

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

April 28, 2009

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Trustee G. Rice, Conference Committee Chair

SUBJECT: Report #11 of the Conference Committee (From the Meeting Held April 21, 2009)

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Report #11 of the Conference Committee from the meeting held April 21, 2009 be received and considered.

Principal Designations

2. That the designation of the following individuals as principal to the District, effective September 1, 2009 to August 31, 2011, be confirmed:

Rob McPhee
Bruce Miller
Brenda Giourmetakis
Elizabeth Shen

Board Communication Plan

3. That the goal, outcome, principles, key messages and target audiences of the “Proud to be Your Public School Trustee” Communication Plan be approved to direct Board communications.

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Background - Recommendation 2

In accordance with Administrative Regulation GBA.AR – Designation, Appointment and Assignment to Leadership Positions, principals are designated by the Board of Trustees for a two-year term prior to designation by the Board of Trustees for an indefinite term and are assigned by the Superintendent of Schools.

Background – Recommendation 3

Excellent communication is critical to fostering support for public education, Edmonton Public Schools, and publicly elected school boards. This plan updates and enhances a 2006 Communications Plan developed for the previous Board. It takes into account the direction from the October 2008 Retreat to develop goals, criteria, key messages, and outcomes by which ALL communication efforts undertaken by the Superintendent on the Board's behalf over the remainder of our term shall be developed. It also includes insights and ideas generated at the January and February 2009 trustee retreat sessions as well as building on elements from the Community Relations plan developed in 2008-09 and the contributions of individual trustees to the current Community Relations Committee over the past six months.

GOAL

To connect with Edmontonians in a diversity of meaningful and effective ways in order to 1) inculcate the value of public education as the best educational choice for children; and 2) increase awareness of the role and importance of the Edmonton Public School Board as the guardian and visionary that is committed to supporting the best educational outcomes for all students.

OUTCOME

By accomplishing the goal, by September 2010, Edmontonians will have an increased understanding about the importance of public education, an increased awareness of the role a publicly elected Board of Trustees plays in ensuring an excellent public education that is responsive to the whole community and meets the needs of all students, and increased confidence in the leadership of the Edmonton Public School Board.

PRINCIPLES

Content

All Communication Pieces (“the story”) shall attempt to....

- Celebrate public education as a noble and fundamental task undertaken by society to ensure a healthy, happy future for all
- Engender collective pride in the work of Edmonton Public Schools and the sense of ownership by the public of their public education system
- Place “the story” in the context of the ongoing governance work of the Board (i.e. our role in directing the Superintendent, acting as communication bridge, setting

- priorities, developing policy, allocating resources, being accountable for the work)
- Place “the story” in the historical continuum of fine public education in Edmonton and sound Board decision-making while responding to the demands of an ever-changing global community.
 - Celebrate the unique contribution that the Board as an order of government makes to ensuring all students achieve success and are ready to contribute to society as well-rounded, skilled citizens.
 - Educate and inform in simple, everyday language (i.e. give the facts with no jargon, or if necessary, with jargon clearly explained)
 - Acknowledge the complexity of the work, the challenges, the successes, and the continuous learning that happens in education to response to the challenges, the successes and the changing student population
 - Invite contact with trustees/the Board and welcome the participation/engagement of the public in the work
 - Connect the “story” to the Board’s Strategic Plan/Priorities.

Delivery

All Communication Pieces shall attempt to be:

- Timely
- Developed proactively in advance of decisions and activities rather than being produced reactively
- Be multi-faceted in delivery (i.e. take one story and propagate in a multitude of ways so as to reach as many audiences as possible: website, School Newsletter insert, press release for mainstream media, pitch for Shaw TV spot, basis for CTV school feature spot on 6 pm News Thursday slot, Facebook/Twitter update, speaking notes for trustees to use in their own rounds, correspondence, posting on School Zone/Staff Zone, etc.)
- Provide information in layers –summary for quick read, backgrounder, research documents to support backgrounder, etc.

KEY MESSAGES

We are proud and honoured to serve as your publicly elected School Board of Trustees and to set the direction of and safeguard high quality public education on your behalf.

As publicly elected citizen representatives, we are proud to identify, articulate and reflect a broad range of perspectives from across Edmonton in our decision making and governance activities. The Board is the tangible proof that the public “owns” public education and that boards are responsive to the needs and desires of the local community they serve.

We are proud to be transparent and honest about our plans, the challenges and successes the district faces, and the values driving our decision making. We are proud of our district priorities set in consultation with our community.

We celebrate public education because:

- It is inclusive, open, and welcoming to all students regardless of income, culture, faith, ability, gender....
- It has a successful track record of being responsive to the changing needs of society and the individual needs of students
- It provides the best “life” education for any student because its classrooms mirror our society.
- It models democracy in its governance processes

We celebrate Edmonton Public Schools because:

- It has a 128-year-old record of raising the bar for public education in Alberta.
- It is innovative and forward-thinking (programs of choice, EDI, Skills Centre, Aboriginal/ Multicultural Task forces...)
- It is responsive to the changing classroom.
- It offers programs of choice and the freedom to choose those programs.
- It has developed a site-based decision making process, which supports decision making at the local level closest to the children and the community being served.

MESSAGES RELATED TO SPECIFIC AREAS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

High School Completion

We are proud that our focus on successful high school completion begins the moment a student enters the school district.

Early Learning

We are committed to improving the state of early learning opportunities for all children so as to positively impact their transition into school and their success in school.

Employer of Choice

The Board is committed to ensuring that Edmonton Public Schools is the best place to work in Edmonton where “everyone is in” and respected, and where all staff are well supported and recognized for their contributions.

Fiscal Accountability

We practice good stewardship knowing that our community has unlimited dreams for their children and recognizing we have limited resources and must make difficult choices.

AUDIENCES

To infiltrate all circles and sectors of Edmonton society with our key messages every time “a story” is created, all audiences should be considered.

Students

- Student Unions, Governments, etc.
- Advisors on issues (i.e. contacts for multicultural task force, for example)

All Staff

- Staff on the front lines
- Staff Group representatives
- District leaders

All Parents

- Parents who read newsletters
- Parents who attend school events (teacher interviews, concerts, etc.)
- School Council regular participants
- Parents as Partners parents

Former Trustees

Current District Partners (List taken from Community Collaboration list from District Website)

- ABC Head Start
- Aboriginal Youth & Family Well-being and Education Society
- Alberta Health Services
- Ben Calf Robe Society
- Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society
- Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Catholic Social Services, Settlement Services
- Centre for Family Literacy
- Children's Services Region 6
- City of Edmonton
- Community-University Partnership
- Edmonton Immigration Services Association
- Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers
- Edmonton Public Library
- Joint Action for Children Committee
- Linkages
- Logos Society
- Métis Child and Family Services
- Multicultural Health Brokers
- Northern Alberta Alliance on Race Relations
- Safe and Caring Schools
- Success By 6
- The Family Centre
- YMCA
- YMCA Time Out Program Information
- YWCA

Potential Partners

The General Public (without children in schools)

- Grandparents
- Seniors
- Young parents with preschoolers
- NextGen (20 – 30 year olds)
- Service Club members
- Community Leagues
- Small business owners
- Artists (Theatre, Music, Visual, Writing, etc.)
- Former staff

Government

Provincial Government
Municipal Councillors
Fellow Trustees in Region/Province
Federal Government

AS:mmf