

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

February 26, 2002

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: A. McBeath, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Responses to Trustee Requests for Information

ORIGINATORS: M. de Man, Department Head
G. Reynolds, Department Head
D. Barrett, Assistant to the Superintendent

RESOURCE

STAFF: Caroline Baker, Gloria Chalmers, Bob Clark, Zoe Cooper, Andrea
Furness, Bob Holt, Dean Power, Anne Sherwood

INFORMATION

TRUSTEE REQUEST #63, JANUARY 29, 2002 (TRUSTEE MARTIN): PROVIDE INFORMATION AS TO WHETHER THE TRANSFERS BETWEEN SCHOOLS INVOLVE HIGH NEEDS SCHOOLS. Enrolment in high needs schools make up 13.4% of the September 30, 2001 district population. During the months of October and November 2001, 19.7% of transfers between schools involved students in high needs schools. (C. Baker, 429-8280)

TRUSTEE REQUEST #64, JANUARY 29, 2002 (TRUSTEE MARTIN): PROVIDE INFORMATION REGARDING WHERE NEW REGISTRATIONS ARE COMING FROM. There were 764 new registrations for the months of October and November 2001. The breakdown of where the new registrations come from is as follows:

Kindergarten and pre-kindergarten	27.7%
From a school within Alberta	29.8%
From a school outside of Alberta, but within Canada	16.7%
Outside of Canada	8.9%
Unknown	16.9%

(C. Baker, 429-8280)

TRUSTEE REQUEST #65, JANUARY 29, 2002 (TRUSTEE BONKO) PROVIDE INFORMATION WITH RESPECT TO THE STATUS OF DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CITY OF EDMONTON REGARDING UNUSED SCHOOL SITES THAT ARE NOT NEEDED FOR SCHOOLS IN THE NEAR FUTURE AND THE PROCESS FOR INVOLVING THE COMMUNITY IN DEALING WITH THESE SITES. Edmonton Public Schools is committed to working with the City to address issues and develop a plan relating to the current inventory of sites where a school has not been built.

The district is represented on the Future School Sites Working Committee that was initiated by City Council to examine ways to make the most efficient use of existing school sites. The study will also include options for the provision of school sites for communities of the future and identify options or make recommendations for future policies. More information regarding the Future School Sites Committee will be provided in an interim report that will be brought to Board in the near future.

The administration has undertaken to review the current inventory of sites reserved for future schools. The review will develop criteria to determine which sites could be declared surplus to district needs. The administration will inform the affected community leagues of plans to declare the sites surplus and they will have an opportunity for input through the City's process outlined below. A recommendation will then be made to the Board of Trustees regarding potential surplus sites in late spring.

The community also plays a key role after the sites have been declared surplus by the board. The City of Edmonton has the following guidelines for the disposition of surplus school sites:

- The City of Edmonton Community Services Department will conduct a review to determine if there is a need to retain the site for municipal park use.
- If the site is not required for parks the City will determine if there is another city department or agency that requires the site.
- If the site is not required the community is informed and input is solicited from residents with respect to future land use, location and configuration.
- If the neighbourhood residents do not require the site a resolution to remove the Municipal Reserve designation is sent to City Council, which involves a public hearing.
- Once the Municipal Reserve has been removed the site can be rezoned, again involving a public process, and sold.

Edmonton Public Schools will be available during all the City's public consultation with neighbourhood residents to answer questions about the district's decision not to proceed with construction of the school. (A.Furness 429-8544)

TRUSTEE REQUEST #66, JANUARY 29, 2002 (TRUSTEE ODYNSKI) PROVIDE A LIST OF THE PROVINCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE AUDIT SCORES OF THE DISTRICT SCHOOLS ORGANIZED ALPHABETICALLY BY WARD. Alberta Infrastructure has conducted an audit of all provincial schools. The audit provided the government with a snapshot of the general physical condition of the buildings. Selected components of the buildings were rated on their condition on a scale of one to five with number one being the most in need of attention. The raw scores of the audits were tabulated for each building in the district. The government rates schools from 0 - 400 as in good condition, from 401 - 800 as in fair condition, and over 801 as in poor condition. A list, by electoral ward is provided in Appendix I). (B. Clark 429-8511)

TRUSTEE REQUEST #67, JANUARY 29, 2002 (TRUSTEE MARTIN) IS THE DISTRICT AWARE OF THE WORK OF DR. ALFRED TOMATIS IN DEALING WITH SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS, ESPECIALLY AUTISTIC CHILDREN, AND IS IT OF VALUE TO THE DISTRICT: The Tomatis Method, otherwise known as Auditory Integration Therapy, grew out of the work of Dr. Alfred Tomatis, a French physician, who approximately 50 years ago, studied the connection between the voice, the

ear, and the brain. He defined listening as an active, voluntary and complex process distinct from hearing and developed a series of techniques and technologies to educate and strengthen listening abilities. There are a number of centres that use the approach for a diverse set of problems (e.g., attention difficulties, learning difficulties, sensory integration and developmental disorders, communication and social interaction challenges, emotional disquiet and neurological problems) and for self-development (e.g., to learn foreign languages, expand listening and communication strategies and develop voice control). Some centres use the Tomatis Method in conjunction with other approaches such as sensory-motor and psycho-motor strategies. However, although auditory integration therapy has been used for more than a decade, it remains a controversial procedure. There are supporters and detractors. There does not appear to be reliable, objective outcome measures available resulting in lack of clarity on the general benefits of the approach or the benefits for particular problems.

Generally, knowledge of the broad range of interventions, both clinical and educational, is of benefit to the practitioners and the district. Thus, it is of interest to the district to know about the Tomatis Method. However, as the district is not a clinical centre, serves students with a broad range of needs, partners with parents who have various intervention preferences, the staff has found that a transdisciplinary approach focused on the student as learner is effective. The focus is the student rather than any particular intervention, particularly interventions that are controversial.

With specific reference to auditory processing/integration, decisions regarding intervention are made after psycho-educational, speech and language and audiology assessments are completed. A thorough understanding of a student's level of functioning in each of these areas is required in order to target the intervention goals that will best meet the needs of the student. This transdisciplinary assessment and intervention model integrates researched approaches and student needs, including auditory processing/integration needs, to best serve students with special needs, including children with autism. (G. Chalmers, 429-8398)

TRUSTEE REQUEST #79, FEBRUARY 12, 2002 (TRUSTEE NICHOLSON): PROVIDE A COPY OF THE REPORT "PROPOSED SUBMISSION TO THE ALBERTA CHILD WELFARE ACT REVIEW" TO STAFF AND/OR PLACE IT ON THE DISTRICT WEBSITE: The district submission to the review of the *Child Welfare Act* approved by board at the February 12 meeting is posted on the "What's Up" page of the district website (<http://www.epsb.ca/>). This posting ensures that it is immediately accessible. We will bring attention to the submission through an item in the Superintendent's Memo. It is also on the InfoZone site under each staff group's "What's New" section (<http://intranet.epsb.ca/>). It will be kept online for the next two to three months. (G. Chalmers, 429-8398; Z. Cooper, 429-8461)

TRUSTEE REQUEST #80, FEBRUARY 12, 2002 (STEVE BRODIE): WILL THE BOARD SEND CONDOLENCES TO THE ROYAL FAMILY ON THE DEATH OF PRINCESS MARGARET? Attached is a copy of the letter sent to Her Majesty, The Queen from the board chairman (Appendix II). (D. Barrett, 429-8035)

TRUSTEE REQUEST #81, FEBRUARY 12, 2002, (STEVE BRODIE): WILL CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN TO NAMING A SCHOOL AFTER PRINCESS

MARGARET?: With respect to the naming of schools, preference is given to the names of persons who have made a valuable contribution to education and to the names of neighbourhoods. However, the board reserves to itself the authority to name schools.

A record of names that have been suggested to the board is kept on file and is referred to when the board needs to make a decision with respect to the name of a new school. The chairman has requested that Princess Margaret's name be added to the record of suggested school names for future consideration. (A. Sherwood, 429-8020)

REQUEST #82, FEBRUARY 12, 2002, (MS. PAT KIRKLAND) WHAT WOULD BE THE REQUIRED MILL RATE INCREASE (IN \$'S PER HOUSEHOLD IF POSSIBLE) THAT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE THE BLACK GOLD SETTLEMENT? Approximately \$170 million is raised in Edmonton that goes into the Alberta school foundation fund (ASFF) that does not go to the separate school boards in Alberta. Based upon this, a 1% increase in the mill rate in Edmonton should raise approximately \$1.7 million in education property taxes.

For example, if the shortfall to fund teacher salary increases is \$10 million, a mill rate increase of 5.9% would be needed; \$20 million would be an 11.8% increase.

The average residential house in Edmonton has an assessed value of \$130,000. The mill rate in 2001 was 4.9699 mills. Currently this average house would pay \$646 education property taxes in a year. Each 1% increase in the education mill rate would mean an extra \$6.46 more per year in property taxes. A 5.9% increase would mean \$38.11 more per year; 11.8% could mean \$76.23 more per year. (D. Power, 429-8141)

TRUSTEE REQUEST #83, FEBRUARY 12, 2002 (TRUSTEE HANSON): WHAT WOULD THE IMPACT BE ON THE 2002-2003 BUDGET OF THE RUMOURED 40 PER CENT INCREASE IN ALBERTA HEALTH CARE PREMIUMS FOR DISTRICT STAFF?: In response to Trustee Hanson's request, the following information is provided:

	Impact of Proposed Increase of Alberta Health Care Premiums on the District and on Employees:			
	April 1 to Aug. 30, 2002		Sept. 1/02 to Aug. 31/03	
Impact on Teaching and Exempt Staff	20% Increase \$259,400	40% Increase \$518,709	20% Increase \$622,600	40% Increase \$1,245,000
Impact on Support, Custodial and Maintenance Staff	\$105,916	\$211,791	\$254,200	\$508,300

For teaching and exempt staff, the total impact of the change is on the board, as the district pays 100% of the premium.

For Support, Custodial and Maintenance staff, the contractual commitment is to a dollar amount. (B. Holt 429-8070)

MdM/DB/GR:hc

APPENDIX I – Provincial Infrastructure Audit Scores of the District Schools

APPENDIX II – Letter sent to Her Majesty, The Queen