



MEETING MINUTES

Elk Island Public Schools, virtual meeting

Oct. 6, 2021 | 6:30 p.m.

In Attendance

SCHOOL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

Chair: Lesley Bowman, Pine Street Elementary

Vice-Chair: Devon Marshall, SCA Elementary

Secretary: Michelle Uytterhagen, Fultonvale Elementary Junior High

Jacque Surgenor, Salisbury Composite High & Sherwood Heights Junior High
Brian Vick, Brentwood Elementary
Sara Witholt, Heritage Hills Elementary & Woodbridge Farms Elementary

SCHOOL COUNCIL MEMBERS

Ken Allan, A.L. Horton Elementary
Jackie Anderson, Ardrossan Junior Senior High
Heather Bayne, Ardrossan Junior Senior High
Leanna Bechtel, École Parc Élémentaire
Aileen Bozic, SCA Secondary
April Childs, Lakeland Ridge
Nadine Fricke, James Mowat Elementary
Cara Kern, Pine Street Elementary
Lori Lehman, Woodbridge Farms
Courtney Liddle, Win Ferguson Elementary
Theresa MacKenzie, Westboro Elementary
Natalie Manuel, Fort Saskatchewan Christian
Tracey Nielsen, Clover Bar Junior High
Krista Scott, Bev Facey Community High, Fultonvale Elementary Junior High & SCA Secondary
Jacqueline Shotbolt, École Parc Élémentaire
Sheena Singleton, Sherwood Heights Junior High

ELK ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Trina Boymook, Chair
Colleen Holowaychuk, Vice-Chair
Randy Footz, Trustee
Annette Hubick, Trustee
Don Irwin, Trustee
Jim Seutter, Trustee
Harvey Stadnick, Trustee

ELK ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Mark Liguori, Superintendent
Deneen Ziekle, ATA Local No. 28 President
Ryan Marshall, Director Instructional Supports
Tracey Arbuthnott, Principal Pine Street Elementary
Keri Busenius, Principal A.L. Horton Elementary
Corrie Fletcher, Communications

CALL TO ORDER

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

COSC ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

Past COSC Chair Lesley Bowman called the election for the position of Chair for the 2021-22 school year. Lesley Bowman was acclaimed Chair. Bowman then called the election for the position of Vice-Chair and Secretary for the 2021-22 school year. Devon Marshall was acclaimed Vice-Chair and Michelle Uytterhagen acclaimed the secretary.

MOTION | To accept the nominations for the Chair and Vice-Chair as nominated.

MOTION CARRIED

COSC PLANNING

Members agreed to:

- Hold COSC meetings on the first Wednesday of the month—October, November, January, February, March, April and May.
- For the time being, hold meetings virtually, using the platform ZOOM. COSC will review meeting location when COVID-19 restrictions lift.
- The meeting time: 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

AGENDA

COSC Chair Bowman called for additions or deletions to the agenda.

MOTION | The agenda be adopted, as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

COSC Chair Bowman called for approval of the May 5, 2021 meeting minutes.

MOTION | The minutes be approved, as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

Board Report

Board Chair Trina Boymook presented the Board report.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Over the summer, the Board met various times to discuss EIPS' operations plan and guidelines. It also held special board meetings to discuss the Division's masking protocol—on August 18 and September 2.
- On September 15, the province introduced masking requirements for students in all Alberta schools. Shortly after, it released updated guidance documents for schools. All EIPS families received an email from the Division highlighting the changes. As well, if Alberta Health Services declares an outbreak at a school, extra public-health measures are needed and put in place. The Board's No. 1 priority is the health and safety of all students and staff.
- To support students negatively affected by the pandemic, the Board allocated additional dollars to cover related costs. Specifically, reserve spending increased by \$2.65 million to account for COVID-19 costs—personal protective equipment, enhanced custodial services and Home Education. As well, the Division launched two new initiatives, each earmarked with \$500,000. The first is a Focus on Learning Loss project. Schools have put together comprehensive plans that address achievement gaps resulting from the disruption in learning last year. The second initiative focuses on student social and emotional well-being by providing resources and supports to those impacted by the pandemic.
- The Board plans to apply to access a portion of the \$45 million set aside by Alberta Education to address learning achievement gaps for students in grades 1-3.
- National Day for Truth and Reconciliation is now recognized federally as a national holiday. The day's intended to remind Canadians about the history of residential schools, remember the victims and honour the survivors. To mark the actual day, the Board of Trustees declared it a divisionwide school-closure day.
- Recently, the Board submitted a letter to the Minister of Education outlining EIPS' concerns with the new draft K-6 curriculum, recommendations on how to improve it and areas that need addressing before it's implemented in schools.

- At the September 20 special Board meeting, trustees approved increasing its reserve use from the Division Unallocated Reserve. The Division will use the additional funds, up to \$325,000, to maintain its Student Transportation services for EIPS riders.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Question: Was the Transportation Fee Schedule a factor in the reduced ridership?

Answer: The Director of Student Transportation reported to the Board the primary reason for the reduced ridership is COVID-19.

ATA Report

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

HIGHLIGHTS

- Zielke shared with members many teachers are being pressured by families to volunteer and run extracurricular activities for students.
- She asked for understanding and provided background and context about why adding extracurricular activities is a difficult task for many teachers right now—the current teaching reality, information about the last 12 months and public-health restrictions.
- She asked members to raise the concern at their school council meetings. The goal: To support teachers and avoid more stress for staff who are doing their best during a challenging time.
- The full report was emailed to all members subscribed to the EIPS COSC Email Distribution List.

For Information

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

- The grant to fund Alberta School Council Association (ASCA) was cut by 75 percent last year. As of last weekend's board meeting, ASCA still doesn't know if it has a grant this year. The Board of Directors discussed what it looks like and remains sustainable with this reduction—\$130,000 is projected from membership fees. ASCA will provide sessions at \$100 per session to member school councils. The ASCA Board is looking at making some severe and difficult decisions. The Minister of Education has given each school council \$500 to encourage parental engagement.
- School councils are encouraged to sign up for the Engagement Taskforce to help ASCA gather information. The information collected gives ASCA direction for its advocacy efforts. Registration is annual.
- The EIPS Board of Trustees paid the membership fee for each EIPS school council. ASCA created a members-only section on its website. All EIPS school councils have access to it—accessed by email. Krista Scott encourages members to use a separate school council email, instead of a personal email. The members-only site's assigned to the email provided. As a member, you have access to certain content.

MUNICIPAL ELECTION – Lesley Bowman, COSC Chair

- Bowman shared information on where to find information about the trustee elections. She encourages everyone to share the information and get the communities involved. For more information visit:
 - [EIPS' Trustee Election 2021](#)
 - [Elk Island Elections](#)

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES – Lesley Bowman, COSC Chair

- The [COSC Operational Procedures](#) are available on the EIPS website and the [COSC Facebook page](#).

CAREGIVER SERIES UPDATE – Lesley Bowman, COSC Chair

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

SAFFRON CYBER SECOND – Lesley Bowman, COSC Chair

- The October 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.

New Business

COVID-19 UPDATE – Superintendent Mark Liguori

- An issue around COVID-19 for the Board and Division is managing expectations. To help with this, the Division developed operational guidelines.
- Up until today:
 - Schools are dependent on families to let them know if a child tests positive for COVID-19. The Division's data is based on that information.
- COVID-19 data is self-identified and reported by parents. The difference between last year and this year: In 2020-21, the direction from the province was black and white, with clear guidelines on how to operate. This year, the direction isn't clear, so school divisions aren't doing the same thing, making it difficult for families to navigate.
- Between September 1-30, 231 COVID-19 cases were reported to EIPS—that's around the same number as infectious COVID-19 cases reported over all of last year to EIPS.
- Alberta Health Services (AHS) will post the [status of every school](#) in the province. On October 12, AHS will begin releasing information about COVID-19 cases in school. If a student tests positive but wasn't infectious while at school, it won't be reported, and the Division won't be notified. If a student tests positive for COVID-19 and was infectious at school, AHS will report the case to the Division and post it online if there is more than one case in a 14-day period.
- The Division doesn't have a lot of information about the rapid testing initiative. Starting late October, the province plans to offer a targeted rapid-testing program for elementary schools experiencing outbreaks. Testing is voluntary and administered at home by a family member. The initiative is voluntary and offers an added screening tool for asymptomatic individuals.
- Families will receive information on the parameters of what is an alert status and outbreak status—AHS is changing the parameters around that.
- The at-home learning will only occur in a single classroom—if there are three or more infectious cases in a class within a five-day period. The at-home learning will last for 10 calendar days. During this time, students will transition to Brightspace, the Division's online learning platform.
- At the end of November, AHS will take over contact tracing. There is a lot of work the Division must take on to do the contact tracing until AHS steps in.
- Students are not required to quarantine if they are a close contact of a COVID-19 case.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Question: Will EIPS receive information about numbers of students who get, with parental consent, COVID-19 vaccinations within EIPS schools? Curious if AHS will inform the Division on of how many participants there are?

Answer: The only information that is accurate is from Strathcona Health Centre. EIPS doesn't have access to that information.

EIPS OPERATIONS GUIDELINES – Superintendent Mark Liguori

- The EIPS Operations Guidelines is a living document and updated regularly, when the Division receives new information. The purpose of the guidelines is:
 1. To do everything possible to keep children in school and learning. The worst thing that could happen is going to an out-of-school learning situation. For students to be successful, they need more real-life experience—working, writing exams, such as diploma examinations. EIPS wants to ensure students receive as much real-life experience in school as possible.
 2. To ensure everyone under the EIPS umbrella stays healthy. EIPS wants to avoid what happened last year, in terms of the suspension of in-school learning. The guidelines help ensure staff remain healthy and there is enough staff to keep classes in person.

COSC Engagement

ENGAGE WITH THE EIPS BOARD ON THE NEW DRAFT K-6 CURRICULUM – Board Chair Trina Boymook and Ryan Marshall, the director of Instructional Supports

- The province plans to implement the draft K-6 curriculum in September 2022.
- The Alberta School Board Association (ASBA) received a grant from the Minister of Education to engage trustees on the curriculum—the report is due January 7.
- ASBA has several engagement sessions planned—the first one is on October 12. The Minister of Education also encourages trustees to continue with the engagement and collect feedback from families as well.
- There are a number of focus areas.
- Chair Boymook will share the feedback from COSC members with ASBA.
- Ryan Marshall led the conversation and initially asked:
 1. What would you like to see in the new draft curriculum?
 2. What are your hopes that the new curriculum will provide for your children?
- Everyone was given the opportunity to provide feedback on what came to mind for each question.
- Marshall encouraged everyone to take the questions back to their school councils and receive feedback. Members can amalgamate the feedback and send it to [Corrie Fletcher](#).

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:43 P.M.

Next COSC Meeting

DATE: Nov. 3, 2021

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

LOCATION: Virtual meeting, link available in the November agenda