EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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, October 27, 2026, at 2 p.m.

Present

Trustees	**Nickela Anderson, Sarah Doll, Linda Lindsay, Holly Nichol, Sherri O'Keefe, Jan Sawyer *(present until 3:18 p.m.)*, Saadiq Sumar**		
Officials	**Angela Anderson, Todd Burnstad, Grace Cooke, Andrea Cooper, Kelsey Duebel, Martin Fechner, Kent Pharis, Nancy Petersen, Carrie Rosa, Ron Thompson, Christopher Wright, Liz Yule**		
Board Chair	**Saadiq Sumar**	**Recording Secretary**	**Catherine Angeles**

A. Land Acknowledgement

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.

B. O Canada

The Svend Hansen School video version of O Canada was played.

C. Roll Call

2:04 p.m. – The Superintendent advised that Trustee Hoffman was absent and all other Trustees were present.

Trustee Kusiek called a Point of Privilege and read her letter of resignation from the Board, effective immediately.

Board Chair Sumar thanked Trustee Kusiek for her service and wished her the best in her future endeavours. Chair Sumar noted that, in accordance with the *Education Act*, Trustee Kusiek's resignation was effective immediately and accepted upon submission to the Corporate Secretary.

The Board Chair called a recess at 2:07 p.m. At that time, Trustee Kusiek departed the meeting.

The Board Chair called the meeting back to order at 2:25 p.m.

D. Approval of Agenda

MOVED BY Vice-Chair Nichol:

That the agenda for the October 27, 2026, Board meeting be approved as presented.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

E. Communications from the Board Chair

The Board Chair said that this Saturday marks one year of the swearing-in of the current Board of Trustees. It's been an incredible year, full of ups and downs, including job action, lots of school, Division-wide, and community events, many internal and external groups and individual awards for staff and students, a new Division Strategic Plan and a lot of learning. Chair Sumar said he is incredibly grateful to serve with an amazing group of women as well as with the amazing team at EPSB. He also stated that it has been an incredible privilege to serve as the Board Chair; as far as he was aware, he is the first person of colour to serve in this role. Chair Sumar thanked all of the Division's partner organizations and community stakeholders for their patience while the Board has been settling into their roles and their willingness to connect. He said their support provides an immeasurable impact to the Division and to Edmonton as a whole.

The Board Chair thanked school principals, Read In Week Coordinators, and school staff for welcoming the Board of Trustees into schools at the start of October for Read In Week and other literacy-themed activities. Read In Week provides the Board of Trustees an incredible opportunity to underscore the importance of literacy, share their love of reading, and answer questions students have about trusteeship.

The Board Chair shared that several members of the Board of Trustees attended the PSBAA Fall Conference and AGM. A highlight of the Fall Conference was the Lois Hole Dinner, where members heard an address from Dylan Bressey, President of Alberta Municipalities. There was also time for some incredible PL, connection-building, and business. Chair Sumar thanked the team at PSBAA for organizing a fantastic conference.

The Board Chair announced the launch of the new Edmonton Public Schools Foundation Endowment Fund. This fund represents a transformational milestone, ensuring a permanent, sustainable source of funding to help Edmonton students thrive for generations to come. More information was shared in the Trustee reports section of the agenda. Chair Sumar recognized the Foundation and the Board for their ongoing support of thousands of students—support that will continue for decades to come thanks to this endowment.

The Board Chair shared that the Board of Trustees is incredibly proud of all students who were honoured with a 2026 Division Student Award. A full listing of the recipients, along with a short bio of each of them, can be found on the EPSB website or through social media channels. Chair Sumar encouraged all to read more about these incredible leaders. Chair Sumar congratulated A. Blair MacPherson Junior High School Science Teacher, Nicholas Riemann, for receiving one of only three

Inspiring Education Awards this year. He thanked Nicholas for his incredible dedication to student learning and sharing his passion for science.

The Board Chair advised that construction is moving ahead at Dr. Anne Anderson High School, with the addition of 600 new student spaces. Construction is expected to be completed for the next school year, and the Board is incredibly grateful to Division staff as well as the Government of Alberta for their work in bringing more capacity to our system.

The Board Chair took a few moments to speak on some recent Government announcements. The Student Support Policy Framework and the Regulation of the Display of Flags were shared last week. He said the Board is working closely with Division staff to review the regulations and understand their impact. Broadly, they are examining how these relate to societal progress on Truth and Reconciliation and the 94 Calls to Action, as well as the Board's mandate as stated in the *Education Act* to provide students with safe and caring learning environments.

F. Communications from the Superintendent of Schools

The Superintendent welcomed everyone in attendance and those who were tuning in online. He congratulated Trustees on the upcoming one-year anniversary of their election to the Board. He also extended a special welcome to two principals from the Superintendent's Community of Practice in Education (SCOPE), Principal Kristel Busby from Kirkness School and Principal Rick Gingras from Meyonohk School.

The Superintendent shared that September 30 is an important day for school divisions across the province, because that is the date the Division shares our enrolment data with the provincial government. The official September count for the Division for the 2026-2027 school year is 121,613 students. This is a decrease of 401 students, or a 0.3 per cent decrease, from the September 30 count in the 2025-2026 school year. While the Division projected more than 123,000 students for this school year, Superintendent Thompson understands many other school divisions in Alberta have also seen flat enrolment growth.

The Superintendent advised that schools have just finished up the fall budgeting process, building and revising their school plans. Superintendent Thompson shared his gratitude to everyone involved in the process, from school accountants, budget consultants, the assistant superintendents, principals, school teams and central Decision Units (DUs).

The Superintendent shared that schools and central DUs are getting ready for Results Reviews, which take place next month. The central Results Reviews are earlier this year and start next week. These are great opportunities to share with staff and the community the amazing things happening around the school Division. Superintendent Thompson thanked principals and central DU administrators for all of the work they've done to prepare for those conversations. He also thanked the Board of Trustees, acknowledging that while these responsibilities add to their already busy calendars, he noted how much they enjoy this time of year celebrating the work done over the past school year and learning more about plans for the future.

The Superintendent congratulated the Communications team, who picked up two awards over the weekend at the Canadian Association of Communicators in Education Bravo Awards. They received an award for the campaign to introduce the Board of Trustees to the community exactly one year ago after they were elected. They also received an award of excellence for their work to reintroduce School Resource Officers into schools.

G. Approval of the Minutes

1. Board Meeting - October 6, 2026

MOVED BY Trustee Doll:

That the minutes of the Board meeting held October 6, 2026, be approved as presented

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

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

There were no registered speakers for this item.

I. Reports

2. Motion: Ward Map Review Including Options for Seven Wards or Nine Wards in 2029 Election (Recommendation)

The Board Chair provided a summary of the background on this report. This report was originally presented as Agenda Item 5 at the September 15, 2026 Board meeting. During the previous debate, an amendment to the recommendation was moved by Trustee Hoffman. Before that amendment was debated or voted on, the Board passed a motion to table the item until the October 6, 2026, Board meeting in order to gather additional information and clarification. At the October 6, 2026, Board meeting, the item was deferred to the October 27, 2026, Board meeting.

Administration added the extra information requested by the Board on September 15 as an appendix to the October 6 report.

According to parliamentary procedure, the motion became the property of the Board once the agenda was approved. Trustee Hoffman's absence did not stall the amendment. The amendment was attached to the main motion and must be addressed.

Because the Board paused before debate on the proposed amendment, the Board Chair opened the floor for questions to Administration.

The previous amendment, MOVED BY Trustee Hoffman at the September 15, 2026 Board meeting:

That Division Administration prepares a report for the Board of Trustees that outlines updated ward boundary maps for the 2029 election with ~~two~~ the following options ~~- one with seven wards and one with nine wards~~ - seven wards, nine wards, eleven wards, or another number in alignment with boundaries for other levels of government - be approved.

(UNANIMOUSLY DEFEATED)

The original motion, MOVED BY former Trustee Kusiek at the September 15, 2026 Board meeting:

That Division Administration prepares a report for the Board of Trustees that outlines updated ward boundary maps for the 2029 election with two options - one with seven wards and one with nine wards - be approved.

(CARRIED)

IN FAVOUR: Trustees Anderson, Lindsay, O'Keefe, and Sawyer

OPPOSED: Trustees Doll, Nichol, and Sumar

3. Ward H Trustee Coverage
   (Recommendation)

MOVED BY Trustee Anderson:

That the following actions be taken to support Trustee Hoffman's medical leave of absence:

1. That the Board authorizes Trustee Hoffman (Ward H) to take a medical leave of absence, with no trustee duties to be performed during this leave, until she is able to resume her duties.

2. That the Board approves additional remuneration for the trustee representing Ward H during Trustee Hoffman's absence, in the amount of one-third of the regular remuneration for a trustee until Trustee Hoffman resumes her duties.

3. That the Board elects one trustee to represent Ward H until Trustee Hoffman resumes her duties.

4. That the Board elects one trustee to serve on the Governance and Evaluation Committee until the next organizational meeting of the Board, scheduled for June 15, 2027.

5. That the Board elects one trustee to serve on the Specialized Learning Supports Employees (CUPE Local 3550) negotiations committee until the next organizational meeting of the Board, scheduled for June 15, 2027.

6. That the Board's ASBA Issues and Resolutions Committee, comprised of the Board Chair or Board Vice-Chair, the ASBA Provincial Executive Board of Directors representative and the ASBA Zone 2/3 alternate, be confirmed.

MOVED BY Trustee Nichol, the motion be amended:

That the following actions be taken to support Trustee Hoffman's medical leave of absence:

1. That the Board authorizes Trustee Hoffman (Ward H) to take a medical leave of absence, with no trustee duties to be performed during this leave, until she is able to resume her duties.

2. That the Board approves additional remuneration for the trustee representing Ward H during Trustee Hoffman's absence, in the amount of one-third of the regular remuneration for a trustee plus an additional bi-weekly car allowance until Trustee Hoffman resumes her duties.

3. That the Board elects one trustee to represent Ward H until Trustee Hoffman resumes her duties.

4. That the Board elects one trustee to serve on the Governance and Evaluation Committee until the next organizational meeting of the Board, scheduled for June 15, 2027.

5. That the Board elects one trustee to serve on the Specialized Learning Supports Employees (CUPE Local 3550) negotiations committee until the next organizational meeting of the Board, scheduled for June 15, 2027.

6. That the Board's ASBA Issues and Resolutions Committee, comprised of the Board Chair or Board Vice-Chair, the ASBA Provincial Executive Board of Directors representative and the ASBA Zone 2/3 alternate, be confirmed.

The Board Chair called the question on the amendment.
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

The Board Chair called the question on the amended motion.
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

There was a short break in the meeting at 3:00 p.m. The meeting resumed at 3:12 p.m.

The nominations and elections were held, resulting in the Board appointing the following positions:

Ward H Coverage

The Board Chair called for nominations for one Trustee to represent Ward H until Trustee Hoffman resumes her duties.

Trustee O'Keefe nominated Trustee Sawyer. Trustee Sawyer accepted the nomination.

Trustee Anderson nominated Trustee Doll. Trustee Doll accepted the nomination.

The Board Chair, seeing no further nominations, declared the nominations closed.

The Board Chair confirmed that the vote would be taken by a show of hands.

Trustee Doll received the majority of votes. The Board Chair declared Trustee Doll elected to represent Ward H until Trustee Hoffman resumes her duties.

Governance and Evaluation Committee

The Board Chair called for nominations for one Trustee representative to serve on the Governance and Evaluation Committee until the next organizational meeting of the Board, scheduled for June 15, 2027.

Trustee Doll nominated Trustee Anderson. Trustee Anderson accepted the nomination.

The Board Chair, seeing no further nominations, declared the nominations closed.

The Board Chair declared Trustee Anderson elected by acclamation to serve on the Governance and Evaluation Committee until the next organizational meeting of the Board, scheduled for June 15, 2027.

Specialized Learning Supports Employees (CUPE Local 3550) Negotiations Committee

The Board Chair called for nominations for one Trustee representative to serve on the Specialized Learning Supports Employees (CUPE Local 3550) Negotiations Committee until the next organizational meeting of the Board, scheduled for June 15, 2027.

Trustee O'Keefe nominated Trustee Sawyer. Trustee Sawyer did not accept the nomination.

Vice-Chair Nichol self-nominated. The nomination was accepted by Board Chair Sumar.

The Board Chair, seeing no further nominations, declared the nominations closed.

The Board Chair declared Vice-Chair Nichol elected by acclamation to serve on the Specialized Learning Supports Employees (CUPE Local 3550) Negotiations Committee until the next organizational meeting of the Board, scheduled for June 15, 2027.

4. Authorization to Enter into Joint Elections Agreement with the City of Edmonton (Recommendation)

MOVED BY Trustee Lindsay:

That the Division may enter into an agreement with the City of Edmonton to conduct joint elections for a term not longer than ten years, and that the agreement be in form and content acceptable to the Superintendent of Schools.

Trustee Sawyer left the meeting at 3:18 p.m.

The Board Chair called a short break in the meeting at 3:20 p.m., before the vote on Recommendation 1 was conducted.

The meeting resumed at 3:32 p.m.

The Board Chair called the question on Recommendation 1.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

Trustee Sawyer was absent for the vote.

MOVED BY Trustee O'Keefe:

That the City of Edmonton's Returning Officer be appointed as the Board's Returning Officer for Trustee General Elections and any other Election required by the Board during the term of the agreement.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

Trustee Sawyer was absent for the vote.

5. Board Policy CO.BP Fiscal Oversight and Accountability
   (Recommendation)

MOVED BY Trustee Anderson:

That Board Policy CO.BP Fiscal Oversight and Accountability be read for the first, second, and third time and be approved.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

Trustee Sawyer was absent for the vote.

6. Trustees' Handbook Committee Terms of Reference and 2026-27 Work Plan
   (Recommendation)

MOVED BY Vice-Chair Nichol:

That the Trustees' Handbook Committee's Terms of Reference and 2026-27 Work Plan be approved.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

Trustee Sawyer was absent for the vote.

7. Caucus Committee Report
   (Information)

The report was received as information.

J. Other Committee, Board Representative and Trustee Reports

Board Chair Sumar shared an Edmonton Public Schools Foundation (Foundation) update:

- The Foundation announced Leanne McFee as their new Board Chair. Leanne has been a dedicated member of the Foundation Board since 2019, previously serving as Vice-Chair. A retired teacher who taught for 27 years in Saskatchewan before moving to Edmonton, Leanne brings a belief in the transformative power of education and an unwavering commitment to children. The Foundation is grateful to have Leanne stepping into this role.
- The Foundation also announced that Leanne Moncrieff has been appointed to the role of Vice Chair for the Foundation. Leanne is a retired Edmonton Public School Board principal and educator, and the Foundation feels fortunate to have Leanne stepping into this leadership role.
- The Foundation announced the launch of its brand-new Endowment Fund. This fund represents a transformational milestone, ensuring a permanent, sustainable source of funding to help Edmonton students thrive for generations to come. To celebrate this launch, the Edmonton Community Foundation has generously agreed to match all donations dollar-for-dollar up to $50,000 from now until December 31, 2026. This means every gift made today goes twice as far toward building a lasting foundation for Edmonton students. Visit the Foundation's website to learn more.

K. Trustees and Board Requests for Information

Trustee Anderson submitted a Request for Information regarding the Ministerial Order 26/2026, Flag Display Regulation:

The Flag Display Regulation imposes new requirements on school divisions that were not requested by our school communities and that carry financial and operational implications for local education priorities.

Understanding the financial, operational, and community impacts of implementing and maintaining these requirements is important to ensuring transparency, accountability, and informed Board advocacy.

This information request seeks to understand the Division’s implementation and maintenance costs, as well as the identification of and applications for exemptions under the regulation and ongoing school level support.

1. What are the costs associated with implementing the Flag Display Regulation, including material costs (e.g., flagpoles and flags) and administrative costs (e.g., staff time)?
2. What are the anticipated ongoing maintenance and replacement costs?
3. Where will the funds come from?
4. What are potential additional dates of significance, recognition, or symbols of distinction that the Division will consider when identifying and applying for exemptions to help ensure school communities feel safe, cared for, and respected?

5. How will administration support consistent implementation of the regulation across the Division, including providing guidance to principals and staff on interpretation and the exercise of professional judgment where requirements are unclear?
6. How will administration assess and monitor the regulation's impacts on students, staff and communities, including opportunities for students, families and staff to provide feedback and processes to address concerns or unintended consequences?

This RFI will enable the Board to share timely information with the public about the financial, operational, and school community impacts of the regulation. It will also help identify opportunities to support administration in determining appropriate exemptions.

The information gathered will help the Board assess the scope and urgency of advocating for provincial funding to cover the costs associated with implementing and maintaining these requirements. As these obligations arise from a provincial regulation, it is important to understand their full impact on Division resources, including classrooms, and the potential implications for existing priorities.

The timing of this request is intended to allow Division staff to proactively collect the necessary information and support informed decision-making and advocacy.

L. Notices of Motion

None

M. Meeting Dates

Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, November 10, 2026, at 2 p.m.

N. Adjournment

3:50 p.m. – The Board Chair adjourned the meeting.

Saadiq Sumar, Board Chair	Kelsey Duebel, Director Board and Superintendent Relations