

**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 that the board is committed to transparency in the work it does on behalf of parents and community members to provide a quality public education system to Edmontonians and she was pleased that the board was holding its public board meeting in a community school. She thanked Principal Jean Stiles and the wonderful students and staff at Jasper Place High School for providing the facility and their assistance in making the meeting possible.
2. The board chair advised that April is Earth Month and Tuesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> 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. We encourage schools to participate. 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.

She added that, in the same vein, it has come to the board's attention that the students and staff of Westglen School have achieved Earth III status from the SEEDS Canada Foundation – the first school in Alberta and the third in Canada to receive this status. It involved the completion and write up of 3,000 environmental projects.

3. The board chair advised that next week is Support Staff Appreciation Week with Wednesday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> 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.

#### **D. Communications from the Superintendent of Schools**

The superintendent reported that 40 district teachers are among the 130 semi-finalists for 2008 Excellence in Teaching Awards announced by Alberta Education on April 8<sup>th</sup>. The semi-finalists were selected from 334 eligible nominations. Trustees will honour all semi-finalists at a Board event on May 6<sup>th</sup>; however, the province will be announcing the finalists in a release on May 2<sup>nd</sup>.

From the 130 semi-finalists, 20 teachers will receive a provincial Excellence in Teaching Award and three will be recipients of the SMARTer Kids Foundation Innovative Use of Technology Award. Alberta Education will honour the 2008 award recipients at a dinner and ceremony in Calgary on May 10<sup>th</sup>.

The following benefits have been added to the Excellence in Teaching program this year:

- Support for the 130 semi-finalists to attend an education conference to a maximum value of \$1,500;
- Support for the 20 finalists to register in a North American education conference of their choice, up to a maximum value of \$4,000;
- Special celebration dinners in Edmonton and Calgary for all the semi-finalists; and
- An acknowledgment certificate signed by the Education Minister for each eligible semi-finalist in recognition of their work with Alberta students.

The three teachers who receive SMARTer Kids Foundation Innovative Use of Technology Awards will receive a comprehensive technology package, which includes a SMART board.

#### **E. Minutes:**

1. Board Meeting #10 – March 25, 2008

Approved as printed.

#### **F. Improving Student Achievement:**

2. Improving Student Achievement at Glendale Elementary School

Received for information.

#### **G. Reports from the Superintendent of Schools:**

3. S.T.A.R. Program – Interagency Program at Jasper Place School

Received for information.

4. Cree Extended Alternative Program  
Approved recommendation.
5. Delegation – Student Pass Initiative (SPI) Committee  
Received verbal report for information.
6. Unrestricted Bus Pass Initiative  
Approved recommendation.
7. Old Scona – Approval for Designation as a Provincial Historic Resource  
Approved recommendation.
8. Support for Second Languages and the Confucius Institute  
Received for information.
9. Response to Staff Group Budget Presentation  
Received for information.

#### **H. Committee, Board Representative and Trustee Reports:**

10. Report #8 of the Conference Committee (From the Meetings Held March 18 and April 8, 2008)  
Approved recommendations.
11. Motion re Comprehensive School Health Symposium  
Deferred to the April 29, 2008 board meeting.

#### **I. Other Trustee Reports:**

1. Trustee Huff reported that she had attended the following:
  - March 12, 2008 – open house at Westminster School
  - March 14, 2008 – performance at Brightview School directed by one of the district's Edwin Parr nominees
  - March 19, 2008 – RAP information session at the Centre for Education
  - April 9, 2008 – parent council meeting at Britannia School
  - April 9, 2008 – ASBA fiscal accountability training session with Trustees Colburn and Esslinger

- April 11, 2008 – performance at Coronation School put on by the QUEST Theatre involving Coronation students
  - April 12, 2008 – CUPE 474 (custodial staff) general meeting
  - April 14, 2008 – visited Prince Charles to learn about their Aboriginal history quiz
2. Trustee Colburn reported that the School Health Symposium held March 19 and 20, 2008 was a great success. The Symposium was held in Sherwood Park and was sponsored by the Alberta Coalition for Healthy School Communities and the Alberta School Boards Association. Over 200 people registered for the symposium including 30 new trustees representing 25 boards from across the province, seven physicians representing 9 of the Alberta health regions, 2 medical officers of health, 9 superintendents, many front-line health professionals as well as parents and teachers and principals.
  3. Trustee Colburn advised that he had attended the Closing the Gaps conference with Assistant Superintendent Barrett and Gloria Chalmers April 13 to 15<sup>th</sup> in Kananaskis. The conference focus was on improving achievement for Alberta's First Nations, Metis and Inuit students. The conference was sponsored by the Alberta School Boards Association. Two of the highlights of the conference were:
    - A presentation by Former Superintendent Emery Dosedall regarding the practice in British Columbia of disaggregating Aboriginal achievement data. BC is the only province in the country that is doing so. Dr. Dosedall spoke about the value of this practice and the need for data to support policy development and a better understanding of what the challenges are of Aboriginal need. He suggested this might be something for the board to consider whether it is time to revisit the district's practice in this regard with the community.
    - Minister of Aboriginal Relations Gene Zwosdesky committed that his priority in his term as minister of this new ministry will be focusing on the education of Aboriginal youth.
  4. Trustee Rice reported that the Terra Association held their annual breakfast/recognition/fundraiser on April 10, 2008 in support of Breamar School students and the programs being offered. He noted that more than 300 people were in attendance from businesses, community, members of the government, MLAs and the Minister of Education.
  5. Trustee Rice reported that he attended the Public School Board Council meeting April 10-11, 2008 in Nisku as the board's representative. He added that he would provide trustees with a more extensive report later but provided the following highlights:
    - MLA George Rogers spoke on Friday night encouraging intergovernmental cooperation/collaboration
    - Minister of Education David Hancock spoke on Friday morning. He was concerned with school boards providing excellent programs for students so they can all reach their potential, specifically, Aboriginal students. The Minister clearly stated that the critical factor for students to be successful is their teachers. He is committed to promoting and enhancing teachers and school leaders and their value to society.

6. Trustee Esslinger reported that she and Trustee Rice attended the Time is Now Health Symposium with Trustee Colburn.
7. Trustee Esslinger reported that for the past two days she had attended the Pan Canadian Literacy Forum. The forum was supported by the Ministers of Education from across the country to look at literacy. She noted that it was alarming to hear that one-third of Albertans are considered to have low levels of literacy.
8. Trustee Esslinger, as the board's representative on the Alberta School Boards Association, reported that she had attended a presentation last weekend on distributed learning by Alberta Education.

#### **J. Comments from the Public and Staff Group Representatives**

1. Ms Lora Yaskow, a Woodcroft parent, thanked Trustee Huff, Shipka, Colburn and Gibeault for their support and expressed concern about the impact of the school closure on the children currently attending the school.
2. Ms Sonya Chudyk, a Woodcroft parent, expressed her concern about the closure of the school.
3. Ms Carrie Der, Chair of Parent Council for Woodcroft, spoke about the school closure.

#### **K. Trustee and Board Requests for Information**

1. Trustee Ripley requested that information be provided regarding whether student pedestrian safety is a concern across the district or just to particular schools in Ward H. What is the scope of the problem? What are the best practices at school that have had the problem in the past and have successfully dealt with it? How or if the district supports solutions for this issue at individual schools beyond the regular block funding way of distributing money? Is there any district resource material or recommended procedures with regard to student pedestrian safety for schools and school councils?
2. Trustee Huff requested that information be provided regarding the current practices and notification procedures for schools scheduled for sustainability review in the next five years, in particular, what are the principals and parent councils and community members being advised regarding their school's status and the steps they should be taking in the years prior to review. She would like similar information provided regarding schools whose viability could be affected by the opening of the ASAP schools in 2010.
3. Trustee Huff requested that information be provided regarding what the proposed drop-off and pick-up point is for Woodcroft students who will be bused to their designated school in the new year.

4. Trustee Colburn requested that information be provided on the status of the district review of its data management practices with a particular focus on the feasibility of a trustee-only website for data retrieval and what plans are in place to make it easier for the public to acquire information from the district website.

**L. Notices of Motion**

1. Trustee Huff served notice of the following motion:

*To establish a Student Advisory Committee, which would meet directly with the Board of Trustees on a periodic basis with the intent of:*

*(a) enhancing the Board's understanding of the student perspective of education; and  
(b) encouraging civic engagement and leadership in our youth.*

She noted that the composition of the Student Advisory Committee, frequency of meetings and start date would be determined by the Board, in consultation with EPSB administration and staff.

Trustee Huff requested that the debate of this motion take place at the May 13, 2008 board meeting. In the interim, she requested that the administration provide information on the pros and cons and the cost implications of this proposal to round out the board's consideration.

2. Trustee Colburn served notice of the following motion:

*That the expenditure of any uncommitted operating surplus or capital reserves in the district require the formal approval of the Board of Trustees.*

**M. Next Board Meeting Date: Tuesday, April 29, 2008 at 6:00 p.m.**

**N. Duration of Meeting: 6:00 p.m. to 9:25 p.m.**