

CALGARY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees (the "Board") held in the Multipurpose Room, Education Centre, 1221 – 8 Street SW, Calgary, Alberta on Tuesday, September 15, 2015 at 12 noon

MEETING ATTENDANCE

Board of Trustees:

Trustee J. Bowen-Eyre, Chair
Trustee L. Ferguson
Trustee J. Hehr
Trustee J. Hrdlicka
Trustee T. Hurdman
Trustee P. King
Trustee A. Stewart

Administration:

Mr. D. Stevenson, Chief Superintendent of Schools
Ms. S. Church, Deputy Chief Superintendent of Schools
Mr. F. Coppinger, Superintendent, Facilities and Environmental Services
Ms. J. Everett, Superintendent, Learning Services
Mr. G. Francis, General Counsel, Legal Services/Superintendent, Human Resources
Mr. B. Grundy, Superintendent, Finance and Supply Chain Services
Ms. M. Martin-Esposito, Acting Chief Communications Officer
Ms. J. Barkway, Corporate Secretary
Ms. D. Perrier, Recording Secretary

Stakeholder Representatives:

Ms. B. McPherson, Elementary School Principals' Association
Ms. L. Robb, Calgary Board of Education Staff Association

1 | CALL TO ORDER, NATIONAL ANTHEM AND WELCOME

Chair Bowen-Eyre called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. and O Canada was led by Taradale School students by way of a video recording.

Chair Bowen-Eyre acknowledged and welcomed staff, public and representatives from the aforementioned organizations. She introduced and welcomed Mr. C. Blais, Learning Leader, and his Grade 1 students from Royal Oak School, who are in the historical Dr. Carl Safran building for the week. They will be exploring the idea of what future they as students will create; they will be collecting data to support the idea of legacy; and they will be exploring the many public spaces in the downtown area of Calgary.

2 | CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. J. Barkway, Corporate Secretary, noted that a public comment would be given under Item 6. The Board agreed to move Item 6 Public Comment to follow Item 3.1, and to reorder Item 4.1 Extraordinary Monitoring Report Request to follow Item 4.2.

MOVED by Trustee King:

THAT the Agenda for the Regular Meeting of September 15, 2015 be approved as submitted, subject to the above noted changes.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

3 | RESULTS FOCUS

3.1 School Presentation: Taradale School – Results 2

Dr. D. Yee, Director, Area III, shared opening remarks and introduced the presenters as follows:

Ms. McLaren, Principal
Ms. L. Vieweger, Assistant Principal
Ms. M. Kunn, Learning Leader
Ms. N. Duque, Learning Leader
Justin and Divjot, Grade 4 Students

Ms. McLaren noted that the Taradale School presentation highlights the intellectual engagement of their students and staff as a collaborative community. A video was shown of the teaching and learning at Taradale School with the focus on their school development goals. In particular, those goals represented the development of authentic and worthwhile tasks and literacy success, as well as teachers as designers of curriculum and formative assessment strategies. The “Tell Them from Me” survey was used to determine the level of student engagement and to measure the targets for academic success. The data from the survey offered conclusive evidence that Taradale School students are positively engaged in learning. Justin and Divjot shared comments about their individual learning experience and achievements.

On behalf of the Board, Trustee Ferguson expressed appreciation for the presentation and for the pre-recorded student performance of O Canada. She said that it is enlightening for the Board to hear how its values, as stated in the Results, are brought to life day-by-day in classrooms and schools.

6 | PUBLIC COMMENT

6.1 Mr. M. Gray, Parent

Mr. Gray shared his support for the extraordinary monitoring report, which is being requested by a trustee later in the meeting. He shared his perspective and concerns about the changes to student transportation and the communication to parents about the changes. Mr. Gray commented on how the congregated bus stop and untimely notification of its location has impacted his family life and work. He stated that subsequent to watching a recent news conference with superintendents of the CBE, he fully appreciates the transportation challenges the CBE faces. He shared his belief that the focus now should be on how CBE responded to the funding shortfall and how it engaged its public about available options; he felt the survey to parents notifying them of the changes failed to make clear to everyone what the impacts would be from moving all CBE routes to congregated bus stops. Mr. Gray suggested that for the CBE to rebuild

its relationships and trust with its stakeholders there should be an apology to parents by admitting it did not do enough to engage parents about the option of responding to the transportation funding shortfall by switching all routes to congregated stops, and it should restart the conversation about funding bus service, first with the Minister and then with parents to look at options for funding bus service.

Chair Bowen-Eyre thanked Mr. Gray for his comments and asked that he submit his personal concerns about transportation of his children to the Transportation department. A copy of his letter was submitted for the administrative records.

4 | OPERATIONAL EXPECTATIONS

4.2 Student Travel Distance for Yellow School Bus Riders

Chair Bowen-Eyre noted that the report is submitted for the Board's information, but Administration would speak to the issue and provide further information as requested by trustees. She explained that transportation is a delegated responsibility to the Chief Superintendent of Schools.

Chief Stevenson noted that the report puts forward plans to re-adjust the travel distance for some elementary and junior high students. Trustee and parent concerns have been heard over the past weeks and Administration is responding to those concerns and making changes. The transportation department has already started the process to modify routes and adjust bus stop locations so that students will not have to travel further to their yellow school bus location than those students who walk to school. He pointed out that as the planning continues for safe and accessible bus stop locations, there may be slight distance variations for some students. These changes are expected to be completed by mid-October.

Chief Stevenson thanked parents for their patience and understanding as the work continues to make this right. He stated that he takes full responsibility for the fact that communications regarding travel distances were not clear and complete. He stated that he did not communicate clearly about the changes and what they would mean for the distance some students would need to travel to their yellow school bus stop, for which he expressed his apology. He noted that in going forward, Administration is committed to working with trustees, parents and other stakeholders about the CBE issues and complexities surrounding the transportation of our students. On reflection of this experience we can learn from it and improve. He stated that he is committed to reviewing processes and practices and putting measures in place to ensure that communications on changes that impact families are clearly and completely communicated.

Superintendent Coppinger provided highlights of the contents of the report. He pointed out that not all registrations for yellow bus service have been submitted, routes are still not finalized, and we do not know yet the final number of students who are impacted. He noted that with respect to ride times, congregated stops have minimized or reduced the ride time for students – as of September 9th there were 2,219 students who had ride times reduced compared to last year. The data shows that last year there were 1,725 students whose travel time was over one hour and that has been reduced to 1,004

students. For those riding for 45 to 60 minutes, last year's number of 3,187 has been reduced to 2,120 students.

The CBE's transportation grant this year is \$35 million and the costs at the beginning of September are estimated at \$43 million. The gap of \$8 million is being funded by parents paying the \$300 transportation fee.

Superintendent Coppinger noted that the criteria for determining the location of a school bus stop for eligible riders is based on a student's primary residential address and it is established considering: the number of students assigned to the school bus stop; it is in public areas on main collector roads, where possible; it minimizes inconvenience to the public; and ensures traffic safety during the bus loading and unloading.

In response to concerns received and the requested five safety reviews, all bus drivers have reported back that the stops are safe for our students. We do not keep a record of all detailed complaints and concerns received by the transportation department, but it is known that the number of phone calls with complaints and concerns received this year has been consistent with previous years.

The process, as followed every year, is that we ask parents to complete their registration forms by the end of June so that we can build the bus routes over the summer. As of today, we have received about 80% of the expected registrations; therefore, it has been difficult for staff to finalize bus maps and routes. With those maps and routes that were released at the end of August, a number of parents have expressed concern regarding the distances some students had to travel to access the yellow bus stop. On September 4th the Chief Superintendent directed staff to take the necessary steps to ensure that students riding yellow school buses will be accessing stops in alignment with the travel distances of 1.6 km and 1.8 km for elementary and junior high schools respectively. These route adjustments have been started and should be completed by mid-October. Parents are being asked to submit their registrations by September 25, 2015. Administration will continue to monitor and adjust routes and will communicate changes to schools and parents when required.

A question and answer session took place between trustees and Administration on issues including:

- the total number of students that may be impacted by the changes in transportation services;
- how the changes will be communicated to parents through their schools;
- the financial impact of these changes;
- how routes can change at any given time based on other factors including new riders from outlying new communities and in-migration of students throughout the year;
- the review of all requests to the transportation department to determine whether it is feasible or possible to satisfy the individual requests;
- transportation fees;
- ensuring that all stops are safe and secure, which may affect some slight differences in locations and/or ridership in particular cases; and

- the assessment of congregated stops, which will occur at the end of the year to look at costs, grants and budget.

Recessed: 1:42 p.m.

Reconvened: 1:54 p.m.

4.1 Extraordinary Monitoring Report Request

Trustee Hurdman provided opening comments and noted, in particular, how the Board's governance structure works and what the role of a trustee is. She noted that trustees are not here to judge whether any decision by Administration is right or wrong; however, if a trustee feels that policy is not being followed, it should be addressed. She commented that this is a matter of learning and looking forward to how improvements can be made. She provided clarification to trustee questions. She shared her expectation that, should a motion be approved for an extraordinary monitoring report, the details of that report would provide evidence of whether the Chief Superintendent was in compliance with Board policy.

MOVED by Trustee Hurdman:

THAT the Board of Trustees directs the Chief Superintendent to provide to the Board, at its October 6, 2015 Regular Meeting, a monitoring report regarding OE-3: Treatment of Owners, with specific reference to subsection 3.3 (b), which reads "Maintain an organizational culture that reasonably includes people in decisions that affect them," in relation to the decision to significantly change charter transportation service levels for regular and alternative programs and the decision to eliminate the Calgary Transit rebate.

Trustees debated the motion and their comments of support are summarized as follows:

- Our partnership with parents is important. Engaging our public is one of our four pillars and it is a value held by the Board and by Administration, written in policy and in our Three-Year Education Plan.
- This is not asking whether or not compliance has been achieved, but rather whether trustees need to monitor this specific issue through a higher scope. As governors of the system it is incumbent upon the Board to address issues that have been shown or heard to be of great concern to our public.
- Feedback from parents clearly indicated their opinion that there was a lack of communication around this issue.
- A detailed review of this particular issue can serve as a learning experience. It should not be a huge task in terms of resources.
- It is understood that the indicators of this policy subsection do not speak directly to the issue of transportation. The Board's monitoring of policies is important and it is incumbent upon the Board to ask for a report to address these issues.

Trustee comments in opposition to the motion are summarized as follows:

- It is questionable whether this is the correct policy subsection to pinpoint. A full monitoring report on this Operational Expectations policy is due to the Board in two

- weeks and if Administration feels they were off-side on this matter that would be indicated in the monitoring report.
- There are many issues surrounding this subject matter, including the lateness of the provincial budget, difficulties surrounding timelines and the need to balance the very diverse community expectations. Less than three percent of students were impacted by these changes. Congregated stops have been utilized successfully since 2007.
 - The policy speaks to “reasonably” including people in decisions that affect them, which should also relate to encompassing a reasonable timeframe.
 - It is preferred to look at the full context of a policy and not to focus on a particular subsection of a policy.
 - It is questionable whether collectively there is a shared understanding of what engagement is. An engagement model or framework that is clear to everyone should be first put into place.

Chair Bowen-Eyre called for the vote on the motion.

The motion was
CARRIED.

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| In favour: | Trustee Hehr Trustee Hrdlicka Trustee Hurdman Trustee Stewart |
| Opposed: | Trustee Bowen-Eyre Trustee Ferguson Trustee King |

5 | **MATTERS RESERVED FOR BOARD ACTION**

There were no items.

7 | **CONSENT AGENDA**

Chair Bowen-Eyre declared the following items to be adopted as submitted on the Consent Agenda:

7.1 **OE-2: Temporary Chief Superintendent Succession – Annual Monitoring**

THAT the Board of Trustees approves that the Chief Superintendent is in compliance with the provisions of policy OE-2: Temporary Chief Superintendent Success.

7.2 **Items Provided for Board Information**

7.2.1 Chief Superintendent’s Update

7.2.2 Construction Projects Status Report

Chair Bowen-Eyre stated that the Regular Meeting would go in camera for the Board to discuss three land issues.

Recessed: 2:41 p.m.

Reconvened: 3:04 p.m.

8 | **IN-CAMERA ISSUES**

8.1 **MOTION TO MOVE IN CAMERA**

MOVED by Trustee King:

Whereas the Board of Trustees is of the opinion that it is in the public interest that matters on the Private Agenda for the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees, September 15, 2015, be considered at an in-camera session; therefore, be it

Resolved, **THAT the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees moves in-camera.**

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

8.2 **MOTION TO REVERT TO PUBLIC MEETING**

MOVED by Trustee Stewart:

THAT the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees moves out of in-camera.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOTIONS TO ACTION IN-CAMERA RECOMMENDATIONS

MOVED by Trustee Ferguson:

THAT the Board of Trustees directs the Chief Superintendent to prepare draft correspondence to the Minister of Education, as discussed in camera.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

CONSENT AGENDA

Chair Bowen-Eyre declared the following item to be adopted as submitted:

THAT the Board of Trustees authorizes Administration to proceed with the award of the construction tenders for Aspen Woods Elementary School and Marshall Springs Middle School, as recommended in the private report.

9 | **ADJOURNMENT**

The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 3:48 p.m.