

I am really pleased to be able to share with you some thoughts regarding the Calgary Board of Education's work on sustainability.

The Calgary Board of Education is Calgary's public school system. We are also one of the largest landowners and employers in the city. We believe we have a responsibility to contribute to a sustainable future.

Our staff and students have demonstrated a significant commitment to the environment through education and energy management on both an individual school and system level for many years.

We are guided by the CBE's Sustainability Framework. This framework outlines our commitment to the environment and lays out objectives along with targets.

The Sustainability Framework is also aligned with the Board of Trustees Results. The Board has set clear direction for student success. Academic success; character, personal development and citizenship are the cornerstones for how we monitor the success of our students. Specifically, our citizenship policy states that "our students will be responsible stewards of the environment by contributing to its quality and sustainability".

The CBE has a small team of employees dedicated to guiding our system on sustainability research, education, and infrastructure initiatives. But I would say everyone at the CBE is part of the Sustainability team- our students, teachers, principals, trustees, our administrators and staff in HR, IT, Finance, Transportation. We all play a role in reducing our environmental footprint.

I would like to highlight a few ways we make a difference:

Students across our system are exploring the environment through living walls, Fresh Air Fridays, composting and recycling, Aquaponics, and naturalization projects. Students are our greatest ambassadors for our future. Getting students "hands dirty", so to speak, is a brilliant way to connect them to the living world around us. It helps+ inspire them to ask questions and have conversations about the environment, the future and some of the challenges ahead of us.

We are thankful for the collaboration with the province on many initiatives including retrofitting. We also appreciate the province's commitment to build new schools with a minimum of LEEDS Silver Certification.

The CBE has invested in solar panels for 19 of our schools. Our latest target review shows we are making positive steps in reaching our targets in recycling and waste reduction along with reductions in GHG emissions. WE are also making important steps to improve purchasing environmentally preferable products and services.

But of course there is so much more than can be done and that is why we are pleased to part of this discussion today.

The CBE and other school boards across this province, like my colleagues at Edmonton Public who are here today, face similar challenges. How do we support and invest in environmental initiatives which will transform our future and balance that, with the budget constraints we face today. We know that financial benefits and savings will be achieved through continued implementation of energy management projects, energy

retrofits, alternative energy installations and waste minimization and diversion strategies. But we also know that these initiatives require an investment of resources.

As I mentioned earlier, we have 19 schools with solar panels. Those solar panels were bought and installed using money fundraised by school councils and parents and supplemented by the CBE. This is a great initiative and we would like to see more solar panels at more schools. So how can we work together to make initiatives like this happen?

We are looking forward to ongoing communication and collaboration with the government and other school boards on sustainability initiatives. The CBE will continue to work on sustainability measures. We appreciate a strong partnership with the provincial government.

Also noteworthy:

At the fall General meeting of the Alberta School Board Association meeting in November, the CBE's Board of Trustees has asked for a policy discussion on sustainability. The Alberta School Board Association is made up of 61 school boards from across the province. If passed, this policy will give the association the mandate to advocate on the behalf of schools boards on sustainability issues. If this policy passes, it can become an important vehicle for school boards to continue the dialogue with the government on environmental sustainability issues.

If this policy passes, the Alberta School Board Association will be the first school board association in Canada to self-declare a sustainability policy. And that, in itself, is pretty exciting.

Our Board of Trustees is ready to show leadership and take on this challenge. Working together, we can achieve great things.

Thank you