



UNRATIFIED

MEETING MINUTES

Elk Island Public Schools, in-person meeting

April 5, 2023 | 7 p.m.

Committee of
School Councils

In Attendance

SCHOOL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

Chair: Lesley Williams, Sherwood Heights Junior High

Vice-Chair: Chelsea Pretzlaw, Ardrossan Elementary

SCHOOL COUNCIL MEMBERS

Aileen Bozic, SCA Secondary (Interim Secretary)

April Childs, Lakeland Ridge

Brian Vick, Brentwood Elementary

Christan Rasmussen, Westboro Elementary

Jenn Fukuyama, Clover Bar Junior High

Jennie March, Ardrossan Junior Senior High

Kendra Roemer, Mills Haven Elementary

Kim Scott, Westboro Elementary

Lisa Harke, SCA Elementary

Lisa Plooy, Fort Saskatchewan Christian

Meagan Bruce, Woodbridge Farms Elementary

Sarah Witholt, Heritage Hills Elementary

ELK ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Trina Boymook, Chair

Don Irwin, Trustee

Jim Seutter, Trustee

Jacqueline Shotbolt, Trustee

Susan Miller, Trustee

ELK ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Mark Liguori, Superintendent

Sandra Stoddard, Associate Superintendent

Daniel Radersma, ATA Local No. 28 Secretary

Emma Small, Communication Services

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m.

AGENDA

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

MOTION | The agenda be adopted, as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

COSC Chair Williams called for approval of the March 1, 2023, meeting minutes.

MOTION | The minutes be approved, as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

COSC Chair Williams stated the May COSC meeting would use a hybrid delivery.

Board Report

Board Chair Trina Boymook presented the Board Report.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- The Board of Trustees approved the recommendation to consolidate the elementary Logos program at Brentwood Elementary. Families were informed of the decision and given an opportunity to finalize their registration for the 2023-24 school year.
- At the March 16 Board meeting, the Board set boundaries for Cambrian Crossing. Hearthstone—east of Oldman Creek—will be designated to Glen Allan Elementary, F.R. Haythorne Junior High and Bev Facey Community High, while Cambrian—west side of Oldman Creek—will be designated to Westboro Elementary, Clover Bar Junior High and Salisbury Composite High.
- Also at the March 16 Board meeting, the Board was thrilled to nominate Rae-Lynn Billingsley, a Grade 4 teacher at A.L. Horton Elementary for this year’s Edwin Parr Teacher Award from the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA).
- The Board approved an updated three-year capital plan, where the Fort Saskatchewan High-Rudolph Henning Junior High replacement school has moved to the Board’s number one request. This request is followed by a James Mowat Elementary replacement school and then a major modernization of Vegreville Composite High into a K-12 school as priority number three.
- Earlier this year, EIPS submitted a concept proposal that would see the replacement school for Fort Saskatchewan High and Rudolph Hennig Junior High become a collegiate school. The Board received exciting news from Alberta Education—it would like the Division to submit a business case by March 31.
 - The collegiate school concept helps students pursue a wide range of post-secondary options, in addition to opportunities in high demand trades. A collegiate school provides a comprehensive launch to many apprenticeship-based occupations high demand in Alberta, while still providing important experiences and learning opportunities for those choosing to pursue other academic routes and careers. EIPS has one of the first public school boards to put forward a concept under this new initiative; therefore, timelines and the extent of the process is unknown currently.
- On March 22, the Board had a second budget working session. It has reviewed the details of the funding manual and will continue its budget discussions at the Board Caucus meeting on April 6. Although the budget has experienced an increase in specific places, this rise is a result of repurposed funding from other areas. Because of the introduction of reserve caps, the Board is on track to deplete a large portion in the current year to stay under the cap. It’s expected there’ll be limited use of reserves in building next year’s budget. The Board will approve allocations to schools at a special meeting taking place April 27.
- Also on March 22, the Board met with Lamont Town Council where it discussed areas of mutual interest. Additionally, the Board extended its appreciation to the town council for their financial contributions toward a Family School Liaison Worker.
- EIPS will implement the majority of new student transportation changes this fall. These changes will see eligible service extend to those elementary students living one kilometre or more walking distance from the school they’re registered to attend and secondary students who live two or more kilometres walking distance from the school they’re registered to attend. Implantation for the 2023-24 school year is optional. EIPS will use driving distance to determine eligibility for the 2024-25 school year. On April 27, the Board will set the fees for the 2023-24 school year at a special meeting. The Division will advise parents of their eligibility and fees following the meeting.
- On April 6, the Board will have a special meeting to consider the need for an information report regarding the possible closure of Andrew School. The information report would be presented at the Board meeting on April 20. The special meeting is scheduled for 1 p.m. and will be livestreamed.
- The next French Immersion public engagement session will take place April 13. EIPS is exploring ways to enhance the program, increase retention at the junior high and senior high levels, address anticipated enrolment pressures in Ardrossan and balance enrolment at the elementary level.

- At the upcoming session, EIPS will share its vision for the French Immersion program and the guiding principles that align with the key themes identified during the first two phases. The Division also developed a potential solution that supports both the vision and guiding principles.
- Those in attendance will break out into small groups to consider the strengths, weaknesses and gather ideas around how the solution can be enhanced and alternative options. Those that are unable to attend will be able to provide their thoughts through a survey emailed out to families and posted on the Division website.
- At the June 15 Board meeting, the Board will consider the EIPS Superintendent's recommendation for the French Immersion program and will make a decision on the solution.
- April 16-22 is National Volunteer Week. This year's week focuses on highlighting inspiring figures whose invaluable seeds of kindness through volunteering are bettering their community and the world in general.

ATA Report

ATA Local No. 28 Secretary Daniel Radersma presented the ATA report.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- With less than two months to the provincial election, both the provincial Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) and the Local are working hard to make education a top priority for all candidates.
- The provincial ATA has sponsored new television, billboard, bus and radio ads. Because of new advertising constraints regarding election material, these ads must be carefully designed to not break the rules. Radersma stated voters are encouraged to go to the [Stand for Education website](#), which is a private campaign where more blunt statistics and survey results can be found. He asked COSC members to sign up and to encourage parents and caregivers in their school communities to do the same.
- From April 14-16, the Strathcona County Chamber of Commerce's annual [trade fair](#) occurs at Millennium Place. The Local has rented a booth and will be handing out window signs that encourage people to vote for education. Children's artwork will be featured, and small treats will be handed out. Booth facilitators will encourage voters to talk to all party candidates about the importance of a properly funded public education system that addresses class sizes and supports for vulnerable learners. Radersma stated if COSC members or anyone in their school communities are interested in working the booth for a short shift, they can contact politicalengagement@elkislandlocal28.ca.
- Radersma stated Stand for Education posters are also available for school councils and their communities to use, and they can contact ATA Local No. 28 President [Deneen Zielke](#) to get them dropped them off at their schools.

For Information

ASCA UPDATE – Lesley Williams, COSC Chair

- The ASCA Conference and Annual General Meeting (AGM) occurs April 21-23.
 - COSC Chair Williams stated there were three Board-sponsored spots available for EIPS school council members to attend the ASCA Conference and/or AGM. The deadline to register was April 5.
 - The keynote speaker will be Debbie Pushor who will speak about the role of parents and family-centric education. Jennifer Turner will discuss the reconnecting of people after the pandemic. Representatives from Sherwood Heights Junior High will also speak. Other session speaker and breakout session [descriptions](#) are available.
 - COSC Chair Williams stated the deadline to register for ASCA resolution voting at the AGM was April 13. The credential voting form and proxy voting form can be found on the ASCA website.
 - The AGM also gives ASCA members a chance to vote on the elected ASCA Board of Directors. Candidate profiles can be found on the [ASCA website](#).

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Question: If you can only attend part of the conference, can someone go in your place?

Answer: No, the registration is not transferable.

ASCA REGISTRATION AND PROXY VOTE – Lesley Williams, COSC Chair

- COSC Chair Williams noted the importance of filling out the credential voting form by 5 p.m. on April 13.
- In terms of the proxy voting form, “proxy” means to carry another school council’s vote. Filling out the form is simple and easy.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Question: Is the AGM hybrid?

Answer: No—you need to be in person, but you’ll use the Election Buddy platform.

Question: How will we know who can proxy?

Answer: Emma Small, a communications and public engagement assistant at EIPS, will let COSC members know who’s registered in the meeting follow-up email.

CAREGIVER SERIES UPDATE – Lesley Williams, COSC Chair

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

SCHOOL COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT GRANT – Lesley Williams, COSC Chair

- The Alberta Education School Council Engagement Grant funds are available until the end of the school year. COSC Chair Williams encouraged all councils to use their grant if they haven’t done so already.
- COSC Chair Williams went over grant approvals:
 - The following school councils have grant approval as of April 5, 2023:
 - A.L. Horton Elementary
 - Andrew School
 - Brentwood Elementary
 - École Campbelltown
 - École Parc Élémentaire
 - Fort Saskatchewan Elementary
 - Fort Saskatchewan High
 - Rudolph Hennig Junior High
 - Strathcona Christian Academy Elementary
 - Westboro Elementary
 - Woodbridge Farms Elementary
 - The following school councils are pooling funds for the David Irvine presentation:
 - Ardrossan Elementary
 - Ardrossan Junior Senior High
 - Bev Facey Community High
 - Clover Bar Junior High
 - Fultonvale Elementary Junior High
 - Heritage Hills Elementary
 - Lakeland Ridge
 - Mills Haven Elementary
 - Next Step
 - Sherwood Heights
 - Strathcona Christian Academy Secondary
 - Wes Hosford Elementary

- COSC member Kendra Roemer stated David Irvine will be presenting Cultivating Compassion in Our School Community for the schools who pooled their funds together at 7 p.m. on April 19. This session is not only for school councils but their whole school community. He will discuss how to be engaged in a school community and how to make the school community a warm inviting space. There'll also be time for a Q and A at the end. Registration is required for the presentation, so COSC member Roemer encouraged people to register early. An email with a flyer went out to school councils pooling funds.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Question: Are only the schools who pooled their funds able to attend the David Irvine session?

Answer: Yes, that's the contract that was signed.

New Business

PROVINCIAL ELECTION PLANNING AND ADVOCACY – Trina Boymook, EIPS Board Chair

- The Board will engage with all the candidates about education and advocate for the Division with consistent messaging. The Board will also work with ASBA to create a provincial approach.
- There's an added emphasis this year on charter schools because they receive the same funding as the public system, yet don't have as much accountability and can be selective in who can attend. EIPS creates education for all children and all abilities.
- The Board has identified three areas to focus on for the election:
 1. Strong Public Education System: Advocating for public education and the success of the public education system for all students. To return funding to public education and not private or charter schools.
 2. Infrastructure: EIPS has increased infrastructure needs and each community must be looked at separately as each school is unique and diverse. Modular costs are not being met by the provincial government whether it's for moving them between sites or replacing outdated ones.
 3. School Board Autonomy: The provincial government is encroaching on mandate and decision-making capacity. School boards should be able to invest resources to best serve their students once the government identifies what needs to be achieved.
- Board Chair Boymook stated if any of the one to three areas are important to COSC members, they can be used as a springboard to advocate.
- Flyers will be shared with EIPS families and staff once the election has been called.
 - Trustees will be attending all public forums and handing out these flyers to participants attending.
 - The flyer focuses on three key areas and gives parents and caregivers questions that they can be comfortable to ask, and candidates can realistically give a response to.
 - COSC member Roemer discussed parents and caregivers using fact blurbs from the flyer to share on social media.

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Question: When you speak to the candidates will you make their answers available to us?

Answer: The advocacy committee will review to see if this information can be shared.

Question: Is there a good spot available to share information?

Answer: EIPS will make a plan and potentially use the Division's social media platforms to help keep families informed. The Division does advocacy updates quarterly. Follow your trustees on social media as they will be responsible for engaging the nominees in their areas. However, individuals must recognize some candidates may not be education experts.

Question: Is it the different funding models or the reserve caps that are more limiting for school boards?

Answer: Prescribed solutions are not a fit for all schools. The reserve cap is certainly limiting but it's more about the prescribed solutions. It can be difficult for some school boards to actually utilize funds with narrow

parameters. These prescribed solutions often do not capture consultation or real-life, ongoing situations and often are overreaching unilateral decisions. All governmental parties overreach—it's not a singular party concern. Publicly elected boards with autonomy and wider parameters can do better—sometimes with less cost.

Question: What is a public forum for meeting with candidates?

Answer: The Strathcona County Chamber of Commerce will be hosting local candidate forums. These are open to the public and the candidates take questions—usually candidates start with a speech. Tables will also be set up for residents to come and talk to candidates. Forums will have certain questions from the business community too. Other local chambers of commerce will likely have candidate forums.

COSC Sharing

Q AND A FOR ASCA RESOLUTIONS – Lesley Williams, COSC Chair and Chelsea Pretzlaw, COSC Vice-Chair

- No comments on ASCA resolutions.
- COSC member Roemer: We moved our school council AGM to May. Have other school councils had success explaining the roles of their council without scaring potential members away?
 - Stress the importance of having strong leadership within the executive team.
 - Have varying roles for council executives.
 - Start with small jobs. There's the potential to break the roles down to be shared by two people, such as the secretary position.
 - Move AGM to the end of the year, which could increase succession planning and recruiting.
 - Build a strong relationship with the school administration and fundraising society—if applicable—they may know of people wanting to be involved.
 - Reduce barriers to participation—break down acronyms and explain jargon as not everyone knows what these specialized words and phrases mean.
 - Meet with new parents to see if they'd like to get involved.
 - Try for direct asks as they may be more effective.
 - Increase visibility of the council, such as going to school events.
 - Have clear bylaws and operating procedures.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:01 P.M.

Next COSC Meeting

DATE: May 3, 2023

TIME: 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

LOCATION: EIPS Central Services building, boardroom.