

DATE: March 13, 2012
TO: Board of Trustees
FROM: Edgar Schmidt, Superintendent of Schools
SUBJECT: 2012 New School Openings (Response to Trustee Request #171)
ORIGINATOR: Brian Smith, Executive Director, Finance and Infrastructure
RESOURCE STAFF: Tim Boan, Leanne Fedor, Jack Geldart, Ann Parker, Lorne Parker, Jim Ray
REFERENCE: February 14, 2012 Board Meeting (Trustee Hoffman)

ISSUE

Trustee Hoffman has requested the following information:
Provide a brief report outlining some of the things we learned through the new school openings in September 2010 and how we are using this information to improve for our 2012 school openings.

BACKGROUND

The first six Alberta School Alternative Procurement (ASAP I) schools included A. Blair McPherson, Dr. Donald Massey, Elizabeth Finch, Esther Starkman, Florence Hallock and Johnny Bright schools. These schools opened in September 2010, accommodating Kindergarten to Grade 9.

Three new ASAP schools accommodating Kindergarten to Grade 9 are scheduled to open in September 2012. Bessie Nichols and Michael Strembitsky schools are new schools designed to accommodate students currently without a local school. The ASAP II Major General Griesbach School is a replacement school for the current Major General Griesbach School.

CURRENT SITUATION

The ASAP I school opening process involved a number of Edmonton Public decision units that worked collaboratively to plan for and support the unprecedented simultaneous opening of six schools. With the appointment of six principals in the spring of 2009, the preparations for the school openings required coordination with each principal, a number of central decision units as well as the private sector participants in the P3 venture.

Central Decision units that work together to support and coordinate new school openings include:

- Budget
- Communications
- District Technology
- Facilities
- Student Transportation
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Planning
- Purchasing

Three additional ASAP schools will open in September 2012. These include two new schools and one replacement school.

While the process of new school openings has remained relatively consistent, some refinements have been made:

1. Appointment of a single Assistant Superintendent as the project director, and assignment of the coordinating role to the Planning department. This refinement has resulted in a single point of contact for decision making and information sharing.
2. The purchasing of supplies, equipment and resources is occurring earlier in the process to ensure that these are received well in advance of school opening.
3. The six schools that opened in September 2010, had open boundaries for the first year of operation while limiting enrolment from students residing outside the attendance area with the application of Optimal Enrolment Limits. The two ASAP 2012 schools opening in developing neighbourhoods (Bessie Nichols and Michael Strembitsky) will open with closed boundaries accommodating Kindergarten to Grade 9. This decision was made as a direct result of the enrolment pressures currently being experienced at the schools that opened in September 2010.
4. Two modular classrooms each have already been requested from Alberta Education for Bessie Nichols and Michael Strembitsky schools in anticipation of the enrolment pressures predicted to occur within the first two years of opening.
5. Planning has ensured regular and ongoing communication with new school principals to provide support and assistance, coordinate resources and ensure timelines are being met for school opening processes.

KEY POINTS

- The school opening process is a collaborative process involving senior administration, school principals and many central decision units.
- The school opening process is directed through an Assistant Superintendent.
- Based on previous experience of the ASAP I school opening process, some refinements to the process have been made (as outlined above).

ATTACHMENTS & APPENDICES

N/A

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