

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

January 16, 2001

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Dosdall, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Response to Delegation for a Junior High School to Serve the Jackson Heights, Kiniski Gardens, Larkspur , and Wild Rose Neighbourhoods

ORIGINATOR: A. McBeath, Department Head

RESOURCE STAFF: Robert Craig, Cindy Davis, Beatrice Denboer, Michael Ediger, Andrea Furness, June Klassen, Roland Labbe, Faye Parker, Deanne Patsula

RECOMMENDATION

That the submission to Alberta Infrastructure of a request for \$60,000 in concept development funding for 2002 to assist in reviewing the feasibility of a junior high school in the northeast Mill Woods/Meadows area be approved.

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On December 12, 2000, a delegation to the board, representing a number of residents in the northeast Mill Woods neighbourhoods of Jackson Heights and Kiniski Gardens as well as The Meadows neighbourhoods of Larkspur, and Wild Rose, was heard. The delegation requested that the district provide a new junior high school to serve these four neighbourhoods and submitted a 1,700-name petition in support of the new school. The presenters provided the following rationale for their request:

- There is sufficient enrolment in the area to support the school.
- A school would enable students to attend junior high in their community.
- A school would address the bus ride times to and from the designated schools and would contribute to a sense of community for the area.

The administration has reviewed area plans and enrolment data for these neighbourhoods and presents the following relevant information:

- In general, junior high schools are designated to accommodate students from more than one neighbourhood, and attendance areas are planned accordingly. The newest junior high schools in the district were designed with a core capacity for 440 students.
- The delegation represented residents and parents in two separate plan areas: Mill Woods west of 34 Street and The Meadows east of 34 Street.
- During the development of these areas, two junior high school sites were reserved to accommodate future junior high school students, as shown on Appendix I.
- One of the building envelopes is reserved in the Kiniski Gardens neighbourhood in Mill Woods next to Julia Kiniski School. Its planned junior high attendance area is Jackson Heights and Kiniski Gardens, previously known as the Burnewood area.

- The other building envelope is reserved in Larkspur in The Meadows next to Velma E. Baker School. Its planned junior high attendance area is Larkspur, Wild Rose, and the western half of the Silver Berry neighbourhood, which is just beginning development.
- Typically, about 650 junior high students living in a school's attendance area would be used as a criterion to justify a new school for that area. Presently there are 386 living in the Jackson Heights/Kiniski Gardens area and 185 living in Larkspur and Wild Rose. Under the current plans for these two residential areas, there are insufficient numbers to justify a new school proposal for either area.
- The delegation requested a junior high school to serve all four neighbourhoods. Although currently there are 571 students living in the four neighbourhoods, plans for the two attendance areas indicate a total projected long-term enrolment of about 1,275 junior high students.
- When the elementary school in Jackson Heights was reconfirmed as a priority for 2001, the administration examined the option of adding a junior high component to the proposal. This was not done because enrolment projections for the area would not justify it at this time, and because, in any case, the limited size of the vacant school site in Jackson Heights means that a junior high component would not be physically feasible in that location.
- Currently, Hardisty School is designated for junior high students living in Jackson Heights, Ottewell for Kiniski Gardens and Larkspur, and Donnan for Wild Rose and Silver Berry.

Because the delegation's requested approach would require a redesign of the sites and the accommodation plans that were put in place when they were acquired, it is recommended that the district request concept development funding to examine the implications and feasibility of this approach. The funding would assist the district in generating and assessing alternative accommodation options to the provision of a junior high school in each of the two plan areas as initially envisioned, including the option proposed by the delegation. The study would also consider transportation service and potential impacts on existing schools. Consultation with community residents and other stakeholders would be an important element of the study.

In terms of assigning a district priority for this study, it is recommended that the new construction priorities submitted for 2000 and 2001 in the capital submission not be changed, but that the concept development request be included as an amendment to the 2002 submission. The current designated receiving schools for the four neighbourhoods will have sufficient space to accommodate projected junior high enrolment from the area at least until the 2002 study is completed and any resulting capital construction proposals are submitted.

Following consideration of this report, a written response to the petition will also be prepared.

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APPENDIX I - Northeast Mill Woods and The Meadows: Planned Junior High Attendance Areas