



Board Meeting #16
Held Tuesday, October 10, 2006

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

B. Roll Call: All trustees were present.

C. Communications from the Board Chair

1. The Board Chair announced that the Provincial Executive Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association has proclaimed October 10 to 14, 2006, as Substitute Teacher Appreciation Week throughout Alberta. Schools are encouraged, during this week especially and throughout the year, to recognize the contributions substitute teachers make in providing continuity to the learning experiences of district students. The district values its substitute teachers and applauds the excellent work they do.
2. The Board Chair advised that Mr. Will Simpson was in attendance at the meeting with a number of students from a Concordia College after-degree education class that both he and Dr. Maureen Stratton Lemieux teach. The course focuses on issues in the organizational framework of teaching and one of the requirements of the course is that students attend a school board meeting.
3. The Board Chair noted that Trustees and members of administration participated in Read In Week activities during the past week. Read In Week not only provides an opportunity to visit schools and meet many staff and students, it is also an opportunity to bring attention to the importance of literacy in our daily lives.

D. Communications from the Superintendent of Schools - None

E. Minutes:

1. Board Meeting #15 – September 26, 2006 – Approved as printed.

F. Focus on Student Achievement:

2. Technology – AISI Project Update – Received for information.

G. Reports:

3. Report #14 of the Conference Committee (From the Meeting Held October 3, 2006)

Approved.
4. Board Evaluation
 - a) Approved verbal report for information.
 - b) Trustee Nicholson noted that trustees had agreed that the verbal report would be available on the district website. **See attached.**
5. Proposed 2006 - 2007 Annual Implementation Plan - Ten-Year Facilities Plan
 - a) Approved recommendation.
 - b) Ms Sue Huff, Chair, Westglen Advocacy Group advised that in the four months since learning that Westglen School had been placed on the Sustainability Review List the Advocacy Group has met with Trustees, MLA's and City Councillors. Parents are spearheading an initiative to bring back the community school designation and MLA Bruce Miller will be introducing a private members bill to bring this initiative back. The work of the group has revitalized the school and the community; the school climate has changed and community schools need to learn how to promote themselves as much as alternative program schools. Solutions can be found to save community schools if they are given the time necessary to respond.
6. School Closure Policy Review
 - a) Approved 1st and 2nd consideration of revised Board Policy FL.BP – School Closure
 - b) Third consideration and final approval of revised Board Policy FL.BP – School Closure scheduled for November 7th Board Meeting.
7. Update on Major Maintenance Plan

Received for information.
8. Balwin and Holyrood Schools Modernization Projects

Received for information.

9. Fourth Quarterly Report: June 1, 2006 to August 31, 2006

- a) Received for information.
- b) Trustee Gibson suggested that the staff numbers provided on page 5 of the report be accompanied by decision unit information in future reports so that trustees can see the movement within various departments relative to their budget documents.

10. Response to Trustee Request for Information

Received for information.

H. Committee and Board Representative Reports

Community Relations Activities

- 1. Trustee Keiver reported that the Linkages Committee met last week and received a presentation by Fraser Mustard regarding the importance of health and education services being provided to children in a consistent manner. A subcommittee was established to set direction and identify common areas of strength and concern for the agencies serving children in Region 6.
- 2. Trustee Keiver reported that last year PSBAA offered a one-year free trial membership for non-member boards. Nine boards took advantage of the offer and to date four new boards have taken out full membership in PSBAA.
- 3. Trustee Esslinger advised that she and representatives from Calgary Public, Calgary Separate and Edmonton Separate had attended the Council of Urban Boards of Education (CUBE) Conference in Phoenix on behalf of the ASBA. She noted that boards throughout North America face the same challenges with growing numbers of ELL and high school completion challenges. The ASBA will be hosting a similar conference for Canadian urban boards at the CSBA Congress in July of 2007.

I. Comments from the Public and Staff Group Representatives

- 1. Mark Ramsankar, President, Edmonton Public Teachers #37, advised that October 5, 2006, was World Teachers' Day and noted that the Local appreciates the Board's recognition and support of this event and Substitute Teachers' Day. Mr. Ramsankar noted that highlighting the work of teachers to the community is a positive reflection of the board. He also extended an invitation to Trustees to attend the New Teachers Induction Ceremony on November 13, 2006, at Barnett House.

2. Ms Madeline Rainey advised that her recent correspondence addressed to the Board Chair has gone unanswered. Ms Rainey has received a response from the superintendent. Ms Rainey also expressed her concerns regarding the cost to parents of field trips which are part of the curriculum. She questioned whether schools are required to distinguish between field trips which are extra-curricular and those that are curricular. Ms Rainey also expressed concern regarding the consent form that requires a parent to accept unlimited liability in regard to their child attending a field trip. She provided a copy of her comments to the board chair and superintendent.

J. Trustee and Board Requests for Information

1. Trustee Colburn requested information regarding the guidelines and practices that guide the district with respect to school fees.
2. Trustee Gibson requested an update on where the district is in the process of reopening the junior kindergartens.
3. Trustee Esslinger requested an update on student transportation with respect to the shortage of drivers and the initiatives undertaken to address this.

K. Notices of Motion

Trustee Colburn served notice of the following motions:

1. *That the sale of junk food be eliminated from all district schools.*
2. *That subject to support of the above motion, that the administration be directed to deliver a report to Public Board no later than February 27, 2007, on the process and timeframe necessary to achieve this end.*

L. Next Board Meeting:

Organizational Board Meeting

Tuesday, October 24, 2006

This meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m.

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

BOARD EVALUATION STATEMENT

Presentation to Public Board Meeting #16 October 10, 2006

Madame Chair I am pleased to provide a verbal report on the results of this year's board self-evaluation. The board conducts an annual 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 in the context of its legacy statement and to plan more effectively, and provide for, the learning opportunities of children in the district.

In October 2004, the board came together as a new working team and developed what we call a "legacy statement" that we would work towards achieving in our term of office in support of the district priorities. The legacy statement reads:

As leaders and advocates for public education, we have:

- raised academic achievement levels and high school completion rates, and promoted the physical and mental well-being of every student
- actively engaged community partners in support of defining and obtaining superb results from every student
- secured broad community support for sustained investment in public education and provided sound stewardship of district resources
- instilled in every student a strong belief in societal involvement, values and responsibilities
- celebrated excellence in teaching and the work of all district staff.

Going into the final year of our term and reviewing the board's self-evaluation results for the past year, we believe that we have made significant progress on our legacy objectives and that these objectives continue to be valid and important to achieve.

In terms of our first objective of raising academic achievement levels...

- The district continues to exceed provincial results in most areas in the 2005-06 test administration with the exception of English language arts. Also, for the grades 6 and 9 achievement tests written in French the district results are substantially higher than provincial results for both acceptable and standard of excellence. One positive trend in the data is an increase in the percentage of students achieving the acceptable standard in grades 3 and 6 English language arts and grade 3 mathematics written in English. However, our district results remain below provincial results in these three areas. These gains in grades 3 and 6 language arts may be attributable to schools' increased focus on early literacy. The substantial increases in both acceptable standard and standard of excellence for the grade 6 French language arts achievement test may be attributed to the targeted support provided to those schools during the 2005-06 school year. The district needs to continue to examine why it can exceed the province in all subject areas except English language arts.
- The successful completion rate trend is positive in all four core grade 10 and 11 subject areas (English, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies). Proportionally more students are accessing the more challenging core courses in grades 10 and 11 and being successful. Students enrolled in the general stream courses continue to have a much lower successful completion rate than students enrolled in the more academically challenging courses. The district needs to continue to create a range of supports for these students to improve their achievement.
- Results for some high schools indicate a substantial change in program delivery practices over the past four years. District-wide professional development has provided high schools an opportunity to share strategies and learn from each other.
- Overall, the board sees steady progress being made and believes that the district's work on supporting teaching and learning and professional development

In terms of actively engaging community partners in support of defining and obtaining superb results from every student ...

- Schools have been sharing information with staff, parents and their community not only about their budget and financial needs but about their instructional focus and have sought community assistance in supporting teaching and learning in the classroom.
- The administration has worked actively to engage community partners on a variety of fronts, the Edmonton Public Library, the YMCA, the English Language Learning centre and recently announced History Centre being examples of what can come from collaborative effort.
- The district is represented on all major interagency organizations in the Capital Region and has created alliances with a number of organizations to enhance the learning environment of students.

- The board has met with post secondary leaders and other community partners to share information and understanding of issues related to education. The board has established a Trustee Aboriginal Education Task Force to strengthen the relationship between the board of trustees and the Aboriginal parent and student community.
- We recognize that engaging the community requires ongoing effort and our success or failure will directly impact community support for public education.
- Community partners can provide support for district objectives and both fiscal and informational resources to support district work. The board will continue to seek mutual points of benefit with community partners and to establish clear objectives and consistent messages.
- The board will continue to nurture a sound and open relationship with provincial and municipal levels of government, as well as other school boards to seek cooperation on mutual issues.

In terms of securing broad community support for sustained investment in public education and providing sound stewardship of district resources...

The board sees public education as the most important work in society today -- our challenge is to communicate this importance with passion to our students and to our broader communities. This past year the board of trustees took opportunities to make our funding case to the Ministers of Education and Infrastructure, MLA's and other opinion leaders. The ASBA and PSBAA were also active in making our case. Our planning process requires that schools share their budget and education plans with their community. The board encouraged schools to explain the challenges we expected to face for this current school year given our funding and rising costs.

The Community Survey results indicate an increase in overall positive responses when compared to last year's data. Funding issues were the main concern cited for both parent and non-parent groups. Our message was delivered.

At the end of the school year, the board was disheartened by the prospect of a deficit and having to reduce staff and programs. The board greatly appreciates the efforts and sacrifices of staff, parents and community in trying to meet the funding challenges.

The board is gratified that the Minister saw fit to announce more funding for this coming year.

With respect to stewardship of district resources ...

- The board has risen to the challenge of addressing the use of all district resources -- human, financial, and physical -- including district space -- for maximum benefit of students. The community consultation and review of district practices and policies related to the use of space as a district resource ~~and~~ lead to what we believe are clear and consistent processes with respect to planning and decisions about school space. The negotiation of the Joint Use Agreement, the 10-year facility plan and the identification of school viability criteria reflect the results of this community consultation.
- We are committed to lowering average class sizes by the 2006/07 school year to the levels recommended by the Learning Commission and to this end, ensured that class size funding was used for class size reductions. The reinstatement of class size reduction funding from the province will be of great assistance.
- The board has made a concentrated effort to become more knowledgeable about district finances in order to provide appropriate oversight of district operations.

In terms of instilling in every student a strong belief in societal involvement, values and responsibilities...

- We believe that the district's framework and focus on character education is having a positive impact in the schools as evidenced by increased student and parent satisfaction levels.
- The initiatives being taken in the district to support the physical and mental well-being of students and staff by promoting healthy lifestyles is also appreciated.

In terms of celebrating excellence in teaching and the work of all staff...

- The board takes pride in the service and accomplishments of staff both within and outside of the district
- The board believes that the board, administration and staff are all committed to supporting teaching and learning.
- Our employees represent a significant population of influence in the community. To this end we must keep our staff informed as much as possible on issues that affect their work and personal welfare.
- The board continues to support district staff and student recognition programs
- The board continues to support professional development to enable all staff to achieve high standards of performance and fulfillment.
- The board encourages principals and decision unit administrators to take the opportunity to recognize staff accomplishments.

Overall, in reviewing the board's self-evaluation, the board is pleased with both our effort and the results of our work. We acknowledge that sustainability and sufficiency of funding will continue to challenge us. The board wants to focus our efforts for the balance of this term on developing strategies that will assist us in engaging opinion leaders in the community in promoting the importance of education. We want to build and present a business and a social case for ensuring that public education receives the resources and priority it needs.

The board also wants to express its appreciation for the support of the administration in advancing the board's Legacy Statement.

Thank you Madame Chair