

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, February 1, 2005 at 5:00 p.m.

PRESENT

Board of Trustees:

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

ABSENT: Trustee G. Lane

Administration:

Dr. B. Croskery, Chief Superintendent of Schools
Ms. J. Barkway, Assistant Corporate Secretary
Ms. M. Clark, Superintendent, Human Resources
Mr. J. Drysdale, Superintendent, School Support Services
Mr. J. Jones, Executive Assistant to the Chief Superintendent of Schools
Ms. B. Kuester, Executive Director of Communications
Mr. G. Scott, Director and General Counsel, Legal and Risk Management Services
Ms. S. Wasylyshyn, Executive Assistant to the Trustees
Ms. D. Perrier, Recording Secretary

Stakeholder Representatives:

Ms. G. Burger-Martindale, Calgary Association of Parents and School Councils
Mr. B. Hicks, Calgary Board of Education Staff Association
Mr. L. Liffiton, Alberta Teachers' Association, Local No. 38
Ms. S. Raymond, Elementary School Principals' Association

Action By

1.0 CALL TO ORDER, NATIONAL ANTHEM AND WELCOME

Chair Dirks called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. and subsequent to singing the national anthem, welcomed representatives from the aforementioned stakeholder groups and members of the public.

2.0 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOVED by Trustee Close:

THAT the Agenda for the Regular Meeting held February 1, 2005, be approved as submitted.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

3.0 CORRESPONDENCE

There was no reporting of correspondence.

4.0 PRESENTATION, HONOURS AND RECOGNITION

4.1 PIITOAYIS FAMILY SCHOOL PRESENTATION

Superintendent Drysdale called forward Mr. P. Carlton, Area III Director, to make introductions. Mr. Carlton stated that the Piitoayis Family School is a success story and it has grown over the past three years. He thanked Chief Superintendent Croskery for his commitment to the aboriginal community. Ms. I. LaPierre, Principal, Piitoayis Family School, commenced the presentation with an invite to Mr. L. Wells and his son Harlan to share the flag song, which is performed every morning at their school to honour the flag of nations.

Ms. LaPierre continued the presentation with an introduction of herself in her native tongue, and a translation of the introduction, following with a PowerPoint presentation showing pictures of Piitoayis students in their learning environment. She noted the school opened in the fall of 2002; Piitoayis is a Blackfoot name, meaning Eagle Lodge; the learning environment is based on the balance of tradition, culture and academic excellence. The school serves over nine nations, offering a program of studies for Kindergarten to Grade 7, following the Alberta Education program of studies; it is open to all students – aboriginal and non-aboriginal. When the aboriginal community was consulted in the planning stages of the school, it was their recommendation that family form a part of the school, and this relationship continues to build within their school.

Shilo, a Grade 7 student at the school, provided comments about his learning experience. He opened by giving thanks first to the Board of Trustees and Chief Superintendent Croskery for hearing the presentation; then to his school for supporting him and allowing him the opportunity to present, and also to his grandmother for her presence at the meeting. Shilo stated that he has been studying the native studies since Grade 5, that his schooling has provided an awesome cultural experience for him as well as for his peers and his classmates, and that he has had tremendous success with his learning at Piitoayis.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, Trustee Cochrane gave words of thanks, noting she is honored to represent the school and community as Ward Trustee. She pointed out that she looks forward in anticipation to the day that Piitoayis Family School can be housed in its own location. She gave thanks to Shilo and noted that he is a living example of why the Board of Trustees wanted this kind of school to exist.

5.0 VERBAL UPDATES

The next two items are recorded in the order that they were received through the Board Chair – they are reversed in the order as noted on the agenda.

5.1 REPORT FROM THE CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT

Chief Superintendent Croskery introduced and welcomed Mr. Jeff Jones, Executive Assistant to the Chief Superintendent, noting he was formerly the principal of University Elementary School.

Chief Superintendent Croskery reported on a project that has been undertaken at Fred Seymour Elementary School. To celebrate National Flag Day of Canada, February 15, 2005,

the students made up flags using red and white beads strung onto safety pins. He noted that Fred Seymour School is looking to raise funds to build a house in a small fishing community called "Morgan Village", situated on the west coast of Thailand, which was devastated by the tsunami. This village lost many family members and a great number of their homes, boats and businesses. It is now a tent city in need of support to rebuild its community, including a school - the cost of building one home in this village is \$3,200 and they need to build 100 homes. Chief Superintendent Croskery pointed out that this kind of work is going on in many of our schools in the CBE and he feels very privileged to be Chief Superintendent of a system that cares for those in need.

5.2 REPORT FROM THE CHAIR AND TRUSTEES

Trustee Bazinet shared that she was at Fred Seymour Elementary School when they introduced the Morgan Village project. She noted the students' goal is to raise enough funds to rebuild the entire village. While they have always been told that it takes a village to raise a child, they now believe that it takes children to raise a village.

Chair Dirks relayed that a recent meeting was held with the Board of Trustees and the Calgary Caucus of MLAs, where key concerns were raised with respect to our funding and infrastructure needs. He noted further that he had also met with the newly appointed Minister of Infrastructure where discussion focused on costs associated with building - in particular floor pricing - and on our plant operations and maintenance funding.

Chair Dirks noted the CBE is a senior sponsor of the 2005 World School Debate Championship being held in Calgary, commencing Friday, February 11, 2005.

6.0 PUBLIC QUESTION PERIOD

There were no questions submitted from the public.

7.0 STAKEHOLDER REPORTS

7.1 Mr. N. MacKenzie, School Council Member, Balmoral Junior High School

Mr. MacKenzie shared concerns as they affect Balmoral School, referencing past and present communications, with respect to the proposed move of the Traditional Learning Centre (TLC) program and the proposed creation of a new arts program at Sir John Franklin School. He stated that the concerns of the Balmoral community have not diminished; that although a great deal of time and effort has been spent by their school community, Dr. Croskery and the school administration, trying to resolve the complex issues, the recommendations put forward in a report for consideration by the Board later in the meeting clearly default to the original proposal, which is both frustrating and disappointing.

Mr. Mackenzie stated his belief that should the Board approve these recommendations, the Board will have effectively:

- Endorsed the "default proposal" by accommodating TLC at Balmoral and creating a New Arts program at Sir John Franklin making a reversal more difficult.
- Created the challenge of two additional dual track programs, one at Balmoral and one at Sir John Franklin. King George will remain dual track as there is not space at Balmoral to accommodate all the TLC students and so some will need to stay behind.

- Undermined the value of the Balmoral Learning Through the Arts Program by continuing that program while creating a competing program not 20 blocks away.

Mr. Mackenzie pointed out that in the recommendations to be considered later in the meeting, the administration acknowledges that the TLC will not find a dedicated home for September 2005. Given this, there is no need to legitimize those recommendations with approvals that will be difficult to rescind. He urged the Board of Trustees to not approve those recommendations, but to charge the administration with seeking more appropriate long-term solutions.

7.2 Mr. E. Semple, Chair, Traditional Learning Centre Middle School Parent Committee (King George School)

Mr. Semple noted that written material was made available to trustees, which he asked that they review. He stated that yesterday afternoon parents involved in the ongoing consultations regarding the proposed relocation of the Balmoral Learning through the Arts program were called to a meeting with Dr. Croskery, with the stated agenda of providing a heads up to what would be presented to the Board of Trustees this evening. Mr. Semple put forward the concern that if the Board approves the recommendation put forth in the upcoming report, as it stands, it will irrevocably damage the Traditional Learning Centre (TLC) program going forward. He stated that a great deal of hard work and investment by TLC students, parents, staff and administration has been overlooked in this process; and he shared the concern that the recommendations in no way reflect the exchange that took place in the consultations.

Mr. Semple reminded the Board of Trustees of their motion made on December 7, 2004, regarding the consolidation and expansion of the TLC program in North Calgary, and he noted their community has embraced this endeavour with excitement and passion. He stated his belief that the TLC needs a home in 2005 – they do not need dual track, nor do they need to have their children further fragmented and moved around the city – and we need to change the belief that they are nothing more than a head count to maintain viability at unviable schools. He urged the Board of Trustees to recognize and look at their decision of December 7th, to apply that thought process to the recommendations coming forward later in the meeting by administration, and treat it accordingly.

8.0 GOVERNANCE: POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND MONITORING

8.1 ACTION ITEMS

8.1.1 Middle School Expansion of The Traditional Learning Centre in North Calgary

Chief Superintendent Croskery provided introductory comments and acknowledged the many community members and parents of the four affected school programs, who participated in a number of meetings for the purpose of consultation and discussion of the complexities surrounding the issue of expansion of programs. He stated the complexity of the challenge is now better understood, but we are still not at the point of resolving all the matters in need of addressing. There are no satisfactory technical solutions that administration has somehow failed to invoke - we have a classic organizational challenge that requires more time for its resolution and a willingness for all parties, including the Calgary Board of Education, to settle for something less than having all of their interests 100 percent fulfilled.

Chief Superintendent Croskery pointed out that if the Board of Trustees supports the recommendations in this report, it would buy us a little time to work together to develop more acceptable alternatives if that is possible; and, in that sense, this report is a partial

compromise that runs the risk of offending all parties. The report suggests some general directions with final details remaining to be worked out at the school and area levels.

Trustees reviewed the issues and posed numerous questions, summarized as follows. In response to a question of space at Balmoral for the two programs, Chief Superintendent Croskery provided the projected numbers, noting that the total number of students projected for the Traditional Learning Centre (TLC) (grades 7-9) and for the Learning Through the Arts program (LTTA), is 401 students. The rated capacity for Balmoral School is 490 spaces.

The proposal by Balmoral representatives to reopen King Edward School to facilitate the TLC expansion was discussed. Chief Superintendent Croskery pointed out that it has been made clear by the representatives of the TLC that a site north of the Bow River is strongly desired. In response to a question about the state of condition of King Edward School, he was unable to provide figures on the cost for upgrades to the facility should it be considered for reopening, but noted that it is in poor condition.

The matter of single track and dual track schools was discussed and in response to a question, Ms. N. Johnson, Area V Director, provided the names of schools in south Calgary that currently offer the TLC, which are all dual track schools. Colonel Sanders in north Calgary is the only school that offers TLC as a single track.

Comments were made about the term "dedicated site" as put forth in the recommendations of the report, and concerns were noted about its use. Chief Superintendent Croskery stated that there are parts of our city where space is more readily available, with Area II being very tight on space. More specifically, other than focusing on the nature of the program and the aspirations of the parents, decisions are framed around the contextual issues such as what facilities are available in the city, where those schools are located, in relation to the demand, the facility condition and the projected cost for renovation.

In response to a question of school capacity and projections for growth at Balmoral School and at King George School, Mr. J. Jones, Executive Assistant to the Chief Superintendent, provided a breakdown of the actual enrolments for the TLC grades 5-8 at King George and of the number of students on the wait list for the TLC at King George.

MOVED by Trustee Bazinet:

THAT the Board of Trustees waive the notice provisions in Section I (11) (f) of the Board Procedures (April 2004) that require two weeks notice be given to bring forward a motion, in order to allow for an amendment to a motion that was previously adopted regarding the Traditional Learning Centre.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the motion of December 7, 2004, which reads:

"THAT the middle school component of the Traditional Learning Centre Alternative Program be relocated from King George School to a suitable facility north of the Bow River for September 2005;"

be amended to read:

“THAT some middle school component of the Traditional Learning Centre Alternative Program be relocated from King George School to a suitable facility north of the Bow River for September 2005;”

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Trustee Cochrane:

THAT the Board of Trustees designates Balmoral Junior High School as the site for some middle school component of the Traditional Learning Centre program, effective September 2005. The grade configuration of the program will be subject to statutory provisions, Board Governance Policies and available space at that time.

Throughout the discussion and in debate of the motion, it was recognized by trustees that this is an interim measure to address the issue of space and it is a compromise to meet the accommodation needs of our students system wide.

Chair Dirks called for the vote on the motion.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Trustee Close:

THAT the Board of Trustees confirms the status of the Balmoral Learning Through the Arts (LTTA) program as a LTTA-community program at Balmoral School for 2005-2006.

During debate of the motion, concerns expressed by trustees included that a community program does not benefit in the same manner as a system program with respect to resources; it was felt to be unwise to introduce a new term that has no clarity of definition; and, communications to trustees from a number of Balmoral community residents have indicated varying perceptions about the type of program that is being offered at Balmoral School and consensus amongst those residents has not been reached on whether it should be a community program, an alternative program or other type of program.

Chair Dirks called for the vote on the motion.

The motion was
DEFEATED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Trustee Close:

THAT the Board of Trustees directs the Chief Superintendent to seek a long-term site for a Traditional Learning Centre middle school, to be confirmed and operational by September 2006.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the Board of Trustees approves in principle the establishment of a North Calgary Arts and Learning Alternative Program at Sir John Franklin Junior High School effective September 2005, and directs Administration to provide further recommendations regarding the grade configuration of the alternative program with an implementation plan by March 1, 2005 for final approval by the Board of Trustees.

In response to a question, Trustee Fawcett stated that the motion is made with the assumption that the proposed alternative arts and learning program would mirror the program that is offered in south Calgary at Willow Park Elementary School (formerly at Milton Williams School).

The following is a summary of the comments that were made during the debate and in favour of the motion:

- There are a number of CBE school sites that offer arts-infused programs with great success and the demand for such programs continues to grow;
- There is strong support for this type of alternative program from families living in North Calgary;
- Some parents have expressed the belief that the program currently at Balmoral School would not suit their needs, in that they see Balmoral as a community school.

The comments expressed in opposition to the motion included:

- It could potentially take away from further opportunities and success of the program that is currently offered at Balmoral School;
- It would require the expenditure of more resources to the program being proposed at Sir John Franklin School if it were to operate under the same status as that of the program in the south; and
- It is premature and should not be considered until after further consultations are held between the Chief Superintendent and the parents of Balmoral School.

Chair Dirks called for the vote on the motion.

The motion was
CARRIED.

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

MOVED by Trustee Cochrane:

THAT the Board of Trustees directs the Chief Superintendent to continue working with the impacted communities to engage their legitimate long-term interests as they relate to the principles of democracy, the common good, and the finite resources of the Calgary Board of Education, and to report back to the Board of Trustees by March 1, 2005.

The motion was
CARRIED.

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

Recessed: 7:15 p.m.
Reconvened: 7:33 p.m.

8.1.2 Report from School Fees Review Committee

Trustees gave consideration to the contents of the report and had their questions responded to by Mr. A. Smith, Director, Corporate Financial Services.

Mr. Smith addressed a question about the junior high school general fee maximum being higher than the senior high school general fee maximum. He stated the fee maximum for the junior high school is made up of two components with \$30 relating to the provision of lunch services within the school. It was asked where there are two components to a fee, do parents have the option of voting on each component separately? Mr. Smith noted his belief that further clarification was provided to schools this past fall, so that segregation and separate accountability for this current school year is a requirement.

With respect to a question of the waiver process Mr. Smith informed that the general rule is that Alberta Health provides subsidies to certain individuals on the basis of low income for their Alberta Health Care (AHC) premiums. Those families who receive any form of AHC subsidy are eligible to be waived for the instructional resource fee, transportation fee and the musical instrument rental fee. There are some other provisions for fee waiver eligibility, such as for new refugees to Canada, as they likely do not have Alberta Health Care coverage.

In addressing a question of accountability for collection and spending of the fees, Mr. Smith stated that instructional resource fees are collected at the school and remitted centrally; each school is accountable for reporting to the parents – for identifying first what the fee will be used for, early in the school year, and after the end of the school year, identifying how those fees were spent. There is a format provided as a guide to schools; however, the school has some discretion in how they report back to parents. The accountability for the general school fees is at the school level – where the amount of the fee is established (subject to the maximum approved by the Board of Trustees); it is explained to parents what that would be used for, and, after the fact, an explanation is given of how that was spent. Activity charges are exclusively set at the school level, which may relate to gym wear, field trips and other such things, and the accountability for that would be on a general basis to the parents. Mr. Smith noted his belief there is a guideline for instances where a significant amount of money is to be charged for a specific event, for that particular charge to be accounted for. The noon supervision fees are collected at the school and the accountability of the fees to the parent remains with the school. The musical instrument rental fees are collected at the school but are remitted centrally to the music loan pool – the accountability for this fee is on a general basis and is reported as part of our year-end financial statements. Any unspent dollars go into a formal reserve and are available for the purchase of instruments in subsequent years if not spent that year. The transportation fees are collected on a global basis for all students, and those fees are accounted for under the transportation block as a whole; any unspent monies in this area fall into a reserve and are used in future years in support of transportation.

Mr. Smith addressed a concern that was raised, noting that the School Fees Committee had reviewed the issues around the reporting to parents by schools. The context of the review was around principles that should be applied, and with regard to compliance with existing guidelines. It was found that compliance may not be in as detailed format as some of the recommendations; therefore, it is anticipated that Corporate Financial Services will follow-up and clarify the nature of accountability.

Some discussion was held about the necessity of our board charging a transportation fee, with acknowledgement made of the many different variables between an urban board setting and a rural board setting. It was noted that we are challenged to meet the service levels that we provide with the grants that are made available to us.

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the Board of Trustees receives the report from the School Fees Review Committee for information.

Trustee Fawcett spoke to the rationale for the motion, noting it is important for the Board of Trustees to have a discussion on the values and benefits behind school fees and to develop a policy that clearly articulates the need for school fees and the level at which school fees should be collected.

Chair Dirks called for the vote on the motion.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

8.2 INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

8.2.1 Chief Superintendent's Monitoring Report

Chief Superintendent Croskery and senior staff responded to questions raised by trustees. Mr. A. Smith, Director, Corporate Financial Services, responded to a question on the definition of functional capacity, as referenced on page 5 of the report, third paragraph. He provided a summary of the issue and noted that in relation to our goal of reducing class sizes in our schools the question that becomes relevant is whether available school space can realistically accommodate the number of classrooms required.

Further discussion took place about capacity and ratings of student spaces, with Mr. Smith noting the calculation is based on an overall capacity of the school as a whole. The Student Accommodation Services staff looks at what the school can accommodate versus what the capacity is assessed at by Alberta Infrastructure and for those where there is a difference of over 25 student spaces (the equivalent of a classroom), there will be an appeal. Out of our +200 schools, there are approximately 50 schools that are over rated by at least 25 student spaces and approximately 80 schools that are under rated by at least 25 student spaces.

MOVED by Trustee Cochrane:

THAT the Board of Trustees receives the Chief Superintendent's monitoring report for information.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

At this point in the meeting Chief Superintendent Croskery announced this is the last Board meeting that Mr. Smith would be attending because he has resigned his position with the CBE. Accolades were given to Mr. Smith for his exemplary work during his tenure, with Chief Superintendent Croskery stating he could not wish for a better colleague, a more astute or committed person in our school system. Thanks were bestowed upon Mr. Smith by Chair Dirks, on behalf of the Board of Trustees, for his dedicated and competent service to the CBE. He noted also that we were richly blessed to have Mr. Smith as a public servant and he will be missed greatly.

8.2.2 Boys and Learning Strategies Analysis

Superintendent Drysdale introduced the item, noting that the report is provided as a response to the Board of Trustees' directive last fall, which is an outcome from the work of the committee that reviewed a wide array of issues concerning boys and their unique learning needs. The analysis in this report identifies responses to nine strategies that were brought forward in the earlier report, with a series of recommendations. Ms. D. Lewis, Director, Student Services Support, was in attendance to assist with questions. Trustees remarked that the report was very thorough and well written.

8:11 p.m. – Chair Dirks received the consent of the Board of Trustees to continue the meeting to the completion of the agenda.

MOVED by Trustee Cochrane.

THAT the Board of Trustees receives the report entitled *Boys and Learning Strategies Analysis* for information.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

8.2.3 Full-Day Kindergarten

Superintendent Drysdale provided opening comments and commended the work of the many staff members who assisted with the full day kindergarten research. Ms. D. Bailey, Kindergarten Specialist, Curriculum Support, was in attendance to assist with questions.

Questions were raised and responded to with respect to the following issues:

- Funding the program – in some schools the kindergarten program is funded through the school's budget; some schools are using their equity allocation.
- Student accommodation and availability of space for full-day kindergarten calculations are based on class size projections and space availability for 2005-2006. It is known that presently we have a number of schools that don't have space for a full-day kindergarten program this year.
- How to identify who and where the students are that would benefit from a full-day kindergarten program – the issue is under review by Alberta Education as well, to consider the possibility of screening processes, assessment methods and the like.
- Of the nine schools currently identified as having the highest risk factors, two of these schools do not have space to accommodate a full-day kindergarten program. With respect to a time frame required for approval to allow the program to be operational by the fall of this year, it is possible to move fairly quickly through the use of a very good model we have in place to implement programs. It is always preferred to have a few months notice in order to allow for smooth planning and early communications.
- Attendance in the full-day kindergarten program is not mandatory – it is a choice.

MOVED by Trustee Cochrane:

THAT the Board of Trustees receives the Full-Day Kindergarten report for information.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Action By

MOTIONS ARISING:

MOVED by Trustee Close:

THAT the Board report entitled *Full-Day Kindergarten*, dated February 1, 2005, be posted on the Calgary Board of Education's website and that our school communities be notified of this posting.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

J. Barkway/B. Kuester

MOVED by Trustee Bazinet:

THAT the report entitled *Full-Day Kindergarten*, dated February 1, 2005, be shared with Alberta Education.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

S. Wasylyshyn

MOVED by Trustee Bazinet:

THAT the Chief Superintendent be directed to bring recommendations and options to the Board of Trustees, prior to budget deliberations, regarding how to offer, on an ongoing basis, full-day kindergarten programs for students in the CBE, and the costs associated with such programs.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

B. Croskery

8.3 TRUSTEE INQUIRIES

There were no trustee inquiries.

8.4 TRUSTEE NOTICES OF MOTION

Trustee Close gave notice of motion regarding Board Governance Policy around School Fees.

9.0 MINUTES

9.1 REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES HELD JANUARY 18, 2005

9.3 REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES HELD JANUARY 25, 2005

MOVED by Trustee Close:

THAT the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held January 18, 2005 and the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held January 25, 2005 be approved as submitted.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

9.2 SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES HELD JANUARY 19, 2005

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees held January 19, 2005 be approved as submitted.

The motion was

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Abstained:

Trustee Dirks

9.4 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There was no business arising from the minutes.

10.0 EMERGENT ITEMS FOR NEXT BOARD MEETING

There were no emergent items for the next Board meeting.

11.0 ADJOURNMENT

The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.