



Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the The Red Deer Catholic Separate School Division, held March 22, 2024.

Present: S. Heistad  
M. Hollman  
C. Leyson  
D. Lonsdale  
K. Pasula  
A. Watson, Trustees  
K. Finnigan, Superintendent of Schools  
L. Latka, Secretary-Treasurer  
R. Ledene, Associate Superintendent - System Services  
R. Sawula, Associate Superintendent - Curriculum  
M. St. Pierre, Executive Assistant

Joined via Zoom: J. Smith, Associate Superintendent - Human Resources

*Board Chair Hollman called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m.  
Trustee Pasula read an opening prayer aloud.*

03/22/24-01-Heistad

**THAT THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MOVE IN CAMERA AT 11:32 AM.**

**CARRIED.**

03/22/24-02-Leyson

**THAT THE BOARD MOVE OUT OF CAMERA AT 1:05 PM.**

**CARRIED.**

*Board Chair Hollman called the meeting into recess until the public meeting is called back to order.  
Board Chair Hollman called the meeting back to order at 1:36 p.m.*

*Trustee Heistad read the opening prayer aloud.  
Associate Superintendent Ledene read the Land Acknowledgement aloud.*

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

03/22/24-03-Pasula

**THAT THE AGENDA BE ACCEPTED AS PRESENTED.**

**CARRIED.**

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

03/22/24-04-Leyson

**THAT THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 27, 2024 BE ADOPTED AS PRESENTED.**

**CARRIED.**

3. DELEGATIONS

Chair Hollman extended a welcome to Alicia McClelland, who attended the meeting as a parent representative. Mrs. McClelland proceeded to deliver an oral presentation, sharing insights into her family's journey and addressing topics such as gender. She expressed interest in exploring policies pertaining to gender and pronoun usage, parental engagement, as well as matters related to transgender and gender dysphoria. The presentation concluded with Chair Hollman expressing gratitude to Mrs. McClelland for her attendance and contribution.

4. ACTION ITEMS

4.1 THREE-YEAR CAPITAL PLAN

Associate Superintendent Ledene presented the Three-Year Capital Plan report to Trustees. Ledene explained that the capital plan is based on projected enrolments for the Division and that a new high school in Sylvan Lake, in partnership with Chinook's Edge School Division and the Town of Sylvan Lake, is now the highest priority for the Division.

Ledene highlighted the new construction priorities in the Executive Summary, projected population growth rates in Red Deer and rural areas, and student enrolment projections for the next ten (10) years.

Trustees asked various questions regarding projected population growth and whether immigration numbers have been factored into the report. They also asked for clarification on the differences between division priority sector priority and provincial priorities and for an update on collaboration with the new Sylvan Lake high school. Trustees also asked for insights as to why there appears to be a decline in the french immersion school population.

The Administration informed Trustees that the decline in French Immersion enrolments is a trend nationwide and that the Division is looking at ways to increase enrolments by helping parents understand the benefits of a second language and the value of

learning about French culture.

03/22/24-05-Watson

**THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVES THE 2024-2025 -  
2026-2027 THREE YEAR CAPITAL PLAN AS AMENDED.**

**CARRIED.**

4.2 SIGNING AUTHORITIES

Secretary Treasurer Latka explained that new signing authorities are required due to the upcoming retirement of the Finance Manager.

03/22/24-06-Pasula

**THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPLACE CINDY ARMSTRONG  
WITH STEVEN SYPKES AS SIGNING AUTHORITY FOR THE  
DIVISION ALONG WITH LAUREL LATKA, SECRETARY  
TREASURER AND DR. KATHLEEN FINNIGAN, SUPERINTENDENT  
OF SCHOOLS EFFECTIVE MARCH 22, 2024.**

**CARRIED.**

5. DISCUSSION ITEMS

5.1 TRANSPORTATION UPDATE WITH THE CITY OF RED DEER

Associate Superintendent Ledene provided Trustees with a written update on a recent transportation meeting with the City of Red Deer to discuss transportation requirements due to new eligibility guidelines from Alberta Education. Ledene explained that student fees cover approximately 25% of the city's costs to operate the transit system and that the City of Red Deer Transit department officials indicated that they will not be able to expand services provided to the school divisions.

Ledene stated that students who utilize the City of Red Deer transit system may have to utilize regular routes and transfer downtown to connect to a bus that drops students off at their school if the special school routes are full. He indicated that the Administration will keep a close eye on the ridership numbers next year to see if any changes are required.

Trustees requested that the Administration explore other options for City of Red Deer student transportation should it become necessary.

5.2 NEW BLACKFALDS SCHOOL REPORT AND UPDATE

Associate Superintendent Ledene provided Trustees with a written update on what is happening with the new school that will be built in Blackfalds and with an overview of a P3 Project Delivery (Public-Private Partnership).

5.3 RELOCATION OF ST. GREGORY THE GREAT MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS UPDATE

Associate Superintendent Ledene provided a written update on the relocation of middle school students from St. Gregory the Great Catholic School to St. Lorenzo Ruiz Middle School in September 2024.

Trustees requested that the Administration keep a listing of non-resident families who expressed an interest in Catholic education for future use should space become available later.

5.4 ACCESS TO NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE ARMORY PROPERTY UPDATE

Trustees discussed that they were made aware that the land adjacent to École Camille J. Lerouge School belonging to the National Department of Defence is going to be fenced off and will no longer be available to be used by École Camille J. Lerouge School. Trustees agreed that they are in support of writing an official letter to the Department of Defence to request that they do not put the fence up and to continue to allow the school to use the land. Trustees also encouraged the Administration to contact the Department of Defence and lobby against the fence being put up.

5.5 ZONE 4 CHAIRS MEETING UPDATE

Vice-Chair Lonsdale informed Trustees that Boards are being given an opportunity to share their opinion on a request regarding partisanship and the Municipal Election Act. She asked Trustees if they have any interest in being tied to a political party during a municipal election. Trustees shared that they would like to be able to represent all of their constituents, be broad with their representation and they do not support partisanship amongst trustees at the municipal level.

*Board Chair Hollman called for a break at 3:15 P.M until 3:25 pm.*

6. INFORMATION ITEMS

6.1 SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Superintendent Finnigan presented the Superintendent report and provided Trustees with highlights from the International Education program stating that this year RDCRS has welcomed 99 international students into the Division. She shared that 10 international students will graduate from the Division with an Alberta Education

credential and some be able to continue their studies into post-secondary institutions across Alberta and British Columbia.

Associate Superintendent Sawula provided highlights on the Division's work with Red Deer Polytechnic focused on the Career and Technology Framework (CTF) professional development courses for teachers. Sawula stated that the courses are geared towards middle school and high school teachers and will provide teachers with the skills necessary to teach a wide range of CTF courses. The Division will encourage teachers to take advantage of these opportunities that will allow them to earn new credentials.

## 6.2 SECRETARY-TREASURER REPORT

Secretary-Treasurer Latka presented the Secretary-Treasurer report and highlighted the statement of operations and year end projections indicating there is a total projected deficit of \$3.8 million.

Trustees asked the Administration to start taking action and look at where there are opportunities to make changes. Latka indicated that with the majority of the budget being salaries and benefits, staffing adjustments will be required to make a meaningful impact on the operating deficit. Latka added that it is difficult to make mid-year staffing adjustments due to the significant impact on the classroom and students, but adjustments will be considered for the next school year.

## 6.3 TRUSTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

- ALBERTA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION (ASBA)
  - Trustee Heistad did not provide a report and stated that they will not meet until Monday, March 26, 2024.
- ALBERTA CATHOLIC SCHOOL TRUSTEES ASSOCIATION (ACSTA)
  - Trustee Leyson informed Trustees that the ACSTA has been busy fine tuning their code of conduct policy. She stated that their next meeting is happening May 23-24, 2024 in Leduc.
- RURAL CAUCUS OF ALBERTA SCHOOL BOARDS
  - Trustee Heistad informed Trustees that work being done with the website and more conversation has occurred on transportation. She stated that she will present report after attending the Rural Education Symposium
- CATHOLIC EDUCATION FOUNDATION
  - Trustee Pasula presented Trustees with a written report.

6.5 CORRESPONDENCE

The Trustees reviewed a written correspondence report.

6.6 UPCOMING EVENTS:

- March 25, 2024 ASBA Zone 4 Meeting
- April 10, 2024 Town of Blackfalds Meeting
- April 12, 2024 Board Retreat
- April 22, 2024 ASBA Zone 4 Meeting

*Trustee Leyson read the closing prayer aloud.*

*Board Chair Hollman called for a break at 4:06 p.m.*

03/22/24-07-Heistad

**THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES GO INTO CAMERA AT 4:11 PM.**

**CARRIED.**

03/22/24-08-Watson

**THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MOVE OUT OF CAMERA AT 6:02 P.M.**

**CARRIED.**

03/22/24-09-Pasula

**THAT THE MEETING ADJOURN, THE TIME BEING 6:02 P.M.**

**CARRIED.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(CHAIR)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(SECRETARY-TREASURER)