

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

January 11, 2005

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: A. McBeath, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Responses to Trustee Requests for Information

ORIGINATOR: B. Holt, Executive Director, Instructional and Curricular Support Services
R. MacNeil, Assistant to the Superintendent

RESOURCE

STAFF: Carolyn Baker, Gloria Chalmers, Bruce Cline, Mike Falk,
Dennis Huculak, Sherry Matter, Stuart Wachowicz

INFORMATION

TRUSTEE REQUEST #7 NOVEMBER 2, 2004 (TRUSTEE COLBURN) PROVIDE INFORMATION REGARDING WHAT THE DISTRICT IS DOING WITH THE REQUEST TO IMPLEMENTING THE NEW PHYSICAL ACTIVITY REQUIREMENT: The actual details of the proposed provincial requirement for Daily Physical Activity (DPA) have not yet been prepared or distributed to school districts by Alberta Education. Some discussion papers have been published by Alberta Education which restate many of the concerns raised by districts across the province with regard to this proposal, but no statement of provincial policy or regulations have been presented to provide details of the initiative. In addition, some responses by Alberta Education personnel to questions on the matter have been contradictory. It should be noted that at this time Alberta Education has withdrawn references to the high school component of the DPA plan, given timetabling, scheduling and funding issues brought forward by most boards in the province.

Although Alberta Education has not provided guidelines for the implementation of Daily Physical Activity initiative, the district recognizes the importance of physical education and recent district initiatives related to student health. The district is encouraging all elementary and junior high schools to offer 95 hours/year (150 minutes/week) of quality physical education, taught by a knowledgeable instructor. Sample timetables have been distributed to elementary and junior high schools, modeling several ways in which schools can allow for 150 minutes per week of physical education, as well as still provide the 150 minutes per week of second language and also allow for 150 minutes per week of Fine Arts programming. Other districts such as; Calgary Board of Education and Edmonton Catholic Schools, are also recommending the instructional time for Physical Education/Health be 95 hours per year.

In an effort to collectively convey apprehensions about the DPA initiative, the Superintendents of the eleven districts in the Capital Region, forwarded a letter outlining concerns and providing a set of recommendations to the acting Deputy Minister, as to how the intent of the initiative may be realized without negatively impacting school programming. A copy of the letter is appended to this report (Attachment I). No response has been received to date.

Once Alberta Education provides districts the final details of the DPA initiative, we will work with schools to assist them in delivering what is mandated by the province. (Stuart Wachowicz, 429-8186)

TRUSTEE REQUEST #8, NOVEMBER 2, 2004 (TRUSTEE COLBURN) REQUESTED THAT INFORMATION BE PROVIDED REGARDING WHAT QUESTIONS OR ISSUES WOULD NEED TO BE ADDRESSED IF THE BOARD WERE TO CONSIDER A NO-JUNK FOOD POLICY IN SCHOOLS. The following issues would need to be addressed if the board were to consider a no-junk food policy in schools:

- Obligations related to current contracts with vendors
- Provision of a definition regarding what is or is not junk food as there is lack of clarity or unanimity on this topic
- Degree of community support for such a policy
- Likelihood of students leaving school premises to access food elsewhere and the impact and reaction of the community should this occur
- Question of our authority to stipulate what students can bring for lunch and means of monitoring student lunches
- Discipline implications of students who leave school premises during lunch hour and who violate policy
- Impact on special events such as birthday treats at elementary, basketball tournaments, cultural celebrations and so forth
- Impact on school generated funds and on sponsorships (e.g., uniforms, scoreboards) (Gloria Chalmers, 429-8398; Dennis Huculak, 429-8394)

TRUSTEE REQUEST #13, NOVEMBER 30, 2004, (TRUSTEE COLBURN) PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION RELATED TO THE RECENT DISTRICT MEDIA RELEASE REGARDING CLASS SIZE:

- a) **Do the figures include or exclude special needs classes?**
- b) **If special needs classes are excluded from the calculation, what would the class size averages be?**
- c) **Are principals and/or other administrative staff included in these calculations?**
- d) **How many classes in each grade continue to have more than 30 students, more than 35 students, more than 40 students? What subjects are these high class sizes associated with.**
- e) **How do these class size averages compare to class size averages for 2002-2003 if you exclude classes with 50% or greater special needs students?**

RESPONSE

- a) The class size averages reflect all classes in session as of September 30, 2004, including all classes with special needs students.
- b) The following table compares the average class sizes by division for 2004-05 when all classes are included and when all classes with 50% or more special needs students are excluded.

2004-05 Class Size Averages

	K-3	4-6	7-9	10-12
All Classes	19.2	21.6	23.4	25.0
Non- Special Needs Classes	19.7	23.3	24.7	26.1

- c) The class size figures represent the actual averages of the classes in session as of September 30, 2004 in each division. Any time that is designated as administrative or non-teaching is not included in these calculations.
- d) The following tables show the number of classes by division and subject area that have enrolments of over 30 students and the percentage that these classes comprise of the total classes as of September 30, 2004. Note that prior to final confirmation by Alberta Education, a total of 24,695 classes were reported in session as of September 30, 2004. Of these classes, 7772 were classified as grade range K-3, 6883 as grade range 4-6, 6400 as grade range 7-9 and 3640 as grade range 10-12.

Classes with enrolments of 31 to 35 students by division and subject.

Subject	Class Size Range	K-3	4-6	7-9	10-12
Language Arts	31 to 35		10	71	119
Mathematics	31 to 35	1	10	68	114
Science	31 to 35	4	11	73	151
Social Studies	31 to 35	5	9	72	113
Health	31 to 35	3	12	44	
Physical Education	31 to 35	3	14	109	64
CALM	31 to 35				26
Art	31 to 35	2	12	22	7
Music	31 to 35	4	13	22	5
Drama	31 to 35	1		18	8
Second Languages	31 to 35		5	29	19
Outdoor Education	31 to 35			2	
Social Science	31 to 35			1	8
CTS	31 to 35		1	29	18
Locally Developed	31 to 35			9	19
Other	31 to 35				1
Total 31 to 35		23	97	569	672
% of Total Classes		0.3	1.4	8.9	18.5

Classes with enrolments of 36 to 40 students by division and subject.

Subject	Class Size	K-3	4-6	7-9	10-12
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	Range				
Language Arts	36 to 40			1	12
Mathematics	36 to 40				12
Science	36 to 40		2	1	12
Social Studies	36 to 40				7
Health	36 to 40		1		
Physical Education	36 to 40		1	12	5
CALM	36 to 40				2
Art	36 to 40		1		1
Music	36 to 40		2	4	7
Drama	36 to 40			1	3
Second Languages	36 to 40		1	1	1
Social Science	36 to 40				1
CTS	36 to 40			3	4
Locally Developed	36 to 40				3
Total 36 to 40		0	8	23	70
% of Total Classes		0.0	0.1	0.4	1.9

Classes with enrolments of over 40 students by division and subject.

	Class Size Range				
Subject		K-3	4-6	7-9	10-12
Language Arts	Over 40				3
Mathematics	Over 40				7
Science	Over 40				8
Social Studies	Over 40				4
Physical Education	Over 40				1
Music	Over 40			4	5
CTS	Over 40				1
Locally Developed	Over 40				2
Total Over 40		0	0	4	31
% of Total Classes		0.0	0.0	0.1	0.9

- e) The following tables provide a comparison of the core class sizes over the last three years for all classes and for classes that have less than 50% special needs enrolment. Only core class sizes were collected for the 2002-03 and 2003-04 school years.

Core Class Size Averages				
All Core Classes	K-3	4-6	7-9	10-12
2002 – 2003	20.1	21.7	24.4	26.8
2003 – 2004	21.3	23.0	25.8	28.5
2004 – 2005	19.0	21.3	24.5	26.8

Core Class Size Averages				
Non-Special Needs Core Classes	K-3	4-6	7-9	10-12
2002 – 2003	20.6	23.8	26.3	27.1
2003 – 2004	21.6	25.0	28.1	29.0
2004 – 2005	19.5	23.1	26.2	27.4

(Mike Falk, 429-8437)

Attachment I – Letter to Lois Hawkins

BH:hc