

AL Horton School Council Meeting Minutes
Monday January 23, 2023

Attendees: R.Lal, K.Busenius, R.Footz, H.Dinwoodie, D.Gara, S.Golka, K.Bortnick, B.Burke, B.Dribnenki, T.Horon, K.Allan, B.Barkwell

1. **Call to order:** 6:34 pm by Ken Allan
2. **Review of the agenda**
3. **Approval of the minutes, as presented**
 - a) November 2022 Ken Allan and seconded by Denise Gara
4. **Trustee Report:** By Randy Footz

Trustee Footz took the time to Thank the Administration and Staff of A L Horton for inviting me to the Christmas concert. It was wonderful to see the gymnasium filled for both concerts.

The Alberta Teachers' Association surveyed 1,085 teachers and 165 school leaders between September and October and found 64 percent of teachers saw an increase in their classroom size, while about 36 per cent of teachers surveyed said they have 30 to 40 students, or more, in their classes. The largest class size growth was found in Grades 4 to 6, high school science and math, and junior high math and English language arts.

In December, Superintendent Mark Liguori received The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medal. Sherwood Park MLA Jordan Walker nominated him in recognition of his leadership through COVID and to acknowledge a career that focused on the success of thousands of students.

From December 5-8, the Board took part in the Assurance Reviews, a division-wide forum for schools to share with the Board their individual results, annual plans, successes, challenges and growth opportunities.

December 15 Board Meeting

The Board approved the transfer of \$1 million from its operating reserves to its capital reserves to support the Division's Salisbury Composite High stormwater project.

As of Nov. 30, 2022, revenues exceed expenses, resulting in an operating surplus of \$1.65 million. The operational revenue for the three months was \$49.03 million, which

represents 26 per cent of the budget. Meanwhile, total expenses incurred was \$47.38 million, which represents 24 per cent of the budget.

January 5: Special Board Meeting

REALLOCATION OF SURPLUS

The Board approved changes to the allocation of surplus for the 2022-23 school year. The reallocation allows the Division to use any net surplus funds and ensures its reserves remain below the 3.15% provincially mandated reserve cap. Additionally, the Board approved requesting permission from Alberta's Education Minister to transfer \$756,000 to EIPS' capital reserves, from the contingency surplus, to cover the cost of new buses to ensure their arrival before classes resume in the 2023-24 school year.

January 19 Board Meeting

The Board approved the school fee parameters for the 2023-24 school year. The parameters are based on the guidelines laid out within the Education Act and the Board's mandate for affordable school fees. Overall, the 2023-24 school fee parameters are similar to the previous year and operate on a cost recovery basis.

Optional courses fees – five per cent allowable increase—up to seven per cent for food courses

Noon supervision fees – five per cent allowable increase

Activity fees – five per cent allowable increase

Extracurricular fees – five per cent allowable increase

Non-curricular travel fees – five per cent allowable increase.

Non-curricular goods and services fees – five per cent allowable increase.

The Board approved changes to the Ukrainian program at A.L. Horton Elementary. Traditionally, the school has offered a Ukrainian Bilingual program for students in kindergarten to Grade 6. However, low enrolment numbers, funding changes and language arts instructional requirements have made offering a full immersion program challenging. EIPS consulted

with school families, and based on their feedback, introduced a new Ukrainian Language and Culture pilot program in fall 2022. The program still offers robust Ukrainian instructions, but the provincial requirements are more flexible.

The pilot program has received overwhelming support from the school community. As such, the Board approved the recommendation to replace A.L. Horton's Ukrainian Bilingual program with the Ukrainian Language and Culture program, starting in the 2023-24 school years. This program will continue to foster an appreciation for the Ukrainian language and culture and will provide the opportunity to expand the Ukrainian language and culture programming at the junior high level.

The Board received for information an update on one of the projects listed in the Division's Three-Year Engagement Plan. In May 2022, EIPS developed a Three-Year Engagement Strategy which identified areas where the Division can improve operations to best serve students. In total, there are four engagement projects listed within the plan. For Project 4, the Division explores possible solutions to improve the schools' utilization rates in Vegreville.

Over the last few years, both schools in Vegreville have experienced drops in enrolment, affecting program delivery and facility operations. As such, EIPS has included the region in its Three-Year Capital Plan—The Division requested and received provincial funding to conduct a value scoping session with community stakeholders in Vegreville and area. The value-scooping session took place in fall 2022. It was facilitated by START Architecture and included representatives from the Government of Alberta, the EIPS Board of Trustees, EIPS administration, A.L. Horton Elementary, Vegreville Composite High, school councils and the Town of Vegreville, the County of Minburn and the Village of Andrew.

Eight different solutions were examined and discussed, the most favorable of which consists of modernizing and expanding Vegreville Composite High School to accommodate a kindergarten to Grade 12 program. The Board will use the report and feedback to develop a community-derived solution and include it in the 2024-27 Three-Year Capital Plan—planned for release in April 2023. Read the full report at eips.ca.

The average cost per EIPS student is \$7,141, which is up from the previous year by \$175.

The Division currently has 20 schools operating above the \$7,141 average.

*** A L Horton cost per pupil is \$8,098

*** VJS cost per pupil is \$8,060

EIPS' utilization rate for 2021-22 increased to 73 per cent—up by one per cent from the previous year.

5. Principals Report: Keri Busenius

Registration opens Feb 1 for 2023-2024

School enrollment is currently 358 students with 105 in Ukrainian Language and Culture.

December surveys included a desire from students and parents for more senior lodge visits, more communication about the Ukrainian program, and more intramural opportunities. Students enjoy all of the opportunities to lead at school.

Skating is coming up in February. Find some skates and a helmet. Our teachers are looking forward to taking their classes.

The Ukrainian Language & Culture program will be featured by EIPS Communications this Friday.

Fees for 2023-2024 large breakout discussion and answering questions. Several families at this time thanked the admin for their hard work in moving numbers around so our fees as parents have barely increased. The fees we had discussion on was emailed out to all families and it is currently posted on our website.

Yearbook interest discussion. Several parents said before they can decide one way or the other they would need a ballpark of what they would cost.

Brendan Barkwell, one of our grade 6 teachers, spoke to us next about his classroom celebrations. Brendan said his class has started studying local government in social studies. They are currently working on creating stop motion animation videos focussed on tourism and getting people interested in our Vegreville community. Mr. Barkwell said his class just finished their unit study on aerodynamics and they have now moved onto flight. They have made parachutes, planes and rockets.

Kelsey Bortick, our kindergarten teacher, spoke to us next about her room. Kelsey shared her class is currently working on writing and recognizing their last names. One way they practice last name recognition is by tapping their last name on the smart board when they arrive in the morning. Mrs. Bortnick also shared how much they enjoyed their post office trip in December to mail their santa letters. They are working on a daily letter in her room. Kelsey is really noticing in the new year how it's a really neat time watching the children turn the next corner on their independence and growth.

Rita Lal spoke next about there being a bigger project in the works with Leah for the month of March. Leah is one of our EIPS Metis and Inuit presenters. Rita also briefly touched on the science and wisdom conference that is approaching.

6. Outstanding Business

a) Meeting Logistics Review- Attendees agreed at this time, for the rest of the year we will meet monthly and still on the last monday of the month.

7. New Business

- a) School Council Engagement Grant - This is a provincial grant provided by the government. Each school is eligible for 500.00. This money can be used on school courses, presentations, school friends groups just to name a few examples of what was discussed. This money can also be pooled together with other schools through EIPS such as the composite. This grant allowed for a lot of opportunity. One suggestion from a parent at the meeting was a presenter on mental health or diversity.

- b) School Councils Stand for Education Hopeful Conversation- At this time in the meeting we had a large group discussion on the question, What actions would you recommend to the Alberta government to improve education for your children and school? Some of the items discussed were class sizes, full time kindergarten, the new curriculum, the concerns of PAT's being on the last day of school this year.

8. Next Meeting: February 27th, 2023 @ 6:30pm

9. Adjourned: By Ken Allan @ 7:29 pm