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November 6, 2024

Honourable Demetrios Nicolaides

Minister of Education

228 Legislature Building

10800 – 97 Avenue

Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Dear Minister Nicolaides,

The Calgary Board of Education (CBE) is seeking Ministerial approval to increase the school capacity of the future elementary school in the community of Redstone, identified in the 2025-28 Three Year School Capital Plan, from 600 to 900 students.

On March 1, 2024, Alberta Education approved design funding for a new elementary school in the community of Redstone with a capacity for 600 students. The CBE has carefully reviewed projections for the community of Redstone and determined that a school built to a capacity of 600 would likely be overflowed within 5 years of opening.

School enrolment reports for 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 have highlighted that the CBE saw an increase to its overall enrolment of 13,000 students in two years. At the end of September 2024 enrolment had increased a further 4,158 students from September 2023 to reach a total of 142,402 students. Currently 87 of CBE schools are operating at or above 100% utilization. Thirty-four schools are being overflowed, the majority of which are on the outer edges of the CBE boundary, to other schools closer to the city centre.

The system utilization rate for K-4 and 5-9 as of end of September 2023 was 86% and 93% respectively. The CBE's Ten-Year Student Accommodation and Facilities Strategy 2024-2034 identifies that the number of students in the middle years cohort is expected to increase by 7,700 students over the next ten years and the number of K-4 students to initially rise only to later decline slightly by 250 students. Among the strategies being employed by the CBE to manage growth is a shifting of students from middle schools to elementary schools through grade configuration changes to balance enrolment between schools. Moreover, while an 86% utilization rate appears to indicate there are sufficient elementary schools, this capacity is not situated in the new and developing communities where they are required.

An analysis for the future Redstone elementary and the future Cityscape middle school into which it will feed, and well as the future elementary school in Cityscape, was undertaken concurrently to determine the impact of future

Redstone and Cityscape students on enrolment at the middle school level and to ensure a balance of enrolment between schools.

In September 2023, there were 453 K-9 students enrolled in CBE schools in Cityscape and 741 in Redstone. These numbers are projected to increase to 1,077 in Cityscape and 1,706 in Redstone by 2033.

Table 1 shows the projected utilization rates at the future Cityscape/Redstone middle school and its future feeder schools in Redstone and Cityscape based on current requests in the 2025-28 Capital Plan. Based on the current 600-capacity requests Redstone elementary would be slightly overutilized. The major concern, however, is the pressure that Redstone community will place on the middle school: it will see a 131% and 174% utilization rate after 1 and 5 years of opening, respectively. By increasing the number of grades at the elementary level and increasing the school capacity of Redstone elementary from 600 to 900 and Cityscape/Redstone middle from 900 to 1200, these schools will be able to operate with manageable utilization rates of 97% and 107% utilization after 5 years of opening, respectively.

**Table 1: Projected Utilization Rates, 1 Year and 5 Years After Opening Redstone and Cityscape Elementary and Middle Schools with Requested and Revised Capacities and Grade Configurations**

School	Redstone Elementary	Cityscape Elementary	Cityscape/Redstone Middle
<b>Current Requests</b>			
K-4 spaces	600	600	
5-9 spaces			900
Utilization at 1 year after opening	99%	65%	131%
Utilization at 5 years after opening	116%	74%	174%
<b>Revised Request: Grade configuration change and increase capacity</b>			
K-5 spaces	900	600	
6-9 spaces			1200
Utilization at 1 year after opening	82%	80%	79%
Utilization at 5 years after opening	97%	93%	107%

On Oct 29, 2024, the CBE Board of Trustees passed the following motions:

- *THAT the Board of Trustees approves an increase in the school capacities and grade configurations of 9 schools contained in the 2025-28 Three Year School Capital Plan in the communities of Redstone, Cornerstone, Mahogany, Livingston, Saddle Ridge, Cityscape, and Sage Hill; and*

- *THAT the Board authorizes the Chair to correspond with the Minister of Education pertaining to this change request, as provided in Attachments I and II to this report.*

In alignment with the above, the CBE hereby requests Ministerial approval to increase the capacity of the future elementary in the community of Redstone from 600 to 900 students.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P Bolger', is written over a faint yellow rectangular background.

Patricia Bolger, Chair  
Board of Trustees

cc Joanne Pitman, Chief Superintendent of Schools  
Dany Breton, Superintendent, Facilities and Environmental Services





ALBERTA  
EDUCATION

*Office of the Minister  
MLA, Calgary - Bow*

AR 127484

December 3, 2024

Ms. Patricia Bolger  
Chair  
Calgary Board of Education  
1221 - 8 Street SW  
Calgary AB T2R 0L4

Dear Ms. Bolger:

Thank you for your November 6, 2024, letter requesting the change of scope to increase the capacity of the new elementary school to be built in Calgary's Redstone community. I am pleased to respond.

This elementary school was approved for Design funding in Budget 2024 with a capacity of 590, in accordance with Calgary Board of Education's 2024-27 Capital Plan; however, I am aware that enrolment growth is surpassing expectations in the metro regions. I understand your concerns and appreciate the updated information you have provided regarding enrolment projections and the anticipated utilization rates in Calgary elementary schools.

As you can appreciate, changes to the scope of a capital project have budget impacts that require assessment of the cost and benefit of that change. I recognize the critical growth needs and support the increase in capacity to 890. This adjustment can be implemented immediately in the project's design stage and the additional construction costs will be considered in the capital review process.

Should you have any further questions regarding this approval, please contact Allison Matichuk, Stakeholder Relations Manager, at [allison.matichuk@gov.ab.ca](mailto:allison.matichuk@gov.ab.ca) or 780-643-1453 (toll free by first dialing 310-0000).

I wish you success with this important project.

Best,

Demetrios Nicolaides ECA PhD  
Minister of Education

cc: Honourable Peter Guthrie, Minister of Infrastructure