



Area IV Accommodation Challenges West Springs and Wildwood Schools Parent Focus Group Meeting January 27, 2014

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Introductions

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Introductions

Calvin Davies, Director Area IV

Ian Fero, System Assistant Principal, Area IV

Planning & Transportation

- Darlene Unruh, Director,
- Anne Trombley, Planning Supervisor
- Vidya John, Planning Analyst
- Darcia Pullan, Administrative Assistant
- Adelle Palmer, Community Engagement Consultant

Introductions

Principals

Rhonda Morrison – West Springs School

Dave Quon – Wildwood School

Jennifer Batycky – Rosscarrock School

Chris Aylesworth – Jennie Elliott School

Michelle Speight – Glendale School

Barbara Bannon – Olympic Heights School

Agenda

1. Purpose of the focus group
2. Since last time:
 - Parent feedback
 - YourVoice & Thoughtstream
3. Question received in advance of the meeting
4. Possibilities
5. Next Steps

Accommodation Challenges

- Both Wildwood and West Springs were at capacity for Fall 2013 and are projected to be overcapacity for Fall 2014
- We are monitoring enrolment at Vincent Massey School



Purpose of the focus group

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Purpose of the focus group

- To provide information and an opportunity to ask questions to a representative number of stakeholders
- Establish the different values or perspectives within a community on an issue
- Generate dialogue about an issue in a small forum
- To act as a barometer for issues and concerns raised by the larger school communities

Decision Making

- The Area Director and Director of Planning & Transportation make decisions on student accommodation issues.
- Parent input influences and impacts decisions.



Since November 14, 2013

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Since November 14, 2013

- Parent feedback
 - YourVoice
 - Thoughtstream

188 received to date

160 West Springs Residents/families/relatives

18 Wildwood/Olympic Heights

10 Receiver Schools (majority from Jennie Elliott)

Thoughtstream

Thoughtstream data from all 4 Thoughtstreams was consolidated and analyzed independently by facilitators at Thoughtstream. Information included in this presentation has been provided by Thoughtstream.

Thoughtstream

Thoughts:

- 758 invited
- 401 participated (53%)
- 2929 individual Thoughts submitted

Priorities:

- 758 invited
- 579 participated (76%)
- 18,625 stars assigned

Thoughtstream

Main Theme:

- Splits/Disruptions/Grade Configurations

Other Common Themes:

- Proper Utilization/Planning of Space and Capacity
- Maintaining Quality Education
- Transportation
- Capping/lottery set-up

Splits/Disruptions/Grade Configurations

- Maintaining community and connections” was voiced in all five options as an issue of high negative concern.
- Cited as extremely important as encourages involvement and social stability through peer and family networks.
- Concern that some options would split up communities or force dissimilar communities to merge.
- Mixed feelings around changes to grade configurations of schools (ex: K-4 or K-6).

Scenario 1

West Springs School: Change grade configuration to K-4 and designate GR 5-6 students to Rosscarrock School.

Wildwood School: Re-designate Aspen Woods (West of 85th Street) to Jennie Elliott School and re-designate Olympic Heights overflow to Glendale School

Scenario 2

West Springs School: Remain K-6 and Cap enrolment.
Overflow K-6 students to Rosscarrock School.

Wildwood School: Re-designate Cougar Ridge students to
Rosscarrock School.

Scenario 3

West Springs School: Remain K-6 and Cap enrolment.
Overflow K-6 students to Rosscarrock School.

Wildwood School: Re-designate Spruce Cliff and Westgate students to Rosscarrock School for Regular program.

Scenario 4

West Springs School: Change grade configuration to K-4 and designate GR 5-6 students to Rosscarrock School.

Wildwood School: Re-designate Aspen Woods (West of 85th Street) and Olympic Heights overflow to Jennie Elliott School.

Scenario 5

West Springs School: Change grade configuration to K-4 and designate GR 5-6 students to Rosscarrock School.

Wildwood School : Re-designate Cougar Ridge students to Jennie Elliott School

Scenarios

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3	Scenario 4	Scenario 5
<i>Splits/Disruptions/grade Configuration changes</i>	<i>neutral</i>	most beneficial	most beneficial	<i>somewhat beneficial</i>	<i>extremely problematic</i>
<i>Capping/Lottery</i>	<i>somewhat beneficial</i>	problematic	problematic	<i>neutral</i>	<i>somewhat beneficial</i>
<i>Maintaining Quality of Education</i>	<i>problematic</i>	very problematic	problematic	<i>somewhat beneficial</i>	<i>problematic</i>
<i>Proper Utilization of Space</i>	<i>beneficial</i>	very problematic	most problematic	<i>extremely problematic</i>	<i>extremely problematic</i>
<i>Transportation</i>	<i>neutral</i>	somewhat beneficial	somewhat beneficial	<i>problematic</i>	<i>extremely problematic</i>

Thoughtstream

Other thoughts from parents:

- Add portables to West Springs
- Give siblings priorities (if do overflow) and deciding who goes to what school
- Add Glendale to Options 2 and 3
- If need to make West Springs K-4 ensure that those already enrolled get to finish grades 5 and 6 there as they expected and planned (since they contributed to the school and stuff)
- Build a middle school
- Access to TASC program (Jennie Elliott)
- Access to childcare



Revised Scenario

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Recommended Scenario West Springs

K-6 West Springs

- Remain K to 6
- Enrolment capped at approximately 80 new kindergarten students each year using lottery process.

**Existing students attending West Springs School would not be asked to leave.*

- New K to 6 students that are overflowed from West Springs would be designated to Rosscarrock School effective September 2014.

Recommended Scenario Wildwood School

New Cougar Ridge students would be designated to Rosscarrock School effective September 2014.

- Current Cougar Ridge students and any new siblings of Cougar Ridge students currently attending Wildwood School could remain at Wildwood School.

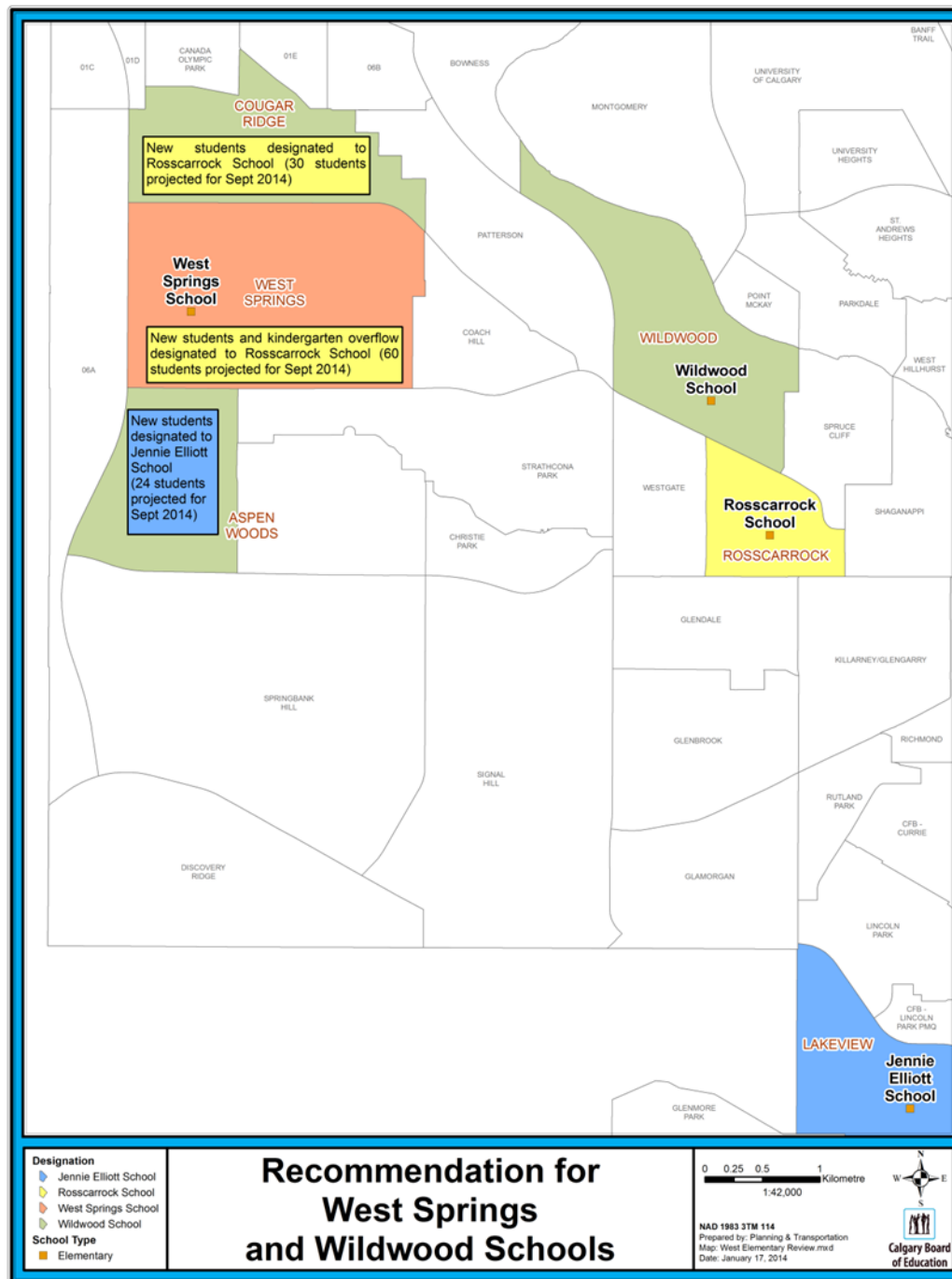
**Existing Cougar Ridge students attending Wildwood School would not be asked to leave.*

- New Aspen Woods (West of 85th Street) students would be designated to Jennie Elliott School starting September 2014.

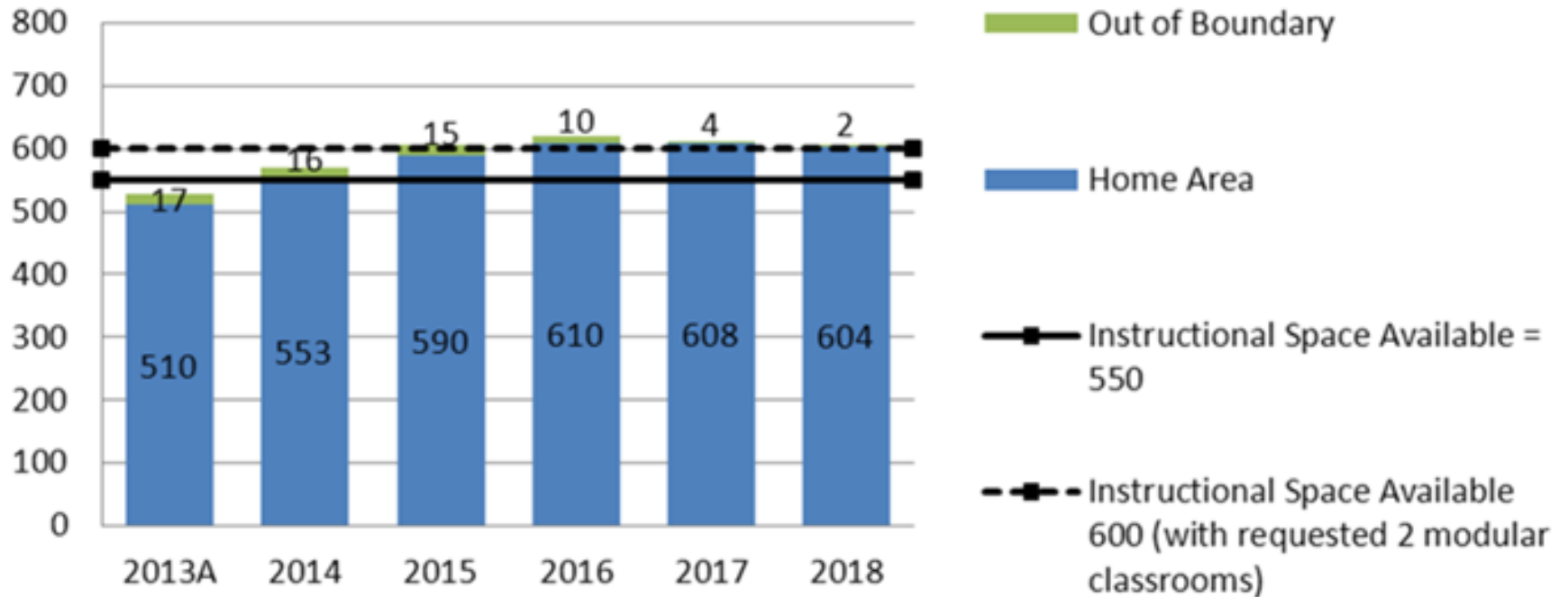
**Existing Aspen Woods (West of 85th Street) students and any new siblings would not be asked to leave Wildwood School.*

Recommended Scenarios Olympic Heights School

Status quo, continue to monitor enrolment

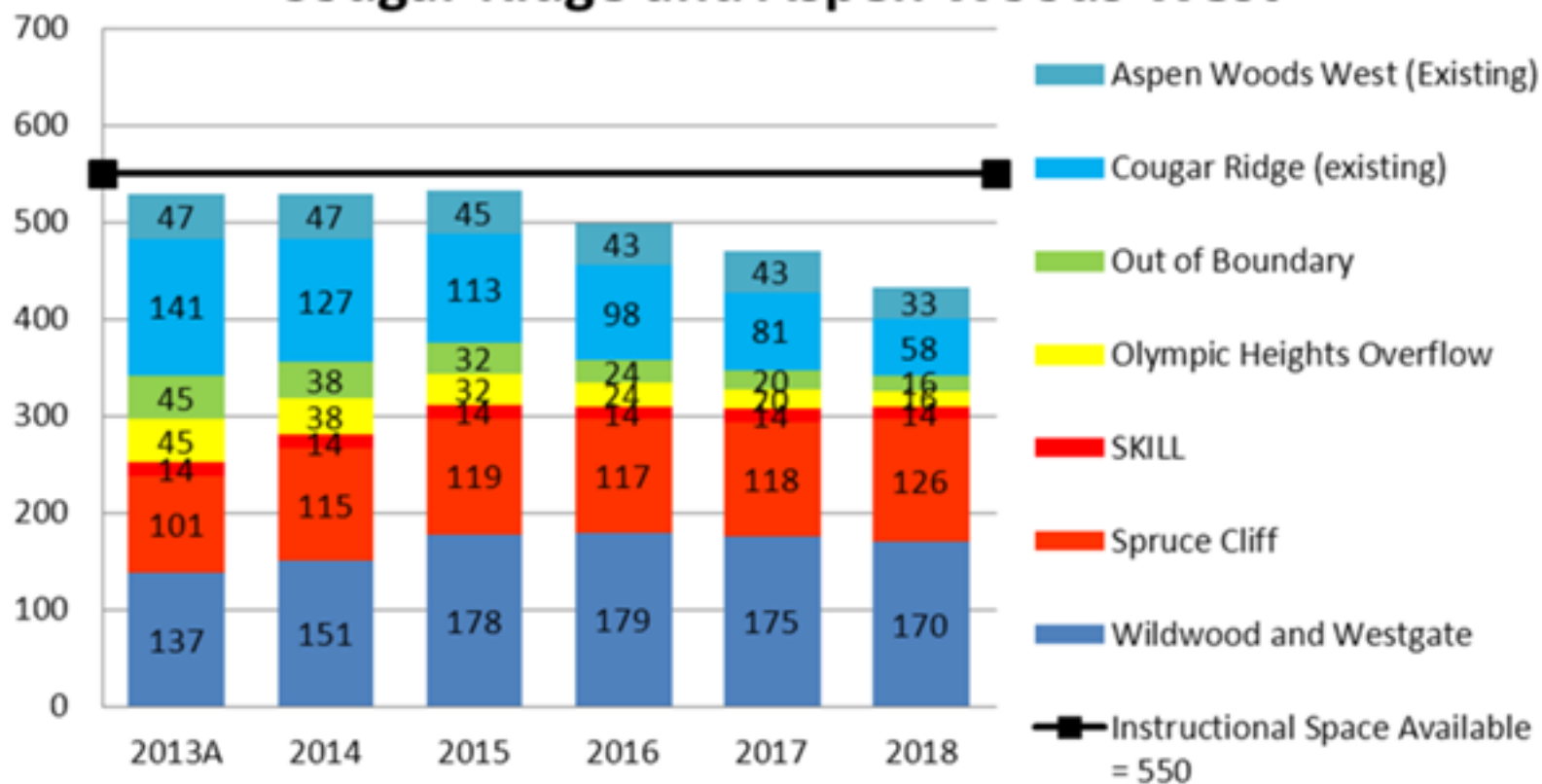


West Springs 5 YR Projection (after capping enrolment)



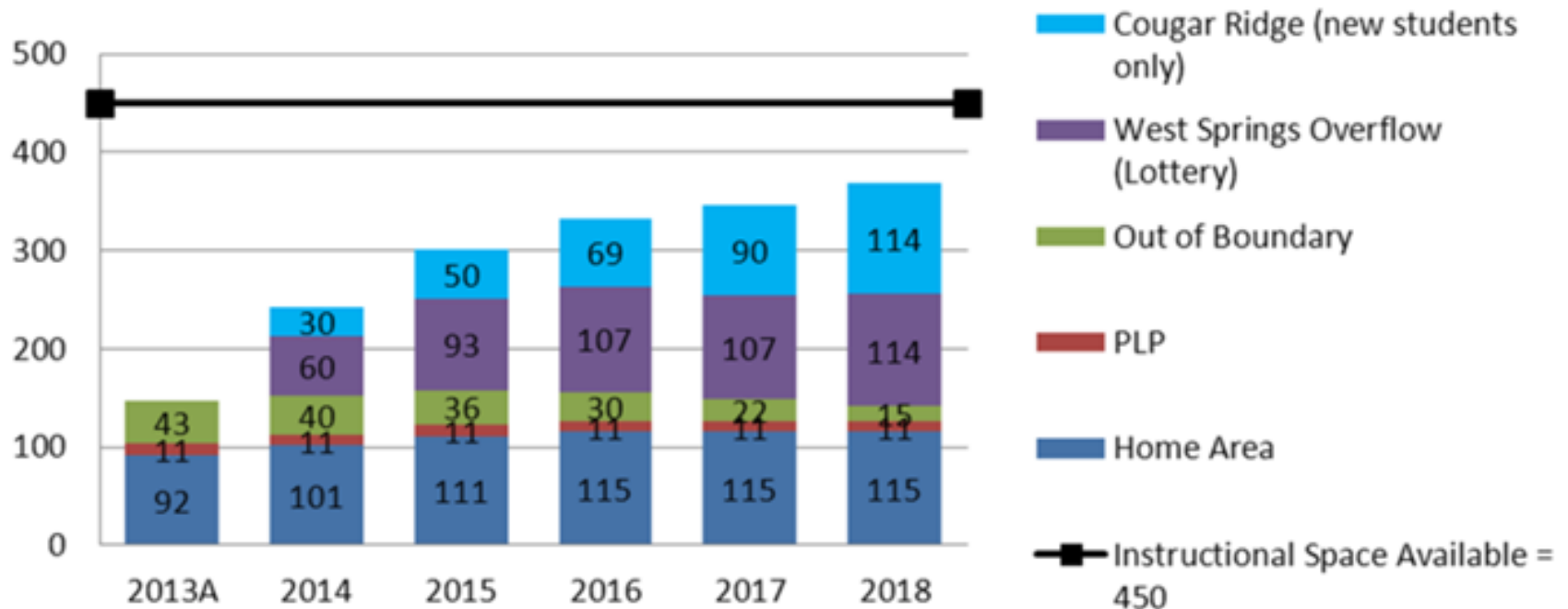
Prepared by Planning & Transportation, January 2014
SUBJECT TO REVIEW AND UPDATE

Wildwood 5 Yr Projection redesignating Cougar Ridge and Aspen Woods West



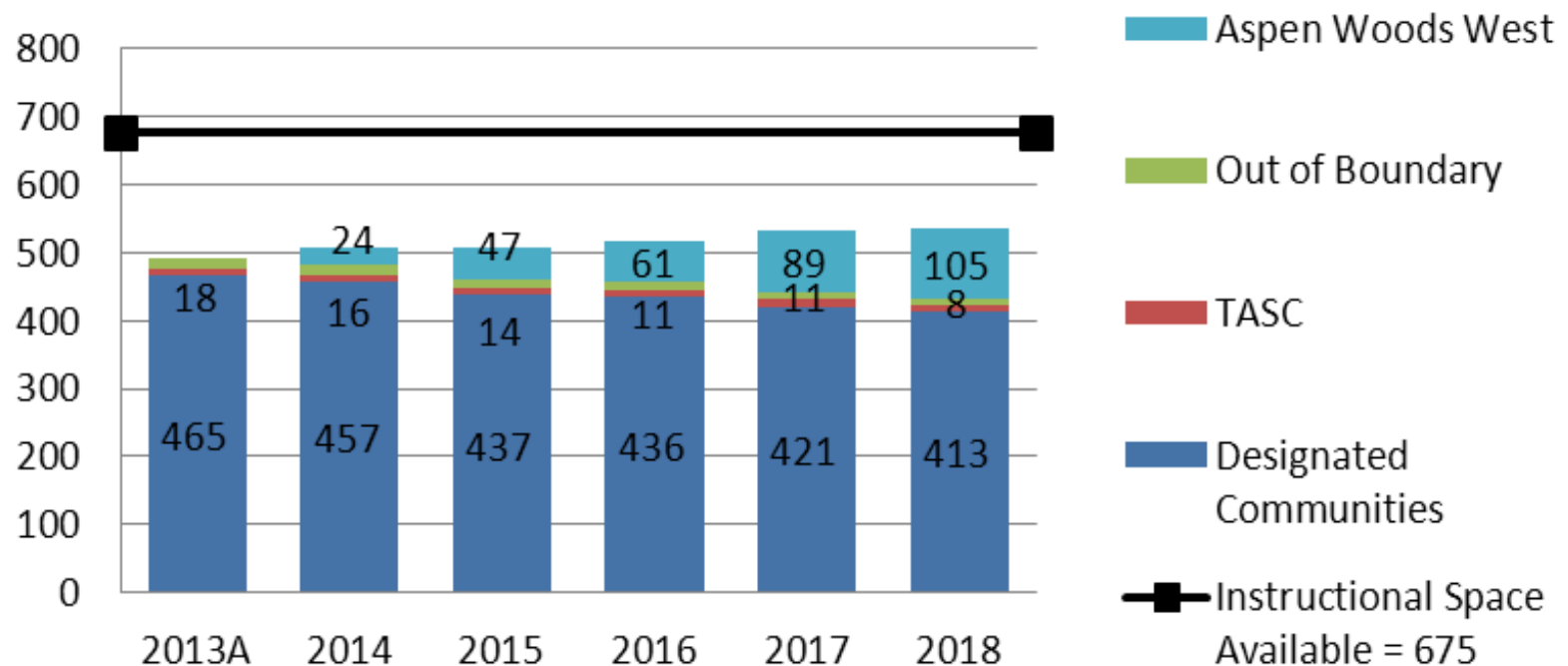
Prepared by Planning & Transportation , January 2014
SUBJECT TO REVIEW AND UPDATE

Rosscarrock 5 Yr Projection with West Springs Overflow and Cougar Ridge



Prepared by Planning & Transportation, January 2014
SUBJECT TO UPDATE AND REVIEW

Jennie Elliott 5 YR Projection with Aspen Woods (West)



Prepared by Planning & Transportation, January 2014
SUBJECT TO UPDATE AND REVIEW

Scenario from parents regarding West Springs School only

As of Sept. 2014 cap kindergarten registration at 85-100 students and announce that these kindergarten students will be the first group that may only attend until grade 4.

All students currently at West Springs School will complete to grade 6.

Overflow students to Rosscarrock School.



Questions Submitted by Parents

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Question

Where can I find information about September 30th enrolment and capacity and enrolment projections for the schools in this project?

Project page: http://www.cbe.ab.ca/Schools/ceop/pp13-14/area_iv_accommodation_challenges.asp

2013-2014 School Enrolment Report

<http://www.cbe.ab.ca/aboutus/documents.asp>

Question

Have you considered Westgate program students that may need a school if they decide not to choose Spanish or French?

How many kids are in the Spanish program?

Answer

The decision about Westgate Spanish program is currently under an appeal process. We hope that this issue will be resolved prior to spring break.

There are approximately 330 students in Spanish at Westgate.

Question

Will the options presented here tonight influence options available for Westgate?

Answer

No these solutions are not part of a solution for Westgate.

Question

How many spaces would open up at Westgate if the Spanish were to move?

Answer

Currently Westgate School has both French and Spanish K-4. The current proposal (pending the appeal process) is to have French Immersion at Westgate become a K-6 program.

Question

How much space is actually available at the schools identified?

School	Prov. Capacity	Instructional Space	# of Class-rooms	Sept 30 Enrolment	# of Kindergarten Students	# of Rooms for System Classes	Leased Class-rooms
West Springs	550	550	22	527	101	0	0
Wildwood	551	550	22	550	94	2	1 Part-time
Rosscarrock	394	450	18	146	23	1	3
Glendale	305	325	13	228	32	0	1 Part-time
Jennie Elliott	650	675	27	493	80	2	1 Full-time
Olympic Heights	638	700	28	742	101	0	0

Question

What resources would follow the Grade 5&6 if they relocated?

Answer

Instructional resources would move with the students.
Teachers would move according to spring staffing processes
and may or may not move depending on personal choice.

Question

Have you taken into account the number of siblings that would have to relocate?

Answer

Our numbers come from the pre-school census. Of those numbers approximately 60% choose public school. From that group 65% choose their community school and 35% choose an alternative program.

Parent choose different programs for their children, making it difficult to determine how many siblings might be affected.

In the scenario offered there is space in the overflow for siblings to both attend the overflow school.

Question

How will a decision to change the lottery process change the number of children that will need to be overflowed?

Answer

There will be no change to the number of students that will need to be overflowed.

Question

Is there a lottery process currently in place? Has it run it's course?

Answer

We have a plan in place that was developed by senior administration. <http://www.cbe.ab.ca/new/news2013-14/20130827-process-for-accepting-students.asp>

The lottery process will run through a full cycle over the next 6 months and will be assessed during the 2014-2015 school year.

Question


Why was West Springs built as a K-4 not a K-3?

Answer

New schools are built as elementary schools and can accommodate any number of grades. That way there is flexibility to the number of children that may be in a community at a given point in time.

Question

How can you say you minimize disruptions for students when you are going to move my child?



It is always our intent to minimize transitions for students and whenever possible we look to providing a smooth transition points. Regardless of the planning there is always a group of children that may be disrupted by change.

It is not possible to find a solution for this accommodation issue that does not involve a change of school designation, be they current students attending West Springs School or new students that would like to attend West Springs School.

There must be a school for all students of West Springs to attend – it is just not possible for every child living in West Springs to attend the local school.

Question

Research indicated and letters that parents have provided indicate that moves:

- Damage academic achievement
- Ruin school climate at both schools
- Destroy the sense of community
- Lower parent involvement
- Destroy public confidence and the culture of respect.

Answer

Research comes up on both sides of this issue. Certainly all of these things above could happen, but they don't always happen.

With proper transition plans in place and the work of school administrations and parents, transitions for students can be very positive.

In all areas of the city we have all kinds of grade configurations i.e. K-1/2-6, K-2/3-6, K-3/4-9, K-4/5-9, K-3/4-6.

Question

Why are Elbow Park students getting special treatment from the CBE and the province and West Springs students are being asked to move?

Answer

The Elbow Park issue is very different from the challenges in West Springs. The CBE has been assured by the province that plans for temporarily accommodating Elbow Park students and ultimately rebuilding Elbow Park School are outside of the normal Capital Planning process and will not affect the number of new school construction projects approved for the CBE.

Elbow Park school will be rebuilt with insurance money that can only be used to repair or rebuild a school of the same size on that same site.

Question

Why are parents being asked to solve complicated budgeting and infrastructure problems?

Answer

Parents are not being asked to solve this issue.

Parents role is to provide input on possible options so that administration is able to make an informed decision.

Question

Why isn't the CBE putting pressure on the province to build a middle school?

School Capital Plan 2014-2017

http://www.cbe.ab.ca/aboutus/documents/2014-2017_School_Capital_Plan.pdf

A new middle school for West Springs is currently 10th on the new school construction priority list in the 2014-2017 School Capital Plan.

Question

Why can we not combine communities to get our middle school moved up the list on the capital plan?

Answer

We have currently combined West Springs and Cougar Ridge for a new middle school.

To add an additional community (Aspen Woods) would make the total number of residents, when all three communities are fully built out, approximately 32,000.

The current CBE population threshold for combining communities for ranking of middle school priority is approximately 24,000 residents.

Question

It feels like there are more parents fighting for kindergarten students to stay and those numbers are larger than the grade 5&6.

How can we be fairly represented in the Thoughtstream process when there are fewer of us?

Answer

Decisions regarding this and any accommodation issue are not based on volume of mail received or the loudest voices.

Decisions are made based on provincial, CBE and planning values taking into consideration the needs of the community.

Question

Why are siblings given a priority in the options for Wildwood School, but not for West Springs?

Answer

All students from Cougar Ridge and Aspen Woods (West) are outside of the walk zone of Wildwood School. Prioritizing siblings from those communities for future enrolment at Wildwood School does not limit access for students living in the walk zone for Wildwood School.

The lottery process category 2 is designed to address the need to provide access for both students in the walk zone without older siblings and students with older siblings who live outside the walk zone.

Placing a priority on one of these groups over the other would result in limited access for one of those 2 groups over the other.

Question

Is there really enough space at Jennie Elliott School to accommodate students from another community?

Answer

There are currently 4 classrooms spaces available at Jennie Elliott, this equates to space for 100 students.



Feedback on Scenarios

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Next Steps

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Next Steps

February Open House
Feedback Opportunity

Communication

- Via the school
- Posted on the CBE website
<http://www.cbe.ab.ca/Schools/ceop/projects.asp>
- Yourvoice email address yourvoice@cbe.ab.ca



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