



APRIL 22, 2021

Chair's Report

RECENT EVENTS

Board Chair Trina Boymook highlighted a few recent events and shared information:

- On March 26, Chair Boymook attended the virtual Alberta School Boards Association Zone 2/3 meeting—with special guest Education Minister Adriana LaGrange.
- On March 29, Chair Boymook, Superintendent Mark Liguori and school boards across the province met virtually with LaGrange for a debrief of the new draft K-6 curriculum.

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

National Volunteer Week takes place April 19-23. Within EIPS, hundreds of volunteers offer their time and expertise on an ongoing basis. While that work looked a little different this year, the commitment from families remains the same. Collectively, these efforts help to support the success of EIPS schools and make a profound difference in the lives of students and their learning environments. In recognition of National Volunteer Week, and on behalf of the Board of Trustees, Chair Boymook thanked all EIPS volunteers for the many ways they give their time, skills and resources to the Division.

Association and Local Reports

ASBA ZONE 2/3 REPORT

Trustee Heather Wall attended a virtual Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) Zone 2/3 meeting on March 19, 2021. The meeting included robust discussions and reports from the ASBA President, CEO, directors and Advocacy Committee.

ATA LOCAL REPORT

The Board received for information the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) Local No. 28 report from President Deneen Zielke:

- Zielke thanked EIPS for deciding not to pilot the new draft K-6 curriculum. Both the ATA and Local have serious concerns with the draft curriculum and oppose the document in its current state.
- Overall, teachers are feeling anxious and overwhelmed—for good reason. The province is now in its third wave, the number of school alerts and outbreaks are on the rise and access to vaccines is still limited.

New Business

COVID-19 COST UPDATE AND REALLOCATION OF FUNDS

The Board approved changes to the budget estimates for costs related to COVID-19. Recently, administration reviewed the Division's estimated COVID-19 costs for the 2020-21 school year—based on the province's Scenario 1 school re-entry plan. Overall, medical illness costs related to COVID-19 are lower than estimated—by \$850,000. As such, Financial Services now estimates the Division will need \$2.05 million to cover the remaining COVID-19 costs for the 2020-21 school year—down from \$2.90 million. Additionally, the Division anticipates a surplus of \$243,00 in the personal protective equipment and custodial budgets.

The Board also approved an adjustment to the Division's To Be Allocated budget. The additional funds (\$183,500) will cover expenses for the upcoming election; furniture and equipment for four modular unit classrooms; curriculum costs; evergreening student computers at schools with need; and strobe lights for emergency notification systems in high-noise areas.

TRANSFER TO CAPITAL RESERVES

The Board approved transferring \$1 million to capital reserves from the Division Unallocated Operating Reserves. The move ensures the Division has adequate funds to maintain its capital assets and address any unexpected capital needs.

2021-22 KEY BUDGET ASSUMPTIONS

The Board approved the key budget assumptions for the 2021-22 school year (see pg. 16, "[2021-22 Key Budget Assumptions](#)"). The assumptions are based on the province's Budget 2021 and *Funding Manual for School Authorities 2021-22 School Year*. EIPS will now use the approved assumptions to develop a conservative 2021-22 spring budget. The budget then allows schools and departments to begin planning for the upcoming school year. As with all assumptions, any changes such as funding changes, reserve usage, enrolment numbers and standard costs can affect the initial budget.

ASSUMPTION HIGHLIGHTS

- **General operations:** Operations will align closely with the 2020-21 spring budget—except the 2021-22 spring budget will include COVID-19 cost estimates.
- **Alberta Education:** EIPS anticipates it will receive the funding amount outlined in Alberta Education's *Funding Manual for School Authorities 2021-22 School Year*.
- **Other Funding:** EIPS expects provincial funding to cover lease agreements and the French programming; the Mental Health Capacity Building grant to remain in place; a school fee collection rate similar to the 2018-19 school year; assessments for Program Unit Funding completed by deadlines imposed by Alberta Education; and School Generated Funds to return to normal, similar to the 2018-19 actuals.
- **Enrolment:** For the 2021-22 school year, the Division expects slightly higher student registration numbers than in fall 2020—increasing to 17,176 students.
- **Compensation:** EIPS anticipates employee compensation to stay the same—a 0% increase to staff salaries. The certificated standard costs are expected to increase by 1.7%—mostly because of grid movement and increases to benefit costs. Similarly, classified standard-cost changes will increase between 0.7% and 5.5%—based on grid movement and benefits costs.
- **Reserves:** The 2021-22 budget will include an estimated 1% reserve spending by schools and departments, and additional reserve usage of Division Allocated Operating Reserves, School Generated Funds and capital reserves.
- **Expenses:** The Division projects higher costs for insurance premiums—up to 15% for liability and property, and 25% for bus operators—and the increase of \$10 per tonne for the Federal Carbon Tax. Meanwhile, the Division will see savings related to lease space for Next Step Fort Saskatchewan and Next Step Vegreville. Both schools are moving into school sites for the upcoming school year—Salisbury Composite High and Vegreville Composite High, respectively.
- **Inflation:** EIPS anticipates a slight increase in non-salary inflationary costs for schools and departments.
- **Board System and Administration:** Board system and administration expenses will stay within the targeted grant amount provided by Alberta Education. The Division will use any unused amount for Board expenditures, such as instruction.

ALLOCATIONS AND USE OF RESERVES: 2021-22

The Board approved the budget allocations and reserve use for the 2021-22 school year (see pg. 27, "[2021-22 Budget Allocations and Use of Reserves](#)"). The following is a brief summary of the approved allocations and reserve usage.

ALLOCATIONS

For the 2021-22 school year, funding from Alberta Education is relatively the same as the current school year. The Division's projected accumulated surplus, which includes investment in tangible capital assets, operating reserves and capital reserves, is \$14 million, as of Aug. 31, 2022. Allocations for schools, Supports for Students and Central Services departments will see a slight increase—primarily because of higher standard costs, benefit expenses, changes in Program Unit Funding and reserve usage. Overall, EIPS plans to access \$2.19 million from its operating reserves for schools and departments and \$4.66 million from the Division Allocated Reserves to support Division projects. In terms of capital reserves, the Division anticipates using \$400,000. And, finally, projected Division Unallocated Reserves is \$5.76 million—well within the recommended 2% of the budget.

RESERVE FUND REQUESTS

The Board approved the following reserve fund requests:

- Transfer \$5.76 million to the Division Allocated Reserves from the Division Unallocated Operating Reserves.
- The use of \$4.67 million from the Division Allocated Operating Reserves to cover COVID-19 costs, the Focus on Learning Loss initiative, social-emotional supports and other Division project expenses.
- Transfer \$500,000 to Division Allocated Capital Reserves from the Division Unallocated Capital Reserves.
- The use of \$400,000 from capital reserves to update or replace ageing equipment at schools and information technology equipment.

SCHOOL FEES: 2021-22

The Board approved the proposed School Fees for 2021-22, which outlines how fees are charged for optional courses, noon supervision, and extracurricular and activity expenses. Now approved, each school will post fees on their individual websites for the 2021-22 school year.

2021-22 ADMINISTRATIVE FEES

FACILITY RENTAL FEES

The Board approved the facility rental and lease fees for the 2021-22 school year. Fees are reviewed annually and determined by current market rates and operational cost-recovery analysis. Based on that review, fees will remain the same as the previous year (see, [After-Hour Fee Schedule:2021-22](#)).

SPECIALIZED SUPPORTS FEES

The Board approved the Specialized Supports Fees for the 2021-22 school year. The fees cover the costs associated with providing specialized supports and services in both inclusive settings and system programs for non-resident students. For 2021-22, fees will increase slightly because of higher standard costs for staff working in specialized system programs (see pg. 103, "[2021-22 Specialized Supports Fees](#)").

PARTNERS FOR SCIENCE

The Board approved the Partners for Science (P4S) fees for the 2021-22 school year. Annually, EIPS supplies its schools and other school jurisdictions with P4S kits. Fees aren't charged to EIPS schools but are charged to other school jurisdictions. For the upcoming school year, these fees will remain the same as the 2020-21 rates. The Division will also continue to charge a \$25 restocking fee for any P4S kits returned late. Overall, the fees help offset the costs associated with the P4S program (see page 106, "[2021-22 Partners for Science Fees](#)").

ALBERTA NON-RESIDENT AND INTERNATIONAL

The Board approved the Alberta non-resident and international fees for the 2021-22 school year. Rates for non-Alberta residents and international students will remain unchanged and are comparable to other Alberta-based school division rates. Currently, there are five international students—four full-time and one part-time—enrolled in EIPS schools and zero non-Albertan resident students (see [Non-Resident Student Fees](#)).



BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

PLAY AND LEARN AT SCHOOL

The Board approved the Play and Learn at School (PALS) fees for the 2021-22 school year. The fee is for the typically developing twin of a child who meets the criteria for PALS programming—providing programming for a typically developing twin benefits the child with disabilities and the PALS program as a whole. For the 2021-22 school year, fees remain unchanged. (see pg. 112, "[2021-22 Play and Learn at School \(PALS\) Fees](#)").

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION FEES

The Board approved the Student Transportation fees for the 2021-22 school year. In 2020-21, the Division introduced a two-tiered, cost-recovery fee structure. As such, all riders—eligible and ineligible—now pay a fee for student transportation services. Overall, the new fee structure is more equitable for riders and allows EIPS to deliver its current level of service. For the 2021-22 school year, fees remain unchanged from the previous year. Student Transportation will also continue to offer a payment-plan option—available to all families with fees of \$300 and more.

ANDREW SCHOOL ATTENDANCE BOUNDARY: STUDENT TRANSPORTATION ELIGIBILITY

The Board approved a change to Student Transportation eligibility for senior high students living in the Andrew School attendance boundary (see page 119, "[Andrew Attendance Boundary Student Transportation Fee Eligibility Criteria](#)").

Committee Reports

ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

The Board received for information a report about the Advocacy Committee meeting held on April 6. Topics discussed: strategies for the Board's advocacy efforts and what to include in the next *EIPS Quarterly Update*.

POLICY COMMITTEE

The Board received for information a report about the Policy Committee meeting held on April 13. The committee reviewed six Board policies, three of which require minor edits—coming forward at an upcoming Board meeting.

STUDENT EXPULSION COMMITTEE

The Board received for information a report from the Student Expulsion Committee, which held one hearing on April 6.

Reports for Information

FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS

The Board received for information a report regarding the Division's financial projection for the 2020-21 year-end. Policy 2: Role of the Board states the Board of Trustees will monitor the fiscal management of the Division, including reviewing year-end projections. Overall, EIPS projects an increase in the accumulated surplus of \$2.59 million from its audited balance on Aug. 31, 2020. Operating reserves will increase by \$2.3 million, capital reserves will increase by \$312,000, and tangible capital assets remain unchanged. The projected \$2.59-million surplus is \$7.31 million more than budgeted. For the most part, the variance is the result of increases to the Division Operating Reserve from the provincial COVID-19 mitigation funding recognized in the current school year, projected surpluses from department programs, a surplus in standard teaching costs and other items (see pg. 122, "[Financial Projections 2020-21](#)").

Trustee Reports Roundtable

RECENT EVENTS

Trustees shared information and highlighted recent events:

- **Vice-Chair Colleen Holowaychuk** attended her regular school council meetings and the April Committee of School Councils (COSC) meeting. She's also looking forward to the upcoming 2021 Alberta School Councils' Association conference.
- **Trustee Randy Footz** attended school council meetings for A.L. Horton Elementary and Vegreville Composite High—attendees at both meetings voiced support for the existing school fees. He also toured Vegreville Composite High's new office and reception area and the planned space for Next Step Vegreville.
- **Trustee Skip Gordon** attended his regular school council meetings and the April COSC meeting.
- **Trustee Annette Hubick** attended the Alberta School Board Association Zone 2/3 meeting featuring special guest Education Minister Adriana LaGrange. She also attended Strathcona Christian Academy (SCA) Secondary's virtual presentation about how to support students during challenging times; the April COSC meeting; and school council meetings for Davidson Creek Elementary, Brentwood Elementary and Clover Bar Junior High—which all included thoughtful feedback about the draft K-6 curriculum.
- **Trustee Don Irwin** attended various meetings, including the regular school council meetings, the April COSC meeting, Board budget meetings and the Advocacy Committee meeting. In addition, he attended F.R. Haythorne Junior High's virtual open house and SCA Secondary's virtual presentation about how to support students during challenging times—both events were excellent.
- **Trustee Jim Seutter** attended virtual school council meetings for Heritage Hills Elementary, Lakeland Ridge and Fultonvale Elementary Junior High. He also took part in SCA Secondary's virtual presentation about how to support students during challenging times, which he quite enjoyed.
- **Trustee Harvey Stadnick** attended his regular school council meetings.
- **Trustee Heather Wall** attended her regular school council meetings.

EIPS BEREAVEMENT

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, Chair Boymook extended condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of Cathy Rudnisky, an Educational Assistant who worked with Elk Island Public Schools since 1999. Rudnisky passed away earlier this week. For the last 18 years, she worked at Ardrossan Junior Senior High, assisting the teaching team and supporting students. Over the years, she helped countless senior high students achieve their goal of graduating—through Alberta Distance Learning—and supported many junior high students with their learning and achievement goals. She'll be remembered for her infectious smile and as a staunch advocate for students. She will be missed by all.

Board Members

Trina Boymook, *Chair* | Colleen Holowaychuk, *Vice-Chair* | Randy Footz | William (Skip) Gordon
| Annette Hubick | Don Irwin | Jim Seutter | Harvey Stadnick | Heather Wall

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Trina Boymook, *Board Chair* | P 780 417 8101

Laura McNabb, *Director, Communication Services* | P 780 417 8204

www.eips.ca | Twitter: [@eips](https://twitter.com/eips) | Facebook: [elkislandpublicschools](https://www.facebook.com/elkislandpublicschools)