

A. O Canada:  (6:00 p.m.) – *District O Canada Video*


B. Roll Call: All trustees were present.

C. Communications from the Board Chair

1. The Board Chair noted the exhibit *Icons of the Wall* located in the Atrium. This unique collection of photos commemorates the 20th Anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall and documents the search for visible and invisible remnants of the wall using cameras and acoustic recording devices. The District hosted the official opening of the exhibition earlier today. The exhibit will help the District's art, social studies, German and language arts students make connections to many curriculum outcomes in a very meaningful and relevant way.

She acknowledged the partnership that Edmonton Public Schools enjoys with the Goethe Institute and the Central Agency for German Schools Abroad and thanked the District's own Institute for Innovation in Second Language Education for its hard work in obtaining and maintaining this important partnership. District staff and students enjoy numerous cultural events, excellent resources and access to outstanding educational experiences as a result of this agreement.

2. The Board Chair noted that, on April 7th, the Government of Alberta released the provincial budget. The District appreciates that the Provincial Government continues to place a priority on education and has provided increased funding for the 2009-2010 school year. The Board has signed collective agreements with our staff groups in which the District will increase staff salaries based on the average weekly wage earnings index, which is 6.0 per cent. These agreements reflect the Board's commitment to honour staff and the important work that they do for public education. However, the Province has provided an increase of only 4.8 per cent to the base instruction grant, which is used to fund teacher salaries. This discrepancy puts the Board in an awkward position as it tries to honour its agreements and live within its means. It is the Board's expectation that the Province will live up to its commitment to provide funding to school boards based on the average weekly wage earnings index.

3. The Board Chair drew attention to the District's  billboards, as well as the print and online ads that have appeared around the city over the past few weeks. The District's goal has been to reinforce in the hearts and minds of Edmontonians the important role public education plays in our lives. The Board of Trustees and Administration have sought to rekindle people's memories of school and spark conversations about what public education means to each of us. As elected representatives, it is vital that Trustees truly understand those things about public education that the community values most. This insight will enable the Board to reflect the priorities and interests of parents and community members in its decision-making. She encouraged people to visit the www.school4you.ca website to share their own thoughts.
4. The Board Chair announced that 28 district teachers are among the 134 semi-finalists for 2009 Excellence in Teaching Awards. The semi-finalists were selected from 365 eligible nominees. These teachers were chosen because of their excellence in a variety of areas—including knowledge of subject matter, effectiveness with students, creative and innovative teaching practices, involvement with parents and collaboration with colleagues. Being named a semi-finalist is an acknowledgement from the local school community that these teachers are held in high esteem for their valuable and lasting contribution to the lives of their students – and it is testament to the outstanding teachers we have in Edmonton Public Schools. The Board of Trustees will recognize our district's semi-finalists during a special ceremony on Tuesday, April 30, 2009.
5. The Board Chair noted that next week is Support Staff Appreciation Week with Wednesday, April 22nd designated as Support Staff Appreciation Day in the district. On this day, schools and central service decision units will have the opportunity to recognize the important contributions of all support staff for the excellent work that they do in supporting the success of all students and staff.
6. The Board Chair noted that April is Earth Month and Wednesday, April 22nd is International Earth Day which is the largest, most celebrated environmental event worldwide. Many district students will be involved in activities recognizing Earth Month and Earth Day – everything ranging from eco-tours, Earth Day assemblies, waste reduction projects, planting trees and gardens -- to pitch-in and clean-up drives. Several years ago, the Board identified Earth Day and Week as an initiative to promote within the district. To that end, the students of Westglen School have challenged all other Edmonton Public Schools to celebrate Earth Day on April 22, by observing "Power Hour". All schools and other district facilities are challenged to turn off their lights for one hour, from 2 to 3 p.m. Participating classrooms, schools or facilities will be supplied a form that will allow them to calculate the energy savings, as well as the resulting reductions in carbon dioxide emissions. This event is intended to bring awareness of the District's impact on the environment and bring about actions to help reduce it.

While Earth Day and Week only come around once a year, taking pride in our school grounds and keeping our communities beautiful and litter-free is a worthy cause for all – every day of the year.

D. Communications from the Superintendent of Schools

1. The Superintendent acknowledged educators from Belize who are visiting to learn the education system in Alberta. They are attending the board meeting this evening to study the governance of school boards. The group is being sponsored by a number of rotary groups.
2. The Superintendent advised that there were a number of principals in attendance for the board meeting who will have their principal designations confirmed later in the board meeting.
3. The Superintendent advised that April 26 to May 2, 2009 is Education Week. This year's theme is "Learning Connections: Celebrating Student Engagement." Education Week was established more than 75 years ago to call attention to the importance of education and to show the public some of the good things happening in Alberta schools.
4. The Superintendent, with respect to the Board Chair's comments regarding the provincial budget, expressed appreciation for the ongoing contributions of staff. The District is committed to exploring all options to retain staff positions for the coming school year and doing everything it can to ensure the funding received is directed to supporting students and staff. Any budgetary adjustments required to incorporate additional funding that may materialize in the future will be done.

E. Minutes:

1. Board Meeting #13 – March 24, 2009
 - a) Trustee Ripley referred to her comments on page 7 of the minutes and advised that four community members had attended the ASBA Conference Summit along with Trustees.
 - a) Approved as amended.

F. Improving Student Achievement:

2. Improving Student Achievement at Forest Heights Elementary

Received for information.

G. Reports from the Superintendent of Schools:

4. Early Development Inventory and Community Mapping: Overview Presentation

a) Received for information.

b) Colour maps available on the Alberta Education website:
- [ECD Mapping PowerPoint Presentation](#)

5. City Centre Education Partnership (CCEP) Update

Received for information.

6. Results of the Ad Hoc Committee for School Closure and Sustainability Review

a) The Board heard from Ms Dena Boyle, School Council Chair Fulton Place School.

b) Received for information.

c) Trustee Huff requested that the presentations of Johnston Research and Cambridge Strategies Inc. be posted on the District website.

Board members concurred with the request.

3. District Response to Alberta School Boards Association High School Completion Task Force Board Survey

Approved recommendation.

7. Response to Staff Group Budget Presentation

Approved recommendation.

8. Update on Plan to Promote Healthy Food and Beverage Choices

Received for information

9. Response to Board Requests for Information

Received for information.

H. Committee, Board Representative and Trustee Reports:

10. Report #10 of the Conference Committee (From the Meeting Held March 24, 2009)

Approved recommendation.

11. Proposed Issues for the 2009 ASBA Fall General Meeting

Approved recommendation.

12. Motion re Student Transportation Policy

a) The Board heard from Ms Madelaine Rainey.

b) The recommendation was deferred to the Planning and Policy Committee to gather information as identified by Trustees and bring forward a recommendation to Board.

13. Motion re Audit Committee

Approved recommendation.

I. Other Trustee Reports – None.

J. Comments from the Public and Staff Group Representatives – None.

K. Trustee and Board Requests for Information

1. Trustee Shipka requested that information be provided regarding the implications of moving to a four-day school week indicating areas, including transportation, where cost savings may be possible and identifying other Alberta jurisdictions using this model.

Board members concurred with this request for information.

2. Trustee Colburn requested that information be provided by the end of September 2009 on district and external practices that promote volunteerism in students.

Board members concurred with this request for information.

L. Notices of Motion – None.

M. Next Board Meeting Date: Tuesday, April 28, 2009 at 6:00 p.m.

N. Duration of Meeting: 6:00 p.m. to 9:55 p.m.