

**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 5, 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 Nelson to provide a land acknowledgement.

Trustee Nelson acknowledged and gave thanks to the land on which she lives and works, and to the Indigenous peoples who have cared for it since time immemorial. amiskwacîwâskahikan or Edmonton sits in Treaty 6 land and she is a visitor who is privileged to have called it home. It is a site of ceremony, culture and relationship with the rich land. As a settler with Scandinavian roots, she was also raised with the importance of celebrating in ceremony, culture and her relationship with the land. Although she shares these values, she knows she needs to learn more about First Nations, Métis, and Inuit cultures and perspectives. As a small act of "reconcili-action", she will honour those who've come before her and she commits to her own learning journey. She recognized she has an opportunity and the responsibility to take the next steps and to share those learnings with the rest of her family.

**A. O Canada**

**B. Roll Call: 2:01 p.m.**

The Superintendent advised that all Trustees were present.

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

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

**D. Communications from the Board Chair**

The Board Chair expressed the Division’s appreciation to the Minister of Education for recognizing that school divisions across the province are growing. While the Division waits for our funding profile to understand what Budget 2024 means for Edmonton Public Schools, we continue to grow rapidly and the pressures on our Division remain. She said the Division will be the best stewards of provincial funds to support student success, as we continue to navigate the challenges ahead.

The Board Chair shared that on Friday she had the opportunity to attend the school infrastructure announcement in Calgary, where she was reminded that the needs for new school infrastructure across the province are immense. She said that Friday’s announcement is a tale of two stories: on one hand, we celebrate the progress that has been made both on new school construction and modernization/replacement of existing schools, but on the other hand, we recognize the critical need for additional resources to address the backlog of infrastructure projects. The Division welcomes construction funding for the new Grades 7-12 school in Glenridding. It will bring 2,400 much-needed student spaces to an area of the city that is seeing rapid growth. Three schools in Glenridding Heights, Rosenthal and McConachie received design funding and two mature neighbourhood schools – Delton and Spruce Avenue - were added to the provincial list with planning funding. Both Delton and Spruce Avenue schools have been on the Division’s capital planning list for 15 and 17 years respectively.

The Board Chair also mentioned that in the next 10 years, the Division expects to grow by 60,000 students, and anticipate the need for 50 new schools to accommodate this growth. The Division could already fill every project outlined in the first two years of our three-year capital plan, so new school construction is critical to meeting demand and ensuring every student has access to a high-quality learning environment. The Division is committed to working with the government to find ways to address the Division’s critical need for new school space.

The Board Chair recently attended the Winter Cycling Congress, where she had the honour of delivering opening remarks at the pre-conference on active school travel. She extended her gratitude to Trustees Estabrooks, Hancock, and Hole for their attendance at the Garneau Bike Bus event and the pre-conference. Their support and advocacy for active transportation initiatives were truly appreciated. She said that during the pre-conference, she was inspired by the wealth of innovative ideas and strategies discussed, and she encouraged anyone interested in promoting active school travel to explore the resources available through Ever Active Schools’ Tools for Schools program.

The Board Chair confirmed that the Board sent a letter to the Premier regarding gender diversity and the teaching of sexual health in Division schools. She said that this is an important step in ensuring that

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all students feel included and supported in their educational journey. The letter is posted in the Board Correspondence section of [epsb.ca](https://epsb.ca).

The Board Chair expressed her gratitude and appreciation for the recent Night of Music event. The talent and dedication of our students and staff were truly awe-inspiring, and she is continually amazed by the vibrant arts community that thrives within our Division. She thanked everyone who performed, helped students prepare and organized the event!

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

The Superintendent welcomed staff attending the Board meeting and the many special guests in the audience including one of the SCOPE principals, Scott Horton.

The Superintendent shared his deep appreciation for everyone who was involved in organizing, performing and attending the Night of Music last week. The event showcased the musical talents of more than 650 students, along with 40 teacher conductors, directors, music teachers and accompanists before nearly 2,000 audience members. He invited everyone to head to the Division's social media channels to check out some pictures from the awesome night.

The Superintendent reminded everyone that it's pre-enrolment and registration time. Registration and pre-enrolment opened on February 1 and closes on March 22, just before Spring Break. For more information about what schools offer, there are several Open Houses still happening this month. If you've missed an open house, don't hesitate to reach out to the school principal for more information.

The Superintendent advised that the Division Feedback Survey is also still open until March 22. So far, there has been a great response:

- 18,496 students
- 3,785 families
- 3,431 staff members filled out the survey

He encouraged staff, students and families to share how the Division is doing and what they value in a quality education system. The Division uses this feedback to help measure the Division's progress on achieving our goals and understand how to best support students and families.

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

1. Board Meeting – February 6, 2024

**MOVED BY Trustee Sumar:**

**“That the minutes of the Board meeting held February 6, 2024, be approved as printed.”  
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

**MINUTE BOOK****G. Recognition**2. Edwin Parr Teacher Awards

Ms. Kate Jolicoeur of Soraya Hafez School was selected as the Division's honorary nominee for the 2024 Edwin Parr Award for excellence in first year teaching.

**H. Comments from the Public and Staff Group Representatives**

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

**I. Reports**3. Report #07 of the Caucus Committee (From the meeting held February 6, 2024)

Information was provided regarding actions taken at the February 6, 2024, Caucus Committee meeting.

4. Student Senate 2023-2024

Student Trustees Chelsea Kwon and George Xie presented the 2023-2024 Student Senate Work Plan update.

5. Strategic Plan Update Report: Priority 2  
Anti-Racism, Reconciliation and Equity Plan Action Plan Year Two Update

The Strategic Plan Update Report provided an overview of the Division's efforts in support of the Anti-racism, Reconciliation and Equity Action Plan (formerly, the Anti-racism and Equity Action Plan) and reflected progress in support of Priority 2 of the [2022-26 Division Strategic Plan](#), "*Advance action towards anti-racism and reconciliation.*"

There was a short break in the meeting.

6. School Councils Annual Report Highlights Summary

Information was provided regarding highlights from the 2022-2023 school council annual reports.

Trustee Estabrooks said that in the past the Division has sent this report to the Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) and wondered if the Board Chair might consider continuing with this practice.

Board Chair Kusiek said she would be happy to send the report to ASCA.

**MINUTE BOOK**7. Update on Operational Efficiencies 2022-2023

Administration provided an update on operational efficiencies undertaken in the past year as well as other operational efficiencies being considered as a way to direct as many dollars as possible to the classroom.

Trustee Estabrooks suggested that the Board Chair share the highlights of this report with the Minister of Education when the opportunity arises.

Board Chair Kusiek thanked Trustee Estabrooks for the suggestion and said she will work on preparing something to share the highlights of the report, along with other highlights from today's meeting, with the Minister.

8. Division Centre Program Information  
(Response to Request for Information #019)

Information was provided regarding the Request for Information #019.

9. Students Fleeing Persecution and/or Global Conflicts  
(Response to Request for Information #020)

Information was provided regarding the Request for Information #020.

Trustee Estabrooks asked Administration why there is an Unknown category listed in Attachment I. Superintendent Robertson said staff will respond to Trustee Estabrooks via a Transmittal Memorandum (TM) to the Board.

10. Bereavement

Vice-Chair Sawyer reported on the passing of Ms. Diane Riedyk.

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

Trustee Estabrooks thanked the students at Solomon College for the warm welcome to their classroom last week. Solomon College helps support adult learners in learning English. She was asked to speak about the role of Trustee as many of the students at Solomon College are also parents. She was pleased to share the proposed changes to the Division's calendar policy to recognize days of significance when possible and encouraged parents to do the calendar policy feedback survey by March 11.

Trustee Estabrooks spent the morning of Pink Shirt Day on February 28 at Eastglen School with that school's QSA, along with students from Highlands School. She appreciated the invitation to speak about the work the Board is doing to ensure schools remain safe, welcoming and inclusive in light of the Premier's proposed legislation about gender identity.

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Trustee Estabrooks shared a big shout out to parents at Garneau School who through snow and wind and rain continue to organize a bike bus for students at this Ward D school. The school organized a bike bus, picking up cyclists along the way to school, to kick off the Winter Cycling Congress in our city on February 21. She said it was great to also see Board Chair Kusiek at Garneau School that morning as part of the celebration.

Trustee Sumar thanked the folks over at W.P. Wagner School for including him again in this year's Wagstock, where he got a chance to see some amazing talent from some of the students. The event also served as a kickoff for their upcoming Wagathon, which is a bikeathon fundraiser and this year is supporting Second Chance Animal Rescue Society (SCARS).

Trustee Sumar shared that A. Blair McPherson School is holding a March Animal Madness, which is a Grade 9 student inquiry project between language arts and science. Students champion an animal, teach their peers about them and put them into a March Madness style bracket to be voted on by their peers. A. Blair McPherson is also hosting the Elder Dr. Francis Whiskeyjack High School open house on March 6, 2024, at 6 p.m. Trustee Sumar will be in attendance, along with some Division staff. He is looking forward to talking to members of the community and folks who are excited about the new high school.

Trustee Sumar provided details on the upcoming Parent Appreciation Night on April 16 at the Telus World of Science. The doors will open at 5:30 p.m. It will be on a first-come, first-serve basis and is not a ticketed event. Folks will have access to the Arctic Journey, the feature Dinosaurs exhibits and the Legends of the Northern Sky at the Zeidler Dome.

Trustee Sumar said the Policy Review Committee is still looking for some feedback on the Calendar Policy which is due on March 11. He expressed his appreciation to his colleagues for sharing this over their social media and making sure that the message was spread far and wide.

Trustee Sumar attended the 1 Million Voices for Inclusion rally which happened at the Legislature two weekends ago. He expressed gratitude for all the community that was in attendance. There were a lot of heart-wrenching stories, but also lots of energy and passion around 2SLGBTQIA+ rights.

Trustee Sumar shared that Ramadan is right around the corner. He encouraged folks to learn more about Ramadan. He also encouraged the Muslim community to reach out to other folks who may not be celebrating to include them in any potential Iftar celebrations or Eid coming up at the end of the month.

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

**MINUTE BOOK****L. Notices of Motions**

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

That the Board of Trustees send a letter in support of a national framework for a school food program to federal ministers whose portfolios have an education and/or student health component and all Alberta Members of Parliament.

**M. Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, March 19, 2024, at 2 p.m.****N. Adjournment: 5:49 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