

Organizational 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 Friday, October 31, 2025, at 2 p.m.

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, Kelsey Duebel, Martin Fechner, Kathy Muhlethaler, Kent Pharis, Nancy Petersen, Carrie Rosa, Ron Thompson, Liz Yule, Christopher Wright		
Board Chair	Julie Kusiek (Pro Tem)	Recording Secretary	Catherine Angeles

A. Land Acknowledgement

The Board Chair (Pro Tem) called the meeting to order.

Trustee Hoffman provided a land acknowledgement.

B. O Canada

Trustee Lindsay led the singing of O Canada.

C. Roll Call

2:07 p.m. – The Superintendent advised that all Trustees were present.

D. Approval of Agenda

MOVED BY Trustee O’Keefe:

That the agenda for the October 31, 2025, Organizational Board meeting be approved as presented.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

E. Communications from the Board Chair (Pro Tem)

The Board Chair welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the 2025-29 Board of Trustees. She extended her sincere thanks to outgoing Trustees Dawn Hancock and Marsha Nelson, who did not seek re-election. Chair Kusiek expressed gratitude for their dedicated service, noting that their valuable contributions, wisdom, and care have strengthened the Board and the Division.

The Board Chair also acknowledged everyone who put their name forward to run for Trustee. She formally recognized the time and effort invested by all election candidates and encouraged them to remain engaged in supporting public education.

The Board Chair welcomed back, for a second term, Trustees Jan Sawyer, Sherri O’Keefe and Saadiq Sumar. Chair Kusiek extended congratulations to the five new Trustees—Linda Lindsay, Holly Nichol, Nickela Anderson, Sarah Doll, and Melanie Hoffman. She also reported that the recent orientation sessions were successful in preparing the Trustees for their roles. She noted the shared commitment, diversity of expertise, and strong dedication among all Trustees as the Board prepares to commence its governance work for the Division.

The Board Chair acknowledged the vital work of teachers, confirming that their dedication and service are deeply respected and appreciated across the Division.

The Board Chair advised that Trustees will be attending two important conferences this month alongside school boards from across Alberta: the Alberta School Boards Association and the Public School Boards’ Association of Alberta Fall General Meetings and Conferences. These conferences provide a multi-day opportunity to connect with Trustees from across Alberta on shared topics of interest, professional development and advocacy.

The Board Chair reported that School and Central Results Reviews are scheduled for November. This is an opportunity for Trustees to get to know their schools and decision units better and understand progress towards the Division Strategic Plan and student learning outcomes. It’s also an opportunity to listen and learn more about how best to govern in support of educational work in Edmonton Public Schools.

The Board Chair thanked teachers and all Division staff for their dedicated efforts in supporting student learning. She acknowledged that it is an honour to serve alongside people so dedicated to the calling of public education and the work of our Division to enhance pathways to student success.

F. Communications from the Superintendent of Schools

The Superintendent welcomed everyone in attendance today, and those watching online.

The Superintendent welcomed the newly elected Trustees, who were scheduled to be sworn in today. He stated that serving as a Trustee is an incredible commitment, and their success reflects the community’s trust. On behalf of the Division, Superintendent Thompson congratulated the Trustee-elects on their successful campaigns. He also thanked every individual who ran in the recent election, noting that running a campaign requires significant dedication and is essential to local democracy. Superintendent Thompson shared that he was looking forward to working collaboratively with the Board over the next four years to focus on the Division’s core mission: supporting student success in every school, every classroom, every day.

The Superintendent welcomed principals and teaching staff who returned to schools this week, emphasizing that teachers are at the very heart of the classroom. Superintendent Thompson also thanked the incredible dedication demonstrated by the Division's support, specialized learning support, maintenance, exempt, and custodial staff. He noted that their commitment during the job action to getting schools ready for staff and students was invaluable and appreciated.

The Superintendent congratulated two incredible educators who were named recipients of the prestigious Prime Minister's Certificates of Achievement in Teaching for 2025. This is a tremendous national honour that recognizes truly exceptional teaching practices. Sean Bradley from McNally School was recognized for his visionary work in empowering students as confident, capable leaders through his innovative programs in Design Studies, Enterprise and Computer Science. His creation of "McNally Makes" and his use of real-world initiatives are truly preparing Division students for the future. Morgan Gahler from amiskwaciy Academy was recognized for the incredible work transforming the school's culture, using sport—specifically Physical Education—to build student self-worth and connect deeply with the community. Her approach blends high expectations with deep care, integrating land-based Indigenous teachings and mentorship. On behalf of the Division, Superintendent Thompson congratulated Sean and Morgan, noting that their dedication, innovation, and unwavering belief in their students inspires all staff.

The Superintendent shared that he was looking forward to the Division's upcoming Results Review process. These conversations are vital for continuous improvement and will begin right after the fall break. Superintendent Thompson expressed gratitude to all school and central decision unit leaders and staff for the preparation and thoughtfulness they put into getting ready for these important conversations.

The Superintendent stated that the November fall break will proceed as originally planned.

G. Declaration of the 2025 Municipal Election Results

Ms. Duebel, Corporate Secretary, reported the following Trustees had been elected for the ensuing four years (2025-29):

Ward A - Sherri O'Keefe

Ward B - Linda Lindsay

Ward C - Holly Nichol

Ward D - Nickela Anderson

Ward E - Sarah Doll

Ward F - Julie Kusiek

Ward G - Saadiq Sumar

Ward H - Melanie Hoffman

Ward I - Jan Sawyer

H. Receipt of Oaths of Office

Ms. Cooke, General Counsel, conducted the Oath of Office Ceremony. All Oaths of Office were received.

There was a short break in the meeting at 2:31 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 2:41 p.m.

I. Reports

1. Actions Taken Under the Delegation of Authority - 2025 Municipal Election Recess
(Information)

The Superintendent reported that no actions were taken under the delegation of authority during the 2025 municipal election recess.

2. Confirmation of Committees, Board Representatives and Regular Meetings
(Recommendation)

MOVED BY Trustee Nichol:

“That the following actions be taken for the 2025-26 school year:

1. **That the following standing committees of the whole be confirmed:**
 - a. **Caucus Committee**
 - b. **Audit Committee**
2. **That the following Board committees be confirmed:**
 - a. **Governance and Evaluation**
 - b. **Policy Review**
3. **That Board representation on the following Division staff negotiating committees, as required, be confirmed:**
 - a. **Custodial Staff (CUPE Local 474)**
 - b. **Maintenance Staff (CUPE Local 784)**
 - c. **Support Staff (CUPE Local 3550)**
 - d. **Specialized Learning Supports Employees (CUPE Local 3550)**
 - e. **Teaching Staff (Edmonton Public Teachers’ Local 37)**
4. **That Board membership and representation on the Public School Boards’ Association of Alberta (PSBAA) be confirmed:**
 - a. **Provincial Executive - Director**
 - b. **Public School Boards Council (PSBC) Representative**
 - c. **Public School Boards Council (PSBC) Alternative Representative**
5. **That Board membership and representation on the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) be confirmed:**
 - a. **Provincial Executive - Director**
 - b. **Zone 2/3 Executive**
 - c. **Zone 2/3 Executive - Alternate**

6. That the Board's ASBA Issues and Resolutions Committee, comprised of the Board Chair or Board Vice-Chair, the ASBA Provincial Executive Board of Directors representative and the ASBA Zone 2/3 representative, be confirmed.
7. That the following Ad Hoc committee and Board representative assignments be confirmed:
 - a. Ad Hoc Advocacy Committee
 - b. Edmonton Public Schools Foundation Board of Governors
8. That the following dates and times of the regular meetings be confirmed:
 - a. Board: The Board will hold its regular meetings at 2 p.m. on the first and third Tuesday of each month, when possible, unless otherwise directed by a special motion or by the Board Chair.
 - b. Caucus Committee: Caucus Committee meetings will be held on an as-needed basis at the call of the Caucus Committee Chair. The first Tuesday morning of each month will be reserved for such meetings.
9. That the Board appoint or review the following positions and committees."

The Board Chair (Pro Tem) called the question on recommendations 1 to 9.
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

Board Member Positions:

a. Board Chair

The Board Chair (Pro Tem) called for nominations for the position of Board Chair.

Trustee O'Keefe nominated Trustee Kusiek. Trustee Kusiek accepted the nomination.

Trustee Nichol nominated Trustee Sumar. Trustee Sumar accepted the nomination.

The Board Chair (Pro Tem), seeing no further nominations, declared the nominations closed.

The nominees for the position of Board Chair each provided a one-minute presentation.

The Board Chair (Pro Tem) advised that the vote would be taken by a show of hands unless a request for a secret ballot was made. Trustee O'Keefe requested that the vote be by secret ballot. Ms. Duebel distributed the secret ballots.

Ms. Duebel collected the completed ballots and left the room with Superintendent Thompson to tabulate the results.

Ms. Duebel and Superintendent Thompson returned to the room. Ms. Duebel reported the results. Trustee Sumar was declared elected as the Board Chair.

Following the declaration of the result, Trustee Sumar assumed the Board Chair seat.

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

The meeting resumed at 2:53 p.m.

b. Board Vice-Chair

The Board Chair called for nominations for the position of Board Vice-Chair.

Trustee Doll nominated Trustee Lindsay. Trustee Lindsay accepted the nomination.

Trustee Kusiek nominated Trustee Sawyer. Trustee Sawyer accepted the nomination.

The Board Chair, seeing no further nominations, declared the nominations closed.

The nominees for the position of Board Vice-Chair each provided a one-minute presentation.

The Board Chair confirmed that the vote would be taken by a show of hands, as no request for a secret ballot had been made.

Trustee Lindsay received the majority of votes. The Board Chair declared Trustee Lindsay elected as the Board Vice-Chair.

Following the declaration of the result, Trustee Lindsay assumed the Board Vice-Chair seat.

1. Standing Committees of the Whole:

a. Caucus Committee Chair

The Board Chair advised that Trustee Lindsay is the Board Vice-Chair and will also serve as the Chair of the Caucus Committee.

b. Audit Committee Chair

The Board Chair called for nominations for the position of Audit Chair.

Trustee Sawyer nominated Trustee O'Keefe. Trustee O'Keefe accepted the nomination.

Trustee Kusiek nominated Trustee Anderson. Trustee Anderson declined the nomination.

The Board Chair, seeing no further nominations, declared the nominations closed.

The Board Chair declared Trustee O'Keefe elected by acclamation as Audit Committee Chair.

2. Board Committees:**a. Governance and Evaluation**

The Board Chair called for nominations for four Trustee representatives to serve on the Governance and Evaluation Committee.

Trustee Kusiek nominated Trustees O'Keefe, Doll, Sawyer and Hoffman. All four nominees accepted.

The Board Chair, seeing no further nominations, declared the nominations closed.

The Board Chair declared Trustees O'Keefe, Doll, Sawyer and Hoffman as the Board's representatives on the Governance and Evaluation Committee.

b. Policy Review

The Board Chair called for nominations for four Trustee representatives to serve on the Policy Review Committee.

Board Chair Sumar nominated Trustees Nichol, Anderson, Doll, and Kusiek. All four nominees accepted.

The Board Chair, seeing no further nominations, declared the nominations closed.

The Board Chair declared Trustees Nichol, Anderson, Doll, and Kusiek as the Board's representatives on the Policy Review Committee.

3. Negotiating Committees:**a. Custodial Staff (CUPE Local 474)**

The Board Chair called for nominations for two Trustee representatives to serve on this committee.

Board Chair Sumar nominated Trustees Kusiek and O'Keefe. Both nominees accepted.

The Board Chair, seeing no further nominations, declared the nominations closed.

The Board Chair declared Trustees Kusiek and O'Keefe elected to the Negotiating Committee for the Custodial Staff (CUPE Local 474).

b. Maintenance Staff (CUPE Local 784)

The Board Chair called for nominations for two Trustee representatives to serve on this committee.

Trustee Sawyer nominated Trustees Doll and Sumar. Both nominees accepted.

The Board Chair, seeing no further nominations, declared the nominations closed.

The Board Chair declared Trustees Doll and Sumar elected to the Negotiating Committee for the Maintenance Staff (CUPE Local 784).

c. Support Staff (CUPE Local 3550)

The Board Chair called for nominations for two Trustee representatives to serve on this committee.

Trustee Lindsay nominated Trustees Sawyer and Anderson. Both nominees accepted.

The Board Chair, seeing no further nominations, declared the nominations closed.

The Board Chair declared Trustees Sawyer and Anderson elected to the Negotiating Committee for the Support Staff (CUPE Local 3550).

d. Specialized Learning Supports Employees (CUPE Local 3550)

The Board Chair called for nominations for two Trustee representatives to serve on this committee.

Trustee Doll nominated Trustees O'Keefe and Hoffman. Both nominees accepted.

The Board Chair, seeing no further nominations, declared the nominations closed.

The Board Chair declared Trustees O'Keefe and Hoffman elected to the Negotiating Committee for the Specialized Learning Supports Employees (CUPE Local 3550).

e. Teaching Staff (Edmonton Public Teachers' Local 37)

The Board Chair called for nominations for two Trustee representatives to serve on this committee.

Trustee Hoffman nominated Trustees Lindsay and Nichol. Both nominees accepted.

The Board Chair, seeing no further nominations, declared the nominations closed.

The Board Chair declared Trustees Lindsay and Nichol elected to the Negotiating Committee for the Teaching Staff (Edmonton Public Teachers' Local 37).

The Board Chair advised that the TEBA Representative will be designated by the two elected Trustees and announced at the next Board meeting.

4. Representatives for the Public School Boards' Association of Alberta (PSBAA):

a. Provincial Executive - Director

The Board Chair called for nominations for one Trustee representative to serve as Provincial Executive - Director.

Trustee O'Keefe nominated Trustee Sawyer. Trustee Sawyer accepted the nomination.

The Board Chair, seeing no further nominations, declared the nominations closed.

The Board Chair declared Trustee Sawyer elected as the Board's Director on the Provincial Executive of the PSBAA Executive Committee.

b. Public School Boards' Council (PSBC) Representative

The Board Chair called for nominations for one Trustee representative to serve as PSBC Representative.

Trustee Hofman nominated Trustee O'Keefe. Trustee O'Keefe accepted the nomination.

The Board Chair, seeing no further nominations, declared the nominations closed.

The Board Chair declared Trustee O'Keefe elected as the Board's PSBC Representative.

c. PSBC Alternate Representative

The Board Chair called for nominations for one Trustee representative to serve as PSBC Alternate Representative.

Board Chair Sumar nominated Trustee Doll. Trustee Doll accepted the nomination.

The Board Chair, seeing no further nominations, declared the nominations closed.

The Board Chair declared Trustee Doll elected as the Board's PSBC Alternate Representative.

5. Representatives for the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA):

a. Provincial Executive

The Board Chair called for nominations for one Trustee representative to serve as Provincial Executive - Director.

Trustee Anderson nominated Trustee Kusiek. Trustee Kusiek accepted the nomination.

Trustee Nichol nominated Trustee Lindsay. Trustee Lindsay accepted the nomination.

The Board Chair, seeing no further nominations, declared the nominations closed.

The Board Chair confirmed that the vote would be taken by a show of hands.

Trustee Lindsay received the majority of votes. The Board Chair declared Trustee Lindsay elected as the Board's Director on the ASBA Board of Directors.

b. ASBA Zone 2/3 Executive

The Board Chair called for nominations for one Trustee representative to serve as ASBA Zone 2/3 Executive.

Trustee Kusiek nominated Trustee Hoffman. Trustee Hoffman accepted the nomination.

The Board Chair, seeing no further nominations, declared the nominations closed.

The Board Chair declared Trustee Hoffman elected as the Board's ASBA Zone 2/3 Executive.

c. ASBA Zone 2/3 Executive - Alternate

The Board Chair called for nominations for one Trustee representative to serve as ASBA Zone 2/3 Executive - Alternate.

Trustee Lindsay nominated Trustee Sumar. Trustee Sumar accepted the nomination.

The Board Chair, seeing no further nominations, declared the nominations closed.

The Board Chair declared himself, Trustee Sumar, elected as the ASBA Zone 2/3 Executive - Alternate.

6. ASBA Issues and Resolutions Committee

The Board Chair advised that Trustees Sumar, Lindsay and Hoffman will serve as the Board's representatives on the ASBA Issues and Resolutions Committee.

7. Ad Hoc Committee and Board Representative Assignment:

a. Advocacy Committee

The Board Chair advised that the Advocacy Committee is a committee of the whole, as affirmed on September 24, 2024.

b. Edmonton Public Schools Foundation (Foundation) Representative

The Board Chair called for nominations for one Trustee representative to serve on the Foundation's Board of Governors.

Trustee Kusiek nominated Trustee Sumar. Trustee Sumar accepted the nomination.

The Board Chair, seeing no further nominations, declared the nominations closed.

The Board Chair declared himself, Trustee Sumar, elected to serve as the Board's representative on the Foundation's Board of Governors.

J. Meeting Dates

Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, November 25, 2025, at 2 p.m.

K. Adjournment

3:17 p.m. - The Board Chair adjourned the meeting.

Saadiq Sumar, Board Chair

Kelsey Duebel, Director Board and
Superintendent Relations