



Committee of
School Councils

MEETING MINUTES

Elk Island Public Schools, virtual meeting

May 5, 2021 | 6:30 p.m.

In Attendance

SCHOOL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

Chair: Lesley Bowman, Pine Street Elementary

Vice-Chair: Devon Marshall, SCA Elementary

Secretary: Brian Vick, Brentwood Elementary

Michelle Uytterhagen, Fultonvale Elementary
Junior High

Sara Witholt, Heritage Hills Elementary &
Woodbridge Farms Elementary

SCHOOL COUNCIL MEMBERS

Ken Allan, A.L. Horton Elementary

Jackie Anderson, Ardrossan Elementary & Ardrossan
Junior Senior High

April Childs, Lakeland Ridge

Jen Fraser, Salisbury Composite High

JP Grebenc, Ardrossan Elementary & Ardrossan Junior
Senior High

Cara Kern, Pine Street Elementary

Cassandra Levitt, Fort Saskatchewan Christian

Theresa MacKenzie, Westboro Elementary

Rammi Pandher, Sherwood Heights Junior High

Melissa Pressé, Davidson Creek Elementary

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

Jacque 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

Sandra Stoddard, Associate Superintendent

Deneen Zielke, ATA Local No. 28 President

Corrie Fletcher, Communication Services

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

COSC Chair Bowman called for additions or deletions to the agenda for May 5, 2021.

MOTION | The agenda be adopted, as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Bowman called for confirmation of the meeting minutes for April 7, 2021.

MOTION | The minutes be adopted, as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

Board Report

Board Chair Trina Boymook presented the Board report.

HIGHLIGHTS

- In April, the Board approved a two-year reserve plan for the Division, which addresses the Division's COVID-19 recovery plan, and mission, values and priorities. The total reserve plan totals \$5.76 million—\$4.66 million for year one and the remaining \$1.1 million for year two. Highlights include:
 - \$2.1 million for COVID-19 response costs—personal protective equipment and sanitization;
 - \$500,000 for the Focus on Learning Loss initiative;
 - \$500,000 to develop social and emotional support plans for students;
 - \$130,000 to hire a Career Pathways Consultant;
 - \$393,000 to hire consultants in the areas of numeracy, early learning and assessment;
 - \$175,000 to implement Alberta Education's new curriculum;
 - \$20,000 for the Junior High Honours program;
 - \$116,000 to offer the Home Education program; and
 - \$250,000 for year three of the modular mechanical cooling program.
- At the April 22 public Board meeting, trustees:
 - approved the key budget assumptions for the 2021-22 school year;
 - approved the key budget allocations and reserve use for the 2021-22 school year;
 - approved the administrative fees and school fees for the 2021-22 school year.
 - approved changes to the budget estimates for costs related to COVID-19—medical illness costs related to COVID-19 and personal protective equipment costs are lower than estimated.
 - approved an adjustment to the Division's To Be Allocated budget to cover expenses for the upcoming election, furniture and equipment of four modular unit classrooms, curriculum costs, evergreening student computers at schools with need, and emergency-notification systems; and
 - approved a change to Student Transportation eligibility for senior high students living in the Andrew School attendance boundary.
- Next year, EIPS isn't offering the out-of-school learning option. However, a Home Education option is available through Next Step—open to learners currently registered in out-of-school learning. The Home Education option requires the full-year commitment, meaning there's no option to transition back to in-school classes in the 2021-22 school year.

ATA Report

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

HIGHLIGHTS

- Zielke thanked COSC members for including her in the meetings this year—children benefit when stakeholders come together to discuss educational topics and shared experiences. She hopes the relationship continues next year.
- The Local's selling lawn signs to families, school council groups and community members who want to show support for public education. To order a sign, contact Kern Topma, the Local's Administrative Assistant, at 587-988-3993. Each sign is \$4.
- Alberta's municipal elections take place this October. Some trustees will seek re-election, and some will not. Trustees provide governance to the Division. As such, it's important to help support and elevate the election to ensure people vote for candidates who support their philosophies about education. The ATA and Local are working on several initiatives to engage trustee candidates and inform voters.

For Information

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

- Krista Scott and Jacquie Surgenor thanked the Board for sponsoring COSC members to attend the Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) Conference and Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- They also thanked the school council groups who participated in this year's conference and AGM.
- Continue to visit the ASCA website for the latest school council information and news.
- Both Scott and Surgenor look forward to meeting again in the new school year.

CAREGIVER SERIES UPDATE – Lesley Bowman, COSC Chair

- The [May Caregiver Series](#) schedule is now available.
- Offered through Alberta Health Services, the sessions are informative and valuable.
- Bowman encouraged members to review the May Caregiver Series calendar.

SAFFRON CYBER SECOND – Lesley Bowman, COSC Chair

- The May issue of the [Saffron Cyber Second](#) is now available.
- The newsletter offers tips, tools and strategies to help ensure healthy and safe online experiences.
- Consider distributing the issue in a school council newsletter, the school newsletter or on social media.

SAFFRON PRESENTATION – Lesley Bowman, COSC Chair

- Ardrossan Junior Senior High is hosting a virtual Saffron presentation entitled, "Cyber World: Keeping children safe in a virtual world."
- The session takes place on May 10 at 7:30 p.m.

SHERWOOD HEIGHTS JUNIOR HIGH – Lesley Bowman, COSC Chair, and Jacquie Surgenor, COSC member

- The province has yet to announce a replacement school for Sherwood Heights Junior High.
- School families and community members are disappointed, given the age and condition of the school.
- All stakeholders have to work with Alberta Education to help them understand the importance of a replacement for Sherwood Heights.
- Surgenor and Bowman are working with Sherwood Heights' school council to address the issue and develop a website ([replacesherwoodheights.ca](#)) highlighting important information and resources.
- The No. 1 priority on EIPS' Three-Year Capital Plan is a K-9 replacement school for Sherwood Heights Junior High and École Campbelltown, which was submitted to Alberta Education earlier this year.
- [Replacesherwoodheights.ca](#) plans to host two or three engagement sessions over the next year.
- A concerted effort from all stakeholders—emails and letters—is needed to engage local members of the legislative assembly of Alberta, the Minister of Education and the Premier.
- The current enrolment at Sherwood Heights is close to 650 students.

New Business

COVID UPDATE— Mark Liguori, Superintendent, EIPS

- The last two weeks, especially the last two days, have been busy in terms of COVID-19 cases.
- Schools do an outstanding job dealing with COVID-19.
- From an instructional point of view, in-class learning is the best way to deliver instruction.
- Interacting with other students and adults is good for a child's overall mental health and well-being.
- With the latest provincial public-health restrictions, all EIPS schools will transition to online learning—May 10-20.
- Students return to in-school learning on May 25.
- Currently, the Division has 37 active COVID-19 cases, 15 schools on alert status, and five schools on outbreak status.
- COVID-19 is taking a foothold, but the Division has a solid plan for the temporary online learning.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Question: As we're moving back to the two-semester system in the fall, have you seen any information, from the junior high perspective, that helped in your decision to move back to the two-semester system?

Answer: We're constantly reflecting. Certainly, a compact schedule helps mitigate the overall amount of exposure students may have. Right now, though, we feel the two-semester system is the right choice for students. As we head into the summer, we'll again look at the best information to move forward. If there's evidence to do something else, then, we will do that.

Q: Is there any way for parents to get their hands on information related to what courses were negatively affected by the quarter-semester system?

A: We'd need to present that information to the Board of Trustees first. There are courses at the senior high level that are historically difficult to implement regardless of when they are offered.

Q: What are the chances the temporary online learning schedule gets extended beyond May 25?

A: What I believe will happen is the province will come up with a metric, whereby if we are below the metric, we will return to in-school classes on May 25.

Q: Why is the Impact program not exempt from the temporary online learning this time?

A: Given COVID-19's status, we need to minimize the number of people in a building. If one person gets sick, then the entire program must shut down. Before a decision was made, the Division worked closely with the Specialized Supports team to determine who can and can't transition to temporary online learning.

Q: What will graduation look like? Will EIPS follow the provincial guidelines or have extra measures?

A: EIPS will follow the provincial public-health guidelines.

Comment: We are very grateful for the hard work EIPS has done in relation to dealing with COVID-19. Your handling of the situation fills us with confidence that EIPS is doing a good job.

DRAFT BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS: 2021-22 – Mark Liguori, Superintendent, EIPS

- It's budget time for EIPS.
- Superintendent Mark Liguori thanked the Board for their patience and work on the 2021-22 budget—it's an excellent budget to move forward with.
- School boards receive money from a variety of sources—the main source is the provincial government.
- The province now uses a moving three-year weighted average to determine funding, which is based on the Division's enrolment numbers over a three-year period.
- EIPS enrolment declined slightly because of COVID-19 and the province's current economic climate.
- Other revenue sources include school fees, administrative fees and after-hour rental fees.

NOTE: The rest of the presentation focused on Division's projected revenue and reserves for the 2021-22 school year, which is highlighted in the following [Revenue and Reserves Summary](#).

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Question: The provincial government said earlier it was going to increase funding for special education support. Do we know how that worked out?

Answer: Funding did increase for special education—funding was taken from another area to put more money into special education. *NOTE:* A discussion followed about rough allocations for various budget lines.

Q: Is the fundraising line presented in the budget for the entire Division?

A: Yes, it is.

Q: Can you explain the difference between operating reserves and capital reserves.?

A: Operating reserves typically have no strings attached, and the Board decides how the Division spends these. Capital reserves are for the purchase of capital equipment, and only accessible by the Board.

Q: Do school divisions require permission from the Minister of Education to spend its reserves?

A: Yes. We do need approval from the Minister of Education to spend reserves.

Comment: I appreciate the time and effort put in by the Board in presenting budget numbers to school councils. It's important we have these conversations, so we can better understand what's happening within the overall scope of the budget.

SCHOOL COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORTS – Lesley Bowman, COSC Chair

- It's the responsibility of each school council to submit an annual report by June 25.
- The report is submitted to the Principal, who then sends it to the Superintendent for review.
- The report summarizes the school council's activities, engagements and participation during the school year. It also includes any plans for the upcoming school year.
- An example of an annual school council report: [School Council Annual Report Sample](#)

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Question: What does the Division do with the school council reports? If they are used, what are they used for and do they have any bearing on future planning?

Answer: We read through each report and then archived it, so we have a record. If there are any areas of concern, these are addressed directly with the school council Chair and school Principal.

COSC Sharing

ASCA CONFERENCE AND AGM – Lesley Bowman, COSC Chair

Bowman thanked the Board for sponsoring the registration fee for members to take part in the 2020-21 ASCA Conference and AGM. Members then discussed their experience at the conference and AGM:

- The online platform worked quite well. We're very grateful for the work done by Krista for this event.
- It was my first time attending the AGM. I really enjoyed it. I also attended three breakout sessions, which had some great ideas presented.

NOTE: The remaining comments focused on sessions offered through the conference and presenters.

ASCA RESOLUTIONS NO. 11 – Lesley Bowman, COSC Chair

- At the ASCA AGM, Resolution No. 11 was ruled "out of order" because it conflicts with ASCA's objects of incorporation.
- The [outcome of the resolutions](#) debated at the AGM are available online.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:39 p.m.

Next COSC Meeting

DATE: Oct. 6, 2021

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

LOCATION: virtual