

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

May 27, 2003

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: A. McBeath, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Stratford High School Program Relocation

ORIGINATOR: A. Habinski, Executive Director School and District Services

RESOURCE

STAFF: Jenise Bidulock, Bruce Coggles, Robert Craig, Kathy McCabe, Pat Niven,
Gerri Porter, Cindy Skolski

INFORMATION

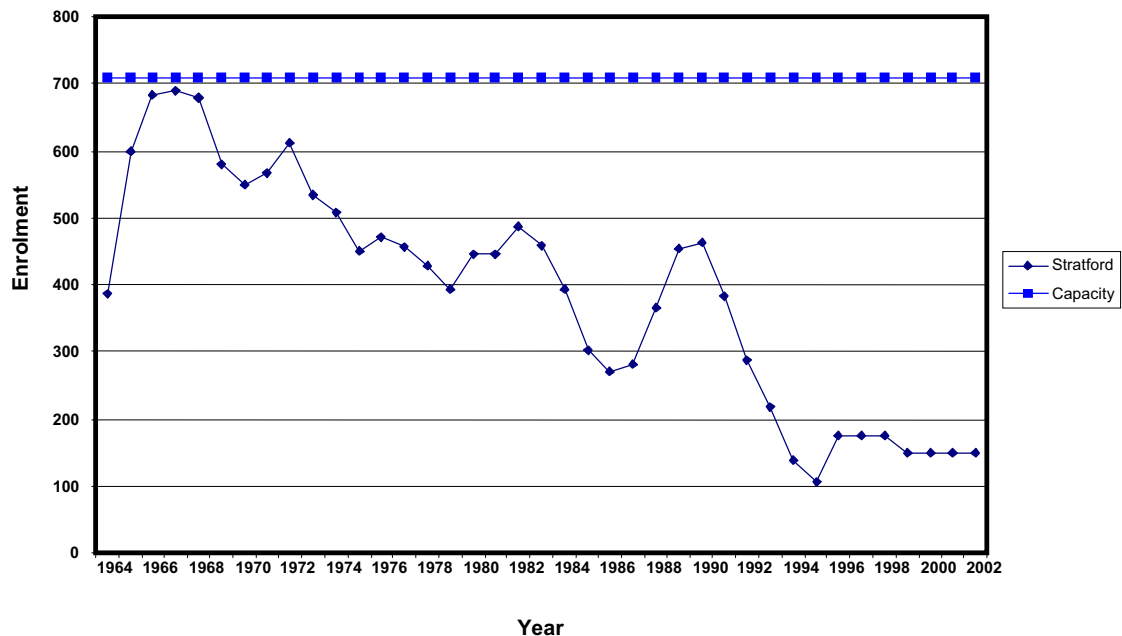
The administration plans to relocate the Jasper Place School students from the Stratford campus to the main campus of Jasper Place School for the 2003 – 2004 school year.

Rationale for Recommending Relocation

In 1965 Stratford was opened as a junior high school with a capacity of 710 students. Due to increased enrolment pressures at west end high schools and adequate junior high space in nearby junior highs, Stratford became a small-scale, academic-focused senior high school in 1994. The grade 7 and 8 programs were phased out as the senior high was phased in. In 1999 Stratford was twinned with Jasper Place School. The International Baccalaureate Program grades 9 to 12 was housed in Stratford and administered from Jasper Place. The grade 9 students spend the entire day at Stratford and senior high students are shuttled between the two campuses.

Stratford senior high program is eligible for closure under board policy FL.BP which states that senior high programs may be considered if enrolment is fewer than an average of 120 students per grade (Appendix IV). Stratford currently accommodates 149 students in grades 9 to 12 and has a capacity for 710 students. This results in a utilization rate of 28.2%. It is proposed that the programming for these students be moved to Jasper Place School, which has a rated capacity of 2,783 students and as of September 2002 had an enrolment of 1,857. The enrolment at Stratford has remained static for several years and is predicted to remain static.

Stratford



Accommodation of Stratford Students

Students from Stratford can be easily accommodated at the Jasper Place campus and will no longer have to be shuttled between the two sites. Through the planned modernization at Jasper Place, students will have access to an upgraded facility.

Stratford students' programming will remain unchanged and they may stay in the same classes with the same students if they choose to do so. Students will have improved access to specialized facilities such as the career centre and weight room. Also, because students will no longer be shuttled, they will have greater access to co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Consultation

Stratford School did not go through a school closure process when the grade 7 and 8 programs were phased out. The School Act indicates that a school must go through closure if three or more consecutive grades are moved. Therefore, in accordance with the School Act, a public meeting was held on April 30, 2003 about the possible closure of Stratford School (Appendix III). The meeting was attended by five trustees, district staff, and approximately 30 parents and community members. At this meeting district staff provided information to the parents and community about the possible impacts of moving the programming from Stratford School to the Jasper Place campus as well as the impacts of leaving the programming at Stratford (Appendix I). Opportunity was given to ask questions and raise issues and concerns. Questions were answered by the administration at the meetings, and a follow-up summary of questions and answers from the meeting was subsequently mailed to those in attendance (Appendix II). This letter also informed parents of the May 27, 2003 Public Board meeting.

In seeking clarification with Alberta Learning re: necessity of a school closure for Stratford School they indicated that because the students at "the Stratford satellite site are the students

of Jasper Place School” transferring the students to the main campus does not require the formal closing of Stratford School. Though the public meeting was about the possible closure of Stratford School, the issues raised are issues related to the service of the students at the Jasper Place Campus. The two main concerns that were raised at the meeting and in the subsequent questions were the comfort of a small school and the possibility of putting a junior high Logos program into the building. Bruce Coggles, Principal of Jasper Place School and Stratford Campus, reassured parents that the Stratford students would be housed in the tower at Jasper Place School and could have all their programming with their classmates if they so chose.

The administration is presently consulting with principals regarding use of the school to accommodate growing enrolments in Logos and Cogito programs at the junior high level. The school will be identified as a program site for either or both of these programs as soon as possible in order to accept registrations for September 2003.

The administration will undertake to close up to 700 student spaces at other schools in the district prior to September 2003 in order to increase utilization levels. Initiatives will include removing pods and portables.

Input From the City of Edmonton

The City of Edmonton was invited to comment on potential impacts of the proposed closures. The following is a summary of the comments from the City impact statement:
“The closure of Stratford School would have a very small impact on community programs. It would require that the adult basketball and soccer groups and the church user-group find new locations for its activities. There would be reduction in use of sportsfields and the community league ice rink during the day if the school were closed. Parkland size would not be affected unless the school was declared surplus and the land purchased for parkland. In that case, the neighbourhood’s deficiencies in parkland and sportsfields could be reduced.”

The recommendation is no longer to close the school but rather to relocate programs, therefore there should be no impact to the community.

AH:kmc

APPENDIX I – Notice of Meeting

APPENDIX II – Questions and Answers from the April 30, 2003 Public Meeting

APPENDIX III – School Act Requirements for School Closure

APPENDIX IV – Board Policy FL.BP School Closure