

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, November 28, 2023, 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. She reflected on the promise of Treaty, to honour and acknowledge the footsteps of the many First Nations, Métis and Inuit who have called these lands home since time immemorial. She feels hope and encouragement when listening to principals share stories about the work their schools are doing to embrace and respect the teachings of many diverse Indigenous peoples and to connect students with the land. Teachings like the Thirteen Moons, where students go outside on each full moon to observe changes to the land throughout the year. Or the Seven Sacred Teachings, including the new mural unveiled at the Earl Buxton School yesterday. She hopes that students within Edmonton Public Schools will learn to respect Indigenous peoples and the knowledge they share with those who make their home on Treaty 6. To be given the opportunity to reflect on and learn from those teachings is a gift.

A. O Canada

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

The Superintendent advised that all Trustees were present.

MINUTE BOOK**C. Approval of the Agenda****MOVED BY Vice-Chair Sawyer:****“That the agenda for the November 28, 2023, Board meeting be approved as printed.”
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)****D. Communications from the Board Chair**

The Board Chair acknowledged Minister Nicolaides’ announcement regarding an additional \$30 million for school divisions across the province. She said the Division is looking forward to seeing the impact of this change and continuing the dialogue with the provincial government about improvements to the funding formula.

The Board Chair thanked Diversity Magazine for the invitation to attend the Afro-Canadian Awards. She also thanked Trustees Hole, Sumar and Estabrooks for attending with the event with her. The event was a celebration of African entrepreneurs and the contributions they make to our community. They also learned about an exciting new grant available through the Africa Centre - the Black Youth Leadership Program. Successful applicants, aged 15 to 30, will receive up to \$5,000 towards their community enriching project ideas.

The Board Chair shared that at the recent Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) conference and fall general meeting, valuable connections between school boards were made. Krysta Florence, a Division teacher, was recognized with the Edwin Parr Award. The Board Chair expressed appreciation for the Premier and Minister of Education, who provided greetings and answered questions, and to all MLAs who took the time to attend the MLA breakfast. Their presence at events for elected school boards was important and appreciated.

The Board Chair stated that the Board recently completed Results Review with principals and central leaders from across the Division. Results review is an important part of the accountability process for the Board in ensuring that they are delivering high-quality public education. She thanked all principals, staff members and community members who attended those sessions.

The Board Chair said that McKay Avenue School Archives and Museum Old Time Christmas Gathering was this past weekend. The historic McKay Avenue School Archives and Museum is truly a special place that stores so much of Edmonton’s history and the history of Edmonton Public Schools. She thanked The Friends of Historic McKay Avenue and 1881 Schoolhouse Society for hosting this fun event and for the support they provide year-round to this important resource for all Edmontonians.

The Board Chair expressed that it was a joy to witness and bring greetings to the new teacher induction ceremony hosted by the Edmonton Public Teachers Local 37. She thanked Trustees Hole and Sumar who also attended the event. She said, “Our success as a Division, and the success of the students we serve, is due to the incredible contributions of the people who choose to work at Edmonton Public Schools.”. She thanked each and every new teacher inductee for choosing this calling of teaching and for choosing Edmonton Public Schools.

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The Board Chair shared that she attended a couple of school council meetings last week. She thanked all school councils who continue to invite Trustees to their meetings. She expressed appreciation, on behalf of the Board, for connecting with the school community at their school council meetings and events.

E. Communications from the Superintendent of Schools

The Superintendent expressed a belated welcome back to staff from a well-deserved fall break and hoped staff, students and families had an opportunity to rest and recharge.

The Superintendent welcomed all of the staff attending the meeting today to support the Annual Education Results Report, including central leaders and principals, and those who were tuning in online. He also extended a welcome to the SCOPE principals who have joined the meeting in person.

The Superintendent shared his appreciation, on behalf of all of the staff in the Division, for the time and thought everyone put into Results Review, both in schools and with the Central units. He also thanked principals and central DU administrators for all of the time they spent preparing for and participating in Results Review. The Superintendent is proud to serve a Division that continues to put students first in everything they do and work as one team to support student success.

The Superintendent provided an update on the illness and staffing rates for Division schools. The Division continues to publish information about illness rates on epsb.ca every day. As of November 27, 5.8 per cent of Division students were away due to illness. Presently, several schools have respiratory outbreaks: Abbott, Millwoods Christian, Sweet Grass, York, Horse Hills, Mill Creek, Avonmore, Parkallen and Jackson Heights schools. In all of these cases, information from Alberta Health Services has been shared with families.

TEACHER data:

Friday: 73 unfilled positions, 385 sick
Monday: 62 unfilled positions, 383 sick
Tuesday: 65 unfilled, 397 sick

EA data:

Friday: 199 unfilled, 151 sick
Monday: 200 unfilled, 153 sick
Tuesday: 172 unfilled, 147 sick

MINUTE BOOK**F. Approval of the Minutes**

1. Board Meeting – November 7, 2023

MOVED BY Trustee Estabrooks:

**“That the minutes of the Board meeting held November 7, 2023, be approved as printed.”
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

G. Comments from the Public and Staff Group Representatives

The Board of Trustees heard from one registered speaker for this item.

H. Reports

2. Report #02 of the Caucus Committee (From the meeting held November 7, 2023)

Information was provided regarding actions taken at the November 7, 2023, Caucus Committee meeting.

3. 2022-2023 Audited Financial Statements

MOVED BY Trustee Hancock:

**“That the 2022-2023 audited financial statements, notes to the financial statements and unaudited schedules be approved.”
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

There was a short break in the meeting.

4. Annual Education Results Report (2022-2023)

MOVED BY Trustee Hole:

**“That the Edmonton Public Schools’ 2022-2023 Annual Education Results Report be approved.”
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

There was a short break in the meeting.

5. Funds for the 2024-2025 Professional Improvement Program –
Teacher Certificated Staff

MOVED BY Trustee Nelson:

**“That an allocation of \$1,300,000 from the 2024-2025 operating budget be approved for the Professional Improvement Program – Teacher Certificated Staff for the purpose of granting professional improvement leaves and tuition support to teachers for the 2024-2025 school year.”
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

MINUTE BOOK6. Funds for the 2024-2025 Professional Improvement Program – Exempt Staff**MOVED BY Trustee O'Keefe:**

“That an allocation of \$140,000 from the 2024-2025 operating budget be approved for the Exempt Staff Professional Improvement Program for the purpose of granting professional improvement leaves and tuition support to exempt staff for the 2024-2025 school year.”
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

7. Policy Review Committee 2023-2024 Work Plan**MOVED BY Trustee Estabrooks:**

“That the Board meeting be extended beyond 6 p.m.”
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

MOVED BY Trustee Sumar:

“1. That the Policy Review Committee 2023-2024 work plan be approved.”
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

“2. That the Board approve the expenditure of up to \$15,000 from the Board Initiative Fund for the production of a school calendar video.”
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

I. Comments from the Public and Staff Group Representatives – 5 p.m.

There were no registered speakers for this item.

J. Other Committee, Board Representatives and Trustee Reports

Trustee Nelson shared that the Public School Boards' Association of Alberta (PSBAA) had its fall conference and general meeting on November 17th and 18th. The meetings provided an opportunity to listen and learn from Assistant Deputy Ministers (ADMs) from Alberta Education. The ADMs spoke on the Assurance Framework and planning/reporting requirements. They also spoke on the *Child and Youth Well-Being Review* and action plans. PSBAA representatives shared their concerns and they heard about what was going on in other divisions.

Trustee Nelson said that one of the exciting initiatives of PSBAA is the Professional Learning opportunity for Trustees. The Board of Trustees will all participate, together, to complete 21 modules. The modules will focus on their roles as Trustees in terms of governance, fiduciary and generative responsibilities. She thanked PSBAA for providing the Board this opportunity.

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Trustee Hole shared an Edmonton Public Schools Foundation (Foundation) update:

- Wrap and Roll is back at Kingsway Mall for the month of December. This year, the Foundation will be located by Entrance 6, on the upper level beside LUSH. The Foundation invites everyone to bring their presents. For a donation to the Foundation, volunteers will wrap your presents and get them ready for gifting. The Foundation thanked Kingsway Mall for donating the space and supplies and thanked the many Division staff who have signed up to volunteer.
- Through the Chromebooks for Kids program, the Foundation's goal is to improve technology-based equity amongst the Division's most vulnerable students and families. Technology can be expensive and for some families in our community, is simply not something they can afford. Technological literacy is both an essential educational tool for students and a critical life skill. By referring students who are at risk of falling behind because they lack access to technology at home, principals are identifying those who are most in need of support. During the 2022–23 school year, the Foundation distributed nearly 500 devices to 50 Division schools through the Chromebooks for Kids program. Over 300 devices have already been distributed this year. Principals are encouraged to learn more about the program on Connect.
- Giving Tuesday is November 28 and is the world's largest generosity movement. Whether folks choose to support the Foundation, one of the other incredible Edmonton charities, or simply spread some kindness in your own way, everyone has something to give and every act of generosity counts.

Trustee Hancock shared that the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) held their Fall General Meeting on Monday, November 20th. Trustee Hancock thanked Board Chair Kusiek, Vice-Chair Sawyer and Trustee Estabrooks for attending the meeting with her. During the business portion of the meeting, one emergent position statement and nine regular position statements were presented to members for discussion and to vote on. ASBA will submit those that were passed as advocacy to the provincial government on behalf of the members.

Trustee Hancock reported results for the election of ASBA president and vice-president and the voting of the submitted position statements including how the Trustees attending on behalf of Edmonton Public School Board (EPSB), voted on each statement, and where appropriate, the discussion.

ASBA Election

Marilyn Dennis was re-elected as president for a second two-year term.

Shali Baziuk was re-elected as vice-president for a second two-year term.

ASBA Position Statements

1. Emergent Position Statement

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Minister of Education allow school divisions the flexibility to implement the new transportation requirements over a 2 year period. Year 1: Implementation of the 2 km guideline for all grades; Year 2: Implementation of the 1 km guideline for Kindergarten to grade 6 students.

- Discussion on the floor was around whether this position statement is considered emergent and to be added to the agenda.
- EPSB voted in favour.

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- The motion was defeated.

2. Access to New Funds for Fully Funded Full-Time Kindergarten

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the assembly adopt the position that Alberta Education provide the opportunity for every school division to access new funds for fully funded, full-time (950 hours) Kindergarten to ensure students develop the important language, social, motor, literacy, and numeracy skills that create a foundation of success for future learning.

- Discussion on the floor focused on whether this resolution would replace the existing Resolution 15.6 Investment in Early Education.
- An amendment was made to have this new resolution replace the existing one.
- Resolution 15.6 is consistent with EPSB's current approach to offering full-day and half-day Kindergarten.
- EPSB voted against both the proposed amendment and this position statement.
- The motion was defeated.

3. Recognition of Valid Teaching Certificates

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the assembly adopt the position that the Alberta School Boards Association support and advocate to the Minister of Education that individual Alberta school authorities be given the latitude to temporarily recognize the scope of practice as authorized by a valid teaching certificate from either an Alberta or other Canadian jurisdiction until such a time that an Interim Professional Certificate can be issued.

- EPSB voted in favour.
- The motion was carried.

4. Removal of the Reserve Cap

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Alberta School Board Association advocate for the Government of Alberta to remove the requirement of the maximum limit for operating reserves for school boards, thereby respecting school boards' local decision-making autonomy.

- EPSB voted in favour.
- The motion was carried.

5. Revision to Capital Planning Process

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the ASBA advocate to the Provincial government for school boards to submit a disaggregated Three-Year Capital Plan, with one list for modernization/replacements and one for new construction projects.

- This position statement was submitted by EPSB.
- Thank you to Chair Kusiek for presenting our resolution and responding to questions.
- Discussion on the floor included concern this could lead to potentially further loss of autonomy and the desire was to focus on elevating existing position statements on capital funding.
- The motion was defeated.

6. Review of Diploma Exams

WHEREAS the priority of Alberta's education system is the success of every student;
WHEREAS Alberta school boards are responsible for providing assurance to their local stakeholders that students are successful; and

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WHEREAS Alberta's education system supports accountability, transparency, and continuous improvement;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the assembly adopt the position that the Ministry of Education review the practice of administering provincial high school diploma examinations to ensure the efficacy of this tool as an indicator of both system and student success.

- EPSB voted in favor.
- The motion was carried.

7. Remove Barrier to Dual Credit and Off-Campus Education

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, The Alberta School Board Association advocate for the Government of Alberta to remove barriers to Dual Credit and Off-Campus Education as recommended by the Career Education Task Force, including:

- Maintain start-up and enhancement grants for Dual Credit and increase flexibility of grants to support operational costs related to Dual Credit projects and programming.
- Provide top up funding that includes sufficient, sustainable and equitable funding structure for Dual Credit and Off-campus credits awarded at all times of the year.
- Reduce red tape and barriers by
 - Moving to provincial MOUs
 - Simplifying PSI code creation and transferability
 - Sharing off-campus site inspections and reviewing supervision requirements
 - Providing WCB coverage to all off-campus students
- The motion was amended on the floor to include the reference to the Career Education Task Force.
- EPSB voted against the amendment as we felt it was too prescriptive in nature, but in favor of the amended motion.
- With the amendment, the motion was carried.

8. EAL Student Funding

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Minister of Education ensures funding is available for EAL students throughout their pre-Kindergarten and K-12 school years as needed to achieve language proficiency, up to seven years.

- EPSB submitted an amendment to this resolution to replace the previous wording "and not be limited to a 5 year maximum" to "up to seven years". This was the maximum prior to March 2013 and also in alignment with the data provided in the position statement's background information on Stages of Second Language Acquisition for Advance Fluency.
- EPSB voted in favor.
- With the amendment, the motion was carried.

9. Cross-Ministerial Support

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, ASBA advocates to the Government of Alberta to enhance funding for and access to community-based service agencies that schools collaborate with to effectively address the needs of all students.

- EPSB did not support this motion as the intent of the resolution was to advocate for funding for external agencies.

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- We do not see this as a role of ASBA who advocates for funding and issues on behalf of school boards.
- In addition, there are existing ASBA position statements that support the intent: 23.5 Wrap Around Services and 23.6 Mental Health Funding.
- The motion was defeated.

10. Collaboration on School Site Allocations

This position statement was divided into two separate resolutions.

First resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, Government of Alberta collaborate with school boards to resolve challenges around the lack of properly sized and available reserve land for school site allocations through the *Municipal Government Act*.

- EPSB voted in favour.
- The motion was carried.

Second resolution:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the Government of Alberta collaborate with school boards and municipalities to ensure distinct provincial allocations of capital funding for school site servicing and school construction to cover all costs of construction with the required Infrastructure.

- Discussions on the floor suggested some unintended consequences and the need for more clarity, specifically the managing of the funding and selection of sites.
- EPSB voted against this second resolution.
- The motion was defeated.

K. Trustees and Board Requests for Information - None

L. Notices of Motions - None

M. Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, December 12, 2023, at 2 p.m.

N. Adjournment: 6:26 p.m.

The Board Chair adjourned the meeting.

Julie Kusiek, Board Chair

Karen Mills, Director Board and
Superintendent Relations