

DATE: February 25, 2020

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Trustee Michael Janz

SUBJECT: Motion re: Proposal for More Trustee Positions

REFERENCE: [Trustees' Handbook – Section 5.2.2 – Notices of Motion](#)

ISSUE

Notice of motion was served at the February 11, 2020, Board meeting.

BACKGROUND

Our families are dramatically under-represented, and we need to invest resources in our advocacy. Three more trustees would dramatically increase how we are able to effectively advocate for our communities, host town halls, rally parents, and stand up for our students. Locally elected school boards are a critical part of our democracy, and we need more democratic voices protecting public education.

Adding three more elected advocates for our schools and communities would ensure that Edmonton students, staff, and families are effectively represented in advocating for public education. Public schools are under attack, and we need more democratically elected voices from urban Alberta who will stand up for a fair deal for our public schools.

Edmonton Public high schools are estimated to run out of space by 2022. The new UCP funding framework means fewer dollars for classrooms in growing urban areas. These are the kinds of critical issues that need more elected voices at the table from Edmonton to protect our public schools.

- Across Alberta, there are over 450 school trustees; however, despite more than half of students attending schools in Edmonton or Calgary, only 30 trustees (Calgary Public 7, Calgary Catholic 7, Edmonton Catholic 7, Edmonton Public 9) are elected from those two cities.
 - 400 non-Calgary/Edmonton trustees -- roughly one trustee per 5000 Albertans
 - 30 Calgary/Edmonton trustees -- roughly one trustee per 70,000 Albertans
- Despite half of the population, urban trustees are dramatically under-represented, especially compared to any other elected order of government. Once you separate out the Catholic population (represented by Catholic trustees), that ratio gets even more unfair to urban Albertans.
- Despite tremendous population growth to our cities we have not added more trustees, only added hundreds of thousands of new citizens to our ward boundaries.
- Of the 61 school boards in Alberta, the urban school boards are growing in student enrolment each year, but the vast majority of non-urban school boards are shrinking in student count.
- Fewer urban trustees mean fewer advocates for organizing parents, representing on committees, or serving in various advocacy capacities.

RECOMMENDATION

That Edmonton Public School Division seek permission from the Minister of Education to increase the number of trustees to align with Edmonton City Council and their wards.

OPTIONS

1. Approve the recommendation.
2. Provide feedback and request changes to the recommendation for approval.

NEXT STEPS

Upon approval of this recommendation, the Board Chair would write to the Minister of Education to seek approval to increase the number of trustees to align with Edmonton City Council and their wards, effective for the 2021 civic election.

MJ:sj