

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, March 6, 2007 at 5:00 p.m.

PRESENT

Board of Trustees:

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

Administration:

Ms. J. Barkway, Assistant Corporate Secretary
Mr. F. Coppinger, Superintendent, Facilities and Environmental Services
Dr. B. Croskery, Chief Superintendent of Schools
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. S. Wasylshyn, Executive Assistant to Trustees
Ms. H. Numrich, Recording Secretary

Stakeholder Representatives:

Ms. G. Burger-Martindale, Calgary Association of Parents and School Councils
Mr. B. Anderson, Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local No. 40
Ms. A. Craig, Calgary Board of Education Staff Association
Ms. E. Knudtson, Principal's Association for Adolescent Learners
Ms. C. Murray, Principal's Association for Adolescent Learners

Action By

1.0 CALL TO ORDER, NATIONAL ANTHEM AND WELCOME

Chair Cochrane called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m., and Alexandria, a Grade 12 student from Central Memorial High School led in the singing of the national anthem. Chair Cochrane acknowledged and welcomed representatives from the aforementioned organizations.

2.0 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the Agenda for the Regular Meeting held March 6, 2007 be approved as submitted.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

3.0 SCHOOL/SYSTEM PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Vision Centre

Chair Cochrane noted that some of the Trustees and staff had already met some of the Vision Centre students this evening and enjoyed their displays on the plaza. She invited Director D. Lewis, Student Services to introduce the presentation. Director Lewis gave a brief introduction and introduced members of the Vision Team: Ms. J. Northcott, Ms. J. Leslie, Ms. L. Graham-Hill, Ms. A. Leavens, Ms. C. Bell and Ms. D. Brent. Ms. Northcott gave a PowerPoint presentation. The Vision Centre has seen an increase each year in the number of Braille students and will be accepting four more new students next year. She provided a Braille document, explaining that just as most people require support to read it, Braille students require more intense support to the learning materials that are presented to them. Specific skills are needed to access the curriculum presented in the regular classroom. The Visual Resource Centre offers intensive, short term programs for students and provides professional development opportunities for parents and staff. The program has been very successful and has been expanded to allow access to individuals throughout Alberta. Open houses are held throughout the year and they often have visitors from different provinces and countries. The Vision Centre is mindful of ensuring that students meet the Ends Statements of the Calgary Board of Education. Ms. J. Whitley, a parent, shared about her experience with her own son attending the program and his positive, incredible learning opportunity. Students Stephen, Dominick and Dylan also shared by reading Braille to the boardroom audience.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, Trustee Lane thanked the presenters, and particularly the students for an exceptional presentation.

4.0 HONOURS AND RECOGNITIONS

5.0 PUBLIC CONVERSATION AND INFORMATION

5.1 Correspondence

Ms. Barkway read a letter for the record, from the Honorable Liepert, Minister of Education, congratulating the Board of Trustees on receiving the Conference Board of Canada National Award in Governance.

5.2 Report from the Chair and Trustees

Chair Cochrane reported that Superintendent J. Drysdale has announced that he will be retiring from the Calgary Board of Education, and on behalf of the Board, thanked him for the work that he has done for so many students and for many years of excellent service. Superintendent Drysdale responded with his thanks and appreciation.

5.3 Report from the Chief Superintendent

Chief Superintendent Croskery provided brief remarks about the following activities and school visits: he attended two academy qualifier meetings regarding system expectations, upcoming assessment and training initiatives, and the building of a succession plan at the Leadership Centre; Deputy Chief Superintendent B. Hubert attended retirements of two principals, Mr. J. Clarke from Woodman Junior High and Mr. B. Tuff from Sir John A. Macdonald Junior High; Dr. Croskery attended West View Secondary School where sadly, Ms. B. Wallace, Administrative Secretary who had been pivotal to the school, passed away suddenly. He gave tribute for her work on behalf of the school system; Dr. Croskery was radio interviewed at Alex Ferguson Elementary School; he attended Western Canada High Career Day Symposium and acknowledged the support of Husky Oil and other members of

the corporate community, resource people and military who supported the school; Mr. J. Jones attended the Award Ceremony for Canada's Outstanding Principals, where Principal W. Tuff received an award; Dr. Croskery attended the Principal's Association of Adolescent Learners retreat and gave a presentation with Ms. C. Faber regarding the focus on personalization of learning; Superintendent Drysdale attended the Calgary Bridge Foundation for Youth fundraising gala; Dr. Croskery attended the Alberta Teacher's Association dinner for new principals and acknowledged them for the invitation.

5.4 Public Question Period

There were no questions from the public.

5.5 Stakeholder Reports

5.5.1 Ms. M. Mather, Parent and Spokesperson for South Calgary Immersion Families Association

Ms. Mather presented the group's position on the recommendation for Kingsland Elementary School closure consideration. They are not in support of the recommendation for closure. She stated that it has been a very viable school up until approximately five years ago when the system began a slow dismantling process. The English program was removed four years ago, and less than three years ago, part of the French Immersion program was removed. As a result, the population of the school is not as large as it has been; however, it has the largest student population of the schools that serve the south. They are concerned that if this closure occurs and the children are dispersed into three different schools, this will have a negative impact on the students. These children have seen their peers taken away twice and if this plan is not sustainable, they could see another disruption in as little as a two-year time frame. Ms. Mather and the South Calgary Immersion Families Association request that the Board look at another alternative, and not to make this a business decision but rather to consider the best interests of the children.

Chair Cochrane thanked Ms. Mather for her presentation. She explained the rationale for moving the consideration of closure items to the beginning of the agenda, in respect for those whose communities may be affected by these decisions.

5.6 Trustee Inquiries

There were none.

6.0 ACTION ITEMS

6.1 Recommendation for Consideration of Closure of the French Immersion Program at Kingsland School

Dr. Croskery introduced the report and thanked the staff for their work. Director P. Carlton gave opening comments about the very complex issue of French Immersion South and explained that they have been discussing this issue over the past ten years. Administration has listened very carefully to parents and communities, and has come back with a revised plan based upon stakeholder input, some of which is in this report. The closure of Kingsland French Immersion would allow other opportunities, in regards to French Immersion accommodation in the South, to move forward. Director N. Johnson from Area V stated that they have been working on this process for a number of years with school principals and school council chairs and a foundation has been laid over the past two to three years to support the consideration of closure.

Trustees gave consideration to the report and posed a number of questions, which were addressed by administration and are summarized as follows:

- Based on feedback from parents of Area IV students currently attending Chinook Park School, it would be most appropriate to grandfather those students to the end of Grade Six. Any new Kindergarten or Grade One student residing in Area IV would be designated to the appropriate school, either Westgate or William Reid schools. The Grades 3, 4 and 5 students who are currently attending Kingsland School, residing in Riverbend and Ogden, would be grandfathered as a cohort group to Chinook Park School, if parents so wished. New students would be designated to Sam Livingston School, as transportation would be more appropriate. There are 9 students in Area IV at Kingsland School that can be grandfathered to finish their division at Chinook Park or go to William Reid School. Should it remain open, the projected enrolment for Kingsland School for September 2007 is 170 Kindergarten to Grade 6 students. There are only two entry points into the French Immersion program, Kindergarten or Grade One. The projected numbers are based on trends over time.
- With reference to page 6-4 of the report, under Kingsland Elementary School, it states, "With the current numbers, the school requires incremental dollars to provide the program of studies". The incremental dollars that supported Kingsland School came out of the Area office. A small number of schools in Area V receive incremental dollars based on increase/decrease in population or in some cases a transition around student accommodation processes.
- Schools in Area V west of Macleod Trail that currently offer French Immersion programs are Kingsland and Chinook Park, both located in the north end of the Area. The long-term plan is to reduce ride times and keep cohort groups of students together. Commencement of a Grade 7 French Immersion program at Harold Panabaker School allows for a cohort group from Chinook Park west of McLeod Trail. For those students on the east side of McLeod Trail, Area V schools offering French Immersion include Sam Livingston, Sundance, and Fairview Schools to accommodate those in the Kindergarten to Grade 9 configuration.
- There are only 15 French Immersion students projected to continue to Junior High at Elboya School. For some parents, the longer bus ride is the issue, for others it is the choice of an alternate program. By expanding the William Reid School boundary they hope to generate a continuing K-9 population at both William Reid and Elboya schools.
- A Trustee reported that the Board received a report from the school council at Kingsland School with some recommendations and revised goals. They suggest opening a K-4 French Immersion program at Janet Johnstone School. The feedback that administration received from parents was to open another site south of Fish Creek on the west side of McLeod Trail. The current schools are full right now. The opening of the Somerset/Shawnessy Middle School in 2008 will present opportunity for students in Grades 5 and 6 from Janet Johnstone School to move there. When Shawnessy opens, another French Immersion site will be considered.
- If Kingsland School does not close, the other recommended changes in the report would occur and it would not impact any boundary or designation changes with regards to French Immersion South.

Chair Cochrane reminded that any decision made tonight is not about closure but about whether or not to proceed with consideration of closure.

MOVED by Trustee Close:

That the Board of Trustees Receives for information and for the record, the accommodation and implementation plans outlined in the report, as circulated with the agenda for the March 6, 2007 Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Trustee Close:

THAT the Board of Trustees is satisfied that there is cause to proceed with a consideration of closure of the French Immersion Program at Kingsland Elementary School in accordance with the *Closure of Schools Regulation* and the Board of Trustees' Governance Policy 5E: *Board of Trustees' Procedure – Consideration of School Closure, sections 4-7.*

Trustee comments in support of the motion included:

- This is an important, serious step. The questions raised by the parents and the report from administration require the full process to allow questions to be more fully explained and to have a more complete understanding of the impact of keeping the program open or closing it.

Trustee comments not in support of the motion included:

- Parents and staff have been working for a long time in regards to French Immersion accommodation. Trustees support the French Immersion program and believe in making it more accessible. The concern is that all French Immersion programs in the south will be very full which doesn't allow for room to grow. For example, Sundance Elementary School has a capacity of 500, and according to this report, it will be over 100% utilized until 2011. There are 600 spaces at Chinook Park, with a projected enrollment of 570. A letter was sent to parents on January 12, 2007 stating that one of the main accommodation challenges, and the reason for the review, was because some programs were experiencing high enrolment problems. Examples given were Sam Livingston and Sundance schools. This proposal does nothing to alleviate either problem, in fact it will mean adding to Sam Livingston School. French Immersion parents have seen a lot of movement. A Trustee expressed that there is not sufficient cause to proceed with consideration of closure at this time.

Chair Cochrane reminded Trustees that the point of debate is "do we have enough information contained in this report to proceed to consideration of closure", rather than to debate the merit of the proposals contained within this report.

Trustees entered into second round of debate on the motion.

Trustee comments not in support of the motion included:

- When the proposal was taken out to the public, an additional proposal was also taken, but not at the same time. When feedback was received, it was on the proposal to open three new sites and to close two sites. This proposal is to close one site and open none. Concern was expressed that the process followed did not receive feedback on the revised plan. Parents have strongly supported the French

Immersion program, and there is concern this only deals with the current students and does not deal with the building up of the French Immersion program.

Trustee comments in support of the motion included:

- There is enough sound rationale in this report to begin the process; it will not impact students at this point, but will allow the Board to engage the public. This is a serious consideration to be taken.

Chair Cochrane called for the motion.

The motion was
CARRIED.

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

7.0 MONITORING AND RESULTS

7.1 Executive Limitations 6: Instructional Program

Chief Superintendent Croskery provided introductory remarks and thanked everyone who worked on the report. Superintendent Drysdale presented the report and expressed his appreciation for the work of his colleagues.

Chair Cochrane reviewed the criteria against which 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 for the Board to decide. She noted further that the particular vote with regard to compliance should in no way be construed as a vote of non-confidence.

Trustees posed questions that were addressed by Administration that are summarized as follows:

- A broad array of programs were identified in considering individual student programs of choice, but did not include any Junior and Senior High options.
- There was considerable discussion with regards to equal opportunity to alternative programs for out of area students. Some Areas offer more alternative programs than others. Area students residing within the designated Area are given first priority to access the program. There is no lottery system that they are aware of. Administration is willing to listen to expressions of community interest in a particular program and consider available options. Area Directors and Principals do careful monitoring of demand for programs. There is a wait list for the Traditional Learning Centre program, for which they are monitoring and considering expansion. It was suggested that the public might be more reassured if data could be provided in regards to monitoring of the programs and future predictability. In general, families who elect to send students to an alternate program school would be expected to see very good performance. The School Development Process is an annual review of program and learning outcomes, where Education Support Services is involved in quality control checks to ensure learning outcomes are being met.

- In reference to the paragraph on Student Services Support on page 7-8, it should read “over 60 per cent of participants”.
- Kindergarten is not a mandated program in Alberta and Alberta Education only funds a half-day program. The Calgary Board of Education offers several full day programs.
- It is up to the individual school and school council as to how funds raised are allocated. It is intended that they are used for whatever cause they have been raised for.
- There has been an increase in enrollment in CBe-learn and home school programs. Enrolments are not capped and extra staff has been hired to adjust to the significant growth.

MOVED by Trustee Bazinet:

THAT the Chief Superintendent has reasonably interpreted the provisions of Executive Limitations 6: Instructional Program, and that the Board of Trustees finds the Chief Superintendent to be in compliance with this policy.

There was some discussion regarding the importance of this Executive Limitation as it directly impacts student learning.

Chair Cochrane called for the vote on the motion.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Motions arising:

MOVED by Trustee Dirks:

THAT the Board of Trustees commends the Chief Superintendent and the school system for the significant leadership role in developing English as a Second Language benchmarks and for the high quality work in regards to CBe-learn and home schooling which has resulted in a significant increase in enrolment in those programs.

Trustees expressed that these are significant areas of achievement and are worthy of commendation. Benchmarks have positively impacted student achievements.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Trustee Ferguson:

THAT the Board of Trustees commends the Chief Superintendent for exemplary performance in the area of implementing an integrated, automated library system.

Trustee Ferguson commented that the Calgary Board of Education is the first school district in Canada to institute an integrated library system, and that it is important to provide students access to resources that support learning.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Trustee Lane:

THAT the Board of Trustees commends the Chief Superintendent on advancement of the second language initiative one year ahead of the Alberta Education mandate.

Trustee Lane stated that this is a real achievement, especially for such a large system. Many other boards in the province were not able to move ahead as quickly.

Chair Cochrane called for the motion.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Recessed at 6:53 p.m.
Reconvened at 7:07 p.m.

8.0 POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

8.1 Executive Limitations 3: Information, Counsel and Support to the Board of Trustees – Impact Statements

Chief Superintendent Croskery provided introductory remarks.

Trustees posed questions, which Administration responded to, and the following is a summary of that discussion:

- The clause “but not limited to” was included so as not to limit the impact statements to only specific areas.
- Administration requires clarity from the Board of Trustees as to specifically what support or information they are asking for, in order to provide the information in the best way possible.

MOVED by Trustee Dirks:

THAT the Board of Trustees receives the report *Impact Statement for Proposed Amendments to EL-3: Communication and Counsel to the Board of Trustees for information, in the form as submitted with the agenda for the Regular Meeting held March 6, 2007.*

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

9.0 CONSENT AGENDA

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

9.1 Board Consent Agenda

9.1.1 Approval of Minutes

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

9.1.2 EducationMatters

THAT the Board of Trustees approves the reappointment of Mr. Chris Fong as Governor of EducationMatters, to be effective February 17, 2007, for a 3-year term, ending February 17, 2010.

9.1.3 Notification of Change in Ward Boundaries

THAT the Board of Trustees receives the *Ward Boundaries* report for information and for the record in the form as submitted with the Agenda for the Regular Meeting held March 6, 2007.

9.1.4 Approval of Public Participation Plan for Governance Policies on Educational Funding and Innovative/Supplementary Funding.

THAT the Board of Trustees adopts the Public Participation Plan regarding the draft Governance Policies on Educational Funding and Innovative Supplementary Funding, in the form as submitted with the Agenda for the Regular Meeting held March 6, 2007 and directs that the plan be implemented as soon as possible

9.2 Chief Superintendent Consent Agenda

9.2.1 Monthly Update

THAT the Board of Trustees receives the report for information, in the form as submitted with the Agenda for the Regular Meeting held March 6, 2007.

10.0 ACTION ITEMS

There were no action items.

11.0 TRUSTEE NOTICES OF MOTION

Trustee Bazinet gave notice of a motion that she will be bringing forward at the next public meeting, March 20, 2007, regarding deleting subsection 9 of EL-6 that reads: "Assure that no program emphasizes a particular religion, notwithstanding the *School Act* definition of alternative programs". Should the first motion be successful, she will also be bringing forward a motion for a public participation plan.

Recessed at 7:27 p.m.
Reconvened at 7:35 p.m.

IN-CAMERA ISSUES

12.1 Motion to Move In Camera

MOVED by Trustee Bazinet:

THAT the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees moves in camera.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

12.2 Motion to Revert to Public Meeting

MOVED by Trustee Close:

THAT the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees moves out of in camera.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

12.3 Motion to Action In-Camera Recommendations

Chair Cochrane declared the following recommendation, which was put forward on the private consent agenda, adopted:

THAT the Board of Trustees approve the proposal submitted by Tribuild Contracting (Calgary) Ltd. for the construction of Taradale Elementary School and;

THAT the Board of Trustees approve the proposal submitted by Tribuild Contracting (Calgary) Ltd. for the construction of Panorama Hills Elementary School .

13.0 ADJOURNMENT

The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.