

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, December 9, 2025, at 2 p.m.

Present

Trustees	Nickela Anderson, Sarah Doll, Melanie Hoffman, Julie Kusiek, Linda Lindsay, Holly Nichol, Sherri O’Keefe, Jan Sawyer, Saadiq Sumar		
Officials	Angela Anderson, Todd Burnstad, Grace Cooke, Andrea Cooper, Kelsey Duebel, Martin Fechner, Kathy Muhlethaler, Kent Pharis, Nancy Petersen, Cliff Richards, 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 and provided a land acknowledgement.

Chair Sumar acknowledged that he lives, works, plays, and enjoys the abundance that Treaty 6 land provides. This land, known by many names, has been cared for by the Siksikaitstapi, Denesuline, nehiyawak, Anishinaabe, Stoney Nakoda, and the Métis from the North Saskatchewan River Territory. This land has also been imprinted by the footsteps of the Inuit. It is only through their teachings and stories that we can fully appreciate the beauty of this land. December brings cold and snow, but it also brings the Winter Solstice. In the darkness of the longest night of the year, the solstice is an opportunity for us to look inward, to care for our bodies and minds, to appreciate Indigenous knowledge and to honour connections with community and family. As the First Peoples’ Cultural Foundation suggests, it’s a time for us to rest and be slow, to share a meal, and to listen, learn and reflect.

B. O Canada

The Victoria School video version of O Canada was played.

C. Roll Call

2:04 p.m. – The Superintendent advised that all Trustees were present.

D. Approval of Agenda

MOVED BY Trustee Sawyer:

That the agenda for the December 9, 2025, Board meeting be approved as presented.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

E. Communications from the Board Chair

The Board Chair thanked all of the school communities that participated in Results Review last month. It was a great opportunity for the Board to learn about the important work that staff do in schools every day in support of students and the Division Strategic Plan.

The Board Chair thanked the Public School Boards' Association of Alberta for putting on several showings of "Backpack Full of Cash". Although the film is almost a decade old, it's still relevant and an important reminder of the value of a strong and well-funded public education system.

The Board Chair shared that last weekend, he attended the Friends of Historic McKay Avenue & 1881 Schoolhouse Society's Winter Celebration, complete with treats, music, storytelling, and crafts. Not only is McKay Avenue an important building for the Division, but it's also the former site of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta and continues to provide students with educational opportunities and programming.

The Board Chair said that he and the Trustees attended a meeting of the Student Senate last week. It was a wonderful opportunity to connect with high school students from across the city and answer questions about the Board of Trustees. Students in the Division do incredible things, inside and outside of the Senate, and it was great to see firsthand the passion and dedication of young leaders.

The Board Chair thanked Principal Errol Johnson and the students and staff at L.Y. Cairns School. The Board was treated, this afternoon, with poinsettias, donuts, and ornaments from the Horticulture, Arts, and Commercial Foods programs at the school.

F. Communications from the Superintendent of Schools

The Superintendent welcomed everyone in attendance today and those tuning in online. He also welcomed two principals from the Superintendent's Community of Practice in Education (SCOPE), David Sloan from Sorya Hafez School and Marnie White from Old Scona.

The Superintendent shared that the Division is already planning for the 2026-2027 school year, and after the winter break, open house season will be upon us. Some Division events are already scheduled for January 2026. Open houses are a great way for families to learn more about what the Division has to offer, from regular programming to programs of choice. Superintendent Thompson encouraged any parent who has a child transitioning to a new school to check them out. Most open houses take place in February and March and can be found on epsb.ca. He also thanked all Division schools for creating these amazing events to showcase what they have to offer to families.

The Superintendent shared that next week, he is excited to recognize and honour the staff, students, parents and community volunteers who make Division schools such wonderful places to grow and learn at the annual Division Recognition event. After the winter break, Division social media channels will be updated with information about the recipients.

The Superintendent wished everyone a restful and relaxing winter break. He hopes everyone rests up and is ready to get back to learning in January.

G. Approval of the Minutes

1. Board Meeting - November 25, 2025

MOVED BY Trustee Hoffman:

**That the minutes of the Board meeting held on November 25, 2025, be approved as presented.
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)**

There was a short break in the meeting at 2:13 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 2:15 p.m.

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

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

There was a short break in the meeting at 2:21 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 2:34 p.m.

I. Reports

2. 2025-26 Student Senate Work Plan
(Information)

Student Trustees Selina Lin, Taneesh Chekka and Zidaan Virani presented the 2025-26 Student Senate Work Plan.

3. 2024-25 Annual Education Results Report (AERR)
(Recommendation)

Trustee Doll left the meeting at 2:38 p.m.

Trustee Doll returned to the meeting at 2:40 p.m.

Trustees Doll and Nichol left the meeting at 4:01 p.m.

Trustees Doll and Nichol returned to the meeting at 4:04 p.m.

There was a short break in the meeting at 4:06 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 4:18 p.m.

MOVED BY Trustee Kusiek:

That the Edmonton Public Schools' 2024-25 AERR be approved.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

There was a short break in the meeting at 5:10 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 5:16 p.m.

4. 2026-27 School Year Calendar
(Recommendation)

MOVED BY Trustee Doll:

That the proposed 2026-27 School Year Calendar be approved.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

5. Proposed School Budget Amendment and Additional Funds for Infrastructure and Technology Projects for 2025-2026
(Recommendation)

MOVED BY Trustee Anderson:

1. That a one-time school budget amendment for \$15 million, to allow schools to access their operating surplus from 2024-2025 to support staffing and classroom supports in 2025-2026, be approved.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

MOVED BY Trustee Nichol:

2. That a one-time budget amendment of \$8.8 million to the Infrastructure and Technology and Information Management (TIM) central units to support infrastructure and technology improvements in support of schools be approved.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

J. Other Committee, Board Representative and Trustee Reports

Board Chair Sumar shared an Edmonton Public Schools Foundation (Foundation) update. The Foundation Wrap and Roll starts this Friday at Kingsway Mall. He thanked their partner, Kingsway Mall, for donating the space and supplies.

K. Trustees and Board Requests for Information

Trustee Sawyer submitted a Request for Information regarding the EPSB Trustee Election Costs: Related to the most recent trustee election, my understanding is that the City of Edmonton coordinates the Trustee election in conjunction with the Municipal election, then they invoice the Division for this cost. As such, can the administration provide the Division's share of the most recent election cost, and how this compares to the last trustee election? Secondly, does the Division receive funding from the Province to cover this cost and if so, is that based on the actual cost or a different formula?

Trustee Doll submitted a Request for Information regarding Follow-up on Seclusion Reporting in the 2025 AERR:

On May 25, 2021, the Board of Trustees unanimously passed the following motion:

“That data on the use of seclusion and restraint, including seclusion rooms that are being decommissioned, are reported to the Board annually, along with work on systemic changes so that these practices are no longer needed or used.”

This motion remains active.

In the May 27, 2025, [Seclusion and Physical Restraint Update](#), administration stated that future reporting would be included in the Annual Education Results Report (AERR). However, the [2025 AERR](#) presented on December 9, 2025, does not include restraint data or such information as was included in previous reports. I am hoping to understand whether reporting practices have shifted, or whether this information will be reported to the board of trustees at another time.

In support of transparency, accountability, and informed governance regarding the reduction and elimination of seclusion and restraint in Edmonton Public Schools, I submit the following Request for Information:

1. Transparency, Consistency, and Informed Governance:

Please provide the division's regular annual reporting on seclusion and restraint for the 24/25 school year, including:

- Number of seclusion incidents reported by month.
- Number of restraint incidents reported by month.
- Number of combined restraint and seclusion incidents reported by month.
- Number of unique students per type of incident.
- Number of staff participants in training programs that 'support systemic changes so that these practices are no longer used.' Please provide data for: Complex Behaviour Modules A, B and C, Non Violent Crisis Intervention, Studio 3, as well as any other relevant training or systemic changes.

2. Oversight, Review Processes, and Continuous Improvement:

In order to fulfill the Board's governance responsibilities, further detail is requested regarding the goals and strategies related to reducing seclusion and restraint.

- What feedback mechanisms are in place to gather student and family experiences related to seclusion and restraint, and how has this feedback informed policy or practice?
- What lessons have been identified from schools within EPSB that have reduced or eliminated reliance on seclusion and restraint?

3. External Expertise and Comparative Learning:

Please provide a summary of any external consultation related to reducing the use of seclusion and restraint. What key findings, recommendations, or evidence-based outcomes were shared during those consultations and how did they inform division policy and contribute to decreased use of seclusion across Edmonton Public Schools?

L. Notices of Motion

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

That the response to her Request for Information from today's Board meeting be brought forward as an information report and placed on the agenda for discussion at the public Board meeting following the completion of the report.

M. Meeting Dates

Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at 2 p.m.

N. Adjournment

5:50 p.m. – The Board Chair adjourned the meeting.

Saadiq Sumar, Board Chair

Kelsey Duebel, Director Board and
Superintendent Relations