

Questions from emails.

What was the original budget for the Fultonvale modernization and what is the projected actual cost? What was the original estimated completion date and what was the actual completion date? Or is the project even close to being complete? I would like to confirm if the numbers that I have heard are realistic because it seems as though the mismanagement in the planning of one school development project has now become part of the financial strategy to close another. To confirm, Superintendent Liguori, I do expect a response to these questions.

The Fultonvale Modernization is an Alberta Infrastructure managed project. This means that the funds for building the school were held by the Alberta government and not transferred to the Division. This also means that this project was not managed by the Division, but rather Alberta Infrastructure. Any budget shortfalls in this project are covered by the Alberta government and not the Division.

1. Alberta infrastructure has approved the portables for Ministik school - has any other schools asked for an increase in funding?

In the fall of 2016, the Division asked for 13 portables. The following schools were approved for portables for the 2017-2108 year:

1. 3 modular classrooms for Ministik School (for Health and Safety reasons)
2. 8 modular classrooms for Wes Hosford Elementary School (for Health and Safety reasons)
3. 2 modular classrooms for Mills Haven Elementary School (for Enrolment Pressures)

2. As per the attached budget, we are showing an increase in surplus year over year, I think I am understanding it correctly. My questions would be, why can't Ministik school be invested it?

The Division had accumulated surplus of **\$23.7M at August 31, 2016** comprised of:

1. **\$5.5M** Investment in Tangible Capital Assets¹
2. **\$1.4M** Capital Reserves²
3. **\$16.8M** Operating Reserves³ comprised of:
 - \$5.6M in schools and departments⁴
 - Schools and departments can carryforward up to 2% of surplus from prior year
 - Schools carry forward 100% of their school generated funds
 - \$5.0 M Allocated Operating Reserve for specific purposes (specific one-time projects)⁵
 - \$6.2M Unallocated Operating Reserve⁶

¹**Investment in Tangible Capital Assets** is the net book value of board funded capital assets, net of unsupported debt. [This does not include Alberta Education funded capital assets.] (Not accessible for operations.)

²**Capital Reserves** can only be used for the purchase of capital items. (Not accessible for operations.)

³**Operating Reserves:**

⁴The dollars in schools and departments are also not accessible (being used in schools and departments so not accessible for other expenditures).

⁵In December 2015, the Board approved a plan to allocate a portion of the operating reserve to fund specific one-time projects. Plans are in place to spend the majority of these funds by the end of August 2019.

⁶The Board has maintained that a portion of its operating reserve (minimum threshold set is 2% of expenditures – approximately \$4M) should be kept as unallocated to provide some flexibility to cover potential emergent issues, price fluctuations, and to stabilize funding in future years.

The Division, in the 2016-2017 school year, budgeted to access \$1.75 million from its unallocated operating reserves to cover day-to-day expenditures. Accessing reserves for ongoing operations is not a sustainable practice, as the reserves will be depleted.

Based on the 2016-2017 budget, the unallocated operating reserve is estimated to be \$4.5M at August 31, 2017 which is close to the minimum threshold.

Administration and the Board recognized that the unallocated reserve cannot be accessed again in the 2017-2018 year without going below the minimum threshold. To avoid this, EIPS has to examine options to align its expenditures and revenues.

We are anticipating that due to current economic times that the Province will announce a 0% increase to our funding rates (and hopefully fund growth for new students). What does a 0% increase mean? This means that any increases in staff costs (as staff move up the salary grid – their steps) must be covered by the Division.

3. I don't understand why putting funds into a school should be a negative! In the equation we have before us: on one side, close Ministik School and move kids to Fultonvale School and add portables to accommodate them and on the other side keep Ministik School open and put in the all ready approved and planned portables. I don't understand why you would need to close our school or how it saves you money?

Refer to Document B, Question 39.

4. Was the possible closure of Ministik School pre-determined when you approved the expansion of Fultonvale School?

Please refer to the Ministik section of the Division Website. The “Value Scoping Session – Fultonvale and Colchester Schools – January 12, 2012.” document is found in the Ministik Report section.

Questions:

5. Has the Board of Trustees looked at other areas to reduce operational expenditures before looking to close the school? i.e. wage rollbacks, renegotiating service and utility contracts, layoffs, centralized administration, etc.(please provide details)

The Board is continuing to look at a number of options to reduce operational expenditures.

6. If the above measures have not been implemented what has been the Board of Trustees Cost Reduction Strategy? May we see the plan?

The Board is continuing to look at a number of options to reduce operational expenditures.

7. What is EIPS Division's capital budget vs operational budget and what is the criterion for capital spending vs operational spending?

In 2016-2017 the operating budget for EIPS was \$202.5 M in expenditures. The operating revenue was \$197.5M, and reserves in the amount of \$5.0M are being accessed. In 2016- 2017, the Board approved \$778.6K in capital expenditures from its capital reserve.

Items are considered capital expenditures if they are non-financial assets having physical substance that are held for use, have a useful life beyond one year, and are used on a continuing basis.

8. What is the facility maintenance budget and how has it been adjusted over the years?

Facility maintenance budget receives the following funding each year:

1. Plant Operations & Maintenance:
 - o for 2014-2015 = \$13.1M
 - o for 2015-2016 = \$13.2M
 - o for 2016-2017 = \$13.3M
 2. Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal funding varies each year depending on the amount of work that can be completed, the amount of funding received and the types of work:
 - o In the 2013-2014 year, \$2.3M was spent
 - o In the 2014-2015 year, \$3.0M was spent
 - o In the 2015-2016 year, \$5.1M was spent
9. What change in the funding model has occurred that now Ministik can no longer support itself?

Refer to Document E, question 2.

10. Has EIPS looked at corporate sponsorship for such items as computers, learning aids, software, etc.?

EIPS engages in many sponsorship initiatives and also seeks out grants from other parties whenever possible.

11. If the school is to close will the building and or land be sold? If not it will need maintenance thereby reducing proposed maintenance savings?

Refer to Document B, question 45.

12. Can the Parents Association be given a copy of the budget?

The Division's budget was approved by the Board on November 24, 2016. A copy of the budget can be found in the Board package on the website for that date. The Ministik school budget can be found in the Ministik School Report – January 2017 Appendix E

13. The percentage of students who complete gr k-6 at Ministik that go on to complete grade 12, historically, vs the division and provincial average.

The Division does not track high school completion rates by the elementary schools students attended. The Division high school completion rate is available in the Annual Education Results Review document.

14. Historically the percentage of Ministik IPP students that revert to regular programs in jr high or high school vs other elementary schools

The Division does not track our students on IPPS in this manner.

15. Historically the percentage of Ministik students who receive IPP's in Jr High or high school vs other elementary schools

The Division does not track our students on IPPS in Junior or Senior high school by the elementary school the students have attended.

16. Question I'd like addressed by administration for Feb 15th public meeting: The report on ministik school indicates that the library portable has "an estimated replacement value of \$376,328." Please provide detailed specifics regarding how this number was determined.

That value is an estimate based on Alberta Infrastructure's average cost to supply and install a portable.

17. Question I'd like answered for Feb 15 mtg: please provide detailed specifics on how Alberta Capital Planning arrived at replacement cost of \$376,328 for portable T3692. Detailed breakdown please.

EIPS does not have that information. As Alberta Infrastructure funds portables and their installation, your query would have to be directed to that ministry.

18. Question I'd like addressed at Feb 15th public meeting: Alberta Education allows for relocation/transfer of existing or surplus modular classrooms. Does EIPS or Alberta Education currently have any relocatable or surplus modular structures that could be used at Ministik?

There are no surplus modulars available in EIPS or through Alberta Infrastructure.

Additional responses to questions from email.

DOCUMENT A QUESTIONS

19. Document A Question #3: (embedded response)

I feel the question was not adequately addressed, so I will ask it again here. What cost per student would satisfy the EIPS? Surely the administration has a number in mind that would work for budgetary purposes. As a follow-up to the answer given by the EIPS to this question (Question #3), please provide detailed information on the specific factors included in the “many factors” which result in the cost for Ministik (\$9,785) and the average cost per student (\$7,350). That is, provide a detailed breakdown of where these costs come from. Also provide the same, for comparison, for Fultonvale, Uncas and Strathcona Christian Academy schools. [The cost per student include:](#)

- [Instructional costs - Total actual instructional costs incurred by the school for fiscal year, excluding Special Ed program allocation, capital, PO & M and School Generated Funds; AND](#)
- [Plant Operations & Maintenance costs \(PO & M\) - Includes custodial, electricity, gas, water, maintenance and garbage](#)

[The report that contains all of this information is called the School Status Report and can be found in the January 2017 Board Package on the website.](#)

20. Document A Question #4 (also Document B Question 42): (embedded response)

The EIPS answer indicates that all students have “equitable access” to high quality programming. Please provide the definition of “equitable access” you are using. It is clear, simply from logistics/location, that it would (by necessity) cost more to operate and maintain a school that is further from the origin of any maintenance calls (all other things being equal). How exactly is this taken into account for Ministik and other rural schools? For it to be equitable the higher costs arising from the locale must not be used to penalize the school. To be equitable, the higher costs must be accepted as part of the EIPS’s “cost of doing business”. To that end, what percentage above urban schools are rural schools allowed to be to be considered “equitable”? [There is no established benchmark.](#)

21. Document A Question #7: (embedded response)

The answer indicates that “a new Wye School has not been approved.” While technically true, in the Wye School Council Meeting Minutes of March 22, 2016, Trustee Jim Seutter indicated that the “Wye school replacement school to be located in Heritage Hills.” This chosen location is widely known already. Surely some preliminary assessment of the boundaries had already taken place by the time of the March 2016 meeting, or surely has taken place by now (nearly one year later), regardless of whether or not the school has been formally approved. Please provide any and all information related to boundary considerations (including, but not limited to, where rural students currently attending Wye School would be designated to attend and any studies on the potential impact of enrollment at Fultonvale), preliminary or otherwise, arising from the choice to have the eventual Wye School replacement located in Heritage Hills. [At this time, all current Wye students would attend the new school if it is approved. Boundary considerations would be made once the school has](#)

been approved.

22. Document A Question #14: (embedded response)

The answer to the question was limited by the administration to just the instructional aspects of the Budget vs Actual. Please answer the question as asked, and provide full Budget vs Actual amounts as requested (i.e., do not exclude “School Generated Funds” or “Plant, Operations and Maintenance” costs, nor any other funds not specifically contemplated in the question; i.e., provide the full amounts, budgetary and actual).

Year	Budget		Actual Costs			
	Instructional	SGF	Instructional	SGF	PO&M	Insurance
2013-2014	988,981	42,317	959,804	106,303	109,602	4,228
2014-2015	1,074,403	105,489	1,029,468	35,473	96,749	7,892
2015-2016	1,102,855	35,474	1,062,960	36,181	91,667	6,648

* Note: PO&M (Plant, Operations and Maintenance) and Insurance Costs are not budgeted for at the individual school level.

* SGF (school generated funds)

23. Document A Question #15: (embedded response)

The answer to this question indicated that the average PO&M cost for schools in the district was \$3.82 while Ministik’s cost was \$6.47. Are these dollar figures? **Yes**. If so, is the decimal in the wrong location? **No**. Or are the values percentages? **They are dollar figures**. In either case, the values presented are different that the answer given elsewhere (in table format) by the administration in their answer to “Document B Question 18”.

Please provide the correct PO&M costs and percentages. **The PO&M costs are posted on the website. Percentages are not used.**

24. Document A Question #16: (embedded response)

The answer is demonstrably false. The figure is clearly the sum of the values presented in Table 13 (page 18) of the “Ministik School Report.” In order to believe that the reporter “came up with this figure” you either have to believe it was fabricated (as the answer seems to imply, whether intentional or otherwise) or you would have to believe that the reporter firstly spent time searching the EIPS website for the document themselves (without asking for any available documentation first, which would have been the natural thing to do), and then read through the 74 page report to find those figures, and then sum the values in the table to come up with the total cost reported in the article. I find this very hard to believe, in light of there being precedent for administration providing reporters with supporting documents for stories related to the Ministik situation (see cbc.ca article, which included photographs of the school and also of mold from one of the portables, both of which were captioned as being “Supplied”). Article link: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/ministik-school-elk-island-public-closure-1.3960941>
Why is the administration providing knowingly inaccurate answers to our questions?
Administration has not provided false information.

25. Document A Question #17: (response embedded)

I respectfully disagree with the answer to this question, and to the lengths by which the administration appears to be going to purposefully misrepresent their answers to our questions. To quote, the answer was “The replacement cost has never been determined by the Division.” Whose responsibility is it to determine replacement costs for a school, EIPS or Alberta

Infrastructure? [Alberta Infrastructure](#)

To once again quote the “Ministik School Report”, on page 17 it states: “Based on Alberta Infrastructure’s year-end assessment, the current replacement cost of Ministik School as of April 1, 2016 is \$3,508,891 (exclusive of the portables).” Also please refer again to Table 13 on page 18 of the same report. While it may be technically true that the “division” has not determined the replacement cost, the replacement cost is clearly known by the division via Alberta Infrastructure. This was, in my view, purposeful misrepresentation using semantics.

26. Document A Question #20: (response embedded)

Please provide a detailed accounting of each type of work order (i.e., preventative maintenance, breakdown, demand), including the comparative costs associated with each of the three types of work order, for each of the 6 schools listed in your answer to “Document B Question 8.”

[An 86 page document is on the website which provides a listing of work orders for the schools requested. We do not have the information in a comparative format.](#)

27. Document A Question #22: (response embedded)

In response to the answer given, if the board’s consideration for possible closure was initially based on budgetary considerations, why did the administration push the initial public view that it was due to health and safety concerns (as demonstrated through communication to parents, at December 15, 2016 EIPS meeting and through media reports (i.e. Sherwood Park News))?
(Article link: <http://www.sherwoodparknews.com/2016/12/20/ministik-school-could-close>)

Why was this (the budgetary issues being the primary factor) not made clear to the parents, staff and community prior to the opening statements of the February 7th public meeting (at which time we were stunned to hear an apparent change in what we had been told was the primary consideration by the administration)? [This was covered at the February 15 public meeting. Please refer to the meeting minutes.](#)

This misrepresentation has been effective at reducing the time available prior to the March 16th meeting for the parents and community to request, obtain, review and adequately audit the budgetary information with a view to providing an effective counter argument. As a result, I ask whether the administration will make available immediately, without delay since time is of the essence, any and all information (detailed) related to the budgetary issues facing the school and the district which may have any bearing on the potential closure of Ministik School, with a focus on any documents requested by other members of the Ministik community during this public consultation process? I also request that any vote by the board be delayed until such a time that said documentation is provided by the administration and after as short a period of time as reasonable has transpired to allow for the proper assessment of the budgetary information. [Ministik’s budget has been provided in the original report. Division budget information is available on the Division website. A presentation has been provided to the Board from the Ministik Parent group regarding the budgetary concerns on February 16. The Board has not determined the date to vote regarding the possible closure of Ministik School. March 16 would be the first date that would be possible as per School Act regulations.](#)

28. Document A Question #25: (response embedded)

The answer to the question is incomplete. As a follow-up, if the “future” capacity of Fultonvale is 700, please indicate by which means this future capacity would be obtained? [By the addition of modulars.](#) Would it be with the purchase of up to 4 new portables (which would seemingly

reduce the overall budgetary impact of the closure of Ministik, assuming the funding for them was approved)? [Modulars are requested from and provided by Alberta Infrastructure. EIPS is responsible for the costs for linking.](#) If that is the case, why was this fact not included in the original answer to Question #25, for completeness?

[We have provided this information at this time.](#)

DOCUMENT B QUESTIONS

29. **Document B Question #12:** [\(response embedded\)](#)

The answer to Question #12 indicated that “the need for replacement modular was not identified until the fall 2016.” Please provide the following information (include meeting minutes where necessary):

- 1) Date of the initial request to the board for new portables for Ministik School. Also provide any information related to the reason(s) for the request initially being made.
- 2) Date of board approval of the portables for Ministik School (as it relates to #1 above).
- 3) Date of request to the provincial government for funding of the portables which had been approved by EIPS.
- 4) Date of the initial motion regarding investigating the possible closure of Ministik School.
- 5) Date of approval of the funding by the provincial government.

[This information has been provided and is on the website.](#)

30. **Document B Question #14:** [\(response embedded\)](#)

The answer to this question indicates that funding for the repair and maintenance of all school buildings is the responsibility of the provincial government. It is understood that 11 of the 42 schools in the district have concerns related to lead in the water. Have any funding requests been made to the provincial government for any of the schools in the district for the lead in water concern? I assume so, since the drinking water was one of the health and safety concerns initially indicated by administration and Trustees. If so, please provide details including which schools, request dates, results of the requests, etc. If no requests have been made, explain why they haven't been made. [Issues have been resolved in all but four schools. Those schools have a daily or weekly flushing protocol \(depending on the school\) in place until long term solutions such as lining of pipes is investigated. Before remediation strategies are finalized and any necessary funding requests made, EIPS is waiting for the Provincial Drinking Water Guideline from Alberta Health which will provide a provincial framework to all school divisions for lead in water testing and mitigation.](#)

31. **Document B Question #18:** [\(response embedded\)](#)

The table provided within the answer to this question appears to show an average of approximately 6% for the schools closer to the urban center and 8% for the two schools that are further (Ministik and Uncas). Of the 2% difference, how much is directly attributable to higher costs related to the longer/further travel time/distance to the more rural school locations? If an 'equitable' assessment is being made, the rural schools should be naturally expected to have a higher percentage simply due to location.

[Plant Operations & Maintenance costs \(PO & M\) - Includes custodial, electricity, gas, water, maintenance and garbage](#)

- [Upon review, electricity and gas cost slightly more in urban than rural.](#)
- [Water is trucked in and delivery would be in cost of water – this does have some location costs](#)
- [Maintenance includes the supplies, contractor costs and labor of our tradesmen. They do include their travel time, but travel time can be relative because they may go out to a select group of schools \(UNC, FTV, MIN\) all in the same day.](#)

32. **Document B Question #20:** [\(response embedded\)](#)

The answer provided averages only. Please provide a table with the size of all classes, for each grade, on an individual classroom basis at Fultonvale and Uncas. [EIPS reports school class size by grade only. If Ministik were to close Fultonvale has the capacity to accommodate all of its students.](#) Also, using the assumptions that a) all students currently attending Ministik are relocated to Fultonvale and b) all students currently in Fultonvale remain in Fultonvale, what would the individual class sizes be in that assumed case? I.e., if all Ministik students were suddenly dropped into Fultonvale tomorrow, what would the class sizes be for each individual classroom by grade? A similar question was asked as Document B Question 24; however, the answer to that question was non-responsive. Assumptions can be tested. It is understood that the assumptions above would be one possible (although unlikely) outcome, and modelling of this potential outcome is surely possible as administration knows the current class sizes at Fultonvale, and helps to inform the debate by placing boundary conditions on the possible size range.

33. **Document B Question #30:** [\(response embedded\)](#)

The answer to this question shows that the administration does not truly understand the unique nature of the district. If all schools were similar in that they were located in urban areas with comparable catchments sizes and transportation requirements, then the answer would have been reasonable. The answer that “families must determine for themselves what areas best meet their own needs” reveals a misunderstanding of the rural nature of the Ministik catchment area, bordering on negative bias.

In what specific ways does EIPS take into consideration and differentiate the very different nature of rural schools from the urban schools? [Each school in EIPS has unique characteristics that are in keeping with the communities or neighbourhoods where they are located.](#) Does the administration in any way take into consideration the unique challenges posed by rural families (impacts to job opportunities, child care, etc.)? [Individuals and families choose the communities and areas where they live and it is their responsibility to address impacts to job opportunities or child care. This is not a responsibility of the Division.](#) Having moved to Strathcona County 14 years ago from Edmonton, I can tell you that we would not have moved to the area had the closest elementary school been Fultonvale.

34. **Document B Question #31:** [\(response embedded\)](#)

In the answer to this question, the incorrect chart was provided for Fultonvale (Chart 4). The information in the chart appears to be a copy of the information for the Uncas area (i.e., Chart 3). Please provide the correct chart for the Fultonvale attendance area, as well as a chart for the Ministik attendance area. If it is available through Elk Island Catholic Schools, also please provide the information for St. Luke’s school in South Cooking Lake. [The correct chart is provided on the website. We do not provide information for St. Luke’s. Contact EICS for this information.](#)

35. **Document B Question #35:** [\(response embedded\)](#)

The answer to this question is unacceptable. It is a non-answer. How will the cost per student at Fultonvale change if all inclusive (coded) children from Ministik attend Fultonvale? This is an important consideration to compare costs related to a possible closure. [The cost per student cannot be calculated at this time as we do not know if all of the students will attend Ministik school and what the grade configuration will look like.](#)

36. **Document B Question #36:** [\(response embedded\)](#)

The first bullet in the answer to this question is unacceptable and bordering on ridiculous. Once a decision is made, what would be the point of consulting the other schools/parents about a decision that has already been made? That is a circular argument. Are you implying that the parents of schools that would

potentially be affected by an influx of new students, a significant percentage of them having special needs, have no say whatsoever, no right to be consulted, no voice, no ability to provide input on something that could dramatically affect the school their children attend?

Regarding the third bullet, who is the “they” that is being referring to? “...when **they** transition to Fultonvale....for Grade 7.” Are you saying that when a sibling graduating Grade 6 moves to Fultonvale for Grade 7, that a sibling in Grade 1 at Ministik leaves Ministik and also moves to Fultonvale (into Grade 2) at the same time as the older sibling? **Yes, at the time the older siblings moved into grade 7. Some families prefer to keep their children together at one school.** Or that younger sibling eventually moves to Fultonvale for Grade 7? What does this answer have anything to do with the question at all? Since you are singling out children with siblings also attending Ministik, what percentage of children attending Ministik do not have any siblings at the school? **82 children at Ministik do not have siblings attending Ministik.**

37. Document B Question #39: (response embedded)

In regards to the answer given to this question, what are the comparable savings in each category for closing of Uncas? Similarly, what are the comparable savings in each category for eliminating Strathcona Christian Academy from the public school system all together (it should not be funded by public funds in the first place)? **The Board is not contemplating these items at this time.**

Further to the above, please provide the funding amounts that EIPS has received from Alberta Education for the past 15 years, and the district finances (budgets versus actual) for the same time period. **The audited financial statements for the last 5 years for EIPS can be found on the attached hyperlink:**

<https://education.alberta.ca/financial-statements/school-jurisdictions/everyone/individual-audited-financial-statements/>

38. Document B Question #43: (response embedded)

What were the results of the “public results review process” as they relate to Ministik School specifically, and how does Ministik compare to the other schools in the district? **As part of the accountability process, trustees have the opportunity to review the results of schools from the previous year and to learn about their plans for the current school year, both of which support of the overall district priorities. The results review is based on information contained in each school’s School Education Plan (SEP) which is posted on their website.**

39. Document B Question #44: (response embedded)

When will EIPS request funding from capital reserves for the connecting links? **Once a decision is made regarding the school.** Assuming the school remains open, in order for the new portables to be in place in time for next year, by what date will the funding request have to be made in order to allow for enough time for the approval process and all coordination/construction thereafter? **Soon after a decision is made, a request will be made.**

40. Document B Question #45: (response embedded)

Upon disposal of a school, which organization will gain the benefit of the proceeds? EIPS? The provincial government? Some combination? **This process for “disposal of the school” has been provided in previous responses on the website.**

41. Document B Question #48: (response embedded)

Has EIPS funding by the provincial government been impacted at all by the budget/schedule overruns at Fultonvale? **No.**

42. Document B Question #51: (response embedded)

As a follow-up to Question #51, why hasn’t the district considered other cost control measures? If other cost control measures have actually been considered and either implemented or rejected,

please detail them. EIPS has been looking at several means to reduce costs. Many of these items are contentious. Detailing considerations that have been contemplated and may or may not be acted upon, would cause unnecessary turmoil within the Division.

43. **Document B Question #55:** (response embedded)

Regarding the answer to this question, the administration has previously indicated that the final vote would take place during the March 16th Trustees meeting. This date is also confirmed in the Ministik School newsletter of January 13, 2017. Is this no longer the case? If not, how much notice will we be given prior to the vote being on a board of Trustees meeting agenda? [The Board of Trustees sets the date for the decision, not administration. We did not provide that information for the Ministik School newsletter; you will need to contact the school to determine who put that information forward as it has not been determined. The first possible date for the Board to vote on this matter is March 16. The Trustee agenda comes out to the public on the Monday before the Thursday Board meeting.](#)

44. **Document B Question #56:** (response embedded)

As part of the answer to Question #56, it is stated that “the Board has, and will, continue to examine options...” What other options are currently being considered in addition to the closure of Ministik School? What options have already been considered and either accepted or rejected? [This information was provided at the February 16 public meeting. The posted minutes of the meeting will provide the information.](#)

If “spending is unsustainable”, why is the person in charge of the spending (the person “responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Division...”) approved an increase in remuneration in the very same meeting where a vote is taking place to consider closure of an entire school due to ‘unsustainable spending’? And not just the same meeting but the very next motion considered by the board!.....with no other options even being put forth for consideration? Does the administration and Board agree that at the very least the optics are horrendous? [This was brought forward at the February 16 public meeting. The posted minutes of the meeting will provide the information.](#)

45. **Document B Question #60:** (response embedded)

In response to the answer given to this question, does EIPS have any consideration outside of enrollment, fiscal issues, demographics and health & safety when considering closure of a school? In particular, does community effects and uniqueness of rural versus urban considerations merit any consideration? If so, how exactly is the community impact taken into account? [This has been reflected in the feedback received at the public meetings and in letters/emails to EIPS. All of that feedback is provided to Trustees for their consideration in the decision-making process.](#)

46. It is stated that the Superintendent is the sole employee of the Board of Trustees. Does the remuneration for the superintendent come from the EIPS budget? **Yes.** If not, what is source of funding for the position?

47. The superintendent has been quoted in several newspaper or online articles, and has appeared on television newscasts providing ‘information’ on the possible closure of Ministik. For all ‘media’ appearances, was initial contact with the reporters/publications/news organizations made by those organizations, or was the initial contact with these organizations initiated by members of the administration or the superintendent? [The media has contacted EIPS and EIPS has been in contact with the](#)

media, so both have occurred.

48. Does bus route timing information provided for the proposed routes include all stops on the routes (i.e., do they include all pickups, regardless of age of child and destination school)? [Yes. Bus routing information has been provided on the website.](#)

49. The community paid for the recent replacement of the school playground from the fundraising efforts of the parent council. What would happen to the playground and equipment should the school close? [If the Board closed the school, as per the Closure of Schools Regulation \(AR 238/97\), EIPS would follow Administrative Procedure 519, Surplus Land and Buildings and the School Act's Disposition of Property Regulation 181/2010.](#)

[Discussions would have to take place with the Ministik Community and Strathcona County.](#)

50. Why has the disposal of Colchester been delayed (as opposed to the standard to dispose of the school immediately)? What is involved in the 'disposal' of the Colchester school? If the building and/or land are sold, who received the proceeds of the sale? Has EIPS investigated the lease, rent or sale of the building and/or land? If so, what proceeds (even rough/preliminary if known or estimated) are expected from a potential lease/rent/sale? [The disposition of Colchester school has not yet been completed. This has been an extra-ordinary situation, and efforts are underway for this disposition. We are unable to provide any further details at this time as the disposition has not yet been completed. Once it has been, all information will be publicly disclosed.](#)

[If the Board closed the school, as per the Closure of Schools Regulation \(AR 238/97\), EIPS would follow Administrative Procedure 519, Surplus Land and Buildings and the School Act's Disposition of Property Regulation 181/2010.](#)

51. The Strathcona Christian Academy (SCA) is a ministry of Sherwood Park Alliance Church as an Alternative Program of Elk Island Public Schools. Please provide a complete and detailed accounting of all funding provided by EIPS for the SCA. Why is SCA funded by Elk Island Public Schools and not Elk Island Catholic Schools? Why, if funding concerns are at the point of possible closure of an important rural public school, isn't the administration first considering dropping the urban based SCA from the public system to help control costs?

[In 2016-2017, the following amounts were budgeted for:](#)

[School Operating Budgets;](#)

- [• SC Elementary \\$3,603,540](#)
- [• SC Secondary \\$3,919,883](#)

[Building:](#)

- [• Lease support \\$766,740](#)
- [• Operating Costs \\$537,735](#)

[Strathcona Christian Academy is an alternative program of EIPS in accordance with Section 21 of the School Act.](#)

52. Considering the low utilization rate expected for the long term at Uncas school, resulting in an inefficient (some might say wasteful or 'unsustainable') use of fiscal resources, why isn't Uncas being considered for possible closure (instead or as an alternative)? If budgetary reasons are the driving factor, why are there not multiple possibilities being looked at to save money (such as dropping Strathcona Christian Academy from the public purse, closing Uncas, savings elsewhere, etc.).

[Can the Board request that the administration provide a range of possible options rather than](#)

singling out Ministik as the only option to choose from? The lack of options available to the Board makes it nearly impossible for them to vote for keeping the school open if it comes down primarily to finances. This is patently unfair to the Ministik community. [EIPS has been looking at several means to reduce costs. Many of these items are contentious. Detailing considerations that have been contemplated and may or may not be acted upon, would cause unnecessary turmoil within the Division.](#)

53. According to a news article from last spring, the top two priorities on the EIPS capital plan surround leases for Strathcona Christian Academy, due to the fact that all school leases need to appear as top priorities in the plan.

Article link: <http://www.sherwoodparknews.com/2016/04/04/new-schools-wanted-eips>

Once again, why is a Christian 'school' being paid for from public funds, at the possible expense of a thriving public school that the rural community desperately needs? [Strathcona Christian Schools are part of EIPS Division. The buildings that house the EIPS students at Strathcona Christian are not owned by EIPS. They are leased. The lease funding requests were included on the capital plan in prior years as it was to be included on this page.](#)

[This is the case with many school jurisdictions leasing buildings rather than owning them. Rather than pay for the cost of the building, Alberta Education provides funding to lease it.](#)

54. It seems as though there has been no thought of possible cost savings alternatives – the only options appear to be close Ministik or...or what? There is no alternative up for discussion to compare it to, other than use the rest of the financial reserves. Why not? Will a decision be deferred until a proper comparison of options can be undertaken? [EIPS has been looking at several means to reduce costs. Many of these items are contentious. Detailing considerations that have been contemplated and may or may not be acted upon, would cause unnecessary turmoil within the Division.](#)

55. What role, if any, does the Board of Trustees play in requesting funds from the provincial government for the district? [The Board has an advocacy plan and advocates for the needs of the Division on an ongoing basis and in a variety of ways. These include the provincial government.](#)

56. What time will FTV school day begin if Ministik School closes? [Since no closure decision has been made, bell time changes and transition plans have not been determined.](#)

57. How do you propose to transition K to 5 students into FTV should Ministik school close? [Since no closure decision has been made, bell time changes and transition plans have not been determined.](#)

58. Should Ministik school close, what happens to the money that's been approved for the three new portables? Is that money redirected to another school in EIPS division for portables, or has the division lost out on it until they go thru the process of reapplying again? [EIPS does have the ability to request that approved portables be deployed elsewhere.](#)