

MINUTE BOOK**Board Meeting**

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of Edmonton School Division of Alberta held online on Tuesday, March 4, 2025, at 2 p.m.

Present:**Trustees**

Dawn Hancock
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, a traditional meeting grounds, gathering place, and travelling route to the Cree, Saulteaux, Blackfoot, Métis, Dene and Nakota Sioux. We acknowledge all the many First Nations, Métis and Inuit whose footsteps have marked these lands for centuries.

A. Roll Call: 2:03 p.m.

The Superintendent advised that Trustees Hole and Sumar were absent, all other Trustees were present.

B. Approval of the Agenda

MOVED BY Trustee Hancock:

**"That the agenda for the March 4, 2025, Board meeting be approved as presented."
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

C. Communications from the Board Chair

The Board Chair acknowledged the upcoming retirement of Superintendent Robertson at the end of August. For 30 years, Superintendent Robertson has dedicated his life to Edmonton Public Schools, and for the last 12 he has served as Superintendent. His unwavering commitment to a student-first approach

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has been truly remarkable. Every decision, every initiative, has been driven by a desire to create the best possible learning environment for students. His leadership has been instrumental in the success of countless students. The Board is immensely grateful for his dedication, his vision and his profound impact on the Division. She wished Superintendent Robertson all the best in his upcoming retirement at the end of this school year.

The Board Chair said that on February 28, Trustee Hole submitted her resignation to the Board of Trustees. As per the *Education Act*, the Board Chair accepted the resignation of Trustee Hole at this Board meeting, thus putting it into effect. She wished Trustee Hole well in her future endeavours. Board Chair Kusek stated that Trustees Hancock and O’Keefe will continue to represent Ward C for the remainder of this term.

The Board Chair shared that last week, the provincial budget was tabled and it holds significant implications for the Division. The Board has been steadfast in their advocacy for a change to the provincial funding formula for schools, called the Weighted Moving Average (WMA) formula. It simply did not keep pace with the Division’s rapid growth. Under the previous three-year WMA, the Division was facing a situation where approximately 3,000 students were unfunded, which is a significant strain on the Division’s resources. The Division is pleased to see the province has moved to a two-year WMA. While we will still have about 1,000 students unfunded, this is a clear step in the right direction. She stated that the Board is grateful for this and remains committed to continuing their advocacy and to working alongside the government for full funding for every student. The Division will closely monitor the impact of this, including the impact of discontinuing the supplemental enrolment growth grant, which under the previous formula was meant to help bridge that funding gap. The Board is also heartened to see that the overall education budget is set to increase for the 2025-2026 school year. The increase in student enrolment is anticipated to result in a status-quo budget for the Division.

The Board Chair stated that the Board remains committed to advocacy for public education and working with government to find additional ways to support an increase to base funding which will better support the range of supports for student learning they know is needed. The Division will continue to analyze the budget in depth, and work to understand the full impact on Division schools.

The Board Chair said that the Board is encouraged by the province’s indication that more new schools are on the horizon as part of the School Construction Accelerator program. The Division desperately needs these new schools to accommodate the Division’s growing student population.

The Board Chair expressed interest in hearing about the Division’s Ten-Year Facilities Plan and the long-term vision, and how the Division will continue to support students and communities.

D. Communications from the Superintendent of Schools

The Superintendent said that the province tabled their budget last Thursday (February 28). It was noted that, pending the provincial funding profile, a preliminary analysis indicates a status-quo budget for Edmonton Public Schools. While the weighted moving average formula moves to a two-year timeframe, which means that more students will receive funding, the province has also removed the supplemental

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enrolment funding. Therefore, the projected overall funding remains similar, accounting for anticipated student enrolment growth. Superintendent Robertson said that some grants are increasing, including the complex learning needs grant. For Edmonton Public Schools, a 20 per cent increase to \$8 million is welcome. The Division already supplements complex learning needs by more than \$20 million. It was noted that all increased budgetary funds will be required for program development to accommodate the anticipated 5,000 student increase in September 2025. It was noted that the Division will need every increased dollar in next year's budget to program for the anticipated 5,000 additional students expected for September 2025.

The Superintendent shared that pre-enrolment and registration for the 2025-2026 school year has started. Families have until Wednesday, March 19 to pre-enrol their children. Open houses in schools run right until the deadline, giving 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. Information about these dates will be available on epsb.ca. Families with questions are encouraged to contact the school principal for more information.

The Superintendent extended his congratulations to Laurel Nikolai, who is a dedicated music teacher at Centennial School. She was recently recognized by the Alberta Music Advocacy Alliance as part of the January Spotlight Series, which celebrates music within the province. Laurel's passion, expertise and love of music are having an impact on student outcomes. She creates environments where students are encouraged to realize their own potential as learners. She was nominated by her peers from the Carl Orff Canada Alberta Chapter.

E. Approval of the Minutes**1. Board Meeting – February 11, 2025**

Board Chair Kusiek requested that her report, under Item C in the February 11, 2025 minutes, be amended, removing the Advocacy Committee update and adding the update to Item I:

Excerpt:

The Board Chair reported that the Advocacy Committee met since the last Board meeting to discuss:

- Methods for improving communication of the Board of Trustees' advocacy work;*
- Content of joint advocacy with partner organizations; and*
- Opportunities to strengthen government relations.*

MOVED BY Trustee Nelson:

**"That the minutes of the Board meeting held February 11, 2025, be approved as amended."
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

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Ms. Breanna Tran-Ly of Weinlos School was selected as the Division's recipient for the 2025 Edwin Parr Award for excellence in first year teaching.

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**3. Special Caucus Committee Report (From the meeting held February 18, 2025)**

Information was provided regarding actions taken at the February 18, 2025, Special Caucus Committee meeting.

4. Process and Timeline for the 2025-2026 Budget**MOVED BY Trustee O'Keefe:**

"That the Process and Timeline for the 2025-2026 Budget as outlined in Attachment I, be approved."

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

There was a short break in the meeting at 3:05 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 3:15 p.m.

5. Ten-Year Facilities Plan 2025-2034

The Ten-Year Facilities Plan 2025–2034 will be submitted to Alberta Education for provincial consideration. It will inform the capital priority recommendations in the Division's Three-Year Capital Plan 2026–2029, which is scheduled to be tabled at the April 1, 2025, public Board meeting and submitted to the province.

There was a short break at 3:52 p.m. before Trustee questions and comments on the report.

The meeting resumed at 3:58 p.m.

I. Other Committee, Board Representatives and Trustee Reports - None

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

K. **Notices of Motion** - None

L. **Next Board Meeting**: Tuesday, March 18, 2025, at 2 p.m.

M. **Adjournment**: 4:28 p.m.

The Board Chair adjourned the meeting.

Julie Kusiek, Board Chair

Karen Mills, Director Board and
Superintendent Relations