

## **CALGARY BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees (the “Board”) held on Tuesday, December 8, 2020 at 12:00 p.m. through Microsoft Teams

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### MEETING ATTENDANCE (Virtual)

#### Board of Trustees:

Trustee M. Dennis, Chair  
Trustee A. Adams  
Trustee M. Bradshaw  
Trustee R. Hehr  
Trustee J. Hrdlicka  
Trustee T. Hurdman

#### Administration:

Mr. C. Usih, Chief Superintendent of Schools  
Mr. R. Armstrong, Superintendent, Human Resources  
Mr. D. Breton, Superintendent, Facilities and Environmental Services  
Ms. K. Fenney, General Counsel  
Mr. B. Grundy, Superintendent, Finance/Technology Services  
Ms. M. Martin-Esposito, Chief Communications Officer  
Ms. J. Pitman, Superintendent, School Improvement  
Ms. D. Unruh, Acting Superintendent, School Improvement  
Ms. T. Minor, Corporate Secretary  
Ms. M. Broda, Recording Secretary

### **1 | CALL TO ORDER, NATIONAL ANTHEM AND WELCOME**

Chair Dennis called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m. and O Canada was led by students from Deer Run School by way of pre-recorded video.

Chair Dennis acknowledged the traditional territories and oral practices of the Blackfoot Nations, which includes the Siksika, the Piikani, and the Kainai. She also acknowledged the Tsuut’ina and Stoney Nakoda First Nations, the Métis Nation (Region 3), and all people who make their homes in the Treaty 7 region of Southern Alberta.

Chair Dennis welcomed staff, public members and representatives.

### **2 | CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Ms. Minor, Corporate Secretary, noted that a request was made to remove item 10.2.2 2020-2021 School Enrolment Report and 10.2.3 Construction Projects Status Update from the consent agenda for discussion immediately following the consent agenda.



MOVED by Trustee Hrdlicka:

**THAT the Board of Trustees approves the agenda for the Regular Meeting of December 8, 2020 as submitted, subject to the changes noted above.**

The motion was  
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

3 | **AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS**

There were no awards or recognitions.

4 | **RESULTS FOCUS**

There were no reports or presentations.

5 | **OPERATIONAL EXPECTATIONS**

5.1 **OE-8: Communicating and Engaging With the Public – Annual Monitoring Report**

Chief Superintendent Usih introduced the report, stating that evidence collected is from the 2019/2020 school year. The report highlights work done by administration and Communications Services to build relationships through ongoing communication and engagement and indicates compliance in all 14 indicators.

Chief Communications Officer Ms. Martin-Esposito provided more details from the report, stating the report highlights the many ways the CBE engages with parents, staff, students, and the public. In 2019/2020, the public information line received more than 8500 inquiries, an increase of approximately 3500 (67%) over the prior year. From mid March to the end of August, 2100 of these calls were about the impacts from COVID-19 alone. An important engagement to note is the re-entry survey launched in May saw more than 73,000 parents, students and staff respond. This feedback helped to inform the re-entry planning. The CBE continues to use the dialogue framework to guide the engagement process and continues to learn from every engagement to improve for the future.

Administration responded to trustee questions on matters including: how recently the dialogue framework was updated or reviewed; updates to school council resources and how people are notified; why media was not mentioned in the report; concerns that there are gaps in how the CBE presents itself and how to improve the CBE brand; how to ensure different peoples perspectives are captured and engaged; reaching out to schools without school councils to ensure those parents have opportunity to provide input into school development plans; improving communications with different communities, specifically with the provincial government; at what point are school councils involved in engagement initiative such as budgets; how feedback is captured at public input events such as the recent high school engagement; communicating on unanticipated issues and keeping provincial government counterparts informed; ways to improve communications between the provincial government and trustees; staff opportunities to be engaged in decisions; the low National Sport School feedback evaluation results being in contrast to the feedback received when engaging this fall – what changed and what was learned in the process;



how often concerns and complaints are addressed through area offices and how often they are elevated to Chief Superintendent's office through the concerns and complaints program; common themes of concerns and complaints received; number of staff doing engagement and communications with the public.

The Chair asked trustees to identify their intentions to bring forward any motions related to compliance, exceptions or commendations for Operational Expectations OE-8: Communicating and Engaging With the Public to the Corporate Secretary and all trustees by noon, January 7, 2021. If no motions are received, the item will be placed on the consent agenda for the Regular Meeting of January 12, 2021 with a motion that the Board of Trustees approves the Chief Superintendent is in compliance with the provisions of this policy.

## 6 | **PUBLIC COMMENT**

MOVED by Hehr:

**THAT the Board of Trustees approves the extension of the public comment speaking time in section J.6(c) of the Board Meeting Procedures from up to three minutes to up to eight minutes for December 8, 2020 Regular meeting of the Board of Trustees.**

In debate of the motion, trustees made comments on: the request that was made by a speaker to allow them more time; the board meeting procedures stating fair opportunities for all to speak; how do trustees decide who can have more time to speak; the possibility that allowing more time is precedent setting; board meeting procedures policy allowing for more speaking time if there is a motion passed; the importance of showing flexibility.

The motion was  
CARRIED.

In favour:	Trustee Bradshaw Trustee Dennis Trustee Hehr Trustee Hrdlicka Trustee Hurdman
Opposed:	Trustee Adams

### Ms. Sara Peden, Psychologist, Member of the Ontario College of Teachers

Ms. Peden spoke about the need she sees for school boards to implement high quality universal screening for reading, follow-up assessment systems, and intervention programs with highly trained teachers. She spoke about high quality, low cost tools being available. She expressed concerns over COVID-19 disrupting learning further impacting student literacy, especially early reading instruction and those students not being able to catch up. Ms. Peden spoke about the science behind learning to read. She stated that those who struggle to read and write experience lifelong mental health consequences such as increased anxiety and depression. She reiterated her desire to see the CBE implement high quality universal screening for reading, follow-up assessment systems, and intervention programs with highly trained teachers.



## 7 | **BOARD DEVELOPMENT SESSION**

### 7.1 **Supporting Student Learning, Mental Health, Well-Being in Response to COVID-19 Pandemic**

The presenters of the item were:

Ms. J. Pitman, Superintendent, School Improvement  
Ms. C. Chase, Supervisor of Psychological Services  
Mr. S. Becker, Teacher at McKenzie Highlands School  
Ms. A. Daniel, Assistant Principal at Erin Woods School  
Ms. H. Fisher, Specialist, School Improvement  
Ms. E. Wood, Education Director  
Ms. L. Cooper, Education Director

Superintendent Pitman introduced the presentation, stating this presents work that has been done and continues to be underway. The presentation focused on understanding how the CBE has responded thus far to supporting student learning, mental health and well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic, how the CBE is reflecting on and analyzing the impacts, and how the CBE is mapping the next best steps forward, specifically in preparing for the 2021-2022 school year.

The CBE's response to the COVID-19 pandemic was informed by local and national research data, showing that children were experiencing stress related to: fears about being infected; the measures required to combat the virus; the long term impact; and risk elevating messages in the media. The research found that the COVID-19 pandemic has differential impacts on students and families based on socio economic status. Reports have indicated that pre-existing socioeconomic disadvantages for Indigenous families may have been further exacerbated by COVID-19. Another group identified as experiencing disproportionate impact is students with neuro-diverse developmental conditions such as fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, autism spectrum disorder, and development disabilities. Overall, the research suggests that students need more support to cope with the mental health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Data from the University of Calgary's year long study to learn impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on student mental health was used to inform, and continues to inform, the CBE's response to the impacts of COVID-19 on student mental health. The study started in late spring and data will be generated in four waves over the course of the year. The CBE wave one data, generated in September/ October, gathered information from 1201 CBE students showed that 184 students were accessing supports.

School closures meant a loss of access to resources previously needed by students and required the CBE to come up with new ways of supporting students and families in their academic and well-being needs. Timely and transparent communication began immediately following the school closure using a number of different channels. Resources were created by the CBE in order to support staff and families. Further resources were created in collaboration with other school boards, Alberta Health Services (AHS), and the University of Calgary to support student well-being for learning.



COVID-19 has impacted assessment and reporting. New resources have been created for schools and teachers navigating assessment and reporting processes during the pandemic. Updates to these resources and supports have been sent out with 'the week ahead' mail outs. The resources and supports have emphasized importance of employing strategies that prioritize student mental health. This year, each schools' Development Plan was required to include both literacy, and well-being for learning goals. Details on school development planning was provided. Highlights included: the mathematics strategy; literacy goals and tools available; and well-being for learning goals examples and possible data available including the OurSchool Survey.

Trends identified since students returned to school are increased referrals to psychological services, decreased expulsion rate, decreased reports of student conflict and reduced access to supports. Details were provided on the use of the Response to Intervention framework used to provide evidence based support. The CBE is working to increase capacity internally to provide targeted, focused supports required. Further enhancements to learning and mental health data monitoring is ongoing.

Administration responded to trustee questions on matters including: definition of extremely worried; use of the mental health and well-being resources found on the CBE website for teachers and parents and why the CBE developed their own; the possibility of having a system-wide strategy or framework on mental health and well-being; the school based mental health referral process; the reasons for the decrease in expulsions and conflicts being reported; utilizing words from elders to foster relationship and connection; and the reduced access to community supports.

## 8 | **MATTERS RESERVED FOR BOARD INFORMATION**

### 8.1 **Positive COVID-19 Cases**

Chief Superintendent Usih provided a brief introduction to the report, stating it is for information only.

Administration responded to trustees questions on matters including: students and staff being impacted by quarantine once or more than once; quarantine definition; impacts on staff and students having to quarantine; the notification process once a positive case has been confirmed; the reporting and follow-up process of suspected cases of in-school transmission; how the CBE is notified of positive cases, primarily through families or from AHS; implications if the CBE stopped doing contact tracing; the number of unfilled substitute teacher vacancies at schools each day; substitute teachers for HUB; clarification of grades 7-12 leaning online that was mandated by the province; quarantine requirements even with negative test; requests from parents since September for HUB students to go back to school; and students and staff ability in maintaining health and safety guidelines.

Recessed: 2:28 p.m.

Reconvened: 2:38 p.m.



## 9 | **MATTERS RESERVED FOR BOARD DECISION**

### 9.1 **New School Fit Up Funding**

Chief Superintendent Usih introduced the report requesting the use of capital funds to ensure the opening of new schools.

Superintendent Breton spoke about the report, stating the use of capital funds is to supplement the Alberta Infrastructure new school construction grant in the design and build of five new schools for the CBE. Funding from the province does not include many items, such as technology devices, learning commons resources and staff time required for capital development. This funding request is to cover items not paid for by Alberta Infrastructure and only represents funding for this school year.

Administration responded to trustees questions on matters including: clarification of addressing existing learning hindrances; the school jurisdiction staff involvement and role; the need for independent reviews for technical consultants.

MOVED by Trustee Bradshaw:

- 1. THAT the Board of Trustees approves a budget expenditure of up to \$308,000 from capital reserves in 2020-2021 to undertake school development and fit-up for the following five schools: Auburn Bay Elementary School, Auburn Bay Middle School, Mahogany Elementary School, North Calgary High School, Skyview Ranch K-9 School.**
- 2. THAT the Board of Trustees authorizes the Chair to correspond with the Minister of Education pertaining to the use of reserves.**

In debate of the motion, trustees made comments on: the leadership of the CBE in finding and addressing gaps that require attention; dipping into the reserves is already a concern; the forward thinking by administration to ensure smooth transitioning into schools; and the importance of being prepared for schools opening.

Chair Dennis called for a vote on the motion.

The motion was  
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

### 9.2 **Recommendation to Commence Public Input to Consider the Relocation of the Marlborough Discovering Choices II Program**

Chief Superintendent Usih introduced the report, stating it is recommending commencement of the public input process to consider relocation of the Marlborough Discovering Choices II Program.

Superintendent Breton provided more detail on the report, stating that Discovering Choices is the CBE's outreach high school program offered at four locations throughout the city. The Discovering Choices II program is the CBE's second largest outreach



program, running at maximum capacity for several years and turning students away due to lack of instructional space. The lease at Marlborough Mall is set to end in August, at the end of the current school year, and a larger lease site has been identified across the street from the old site. Because the new location is only few hundred meters from the old site and transportation would remain same, there is a preference to shorten the public input time. This would also allow the CBE time to fit-up the new location for the September 2021 school year.

Administration responded to trustees questions on matters including: demographics of students attending the Marlborough Discovering Choices II program; land use zoning requirements and restrictions; Alberta Education not allowing outreach programs to take place in traditional school buildings; the increase in students attending outreach, unique and special settings; COVID-19 impacting expected enrolment for next year; the impact of funding changes for outreach programs and differences in funding amounts; cost of operations compared to other locations if relocated; the increased student capacity at the new site requiring additional staff be hired; the cost differences noted between lease lengths; is the Resource Allocation Method (RAM) funding comparable to other high schools; lease funding compared to high school building maintenance funding; and other jurisdictions outreach programs student numbers.

MOVED by Trustee Hurdman:

**THAT the Board of Trustees is satisfied that there is cause to commence the public input process to consider the closure of Discovering Choices II for the purpose of relocation in accordance with GC-3E Closure of Schools Procedure.**

In debate of the motion, trustees made comments on: the good reasons presented to explore bigger spaces; looking forward to the public input process; the program requiring more space; turning away students being a concern; and this being a positive case of commencing a school closure public input process.

Chair Dennis called for a vote on the motion.

The motion was  
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Trustee Hurdman:

**THAT the Board of Trustees approves the public input period to consider the closure of Discovering Choices II for the purpose of relocation be shortened from 60 calendar days to 49 calendar days in accordance with the GC-3E Closure of Schools Procedure.**

In debate of the motion, trustees made comments on: the decision being required by the end of January in order to meet the deadline to have the new location prepared for the upcoming year.

Chair Dennis called for a vote on the motion.



The motion was  
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

## 10 | **CONSENT AGENDA**

### 10.1 Items Provided for Board Decision

### 10.2 Items Provided for Board Information

#### 10.2.1 Chief Superintendent's Update

#### 10.2.2 2020-2021 School Enrolment Report

Administration responded to trustees questions on matters including: similar enrolment declines for both full day and half day kindergarten; impacts on enrolment from the Choice in Education Act; reduction in pre-kindergarten programs offered; the CBE's process of tracking down missing students enrolled in previous years; impacts on the Weighted Moving Average with less kindergarten student enrolled in 2020-2021; changes in student numbers for the different learning categories; common age of entry affecting enrolment numbers; reasons for fewer returning grade 12 students; and the reduction in funding received and the process for next year's funding.

#### 10.2.3 Construction Projects Status Update

Administration responded to trustees questions on matters including: an update on the North Calgary High School; consideration of opening a high school in the second semester; building high schools for only 1800 capacity; Skyview Ranch elementary and middle school project updates; how a decision is made to delay the opening of school; and any opportunities to influence the city in getting approvals done faster.

Chair Dennis noted that the Board would meet in-camera following the public portion of the meeting to discuss two legal and one strategic planning matter. She noted the next public Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 12, 2021.

Recessed: 4:06 p.m.

Reconvened: 4:45 p.m.

## 11 | **IN-CAMERA SESSION**

All Trustees and Superintendents confirmed they were alone and in a location that no other person could hear them or any part of this meeting.

### Motion to Move In-Camera

MOVED by Trustee Adams:

Whereas the Board of Trustees is of the opinion that it is in the public interest that matters on the private agenda for the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees, December 8, 2020 be considered at an in-camera session; therefore, be it



*Resolved*, **THAT the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees moves in-camera.**

The motion was

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Absent: Trustee Bradshaw

Trustee Bradshaw joined the meeting at 4:54 p.m. He confirmed that he is alone and in a location that no other person could hear him or any part of this meeting.

Motion to Revert to Public Meeting

MOVED by Trustee Bradshaw:

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

The motion was

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Motion to Action In-Camera Recommendations

MOVED by Trustee Hurdman:

**THAT the Board of Trustees authorizes the Chair to communicate with the Minister of Education as discussed in-camera.**

The motion was

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

12 | **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 5:12 p.m.

