



# Meeting Minutes

Central Office Boardroom, Sherwood Park

March 6, 2019

7 p.m.

## In Attendance:

**Chair:** Jacquie Surgenor, Salisbury Composite High & Sherwood Heights Junior High

**Vice-Chair:** Krista Scott, Bev Facey Community High & Fultonvale Elementary Junior High

**Secretary:** Lesley Bowman, Pine Street Elementary

Ginger Hassett-Koza, Fultonvale Elementary Junior High

Darcy LaRue, Fort Saskatchewan Christian

Robyn Michaelchuk, Fort Saskatchewan Elementary

Jen Mills, Davidson Creek Elementary

Sarah Withholt, Wye Elementary

## School Council Members

Ken Allan, A.L. Horton Elementary

Jackie Anderson, Ardrossan Elementary & Ardrossan Junior Senior High

Michelle Beck, Wye Elementary

Curtis Christopher, École Campbelltown

Nadine Fricke, James Mowat Elementary

JP Grebenc, Ardrossan Elementary & Ardrossan Junior Senior High

## Board and EIPS

**Chair:** Trina Boymook

**Trustee:** Jim Seutter

**Superintendent:** Mark Liguori

**ATA President:** Deneen Zielke

**Communications:** Corrie Fletcher Naylor

## Welcome

Jacquie Surgenor, the COSC Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

## Additions to the Agenda

Surgenor asked if there were any additions to the March 6, 2019 agenda.

- New Business was moved before For Information.
- Social Media Smarts was added to the For Information section.

**Motion:** To accept the March 6, 2019 agenda as presented.

Moved: Jen Mills

Seconded: JP Grebenc

**Motion Carried**

## Approval of the Feb. 6, 2019 Minutes

Surgenor asked if there were any changes to the minutes from the Feb. 6, 2019 meeting.

- No changes were made.

**Motion:** To accept the Feb. 6, 2019 minutes as circulated.

Moved: Jackie Anderson

Seconded: Ken Allan

**Motion Carried**

## **Board Report – presented by Trina Boymook, Board Chair, EIPS**

Board Chair Trina Boymook presented the Board Report. Highlights include:

- On February 28, Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) hosted a Student Forum. The feedback gathered will help the Board of Trustees develop a new policy regarding the use of cellphones and personal devices during school hours.
- The annual EIPS Parent Survey will run March 11-29. The survey also includes questions about student cellphone use. Feedback gathered will help inform the new policy about the use of cellphones and personal devices during the school day.
- On February 20, the Board hosted a public feedback session regarding senior high programming for students living in the Andrew School attendance boundary.
- On February 21, at the public Board meeting:
  - Trustees defeated the notice of motion “that the parents of students attending the new Wye Elementary replacement school be given an opportunity to offer their input for the renaming of the school by way of a new survey.” The Board anticipates making a decision on the name at the public Board meeting on March 14.
  - Trustees approved the 2020-21 Division calendar and the 2021-22 Division calendar, in principle. For the 2020-21 school year, the first day of school is Sept. 1, 2020. Christmas break will start on a Wednesday.
  - Trustees also approved capping French immersion at two schools in Sherwood Park. The Division will introduce a cap of three French immersion classes per grade at École Campbelltown, starting September 2020. In addition, when the replacement school—being built in Heritage Hills—opens it will have a cap of two French immersion classes per grade.
- The Board is seeking two volunteer community members to serve on the Audit Committee. The position offers valuable experience and financial oversight into one of Alberta’s largest school divisions—with an operating budget of approximately \$204 million.

## **ATA Report – presented by Deneen Zielke, president, Alberta Teachers’ Association Local No. 28**

Deneen Zielke presented the ATA Report. Highlights include:

- The Local formally elected by acclamation Deneen Zielke as president. She’ll serve as president for another two-year term.
- The Local, in partnership with Elk Island Catholic Schools, hosted a meet and greet with provincial candidates to discuss topics relating to education including proper funding, class sizes and support for inclusion students. She thanked Surgenor for attending.
- Zielke thanked Chair Boymook, Trustee Don Irwin and Sandra Stoddard, the Associate Superintendent of EIPS, for attending the Partners in Education luncheon during the North Central Teachers’ Convention.
- The Professional Development Committee is hosting an event entitled, Tasting the TQS. At the event, the Local will provide teachers with information about the new Teacher Quality Standard (TQS) and details about the related requirements.

## New Business

### a) Election Advocacy: Education Funding – presented by Trina Boymook, Board Chair, and Mark Liguori, EIPS

- The Board continues to advocate for stable funding for education in Alberta.
  - There was a desire to provide COSC members information to take back to their own school councils surrounding the upcoming provincial election and to create a document with education-based questions for candidates.
  - There is a document in the package entitled, “[Advocacy Information Sheet for EIPS Families](#),” outlining important points about education funding, why stable and predictable funding matters to students, specific examples and specific questions to ask candidates at the door or at a forum.
- How does EIPS receive funding and where does it come from?
  - Approximately \$7.4 billion flows to Alberta school boards every year.
  - About \$4.9 billion comes from general revenue and the remaining \$2.9 billion from taxes.
  - When general revenue suffers, money flowing to all services declines.
  - Most of the general revenue in the province goes to education and health care.
  - Education taxes collected from Albertans are pooled and redistributed. The reason: In the past, some school boards had high levels of industrial revenue, which disproportionality benefitted those boards over others.
  - While there has been an investment in education over time, there continues to be a significant cost and student number increases. As such, there remains a gap between funding and need.
- The provincial government provides funding to the public school system—public, separate, francophone and charter schools—and private schools.
  - The funding split is approximately 95 per cent for public and five per cent for private.
- In 2018, there was a 1.9 per cent increase in funding from the year before.
  - Some areas are still seeing significant population growth despite the economic downturn.
  - The increase in funding doesn’t match the growth in student population.
- The Alberta Teachers’ Retirement Fund receives money from the provincial government—a result of an obligation to teachers from a previous government.
- Funding is equitable across the geography of the province but when money comes to school boards, there should be a balance of freedom and accountability.
  - School boards receive money monthly.
  - EIPS has a large lending facility with the bank, as funding is month-to-month.
  - Early Childhood Services to Grade 9 funding is allocated per student.
  - Grades 10 to 12 funding is distributed based on Credit Enrolment Units.
- There are three types of funding:
  - Base Instruction Funding
    - Once money is allocated to the school board, each board has the flexibility to use the funds as it sees fit.
  - Differential Funding
    - Based on economic, geographical and socio-economic factors.
    - Many demographics contribute to the distribution of these grants.
    - Boards have less flexibility in how this money is spent.
  - Targeted Funding
    - The money can’t be re-allocated.
    - An example, is money allocated for school nutrition.

- Funding eligibility is based on enrolment numbers as of September 30. Random samples are taken throughout the year to ensure student numbers are accurate.
- When criteria for funding continually changes, it doesn't allow school boards the flexibility to plan and distribute money.
- School boards can't continue to build well-functioning systems and plan for the long-term when funding is unpredictable.
  - For example, this year, when the government decided to clawback money in the middle of the school year, it left the Division scrambling to pull funding from other areas. The Division hired staff and made financial commitments, which it still had to honour.
- Transportation is another area where predictable funding would benefit school boards and, consequently, students in Alberta. The province hasn't reviewed the transportation funding formula since 2004.
  - Diesel costs have increased exponentially—no additional funding.
  - Carbon tax implemented—no additional funding.
  - Mandatory Entry Level Training (MELT)—no additional funding.
  - The money to support this has to come from somewhere. That usually means it's drawn from funds allocated to the classroom.
- EIPS has mixed rural and urban schools to serve.
  - Costs remain the same despite the number of students at the school.
  - The Board and schools are then forced to make difficult choices in the face of unpredictable funding.
- Unpredictable funding is an issue no matter the party, no matter the candidate.
- The [Advocacy Information Sheet for EIPS Families](#) is a tool to help parents engage with candidates and ask questions to ensure education is a top priority throughout the provincial election.

#### Questions and Comments:

- ATA hosted a [Candidate Forum](#). The video is posted on the ATA website.
- What percentage of our approximately \$204 million budget goes where?
  - The majority, \$170 million to \$175 million, goes to base instruction and differential funding.
  - About \$75 million goes into targeted funding.
- There is intent to organize an all-candidate forum for parents to ask questions to candidates, the COSC group will keep members notified of any progress.
- Parents want to feel empowered to ask questions and elevate education to a big election issue.
- It's a great document to help guide parents to ask the right questions.

#### For Information

##### b) *Saffron Cyber Second* – presented by Jacquie Surgenor, COSC Chair

- The March [Saffron Cyber Second](#) is available. Surgenor will post it on the COSC Facebook page.

##### c) ASCA Update – presented by Jacquie Surgenor, COSC Chair

- Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) Conference and AGM
  - The EIPS Board is sponsoring up to 12 representatives—one from each school within the Division—to attend the ASCA conference and AGM.

- If you plan to attend, fill out the [registration form](#) and email it back to EIPS.
- If you can't attend, fill out a [Proxy Vote Form](#) to cast a vote for your school council.
- There is a change in the format for nominations to the Board of Directors.
- Download the [nomination package](#) if you're interested.
- ASCA will only accept nominations from the floor. If there are fewer than five nominations submitted ahead of time, ASCA will accept nominations from the floor up to Saturday at 1 p.m.

**d) Social Media Smarts – presented by Michelle Beck, Wye Elementary School Council Chair**

- Wye Elementary is hosting a Social Media Smarts event on March 12, 2019.
- All are welcome to attend. Please RSVP.

## **COSC Sharing**

**a) ASCA Resolutions – presented by Jacquie Surgenor, COSC Chair, and Krista Scott, COSC Vice-Chair**

- Members voted on their top four resolutions to discuss at this meeting. Jacquie Surgenor and Krista Scott went through as many as time permitted.
- Next year, ASCA will move up voting and information to February.

### **Questions**

- What about pre-voting?
  - It's an attempt to figure out what resolutions are most popular and most likely to pass so members can vote on them as an omnibus vote.
- Some school councils are using technology and surveys to gauge the response from their parents on the resolutions prior to school council meetings.
- Remember ASCA advocates based on intent, rather than the verbatim resolution.
- P19-04: Education Assistant Quality Standard
  - Many were under the impression there are quality standards for educational assistants.
  - Hope they are used to improve the profession rather than make it prohibitive.
  - It's a challenge to get educational assistants in urban settings, let alone rural settings.
  - Be aware of possible unintended consequences of implementation of standards.
- P19-10: Guaranteed In-school Access to Mental Health Programs and Counselling for Students
  - The word guarantee is problematic.
  - More interest in the ASCA board-sponsored resolution.
  - The resolution presents in the education system but should be supported by Alberta Health Services.
  - No bag of money, it has to come from somewhere.
  - Resolutions 03, 10, and 13 are similar.
- P19-02: Preservation of Locally Elected School Boards
  - Trying to maintain the importance of locally elected school boards.
  - Loss to parents of having influence.
  - Minister maintains the importance and doesn't discuss centralization.
  - ASCA felt it was important to have direction from their members on this issue.

- P19-21: Equality of CEU Funding for Special Needs Students
  - School boards can make this happen without legislation.
  - It helps to have an understanding of how parents in other school jurisdictions advocate and escalate concerns; not all of them have faith in their local board.
  - Superintendents and boards might not do what we want, but we do have a voice and are a valued part of the conversation.
  - It's restrictive to further regulate how boards distribute funds.
- P19-18: Comprehensive Education Funding Framework Review
  - The resolution seems reasonable to review. However, it could turn into a political piece.
  - Seems unlikely to pass.

Meeting adjourned at 9 p.m.

**The next COSC meeting:**

**Date:** Wednesday, April 3, 2019

**Time:** 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

**Location:** EIPS Central Services, boardroom, Sherwood Park