

DATE: January 17, 2012

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Edgar Schmidt, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Comparison of Edmonton and Calgary School Districts Unused Student Space (Response to Trustee Request #134)

ORIGINATOR: Brian Smith, Executive Director, Finance and Infrastructure

RESOURCE STAFF: Leanne Fedor, Ann Parker, Lorne Parker

REFERENCE: November 8, 2011 Board Meeting (Trustee Shipka)

ISSUE

The following information was requested:
 Provide comparisons of how district unused space compares with Edmonton and Calgary districts. What current and future implications if any, could this have for student achievement in our district?

BACKGROUND

Information has been obtained from the Alberta Infrastructure Area Capacity and Utilization Report (ACU) for the most current year, as well as, from discussions with the respective Metro Boards.

CURRENT SITUATION

School District	Total Capacity	Net Capacity	Enrolment	Difference in Capacity and Enrolment	Utilization Rate
Calgary School District No. 19	132,248	130,420	99,771	30,649	76%
Calgary Roman Catholic	60,586	60,561	45,733	14,828	76%
Edmonton School District No. 7	121,107	116,495	77,468	39,027	66%
Edmonton Catholic District No. 7	47,976	45,489*	34,117	10,883	75%

* Based on calculation derived from the most recent available data

As outlined in the chart above during the 2010-2011 school year, Edmonton Public Schools had 39,027 unused student spaces. The amount of unused student space is determined by calculating the difference between net capacity and adjusted enrolment. Net capacity is used in the calculation as this capacity measure takes into consideration any exempted lease space.

In comparison to other major boards in Alberta, Calgary School District No. 19 had 30,649 unused student spaces and Edmonton Catholic had approximately 10,883 unused student spaces based on 2010 data. Calgary Catholic Board had 14,828 unused student spaces with the expectation that this will decline in the next year.

Based on the chart above, Edmonton Public Schools had the greatest difference between net capacity and adjusted enrolment compared to the other major school boards within the province. Edmonton Public Schools subsequently has the lowest utilization rate among major school boards in the province.

It is difficult to establish a direct link between student achievement and unused district space. However, the combination of unused student space and low enrolment schools has an impact on the funds available to all schools. For example, during the 2009-2010 school year:

- The District allocated \$6.4 million from the operating budget to support schools with enrolments of less than 275 students.
- The excess expenditure over revenue as per the unaudited schedule submitted to Alberta Education was over \$26 million in relation to operations and maintenance of schools. \$8.8 million was recovered from instructional grants to partially address the shortfall.

The data relating to unused school space provided in this request was gathered from a number of public documents including the ACU. The administration has contacted each of the school districts mentioned above to request the most recent data provided to them from Alberta Education.

ATTACHMENTS & APPENDICES

N/A

LF: sa