

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

June 28, 2005

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: A. McBeath, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Recommendations Regarding the Proposed Closure of North Edmonton School

ORIGINATOR: C. McCabe, Assistant to the Superintendent

RESOURCE
STAFF: Jenise Bidulock, Meredith Colgan, Dean Caouette Michael Ediger, Leanne Fedor, Kelly Hehn, Darlene Jones, Kerry-Ann Kope, Amy-Irene Seward, Cindy Skolski, Dorothy Sombach

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the closure of North Edmonton School at the end of the 2004-2005 school year be approved.
- 2a. That an emergent request to the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation for capital funding to complete essential facility modifications at Balwin School to accommodate students for September 2005; (minor modifications would be required at Balwin School in the amount of \$200,000) be approved.
- b. That in the event that a commitment for funding the above from the Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation is not forthcoming prior to October 15, 2005, that a transfer of these funds from the Capital Reserve be approved.
3. That once September 2005 enrolment has been confirmed, the Three-Year Capital Plan be amended as appropriate for general upgrades to Balwin School.

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Rationale for Recommending Closure

North Edmonton School was opened in 1917 and has a provincially rated capacity for 448 students. According to the September, 30, 2004 enrolment count there were 193 students attending North Edmonton School. Enrolment at North Edmonton School has been steadily declining since 1971 (Appendix I). Of the 193 students enrolled at North Edmonton School; 139 students receive regular programming and 54 students receive Opportunity special needs programming. Thirty-nine per cent the students attending this school are special needs students. Of the 54 students in the special needs programs, 12 students reside in the North Edmonton

School attendance area. The remaining special needs students are transported to North Edmonton School from other communities.

Projected enrolment for next year is 204 students (including special needs students) in kindergarten through grade six. Current pre-enrolment at North Edmonton School as of June 23, 2005 is as follows: 116 students in the regular program and 78 students in special needs programs for a total of 194 students. The projected increase is partially due to the school operating an additional Opportunity class. There are 272 public elementary students living within the North Edmonton School attendance area. This includes the local North Edmonton, Balwin and the Miller neighbourhoods. Of these students 90 currently choose to attend North Edmonton School, with the remaining 182 students attending 42 other district schools.

Demographic Data

The City of Edmonton prepared a 25 year *Edmonton Population and Employment Forecast 2000 - 2025* which was released in 2001. This study has been used by City departments in support of developing such plans as the Transportation Master Plan, the Recreation Facilities Master Plan, and in support of the current Urban Parks Master Plan project. The study was developed by an external consultant working with City representatives, and was based on available population and census data, and development planning activity information current at the time. Included in this plan was a significant section on the overall composition of the population in the City of Edmonton, including pre-school and school-aged population totals both in total numbers and as percentage of the population. Population projections were also presented by City Transportation Zones. Only one population projection scenario was included in the *Edmonton Population and Employment Forecast 2000 - 2025*.

As part of the recent cluster study work engaged by our district, a review of supporting information and data included inquiries to City representatives about statistics and forecasts in the *Edmonton Population and Employment Forecast 2000 – 2025*. City officials indicated that they were close to releasing an update to the 25 year projection for the period 2003 - 2030. The district was provided with data tables which provided population projections by age by neighbourhood. Two tables were provided, a Base projection, which is consistent with the previous 25 year projection, and a High projection. City officials indicated that they were contemplating inclusion of a Base and a High projection approach as part of the 2003 – 2030 forecast. At the time that consultation meetings were held, the forecast was not officially released. The forecast has now been released officially, exclusive of 2005 Civic Census results.

Only the City's draft Base projection was used at the time of public consultation meetings, as the adoption of a High projection model was not yet formalized. It should also be noted that the difference between the Base and the High projection for elementary students in the North Edmonton School elementary attendance area is 288 to 303 (15 students).

For district projections, the best data source available on which to base district enrolment projections are district student counts. These are available through the district's own Student Information System. This system informs the district of actual numbers of students by where they live and what schools they attend. This is the most relevant data available in analyzing and developing district projections for student numbers residing in an area or attending a district school. The City's 25 year projections provide the best external information available for projections beyond the Student Information System.

The Appendix II graph indicates the district's own student residency history to September, 30, 2004, known total school-aged populations extracted from the 1996 and 2001 Federal Census, the

1999 Civic Census, and the City's draft Base and High forecasts to 2030. The enrolment history of North Edmonton School has also been included as an additional contextual reference.

Based on district enrolment history and trends, census data from 1996 to 2001, and civic population projections for the next twenty-five years, it is projected that the population of school age children in the North Edmonton School attendance area will continue to decline.

North Edmonton School is eligible for closure in accordance with Board Policy FL.BP (Appendix III), which identifies space utilization (under 40 per cent) and/or an average enrolment below 15 students per grade, and/or that the cost of keeping the school in operable condition or restoring it to operable condition being deemed by the board to be unreasonably high as criteria for selection.

If North Edmonton School were to close the district would realize a savings of approximately \$200,000 in terms of operational costs. North Edmonton School audit score is 910. It would cost approximately \$4.6M dollars to modernize the school to current day standards.

Accommodation of North Edmonton School Students

If North Edmonton School were to close, the 204 students projected to be enrolled in the fall would be designated to Balwin School for regular and Opportunity programming. There is space available in Balwin School to accommodate the North Edmonton School students.

Appendix IV represents the elementary students who live in the North Edmonton School attendance area and the Edmonton Public Schools they attend. There are 272 public elementary students living within the North Edmonton School attendance area. Eighty elementary students currently choose to attend North Edmonton School or 33 per cent. Twelve per cent attend McLeod School, 7 per cent attend Kildare School, and 48 per cent attend other district elementary schools. Currently 51 per cent of elementary students attend their neighbourhood school district wide.

Should North Edmonton School be closed, some students may choose to attend other district elementary schools. The current utilization rates of other neighborhood elementary schools are 62 per cent for Princeton School, and 90 per cent for Belvedere School. There would be adequate space available at Princeton School to accommodate North Edmonton School students. There would be space to accommodate 25 to 40 new students at Belvedere School.

As Balwin School would be proposed for major facility upgrades to accommodate a new elementary program, it is recommended that permission be sought from the province for the elementary program to be housed in the closed North Edmonton School facility until the planned upgrades are completed. This temporary arrangement would limit disruption to students, staff and programming while the work is in progress at Balwin School.

Consultation

On December 14, 2004, the board approved a recommendation that groups of schools in areas of the city with low enrolments be examined for the purpose of addressing improved educational opportunities for students. Balwin School was clustered with North Edmonton and Princeton schools. Cluster Studies commenced early in the new year and were coordinated by the Planning Department. Planning staff consulted with principals, and in various meetings with school staff, parents, school councils, program representatives and the broader community. The overall objective of the consultation process was to provide participants with the opportunity to work with the district to realize the following outcomes:

- Enhanced programming for students;
- Improved educational and co-curricular opportunities for students;
- Improved facilities and learning environments for students; and
- Improved use of School space.

The recommendations resulting from the cluster study consultation process, approved by the board of trustees on March 8, 2005 were as follows:

1. That the administration be authorized to undertake the provincial and board mandated processes to consider the closure of North Edmonton School.
2. That in conjunction with recommendation one above, the administration bring forward information to the Board of Trustees regarding:
 - a. Emergent capital funding as required to complete a comprehensive modernization of Balwin School as a kindergarten to grade nine school;
 - b. program enhancements at Balwin School: and
 - c. any other matters relating to the implementation of the recommendations.

Public Meetings

Public meetings were held to consider the closure of North Edmonton School on Wednesday, April 6, 2005 at North Edmonton School and on Monday May 30, 2005 at the Centre for Education. The arrangements and outcomes of the meetings are as follows:

Public Meeting – April 6, 2005

Following the March 8, 2005 board meeting, the following arrangements were made prior to the public meeting scheduled for April 6th:

- Parents/guardians of students registered at the school received a letter informing them of the public meeting along with the Notice of Meeting information package (Appendix V)
- Notice of Meeting was translated into Somalian and distributed to parents/guardians the school administration felt would require this service.
- Advertisements were placed in the Journal, Sun and the Examiner
- Flyers were posted in a minimum of five conspicuous places in the community
- A mail drop was arranged to ensure all members of the community were informed of the meeting
- A letter was sent to the City of Edmonton requesting a community impact statement and provided notice and invitation to the public meeting
- Community League Presidents received notification of the meeting and an invitation to attend

The public meeting was held in accordance with the School Act and *Closure of School Regulation* (Appendix VI). The meeting was held to provide information and receive input regarding the proposed closure of North Edmonton School. The meeting was held on Wednesday, April 6, 2005. Sixty three parents, community members and students from the North Edmonton/Balwin community attended the meeting at which district staff provided information about North Edmonton School. Also in attendance were seven trustees, two elected officials and twenty seven district staff.

Attendees were provided with information about the implications of the closure for the students, the community, and the district, the implications of keeping the school open, and information about the implementation of closure. Information regarding the district's long range capital plan was provided in the Notice of Meeting information package, items 8, 9, and 10 (Appendix V). Further information regarding capital plans was provided the public meeting.

Concerns and Issues

The administration has identified, through the closure consultation process, the following issues and concerns identified by parents and community members. The ways in which these could be addressed follows:

- Class Sizes
- Transition of Regular and Special Needs Programs and Staff
- Cost of Transportation and Lunch Fees
- Improved Educational Opportunities
- Capital Investment
- Utilization of Surplus Space in Schools

Class Sizes

- Ensure class size initiative is implemented at Balwin School, the designated receiving School

Edmonton Public Schools will lower average class sizes by the 2006 – 2007 school year to the levels recommended by the Learning Commission. In the fall of 2004 – 2005 the district distributed additional funds to school designated specifically for staff to meet the small class size recommendations. It is anticipated that the district, will assist principals to ensure that schools are working toward meeting the recommendations. Balwin School will organize classes in order to maintain lower class sizes at both the elementary and junior high grade levels.

Transition of Regular and Special Needs Programs and Staff

- Ensure scheduling and accommodation of students will support elementary and junior high students in the same building

District staff would work with the new principal of Balwin School to create a plan for scheduling and accommodation of students in order to provide continuity and transition to a safe environment for both the elementary and junior high programs.

Balwin School is currently a district site for the Opportunity program. The staff at Balwin School is familiar with the needs and programming of students in the Opportunity program. North Edmonton School teaching and support staff currently working in the Opportunity program classrooms at North Edmonton School would be given the opportunity to move to Balwin School along with the Opportunity students, given that the number of students that move to Balwin School supports the need for all staff. The modernization plan will take into account the specific needs of students in the Opportunity program and will incorporate any specific requirements to the facility in the modernization plan. All resource material currently in use at North Edmonton School to support the special needs program would be transferred to Balwin School. Special need students currently being transported to North Edmonton School for the Opportunity program would continue to be transported to Balwin School or to another site as identifies through the school closure process.

All students registered and living in the North Edmonton School attendance area would be designated to attend Balwin School for elementary and junior high. If the students choose to attend Balwin School from the elementary program North Edmonton staff would be given the option to be assigned to Balwin School. Personnel has worked with district administration, staffing, the Alberta Teacher's Association, and CUPE local 3550 to ensure that all Teaching and Teaching Assistant staff have the opportunity to move to Balwin School should North Edmonton School close.

Cost of Transportation and Lunch Fees

- Determine the impact on the district to subsidize transportation and lunch fees

If North Edmonton School were to be closed, transportation of students to Balwin School from the immediate North Edmonton School area would not be provided as students are within walking distance of Balwin School. Students living in the Miller neighbourhood would continue to be transported to Balwin School or would be designated to another receiving school based on a review of transportation needs arising from the school closure. Special needs students currently being transported to North Edmonton School for the Opportunity program would continue to be transported to Balwin School.

There would be a subsidized program put in place for students from North Edmonton School staying for lunch at Balwin School. Students who require lunch room supervision at Balwin School would have access to free lunch room supervision at Balwin School through grade 6.

Improved Educational Opportunities

In consultation with North Edmonton School staff and Balwin School staff the following educational opportunities could be provided for the elementary and junior high students at Balwin School if North Edmonton School were to be closed and the elementary students were to attend Balwin School.

School	North Edmonton / Balwin
Staffing	Additional support staff (teaching assistants) Teacher librarian Curriculum coordinator for Literacy Support Language specialists Music, art and physical education specialists North Edmonton School staff to relocate to Balwin School
Curriculum, Resources, and Program Benefits	Balanced Literacy from K-9 Full day kindergarten Technology support in every classroom New resources to support Balanced Literacy Resources to support the new social studies curriculum Second language programs from 4-9 Small class sizes Integration of special needs students Living skills facilities to support special needs program, integration into curricular areas such as art, social studies, and science Support for academically at risk students

School	North Edmonton / Balwin
Support Services	On site counseling for K-9 School liaison officer On site support (Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Therapist) Lunch room supervision Breakfast and Snack program (use of Living skills space) Walkable community plan Parent support programs Liaison with other community services Tracking and support for at risk students
Facilities	Comprehensive CTS and library space Fine arts facility for art, drama, music, band Science laboratory Living skills facilities (Home economics and industrial arts space) Two gymnasiums Hard surface play area will be included in capital upgrade Creation of access corridor to provide easier access to areas of the School Time out facilities to support behaviour transition needs Environmental garden Second language classrooms
Extra Curricular Activities	Leadership Reading Buddies Walking School Bus Mentoring School Store Student Council Safety Patrols Intramurals Lunch hour clubs Christmas Dinner Turkey Trot Choir for Div. 1,2, and 3 Sports teams Other extracurricular activities to meet student interest

Capital Investment

- Include playground development in the modernization plan for Balwin School

Parents and staff raised the concern that there is no playground at Balwin School, if North Edmonton School were to close. The current playground at North Edmonton School was recently upgraded and is owned and maintained by Edmonton Public Schools. A hard surface play area can be included in a major capital upgrade for Balwin School; however, capital funds cannot be used to build a playground.

The concern regarding the lack of a playground at Balwin School will be addressed as follow:

- The administration will work with the school, parent advisory council and the City of Edmonton to create a new playground at the Balwin School site

- Further define extent of capital investment and ensure capital investment will impact classrooms and learning spaces

The modernization of Balwin School would specifically address program and instructional spaces, and the final design plan would be determined through consultation with the community. Capital investment would be directed toward creating elementary-scale classrooms and mill work as well as washrooms and play areas. The elementary program would be accommodated in the west wing of the school, and consideration would be given to constructing a separate drop-off area for elementary children at a location to be determined through consultation with parents. A paved play area is also proposed. A new corridor is proposed to better integrate the west wing with other areas of the school. This would enable direct access to the music, drama and CTS labs. Capital investment would also be directed to re-configure CTS rooms to support both the elementary and junior high programs. The cost of the proposed modernization is \$7.0M.

Utilization of Surplus Space in School

- Ensure future use of closed building and land meets community expectations

If North Edmonton School is closed, the district would consult with the community league and the City of Edmonton, and would ensure that the future use of the building is appropriate. The district may also consider issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) from the community non-profit sector to explore possible partnership opportunities.

Public Meeting – May 30, 2005

The following arrangements were made prior to the public meeting that was scheduled for May 30, 2005:

- Parents/guardians of students registered at the school received a letter informing them of the public meeting along with the Notice of Meeting information package (Appendix VII)
- Advertisements were placed in the Edmonton Journal, Sun and the Examiner
- Flyers were posted in over 70 public places in the community
- A letter was sent to the City of Edmonton requesting further input or revisions to the April 26th community impact statement received and provided notice and invitation to the public meeting
- Community League Presidents and the President of the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues (EFCL) received notification of the meeting and an invitation to attend

The public meeting was scheduled and conducted in accordance with the requirements of the School Act and Closure of Schools Regulation (Appendix VI). It was intended to provide the district with the opportunity to present information to the public and receive their input regarding the proposed closure of North Edmonton School. The meeting was held Monday, May 30, 2005 at the Centre for Education. Twenty-five parents, community members and students from the North Edmonton community attended the meeting at which district staff provided information about North Edmonton School. Also in attendance were eight trustees, one elected official and sixteen district staff. Yellow bus transportation was provided to 8 parents and 14 children to attend the meeting.

Attendees were provided with information about the implications of the closure for students, the community and the district, the implications of keeping the school open and information about the implementation of closure. The district's Three-Year Capital Plan and Ten-Year Facilities

Plan were provided in the Notice of Meeting information package. Further information and additional copies of the capital plans were provided at the public meeting.

Parents and community members expressed a desire to keep North Edmonton School open for the following reasons:

- concern with students ability to adapt to change
- concern with students ability to walk to and from Balwin School and their safety during this period
- concern that junior high students will bully elementary students
- concern that the small school atmosphere will be lost

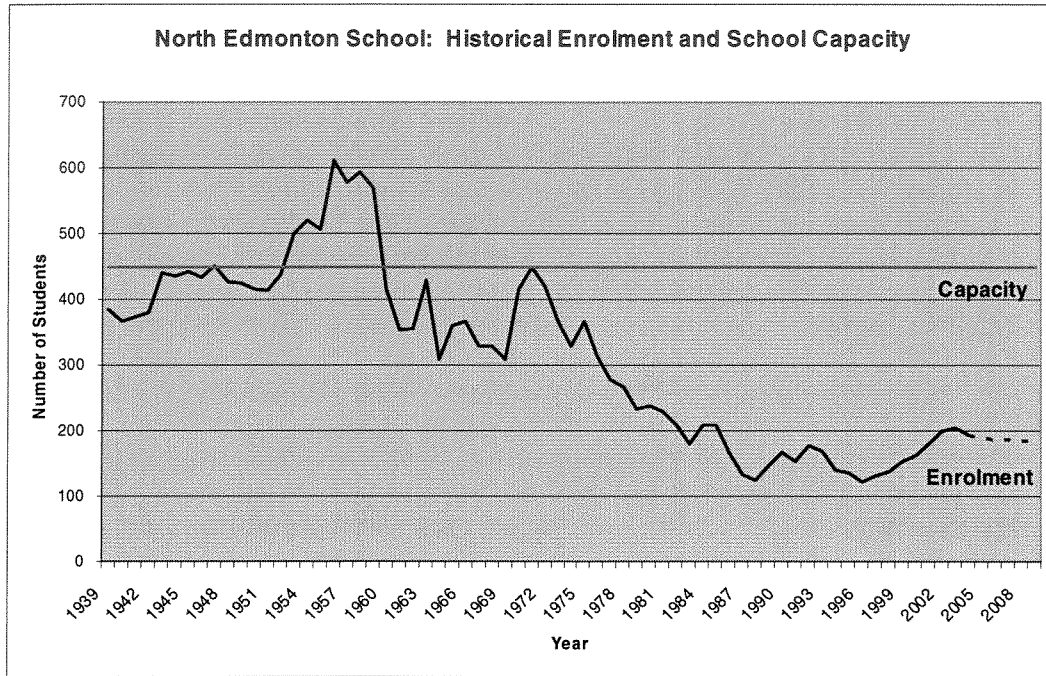
Input from the City of Edmonton

The City of Edmonton was invited to provide a community impact statement on the potential closure of North Edmonton School. A copy of their response is attached (Appendix VII). There are no evening or weekend gymnasium rentals at North Edmonton because it is a one custodian school. The district will consider community access to gymnasiums in any future lease arrangements and will continue to work with the City of Edmonton if any additional issues or concerns arise.

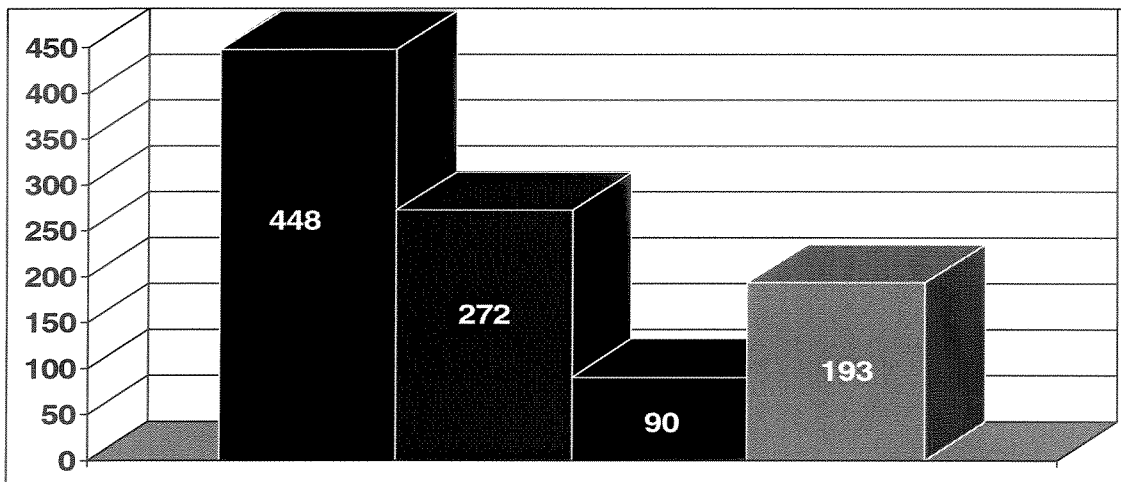
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APPENDIX I	North Edmonton School Enrolment History and Total Capacity, Student Projection, and Student Enrolment
APPENDIX II	City of Edmonton Neighbourhood Demographic Information
APPENDIX III	Board Policy FL.BP School Closure
APPENDIX IV	Elementary Students who live in the North Edmonton School Attendance Area and the Edmonton Public Schools they attend
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NORTH EDMONTON SCHOOL ENROLMENT HISTORY AND TOTAL CAPACITY, STUDENT PROJECTION, AND STUDENT ENROLMENT



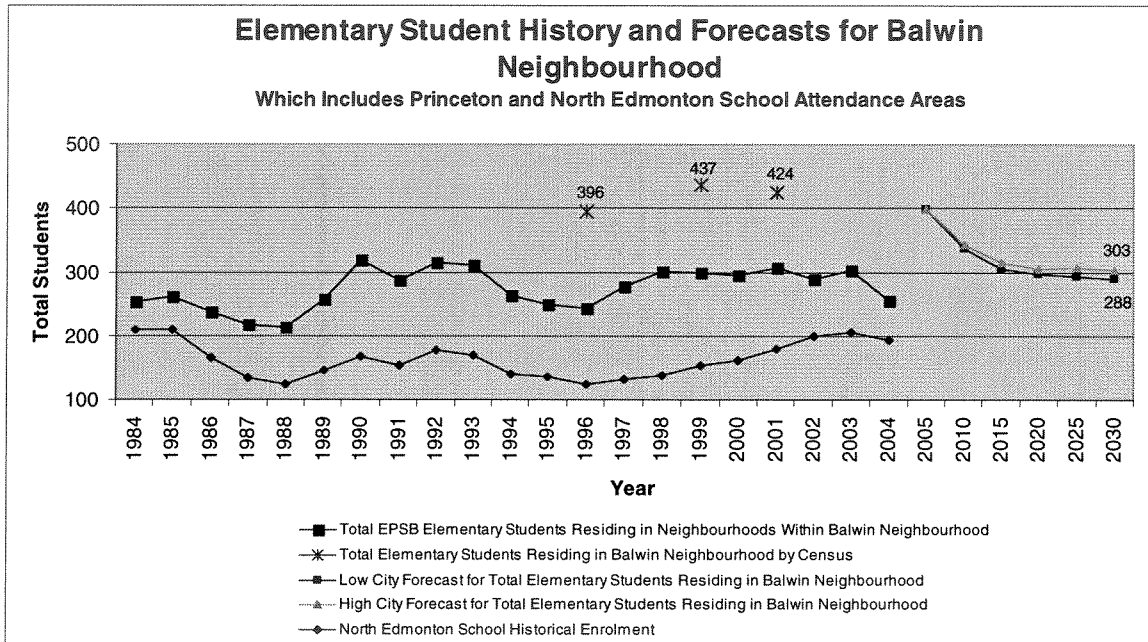
Total Capacity, Student Population and Student Enrolment at North Edmonton School



- Total Capacity of North Edmonton School
- Total # EPS elementary students living in the the North Edmonton School Attendance Area (which includes Miller Neighbourhood)
- Total # of elementary students living in North Edmonton Attendance Area attending North Edmonton School
- Total Enrolment of North Edmonton School

CITY OF EDMONTON NEIGHBOURHOOD DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Neighborhood Demographic Information



BOARD POLICY FL.BP SCHOOL CLOSURE

Policies -> Table of Contents -> Facilities

**Edmonton Public Schools
Board Policies and Regulations**

CODE: FL.BP

TOPIC: School Closure

EFFECTIVE DATE: 11-09-2001

ISSUE DATE: 25-09-2001

REVIEW DATE: 09-2006

The board believes that the closure of schools is an important consideration in ensuring the responsible use of the resources placed in its trust; making efficient use of the district's school space; and safeguarding the health and safety of students, staff, and the public.

A. SCOPE AND AUTHORITY

1. The board reserves to itself the authority to close an entire school or three or more consecutive grades in a school.
2. The board authorizes the administration, under the direction of the superintendent of schools and with appropriate consultation, to:
 - a. close or permanently relocate fewer than three consecutive grades in a school, or
 - b. temporarily relocate any number of grades from one school to another.
3. Discontinuance of a special needs program or an alternative program is not considered a school closure and is addressed in HA.BP Student Programs.

B. CRITERIA FOR SCHOOL CLOSURE

An entire school or three or more consecutive grades in a school may be considered for closure if one or more of the following criteria are met:

1. Total enrolment as of September 30 in the current school year is below the following levels:
 - a. elementary (K to 6) - an average of 15 students per grade, or
 - b. junior high (7 to 9) - an average of 30 students per grade, or
 - c. senior high (10 to 12) - an average of 120 students per grade.
2. The space utilization rate as defined by the provincial government as of September 30 in the current school year is less than 40 per cent.
3. The cost of keeping the school in operable condition or restoring it to operable condition is deemed by the board to be unreasonably high.
4. Closing the school is deemed by the board to be necessary to safeguard the health and safety of students, staff, or the public.

5. Parents and guardians of a majority of students enrolled in the school on September 30 in the current school year agree that closure should be considered.

C. PROCESS FOR SCHOOL CLOSURE

1. Where the board is considering school closure, it shall raise the matter through notice of motion at a regular board meeting, and ensure that the following are carried out:
 - a. A written communication, the contents of which are consistent with policies established by Alberta Learning, is sent to the parents of every student enrolled in the school who, in the opinion of the board, would be significantly affected by the closure of the school.
 - b. A public meeting is held, with at least a simple majority of trustees present.
 - c. The time, date, and place of this meeting are publicized in accordance with policies established by Alberta Learning.
 - d. The City of Edmonton is provided an opportunity to provide to the board a statement of the impact the closure may have on the community.
2. Following the public meeting attended by trustees, there shall be a period of at least three weeks for parents and community members to present to the board further responses to the proposed closure.
3. The administration may hold additional public meetings, consult with parents at other schools, or provide other opportunities for public involvement as appropriate, at any time.

Reference(s):

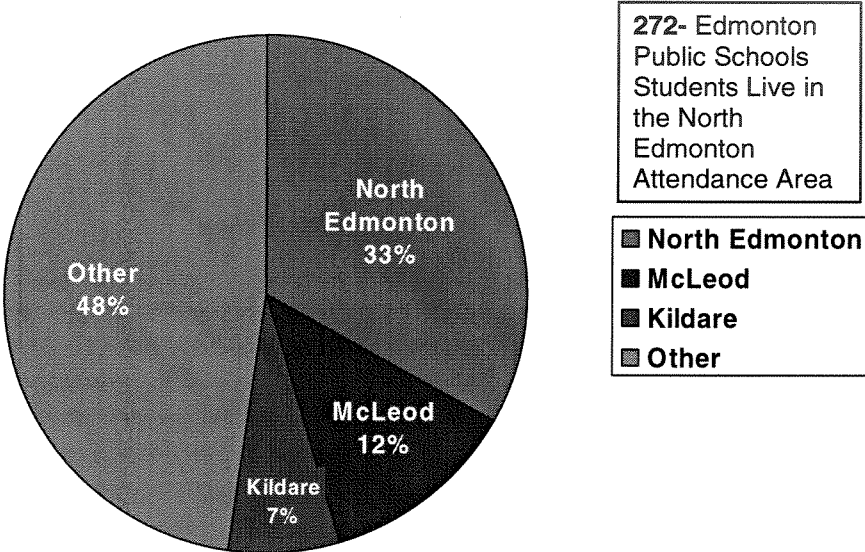
HA.BP - Student Programs

School Act Section 58

Alberta Learning's Closure of Schools Regulation

Alberta Infrastructure- see School Capital Manual 2002-2003 Section 5.2.1 Utilization Rate and Section 5.2.2. Area, Capacity and Utilization Procedures

Elementary Students who live in the North Edmonton School Attendance Area and the Edmonton Public Schools they Attend



An Average of 51% of Elementary Students attend their Neighbourhood Elementary School

NOTICE OF MEETING

MEETING TO CONSIDER CLOSURE OF NORTH EDMONTON SCHOOL

Date: Wednesday, April 6, 2005
Time: 7:00 pm
Location: North Edmonton School Gymnasium

Information regarding the potential closure of North Edmonton School

- 1. How will School closure affect the attendance area defined for North Edmonton School?**
 The current North Edmonton attendance area would remain the same and would become the elementary attendance area for Balwin School. All elementary students living in the attendance area will be designated to Balwin School.
- 2. How will the closure affect the attendance at other Schools?**
 With the closure of North Edmonton School, students would be designated to Balwin School. Parents within the North Edmonton School boundary may choose to attend Balwin School or exercise their choice in registering their elementary students in the K-6 grade configuration at Princeton School or in any of the district's alternative program sites. Anticipated enrolment for September 1, 2005 will be as follows:

Balwin School Grades K-9	Enrolment
a) Grades 7-9	260
b) Grades K-6 (From North Edmonton)	193
Total	453

- 3. How many students need to be relocated as a result of North Edmonton School closing?**
 There are 193 students projected to attend North Edmonton School in 2005. Ninety of those students are from the North Edmonton designated area. There are 103 students attending North Edmonton School that are from other Edmonton neighbourhoods. Many of them are special needs students attending the district site at North Edmonton School. All students within the former North Edmonton attendance area in the fall of 2005 will be designated to Balwin School.
- 4. What is the need for, and extent of bussing?**
 Transportation of students to Balwin School from the immediate North Edmonton area would not be provided as students are within walking distance of Balwin School. Students living in the Miller neighbourhood would continue to be transported to Balwin School or will be designated to another receiving School based on a review of transportation needs arising from the School closure. Special needs students currently being transported to North Edmonton School for the Opportunity program would continue to be transported to Balwin School or to another site as identified through the School closure process.
- 5. What are the program implications for other Schools and for the students when they are attending other Schools?**
 With the closure of North Edmonton School, regular and Opportunity program students would be able to continue their programs at Balwin School. The accommodation of elementary students at Balwin School would allow students to maintain the continuity and sense of community valued by parents and staff. It is expected that the high needs

designation for North Edmonton School could be maintained, allowing the continuation of the full day kindergarten program currently in place. Students would continue to gain from the School-wide implementation of the balanced literacy program that has been integrated into daily instruction. Due to the high needs designation, other programs that support student learning, such as nutrition programs, could be maintained at the Balwin School site.

6. What are the educational impacts of closing the School?

Students from North Edmonton School would benefit from the enhanced learning environments at Balwin School. Balwin School has two gymnasiums, science labs, art and drama rooms, music room with risers, computer lab and upgraded wiring throughout the School building. Students from North Edmonton School would be able to utilize these and other areas of the School. All students will benefit from the modernization of Balwin School as a K-9 School.

Students from North Edmonton School and students at Balwin School would benefit from the larger student population that would allow for a wider range of opportunities for extra-curricular activities and mentorship/buddy programs. This access to older grades 7 to 9 students would work well with the balanced literacy program focus and provide leadership opportunities for the junior high students. The larger student population would enable the opportunity to introduce second language programs as well as enhance opportunities for band and drama extra-curricular activities.

7. What are the educational impacts of the School staying open?

If North Edmonton School were to remain operational its projected student population would decline to 185 within the next 5 years. It is also expected that there would be a 40 per cent ratio of special needs students to regular program students. The School would need to combine grade classes in both regular and special needs. Programming options would be limited and resources would be limited or reduced to purchase instructional materials and equipment.

8. What are the financial impacts including the effects on operational costs and capital implications of closing the School?

Closing North Edmonton School would save the district approximately \$200,000 in operating costs annually. The cost of modernizing Balwin School is approximately \$1.3 Million which is already included in the district's 3 Year Capital Plan.

9. What are the financial impacts including the effects on operational costs and capital implications if the School were not closed?

The Provincial Audit Score of 910 is relatively high compared to other Edmonton Public Schools. North Edmonton School would require extensive modernization costing approximately \$4.6M. The School would not qualify under the Provincial regulations for this \$4.6M in required upgrades.

10. Would there be a need to upgrade existing space or build new School space as a result of increased enrolment other Schools?

Balwin School would require \$1.3M for essential upgrades that are already included in the district's 3-Year Capital Plan. Balwin School would require additional capital to upgrade lighting and flooring. Balwin School would require additional capital to convert existing surplus space into kindergarten and elementary learning environments. The conversion of space would include one under utilized CTS lab and other classrooms but would not remove junior high program space currently being used. Further upgrades to areas of Balwin School

that are affected by increased enrolment will be considered, including the provision of elementary-sized washrooms and fixtures.

11. What is the proposed use the School building if it is closed?

It is not district practice to predetermine the future use of a School building prior to closure. In the past the School buildings have been used by the district for educational purposes, leased to non profit organizations or sold. For example, closed Schools have been used by the district for the Home School Centre, the Environment Education Centre, and the Rites of Passage Program. A few have been leased on a long-term basis to organizations such as NAIT, the Edmonton City Centre Church Corporation, and the City of Edmonton Community Services Department. A number of Schools have been sold to the City of Edmonton for green space, the Edmonton Society for Christian Education, the Turkish Canadian Cultural Society.

12. What are the impacts to Lease Agreements should the School close?

The current tenant is a Out-of-School Care provider. The tenant will have three options if North Edmonton School were to close.

- a) The tenant may remain in the School for the remainder of the lease term,
- b) The tenant may terminate the lease at any time without penalty,
- c) The tenant may request consideration to relocate to any other district School, including Balwin School.

For more information regarding the School closure process or to provide feedback, visit Edmonton Public Schools website <http://planning.epsb.ca/Schoolclosures>

SCHOOL ACT

(Consolidated up to 170/2004)

ALBERTA REGULATION 238/97

School Act

CLOSURE OF SCHOOLS REGULATION

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Definitions

1 In this Regulation,

(a) "closure" means any action referred to in section 2;

(a.1) "Ministers" means, for the purposes of sections 6 and 7, the Ministers determined under section 16 of the Government Organization Act as the Ministers responsible for Part 7 of the School Act;

(b) "school year" means the 12-month period beginning on September 1 and ending on the following August 31.

AR 238/97 s1;223/2002;257/2003

Non-application of sections

1.1(1) Sections 4 to 7 do not apply to a closure that occurs

(a) in connection with the transfer by one board to another board or to the operator of a charter school of the ownership of real property on which a school building is located and the school building will continue to be used for the instruction or accommodation of students,

(b) as a result of the Minister's having directed the board to dispose of the school building pursuant to section 200(3) of the Act, or

(c) pursuant to section 2(b) if

(i) the school has more than one education program,

(ii) the students in the grades being closed are all in the same education program, and

(iii) the education program referred to in subclause (ii) is to be transferred to another school.

(2) Where a board plans to transfer an education program pursuant to subsection (1)(c)(iii), the board shall organize and convene an information meeting for the purpose of informing the parents of the students affected by the transfer of the transfer and the alternative arrangements for continuing the education program at another school.

AR 135/2003 s2;257/2003;170/2004

Exemption from requirements

1.2(1) The Minister may, on the written request of a board or on the Minister's initiative, exempt a board from the requirements of

sections 4 to 7 in respect of a closure that occurs

(a) as a result of the board's inability to comply with section 57(2) of the Act, or

(b) for health or safety reasons.

(2) The Minister may, on the written request of a board, exempt the board from the requirements of sections 4 to 7 in respect of a closure if the Minister is satisfied that the board has consulted with the community regarding any change in grades and programs in one or more of the schools operated by the board.

AR 257/2003 s4;170/2004

Closure of schools, etc.

2 A board may

(a) close a school permanently or for a specified period of time,

(b) close entirely 3 or more consecutive grades in a school, or

(c) repealed AR 257/2003 s5,

(d) transfer all students from one school building to one or more other school buildings on a permanent basis.

AR 238/97 s2;257/2003

Policies and procedures for closure of schools

3 A board may develop and implement policies and procedures with respect to closure of schools that are not inconsistent with this Regulation.

AR 238/97 s3;257/2003

Notification of proposed closure

4(1) Where a board is considering the closure of a school, the board shall

(a) raise the matter by way of a motion at a regular meeting of the board, and

(b) in writing notify the parents of every child and student enrolled in the school who, in the opinion of the board, will be significantly affected by the closure of the school.

(2) A notice referred to in subsection (1)(b) shall set out the following:

(a) how the closure would affect the attendance area defined for that school;

(b) how the closure would affect the attendance at other schools;

(b.1) information on the board's long-range capital plan;

(c) the number of students who would need to be relocated as a result of the closure;

(d) the need for, and extent of, busing;

(e) program implications for other schools and for the students when they are attending other schools;

(f) the educational and financial impact of closing the school,

including the effect on operational costs and capital implications;

(g) the educational and financial impact if the school were to remain open;

(h) and (i) repealed AR 257/2003 s7;

(j) the time and location of the public meeting referred to in section 5(1)(a).

(3) A notice referred to in subsection (1)(b) may set out the following:

(a) the capital needs of the schools that may have increased enrolment as a result of the closure, and

(b) the possible uses of the school building or space in the school building if

(i) the entire school is being closed, or

(ii) 3 or more consecutive grades in the school are being closed entirely.

AR 238/97 s4;257/2003;170/2004

Public meetings

5(1) Where a board has given notice of motion at a regular meeting of the board that it is considering the closure of a school, the board

(a) shall organize and convene a public meeting for the purpose of discussing the information provided to the parents under section 4,

(b) shall provide an opportunity for the council of the municipality in which the school is located to provide a statement to the board of the impact the closure may have on the community, and

(c) may hold other meetings with respect to the closure at times and places as the board may determine.

(2) The date and place of the public meeting referred to in subsection (1)(a) shall be

(a) posted in 5 or more conspicuous places in the area or areas of the school or schools affected by the closure, for a period of at least 14 days before the date of the public meeting, and

(b) advertised in a newspaper circulating within the area or areas of the school or schools affected by the proposed closure, on at least 2 occasions as close as is practicable to the date of the meeting.

(3) At least 2 trustees of the board shall attend the public meeting referred to in subsection (1)(a).

(4) A board shall ensure that minutes of all public meetings held under this section are prepared.

AR 238/97 s5;257/2003

Decision on closure

6(1) A board shall not make a final decision on the proposed closure until at least 3 weeks have passed since the date of the public meeting referred to in section 5(1)(a).

(2) A board shall give due consideration to any written submissions on the proposed closure that it receives after the public meeting referred to in section 5(1)(a).

(3) A board

(a) shall by resolution decide whether to close the school, and

(b) if the decision is to close the school, shall forthwith notify

the Ministers in writing of the decision.

AR 238/97 s6;223/2002;257/2003

Closure within school year

7(1) All school closure procedures shall be initiated and completed within the school year in which the decision to close the school is made.

(2) Notwithstanding subsection (1), on the written request of the board, the Ministers may extend the school closure procedures

beyond one school year.

AR 238/97 s7;257/2003

Expiry

8 For the purpose of ensuring that this Regulation is reviewed for ongoing relevancy and necessity, with the option that it may be re-passed in its present or an amended form following a review, this Regulation expires on November 1, 2008.

AR 238/97 s8;223/2002;257/2003

9 Repealed AR 223/2002 s5.

NOTICE OF MEETING

MEETING TO CONSIDER CLOSURE OF NORTH EDMONTON SCHOOL

Date: Monday, May 30, 2005
Time: 7:00 pm
Location: Centre for Education, One Kingsway
 McCauley Chambers

Information regarding the potential closure of North Edmonton School**1. *How school closure would affect the attendance area defined for North Edmonton School.***

North Edmonton School, located at 6920–128 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta offers a Kindergarten to grade 6 regular program and grades 1 to 6 Opportunity special needs program. The Board of Trustees is considering the closure of both the regular and Opportunity programs at North Edmonton School.

The attendance area for the regular program at North Edmonton School consists of North Edmonton, Balwin and Miller neighbourhoods. The Opportunity program is a special needs district program that accommodates students who live in the north east area of the city. In the event of closure of North Edmonton School all students residing within the North Edmonton attendance area in the fall of 2005 would be designated to Balwin School located at 7055-132 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta. The Opportunity program would also be relocated to Balwin School.

2. *How the closure of North Edmonton School would affect the attendance at other schools.*

With a provincially-rated capacity of 758 students, Balwin School could accommodate all students from the regular and Opportunity programs at North Edmonton School. The September 30, 2004 enrolment at North Edmonton School was 193 students in Kindergarten to grade 6. The projected enrolment for September 2005, prior to consideration of closure of North Edmonton School, is 204 students including both regular and special needs students. If North Edmonton School closes, 204 elementary students in Kindergarten to grade 6 would be designated to Balwin School for a projected enrolment for 2005/2006 of 464 students in Kindergarten to grade 9 at Balwin School.

Currently there are 272 public elementary students living within the North Edmonton School attendance area. Eighty elementary students currently choose to attend North Edmonton School or 33 per cent. On average 51 per cent of elementary students attend their neighbourhood school. Some students may register in other district elementary schools, however, it is not possible to predict how many students may register and at which school. The current utilization rates of other neighbourhood elementary schools are 62 per cent for Princeton School, and 90 per cent for Belvedere School. There would be adequate space available at Princeton School to accommodate North Edmonton School students. There would be space to accommodate 25 to 40 new students at Belvedere School.

Edmonton Public Schools will lower average class sizes by the 2006 – 2007 school year to the levels recommended by the Learning Commission. In the fall of 2004 – 2005 the district distributed additional funds to schools designated specifically for hiring additional staff to

meet the smaller class size recommendations. Balwin School will organize classes in order to maintain lower class sizes at both the elementary and junior high grade levels.

3. *Information on the Board's long-range capital plan.*

Edmonton Public Schools has a plan to build new schools in growth areas, renew existing schools in areas where enrolments are sustainable and transform the way facilities are managed into a model of efficiency for the future. Please find enclosed:

- brochure with information on Edmonton Public Schools Ten-Year Facilities Plan (2005-2014) and Three-Year Capital Plan (2005-2008)
- copy of the Ten-Year Facilities Plan (2005-2014)
- copy of the Three-Year Capital Plan (2005-2008)

North Edmonton School is located in the Central Sector which has a provincial utilization rate of 54 per cent for kindergarten to grade 9. A strategy to decrease the amount of excess space in this sector will be undertaken that may necessitate program relocation and possible school or program closures in order to maximize learning opportunities for students.

4. *The number of students who would need to be relocated as a result of closure of North Edmonton School.*

The projected enrolment for North Edmonton School for 2005/2006 is 204 students. This includes 138 students in the regular elementary program, and 66 students in the Opportunity program. All students within the former North Edmonton attendance area in the fall of 2005 would be designated to Balwin School.

Some students may choose other district elementary schools. Should parents request to register in a different school other than the designated receiving school, students would be able to register in that school (provided the school provides the appropriate program) even if pre-enrolment deadlines are past.

5. *The need for, and the extent of, bussing.*

Kindergarten to grade 6 students attending Edmonton Public Schools are currently eligible for transportation service if they attend the designated school for their community and live beyond the recommended walking distance from the school. Special transportation is provided for eligible students with mild, moderate or severe special needs. Should North Edmonton School be closed, transportation of students to Balwin School from the immediate North Edmonton area would not be provided as students are within walking distance of Balwin School. Students living in the Miller neighbourhood would continue to be transported to Balwin School or would be designated to another receiving school based on a review of transportation needs arising from the school closure. Special needs students currently being transported to North Edmonton School for the Opportunity program would continue to be transported to Balwin School or to another district site as identified through the school closure process.

6. Program implications for other schools and for the students when they are attending other schools.

Should North Edmonton School be closed, regular and Opportunity program students would be able to continue their programs at Balwin School. The accommodation of elementary students at Balwin School would allow students to maintain the continuity and sense of community valued by parents and staff. District staff would work with the new principal of Balwin School to create a plan for scheduling and accommodation of students in order to provide continuity and transition to a safe environment for both the elementary and junior high programs.

It is expected that the high needs designation for North Edmonton School could be maintained, allowing the continuation of the full day kindergarten program currently in place. Due to the high needs designation, other programs that support student learning, such as nutrition programs, could be maintained at the Balwin School site.

Both schools share a common focus on improving reading and literacy. This provides opportunities for program continuity from Kindergarten to grade 9. Students would continue to gain from the school-wide implementation of the balanced literacy program that has been integrated into daily instruction, with the potential to expand the program to the junior high level. In accordance with Edmonton Public Schools goal to lower average class sizes, Balwin School would organize classes in order to maintain lower class sizes at both the elementary and junior high grade levels. Balwin School is currently a district site for the Opportunity program. The staff at Balwin School is familiar with the needs and programming of students in the Opportunity program. There would be a special program put in place to reduce or eliminate lunchroom supervision fees for students from North Edmonton School staying for lunch at Balwin School

Summary of Educational Benefits for North Edmonton/Balwin Schools

School	North Edmonton / Balwin
Staffing	Student counselors for K-9 Additional support staff (teaching assistants) Teacher librarian Curriculum coordinator for Balanced Literacy Language specialists Music, art and physical education specialists North Edmonton School staff to relocate to Balwin School
Curriculum, Resources, and Program Benefits	Balanced Literacy from K-9 Full day kindergarten Technology support in every classroom New resources to support Balanced Literacy Resources to support the new social studies curriculum Second language programs from 4-9 Small class sizes Integration of special needs students Living skills facilities to support special needs program, integration into curricular areas such as art, social studies, and science Support for academically at risk students

School	North Edmonton / Balwin
Support Services	On site counseling for K-9 School liaison officer On site support (Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Therapist) Lunch room supervision Breakfast and Lunch program (use of Living skills space) Walkable community plan/ Walking School bus Parent support programs Liaison with other community services Tracking and support for at risk students
Facilities	Comprehensive CTS and library space Fine arts facility for art, drama, music, band Science laboratory Living skills facilities (Home economics and industrial arts space) Two gymnasiums Hard surface play area will be included in capital upgrade Creation of access corridor to provide easier access to areas of the School Time out facilities to support behaviour transition needs Environmental garden Second language classrooms
Extra Curricular Activities	Leadership Reading Buddies Walking School Bus Mentoring School Store Student Council Safety Patrols Intramurals Lunch hour clubs Christmas Dinner Turkey Trot Choir for Div. 1,2, and 3 Sports teams Other extracurricular activities to meet student interest

7. The educational and financial impact of closing North Edmonton School, including the effect on operational costs and capital implications.

Educational Impacts

Should North Edmonton School close, students from North Edmonton School would benefit from the enhanced learning environments at Balwin School. Balwin School has two gymnasiums, science labs, art and drama rooms, music room with risers, a library and computer labs and upgraded wiring throughout the school building. Students from North Edmonton School would be able to utilize these and other areas of the school. All students would benefit from the modernization of Balwin School as a K-9 school.

Students from North Edmonton School and students at Balwin School would benefit from the larger student population that would allow for a wider range of opportunities for extra-

curricular activities and mentorship/buddy programs. The combination of elementary and junior high students would provide increased leadership opportunities for all students. The higher enrolment would enable the opportunity to introduce second language programs as well as enhanced opportunities to provide continuity by expanding the balanced literacy program from Kindergarten to grade 6 to include grade 7, 8 and 9.

The higher enrolment would enable the school to increase resources to provide additional support for counselling, library, literacy and specialized subjects. To ensure program continuity, teachers from North Edmonton School would be able to work with teachers at Balwin School to inform them of the specific learning needs of the students. Balwin School would engage in welcoming and community building activities prior to the end of the 2004/2005 school year and extensively in September 2005 to support successful student transition to the school.

Financial Impact – Operational Costs

If North Edmonton School were to close the district would save approximately \$200,000 in operating costs annually. Balwin School would require \$1.3M for essential upgrades that are already included in the district's Three-Year Capital Plan. Balwin School would require additional capital to convert existing surplus space into kindergarten and elementary learning environments. Further upgrades to areas of Balwin School that are affected by increased enrolment will be considered, including the provision of elementary-sized washrooms and fixtures. The estimated cost to make these installations is approximately \$70,000.

Staffing Implications

Staffing levels at Balwin School for the elementary and junior high for 2005/2006 would be adjusted based on projected student enrolments. Junior high staff positions at Balwin would not be impacted by the addition of North Edmonton School staff. If North Edmonton School were to close, and if the students choose to attend Balwin School from the elementary program, North Edmonton School teaching staff and classroom assistant staff would be given the option to be assigned to Balwin School. Personnel has worked with district administration, staffing, the Alberta's Teacher Association, and CUPE local 3550 to ensure that all teaching and teaching assistant staff have the opportunity to move to Balwin School should North Edmonton School close. Custodial staff would be reassigned in accordance with the CUPE Local 474 Collective Agreement. Requirements of each of the Collective Agreements will be met:

- Alberta Teachers' Association Local 37
- Custodial CUPE Local 474
- Support Staff CUPE Local 3550

8. *The educational and financial impact if North Edmonton School were to remain open.*

Educational Impact

If North Edmonton School were to remain operational its projected student population would decline to 185 within the next five years. It is also expected that there would be a 40 per cent ratio of special needs students to regular program students. The school would need to combine grade classes in both regular and special needs classes. Programming options would be limited and resources to purchase instructional materials and equipment would be reduced.

Financial Impact

Based on staffing and operating costs appropriate for a projected enrolment of 204 students, the total annual cost to operate North Edmonton School would be \$1,641,431 for the 2005/2006 school year. Without the closure of North Edmonton School, an additional cost to the district of \$200,000 in operational costs would result. The Provincial Audit Score of 910 is relatively high compared to other Edmonton Public Schools. North Edmonton School would require extensive modernization costing up to \$4.6M.

9. *The capital needs of the schools that may have increased enrolment as a result of the closure of North Edmonton School.*

Balwin School requires \$1.3M for essential upgrades that are already included in the district's Three-Year Capital Plan. If North Edmonton School is closed, Balwin School would require additional capital to upgrade lighting and flooring, and would require additional capital to convert existing surplus space into kindergarten and elementary learning environments. The conversion of space would include one under utilized CTS lab and other classrooms but would not remove junior high program space currently being used. Further upgrades to areas of Balwin School that are affected by increased enrolment will be considered, including the provision of elementary-sized washrooms and fixtures.

The existing playground at North Edmonton School was built in 2003 using funds raised by a special committee of school and parents. A plan will be put in place to build a new playground at Balwin School.

10. *Proposed use of the school building if it is closed.*

It would be the intent of the district that, should the school be closed, the school could be used by the district for educational purposes, leased to non profit organizations or sold. For example, closed schools have been used by the district for the Home School Centre, the Environment Education Centre, and the Rites of Passage Program. A few have been leased on a long-term basis to organizations such as NAIT, the Edmonton City Centre Church Corporation, and the City of Edmonton Community Services Department. A number of schools have been sold to: the City of Edmonton for green space, the Edmonton Society for Christian Education, the Turkish Canadian Cultural Society.

11. Impacts to Lease Agreements should the school close.

The current tenant is an Out-of-School Care provider. The tenant will have three options if North Edmonton School were to close:

- a) The tenant may remain in the school for the remainder of the lease term;
- b) The tenant may terminate the lease at any time without penalty; and
- c) The tenant may request consideration to relocate to any other district school, including Balwin School.

12. The time and location of the public meeting.

A public meeting for the purpose of discussing the information provided will occur **Monday, May 30, 2005** at the **Centre for Education in McCauley Chambers** starting at 7:00 pm.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information regarding the school closure process or to provide feedback, visit Edmonton Public Schools website <http://planning.epsb.ca/schoolclosures>

As outlined in Edmonton Public Schools' School Closure Policy the Board shall not make a decision on the proposed closure of North Edmonton School until at least three weeks have passed from the date of the public meeting. The Board will give due consideration to any written submission on the proposed closure that it receives after the public meeting and prior to the final debate and decision at a board meeting.



COMMUNITY
SERVICES

MAILING ADDRESS
P.O. BOX 2359
EDMONTON, ALBERTA
T5J 2R7

April 26, 2005

Mr. Angus McBeath
Superintendent of Schools
Edmonton Public School Boards
Center for Education
One Kingsway Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5H 4G9

REC-1
APR 27 2005

Dear Mr. McBeath:

Community and Emergency Services has been provided the opportunity to provide feedback to the Edmonton Public School Board on the proposed closure of the Wellington, North Edmonton, Terrace Heights and Strathearn schools. We appreciate the opportunity to share our thoughts on the possible impacts these closures may have.

Our Department is aware of community concerns regarding these sites. While we cannot speak for these communities, we trust that you have received comments from them regarding these possible closures.

We understand that if the schools are closed, they will still remain in the Edmonton Public School Board inventory until they are declared surplus by the Board. The City will continue to maintain adjacent sports fields to meet community needs. Should the Edmonton Public School Board decide to declare these sites surplus, the City would evaluate our need to acquire them and determine if we should act on our first right to purchase included in our Joint Use Agreement.

We have concerns regarding the possible impact of these closures on the community's ability to access gyms for recreational and physical activity needs. We understand that some of these schools may be leased to other agencies if closed. Please consider if the community access to these gyms could be included in any future lease arrangements.

Some of these sites have new or redeveloped playgrounds. We wish to ensure investments the City has made in this community infrastructure will continue to benefit the community. Can you provide any assurances of this continued benefit?

Should you have any questions or wish to discuss any of the information we have shared, please contact Rob Smyth, Manager of Strategic Services, with Community and Emergency Services at 496-8301.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deryl Kloster". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Deryl Kloster
General Manager

DK/jb

c. Rob Smyth, Manager, Strategic Services Branch