

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE GRANDE PRAIRIE PUBLIC SCHOOL DIVISION HELD AT CENTRAL OFFICE ON **September 10, 2024**

Board Chair Joan Nellis called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., acknowledged that the Board is on Treaty 8 Land, and reviewed the Division's Universal Guiding Principles, with the following present:

PRESENT

Trustees Ray Buziak, Chris Johnston, Donna Koch, Rob Martin, Joan Nellis, Andre Ouellette, Superintendent Sandy McDonald, Deputy Superintendent James Robinson, Associate Superintendent Business Services Ola Oladele, Executive Assistant Business Services SheraLea Crichton, (recorder), and Secretary to the Board Sandy Fredland (minutes).

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Adoption of Board Agenda

The Board reviewed the Regular Meeting agenda.

The Board agreed to the following additions to the agenda:

- An in-camera session at the end of the Regular meeting to discuss legal and human resources; and
- The September 18, 2024 Zone 1 Alberta School Boards Association meeting and awards, under ASBA/PSBA.

MOTION: Donna Koch moved that the Board adopt the Regular Meeting agenda as amended.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15660

MINUTES

Organizational Meeting of August 20, 2024

The Board reviewed the Organizational Meeting minutes of August 20, 2024.

MOTION: Ray Buziak moved to adopt the minutes of the Organizational Meeting of August 20, 2024, as circulated.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15661

Regular Board Meeting of August 20, 2024

The Board reviewed the Regular Board Meeting minutes of August 20, 2024.

MOTION: Andre Ouellette moved to adopt the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of August 20, 2024, as circulated.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15662

PRESENTATION

No presentation.

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BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

- Laura Noel, Prime Minister’s Award for Teaching Excellence Recipient Presentation Date
Administration reached out to teacher Laura Noel, who will be pleased to attend the September 24, 2024 Board meeting to be presented with a letter of congratulations from the Board for receiving the Prime Minister’s Award for Teaching Excellence.
- Reading University
A thank you card from the Dean of Students for the local Grade 3 Reading University was presented to the Board as information. This year just under 200 local grade 3 students participated in Reading University, representing a 13% increase in attendance over the previous year. The premise of the program design is to build the solid foundation of word recognition that is needed for language comprehension as students move into grade 4 and beyond.

The Board requested a presentation at an upcoming Board meeting from Reading University to hear about student progress.

**BOARD CHAIR/
SUPERINTENDENT’S
REPORT**

Board Chair Report

- Meeting with the Local MLAs
Joan Nellis reported that the Board met with MLA Nolan Dyck and MLA Ron Wiebe on August 27, 2024. The Board advocated for a per student funding increase, discussed the Division’s capital plan, recruitment and retention, among other topics. The Board appreciated the meeting and found it to be helpful and positive.
- Meeting with the Minister of Education
Joan Nellis reported that the Board met with the Honourable Demetrios Nicolaides, Minister of Education, virtually on September 5, 2024. The meeting was reported as beneficial and the Board appreciated the effort the Minister has shown in meeting with the Board several times over the past year.
- Grande Prairie Chamber Event, “Your Region Your Voice”
Joan Nellis discussed with the Board the Grande Prairie Chamber Event, “Your Region, Your Voice” that is being held November 14, 2024. The event presents an opportunity for members of the Chamber of Commerce to engage directly with the region’s elected officials.

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Superintendent's Report

Items for Information

Sandy McDonald presented the Superintendent's Report provided to the Board as information regarding the following:

- **All Administrators' Start Up Meeting**
The first meeting for all school administrators occurred on August 20, 2024. The morning was scheduled to provide collaborative time for school leadership teams to revisit the planning done in May and June to develop the year plan for professional learning at each school. The afternoon portion of the meeting provided all instructional and non-instructional system leaders to share key information, review priorities, and answer questions to support school startup.
- **2024 – 2025 Guide to Education Update**
On August 28, the Deputy Minister released the update to the [Guide to Education](#) for the 2024-2025 school year. The Guide is an important document for school and system leaders to support the delivery of education in the province and is the key education policy repository for the ministry of education.
- **College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS)/Alberta School Business Officials Association (ASBOA) Summer Conference**
System leadership participated in the CASS/ASBOA conference in Edmonton from August 15-17. This conference was focused on the initial delivery of the course-based learning modules developed by CASS as a condition for regulated membership in the association.
- **Enhanced Early Years Literacy Assessments Preparation**
Director of Teaching and Learning Corinne Kruse and the Curriculum Department have developed a plan to support the training of teachers that is needed to administer the new enhanced early years literacy assessments announced by the Minister of Education on July 5, 2024.

The initial focus of the implementation support plan is on supporting grade 1 teachers and intervention educational assistants to successfully communicate to parents and administer the assessments, which are expected to take 30-minutes per student, by the September 26 timeline for completion established by Alberta Education.

- **New Social Studies Curriculum Piloting**
Curriculum department staff are also finalizing the plan to support pilot implementation of some or all of the learning outcomes in the draft K-6 Social Studies curriculum. Well over 100 teachers have indicated it is

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their intention to participate in the piloting and the curriculum department is working to formalize the list and submit the participant teacher details to Alberta Education to secure funds to provide teacher release time and other supports.

- **Apple Schools Pilot**

Over the course of the previous school year, Deputy Superintendent James Robinson and Director of Inclusive Learning Nancy Gorgichuk met with representatives from APPLE Schools to discuss the potential of piloting implementation of the APPLE Schools program, a comprehensive school-based health promotion initiative, in the division schools. APPLE Schools is an acronym that stands for A Project Promoting Healthy Living for Everyone in Schools and the program aligns with priority 2 in the division's 3-Year Education Plan: "The emotional, physical, and mental health of all students and staff is supported".

The outcome of those meetings is that details are currently being finalized for the program to be implemented in four division schools, at no cost to the division, beginning in January for a period of 2 to 3 years. The four schools selected, based on location, grade configuration and capacity to implement the program are Avondale Elementary School, Roy Bickell Public School, Crystal Park School, and Alexander Forbes the Academy School.

- **United Way Tools for Schools**

Gratitude is again extended to the community of Grande Prairie and to the United Way of Northwestern Alberta, for providing back to school supplies for over 300 GPPSD students this fall through the Tools for Schools Program. School staff and external agencies identified students in need in the spring of last year and backpacks were prepared for individual students.

Items for Action

- **Governance Framework**

A draft table of contents for a Governance Framework, as discussed during the Board's Governance Planning Session held March 25, 2024, and further developed by the Board's Advocacy and Engagement Committee, was presented to the Trustees for review.

The Governance Framework is being developed to support the Board's governance efforts in general, and to specifically make more visible the beliefs, values, and actions that are at the core of board governance in the division. It has also been discussed that this document may be

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valuable to support candidates considering running for school board trustee in the October 2025 municipal election. Trustees were in agreement with the concept. Administration will bring a final document to the Advocacy and Engagement Committee for recommendations, and then it will be brought to the Board for approval.

- **Board Work Plan**

A draft Board Work Plan for the 2024 – 2025 School Year was presented to the Trustees for review. Board standing committee times were discussed and there was agreement in changing some of the meeting times.

The Board adopted the draft board work plan as presented and discussed.

- **New Agenda Concept**

A draft template of the new Board meeting agenda concept as discussed at the Board Governance Retreat, was presented to the Trustees for review. The intent of restructuring the agenda is to prioritize and make visible the Board's governance actions at each meeting of the board. The potential adoption of the new agenda will be discussed by the Board at a Committee of the Whole meeting on September 24, 2024.

- **Board Meeting Practice and Compensation Review**

As discussed during the Board planning and evaluation session on August 20, a table summarizing board meeting start times, frequency, and compensation from school divisions across the province has been prepared by administration using information from public websites.

The board meeting practice information will be presented for board review and discussion at the Committee of the Whole meeting on September 24.

**BOARD POLICY
COMMITTEE**

**ADVOCACY AND
ENGAGEMENT
COMMITTEE**

- 2024 08 20 Draft Meeting Minutes as Information

Rob Martin reported to the Board that the draft Advocacy and Engagement Committee meeting minutes for the August 20, 2024, meeting that were circulated to the Board as information were adopted at the September 10 2024, Advocacy and Engagement Committee meeting.

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- 2024 09 10 Meeting Update

Rob Martin will serve as the Chair for the Advocacy and Engagement Committee for the 2024 – 2025 school year. Trustee Martin reported to the Board regarding the meeting that was held earlier in the day. Of note, the Committee Terms of Reference were reviewed with some suggested changes by the Committee to be brought to the Board for review at the next Board meeting. The Committee discussed setting new Advocacy Priorities, and the goal is to have these ready for Board review at the October 8, 2024, Board meeting.

CULTURE AND ENGAGEMENT

BUSINESS SERVICES

Business Services Report

- Transportation Update for 2024 – 2025 School Year

The Division was informed at the end of August that the Zonar System parent app will no longer be available. The app provided valuable features for parents, including the ability to view and receive instant alerts about their child's bus activity, such as boarding and exiting details. Given the significance of this service to our parents, the Transportation Department has been advised to investigate other potential solutions. In the meantime, parents are encouraged to use the FirstView app until a suitable alternative is found.

- Guaranteed Investment Certificate (GIC)

Ola Oladele updated the Board in regard to a strategic investment made in anticipation of the Bank of Canada reducing the interest rates on September 4, 2024.

ASBA / PSBAA

Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA)

- Zone 1 Operating Procedures Questions and Review

Joan Nellis discussed with the Board the ASBA Zone 1 draft Operating Procedures as well as some feedback that the Operating Procedures Review Committee is requesting in the form of two questions:

- How are boards expensing Zone 1 for honoraria and per diem? Are they including all expenses such as the employer portion of the CPP and EI?
- Canadian School Boards Association Conference – currently practice has Zone 1 sending the Chair to the conference yearly and paying for all expenses.

Discussion was held with the Board and Trustees agreed to go with the majority of the group at the Zone 1 Meeting.

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**ALBERTA
EDUCATION**

**COMMITTEE
REPORTS**

- School Council Year End Reports
The Board received the 2023 – 2024 Year End Report from the following School Councils as information:
 - Roy Bickell School Council
 - Avondale School Council

**PRESENTATION OR
DELEGATION
BUSINESS**

CORRESPONDENCE

- Letter from HPSD - To Ministers of Transportation MLAs Re: Mental Health Proposal 2024 08 13
- Letter to Minister Sawhney Re: Support for NWP Bachelor of Education Degree 2024 08 21

**NEW IDEAS / NEW
ISSUES**

Donna Koch reported that she has heard from some retired teachers that are excited to attend the upcoming Board Social.

Rob Martin discussed the Student Advisory Committee meeting times and following discussion, Trustee Chris Johnston will be the alternate attending Trustee for those times that Trustee Martin is unable to attend.

Ray Buziak inquired about installing an additional sound system in the Board room and Administration will investigate this.

SheraLea Crichton exited the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

Sandy Fredland, James Robinson, Ola Oladele left the meeting at: 8:10 pm

**IN CAMERA
SESSION**

MOTION: Rob Martin moved that the Board go in camera at 7:32 pm to discuss legal and personnel.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15663

James Robinson, Ola Oladele and Sandy Fredland exited the meeting at 8:16 p.m. Sandy McDonald left the meeting following a brief discussion regarding the Superintendent's annual performance evaluation and re-entered the meeting at 9:11 p.m.

MOTION: Chris Johnston moved that the Board come out of camera at 9:12 p.m.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15664

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REGULAR MEETING CONTINUED

MOTION: Donna Koch moved that the Board amend the Superintendent of Grande Prairie Public School Division's contract effective the start of the 2024 – 2025 School Year.

CARRIED 15665

In Favour: Joan Nellis, Chris Johnston, Andre Ouellette, Rob Martin, Donna Koch

Opposed: Ray Buziak

NEXT BOARD MEETING

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for Tuesday, September 24, 2024, to be held at Central Office in the Board Room.

ADJOURNMENT

Board Chair Joan Nellis called the Regular Board Meeting closed at 9:13 p.m.

Chair

Secretary-Treasurer