



Chinook's Edge School Division

Board of Trustees

Date: Tuesday, March 11, 2025
Time: 9:00 AM
Location: Boardroom

Practical Vision, Strategic Assumptions and Guiding Principles

Attendance

Trustees Present: H. Bilton, S. Cooper, M. Copley (9:11 a.m.), D. Hutchison, K. Kemmere, G. Kerr, T. Leslie, J. Swainson, L. Wagers

Staff Present: L. Woodward - Communications Coordinator, S. Russell - Associate Superintendent Corporate Services, K. Sacher - Superintendent/CEO, S. Babb – Assistant to the Superintendent, S. Westwood - Administrative Assistant/Recording Secretary

Call to Order

Chair H. Bilton called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

Land Acknowledgement • Treaty 7

Trustee H. Bilton opened the meeting with a Treaty 7 Land Acknowledgement.

Agenda/Minutes Approval

Agenda Approval

Resolution # 20250311001BOT

Moved By: K. Kemmere

Motion to approve the agenda as presented.

Carried

Minutes Approval

Resolution # 20250311002BOT

Moved By: D. Hutchison

Motion that Chinook's Edge School Division Board of Trustees approve the minutes on the 2025 February 04 Board of Trustees Meeting.

Carried

In Camera

It was noted that H. Bilton, S. Cooper, M. Copley (9:11 a.m), D. Hutchison, K. Kemmere, G. Kerr, T. Leslie, J. Swainson, L. Wagers, S. Russell and K. Sacher remained in the meeting at this time.

Resolution # 20250311003BOT

Moved By: J. Swainson

Motion to move In Camera at 9:03 a.m.

Carried

Personnel

Resolution # 20250311004BOT

Moved By: D. Hutchison

Motion to accept the personnel report as presented.

Carried

Superintendent's Personnel Update

Superintendent K. Sacher provided a personnel update.

Resolution # 20250311005BOT

Moved By: K. Kemmere

Motion that Chinook's Edge School Division Board of Trustees appoint Jason Drent as Corporate Secretary for Chinook's Edge School Division effective July 1, 2025.

Carried

Resolution # 20250311006BOT

Moved By: S. Cooper

Motion that Chinook's Edge School Division Board of Trustees appoint Bonnie Milman as the substitute Returning Officer for the 2025 School Board Election.

Carried

Facilities Update

Associate Superintendent Corporate Services S. Russell provided an update on facilities matters.

Negotiations Committee / TEBA Update

Associate Superintendent Corporate Services S. Russell and Trustee Leslie provided an update on Negotiations during the In Camera portion of the meeting.

Information Items**Accounts Payable****Visa****Resolution # 20250311007BOT**

Moved By: J. Swainson

Motion to return to the regular meeting at 9:37 a.m.

Recess: 9:37 a.m.

Reconvene 9:45 a.m.

New Business

Capital Plan 2025-2029

The 2026-2029 Chinook's Edge School Division Capital Plan was provided for review. The plan was reviewed at the 2025 February 20 Facilities and Maintenance Committee meeting.

While the expectation was to receive design funding for Sylvan Lake, unfortunately, that did not materialize. This raises a strategic question about our current Capital Plan priorities, particularly in light of changing enrollment trends and shifting ministry priorities between urban new builds and rural modernizations.

Priority Order Considerations

- Discussion focused on whether we should:
 - Move Olds up to #2 and shift Innisfail down to #3, or
 - Maintain the current order with Innisfail modernization at #2 and Olds at #3.

Rationale for Reordering

- The prior decision to move Innisfail to #2 was based on an assumption that Sylvan Lake (currently #1) might soon be removed from the list or funded.
- With no funding received, re-evaluation is warranted.
- Olds and Carstairs are nearly tied in rubric scores and enrollment projections.
- Keeping Olds lower now provides flexibility in future years without giving the community the impression of being “demoted.”
- Realistically, only one major project gets approved per year, so strategic positioning matters.

Ministry Trends and Rural Context

- The Ministry has indicated a preference for modernizations in rural areas over new school builds.
- It may be more effective to keep Innisfail modernization high on the list to align with that priority.

- Moving Innisfail back to #3 risks losing visibility for that modernization ask.

Community and Long-Term Considerations

- There is a broader strategic conversation needed about rural high school planning—especially the idea of a regional high school possibly located along the highway corridor to serve multiple communities (e.g., Bowden, Spruce View).
- However, with an election upcoming, this year is not the right time to engage communities on such transformative ideas.
- The current modernization, if approved, would likely be the only investment in that community for decades.

Sylvan Lake and Red Deer Catholic

- Sylvan Lake remains a top priority and is also #1 for Red Deer Catholic.
- There's a strong case for Sylvan as it impacts both urban and rural needs, especially with Catholic students being redirected.
- Disappointment in the community is high due to the lack of recent announcements.
- A recommendation was made to develop a strategy at the Education Committee meeting to better coordinate and advocate in tandem with Red Deer Catholic.

Resolution # 20250311008BOT

Moved By: T. Leslie

Motion that Chinook's Edge School Division Board of Trustees approve the 2026-2029 Capital Plan as amended.

Carried

Transportation Quarterly Update

Associate Superintendent Corporate Services S. Russell presented the Transportation Quarterly Report.

During the Transportation Quarterly Update, the Board was presented with several critical updates and considerations impacting current and future planning. One of the

most significant issues discussed was the potential financial impact of reverting the transportation eligibility distance from the current 1.0 km back to a shorter distance, which would cost the division approximately \$400,000 annually. Given this, administration recommended maintaining the 1.0 km threshold to avoid substantial budget strain. While a \$50 increase in transportation fees was mentioned, the board agreed to delay any decisions until the provincial budget breakdown is released, expected next week, with formal transportation recommendations scheduled for April.

The rising costs associated with fleet evergreening and contractor rate increases were also acknowledged, alongside a long-term strategy to gradually take over more contracted routes to improve cost efficiency.

Additionally, the Board discussed concerns related to recent U.S. tariffs and their potential effect on equipment and bus procurement. Fortunately, the division's recent bus purchases are secured under signed contracts, shielding them from cost increases this year. However, there is growing concern over new federal procurement rules prioritizing Canadian-made products and how tariffs may unintentionally impact Canadian school divisions. Trustees agreed on the importance of monitoring these developments closely and potentially advocating at the federal level to ensure rural school divisions are not adversely affected by broader trade policies.

Red Deer County Meeting Agenda

Trustees reviewed the agenda for the Red Deer County Meeting.

Significant Donations

As per PL 3-07.1.0 Donations, a list of all significant donations made to the division from September 1, 2023 to August 31, 2024 were provided for review.

Trustees reviewed the Significant Donations List and discussed the logistics of tracking and reporting donations over \$500, as previously requested. While it is easy for finance staff to pull donation amounts, compiling full donor details and community affiliations is labor-intensive—especially during March when they are simultaneously managing T4s, WCB filings, and year-end financial tasks. As a solution, administration requested either increasing the reporting threshold to \$1,000 or shifting the reporting month from March to April to reduce pressure during peak workload. Trustees expressed appreciation for maintaining the \$500 threshold, noting that for many small businesses, a \$500 donation represents a substantial contribution and deserves recognition. The intent behind the report is to ensure trustees can acknowledge and thank donors appropriately, particularly in public or social settings. Trustees discussed the timing of most donations,

such as those tied to scholarships or awards in the fall, and considered whether a November or April report would better reflect donation patterns. The Board agreed that administration should work with the finance department to determine the most practical reporting month and adjust the Board Work Plan accordingly, while preserving the \$500 recognition threshold to ensure all meaningful contributions are properly acknowledged.

Superintendent Update

Superintendent K. Sacher provided a written and verbal update on the following:

- Congratulations to Jackie Taylor and Kathy Kemmere for receiving the King Charles III Medal.
- Budget Released on February 27
 - further updated will be provided an the meeting.
- Community Learning Campus Connection Event in Olds on February 27
 - This event was initiated by Jackie Taylor to ensure all the key constituents of the CLC remain connected and aware of the partnership.
- Welcome to Trudy Gusse, Governance Professional effective March 1
- Colt offsite meeting March 10.

Committees

Audit Committee

No meeting prior to this meeting.

Cheque Review Comments

Education Committee (February 25th)

The minutes of the 2025 February 25 Education Committee Meeting were provided for review.

Facilities and Maintenance Committee (February 20th)

The minutes of the 2025 February 20 Facilities and Maintenance Committee meeting were provided for review.

Governance Effectiveness Committee

No meeting prior to this meeting.

Policy Committee (February 18th)

The minutes of the 2025 February 18 Policy Committee meeting were provided for review. As this will be a broader discussion, it has been postponed to the April Board Meeting. The motions from the February 18 meeting will be passed at the April Board meeting.

Flourishing Stories and Innovation Adhoc Committee

No meeting prior to this meeting.

Trustee Onboarding Adhoc Committee (February 20th)

The minutes of the 2025 February 20 Trustee Onboarding Committee meeting were provided for review.

Resolution # 20250311009BOT

Moved By: S. Cooper

Motion to direct the Superintendent to develop a Trustee survey/interview process to help identify topics for onboarding.

Carried

Health Adhoc Committee

No meeting prior to this meeting. There is a meeting scheduled for March 17th at 1:00 p.m.

Regular Business

Correspondence

The following correspondence was discussed.

- A letter from Svend Nielsen, Director of the Sundre & District Ag. Society regarding the current parking lot agreement between the Sundre & District Ag. Society and Chinook's Edge School Division.

Resolution # 20250311010BOT

Moved By: T. Leslie

Motion that Chinook's Edge School Division Board of Trustees use \$10,000 from Capital Reserves towards the parking lot upgrade in Sundre.

Carried

Alberta School Boards Association

Board representative K. Kemmere and L. Wagers provided an update on the following items:

- February 25 Zone 4 meeting.
- The March 24 Zone 4 meeting will be hosted by Chinook's Edge and is a hybrid meeting.
- Virtual training
- ASBA Awards

It was asked that the following be added to the Board Work Plan:

- Friends of Education in January
- Trustee recognition and distinguished service in May

Canadian School Boards Association

No updates at this time.

National School Boards Association

No updates at this time.

Rural Caucus

At the March 2 Rural Caucus meeting there was a world cafe discussion. The Board would like to see the outcomes from those discussions.

Trustee Professional Development Reports/Conferences

Trustees were reminded to update the conference spreadsheet for attendance.

Information Items

Enrolments

Enrolments as of 2025 March 05 were provided for review.

Approved Trip Requests

Approved trip requests were provided for review.

Board Work Plan

The Board Work Plan was provided for review.

Adjournment

Resolution # 20250311011BOT

Moved By: G. Kerr

Motion to adjourn the meeting a 10:49 p.m.

Carried

H. Bilton - Chair

D. Hutchison - Vice Chair

S. Russell - Corporate Secretary