

Minutes of the Regular Public Board of Trustees Meeting of Northern Gateway Public Schools

Division Office Board Room, Whitecourt, Alberta

March 19, 2024

OPENING

Call to Order and Roll Call

A. OPENING

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The March 19, 2024, meeting was called to order by Board Chair Gerry Steinke at 10:02 a.m.

Present at this time: Board Chair Gerry Steinke, Board Vice-Chair Diane Hagman, Trustees Jim Hailes, Judy Muir, Barb Maddigan, Deb Koloski, Les Urness and Christine Peck; and Administrators Kevin Bird, Superintendent; Leslee Jodry, Deputy Superintendent; and Nancy Whittaker, Recording Secretary. Trustee Linda Wigton, teacher Shelley Knott, and Secretary-Treasurer Tamara Spong were present via Zoom.

Lisa Bakos, Communications Officer, and teachers Pam Mehl and Chris Keay were present at this time. There were three members of the public present in the gallery.

A recording of O Canada by Addison Watson, Grade 9 student at Hilltop High School was presented.

Treaty Land Acknowledgement

2. Treaty Land Acknowledgement

Vice-Chair Diane Hagman read the Treaty Land Acknowledgement.

Additions/Deletions to the Agenda

3. Additions/Deletions to the Agenda

Nil

Acceptance of the Agenda

4. Acceptance of the Agenda

The Agenda for the March 19, Regular Public Board Meeting was accepted as presented.

Acceptance of the Minutes

5. Acceptance of the Minutes – February 13, 2024 Regular Board Meeting

The Minutes of the February 13, 2024 Regular Board Meeting were adopted as presented.

Letter to Addison Watson

Trustee Hailes recommended that the Board write a letter of thank you to Addison Watson for her rendition of O Canada.

Randy Lovich, Director of Facility Services, joined the meeting at 10:15 a.m.

APPOINTMENTS AND DELEGATIONS

B. APPOINTMENTS AND DELEGATIONS

Shelley Knott

Shelley Knott, lead teacher, provided details and requested approval in principle for the 2024 Mayerthorpe Jr/Sr High School international field trip D-Day 80: Juno and the Road to Liberation Tour for herself and two students. They will also travel to Versailles.

Shelley Knott left the meeting at 10:20 a.m.

Pam Mehl

Pam Mehl, lead teacher, provided details and requested approval in principle for the Hilltop High School 2025 international field trip to Italy. Highlights of the trip include visits to Pompeii and Ostia Antica.

Chris Keay

Chris Keay, lead teacher, provided details and requested approval in principle for the Hilltop High School international field trip to Cuba. Humanitarian work is a key focus, and the students will be bringing items to donate.

Pam Mehl and Chris Keay left the meeting at 10:37 a.m.

Randy Lovich

Randy Lovich, Director of Facility Services presented the draft 2025 – 28 Three-Year Capital Plan to the Trustees. Superintendent Bird noted that Valleyview School has been removed from the Plan. Director Lovich answered questions from Trustees regarding Fox Creek School furnace replacement, Whitecourt Central School modernization, and concerns about the lack of official approval for the Valleyview school.

Randy Lovich left the meeting at 10:51 a.m.

Dr. Kirk Savage joined the meeting at 10:54 a.m.

Dr. Kirk Savage

Dr. Kirk Savage gave a presentation on the SNAP/ANIE numeracy assessment system being introduced in the Division. Dr. Savage and Superintendent Bird answered questions regarding grade levels affected, testing methods, parental acceptance and teacher involvement in implementation. The system will be made Alberta-specific.

Dr. Savage left the meeting at 11:40 a.m.

ACTION ITEMS

International Field Trip

4953-24

C. ACTION ITEMS

1. Mayerthorpe Jr/Sr High School 2024 D-Day 80: Juno and the Road to Liberation International Field Trip to Netherlands, Belgium, and France

Moved that That the Board approve, in principle, the Mayerthorpe Jr/Sr High School D-Day 80: Juno and the Road to Liberation Tour to Netherlands, Belgium and France, from May 31 to June 10, 2024.

Motion Carried

International Field Trip

4954-24

2. Hilltop High School 2025 Grand Tour of Italy International Field Trip

Moved that the Board approve, in principle, the Hilltop High School 2025 Grand Tour of Italy International Field Trip, from March 22 to April 1, 2025.

Motion Carried

International Field Trip

4955-24

3. Hilltop High School International Field Trip to Cuba for the Canada-Cuba Sports and Cultural Festival

Moved that the Board approve, in principle, the Hilltop High School International Field Trip to Cuba, to attend the Canada-Cuba Sports & Cultural Festival, from October 12 to 19, 2024.

Motion Carried

Three-Year Capital Plan

4956-24

4. 2025 – 28 Three-Year Capital Plan

Moved that the Board approve the 2025 – 28 Three-Year Capital Plan, as presented.

Motion Carried

Board-Directed School Fees

5. 2024 – 25 Board-Directed School Fees

Trustees had roundtable discussion regarding the need to increase fees gradually, Policy Committee involvement, clarification of replacement passes, and the idea of a discount for a second student in the same family.

4957-24

Moved that the 2024 – 25 Transportation Fees for Grant Ineligible Students remain the same at:

- Grades 1–12 Annual Pass Fee: \$371.00 per student
- ECS Pass Fee: \$185.00 per half day ECS student
\$371.00 per full day every day ECS student
- Family Pass Fee: \$927.00 maximum per family
- Replacement Pass Fee: \$6.00 per pass
- Alternate Seat Pass Fee: \$200.00 per student
- Alternate Seat Pass Fee ECS: \$100.00 per half day ECS student
\$200.00 per full day every day ECS student
- Alternate Seat Pass Fee Family: \$500.00 maximum per family

Trustee Linda Wigton was absent from the vote.

Motion Carried

Trustee Wigton rejoined the meeting at 11:54 a.m.

4958-24

Moved that the 2024 – 25 Technology Access/Maintenance Fees remain the same at:

- Per Student Grades 1 – 12: \$32.00
- For Half-day ECS Student: \$16.00
- Per Full Day Every Day ECS Student: \$32.00

Roundtable discussion on the benefit to students, the difficulty of collecting fees, and a possible cap per family.

Motion Amendment: Moved that a cap be implemented on Technology Access/Maintenance Fees at One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) per family.

Roundtable discussion on the amendment to the motion – more information is needed.

4959-24

Moved that the Motion to Amend be tabled until the next Regular Board Meeting on April 16, 2024.

Motion Carried
Motion Amendment Tabled

Administration will provide a report on the financial impact.

4960-24

Moved that the fee for non-Alberta students be waived for the first two students per each of our schools.

Roundtable discussion; concerns regarding possible increase in costs to some schools and inequity in fairness were expressed.

Motion Defeated

4961-24

Moved that the 2024 – 25 Tuition Fees for Non-Alberta Students remain the same at:

- For Full Year: \$11,000
- For Half Year: \$5,500

Motion Carried

4962-24

Moved that the Policy Committee be directed to examine the concept of tuition fees for non-Alberta students.

Motion Carried

Deputy Superintendent Leslee Jodry was absent for the remainder of the meeting.

INFORMATION/REPORTS D.

INFORMATION AND REPORTS

ASBA

1. Alberta School Boards Association

Trustee Wigton presented the ASBA Action Items to the Trustees for information. A recommendation was made that the Board develop a position statement regarding opportunities for transitioning students to post-secondary education.

4963-24

Moved that the Board appoint Trustee Linda Wigton to write a draft policy position statement for ASBA consideration, regarding the transition of rural students to post-secondary studies.

Motion Carried

The draft will be presented to the Board for consideration.

The ASBA Board of Directors has approved their position statement that ASBA does not support party politics in municipal elections for Trusteeship. Roundtable discussion around education being non-partisan and the Premier's comment on Trustees identifying their political affiliation during the next election.

4964-24

Moved that the Board write a letter to the Premier of Alberta, indicating the Board's disapproval of identifying political parties with Trusteeship.

Motion Carried

A copy of the letter will be provided to Trustees for information and comment.

PSBAA

2. Public School Boards Association of Alberta

The March 1 Webinar on choice in education is available on the PSBAA website and Trustees were encouraged to view it.

Standing Committee Reports

3. Standing Committee Reports

The Support Staff/Contractor Compensation Committee report will be presented in Closed Session.

The Advocacy Committee completed the advocacy brochure and copies were provided to Trustees. The brochure is being distributed to schools and other places in the community.

Ward Boundary Review

4. Ward Boundary Review

The report on ward boundaries and transportation area maps were presented to the Trustees by Superintendent Bird and Secretary-Treasurer Tamara Spong.

Board Chair Steinke recommended that the topic be placed on the next Committee of the Whole agenda after receiving further clarification on details of concern.

Questions regarding population numbers and what other Boards are doing to gather information, were answered by Administration.

Board Policy 19 does not fully align with provincial legislation (population being the primary factor) and Board Chair Steinke proposed that the Policy Committee review the Policy and submit a proposal before the April Board Meeting.

4965-24

Moved that the Board direct the Policy Committee to examine Policy 19 and align the wording with provincial legislation.

Motion Carried

The item will be placed on the agenda for the next Committee of the Whole meeting.

Alberta Rural Education Symposium

5. Alberta Rural Education Symposium

Highlights from the Symposium included the presentations on reconciliation and message of hope, education and survival of rural Alberta, stigma around rural education leading to post-secondary education, and the presentation by the student panel.

Health Attraction and Retention Committee

6. Health Attraction and Retention Committee

Trustee Koloski presented her report from the Zoom meeting on February 26th. Trustee Koloski will provide copies of the Board's advocacy brochure to Committee members at their next meeting.

Superintendent's Report

7. Superintendent's Report

Condolences extended to Twilight and Homeland Colonies for the loss of two elders.

Superintendent Bird presented his report to the Trustees for information. The two elementary schools in Whitecourt were selected for the province's Integrated School Support Program (ISSP) which will provide psychology support and access to funding for other resources.

The advocacy brochure will be distributed to Division staff electronically.

Recognition was given to Tammy Charko, Student Support Facilitator, for her presentation to the Minister of Children and Family Services.

Draft School Calendars

8. Draft School Calendars

Superintendent Bird presented the draft calendars for the next three school years. Roundtable discussion. Concerns included format of the calendar card and timeline for Board approval (Policy Committee will review placement in Work Plan).

ASBA Edwin Parr Award Nominee

9. ASBA Edwin Parr Award Nominee

The Edwin Parr Award nominee for 2024 is teacher Josie Liske from Fox Creek School. Superintendent Bird gave background information on the nominee.

Financial Reports

10. Financial Reports for February, 2024

The financial reports and enrolment report for February, 2024 were presented to the Trustees for information by Secretary-Treasurer Spong.

Board Annual and Term Work Plans

11. Board Annual and Term Work Plans

Outstanding Items: Technology Access/Maintenance Fees approval has been tabled until April. The Committee of the Whole meeting will be scheduled in April, before the next regular Board meeting.

Motion Review Cycle

12. Motion Review Cycle

Motion 4933-23 is complete.

Trustee Reports

13. Trustee Reports

Trustee Wigton

Attended school council meetings and the Rural Education Symposium.

Trustee Urness

Attended Whitecourt school tours.

Trustee Maddigan

Attended school council meetings.

Trustee Hagman

Attended school tours and Rural Caucus met before the Symposium (meeting was missed but the mailing list has been updated). Report will be given after the next meeting.

Trustee Muir

Attended school tours, council meetings and Rural Education Symposium.

Trustee Koloski

Attended school tours, enjoyed having discussions with the students. Attended council meetings. A parent at Sangudo school council expressed appreciation for the recent professional development for EAs.

Trustee Peck

Enjoyed school tours, attended Onoway Children's Health Fair on March 8. Very well attended. Mental health capacity builders from our local schools were able to attend. At OES school council, discussed the IT presentation by Jason Yaremchuk and parents were interested in having the community participate in the recycling program.

Trustee Hailes

Attended TEBA meeting and highlights were provided to Trustees by email. ASBA Zone 2/3 is having an MLA advocacy meeting on May 8 and Trustees will discuss who will attend.

Upcoming Events

14. Upcoming Events

- April 8, 2024 – Committee of the Whole Meeting
- April 8 and 9, 2024 – School Tours
- April 16, 2024 – Regular Board Meeting
- May 2, 2024 – New Teacher Induction and Celebration
- May 7, 2024 – Regular Board Meeting
- May 8, 2024 – Zone 2/3 MLA Advocacy Meeting
- May 21, 2024 – Regular Board Meeting
- May 30 to June 1, 2024 – PSBAA Spring General Assembly
- June 3 to 4, 2024 – ASBA Spring General Meeting

TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSIONS

E. TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSIONS

Nil

REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

F. REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION FROM ADMINISTRATION (BY BOARD MOTION)

Report on success rate for collection of fees.

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

G. MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- International High School Field Trips
- Approval of 2025 – 28 Three Year Capital Plan
- Approval of Transportation and International Student School Fees
- Ward Boundary Review
- Rural Education Symposium
- ASBA Edwin Parr Nominee

CLOSED SESSION

H. CLOSED SESSION

4966-24

Moved that the Board move to Closed Session at 3:10 p.m.

Motion Carried

Superintendent Kevin Bird and Secretary-Treasurer Tamara Spong were invited to stay.

Electronic Recording stopped at 3:10 p.m.

4967-24

Moved that the Board move out of Closed Session at 3:53 p.m.

Motion Carried

4968-24

Moved that the Board accept the recommendation from the Support Staff/Contractor Compensation Committee.

Motion Carried

ADJOURNMENT

I. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:54 p.m.

Board Chair

Secretary-Treasurer