

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF
TRUSTEES OF THE GRANDE PRAIRIE PUBLIC SCHOOL DIVISION
HELD AT CENTRAL OFFICE ON **August 19, 2025**

Board Chair Nellis called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:03 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 Johnston, Koch, Martin, Nellis, Ouellette, Superintendent McDonald, Associate Superintendent Business Services Oladele, Deputy Superintendent Robinson, Executive Assistant Business Services SheraLea Crichton, (recorder), and Secretary to the Board Amanda Westwater (minutes).

Virtual: Trustee Buziak

**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 "Board Chair Report" as item 3.a.
- Addition of In Camera item at end of meeting to discuss labour relations

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

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15773

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

No conflicts.

MINUTES

Committee of the Whole Meeting of June 10, 2025

The Board reviewed the Committee of the Whole Meeting minutes of June 10, 2025.

MOTION: Trustee Ouellette moved to adopt the minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting of June 10, 2025, as circulated.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15774

Regular Board Meeting of June 10, 2025

The Board reviewed the Regular Board Meeting minutes of June 10, 2025.

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MOTION: Trustee Johnston moved to adopt the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of June 10, 2025, as circulated.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15775

Special Board Meeting of June 26, 2025

The Board reviewed the Special Board Meeting minutes of June 26, 2025.

MOTION: Trustee Martin moved to adopt the minutes of the Special Board Meeting of June 26, 2025, as circulated.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15776

**BUSINESS ARISING
FROM THE MINUTES**

None to report.

**DELEGATIONS,
PRESENTATIONS
and SYSTEM
LEADERSHIP
REPORTS**

Summer School Summary and Career Pathways Planning

Deputy Superintendent Robinson noted that 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 of 7%.

Director of System Planning, Kim Frykas, provided the board with an overview of the division's summer school programming. Summer School programming is a strategy to support students and the Division Three Year Education plan. This is the second year in which programming was offered to division students enrolled in grade 9-12 in the 2024/2025 school year from July 2 – July 25, 2025.

There was discussion on:

- Additional course offerings for 2025 year; including in-person, online, off campus, and Career and Technology Studies (CTS).
- The Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP).
- Engagement with other local school boards about offering the same summer school programming next year so we can expand the courses availability with more teachers available.
- Additional advertising for summer school programming in 2026.
- The reasons why most student attending summer school include credit recovery, fast-tracking course credits, and taking courses that were not available in their timetables during the regular school year.
- Whether the summer school programming is self-sustaining. Director Frykas confirmed that the program is self-sustaining with potential to generate a small amount of revenue in the future to offset supporting

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the dual credit programs with Northwestern Polytechnic and Northern Lakes College.

Director Frykas provided an update to the Career Pathways planning and distributed a 1-page handout that provides a more simplified outline of the Career Pathways program. The slogan was updated after discussion and input from the Student Advisory Committee to “Your Future, Your Way”.

The Board thanked Director Frykas for the update and thanked administration for their work on the summer school programming and continued efforts with the Career Pathways Framework.

**COMMITTEES AND
REPORTS**

- Board Chair Report
- Board Chair and Superintendent have been invited to a Ministerial Engagement session on September 29 in Calgary.
- Funding Letter to Minister of Education and Childcare
The letter was discussed at the June 10 Committee of the Whole Meeting will not be sent on behalf of the Board as there was additional grant funding announced shortly after the Board discussed the topic.
- Alberta School Boards Association Update
Trustee Buziak commented on the virtual ASBA Zone 1 meeting on June 11, 2025 and provided highlights from the session. The meeting was changed to virtual due to the wildfires around Fort Vermillion.
- Public School Boards' Association of Alberta Update
Vice-Chair Koch commented on the PSBC meeting held August 6-8, 2025 in Red Deer and provided highlights from the meeting. PSBAA Long Service Recognition certificates were presented to Trustees Ouellette, Martin, and Board Chair Nellis for 8 years of service.
- Advocacy and Engagement Committee
The June 10, 2025 meeting minutes were included for information. Trustee Martin commented on the Advocacy and Engagement Committee meeting held August 19, 2025. The Committee discussed the finalized Advocacy and Engagement Tracker, reviewed the DRAFT Governance Framework, topics for the upcoming meeting with MLAs in September, DRAFT Attendance Request Form to invite Trustees to school and community events, and ASBA Awards. The Committee reviewed draft versions of the Trustee Election FAQ videos, which will be posted on YouTube, promoted through social media, and with School Councils and School sites.

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- Governance Minute

Trustee Martin discussed the importance of Trustees maintaining their focus on governance matters, rather than involvement in daily operational details, which can blur roles and create confusion. Trustees are responsible for decision-making at the system level, and once a decision is made, the Board speaks with one voice through governance.

Next Governance Minute will be completed by Trustee Johnston at the September 9 Regular Board Meeting; Trustee Ouellette on September 23; Trustee Buziak on October 14.

Individual Trustee Reports

Vice-Chair Koch attended the Reading University Graduation at the end of July and commended RU for their ongoing dedication to student growth.

Board Chair Nellis commented on the Charles Spencer High School Graduation, held on June 25.

Superintendent's Report

Items for Information

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

- **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. The Secretary to the Board will email trustees and School Council Chairs in late August with event details and an RSVP request by September 12. Chairs and principals will be asked to share the information with their school councils to encourage participation. The event will proceed once a majority of school councils confirm, with further details to follow after September 12.
- **Ministers Taskforce on Aggression and Complexity**
On June 30, the Minister of Education and Childcare 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.

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While initial meetings were expected to occur over the summer, no information has been shared to date, and updates are expected later this fall.

- **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.
- **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](#).

- **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.

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There was discussion on resources to support the new curriculum. Additional information will be brought back to the September 9 Regular Board Meeting.

- 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. The specific dates for the 2025/26 school year are as follows:
 - Fall screening dates from September 15 to October 3, 2025.
 - Winter screening dates from January 19 to February 6, 2026.
 - Spring screening dates from May 11 to 29, 2026.

Items for Action or Discussion

- Board Policy 20: Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Working and Learning Environments
Superintendent McDonald noted that 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. The Board discussed proposed amendments to Section 11 of Board Policy 20.

MOTION: Trustee Nellis moved the Board approve the change to Board Policy 20 as presented.

CARRIED 15777

For: Trustees Nellis, Johnston, Koch, Buziak

Opposed: Trustees Martin, Ouellette

- Recommendation to new Board re: 2025-2026 Board Meeting Schedule
As discussed in Committee prior to the end of the 2024-2025 school year, trustees were 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. The Board was in favour of maintaining the traditional Board Meeting Schedule – 2 public meetings per month, one Committee of the Whole on the first meeting of the month (if required). There were no recommended changes from the Board. The meeting schedule will be presented by the Superintendent at the Annual Organizational Meeting set for October 28, 2025.

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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:

- Recommendation to new Board re: 2025-2026 Trustee Compensation
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

Preliminary discussions occurred at the June and August Committee of the Whole meetings. The Board thanked Associate Superintendent Oladele for the informative report.

MOTION: Trustee Ouellette 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.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15778

MOTION: Trustee Martin move that the Board of Trustees approve Option 1 – Status Quo for Trustee benefits, as outlined in the report.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15779

MOTION: Trustee Martin move that the Superintendent recommend the Organizational meeting be held in June instead of August beginning in the 2026-2027 school year.

CARRIED 15780

For: Trustees Nellis, Johnston, Koch, Martin, Ouellette
Opposed: Trustee Buziak

- 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

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Plan. This funding now allows the Division to proceed with the design phase of the project in preparation for construction. 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.

- **Grande Prairie Christian School 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.

NEW BUSINESS

Trustee Professional Learning and Sharing
Nothing to report.

Upcoming Dates and Events

- **Board Workplan**
The Board reviewed the Board workplan as information. Superintendent McDonald noted that the new DRAFT workplan for the 2025 – 2026 school year will be finalized and distributed to Trustees at the next Regular Board Meeting on September 9.

Correspondence

- 2025-06-19 Letter from Sturgeon Public School Division to Ministers re: Inter-Ministerial Collaboration

**IN CAMERA
SESSION**

MOTION: Trustee Martin moved that the Board go in camera to discuss labour relations at 7:16 p.m.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15781

MOTION: Trustee Koch moved that the Board come out of camera at 7:34 p.m.

UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 15782

**ACTIONS ARISING
FROM IN CAMERA**

No actions.

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**NEXT MEETING AND
ADJOURNMENT**

Next Board Meeting and Adjournment

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for Tuesday,
September 9 at 6:00pm, to be held at Central Office in the Board Room.

Board Chair Nellis called the Regular Board Meeting closed at 7:35 p.m.

Chair

Secretary-Treasurer