EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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, November 10, 2026, at 2 p.m.

Present

Trustees	**Nickela Anderson, Sarah Doll, Linda Lindsay, Holly Nichol, Sherri O'Keefe *(present until 4:04 p.m.)*, Jan Sawyer, Saadiq Sumar**		
Officials	**Angela Anderson, Todd Burnstad, Grace Cooke, Andrea Cooper, Kelsey Duebel, Martin Fechner, Kent Pharis, Nancy Petersen, Carrie Rosa, Sunita Sas, Ron Thompson, Christopher Wright, Liz Yule**		
Board Chair	**Saadiq Sumar**	**Recording Secretary**	**Catherine Angeles**

A. Land Acknowledgement

The Board Chair called the meeting to order and acknowledged that we live, work, play, and enjoy the abundance that Treaty 6 land provides. This land, known by many names, 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. As the air grows crisp and frost begins to settle on the land, we welcome the Freezing Moon. In many Indigenous traditions, this moon marks a time of preparation, reflection, and learning. It is a period when communities gather close, share teachings, and strengthen their spirits for the winter ahead. The Freezing Moon reminds us of endurance, gratitude, and the wisdom that comes from slowing down and listening—to the land, to the ancestors, and to one another.

The Board Chair also said that this past Sunday also marked Indigenous Veterans Day. Many Indigenous men brought valuable skills with them when they joined the military. Patience, stealth and marksmanship were well-honed traits for those who had come from communities where hunting was a cornerstone of daily life. Chair Sumar shared that at a previous Remembrance Day ceremony, he had the opportunity to listen to Elder Dr. Francis Whiskeyjack, who spoke about the Code Talkers. The Code Talkers translated sensitive radio messages into Cree so they could not be understood if they were intercepted by the enemy. Indigenous Veterans had fought side-by-side with their non-Indigenous comrades, but did not receive the same recognition for their service. Many of them had to give up their status under the Indian Act after serving.

B. Roll Call

2:06 p.m. – The Superintendent advised that Trustee O'Keefe was joining virtually. All other Trustees were present.

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C. Approval of Agenda

The Board Chair reported that he had previously notified the Board of Trustees of his decision to step down as Board Chair and take a temporary unpaid leave of absence effective at the adjournment of the meeting.

MOVED BY Board Chair Sumar:

That the agenda be amended to add "Coverage for All Additional Necessary Board Positions", immediately following the "Interim Coverage of Ward F" agenda item.

The Board Chair stated this additional agenda item would include the election of a new Board Chair, remuneration for coverage of Ward G, and temporary coverage of Ward G, Maintenance Staff (CUPE 784) Negotiations Committee and EPSB Foundation representation.

The Board Chair called the question on the amendment.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

MOVED BY Board Chair Sumar:

That the agenda for the November 10, 2026, Board meeting be approved as amended.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

D. Vimy Ridge Academy Remembrance Day Ceremony

Retired Captain Michael Chute of Vimy Ridge Academy presented a recorded ceremony produced by Vimy Ridge Academy to commemorate Remembrance Day.

The Board Chair thanked Retired Captain Michael Chute and Vimy Ridge for the meaningful presentation.

There was a short break in the meeting at 2:46 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 2:55 p.m.

E. Communications from the Board Chair

The Board Chair said that November is Indigenous Disability Awareness Month, as well as Hindu Heritage Month. November also has a number of important days of significance, including Diwali and Bandi Chhor Divas, which was celebrated this past weekend, and the Transgender Day of Remembrance and National Child Day, both of which are recognized on November 20th.

The Board Chair noted that Remembrance Day would be observed tomorrow, November 11, across the country and within the community. He shared that he attended the Remembrance Day

ceremony at Vimy Ridge last week. Chair Sumar shared with students his thoughts and emphasized that conflict is not solely a distant historical event, as recent events in October demonstrated its potential impact closer to home and within the local community. He shared that Sergeant Wong was a graduate of Harry Ainley High School, just a few years ago. The Board Chair also thanked Retired Captain Chute for attending the meeting today and speaking to the importance of remembering, noting the critical importance of continuing to share these messages with students and the broader community.

The Board Chair shared that he attended the ATA Local 37 Council of Representatives and provided greetings on behalf of the Board. He thanked all of them for their service and their time.

The Board Chair shared that he had the honour to attend the Edmonton Council of Muslim Communities' (ECMC) 25th anniversary celebration and recognized ECMC for its leadership and 25 years of contributions toward fostering a welcoming and inclusive community in Edmonton.

The Board Chair said he also attended, with several members of Administration and Superintendent Thompson, a presentation from the Mental Health Capacity Building (MHCB) team. There were members of Health Services and Mental Health and Addictions who participated in the presentation as well. He reported observing coaches work directly with students on resilience and mental health strategies, which also included a presentation on vaping.

The Board Chair noted that last week also kicked off Results Review. The Board of Trustees were thrilled to be able to participate in the Central Results Reviews, and coming up next week the School Results Reviews. He expressed thanks in advance to all of the Division school teams, parents, guardians and students who were participating in those Results Reviews.

The Board Chair shared that he and Trustee Doll attended the Changing Lives, Changing Communities Fundraiser organized by Inclusion Alberta, which recognized some of that important work by that organization. They heard some incredible stories from parents and students.

The Board Chair shared that several members of the Board went out to some retirement banquets for the Division CUPE Locals, CUPE 474 and CUPE 784. He congratulated all the retirees and the Board of Trustees wished them all the best in their future endeavours.

The Board Chair thanked the folks at the Sifarish Network and the City of Edmonton, who jointly organized the Edmonton United: Diwali & Bandi Chhor Diwas Celebrationan event at the Millwoods Park for all folks to attend and celebrate. He thanked those organizations for the event and for making sure that folks were able to engage and participate in a safe and meaningful way.

The Board Chair advised that over the last couple of weeks the Board, alongside Administration, has been working on what the impact is of different regulations and legislation, including Bill 35, which includes changes to report card standards, additional approvals around naming and renaming of schools, and more. More information will come out in the future.

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The Board Chair concluded his comments and said, “It has been an incredible honour to serve as the Board Chair for the last year. And I've been so honoured to work with our Superintendent very closely. I think we've built a really good team, and I look forward to seeing what the Board continues to do and what this team is still able to achieve over the next three years. Thank you very much.”

F. Communications from the Superintendent of Schools

The Superintendent welcomed everyone in attendance and those who were tuning in online. He extended a special welcome to Elizabeth Fraser, principal at Allendale School, for joining the meeting. Ms. Fraser is a member of the SCOPE committee.

The Superintendent shared that last week, he, along with Board Chair Sumar, had an opportunity to attend the No Stone Left Alone Remembrance Ceremony at Beechmount Cemetery. This was his second year attending, and said it was a powerful, meaningful and poignant event. Every headstone of a veteran is marked with a poppy, put on there by students from across Edmonton.

The Superintendent took a moment to congratulate Grade 11 Lillian Osborne School student, Samyukta Warriar, who won the top Canadian poetry award in her age category in the National Youth Remembrance Contest. She was invited to present a wreath at the Remembrance Day ceremony in Ottawa tomorrow. Her poem “Timeless Remembrance” can be found online through the Legion National Foundation’s website.

The Superintendent congratulated Lea Beeken, the recipient of the 2026 Alberta Technology Leaders in Education Award. This is the association’s highest honour, recognizing exceptional leadership, dedication and lasting contributions to technology in K-12 education across Alberta. Lea has been with the Division for many years and currently serves as Manager of Information Management. Lea exemplifies the spirit of this prestigious award through her unwavering commitment to advancing privacy practices, strengthening collaboration and empowering educational technology leaders and privacy officers throughout the province.

The Superintendent congratulated Roberta Alook, who was recently featured by Canadian Geographic. Roberta, a nêhiyawêwin or (Cree) educator at amiskwaciy Academy, shares how reconnecting with her cultural roots helped her find her calling in the classroom. She now guides 161 students from grades 7-12 using new teaching tools and methods to make learning nêhiyawêwin meaningful and accessible. The full feature is available online on the Canadian Geographic website. Superintendent Thompson thanked Roberta for everything she’s done to empower the next generation through language.

The Superintendent congratulated both Steinhauer and Spruce Avenue schools as they recently received MusiCounts School Music Funding for the 2026-27 school year. Steinhauer received an $8,000 grant from the MusiCounts Band Aid Program, which will support the purchase of new instruments and modern tech, like bongos, tubanos, drums, woodblocks and maracas. They’re also getting a new drum kit, keyboards, acoustic guitars, a bass guitar and an electric ukulele. Spruce

Avenue School received $20,000 from the MusiCounts Slaight Family Foundation Innovation Fund for new instruments and equipment. They are going to be working with Cree Elder Coyote to craft traditional drums, which they'll be able to use for drumming circles. They're also going to be adding acoustic and electric guitars, drums and keyboards. Superintendent Thompson expressed congratulations to both schools.

The Superintendent shared that Trustee Results Reviews are underway. Schools and Central Units look forward to this time of year, giving them an opportunity to share the great things happening around the Division. Central Units had their Results Review sessions last week, and the conversations were great. He is looking forward to hearing how conversations go in schools later this month.

G. Approval of the Minutes

1. Board Meeting - October 27, 2026

MOVED BY Trustee Anderson:

That the minutes of the Board meeting held October 27, 2026, be approved as presented.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

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

There were no registered speakers for this item.

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

There were no registered speakers for this item.

J. Reports

2. Interim Trustee Coverage for Ward F
(Recommendation)

MOVED BY Trustee Doll:

That the following actions be taken to address coverage for the vacancy in Ward F:

1. That the Board approves additional remuneration for the trustee representing Ward F until a decision about a by-election is made, in the amount of one-third of the regular remuneration for a trustee plus an additional bi-weekly car allowance.

2. That the Board elects one trustee to represent Ward F, until a decision about a by-election is made.

3. That the Board elects one trustee to serve on the Policy Review Committee until the next organizational board meeting of the Board, scheduled for June 15, 2027.

4. That the Board elects one trustee to serve as the Audit Committee Chair until the next organizational board meeting of the Board, scheduled for June 15, 2027.

5. That the Board elects one trustee to serve on the Custodial Staff (CUPE Local 474) negotiations committee until the next organizational board meeting of the Board, scheduled for June 15, 2027.

MOVED BY Vice-Chair Nichol that the motion be amended:

That the following actions be taken to address coverage for the vacancy in Ward F:

1~~2~~. That the Board elects two ~~one~~ trustees to represent Ward F, until a decision about a by-election is made.

2~~1~~. That the Board approves additional remuneration for two ~~the~~ trustees representing Ward F until a decision about a by-election is made, in the amount of one-third of the regular remuneration for each ~~a~~ trustee, plus an additional bi-weekly car allowance for both trustees.

3. That the Board elects one trustee to serve on the Policy Review Committee until the next organizational board meeting of the Board, scheduled for June 15, 2027.

4. That the Board elects one trustee to serve as the Audit Committee Chair until the next organizational board meeting of the Board, scheduled for June 15, 2027.

5. That the Board elects one trustee to serve on the Custodial Staff (CUPE Local 474) negotiations committee until the next organizational board meeting of the Board, scheduled for June 15, 2027.

The Board Chair called the question on the amendment.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

The Board Chair called the question on the amended motion.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

3. Coverage for all Additional Necessary Board Positions
(Recommendation)

The Board Chair called on Ms. Duebel to advise the Board of the next steps to address this additional agenda item.

Ms. Duebel stated that Administration had prepared a recommendation that would be effective at the adjournment of this meeting, for consideration by the Board. The recommendation addressed the election of a new Board Chair, approval of additional pay for a Trustee temporarily covering Ward G, temporary coverage of the Board representative positions on the Maintenance Staff CUPE 784 negotiating committee and the EPSB Foundation Board of Governors.

MOVED BY Trustee Anderson:

That the following actions be taken to address Trustee Sumar's board position coverage, effective following adjournment of the November 10, 2026 board meeting:

1. That the Board elects one trustee to serve as Board Chair until the next organizational meeting of the Board, scheduled for June 15, 2027.

2. That the Board approves additional remuneration for the trustee representing Ward G until Trustee Sumar resumes his duties, in the amount of one-third of the regular remuneration for a trustee plus an additional bi-weekly car allowance.

3. That the Board elects one trustee to represent Ward G until Trustee Sumar resumes his duties.

4. That the Board elects one trustee to serve on the Maintenance Staff (CUPE 784) negotiations committee until Trustee Sumar returns to his duties.

5. That the Board elects one trustee to serve on the EPSB Foundation Board of Governors until Trustee Sumar returns to his duties.

MOVED BY Vice-Chair Nichol that the motion be amended:

That the following actions be taken to address Trustee Sumar's board position coverage, effective following adjournment of the November 10, 2026 board meeting:

1. That the Board elects one trustee to serve as Board Chair until the next organizational meeting of the Board, scheduled for June 15, 2027.

~~2~~3. That the Board elects two ~~one~~ trustees to represent Ward G until Trustee Sumar resumes his duties.

~~3~~2. That the Board approves additional remuneration for two ~~the~~ trustees representing Ward G until Trustee Sumar resumes his duties, in the amount of one-third of the regular remuneration for both trustees ~~a trustee plus an additional bi-weekly car allowance~~.

4. That the Board elects one trustee to serve on the Maintenance Staff (CUPE 784) negotiations committee until Trustee Sumar returns to his duties.

5. That the Board elects one trustee to serve on the EPSB Foundation Board of Governors until Trustee Sumar returns to his duties.

The Board Chair called the question on the amendment.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

The Board Chair called the question on the amended motion.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

The nominations and elections were held, resulting in the Board electing the following positions:

Ward F Coverage

The Board Chair called for nominations for two Trustees to represent Ward F.

Trustee Lindsay nominated Trustees Anderson and Sawyer. Both Trustees accepted the nominations.

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

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The Board Chair declared both Trustees Anderson and Sawyer elected by acclamation to represent Ward F.

Ward G Coverage

The Board Chair called for nominations for two Trustees to represent Ward G.

Trustee Lindsay nominated Trustees Anderson and Sawyer. Both Trustees accepted the nominations.

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

The Board Chair declared both Trustees Anderson and Sawyer elected by acclamation to represent Ward G.

Board Chair

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

Trustee Doll nominated Trustee Nichol. Trustee Nichol accepted the nomination.

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

The Board Chair declared Trustee Nichol elected by acclamation as Board Chair.

There was a short break at 3:39 p.m. and resumed at 3:44 p.m.

The Board Chair advised that since Vice-Chair Nichol was now the Board Chair, the Vice-Chair position was now vacant. He asked Ms. Duebel to advise the Board of the next steps to address the vacancy.

Ms. Duebel stated that the Board would need to elect a new Vice-Chair. Additionally, Trustee Nichol also serves as the Chair of the Trustee's Handbook Committee and as a member of the Policy Review Committee. The Trustee's Handbook currently states that the Board Chair is an ex-officio, non-voting member of all standing committees. This means the Board would need to either elect a new member for each of the committees Trustee Nichol is a member of or grant a waiver of this requirement to allow her to continue in her current roles until the next Organizational Board meeting. Ms. Duebel indicated that Trustee Nichol had advised she was willing to continue in her current committee positions if the Board is in agreement. Ms. Duebel introduced a recommendation to address the vacant position of Vice-Chair, for consideration by the Board.

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MOVED BY Trustee Lindsay:

That the following actions be taken to fulfill the Vice-Chair role and necessary board committee membership roles, given the election of Vice-Chair Nichol as the Board Chair, effective at the adjournment of the November 10, 2026 meeting.

1. That the Board waive the requirement in the Trustees' Handbook for the Board Chair's ex-officio membership on board committees be non-voting, until the next organizational meeting of the Board, scheduled for June 15, 2027.

2. That the Board elects one trustee to serve as Vice-Chair until the next organizational meeting of the Board, scheduled for June 15, 2027.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

The nominations and elections continued; the Board elected the following positions:

Vice-Chair

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

Vice-Chair Nichol advised that, due to technical difficulty, Trustee O'Keefe had requested that she nominate Trustee Sawyer on her behalf. Trustee Sawyer accepted the nomination.

Trustee Lindsay nominated Trustee Anderson. Trustee Anderson 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.

MOVED BY Trustee Lindsay:

That the vote be by secret ballot.

(CARRIED)

IN FAVOUR: Trustees Anderson, Doll, Lindsay, Nichol, O'Keefe, and Sumar

OPPOSED: Trustee Sawyer

The Board Chair asked that Ms. Duebel distribute the secret ballots. He also asked that Trustee O'Keefe communicate her vote with Ms. Duebel. Ms. Duebel collected the completed ballots and left the room with Superintendent Thompson to tabulate the results.

MOVED BY Trustee Doll:

That the secret ballots be destroyed.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

DRAFT

Ms. Duebel and Superintendent Thompson returned to the room. Ms. Duebel reported the results. Trustee Anderson was declared elected as the Vice-Chair.

Policy and Review

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

Trustee Nichol 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 by acclamation the Board's representative on the Policy Review Committee.

Audit Committee Chair

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

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

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

The Board Chair declared Trustee Anderson elected by acclamation as Audit Chair.

Negotiating Committee: Custodial Staff (CUPE Local 474)

The Board Chair called for nominations for one Trustee representative to serve on this committee.

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

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

The Board Chair declared Trustee Lindsay elected by acclamation to the Negotiating Committee for the Custodial Staff (CUPE Local 474).

Negotiating Committee: Maintenance Staff (CUPE Local 784)

The Board Chair called for nominations for one Trustee representative to serve on this committee.

Trustee Sawyer nominated Trustee Anderson. Trustee Anderson accepted the nomination.

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

The Board Chair declared Trustee Anderson elected by acclamation to the Negotiating Committee for the Maintenance Staff (CUPE Local 784).

ASBA Issues and Resolutions Committee

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

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 Nichol 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 to serve as the Board's representative on the Foundation's Board of Governors.

Trustee O'Keefe left the meeting at 4:04 p.m.

4. Funds for 2027-29 Professional Improvement Program - Teacher Certificated Staff (Recommendation)

Trustee Anderson left the meeting at 4:16 p.m. and returned at 4:19 p.m.

MOVED BY Trustee Sawyer:

That an allocation of $1,450,000 from the 2027-28 operating budget be approved for the Professional Improvement Program - Teacher Certificated Staff for the purpose of granting professional improvement leaves and tuition support to teachers for the 2027-28 school year.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

Trustee O'Keefe was absent for the vote.

MOVED BY Trustee Lindsay:

That a commitment of support not exceeding 50 per cent of the 2027-28 allocation amount be approved for the 2028-29 Professional Improvement Program - Teacher Certificated Staff applications. A formal request for an allocation of funds from the 2028-29 operating budget will be brought to the Board of Trustees in the fall of 2027.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

Trustee O'Keefe was absent for the vote.

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There was a short break in the meeting at 4:25 p.m. and resumed at 4:37 p.m.

5. Funds for 2027-2029 Professional Improvement Program - Exempt Staff (Recommendation)

MOVED BY Trustee Anderson:

That an allocation of $140,000 from the 2027-28 operating budget be approved for the Exempt Staff Professional Improvement Program for the purpose of granting professional improvement leaves and tuition support to exempt staff for the 2027-28 school year.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

Trustee O'Keefe was absent for the vote.

6. Ministerial Order 34/2025, Education Act Amendments and Bill 27/29 Impact (Response to Request for Information #003)

Information was provided in response to the Request for Information #003.

7. Addition of April, May and June 2025 Seclusion and Physical Restraint Data (Information)

Trustee Doll left the meeting at 5:33 p.m. and returned at 5:34 p.m.

The report was received as information.

MOVED BY Trustee Sawyer:

That the Board meeting be extended and end at 6:15 p.m.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

Trustee O'Keefe was absent for the vote.

K. Other Committee, Board Representative and Trustee Reports

Trustee Anderson provided an update from the Policy Review Committee (PRC). They are on track to have all policy updates regarding Bill 25 and the Flag Display Regulation completed by the Government of Alberta's deadlines. The PRC are making progress on the policy framework review project and beginning phase two of the multi-year project. The PRC has also begun discussing and exploring options for the October 6 approved motion, the recommendation for alignment of board policies with the recognition of every child's right to education.

Trustee Anderson shared that she and Chair Sumar have been working together on a Ward D and G Council of Councils. The meeting is still moving forward and invited parents and constituents to join her next week.

Vice-Chair Nichol thanked Chair Sumar for his leadership, dedication, and unwavering commitment to the Board, public education, and the students and families served over the past year. Vice-Chair Nichol expressed appreciation for his kindness and patience, noted the honour of stepping into the role, and stated that his presence will be missed during his leave.

L. Trustees and Board Requests for Information

None

M. Notices of Motion

None

N. Meeting Dates

Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, November 24, 2026, at 2 p.m.

O. Adjournment

6:03 p.m. – The Board Chair adjourned the meeting.

Saadiq Sumar, Board Chair	Kelsey Duebel, Director Board and Superintendent Relations

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