

Board Meeting Minutes

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, April 14, 2026, at 2 p.m.

Present

Trustees	Nickela Anderson, Sarah Doll, Melanie Hoffman, Julie Kusiek, Linda Lindsay, Holly Nichol, Sherri O’Keefe, Saadiq Sumar		
Officials	Angela Anderson, Todd Burnstad, Grace Cooke, Andrea Cooper, Kelsey Duebel, Martin Fechner, Kathy Muhlethaler, Kent Pharis, Nancy Petersen, Cliff Richard, Carrie Rosa, Ron Thompson, Liz Yule		
Board Chair	Saadiq Sumar	Recording Secretary	Catherine Angeles

A. Land Acknowledgement

The Board Chair called the meeting to order. Before starting the Land Acknowledgement, Board Chair Sumar mentioned that he was at an event the previous night, organized by the Education Society of Edmonton, and after hearing the Land Acknowledgement delivered by President Carmen Glossop, asked if he could share it at the public Board meeting.

The Board Chair acknowledged that we live, work, and play on this beautiful Treaty 6 territory. This is the travelling route, gathering place, and meeting grounds for Indigenous people, including the Nehiyaw, Denesuline, Siksikaitsitapi, Stoney Nakotea, Anishinaabe, Haudensoaunee, Metis Otipemisiwak and Esikisimu Nunangat.

In April, we celebrate the Frog Moon. It signifies the start of spring. Birds, bugs, and budding plants will soon start to be visible. With the thawing temperatures, it awakens the frogs from their hibernation. Much warmer weather is to come. Winter puts things to rest, while spring is a time of rebirth. As the brown grass turns green and the bare branches grow leaves, he thanked Mother Earth for these new first gifts. The frog’s song encourages humans to “sing their own truth”. Spring is officially here, and in some yards, green blades of grass are even present. Chair Sumar gave gratitude to Mother Earth for everything she provides for us and to our Grandmother Moon as new seasons bring new beginnings.

Where there is light, there is hope. Where there is hope, there is a way. Hiy Hiy.

B. O Canada

The 2026 EPSB Night of Music video version of O Canada was played.

C. Roll Call

2:05 p.m. – The Superintendent advised that Trustee Sawyer was absent. All other Trustees were present.

D. Approval of Agenda

MOVED BY Vice-Chair Lindsay:

That the agenda for the April 14, 2026, Board meeting be approved as presented.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

E. Communications from the Board Chair

The Board Chair recognized that April is Sikh Heritage Month in Canada, which celebrates the rich history, culture and contributions of Sikh Canadians. Canada was the first country in the world to adopt this formal designation, acknowledging over 120 years of community impact. This month highlights the Sikh tradition of SEVA, also known as self-service, equality, compassion and generosity. It also includes the celebration of Vaisakhi, marking the founding of the Khalsa. Board Chair Sumar recognized the strong representation and contributions of Sikh students, staff, and community members within the Division.

The Board Chair shared that April is also World Autism Acceptance Month, which focuses on promoting diversity, understanding and acceptance for individuals with autism spectrum disorders. This year's theme celebrates differences and is centred on advancing advocacy to support the one in 50 children and youth in Canada with autism.

The Board Chair said that this week is also Education Week, which celebrates the power of learning and the people who make it possible. The Division recognizes how staff spark curiosity, how students inspire growth, and how school communities work together to create places where children flourish. It reminds us that learning doesn't just shape minds, it reshapes the future.

The Board Chair expressed appreciation to the federal and provincial government for recent funding announcements supporting school nutrition, school safety and low incident supports and services. The Division appreciates the investment and the recognition of the needs of our students.

The Board Chair addressed Bill 25, recently introduced by the Minister of Education and Childcare. Bill 25 is an act to remove politics and ideology from classrooms, which represents significant changes to the *Education Act*. Education is a community-led journey, and locally elected trustees serve as the vital pulse of that journey, ensuring that the values and diverse perspectives of the community are reflected in the classroom and in the overall direction of this Division. Board Chair Sumar said that the Board, as elected representatives, aren't just a rubber stamp for provincial mandates. They are the bridge between government policy, students, families and the community they serve. A strong education system isn't built in a vacuum. It's built by listening to the local voice. Pending further information on the legislation's impacts, the Board Chair noted that the

Board remains dedicated to being the community's voice, advocating for a system that stays rooted in the community it serves and provides every student with a place to belong.

The Board Chair congratulated Zaki Hirabe, a Division staff member on the Strategic Division Support Team, who was recognized as an Edified Emerging Leader and featured in the April issue of the Edify magazine.

The Board Chair also recognized another important leader within the Division, Tessa Muddle, a student from Strathcona school, who was the recipient of the 2026 Loran Scholar. This award is given to young people who demonstrate strength, character, commitment to service and exceptional leadership potential. Chair Sumar thanked Tessa for sharing her gifts with us and showing leadership in our school community.

The Board Chair noted that the Strategic Plan Survey ends soon. Information can be found on the Division's website and SchoolZone.

F. Communications from the Superintendent of Schools

The Superintendent welcomed everyone in attendance today and those watching online. He also welcomed principals from the Superintendent's Community of Practice in Education (SCOPE), who also joined today's Board meeting: Linda Speelman and David Sloan from Baturyn and Joey Moss schools.

The Superintendent also welcomed everyone back after spring break, hoping everyone had a relaxing break and a great first week back in class.

The Superintendent shared that every year, as part of the pre-enrolment process, the Division launches the Division Feedback Survey, seeking input from students, staff and families. He thanked everyone for providing their feedback and perspectives with the Division and noted that there has been great participation this year. More than 71,000 responses this year, which is a 13 per cent increase from last year.

The Superintendent said that Trustees have been hard at work creating the 2026-2030 Strategic Plan for the Division and want to hear from our community about their draft Vision, Mission and Priority statements. Everyone's feedback will help finalize the statements that form the foundation of the Strategic Plan and guide development of the goals for each of the priorities. The survey is open for a short window. Students, staff, community and families have until April 19 to share their feedback.

The Superintendent reported that last week, the province announced it's investing \$22 million to strengthen school safety across the province. The total investment is divided into two primary streams: building security upgrades and safety training. The province also announced they are creating consistent standards to support student safety across the province. The Division will receive \$3.43 million as part of the initiative. In the coming weeks, the Division will be developing plans about how the funds will be used.

G. Approval of the Minutes

1. Board Meeting - March 17, 2026

MOVED BY Trustee Nichol:

**That the minutes of the Board meeting held on March 17, 2026, be approved as presented.
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

H. Recognition

2. Confirmation of Principal Designations (Information)

The Superintendent announced that the following principals have been confirmed, effective September 1, 2026:

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| ● Nellie Alves, John Barnett | ● Francisco Gaviria, Forest Heights |
| ● Basem Ayoubi, Glengarry | ● Donna Hunter, Brightview |
| ● Danielle Couillard, J.A. Fife | ● Terriss Paliwoda, Donnan |
| ● Pam Depeel, Sifton | ● Rhonda Sader, Ormsby |
| ● Melissa Dziendzielowski, Hillview | ● Scott Slatter, Glenora |
| ● Holly Fisher, Kameyosek | ● Jennifer Williams, Grace Martin |
| ● Tamara Franko, Virginia Park | ● Jen Wilson, Waverley |

I. Comments from the Public and Staff Group Representatives on items on the Meeting Agenda

The live stream of the Board meeting was suspended at 2:19 p.m. to hear from registered speakers.

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

There was a short break in the meeting at 2:29 p.m.

The meeting and live stream resumed at 2:36 p.m. after all registered speakers had been heard.

J. Reports

3. Omnibus Updates on Board Policies re: *Protection of Privacy Act and Access to Information Act*
(Recommendation)

MOVED BY Trustee Anderson:

That administrative changes identified from the omnibus removal of references to the Alberta Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act in board policies be read for the first, second, and third and final time and be approved.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

4. Revised Process and Timeline for the 2026-27 Budget
(Recommendation)

MOVED BY Trustee O’Keefe:

That the Revised Process and Timeline for the 2026-2027 Budget, as outlined in Attachment I, be approved.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

5. 2026-27 Distribution of Funds
(Recommendation)

Trustee Doll left the meeting at 3:40 p.m. and returned at 3:42 p.m.

MOVED BY Trustee Hoffman:

That the Distribution of Funds for the 2026-2027 Budget be approved.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

There was a short break in the meeting at 3:45 p.m., and it resumed at 4:00 p.m.

6. Three-Year Capital Plan 2027-30
(Recommendation)

MOVED BY Trustee O’Keefe:

That the Three-Year Capital Plan 2027–2030 be approved for submission to the provincial government.

MOVED BY Trustee Doll, the motion be amended:

That the Three-Year Capital Plan 2027–2030 be approved for submission to the provincial government, **subject to the removal of the Autism Centre of Excellence from the capital priorities and the removal of all references to the Autism Centre of Excellence from the Three-Year Capital Plan Report.**

MOVED BY Trustee Hoffman:

That the Board meeting be extended beyond 6 p.m. and not past 6:30 p.m.

IN FAVOUR: Trustees Anderson, Doll, Hoffman, Kusiek, Lindsay, Nichol, and Sumar

OPPOSED: Trustee O’Keefe

(CARRIED)

There was a short break in the meeting at 5:46 p.m. before the debate of the amended motion.

The meeting resumed at 5:55 p.m.

The Board Chair called the question on the amendment.

IN FAVOUR: Trustees Anderson, Doll, Hoffman, Nichol, and Sumar

OPPOSED: Trustees Kusiek, Lindsay, and O’Keefe

(CARRIED)

The Board Chair noted that the time was 6:34 p.m and asked a Trustee to make a motion to extend the meeting past 6:30 p.m.

MOVED BY Trustee Kusiek:

That the Board meeting be extended to the end of this agenda item.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

The Board Chair called the question on the amended motion.

IN FAVOUR: Trustees Anderson, Doll, Hoffman, Lindsay, Nichol, and Sumar

OPPOSED: Trustees Kusiek and O’Keefe

(CARRIED)

Due to time constraints, the Board did not reach agenda items K through M.

K. Other Committee, Board Representative and Trustee Reports

Deferred to the next meeting.

L. Trustees and Board Requests for Information

Deferred to the next meeting.

M. Notices of Motion

Deferred to the next meeting.

N. Meeting Dates

Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, April 28, 2026, at 2 p.m.

O. Adjournment

6:37 p.m. – The Board Chair adjourned the meeting.

Saadiq Sumar, Board Chair

Kelsey Duebel, Director Board and
Superintendent Relations

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