



Superb
Results
from all
Students

Summary of Board Meeting #16 Tuesday, September 14, 2004

A. **O Canada** – District Video.

B. **Roll Call:** (6:00 p.m.) - All trustees were present.

C. **Communications from the Board Chairman**

1. The chairman congratulated Teacher Jackie Underhill of S. Bruce Smith Junior High School who is a recipient of Governor General's Award of Excellence in Teaching Canadian History. This award is given to six teachers across Canada. Ms Underhill has been recognized for her dynamic and interactive teaching methods. History comes alive in her class. This is an auspicious award and the district is pleased and very proud of Ms Underhill's accomplishment.
2. The chairman advised that Westbrook School has provided the board with their results of the cross-country Math League contests. There were 494 Canadian schools that participated in the Grade 7 Math League Contest and two Westbrook students (Jonathan Chu and Mariya Sardarli) tied for the top score in Canada. Although they competed in the Grade 7 contest, Jonathan is in grade 5 and Mariya is in Grade 4.

There were 486 schools that participated in the Grade 6 Math League Contest and Westbrook School ranked 6th in Alberta. The members of this team were: Ty Kim, Taylor Lloyd, Calvin Ho, Thomas Lee and MacKenzie Carson.

More than 13,000 students from 751 Canadian schools participated in the Grade 5 Math Contest and four Westbrook students earned first, second, third and fifth place. Together their scores made them the top team in Alberta and the top team in Canada! The students on this team were: Kaiven Zhou, Mariya Sardarli, Andrew Qi and Qaasim Mian.

The chairman commended the Westbrook students and their tremendous accomplishments in Math.

D. Communications from the Superintendent of Schools

The superintendent introduced the following members of the 2004-2005 superintendent's council: Wilma Bayko, Cam Colville, Linda Craig, Colin Inglis, Colleen Mondor and Carol Symons.

E. Minutes:

1. Board Meeting – June 14, 2004
2. Board Meeting #15 – June 15, 2004
3. Board Meeting – September 7, 2004

Approved as printed.

F. Focus on Student Achievement

4. Central Services' Role in Supporting Teaching and Learning

Received for information.

G. Reports:

5. Report #13 of the Conference Committee (From the Meeting Held September 7, 2004)

Approved recommendations re:

- Teacher-certificated resignations
- City purchase agreement for a portion of H.A. Gray School Site
- Trustees' Manual
- ASBA Organizational Review Survey

6. Delegation of Authority – Superintendent of Schools - 2004 Summer Recess

Received for information.

7. Evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools

The following verbal report from the Evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools' Committee was received for information:

The Board of Trustees recently completed its annual review of the Superintendent of Schools. This is the third year in which Angus McBeath has served in this capacity, and his third evaluation.

Mr. McBeath's time as Superintendent has been challenging. Government funding anomalies, an arbitrated settlement, the Learning Commission Report, government audit reports, and larger class sizes due to severe staff reduction were just some of the major issues the district faced in the last three years. Mr. McBeath not only faced these head on, he managed to help everyone, both staff and students, maintain their focus on teaching and learning.

Over the past year the district again has received a gratifying share of recognition, nationally and internationally, through books and magazines. We constantly welcome visitors who are keen to learn about our systems and how we do things. In all of this positive acknowledgment, the superintendent has continually focused on meeting the needs of all students.

In its evaluation, the Board was particularly impressed with Mr. McBeath's persistence to maintain the course despite distractions. He focused on ensuring that all staff had professional learning opportunities so that they could do their work even more effectively. He helped high schools focus on their course completion rates - with improved results. He constantly communicated the value of professional learning communities, and the work of the principal as instructional leader. The Board appreciates the Superintendent's ongoing work in the district to improve financial accountability.

The evaluation process highlighted the Board's continued expectations for the Superintendent. The district's high school completion rate continues to be an important area of focus. Meeting the needs of all students, especially those who are disadvantaged also remains a concern and area for improvement. The Board is aware of the progress made and the work still to be done.

Through its evaluation of Superintendent McBeath, the Board demonstrates a high level of confidence in him. The Board is confident in his ability to manage a complex district, and to inspire staff, students, parents, and the community through his leadership, modeling and effective communication. The Board is pleased with his positive working relationships, both with Board members and staff. The Board recognizes Mr. McBeath for his integrity, the high standards he holds for himself and others, and his crystal clear vision that all students can achieve superb results. The Board congratulates Angus McBeath on an excellent year.

8. Board Evaluation

The following verbal report from the Board Evaluation Committee was received for information:

I would like to report from the Board Evaluation Committee on the results of this year's board evaluation. The board has conducted an annual self-evaluation for the past three years of its term of office. As this is the last scheduled public board meeting of the current board, it is an opportune time to bring closure.

The board conducts a board self-evaluation for a number of reasons:

- *To facilitate communication and teamwork among board members.*
- *To enable the board to model its policy of system-wide evaluation.*
- *To assist the board in clarifying its direction to more effectively plan, and provide for, the learning opportunities of children in the system.*

In 2001, the board came together as a new working team. We developed what we called a "legacy statement" that we would work towards achieving in our term of office. The statement reads:

As leaders and advocates for public education, we have:

- *Promoted excellence in teaching and learning to develop every student's full potential,*
- *Achieved adequate and sustainable financial resources,*
- *Demonstrated respect and recognition for the contribution district staff makes to society,*
- *Fostered character and citizenship values in students, and*
- *Engaged our communities as active partners in support of public education.*

Our "legacy statement" provided an effective mechanism to assist the board in developing a common focus at the beginning of our term and in monitoring progress through the three years.

In reviewing the board's evaluation results for each of the three years, there has been consistent and steady growth in all areas in spite of the significant challenges we had to work through...

To name but a few of the challenges... a teachers strike, a district deficit, a ministerial audit, a significant reduction in teaching staff, and school and program closures...

The board was a leader and an advocate for public education on all fronts.

- *In terms of promoting Excellence in teaching and learning...*
 - *As a board we recognized that our attention has to be on the achievement of all students, including those with special educational needs.*
 - *We are very pleased with the progress made in the work of supporting teaching and learning.*
 - *The district has made great gains – we were able to increase the high school completion rate by 5% over the three years.*
 - *We continue to make small gains in our achievement rates relative to the province at almost all levels.*
 - *High school course completion rates at grades 10 and 11 are up.*
- *In terms of adequate and sustainable financial resources:*
 - *The board developed strategies to advocate for improved conditions and funding at all levels for our district.*
 - *We varied our approach – we were assertive in bringing our concerns about the funding shortfall to the attention of our public and the government and we worked behind the scene in focused meetings with government officials to resolve issues and reach solutions.*
 - *We recognize the role parents and community members played in positive advocacy for our schools.*

Regardless of these efforts, we had mixed results in achieving adequate and sustainable financial resources.

While we are pleased with the latest funding announcements by the government -- we were not happy with the necessary staff reduction in the 2002-2003 school year even though we have been able to bring most staff members back this fall.

We had to make difficult decisions to close schools and some programs and we have had to increase our advocacy for adequate funding to maintain and improve our school buildings.

In terms of respect and recognition for the contribution district staff make to society:

- *The board has worked hard to maintain the integrity of our working relationships with all of our staff and stakeholders.*
- *We believe this enabled us to weather the reduction to staff last year and contributed to the recent successful teacher contract settlement. The board*

believes that our district is stronger when there is mutual respect for staff and a common sense of purpose – the board, administration and staff are all committed to supporting teaching and learning.

- *The board has encouraged the administration in offering professional development to enable all staff to achieve high standards of performance.*
- *The board takes pride in the accomplishments of staff both within and outside of the district and is particularly pleased that Edmonton Public Schools is substantially represented in Alberta's Excellence in Teaching Awards.*

In terms of fostering character and citizenship values in students:

- *We believe that character education is important for a civil society. Citizenship development supports participation in the democratic process and is essential to a democracy.*
- *The board brought forward the initiative to create a framework and focus on character education and is pleased to know that it has had a positive impact in the schools. We are gratified to learn that Alberta Learning will be undertaking an initiative to support character and citizenship development across Alberta based on the district's experience and framework.*

In terms of engaging our communities as active partners:

- *The board was very pleased with the involvement of our stakeholders in the development of the district's submission to the Learning Commission.*
- *Schools have been encouraged to share information with staff, parents and their community not only about their budget and financial needs but about their instructional focus and to seek community assistance in supporting teaching and learning in the classroom. Visitors to the district frequently remark on the consistency of the messages about what it is we are about no matter who they talk to in the district.*
- *While the board is pleased with this positive corporate climate, it still believes that more must be done to engage non-parents, or those who have no children in schools. Education is of vital importance to every person in our society, touching each of us more directly than almost any other aspect of our society.*
- *The elected board provides the most direct linkage between the individual member of society and the direction, delivery and quality of education. An elected board gives public education institutions legitimacy in doing their work and ensures responsiveness to the needs of the community.*

Overall, in reviewing the board's self-evaluation, the board can take pride in staying on course and making considerable progress in achieving the goals it laid out for itself. Although, we are pleased with both our effort and with the results of our advocacy work, we acknowledge that sustainability and sufficiency of

funding and engaging our communities in support of public education will continue to be a challenge for the next board of trustees.

This board, and the 94 boards preceding it, has never rested on their laurels; there is always more that can be done.

We encourage the next board of 2004-2007 to continue to focus their efforts on student learning and the expectation of excellent results from all students whatever their ability. Public education creates hope and equity for all students. We want Edmonton Public Schools to be known for its remarkable results with students. The district is poised to make great strides in this area, we hope the next board will keep up the momentum.

We encourage the next board to maintain advocacy for public education and work with government to ensure that resources are available for the adoption of Learning Commission recommendations in ways they can be implemented by School districts... and,

We encourage the next board to develop strategies for reaching out and engaging the non-parent community and post secondary institutions in the cause of a strong public education system.

On behalf of this board, thank you. The realization of the board's legacy statement in any measure must be attributed to the dedication and commitment that senior administration, the staff and our active parent community have made to these objectives.

You, the administrator, central service provider, teacher, parent and student are the ones who have found ways of transforming the board's priorities and objectives into reality. In the board's estimation there is no finer district and we the 2001-2004 board of trustees are proud to have served you.

9. Funds for 2005-2006 Professional Improvement Program

Approved recommendation.

10. Policy and Administrative Regulations for Second Language Instruction

Approved recommendation.

11. Process for Results Review and Three-Year Planning

Approved recommendation.

12. Highest Level of Achievement Test Results: June 2004

13. Advanced Placement Examination Results: 2004

14. International Baccalaureate Examination Results: May 2004

Received for information.

15. 2004 Student-Parent-Staff Satisfaction Survey Results

16. 2004 Community Survey Results

Received for information.

17. Provincial Survey Results

Received for information.

18. Third Quarterly Report: March 1, 2004 to May 31, 2004

Received for information.

19. Review of High School Accommodations in South Edmonton

Received for information.

20. Response to Trustee Request for Information

Received for information.

21. Bereavements

Received with regret.

H. Committee and Board Representative Reports

• **Community Relations Activities**

1. Trustees Woodrow, Bonko, Odynski and Martin expressed their appreciation for the support of district staff and their fellow board members during the past three years.

The chairman commended Trustees Woodrow, Bonko, Odynski and Martin for their contributions and wished them well in their future endeavours.

2. Trustee Hansen advised that he had attended a Metro Boards meeting this summer in Red Deer and with the Minister of Learning with respect to funding of the Learning Commission's recommendation regarding class sizes. He believed that the board's initiative was significant in obtaining increased dollars for reducing class sizes.
3. Trustee Hansen advised that he had attended a meeting last week with a representative from the Mayor's office as well as members of the administration and representatives from Alberta Infrastructure and Capital Health regarding funding for the pedway between the hospital parkade and Victoria School. Alberta Infrastructure has committed to providing \$250,000 each year for the next 25 years to support the cost of the pedway.
4. Trustee Hansen advised that he had met with a number of city councillors to oppose a developer's request to build a charter school on the Cameron Heights school reserved site. He also met with Minister Ty Lund with respect to this matter. He encouraged trustees to attend the City Council meeting tomorrow when this item will be discussed.
5. Trustee Hansen advised that he attended, along with Trustees Dean, Gibeault and Martin, the Public Service Commission student awards ceremony last night at the Centre for Education. There were 180 students who challenged the PSC language proficiency exam and are considered to be at the same level of proficiency in French as federal employees.

I. Comments from the Public and Staff Group Representatives

Karen Beaton, president Edmonton Public Teachers, thanked the board on behalf of the district's teaching staff for the leadership they have demonstrated. She also thanked board members for maintaining the excellent relationship between the staff and the board.

J. Trustee and Board Requests for Information

1. Trustee Bonko requested that information be provided with respect to whether Punjabi will be offered in the northeast quadrant of the city.
2. Trustee Bonko requested that the following information be provided: What kinds of measures were taken to reduce damage caused by flooding this summer? What role did emergency preparedness, security monitoring and Occupational Health and Safety play? What would the contingency plan have been if school had been in session? Who was responsible for coordinating the response?
3. Trustee Odynski requested that information be provided with respect to the district's relationship with the Alberta Speech and Debate Association and whether there is any way the district could provide financial assistance.

4. The chairman noted that Students Awards Night will take place on Thursday, October 7, 2004. The district will recognize more than 80 high school students who have achieved excellence and distinguished themselves in the area of academic studies, fine arts, athletics, vocational choices and community involvement.
5. The chairman noted that Read-In 2004 is scheduled for October 4 to 8, 2004. This year's theme *Chapters in Time* or *Regard sur notre Histoire* is a tribute to the 15th anniversary of Read-In and the 100th birthday of the City of Edmonton. He invited all Edmontonians, on behalf of the board, to participate.

K. Notices of Motion – None.

L. Next Meeting Date: Tuesday, October 26, 2004 (Organizational Board) at 7:30 p.m.

M. Duration of Meeting: 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.