

**MINUTE BOOK****Board Meeting**

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of Edmonton School Division of Alberta held in the Centre for Education McCauley Chambers on Tuesday, November 26, 2024, at 2 p.m.

**Present:****Trustees**

Trisha Estabrooks  
Dawn Hancock  
Marcia Hole

Julie Kusiek  
Marsha Nelson

Sherri O'Keefe  
Jan Sawyer  
Saadiq Sumar

**Officials**

Angela Anderson  
Todd Burnstad  
Grace Cooke  
Andrea Cooper

Karen Mills  
Kent Pharis  
Nancy Petersen  
Cliff Richard

Darrel Robertson  
Carrie Rosa  
Ron Thompson  
Liz Yule

**Board Chair:** Julie Kusiek**Recording Secretary:** Catherine Angeles

The Board Chair called the meeting to order with recognition that we are in the beautiful, crisp and snowy season of winter 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 took a moment to reflect on her relationship with the land. She is reminded of the joy of the first really big snowfall - going with her daughter to their neighbourhood park to sled down the hill, then building community in this outdoor space as more and more neighbours arrived to also enjoy the day. On the walk to the park, seeing piles upon piles of really high fluffy white snow on the mountain ash berries. Her husband and daughter shovelling the biggest snow pile they could in the backyard, so that they can build a fort once the snow settles and packs down a bit more. This connection to the outdoors is powerful and it inspired her to look up the Cree word for snow, which she understands to be kona and the act of snowing to be mispon. The Board Chair's snowy experiences make her grateful for the land and those who have nurtured it.

**A. O Canada**

**MINUTE BOOK****B. Roll Call: 2:04 p.m.**

The Superintendent advised that Board Chair Kusiek was participating remotely and all other Trustees were present.

**C. Approval of the Agenda**

**MOVED BY Trustee Estabrooks:**

**“That the agenda for the November 26, 2024, Board meeting be approved as printed.”  
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

**D. Communications from the Board Chair**

The Board Chair shared updates from the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) Fall General Meeting and Conference. Member boards across Alberta approved the Edmonton Public School Board’s (EPSB) position statement that: *Sexual health education remains an “opt out” option for parents in Alberta and that school board autonomy be respected with regards to their own sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression policies.* Board Chair Kusiek said this is a strong stand, with ASBA representing membership from over 60 public, Catholic and Francophone boards in the province. She hopes that the government acts on this feedback and revises Bill 27, which is currently in third reading in the Legislature.

The Board Chair also shared that ASBA members approved the other position statement brought forward by the Board: *The Government of Alberta annually increases grant funding rates proportional to inflation, to maintain the impact and value the grant funding is intended to have on supporting students for success.* The Board Chair said given the Minister of Education has signaled there will be changes to Education funding with Budget 2025, this position statement is especially important to protect the purchasing power of school divisions with rising inflation over time. Chair Kusiek said that Trustee Hancock, ASBA Director for EPSB, will provide a further update on other position statements passed by ASBA members at the ASBA Fall General Meeting and Conference.

The Board Chair advised that following the ASBA business meeting, trustees from the metro boards in both Calgary and Edmonton met. She noted that this was a great opportunity to build relationships among trustees, discuss the work being done across their divisions and explore ways to leverage their collective metro voice.

The Board Chair mentioned that the Public School Boards’ Association of Alberta (PSBAA) also held meetings for several days this month. She expressed appreciation to the PSBAA Provincial Executive Director for EPSB, Vice-Chair Sawyer, and Public School Boards’ Council representative for EPSB, Trustee O’Keefe, for their many days of hard work and looks forward to their updates later in the meeting.

The Board Chair shared that Trustees, schools and central units are currently busy with results review, which is an important part of the accountability process and an integral part of the Annual Education

## **MINUTE BOOK**

Results Review report. She expressed thanks to Division staff for their unwavering dedication to supporting students and their unique pathways to success.

The Board Chair thanked Mayor Amarjeet Sohi for organizing a meeting with Joint Use Agreement (JUA) partners earlier this month. They discussed opportunities within the JUA for further collaboration and the urgency to ensure new school sites are ready so that we can all benefit from the School Construction Accelerator Program. By working together, we can maximize opportunities to get schools built, benefitting current and future generations of Edmonton students and their families who are an integral part of creating a thriving local economy and vibrant city.

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

The Superintendent thanked everyone attending the meeting in person today, including SCOPE principals Heather Duncan and Damian Wilkinson, and those watching online.

The Superintendent stated that Trustee Results Reviews began last week and will continue later this week. These reviews provide excellent opportunities to highlight the truly great things happening within the Division and to share this information with staff, parents, and the community. Superintendent Robertson thanked principals and central DU administrators for all of the work they've done to prepare for these great conversations. He also thanked the Board of Trustees and acknowledged that, while the upcoming schedule would add to Trustees' busy calendars, it provides a valuable opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the past school year and gain insights into the plans for the future.

The Superintendent extended congratulations to Jasper Place School for being honoured with the National Philanthropist of the Year Award for their Make-A-Wish bike-a-thon. Since 2016, the event has raised over \$1 million, granting countless wishes to children who are battling life-threatening diseases. This award is a testament to the unwavering dedication and compassion of Jasper Place students, staff and community. Superintendent Robertson congratulated Principal Kim Backs and her team at Jasper Place for providing a supportive environment for this great fundraiser to take place every year.

### **F. Approval of the Minutes**

1. Board Meeting – November 5, 2024

**MOVED BY Trustee Nelson:**

**“That the minutes of the Board meeting held November 5, 2024, be approved as printed.”  
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

### **G. Comments from the Public and Staff Group Representatives on Items on the Meeting Agenda**

The Board of Trustees heard from one registered speaker for this item.

**MINUTE BOOK****H. Reports**

2. Caucus Committee Report (From the meeting held November 5, 2024)

Information was provided regarding actions taken at the November 5, 2024, Caucus Committee meeting.

3. 2023-2024 Audited Financial Statements

**MOVED BY Trustee Hancock:**

**“That the 2023-2024 audited financial statements, notes to the financial statements and unaudited schedule be approved.”  
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

There was a short break in the meeting.

4. Modular Classroom Update

An update was provided on modular classrooms. Of the 42 new modulars and eight total relocations approved by the Province, 19 units have been installed and are now operational. Eight additional units are on their intended sites and installation will be complete by the end of November. The remainder are anticipated to be received/moved and installed over the course of the 2024–2025 school year.

5. Revised Capital Reserve Plan for 2024-2025

**MOVED BY Trustee Sumar:**

**“That the revised Capital Reserve Plan as outlined in Attachment I be approved.”  
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

There was a short break in the meeting.

6. Annual Education Results Report (2023-2024)

Ms. Petersen presented a slide presentation on the Annual Education Results Report.

The Board Chair temporarily moved to a later agenda item prior to the vote on the AERR recommendation to accommodate public speakers scheduled for 5 p.m.

**I. Comments from the Public and Staff Group Representatives on Educational Issues – 5 p.m.**

The Board of Trustees heard from two registered speakers for this item.

**MINUTE BOOK**6. Annual Education Results Report (2023-2024) (continued)**MOVED BY Vice-Chair Sawyer:**

**“That the Board meeting be extended beyond 6 p.m.”  
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

Trustee Estabrooks left the meeting at 6:26 p.m.

**MOVED BY Trustee O'Keefe:**

**“That the Edmonton Public Schools’ 2023-2024 Annual Education Results Report be approved.”  
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

Trustee Estabrooks was not present for the vote.

There was a short break in the meeting.

Board Chair Kusiek left the meeting at 6:31 p.m. Vice-Chair Sawyer chaired the remainder of the meeting.

7. Funds for the Professional Improvement Program – Teacher Certificated (2025-2025 and 2026-2027)**MOVED BY Trustee Hole:**

**“1. That an allocation of \$1,300,000 from the 2025-2026 operating budget be committed for the Professional Improvement Program – Teacher Certificated Staff for the purpose of granting professional improvement leaves and tuition support to teachers for the 2025-2026 school year.”  
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

**“2. That a commitment of support for Year 2 (2026-2027) applications not exceeding 50 per cent of the 2025-2026 allocation amount be approved by the Board of Trustees. A formal request for an allocation of funds from the 2026-27 budget year be brought to Board of Trustees in the fall of 2025.”**

**(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

Board Chair Kusiek and Trustee Estabrooks were not present for the votes.

8. Funds for the 2025-2026 Exempt Staff Professional Improvement Program**MOVED BY Trustee Nelson:**

**“That an allocation of \$140,000 from the 2025-2026 operating budget be approved for the Exempt Staff Professional Improvement Program for the purpose of granting professional improvement leaves and tuition support to exempt staff for the 2025-2026 school year.”  
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

Board Chair Kusiek and Trustee Estabrooks were not present for the vote.

**MINUTE BOOK**9. Bereavement

Vice-Chair Sawyer reported on the passing of Ms. Julie-Ann Dzeryk.

**J. Other Committee, Board Representatives and Trustee Reports—None**

Acting Board Chair Sawyer advised the Board they would skip this agenda item due to time restraints.

**K. Trustees and Board Requests for Information - None****L. Notices of Motion**

Trustee Hole gave notice that she would be making the following motion:

Given the significant population growth the province of Alberta and the City of Edmonton have experienced in recent years, and the associated challenges that has been posing for Edmonton Public School Board's rapidly increasing enrolment, and

Given that the enrolment of students requiring specialized learning supports is outpacing overall enrolment in the division,

THAT the Board of Trustees advocate to the province for an increase to the education budget that adequately addresses the growing number and complexity of diverse learners requiring specialized supports.

**M. Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, December 10, 2024, at 2 p.m.****N. Adjournment: 7:02 p.m.**

**The Board Chair adjourned the meeting.**

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Julie Kusiek, Board Chair

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Karen Mills, Director Board and  
Superintendent Relations