

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

November 8, 2005

TO: Board of Trustees  
FROM: E. Schmidt, Acting Superintendent of Schools  
SUBJECT: Community Use of School Facilities Consultation Group

ORIGINATOR: B. Tams, Acting Executive Director

RESOURCE

STAFF: Lisa Austin, Jenise Bidulock, Michael Ediger, Jane Farrell, Cathy MacDonald, Cory Sinclair

INFORMATION

At the October 25, 2005 public board meeting, the board received for information a report announcing that the administration was initiating a consultation process to better understand issues and concerns related to community access to schools. The administration has since retained an external facilitator, Anne Marie Downey of Downey Norris & Associates, to develop the consultation process and facilitate the consultation meetings. Ms. Downey will be present at the November 8, 2005 board meeting to outline the process and timelines for the consultation (APPENDIX I).

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APPENDIX I – Community Use of School Facilities Consultation Group Process Outline

## **Edmonton Public Schools**

### **Community Use of School Facilities Consultation Group**

#### **Purpose**

To more fully understand the challenges and opportunities facing users of Edmonton Public Schools' facilities as well as school administrators and staff in their joint efforts to help meet the recreation and leisure needs of the Edmonton community. To assist the district in preparing to provide meaningful input that reflects the needs of users and its schools into the Joint Use Agreement review process.

#### **Background**

The provision of recreation and leisure is the mandate of the City of Edmonton. The City is strongly supported by Edmonton Public Schools and Edmonton Catholic Schools in a Joint Use Agreement (JUA) designed to address community use of school facilities, school use of City facilities, and matters pertaining to joint land use. Under this agreement, the district offers approximately 75,000 hours, about 36,000 of which are used by sports teams, at no or nominal cost to accommodate community needs each year -- a demand that continues to grow.

In early 2006, the City of Edmonton, Edmonton Public Schools and Edmonton Catholic Schools will launch a comprehensive consultation process as part of an examination of the current JUA to determine how that agreement might be modified to better meet the needs of a growing and changing community.

In preparation for this exercise and in light of recent concerns raised about convenient access to school facilities in some areas of the city, Edmonton Public Schools wants to hear directly from schools and organizations who use school facilities, such as sports associations and other casual users, in an effort to better understand the issues, challenges and opportunities both face and to be well prepared to participate in the upcoming review of the JUA.

#### **Objectives**

- To better understand users' expectations for access to school facilities.
- To understand what currently works for both users and schools.
- To identify the issues and challenges users face in trying to meet the needs of their communities.
- To identify the issues and challenges the district faces in trying to meet the needs of users.
- To describe what "ideal" access looks like from the perspectives of both users and schools.
- To explore potential messages Edmonton Public Schools might deliver on behalf of users and schools through the JUA review.

#### **Approach**

Two facilitated 2½-hour, early evening consultation meetings held on November 23 and 28. Participants will include nine principals, ten sport association representatives, three representatives of casual users, three members of the district's Key Communicators Advisory

Group, nine School Council and Parent Advisory Committee Chairs, one CUPE Local 474 representative, and seven Edmonton Public Schools JUA committee representatives, for a total of 42.

In small and full groups, participants will clarify what is now working for users and schools, identify and discuss the issues and challenges both face, describe what ideal access might look like from the perspectives of users and schools, and help develop potential messages the district might consider bringing to the JUA Review. The facilitator will document the input provided and report to the board of trustees in writing and by way of a presentation in December.