

Minutes of the Public Meeting re: Discussion Respecting Consideration of Closure of Rosscarrock School, held in the gymnasium of Rosscarrock School, 1406 – 40 Street SW, Calgary, Alberta on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT

Board of Trustees:

Ms. T. Hurdman, Board Chair, Trustee – Wards 1 & 2
Ms. A. Adams, Trustee – Wards 3 & 4
Ms. L. Davis, Trustee - Wards 6 & 7
Ms. M. Dennis, Trustee – Wards 5 & 10
Mr. R. Hehr, Trustee – Wards 8 & 9
Ms. J. Hrdlicka, Trustee, Wards 11 & 13
Mr. M. Bradshaw, Trustee, Wards 12 & 14

Administration:

Mr. C. Usih, Chief Superintendent of Schools
Mr. D. Breton, Superintendent, Facilities and Environmental Services
Mr. C. Davies, Director, Area 7
Ms. C. Edwards, Director, Property, Planning and Transportation, and Moderator
Ms. K. Fenney, Acting General Counsel and Procedures Chair
Ms. T. Minor, Associate Corporate Secretary
Ms. B. Gibson, Manager, Transportation Services
Ms. A. Trombley, Manager, Planning
Ms. D. Perrier, Recording Secretary

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND MEETING OUTLINE

Copies of the Agenda entitled *Board of Trustees, Calgary Board of Education, Public Meeting, Discussion Respecting Consideration of Closure of Rosscarrock School, Thursday, March 7, 2019*, which also contained information with respect to the purpose of the meeting, discussion guidelines, and written submissions and further questions were made available to those present and submitted for the record.

Ms. Edwards called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. and noted she would Chair the Meeting. She introduced and called forward Ms. T. Hurdman, Trustee for Wards 1 and 2 and Chair of the Board of Trustees, to acknowledge the land. Chair Hurdman acknowledged the traditional territories and oral practices of the Blackfoot Nations, which includes the Siksika, the Piikani, and the Kainai. She also acknowledged the Tsuut'ina and Stoney Nakoda First Nations, the Métis Nation (Region 3), and all people who make their homes in the Treaty 7 region of Southern Alberta.

Ms. Edwards introduced the Trustees and the Calgary Board of Education (CBE) Administration in attendance. She also welcomed Ms. B. Fraser, Principal of Rosscarrock School, and CBE teachers and staff members.



**Calgary Board
of Education**

Ms. Edwards stated that the meeting was being video recorded for the purpose of maintaining an accurate internal record of the proceedings, and that minutes of the meeting will be available on the website at www.cbe.ab.ca prior to the Board of Trustees making a decision on this matter.

OPENING REMARKS

Mr. C. Usih, Chief Superintendent of Schools, welcomed members of the community to the meeting and thanked all individuals who have been involved with the Rosscarrock School program.

Chief Usih stated that the meeting was convened by the Board of Trustees, and that Board Chair Hurdman would provide comments on the Board of Trustees' role in the consideration of closure process. He noted that Administration was present in an advisory role to the Board of Trustees; that they have provided support leading up to this meeting and would continue to provide support throughout the formal legislated closure consideration process.

The Planning Department and the Area 7 Office, together with the Communication and Engagement Services have been engaging and working with the Rosscarrock School community. During the 2017-18 school year, the CBE undertook an extensive engagement on impacted schools in Areas 6 and 7. As a result, the students from Cougar Ridge were designated to another school closer to home for the 2018-19 school year, and at the same time, students from the Spanish Bilingual program moved to Glenmeadows School.

Chief Usih noted during that engagement concerns were heard that enrolment at Rosscarrock School would be low. He shared that it was also determined that the addition of an alternative program at the school would not impact enrolment in the Kindergarten to Grade 6 regular program.

In December 2018 and January 2019, Administration met with staff and the school community to discuss the possibility of closure of the school. Many members of the community made significant contributions to the engagement work and provided CBE with feedback. Chief Usih expressed his appreciation for the thoughtful and carefully considered input that the public has provided Administration to assist with this work.

Chief Usih stated that all of the previous engagement work led to the preparation of the Administration's recommendation to the Board of Trustees to consider the closure of Rosscarrock School. He pointed out that although the Board of Trustees was prepared to consider this closure, no decision has been made at this time. The Board of Trustees has sole authority and responsibility in the closure consideration process.

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING AND ROLE OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Board Chair Hurdman spoke to the role of the Board of Trustees in the closure consideration process. Her comments were as follows:

“Good evening ladies and gentlemen.

As the Meeting Chair has indicated, I am Trina Hurdman, Trustee for Wards 1 & 2 and Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Calgary Board of Education. On behalf of myself and my fellow Trustees, I would like to speak to you briefly about the Board of Trustees’ role in the closure consideration process.

The Board of Trustees has the sole responsibility and authority to make closure decisions and I want to make it clear again tonight that no decision has been made at this time. In accordance with Alberta legislation the consideration of closure process has many steps to it.

As part of the process, at the regular Board of Trustees meeting held Tuesday February 5, 2019, the Board passed a motion to give consideration to the closure of Rosscarrock School. This was a decision to initiate the consideration of closure process; not a decision to proceed with the closure. Soon after, based on information provided to the Board by Administration, a Written Notice Regarding the Consideration of Closure of Rosscarrock School was issued by the Board of Trustees. The Written Notice is one part of the information that has been, and will be, reviewed and considered by Trustees. Before making any final decision on a closure of a school, the Board follows a process to secure additional input from parents and the general public which includes:

- convening this public meeting to provide important and relevant information that is contained in the Written Notice, and review it with you; and
- providing you and other concerned members of the public an opportunity to share your perspective with the Board.

Tonight you will have time to provide your observations, questions and comments directly to all of us. You can also provide your input in writing as set out in the Written Notice. Trustees are here to listen to your comments and questions as your input will inform our decision-making on this matter. Throughout tonight’s discussion and throughout the entire consideration of closure process, Trustees will be paying very careful attention to what you have to say.

All of the information collected during the consideration of closure 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 the proposed closure on **Tuesday April 9, 2019** at the regular public meeting of the Board of Trustees. You are all invited to attend that meeting and can stay informed about the date on the CBE’s website.

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 many factors including student enrolment levels, our ability to

resource instructional programming, the health and safety of students, and accessibility. We also consider financial factors to ensure the CBE is using resources effectively. We take the information received and make decisions, on a system-wide basis, serving the overall interests of public education within our jurisdiction.

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

On behalf of the Board of Trustees I thank you for attending tonight's meeting."

REVIEW OF THE WRITTEN NOTICE

Ms. Edwards pointed out that copies of the Agenda and the *Written Notice Regarding Consideration of Closure of Rosscarrock School* were available on the table near the entrance door of the gymnasium. She indicated that the public's observations, comments, submissions and questions form part of the material that the Board of Trustees will consider as they review this matter and ultimately reach a decision. Ms. Edwards pointed out that following this public meeting the public has until 12 noon on Monday, April 8, 2019 to submit follow-up questions and to provide further written submissions for the Trustees regarding this closure consideration.

Ms. Edwards highlighted the contents of the *Written Notice*, aided by a PowerPoint presentation. The following is a summary of the presentation.

CBE Planning Principles

The factors considered when planning for student accommodation are outlined in the CBE Administrative Regulation 1090, and noted as follows:

- minimize disruptions for students,
- provide program continuity from Kindergarten to Grade 12,
- keep cohort groups of students together,
- allow students to attend school as close to home as possible,
- provide long term sustainability,
- use space and resources effectively, and
- provide equitable access for all students to quality learning environments and choice of programs.

All planning principles are important but they are not mutually exclusive; sometimes addressing one principle on the list, i.e. allowing students to attend school as close to home as possible, can result in the inability to satisfy one of the other principles such as keeping cohort groups of students together.

CBE Administration applied these planning principles in their recommendation to the Board of Trustees to consider the closure of the Rosscarrock School.

Background

Rosscarrock School was identified on CBE's Three-Year System Student Accommodation Plan as having low enrolment and excess capacity starting in 2009. From 2014 to 2018 the utilization of the building increased because CBE used space to accommodate students from other programs and communities. In the past three years the CBE has opened several new schools that have provided space for West Springs and Cougar Ridge students to attend school closer to home. The CBE also re-opened Glenmeadows School for Spanish Bilingual after having leased it out for many years to a charter school.

During the 2017-2018 school year the CBE conducted an engagement with eight schools in southwest Calgary regarding the impacts of the opening of Dr. Roberta Bondar School, Griffith Woods School and West Ridge School. Rosscarrock School was one of the eight schools involved in this process. Decisions from this process were communicated in April 2018 and implemented for the 2018-19 school year.

Rosscarrock School was originally built in 1960 and a two-story addition was constructed in 1965 on the east side of the original building. The school has 18 classrooms.

From 2008 to 2013 there was excess capacity at the school. Enrolment was approximately 150 students per year. During this period of time, enrolment from the community of Rosscarrock averaged 94 students with out of attendance area students averaging 46 students per year.

Starting in 2014 enrolment increased to 201 students, which included 15 students overflowed to the school from the community of West Springs, and 22 students attending from the community of Cougar Ridge. There were 102 students attending from the community of Rosscarrock at that time. Additionally, the school had 12 students enrolled in the Paced Learning Program (PLP) as well as 50 out of attendance area students.

In 2015 and 2016 the addition of Kindergarten programs for both French Immersion and Spanish Bilingual programs saw enrolment in Rosscarrock School climb to as high as 390 students.

In 2017 French Immersion Kindergarten students were designated back to Westgate School. The Spanish Bilingual program at Rosscarrock School grew by a grade to include K-2 Spanish Bilingual programming. By this time, out of attendance area numbers had dropped to 20 students, less than half of what the numbers indicated two years prior. Enrolment from the community of Rosscarrock remained stable at 99 students and there were 48 students attending from Cougar Ridge. The PLP continued to be located within the school bringing the total September 30, 2017 count to 331 students for the 2017-2018 school year.

Issue

After several years of using space to accommodate other programs and communities, Rosscarrock School is now back at a place of low enrolment. On September 30, 2018 there were 109 students registered in the K-6 regular program at the school (87 of those students



from the designated attendance area of Rosscarrock and 22 from out of the attendance area). There were also 13 students in the PLP class. Enrolment in Grade 1 was particularly low with only 8 students in total in that grade.

By January 9, 2019 enrolment had declined to 119 students with 106 in the regular program and 13 students in the PLP program. Low enrolment in the regular program is expected to continue into the future and have impacts on student learning.

Rosscarrock School Attendance Area

Rosscarrock School accommodates the regular program students who live in the community of Rosscarrock. As mentioned, the school also accommodates a complex learning class called the Paced Learning Program (PLP). Students attending the school for the PLP class live in several different communities in South Calgary.

There are two schools in adjacent communities to Rosscarrock that have space to accommodate regular program students living in the Rosscarrock community in the future; Glendale School and Wildwood School. All students currently attending the regular program at Rosscarrock are within walking distance to either Glendale or Wildwood School.

Enrolment Projections

A wide range of factors impact enrolment projections and these factors are constantly monitored to ensure CBE data is accurate, current and relevant. Determining trends and identifying areas of growth/decline ensures that the CBE is well-equipped to serve the needs of students, parents, and communities.

The CBE uses a geographical information system to “geo-code” its students every year. This allows the CBE to analyze the educational choices students make in relation to where they are living, both in the current school year as well as in the past.

To project future Kindergarten and Grade 1 classes accurate birth data is necessary. Census data is collected in April of each year and updated annually. This data is collected for each community and each elementary school attendance area, allowing the CBE to project student numbers over the next five years. Birth data is currently available for future Kindergarten students eligible to attend school from September 2019 to September 2024. For communities that are growing quickly, birth data is analyzed and can be adjusted to reflect current growth trends as needed.

The CBE uses the Cohort-Survival methodology in preparing enrolment projections. This methodology uses historic birth data and historic student enrolment data to “age” a known population (cohort) through their school grades. The cohort survival ratio is calculated to see how a group of potential students first enter the system at Kindergarten and Grade 1 (market share) and how this group of students grows or shrinks over time (retention rates). Enrolment patterns emerge that are used for projections.

Projected Enrolment if Rosscarrock School Remains Open

If Rosscarrock School remains open, enrolment will remain low for the foreseeable future with a total of 111 students projected for September 2019. The projection includes 77 students from the Rosscarrock community, 13 students in the PLP class and 21 students from out of the attendance area.

The projection was prepared using the cohort survival method which takes into consideration the number of children living in the Rosscarrock community who are eligible for Kindergarten and Grade 1 in September 2019 as well as historic enrolment trends for students in Grades 2-6.

Accommodation Plan

If Rosscarrock School closes, students would be designated to either Wildwood School or Glendale School based on their home address. Out of attendance area students would be expected to return to their designated school. The PLP class would be moved to Olympic Heights School.

Students south of 10th Ave SW would be designated to Glendale School and students north of 10th Avenue would be designated to Wildwood School. This accommodation plan was informed by feedback and in relation to the planning principle of having students attend school as close to home as possible.

Originally, in meeting with stakeholders previously this year, two options were provided on which they were able to provide feedback. The options for accommodating students were as follows:

- Designate all students to a school within walking distance. Some students would be designated to Wildwood School and some students would be designated to Glendale School. With respect to CBE's planning principles, this option keeps students close to home but involves splitting the current cohort of students.
- Designate all students to one location. All students would be designated to Wildwood School. Wildwood School currently has transportation services for some students who live beyond the walk zone for the school. This bus route has space for students in the Rosscarrock community who would be beyond a walkable distance to Wildwood School without incurring any additional costs for CBE. With respect to CBE's planning principles, this option would designate the current cohort of students to the same location but some students would attend school farther from home.

The decision to designate students to a school within walking distance rather than designating all students to one school was based on feedback received through the engagement sessions held at the school, as well as the online survey.

A map was shown depicting where students attending the Rosscarrock PLP in Grades 4 and 5 live. Grade 6 students were not included as they will be moving from the school at the end of this school year. Olympic Heights School was chosen as the proposed location for PLP

students if Rosscarrock closes, as it was the closest school to the majority of students and also had space for the program.

At this time, it is anticipated that all students would move together to a new location; however, should space in a similar program closer to a student's residence become available the student may be offered placement at that location.

Projected Enrolment at Glendale and Wildwood Schools if Rosscarrock School Closes

Both Glendale and Wildwood Schools have space to accommodate additional students. If Rosscarrock School closes and students are re-designated based on the proposed attendance areas, the projected enrolment at Glendale School is 264 students, and 392 students at Wildwood School.

Projected Enrolment at Olympic Heights School if Rosscarrock School Closes

Olympic Heights School has space to accommodate the PLP students. The projected enrolment at Olympic Heights School, if Rosscarrock School closes and the PLP is re-designated to Olympic Heights School, would be 635 students.

Enrolment and Transportation Impacts

The number of regular program students living in the Rosscarrock community who would need to be relocated as a result of the possibility of closure would be up to 77 students. Regular program students living in the community of Rosscarrock can be accommodated at schools within walking distance of their residences, and therefore there are no transportation impacts.

Students attending the Rosscarrock School in the PLP class are transported to the school from several communities in south Calgary. If Rosscarrock School closes, transportation services would continue to be provided for students in this program to Olympic Heights School.

CBE Capital Plans

A decision to close Rosscarrock School would have no implications relative to the CBE's Capital Plans.

The CBE's Three-Year Capital Plan identifies projects and priorities for new school or replacement school construction and major modernization projects and is submitted to the province on an annual basis.

There are no capital expenditures anticipated at other CBE schools if Rosscarrock School closes.

Director Davies came forward and provided highlights of the educational impacts for students should Rosscarrock School close or remain open.

Programming and Educational Impacts of Closing for Students

The re-designation of Rosscarrock students into existing K-6 schools offers the students access to a larger peer group, which enhances the ability for grouping and regrouping students based on programming need.

There would be greater access to teacher expertise in areas such as music, languages and resource support can contribute to student success. A larger student population also provides greater access to a variety of extracurricular and co-curricular activities such as field trips.

The larger student population in either Glendale or Wildwood School translate into a greater number of teachers. This affords staff with the opportunity to work in teams to design learning opportunities for students and discuss teaching practice with one another. This type of professional dialogue has been shown to have an impact on student achievement, as staff hold one another accountable to student learning outcomes.

The PLP class would relocate to Olympic Heights School and programming for students would not change.

Programming and Educational Impacts of Closing for Other Schools

Students will be re-designated to either Glendale or Wildwood School and the PLP would be moved to Olympic Heights School. These schools have a strong student population base and the number of students re-designated to each location can be accommodated now and into the future.

There would be no educational or programming impact at these schools due to the number of students being re-designated.

Programming and Educational Impacts of Remaining Open

Lack of enrolment in the current year has reduced the resource and administrative support available to students and confines the way in which the school is organized. The ability of staff to regroup students based on need is diminished.

Should Rosscarrock School not close, there will be impacts on learning for existing students. Currently there are five Kindergarten pre-registrations. This would mean re-designating the Kindergarten students to another school or looking at a blended Kindergarten, Grade 1 and Grade 2 single classroom. The latter would be a very complex undertaking.

Due to lack of enrolment, it is anticipated there would be limited extracurricular and co-curricular offerings for 2019-2020, as both the number of staff and the volunteer base to meet required off-site supervision ratios would be a challenge.

The support and development of a School Council is a challenge; the current School Council has two members. It is anticipated that, should the school remain open, this challenge will continue into 2019-2020.

Ms. Edwards returned to Chair the remainder of the meeting.

Financial Implications of Remaining Open

There are currently eight full-time equivalent administrative teaching positions assigned to support the learning at Rosscarrock School.

Including staffing costs, the total annual administrative costs to operate the school are approximately \$1.5 to \$2 million dollars.

The Area office through the Area basic discretionary funds would likely need to increase financial support beyond what is currently provided. Depending on final enrolment as of September 2019 it could be as high as \$150,000 (approximately 50% of the funds allocated to the Area).

Financial Implications of Closing

The closure of Rosscarrock School would allow some of these dollars to follow the students to their new school sites while some would result in savings. The per school allotment for a principal, office and library staff would be saved; this would amount to approximately \$200,000.

The annual average building operating and maintenance costs are approximately \$150,000-\$190,000 per year. This includes maintenance and custodial staff, utilities and maintenance and repairs.

There would be no impact on transportation costs as per the proposed accommodation plan as students will be re-designated to schools within walking distance from their residences. The PLP students will continue to require bussing to the new location (Olympic Heights) and as bussing is currently in place there will be little to no impact as the bell times at Olympic Heights are the same as at Rosscarrock School, therefore no added costs are foreseen.

Future Use of Facility

The future use of the facility will be reviewed in alignment with processes outlined in CBE's Three-Year Capital Plan, Three-Year System Student Accommodation Plan and Ten-Year System Accommodation and Facilities Strategy.

In the past, CBE has closed buildings and re-used the facility in a variety of ways. Some examples include:

- disposal of the building,
- alternative program,
- lease of building,

- use of the space for CBE administrative, and
- temporary accommodation of students

If CBE were to determine the building is surplus to its needs and proceeds to dispose of the building, there is a provincial regulatory process and a municipal Joint Use Agreement that must be followed. Ministerial approval is required before a school board can dispose of a property.

QUESTIONS

The following questions were either received prior to this public consultation meeting or were anticipated by CBE Administration.

Question: *How will School Council funds be distributed if Rosscarrock School were to close?*

Response: The CBE has established a guide to support school administrators in situations such as a school closure. The matter of School Council funds is a question that arises frequently. Any funds remaining that are attached to the School Council or raised by a fundraising branch of the School Council would be distributed to the schools where students attend into the future based on conversations between the principal and School Council.

Question: *Has CBE considered an alternative program at Rosscarrock School?*

Response: Historically, adding an alternative program has generally had an impact on enrolment in the regular program at the school where the alternative program has been added. Experience has shown that students often move into the alternative program which accelerates the decline in enrolment in the regular program and increases the challenges of delivering quality programming for students that do not move and stay in the regular program.

Alternative programs are an alternative to a community program and are intended to address particular learning styles, languages, curriculum approaches etc. Not all alternative programs would appeal to students choosing a community program.

Specifically, with respect to adding an alternative program to Rosscarrock school:

During the Area 6 and 7 impacted schools engagement, feedback suggested CBE consider an alternative program or Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) complex learning classes for Rosscarrock School. The decision was made not to place an alternative program or GATE classes at the school for the following reasons:

- Consultation with CBE's Learning department indicated that there was no unmet need for GATE identified for the area of the city where Rosscarrock School is located.
- The majority of CBE alternative programs operate in a K-9 continuum. Although Rosscarrock School is suitable for and has space for K-6 students, enrolment projections

indicate that there is not space within junior high or middle schools in the area for a program to continue for Grades 7 to 9.

Question: *Is CBE aware of the future development proposed in this area?*

Response: CBE works with The City and is aware of major developments happening within Calgary. Two slides were shown providing information about what The City is proposing for the area around the Westbrook LRT Station.

Westbrook Station is within the community of Rosscarrock, adjacent to an underground LRT Station and part of Calgary's Westbrook Village Redevelopment Plan.

A slide was shown of information about the size and type of development as well as the anticipated number of CBE students that could be generated by this development in the future. Development on the Westbrook Station lands has not started. It will take several years for this development to begin generating any residents or students for the community. Based on the information available, approximately 25 to 30 students could be anticipated to attend Rosscarrock School in the future from this redevelopment as it is proposed at this time.

Question: *What will happen to the childcare program?*

Response: In this circumstance, the lease with the service provider was terminated two years ago due to lack of space in the school (due to growth in the Spanish program). The service provider returned to Rosscarrock School in September 2018. In offering a lease for this year, CBE was explicit that this would only be a one-year assurance of space, as move of the Spanish program was a period of transition for Rosscarrock School.

When the Board approved the motion to consider closure of Rosscarrock School, the service provider was informed by CBE administrative staff of Real Estate and Leasing of the motion and what it could mean. If Rosscarrock School closes and the current provider of childcare services wants to continue leasing space in a CBE school, the Real Estate and Leasing department will work with the service provider to identify potential opportunities, if available.

Question: *Can out of attendance area students move with their friends to Glendale School or Wildwood School?*

Response: Administrative Regulation 6090, Student Registration indicates that the decision to accept out of attendance area students is based on available school space and resources, in consultation with the Area Director. This varies from school to school and must be determined based on what is appropriate for each school community; it is something that Area Directors and principals evaluate on an ongoing basis.

Families of students who are attending Rosscarrock School from out of the attendance area can contact the principal of either Glendale or Wildwood School to determine if there is space and resources available to accept them at the school. If space and resources are available,

parents are responsible to get their children to and from the school as transportation services are not provided for out of attendance area students.

Ms. Edwards restated that following this meeting, members of the public who wish to make further comments or provide written submissions may do so. The form attached to the back of the Written Notice explains that questions or written submissions may be made prior to 12 noon on Monday, April 8, 2019, to the attention of Calvin Davies, Director, Area 7, or by email to dialogue@cbe.ab.ca.

OPEN DISCUSSION, QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM PARENTS AND PUBLIC

Ms. Edwards provided a brief review of the discussion guidelines, noted on the back of the Agenda. She 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 Rosscarrock School. She pointed out that it would not be appropriate in the middle of the process for Trustees to respond directly to questions or to engage in debate. She asked that questions be directed to her as the meeting Chair and she would provide a response or direct the question to an appropriate CBE staff member for response.

Ms. Edwards opened the meeting to questions or comments from the public.

Mr. J. Kenney, community member and retired educator, noted he had a written submission available for Trustees. He remarked on the intake of Rosscarrock students at Glendale and Wildwood Schools. He questioned whether a conversion of classrooms in those intake schools will affect programming. He also questioned meeting the program needs for English Language Learners (ELL).

Mr. Davies responded that classroom space and programming is critical and it is a function the principal, teachers and administrative team review together. They look at the opportunity for regular classroom instructional space; for breakout areas for resource support, and space for a music program. With respect to ELL support and resources, Administration believes that the move of students into schools with higher student population translates into principals being able to make decisions about deployment of their staff; in both schools proposed for accommodating Rosscarrock students, there is the ability to provide resource teacher support and ELL support, which is currently a struggle at Rosscarrock School.

Mr. L. Petan, resident of the community and parent, expressed his opinion that the closure of Rosscarrock School would be fiscally responsible. He noted there are no children living in the vicinity of his residence; that infills are being developed in the community, but slowly. He expressed being fortunate to have two schools within walking distance.

Uzma shared she did not agree with the closure of Rosscarrock School. She noted she immigrated to Canada last year and moved into a residence in close proximity to Rosscarrock School. She expressed her belief that the two schools proposed in this consideration are far from her residence, and that the walk is too far for young children, especially in the months of cold winter weather. She shared it will be difficult for her to take her children to school and then get to work in a timely manner.



Ms. Edwards noted the walk zone is provincially set at 2.4 kilometres and students residing within that distance would not be eligible for transportation services. The Calgary Board of Education recognizes the challenges of that distance, especially for younger students, and has set up a committee comprised of parents and CBE Administration. The CBE walk zones for students attending senior high schools is set at 2.4 kilometres, and for students attending elementary, middle and junior high schools the walk zones are set at a lesser distance, .

Mr. M. Pribilovic, parent of a future student for the area, questioned the calculation of the provincial capacity of 451 students for Rosscarrock School. He commended the CBE for the approach towards closing the school, but noted he has concerns with the walk distance and student safety with respect to crossing major roadways.

Ms. A. Trombley, Manager, Planning, spoke to capacity, noting it can change over time, and she shared how that may occur. She noted the provincial formula for capacity is relatively complex, but it roughly translates into approximately 25 students in a space. She shared how the province calculates the overall utilization, including weighted factors. She pointed out that space for Kindergarten students who are registered in half-day programs is calculated as half the space, and the gymnasium of an elementary school does not factor into the school capacity.

Ms. B. Gibson, Manager, Transportation Services, shared that it is the parents' responsibility for children walking to and from school. She noted that a traffic safety sub-Committee is formed within the CBE's Transportation Advisory Committee. Reviews are made of how to ensure routes to and from school are safe for walking to and from either a bus stop or a school. The CBE is unable to add buses due to a cost to the system that is not funded by the province; fees that could be charged would not cover the costs. This sub-Committee consults with school councils, Alberta Motors Association and Calgary Police Services.

Ms. K. Hern, parent, commented on the closure of the regular program at Westgate School and re-designation to Wildwood School, which is considered within walking distance from their home. She stated their walk to the school is more than 25 minutes, which she noted is difficult enough for an adult and is more difficult with children. She shared her belief the school sees low attendance on days of extreme cold weather. She noted that she has one special needs child and expressed her belief that Calgary has only one special behavioural needs school in Calgary. She questioned whether it would be possible to place that kind of program in Rosscarrock School.

Ms. Edwards shared her uncertainty of the specific type of program referenced and noted there are many special education programs operating throughout the CBE. She stated that placing such a program in Rosscarrock School may increase the number of students in the building, but it would not increase the enrolment in the regular program. Ms. Edwards encouraged she reach out to her Area Director to discuss the particular programming needs for her child.

Mr. J. Kenney, noted with respect to the desire to keep the cohort of students together there seems to be a high number of students living on the east side of or on 47th Street and he

questioned if it has been considered as it would be safer for those students to walk to Rosscarrock School rather than to Wildwood School.

Ms. Edwards stated it is recognized that many students travel these distances to their schools and bus stops. In terms of safety, she reminded that student travel to and from the school and bus stop is a parental or guardian responsibility. She noted the CBE works with schools and communities to review options, including mentor programs where older children walk with younger children.

Taz, parent, asked what the process is going forward for parents who have children enrolled as out of attendance area students. He expressed not understanding the rationale for considering the closure of the school, as it appeared to him to be more about finances than enrolment.

Ms. Edwards responded that if they are not looking to attend their designated school, parents should contact the principal at either Wildwood School or Glendale School to ask if they are able to accept the child as an out of attendance area student. With respect to the financial aspects, the overall costs including operating and staffing are taken into consideration.

Mr. Breton restated some of the challenges for a school with low enrolment, including the inability to offer a quality education program.

Ms. Edwards commented on the population decline, noting three new schools opened in communities closer to the homes of those students who were formerly designated to Rosscarrock School. She noted that the pre-school census data the CBE collects from The City has shown a decline over time. The City's densification plan is recognized and research shows this community is not densifying as quickly as other communities.

Mr. J. Kenney questioned the projected number of Kindergarten students for September 2019.

Ms. Edwards shared the number of children living in the Rosscarrock community who are eligible for Kindergarten in September 2019 is 14. She pointed out that from that number, there may be parents who choose to have their child attend an alternative program within the CBE, or they may choose a Calgary Catholic school.

Mr. J. Kenney pondered that Rosscarrock School may not be the choice for parents because of its potential closure.

Ms. Edwards shared that in the current school year the number of Grade 1 students registered is very small and this was evident even before the public engagement on declining enrolment and potential closure of the school.

Ms. A. Williams commented on the closure process for Windsor Park School and noted her understanding they took on a home-schooling program and CBe-learn operates out of that school. She questioned whether Rosscarrock School might be considered for offering a

home-schooling program. She shared her concern that Rosscarrock School will close, while the aging population will leave the community and new younger families will move in.

Ms. Edwards remarked that if closure of Rosscarrock School goes forward, there are a number of possibilities for how the facility may be used. She noted that the scenario suggested would not increase enrolment and would have no impact on the current students in the K-6 regular program at Rosscarrock School. With respect to aging out, what the future brings is unknown; the CBE looks at past history and the demographics of the communities and the information provided by The City. A slide was shown in the PowerPoint presentation earlier in the meeting that demonstrates how growth is anticipated in the coming years.

Mr. M. Abdalrahman, community member, commented on the community's loss of Ernest Manning High School, Chinook Learning Centre and now, possibly, Rosscarrock School. He questioned what the long-term impact could be from having fewer schools in the community.

Ms. Edwards clarified that Ernest Manning High School was relocated as a result of The City expropriating the land it was located on to build the Light Rail Transit corridor. She noted that in terms of accommodating students from this community into the future, there are schools in two adjacent communities that the CBE believes will be able to meet the needs.

Ms. M. Bacani shared her concern about the safety of young students walking to the proposed schools outside of their community.

Mr. I. Graham, parent and community member, asked how the capacity of Rosscarrock School at roughly 25% compares with other elementary schools. He expressed his understanding of the rationale for this consideration of closure. He noted his concern with what will happen to the school if it is closed. He asked what that process looks like - if there is a mandate and what the timing might be for decisions to be made. He shared that it is not desirable to have a vacant lot and building in the community and he questioned the future management of the building and property.

Ms. Edwards noted that Alberta Education looks to school boards to try to maintain an average school capacity of 85% across the system. The CBE has a very small number of schools that have a capacity below 50%. Schools have low enrolment for various reasons – some schools do not have the capacity that this school has and some have a lower number of students in them because they can accommodate only that lower number of students.

Mr. Breton shared that in the event of closure of the school the CBE must work through legislation. Should the CBE determine that the school would not serve any future needs, the Board of Trustees would be required to submit a request to the Minister of Education for approval to dispose of the property, which could take up to a year for response. He noted the building and the land it is located on was originally intended for school purposes and if the authority for disposition is granted the CBE is obligated to offer the right of first refusal to The City. During this time of indecision, the CBE is responsible for maintaining the building and the property.

Mr. I. Graham asked what historically has been seen in terms of timelines.

Mr. Breton noted it could take two years or longer.

Ms. Edwards responded to a previous question of Mr. Graham, noting that of all regular programs across the CBE, Rosscarrock School has the lowest enrolment.

Ms. N. Iclichen shared her concern about the walk, especially in cold weather, for younger children to attend school outside of their community. She noted that her family immigrated nine months ago to Canada and chose their home in this community with the Rosscarrock School in close proximity.

Mr. R. Waters, president of Rosscarrock Community Association, shared a polling of the community which showed 85% in favour of keeping Rosscarrock School open. He questioned if the intake of Rosscarrock School students at Glendale School would put that school at nearly 100% capacity.

Ms. Edwards noted the CBE needs to make use of available space to the maximum, as per the direction of Alberta Education, and the increase of students at Glendale factors in to the 85% capacity.

Mr. R. Waters commented on the growing communities south of 10th Avenue in particular, noting there are a number of infills. He shared that he lives on a property that historically housed one family and now houses four families, two with children. He shared his belief the communities south of 10th Avenue would likely be designated to Glendale School and he questioned the school's capacity in the future and the accommodation of Rosscarrock School students.

Ms. Edwards shared that Glendale School would be at about 86% utilization. She restated that the CBE works very closely with The City to look at both densification and development work; and review the number of school-age children that those infills are generating. Ms. Trombley noted that the projections for Glendale School show higher enrolments in the higher grades and it is expected that enrolment will be lower over the next couple of years. With respect to potential CBE students in the future for this area, that is more difficult to predict as there are many alternative programs throughout the system that could be the choice of families.

Mr. I. Graham noted that three or four years ago capital investment for renovations were made to the school and he questioned how those decisions were made when low enrolment at Rosscarrock School had been realized over time.

Mr. Breton noted decisions around infrastructure maintenance and renewal are made based on the facility condition report and assessments by CBE staff and the province. The CBE attempts to ensure its facilities are a safe and welcoming learning environment for students. He noted a delicate balance has to be taken, between making an investment of limited resources, wanting to care for students, and wanting to preserve the integrity of the process and not presuppose the outcome that is ultimately a decision of the Board of Trustees.

Ms. Edwards commented that it is also a challenge in not knowing when new schools in the suburbs will be approved by the province; in the absence of that information the CBE sometimes has to make investments without anticipated outcomes.

Ms. T. Tharmalingam shared her belief the concerns are more quantitative versus qualitative; that it is about finances rather than safety for students. She shared concern about safety with the walk for students and families. She expressed her concern that if Rosscarrock School closes people will not move into the community, and that people may actually move away from the community. She questioned bringing other programs to Rosscarrock School to increase the population of the school.

Ms. Edwards noted the discussion at this public meeting is about the potential closure of the regular program at Rosscarrock School. She pointed out that if the closure does get approved by the Board of Trustees, it does not preclude the potential for having an alternative program operate here in the future. She also noted that having an alternative program in the school does not increase participation or enrolment in the regular program.

Uzma requested the Board considers the safety and health of children as the utmost important factor.

Ms. Edwards advised the CBE works as much as possible with schools about the safety of students walking to and from school. She noted the presentation given by CBE highlighted financial aspects, but it also showed that the low enrolment in the regular program has an impact on the ability to provide quality programming for those students.

Uzma stated that students benefit from smaller classrooms, receiving more support from teachers.

Ms. Edwards restated there are challenges in programming for students in very small classes.

Karon, parent, commented on the program changes/additions at Rosscarrock School over the years and expressed concern about future accessibility to the English program. She shared her belief that the number of students in classrooms at Wildwood School is already high and she questioned what will be done about that with the intake of students from Rosscarrock.

Ms. Edwards noted that the government provides funding per student and that schools receive a budget allocation based on the number of students enrolled. The principal makes the resource decisions based on the school's budget.

Ms. S. Zainy, a high school graduate and former student of Rosscarrock School, shared that she has experienced danger and near tragedy while walking and crossing the busy roadways in the neighbourhood. She questioned how CBE will address safety for students.

Ms. Edwards restated that the CBE works in partnership with the school, parents and students in consideration of safety, to find ways to mitigate concerns. Part of the process is

to engage with CBE Transportation subcommittees about traffic safety. She noted that traffic roads, lights, speedways, etc., are not within the CBE's purview, but they are considered important to student safety in the work with partners.

Ms. A. Dedic, Day Home operator, noted she knows of children eligible to attend Rosscarrock School, but they chose not to register because of consideration of closure of the school.

Ms. Edwards stated that the Board of Trustees has sole authority on the matter of closure of a school, and no decision has been made at this time regarding closure of Rosscarrock School.

Ms. H. Oh, community member and parent, asked for clarification about the remarks made with respect to not having space for an alternative program suggested for Rosscarrock School.

Ms. Edwards explained that adding an alternative program at this time would not increase enrolment in the regular program, which is the issue under consideration at this time. She noted that should the school close and be considered for an alternative program, the issue would be whether the school has adequate space to provide a continuum of learning for a specific alternative program.

Mr. T. Getu remarked that he immigrated to Canada and chose the community and Rosscarrock School for its location and proximity to the LRT station. He shared it will be difficult for him and his child should Rosscarrock School close. He noted that his child has made friends at the school and is happy with his peers and his teachers.

Mr. M. Pribilovic questioned whether the CBE or the school put enough effort towards boosting enrolment at Rosscarrock School, such as advertisements. He asked if following this public meeting there are plans to further engage the community about the future of Rosscarrock School.

Ms. Edwards noted in the month of January every year the CBE advertises on its websites that schools are accepting registrations for Kindergarten and holding open houses. It varies from school to school how they undertake that. Rosscarrock School has been open to and accepting registrations. She again pointed out that this meeting is a part of the consideration of closure process; that the decision has not yet been made for closure of Rosscarrock School.

Mr. M. Pribilovic noted that the community of Killarney has seen redevelopment and infills and he questioned if that has resulted in a densification in terms of students for the educational programs being offered at Killarney School.

Ms. Edwards shared that Killarney School does not have a regular program; it is a Montessori K-6 program that is currently offered there. She noted for the question on densification, CBE staff will follow-up with The City and post a response, if one is available, under FAQs on the CBE website.

Mr. J. Kenney asked that information on enrolments at Alex Ferguson School also be looked into and posted on the website.

Uzma, on behalf of **Ms. S. Hiba**, spoke due to a language barrier. She noted that Ms. Hiba has two children attending Rosscarrock School, with a third child to start next year. She shared that Ms. Hiba is feeling distraught with the potential closure of the school as it will be difficult for her to ensure her children get to school safely.

CLOSING REMARKS

Ms. Edwards thanked everybody for attending the meeting and for providing respectful comments and input. The Board of Trustees tentatively anticipates debating the merits of this matter and making a decision regarding this program closure consideration on or about Tuesday, April 9, 2019 at the public Board meeting. 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. She noted that the public's input at this meeting has been an important contribution to the Board of Trustees' decision-making process.

Ms. Edwards declared the meeting closed at 8:56 p.m.

Note to Reader:

The Minutes of the Public Meeting re: Discussion Respecting Consideration of Closure of Rosscarrock School, held in the gymnasium, 1406 – 40 Street SW, Calgary, Alberta on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. include the major points of discussion - they are not a verbatim transcript of the meeting.

