

SEPT. 18, 2025

Board Report

RECENT EVENTS

Board Chair Cathy Allen highlighted information and recent events:

- On August 28, trustees joined school board chairs and superintendents from across the province for an engagement session with Education and Childcare Minister Demetrios Nicolaides. The focus: The timing and process for rolling out the junior high curriculum.
- On September 8, trustees again joined school board chairs and superintendents from across the province for an information session with Minister Nicolaides. The focus: The revised ministerial order regarding the selection and availability of school literary material.
- Chair Allen congratulated École Claudette-et-Denis-Tardif on the official opening of its new kindergarten to Grade 12 francophone school in Sherwood Park. The grand opening ceremony is scheduled for September 18, which Chair Allen and Superintendent Sandra Stoddard will attend.
- Throughout September, trustees are attending school council meetings at various schools across the Division. They are also looking forward to the first Committee of School Councils meeting of the year on October 1.

Superintendent's Report

RECENT EVENTS

Superintendent Sandra Stoddard shared recent events and information, including:

- On August 28, EIPS officially welcomed students back to school. Overall, the startup went incredibly well, that's thanks to both students and the dedicated staff who ensure every student is supported and has access to the programs and resources needed for success.
- On August 28, Superintendent Stoddard joined the Board at the engagement session with Education and Childcare Minister Demetrios Nicolaides, which focused on the roll-out of the new junior curriculum. The Division appreciates knowing the implementation timeline and process in advance. It also plans to participate in the field testing of the new curriculum.
- On September 8, she joined the Board again for the information session with Minister Nicolaides, which focused on the revised ministerial order regarding the selection and availability of school literary materials. The Division is pleased revisions were made to the order.
- On September 9, she attended a meeting with the Lamont Rural Health Committee, which is working to recruit people to work in health care in rural areas. Most exciting: EIPS is partnering with the group to launch a new opportunity for Lamont Elementary students, where a class visits the Lamont hospital to shadow various health care professionals.
- On September 11, she attended an Alberta Education and Childcare information session for superintendents across the province. The focus: the 2025-26 school startup.
- On September 16, EIPS held its monthly leadership meeting with senior administration, principals, directors, assistant principals and assistant directors. Divisionwide, everyone is working diligently to ensure the 2025-26 school year is another successful year for students.
- On September 19, she is excited for her first tour at Forest Grove School, which EIPS expects to open to students next year.

LABOUR ACTION UPDATE

On September 10, the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) announced teachers across Alberta—including all teachers from Elk Island Public Schools—plan to begin strike action starting Oct. 6, 2025. At this point, a strike is not certain, as negotiations are still ongoing. Teachers will only strike if an agreement with the province's collective bargaining group isn't reached by the specified date. EIPS appreciates the advance notice and is hopeful both sides will reach an agreement soon to avoid classroom disruptions.

Association and Employee Relations Reports

ATA LOCAL REPORT

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

- School startup was both exciting and challenging for teachers, given the looming labour disruption. Overall, teachers are asking for a clear plan to address class size, classroom complexity, violence in schools and compensation, to ultimately improve teaching and learning for students. Teachers appreciate the support they receive from trustees, families, and community members who continually advocate alongside them.
- Another focus area for the Local is the upcoming Trustee elections. Sarah Dyer, the Local's Political Engagement Officer, plans to reach out to each trustee to discuss the importance of public education, which the Local will also share with community members.
- The Local thanks EIPS for its guidance on promoting healthy work-life balance and establishing reasonable boundaries around communication.
- Holm also thanked trustees for their work and support during the last four-year term. Those who are moving on, the Local wishes them all the best as they begin a new adventure after the election.

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS GROUP REPORT

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

- On September 11, the ERG held its first committee meeting of the year.
- The committee is looking to fill the Strathcona County Rural Schools Representative position.
- EIPS Human Resources provided members with an overview of the work completed over the summer months and introduced the new attendance support program.
- The Classified Handbook was recently updated, which includes the new paid grid for both classified staff and substitutes. The ERG hopes it will help with recruitment and retention.
- Many classified staff are worried about the possibility of a teachers' strike and what it means for them. The recent email sent by Superintendent Stoddard helped answer many questions and ease concerns. Like the Division, the ERG is hopeful an agreement is reached quickly to prevent classroom disruptions.
- EIPS' Occupational Health and Safety team reviewed with ERG members the Division's [Administrative Procedure 171: Workplace Violence Prevention](#) and the measures in place to mitigate and report incidents.

Reports for Information

ANNUAL TRUSTEE COMPENSATION: 2025-26

The Board received for information the EIPS Trustee Compensation Schedule for the 2025-26 school year. As per [Board Policy 7: Board Operations](#), EIPS assesses its trustee compensation each year. The rate is determined by averaging the increases reported by the Consumer Price Index—up by 1.9 per cent—and Alberta's Average Weekly Earnings data—up by 2.4 per cent. As such, for 2025-26, the Trustee Compensation Schedule rate will rise by 2.2 per cent, effective Sept. 1, 2025.

Condolences

Superintendent Sandra Stoddard extended condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of Victoria Kaiser, who passed away on September 8. Tori joined EIPS in 2022 as an educational assistant at Glen Allan Elementary, where she quickly became known for her incredible work, dedication and passion. She was always committed to helping students learn and grow, and filled the classroom with laughter and joy. Tori will be deeply missed by her friends and fellow educators at Glen Allan Elementary. EIPS offers its heartfelt sympathies to everyone who knew her.

Trustee Reports

END OF TERM REMARKS

September 18 marks the last public Board meeting of the trustees' four-year term. As such, trustees shared final reflections on their service:

- **Board Chair Cathy Allen** thanked the Sherwood Park electorate for the trust placed in her and expressed appreciation to all trustees, senior administration, students and families. She described the past four years as an honour and a privilege, highlighting the shared dedication to always doing what is best for students.
- **Vice-Chair Susan Miller** said it is an honour to have served as a public school trustee. The last four years were an exceptionally rewarding experience. She thanked the community for the opportunity to serve as a trustee and her fellow Board members—wishing them all the best in their future endeavours.
- **Trustee Randy Footz** thanked the communities of Vegreville and Minburn County for placing their trust in him over the past eight years. He also thanked former trustees for their guidance, Trustee Trina Boymook and senior administration for their mentorship and leadership, EIPS staff for their outstanding work, and current trustees for their ongoing dedication—together, a significant amount of good work has been achieved.
- **Trustee Colleen Holowaychuk** reflected on the teamwork of the past four years, thanking her fellow trustees and senior administration for their dedication to students. To those leaving, she offered best wishes as they embark on new adventures. And, to those seeking re-election, she extended good luck—hoping to see them again in another month.
- **Trustee Don Irwin** echoed that sentiment, offering gratitude to all trustees, senior administration and staff for their commitment to education and support throughout his eight years on the Board.
- **Trustee Ralph Sorochan** said it's been a privilege to serve as Fort Saskatchewan trustee for the past four years. He acknowledged the efforts of students, staff, families, Superintendent Stoddard, senior administration and Central Services employees. The collective work done together benefits children and what is best for students. He also thanked his fellow trustees for their mentorship and the important work accomplished during the term. He wishes them all well, whether returning or moving on to new paths.

Board Members

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

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Cathy Allen, Board Chair | P 780 417 8109

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

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