

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE GRANDE PRAIRIE PUBLIC SCHOOL DIVISION HELD AT CENTRAL OFFICE ON **March 25, 2025**

Board Chair 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 Buziak, Johnston, Koch, Martin, Nellis, Ouellette, Superintendent McDonald, Deputy Superintendent Robinson, Associate Superintendent Business Services Oladele, Executive Assistant Business Services SheraLea Crichton, (recorder), and Secretary to the Board Amanda Westwater (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 meeting to discuss confidential correspondence.

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

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15733

TRUSTEE SELF-DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No conflicts.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None to report.

DELEGATIONS, PRESENTATIONS and SYSTEM LEADERSHIP REPORTS

Annual Division 3-Year Capital Plan
Occurred before approval of minutes.

Superintendent McDonald introduced the report. Associate Superintendent Oladele presented the Annual Division 3-Year Capital Plan for 2026 – 2029 Report to the Board. The report is to help identify the top capital priorities for the Grande Prairie Public School Division, for consideration by Alberta Education staff for capital funding in Budget 2026 to Budget 2029. The report provided background information on the provincial process used for identifying school division capital facility construction needs, describes the current context regarding growth and development in the City of Grande Prairie, and provides an overview of the current enrolment, enrolment

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projections, and school utilization for schools in the Grande Prairie Public School Division. Superintendent McDonald extended gratitude to Associate Superintendent Oladele, Deputy Superintendent Robinson, and Director of System Planning, Kimberly Frykas, for all their help on the development of the 2026 – 2029 Capital Plan. The four projects included for consideration were:

- Permanent Addition, Charles Spencer High School
- New School, Kensington Neighbourhood
- Replacement School, Crystal Park School
- Modernization Solution, Harry Balfour School – expansion of Montessori school from K-6 to K-8 with this option.

The Board discussed:

- The average number of projects submitted in a School Division Capital Plan.
- Frequency of approval for lower priority projects on a Capital Plan.

MOTION: Trustee Koch moved to approve the order the 2026 – 2029 Capital Plan priorities as follows:

- 1) New School, Kensington Neighbourhood
- 2) Modernization Solution, Harry Balfour School
- 3) Permanent Addition, Charles Spencer High School
- 4) Replacement School, Crystal Park School

There was discussion on the motion and potential amendment from Trustees Ouellette to reorder priorities: 1) Charles, 2) Kensington, 3) Crystal Park, 4) Harry Balfour.

There was debate on the current motion on the floor and discussion on:

- The potential expansion of the Montessori program at Harry Balfour and how it would impact enrollment at Avondale School.
- The ongoing growth in the Kensington area structure plan.
- Projected and current capacity at Charles Spencer High School.
- The provincial School Construction Accelerator Program for new school builds.

The Board returned to main motion.

CARRIED 15734

For: Trustees Nellis, Johnston, Koch, Buziak

Opposed: Trustees Martin, Ouellette

The Board thanked Superintendent McDonald, Deputy Superintendent Robinson, and Associate Superintendent Oladele for the informative report and all the work done to develop the Capital Plan.

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MINUTES

Committee of the Whole of March 11, 2025

The Board reviewed the Committee of the Whole Meeting minutes of March 11, 2025.

MOTION: Trustee Ouellette moved to adopt the minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting of March 11, 2025, as circulated.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15735

Regular Board Meeting of March 11, 2025

The Board reviewed the Regular Board Meeting minutes of March 11, 2025.

MOTION: Trustee Ouellette moved to adopt the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of March 11, 2025, as circulated.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15736

COMMITTEES AND REPORTS

Board Chair Report

- Chamber of Commerce 2025 Alberta Budget Presentation
Chair Nellis and Associate Superintendent Oladele attended and commented on the Chamber of Commerce 2025 Alberta Budget Presentation on March 21, 2025 hosted by MLA Nolan Dyck and MLA Ron Wiebe.

- Alberta School Boards Association Update
Trustee Buziak reported to the Board regarding the ASBA Zone 1 meeting held March 12, 2025 in Grimshaw. President Marilyn Dennis spoke about 2025 Budget, the National School Food Program agreement, Real Property Governance Act, and Jordan's Principle funding.

It was also noted that the Edwin Parr Nomination deadline for Zone 1 will be changed to March 18th next year to align with the other ASBA Zones.

- Board Policy Committee
Vice-Chair Koch commented on the meeting held March 25, 2025. The Committee discussed three Board policies (Policy 3, Policy 11, and Policy 3).
- Advocacy and Engagement Committee
The March 5, 2025, meeting minutes were included in the Board meeting agenda package as information.

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- GPPSD Education Foundation Committee
Trustee Martin commented on the meeting held March 19, 2025. A new Executive Director has been hired, Elizabeth Bell. There is also one new Board member, Collette Marcotte.

Individual Trustee Reports

Trustee Ouellette extended thanks to the IT Department for assisting him with his computer.

Trustee Johnston had nothing to report.

Trustee Buziak had nothing additional to report.

Trustee Martin had nothing to report.

Vice-Chair Koch attended the City of Grande Prairie's State of the City address with Trustee Martin and Board Chair Nellis. She noted great discussion and panels; as well as what is upcoming for post-secondary education through Northwestern Polytechnic.

Board Chair Nellis attended the virtual ASBA Bargaining Session with Superintendent McDonald.

Superintendent's Report

Items for Information

Superintendent McDonald shared the Superintendent's Report to the Board as information, which included the following information:

- **All Administrators Monthly Virtual Meeting**
The March 12 Professional Learning meeting for all school and system administration was focused on a variety of topics, including providing an update on division support for the use of artificial intelligence, reviewing the Resource Guide for Schools to Support English as Additional Language (EAL) learners, school level professional learning planning and planning for the 2025-2026 school year.
- **Interpreting Service Trial**
Director of Teaching and Learning Corinne Kruse, Director of Human Resources Tammie Maurer, and HR specialist Nythia Hojka introduced administrators to Language Line, an on-demand telephone interpreting service selected after reviewing three options. The service, already used by Alberta Health Services (AHS), will assist school administrators

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in communicating with non-English-speaking parents for registrations and meetings. Thanks to AHS, the division can access the service at their rates during the pilot program, which runs through this year and the 2025-2026 school year.

- **Spring Kindergarten Intervention**
Director Kruse has submitted a request to Alberta Education for division funding to offer small group literacy and numeracy intervention to Kindergarten students, beginning after the April break to the end of June. This is the 3rd year that direct intervention is being offered to kindergarten students. While the past 2 years have focused on literacy, this year students will also receive numeracy intervention.
- **Third Year Nursing Student Presentations**
Appreciation is extended to the 11 schools who partnered with the Bachelor of Science – Nursing program this year to welcome third year nursing students to provide classroom health promotion presentations. The presentations are an important part of the program for the young nurses and have been very well received by school administrators and teachers.
- **Apple Schools Update**
The four APPLE Schools in the division—Alexander Forbes, Avondale, Roy Bickell, and Crystal Park—are fully staffed, with staff completing initial training in early March. Each school is identifying key priorities in nutrition, physical health, and mental health to shape program delivery. Schools have started implementing activities like healthy food tastings, sports programs, and screen time reduction, while APPLE Schools staff work with School Councils to develop vision statements for the next two years.
- **Provincial Distribution of Information About Measles**
On March 18 Superintendents received a letter from the Medical Officers of Health in the North Zone identifying the increase in the number of confirmed cases of measles. The letter identified that as of the date of writing there were no confirmed cases in our school division, but contained proactive information about the virus, symptoms, and the response expected from our division if any confirmed cases are identified that involve staff, students or volunteers. As requested, principals have distributed the letter to all school parents, staff and volunteers. Superintendent McDonald commented on the policies and guidelines that the division has applied for any communicable diseases in schools.

Items for Future Action

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- ASBA Friends of Education Award Nomination
The nomination package for the RCMP School Resource Officers Program as the division's nominee for the Friends of Education Award was reviewed by the Board.

MOTION: Trustee Martin moves the Board nominate Corporal Gavin Ool, and the Grande Prairie Royal Canadian Mounted Police School Resource Officer Program, as the division's nominee for the 2025 ASBA Friends of Education Award.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15737

Superintendent McDonald thanked Deputy Superintendent Robinson and the Secretary to the Board for their assistance in developing the nomination package.

- 2025-2026 School Board Social Planning
Trustees were asked to engage in discussion about their goals for the upcoming Board Social scheduled for October 4, 2025. The Board reviewed feedback from the Teacher Trustee Liaison Committee (TTLC). There was general discussion on:
 - Changing the name of the event
 - Cost per ticket
 - Ability to reserve tables for schools
 - Development of a stakeholder committee to assist in planning

Associate Superintendent of Business Services

Associate Superintendent Oladele shared the Associate Superintendent of Business Services' Report to the Board as information, which included the following information:

- SCORES Update
The Technical Committees for the Standing Committee on Recreation and Education Services Agreement (SCORES) have had several meetings this year. Key items discussed during the meetings include:
 - Review of the draft updated SCORES agreement
 - Tournaments and developing a fee schedule
 - Mobile Skateparks for Summer 2025
- GP Christian School Modulars
Over the May long weekend, the Maintenance Department will relocate two modular classrooms from I.V. Macklin School to GP Christian School to provide extra space during its expansion. The move, which won't affect classroom space at I.V. Macklin, will be jointly funded, with the division contributing donated labor to reduce costs.

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- Information Technology Update
 - **Cyber Security Workshop:** Information Technology staff attended a cyber security workshop from March 12 – 14 hosted by Alberta Technology Leaders in Education (ATLE). The team explored the dark and deep web, learning how to navigate these platforms safely and securely and how these strategies can help protect the Division.
 - **Student Laptop Refresh:** For the 2025-26 school year, all student laptops will be replaced under a new five-year lease to manage costs and maintain consistency. The IT department, with help from three summer students, will distribute nearly 4,000 laptops across 17 schools, ensuring they are ready for the first day of school on August 28, 2025. There was discussion on target ratios, the average cost per student laptop, and how technology is being incorporated into curriculum.

- Transportation Committee Meeting

The Transportation Committee met on March 18 to discuss the ongoing implementation of the new regulation. The committee had an initial discussion about lowering the temperature threshold for school bus cancellations. The Transportation Coordinators from the three school divisions will review data from the past two years to assess the potential impacts of the change.

- 2025 Federal Election

Preliminary discussions have occurred with Elections Canada as they have requested use of 9 school sites for the April 28th Federal Election.

NEW BUSINESS

Trustee Professional Learning and Sharing
Nothing to report.

Upcoming Dates and Events

- Board Workplan

The Board reviewed the Board workplan as information. Trustees were reminded of the following upcoming events:

 - Board Professional Learning Retreat 2025 03 27
 - NSBA (Atlanta) 2025 04 04 – 05
 - ASBA Speakers' Corner 2025 04 07
 - ASBA Zone 1 (GPPSD Hosted) 2025 04 09
 - PSBC 2025 04 10 – 11
 - Board Policy Review Committee (3:30 pm) 2025 04 22
 - Review 2nd Quarter Budget Update 2025 04 22

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- Review Annual Leadership Succession Planning Report *In Camera* 2025 04 22
- Review Annual Division Compensation Report *In Camera* 2025 04 22
- Review Bi-Annual Legal and Insurance Issues Update *In Camera* 2025 04 22

Correspondence

- Correspondence from President of the AMA Section of Pediatrics to Minister of Education – re: Program Unit Funding (PUF)

MOTION: Trustee Johnston moved that the Board write a letter in support of increased Program Unit Funding (PUF) funding to the Minister of Education and Minister of Health.

There was discussion on the motion.

Trustee Ouellette suggested an amendment to remove the Minister of Health as PUF is administered by the Ministry of Education.

Trustee Johnston accepted the amendment as friendly. The Board voted on the amended motion:

MOTION: Trustee Johnston moved that the Board write a letter in support of increased Program Unit Funding (PUF) funding to the Minister of Education.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15738

- 2025 03 13 Letter from Wolf Creek Public School Board Chair to Minister Hajdu – re: Advocacy for Jordan's Principle
- 2025 03 17 Letter from GPPSD Parent – re: Shortened School Year Calendar

Superintendent McDonald provided additional background on a meeting held with the parent. Superintendent will send a thank you letter on behalf of the Board and Division.

Chair Nellis commented on the Board Highlights that are prepared for distribution to School Council Chairs.

IN CAMERA SESSION

MOTION: Trustee Oulette moved that the Board go in camera to discuss confidential correspondence at 8:03 p.m.

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UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15739

MOTION: Trustee Martin moved that the Board come out of camera at 8:18 p.m.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15740

ACTIONS ARISING FROM IN CAMERA

No actions.

NEXT MEETING AND ADJOURNMENT

Next Board Meeting and Adjournment

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for Tuesday, April 22, 2025, to be held at Central Office in the Board Room.

Board Chair Nellis called the Regular Board Meeting closed at 8:18 p.m.

Chair

Secretary-Treasurer