

## **Opportunities & Challenges**

**Deer Run School, Haultain Memorial School & Queensland Downs School**

**Focus Group Feedback**

**September 14, 2009**

*Based on today's presentation, what do we need to pay attention to as we move forward?*

### **Opportunities**

- To help unite communities build and strengthen relationships
- Help bring a diversified community together
- Involve more parents in their children's school (new)
- To create an awareness of the CBE and the role they play and how decisions that effect everyone are made
- To educate
- The opportunity to strengthen our learning community
- The chance to share information in a pro-active and timely manner
- To make all families involved feel that they are informed and in the loop
- It is hard to present any opportunities when a school is closing
- Keeping a school open with a large gym close to a junior high would provide more opportunities in the future depending on enrolment in the future; more opportunities for different configurations (i.e. middle schools)
- Deer Run provides a pre-K program
- Haultain is 4 years newer, though that may make it more attractive as a charter school
- Queensland Downs currently has a higher capacity for students than Haultain, and is located on a major route out of the neighbourhood, this makes student drop off easier for work-bound parents

### **Challenges**

- Diffuse "the personal" aspect of parents, without appearing heartless; emotions tend to run high
- Need to be more approachable; some people don't want to hear all the 'statistical' talk when it's their school
- To help with a smooth transition between Queensland and Deer Run and Haultain
- Not just parents and students but also teachers, admin staff and support staff
- (Obviously) a reluctance to embrace change (which might be overcome through education on the situation) by all parties (physical change – the school)

- Overcoming the fear of social change – and the change in learning culture
- Combining Haultain and Queensland Downs families
- Losing Queensland Downs gym use by Wilma Hansen Jr High
- Lack of handicap accessibility at Haultain Memorial
- Maintaining buildings at two locations rather than sharing a footprint with Wilma Hansen
- A large number of students changing schools
- Bussing students to Deer Run
- Separating Queensland Downs families into two different schools
- Transportation of students in Deer Ridge living on ‘top’ of the escarpment
- Socialization of Queensland Downs students into Haultain Memorial (x2)
- Wilma Hansen will lose the use of our regulation size gym and will no longer be able to participate/host in tournaments, etc.
- There are roughly 12 students in daycare across Canyon Meadows whose parents will need to find alternate care and lunch time care

### Comments

- I thought the first meeting was extremely well planned, the right people were there to show caring yet well thought out, methodical plans.
- After having viewed the CEOP presentation, and fully understanding that low student enrolment numbers fuel the need for a school closure, I realise that one school does need to be closed. Building wise and location wise, the current proposal, though difficult, seems to make the most sense.
- Queensland Downs parents have shown in the past that they can overcome adversity.
- Both Haultain and Queensland Downs would have all students within their walk zones with the new boundaries according to current walk zones.
- All communities in the area are closely connected as evidenced by the DDQ community group.
- There is a large daycare on the corner by Queensland Downs. This facility offers hot lunches to a number of the students.
- There’s a new principal at Queensland Downs ready to accept change and stay with the school for a number of years.
- I was surprised a recommendation was already presented. I wrongly assumed a focus group was gathered to accumulate more information. Perhaps in the future such meetings should be renamed.

## Questions

- What will happen to the existing site? (x2)
- Will resources be made available to parents of both schools to assist in making not just a physical transition, but a social one as well?
- What will happen in a few years if attendance blossoms again and more classrooms are required? Would portables be considered?
- Would it not be more fiscally responsible to have Haultain available to rent out?
- Is being located next to Queensland Community Centre (that is not used by Haultain School) more important than being next to Wilma Hansen (that does use Queensland Downs school gym)?
- How will students be transitioned?
- How will transportation work?
- How much will transportation cost?
- How will larger class sizes be accommodated to maximize individual learning?
- How will transparency be maintained during this process, beyond access to the website?