



MEETING MINUTES

Elk Island Public Schools, virtual meeting
Feb. 2, 2022 | 6:30 p.m.

In Attendance

SCHOOL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

Chair: Lesley Bowman, Pine Street Elementary

Vice-Chair: Devon Marshall, SCA Elementary

SCHOOL COUNCIL MEMBERS

Ken Allan, A.L. Horton Elementary
Heather Bayne, Ardrossan Junior Senior High
Aileen Bozic, SCA Secondary
April Childs, Lakeland Ridge
Karen Green, Davidson Creek Elementary
Cara Kern, Pine Street Elementary
Lori Lehman, Woodbridge Farms Elementary
Natalie Manuel, Fort Saskatchewan Christian
Jami McLaren, Ardrossan Elementary
Kimberly Scott, Westboro Elementary
Krista Scott, Bev Facey Community High, Fultonvale
Elementary Junior High
Jacquie Surgenor, Salisbury Composite High,
Sherwood Heights Junior High
Brian Vick, Brentwood Elementary
Sara Witholt, Heritage Hills Elementary

ELK ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Trina Boymook, Chair
Cathy Allen, Trustee
Randy Footz, Trustee
Don Irwin, Trustee
Susan Miller, Trustee
Jim Seutter, Trustee
Jaqueline Shotbolt, Trustee
Ralph Sorochan, Trustee

ELK ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Mark Liguori, Superintendent
Sandra Stoddard, Associate Superintendent
Deneen Ziekle, ATA Local No. 28 President
Corrie Fletcher, Communications
Amy von Heyking, Associate Professor, University
of Lethbridge

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m.

AGENDA

COSC Chair Bowman called for additions or deletions to the agenda.

MOTION | The agenda be adopted, as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

COSC Chair Bowman called for approval of the Jan. 12, 2022 meeting minutes.

MOTION | The minutes be approved, as circulated.

Motion CARRIED

Board Report

Board Chair Trina Boymook presented the Board report.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- On January 13, trustees took part in another Board retreat to further discuss the Board's direction, foundational statements and draft priorities, which it will share at the next COSC meeting.
- On January 17, Chair Boymook attended a fourth curriculum engagement session, hosted by the Alberta School Boards Association.
- This spring, the Board's hosting a day-long student conference. The first half will focus on enhanced supports for learners preparing for life after senior high. The second half will focus on mental health.
- At the January 20 Board meeting, trustees:
 - approved the Division calendar for the 2022-23 school year;
 - set the school fee parameters for the 2022-23 school year;
 - approved reallocating the unanticipated surplus (\$1.5 million) to support schools, curriculum implementation and Division processes;
 - agreed to request approval from the province to access 1.4 million in unallocated reserves—for its COVID-19 illness fund and various Division initiatives within the 2021-22 school year; and
 - approve the use of capital reserves to allow for office renovations and server upgrades.
- On February 1, registration for kindergarten opened.
- The returning student registration process runs February 1-28. Those who want a boundary exemption must request it during the returning student registration. EIPS won't consider requests after February 28. Schools with closed boundaries for the 2022-23 school year include: Ardrossan Junior Senior High, Davidson Creek Elementary, F.R. Haythorne Junior High, James Mowat Elementary, Sherwood Heights Junior High and SouthPointe School.
- High School Information Sessions run February 8-17—dates and times are posted on each school's website.
- On February 24, the province tables its 2022 budget. As such, the Board will schedule its budget-working sessions at the next Board Caucus meeting.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Question: The three schools offering Junior High Honours are all closed boundary schools. How will that affect students who want to attend that program who don't live in the attendance area?

Answer: It won't impact those students. The programs are adjusted to take out of boundary students.

ATA Report

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

HIGHLIGHTS

- School boards provincewide are experiencing serious teacher shortages and student absences related to illness. While teachers are doing their best, time will tell the impact of the fifth wave of COVID-19 and Omicron variant.
- The Local's Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Committee, which promotes diversity, equity and human rights in schools, launched a new interactive inclusion training kit to support teachers in Indigenous and intercultural education, sexual orientation, and gender identity and equity.
- Zielke spoke about her disappointment regarding a series of recent interviews conducted by the Premier and Education Minister, which she says vilify teachers and the ATA.
- The ATA continues to work with Alberta Education and school divisions to find ways to solve problems.
- The ATA recently launched an information campaign to share statistics on education funding.
 - [Education funding for private schools](#)
 - [Education funding over the last seven years](#)
 - [Education funding by provinces](#)

For Information

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

- The Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) School Council Conference shifted from in-person to virtual, taking place April 22-24. The conference theme: School Councils Cultivating Compassion. For more information visit albertaschoolcouncils.ca.
- The annual general meeting is on April 24—also virtual.
 - There are three director positions open this year.
 - It will also include advocacy resolutions, but not as many as previous years.
- Krista Scott and Jacquie Surgenor are both done their terms this year. Neither are running again.

RETURNING STUDENT REGISTRATION – Mark Liguori, EIPS Superintendent

- The EIPS returning student registration process is now open.
- EIPS families are asked to confirm their child's enrolment in a school for the upcoming year by completing the online Returning Student Registration Form—available on the PowerSchool Parent Portal.
- The process helps EIPS determine staffing levels needed for the next year.
- Using the form, families can indicate the school their child plans to attend and apply to attend a non-designated school.
- All returning EIPS students are required to complete the form by Feb. 28, 2022.
- Already 5,700 forms are complete.
- There are about 800 new registrations, 700 of those are kindergarten registrations.
- COSC members are asked to share the information with their school council groups.

CAREGIVER SERIES UPDATE – Lesley Bowman, COSC Chair

- The [February Caregiver Series](#) schedule is now available.
- Offered through Alberta Health Services, the sessions are informative and valuable.
- Bowman encouraged members to review the [February Caregiver Series](#) calendar.

SCHOOL COUNCIL GRANT – Lesley Bowman, COSC Chair

- The province is providing each school council with a \$500 grant. The funds are meant to help with member professional learning and enhance parent engagement.
- School council chairs can apply for funding by filling out the [School Council Grant Form](#).
- So far, eight school councils have submitted the form.
- Some school councils are pooling resources toward a speaker series.
 - **Jody Carrington** – a well-known Alberta-based psychologist, focused on building relationships. Her presentations are engaging and full of passion and laughter. Her talk will focus on mental health and what families can do to support their children, each other and school administrators.
 - **Amy von Heyking** – an Associate Professor at the University of Lethbridge and a member of the Alberta K-12 Curriculum Advisory Panel. In her presentation, her presentation is below
 - **Alberta School Council Association** – ASCA engages directly with Alberta Education and advocates on behalf of school councils. The presentation focuses on the Assurance Framework; the performance measures; and how it supports a responsive and accountable education system.
- All funds must be used within the 2021-22 school year.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Question: If we pool our money, do we get a choice on which speakers?

Answer: There are a lot of logistics, so it's difficult to do that. But you could allocate a certain amount towards a speaker.

Q: Does Jody Carrington have a not-for-profit price?

A: Karen negotiated an excellent price.

New Business

COVID-19 UPDATE – Mark Liguori, EIPS Superintendent

- It appears EIPS has missed, or been successful in its efforts to avoid, widespread COVID-19 absences.
- Last week, two classes were temporarily learning online.
- Currently, no classes are temporarily learning online.
- Trends for staff are consistent with previous waves. It was slightly higher, but now declining.
- EIPS continues to do the right things and it's benefiting students and staff.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Comment: Thank you for quickly re-evaluating and reinstating sports and extracurricular activities.

C: Thank you for communication classes learning from home. We appreciate parents asked for it and EIPS communicating it.

C: Thank you for the work done on the operating guidelines and how the changes were communicated—specifically the page numbers where changes were made.

Question: Are there still restrictions on elementary extracurricular activities or can schools bring back intramurals?

Answer: We're taking a staggered approach because this age group is the most vulnerable—some students still aren't fully vaccinated. Older students are doing activities. But the province still recommends avoiding large-group gatherings. The Division will start looking at offering more extracurriculars but want to be cautious.

ALBERTA K-12 CURRICULUM – Amy von Heyking, Associate Professor, University of Lethbridge

- Amy von Heyking made a presentation about the province's draft curriculum, available on [YouTube](#).
- Recently, Ontario and British Columbia revised their curriculum with little public outcry.
- Curriculum is the course of studies—it's what we teach in school.
- Curriculum answers the question: What must children learn to function in society?
- Curriculum needs to be in the public interest and for the common good.
- The purpose of the presentation is to share information to give valuable feedback on the surveys.
- Curriculum design has been collaborative problem-solving and usually involves subject area expertise, subject-specific students' learning expertise, learning theory, assessment, pedagogy, differentiation and diverse classroom contexts.
- For Alberta's curriculum, only about 24,000, out of 730,000 students, don't follow it.
- Curriculum development has been in the works since 1990s.
 - 2009: Inspiring Education Initiative—What will it mean to be an educated Albertan in 2030? Engaged thinker, ethical citizen, entrepreneurial spirit, and less focus on knowledge instead of competencies, such as critical thinking and problem-solving.
 - 2013: Ministerial order on student learning.
 - 2015: The NDP signed a memorandum of understanding with the ATA to work collaboratively on the draft curriculum.
 - 2018: Work focused on a common framework for all six subject areas and a draft released.
 - 2019: The UCP government was elected and curriculum paused. The Minister of Education's Curriculum Advisory Panel launched.
 - 2020: New ministerial order and program revision by individuals rather than teams.
 - 2021: The draft curriculum was released. Fifty-eight of the 61 school boards did not pilot and several formal reviews were done.
 - 2021-22: 7,800 students in 17 schools are piloting parts of the K-6 draft curriculum. The implementation of English language arts, mathematics, and physical education and wellness will go ahead in fall 2022. The remaining subjects are postponed.
- It's now feedback time.
 - The social studies draft received the most criticism. Feedback is happening on the blueprint for social studies now. Consider instructional time and the purpose and nature of curriculum documents.

- What is a high-quality curriculum?
 - Curriculum for deep understanding.
 - Need to go beyond basic recall.
 - Transform factual information into usable knowledge and be able to apply knowledge and skills in different situations.
- Questions to ask:
 - Will my child be motivated to learn by this program?
 - Can the content be connected to what my child already knows?
 - Does it seem well-sequenced? Will it build my child's understandings logically and coherently?
 - What does education for citizenship mean today and for our children?
 - Is the content of the program reflective of who Albertans are as a community?
 - Will it foster citizens with the knowledge and attributes you think they need?
 - Will my child see and come to value themselves in this program?
- We need a collaborative process to develop great curriculum.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS: *Answered by von Heyking*

Question: I read the mandate and advisory committee report. As a member, were you given presentations on how an emphasis on foundational knowledge was desirable. The recommendation surprised me.

Answer: The panel was diverse and asked to provide input into the 2018 draft curriculum. The framework was interpreted differently across different subjects.

Q: I was also shocked by the recommendation there should be more standardized testing. Especially standardized formative assessment. Where did that come from?

A: The suggestion was around catching students who were falling behind and not about tests, such as PATs.

Q: The recommendation to explore a dual structure, like the Germanic model, where did that come from?

Q: The knowledge section includes pieces that seem to be background knowledge for teachers—for example, the definition of Tier 2 words in language arts. Are you satisfied children are expected to memorize everything in the knowledge column? It's a failing this isn't made clear.

A: This is a failing in this draft curriculum.

Q: What are the key ideas school council chairs should take back to their councils.

A: We've never actually been given any reason why we needed to revise all subject levels simultaneously. Trying to express learning across all subjects has been a challenge. It's the reason behind some of the big challenges in the draft. If they want literacy developed across the curriculum, it isn't clear across other subjects. Language arts is focused on reading and writing but not digital or critical literacy. We need students to negotiate digital world, which isn't in the curriculum.

Ask why we need a common framework for all subject areas. For literacy, critical thinking, citizenship, are you satisfied that it's providing students with usable knowledge and personal attributes?

Q: The old draft was to have cross-curriculum connections, which are missing in the new draft.

A: Yes. There were problems with the 2018 draft and recommendations were about tweaking, not a complete revision. There were things that could have been fixed.

Q: As a representative for a high school, can you give me some messaging that I can share with parents that indicate why they should be concerned that this draft precedes and is a precursor to a high school curriculum?

A: Principles of a high-quality curriculum are just as applicable for senior high curriculum as for elementary. And looking at that approach, there's concern about the large amount of knowledge required. What do students learn with that information? If assumptions behind this program aren't questioned, then they will roll out in future curriculums

COSC Sharing

SHARE THE POSITIVE WORK HAPPENING IN YOUR SCHOOL – Devon Marshall, COSC Vice-Chair

Members discussed some of the positive work happening in schools. Comments included:

Lakeland Ridge: The Principal called families of students affected by an incident at the school to check on them and provide resources.

SCA Elementary: Athletics are back on and one of the coaches, who's getting a bachelor of education degree, volunteers her time. She also organized two team nights to watch a Pandas game and The King's University women's team.

Fultonvale Elementary Junior High: Every day the Principal and Assistant Principal stand outside and greet students—even when it's freezing rain or buses are cancelled. The school also has a student-leadership group called Student Voice.

Salisbury Composite High: The administration and guidance team meet with every student to talk about plans after senior high—and followup with a phone call to the parent.

Sherwood Heights Junior High: There's a strong emphasis on student mental health. It's a standing agenda item and the school works with families to host information nights.

Heritage Hills Elementary: The school has a separate committee for staff appreciation, which provides staff with cards, personalized gifts, snacks and coffee. The fundraising Society also added a donation option to their hot-lunch program. Additionally, staff donated 40 helmets so all students can use the hockey rink.

Davidson Creek Elementary: The school bought small gifts for every student and hid them in each locker.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:46 P.M.

Next COSC Meeting

DATE: March 2, 2022

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

LOCATION: Virtual meeting, link available in the February agenda