

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, October 17, 2006 at 5:32 p.m.

PRESENT

Board of Trustees:

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

Administration:

Ms. J. Barkway, Assistant Corporate Secretary
Dr. B. Croskery, Chief Superintendent of Schools
Mr. D. Dart, Superintendent, Corporate Services – Secretary Treasurer
Mr. C. Davies, on behalf of Mr. J. Drysdale, Superintendent, Educational Support Services
Ms. B. Hubert, Deputy Chief Superintendent of Schools
Mr. J. Jones, Executive Assistant to the Chief Superintendent
Ms. B. Kuester, Executive Director of Communications
Ms. S. Wasylshyn, Executive Assistant to the Trustees
Ms. D. Perrier, Recording Secretary

Stakeholder Representatives:

Mr. R. Anderson, Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 40
Mr. K. Brown, Elementary School Principals' Association
Ms. G. Burger-Martindale, Calgary Association of Parents and School Councils
Ms. J. Minifie, Calgary Board of Education Staff Association
Mr. L. Liffiton, Alberta Teachers' Association, Local 38
Ms. P. Swain, Elementary School Principals' Association

Action By

1.0 CALL TO ORDER, NATIONAL ANTHEM AND WELCOME

Chair Cochrane called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

2.0 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOVED by Trustee Dirks:

THAT the Agenda for the Regular Meeting held October 17, 2006 be approved as submitted.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

3.0 SCHOOL/SYSTEM PRESENTATIONS

There were none.

4.0 HONOURS AND RECOGNITIONS

4.1 Lighthouse Award

Ms. Kuester introduced the Lighthouse Award recipient this month as First Calgary Savings, and she welcomed Ms. D. DeBoice, Communications and Corporate Citizenship Specialist, and Ms. J. Iverson, Manager of Communications and Corporate Citizenship. First Calgary Savings is a community-oriented credit union that is strongly committed to leading, learning and living in our city. First Calgary Savings is a member of the Partnership Steering Committee and has collaborated with the Calgary Board of Education on a number of initiatives, noted as follows:

- Through the Partners in Education Program: *Reading Makes Cents, Calendar Artwork, and the Mentorship Program with Theatre Junction.*
- In partnership with Big Brothers and Big Sisters: the *Between Generations* program, which is a mentoring program that connects Calgary Board of Education students with caring seniors.
- Scholarships for Calgary Board of Education students through the Angus and Mary McKinnon Scholarship Fund.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, Chair Cochrane presented the Lighthouse Award to Ms. DeBoice and Ms. Iverson, who accepted it on behalf of First Calgary Savings.

5.0 PUBLIC CONVERSATION AND INFORMATION

5.1 Correspondence

There was none.

5.2 Report from the Chair and Trustees

Trustee Lane shared a story about a young lady by the name of Ms. M. Prince, who was a Calgary Board of Education student at King George School in 1935, noting that the Board was given a commemorative plaque from her family recently, which had been presented to Ms. Prince by King George in 1935. The plaque represents the commemoration of the 25th Anniversary of the Ascension to the Throne of His Most Excellent Majesty George the Fifth. The Board of Trustees will offer this plaque to King George School for its archives.

Trustee Lane noted that the parents of Battalion Park School recently held a celebration in recognition of the school's upgrade from a mini school to a core school, which he attended, as did Superintendent Dart.

5.3 Report from the Chief Superintendent

Chief Superintendent Croskery reported on the following events and issues:

- Ranchlands Community School held its 25th anniversary celebration last week, which he attended, as did Mr. G. Melchin, MLA, Calgary-Northwest.
- Pineridge Community School held an all-day staff development workshop that he attended.
- This evening, at the Annual General Meeting of Hull Child & Family Services, the Calgary Board of Education will be honored with two awards – one is for Area III for the Fast-Track program, for which Ms. M. McBride is named as the recipient; the other award is the Family School Liaison program under the School Health Partnership and Mr. K. Renaud is the named recipient. Superintendent Drysdale is attending the event this evening on behalf of the Calgary Board of Education.
- The Canadian Council of Learning is a new not-for-profit, non-government “think-tank” that has been established over the last 14 months. It consists of a number of roundtables, with Calgary recently being invited to join as the fifth roundtable. He attended the

opening meeting where that particular issue was discussed and concluded that Calgary would most likely form a roundtable.

- On October 25, 2006, Mr. D. Stamp, Calgary Board of Education's Corporate Security Advisor, will be presented with a medal in recognition of his 12 years of service with the Calgary Police Service.
- The Readers' Digest printed an article recently on the Fred Seymour School project subsequent to the tsunami that took place in Southeast Asia, and focused on the school's project following the tsunami.

5.4 Public Question Period

There were no questions from the public.

5.5 Stakeholder Reports

There were no stakeholder reports.

5.6 Trustee Inquiries

There were no Trustee inquiries.

6.0 MONITORING AND RESULTS

6.1 Ends 5: Character – Reasonable Interpretation, Indicators and Benchmarks – Year 2

Chief Superintendent Croskery provided a brief review of the contents of the report, noting that the indicators, baselines and benchmarks for the next monitoring report have been revised from that which was presented and approved on February 7, 2006. Particular mention was made of the Case Studies initiative, which is a Charter Agreement between Alberta Education and the Calgary Board of Education for a collaborative case study pilot; of the removal of the Provincial Achievement Tests and Diploma Examination results as an indicator; and of some of the additional methods to be used as indicators for monitoring Ends 5: Character. He noted appreciation to Superintendent Dart and to the resource persons who provided the work for this monitoring report.

Trustees asked some questions for clarification, which were addressed by Administration. Chief Superintendent Croskery pointed out that at the time the Board of Trustees developed the policy on Ends 5, there was public speculation made through the media that was critical of us for evaluating students on character. He noted his belief that our staff are very mindful of the fact that we are not trying to sort and grade children who will pass and fail on issues of character but, rather, are trying to provide a focus on the importance of character development and to provide some feedback.

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the Board of Trustees approves the reasonable interpretation, indicators and benchmarks for Ends 5: Character, in the form as submitted with the agenda for the Regular Meeting held October 17, 2006.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

6.2 Executive Limitations 7: Treatment of Staff and Volunteers – Annual Monitoring Report

Chief Superintendent Croskery acknowledged those responsible for this work, commending them on their efforts, and he also expressed thanks to his Executive Assistant, Mr. J. Jones, for his input on each of the monitoring reports.

Chair Cochrane 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. She noted further that the particular vote with regard to compliance should in no way be considered as a vote of non-confidence.

A lengthy discussion ensued, with Administration responding to numerous questions by Trustees, which is summarized as follows:

- In the selection of the most highly qualified and best-suited candidates for employment, there is no particular policy with respect to looking outside of the system versus posting internally. Chief Superintendent Croskery stated it is important to note that there is tremendous confidence in our staff at every level, and the Calgary Board of Education has a great pool of skills and expertise. In a large organization such as ours it is sometimes viewed as a vote of non-confidence when job postings are made outside of the system; however, the decision to post internally or outside of the system is reserved with the Human Resources Administration.
- The security clearances for volunteers are approved for a five-year period, and that is depicted by the lower number of security clearances that were processed in 2005/06.
- An explanation was provided about the process that is followed in hiring to permanent teacher contract positions, with respect to filling such vacancies with teachers who are on a temporary contract.
- Further discussion took place about the values that are held with respect to recruitment of candidates, and Chief Superintendent Croskery noted that this is high up on the agenda of Superintendents' Team, with more work to be done in this area.
- With respect to the handling of complaints and concerns, the Administration shared information on the ways in which these are being tracked, and noted that enhancements to the methods of tracking all sorts of data throughout the system are being reviewed and developed.
- In regards to the Coordinated Assistance and Rehabilitation for Employee Support (CARES) Program, it was noted that details with respect to all employee groups and the data pertinent to absence and decline in the number of days lost per FTE due to illness and injury are available, and would be provided to Trustees at a later date.

D. Dart

MOVED by Trustee Dirks:

THAT the Chief Superintendent has reasonably interpreted Executive Limitations 7: Treatment of Staff and Volunteers, and that the Board of Trustees finds the Chief Superintendent to be in compliance with this policy.

MOVED by Trustee Bazinet:

THAT the motion be amended to include “with the exception of point 4, due to insufficient information”.

The amendment was
CARRIED.

In favour: Trustee Bazinet
 Trustee Close
 Trustee Fawcett
 Trustee Ferguson
 Trustee Lane

Opposed: Trustee Cochrane
Trustee Dirks

Chair Cochrane called for the vote on the motion as amended.

The motion, as amended, was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the Chief Superintendent provides further information to the Board of Trustees by the end of February 2007, that either indicates evidence of compliance or discloses procedures to establish compliance with Executive Limitations 7: Treatment of Staff and Volunteers.

Clarification of the motion was provided, with Trustee Fawcett noting that it speaks only to the matter of insufficient information, particular to point 4, which reads "Effectively handle complaints and concerns."

The motion was
CARRIED.

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

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the Board of Trustees commends the Chief Superintendent for the joint project with the Calgary Police Service on the security checks of volunteers.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Trustee Dirks:

THAT the Board of Trustees commends the Chief Superintendent for the system's single-minded pursuit and commitment to recruiting, selecting and hiring high caliber talent in the Calgary Board of Education.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

6.3 Executive Limitations 16: Learning Environment/Treatment of Students – Annual Monitoring Report

Chief Superintendent Croskery recognized and thanked the individuals who provided input to the monitoring report on Executive Limitations 16: Learning Environment/Treatment of Students. He made the observation that an effective learning environment goes hand in hand with the way we treat students – if you have a strong learning environment, then students are being treated well - and he suggested that this might be something that could be given further consideration.

Chair Cochrane 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. She noted further that the particular vote with regard to compliance should in no way be considered as a vote of non-confidence.

Trustees raised questions about the following issues, which were responded to by Administration:

- Each principal must develop a written code of student conduct in consultation with stakeholder groups, and this information must be communicated on an annual basis to students, parents and school councils. A survey that was done last year to gather information for Executive Limitations 3, 4 and 5 monitoring reports included data that questioned this issue and the feedback was shared with Area Directors for future reference and monitoring.
- The significant decline in suspensions over the past year can be attributed to the increased system and community supports to meet student needs, including the 1.0 FTE clinical psychologist funded by the Student Health Partnership.
- Concerns were expressed about the lack of student participation in issues that directly impact students, their learning outcomes and high school completion rates, and in this regard a Trustee questioned feedback that students feel disengaged and disrespected by teachers and by the school system, which may contribute to students dropping out of school. A question was raised as to whether student involvement in the secondary school review might be one avenue to address this. Chief Superintendent Croskery noted that further consideration would be given to that point. He made some general observations about personalizing learning, and noted that the development of an ethos of personalization in our schools is work that is underway in all of our areas, through school plans, and through principal, directors and staff meetings.
- With regard to a question about the number of male suspensions versus the number of female suspensions, some theories do exist but are not believed to be conclusive. It was noted that a divisional meeting of junior high schools and middle schools was scheduled to take place on October 18th, where the data from this report will lead into the discussion about setting a context around boys and learning.

MOVED by Trustee Dirks:

THAT the Chief Superintendent has reasonably interpreted Executive Limitations 16: Learning Environment/Treatment of Students, and the Board of Trustees finds the Chief Superintendent to be in compliance with this policy.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Trustee Dirks:

THAT the Chief Superintendent be commended for successful efforts made to assist students in remaining in school settings.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Trustee Dirks:

THAT the Chief Superintendent be commended for efforts made to ensure students feel safe in school.

The motion was
CARRIED.

In favour: Trustee Close
Trustee Cochrane
Trustee Dirks
Trustee Fawcett

Action By

Opposed: Trustee Ferguson
Trustee Lane
Trustee Bazinet

7.0 CONSENT AGENDA

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

7.1 Board Consent Agenda

7.1.1 Approval of Minutes

- Regular Meeting held September 19, 2006
- Regular Meeting held September 26, 2006

THAT the Board of Trustees approves the Minutes of the Regular Meetings held September 19, 2006 and September 26, 2006 as submitted.

8.0 ACTION ITEMS

There were no action items.

9.0 TRUSTEE NOTICES OF MOTION

There were no Trustee notices of motion.

10.0 ADJOURNMENT

The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 7:41 p.m.