

Deer Run, Haultain Memorial and Queensland Downs Schools' Open House October 26, 2009 Opportunities and Challenges

Accommodation Proposal

Opportunities:

- Combine the student population allowing better opportunity for resources to be utilized for the students giving them access to more programs and support where needed. (5)
- May make it so there are no split classes
- New “blood” → students & parents → ideas → improved education for students
- A chance to re-stimulate the community attitude
- Unique opportunity to broaden and strengthen a community (9)
- This will put groups of kids, once geographically divided together, with the strong potential to create new relationships through to high school.(3)
- Represents the best way to save money on running expensive schools
- Keep the newer school
- Keeping Haultain open balances out the areas for Deer Run & Queensland
- If a private school uses Queensland school, there is better access off Canyon Meadows to Queensland school
- Web page
- Increased parent involvement within the school (3)
- Eliminates needing Jr. High, giving them high number of peers entering
- Is in core of community and community centre (2)
- Queensland Downs school is in an excellent location for use by Wilma Hansen pupils after school activities
- The staff at Queensland Downs School has innovative and challenging ideas for students, which demand their excellence for learning.
- NONE (6)
- Living in the Queensland area there are no opportunities provided – no transportation, no daycare
- Apparently you need to live in Deer Run/Deer Ridge to benefit from this change
- Pre-kindergarten program at Deer Run

Challenges:

- Transitions are challenging for students, parents & communities (5)
- Transportation (2)
- Out of school care (3)
- Accommodating special needs
- Getting past the statistics that some people are unwilling to hear
- Avoiding an us and them mentality (2)
- Quelling rumour, innuendo, and drama!
- Will my taxes go down? I doubt it!
- The tackling of perceptions will be a challenge – what one population (how one population) perceives the other

- Most challenges I noticed seem to stem from parents' personal feelings
- Closing facilities of any type can cause hard feelings
- Change can be positive but difficult for families/students
- What will become of Queensland school?
- Future changes
- The negative response that is happening now. I am hoping this will NOT rub off on the kids
- Keeping class size 20 (max) and under (3)
- Unable to walk to school anymore (4)
- New walk zones for Queensland Downs seem unreasonable. Our Calgary winters are much too extreme/variable for elementary school kids to walk these distances in this community. We have had "violent crime" here – why not keep both schools open? Or at least more easily accessed by car Jr. High walking siblings and neighbours to school.
- Related childcare issues with increased distance (3)
- Re-socializing students, disrupting friendships (5)
- Dividing families going to Haultain/Wilma – keep the schools together
- Are we building community by moving younger kids away from older kids
- Seems you have made up your minds making it difficult, to make our challenges/concerns heard and considered.
- We pay now for busses. Thanks! (2)
- Transportation to Deer Run – bussing fees for economically challenged families who make "too much" to be fully subsidized
- No buses for physically challenged students not in wheelchairs
- No benefit for bus stop, live on wrong side of the street
- Deer Run has the money, Queensland does not - interesting. Therefore, Deer Run/Deer Ridge gets two day cares, transportation and Queensland is left out.
- Not truly best located school: proximity to Jr. High & easy access for driving
- Safety related concerns& issues (9)
- Splitting a student body (3)
- If Haultain stays open & Queensland closes:
 - Daycare will not walk K & Grade 1 students to Haultain
 - My daughter will lose close friends
 - Her cousins will now have to attend two different schools
 - Teachers she has had in her life will no longer be there for her
 - Lots of parents forced to drive meaning increased traffic
- The daycare is an established business which will be majorly impacted
- Children from kindergarten can walk to Sobey's or Co-op for a field trip
- Children walk to Fish Creek to study wildlife and the wetlands first hand
- Close proximity to seniors' home for singing concert performance
- Queensland Downs students will lose touch with favorite & much loved teachers
- Older siblings when attending Wilma Hansen cannot walk their younger siblings to Haultain or Deer Run (2)
- Wilma Hansen loses the use of Queensland Downs gym, as well as our huge fields (2)

- Students lose their mentors at Wilma Hansen

Comments:

- I greatly appreciate the openness of the community engagement process. However, it would have been great to have these closures forecasted 3-5 years ahead for people moving into communities
- Ask the children how they would make the transition/separation easier as they will know more about how they feel & what they would like to see/have
- Would like to see all issues & misconceptions that were brought up in the 'conversation café' cleared up and verified
- Have been fairly treated & the process was clearly communicated
- It is obvious that, due to dwindling school populations in our area, one school needs to be closed. The information provided through CEOP supports that strongly
- I am eager to see the Challenges Board, along with other topics/questions from the Conversation Café posted on the CEOP's website
- Haultain Memorial is a bright, vibrant school, with strong community spirit. The parent council contributes to this presence in the community. The school has warmth that welcomes students and parents.
- Queensland Downs is the most amazing school. However the thought of all of our community coming together is a goal and the most exciting opportunity for parents, children & the community as a whole, regardless of which school they attend.
- I understand that ALL of the parents from both schools just want what's best for our kids. I can only hope that this does not change when the schools merge together next fall. We all fear the unknown, once a decision has been made I am hoping for a positive response. There's enough negativity in the world let's please try to keep it out of our schools. It's not the kids fault nor is it the teachers.
- Haultain is newer and central to the community. The school is open & clean. It is not located on a busy road or sharing land with a Jr. High. It will also reduce any busing concerns for majority of parents. The awards that Haultain has been receiving are defiantly worth note. The principal is very dedicated and also very hands on. Teaching gym on Thursday to almost every class. I have joined the PTA expecting an overeducated gong show. I was taken back by the way and timely fashion the meetings have gone. Actually attacking issues. GREAT JOB!
- Closing Queensland would result in the students feeling cramped if they were forced to go to Haultain Memorial. Queensland is a larger school, with a larger gymnasium.
- If a school must be closed, Haultain Memorial is a better choice than Queensland Downs
- I am concerned about my son having to be bused to school. We purchased our house two years ago with proximity to schools as a prime consideration. The busing issue has many spin-offs child care issues associated with it. Also, I am a parent who is concerned about the safety issues associated with using Southland Transportation as I personally know that for many drivers their training is inadequate

- I implore the Board of Trustees to investigate further into which school should be closed. From what I understand Haultain School does not have the appropriate safety measures in place for fire prevention and security lockdown. There is only one safety measure in place for security and that is the front door, which is open during the day. There are no doors on the classrooms and hence will allow fires & smoke to spread quicker leaving little time to evacuate. (2)
- Queensland Downs & Wilma Hansen facilitate a smooth transition from Elementary to Jr. High and makes better sense to keep the schools open together for the following reasons:
 - Shared gym for tournaments – Wilma Hansen does not have a large enough gym and has to use Queensland Downs, don't take that away from Wilman Hansen
 - Builds community to have the schools together
- Make Haultain close and change the boundaries so that we could keep a school that has been here for over 35-40 years. My wife went to this school and now our youngest are going to be going here.
- Keep the two schools together to build community not move them apart.
- Do not close Queensland Downs. Are you really putting a price on our children's heads/education? Instead of saying Queensland Downs enrolment is doing down why not tell us why.
- We moved to Queensland for the two schools together.
- It is insulting that schools are opening in new-rich communities and older, poorer communities lose the few rich resources that keep them vibrant. Calgary is not so lacking in funds that we should be closing such a beautiful school that will help raise good children to lead us into the future, is it?
- I guess we'll leave Calgary Board of Education
- I feel Haultain school should be the chosen school for closure as it provides no transportation or child service to the Queensland residents
- Keeping Queensland open provides the child service which is needed and allows the children to walk a short distance to daycare
- We just feel this sucks. These days, we don't really walk our elementary kids; we drive them through long Calgary winters. Queensland Downs is very well located. It is a great, safe school grounds and building. The building is large enough to accommodate all of the kids instead of having to separate them from old friends. Why not keep such a great resource in use...in a still vibrant, young community where there may be population increase in young families due to the affordability of homes in our area. Are we really concerned about saving money that we'll risk our children's safety?
- Please, Please, Please reconsider? Why split the elementary & Jr. High's up more. The transition will be harder for the little ones. The Jr. High kids from Wilma Hansen will lose their ability to share the gym for larger activities.
- Fire safety? Lock Down Procedures? We are uncomfortable with the open plan school for our elementary school in this community.
- Some children will have to take the bus, it will be less safe and parents will have to pay for the buses

- From the beginning this process has not felt engaging. It has however been very informative. Perhaps the nomenclature of the process should be changed 'community information' would be more appropriate. Granted we have had opportunity to provide written feedback, the meetings have been lacking the chance to **voice** our concerns. It has felt farcical.
- 'Advertising' was also very sparse for the open house. The majority of the community would not know what student accommodation is. In fact some assumed people needed students housed.
- Challenges for community involved at the students having to move to the new schools and having farther to walk, new environment. Also the surrounding organizations, such as Wilma Hansen Jr. High, Day homes, Deer View KinderCare. Will the organizations be forced to close in these economic times? Students, teachers, businesses, the community as a whole. Who considers this? Did anyone? What does this teach our children?
- From the beginning I don't feel that the parents at Queensland Downs have been involved and the choice has already been made. The separation of children that have been together from the beginning of the school years. I feel that there are some security issues at both Deer Run and Haultain that have not been answered. I don't feel that you are taking the kids into consideration. The smaller group of children should be uprooted more so than one of the larger groups. It would be easier to have one group of kids disrupted instead of two communities of children.
- Notification of the Community
 - If we did not have grandchildren attending one of the schools in the neighborhood we would not know of this proposed change
 - In community advertising, mobile billboards, handbills delivered, etc.
 - There is approximated 40% of homeowners that are not aware of this probability
- City of Calgary
 - Participation with proposed use of returned property would be helpful in making decisions
- Haultain = Elementary Queensland = Junior Wilma Hansen = Senior
- The leaders here tonight seem to have their minds made up. Does our opinion matter? Please reconsider
- We need to have more notice for the community on these meetings, not everyone has kids or grand kids in these schools and as homeowners we need to also know what is happening in this community
- Are we really this cheap?
- Queensland Downs should stay open - easy to find
- Jr. High students can help elementary students, siblings can walk together (Queensland)
- Disabled children can attend single storey (Queensland)
- I choose to put my kids in Queensland because a friend had her legally blind son there and in kindergarten there was a boy who was going blind in the school neither of whom could have attended a two storey school in elementary. They accommodated challenged students. We also have a boy with Cerebral Palsy who could not do two storeys.

- Any changes made should have the least negative effect on the community
- A daycare business will be majorly impacted (students can have a hot lunch)
- Wilma Hansen has to change contingency plans in case of external lockdown
- Wilma Hansen uses Queensland Downs gym on a weekly bases
- Basketball group use Queensland Downs gym
- Queensland students learn first hand about wild life and wet lands at fish creek park
- Queensland kindergarteners can walk down to Sobey's or Co-op and learn how bread and pizza are made in store
- The park is not shared with a community centre or preschool
- Queensland park has swing
- Queensland children can entertain elderly right across the street
- Students walk to daycare across the street
- If students from Haultain are sent to the community centre there is barely enough room for 300 students to get in
- Also, there are preschool children in the community centre
- The community centre has programs running in their facility o a daily basis so there can be many people in the building. Not always room for students in an emergency
- Close Haultain Memorial school

Questions:

- Why is there no transportation forecasted for Queensland Downs kids to Haultain? Possible solutions:
 - Bus from KinderCare to Haultain
 - Waive “out of attendance area” fee for parents using KinderCare to Deer Run
- Will the school remaining open receive a greater amount of funding as a result of costs incurred through transition?
- Is there more we can/should do to encourage the process? I would like to have this all decided sooner rather than later, before spring break seems like a very long time. (3)
- Can this information be posted on the CBE website?
- Would the school look at having a before and after school program? This seems to be one of the biggest problems that I have heard voiced from parents.
- When do the councils (PTA) meet?
- Should we make up some kind of joining day(s) before school end with students from each school
- Where has the 800 meter track gone? Why is there no more track & field in school?
- Where will the kids who go to the daycare right by Queensland Downs go if Queensland Downs closes?
- If Queensland Downs closes will the school supplies in the school be wasted like has happened to other schools in the past?

- If money is the issue, then why not give each school a little less money and keep all three open?
- Why is this process so quick? A year does not seem like enough time for people to make the transition
- Why?!
- Opening up Queensland Downs grounds for development, what can and will take place, what can't take its place?
- How could and will a vacant lot/developed land affect land values? I am sure it will not change your house value but would you buy a house next to a vacant huge plot of land?
- Lock down procedures at Haultain? New fire security measures?
- Safety at the park?
- Will Haultain provide before and after school services, since there will be no daycare at Queensland?
- Please provide us with the walking measures for Haultain school within Queensland district
- Why are you not just reducing the boundary for Queensland area, less people affected? Queensland can absorb all of Haultain, minimal change in social structure, minimal adjustment for teachers & students.
 - Main roadway can handle traffic better than side streets
 - No busing needed
 - Daycare still operates
 - Full sized gym still available to community
 - Everyone benefits!!
- How will they keep my child safe in an open concept school?
- What will happen to the building/land if Queensland were to close? (2)
- Where do bused students have to catch the school bus?
- Since the school board is forcing Deer Ridge students out the walk zone, why should we have to pay for the busing?