

**DATE:** November 25, 2014

**TO:** Board of Trustees

**FROM:** Trustee Michael Janz, Caucus Committee Chair

**SUBJECT:** Report #5 of the Caucus Committee (From the Meeting Held November 4, 2014)

**ORIGINATOR:** Dr. Sandra Stoddard, Executive Director Governance and Strategic Support Services

**REFERENCE:** [Trustees' Handbook](#) – Caucus Committee - Section 5.4  
[School Act](#) Section 61  
[April 10, 2012 – Board Meeting Minutes - Motion re Student Advisory Council](#)  
[September 10, 2013 Board Report – Motion re Student Trustee/Representative](#)  
[June 10, 2014 Board Report – Student Representative](#)  
[October 21, 2014 Board Report – Update on the Process to Support the Election of a Student Trustee](#)

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**RECOMMENDATION**

- 1. That Report #5 of the Caucus Committee from the meeting held November 4, 2014 be received and considered.**
- 2. That the 2014-2015 Student Trustee Role and Responsibilities Statement, as detailed in Attachment I, be approved.**

**BACKGROUND**

On April 10, 2012, the Board approved the establishment of a Student Advisory Council to meet with the Board and Administration at least twice per year to provide student perspectives on educational issues. The Board values student voice, feedback and participation and has found that Student Advisory Council (established in the 2012-2013 school year) has been an effective source of meaningful student input.

On September 10, 2013 the Board approved a motion regarding a Student Trustee. The motion suggested that the elected position of Student Trustee be piloted for the 2014-2015 school year, and that the purpose is threefold:

- facilitating dialogue between the student body and the Board;
- increasing student engagement in Board policy and planning functions; and
- educating students about democratic governance.

The Student Trustee pilot supports the District's Vision, Mission, and Priorities and reflects the District's values of accountability, collaboration, equity and integrity.

On June 10, 2014, the Board of Trustees approved the process to support the election and ongoing participation of a Student Trustee to the Edmonton Public School Board, beginning in the 2014-2015 school year. Following the approval of the pilot, a group of school and central services staff developed a process to support the election of a Student Trustee. A report regarding the process for the election of a Student Trustee was brought to public board on October 21, 2014. This committee also provided support in the creation of the role and responsibilities statement.

On November 4, 2014, the District Priorities and Governance Committee brought forward a proposed 2014-2015 Student Trustee Role and Responsibilities Statement to the November 4, 2014 Caucus Committee meeting for consideration.

On November 20, 2014 a full-day Student Trustee Election event was held at the Centre for Education for all members of the Student Advisory Council and the Student Trustee candidates. The students participated in a series of activities where the candidates were able to provide their voice and vision for the role of a Student Trustee. The event culminated with an election process of a Student Trustee for the 2014-2015 school year. The actual voting process used to support the election was coordinated and implemented in partnership with Elections Alberta.

The Student Trustee will be officially announced and introduced at the November 25, 2014 board meeting.

### **CONSIDERATIONS & ANALYSIS**

The following sources were used as reference materials and informed the development of the recommended Student Trustee Role and Responsibilities Statement as outlined in Attachment I:

- Alberta School Boards Association's (ASBA) Roles and Responsibilities of a Trustee in Alberta
- Roles and Responsibilities statements supporting Student Trustees in British Columbia and Ontario
- Trustee input from the August 26, 2014 Board Retreat

### **NEXT STEPS**

- Following the formal announcement of the Student Trustee at the November 25, 2014 board meeting, Board Chair Hoffman, who will serve as the Lead Mentor for the Student Trustee, will begin to provide support and guidance to the Student Trustee.
- The Communications Department and the Administration, under the leadership of Assistant Superintendent Mark Liguori, will provide orientation support to the Student Trustee.
- The Student Trustee will begin their duties and will be in attendance at the December 2, 2014 board meeting.
- Recruitment will continue for the District Leadership and Governance course slated to begin in term two of the 2014-2015 school year. The teachers responsible for the course will also have a role in supporting the newly elected Student Trustee.
- Assistant Superintendent Liguori will develop an evaluation strategy to support this initiative to inform beyond the pilot.
- The Student Trustee Role and Responsibilities statement will be reviewed by the Board at the conclusion of the 2014-2015 pilot.

The program for the Welcoming of the Student Trustee (which commences at 5:30 p.m.) is as follows:

- Board approval of the 2014-2015 Student Trustee Role and Responsibilities Statement
- Introduction and recognition of all Student Trustee candidates (each candidate will be introduced and come forward to receive a certificate and for a photograph to be taken with the Board Chair and the Superintendent).
- Announcement by the Board Chair of the successful Student Trustee candidate (the results of the November 20<sup>th</sup> election process will be confidential until announced at the November 25, 2014 board meeting).
- The successful Student Trustee candidate will come forward and provide a brief acceptance speech.
- The board meeting will adjourn and participants will move to the Centre for Education Atrium for a reception and a chance to meet and talk with all the Student Trustee candidates.

**ATTACHMENT**

ATTACHMENT I - 2014-2015 Student Trustee Role and Responsibilities Statement

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## 2014-2015 Student Trustee Role and Responsibilities Statement

The Alberta legislature through the [School Act](#) and regulations passed thereunder has delegated some authority for the governance of education to locally elected school boards. School boards are statutory corporations and, as such, have certain obligations to perform and certain powers to carry out their tasks.

The philosophy of school board governance is that government is most effective when it is close to the people being governed. Historically, community residents have elected trustees to boards to act for the legislature in their local schools.

The Board provides oversight and stewardship to ensure:

- each student has the opportunity to achieve his/her potential
- children are safe at school
- the jurisdiction's financial and capital resources are well managed
- that business is conducted in a legal and ethical manner

The school board, as a representative of the people, is a decision-maker and direction-setter. The Board integrates information from many sources; processes that information; evaluates it and makes a decision compatible with the system's beliefs, values and goals. As it makes these decisions, the school board considers the interests of all the students in the jurisdiction – not just the interests of students from a particular school or area. (A comprehensive overview of the role and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees is listed in Section 3.1 (page 18) of the [Trustees' Handbook](#).)

Edmonton Public School Board has historically been composed of 9 members representing the communities of Edmonton. At this time, the Board is committed to adding the student perspective to its composition and is embarking upon a pilot that will see the election of a Student Trustee to serve alongside the current 9 members. This role and its parameters are defined in this document.

### 1. Role Description

The Student Trustee:

- 1.1 Is an elected, non-voting representative providing student voice to the Board as a reflection of participating in public education with Edmonton Public Schools.
- 1.2 Will attend all regular public meetings of the Board.
- 1.3 Will present a Student Trustee report monthly at public Board meetings. As part of this monthly report, the Student Trustee will provide the Board with information on how student voice has been captured.

- 1.4 Will be invited to attend Board-related meetings and functions, such as committee meetings, professional learning, special events, as appropriate to fulfill their work and responsibilities as a Student Trustee. This would exclude any meetings that are deemed private or closed for Trustees; e.g. Caucus Committee meetings.
- 1.5 Will provide the Board with a student perspective on educational matters including information on how student voice has been captured.
- 1.6 May suggest a motion on a Board-related issue or topic through a committee of the Board or the Student Trustee mentor, but does not have authority to personally move a motion.
- 1.7 Will be provided access to all reading materials relevant to any public Board meeting and committees or working groups they participate in directly. Will not have access to materials related to private or closed-door Board-related meetings or discussions.
- 1.8 Will report back regularly to the students of EPSB on the activities of the Board.
- 1.9 Will engage with and seek student input from members of the Student Advisory Council and students participating in the governance/leadership course around matters related to governance, educational topics and emerging issues relevant to public education and the Board of Trustees.
- 1.10 Will work closely with the designated Trustee mentor and administrative staff assigned to support the role of the Student Trustee.
- 1.11 Will work with Communications and, where appropriate, provide key messages to media reflecting student perspective on education-related topics, as appropriate.
- 1.12 Will comply with the Conflict of Interest Guidelines and the parameters identified under *Disqualifications of a Student Trustee*, as outlined in this document.

## **2. Eligibility and Qualifications**

In order for a student to participate as a Student Trustee candidate in the District's election process supporting the appointment of a Student Trustee, he or she must meet the following:

- 2.1 Currently be registered and in regular attendance at an Edmonton Public Schools' High School in grade 11 or 12.
- 2.2 Have signed support from the school principal and at least one other adult staff member at the school.
- 2.3 Have signed parental consent where appropriate.
- 2.4 Agree to all terms outlined in this document.

- 2.5 Be identified by their school's Student Trustee selection committee as the candidate representative from their high school.

### **3. Election Process**

Central and school administration will work together to develop an election process that engages a representation of the overall student body of Edmonton Public Schools, is fair and reflects the democratic process. This process will result in a single successful candidate emerging as the elected Student Trustee for the 2014-2015 school year.

### **4. Term of Office**

The Student Trustee will sit for the 2014-2015 school year.

### **5. Disqualifications of a Student Trustee**

A Student Trustee will be asked to resign from their role under the following circumstances:

- a) They cease to be a student of Edmonton Public Schools.
- b) They are absent from 3 consecutive Board meetings without prior approval.
- c) They breach the confidentiality of the Board.
- d) They are in serious violation of the student code of conduct resulting in a serious disciplinary action, such as out-of-school suspension or expulsion.

### **6. Honorarium and Support**

The Student Trustee, upon successfully fulfilling his or her responsibilities for the 2014-2015 term of office, will be eligible to receive a \$2,000 honorarium. This is intended to support further growth or learning and will be provided to the out-going Student Trustee upon receipt of written confirmation of acceptance into a post-secondary or professional development opportunity.

### **7. Responsibilities of the Board**

- Welcome, onboard and reflectively act in a manner that helps to create a space for the role of student trustee within the Board of Trustees.
- Should a Trustee other than the Lead Mentor wish to work more closely on any initiative related to the Board, that Trustee can work with the Lead Mentor to determine next steps. This may include, but is not limited to, the following:
  - Should the Trustee where the student resides and/or the Trustee where the student attends school be interested in working directly with the Student Trustee on an initiative, either party may approach the Lead Mentor to help facilitate the process.

- Similarly, should committee chairs or the Student Trustee desire increased coordination/mentorship with each other to ensure success for all, they can work with the Lead Mentor to determine next steps.

## **8. Role of the Student Advisory Council**

The role of the Student Advisory Council will be informed by the initiative. This fall the Student Advisory Council is a key stakeholder group supporting the District-level election process. The interplay between the Student Advisory Council and the Student Trustee will be explored over the coming months.

## **9. The District Leadership and Governance Course**

The Student Trustee will be a member of this group and will use this cohort of youth as a source of student voice. Educational issues and certain reports from the work of the Board will be brought to this group as part of their course curriculum.

## **10. Role of the Trustee Mentor**

- Lead Mentor for the Student Trustee will be Board Chair Hoffman who will:
  - Provide to Caucus a minimum of two Information Reports, including such things as actions taken, lessons learned and highlights. This information will be taken into consideration at the end of the pilot to inform next steps.
  - Support the Student Trustee in preparation for Board meetings and other official Board events.
  - Be available to the Student Trustee to provide support, answer questions, etc.
  - Provide feedback or suggestion to the Student Trustee's monthly report at Board.
  - Assist the Student Trustee in networking and connecting within the community.

## **11. Administration Support**

- Communications will provide initial and ongoing training to the Student Trustee in the areas of media training and communication skills.
- The Administration will provide support or guidance, as appropriate, to ensure the Student Trustee is set up to successfully participate in various events or initiatives.
- The lead teacher from the District governance/leadership course will attend public Board meetings on a regular basis as a support to the Student Trustee.