

École Parc Élémentaire School Council Meeting

Wednesday November 29th, 2023 - School Library. 7:00pm

Attendees

Amanda Shand - Chair
Danielle Rusk - Secretary
Jasmyne Garbe - Treasurer
Tandy Atchison - Principal
Jade Jordan - Assistant Principal
Ralph Sorochan - School Trustee

Absent

Rebecca Millburn - Vice- Chair
Jennifer Dechaine - Member
Amy Archibald - Member
Melanie Redfearn - Member
Michelle Poitras - Hot Lunch Cor.

Called To Order: 7:02 PM

Land and People Acknowledgments - Jade Jordan

We acknowledge with respect the history and culture of the peoples with whom Treaty 6 was entered into and the land upon which Elk Island Public Schools reside. We also acknowledge the traditional homeland of the Métis Nation. We recognize our responsibility as Treaty members and honour the heritage and gifts of the First Peoples.

Last Meeting Follow-up

Approval of minutes, October 11, 2023

- Deferred to next meeting

Approval of Agenda, November 29, 2023

- approved by: Deferred

Additions to Agenda:

None

Principals Report: Tandy Aitchison - Principal

1. Christmas concerts have been set:

- December 12: ECS B and 1-3 performance at 1:00 PM and 5:30 PM •
December 13: ECS A and 4-6 performance at 1:00 PM and 5:30 PM
- December 14: PALS performance at 5:30 PM

2. Parents weren't happy with Lifetouch for school photos so switching to Edge Imaging moving forward.

3. Zen Den Fridge - not alot of demand for it

4. Broken playground equipment, City of Fort Sask will come and remove what's left of it as it's a safety hazard for the students. Unfortunately there's no room in the budget at this time to replace it.

5. Mental health piece for our students

- CASA is available to our students however it is only offered in English not french
- Want to create a space for kids that need to be brought down from sensory stimulation - thinking of using the two small spaces (the old sick rooms) and turning it into one sensory space/reset room.
- Roadblock is having the manpower to have the staff stay with the kiddos, can't leave them unattended in the room.
 - Currently in a holding pattern to see if EIPS facilities will help (Ralph advised not to let facilities dictate if Ecole Parc can or can't do it, their role is to support the schools in what they need. Ask them can we do it from a structural standpoint?)
- Kindergarten transition class has a room built in for this however it's only available in the PM.

COSC Update: - Danielle Rusk

1. Unfortunately I couldn't attend much of the meeting via Zoom as I had been injured in a car accident and was struggling with my injury.

2. Brief overview of what took place at the meeting is included at the end of these minutes, once COSC has released the full minutes I will add them to these.

ASCA Grant: - Amanda Shand

1. Applied for this again it's a \$500 grant through ASKA, there are some stipulations on how, what and when we can use the grant money on.

[Amanda to do motion in an email as to how, what and when the grant funds can be used on](#)

Trustee Report - Provided by Ralph Sorochan

Full report attached below.

Assurance Review - Amanda Shand/Tandy Atchinson

- Social Emotional Wellness of the Students, teaching them how to regulate their emotions difficult to do without providing them a space where they can do that ● CASA is available to our students however it is only offered in English not french
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New Business

1. Need to change our January meeting to January 24th 2024 instead of January 17th Kristi with FCSS would like to attend our meeting and give us a presentation on what they offer our families.

Action Item: Amanda to send out email to members advising them of the date change for the next meeting

Next Meetings:

- January 24th @ 7PM
- February 14th @ 7PM
- March 13th @ 7PM
- April 10th @ 7 PM
- May 8th @ 7 PM
- June 12th @ 7PM

Meeting Adjourned at 7:24 PM

COSC Meeting Follow Up

Good afternoon COSC members,

Below is a brief overview of what took place at the last COSC meeting on Nov. 1, 2023.

KEY AGENDA TOPICS

- Board Report
- ATA Report
- ASCA update
- Caregiver Education Series
- COSC Operating Procedures updates
- School Council Engagement Grant
- EIPS assurance review
- COSC Sharing: School council roles

BOARD REPORT

EIPS Board Chair Cathy Allen presented the Board Report. She highlighted the Board of Trustees' Advocacy Work Plan and plans to bring advocacy topics to future meetings.

ATA REPORT

ATA Local No. 28 President Deneen Zielke presented the ATA report. Zielke detailed what happened during the 1 Million March for Children protest on September 20. This included the tearing down of the ATA's pride flag—an action being investigated as a hate crime. She also spoke about a movement called Take Back Alberta, which seeks to target school authorities across Canada. The movement's goal is to take over and impose its views of public education on administration, removing anyone who would oppose those views. The ATA is working on a strategy to engage members and prepare for the election in spring 2025. Zielke encourages parents and caregivers to research Take Back Alberta, dispel the misinformation being spread and remain advocates for the safety of all students. For more information, contact [Deneen Zielke](#).

ASCA UPDATE

The [Alberta School Councils' Association](#) (ASCA) is the provincial organization for families on school council. Below may be of interest to COSC members:

- ASCA's [Walk Alongside Engagement Event](#) takes place online from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on **November 18**. There's no cost to register. Engage with the ASCA Board of Directors on topics of importance to school councils and their communities.
- COSC members can reach out to ASCA to schedule a virtual drop in from one of its board members to explain the role of ASCA and how the organization helps school councils.
- ASCA learning [opportunities](#) and [supports](#) can be paid for using the \$500 Alberta School Council Engagement grant. Workshops are offered online, scheduled weekly throughout the year.
- The [ASCA Conference and Annual General Meeting](#) will be held April 26-28, 2024.

CAREGIVER EDUCATION SERIES: November

Alberta Health Services hosts a series of virtual caregiver information sessions focused on ways to support students' mental health. The sessions are free and geared toward parents, caregivers, teachers

and community members who want to learn more about challenges impacting children and adolescents. Session topics include anxiety, depression and technology, while teaching leadership skills, communication, resiliency and more. [Learn more](#)

COSC OPERATING PROCEDURES UPDATES

No updates were proposed for the [COSC Operating Procedures](#).

SCHOOL COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT GRANT

On November 2, school councils should have received a School Council Engagement Grant application to the email they provided in the contact form. If you didn't receive this email, contact [Emma Small](#). As stated previously, ASCA learning [opportunities](#) and [supports](#) can be paid for using the grant. However, each school council will have the best idea for how grant funds could be used in their school context. Complete the application form by **December 31**. For more information, refer to the [November COSC Meeting Package](#).

EIPS ASSURANCE REVIEW

EIPS Associate Superintendent Ryan Marshall discussed assurance reviews in the Division, including what an assurance review is and how to read your school's result. He highlighted diving deeper into the data and figuring out the story behind it. A copy of the presentation is on the [EIPS website](#). For school councils looking to know more about school fees, refer to [Administrative Procedure 505: School and Administrative Fees](#).

COSC SHARING: School council roles

COSC Vice-Chair Dallas Kirtz asked what school councils have done in the past for holiday events. Other members shared what they've done historically, such as winter festivals and concerts. COSC Secretary Chelsea Pretzlaw shared her school council had an informal picnic at lunch hour where families could come read a book with their children for Read In Week, and she suggested informal cookie-decorating could be simple and easy to plan for a holiday event. Members also highlighted the importance of engaging with not only other parents and caregivers, but asking what the students themselves would like to do. When you have student engagement, investment from parents and caregivers naturally seems to follow.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND IMPORTANT DATES

November 6-10 November Break (schools closed) November 10 Day in Lieu for Remembrance Day (Central Services closed) November 11 Remembrance Day (schools and Central Services closed) November 12-18 [Métis Week](#) November 13-17 [Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week](#) November 20 [National Child Day](#) November 21 [Your Future: Post-secondary and Career Fair](#) November 22 [Junior High Honours Information Session](#) December 6 Early Dismissal December 25 to January 5 Christmas Break (schools closed) December 25 Christmas Day (Central Services closed) December 26 Boxing Day (Central Services closed) December 27 Christmas Floater Day (Central Services closed) January 1 New Year's Day (Central Services closed) January 10 Early Dismissal

EPE Trustee Report – November 29, 2023

Ralph SoroChan

- 1) **APPRECIATION** – Much appreciation for all your efforts to make each students' school experience an enjoyable one.
- 2) **ASSURANCE REVIEWS** - Assurance Reviews are a forum for schools and departments to share their individual results, annual plans, successes, and challenges. The review informs the Division's Annual Education Results Report and allows trustees to gain a holistic understanding of what's happening throughout the Division. Council Chairs/Reps are encouraged to attend and will be given the opportunity to share how they are supporting the goals and Education Plan of their school. All School Reviews were scheduled for November. Central Department reviews were completed in October. Tandy, Jade and Amanda are to be commended for their excellent representation of EPE at their Assurance meeting!
- 3) **ALBERTA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION FALL GENERAL MEETING** – I attended this conference on November 20 and 21. Trustees from across the province came together to discuss educational issues, set provincial advocacy direction, and receive professional development.
- 4) **2023 OHS AUDIT RESULTS** - Last May, six EIPS schools and EIPS Central Services participated in the Division's annual Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Audit as part of the Partners in Injury Reduction Program. The Division achieved an overall score of 93 per cent, maintaining a Certificate of Recognition for health and safety. The audit contains strengths and recommendations for improvement. The audit states: *"Elk Island Public Schools has demonstrated an active and effective implementation of the health and safety management system (HSE) within the Division."*



- 5) 6) **BULLYING AWARENESS WEEK** – was celebrated November 13-17. It promoted awareness and understanding of bullying and its impacts. Schools throughout the Division were engaged in different activities to take part in this important initiative. Remember, school staff address this topic regularly and not just during this week in November that is legislated by the Alberta government.
- 7) **UNAUDITED FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED AUGUST 31, 2023 / UNAUDITED ACCUMULATED SURPLUS AT AUGUST 31, 2023** – The Board received these two financial reports for information, at the October 19th public Board Meeting. Details are available at www.eips.ca.

- 8) **ENROLMENT REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER 29, 2022** – An Enrollment Summary Report was received for information by the Board on October 19th. Financial Services has summarized the Sept. 29, 2023, enrolment (student headcount). There are 17,760 students in the Division as of this date. This is an increase of 277 (1.58%) students from the Spring Budget, which did not meet the provincial threshold of 2% for additional funding.
- 9) **BOARD TOURS** – The Board of Trustees toured through five Fort Saskatchewan schools on Tuesday, October 17. The Board visited Fort High, Fort Christian, Next Step Fort Saskatchewan, Fort Elementary, and Ecole Parc. The remaining Fort Schools will be visited later in the school year. Well-done to the administration and staff of EPE. The Board thoroughly enjoyed the tour!
- 10) **SCHOOL COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT GRANT** - On November 2, school councils should have received a School Council Engagement Grant application to the email they provided in the contact form. If you didn't receive this email, contact [Emma Small](#). As stated previously, ASCA learning [opportunities](#) and [supports](#) can be paid for using the grant. However, each school council will have the best idea for how grant funds could be used in their school context. Complete the application form by **December 31**. For more information, refer to the [November COSC Meeting Package](#).
- 11) **THE PRIME MINISTER'S AWARDS FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE** - These awards honour outstanding and innovative elementary and secondary school teachers in all disciplines for their remarkable educational achievements and for their commitment to preparing youth for a digital and innovation-based economy. [Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching](#) – deadline January 11
- 12) **ALBERTA HEALTH SERVICES ADDICTIONS AND MENTAL HEALTH NEWSLETTER** - The December edition of the Alberta Health Services Addiction and Mental Health Newsletter focuses on talking to children about drugs and alcohol.
[Newsletter](#) Themes include:
- [What are the winter blues?](#)
 - [Ways to combat winter blues](#)
 - [Ways to combat winter blues as a family](#)
 - [Stress Busters](#)
- 13) **CAREGIVER EDUCATION SERIES: November/December** - Alberta Health Services hosts a series of virtual caregiver information sessions focused on ways to support students' mental health. The sessions are free and geared toward parents, caregivers, teachers and community members who want to learn more about challenges impacting children and adolescents. Session topics include anxiety, depression and technology, while teaching leadership skills, communication, resiliency and more. [November Sessions](#). The list of [December 2023 sessions](#) is now available. 14) **NEXT BOARD MEETING** – The next regular Board meeting takes place on November 30, 2023, at 10 a.m. Board meetings are held in the Elk Island Public School boardroom. EIPS also livestreams public Board meetings on its [YouTube channel](#).



EIPS Advocacy in Action

Introduction

One of the critical roles of the Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) Board of Trustees is to represent students' best interests, acting as the voice for public education on behalf of the communities they serve. Each year, the Board determines the focus of its advocacy efforts, which are also in alignment with the

Division's [priorities and goals](#). The intent of the Board's advocacy is twofold: To influence the Government of Alberta's education policy, and to seek and secure sufficient resources to meet the needs of all EIPS students.

Following robust discussion at the EIPS Board of Trustees' retreat mid-September, the Board set four key areas of focus for advocacy efforts through the 2023-24 school year:

- Infrastructure: *addressing capacity issues and providing learning spaces that promote student achievement and growth.*
- The value of public education: *equitable access, opportunities that meet the needs of a diverse student body, and choice in education.*
- Autonomy of locally elected school boards: *school boards should have the flexibility to invest resources in ways that best meet the unique demands of the communities we serve.*
- Education funding: *funding serves the student needs, and is allocated in ways that are equitable, efficient and give students the best chance of academic and career success.*

Quarterly, through this newsletter, *EIPS Advocacy in Action*, the Division will advise school families and EIPS employees about the Board's work and advocacy efforts to ensure EIPS continues to provide high quality, student-centred education.

Advocacy Efforts: Spring and Summer 2023

Provincial election efforts

The Board of Trustees identified three areas of focus for the election campaign:

- the value of public education
- infrastructure needs
- board autonomy

Information about the challenges the Division faces regarding each of these issues were shared with school families and staff members, along with potential questions individuals could ask of candidates who were campaigning door-to-door.

Once the writ was dropped, EIPS trustees met with candidates from all parties to discuss the areas of focus; to listen to the candidates' party platforms; and to provide information about EIPS and answer questions candidates might have about public education. As well, trustees attended various candidate forums held by local Chambers of Commerce to pose of question to each candidate, and to learn more about those running for elected office in the urban and rural areas the Division serves.

EIPS PRIORITY AND GOAL:

PRIORITY 3: ENHANCE PUBLIC EDUCATION THROUGH EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT; GOAL 1: PARENT AND CAREGIVER ENGAGEMENT AND GOAL 2: ENGAGED AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

Correspondence and conversations:

Throughout spring and summer 2023, the Board of Trustees sent several letters to elected officials on a range of topics, as well as engaging one-on-one:

May/June: MLAs Nate Glubish (Strathcona-Sherwood Park) and Kyle Kasawski (Sherwood Park) were invited to attend the Sherwood Heights Junior High/École Campbelltown replacement school information session to view the architect's plans for the facility and familiarize them about the stage of the process.

June: A letter of congratulations was sent to each successful MLA candidate, with an invitation

to meet with the EIPS Board of Trustees in the fall.

June: A letter of congratulations was sent to the Honourable Demetrios Nicolaides, appointed the new Minister of Education by Premier Smith. The letter provided details about the Division, reinforced trustees' commitment to work collaboratively, and expressed an interest in meeting with the minister in the future to discuss mutual interests in public education.

July: A letter was sent to Minister Nicolaides upon release of his mandate letter from the premier. The letter highlighted EIPS' vision for a collegiate school in Fort Saskatchewan, a replacement school for Fort Saskatchewan High and Rudolph Hennig Junior High, and what the combined project would mean for both the community and industrial development in the Heartland area. An invitation to meet to discuss the project further, along with the business case developed by the Division, was shared with the minister.

July: Both Board Chair Trina Boymook and Vice-Chair Colleen Holowaychuk had initial conversations with each of the three MLAs who hold office in the Division's constituencies, with the goal of setting the stage for positive working relationships over the course of their term in office.

EIPS PRIORITIES AND GOALS:

PRIORITY 2: ENHANCE HIGH-QUALITY LEARNING AND WORKING ENVIRONMENTS; GOAL 3: QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR ALL

PRIORITY 1: PROMOTE GROWTH AND SUCCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS; GOAL 1: EXCELLENT START TO LEARNING, GOAL 2: SUCCESS FOR EVERY STUDENT

PRIORITY 2: ENHANCE HIGH-QUALITY LEARNING AND WORKING ENVIRONMENTS; GOAL 1: A CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Other

Through attendance at and participation in the Alberta School Board Association (ASBA) spring general meeting, EIPS trustees jointly advocated for:

- Equitable funding for displaced students, refugee students and refugee claimants—primarily in response to the evolving crisis in Ukraine.
- Per student, per subject curriculum implementation funding.
 - Ongoing consultation and collaboration on curriculum implementation, as well as advancing curriculum implementation one grade at a time—effective the 2023-24 school year.

In August, the Board of Trustees reviewed the results of its annual evaluation and discussed what requires attention this school year. Several areas were identified for further conversation at the Board's retreat in September:

- Building relationships with local MLAs
- Strategies for working with an opposition MLA
- Alignment between the Minister of Education's mandate letter and the educational interests of EIPS students and communities

EIPS PRIORITIES AND GOALS:

PRIORITY 1: PROMOTE GROWTH AND SUCCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS; GOAL 1: EXCELLENT START TO LEARNING, GOAL 2: SUCCESS FOR EVERY STUDENT

PRIORITY 2: ENHANCE HIGH-QUALITY LEARNING AND WORKING ENVIRONMENTS; GOAL 3: QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR ALL

PRIORITY 2: ENHANCE HIGH-QUALITY LEARNING AND WORKING ENVIRONMENTS; GOAL 1: A CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

PRIORITY 3: ENHANCE PUBLIC EDUCATION THROUGH EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT; GOAL 2: ENGAGED AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

Summary

Throughout the 2023-24 school year, the Board of Trustees will focus advocacy efforts on:

- promoting growth and success for all students;
- enhancing high-quality learning and working environments; and
- enhancing public education through effective engagement.