

JAN. 19, 2023

Chair's Report

RECENT EVENTS

Board Chair Trina Boymook highlighted one recent event:

- On January 12, the Board of Trustees spent the evening having dinner with Alberta Teachers' Association Local No. 28 executive.

Association and Local Reports

ATA LOCAL REPORT

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

- On February 9-10, the ATA is hosting its North Central Teachers' Convention.
- On February 10, the ATA is hosting its annual Partners in Education Luncheon. Zielke invited all trustees to attend, which will feature keynote speaker Tareq Hadhad, a Syrian refugee and founder of the hugely successful Peace by Chocolate, based in Nova Scotia. At the luncheon, Hadhad will share a compelling story about family; being a newcomer; and the spirit of resiliency, entrepreneurship and giving back.

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS GROUP REPORT

The Board received for information the Employee Relations Group (ERG) report from the Chair, Dulcie Jarvin:

- Recently, the ERG welcomed a new committee member, Helen Bienert. She has spent more than 30 years with the Division and now represents Fort Saskatchewan for the ERG.
- The committee continues to fine-tune the ERG's terms of reference.
- Two ERG members will soon receive the Crucial Conversation professional learning.
- On May 5, the Division will host its annual Classified Staff Professional Learning Day. Currently, the ERG is working with EIPS' Human Resources department to develop and co-ordinate learning sessions.

New Business

POLICY AMENDMENTS

The Board approved amendments to:

- [Board Policy 4: Trustee Code of Conduct](#);
- [Board Policy 7: Board Operations](#); and
- [Board Policy 24: Personal Communication Devices](#).

Overall, the approved changes strengthen each policy's clarity, definitions, language and readability.

SCHOOL FEE PARAMETERS: 2023-24

The Board approved the school fee parameters for the 2023-24 school year. The parameters are based on the guidelines laid out within the *Education Act* and the Board's mandate for affordable school fees. Overall, the 2023-24 school fee parameters are similar to the previous year. Highlights include:

Optional-courses fees – five per cent allowable increase—up to seven per cent for food courses

Noon-supervision fees – five per cent allowable increase

Activity fees – five per cent allowable increase

Extracurricular fees – five per cent allowable increase

Non-curricular travel fees – five per cent allowable increase

Non-curricular goods and services fees – five per cent allowable increase



BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

Schools must set all fees at a cost-recovery rate. If any fees exceed the listed parameters, the school must submit an explanation to the EIPS Secretary-Treasurer. Now approved, schools can begin establishing school fees for the 2023-24 year.

UKRAINIAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE PROGRAM

The Board approved changes to the Ukrainian program at A.L. Horton Elementary. Traditionally, the school has offered a Ukrainian Bilingual program for students in kindergarten to Grade 6. However, low enrolment numbers, funding changes and language arts instructional requirements have made offering a fulsome program challenging. EIPS consulted with school families, and, based on their feedback, introduced a new Ukrainian Language and Culture pilot program in fall 2022. The program still offers robust Ukrainian instruction, but the provincial requirements are more flexible.

To date, the pilot has received overwhelming support from the school community. As such, the Board approved replacing A.L. Horton's Ukrainian Bilingual program with the Ukrainian Language and Culture program, starting in the 2023-24 school years. The program goal: To foster an appreciation for the Ukrainian language and culture. Additionally, the Division will look at ways to expand the Ukrainian language and culture programming at the junior high level.

EIPS LANGUAGE AND CULTURE PROGRAMS: GERMAN AND UKRAINIAN

As part of the Board's commitment to second-language programming, the Board approved the recommendation to designate EIPS' two language and culture programs—German and Ukrainian—Division alternative programs. All alternative programs require Board approval before being established or closed.

Committee Report

ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

The Board received for information a report from the Advocacy Committee meeting held on January 4. The main topics discussed: the Board's advocacy focus areas and advocacy strategies for the upcoming provincial election.

STUDENT EXPULSION COMMITTEE

The Board received for information a report from the Student Expulsion Committee meeting held on January 6. The committee reviewed all relevant information and upheld the recommendations put forward.

POLICY COMMITTEE

The Board received for information a report from the Policy Committee meeting held on January 10. The committee reviewed three policies—all recommended amendments were approved earlier, at the January Board meeting.

Report for Information

THREE-YEAR ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY: VEGREVILLE VALUE SCOPING SESSION

The Board received for information an update on one of the projects listed in the Division's Three-Year Engagement Plan. In May 2022, EIPS developed a Three-Year Engagement Strategy. The plan identifies areas where the Division can improve operations to best serve students. In total, there are four engagement projects listed within the plan. In terms of Project 4, the Division is exploring possible solutions to improve the school utilization rates in Vegreville.

Currently, EIPS has two schools in Vegreville that serve students living in the western portion of Minburn County and the Town of Vegreville—A.L. Horton Elementary and Vegreville Composite High. Over the last few years, both schools have experienced a significant drop in enrolment, affecting program delivery and facility operations.

As such, EIPS included the region in its Three-Year Capital Plan—requesting provincial funding to conduct a value scoping session with community stakeholders in Vegreville and area. The value-scoping session took place in fall 2022. It was facilitated by START Architecture and included representatives from the Government of Alberta, EIPS Board of Trustees, EIPS administration, A.L. Horton Elementary, Vegreville Composite High, EIPS school councils, Town of Vegreville, County of Minburn and Village of Andrew.

Collectively, they discussed eight possible solutions to optimize learning environments for students and ensure high-quality educational program delivery. The best-performing solution: Option 2, modernizing and expanding Vegreville Composite High School to accommodate a kindergarten to Grade 12 program. The Board will use the report and feedback to develop a community-derived solution and include it in the 2024-27 Three-Year Capital Plan—planned for release in April 2023. Read the full report at eips.ca.

SCHOOL STATUS REPORT: 2021-22

The Board received for information the School Status Report for the 2021-22 school year. The report identifies enrolment numbers, school utilization rates and per-student costs within the Division. The data is presented by geographic sectors and on a four-year comparative basis to ensure analysis is based on long-term trends and not isolated incidences (see pg. 218, "[School Status Report for 2021-22](#)"). Highlights from the report:

- The average cost per EIPS student is \$7,141, which is up from the previous year by \$175.
- The Division currently has 20 schools operating above the \$7,141 average.
- EIPS' utilization rate for 2021-22 increased to 73 per cent—up by one per cent from the previous year.

INTERIM SCHOOL FEE APPROVAL SUMMARY: 2022-23

The Board received for information a summary of fee changes for the 2022-23 school year. To date, the Division has received and approved 54 fee change requests. (see pg. 251, "[2022-23 Interim School Fee Approval Summary](#)").

Special Board Meeting: January 5

REALLOCATION OF FUNDS

The Board approved changes to the allocation of funds for the 2022-23 school year. The reallocation allows the Division to use any net surplus funds and ensures its reserves remain below the 3.15% provincially mandated reserve cap. Additionally, the Board approved requesting permission from Alberta's Education Minister to transfer \$765,000 to EIPS' capital reserves for new buses, in case they don't arrive before classes resume at the start of the 2023-24 school year.

Board Members

Trina Boymook, *Chair* | Colleen Holowaychuk, *Vice-Chair* | Cathy Allen | Randy Footz | Don Irwin | Susan Miller | Jim Seutter | Jacqueline Shotbolt | Ralph Sorochan

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