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 6, 2026, at 2 p.m.

Present

Trustees	**Nickela Anderson, Sarah Doll, 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, 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. Chair Sumar received permission from LJ, a student from wîhkwêntôwin School, to share his land acknowledgement, which was shared at the Truth and Reconciliation Division Event on Tuesday, September 29.

"Today I am here to share a message of hope. As we come together on Treaty 6 land, we promise to remember the Indigenous people such as the Cree, Saulteaux, Blackfoot, Metis, Dene and Nakota Sioux. As we have learned and continue to learn about the experiences that many of the Indigenous people have gone through, I hope that we can all keep an open mind and heart. We will remember the people that have cared for this beautiful land that we stand on today. We are all treaty people and we can work together to share hope and knowledge to everyone."

The Board Chair shared that last week, the Division commemorated the National Day for Truth & Reconciliation. This included a gesture of the Board's commitment to reconciliation. Reconciliation & Orange Shirt Day cannot be limited to one day, particularly when we consider the socialization of residential school denialism. Truth comes before Reconciliation. As a Division, we have a responsibility to elevate Indigenous stories and voices. A great example of that in action was the opening of the new Jane Flett Mackay exhibit at the McKay Avenue School. Chair Sumar thanked Division staff for all their work to bring Jane Mackay's story to life; he thanked her family who came from near and far to share more about her story; and he thanked the Metis knowledge keeper, Donna Bird, for underscoring the importance of her legacy and work in a time of racism and discrimination.

B. O Canada

The Ross Sheppard Concert Band video version of O Canada was played.

C. Roll Call

2:05 p.m. – The Superintendent advised that Trustee Nichol joined virtually and all other Trustees were present.

D. Approval of Agenda

Board Chair Sumar advised that since the report originator, Trustee Kusiek, and the mover of the amendment, Trustee Hoffman, were both absent, he would like to defer Agenda Item 2, Motion re: Ward Map Review Including Options for Seven Wards or Nine Wards in 2029 Election, to the October 27, 2026, Board meeting.

MOVED BY Board Chair Sumar:
That Agenda Item 2 be deferred to the October 27, 2026, Board meeting.
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

MOVED BY Trustee Lindsay:
That the agenda for the October 6, 2026, Board meeting be approved as amended.
(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

E. Communications from the Board Chair

The Board Chair noted that Custodial Appreciation Day was on Friday. It was an opportunity to honour the work of custodians who provide our students with clean, safe, & high quality learning environments. Yesterday was World Teacher Day, which is celebrated annually to recognize the vital role of educators in shaping education and society. Chair Sumar thanked all Division custodians and teachers for providing high quality public education that supports students' success and builds compassion and connection.

The Board Chair advised that October in the City of Edmonton is Learning Month. He had the privilege of attending today's ceremonies at City Hall to launch Learning Month. Since 2022, Edmonton is the only Canadian City to have joined the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities, demonstrating a commitment to lifelong learning. Chair Sumar thanked Edmonton City Council and other learning partners for continuing to support this journey for all Edmontonians.

The Board Chair shared that part of Learning Month is Read In Week. This year's theme is "Let Stories Soar", celebrating how stories open minds to new worlds, adventures and formats. The Board of Trustees have been invited to several schools to participate, and he thanked Division schools for giving Trustees the opportunity to connect with students and share their love of reading. He also thanked all volunteers and community members for taking the time out of their busy schedules to read to students.

The Board Chair said he also had the opportunity to represent the Board at the groundbreaking ceremony for the new high school in the Callingwood area. École l'Odyssée and École l'Envolée are scheduled to open in 2029 and will welcome 1,260 students in Grades 7 to 12. Congratulations to Conseil Scolaire Centre Nord on this achievement.

The Board Chair thanked the many community leagues for hosting members of the Board at various Community League Day events. These events and activities are a great way to connect with members of the community beyond parents that Trustees interact with at school council. He thanked them for the invitations and the opportunities to develop good relationships.

F. Communications from the Superintendent of Schools

The Superintendent welcomed everyone attending the meeting in person and those watching online to the first meeting in October. He also welcomed SCOPE Principal Jillian Marino from Vimy Ridge Academy.

The Superintendent said it's a busy time around the Division; as the Board Chair mentioned in his opening comments, it was Custodial Appreciation Day on Friday, World Teachers' Day yesterday, and one of our favourite times around the Division: READ In Week. This year's theme is "Let Stories Soar". He knows Trustees have received more invitations than they can get to, but he also knows that schools are appreciative of having Trustees come read to their students this week and share their enthusiasm for reading.

The Superintendent shared that last week, he and the Board had the honour of attending the Division's annual National Day for Truth and Reconciliation event at Victoria School. The event was livestreamed to schools across the Division and is one of the many ways schools gathered, reflected and remembered those who didn't come home. After the event, the Board, himself and other members of the Division Support Team had an opportunity to meet with residential school survivors and family members to hear more about their lived experiences and hopes for the future. Guided by the Division's Strategic Plan and by the work staff are doing in schools each and every day, he knows we're making a difference as we continue to address the Calls to Action outlined in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's report. Superintendent thanked the staff in the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit unit who spent so much time organizing this important day of reflection for the entire Division.

The Superintendent said Edmonton is part of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities. Led by the City of Edmonton, this initiative brings together Edmonton Public Schools and other partners, including Edmonton Public Library, Edmonton Catholic Schools, Conseil scolaire Centre-Nord and eight post-secondary institutions. While he thinks the Division does a great job celebrating learning every single day, October gives us an extra excuse to celebrate all that's going on across the Division.

The Superintendent advised that last week, the province shared more information with school divisions about the School Critical Emergency Standards and School Critical Emergency Guidelines, which apply to all divisions across the province. The Ministerial Order sets expectations for how

divisions and schools handle emergencies. As the Board may be aware, school divisions are expected to establish a framework by January 4, 2027 and schools will have until April 5, 2027 to have School Critical Emergency Plans that align with the Division framework. Currently, the Division has staff in Central who are reviewing the provincial standards and comparing them to the current Division practices, looking for alignment and identifying any areas that need to be addressed. The Division has just started this work and will have more information to share later this fall.

The Superintendent shared that throughout September, many Division schools participate in the Terry Fox Run, raising funds and awareness for cancer research. Annually, the run welcomes more than 10,000 schools and 4 million students, who raise tens of millions of dollars for cancer research in Canada. The Division is proud of our staff and students who get involved in this amazing event, continuing the legacy that Terry Fox started. One of our schools raised the most funds in all of Canada. He congratulated the students and staff at Avalon School for raising over $111,000. He also shared that Principal Kirsten Johns-Bell is new to the school and promised students that if they reached their fundraising goal, she'd get a tattoo. Students are working on a design for her to choose from, based on the school logo. Additionally, five staff members have also agreed to get a tattoo. Superintendent Thompson extended a huge thank you to Avalon and all Division schools for organizing and participating in these impactful and meaningful events last month.

G. Approval of the Minutes

1. Board Meeting - September 15, 2026

MOVED BY Trustee O'Keefe:

That the minutes of the Board meeting held September 15, 2026, be approved as presented.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

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

The live stream of the Board meeting was suspended at 2:18 p.m. to hear from registered speakers.

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

One registered speaker submitted their comments via email, as they were unable to attend.

The live stream of the Board meeting resumed at 2:31 p.m. after all registered speakers had been heard.

I. Comments from the Public and Staff Group Representatives on Education Topics

There were no registered speakers for this item.

J. Reports

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

This report was deferred to the October 27, 2026 Board meeting.

3. Confirmation of Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) Provincial Executive
(Recommendation)

Trustee Doll left the meeting at 2:33 p.m. and returned at 2:35 p.m.

MOVED BY Trustee Sawyer:

That the Board of Trustees reappoint or review the position of Provincial Executive (Director) representative for the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA), effective following the conclusion of the November 2026 Fall General Meeting.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

The Board Chair called for nominations for the position of ASBA Provincial Executive.

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

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

The Board Chair declared Trustee Lindsay elected by acclamation as ASBA Provincial Executive (Director), serving a two-year term following the conclusion of the ASBA 2026 Fall General Meeting.

4. Motion re: Recommendations for Alignment of Board Policies with the Recognition of Every Child's Right to Education
(Recommendation)

MOVED BY Trustee Doll:

That the Policy Review Committee (PRC) review relevant Board policies and develop recommendations to align those policies with the recognition of every child's right to education as described in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The review should be informed by input from Administration regarding operational, legal and financial considerations.

There was a short break in the meeting at 2:49 p.m., and it resumed at 2:55 p.m.

MOVED BY Board Chair Sumar:

That the Board of Trustees move the meeting in camera to consult with legal counsel.

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

OPPOSED: Trustee Nichol

(CARRIED)

The Board of Trustees moved in-camera at 3:01 p.m., with Superintendent Thompson, Ms. Duebel, Director Board and Superintendent Relations and Ms. Cooke, General Counsel. Trustee Nichol joined the in-camera meeting virtually.

The Board of Trustees and relevant officials returned to McCauley Chambers to resume the public Board meeting at 3:36 p.m.

MOVED BY Trustee Sawyer, the motion be amended:

That the Policy Review Committee (PRC) review relevant Board policies and explore how ~~develop recommendations~~ to align those policies with the recognition of every child's right to education as described in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and bring a recommendation to the Board. The review should be informed by input from Administration regarding operational, legal and financial considerations.

The Board Chair called the question on the amendment.

IN FAVOUR: Trustee Sawyer

OPPOSED: Trustees Anderson, Doll, Lindsay, Nichol, O'Keefe, and Sumar

(DEFEATED)

The Board Chair called the question on the original motion:

That the Policy Review Committee (PRC) review relevant Board policies and develop recommendations to align those policies with the recognition of every child's right to education as described in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The review should be informed by input from Administration regarding operational, legal and financial considerations.

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

OPPOSED: Trustees O'Keefe and Sawyer

(CARRIED)

There was a short break in the meeting at 4:13 p.m. The meeting resumed at 4:25 p.m.

5. Second and Third Reading of Board Policy CH.BP Framework for Policy Development and Review
(Recommendation)

MOVED BY Trustee Anderson:

That Board Policy CH.BP Framework for Policy Development and Review be read for the second time.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

MOVED BY Trustee Anderson:

That Board Policy CH.BP Framework for Policy Development and Review be read for the third time and approved.

(UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED)

6. Caucus Committee Report
(Information)

The report was received as information.

K. Other Committee, Board Representative and Trustee Reports

No reports were submitted.

L. Trustees and Board Requests for Information

None

M. Notices of Motion

None

N. Meeting Dates

Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, October 27, 2026, at 2 p.m.

O. Adjournment

4:35 p.m. – The Board Chair adjourned the meeting.

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