



**Grande Prairie
Public School
Division**

AGENDA
Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the
Grande Prairie Public School Division
Tuesday, August, 19, 2025 6:00PM

1. CALL TO ORDER and INTRODUCTIONS		
a.	National Anthem, Territorial Land Recognition, and Board Universal Guiding Principles	Board Chair Nellis
b.	Adoption of the Agenda	Board Chair Nellis
c.	Trustee Self-Declaration of Conflict of Interest	Trustees
d.	Approval of the Minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee of the Whole 2025 06 10 Regular Board Meeting Minutes 2025 06 10 Special Board Meeting Minutes 2025 06 26 	Board Chair Nellis
e.	Business Arising from Previous Minutes	
2. DELEGATIONS, PRESENTATIONS and SYSTEM LEADERSHIP REPORTS		
a.	Summer School Summary and Career Pathways Planning	Superintendent McDonald Director Frykas
3. COMMITTEES AND REPORTS		
a.	Alberta School Boards Association Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2025 06 11 ASBA Zone Meeting (virtual) 	Trustee Buziak
b.	Public School Boards' Association of Alberta Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2025 08 06-08 PSBC Meeting in Red Deer 	Vice Chair Koch
c.	Advocacy and Engagement Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2025 06 10 Advocacy and Engagement Committee Minutes for Information only 2025 08 19 Advocacy and Engagement Committee 	Trustee Martin
d.	Governance Minute	Trustee Martin
e.	Individual Trustee Reports (round table)	Trustees
f.	Superintendent's Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer School Summary Alberta School Councils Association Meeting Management Workshop 2025 09 18 2025 06 30 Minister's Information Session on Classroom Aggression and Complexity Taskforce Board Policy and Administrative Procedure Updates Teaching and Learning Updates for 2025-2026 	Superintendent McDonald

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Curriculum Implementation • Alberta Education Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Date Updates <p>Items for Action or Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Policy 20 • Recommendation to new Board re: 2025-2026 Board Meeting Schedule 	
g.	<p>Associate Superintendent of Business Services Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation to new Board re: 2025-2026 Trustee Compensation • Grande Prairie Composite High School Addition • GP Christian School Lease 	Associate Superintendent Oladele
4. NEW BUSINESS		
a.	Trustee Professional Learning and Sharing	Trustees
b.	<p>Upcoming Dates and Events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Workplan 	Trustees
c.	<p>Correspondence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2025 06 19 Letter from Sturgeon Public Schools to Ministers re: Inter-Ministerial Collaboration 	Board Chair Nellis
d.	In-Camera	Board Chair Nellis
e.	Actions Arising from In-Camera Discussion	Board Chair Nellis
f.	Actions Arising from Presentations or Delegations	Board Chair Nellis
g.	Next Meeting and Adjournment	Board Chair Nellis

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE - MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE GRANDE PRAIRIE PUBLIC SCHOOL
DIVISION HELD AT CENTRAL OFFICE ON **June 10, 2025**

Board Chair Nellis called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. with the following present:

PRESENT

Trustees Buziak, Johnston (5:21pm), Koch, Martin, Nellis, Ouellette, Superintendent McDonald, Deputy Superintendent Robinson, Executive Assistant, Business Services Crichton and Secretary to the Board Westwater (minutes).

Virtual: Associate Superintendent Business Services Oladele

Trustee Compensation Recommendation

- Associate Superintendent Oladele discussed that, in preparation for the 2025 School Board election with nominations opening in January 2025, the Board of Trustees tasked Public Members of the Audit Committee, along with Administration, to review the current compensation structure for School Board Trustees.
- The purpose was to evaluate potential adjustments, provide recommendations for how and when trustee compensation could be adjusted. The review focused on the following key areas:
 - Compensation Adjustments
 - Benefits Package
 - Comparison with Other Divisions
- The Board thanked Associate Superintendent Oladele for the informative report that will come back for final approval by the Board at the next Regular Board Meeting.

**BOARD
GOVERNANCE**

Board Meeting Practices Report and Draft Meeting Schedule for 2025-2026

- The Board reviewed the report and draft meeting schedule for the 2025-2026 school year. Trustees were asked to identify a consensus position on the following topics that can be presented to the new board following the October 20 municipal election, to inform them of their decision-making regarding meeting scheduling to occur at the 2025-2026 Annual Organizational Meeting:
 - Meeting Schedule Structure
 - Meeting Start Time
 - Meeting Recording and Posting Practice
- The Board thanked Superintendent McDonald for the report that will come back for final approval at the next Regular Board Meeting on Tuesday, August 19, 2025.
- Executive Assistant to the Board will send out placeholders for 2025 meetings for September and October to the Board (2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month).

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE - MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE GRANDE PRAIRIE PUBLIC SCHOOL
DIVISION HELD AT CENTRAL OFFICE ON **June 10, 2025**

Review Draft Letters to the Minister

- The Board reviewed draft correspondence to the Minister of Education and Childcare regarding advocacy for students with complex needs. The Executive Assistant to the Board will send the correspondence to the Minister by email as per the Board's direction.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Nellis called the Committee of the Whole Meeting closed at 5:57 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF
TRUSTEES OF THE GRANDE PRAIRIE PUBLIC SCHOOL DIVISION
HELD AT CENTRAL OFFICE ON **June 10, 2025**

Board Chair Nellis called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:06 p.m., acknowledged that the Board is on Treaty 8 Land, and reviewed the Division's Universal Guiding Principles, with the following present:

PRESENT

Trustees Buziak, Johnston, Koch, Martin, Nellis, Ouellette, Superintendent McDonald, Deputy Superintendent Robinson, Executive Assistant Business Services SheraLea Crichton, (recorder), and Secretary to the Board Amanda Westwater (minutes).

Virtual: Associate Superintendent Business Services Oladele

**ADOPTION OF
AGENDA**

Adoption of Board Agenda

The Board reviewed the Regular Meeting agenda. The Board agreed to the following additions to the agenda:

- Addition of "Grande Prairie Charter School Application" to the Superintendent's Report (3.j.10)
- Addition of In Camera item at end of meeting to discuss labour relations
- Addition of "2025 Lieutenant Governor of Alberta Student Awards" under the Board Chair report

MOTION: Trustee Martin moved that the Board adopt the Regular Meeting agenda as amended.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15760

**TRUSTEE SELF-
DECLARATION
OF CONFLICT OF
INTEREST**

No conflicts.

MINUTES

Committee of the Whole Meeting of May 27, 2025

The Board reviewed the Committee of the Whole Meeting minutes of May 27, 2025.

MOTION: Trustee Koch moved to adopt the minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting of May 27, 2025, as circulated.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15761

Regular Board Meeting of May 27, 2025

The Board reviewed the Regular Board Meeting minutes of May 27, 2025.

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF
TRUSTEES OF THE GRANDE PRAIRIE PUBLIC SCHOOL DIVISION
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MOTION: Trustee Martin moved to adopt the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of May 27, 2025, as circulated.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15762

**BUSINESS ARISING
FROM THE MINUTES**

None to report.

**DELEGATIONS,
PRESENTATIONS
and SYSTEM
LEADERSHIP
REPORTS**

No Delegations or Presentations.

**COMMITTEES AND
REPORTS**

Board Chair Report

- 2025 05 28 ASBA Lunch and Learn session
Chair Nellis commented on the ASBA Lunch and Learn session on May 28 and provided highlights from the session including the Trustee Code of Conduct changes and fees for appeals under the Teaching Professional Conduct Act.
- 2025 06 01-03 ASBA Spring General Meeting
Chair Nellis, Trustees Koch and Buziak, Superintendent McDonald, and Deputy Superintendent Robinson attended the ASBA Spring General Meeting held June 1-3, 2025. Highlights from the Spring General Meeting include: the Q&A period with Minister Nicolaides, professional development sessions, and a review of the proposed bylaws and position statements.
- 2025 06 09 2025 Lieutenant Governor of Alberta Student Awards
Chair Nellis attended the 2025 Alberta School Boards Association's (ASBA) Lieutenant Governor of Alberta Student Awards ceremony on June 9 at Government House in Edmonton, where grade 6 student Tarena Khalsa, from Hillside Community School, alongside her family, was presented with a Lieutenant Governor of Alberta's Student Award.
- Non-Instructional Employees Association Committee
Trustee Buziak and Vice-Chair Koch commented on the Non-Instructional Employees Association Committee meeting held May 29, 2025. The minutes were included for information.

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF
TRUSTEES OF THE GRANDE PRAIRIE PUBLIC SCHOOL DIVISION
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- Advocacy and Engagement Committee
Trustee Martin commented on the Advocacy and Engagement Committee meeting held June 10, 2025. Committee discussed the refreshed Advocacy and Engagement Tracker, the questions and schedules for Trustee Q&A videos for the upcoming election, and scheduling MLA meetings for August. Executive Assistant will send a summary of questions to all trustees and confirm dates and times for recording.
- Trustee Student Advisory Committee
Trustee Martin commented on the Trustee Student Advisory Committee meeting held on June 6, 2025. It was the final meeting of the term, and they reviewed the use of AI and recruiting for next term's Student Advisory Committee.
- GPPSD Education Foundation Committee
The May 6, 2025 minutes were included for information only.
- Superintendent Evaluation Committee
Board Chair Nellis commented on the May 29, 2025 Superintendent Evaluation Committee meeting. The Committee discussed the Superintendent Evaluation Process and updates to Board Policy 19.
- Board Policy Committee
Vice-Chair Koch presented the proposed updates to Board Policy 3 – Role of the Trustee and Board Policy 8 – Committees of the Board Appendix F as were discussed at the May 27 Board Policy Committee Meeting.

The Board discussed additional amendments to Policy 3:

- 1.3 Regarding request for information regarding operations. Remove word "back" to school.
- 1.14 Attend Division or school functions when **invited and your schedule permits**.

MOTION: Trustee Koch moved to adopt Board Policy 3 – Role of the Trustee as amended.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15763

MOTION: Trustee Koch moved to adopt Board Policy 8 – Committees of the Board Appendix F as presented.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15764

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF
TRUSTEES OF THE GRANDE PRAIRIE PUBLIC SCHOOL DIVISION
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- Governance Minute

Vice-Chair Koch discussed the definition of “governance” and what governance means to Trustees. Spoke to the Alberta Education Act and how it outlines the Board’s role. The Board discussed:

- Stakeholder engagement and advocacy
- Strategic direction
- Monitoring and evaluating
- Accountability
- Decision-Making
- Resource management

Administration will build a Trustee schedule for upcoming Governance Minutes at Regular Board meetings.

Individual Trustee Reports

No Trustee reports.

Superintendent’s Report

Items for Information

Superintendent McDonald shared the Superintendent’s Report to the Board as information, which included the following information:

- **New Curriculum Development Update**
On Friday, May 30, the Deputy Minister of Education provided an update on the K-6 Social Studies curriculum. Updated information about curriculum implementation for the 2025-2026 school year will be provided in the Superintendent’s Report at the August Regular Board meeting.
- **Indigenous Cultural Celebration**
The Indigenous Cultural Celebration was held in the gymnasium of the Grande Prairie Composite High School the evening of Wednesday, June 4. Approximately 200 people attended the event, held to acknowledge and celebrate graduating GPPSD students and the efforts of our students, their families, and their communities that contributed to their success. The celebration included several division students performing traditional Indigenous and Metis dances.

Deep appreciation is extended to Krista Umble, the Division’s Coordinator of Indigenous Programming and the Indigenous Liaison team for their thoughtful organization of this community event.

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Additional gratitude is due the school administrators, teachers, and other staff who attended to celebrate our students and to our community elders, the MC, musicians and others who made the event a success.

- **All Administrator Professional Learning and Principals Meeting**
The June administrator professional learning meeting and June principals meeting were held on June 4. The professional learning provided school leaders the opportunity to engage in learning and planning related to benchmarking; new curriculum updates; report card updates; literacy screening; changes to the early intervention model for 2025-2026; and summer school and dual credit planning. The principals' meeting focused on reviewing and gathering input on the draft companion document to the Optimum Learning Framework to guide programming to support the success of our Indigenous Students.
- **Alberta Education Assurance Measures – May Report**
The results from the 2025 provincial assurance surveys distributed to staff, students, and parents are generally strong. They reflect continued acceptable results in four of the eight measures reported, improved results in three of eight measures, and a decline year over year in only one measure, the five-year high school completion rate. In addition, the results reflect a relatively high response rate, with the largest number of responses recorded in the past 5 years from each of the stakeholder groups surveyed. A more detailed analysis of the results will be shared with trustees in the Committee of the Whole meeting prior to the August board meeting.
- **What We Heard – 2025 Division Assurance Survey Report**
As with the provincial assurance surveys, the division's internal surveys show similarly high levels of stakeholder satisfaction as in previous years and reflects high levels of participation in the survey. A more detailed analysis of the results will be shared with trustees in the Committee of the Whole meeting prior to the August board meeting.
- **Alberta School Councils Association Meeting Management Workshop**
The Executive Director of the Alberta School Councils Association has confirmed a workshop facilitator is available to present an in-person training session on September 18th on the topic of "Meeting Management" for all current school council members and those interested in joining school council in the future. We will require pre-registration and a minimum of 20 participants, representing a majority of school councils, for the event to proceed.

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- **Protection of Privacy Act and Access to Information Act**
System leadership staff continue to prepare for implementation of the Protection of Privacy and Access to Information Act. The act and supporting regulations are being finalized and it is expected all new legislation will come into effect this month. Once the act and regulations are proclaimed, the Ministers of Technology and Innovation and Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction will provide public bodies with more information. A more detailed description of the impact of the legislation on the division will be shared as it becomes available.
- **Draft Board Orientation Planning**
A report was attached to provide information about the proposed orientation schedule for new trustees, which is mandatory as per board policy, beginning immediately after election day on Monday, October 20. The trustee orientation topics described in the report are similar to those use in previous years and are based on the trustee orientation expectations identified in Section 2 of Board Policy 3 – The Role of the Trustee. The Board discussed the proposed topics and that it would be beneficial to have them tied to “real-life” scenarios or incorporated into case studies, where possible. The draft orientation schedule and draft Board Meeting calendar dates will be provided to any nominees who submit their intent to run for GPPSD School Board Trustee on Nomination Day (September 20).
- **Grande Prairie Charter School – Response from Minister’s Office**
Superintendent McDonald commented that a response was received on June 9 noting that the Grande Prairie Technical Institute public charter school application was not approved by the Minister of Education and Childcare.

Associate Superintendent of Business Services

Associate Superintendent Oladele shared the Associate Superintendent of Business Services’ Report to the Board as information, which included the following information:

- **Investment Update**
In anticipation of the Bank of Canada interest rate announcement on June 4, 2025, the division strategically invested \$4,000,000 into a GIC with a maturity period of 180 days. This move was made to take advantage of the higher interest rates, 3.02%, available from Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) prior to the announcement. The maturity date of the investment is at the end of November with anticipated interest of \$59,572.60. Year to date, the division has successfully realized investment revenues of approximately \$470,000 against a conservative budget of \$550,000.

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- **Real Property Governance – School Ownership Changes**
On May 29th, the Superintendent, Associate Superintendent and 2 two Business Services Directors attended a webinar hosted by Alberta Infrastructure to provide an update on changes to Bill 50 – Municipal Affairs Statutes and Bill 51 – Education Act as it relates to the future of school ownership in Alberta. There was discussion on the proposed changes, the risks, challenges, and unknowns for the Division, and potential impact to GPPSD. Biggest challenge could be the new school planned for the Kensington subdivision from the 2026-2029 Capital Plan. A meeting will be arranged with the Division and the City of Grande Prairie to discuss the impact on both organizations after the changes are implemented. Recommendation that the Board write a letter to MLA Dyck and MLA Wiebe to request a meeting to discuss the changes to Bill 50 and Bill 51, advocacy items, as well as other topics of interest to the Board.
- **Third Quarter Budget Update**
The Board reviewed the third quarter budget update for the 2024–2025 school year, covering the nine-month period ending May 31, 2025. The report compares the Fall budget with actual results for the first half of the current school year, alongside data from the same period in 2023–2024. The Spring budget, revised in the Fall, reflects updated revenue and expenses related to the school startup process. As a result of these adjustments, budgeted revenue increased by \$795K, bringing the total revenue to \$115,028,052. At the same time, expenses were revised by \$1.2 million to a total of \$11,935,284. These changes resulted in a projected deficit of \$4.3 million, which ensures that the Division remains aligned with the ASO limit. As of the third quarter, the deficit stands at \$3.07 million. When projected over the full 12 months, this brings us closer to our target deficit, with an estimated deficit of \$230K by year-end.
- **Annual Summer Operations and Maintenance Report**
As the school year concludes at the end of June, the Maintenance Department's activity peaks during the summer months. This period allows staff to undertake and complete all the major and minor maintenance projects that cannot be carried out during the school year. For Summer 2025, no major construction projects are planned. There was general discussion on the carryover amount noted in the report.
- **Request for Proposal for External Auditor 2025- 2030**
The RFP for an External Auditor for 2025 – 2030 opened on June 2 and closes on June 18. Administration will have a recommendation for the Board to pass a motion for approval on the June 26th special meeting.

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF
TRUSTEES OF THE GRANDE PRAIRIE PUBLIC SCHOOL DIVISION
HELD AT CENTRAL OFFICE ON **June 10, 2025**

NEW BUSINESS

Trustee Professional Learning and Sharing

Nothing to report.

Upcoming Dates and Events

- Board Workplan

The Board reviewed the Board workplan as information. Trustees were reminded of the following upcoming events:

- ASBA Zone 1 Meeting – Virtual 2025 06 11
- ASBA Protection of Privacy Act and Access to Information Act follow up session 2025 06 16
- Charles Spencer High School Graduation 2025 06 25
- CSBA Congress 2025 07 03–05
 - Has been changed to virtual due to wildfires
- PSBC Meeting in Red Deer 2025 08 06-08

Correspondence

- 2025 05 23 Letter from Evergreen Catholic Separate School Division (ECSSD) to Minister of Indigenous Services Canada – re: Jordan's Principle

**IN CAMERA
SESSION**

MOTION: Trustee Martin moved that the Board go in camera to discuss labour relations at 7:35 p.m.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15765

MOTION: Trustee Ouellette moved that the Board come out of camera at 7:46 p.m.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15766

**ACTIONS ARISING
FROM IN CAMERA
NEXT MEETING AND
ADJOURNMENT**

No actions.

Next Board Meeting and Adjournment

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for Thursday, June 26 at 9:30am, to be held at Central Office in the Board Room.

Board Chair Nellis called the Regular Board Meeting closed at 7:47 p.m.

Chair

Secretary-Treasurer

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF THE GRANDE PRAIRIE PUBLIC SCHOOL DIVISION HELD AT
CENTRAL OFFICE ON **June 26, 2025**

Board Chair Nellis called the Regular Meeting to order at 9:33 a.m., acknowledged that the Board is on Treaty 8 Land, and reviewed the Division's Universal Guiding Principles, with the following present:

PRESENT

Trustees Johnston, Koch, Martin, Nellis, Superintendent McDonald, Deputy Superintendent Robinson, Associate Superintendent Business Services Oladele, Executive Assistant Business Services SheraLea Crichton, (recorder), and Secretary to the Board Amanda Westwater (minutes).

Virtual: Trustee Buziak, Trustee Johnston, and Trustee Ouellette

**ADOPTION OF
AGENDA**

Adoption of Board Agenda

The Board reviewed the Special Board Meeting agenda.

MOTION: Trustee Koch moved that the Board adopt the Special Board Meeting agenda with the addition of an In Camera section at the end of the meeting to discuss labour relations.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15767

**TRUSTEE SELF-
DECLARATION
OF CONFLICT OF
INTEREST**

No conflicts.

NEW BUSINESS

Appointment of External Auditor

Associate Superintendent Oladele commented on the RFP and Evaluation process. A Request for Proposal (RFP) was posted on the Alberta Purchasing Connection (APC) website, the official procurement platform for Alberta's public sector. The RFP was issued on May 30, 2025, with a closing date of June 18, 2025. The Division received one submission on June 12, 2025.

The evaluation committee recommends that the Board appoint Fletcher Mudryk LLP as the Division's financial statement auditor for a five-year term. Fletcher Mudryk is a local firm with an established track record, having successfully served as the Division's auditor for the past five years. Their proposal includes maintaining the same audit team, ensuring continuity and familiarity with Division operations.

There was discussion on the Request for Proposal document, as well as whether there were concerns with receiving only one bid.

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF THE GRANDE PRAIRIE PUBLIC SCHOOL DIVISION HELD AT
CENTRAL OFFICE ON **June 26, 2025**

It was noted that June is the busy season for many accounting firms, so that could have impacted additional submissions.

MOTION: Trustee Martin move that the Board appoint Fletcher Mudryk LLP as the Division's financial statement auditor for a five-year term, beginning with the fiscal year ending August 31, 2025.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15768

Superintendent Evaluation Committee

- Board Policy 19 – Evaluation of Superintendent of Schools – proposed updates
Chair Nellis commented on the proposed updates to Board Policy 19 following recommendations from the Committee at the May 29 and June 18 meetings.
- Board Policy 8 – Committees of the Board – proposed updates
Chair Nellis commented on the proposed updates to Board Policy 8 following recommendations from the Committee at the May 29 and June 18 meetings.

MOTION: Trustee Buziak moved that the Board adopt Board Policy 19 – Evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools and Board Policy 8 – Committees of the Board as presented.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15769

Selection of Superintendent/CEO

Board Chair Nellis commented on the Superintendent Recruitment process and that both GPPSD staff and families with students in Division schools were surveyed about what they are looking for in the next Superintendent of Schools.

MOTION: Trustee Koch moved that the Board of Trustees appoint Mr. James Robinson to the position of Superintendent of Schools/CEO of Grande Prairie Public School Division, effective January 1, 2026.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15770

Board Chair Nellis congratulated Mr. Robinson on his appointment and expressed gratitude to the Board for their work on the selection process. Mr. Robinson thanked the Board for their support and trust and expressed gratitude for the appointment.

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
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**IN CAMERA
SESSION**

MOTION: Trustee Martin moved that the Board go in camera to discuss
labour relations at 9:52 a.m.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15771

MOTION: Trustee Koch moved that the Board come out of camera at
10:01 a.m.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15772

**ACTIONS ARISING
FROM IN CAMERA
NEXT MEETING AND
ADJOURNMENT**

No actions.

Next Board Meeting and Adjournment

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for Tuesday,
August 19 at 6:00pm, to be held at Central Office in the Board Room.

Board Chair Nellis called the Regular Board Meeting closed at 10:01 a.m.

Chair

Secretary-Treasurer



**Grande Prairie
Public School
Division**

Advocacy and Engagement Committee

Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, June 10, 2025
Board Room

PRESENT: Rob Martin – Trustee (Chair)
Joan Nellis - Trustee
Donna Koch – Trustee
Sandy McDonald - Superintendent
Amanda Westwater - Secretary to the Board (minutes)

1. Call to Order

Trustee Martin called the meeting to order at 3:41 p.m.

2. Minutes

The minutes for May 13, 2025, Advocacy and Engagement Committee were submitted to the Committee via email. The Committee accepted the minutes as circulated.

3. New Advocacy and Engagement Tracker Review

The Committee reviewed the new Advocacy and Engagement Tracker and discussed:

- which actions and events the Committee would like to record on the tracker
- Priority column will include all three priority names (Student Outcomes, Public Education Funding, and Staff Supports) rather than “all”.
- Whether the tracker information would be shared externally – Ex. for updates to School Council's, other Committees, or external stakeholders.
- Potential to use progress tracking (percentage complete) and update the Board on a quarterly basis.

Recommendation: Superintendent and Executive Assistant to proceed with including new advocacy items on the tracker and explore the possibility of tracking completion on a quarterly basis. Updated tracker to be reviewed at the August Committee of the Whole or Regular Board meeting.

4. Election Planning

The Committee reviewed the questions for the Board of Trustee Q&A videos and selected the following:

- 1. *What's something the public might not know about your role as a Trustee?*
 - **Chris Johnston**
- 2. *How much time is expected?*
 - *Include time needed to review agendas.*
 - *How much is the annual salary, and comment on travel and expenses*
 - **Donna Koch**

- 4. *Why is it important to have locally elected School Boards?*
 - **Ray Buziak**
- 5. *How do Trustees engage with Community and Stakeholders?*
 - **Joan Nellis**
- 6. *What type of skills do I need to be a good Trustee?*
 - *Do I need to be an education expert or retired teacher to run?*
 - **Rob Martin**
- 3. *What does a Trustee do? (tie to Policy 3)*
 - **Andre Ouellette**

Recording: will be recorded in the Central Office Board Room – identify 1 full-day or a couple afternoons – when the Board can stop in and record their video. Each video will be 30 seconds – 1 minute long, and coordinated with the Executive Assistant, Communications Officer, or Superintendent.

5. Schedule MLA Meetings for August

The Committee would like to recommend the Board schedule meetings with MLA Dyck and MLA Wiebe to discuss various advocacy items. Discussion on whether to request the meeting in August 2025 with the current Board, or spring 2026 with the new Board after the municipal election occurs in October 2025.

6. Next Meeting

Tentatively August 19, 2025 at 3:30pm prior to the Regular Board Meeting.
Topics:

- MLA meeting requests;
- finalized Advocacy and Engagement Tracker; and
- review the DRAFT Governance Framework

Meeting adjourned at 4:20 pm



**Grande Prairie
Public School
Division**

DATE: August 26, 2025

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Sandy McDonald, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Superintendent's Report

REFERENCE: Board Policy 2 – The Role of the Board, Board Policy 18 – Superintendent of Schools/CEO Roles and Responsibilities. Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

SUMMER SCHOOL SUMMARY and CAREER PATHWAYS PLANNING

The division's grade 9-12 summer school session provided flexible learning options for a number of division students. The second year of operation saw an increase in credit attainment by GPPSD students, and a summary report is attached, and will be presented at the meeting by Director of System Planning, Kim Frykas.

ALBERTA SCHOOL COUNCILS ASSOCIATION MEETING MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

The fall professional learning session discussed with School Council Chairs has been arranged with the Alberta School Councils Association Executive Director and is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, September 18. Mrs. Westwater will email trustees and school council chairs later in August to share the details and to ask they reply to indicate their intent to attend. In her email, Mrs. Westwater will also ask the Chairs to distribute to their members and ask for all school council and trustee participants to RSVP by Sept 12. Principals will also be asked to share this information with their school council membership, as a recruiting strategy, at the start of the school year. For this to be an effective learning experience, we are seeking to have a majority of school councils represented for the event to be finalized. More information will be shared following September 12.

MINISTERS TASKFORCE ON AGGRESSION and COMPLEXITY

On June 30, the Minister's of Education announced the development of an Aggression and Complexity in Schools Action Team to find ways to reduce disruptions and strengthen supports for both students and educators within their learning environments.

The action team's mandate is to develop recommendations for the Minister of Education and Childcare on both immediate and long-term actions to better support students and educators across the province. The team will examine policies, teacher training practices, inclusive education supports, funding considerations, and coordination across sectors. The team may also invite frontline professionals and experts to share insights as subject matter experts.

While initial meetings were expected to occur over the summer, no information has been shared to date and updates are expected later this fall. More information about the team, including their mandate and membership, is available online in the team's terms of reference at [Terms of Reference Aggression and Complexity in Schools Action Team](#).

BOARD POLICY AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE UPDATES

A considerable number of changes are required to division Administrative Procedures, and one small change to Board Policy 20, as a result of the changes in legislation in the Education Amendment Acts of 2024 and 2025, the Fairness and Safety in Sport Act, the Learning Commons materials Ministerial Order, and the changes to Alberta's Privacy Legislation.

Members of the system leadership team have built a structured process to introduce the various changes to school administrators and to support them with introduction to different changes over time. The work involved over the summer months to be prepared for the totality of the changes coming into effect this year was significant, and appreciation is extended to the system leadership team for the thoughtful way each individual worked with the others, keeping the needs of our school leadership in mind, to build a plan to support introduction of all the changes.

Included in the *Items for Action* section of this report is a request for Board's approval of Board Policy 20, as a result of a change in Alberta Education's expectation. More information follows in that section.

TEACHING AND LEARNING UPDATES FOR 2025-2026

At the end of June, changes to the elementary report card format were announced to school leadership, based on suggestions and feedback provided by school leadership during 3 working group sessions. Changes made to improve the effectiveness of the report card include improving the process for teachers to provide comments to parents and improvements to the software that will improve the process teachers use to generate report cards.

The telephone-assisted live interpretation services introduced last year have been expanded this year and will be communicated to parents beginning the first day of school. Posters have been developed and will be placed in school offices and posted on the division's website to promote the service to parents. Information can be found in the parents section of the division website at [Interpreting Services | Grande Prairie Public School Division](#) and a banner will announce the new service on the division home page.

NEW CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

The new curriculum implementation continues, with Social Studies mandatory in Kindergarten to grade 3. Social Studies will be optional in grades 4-6 junior high, with mandatory implementation beginning in September of 2026.

At the secondary level, draft curriculums for mathematics, physical education and wellness, and social studies were released for grades 7 to 9 in June of 2025 and are available for viewing on the new Learn Alberta website. Draft curriculum for grade 7 to 9 career education and financial literacy will be released in summer 2025.

During the 2025/26 school year, optional field testing of curriculum will occur prior to optional classroom piloting in 2026/27. Mandatory implementation of these grade 7 to 9 curriculums will take place in the 2027/28 school year.

ALBERTA EDUCATION LITERACY AND NUMERACY ASSESSMENT DATE UPDATES

Based on feedback from the June Literacy and Numeracy Screening Survey, Alberta Education and Childcare are making changes to the elementary literacy and numeracy screening assessment dates in

the fall and winter sessions. Feedback was provided by Alberta teachers and leaders that the assessments were delivered too early and for the current year the administration of the screens will begin one week later.

ITEMS FOR ACTION OR DISCUSSION

BOARD POLICY 20

Bill 27, the Education Amendment Act of 2024, contains content that requires a minor change to Board Policy 20, regarding the expectations of how school staff will work with parents to support students working through issues related to their gender identity.

Section 11 of Board Policy 20 currently reads:

The Board believes parents are critical partners in a child's learning and as such, individual parental involvement supporting students of diverse gender identities is ***highly encouraged where appropriate and where the student consents.***

The expectation, which comes into force when the new legislation is in effect on September 1, is that parents will always be engaged. Consequently, system leadership is proposing section 11 of Board Policy 20 be revised to become:

The Board believes parents are critical partners in a child's learning and as such, parental involvement, notification and consent while supporting students of diverse gender identities is ***required.***

A copy of the revised policy is attached for review. Trustees are asked to consider the following motion:

Trustee X moved the Board approve the change to Board Policy 20 as presented.

RECOMMENDATION RE: 2025-2026 BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

As discussed in Committee prior to the end of the 2024-2025 school year, trustees are asked to review the potential change to the traditional board meeting practices and schedule for the purpose of making a recommendation to the new board at their October organizational meeting. A copy of the reports reviewed in June are attached for trustees' consideration and to inform discussion.

If the Board wishes to recommend a change to any practice or to move from the traditional schedule with two public meetings per month, generally, to one public meeting and one committee of the whole meeting, administration will present the recommendation to the new Board at the organizational meeting.

<p><i>Policy Manual</i></p> <p>PAGE: 1 of 4</p>	<p>Policy 20 TITLE: Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Working and Learning Environments</p> <p>APPROVED: March 8, 2016 AMENDED/REVIEWED: June 11, 2024</p>
<p>LEGAL REFERENCE: Section 8, 31, 33, 35, 35.1, 36, 37, 41, 51, 52, 53, 222 Education Act; Alberta Bill of Rights; Alberta Human Rights Act; Occupational Health and Safety Act; Teaching Profession Act; Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard; Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms; Criminal Code</p>	

Policy

Each and every student and staff member within the Grande Prairie Public School Division has a right to work and learn in an environment that is respectful of individual diversity, engenders a feeling of safety, and is free from bullying, discrimination, and harassment.

The Board recognizes and affirms the rights of all staff members and enrolled students as provided for in the *Alberta Human Rights Act*, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, and all other relevant legislation. Staff and students will not be discriminated against for reasons of race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical or mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status, and sexual orientation as provided for in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* or the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

Because diversity is a strength of our division, it is a focus of our attention. We welcome students from all backgrounds. The Board is committed to the safety of students and to providing a welcoming, caring, inclusive, respectful and safe learning and working environment free from bullying, harassment, discrimination, and violence. This policy applies to all Board operated sites and includes field trips and other off-site activities engaged in by students and staff. All will share in the responsibility for eliminating bullying, discrimination, harassment, and violence. The application of this policy will apply to all Board operated sites and includes field trips and other off-site activities engaged in by students and staff. The Board prohibits bullying, harassing, discriminatory, and violent behaviours and expects allegations of such behaviours to be investigated in a timely and respectful manner.

The division and its staff strive to ensure that a key outcome for the Division is that all stakeholders will possess a strong connection to their schools as welcoming, caring, respectful and safe places focused on their individualized success.

Guidelines

The Board acknowledges its responsibility to ensure welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments for all students and staff. It recognizes the importance of students' emotional, social, intellectual and physical wellness to their success in school

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and expects students to adhere to the detailed expectations outlined in Administrative Procedure 350: [Student Code of Conduct](#) and all school codes of conduct.

1. The Board expects all stakeholders to adhere to this policy. This policy covers behavior that has a negative impact on an individual or group in the school community whether the behavior occurs within the school building, during the school day or by electronic means.
2. The Board encourages reporting to a responsible adult within the Division all incidents of threats, bullying, harassment, violence or intimidation regardless of the identity of the alleged harasser or offender.
3. The Board provides a method to attend to harassment, bullying, and discrimination through Administrative Procedure 170 and 171.
4. The Board recognizes the Trustees may, at times, engage in vigorous debate and provides a method to attend to harassment, bullying and discrimination in regard to Trustees of the Board through Board Policy 6, Trustee Code of Ethics.
5. The Board recognizes that many individuals have dissenting opinions pertaining to Federal Charter and Provincial Human Rights issues. These opinions shall be respected if these opinions do not transfer to become bullying, discrimination, or harassment. Those with dissenting opinions should not be made to feel unwelcome, discriminated against, or harassed because of their differing belief systems.

Support for Student Organizations

The Board supports student organizations and activities in accordance with Section 35.1 of the Education Act.

6. If one or more students attending a school operated by the Board requests a staff member employed by the Board for support to establish a voluntary student organization, or to lead an activity intended to promote a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging, the Principal of the school shall:
 - 6.1 Immediately grant permission for the establishment of the student organization or the holding of the activity at the school, and
 - 6.2 Subject to subsection (6), within a reasonable time from the date that the Principal receives the request designate a staff member to serve as the staff

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liaison to facilitate the establishment, and the ongoing operation, of the student organization or to assist in organizing the activity.

7. The students may select a respectful and inclusive name for the organization or activity, including the name “gay-straight alliance” or “queer-straight alliance”, after consulting with the Principal.
 - 7.1 For greater certainty, the Principal shall not prohibit or discourage students from choosing a name that includes “gay-straight alliance” or “queer-straight alliance”.
8. The Principal shall immediately inform Division Administration, and subsequently the Board and the Minister, if no staff member is available to serve as a staff liaison referred to in subsection (6). If so informed, the Minister shall appoint a responsible adult to work with the requesting students in organizing the activity or to facilitate the establishment, and the ongoing operation, of the student organization at the school.
9. The Principal is responsible for ensuring that notification, if any, respecting a voluntary student organization or an activity referred to in subsection (6) is limited to the fact of the establishment of the organization or the holding of the activity, and is otherwise consistent with the usual practices relating to notifications of other student organizations and activities.
10. As a public body, Grande Prairie Public School Division is bound by the provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. Any disclosure of personal information is done in accordance with that Act.
11. The Board believes parents are critical partners in a child’s learning and as such, individual parental involvement supporting students of diverse gender identities is highly encouraged where appropriate and where the student consents.

Definitions

Harassment: Unwelcome, discriminatory conduct or behaviour, or verbal or physical conduct, that focuses on the protected areas of Human Rights Legislation. Harassment includes conduct that disparages, humiliates, or harms another person. It may involve abuse of authority but does not include the legitimate exercise of an individual’s positional authority. Harassment may undermine another individual’s personal dignity by causing embarrassment, discomfort, humiliation, and may interfere with an individual’s work performance by creating an intimidating or hostile work or learning environment.

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Harassment can stem from the actions of an individual or those of a group purporting certain unacceptable opinions or actions. The behaviour giving rise to a complaint is typically intentional in order to be considered harassment. This behaviour is often repeated; however, there may be instances of a singular vexatious event that may be considered harassment. The expectation is that the offender ought to reasonably know that the behaviour is offensive and unwelcome. Any member of the Division who believes he/she has been subjected to harassment is encouraged to make it known to the harasser that the behaviour is offensive and contrary to this Board Policy.

Discrimination: The abusive, unfair, or demeaning treatment of a person or group of persons that focuses on the protected areas of Human Right legislation, when such treatment has the effect or purpose of unreasonably interfering with that person's or group's status or performance, or of creating a hostile or intimidating educational environment

Bullying: A conscious, willful, deliberate, repeated and hostile activity marked by an imbalance of power, intent to harm and/or threat of aggression. It can occur within a peer group or between groups. It can occur at school and in extracurricular settings. It often includes a combination of forms of bullying.

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DATE: June 10, 2025

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Alexander (Sandy) McDonald, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Review of Board Meeting Practices and Draft Board Meeting Schedule

REFERENCE: Board Policy 7 – Board Operations

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to support trustee's reflection on board meeting practices and the schedule and structure of board meetings for the 2025-2026 school year. Following discussions earlier in the year about meeting start time, frequency, and other structures, the superintendent was asked to bring back the topic to the June board meeting for the board to discuss and make a recommendation to the new board, which will be elected on Monday, October 20.

The new board will be holding its annual organizational meeting on (tentatively) Tuesday, October 28. At that meeting, in addition to identifying the chair, vice chair, and committee membership, the board will pass a motion identifying the meeting schedule for the remainder of the 2025-2026 school year.

This report provides information on two proposed meeting schedules, one structured as per the status quo and a second with approximately one meeting and one committee of the whole each month. Trustees are asked to consider the options and consider the recommendations they would make to the new board regarding each of:

- Meeting schedule structure
- Meeting start times
- The practice of recording meetings

NOTE: The dates in this report are to be considered draft, as they have not yet been cross-referenced with the other scheduled board events, include ASBA meetings, PSBAA meetings, etc.

EXPLORING MEETING STRUCTURES

The report reviewed at the March 11 board meeting is attached for information and includes the summary of meeting practices in other divisions reviewed earlier in the year.

The tables on the following two pages illustrate two potential **draft** year schedules for board meetings.

STATUS QUO MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2025-2026

Regular Board Meetings will begin at 6:00pm on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday, except when one of those days falls during a scheduled break to the school year calendar. Committee of the Whole Meetings from 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm on the first Tuesday meeting of each month, and/or as required.

Tuesday, August 26	Regular Meeting
Tuesday, September 9	Regular Meeting
Tuesday, September 23	Regular Meeting
Tuesday, October 14	Regular Meeting
Tuesday, October 20	Election Day
Thursday, October 23	First day of trustee orientation and Mock Board Meeting Trustee photos, oath of office, all other paperwork.
Tuesday, October 28	Annual Organizational Meeting and First Regular Meeting.
Tuesday, November 18	Regular Meeting. <i>Note: First Tues is Remembrance Day. One meeting this month.</i>
Thursday, November 20	Second day of trustee orientation and introduction to 3-Year Education Plan and Annual Education Results Report
Tuesday, December 9	Regular Meeting
Tuesday, January 13	Regular Meeting
Tuesday, January 27	Regular Meeting
Tuesday, February 10	Regular Meeting
Thursday, February 19	Board Professional Learning Day - <i>Note: proposed topic: The individual trustee's role in effective board governance and operations</i>
Tuesday, February 24	Regular Meeting
Tuesday, March 10	Regular Meeting
Tuesday, March 24	Regular Meeting
Tuesday, April 21	Regular Meeting
Thursday, May 7	Spring Planning Retreat
Tuesday, May 12	Regular Meeting
Tuesday, May 26	Regular Meeting
Tuesday, June 9	Regular Meeting
Tuesday, June 23	Regular Meeting

SUMMARY – 17 REGULAR MEETINGS. 9 Hours of Committee of the Whole (assuming 1 hour per)

DRAFT NEW MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2025-2026

One Regular Meeting per month, on the 4th Tuesday of each month. Exceptions will be scheduled for months when the 4th Tuesday falls during a scheduled break to the school year calendar.

On the 2nd Tuesday of each month a Committee of the Whole Meeting will be held beginning at 6:00 pm, except in those months when the 2nd Tuesday falls during a scheduled break to the school year calendar.

Tuesday, August 26	Regular Meeting
Tuesday, September 9	Committee of the Whole
Tuesday, September 23	Regular Meeting
Tuesday, October 14	Committee of the Whole
Tuesday, October 20	Election Day
Thursday, October 23	First day of trustee orientation and Mock Board Meeting Trustee photos, oath of office, all other paperwork.
Tuesday, October 28	Annual Organizational Meeting and First Regular Meeting.
Tuesday, November 18	Regular Meeting. <i>Note: First Tues is Remembrance Day. One meeting this month.</i>
Thursday, November 20	Second day of trustee orientation and introduction to 3-Year Education Plan and Annual Education Results Report. Fall results retreat.
Tuesday, December 9	Regular meeting.
Tuesday, January 13	Committee of the Whole
Tuesday, January 27	Regular Meeting
Tuesday, February 10	Committee of the Whole
Thursday, February 19	Board Professional Learning Day - <i>Note: proposed topic: The individual trustee's role in effective board governance and operations</i>
Tuesday, February 24	Regular Meeting
Tuesday, March 10	Committee of the Whole
Tuesday, March 24	Regular Meeting.
Tuesday, April 21	Regular Meeting
Thursday, May 7	Spring Planning Retreat
Tuesday, May 12	Committee of the Whole
Tuesday, May 26	Regular Meeting.
Tuesday, June 9	Committee of the Whole
Tuesday, June 23	Regular Meeting

SUMMARY – 11 Regular Meetings and 14 hours of Committee of the Whole (assuming two hours per)

SUMMARY

Trustees are asked to identify a consensus position on the following topics that can be presented to the new board following the October 20 municipal election, to inform t their decision making regarding meeting scheduling to occur at the 2025-2026 Annual Organizational Meeting:

- Meeting Schedule Structure
- Meeting Start Time
- Meeting Recording and Posting Practice



DATE: March 11, 2025

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Alexander (Sandy) McDonald

SUBJECT: Review of Board Meeting Practices

REFERENCE: Board Policy 7 – Board Operations, Board Procedures Regulation

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Alberta Regulation 82/2019, the [Board Procedures Regulation](#), establishes the expectation for Alberta school boards' organizational meetings, regular meetings, and special meetings. Section 2(1) of the regulation states that:

The board must hold as many regular meetings as it considers necessary to deal adequately with its business.

Further, section 4 of the regulation states the board must monitor the effectiveness of the established policies and procedures on a regular basis. Monitoring the effectiveness of board meetings is part of the annual *Board Self-Evaluation* process.

As trustees were engaged in discussion at the end of the 2023-2024 school year about preparing for the next board, to be elected in October 2025, the board identified two topics of interest: A desire to review trustee compensation, and a desire to review board meeting practices relative to other divisions.

The purpose of this report is to share information about board meeting practices in other local divisions and in other similar-sized divisions from across the province, to inform trustees dialogue on the topic and any potential changes or recommendations for the future.

BOARD MEETING PRACTICES

The summary information in the attached table contains information collected in August 2024 from a review of publicly available information on school division websites. Included in the table is information regarding:

- Division student enrollment
- The number of regular meetings per year
- General information regarding board meeting structure
- Organizational meeting timing
- Committee information
- Board meeting start times
- Board meeting video recording practices

SUMMARY OF THE INFORMATION COLLECTED IN THE REVIEW

- While not shown in the review results, because committee of the whole meeting information was not consistently available on all division websites, there are two general board meeting/committee of the whole meeting structures: (1) some boards, with more regular board meetings, tend to have less frequent committee of the whole meetings, and (2) Other boards may schedule fewer regular board meetings and increase the frequency of committee of the whole meetings.
- For the divisions shown, the average number of board meetings per year is 14. Excluding the 4 Edmonton and Calgary metro boards, the average number of board meetings per year is 13.5.
- There is no standard for meeting start time, however distribution of start times by morning, afternoon, or evening (5:00 pm or later) is:
 - Morning: 5 divisions
 - Afternoon: 9 divisions
 - Evening: 4 divisions
- The distribution of organizational meetings, by month in non-election years, is (with one division not captured):
 - June: 7 divisions
 - August: 5 divisions
 - September: 3 divisions
 - October: 1 division
- The information about the number of committees of the board that exist seems less accurate than the other information in the table, given the source is public websites which can contain different detailed information.

There appears to be a significantly different approach to the number of standing committees that exist among the school divisions shown, ranging from 2 to over 20. Committee structure and format is also a function of governance structure. Some boards with a relatively large number of committees may be more involved in committees relating to operational tasks or processes than boards that align more closely with a policy governance structure.

Based on the information provided, an estimate of the average number of standing committees for the boards shown is 7. Excluding the 4 Edmonton and Calgary metro boards, the average number of standing committees appears to be 9.

- 11 of 17 boards, at the time they were surveyed, either live stream or record their regular meetings, with one board's practice unknown.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

The intent of the review was to support trustee understanding of board meeting practices in other divisions to inform reflection on board practice and/or to explore potential future changes to board meeting practice.

To facilitate pre-thinking prior to the discussion at the Committee of the Whole, based on earlier discussion about the information gathered, the following questions are shared for trustee's consideration:

- What is the impact on individual trustees of the regular board meeting – committee of the whole structure?
- What is the impact on the board of the regular board meeting – committee of the whole structure?
- What are the pros and cons of structuring the Organizational Meeting in June, August, or September?
- What is the impact on potential trustees' decision to run for the board of the different meeting start times and/or practices?
- What is the impact on public participation in board meetings of the different meeting start times and/or practices?
- What is the impact on administration staff of the different meeting start times and/or practices?
- What are the pros and cons of recording board meetings and posting meeting videos online?

PROVINCIAL BOARD MEETING PRACTICES
August 2024
(data collected from review of information publicly available online)

DIVISION NAME	2023-2024 ENROLLMENT	REGULAR BOARD MEETINGS PER YEAR	BOARD MEETING STRUCTURE	REGULAR COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE?	ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING	STANDING and AD HOC COMMITTEES?	BOARD MEETING START TIME	LIVE STREAMED or RECORDED?
GRANDE PRAIRIE PUBLIC	8804	18	Generally meet the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of every month. Some months with only 1 due to holidays. None in July	No. 2-3 per year as needed, the hour prior to the Board Meeting	August	9 identified in BP8. Most meet as needed.	6:00 PM	Recorded and posted following the meeting.
PEACE WAPITI PUBLIC	6271	11	Appears to be generally the 3rd or 4th Thursday of each month, with some months different due to holidays. None in July or August.	9 full days plus the one hour prior to every Board meeting.	September	22 identified online.	10:30 AM	No
GRANDE PRAIRIE AND DISTRICT CATHOLIC	5539	10 (no meeting in June)	Last operational Monday of every month	No. In Camera 30 minutes prior to each Board Meeting	August	22+ identified online. As needed.	2:00 PM	Live streamed and posted to youtube
PARKLAND	12572	12	One board meeting most months of the school year, with two special meetings. No meetings in July or August.	Unsure. Two special meetings scheduled in Sept. and Nov.	June	Yes. Scheduled as required.	9:00 AM	Livestreamed. Do not appear to be saved.
MEDICINE HAT PUBLIC	6875	10	Appears to be the last operational Tuesday of every month. No meetings in July or August.	Committee of the Whole = In Camera	October	5 identified in BP208	5:30 PM	No
MEDICINE HAT CATHOLIC	2948	11	One or two meetings per month that appear to generally be on the second operational Tuesday. Two special meetings in October. None in July or August.	9 Committee of the Whole per year. COW includes 5 committees in BP8.	October	Yes. 8 standing committees scheduled as required.	2:45 PM	No
FT. MAC PUBLIC	7743	10	Appears to be the last operational Wednesday of every month. None in July or August.	Unsure	June	10 plus ad hoc identified in BP8	2:00 PM - 8:00 PM	No
FT. MAC CATHOLIC	6968	13	Appears to be one per month with 3 special meetings this year.	Unsure	August	10 as required plus adhoc	7:00 PM	No
RED DEER PUBLIC	11341	10	Second Wednesday of each month	Unsure	June	Yes, 5 identified in BP8	1:00 PM	Livestreamed and archived
RED DEER CATHOLIC	10648	17	Last Tuesday of each month, starting at 5:30 pm, and alternating on the last Friday of every month, starting at 1:30. No meeting in July *note 7 special meetings in 23-24 so far.	Unsure	August	Yes. 9 identified in BP7, plus special committees. Meet as required.	5:30 PM and 1:30 PM	No
ROCKYVIEW	28553	19	1-3 meetings per month. None in July or August	Unsure	September	13 identified in BP8	10:00 AM	Livestreamed
GOLDEN HILLS	8234	11	1 per month. None in July	Unsure	August	5 identified in BP8	9:30 AM	No
LETHBRIDGE PUBLIC	12210	13	1 per month with 3 special meetings for 24-25. none in July or August.	Unsure	September	11 identified online plus 5 ad hoc	1:00 PM	Livestreamed and recorded

PROVINCIAL BOARD MEETING PRACTICES
August 2024
(data collected from review of information publicly available online)

DIVISION NAME	2023-2024 ENROLLMENT	REGULAR BOARD MEETINGS PER YEAR	BOARD MEETING STRUCTURE	REGULAR COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE?	ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING	STANDING and AD HOC COMMITTEES?	BOARD MEETING START TIME	LIVE STREAMED or RECORDED?
ST ALBERT PUBLIC	9561	14	1 or 2 per month. None in July or August.	Unsure	Unsure	Unsure	3:30 PM	Livestreamed and recorded
EDMONTON PUBLIC	115415	21	1 to 3 per month. 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month, when possible. None scheduled in July or August.	Unsure	June, in non-election years	3 plus 4 ad hoc identified in Trustee Handbook	2:00 PM	Livestreamed and recorded. Audio recordings as well.
EDMONTON CATHOLIC	47724	10	One per month. None in July or August	Unsure	June	3 plus ad hoc identified in Trustee Handbook	3:00 PM	Livestreamed and recorded
CALGARY PUBLIC	138140	17	One or two per Month plus numerous special meetings	Unsure	June	6 Policies Identified in Policy GC-5	11:00 AM	Livestreamed and recorded
CALGARY CATHOLIC	61463	18	Appear to be scheduled for the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month. Several special meetings as well.	Unsure	June	2 standing committees plus ad hoc identified in BP8	1:30 PM	Unsure



**Grande Prairie
Public School
Division**

DATE: August 19, 2025

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Ola Oladele, Associate Superintendent / Secretary-Treasurer

SUBJECT: Business Services Update

REFERENCE: Board Policy 3 – The Role of the Trustee and Board;

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to update the Board on the Composite High School expansion as well as an update on the Grande Prairie Christian School's lease.

Grande Prairie Composite High School Expansion - Design

The Division has received confirmation of design funding from the Province for the planned expansion of the Composite High School, which was announced in March as part of Alberta Education's Capital Plan. This funding now allows the Division to proceed with the design phase of the project in preparation for construction.

Alberta Infrastructure has invited the Division to manage and deliver the project on the Province's behalf. After internal discussions, it was agreed that the Division has the experience and internal capacity to take on this role, based on the successful delivery of past capital projects.

On August 8, 2025, the Associate Superintendent and Director of Maintenance and Operations met with representatives from Alberta Education and Alberta Infrastructure to review the preliminary scope and budget.

The next step is to finalize the project agreement with the Province. Once approved, internal work can begin to support a timely launch. Under the new Schools Now Program (formerly the School Capital Accelerator Program), construction can begin as soon as design is complete. While design typically takes 6 to 12 months, the timeline may be shorter due to prior planning completed during the school's original construction.

Grande Prairie Christian Update

Alberta Education and Childcare has approved the Division's lease funding request for the 2025-26 school year in the amount of \$404,777 for the Grande Prairie Christian School lease. As the facility is owned by GPCS Society, the funding is typically transferred to them as a lease payment.

The 2025-26 Approved Budget had projected \$391,670 in lease support from the Province, making the approved amount \$13K higher than anticipated.



DATE: June 10, 2025

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Ola Oladele, Associate Superintendent Business Services

SUBJECT: GPPSD Board of Trustees' Compensation

REFERENCE: **Board Policy 7.1.6:** Establish trustee compensation rates at the Organizational Meeting;

Board Policy 2.9.4: Establish Trustee honoraria and reimbursement

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to inform the Board of Trustees to support their decision-making related to establishing compensation rates.

BACKGROUND

In preparation for the 2025 School Board election, with nominations opening in January 2025, the Board of Trustees tasked Public Members of the Audit Committee, Michelle Rieger and Kristie Hedges, along with Administration, to review the current compensation structure for School Board Trustees.

The purpose was to evaluate potential adjustments, provide recommendations for how and when trustee compensation could be adjusted.

SCOPE OF THE REVIEW

The review focused on the following key areas:

- Compensation Adjustments
- Benefits Package
- Comparison with Other Divisions

COMPENSATION REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

Several factors were considered in determining an appropriate basis for compensating School Board Trustees. The options reviewed were:

- Canadian Price Index (CPI) as an inflationary measure
- Settlements negotiated by the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA)
- Changes in the Operating Grants provided by the Province
- Annual adjustments to the Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund

Each of these factors has its merits and implications. CPI, for instance, is widely recognized as a measure of inflation and could help ensure that trustee compensation keeps pace with the cost of living. Similarly, using the ATA's negotiated settlements could align trustee compensation with teacher compensation trends, which are negotiated at the provincial level. Changes in the operating grants from the province could also serve as a relevant benchmark, since they directly affect the financial resources available to the division. Finally, adjustments tied to the Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund would provide a link to retirement-related costs, though it might not directly reflect overall compensation trends.

Annual Compensation Adjustment

After considering these alternatives, the committee recommends that trustee compensation be indexed to the ATA's negotiated settlement. The key reasons for this recommendation include:

- **Alignment with the Provincial Standard:** The ATA's compensation is negotiated at the provincial level, ensuring that trustee compensation aligns with broader educational sector trends and overriding potential conflicts of interest.
- **Revenue-Expense Balance:** Increases to the ATA salary grid often coincide with increases in the Division's operating grants, ensuring that additional revenue is available to cover the rising costs.
- **Administrative Expense Alignment:** The Division's administrative expenses are capped at 3.2% of total expenses. Indexing compensation to ATA settlements ensures that the administrative costs align with other Division expenses.

If the Trustees choose to proceed with this recommendation, the committee suggests the Trustee compensation be:

- *Reviewed annually, at the same time each year, and as part of the annual budget planning process.*
- *Adjusted at the annual organizational meeting based on the ATA's negotiated settlement, or up to this amount if no increase is agreed upon.*
- *Implemented on a go-forward basis, with any adjustments taking effect in the following school year after Board approval. For example:*
 - *If the ATA settles for a 2% increase beginning in September 2026, the Board would vote in Spring 2026 on a corresponding adjustment for the 2026-27 school year.*
 - *This adjustment would then be incorporated into the budget planning process for the 2026-27 fiscal year, with approval occurring in May 2026*
- *Board Policy 7.1.6 be revised to reflect this recommendation.*

Benefits Package Review

In reviewing the Division's current benefit costs, the committee compared the cost of benefits for trustees within the Division and other local and provincial school divisions. The key findings include:

- GPPSD Trustee Benefit: Average \$4,250 per trustee
 - Some trustees within GPPSD have waived their Family Health and Dental benefits, contributing to the lower average cost.
- Other Local Divisions (Peace Wapiti and Catholic): Average \$6,400 per trustee
- Provincial (for similarly sized Divisions, 2023): Average \$5,630 per trustee

To ensure the benefits package meets the needs of all trustees while remaining fiscally responsible, the committee suggests exploring a more flexible benefits model, including:

- A flexible benefits allocation, capped at \$6,900 (or the amount equivalent to the annual family extended health, vision and dental coverage as of the annual renewal date).
- Trustees would have the option to allocate this amount toward:
 - The standard benefits offered by the Division, or
 - Increase the balance of the existing spending account to match the equivalent annual benefit cost, or a different amount determined by the Board.

Options for Trustee Consideration:

Option 1 – Status quo: Trustees continue with the option to choose or waive health benefits coverage plus a \$500 spending accounts. Trustees may waive some coverage if they have other benefits, but unused amounts are not reallocated.

Option 2 – Hybrid Flexibility: Same as status quo, but trustees who waive some or all benefits can reallocate unused premiums into their spending accounts. The Board will need to decide the maximum amount of the spending account.

Option 3 – Full Flexibility (Opt-Out): Trustees opt out of the benefits plan entirely and have the equivalent cost their benefits transferred to their spending account or be paid in-lieu as taxable cash. The Board will need to decide the maximum amount that can be transferred.

Key Differences of the options:

- **Option 1** = No flexibility beyond basic opt-out of benefits.
- **Option 2** = Flexibility to reallocate unused premiums into spending account.
- **Option 3** = Fully opt out, with equivalent cost transferred to a spending account or taxable cash allowance.

Board Consideration:

- Should trustees who opt out or waive benefits be entitled to the full value of the benefit package (i.e. top-up spending account) or
- Should a reduced amount be transferred to reflect savings to the Division when benefits are waived.

Additional Note:

Under the Division's current practice, staff who waive benefits coverage due to other insurance are not eligible for a spending account allocation, as this part of the Division's broader wellness strategy to supplement expenses not covered under the benefits plan. Options 2 and 3 would not align with this existing approach.

Recommendations:

1. Trustee _____ move that the Board of Trustees amend Board Policy 7.1.6 to index its annual compensation to the Alberta Teachers' Association's (ATA) negotiated settlement from the start of the 2026/2027 school year.
2. Trustee _____ move that the Board of Trustees approve Option _ for Trustee benefits, as outlined in this report.

Grande Prairie Public School Division

DRAFT 2024 – 2025 Board Work Plan



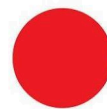
	PUBLIC MEETING DATES	MONTHLY GOVERNANCE ACTIONS	PROFESSIONAL LEARNING
AUGUST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024 08 20 Organizational Meeting Regular Meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board Self-Evaluation 2024 08 20 Board Evaluation of Superintendent 2024 08 20 Meeting with Local MLAs 2024 08 27 	2024 08 07 – 09 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSBC
SEPTEMBER	2024 09 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TEAMS Meeting (1:00 pm) with Minister of Education 2024 09 05 Advocacy & Engagement Committee (11:00 am) 2024 09 10 	2024 09 18 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASBA Zone 1
	2024 09 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocacy and Engagement Committee (3:30 pm) 2024 09 24 Review Board Self-Evaluation (Committee of the Whole) 	
OCTOBER	2024 10 08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board Policy Committee (3:30 pm) 2024 10 08 Audit Committee (4:30 pm) 2024 10 08 PD Committee Meeting 2024 10 08 Review Annual Student Enrollment Summary 2024 10 08 Review Annual Exit Survey Report <i>In Camera</i> 2024 10 08 	2024 10 09 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASBA Zone 1 2024 10 16 – 18 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSBAA FGM
	2024 10 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board Policy Committee (3:30 pm) 2024 10 22 Board Social 2024 10 26 TTLIC Meeting (3:45 pm) 2024 10 29 	
NOVEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024 11 12 Committee of the Whole 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocacy & Engagement Committee (3:30 pm) 2024 11 12 Review Annual Student Attendance Report 2024 11 12 Draft Annual Education Results Report 2024 11 12 (Committee of the Whole) Non-Instructional Support Staff Committee Meeting 2024 11 13 	2024 11 13 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASBA Zone 1 2024 11 15 - 16 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSBC
	2024 11 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board Policy Committee (3:30 pm) 2024 11 26 Audit Committee (4:30 pm) 2024 11 26 Approve Annual Education Results Report 2024 11 26 	2024 11 17 – 19 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASBA FGM

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve Audited Financial Statements 2024 11 26 • Fall Budget Update 2024 11 26 • Review Bi-Annual Legal and Insurance Issues Update 2024 11 26 <i>In Camera</i> • Council of School Councils (7:00 pm) 2024 11 28 	2024 11 26 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASBA PL
DECEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2024 12 10 • Committee of the Whole 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Planning Retreat 2024 12 05 (Thursday) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Presentation of Educational Director Work Plans • TTLC Meeting (3:45 pm) 2024 12 03 • Advocacy & Engagement Committee (3:30 pm) 2024 12 10 • Review Annual Class Size Report 2024 12 10 • Review draft 2025-26 School Year Calendar (Committee of the Whole) 2024 12 10 • Annual HR Report (Committee of the Whole) 2024 12 10 • Student Advisory Committee (9:00 am) 2024 12 13 	2024 12 09 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASBA Speaker's Corner – Role of Trustee Fostering Safe & Healthy... 2024 12 11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASBA Zone 1
JANUARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2025 01 14 • Committee of the Whole 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy & Engagement Committee (3:30 pm) 2025 01 14 • Review Annual Student Profile and Specialized Learning Services Report 2025 01 14 (Committee of the Whole) • Review Annual Student Transportation Update 2025 01 14 • Council of School Councils – Workshop – 2025 01 23 	2025 01 08 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASBA Zone 1
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2025 01 28 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Policy Committee (3:30 pm) 2025 01 28 • Approve 2025 – 2026 School Year Calendar 2025 01 28 • Review Annual Information Technology Report 2025 01 28 • Review Annual Student Intervention Programming Report 2025 01 28 • Review 1st Quarter Budget Update 2025 01 28 • Student Advisory Committee (9:00 am) 2025 01 31 • School Assurance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2025 01 30 ○ 2025 02 04 ○ 2025 02 21 • PD Committee Meeting 2025 02 06 	2025 01 13 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASBA Virtual Session ASEBP 2025 01 20 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASBA Speakers' Corner

FEBRUARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2025 02 11 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocacy & Engagement Committee (3:30 pm) 2025 02 11 Review OLF Framework Implementation and Planning Companion 2025 02 11 TTLIC Meeting (3:45 pm) 2025 02 18 Non-Instructional Support Staff Committee (4:15 pm) 2025 02 19 	2025 02 6 - 7 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSBC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2025 02 25 Committee of the Whole 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board Policy Committee (3:30 pm) 2025 02 25 Develop Budget Process and Budget Development Principles 2025 02 25 (Committee of the Whole) Review Annual Division Occupational Health and Safety Report 2025 02 25 Review Annual Division Operations and Maintenance Report 2025 02 25 Review Annual Division Wellness Report 2025 02 25 Council of School Councils Meeting 2025 02 27 	2025 02 12 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASBA Zone 1 2025 02 24 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASBA Speakers' Corner
MARCH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2025 03 11 Committee of the Whole 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Advisory Committee Meeting (9:00 am) 2025 03 06 Board Advocacy & Engagement Committee (3:30 pm) 2025 03 11 Review draft 3-Year Capital Plan 2025 03 11 (Committee of the Whole) Review Annual Indigenous Programming Report 2025 03 11 	2025 03 10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASBA Speakers' Corner
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2025 03 25 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board Policy Committee (3:30 pm) 2025 03 25 Approve Annual Division 3-Year Capital Plan 2025 03 25 Board Professional Learning Retreat 2025 03 27 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning Focus TBD 	2025 03 12 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASBA Zone 1

APRIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2025 04 22 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board Policy Review Committee (3:30 pm) 2025 04 22 Review 2nd Quarter Budget Update 2025 04 22 Review Annual Leadership Succession Planning Report <i>In Camera</i> 2025 04 22 Review Annual Division Compensation Report <i>In Camera</i> 2025 04 22 Review Bi-Annual Legal and Insurance Issues Update 2025 04 22 <i>In Camera</i> 	<p>2025 04 04 – 05</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSBA (Atlanta) <p>2025 04 07</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASBA Speakers' Corner <p>2025 04 09</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASBA Zone 1 <p>2025 04 10 – 11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSBC <p>2025 04 23</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TEBA/ATA Engagement Session <p>2025 04 23</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASBA Protection of Privacy Act and Access to Information Act session
MAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2025 05 13 Committee of the Whole 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board Spring Governance Retreat 2025 05 01 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Draft 3 Year Educational Plan Review Draft Division Assurance Summary Review 2025-2026 Division Budget Development TTLIC Meeting (3:45 pm) 2025 05 06 Council of School Councils Meeting 2025 05 08 Advocacy & Engagement Committee (3:30 pm) 2025 05 13 Review draft Division 2025-26 Budget 2025 05 13 Grande Prairie Composite HS Graduation (11:00am) 2025 05 16 	<p>2025 05 05</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASBA Speakers' Corner <p>2025 05 14</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASBA Zone 1

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2025 05 27 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board Policy Committee (3:30 pm) 2025 05 27 Approve Division 3-Year Education Plan 2025 05 27 Approve Division 2025-26 Budget 2025 05 27 Approve Locally Developed Courses 2025 05 27 Non-Instructional Support Staff Committee (4:15 pm) 2025 05 29 	2025 05 28 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASBA Lunch and Learn session with the Alberta Teaching Profession Commission
JUNE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2025 06 10 Committee of the Whole 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous Cultural Celebration Evening (6:30 pm) 2025 06 04 Student Advisory Committee Meeting (9:00 am) 2025 06 06 Advocacy & Engagement Committee (3:30 pm) 2025 06 10 Review 3rd Quarter Budget Update 2025 06 10 Review Annual Summer Operations and Maintenance Report 2025 06 10 Charles Spencer High School Graduation (10:00am) 2025 06 25 	2025 06 01 – 03 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASBA SGM 2025 06 03 - 05 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSBAA SGM 2025 06 11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASBA Zone 1 2025 06 16 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASBA Protection of Privacy Act and Access to Information Act follow up session
JULY			2025 07 02 - 05 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSBA Congress (Winnipeg)
AUGUST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2025 08 19 Committee of the Whole 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocacy & Engagement Committee (3:30 pm) 2025 08 19 	2025 08 6 – 8 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSBC Meeting



June 19, 2025

Honourable Demetrios Nicolaides
Minister of Education and Childcare
Government of Alberta

Honourable Adriana LaGrange
Minister of Health
Government of Alberta

Honourable Rick Wilson
Minister of Mental Health and Addiction
Government of Alberta

Dear Ministers Nicolaides, LaGrange and Wilson,

RE: Inter-Ministerial Collaboration – Health/Education/Mental Health & Addiction

On behalf of the Board of Trustees for Sturgeon Public Schools, I am writing to raise a strategic opportunity as Alberta transitions from the Primary Care Network model to the newly formed Primary Care Alberta (PCA) agency. As this significant transformation in health service delivery unfolds, the timing presents a rare and vital opportunity to align cross-ministerial priorities, specifically those of Education, Health, and Health and Addiction, in a way that will yield improved outcomes for students and families and long-term cost efficiencies for the province.

This is not a call for more burden, but for better alignment of services. We urge your ministries to consider a provincial framework that integrates primary health care services, including mental health supports, directly into schools and school communities, potentially referring to the former Regional Collaborative Service Delivery (RCSD) model; analyzing “what worked well and what did not” as the launch point for discussion.

Why It Matters

The Education Ministry Business Plan 2025–2028 highlights a priority to “expand mental health and well-being supports for students” (Outcome 1.2) and “improve access to qualified professionals” (Outcome 4.5). This aligns with Premier Danielle Smith’s 2023 Mandate Letter to the Minister of Education, which called for the expansion of prevention and early intervention mental health supports integrated within schools and communities. We echo and support this direction.

Frank Robinson Education Centre
9820–104 Street, Morinville, AB T8R 1L8

P: 780.939.4341
F: 780.939.5520

TF: 1.888.459.4062
E: frec@sturgeon.ab.ca



Yet, from the frontline, we also live the realities: Alberta classrooms are facing increased complexity, overstretched staff and insufficient access to health professionals. The recent strike vote by 95% of Alberta Teachers' Association members sends a clear message that the current model is unsustainable: "We are expected to do more with less every year" (ATA President Jason Schilling, June 2025).

June 14, 2025, on *Your Province, Your Premier*, Premier Danielle Smith, recently acknowledged these same pressures, stating:

We're now beginning to hear from teachers about the issues and conditions in the classroom around aggression and safety... complexity you can manage if it's a small number of students, but if you start getting six or eight students in a classroom that have complex needs, it becomes overwhelming if you don't have an education assistant.

She further emphasized:

We often allow the school boards... and we just expect them to manage... What we're hearing is that, that process is not working as well as it should.

This moment demands action but also offers opportunity.

The Opportunity

We believe that the emerging PCA framework can serve as the backbone for a renewed collaborative education/healthcare service delivery model, where cross ministerial funds support coordinated healthcare delivery in school communities, directed and governed through Primary Care Alberta or other system aligned health agencies.

In Sturgeon Public Schools, the implementation of CASA Classrooms has provided important lessons and successes, as well as surfaced critical challenges. CASA's mandate supports a small, specific population of students with targeted, intensive mental health needs. While this model is essential, it does not address the broader group of students who experience persistent dysregulation and complex mental health challenges that manifest daily in classrooms.

These students, while not eligible for CASA Classroom, significantly impact the learning environment for others. Their needs often exceed what school-based staff are equipped to manage without additional system supports. When appropriate and coordinated mental health services are not available within schools, the safety, inclusivity, and well-being of both students and staff are compromised.



CASA Classrooms have demonstrated the value of cross-sector collaboration. When education and health partners are aligned, open to adaptation, and willing to jointly invest in shared solutions, the result is improved access to care, reduced strain on acute systems, and better outcomes for students. However, a broader system of collaboration between education and mental health and wellness is required to create safe, caring, respectful, and welcoming schools for *all* students, not just those eligible for specialized services.

Research into collaborative healthcare and education models reveals that regions such as Parkland County and Fort McMurray have existing partnerships in place within their Primary Care Networks (PCNs), which are now part of the newly formed Edmonton Corridor. This illustrates the capacity for cross-ministerial success in meeting the needs of our students that is currently happening in the Edmonton Corridor.

Based on the above mentioned research, our goal is to create a collaborative education and health partnership in our region within the Edmonton Corridor. This will alleviate pressure on hospitals and community-based emergency services, a priority identified in the PCA framework as articulated in the agency's 2025 FAQ: to "[prevent] downstream demand on acute services" and provide care "closer to home".

By incentivizing coordinated healthcare service delivery for school communities through clear inter-ministerial collaboration, Alberta has a real chance to:

- Increase access to care for students and families
- Reduce long-term system costs across ministries
- Support teacher retention by reducing burnout and burden
- Support the complex needs of neurodiverse students (drastic increase in %)
- Support the mental health of our children and families
 - In our lifetime, 1 in 5 people will experience a mental illness and as many as 10% of people over the age of 15 will battle a drug or alcohol dependency. The financial impact on society is in the billions of dollars. The emotional impact on families and individuals is incalculable ([GoA Children's Mental Health](#)).
- While Alberta's current programs and services are helping to address the needs of Albertans struggling with addiction, mental health problems and mental illness, we know more must be done.
- Improve measurable student outcomes, such as high school completion and post-secondary transitions which are targets clearly outlined in the 2025-2028 Education Ministry Business Plan.



A Vision for Alberta's Future

In her 2023 Mandate letter, Premier Smith stated that “ensuring our children receive a world-class education is a top priority” and that students with mental health needs must be “provided with every opportunity to flourish”.

June 14, 2025, Premier Smith also noted the importance of reassessing how classroom needs are supported, stating:

We may have to be a little bit more hands-on... if it's going to prevent us from getting to a deal with the teachers because they don't believe we're addressing the true workplace issues.

This vision can only be realized through intentional, integrated planning across ministries. We must incentivize collaboration, not simply coordination.

We would welcome the opportunity to contribute to a cross-ministerial planning process or pilot initiative. In doing so, we believe Alberta can demonstrate national leadership in health and education integration, while investing in the well-being of its future workforce and citizens.

Sincerely,

Tasha Oatway-McLay
Board Chair, Sturgeon Public Schools

cc Honourable Dale Nally, MLA, Morinville-St. Albert
Shane Getson, MLA, Lac Ste. Anne-Parkland
Marilyn Dennis, ASBA President
Dennis MacNeil, PSBAA President
School Board Superintendents
Alberta School Councils' Association
School Board Chairs

