

## EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

September 14, 2010

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Trustee D. Colburn, 2009-2010 Board Evaluation Committee  
Trustee K. Gibson, 2009-2010 Board Evaluation Committee  
Trustee G. Rice, Chair, 2009-2010 Board Evaluation Committee

SUBJECT: Board Evaluation 2009-2010 Summary Report

RESOURCE

STAFF: Bruce Coggles, Anne Sherwood

### INFORMATION

The Board conducts an annual self-evaluation for the following reasons:

- to enable the Board to model its policy of system-wide evaluation as a means of continuous improvement.
- to provide an opportunity for Trustees to reflect on Board governance and how they can work effectively as a Board and as individuals in support of the Board's mandate.

The Board charges the Board Evaluation Committee with the task of assisting the Board in conducting its annual self-evaluation. Attached as APPENDIX I is the Terms of Reference for the Board Evaluation Committee.

### Evaluation Process

The areas for evaluation are based on the Board's Role and Responsibilities statement (Appendix II) and reflect the District Mission, District Priorities and the Board's Strategic Plan.

A Board evaluation questionnaire is administered annually to gather individual Trustee assessment on the success of the Board in fulfilling its roles and responsibilities. The questionnaire is divided into seven sections: decision making, advocacy, leadership and direction, resources, monitoring/evaluating/accountability, reporting/communication, and staff relations. For each question, Trustees are asked to give an overall assessment of the Board's effectiveness on a four-point scale of very effective to very ineffective and to comment on why they rated the Board as they did, identify what the Board is doing well, and what the Board needs to improve. Each Trustee is then asked to identify an area of overall priority for improvement. The results of the individual Trustee responses are compiled and provided to the Board for discussion at Trustee Retreat.

### Summary of the Results of the 2009-2010 Board Evaluation Questionnaire

A majority of Trustees gave the Board a positive rating in the following key roles and responsibilities:

- representing the interests of the community and reflecting the values of the community in its decision making.
- serving as an advocate of public education.
- setting priorities and policies to provide leadership and overall direction for the District.
- establishing and following a strategic plan which focuses the Board's own work on and aligns its energy and time on supportive actions to assist the District in meeting the district priorities to improve student outcomes.
- allocating resources to the District to fulfill its responsibilities.
- monitoring the implementation of policies.
- hiring and evaluating the Superintendent of Schools
- promoting a collaborative, healthy and innovative workplace that recognizes individual contributions and supports opportunities for growth and professional development.

The overall level of Trustee satisfaction declined relative to the evaluation results from the previous years, particularly in the areas of teamwork, the evaluation and reporting of results achieved in the District and serving as a communication bridge between the community and the District.

A common theme was to improve communication by “connecting the dots” for both internal and external stakeholders, for example: drawing the connection of how stakeholder input influences the Boards decisions, linking Board reports to the policies which drive them, profiling the Board's advocacy efforts on behalf of public education and providing the public with meaningful indicators of student achievement.

Despite tensions around school closures and funding shortfalls, many key decisions were made that have moved the district forward in line with district priorities and the Board's Strategic Plan. A summary of Board activities and accomplishments over its three year term is attached as Appendix III.

While the Board celebrates these accomplishments, it recognizes there is still much work to be done and encourages the incoming Board to remain committed to continued improvement of student outcomes. The Board also recommends a focus on professional development opportunities for trustees to enhance skills in team decision making and problem solving and recognizes that establishing clear expectations for working with the district Administration will contribute to high levels of success for the 2010/2013 Board of Trustees.

GR/BC/AS:mmf

- APPENDIX I - Board Evaluation Committee Terms of Reference
- APPENDIX II - Board Role and Responsibility Statement
- APPENDIX III - Sampling of Board Achievements and Successes 2007-2010

## **BOARD EVALUATION COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Board Evaluation Committee consists of three Trustees who are responsible for assisting the Board of Trustees to conduct an annual Board self-evaluation for continued Board development and improved Board performance with respect to the Board's role and responsibilities.

The committee will:

- recommend a plan to Conference Committee for the annual evaluation of the Board of Trustees in keeping with the terms of reference for the Board self-evaluation.
- develop and recommend to Conference Committee a proposed Board result statement based on an analysis of the Board's self-evaluation.
- present the Board evaluation result statement on behalf of the Conference Committee to public Board for approval.

The Board shall undertake an annual Board evaluation for the purpose of Board development and to model its policy of system-wide evaluation as a means of continuous improvement.

The Board Evaluation process should:

- assist the Board in identifying Board strengths and areas for improvement, and common beliefs and values amongst Trustees,
- provide an opportunity for Trustees to reflect on how they work collectively and as individuals with respect to the Board's mandate and role and responsibilities,
- provide an opportunity for Trustees to discuss the Board Evaluation results in the context of Board development, and
- provide an opportunity to recognize the Board's accomplishments.

The Board Evaluation Instrument should:

- be brief; it should not take more than one hour for completion by each Trustee.
- be specific to the Board of Trustees of Edmonton Public Schools.
- measure Board performance with respect to the mission statement, the roles and responsibilities of the Board, the principles of operation of the Board, and the district priorities.
- measure Board performance in both quantitative and qualitative terms.
- lend itself to ease of aggregating results.
- provide a basis of comparison of Board performance from year to year over the Board's three-year term.

## Board Role and Responsibilities

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In accordance with law, Alberta Education directives, community expectations, and in support of the District's mission statement, the Board's mandate includes:

- representing the interests of the community and reflecting the values of the community in its decision making;
- serving as an advocate of public education;
- setting priorities and policies to provide leadership and overall direction for the district;
- allocating resources to the district to fulfill its responsibilities;
- monitoring the implementation of policies;
- evaluating the results achieved in the district;
- reporting the results achieved to its public;
- serving as a communication bridge between the community and the district; and
- hiring and evaluating the Superintendent of Schools.

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Revised: September 11, 2007

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**SAMPLING OF BOARD ACHIEVEMENTS AND SUCCESSES 2007-2010**

- Initiated a Student Transportation review and transportation action plan
- Initiated review of policy for setting attendance areas
- Supported a review of the co-ordination and integration of Central Services
- Developed a Respectful Learning Environments policy
- Established a Board of Trustees' Ad Hoc Committee to Review Sustainability and School Closure processes
- Established a new process for managing student space through Sector Reviews
- Conducted a City Centre Education Partnership Sector Review and rationalization of school space for education programming
- Conducted a Greater-Hardisty Area Sector Review and rationalization of school space for education programming
- Opened Lillian Osborn High School (District's first Leadership in energy and Environmental Design LEEDS standard school)
- Opened six new Alberta Schools Alternative Procurement ASAP K-9 schools in September 2010
- Launched the Edmonton Public School District Foundation
- Established the Multi-Cultural Task Force – approved a Multi-Cultural Education policy
- Collaborated with local agencies and government departments to provide wrap-around supports for students and families
- Created of a Transition Centre for immigrant and refugee students
- Established a task force to develop the Board's Aboriginal Education policy
- Worked at fine tuning the Board's Strategic Plan and using it to guide Board work in four key areas:
  - Every student is successful
  - A responsive learning culture
  - An employer of choice
  - Stewards of public education
- Enhanced understanding of who, when and how to engage or promote opportunities and processes for community engagement.
- Developed a policy on Stakeholder Engagement

- Provided opportunities for public engagement through:
  - Setting the Direction for Public Education
  - Participation in task force on multi-cultural education
  - Participation in the Ad Hoc Committee on sustainability and school closure
  - Attending the Town Hall meeting
  - Attending the Student Voice forum
  - Attending Parents as Partners events
  - Policy development
  - Policy reviews
- Established international agreements for second language instruction with China, Spain, Germany and France
- Signed a partnership agreement with the Goethe - Institute
- Implemented a health and wellness initiative
- Established the Skill Centre to support high school completion
- Established an extensive H.R. strategy
- Revised and updated H.R. policies
- Worked with the City on utilization of surplus school sites
- Approved an overarching Environment Policy and revised Purchasing policy to include environmental and ethical considerations
- Developed an Early Years Policy
- Developed a District Staff Code of Conduct Policy (whistle blower)
- Established a Fiscal Oversight and Management policy
- Responded to the Provincial Review of Special Education
- Approved a Waldorf Alternative Program
- Approved a Cree Extended Alternative Program
- Approved the Sakinah Circle Alternative Program
- Adopted an Employability Skills Achievement Certificate
- Established an annual Report to the Community
- Conducted a discrete Choice Measure Survey on community values re: school space and education programming
- Established a set of Board values to guide budget management decisions