

MINUTE BOOK

Board Meeting #03

Minutes of the Board Meeting of the Trustees of the Edmonton School District No. 7 of the Province of Alberta held in McCauley Chambers in the Centre for Education on Tuesday, December 19, 2017 at 2:00 p.m.

Present:

Trustees

Trustee Adams
Shelagh Dunn
Michelle Draper

Trisha Estabrooks
Ken Gibson
Nathan Ip

Michael Janz
Cheryl Johner
Bridget Stirling

Officials

Angela Anderson
Grace Cooke
Todd Burnstad
Ron MacNeil

Karen Mills
Leona Morrison
Kathy Muhlethaler
Lorne Parker

Darrel Robertson
Mike Suderman
Liz Yule

Board Chair: Michelle Draper

Recording Secretary: Shirley Juneau

Staff Group Representatives

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.

The Board Chair advised that the fire alarm system at the Centre for Education is a Two Stage alarm system. Stage One is a single repeating alarm tone indicating a warning only and that evacuation is not required. Stage Two is a triple repeating alarm tone indicating that evacuation is required.

The Board Chair advised those attending the meeting in person that the floor area is restricted to the Board of Trustees, Superintendent, Director of Board and Superintendent Relations and Recording staff, with an area reserved for media. She advised that she would signify to any other staff or registered speakers to come down to the floor at the designated time on the agenda. The Board Chair thanked everyone for their cooperation.

A. O Canada 

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B. Roll Call: (2:00 p.m.)

The Superintendent advised that all Trustees were present.

C. Approval of the Agenda

MOVED BY Trustee Ip:

**“That the agenda for the December 19, 2017, Board meeting be approved as printed.”
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

D. Communications from the Board Chair

The Board Chair reported that she, Trustee Ip and Dr. Parker met with the Minister of Infrastructure on Tuesday, December 12, 2017. She said they spoke about the growth the District is experiencing and thanked the Minister for the recent high school announcement. The Board Chair said they also discussed the pressing need for another high school and the need for an increase in funding to address the District’s deferred maintenance as well as the benefit of having predictable funding in this area as well as overall. She said that there was also a discussion about the District’s Integrated Project Management approach, how successful it is, and the District’s ability to find efficiencies working collaboratively with other districts.

The Board Chair said that concerns were shared with the Minister of Infrastructure over ongoing issues with respect to maintenance at the District’s P3 schools. At the Minister's request, copies of correspondence between Edmonton Public Schools and Alberta Infrastructure relating to this issue will be sent to the Minister.

The Board Chair reported that on Wednesday, December 13, 2017, she attended the Pre-Budget Consultation, education discussions, along with Mr. Burnstad, Chief Financial Officer. She said that the Minister of Finance and Minister of Education spoke about wanting to maintain the quality of the classroom, in terms of buildings and structures, as well as supports for students and that both Ministers stated the government firmly supports education and will do all they can to make sure the District has what is needed. However, the agenda to strengthen education must be seen in the light of the challenges of balancing provincial books.

The Board Chair advised that there was an opportunity by participants to note challenges as well as to offer suggestions for efficiencies, including cost sharing opportunities with other boards.

She said there will be several opportunities for consultation in the coming months and encouraged stakeholders to share their thoughts and feedback to help influence the direction of the provincial budget. The Board Chair advised that additional information is available at budget.alberta.ca.

The Board Chair on behalf of the Board of Trustees wished everyone a safe and happy holiday season. Her wish was that everyone would be able to spend time with their families and friends, and time to celebrate the wonderful accomplishments the District has seen in 2017.

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E. Communications from the Superintendent of Schools

The Superintendent said that given the challenging financial environment in the province of Alberta and the opportunity to share suggestions at the pre-budget consultations around ideas for efficiencies, that Administration is planning to bring a report to the Board in January 2018. He said that on a number of fronts the District is trying to achieve efficiencies not only within the District but in collaboration with other jurisdictions. He shared that there are incredible opportunities for large metro jurisdictions to share services to collaborate not only with staff within the District to find efficiencies but with jurisdictions across the province. The Superintendent said that the District is open to sharing efficiencies whether they are operational efficiencies or the creation of learning supports for the students.

The Superintendent thanked the staff that will be working hard during the winter break maintaining buildings, preparing new schools for opening, and assisting schools that will be moving into their own space in January 2018.

The Superintendent expressed his appreciation to staff throughout the District for their amazing work and support of students. He wished everyone a safe and relaxing holiday season.

F. Minutes

1. Board Meeting #02 – November 28, 2017

MOVED BY Trustee Gibson:

“That the minutes of Board Meeting #02 held November 28, 2017, be approved as printed.”

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

G. Comments from the Public and Staff Group Representatives

There were no registered speakers for this item.

H. Reports

2. Board Chair Discretionary Expense Allowance Report 2016-2017

Information was provided regarding the Board Chair discretionary expense allowance for 2016-2017.

3. Update on Annual Results Review

An update regarding the annual results review was provided to the Trustees.

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4. Strategic Plan Update: Academic Achievement (Literacy, Numeracy and High School Completion)

The Trustees received a detailed overview of District- level results related to literacy, numeracy and high school completion.

Trustee Estabrooks commented on the Edmonton Public Schools Together app, a mobile app for families that includes literacy activities that can be incorporated into daily life at homes of students and asked what work the District is doing to get the message out to parents. The Board Chair requested that Administration provide the Trustees with key messages on how to access the app so that they can promote it when attending school council meetings.

Trustee Gibson referred to page 35 of 70 of the consolidated Board meeting package, District Reading Levels (At, Above or Below Grade Level) for Grades 1-6 and requested that Administration provide information in future reports that would reflect what kind of growth was actually achieved on a year basis by students who were reading below grade level.

Trustee Gibson suggested that it would be useful in future additions of this reports to provide context that the decision around whether students read and or write at grade level is multi-dimensional. He also suggested that a statement explaining that teachers are encouraged to rate students below grade level even if they are only below in one or two dimensions, so that it flags that the student requires additional interventions, would be helpful in setting the context for the reported results.

Trustee Gibson referred to pages 37, 38 and 39 of the consolidated Board meeting package, Highest level of Achievement (HLAT) and noted that the longer a student is in the system that fewer and fewer of them are performing below grade level according to the HLAT measures. He said that given the observation that teachers are rating students below grade level so that they can receive the attention they require explains the spike in students rated below grade.

Trustee Gibson provided feedback that the District measures the entire cohort of students as though all students have been in District schools since Grade 1 and that it would be interesting to know how many students come into the District at different grade levels, as much of the information provided is predicated on the students being in the District for the entire journey which is not the case. The Superintendent requested additional time to discuss this with staff prior to providing a response.

There was a short break in the meeting at this point.

5. Student Assessments – Elementary Aged Students (Response to Request for Information #002)

Information was provided regarding request for information #002.

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Trustee Gibson thanked the Administration for the report and great learning session regarding student assessments.

6. Bereavement

The Vice-Chair reported on the passing of Ms. Teresa Dalton.

I. Comments for the Public and Staff Group Representatives

There were no registered speakers for this item.

J. Other Committee, Board Representative and Trustee Reports

Trustee Draper said that it was a delight to spend the evening of December 4, 2017, visioning with residents of Pilot Sound about what the McConachie elementary school could be. She said that District staff did a great job of facilitating many interactive exercises that allowed participants to envision the new school and that she looks forward to seeing the preliminary designs in 2018.

Trustee Dunn reported that it was a pleasure to visit staff and students of Youngstown School and La Perle School. She said that she also had the pleasure of attending the opening of Donald R. Getty School and celebrating with Trustees, students, staff and the Getty family.

Trustee Dunn reported that she attended the National Day of Remembrance hosted by the Alberta Federation of Labour and was inspired by Lynne Rosychuk's efforts to establish housing for women leaving domestic violence.

Trustee Dunn reported that on December 6, 2017, she enjoyed celebrating the community and staff accomplishments at the District Recognition event.

Trustee Dunn shared that she enjoyed participating in holiday events including the Infrastructure holiday party, and acknowledged the hard work of the District's maintenance and infrastructure staff.

Trustee Dunn reported that she and Trustee Johner attended the Winter Feast held at amiskwacyi Academy and that it was an honour to attend the event with Board Chair Draper.

Trustee Estabrooks reported that she had the pleasure of speaking at McNally High School's Quest day on the topic of women and politics. She thanked Principal Lisa Wright for the invitation and the students in Grades 11 and 12 who asked thought provoking and meaningful questions.

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Trustee Estabrooks shared that she had opportunities to visit a number of schools as they prepared for and celebrated the holiday season and that she was honoured to represent the Board of Trustees at Eastglen High School's winter feast. She thanked the students from Eastglen, Highlands Junior High, and Montrose for attending the event, as well as the two Indigenous dancers and fiddlers from Montrose Elementary school. Trustee Estabrooks said the feast was delicious and a true celebration of community.

Trustee Estabrooks reported that she had the pleasure of attending Riverdale Elementary School's Christmas concert and thanked Principal Cynthia Kelly for the invitation to bring holiday greetings on behalf of the Board of Trustees.

Trustee Estabrooks congratulated the parents in Ward D who have worked hard to advocate for a French Immersion program. She said the parents received great news from the District in that an early French Immersion program for Kindergarten or Kindergarten/Grade 1 at Oliver School in September 2018 will be dependent on demand during pre-enrolment.

Trustee Gibson reported that he was pleased to represent Edmonton Public Schools at the December 12, 2017, Mayor's Economic Development Summit. He said participants emphasized their appreciation for the high quality of public education provided by Edmonton Public Schools, and its importance in attracting and retaining people in the community.

Trustee Gibson said that he and Trustee Dunn appreciated the dialogue between community and the District at the December 18, 2017, accommodation consultation for the Edgemont neighborhood.

Trustee Johner shared that during the month of December, volunteers for the Edmonton Public School Foundation will be wrapping gifts on a donation basis for shoppers at Kingsway Mall and that the Foundation was in need of volunteers on December 24, 2017. Trustee Johner thanked everyone and their families who had already volunteered.

Trustee Johner stated that Edmonton Public Schools aspires to be an employer of choice and as such, hosts the Infrastructure Christmas appreciation luncheon for many District employees. She said that she had the pleasure of attending with Trustees Dunn and Ip.

Trustee Janz reported that he attended the following events on:
December 6, 2017 - District Recognition event and thanked everyone for a wonderful evening.
December 13 and 14, 2017 – Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) Board of Directors meeting.

Trustee Janz announced the Pretzels and Root Beer with Trustee Janz event that will be held on February 7, 2018, at Harry Ainlay School.

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Trustee Stirling thanked the many community members who participated in the visioning session for the new Larkspur area junior high school on November 29, 2017. She also thanked Ward 12 City Councillor, Mohinder Banga for attending and sharing in the excitement for this new school in the southeast.

Trustee Stirling said she was pleased to join Deputy Speaker Debbie Jabbour at Donnan School on November 30, 2017, for a conversation with Grade 6 students about government and elections at the provincial and local level.

Trustee Stirling reported that she, Trustees Dunn and Estabrooks were in attendance at the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women Commemorative Brunch on December 3, 2017, and that the event was a powerful recognition of the ongoing work to end violence against women in all areas of everyone's lives.

K. Trustee and Board Requests for Information

Trustee Dunn shared that the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) lists the prevalence of specific learning disorders across reading, writing and mathematics as between 5-15% in school-aged children. She said that this is a significant number of children affected by a neurodevelopmental disorder and that these disorders have academic, social and emotional impacts on students and that early identification can help provide evidence-based academic intervention as well as social and emotional supports.

Trustee Dunn requested the following information:

1. How many students currently in the District have been diagnosed with a learning disorder (with impairment in reading, written expression or mathematics)?
2. How does this number compare to the estimated prevalence of a learning disorder?
3. How is the District identifying students with a learning disorder?
4. What screening tools are being used to specifically identify students who have a learning disorder in the areas of reading, written expression or mathematics? At what age or grade level are these tools being used?
5. What evidence-based interventions specific to learning disorders in reading, written expression or mathematics are being used by the District?
6. How do students and parents access these resources?

L. Notices of Motion

MOVED BY Trustee Johner:

**"1. That the Board of Trustees grant waiver of notice of motion to consider Recommendation 2 at the December 19, 2017, Board meeting."
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

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**“2. That the Edmonton Public School Board formally ratifies the Public School Board Association of Alberta (PSBAA) special levy.”
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

M. Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, January 23, 2018, at 2:00 p.m.

N. Adjournment: 4:20 p.m.

The Board Chair adjourned the meeting.

Michelle Draper, Board Chair

Karen Mills, Director of Board and
Superintendent Relations