EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

October 27, 2009

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Schmidt, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Sector Planning: Public Engagement Update

ORIGINATOR: T. Parker, Assistant Superintendent

RESOURCE

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INFORMATION

In June 2009, the Administration retained Dialogue Partners Inc. to conduct public engagement activities as part of Sector Planning work in the District. This report and presentation contains an update to the Board of Trustees on a public engagement plan and communication plan to support sector reviews in the Greater Hardisty Area (GHA) and in City Centre Education Partnership (CCEP) schools. Dialogue Partners Inc. has consulted widely with stakeholders and have assembled a Public Engagement Advisory Committee in order to build a strong public engagement plan (Attachment I).

As directed by the Board, sector reviews are proceeding on an accelerated basis in the GHA and CCEP schools. Public engagement activities have begun this fall using a variety of media, on-line tools and structured events. Face-to-face workshops and community-led discussions are scheduled in November and early December.

The Board will receive reports on the input received from parents, students and residents. A final report of the public engagement process in the GHA and CCEP schools will be available on January 5, 2010. The Administration will prepare recommendations arising out of the GHA and CCEP sector reviews for consideration on January 26, 2010 or February 9, 2010.

Looking ahead, public engagement activities will begin in March 2010 in the West 1, Central and South Central sectors.

DME:gm

Attachment I – Public Engagement Plan



EPSB Sector Review Public Engagement Plan



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Please note: This Plan should be reviewed with its supporting plans, including the Communications Plan, Detailed Work Plan and Evaluation Plan. Please refer to these plans for more information and detail.

Updated: October 1, 2009

1. Public Engagement Plan Overview

Edmonton Public School Board (EPSB) is undertaking a sector review within the District for the purpose of developing strategies to manage space requirements. Despite the closure of 14 schools and five programs since 2000, the District remains significantly oversupplied in terms of instructional space, and with the planned opening of six new schools in 2010, it is essential to develop a strategic approach to managing the space.

This public engagement plan is focused on the sector reviews in the <u>Greater Hardisty Area and the City Centre Education Partnership.</u> There will be a separate Public Engagement Plan developed for the Central, South Central and West 1 Sectors that will commence in spring 2010.

The sector review process will begin in September 2009 and the report findings, including the results of the public engagement process, are expected to go to the Board of Trustees in January 2010. The timing for this plan is related to requirements for decision making in order to implement the results of the sector review in the 2010 /2011 school year.

The project is focused on ensuring that all students will be able to access a quality school close to where they live, while ensuring sound management of school space where student populations are stable over the long term. The following Planning Principles will guide the engagement process:

- 1) Equitable access to quality learning environments and choice of programs
- 2) Creative re-use of surplus space
- 3) Efficient use of school space in Sectors and retention of schools in aging neighbourhoods
- 4) Accommodation and program needs met within Sectors
- 5) Capital Investment contingent upon confirmation of long-term viability
- 6) Proactive approach to environmental awareness and stewardship

EPSB recognizes that a robust public engagement process accompanying the sector review will contribute significantly to the sustainability of the resulting decisions. A meaningful public engagement process provides an opportunity to build trust, create ownership, improve relations and yield better understanding of the complexity of the issues related to the review and ultimately the decisions to be made.



2. Public Engagement Scope, Goal and Objectives

This public engagement project is designed to provide a variety of ways in which a wide range of interested and affected members of the public and internal staff can be involved and provide input on how the space might be managed in the Greater Hardisty Area and the City Centre Education Project.

Having a wide range of participants will greatly enhance the quality of the public involvement process. Helping all stakeholders (including staff and decision makers) engage in a productive discussion and identify common interests is critical to developing recommendations that are sustainable by fostering better understanding and increased knowledge.

The Sector Planning Approach has a focus on building new schools in growth areas, renewing existing schools that are sustainable and transforming school space so that all students can access a quality facility. This sector planning approach is being implemented in the Greater Hardisty and City Centre Areas first, and then in the Central, South Central and West 1 Sectors in 2010.

The public engagement program is committed to the following:

- Raising awareness and sharing information on how space is used
- Engaging the community in discussions on space requirements and configurations
- Involving the community in discussions on using closed space so that schools continue to serve as centres of the community

The Scope of the Public Engagement Project is:

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

Overarching public engagement goals that will guide the project include:

- Gathering community and stakeholder input that will be used in drafting recommendations for the path forward, and for decision making
- 2) Involving a broad, diverse range of interested and affected stakeholders, with a variety of perspectives, throughout the project
- 3) Creating and implementing multiple opportunities for meaningful dialogue and a value based discussion
- 4) Providing participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way
- 5) Raising awareness and understanding about the challenges and opportunities affecting space allocation and configuration across the school board



- 6) Developing and implementing the public engagement process in an open, transparent, accountable and meaningful way
- 7) 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
- 8) Contributing to stakeholder capacity to participate by supporting and enriching skills and experience in public engagement processes

Each Phase of the Project will have a specific goal, focused directly on that part of the project. As well, all public engagement activities / events will have specific objectives. All objectives will align with these overarching goals.



3. Timelines, Project Phases and Activities

Phase 1 PLAN the Engagement Program

Phase 1 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

Timeline	Objective	Activity	Specific Dates for Public
June - August	To develop and implement the project management and administrative approaches and schedule to support project implementation	 Research Roles & Responsibilities Work plan Preparation & Initial Communications 	Engagement Ongoing
September	To fully understand the issues and perspectives of stakeholders from multiple viewpoints, and to use this information to develop a comprehensive Public Engagement Plan To raise awareness of the project, its objectives and approach, and to prepare stakeholders for upcoming opportunities for participation	 Interview material development Preliminary stakeholder database Stakeholder interviews Development of issues assessment and what was said reports from interviews Detailed work plan Communications activities Web site creation and content development Engagement Advisory Committee for Sector Planning (consideration of mandate, role & membership) Development and approval of Engagement Plan Finalize Mandate and terms of reference for Advisory Committee Circulate terms of reference to Advisory Committee members and confirm existing and proposed membership Hold Orientation with new Advisory Committee members, if necessary 	1) September 1 2) September 7 3) September 14 - 25 4) October 6 5) Sept 1 - October 6 6) Ongoing 7) By Sept 23 8) Sept 17 9) Sept 16 for draft, October 6 for final plan and October 27 for presentation to Trustees (for information) 10) October 2, 2009 11) October 6, 2009 12) October 13, 2009

Phase 2



Engaging stakeholders in a Conversation on Values and Principles guiding space allocation and configuration within vibrant communities

Phase 2 Goals:

- To raise awareness and understanding about the challenges and opportunities affecting space allocation and configuration across the school board
- 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

Timeline	Objective	Activity	Specific Dates for
Timemic	Objective	Activity	_
September, October, November, December & January	To develop and distribute materials to provide stakeholders with information about the public engagement approach, objectives and opportunities To develop and distribute materials about the substantive issues on space challenges, allocation and configuration To distribute information to stakeholders to prepare them for participation To develop materials for use in public engagement activities to support the process and participation To develop materials documenting the outcome of public engagement activities To engage stakeholders to gather input and feedback on the transparency, openness and accountability of the process	 Newsletters E-Newsletters Backpack letters 	Public Engagement Ongoing (See Workplan and Communications Plan for more details)



Timeline	Objective	Activity	Specific Dates for
			Public Engagement
		Sector Planning meetings (to be determined) • Engagement Activity Evaluations	
October	To build capacity among youth and community members, by providing them with the skills, tools and experience to engage other interested and affected stakeholders in conversations on space allocation and configuration within vibrant communities To share information, raise awareness and gather comments from stakeholders about space allocation and configuration To raise awareness of the project, its goals and approach and to prepare stakeholders for upcoming opportunities for participation or provide information on completed activities To engage stakeholders to gather input and feedback on the transparency, openness and accountability of the process	 Ongoing communications activities Online engagement – Website, Surveys, Facebook, Twitter, Website, Connect2Edmonton Capacity Building Training for youth and community members to host dialogues on the issue Advisory Committee Meeting 	1) Ongoing 2) Ongoing 3) October 26, October 29, November 3, November 3 session is for EPSB staff) 4) October 29, 2009
November and December	Engaging stakeholders in a values and principles based conversation on space requirements and configuration with a focus on common ground and collective wisdom To raise awareness of the project, its objectives and approach and to prepare stakeholders for upcoming opportunities for participation or provide information on completed activities To engage stakeholders to gather input and feedback on the transparency, openness and	 Community Forums using Open Space Process Youth and Community hosted dialogues Online tools – website, facebook, surveys, discussion forums, Connect2Edmonton etc Advisory Committee meeting Partner workshop (non-profits, arts, cultural groups, City, other partners etc) 	1) November 12 & 14 for community, November 14 additional session for internal staff 2) Ongoing until November 27 3) Ongoing throughout November and December 4) To be determined 5) November 13



Timeline	Objective	Activity	Specific Dates for
			Public Engagement
	accountability of the process		



Phase 3 – Reflecting and Confirming Stakeholder Input in Reports for Decision Making and Identifying Opportunities for use of school space

Phase 3 Goals:

- To summarize stakeholder input and identify themes and common ground
- To consider stakeholder input, suggestions and ideas on new or alternate uses for school space
- To gathering comments and input on the themes, summarize input, and develop final reports for presentation to Trustees

Timeline	Objective	Activity		Specific Dates for Public	
					gagement
November, December & January	To develop materials documenting the outcome of public engagement activities To develop recommendations, summarize and theme input from stakeholders To gather stakeholder input on what has been heard to date and draft recommendations on what will be done with closed space To present the report, built on stakeholder input, to Trustees for decision making	1) 2) 3) 4) 5) 6) 7) 8)	What Was Said reports Summary and Theme reports "Block" Workshops Online and paper questionnaire / survey Final Draft report Final report Present report to Trustees Public Engagement Advisory Committee for Sector Planning meeting	Dec 2) t Dec 3) 30, 1 and 4) 30-I 5) 22 tr 6) 7) & 20	Throughou ovember and tember Throughou ecember November December 1 December 2 November December 14 December 14 December 5 January 5 January 19 6 To be



4. Level of Involvement

Noted below is a Public Participation Spectrum developed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2). This Spectrum outlines five possible levels of involvement, each with an associated goal and promise / commitment. The Spectrum helps define the level of impact the public will have on the various issues, and clarify the expectations for involvement.

For this Public Engagement Project, the *INFORM* level will apply to all phases and activities, with a focus on providing participants with balanced and objective information so that they understand – both their opportunities to participate and the substantive issues.

Phase 1 of the project is at the **CONSULT** level with all stakeholders, and **INVOLVE** with the Engagement Advisory Committee for Sector Planning. Interviews will be conducted with a select number of stakeholders, and email, fax and hand written responses to our interview questions, will be accepted from anyone who wants to participate. All input will be considered in the development of this Engagement Plan. We will be working with them to determine their mandate, membership and role and to determine how they will provide input to the engagement program.

Phase 2 of the project is at the *INVOLVE* level overall, with specific activities at the *COLLABORATE* or *CONSULT* level. We will work with stakeholders to ensure that concerns and aspirations are understood and considered, and reflect this input in the reports that are developed. The Capacity Building Training, the Community and Youth Hosted Dialogues and the Community Open Space Forums are all at the *COLLABORATE* Level, where we will be working directly with stakeholders to develop solutions and ideas, and to identify possible options for the path forward. The Engagement Advisory Committee for Sector Review will be at the *INVOLVE* level.

As in Phase 1, the *INFORM* Level will apply throughout Phase 2, where we will provide stakeholders with balanced and objective information so that they understand – both their opportunities to participate and the substantive issues.

<u>Phase 3</u> of the project will be at the *CONSULT* level. We will gather input using surveys and online engagement and confirm what we have heard by providing summaries and themes identified in Phase 2 consultations. Using "block" workshops where participants work through different options for closed space, we will engage stakeholders at the *INVOLVE* Level to gather information about what will be done with closed space. A final report will be developed and presented to Trustees for decision making.



IAP2's Public Participation Spectrum





Inform

To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.

Consult

To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.

Involve

To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.

Collaborate

To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.

Empower To place final

o piace mai decision-making in the hands of the public.

Promise to the public

Public

goal

participation

We will keep you

We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concems and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.

We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.

We will implement what you decide.

Example techniques

- Fact sheets
- Web sites
- Open houses
- Public comment
- Focus groups
- SurveysPublic meetings
- Workshops

■ Deliberative polling

- Citizen advisory
 Committees
- Consensus-building
- Participatory decision-making
- Citizen juries
- Ballots
- Delegated decision

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5. Summary of Stakeholders and Issues

We've identified a number of general categories of stakeholders, based primarily on the issues we believe may be important to them. This information has been enhanced and increased through stakeholder interviews in Phase 1.

Internal	Issues
Stakeholder	
EPSB Staff from across	• Job Security
the	• Impact on Workload
organization:	• Impact on departmental mandate, role,
Planning,	projects
Programs,	Budgetary impacts
Transportatio	 Partnership and community building opportunities
n, Facility	Impact on students, parents, family and
Services, Personnel,	community
Teaching &	Perception of the organization by
School	stakeholders
Support /	 Transparency and fairness of process
Administratio	Provision of information
n Staff	 Constraints to decision making – funding,
	provincial policies etc
EPSB	 Representation and reflection of constituent
Trustees	interests
	 Best interests of Board as a whole
	 Adherence to Board principles and values
	• Impact on budget
	Quality decision making
	 Perception of the organization by
	stakeholders
	• Re-Election / Job security (2010)
	Sustainable decision making
	• Vibrant communities
	 Transparency and fairness of process
	 Provision of information
	 Constraints to decision making – funding,
	provincial policies etc



Other	Issues
government	
organization	
Provincial Government: Ministries of Education, Health, Children & Social Services, Municipal Affairs,	 Compliance with legislation and guidelines Obligation for and effectiveness of Community consultation Impact on funding and budget Impact on different mandates that provide policy, program or services to City residents
Justice City of Edmonton (Staff from various departments)	 Impact and/or relationship to associated work – i.e. community development, health or social services, diversity & inclusion, transportation, recreation, safety, police, libraries etc Opportunity for partnership and community building opportunities Possible budgetary impact (negative or positive) if they become involved in partnership projects or if facilities become available (or cease to be available) for programming or services Jurisdiction and role – who does what and who is responsible for what Development and creation of viable, vibrant communities Adequate provision of information
Elected Officials (municipal, provincial and federal)	 Impact on constituents Impact on organizational budget and priorities Representation of constituents Re-election Transparency of process



External	Issues
Stakeholders	
Parents	 Welfare and best interests of children Property values Impact on family Viable, sustainable community Access to services and programs (day care, arts, culture, recreation programs Safety Transparency & Fairness of process Constraints to fair process – funding, provincial policies, impact of input on decision making etc Flexibility
Community members and residents	 Welfare and best interests of children Property values Viable, sustainable community Access to services and programs (day care, arts, culture, recreation programs Safety Transparency & Fairness of process Outreach to those who are silent (e.g. seniors, disabled, new Canadians)
Community based organizations (non –profit, social service, housing, arts, cultural, sports & recreation groups etc)	 Partnerships Access to space Financial viability Viable, sustainable community Opportunity to get involved in process Flexibility
Business	 Property values Viable, sustainable community Employee base – access to and satisfaction of Safety and crime



6. Special Outreach Strategies

All stakeholders who are interested or affected are important in this project and will be contacted, invited and engaged in a transparent, open, accountable and meaningful way. Also, we want to take *a few additional steps* to ensure that certain groups of stakeholders are specifically targeted for engagement.

Stakeholder	Special Outreach Activities
Group	
Youth – high school students and young adults in particular	 Facebook Twitter Communication with Student Associations and Student Councils Liaison through Youth Advisory Committee and NextGen High School Assemblies Letters to parents Capacity Building Training
School age Children	 Letters to principals and teachers Development of a workbook geared to grade 3-7 students
Residents (but not parents or affected / interested organizations) of affected areas	AdvertisementsHousehold Flyers
Parents of students in affected areas	 Backpack letters Notices and Discussions with Parent Council representatives for area schools
Edmonton's diverse, multicultural and low income community	 Communications and networking with and through partner organizations and associations (e.g. YMCA, Big Brothers / Sisters, Multicultural Association, Native Friendship Centre, Breakfast Programs, United Way, ABC Headstart etc.) Posting of flyers and notices in community organizations Phone Calls and Notices about opportunities to participate



	Translation of materials about how to participate and some core engagement materials into different languages (to be determined)
Partners and potential partners	 Partner workshop to discuss the issues Notices and materials that can be disseminated to networks, members and contacts
EPSB Staff (any internal staff)	 Internal communications via email and notices Engagement activities geared specifically at EPSB staff



7. Public Engagement Activity Details (Note: Communications and

Evaluation Activities are documented in those plans)

Public	Objective	Date and	Operational Details
Engagement Activity	Objective	Time	operational Betano
Interviews	To fully understand the issues and perspectives from multiple viewpoints, and to use this information to develop a comprehensive Public Engagement Plan	September 1 – 25, 2009	Targeted interviews to be conducted by phone, in response to interview invitation and booking of scheduled interview Parents at large targeted via invitation to participate in backpack letters on Sept 10 and Sept 17 Information posted on website Parents, community members and any interested or affected party can access interview questions on EPSB website (or in hard copy in backpack letter). Stakeholders can respond to interview questions by fax, email or drop off at schools.
Website Creation	To raise awareness of the project, its objectives and approach, and to prepare stakeholders for upcoming opportunities to participate	August 24 – September 25 Ongoing and regular updates	Website created, branded and content developed Regular News Updates, postings, information etc to be posted Use of additional online tools such as facebook, twitter and Connect2Edmonton Interim communications material posted on EPSB website
Sector Review Workbook	To raise awareness about space issues, allocation, configuration and challenges affecting	Development complete by October 9, graphics	Distribute hard copies throughout schools and to targeted community and partner organizations, with



	communities. To create a "frame" for a values based discussion on the issues. Will be used by conversation hosts to hold their own discussions as well be posted online. Will be developed to include 2 versions – one for kids grades 3-6, and one for adults and kids 12 and over.	complete by October 16, printing thereafter	arrangements for collection and pick up Post online with instructions for fillable pdf
Capacity Building Training (based on workbooks)	Using workbooks, put the conversation in the hands of trained volunteers who will host their own conversations and provide the input via recording worksheets	October 26, 7-9:30pm October 29, 7-9:30pm November 3, 6:30-9:00pm (for internal staff) November 7, 9-11:30am	Need a room to accommodate up to 40 participants each in round tables of 5 or 6. 5 flip charts Projector and screen Need juice, coffee, tea, water and appropriate snacks
Open Space Community Forums	To gather input on the principles, values of sector planning, with a focus on identifying suggestions and strategies for space configuration and allocation	November 12, 5-9:30pm, November 14 from 1:30- 5:30pm (for internal staff) November 14, 9am – 1:00pm	Need a very large room that can accommodate up to 125 people (may be smaller for the internal staff session), with round tables and groups of 6, clustered in a circle around an open space in the centre of the room Need a lapel mic and 2 handheld mics Need 12 flipcharts Lots of wall space Projector, screen Need coffee, tea, juice, water on the tables, fruit and/or snacks and a box lunch or dinner for each participant
Partner workshop	To engage partners and potential partners in a targeted workshop on the principles, suggestions and strategies for space configuration and allocation	November 13, 9:30am- 12:30pm	Large room with space for display boards and things on the wall around the edges of the room, with 5 or 6 tables that could accommodate 10 people each 8 flip chart stands Projector and screen



Youth & Community Hosted Dialogues (based on workbooks) Workbook	Using workbooks, put the conversation in the hands of trained volunteers who will host their own conversations and provide the input via recording worksheets Using workbooks, allow	Throughout November Throughout	Will need drop off locations where materials can be dropped off by conversation hosts, with arrangements for collection Will need drop off locations
completion (individual or class completion)	individuals, school age children and youth to complete workbooks on their own and submit their input	November	where materials can be dropped off, with arrangements for collection
Questionnaire – online and hard copy	To gather final comments on the themes and summaries of input to date To gather input on opportunities for use of school space	November 30- December 14	Online fillable pdf or survey monkey Hard copy in some instances. Will need drop off locations where materials can be dropped off, with arrangements for collection
"Block" Workshops	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	November 30, 4-9:30pm December 1, 4-9:30pm and December 2 from 6:30- 9pm (for internal staff)	Sessions are drop in with set activities so no meals required although beverages and snacks would be good. Large room with space for display boards and things on the wall around the edges of the room, with 5 or 6 tables that could accommodate 10 people each 8 flip chart stands Projector and screen Accommodate up to 60 people in the room at one time, although we anticipate more people will attend throughout. 2 hand held mics in case we need them
Advisory Committee meetings	To provide input and advice on the public engagement process for sector planning	October 29, 3-5pm Other meetings to be identified as necessary	Need a room to accommodate 25 people, preferably in a large "U" shape, or boardroom style if the "U" isn't possible Projector and screen 1 flip chart



Attachments that form part of this Engagement Plan

- Detailed Work plan
- Project Budget
- Communications Plan
- Evaluation Plan

