

frequently asked questions

June 5, 2014

Reviewing the Criteria for School Capital Planning Priorities

The following questions were received from stakeholders during the focus group meeting held on May 27, 2014.

1. How was this opportunity communicated?

Via the CBE website, email to Key Communicators at CBE schools, Twitter, press release on May 15, 2014, RSS feed on all school website and 5 Bold Signs in different parts of the City of Calgary.

2. Does the CBE look at the type of community (income based) need?

No the CBE does not consider income based need in our current points based criteria.

3. How do you compare a modernization versus a rebuilt/new build?

Currently the CBE point based criteria for new schools and modernization are not on the same scale, so therefore not directly comparable. Senior administration reviews the new school priority list and the modernization priority list to determine placement order on a combined list.

4. Is there a score when a school should just be torn down?

Generally if the cost to modernize a school is estimated to be greater than 75% of the replacement value of the school, modernization is not considered and a replacement facility may be considered.

5. What is median travel time?

The Median is the "*middle number*" in a sorted list of numbers. For example: If a community has ride times of 15, 18, 20, 22 and 25 minutes to their designated school the median time would be 20 minutes.

6. Is there something that CBE can do with the Province once a school is approved, to increase site capacity/size?

The school site planning process is undertaken between the City of Calgary, CBE, Calgary Catholic School Board and developers. The design standards are clearly laid out and agreed to by all parties. The standard building envelope sizes are:

- Elementary 4 acres
- Middle 4.75 acres
- High school 10 acres

The site identification process begins when development of a community is first planned and happens well before a school will be built.

7. Is the CBE flexible in the grade configurations?

Yes, dependent on need and students numbers school grade configurations are determined. These grade configurations can change over time to accommodate the life cycle of a community.

8. Why are new schools not built out to capacity (max number of modulars) at the outset?

In the last few years most schools have been fully built out with the maximum number of modular units.

9. Definition of Provincial capacity versus CBE capacity?

The provincial capacity for an individual school is based on a formula which measures the total square footage of a building and uses a matrix to determine the amount of space that should be allocated for instructional and non-instructional purposes based on the total square footage and grade configuration of the school. Provincial capacity does not always reflect the amount of space available for instructional purposes in a particular school. Schools with a greater ratio of instructional space to non-instructional space can accommodate more students than the provincial capacity would indicate and schools with a lower ratio of instructional to non-instructional space can accommodate less.

10. When was the last time portables were moved?

The last relocatable move was in 2011 when 2 units were moved from Ian Bazalgette School to Abbeydale School.

11. Ranking criteria for alternative programs?

Currently CBE does not request new schools to accommodate alternative programs.

12. What about older buildings with alternative programs?

Older schools which accommodate alternative programs are considered with all other CBE schools in the points ranking criteria for modernization projects.

13. What is the ratio between old communities and old schools compared to family income?

The CBE has not performed this type of analysis.

14. Do we have the ability to build up rather than out?

New middle and high schools are often two storey structures but modular classrooms that are added to a building are single storey.

15. What's the difference between block funding and what we have now?

Block funding is subject to discretionary spending and IMR is to be directed towards specific, pre-identified maintenance-type work. With special permission from the Minister, IMR could be directed at a modernization (however, additional or extra funds are not provided and the CBE would need to compromise its expenditure on maintenance work)

16. How are community projections connected with school site planning?

In the site planning process, projections of school age (5 - 14 years) population are used to determine the number of school sites (elementary and middle) required in a community. The projections use a 14.6% peak population of school-aged children (5 - 14 years) and a stable population of 10.6% (aged 5-14 years).

17. Enrolment/utilization – does the CBE take into account multiple schools or just at the designated regular program school?

The CBE considers enrolment of all students from a community who attend any CBE school when analysing statistics for the points ranking criteria. The CBE does not have access to enrolment data from other school boards, charter schools or private schools.

18. Please explain the moratorium on development in the NW?

Currently the City of Calgary has not annexed any new developable lands beyond the northwest region of the city. This means that no new communities will be developed in the northwest.

19. Could there be a global ranking process used for k-4, 5-9, high schools, modernizations and modular classrooms?

Each of these categories require some similar and some dissimilar information. The type of information considered to assess the need in each of these categories is not the same, i.e. facility condition is relevant in consideration of modernization needs but not new school construction.