



Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Red Deer Catholic Separate School Division, held June 17, 2025.

Present:

- S. Heistad,
- M. Hollman,
- C. Leyson,
- D. Lonsdale,
- K. Pasula,
- A. Watson, Trustees
- K. Kissel, Director of Education Technology
- L. Latka, Secretary-Treasurer
- R. Ledene, Acting Superintendent
- J. Smith, Associate Superintendent - Human Resources
- M. St. Pierre - Executive Assistant

Chair Hollman called the meeting to order at 3:30 P.M. Trustee Pasula read an opening prayer aloud.

06/17/25-01-Watson

THAT THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MOVE IN CAMERA AT 3:31 P.M.

CARRIED.

06/17/25-02-Watson

THAT THE BOARD MOVE OUT OF CAMERA AT 5:12 P.M.

CARRIED.

06/17/25-03-Leyson

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

CARRIED.

Chair Hollman called the meeting back to order at 5:40 p.m. Trustee Lonsdale read an opening prayer aloud. Acting Superintendent Ledene read the Land Acknowledgement aloud.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

06/17/25-04-Lonsdale

THAT THE AGENDA BE APPROVED AS AS AMENDED BY ADDING:

- **4.5 DIVISION OPENING WINE AND CHEESE**

CARRIED.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2.1. MAY 27, 2025 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

06/17/25-05-Heistad

THAT THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF MAY 27, 2025 BE ADOPTED AS PRESENTED.

CARRIED.

3. DELEGATIONS

Mustard Seed representative, Scott Tilbury, thanked RDCRS for its \$30,000 contribution last fall, which supported children in Red Deer through the school lunch program. He shared that more than 95,000 lunches have been prepared and served through the program this year.

He added that a full report on lunch totals, costs, and Thanksgiving hamper recipients will be shared after the school year ends. Tilbury highlighted plans for summer hampers for families in the lunch program, and noted 25 single mothers received housing support this year. Additionally, he emphasized that The Mustard Seed continues to fundraise actively to sustain its programs, citing the “Bowls for Bellies” fundraiser, which raised over \$30,000.

Tilbury raised concerns about a growing shortage of volunteer drivers due to retirements, and asked the board to consider potential solutions, such as schools picking up their own lunches or connecting with community partners. He added that tax receipts are available to help offset fuel costs for volunteers.

4. ACTION ITEMS

4.1. APPROVAL OF AUDITORS

Secretary-Treasurer Latka informed Trustees that a Request for Proposal was conducted resulting in submissions from five firms. She reported that the Audit Committee carefully

reviewed the proposals and is recommending MNP as the successful firm based on the strength of its proposal, extensive experience, and overall value. Latka added that the committee found the process thorough and sees this as a timely opportunity for change.

06/17/25-06-Heistad

THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF MNP AS THE AUDITORS FOR FOUR FISCAL YEARS.

CARRIED.

4.2. LOCALLY DEVELOPED COURSES

Acting Superintendent Ledene presented the Locally Developed Courses report.

06/17/25-07-Pasula

THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVE THE RENEWAL AND RE-AUTHORIZATION OF THE LOCALLY DEVELOPED COURSES AS PRESENTED.

Course Name	Version	Course Code	First Approved Year	Last Approved Year
Chamber Ensemble 15	3 Credits (2025-2029)	LDC1417	2025-2026	2028-2029
Chamber Ensemble 15	5 Credits (2025-2029)	LDC1417	2025-2026	2028-2029
Chamber Ensemble 25	3 Credits (2025-2029)	LDC2417	2025-2026	2028-2029
Chamber Ensemble 25	5 Credits (2025-2029)	LDC2417	2025-2026	2028-2029
Chamber Ensemble 35	3 Credits (2025-2029)	LDC3417	2025-2026	2028-2029
Chamber Ensemble 35	5 Credits (2025-2029)	LDC3417	2025-2026	2028-2029
Film and Media Art 15	3 Credits (2025-2029)	LDC1092	2025-2026	2028-2029
Film and Media Art 15	5 Credits (2025-2029)	LDC1092	2025-2026	2028-2029
Film and Media Art 25	3 Credits (2025-2029)	LDC2092	2025-2026	2028-2029
Film and Media Art 25	5 Credits (2025-2029)	LDC2092	2025-2026	2028-2029
Film and Media Art 35	3 Credits (2025-2029)	LDC3092	2025-2026	2028-2029
Film and Media Art 35	5 Credits (2025-2029)	LDC3092	2025-2026	2028-2029
Forensic Studies 25	3 Credits (2025-2029)	LDC2256	2025-2026	2028-2029
Forensic Studies 35	3 Credits (2025-2029)	LDC3256	2025-2026	2028-2029

Instrumental Jazz 15	3 Credits (2025-2029)	LDC1431	2025-2026	2028-2029
Instrumental Jazz 15	5 Credits (2025-2029)	LDC1431	2025-2026	2028-2029
Instrumental Jazz 25	3 Credits (2025-2029)	LDC2431	2025-2026	2028-2029
Instrumental Jazz 25	5 Credits (2025-2029)	LDC2431	2025-2026	2028-2029
Instrumental Jazz 35	3 Credits (2025-2029)	LDC3431	2025-2026	2028-2029
Instrumental Jazz 35	5 Credits (2025-2029)	LDC3431	2025-2026	2028-2029
Medicine Wheel 15	3 Credits (2025-2029)	LDC1172	2025-2026	2028-2029
Religions of the World 35	3 Credits (2025-2029)	LDC3450	2025-2026	2028-2029
Religions of the World 35	5 Credits (2025-2029)	LDC3450	2025-2026	2028-2029
Seven Teachings 15	3 Credits (2025-2029)	LDC1175	2025-2026	2028-2029

CARRIED.

4.3. NEW ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT CONTRACTS

Acting Superintendent Ledene shared that the contracts for the Associate Superintendent of Student Services and Associate Superintendent of Learning Services were reviewed and discussed in the Committee of the Whole, and recommended both for approval.

06/17/25-08-Leyson

THAT IN ACCORDANCE WITH BOARD POLICY 12 - RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF PERSONNEL, THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVE THE CONTRACTS FOR THE NEWLY APPOINTED ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT OF LEARNING SERVICES AND ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT OF STUDENT SERVICES AS DISCUSSED TO BECOME EFFECTIVE AUGUST 11, 2025.

CARRIED.

During discussion, Trustee Pasula expressed that he wished he could vote in favour of the contract resolutions, adding that while he supports the improvements to the process shared by administration, he stated that he has not yet received all the information he believes is necessary to make a prudent decision at this time.

4.4. REVIEW OF EXISTING ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT CONTRACTS

Acting Superintendent Ledene explained that, in accordance with policy requiring annual contract reviews, the existing Associate Superintendent contracts were reviewed and discussed in the Committee of the Whole. Following those discussions, both contracts are being recommended for approval.

06/17/25-09-Watson

THAT IN ACCORDANCE WITH BOARD POLICY 2 - BOARD OPERATIONS, THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVE THE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS PRESENTED FOR THE ANNUAL EVALUATION OF THE SECRETARY TREASURER'S CONTRACT AND THE ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES' CONTRACT AS DISCUSSED IN-CAMERA.

CARRIED.

Trustee Pasula stated that he would not be able to support the motion, citing the same rationale as the previous item.

4.5. DIVISION OPENING WINE AND CHEESE

Acting Superintendent Ledene requested the Board's approval for the Division Opening Wine and Cheese event, noting that approval is required due to the consumption of alcohol within a school facility.

06/17/25-09-Lonsdale

THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES SPONSOR AND APPROVE THE DIVISION OPENING WINE AND CHEESE EVENT TO BE HELD AT ST. JOSEPH HIGH SCHOOL ON AUGUST 25, 2025. APPROVAL IS ALSO GRANTED FOR THE CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL WITHIN THE SCHOOL FACILITY, TO OCCUR FOLLOWING THE FORMAL CONCLUSION OF THE DIVISION OPENING EVENT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH ALL RELEVANT ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES.

CARRIED.

5. DISCUSSION ITEMS

5.1. INCLUSIVE SYMBOL REPORT

Acting Superintendent Ledene shared the Inclusive Symbol report, outlining previous actions and providing a recommendation to resume its work in the fall based on student data and feedback gathered at that time.

Trustees expressed support for continuing to incorporate student feedback in this work and were in agreement with the recommendation to table the item until the fall. Trustees also suggested considering reframing the discussion to include the question: Do stakeholders feel we are being too exclusive? Trustees suggested the need to consider whether inclusion is perceived as an issue in schools and recommended gathering input from those “in the trenches.”

5.2. BOARD CHAIR YEAR-END MESSAGE

Chair Hollman noted that a year-end message was shared last year and was well received by staff. He asked if the Board would like to proceed similarly this year, offering to prepare a message thanking staff and parents for a successful year and extending best wishes for the summer. Trustees expressed support, noting the importance and value of the message.

5.3. ST. PATRICK’S COMMUNITY SCHOOL - DAWE RUN REPORT

Acting Superintendent Ledene presented the St. Patrick’s Community School - Dawe Run report, which was initially reviewed in response to transportation cost concerns. The report included feedback gathered by the St. Patrick’s principal and noted anticipated logistical challenges with using Heritage Ranch next year. Given these factors, Ledene shared that senior administration supports the school’s recommendation to withdraw divisional participation from the Dawe Run. The matter was brought to the Board in recognition of the event’s long-standing history within the Division.

Trustees expressed overall support for the recommendation to withdraw divisional participation from the Dawe Run, citing budget constraints, the considerable staff workload involved, and the limited impact on the broader school community. It was noted that many schools, including those in rural areas, have already shifted toward organizing their own local events, which have proven to be both cost-effective and successful. To maintain the spirit of the Dawe Run, suggestions included holding school-based activities such as walk/runs on school property. Additionally, the possibility of participation on a smaller scale by sending select teams or elite runners was discussed, should it be feasible and if the public system continues its involvement.

Chair Hollman called for a break at 6:40 pm until 6:50 pm.

6. INFORMATION ITEMS

6.1. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Acting Superintendent Ledene presented the Superintendent Report for information and invited questions from Trustees.

Discussion focused on the pilot hockey academy program at St. Francis of Assisi Middle School, with Trustees inquiring about student interest, funding, logistics, and potential expansion. Ledene shared that 39 students, including some in Grade 8, have expressed interest, enough to proceed with the program. He noted that the initiative is exclusive to St. Francis at this time and is not a division-wide program.

Trustees asked about logistics, including a potential partnership with Notre Dame. It was confirmed that the program will operate independently but in collaboration with Notre Dame staff, with ice time secured at the Penhold arena. Ledene informed Trustees that approximately 25 students are needed to make the program viable and it will be self-sustaining through student fees, with financial support available for students who may require assistance. It was clarified that, at this time, the program will only be available to St. Francis students and will not include students from Innisfail or other areas during the pilot phase.

6.2. SECRETARY-TREASURER REPORT

Secretary-Treasurer Latka presented the Secretary-Treasurer report as information, highlighting a year-to-date surplus in the Statement of Operations and a positive turnaround from the previous year. She added that consideration is being given to allowing schools to carry forward reserve funds into the next year to promote purposeful spending, rather than using funds solely to exhaust budgets. It was also noted that while school-generated funds are currently showing a surplus, many expenses such as field trips will be processed at the end of the school year.

Latka referenced Administrative Procedure 511, noting that while financial reports are required quarterly, they are currently provided monthly. However, the early timing of the June Board meeting makes it difficult to complete a full analysis for that period.

Trustees expressed appreciation for the quality of financial reporting and acknowledged the challenges of earlier meeting dates, emphasizing there is no expectation to rush reporting. They also indicated support for transitioning to quarterly reporting, noting it could ease administrative workload and allow greater focus on policy development and governance during non-reporting months.

Discussion also addressed substitute teacher costs, with trustees acknowledging variability across schools and expressing interest in further analysis. Administration confirmed that a long-term data review is underway in collaboration with ASEBP, with the first year of data already collected.

Questions were raised about strategies for improving the Division's financial position. Latka shared that short-term improvements are anticipated over the next few years, supported by a decision not to replace many capital assets next year and to redirect those funds back into reserves. In the longer term, financial stability will depend on future government funding and

the development of a strategic capital replacement plan. Maintaining the status quo and managing reserves carefully were identified as key interim measures to help stabilize finances.

Trustees also inquired about the budget impact of benefit eligibility changes for non-certificated staff. Administration confirmed that adjustments were made in May but may not yet be reflected through ASEBP.

6.3. SCHOLLIE SURVEY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Director of Education Technology, Mr. Kissel, presented the Schollie Survey data to the Board of Trustees, along with a one-page summary highlighting key insights. He noted that this year's data collection included additional grade levels and introduced two new open-ended questions for parents, teachers, and support staff, one regarding opportunities for involvement and another inviting a message to trustees and senior leadership.

Kissel shared that the open-ended responses generated 84 pages of comments and explained that artificial intelligence tools were utilized to provide an unbiased summary, which is included at the end of each section in the report.

Trustees acknowledged the value of the feedback shared through the Schollie Survey, emphasizing that the comments reflect the voices of the community. They noted the importance of taking the feedback seriously, recognizing it as an opportunity for growth and improvement, and stressed the responsibility of trustees to listen and respond.

Trustees also expressed concern regarding the timing of the survey results' distribution. They noted that while the data had been available for some time and schools had access, Trustees had not received the results concurrently. This delay caused confusion and limited Trustees' ability to respond to inquiries about the survey findings.

Acting Superintendent Ledene acknowledged previous discussions regarding the need to improve timelines and sequencing of data distribution. He noted that while schools use the survey data to inform their improvement plans, adjustments are necessary to ensure Trustees receive the data prior to its release to schools. It was noted that this correction should be reflected in the Board Work Plan moving forward.

Trustees expressed a desire for senior administration to provide a formal report outlining their interpretation of the Schollie Survey results. They emphasized the importance of transparency and accountability, noting that some of the feedback was deeply concerning and indicated areas in need of attention.

Acting Superintendent Ledene acknowledged the request, noting that the data is also used to inform the Division Education Plan and that a more structured reporting process would be appropriate.

Trustees commended the comprehensive report for its quality and the value of the one-page summary for its clarity. They observed that while faith-related feedback remains strong, other areas, particularly communication and leadership, reflected concerns from staff and parents. Trustees identified key areas requiring attention: a disconnect between parent input and visible change, notable drops in teacher satisfaction, and ongoing decline in support staff perceptions, especially regarding senior administration. There was consensus that these issues must be addressed by the incoming Board and senior leadership team, as follow-up on such research has been lacking in the past.

6.4. SYSTEM SERVICES REPORT

Acting Superintendent Ledene presented the System Services Report for information. He noted that regular meetings are taking place for both the St. Veronica Catholic School and Sylvan Lake High School projects.

Trustees inquired whether the site location for the Sylvan Lake project could be shared publicly. Acting Superintendent Ledene responded that he was unsure but would follow up. Trustees also expressed interest in seeing the school plan and suggested it be presented at the August board meeting. Acting Superintendent Ledene agreed.

6.5. WESTERNER PARADE - JULY 16, 2025

Acting Superintendent Ledene informed the Board that RDCRS will not be participating in this year's Westerner Parade due to time constraints and limited capacity over the summer. He noted that, while the idea had merit, particularly in promoting student enrollment and potential bus driver recruitment, the division does not currently have the manpower to support the initiative.

Trustee Lonsdale suggested exploring participation in the Rocky Mountain House parade as a potential trial run, as it takes place approximately six weeks prior to the Red Deer event. Acting Superintendent Ledene agreed this could be a good option to consider for next year.

6.6. CURRICULUM AND INCLUSION REPORT

No report was provided for this item.

6.7. HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT

Associate Superintendent Smith presented the Human Resources Report for information. She expressed her appreciation to the Board for sponsoring the recent Night of Gratitude event, noting that the feedback received was very positive and that further input will be gathered in the fall. A summary of non-certified staff data was also shared during the presentation.

Trustees noted the challenges related to this year's staffing timelines, particularly for staff without permanent contracts. They observed that some individuals may have accepted positions with other divisions that had posted earlier and suggested that the division consider ways to enhance hiring timelines in the future to support staff retention.

6.8. TRUSTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

- ALBERTA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION (ASBA)

Trustee Heistad reported that the ASBA Spring General Meeting (SGM) was held from June 1–3. The association's budget was approved during the meeting.

- ALBERTA CATHOLIC SCHOOL TRUSTEES ASSOCIATION (ACSTA)

Trustee Leyson presented a written report from the May 26–27, 2026 ACSTA Board of Directors' Meeting.

- RURAL CAUCUS OF ALBERTA SCHOOL BOARDS

Trustee Heistad reported that there was no new update at this time.

- CATHOLIC EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Trustee Pasula presented a written report with an update from the Catholic Education Foundation.

6.7. CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

The Board reviewed the correspondence items as presented.

6.8. UPCOMING EVENTS

The Board reviewed the upcoming events as presented.

Chair Hollman invited community member Shelley Odishaw to address the Board as she will no longer be attending board meetings. Ms. Odishaw expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to attend Board meetings over the past eight years and thanked the Trustees for allowing her to be part of the proceedings.

Trustee Heistad read a closing prayer aloud. Board Chair Hollman called for a break at 7:54 pm.

06/17/25-10-Leyson

THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES GO INTO CAMERA AT 8:01 P.M.

CARRIED.

06/17/25-11-Lonsdale

THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MOVE OUT OF CAMERA AT 10:00 P.M.

CARRIED.

06/17/25-12-Leyson

THAT THE MEETING ADJOURN, THE TIME BEING 10:01 P.M.

CARRIED.

(CHAIR)

(SECRETARY-TREASURER)