

MINUTE BOOK**Board Meeting #11**

Minutes of the Board Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Edmonton School Division of the Province of Alberta held via Zoom on Tuesday, March 9, 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 Adams:

**“That the agenda for the March 9, 2021, Board meeting be approved as printed.”
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

Trustee Draper advised that she would be leaving the meeting at 4:00 p.m. and requested that the Board Chair put forward an RFI on her behalf under agenda Item J.

C. Communications from the Board Chair

The Board Chair advised that March 8, 2021, was International Women’s Day. She explained this day was created as an opportunity to recognize women around the world for their political, economic, and social achievements. The 2021 campaign theme is *Choose to Challenge*.

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The Board Chair said that we can all choose to challenge and call out gender bias and inequality and we can all choose to seek out and celebrate women's achievements. Collectively, we can all help create an inclusive world.

The Board Chair stated that the Alberta Teachers' Association Provincial Executive Council has proclaimed March 8 to 12 as Substitute Teachers' Appreciation Week for the 2020/21 school year. The role of the substitute teacher carries the same daily responsibilities of instruction, marking and supervision as that of regular classroom teachers. She explained that this year, many of the Division's substitute teachers have taken online teacher training and have been covering online as well as in-person classes. The Board Chair expressed that this has been a big help during a year that's like no other. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, she thanked substitute teachers for their role in maintaining continuity and excellence of the learning process for students in the Division.

The Board Chair advised that on February 25, the provincial government introduced their budget to Albertans and said the education budget is frozen. For a growing school division such as Edmonton Public Schools that means this is a budget that will not grow with the Division. She expressed that the Division is pleased that the government will not penalize Edmonton Public Schools for lower than anticipated enrolment and that we can keep the money allocated to us for this school year.

The Board Chair explained that the Board of Trustees remains concerned that funding for some of the Division's most vulnerable and earliest learners was not reinstated. She remarked that this is a short-sighted move by this government and will continue to impact students in Division classrooms. The Board Chair advised that there are a number of details yet to be released by the government about the education budget. The Division looks forward to budget part two, as well as learning about any capital projects that will be funded.

The Board Chair advised that on February 22 the Board of Trustees and the Administration met with Dr. Chris Sikora, the Edmonton Zone Medical Officer of Health. She thanked Dr. Sikora and his team from Alberta Health Services (AHS) for taking the time to meet. The Board Chair said that Dr. Sikora was invited by the Board of Trustees to answer questions about variants and whether the measures the Division currently has in place to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 are sufficient. Dr. Sikora assured the Division that its measures are effective in controlling the variant. The Board Chair said that the Division was advised it would be notified if a variant case is identified in any of its schools.

The Board Chair stated the Board appreciates that AHS continues to look at cases of in-school transmission and is learning from those cases when they occur. She remarked that next week marks the one-year anniversary since schools in Alberta were closed because of the COVID-19 virus. On behalf of the Board, she thanked staff in the Division who are continuing to work hard to mitigate the spread of the virus as much as possible. This has been a challenging year that has required flexibility, creativity and above all else compassion. The Board Chair thanked staff and administration for all that they've done since March of last year to guide the Division and support students, families and staff through this pandemic.

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The Board Chair thanked everyone who has taken the time to provide feedback on two Board policies now out for public engagement - the Anti-Racism and Equity policy as well as the Early Years policy. She expressed that these policies are important in guiding the work of the Board of Trustees and the Administration. The Board Chair advised that the Policy Review Committee will continue to accept feedback on these policies until March 19, 2021.

The Board Chair encouraged Edmontonians to submit names for two schools in the Division. She stated that the Division needs a name for a K-9 school under construction in the Keswick neighbourhood, as well as a new name for Dan Knott School. The Board Chair explained that renaming a school is a new process for Edmonton Public Schools and thanked community members as well as students for guiding the Board in this direction. She advised that naming suggestions will be accepted until March 12, 2021.

D. Communications from the Superintendent of Schools

The Superintendent stated that pre-enrolment for the 2021-22 school year opened yesterday. He advised that the Division is offering both online and in-person options next year, with the goal to have a gradual return to in-person learning. Families can find information about the options on SchoolZone or the Division's website and social media channels. The Superintendent explained that parents of students currently enrolled at Edmonton Public Schools can pre-enrol on SchoolZone until 4 p.m. on April 15, 2021. He suggested that parents should talk to the principal at their child's current school should they have any questions.

The Superintendent said that families who are new to the Division should contact their preferred school to learn how to register as a new Edmonton Public Schools student before April 15, 2021.

The Superintendent reminded families that now is the time to choose if they would like to participate in online or in-person learning for Quarter 4.

E. Minutes

1. Board Meeting #10 – February 9, 2021

MOVED BY Vice-Chair Dunn:

**“That the minutes of Board Meeting #10 held February 9, 2021, be approved as printed.”
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

F. Recognition

2. Edwin Parr Teacher Award

Mr. Peter Csiszar of the Alberta School for the Deaf was selected as the Division's honorary nominee for the 2021 Edwin Parr Award for Excellence in first year teaching.

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There were no registered speakers for this item.

H. Reports

3. Staff Group Budget Presentation re 2021-2022 Budget

Mr. Jorge Illanes, President of CUPE LOCAL 3550 (Support Staff) presented the Local's brief.

4. Report #23 of the Special Caucus Committee (From the meeting held February 23, 2021)

Information was provided regarding actions taken at the February 23, 2021, Special Caucus Committee meeting.

5. Motion re: Internet for All

There was one registered speaker who shared their support for this item.

MOVED BY Trustee Janz:

- "1. That the Edmonton Public School Board affirm that internet access is essential to our students, staff, and families for participation not only in public education, but society, and should be accessible and affordable for all."**

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

The Board Chair asked how many families in the Division have required access to low cost internet. The Superintendent advised that this information would be provided in a Transmittal memorandum (TM).

- "2. That the Edmonton Public School Board request that provincial school board organizations such as the Alberta School Boards Association and the Public School Boards' Association of Alberta advocate to the federal, provincial and municipal governments on behalf of all Alberta school divisions for immediate initiatives to increase accessibility and quality and reduce costs of internet for students, staff, and families."**

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

There was a short break in the meeting.

6. Three-Year Capital Plan 2022-2025

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“That the proposed capital priorities for modernization and new construction identified in the *Three-Year Capital Plan 2022-2025* be approved.”

IN FAVOUR: Trustees Adams, Dunn, Estabrooks, Gibson, Janz, and Stirling

OPPOSED: Trustee Ip

(CARRIED)

Trustee Draper was not present for the vote.

Trustee Draper left the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

MOVE BY Trustee Ip that the motion be amended:

“That the capital plan be amended to move Glenridding Heights K-6 from Priority 9 to Priority 5 in year one of the aggregated list.”

IN FAVOUR: Trustees Adams and Ip

OPPOSED: Trustees Dunn, Estabrooks, Gibson, Janz and Stirling

(DEFEATED)

Trustee Draper was not present for the vote.

7. Information Update Regarding the *Ten-Year Facilities Plan 2020–2029*

The *Ten-Year Facilities Plan 2020–2029* was approved by the Board of Trustees on February 25, 2020. This report provided information on changes in context since The Plan was approved. If requested by the province, this report would be provided along with the *Ten-Year Facilities Plan 2020–2029*.

8. COVID-19 Impact on the Division from January 27 to February 23, 2021

The Board of Trustees received an update on the impact of COVID-19 on the Division from January 27 to February 23, 2021.

9. Bereavement

Vice-Chair Dunn reported on the passing of Mr. Hildefonso Interiano.

10. IMR and CMR Funding
(Response to Request for Information #095)

Information was provided in response to request for information #095.

Trustee Janz requested that this report be referred to the Edmonton Public Schools ASBA Issue and Resolutions Committee for further discussion.

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I. Other Committee, Board Representative and Trustee Reports

Trustee Gibson reported that he will not be a Trustee candidate in the 2021 municipal election. Trustee Gibson advised that he has scheduled a March 17, 2021, meeting with prospective candidates.

J. Trustee and Board Requests for Information

On behalf of the Trustee Draper, the Board Chair read the following:

As Trustee for Ward B, representing many great schools including the newly opened Soraya Hafez elementary school in the McConachie neighbourhood, I have watched many Committees invest countless hours into fundraising for park construction or renovations.

I am inspired by the work the Playground Parent Committee of Soraya Hafez school is beginning to undertake. I am concerned, however, with the lack of clarity on their eligibility for Neighbourhood Park Development Program Funding (NPDP). From what I understand, it may be the case that the Community League (in this case Horse Hill CL) is eligible for only one playground funding under this funding stream.

I understand the funding is substantial but may be restrictive to the number of schools funded under a specific timeline. Christ the King School, in the Edmonton Catholic School division, received funding for its playground a few years ago, which falls under the same Community League. Note, this is a large geographical community league which has many schools within its boundaries.

Please confirm whether or not the Soraya Hafez School Playground Committee is eligible for Neighbourhood Park Development Program Funding (NPDP).

K. Notices of Motion

Trustee Janz served notice of motion that in order to strengthen the independence and provide greater transparency and objectivity for the Edmonton Public School Division, I request the Administration to bring forward a report on costing and considerations of establishing an independent Division Auditor, reporting directly to the Board of Trustees.

L. Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, March 23, 2021, at 2:00 p.m.

M. Adjournment: 5:30 p.m.

The Board Chair adjourned the meeting.

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Trisha Estabrooks, Board Chair

Karen Mills, Director of Board and
Superintendent Relations