

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, September 15, 2026, 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, Andrea Cooper, Kelsey Duebel, Martin Fechner, Kathy Muhlethaler, Kent Pharis, Nancy Petersen, Carrie Rosa, 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 provided a land acknowledgement.

Board Chair Sumar 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. He said that later this month, we will be marking the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation or Orange Shirt Day, a day to remember and honour Indian Residential School Survivors and for those who did not make it home to their families and communities. It is also an opportunity to renew our shared commitment to Truth and Reconciliation. This is of particular importance this year, when one considers that 2026 marks 150 years of the signing of Treaty 6.

B. O Canada

The 2026 Night of Music video version of O Canada was played.

C. Roll Call

2:05 p.m. – The Superintendent advised that Trustee Hoffman joined virtually and all other Trustees were present.

D. Approval of Agenda

Board Chair Sumar advised that he would like to defer Agenda Item 3, Confirmation of ASBA Provincial Director, to the October 6, 2026, Board meeting.

MOVED BY Trustee Kusiek:

That the agenda for the September 15, 2026, Board meeting be approved as amended.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

E. Communications from the Board Chair

The Board Chair welcomed everyone back and congratulated all school and central staff for another successful start to the year and for supporting students and families with the transition back to school. He also thanked the staff who have been working diligently to hire complexity teams and new teachers as part of initiatives that were announced in the spring and summer.

The Board Chair shared that as Trustees, part of the summer was spent getting some much-needed rest after a busy year, but there were also a few events, activities, and announcements that he wanted to highlight:

- Many Trustees from across the country kicked their summer off in BC, with the Canadian School Boards Association Trustee Gathering on Education, Innovation and Reconciliation. He said it was an incredible few days of learning from colleagues across the country as well as speakers like author, lawyer, and former MP Jody Wilson-Raybould, athlete and advocate Rick Hansen, singer/songwriter Susan Aglukark, Olympic Gold Medal Winner Jon Montgomery, and various Indigenous leaders and Elders.
- In the first week of August, EPSB hosted the Public School Boards Association Council Meeting. Trustees from member boards had the opportunity to engage in some incredible professional development and visit many schools and spaces within EPSB, including amiskwaciy Academy and McKay Avenue School. Chair Sumar thanked Trustee Jan Sawyer for her effort in organizing and hosting the event.
- The Board of Trustees took a couple of days last week to roll up their sleeves and discuss the upcoming school year, including how the new 2026-2030 Strategic Plan will be actioned by both Division Administration and the Board of Trustees. He thanked all of his colleagues and members of Administration for coming together in support of their Mission, to provide high-quality public education that supports students' academic success and builds compassion and connection. Trustees are excited to see the new strategic plan in action this year.

The Board Chair advised that after the last Board meeting in June, the province announced funding for more Classroom Complexity teams and expanded the scope of those resources to 7-12 schools and different types of supports for students. For EPSB, that increases the number of teams from 101 to 137 and includes the addition of 19 teams for Grades 7-12.

The Board Chair noted that Bill 25 passed last Spring and many changes from this legislation have already come into effect. The Board appreciates everyone's patience as the Division navigates these changes and awaits additional information and regulations from the province.

The Board Chair reported that more recently, funding for modulars was announced for various division schools, including for EPSB. With the constant need for additional space for students, this funding announcement is welcomed and appreciated by the Board.

F. Communications from the Superintendent of Schools

The Superintendent welcomed back the Board, staff, students and families to the 2026-27 school year. September is all about re-establishing routines, building relationships and getting the learning going, which he knows is happening across the city. He wished everyone a great 2026-27 school year.

The Superintendent shared that the EPSB Human Resources department has been working incredibly hard over the summer to support school startup. He shared an update on teacher staffing and this fall's Educational Assistant Internship Program:

- We have completed 463 new teacher continuing contracts.
- We've also completed 726 other teaching contracts, which include the 101 complexity assignments and 105 class size reduction teachers.
- We've also filled a number of other temporary teaching assignments and have seen some movement throughout the Division (teachers going from one assignment to another).
- We've hired 319 Educational Assistants to the supply pool, which includes some of the interns who participated in the Educational Assistant Internship program in the spring.
- We've also hired 99 new EA interns as part of the fall cohort, which will support 62 schools. We were excited for them to kick off their year with us on August 31 for their first week of orientation and training, which has included NCI and an introduction to the low arousal approach. Last week, we started placing interns in schools to work directly with their mentor EAs and students.

Superintendent Thompson welcomed all the new staff members hired to join Edmonton Public Schools this fall.

The Superintendent noted that the Division will be hosting its annual livestream event to mark the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on Tuesday, September 29. Advancing reconciliation is a priority for both the Division and the Board of Trustees. Division schools support this work in many different ways throughout the year, and the Division's event is just one example of this important work. He also advised that additional teaching and learning resources have been provided to schools. Every school is receiving a Truth and Reconciliation book club kit from Curriculum and Learning Supports.

The Superintendent advised that in addition to the work around Truth and Reconciliation, the Division is working to create a Community of Practice for First Nations, Metis, and Inuit education. The Division knows that Communities of Practice are a great way for educators to gather, learn from one another, share practices and come away with additional knowledge. The work to create

this Community of Practice is just starting, but Superintendent Thompson expressed his excitement about the potential. Advancing this work supports Priority 2 of the Division's new Strategic Plan. The Division will be continuing this work throughout the year on all priorities, and he'll be highlighting examples at future meetings.

G. Approval of the Minutes

1. Board Meeting - June 16, 2026
2. Organizational Board Meeting - June 16, 2026

MOVED BY Trustee Sawyer:

That the minutes of the Board meeting held June 16, 2026, and the Organizational Board meeting held June 16, 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 Education Topics

The live stream of the Board meeting was suspended at 2:20 p.m. to hear from registered speakers.

The Board of Trustees heard from three registered speakers for this item.

The live stream of the Board meeting resumed at 2:36 p.m. after all registered speakers had been heard.

J. Reports

3. Confirmation of Alberta School Board Association (ASBA) Provincial Director

This item was deferred to the October 6, 2026 Board meeting.

4. Process and Timelines for the Fall Review of the 2025-26 Results and the 2026-27 Plans
(Recommendation)

Trustee Hoffman left the meeting at 2:37 p.m. and rejoined the meeting at 2:43 p.m.

MOVED BY Trustee O'Keefe:

That the process and timeline for the 2025-26 results review and the 2026-27 plans be approved.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

5. Motion re: Ward Map Review Including Options for Seven Wards or Nine Wards in 2029 Election
(Recommendation)

There was a short break in the meeting at 3:24 p.m. and resumed at 3:36 p.m.

MOVED BY Trustee Kusiek:

That Division Administration prepares a report for the Board of Trustees that outlines updated ward boundary maps for the 2029 election with two options - one with seven wards and one with nine wards - be approved.

MOVED BY Trustee Hoffman, the motion be amended:

That Division Administration prepares a report for the Board of Trustees that outlines updated ward boundary maps for the 2029 election with ~~two the following options –one with seven wards and one with nine wards~~ - seven wards, nine wards, eleven wards, or another number in alignment with boundaries for other levels of government - be approved.

Trustee Hoffman reported technical difficulties at 3:53 p.m. and was unable to rejoin the meeting.

The Board Chair recommended tabling this item to the October 6, 2026 Board meeting, as Trustee Hoffman, the mover of the amendment, was unable to continue participating in the meeting, and there are a number of questions that the Board may need answered before they fully consider the amended motion.

MOVED BY Trustee Sawyer:

That Agenda Item 5 be tabled, in order to receive more information and clarification, to the October 6, 2026 Board meeting.

IN FAVOUR: Trustees Anderson, Doll, Hoffman, Kusiek, Nichol, O’Keefe, and Sumar

OPPOSED: Trustees Lindsay and O’Keefe

(CARRIED)

Trustee Hoffman was not present for the vote.

6. Omnibus Information Reports
(Information)

- a. Actions Taken Under the Delegation of Authority - 2026 Summer Recess
- b. 2025-26 Superintendent of Schools’ Evaluation Summary
- c. Caucus Committee Report

K. Other Committee, Board Representative and Trustee Reports

Board Chair Sumar shared an Edmonton Public Schools Foundation (Foundation) update:

- The Foundation hosted its first board meeting of the 2026-27 school year last week, where they officially welcomed two new members to the Foundation Board.
- The Foundation is also currently working on its 2025-26 impact report and wanted to share some impact numbers from the 2025-26 school year:
 - 482 Chromebooks were delivered to students across 81 schools through Chromebooks for Kids
 - 88 schools received funding to provide nutritious breakfasts, snacks and lunches to approximately 4,700 students daily through Top-ups for Tummys
 - Through various partnerships, over 9,000 books were gifted to schools for their classroom libraries, which are being enjoyed by over 5,000 students
- Earlier this month, the Foundation officially wrapped up its Pack the Pack School Supplies drive in partnership with Kingsway Mall. Over 2,000 school supplies, including backpacks, binders, notebooks, paper and pencils, were donated.
- The second annual Fueling Futures Back to School Fundraising Campaign concluded on September 1, and thanks to generous community support, they raised over \$10,000 to help ensure even more students can start the year supported, inspired and ready to learn.

L. Trustees and Board Requests for Information

None

M. Notices of Motion

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

Given that the Alberta School Boards Association, representing all 64 publicly funded school boards, recently adopted a formal position calling on the Government of Alberta to fully fund K–12 public education for all ordinarily resident school-aged children, recognizing children's right to education under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Given that Alberta's funding model uses adjusted enrolment to determine student-driven funding, which does not reflect actual enrolment. School boards must educate all eligible students, including those who enrol after the September count date, regardless of whether corresponding funding is provided.

Given that Edmonton Public Schools' 2026-2030 Strategic Plan commits the Division to advancing inclusion, taking action to address systemic barriers to students' success, and strengthening trusting relationships among communities.

And

Given that reviewing Board policies through the lens of children's right to education provides an opportunity to put these commitments into practice;

Therefore, I move that the Policy Review Committee (PRC) review relevant Board policies and develop recommendations to align those policies with the recognition of every child's right to education as described in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The review should be informed by input from Administration regarding operational, legal, and financial considerations.

N. Meeting Dates

Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, October 6, 2026, at 2 p.m.

O. Adjournment

4:09 p.m. – The Board Chair adjourned the meeting.

Saadiq Sumar, Board Chair

Kelsey Duebel, Director Board and
Superintendent Relations