

## Calgary Board of Education

Minutes of the Public Meeting re: Discussion Respecting Consideration of Closure of Eugene Coste School and all Programs Contained Therein, held in the Eugene Coste School Gymnasium, 10 Hillgrove Crescent SW Calgary, Alberta on Thursday, February 4, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.

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### PRESENT

#### Board of Trustees:

Ms. P. Cochrane, Board Chair, Trustee – Wards 8 & 9  
Mr. G. Dirks, Trustee – Wards 1 & 2  
Ms. P. King, Trustee – Wards 5 & 10  
Dr. G. Lane, Trustee – Wards 6 & 7  
Ms. L. Ferguson, Trustee – Wards 3 & 4  
Ms. C. Bazinet, Trustee – Wards 12 & 14  
Ms. K. Kryzcka, Trustee – Wards 11 & 13

#### Administration:

Mr. P. Carlton, Moderator and Chair of the Public Meeting  
Mr. R. Peden, Procedures Chair  
Ms. N. Johnson, Chief Superintendent of Schools  
Ms. J. Rogerson, Director, Area V  
Ms. J. Barkway, Assistant Corporate Secretary  
Ms. H. Numrich, Recording Secretary

### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Copies of the Agenda entitled “Board of Trustees, Calgary Board of Education, Public Meeting, Discussion Respecting Consideration of Closure of the Eugene Coste School and All Programs Contained Therein, Thursday, February 4, 2010, which also contained information with respect to Purpose of the Meeting, Discussion Guidelines, and Written Submissions and Further Questions, were made available to those present and submitted for the record.

Mr. Carlton called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and noted he would be Chair of the meeting. He introduced the Trustees present and the Calgary Board of Education (CBE) Administration. He noted also the attendance of Ms. G. Landon, former Principal of Eugene Coste School, and Ms. D. Fairhurst, Acting Principal of Eugene Coste School and gave recognition to the teachers and staff members that were in attendance.

Mr. Carlton informed that the meeting was being recorded for the purpose of maintaining an accurate internal record of the proceedings and he noted that minutes would be available on the website at [www.cbe.ab.ca](http://www.cbe.ab.ca) prior to the Board of Trustees making its decision.

### OPENING REMARKS

Chief Superintendent N. Johnson expressed her welcome, thanked everyone for coming and for any previous time commitment they may have already made in relation to this matter. She spoke of the advisory and support role of Administration in these proceedings. She noted that the department of Community Engagement and Operational Planning (CEOP) had initiated and coordinated an engagement process with the community where meetings were held to address the opportunities and challenges associated with Eugene Coste School. CBE was provided with feedback from the focus groups and open houses. On December 15, 2009 after deliberation, Trustees voted to consider closure of Eugene Coste School and all programs contained therein. She noted that no determination has yet been made and that there have been situations in the past, in matters such as this, where the Board has decided not to follow the Administrative recommendation. She stated that the role of

Administration is to provide the Board, school community and general public with relevant information and answers to questions.

### **PURPOSE OF THE MEETING AND ROLE OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Mr. Carlton welcomed Ms. P. Cochrane, Board Chair and Trustee of Wards 8 & 9.

Ms. P. Cochrane spoke about the Board of Trustees' role in the closure consideration process, presenting the following information on behalf of the Board of Trustees:

“On Tuesday, December 15, 2009, after discussion and debate at a regular meeting of the Board of Trustees, a motion was passed by the Board to give consideration to the closure of Eugene Coste School and all programs contained therein.

The Board of Trustees has the sole responsibility and authority to make closure decisions and I want to make it clear tonight that no decision has been made at this time.

Based on information provided to us by Administration, a *Written Notice* Regarding the Consideration of Closure of this program has been issued by the Board of Trustees, but that is only one part of the information that has been, and will be, reviewed and considered by Trustees. In accordance with Alberta legislation and the Board of Trustees' Governance Policies and Procedures, before making any final decision on a matter such as this, the Board follows a process to secure additional community input.

That process involves providing important and relevant information to you – the *Written Notice* – and reviewing it with you. It also involves providing you and other concerned members of the public an opportunity to impact our decision by providing us with your input. Tonight, Trustees want to augment our understanding of the information presented in the *Written Notice* by hearing your observations, submissions and questions. That is why the Board of Trustees has organized and convened tonight's public meeting. Following tonight's meeting, you will have an additional opportunity to ask further written questions and make further written submissions.

Trustees, as the ultimate decision makers, are here tonight to listen and observe. Throughout tonight's discussion and throughout the closure consideration process, Trustees will be paying very careful attention to what you have to say.

All of the information collected during the closure consideration process will be weighed very carefully by Trustees before any final decision is made.

The Board of Trustees tentatively anticipates debating the merits of this matter and making a decision regarding this program closure consideration on Tuesday, March 2, 2010.

The Board's ongoing commitment is to provide educational programs and services in suitable facilities throughout Calgary. To honour that commitment, we as a Board, need to take into consideration student populations, the demand for programs, our available resources and any other factors that may be significant. Although we certainly may consider financial factors, such as costs of the school or program, there are many other equally important considerations that impact our examination of any school's circumstances --- student enrolment levels, our ability to resource instructional programming, the health and safety of students, accessibility, and on a system-wide basis, serving the overall interests of public education within our school jurisdiction.

Consideration of closure is a very serious matter to the Board of Trustees and we clearly appreciate that it is very significant to the students, parents and other concerned members of the community. Because of that, we want to hear your input around this very important matter. We look forward to listening carefully tonight to your comments, observations and questions.

**DRAFT** – These Minutes are subject to approval by the Board of Trustees.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees I thank you.”

### **REVIEW OF THE WRITTEN NOTICE**

Mr. Carlton stated that copies of the *Agenda* and *Written Notice Regarding Consideration of Closure of Eugene Coste School and All Programs Contained Therein* were available on the table at the back of the gymnasium.

Mr. Carlton drew attention to the back of the agenda and reviewed the purpose of the meeting. He indicated that the public’s observations and questions form part of the material that the Board of Trustees will consider as they review the potential closure of Eugene Coste School and ultimately make a decision. It was pointed out that the public also has until 12:00 noon on Monday, March 1, 2010 to submit written follow-up questions and until 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, March 2, 2010 to provide further written submissions regarding this closure consideration.

Mr. Carlton gave a PowerPoint presentation that provided an overview of the *Written Notice*. The following is a summary of the presentation given by Mr. Carlton.

#### Issue

A key issue for the consideration of closure of Eugene Coste School and all programs contained therein is excess capacity in the two schools, Haysboro School and Eugene Coste School, in the residential district of Haysboro. A low number of kindergarten to grade four students from the home area will make it difficult to provide a regular program for these students. Kindergarten to grade four students residing in the residential district of Evergreen and Evergreen Estates will be designated to the new school in Evergreen, beginning the 2010-2011 school year. The student accommodation proposal includes the closure of Eugene Coste School and all programs contained therein.

#### Rationale

When Evergreen School opens there will be a significant decline in the enrolment at Eugene Coste School. The enrolment projection for Eugene Coste School is expected to be approximately ten students per grade for kindergarten to grade four over the next five years. Future projections indicate that only one school will be required in order to provide a kindergarten to grade six regular program for students in the residential district of Haysboro.

### **Information Section A: Implications for Affected Attendance Areas**

#### Current Attendance Areas

The map on page four illustrates the current attendance areas for Eugene Coste and Haysboro Schools.

#### Schools and Programs

##### Eugene Coste School

Eugene Coste School offers a regular program for students from kindergarten to grade six residing in the Haysboro residential district, for students residing in the Southwood residential district north of Southland Drive, and for students residing in Evergreen (including Evergreen Estates). The chart provided on page 2 identifies September 30, 2009 enrolment in the regular program at Eugene Coste School.

A total of 56 students attend Eugene Coste School from the residential districts of Haysboro and Southwood and 310 students attend from the residential district of Evergreen (including Evergreen Estates).

##### Haysboro School

Haysboro School offers a regular program for students from kindergarten to grade six residing in the Haysboro residential district. Haysboro School also accommodates the Area V administrative offices.

Also on page 3 of the *Written Notice* the chart illustrates that Haysboro School has instructional space to accommodate 225 students (excluding the space for the Area V offices) and, as of September 30, 2009, had an enrolment of 121 students in the kindergarten to grade six regular program. Note: 36 students reside in the Eugene Coste School attendance area.

#### Proposed Attendance Area

The map on page 5 illustrates the proposed attendance area which would take effect if Eugene Coste School and all programs contained therein are closed.

#### Change of Designation

On page 6 of the *Written Notice* you will find the student designations that will change if Eugene Coste School and all programs contained therein, are closed.

- Note: Regardless of the outcome of the consideration of closure of Eugene Coste School and all programs contained therein kindergarten to grade four students living in the residential district of Evergreen (including Evergreen Estates) will be designated to the new school opening in Evergreen, beginning the 2010-2011 school year.
- Students living in the residential district of Haysboro will be designated to Haysboro School.
- Students living in the Southwood residential district that is north of Southland Drive will be designated to Haysboro School.
- Grade five and six students living in the residential district of Evergreen (including Evergreen Estates), will be designated to Woodman School.

#### Projected Enrolment for Haysboro School

On page 6 of the *Written Notice* the chart indicates the projected 2010 enrolment for Haysboro School, if Eugene Coste School and all programs contained therein are closed and students are designated to Haysboro School, as proposed.

For September 2010 Haysboro School is projected to have 168 students, including 32 students from outside the school's attendance area. If Eugene Coste School and all programs contained therein are closed, 46 students who reside in the residential district of Haysboro, including students living in the Southwood residential district north of Southland Drive, will be designated from Eugene Coste School to Haysboro School.

#### Projected Enrolment for Woodman School

The chart on page 7 shows the projected 2010 enrolment if the grade five and six students living in the residential district of Evergreen (including Evergreen Estates) are designated from Eugene Coste School to Woodman School.

In consultation with the Area V Director, the Principal and the parents from the residential district of Evergreen (including Evergreen Estates), it has been determined that if Eugene Coste School and all programs contained therein are closed Woodman School would become a middle school.

### **Section B: Implications Relative to Calgary Board of Education's Long Range Capital Plan**

#### Capital Plan

A decision to close Eugene Coste School and all programs contained therein provides an opportunity to continue to work towards an 80 to 85 percent space utilization within the Calgary Board of Education. The CBE's *School Capital Plan 2010-2013* identifies strategies to provide new and modernized schools in closer proximity to student populations. The Calgary Board of Education's

*Ten-Year Facilities Plan 2009-2018* provides detailed site, building, program and planning information for each school building.

Haysboro School and Woodman School have the capacity to accommodate additional students without the need for capital cost upgrades. Funds will be allocated to support the change from 7-9 grade configuration to 5-9 grade configuration. As noted on page 7, both documents are available from any CBE school or can be accessed on the CBE website. [www.cbe.ab.ca](http://www.cbe.ab.ca)

### **Section C: Implications with Respect to Busing**

#### **Busing**

If Eugene Coste School and all programs contained therein are closed, administration anticipates that although additional buses will be required for both Haysboro School and Woodman School the net overall impact will be a reduction of two buses due to the opening of the new school in the residential district of Evergreen.

Currently ten buses are required to transport students from the residential district of Evergreen (including Evergreen Estates) to Eugene Coste School and Woodman School. One bus route is anticipated to be required morning, mid-day and afternoon, to transport students to the new school in the residential district of Evergreen. *Administrative Regulation 6095-Student Transportation* is available on the CBE website and provides information regarding the administration of transportation services. Also, *Appendix 1 – Transportation Information 2009-2010* summarizes eligibility criteria, fees and parent/guardian responsibilities relating to student transportation. This Appendix is on pages 13 to 15 of the Notice.

#### **Busing – Haysboro School**

The new transportation service area for Haysboro School will take effect for the 2010-2011 school year.

*Appendix 2 on page 16* provides the *Proposed Walk Zone Map for Haysboro School* (if Eugene Coste School and all programs contained therein are approved for closure). Designated students residing outside the walk zone depicted in the map would be eligible for subsidized transportation.

*Appendix 1- Administrative Regulation 6095-Student Transportation* is available on the CBE website and provides information regarding the administration regarding transportation services. Also, *Appendix 1-Transportation Information 2009-2010* summarizes transportation eligibility criteria, fees and parent/guardian responsibilities relating to student transportation. This Appendix is on pages 13-15 of the Notice.

#### **Busing – Woodman School**

Six bus routes will be required to transport grade five to nine students from the residential district of Evergreen (including Evergreen Estates) to Woodman School.

### **Section D: Educational Programming and Staffing Impacts**

#### **Educational Impact if School is not Closed**

At Eugene Coste School an anticipated enrolment of less than ten students per grade in kindergarten to grade four is projected for the 2010-2011 school year. The ability to best meet the learning needs and interests of a small number of regular program students may be more challenging with fewer staff as organizing students into classroom groupings for instruction would be significantly limited.

Additionally, the range of subject expertise would be limited as would the range of extra- and co-curricular activities. For example, with few staff the principal may be constrained in the ability to have expertise in specialty areas like Physical Education, music and technology.

#### **Educational Impact if School is Closed**

As funding is provided on a per student basis and schools are resourced according to the number of students, students would have access to teachers and staff with expertise in a wide variety of disciplines. The principal would have greater flexibility in determining how to allocate resources to best serve the learning needs of students.

#### Staffing Impact

Staffing resources are allocated to schools on a per school base allocation, student enrolment and student profile. Should Eugene Coste School and all programs contained therein close, resource allocation levels would be adjusted at Haysboro School and Woodman School to reflect the projected student enrolment and profile for 2010-2011. Further adjustments would be made should there be any discrepancy between the projected student enrolment/profile and the actual September 30, 2010 student enrolment.

Deployment of both resources and staff is at the discretion of the principal. Based on the number and individual needs of students enrolled at a school, the principal determines how to effectively allocate physical and human resources to best serve the learning needs of students.

One benefit of a larger student population is the ability to take advantage of efficiencies inherent in a larger staff. Final staffing decisions cannot be made until the actual number of students and their unique learning needs are determined. Teachers would be transferred in accordance with the CBE's current staffing processes. Final teacher staffing decisions take place in the fall of each school year, based on the September 30th actual enrolments. Support staff would be identified for transfer/layoff and considered for placement in accordance with the CBE's Staff Association Collective Agreement and current staffing processes. Facility Operations staffing levels would be assessed in accordance with the CUPE Local 40 Collective Agreement and caretaking staffing formulae.

### **Section E: Financial & Operational Implications**

#### Financial & Operational Impacts

The financial and operational impacts for educational programming are not key factors in the consideration of closure of Eugene Coste School and all programs contained therein; both physical and human resources are allocated according to student enrolment/profile and would follow the students to their designated schools. The operational impact is negligible as the school facility will continue to be maintained and may be operated as an administrative and/or leased space. The ability to lease a portion of the facility could result in additional revenue.

Plant, Operation and Maintenance funding is allocated by the Provincial Government based on student enrolment. Consolidating programs in residential districts with multiple underutilized facilities is therefore desirable to support fiscal responsibility and appropriate allocation of resources.

#### Capital Impacts

There is no known capital impact associated with the proposed school closure since no renovations or modernizations are required to accommodate the increased number of students at either Haysboro School or Woodman School.

### **Section F: Future Facility Plans**

#### Future Facility Plans

At this time there are no immediate plans to utilize Eugene Coste School for other CBE educational programming. Closure of the school would provide the CBE opportunity to consider other potential uses to meet CBE needs and/or lease the facility.

### **RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS**

The following questions were either received before this evening's public consultation meeting, or are anticipated questions:

***If Eugene Coste School does not close, where will the grade five and six students from Evergreen attend?***

They would remain designated to Eugene Coste School for grade five and six.

***I live in Haysboro. If Eugene Coste School closes can my grade four student go to Woodman School with her Evergreen friends rather than Haysboro School for grades five and six and then to Woodman for grade seven?***

To minimize the impact on the cohort group at Eugene Coste School, current grade four and five students at Eugene Coste School would have the option to attend Woodman School for grades five and six. This would only be an option for the current grade four and five students in the event that Eugene Coste School is approved for closure.

#### **OPEN DISCUSSION – COMMENTS & QUESTIONS FROM PARENTS AND PUBLIC**

Mr. Carlton provided a brief review of the discussion guidelines, which are noted on the back of the agenda. He reiterated that the Trustees are present to hear the public's input, that they will ultimately be the sole decision makers regarding the status of Eugene Coste School and it would not be appropriate in the middle of the process for Trustees to respond directly to questions or to engage in debate. He asked that questions be directed to him as the meeting Chair and he would provide a response or he would direct the question to an appropriate CBE Administrator for response.

***Ms. K. Croft, a resident of Haysboro, questioned if Eugene Coste School closes will the building be sold and will the school grounds and playground both be maintained?***

Mr. Carlton responded that if Eugene Coste School is closed the playground and fields would continue to be maintained. He noted that Eugene Coste School is a reserve site. If reserve sites are determined to be surplus by the CBE they must be turned over to the City of Calgary or the provincial government.

***Mr. S. Wealleans, president of the Haysboro Community Association, questioned if all possibilities of keeping the school open had been explored? He commented that the YMCA is very anxious to find another location in order to keep their programs open and suggested that they could rent some of the space at Eugene Coste School and the school could remain open.***

Mr. Carlton explained that lease opportunities do not impact the regular program enrolment. He noted that with three more schools being built in the south, there is no possibility at this point in time of any additional communities to be designated to Eugene Coste School as a bus receiver.

***Mr. S. Johnson, a parent of a grade 5 student living directly across the street from the school, asked if current grade 5 and 6 students would be allowed to go to Woodman School for a one year option with their cohort group and why the decision whether or not to close Eugene Coste School will not be made until March?***

Mr. Carlton replied that for a one year option, grade 4 and 5 students currently registered at Eugene Coste School could go to Woodman School for grade 5 and 6 with their cohort group. He stated that the timing of the decision is in accordance with a government regulatory process that dictates the amount of time that must be allowed and explained that two weeks after Trustees make the first decision to consider closure, a public meeting takes place. The final decision can not be determined until three weeks after the public meeting in order to allow time for comments and questions to

Trustees before they make their final decision. The earliest opportunity for this decision is the first public meeting in March.

***Mr. S. Johnson questioned if there were any opportunities for students from other communities to attend Eugene Coste School?***

Mr. Carlton stated that Administration takes closure considerations seriously and look very carefully for other options. In circumstances where there are two schools in one residential district, the first option is to see if the school could continue to be used as a bus receiver. As previously indicated, there are three new schools opening in the south, and there are no other opportunities to continue to use Eugene Coste School as a bus receiver.

***Mr. S. Johnson asked if Eugene Coste School were to close, what would happen to all of the memorabilia such as graduation photos, etc?***

Mr. Carlton stated that Community Engagement and Operational Planning (CEOP) would work with the Area Director and Principal to identify items of significance that would be kept in the CBE archives or possibly displayed in an appropriate place at the CBE.

***Mr. S. Johnson commented that as a homeowner his biggest concern is if the school closes what will happen to the building and is a charter school an option?***

Mr. Carlton stated that at this point in time, there has been no future use of the school determined by the CBE. He noted that it is possible that at some point they may consider other possibilities that might include an alternative program. If it is determined that there is no further use for the school by the CBE, it would be turned over to the province. The province might choose to use it as a charter school, but before that happens it would have to be determined that there is no further use by CBE.

***Mr. S. Johnson asked if the community has any say in regards to what the school would be used for in the future?***

Mr. Carlton provided an example of when the provincial government requested that the CBE release a school in Ogden that was surplus to the CBE for a charter school “Foundations for Future” the CBE informed the community. Another example of this is when Kingsland School closed three years ago, the CBE kept in contact with the community association keeping them fully informed of the status of the school. For the past two years Kingsland School has been used for Connaught School students while that school was undergoing renovations. It is also the reception centre and administrative office for the CBE diversity team where new Canadians come for assessment.

***Ms. R. Chapman, a parent and CBE teacher, questioned if there would be combined grades at Haysboro School if Eugene Coste School closes?***

Mr. Carlton replied that the organization of a school is at the discretion of the principal and is dependent on enrolment numbers. He noted that when there are larger numbers, there are more opportunities with regards to organization.

***Ms. H. Guedo, a parent, questioned if any consideration has been given to future growth of the community? She referred to a townhome complex being built in the area called “The London” that will add 1,200 homes to the community.***

Mr. Carlton replied that community growth is looked at very carefully and the city census is consulted in doing so. He noted that there is additional space at Haysboro School and that the Area V office that is located there could be relocated if necessary.

***Ms. H. Guedo stated that it is her belief that this community hasn't changed much in fifty years and questioned why services would be reduced now. She believes that it is a centralized community and commented that she sees older people moving away from their homes and young families moving in.***

Mr. Carlton replied that there is a trend in developed communities for the population growth to spike, drop, spike and then level off. He stated that fifteen years ago these same scenarios involved inner city schools, now it is happening in developed communities. He provided examples of schools in the communities of Queensland and Varsity where in the 1970's there were 2-3 schools in one community; however, now as Calgary has grown out, we face a dilemma with not enough students in the regular program to support more than one school in the same community. This is a result of a fast growing metropolitan city. He noted that the preschool census is reviewed when looking at accommodation planning and that not all students in the area choose CBE schools. Some choose alternative programs such as Spanish, French, Art, etc. and all of this is taken into consideration.

***Ms. H. Guedo asked why Eugene Coste School was chosen for consideration of closure rather than Haysboro School?***

Mr. Carlton replied that one of the factors affecting the decision to consider closure of Eugene Coste School rather than Haysboro School was determined by the number of students that can be accommodated for effective use of space and resources. If the regular program students were moved from Haysboro School to Eugene Coste School, Eugene Coste School would still be under utilized.

***Ms. H. Guedo asked if it is common to move students after grade 4 and put grades 5-9 together.***

Mr. Carlton replied that it is a one time option for grade 4 and 5 students currently attending Eugene Coste School to go to Woodman School for grade 5 and 6. Grade 5 and 6 students from Evergreen and Evergreen Estates will be designated to Woodman School. Mr. Carlton explained that the original plan for Eugene Coste School consideration of closure included an additional transition for students currently in grade 4 and 5 to attend another elementary school for grade 5 and 6 and then transition to Woodman School for junior high. At the request of parents to the Area Director, this additional transition has been eliminated.

***Ms. H. Guedo expressed concern with grade 5 students attending school with junior high students.***

Mr. Carlton stated that the CBE has a very strong record of successful middle schools. He stated that it has been found that this approach pro-actively addresses the learning needs of young adolescents socially, academically, physically and emotionally.

***Ms. M. Haynes (Wirsch) stated that she was part of the first graduating class of grade 6 at Eugene Coste School. She commented that it would be hurtful to see the school close. She stated that she was in 5 classes in grade 5 and believes that it is not right to keep moving students. She asked that students be allowed to finish the term and then start the new school.***

Mr. Carlton responded that the proposal is that the school would not be closed until the end of June 2010. The recommendation is to allow the students to move as a cohort group.

***Ms. M. Haynes commented that the Catholic School across the street have come up with a good idea to keep that school open by offering a French program and asked if the same could be done at Eugene Coste School.***

Mr. Carlton replied that every possibility of how to keep the regular program open at Eugene Coste School had been explored. An alternative program would keep the building open but it will not keep the regular program open, as there would still be a small number of students in the regular program which is why they are considering closure. If at some time in the future it is determined to place an

alternative program here, community residents would have priority. He stated that there is no other possibility for increasing enrolment through bus receiver options.

***Ms. M. Haynes suggested that in this society where both parents often work, the school could be a good location for child care for young children.***

Mr. Carlton stated that lease possibilities are always items that they pursue after a consideration of closure.

***Ms. B. Howard, a full time working parent, expressed concern regarding transportation. She stated that she has engaged in conversations with the CBE regarding bus transportation for her children that are within the walk zone. Her children are cared for before and after school at a day home in close proximity to Eugene Coste School and within the walk zone to Haysboro School. She questioned how to apply for conditional rider status and where the stop might be located.***

Mr. Carlton stated that unfortunately when walk zones and transportation services are established, they are affected by fiscal restraints and funding that comes from the provincial government. He explained that the province sets a guideline of 2.4 km as the walk zone and that the CBE does provide transportation services within that, but has to draw the line somewhere. He noted that all walk zones have been reviewed over the last three years and changes have been made with walk zones ranging from 1.3 km – 1.7 km for K-6 students.

In response to Ms. Howards' question as to how to access conditional rider status, Mr. Carlton explained that conditional rider status can be applied for in June of the prior year. Contracts are reviewed and bus stops established. If there is room available on the bus, conditional riders are permitted; however, bus stops are not added for conditional riders. He noted that parents would be responsible for the bus fee and the lunch room supervision fee for conditional riders.

***Ms. B. Howard stated that for transportation reasons, she could try to register her children in an alternate program such as Science or Montessori but that these programs are very full, and it is challenging to get two children into the Science School. She asked if it is possible to make more space available at these alternative programs.***

Mr. Carlton replied that if she chose to register her children in a Science program they would be eligible for transportation from a congregated stop.

***Ms. B. Howard stated that her other option would be to move her children to the Catholic school. She asked if there would be any consideration given to providing French mentoring for students at Eugene Coste School if there were a group of students wishing to move to the Catholic French program.***

Mr. Carlton replied that choices parents make are parent responsibilities. He noted that CBE intake for French Immersion is in Kindergarten and grade one, and later immersion at grade 7.

***Ms. B. Howard stated that numbers have fluctuated at Eugene Coste School over the past four years and she does not feel that there is a clear prediction of growth. She commented that she does not understand the choice of this school as opposed to Haysboro School as Eugene Coste School could accommodate a regular program to grade 6.***

Mr. Carlton responded that if Eugene Coste School were not to close, there would be less than 10 regular program students per grade and organizing for instruction would be difficult. If trustees determine not to close Eugene Cost School, a regular program would remain and the grade configuration and number of classes would be determined by the number of students registered. He noted that the growth prediction numbers are from the Calgary census which does not indicate that the numbers will grow significantly enough to have a full class at those grade levels.

***Ms. H. Guedo questioned if Eugene Coste School closes, would Haysboro School be a K-4 School?***

Mr. Carlton responded that if Eugene Coste School closes, Haysboro School would be designated as a K-6 school. The option is being given only to currently registered grade 4 and 5 students living in Haysboro, to go to Woodman School for grade 5 & 6 as it is their designated junior high school.

***Ms. H. Guedo inquired how many spaces are available in the Haysboro School and at Eugene Coste School. If they are both reserve sites, why was the smaller school chosen to remain open? She commented that it is sad that the smaller school was chosen to remain open as it limits growth in the community and that Haysboro School is less central.***

Mr. Carlton responded that the capacity for Eugene Coste School is 550, while the capacity for Haysboro School is 225. He explained that space utilization is closer to 80-85 per cent at Haysboro School with only 168 students.

***Mr. P. Demong requested to see the results of a survey of Evergreen parents that chose to put their children into Woodman School.***

Mr. Carlton replied that it was not a survey, but a general consensus as part of an engagement process where parents indicated that if Eugene Coste School closed and the grade 5 and 6 students that were in the regular program would have to be designated to a different elementary school, they preferred to send them to Woodman School so they didn't have to move again in junior high. Woodman School would become a middle school for grades 5-9. Haysboro School would be K-6, with one transition to Woodman School at grade 7. Evergreen and Evergreen Estates would go to Evergreen School K-4, with one transition to Woodman School at grade 5. Mr. Carlton indicated that this decision was made by the Area Director and himself after listening to parents in the engagement process.

***Ms. A. Minton, a resident of Haysboro who attended this school as a child, commented on the walk zone. It is her belief that there are too many safety issues with students walking to school. She questioned if Haysboro School was chosen because the Area office is located there and asked what would happen if the office space needs to grow.***

Mr. Carlton responded that they would not compromise student programming for Administrative space. If there was a need to expand the Area office, they would look for a different location rather than disrupt student programming.

***Ms. A. Minton commented on the organization and lay out of Eugene Coste School in comparison to Haysboro School. Some of the areas she noted were that there is no music room, no technology room, and a smaller library at Haysboro School. In comparison, at Eugene Coste School there is a music room, science room, and art room. It is her opinion that if the size of classes involve split grades there might not be room for specialization teachers for music, technology, etc.***

Mr. Carlton explained that the larger number of students in a school allows greater opportunity for a larger number of staff. He reiterated that the organization and management of a school is up to the principal including specialization teachers for technology, music, etc. He noted that more often than not technology is incorporated into daily work in the classroom.

***Ms. A. Minton inquired where students from the new communities of Silverado and Bridlewood would attend school?***

Mr. Carlton responded that Silverado students are bused to a designated school and a new K-6 school will open in Bridlewood this fall.

***Ms. A. Minton commented that Haysboro Community Association houses two preschool classes and she believes that there is another at St. Andrews United Church. She questioned if these preschool numbers are included in the stats that the CBE is looking at in their planning?***

Mr. Carlton responded that the preschool census is reviewed in their accommodation planning and that current projections reflect five students per kindergarten class.

***Ms. A. Minton commented that there are over 2,000 seniors in this community who will likely eventually downsize and move. It is her belief that there would be no advantage to move into the community if you take away the school.***

Mr. Carlton replied that the plan is that Haysboro School will still be in the community and that there is room for growth there, noting that if necessary, the Area office could be moved.

***Ms. A. Minton commented that there is a rumour in the community that the roof needs to be replaced on Eugene Coste School and that CBE did not want to spend the money, which is why Haysboro School was chosen to remain open.***

Mr. Carlton replied that he had no knowledge of this and commented that he did not put much faith in rumours.

***Mr. P. Demong questioned that if grade 5-9 is a more suitable grouping for children and the optimum choice why is it that some schools such as Bridlewood School is a K-6 School and Evergreen a K-4.***

Mr. Carlton stated that when the new and developing communities such as Bridlewood were placed on the School Capital Plan 5 years ago the CBE was totally dependent on provincial funding to build new schools. Bridlewood is a K-6 because it was on the capital plan as such. The CBE is committed to trying to keep the youngest students close to home. He noted that in the north communities of Panorama Hills, Coventry Hills and Taradale the new P3 schools are all K-4 schools and will be opening 5-9 middle schools in 2012.

***Mr. P. Demong asked where the CBE is getting evidence that suggests putting 10 year olds with 15 and 16 year olds is a wise idea. He stated that he is more concerned about the changes that the 10 & 11 year olds are going through than the 15 & 16 year olds and does not agree with the mix.***

Mr. Carlton replied that there is much evidence from across the United States and Canada regarding how Middle Schools operate. There are many provinces that operate K-8 and grades 9-12 schools. Results in achievement tests have gone up consistently over the last 6 years at the system level. They have found that the grades 5-9 mix is reasonable to address the learning needs of students, especially related to the social, intellectual, physical and emotional development when students are going through more changes than at any other time in their lives, with the exception of between the ages of 0-3. Mr. Carlton stated that there are many schools operating as grades 5-9 as well as K-9, which have also proved to be very successful.

***Ms. H. Mowat, commented that as an educator, studier of education in other provinces and a mature woman she believes that a grade 5-9 school does not meet the needs of children. It is her belief that a grade 5-9 school is detrimental to their health and well being and does not meet their social and learning needs.***

***Ms. K. Sinclair asked if Woodman School will continue to run as a grade 5-9 school?***

Mr. Carlton replied that Woodman School will continue to operate as a grade 5-9 school for the residential districts of Evergreen and Evergreen Estates. The current grades 4 and 5 students at Haysboro can attend as a one time offer, taking into account their relationships with their peer group.

***Ms. K. Sinclair asked if Southwood is on a bus route and if so where will the stops be? Are they placed away from busy streets?***

Mr. Carlton replied that the bus stops are determined based on the number of students that register to ride the bus. Bus stops are placed within 800 metres of the residence of students who wish to access the transportation service and are established by taking into account student safety, bus access, parent drop off and the effect on residents.

***Ms. K. Croft expressed concern regarding students that will walk to Woodman School. She questioned how to request that the cross walk at 96<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Elbow Drive be changed to a stop light.***

Mr. Carlton replied that these type of traffic issues are the responsibility of the City of Calgary and that the CBE encourages communities to work together to request that traffic surveys be done by the Traffic Division of the City of Calgary.

***Ms. K. Croft asked if the school zone would stay in effect at Eugene Coste School if the school is closed?***

Mr. Carlton replied that it is his understanding that there is some provincial work being done in regards to a provincial initiative that would combine playground and school zones. The outcome has not yet been determined.

***Ms. J. Tetz commented that currently Haysboro School is accessed by Elbow Drive. It can not be accessed by 12<sup>th</sup> Street as there is a barricade. Will this now be opened up for easier access?***

Mr. Carlton replied that the community could approach the City of Calgary Traffic Division regarding this issue as well.

***Ms. H. Guedo asked if Haysboro School grows would the Area office be moved out of the school or would grade 5 and 6 students be moved to Woodman School. Would there be a capital cost to make the change from office space back to classrooms?***

Mr. Carlton replied that the determination of whether or not the Area office would be moved would depend on the number of students registered. They would consider the educational programming first with the least amount of disruption and would consider moving the Area office first. Some of the office space has been renovated but the majority could be very easily turned into classrooms.

***Ms. H. Mowat stated that she has been to Haysboro School and does not believe that it will be easy to turn the Area Office space back into classrooms as they put a lot of money into the office space.***

***Ms. L. Gnam commented regarding the census information. She stated that although Haysboro community has a large senior population, she believes that this is changing and that this might be a premature decision. She asked if the census takes that into account.***

Mr. Carlton responded that this is taken into account. There are only sufficient numbers to support one school in the community and does not forecast that Haysboro School will be overcrowded in any way.

***Mr. S. Wealleans asked what security arrangements would be made for Eugene Coste School if it closes? He also asked that the CBE make contact with Helen Weir, Chief Executive Officer of the YMCA.***

Mr. Carlton stated that the CBE does have an obligation to maintain the site and it will be looked after by the Facility and Environmental Services Department, including security issues. He requested that Mr. Wealleans put his request regarding the YMCA into writing and that the YMCA should contact the Leasing Department of the CBE to this regard. He stated that there are no immediate plans for the school and that they will be looking at all of the accommodation strategies to see if there is an opportunity to utilize the school for educational purposes or other CBE use. If it is determined that the school is surplus to the CBE it will be turned over to the province and the City of Calgary who will determine the future opportunities for the school.

***Mr. P. Demong commented that he is under the impression that this is a done deal and that there is nothing that they can do.***

Mr. Carlton responded that Administration has been engaging in a series of conversations with the community since November and has made a recommendation to the Board of Trustees. The Board looked at the information and decided to move forward with a consideration for closure, but no decision has yet been made. He stated that this decision can only be made by the Board of Trustees and that they will further debate this matter in three weeks, and then make a decision.

***Mr. P. Demong asked how many times the decision has been made not to close a school in past closure considerations? Is there anything that can be done, such as a petition to not close the school?***

Mr. Carlton replied that since Community Engagement and Operational Planning (CEOP) has been in operation there has been one situation where the Board decision was not to close the school. He noted that the limited number of students at Eugene Coste School indicate it would be difficult to run a program but if trustees determine not to close the school there would still be a regular program open.

***Mr. P. Demong asked if any consideration had been given to offering a staged closure where the grade 5 and 6 students could finish their division at Eugene Coste School in the same way as Dalhousie School is being done?***

Mr. Carlton replied that a staged closure was considered; however, it is not feasible, or fiscally responsible because of the low number of students.

***Ms. M. Haynes asked if there was recently a lot of money spent on the boiler system at Eugene Coste School?***

Mr. Carlton responded that yes, they have an obligation to ensure that schools are safe and maintained as they are providing for the health and safety of students. Replacing the boiler was necessary and regardless of the future use of the school, it is still needed.

***Mr. H. Minton commented that it sounds as if closure is a done deal that he does not see a reason to close the larger school. He commented that this district has the highest percentage of seniors in the city of Calgary and that the demographics will soon be changing.***

Mr. Carlton responded that it is not a done deal, and that only the Board of Trustees can make that decision. The projected numbers are not sufficient to maintain two schools. In terms of fiscal responsibility and space utilization, Haysboro School can accommodate students now and into the future. Choosing to keep Eugene Coste School open instead would result in under utilization with no opportunity to address the under utilization in the immediate future.

***Mr. H. Minton inquired why Eugene Coste School was built and why was it chosen instead of Haysboro School?***

Mr. Carlton responded that at the time, like many of the other districts, the government made the decision to build more than one school in the community. At this point in time and in the reality we face today, a community of 6,000-7,000 people would qualify for one school. He stated that moving a smaller population into a large school is not fiscally responsible.

***Mr. H. Minton commented that he believes that the people that are now moving into the area will be families with children. He commented that Eugene Coste School is newer than Haysboro School.***

Mr. Carlton responded that demographics of the population have changed in terms of the number of children per family. In the past, it was common that there were 3-4 children per family, now families are more likely to have 1-2 children. He noted that both schools were built in 1959.

***Ms. M. Haynes stated that she attended Haysboro School and she believes that Eugene Coste is a newer school.***

***Mr. S. Wealleans commented that the capacity of Haysboro School is 225 and the projected enrolment is 168; this would mean that if there were 57 more students, the CBE would have to move the Area office. He noted that the condominium project “the London” that is currently stalled will eventually be completed and there will be more families with students that need to attend school.***

Mr. Carlton replied that the projected enrolment in consultation with the city census does not show an increase of 57 students. He noted that the CBE only receives a percentage of students in an area, as families make other choices.

***Ms. L. Gnam commented that although the original schools are the same age, Eugene Coste School had a newer extension built of brick. It is her belief that this school seems like a better choice, and the only reason for not keeping it open is because the offices are located at Haysboro School.***

***Ms. K. Sinclair asked if enrolment increases and the offices move, how much room would that allow for?***

Mr. Carlton replied that if the Area office was moved from Haysboro School, it could accommodate another 75 students.

***Ms. K. Sinclair asked what is the closest school that offers any programs for children that are academically challenged?***

Mr. Carlton replied that every attempt is made to address student learning needs within the home designated school. If a child requires another location, it is determined by the Special Education Department in consultation with the parents and Area Director. They would look for a location as close to home as possible for the child. It is dependent on the grade level and program required.

Chief Superintendent N. Johnson stated that there are several special education classes in Area V that range from behavioural challenges, learning disabilities and cognitively delayed for students in Kindergarten through grade 12. She noted that the best source of information for this is the school principal or Area Director.

***Ms. A. Minton asked what is the capacity of Chinook Park Elementary School? She commented that there are some students bused from Oakridge to that school.***

Mr. Carlton replied that Chinook Park School offers a bilingual program and is running a two track program. Most regular program students are from within the walk limit and those that are bused from Oakridge are French Immersion students. The capacity of Chinook Park School is 725.

***Ms. M. Haynes asked if a petition from the Haysboro community would help and if so, how much time do they have?***

Mr. Carlton replied that the Board of Trustees is obligated to receive any appropriately designed petitions in the course of their procedures. The public has three weeks after this public meeting to make any additional comments or submissions before Trustees debate this issue and make a final decision.

***Mr. J. Johnson asked if the only option is to close Eugene Coste School or is there an option to close Haysboro School instead and keep Eugene Coste School open?***

Mr. Carlton replied that if the Board of Trustees were to decide not to close Eugene Coste School, it would remain status quo for next year and Community Engagement and Operational Planning (CEOP) would work with the Area Director to determine if there was any other course of action required within the Haysboro residential district.

***Ms. H. Guedo stated that she understands and accepts the idea that one school has to be closed in the Haysboro community because of capacity. It is her belief that the community is growing and that there is land in the community on Macleod Trail near the LRT that the City has committed to expanding and developing that will likely bring in more students. She suggested that if Eugene Coste School were to remain open there would be space to accommodate an alternate program as well. Ms. Guedo believes that if the area grows there will not be space at Haysboro School to accommodate the growth, or if there is a decrease in growth there is no room there to add an alternate program to try to keep it open.***

***Mr. S. Spinks questioned what will happen to the building if Eugene Coste School closes and the CBE determines it is surplus? Can the government do whatever they want with the building and land, i.e. build homes?***

Mr. Carlton replied that the provincial government can not change zoning; only the City of Calgary can do that and to do so they would have to go through their processes and procedures regarding zone changes.

***Mr. S. Spinks asked who was responsible for the digging that was done around the school fence last summer? He inquired if it was the CBE or was it the City of Calgary preparing to do something to the land?***

Mr. Carlton replied that this is a reserved site, which is a joint site and it is possible that the City of Calgary would have done it as part of a beautification project.

***Mr. S. Spinks commented that he moved into this area 9 years ago, and it is his belief that there have been no upgrades to the area during that time. He expressed his opinion that while the city is encouraging people to live inside the city centre the CBE is building new schools in new communities. He stated that there are already schools built that can be upgraded and have the capacity to accommodate.***

Mr. Carlton replied that just as a case is made for this community, parents in new and developing communities, with large numbers of students in the community, make a case to have a school as well. Those communities are now only qualifying for one elementary school and one middle school. They do not have the luxury that people had in the 1960's and 1970's when they were building two schools in a community.

*Mr. S. Spinks commented that he disagrees with the grade 5 - 9 students being put together and it is his belief that it is a mistake and will result in a challenge for the school board.*

*Ms. A. Minton commented that if students are re-designated to Haysboro School and there is growth in the community the CBE would not be in a position to offer alternate programs to Haysboro residents. She stated that it is her belief that Eugene Coste School has additional space that could be rented out to seniors groups, girl guides, etc. so that if there is future growth, there is space available. She commented that this is not forward thinking unless they are planning on busing Haysboro students to Evergreen.*

Mr. Carlton stated that in 2008-2009 Haysboro population grew by 500 due to the development in “London”. Enrolment at Eugene Coste School declined by 11 students. Enrolment at Haysboro School increased by 27 students from the home area. This is a difference of 16 students from a population of 500. Even if it grows by 1,200 there is still room at Haysboro School based on what the trend has indicated in the number of students the CBE gets from a population increase.

*Ms. H. Guedo stated that the London development that has been completed is small apartments. The remaining project phases include town homes up to 3 bedrooms. It is a different population. It is her belief that the statistics are not that clear.*

*Mr. S. Wealleans commented that there are 1,200 units being built in the London project. There are 400, 2 bedroom units, with a potential increase of 1,600 people, not 1,600 students. In the city “transport oriented development plan” they are trying to develop and grow communities near the LRT. He stated that when the YMCA closes, the building will be torn down and it is his opinion that there will be more housing developments there.*

*Mr. H. Minton stated that it is his belief that the projections from the city of Calgary have been out approximately 80 per cent. He referred to Macleod Trail and Elbow Drive both running at over 100 per cent capacity. Mr. Minton expressed frustration that while the city is encouraging people to live in the inner city, the CBE is projecting no growth.*

Mr. Carlton stated that the CBE projections are within .01 percent of accuracy for 100,000 students. The CBE planners do exceptional work reviewing statistics, community trends and the intake and retention in schools.

*Mr. H. Minton inquired how long it takes to build a new school and that it is his belief that by the time a new school is built the projections will be different. He commented that the projections do not include encouraging people to move to the centre of the city and big schools are closed. It is his opinion that the smaller school should have been closed while keeping the bigger one open as it is more central and has room to accommodate growth.*

Mr. Carlton replied that it takes 2-3 years to build a school and that this is taken into account when forecasting student enrolment. Projections are based on the city census and the number of children residing in a particular area and/or home.

*Ms. M. Haynes asked how many students it would take to keep Eugene Coste School open?*

Mr. Carlton replied that it would take approximately 400 students to keep Eugene Coste School open.

### **CLOSING REMARKS**

Mr. Carlton pointed out that it is not possible to direct personal responses to each question; that all questions submitted would be reviewed for relevancy and repetitiveness and those selected for response would be answered on the Calgary Board of Education website at <http://www.cbe.ab.ca>. He

directed attention to the back of the agenda and reminded those in attendance that follow-up questions from this meeting must be received by the CBE on or before 12:00 noon on Monday, March 1, 2010 and written submissions must be received by 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, March 2, 2010. He thanked everyone for attending the meeting and providing respectful comments and input.

Mr. Carlton noted that it is anticipated that the Board meeting to discuss the consideration of closure of Eugene Coste School would be Tuesday, March 2, 2010, since the regulation requires a full three weeks between the public meeting and the board meeting to make the decision. The public's observations, comments and questions are valued and will form part of the material that Trustees will consider as they review the matter and ultimately reach a decision. He advised that the public's input at the meeting this evening has been an important contribution to the Board's decision-making process.

Mr. Carlton declared the meeting closed at 9:09 p.m.

Note to Reader:

The Minutes of the Public Meeting re: Discussion Respecting Consideration of Closure of Eugene Coste School, held in the gymnasium, 10 Hillgrove Crescent SW, Calgary, Alberta on Thursday, February 4, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. include the major points of discussion - they are not a verbatim transcript of the meeting.