

## **Strathcona Christian Academy**

### **School Council Agenda**

May 15, 2023 at 7:00pm in The Commons

Attendance: Amanda Meints, Kevin Winkel, Pauline Gurnett, Nadine Merz, Sheena Singleton, Melissa Wall, Kevin Semenjuk, Nate Peters, Andrea Timmermans, Nolan Goertzen

Meeting start: 7:00 pm

**1. Welcome/Call to Order** – Amanda Meints

**2. Opening Prayer** – Amanda Meints

**3. Approval of Agenda** – motion to approve, Pauline Gurnett, seconded by Sheena Singleton

**4. Approval of Minutes- March and April** – Nate motions to approve March minutes, seconded by Andrea. Pauline motions to approve April minutes seconded by Andrea.

**5. Missions Student Share** – Nolan Goertzen

- Missions Global/National was held for grade 10-12 students this year with all highschool classes together
- Studied the book of Mark together, looking at the life and mission of Jesus.
- Did some community service and missions retreats earlier in the year where they split into committees assigned to different tasks (cleaning, food, etc).
- Held a missions gala to fund their trip to Ontario
- went to Ontario, ran weekend and day camps where they helped supervise, did food prep, cleaned, etc throughout the week. It was a good experience, they worked hard and grew closer to God and to one another
- currently working on Toastmaster's certificate

**6. Trustee Report** – prepared by Cathy Allen, read by Amanda Meints

#### **THREE-YEAR ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY: FRENCH IMMERSION**

On April 13, 2023 the Board attended the third in-person public engagement session about the EIPS' French Immersion program. The Board is exploring ways to enhance French Immersion programming by increasing secondary-level retention, addressing anticipated enrolment pressures in Ardrossan and balancing enrolment at the elementary level. Trustees will review all the written feedback and survey data before making decisions.

#### **SCHOOL CLOSURE - ANDREW SCHOOL**

At a special board meeting on Thursday May 4, 2023, the EIPS Board of Trustees voted to close Andrew School, effective June 30, 2023. The school continues to experience declining enrollment (40 students registered for 2023-2024) and repairs to the fire suppression system and the replacement of the roof will cost in excess of \$3.5 million.

#### **2023-24 KEY BUDGET ASSUMPTIONS**

**General operations** – Focus areas include student learning, student and staff well-being, career pathways, the new curriculum, junior high intervention supports, program equity and Division infrastructure.

**Enrolment** – The Division expects student enrolment to increase by 23 students by fall 2023—to 17,483 students from 17,460 students in fall 2022.

**Funding Grants** – Alberta Education is introducing two new grants—the Teacher Settlement Grant and Class Complexity Grant. It will also continue offering the Student Well-Being Grant and Curriculum Implementation Grant. However, these amounts are still unknown and now require an application process. As well, the province made revisions to the Transportation Grant and System and Administration Grant.

**Other Revenue** – EIPS expects provincial funding to cover its lease agreements for Strathcona Christian Academy Elementary and Strathcona Christian Academy Secondary; the Mental Health Capacity Building Grant; and the Division’s Official Languages in Education Program. The Division will also generate revenue through school-generated funds and school fees. Unlike previous years, the spring budget won’t include funding for the Odyssey Language Program, as it’s unknown if the federal government will continue to support it, and the amount.

**Compensation** – EIPS anticipates the overall certificated standard costs to increase by 2.9% and standard classified costs to increase by 2.3% and 8.5%. The increases are the result of the new collective bargaining agreement and a hike in the employee benefits rate.

**Inflation** – EIPS anticipates non-salary inflationary increases—based on the overall consumer price index. These include higher costs for furnishings, equipment, careers and technology studies supplies, electricity, natural gas and custodial services.

**Carbon Tax** – EIPS anticipates increases in carbon tax costs based on the *2030 Emissions Reduction Plan*, a federal document outlining Canada’s plan to meet its 2030 emissions reduction target. Currently, EIPS pays a \$65 per tonne carbon tax. Annually, that will increase until it reaches the targeted \$170 per tonne, in 2030. As a result, it will continue to impact the Division’s budget, and in term, remove funds from the classroom.

**Reserves** – Alberta Education confirmed EIPS’ operating reserve limit for Aug. 31, 2024—3.2%, or \$6.56 million. The Division must ensure its operating reserves are within 3.2% of its operating expenses. Any reserve money more than that amount must be returned to Alberta Education in December 2025. Administration will ensure operating reserves are below that number.

**Expenses** – The Division anticipates overall capital items purchases to total approximately \$300,000 in 2023-24. Administration also developed a five-year capital projection that lists anticipated capital needs requiring funds into the Capital Reserve over time. The list ensures enough funds in future years.

## **BUDGET ALLOCATIONS AND RESERVES USE: 2023-24**

The Board approved the budget allocations and reserve use for the 2023-24 school year (see pg. 3, [“2023-24 Budget Allocations Including the Use of Reserves”](#)). Overall, EIPS will receive a 4.8%, or \$8.82 million, increase in funding from Alberta Education—\$6.6 million for specifically targeted grants and \$2.2 million for non-targeted grants. Despite the increase, it’s still a tight budget given rising inflation for utilities and employee benefits costs, rules for targeted grants and restrictions on accessing reserves. As such, the Division will develop a conservative spring budget that supports the mission, belief statements and priorities of EIPS.

## **FUNDING CHANGES HIGHLIGHTS: 2023-24**

Changes in funding include:

- a 6% base-funding increase—to offset the decrease in bridge funding
- a 10% increase to supports and services grants—for specialized learning support; Program Unit Funding; English as an additional language; refugee students; and First Nations, Métis and Inuit education—to offset the decrease in bridge funding.

- a 20% increase to the School Nutrition Grant
- a 5% increase to the Operations and Maintenance Grant
- a new Classroom Complexity Grant
- a new funding model for student transportation that expands rider eligibility and helps absorb rising inflationary costs; and
- the elimination of bridge funding.

#### SCHOOLS AND DEPARTMENTS: 2023-24

Allocations for schools will increase, by 1.6%, because of higher standard costs. Although, the exact allocations for each school will vary based on enrolment number changes, the weighted-moving-average funding formula and standard cost adjustments. And, for small rural schools, allocations will align with the funding levels detailed in the province's *Funding Manual for School Authorities 2023-24 School Year*. Similarly, allocations for central departments will also increase, by 2.3%. However, after factoring out the targeted student transportation funding, department allocations will end up decreasing, by 1.1%. The drop is primarily because of one-time spending projects planned in 2022-23—which were funded by reserves.

#### ACCUMULATED SURPLUS AND RESERVES

Overall, the Division projects an accumulated surplus of \$3.58 million, as of Aug. 31, 2024. The accumulated surplus comprises investment in tangible capital assets (\$7.66 million), operating reserves (\$4.67 million), capital reserves (\$840,000), and asset-retirement obligation (-\$9.6 million). As well, EIPS plans to access \$1.86 million from its operating reserves for schools and departments and \$1.17 million from the Division Allocated Reserve to support Division projects—for the most part, related to student learning, student and staff well-being, career pathways, the new curriculum, junior high intervention supports, program equity and Division infrastructure. Finally, EIPS projects the Division Unallocated Reserve to be \$3.45 million by Aug. 31, 2024, which is well within the operating reserve limit (see pg. 4, "Assumption Highlights: Reserves").

#### CAPITAL PURCHASES

The Board approved \$1.33 of capital purchases in 2023-24:

- \$814,000 for the Salisbury Composite High Stormwater Project; and
- \$220,000 for the building management system.

#### STUDENT TRANSPORTATION FEES: 2023-24

The Board approved Student Transportation fee schedule for the 2023-24 school year. Student Transportation offers an enhanced transportation fee structure. As such, all riders pay a fee for transportation services. It's an equitable structure for riders and allows EIPS to maintain its current level of service. Thanks to a new provincial funding model for student transportation, fees will decrease in 2023-24. Changes made to the funding model include expanding rider distance eligibility, including for riders attending a school or program of choice, and added funding to cover higher fuel and inflationary costs. Student Transportation will also continue to offer a payment-plan option—available to families with fees of \$300 and more—paid over seven months. The approved 2023-24 student fee schedule is available online at [Student Transportation Fees 2023-24](#).

Please contact me with questions or concerns.

Cathy Allen  
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## **7. COSC Report- Aileen Bozic**

### **SCA UPDATE**

The [Alberta School Councils' Association](#) (ASCA) is the provincial organization for families on school council. Below may be of interest to COSC members:

The [ASCA Resolutions Results](#) are available.

The [Board Election Results](#) are also available.

ASCA is offering [School Council Self Directed Learning Modules](#). The modules are self-paced and provide school councils a professional development opportunity that incorporates tasks and deadlines determined by your school council. Councils can choose from one of three methods of learning.

### **SCHOOL COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORTS: Due June 27**

School Council Annual Reports are due [June 27](#). In accordance with Alberta Education, councils must [complete and provide an annual report to their school board](#) summarizing their activities and detailing the receipt, handling and use of any money in the previous school year.

### **SCHOOL COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT GRANT SUMMARY**

COSC Chair Williams also spoke about the David Irvine presentation, which 12 school councils pooled their funds toward. The content of the presentation was informative and valuable for all those that attended.

### **DRAFT SPRING BUDGET 2023-24: Highlights**

EIPS Superintendent Mark Liguori discussed the draft spring Budget 2023-24. He highlighted revenue, reserves and allocations. He also detailed various grants and explained the effects of inflation on the budget in terms of utilities costs, Alberta School Employee Benefit Plan cost increases and the cost of operations. Though revenue has increased, the rise is not as substantial when considering the amount used for targeted funding and the remaining amount impacted by inflation, growth and other pressures.

### **EIPS THREE-YEAR ENGAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE**

EIPS Superintendent Liguori also provided an update on the progress of the Three-Year Engagement Plan. There are four projects included in the plan:

1. [Three-Year Strathcona County Engagement](#)
2. [Enrolment Pressure Engagement](#)
3. [LOGOS Program Review](#)
4. [Vegreville Value Scoping Session](#)

Q. Amanda: David Irvine presentation was poorly attended – only 29 people attended for all of the schools that pooled their money. Did parents get the information about the presentation, and if so, what prevented people from attending?

A. Sheena – I prefer in person presentations. I think Zoom is part of the problem. I would rather we did other things with the money than pool it, perhaps something more faith-based?

A. Pauline – I would like to see something targeted to our school, maybe do a survey to see what parents want?

A. Andrea – the elementary school used the money to purchase parenting books, was a good way to get parents talking to the council

A. Sheena – Perhaps a talk with Pastor Jordie or other presentations from RCMP, Saffron? We had the presentations during parent-teacher interviews that were really good but too short. Something like that?

A. Pauline – what are we doing for the new families in our school? Could we do a bigger open house with the money and maybe have a presentation at that?

Congratulations to Ryan Marshall on his new role as associate superintendent.

### **8. Admin Report - Kevin Winkel**

- a lot going on at the school, band is busy multiple times throughout the week, we have handball and badminton wrapping up, had a great track and field day
- turnover at the office, as Naomi is gone and Mr. Johnson has been acting VP
- budget for next year looks good, hoping to have almost all of the staff return next year. Naomi's job is being posted.
- enrollment for next year looks strong

FNMI – not a lot to report right now. Getting ready to book kits for next year.

### **9. SCA Society Report Business – Nate Peters**

Link to the slides can be found at: <https://scasociety.ca/about-us/>

### **10. New Business –**

#### School Council Year End Report and Financials (includes goals for next year)

What a wonderful and successful year our school council has had. We have achieved many of the goals we had set out to accomplish at the end of last year. Here are some of our highlights from the last 10 months are to align our school council with the school education plan.

To promote active parent and caregiver engagement and participation in the 2022-23 school year, SCS will expand communication strategies with families.

Meet the teacher night hosted along with the first school council meeting of the school year in an attempt to engage and welcome more school families to our school council meetings.

School council welcomed EIPS First Nation Metis and Inuit lead staff to host a Blanket Exercise shared with parents of the school. First Nation, Metis and Inuit Share implemented in all our meetings with Kevin Winkel at all School Council meetings to share with parents what learning and engaging opportunities the students have.

SCS SOARS Staff Recognition- we created an opportunity for families and the community to recognize the wonderful things the staff of SCA do to support the students, school and community.

Starting the discussion to adapt the school council mission statement to reflect the goals and priorities on the school council today.

Partnered with other schools in the EIPS district to bring David Irvine as a guest speaker utilizing the School Council Engagement Grant funds.

SCA School Cultural Day- To celebrate the different cultures in our school we hosted a family evening event where students created displays of the different cultures and families shared food samples of their culture. This event is still to take place and we are still looking for lots of parents and families help to make it successful.

As a school council chair I represented our school at the monthly COSC meetings and EIPS School Assurance review.

Some of our school council goals for next year will be:

Continue to support the school missions plans ( National and Local) To be an influential and impactful advocate for our school and community.

Inviting students from different programs in the school to share highlights from a student perspective

. Continue to adapt the school council mission statement to reflect the current school council goals.

To facilitate a parent discussion on internet safety and legal ramification from improper internet use.

Continue to foster a positive and collaborative environment

Continue to build regular communication with SCA Society with regular reports

To engage in conversation and deepen parent awareness around first nation Metis and Inuit culture and history with school FNMI lead

To continue to represent our school at monthly COSC meetings and to be our school parent voice in the district and provincial levels.

A brief financial overview for our school council SCA Secondary School Council Financial Statement For the year Sept 1, 2021 - Aug 31, 2022 Assets:

General Bank Account: \$385.73

Liabilities: ( cheques issued and not yet cleared through the account)

Income: \$0.00 Disbursements:

Bank Fees \$49.50

SCA Cultural Day \$336..23

Total Disbursements \$385.73 Total \$000.00

**ADDENDUM** Due to postponement of SCA Cultural day

General Bank Account \$385.73

Liabilities \$9.90 (bank fees)

Income \$0.00

Bank Fees \$49.50

Total \$326.23

This financial Statement was prepared and reviewed by: Aileen Bozic Name Council Chair  
Position Bank account was closed on: Still being completed

I want to take this time to thank Cathy Allen for her commitment to continuing to support our school council. Your support allows parents' voices to be heard not only on a district level but also on a provincial level. Not all school boards make the effort that EIPS does to engage with parents so we are very blessed to have a trustee joining our meeting. We appreciate the continuous information and knowledge you share with us and providing parents the opportunity to ask questions. We look forward to working with you in the fall.

Next year our school council will be looking for parents who would be willing to volunteer their time in the role of Vice Chair if you have any questions about these roles please reach out to me through our school council email and I will be happy to discuss each role.

Next year will be my last year in the role of school council chair so if this is a role that interests you please reach out and I would be happy to walk you through what this entails.

[scsschoolcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:scsschoolcouncil@gmail.com)

I am pleased to say that our work with SCA Society continues to grow. I want to thank Nate for continuing to be present to parents during our meetings this past year and being open to working with parents. Nate thank you for sharing with us your valuable time as I know your role is also a volunteer position. My goal as chair next year is to continue to working with our society representative.

To our school admins, thank you for being a part of our meetings. Thank you for all the different reports you have shared with us through out the year. It has been wonderful to work with all of you on different projects. Matt, Naomi and Kevin I want to say I was privileged to work along side you as school council chair. I thank you specifically for all your patience you have bestowed upon me this past year. You encountered endless emails and even more thoughts and ideas from me and you met each with such grace. This year I appreciated your constant communication with parents most of all. You have all been an excellent leaders.

Thank you to Andrea and Amanda That you for joining me and volunteering your time in the executive roles of our school council. You have been wonderful partners this past year.

Finally thank you to the parents who have showed up to all our meetings this last year. We have achieved great things on this school council with lots of ideas to work on next year. Have a great Summer

Aileen Bozic School Council Chair

Internet Safety in the School – tabled until September

Election of School Council Vice Chair – discussed, tabled until September

Q. Sheena – Is it possible to get a link to [SCA Soars](#) in the minutes?

Q. Kevin S – Where can you find the council minutes? Is it possible to make it easier to find them on the school website?

Minutes can be found at: <https://www.scasecondary.ca/about/school-council/school-council-minutes>

Q. Nadine – Can we talk about handicapped parking stalls being taken by staff and students and about enforcement of the school dress code?

A. Amanda - As there is no admin currently at this meeting, it's hard to discuss those things, but the concern will be recorded and we could possibly discuss it in September?

Q. Pauline - ***Is it possible for parents to have a chance to speak during the new business section of the agenda and to bring up topics during the meeting?*** The point of school council is to let parent's be informed, but also have a say in what is happening in the school. It would be nice if we had a designated time during the meeting to bring up what is on our hearts. Even if it was something more formal, where parents were given 2 minutes to say their piece and the admin a chance to respond? That way it won't consume the whole meeting.

A. Nadine – yes, that is why I came, so I could have a chance to ask these questions.

A. Sheena – yes, it seems so strange to me that we can't add to the agenda or discuss these things at the meeting, but have to write a formal letter to be heard. In all other council meetings I have been in, I have never had to do this.

## **11. Old Business -**

Update on School Council Mission Statement

Old mission statement:

To be an influential and impactful advocate for change in our church and school. We will achieve this through tangible support recognized by students, parents and staff.

Proposed new mission statement:

To create a space where parents and community members can work together to support and promote positive change for staff and students by collaborating together to enhance and enrich student learning with a Christ-centered education.

Vote on new mission statement tabled until September 2023.

## **12. Closing Prayer and Adjournment – Nate Peters**



**13. Next Meeting Date** – September 18, 2023