



Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the The Red Deer Catholic Separate School Division, held April 23, 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  
J. Smith, Associate Superintendent - Human Resources  
M. St. Pierre, Executive Assistant

*Board Chair Hollman called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.  
Vice-Chair Lonsdale read an opening prayer aloud.*

04/23/24-01-Leyson

**THAT THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MOVE IN CAMERA  
AT 3:30 P.M.**

**CARRIED.**

04/23/24-02-Watson

**THAT THE BOARD MOVE OUT OF CAMERA AT 5:13 P.M.**

**CARRIED.**

04/23/24-03-Heistad

**THAT THE BOARD RECESS UNTIL THE PUBLIC MEETING IS  
CALLED TO ORDER**

**CARRIED.**

*Board Chair Hollman called the meeting back to order at 5:34 p.m.  
Trustee Heistad read an opening prayer aloud.  
Secretary-Treasurer Latka read the Land Acknowledgement aloud.*

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

04/23/24-04-Leyson

**THAT THE AGENDA BE ACCEPTED AS AMENDED BY  
ADDING THE FOLLOWING ITEM:**

**5.7 ASEBP PREMIUMS AND STAFF BENEFIT COSTS**

**CARRIED.**

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

04/23/24-05-Watson

**THAT THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF MARCH  
22, 2024 BE ADOPTED AS PRESENTED.**

**CARRIED.**

04/23/24-06-Pasula

**THAT THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF MARCH  
28, 2024 BE ADOPTED AS PRESENTED.**

**CARRIED.**

3. DELEGATIONS

3.1. EDWIN PARR NOMINEES - PRESENTATION

Board Chair Hollman introduced the Division's two nominees for the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) 2024 Edwin Parr Award. Vanessa Stang from St. Gregory the Great Catholic School was recognized as a nominee for the award and Kaitlyn McCulloch from St. Patrick's Community School was recognized as the Division finalist.

3.2. EXCELLENCE IN CATHOLIC EDUCATION NOMINEE - PRESENTATION

Board Chair Hollman introduced Gillian Hallam, a teacher at Father Henri Voisin School, with the Division Excellence in Catholic Education Award. The award is presented annually at the SPICE conference by the Council of Catholic School Superintendents Association (CCSSA).

3.3. JIM SLIPP - ADVISOR WITH THE RDCRS AUDIT COMMITTEE - PRESENTATION

Board Chair Hollman recognized Jim Slipp, a community member at large advisor on the Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools Audit Committee, for his contributions and many years of service. Mr. Slipp will be retiring this year.

4. ACTION ITEMS

4.1. BUDGET ASSUMPTIONS REPORT

Secretary-Treasurer Latka presented the 2024-2025 Budget Assumptions report, beginning with highlights from the provincial budget announcements. Latka informed Trustees that the funding announcement did not include an increase to the Division's base funding but the Division has realized continued increased costs in ASEBP Benefits, Canada Pension Plan and Employment Insurance Benefits. She informed Trustees that the increase in average costs and additional costs for services, contracts and supplies has put significant pressure on the budget when there is no offsetting increase to base funding. She stated that the Division is currently projecting a deficit of \$4.2 million for the 2023-2024 school year.

Latka stated that with the current projected deficit, the Division will be below the total required minimum operating reserves and that the Division must make significant adjustments to its spending to balance the budget and restore both operating and capital reserves to acceptable levels.

Trustees discussed the budget assumptions report and posed several questions about funding, expenditures and building up reserves. Latka stated that her goal is to submit a balanced budget for next year and will begin to work on building up the Division's reserves next year.

Latka informed Trustees that the impact of the 2024-2025 funding announcements were assessed and that the budget assumptions will guide the development of the 2024-2025 budget. Highlights of the budget assumptions included overall assumptions, enrolment data, revenue changes, certificated staffing changes, non-certificated staffing changes, benefits, services, contracts and supplies, capital and some risks.

Trustees thanked the Administration for generating all of the data into a concise report.

04/23/24-07-Pasula

**THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVES THE BUDGET ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS REPORT AS PRESENTED.**

**CARRIED**

#### 4.2. FEES REPORT

Secretary-Treasurer Latka presented Trustees with the Fees Report. Latka began by stating that the School Fees Regulation requires schools to consult with parents and demonstrate to parents the need to charge school fees prior to initiating any new school fees or increasing fees and that Administrative Procedure 202 also requires

the Board to approve the fee schedule at the April board meeting.

Latka presented a Division fee template with a list of current fees and proposed fees for the 2024-2025 school year. She stated that fees were reviewed through the lens of overall costs and prior year unspent amounts (both overall and by school) and that fee increases have not been recommended if there is a significant carryforward.

Trustees asked various questions about school fees, school council fees, fundraising fees and CTF fees. Discussion arose on why families are charged school fees in a public school division and Trustees expressed a concern that school fees may pose barriers to what some families and students can access.

Trustees suggested that the Administration make the fee waiver forms visible to families so that families in need are aware that relief is available if needed. Trustees thanked the Secretary-Treasurer for her work on the report.

04/23/24-08-Watson

**THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES ACCEPTS THE 2024-2025 SCHOOL AND TRANSPORTATION FEES AS PRESENTED.**

**CARRIED**

Recorded vote requested by Trustee Pasula:

In Favour: Hollman, Watson, Heistad, Leyson, Lonsdale

Opposed: Pasula

*Chair Hollman called for a break at 7:18 p.m. until 7:30 p.m.*

**5. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**5.1. BOARD OF TRUSTEES STRATEGIC PLAN MEASUREMENT DASHBOARD**

Superintendent Finnigan presented the Board of Trustees Strategic Plan Measurement Dashboard update to Trustees. Associate Superintendent Smith spoke about the work being done with strategic imperative one, Mental Health and Safety, and highlighted an improvement in students with lagging skills, and the use of the YMCA alternative suspension program.

Superintendent Finnigan spoke about the work being done on strategic imperative two, Purposefully, Tangibly, and Visibly Demonstrate our Faith, and highlighted how schools are exploring their parish relationships and how they are finding ways for deeper connections through service, retreats, prayer and intentional professional development around foundational knowledge.

Associate Superintendent Sawula spoke about the work being done on strategic

imperative three, Build a Workplace Culture of Engagement, Empowerment and Innovation, and highlighted the continued work on the revised school improvement plan and ongoing professional development support. He stated that staff will have an opportunity to provide feedback on this model.

5.2. ACCESS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE ARMORY UPDATED REPORT

Associate Superintendent Ledene provided Trustees with an update on the access to the Department of National Defence Armory land. Ledene informed Trustees that the Division has entered into an agreement where the school will still be able to continue to use the field owned by the armoury at no charge. Ledene thanked the Board of Trustees, parents and staff for their advocacy on this matter.

5.3. COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

Superintendent Finnigan presented the Communications Report and spoke about the Division events, news and videos being highlighted by the Communications department.

5.4. ALBERTA SCHOOL COUNCILS ASSOCIATION (ASCA) SERVICES AND MEMBERSHIP

Superintendent Finnigan presented the Alberta School Councils Association Membership Funding Report. Finnigan provided information on the Association's membership fees and other services they provide and whether the membership fee should be absorbed by the division or paid individually by each school council.

Trustees discussed the idea of paying for the membership fee but were concerned that some school councils would not be interested in the membership and indicated that it would be best to give individual school councils the opportunity to decide if they want the membership. Trustees requested that the report be shared with school council chairs.

04/23/24-09-Watson

**THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES PAY THE ANNUAL ASCA MEMBERSHIP FEES FOR ALL SCHOOLS FOR THE UPCOMING SCHOOL YEAR.**

**DEFEATED.**

5.5. CATHOLIC EDUCATION WEEK REPORT

Superintendent Finnigan, presented the Catholic Education Report, and highlighted the activities planned the week of May 6-10, 2024.

5.6. BLACKFALDS SCHOOL - GRADE CONFIGURATIONS

Associate Superintendent Ledene presented the Blackfalds School - Grade Configurations Report to Trustees. Ledene informed Trustees that Administration is now looking at the next steps for the new Blackfalds school which includes determining the grade configuration and the naming of the school. Ledene added that the division will seek stakeholder feedback on the naming of the new school.

Trustees thanked the Associate Superintendent for the information and asked whether the new school's capacity would be able to accommodate the grade configuration. Ledene explained that modifications can be made if needed while in the build process and that the new school is being built to allow for changes in capacity very quickly.

5.7 ALBERTA SCHOOL EMPLOYEE BENEFIT PLAN (ASEBP) PREMIUMS AND STAFF BENEFIT COSTS

*Trustee Pasula declared a conflict to this discussion item and left the board room at 8:10 p.m.*

Chair Hollman opened the discussion by stating that the Division has seen an increase in the ASEBP benefit premiums and the costs for benefits are becoming unaffordable and affecting the classrooms. Hollman asked Trustees for feedback on how the Board can make ASEBP aware that benefit premium increases are affecting school boards and classrooms. The Board shared ideas and agreed that they will write a letter to ASEBP about their concerns including the proportion of the cost of the premiums to the salary of the person receiving the benefit. The Chair stated that he will create a letter to send it to ASEBP on behalf of the Board.

6. INFORMATION ITEMS

*Trustee Pasula entered the board room at 8:15 p.m.*

6.1. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Superintendent Finnigan presented the Superintendent Report as an information item. The Superintendent highlighted the Empowering Youth Voices in Alberta Education Initiative, the Division's partnership with YMCA and their alternative suspension program and a new partnership with YMCA and St. Lorenzo Ruiz Middle School for a new afterschool program beginning in May.

Trustees acknowledged the good work happening in the Division and thanked the Superintendent for encouraging the nomination of students to the Alberta Education Council and for building relationships with YMCA.

6.2. SECRETARY-TREASURER REPORT

Secretary-Treasurer Latka presented the Secretary-Treasurer report as information.

Latka shared that she will continue to monitor the projected \$4 million deficit.

6.3. Trustee Reports and Updates

■ Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA)

Trustees asked for clarification on dual credit funding and if there was carbon tax relief offered to school divisions. A report was not provided.

■ Alberta Catholic School Trustees Association (ACSTA)

Trustee Cynthia informed Trustees that she will be attending the ACSTA Board of Directors meeting in May and will not be in attendance for the next board meeting.

■ Rural Caucus of Alberta School Boards

Trustee Heistad stated that a report was sent to Trustees.

■ Catholic Education Foundation

Trustee Pasula informed Trustees that the next meeting will be held after the scholarship and grant submission deadline has passed and he will prepare a report after the foundation's next meeting.

6.4. CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

The Correspondence Report and correspondence was presented as information.

6.5. Upcoming Events:

■ April 25, 2023 - Mayor's Prayer Breakfast - Pidherney Centre

■ April 25-28, 2024 - SPICE Retreat, Kananaskis

■ April 30 - May 3, 2024 - Blueprints Retreat, Kananaskis

■ May 1-3, 2024 - Judicial Review

■ May 6-10, 2024 - Catholic Education Week

■ May 7, 2024 - Installation & Blessing of Artwork - Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton

■ May 9, 2024 - World Catholic Education Day

■ May 9, 2024 - Celebration of Excellence

■ May 10, 2024 - Town of Olds Meeting

■ May 15, 2024 - Leadership Prayer Breakfast in Rocky Mountain House

■ May 22, 2024 - Rosary Celebration at St. Joseph High School

■ May 23-24, 2024 - ACSTA Board of Directors Meeting

■ May 27, 2024 - Edwin Parr Banquet

*Board Chair Hollman read the closing prayer aloud.*

*Board Chair Hollman called for a break at 8:43 p.m.*

04/23/24-10-Pasula

**THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES GO INTO CAMERA AT 8:45 P.M.**

**CARRIED.**

04/23/24-11-Heistad

**THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MOVE OUT OF CAMERA AT 9:32 P.M.**

**CARRIED.**

04/23/24-12-Watson

**THAT THE MEETING ADJOURN, THE TIME BEING 9:33 P.M.**

**CARRIED.**

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(CHAIR)

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(SECRETARY-TREASURER)