

CALGARY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees (the “Board”) held in the Multipurpose Room, Education Centre, 1221 – 8th Street SW, Calgary, Alberta on Tuesday, April 3, 2012 at 3:00 p.m.

MEETING ATTENDANCE

Board of Trustees:

Trustee P. Cochrane, Chair
Trustee C. Bazinet
Trustee J. Bowen-Eyre
Trustee L. Ferguson
Trustee P. King
Trustee G. Lane
Trustee S. Taylor

Administration:

Mr. D. Stevenson, Deputy Chief Superintendent of Schools
Mr. F. Coppinger, Superintendent, Facilities and Environmental Services
Ms. C. Faber, Superintendent, Learning Innovation
Mr. K. Peterson, Acting Superintendent, Human Resources
Ms. D. Lewis, Superintendent, Learning Services
Ms. D. Meyers, Superintendent, Finance & Supply Chain Services
Mr. R. Peter, Chief Communications Officer
Ms. L. Safran, Acting General Counsel and Corporate Secretary
Ms. J. Barkway, Office of the Corporate Secretary
Ms. A. McNaught, Recording Secretary

Stakeholder Representatives:

Bob Anderson, Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 40
Mr. F. Fuchs, Calgary Board of Education Staff Association
Ms. J. Regal, Alberta Teachers’ Association, Local 38
Mr. R. Hurdman, Calgary Association of Parents and School Councils (CAPSC)
Mr. J.F. Belanger, Principals’ Association for Adolescent Learners (PAAL)
Mr. M. Bester, Principals’ Association for Adolescent Learners (PAAL)

1 | CALL TO ORDER, NATIONAL ANTHEM AND WELCOME

Chair Cochrane called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m. in the link where a musical presentation by students from Alternative High School was enjoyed. The students led in the singing of the national anthem. Chair Cochrane thanked them on behalf of the Board of Trustees for their wonderful presentation.

The meeting continued in the Multipurpose Room and Chair Cochrane acknowledged and welcomed stakeholder representatives from the aforementioned organizations. She informed that in keeping with the Board’s new procedures the meeting would be live-streamed that evening. Meeting videos would be linked to existing webpages to provide

access to both the live-stream, as well as intuitive access to the eventual archives for each meeting. Website information will be posted under Board of Trustees, Board Meetings.

2 | **CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chair Cochrane introduced the new Agenda format under the new Board Meeting Procedures.

Ms. Barkway alerted that a revised page 5-7 had been circulated for Agenda Item 5.1, Operational Expectations 12: Facilities – Reasonable Interpretation.

Trustee Taylor noted two differences on the Agenda from the approved template, namely: the Pre-meeting at 2:30 p.m. had been removed; and Debrief had been moved to after Adjournment. Chair Cochrane advised that there was agreement during the March 6, 2012 Board meeting that Debrief would occur after Adjournment, and that much of pre-meeting time was filled by the School Presentation that began at 2:40 p.m. and that further review would be undertaken to make sure the Board is aligning with decisions it has made.

MOVED by Trustee King:

THAT the Agenda for the Regular Meeting of April 3, 2012, be approved as submitted, subject to the amendments noted above.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

3 | **AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS**

There were none.

4 | **RESULTS FOCUS**

4.1 **School Presentation – Alternative High School**

Area Director S. Smith introduced the presentation by Alternative High School. She advised that the school philosophy is one of providing a highly personalized and democratic learning environment for academically capable students who have not met success in their community high school. Director Smith informed that Alternative High School creates a caring community providing academic and personal support by living within the aspects of the Circle of Courage, a philosophy based on an Aboriginal Medicine Wheel which unites the four corners of belonging, mastery, generosity and independence. She informed that there are three off-campus classrooms attached to Alternative High School: the Alberta Adolescent Recovery Centre (AARC), the Re-engaging Academically Disconnected Adolescents Respectfully (RADAR) Program and the HERA Program, which works with at risk teenage girls. The purpose of those programs is to transition students back into their community schools.

Ms. J. McDonald, principal, shared that the school's motto, "freedom to be who you are," is what Alternative High School is all about. She discussed how students are

encouraged to represent their true selves in the way they dress and think, and most importantly, in the way they learn. Ms. McDonald talked about how character education is threaded throughout the fabric of the school and invited the students in attendance to talk about their experiences. Centred around the components of the Circle of Courage, students shared a PowerPoint presentation, a rap and personal stories demonstrating what good character is and how each student possesses the strength of character to do what is right, to act morally with wisdom, and how each student works to balance their individual concerns with the rights and needs of others.

Trustee Taylor thanked the staff and students of Alternative High School for their presentation and for sharing their personal stories.

4.2 Fees – Community Engagement

Before beginning the presentation, Deputy Chief Superintendent Stevenson acknowledged Mr. K. Peterson in his new role as Acting Superintendent of Human Resources.

Deputy Chief Superintendent Stevenson introduced the report stating Administration was pleased to bring the voice of more than 4,000 parents into the public Board meeting that evening by sharing the results of the community consultation on school fees. He discussed the budget cycle in order to give context to the fees initiative. He explained that Administration was given clear direction about applying the parental expectations to the fees framework for 2012-13. Mr. P. Coppard of Stormy Lake Consulting, one of two firms secured for the community engagement process, guided the PowerPoint presentation and communicated the findings.

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

- It is safe to use “parents” as the proxy for “respondents” because more than 99% of people who responded to the survey reported having children in the CBE system.
- Every parent in the system was invited to participate. 97% of responses came from Kindergarten to Grade 6 parents. Noon supervision fees and the inconsistencies of fees between schools are a real concern.
- This was an engagement rather than research and, as every parent was invited to participate, it is not the same as a random sampled survey; therefore, a margin of error is not relevant. However, if this number of people had been randomly sampled, the margin of error would be well below 2%.
- Parents were clear that when charging transportation fees the distinction between educational necessity and personal choice was important to them. There is general acceptance that exceptional/special needs are an educational necessity. Respondents struggled with further definitions of educational necessity such as recommendations from the system that a child attend a different school, or choosing to live in a community that does not have a school or where a school has been closed. Looking at the different types of programming, parents have asked the CBE to make a differentiation and explain it.
- Administration reminded that the report was a summary of what parents openly and thoughtfully told the CBE as their perception. In some cases what parents believed

may not have been accurate. Administration's job is to listen and determine what can be done operationally to communicate better so parents understand what the reality is in those cases.

- It is very clear that parents do the math and are very insightful in terms of how they do the figuring. Inaccurate math speaks to two things: either they don't understand the reality of the system, in which case Administration needs to determine what can be done to communicate better, or there is some room to improve how the CBE operationalizes fees to improve what parents ultimately pay.
- The next stage of the work, which will be presented at the public meeting on April 17th, is to incorporate the expectations of parents into the fee structure for 2012-13. Recommendations have been so coherent that the CBE will be able to action most, if not all, of the recommendations and expectations supported by the majority of parents.
- A comprehensive communication plan is being brought forward to communicate the results to parents, including possibly making the information available in languages that are important to constituents and taking the information out on the road. Administration is continually looking for ways to improve the communication to parents and while it is impossible to deliver it all to parents, when they want it, it's vital to ensure it is easily accessible.
- There will be sessions for employees who support the administration of fees so they will be able to explain the fee structure on the front lines.
- In response to the question of what kind of contextual information was given to participants, Administration advised that during the qualitative research they wanted to capture people's discussion based on their own situation and knowledge first. Then a simplified explanation of how fees work was handed out and further discussed. The questions on the survey were self-contained and didn't require more information.
- The survey was 16 minutes long and was very selective in the demographic questions that were posed. Questions about income levels or which school students attended were not asked, and there is no information about what Areas parents who responded to the survey were coming from. The survey did ask about the division students were in and the type of program they attended.
- In response to the survey question "who should be responsible for setting fees?" 38% said the principal, 31% said CBE head office and 31% said the Board of Trustees. In response to the survey question, "of those three groups who do you trust to set the fees?" 81% said principals, 54% said CBE head office and 56% said Board of Trustees.
- The presentation given was abridged to respect the Board's Agenda for the meeting. Administration will publish all of the survey questions and the answers received.
- In response to the question about whether there is consistency through the system for the length of the lunch hour, Administration advised there is flexibility around a school's timetable in terms of transportation, programming and principal decision making in consultation with staff and the community. There is consistency around legislated requirements such as hours of instruction, number of days, etc.

- One of the survey questions began with the statement “most Alternative Programs and schools receive less government funding,” which was queried by a Trustee. Administration advised that the differential is about the cost of the program, not the amount of funding that is received. There is additional funding received for some French Programs.
- A Trustee asked that if the CBE decision-making is based on perceptions of parents that may not be correct, how will that lead to better decision making in terms of solutions. Administration stated they heard from parents that work needs to be done around how fees are set, managed and communicated. It was not that everything was true or that everything would be done but rather that the decisions are understandable and effort would be made to explain them.
- The release of the Resource Allocation Method (RAM) to schools has been delayed to provide Administration sufficient time to consider the information received from the community engagement and incorporate it into the fee structure framework.
- At the next public Board meeting, Administration will bring forward the fee principles that guided the decision making, the fee schedule for the 2012-13 school year, the accompanying communication plan and the overall estimated budget impact.
- The fees principles that are developed would apply to all of the in-scope fees, the Instructional Supplies and Materials (ISM) fees, music instrument rentals, noon supervision and transportation.

MOVED by Trustee King:

THAT the Board of Trustees receives the report *Fees – Community Engagement* for information.

Chair Cochrane called for the vote on the motion.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Recessed: 4:55 p.m.
Reconvened: 5:11 p.m.

5 | **OPERATIONAL EXPECTATIONS**

5.1 **Operational Expectations 12: Facilities – Reasonable Interpretation**

Chair Cochrane advised that Trustees have received and reviewed the Chief Superintendent's report regarding the Reasonable Interpretation of Operational Expectations 12: Facilities. She reminded the Board that the criteria against which the Board is to judge this report is whether the Board is satisfied that the Chief Superintendent has conveyed that she reasonably understands the values underlying this Board policy. She pointed out that any decision or comment of the Board of Trustees around non-approval of the reasonable interpretation, including the indicators, is in no way intended to be a vote of non-confidence for the Chief Superintendent.

Superintendent Coppinger introduced the report stating that it contained 26 indicators of compliance. He advised that a revised page 5-7 had been distributed as the indicator of compliance for 12.1.c. had initially been inadvertently omitted.

Trustees posed questions, which were addressed by Administration and the discussion is summarized as follows:

- Relative to the indicators of compliance under 12.2 on page 5-9, the number of Unsafe Condition Reports received each year varies significantly with numbers as low as 19 to as high as 62.
- The indicator of compliance, Level 2 “Ordinary Tidiness” under 12.2 on page 5-9, is the second level from the top of a five level industry standard of caretaking and cleanliness. Part of the process coming out of the Reasonable Interpretation report is introducing those standards to staff who will be trained to know what performance is expected and that can be measured.
- Funding for playgrounds is not part of the provincial support that the CBE receives for new schools. Playgrounds are procured through third parties, typically by fundraising of parents and the community. Once built, the playgrounds belong to the CBE and the CBE accepts and delivers on the subsequent care, upkeep and operation of them.
- The province awards the Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal (IMR) funding annually and, within the confines and constraints they apply to it, the CBE can make choices as to disposition. There is not a specific cap on the maximum size of project that can be undertaken but there are a series of steps along the way that require different approvals. The \$2.5 million under 12.3 on page 5-9 captures those limits that begin as low as \$200,000 and then migrate upwards. Historically the CBE has not spent IMR funds on projects that have exceeded \$2 million.
- Relative to Ministerial requirements around approvals, they do not predetermine or dictate to any Board exactly how it might manage itself. They are not prescriptive around what they expect to see with regards to internal Board approvals, they just expect to see certain magnitude or types of projects advanced to them for their approval.
- Under the Interpretation of 12.1.b on page 5-5, the reports referred to will be completed by Administration but will not come forward to the Board. They are done in support of the Three-Year Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal (IMR) Plan that does come forward to the Board.

MOVED by Trustee Bowen-Eyre:

THAT the Board of Trustees approves that the Chief Superintendent has reasonably interpreted the provisions of OE-12: Facilities, including but not limited to the indicators provided in the report.

MOVED by Trustee Ferguson:

THAT the motion be amended by the addition of “with the exception of the interpretation of 12.1.c.”

For clarification, Governance Policy OE-12.1.c reads: “The Chief Superintendent will develop a plan that establishes priorities for construction, renovation and maintenance projects that is based upon the needs of the entire organization and that discloses assumptions on which the plan is based, including growth patterns and the financial and human impact individual projects will have on other parts of the organization.”

Trustees entered into debate on the proposed amendment and comments in support of the amendment included:

- It would be beneficial to see assumptions and growth patterns, and financial and human impact in the CBE’s Three-Year School Capital Plan, as well as the Three-Year System Student Accommodation Plan, as that is part of the information that should be provided to the public around how decisions are made about priorities in the School Capital Plan.
- More clarity in terms of how the Indicators are described would be positive.

Trustee comments in opposition of the amendment included: the priorities and assumptions will be seen in multiple places and there is no value in building redundancy in each of the sections.

Chair Cochrane called for the vote on the amendment.

The motion was
DEFEATED.

In Favour:	Trustee Bowen-Eyre Trustee Ferguson Trustee Lane
Opposed:	Trustee Bazinet Trustee Cochrane Trustee King Trustee Taylor

Chair Cochrane called for the vote on main motion.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chair Cochrane advised the recommendation to determine an appropriate date for the monitoring report to come forward will take place at Agenda Planning.

6 | **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no presenters for public comment.

7 | **MATTERS RESERVED FOR BOARD ACTION**

7.1 **Consideration of Closure, Chinese (Mandarin) Bilingual Program at Langevin School, for the purpose of relocation**

Trustees considered the report before them, including the minutes of the Public Meeting of March 12, 2012. There were no questions about the report.

MOVED by Trustee Lane:

THAT the Minutes of the Public Meeting of March 12, 2012, as attached to the report as Attachment I, be approved by the Board of Trustees.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

As the Trustee who represents Langevin School, Chair Cochrane advised that no comments or submissions were received from the public after the Public Meeting on March 12, 2012.

MOVED by Trustee Bowen-Eyre:

Be it Resolved, THAT the Board of Trustees approves the closure of the Grade 7 to Grade 9 Chinese (Mandarin) Bilingual Program at Langevin School effective June 30, 2012, to allow for relocation of that program.

Trustee comments in support of the motion included:

- The community of parents who support the Chinese (Mandarin) Bilingual Program are fully in support of this closure for the purpose of relocation.
- The relocation would provide room for growth of the Chinese (Mandarin) Bilingual Program at Colonel Irvine School, as well as space for the Science Program at Langevin School to grow.
- The number of instructional hours for language learning in the Chinese (Mandarin) Bilingual Program was being impacted by the number of field studies required in the Science Program.
- This closure for relocation would put the Grade 7 to Grade 9 Chinese (Mandarin) Bilingual Program very close to the Kindergarten to Grade 6 Program at Highwood School.

Chair Cochrane called for the vote on the question.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

8 | BOARD CONSENT AGENDA

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

8.1 Approval of Minutes

- Special Meeting held March 13, 2012

THAT the Board of Trustees approves the Minutes of the Special Meeting held March 13, 2012, as submitted.

8.2 Correspondence

THAT the Board of Trustees receives the following correspondence for information and for the record, in the form submitted:

- Letter dated March 7, 2012 from Mr. K. Hehr, MLA, Calgary-Buffalo Constituency, to the Board of Trustees, regarding interest in an Arabic Bilingual Program in the CBE; and
- Letter dated March 21, 2012 from Board Chair Pat Cochrane, to Connie McLaren, indicating that the CBE has no plans to seek or support a historic designation for Stanley Jones School.

8.3 EducationMatters – December 31, 2011 Audited Financial Statements

THAT the Board of Trustees receives the financial report for EducationMatters for information and for the record, in the form as submitted.

9 | CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT'S CONSENT AGENDA

9.1 Chief Superintendent Update

THAT the Board of Trustees receives the report for information.

10| ADJOURNMENT

Chair Cochrane declared the meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.