

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

February 26, 2008

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Schmidt, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Responses to Trustee Requests for Information

ORIGINATOR: D. Barrett, Assistant Superintendent
J. Bidulock, Assistant Superintendent
B. Coggles, Assistant Superintendent
B. Tams, Assistant Superintendent

RESOURCE
STAFF: Lisa Austin, Josephine Duquette, David Fraser, Bob Morter, Corrie Ziegler

INFORMATION

TRUSTEE REQUEST #53: FEBRUARY 12, 2008 (TRUSTEE SHIPKA) PROVIDE INFORMATION REGARDING HOW MANY RESPONSES WERE RECEIVED THROUGH THE ON-LINE SURVEY WITH RESPECT TO THE DISTRICT PRIORITIES: As part of the consultation process, 609 individuals and group representatives provided input into the development of the District Priorities; of this total, 122 submissions were provided through the online survey. (L. Austin)

TRUSTEE REQUEST #54: FEBRUARY 12, 2008 (TRUSTEE FLEMING) PROVIDE INFORMATION REGARDING THE CURRENT ANNUAL COSTS FOR HEALTH CARE PREMIUMS SO THAT THE BOARD CAN CONSIDER WHAT USE IT CAN MAKE OF THOSE FUNDS SHOULD HEALTH CARE PREMIUMS BE ELIMINATED: The board's cost of Alberta Health Care premiums for 2007-2008 is estimated to be approximately \$5.4 million. The district has not received any assurance from the provincial government that educational grants would not be adjusted if health care premiums are eliminated. It should be noted that language related to the Board's payment of Alberta Health Care premiums is included in all four collective agreements and has been subject to collective bargaining related to total compensation for many years. The terms and conditions of employment for exempt staff also contain similar language which reflects the long standing practice of the Board. (D. Fraser)

TRUSTEE REQUEST #55 FEBRUARY 12, 2008 (TRUSTEE HUFF) PROVIDE INFORMATION REGARDING THE ANTICIPATED IMPACT OF THE NINE ASAP SCHOOLS ON DISTRICT SPACE: Administration is anticipating a variety of impacts as a result of the six (6) ASAP schools proposed for construction in the new communities due to the fact that we do not have dates for proposed construction of the three (3) newly announce schools.

1) WHICH SECTORS WILL SEE THE SHARPEST INCREASE IN UNUSED SPACE?
The sectors that will see the sharpest increase in unused space will be South Central, Central and West 1 Sectors. While the data in Appendix I suggests that South West, North Central and

South East Sectors will have the greatest number of schools affected by the opening of the ASAP schools, there are currently more students in these sectors than there are student spaces. The opening of the ASAP schools will result in the sector utilization in these areas being reduced from over 100 per cent to approximately 100 per cent. The ASAP schools will provide sufficient student spaces for all students residing in these sectors.

2) WHICH SCHOOLS WILL BE IMPACTED IN TERMS OF DECLINING ENROLMENT? The impact on school enrolments is difficult to predict because students can attend schools other than the neighbourhood or designated neighbourhood school. Appendix I provides a list of the designated schools anticipated to be impacted by the new attendance areas and a list of schools currently receiving a significant number of students from the new attendance areas for your review. The following assumptions were used in making these predictions:

- Students attending their designated school will transfer to the new ASAP schools; and
- Existing student populations based on September 30, 2007 were used in the counts.

3) HOW MIGHT THIS TRANSLATE INTO PROJECTED SCHOOL CLOSURES BY SECTOR? To maintain the existing utilization rate in the District, a total of 4905 Alberta Commission on Learning (ACOL) student spaces will need to be removed. Each of the sectors receiving an ASAP school will continue to be over 85 per cent utilization. Therefore the surplus student space in the District will continue to be located in the West 1, Central and South Central sectors. (J. Duquette, B. Morter)

TRUSTEE REQUEST #56: FEBRUARY 12, 2008 (TRUSTEE RIPLEY) PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION TO ASSIST THE BOARD IN ASSESSING THE WOODCROFT SITUATION:

- **WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES THAT LOW-INCOME FAMILIES FACE IN SUPPORTING THEIR CHILDREN IN THE SCHOOL SETTING; E.G. BUSSING COSTS, FIELD TRIPS, SCHOOL FEES, HOMEWORK CHALLENGES, FOOD?**
- **EDUCATIONALLY, WHAT ARE THE VERY BEST PRACTICES THE DISTRICT USES TO ENSURE THE SUCCESS OF CHILDREN FROM LOW-INCOME FAMILIES?**
- **WHAT ARE THE BEST PRACTICES TO CONNECT AND WORK POSITIVELY WITH THESE FAMILIES?**

Low income families face challenges meeting costs directly associated with school attendance such as bus pass fees, costs for field trips and school supplies. In addition these families may face additional challenges in meeting basic subsistence requirements for food, clothing and shelter. These also can negatively impact students. For example, increased mobility necessitated by challenges in finding housing can have a negative impact on student learning. Poverty is also associated with increased incidences of familial dysfunction which adds to the challenges experienced by children.

Principals engage in a number of practices to assist low income families. They may waive transportation costs, field trip costs and lunch room fees in order to avoid undo hardship on families. These costs may be covered through the school allocation if no other source of revenue exists. The district provides a high socio-economic needs allocation to the 75 highest needs schools in the district. The amount allocated reflects the characteristics of the school's

community based enrolment, mobility, and incidence of low family income. Woodcroft is ranked number 40 on the district high needs list.

Some key programming supports for students experiencing the effects of poverty, and strategies used that have been successful in working positively with families in high needs schools are attached (Appendix II). (D. Barrett)

TRUSTEE REQUEST #57: FEBRUARY 12, 2008 (TRUSTEE RICE) BRING THE RESPONSE TO SERVICE REQUEST #41 (PROVIDE COMPARISON INFORMATION RE: PERFORMANCE RESULTS OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS WITH LESS THAN 140 STUDENTS WITH THOSE OVER 400 STUDENTS) AS AN INFORMATION ITEM TO PUBLIC BOARD: The following information compares achievement results of elementary schools with less than 140 students with those over 400 students. Specifically comparisons were requested with respect to provincial achievement test participation rates (Table 1), provincial achievement test (PAT) results (Table 2), Highest Level of Achievement Test (HLAT) results in reading and writing (Table 3), and district student satisfaction survey results (Table 4).

The cluster of schools that are small (less than 140 students), and the cluster of schools that are large (more than 400 students) are listed in Table 5. The number of students is based on the enrolment numbers as of December, 2007. In schools with K-9 or K-12 programming, only the students enrolled in K-6 were counted to identify school size.

The information in Table 1 (participation rates for provincial achievement tests) shows that the percentage of students who are given an opportunity to write grade 3 and grade 6 achievement tests is lower in small schools than in large schools for all courses tested.

The information in Table 2 (percentage of students meeting the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence for grades 3 and 6 based on cohort data) shows that the percentage of students meeting standards is lower for small schools than for large schools at both grade 3 and 6 for all courses tested and at both the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence. The differences for standard of excellence are quite substantial for grade 6 mathematics, science and social studies.

The information in Table 3 (HLAT results in reading and writing) shows that the percentage of students reading and writing at or above grade level is substantially lower for small schools than large schools for students enrolled in both Division I (grades 1-3) and Division II (grades 4-6).

Table 4 provides information on the district 2006-07 Satisfaction Survey for schools with enrolments of less than 140 students and schools with enrolments of more than 400 students. For all three categories of satisfaction data, the percentage of positive responses is slightly higher for schools with enrolments of more than 400 students than for schools with enrolments of less than 140 students.

**TABLE 1
PARTICIPATION RATES ON PROVINCIAL ACHIEVEMENT TESTS**

	SMALL <140 # OF SCHOOLS = 21	LARGE >400 # OF SCHOOLS = 15
Participation Rates PATs – June 2007	% of Students Who Wrote	% of Students Who Wrote
Grade 3 Language Arts	83.5	87.0
Grade 3 Mathematics	85.5	88.6
Grade 6 Language Arts	82.7	84.9
Grade 6 Mathematics	84.6	86.7
Grade 6 Science	82.3	84.0
Grade 6 Social Studies	85.0	85.1

**TABLE 2
2007 PROVINCIAL ACHIEVEMENT TEST RESULTS
BASED ON COHORT DATA**

Achievement Test	SMALL <140 # OF SCHOOLS = 21	LARGE >400 # OF SCHOOLS = 15
	% of Students Meeting Standards	% of Students Meeting Standards
Grade 3 Language Arts		
Acceptable Standard	74.6	77.3
Standard of Excellence	16.2	19.7
Grade 3 Mathematics		
Acceptable Standard	75.2	78.2
Standard of Excellence	23.6	29.6
Grade 6 Language Arts		
Acceptable Standard	70.4	79.1
Standard of Excellence	20.2	25.2
Grade 6 Mathematics		
Acceptable Standard	66.7	74.2
Standard of Excellence	14.5	21.1
Grade 6 Science		
Acceptable Standard	68.9	76.0
Standard of Excellence	27.4	37.5
Grade 6 Social Studies		
Acceptable Standard	75.0	78.3
Standard of Excellence	18.4	32.3

**TABLE 3
2007 RESULTS ON DISTRICT
HIGHEST LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT TESTS**

HLAT	SMALL <140 # OF SCHOOLS = 23	LARGE >400 # OF SCHOOLS = 15
	% of Students at or Above Grade Level	% of Students at or Above Grade Level
Reading: Division I	81.5	91.7
Writing: Division I	89.2	95.2
Reading: Division. II	77.0	91.7
Writing: Division. II	78.9	94.3

**TABLE 4
RESULTS FROM 2007 DISTRICT SATISFACTION SURVEY
ADMINISTERED TO STUDENTS**

Satisfaction Survey Category	Percentage of Positive Responses	
	SMALL <140 # OF SCHOOLS = 23	LARGE >400 # OF SCHOOLS = 14*
Teaching and Learning	92.8	93.2
Conduct and Safety	88.0	89.6
School Environment	91.6	92.8

* Argyll Centre which falls in the “Large >400” Category is not represented in the data as students at Argyll Centre are not included in the survey group.

**TABLE 5
*SCHOOLS DETERMINED TO BE SMALL (<140) OR LARGE (>400)**

School Enrolment (K-6) Less Than 140 Students		School Enrolment (K-6) Greater Than 400 Students
Ab School for the Deaf	R.J. Scott	Argyll Centre (Terrace Hts. Campus)
Beacon Heights	Riverdale	Delwood
Belgravia	Scott Robertson	Dunluce
Coronation	Sherwood	Earl Buxton
Gold Bar	Spruce Avenue	George P. Nicholson
Grandview Heights	Talmud Torah	Glengarry
Grovenor	Tevie Miller	Greenfield
Horse Hill	Woodcroft	Greenview
James Gibbons		Holyrood
McCauley		Kensington
Mill Creek		Kildare
Mount Royal		Meyokumin
Parkdale		Michael A. Kostek
Parkview		Richard Secord
Queen Alexandra		Westbrook

Note: Based on enrolments as of December, 2007
(C. Ziegler)

DB:JB:BC:TP:BT:cg

Appendix I: Designated or Other Impacted Schools
Appendix II: Key Programming Supports for Students

Designated or Other Impacted Schools

Sector	Designated or Other Impacted Schools	School Name	Students attending their designated school who reside in a new ASAP attendance area	Number of additional students attending these schools who reside in a new ASAP attendance area
North West	Designated	Major General Griesbach	122	0
	Designated	Mary Butterworth	8	73
	Other	Caernarvon		65
	Other	Dunluce		70
North West Total			130	208
North Central	Designated	Dickinsfield	22	23
	Designated	Evansdale	51	2
	Designated	J. A. Fife	108	68
	Designated	Londonderry	90	163
	Designated	McLeod	73	28
	Designated	Northmount	49	12
	Designated	Steele Heights	66	0
	Designated	York	77	9
	Other	Kildare		270
	Other	Lago Lindo		52
North Central Total			536	627
North East			0	0
Central	Designated	Athlone	51	2
	Designated	Balwin	8	6
	Designated	Calder	55	5
	Designated	McArthur	37	9
	Designated	Princeton	47	2
	Designated	Rosslyn	68	21
	Other	Delwood		84
	Other	Glengarry		44
	Other	Kensington		57
	Other	Killarney		53
Central Total			266	283
South Central	Designated	Donnan	102	3
	Designated	Hardisty	13	10
	Designated	Ottewell	157	51
	Other	Mount Pleasant		44
South Central Total			272	108

Sector	Designated or Other Impacted Schools	School Name	Students attending their designated school who reside in a new ASAP attendance area	Number of additional students attending these schools who reside in a new ASAP attendance area
South East	Designated	Dan Knott	34	10
	Designated	Ellerslie Campus	205	68
	Designated	Satoo	68	2
	Other	Julia Kiniski		43
	Other	Kate Chegwin		166
	Other	Meyokumin		52
	Other	Meyonohk		61
	Other	Minchau		23
	Other	T. D. Baker		103
	Other	Velma E. Baker		46
South East Total			307	574
South West	Designated	Brander Gardens	46	14
	Designated	Brookside	111	15
	Designated	D. S. Mackenzie	69	10
	Designated	Duggan	37	8
	Designated	Riverbend	152	0
	Designated	Steinhauer	138	6
	Other	Earl Buxton		61
	Other	George H. Luck		88
	Other	Greenfield		76
	Other	Keheewin		67
	Other	Richard Secord		80
	Other	Vernon Barford		67
	Other	Westbrook		57
South West Total			553	549
West 1	Designated	Westlawn	9	4
	Other	Dovercourt		37
	Other	Rio Terrace		25
	Other	Stratford		45
West 1 Total			9	111
West 2	Designated	Belmead	38	0
	Designated	Ormsby	68	1
	Designated	S. Bruce Smith	73	16
	Other	Centennial		41
	Other	Lymburn		27
	Other	Michael A. Kostek		70
	Other	Winterburn		40
West 2 Total			179	195

Key Programming Supports for Students

- Strong literacy and numeracy programming beginning right in Kindergarten – hopefully this would be a full day Kindergarten program.
- Teacher expertise to support Reading Recovery and Middle Years Literacy Intervention (MYLI) programming in the school.
- Each grade should have a field trip plan to ensure students have many opportunities every year to go beyond the “hood” to engage in curriculum themed, hands on learning experiences.
- Second language instruction.
- Strong and deliberate programming in the area of literacy – this includes extensive PD for teachers in how to support each child in their journey to be a life long reader.
- Materials to support a home reading program beginning right in Kindergarten.
- Each classroom should have a “mini library” with a diverse range of reading materials for students to explore through out the school day – students should see their teachers reading for pleasure as well – some will not have this modeled in their home due to parental literacy issues.
- Students should be aware of their progress, strengths and goals as learners – engaging them to reflect on their learning will be more empowering and makes them an active participant in their learning.
- There has been a lot of research coming out around at-risk learners and the development of strong language or vocabulary – things like vocabulary walls for the four core subjects in classrooms would help to increase capacity. Ensuring teachers use proper language and terminology with students – not effective to “limit” language due to concern it will be too hard – best strategy is to use complex vocabulary and then teach its meaning.
- Beyond strong PD for literacy, staff should have opportunities to connect and learn from colleagues – either within the school or through trio schools – isolation in a small school can be an issue.

Supportive Strategies for Families and Students in Low Income Communities

- Free or subsidized school supplies, field trips, after school programs, and no school fees.
- Nutrition built into the school day (various options such as - breakfast, snack or lunch program; milk and fruit supplemented to a sandwich sent from home; or once a week hot lunch meal).
- School based family evenings (winter fun night, family literacy evening, computer lessons for parents, healthy eating on a limited budget, internet safety for children etc.). Many of these programs are run with expertise and support from community partners.
- Partnering with a local service club to include a family dinner as part of parent-teacher conference evenings and September open house.
- Including in school newsletters information about various supports for low income families (i.e. income tax information sessions, rental housing support network, subsidized recreation opportunities in the community, or summer camp information).
- Newsletters written in a manner that will allow families to read them, remembering that many low income earners have a grade 8 or lower level of education (some communities would need to be sensitive to translation to another language). This sensitivity to literacy

levels carries over to other written communication from the school such as report cards, suspension letters etc.

- Structuring the process of reporting student learning to parents in a manner that feels safe and welcoming to the parent – keeping in mind that for many parents school was not a successful experience and they often bring this “baggage” to the table. Some schools have separated the report card document from the parent conference by holding conferences several weeks ahead of the report card being written. Schools using this process have consistently reported an increase in parents attending the conference, as well as feedback indicating that the conference feels more positive and pro-active.
- Schools should have a general understanding of community supports and services in the immediate area – knowing this in advance will make connecting families to community supports in a time of urgency smoother and more effective. The City of Edmonton has social workers assigned to each quadrant of the city, who can help Principals better understand what services are in the community.
- Some community agencies should be active, visible members of the school environment – bringing expertise, and human capacity to the school for such things as after school programs, mentoring or tutoring of students and providing support to families.