

Minutes of a Regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of The Red Deer Catholic Separate School Division, held March 29, 2022.

Present: S. Heistad
M. Hollman (via Zoom)
M. LaGrange
C. Leyson
D. Lonsdale
K. Pasula and
A. Watson, Trustees
K. Finnigan, Superintendent of Schools
R. Ledene, Assoc. Superintendent - Personnel
R. Sawula, Assoc. Superintendent - Curriculum
J. Smith, Assoc. Superintendent - Inclusive Learning
R. Steeves, Secretary-Treasurer
M. St. Pierre, Executive Assistant
A. Visscher, Communications Coordinator

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m.

22/03/29-01-Lonsdale

**THAT THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MOVE
IN CAMERA.**

CARRIED.

Superintendent Finnigan and Executive Assistant St. Pierre joined the Committee of the Whole meeting at 4:35 p.m.

22/03/29-02-Watson

THAT THE BOARD MOVE OUT OF CAMERA

CARRIED.

22/03/29-03- Leyson

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

CARRIED.

Recess 5:03-5:30

Board Chair Pasula called the public meeting to order at 5:41pm.

Associate Superintendent Sawula led the group in prayer.

Trustee Lonsdale read the Land Acknowledgement aloud.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved by consensus.

2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

22/03/29-04-Lonsdale

THAT THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 22, 2022 BE ADOPTED AS PRESENTED.

CARRIED.

3. EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY TEAM

The Board of Trustees received a presentation from the Director of Technology, Rob Melenchuk on Educational and Information Technology. The report outlined some of the challenges and successes in providing equitable access to technology for schools. The report also presented a new elementary reporting system going live in the 2022-2023 school year and innovative ideas (Esports) to help the Division meet stakeholder and student needs in the future.

4. ACTION ITEMS

4.1 THREE YEAR CAPITAL PLAN

Secretary Treasurer Roderic Steeves presented the Board of Trustees with a Three Year Capital Plan report based on projected enrolments for the Division. The highest priority for the Division is the need for a new K-5 school in Blackfalds as St. Gregory the Great Catholic School is expected to be at 122% utilization rate by September 2022. Other priorities include the need for a new K-5 school in the City of Red Deer, a new K-5 French Immersion school in the City of Red Deer and a new K-5 school in the town of Sylvan Lake due to continued growth that is occurring. Administration and Trustees also discussed the possibility of undertaking a joint venture with Chinook's Edge School Division for a possible new school in Sylvan Lake as this has worked well with the Wildrose School Division in the town of Rocky Mountain House.

22/03/29-05-Leyson

THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVES THE THREE YEAR CAPITAL PLAN AS PRESENTED.

CARRIED.

4.2 NEW FINANCE, HUMAN RESOURCES AND PAYROLL SOFTWARE

Associate Superintendent Ryan Ledene informed the Board of Trustees that the current software has been unable to meet the needs of the Human Resources, Payroll and Finance departments. A committee of ten staff members from the respective departments was established and reviewed proposals from various vendors. After extensive investigation, the committee made an almost unanimous recommendation to recommend a contract with a company (Sparkrock 365) based out of Toronto. Trustees were pleased that everyone on the committee was given an opportunity to participate and have input in the process.

22/03/29-06-Lonsdale

THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVES THE PURCHASE OF NEW SOFTWARE FOR THE PURPOSE OF UPGRADING OUR FINANCE, HUMAN RESOURCES AND PAYROLL SOFTWARE TO A MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF \$300,000.

CARRIED.

4.3 POLICY REVIEW - POLICY 24 - ATTENDANCE AT FUNDRAISING EVENTS

22/03/29-07-Watson

THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES ACCEPTS CHANGES TO POLICY 24: ATTENDANCE AT FUNDRAISING EVENTS AS PRESENTED.

CARRIED.

5. DISCUSSION ITEMS

5.1 Boundary Development Update:
Highlighted in the Report:

- Superintendent of Schools Kathleen Finnigan presented a report on the third stakeholder engagement session and indicated that since the report was written the committee met again and went through over 20 pieces of additional feedback from parents on boundary development. Superintendent Finnigan requested more time to go over data. The Trustees requested that updated data be brought back to the April Board meeting so that a decision can be made at the June board meeting.
- The Trustees asked the Administration numerous questions about busing/transportation, grandfathering process, programming, population growth at schools, programs of choice, school viability

and the lottery concept and directed the Administration to provide a follow-up report for the April Board meeting.

- **Busing/Transportation**

- Request for more options with respect to rural busing?
- Do we want to establish a guideline for the maximum amount of time for a bus ride? Not just about St. Lorenzo, a bigger question for the whole district.
- Look at school bell times and integrate school bus times to allow for shorter rides and earlier ends to the school day for students?
- What is practical for bus stops? Considerations should include:
 - Distance from schools
 - Idea of express buses
 - What would that look like
- Once boundaries are developed and there is busing provided, what would happen if you gave the parents the option to opt out of busing?

- **Grandfathering**

- Grandfathering, how will things be affected if you open up grandfathering? Related to grandfathering and keeping siblings together, how far do you grandfather, could be several years, what does that look like, how many years?

- **Programming**

- Idea of programming opportunities at St. Lorenzo - what will this look like?
 - Academies, STEM, Esports, Fine Arts?
- How will it be part of broader programming across the Division?
- Where will sports academies be delivered and how will they be handled?

- **Population Growth at Schools**

- Idea of delinking elementary to middle schools, how would that work and affect populations at different schools?
- Have we considered how these decisions will impact the populations at our elementary schools?
- Did the administration do any analysis on how people voted related to if they lived in a certain geographic area?

- **Program of Choice**

- There was an impression that families didn't understand that if their child was in a program of choice, that this wouldn't be affecting them. How are we communicating this?

- **What makes a school viable?**
 - Is there a minimum number of students required to make a middle school viable?
- **Lottery**
 - Would we consider the concept of lottery? For example, if the capacity is 800, and there are 600 that live in the catchment, there are still 200 spots available. What are the impacts of holding a lottery on the next 200 spots for families outside the catchment?
- **Next Steps**
 - The Boundary Development Team will communicate that a Board Boundary Development Report is due in April and will be presented to the Board of Trustees to assist with boundary development decisions in June.
- **Feedback Submission Deadline**
 - The Trustees directed the administration to inform parents and guardians that their thoughts and ideas were still being welcomed and to also inform them that a deadline for taking parent feedback into consideration will be set.

5.2 Curriculum Implementation Plan:
Highlighted in the Report:

- Associate Superintendent Ryan Sawula reported on the curriculum implementation plan and the goals for Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools. Much concern was expressed regarding the short amount of time teachers will have to be ready for the new curriculum in September and to ensure there is enough support for our teachers and school staff. Administration indicated the approach would see teaching staff preparing using a phased approach where they prepare in stages and not have to have everything for the whole year planned out in September.

5.3 Transportation Safety Report
Highlighted in the Report:

- Superintendent of Schools Kathleen Finnigan presented the report on “Red Lights Flashing No Passing” as created by Transportation Manager Shevon Medicraft. The report’s goal is to promote stronger bus safety education and identifies safety concerns for student bus riders where drivers do not always stop when red lights are flashing. Trustees requested that the Administration gather more data on transportation safety and report their findings to the Board.

6. INFORMATION ITEMS

6.1 Superintendent Report

Highlighted in the Report:

- The Division is moving forward with an Online Middle School program at St. Thomas Aquinas School for the 2022-2023 school year. The At-Home Learning program was designed to be a response to the pandemic and due to decreased enrolments, beginning next year, the At-Home Learning Program will no longer be operating. Due to low enrolments in the At-Home Learning Program in elementary grades, no online programming will be offered in elementary at this time.
- The Division has a new partnership with Red Deer Childcare Society to offer daycare services in Maryview and St. Teresa of Avila School for students attending the Pre-K programs at our Pre-K Hub schools (Maryview and St. Teresa of Avila School).
- The International Program has seen considerable growth despite the challenges of the pandemic.
- The Division is being promoted across central Alberta using a variety of methods and techniques including radio, print, memberships and banners.

6.2 Quarterly Progress Report

Highlighted in the Report:

- Trustees commended Administration on the informative report focusing on quarter two of the 2021-2022 school year.
- Human Resources will be focusing on an Integrated Disability Management Program to better support employees with short term disability absences.
- Dual credit opportunities will continue for high school students in conjunction with post-secondary institutions.

6.3 Financial Report

Highlighted in the Report:

- The Secretary Treasurer provided a written financial report. The Division is still in a surplus position of \$2.2 million. The Board and System Administration budget is currently over by \$100,000. St. Lorenzo de Ruiz new school costs to date are \$1.6 million and to date, the Division has received \$1.1 million from Alberta Infrastructure.

22/03/29-08-Lonsdale

**THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES DIRECTS
ADMINISTRATION TO DEVELOP A PRESENTATION ON
COST SAVING MEASURES FOR RUNNING AN
ELECTION AND BRING IT BACK TO TRUSTEES BY**

THE END OF JUNE 2023.

CARRIED.

6.4 Trustee Reports and Updates

- Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA)
 - Trustee Cynthia Leyson provided an oral update on the Edwin Parr event and planning.
- Alberta Catholic School Trustees Association
 - Chair Kim Pasula provided a written report.
- Trustee PD Reports:
 - Alberta Rural Education Symposium - Trustee Dorraine Lonsdale provided a written report on the symposium.
 - The next meeting for the rural caucus is being held on Thursday, March 31.
 - Canadian Mental Health Association Conference - Trustee Dorraine Lonsdale provided a written report on the conference.

6.5 2021 Election Campaign Disclosure

- The City of Red Deer provided a written Campaign Disclosure Statement and Financial Statement

6.6 Correspondence

- Two letters from the Minister of Education were presented as information.

Trustee Hollman led the group in closing prayer.

22/03/2-09- Lagrange

**THAT THE REGULAR MEETING RECESS
TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, THE
TIME BEING 9:01.**

CARRIED.

22/03/29-10-Watson

**THAT THE REGULAR MEETING
RECONVENE.**

CARRIED.

22/03/29-11-Lonsdale

**THAT THE REGULAR MEETING ADJOURN,
THE TIME BEING 10:15pm.**

CARRIED.

CHAIR

SECRETARY-TREASURER