

NOV. 30, 2023

Chair's Report

RECENT EVENTS

Board Chair Cathy Allen highlighted recent trustee events:

- On October 18, trustees attended Sherwood Park and District Chamber of Commerce's luncheon, a valuable networking opportunity to share Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) successes and challenges with the local business community.
- On October 18-20, trustees attended the Public School Boards' Association of Alberta Fall Conference and Annual General Meeting.
- On October 19, trustees attended a Vegreville and District Chamber of Commerce meeting, again, it was a valuable networking opportunity to discuss successes and challenges with the local business community.
- On October 20, Chair Allen and Superintendent Sandra Stoddard attended the Alberta Teachers' Association New Teachers' Induction, hosted by Elk Island Local No. 28. It was wonderful to meet the Division's new teachers and welcome them to the Division.
- On October 23, Chair Allen and Superintendent Stoddard met with the Board Chair and Superintendent of Elk Island Catholic Schools.
- On November 3, trustees attended school Remembrance Day ceremonies throughout the Division. Chair Allen thanked all the schools that invited trustees to participate.
- On November 11, trustees attended their municipal Remembrance Day services and placed wreaths on behalf of EIPS.
- On November 15, trustees met with Rakhi Pancholi, the province's opposition critic for education, and Kyle Kasawski, Alberta's Member of the Legislative Assembly for Sherwood Park. Together, they toured two EIPS schools—Bev Facey Community High and Davidson Creek Elementary—while also discussing various Board advocacy priorities.
- On November 15, Chair Allen and Superintendent Stoddard met with the Town of Bruderheim.
- On November 16, trustees took part in a Board professional learning session exploring strategies to help read and analyze data provided through the assurance reviews.
- On November 17, Chair Allen attended the groundbreaking ceremony for École Claudette-et-Denis-Tardif's new school. Next spring, she hopes to do the same for EIPS' new replacement school in Sherwood Park.
- On November 19-21, the Board attended the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) Fall General Meeting.

ASSURANCE REVIEWS

Throughout October and November, trustees participated in EIPS' Assurance Reviews, a divisionwide forum for schools and departments to share their individual results, annual plans, budgets, successes and challenges with the Board. Collectively, the reviews allow trustees to gain a holistic understanding of what's happening throughout the Division.

Superintendent's Report

RECENT EVENTS

- On November 3, Superintendent Stoddard attended Ardrossan Elementary's Remembrance Day Ceremony. She thanked the school for inviting her and creating a touching and personalized ceremony.
- Superintendent Stoddard also joined trustees at the following events:
 - The New Teachers' Induction ceremony, hosted by the ATA Local No. 28. She particularly enjoyed meeting the Division's new teachers—all passionate, bright and excited about serving EIPS.

- A joint meeting with the Board Chair and Superintendent of Elk Island Catholic Schools—she looks forward to exploring new ways to work collaboratively.
- The two school tours with Pancholi and Kasawski—discussions primarily focused on public education.
- The meeting with the Town of Bruderheim.
- ASBA’s Fall General Meeting, which included robust conversations about advocacy and future resolutions, and a professional learning session about artificial intelligence.

ASSURANCE REVIEWS

Over the last month, EIPS conducted its annual Assurance Reviews with schools and departments—using Alberta Education’s assurance measures, and internal qualitative and quantitative data. The reviews complement the education plans and allow schools and departments to share their results, annual plans, successes and challenges with the Board and community. Superintendent Stoddard thanked all those who worked on the department and school assurance reviews. It’s a lot of work that helps build capacity about what’s happening across the Division.

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 October 27. Discussion highlights included ASBA’s annual general meeting elections, advocacy topics and priorities, best practices and Zone 2/3’s draft policies.

ATA LOCAL REPORT

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

- On October 20, the Local hosted its annual New Teachers’ Induction ceremony. She thanked Chair Allen and Superintendent Stoddard for attending.
- On November 24-25, Zielke attended the ATA’s Professional Development Area Conference. The highlight: an artificial intelligence learning session emphasizing the professional and legal responsibilities around AI use. The Local hopes to offer members a similar AI professional learning session soon.
- The Local is now a Sherwood Park and District Chamber of Commerce member—it will attend chamber events and host a booth at The Great Canadian Trade Fair and Sale, promoting public education.

New Business

BUSINESS ARISING FROM IN CAMERA

Trustees approved the motion: “That the Board of Trustees ratify the memorandum of agreement for the Elk Island Public Schools Teachers’ Collective Agreement, Sept. 1, 2020 to Aug. 31, 2024.”

RECEIPT OF TRUSTEE RESIGNATION

The Board accepted the resignation of Trustee Jim Seutter, effective Nov. 30, 2023. Seutter recently moved. His new residence is outside the ward he represents, which disqualifies him as an EIPS trustee. As outlined in the *Education Act*, section 81(2), a by-election isn’t required when there is only one vacancy on the Board. As such, EIPS will not hold a by-election. Instead, the remaining eight trustees will assume Seutter’s duties, by modifying:

- the 2023-24 Trustee School Liaison Representative list;
- the 2023-24 Board Committee Representatives list; and
- the 2023-24 Acting Chair Schedule.

To review the full modified lists see pg. 13, “Receipt of Trustee Resignation,” within the [EIPS Board Meeting Package: Nov. 30, 2023](#).

BOARD POLICY AMENDMENTS

The Board approved amendments to the following Board policies:

- [Policy 2: Role of the Board](#) – the changes strengthen the policies’ clarity, language and readability.
- [Policy 3: Role of the Trustee](#) – the changes strengthen the policies’ clarity, language and readability.
- [Policy 4: Trustee Code of Conduct](#) – the changes strengthen the policies’ clarity, language and readability.
- [Policy 23: School Fees](#) – the policy no longer requires Board approval for school fees, which reflects recent changes to the *Education Act*.

UNAUDITED ACCUMULATED SURPLUS

The Board approved the transfer of \$5.62 million to the Division’s unrestricted surplus from its internally restricted operating reserves to offset the net results in 2022-23.

AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS: 2023

The Board approved the Audited Financial Statements for Aug. 31, 2023. MNP LLP, a national accounting firm, audited the statements and provided the opinion:

“[The Division’s] financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of EIPS as at August 31, 2023, and the results of its operations, its remeasurement gains and losses, changes in its net financial assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.”

Briefly, the presented statements indicate net financial assets of \$24.5 million and liabilities of \$31.2 million, which also includes the new asset retirement obligation of \$14.1 million. Additionally, the non-financial assets include \$158.2 million in capital assets and \$1.7 million in prepaid expenses. Meanwhile, the spent deferred capital contributions total \$144.9 million, comprised of provincial funding to cover capital assets. Overall, the Division ended the 2022-23 school year with an accumulated surplus of \$8.3 million and an operating deficit of \$5.3 million.

ANNUAL EDUCATION RESULTS REPORT 2022-23

The Board approved EIPS’ *Annual Education Results Report 2022-23*, an Alberta Education reporting requirement that provides school families and community members easy-to-understand information about the Division. It also serves as a mechanism to improve accountability and transparency with local stakeholders. The *Annual Education Results Report 2022-23* features detailed information about how EIPS is doing relative to Alberta Education’s performance measures; how the Division’s supporting students to achieve the best possible outcomes; and its successes, challenges and priorities moving forward. Now approved, the Division will submit the report to Alberta Education on November 30. After sending it to the province, EIPS will also post it online and share it with stakeholders and the Committee of School Councils. To read the report visit, eips.ca.

EIPS 2023-24 FALL BUDGET

The Board approved the EIPS 2023-24 Fall Budget Report for the period of Sept. 1, 2023 to Aug. 31, 2024. The Board originally approved the 2023-24 operating budget on May 25, 2023. Every fall, the budget is updated to account for current information regarding enrolment numbers, revenue changes, actual carry-forward amounts, expenses and planned reserve spending. Overall, the EIPS 2023-24 budget provides stability for schools and maintains essential services (see pg. 184, “[2023-24 Fall Budget](#)”).

Highlights from the Fall Budget Report: 2023-24 include:

- operating budget* – \$207.5 million, which includes a \$1.05-million draw from operating reserves
- student enrolment* – 17,760, as of Sept. 29, 2023
- employees (full-time equivalent)* – 1,372.58, as of Sept. 30, 2023



BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

compensation – a 2% increase, effective Sept. 1, 2023—in accordance with the certificated settlement ratified June 2022. As approved by the Board, classified staff received the same increase in pay as certificated staff.

operating reserves – \$7.25 million, as of Aug. 31, 2024.

capital reserves – \$965,000, as of Aug. 31, 2024

instructional spending –78.5% of the total budget, equating to \$9,448 per student.

system administration spending – \$4.59 million, 2.2%, of total expenses.

NOTE: System administration spending is within the \$6.19 million provided by Alberta Education. EIPS will distribute the surplus funds for other uses, as allowed in the *Funding Manual for School Authorities 2023-24 School Year*.

Committee Report

ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

The Board received for information a report from the Advocacy Committee meeting held on October 23. Topics discussed: the advocacy priorities, plan and work for the year. The committee will also ensure all advocacy priorities align with Alberta Education’s ministerial mandate letter and work with stakeholders to build awareness around the importance of public education. The key 2023-24 advocacy priorities are funding, Board autonomy, the value of public education and school infrastructure. The Board also plans to continue publishing the *EIPS Board Quarterly Update* and *Advocacy in Action* newsletters.

POLICY COMMITTEE

The Board received for information a report from the Policy Committee meeting held on October 31. The committee reviewed four policies—2, 3, 4, and 23. During the November Board meeting, trustees approved the committee’s amendment recommendations to all four policies.

AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Board received for information a report from the Audit Committee meeting held on November 7. Discussion topics included the Division’s audited financial statements and the auditor’s, MNP, findings. Overall, MNP had no concerns with EIPS’ accounting practices.

STUDENT EXPULSION COMMITTEE

The Board received for information a report from the Student Expulsion Committee meeting held on November 28. The committee reviewed all relevant information and upheld the school administration’s recommendations.

Board Members

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

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