

MARCH 2025

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SPECIAL BOARD MEETING: March 6, 2025

New Business

ASBA EDWIN PARR TEACHER AWARD: 2025

The Board approved EIPS' nomination for this year's Edwin Parr Teacher Award nominee, Janna MacLelland. Every year, the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) Zone 2/3 hosts the award program to honour and recognize outstanding first-year teachers who demonstrate excellence in the *Teaching Quality Standard*. MacLelland, a first-year French Immersion teacher at Ardrossan Elementary, was selected as EIPS' nominee for her commitment to education through her exceptional learning spaces, inclusive approach to learning and innate ability to engage with children.

BOARD MEETING: March 20, 2025

Chair's Report

RECENT EVENTS

Board Chair Cathy Allen highlighted recent trustee events:

- On February 27, Chair Allen attended the province's Budget 2025 announcement at the Legislative Assembly of Alberta. Following the announcement, trustees and senior administration took part in a budget debrief with Education Minister Demetrios Nicolaides. The meeting, which included representatives from school boards across the province, provided a high-level overview of the education budget for the 2025-26 school year.
- On February 28, EIPS hosted its third annual Round Dance at Bev Facey Community High, which was a nice event and well attended.
- On March 2-4, trustees joined locally elected officials at the 2025 Alberta Rural Education Symposium in Edmonton, which focused on professional learning and discussion on topics relevant to rural school boards.
- On March 7, Chair Allen represented the Board at the EIPS Classified Professional Learning Day event. The keynote speaker was Greg Wells, a Calgary-based performance physiologist, health and high-performance expert, best-selling author and motivational speaker. He shared with staff strategies, using complex science, to create healthier workplaces and enhance well-being.
- From March 10-14, trustees celebrated the Week of Inspirational Math by visiting various schools and reading numeracy-focused books to students.
- On March 17, trustees attended the 2025 High School Culinary Challenge Awards. Chair Allen congratulated the EIPS teams who competed this year. One team, made up of students from Bev Facey Community High and Salisbury Composite High, won bronze. And, the team from Vegreville Composite High won a supplemental competition.
- On March 18, trustees attended a meeting and luncheon with EIPS' Employee Relations Group. Members were able to ask questions and share recent successes and challenges.

Superintendent's Report

RECENT EVENTS

Superintendent Sandra Stoddard shared recent events and information with the Board, including:

- On March 10, she attended a meeting with the Education Society of Edmonton, which featured a presentation on staff codes of conduct.
- On March 11, she attended a meeting with NorQuest College. The focus: collaboration and support opportunities for rural schools and dual-credit programming.
- On March 14, EIPS senior administration attended a College of Alberta School Superintendent Zone 2/3 meeting. The highlight: a presentation on restorative practices and an update from Alberta Education.
- On March 14, she attended an annual meeting with CASA Mental Health focusing on the Division's CASA Classrooms.
- Superintendent Stoddard also joined the Board at the following events:
 - the 2024 Alberta Rural Education Symposium, which she attended with EIPS senior administration and elected officials from Lamont, Mundare and Burdett, providing an opportunity to discuss shared successes and challenges; and
 - the Employee Relations Group luncheon—it was great to meet with members, discuss concerns and answer questions.

CLASSIFIED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING DAY

The EIPS Classified Professional Learning Day took place at Bev Facey Community High on March 7. Throughout the day, classified staff participated in various centrally co-ordinated professional learning sessions. This year's keynote speaker, Greg Wells, discussed easy ways people can make changes in their lives to enhance overall health and well-being. The event also coincided with a professional learning day for certificated staff, who participated in learning sessions throughout the day.

WEEK OF INSPIRATIONAL MATH

On March 10-14, students and staff celebrated numeracy during EIPS' Week of Inspirational Math. Divisionwide, schools hosted daily math activities, games, and hands-on learning exercises—all aimed at building students' mathematical confidence.

Association and Employee Relation Reports

ASBA ZONE 2/3 MEETING

Trustee Colleen Holowaychuk presented highlights from the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) Zone 2/3 meetings held on February 21 and March 14. Discussion highlights included:

- On February 21, members participated in a workshop on zone practices and discussed possible Zone policy positions to bring forward to ASBA's fall general meeting in November 2025.
- On March 14, members discussed the various timelines and deadlines for regular and emergent policy position statements.
- ASBA's spring general meeting is scheduled for June 2025—trustees will receive the initial bulletin for the meeting on April 3 and a final bulletin on May 2.
- The next Zone 2/3 meeting is on April 11, 2025.

ATA LOCAL REPORT

The Board received for information the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) Local No. 28 report from Maxine Holm, the Local President. Since the February Board meeting:

- The ATA held elections for its Provincial Executive Council:
 - President – Jason Schilling
 - Vice-presidents – Greg Carbine and Allison McCaffrey
 - District Representative – Janet Westworth
- The ATA hosted a Local Political Engagement Seminar. Highlights include:
 - Duane Bratt, a public policy professor at Mount Royal University with expertise in international relations, spoke to members about the state of the region, focusing on recent changes led by the United States.
 - Janet Brown, a local pollster, offered insight into recent provincial polling research.
 - A Budget 2025 update—the ATA is awaiting the province's release of the *Funding Manual for School Authorities* to fully understand the budget's impact.
- Holm attended a North Central Teachers' Convention Association Board meeting. The focus: Teachers' convention feedback, the Budget 2025 and executive elections.
- The Local's Women in Leadership committee hosted a speed-sharing event, where attendees shared their experiences, successes and challenges.
- The Local's Professional Development Committee hosted a conversation focused on common and emerging issues for school leadership teams, including workload, staff wellness and social media.
- On March 18, the ATA hosted a school board trustee information session.
- The Local also welcomed two new committee chairs.
 - Krista Porter is the new chair of the Women in Leadership Committee—good luck to former chair Kim Zapesocki, who takes on a new role with the ATA.
 - Sarah Dyer is the new chair of the Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Committee—good luck to former chair Danielle Booker, who is taking on a new role with another school division.
- On behalf of the Local, Holm hopes everyone has a relaxing and enjoyable spring break.

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS GROUP REPORT

The Board received for information the Employee Relations Group (ERG) report from Michelle Miller, the committee's Chair:

- On March 18, Miller attended a meeting and luncheon with the EIPS Board. She thanked the Board for hosting the event and meeting with ERG members—it was beneficial for everyone.
- The ERG recently welcomed two new members.
 - Rose Gary, who works in Facility Services, is the new Central Services representative.
 - Tammy Seney, who works at Mundare School, is the new Lamont representative.
- On March 7, the Division hosted its annual Classified Professional Learning Day, which was again a huge success. The post-event feedback is positive. Miller also thanked Chair Allen and Superintendent Stoddard for joining and providing greetings—it was greatly appreciated.
- Staff continue to have questions about compensation in 2025-26 and look forward to learning more at the upcoming town hall meeting in May.

New Business

BOARD POLICY AMENDMENTS

The Board approved amendments to [Board Policy 25: Petitions and Public Notices](#). The approved changes strengthen the policy's clarity, definitions, language and readability.

THREE-YEAR CAPITAL PLAN: 2026-29

The Board approved EIPS' [2026-29 Three-Year Capital Plan](#). Annually, the Board reviews and updates the plan to prioritize its key capital projects. The Division's top five capital priorities are:

Priority 1: A replacement school for Rudolph Hennig Junior High and Fort Saskatchewan High (grades 7-12).

Priority 2: A replacement school for James Mowat Elementary (grades K-6).

Priority 3: A new school for the Cambrian Crossing neighbourhood (grades K-9).

Priority 4: A modernization and expansion of Vegreville Composite High to accommodate K-12 programming.

Priority 5: A modernization of Win Ferguson Elementary (grades K-6).

Now approved, the Division will submit the *Three-Year Capital Plan* to the province for funding consideration.

COLLEGIATE PROGRAM: SCHOOL NAME AND CODE

The Board approved a school name for the Division's new collegiate program—Campus EIPS. Now approved, the Division will submit the school's name to Alberta Education for inclusion in the Provincial Education Directory and the Provincial Approach to Student Information. Starting the 2025-26 school year, Campus EIPS will offer programming to students at secondary schools throughout the Division, including Ardrossan Junior Senior High, Bev Facey Community High, Fort Saskatchewan High, Lamont High, Salisbury Composite High, Strathcona Christian Academy Secondary, Vegreville Composite High and Next Step.

REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS: 2024-25

The Board received for information a report regarding the Division's financial projections for the rest of the 2024-25 school year. Overall, there are no areas of concern and no excessive deficits or surpluses. EIPS projects its accumulated surplus to increase by \$57,215, from the amount reported in the Fall Budget Report. There are also some offsetting changes, including a projected decrease in School Generated Funds Reserves and a reduction in Central Services Reserves from an anticipated deficit in Student Transportation—offset by an increase in Division Unallocated Reserves from unused contingency funds. Finally, the Division projects its reserve funds to remain within the provincially mandated limit (see pg. 56, "[Financial Projections 2024-25](#)").

UNAUDITED FINANCIAL REPORT: SEPTEMBER 2024 TO FEBRUARY 2025

The Board received for information the EIPS Unaudited Financial Report for the six-month period ending Feb. 28, 2025. Overall, expenses exceeded revenue, resulting in an operating deficit of \$34,938. In total, revenue for the six months is \$102.24 million, which represents 50 per cent of the year-to-date budget—an expected percentage for the fiscal year midpoint. Similarly, total expenses are \$102.28 million, which also represents 50 per cent of the year-to-date budget. Generally, the variances are the result of timing differences, meaning expenditures aren't incurred evenly over the year and are expected to resolve themselves by the end of the school year, when all expenses are incurred (see pg. 68, "[Unaudited Financial Report for Sept. 1, 2024 to Feb. 28, 2025](#)").

Committee Report

POLICY COMMITTEE

The Board received for information a report from the Policy Committee meeting held on March 10. The committee reviewed five policies—12, 15, 19, 25 and 26. Policy 12 was reviewed and deferred to a later meeting. Policies 15 and 19 were sent for legal advice to ensure alignment with related provincial acts. Amendments to Policy 25 were approved earlier at the March Board meeting (see pg. 3, "Board Policy Amendments"). And, Policy 26 required no changes. The next policy committee meeting is scheduled for April 8.

STUDENT EXPULSION COMMITTEE

The Board received for information a report from the Student Expulsion Committee regarding a recent meeting—held on February 28. The committee reviewed all relevant information and upheld the school administration’s recommendations.

GOVERNANCE AND EVALUATION COMMITTEE

The Board received for information a report from a recent Governance and Evaluation Committee meeting—held on March 11. Discussion topics included: section 5 of the *EIPS Trustee Handbook*, proposed guidelines for acknowledging life events, the Board’s work plan, possible Board retreat dates and orientation planning for the incoming Board next fall. The committee also discussed its priority work, now and in the future.

TRUSTEE NOTICES OF MOTION AND INFORMATION REQUESTS

Trustee Ralph Sorochoan requested an update on the Division’s playground process—to come to trustees at an upcoming Board Caucus meeting.

Board Members

Cathy Allen, *Chair* | Susan Miller, *Vice-Chair* | Trina Boymook | Randy Footz | Colleen Holowaychuk | Don Irwin | Ralph Sorochoan

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