

Board Meeting Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of Edmonton School Division of Alberta, held in the Centre for Education McCauley Chambers on Tuesday, March 3, 2026, at 2 p.m.

Due to technical difficulties, the meeting was not live-streamed.

Present

Trustees	Nickela Anderson, Sarah Doll, Melanie Hoffman, Julie Kusiek, Linda Lindsay, Holly Nichol, Sherri O'Keefe, Jan Sawyer, Saadiq Sumar		
Officials	Angela Anderson, Todd Burnstad, Grace Cooke, Andrea Cooper, Kelsey Duebel, Martin Fechner, Kathy Muhlethaler, Kent Pharis, Nancy Petersen, Cliff Richard, Carrie Rosa, Ron Thompson, Liz Yule		
Board Chair	Saadiq Sumar	Recording Secretary	Catherine Angeles

A. Land Acknowledgement

The Board Chair called the meeting to order with recognition that we are on Treaty 6 Territory, a traditional meeting grounds, gathering place, and travelling route to the Cree, Saulteaux, Blackfoot, Métis, Dene and Nakota Sioux. We acknowledge all the many First Nations, Métis and Inuit whose footsteps have marked these lands for centuries.

B. O Canada

Trustee Lindsay led the singing of O Canada.

C. Roll Call

2:12 p.m. – The Superintendent advised that Trustee Kusiek ~~was absent~~ would join virtually once the technical issues were resolved and all other Trustees were present.

D. Approval of Agenda

Trustee Doll requested that agenda item 8, Ten-Year Facilities Plan 2026-35, be deferred to the March 17, 2026 Board meeting.

MOVED BY Trustee O'Keefe:

That the agenda for the March 3, 2026, Board meeting be approved as amended.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

E. Communications from the Board Chair

The Board Chair extended Ramadan Kareem wishes to those observing the holy month. Trustees received several invitations to Iftars during this month, which were a great way to bring people of different faiths and backgrounds together. Events where Trustees broke bread served to build community and grow stronger.

The Board Chair recognized that International Women's Day is on March 8th and is a time for us to recognize and celebrate the achievements of women and girls. The theme for 2026 is Give to Gain, highlighting the power of reciprocity. When communities invest in women, opportunities expand, systems strengthen, and societies thrive. Chair Sumar said, "To all of the women working in the Division and to all women and girls, an early but very happy International Women's Day."

The Board Chair noted that the provincial budget was released last week, which included \$10.8B for education. In a deficit budget, a 7% increase demonstrates an important investment, and the Division is cautiously optimistic about what this means for students pending receipt of the funding profile.

The Board Chair shared that last week was the Division's Night of Music, the 60th anniversary, or the diamond anniversary of the event. It was fitting to have former Harry Ainlay student Annika Schoenhardt's piece From the Stone, A Diamond as the finale. This event was an incredible display of the talent of Division students and staff. Chair Sumar said, "As the Division Two Choir sang in one of their songs, my heart is full of joy after all of the performances."

F. Communications from the Superintendent of Schools

The Superintendent thanked everyone in attendance today, including the Superintendent's Community of Practice in Education (SCOPE) principals, Chad Sheppard from Michael Strembitsky School and Satinder Basra from McNally. He also welcomed the Edwin Parr Nominees and their guests to the Board Meeting.

The Superintendent shared that it's pre-enrolment and registration season in Edmonton Public Schools. The Division is eager to see so many students return next year and to welcome many new-to-the-Division students and families. Families have until Wednesday, March 25, to participate in pre-enrolment.

The Superintendent said it is also open house season, which gives families and students a chance to learn a little more about what a school has to offer, from alternative programming to complementary courses, extracurricular activities, sports teams, a taste of school culture and a chance to see the school space. Parents can find information about programs and when open houses are on epsb.ca. If families have missed an open house and have questions about what a school offers, reach out to the school directly for more information.

The Superintendent invited staff, students (in grades 4-12), and families to participate in the Division Feedback Survey, which provides information to the Division and schools. He said it is

important that the Division hears from staff, students, and families about how the Division is doing and what they value in a quality public education system. The Division uses this feedback to help measure our progress on achieving our goals and understand how to best support students, staff and families. The survey is open until March 25.

The Superintendent referenced Chair Sumar's remarks regarding the provincial budget tabled last Thursday. While the Division waits for the funding profile from the province, we are pleased to see that given the financial position the province is in, so many funds and resources are being directed into classrooms. That includes funds to hire teachers, EAs and other support staff to support student success. The Division looks forward to learning more about what the impact on our Division will be later this month.

G. Approval of the Minutes

1. Board Meeting - February 10, 2026

MOVED BY Trustee Nichol:

That the minutes of the Board meeting held February 10, 2026, be approved as presented.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

H. Recognition

2. Edwin Parr Teacher Award
(Information)

The following first-year teachers were celebrated as the Division's nominees for the Edwin Parr Teacher Award:

Olivia Branco, Baturyn School
Austin Bosh, Calder School
Cokee Schmidt, L.Y. Cairns School
Cassandra DuChene, McNally School
Ao (Leo) Li, McNally School

Cokee Schmidt of L.Y. Cairns School was selected as the Division's recipient for the 2026 Edwin Parr Award for Excellence in first-year teaching.

I. Comments from the Public and Staff Group Representatives on items on the Meeting Agenda

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

There was a short break in the meeting at 2:50 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 3:02 p.m.

J. Reports**3. 2026-27 Budget - Staff Group Budget Presentations**

This item was deferred to a later date due to the presenter's illness.

**4. Student Senate 2025-26 Work Plan Update
(Information)**

Student Trustees Selina Lin, Taneesh Chekka and Zidaan Virani presented the 2025-26 Student Senate work plan update.

Trustee Kusiek joined the meeting virtually at 3:05 p.m.

**5. Motion re: Request for Information Follow-up on Election Costs
(Recommendation)**

MOVED BY Trustee Sawyer:

That the response to the request for information regarding election costs from the December 9, 2025, Board meeting be brought forward as an Information Report and placed on the agenda for discussion at the public board meeting following the completion of the report.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

**6. Approval of Class Size and Complexity Team Grant Funds Expenditure
(Recommendation)**

MOVED BY Trustee Hoffman:

In accordance with Board Policy CHA.BP Delegation of Authority, that the Board approves the Division to incur additional expenses during the 2025-2026 school year in support of the Class Size and Complexity Grant not to exceed \$8.7 million, knowing any unspent grant funds can be carried forward to the 2026-2027 school year.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

There was a short break in the meeting at 4:08 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 4:17 p.m.

**7. Process and Timeline for the 2026-27 Budget
(Recommendation)**

MOVED BY Trustee Anderson:

That the Process and Timeline for the 2026-2027 Budget, as outlined in Attachment I, be approved.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

8. Ten-Year Facilities Plan 2026-35
(Information)

This report was deferred to the March 17, 2026 Board meeting.

9. Bereavement
(Information)

Vice-Chair Lindsay reported the passing of Ms. Norma Jean Carbert.

K. Other Committee, Board Representative and Trustee Reports

Trustee Kusiek shared an update on Ward F:

Trustee Kusiek shared that it has been wonderful to get out in Ward F, connecting with students, staff, families and the wider community. Since the last Board meeting, she attended School Council meetings at McKernan and Lillian Osborne. She thanked the school council volunteers for all their efforts in partnership with the Principal and school community.

Trustee Kusiek attended the Brookside School annual community walk to deliver notes of kindness to the local community. This year, there was an added inspiration of “Monks Walk For Peace” and a bulldog twist with the school mascot joining in. Spreading kindness and peace is a powerful message, today more than ever. She expressed appreciation to Brookside, Ms. Kurup and the organizing team.

Trustee Kusiek attended the Avalon Junior High Career Day - Creating pathways for student success takes a community. Students at Avalon Junior High had the opportunity to sign up for four different career sessions, which featured 24 different speakers with 24 different careers. Students learned about the career path of the presenter and got to ask questions. The best part of the event was that all speakers were connected with the Avalon school community, including parents.

Careers fields highlighted included:

- engineering - biomedical, materials and water resources
- mining
- accounting
- emergency services - fire, police, medical
- environmental consulting
- journeyman carpenter
- landscape architecture
- journeyman painter
- marketing
- Medical laboratory technologist
- nursing
- orthopaedic technician
- pharmacist
- Rabbit Hill Ski Resort
- real estate
- researcher
- speech-language pathology
- water resource engineer

The event provided a valuable opportunity for students to explore future pathways, including high school course selection, post-secondary options and work experience. Trustee Kusiek expressed appreciation to Mme. Engli and Principal Sader for spearheading this event, championing EPSB's Career Pathways approach to learning and for the invitation to attend the event.

Trustee Kusiek shared that she attended the Esther Starkman Lunar New Year Celebration. She wished everyone a Happy Lunar New Year, year of the Fire Horse. She expressed appreciation for the opportunity to attend the event celebrations. She highlighted the diverse cultural program, which included Lion, umbrella, and tai chi fan dances, songs and more. She was reminded of the importance of community in public education, where we learn from one another's cultures, celebrate together and create an atmosphere where everyone belongs. She thanked Ms. Choi and the Esther Starkman team for organizing the event celebrations and to the Edmonton Chinese Bilingual Education Association for their continued partnership.

Trustee Kusiek hosted a casual drop-in Ward F Coffee conversation. A key point raised with her was about parent engagement. She thanked everyone for stopping in.

Trustee Kusiek thanked Christina and the team for the first annual Hearts in Harmony production featuring Ariana Whitlow and some schools in the Lillian Osborne catchment in partnership with SEATS. She congratulated students (and their hard-working teachers) from Lillian Osborne, Nellie Carlson, Constable Daniel Woodall School, and the volunteers of South Edmonton Arts & Theatre Society (SEATS) on this heart-warming show at the MacLab Theatre at Lillian Osborne.

L. Trustees and Board Requests for Information

None

M. Notices of Motion

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

That the Board of Trustees write a letter to the Minister of Education acknowledging appreciation for additional classroom complexity funding, providing context of our Division in consideration of the complexity teams, and offering suggestions for further action on reducing classroom complexity.

N. Meeting Dates

Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, March 17, 2026, at 2 p.m.

O. Adjournment

4:41 p.m. – The Board Chair adjourned the meeting.

Saadiq Sumar, Board Chair

Kelsey Duebel, Director Board and
Superintendent Relations