

**MINUTE BOOK****Board Meeting #13**

Minutes of the Board Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Edmonton School Division of the Province of Alberta held via Zoom on Tuesday, April 13, 2021, at 2:00 p.m.

**Present:****Trustees**

Sherry Adams  
Shelagh Dunn  
Michelle Draper

Trisha Estabrooks  
Ken Gibson  
Nathan Ip

Michael Janz  
Bridget Stirling

**Officials**

Angela Anderson  
Todd Burnstad  
Grace Cooke  
Ron McNeil

Karen Mills  
Leona Morrison  
Kathy Muhlethaler  
Kent Pharis

Nancy Petersen  
Darrel Robertson  
Carrie Rosa  
Liz Yule

**Board Chair:** Trisha Estabrooks

**Recording Secretary:** Shirley Juneau

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.

**A. Roll Call:** (2:00 p.m.)

The Superintendent advised that all Trustees were present.

**B. Approval of the Agenda**

**MOVED BY Trustee Gibson:**

**“That the agenda for the April 13, 2021, Board meeting be approved as printed.”**

**MOVED BY Trustee Draper:**

**“That item #7 be moved to item #4 on the agenda.”**

**MOVED BY Trustee Gibson:**

**“That the agenda for the April 13, 2021, Board meeting be approved as amended.”  
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

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### **C. Communications from the Board Chair**

The Board Chair thanked the many parents, community members and curriculum experts who have taken time to share their concerns with the Board of Trustees about the draft K-6 curriculum. She remarked that the Division shared their concerns and looks forward to providing its feedback on the draft curriculum to the government. The Board Chair said that Alberta students deserve a modern, up-to-date curriculum and the Board of Trustees will do all it can to ensure that happens.

The Board Chair reported that variants of concern are now the dominant strain of COVID-19 in Edmonton and therefore in Edmonton Public Schools. She advised that the Division, working with AHS, are watching the case counts and the number of staff and students who are having to isolate carefully. The Board Chair explained that the virus continues to affect our physical and emotional health and, as we enter the fourth quarter of the school year, we are all tired and we have all made sacrifices this year. The Board Chair highlighted that students in the Division have found creative and inspiring ways to build community during this challenging time. She said that she has heard stories about students who have delivered cards to seniors' homes, collected donations for food banks, and written messages to frontline health care workers. On behalf of the Board, she thanked them for all their efforts.

The Board Chair advised that the Board of Trustees, along with the other Metro boards, continues to advocate for school-based staff to be prioritized by vaccination. She reiterated that teachers, custodians and educational assistants are on the front lines of this pandemic in schools and deserve to be prioritized for the vaccine. The Board Chair expressed that teachers are being prioritized in other provinces and would like the government to recognize that although all teachers may not be in a "high risk" group they are certainly working in congregant settings where the virus may be present and spreading.

The Board Chair shared her appreciation for the government of Alberta's announcement this past weekend to expand the rapid testing program for COVID-19 in about 300 schools, including Edmonton Public Schools. She remarked that she hopes quick test results mean limiting exposure and the potential of the virus spreading within a school community.

### **D. Communications from the Superintendent of Schools**

The Superintendent reminded everyone that pre-enrolment for the 2021-22 school year closes at 4 p.m. on Thursday, April 15, 2021. He advised that families can find information about options on SchoolZone or the Division's website and social media channels. He suggested that families with questions speak directly to the principal at their child's current school.

The Superintendent advised that Quarter 4 classes will begin on April 22, 2021. He thanked families who have notified the Division of their choice of in-person or online learning. He shared that as with previous quarter changes, the Division needs to organize staff to accommodate students' learning choices. The Superintendent explained that choice is a good thing, but there are trade-offs. He said

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the Division makes every effort to cause as little disruption as possible, but sometimes teachers need to be reassigned because of the redistribution of students. The Superintendent thanked students, staff and families for their patience and flexibility.

### **E. Minutes**

1. Board Meeting #12 – March 23, 2021

**MOVED BY Vice-Chair Ip:**

**“That the minutes of Board Meeting #12 held March 23, 2021, be approved as printed.”  
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

### **F. Comments from the Public and Staff Group Representatives**

There were no registered speakers for this item.

### **G. Reports**

2. 2021-2022 Distribution of Funds

There were three registered speakers for this item. Two registered speakers requested that the Board of Trustees consider providing free menstrual products in all Edmonton Public Schools. One registered speaker requested that the Board of Trustees consider providing funding for secure bike storage at all Edmonton Public Schools.

**MOVED BY Trustee Stirling:**

**“That the Distribution of Funds for the 2021-2022 Budget be approved.”**

**IN FAVOUR: Trustees Adams, Draper, Dunn, Estabrooks, Gibson, Ip and Stirling**

**OPPOSED: Trustee Janz**

**(CARRIED)**

Trustee Draper noted interest in further discussion on the operational surplus that will take place in the weeks to come. She shared that the Strategic Policy Evaluation Framework, currently being developed as part of the Governance and Evaluation Committee's work plan, will require funds to support implementation should it be passed by the Board of Trustees, and may be requested as an item for consideration for the planned use of surplus.

3. Motion re: Action Plan to Improve Literacy and Numeracy Skills

**MOVED BY Trustee Dunn:**

**“That Administration develop an action plan to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of students for the start of the 2021-2022 school year, with a focus on evidence-based practice, equity for students in the highest social vulnerability indexed schools, students**

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**who meet coding requirements for specialized supports and First Nations, Métis and Inuit students.”**  
**(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

Trustee Draper requested that an evaluation component be added to the action plan.

7. Neighbourhood Park Development Funding — Soraya Hafez  
(Response to Request for Information #096)

The Trustees requested that a letter be sent to the Mayor and City Council and copied to the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues expressing concern about the eligibility restrictions for obtaining NPDP grants and the inequity large neighbourhoods that have multiple schools and park sites experience when trying to adequately address their playground needs.

**MOVED BY Trustee Gibson:**

**“That Board meeting proceed past 6 p.m. in order to complete the agenda items.”**  
**(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

Trustee Draper left the meeting.

There was a short break in the meeting.

4. COVID-19 Impact on the Division from February 24 to March 30, 2021

An update was provided to the Board of Trustees regarding the Division’s efforts to support students and staff to mitigate transmission during the COVID-19 pandemic.

5. Class Size Information

The annual results of class sizes along with two years of historical data was provided to the Board of Trustees.

6. Program Unit Funding (PUF)  
(Response to Request for Information #094)

Information on the impact of the province discontinuing Program Unit Funding (PUF) grants for Kindergarten-aged children for school jurisdictions was provided to the Board of Trustees.

8. Bereavement

The Vice-Chair reported on the passing of Mr. Ernie Lotz.

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### **H. Other Committee, Board Representative and Trustee Reports**

Trustee Estabrooks submitted the following report in writing:

Trustee Estabrooks thanks school councils in Wards A and D for the warm welcome to their meetings in the last couple of months. She enjoyed the conversation, the questions and the discussion around what parents believe the needs of their children will be next school year and post-pandemic.

Trustee Estabrooks thanks Mr. Ali Mahdi for the kind invitation to attend his citizenship class. Mr. Mahdi invited her to share information about the role of Trustee and talk about the importance of engagement in civic elections.

Trustee Estabrooks thanks the Pakistan Canada Association of Edmonton for a recent meeting to discuss the importance of education as being a catalyst for social change and the importance of addressing systemic racism in school systems.

Trustee Estabrooks thanks the "Survivors and Thrivers" organization for continuing to host noon hour speakers highlighting the stories of Indigenous peoples. She has attended three sessions and looks forward to listening to the remaining speakers at future sessions.

### **I. Trustee and Board Requests for Information**

Trustee Janz requested the following information:

1. the high school completion rate for each high school
2. an overview of the leases or funding agreements around parent societies and facility use payments
3. a cost to ensure that all schools have bike racks compliant with the City of Edmonton standard and cost to provide bike cages to schools. Could this be provided through Division surplus?
4. funding implications if the Division were to amend the funding formula for next year to ensure that a level eight is provided for a full-time unit cost and a level seven to equate to .75 of an Education Assistant

### **J. Notices of Motion**

Trustee Ip moved that the Board of Trustees establish a mental health initiative fund with an allocation of \$5 million dollars each year beginning in the 2021-2022 school year, over three years to support the expansion of mental health supports, wellness initiatives and or partnerships in Division schools. Additionally, that a report on the use of the funds including an evaluative component on the efficacy and effectiveness of practice be presented to the Board of Trustees annually.

Trustee Estabrooks moved that given that menstrual products are a basic need and that access to these products can be a barrier for students, the Board of Trustees moves that Administration

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explore ways to provide free menstrual products in Division schools, including pursuing partnerships, to provide what should be essential products in Edmonton Public School washrooms.

K. **Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, April 27, 2021, at 2:00 p.m.**

L. **Adjournment: 6:30 p.m.**

**The Board Chair adjourned the meeting.**

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Trisha Estabrooks, Board Chair

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Karen Mills, Director of Board and  
Superintendent Relations