

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 7, 2006 at 5:00 p.m.

PRESENT

Board of Trustees:

Trustee G. Dirks, Chair
Trustee C. Bazinet
Trustee N. Close (departed at 5:25 p.m.; returned at 7:45 p.m.)
Trustee P. Cochrane
Trustee K. Fawcett
Trustee L. Ferguson
Trustee G. Lane

Administration:

Dr. B. Croskery, Chief Superintendent of Schools
Ms. J. Barkway, Assistant Corporate Secretary
Ms. L. Angelo, Acting Superintendent, Human Resources
Mr. D. Dart, Superintendent, Business Operations & Environmental Services – Secretary Treasurer
Mr. J. Drysdale, Superintendent, School Support Services
Ms. B. Hubert, Deputy Chief Superintendent of Schools
Mr. J. Jones, Executive Assistant to the Chief Superintendent of Schools
Ms. B. Kuester, Executive Director of Communications
Mr. G. Scott, Director & General Counsel, Legal & Risk Management Services
Ms. S. Wasylshyn, Executive Assistant to the Trustees
Ms. D. Perrier, Recording Secretary

Stakeholder Representatives:

Ms. B. Brignall, Elementary School Principals' Association
Ms. G. Burger-Martindale, Calgary Association of Parents and School Councils
Mr. L. Liffiton, Alberta Teachers' 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 students from Somerset School led in the singing of the national anthem by way of a video clip. Chair Dirks welcomed representatives from the aforementioned organizations and members of the public.

2.0 CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Barkway noted that a revised Agenda had been circulated, and she informed that an addition to the revised Agenda had been requested for consideration as new Item 12.0 – In-Camera Issue.

MOVED by Trustee Ferguson:

THAT the revised Agenda for the Regular Meeting held March 7, 2006, be approved as submitted, subject to the addition of an in-camera item to be considered as new Item 12.0.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

3.0 SCHOOL/SYSTEM PRESENTATIONS

There were no school or system presentations.

4.0 HONOURS AND RECOGNITIONS

There were no honours or recognitions.

5.0 PUBLIC CONVERSATION AND INFORMATION

5.1 Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

5.2 Report from Chair and Trustees

Trustee Fawcett reported on the Calgary Region Debate Championships, noting he had attended the final debate for the senior division and assisted with the presentation of the awards, which took place at Lester B. Pearson High School. William Aberhart High School won awards in many categories of the debates.

Trustee Close informed that she would be leaving this meeting at around 5:30 p.m. to attend a meeting of imagineCalgary on behalf of the Board of Trustees.

Trustee Cochrane gave highlights of the Trustees' most recent Patrons' Tour, at which the focus was on Citizenship and Leadership. They toured and visited with students from John G. Diefenbaker High School and Sir John A. Macdonald Junior High School. She thanked Superintendents Dart and Drysdale and Ms. Kuester for their attendance on the Tour.

Trustee Cochrane commented on her attendance and assistance with the launch of *Kidcasters* that took place last week at the Saddledome. This is a program spearheaded by CTV and it is an opportunity for students to experience the role of an on-camera journalist. A number of local professional sports teams will be supporting this program throughout the year by giving interviews.

5.3 Report from Chief Superintendent

Chief Superintendent Croskery reported on the following issues and events:

- February 23rd he attended a luncheon with Telus representatives, and accepted their donation of \$10,000 towards the Calgary Board of Education's *Fuel For Schools* program.
- March 2nd he attended Sir Winston Churchill's students' performance of *Les Misérables*, noting it was an astonishing performance of high calibre, and he acknowledged that credit for this great effort must be given to students, parents, teachers, administrators and members of their community.
- March 4th was The Bridge Foundation's 15th Annual Gala, and there were many CBE staff members who took part in the celebration, along with Trustees Bazinet and Fawcett.
- March 5th a group of administrators and staff from the Education Centre served lunch at the Drop In Centre.
- The Alberta Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA), in their publication *AnimalWise*, gave recognition to the CBE with respect to our Administrative Regulation 6004 – Animals in Schools.

5.4 Public Question Period

Ms. Barkway read for the record, questions that had been received from Mr. D. Avern, as follows:

- “1. Following recent meetings in the Varsity community, have the Trustees resolved to revisit the dates for when they will vote on the proposed closures of Jerry Potts (and possibly Varsity Acres) Elementary Schools?
2. Have the Trustees agreed to consider the proposed closures of Jerry Potts and Varsity Acres Elementary Schools as a joint issue, and if so when will they vote on these matters?
3. Will the Trustees acknowledge the viability of a regular English program at Varsity Acres (with the transfer of students from Jerry Potts and the retention of school of choice status); and will the Trustees address demographic inconsistencies, overcrowding, safety concerns and increased busing, and retain an elementary school in Varsity on the east side of Shaganappi Trail?”

Chair Dirks responded to the questions, as follows:

1. The Board has not yet announced any revised dates for school closure considerations to be placed on the upcoming Board’s agendas. If dates are modified, the meeting agendas would be posted on the website the day prior to the meeting. Further it is anticipated that those revised dates would be posted on the website in advance, in the Consideration of School Closures section.
2. The closure consideration motions for Jerry Potts School and for the regular program at Varsity Acres School were passed by the Board of Trustees as separate matters. The *Closure of Schools Regulation* would preclude combining the two considerations.
3. The issues raised are implicit in the Board of Trustees’ consideration of closure of Jerry Potts School and the regular program at Varsity Acres School. Trustees have heard these public concerns addressed at the public meetings, and as they have indicated, they will weigh those concerns carefully as they make that public decision.

In addition, Chair Dirks noted that with respect to any revised dates for school closure considerations, a communication as such would be made to the affected schools. He noted further that the Board of Trustees have scheduled to meet on March 8, 2006 to discuss the dates for school closure considerations and the outcome of that discussion will be relayed to the public and to the affected schools accordingly.

A second set of questions had been received by email from another member of the public; however, in accordance with Board Meeting Procedures, that individual was not present, and thereby the questions were not addressed at this meeting.

5.5 Stakeholder Reports

There were no stakeholder reports.

5.6 Trustee Inquiries

There were no Trustee inquiries.

6.0 BOARD DEVELOPMENT

6.1 Fundraising

Chief Superintendent Croskery provided brief comments and introduced Ms. S. Church, Director, Corporate Partnerships, to give the presentation. Ms. Church noted that Mr. D. Woloshyn, Director, Zone 5, Alberta Education, sends his regrets on his absence from the meeting; and she acknowledged the attendance of the following resource persons to this work:

Ms. B. Burggraf, Executive Director, EducationMatters
Mr. G. Walker, Manager, School Finance Operations
Mr. K. Renaud, System Principal, Corporate Partnerships
Mr. D. Fretts, Specialist, Corporate Relations

Ms. Church proceeded with the presentation, which was provided by PowerPoint and was supplemented by hard copies of the presentation material that were circulated at the meeting. The following issues were highlighted in the presentation by Ms. Church, and Ms. Burggraf spoke to the issues involving EducationMatters:

- Purpose: To understand what currently exists with respect to fundraised dollars and donated dollars; to be prepared for possible changes in legislation; and to impact thinking about partnerships, sponsorships, EducationMatters, donor recognition, etc.
- Issues Related to Fundraising: Definition of Terms; School and System; Control and Accountability.
- Current Alberta Education Actions: Alberta Commission on Learning Recommendations re Definition and Province-Wide Policy; 2005 Audited Financial Statement Guidelines.
- School-Related Organizations: School Council; Societies; Partners.
- Accountability: Administrative Regulations; Societies Act; School Act.
- System Services and Programs Provided by Fundraising: System projects; volunteers; range of services and programs; examples of services and programs.
- Current Initiatives: Document outlining strategic issues for consideration; Corporate Partnerships database development; Recognition program to acknowledge and honour corporate and individual donations and partnerships.

Trustees gave consideration to a number of issues and posed questions of clarification, which were responded to by Administration.

In conclusion, the Trustees agreed that the next step for the Board was to have the Board Chair communicate with the Minister of Education to ask when the province's work regarding directives on fees and fundraising would be completed and shared.

6:15 p.m. – Recessed.

6:37 p.m. – Reconvened.

7.0 MONITORING AND RESULTS

7.1 Ends

7.1.1 E-2: Academic Success – Science, Social Studies, Art and Information Technologies

Superintendent Drysdale gave a brief overview of the presentation and a video was shown related to the monitoring of academic success specific to Science, Social Studies, Art and Information Technologies.

Superintendent Drysdale noted that in an earlier report on the reasonable interpretation, indicators and benchmarks for Ends 2, approved by the Board on October 18, 2005, as much detail as possible was provided, including baselines and targets. The two related monitoring reports, dated February 7, 2006 and March 7, 2006, have provided a great deal of data but the overall story is that our student achievement results are good and that they have improved significantly over time. Reference was made of two indicators – Provincial Achievement Tests and Diploma Examination Results; and it was noted that we use the provincial results as the benchmarks.

Superintendent Drysdale provided further comments about the achievement test data, covering aspects of the cohort results (Alberta Education's focus) as well as the participation levels (writers). In review of the 60 measures that are used in relation to participation and achievement for both the cohort and the writers, CBE results met or exceeded provincial results on 85% of those measures; and, with respect to improvement and comparisons made with previous years, Alberta Education data indicates that the CBE has improved significantly at the standard of excellence and maintained achievement levels at the acceptable level. The CBE is continuing to take action that should positively impact the student achievement levels.

Acknowledgement was made of the attendance of the following staff members to assist with questions: Ms. L. Brost, Director, Accountability Services, Ms. L. Flanagan, Specialist, Accountability Services; and from Curriculum Support Services, Ms. P. Kaiserseder, Ms. A. Cartwright, and Ms. K. Haslett. Trustees posed numerous questions, which were addressed by Administration.

With respect to areas where it has been evident that students are struggling with the curriculum, e.g. math at the higher grade levels and science at all grade levels, the province is working with the CBE to find the reasons behind this. Superintendent Drysdale noted that he would inquire about the possibility of the province reporting on their findings and plans of action. The CBE has been proactive in providing additional support to students and teachers, particularly for high school math, in the way of computer software.

Discussion took place on student learning through technology, with Ms. C. Seibel, Director, Information Technology Services, assisting with questions. Superintendent Drysdale pointed out that this is an area that is continually advancing in the CBE in both teaching and learning. The work that Innovative Learning Services has done over the past ten years involved a great deal of research to understand how technology leverages teaching and learning and what some of the best practices are that can be used. Technology is deeply embedded in much of the regular program of studies, at both the basic level and advanced levels. It was noted also that equity of access for children across the entire system is important; and we are able to identify by area at least, the amount of home computer usage. It is a combination of school and home use that will have an impact on student learning through technology.

Some questions were raised about the targets as noted in the two reports on Ends 2: Academic Success. Ms. Brost noted that the targets are set by the current information that is available to administration; and as the results become available next year, the setting of the targets for the following years could very likely be adjusted to take into consideration the most recent data on results achieved. She noted further that it is important to set targets for a three-year period; it is also important to set targets that are equally balanced between what is actually attainable and what the uppermost limit might be. In respect to the latter comment, a Trustee noted that in every instance where new curriculum is introduced, there would not be the ability to set a three-year target. A Trustee suggested that it might be possible to rely on the old target trend with the addition of a caveat around it that it is new curriculum. Chief Superintendent Croskery pointed out that any kind of benchmark that can be used is better than no benchmark at all.

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the Chief Superintendent combines the Ends 2 monitoring report presented to the Board of Trustees on March 7, 2006 with the Ends 2 monitoring report presented to the Board of Trustees at the Regular Meeting held February 7, 2006, into a single report. This report should include the contextual information that was presented by Administration upon introduction of the two monitoring reports at the Board meetings, and would be due back to the Board of Trustees by the Regular Meeting scheduled April 4, 2006, in order for the Board of Trustees to determine whether reasonable progress has been made in achieving that which is set out in the Ends 2 policy.

The motion was
CARRIED.

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

7.2 Executive Limitations

7.2.1 Annual Monitoring Report – Executive Limitations 6: Instructional Program

Superintendent Drysdale noted the report is fairly comprehensive and that many staff members contributed to this work. It is the belief of Administration that the report includes a reasonable interpretation of EL-6: Instructional Program and provides documented evidence of compliance.

Trustees posed questions, which were responded to by Administration. Discussion took place surrounding evaluations and effectiveness of innovative or alternative programs, from the perspective of the method of learning, the demands for such programs, the effectiveness of these programs for the individual learner, i.e. is it a successful learning experience or ineffective.

The issue of equitable access to programs was mentioned, and a question was asked about programs where space might not be available, or where an individual might not qualify for an alternative program. Chief Superintendent Croskery noted we are doing our best to provide access to successful programs in a system that has somewhat limited opportunities, such as having fragments of space available in many schools; and it would be much easier if we had massive space available in separate and distinct locations. With respect to wait lists for particular programs, there are variable criterion applied for entrance to each program, e.g. first come, first served; suitability of a candidate for a particular program; students living in the school community could be a priority factor for entrance; siblings may be also be a consideration.

A Trustee commented that she would have liked to see more information reported as it relates to the instructional program including opportunities for students to develop talents and interests in more specialized areas. Chief Superintendent Croskery noted that a more comprehensive reporting could be made; and he noted his belief that we should also be thinking in terms of how to offer opportunities to customize and personalize the learning environment, even in the regular programs at neighborhood schools, where the many different learning styles are also a challenge.

8:02 p.m. – Chair Dirks received the consent of Trustees to continue the meeting to the conclusion of the agenda.

Comments were made about quality control of alternative programs. In response to a question, Deputy Chief Superintendent Hubert noted that there are documents available that inform parents about what a particular alternative program offers, to assist in making choices for their children. These documents are available through the Area Offices as well as through the principal at each of the schools that offer alternative programs.

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.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Motion Arising:

MOVED by Trustee Bazinet:

THAT the Board of Trustees commends the Chief Superintendent for exemplary performance in the following areas: School Development Plans and Area Renewal Plans (great focus on results); the second languages initiative (tremendous work and preparation); the automated library system; English as a second language benchmarks; Career Pathways; CBe-learn; English as a Second Language Centres of Excellence; and an array of Special Education programs.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

7.2.2 Annual Monitoring Report – Executive Limitations 9: Compensation and Benefits

Acting Superintendent Angelo provided brief introductory comments and noted that Administration is of the belief that the report includes a reasonable interpretation of EL-9: Compensation and Benefits, and provides documented evidence of compliance.

A Trustee noted that there is a growing trend to include in other corporate employee assistance programs, corporate chaplaincy interfaith services. Acting Superintendent Angelo commented that she was not aware of any specific conversation of this nature for providing this kind of service; but she was of the belief that such service would, in an informal sense, be provided to those individuals who would indicate an interest.

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the Chief Superintendent has reasonably interpreted the provisions of Executive Limitations 9: Compensation and Benefits, and that the Board of Trustees finds the Chief Superintendent to be in compliance.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

8.0 POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

8.1 Governance Policy – Executive Limitations 7: Treatment of Staff and Volunteers

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the Board of Trustees gives second reading to the amended Executive Limitations Policy 7: Treatment of Staff and Volunteers, in the form as submitted with the Agenda for the Regular Meeting held March 7, 2006.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the Board of Trustees gives third reading and thereby final approval to the amended Executive Limitations Policy 7: Treatment of Staff and Volunteers, in the form as submitted with the Agenda for the Regular Meeting held March 7, 2006.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

(The full text of EL-7: Treatment of Staff and Volunteers, as approved, is attached to these minutes.)

8.2 Governance Policy – Executive Limitations 16: Learning Environment/Treatment of Students

Ms. Barkway noted a correction to the last paragraph at the bottom of the first page and carrying over to the second page of the report, to replace “for staff and volunteers” with “for students”.

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the Board of Trustees gives second reading to the amended Executive Limitations Policy 16: Learning Environment/Treatment of Students, in the form as submitted with the Agenda for the Regular Meeting held March 7, 2006.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Trustee Fawcett:

THAT the Board of Trustees gives third reading and thereby final approval to the amended Executive Limitations Policy 16: Learning Environment/Treatment of Students, in the form as submitted with the Agenda for the Regular Meeting held March 7, 2006.

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

(The full text of EL-16: Learning Environment/Treatment of Students, as approved, is attached to these minutes.)

9.0 CONSENT AGENDA

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

9.1 Board Consent Agenda

9.1.1 Approval of Minutes

- Regular Meeting held February 7, 2006
- Regular Meeting held February 21, 2006
- Regular Meeting held February 28, 2006

THAT the Minutes of the Regular Meetings of the Board of Trustees held February 7, 2006, February 21, 2006 and February 28, 2006 be approved.

9.1.2 Liaison Report – Alberta School Boards Association

THAT the liaison report with respect to the Alberta School Boards Association be received for information, in the form as submitted with the Agenda for the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees held March 7, 2006.

9.2 Chief Superintendent Consent Agenda

9.2.1 Monthly Update

THAT the Board of Trustees receives the Chief Superintendent's Monthly Update for information.

10.0 ACTION ITEMS

There were no action items.

11.0 TRUSTEE NOTICES OF MOTION

There were no notices of motion.

8:22 p.m. – Recessed.

8:31 p.m. – Reconvened.

12.0 IN-CAMERA ISSUES

MOVED by Trustee Ferguson:

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

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOVED by Trustee Cochrane:

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

The motion was
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Action By

12.0 ADJOURNMENT

The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 9:57 p.m.

Chair

Assistant Corporate Secretary
March 7, 2006