

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

February 13, 2001

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Dossdall, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Response to Delegations from Central McDougall Community League and Immigrant Neighbourhoods Community Planning Association

ORIGINATOR: Shirley Stiles, Assistant to the Superintendent

RESOURCE

STAFF: Ed Butler, Betty Dean, Paul Gish, Sherry Holmes, Colin Inglis, June Klassen, Manfred Malzahn, Faye Parker, Nancy Peterson, Pat Semeniuk, Sandra Woitas

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the request of the delegation from the Central McDougall Community League to delay the formal consultation process related to the City Centre Education Project be denied.
2. That the request of Mr. Emil van der Poorten to consult the Queen Mary Park and Central McDougall Community Action Coalition and the Immigrant Neighbourhoods Community Planning Association about the City Centre Education Project be approved.

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At the public board meeting of January 30, 2001 two delegations addressed the board about the City Centre Education Project. A delegation from the Central McDougall Community League requested that the board delay the start of the formal consultation process related to the project. Mr. Emil van der Poorten, a resident of Central McDougall, representative of the Immigrant Neighbourhoods Community Planning Association and co-chair of the Queen Mary Park and Central McDougall Community Action Coalition, requested that the Coalition be consulted about the proposal.

The main points made by the Central McDougall Community League delegation were:

- The community was not involved in developing the principals' vision for education in the city centre, and it should be consulted before the board approves a formal consultation process.
- Proposed housing development on the Prince of Wales Armoury lands will generate a projected 200 new students, which would increase to 500 the number of students who

would be forced to leave the community to attend school if John A. McDougall School were closed.

- If either John A. McDougall School or Queen Mary Park School are to be closed, John A. McDougall should remain open because it is a larger building and is suitable for junior high programming.
- The League has plans for a park project that will benefit the school as well as the community.

The main points made by Mr. van der Poort were:

- The community needs more information about the City Centre Education Project and the possible closure of John A. McDougall School.
- The community should be consulted.
- The community consultation process should be sensitive to the unique needs of the community.
- The Queen Mary Park and Central McDougall Community Action Coalition wishes to be among those offered the opportunity to participate in any consultation process.

The administration's response is as follows:

1. The City Centre Education Project, as put forward by principals of the city centre schools, is a work in progress. Input from school staff, parents and the community will be needed as the planning continues. Because extensive consultation would be part of the school closure process, the administration does not believe it is necessary to delay the beginning of that process.
2. If the board approves recommendation number 1 in the January 30, 2001 board report headed City Centre Education Project – School Closure Process:
 - Information about this matter will be widely distributed. The main vehicle will be the written communication that would be sent to the parents of every student potentially affected by a school closure, as required by the provincial regulation on school closure. The same information would be made available to other stakeholders.
 - The administration would undertake broad-based consultation with opportunities for parents, community members and organizations to participate. Special provisions will be made for parents in situations where language is a barrier.
 - The Queen Mary Park and Central McDougall Community Action Coalition would be invited to participate, as would the Central McDougall Community League.
 - A public meeting attended by trustees will be held at each of the schools being considered for closure.
 - The possible closure of John A. McDougall School would be considered in the same manner as any other. That is, multiple factors will be considered when the administration makes its recommendation, with the educational needs of our students

being the most important one. School building size, space utilization and enrolment alone have not determined which schools ought to be considered for closure.

- 3) The number of students projected to live in the proposed Prince of Wales Armoury development would be a consideration in any possible school closure. It is projected that 34 new students would attend John A. McDougall School if the development proceeds.

Edmonton Public Schools, the City of Edmonton Planning and Development Department and the development industry use common factors to predict how many students will live in a new housing development. These generation factors are different for various types of housing. For single detached units the average number from each unit is about 0.51 elementary and 0.20 junior high students. For semi-detached units the average numbers are 0.49 elementary and 0.17 junior high students per dwelling unit.

The student generation figures for the proposed development would be:

Single detached	18 units
Average number of elementary students	$18 \times 0.51 = 9$
Average number of junior high	$18 \times 0.20 = 4$
Semi detached	136 units
Average number of elementary students	$136 \times 0.49 = 67$
Average number of junior high students	$136 \times 0.17 = 23$

Therefore, there will be approximately 76 elementary and 27 junior high students in this development. In the neighbourhood an average of 69 per cent of these children will attend the public school system. This means that Edmonton Public Schools must be able to accommodate about 52 additional elementary students (69 per cent of 76) and 19 additional junior high students (69 per cent of 27) from this development. Existing attendance patterns indicate that 48 per cent of these students would attend John A. McDougall School, while the others attend programs of need or choice, or schools of choice, elsewhere in the district. Therefore the number of new students attending John A. McDougall School from the development is projected to be 25 in elementary (48 per cent of 52) and 9 in junior high (48 per cent of 19), for a total of 34.

The delegations will receive a written response after the board considers the recommendations in this report.

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