



Committee of School Councils

MEETING MINUTES

Elk Island Public Schools, virtual meeting
April 7, 2021 | 6:30 p.m.

In Attendance

SCHOOL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

Chair: Lesley Bowman, Pine Street Elementary
Vice-Chair: Devon Marshall, SCA Elementary
Secretary: Brian Vick, Brentwood Elementary

Michelle Uytterhagen, Fultonvale Elementary
Junior High
Jessica Winship, Glen Allan Elementary
Sara Without, Heritage Hills Elementary &
Woodbridge Farms Elementary

SCHOOL COUNCIL MEMBERS

Shaheen Alarakhia, École Campbelltown
Ken Allan, A.L. Horton Elementary
Jackie Anderson, Ardrossan Elementary & Ardrossan
Junior Senior High
Aileen Bozic, SCA Secondary
April Childs, Lakeland Ridge
Nadine Fricke, James Mowat Elementary
Jen Fraser, Salisbury Composite High
Cara Kern, Pine Street Elementary
Cassandra Levitt, Fort Saskatchewan Christian
Theresa MacKenzie, Westboro Elementary
Melissa Pressé, Davidson Creek Elementary
Kimberly Scott, Westboro Elementary
Krista Scott, Bev Facey Community High, Fultonvale
Elementary Junior High & SCA Secondary
Jacquie Surgenor, Westboro Elementary &
Salisbury Composite High School

ELK ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Trina Boymook, Chair
Colleen Holowaychuk, Vice-Chair
Randy Footz, Trustee
Skip Gordon, Trustee
Annette Hubick, Trustee
Don Irwin, Trustee
Jim Seutter, Trustee
Harvey Stadnick, Trustee

ELK ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Mark Liguori, Superintendent
Sandra Stoddard, Associate Superintendent
Deneen Ziekle, ATA Local No. 28 President
Marcus Reed, Director, Supports for Students
Corrie Fletcher, Communication Services

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

COSC Chair Bowman called for additions or deletions to the agenda for April 7, 2021.

MOTION | The agenda be adopted, as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Bowman called for confirmation of the meeting minutes for March 3, 2021.

MOTION | The agenda be adopted, as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

Board Report

Board Chair Trina Boymook presented the Board report.

HIGHLIGHTS

- On March 18, the Board of Trustees met for a budget working session to discuss priorities for the next year, COVID-19 costs and reserve use for the next two years.
- On March 25, the Board held a special meeting. Trustees approved:
 - The motion to update the Division's modular classroom request. The request now includes the relocation of two modular units to Ardrossan Junior Senior High from École Campbelltown.
 - The use of To Be Allocated funds to hire three full-time family school liaison workers to connect with identified out-of-school learners.
- On March 29, Chair Boymook, Superintendent Mark Liguori and school boards across the province met virtually with Education Minister Adriana LaGrange for a debrief of the new draft K-6 curriculum. Over the next few months, the Division will review the new draft K-6 curriculum with groups of EIPS teachers. The Board will use the review to provide official feedback to the Minister. Trustees encourage families to review the draft curriculum and provide feedback through the province's online survey.
- On April 8, the Board meets for a Caucus meeting, which will include budget discussions and funding allocation.
- On April 15 and 19, the Board meets again about the spring budget.
- The April 22 Board meeting includes the approval of school allocations, school fees and administrative fees. The Board encourages all school councils to include school budget discussions on the agenda for their next meeting.
- The Board is not considering a technology fee for the 2021-22 school year. As such, senior administration will update the Division's technology plan. Once reviewed by the Board, Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) will share the plan with COSC members.
- April is the month EIPS recognizes its many volunteers. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, Chair Boymook extended thanks to all COSC members for the time they give to their school and the Division, which is vital to its success.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Comment: Thank you Trina. It's always good to have you here to share your report.

Question: I believe through social media, there was talk school divisions participating in piloting the new draft curriculum, will receive greater attention for their feedback, as opposed to school divisions not participating. Is this true?

Answer: The Education Minister invited all boards to provide feedback. The decision to pilot is an operational one, and made by the school division's Superintendent. EIPS made the decision to not pilot the curriculum well before the draft curriculum came out. The Minister said, typically 10 per cent of school divisions participate in piloting. Currently, six out of 61 divisions are participating.

Q: Do you know of any school boards, at this time, that are on board to pilot the draft curriculum? Is that information available?

A: I've read Fort McMurray Catholic Schools, and the francophone school in Sherwood Park will pilot the curriculum. The Education Minister wants to see a sizeable number of school divisions piloting it.

Q: Is there a lower threshold number that's acceptable for piloting—for example, what if only two school boards decide to participate?

A: During the meeting with the Education Minister, the timing of the pilot was questioned, given the pandemic. We have our plates full, and we question if there are enough boards participating. She replied she'd like to see 10 per cent participate.

ATA Report

ATA Local No. 28 President Deneen Zielke presented the ATA report.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Zielke thanked EIPS for deciding not to pilot the new draft K-6 curriculum. The curriculum is heavy on knowledge and lacks the teaching of skills and attributes children need to flourish in a connected world. 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.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Comment: I can see there will be difficulty with parents attempting to decipher this curriculum. Understanding the past curriculum, comparing it to the new curriculum, and understanding those comparisons will be difficult. I myself have had difficulty with these items—trying to understand the impact the new curriculum will have on my children.

Question: Where can we go for help on these issues?

Answer: You could talk to teachers and administrators. They will point out the differences in the curriculum. The differences are vast and encompass everything. The new curriculum is heavy on fact and memorization. Teachers, in general, were shut out of the process, and those who were involved had to sign non-disclosure agreements.

Comment: EIPS will take a good look at the new draft K-6 curriculum and provide feedback, which it will make available to families.

Comment: Anyone who finds a tool to help navigate the new draft curriculum, please share that tool.

For Information

ASCA UPDATE – Krista Scott and Jacquie Surgenor, COSC members and ASCA Board directors

- The Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) website includes videos to help navigate the upcoming annual general meeting.
- One video deals with motions and resolutions.
- On March 24, ASCA posted an e-Bulletin about the nullification of a resolution, the rationale for that nullification and next steps.
- *REMINDER:* If you're not attending the annual general meeting, someone can carry a proxy for you.
- The ASCA annual general meeting includes many important resolutions and the directors' election.
- Since the release of the draft curriculum, ASCA has worked closely with Alberta Education.
- An emergent resolution is an advocacy resolution that arises after the close of proposal for resolutions.
- The province released the new draft curriculum after the call for proposed resolutions closed. As such, ASCA will allow school councils to put forth related emergent resolutions.
- There is a proper process for presenting an emergent resolution. For more information contact the ASCA office.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Question: How do we get approval from a voter to proxy for us? Will you or Krista do it?

Answer: Krista and I do not get a vote, however there are members within EIPS who are going.

Q: If a school council wants to put forward an emergent resolution, is that school council, or voter required to attend the AGM?

A: Yes.

Comment: Do we have to attend the annual general meeting to put forward an emergent resolution? If so, our school council will discuss putting one together. Maybe we can co-ordinate putting one together through the COSC Facebook group.

ASCA PROXY VOTE – Lesley Bowman, COSC Chair

- If you can't attend the annual general meeting, you can fill out a proxy form.
- The proxy form's included in the meeting package and available online.
- If you're carrying proxy votes for other school councils, just one device is all that is needed to vote.
- It's the responsibility of the school council assigning the proxy vote to ensure whoever makes the voting understands its intentions.
- If guidance isn't given, the proxy holder has the discretion to vote according to his or her intentions.

CAREGIVER SERIES UPDATE – Lesley Bowman, COSC Chair

- The April Caregiver Series [schedule](#) is now available.
- Offered through Alberta Health Services, the sessions are informative and the resources valuable.
- School councils are hearing comments about mental health issues—affecting parents and children.
- Bowman encouraged members to review the April Caregiver Series calendar.

SAFFRON CYBER SECOND – Lesley Bowman, COSC Chair

- The April issue of the [Saffron Cyber Second](#) is now available.
- The newsletter offers tips, tools and strategies to help children develop skills for healthy and safe online experiences.
- Consider distributing it in a school council newsletter, the school newsletter or through social media.

New Business

CURRICULUM UPDATE— Mark Liguori, Superintendent, EIPS

- When it comes to the new curriculum, the first thing a person should look at are two specific documents—the guiding framework and competencies overview, both put out by the province.
- [The guiding framework for the design and development of kindergarten to grade 12 provincial curriculum](#) was developed before any work started on the draft K-6 curriculum.
 - The document answers a lot of peoples' questions as to what the curriculum is about.
 - It's recommended to look at the document before digging into the curriculum itself.
- The [Alberta Education: Competencies Overview](#) is developed by Alberta Education.
 - The document outlines what students should achieve through the curriculum.
 - For example, critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, collaboration, citizenship, personal growth and well-being.
- Review both documents and then dig into the draft curriculum.
- Looking at these first will allow you to better calibrate what should be in the curriculum.
- EIPS approached the Board early on, as to why it's not piloting the new curriculum.
- By the time the 2021-22 year is finished, children piloting the program will go three years without a normal education. To add draft curriculum to the 2021-22 school year isn't what the Division desires.
- It takes lots of work to introduce new curriculum, and getting it right the first time is difficult.
- Learners have to have a solid and normal third year—in 2021-22—before introducing new curriculum.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Comment: Thank you. If we are talking to parents at school council meetings, your comments will certainly help conceptualize a game plan to approach Alberta Education.

Question: Is it OK to share with parents in our school council, EIPS decided early not to pilot the curriculum, and to also share with them the reasons given tonight.

Answer: Yes, that's fair. We have a formidable task, with a ton of work ahead of us, just to return to normal.

Q: How much material is in this guiding framework document? How large is it?

A: It's not too bad, there are 27 pages, and it's readable.

C: We're glad you're taking a good look at the draft curriculum—the good, and the bad.

COVID-19 UPDATE – Mark Liguori, Superintendent, EIPS

- EIPS currently has one active COVID-19 case.
- Since the last meeting, EIPS had 12 cases of COVID-19—11 are now recovered.
- Two of the past 12 cases were identified as a variant of concern.
- The Division expects the number of COVID-19 cases to rise over the next two weeks to three weeks, which could impact schools and classes.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Question: Given a variant of concern was detected, will the flow of information change?

Answer: Nothing will change in that regard. EIPS will work as hard and as fast as it can. There may be some small delays though, but not days or weeks. Typically, everyone's on top of it.

Q: Has there been any in-school transmission?

A: To the best of our knowledge, no.

Q: If there is a confirmed case on a school bus, will the current protocols change?

A: Based on the information we have from Alberta Health Services, the protocols remain the same. However, the situation is fluid and could change.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND SPECIALIZED PROGRAMMING WITHIN EIPS: PALS TO GRADE 12 –

Marcus Reed, Director, Supports for Students

- EIPS believes in the inclusion of all children and students in a way that maximizes their learning potential and fosters their sense of belonging to the school community and larger society.
- Inclusion is an approach, not a place—a values-based approach to accepting responsibility for all children and students.
- Successful inclusion involves:
 - beliefs and values that encompass a sense of community, all learners belong to the community and all children and students can learn;
 - effective teaching and learning for all learners;
 - a commitment to professional learning on the part of teachers and support staff;
 - a commitment to teamwork and a willingness to share expertise and learn from one another;
 - a collaborative approach with families that offers opportunities and support to help their children be successful learners and contribute to decision-making about their child's education;
 - thoughtful and intentional planning for academic and social development opportunities for all children and students; and
 - a school culture and environment where everyone belongs and everyone learns together.

- When you have inclusive schools, you build diverse communities.
- EIPS does everything possible to ensure programming priorities align with student need.
- What’s best for students is always the focus. As such, programming within EIPS is constantly changing to ensure expectations are met.
- The pre-K program, PALS, works to provide early intervention and programming for students with a variety of developmental or speech-related needs. Specialized programs for school-aged students include CSP, Connections, GOALS, Impact, LINKS, PLACE, STEPS, FOCUS and SEAS.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Question: In the past, before COVID-19, junior high students had cohorts in higher grades, in option classes, such as music or art. How does COVID-19 affect that?

Answer: An excellent question. EIPS is mindful of the situation. Schools still have cohorts in place, and contact is kept to an absolute minimum. In most cases, students are still able to participate in some options, provided the cohorting model is followed.

COSC Sharing

ASCA RESOLUTIONS NO. 3 – Lesley Bowman, COSC Chair

- The discussion was tabled because of lack of time.

ASCA RESOLUTIONS NO. 11 – Lesley Bowman, COSC Chair

- The discussion was tabled because of lack of time.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:32 p.m.

Next COSC Meeting

DATE: May 5, 2021

TIME: 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

LOCATION: Virtual meeting, link available in April agenda