

DATE: June 6, 2023

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Options for Vacant Ward H Trustee Position

RESOURCE STAFF: Karen Mills

REFERENCE [Trustees' Handbook](#)
[Education Act](#)
[Local Authorities Election Act](#)

ISSUE

Trustee Ip was successful in his provincial election bid. Upon receipt of his resignation letter, the Board of Trustees of Edmonton School Division will have a vacant Trustee position in Ward H. The Board must first decide whether or not they wish to hold a by-election.

BACKGROUND

On September 28, 2015, a by-election was held for Edmonton Public Schools when a Trustee resigned her seat with two years remaining in her term. Eight individuals vied for the Trustee position. A total of 1,227 votes were cast (2.17 per cent of eligible voters), with the successful candidate receiving 578 votes. The cost of running that by-election was \$133,459.20.

On June 24, 2020, an Edmonton Public Schools Trustee resigned. One year remained in the Trustee's term. The Board chose not to hold a by-election, but rather have another Trustee serve as the ward's Trustee for the remainder of the term. Additional remuneration was allocated to that Trustee.

In the October 2021 Edmonton Election, 14,082 Edmonton Public School Division ballots were cast in Ward H or about a 29 per cent voter turnout, below the overall voter turnout of 37.6 per cent.

RELATED FACTS

- In the 2023-2024 school year, the Board will be in the third year of its four-year term. The next municipal election is scheduled for October 20, 2025.
- The Board is not required to hold a by-election. As stipulated in the *Education Act*, 81(2) where a vacancy occurs on a board of 6 or more trustees:
 - during the 3-year period immediately following a general election, a by-election need not be held if there is only one vacancy on the board, and
 - during the 4th year following a general election, a by-election need not be held unless the number of vacancies on the board reduces the board to a number that is less than the quorum of the board plus one.

- All wards are designed such that they have a total resident population that is within +/- 25 per cent of the average for all wards and reflect the potential for population growth or decline with the goal that school ward populations remain within +/- 25 per cent of the average through two municipal general elections. However, the number of schools differs quite a bit by ward.
- Ward H has 11 schools (see Attachment I for a list of all schools by ward):
 - Constable Daniel Woodall (K-6)
 - Donald R. Getty (K-9)
 - Dr. Anne Anderson (10-12)
 - Dr. Lila Fahlman (K-9)
 - Dr. Margaret- Ann Armour (K-9)
 - Garth Worthington (K-9)
 - George P. Nicholson (K-6)
 - Joey Moss (K-9)
 - Johnny Bright (K-9)
 - Keheewin (K-6)
 - Roberta MacAdams (K-6)
- There are an estimated 33,000 voters eligible to participate in a Ward H by-election. If turnout is similar to 2015, approximately 660 voters (two per cent of eligible voters) would cast a ballot in a Ward H by-election.
- The estimated cost for a by-election ranges from approximately \$230,000 to \$410,000.
 - Costs vary due to the number of advance voting days, voting stations, voting tabulators, voter information cards and institutional voting options used.
 - Funds for a by-election would be drawn from the Board and System Administration Grant. As a Division, the Board and system administration expenditures cannot exceed 3.2 per cent of the total operating budget.
- The decision as to how to handle the Trustee vacancy in Ward H is the Board's decision. Administration will fully support the Board's decision, whether it be to hold a by-election or choose from amongst current Trustees. The following recommendation is offered only as a starting place for the discussion.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board select from among current Trustees to represent Ward H for the remainder of this term.

OPTIONS

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

- Approve the recommendation as presented.
- Direct that a by-election be held.

CONSIDERATIONS and ANALYSIS

If the Board decides to select from among current Trustee to represent Ward H, Trustees could then consider one of the following options at a future meeting:

- *Elect one Trustee to represent Ward H in addition to their current ward.* This option would provide a consistent point of contact for constituents and facilitate a broad understanding of the ward issues.

While this arrangement would increase the responsibilities of the individual Trustee, they could ask Trustee colleagues for assistance, when appropriate. This option would provide a consistent point of contact for constituents and facilitate a broad understanding of the ward issues. While this arrangement would increase the responsibilities of the individual Trustee, they could ask Trustee colleagues for assistance, when appropriate.

This option could be designed such that the Trustee serve the ward either:

- for the remainder of the term (two years), or
 - for one year, following which the decision as to which Trustee will cover Ward H for the 2024-2025 school year to be made at the Organizational Board meeting in June 2024.
- *Rotate Trustee representation for Ward H* (i.e., each Trustee would be the ward contact for approximately two months, which would provide representation until the October 2025 municipal election). This option would share the responsibilities among Trustees and provide constituents with access to Trustees with a broad scope of skills, expertise and experience. However, it may be difficult for constituents to keep track of which Trustee is the contact for the ward. It would also impede relationship development and add complexity to carrying out longer-term projects or gaining a deep understanding of ward issues.
 - *Divide Ward H among Trustees* (i.e., individual Trustees are assigned specific schools in the ward for the remainder of the term). This option would most evenly divide responsibility among Trustees. However, an understanding of broad ward issues may be more difficult to gain with this model. It may also be challenging for the building of relationships and continuity for longer-term ward issues.

The above options would have Trustee(s) undertake additional duties. As such, the Board may consider approving additional remuneration for the Trustee(s) representing Ward H.

Holding a by-election would mean that no current Trustee would be required to assume additional responsibilities and that Ward H electors would be directly choosing their representative. However, cost, historical voter turnout, and the steep learning curve for an individual joining mid-term are considerations with this option.

If the Board chooses to hold a by-election, this option requires two resolutions:

- Resolution 1 would be the general direction to hold a by-election. This could be considered at the June 6 meeting, if waiver of notice is granted.
 - Resolution 2 would be presented at a future Board meeting to set the Election Day, the location where nominations will be received, approve the budget of the by-election and appoint the City's Returning Officer as the Board's Returning Officer. Notice of this motion could be served at the June 6 meeting.
- The *2017 to 2026 Agreement between the City of Edmonton and the EPSB Board of Trustees* dictates that EPSB must give Edmonton Elections a resolution (referred to in this report as Resolution 2) 75 days before Election Day, but a minimum of 120 planning days are required before Election Day.
 - Because the Nomination, Campaign, and the Election Advertising Periods starts the day immediately following the passing of Resolution 2, Edmonton Elections needs to be prepared to receive nominations and register third party advertisers as soon as the resolution is passed. (See *Attachment II for a by-election timeline.*)

- There is no legislative timeline within which a Trustee by-election must occur. Given the recent provincial election and resulting voter fatigue, as well as the difficulty in engaging people over the summer, administration and Edmonton Elections both recommend that, should a by-election be desired, a date for it not be set until the Board meets in September, so that there is not campaigning through July and August.
 - Edmonton Elections recommends that Resolution 2 setting the date of the by-election, amongst other details, not be made before September 1. The Election Day must be 75 days after the resolution (Resolution 2) is announced; thus, as an example, if the resolution setting the date for a by-election is passed on September 1, the Election Day would be November 14.
- As schools are typically the main voting locations, it is recommended that Election Day be on a PD or other non-instructional day. The Division's 2023-2024 school year calendar has weekdays with no classes on September 25, October 20, and November 9, 10, 13 and 14.

NEXT STEPS

Administration will support the direction the Board provides.

ATTACHMENTS and APPENDICES

ATTACHMENT I Schools by Ward

ATTACHMENT II By-election Timeline

KM:km

List of Schools by Ward

WARD A	WARD B	WARD C	WARD D	WARD E	WARD F	WARD G	WARD H	WARD I
Athlone	Balwin	Aldergrove	Abbott	Aleda	Alberta	A. Blair	Constable	Crawford
Baturyn	Bannerman	amiskwacyi	Academy at	Patterson	School for	McPherson	Daniel	Plains
Caernarvon	Belmont	Academy	King Edward	Alex Janvier	the Deaf	Avonmore	Woodall	Daly Grove
Calder	Belvedere	Belmead	Argyll	Bessie	Allendale	Bisset	Donald R.	Ekota
Dickinsfield	Delwood	Brightview	Centre	Nichols	Avalon	Braemar	Getty	Ellerslie
Dunluce	Dr. Donald	Britannia	Beacon	Callingwood	Belgravia	Clara Tyner	Dr. Anne	Campus
Elizabeth Finch	Massey	Coronation	Heights	Centennial	Brander	Donnan	Anderson	Jan Reimer
Evansdale	Edmonton	David Thomas	Centre High	Crestwood	Gardens	Edith Rogers	Dr. Lila	kisêwâtisiwin
Florence Hallock	Christian	King	Campus	Elmwood	Brookside	Grace	Fahlman	Menisa
Glengarry	Northeast	Dovercourt	Delton	Hillcrest	D.S.	Martin	Dr. Margaret-	Meyokumin
Hilwie Hamdon	Fraser	Edmonton	Eastglen	James	MacKenzie	Greenview	Ann Armour	Michael
Kensington	Homesteade	Christian High	Forest	Gibbons	Duggan	Hazeldean	Garth	Strembitsky
Killarney	r	Edmonton	Heights	Jasper Place	Earl Buxton	Hillview	Worthington	Pollard
Lago Lindo	Horse Hill	Christian	Garneau	Kim Hung	Esther	Holyrood	George P.	Meadows
Lauderdale	J.A. Fife	West	Gold Bar	Laurier	Starkman	J. Percy Page	Nicholson	Sakaw
Learning Store at	John Barnett	Glenora	Hardisty	Heights	George H.	Jackson	Joey Moss	Satoo
Northgate	John D.	Grovenor	Highlands	Learning	Luck	Heights	Johnny Bright	Shauna
Lorelei	Bracco	Inglewood	Ivor Dent	Store West	Grandview	Julia Kiniski	Keheewin	May Seneca
Major-General	Kildare	John A.	King Edward	Edmonton	Heights	Kameyosek	Roberta	Svend
Griesbach	Kirkness	McDougall	McNally	Lymburn	Greenfield	Kate	MacAdams	Hansen
Mary	Londonderry	LaPerle	Norwood	Lynnwood	Harry Ainlay	Chegwin		T.D. Baker
Butterworth	M.E. LaZerte	Mayfield	Old Scona	Meadowlark	L.Y. Cairns	Kenilworth		
McArthur	McLeod	Michael Phair	Oliver	Meadowlark	Lansdowne	Learning		
Mee-Yah-Noh	Overlanders	Prince Charles	Riverdale	Christian	Learning	Store on		
Northmount	Princeton	Ross	Rutherford	Michael A.	Store at	Whyte		
Queen Elizabeth	Sifton	Sheppard	Virginia Park	Kostek	Blue Quill	Lee Ridge		
Rosslyn	Soraya Hafez	Spruce	Windsor	Ormsby	Lendrum	Malcolm		
Scott Robertson	Steele	Avenue	Park	Parkview	Lillian	Tweddle		
	Heights	Thorncliffe		Patricia	Osborne	Metro		
	York	Victoria		Heights	Malmo	Continuing		
		Westglen		Rio Terrace	McKee	Education		
		Westminster		S. Bruce	McKernan	Meyonohk		
		Westmount		Smith	Mount	Mill Creek		
		Winterburn		Stratford	Pleasant	Millwoods		
		Youngstown		Talmud	Nellie	Christian		
				Torah	Carlson	Minchau		
					Parkallen	Ottewell		
					Queen	Thelma		
					Alexandra	Chalifoux		
					Richard	Tipaskan		
					Secord	Velma E.		
					Rideau Park	Baker		
					Riverbend	Vimy Ridge		
					Steinhauer	Academy		
					Strathcona	W.P.		
					Sweet Grass	Wagner		
					Tevie Miller	Waverley		
					Heritage	Weinlos		
					School			
					Vernon			
					Barford			
					Westbrook			

By-election Timeline

Day	Activity
Any time	Pass the general motion (Resolution 1) directing that a by-election be held
The day following the passing of the general motion	Edmonton Elections begins preparing election materials
At least 45 days following general motion	Pass the formal resolution (Resolution 2) setting the Election Day, the location where nominations will be received, approving the by-election budget and appointing the City's Returning officer as the Board's Returning Officer Election Day must be 75 days from this date
Four weeks following passing of formal resolution	Nomination period, the last day of which will be Nomination Day
The four week period following Nomination Day	Campaign period
75 days following passing of formal motion (Resolution 2) (and 120 days following general motion (Resolution 1) directing a by-election)	Election Day (four weeks after Nomination Day)