

**Westboro School Council
Meeting Minutes
April 19, 2017**

Welcome and Introductions:

Called to order 6:30 pm (Jacquie Surgenor).

Present:

Colleen Alpern, Amy Churchill, Jeff Dickey, Krystal Gibson, Leah Hesson, Sandra Hryhirchuk, Debbie Klita, Matt Matheson, Rachel Milne, Jacquie Surgenor, Heather Wieler

Approval of Agenda:

The agenda was amended to add Curriculum Redesign Update as Item 4(c) and to renumber the remaining items. Heather Wieler moves to approve the amended agenda, Amy Churchill 2nd. All in favour: "Yes."

Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting:

Amy Churchill moves to accept the minutes from March 15, 2017, Krystal Gibson 2nd. All in favour: "Yes."

New Business:

A.) Logos Report

Rachel Milne shared the Logos report.

- The pizza fundraiser has happened.
- Chapel was held last week at Brentwood Elementary School.
- The next Logos meeting is Tuesday, May 9, at Sherwood Heights Junior High at 7pm.
- The Logos Society Annual General Meeting (AGM) is scheduled for June 13 at Brentwood Elementary School starting at 7pm. Some current members are stepping down so they are looking for new members to join their board.

B.) COSC (Committee of School Councils) Report

Jacquie Surgenor shared the following report.

Kyla Sorel presented on the First Nations, Metis, Inuit (FNMI) projects that Elk Island Public School (EIPS) division is doing. She is a consultant who is currently coordinating many of them. The question was asked about why we are doing these projects now and she referenced the 94 Calls to Action that resulted from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Closing Ceremony. The Commission heard 6000 stories from residential school survivors over

6 years. The COSC attendees discussed how families can get involved so they understand what their children are learning in school. Alberta Education has a goal to bridge the achievement gap between Aboriginal students and non-Aboriginal students so there is an increased awareness being levied around their history. This goal filters down to school divisions and individual schools and EIPS is leading the way in this regard. An example of this leadership was a recent federal contest held by the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation called "Imagine a Canada...". 10 finalists were chosen from each province and for Alberta, 3 of the 10 were EIPS students. Since the COSC meeting, Kyla has mentioned the possibility of doing a book study with Elder Wilson.

Westboro Elementary School staff recently participated in a Blanket Exercise which Jacquie was very thankful to have been invited to share in as well.

To learn more about the 94 Calls to Action, please see the document: http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf

C.) Curriculum Redesign Update

The provincial government has released a summary from the on-line survey completed last fall. It can be found at <https://education.alberta.ca/curriculum-development/curriculum-survey/everyone/curriculum-survey/>. To read the 19 page report, click on the hyperlink "A summary of feedback is now available."

D.) Bill 1 Feedback and Discussion

Recently, Jacquie Surgenor has represented Alberta School Councils Association at sessions held by Alberta Education to gather feedback for regulations being developed relating to Bill 1: An Act to Reduce School Fees. Bill 1 is focused on 2 items: Instructional Support and Materials; and transportation to your designated school over 2.4 km away. The bill will prohibit school boards/divisions from charging for either of these items. The timeline to prepare these regulations is very tight. The government wants to have the draft done by the end of April to go to Cabinet and then to school divisions by the beginning of June. They want school divisions to consult with parents in June, develop their policies and procedures for submission to the government for approval in July and have these implemented in September. An important part of Bill 1 is not to reduce or cut services or programs already in place.

2 questions were discussed by those in attendance:

- 1) What is the best way to communicate school fees for the upcoming school year?
- 2) What is the best method to consult parents (beyond those that attend school council meetings) on setting school fees?

Ideas for question 1 included communicating school fees at the same time as the school supply lists; having a clearer breakdown of what the Learning Resource Fee actually covers; utilizing the local newspaper, school website and school handbook. Ideas for question 2 were to host an open house night with refreshments and babysitting provided; combining the consultation process with another school event like a bbq; using a survey. Jacquie will follow up with EIPS Board Chair Trina Boymook on this list of ideas.

Jacquie also shared a recent letter to parents from the Minister of Education. Please refer to page 6 of the meeting minutes.

E.) Open Questions

There were no open questions.

School Report:

A.) Principal's Report

Colleen Alpern shared the following report.

Activities and events in our school over the past month

- Spring and Easter breaks
- Washrooms renovations have been completed for the grade 5/6's, grade 3/4's and the staff room.
- Author visit for grades 4, 5, 6
- Grade 6 registration for junior high is underway. An open house was held last night at Sherwood Heights Junior High School.
- Boundary exemption process closed on April 7.
- Blanket exercise was completed with staff. There is the possibility of the exercise occurring with grade 5 and 6 classes next year.
- Talking stick exercise for each classroom is on-going.
- Logos chapel in conjunction with Brentwood Elementary School
- A Vancouver school student choir and band visited last week.

Activities and events coming up

- Education week (May 1-5) planned activities include music Monday for which the students are learning an aboriginal song and Elder Wilson will visit some classrooms.

- FNMI information is being presented each month in the school newsletter.
- Earth Day and Family Dance are on April 21. Pitch-in will be weather dependent.
- Kindergarten information night is April 26. Current registration for the regular program is 18 students and 20 for Logos.
- EIPS is having a name the new school in Davidson Creek contest. Submission cards are available from the front office.

School agenda discussion

Colleen shared the following message from EIPS regarding school agendas for our students:

As we try and navigate through Bill 1, our superintendent believes it is best if we hold off as long as possible on the ordering of agendas. This includes asking parent council/groups to pay/fundraise for them, etc. Bill 1 is presenting considerable challenges to all Boards as the details are severely lacking. We are trying to be prudent so that we are not caught short by any decisions made by the province as they now define the Bill.

Colleen will be discussing the need for student agendas at the May staff meeting but also opened the discussion with school council. Both the idea of Westboro Parents Group paying for student agendas and if the division had the school agenda as an optional fee were considered. In lieu of the more expensive agendas, parent suggestions included using scribblers or duotangs with lined paper or photocopied calendar pages for student use or leaving it up to parents to purchase something that would work for their child as part of the school supply list. The parents in attendance were not in favour of fundraising for them.

B.) Trustee Report

Jacquie Surgenor presented the report on behalf of Trina Boymook.

The next round of public consultations for the Sherwood Park Boundary Review will be held on April 19 and 25 at Lakeland Ridge School from 5-8pm. It has been narrowed down to 2 options and information will be available on the EIPS website the evening of the first open house. The Board is hoping to be in a position to make a decision before the end of this school year.

The provincial budget was announced on March 16. Given the economic climate, it can be considered a good news budget for education but it does come with some challenges that will need to be worked through. EIPS will see a decrease of \$899,000 through the High School Credit Earn Unit (CEU) Grant. The government has capped CEU at 45 which is less than the current cap of 60 CEU. The savings to the government will be redirected to cover \$10 million of

the \$54 million that will cover the expense of Bill 1. There has been no increases to the per student grants for K-9. Boards did not receive any dollars to address increase costs or carbon levy. Fees and Budget Allocations to schools and departments will be approved at the April 20th Board meeting.

The Board approved the Three Year Capital Plan at the March 16 Board meeting. Their first request was a Wye Elementary School replacement that would be for 650 students, K-6, located in Heritage Hills. Their second request was for modernization of Sherwood Heights Junior High School, third request was for modernization of Rudolph Hennig Junior High School and fourth on the list was a new K-6 school for Fort Saskatchewan. Boards are required to submit their Three Year Capital Plan to Alberta Education by April 1 of each year. On March 22, the Board received news that the request for a Wye Elementary School replacement was approved. With this first request now approved, the remaining requests shift up on the priority list.

News was received on April 5 that the Education Minister has expanded the nutrition program to all school boards. The original 14 boards who participated in the pilot project will receive \$255,000 while the remaining 46 boards will receive \$141,000 in grant funding to implement the program. Funds will be distributed to establish or enhance existing nutrition programs and will be targeted for the provision of nutritional meals including costs associated with ordering, preparation and delivery. Funds will not be available for the development of infrastructure such as commercial kitchens or other food handling facilities. A decision on how EIPS will be using the funds have not been determined at this time.

Volunteer Appreciation Week is April 23-29. Trina would like to thank all volunteers for the times they take away from family to attend school council meetings. Our contributions to Westboro Elementary play an important role in shaping the direction of the school and the success of the students.

Next Meeting Date: May 24, 2017 at 6:30 pm Annual General Meeting

Adjournment: Krystal Gibson moves to adjourn at 7:48 pm.



ALBERTA
EDUCATION

Office of the Minister

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I am pleased to share with you some information about Bill 1: An Act to Reduce School Fees, which our government recently introduced in the legislature. By introducing this legislation, our government is working to make life better and more affordable for Alberta families.

If Bill 1 is passed, these fee reductions will come in to effect this fall and no Alberta family will be required to pay for instructional supplies or materials, or for certain types of student transportation, as outlined below. These two school fees represent approximately 25 per cent of the fees collected each year by school boards, and reducing them would lead to Alberta families saving more than \$50 million annually.

Instructional supplies or materials include fees for textbooks, workbooks, printing and paper costs incurred by their public schools. It also includes any common fees that are charged to an entire student body, or grade cohort. These fees can be referred to as—among other titles—instructional fees, instructional materials or basic fees. To date, school fees have varied significantly from school to school, so your savings will depend on the type and amount of fees currently charged by your child's school.

Bill 1, if passed, will also remove bus fees for eligible students traveling to their designated school. That means that if your child attends his or her designated school and that school is more than 2.4 kilometres away from your home, you will not be charged transportation fees. In some circumstances—for example, if parents choose to enrol their child in a school other than their designated school—fees may still be incurred.

Our government understands that times are tough for Alberta families and is working to make education more affordable. We believe that all students deserve access to a quality education in an Alberta school, and we are committed to reducing financial barriers such as school fees.

Further details about Bill 1 will be released in the coming months, and additional information will be available on the Alberta Education website at <https://education.alberta.ca/>. If you have questions about your school's school fees, please contact your school or school board directly.

Sincerely,

David Eggen
Minister of Education