

Calgary Board of Education

Minutes of the Public Meeting re: Discussion Respecting Consideration of Closure of Sir William Van Horne High School and all Programs Contained Therein, held in the Sir William Van Horne High School Gymnasium, 2215 Uxbridge Drive NW Calgary, Alberta on Tuesday, March 9, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.

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. K. Kryzcka, Trustee – Wards 11 & 13

Administration:

Mr. P. Carlton, Moderator and Co-Chair of the Public Meeting
Mr. R. Peden, Procedures Chair
Ms. N. Johnson, Chief Superintendent of Schools
Ms. C. Faber, Superintendent, Learning Innovation
Dr. D. Yee, Director, Area I, and Co-Chair of the Public Meeting
Ms. S. Church, Director, Area II
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 Sir William Van Horne High School”, Tuesday, March 9, 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 7:04 p.m. and noted he would be Chair of the meeting and that the format of the meeting is determined by the Closure of Schools Regulation; thus it has a high level of structure regarding the information that must be presented. He made introduction of the Trustees present and the Calgary Board of Education (CBE) Administration. He also noted the attendance of Ms. L. Youck-McGowan, Principal of Sir William Van Horne High 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 prior to the Board of Trustees making its decision.

OPENING REMARKS

Chief Superintendent N. Johnson expressed her welcome and presented the following information:

“I’ve had a brief chance to circulate and speak with some of you tonight as you came in. I know that we have parents here, local community residents, representatives from stakeholder groups and, very importantly, students. I know that you’ve all come here tonight because this is a very important matter for you – as it is for our Board of Trustees.

All of you have your own points of view that you want our Board of Trustees to hear, to be aware of and to understand – and so, from the outset I want to assure you, and to reinforce the fact, that you will have an opportunity, throughout this closure consideration process, to fully express your concerns and to be heard

by Trustees – that is a primary purpose of the closure consideration process and it's certainly the focus of tonight's public meeting.

We've initially set aside three hours tonight and, as we go forward we'll make a determination as to whether that time is sufficient - but, be assured, you will have an opportunity to be heard.

I also think that it's important that you understand that tonight's meeting has been convened by the Board of Trustees and our Board Chair, Pat Cochrane, will be speaking to you shortly to outline the Board's role in the closure consideration process. The closure consideration process is "owned" by the Board of Trustees and it is important that you understand that they are here tonight to hear your observations and concerns and to make sure that questions you have are answered – the Board of Trustees alone will decide whether to proceed with closure and the decision they make will be based on the totality of information available to them – and a very significant part of that will include what you have to say.

Before you hear from the Board Chair I wanted to speak with you about the advisory role and the support role that Administration plays, both leading up to and following the formal, legislated closure consideration process. The role that administration fulfils is significant, and I want to outline that to you, but it's really quite irrelevant with respect to the decision that will ultimately be made by Trustees regarding the consideration of closure – and it's important that there not be any confusion on that point.

Administration has an ongoing obligation to provide recommendations each year to our Board of Trustees with respect to how the Calgary Board of Education can best support the educational outcomes of all of our students – a significant part of that work involves constantly reviewing the nature of our program delivery and the best placement of CBE's many programs and facilities. Within the Calgary Board of Education, it is our Community Engagement and Operational Planning department that is charged with the responsibility of initiating and coordinating transparent engagement processes, internally and externally, to comprehensively review and address those matters.

Sometimes, where there are no circumstances constraining the actions of administration, the engagement process involves going to communities to develop various scenarios and options. Other times, where administration feels that options are limited, the engagement takes the form of consulting with the community to discuss the "implementation" of the proposed administrative recommendation.

In October, November and January, our Community Engagement and Operational Planning department began the process of trying to address the opportunities and challenges associated with Sir William Van Horne High School and its programs.

In the case of Sir William Van Horne High School, the Community Engagement and Operational Planning department concluded that the most viable recommendation to make to the Board of Trustees was for the consideration of closure, but as part of their work they did undertake to consult with the community about the "implementation" of that recommendation. Amongst other things, they met with parent representatives as part of a Focus Group, they met with students and participated in a Focused Conversation and they conducted an Open House on January 14th that was well attended by students, parents and community members. Consequently, as a result of that consultation, administration modified its initial thoughts and changed the initial recommendation from a consideration of closure in June, 2010 to a consideration of closure in June, 2011 to allow the greatest number of students to complete their program and to develop appropriate transition plans for students and staff.

Many of you here tonight, and many other members of the community, made significant contributions to that initial work, either as parent representatives, as part of a focus group or simply in attending open houses and providing CBE with your feedback, and I want to express my sincere appreciation to each and every one of you for the thoughtful and carefully considered input you provided Administration to assist in that difficult work. That work was undertaken as part of Administration's advisory role to the Board of Trustees.

It was that engagement process which led to the preparation of an Administrative recommendation that went forward to the Board of Trustees on February 16, 2010 and, after deliberation, the Board of Trustees did decide at that time to consider the closure of the Sir William Van Horne High School and all of its programs, effective June 30, 2011.

What is very important from my perspective and as I'm certain the Board Chair will tell you, is the fact that the Board of Trustees is prepared to "consider" the closure of a school should in no way suggest that any determination has already been made, and the fact is that no decision has been made to date.

Administration has made "recommendations" in the past, in relation to matters such as this, that the Board has reviewed and as a consequence of input from the public, decided not to follow.

Because the Board of Trustees has sole authority and responsibility for the closure consideration process, administration's role since February 16, 2010 has been, and will be, to provide the Board of Trustees, the school community and the general public with our full and total support in providing relevant information and answers to questions. I want to offer my assurance to you tonight that throughout the process we will be doing just that.

On behalf of Calgary Board of Education Administration I welcome any questions or comments that you may wish to direct to me or to the team that is assembled here tonight.

Thank you."

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, February 16, 2010 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 Sir William Van Horne High School and all Programs Contained Therein, effective June 30, 2011.

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 this Consideration of Closure 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 final 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, April 13, 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 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.

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

At this point in the meeting, Mr. Carlton welcomed and noted the attendance of Mr. B. Bobenic, Principal of Jack James High School

REVIEW OF THE WRITTEN NOTICE

Mr. Carlton indicated that copies of the *Agenda* and *Written Notice Regarding Consideration of Closure of Sir William Van Horne High School and all Programs Contained Therein* were available on the table at the back of the gymnasium. 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 Sir William Van Horne High School and ultimately make a decision. It was pointed out that the public also has until 12:00 noon on Monday, April 12, 2010 to submit written follow-up questions and until 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, April 13, 2010 to provide further written submissions to the Trustees regarding this closure consideration.

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

Issues

A key issue for the consideration of closure of Sir William Van Horne High School and all programs contained therein is that the delivery of education for students choosing Knowledge and Employability courses has changed.

Commencing in 2000, Alberta Education completed a comprehensive review and consultation process for the Integrated Occupational Program (referred to as IOP) with over 800 stakeholders and stakeholder groups in the province. This consultation process recommended that IOP be revised to ensure that students would be well prepared to make successful transitions to other high school courses, from school to workplace and from school to continuing education and training opportunities. This change from a program to a series of courses was designed to offer students both support and flexibility.

Beginning in 2005, Calgary Board of Education began offering Knowledge and Employability courses in high schools other than Lord Shaughnessy, Sir William Van Horne and Jack James which were operating as segregated IOP schools. As per Alberta Education expectation, the number of Calgary high schools offering Knowledge and Employability courses has expanded.

As high schools in Areas I and II have offered Knowledge and Employability courses, the enrolment at Sir William Van Horne High School has begun to decline with projections for further enrolment losses.

Background

Sir William Van Horne is a unique facility that was built in 1967 and designed to provide technical and vocational programming. With the IOP program removed by Alberta Education, Sir William Van Horne has changed and the school currently offers mainly Knowledge and Employability courses, some Diploma courses and houses several system special education classes.

Alberta Education expects that each Knowledge and Employability student has opportunities to:

- Take courses at his or her highest level of achievement;
- Select courses to meet individual learning needs and secondary education, continuing education and training and career goals;
- Transition from Knowledge and Employability courses to other courses;
- Remain in his or her neighbourhood or local school; and
- Earn a Certificate of High School Achievement or, as appropriate, an Alberta High School Diploma.

INFORMATION SECTION A: IMPLICATION FOR AFFECTED ATTENDANCE AREAS

Administrative Areas

There is no defined attendance area for Sir William Van Horne High School. Most of the students that attend Sir William Van Horne reside in either Area I or II. Currently there are 104 Area I students and 103 Area II students. There are about 35 students that reside in one of the other areas or outside the city limits.

Attendance at Sir William Van Horne High School

At Sir William Van Horne High School there is space for 965 students as per the provincial capacity regarding square meterage. Enrolment as of September 30, 2009 was 296 students. Please note that 54 students are enrolled in the system special education classes. Mr. Carlton also pointed out that the enrolment in grade 12 is significantly higher than grades 10 and 11.

Special Education Classes

System special education classes are located in all areas of the city. All classes are reviewed annually and can be relocated without the formal closure process. The special education classes at Sir William Van Horne would be relocated if Sir William Van Horne High School closes.

Change of Enrolment

The Director of Community Engagement and Operational Planning, the Area Director and the Director of Special Education would engage parents and staff to identify opportunities and challenges to be addressed in selecting new locations for the special education classes.

Students enrolled in Knowledge and Employability courses at Sir William Van Horne High School would transition to other high schools at the end of the 2010-2011 school year.

Attendance at Other Schools

As with all Calgary Board of Education high school students, Sir William Van Horne students have a designated high school based on their residence. All high school students have the option of attending any high school, provided that they complete an Application for Transfer form and that space and resources are available in the school as an out-of-attendance area student. If Sir William Van Horne High School closes,

we anticipate enrolment in Knowledge and Employability courses will increase at other high schools in Areas I and II.

INFORMATION SECTION B: IMPLICATIONS RELATIVE TO CBE'S LONG-RANGE CAPITAL PLAN

Capital Plan

A decision to close Sir William Van Horne High School and all programs contained therein provides an opportunity to continue to work towards an 80 to 85 percent space utilization within the jurisdiction relative to the CBE's long range capital plan which is comprised of the *School Capital Plan 2010-2013* and the *Ten-Year Facilities Plan 2009-2018*. These documents are available on the CBE web page at:

www.cbe.ab.ca/aboutus/documents.asp

INFORMATION SECTION C: IMPLICATIONS WITH RESPECT TO BUSING

There will be no change to the provision of subsidized transportation services for students attending the high school.

Mr. Carlton introduced Dr. D. Yee, Director of Area I. Dr. Yee provided some personal background information stating that she has had experience as a high school teacher for over 30 years, including that of a high school counsellor for 10 years, working primarily with students with unique learning needs. She has also been both a high school and junior high principal. Dr. Yee noted that she was principal at Lord Beaverbrook High School for five years, and is now in her first year as Director of Area I. Dr. Yee continued with the PowerPoint presentation.

INFORMATION SECTION D: EDUCATIONAL, PROGRAMMING AND STAFFING IMPACTS

Educational Impact If School Is Not Closed

It is anticipated that the enrolment for grades 10 and 11 will be approximately 30 students in each grade as fewer students access Sir William Van Horne High School and more students choose to take Knowledge and Employability courses in neighbourhood high schools. Offering an appropriate range of programming opportunities and organizing students into classroom groupings for instruction at Sir William Van Horne High School would be limited.

A significant portion of the financial resources allocated to schools through our Resource Allocation Model is based on each student's profile. With less students, fewer teachers and support staff members could be hired. The ability to best meet individual student learning needs and interests in all of the programs currently offered becomes very challenging if there is a reduction in staff. Also, staff expertise in specialized areas would be limited for both instructional programming as well as co- and extra-curricular activities.

Educational Impact if School is Closed

Resources

A larger student population provides more flexibility in determining how to allocate resources to meet the diverse learning needs and interests of students in their neighbourhood school.

Students would have a choice of:

- a wider variety of courses;
- the opportunity to work with teachers with specialization in a wider variety of disciplines; and

- access to staff members who could offer a broader range of extra- and co-curricular activities.

Closure would systemically address effective use of space and resources.

Transitioning Strategies

In transition planning, each student's Learning Plan or Individual Program Plan (IPP) will be reviewed in order to determine what must be put in place to support the student's continued success and also determine if there is a particular school in the Area that best meets the learning needs of the student. In neighbourhood high schools, a variety of strategies would be implemented to provide support for students in their Knowledge and Employability courses and other courses. Some specific strategies could include the following:

- Designating one counselor and one administrator for all students enrolled in Knowledge and Employability courses to support progress through their individual learning plans.
- Creating a school community including all Knowledge and Employability teachers as well as appropriate counseling, special education and administrative personnel who, on a regular basis, discuss teaching strategies, individual student progress and school supports required.
- Working with community partners and service agencies to support leadership and personal development opportunities for students that are specific to the Knowledge and Employability courses.
- Hiring additional support personnel (i.e. Educational Assistants, Behavior Support Workers) and other people to assist students with academic success and social/emotional development.
- Developing additional individual and group supports in career development to assist students with job search and employability skills as well as increased off-campus work experiences.
- Developing opportunities to explicitly include Knowledge and Employability students in school-wide extra curricular and co-curricular activities.
- Moving a group of teachers and support staff members from Sir William Van Horne High School to neighbourhood high schools would assist with transitions for Knowledge and Employability students and also provide mentorship for local high school teachers who have not previously worked with the knowledge and employability students.

Special Education

Students in the two Paced Learning classes and the Deaf and Hard of Hearing class could have access to a wider variety of courses as well as extra- and co-curricular activities in high schools that have a larger student population. It is also possible that these system classes could be relocated to schools that are closer to the students' residence, which is always the priority in the CBE.

Educational Impact If School Is Closed

Community high school staff will be engaged in building their capacity to meet a wide range of students' abilities in their classes. This is the ongoing work in the Calgary Board of Education.

At this point in the meeting, Mr. Carlton resumed the Chair and continued with the PowerPoint presentation.

Staffing Impact

Staffing resources are allocated to schools based on a per school base allocation, student enrolment and student profile. Deployment of both resources and staff is at the discretion of the principal and his or her

staff. 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.

Resource allocation levels are based on projected student enrolment and profile for each school year. Adjustments are made should there be any discrepancy between the projected student enrolment/profile and the actual September 30th enrolment. One benefit of a larger student population is the ability to take advantage of efficiencies inherent in a larger staff.

Final staffing decisions take place in the fall of each school year, based on the September 30th actual enrolments. Teachers would be transferred in accordance with the CBE's current staffing processes. Final teacher staffing decisions will take place in the fall of 2011, based on actual enrolments. Support staff would be 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.

INFORMATION SECTION E: FINANCIAL AND CAPITAL IMPLICATIONS

Both human and physical resources are allocated according to student enrolment and profile and would follow the students. Plant, Operation and Maintenance funding is allocated by the Provincial Government based on student enrolment.

Capital Impacts

There is no known capital cost associated with the proposed school closure since no renovations or modernizations are required to accommodate the increased number of students at other high schools.

INFORMATION SECTION F: FUTURE FACILITY PLANS

If the school is closed, Sir William Van Horne High School would be made available for leasing opportunities.

RESPONSES TO PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED OR ANTICIPATED QUESTIONS

Mr. Carlton indicated that the following questions were either received before this evening's public consultation meeting or are anticipated by administration. He invited Director Yee to read the responses to questions.

Question: The notice indicates that students will be designated to their regular high school if Sir William Van Horne closes. What happens if the designated school cannot meet the programming needs for my child?

Response: Each student taking K&E courses has a written learning plan to identify secondary, continuing education and career goals of that particular student. This forms the basis of planning any transition. If the plan requires programming needs that cannot be met at the designated high school, counsellors and principals work together to find an appropriate school setting where they can be met.

Question: Does CBE have a timeline to close/change programming at Jack James High School?

Response: Although we do not have a timeline, over the next three years, the CBE's Career and Technology Strategy may impact student accommodation in all Area III high schools. Jack James High School is operating at or near capacity. There is not enough space available in Area III high schools to accommodate the 540 students that are enrolled at Jack James.

Question: *If 60% of the students attending Jack James High School are from the local community, 40% are out-of- boundary choosing this type of setting. Is there space to accommodate Van Horne students whose parents wish this setting?*

Response: It is incorrect that 40% of the students are out-of-boundary at Jack James, as all Area III students are considered in boundary and there are 25 students or 5% attending Jack James that live outside of Area III. Sir William Van Horne High School students who do not live in Area III can apply to attend Jack James High School as out-of-boundary students; however, there is limited space available at Jack James High School.

Question: *Would there be student spaces to access programming in shop options at Bowness, James Fowler, and Jack James if other schools don't offer choices that students want?*

Response: There is space in Bowness High School to accommodate students who wish to take shop courses. Access depends on the interests and abilities of the individual student and their transition plans. Bowness High School will also be offering Knowledge and Employability core academic courses in the 2010-2011 school year. There is space in all Area II high schools, except for John G. Diefenbaker, to accommodate out of attendance area students who want to access programming in specific shop options. In Area II, of the 12 possible K&E occupational component courses at the 10 level, the following high schools also offer some of these courses.

- Crescent Heights - 7
- James Fowler - 8
- John G. Diefenbaker - 6
- Queen Elizabeth - 4
- William Aberhart - 6

Sir William Van Horne currently offers 8 of the 12 K & E occupational component courses.

Question: *If Sir William Van Horne High School closed and sufficient expression of interest was received from parents for congregating their students, how would administration accommodate a congregated setting?*

Response: If Van Horne closes, the CBE will have one congregated school which is Jack James High School, which has limited space. In addressing the learning needs of students, we would investigate needs of students, we would investigate a number of options which could include segregated classrooms within a high school or infusion of K&E students in classrooms with mainstream students. We have over a year to work with you to explore all options and work through transition planning and programming opportunities for affected students. We are not making any promises and we cannot guarantee that there will be congregated settings into the future. Decisions about how each school organizes staff, students, resources and facilities are made at the system, Area and school level with input from parents system, and students.

Question: *Who will scribe for students who need it?*

Response: Scribing for students for examinations and appropriate projects will be done by resource teachers, class teachers, and educational assistants.

Question: *How will the Sir William Van Horne kids compete with kids who achieve higher academic standards?*

Response: In Knowledge and Employability academic core courses like English, Science, Social Studies and Math, students will work to further develop their skills with students who have similar ability

levels and with teachers who understand their specific learning needs. In option courses, their teachers have read individual student learning plans or IPPs and will make necessary accommodations so that students can be successful. Students will be encouraged to participate in whole school extra-curricular activities that they are interested in. Also leadership activities that would be specific to Knowledge and Employability students can be created with support from school funds and assistance from community partners.

SIR WILLIAM VAN HORNE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT COUNCIL PRESENTATION

Two student representatives of the Sir William Van Horne Student Council, Kathryn and Jonie, gave a presentation and a summary of their comments follows:

Jonie, a grade 12 student, spoke of Sir William Van Horne High School as a school of second chances. It is a school that welcomes students that who have not experienced success elsewhere for a variety of reasons. Jonie stated that for the first time ever she is achieving excellent grades and is hopeful that she will receive a diploma. She has aspirations to become an English teacher, a dream she would have never thought possible prior to attending this school. Jonie expressed her admiration for the school and attributes her success to the small class sizes and caring teachers.

Jonie suggested that the low enrolment issue at Sir William Van Horne High School could be addressed by opening its doors to students from other communities. She noted that Sir William Van Horne High School offers more than just Knowledge & Employability courses; it also offers Paced Learning Program (PLP); diploma and some dash 1 courses.

Kathryn, a returning grade 12 student, stated that when she came to Sir William Van Horne High School she was registered in PLP classes, but with encouragement from the teachers at Van Horne to register in diploma classes because of her good grades, she did. She is now returning for her fourth year, doing very well and getting closer to receiving a high school diploma. Kathryn credits her success to the chance that she was given to try new trades at Sir William Van Horne High School and because of the encouragement she received from teachers. It is her belief that if she had stayed in her designated school that she would have remained in PLP classes until graduation. Kathryn stated that this school gave her a better chance for the future and she requested that trustees give other students, just like her, that same chance.

Mr. Carlton commended the students for being great representatives of their school.

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 were present to hear the public's input and that they will ultimately be the sole decision makers regarding the status of Sir William Van Horne High 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. L. Rothery, a returning grade 12 student, expressed her thanks on behalf of the students and staff at Sir William Van Horne High School to all who came to lend their support to the school. She gave her personal success story telling of how her marks improved dramatically when she began attending Sir William Van Horne High School and stated that she will be graduating with a diploma and 130 credits.

Ms. L. Rothery commented that it is her understanding that the school staff, whom she believes understand and support the needs of the students best, were told to remain neutral in this process or they may face

termination. She expressed frustration that students are taught about freedom of speech, yet their teachers are silenced.

Ms. L. Rothery read a portion of the Ends 4 policy regarding Personal Development from the CBE website as well as the vision of the CBE and stated that it is her belief that Sir William Van Horne High School is not part of the CBE vision. She noted that Ms. S. Rhodes, a former Sir William Van Horne High School principal, was the only principal in Alberta recognized with the “Outstanding Principal Award”. She also noted that over 70 per cent of students at Sir William Van Horne High School have been given a special education code. It is her belief that what makes this school work are the teacher’s patience, compassion, devotion and tolerance.

Mr. S. Daniels, a former student who attended Sir William Van Horne High School from 1999 – 2002, expressed his gratitude that this school and its teachers made him the man he is today. He stated that it was here that he was taught how to become a better person and citizen, learned skills and developed abilities needed for the future. Mr. Daniels noted that he graduated 7 years ago, but that he comes back every year to thank the teachers for their encouragement. He stated that before he came to Sir William Van Horne High School he was failing academically and was on a path to become a high school drop out. Instead, he graduated not only with a diploma, but with top honors. It is his belief that to close the doors of Sir William Van Horne High School is to close the doors on some students’ only chance to finish high school, and to their future. He requested that the Board save this school, on behalf of students, past, present and future.

Ms. P. Corbett, a parent of a former Sir William Van Horne High School graduate, and a support worker for families with special needs, stated that this school was a strong, safe and secure setting for her son. She stated that it was here that he learned strategies and coping skills to be successful in adult life. It is her belief that if he was in a larger school, he would have been lost and that his school experience would not have been as positive. Ms. Corbett stated that she has made many referrals to this school because of the success that students achieve here. Many of the families she works with have indicated their hopes to her that their children would one day attend this school as well.

Mr. K. Lavoie, a parent of a daughter who attends Sir William Van Horne High School now as well as a daughter who hopefully will attend in the future, stated that it is his belief that segregating students with special needs into special classrooms will make them feel small. He stated that it is his opinion that they need this structure; this school is their heart, dreams and home.

Mr. K. Lavoie stated that it is his belief that if the Board of Trustees would decrease their salaries by 10 per cent, schools could be kept open. It is his belief that the decision has already been made and noted that when he went to register his 14 year old at the school 3 weeks ago, they were hesitant to take the registration. It is his opinion that this is due to fear that the school is closing.

Mr. J. Garrick attended Sir William Van Horne High School from 2001-2006. He stated that it was an excellent experience and that he received individualized help, excelling in areas he never thought possible including becoming the first person in his family to earn a high school diploma. Mr. Garrick credited the many opportunities that were made available to him at Sir William Van Horne and noted the most significant help was from his English teacher, Mr. Christenson who helped him overcome a drug addiction. Mr. Garrick suggested this school to his girlfriend because of his own positive experience and she too is now experiencing success. Mr. Garrick gave his opinion that if this school is closed, the potential negative consequences for these students will be great.

Ms. J. Paley, a Sir William Van Horne High School student, stated that she dropped out of Lord Beaverbrook High School last year. She felt that there were too many students there, that she did not get enough individual attention from teachers and she did not feel that she could achieve a high school diploma. She was encouraged by her boyfriend to attend Sir William Van Horne High School and stated that when she did, she was welcomed with open arms. She commented that she loves this school and feels that if it were

to close, she would not graduate. She passionately expressed that she does not want to get lost in the system and become a number.

Mr. A. Weller, a former Sir William Van Horne High School student who graduated in 2009, stated that this school was his sanctuary. Where other schools wouldn't accept troubled students, Sir William Van Horne High School gave him a second chance. He stated that thanks to the personal connection he had with his teachers he was given the opportunity to succeed. He commented on the many opportunities that students have at Sir William Van Horne including the opportunity to learn trades. Mr. Weller stated that he received 3 scholarships and is well on his way to achieving his dream of attending college. He commented that when he was growing up he needed significant guidance and it is his belief that without small schools such as this, students like him won't receive the help they need to succeed.

Ms. R. Auktor, a parent, spoke of one of the mandates of this school as being an alternative route for high school students who wish to pursue a trade, technical or service industry occupation. She does not believe that this mandate can be met in a regular high school where the focus is on academics. She believes that here students can prepare for productive work lives. She spoke of her own experience as a guardian of students who have succeeded here and believes that they would not have been successful in a regular high school setting.

Ms. R. Auktor stated that the current youth who attend Sir William Van Horne High School have indicated to her that the difference here is that the focus is on a student's strengths, rather than failures. Students are united because of their uniqueness and talents. Teachers are passionate about seeing students succeed. They are instrumental in seeing a student who is struggling with low self esteem in September and by June the same child has vision, purpose and self respect. It is her opinion that physical health is also affected when students struggle emotionally and academically. She indicated her opinion is that a much higher cost will be paid if students drop out of high school and are unemployed, underemployed, living in poverty or on social assistance. She requested that Trustees consider this and instead of closing the school, build on what is already there and explore other avenues. Some of her suggestions include: integrate programs, utilize space differently and increase enrolment by targeting potential junior high students.

Ms. K. Bell, a former Sir William Van Horne High School student, who graduated in 2007, stated that she had a disability and prior to coming to Sir William Van Horne High School took Paced Learning Program (PLP) classes. Her mother was told that she was not like other students and did not have the ability to achieve a high school diploma. In grade 9 she was given the chance to attend Sir William Van Horne High School and not only completed high school with a diploma, but was class valedictorian and received many awards. Ms. Bell pleaded with Trustees to keep this school open for the difference it makes in students lives' and for the many people that care about the school.

Mr. Carlton acknowledged the wonderful success stories from the students who have graduated from Sir William Van Horne High School.

Mr. D. Christensen, a former employee of the CBE for 32 years was a principal of both elementary and junior high schools, assistant superintendent, and a high school principal at Sir William Van Horne for 6 years. He expressed grave concern about what will happen to these students if the school were to close. He spoke fondly of his years as principal at Sir William Van Horne High School and commented that at that time the school was nick named "Second Chance High". He saw many students with low self esteem, in sometimes less than one year, turn around to be on the honor roll for the first time, serve on student council, play on teams, receive athletic awards and participate in public speaking opportunities with the Rotary Club. Mr. Christensen noted that as students experienced success in other areas their academics also improved. He strongly suggested that if this school is closed it should be ensured that there is another similar program in another school that will give students the same chance.

Mr. D. Christensen further noted that, in his experience, while working at other high schools, Integrated Occupational Program (IOP) students do not get the same leadership, extra curricular clubs and team sport participation opportunities that they would at Sir William Van Horne High School, as they can't compete.

Mr. D. Christensen stated that, in his opinion, students at Sir William Van Horne High School are given more opportunity to develop their skills. For example, they can spend a whole morning in a shop class at Sir William Van Horne, while at another high school; they might only get one, 1 hour class. Mr. Christensen warned that, in his opinion, these issues need to be addressed now or we will pay later.

Ms. G. Singendonk, a parent of a Sir William Van Horne High School student, stated that at the February 16, 2010 public meeting Trustees asked what the students at Sir William Van Horne had in common? She commented that many of the students have special needs, noting that 78 per cent are on an Individualized Program Plan (IPP) and 22 per cent are on learning plans. She stated that it is her belief that this school unofficially fills a special education gap in the CBE.

Ms. G. Singendonk noted that Sir William Van Horne High School is not a Knowledge and Employability (K&E) School, and according to the K&E information manual these courses are designed for students who will finish school early and go directly into the work force. She noted that the manual indicates that the K&E courses are not designed for special education students. Ms. Singendonk believes that Sir William Van Horne High School has tailored the delivery of the K&E courses in a way that provides supports for students so that they succeed despite their issues and that they need the same support when they move on to diplomas. She believes that this is a niche that this school fills in building self esteem and keeping them on a positive path. Ms. Singendonk stated that it is her opinion that this type of support cannot be found in a regular high school and that the peer support at this school gives them a sense of belonging which is invaluable.

Ms. K. Gogorenko, a former student who graduated in 2006, gave her personal success story of how she came to Sir William Van Horne High School in grade 9 and was at a grade 7 level in math. At the end of the first semester she was achieving marks in the 90 per cent range and graduated as valedictorian with many awards, scholarships and was noted as “outstanding student” in the Calgary Herald. She stated that the difference at Sir William Van Horne High School was the small class size where she received one on one assistance in learning. Ms. Gogorenko requested that the Board not close the doors of this school to people such as herself who need smaller class sizes in order to learn.

Ms. K. Gogorenko asked if returning grade 12 students would be given a chance to complete their education at other high schools if Sir William Van Horne High School were to close? Director Yee responded that in all high schools there is the option to give students an additional year or semester in order to complete high school, depending on their learning needs and career goals. Each situation is considered on an individual basis.

Mr. C. Tanner, a 2002 transition student who graduated in 2005, shared his personal success story at Sir William Van Horne High School. Mr. Tanner stated that he was a student who fell through the cracks, was struggling to read and spent more time in the office than in the classroom because of the problems he caused. He started to become involved in drugs and at the suggestion of a guidance counselor went to Sir William Van Horne High School, although he noted that he did so hesitantly. Mr. Tanner stated that the teachers managed to keep him engaged by encouraging him in class and to be involved in shop. He progressed into diploma courses and graduated with more credits than required. Mr. Tanner is now attending post secondary school and will soon become a third year millwright.

Mr. C. McRae, a Sir William Van Horne High School grade 12 diploma graduate, gave his personal success story. He stated that in prior schools his marks were so low that they were not recorded. Thanks to this school and the help he received, he graduated and is now in his third year at SAIT in a Heavy Equipment Technician program. Mr. McRae credits this school for where he is today. He stated that the teachers are there for students struggling with many issues whether at home, medical or academic and he believes that these students could not get the help they need in large classes. He questioned how Trustees could take this away from those who need it.

Dr. Yee responded that it would not be reasonable to offer a K&E class for 30 students. She stated that the typical size of a K&E class is 15-18, depending on the needs of students.

Ms. J. Tarasoff, a current grade 12 Sir William Van Horne High School student, read a letter from **Ms. L. Shultz** regarding her deep concerns with the possibility of closing Sir William Van Horne High School. Ms. Shultz is a parent of a current Sir William Van Horne High School student. She stated that closure of this school would be detrimental to her child's self esteem and education who, prior to attending this school, was failing. It was a daily fight to attend class and do homework; now her child loves going to school, is on the honor roll, and has received many awards.

Ms. L. Schultz suggested that as an effort to increase the enrolment at Sir William Van Horne High School, students who are on an IPP in regular high schools be offered the opportunity to attend here where they would have specialized teachers who are wonderful with these students and know just what it takes to help them succeed.

Ms. L. Shultz expressed that this school helps many students who come from difficult situations and it is her belief that they would not be able to function in the regular system. She stated that she believes the ramifications of closing this school could be far reaching for many years and questioned if monetary value is worth taking away their only chance to become productive, well rounded citizens? It is her opinion that to save in one pocket, to pay out of the other, makes no sense.

Mr. D. Knauert, a 2005 graduate of Sir William Van Horne High School, shared his personal success story of how he came to this school from a 3,000 student school in Red Deer where he was failing. At Sir William Van Horne High School he achieved marks in the high 80's and 90's and graduated with 140 credits. Mr. Knauert stated that it is his belief that because of this school and the one on one instruction he received, he went from being close to a high school drop out to a post secondary student. It is his opinion that he could not have achieved this elsewhere.

Ms. L. Binding, a long time resident of the community of University Heights and a mental health nurse, stated that she gives her full support to keeping this school open. She stated that she is interested in the mental health of young people and that if students feel at home here, and are succeeding, it can't be measured financially. She challenged Administration to find alternative measures to deal with the low enrolment issue rather than close the school. She suggested partial leasing or bringing other special education classes to the school as an opportunity to increase capacity. She believes that many other alternatives could be explored.

Ms. L. Rothery, a Sir William Van Horne High School student, expressed her frustration that Administration is considering the closure of Sir William Van Horne High School. She stated that this is a high school that works and spoke of the successful experience it has been for her and the recognition of the huge contribution that schools make to students' lives. It is difficult for others to understand the bias, discrimination and negative connotations associated with special learning needs.

Ms. P. Salatino commented that in her opinion, Sir William Van Horne High School is a successful environment, a unique village. She suggested that Administration look into different ways to increase the enrolment rather than close the school. She suggested offering the opportunity to attend Sir William Van Horne High School to struggling students in junior high schools.

Mr. Carlton replied that the number of students registering in K&E courses is declining. One of the challenges is that parents are not supportive of registering their students in these courses as it requires their signature acknowledging that their child will not receive a high school diploma. He noted that in Area I only 39 grade 8 and 9 students were registered in K&E courses.

Ms. C. Faber, Superintendent of Learning Innovation, stated that Administration is committed to ensuring that all students are given choice and to connecting them in multiple ways to a variety of program options. Administration is looking for ways to expand flexibility and to ensure that students in every setting have

choice. She noted that Administration is listening carefully to the comments this evening regarding Sir William Van Horne High School.

Ms. D. Wheeler, a current grade 10 student at Sir William Van Horne High School, shared her personal success story. She stated that at her junior high school she did not get the extra help she needed, did not feel that anyone believed in her or made her feel welcome, and she was failing. She stated that she did not want to go to K&E classes as she was afraid of looking stupid. Since coming to Sir William Van Horne High School she immediately received one on one help and began to experience success. She stated that this school is one of the only supports she has in her life and believes that to close this school is to close her home.

Mr. M. Ferguson, a current Sir William Van Horne High School student, shared his success story. He stated that he has a behaviour disability and was suspended repeatedly throughout his school years starting in grade one of elementary school. He felt that he never fit in. He attended 11-12 junior high schools until he was dismissed from the CBE. He tried attending a private school which was also not successful for him. In grade 10 he came to Sir William Van Horne High School and was expelled for drug addiction in both grades 10 and 11. After he attended Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission (AADAC), Sir William Van Horne High School gave him another chance; Mr. Ferguson noted that he is now passing all of his classes and succeeding. For the first time ever, he can say that he has completed a year of school without getting expelled or suspended. He attributes his success to this school and its teachers.

Ms. C. Ferguson, parent of a student, stated that this school is more than a second chance, rather it is a school of many chances. Her son will graduate in 2010 and although it has taken him a long time to get there, she did not ever expect to see this day. She stated that her son did not fit in with or learn like his classmates, he had given up and read at a grade 3 Level in grade 8. She told of how things changed when he came to Sir William Van Horne High School and with the support and encouragement of the staff, has experienced success. He now feels that he fits in, is safe to be himself and looks forward to the future. At one time the future looked bleak and she believed that he would be a high school drop out. On behalf of others like him who deserve a chance to succeed, she stated that this school should be of great value to the CBE, it is unique and provides an opportunity for success for those who might have otherwise given up in a mainstream school. It is her belief that this school should be supported as all students should be given an equal chance.

Mr. S. Tigani, parent of a daughter with special needs, expressed concern on behalf of the parents. He stated that if this school closes it will be difficult for his grade 11 daughter to have to go to a new school and make new friends again in grade 12. He stated that it is his belief that if Trustees had children with special needs that they would not close this school, he asked for their understanding as parents. Mr. Tigani stated that the students and parents are happy with the school. It is his opinion that the government wastes a lot of money and funding could be found elsewhere to support this school.

Ms. B. Bridger, a parent of a student who graduated from Sir William Van Horne High School in 2005, shared her son's success story. She stated that prior to coming to Sir William Van Horne High School her son had failed every grade, was put in special classes, made fun of and attended two different high schools in the first 5 months of grade 10. When he came to Sir William Van Horne High School he found a sense of belonging, self worth, was named MVP of the basketball team and graduated. She noted that he wanted to be here to tell his story; however, he was unable to because of work commitments.

Mr. B. Tanner, a parent, expressed thanks to Administration and Trustees for coming tonight and for listening to their concerns. Mr. Tanner asked what the statistics were over the last 3 years of students who had dropped out of high school?

Director S. Church responded that the 3 year high school completion rate is approximately 71-72 per cent. She noted that it is considerably higher over 5 years, and is approximately 79-80 per cent.

Mr. B. Tanner asked if Sir William Van Horne High School closes and the students are sent to their designated high schools, how many would be able to build a house?

Mr. Carlton responded that Bowness, Ernest Manning and Jack James High Schools all have a construction program and partnership with home building companies.

Mr. B. Tanner suggested that in an effort to increase enrolment, the opportunity to attend Sir William Van Horne High School should be offered to the 20 per cent of students that would otherwise quit high school. It is his belief that if that happened, Sir William Van Horne High School would soon be over capacity and there would be a need to open another. Mr. Tanner spoke of the success that his own son experienced here and commended the teachers for their time and dedication both at Sir William Van Horne and at Jack James High School. Mr. Tanner requested that if the decision to close is financial, please consider other options.

Ms. C. Tanner stated that Sir William Van Horne High School promotes equality above all and asked if Sir William Van Horne School closes, how will you keep these unique students from being socially segregated?

Director S. Church responded that when the government changed the Integrated Occupational Program (IOP) to K&E courses, the intention was that students could go to their community high school and be in a variety of courses, not separated. She noted that in a large setting they make great efforts to ensure that students are not socially isolated, and that they have people to connect to. They try to ensure that each K&E student has at least two adults that know them well.

Ms. A. Fuenzalida, a former student of Sir William Van Horne High School, shared her success story. She told of her struggles at other high schools where she did not experience success, felt stupid and worthless to the point that she dropped out of high school. After 1 ½ years, a psychologist suggested that she try Sir William Van Horne High School and told her that she could turn her 30% marks into 70%. Ms. Fuenzalida was warmly accepted at Sir William Van Horne by teachers whose patience never grew thin and was given the opportunity to grow. She began to realize her self worth, was taught self respect and gained confidence. Ms. Fuenzalida stated that it is her belief that it is because of this school that she was able to reach her dream and is now a student at the Alberta College of Art and Design. She stated that she did not know where she would be if it weren't for this school and pleaded that trustees "See through our eyes and hear our words, students need this school more than you can understand."

Mr. S. Daniels, a former Sir William Van Horne High School student, questioned why administration would think that IPP and K&E students from Sir William Van Horne High School will succeed in regular schools when these are the same schools that referred them to Sir William Van Horne because they could not handle them.

Director Yee stated that she has had experience with K&E students in 3 different high schools. When the K&E courses were created and offered to students at the CBE, parents indicated that they wanted the opportunity for students to take these courses in their local high school. Director Yee stated that she believes success is possible for students who take K&E courses in a local high school as she has seen it happen. She acknowledged that the students at Sir William Van Horne love their high school, but she has also heard success stories from students in other high schools.

Mr. S. Daniels stated that it is his belief that being in a regular high school will not work for some students. It is his opinion, that the type of setting that Sir William Van Horne High School provides with peers of like needs and teachers who are able to provide one on one learning, is the only way for some students to succeed. Mr. Daniels shared his own story where he was not treated equally by other students or teachers and his marks suffered as a result, yet when he came to Sir William Van Horne he experienced success. Mr. Daniels expressed his opinion that to put students back into regular classes would defeat the purpose of why they came to this school.

Ms. B. Stewart, a parent, stated that it is her belief that the value of an IPP is dependent on the teacher who oversees it and noted that she has had gifted, learning disabled and behaviour challenged children in her own home. She told of her own son's experience when Lord Shaughnessy High School was closed and the K&E students were designated to Central Memorial High School. Her son and several of his friends refused to go to Central Memorial High School because of prior negative school experiences and none of them graduated. She stated that her son succeeded as he was home schooled by his father, but most of his friends that were K&E students are now unemployed and one is homeless. Ms. Stewart spoke of the importance of the social network that students have at Sir William Van Horne High School. She asked if there were statistics to show the number of grade 11 and 12 K&E students that are continuing with school since Lord Shaughnessy High School was closed and how many are graduating?

Director Yee responded that she could not speak to the students who went to Central Memorial High School, but that some of the K&E students from Lord Shaughnessy High School came to Lord Beaverbrook High School when she was principal there. Of the 17 K&E students, 13 graduated three years later with a diploma or K&E certificate of achievement. She stated that in her experience, approximately 20 K&E students came to Lord Beaverbrook High School each year and were involved in various activities such as shop, fine arts, drama, dance, football, leadership program, and/or graduation fashion show.

Ms. B. Stewart inquired if the teachers and educational assistants who went from Lord Shaughnessy High School to Central Memorial High school to assist the teachers there with the K&E students were still there?

Director Yee stated that her experience was at Lord Beaverbrook High School and that the majority of staff who came to assist with the K&E students from Lord Shaughnessy High School are still at Lord Beaverbrook High School.

Ms. P. Corbett, a parent of a Sir William Van Horne High School graduate and an in-home community support worker, stated that many of the families she works with have small children with special needs. They are already looking at what kind of high school their children might attend to succeed later in life. She has recommended Sir William Van Horne High School to them already. She related some comments that she has heard from parents of students who attend Sir William Van Horne and are excited because this is the first time they have been able to celebrate success, this is the first time their child has ever won an award. She noted that when students are happy and succeeding it also has a positive effect on their parents and families. She expressed her hopes that this school will still be open for the younger generations yet to come.

Ms. G. Singendonk, a parent of a Sir William Van Horne student, asked what is the current capacity at Jack James High School?

Mr. Carlton replied that Jack James High School has a provincial capacity of 885, current enrolment is now at 540.

Ms. G. Singendonk commented that the small class sizes at Sir William Van Horne High School are part of what makes the school successful. In order for class sizes to remain at 17 students per class (as previously stated as the size of K&E classes) full capacity would be 680 as opposed to the 965 suggested. She noted that even the diploma students that are here need the small class sizes in order to experience success.

Ms. K. Sawatzky, a Sir William Van Horne High School student, shared her difficult school experiences previous to coming here where she had been teased and made fun of. She stated that she could not read and when she came to Sir William Van Horne High School the teachers spent time reading with her. She can now read and write. She is a returning grade 12 student and feels accepted at this school where she is still working hard to succeed.

Mr. K. Lavoie asked if Administration could ensure that if his daughter were to go into a different school with an IPP that she would get into a career that she wants, would not be made fun of, and feel comfortable?

Director Church stated that they will make a commitment to do everything in their power to try to make sure that happens. They would work with counselors if she were transitioning into another high school, they would talk to her to see what she aspires to, and find out what classes she wants to take to try to find a program where she fits and involve parents.

Mr. K. Lavoie stated that he respects the position that the CBE is in, understands that we are in a recession, but stressed that he wants his daughter to have an education. He feels that the government is taking that away. It is his opinion that by putting students on an IPP in a special class in another school, it will ostracize them and he does not want to see that happen to his daughter or anyone else. He expressed his frustration and asked why would his daughter have to go to Jack James High School when this school is available here?

Mr. Carlton responded that there is one year to determine what school is appropriate for students to be designated to in order to ensure their programming needs will be met.

Mr. Lavoie inquired what school would his 14 year old be designated to?

Mr. Carlton responded that appropriate choices and designations would be determined for his 14 year old as well.

Chief Superintendent N. Johnson commented that she was amazed at the respectful, positive and truthful stories that have been shared. She expressed great admiration for teachers, parents and students, noting that their voices were being heard. Chief Johnson requested that this respectful, positive interaction continue for the remainder of the meeting and that speakers come to microphone if they wish to speak.

Ms. V. Nesbitt, a parent of a grade 11 student at Sir William Van Horne High School, commented that her son's junior high years were difficult and after one semester of high school at his designated school, he failed and began to be involved in drugs. The school and classes were big, he had low self esteem, and was failing. She commented that she believes that there are success stories at other schools as well but that these students need special attention and encouragement in order to achieve the confidence and self worth they need to succeed. It is her belief that this is what Sir William Van Horne High School does and that it is key to these students graduating. She believes that it would be a huge mistake to close it.

Mr. R. Lange, a parent of a student at Sir William Van Horne High School, commented that this is an "I Can" school. His daughter feels a sense of achievement here, fits in, wants to do homework and to excel. It is his belief that it is better to keep the expertise of the teachers together in one place rather than disperse them throughout the system to other schools for the benefit of a few.

Director Church stated the desire and goal is to have the ability to address each child's needs in all of our schools. She noted that the expertise found at Sir William Van Horne High School is in other schools as well.

Mr. R. Lange stated that right now this school is an option for students with an IPP that can't make it in regular schools, he asked if this school closes, what would the option be?

Director Church stated that they would be accountable to ensure that there are places for every child to be successful. It would be desirable that each high school become an "I Can" place.

At 9:30 p.m. Mr. Carlton requested that anyone who had not yet had an opportunity to speak to proceed to the end of the line up for the microphone.

Ms. C. Kozbial, parent of a daughter who is hoping to come here next year, stated that her daughter has had a very difficult school experience. She does not have a junior high school education because she refused to go to her designated school where she was bullied. She was refused by two other schools in the jurisdiction and her mother and support worker were told by a principal that she was the worst student he had ever encountered and was asked to leave the school. At this time she is 14 years old and in a school for girls at risk. Ms. Kozbial stated that her daughter's success is what she desires and expressed concern that she might not be able to attend Sir William Van Horne High School to be given that chance to succeed.

Ms. J. Tarasoff shared her own school experience before coming to Sir William Van Horne High School. She spoke of how she was mistreated in her elementary years, suffered bruises and went home crying every day. Although she told the teachers about being bullied, it is her opinion that nothing was done. She had no friends and by grade 4 went to a psychiatrist for help. At the suggestion of the psychiatrist she was given an IPP and from that point was picked on and called stupid even more. By grade 8 she decided to become the bully herself and was suspended three times. She understands that bullying was wrong and that she deserved the consequences but still questions why those who bullied her were not disciplined. She spoke of how her experience at Sir William Van Horne High School has been not like any other school and commented that they treat each other like a family.

Ms. A. Vanderleek, a mother of a grade 10 student at Sir William Van Horne High School commented that although other schools have shop programs that build houses, she was told by the principal of Bowness High School that with 1400 students, the chance of getting into a particular option class such as shop, would be much less there than it would be at Sir William Van Horne High School.

Ms. A. Vanderleek commented that a lot of students tonight had spoken of feeling like they don't fit in and noted that parents also feel this way. She feels that parents who have kids that fit in don't understand, noting that she has 5 adopted children, all with disabilities. Ms. Vanderleek commented on the commitment, expertise and passion of the teachers at Sir William Van Horne High School and it is her belief that it is best to raise children, particularly special needs children, in a community where the teachers, parents and school are working together. It is her belief that it is best to have them all together in one place. She stated that her son is struggling here as well, but believes that this is a place where they will understand and are willing to do whatever it takes in order to help him succeed.

Ms. Y. Piera, a parent of a son interested in attending Sir William Van Horne High School next year with aspirations to be a chef, inquired if there would be a possibility of increasing the curriculum choices at Sir William Van Horne High School? She suggested offering classes to students who might be interested in a career in the trades as a way to increase enrolment and not have to close the school. It is her belief that this would also better prepare them before entering SAIT and it would be in line with the CBE direction towards Career Pathways.

Superintendent Faber responded that Alberta Education is moving towards the redefinition of Career Pathways around clusters that articulate post secondary programs. She stated that the first will be available this fall and they will be working with post secondary institutions to connect programs to credentialed opportunities in all CBE schools.

Ms. Y. Piera stated that Western Canada High School had an amazing mechanics shop and offered an excellent opportunity for students to pursue Career Pathways in this area. She questioned why the program was closed?

Mr. Carlton interjected that the 3 minute time limit had passed and due to the time consideration of the meeting and others waiting to speak who had not yet had an opportunity, suggested that Ms. Piera meet with Superintendent Faber after the meeting who could provide her with contact information for further discussion regarding this issue at another time if she desired.

Ms. E. Berniko commented that the discussion about streamlining Sir William Van Horne High School students into the other schools sounds as if the decision has already been made; she asked if it had been?

Mr. Carlton responded that the Administrative recommendation and rationale has been provided to the Board of Trustees in order for them to be fully informed before making the decision. Part of the decision making process includes the public meeting in order to get a sense of the stakeholders' position on the issue. Trustees will take all of this information including the feedback from prior engagements with stakeholders that was included in the report to the Board of Trustees on this issue. Mr. Carlton noted that this information will also be available on the website before trustees make their decision.

Chief Superintendent N. Johnson stated that under legislation, Administration does not have the authority to make the decision to close a school. The only people who have the authority to make the decision is the Board of Trustees and it is very important for Trustees to hear the voice of stakeholders on the matter.

Ms. E. Berniko inquired what kind of financial implications would be involved in streamlining all of the Sir William Van Horne High School students into different schools, including organizing counsellors, special education teachers, IPP programs, etc?

Mr. Carlton responded that the resource allocation to schools is based on the student population and their profile. If a student moves to a different school, the funding goes with the student and the principal determines the staff required to meet the learning needs of the students. He explained that the declining enrolment at Sir William Van Horne High School has caused a loss in funding making it difficult for the principal to allocate staff appropriately.

Chief Superintendent N. Johnson stated that this is not about money; it is about programming and is related to the change in Alberta Education and how they have changed from the IO program to K&E courses. She stated that Administration wants to provide the best program for students and has to consider two perspectives; there is another group who believe that the best programming exists in community schools. She noted that what has been heard tonight is that this school has provided excellent programming for students.

Ms. E. Berniko commented that the students who are attending Sir William Van Horne High School are doing so because they were told to come here as they did not fit into other schools. She requested that when Administration is looking at school closures they need to be very careful as people who may have difficulty defending themselves.

Mr. A. Weller shared his success story. Mr. Weller came to Sir William Van Horne High School in 2007 as part of an outreach program. He was known as a trouble maker and was not accepted in any other school. As a K&E student at Sir William Van Horne High School he was looking to do the minimum in order to complete school and get a job. He decided to pursue the auto body technician certificate and excelled. He also began to excel in the K&E courses and was encouraged by a teacher to enrol in diploma courses. Mr. Weller stated that because of this challenge he was encouraged to give much more than minimum. He noted that he had never considered diploma courses before as he had just assumed he was a K&E student.

Ms. P. Salatino inquired if the Calgary Board of Education had advocated for Sir William Van Horne and Jack James High Schools when Alberta Education proposed replacing the IO program with K&E courses?

Ms. S. Church stated that the learning environment is about people who work with children. The challenge is to put that care into programming, and social inclusion. She stated we rely on people to create that learning environment in whatever school to make successes from one stream to another.

Ms. G. Singendonk commented that her son is attending this school because of health issues, he can't keep up in regular diploma classes and needs the support this school offers. It is her belief that this level of

understanding and support will not be possible in a regular high school for students who are in diploma courses, not K&E. She noted that this school offers help to more than just K&E students.

Ms. S. Schmidek has a daughter in grade 12 that will be graduating with K&E courses but will be returning to get her diploma. Ms. Schmidek inquired if students who wish to enrol in diploma classes will be given the opportunity for smaller class sizes in their designated high school?

Dr. Yee responded that each principal looks after the needs of students in a variety of ways. Some schools have reduced sizes for students on IPP's. The educational assistant and parents work together to ensure that students succeed. The goal is to work with each individual student's needs, not to assume every student learns like others. She further noted that Alberta Education is currently reviewing the coding system, looking at students strengths and putting in supports where needed.

Ms. S. Schmidek commented that it is her belief that her daughter would not have received her diploma if she had not attended Sir William Van Horne High School. She stated that high school is about more than just academics and expressed concern that students who are used to a small setting might be overwhelmed in a large high school and shy away from becoming involved in extra curricular activities.

Director Yee responded that larger schools need to make explicit effort to include all students; they have counsellors and assistants who would encourage them to become involved and would provide support to do that.

Ms. J. Paley, a student, asked what guarantee is there that students who are drug addicts and can't read or write will get accepted into a designated high school and not get lost in the system and become a number?

Mr. Carlton responded that there are no guarantees. All that he can say is that they will work as hard as they can to put the supports in place and provide students the opportunities to make the right decisions, personal, social and academic.

Director Yee commented that as Director of Area I, she cares about all students and wants the best for them; she noted that in order to do this we need help from parents to identify issues on a daily basis, and as students become more interested in their goals, to work with them as well.

Chief Superintendent N. Johnson stated that the Board of Trustees has Ends statements regarding each student's academic growth, citizenship growth, personal development and character that declare publicly to care about every student. This is not a guarantee, but they will work together to cause that to happen.

Ms. L. Rothery, a student, apologized for her comments earlier and stated that the students at Sir William Van Horne High School have a mutual respect for each other. They will not allow another student to be picked on or bullied because they all know what it feels like as they have been there themselves. Her concern is about being bullied by other students in a regular high school setting and she expressed concern for her younger sister who she feels might not graduate if Sir William Van Horne High School were to close. She expressed that the low class size is what makes this school successful and asked if it's not about the money, then why do numbers matter?

Ms. L. Grandy, a Sir William Van Horne High School student, commented that her dad was told that Administration would find the appropriate school for students if this school were closed, but it is her belief that Sir William Van Horne High School is the appropriate school for her and for others. She commented that this school is a community, where people fit in and teachers care. It is her belief that if this school closes, all of these students would be lost.

Ms. K. Bell, a Sir William Van Horne High School graduate of 2007, gave her personal success story. She stated that in junior high school she was ridiculed for her disability. When she came to this school she was inspired by a girl with one leg on the volleyball team, and for the first time ever joined the volley ball team herself; everyone was given a chance. She commented how teachers would stay after school for 2 hours helping her with social studies, and she saw her marks improve from 50% to 80%. She believes that the success of this school is the individual help from teachers who know the students.

CLOSING REMARKS

Mr. Carlton thanked everybody for attending the meeting and for providing respectful comments and input. 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 Monday, April 12, 2010. He 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>.

Mr. Carlton noted that it is anticipated that the Board meeting to discuss the consideration of closure of Sir William Van Horne High School would be Tuesday, April 13, 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 10:10 p.m.

Note to Reader:

The Minutes of the Public Meeting re: Discussion Respecting Consideration of Closure of Sir William Van Horne High School, held in the gymnasium, 2215 Uxbridge Drive, NW, Calgary, Alberta on Tuesday, March 9, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. include the major points of discussion - they are not a verbatim transcript of the meeting.