



Committee of School Councils

# MEETING MINUTES

Elk Island Public Schools, virtual meeting

Feb. 3, 2021 | 6:30 p.m.

## In Attendance

### SCHOOL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

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

**Vice-Chair:** Devon Marshall, SCA Elementary

Brian Vick, Brentwood Elementary

Sara Witholt, Heritage Hills Elementary & Woodbridge Farms Elementary

### SCHOOL COUNCIL MEMBERS

Ken Allen, A.L. Horton Elementary

Jackie Anderson, Ardrossan Elementary & Ardrossan Junior Senior High

Aileen Bozic, SCA Secondary

April Childs, Lakeland Ridge

Jen Fraser, Salisbury Composite High

Dawn Ferguson, Win Ferguson Elementary

Julie Karaoghlanian, Andrew School

Cara Kern, Pine Street Elementary

Cassandra Levitt, Fort Saskatchewan Christian

Theresa MacKenzie, Westboro Elementary

Melissa Pressé, Davidson Creek Elementary

Krista Scott, Bev Facey Community High, Fultonvale Elementary Junior High & SCA Secondary

Amanda Shand, École Parc Élémentaire

Jacquie Surgenor, Westboro Elementary & Salisbury Composite High School

### ELK ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Trina Boymook, Chair

Colleen Holowaychuk, Vice-Chair

Randy Footz, Trustee

Skip Gordon, Trustee

Annette Hubick, Trustee

Don Irwin, Trustee

Jim Seutter, Trustee

Harvey Stadnick, Trustee

### ELK ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Mark Liguori, Superintendent

Amit Mali, Lamont High

Deneen Ziekle, ATA Local No. 28 President

Corrie Fletcher, Communications

## CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

### COSC ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING: ELECTION OF SECRETARY

Lesley Bowman, the COSC Chair, called the election for the position of Secretary for the 2020-21 school year.

Brian Vick, the COSC Representative for Brentwood Elementary School Council, volunteered for the position.

MOTION | To accept the nominations for the secretary as nominated.

*MOTION CARRIED*

### AGENDA

COSC Chair Bowman called for additions or deletions to the agenda for Feb. 3, 2021.

MOTION | The agenda be adopted, as circulated.

*MOTION CARRIED*

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Bowman called for confirmation of the meeting minutes for Jan. 6, 2021.

MOTION | The agenda be adopted, as circulated.

*MOTION CARRIED*

## Board Report

Board Chair Trina Boymook presented the Board report.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- At the January Board meeting:
  - The Board reviewed the Division's COVID-19 response and approved changes to the budget estimates for costs related to COVID-19, which take into account the most current information. In total, the Board increased funding by \$180,000 to support the K-6 French Immersion and senior high out-of-school learning option.
  - The Board approved an adjustment (\$495,411) to the Division's To Be Allocated budget. Part of the funds allow consultants, currently teaching out-of-school learners, to transition back to supporting teachers and students. The Board will continue to monitor costs throughout the year and consider the need for further reallocations, if required.
  - The Board approved the 2021-22 School Fee Parameter, which principals use to set school fees for the upcoming year.
  - The Board received for information a summary of fee changes for the 2020-21 school year. To date, the Division has received and approved 36 fee change requests.
- The Board expects the province to announce its Budget 2021 on February 25. There's a lot of uncertainty with this budget, given the economic crisis, and the budget may include additional funding reductions for education. To prepare, the Board has several budget working sessions scheduled in March.
- The Division's contemplating a technology fee to ensure schools can acquire, install and maintain up-to-date technology resources and services to enhance student learning in the classroom.
  - If implemented, the Division will charge a fee to students who attend a school without a Bring Your Own Device requirement.
  - The fee would be significantly less than the cost to purchase individual devices for a child.
  - The Division would use the money to offset the costs associated with purchasing student devices, updating classroom computer labs or smart classroom technology, student printing and network-related services, including internet demands across the Division.
- Chair Boymook met with Jordan Walker, the member of the legislative assembly of Alberta for Sherwood Park and Strathcona County Mayor Rod Frank. At the meetings, she discussed the recent Sherwood Park Value Scoping Session and the recommendation to combine Sherwood Heights Junior High and École Campbelltown into a new kindergarten to Grade 9 school.
- The Returning Student Registration process runs February 1-28. The following schools have closed boundaries for the 2021-22 school year: Ardrossan Junior Senior High, Davidson Creek Elementary, Lakeland Ridge, Sherwood Heights Junior High, James Mowat Elementary and SouthPointe School.
- The Division continues to livestream public Board meetings. The next meeting takes place on February 18, starting at 10 a.m. At the meeting, the Board will consider a recommendation to sponsor one school council member per EIPS school council to take part in the 2021 Alberta School Councils' Association Conference and Annual General Meeting—up to a maximum of 15 people.

## COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

**Question:** How did the meeting with Jordan Walker and Mayor Rod Frank go?

**Answer:** Both were an hour. They went well. At both we reviewed the plan for combining Sherwood Heights Junior High and École Campbelltown into one school. If approved, the Division will build the school on the site beside where Sherwood Heights Junior High is currently located. Strathcona County agreed to work with EIPS and have the site ready, if approved by the province.

**Q:** Why is EIPS considering a technology fee?

**A:** EIPS is looking at the possibility of implementing a technology fee at schools that don't have a Bring Your Own Device requirement. The purpose is to enhance student learning. Students are using technology more heavily, and schools need to figure out how to update, maintain and replace technology. The Division needs to look at viable solutions to ensure students have access to needed technology.

## ATA Report

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

### HIGHLIGHTS

- On February 4-5, the ATA is hosting its virtual North Central Teachers' Convention.
- Zielke's looking forward to having trustees and COSC Chair Lesley Bowman take part in the convention's virtual Partners in Education session. The keynote speaker is Shelley Moore, a renowned expert on effective practices of inclusion, special education, curriculum and professional learning.

## For Information

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

- The ASCA Annual General Meeting (AGM) takes place April 23-25.
- This year, the conference and AGM are virtual.
- Visit the ASCA website for nomination forms concerning school council and school council [recognition awards](#)—announced at the conference.
- The deadline for nominations is Feb. 28, 2021.
- ASCA's advocating the province to prioritize the COVID-19 vaccine for teachers and school-based staff.
- Refer to the ASCA website for information about its fundraising campaign, entitled [Rally for ASCA Donation Drive](#). ASCA hopes to raise \$300,000 by June 15, 2021.
- Once again, ASCA's offering its Meeting Mondays and Webinar Wednesdays.

## COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

**Comment:** It's good to see Meeting Mondays and Webinar Wednesdays recommencing.

**RETURNING STUDENT REGISTRATION** – Mark Liguori, Superintendent, EIPS

- Everyone should have received information regarding the Returning Student Registration process for the 2021-22 school year.
- The Division anticipates more normal conditions in the 2021-22 school year.
- Returning student registration information is important as it allows schools to accurately prepare budgets for the upcoming school year.
- Returning Student Registration closes on Feb.28, 2021.
- After February 28, any EIPS families who did not complete the Returning Student Registration form will receive a call from their current school to collect more information.

## COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

**Question:** For high school students, do you know if EIPS will return to the two-semester system?

**Answer:** The Division will soon bring information about this to the Board, and preliminary discussions will begin. At present, we don't know the answer and, of course, a lot depends on the province and the status of COVID-19 and immunizations. The Division will have an answer before June 25.

**Q:** This question is for Board Chair Trina Boymook. Is there any update on the Division being held harmless for the reduction in enrollment numbers this year?

**A:** We do not know and will not receive any information on this until after the province announces its 2021 Budget.

**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 the resources valuable.
- School councils are hearing more comments about mental health issues—affecting parents and children.
- Bowman encouraged members to review the Caregiver Series calendar. There may be a session beneficial for you or someone you know.

**SAFFRON CYBER SECOND** – Lesley Bowman, COSC Chair

The February issue of the [Saffron Cyber Second](#) is now available. The newsletter offers tips, tools and strategies to help children develop skills for healthy and safe online experiences. Consider distributing it in a school council newsletter, the school newsletter or through social media.

## New Business

**ASCA RESOLUTIONS 2021: OVERVIEW AND HOW TO DISCUSS AT THE NEXT SCHOOL COUNCIL**

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

Scott and Surgenor discussed the advocacy process for the Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA)—what it is and what it does.

- The [ASCA Advocacy Resolutions: An overview](#) is a great resource and easy to understand.
- The document explains what advocacy is and explains how to develop an advocacy policy, start to finish.
- Scott recommends presenting the document at the next school council meeting when discussing the [proposed 2021 ASCA Advocacy Resolutions](#).
- Both Scott and Surgenor offered to attend members' school council meetings to help discuss the [proposed 2021 ASCA Advocacy Resolutions](#).
- One of ASCA's roles is advocacy, which can be carried through to the Minister of Education.
- An advocacy policy is a guiding principle and belief statement.
- [ASCA's advocacy policies](#) are available online.
- An example of an advocacy policy brought forward by a school council association and voted on at the ASCA annual general meeting (AGM), is the one about changing the weighting of diploma examinations to 30 per cent from 50 per cent. Members voted on the resolution at the annual general meeting, and it passed.
- ASCA AGMs are important because advocacy resolutions are debated during the meeting.
- ASCA also outlines how to write a [proper resolution](#).
- Often a resolution is brought forward by a school council because there is a problem in their area.
- When reviewing a list of resolutions on a provincewide scale, it's important to remember certain resolutions aren't applicable to a certain area, whereas others are.
- The proposed resolutions should be an agenda topic at all the next school council meetings.
- If discussing a resolution at your school council meeting, involve your trustee and school principal in the discussion, as they may have a different perspective.
- The ASCA AGM offers school councils a voice—either for or against a resolution.
- By taking part at the annual general meeting, your voice is heard.

## COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

**Question:** How many board members are on ASCA's Board?

**Answer:** There are 12 board members—a President, Vice-President and 10 directors.

**Q:** Before COVID-19, approximately how many people were present at the AGM?

**A:** There were about 150 people present.

## COVID-19 UPDATE – Mark Liguori, Superintendent, EIPS

- As of Feb. 8, 2021, the province will ease some of its COVID-19 restrictions.
- From EIPS' point of view, the changes present some challenges:
  1. Parental expectations. Understanding what the easing of restrictions means versus how it's interpreted.
  2. The quarantine period for the COVID-19 variants of concern, which is now between 14 to 24 days.
  3. What is EIPS going to do?
- EIPS' goal is to continue with in-school classes, with face-to-face instruction, until the end of June.
- There's a wide variation in response from parents.
- With respect to No. 2, the possibly longer quarantine period may result in a teacher missing work for about a month. It's also difficult for families—if a student is diagnosed with a variant of concern, then the whole family must quarantine for at least 24 days.
- With respect to No. 3, sport for children will return, with restrictions, on February 8.
- Offsite facilities are allowed to be used, as long as they relate to curriculum activities.
- However, being allowed to do something and putting it into practical use is much different. For example, if EIPS provides transportation, then teachers must adhere to the Student Transportation cleaning protocols. Doing so is cumbersome and the teacher's time is spent cleaning as opposed to the actual activity.
- Strathcona County's recreational facilities are still closed, such as skating rinks, so these facilities aren't available for use.
- When possible, EIPS will try to work within the new COVID-19 restrictions.

## COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

**Question:** Why are siblings of close contacts not required to stay at home too?

**Answer:** AHS is the deciding party in this decision. School divisions take their directives from AHS.

**Q:** What is the quarantine time for school close contacts of an individual identified with a variant of concern?

**A:** AHS is the deciding party.

**Comment:** From ASCA's perspective, the President made it abundantly clear in her conversations with the Minister of Education students who want to be in school deserve to be there. And, the government must institute policies to meet these needs.

**Q:** At our last school council meeting there was some discussion around budgeting for field trips for the next school year, and as our budgets are due this spring, should we plan for budgeting field trips?

**A:** Yes, I believe schools should budget for field trips next year. It's easier to remove it from the budget, as opposed to adding items to a budget later.

**Q:** Is there anything in the plan about how to deal with spring break, such as returning from spring break?

**A:** Given the restrictions surrounding COVID-19, the Division recommends people not travel over spring break.

**Q:** When you say, you're hopeful things are normal in September, are you referring to life back in 2019?

**A:** To the best of our ability, we will try and get back to normal. The return to normal activities will be introduced slowly, and of course, depends on where we are with COVID-19.

## **COSC Sharing**

### **HOW SCHOOL COUNCILS SHARED INFORMATION ABOUT THE DIVISION'S FIRST NATION, MÉTIS AND INUIT ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS – Lesley Bowman, COSC Chair**

The first online First Nation, Métis and Inuit information sessions took place last night. The session included information about First Nation, Métis, and Inuit programming within EIPS and how it relates to the classrooms, teachers and projects. COSC members shared how they communicated details about the sessions to their school council groups and school community.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:35 p.m.

## **Next COSC Meeting**

**DATE:** March 3, 2021

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

**LOCATION:** Virtual meeting, link available in March agenda