

AL Horton School Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday February 27, 2024

Attendees: A.Rice, K.Busenius, R.Footz, H.Dinwoodie, Kelly D, S.Kuhn, C.Geibelhaus, Bonnie D

1. **Call to order:** 6:31 pm by Keri B
2. **Review of the agenda**
3. **Approval of the minutes, as presented**
 - A) Hannah Dinwoodie
4. **Trustee Report:** By Randy Footz

The Board approved the Division's borrowing resolution to meet expenditures during the 2023-24 school year. Annually, the Division submits a borrowing resolution to the Bank of Montreal to support the credit facility agreements.

For 2023-24, no changes have been made to EIPS' credit facilities or borrowing resolution.

Overdraft Lending Facility

To assist with daily operating cash requirements.

Overdraft would only be accessed if insufficient funds were available to cover withdrawals.

Set at \$5,000,000 – no money was used from this fund in the past year.

Corporate MasterCard

To finance all expenses eligible under the EIPS purchasing card program.

Set at \$4,000,000. --The average monthly spending was \$467,000. No interest charges are incurred as the Division pays the bill in full each month.

Direct Electronic Funds Transfer (DEFT)

DEFT for payroll, bill payments or other cash management services.

This credit facility is required by BMO. It is in place to protect the bank if insufficient funds were available at EIPS. The Division cannot draw on this facility as part of a cash management strategy.

Set at \$8,500,000 – no money was used from this fund in the past year.

Borrowing Resolution Total ~~~~~ \$17,500,000

5. Principals Report: Keri Busenius

1. Events & Celebrations

- School team to share - Chloe Giebelhaus & Stephanie Kuhn
- Basketball for grade 5/6 on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays at noon
 - Over 40 students taking part
 - Tournament coming up in Sherwood Park for a few of our teams
- Learning Intervention for grades 2 & 3
 - Letters, sounds, common words and patterns, reading
 - Numbers, counting, place value, operations
 - End of this 6-week cycle of identified students
 - Grades 1 and 4 are up next
- Wendy Brook Performing Arts Festival
 - March 7 & 8 are instrument and choral speech performances by classes
 - March 11 is Ukrainian performances in the gym
 - Panni Bombak working with solos, duets, small groups in Ukrainian
- WISEST Conference - 4 grade six students attended this week

2. Community of Learners

- On January 31, teachers learned about Artificial Intelligence for our work in schools
- Other staff professional learning lately has included literacy with a focus on morphology, the Blanket Exercise protocols, programming for students with autism, and many Convention sessions
- All grade 4-6 students successfully changed their passwords to meet new security requirements

3. Opportunities

- March 1 to 21 is the EIPS 2023/24 Assurance Survey for all families.
 - Last year we had 80 surveys completed; let's beat that!

- Interviews are February 28 and 29 this week
- Report cards are posted online on March 15
 - For term one, over 70% of report cards were accessed online; let's try for 75%
- There has been an 18% response rate for Grade 4 parents completing the Alberta Education Assurance Survey online. This is 8 of 45 parents.
- Attendance check up - over 150 students were identified as having 12-82% absenteeism.
 - We are sending home communications to these families and have checked in with about half of them through our Family School Liaison Worker and many more via homeroom teachers and school administration.
- **School Fees paper survey - 23 responses (see feedback on page that follows)**
 - Winner of the random draw is Jody W.

4. Other Items

- Congratulations to Amy Rice who will be continuing on as Assistant Principal in 2024-25
- Principal Keri Busenius will be the new Principal of Win Ferguson Elementary in Fort Saskatchewan next year.

School Fees Survey - Feedback from Parents & Caregivers at A.L. Horton Elementary

February 2024

Of the 23 paper surveys returned:

- 18 were pleased with the fees for 2024/25 as proposed
- 4 were unsure
- 1 was displeased, finding the fees high and hoping all noon supervision, field trip, and sports fees could be waived for all

Questions/Worries:

- Sports fees should not be chargeable.
 - *Admin response: Who should be responsible for paying for students to participate in athletic activities, if not parents/guardians?*
- Concern over the few activities being offered (no curling, little basketball or volleyball, few field trips, no swimming).
 - *Admin response: Volleyball, swimming, and basketball were all offered this year, two as extracurricular activities at lunch and after school and one*

during school. We are happy to speak with parents, caregivers, and community members who would like to coach/teach curling and organize this as a school-based or extracurricular activity.

- Too much “free skate” and “free swim” time. Lessons would be preferred.
 - *Admin response: Swim lessons are being offered for Grade 3 as an extracurricular activity. There are no Alberta curricular outcomes related to swimming nor skating.*
- A skate and helmet initiative was requested if there is skating in 2024/25.
 - *Admin response: We welcome parents, caregivers, and community members to organize a skate and helmet trading initiative in September to December 2024. Our school’s participation in skating as an activity will be based on this volunteer service being operational.*
- If there’s no raise in fees this year, how much will you increase the cost the year after?
 - *Admin response: The guidelines are that no fees can exceed an increase of 5% per year without the approval of the Board of Trustees.*

Ideas for Changes:

- Swim lessons for all grades.
 - *Due to the time pulled from required subjects and curriculum for 5-6 lessons and the availability of lessons to families at the pool nearby, the school will not be offering lessons for all grades.*
- A fun field trip at the end of the year for each grade.
 - *Field trips are generally tied to curriculum outcomes in a variety of subject areas. On occasion, when a small balance (such as \$2-3 per student) remains, a class may choose to go bowling or to have an extra fun swim at the pool.*
- Increase fees for sports and microwaves.
 - *Fees cover the cost of the activity.*
 - *The operation of microwaves in division schools is frowned upon due to safety concerns. We no longer use microwaves in classrooms at A.L. Horton Elementary.*
- Is there an option to pay in installments?
 - *Yes. Any amount may be applied to school fees in the Parent Portal at any time until all fees have been paid.*
- A ski trip for older students would be good. (multiple respondents)
 - *The school may seek an exception to add this fee for a trial for grades 4 and 5.*
 - *If 90% of fees are not paid two weeks in advance of the planned ski trip, the trip will be canceled. No ski trip fees will be waived by the school.*

- No skating for next year, please.

Chloe Geibelhaus, our school counselor and one of our kindergarten teachers spoke about the busyness of seeing students and working behind the scenes on their paperwork needs for assessments. In kindergarten the kids are learning so much this time of year and are becoming more confident in their skills. They are finishing up the alphabet and making the final touches on report cards.

Stephanie Kuhn, our grade four teacher, talked about the efforts her students are putting into this new math curriculum. Currently working on factors and number sense. Mrs. Kuhn has been thinking of new hands-on ways to practice factors such as bean bags and hula hoops for visuals. Mrs. Kuhn spoke about how proud she was of some of her students who are on Ipp's who have made several level advancements in reading. They have had breakthroughs with proper word decoding strategies, suffixes and prefixes.

7. New Business: To proceed if a chair / vice chair is chosen. None at this time.

8. Next Meeting: April 30, 2024

9. Meeting Adjourned: 6:57 P.M