

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 17, 2007 at 5:00 p.m.

PRESENT:

Board of Trustees:

Trustee P. Cochrane, Chair
Trustee C. Bazinet
Trustee N. Close (departed at 8:50 p.m.)
Trustee G. Dirks
Trustee K. Fawcett
Trustee L. Ferguson
Trustee G. Lane

Administration:

Dr. B. Croskery, Chief Superintendent of Schools
Mr. F. Coppinger, Superintendent, Facilities and Environmental Services
Mr. D. Dart, Superintendent, Corporate Services – Secretary Treasurer
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
Mr. R. Peden, Director and General Counsel, Legal Affairs
Ms. J. Barkway, Assistant Corporate Secretary
Ms. S. Wasylshyn, Executive Assistant to the Trustees
Ms. D. Perrier, Recording Secretary

Stakeholder Representatives:

Mr. B. Anderson, Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 40
Ms. G. Burger-Martindale, Calgary Association of Parents and School Councils
Ms. C. Evanochko, Calgary Board of Education Staff Association
Mr. L. Liffiton, Alberta Teachers' Association, Local 38

Action By

1.0 CALL TO ORDER, NATIONAL ANTHEM AND WELCOME

Chair Cochrane called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. on the plaza, and the Grade 4 Choir from Colonel Sanders Traditional Learning Centre led in the singing of O Canada. The meeting reconvened in the Board Room, where Chair Cochrane acknowledged and welcomed representatives from the aforementioned organizations.

2.0 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mrs. Barkway noted that Item 4.1 – Lighthouse Award, was withdrawn from the agenda.

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the Agenda for the Regular Meeting of April 17, 2007, be approved as submitted, subject to the deletion of Item 4.1.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

3.0 SCHOOL/SYSTEM PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Sir John Franklin School

Ms. A. Verdiel, Director, Area II, provided introductions and opening comments about the school, noting it offers the alternative program of Arts Centred Learning for North Calgary. Ms. M.J. Burrows, Principal, came forward and commenced the presentation with introductions of Ms. L. Sparks, Assistant Principal, and students, Lia and Andrea, who were present with their parents.

Ms. Burrows noted that at Sir John Franklin School they have learned and continue to experience that arts centred learning is all about the journey and about the process – the process of creating a community of learners who take risks, share, create and learn together the principles of arts centre learning. She pointed out that Lia and Andrea are grade 8 students who, with the help of a fellow student that was unable to attend this meeting, made a video of students and teachers in their learning environment, and this video was shown at this point in the meeting. In the video, students were given one-on-one interviews to talk about what arts centred learning meant to them, what they gained from the Trickster Program, and how they've taken their learning into the classroom.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, Trustee Ferguson thanked Ms. Burrows, Ms. Sparks, Lia and Andrea, for sharing their experience of learning through the arts. She noted it is made evident through the video that students are able to express what they learn in many different ways and that the community itself has joined together to support the learning at Sir John Franklin School, which is a wonderful accomplishment.

Ms. Burrows thanked her students for taking on the challenge and for creating the material for this presentation, and for allowing and showing patience for the interference of adults in their project. She also noted that she is always impressed with, and learns from, and is guided by the students that she works with, and she thanked her students, her staff and her parents for the support they have given her.

4.0 HONOURS AND RECOGNITIONS

The item was withdrawn from the agenda.

5.0 PUBLIC CONVERSATION AND INFORMATION

5.1 Correspondence

Ms. Barkway noted that correspondence was received in the Corporate Secretary's office, which all Trustees have received a copy of, and the title on the correspondence is "Keep Greenview School Open" and "Save Greenview School". She pointed out that it had 211 signatures attached to it; however, not all signatures are CBE residents. The correspondence reads "We, the undersigned, request that Greenview School and its French Immersion program be continued and allowed to remain open, regardless of the Calgary Board of Education's decision to close this program. The public consensus is clear that they want the program to continue running in its current facility."

5.2 Report from the Chair and Trustees

Trustee Fawcett noted that he attended "Pride in the Properties", which is an annual event organized by the principal and art teachers at Lester B. Pearson High School. All schools in the northeast area of the city participate in this event; it is hosted at the Jubilee Auditorium,

and it is a great opportunity for the students of all grade levels to showcase the wide variety of work they are doing in their schools.

Chair Cochrane informed that on Friday, April 13, 2007, the Honourable Ron Liepert, Minister of Education, visited both Ernest Morrow Junior High School and Connaught School, and spent time in our English as a Second Language Centres of Excellence to get a sense of what is happening in our schools and to share some of the many successes that we are experiencing with our ESL students.

5.3 Report from the Chief Superintendent

Chief Superintendent Croskery provided comments on the following issues and events:

- On April 11th he attended the 7th annual staff recognition event at Chinook Learning Services; Chair Cochrane also attended the event.
- April 12th was The Learning Partnership's 2nd annual *Invention Convention* held at the West Atrium of Calgary City Hall, and 9 Calgary Board of Education junior high schools participated in this student event.
- On April 14th he and Trustee Bazinet attended the 14th annual *Celebrate Western* event, held at the Husky Energy Atrium, where art exhibits, singing, music, choral music and a silent auction took place. It was a good opportunity to mingle with parents, supporters and staff of Western Canada High School.
- Earlier today, the Calgary Senior High School Athletics Association held their annual *Superintendents' Breakfast*. Through this association, there are almost 10,000 students, along with their families and friends, who participate in a whole range of athletic endeavours in our city.
- Earlier today, he visited the Piitoayis Family School at Colonel Walker School and met with Mr. B. McWilliam, acting principal, who is in the school for approximately 3 months to effect the transitioning of the retiring principal with the new permanent principal for that school.

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 BOARD DEVELOPMENT

Chair Cochrane welcomed invited guests to the Board Room for the Board Development Session on English as a Second Language, noting that a number of our principals were present, as were representatives from the Coalition for Equal Access to Education, from the Calgary Multicultural Centre, from the University of Calgary, and from the Settlement Workers in Schools program.

6.1 English as a Second Language

Chief Superintendent Croskery introduced Mr. C. Davies, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent, Educational Support Services, and noted that Ms. S. Reib, former system principal for English as a Second Language (ESL) was also in attendance. He noted that

Mr. Davies had prepared a comprehensive note sheet that was distributed; however, he would present on a number of themes that are very important for a school system with approximately 21,000 ESL students. Chief Superintendent Croskery thanked Mr. Davies for the work he has done for this presentation. Mr. Davies introduced co-presenter, Ms. C. Berndt, ESL Specialist, and noted that the work of Multicultural Services, the ESL Team and our schools with respect to ESL learners would be shared, as would a discussion of the opportunities and challenges facing the Calgary Board of Education in supporting the achievement of our learners.

The first presenter was Mr. T. Merali, Diversity and Learning Support Advisor, Multicultural Services, who provides support to students and families, and works jointly with psychologists and health professionals, including speech therapists and school nurses. He noted the support and services that are offered through Multicultural Services is not only limited to newly arrived families and students, but also to first and second generation Canadians. He pointed out that one of the very important aspects of their work with students and their families is when students transition from special programs to regular programs. The ESL team members engage in a manner that protects the rights and dignity of every individual and family, as well as that of the learning mandate. Mr. Merali stated that the families must be well informed and give informed consent to any programming initiatives that impact their children's learning; and the ability to communicate in a family's first language is definitely an asset to establish trust and sound rapport.

Mr. Merali called forward Ms. B. Sabbagh to share some of her personal experiences as an ESL student and as a parent. Ms. Sabbagh came to Canada 16 years ago and took adult ESL classes at Mount Royal College. She pointed out that to have a program is one thing, but to employ the program in a way that suits each individual's needs and purposes is another, e.g., some adult ESL learners want to learn enough English to use it instrumentally only, while others, like herself, strive to further their education. Ms. Sabbagh will very soon graduate with an MA in mathematics. She shared comments about her son's learning, noting that he attended ESL classes in his 6th grade, and he was provided with intensive instruction in listening, speaking, reading, and writing for comprehension of the English language. She was pleased to find that the program provided an enhanced and smooth transition into the Canadian culture and, in addition, the program uses the academic and cultural experience of the student as a platform to specify the required instruction in English. As a result, her son achieved at the level of excellence in his grade 6 achievement tests. She shared a story of a friend of her son, who was an immigrant from overseas and took ESL classes and he became more confident academically and socially after taking the program; he could easily make friends and had developed a sense of belonging to the culture, society and the school, and it made him understand and respect others' perspectives as well as his own.

Ms. Sabbagh noted that her son again required ESL in grade 7, and it was at this time that she made contact with Mr. Merali and was informed about the options and resources available for her son. She was also given assurance by him that as an advisor, he would make certain that her son was properly assessed in terms of his learning abilities and skills. Mr. Merali also did follow up on the progress of her son's learning in the following year to ascertain that he was achieving and the program was successful for him. In conclusion, Ms. Sabbagh noted her belief that having the ESL program in school for students who speak a language other than English is significantly important; however, in her opinion and based on her experiences, it can only be beneficial and effective if parents and students are given the opportunity to discuss the options available to them with professional advisors such as Mr. Merali. She thanked the CBE for their efforts in providing such a program.

Mr. Davies then introduced Tong, who is a grade 12 student of John G. Diefenbaker High School. Tong noted he and his family moved to Canada approximately 4 years ago, and he first attended Sir John A. Macdonald junior high school, where an extensive ESL program was offered. He noted that it is important for newcomers, especially children, to have an

environment that they can feel secure and comfortable in. It took him 3 months to finish the ESL program and feel ready to proceed with the regular program. He stated that speaking English at normal speed is something that is learned only while one is in the regular program, which he believed to be a good learning experience for ESL students. Reading and watching DVD's with English subtitles were very helpful to him to learn English, although at first it was very difficult; and he was of the belief that perseverance is very important for ESL students.

Tong noted his many experiences and successes and that he has applied to a number of different universities and has been accepted at all of them and, to date, he has been offered a couple of scholarships.

Ms. F. McGilvray Cooke, Principal, and Ms. J. Tickles, Assistant Principal, Connaught Community School, shared a DVD video presentation. The school is one of our ESL Centres of Excellence that provides Level 1 classes to elementary and junior high students. It utilizes a variety of teaching methods in organizational models and, hence, is utilized as a professional development location for other CBE teachers. Ms. McGilvray Cooke noted that Connaught school has a population of 230 students and that number fluctuates weekly due to the highly transient neighbourhood. They currently have 36 English students and over 40 different language groups represented in the rest of the school population. The teachers are working on the development of some models around how to work with students who come to them from places in the world where school was not available to them or they have not had schooling for most of their young lives. Ms. Tickles showed a video that put forward various contrasts some of their students feel when they come to Connaught. Ms. Tickles then shared a story that was written by a student who was nearing the end of her 2nd year in the ESL program at Connaught School. The story was about the student's personal experiences from living in Sudan, in a refugee camp, to her move to Canada and attending Connaught School. The student completed her two years at Connaught School's Level 1 program and has since been transitioned to the ESL program in her community junior high school.

Mr. Davies returned to the podium and with the assistance of Ms. Berndt, presented a few themes to help shape some of the details that have been provided in the presentation thus far. References were made to details that were put forward in the PowerPoint document that had been previously distributed. The following is a summary of the highlights given:

- The CBE has a disproportionately large number of ESL students in comparison to other Alberta school districts, having about 50% of all ESL students in the province; about 20% of our student population are ESL learners.
- These high numbers effectively drive the provincial average, thus it is all the more impressive that on the grade 3, 6 and 9 provincial achievement tests, we are above the average score on the acceptable standard, on 19 of 20 of the measures.
- The data must be examined from multiple perspectives in order to tell the story of our work. Accountability Services has obtained from Alberta Education for the first time disaggregated provincial achievement test data, so that we can drill down and examine our ESL achievement. We are now able to look at Canadian-born and foreign-born student data. We will soon have 3 years of data from our CBE developed benchmark assessment framework, which will allow us to look at trends over time. Preliminary analysis of the data points to the need to examine what strategies can enhance and accelerate the transition from level 3 benchmarks to levels 4 and 5.
- ESL graduation numbers are not readily available. The potential development of a longitudinal study is being considered in which a cohort group of ESL learners would be identified and their progress captured over time.
- We need to be able to demonstrate our successes and know how many of our learners develop language proficiency and in how many years; and, we need to be able to demonstrate how many of our ESL learners transition from benchmark 5 and thus have

language proficiency, to not being coded, and the implications of this on our data – for instance, taking a look at the standards of excellence and what it means.

- A review was made of the financial allocations that come to us from the province to support ESL, and of the deployment of the funds to support ESL.
- Mr. Davies reviewed the complexity of our ESL learners, the huge variability among our ESL students, and how we are able to more clearly articulate their learning needs and match appropriate services and instruction. There are a myriad of factors that influence second language development and academic success. There can be no one size fits all approach to meeting the needs of ESL students. Our system's response to the range of variables is to offer a range of program models and teaching approaches.
- Schools are working very hard to try to balance the need for ESL students to belong to the learning community and to have full access to the Alberta Program of Studies, while also receiving the explicit language instruction necessary for both interacting with others, and for using language for the critical thinking and high levels of inquiry and discourse of academic study.
- Employees on the ESL Team are engaged in examining research and implementing best practice as they support schools in their development plans and their staff deployment decisions. The ESL Team's focus for professional learning includes two main dimensions: 1) methods for differentiating instruction to promote language learning outcomes; and 2) the building of cultural competence and culturally responsive pedagogy within our schools. One of the ESL centres is dedicated to professional inquiry, and the long term plan for Connaught School is to develop it as a centre for professional development.
- The leadership role that the CBE has taken on provincially with respect to ESL include: being one of the first jurisdictions to have a reception centre, and the first to employ multicultural liaison workers; we may have also been the first to have a special education specialist and a psychologist dedicated to ESL students; our language proficiency benchmarks have had a profound effect on building understanding of ESL learners and on guiding assessment and instructional practice; and these benchmarks have been in demand by other jurisdictions, as have requests to us for staff development work elsewhere in the province. The CBE has also contributed to a number of provincial initiatives over several years, such as in the design and feedback for the *Howard Report*, which has been instrumental in shaping Alberta Education's strategic plan for ESL education. In addition, our work in examining assessment tools is currently being used to inform Alberta Education initiatives in this area; and we have been asked to take part in the writing of documents for Alberta Education, such as their proposed guide to differentiated instruction, and their guide for administrators.

In conclusion, Mr. Davies thanked all CBE staff and representatives of ESL advocacy groups for their involvement and support of this work and for their attendance this evening. He also commended the Board of Trustees for lobbying for the establishment of the Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) Program in our schools. Administration addressed the questions that were put forward by Trustees, which included information sharing about the following issues:

- ways that we are measuring and monitoring the cultural competency of our teaching core;
- tools used to assess students, both formally and informally, aside from the benchmarks, are numerous and include observation and the daily work that our ESL students do in the classroom;
- the benefits that our ESL students bring to the classroom, which include the encouragement of global learning and the sharing of cultures, which link together aspects of the citizenship and character Ends;
- mechanisms that are used to monitor an equity of resources, given the different learning needs – a big indicator around this is looking at where our ESL Centres are located, so that we are supporting in an equitable fashion the teacher and the ESL assistant that goes into those centres, and also to meet the needs for supplementary funding for materials and other expenses; it does raise an issue of uniformity and diversity in terms of CBE

practice, and we do try to acknowledge the importance of both presets; however, we do need to do more work in conjunctively reviewing the allocation model with the deployment model;

- options for providing support to ESL students who need more than 3 years to complete high school include: senior high school principals develop a transition plan with their students (ESL and otherwise) to determine if they might require a 4th year to complete; also, Chinook Learning Services has gone directly to the school sites and offered after-school courses, and we also work with Chinook Learning and families in order to provide opportunities for them to connect into the full program there. In addition, engagement with Bow Valley College and the University of Calgary has resulted in alternative opportunities for students. The English for Academic Purposes Program at the University of Calgary is now able to offer the equivalency for English 30; as well, Student Finance is now making funding available for students as soon as they exit high school, where in the past they had to have been out of high school for one year to be eligible for this funding.

Chair Cochrane noted that the purpose of board development sessions is for the Board of Trustees to develop more complete knowledge and a better understanding of specific policy issues, and to support effective Board monitoring. She reviewed what the expected outcomes are and noted that Trustees don't feel there is enough time at this meeting to address what the next steps would be. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, Chair Cochrane thanked the presenters for providing valuable information at this session, and she thanked all CBE employees and non-employees, involved in the English as a Second Language work.

Recess: 6:38 p.m.

Reconvened: 7:01 p.m.

6.2 Resource Allocation Method for CBE Schools

Deputy Chief Superintendent Hubert provided introductory comments, noting that about 4 years ago we introduced a new method of allocating resources to schools, which is called the Resource Allocation Method (RAM). This method was developed at the same time as the Alberta Education new funding framework was introduced. The allocation method itself is a rationale and transparent approach to allocating resources to schools. Mr. W. Braun, Director, Corporate Financial Services, came forward and provided an overview of the RAM with the aid of a PowerPoint slideshow, which is summarized as follows:

- The annual operating budget is developed by a CBE Steering Committee, which receives significant input by four distinct budget councils.
- Schools and Areas Instructional Budget Council has responsibility with respect to teaching and learning resources allocated through the RAM to schools and areas.
- Funds are allocated to the schools and areas by the Steering Committee for reallocation through the RAM to schools and areas.
- Funds allocated to schools through the RAM are deployed by schools to meet the needs of students in each school.
- Funding allocation within the CBE is approximately 72% for schools and areas; 7% for system instructional support; 4% for administration; 13% for facilities and environmental services; and 4% for transportation. The current year operating budget is approximately \$870 million.

Mr. Braun reviewed the schools and areas priority setting process, including the make-up of the Budget Council; the basis for establishing priorities, which considers the 3-Year Education Plan and the Area Renewal Plans; and the values that influence the schools and areas budget recommendations, which are: students come first; learning is our central purpose; and public education serves the common good.

The RAM portion of the budget is informed by a number of sources of data, including basic student enrollment data projections by grade for each of the CBE schools; additional projected specific enrollment data for student complexity, such as ESL, special needs, aboriginal, etc.; targeted funding and other requirements of Alberta Education, i.e., class size guidelines, specific program requirements; legislative and mandatory requirements; Alberta Education grant funding rates for per student and other instructional grant funding; staffing requirements and associated labour rates; and analysis of costs to provide services to students.

There are two types of resource allocations to schools: 1) per school allocations, which are based on the school type, special education classes and school/program complexity; and, 2) per student allocations, which are based on a basic amount per student, as well as on a variety of per student differential funding, including: ESL, special education, small class size, equity allocation, aboriginal, small school size, bilingual students.

Mr. Braun highlighted the approval process and the update process for RAM. The Board approves the RAM rollout to schools to facilitate spring staffing for the next budget year. On April 26, 2007 a meeting will be held with all administrators in the CBE to roll out the RAM for 2007/08. Work sessions will be held with principals following the rollout, and principals will complete their RAM to facilitate spring staffing of schools by May 8, 2007. In the fall, when actual September 30th enrollments are known, is when the actual allocations for schools are determined for the next budget cycle.

Trustees asked questions of clarification, which were responded to by Administration, and are summarized below:

- What are the advantages to schools to have the RAM rather than direct allocation going to them through the funding framework that the province has set up? It was noted that our resource allocation model mirrors the province's model fairly closely; prior to RAM we actually deployed resources centrally for staff, and schools have greater flexibility since the RAM model has been used. It was further noted that schools may provide advice, through their school principal, about resources they wish to see located centrally to support them, either at the Area level or with System Instructional Support.
- With regards to the accountability aspect of the deployment of resources, that often rests with the Area Director and the principal and can relate to expectations of class sizes, and of maintaining fiscal responsibility.
- To determine the differential per student allocation, in relation to ESL students, the funding is broken down between elementary, junior high and senior high, with the senior high school rate being significantly higher than the elementary rate. We are in the process of revisiting those particular rates to validate their accuracy in meeting the particular needs. The allocation of funds that we receive from the province for ESL students is not based on the differential of grade levels; and not all of those funds that we receive from the province go directly to schools, but all of it is deployed to support ESL students. We are not augmenting those funds that we get from the province in terms of the differential amount in the RAM.

7.0 ACTION ITEMS

7.1 Consideration of Closure of the Regular Program and the French Immersion Program at Greenview School

Trustee Ferguson summarized the written submissions that were received since the public meeting that was held at Greenview School on March 7, 2007, as follows:

- A submission of 211 signatures was received that generally requested the program be kept open, and a number of the signatures are from non-residents not served by the CBE and a few are duplicate signatures.

- Community and parent concerns have centred on the French Immersion program consideration of closure, with concern around the increased length of time to transport students from the northern and northeastern communities, the farther distance to King George School.
- A parent who resides east of Deerfoot Trail expressed concern that if students are designated to Mayland Heights School, the school will be too full; and also was concerned about the physical condition of the facility, specifically in regards to flooding issues.
- A concern was expressed with regards to the process and the ability of parents of ESL students to access translation of all the documents during the accommodation process.
- No submissions have been received regarding consideration of closure for the regular program at Greenview School.

Chair Cochrane noted that the particular submission that was sent as a petition, did not qualify as a petition under the School Act. She pointed out that all Trustees have received and reviewed all submissions particular to the potential closures.

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

1. **THAT the Minutes of the Public Meeting of March 7, 2007, attached as Attachment I to the report dated April 17, 2007, be approved by the Board of Trustees.**
2. **THAT the report titled *Consideration of Closure of the Regular Program and the French Immersion Program at Greenview School* be received for information and for the record.**

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Motion Arising:

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the Kindergarten to Grade 6 regular program at Greenview School be closed effective June 30, 2007.

Trustees debated the motion, and comments in support included the belief that Administration has presented material that shows the program is not viable due to insufficient student numbers; that there are currently no regular program students registered at Greenview School; and, there are two schools in close proximity that can offer a regular program to students who choose it.

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the motion be laid on the table.

Trustee Fawcett provided rationale for laying the motion on the table, noting that the discussion and debate surrounding the next items for consideration may help to inform the Board's decision on this matter. It would be the intention to move to take this motion from the table for consideration prior to the decision being made on the Highwood School French Immersion program.

Chair Cochrane called for the vote to lay the motion on the table.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Motion Arising:

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the Kindergarten to Grade 6 French Immersion program at Greenview School be closed effective June 30, 2007.

Prior to debating the motion, Administration addressed a question about the physical condition of Mayland Heights School, noting that because of its location on the side of a hill, in the spring when there are heavy rains the water level does rise and it does flow through the ducts underneath the gym, and requires work by our maintenance staff. The CBE's maintenance department has informed us that with the supplementary IMR funding that has been provided this year, this issue is a priority to be addressed in this school year. On another issue that had been expressed previously by a member of the public about the high enrolment at Mayland Heights School, it was noted that there is now ample space in the school because the Marlborough students have returned to their school.

The following is a summary of the discussion and debate by Trustees:

- The French Immersion program is currently being offered at many schools in Area II, which is believed to be acceptable; and since only about 64 students attend Greenview School from Area II, its French Immersion program could easily be rolled into one of the other Area II schools. Relocating the 108 Area III students to Mayland Heights School appears to make sense in terms of cohort continuity for students who live east of Deerfoot Trail.
- A Trustee commented that some parents have expressed concern with the location of Greenview School, and noted it was not a concern shared by her because the Ward Alderman has relayed that the recommendation to widen McKnight Boulevard has been tabled.
- A concern was expressed by a Trustee that under-utilized schools with populations of 200 or less can potentially lead to constrained programming, and could be enhanced in an environment where there are more students. It is believed that there are acceptable alternate locations for students to attend should the French Immersion program at Greenview School be closed.
- A comment was made that it seems to make sense to put students who reside in Area III in a school closer to their home.
- A Trustee noted that it is difficult to make a decision that could disrupt a program that was a choice of parents and students of that community; but it is a decision that is being made in the overall scheme of positioning of programs that could accommodate greater numbers of students in closer proximity to the majority of the students' neighbourhoods.
- A Trustee shared the understanding that we operate in an environment where we don't know when or where we will be getting new schools, whereby it is hard to make a decision in the long-term planning of our capital plan. The Trustee stated that he must make his decision based on the parameters that are known at this time. He recognized comments made by parents - that bigger is not necessarily better, and that there is a family atmosphere at the school; however, he was of the belief that this is a step towards creating a balance.

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the motion be laid on the table.

Trustee Fawcett noted the rationale for laying the motion on the table is the same as previously noted, that the discussion and debate surrounding the next item for consideration

might help to inform the Board's decision on this matter. It would be the intention to move to take this motion from the table for consideration prior to the decision being made on the Highwood School French Immersion program.

Chair Cochrane called for the vote to lay the motion on the table.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

7.2 Consideration of Closure of the French Immersion Program at Highwood School

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

1. **THAT the Minutes of the Public Meeting of March 12, 2007, attached as Attachment I to the report dated April 17, 2007, be approved by the Board of Trustees.**
2. **THAT the report titled *Consideration of Closure of the French Immersion Program at Highwood School* be received for information and for the record.**

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Trustee Ferguson summarized the written submissions that were received subsequent to the public meeting that was held at Highwood School on March 12, 2007, which put forward concerns about the potential closure of the French Immersion program at Highwood School:

- a stakeholder report was given to the Board on March 20, 2007, about the longer transportation times should the program close; and, of the potential increase of obesity in children who are unable to walk to school;
- community and parent concerns have centred on the increased transportation time to King George School for students living in the northern communities.
- the need for a safe drop off and pickup at King George School;
- increased busing congestion due to the larger number of students attending King George School;
- the loss of the residential environment, the opportunities offered at Highwood School with the Community Centre, the swimming pool and the junior high school being in close proximity to the school site;
- larger class sizes at King George School, and the desire to maintain the smaller class sizes at Highwood School;
- the transition for students to a larger school; and the loss of a unique program at Highwood School in terms of the current learning environment;
- the accommodation process was felt not to be broad enough; the belief was shared that the information regarding the number of students in the regular program at G.P. Vanier was not accurately represented in the early scenarios during the accommodation process, and it was felt that this influenced the decision to delete some scenarios from the final recommendations; Trustee Ferguson noted her belief and recollection was that this relates to a recommendation that Highwood School be kept open as a kindergarten to grade 4 school;
- a couple of parents had written about their appreciation for the accommodation process, for its breadth and involvement of the community, and stated their belief that it made good sense to have French Immersion taught in one school in Area II; and
- an urge for change was expressed so that the future for French Immersion students in Area II will no longer be uncertain.

A Trustee asked for clarification of whether there was an increase to the transportation ride times for students, to which Administration noted if the French Immersion program at Highwood School is closed, a larger cohort would be picked up on the transportation route that is being suggested, the number of stops would be reduced as it would be more streamlined, and it is expected that there will be a small increase to the ride times by between 4 and 7 minutes.

8:00 p.m. - Chair Cochrane received consent of the Trustees to continue the meeting to the completion of the agenda.

A request was made by a Trustee for Administration to speak to the impact of keeping the French Immersion program at Highwood School open, and closing the programs at Greenview School and directing students to Mayland Heights and to King George schools. Mr. Carlton stated the impacts of not closing any of the programs results in the same utilization rates that we currently have and the question of using space and resources effectively remains. If Trustees decided not to close the French Immersion program at Highwood School, the 190 students projected would remain, and the utilization rate would be 42%. Administration has determined that it will be moving forward with the designation of students in Area III to Mayland Heights Elementary School, and if the decision is made to not close the programs at Greenview School, as with past practice, we would allow students to complete their division as students are redirected to Mayland Heights Elementary School. Administration believes that Area III students are more appropriately served in a cohort group that transitions from Mayland Heights to Bob Edwards to Lester B. Pearson. If we were not to close any of the programs at Greenview School or at Highwood School, it would leave King George School with 225 students, while it has a capacity of 656 students.

A Trustee commented on and questioned the rated room capacity for King George School, noting that looking at the projection of students for the fall of 2007, without inclusion of the numbers for the Traditional Learning Centre, but with the inclusion of the numbers of students from Highwood and Greenview schools, and taking into consideration the class size initiative, it appears that King George School would be very much at capacity and would have no flexibility for expansion should the need arise. Mr. Carlton noted that we are in debate with the province about the utilization of schools in regards to the rated room capacity and the complexity of the class size initiative. He stated that his department interprets the class size initiative to be defined as the instructional group size – we have schools that are over capacity but are meeting the class size initiative guidelines because of the way in which they organize for instruction. Schools that have extra space are interpreting the guidelines as 17 to 1 for the instructional program, and not as the number of children per classroom. Administration continues to use the guideline of 25 to 1 as its guideline for making projections relative to the number of students that schools can accommodate based upon the available instructional spaces or classrooms that exist.

In response to a question, Mr. Carlton noted that G.P. Vanier School may not have been part of the initial discussion around accommodation of students, but later when looking at the growth of many of our communities in the north and, specifically, the growth in the communities of Kincora and Evanston, concerns were raised about whether G.P. Vanier would be able to accommodate any additional growth. Sir John A. Macdonald Junior High School is full and, therefore, the students from the communities of Kincora and Evanston had to be redesignated to G.P. Vanier School.

It was asked if the two French Immersion programs that are currently under consideration were closed and if the French Immersion population were to increase over the next year or two, how would we accommodate that growth if King George School was at maximum capacity? Mr. Carlton noted that there is the repatriation of students from Greenview School back to Area III, as well as the repatriation back to Area I of students who are currently attending King George School; this would allow some flexibility as those students complete

their division and move back to Varsity Acres. He pointed out too, that as new schools open up, the discussion could be held with the parents about what the opportunities are for potential alternative programs in those new schools.

Motion Arising:

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the Kindergarten to Grade 6 French Immersion program at Highwood School be closed effective June 30, 2007.

Trustees debated the motion, which is summarized as follows:

- The issue is complex, being a closure consideration of an alternative program.
- King George School might be a tight fit, but over time as we get schools in the right places, the issue of space availability may be alleviated.
- The majority of students are at the upper northern end of the corridor, which is felt to be quite a distance to bus students to King George School. It was believed that having two schools offering a French Immersion program in Area II was not unreasonable.
- A Trustee was not convinced that a school with just 200 students couldn't be considered as being viable.
- Concerns were noted with regards to the future use of school buildings; whether the lack of new schools is displacing French Immersion and increasing ride times; that the picture is incomplete at this time in regards to French Immersion in the north; and, taken together, make it difficult to reach a conclusive decision on the matter.
- The transportation issues are not unique to this area of our city alone; the issue of capacity and utilization is crucial; but we may be too close to the margins if this program is closed at this particular point in time, without knowing what the ultimate impact at King George School is going to be, and not knowing about the new school possibilities in the near future.
- It was uncertain that the cost of keeping two schools open would be insurmountable.
- A comment was made that the 42% utilization is an issue when we have a great need for new schools to be built. It was noted that if we don't close Highwood at this point, either Highwood or King George could potentially be up for closure of the French Immersion program once again if we do build new schools and those schools offer this as an alternative program.

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the motion be laid on the table.

Trustee Fawcett provided rationale for laying the motion on the table, noting that the purpose is to take the other two motions off the table and make decisions on those issues first.

Chair Cochrane called for the vote to lay the motion on the table.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the motion that was laid on the table regarding the regular program at Greenview School be removed from the table.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

The motion under consideration is as follows:

THAT the Kindergarten to Grade 6 regular program at Greenview School be closed effective June 30, 2007.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the motion that was laid on the table regarding the French Immersion program at Greenview School be removed from the table.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

The motion under consideration is as follows:

THAT the Kindergarten to Grade 6 French Immersion program at Greenview School be closed effective June 30, 2007.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the motion that was laid on the table regarding the French Immersion program at Highwood School be removed from the table.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

The motion under consideration is as follows:

THAT the Kindergarten to Grade 6 French Immersion program at Highwood School be closed effective June 30, 2007.

The motion was
DEFEATED.

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

Recessed: 8:40 p.m.
Reconvened: 8:50 p.m. Trustee Close did not return to the meeting.

7.3 TRUSTEE REMUNERATION

MOVED by Trustee Lane:

THAT the Board of Trustees receives the report regarding recommended changes to the Trustees' Remuneration and its attachments, for information and for the record, in the form as submitted with the agenda for the Regular Meeting held April 17, 2007.

The motion was

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Absent:

Trustee Close

MOVED by Trustee Lane:

THAT the current policy GP-12E: Trustee Remuneration, be approved as amended, as shown in Attachment 2 to the report dated April 17, 2007.

Trustee Lane reviewed the amendment, noting it is an extension of the effectiveness of the current policy for two months, until October 31, 2007, because the intent is that the new policy would become effective after the next election.

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the motion be laid on the table.

The motion was

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Absent:

Trustee Close

MOVED by Trustee Lane:

THAT the Board of Trustees approves the proposed revised policy GP-12E: Trustee Remuneration, as shown in Attachment 3 to the report dated April 17, 2007, to be effective November 1, 2007.

Trustee Lane responded to questions posed by some Trustees, which are summarized as follows:

- Point A-5 of the proposed policy is meant to reflect both increases and decreases to Trustees' honoraria; and the rationale of including this point is to allow for the annual debate of any potential increase or decrease.
- Point C-1, which states that the Committee would continue to meet to review and report annually, primarily on remuneration matters other than the levels of honoraria – it was asked whether consideration was given to not having an annual review, but having only a major review in 2009. Trustee Lane did not believe the Committee gave consideration to that notion in particular, and suggested that an amendment may be offered on that point.
- The conversation on transparency and greater accountability of elected officials and governments has been taking place in the public sphere for some time, and the Trustee Remuneration Committee concluded that this is a step we should take, even though we are not legally obligated to do so.
- A definition was given of "corporately-skilled people", with Trustee Lane noting it speaks to people who are able and willing to appreciate and operate in large corporate environments.

Ms. G. Burger-Martindale, Stakeholder Representative on the Trustee Remuneration Committee, shared some comments about the rationale the Trustee Remuneration Committee used to examine and reach its conclusion for the establishment of a remuneration level that is based on the premise that the work and responsibility level of a trustee was roughly equivalent to 50% of the work and responsibility level of a Calgary alderman. She noted that a comparison was also made of CBE trustee remuneration on both an individual level and as a whole board, with other Alberta urban school boards; and even after this proposed adjustment the total CBE trustee remuneration expenditure will be less than Edmonton public board's expenditure as of 2004. The Committee does not believe that CBE has to be a leader in trustee remuneration, but it should not lag significantly behind comparable organizations. The Committee also took the opportunity to introduce greater transparency by recommending the elimination of the tax-free allocation and not introducing the concept of per diems, which are difficult to monitor and actually determine total amounts.

Trustee Lane opened debate, and spoke to some of the findings from the data collected, which was significant and is noted in Attachment 1 to the report. The consensus of the Trustees was that there was significant material researched and referenced in the report that adequately captures the issues, and that a fair assessment of the role of a trustee and the importance of that role was put forward, which all makes for a good argument in support of the recommendation.

Chair Cochrane called for the vote on the motion.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Absent: Trustee Close

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the motion that was laid on the table regarding the proposed amendment to the current GP-12E, as it relates to an extension of the time of effectiveness, be removed from the table.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Absent: Trustee Close

The Chair called the question on the motion that reads as follows:

THAT the current policy GP-12E: Trustee Remuneration, be approved as amended, as shown in Attachment 2 to the report dated April 17, 2007.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Absent: Trustee Close

8.0 MONITORING AND RESULTS

8.1 Annual Monitoring Report for Executive Limitations 14: Attendance Areas

Chief Superintendent Croskery extended his gratitude to the staff members involved in the work to put together the monitoring report for EL-14: Attendance Areas. Superintendent Dart noted that he and his staff would forego a review of the report, in the interest of time, and would respond to any questions by Trustees.

Chair Cochrane noted it is now the responsibility of Trustees to consider the report as evidence of organizational performance in this operational area. She 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 posed questions, which were responded to by Administration and are summarized as follows:

- A question was asked in relation to point 3 of the policy, whereby a student would be denied access to a school or a program of choice because Administration wishes to grow a program that is being offered at the student's designated school. Chief Superintendent Croskery remarked that it would not be appropriate for a principal or anybody else to say that a student must attend a particular school and deny the choice that is inherently built into this executive limitation.
- There is no tracking of the numbers of students who have asked to attend a school or a program of their choice, and who were denied as a result of insufficient resources or space in the school.
- Mr. Carlton added a comment, noting that there have been instances where students may have been required to attend a designated program rather than the one that they chose, because the designated program would be jeopardized if enrolment were not adequate.

MOVED by Trustee Dirks:

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

MOVED by Trustee Bazinet:

THAT the motion be amended to include "with the exception of point 3 of the policy".

Trustee Bazinet provided rationale for the motion, noting that if point 3 in the policy is intended to facilitate the parent's and student's request for choice, the only reason to deny such a request is if there is not sufficient resources, and as heard in the discussion earlier, there are other reasons given by Administration for denying a student access to a school that is not their designated school.

Trustees debated the motion, and the following positions were expressed, in both support and non-support of the amendment:

- A reason of non-support of the amendment was that it is a matter of interpretation, and what was heard from Mr. Carlton is that in a broader interpretation of the policy, the suggestion could be made that there is a need to grow another program, because to not do so would be denying other students their choice.
- A statement in support was that where there is overcrowding in a particular program, then it is likely that enrollment would be denied because of the issue of space; and if there is room for a program to take in more students, then those students should not be denied entrance to such program, regardless of any other issues other than that which is stated in the policy.
- A comment was made that there is a need for this policy to be reviewed for potential amendment to provide clarity to this point.
- A comment in support was given because it is how the Trustee interprets the policy as it is currently written.
- A reason of non-support of the amendment was noted to be that one always must go back to the stem of the policy, which reads "within the fiscal and operational capacity of the Calgary Board of Education..." and, although we do support parental choice and parents

and students may exercise their choice, there are always instances when a larger system need may come above the individual need or request of an individual family or parent.

- A belief was shared that it is important to have the broader interpretation so that the Chief Superintendent is allowed some flexibility. A scenario was shared that if a situation came about where someone is designated to a program, and a new program starts up because the other program is overcrowded, but no one wants to go to the new program because of one reason or another, how do you determine which students should go to that new program and which students could remain at the old program? It was felt that such a situation is where there is a need to make a determination based on what is in the best interests for the school system; and thereby allowing for this broader interpretation of the policy.
- A Trustee shared that this goes to the heart of how we are offering choice within our system, and where the line is drawn. It was noted that her personal belief was that these types of situations should be avoided altogether if at all possible.

Chair Cochrane called for the vote on the amendment.

The motion to amend was
DEFEATED.

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

Chair Cochrane called the question on the main motion.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

8.2 Annual Monitoring Report for Executive Limitations 15: Transportation

Superintendent Dart provided opening remarks, noting that this monitoring report speaks to the current policy on EL-15: Transportation, and it is understood that first reading has been given to an amended policy.

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.

Chair Cochrane reviewed the issue re compliance decision by trustees.

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

- Superintendent Dart responded to a question of clarification regarding the second paragraph on page 7 of the report, and in particular to the inference that significant considerations impacting students and parents will be required, and whether that which is noted for contemplation would bring this part of the policy in complete compliance. He pointed out that the issue regarding the “walk/bus zones” was provided as an example only and was considered for contemplation if we were going to be fully in compliance with this policy provision. The issue we are facing is the shortfall in funding associated with the entire transportation budget envelope, which took significant efforts last year to try to balance. He noted that going into this year’s budget cycle we are still looking at

additional revenues for the transportation budget envelope, pending the provincial review of the metro formulas. He stated that in the past two years it was felt to be prudent to not pass on to parents any significant increase to fees.

- In regards to a question on the transportation inefficiencies resulting from attendance area changes, etc., as noted on page 3 of the report, Mr. Carlton noted that the dual designations are starting to decrease as repatriation of students occurs and the grades drop off.
- With respect to the point made about the French Immersion accommodation plan for Areas IV and V, noted on page 3, Mr. Carlton informed that the statement that students would be transported to two different schools from some communities for two to five years is questionable, because it is true that students are transported to the end of their division. He stated that further clarification of the timeframe would be provided to Trustees at a later date.
- A correction to the report was noted in the first paragraph of page 7, to change the figure of \$2.9 million to \$3.9 million, relating to the shortfall in transportation funding. In response to a question, Mr. Carlton noted that through efforts made by our Transportation team and their innovative management, that shortfall has dropped significantly, and is anticipated to be less than \$1.1 million.
- Some discussion and explanation took place in regards to differential fees that might be considered to minimize the deficit, with Administration noting that it is being looked at, for the most part, in relation to the mode of transportation (i.e. Calgary Transit, Charter), and not necessarily as it relates to grade levels; and the issue of there being no differential of fees for transportation to alternative programs has also been reviewed.
- Ms. C. Llewellyn, Manager, Transportation Services, addressed a question about compliance of our carrier transportation services, noting that to date they have been given a satisfactory rating by Alberta Transportation annually. She also responded to a question about the electronic routing software, noting that we were mandated by Alberta Education to purchase the software. The initial stage will be to provide data for them to review our metro funding formula, but there are a number of different components with this software that allow for electronic routing as well as the potential for finding efficiencies in our bus scheduling.

D. Dart

MOVED by Trustee Bazinet:

THAT the Chief Superintendent has reasonably interpreted the provisions of EL-15: Transportation, and that the Board finds the Chief Superintendent to be compliance with this policy.

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

That the motion be amended to include “with the exception of policy point 2.

Trustee Fawcett provided rationale for the amendment, noting his belief that it is appropriate to recognize that we are not in compliance with this policy provision; and the Board recognizes that it may not be a strong policy provision as it is written, and it may require some revision in the future.

Trustees debated the amendment and a comment of non-support was made that, in this particular case the Chief Superintendent does not have the capacity to be in compliance because he does not have the authority to set the transportation fee schedule. It was felt that at one level he is not in compliance, but at another level he can't be in compliance.

A comment in support of the amendment was that although the Board approved the transportation fee schedule, the Board did not prepare it; and if the fee schedule had ensured that all the costs would be recovered, the Board would likely have approved that as well.

Chair Cochrane called for the vote on the amendment.

The motion to amend was
DEFEATED.

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

Chair Cochrane called for the vote on the main motion.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Trustee Ferguson:

THAT the Board of Trustees commends the Chief Superintendent for exemplary performance in meeting point 3 of Executive Limitations 15: Transportation, in keeping the number of students who have a one-way ride of more than 60 minutes to a minimum.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

9.0 CONSENT AGENDA

No items were removed and Chair Cochrane declared the consent agenda items would be adopted as submitted.

9.1 Board Consent Agenda

9.1.1 Approval of Minutes

- Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees held March 20, 2007
- Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees held March 27, 2007

THAT the Board of Trustees approves the Minutes of the Regular Meetings held March 20, 2007 and March 27, 2007, as submitted.

9.1.2 Liaison Report – EducationMatters

THAT the Board of Trustees appoints Ms. Tamera Van Brunt as Governor of EducationMatters.

10.0 TRUSTEE NOTICES OF MOTION

Trustee Dirks gave notice of motion requesting the Administration to research and report back to the Board of Trustees, the extent and impact of religious alternative schools or programs presently operating or planned to be offered in other Alberta public school board jurisdictions.

11.0 ADJOURNMENT

The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 10:18 p.m.