

Board Highlights

“Aspen View Public Schools is committed to preparing our students to achieve success and reach their unique potential through the provision of diverse learning opportunities.”



From the regular meeting held Thursday, October 26, 2023 at Smith School

Critical minimum enrolment

Aspen View Public Schools’ *Policy 15 - School & Program Viability* states that the Board of Trustees shall review school enrolments that have fallen below established critical minimum enrolment thresholds. Secretary-Treasurer Amber Oko advised the Board that three schools — Grassland, Rochester and Smith — are below the threshold for both the elementary and junior high levels; Vilna School is below the threshold at the elementary level only.

She also explained that while the weighted moving average used to determine provincial funding ensures stable funding for the 2023-24 school year, all four schools are at risk of falling below provincial thresholds for Rural Small Schools Grant funding in 2024-25; should all four schools fall below the threshold, the potential funding decrease to Aspen View could be over \$1.2 million.

Secretary-Treasurer Oko also noted that Vilna School’s enrolment has dropped significantly, in large part due to the discontinuation of busing for K-3 students from Saddle Lake Cree Nation. As students residing on First Nations are funded federally, rather than provincially, the decreased in enrolment will impact Aspen View’s funding in the 2023-24 school year.

The Board of Trustees passed a motion to revisit the viability of Rochester School, with administration directed to provide the necessary information. Rochester School was considered for closure in the 2021-22 school year.

Revised 2024-25 School Calendar

Superintendent Constantine Kastrinos presented a revised calendar for the 2024-25 school year, which the Board of Trustees voted unanimously to approve in principle.

The revised calendar removes three operational and three instructional days at the start of the school year, and moves a Professional Learning Day from September to April. Under the revised calendar, the first day of school for students moves from August 26 to August 29.

Superintendent Kastrinos noted that even with the reduced number of instructional days, Aspen View meets the required number of instructional days and minutes. He suggested that in subsequent years, adjustments to school schedules could be examined to determine if a first day of school after Labour Day could be considered.

The 2024-25 calendar will come back before the Board in December for final approval.

Volunteer drivers

During a review of *Administrative Procedure 491 - Volunteer Drivers*, Board of Trustees Chair Candy Nikipelo expressed concern that a requirement for first aid training would discourage volunteer drivers. Administration concurred that first aid be recommended, but not required, for volunteers driving private vehicles.

Student voice

The Board of Trustees unanimously passed a motion directing school principals to assist in inviting students to make presentations at locally-hosted Board meetings on topics pertinent from students’ perspective.

Other highlights

- The Board of Trustees unanimously approved first reading of amended *Policy 19 - School Fees*.

- The Board of Trustees voted unanimously to reschedule its December 14, 2023 meeting to December 7, 2023.

Next Board Meeting:

Thursday, November 23, 2023
10 a.m. - Division Office

Upcoming Events:

November 6-10, 2023
November Break
(No school)

November 14, 2023
Council of School Councils
5:30 p.m. H.A. Kostash School

December 4, 2023
Professional Learning Day
(No school for students)

Trustees:

Ward 1 (North West):
Brenda Fulmore
Ward 2 (North Central):
Anne Karczmarczyk
(Vice Chair)
Dennis MacNeil
Ward 3 (North East):
Candy Nikipelo (Chair)
Ward 4 (South West):
April Bauer
Ward 5 (South Central):
Elohne Chizawsky
Ward 6 (South East):
Donna Cherniwchan

Division Office:

3600 48 Ave.
Athabasca, AB T9S 1M8
Phone: 780-675-7080
<https://www.aspenview.org>
email: info@aspenview.org
Facebook: [@aspenviewschools](https://www.facebook.com/aspenviewschools)

“Aspen View Public Schools acknowledges Treaty 6 territory: the ancestral and traditional territory of the Cree, Dene, Blackfoot, Saulteaux, Nakota Sioux, as well as the Métis. We acknowledge the many First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples whose footsteps have marked these lands for generations. We recognize the land as an act of reconciliation and gratitude to those on whose territory we reside or are visiting.”