

OCT. 19, 2023

## Chair's Report

### RECENT EVENTS

Board Chair Cathy Allen highlighted a few recent trustee events:

- On September 25, trustees attended the 2023 Lieutenant Governor of Alberta Student Award Ceremony. EIPS student Daniella Figliuzzi was one of nine individuals recognized.
- On October 2-6, EIPS celebrated Read In Week, a divisionwide initiative that takes place annually to promote a lifelong love of reading in students. Chair Allen thanked EIPS schools for inviting trustees to be part of the week. It's always special to read to students and celebrate storytelling.
- On October 4, trustees hosted a Meet-and-Greet with the Committee of School Councils (COSC), followed by the first COSC meeting of the school year. The Board's looking forward to another great year of discussions with COSC members.
- On October 5, trustees celebrated World Teachers' Day, an annual event recognized worldwide to honour teachers and their integral role in providing quality education to students globally—particularly poignant this year, given the current conflict overseas.
- On October 6, Chair Allen brought greetings to kickstart EIPS' Professional Learning Day, a divisionwide event for all EIPS employees to gather together, in one place, and to take part in various learning and collaboration sessions.
- On October 12, Chair Allen took part in a school board chairs meeting with Education Minister Demetrios Nicolaides and his team. At the meeting, the Minister reviewed Alberta Education's priorities and focus areas and hosted a question-and-answer period for Boards.

### TRUSTEES' SCHOOL TOURS

On October 17, trustees visited École Parc Élémentaire, Fort Saskatchewan Christian, Fort Saskatchewan Elementary, Fort Saskatchewan High and Next Step Fort Saskatchewan as part of its 2023-24 Trustees' School Tours. The Board thanked all the school staff and students for hosting the tours. Trustees enjoyed learning and hearing about each school and the programs offered.

### ADVOCACY

Throughout October, trustees took part in two chamber luncheons. The Fort Saskatchewan and District Chambers of Commerce hosted one. The other was hosted by the Sherwood Park and District Chambers of Commerce. It's always important to connect with the local business community, share ideas and discuss advocacy strategies.

## Superintendent's Report

### RECENT EVENTS

Superintendent Sandra Stoddard highlighted several recent events:

- On September 25, Superintendent Stoddard joined trustees at the 2023 Lieutenant Governor of Alberta Student Award Ceremony. She congratulated EIPS recipient, Daniella Figliuzzi, a Grade 12 student at Next Step Sherwood Park. She also thanked Next Step school staff for their ongoing support and encouragement of students.
- On October 4, the Board hosted a Meet-and-Greet with COSC representatives. The first COSC meeting followed. Superintendent Stoddard said she's always impressed by how engaged members are with their child's learning, their willingness to help other school councils and their interest in what's happening across the Division.

- On October 6, EIPS held a divisionwide Professional Learning Day. In total, 1,500 EIPS employees came together to participate in numerous learning sessions all centred around this year's theme—Our students, our stories our strengths. The goal: To remind everyone of the importance of the work they do, every day.
- On October 12, Superintendent Stoddard joined Chair Allen at the province's school board chairs' meeting with Minister Nicolaides, who was engaged and keen to learn more about what's happening in schools across Alberta.
- On October 17, Superintendent Stoddard joined trustees on the Trustees' School Tours. It was wonderful to learn more about the great work happening at each of the schools visited.

## **READ IN WEEK: 2023**

Throughout the week of October 2, schools took part in Read In Week, a divisionwide initiative held annually to encourage a lifelong love of reading and to enhance literacy awareness among students, staff, families and community members. Through various activities, students spent the week learning about the importance of reading; how to choose the right book; the art of storytelling; and how stories have the power to teach lessons, broaden perspectives and foster empathy. Some of the activities included guest readers, book giveaways, book-club readings and discussions about stories. Superintendent Stoddard also thanked the many school families, community members, staff and trustees who participated in this year's Read In Week—all played a role in helping students ignite a passion and love for reading.

## **Comments from the Public**

### **FRENCH IMMERSION: CANADIAN PARENTS FOR FRENCH ALBERTA**

The Board heard a presentation from Chelsea Pretzlaw, the Chair of the Ardrossan chapter of the Canadian Parents for French Alberta. The organization is a national advocacy group focused on creating strong bilingual school programming. On behalf of the organization, Pretzlaw discussed her concerns about possible changes to the secondary French Immersion program—specifically relocating the program to Sherwood Park. She said the organization feels it's not in the best interest of students and would not improve retention. Instead, she asked for the program to stay in Ardrossan. The Board thanked Pretzlaw for taking the time to present her concerns.

### **FRENCH IMMERSION: ÉCOLE CAMPBELLTOWN SCHOOL COUNCIL**

The Board heard a presentation from Melissa Manolescu, a parent of a child enrolled in EIPS' French Immersion program and a representative for École Campbelltown's school council group. Manolescu discussed concerns related to possible changes to the secondary French Immersion program—specifically relocating the junior high and senior high French Immersion program to Bev Facey Community High. She asked the Board to consider an alternative solution. The Board thanked Manolescu for taking the time to present her concerns.

## **Association and Employee Relation Reports**

### **ASBA ZONE 2/3 MEETING**

Trustee Jacqueline Shotbolt presented highlights from the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) Zone 2/3 meeting held on September 22. Discussion highlights include:

- the Zone's best practices, which received positive feedback;
- advocacy communication;
- the 2023-24 budget;
- various Zone 2/3 committees;
- the Zone's action items; and
- the Fall Annual General Meeting, which takes place on November 19-21.

## ATA LOCAL REPORT

The Board received for information the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) Local No. 28 report from Deneen Zielke, the Local's President.

- On September 22, Zielke attended the ATA Beginning Teachers Conference, an annual event aimed at supporting new teachers and helping them navigate the profession. As always, the conference was a great success. Zielke particularly enjoyed meeting EIPS' new teachers.
- On October 21, the Local will host its annual Induction Ceremony at the University of Alberta Faculty Club. Zielke looks forward to inducting 14 new EIPS teachers and also welcoming both Chair Allen and Superintendent Stoddard.

## EMPLOYEE RELATIONS GROUP REPORT

The Board received for information the Employee Relations Group (ERG) report from Michelle Miller, the committee's Chair:

- On October 6, EIPS hosted a Professional Learning Day, which was excellent. Staff feedback was positive, with many saying they liked hearing the student and employee success stories, making connections with staff from other school sites and participating in the afternoon collaboration sessions.
- The ERG is now looking forward to planning for the Classified Professional Learning Day in March.
- The Division has asked the ERG to complete the Job Information Questionnaire. Members are reviewing and looking forward to completing it.

## New Business

### MODULAR CLASSROOM REQUEST: 2023-24

The Board directed EIPS administration to request funding from Alberta Education to address needed changes to several modular classroom units in the 2024-25 school year. If approved, the Division will:

- add two new modular classrooms to Ardrossan Elementary;
- add two new modular classrooms to SouthPointe School; and
- demolish two ageing modular classrooms at Westboro Elementary—followed by a site reclamation.

EIPS hopes a decision from the province comes before the end of the 2023-24 school year.

## BOARD SELF-EVALUATION

The Board approved the Board Self-Evaluation Report, which was developed on Aug. 24, 2023. The Board also authorized the Board Chair to monitor the agreed priorities and suggestions and to bring items forward for the Board's consideration as deemed appropriate.

## BOARD POLICY AMENDMENTS

The Board approved amendments to the following Board Policies:

- [Policy 7: Board Operations:](#)
  - language changes to better align with the *Education Act*;
  - a new section outlining appropriate presenter behaviour, conduct and respect; and
  - new approval guidelines for trustee professional development.
- [Policy 8: Board Committees:](#)
  - The changes strengthen the policies' clarity, definitions, language and readability.
- [Policy 17: Student Transportation Services:](#)
  - The changes strengthen the policies' clarity and expand on the Division's enhanced bus service.



# BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

## Committee Report

### STUDENT EXPULSION COMMITTEE

The Board received for information a report from the Student Expulsion Committee meeting held on September 26. The committee reviewed all relevant information and upheld school administration's recommendations.

### POLICY COMMITTEE

The Board received for information a report from the Policy Committee meeting held on October 4. The committee reviewed four policies—7, 8, 17, and 19. During the October Board meeting, trustees approved the committee's recommended amendments to policies 7, 8, and 17. Policy 19 required no amendments.

## Reports for Information

### UNAUDITED FINANCIAL REPORT: 2022-23

The Board received for information the Unaudited Financial Report for the 2022-23 school year—September 1 to August 31. The Division ended the 2022-23 school year with an overall operating deficit of \$5.32 million, which includes school-generated funds and the asset retirement obligation—a relatively new accounting standard requirement that represents the costs to abate EIPS buildings when the Division retires a building. That deficit is less than budgeted, by \$3.52 million, primarily because of school and department surpluses and a surplus in school generated funds. The planned deficit was offset by operating reserves to cover costs to support schools and departments, the focus on unfinished learning initiative, mental health and well-being and the new curriculum work (see page 418, "[Unaudited Financial Report](#)").

### UNAUDITED ACCUMULATED SURPLUS

The Board received for information the Unaudited Accumulated Surplus Report as of Aug. 31, 2023. The Division's accumulated surplus totals \$8.34 million, which includes investment in:

- Board-funded tangible capital assets (\$8.03 million);
- the asset retirement obligation (-\$9.31 million);
- capital reserves (\$2.23 million); and
- unrestricted surplus, operating reserves (\$7.39 million).

Also, included in the operating reserves is the Division Unallocated Reserve, which EIPS maintains to cover emergent issues, manage price fluctuations and stabilize funding in the future. The Division Unallocated Reserve is at \$3.63 million (see page 434, "[Unaudited Accumulated Surplus at Aug. 31, 2023](#)").

### EIPS ENROLMENT: 2023-24

The Board received for information the Division's Enrolment Report for the 2023-24 school year. Enrolment numbers were collected from the PowerSchool database on Sept. 29, 2023. In total, 17,760 students are registered within EIPS—an increase of 300 students from fall 2022.

## Board Members

Cathy Allen, *Chair* | Susan Miller, *Vice-Chair* | Trina Boymook | Randy Footz | Colleen Holowaychuk | Don Irwin | Jim Seutter | Jacqueline Shotbolt | Ralph Sorochan

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Cathy Allen, *Board Chair* | P 780 417 8109

Laura McNabb, *Director, Communication Services* | P 780 417 8204

[www.eips.ca](http://www.eips.ca) | Twitter: [@eips](https://twitter.com/@eips) | Facebook: [elkislandpublicschools](https://www.facebook.com/elkislandpublicschools)