

## EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

September 14, 2010

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Schmidt, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Sector Reviews: Update

ORIGINATOR: B. Smith, Executive Director

RESOURCE

STAFF: Jack Geldart, Ann Parker, Lorne Parker

### INFORMATION

On February 23, 2010, the Board of Trustees approved the *Annual Implementation Plan 2010-2011* which gave direction to the Planning department to continue the multi-year sector review initiative. The sector review process implements the Board approved *Results of the Ad Hoc Committee for School Closure and Sustainability Review* findings.

### Outcomes

- The sector review process addresses enrolment and programming in a sector in a systematic manner. The goal is to provide viable schools and program availability for all district students. Staff and students will teach and learn in appropriately located, high quality learning environments. Student transportation services will be improved.
- The sector review process provides opportunities for meaningful community engagement through direct participation in the process.
- Information gathered from the sector reviews may result in recommendations such as reconfiguration of schools, redistribution of students, reorganization of programs or closure of some schools.

### Methodology

- The Central, South Central and West 1 sectors are currently under review.
- These sectors have the greatest need for change relating to the deployment and use of space. As these sectors are addressed and improved, the focus will shift to other sectors. This is a 'rotating' approach that will carry on into the future.
- Public information sessions and consultations will be conducted by Dialogue Partners, contracted by Edmonton Public Schools. Dialogue Partners will gather input from parents, community members and other interested parties. The input gathered from the public consultation meetings will be compiled by Dialogue Partners and presented to the Board of Trustees in December 2010.
- Recommendations resulting from the sector review process will be presented to the Board of Trustees in January 2011.

## Public Engagement Commitment

- Public engagement is being conducted by Dialogue Partners who operate ‘at arm’s length’ from the Administration. The work plan developed by Dialogue Partners incorporates findings of the *Ad Hoc Committee to Review Sustainability Reviews and School Closures*, and is being conducted in accordance with district approved frameworks and International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) principles. The public engagement model is built on three key points of contact with communities:
  - a. *Inform* the public of the issues surrounding how the District is using educational space and how much space is needed
  - b. *Consultation* on which space the District needs to retain and program configuration
  - c. *Involve* the public in determining what will be done with closed space

## Public Engagement Update

- Dialogue Partners received more than 400 survey responses prior to framing the final public engagement process. The Public Engagement Advisory Committee met on April 22, 2009. All the responses and evaluation reports were posted to the [sectorreview2010.com](http://sectorreview2010.com) website.
- Backpack letters and updates on the [sectorreview2010.com](http://sectorreview2010.com) website have provided parents with information on opportunities to participate in the sector review process including dates, topics and locations.
- Two *Public Engagement 101* workshops were held for parent councils, community leagues and community organizations. These sessions were led by Dialogue Partners representatives and provided information regarding the public engagement plan and clarified the levels of public participation in the decision making process. All responses and evaluations were posted to the [sectorreview2010.com](http://sectorreview2010.com) website.
- Dialogue Partners presented the workshop, *Public Participation for Decision Makers* to a number of senior administrative staff including the Superintendent.
- District staff representatives from Senior Administration, Planning, Leadership Services, Facilities and Communications attended the two day workshop, *Emotion, Outrage and Public Participation*. The need to move from position based arguments to common ground was addressed and techniques to deal with the emotion and outrage in the context of sector reviews were studied.
- Dialogue Partners visited 16 schools to ask students what was important to them about their school and community. Their feedback from these *YOUth Talk* sessions was posted to the [sectorreview2010.com](http://sectorreview2010.com) website.
- Dialogue Partners has been receiving questions directly from the public about the sector review process. The responses to these questions have been posted in three editions in the [sectorreview2010.com](http://sectorreview2010.com) website library.
- Workbooks were created by Dialogue Partners to encourage participants to describe what is important about community and use of school space. The workbooks contained expanded information based on feedback received in the reviews of the City Centre Education Partnership and Greater Hardisty Area reviews. The completion date for participants was extended to June 25, 2010. Dialogue Partners received over 600 workbooks submitted by both individuals and groups. The summary report of

participant input from April to June has been posted on the [sectorreview2010.com](http://sectorreview2010.com) website.

- Dialogue Partners completed an evaluation of the outcomes of public input and resulting recommendations, decisions and implementation for the City Centre Education Partnership and Greater Hardisty Area sector reviews. The *Link to Decision Making* report, outlining the input received during the consultation process and the links to the final outcomes, was posted to the [sectorreview2010.com](http://sectorreview2010.com) website as well as the Edmonton Public Schools website.
- Weekly updates of public and social media articles have been provided to Dialogue Partners as a means to identify key stakeholders, their positions and concerns.
- A community forum was held in each of the three sectors and a staff forum was held at the Centre for Education. These forums provided the public and district staff the opportunity to come together to talk about values and what was important in developing options for the fall workshops. Participants shared what is working well in area schools, what can be improved and what ideas, issues and concerns relate to stakeholders and their areas. Approximately 80 participants were present at the South Central sector forum, 50 at the West 1 sector forum, 35 at the Central sector forum and 30 at the staff forum. All responses and evaluations were posted to the [sectorreview2010.com](http://sectorreview2010.com) website.
- Planning staff are visiting schools, involved in sector reviews, to make a brief presentation to staff members. Issues facing the District are highlighted and key messages for staff and parents will be provided.
- Planning staff conduct ongoing meetings with City of Edmonton administrators to ascertain city interests in sectors under review.
- Strategic discussions with the City of Edmonton and Edmonton Catholic Schools by district administrative staff have taken place and are scheduled to continue. The goal of these discussions is to establish a consultative process to explore implications of school closure, collaborative use of space and strategic planning initiatives.
- Using data gathered in the spring, materials will be designed by Dialogue Partners for use in the sector workshops to be held in September and October. There will be two workshops per sector. Participants will weigh the input from workbooks and forums with additional facts and data to propose options. A workshop targeting sector staff will also be held. Dates for all sector workshops are available on the [sectorreview2010.com](http://sectorreview2010.com) website and additional notice will be provided to parents, community and staff via backpack letters, an e-newsletter and e-mail. Planning staff will be available at the workshops in a resource capacity.
- The final opportunity for public participation will be the “Out of the Box” Think Tank to be held on October 16, 2010. Dialogue Partners will be inviting the City, Province, community organizations and parents to talk about opportunities for working together and to offer innovative ideas.

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Appendix I – Dialogue Partners Flowchart of Public Engagement Opportunities

Appendix II – Dialogue Partners Flowchart of Staff Engagement Opportunities

# WHAT IS HAPPENING AND WHEN?

Change is Coming... Be a part of it.

## STEP 1 April – June

### Identifying Criteria, Principles & Issues of Importance to Guide the Conversation

1. **Interviews and Surveys** | First step in finding out what is important. Information will be used to develop the Public Engagement Plan. Report posted online early May.
  - April 7 – 28, 2010.
2. **Work Books** | Tell us what is important to you about your community and use of school space. Share ideas, issues and concerns that should be included in sector review.
  - May 10 – June 25, 2010
3. **Workshop – Public Engagement 101** | What to Expect, How to Participate For – Parent Councils, Community Leagues and Partner Organizations
  - May 19, 2010 9am -12pm
4. **Community Forums** – Everyone welcome! Come talk about what is important to you about your community and use of school space. Share your ideas, issues and concerns that should be considered in sector planning.
  - May 29 – South Central Sector, 9am -12:30pm
  - June 5 – West 1 Sector, 9am -12:30pm
  - June 19 – Central Sector, 9am -12:30pm
5. **YOUTH Talk** | Hearing what youth have to say. Visits and consultation with Grade 6 and 7 classes in sector schools.
  - May 28 to June 18.

## STEP 2 September – October

### Using the Principles, Values and Ideas from Step 1 to Develop Options for the Future

1. **Workshops** | You will consider the facts, data and community input and offer what YOU propose as an option going forward.
  - Sept 21 – Central Sector
  - Sept 23 – South Central Sector
  - Sept 25 – West 1 Sector
  - October 4 – Central Sector
  - October 5 – South Central Sector
  - October 9 – West 1 Sector
2. **“Out of the Box” Think Tank** | Everyone Welcome – All sectors.
  - October 16, 2010.We’re inviting the City, province, community organizations and YOU. Think long term, think collaboration. Come to this all party discussion to talk about working together, long term and offer your “out of the box” ideas.

## STEP 3

## November – February

### Public Consultation Results

1. Dialogue Partners report on public engagement – Written in November and presented to Trustees in December / January.
2. EPSB Administration Report with Recommendations to Trustees – January / February
3. If there is a motion for school closure the Process for School Closure will follow as outlined in the Alberta Schools Act.

## THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS April – February

If you can't come out to a meeting, have your say online. Share your ideas and options for going forward.

1. **Have your say online.**
  - Launching May 28
2. **City of Edmonton / Edmonton Public Schools – Thinking and Working Together** | Reports and Updates on collaborative initiatives, plans and progress. Updates throughout the process.
3. **Reporting and News Updates** – What Was Said? Reports on each event will be posted to the website along with news updates.

# WHAT IS HAPPENING AND WHEN?

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## STAFF ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

### STEP 1 April – June

#### Identifying Criteria, Principles & Issues of Importance to Guide the Conversation

1. **Interviews and Surveys** | First step in finding out what is important. Information will be used to develop the Public Engagement Plan.
  - April 7 – 28, 2010.Report and plan posted online early May.
2. **Work Books** | Tell us what is important to you about your community and use of school space. Share ideas, issues and concerns that should be included in sector review.
  - May 10 – June 25, 2010
3. **Staff Forum** | Everyone welcome! Come talk about what is important to you about use of school space. Share your ideas, issues and concerns that should be considered in sector planning.
  - June 3 – All Sectors – 4:30pm – 8pm
4. **Reporting – What Was Said?** | Report posted online early May.

### STEP 2 September – October

#### Using the Principles, Values and Ideas from Step 1 to Develop Options for the Future

1. **Workshops** | You will consider the facts, and community input and offer what YOU propose as an option going forward.
  - Sept 22 – All Sectors
2. **“Out of the Box” Think Tank** | Everyone Welcome – All sectors.
  - October 16, 2010.We’re inviting the City, province, community organizations and YOU. Think long term, think collaboration. Come to this all party discussion to talk about working together, long term and offer your “out of the box” ideas.

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