

DATE: October 21, 2014

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Update on the Process to Support the Election of a Student Trustee

ORIGINATOR: Mark Liguori, Assistant Superintendent of Schools

RESOURCE STAFF: Jeremy Fritsche, George Heidt, Dave Jones, Shelley Kofluk and Nancy Petersen

REFERENCE: [June 10, 2014 Board Report - Student Representative](#)
[September 10, 2013 Board Meeting – Motion re Student Trustee/Representative](#)

ISSUE

This fall, the Edmonton Public Schools' Board of Trustees will be the first board in Alberta to have a student formally sitting as a member of their board.

This concept was approved at the September 10, 2013 board meeting and a draft implementation plan was approved at the June 10, 2014 board meeting (Attachment I).

This report provides an update of the work supporting the initiative.

BACKGROUND

The Administration has looked at other school districts in North America that have a Student Trustee, including Vancouver Public, Toronto Public, New Brunswick, Saskatchewan and Chicago Public, to inform the development of the District's model. There is a District committee supporting this work comprised of staff from both central and schools. This fall, the leadership of this initiative transitioned from Assistant Superintendent McNeil to Assistant Superintendent Liguori.

CURRENT SITUATION

The Student Trustee model being piloted by the District is made up of three key components:

1. **A Student Trustee:** Through a District-level election process, a student will be identified as the successful Student Trustee candidate. This student will sit, as a non-voting member, on the Board of Trustees for a one-year term. A comprehensive role and responsibilities statement is currently under development and will be brought forward for Board approval by the District Priorities and Governance Committee. Each high school is being asked to run a selection process that will result in a single candidate coming forward to participate in the District's election of a Student Trustee. The District criteria to support this process is outlined below.

2. **Student Advisory Council:** The Council will continue to serve in the 2014-2015 school year. The meeting times and purpose of the Council will evolve as the connection and interplay between the Student Advisory Council, the Student Trustee and the Board of Trustees is explored and established. Each high school selected their representatives last spring; these students will carry forward and serve for this year, unless circumstances require a school to select a new council member.
3. **District-wide Leadership/Governance Course:** To help build student interest, knowledge and awareness in the area of governance, the District will be offering a credit course for high school students that compliments and supports the Student Trustee initiative. To date, two teachers have been hired to support the delivery of the course (both assigned to the course as 1/7th of their overall teaching assignment). The course will have student participants from across the District, with each high school having the opportunity to have up to two student participants. The Student Trustee will also be a member of the course cohort and will bring educational issues and Board reports to the course as part of the curriculum supporting the concept of governance. The course is scheduled to begin in term two of the 2014-2015 school year and classes will be held on a series of Thursday evenings from 5:00 - 8:30 p.m. Harry Ainlay School is the recommended location for school-based sessions based on consideration to the ease of LRT access and diversity of the facility.

The course is being structured around, but not limited to, three key mechanisms of engagement: linking students to Boards at the municipal, provincial or community level; presentations or evenings with key community leaders (such as Mayor Iveson, Chris Morris, Georgette Reed, Sandra Woitas, Phil Boyte , etc.); and student-leadership projects.

District Selection Process: To ensure equity of opportunity, it is critical to have a consistent selection process for District schools to use in the identification of a Student Trustee candidate. A common process was developed with consideration to the following key components:

1. **Awareness:** The Student Trustee initiative will be advertised and promoted across the entire school population to create awareness and generate interest amongst all students.
2. **Consistency in Messaging:** Communications has developed tools for schools to use to ensure common and consistent messaging. These tools include posters for hallways (Attachment III) or SchoolZone and a morning message announcement script.
3. **District Nomination Criteria:** All students interested in the role of Student Trustee must meet the minimum criteria outlined in District's Student Trustee nomination form (Attachment II). Candidates must also submit a one-page biography highlighting their interests, accomplishments and future aspirations, as well as a recent 5x7 photo of themselves.
4. **Selection Panel:** All schools will establish a selection panel that will make the final selection of a single candidate from the group of students who submit a completed nomination package.

5. **Common Oral Answer Questions:** The student who is successfully elected to be the Student Trustee will need to be comfortable speaking in a variety of settings, including public board meetings and media opportunities. Part of the selection process needs to address the student's comfort in public speaking. All interested candidates will need to verbally answer the following two questions:
- What would you hope to accomplish in your term as Student Trustee should you be the successful candidate?
 - Why is student voice an important aspect of the decision making process of the Board of Trustees?

Key Dates:

- **Friday, October 24, 2014:** Nomination deadline. All schools need to submit the name and completed nomination package of their Student Trustee candidate to Nancy Petersen, Governance and Strategic Support Services by 4:30 p.m. on October 24, 2014.
- **Monday, November 3, 2014:** Student Advisory Council and Trustee candidate orientation. This is an afternoon session when the members of the Student Advisory Council and all Student Trustee candidates come together at the Centre for Education for a half day of governance and campaign orientation in preparation for the November 20, 2014 District election.
- **Thursday, November 20, 2014:** Election Day. This is a full-day event at the Centre for Education for all members of the Student Advisory Council and the Student Trustee candidates. They will participate in a series of activities where the candidates are able to provide their voice and vision for the role of a Student Trustee. It will culminate in an election process where all participants vote and a single student emerges as the successful candidate in the role of Student Trustee for the 2014-2015 school year.
- **Tuesday, November 25, 2014 Board Meeting:** There will be a public introduction of the 2014-2015 Student Trustee. All members of the Student Advisory Council and all Student Trustee candidates are invited to attend the public board meeting. At this time the Student Trustee will be announced by the Board Chair, followed by a celebration in the Atrium with Trustees and District staff.

KEY POINTS

- A draft role and responsibilities statement will be brought forward for approval by the District Priorities and Governance Committee at the November 4, 2014 Caucus Committee meeting.
- The committee supporting this initiative will finalize planning and processes to support the events of November 3rd, 20th and 25th.
- Communications and Governance and Strategic Support Services are working on the plan to onboard the Student Trustee. This plan will reflect the involvement of the Trustee mentor.
- The first Student Trustee to sit as an active, non-voting member of a school board will be announced and introduced as a member of the Edmonton Public School Board on Tuesday, November 25, 2014 at the board meeting.
- This initiative is a one-year pilot and a summary report will be brought forward in spring of 2015 to enable the Board to provide ongoing direction around the role of Student Trustee.

ATTACHMENTS & APPENDICES

- ATTACHMENT I - June 10, 2014 Board Report - Student Representative
- ATTACHMENT II - District Student Trustee Nomination Form
- ATTACHMENT III - Sample Poster Supporting the Student Trustee Opportunity

NP:mmf



DATE: June 10, 2014
TO: Board of Trustees
FROM: Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools
SUBJECT: Student Representative
ORIGINATOR: Ron McNeil, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
RESOURCE STAFF: Jeremy Fritsche, Janet Hancock, Dave Jones, Ron MacNeil, Darwin Martin, Nancy Petersen, Jean Stiles, Sandra Stoddard
REFERENCE: [Board Motion - September 10, 2013 Board Meeting](#)

ISSUE

The following motion was approved by the Board of Trustees on September 10, 2013: *That the elected position of Student Representative be further outlined with the active engagement and participation of District students, and be piloted by the Edmonton Public School Board (EPSB) for the 2014-2015 school year. The purpose is threefold: facilitating dialogue between the student body and the Board, increasing student engagement in Board policy and planning functions and educating students about democratic governance.*

The following motion was also approved by the Board of Trustees on October 23, 2012: *That the Administration design a program that offers students the opportunity to participate in a tour of the Centre for Education, watch part of a school board meeting, meet School Trustees and the Superintendent, and possibly participate in other activities modelled after, or in conjunction with, the School at the Legislature Program and City Hall School.*

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That the following process to support the election and ongoing participation of a Student Representative to the Edmonton Public School Board, beginning in the 2014-2015 school year be approved.**
- 2. That the identified costs, associated to support this pilot, be funded out of the Board Initiative Fund for the 2014-2015 school year be approved.**

BACKGROUND

The Board values student voice, feedback and participation and has found the Student Advisory Council (established in the 2012-2013 school year) an effective source of meaningful student input. The proposed Student Representative to the Board pilot intends to support the District's Vision, Mission, and Priorities and reflect the District's Cornerstone Values of accountability, collaboration, equity and integrity.

A group of school and central services staff have been working on a model for the election of a Student Representative in fall 2014 and for the subsequent support of the Student Representative over the one-year term.

In developing the model, the following background work has been done:

- Examined current models of Student Representative participation in British Columbia and Ontario.
- Reviewed for alignment and relevance the *School Act*, Board Policies, Administrative Regulations and the Trustees' Handbook.
- Consulted with Claire Edwards of the Student Voice Initiative around models of student representation in Canada.

RELATED FACTS

The model proposed meets the purpose outlined in both the October 2012 and September 2013 Board motions by providing a means for students in all district high schools to learn about and participate in democratic governance, gain a stronger understanding of the role of public education and voice their perspectives about educational issues. It also gives the Board and Administration direct access to student voice to inform decision-making.

The Administration recommends establishing a model that includes the following:

- **Trustee Mentor:** A Trustee mentor will be established to support the Student Representative. The Administration recommends that the Board identify a current Trustee to support and mentor the Student Representative in various aspects of their role throughout the one-year term. The role of Trustee mentor would be established with a Role and Responsibility Statement in the Trustees' Handbook.
- **Role and Responsibility of the Student Representative:** The Student Representative's success rests on a well-thought-out Role and Responsibility Statement that clearly addresses matters such as: attendance and student role in public board meetings, the non-voting status of this position, expectations around media interactions, how the Student Representative will engage with students from across the District and how the student reports items of interest or concerns will be brought forward to the Board. The role of Student Representative would be established with a Role and Responsibility Statement in the Trustees' Handbook.
- **The Student Advisory Council:** High school principals will appoint a group of students in June 2014 to act as the Student Advisory Council for the 2014-2015 school year. The Council will raise awareness about the election of a Student Representative, encourage student participation and democratically elect the Student Representative. The Council will meet with the Board twice per school year to offer student perspective. The Council will also help the Student Representative stay connected to the student population of district high schools.
- **Centre of Education Tour and Orientation:** Through the structure of the Student Advisory Council, the new high school District leadership course and the yearly process of electing a student Trustee, there will be a mechanism to provide District students with the opportunity for a tour and orientation of the Centre for Education. This model will be informed by the recent June 5th Student Advisory Council meeting process that saw participants toured through the Centre and participate in small group discussions with Trustees.
- **A District Leadership Course:** A group of high school principals are developing a course around school board governance and youth leadership that will be available to all district high school students starting in January 2015. The course cohort will be comprised of students from across the District, including the Student Representative and they will participate in a variety of learning and leadership experiences. The issues and reports that

will be brought to public board will serve as one source of course content. It is anticipated that this will assist the Student Representative in being prepared to participate at public board when these reports are being discussed.

- **The Role of District High Schools:** In the fall of 2014, each participating high school will run a nomination process and bring forward one candidate to run for the position of Student Representative. The Student Advisory Council will then elect the Student Representative from this group of candidates.
- **Administration Support:** There will be responsibilities for the Administration throughout the election process and during the Student Representative's one-year term to ensure the role is successful: Board and District orientation, communication skills training, media relations training and ongoing support, technology safety training, and continuous support in fulfilling the role and responsibility of a Student Representative. Ongoing responsibility for the overseeing and coordination of this support would logically rest within Governance and Strategic Support Services in collaboration with the Trustee mentor.
- **Evaluation Component:** The Administration will evaluate the effectiveness and success of the pilot after the first year. The evaluation will examine the election process, the role of the Student Representative and costs associated with this pilot. Trustees, students and staff will be invited to participate in the evaluation process. The results of the evaluation will be presented to the Board.
- **Honourary Scholarship:** Upon successfully fulfilling the duties of Student Representative, as defined by the Student Representative Role and Responsibility Statement, the Administration recommends that the student receive a \$2,000 scholarship from the Board to support a future learning opportunity of their choice. The scholarship would remain in trust until written confirmation of registration and acceptance at a learning opportunity is received from the student or forwarded to the Board's office.

OPTIONS

1. Approve the recommended model and budget to support this pilot as outlined in this report.
2. Approve the model and budget with amendments as noted.
3. Do not proceed with this pilot at this time.

CONSIDERATIONS & ANALYSIS

In considering the approval of this model to support the election of a Student Representative, there are human resource and financial implications that need to be considered. The majority of these implications will be ongoing in nature as the process to elect a Student Representative and provide ongoing support to the Student Representative occur on a yearly cycle. The anticipated financial implications include, but may not be limited to:

- Costs to support the fall election process would impact schools and central services departments (~\$4,000-\$6,000).
- Summer work to support the development of the District Leadership Course (~\$3,500 - \$3,900).
- Supply and set up district computer, i.e., laptop or tablet device (~\$850).
- Transportation to and from district meetings and functions throughout the Student Representative's term (~\$800 - \$1,200).
- Orientation, training and professional development as appropriate (~\$1,500).
- Future learning opportunity scholarship (\$2,000).

The human resource implications include, but may not be limited to:

- The District Priorities and Governance Committee to update the Trustees' Handbook to reflect the role of a Student Representative and the supporting processes to ensure the success of this role.
- Staff from Governance and Strategic Support Services to provide ongoing overarching coordination of the overall pilot, including communicating with the school leadership course teacher to ensure continuity and alignment between the Student Representative's work with the Board and the content and activities of the leadership course.
- Trustee Mentor to provide ongoing mentorship and support to the Student Representative throughout their term.
- Staff from schools and central services to support the yearly election process.
- Staff from Information Technology, Communications, and other central decisions units, as appropriate, to provide ongoing relevant support to ensure the success of the Student Representative role.
- Staff from central services to conduct the pilot evaluation.

In order to implement this pilot in a successful manner there will be pressure points on current staffing levels. Consideration will need to be given to how the lead decision unit, Governance and Strategic Support Services, can properly support this pilot throughout the phases of the election process, the on-boarding and orientation of the Student Representative and the overseeing of ongoing support.

NEXT STEPS

Upon approval of the model school and central services staff will:

- Finish developing the election process including supporting forms and communication tools.
- Complete the requirements to support the District Leadership Course.
- Work with the District Priorities and Governance Committee to finish writing the Role and Responsibility Statement for the role of Student Representative, the role of the Student Advisory Council, and the role of the Trustee Mentor, revise the Trustees' Handbook to reflect a Student Representative participant, outline the working relationship between the Board and the Student Advisory Council and develop an evaluation strategy for the pilot.
- Formalize the support plan for a Student Representative including orientation, training and ongoing support.
- Administration will bring an update around the progress and status of this initiative to a Caucus meeting in October 2014.

ATTACHMENTS & APPENDICES

N/A

NP:ja



Student Trustee Nomination Form 2014-2015

Student's Name: _____

Edmonton Public High School for the 2014-2015 school year: _____

To be eligible to run for the position of Student Trustee on the Board of Trustees of Edmonton Public Schools you must agree to and/or meet the following criteria:

- Currently registered as a full-time Grade 11 or 12 student at Edmonton Public Schools.
- Demonstrate a commitment to a high standard of learning and citizenship evidenced by such things as:
 - school attendance;
 - academic achievement; and
 - behaviours and attitudes that contribute to a positive environment, both in the school and the broader community.
- Have the support of at least one teacher currently on staff and the principal of your school.
- Be willing and able to fulfill the role and responsibilities of the Edmonton Public School Board's Student Trustee position including, but not limited to, the following types of activities:
 - Attend and participate in all regularly scheduled public board meetings and provide a monthly update on behalf of the students of Edmonton Public Schools.
 - Attend official Board of Trustee (the Board) functions and events as appropriate and reasonable.
 - Act as a conduit of communication between the Board, the student body of Edmonton Public Schools, the Edmonton Public Schools' Student Advisory Council and the student cohort of the Edmonton Public Schools' Leadership and Governance course.
 - Provide a youth perspective and voice to student-related matters of education.
 - Promote youth leadership to the students of Edmonton Public Schools.
 - Participate in professional learning and orientation related to the role of Student Trustee.
 - Work with the Board of Trustees' Student Trustee mentor and district staff assigned to support the Student Trustee.
 - Adhere to Board policies, procedures and guidelines for the appropriate use of technology, confidentiality, and use of district funds.

Student Signature

Parent Signature
(if student is under 18 years of age as of September 1, 2014)

Teacher Supporter Signature

Principal Signature

With this form please also submit a one page bio of yourself including interests, accomplishments and future aspirations and a recent 5x7 photograph (last year's school picture would be appropriate).



EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BE A

STUDENT TRUSTEE!



The Edmonton Public Schools Board of Trustees is currently seeking a student representative for the 2014-2015 school year.

Be the VOICE OF STUDENTS!

* This would be an AWESOME EXPERIENCE!

This is a unique opportunity for a student to:

- Represent student voice to the Board of Trustees
- Increase student involvement in Board policy
- Learn about democratic governance

SPEAK UP at public board meetings!

Oh yeah...AND A \$2000 BURSARY!!!

To be eligible, you must be:

- a full-time Grade 11 or 12 student
- committed to a high standard of learning and citizenship
- willing and able to take on the responsibilities of Student Trustee

Check this out! COULD THIS BE YOU??

But first you've gotta GET NOMINATED... HERE'S HOW!

To find out more, contact:

School contact info here.