EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

March 8, 2005	
TO:	Board of Trustees
FROM:	A. McBeath, Superintendent of Schools
SUBJECT:	Conduct and Outcomes of Forest Heights, Fulton Place, Hardisty, Strathearn and Terrace Heights Schools' Cluster Study
ORIGINATOR:	C. McCabe, Assistant to the Superintendent
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INFORMATION

Background

On December 14, 2004, the board approved a recommendation that groups of schools in areas of the city with low enrolment be examined for the purpose of addressing improved educational opportunities for students. One area studied included the cluster of Forest Heights, Fulton Place, Hardisty, Strathearn and Terrace Heights Schools'.

Educational Benefits for Students

By working together with school communities, increased educational opportunities for all students is an expected outcome of the studies. Small schools can be of benefit to students because of the family-like environment created. This environment can be created in a larger school. When schools become very small, significant disadvantages arise.

The following are educational benefits for students that will be realized if recommendations in the subsequent board report are approved.

- In larger schools with more than one class per grade, students can be placed with the most appropriate teacher to match each student's learning needs. There is typically only one teacher per grade in small schools, thus allowing little opportunity for schools to match teaching style to learning style of students. Very small schools, or programs with low enrolment, provide little flexibility for grade groupings, often necessitating double or triple-combined grades.
- The financial supports for inclusion of students with special needs are far greater in a larger school than they are in very small schools. As well, specialized teaching for students with special needs may be more difficult to provide in a very small school.
- Students attending schools with increased enrolment and more resources are able to experience diverse programming options that very small schools are unable to offer. As enrolment declines, the demands on staff to teach outside their area of expertise increase. The wider availability of specialist teachers, for example, for fine and performing arts,

physical education, second languages and special education is less likely in a very small school. School librarians and computer specialists, as well as the available resources for libraries and computer rooms are far greater in a larger school.

- At the junior high level, the range of teacher specialization is much more limited in a small school. For example, teachers may be required to teach beyond their specialty areas of expertise. The range of junior high option courses is limited as are opportunities for the organization of junior high clubs, teams and activities.
- Very small schools have limited funds to purchase resource, materials for new curriculums, library book upgrades, physical education equipment, mathematics and science manipulative materials and technology upgrades.
- Studies have shown that student learning is enhanced in school facilities that are up to date and provide optimal classroom environments for student learning ¹. In larger schools, students have better access to specialized equipment, materials, and facilities for option courses, such as: Music, Instrumental Band, Food and Fashion Studies, Design and Technology and Computer Studies.

Curricular	Co-curricular and Extra-	Special	Student Services
	Curricular	Education	
• French as a Second	 Math Competitions and 	 Behaviour 	 Counseling
Language	Science Fairs	Assistance	Services
• Second Languages (e.g.	 Field Trips 	 Resource 	Daily Noon Hour
Mandarin, Ukrainian,	• Cultural, Speech,	Room	Teacher
German, Spanish)	Computer, Table Tennis,	 Reading 	Tutorials/Special
Computer Assisted	Travel, Cycling and Ski	Recovery	Help
Instruction	Clubs		 Snack Shack
Career and Technology	 Heritage Fair 		School Resource
Studies (Construction and	 Jazz and Concert Bands 		Officer
Technology, Foods and	Band Camps		 Peer Support
Fashion Studies,	Cheerleading		Programs
Environmental and Outdoor	 Intramurals 		• Electronic
Education, Information	 Athletics (Track & Field, 		Homework
Processing, Visual	Soccer, Volleyball,		Hotline
Communications,	Basketball, Slow Pitch,		
Leadership)	Journal Games, Cross		
• Fine Arts (Band, Art and	Country Running,		
Drama)	Downhill Skiing, Snow		
• Computers	Boarding, Rock		
Academic Challenge	Climbing, Archery, Bike		
English as a Second	Trips)		
Language (ESL)	Theatre Sports		
-	School Dances		
	School Council		
	• Yearbook		

Examples of Junior High Programming Available in Schools with Higher Enrolments (i.e. 400 – 600 regular program students)

¹ Lewis, Dr. Morgan, <u>Where Children Learn: Facility Conditions and Student Test Performance in</u> <u>Milwaukee Public Schools</u>, *CEFPI Issuetrak*, December 2000.

Curricular	Co-curricular and	Special Education	Student Services
Curricular	Extra-Curricular	Special Education	Student Services
 French as a Second Language (FSL) Second Languages (e.g. Mandarin, Ukrainian, German) Computer Assisted Instruction Fine Arts (Music, Art and Drama) Computers Academic Challenge Balanced Literacy English as a Second Language (ESL) 	 Math Competitions and Science Fairs Field Trips Computer, Table Tennis Clubs Heritage Fair Choir, Hand Bells Intramurals Athletics (Track & Field, Soccer, Journal Games, Cross Country Running) Theatre Sports Family Dances Student Council Newspaper Safety Patrols Student Announcers Conflict Management Teams 	 Behaviour Assistance Resource Room Reading Recovery 	 Counseling Services Daily Noon Hour Tutorials/Special Help Lunch Program Peer Support Programs Teacher Librarian

Examples of Elementary Programming Available in Schools with Higher Enrolments (i.e. more than 350 regular program students)

Study Results

With the goal of improving programming opportunities and learning environments for students, it was anticipated that the study would result in recommendations to the board for the consideration of one or more of the following:

- the relocation or consolidation of programs;
- the upgrading and preservation of existing space;
- the closure of schools;
- the demolition or decommissioning of space; and
- an alternative arising from the community consultation process.

Appendix I describes the completed consultation process and timeline for the studies. A consolidated record of parent, staff and community input can be found on the district website at http://planning/epsb.ca.

Preliminary and Refined Options

In each cluster, a number of preliminary options were presented for discussion purposes at the special combined school council meetings, the individual school council meetings and the combined staff meetings. Capacity, enrolment, and utilization rates were presented (Appendix II). Participants identified issues for consideration regarding each option, and provided advice relative to the issue. Participants also identified additional options.

Summary of Feedback Regarding Preliminary Options

- displace as few students as possible with closures
- retain local student accommodation
- classes would be too large and buildings over-crowded if local junior highs close
- retain the German Bilingual and Logos Christian programs in the study area
- re-consolidate the K-6 Logos Christian Program into one facility
- greater preference for K-6 and 7-9 rather than K-9
- retain the existing staff with the programs and the students
- preserve pre-school and out-of-school care
- maintain the city's minimum standards for parkland and green-space
- retain school buildings that are in the best condition
- closure of schools would render communities less attractive to families with children

Summary of Feedback Regarding Refined Options A, B and C

Refined options were presented at the parent and community consultation meeting on February 17, 2005 (Appendix III). These options were refined based on feedback received at the previous sets of consultation meetings. At this time, participants evaluated the advantages and disadvantages of each refined option, and indicated which refined option(s) they might be able to support.

Refined Option A – <u>Retain Forest Heights as a K-6 receiving Terrace Heights, Close</u> <u>Terrace Heights, Retain Fulton Place as a K-6, Close Hardisty</u> <u>School, and Close Junior High Program at Strathearn School</u>

Advantages:

Parents, staff and community members identified the following advantages of Refined Option A:

- maintenance or enhancement of viability of regular and alternative programs at Forest Heights and Fulton Place
- maintenance of an existing relationship between the Fulton Place and Terrace Heights communities
- enhancement of programming opportunities resulting from larger enrolments
- re-establishment of K-6 Logos Christian programming at Fulton Place
- maintenance of existing K-6 and 7-9 separation
- retention of the best distribution of elementary schools
- junior high students are more mobile than elementary students, therefore the impact of relocation on junior high students is less
- maintenance of existing child care at Forest Heights and Fulton Place

Disadvantages:

The primary disadvantages of Refined Option A were:

- no enhancement of viability of the elementary program at Strathearn
- Hardisty School community fractured by the relocation of programs to more than one school

- existing capacity at Ottewell and Kenilworth is inadequate
- negative impact on students' access to recreational amenities close to Hardisty School
- loss of capital investment at Terrace Heights
- loss of existing relationship between special education programs at Hardisty and McNally schools
- relocation of 7-9 Logos Christian program to Mill Woods results in a negative impact on access for families residing in the south central sector
- retention of elementary space is greater than what is required to meet long term accommodation needs

Refined Option B – <u>Retain Forest Heights as a K-6 receiving Terrace Heights, Close</u> <u>Terrace Heights, Retain Fulton Place as a K-6, Close Hardisty</u> <u>School, and Close Strathearn School</u>

Advantages:

Parents, staff and community members identified the following advantages of Refined Option B:

- maintenance or enhancement of viability of regular and alternative programs at Forest Heights and Fulton Place
- maintenance of an existing relationship between the Fulton Place and Terrace Heights communities
- enhancement of programming opportunities resulting from larger enrolments
- re-establishment of K-6 Logos Christian programming at Fulton Place
- maintenance of existing K-6 and 7-9 separation
- retention of the best distribution of elementary schools
- junior high students are more mobile than elementary students, therefore the impact of relocation on junior high students is less
- maintenance of existing child care at Forest Heights and Fulton Place

Disadvantages:

The primary disadvantages of Refined Option B were:

- Hardisty School community fractured by the relocation of programs to more than one school
- existing capacity at Ottewell and Kenilworth is inadequate
- negative impact on students' access to recreational amenities close to Hardisty School
- loss of capital investment at Terrace Heights
- loss of a building in relatively good condition (Strathearn)
- loss of existing relationship between special education programs at Hardisty and McNally schools
- relocation of 7-9 Logos Christian program to Mill Woods results in a negative impact on access for families residing in the south central sector
- loss of existing child care at Strathearn

Refined Option C – <u>Retain Forest Heights as a K-6 receiving Terrace Heights, Close</u> <u>Terrace Heights School, Establish a K-9 at Hardisty School</u>

<u>Receiving Fulton Place, Close Fulton Place, Retain Strathearn as</u> <u>a K-9</u>

Advantages:

Parents, staff and community members identified the following advantages of Refined Option C:

- retention of junior high programming in the cluster
- retention of elementary and junior high accommodation within Fulton Place neighbourhood
- consolidation of the Logos Christian Program in one K-9 site
- relocation of the fewest number of students
- retention of students' access to recreational amenities close to Hardisty School
- minimize negative impact on students' access, and the number of students requiring transportation
- maintenance of junior high regular, alternative and special needs programs
- enhancement of support for educational operations at Hardisty School resulting from larger enrolment
- minimize number of school closures to two

Disadvantages:

The primary disadvantages of Refined Option C were:

- combined K-9 sites are not acceptable to some parents
- relocation of a large number of elementary students
- closure of schools in better condition
- potential negative impact on the existing child care at Fulton Place
- traffic and pedestrian safety relative to the proximity of Hardisty School to 106 Avenue traffic
- capital expenditure required to modernize Hardisty, and add elementary components
- reduction in the number of elementary site choices in the cluster area
- long-term viability of Strathearn School is not resolved

Summary of Indications of Parent and Community Support

At the Parent and Community Consultation Meeting held on February 17, 2005, the 482 participants were asked to indicate option(s) that they could support. A total of 240 response sheets were received: 27 from community members, 48 from Forest Heights parents, 64 from Fulton Place parents, 56 from Hardisty parents, 11 from Strathearn parents, 31 from Capilano parents and three from Gold Bar parents.

Many respondents indicated they could support Refined Option C (retain Forest Heights School as a K-6 receiving Terrace Heights, close Terrace Heights School, establish a K-9 at Hardisty School receiving Fulton Place, close Fulton Place, and retain Strathearn as a K-9), with over half of this support coming from Hardisty and Capilano parents. Some respondents indicated support for Refined Option A (retain Forest Heights as a K-6 receiving Terrace Heights, close Terrace Heights, retain Fulton Place as a K-6, close Hardisty School, and close the junior high program at Strathearn School), the majority of this support coming from

Fulton Place parents. Some respondents also indicated support for Refined Option B (retain Forest Heights as a K-6 receiving Terrace Heights, close Terrace Heights, retain Fulton Place as a K-6, close Hardisty School, and close Strathearn School), this support coming again mainly from Fulton Place School parents. A number of respondents, 45 in all, indicated that they could not support any of the refined options presented.

Appendices IV and V provide details regarding school enrolments in the cluster, and an area map of schools.

JB:RL:pn

Appendix I Appendix II	Consultation Process and Timeline for Study Preliminary Options and Capacity, Enrolment and Utilization Rates in Cluster
Appendix II	Schools
Appendix III	Refined Options
Appendix IV	School Enrolment
Appendix V	Cluster Area Map

CONSULTATION PROCESS AND TIMELINE FOR STUDY

The consultation process for the cluster studies began in late November, 2004 with the administration holding preliminary discussions with the principals of all the schools in each of the three clusters. These discussions focused on defining optimal learning environments for students and informed the administration on the development of preliminary options.

Early in the New Year, staff from the Planning Department coordinated the commencement of the studies in each of the three clusters. Planning staff continued to consult with principals throughout the process and, in various meetings, consulted as well with school staff, parents, school councils, program representatives and the broader community within each cluster. The overall objective of the consultation process was to provide participants with the opportunity to work effectively and meaningfully with the district in the further refinement of options and, finally, in the identification of preferred alternatives.

The specific objective of the consultation process at each of the meetings was to enable the administration to receive and record advice specific to each of the preliminary options presented to participants within each of the clusters. This advice was purposefully intended to inform the administration on the further refinement of options. Refined options based on the advice received from participants in the process were then presented in each cluster to an assembly of parents and community members for their review and discussion around advantages and disadvantages. This information was also recorded along with information indicating which, if any, of the refined options participants felt they could support.

Throughout the process, the administration kept a running record of advice received specific to the preliminary options and feedback on the refined options. The advice and feedback that was received and recorded from all of the meetings held within each cluster was supplemented, as well, by advice and feedback that was received by the administration through phone calls, letters and emails. The full running record has been maintained for public viewing on the district's main website as well as the district's Planning website.

The consultation meetings held within each cluster study included:

- Special Combined School Council Meetings (week of January 17th, 2005)
- *Combined School Staff Meetings (week of January 31st, 2005)*
- Individual School Council Meetings (week of January 24, 2005, week of February 7th, 2005 and week of February 14th, 2005)
- Parent/Community Consultation Meetings (week of February 7th, 2005 and week of February 14th, 2005)

The administration also consulted with the Logos Christian Society (meeting Friday, January 21st, 2005), the Association for English-German Bilingual Education (meeting Wednesday, January 26, 2005) and the Ukranian Bilingual Association (meeting Thursday, March 3rd, 2005).

A table summarizing the timeline of the various consultation meetings held in the study of Forest Heights, Fulton Place, Hardisty, Strathearn and Terrace Heights Schools' along with information on meeting attendance follows below:

Meeting Location Date Attenuance	
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TOTAL ATTENDAN	CE (all meetings)		805
Parent/Community Meeting	Hardisty Junior High School	Thursday, February 17, 2005	482
Hardisty School Council	Hardisty Junior High School	Tuesday, February 15, 2005	36
Forest Heights School Council	Forest Heights School Council	Tuesday, February 8, 2005	38
Terrace Heights School Council	Terrace Heights Elementary School	Tuesday, February 8, 2005	7
Strathearn School Council	Strathearn Junior High School	Monday, February 7, 2005	36
Fulton Place School Council	Fulton Place Elementary School	Monday, February 7, 2005	55
Special Combined School Staffs	Terrace Heights Elementary School	Tuesday, February 1, 2005	57
Association for English-German Bilingual Education (AEGBE)	Forest Heights School	Wednesday, January 26, 2005	9
Logos Christian Society	EPS, Centre for Education	Friday, January 21, 2005	8
Special Combined School Councils	Hardisty Junior High School	Thursday, January 20, 2005	77

PRELIMINARY OPTIONS

Forest Heights, Fulton Place, Hardisty, Strathearn and Terrace Heights Schools

Option A - 1	 Modernize Strathearn School as a K – 9 facility. Complete the modernization at Terrace Heights School as a K – 6 facility. Forest Heights regular and German Bilingual students to Terrace Heights School. All Logos Christian K –9 students to Strathearn School. Fulton Place students to another area elementary school. Hardisty students to another area junior high school. Close Forest Heights, Fulton Place and Hardisty schools.
Option A - 2	 Modernize Strathearn School as a K – 9 facility. Modernize Forest Heights School as a K – 6 facility. Terrace Heights students to Forest Heights School. All Logos Christian K –9 students to Strathearn School. Fulton Place students to another area elementary school. Hardisty students to another area junior high school. Close Fulton Place, Hardisty and Terrace Heights schools.
Option B - 1	 Modernize Strathearn School as a K – 9 facility. Modernize Fulton Place School as a K – 6 facility. Terrace Heights regular and Forest Heights regular and German Bilingual students to Fulton Place School. All Logos Christian K – 9 students to Strathearn School. Hardisty students to another area junior high school. Close Hardisty, Forest Heights and Terrace Heights Schools.
Option B - 2	 Modernize Hardisty School as a K – 9 facility. Modernize Forest Heights School as a K – 6 facility. All Logos Christian K – 9 students to Hardisty School. Terrace Heights and Fulton Place students to Hardisty. Strathearn students to another area elementary and junior high school. Close Strathearn, Fulton Place and Terrace Heights schools.

Option C - 1	 Modernize Forest Heights as K – 6 facility. Terrace Heights and Fulton Place students to Forest Heights School. Logos Christian K – 9 students to another southeast elementary and junior high school. Hardisty and Strathearn students to another area elementary and junior high school. Close Hardisty, Strathearn, Fulton Place and Terrace Heights schools.
Option C - 2	 Complete the modernization of Terrace Heights as K – 6 facility. Fulton Place regular and Forest Heights regular and German Bilingual students to Terrace Heights School. Logos Christian K – 9 students to another southeast elementary and junior high school. Hardisty and Strathearn students to another area elementary and junior high school. Close Hardisty, Strathearn, Fulton Place and Forest Heights schools.

CAPACITY, ENROLMENT AND UTILIZATION RATE OF SCHOOLS IN SCHOOL GROUPS

(Based on September 30, 2004 enrolment.)

Cluster Schools	Total Capacity (Actual)	Total Enrolment (Actual)	School Utilization (%) (PUR *)	Audit Score
<u>Cluster C</u>				
Forest Heights (K-6)	496	246	51	640
Fulton Place (K-6)	471	267	65	450
Hardisty (Gr. 5-9)	1159	331	33	600
Strathearn (K-9)	670	182	31	390
Terrace Heights (K-6)	321	99	31	340

* **PUR (Provincial Utilization Rate)** is the calculation of school space utilization based on "weighted" enrolments and capacities. The PUR is not calculated on the basis of "actual" enrolments and capacities.

- Adjusted Enrolment: The total enrolment at schools is weighted by Alberta Education with consideration being given to the accommodation of students enrolled in special education programs.
- Net Capacity: The total capacity at schools is weighted (or adjusted) by Alberta Infrastructure as well, with consideration being given to the total area of leased space and CTS (Career Technology Studies) space that exists within schools.
- **Provincial audit score:** Is calculated by Alberta Infrastructure and indicates the relative condition of the building. A high audit score (600+) indicates a school requiring major upgrades.

REFINED OPTIONS: FOREST HEIGHTS, FULTON PLACE, HARDISTY, STRATHEARN AND TERRACE HEIGHTS CLUSTER

Note: Facility modifications at all receiving schools if required Closed schools to be retained by the District for possible alternative uses

REFINED OPTION A

- Retain Forest Heights School as a K-6 facility
 - Receive Regular and Strategies students from Terrace Heights School
- Retain Fulton Place School as a K-6 facility
 - Receive Logos Christian (5-6) students from Hardisty School
- Close Hardisty School
 - Relocate Regular (7-9) students to Ottewell School
 - Relocate Logos Christian (5-6) students to Fulton Place School
 - Relocate Logos Christian (7-9) students to Dan Knott or Edith Rogers School
 - Relocate Strategies (7-9) students to L'Académie Vimy Ridge Academy
 - Relocate Community Learning Skills (7-9) and Community Learning &
 - Behaviour Skills (7-9) students to Kate Chegwin and/or T.D. Baker School
- Close Junior High Program at Strathearn School
 - Relocate Regular (7-9) and Opportunity (7-9) students to Kenilworth School
- Close Terrace Heights School
 - Relocate Regular (K-6) and Strategies (5-6) students to Forest Heights School

REFINED OPTION B

- Retain Forest Heights School as a K-6 facility
 - Receive Regular and Strategies students from Terrace Heights School
- **>** Retain Fulton Place School as a K-6 facility
 - Receive Logos Christian (5-6) students from Hardisty School
- Close Hardisty School
 - Relocate Regular (7-9) students to Ottewell School
 - Relocate Logos Christian (5-6) students to Fulton Place School
 - Relocate Logos Christian (7-9) students to Dan Knott or Edith Rogers School
 - Relocate Strategies (7-9) students to L'Académie Vimy Ridge Academy
 - Relocate Community Learning Skills (7-9) and Community Learning &
 - Behaviour Skills (7-9) students to Kate Chegwin and/or T.D. Baker School
- Close Strathearn School
 - Relocate Regular (K-6) and Behaviour & Learning Assistance (4-6) students to Rutherford School
 - Relocate Regular (7-9) and Opportunity (7-9) students to Kenilworth School
- Close Terrace Heights School
 - Relocate Regular (K-6) and Strategies (5-6) students to Forest Heights School

REFINED OPTION C

> Retain Forest Heights School as a K-6 facility

- Receive Regular and Strategies students from Terrace Heights School

Close Fulton Place School

- Relocate Regular (K-6), Logos Christian (K-4) and Behaviour & Learning Assistance (1-4) students to Hardisty School

> Establish Hardisty School as a K-9 facility

- Receive Regular (K-6), Logos Christian (K-4) and Behaviour & Learning Assistance (1-4) students from Fulton Place School

> Retain Strathearn School as a K-9 facility

Close Terrace Heights School

- Relocate Regular (K-6) and Strategies (5-6) students to Forest Heights School

SCHOOL ENROLMENT

(Enrolments as of September 30, 2004)

School	Programs	Enrolment
Forest Heights (K-6)	German Bilingual	165
	Regular	81
	Total Enrolment	246
	\mathbf{L} and \mathbf{C} by intiation (\mathbf{K}, \mathbf{A})	121
Fulton Place (K-6)	Logos Christian (K-4)	131
	Regular	113
	Behaviour & Learning	22
	Assistance	23
	Total Enrolment	267
Handisty(Cn 50)	Regular (7-9)	120
Hardisty(Gr. 5-9)	e , ,	
	Logos Christian (5-6)	62
	Logos Christian (7-9)	97 20
	Strategies	20
	Community Learning &	
	Behaviour Skills	16
	Community Learning Skills	16
	Total Enrolment	331
		0.4
Strathearn (K-9)	Regular (K-6)	94
	Regular (7-9)	68
	Opportunity	12
	Behaviour & Learning	
	Assistance	8
	Total Enrolment	182
		02
Terrace Heights(K-6)	Regular	83
	Strategies	16
	Total Enrolment	99

Cluster Area Map

