

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

April 26, 2011

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Schmidt, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Responses to Trustee Requests for Information

ORIGINATOR: B. Smith, Executive Director  
T. Taylor, Director

RESOURCE  
STAFF: Bruce Cline, Ann Parker, Lorne Parker, Anne Sherwood

INFORMATION

**TRUSTEE REQUEST #68, FEBRUARY 8, 2011 (TRUSTEE SHIPKA) THAT THE ADMINISTRATION CONSULT WITH THE PUBLIC WHO ATTEND BOARD MEETINGS, INCLUDING THOSE WHO PARTICIPATE ELECTRONICALLY, REGARDING ANY IMPACT OF MOVING FROM EVENING TO DAYTIME MEETINGS. FURTHER, THAT ADMINISTRATION CONFER WITH SENIOR STAFF AND THE BOARD CHAIR TO ASCERTAIN THE MOST EFFECTIVE TIME, DAY, AND FREQUENCY OF PUBLIC DAYTIME MEETINGS, AND RECOMMEND TO THE BOARD WHEN SUCH MEETINGS COULD TAKE EFFECT.** Public consultation took place from March 18 to April 13, 2011. An online survey was posted on the Edmonton Public Schools website, and hard copies of the survey were provided at public Board meetings to the public who attended. Approximately 572 surveys were completed: 428 employees (75 per cent), 100 parents (17 per cent), 38 general community members (4 per cent), 5 non-identified individuals and one student. Nearly three-quarters (73 per cent) of the respondents had not attended a public Board meeting over the last four months, and 69 per cent of respondents had not watched live webcasting in the previous four months.

Survey comments

Question 3 specifically asked respondents whether a change to daytime meetings would impact them: 44 per cent responded “yes”, 55 per cent responded “no”, and 1 per cent of respondents did not answer.

There were approximately 495 comments provided, ranging in theme and content. Overall, 20 per cent of respondents provided neutral comments, reflecting both advantages and disadvantages to changing the meeting to daytime; 25 per cent provided positive comments in favour of daytime meetings and 42 per cent were opposed.

The survey summary data is attached as Appendix I. The comments and survey data has been posted to the Trustee’s On-line Reading Room.

### Senior staff consultation

The District's Executive Team discussed various possibilities including holding morning, afternoon and evening meetings alternating between weeks. The Executive Team suggested that Board meetings from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m. would be a preferred compromise as this would allow community members to attend either in the daytime or early evening, and would provide a consistent meeting time to reduce scheduling confusion. The Board could possibly break from 5:00 to 5:20 p.m. with light snacks available, a more cost-effective alternative to the current dinner service.

With regard to meeting days, Board administrative systems and processes currently revolve around Tuesday meetings. Should the Board change its meeting day, a significant administrative transition would be required to realign its systems; and therefore, fair notification would be in order to properly plan and ensure a seamless transition.

### Board Chair consultation

The Board Chair was consulted, and advised it would be best that the Board discuss and decide together its preferred meeting days and times.

**TRUSTEE REQUEST #72, FEBRUARY 22, 2011 (TRUSTEE SHIPKA), WHY DO DIVISION I STUDENTS HAVE A 20-1 STUDENT-TEACHER RATIO AS CONTRASTED TO THE ACOL-RECOMMENDED 17-1 RATIO WHILE OTHER DIVISIONS MEET THE ACOL STANDARDS? FURTHER, WHAT CAN BE DONE WITHIN OUR CURRENT BUDGET, AND WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS, TO RE-ALLOCATE RESOURCES TO ACHIEVE THE ACOL RECOMMENDED CLASS SIZES FOR GRADES K-3?** The ACOL class size guideline for K-3 is 17.0. The September 30 district class size average for K-3 was 19.8. The September 30 registration for K-3 was 28,993 students; 36 per cent of total students for the 2010-2011 school year. The single largest factor that creates class sizes above the ACOL suggested number is cost, especially in smaller schools where numbers are lower and typically spread across the grade spectrum. This requires a principal to budget to best allocate resources as equitably as possible through the school. This results in combined grade classes and the decision to have some classes larger than others based upon uneven enrolment in the grades. Although other factors such as grants, additional allocations and monies from other sources within a school budget can help cover the cost of small class sizes, the basic calculation is:

- Basic or Level 1 allocation for a student for the 2010-2011 school year is \$4,634
- The unit cost for a teacher in the 2010-2011 school year is \$93,993

Thus to cover the cost of a teacher in a classroom of students with Level 1 allocation, 20.3 students are needed. (Seventy three per cent of 21,165 K-3 students were Level 1 funded, based on September 30 registration data.) The current K-3 class size average is 19.8, although above the ACOL average of 17.0 is still below the number of students required to cover the basic cost for the teacher.

To operate classes of 17.0 average in K-3 from the current average of 19.8 would require 241 more teachers. At the unit cost of \$93,993 per teacher this creates an increased cost requirement of \$22,652,313. While 27 per cent of the K-3 complement was funded at a higher rate than Level 1, this additional funding provides the added services these students

need including Educational Assistant support and significant smaller classes such as severe special needs classrooms.

Thus to move to the ACOL suggested class size for K-3 of 17.0 would require a significant increase in funding, (\$22.7 million) for Division I classrooms.

**TRUSTEE REQUEST #76, MARCH 8, 2011 (TRUSTEE SHIPKA), PROVIDE INFORMATION ON THE BENEFITS AND DRAWBACKS OF A REVISED 2012-2013 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR THAT WOULD COMMENCE SEVERAL DAYS EARLIER AND WOULD HAVE A FALL BREAK FOLLOWING REMEMBRANCE DAY.** Changing the school year calendar for all Edmonton Public Schools affects individuals as well as our district business processes. Two of the most obvious areas immediately affected are for parents, childcare considerations, and for the district, transportation. While it has been noted in some literature that the practice of a fall break is beneficial to staff wellness, there is no definitive data showing a benefit to students as well. In addition, the Board would need to amend HCA.BP Approval of the School Year Calendar, which speaks to the Board endeavouring to ensure that instruction commences after August 31. Further to HCA.BP the Board would need to amend the calendar which would be already approved for 2012-2013. Other drawbacks and benefits of a revised calendar that provides for a fall break can only be supposed without staff and community engagement to determine firstly the appetite for this change and then what other potential benefits or drawbacks might be raised. In this way the Board would have full information upon which to base any decision regarding the school year calendar.

**TRUSTEE REQUEST #77, MARCH 22, 2011 (TRUSTEE HOFFMAN), PROVIDE THE STATUS OF EACH TRUSTEE MOTION APPROVED SINCE JANUARY 2010.** The status of Trustee motions are listed in Appendix III.

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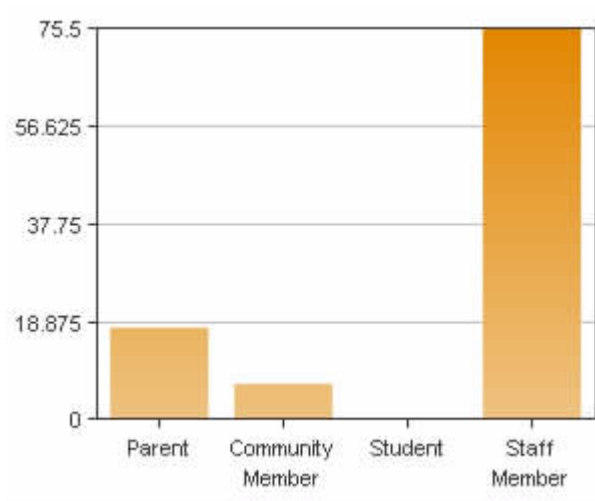
APPENDIX I Board Meeting Survey Summary Data  
APPENDIX II Trustee Motions Approved Since January 2010



# Public Board Meetings

**Question 1:** Please select the one identifier that best describes the perspective from which you are providing feedback:  
(N=567)

Choices	Count	Percent
Parent	100	17.6
Community Member	38	6.7
Student	1	0.2
Staff Member	428	75.5

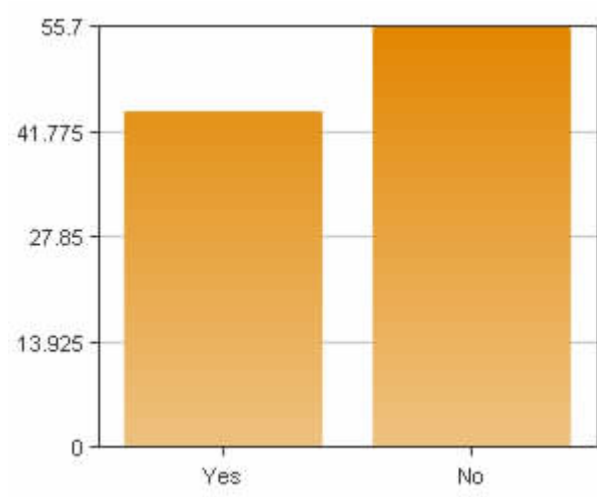


**Question 2:** What are your thoughts and ideas about daytime Board meetings?

Full report provided to Trustees in the On-Line Reading Room.

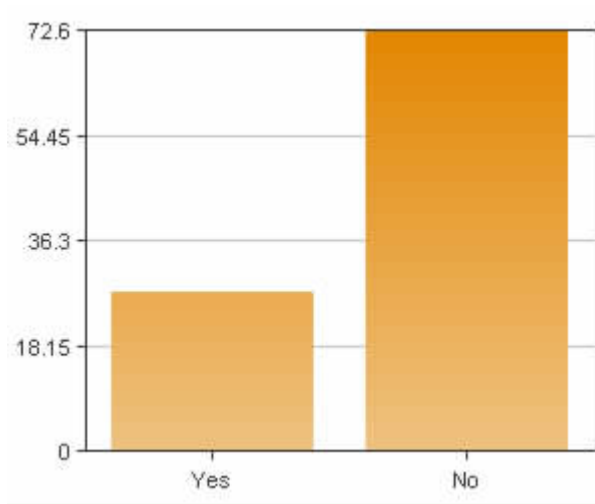
**Question 3:** Would a change to daytime meetings have an impact on you?  
(N=562)

Choices	Count	Percent
Yes	249	44.3
No	313	55.7



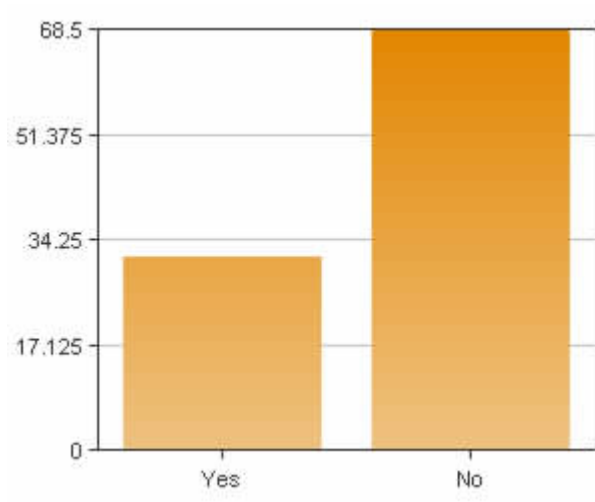
**Question 4:** Over the last four months, did you attend any Board meetings?  
(N=566)

Choices	Count	Percent
Yes	155	27.4
No	411	72.6



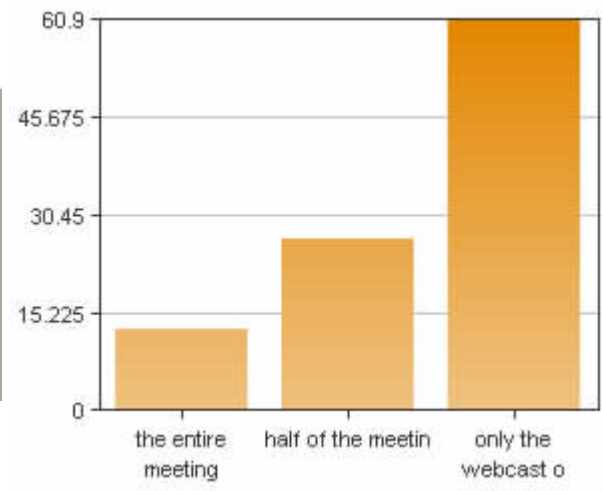
**Question 5:** Over the last four months, have you watched any live webcasts of Board meetings online?  
(N=565)

Choices	Count	Percent
Yes	178	31.5
No	387	68.5



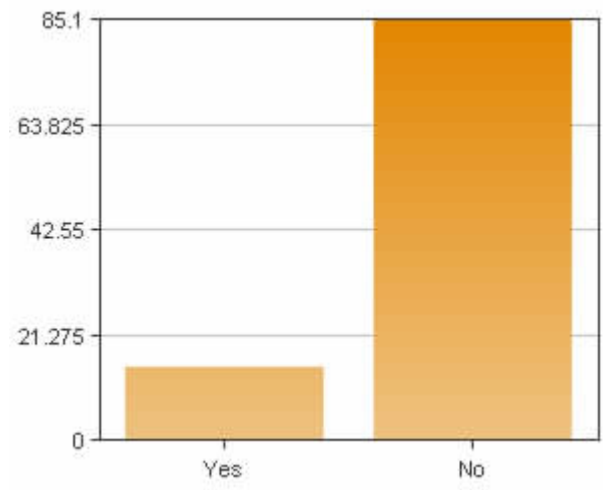
**Question 6:** Of the webcast meetings you watched online, did you watch:  
(N=207)

Choices	Count	Percent
the entire meeting online	26	12.6
half of the meeting online	55	26.6
only the webcast of specific agenda items	126	60.9



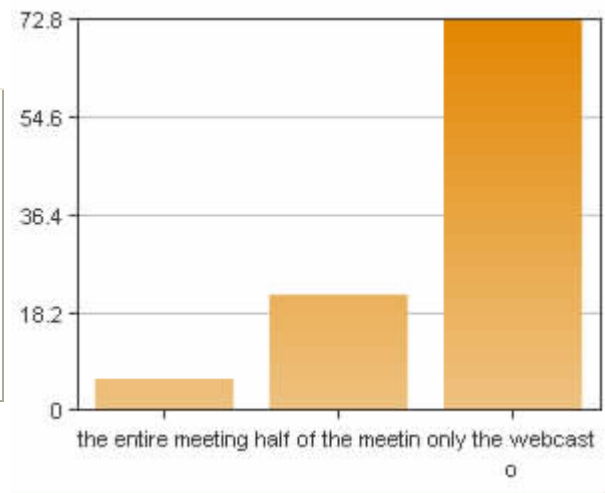
**Question 7:** Over the last four months, did you watch webcasts of previous Board meetings online?  
(N=557)

Choices	Count	Percent
Yes	83	14.9
No	474	85.1



**Question 8:** Of the webcasts of previous Board meetings you watched online, did you watch:  
**(N=136)**

Choices	Count	Percent
the entire meeting online	8	5.9
half of the meeting online	29	21.3
only the webcast of specific agenda items	99	72.8



**TRUSTEE MOTIONS APPROVED SINCE JANUARY 2010**

<b>Date and Trustee</b>	<b>Motion</b>	<b>Assigned To</b>	<b>Status/Outcome</b>
<p>March 9, 2010 Trustee Huff</p>	<p><u>Motion re Review of JGB.AR – Utilization of Surplus Space in Schools and the Development of an Accompanying Board Policy</u></p> <p><i>That the Planning and Policy Committee develop a Board Policy regarding the utilization of surplus space in schools and that Administrative Regulation JGB.AR – Utilization of Surplus Space in Schools be reviewed prior to the end of the Board’s term.</i></p>	<p>Brian Smith</p>	<p>The Policy Review committee 2009-2010 reviewed existing Policy JG.BP – Community Use of District Buildings and it was revised to address utilization of surplus space. The revised policy was posted for stakeholder input and reviewed by the 2010-2011 Policy Review Committee. The revised policy was sent to Board first and second reading April 13, 2011 and subsequently referred back to the administration for information on implications of a proposed amendment to address leasing and licensing of district space to publicly traded corporations.</p> <p>Input received from stakeholders on the revised policy will be used to update the administrative regulation JGB. AR Utilization of Surplus Space. The amended regulation will address access under a lease, license or an educational agreement with a school or the District. This regulation will also address potential tenancies in closed or non-operational sites.</p>
<p>March 23, 2010 Trustee Huff</p>	<p><u>Motion re Capacity Measures for Sector Reviews</u></p> <p><i>Until the new provincial utilization formula is approved, the ACOL, ACU and OEL figures for schools be provided as information during sector reviews.</i></p>	<p>Brian Smith</p>	<p>The sector review public engagement meetings conducted by Dialogue Partners through the fall of 2010, provided extensive information on each school included in the Central, South Central and West 1 sectors reviews. As per the approved motion, the ACOL, ACU and OEL figures were included in the school information made available to participants of the sector review process.</p>



Date and Trustee	Motion	Assigned To	Status/Outcome
May 11, 2010  Trustee Colburn	<u>Motion re Schedule of Annual Reports</u>  <i>The scheduling of annual reports on district work will be indicated on the district website.</i>	David Fraser	This requirement will be addressed in the redesign of the District's website, which will be in place for the 2011-2012 school year.
May 11, 2010  Trustee Shipka	<u>Motion re Debate on Motions</u>  <i>That the second bullet for the current policy on debate on motions be amended to read as follows: The mover of a motion may speak first to that motion. Thereafter, each Trustee will have an opportunity to ask questions for clarification. When the Chair calls for formal debate, Trustees will have two opportunities to speak, for a maximum of three minutes each time. Permission to extend the limits of debate may be granted by the Chair if the majority of Trustees concur. The mover of the motion will be given an opportunity to close debate.</i>	Anne Sherwood	The Trustees' Manual was updated and the Board Chair has been following these procedures.
May 11, 2010  Trustee Esslinger	<u>Motion re Policy for Setting Attendance Areas</u>  <i>That the Board develop a policy articulating the values and principles for setting attendance areas including to be closest to where students live.</i>	Brian Smith	The Administration is currently in the process of developing a policy articulating the values and principles for setting attendance areas. This policy will be brought forward to the Policy Review Committee at the May 2, 2011 committee meeting.
June 15, 2010  Trustee Huff	<u>Motion re Promotion and Support of Regular Schools</u>  <i>That Edmonton Public Schools work to ensure an equitable level of district promotion and support for schools offering regular programming (also known as local or community schools) compared to schools that offer alternative programs or programs of choice.</i>	David Fraser	This requirement has been addressed for 2011-2012 through the core services review of the Communications Department.

Date and Trustee	Motion	Assigned To	Status/Outcome
November 16, 2010  Trustee Colburn	<u>Motion re Establishment of a Special Needs Task Force</u>  <i>That the Board establish a task force to review and make recommendations on special needs education in order to enhance the education and outcomes for all special needs students. The terms of reference would be developed by the task force and approved by the Board.</i>	Tanni Parker	The Task Force was approved November 16, 2010. The committee members were confirmed by Board January 11, 2011 and the Terms of Reference were approved by the Board January 25, 2011.
November 16, 2010  Trustee Janz	<u>Motion re Commitment to Discussions with Provincial and Municipal Governments re School Space</u>  <i>That the Board reaffirm its commitment to discussions with the provincial and municipal governments as well as Edmonton Catholic Schools regarding all possibilities related to space including school closures, school viability and community buildings.</i>	Tash Taylor	The motion was approved November 16, 2010. The Board Chair initiated tri-level discussions. January 21, 2011 meeting of Board Chairs and Superintendents of EPSB and ECS with Mayor. February 23, 2011 Tri-level meeting between Minister of Education, Mayor, Chair and Superintendents of EPSB and ECS. Board representative on Community Sustainability Task Force.
November 30, 2010  Trustee Hoffman	<u>Motion re Moratorium on School Closures</u>  <i>That the Board impose a renewable two year moratorium on school closures, and that during this time the board seek to further understand the issues and impacts surrounding school closures. During the moratorium, the board will also identify a number of ways to support schools instead of close them.</i>	Tash Taylor	Motion approved. See below Committee approved December 14, 2010.

Date and Trustee	Motion	Assigned To	Status/Outcome
December 14, 2010  Trustee MacKenzie	<u>Motion re Moratorium Committee</u>  <i>That the Board create a committee to further understand the issues and impacts surrounding school closures and that this committee work to keep schools open by recommending initiatives to the Board that will address these issues and impacts over the period of the moratorium. That the Committee report back to Board with the proposed terms of reference and a plan and budget by the end of February.</i>	Tash Taylor	Committee approved December 14, 2010. Committee appointments approved January 11, 2011.  February 22, 2011 Board – Tri-Level Meeting Discussion Paper: School Closures and Sustainability Factors to Consider.
January 11, 2011  Trustee Colburn	<u>Motion re In-Camera Meetings</u>  <i>That the Board examine its meeting practices and policies with the view to reducing in-camera discussions, increase transparency of decision making and improving Board governance.</i>	Board	In process. Discussed at the March 1, 2011 Conference Committee. April 13, 2011 a proposed revision to the Board’s procedures regarding In-Camera Sessions Committee of the Whole-Conference was discussed and referred back to the mover (Trustee Janz) to discuss with General Counsel. (See April 13, 2011 board agenda and minutes).
January 25, 2011  Trustee Ripley	<u>Motion re WiFi</u>  <i>That Edmonton Public Schools continue the practice of relying on Health Canada and the World Health Organization safety standards to guide its decisions on the installation and use of WiFi in all its buildings with the understanding that the Administration will keep the board informed should there be any changes to the standards.</i>	Brian Smith	Current practice was confirmed and no follow-up required at this time.

Date and Trustee	Motion	Assigned To	Status/Outcome
February 22, 2011  Trustee Janz	<p><u>Response to Alberta Food Banks</u></p> <p><i>That the request from Alberta Food Banks be supported in the following way:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>In the February 25, 2011 bulletin Board, information about the Alberta Food Bank's request will be shared with District staff.</i></li> <li>2. <i>An email be sent from the Board Chair to other Board Chairs across Alberta to inform them of the request from the Alberta Food Banks and ask them to consider supporting the request.</i></li> <li>3.</li> </ol>	David Fraser	The actions requested were completed.
February 22, 2011  Trustee Hoffman	<p><u>Motion re Anti-Bullying Advisory Committee</u></p> <p><i>That the Board establish an Anti-Bullying Advisory Committee that will develop a list of recommendations for the Administration to consider implementing in an effort to identify the scope and reduce the extent of bullying in Edmonton Public Schools. The Advisory Committee would consist of one Trustee, a member of Central Administration who specializes in this area, one active staff member of school, one junior high school student, one high school student, one elementary school parent and one person from the Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities. The Committee would provide recommendations to the Administration by May 31, 2011.</i></p>	Tanni Parker	In process. March 8, 2011 the Board approved Trustee Hoffman as the Trustee on the Committee. The Committee held its first meeting on April 11, 2011

Date and Trustee	Motion	Assigned To	Status/Outcome
February 22, 2011  Trustee MacKenzie	<u>Motion re Advocacy Committee</u>  <i>That the Advocacy Committee consult with the Edmonton Catholic School Board on their latest postcard campaign for adequate, predictable and sustainable provincial funding and, in the context of our broader advocacy efforts and relationships, consider making a recommendation to the Board for the development of a complimentary EPSB form of advocacy.</i>	Tash Taylor	In process. On behalf of the Advocacy Committee, the Board Chair sent a letter on April 6, 2011 to the Chair of Edmonton Catholic School Board seeking further information on the costs, distribution strategy and type of evaluation measures for their postcard campaign.
March 8, 2011  Trustee Spencer	<u>Motion re Policy for lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual/Transgendered and Queer (LGBTQ) Students and Employees</u>  <i>The Policy Review Committee develop a policy that affirms the District's commitment to providing a welcoming environment, free of discrimination and harassment, for all students and employees who self-identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual/transgendered and queer (LGBTQ). The Committee shall look at LGBTQ policies of the Greater Victoria School District and Vancouver School Board as examples, and seek input from students, staff and members of the public.</i>	Tanni Parker	In process. On April 14, 2011, the Policy Review Committee reviewed a draft policy based on work done by the Toronto, Great Vancouver and Victoria School Districts and research conducted by Dr. Kris Wells. The draft policy will be posted for on-line stakeholder input May 2, 2011 to May 27, 2011.
March 22, 2011  Trustee Johner	<u>Motion re Trustee Per Diems</u>  <i>That Trustees receive per diem honoraria when Board committee meetings that they have been appointed to exceed 18 meetings over 1.5 hours in length within a fiscal year.</i>	Tash Taylor	In process. Trustees will be requested to verify attendance and duration of attendance at committee meetings and shall receive an annual payment for all committee meetings beyond a total of 18 meetings lasting more than 1.5 hours in length.

Date and Trustee	Motion	Assigned To	Status/Outcome
<p>March 22, 2011</p> <p>Trustee MacKenzie</p>	<p><u>Motion re Review of Lunch Fees Policy and Practices</u></p> <p><i>That the Policy Review Committee examine our policy regarding lunch fees for the purpose of ensuring fairness and equity and clarifying expectations within the district. This review would include reviewing the lunch fee policies of other metro boards.</i></p>	<p>Tanni Parker</p>	<p>In process. On April 14, 2011, the Policy Review Committee did an initial review of the board policy and administrative regulations to gain understanding of current practices and issues. The Committee Chair will seek clarification from the Board on further follow-up.</p>
<p>March 22, 2011</p> <p>Trustee Janz</p>	<p><u>Motion re In-Camera Meetings</u></p> <p><i>That the amendments to the Board's procedures regarding In-Camera Sessions Committee of the Whole-Conference (Appendix 1) be approved.</i></p>	<p>Trustee Janz</p>	<p>In process. Some amendments to Appendix I were approved by the Board and the item as amended was referred back to Trustee Janz in order to consult with General counsel to bring back to public board.</p>