



# AGENDA

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Julie Kusiek  
Board Chair

Jan Sawyer  
Board Vice-Chair

Trisha Estabrooks  
Dawn Hancock  
Marcia Hole  
Marsha Nelson  
Sherri O'Keefe  
Saadiq Sumar

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

CFE McCauley Chambers  
Tuesday, April 9, 2024  
2 p.m.

### Board Meeting

- A. O Canada
- B. Roll Call
- C. Approval of the Agenda
- D. Communications from the Board Chair
- E. Communications from the Superintendent of Schools
- F. Approval of the Minutes
  1. DRAFT – Board Minutes – March 19, 2024
- G. Comments from the Public and Staff Group Representatives on Items on the Meeting Agenda  
*(NOTE: Pre-registration with the Board Office [780-429-8443] is required by 12 p.m. on Monday, April 8, 2024, to speak under this item.)*
- H. Reports
  2. Oliver School Renaming  
*(No Enclosure)*
  3. 2024-2025 Budget – Staff Group Presentations  
*(No Enclosure)*
    - Exempt Staff
    - CUPE Local 3550 (Support Staff)
    - CUPE Local 474 (Custodial Staff)
  4. Report #04 of the Special Caucus Committee (From the meeting held on January 9, 2024)  
(Information)
  5. Division Centre Establishments Projected Deficit  
(Recommendation)
  6. Letter Supporting Alberta School Boards Association's Policy Statement on *Local Authority Election Act*  
(Recommendation)
  7. Revision to School Nutrition Framework Letter  
(Recommendation)
  8. Bereavement  
(Information)
- I. Other Committee, Board Representative and Trustee Reports
  9. Public School Boards' Association of Alberta Update  
(Information)
- J. Trustees and Board Requests for Information
- K. Notices of Motion
- L. Meeting Dates
- M. Adjournment

**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, March 19, 2024, at 2 p.m.

**Present:****Trustees**

Trisha Estabrooks  
Dawn Hancock  
Marcia Hole

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:** Julie Kusiek**Recording Secretary:** Catherine Angeles

The Board Chair called the meeting to order and called upon Trustee Sumar to provide a land acknowledgement.

Trustee Sumar acknowledged that he lives, works, plays, and enjoys the abundance that Treaty 6 land provides. This land, known by many names like amiskwacyi-waskahikan (nehiyawewin; “Beaver Hills House”), omahkoyis (Siksika; “Big Lodge”), and ti oda (Assiniboine; “many houses”), has been cared for by the Siksikaitsitapi, Denesuline, nehiyawak, Anishinaabe, Stoney Nakoda, and the Métis from the North Saskatchewan River Territory. This land has also been imprinted by the footsteps of the Inuit. It is only through their teachings and stories that we can fully appreciate the beauty of this land.

Trustee Sumar’s family settled not far from the Tsuut’ina Nation on Treaty 7 territory. As a young traveler, he was and continues to be grateful for the warmth of the people of Beaver Hills House despite the broken promises, mistreatment, constant displacement, and many other wrongs they have endured. He is reminded daily of their resilience and courage and that we must work toward a future where that immeasurable strength is no longer required.

Trustee Sumar said Ramadan is a time of self-reflection for Muslims. Later this week, they will also observe the renewal that comes with spring and the Persian New Year. Coupling these concepts, he is committed to reflecting on and recommitting to his personal journey to learn the truth and to acts of reconciliation, both big and small.

**MINUTE BOOK****A. O Canada****B. Roll Call: 2:01 p.m.**

The Superintendent advised that all Trustees were present.

**C. Approval of the Agenda**

**MOVED BY Vice-Chair Sawyer:**

**“That the agenda for the March 19, 2024, Board meeting be approved as printed.”  
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

**D. Communications from the Board Chair**

The Board Chair expressed her gratitude to Minister Nicolaidis for visiting Belgravia School last week, where he announced the next steps in engaging Albertans on the province’s social studies curriculum. After the announcement, he visited a Grade 6 class engaging in insightful discussions and answering all of their questions. Both staff and students appreciated the opportunity to meet the Minister of Education and share their perspectives. The Board Chair encouraged everyone to review the draft of the new curriculum and provide feedback to the province as they continue to refine it. Division staff will also be providing feedback to Alberta Education, and the Board of Trustees is committed to offering their insights and recommendations to the Minister’s Office.

The Board Chair reported that following the suggestion made at the last Board meeting, she has shared the Operational Efficiencies report with the Minister of Education, highlighting Edmonton Public’s dedication to responsible financial management and our commitment to maximizing resources for classroom purposes.

The Board Chair shared that it was a privilege to attend the Edmonton Chinese Bilingual Education Association’s 40th anniversary gala, alongside many Trustees, the Superintendent, principals and teachers at EPSB schools offering the Mandarin Bilingual Program. This association has played a crucial role in the success of the Division’s Chinese Bilingual Program, which is offered in 14 schools this year and will expand to 15 schools in the upcoming year. The Board Chair expressed congratulations to the Edmonton Chinese Bilingual Education Association on 40 years of excellence!

The Board Chair encouraged all parents and guardians to take part in the Board of Trustees’ parent appreciation night on April 16 from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Telus World of Science. This event is an opportunity to celebrate and express the Board of Trustees’ gratitude for everyone’s unwavering commitment to their child’s education. The Board of Trustees invites all parents/guardians to join them for a night of exploration and fun, including visits to the Arctic Journey gallery, the Dinosaurs exhibit,

## **MINUTE BOOK**

and the Legends of the Northern Sky at the Zeidler Dome. No RSVP is necessary, and they hope to see many parents/guardians there!

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

The Superintendent shared one last reminder that it's pre-enrolment and registration time. The window for registration and pre-enrolment started on February 1 and will end on March 22, right before Spring Break. While open houses have wrapped up for this season, if anyone has questions about what a school has to offer, reach out to the school principal to get the information needed.

The Superintendent said the Division Feedback Survey also remains open until March 22. Administration invites staff, students, and families to take a moment to provide feedback, helping them gauge the Division's performance and identify what constitutes a quality education system. He said everyone's insights are invaluable in guiding the Division's efforts to achieve our educational goals and better support our students and families.

The Superintendent said this is also our last week before Spring Break. He wished everyone a restful and relaxing break.

### **F. Approval of the Minutes**

1. Board Meeting – March 5, 2024

**MOVED BY Trustee Estabrooks:**

**“That the minutes of the Board meeting held March 5, 2024, be approved as printed.”  
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

### **G. Comments from the Public and Staff Group Representatives on Items on the Meeting Agenda**

There were no registered speakers for this item.

### **H. Reports**

2. Report #09 of the Caucus Committee (From the meeting held March 5, 2024)

Information was provided regarding actions taken at the March 5, 2024, Caucus Committee meeting.

3. Report #10 of the Special Caucus Committee (From the meeting held March 12, 2024)

Information was provided regarding actions taken at the March 12, 2024, Special Caucus Committee meeting.

**MINUTE BOOK**4. Process and Timeline for the 2024-2025 Budget**MOVED BY Trustee Nelson:**

“That the Process and Timeline for the 2024-2025 Budget, as outlined in Attachment I, be approved.”

**(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

5. Ten-Year Facilities Plan 2024-2033**MOVED BY Trustee Hole:**

“That the Ten-Year Facilities Plan 2024-2033 be approved for submission to the provincial government.”

**(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

There was a short break in the meeting.

6. Three-Year Capital Plan 2025-2028**MOVED BY Trustee O'Keefe:**

“That the draft Three-Year Capital Plan 2025-2028 for submission to the provincial government, be approved.”

**MOVED BY Vice-Chair Sawyer:**

“That the Board meeting be extended beyond 6 p.m.”

**(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

**MOVED BY Trustee Sumar the motion be amended:**

“That the draft Three-Year Capital Plan 2025-2028 for submission to the provincial government, be ~~approved~~ amended to show Year 1 Priorities as follows:

1. ~~Glenridding Heights K-6\*~~ ~~Dr. Anne Anderson 10-12~~
2. ~~Rosenthal K-6\*~~ ~~Glenridding Heights K-6\*~~
3. ~~McConachie 7-9\*~~ ~~Rosenthal K-6\*~~
4. ~~Delton Replacement K-6\*~~ ~~The Grange 10-12~~
5. ~~Spruce Avenue Replacement/Modernization 7-9\*~~ ~~Hawks Ridge K-6~~
6. ~~Dr. Anne Anderson 10-12~~ ~~McConachie 7-9\*~~
7. ~~The Grange 10-12~~ ~~Castle Downs 10-12~~
8. ~~Hawks Ridge K-6~~ ~~Silver Berry K-6~~
9. ~~Castle Downs 10-12~~ ~~Delton Replacement K-6\*~~
10. ~~Silver Berry K-6~~ ~~Spruce Avenue Replacement/Modernization 7-9\*~~
11. **River's Edge K-9**
12. **Ellerslie K-9**

**MINUTE BOOK**

The Board Chair called the question on the amendment.

**IN FAVOUR:** Trustees Hole and Sumar

**OPPOSED:** Trustees Estabrooks, Hancock, Kusiek, Nelson, O’Keefe, and Sawyer  
**(DEFEATED)**

The Board Chair called the question on the original motion.

**(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

7. Letter Supporting National Framework for a School Food Program Act

**MOVED BY Board Chair Kusiek:**

**“That the Board authorizes the Board Chair to send the letter, in Attachment I, to federal ministers whose portfolios have an education and/or student health component, with a copy to the Alberta Minister of Education, the Alberta School Board Association and the Public School Boards’ Association of Alberta.”**

**(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

**I. Comments from the Public and Staff Group Representatives on Educational Issues**

There were no registered speakers for this item.

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

Trustee Estabrooks congratulated the Hardisty Parent Council for raising funds for their new playground and working hard to ensure it is inclusive with a number of features for children with accessibility needs. The playground will include a one-of-a-kind play structure. She said it is also great to hear that the Alberta School Councils’ Association will be discussing an advocacy motion around school playgrounds at their upcoming meeting.

Trustee Estabrooks shared that she met with leaders in the Eritrean community on the weekend to talk about issues of public education and the importance of families being involved in the school community. They were particularly interested to learn more about the ways in which EPSB is funded and how when families arrive from Eritrea or any other country mid-way through the school year and they enrol their child in school, we are not funded for those students. She really appreciated the conversation with them.

**K. Trustees and Board Requests for Information - None**

**MINUTE BOOK**

**L. Notices of Motions**

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

That the Board authorize the Board Chair to send the letter to Ministers of Education and Municipal Affairs in support of the Alberta School Boards Association’s policy position statement, “School trustee elections should remain free from a political party system”.

**M. Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, April 9, 2024, at 2 p.m.**

**N. Adjournment: 6:21 p.m.**

**The Board Chair adjourned the meeting.**

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Julie Kusiek, Board Chair

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Karen Mills, Director Board and  
Superintendent Relations

**DATE:** April 9, 2024

**TO:** Board of Trustees

**FROM:** Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

**SUBJECT:** Oliver School Renaming

**ORIGINATOR:** Cliff Richard, Chief Infrastructure and Technology Officer

**RESOURCE STAFF:** Kim Holowatuk, Carrie Rosa, Carla Stolte, Christopher Wright

**REFERENCE** [EA.BP – Infrastructure Planning Principles](#)  
[EF.AR – Naming of Schools](#)

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**ISSUE**

To formally acknowledge the new name for Oliver School.

**BACKGROUND**

On September 8, 2020, the Board of Trustees passed a motion:

“That the Division rename Dan Knott and Oliver schools following a process where it seeks input from the community, following a process similar to the naming of new schools.”

Following extensive engagement with students, staff, community members and Indigenous leaders, the name *kisêwâtisiwin* was announced as the new name for Dan Knott School on May 17, 2022.

The renaming of Oliver School was paused as the Oliver Community League had begun a process to rename the Oliver neighbourhood. The decision to pause was made to allow space for this community consultation process to reach its conclusion.

The Oliver Community League, led by Indigenous communities, initiated the #UncoverOliver campaign. The campaign ran from June 2020 to April 2023, educating the community as to who its namesake was, his recorded actions, and why the name came to be—uncovering the history of the community.

In the fall of 2021, the Oliver Community League began working with a team of consultants, Heartstage Consulting, to develop a public engagement process and to support the community league, the community members and other interested persons in deciding on the new name.

At the heart of this process was a Renaming Circle. The Circle began meeting in June 2022, and included Oliver community members and community leaders from Indigenous and other racialized groups that were directly impacted by Frank Oliver’s policies and legacies. The Renaming Circle supported the analysis of information gathered through engagement and helped co-create potential names.



From July to September 2022, the broader Oliver community was invited to share their ideas online and at two in-person engagements held at community events.

In November 2022, with the support of the Oliver School principal, students and staff were invited to share their ideas for a new neighbourhood name. A suggested script and activities were shared with teachers to assist in this process. The Oliver School principal indicated that the student process was meaningful and thorough and that the proposed community name reflects the values of the students and of the school.

## CURRENT SITUATION

The Oliver Community League completed their process in 2023, and presented it to the City Naming Committee on August 29, 2023. The City Naming Committee approved the following motion:

“In support of the request made by the Oliver Community League, the Naming Committee recommends that City Council support the request to rename the Oliver Neighbourhood to **wîhkwêntôwin**, in nêhiyawêwin, which translates in English to ‘Circle of Friends’. This request is in alignment with City Policy C509C, the Indigenous Framework and the City Plan”.

**wîhkwêntôwin** is pronounced *WEE-KWEN-TO-WIN*.

On January 23, 2024, the Caucus Committee approved the following:

**That Oliver School be renamed wîhkwêntôwin School.**

On February 21, 2024, Edmonton City Council approved a new name for the community of Oliver. The community will now be called **wîhkwêntôwin** in nêhiyawêwin. The syllabics are ᐃ·ᐱ·ᑦᐅᐅᐃ·ᑦ and in English translates to ‘Circle of Friends’.

## KEY POINTS

- Edmonton City Council approved the name **wîhkwêntôwin** to replace the neighbourhood name Oliver.
- **wîhkwêntôwin** in nêhiyawêwin translates to ‘Circle of Friends’.
- Students, staff and parents of Oliver School were engaged in a meaningful and thorough way and **wîhkwêntôwin** reflects the values of the students and of the school.
- Communications and Integrated Infrastructure Services will work collaboratively with the school to begin rebranding immediately.

KH:jl

**DATE:** April 9, 2024

**TO:** Board of Trustees

**FROM:** Trustee Sawyer, Caucus Committee Chair

**SUBJECT:** Report #04 of the Special Caucus Committee (From the meeting held on January 9, 2024)

**ORIGINATOR:** Karen Mills, Director Board and Superintendent Relations

**REFERENCE:** [Trustees' Handbook](#) – Caucus Committee - Section 5.4

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#### ISSUE

The Board approved the following recommendation at the March 3, 2015, Board meeting: That Section 5.4 of the Trustees' Handbook be revised to give the Caucus Committee final decision-making power on certain types of matters, and yet constrain that power so it is used only when absolutely necessary.

**The following recommendations were approved at the January 9, 2024, Caucus Committee meeting:**

1. Recommendations for Metro Advocacy Items

That the Edmonton Public Schools Board support joint advocacy with the Metro school divisions regarding infrastructure and funding.

#### BACKGROUND

The Metro Chairs are proposing joint advocacy on a variety of topics. The Metro Chairs represent Edmonton Public Schools, Edmonton Catholic Schools, Calgary Board of Education and Calgary Catholic Schools. The Edmonton Public Schools Board of Trustees provided input on a series of possible advocacy items.

KM:ca

**DATE:** April 9, 2024

**TO:** Board of Trustees

**FROM:** Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

**SUBJECT:** Division Centre Establishments Projected Deficit for the 2023–2024 School Year

**ORIGINATOR:** Cliff Richard, Chief Infrastructure and Technology Officer

**RESOURCE STAFF:** Todd Burnstad, Terri Gosine, Valerie Leclair, Coreen Moccia, Allison Sylvester, Amanda Wong, Christopher Wright

**REFERENCE** [CHA.BP Board Delegation of Authority](#)

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## ISSUE

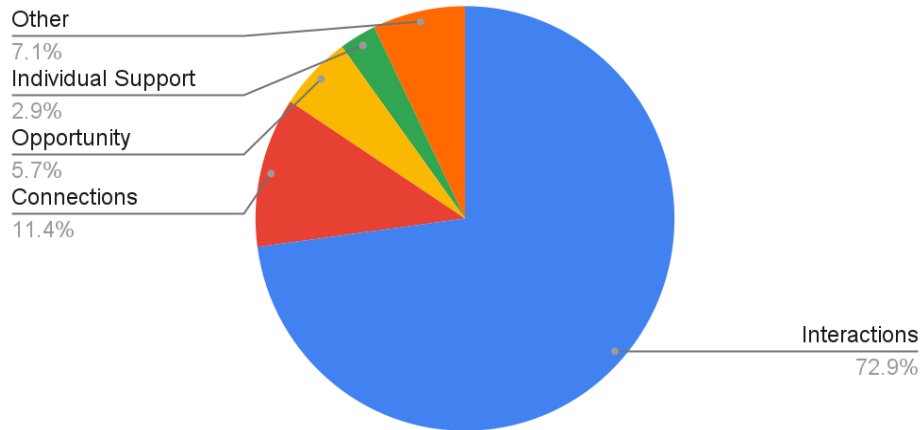
The Division continues to experience cost and space pressures associated with infrastructure needs and student accommodation. In preparation for September 2024, the Division will be required to establish a number of Division centre classes to accommodate programming demand. Anticipated costs associated with establishing the classrooms required are projected to exceed the original budgeted funds. As outlined in CHA.BP Board Delegation of Authority, the total additional funds anticipated exceed the threshold above which the Board has the authority to make decisions regarding new unanticipated expenditures that have not been accounted for in the current annual budget.

## BACKGROUND

The Division offers a comprehensive range of learning environments to help nurture students' emotional, mental and physical well-being. For students with specialized learning needs, our Division offers regular, alternative and specialized programming options. For families who choose a specialized program, there are a number of Division centre programs available.

Of the 194 Division centre classes established over the past 10 years, 140 were established in the past five years (an average of 28 classes/year). This is almost triple the 54 Division centre classes established in the previous five years (an average of 11 classes/year). The most acute increase in demand is for Interactions Division centre programming. In the past five years, Interactions programming accounted for 73 per cent of new Division centre program establishments with the addition of 102 classes.

New Division Centre Classes in the Past Five Years



The 102 newly established Interactions classes in the past five years is an increase of 228 per cent from the previous five years when only 27 Interactions classes were approved.

Last year, the Division prepared to open 35 Division centre classes for September 2023, 31 of which required construction and fit-up. Following the close of SNAP Phase 1 this year, it is anticipated another 45 classes will be established, 38 of which require construction and fit-up.

Number of New Division Centre Classes for 2024–2025		
Program	Number of Classes	Facility Modifications Required
Interactions	38	33
Connections	2	2
CLS	1	1
CLS/Connections	2	1
ISP	1	1
Opportunity	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>38</b>

In finalizing the placement of Division centre classrooms, the following factors are considered:

- a shortfall of space for a Division centre program in a transportation zone at the elementary, junior high or senior high level
- schools with available space for Division centre classes considering:
  - utilization rates
  - student accommodation (overflow designated schools and new neighbourhood designations)
  - programming already in place at the school

- future growth considerations
- proximity to where students who are requesting the Division centre program reside
- consultation with the school principal, assistant superintendent and staff from Financial Services, Human Resources, Property Management, Specialized Learning Supports, Division Support Services, Student Transportation and Integrated Infrastructure Services regarding:
  - available space
  - impact on lease groups such as childcare tenants
  - infrastructure requirements and related costs given the age of the school building
  - specialized supports required
  - class capacity and grade configuration
  - budget
  - staffing
  - student transportation
- other demands for space in schools:
  - mental health support classrooms
  - alternative programs
  - early years programming

### Funding to Support the Distribution of Division Centre Classes

Annually, the Division provides an allocation to Programs and Student Accommodation to support the upfit of classrooms necessary to accommodate new Division centre classes and address student growth pressures across the Division. While the Division also identifies Capital Reserve funds each year to address the cost of portables and larger enrolment growth initiatives, smaller projects (sometimes related to space shifts caused by establishing Division centres) are often addressed using the annual allocation. Such efforts ensure schools can continue to accommodate anticipated enrolment growth, and allow for smooth transitions as Division centre classrooms are welcomed into school communities.

To address growth accommodation and the establishment of Division centre classrooms, in 2022–2023, the allocation provided was \$4.0 million. For the 2023–2024 year, the allocation was raised to \$5.8 million. As noted above, following the recent close of SNAP Phase 1, there are an estimated 38 Division centre classrooms requiring fit-up for the 2024–2025 school year. This is an increase from the 35 classes projected earlier this year. Additional funding, estimated not to exceed \$2.0 million, is required. Costs associated with both enrolment growth and Division centre classroom construction are tracked by a committee overseen by the Chief Infrastructure and Technology Officer and Chief Financial Officer.

While every attempt is made to ensure that construction costs are efficient and predictable, the number of classrooms required based on family choice is the primary driver for the annual budget requirements. As the Division utilizes spaces in older school facilities and the overall age of Division infrastructure increases, costs associated with code compliance, materials testing, air monitoring, as well as abatement and/or safe work procedures related to hazardous materials are also increasing.

### **RELATED FACTS**

- In 2022–2023, an allocation of \$4.0 million was provided to manage growth accommodation and the establishment of Division centres. For the 2023–2024 year, the allocation was raised to \$5.8 million.
- The most acute increase in demand is for Interactions Division centre programming.
- Of the 194 Division centre classes established over the past 10 years, 140 were established in the past five years (an average of 28 classes/year).
- The 102 newly established Interactions classes in the past five years is an increase of 228 per cent

from the previous five years.

- This year, an estimated 45 Division centre classes will be established, approximately 38 of which will require construction and fit-up.
- The cost to construct and fit-up a Division centre classroom varies depending on the extent of design and construction work and the improvements necessary to support the specific Division centre program. Primary cost drivers include hazardous materials remediation, structural and mechanical modifications, and delayed egress installations.
- Construction costs reflect reasonable and operationally necessary improvements only—schools may choose to add additional scope to Division centre establishment projects if the school budget allows.

## RECOMMENDATION

**That authorization to direct up to \$2,000,000 of the Division’s 2023-24 operational budget to support the construction of Division centre classrooms required for the 2024–25 school year be approved.**

## CONSIDERATIONS and ANALYSIS

The primary considerations in funding the establishment of additional Division centre classrooms include:

- Establishing Division centre classes supports the Division’s Strategic Plan Goal 1; recognize and support the diverse learning needs of all students, of Priority 1; build on outstanding learning opportunities for all students.
- Establishing additional specialized program sites in response to family choice allows students accessing Division centre classrooms to attend a school as close to home as possible.

## NEXT STEPS

Should this recommendation be approved, planning for construction will proceed.

Administration will ensure that the upcoming 2024–2025 Distribution of Funds report includes a request to increase the annual ongoing allocation to better reflect the expenditures the Division is currently experiencing for Division centre classroom establishments.

CW:jl

**DATE:** April 9, 2024

**TO:** Board of Trustees

**FROM:** Trustee Dawn Hancock

**SUBJECT:** Letter Supporting ASBA's Policy Statement on *Local Authority Election Act*

**RESOURCE STAFF:** Karen Mills, Director Board and Superintendent Relations

**REFERENCE** [Local Authorities Election Act](#)

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### ISSUE

The Alberta School Board Association (ASBA) adopted the following policy position last week: "School trustee elections should remain free from a political party system."

Trustee Hancock is requesting the Board of Trustees to write a letter to the Ministers of Education and Municipal Affairs in support of this policy position statement.

### BACKGROUND

During the spring legislative session, the provincial government may present a potential change to the [Local Authorities Election Act](#) (LAEA) that would introduce political parties into school board elections.

### RELATED FACTS

- Both local municipal elections and local school board elections are governed by the *Local Authorities Election Act*.
- The Government of Alberta conducted a survey in November and December 2023 to gather input on potential changes to local elections. Results are currently under review.
- Feedback from the surveys, along with previous feedback gathered in 2021 and 2022 by the Government of Alberta, will help inform potential changes to the *Local Authorities Election Act* and the *Municipal Government Act*.
- Alberta Municipalities has engaged heavily with members and strongly opposes the proposed changes that would introduce political parties into municipal elections.
- Alberta Municipalities also commissioned a [public opinion survey](#). This research found that "more than two in three Albertans (68 per cent) would prefer to see municipal candidates run as individuals. One in four (24 per cent) would prefer to see them run as members of a political party, and nine per cent are unsure."
- At their Spring 2023 Convention, members of Alberta Municipalities passed a resolution opposing the introduction of partisan politics within local governments.

### RECOMMENDATION

**That the Board authorize the Board Chair to send a letter to the Ministers of Education and Municipal Affairs in support of the Alberta School Board Association's policy position statement, "School trustee elections should remain free from a political party system".**

**OPTIONS**

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

1. Authorize the Board Chair to proceed as requested.
2. Authorize the Board Chair to proceed with an amended recommendation.

**NEXT STEPS**

Upon approval, a letter will be sent to the following individuals:

- Minister of Education
- Minister of Municipal Affairs

The letter will be copied to the Alberta School Boards Association.

DH:km



**DATE:** April 9, 2024

**TO:** Board of Trustees

**FROM:** Board Chair Kusiek

**SUBJECT:** Revision to School Nutrition Framework Letter

**REFERENCE** [Education Act](#), Section 33

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## ISSUE

The Board Chair is requesting changes to the letter approved on March 19, 2024 in support of Bill C-322, *An Act to develop a national framework to establish a school food program*.

## BACKGROUND

Acadie-Bathurst MP Serge Cormier has introduced private member's bill C-322, *An Act to develop a national framework to establish a school food program*. At their March 19, 2024 meeting, the Board approved a letter to be sent to a variety of elected officials in support of the Bill and funding for a national school nutrition program. On April 1, the Prime Minister announced a new National School Food Program, along with an investment of \$1 billion over five years.

## RELATED FACTS

- The letter approved on March 19, 2024 contains the following paragraph: *The Policy should be followed up by the rollout of a National School Nutritious Meal Program, and with it the \$200 million per year that the Government of Canada committed to in 2021. An investment in Budget 2024 in a national school food program will support both families and school food providers, who have been struggling due to the affordability crisis.*
  - a. In the funding announced along with the National School Food Program, the funds requested in this paragraph have already been committed. Therefore, inclusion of this paragraph no longer makes sense.
- At the March 19, 2024 Board meeting, Trustee Hole voiced concern over the following sentence: *Additionally, it can also contribute to the development of a more sustainable food system by supporting local and sustainable food production, and local economies through the creation of jobs.*
  - a. As other changes to the letter are also being made at this time, I am deleting this sentence as well given concerns from Trustee Hole and that it is not a critical piece of information in the letter.
- Given the April 1, 2024 announcement the letter has also been adjusted to reflect this investment. These areas are articulated in bold in the attachment.

## RECOMMENDATION

**That the following paragraph be deleted from the letter supporting a National Framework for a School Food Program Act:**

*The Policy should be followed up by the rollout of a National School Nutritious Meal Program, and with it the \$200 million per year that the Government of Canada committed to in 2021. An investment in Budget 2024 in a national school food program will support both families and school food providers, who have been struggling due to the affordability crisis.*

**NEXT STEPS**

Upon approval, the letter will be updated and sent to the list of officials approved on March 19.

**ATTACHMENTS**

ATTACHMENT I Letter approved March 19, 2024 (paragraph recommended for deletion highlighted)

JK:km

Date

[Member of Parliament's Full Name (with honorifics as necessary)]

[Constituency Office Address]

[City, Province Postal Code]

Dear (MP's NAME),

**Re: Private Member's Bill C-322 – National Framework for a School Food Program Act**

We are writing to you today in strong support of MP Serge Cormier's Private Member's Bill C-322, National Framework for a School Food Program Act. Specifically, we are requesting that you work with your caucus colleagues to seek unanimous consent of this Bill in support of children and youth across Canada.

**We are heartened to hear of the \$1 billion investment in a National School Food Program over five years which was announced on April 1. This is a step in the right direction, and we believe more can be done.** Our school board has been following the process of this Bill with great interest. It is heartening to see that the Bill has passed second reading and has been sent to committee. However, it will still need the support of those on the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities. We fully support the concept of a universal national school food policy and program for all public schools with certain requirements as described below. As the preamble to the Bill states, "*almost one in five children reported to school or to bed hungry sometimes, often or always because there was not enough food at home.*" In a country as developed and wealthy as ours, this is simply unacceptable. In fact, Canada is currently the only country in the G7 that does not have a national school food program or national standards<sup>[1]</sup>.

This type of program could provide a variety of benefits for students, including:

- Improving access to nutritious food for students, allowing all students to focus on learning in school
- Addressing food insecurity and the resulting anxiety and mental health challenges that affect students
- Improving the social determinants of health for marginalized communities
- Promoting healthy eating habits, choices, and lifestyles
- Increasing food literacy
- Supporting local agriculture and traditions; and
- Supporting a healthier and more sustainable food system.

A national school food policy and program would also help ensure that all children have the nourishment they need to learn and grow and improve their health and well-being. **Additionally, it can also contribute**

to the development of a more sustainable food system by supporting local and sustainable food production, and local economies through the creation of jobs.

We suggest that any federally supported policy/program to provide food (breakfasts, meals, snacks) must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Be present at every publicly funded school and accessible at no cost to students or care providers, school or boards/districts/authorities
- Be offered in a manner that is stigma-free
- Support culturally appropriate local food producers
- Have no marketing to children and youth

Given the widespread need across Alberta and Canada, and the extraordinary diversity of approaches school divisions take in forming partnerships to support those in need, there is a strong need for the federal government, in partnership with provincial ministries and school boards, to commit to a National School Food Policy **that reaches every publicly funded school**. A national policy would set a standard both for securing food for schools and ensuring it is delivered consistently, sustainably, and within a context of transformative action to end poverty, improve students' health and achievement outcomes and build cultural and economic success.

The Policy should be followed up by the rollout of a National School Nutritious Meal Program, and with it the \$200 million per year that the Government of Canada committed to in 2021. An investment in Budget 2024 in a national school food program will support both families and school food providers, who have been struggling due to the affordability crisis.

On behalf of Edmonton Public Schools, we look forward to continued engagement on this critical issue for children and youth and encourage you to vote to pass Bill C-322 as soon as possible. For more information, please review the Employment and Social Development Canada [National School Food Policy Engagements – What We Heard Report](#).

Please do not hesitate to contact me directly by email at [trustee.julie.kusiek@epsb.ca](mailto:trustee.julie.kusiek@epsb.ca) or by phone at 780-429-8087 should you wish to discuss the importance of this [legislation](#).

Best Regards,

Julie Kusiek  
Chair

c: The Honourable Demetrios Nicolaidis, Minister of Education  
Marilyn Dennis, President, Alberta School Boards Association  
Dennis MacNeil, President, Public School Boards' Association of Alberta

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<sup>[1]</sup> According to [Breakfast Club of Canada](#), and as reported by [CBC](#) and the [Globe and Mail](#)

**DATE:** April 9, 2024

**TO:** Board of Trustees

**FROM:** Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

**SUBJECT:** Bereavements

**ORIGINATOR:** Angela Anderson, Chief Human Resources Officer

**RESOURCE  
STAFF:** Cindy Maksymuik

**REFERENCE** [AEBC.AR Acknowledging Student, Staff and Trustee Deaths and Bereavements](#)

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**Mrs. Mhairi Anne Rueb** passed away on March 16, 2024, at the age of 50 years. Mhairi Anne started with the Division in March 2010. Her 14-year career as a teacher was spent at Millwoods Christian, Clara Tyner, Mount Pleasant, Michael A. Kostek, Brander Gardens, Pollard Meadows, Nellie Carlson and David Thomas King schools. She is survived by her husband, Lance; her children, Colten and Katrina; in addition to numerous other family and friends.

AA:cm

**DATE:** April 9, 2024

**TO:** Board of Trustees

**FROM:** Vice-Chair Jan Sawyer, PSBAA Director

**SUBJECT:** Public School Boards' Association of Alberta (PSBAA) Update

**REFERENCE** [Trustees' Handbook](#), Section 7.2

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## ISSUE

At their June 20, 2023, Organizational Board Meeting, the Edmonton Public Schools Board appointed Trustee Jan Sawyer as one of their two representatives for the Public School Boards' Association of Alberta (PSBAA). This report provides background on the Association and an overview of its activities.

## BACKGROUND

PSBAA is an association of public school boards that represents and advocates for Alberta's public school boards and public school education in Alberta. Board membership fees vary depending on the size of the Division; in 2023, EPSB membership fees were approximately \$71,000. The PSBAA Board meets monthly. The Public School Council Professional Development and Council meetings occur four times a year. There is a spring General Assembly and a fall conference and Annual General Meeting. The professional development sessions are available to any members of PSBAA member Boards. The Council meetings include the Council member (Marsha Nelson) and the Board member (Jan Sawyer). During these meetings, a significant portion of the agenda is an "environmental scan" where a topic is provided and each Board representative shares first at their table and then (with a two minute limit) with the entire council. This is an excellent opportunity to hear about solutions other Divisions have developed to issues common to all Boards throughout the province. Some environmental scans questions have been:

- What types of engagement are you having with your local candidates during the election?
- How do your school divisions engage your community stakeholders?
- With the Standards for Special Education (amended 2004) in mind, at a governance level how is your board responding to the diversity of learning needs?

## CURRENT SITUATION

### 2023 in Review

In the late winter of 2024, the PSBAA released its [2023 Annual Report](#); this is the first annual report since the creation of the Association's [2023-2028 Strategic Plan](#). Some highlights of this report include:

- In total, PSBAA includes 27 boards representing almost 850 schools, ranging in student population from 10 to more than 2,800 students per school.
- PSBAA, in collaboration with education partners and external subject matter experts, developed a 21-module governance education program for member school board trustees—specifically in the Alberta context and for public school boards. These modules are available to all member board trustees. Trustees with Edmonton Public Schools are currently working on a plan to complete these modules together.

- Over 28 separate professional development opportunities took place at the PSBAA meetings in 2023.
- The PSBAA board’s Professional Development committee and PSBAA staff worked with numerous education partners to bring exceptional professional learning opportunities to its members on numerous topics—including finance, politics, Indigenous relations and truth and reconciliation, special standards and curriculum—at PSBC meetings, our Spring General Assembly, and Fall Conference.
- The PSBAA Political Relations committee worked with PSBAA staff and an external consultant to develop a package of advocacy materials specifically to promote the importance of public school education in Alberta, leading up to the May 2023 provincial election.
- During 2023, PSBAA established a charitable society to facilitate opportunities for mentorship, leadership, and scholarships with and for public school students.

### In 2024

On March 1, 2024, Dr. Curtis Riep & Katarina Hoeven presented their paper (commissioned by PSBAA) [“Alberta Education - Challenges and Opportunities for Public Education”](#) which reinforced that we must continue, where possible, to provide choice within our public schools, “because it aligns with the principles of equity, efficiency, accountability and inclusivity, while preserving the strength and integrity of the public school system.”

### Looking Ahead

- PSBAA will continue its goal to recruit additional member boards
- The PSBAA board is developing a public information/election readiness action plan that will optimize the resources of the Association in achieving two goals related to the upcoming 2025 Municipal/School Trustee election in Alberta. The two goals are:
  - to promote and protect public school education; and
  - educate Albertans on the value of trusteeship

### KEY POINTS

- The Edmonton Public Schools Board is a member of the Public School Boards’ Association of Alberta (PSBAA).
- In total, PSBAA includes 27 boards representing almost 850 schools, ranging in student population from 10 to more than 2,800 students per school.
- In the late winter of 2024, the PSBAA released its [2023 Annual Report](#); the first since the creation of the Association’s [2023-2028 Strategic Plan](#).
- On March 1, 2024, [Alberta Education - Challenges and Opportunities for Public Education](#) was released, which reinforced that we must continue, where possible, to provide choice within our public schools, “because it aligns with the principles of equity, efficiency, accountability and inclusivity, while preserving the strength and integrity of the public school system.”
- The PSBAA board is developing an election action plan for Alberta’s upcoming 2025 Municipal/School Trustee election.

JS:km