

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, January 23, 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 with recognition that we are on Treaty 6 Territory. She also reflected on the note her daughter wrote on her white board in her room that says "do this tonight!" with an arrow pointed to her homework assignment. In this assignment, she is to observe the moon each evening. This got the Board Chair reflecting on the profoundness of this land and the sky that surrounds it each night, and that this sky is the same one that the Cree, Saulteaux, Blackfoot, Métis and Nakota Sioux have gazed upon from these lands since time immemorial. And it's this same moon they continue to look upon today, alongside the many other peoples from around the world who now call this land home. She also reflected on the significance of the night sky within many First Nations cultures. With that, she gave gratitude to the night sky, the moon and the unique and uniting qualities it brings to our lives today.

A. O Canada

B. Roll Call: 2:02 p.m.

The Superintendent advised that all Trustees were present.

MINUTE BOOK**C. Approval of the Agenda****MOVED BY Trustee Sumar:**

**“That the agenda for the January 23, 2024, Board meeting be approved as printed.”
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

D. Communications from the Board Chair

The Board Chair hoped everyone felt refreshed and rejuvenated after the winter break. She welcomed everyone back as we step into the new year – a year filled with hope and excitement. We are also celebrating all the incredible activities and progress happening within our schools.

The Board Chair emphasized the power of partnerships, a cornerstone of the Division’s success. She expressed excitement to hear more about the Educational Assistant pilot program today. She said this innovative initiative is not just a solution to Division’s staffing challenges, but also a support for school divisions across the province. She expressed gratitude to the provincial government for not only supporting the Division’s initial prototype, but also for providing the necessary funding to pilot this program across the province.

The Board Chair highlighted a recent feature by CBC, spotlighting the remarkable collaboration between the City of Edmonton and the Division. The opening of the city’s newest recreation centre within Dr. Anne Anderson School is a testament to our collective vision. This facility isn’t just a building; it’s a vibrant community hub, serving the residents of the Heritage Valley area. It’s an exemplary model of how ingenuity and cooperation can bring about transformative community spaces.

The Board Chair shared some insights from the Board of Trustees’ two-day planning session held earlier this month. This session was an invaluable time of reflection and forward planning. They looked back at what they’ve achieved so far and set their sights on what they aim to accomplish in the months ahead. The Board’s commitment to advocating for the students of Edmonton Public Schools—and for public education as a whole—remains stronger than ever. There’s much to celebrate, and even more to look forward to.

The Board Chair said that under the Division’s Strategic Plan Priority 2, they’ve seen some notable initiatives. Division schools have also been buzzing with cultural celebrations, from World Arabic Bilingual Day to the upcoming Lunar New Year festivities. Trustees also recently participated in a professional learning session on writing personal land acknowledgements. This is a significant step in their journey towards reconciliation, and there is much learning and work ahead. The diversity in Division schools is not just present; it’s celebrated, and she’s incredibly proud of the many ways we honour Division students’ rich cultural heritages.

The Board Chair expressed that the Board of Trustees were incredibly proud to honour and celebrate 36 individuals and 166 team members at the Division Recognition Awards celebration. These extraordinary people exemplify the best in their peers, Division students, and everyone they work with. This event is a

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poignant reminder of the commitment that lies within our community towards the success of our students and the continual advancement of public education.

E. Communications from the Superintendent of Schools

The Superintendent shared a quick welcome to all of the staff attending the meeting today.

The Superintendent said it's been a busy return to school, after a well-deserved winter recess. He greatly appreciated everyone who supported indoor recesses and dealt with snowy and icy conditions, as well as those who responded to weather-related emergencies in schools.

The Superintendent said the Division celebrated Maintenance Employees Appreciation Day on January 17. The skilled trades professionals and warehouse workers, represented by CUPE Local 784, help make sure our facilities are in great shape and deliver supplies to support student and staff success across the Division. A video about the amazing work they do every day can be watched on the Division social media channels.

The Superintendent advised that the start the second semester of school is next week and the Division is already preparing to get students registered and pre-enrolled for the 2024-2025 school year. This year, the Division has combined dates so that students who are new to the Division and students who will remain with us next year can both register and pre-enrol starting the same day. Registration and pre-enrolment start on February 1 and end on March 22.

The Superintendent shared that it's open house season within the Division and this will help families get ready to choose a school for the 2024-25 school year. Open houses give families and students a chance to learn a little more about what a school has to offer, from alternative programming, to complementary courses, extracurricular activities, sports teams, a taste of school culture and a chance to see the space. Schools host open houses between February and March. Everything needed for registering, pre-enrolling or attending an open house is available on [epsb.ca](https://www.e-psb.ca). If families have any questions, reach out to the school principal for more information.

The Superintendent shared that in the coming weeks, staff, students and families are invited to participate in the Division Feedback Survey, which provides information to the Division and schools. It's important the Division hears from staff, students and families about how the Division is doing and what they value in a quality education system. The Division uses the feedback to help measure our progress on achieving our goals and understand how to best support students, staff and families. The Board of Trustees is also inviting participants to answer a few questions in the Division Feedback Survey about perceptions of school safety. The survey is open to staff, students in Grades 4-12 and families from February 1 to March 22.

The Superintendent advised that presently there are no schools on either respiratory or gastrointestinal outbreak. The Division will continue to monitor and provide updates on the Division website. As of yesterday, three per cent of Division students were away due to illness.

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

1. Board Meeting – December 12, 2023

MOVED BY Trustee O'Keefe:

**“That the minutes of the Board meeting held December 12, 2023, be approved as printed.”
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

G. Comments from the Public and Staff Group Representatives

The Board of Trustees heard from four registered speakers for this item.

H. Reports

2. Report #03 of the Caucus Committee (From the meeting held December 12, 2023)

Information was provided regarding actions taken at the December 12, 2023, Caucus Committee meeting.

3. Proposed Distribution of the Additional Supplemental Enrolment Grant Funds

MOVED BY Trustee Nelson:

**“That the proposed allocation to distribute the additional \$5 million of Supplemental Enrolment Growth funds be approved.”
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

There was a short break in the meeting.

4. Update on the Educational Assistant Internship Pilot

The Educational Assistant (EA) Internship Pilot is the second phase of an innovative provincially funded program launched in the spring of 2023. It is designed to accommodate recruitment and retention of EAs in school divisions throughout Alberta. On November 24, 2023, the Division submitted a grant application for provincial funding of \$733K to support the spring 2024 EA Internship pilot. A comprehensive research report will be submitted to Alberta Education at the conclusion of the pilot.

5. Class Size Information

Average class sizes were generally stable over the last year for Divisions I, II and III, while Division IV shows an increase. The largest class size in each division is fairly consistent with prior years.

MINUTE BOOK6. Independent Student Funding (Response to Request for Information #017)

Information was provided regarding the Request for Information #017.

7. Bereavement

Vice-Chair Sawyer reported on the passing of Ms. Gloria McIntosh and Mr. Paul DaEstrela.

I. Other Committee, Board Representatives and Trustee Reports - NoneJ. Trustees and Board Requests for Information - NoneK. Notices of Motions - NoneL. Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, February 6, 2024, at 2 p.m.M. Adjournment: 4:19 p.m.

The Board Chair adjourned the meeting.

Julie Kusiek, Board Chair

Karen Mills, Director Board and
Superintendent Relations