



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

Board Meeting

CFE McCauley Chambers
Tuesday, November 5, 2024
2 p.m.

Land Acknowledgement

- A. Roll Call
- B. Approval of the Agenda
- C. Vimy Ridge Academy Remembrance Ceremony
- D. Communications from the Board Chair
- E. Communications from the Superintendent of Schools
- F. Approval of the Minutes
 - 1. DRAFT – Board Minutes – October 22, 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, November 4, 2024, to speak under this item.)
- H. Reports
 - 2. Student Senate Work Plan (Information)
 - 3. Advocacy for 2SLGBTQIA+ Rights (Recommendation)
 - 4. Governance & Evaluation 2024-2025 Work Plan (Recommendation)
 - 5. Strategic Plan Update Report – Well-being and Mental Health (Information)
 - 6. Student Accommodation Plan 2024-2025 (Information)
 - 7. Board Chair Discretionary Expense Allowance Report 2023-2024 (Information)
- I. Other Committee, Board Representative and Trustee Reports
- 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, October 22, 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
Karen Mills
Cliff Richard

Darrel Robertson
Carrie Rosa

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 amiskwaciwaskahikan (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 said he is aware, painfully at times, that as an immigrant, he is a settler and only here thanks to the warmth of the First Peoples of this land.

Trustee Sumar said that October marks Latin History Month and 2SLGBTQIA+ History Month. It also marks Islamic History Month and this year's theme is "Health and Healing". During an event that he and some of his colleagues attended on the weekend, he was reminded that, as it says in the Qu'ran, we were made into peoples and tribes and that we have a duty to get to know and learn from others. As a wise twelve-year old said through a video presentation, different peoples are like different parts of the human body, like the arms, the heart, and the brain, and we can only achieve our collective goals by all working together. The program ended with a powerful quote: "People are of two kinds, either your brothers in faith or your equals in humanity." In the spirit of reconciliation, Trustee Sumar committed to, as Dr Ali Lakhani said, "opening wider the aperture of my own heart so that I may know and that I may get to know more about the original inhabitants of Turtle Island and their descendants."

MINUTE BOOK**A. O Canada****B. Roll Call: 2:05 p.m.**

The Superintendent advised that all Trustees were present.

C. Approval of the Agenda

MOVED BY Trustee O'Keefe:

**"That the agenda for the October 22, 2024, Board meeting be approved as printed."
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

D. Communications from the Board Chair

The Board Chair advised she was saving her comments for the next Board meeting.

E. Communications from the Superintendent of Schools

The Superintendent shared that the Minister of Jobs, Economy and Trade has granted approval for a Disputes Inquiry Board (DIB) to assist in resolving the ongoing contract negotiations with CUPE Local 3550. A DIB is a neutral third-party process that helps clarify issues and explore potential solutions to avoid a strike or lockout. The Division was served with strike notice by CUPE Local 3550 late last week and was scheduled to go on strike this Thursday. While the DIB process is ongoing, the strike will not proceed. The Division remains committed to reaching an agreement with CUPE Local 3550. We value the incredible work that support staff do every day in schools, classrooms and in central offices. They are important members of our team, contributing to the success and well-being of students. Superintendent Robertson said the Division is hopeful that the DIB process will be successful in resolving the outstanding issues so we can reach an agreement that avoids any disruption to learning.

F. Approval of the Minutes**1. Board Meeting – October 8, 2024**

MOVED BY Trustee Nelson:

**"That the minutes of the Board meeting held October 8, 2024, be approved as printed."
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

MINUTE BOOK**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. 2024 Division Energy and Environment Strategy Annual Update**

An update was provided on the progress made on the 2023 action items outlined in the Division Energy and Environment Strategy 2023–2026. In addition to the 2023 action items identified within the Energy and Environment Strategy that were addressed during the 2023–2024 school year, a number of other initiatives were undertaken in order to further the Division’s efforts to reduce emissions.

There was a short break in the meeting.

**3. Follow-up on Accelerated Infrastructure Announcement
(Response to Request for Information #022)**

Information was provided regarding the Request for Information #022.

**4. Anticipated Election 2025 Costs
(Response to Request for Information #023)**

Information was provided regarding the Request for Information #023.

Trustee Estabrooks asked the Board Chair if she would be amenable sharing this report with ASBA and explore joint advocacy opportunities. Board Chair Kusiek agreed, stating that the reports are public reports and it’s beneficial to inform our partners about the situation.

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

There were no registered speakers for this item.

J. Other Committee, Board Representatives and Trustee Reports

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

Edmonton Public Schools Foundation Launches Top-ups for Tummies

The Foundation officially launched Top-ups for Tummies to Division schools. The Foundation is excited to be able to provide school nutrition support at a time in our community when food insecurity is a challenge for many families. Top-ups for Tummies is an Edmonton Public Schools Division-wide strategy that allows schools to apply for funding to top-up and fill current gaps within

MINUTE BOOK

their school nutrition strategies. It encourages equitable access to wholesome, nutritious food at school for students who need it most.

Top-ups for Tummies is made possible by a contribution from the Edmonton Community Foundation and additional community donors. Donations continue to be collected to ensure the sustainability of this program in future years and can be made online through the Foundation's website at any time.

The deadline for Principals to apply for their school is Friday, November 15, 2024

2023-2024 Impact Report Available

The Foundation's 2023-2024 Impact Report is now available on the [Foundation's website](#). The Foundation is grateful for the support that it receives from generous donors and supporters, and is looking forward to the year ahead.

Trustee Estabrooks thanked school council chairs in Ward D who are reaching out and inviting her to upcoming meetings. She looks forward to those meetings and sharing the work of the Board of Trustees.

Trustee Estabrooks appreciated the opportunity to attend MacEwan University's "Love in a Dangerous Time" exhibit, which featured a display from the Canadian Human Rights museum in Winnipeg documenting the purge of LGBTQ+ staff from federal government and the military. Former Edmonton mayor Michael Phair, a namesake of one of the Division's schools, spoke at the event. Trustee Estabrooks shared a comment made during the event was how we must continue to fight to protect the human rights of all and how the proposed "parental choice" legislation by the UCP government is taking us back decades, not to mention that it will be incredibly harmful to students.

Trustee Sumar noted that the exhibit from the "Love in a Dangerous Time" event which he and some of his colleagues attended is available in the John L Harr Library at McEwan University until November 8th.

Trustee Sumar expressed gratitude to the Edmonton Council of Muslim Communities and the Aga Khan Councils for Canada and Edmonton for the invitation to attend the Islamic History Month event at the Aga Khan Garden. It was an interesting and thought-provoking event. He shared that Dr. Ali Lakhani, the keynote speaker, and school-aged students, through a video presentation, shared their thoughts and perspectives on diversity and pluralism.

K. Trustees and Board Requests for Information - None**L. Notices of Motion**

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

That the Board of Trustees urge the Alberta School Boards Association and the Public School Boards' Association of Alberta to advocate to the Minister of Education that sexual education

MINUTE BOOK

remain an "opt out" option for parents in Alberta and that school boards' autonomy be respected with regards to their own sexual orientation and gender identity policies.

M. **Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, November 5, 2024, at 2 p.m.**

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

The Board Chair adjourned the meeting.

Julie Kusiek, Board Chair

Karen Mills, Director Board and
Superintendent Relations

DATE: November 5, 2024

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Student Senate 2024-2025 Work Plan

ORIGINATOR: Karen Mills, Director Board and Superintendent Relations

RESOURCE STAFF: Sean Jones, Nancy Petersen, Wanas Radwan

REFERENCE: [October 4, 2016, Board Report – Strategic Plan Update: Student Senate 2016-17 Work Plan](#)

ISSUE

The Student Senate is presenting their work plan for the 2024-2025 school year to the Board of Trustees.

BACKGROUND

The Student Senate serves as a youth engagement model to promote active student participation in youth governance within education and to provide the Board of Trustees with a meaningful way to access student voice. To help focus the direction and energy of the Student Senate, they establish a yearly work plan that focuses on real-life application projects that are informed by the voice of their peers. The Student Senate reports on their efforts to meet their work plan goals at three public Board meetings throughout the year.

In the spring of 2024, Edmonton Public high schools selected up to two students per high school to provide representation on a 2024-2025 Student Senate. The 2024-2025 Student Senate met on September 16 and 23, and October 7 to complete the following tasks:

- Elect three Student Trustees - Bella Jiao, Old Scona Academic; Chloe Ge, Dr. Anne Anderson; Christina Daniel, Ross Sheppard
- Elect four Student Senate Executives - Chair, Addison Borhaven, Jasper Place; Vice-Chair, Sophia Ngan, Strathcona; Secretaries - Anurag Sandhu, W.P. Wagner and Selina Lin, Old Scona Academic
- Identify the themes and channels for their project work this year.

CURRENT SITUATION

To help ensure their work would meet the needs of their peers, the Student Senate reviewed data collected from a survey conducted in the 2022-2023 school year. This survey was available to all high school students in the Division and asked students to answer the following question: Considering your school experiences, what supports or opportunities would enhance pathways for your success? The survey collected 2,156 responses in only five days (October 3, 2022 to October 7, 2022).

Student Senators also discussed what was within their locus of control and what project possibilities came to mind when looking at the Division Strategic Plan. Following these discussions, students were asked to complete a Google Form ranking a variety of project ideas. The responses led to the formation of four initial working groups: a live career exploration event, a live diversity event, an academic support information group and a podcast group.

Next, Student Senators will refine their project ideas and develop project work plans.

In the 2024-2025 school year, the Student Senate will also be providing youth perspective to Board and Division initiatives. Throughout the year, the Board and Division Administration will be able to access youth voice through the Student Senate about a broad range of topics relevant to high school students.

KEY POINTS

- Student Senators elected three Student Trustees and four executive members.
- Student Senators formed four project groups.
- The Student Senate will provide youth perspective to the Board of Trustees and Division Administration about a range of topics throughout the year.
- Student Trustees will report their progress towards their work plan goals at the February 11, 2024, public Board meeting.

SJ:KM:NP:WR:km

DATE: November 5, 2024

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Trustee Trisha Estabrooks

SUBJECT: Advocacy for 2SLGBTQIA+ rights

REFERENCE [HFA.BP Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression Policy](#)
[HFA.AR Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity](#)
[EPSB Parents' Guide to Teaching Sexual Health](#)
[AEBB.BP Wellness of Students and Staff](#)
[EPSB Letter to Premier Danielle Smith, February 15, 2024](#)
[Alberta Human Rights Act](#)

ISSUE

On January 31, 2024, Alberta Premier Danielle Smith posted a [video](#) where she laid out a number of proposed policies focusing on transgender and non-binary youth, including changes to Alberta's education system. She formally announced the policies at a [news conference](#) on February 1.

On February 15, 2024, the Board of Trustees wrote to Premier Smith, opposing the proposed policies and offering to share how the Division's policies and practices are benefiting students and families.

On October 1, 2024, Premier Smith released another [video](#) reiterating the UCP's plan to bring forward legislation implementing new "parental choice" during the fall session of the Alberta Legislature.

BACKGROUND

Edmonton Public Schools has a number of policies that promote welcoming, inclusive, safe and healthy working and learning environments for students, staff and families, regardless of a person's actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

In the spring of 2024, the Board of Trustees reaffirmed our commitment to safe spaces for students, staff and families with revisions to our Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression policy. That policy includes the belief that all sexually diverse and/or gender diverse students, staff and families have the right to self-identification and determination, and that they must be treated fairly, equitably and with dignity and respect.

Currently, school divisions have the autonomy to create sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (SOGIE) policies they believe best represent the students, families and staff they serve.

Sexual health education is part of the Alberta provincial curriculum for Kindergarten to Grade 12 students. The Division adheres to the [curriculum and programs of study for K-12 students](#). The

curriculum, as approved by Alberta Education, is age-appropriate and conducive to a healthy learning environment.

Within our school division, parents and guardians are notified when the Alberta human sexuality curriculum will be taught in the classroom and given an option to request an exemption for their child or children from this instruction. There is no academic penalty for a student not participating.

The Board recognizes that a parent is a child's first teacher and that parents play an important role in conversations about sexual health. The Board believes teaching children and teens about sexual health is a responsibility parents, schools and the community share.

Key points of the proposed "parental choice" legislation

On February 1, 2024, Premier Smith announced the following proposed reforms related to Alberta's education system:

- Parents must be notified and opt in to any instance when a teacher provides formal instruction on subject matter involving gender identity, sexual orientation or human sexuality.
- All third-party resource materials or presentations related to gender identity, sexual orientation or human sexuality available in Alberta classrooms must be pre-approved by the Ministry of Education to ensure they are age-appropriate.
- Parents must consent for their child aged 15 and under to alter their name or pronouns used by school teachers, administration and other educational staff.
- Parents must be notified for their child aged 16 or 17 to alter their name or pronouns used by school teachers, administration and other educational staff.

On October 1, 2024, Premier Smith reiterated her government's plan to proceed with legislation requiring parental "opt-in" consent for classroom instruction on gender and sexuality and provided the following additional context related to 16 and 17-year-olds choosing to use a different name or pronoun at school:

"In those extremely rare circumstances where a teacher feels that a child might be at risk should the parents be notified of a desired name or pronoun change, Alberta Education will provide a protocol to ensure the protection of that child throughout the parental notification process."

Premier Smith has not shared details of this protocol publicly or with the Division.

RELATED FACTS

- All members of a school community have the right to learn and work in an environment free of discrimination, prejudice, and harassment. This right is guaranteed under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the *Alberta Human Rights Act*, and the *Education Act*. In Edmonton Public schools, it is also supported by a [Board policy](#) and Division [administrative regulation](#) on sexual orientation and gender identity in schools, and a Board policy outlining [welcoming, inclusive, safe and healthy learning and working environments](#).

- Division policy includes the belief that all sexually diverse and/or gender diverse students, staff and families have the right to self-identification and determination and that they be treated fairly, equitably and with dignity and respect.
- Dr. Kristopher Wells, former Canada Research Chair for the public understanding of sexual and gender minority youth, has stated that the proposed policies would be some of the most extreme anti-trans and anti-2SLGBTQ policies, not only in Canada, but in the world.
<https://www.macewan.ca/c/documents/dr-kristopher-wells-statements.pdf>
- Sexual health education is part of the Alberta provincial curriculum for Kindergarten to Grade 12 students. Parents and guardians can opt their children out of sexual education without penalty.
- The Division's SOGIE policies have been used as models by other school divisions.
- The Board offered to meet directly with Premier Smith to share our policies and how they have been working for our school division. The Premier, Minister of Education and no other member of government has met with the Board or staff.
- Edmonton Public Schools is a member of the Alberta Schools Boards Association (ASBA) and the Public School Boards' Association of Alberta (PSBAA).

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board of Trustees urge ASBA and PSBAA to advocate to Alberta's Premier and the Minister of Education that sexual education remain an "opt out" option for parents in Alberta and that school boards' autonomy be respected with regards to their own sexual orientation and gender identity and gender expression policies.

CONSIDERATIONS and ANALYSIS

The Division's current policy on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression is part of our mandate to provide a safe, welcoming and healthy school environment for students, staff and families. The current policy aligns with the rights guaranteed under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *Education Act*.

The policy changes being proposed by Premier Smith will contradict what our Board, and previous Boards of Trustees, have worked hard to ensure: the safety and well being of all children in Edmonton Public schools.

For transgender youth who choose a name different from the one given at birth, use of their chosen name in multiple contexts affirms their gender identity and reduces mental health risks, which are known to be high in this group. (source: [Behavior Among Transgender Youth - Journal of Adolescent Health](#))

In the vast majority of cases, a child's parent or guardian is their trusted adult. However, for a variety of reasons, there are cases when a parent or guardian is not able to provide the support a student needs, or cases when a student wishes support from a non-family member before sharing information about their identity. For these situations, it is critical to preserve the respectful, safe and caring spaces and

established relationships created in schools - and which are already required through the *Education Act*. Our current policies support this essential balance.

A [study published in the International Journal of Transgender Health in 2023](#) and cited by [Amnesty International](#) shows that trans, gender-diverse and non-binary people in Canada report higher rates of depression and suicidal ideation than their cisgender peers because of experiences of misgendering and gender-based discrimination.

“Channeling anti-2SLGBTQQIA+ hate into policy directly harms an already intersectionally marginalized group. Amnesty International Canada is deeply troubled that the government did not engage in meaningful consultations with 2SLGBTQQIA+ communities, advocates, community organizations and education and health care experts before implementing these policy changes.”
- Amnesty International on Alberta’s proposed policies.

"New legislation is being proposed, supposedly with broad consultation including parents, that intends to safeguard parental rights. The information related to this consultation process is not readily available. Additionally, no broad consultation took place with school councils or with ASCA related to parental rights or concerns. ASCA calls for a halt to this legislation until broad consultation is meaningfully achieved and incorporated. The thousands of parents in Alberta engaged with their school councils and represented by ASCA deserve to have time and opportunity for input. Nothing about us, without us." - Alberta School Councils’ Association

“We are concerned about the chilling effect placed on classrooms and schools, impacting our ability to provide safe, caring and inclusive spaces for all students. We are concerned about how students may feel forced to suppress their identities and to be afraid of reaching out to teachers as an avenue for support. - Jason Schilling, President Alberta Teachers Association

“The draconian measures announced run directly counter to expert guidance and evidence, violate the constitutional rights of 2SLGBTQI+ people, and will lead to irreparable harm and suffering.” - Egale Canada, organization that advocates for 2SLGBTQI+ people

The other part of this motion asks that sexual education remains an “opt out” option in Alberta. The Division’s current application of the *Education Act*, allowing parents/guardians to opt out of sexual education, is a long-standing practice that works. The process is transparent, respects student well-being as well as parental choice. There are numerous research studies that show the teaching of sexual health education contributes to safer sex practices, fewer sexually transmitted infections and reduced teen pregnancies. (source:

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/82-003-x/2024001/article/00001-eng.htm#>)

“Because adolescents and young adults experience some of the highest rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unplanned pregnancies, it is important to ensure access to appropriate resources and related sexual health information to support more knowledgeable decision making and the adoption of healthy sexual behaviours. Sexual health is a key

component of overall health and well-being.” - Sex Information & Education Council of Canada. [Canadian Guidelines for Sexual Health Education](#).

Furthermore, the Division currently has a robust practice of vetting all resources and third parties used in teaching sexual health in our schools. Requiring government approval each time a guest speaker and/or resources are used in the classroom will create an unnecessary burden to staff who are already dealing with large class sizes and additional workload. The additional layer of required approval from the provincial government could lead to delays and reduced access to important resources to help support the teaching of sexual education.

The recommendation is directing advocacy to the Minister of Education through the two provincial associations of which the Board is a member. A coordinated provincial approach is required as the proposed changes will impact all students in Alberta. This recommendation allows school divisions to maintain their autonomy and individual policies that support students, while also upholding the fundamental human rights of all students.

Silence on the provincial government’s policies is not an option. The actions being proposed are regressive and will create harm for students, staff and families. Those most impacted by these proposed policies have asked us to use our voices in defending the rights they are entitled to.

NEXT STEPS

If approved, the Board of Trustees will bring forward an emergent position statement for consideration by members at the Fall General Meeting of the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA.)

PSBAA council member Trustee Sherri O’Keefe will bring forward the recommendation for discussion at the November council meeting of the association.

TE/te

DATE: November 5, 2024

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Trustee Dawn Hancock, Governance and Evaluation Committee
Trustee Marsha Nelson, Governance and Evaluation Committee
Trustee Sherri O’Keefe, Chair, Governance and Evaluation Committee
Trustee Jan Sawyer, Governance and Evaluation Committee

SUBJECT: Governance and Evaluation Committee 2024-2025 Work Plan

RESOURCE Karen Mills

STAFF:

REFERENCE: [Trustees’ Handbook](#), Subsection 6.1.1 – Governance and Evaluation Committee

ISSUE

The Governance and Evaluation Committee is required to present an annual work plan to the Board.

BACKGROUND

The Governance and Evaluation Committee is responsible for assisting the Board of Trustees to conduct:

- an annual Board self-evaluation;
- an annual evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools;
- a process to identify and develop the priorities that will guide Division operations and the budget planning cycle for the Board’s four-year term of office;
- its duties and commitments in relation to the Division Priorities by making recommendations on governance-related matters; and
- an annual review of the policies and procedures governing the conduct of the meetings of the Board and the administration and business of the Board.

This year’s Governance and Evaluation Committee plan includes the duties outlined in the Committee’s Terms of Reference, and incorporates work that has arisen from observations and requests made over the past year. A specific focus of this year’s committee will be to ensure that the Trustees’ Handbook is up to date for the next Board, which will be elected in October 2025.

RECOMMENDATION

1. **That the Board approve the Governance and Evaluation Committee 2024-2025 Work Plan.**

OPTIONS

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

1. Approve the proposed work plan.
2. Provide feedback and request changes be made to the work plan.

ATTACHMENTS and APPENDICES

ATTACHMENT I Governance and Evaluation Committee Terms of Reference
ATTACHMENT II Governance and Evaluation Committee 2024-2025 Work Plan

SO:km

Governance and Evaluation Committee Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Governance and Evaluation Committee is responsible for assisting the Board of Trustees to conduct:

- an annual Board self-evaluation for continued Board development and improved Board performance with respect to the Board's role and responsibilities;
- an annual evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools in accordance with Board Policy [FGB.BP](#) - Evaluation of Superintendent of Schools and the review and/or renewal of the Superintendent of Schools' contract in accordance with the [Education Act](#);
- a process to identify and develop the priorities that will guide Division operations and the budget planning cycle for the Board's four-year term of office;
- carry out its duties and commitments in relation to the Division Priorities by making recommendations on governance-related matters; and
- an annual review of the policies and procedures governing the conduct of the meetings of the Board and the administration and business of the Board, in alignment with [Board Procedures Regulation AR82/2019](#).

Composition

The committee will consist of four Trustees, from among which a chair will be selected. The chair is responsible for leading the discussion at each meeting and formally reporting back to the Board about the committee's activities. The Superintendent of Schools will assign a member of the Administration to support the work of the committee. Additional resources may be involved as requested by the Superintendent and/or designate.

Terms of Reference

A. Board Self-Evaluation

The Board will undertake an annual Board evaluation to inform the Board's continued development and improved performance. The Board self-evaluation process should:

- measure Board performance with respect to the Mission, Vision, Values, Division Priorities, Division Strategic Plan, the roles and responsibilities of the Board, and the principles of operation of the Board;
- assist the Board in identifying Board strengths and areas for improvement;
- provide an opportunity for Trustees to reflect on how they work collectively and as individuals with respect to the Board's mandate and role and responsibilities;
- provide an opportunity for Trustees to discuss the Board evaluation results in the context of Board development; and
- provide an opportunity to recognize the Board's accomplishments.

The committee will:

- develop and recommend to Caucus Committee:
 - a plan for the annual evaluation of the Board of Trustees;
 - a proposed Board result statement based on an analysis of the Board's self-evaluation;
- present the Board evaluation result statement on behalf of the Caucus Committee to public Board for approval; and
- in the last year of a term, assist Administration in the creation of a summary document of the Board's results and work still to be accomplished to aid in the transition for the next Board.

B. Evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools

The evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools is a vital process toward creating and maintaining a healthy school division. The Board of Trustees believes that organizational outcomes must be clearly and explicitly stated to:

1. ensure the Superintendent of Schools understands what is being expected and evaluated;
2. ensure the Board understands what to expect of the Superintendent; and
3. ensure the Superintendent of Schools and the Board clearly understand their respective roles and responsibilities.

The evaluation process and supporting information sources serve to:

- help to continuously improve the functioning of the Division;
- recognize areas and trends that are showing positive change or progress;
- provide feedback to the Superintendent of Schools regarding their leadership and performance expectations in key areas;
- provide ground work for establishing future goals;
- allow the Superintendent of Schools to report on their successes and challenges during the year, and provide feedback relating to continuous improvement efforts and annual goals;
- enable the Board and Superintendent of Schools to engage in dialogue about results, and discuss any issues or concerns associated with the role and the evaluation process; and
- strengthen the relationship between the Superintendent of Schools and the Board.

Process

1. The committee will be responsible for:
 - a. recommending the evaluation process to be used by the Caucus Committee;
 - b. overseeing the approved evaluation process;
 - c. reporting the evaluation results to the Caucus Committee and to public Board; and
 - d. initiating a timely review and/or renewal process for the Superintendent of Schools contract of employment in accordance with the Education Act and provisions of the Superintendent's contract.
2. The evaluation process will provide the Superintendent of Schools with an opportunity to:
 - a. review all pertinent information used in the evaluation;
 - b. discuss the evaluation report with the Trustee subcommittee;
 - c. include a response to the evaluation in the report to Caucus Committee; and
 - d. discuss the evaluation report with the Caucus Committee.
3. Notwithstanding 1 and 2 above, if the evaluation process calls for individual Trustee evaluations of the Superintendent of Schools, the individual evaluations will be compiled and summarized for reporting purposes by the administrator assigned to assist the committee and destroyed once the Superintendent of Schools has an opportunity to review them.
4. The committee Chair will provide the Board Chair with the Superintendent's evaluation report for review prior to the report being shared with the Superintendent.
5. The Superintendent of Schools will be provided a copy of the evaluation report submitted to Caucus Committee and the final evaluation report to Board.

6. The Caucus Committee evaluation report and Board evaluation report will be filed in the Board corporate records. The records will be accessible to the Superintendent of Schools, a Trustee for that evaluation period, or as directed by motion of the Caucus Committee.

C. Identification and Development of Division Priorities

Division priorities should fit within the scope of the Board's mandate and be few in number so that Division resources may be effectively concentrated to achieve measurable results. After an election, following the organizational meeting, the Committee will:

- recommend and facilitate a process for each Board member to contribute to the development of the Division Priorities;
- seek student, staff, parent and community stakeholder input into the Division Priorities; and
- consider all input received and develop and recommend a Division Priorities statement to public Board for approval.

The Committee will also:

- develop Board retreat agendas and chair the retreats;
- review and monitor Board Work Plan progress;
- review at least once per term or as required, to ensure they are current and relevant:
 - the Trustee Protocols
 - the School Board Governance and Operations Section of the Policy Manual
 - the Trustee remuneration package
 - the post-election orientation process
- Develop an orientation plan for the next Board
- Seek input from other Board committees to perform this work.

Governance and Evaluation Committee 2024-2025 Work Plan

PURPOSE

The Governance and Evaluation Committee is responsible for assisting the Board of Trustees to:

- conduct an annual evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools in accordance with Board Policy [FGB.BP - Evaluation of Superintendent of Schools](#) and the review and/or renewal of the Superintendent of Schools' contract in accordance with the [Education Act](#);
- conduct an annual Board self-evaluation for continued Board development and improved Board performance with respect to the Board's role and responsibilities;
- identify and develop the priorities that will guide Division operations and the budget planning cycle for the Board's four-year term of office; and
- carry out its duties and commitments in relation to the Division Priorities by making recommendations on governance-related matters.

ACTIVITIES

Board Self-Evaluation

The Committee will:

- Review the Board's Self-Evaluation Instrument to determine if any changes are required. (February 2025)
- Initiate the process for the Board Self-Evaluation. Each Trustee will be asked to complete the Board Self-Evaluation Instrument. (May/June 2025)
- With support from the Director Board and Superintendent Relations, compile and summarize the individual evaluations for reporting purposes. (June/July 2025)
- Provide the final Board Self-Evaluation survey results to Trustees at a meeting for discussion (September 2025)
- Prepare a summary statement of the Board Self-Evaluation results to be read at a public Board meeting. (September 2025)

Superintendent of Schools' Evaluation

The Committee will:

- Select an external administrator for the Superintendent's Evaluation. (November/December 2024)
- Initiate the process for the Superintendent's Evaluation. (March 2025)
- Provide the Superintendent an opportunity to review the Evaluation and discuss implications with the Committee Chair. (May 2025)
- Submit the final Superintendent's Evaluation results and a report to Caucus Committee, which includes a response to the evaluation from the Superintendent. (June 2025)
- Prepare a summary statement of the evaluation results to be read at a public Board meeting. (September 2025)
- If needed, work with the Policy Review Committee on Board-governance-related policy in the Trustee's Handbook through providing content recommendations to the Policy Review Committee on existing Board Policy [FGB.BP - Evaluation of Superintendent of Schools](#).

Governance

The Committee will:

- Develop schedules for Board off-site meetings, generative discussions and professional learning sessions, along with agendas and facilitation plans for each. (September/October 2024, with updates as needed)
- Review the Trustees' Handbook in preparation for welcoming the next Board (ongoing)
 - The committee will specifically review Trustee absences and leaves; directions regarding elections, campaigning and running for office while a Trustee; and public conduct at Board meetings.

REQUESTED RESOURCES

- The Committee requests the continued support of the Director Board and Superintendent Relations.
- No funding needs are anticipated at this time

DATE: November 5, 2024

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Strategic Plan Update Report: Well-being and Mental Health

ORIGINATOR: Nancy Petersen, Managing Director, Strategic Division Supports

RESOURCE STAFF: Corbett Artym, Kelsey Duebel, Erin Faught, Heather Langenhahn, Owen Livermore, Christine Simmons

ISSUE

This Strategic Plan Update report highlights the ongoing work and intentional efforts made by the Division in the 2023–24 school year to support Priority 3 of the [2022–26 Division Strategic Plan](#), “Promote a comprehensive approach to student and staff well-being and mental health”.

BACKGROUND

In 2022, Edmonton Public Schools launched the new Division Strategic Plan for the 2022–26 term. The Division Strategic Plan has three priority areas with supporting goals and outcomes. The plan provides common direction and alignment between the work of the Board of Trustees, the Superintendent of Schools and Division staff. The plan serves as the foundation for a Division culture of evidence-based decision making, assurance and accountability.

To demonstrate the Division’s commitment to transparency and accountability, Strategic Plan Update reports were introduced in 2016–17 as an extension of the Annual Education Results Report (AERR). The reports are intended to provide the Board of Trustees with detailed progress towards the goals and outcomes of our Division Strategic Plan.

CURRENT SITUATION

The 2022–26 Division Strategic Plan prioritizes mental health with an emphasis on relationships and building learning environments that support a sense of belonging. This Strategic Plan Update Report provides the Board of Trustees with an overview of the collective efforts made within the Division in partnership with families and the community during the 2023–24 school year to:

- Support student well-being and mental health through an emphasis on active engagement with students to build and maintain a welcoming school culture.
- Co-create expectations and nurture relationships between students, staff, families and the surrounding community to enhance feelings of safety and increase a feeling of citizenship in the school community.
- Build staff capacity to support student and staff well-being through the provision of professional learning and training focused on supporting resilience and engagement as key contributors to mental health and well-being.

The report references data from the Youth Resilience Survey as one indicator of students’ sense of belonging. To provide further context around the Division’s work in the area of resilience, there is a link within the Strategic Plan to a document that highlights the journey of this work and provides a summary of Division results for the Youth Resilience Survey.

The report concludes with a confirmation of the Division's ongoing commitment to supporting student and staff well-being over the coming years

ATTACHMENTS and APPENDICES

ATTACHMENT I Well-being and Mental Health: Priority 3 Update

NP:ef

Well-being and Mental Health

Priority 3 Update

November 5, 2024

Advancing our Strategic Plan

Introduction	3
Background	4
Belonging	5
Safety	10
Resilience and Engagement	12
Professional Learning	13
Conclusion	15
References	16
Appendix: Data Sources	17

Introduction

The [Education Act](#) sets out the Division's responsibility to provide "welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments that respect diversity and nurture a sense of belonging and a positive sense of self." By prioritizing mental health and well-being, the Division strives to support students to achieve learning outcomes and to navigate life's challenges with confidence. Additionally, this commitment empowers our Division staff to better address the evolving needs within our classrooms while deepening the connection within school communities. These efforts are essential to our mission of delivering high-quality public education.

Recognizing the importance of mental health and well-being, EPSB's Board of Trustees established Priority 3 of the [2022–26 Division Strategic Plan](#) to "Promote a comprehensive approach to student and staff well-being and mental health" and its subsequent goals:

- **Goal 1**—"Support students and staff in building skills, strategies and relationships that contribute to positive mental health."
- **Goal 2**—"Support students and staff so they experience a greater sense of belonging and social, emotional and physical well-being."

Mental health and well-being are complex and deeply individual experiences that are influenced by a wide range of factors both within and outside of the school environment. In its approach to ensuring the mandate and priorities outlined above are achieved, the Division is seeking to understand what contributors to mental health and well-being can be influenced within an educational setting. Central to welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments as well as mental health and well-being are the two interrelated concepts of belonging and safety. By maintaining an atmosphere where belonging and safety intersect, schools can support students' academic performance, mental health and overall engagement in high quality learning (Allen et al., 2019; St-Amand et al., 2017; Ungar et al., 2019). Recent research makes clear that when students feel a stronger sense of belonging, their academic outcomes not only improve, but can outpace expectations for each school year (TNTP, 2024).

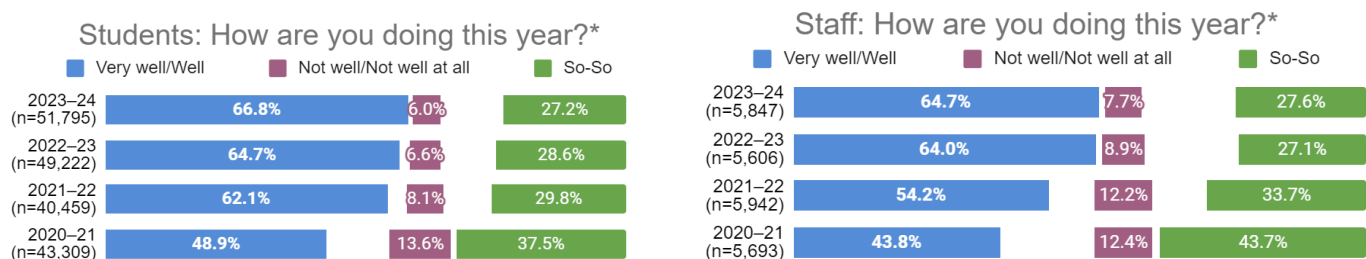
Sections in this report about belonging, safety, resilience and engagement are comprised of three key components:

- Descriptions of actions that are key parts of school culture that uphold mental health and well-being.
- An overview of the Division's philosophical and evidence-based approach to mental health and well-being.
- Highlights of quantitative results from Division collected data for contextual understanding.

Background

Through the Division Feedback Survey (DFS), the Division has been monitoring the overall well-being of students and staff. Figure 1 illustrates a steady increase in well-being among students and staff over time.¹ In the past three years, the percentage of students feeling very well or well increased from 62.1 per cent to 66.8 per cent and for staff it increased from 54.2 per cent to 64.7 per cent. This question, in concept, was introduced to the DFS during 2020 to check in on people during the pandemic, and since then Division students and staff have been feeling more well over time.

Figure 1. 66.8 per cent of students and 64.7² per cent of Division staff reported feeling very well or well during the 2023–24 school year.



* 2020–21 DFS student and staff question: How are you doing during the pandemic?

A return to stable in-person learning and work settings following pandemic measures is a likely contributor to the steady increase in well-being for both students and staff over the time observed above. Being a part of a school community offers opportunities for growth and support beyond just curriculum-based learning. Schools provide the opportunity for students to form supportive, meaningful relations with school staff and build support networks with peers and community members (Ungar et al., 2019). Additionally, students have the opportunity to form a positive sense of self, experience agency over their lives, cultivate their personal identity, and build a sense of belonging through supportive experiences at school (Ungar et al., 2019). Bringing the school community physically back together has provided the foundation for these opportunities to flourish.

Overall results from the 2023–24 [Division Feedback Survey Report](#) show that students' perceived mental health and well-being related to school has remained consistent in recent years. This suggests that the return to in-person learning may be stabilizing and there are now further opportunities to support mental health and well-being beyond post-pandemic adjustments. It is important to be clear about which factors schools can directly influence. Considering mental health and well-being as a Division priority as well as the *Education Act's* mandate to ensure welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments, the following interrelated factors stand out as key areas of focus (see Figure 2):

- **Belonging:** in educational settings encompasses the emotional and psychological safety that students experience when they feel valued, included and supported by their peers and school staff.

¹ Please note that the wording of the check-in question for 2020–21 was slightly different from following versions, which does not allow for a direct comparison.

² Aggregate agreement and disagreement percentages were calculated from the original response counts resulting in slight differences due to rounding at the 10th decimal place when compared to summing up the disaggregate percentages in the chart.

- **Safety:** consists of a supportive space where students feel valued and secure. It supports respectful relationships, promotes positive mental health and embraces diversity as a strength. Clear expectations are communicated, and responses to behaviour are fair and age-appropriate. Support is provided to all, while empathy, compassion and positive social-emotional skills are modeled and encouraged (Government of Alberta, 2024).
- **Resilience:** is the ability to overcome adversity and experience well-being, both individually and with help from others. This includes ways that students can navigate their way to resources that support their well-being and negotiate for these resources to be provided in meaningful ways (Ungar 2011; Ungar et al, 2019).
- **Engagement:** describes the level of participation and commitment that contributes to a sense of belonging in school.

Figure 2. *The interconnectedness of mental health and well-being: belonging, safety, engagement and resilience*



These factors are highlighted consistently in the evidence base as both key components of mental health and well-being and critical factors that can be influenced through school culture (Allen et al., 2018; OECD, 2017; Ungar et al., 2019). They also represent an essential foundation for students to be able to engage with learning opportunities. Given this, the Division has aimed to focus on these concepts as critical pillars of mental health and well-being.

Belonging

Schools support a sense of belonging through the development of a welcoming school culture. The everyday actions of members of the school community establish an environment where students feel cared for and have the opportunity to succeed. These can include:

- Using common language and co-creating school values to bring the school community together.
- Opportunities for students to feel valued as members of a school community through respectful and empowering engagement.
- Establishing shared expectations, common language and accountability for behaviour within the school community.
- Co-creating consistent classroom routines and expectations.

- Encouraging empathetic interactions and active listening.
- Recognizing the individual contributions of each student and celebrating student growth through assemblies and other recognition events.
- Learning about their school's namesake, as well as the land and community that they are a part of (i.e., interconnectivity).
- Creating opportunities for engagement and connection through clubs or student activities.
- Intentionally using resources and materials where students see themselves (i.e., identity, culture, etc.).

According to Allen et al. (2021), belonging incorporates a dynamic set of emotions and experiences including individual competencies, motivations and perceptions, along with the opportunities or barriers that encourage or hinder connection with others. Belonging in educational settings arises from being accepted, valued and supported within the school community, a sentiment that is created through close relationships with peers and teachers (Allen et al., 2018). These relationships contribute to students' feelings of security and acceptance. The everyday interactions and intentional facilitation of spaces that celebrate students and build connections all provide opportunities to build a school culture that centres on belonging.

Respecting Students' Agency in Support of a Welcoming School Culture: A Spotlight on Lillian Osborne School

"Inspiring our students through meaningful learning opportunities that nurture passion, resilience, community and character." —Lillian Osborne School Mission Statement

Under the four pillars of passion, resilience, community and character, Lillian Osborne School, through student voice, identified an opportunity in the 2023–24 school year to create a new position on their staff. The Department Head of Student Life oversees all aspects of student life, including developing cultural capacity and coordinating student engagement and agency. The role has been critical in supporting the important work of active student engagement and building school culture relative to promoting students' sense of belonging. A small cross-section of the initiatives that have stemmed from this work based on students' aspirations are highlighted below:

- **Lillian Osborne Student Association Advisory Board (LOSAAB):** The LOSAAB is a monthly meeting that brings together representatives from student clubs, associations, the Department of Student Life and the Student Solidarity Committee. These student leaders collaborate with administration and department heads to discuss key issues and provide feedback on school matters. By encouraging open dialogue between students and school leadership, LOSAAB ensures that student voices contribute meaningfully to decision-making, promoting a more inclusive and engaged school community.
- **Student Action Summit:** At the Lillian Osborne Student Action Summit, students are brought together at the start of the year with a common goal: to collaboratively explore how to enhance the school community. Participants engage in discussions to address the challenges the school faces, identify obstacles that need to be overcome and reflect on their individual roles in the collective effort. The school also supports the initiation and development of student-led clubs, providing strategies for students to become effective leaders and create a positive impact.

- **Student Solidarity Committee (SSC):** This Committee is focused on initiatives and actions to develop a more inclusive school community through social action, awareness education, anti-racism and equity at Lillian Osborne High School. The SSC works to advocate for the needs of students to feel a sense of connection and global mindedness.

Results from the DFS suggest that Lillian Osborne’s philosophical alignment towards respect for student agency and the creation of collaborative spaces between them, their families, staff and community members has a meaningful impact on their sense of belonging. In the 2023–24 school year, the school saw a six per cent increase in students agreeing that ‘My school is a place where all students feel like they belong’ and a nine per cent increase in families’ perceptions that their child feels like they belong at school. Though the specific initiatives that emerge from centering student agency may look different depending on school context, the philosophical approach to putting students first and centre has tangible benefits for creating a culture of belonging.

The DFS offers the opportunity to understand perceptions of students’ sense of belonging at school from the perspective of students, staff and families. It’s notable that there is a significant discrepancy between both staff members’ and families’ perceptions of students’ sense of belonging at school and students’ reported sense of belonging at school. This evidence emphasizes how critically important it is to elicit students’ voices directly about their experiences.

70.7 per cent of
Grades 4 to 12 students
who responded are in
agreement with the
statement:
**I feel like I belong at
my school.**

2023–24 Division Feedback Survey

90.2 per cent of staff
who responded are in
agreement with the
statement:
**My school is a place
where all students
feel like they belong.**

2023–24 Division Feedback Survey

86.0 per cent of
families who responded
are in agreement with the
statement:
**My child feels like they
belong at school.**

2023–24 Division Feedback Survey

Clubs and Student Activities

Clubs and student organizations offer students opportunities to engage in activities that support a sense of belonging. Many of these clubs are student-driven, created by and for students who share common interests and passions. With the support of school staff, who act as sponsors or mentors, students can take the lead in organizing, managing and growing these spaces as fitting for their grade level. This collaboration allows students to express their individuality, connect with peers and feel seen and valued in their school community. By participating in these clubs, students take ownership of their school experience and contribute to an inclusive environment where everyone has a place. Clubs are responsive to student interest. Further, schools support clubs through working with community agencies and volunteers. All student organizations or activities are reviewed and approved by the school principal.

Depending on the school, some activities are student-driven, while others are staff-driven. In addition to student-driven activities, Division schools offer a wide range of staff-facilitated extracurricular activities that further enhance students' sense of belonging. Whether through athletic teams, cultural organizations or academic clubs, these opportunities allow students to explore their interests.

In Division school communities, efforts to create a sense of belonging and inclusion for all are reflected in the wide variety of clubs available. The following non-exhaustive list , highlights just a few of the many ways that students can get involved, grow and build meaningful connections.

- Alberta Youth Theatre Collective
- Anime Club
- Anybody Can Dance (ABCD) Club
- Black Students Alliance (BSA)
- Board Game Club
- Bollywood Club
- Brain Care Awareness Club
- Cheer Club
- Chinese Dance Club
- Christian Students Association
- Community Helpers
- Culinary Arts Club
- Debate Club
- Disc Golf Club
- Dungeons and Dragons Club
- Esports Club
- Fitness Club
- Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA)
- Green Humane Group (GHG)
- Improv
- Japanese Culture Club
- Joy Club
- Knitting/Crocheting Club
- Maker Space Club
- Mock Trial Club
- Muslim Students Association (MSA)
- Robotics Club
- Science Olympics
- Spoken Word Poetry Club
- Super Smash Bros. Club

By connecting with peers who share similar values and passions, students actively experience and contribute to a supportive community that empowers each member to live a life of dignity, fulfillment, empathy and possibility. By engaging in activities, students can build friendships, develop leadership skills and create memories all while contributing to a positive and caring school culture.

79.9 per cent of Grades 4 to 12 students who responded are in agreement with the statement:
At my school, I have opportunities to be involved in activities that support my sense of belonging.

2023–24 Division Feedback Survey

94.4 per cent of school staff who responded are in agreement with the statement:
My school takes steps to support a sense of belonging and inclusion for everyone.

2023–24 Division Feedback Survey

Emphasizing Relationships in Support of a Safe and Welcoming School Community: A Spotlight on Dickinsfield School

“We can’t see improvement in reading and math until we see improvement in students’ sense of connection to the school community. Until they feel seen as a human.”—Chelsea Erdmann, Principal

At Dickinsfield School staff noticed that students were feeling disconnected to the school community, particularly following the years spent outside of the building during the pandemic. They also noticed that when given the opportunity to lend their voice, students often had the answers to the problems staff were looking to solve. By focusing on student voice, staff empowered students to have agency to advocate for what they needed to build greater connection with their school community, including students who wouldn’t normally participate in youth leadership. This equitable and inclusive approach supported the deeper cultivation of trustful and respectful relationships between staff and students.

Dickinsfield’s emphasis on empowering students to advocate for and lead the changes they wanted to see resulted in many positive outcomes. Students led the development of an open campus during lunch hour policy and were central in the establishment of new course options that otherwise may not have been considered, including Social Innovation, Leadership and Community Connections. Students initiated the development of a new student recognition program that honors and is built around the Seven Sacred Teachings. Students also co-created expectations and appropriate consequences for their actions in the school community, creating a sense of collective accountability. Principal Chelsea Erdmann emphasizes that the outcomes, while important, are not as critical as the process of engaging students. The process of ensuring students experienced a greater sense of trust, autonomy, accountability and ownership was essential to strengthening the relationships between students and staff, and building students’ connection to the school community.

The impact of this work was transformative. Results from the most recent DFS highlighted an increase of five per cent in students reporting that they felt seen by staff as a person. Anecdotally, staff are noticing an increase in student self-referrals — rather than trying to solve problems on their own, students are asking for help from adults in the school. Notably, there was a 30 per cent improvement in staff reporting a sense of belonging and inclusion in their school and all responding staff reporting that they feel safe in their workplace. School leadership credits these improvements to increasing the accountability of staff members, ensuring that all staff are clear on the common goals and values of the school, and creating the expectation that staff will have courageous conversations to challenge and support each other. These approaches support staff to no longer feel alone in the work they’re doing and that collective capacity is being built.

The work at Dickinsfield also included intentionality around engaging and communicating with families throughout the process, resulting in notable changes in the perceptions of families. There was a 28 per cent increase in families reporting that they felt their child was safe at school. Student-led initiatives are also focused on building connections with surrounding and feeder schools in the community, leading to more positive community connections. For example, students initiated a Read-Out week where they went to read in elementary schools that feed into Dickinsfield. Through anecdotal conversations with businesses that students frequent around the school, business owners described a notable improvement in respectful behaviour from students.

The example set by Dickinsfield School highlights that emphasizing an increased sense of belonging and safety among students and staff lays a critical foundation for students to find meaning as members of a school community and ultimately, as learners.

Safety

Sense of belonging in educational settings intertwines with students' sense of safety—where students feel safe to express their identities and opinions within their learning space, knowing these contributions are welcomed—and physical safety, where students feel protected from physical harm within the school environment. Every day, teachers and school staff work together to make students feel protected and valued. Examples of practices that support safe learning environments include:

- Greeting students and families as they arrive.
- Coordinating and supervising pick up and drop off.
- Structuring breaks and transitions to reduce congestion in hallways.
- Supervising recess/lunch.
- Procedures and processes to support emergency response (e.g., evacuation, lockdown).
- Communication protocols to support transparency and awareness around emergency situations.
- Communicating expectations and responsibilities for acceptable behaviour, as outlined in Board Policy [HG.BP—Student Behaviour and Conduct](#), and Administrative Regulation [HG.AR—Student Behaviour and Conduct](#) and supported by the *Education Act*.

The Division's commitment goes beyond physical security, as staff understand the deep connection between feeling safe and a sense of belonging. When students feel secure, they are able to develop strong relationships with their peers and trust in their school community. When they see themselves as valued members of a school community, they are more likely to act in a way that contributes positively to the overall culture. Research supports a connection between students' sense of belonging with prosocial behaviour and the prevention of behavioural problems (Stojanović et al., 2022).

The broader school environment encompasses the physical setting, policies and culture that together create a safe and inclusive space conducive to learning. Schools have direct control over these elements and can design environments that support both physical and psychological safety, thereby promoting better mental health and engagement (Ungar et al., 2019). Physical safety in schools involves creating environments free from violence and threats, with robust security measures and comprehensive safety protocols directly within the control of school divisions (Richard et al., 2012). Psychological safety refers to students feeling secure enough to express their identities and opinions without fear of judgment or retaliation, created by a supportive school culture that promotes open communication and mental health awareness. The broader school environment also impacts student mental health. This includes the physical setting and the cultural climate of the school, which should be welcoming and inclusive (Ungar et al., 2019). A safe and engaging physical environment can decrease stress and alienation among students, promoting better mental health outcomes. School divisions can manage these aspects by designing spaces conducive to learning and psychological well-being. Staff support this in classrooms by:

- Having multiple adults available to support students through formal and informal check-ins.
- Classroom community circles to build trusting relationships with peers.
- Direct teaching of positive social-emotional skills, safe play and communication skills.
- Providing multiple pathways for students to access supports through key staff like student self-referral forms, student services, designated staff, etc.
- Setting up learning spaces that support various learning styles and coregulation (e.g., differentiated seating)
- Using restorative practices to support positive conflict resolution with students.

74.0 per cent of
Grades 4 to 12 students
who responded are in
agreement with the
statement:
I feel safe at school.

2023–24 Division Feedback Survey

90.4 per cent of staff
who responded are in
agreement with the
statement:
**I feel safe at my
workplace.**

2023–24 Division Feedback Survey

86.1 per cent of
families who responded
are in agreement with the
statement:
**I feel my child is safe at
school.**

2023–24 Division Feedback Survey

The DFS again offers insights into the perceptions of students, staff and families about safety in workplaces and schools. As with belonging, there is a discrepancy between the reported experiences of students than those of staff and families. This further emphasizes the critical importance of elevating student voice in decisions about school safety.

Student Rights and Responsibilities: Honouring a Restorative Approach to Safety

The Student Rights and Responsibilities framework is designed to support schools in promoting a culture of collective expectations for positive behavior while emphasizing a shared commitment to each student's success and sense of belonging. At the start of each school year, school administrators are encouraged to tailor this document to reflect their school's unique culture before sharing it with their community. This document articulates the school's commitment to creating a safe and welcoming environment, where every student feels valued and connected. Recognizing that safety is a multi-faceted experience, the framework is designed to support individual circumstances and developmentally appropriate responses.

Division Support Services, in partnership with schools, has led the work to shift toward restorative practices, outlined in the Rights and Responsibilities framework as *School Responses to Unacceptable Behaviour*. When a student exhibits concerning behavior, every effort is made to understand the full context and work toward a constructive solution. This collaborative process, often involving the student's family and/or community partners. By making these processes transparent, students are reminded that their school and the Division are dedicated to providing an inclusive space where they experience a sense of belonging, are welcomed, respected, and cared for, and where they have opportunities to learn, practice, and develop positive personal and interpersonal skills.

"Edmonton Public Schools is helping to shape the future in every one of our classrooms. We're focused on ensuring each student learns to their full potential and develops the ability, passion and imagination to pursue their dreams and contribute to their community."

—Student Rights and Responsibilities 2024–25

Resilience and Engagement

Schools play a crucial role in helping students grow into confident, capable adults. One of the key ways they do this is by supporting both resilience and engagement. Resilience helps students manage challenges and access the resources they need to stay healthy and thrive, while engagement makes them feel connected and committed to their school community. Schools care about building resilience and engagement in students because it affects everything from their academic success to their emotional well-being. By creating an environment where students can connect with others, demonstrate leadership and seek help when needed, schools provide the conditions necessary for students to grow into adults who are ready for fulfilling lives beyond the classroom. The Youth Resilience Survey is one way in which schools learn about the resilience and engagement factors that impact the sense of belonging of their students (*see the [Appendix](#) of this report for more information*).

To unpack this further, below are some everyday ways that schools support student resilience and engagement through classroom activities and interactions:

- Relationship building so that students have a trusted adult at the school that they feel comfortable going to if they need help
- Celebrations of learning that include the wider school community
- Peer support groups across the school community
- Cross grade groups
- Check-ins and sharing with families
- Empowering students as leaders
- Clubs and associations
- Student council
- Events that celebrate the diverse school community and utilize community involvement and support
- Facilitating connections to internal school and external community supports

Beyond how resilience unfolds in the classroom, schools can further support resilience by providing resources such as counseling services and resilience training workshops, which help students develop coping strategies and overcome obstacles. Strengths-based interventions, such as Dr. Martin Brokenleg's Circle of Courage model, emphasizes viewing challenges as opportunities for growth rather than deficits

67.2 per cent of Grades 4 to 12 students who responded are in agreement with the statement:

When I'm really struggling, there are people who want to help me.

2023–24 Youth Resilience Survey

75.4 per cent of Grades 4 to 12 students who responded are in agreement with the statement:

I have chances to show others that I am growing up and can do things by myself.

2023–24 Youth Resilience Survey

74.8 per cent of Grades 4 to 12 students who responded are in agreement with the statement:

I know where to get help.

2023–24 Youth Resilience Survey

70.8 per cent of Grades 4 to 12 students who responded are in agreement with the statement:

I share/cooperate with people around me.

2023–24 Youth Resilience Survey

(Brendtro et al., 2013). This approach empowers students to build on their existing strengths and develop new capacities as they take risks.

Supportive relationships and empowering environments are key to developing resilience in students. By promoting a school culture of trust and mutual respect, schools can create an environment where students feel confident in their ability to face and overcome challenges. Engagement, both academic and social, thrives in environments where students feel safe, valued and connected. Schools can enhance engagement by creating an inclusive school culture and offering diverse curricular and extracurricular opportunities that resonate with students' interests and aspirations.

Student engagement is crucial for academic and emotional well-being, encompassing cognitive, psychological, physical, social and material aspects (OECD, 2017). Emotionally engaged students are interested and value their schoolwork, created through positive relationships and a supportive school climate. Behaviourally, engagement is reflected in students' active participation in school activities and adherence to school norms.

Cognitive engagement involves a deep investment in learning, supported by teaching practices that challenge students and stimulate critical thinking (Ungar et al., 2019). Schools enhance cognitive engagement by incorporating interactive and hands-on learning experiences that make education relevant and engaging. The school environment plays a pivotal role in supporting students' engagement by aligning with their personal interests and aspirations (Allen & Kern, 2019). For example, providing a variety of curricular and extracurricular options allows students to explore different fields and discover what they are passionate about, thereby increasing their overall engagement in school.

The foundational work with Dr. Michael Ungar has enhanced staff knowledge and led to the creation of learning resources that help teachers use effective, research-based strategies. Resources are designed to build a shared understanding of resilience research and resilience-enhancing practices across the Division. By equipping staff with these tools, the Division has strengthened its ability to enhance resilience, engagement, safety and belonging in school communities. A commitment to continuous improvement boosts staff confidence in supporting thriving communities and meeting the needs of students.

Professional Learning

To build the professional capacity of staff in facilitating environments that promote resilience and engagement, the Division is working in collaboration with Dr. Ungar and his team around foundational professional learning for staff in the area of resilience and well-being, and the development of teaching resources to support teaching and learning long term. The goal of this professional learning is to build a common understanding of resilience research, support the analysis and use of Division data and identify and extend practices to nurture student resilience.

Professional learning topics

- Building resilient school communities (school leaders)
- Working with Youth Resilience Survey data
- Supporting student resilience post-pandemic
- Risk-taking and resilience
- Supporting better student conduct using a resilience lens
- Staff resilience
- Nurturing resilient children (parents)

Moreover, this professional learning aims to raise awareness among educators about their influential role in shaping student well-being and resilience. By unpacking the dynamics of resilience in educational settings, this initiative empowers educators to recognize their unique position to positively impact student outcomes in a data-informed manner. It emphasizes the importance of building on the inherent strengths of students, reinforcing the role that teachers play in nurturing these capabilities. Providing school staff with access to expertise,

exemplified by Dr. Ungar, aids in devising strategies to support students' mental health and well-being comprehensively, spanning universal and targeted supports. Ensuring alignment with various school practices and processes facilitates the integration of survey reporting into the everyday work of schools, while ongoing engagement with schools supports continuous improvement.

Principals also have access to a collection of resources designed to support engagement with staff and the formulation of both targeted interventions and universal school strategies. While not prescriptive or sequential, these resources provide schools with opportunities for continued reflection and professional learning and include:

- Videos of Dr. Ungar discussing relevant concepts and approaches.
- Videos of school principals discussing how they use data to work with staff to address the mental health needs of students.
- Activities to support discussions with staff.
- Resources designed to assist in understanding and interpreting Division data to support evidence-based decision making.
- Links to other relevant resources.

Youth Resilience Survey

The Youth Resilience Survey (YRS) serves as a catalyst for meaningful change both in supporting individual students and in school culture by providing insights that are rooted in resilience research. Rather than viewing the survey results as a final assessment of a student's profile, schools use them as a starting point for evidence-based conversations tailored to a specific student or their school. This approach allows for ongoing adaptation and refinement of school practices, supporting a responsive approach to the unique needs of their school community. By leveraging the YRS findings, schools have regular opportunities to equip students with the tools and strategies necessary to navigate the complexities of everyday life, maintaining a supportive and resilient school environment. For further details, please see the [Youth Resilience Survey Summary Report](#) (EPSB, 2024).

R2 Program

The Division also continues to offer the [R2 Program](#), a workshop series offered by Dr. Ungar's Resilience Research Centre. The evidence-based program emphasizes the development of rugged qualities³ and the utilization of external resources that provide support needed to thrive when under stress. Participation in the program is voluntary,

³ **Rugged qualities** are adaptable internal characteristics that enhance an individual's resilience. These qualities include self-esteem, optimism, mindfulness, goal-setting abilities and critical thinking skills (Resilience Research Centre, 2020).

intended for schools seeking to encourage a school culture and programming centered on resilience-building practices. The program involves the creation of resources aligned with the Alberta curriculum aimed at facilitating discussions about the rugged and resourced elements crucial for student success. R2 schools review the modules and Division teacher background documents available and select those that best meet the needs of their school community. R2 lead teams participate in a two-day “train the trainer” workshop that supports schools in creating nurturing environments, as well as championing the power of youth voice within a school community. Additionally, a Community of Practice (CoP) meets three times a year, providing educators with opportunities to engage directly with Dr. Ungar and further enhance their understanding and implementation of resilience-focused approaches.

Conclusion

The strategic initiatives outlined in this report underscore the Division’s commitment to supporting the mental health, well-being, belonging and safety of students and staff. The data from the DFS and the YRS provide insights into these areas, enabling us to tailor both school- and Division-level supports to address the unique needs of our school communities.

As we move forward, the Division remains dedicated to creating an environment where mental health, well-being, belonging and safety are integral to the educational experience. Our continued partnerships with community organizations, along with the data-driven insights, will enable us to maintain and enhance our supportive actions and strategies. By leveraging community networks and focusing on resilience and engagement, we are better positioned to support the academic and personal growth of all students, ensuring they are well-prepared to meet future challenges.

The strides we have made in promoting mental health, well-being, belonging and safety reflect the collective efforts of Division staff, community partners and stakeholders, and together, we will continue to build on this foundation to provide high-quality public education that prioritizes the well-being of every student.

References

- Allen, K.-A., Kern, M.L., Vella-Brodrick, D., Hattie, J., & Waters, L. (2018). What Schools Need to Know About Fostering School Belonging: a Meta-analysis. *Education Psychology Review.*, 30, 1-34.
- Allen, K.-A., & Kern, P. (2019). *Boosting School Belonging: Practical Strategies to Help Adolescents Feel Like They Belong at School* (1st ed.). Routledge.
- Allen, K. A., Kern, M. L., Rozek, C. S., McInerney, D. M., & Slavich, G. M. (2021). Belonging: A review of conceptual issues, an integrative framework, and directions for future research. *Australian journal of psychology*, 73(1), 87-102.
- Australian Education Research Organisation. (2023). Encouraging a sense of belonging and connectedness in primary schools. Retrieved from: [Encouraging a sense of belonging and connectedness in primary schools | Australian Education Research Organisation](#)
- Brendtro, L., Brokenleg, M., & Van Bockern, S. (1990). *Reclaiming Youth at Risk: Our Hope for the Future*. National Educational Service.
- Brendtro, L. K., & Mitchell, M. L. (2013). Deep brain learning: Healing the heart. *Reclaiming Children and Youth*, 22(1), 5.
- Government of Alberta. (2024). *Safe and caring schools*. Retrieved from: <https://www.alberta.ca/safe-and-caring-schools>
- OECD (2017). *Promising practices in supporting success for Indigenous students*. OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264279421-en>.
- Resilience Research Centre. (2020, July). *R2 Summary*. Retrieved from [What is R2?](#)
- Richard, J. F., Schneider, B. H., & Mallet, P. (2012). Revisiting the whole-school approach to bullying: Really looking at the whole school. *School Psychology International*, 33(3), 263-284.
- Saewyc, E. M., Konishi, C., Rose, H. A., & Homma, Y. (2014). School-based strategies to reduce suicidal ideation, suicide attempts, and discrimination among sexual minority and heterosexual adolescents in Western Canada. *International journal of child, youth & family studies: IJCYFS*, 5(1), 89.
- St-Amand, J., Girard, S., & Smith, J. (2017). Sense of Belonging at School: Defining Attributes, Determinants, and Sustaining Strategies. *IAFOR Journal of Education*, 5(2), 105–119.
- Stojanović, Marija & Popović-Ćitić, Branislava. (2022). The sense of school belonging: Its importance for the positive development of students and prevention of behavioural problems. *Teaching and Education*, 71, 403-423.
- TNTP. (2024). *The opportunity makers: How a diverse group of public schools helps students catch up—and how far more can*. Retrieved from [The Opportunity Makers - TNTP](#)
- Ungar, M. (2011). Community resilience for youth and families: Facilitative physical and social capital in contexts of adversity. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 33(9), 1742-1748.
- Ungar, M., Connelly, G., Liebenberg, L., & Theron, L. (2019). How schools enhance the development of young people's resilience. *Social Indicators Research*, 145, 615-627

Appendix: Data Sources

The **Division Feedback Survey (DFS)** is conducted every year with students and their families (Grades 4 to 12) and staff to measure how the Division is meeting its strategic priorities and goals. It also gathers valuable qualitative and quantitative feedback to help schools and the Division identify areas of success and areas for growth. This past year, the Division received over 65,000 responses to the DFS. The DFS summary reports are available on the [EPSB website](#) for in-depth reporting.

The **Youth Resilience Survey (YRS)** is conducted annually and provides schools with information about the well-being of students in Grades 4 to 12. It highlights the strengths students possess in resilience (our ability, on our own and with help from others, to overcome adversity and experience well-being) or engagement (our level of participation and commitment that contributes to a sense of belonging). In 2023–24, over 59,000 students took part in the YRS, helping schools recognize and build on these strengths to support all students. For more information about the survey's history, methods and results, please refer to the [Summary Report](#) for the 2023–24 YRS.

DATE: November 5, 2024

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Darrel Robertson, Superintendent

SUBJECT: Student Accommodation Plan 2024–2025

ORIGINATOR: Cliff Richard, Chief Infrastructure and Technology Officer

RESOURCE STAFF: Jenifer Elliott, Valerie Leclair, Allison Sylvester, Jennifer Thompson, Kyle Wagner, Christopher Wright

REFERENCE [HC.AR Student Admission and Enrolment](#)

ISSUE

The Student Accommodation Plan is updated annually. The plan is informed by:

- residential growth and development
- changes to attendance areas
- new school openings
- current school enrolment and residency patterns

BACKGROUND

Planning for student accommodation is an ongoing process as we adapt to the evolving needs of the communities and students we serve. Administration considers feedback from community engagement before taking action to ensure that accommodation challenges are addressed transparently. These challenges include:

- schools and programs being too full
- schools and programs with declining enrolment
- shifts in student demographics

The Division's Ten-Year Facilities Plan 2024–2033 highlights the many challenges we face concerning student accommodation. As outlined in the plan, further increases in utilization across the Division may lead to the following:

- reduced choice for families
- fewer options for families to access Division centre or alternative programming
- reduced access to other schools through open boundaries
- increased demand for Student Transportation services to farther designated schools
- reclamation of specialized spaces [e.g., Career and Technology Studies (CTS), music, art, library, leased space] for regular instruction

The Student Accommodation Plan highlights actions taken to address enrolment demands on Division schools. As the Division awaits new construction planned by the Government of Alberta, the Division must implement growth accommodation measures, as per the Growth Control Model, to manage enrolment within existing capacity. All Division schools are at one of three levels (Attachment I). Enrolment fluctuations that trigger a school to move between levels are specific to regular programming

only. Enrolment limits and the random selection process can control capacity challenges within alternative programs.

1. Level 1 – Division schools have the capacity to accept new students. These schools have open boundaries and, in some cases, may also have a secondary attendance area. Resident students living within the attendance area and siblings of current students returning to the school the following year are guaranteed a space.
2. Level 2 – Division schools move from Level 1 to Level 2 when they near capacity. Many Level 2 schools, but not all, have closed boundaries.
3. Level 3 – When Division schools have reached capacity and can no longer accommodate additional attendance area resident students, the school moves from Level 2 to Level 3. In Level 3, further measures must be taken to restrict access to a school beyond those taken in Level 2. In response to researching best practices from other jurisdictions and respecting feedback from community members in previous growth accommodation engagements, the Division uses a lottery process. This process employs a standardized course of action to manage enrolment and ensure equitable access to a school that is at or overcapacity with its attendance area resident students.

CURRENT SITUATION

Utilization Rates

Currently, the overall average utilization rate of the Division is estimated to be at 90 per cent, up from 86 per cent in 2023–2024. The Division has experienced a 15 per cent increase in utilization over the last ten years. Typically, 80 per cent utilization is when schools begin to feel full. When utilization is too high, the Division faces many challenges including:

- limited ability to accommodate resident students in schools closest to where they reside
- well-distributed alternative programming is not possible
- expanding Division centre programming to keep up with demand becomes challenging
- students in new neighbourhoods are unable to access a designated receiving school close to home, which strains the transportation system as ride times and the number of routes increase

Fundamentally, choice for students and families is shrinking due to these space and infrastructure limitations. As the Division becomes increasingly higher utilized, accommodating students closest to where they reside is becoming increasingly difficult. Schools selected to become designated receiving schools for new, developing neighbourhoods place further strains on the transportation system, as designations are farther away.

Residential Growth and Development

The City of Edmonton continues to grow. Several neighbourhoods across the city are in the early stages of development. In addition to the large, developing areas of Riverview (West), Horse Hill (Northeast) and Decoteau (Southeast), in 2019, the City of Edmonton annexed two areas of land from Leduc County and the Town of Beaumont. Edmonton Public Schools' boundaries expanded to match the new City of Edmonton municipal boundaries. As Area Structure Plans take effect, future students in these new neighbourhoods will require a designated school.

For 2024–2025, Alces and Meltwater neighbourhoods (the first two neighbourhoods planned in Decoteau), were designated to Avonmore and Kenilworth schools for elementary and junior high programming. The Southeast 2 sector has experienced one of the highest growth rates in the Division (Attachment I). As such, upcoming growth areas in this sector, including Decoteau, will continue to be designated to schools in the South Central sector as schools in Southeast 1 and Southeast 2 cannot accommodate students projected to reside in these neighbourhoods. The five neighbourhoods planned

for the Horse Hill area will also require updated school designations as these areas develop. Similar to the south side, these designations will likely be outside the Northeast sector due to limited capacity in existing schools.

To provide school designations in a timely fashion, Administration monitors the pace of residential development. When identifying designations for new neighbourhoods, Administration looks to provide access to schools located near each neighbourhood while balancing enrolment at existing schools. A communications plan is developed to inform affected families about new designations. In some cases, Administration may explore options in collaboration with communities. Other times, there is only one possible solution, in which case the community is informed of the final decision. For 2024–2025, existing neighbourhood redesignations were approved for three areas in West Edmonton to mitigate enrolment pressure and accommodate students at schools closer to where they reside.

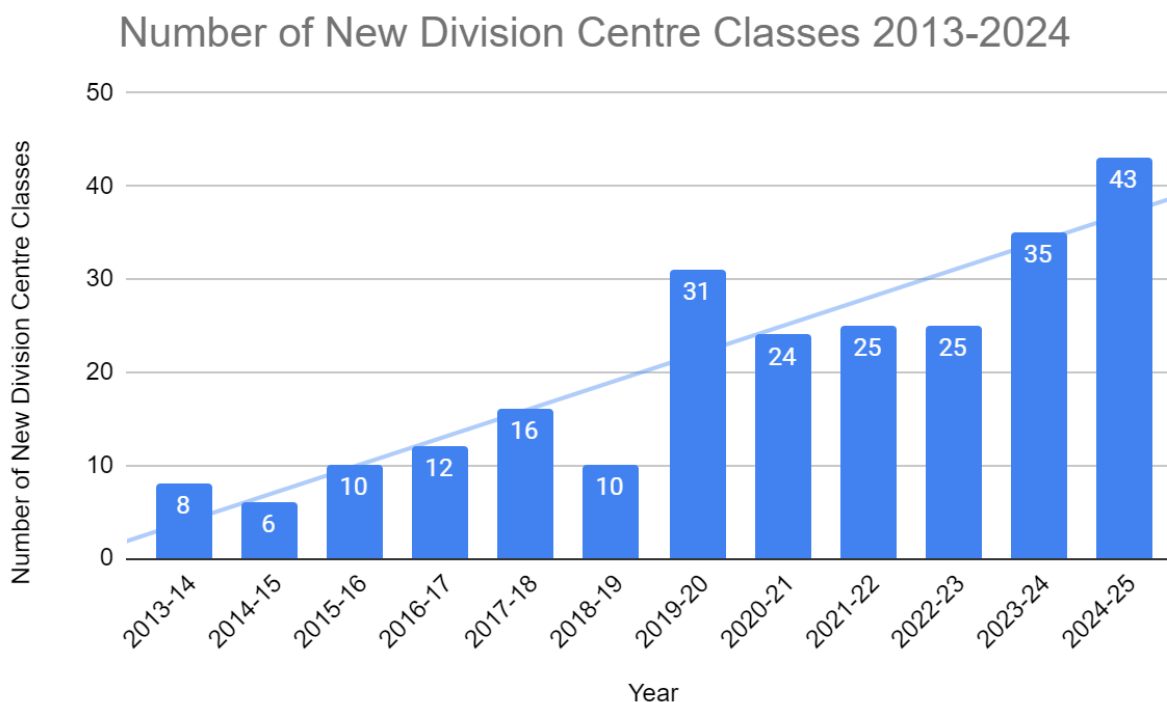
	Previous Designated School(s)	New Designated School
Rosenthal Northwest	LaPerle	Thorncliffe
Edgemont Northwest	Winterburn and Michael Phair	Bessie Nichols
Keswick	Jasper Place	Harry Ainlay

In addition to new development in Edmonton’s suburban areas, several residential redevelopment projects are scheduled to occur in mature neighbourhoods. These projects, coupled with high immigration rates, may impact student residency data as they come to fruition. Administration will continue to monitor development progress, immigration rates and impacts on enrolment.

Division Centres

The Division offers a wide range of specialized programming for students with emotional, behavioural, cognitive, learning, speech, hearing, vision, physical or medical needs. The number of students choosing a Division centre program has increased substantially over the past six years.

There have been 183 Division centre classes approved in the past six years (an average of 31 classes per year) compared to only 62 approved classes in the previous six years (an average of 10 classes per year).



Across the Division, as enrolment increases across all programs and available space declines, establishing Division centre classes near where students reside becomes increasingly challenging. As the Division's utilization rate increases, it is increasingly difficult to find space to establish or expand Division centre programming.

New Construction

Depending on the project delivery method and other factors that may impact project approval, design and construction timelines, new schools take three to five years to build and open for students. Depending on the timing and extent of possible new school construction funding, enrolment growth in the Division will exceed school capacity by approximately 60,000 students over the next ten years. There are currently two new construction projects underway:

- Edgemont K–9 school: tentatively opening September 2027 (Capacity: 950)
- Glenriding Heights Grades 7–12 school: tentatively opening September 2028 (Capacity: 2,410)

The lack of new construction funding results in increased demand for student transportation with further designated schools as well as more pressure on the capacity of existing schools. This leads to an increase in the number of schools managing enrolment with closed boundaries or using the lottery process.

Growth Control Model

A series of measures can be taken to respond to increasing enrolment pressures and to support accommodating student growth in the absence of new school construction. The amount of space available to accommodate a growing number of new Division students is decreasing. To continue to respond to increasing enrolment pressures, Administration developed a model to manage student enrolment growth, to meet demand for student learning space and to be transparent with communities. Like previous growth accommodation strategies, Administration considered long-term sustainability,

equitable access to high-quality learning environments, and the potential level of disruption for students. The Growth Control Model for student accommodation, informed by feedback from families over the past few years, is a dynamic, transparent strategy with a responsive approach to student accommodation Division-wide.

This Growth Control Model does not create additional space for students but rather serves to create efficiencies, provide clarity and minimize the impact on students where possible in the absence of capital funding for new construction.

Level 1 – Open Access

The majority of Division schools are at Level 1 on the Growth Control Model. At this level, schools are required to accommodate resident attendance area students first and if there is space remaining, may accommodate other students. Schools will accommodate as many students as possible up to their enrolment limit. Many schools nearing (or beyond) their enrolment limit will primarily accommodate students from within their attendance area. When nearing or beyond their enrolment limit, based on either current or projected enrolment patterns, the school will then move to Level 2 on the Growth Control Model.

Low Enrolment Model:

It is equally challenging to organize and deliver programming in schools or programs with low enrolment. This is evident with both regular and alternative programs. In some Division schools at Level 1, although they may have a healthy overall enrolment due to other programs, the regular program has not been viable over several years. The opposite is also true; some alternative programs do not have enough students enrolled to make the program viable at a site.

To address programs experiencing low enrolment, Edmonton Public Schools created the Low Enrolment Model in 2021. This process helps the Division identify programs with low enrolment at schools. Schools work together with families in the program and the school community to develop a community-driven plan to increase enrolment before deciding the next steps for the program. The model uses a two-phase approach over two years. This provides an appropriate amount of time to consult and support communities, ensuring all programs in the Division are viable and sustainable. Each year, Administration evaluates program enrolment across all Division schools after the September count date.

Holyrood, McKernan and Rosslyn schools are currently phasing out low enrolment programs at each site. The regular elementary program will be phased out of Holyrood and McKernan schools by the end of the 2025–2026 school year. Resident students living in the Holyrood and McKernan school attendance areas are designated to Avonmore and Garneau schools for regular programming, respectively. The Chinese (Mandarin) Bilingual program will be phased out of Rosslyn School by the end of the 2024–2025 school year. Continuity of programming for students in elementary Chinese (Mandarin) Bilingual programs in North Edmonton is provided at one of the other junior high schools offering this program.

Level 2 – Limit Access

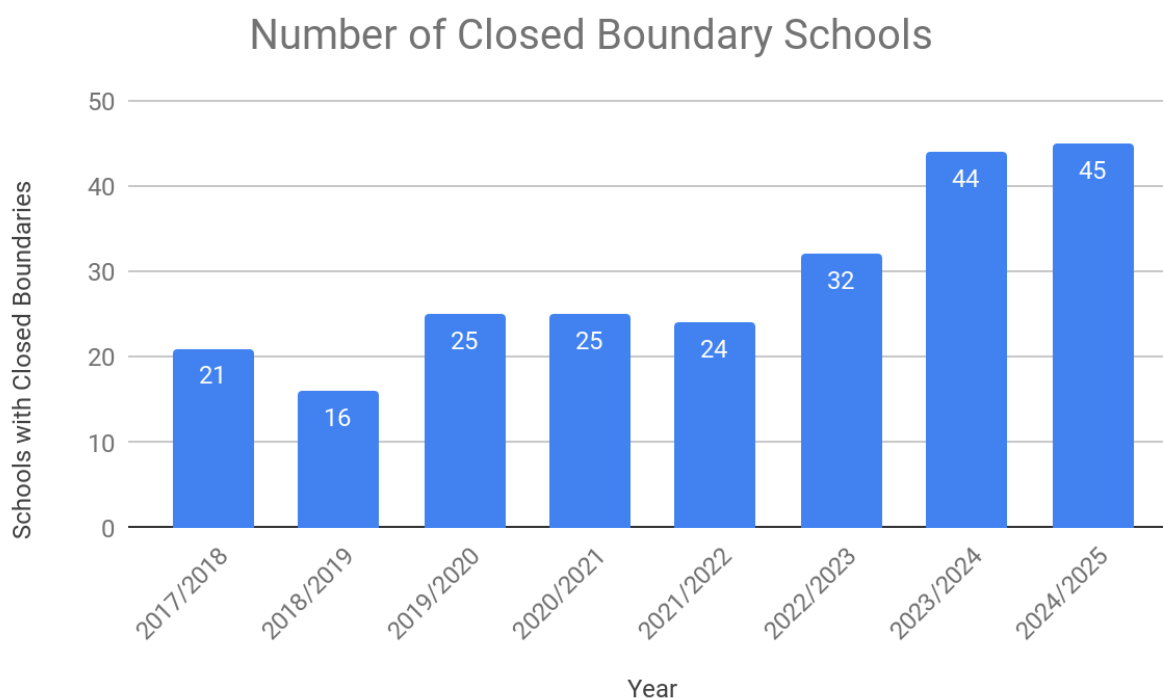
Some schools are experiencing such high demand for space that measures must be taken to limit enrolment to resident attendance area students only. Adding modular classrooms, reclaiming leased space, facility modifications and closing attendance area boundaries are measures the Division can take to ensure schools are able to accommodate resident attendance area students. Seven additional schools have moved from Level 1 to Level 2 for the 2024–2025 school year.

Implications for Lease Groups

While before and after school care programs are not operated by the Division, several licensed service providers work with Property Management staff to lease space in Division schools to provide service to families and the community. As enrolment growth outpaces capacity in a school, the availability of space for lease groups is becoming increasingly limited. As utilization rates increase overall, available lease space in schools is reduced and current leased space may be removed to accommodate enrolment growth. In preparation for the 2024–2025 school year, Athlone, Avonmore, Delwood, Fraser, Garneau, Garth Worthington, Joey Moss, Lansdowne, Laurier Heights, Malmo and McKee schools reclaimed classroom spaces to accommodate additional students.

Closed Boundaries

The amount of space available to accommodate Division students is declining, making it difficult to offer choice for students, including the ability to maintain open attendance area boundaries. The number of closed boundary schools continues to increase each year. There are 45 schools with closed boundaries for 2024–2025 (Attachment II).



Pressure for new school construction in developing areas is expected to continue, as most new students reside in developing areas where schools are at or nearing capacity. Further increases in utilization rates reduce choice for families through greater travel distances for students, fewer seats for Division centre and alternative programming, elimination of open boundaries for schools, and reclamation of spaces used for libraries, staff rooms, and CTS, music, science and art programming.

Modular Classrooms

In scenarios where continued enrolment growth is putting pressure on existing capacity, the Division can request modular classrooms from the Province. Since 2010–2011, the Division has installed or relocated 440 modular classrooms in place of receiving funding for new school construction. This school year, 46 net new modular classrooms (42 new units plus four used units relocated from another school)

jurisdiction) were approved, and the Division relocated four existing units. Annually, the Division submits a request to the Province for new modular classrooms or funding to relocate existing units. Over the past few years, the Division has not received funding for all requested modular classrooms and has been required to use capital reserve funds to acquire and install additional modulars at priority locations.

While additional modular classrooms are a measure to relieve enrolment pressure in some cases, modular classrooms alone cannot address the Division's space challenges. Given the limitations to how many units can be accommodated at existing schools, the provision of modular classroom units is not a practical approach to address rapid enrolment growth. The number of modular classrooms that can be added to a school site is subject to factors such as fire code, building code, parking requirements, washroom capacity and available land. Additionally, modular units are also not a practical approach to providing specialized learning spaces, such as in the accommodation of students with specialized learning needs, or for purpose-built space for junior and senior high school students in the areas of career and technology studies. It will become more challenging for schools to schedule spaces such as gymnasiums and music rooms, given that the school facility is operating beyond the original designed capacity. Many of our newer schools have a greater number of modular classrooms compared to permanent construction; this poses challenges for general functionality such as access to water, washrooms and lockers. Where it is not possible to add modular classrooms, facility modifications may be completed to create additional capacity in non-traditional learning spaces such as learning commons or even staff workrooms.

High School Accommodation

Typically, high school accommodation is managed through enrolment limits and program choices students make. Enrolment limits are designed to support underutilized schools and keep highly utilized schools at optimal levels. However, in recent years, as student enrolment has grown and space has become limited, the focus has shifted towards helping overutilized schools manage and accommodate students. Specific to high school, students choose to pre-enrol at schools outside of their attendance area because of choice of courses/programs. This has traditionally helped shift students to schools with space. High school accommodation is also managed through facility modifications to transform underutilized spaces into flexible classroom environments. These initiatives are focused on improved programming and increased student capacity.

Despite enrolment limits and student choice, several Division high schools have seen an increase in enrolment due to a greater number of resident students enrolling in their designated attendance area school. For the 2024–2025 school year, five high schools moved to Level 2 on the Growth Control Model. Jasper Place and Ross Sheppard schools joined Lillian Osborne School by operating with closed boundaries for the first time. Dr. Anne Anderson, M. E. LaZerte and Queen Elizabeth schools continue to have open boundaries while at Level 2; however, these schools were able to accommodate very few out-of-attendance area resident students. Similar to Level 1 schools, they used the random selection process to manage incoming enrolment when space was available after accommodating resident attendance area students and siblings of returning students. As an example, Dr. Anne Anderson and M. E. LaZerte schools used the random selection process in Grade 10. In Grades 11 and 12, they were only able to accept resident attendance area students who pre-enrolled before the deadline.

The Division is projected to reach 100 per cent utilization of attendance area high school space in the 2025–2026 school year, despite the recent openings of Dr. Anne Anderson School (2021) and Elder Dr. Francis Whiskeyjack School (2024). As of October 1, 2024, all Division attendance area high schools are

full in planned classes for the duration of the 2024–2025 school year. This means that only resident students who newly move into the attendance area for a given high school will be accepted.

School	Enrolment*	Enrolment Limit	Enrolment as % of Enrolment Limit
Dr. Anne Anderson	1,953	1,980	98.6%
Eastglen	1,035	1,050	98.6%
Elder Dr. Francis Whiskeyjack	854	900**	94.9%
Harry Ainlay	2,781	2,700	103%
J. Percy Page	1,312	1,215	108%
Jasper Place	3,058	2,850	107.3%
Lillian Osborne	1,948	1,950	99.9%
M. E. LaZerte	2,387	2,280	104.7%
McNally	1,051	1,155	91%
Queen Elizabeth	1,621	1,500	108%
Ross Sheppard	2,377	2,190	108.5%
Strathcona	1,701	1,650	103.1%
Victoria	976	960	101.7%
W. P. Wagner	1,569	1,755	89.4%

*As of September 2024 count date

**Opened in Grades 10 and 11 only for 2024–2025

While Area Capacity and Utilization (AC&U) is reviewed and considered to inform student accommodation planning, enrolment limits reflect the functional capacity of a high school. For example, the capacity of Elder Dr. Francis Whiskeyjack School is 2,400 students while the enrolment limit for 2024–2025 is 900 students. This is because the school is offering only Grades 10 and 11 in its first year of operation and has limited enrolment to resident attendance area students as much as possible. Despite well-managed enrolment limits, Elder Dr. Francis Whiskeyjack School is projected to be at capacity within three or four years of opening. Enrolment limits are reviewed annually in collaboration with school principals. As the larger, younger cohorts in the Division move into high school, the ideal solution to address high school enrolment pressure is the construction of new attendance area high schools in the growth areas across Edmonton. In the meantime, some high schools have identified areas within the school buildings that could increase student capacity through facility modifications.

As long as enrolment growth continues to outpace provincial funding and delivery of new construction projects, the transportation of students from new and developing communities to schools farther from home will continue to increase, while the amount of available space, and ultimately the amount of choice in public education, will continue to decrease. In response to growth in enrolment and decreasing space in the Division, an increasing number of schools may move to Levels 2 and 3 on the Growth Control Model. Ultimately, the Division requires capital funding and the construction of new school facilities in new and developing communities to accommodate city growth.

Level 3 – Restrict Access (Lottery Process)

The lottery process helps schools at or near capacity manage enrolment by limiting the number of new resident students, allowing the school to stabilize its enrolment while making the most of its available space. It determines which attendance area resident students can access their designated school when there are too many resident students compared to spaces. The lottery process only impacts resident students who are new to a school. Non-resident students are not able to attend a Level 3 school. For those resident students not selected to attend the school through the lottery process, Administration has provided an overflow designated school. A benefit to this process is that it can be applied to individual grade levels and be turned on and off yearly, as needed.

During pre-enrolment for 2024–2025, the number of Level 3 schools using the lottery process was status quo. There are seven Division schools at Level 3 on the Growth Control Model and 14 overflow designated schools. Lillian Osborne School accepted 100 per cent of students who pre-enrolled and they did not use the lottery process for 2024–2025. Grades 10 through 12 are now full in planned classes. As for the six Kindergarten to Grade 9 Level 3 schools, most were open and able to accept additional students in at least two grades before the start of the 2024–2025 school year. It is important to note that the vast majority of students who pre-enrol in a Level 3 school are accepted each year.

Percentage of Students Accepted into Level 3 Schools during Pre-Enrolment					
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
David Thomas King	N/A	N/A	67%	92%	100%
Dr. Lila Fahlman	No data	87%	81%	92%	88%
Dr. Margaret-Ann Armour	70%	65%	81%	91%	94%
Jan Reimer	N/A	N/A	N/A	84%	89%
Lillian Osborne	N/A	N/A	85%	100%	100%
Shauna May Seneca	N/A	N/A	N/A	100%	94%
Svend Hansen	65%	46%	50%	62%	72%

Callback List Extension

Students requesting space at a Level 3 school but who are unsuccessful may access a space in an overflow designated school or they may choose another Division school with space in planned classes. Specific to Level 3 Schools, they may also place their name on a callback list for that particular grade. The callback list was used to fill any available spaces up until the September count date. After the September count date, names were no longer added to the list and the Level 3 school could no longer accept any new students in grades full and closed.

After consultation with Level 3 and Overflow Designated School principals, it was determined that extending the callback list would be beneficial. Prior to pre-enrolment for 2024–2025, the end date for the callback list was extended from the September count date to the end of pre-enrolment for the following school year. This change allows Level 3 schools to accept as many students as possible over the school year, maximizing capacity up to their enrolment limits.

Previously, families that moved into a Level 3 school attendance area after the September count date were directed to the overflow designated school regardless of whether or not there was available space in the Level 3 school. As such, there has been a growing discrepancy in both walk-in rates and class sizes between a Level 3 school and the overflow designated school. With increasing residential development and immigration, the number of walk-ins over a school year has been high. This has placed an increasing amount of unpredictability and pressure on overflow designated schools. By extending the callback period by almost six months, Level 3 schools now have more time to fill vacant spaces with resident attendance area students from the callback list who have indicated they would like to attend the school closest to their home. It also reduces pressure on overflow designated schools, which are typically smaller buildings with less flexibility for scheduling.

Establishment of Additional Overflow Designated Schools

Identifying sustainable, long-term overflow designated schools for Level 3 schools has become increasingly more challenging.

Svend Hansen School continues to turn away the largest number of students each year using the lottery process. When Svend Hansen School first implemented the lottery process in 2020, 1,357 Kindergarten to Grade 9 students lived in the attendance area. As of the September count date 2024, this number has increased to 1,928. The capacity of the school is 1,060. The addition of a second elementary and junior high overflow designated school(s) provides the ability to accommodate a growing number of students and balance enrolment among a number of Division schools. It also alleviates enrolment pressure on the overflow designated schools Kate Chegwin and Weinlos schools, which have been experiencing high enrolment throughout each school year. Weinlos School in particular has had one of the highest walk-in rates across the Division for several years in a row. Between the 2023 September count date and May 2024, enrolment at Weinlos School increased by 97 students. Facility modifications, the addition of modular classrooms and the implementation of closed boundaries were required to manage a rapidly increasing enrolment. Laurel East and Laurel West are the neighbourhoods within the Svend Hansen School attendance area. These areas have a clearly defined boundary divided by a utility corridor and a relatively even number of students in each portion. As of July 1, 2024, Daly Grove and T. D. Baker schools were identified as new overflow designated schools for Laurel West. Kate Chegwin and Weinlos schools remain the overflow designated schools for Laurel East. This did not affect any students currently attending Kate Chegwin or Weinlos schools. Having four overflow designated schools to serve the Svend Hansen School attendance area will reduce enrolment pressure on any one particular school while allowing students to attend a school as close to home as possible.

Similar to Weinlos School, Garth Worthington School faced capacity challenges as the result of being an overflow designated school for Dr. Lila Fahlman School. Between the 2023 September count date and January 2024, Garth Worthington School had an increase of 59 students, the highest number of walk-ins over that period across the Division (with the exception of Centre High Campus). It is difficult to predict the number of students that will choose to attend an overflow designated school. Given Garth Worthington's close proximity to Dr. Lila Fahlman School, while also being a brand new Kindergarten to Grade 9 school, a large number of students unable to access Dr. Lila Fahlman School chose to attend Garth Worthington School. While Garth Worthington School implemented closed boundaries to manage enrolment as much as possible, growth within its own attendance area prompted a change in overflow designations for students living in the Dr. Lila Fahlman School attendance area. In February 2024, Johnny Bright School became the overflow designated school for Dr. Lila Fahlman.

While Johnny Bright School is the third overflow designated school for this area since Dr. Lila Fahlman School was identified as a Level 3 school in 2020, students will continue to be able to access a school located close to home in the Heritage Valley area. Johnny Bright School is the only school at Level 1 on the Growth Control Model in the Southwest 2 sector. Of the 440 modular classrooms across the Division, 103 are located in this sector. Additional capacity through new school construction will be required in this area of the city to accommodate resident students.

Student Accommodation Plan

The annual Student Accommodation Plan provides consistent and ongoing communication with Trustees, Administration, parents and community stakeholders. It outlines the Growth Control Model level assigned to each school for the 2024–2025 school year.

Initiatives to manage growth challenges may include:

- closing boundaries
- reclaiming leased spaces
- addition of modular classrooms
- facility modifications
- new neighbourhood designations
- suspending the sibling rule
- reconfiguring grades (including the removal of grades)
- school or program consolidations
- new school construction
- program establishments

KEY POINTS

- The Student Accommodation Plan is updated annually to provide timely and transparent information to stakeholders and to build an awareness of the intricacies of student accommodation. It provides consistent and ongoing communication with Trustees, Administration, parents and community stakeholders.
- The Province determines new school funding and has recently announced the School Construction Accelerator Program which aspires to create more spaces over future years through school construction. The Board of Trustees has been tireless in their advocacy for new school funding.
 - The Division's Three-Year Capital Plan for 2025–2028 includes 29 priorities for new school construction and school modernization/replacement projects, of which all 12 priorities in Year 1 of the plan meet the provincial requirements for site readiness and are ready to proceed should provincial construction funding be approved.
- The Growth Control Model was developed, based on feedback received through stakeholder engagement, to help manage enrolment at schools as our Division continues to grow.
- The Growth Control Model toolkit is available to support school administration when having conversations with their school community about the levels within the model and the level for their school.
- Updated information will be added online to school profiles to allow parents easy access to this information. This will keep communities and families informed and ensure transparency is reflected through ongoing student accommodation work.

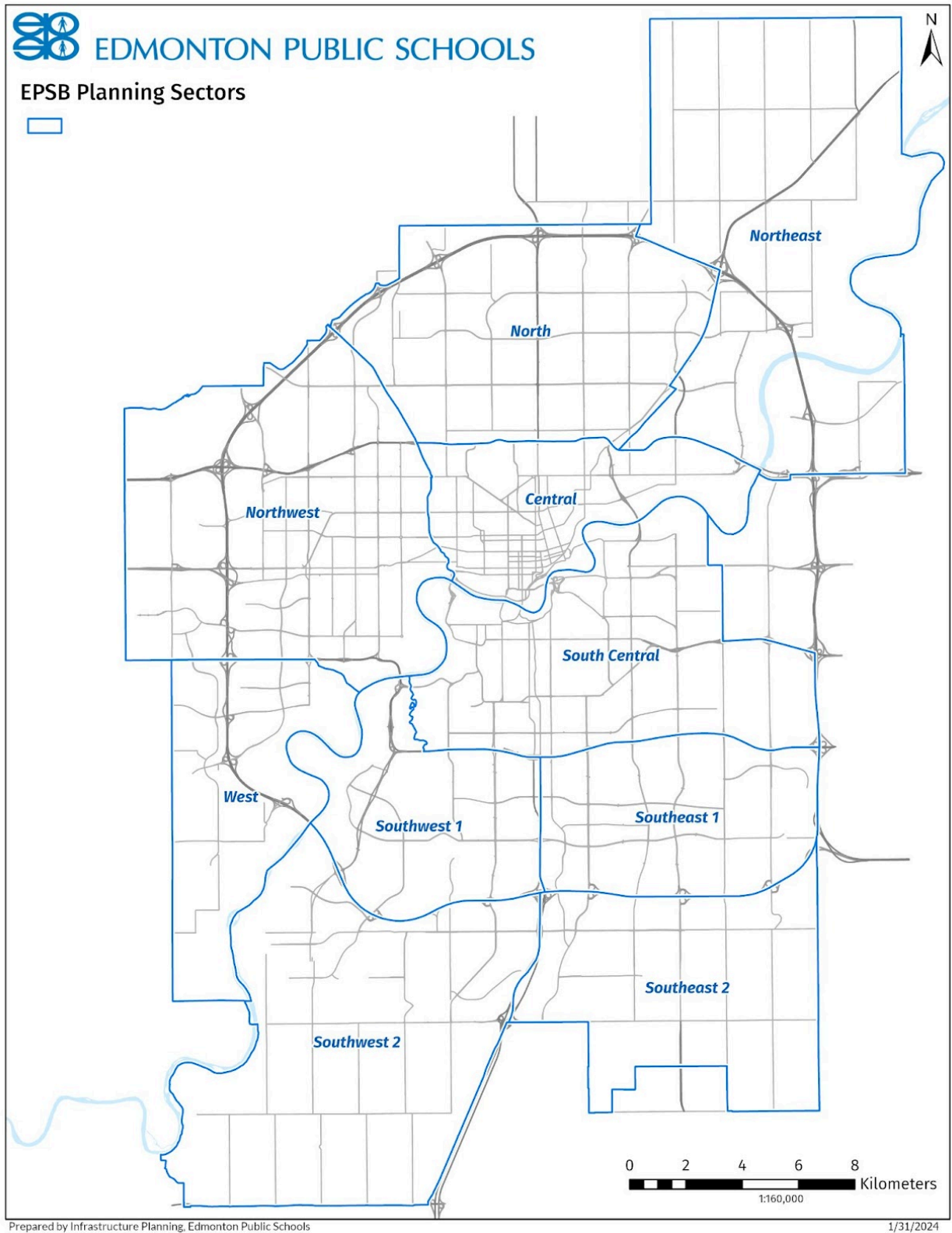
ATTACHMENTS and APPENDICES

ATTACHMENT I Sector Map

ATTACHMENT II Growth Control Model: List of Schools by Level and Closed Boundary List (2024–2025)

JE:ks

Sector Map



Growth Control Model: List of Schools by Level and Closed Boundary List

Level 1 (2024–2025)

awâsis waciston	Gold Bar	McNally
Abbott	Grace Martin	Michael A. Kostek
Academy at King Edward	Greenfield	Millwoods Christian
Alberta School for the Deaf	Greenview	Mount Pleasant
Aldergrove	Grovenor	Northmount
Aleda Patterson	Hardisty	Old Scona
amiskwaciy Academy	Harry Ainlay	Ormsby
Argyll	Hazeldean	Ottewell
Athlone	Highlands	Parkallen
Avalon	Hillcrest	Parkview
Avonmore	Hillview	Princeton
Bannerman	Holyrood	Queen Alexandra
Beacon Heights	Homesteader	Richard Secord
Belgravia	Horse Hill	Rideau Park
Belmead	Inglewood	Rio Terrace
Belmont	Ivor Dent	Riverdale
Belvedere	J. Percy Page	Rosslyn
Bisset	J. A. Fife	Rutherford
Braemar	James Gibbons	S. Bruce Smith
Brander Gardens	John A. McDougall	Sakaw
Brightview	Johnny Bright	Satoo
Britannia	Kameyosek	Scott Robertson
Brookside	Kate Chegwin	Sifton
Calder	Keheewin	Spruce Avenue
Callingwood	Kenilworth	Steele Heights
Clara Tyner	Kensington	Steinhauer
Coronation	Kildare	Stratford
Crawford Plains	Killarney	Strathcona
D. S. Mackenzie	King Edward	Sweet Grass
Daly Grove	Kirkness	T. D. Baker
Delton	kisêwâtisiwin	Talmud Torah
Delwood	L. Y. Cairns	Thorncliffe
Dickinsfield	Lansdowne	Tipaskan
Donnan	Lauderdale	Vernon Barford
Dovercourt	Laurier Heights	Victoria
Dr. Anne Anderson	Lee Ridge	Vimy Ridge
Duggan	Lendrum	Virginia Park
Dunluce	Londonderry	W. P. Wagner
Earl Buxton	Lymburn	Wîhkwêntôwin
Eastglen	Lynnwood	
Edith Rogers	Malmo	
Edmonton Christian High	Mary Butterworth	
Edmonton Christian Northeast		

Growth Control Model: List of Schools by Level and Closed Boundary List

Level 1 (2024–2025) (continued)

Edmonton Christian West	Mayfield	Waverley
Ekota	McArthur	Westbrook
Elizabeth Finch	McKee	Westglen
Elmwood	McKernan	Westminster
Esther Starkman	Meadowlark	Westmount
Evansdale	Meadowlark Christian	Windsor Park
Forest Heights	Mee-Yah-Noh	York
Fraser	Menisa	Youngstown
Garneau	Michael Phair	
George P. Nicholson	Mill Creek	
Glengarry	Millwoods Christian	
	Minchau	

Level 2 (2024–2025)

A. Blair McPherson	Julia Kiniski
Alex Janvier	Kim Hung
Allendale	Lago Lindo
*Balwin	LaPerle
Baturyn	Lorelei
Bessie Nichols	*M. E. LaZerte
Caernarvon	Major General Griesbach
Centennial	Malcolm Tweddle
Constable Daniel Woodall	McLeod
Crestwood	Meyokumin
Donald R. Getty	Michael Strembitsky
*Dr. Anne Anderson	Nellie Carlson
Dr. Donald Massey	Overlanders
Ellerslie	Patricia Heights
Florence Hallock	Pollard Meadows
Garth Worthington	*Queen Elizabeth
George H. Luck	Riverbend
Glenora	Roberta MacAdams
Grandview Heights	*Ross Sheppard
Hilwie Hamdon	Soraya Hafez
Jackson Heights	*Thelma Chalifoux
*Jasper Place	Velma E. Baker
Joey Moss	Weinlos
John D. Bracco	Winterburn
John Barnett	

**indicates new for 2024–2025*

Level 3 (2024–2025)

David Thomas King Dr. Lila Fahlman Dr. Margaret Ann-Armour Jan Reimer	Lillian Osborne Shauna May Seneca Svend Hansen
--	--

Schools with Closed Boundaries 2024–2025

Alex Janvier Baturyn Bessie Nichols Caernarvon (Regular Program) Centennial Constable Daniel Woodall David Thomas King Dr. Donald Massey Dr. Lila Fahlman Dr. Margaret-Ann Armour Donald R. Getty Ellerslie Florence Hallock* Garth Worthington George H. Luck Glenora Hilwie Hamdon Jackson Heights Jan Reimer Jasper Place* Joey Moss John Barnett John D. Bracco	Julia Kiniski Kim Hung Lago Lindo LaPerle Lillian Osborne Lorelei Major General Griesbach Malcolm Tweddle (Regular Program) Meyokumin (Regular Program) Michael Strembitsky Nellie Carlson Overlanders Patricia Heights Pollard Meadows (Regular Program) Riverbend Roberta MacAdams Ross Sheppard* Shauna May Seneca Svend Hansen Velma E. Baker Weinlos Winterburn
---	---

**indicates new for 2024–2025*

DATE: November 5, 2024

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Board Chair Julie Kusiek

SUBJECT: Board Chair Discretionary Expense Allowance Report for 2023-2024

ORIGINATOR: Karen Mills, Director of Board and Superintendent Relations

REFERENCE [Trustees' Handbook](#) – Section 11.5 Board Chair Discretionary Allowance

ISSUE

In accordance with Section 11.5 of the Trustees' Handbook, the Board Chair is granted an annual discretionary expense allowance for expenses incurred related to the role of the Board Chair. The Board Chair is required to provide a written annual report outlining the nature and purpose of expenses incurred under the Board Chair Discretionary Expense Allowance.

BACKGROUND

Effective October 22, 2013, the Board approved granting the Board Chair an annual discretionary expense allowance of \$2,153.80 to cover expenses incurred related to the role of Board Chair. These funds were allocated to support additional business that may arise from the duties associated with the Board Chair position. As per the Trustees' Handbook, any unused portion from the previous year is not to be carried forward into the following school year.

CURRENT SITUATION

The Board Chair expensed three items to the Board Chair Discretionary account. The total expenditure was \$439.75. None of the unused portion was carried over into the current year.

ATTACHMENTS and APPENDICES

ATTACHMENT I Expense Summary from September 1, 2023 - August 31, 2024

JK:km

BOARD CHAIR DISCRETIONARY EXPENSE ALLOWANCE

Expense Summary from September 1, 2023 - August 31, 2024

Date processed	Vendor	Expense Details	Amount	Balance
OPENING BALANCE				\$2,153.80
March 1/24	n/a	Mileage for Provincial School Infrastructure Announcement in Calgary	\$316.01	
June 4/24	The Nash	Lunch in Calgary CCSD Board Chair following Infrastructure announcement	\$60.39	
July 29/24	Bloomex	Condolence flowers for passing of CCSD Trustee	\$63.35	
Total expenses			\$439.75	
CLOSING BALANCE				\$1714.05