EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

January 26, 2010

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Schmidt, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: <u>Dialogue Partners Presentation: Greater Hardisty Area and City Centre
                Education Partnership Reviews</u>

ORIGINATOR: T. Parker, Assistant Superintendent

RESOURCE
STAFF: Jack Geldart, Ann Parker, Lorne Parker, Cindy Skolski

INFORMATION

In June 2009, the Administration retained Dialogue Partners Inc. to conduct public engagement activites as part of Sector Planning work in the District. As directed by the Board, sector reviews proceeded on an accelerated basis in the Greater Hardisty Area (GHA) and in the City Centre Education Partnership (CCEP) schools.

Dialogue Partners Inc. has consulted widely with stakeholders and provided an Executive Summary of input received (Attachment I) and a detailed public engagement report (Attachment II).

The Administration will prepare recommendations with due consideration of the input received through Dialogue Partners. The recommendations will be presented to Board on February 9, 2010.

In March 2010, reviews will begin in the West 1, Central and South Central sectors.

CS:gm

Attachment I – Executive Summary for Greater Hardisty and City Centre Education
                Partnership Areas
Attachment II – Public Engagement Report for Greater Hardisty and City Centre Education
                Partnership Areas

Sector Planning Public Engagement Report
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Greater Hardisty & City Centre Education Partnership Areas

This Executive Summary contain three parts:
- Part 1 – Process
- Part 2 – Results
- Part 3 – Evaluation

PART 1 - PROCESS

Values based approach

The engagement process for sector planning was developed with a methodology designed to identify areas of agreement, identify and resolve conflict, create a forum for values based engagement, information sharing, and productive discussion.

A phased approach to engagement was implemented, designed to provide a series of opportunities that encouraged participants to:

- readily identify their interests
- talk about what was most important to them in relation to the topic
- explore the values they brought to the discussion that would support development of options for a path forward
- gain a deeper understanding of various perspectives
- weigh the "hard" issues of facts, reality, and values and propose options for the future that reflect those things

Best Practises

We grounded our public engagement in the following principles that guide our practice and are based on our previous experience on issues of high emotion or controversy:

- Inclusion and Outreach
- Diversity of perspective, viewpoint and experience
- Creating space for people's emotion, concerns, fears etc.
- Bringing people together to learn and understand from each other, rather than engaging people in "silos" of similar thinking
- Talking about the "hard" issues
- Engaging community, partners, kids, organizations, AND staff in the conversation
- Creating a different kind of conversation, based on values and dialogue
- Openness, transparency and accountability in sharing information and reporting on what was said
- Linking input to decision making
- Multiple opportunities for input

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- Building capacity among participants to talk to each other and the District in an open, respectful, meaningful way

Public Engagement Focus:
Exploring the possibilities and challenges of school space as an important part of a complete and vibrant community

Public Engagement Goals:
- Gathering community and stakeholder input that would be used in drafting recommendations for the path forward, and for decision making.
- Involving a broad and diverse range of interested and affected stakeholders, with a variety of perspectives throughout the project.
- Creating and implementing multiple opportunities for meaningful dialogue and a value based discussion.
- Providing participants with information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
- Raising awareness and understanding about the challenges and opportunities affecting space allocation and configuration across the school board.
- Developing and implementing the public engagement process in an open, transparent, accountable, and meaningful way.
- Using a values and principles based approach where areas of common ground and collective wisdom become a lens to deliberate on issues of diversity or differences.
- Contributing to the stakeholder's capacity to participate by supporting and enriching skills and experience in public engagement processes.

Communication Goals
- Creating awareness and understanding among parents and other stakeholders about the project by providing easy to understand, easy to access, accurate, and timely information
- Fostering clarity among internal stakeholders relative to the goals and opportunities of the public engagement process
- Building good community relations and support for the process by being open, honest, and transparent, as well as responsive to issues that arise as part of project development
- Building support for the public involvement process by encouraging open lines of communication between EPSB and process participants
- Providing information about how the public's input has been used in the decision making process
- Providing relevant and easily understandable information about the issues impacting the Greater Hardisty and City Centre areas

Communication Activities & Participation Rates

Communication Activity	Number of Participants Contacted or Participating
Interviews	79 interviews and/or email and fax comments received.
Connect2Edmonton	2,712 views of information and posts on site. 58 separate posts by 20 different contributors.
Facebook	Four facebook posts to each of 21 different facebook sites (totalling 84 posts), reaching 2,343 members.
Project Website	From the period October 1 – December 31, 2009, there were 11,943 page views, 1,286 visits to the website, and 1,115 unique visitors.
E-newsletters	Five issues of the newsletter, sent to 1029+ email contacts between mid October and mid December *(approximately 60% of the contacts in the database are organizations, community leagues and other interested "groups" and 40% are individuals).* The "open" rate of the electronic newsletter was 25%, considerably higher than the industry average of 14-20%.
Posters and hard copy materials in schools	Posters and hard copies of workbooks distributed to all schools and a large number of community organizations, outlining opportunities to participate .
Backpack letters	Four separate backpack letters sent to all 11 schools *(sent home with approximately 980+ children in CCEP and 850+ children in Greater Hardisty).* One sent in September, one in October, two in November.
Trustee Updates	Four updates sent to EPSB Trustees between October and January.
Staff Updates	Three updates sent to 304 staff in Greater Hardisty and CCEP areas, and 1 update sent to all District staff.
Principal Updates	Four updates sent to twelve principals in both areas between October and January.
Partner / Organization Updates	Three electronic updates sent to 36 partner organizations. In addition, the Chamber of Voluntary Organizations posted the project information on their website, and distributed to their contact list of organizations on our behalf.
City of Edmonton contacts	Seven emails / phone calls with the City to arrange a meeting, as well as representation by the City on the Engagement

Communication Activity	Number of Participants Contacted or Participating
	Advisory Committee. Information shared with multiple City contacts including Community Recreation Coordinators, who attended and participated in activities.
Advertisements	Two insertions in Edmonton Journal, two insertions in Edmonton Sun, and one insertion in Examiner on each of four different weeks.
Media releases	Two Media releases about upcoming events.
School meetings	Four meetings held in response to specific requests to provide additional information on the process and how to get involved with schools, parents or community groups. Approximately 60 participants in total over 4 meetings.
"Other" emails and phone calls	Throughout the project we responded to approximately 20 voice mail inquiries requesting information about how to participate, as well as an additional 30 general email inquiries.
Totals: 16 different communication tools used to share information and encourage participation in the project (many of these tools were used multiple times, like the newsletters, updates, backpack letters, facebook postings, advertisements etc).	**Totals:** Approximately 6,800+ individuals or groups contacted or provided with information (this does not include advertisements, media releases, page views on Connect2Edmonton or the website etc. The count refers to the approximate number of individuals /organizations who were provided with information or visited a site.)

Engagement Activities & Participation Rates

Engagement Activity	Participation Rates
Workbooks	1000 workbooks printed and distributed. 242 completed workbooks returned, including approximately 25 workbooks that represented group discussions with multiple participants. 53% of these workbooks were from the CCEP area, and 45% were from Greater Hardisty. The remainder were unknown or from elsewhere in the City.
Workbook Training	Three community based training sessions were held as well as one additional training session for EPSB staff. A total of 30 participants participated over the four sessions.
Forums – CCEP, Greater Hardisty, EPSB Staff	November 12 with focus on Greater Hardisty = 42 participants

Engagement Activity	Participation Rates
	November 14 with focus on CCEP = 37 participants November 14 for EPSB staff = 12 participants Total participants for forums = 91 participants
Workshops – CCEP, Greater Hardisty, EPSB Staff	November 30 for Greater Hardisty = 56 participants December 1 for CCEP area = 15 participants December 2 for EPSB staff = 34 participants Total participants for workshops = 105
Partner Workshop	December 1 with 12 participants representing 12 different partner organizations
Online comments	4 comments / input received
Meeting with the City of Edmonton	January 4, 2010 with 20 participants
"Other" input	Approximately 30 "other" comments were provided (includes voice mail, emails, faxes and letters).
Phone Calls	Throughout the process, we made phone calls to organizations, individuals, and participants encouraging participation in engagement activities. Towards the end of the process, we also made specific phone calls to set up additional meetings and gather information on why some people had not participated to date.
Multicultural Health Brokers meeting	Meeting scheduled with new and emerging refugee and immigrant community leaders on January 12, 2010. Approximately 25 participants.
Engagement Advisory Committee	Four meetings of the Engagement Advisory Committee were held with 25 members representing a wide diversity of interests and perspectives.
Total Events = 21 events or activities	**Total participants = 600+ participants**

Total Project Communication and Participation Rates

Event Totals:	Participation Totals:
• 16 different communication tools used to share information and encourage participation in the project, most used multiple times	• Approximately 6,800+ individuals or groups contacted or provided with information

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• 21 Different Engagement Events or Activities to gather input, ideas, concerns and suggestions	• 600+ participants attending events or providing input

Adjustments to the Process

With responsiveness and flexibility as cornerstones of meaningful engagement and good process, we made a number of adjustments to the Engagement and Communications Plans throughout process in order to respond to input, comments, activities, or new information. In addition, we conducted an evaluation after every event and phase, and reviewed our communications and engagement objectives and materials on an ongoing basis to identify where we were succeeding and where we needed to adjust the process.

We were able to implement the following changes to the Public Engagement Process:

- Child Care
- Meetings at schools / with communities unable to or uncomfortable about participating in other ways
- Adjustments to message and materials
- Adjustments to online engagement
- Translation / Interpretation
- Changes to timelines to respond to concerns about timing
- Online input re: options extended
- Meetings with Principals and Principal Updates
- Changes to the Partner Workshop
- Additional meeting to engage the City of Edmonton

Finding out why some people have not participated

In reviewing our participation numbers and diversity, we identified that while we received considerable input from parents, organizations, and partners in both areas, we had a smaller amount of input and participation from multicultural and aboriginal communities. Instead of making assumptions about why we weren't hearing from these people, we decided to ask them directly if they had participated, and if they had not, why they had not been involved.

This is what we learned:

- Participation on this topic doesn't relate to their "identity", the issues that are most important to them, or the issues they are dealing with at the time
- Their children are in a good school, and they believe this will continue to be the case
- They are focused on more critical issues (housing, employment, food etc)
- They come from a culture where they don't speak out and they didn't think this was meant for them
- The workshop approach may have been culturally inappropriate for some
- Parents feel defeated by the myriad of issues affecting them

- Some have already participated and can't do so on an ongoing basis

PART 2 – RESULTS

Overall Themes of Input

It should be noted that the focus of the engagement was on qualitative input, not on quantity of input, and the themes that converged, as well as those that were divergent, have been highlighted in this report. Input and themes were not "ranked" according to the volume of input relating to a particular school or idea.

A number of themes emerged from participant input and comments that are not directly applicable to the sector planning principles, partnerships or options for school space use or closure. These themes included:
- Desire for decision makers to be part of the conversation
- Timing
- Language: sector planning vs. school closure
- Provide opportunities for input in ways other than face to face
- Open boundaries and programs of choice
- Entire City vs. sector by sector
- Rethink how space is viewed
- Working with the City
- Meaningful Public Consultation
- The Value of Schools to Students

Principles for Sector Planning

As noted earlier, the engagement process was structured in a phased approach that started with a discussion of what was important to people, and the principles they felt should guide the conversation. The primary intention was to get people to identify and share what is most important to them, to talk to each other and with EPSB in a different way, to build capacity for engagement, and THEN to initiate a discussion about school closure.

Participants were asked to comment on the planning principles guiding sector planning and propose additional comments, ideas and thoughts.   A number of comments were received on the existing Sector Planning Principles, with some modifications and or adjustments to a few of them. Overall, the existing sector planning principles were supported.

From participant input on the sector planning principles, three new guiding principles and a general "statement of intention" emerged, applicable to sector planning overall and not specific to any particular area. These three new proposed principles are:
- Overall best interests of the entire community over the long term
- Inclusion

- Partnership and Collaboration

One over-arching statement of intention guiding sector planning was also made: Be realistic about what can be achieved.

Working with Partners

Key themes related to partnerships and school space emerged from participant input, as well as a number of comments and suggestions about the use of school space after a closure takes place.

- Different approach to administration of school space with partners
- Criteria for Partners in school space
- Clear criteria for partners using school space emerged from participant input:
    o Organizations that offer programs or services that are supportive of students
    o Organizations that offer programs or services that are supportive of healthy families, kids, and community
    o Organizations that offer programs or services that are supportive of lifelong learning
    o Priority should be given to not for profits with a mandate of community benefit versus commercial interests
    o It was noted that the organizations do not have to be delivering a program or service in a specific school, and could instead be leasing office space. Emphasis was on the organizational mandate and compatibility with District mandate
    o These criteria applied to partners using school space in an existing school as well as partners using school space after closure.
- Safety
- Collaboration between partners and organizations

The City of Edmonton

Participant input relating to the City of Edmonton's role in sector planning included:
- The City needs to be part of the discussion.
- Residents are members of the same community, regardless of who is delivering the service or program to them, and they would appreciate being engaged in an integrated conversation on issues that affect their community.

At the meeting held with the City of Edmonton, a number of opportunities and challenges were identified, along with some high level themes that should be considered as part of sector planning:
- There needs to be education – within the community and within the two organizations – about the roles, plans, strategies, and projects being considered and implemented

- There needs to be more dialogue and understanding between the two organizations about their respective roles and needs
- There needs to be action on working together in a more effective, collaborative way about issues that affect Edmontonians within their respective mandates
- More discussion is needed to clarify what happens next

Greater Hardisty Area – Area Specific Criteria for School Space Use / School Closure options

Area Specific Criteria for School Space Use

While the sector planning principles guide the allocation, configuration, and use of school space throughout all sectors across the City, the specific criteria for school space noted below apply to the entire Greater Hardisty area, are specific to the needs of those participants, and are directly related to implementation of any closure option.

1. Pool Resources and Achieve Efficiencies
2. Encourage and Increase Partnerships
3. Additional and Varied Programs
4. Safety
5. Child Care

Options for school closure in Greater Hardisty

While the majority of respondents suggested two schools close, the end configuration and the opinions regarding which two specific schools should close was frequently different.

Option for Moving Forward	Indication of Support (listed in order of priority)
Close Two schools	1
Keep Hardisty School Open	2
Keep Gold Bar School Open	3
Keep Hardisty & Gold Bar Schools Open	4
Keep Hardisty & Fulton Schools Open	5
Keep Fulton School Open	6
Maintain the Logos program	7
Close One School	8
Keep Capilano School Open	9
Keep a Junior High in Greater Hardisty	10

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Other Comments	11
Close Hardisty School	12
Close No Schools	13

Two distinct options emerged in the Greater Hardisty area:
- **Keep Hardisty and Fulton school open, and close Capilano and Gold Bar schools**
- **Keep Hardisty and Gold Bar schools open, and close Capilano and Fulton schools**

Specific comments related to each school in the Greater Hardisty area can be reviewed in the full report. In addition, participants discussed the following topics:
- Kindergarten to Grade 9 versus Grades 7-9
- Find out why or why not families are choosing or leaving the area
- Consider different configuration
- Include additional schools in the review
- Provide support for transition and change

City Centre Education Partnership Area – Area Specific Criteria for School Space Use / School Closure options

Area Specific Criteria for School Space Use
As noted in the section of the report on the Greater Hardisty area, what is important to people about when, where, how, and by whom school space should be used can be considered as a lens through which to view what happens to the collective group of schools in the area. While the sector planning principles guide the allocation, configuration, and use of school space throughout all sectors across the City, the specific criteria for school space noted below apply to the entire City Centre Education Partnership Area (CCEP), are specific to the needs of those participants, and are directly related to implementation of any closure option.

1. Schools as a Community Hub
2. Pool Resources and Achieve Efficiencies
3. Encourage and Increase Partnerships
4. Additional and Varied Programs
5. Transportation and Safety
6. Support and Celebration of the Unique Nature of CCEP
7. Child Care
8. Adequate Funding to Support Needs

Options for school closure in CCEP

Option for Moving Forward	Indication of Support (listed in order of priority)
Keep Specific Schools Open, specifically John A. MacDougall School, Norwood, Eastwood, McCauley (other schools did not receive significant mention)	1
Keep four schools open and use one or two closed facilities for community purposes, closing the other(s)	2
Keep all the schools open	3
Keep five schools open and use one or two closed facilities for community purposes, closing the other schools	4
Other comments	5

Beyond the comments related to keep specific schools open, there were three distinct themes that emerged from the comments relating to options for moving forward in CCEP. The themes noted below are referenced in order of quantity of input received.

I. **Keep four schools open and use one or two closed facilities for community purposes, closing the other(s)**
II. **Keep all the schools open**
III. **Keep five schools open and use one or two closed facilities for community purposes, closing the other schools**

However, within those three themes there was wide divergence on the configuration, programs, and which buildings remained open.

A number of other comments relating to school closure options in CCEP were provided, including:
- Frustration with the District opening schools in new developments while engaging in a conversation about closing schools in the city centre area.
- Questioning of some of the assumptions guiding the discussion and suggestions that the District focused on understanding the root causes of enrolment problems
- Emphasis that this discussion should be focused on the kids, not the money

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- Support for the school most important to some
- The challenges of accelerated timing for the review in the CCEP area

PART 3 – EVALUATION

When the engagement plan was developed, an evaluation plan was also created. Prior to initiating the project, it was important to identify what success would look like when we were complete. In order to do that, we identified a number of Evaluation Success Indicators:
- Participant satisfaction that the project goals and objectives and the role of the stakeholders in the process have been clearly defined and understood.
- A transparent public engagement process that allows easy access to input and material by all interested parties.
- An open and accessible public engagement process that allows for equitable participation by all stakeholders through a variety of appropriate methods.
- Participants are satisfied with how the process evolved and that the process resulted in meaningful and valuable input for consideration by the decision-makers.
- A broad and diverse range of stakeholders representing the demographics of the area are engaged in the process.

Measuring Success
191 out of a possible 315 participants (61%) completed evaluation surveys, as evaluation surveys were provided at 16 out of 21 engagement events (76%). It should be noted that not all numbers noted below total 100% as some respondents did not answer all questions.

Success Goal or Indicator	Evaluation
Use input in recommendations for decision making	Until a final decision is made by Trustees, it will not be possible to make a direct link between participant input and decision making.
Involve a broad, diverse range of interested and affected stakeholders	Total direct participation over the course of the project totaled 600+ with roughly equal participation from the two affected areas. Depending on the activity, participation ranged with Greater Hardisty having higher participation in face to face meetings, and CCEP having higher participation in workbook submissions. Observation at face to face meetings determined diverse participation of parents and community members at the Community Forums and workbook training. Workbook submissions were also made by a wide range of participants including students.
Multiple opportunities for dialogue and values based	On evaluation surveys, 81% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the process provided meaningful

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Success Goal or Indicator	Evaluation
discussion	opportunities for dialogue and values based discussion. 11% of respondents neither agreed or disagreed with this, 2% of respondents disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed.
Provide info about how to get involved through easy to understand, accessible, timely information	On evaluation surveys, 90% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that easy to understand, accessible information was provided. 10% neither agreed or disagreed with this statement.
Raise awareness and understanding about the issues by providing relevant and easy to understand information	On evaluation surveys, 71% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that their understanding about the issues had increased or they had received the information they needed. 19% neither agreed or disagreed with this, 7% disagreed and .05% strongly disagreed.
Open, transparent, responsive, and accountable process	On evaluation surveys, 72% of respondents felt that the process was open, transparent and responsive. 15% neither agreed or disagreed with this, 6% disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed.
Contribute to stakeholder capacity, enriching skills and experience	On evaluation surveys, 96% of respondents felt that their skills and knowledge had increased and they were prepared to facilitate discussions. 4% neither agreed or disagreed.
Participant satisfaction with process	On evaluation surveys, 77% of participants indicated the process had met their expectations and/or the stated objectives. 19% neither agreed or disagreed with this, 2% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed.

Sector Planning Public Engagement Report

Report Contents

Part 1 – Process and Communication

  A. Methodology & Approach
  B. Engagement Goals and Objectives
  C. Stakeholder Identification & Outreach
  D. Communication Goals and Objectives

Part 2 – Engagement Activities and Results

  A. Engagement and Communication Events, Objectives & Participation Rates
  B. Adjustments to the Process
  C. Overall Themes and Principles for Sector Planning
  D. Working with Partners and the City of Edmonton
  E. Greater Hardisty Area – Criteria and Options for school space / school closure
  F. City Centre Education Partnership (CCEP) Area – Criteria and Options for School space / school closure

Part 3 – Project Evaluation

Appendices Available Upon Request – Engagement "What Was Said" Reports
(Also Available on the Sector Planning website)

- Interview Report What Was Said, September – October 2009
- Public Engagement Advisory Committee Terms of Reference
- Public Engagement Advisory Committee minutes – September 17, October 29, November 19
- Workbook Sample – Extended Version
- Workbook Sample – Short Version
- Workbook Training Materials
- Compilation of Workbooks, January 15, 2010
- November 12 Community Forum – Greater Hardisty
- November 14 Community Forum – CCEP
- November 14 Forum – EPSB Staff
- November 12 CCEP Staff Forum (from a session held outside engagement process)
- Greater Hardisty Workshop Materials
- November 30 Greater Hardisty Workshop
- CCEP Workshop Materials
- December 1 CCEP Workshop
- December 1 Partner Workshop

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- December 2 EPSB Staff Workshop
- January 4 City meeting
- Additional Input, comments, questions

Appendices Available Upon Request – Evaluation Reports and Other Material
(Also Available on the Sector Planning website)

- Public Engagement Advisory Committee meetings – September 17, October 29, November 19, January 5
- Workbook Training Sessions – October 26, October 29, November 3, November 7
- November 12 Community Forum – Greater Hardisty
- November 14 Community Forum – CCEP
- November 14 Forum – EPSB Staff
- November 30 Greater Hardisty Workshop
- December 1 CCEP Workshop
- December 1 Partner Workshop
- December 2 EPSB Staff Workshop
- January 4 City meeting
- Overall Project Evaluation Report

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Part 1 – Process and Communication

Part 1 of the report contains the following sections:

- A.   Methodology & Approach
- B.   Engagement Goals and Objectives
- C.   Stakeholder Identification & Outreach
- D.   Communication Goals and Objectives

Part 1A – Methodology & Approach

Values based approach

In any kind of emotional, complex situation, the best way to approach engagement is by focussing on what is most important to people, working to identify and resolve conflict, and build common ground. We approached sector planning from this perspective with a methodology designed to identify areas of agreement, create a forum for values based engagement, information sharing, and productive discussion.

Our experience told us that once people had engaged in these first conversations, they would then be capable of grappling with the hard tasks of weighing facts and reality with community values, and finally be able to propose options for the path forward.
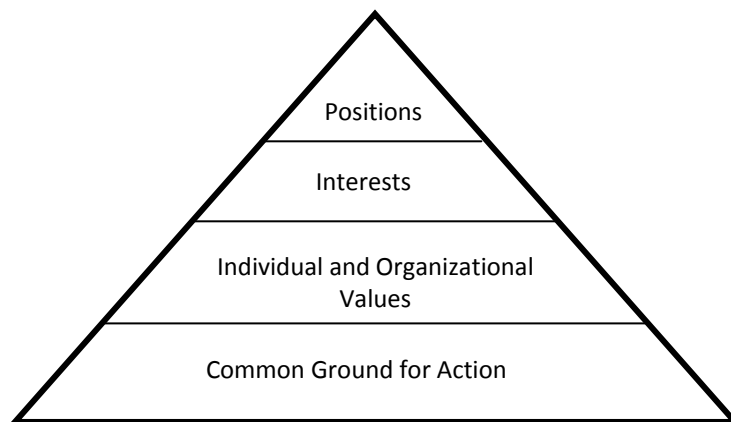
The phased approach that was implemented in the public engagement plan was designed to provide a series of opportunities that encouraged participants to:

- readily identify their interests
- explore the values they brought to the discussion that would support development of options for a path forward
- gain a deeper understanding of various perspectives
- weigh the "hard" issues of facts, reality, and values and propose options for the future that reflect those things

> From a participant:
>
> *The high level of integrity that is modeled and expected in the transparent process will help to develop greater trust in a transparent, fair and meaningful process for further sector reviews.*

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A simple diagram below illustrates our Strategic Dialogue Model©.

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                    /\
                   /  \
                  / Positions \
                 /------------\
                /  Interests   \
               /----------------\
              / Individual and   \
             / Organizational     \
            /      Values          \
           /------------------------\
          /  Common Ground for Action \
         /----------------------------\
```

The idea was to drill down from the very narrow level of "positions" to establish a broad base of support for action that is based upon "common ground" or common interests. The facilitation team worked to ensure that all stakeholder interests were made explicit so that they could be discussed and considered across stakeholder groups. The facilitation team then carefully captured viewpoints to summarize areas of convergence and divergence.

Best Practises

We grounded our public engagement in the following principles that guide our practice and are based on our previous experience on issues of high emotion or controversy:
- Inclusion and Outreach
- Diversity of perspective, viewpoint and experience
- Creating space for people's emotion, concerns, fears etc.
- Bringing people together to learn and understand from each other, rather than engaging people in "silos" of similar thinking
- Talking about the "hard" issues
- Engaging community, partners, kids, organizations, and staff in the conversation
- Creating a different kind of conversation, based on values and dialogue
- Openness, transparency and accountability in sharing information and reporting on what was said
- Linking input to decision making
- Multiple opportunities for input
- Building capacity among participants to talk to each other and the District in an open, respectful, meaningful way

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) is the leading global organization dedicated to best practices in public participation. IAP2 describes meaningful consultation as requiring three key foundations or elements:

- A clearly defined goal or objective
- A link between a consultation process and a resulting decision, or a clear focus
- A values-based process

The public engagement process for EPSB Sector Planning was based on the foundation of this international best practice.

Prior to developing the Public Engagement Plan, we conducted a series of interviews with a sampling of staff, elected officials, and stakeholders to gather information. This information was related to issues, concerns, suggestions, a general level of awareness and/or understanding, and other issues that may impact the public engagement program. We asked specific questions used in a conflict or issues assessment to gather information that provided us with an understanding of areas of agreement or disagreement, and opportunities for a path forward.

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These interviews identified a number of priorities for the public in this engagement project, including:

- Best interests of children first and foremost
- Access to quality education / programs
- Schools as centres of communities
- Trust & Transparency
- Different process than before
- Adequate Time
- Bring people together
- Inclusion

Based on our own best practices and experience in engagement, IAP2's international best practices, and what we learned from participants about what was important to them in this process, we developed the engagement focus and plan.

> From participants:
>
> *A lot of parents I talked to were convinced the decision has already been made, so why bother with this process? I think not standing up and speaking is also a statement, so I hope this effort with the workbooks, etc. has not been in vain.*
>
> *It feels as though the decision has already been made and the feedback from the community is just to appear as though the community has a say.*

Part 1B – Engagement Goals & Objectives

Public Engagement Focus:

Exploring the possibilities and challenges of school space as an important part of a complete and vibrant community

From that focus, we identified a number of overarching goals that would guide the public engagement project:

- Gathering community and stakeholder input that would be used in drafting recommendations for the path forward, and for decision making.
- Involving a broad and diverse range of interested and affected stakeholders, with a variety of perspectives throughout the project.
- Creating and implementing multiple opportunities for meaningful dialogue and a value based discussion.
- Providing participants with information they need to participate in a meaningful way.

- Raising awareness and understanding about the challenges and opportunities affecting space allocation and configuration across the school district.
- Developing and implementing the public engagement process in an open, transparent, accountable, and meaningful way.
- Using a values and principles based approach where areas of common ground and collective wisdom become a lens to deliberate on issues of diversity or differences.
- Contributing to the stakeholder's capacity to participate by supporting and enriching skills and experience in public engagement processes.

With these goals, we broke the project down into three distinct phases. Each phase had a specific goal that aligned with the overall goals, as well as events and activities designed to achieve that goal.

NOTE: More information on each activity and participation rates for events are noted in Part 2 of the report.

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More information on the specifics of each Phase is noted below.

Phase 1 – Planning and Developing a Meaningful, Effective Engagement Program	
Phase 1 Timing & Goal:	**Phase 1 Activities:**
Timing: July – Early October *Goal:* To develop a meaningful, effective engagement plan that reflects the needs and interests of stakeholders and the EPSB, and adheres to the overall project goals.	• Meeting with the EPSB project team • Compiling and reviewing background materials • Preparing project charter and detailed workplan • Compiling a preliminary database of stakeholders • Preparing and distributing information to parents and stakeholders about the process, and inviting them to provide input to a questionnaire • Stakeholder Interviews and Questionnaire: Conducting interviews with a targeted list of stakeholders and providing a questionnaire to any interested stakeholders to complete • Reviewing and Analyzing stakeholder input from the interviews and using it to develop and refine the Public Engagement Plan • Advisory Committee: Initiating work with the Engagement Advisory Committee for Sector Planning, including development of mandate, terms of reference, and committee membership • Developing and Finalizing the Public Engagement, Communications and Evaluation Plans for the project • Meeting with Greater Hardisty and CCEP area principals • Presenting the Public Engagement Plan to Trustees

	• Creating the project website
Phase 2 - Engaging stakeholders in a Conversation on Values and Principles guiding space allocation and configuration within vibrant communities	
Phase 2 Timing & Goal	**Phase 2 Activities:**
Timing: Late October – Late November *Goals:* • To raise awareness and understanding about the challenges and opportunities affecting space allocation and configuration across the District • To implement an open, transparent, accountable, and meaningful public engagement program • To engage stakeholders in a values and principles based conversation on space requirements and configuration • To build stakeholder capacity to participate by supporting and enriching skills and experience in public engagement processes	• Preparing and posting information on http://sectorreview.bangthetable.com/ and on Connect2Edmonton at: http://www.connect2edmonton.ca/ • Preparing and distributing multiple editions of electronic newsletters to a database of 1000+ contacts as well as to area staff • Preparing backpack letters to be sent home with students at the affected schools • Writing and distributing multiple updates to Greater Hardisty and CCEP Principals, Trustees, community groups, and organizations • Writing and issuing media releases • Developing and distributing 2 versions of the Community Conversation Workbook through schools and on line • Developing and delivering training workshops to support participants to facilitate conversations with others in their community • Meeting with the Engagement Advisory Committee for Sector Planning • Convening Community Forums using an Open Space process with staff and in both Greater Hardisty and CCEP. • Enabling online engagement through the project website, Connect2Edmonton and Facebook

| **Phase 3 - Reflecting and Confirming Stakeholder Input in Reports for Decision Making and Identifying Options for Future Use of school space** ||

Phase 3 Timing & Goals	**Phase 3 Activities:**
Timing: Late November to Mid January *Goals:* - To summarize stakeholder input and identify themes and common ground - To gather stakeholder input, suggestions, and ideas on future options for school space - To develop final reports for presentation to Trustees	- Developing and Distributing multiple editions of electronic newsletters and sent to the database of over 1000+ contacts - Updates provided to Greater Hardisty and CCEP Principals & Trustees - Backpack letters sent home with students at the affected schools - Compiling summary and "what was said" reports - Writing final reports - Community Workshops with stakeholders in Greater Hardisty and CCEP, as well as a Partner Workshop and an internal EPSB staff workshop - Follow up telephone interviews with stakeholders to determine why they did not participate in the engagement process to date - Online Engagement activities continued - Advisory Committee meeting

From a participant: *Thanks for the opportunity for input. It really helped me lessen some of my fears.*

Part 1C – Stakeholder Identification & Outreach

With our own guiding principle of Inclusion, and participants indicating that inclusion was important to them, significant efforts were taken to ensure that the project exhausted every

avenue for sharing and providing information, as well as encouraging participation in this important conversation.

Part 2 of the report outlines in detail the extensive Communications and Engagement Activities and Participation Rates of the project. Of note are a number of additional actions that were taken to increase stakeholder identification and outreach.

Stakeholder Database

We developed a database of stakeholders, organizations, groups, and individuals when we started the project, based on our previous experience in Edmonton, with other school closure and education projects, and through research and background information. This database now contains over 2000+ contacts, over 1000+ of which include emails. At every opportunity throughout the project, we asked participants to join our contact list and inquired about other people we should engage in the conversation. Throughout the project we made personal phone calls to organizations and individuals to encourage participation. It should be noted that our contact list and database include organizations like community leagues, social and family services organizations, non profit groups, and more. All of these groups were encouraged to share the information with their members and contacts.

Working with Community Organizations

As noted above, we have worked with community organizations throughout the project to share information, encourage participation, and gather input. We also worked with the Chamber of Voluntary Organizations to provide information about the project to their members, talked to multiple community organizations about participation needs and input, and attended additional meetings wherever possible to provide information on the project.

Public Engagement Advisory Committee

Early in the process we worked with the District to create an Engagement Advisory Committee to provide input and suggestion on the sector planning engagement process. It was important that they review and evaluate the openness, transparency and accountability of the process, and act as a link to the community as well as interested or affected stakeholders through the organizations and communities they represent. Noted in Part 2 are more details on the input provided by the Public Engagement Advisory Committee, and their role in sharing information and encouraging participation in the process.
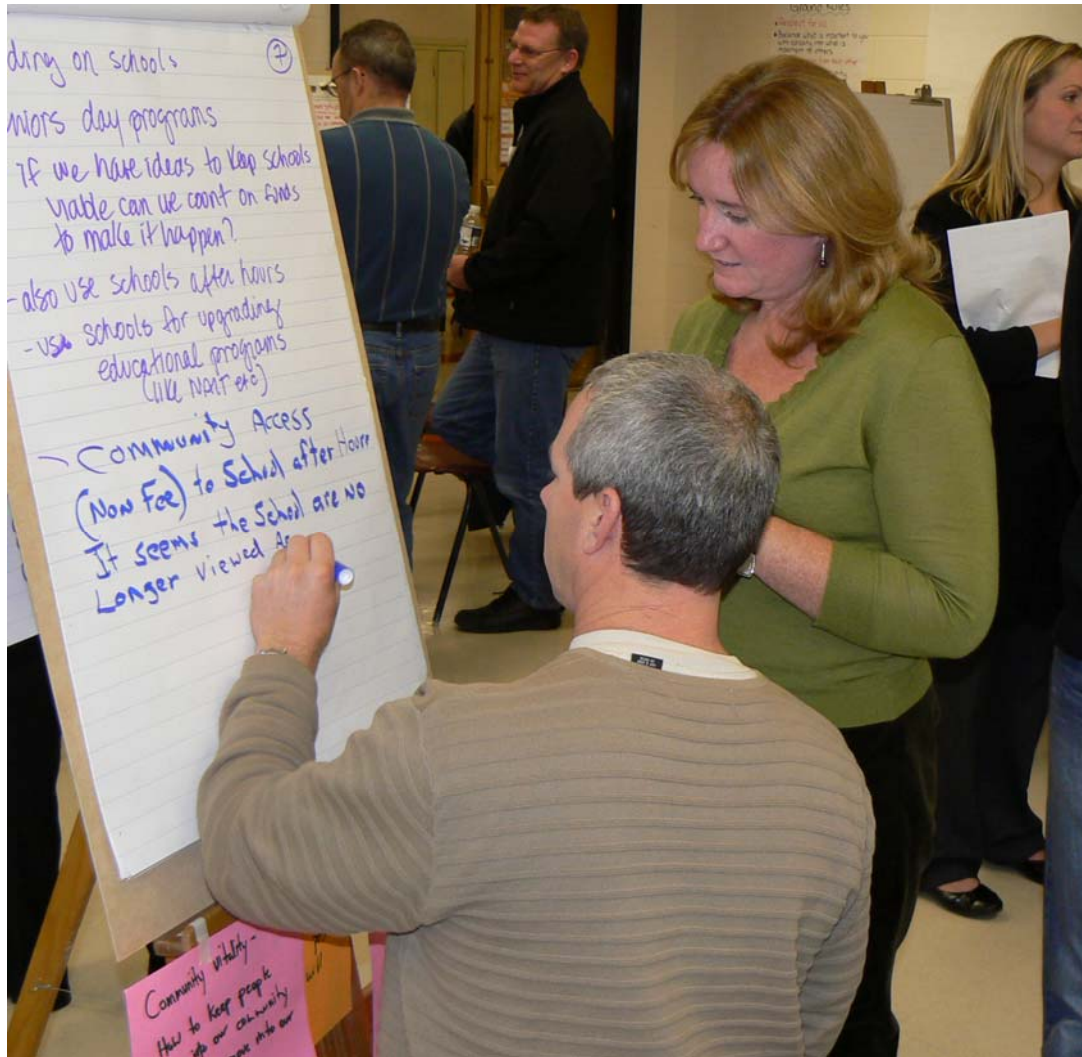
Part 1D – Communication Goals & Objectives

The ultimate goal of the Communications aspect of the project was to have a well-informed public that understands the issues and recognizes the opportunity for individuals to offer input into decisions being made.

Overall communication goals for the process included:
- Creating awareness and understanding among parents and other stakeholders about the project by providing easy to understand, easy to access, accurate, and timely information
- Fostering clarity among internal stakeholders relative to the goals and opportunities of the public engagement process

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- Building good community relations and support for the process by being open, honest, and transparent, as well as responsive to issues that arise as part of project development
- Building support for the public involvement process by encouraging open lines of communication between EPSB and process participants
- Providing information about how the public's input has been used in the decision making process
- Providing relevant and easily understandable information about the issues impacting the Greater Hardisty and City Centre areas

A number of communication tools were used to meet these goals. Both the goals and the specific activities that were undertaken are outlined in the Part 2 of the report.

Part 2 – Communication & Engagement Activities and Results

Part 2 of the report contains the following sections:

A. Communication and Engagement Events, Objectives and Participation Rates
B. Adjustments to the Process
C. Overall Themes and Principles for Sector Planning
D. Working with Partners and the City of Edmonton
E. Greater Hardisty Area – Criteria and Options for school space / school closure
F. City Centre Education Partnership (CCEP) Area – Criteria and Options for School space / school closure

Part 2A – Communication and Engagement Events, Objectives and Participation Rates

Communication Activity	Number of Participants Contacted or Participating
Interviews *Objective:* To fully understand the issues and perspectives from multiple viewpoints, and to use this information to develop a comprehensive Public Engagement Plan. To share information about the goals and objectives of the Public Engagement Plan. Targeted interviews with a wide variety of stakeholders from a variety of perspectives. Interviews were conducted by phone, in response to interview invitation and booking of scheduled interview.	Invitation to participate and questions distributed via backpack letter to all 11 schools in both areas *(sent home with approximately 980+ children in CCEP and 850+ children in Greater Hardisty).* Information posted on EPSB website. Stakeholders could respond to interview questions by fax, email, or drop off at schools. 79 interviews and/or email and fax comments received.
Connect2Edmonton *Objective:* To provide information on the sector planning project and to gather input from participants via an alternative vehicle to face to face events on the same questions being asked in other activities. To open lines of communication and provide information about some of the issues affecting the two areas. Connect2Edmonton was used instead of website discussion forums in order to maximize pre-existing online community of over 6000+ users, and well-known, credible online discussion forum.	2,712 views of information and posts on site. 58 separate posts by 20 different contributors. *For more information about Connect2Edmonton use in the project, see the next section.*
Facebook	Four facebook posts to each of 21 different facebook sites (totalling 84 posts), reaching 2,343 members.

Communication Activity	Number of Participants Contacted or Participating
Objective: To raise awareness of the project, its objectives and approach, and to prepare stakeholders for upcoming opportunities to participate. To utilize an existing network of interested stakeholders – parents, students, community members.	*For more information about Facebook use in the project, see the next section.*
Project Website *Objective:* To raise awareness of the project, its objectives and approach, and to prepare stakeholders for upcoming opportunities to participate. To provide an open, transparent place to share all the project information, as well as report on public engagement activities and events. To share information about the issues affecting the two areas.	From the period October 1 – December 31, 2009, there were 11,943 page views, 1,286 visits to the website, and 1,115 unique visitors.
E-newsletters *Objective:* To raise awareness of the project, its objectives and approach, and to prepare stakeholders for upcoming opportunities to participate. Language and format were tailored as the project progressed.	Five issues of the newsletter, sent to 1029+ email contacts between mid October and mid December *(approximately 60% of the contacts in the database are organizations, community leagues and other interested "groups" and 40% are individuals).* The "open" rate of the electronic newsletter was 25%, considerably higher than the industry average of 14-20%.
Posters and hard copy materials in schools *Objective:* To raise awareness of the project, its objectives and approach, and to prepare stakeholders for upcoming opportunities to participate.	Posters and hard copies of workbooks distributed to all schools and a large number of community organizations, outlining opportunities to participate .
Backpack letters	Four separate backpack letters sent to all 11

Communication Activity	Number of Participants Contacted or Participating
Objective: To provide updates on the project, its objectives, approach, and opportunities to participate. To share information and progress about input from the engagement process.	schools *(sent home with approximately 980+ children in CCEP and 850+ children in Greater Hardisty)*: -September 10 – about the project, interviews / email submissions, and questions -October 9 – about the project and how to get involved, upcoming events -November 9 – about the forums, talking about change is coming -November 25 – workshop advertisement encouraging participation in developing options about school closure
Trustee Updates *Objective:* To provide updates on the project, its objectives, approach, and opportunities to participate. To share information and progress about input from the engagement process.	Four updates sent to EPSB Trustees between October and January, providing information on activities, results and offering information about meetings.
Staff Updates *Objective:* To provide updates on the project, its objectives, approach, and opportunities to participate. To share information and progress about input from the engagement process.	Three updates sent to 304 staff in Greater Hardisty and CCEP areas, and 1 update sent to all District staff.
Principal Updates *Objective:* To provide updates on the project, its objectives, approach, and opportunities to participate. To share information and progress about input from the engagement process.	Four updates sent to twelve principals in both areas between October and January.
Partner / Organization Updates *Objective:*	Three electronic updates sent to 36 partner organizations.

Communication Activity	Number of Participants Contacted or Participating
To provide updates on the project, its objectives, approach, and opportunities to participate	In addition, the Chamber of Voluntary Organizations posted the project information on their website, and distributed to their contact list of organizations on our behalf.
City of Edmonton contacts *Objective:* To discuss opportunities and challenges of working together, and to respond to participant requests for discussion with the City about the issues being raised.	Seven emails / phone calls with the City to arrange a meeting, as well as representation by the City on the Engagement Advisory Committee. Multiple City contacts were included in the database, including Community Recreation Coordinators, who attended and participated in engagement activities.
Advertisements *Objective:* To provide information about upcoming opportunities to participate to a wide range of participants.	Two insertions in Edmonton Journal, two insertions in Edmonton Sun, and one insertion in Examiner on each of the following weeks: Week of November 2 Week of November 9 Week of November 23 Week of November 30
Media releases *Objective:* To provide information about upcoming opportunities to participate.	Media releases about upcoming events: October 13 November 9
School meetings *Objective:* To raise awareness of the project, its objectives and approach, and to prepare stakeholders for upcoming opportunities to participate To respond to requests from parents and/or school communities about their need for additional information.	Four meetings held in response to specific requests to provide additional information on the process and how to get involved with: Norwood School Parents Karen Community Capilano School Parent Council Eastwood School Parents & Community Approximately 60 participants in total over 4 meetings.
"Other" emails and phone calls	Throughout the project we responded to

Communication Activity	Number of Participants Contacted or Participating
Throughout the project a toll free contact number and email were provided for participants who wanted to ask questions or provide additional comments.	approximately 20 voice mail inquiries requesting information about how to participate, as well as an additional 30 general email inquiries.
NOTE: For more information on other vehicles for sharing information about the issues in CCEP and Greater Hardsity see "Workbooks" and "Workshops" in the next section on Public Engagement Activities	
Totals: 16 different communication tools used to share information and encourage participation in the project (many of these tools were used multiple times, like the newsletters, updates, backpack letters, facebook postings, advertisements etc).	**Totals:** Approximately 6,800+ individuals or groups contacted or provided with information (this does not include advertisements, media releases, page views on Connect2Edmonton or the website etc. The count refers to the approximate number of individuals /organizations who were provided with information or visited a site.)

From participants:

It is time to make a decision and move forward.

Transparency and accountability need to be maintained. I think this sector planning process is an excellent step forward. However, I am still leery that it is all for show. It's effectiveness and legitimacy as a process that considers what communities need and want remain to be seen.

I will not answer questions or participate in a blatantly phony exercise. The agenda to close schools with a token consultation is written all over this workbook.

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Recognizing that there are many schools in the two areas, we investigated the use of Facebook as a tool to share information and engage stakeholders in the sector planning public engagement process.

Efforts were made to find as many school or community related Facebook sites as possible, however many Facebook pages have a different title than the school name. By using web search engines versus Facebook searches, a number of new sites were uncovered in mid November 2009.

A news item on the project website asking visitors to let us know about any existing Facebook sites did not result in any additional pages being identified.   A total of 21 related sites representing 2,343 members were identified, as shown in the following table. Four separate postings were made to each of the 21 facebook pages, sharing different information or updates. A few discussion board conversations were initiated during the project, but there were no postings by facebook members in response to these discussions.

FACEBOOK SITES		
Date	Number of sites	Members
Oct. 29	13	
Nov. 2	15	984
Nov. 20	21	2,123
Nov. 27	21	2,343

Connect2Edmonton (C2E) was used as the online discussion forum for Sector Planning because it has a high number of users and is already familiar to many Edmontonians. A non-profit community group run by volunteers, the site has 6,465 members (524 of which are active), and there are 13,587 threads or discussions with 236,954 replies or comments related to those discussions. Overall, the C2E site has

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roughly 60,000 unique visitors a month. By using the existing discussion boards of C2E, the project was able to tap into an existing group of potential participants rather than generating internet traffic to a temporary site specific to the project.

Timed to coincide with the release of the Workbooks, discussions were initiated on C2E on November 3, 2009. Within hours of the first thread/discussion question, people were viewing the material and posting replies. The project was provided the top forum spot on the "Life in Edmonton" section.

A Guest Column entitled "Possible School Closures - How do we move forward together?" by Stephani Roy McCallum, was posted on the CE2 opening "splash page" on November 29, 2009. The text and question reflected the evolution of inquiry through the engagement process, and was similar to the materials used in the workshops on November 30 and December 1 and 2, 2009.

Questions similar to those used in the Workbook were posted on C2E so that responses could be coordinated with those of other aspects of the Sector Review process. Workbooks were often completed alone or in small groups, making it more difficult for others to know their thoughts. Through an electronic discussion board, all the responses are visible, and people often post new materials based on what has been said, so it creates a more shared experience. A notice and a direct link to the C2E website were available on the Project website, and information about the discussion forums was communicated in communications materials (electronic newsletters, updates etc).

A summary of results of the activity and use of the C2E Discussion are provided in the following table:

C2E ACTIVITY REPORT TO DECEMBER 16, 2009				
Question / Threads Posted November 3, 2009	To November 22, 2009		To December 16, 2009 (Guest column posted November 29, 2009)	
	Comments Posted (#)	Views (#)	Comments Posted (#)	Views (#)
Principles guiding the conversation	10	453	14	687
Share your thoughts on possibilities and challenges of school space	16	438	16	898
How might surplus space be used now and in the future?	7	586	18	662
Criteria for how/by whom surplus space is used	4	279	4	344
Guest Column Posted, Possible School Closures. How do we move forward together?			6	121

TOTAL	37	1,756	58	2,712

Highlights of the C2E activity include:
- The discussion topics and comments were viewed a combined total of 2,712 times.
- The highest number of views per thread was 898 regarding *"sharing your thoughts on the possibilities and challenges of school space".*
- 20 individuals posted a total of 58 comments, replies, and ideas to the discussions.
- 7 of these people were new to C2E as of November/December, 2009 (membership dates). It is possible that this process introduced them to C2E.
- Several individuals made multiple posts of comments, including 3 of the new C2E members.
- Some participants on C2E list their local community as Edmonton or left it blank. Other communities noted in the posts included: Norwood, Fulton Place/Capilano, West End, Oliver/Edmonton, and Highlands.

Input provided by participants from the electronic discussion board has been compiled and incorporated in the overall analysis of content input.

Engagement Activities & Participation Rates

In a similar way to the communication activities noted in the previous section, a large number of engagement activities were held, to gather input, comments, and suggestions from participants on school space as part of a complete and vibrant activity. As noted earlier, the engagement process was developed so that input, understanding, and dialogue built on itself. It was phased so that participants first talked about what was important to them, then built the capacity to engage on the issues in a different way, and finally deliberated on the facts and input to date in order to propose options for the future, including school closure.

Outlined below are the details of each engagement activity along with the participation information for each event.

Engagement Activity	Participation Rates
Workbooks *Objective:* To raise awareness about space issues, allocation, configuration, and challenges affecting communities. To create a "frame" for a value based discussion on the issues. To provide a flexible tool for participants to provide input, depending on their preference for hand written,	1000 workbooks printed and distributed. 242 completed workbooks returned, including approximately 25 workbooks that represented group discussions with multiple participants. 53% of these workbooks were from the CCEP area, and 45% were from Greater Hardisty. The remainder were unknown or from elsewhere in the City.

Engagement Activity	Participation Rates
online, or group submission. The workbooks were used by conversation hosts to hold their own discussions as well posted online and distributed in hard copy so individuals could complete them. There were two versions of the workbook produced – an expanded and a simplified version. The workbooks included factual information and examples, outlined some of the issues affecting the two areas, and then asked participants to consider the information and respond to a number of questions.	
Workbook Training *Objective:* Using workbooks put the conversation in the hands of trained volunteers who would host their own conversations and provide the input via recording worksheets. Community and organizational participants were taught facilitation skills and knowledge to host meaningful conversations using the workbook.	Three community based training sessions were held as well as one additional training session for EPSB staff. A total of 30 participants participated over the four sessions.
Forums – CCEP, Greater Hardisty, EPSB Staff *Objective:* To gather input on the principles and values of sector planning, with a focus on identifying suggestions and strategies for space configuration and allocation	November 12 with focus on Greater Hardisty = 42 participants November 14 with focus on CCEP = 37 participants November 14 for EPSB staff = 12 participants Total participants for forums = 91 participants
Workshops – CCEP, Greater	November 30 for Greater Hardisty = 56

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Engagement Activity	Participation Rates
Hardisty, EPSB Staff *Objective:* To create an opportunity for community and stakeholders to work through ideas and suggestions for space allocation and configuration in a hands on way, with a focus on both the community and individual schools. Workshop materials provided the factual and technical information requested by participants in previous engagement activities (budget, enrolment, facility etc. information) along with input on what had been heard to date, and asked them to consider this information and input and to propose options for the future.	participants December 1 for CCEP area = 15 participants December 2 for EPSB staff = 34 participants Total participants for workshops = 105
Partner Workshop *Objective:* To engage partners and potential partners in a targeted workshop on the principles, suggestions and strategies for space configuration and allocation. Originally scheduled for November 13. Rescheduled for December 1 when it was learned that the City and province were co-hosting an event with non profit organizations on social capital on November 13. We partnered with the Chamber of Voluntary Organizations to promote the rescheduled event to their members.	Over 200 invitations were extended to community based organizations and non profit groups, and on December 1, twelve participants representing twelve different partner organizations attended the Partner Workshop.
Online comments On website and/or opportunity to submit worksheets with options with an extended deadline (instead of online	4 comments / input received

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Engagement Activity	Participation Rates
questionnaire, December 15-January 4) *Objective:* To gather final input on opportunities for use of school space. To respond to comments about needing more time to submit input	
Meeting with the City of Edmonton *Objective:* To gather input on the opportunities and challenges of school space use from the City of Edmonton. To identify ideas for how the District and the City can work together. To respond to comments from participants about needing to engage the City in the conversation.	January 4, 2010 with 20 participants.
"Other" input comments, phone calls, emails, letters Objective: To provide an alternate venue for participants to provide their input.	Approximately 30 "other" comments were provided (includes voice mail, emails, faxes and letters).
Phone Calls *Objective:* To encourage participation in specific events or to gather information from participants about participation needs.	Throughout the process, we made phone calls to organizations, individuals, and participants encouraging participation in engagement activities. In particular, we focused efforts on multicultural, aboriginal, and partner organizations. Towards the end of the process, we also made specific phone calls to set up additional meetings and gather information on why some people had not participated to date. See "Adjustments to the Process" below for more information.
Aboriginal Parent Link Resource Centre / Bent Arrow Objective:	Meeting scheduled with Aboriginal grandparents in the CCEP area on January 14, 2010. Unfortunately, the meeting was cancelled on January 5, 2010.

Engagement Activity	Participation Rates
To gather input from aboriginal families and community on the opportunities and challenges of school space.	
Multicultural Health Brokers meeting *Objective:* To gather input from multi-cultural and new immigrant families and community on the opportunities and challenges of school space.	Meeting scheduled with new and emerging refugee and immigrant community leaders on January 12, 2010. Approximately 25 participants.
Engagement Advisory Committee *Objective:* To provide input and advice on the public engagement process for sector planning. Committee representation included 25 participants from a wide variety of perspectives and organizations.	Four meetings of the Engagement Advisory Committee were held on September 17, October 29, November 18 and January 5, with 25 members representing a wide diversity of interests and perspectives.
Total Events = 21 events or activities	**Total participants = 600+ participants**

Total Project Communication and Participation Rates

Event Totals:	Participation Totals:
• 16 different communication tools used to share information and encourage participation in the project, most used multiple times • 21 Different Engagement Events or Activities to gather input, ideas, concerns and suggestions	• Approximately 6,800+ individuals or groups contacted or provided with information • 600+ participants attending events or providing input

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Part 2B – Adjustments to the Process

With responsiveness and flexibility as cornerstones of meaningful engagement and good process, we made a number of adjustments to the Engagement and Communications Plans throughout process in order to respond to input, comments, activities, or new information.

In addition, we conducted an evaluation after every event and phase, and reviewed our communications and engagement objectives and materials on an ongoing basis to identify where we were succeeding and where we needed to adjust the process.

The Engagement Advisory Committee provided the following comments, suggestions, and input to us during the process about adjustments that could be considered to improve the process as it was unfolding:

- This new process seems more informative and engaging than previous processes
- There will be challenges in engaging new Canadians, low income families, kids, transient residents
- Need to talk about funding, budget, and the "hard" issues with the community
- Advisory Committee members to act as a link and communicate with the community and organizations they represent and encourage participation in the process
- Focus on whether the process has been fair, open, transparent, accountable
- Concerns about having "must attend entire event" sessions vs. drop in sessions
- Coordinate meetings with other organizations / the City on issues that intersect – like Great Neighbourhoods or People Plan
- Need to consider how to support the community, kids post closure
- Engage partners, potential partners, and tenants in the schools in the conversation (principals not always sharing information past students, staff, families)
- Need to ensure there is a fair analysis of what people say
- Consider evaluating the interview process
- Need to do more to engage the aboriginal community
- Principals will take direct steps to ensure that different demographic and cultural groups are comfortable with the process and their needs are met, including meeting with the aboriginal community
- Go to the community versus inviting them to come to us
- Be careful when compiling input so that there is not "ballot stuffing"
- Could hold meetings with new immigrants or ethnic groups and have a scribe record info in their own language
- Showcase examples of school space being used post closure
- Improve language and communication and make it plainer, use more visuals, talk about closure
- Consider using the Southeast Voice paper and the Community Resource Coordinators from the City of Edmonton as conduits to the community

- Engage the City and the Province in the discussion

We were able to implement the following changes to the Public Engagement Process:

Child Care

In response to requests from some participants and suggestions from the Engagement Advisory Committee, we made arrangements for child care to be provided to participants at the Community Forums and Workshops. While we attempted to arrange for child care on site, insurance, space, and caregiver availability impacted the opportunity to accomplish this, so childcare was made available at existing childcare facilities in each of the areas where events were held. Organized too late to be included in advertisements, this information was widely communicated to potential participants via electronic newsletters, backpack letters, principal, trustee, and staff updates. Any participants who had registered to attend an event were personally contacted with the new information. Despite these attempts, we did not have any participants take advantage of the available childcare.

Meetings at schools / with communities unable to or uncomfortable about participating in other ways

One of the underlying principles of the engagement process was that people of different perspectives and views would come together to talk about the issues, share their ideas and concerns, and come to understand each other better. This meant that we focused the process in area meetings, versus meetings at individual schools, so that participants learned from each other. However, we recognize that in some situations, this made some participants uncomfortable and/or impacted their ability to participate. Therefore, in some circumstances, determined on a case by case basis, we met with separate groups to gather their input or to answer questions and share information on how to get involved. In addition, we worked with a few organizations to participate in meetings they had already scheduled. Those meetings are noted above in the list of public engagement activities.

Adjustments to message and materials

We heard from many people that they didn't realize that the sector planning conversation and discussions on school space held the potential for discussions on school closure. (It should be noted that we also heard from a number of participants expressing appreciation for the format and presentation of the materials and questions). In order to be certain that everyone fully understood the scope of the conversation, we changed the language, format, and presentation of our materials part way through Phase 2 of the project. We started using more bullets, very plain language, and introduced headlines and language that referenced "change" and "possible school closure". These formed the basis of our materials inviting participants to the workshops and in the online engagement.

Adjustments to online engagement

We monitored the use of electronic media throughout the process, and early on determined that participants in the two affected areas were visiting the website at a far lower rate than anticipated. This led us to the conclusion that while we would continue to use electronic communication, we needed to

maximize the tools we used. Therefore, we chose not to expend resources on "tweeting", and decided to use the already established Connect2Edmonton rather than creating our own online discussion boards and trying to draw people to them. We continued to use the electronic newsletter, but monitored its open rate carefully, and were pleased to see the higher than average open rate. Evaluation surveys at events also told us that people were getting the information at the school, through our emails or from community organizations.

Translation / Interpretation
To understand the demographics of the areas we were working in, early on we asked about the possibility of providing translation or interpretation services. We were advised by the CCEP principals that many of the new immigrants and refugee families did not read their first language, and translation would be an ineffective tool. Principals offered to talk to settlement workers and encourage them to talk to families about getting engaged. We also made follow-up phone calls to some multicultural and immigrant support organizations to encourage participation prior to events. We worked with the District interpreters and had them "on call" to attend events and provide interpretation, should we receive a request for language support. We communicated this offer through the electronic newsletters, updates, and phone calls. We were not asked to provide interpretation at any events.

Changes to timelines to respond to concerns about timing
As noted in the next section of the report, concerns about the tight timelines were expressed by a number of people. Since the overall timelines for decision making could not be changed, we worked to be as flexible as possible within the overall timeframe to accommodate participant's desire for more time to provide input. We extended the deadline for submission of workbooks until November 26, 2009, and then after further requests, to December 18, 2009. We extended the timeline to provide input on proposed options from December 4, 2009 to January 4, 2010.

Online input re: options extended
The original Public Engagement Plan called for questionnaires to be implemented after the workshops in late November / early December. These questionnaires were originally intended to summarize the input received to date and to ask people to provide input on whether the summaries reflected their experience or input. Based on participant comments, we decided the better use of activities and time would be to extend the opportunity to provide input using existing opportunities (workbooks and workshop materials), rather than introducing an additional activity. In addition, the tight timelines meant we could not summarize the volume of material submitted in a meaningful, thoughtful way.

Meetings with Principals and Principal Updates
We met with groups of principals from each of the affected areas to discuss their role in the process, how they could encourage participation and share information with their school communities. Principals played a very valuable role in supporting the process, by working with kids and families to understand what was happening and to support their participation. We did have a number of additional meetings

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with individual principals and smaller groups of principals to discuss some of their comments about the process.

Changes to the Partner Workshop

Originally scheduled for November 13, 2009, the Partner Workshop was intended to bring together partners and potential partners to discuss their views on the opportunities and challenges of school space. Ten days before the meeting, concerned about low RSVP's, we started calling contacts to confirm their participation. At that time we learned of an event co-hosted by the City of Edmonton and the Province, with invitations to not for profit groups in the City. Working with the Chamber of Voluntary Organizations, we rescheduled the meeting to December 1, 2009. The Chamber supported the event by posting the information on their website, and distributing it to their contacts.

Finding out why some people have not participated

In reviewing our participation numbers and diversity, we identified that while we received considerable input from parents, organizations, and partners in both areas, we had a smaller amount of input and participation from multicultural and aboriginal communities. This occurred despite the documented outreach noted earlier in the report. Over the course of the project, we had many suggestions from staff, principals, and the engagement advisory committee about how we could best access those voices. These suggestions included providing childcare and food, using settlement workers and community based organizations, using family interpreters as access points to these individuals, bussing people to events, and using the word "closure" more. We appreciated this input very much and adapted our process to respond to it wherever we could. However, in early December we determined that the desired goal had still not been achieved with these particular stakeholders. Instead of making assumptions about why we weren't hearing from these people, we decided to ask them directly if they had participated, and if they had not, why they had not been involved.

This is what we learned:

- Participation on this topic doesn't relate to their "identity", the issues that are most important to them, or the issues they are dealing with at the time
- Their children are in a good school, and they believe this will continue to be the case
- They are focused on more critical issues (housing, employment, food etc)
- They come from a culture where they don't speak out and they didn't think this was meant for them
- The workshop approach may have been culturally inappropriate for some
- Parents feel defeated by the myriad of issues affecting them
- Some have already participated and can't do so on an ongoing basis

Additional meeting to engage the City

Many times throughout the process, we heard people express two things related to the City of Edmonton: 1) Where is the City in this conversation? and 2) Work together with the City to discuss issues in common – the community is the same community, no matter who delivers the service of

program. As a result, we contacted the City a number of times. They supported our request for a meeting, providing meeting space and encouraging attendance from many different branches and departments in the City. This meeting was held on January 4, 2010, with 20 participants.

> From participants:
>
> *Why build new schools when we have capacity in existing schools? Using that capacity would help aging communities keep their schools until families started to move back in. We need to see joint planning with the City and school board and the province to figure out a better way to utilize schools and help improve older neighbourhoods. The present approach doesn't makes sense.*

Part 2C – Overall Themes and Principles for Sector Planning

Overall Themes of Input

It should be noted that the focus of the engagement was on qualitative input, not on quantity of input, and the themes that converged, as well as those that were divergent, have been highlighted in this report. Input and themes were not "ranked" according to the volume of input relating to a particular school or idea.

A number of themes emerged from participant input and comments that are not directly applicable to the sector planning principles, partnerships or options for school space use or closure. These themes included:

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Desire for decision makers to be part of the conversation
Participants expressed a desire for Board Trustees, City Councillors, other elected officials, and/or senior staff to be present at consultation sessions.   There were concerns that if these decision makers were not in the room, they would not be made aware of the input that was being provided. In addition, participants expressed concern that if the officials were not aware of what the primary interests of the community were, the information that was shared would not be relevant to the community's needs. Note: *As indicated earlier in the report, Trustees were provided with information on engagement activities and results, and encouraged to attend events as observers. City Councillors and elected officials at the provincial and federal level were also provided with engagement information.*

Timing
Participants expressed concern about the tight timelines for engagement in the two affected areas, although there was more concern expressed about timing in CCEP than in Greater Hardisty. A desire for more discussion and participation and the need for more information were cited as reasons to extend the timing of the engagement process. Participants also suggested that revitalization takes time, and the District should wait to see the results of revitalization initiatives - particularly in the City Centre area. Some City staff people also raised concerns about the accelerated process.

Language: sector planning vs. school closure
Participants, along with the Engagement Advisory Committee, expressed concern that community members did not understand that a conversation about sector planning included discussion of potential school closure. See Section 2B of the report for more information on "Adjustments to the Process" related to language.

Provide opportunities for input in ways other than face to face
Participants expressed concern that their own inability to attend a scheduled face to face meeting meant they would be unable to participate at all. They requested opportunities to provide input at either additional face to face meetings beyond those scheduled, or to provide input through another vehicle. Concern about the community forums, where participation was requested for the entire session, rather than as a drop-in event, was also shared.

Open boundaries and programs of choice
Participants referenced the District's policy of open boundaries and programs of choice; however perspectives on this issue varied. Some participants expressed concern with this policy, noting that it has a negative impact on high needs students and on communities, and that by creating this competition, the promotion of healthy neighbourhoods is lost. As a

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participant noted, *"it is a private system with public funds"*. Another added that a *"sense of pride and belonging in an area is defeated by open boundaries"*.

Alternatively, some participants suggested that program offerings and changes to area schools would result in increased enrolment and more vibrant communities. Appreciation was offered for this policy of program of choice and how it allows families and communities to make the best choices for their needs. Reference was also made to flexibility and value.

> From participants:
>
> *The EPSB policy of creating "specialty" programming for elementary aged children has created a strange sort of competition between schools for a pool of students. While schools in the Hardisty area are continually on the chopping block, schools like Holyrood are allowed to become a sort of "Death Star" for the S.E. Edmonton area.*
>
> *I don't think they should shut down our city centre schools because kids need to learn and if their parents don't have any kind of transportation to take their kids a far ways to go to school. But the kids could still take a bus but then they are going to have to pay more for that and if they pay money for each five minutes then they might be out of money for five days a week.*

Entire City vs. sector by sector

Participants suggested that the sector planning conversation should be conducted for the City as a whole rather than sector by sector, as in the end, allocation of resources and services affects the entire City. Participants also expressed frustration about the District opening new schools in other sectors while closing old ones in the areas under review.

Rethink how space is viewed

Participants referenced the need for the province, the City, and EPSB to rethink school space and its role in the community. People noted that school space should be viewed as enrolment PLUS community use. It was noted that the present approach is unrealistic and community members are all taxpayers and part of the same community, regardless of who is providing a service or program.

Working with the City

Participants commented on the need to engage the City in the conversation on school space, and to link and integrate this conversation with City of Edmonton initiatives like the Municipal Development Plan, Area Redevelopment Plans and Revitalization initiatives etc. Participants noted that community members are community members, regardless of who provides them with services or programs. They indicated that they would appreciate being a part of an integrated conversation, rather than being engaged by different organizations on aspects of the same discussion. It was noted that vibrant communities are multi-faceted and involve many jurisdictions and levels of government. See the section below on

"Partners, the City of Edmonton and School Space" for more information on the City of Edmonton.

Meaningful Public Consultation
Participants made comments about the engagement process being a phony and "token" consultation, expressing concern that the decision had already been made about school closure.
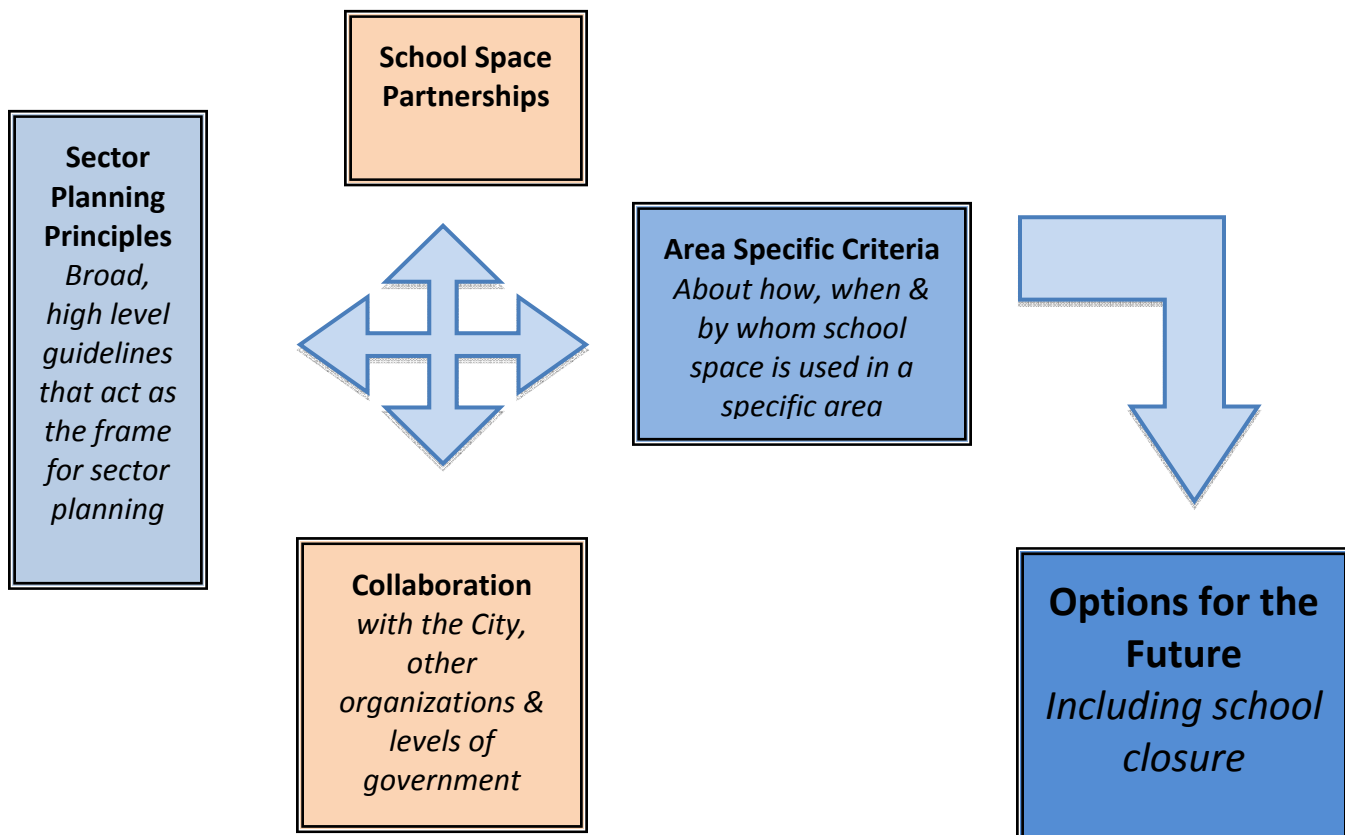
In contrast, other participants expressed appreciation for meaningful conversations and a different kind of "feeling" to the events.

The Value of Schools to Students
A number of students provided input, expressing support and appreciation for good friends, good experiences, and good support including teachers, community, and neighbours.

Linking the conversation together
Beyond general comments, input from participants in the engagement process falls into a number of categories, **all of which flow together and are directly related**.

	School Space Partnerships		
Sector Planning Principles *Broad, high level guidelines that act as the frame for sector planning*		**Area Specific Criteria** *About how, when & by whom school space is used in a specific area*	
	Collaboration *with the City, other organizations & levels of government*		**Options for the Future** *Including school closure*

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Principles for Sector Planning are the over-arching frame that applies to area specific criteria for school space use, allocation, and configuration. In turn, these criteria are the foundation or the "lens" for viewing options for school closure. School space partnerships and collaboration with other organizations are integral to realizing the application of the principles and the criteria, through implementation in Options for the future. None of these components can be viewed in isolation, and must be considered together in order to make decisions that reflect the full spectrum of participant input.

Principles for Sector Planning

As noted earlier, the engagement process was structured in a phased approach that started with a discussion of what was important to people, and the principles they felt should guide the conversation. The primary intention was to get people to identify and share what is most important to them, to talk to each other and with EPSB in a different way, to build capacity for engagement, and THEN to initiate a discussion about school closure.

EPSB Sector Planning Principle	Participant Input
Planning Principle 1 - Equitable access to quality learning environments and choice of programs Students at all grade levels are entitled to equity of access to high quality modern facilities and a balanced range of regular, alternative and special programs regardless of where they live in the City.	Participants expressed support for this principle. Comments were made about the word modernized versus modern as it suggests that "older" schools in older neighbourhoods are not as valuable as "new" schools. Comments also related to the policy of programs of choice as a Board philosophy and how this leads to "have and have not" schools and communities. Alternatively, participants also expressed support for this policy.
Planning Principle 2 - Creative re-use of surplus space School space that is not needed for instruction still has value to the community. Consistent with Board policies, the District will continue to seek out tenants and partners for the use of surplus school space that support the community in areas of child and family services, and the not for profit sector. This may involve other levels of government within a context that use of district space will be provided at no cost to the District. Examples include early learning partners such as Head Start groups, immigrant services, child care providers, etc.	Participants expressed support for this principle, with a number of participants suggesting that "AND in ways that benefit the community" be added to the title of the principle.

Planning Principle 3 - Efficient use of school space in sectors and retention of schools in aging neighbourhoods By reducing the amount of unused and unneeded space, the District will continue to work toward retention of schools in aging neighbourhoods.	Participants expressed support for this principle, with one possible adjustment in language: use of the words "mature" or "central" areas versus aging neighbourhoods. Concern about the inherent conflict of efficient use of school space AND retention of schools was mentioned. The rationale of hosting a conversation that *"will inevitably result in school closures",* was viewed as contrary to the objective of this principle.
Planning Principle 4 - Accommodation and program needs met within sectors The District will ensure that we have sufficient schools and programs in each sector to accommodate the student demand, eliminating the need for students to travel great distances to access programs.	Participants expressed support for this principle.
Planning Principle 5 - Capital investment contingent upon confirmation of long term viability The investment of funds or upgrades will focus on projects at schools where the long-term viability of programming and student enrolment has been confirmed. The District will however, continue to responsibly maintain existing schools in order to ensure that all matters of life, health and safety are fully addressed.	Comments related to this principle focused on the need for funding to be predictable so this challenge doesn't exist, and the inherent conflict relating to the "chicken and the egg" approach to capital investment; where if capital investment is made schools are made viable but waiting for schools to become viable before making capital investment is a recipe for failure.

Planning Principle 6 - Proactive approach to environmental awareness and stewardship The District will consider environmentally responsible approaches to distribution of space and resources within the District. The District will promote a proactive strategy to environmental awareness and stewardship of buildings and land.	Comments and input relating to this principle called for an expanded, more holistic application of environmental awareness and stewardship. Participants referenced sustainable development and the pillars of sustainability in a broader sense: environmental, social, economic and cultural, and the role schools play in the community as a whole. Participants talked about urban revitalization vs. urban sprawl and how closing schools in the centre of the City contributes to an unsustainable City in the long term. Schools as community hubs, the need for energy efficiency improvements, and the importance of green space around schools for the community were referenced.

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From participant input on the sector planning principles, three new guiding principles and a general "statement of intention" emerged, applicable to sector planning overall and not specific to any particular area. These three proposed principles are:

New Proposed Sector Planning Principles
New Proposed Principle - Overall best interests of entire community over long term While the importance of individual schools is recognized, the role of schools in the community and the specifics of how school space is used should be considered in a broader sense by balancing the needs, desires, and priorities of specific areas over the broader community and planning for the long term.
New Proposed Principle - Inclusion While broader community needs should be considered in sector planning, the needs of ALL participants should be included, and a diversity of perspective, background, life experience, and culture should be embraced. Application of the sector planning principles should include a sector specific lens or criteria that reflect the specific needs of those who live in the community.
New Proposed Principle - Partnership and collaboration The District should work collaboratively and openly with other levels of government and organizations to best fulfill its mandate in order to meet the needs and benefit residents of communities and users of school space. In particular this includes; students, families, community groups, and the City of Edmonton.
Statement of Intention - Be realistic about what can be achieved. The need to balance diverse perspectives and interests with the fiscal, social, and resource realities facing the District is critical. As a participant noted, *"We cannot sustain our current consumption path."*

Some participants commented that the principles were meaningless.

Part 2D – Working with Partners and the City of Edmonton

The importance of partners providing needed services and programs and of working together with the District to benefit students and complement education was recognized as important to participants throughout the engagement process. Ideas, suggestions, and criteria for partnerships were discussed with the broader community, in a meeting specifically focused on partner organizations, and another meeting with the City of Edmonton.

Partners

Four key themes related to partnerships and school space emerged from participant input, as well as a number of comments and suggestions about the use of school space after a closure takes place.

Different approach to administration of school space with partners
A number of challenges in accessing, using, and maintaining school space were identified by partners. These included direct liaison with principals for decision making, whose primary responsibility is education versus facility management, concerns about fairness, special preference, and a lack of accountability in decision making.

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Participants talked about the challenges of short term leases and a lack of stability negatively impacting programs and operations. Organizations commented on "bureaucratic red tape" impacting their ability to understand or access surplus school space.

Participants talked about the challenge of school requirements for a custodian on site during space use after hours, and the lack of available staff, even when the organization is able to pay for the service.

Suggestions called for school space to be managed by a neutral third party group that would support access to space, administration of facilities (versus education), and work collaboratively with school management.

Criteria for Partners in school space

Clear criteria for partners using school space emerged from participant input:

- Organizations that offer programs or services that are supportive of students
- Organizations that offer programs or services that are supportive of healthy families, kids, and community
- Organizations that offer programs or services that are supportive of lifelong learning
- Priority should be given to not for profits with a mandate of community benefit versus commercial interests
- It was noted that the organizations do not have to be delivering a program or service in a specific school, and could instead be leasing office space. Emphasis was on the organizational mandate and compatibility with District mandate
- These criteria applied to partners using school space in an existing school as well as partners using school space after closure.

Safety

Participants noted the importance of safety for students, organizational staff, and assets in school space. Some of the motivation for criteria for partnership related to concerns about safety. Participants suggested separating facility use if partners are operating in existing schools, particularly if they are not directly delivering programs to children who attend the school.

Collaboration between partners and organizations

A new neutral administrative organization would support the expressed desire of non profit and voluntary organizations to work together to share resources. In addition, with many similar mandates, a strong desire was expressed by community organizations to

work together in order to deliver services and programs more efficiently to the same communities.

If a school is closed
If the school is closed, participants made a number of suggestions related to how and by whom the facility should be used. The following criteria were offered:
- Used for education (lifelong learning, charter, or other schools, at any level of education)
- Focused on kids and family services and programs
- Focused on community uses
- Used by community groups in the best interests of the community such as: community leagues, sports and/or fitness organizations, seniors, youth, ethnic and cultural uses, churches, arts, social service uses such as food banks, shelters, and soup kitchens
- NOT sold to the highest bidder unless the bidder is proposing uses that meet these criteria
- DO NOT transfer ownership if the school is closed in the city centre, therefore supporting long term revitalization opportunities

The City of Edmonton

Participant input relating to the City of Edmonton's role in sector planning included:
- The City needs to be part of the discussion.
- Residents are members of the same community, regardless of who is delivering the service or program to them, and they would appreciate being engaged in an integrated conversation on issues that affect their community.

At the meeting held with the City of Edmonton, a number of opportunities and challenges were identified, along with some high level themes that should be considered as part of sector planning:
- There needs to be education – within the community and within the two organizations – about the roles, plans, strategies, and projects being considered and implemented
- There needs to be more dialogue and understanding between the two organizations about their respective roles and needs
- There needs to be action on working together in a more effective, collaborative way about issues that affect Edmontonians within their respective mandates
- More discussion is needed to clarify what happens next

From participants:

I believe schools are community centres. I believe that maintaining both elementary and junior high schools in the area are critical for the long-term viability of our communities.

My biggest concern is that our suggestions and options are truly, honestly considered – and this is not just an exercise in PR management.

The Logos Program offers a strong academic opportunity in partnership with Christian values.

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Part 2E - Greater Hardisty Area – Area Specific Criteria for School Space Use / School Closure options

Area Specific Criteria for School Space Use

What is important to people about when, where, how, and by whom school space should be used, can be considered as a lens through which to view what happens to the collective group of schools in the area. This area specific lens, or criteria, cannot be looked at in isolation from the options for closure – they relate directly to each other, and to consider one without the other would mean that only part of the equation was being considered.

While the sector planning principles guide the allocation, configuration, and use of school space throughout all sectors across the City, the specific criteria for school space noted below apply to the entire Greater Hardisty area, are specific to the needs of those participants, and are directly related to implementation of any closure option.

1. Pool Resources and Achieve Efficiencies

Economies of scale, efficiencies of human resources, and sharing of equipment and materials should be a high priority in all schools in the area. Beyond partnerships, within management of the school system itself, opportunities for sharing principals, teachers, custodians, and equipment should be considered. Sharing physical space like music rooms and libraries should be considered. *(Note: Concern about the potential negative impact and stress on teachers and workload that may result from this was raised.)*

2. Encourage and Increase Partnerships

Participants supported the idea of additional partnerships in schools space, as long as they were compatible with and geared to the community. *(See also the earlier section of the report on proposed criteria for partnerships).* Participants specifically suggested seniors housing and programs, teen programs, theatre, dance and music programs, speakers on community issues, cooking classes, community league programs or meetings, sports or recreation uses, health programs and services, and daycare and/or early education. Also encouraged was the use of school space for education and lifelong learning – for children and adults. It was suggested that leasing of surplus school space would provide an additional revenue source for the District that could in turn be redirected to the school facilities in the Greater Hardisty area.

3. Additional and Varied Programs

Aligned with the District's policy of program of choice, Greater Hardisty area participants expressed interest in a French Immersion program, other languages (Spanish was mentioned), continuation of the Logos program, and creation of a specialized sports school in the Hardisty facility, in partnership with adjacent City of Edmonton recreation facilities.

4. Safety

Participants expressed concern related to the safety of children, and noted that street crossing, bussing, and long walks on busy roads would need to be addressed as a high priority - regardless of the final option for school allocation.

5. Child Care

Emphasis was placed on in school child care facilities, and the importance to families of these programs and services.

These five criteria should be considered as critical components of the Options for school closure below. For example, if retention of Hardisty and Fulton schools is considered as the option for moving forward, then all considerations noted below, along with the criteria of pooled resources and efficiencies, should also form a part of the consideration for decision making. These considerations include: additional partnerships, additional and varied programming, safety for children accessing new and different schools and routes, inclusion of student needs, and child care. In a similar way, all other options for moving forward should be viewed through the lens of these five area specific criteria for decision making.

Options for school closure in Greater Hardisty

An overwhelming majority of respondents provided options to close two schools. A very small number of respondents suggested that no schools should be closed, and the buildings should remain open with surplus space used for the community, until such time as the community revitalizes to the point that the surplus school spaces are needed. This was very much the minority viewpoint.

While the majority of respondents suggested two schools close, the end configuration and the opinions regarding which two specific schools should close was frequently different.

Option for Moving Forward	Indication of Support (listed in order of priority)
Close Two schools	1
Keep Hardisty School Open	2
Keep Gold Bar School Open	3
Keep Hardisty & Gold Bar Schools Open	4
Keep Hardisty & Fulton Schools Open	5
Keep Fulton School Open	6
Maintain the Logos program	7
Close One School	8
Keep Capilano School Open	9
Keep a Junior High in Greater Hardisty	10
Other Comments	11
Close Hardisty School	12
Close No Schools	13

Two distinct options emerged in the Greater Hardisty area:

- **Keep Hardisty and Fulton school open, and close Capilano and Gold Bar schools**
- **Keep Hardisty and Gold Bar schools open, and close Capilano and Fulton schools**

Hardisty School

Respondents felt that Hardisty School should be Kindergarten to Grade 9, with modifications to the interior space and playground to accommodate younger students. Also offered was the suggestion that Hardisty should be grades 5/6 to 9 Logos and Regular programming. Also noted was the possibility of Kindergarten to Grade 9 Regular as well as Logos programming at Hardisty.

Investment in infrastructure, integration, alignment with adjacent recreation facilitations, and the potential creation of specialized sports program was suggested. Creating a specialized technology program at the school was also suggested.

Support for a junior high school remaining in the Greater Hardisty area was expressed.

There were suggestions that Hardisty School should be closed, with students transferred to the remaining 3 area schools (Fulton, Capilano and Gold Bar). A couple of respondents suggested that Hardisty could be used for adult learning.

Gold Bar School

Those who suggested that Gold Bar School remain open, paired it with Hardisty school as the remaining open school in the Greater Hardisty area, serving two different parts of the area. There were suggestions of configuration at Gold Bar of Kindergarten to Grade 5, as well as suggestions of Kindergarten to Grade 9. Many who proposed keeping Gold Bar School open referenced the critical importance of making the required capital investments in the facility. Some suggested moving all special needs programs to Gold Bar, including those from Fulton.

Those who suggested keeping Gold Bar open indicated concerns about safety and transportation for students from the area having to access other schools in the area by crossing busy roads, and the need to ensure a school stays open in an area of lower income students. Reference was also made to the sustainable enrolment of students from the area at Gold Bar, as the school of choice for many, and the important presence of three community programs in the school: daycare, playschool, and ABC Headstart.

Reasons offered by participants to close Gold Bar included the large capital investment required to make the required renovations, and the possibility of leasing the space to community groups who could use the facility. Many who suggested closing Gold Bar did so in favour of keeping Hardisty and Fulton Schools open.

Fulton School

Participants suggested keeping Fulton open, many linking this with Hardisty as the two schools to remain open in the area.

There was a wide variety of possible configurations proposed for Fulton School, including (in order of priority):

1. Kindergarten to Grade 6, Logos and Regular programming
2. Kindergarten to Grade 5, Logos and Regular programming
3. Kindergarten to Grade 9, Logos programming

The value of the parking lot, day care, and proximity to other facilities and amenities were referenced.

Those who proposed closing Fulton suggested that the school facility be used by other schools outside the District, such as Suzuki, or by community or social organizations for programs and services that serve the community.

Capilano School
Participants suggested closing Capilano, citing issues of low enrolment and the ability to use the facility for community use.

It was suggested that the site could be used for retirement housing, a senior's centre, a daycare, ABC Headstart, or a similar program that could be co-located in the building.

Those who suggested keeping Capilano open proposed a configuration of Kindergarten to Grade 3 or 4, and/or Kindergarten to Grade 6 Regular and Logos programming.

Kindergarten to Grade 9 versus Grades 7-9
The discussion of Kindergarten to Grade 9 versus Grades 7 to 9 was an issue that resurfaced frequently in the Greater Hardisty area. There was a diversity of perspective on this issue where some supported the idea of a Kindergarten to Grade 9 program within one facility, while others raised concerns with such a wide range of ages in one building.

It should be noted that of those supporting the retention of Hardisty, an overwhelming number supported a Kindergarten to Grade 9 configuration in the facility. It should also be noted that the majority of people who offered support for the Logos Program were also those who expressed concern about a Kindergarten to Grade 9 configuration, particularly if it included regular programming (versus Logos programming only).

Those who supported Kindergarten to Grade 9 configuration suggested that with proper infrastructure improvements, a K-9 configuration provides multiple leadership opportunities, varied programming, and keeps families of siblings together.

Those who raised concerns with a Kindergarten to Grade 9 configuration and proposed Grade 7-9 or Grade 5/6 - 9 configurations, were concerned about exposure of young children to language, behaviour, and activities of older children. They also referenced

leadership opportunities for grades 4, 5 or 6 at the elementary levels, as well as the potential cost and suitability of infrastructure improvements.

Other comments related to school closure in Greater Hardisty
It was suggested that it would be worthwhile for the District to survey families who are leaving their neighbourhoods in order to access different schools. There might be an understanding as to why they are, or are not making their respective school and program choices.

It was also suggested that sector planning could be looked at differently as it relates to configuration and school space. Configuration according to learning styles, flexible groupings, or possibly three buildings with Kindergarten to Grade 3 groupings and one with Grade 4 – 9 should be considered.

Proposed by participants was the idea that Ottewell and Kenilworth schools should have been included in the area review, and that one of the Greater Hardisty schools could be closed, with the students re-routed to those schools.

The importance of support for transition and change for students, families, community members, and staff was noted. It was also noted that resource sharing of positions, resources and materials would be important regardless of which option was selected.

From participants:

I would like to see us capitalizing on the strengths of this community. We have a low carbon footprint, we're multicultural and we believe in social justice. We have artists and technologists living and working in this community.

[Involve] people who don't have a voice – groups that never get consulted – cultural, economic etc. barriers; same people always get chosen for these things – really need to diversify – seniors; people with no children in the system; new arrivals (often a language barrier) – parents can't understand the letters sent to them……..

About half the kids in the city already leave their neighbourhood to go to another school. In the city centre, you will have to provide transportation, as we have many families living in poverty who can't afford cars or even ETS to get their kids to school.

Part 2F – City Centre Education Partnership Area – Area Specific Criteria for School Space Use / School Closure options

Area Specific Criteria for School Space Use

As noted in the section of the report on the Greater Hardisty area, what is important to people about when, where, how, and by whom school space should be used can be considered as a lens through which to view what happens to the collective group of schools in the area. While the sector planning principles guide the allocation, configuration, and use of school space throughout all sectors across the City, the specific criteria for school space noted below apply to the entire City Centre Education Partnership Area (CCEP), are specific to the needs of those participants, and are directly related to implementation of any closure option.

1. Schools as a Community Hub
Schools are a critical component of a vibrant and complete community, and removing a school facility from use can negatively impact the development and maintenance of a healthy community. School space used to support new immigrants, refugees, and those accessing social services and programs was viewed as critical. Green space, parks and community involvement is also important.

2. Pool Resources and Achieve Efficiencies
Economies of scale, efficiencies of human resources, and sharing of equipment and materials should be a high priority in all schools in the area. Beyond partnerships, within management of the school system itself, opportunities for sharing principals, teachers, custodians, and equipment should be considered. Participants also suggested sharing physical space like music rooms and libraries. *(Note: Concern about the potential negative impact and stress on teachers and workload that may result from this was raised).*

2. Encourage and Increase Partnerships
Participants supported additional partnerships in schools space, as long as they are compatible with and geared to the community. *(See also the earlier section of the report on proposed criteria for partnerships).* Participants specifically suggested computer stations for community use, Big Brothers and Big Sisters programs, multicultural programs and services, adult learning, non profit use of space, homework clubs, early education and childcare, farmers markets or gardening programs, and parenting programs.

4. Additional and Varied Programs
Aligned with the District's policy of program of choice, CCEP area participants expressed interest and support for additional varied programming including other languages

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(Mandarin and Arabic were mentioned), feeder school for Victoria Arts School, environmental, social justice programs, arts, dance and music programs, all with a focus on "excellence" versus regular or special needs programming.

5. Transportation & Safety
Participants expressed concern related to the safety of children, and noted traffic and crime issues in the area need to be addressed. Participants suggested that the shortest, safest route to school is important and the measurements of appropriate walking distances in CCEP are likely to be different than in other areas of the City. A 1km limit versus the standard 2.4 km for assignment of bussing was proposed.

6. Support & Celebration of the Unique Nature of CCEP
Participants expressed a desire to celebrate and publicize the unique nature of CCEP, and the collaboration between partners, families and kids, the campus effect and approach, the caring and supportive nature of special programs and services like lunch programs, family support, reading, and public health. Participants proposed that the CCEP "brand" be marketed and publicized.

7. Child Care
Primary emphasis was placed on in school child care facilities and the importance to families of these programs and services.

8. Adequate Funding to Support Needs
Participants referenced the need for adequate funding to meet the unique needs of kids, family, and community in the CCEP area, and recognition that these needs are different from other sectors in the City. In addition, participants referenced the need for capital investment in the schools in the area.

These eight criteria should be considered as critical components of the options for school closure below. For example, if retention of five CCEP schools is considered as the option for moving forward, then all considerations noted below, along with the criteria of pooled resources and efficiencies, additional partnerships, additional and varied programming, safety for children accessing new, and different schools and routes, the unique nature of CCEP, adequate funding to support needs and child care should also form part of the consideration for decision making. In a similar way, all other options for moving forward should be viewed through the lens of these eight area specific criteria for decision making.

Options for school closure in CCEP

Option for Moving Forward	Indication of Support (listed in order of priority)
Keep Specific Schools Open, specifically John A. MacDougall School, Norwood, Eastwood, McCauley (other schools did not receive significant mention)	1
Keep four schools open and use one or two closed facilities for community purposes, closing the other(s)	2
Keep all the schools open	3
Keep five schools open and use one or two closed facilities for community purposes, closing the other schools	4
Other comments	5

Beyond the comments related to keep specific schools open, there were three distinct themes that emerged from the comments relating to options for moving forward in CCEP. The themes noted below are referenced in order of quantity of input received.

   I. **Keep four schools open and use one or two closed facilities for community purposes, closing the other(s)**
   II. **Keep all the schools open**
   III. **Keep five schools open and use one or two closed facilities for community purposes, closing the other schools**

However, within those three themes there was wide divergence on the configuration, programs, and which buildings remained open.

I. Four school sites remain open (Three sites close)

It was suggested that all of the principles and key criteria (like partnerships and child care etc.) should guide the development of any option for closure. Based on this, suggestions for deciding which four schools stay open included: maintaining resources that have

received capital investments; accessibility to students and the community; and utilization of existing transportation routes and programs.

Four sites – Option A
- John A. MacDougall would contain Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 6 regular programming.
- Norwood would focus on Pre-Kindergarten-Grade 6 special needs programming.
- McCauley would be configured for grades 7-9 special needs programs.
- Spruce Avenue would be grades 7-9, regular programming.
- Maintaining resources that have received capital investments; accessibility to students and the community; and utilization of existing transportation routes and programs.

Four sites – Option B
- Spruce Avenue and Parkdale schools would be Kindergarten to Grade 9.
- McCauley would be Kindergarten to Grade 6.
- Delton would be Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 6.
- Eastwood, Norwood, and John A. MacDougall would close.

Four sites – Option C
- Delton would be Kindergarten to Grade 9, with a focus on literacy programs.
- John A. MacDougall would be Pre-Kindergarten and early learning to Grade 6 regular programming as would Parkdale school.
- McCauley would be Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 9, with special needs programming.

Four sites – Option D
- Spruce Avenue and Parkdale schools would include Grades 4-9.
- Delton would contain Kindergarten to Grade 6.
- John A. MacDougall would be Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 3.
- Norwood and McCauley schools would be used for community programs and services, and Eastwood would close.
- Participants suggested that this option would ensure two junior high sites, student safety, and fewer transportation needs.

- An alternative to this option would be Spruce Avenue and Parkdale Grades 4-9 and John A. MacDougall, and Norwood Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 3.

Four sites – Option E
- Delton, John A. MacDougall, and Norwood would be Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 6.
- Spruce Avenue would be a Junior High with Grades 7-9.

- This would ensure leaders in Grades 4, 5 and 6, although upgrades would be required to Spruce Avenue and Delton schools.

- A variation on this option includes John A. MacDougall, Delton, Parkdale, and Spruce Avenue would be configured for Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 9, keeping families and siblings together. Norwood, McCauley and Eastwood would close.

- Another variation on the above proposal, Delton, Parkdale, and Norwood would be Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 6 and Spruce Avenue would be Kindergarten to Grade 9 with Eastwood and McCauley being used by the community.

Four sites – Option F
- Eastwood, John A. MacDougall, and Norwood would be Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 6, and important social, community and family services would be maintained in those schools.
- Spruce Avenue would be grades 7-9.
- Parkdale, McCauley and Delton would close.

Four sites – Option G
- Delton, John A. MacDougall, and McCauley would be Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 6.
- Eastwood be Junior High with Grades 7-9.
- Daycares and partner organizations operating in schools should be maintained, and students should be bussed distances over 1 kilometre.

Variations on this option include:
- Eastwood as Junior High with Grades 7-9, due to the amenities at the school already (lockers, shop, science labs etc) and Delton, McCauley, and Spruce Avenue would be Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 6. Special needs programming should be located in one facility. John A. MacDougall, Norwood, and Parkdale should be leased out for community use.

- Eastwood as a Junior High, Delton, and Parkdale as Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 6 and Spruce Avenue as a CCEP High School with grades 10-12. John A. MacDougall, Norwood, and McCauley should be leased out for community use.

Four sites – Option H
Participants proposed that four sites remain, without specifying which school sites would stay open for which grades or programs.

These options included:

- Two Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 3 sites, and two sites with Grade 4-9. One participant referenced a need for east / west configuration of schools in the area, and another suggested that John A. MacDougall, McCauley, Delton, and Parkdale schools remain open, without identifying the school specific configuration at each site

- Another proposal included two Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 5 sites and two Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 9 sites, with approximately 350 students at each site. Specific sites were not referenced. It was noted that this configuration would reduce the number of transitions for students.

II. Keep all the schools open

Participants suggested that all school space should be kept open, with surplus space being used by community groups for community purposes. This included a wide range of programs and services, all geared to the needs and interests of the CCEP community.

Community Hub Campus

Participants proposed a "Community Hub" concept where the seven existing schools would remain open and serve as centres of the community – with ongoing education, libraries, multicultural centres, and social and family services and programs. Community league and recreational space would also be implemented, with green space used for recreation as well as community gardens. This concept was referenced by participants as both a community support mechanism as well as a response to the unique nature of the CCEP community.

Participants suggested that this "Community Hub Campus" would not necessarily require retention of all the existing schools, and could be implemented with a smaller number of school facilities.

A CCEP High School

Participants proposed that one of the school buildings (Eastwood, Spruce Avenue, and/or John A. McDougall were all suggested by different people) could serve as a CCEP High School. It was noted this would encourage high school attendance and completion by students and ease transition from junior high to high school in the CCEP area.

Considerations for Closing Schools

Capital Investment

There were a number of different views on whether buildings that have been the recipient of capital investment (for example, Norwood, John A. MacDougall, McCauley) should be retained because of the capital investment and the value to the community, or whether these buildings should be used for community purposes as they would be attractive to

community groups and non profits looking for space. Passionate views were expressed on both perspectives.

Keeping siblings together
Participants noted the importance of keeping families and siblings together, and this view was a component of many of the suggestions related to school configuration.

Year round schooling
No support was expressed for year round schooling and comments were received about the challenges of aligning programs in a year round school with other schools in the area.

III. Five school sites remain open (Two sites close)

A number of different configurations emerged relating to utilization of five school sites in the CCEP area. These included:

Five sites - Option A
- John A MacDougall to serve as a refugee / new immigrant centre with Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 6 programming.
- Eastwood and Delton schools would also be Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 6.
- Parkdale and Spruce Avenue schools would both accommodate Grades 7-9.
- Norwood and McCauley would close for school purposes, but continue to be used and/or leased for community purposes.
- Transportation and bussing would be required to move children who had attended Norwood and McCauley to Eastwood, John A. MacDougall, and Delton.

Five sites - Option B
- Delton and John A. MacDougall would accommodate Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 6 students.
- McCauley would accommodate Kindergarten to Grade 6.
- Spruce Avenue and Parkdale would be configured for Kindergarten to Grade 9.
- Eastwood and Norwood would be closed for school purposes, and Norwood would be leased to partners, and community organizations.
- Comments included a desire to keep families and siblings together, ensure two Junior High sites, and provide the least amount of travel possible for students.

Five sites – Option C
- John A. MacDougall, Parkdale, Norwood, and Spruce Avenue would be configured for Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 6.
- McCauley would be a Junior High site for Grades 7-9.

- Eastwood and Delton would close.
- Comments referenced included the development of leaders at the grades 4, 5 and 6 levels, the excessive cost that would be required to renovate Eastwood, and the need to invest in some upgrades to Spruce Avenue.

Five sites – Option D
Participants proposed five school sites, but didn't reference specifically which buildings should be retained.

- This proposed configuration included 1 Junior High site (grades 7-9), 1 middle school site (grades 5 & 6), and 3 Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 4 sites, with two sites closed and used for community purposes.
- Another similar proposal suggested two Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 4 sites, two Grade 5-9 sites (with one of them being Spruce Avenue), and one High School with grades 10-12. The proposal included the closing of Norwood and Eastwood schools, leaving Spruce Avenue, John A. MacDougall, McCauley, Parkdale, and Delton in use.

Other comments related to school closure in CCEP

A number of other comments relating to school closure options in CCEP were provided, including:
- Frustration with the District opening schools in new developments while engaging in a conversation about closing schools in the city centre area. It was suggested that the solution is to bus kids in to the area, rather than closing schools.
- Questioning of some of the assumptions guiding the discussion and suggestions that the District focused on understanding the root causes of enrolment problems
- Emphasis that this discussion should be focused on the kids, not the money
- Support for the school most important to some, including John A. MacDougall, Norwood, Eastwood, and McCauley. The important investments in facility, green space and community that were being made and the critical importance of maintaining schools in order to revitalize the community were noted.
- The challenges of accelerated timing for the review in the CCEP area

Part 3 – Project Evaluation

When the engagement plan was developed, an evaluation plan was also created. Prior to initiating the project, it was important to identify what success would look like when we were complete. In order to do that, we identified a number of Evaluation Success Indicators:

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- Participant satisfaction that the project goals and objectives and the role of the stakeholders in the process have been clearly defined and understood.
- A transparent public engagement process that allows easy access to input and material by all interested parties.
- An open and accessible public engagement process that allows for equitable participation by all stakeholders through a variety of appropriate methods.
- Participants are satisfied with how the process evolved and that the process resulted in meaningful and valuable input for consideration by the decision-makers.
- A broad and diverse range of stakeholders representing the demographics of the area are engaged in the process.

In addition to these indicators, we also used the public engagement and communication goals that were guiding the project, as an indicator of project success. These goals are repeated below:

Overarching Public Engagement Goals that guided the project included:
- Gathering community and stakeholder input that will be used in drafting recommendations for the path forward, and for decision making.
- Involving a broad, diverse range of interested and affected stakeholders, with a variety of perspectives, throughout the project.
- Creating and implementing multiple opportunities for meaningful dialogue and a value based discussion
- Providing participants with information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
- Raising awareness and understanding about the challenges and opportunities affecting space allocation and configuration across the school board.
- Developing and implementing the public engagement process in an open, transparent, accountable and meaningful way.
- Using a values and principles based approach where areas of common ground and collective wisdom become a lens to deliberate on issues of diversity or differences.
- Contributing to stakeholder capacity to participate by supporting and enriching skills and experience in public engagement processes.

Overall communication goals for the process included:
- Create awareness and understanding among parents and other stakeholders about the project by providing easy to understand, easy to access, accurate and timely information.
- Foster clarity among internal stakeholders relative to the goals and opportunities of the public engagement process.

- Build good community relations and support for the process by being open, honest and transparent, as well as responsive to issues that arise as part of project development.
- Build support for the public involvement process by encouraging open lines of communication between EPSB and process participants.
- Provide information about how the public's input has been used in the decision making process.
- Provide relevant and easily understandable information about the issues impacting the Greater Hardisty and City Centre areas.

Measuring Success

We used a number of sources of data to measure success, including:

- Baseline analysis of stakeholders, and ongoing review to determine if stakeholder list has expanded and who is being engaged
- Evaluation surveys conducted at individual events or activities to determine satisfaction levels with information provided, the process, meaningful dialogue etc.
- Qualitative evaluation at events or activities (e.g., visual assessment of participants in terms of whether or not they represent target audiences, numbers, level of engagement in the discussion, informal chats with participants, team debriefs, etc.)
- Monitoring of online discussion forums, other social media
- Phone calls and interviews with participants (and non participants)
- Advisory Committee input
- Requests or suggestions to amend the process and subsequent changes and/or adjustments
- Monitoring and confirmation of sharing of information and reporting of "what was said"

The detailed Project Evaluation report provides information on the entire project, however an overall analysis of the project indicates a number of results related to the summarized engagement and communication goals and indicators.

191 out of a possible 315 participants (61%) completed evaluation surveys, as evaluation surveys were provided at 16 out of 21 engagement events (76%). It should be noted that not all numbers noted below total 100% as some respondents did not answer all questions.

Success Goal or Indicator	Evaluation
Use input in recommendations for decision making	Until a final decision is made by Trustees, it will not be possible to make a direct link between participant input and decision making. However, all of the engagement activities and events have been

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Success Goal or Indicator	Evaluation
	documented in detail and made public. The results of those events and input have been analyzed in depth to develop this report. Once this report is presented to trustees, District Administration will review it and consider it in the development of their recommendations for the consideration of Trustees.
Involve a broad, diverse range of interested and affected stakeholders	Total direct participation over the course of the project totalled 600+ with roughly equal participation from the two affected areas. Depending on the activity, participation ranged with Greater Hardisty having higher participation in face to face meetings, and CCEP having higher participation in workbook submissions. Observation at face to face meetings determined diverse participation of parents and community members at the Community Forums and workbook training. Workbook submissions were also made by a wide range of participants including students and children. Attendance at the workshops was lower than anticipated in the CCEP area. As a result, the team conducted follow-up interviews with non-participants, community groups and organizations, extended submission deadlines and scheduled additional meetings to ensure every opportunity to provide input had been made available. After the first meeting of the Engagement Advisory Committee, it was determined that participation needed to expand in order to ensure a wider diversity of perspective and a number of additional members were added to the Committee membership.
Multiple opportunities for dialogue and values based discussion	On evaluation surveys, 81% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the process provided meaningful

Success Goal or Indicator	Evaluation
	opportunities for dialogue and values based discussion. 11% of respondents neither agreed or disagreed with this, 2% of respondents disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed.
	A wide range of types of engagement events were scheduled in the process including multiple opportunities for individual input (workbooks, emails, faxes, letters, voice mail), opportunities for face to face input (workbook discussions, forums, workshops and some additional meetings) and online (facebook, Connect2Edmonton, website). All opportunities focused on the same approach and questions, in an iterative values based process where one round of input provided the foundation for the next round.
Provide info about how to get involved through easy to understand, accessible, timely information	On evaluation surveys, 90% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that easy to understand, accessible information was provided. 10% neither agreed or disagreed with this statement.
	Electronic newsletters, posters, flyers, advertisements, backpack letters, media releases and updates were used to provide information about how to get involved. Based on input from participants and the Engagement Advisory Committee, the language, look and presentation of materials was adjusted during the process to make them simpler, plainer and more easily understood. The multiple editions of the electronic newsletter was opened by and average of 25% of recipients, higher than the industry opening average of 14-20%.
Raise awareness and understanding about	On evaluation surveys, 71% of

Success Goal or Indicator	Evaluation
the issues by providing relevant and easy to understand information	respondents strongly agreed or agreed that their understanding about the issues had increased or they had received the information they needed. 19% neither agreed or disagreed with this, 7% disagreed and .05% strongly disagreed. The facts and technical information on enrolment, school space use, sector planning principles, budget, facility use etc were provided to participants through two different versions of the workbooks and workshop materials and maps.
Open, transparent, responsive, and accountable process	On evaluation surveys, 72% of respondents felt that the process was open, transparent and responsive. 15% neither agreed or disagreed with this, 6% disagreed and 1% strongly disagreed. All information used in the process, and all information gathered from participants was posted on the website during the project – including information materials, "what was said" reports and event evaluations.
Contribute to stakeholder capacity, enriching skills and experience	On evaluation surveys, 96% of respondents felt that their skills and knowledge had increased and they were prepared to facilitate discussions. 4% neither agreed or disagreed. Training workshops to teach facilitation skills, and ground rules to encourage and support constructive participation were used throughout the process. Unfortunately, while we are aware of a number of hosted conversation by trained community members, many participants who submitted workbooks did not complete the recording sheet which documented information such as how

Success Goal or Indicator	Evaluation
	many participants in their group. Based on recording templates and submission origin, we have determined that approximately 25 sessions were hosted by trained community facilitators.
Participant satisfaction with process	On evaluation surveys, 77% of participants indicated the process had met their expectations and/or the stated objectives. 19% neither agreed or disagreed with this, 2% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed.

From a participant:

I really enjoyed the session, felt educated on the issues involved, and my mind was opened to what's really important. I felt that those whose feelings were passionate were handled professionally and diffused well, which is a difficult thing to do.

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