 2035 be approved.”  
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

There was a short break in the meeting.

3. Strategic Plan Update Report (Priority 1): Literacy and Numeracy

An update was provided on the highlighted importance of the Division’s comprehensive approach to high-quality teaching and learning in support of literacy and numeracy and the intentionality in its efforts to fulfill Priority 1 of the Strategic Plan, “*Build on outstanding opportunities for all students*”, Goal 2 “*focus on literacy and numeracy so students demonstrate growth and achieve learning outcomes*”.

4. Information on Pilot Projects Underway or Recently Completed  
(Response to Request for Information #013)

Information was provided regarding the Request for Information #013: Pilot Projects Underway or Recently Completed.

5. Bereavement

Vice-Chair Ip reported on the passing of Mrs. Karen Bellous.

**I. Other Committee, Board Representatives and Trustee Reports**

6. Advocacy Committee Update

Trustee Nelson shared information about the work of the Advocacy Committee to date. She highlighted the work the committee has done to create four one-page documents with questions for constituents to ask provincial election candidates.

Trustee O’Keefe provided an update on the Edmonton Public Schools Foundation’s Chromebook for Kids campaign. Since kicking off the Chromebooks for Kids program in October 2021, the Foundation has distributed nearly 1,200 brand new devices to kids in need across the Division - and to more than 85 schools! While this year’s allocation of Chromebooks has been fully distributed, thanks to the incredible support of donors and partners in the community, they have nearly raised enough funds to support another year of Chromebooks for Kids. If anyone is interested in donating to this program, it goes a long way to ensuring the Foundation is able to bring this important initiative back year after year. Donations can be made online through the Foundation’s website, [Foundation.EPSB.ca](https://www.foundation.e-psb.ca). They are so grateful for the continued support!

Trustee Hancock congratulated Ian Doktor for being named a “Hometown Hero” for the month March. Mr. Doktor is a science teacher at Jasper Place High School where he also leads a Renewable Energy Club. Here

**MINUTE BOOK**

students engage in hands-on learning through projects like small-scale rooftop solar panels and a wind turbine which will be mounted on the roof within the next couple of weeks. She thanked Mr. Doktor for investing his passions and time with students and for inspiring them to pursue theirs.

**J. Trustees and Board Requests for Information**

Trustee Sumar submitted a Request for Information regarding the Equity Fund:

1. What was the original intent for the Equity Fund?
2. How does the Equity Fund support students in our classrooms?
3. Since the establishment of the Equity Fund, has the intent changed or shifted? If so, what has caused that (those) change(s)?
4. In the last 5 years, what has the Equity Fund been used for? Please provide a breakdown by year and budget line supported. Please also include the allocation approved by the Board for that budget year and a total of how much was spent in that year.
5. How does the Equity Fund differ from the "September Actual Enrolment vs Projected Enrolment Relief"?

**K. Notices of Motions**

Vice-Chair Ip gave notice that he would be making the following motion:

Given that Edmonton Public Schools is facing unprecedented growth pressures and may imminently run out of student space in certain parts of the city without significant investment in new school builds, I move that the Edmonton Public School Board declare a state of emergency and call on the provincial government to immediately fund all requested schools in Year 1 of the capital plan and provide a timeline for the full funding of all Year 1 school requests.

Additionally, I move that the board establish a task force to explore and examine interim solutions pending the funding and construction of new schools.

Trustee Kusiek gave notice that she would be making the following motion:

Given that costs associated with the Division's carbon tax is estimated to reach \$102 million by 2035, and that school authorities have limited options to attain funding for energy retrofits of our buildings, I move that the Board of Trustees:

1. Write to the federal government with a copy of the Division Energy and Environment Strategy Update and Emissions Reduction Targets report, requesting a meeting to discuss direct relief and mitigation options for school authorities related to the federal carbon tax.
2. Invite the Mayor and City Council to an information session to discuss opportunities for collaboration and joint advocacy regarding costs associated with climate change.

**MINUTE BOOK**

L. **Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, April 18, 2023, at 2 p.m.**

M. **Adjournment: 5:39 p.m.**

**The Board Chair adjourned the meeting.**

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Trisha Estabrooks, Board Chair

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Karen Mills, Director Board and  
Superintendent Relations