

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 18, 2006 at 5:00 p.m.

PRESENT

Board of Trustees:

Trustee G. Dirks, Chair
Trustee C. Bazinet
Trustee N. Close
Trustee P. Cochrane
Trustee K. Fawcett
Trustee L. Ferguson
Trustee G. Lane

Administration:

Dr. B. Croskery, Chief Superintendent of Schools
Ms. J. Barkway, Assistant Corporate Secretary
Ms. L. Angelo, Acting Superintendent, Human Resources
Mr. D. Dart, Superintendent, Business Operations & Environmental Services – Secretary Treasurer
Mr. J. Drysdale, Superintendent, School Support Services
Ms. B. Hubert, Deputy Chief Superintendent of Schools
Mr. J. Jones, Executive Assistant to the Chief Superintendent of Schools
Ms. B. Kuester, Executive Director of Communications
Mr. R. Peden, Assistant General Counsel/Senior Solicitor, Legal & Risk Management Services
Ms. S. Wasylshyn, Executive Assistant to the Trustees
Ms. D. Perrier, Recording Secretary

Stakeholder Representatives:

Ms. G. Burger-Martindale, Calgary Association of Parents and School Councils
Ms. M. Clark, Elementary School Principals' Association
Mr. D. Huysman, Alberta Teachers' Association, Local No. 38

Action By

1.0 CALL TO ORDER, NATIONAL ANTHEM AND WELCOME

Chair Dirks called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and students from Hawkwood Elementary School led in the singing of the national anthem by way of a video clip. Chair Dirks welcomed representatives from the aforementioned organizations and members of the public.

2.0 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Barkway noted that requests had been made to remove Item 7.1 – Executive Limitations Policy on Student Fees, Impact Report from the Agenda; and to add to the Consent Agenda the Minutes of the Special Meeting held April 12, 2006.

MOVED by Trustee Cochrane:

THAT the Agenda for the Regular Meeting held April 18, 2006, be approved as submitted, subject to the removal of Item 7.1 - Executive Limitations Policy on Student Fees, Impact Report; and the addition of the Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees held April 12, 2006 to the Consent Agenda.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

3.0 SCHOOL/SYSTEM PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Zone 5 Representative for 2006 Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) Edwin Parr Teacher Award Presentation

Superintendent Drysdale provided some background information and a brief overview of the selection criteria for the award. The Alberta School Boards Association provides for an annual presentation of the Edwin Parr Teacher Award in recognition of outstanding teaching performance by a beginning teacher; and each ASBA zone selects one nominee as a zone winner. Ms. J. Crarer, Director, Curriculum Support, came forward and provided an introduction of Mr. C. Howie, who has been recommended by the selection committee as the CBE's Zone 5 nominee for this award. ASBA will announce the winner in the fall. Mr. Howie teaches Grade 6 Math and Grade 9 Math and Science at Valley Creek School. She stated that Mr. Howie is an outstanding teacher who contributes to the enhancement of quality learning in that school community, and he is appreciated for his open-mindedness and his willingness to continue to seek new ideas and strategies regarding his work with the young adolescents.

Mr. Howie noted he was honoured to accept this nomination, and commented that what is truly gratifying for him is teaching students. He thanked Ms. C. Davies, Principal, and Mr. D. Swift, Assistant Principal, the teachers of Valley Creek School and his family for the support they have provided him.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and the Calgary Board of Education, Chair Dirks presented Mr. Howie with a gift of appreciation, and congratulatory remarks for being named as Calgary Board of Education's 2006 teacher nominee for the ASBA Edwin Parr Award.

3.1 Galileo Educational Network

Chief Superintendent Croskery introduced the presentation and provided some brief comments about the Galileo Educational Network, noting it is a registered charity dedicated to improving student learning through sustained professional development and conducting and applying research. Currently, Galileo is working with 69 CBE schools and with about 200 schools nationally. He called forward Dr. S. Friesen, co-founder of the Galileo Educational Network, to commence the presentation, and welcomed students, principals, teachers and supporters who were in attendance to assist with the presentation.

Dr. Friesen introduced the following attendees and noted the students wished to introduce themselves:

- Mr. B. Parker, Principal, University Elementary School
- Ms. B. Bannon, Principal Olympic Heights School
- Ms. J. George, Teacher, Prince of Wales Elementary School
- Ms. D. Crawley, Teacher, University Elementary School
- Ms. E. Rae, AISI Support Lead Consultant
- Mr. G. Hamby, AISI Support Lead Consultant

Students from University Elementary, Daniel, Kitty, Sebastien and Garnett, shared comments about a project they have undertaken involving inquiry and investigation of the construction work that is taking place along 16th Avenue (the widening of the TransCanada Highway) just outside of their school. Ms. George commented on the support she has received for two year long inquiries – the first project was a study of the disappearing grain elevators; the second, which involved her students as well as students from the Piitoayis Family School and from the Stampede School, involved studies of Treaty Seven, and of the Calgary Stampede. This work has been featured by *Our Roots*, which is a consortium of museum-related work that is sponsored by the Canadian government and can be viewed

online. Ms. Bannon came forward and shared comments about her involvement with the Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AIS), which has been running in Area IV for three years; and working alongside the Galileo Educational Network once a month as a principal leadership group, which she expressed has benefited her to become a better leader of learning.

Dr. Friesen thanked the presenters for sharing their experiences from involvement with the Galileo Education Network. She remarked that those within the Galileo Educational Network are pleased to work with principals, teachers and students in the CBE to assist them to meet the goal of completing high school with a foundation of learning to function effectively in life, work and continued learning; and they look forward to a third round of AISI to continue the collaborative inquiry.

Chair Dirks gave thanks for the very informative presentation, and for the work of the Galileo Educational Network.

4.0 HONOURS AND RECOGNITIONS

4.1 Lighthouse Award

Ms. Kuester provided information about the Lighthouse Award, noting it was developed as a way to recognize some of our outstanding partnerships and honour them for their significant contributions to our schools and students. She noted that tonight we are recognizing the University of Calgary for their continuing commitment and dedication to *Educating Tomorrow's Citizens Today*. Ms. Kuester welcomed to the Board Room, Ms. C. Bagnell Styles, Associate Vice-President of External Relations, the University of Calgary, and commented that the University of Calgary and the CBE have worked closely together for many years and there are many outreach projects happening as a result of this partnership. The following is a summary of just a few of the many projects:

- The SCIBerMENTOR program is an email-mentoring program aimed at girls aged 11-18 and it matches girls with female University of Calgary students who are studying science and engineering, or practicing female scientists and engineers;
- The Fishcreek Archaeology Interpretive Centre runs courses for elementary grade students, as part of the grades 4 and 5 social sciences curricula, and grade 6 science curriculum;
- The Composers in Schools program was developed to give elementary grade students the opportunity to learn how to compose music; and
- For the past two years, the University of Calgary has worked with KidSport and the CBE to offer grades 8-10 students the opportunity to try the sports facilities available, including climbing, racquetball, swimming, gymnastics, soccer, basketball and baseball.

Ms. Bagnell Styles noted that she and her colleague, Mr. R. Cooney, Vice-President, External Affairs, are delighted with the work that they have accomplished with the CBE, and noted that receiving the Lighthouse Award at this time is particularly meaningful for the University of Calgary, as it celebrates its 40th year. She shared further information about a number of other projects, and noted that the *Campus Fair* project is extremely significant for her. In conclusion, she gave thanks for the recognition, and noted that they could not do what they do without the support of the CBE.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, Chair Dirks thanked the University of Calgary for their valuable and significant partnership with the CBE, and presented the Lighthouse Award to Ms. Bagnell Styles, who accepted it on behalf of the University of Calgary.

5.0 PUBLIC CONVERSATION AND INFORMATION

5.1 Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

5.2 Report from Chair and Trustees

Trustee Lane reported that he and Deputy Chief Superintendent Hubert attended the *Celebration of Learning* at Hillhurst Community School, which showcased all of their AISI projects and honoured their *Artist in Residence*.

Trustee Fawcett reported on his and Dr. Croskery's attendance at the *Pride in the Properties*, which is an event that is held annually and showcases art and performing arts from the schools in the communities. This event was held at the Jubilee Auditorium on April 5, 2006, and the children were thrilled to display their work in this venue.

5.3 Report from Chief Superintendent

Chief Superintendent Croskery reported on the following issues and events:

- A letter from the Sheet Metal Workers' International Association, Local Union 8, expressed pleasure at having more members working with the CBE at present than have been in the last decade, as both journeyman and apprentices. In addition, the letter makes reference to a letter they had received from the Ranchlands Community School praising the maintenance staff on the installation of the heating and cooling units at the school. This letter also gives credit to the supervisory personnel within the maintenance department for their role as mentor to the apprentices.
- Correspondence was received from Mr. N. Yaremko, Principal, Marlborough Elementary School, and with respect to the move of the Marlborough students, he gives high praise to all who were involved in this move, including many staff members of various CBE departments and area offices, the schools of Bob Edwards Junior High, Greenview and Mayland Heights, and public service departments. He points out in the letter the tremendous caring, concern and co-operation, which were manifested by the generous expenditure of community effort for the welfare of all.
- April 12th he met with former Human Resources staff members who were leaving the Education Centre to work with Telus Sourcing Solutions.
- The Jamaican Canadian Association held *A Taste of Jamaica* event at the Thorncliffe/Greenview Community Hall.
- Riverbend Elementary School received a certificate of recognition from UNICEF (School and Youth Campaigns and Events) for being the top fundraising school in Alberta in the *Trick or Treat* Campaign, raising \$3,557.00 that will be used towards improving the quality of and access to education for thousands of children.

5.4 Public Question Period

There were no public questions.

5.5 Stakeholder Reports

5.5.1 Ms. C. Stueck, Parent

Ms. Stueck noted that she has a child who attends a school in the CBE. She shared her concern with respect to access to a direct-instruction reading program, and some families having to pay for such program, while others receive it at no charge. She stated that the parents that must pay for this program want assurance that all students in the CBE receive instruction that has been proven effective. Ms. Stueck remarked that for the Board to remain accountable it must have proactive leadership and guidelines that guarantee strong system-wide reading programs. Currently, the responsibility for reading programs and choice for instructional methods has been delegated to individual teachers and school principals. She

noted that professional development has not included any compulsory or certifiable in-service necessary to sustain quality assurance. Many teachers themselves have been taught to read by indirect methods, and graduates from the U of C and the U of A do not take any mandatory courses on reading methodology. Ms. Stueck expressed a concern that some teachers unknowingly continue to use outdated indirect instruction, even though the Board endorses a balanced literacy and language-learning program. She noted the belief that it is a mistake to condone the use of teaching methods that have been proven ineffective for a significant portion of the population.

5.5.2 Ms. J. Ferguson, Parent

Ms. Ferguson noted that she has three children attending schools in the CBE. She shared her concern that her eldest son, now in grade 8, was having difficulty with learning to read in grades 1 and 2; and, when she asked for extra assistance to improve his literacy, she was told that the resource teacher could work with him in the fall, but no guarantees in the winter. She noted her belief that at that time there were 23 students in grades 2 and 3 from his school who were at a learning centre because they could not read – they were being taught only whole language at the school. She stated that she had her son privately tested by a school psychologist and then tutored by a reading specialist and was told that he was two years behind in his reading. Ms. Ferguson noted that she and other families had made the decision to move their children to a different public school out of their neighbourhood. She stated that after one year at his new school, her son's reading had bypassed his grade level. She remarked that having three children in three different schools has led to her discovery that there are many inconsistencies among the schools regarding literacy education. Ms. Ferguson noted that in an effort to improve literacy skills, some school boards throughout North America have adopted a district-wide approach, where every student is taught a standardized reading program, as standardized reading assessments help identify why a student is below grade level, and small group remediation is provided by a qualified professional. She requested that the CBE be more accountable and consistent with the classroom teachers using direct reading instruction.

5.6 Trustee Inquiries

There were no Trustee inquiries.

6.0 MONITORING AND RESULTS

6.1 Ends

6.1.1 Annual Monitoring Report for Ends 3: Citizenship

Chief Superintendent Croskery provided introductory remarks, and called on Mr. Jones to provide some highlights of the report. A video was shown, which represented a summation of that data provided in the written report, and it presented a snapshot of the different activities and work that occurs throughout the school system.

Following the video presentation Trustees posed numerous questions, which Administration responded to, and the following is a summary of that discussion:

- The data that informs this report was gathered from several sources, including, but not limited to, system-wide program inventory; 2005 accountability pillar survey; provincial achievement tests and diploma exams. The data respond to the indicators that were approved by the Board of Trustees and generally monitor opportunities for student involvement rather than actual student development.
- The system-wide program inventory was limited to include data from September to December 2005. Some limitations to this survey include staff may not have been

tracking this information in the previous school year, and processes for gathering some of the data required are new. Administration's response to a number of questions on this aspect of reporting was that some schools may have interpreted the questions differently and subsequent to this inventory, there has been a great amount of discussion between principals and staff, in various forums and at different meeting levels, and there is sharing on a regular basis of the work they are doing at their schools to move forward with citizenship.

- The indicators, as listed in a chart on page 9 of the report, were specific examples used in the system-wide program inventory, just as they were specifically mentioned in the indicators and benchmarks that were approved for Ends 3: Citizenship. There were suggestions made for other common indicators that might be applicable and it is very likely we can expect to see a great many more indicators to inform this work in the future.
- A Trustee noted that no reference has been made to international travel or school trips in the report, to which Deputy Chief Superintendent Hubert said it was a question that had been raised at a principals' meeting subsequent to this data gathering, asking if it could be considered as an indicator.
- Comments and concerns were shared about the use of the words "respect" and "disrespect", noting that the Accountability Pillar Survey addresses the broad question. It was stressed that many different interpretations are made of these words by different age groups, and a better definition is needed to provide more specific clarity to the question.
- With respect to making revisions or additions to the Accountability Pillar Survey, it was noted that in an advisory capacity the CBE's Accountability Services staff have made some suggestions for revisions in the past, and Alberta Education granted a request for the addition of some jurisdiction-specific questions. It was pointed out that Alberta Education is reluctant to tamper with the core questions in the Accountability Pillar Survey because they want a standardized survey.

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the Board of Trustees has reviewed the Chief Superintendent's annual monitoring report on Ends 3: Citizenship, and concludes that reasonable progress is being made towards the ultimate achievement of this ends policy.

Trustee debated the motion, and expressions were shared that this is very important work for public education, and that it is exciting and challenging work. A comment was shared that this is a milestone moment for the CBE, to be holding itself accountable as a system and monitoring this most significant piece of what public education is all about.

Chair Dirks called for the vote on the motion.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Motion Arising:

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the Board of Trustees commends the Chief Superintendent for showing great achievement in the area of students actively contributing to creating a better local and global community.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Motion Arising:

MOVED by Trustee Close:

THAT the Board of Trustees requests the Chief Superintendent to provide a report, that includes reasonable interpretation, indicators and targets for the next monitoring period for Ends 3: Citizenship, for the Board's consideration in June 2006.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Motion Arising:

MOVED by Trustee Cochrane:

THAT the Board of Trustees commends the Chief Superintendent on the admirable collection of data and anecdotal evidence that will provide the CBE with a strong baseline for future monitoring, improving and celebrating Ends 3: Citizenship.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chair Dirks handed the chair over to Vice-Chair Close.

Motion Arising:

MOVED by Trustee Dirks:

THAT the Board of Trustees commends the Chief Superintendent on the significant increase in the use of technology in our school system.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

7:21 p.m. – Recessed.

7:39 p.m. – Reconvened. Chair Dirks resumed the chair.

6.2 Executive Limitations

6.2.1 Annual Monitoring Report for Executive Limitations 14: Attendance Areas

Chair Dirks reviewed the criteria against which the Trustees are to judge this report, including that of reasonable interpretation of the policy, compliance with the policy, and whether sufficient information has been provided. He noted further that the particular vote with regard to compliance should in no way be considered as a vote of non-confidence. Mr. P. Carlton addressed Trustees' questions of clarification regarding whether the numbers included special education students, the number of students attending alternative programs, and funding for and access to programs.

MOVED by Trustee Bazinet:

THAT the Chief Superintendent has reasonably interpreted the provisions of Executive Limitation 14: Attendance Areas, and the Board of Trustees finds the Chief Superintendent to be in compliance.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Motion Arising:

MOVED by Trustee Ferguson:

THAT the Board of Trustees commends the Chief Superintendent for the strong work that is ongoing in the areas to develop long range strategic planning to provide for student needs.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

6.2.2 Annual Monitoring Report for Executive Limitation 15: Transportation

Chair Dirks reviewed the criteria against which the Trustees are to judge this report, including that of reasonable interpretation of the policy, compliance with the policy, and whether sufficient information has been provided. He noted further that the particular vote with regard to compliance should in no way be considered as a vote of non-confidence. Trustees posed a number of questions for clarification regarding the term “qualified compliance”, the under funding in this area, and informing parents and students regarding relevant Administrative Regulations, which were responded to by senior Administration.

8:00 p.m. – Chair Dirks received the consent of Trustees to continue the meeting to the completion of the Agenda.

MOVED by Trustee Ferguson:

THAT the Chief Superintendent has reasonably interpreted the provisions of Executive Limitation 15: Transportation, and the Board of Trustees finds the Chief Superintendent to be in compliance, with the exception of policy sub-part 2, which reads:

“An annual transportation fee schedule that recovers costs over and above government transportation grants is prepared for approval by the Board of Trustees. The fee schedule may differ between grade levels, programs, and mode of transportation.”

Trustee Ferguson provided rationale for the motion, noting her understanding that the Chief Superintendent has indicated it is impossible to be in compliance with this policy at this time because of the level of funding for transportation in the relevant year; as well, that there is a need to re-evaluate the service levels and the delivery model through which the CBE provides transportation to its students; and, therefore, there is a need for an ongoing re-evaluation of transportation within the Calgary Board of Education.

During the debate of the motion, a Trustee noted support for it, but also noted the importance of the executive limitations monitoring report contents to include a reasonable

interpretation of the sub-parts of the policy, to understand whether or not the Chief Superintendent's interpretation mirrors the Trustees' values in those areas. With respect to the transportation budget, a comment was made about the past and being able to top up any deficit in this area from monies in either a transportation reserve fund or from another budget area; however, this is not an option this year and we are faced with relying completely on the government transportation grant. A Trustee noted difficulty with the monitoring timeframe for this particular policy, because the annual transportation fee schedule does not come forward until a later date.

Chair Dirks called for the vote on the motion.

The motion was
CARRIED.

In favour:	Trustee Cochrane Trustee Dirks Trustee Fawcett Trustee Ferguson Trustee Lane
Opposed:	Trustee Bazinet Trustee Close

A Trustee stated that she was opposed to the motion for reasons other than compliance.

8.0 CONSENT AGENDA

There were no objections to the Board Consent Agenda and Chair Dirks declared the items to be adopted as presented.

8.1 Board Consent Agenda

8.1.1 Approval of Minutes

- Regular Meeting held March 7, 2006
- Special Meeting held March 12, 2006

THAT the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees held March 7, 2006, and the Special Meeting held March 12, 2006 be approved.

8.1.2 Liaison Report – Alberta School Boards Association

THAT the liaison report with respect to the Alberta School Boards Association be received for information, in the form as submitted with the agenda for the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees held April 18, 2006.

9.0 ACTION ITEMS

There were no action items.

10.0 TRUSTEE NOTICES OF MOTION

There were no notices of motion.

11.0 ADJOURNMENT

The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 8:14 p.m.