

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

March 8, 2005

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: A. McBeath, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Recommendation Arising from the Forest Heights, Fulton Place, Hardisty, Strathearn and Terrace Heights Schools' Cluster Study Re: Strathearn School

ORIGINATOR: C. McCabe, Assistant to the Superintendent

RESOURCE

STAFF: Rick Bell, Jenise Bidulock, Randy Billey, Michael Ediger, Brian Fedor, Leanne Fedor, Andrea Furness, Kerry-Ann Kope, Roland Labbe, Randy Leal, Shirly McNeill, Jamie Pallett, Deanne Patsula, Larry Schwenneker, Cindy Skolski, Colin Willows

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the administration be authorized to undertake the provincial and board mandated processes to consider the closure of Strathearn School.
2. That in conjunction with the recommendations above, the administration bring forward information to the Board of Trustees regarding:
 - a. Upgrades to Kenilworth and Rutherford Schools;
 - b. upgrades to any schools that may be considered through the closure process to accommodate regular, alternative and special needs programs;
 - c. programming enhancement for students at any schools that may be receiving schools for students through the closure process;
 - d. other matters relating to the implementation of the recommendations.

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In accordance with the Closure of Schools Regulation, and pursuant to the School Act, school boards have the authority to close schools. Strathearn School is eligible for closure in accordance with Board Policy FL.BP (Appendix I), which identifies space utilization (under 40 per cent) and/or an average enrolment per grade, and/or high cost of operation and maintenance as criteria for such selection.

Background

This recommendation is brought before the board in conjunction with a study completed in schools in this area of the city with the goal being to improve programming opportunities and learning environments for students. The study was planned to 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.

Strathearn School

Background

According to City of Edmonton demographic data, the number of pre-school and elementary and junior high school age children has declined steadily in the Strathearn area. (Appendix II) Based on these numbers it is projected that the population of school age children in the Strathearn catchment area will continue to decline.

Strathearn School was opened in 1952 and has a capacity for 670 students. The September 30, 2004 enrolment at the school was 102 students kindergarten to grade 6 and 80 students from grades 7 through 9 for a total of 182 students. This represents a utilization rate of 31 per cent. Enrolment at Strathearn School has been declining steadily since 1960. (Appendix III)

Rationale

Projected enrolment for next year is 96 students in kindergarten to grade 6 and 82 students in grades 7 through 9 for a total of 178 students. There are 371 public elementary and junior high students residing within Strathearn School's attendance area. Only 97 of those students currently choose to attend Strathearn while the remaining 274 students are choosing to attend other district schools. (Junior High attendance area: 223 students residing and 44 attending; Elementary attendance area: 148 students residing and 53 attending.)

Appendix IV includes an illustration of Strathearn School's total capacity, student population and student enrolment.

Educational Considerations

There are 13 teachers and 6 support and custodial staff at Strathearn School. Closure and relocation of Strathearn students as above would result in fewer combined grade classes, more option courses, and other educational benefits would be available through enrolling students in a larger school setting. Program offerings at neighbourhood junior high schools are: languages (Mandarin Bilingual, French, ESL), art, band, computer studies, drama, fashion, foods, industrial arts, outdoor education, study skills and learning strategies, and visual communications. Program offerings at neighbourhood elementary schools are: languages (German Bilingual, French Immersion, Ukrainian International Bilingual), Logos Alternative and Sports Alternative.

In the instance of relocation of students, every effort would be made to ensure as much continuity as possible with current staff, in particular for those students in district center programs for students with special needs.

Should parents request a registration in a different school other than the designated receiving school, students would be able to register in that school, (provided the school provides the appropriate program,) even if pre-enrolment deadlines are past.

Capital and Financial Considerations

Strathearn School audit score is 390. \$1.5 M would be required to modernize the school to modern day standards. Savings in terms of operational costs of approximately \$214,000 per year annually would be realized if Strathearn School were to be closed.

Transportation Considerations

There is a direct ETS route from Strathearn to Kenilworth. Junior high students would be provided with subsidized ETS passes. Yellow bus service would be available for elementary students to the receiving elementary school. A yellow bus would likely need to be added. No major changes are anticipated to the transportation for students currently attending the elementary Behaviour & Learning Assistance and junior high Opportunity programs.

Strathearn School

Date School Opened	Capacity	Current Enrolment	Projected Enrolment Sept 2005	5 Year Projected Enrolment
1952	670	182	178	146
Enrolment Declining Since	Number of Students in Catchment Area	Number of these Students Attending Strathearn School	Number attending Other District Schools	Number of Staff Currently at Strathearn School
1960	371	97	274	24 FTE

Strathearn School

*Audit Score	Cost to Renovate	Operational Cost Savings	Increases or Decreases to Transportation Costs
390	\$1.5M	\$214,000	Increase of one yellow bus at \$40,000

* 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.

Timeline and Next Steps

Approval of this recommendation would authorize the administration to undertake further consultation with parents and communities. At the end of that process, the board would make a decision regarding recommendations that the administration would present regarding the closure of Strathearn School. This approach is consistent with the applicable provincial regulation and the board's policy.

It is anticipated that enrolments at Hardisty, Kenilworth and Ottewell Schools' of students who reside in Mill Woods will significantly decrease when the new junior high school in Burnewood/Meadows opens.

JB:RL:pn

- APPENDIX I Alberta Regulation 238/97 – Closure of Schools Regulation and Policy FL.BP School Closure
- APPENDIX II Neighborhood Demographic Information
- APPENDIX III Historical Enrolment and Capacity
- APPENDIX IV Total Capacity, Student Population, and Student Enrolment
- APPENDIX V Projected Changes to Enrolment in Schools Impacted by Recommendations

Alberta Regulation 238/97 – Closure of Schools Regulation

School Act Section 58

Closure of schools, etc.

58 The Minister may make regulations

- (a) authorizing a board to
 - (i) close a school permanently or for a specified period of time,
 - (ii) close entirely 3 or more consecutive grades in an elementary school,
 - (iii) close the entire junior high school program or the entire high school program in a school, or
 - (iv) transfer all students from one school to one or more other schools;
- (b) governing procedural and other requirements a board must comply with when doing anything described in clause (a).

1988 cS-3.1 s42;1997 c25 s12

Division 2

Operation and Management

Powers of separate school boards

CLOSURE OF SCHOOLS REGULATION

Definitions

- 1 In this Regulation,
- (a) "closure" means any action referred to in section 2;
 - (a.1) "Ministers" means, for the purposes of sections 6 and 7, the Ministers determined under section 16 of the *Government Organization Act* as the Ministers responsible for Part 7 of the *School Act*;
 - (b) "school" year means the 12-month period beginning on September 1 and ending on the following August 31.

AR 238/97 s1;223/2002

Non-application of sections

- 1.1 Sections 4 to 7 do not apply to a closure that occurs
- (a) in connection with the transfer by one board to another board of the ownership of real property on which a school building is located and the school building will continue to be used for the instruction or accommodation of students, or
 - (b) as a result of the Minister's having directed the board to dispose of the school building pursuant to section 200(3) of the Act.

Exemption from requirements

- 1.2 The Minister may, on the written request of a board or on the Minister's initiative, exempt a board from the requirements of sections 4 to 7 in respect of a closure that occurs
- (a) as a result of the board's inability to comply with section 57(2) of the Act, or

- (b) for health or safety reasons.

Closure of schools, etc.

- 2 A board may
 - (a) close a school permanently or for a specified period of time,
 - (b) close entirely 3 or more consecutive grades in a school, or;
 - (c) repealed AR 257/2003 s5,
 - (d) transfer all students from one school building to one or more other school buildings on a permanent basis.

Policies and procedures for closure of schools

- 3 A board may develop, and implement policies and procedures with respect to closure of schools that are not inconsistent with this Regulation.

Notification of proposed closure

- 4 (1) Where a board is considering the closure of a school, the board shall
 - (a) raise the matter through a notice of motion at a regular meeting of the board, and
 - (b) in writing notify the parents of every child and student enrolled in the school who, in the opinion of the board, will be significantly affected by the closure of the school.
- (2) A notice referred to in subsection (1)(b) shall set out the following:
 - (a) how the closure would affect the attendance area defined for that school;
 - (b) how the closure would affect the attendance at other schools;
 - (c) the number of students who would need to be relocated as a result of the closure;
 - (d) the need for, and extent of, busing;
 - (e) program implications for other schools and for the students when they are attending other schools;
 - (f) the educational and financial impact of closing the school, including the effect on operational costs and capital implications;
 - (g) the educational and financial impact if the school were to remain open;
 - (h) and (i) repealed AR 257/2003 s7;
 - (i) the time and location of the public meeting referred to in section 5(1)(a).
- (3) A notice referred to in subsection (1)(b) may set out the following:
 - (a) the capital needs of the schools that may have increased enrolment as a result of the closure, and
 - (b) the possible uses of the school building or space in the school building if
 - (i) the entire school is being closed, or
 - (ii) 3 or more consecutive grades in the school are being closed entirely.

Public meetings

- 5 (1) Where a board has given notice of motions at a regular meeting of the board that it is considering the closure of a school, the board
 - (a) shall organize and convene a public meeting for the purpose of discussing the information provided to the parents under section 4,
 - (b) shall provide an opportunity for the council of the municipality in which the school is located to provide a statement to the board of the impact the closure may have on

the community, and

- (c) may hold other meetings with respect to the closure at times and places as the board may determine.

- (2) The date and place of the public meeting referred to in subsection (1)(a) shall be
 - (a) posted in 5 or more conspicuous places in the area or areas of the school or schools affected by the closure, for a period of at least 14 days before the date of the public meeting, and
 - (b) advertised in a newspaper circulating within the area or areas of the school or schools affected by the proposed closure, on at least 2 occasions as close as is practicable to the date of the meeting.
- (3) At least 2 trustees of the board shall attend the public meeting referred to in subsection (1)(a)
- (4) A board shall ensure that minutes of all public meetings held under this section are prepared.

Decision on closure

- 6 (1) A board shall not make a final decision on the proposed closure until at least 3 weeks have passed since the date of the public meeting referred to in section 5(1)(a).
- (2) A board shall give due consideration to any written submissions on the proposed closure that it receives after the public meeting referred to in section 5(1)(a).
- (3) A board
 - (a) shall by resolution decide whether to close the school, and
 - (b) if the decision is to close the school, shall forthwith notify the Ministers in writing of the decision.

AR 238/97 s6:223/2002

Closure within school year

- 7 (1) All school closure procedures shall be initiated and completed within the school year in which the decision to close the school is made.
- (2) Notwithstanding subsection (1), on the written request of the board, the Ministers may extend the school closure procedures beyond one school year.

Expiry

- 8 For the purpose of ensuring that this Regulation is reviewed for ongoing relevancy and necessity, with the option that it may be re-passed in its present or an amended form following a review, this Regulation expires on November 1, 2008.
- 9 Repealed AR 223/2002 s5.

AR 238/97 s8:223/2002

Board Policy FL.BP School Closure

CODE: FL.BP
TOPIC: School Closure

EFFECTIVE DATE: 11-09-2001
ISSUE DATE: 25-09-2001
REVIEW DATE: 09-2006

The board believes that the closure of schools is an important consideration in ensuring the responsible use of the resources placed in its trust; making efficient use of the district's school space; and safeguarding the health and safety of students, staff, and the public.

A. SCOPE AND AUTHORITY

1. The board reserves to itself the authority to close an entire school or three or more consecutive grades in a school.
2. The board authorizes the administration, under the direction of the superintendent of schools and with appropriate consultation, to:
 - a. close or permanently relocate fewer than three consecutive grades in a school, or
 - b. temporarily relocate any number of grades from one school to another.
3. Discontinuance of a special needs program or an alternative program is not considered a school closure and is addressed in HA.BP Student Programs.

B. CRITERIA FOR SCHOOL CLOSURE

An entire school or three or more consecutive grades in a school may be considered for closure if one or more of the following criteria are met:

1. Total enrolment as of September 30 in the current school year is below the following levels:
 - a. elementary (K to 6) - an average of 15 students per grade, or
 - b. junior high (7 to 9) - an average of 30 students per grade, or
 - c. senior high (10 to 12) - an average of 120 students per grade.
2. The space utilization rate as defined by the provincial government as of September 30 in the current school year is less than 40 per cent.
3. The cost of keeping the school in operable condition or restoring it to operable

condition is deemed by the board to be unreasonably high.

4. Closing the school is deemed by the board to be necessary to safeguard the health and safety of students, staff, or the public.
5. Parents and guardians of a majority of students enrolled in the school on September 30 in the current school year agree that closure should be considered.

C. PROCESS FOR SCHOOL CLOSURE

1. Where the board is considering school closure, it shall raise the matter through notice of motion at a regular board meeting, and ensure that the following are carried out:
 - a. A written communication, the contents of which are consistent with policies established by Alberta Learning, is sent to the parents of every student enrolled in the school who, in the opinion of the board, would be significantly affected by the closure of the school.
 - b. A public meeting is held, with at least a simple majority of trustees present.
 - c. The time, date, and place of this meeting are publicized in accordance with policies established by Alberta Learning.
 - d. The City of Edmonton is provided an opportunity to provide to the board a statement of the impact the closure may have on the community.
2. Following the public meeting attended by trustees, there shall be a period of at least three weeks for parents and community members to present to the board further responses to the proposed closure.
3. The administration may hold additional public meetings, consult with parents at other schools, or provide other opportunities for public involvement as appropriate, at any time.

Reference(s):

[HA.BP](#) - Student Programs

[School Act](#) Section 58

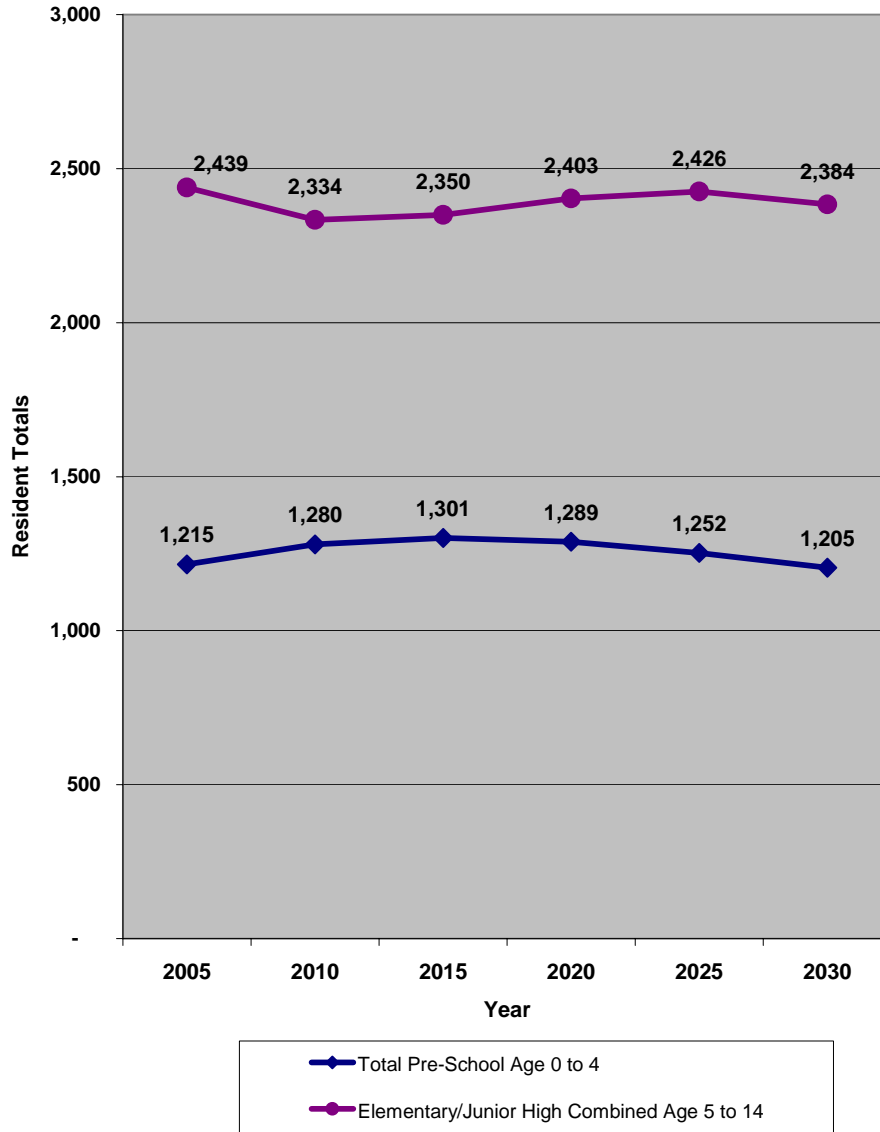
Alberta Learning's [Closure of Schools Regulation](#)

[Alberta Infrastructure](#)- see School Capital Manual 2002-2003 Section 5.2.1 Utilization Rate and Section 5.2.2. Area, Capacity and Utilization Procedures

Neighborhood Demographic Information

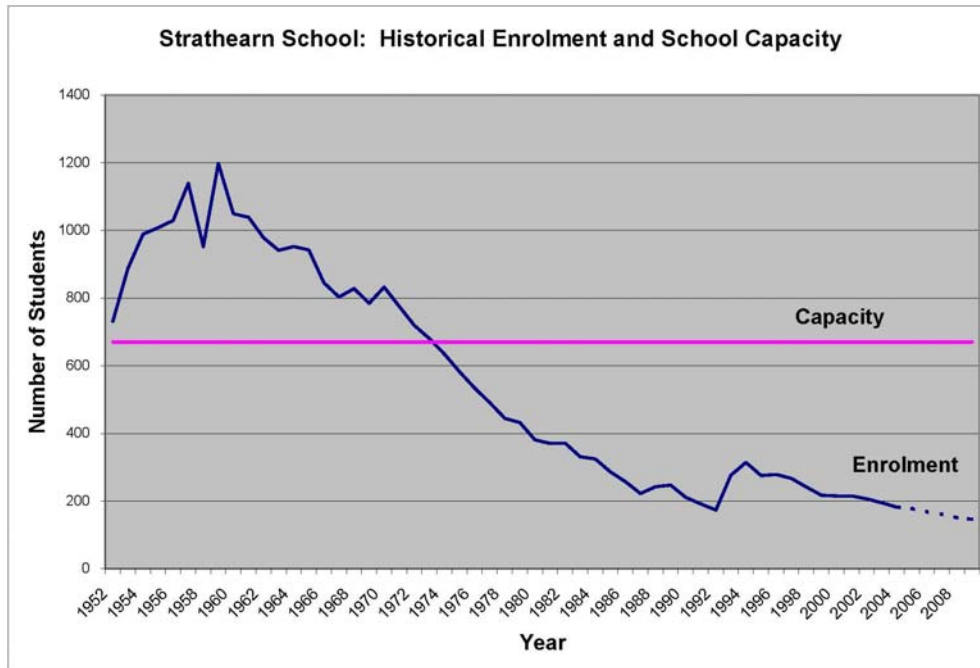
25 Year Projection by Age Group Forest Heights, Fulton Place, Strathearn, Terrace Heights, Capilano, Gold Bar, Bonnie Doon, Cloverdale, Holyrood Neighbourhoods

Source Data: Edmonton Population and Employment Forecast to 2030 (draft February 2005)



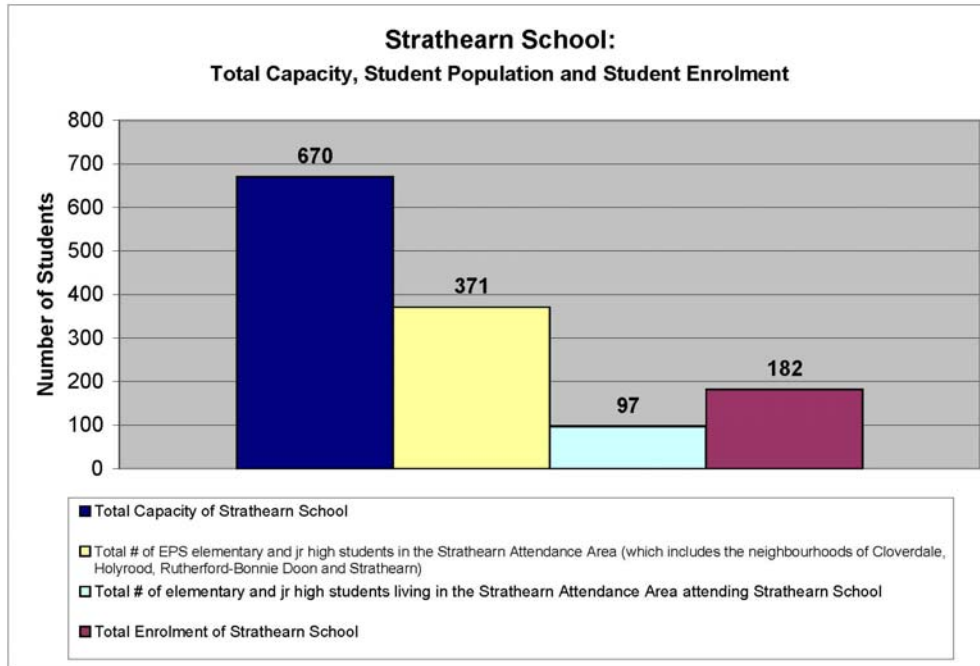
March 8, 2005

Historical Enrolment and Capacity



March 8, 2005

Total Capacity, Student Population, and Student Enrolment



March 8, 2005

Projected Changes to Enrolment at Schools Impacted by the Recommendation

Refined Option B: Closure of Strathearn School

If Strathearn School were to close, the 182 students would be designated as follows:

- Regular and Behaviour & Learning Assistance elementary students to Rutherford School
- Regular and Opportunity junior high students to Kenilworth School

Enrolment Projections for 2005-2006 *

Enrolment information is based on projected enrolment for September 30th, 2005.

Rutherford School

Net Capacity: 367

Utilization Rate: 37%

	Kinder. **	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	TOTAL
Rutherford School	18	15	32	20	20	10	18	133
Strathearn School Regular (K-6) and Behaviour & Learning Assistance (4-6) students	10	12	8	12	17	16	21	96
TOTAL	28	27	40	32	37	26	39	229

Rutherford School	FTE Enrolment: 133	Adjusted Enrolment: 135
Strathearn School	FTE Enrolment: 96	Adjusted Enrolment: 102
TOTALS	229	237

Utilization Rate with relocation of Strathearn School Regular (K-6) and Behaviour & Learning Assistance (4-6) students: 65%

* Assumes all students will go to their designated school

** Kindergarten students have been calculated as 1.0 FTE to show the impact of full day kindergarten

Kenilworth School

Net Capacity: 522

Utilization Rate: 91%

	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9		TOTAL
Kenilworth School	141	167	137		445
Strathearn School Regular (7-9) and Opportunity (7-9) students	27	25	30		82
TOTAL	168	192	167		527

Kenilworth School FTE Enrolment: 445 Adjusted Enrolment: 473

Strathearn School FTE Enrolment: 82 Adjusted Enrolment: 96

TOTALS	527	569
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Utilization Rate with relocation of Strathearn School Regular (7-9) and Opportunity (7-9) students: 109%

* Assumes all students will go to their designated school

March 8, 2005