

## CALGARY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees held in the Board Room, Education Centre, 515 Macleod Trail SE, Calgary, Alberta on Tuesday, April 13, 2010 at 5:00 p.m.

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### MEETING ATTENDANCE

#### Board of Trustees:

Trustee P. Cochrane, Chair  
Trustee C. Bazinet  
Trustee G. Dirks  
Trustee L. Ferguson  
Trustee P. King  
Trustee K. Kryczka  
Trustee G. Lane

#### Administration:

Ms. N. Johnson, Chief Superintendent of Schools  
Mr. D. Stevenson, Deputy Chief Superintendent of Schools  
Mr. F. Coppinger, Superintendent, Facilities and Environmental Services  
Ms. C. Faber, Superintendent, Learning Innovation  
Mr. J. Johnston, Superintendent, Human Resources  
Ms. D. Lewis, Superintendent, Learning Support  
Ms. B. Kuester, Executive Director of Communications  
Mr. R. Peden, General Counsel and Corporate Secretary  
Mr. W. Braun, Interim Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer  
Mr. C. Davies, Sr. Executive Assistant to the Chief Superintendent of Schools  
Ms. S. Wasylyshyn, Executive Assistant to the Trustees  
Ms. J. Barkway, Assistant Corporate Secretary  
Ms. D. Perrier, Recording Secretary

#### Stakeholder Representatives:

Mr. M. Bester, Principals' Association for Adolescent Learners (PAAL)  
Ms. C. Hall, Principals' Association for Adolescent Learners (PAAL)  
Ms. E. Knudtson, Principals' Association for Adolescent Learners (PAAL)  
Ms. J. Minifie, Calgary Board of Education Staff Association  
Ms. L. Newton, Calgary Association of Parents and School Councils  
Ms. J. Regal, Alberta Teachers' Association, Local 38

Action By

### **1.0 CALL TO ORDER, NATIONAL ANTHEM AND WELCOME**

Chair Cochrane called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. on the plaza and a group of students from Westgate School played recorders in accompaniment to the singing of O Canada. The meeting resumed in the Board Room and Chair Cochrane acknowledged and welcomed representatives from the aforementioned organizations.

Action By:

## **2.0 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Ms. Barkway noted that a stakeholder report would be given under Item 5.4.

MOVED by Trustee King:

**THAT the Agenda for the Regular Meeting of April 13, 2010, be approved as submitted.**

The motion was  
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

## **3.0 SCHOOL/SYSTEM PRESENTATIONS**

### **3.1 Westgate School**

Mr. J. Langley, Area IV Director, provided an introduction of the school presentation and called forward Ms. G. Suggitt, Principal. Ms. Suggitt noted that the presentation is on Ends 5: Character, and that Mr. S. Wigglesworth, Assistant Principal, and students Lucas and Laura were present to highlight learning and practising character education at Westgate School. She stated that Sarah, who is a grade two student at Westgate School, and Sarah's mother were also intending to share in the presentation, but they had not yet arrived at the meeting.

Ms. Suggitt noted that Learning with H.E.A.R.T. is what assists the school to actualize the mega end, and incorporates five core values: Helpful, Empathy, Acceptance, Responsibility and Trust. Lucas and Laura shared some of the ways in which the core values are applied by students in their daily activities and interactions with one another. Ms. Suggitt and Mr. Wigglesworth expanded on some of the work undertaken for teaching and learning about character education and evaluating this work, which included the following initiatives:

- The Resiliency Wheel: provide opportunities for meaningful participation; increase pro-social bonding; set and communicate high expectations; set clear, consistent boundaries; provide caring and support; teach life-skills.
- School Code of Conduct: roles and responsibilities, of staff, of students, and parents.
- Classroom Social Contract: reviewed under the pillars of self, earth and others – "do what is right".
- Evaluations: character check for Division 1; restitution and rebuilding character; teaching resources; data collection and accountability pillar survey, school survey, ends reporting (SIRS), and staff input to computer-generated "wordle".

Ms. Suggitt shared the story that was to be presented by Sarah.

(Note: It was sometime later in the meeting that Sarah and her mother arrived. Sarah's comments that were to be shared in this presentation were read by Chair Cochrane and are summarized here to provide continuity to the Minutes:

Sarah noted that on her sixth birthday she decided to do a \$5 + \$5 party, and to donate the proceeds to the Cochrane Humane Society. She has since donated \$210 to the Society. Through learning with HEART she has learned to feel

Action By:

empathy towards the animals at the Cochrane Humane Society. By giving this money, the animals are fed and taken care of until they find a home, which she feels very good about.)

On behalf of the Board, Trustee Lane thanked the presenters for sharing their stories. He stated it is impressive to learn that Westgate School is making such great strides in measuring their achievement with the Ends.

#### **4.0 HONOURS AND RECOGNITIONS**

There were none.

#### **5.0 PUBLIC CONVERSATION AND INFORMATION**

##### **5.1 Report from the Chair and Trustees**

Trustee Bazinet noted that she and Chair Cochrane and a number of senior administrators recently attended a *Carver Policy Governance* seminar in Atlanta, Georgia, which she felt was very informative. She noted that it is an ongoing journey to determine how this governance model best fits our system.

Trustee Lane reported on his attendance at the CUBE (Council of Urban Boards of Education) and the NSBA (National School Boards' Association) conferences, as well as the Policy Governance Wisdom Sharing session in Chicago.

Trustee King shared that she was a celebrity judge at Jack James High School's annual talent show. She noted it was a great deal of fun and she was most pleased to see so many of the students exude personal strength and self-confidence.

Chair Cochrane acknowledged and congratulated Ms. S. McGinnis, reporter from the Calgary Herald, on her receipt of the Education News Writers and Photographers of Alberta Award, which is awarded annually by the Alberta Teachers' Association. After two years of being a recipient of the award in recognition of her writing, this year Ms. McGinnis was given the award for her photography.

##### **5.2 Report from the Chief Superintendent**

Chief Superintendent Johnson informed that on April 6, 2010, she and Superintendent D. Lewis and Ms. V. Murphy from Falconridge School met with Mr. K. Dutton and Ms. L. Craig, Community Services of Alberta Health Services and gave a presentation on Telehealth (videoconference). The presentation was specific to the collaborative work undertaken in the Calgary Board of Education with Alberta Health Services regarding the personalization of learning for our students.

##### **5.3 Public Question Period**

There were no public questions.

##### **5.4 Stakeholder Reports**

Action By:

5.4.1. Ms. G. Singendonk, Parent and School Council Chair, Sir William Van Horne High School

Ms. Singendonk shared her belief that the typical student at Sir William Van Horne High School does not go into Knowledge and Employability (K&E) courses because they don't want a diploma; they attend this school because they've been told they aren't capable of getting a diploma. She remarked that this school is an alternative, special education program that offers more than K&E curriculum and career and technology skills. It is an alternate way to learn and the difference with this school is that it is a congregated setting. Ms. Singendonk spoke about the public meeting, noting that many parents, current, alumni and future students, and members of the community have expressed concerns about this potential closure. She noted that this particular issue is unlike other closure considerations in that it is about taking a proven successful program and dismantling it, in the hopes of replicating it elsewhere with the same results. She urged the Board to recognize that Sir William Van Horne High School, like its students, is worth saving and building up.

**5.5 Trustee Inquiries**

There were no Trustee inquiries.

**6.0 ACTION ITEMS**

**6.1 Consideration of Closure for the Purpose of Relocation of Juno Beach Academy of Canadian Studies**

Mr. P. Carlton, Director, Community Engagement and Operational Planning, introduced the report and spoke briefly about the regulatory processes that were undertaken, noting that compliance was met in all areas.

MOVED by Trustee King:

1. **THAT the Minutes of the Public Meeting of March 11, 2010, attached to the report as Attachment #1, be approved by the Board of Trustees, and**
2. **THAT the report be received for information and for the record.**

The motion was  
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Trustee Kryczka provided a synopsis of written submissions received following the public meeting that was held March 11, 2010. She noted that one submission was received in the Trustees' office, requesting clarification of the anticipated increase in administrative salaries should the relocation occur, and commenting that this would be the third location for Juno Beach Academy. It was noted that the school community fully supports this relocation and feels for the first time that this will be a very positive move; however, with respect to public perception surrounding the closure process and frequent moves of the program, it is requested that the CBE supports the program in a number of areas. It was asked when the parents and community of Juno Beach Academy could expect to be informed about timelines and contacts with respect to the relocation. Trustee Kryczka stated that the submitted questions have been answered on our website.

Action By:

Motion Arising:

MOVED by Trustee Kryczka:

**Be it *Resolved*, THAT the Board of Trustees approves the closure of Juno Beach Academy of Canadian Studies at Lord Shaughnessy High School, effective June 30, 2010, to allow for relocation of the program.**

Trustee Kryczka provided rationale for the motion, noting that with the reality of the renovations required for Lord Shaughnessy High School for future programming, it is a concern that the Juno Beach Academy may be squeezed out of the space that they currently have in the school building. She expressed the belief that this closure process for the purpose of relocation has been relatively positive.

Trustee comments in support of the motion included expressions of belief that the placement of Juno Beach Academy in a stand-alone building may attract more students to the program allowing for its continued growth and success.

Chair Cochrane called for the vote on the motion.

The motion was  
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**6.2 Consideration of Closure of Sir William Van Horne High School and All Programs Contained Therein**

Mr. P. Carlton, Director, Community Engagement and Operational Planning, introduced the report and spoke briefly about the regulatory processes that were undertaken.

Trustees posed a number of questions, which were addressed by Administration and are summarized as follows:

- Administration shared information about the drop out rates and the high school completion rates for students at Sir William Van Horne High School, which was data from October 2009 and for the periods 2004-05 through 2007-08.
- It was clarified that approximately 1500 CBE students are taking one or more Knowledge and Employability (K & E) courses.
- Students taking K & E courses receive system support through the basic per student allocation as well as the basic allocation for schools, through the RAM. In addition, there are supplementary RAM allocations, depending on the types of students that are enrolled in schools across the system.
- Administration shared their views about the congregated setting versus the segregated setting. It was noted that significant gains have been made over the years throughout the system in terms of our understanding and ability to support an inclusive environment that is safe and secure for all of our students. It is believed that students in a congregated setting would be offered greater access to a wider variety of co-curricular activities, in addition to the courses that students take, and a wider variety of teacher expertise that would be available in a larger high school. It speaks to the least restrictive environment

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for students; it allows for each student to be part of their home school community; it benefits our high schools in terms of professional development.

- Administration noted that K & E courses could be offered at all of our high schools. The shift from Integrated Occupational Programs (IOP) to K & E was with the understanding that students would have a broader range of opportunity to participate in courses to meet individual student needs and interests, allowing for more choice.
- Information was shared about the supports that would be in place to ensure a smooth transition for these students, as well as the classroom and school supports that are in our high schools to ensure that the diverse needs of the students are met on an ongoing basis.
- It was noted that the pathways approach and the clustering of students is how we are moving forward, i.e., Career and Technology Skills (CTS) Centres, to bring students together based on what their need is, as opposed to the more permanent notion of congregation.
- Administration noted that CTS will be for all students of all abilities; that K & E would be subsumed under the CTS curriculum as well as under the regular curriculum.
- Should the decision be made to close Sir William Van Horne High School, a review would be made of the students in the deaf and hard of hearing program, to determine what their needs are and how and what location those needs could best be met in, subsequent to consultations with the parents.

MOVED by Trustee King:

1. **THAT the Minutes of the Public Meeting of March 9, 2010, attached to the report as Attachment #1, be approved by the Board of Trustees; and**
2. **THAT the report be received for information and for the record.**

The motion was  
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Trustee Dirks provided a synopsis of written submissions and questions received in the Trustees' office from members of the public, as follows:

- Sir William Van Horne High School (Van Horne) has done a stellar job of turning around the lives of seriously troubled and special needs students. The school has provided a safe and loving environment for kids who were frequently stigmatized in larger high schools. Van Horne has proved to be a school of last resort for many students.
- Van Horne provides a structured environment with small classes and more individual attention than students will get in a larger school.
- The drop in enrolment at Van Horne could be a result of staff not being allowed to recruit students from feeder schools.
- Van Horne's outstanding work with challenging students can be seen in its committed community partnerships.
- One letter reminded trustees of the words of a former CBE administrator who said, "Whenever you have to make a decision, make it on what is best for the

Action By:

students. You will always be right. If you base your decision on anything else you will be wrong.”

- A former school principal said it would be a crime to close Van Horne in a time when more students are finding school difficult.
- A comment was made that closing Van Horne would leave only one vocationally oriented high school for a city of more than a million residents.
- At Van Horne there is a powerful environment of friendship, acceptance, safety, belonging and anti-bullying as well as an “I can succeed” ethic that would be difficult to replicate in larger high schools.
- Numerous suggestions for how to increase enrolment and space utilization were offered.
- One parent expressed great concerns about what will happen to the deaf and hard of hearing class if Van Horne closes, and asked if students in this class would have to move to the school for the deaf in Edmonton.
- A statement was made that by congregating excellent teachers in a setting designed for complex learners there is a higher likelihood of student success than if students take K & E courses in mainstream high schools.
- Repeated concerns were expressed that fragile, special learners with complex needs will inevitably be stigmatized and abused at regular high schools regardless of the good intentions of committed teachers.
- A comment was made that given Alberta’s already high non-completion rates, any move such as closing Van Horne, which will affect those least likely to graduate, is clearly contrary to the stated goals of Alberta Education and the CBE.
- Jack James, a high school similar to Van Horne, has a capped enrolment at approximately 60% of space utilization. Therefore capacity for Van Horne needs to be recalibrated downwards to 680. It is believed that this is the true program capacity at Van Horne and that this puts the current utilization rate at Van Horne at closer to 50%; this rate could easily be increased with appropriate student recruitment efforts. Juno Beach Academy is moving to a building where its utilization rate will be somewhat less than 50%. It is questionable why the proposal for Juno Beach is to grow but for Van Horne, with a similar utilization rate, to close.
- If Van Horne students end up in regular high schools, those schools will need to relax standards for attendance and behavior and deadlines for these students to succeed, given their complex profiles.
- A comment was made that it makes no sense to close a program that is badly needed. The CBE should be adding to the program, renting rooms in the school if necessary; be more creative.
- A belief was shared that when it comes to cuts, the CBE jumps to the easy fix and it was questioned why. A request was made to move Westmount Charter to Van Horne. It was stated that the CBE should either renovate Van Horne or tear it down.
- A belief was shared that Van Horne is a special school which needs to be considered not on the basis of numbers alone but on the benefits it gives to society by providing students with a chance for hope. While closure may save a small amount of money in the short term, in the long term as numerous

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studies have shown, those who cease to benefit from what Van Horne offers will cost society more.

- A Van Horne student shared concern that if Van Horne closes, students with disabilities and not just learning disabilities will not get the education, support and respect that all children deserve.
- A mother wrote that her son has a math learning disability, slow processing and mild ADD. She said that Van Horne is a program of choice, one where he would heal, gain confidence and be given some slack as he got his legs under him.
- A parent wrote that some students need the unique support offered in congregated settings. The CBE has recognized this in other settings such as GATE.
- Van Horne is an environment of acceptance, where everyone is known and encouraged; this is the essential piece that could be lost.
- A parent wrote that the recent closure of Lord Shaughnessy High School should give pause, because as she understands it, only 34 of 69 students who transferred actually completed high school.
- A question was raised about how Van Horne students could be incorporated into regular high schools, when those high schools are already over capacity – i.e., Sir Winston Churchill High School.
- At the conclusion of an extensive brief a parent said that Van Horne should be made an official alternative special education program of choice; that if low enrolment persists it would make more sense to integrate mainstream high school students into Van Horne for K & E, diploma and CTS courses.

Motion Arising:

MOVED by Trustee Bazinet:

**THAT the Board of Trustees waives the Board Procedures under section J.(9)(k) that limit each trustee's debate to three minutes for this agenda item.**

Trustee Bazinet provided rationale for the motion, noting this is a very complex issue and it warrants enabling all trustees to give their full voice. She clarified that there would still be two rounds of debate allowed.

A comment in opposition to the motion was shared by a trustee, noting that the Board often debates issues of significant concern. The reason for having procedures is so that there are ways in which to offer trustees the ability to express their concerns; the Procedures, therefore, provide that outline and guidance.

A comment in favour of the motion was that the Procedures recognize that there may be times when the Board may wish to debate for longer than three minutes. It is not believed that this is a unique situation, but it is one situation that could warrant longer debate.

Chair Cochrane called for the vote on the motion.



Action By:

The motion was  
CARRIED.

In favour: Trustee Bazinet  
Trustee Dirks  
Trustee Kryczka  
Trustee Lane  
Opposed: Trustee Cochrane  
Trustee Ferguson  
Trustee King

Motion Arising:

MOVED by Trustee Ferguson:

**Be it *Resolved*, THAT the Board of Trustees approves the closure of Sir William Van Horne High School and all programs contained therein, as of June 30, 2010, providing for a one year transition period to best enable receiving schools to fully prepare for the consequential student registration increases such that the operative date of closure shall be June 30, 2011.**

Trustee Ferguson provided rationale for the motion. She expressed her understanding that the decision on this matter is crucial in the minds of affected parents and students in regards to the program's success as a learning environment for students who struggle with learning difficulties. She noted her belief that in pursuit of learning, it is much better to teach skills to advocate for oneself, be resilient and risk failure, and turn it into opportunities to be a part of the larger world early on in life. She stated it is also important that supports are in place for the student to take those chances. She pointed out that our Administration has stated that all of our schools need to be more focused on providing safe and caring schools that promote flexibility in learning and support from teachers and individuals who know the student well; and that there are specific strategies, resourcing and staffing that can provide a similar level of support without excluding students from the mainstream; and that, perhaps it is done least well at the high school level and that needs to change.

Trustee Ferguson noted that the decision on this matter is about trust – trust that CBE educators care and are accountable for the Ends on student success, about success for each and every student, and about every student reaching their highest potential.

Additional comments in support of the motion were as follows:

- Sir William Van Horne has evolved from teaching and learning through Integrated Occupational Programs to teaching and learning through Knowledge and Employability Skills courses, which is now offered at all of our high schools. It is questionable that the current supports provided to students at Van Horne are necessarily the best or the right supports.
- It is felt that thoughtful planning has been done by Administration in looking forward with respect to the learning needs of these students; and it is believed that change can allow for personal growth in oneself.

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- It is believed that the timing is right for this change to occur, because there are other changes occurring throughout the system that relate to the personalization of learning for all of our students.
- We would be offering some opportunities for success that students may not currently experience at Sir William Van Horne High School, and as a system we must look to the future in providing the best education possible for our students.

Trustee comments in opposition to the motion were as follows:

- There have been numerous expressions made by parents and students of the community to keep the school open, and it is believed that their pleas are worthy of support.
- It is believed that some students learn best in a smaller and segregated setting, and we should not restrict ourselves to one format for teaching K & E courses.
- A strong culture and sense of community has developed at Sir William Van Horne High School, and the program has evolved as a functional and successful one.
- Closing the school at this time might be a premature decision.
- It is uncertain that the system as a whole has the capacity at this point in time to meet the needs of every student, in terms of safe and caring schools.

Chair Cochrane called for the vote on the motion.

The motion was  
CARRIED.

In favour:	Trustee Bazinet Trustee Cochrane Trustee Ferguson Trustee Kryczka
Opposed:	Trustee Dirks Trustee King Trustee Lane

Recessed: 7:39 p.m.

Reconvened: 7:55 p.m.

Motion Arising:

MOVED by Trustee Ferguson:

**THAT the Board directs the Chief Superintendent to provide updates to the Board of Trustees throughout the next school year, in October 2010, January 2011 and April 2011, with information related to:**

- a) transition outcomes of students currently enrolled at Sir William Van Horne High School;**
- b) the implementation of elements of the strategy and provision of resources for transitioning students taking Knowledge and Employability courses at schools within Areas I and II.**

Action By:

Trustee Ferguson incorporated into the above motion a friendly amendment that was suggested with respect to the number of and dates for the updates to be provided to the Board.

Trustee Ferguson clarified her meaning of 'transition outcomes' noting that some students will be moving back into their regular high schools and, therefore, she is asking for information regarding success in terms of whether or not they are enrolled in another program somewhere else, or in another high school, or in work, or what exactly the transition has been for those students currently enrolled at Sir William Van Horne High School. Many of those students are not necessarily taking K & E courses, but are actually students with special needs that may require a different type of transitioning.

Chair Cochrane called for the vote on the motion.

The motion was  
CARRIED.

In favour:	Trustee Cochrane Trustee Dirks Trustee Ferguson Trustee King Trustee Kryczka Trustee Lane
Opposed:	Trustee Bazinet

8:00 p.m. Chair Cochrane received the consent of the Board to continue the meeting to the completion of the Agenda.

### **6.3 Three-Year School Capital Plan (2011-2014)**

Superintendent Coppinger provided an overview of the details of the three-year School Capital Plan, through a PowerPoint presentation. In conclusion, he noted that in the last two years the province has not approved our three-year School Capital Plan. We have asked for major modernizations to meet program requirements for the past seven years, and we've had approval from the province for one school modernization over that time period.

A typographical correction was noted to page 6-111 (page 4) of the report, to change the date in the last paragraph to read May 1, 2010.

MOVED by Trustee Ferguson:

**THAT the Calgary Board of Education's three-year *School Capital Plan (2011-2014)* be approved and referred to Alberta Education.**

The motion was  
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

### **7.0 MONITORING AND RESULTS**

There were no items.

Action By:

## **8.0 POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW**

There were no items.

## **9.0 CONSENT AGENDA**

Chair Cochrane declared the following items to be adopted as submitted:

### **9.1 Board Consent Agenda**

#### **9.1.1 Appointment of Governor of EducationMatters, Calgary's Public Education Trust**

**THAT the Board of Trustees approves the appointment of Mr. Hanif Ladha as Governor of EducationMatters, to be effective April 13, 2010, for a 3-year term, ending April 13, 2013.**

#### **9.1.2 Governance Process Policy 12: Investment in Governance – Election 2010 Event**

**THAT, in accordance with Governance Process (GP) Policy 12: Investment in Governance, the Board of Trustees approves the expenditure of up to \$5,000 to support an event, to be held on May 12, 2010, regarding the upcoming civic election.**

### **9.2 Chief Superintendent Consent Agenda**

#### **9.2.1 Chief Superintendent's Update**

**THAT the Board of Trustees receives the Chief Superintendent's Update for information.**

## **10.0 TRUSTEE NOTICES OF MOTION**

There were no Trustee notices of motion.

Recessed: 8:29 p.m.

Reconvened: 8:37 p.m.

## **11.0 IN-CAMERA ISSUES**

### **11.1 Motion to Move In Camera**

MOVED by Trustee Lane:

**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, April 13, 2010 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.

Action By:

**11.2 Motion to Revert to Public Meeting**

MOVED by Trustee King:

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

The motion was  
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Trustee Ferguson:

- 1. THAT the Board of Trustees receives the 2010-2011 Budget Update for information.**
- 2. THAT the Board of Trustees directs the Chief Superintendent to provide for the April 20, 2010 Board meeting, draft proposed correspondence to the Minister from the Board Chair and alternate financial scenarios in regard to our current financial situation.**

The motion was  
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Cochrane declared the meeting adjourned at 9:44 p.m.