

**DATE:** December 12, 2023

**TO:** Board of Trustees

**FROM:** Darrel Robertson, Superintendent

**SUBJECT:** Student Accommodation Plan 2023–2024

**ORIGINATOR:** Cliff Richard, Chief Infrastructure and Technology Officer

**RESOURCE STAFF:** Jenifer Elliott, Valerie Leclair, Allison Sylvester, Jennifer Thompson, Christopher Wright

**REFERENCE** [HC.AR Student Admission and Enrolment](#)

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## ISSUE

The Student Accommodation Plan is updated annually. The plan is informed by:

- residential growth and development
- changes to attendance areas
- new school openings
- current school enrolment and residency patterns

## BACKGROUND

Planning for student accommodation is an ongoing process as we adapt to the evolving needs of the communities and students we serve. Actions and decisions consider feedback obtained from community engagement to ensure accommodation challenges are addressed in a transparent manner. These challenges include:

- schools and programs being too full
- schools and programs with declining enrolment
- shifts in student demographics

The Division's [Ten-Year Facilities Plan 2023–2032](#) highlights the many challenges we face in terms of student accommodation. As outlined in the plan, further increases in utilization across the Division may lead to the following:

- reduced choice for families
- fewer options for families to access Division centre or alternative programming
- reduced access to other schools through open boundaries
- increased demand for Student Transportation services to further designated schools
- reclamation of specialized spaces (e.g., Career and Technology Studies (CTS), Music, Art, Library, leased space) for regular instruction

The Student Accommodation Plan highlights actions taken to address enrolment demands on Division schools. In the absence of new construction, the Division must implement growth accommodation measures, as per the [Growth Control Model](#), to manage enrolment within existing capacity. All Division schools are at one of three levels (Attachment I). Enrolment fluctuations that trigger a school to move

between levels are specific to regular programming only. Enrolment limits and the random selection process can control capacity challenges within alternative programs.

1. Level One – Division schools have the capacity to accept new students. These schools have open boundaries and, in some cases, may also have a secondary attendance area. Resident students who live within the attendance area and siblings of current students who are returning to the school the following year are guaranteed a space.
2. Level Two – Division schools move from Level One to Level Two when they near capacity. Many Level Two schools, but not all, have closed boundaries.
3. Level Three – When Division schools have reached capacity and can no longer accommodate additional attendance area resident students, the school moves from Level Two to Level Three. In Level Three, further measures must be taken to restrict access to a school beyond those taken in Level Two. In response to researching best practices from other jurisdictions and in respecting feedback received from community members in previous growth accommodation engagements, the Division uses a lottery process. This process employs a standardized course of actions to manage enrolment and ensure equitable access to a school that is at or overcapacity with its attendance area resident students.

### **CURRENT SITUATION**

Currently, the overall average utilization rate of the Division is 82 per cent and is projected to be at 90 per cent utilization by 2025. In 2022–2023, 78 schools were at or above 85 per cent utilization and 27 schools at or above 100 per cent utilization. When schools hit the 85 per cent utilization rate, they feel full and retain little flexibility to organize students for instruction.

When utilization is too high, the Division faces many challenges including:

- a limited ability to accommodate resident students in schools closest to where they reside
- well-distributed alternative programming is not possible
- expanding Division centre programming to keep up with demand becomes challenging
- students in new neighbourhoods are unable to access a designated receiving school close to home and are transported the furthest (this strains the transportation system as ride times and the number of routes increase)

Fundamentally, choice for students and families will shrink due to these space and infrastructure limitations.

### Division Centres

The Division offers a wide range of specialized programming for students who have emotional, behavioural, cognitive, learning, speech, hearing, vision, physical or medical needs. The number of students choosing a Division centre program has increased substantially over the past few years. As such, a growing number of classes have been established to keep up with demand:

	2023–24	2022–23	2021–22	2020–21	2019–20	2018–19	2017–18	2016–17	2015–16
<b>Connections</b>	71	71	74	73	69	64	61	61	61
<b>Connections /OPP</b>	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	3	3
<b>CLS</b>	17	17	17	17	17	16	16	15	13
<b>CLS/ Connections</b>	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
<b>Extensions</b>	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
<b>ISP</b>	15	14	14	14	13	12	12	12	11
<b>INT</b>	163	131	109	91	78	64	59	52	47
<b>Literacy</b>	8	16	19	21	22	21	20	20	22
<b>OPP</b>	41	40	41	39	42	40	42	43	44
<b>Strategies</b>	33	33	34	36	39	38	38	40	41
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>248</b>

Across the Division, as enrolment grows across all programs while available space declines, establishing Division centre classes near where students reside becomes increasingly challenging. As the Division’s utilization rate increases, it becomes difficult to find space to establish or expand Division centre programming.

New Construction:

New schools take a minimum of three years to build and open for students. If no further new infrastructure is funded, including the three new school construction/design projects underway, the Division will be at 100 per cent capacity by 2030. There are currently three new construction projects underway:

- Elder Dr. Francis Whiskeyjack High School: opening September 2024 (Capacity: 2,400).
- Edgemont K–9 school: tentatively opening September 2027 (Capacity: 950).
- Glenriding Heights Grades 7–12 school: tentatively opening September 2028 (Capacity: 2,410). This project is approved for design funding only.

The lack of new construction funding results in increased demand for student transportation with further designated schools as well as more pressure on the capacity of existing schools. This leads to an increase in the number of schools managing enrolment with closed boundaries or using the lottery process.

#### Level One – Open Access

The majority of Division schools are at Level One on the Growth Control Model. At this level, schools are required to accommodate resident attendance area students first and if there is space remaining, may accommodate other students. Schools will accommodate as many students as possible up to their enrolment limit. Many schools nearing (or beyond) their enrolment limit will primarily accommodate students from within their attendance area. When nearing or beyond their enrolment limit, based on either current or projected enrolment patterns, the school will then move to Level Two on the Growth Control Model.

#### *Low Enrolment Model:*

It is equally challenging to organize and deliver programming in schools or programs with low enrolment. This is evident with both regular and alternative programs. In some Division schools, although they may have a healthy overall enrolment due to other programs, the regular program has not been viable over several years. The opposite is also true; some alternative programs do not have enough students enrolled to make the program viable at a site.

To address programs experiencing low enrolment, Edmonton Public Schools created the Low Enrolment Model in 2021. This process helps the Division identify programs with low enrolment at schools. Schools work together with families in the program and the school community to develop a community-driven plan to increase enrolment before deciding the next steps for the program. The model uses a two-phase approach over two years. This provides an appropriate amount of time to consult and support communities, ensuring all programs in the Division are viable and sustainable. Each year, Administration will evaluate program enrolment across all Division schools after the September count date.

In 2022–2023, three schools were in Phase I of the Low Enrolment Model—Belmont (Logos Christian program), Britannia (Logos Christian program) and Kildare (regular program). In Phase I, school administration and the school community collaborate to increase enrolment in their low enrolment program. Rosslyn School (Chinese Mandarin Bilingual program) was in Phase II in 2022–2023 with the program being phased out starting with Grade 7 for the 2023–2024 school year. This program will be entirely phased out at Rosslyn School by the end of the 2025–2026 school year. Continuity of programming for students in elementary Chinese (Mandarin) Bilingual programs in North Edmonton will be offered at one of the other junior high schools offering this program.

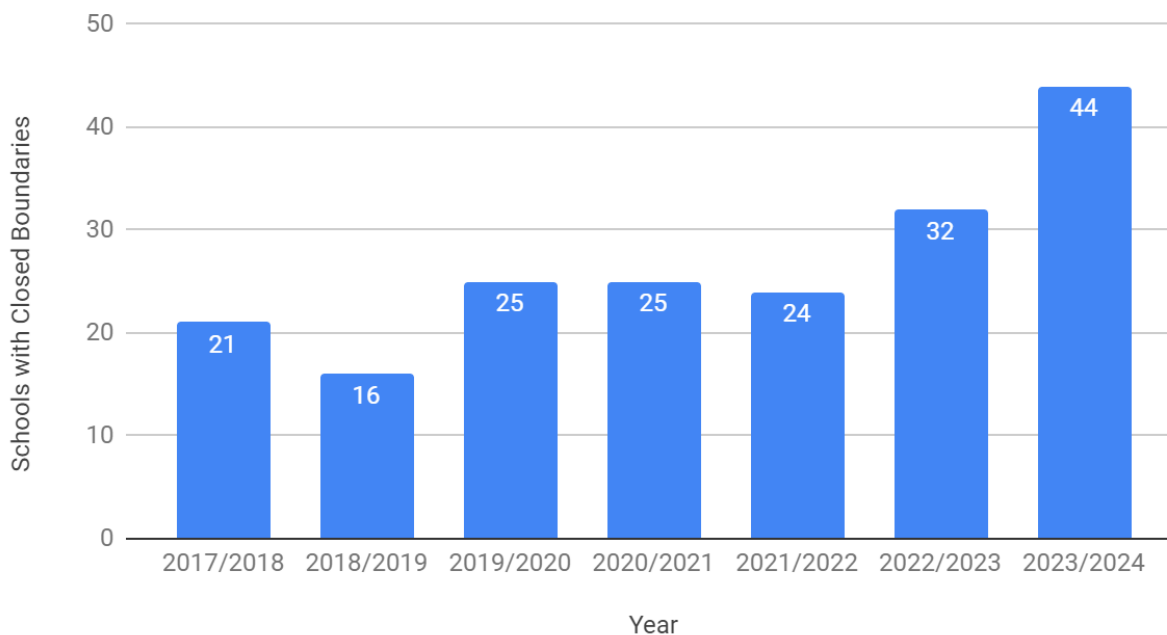
#### Level Two – Limit Access

As per the Growth Control Model, some schools are experiencing such high demand for space that measures must be taken to limit enrolment to resident attendance area students only. Adding modular classrooms, reclaiming leased space, facility modifications and closing attendance area boundaries are measures the Division can take to ensure schools are able to accommodate resident attendance area students. An additional 12 schools have moved from Level One to Level Two for the 2023–2024 school year.

While before and after school care programs are not operated by the Division, several licensed service providers work with Property Management to lease space in Division schools to provide service to families and the community. As enrolment growth begins to outpace capacity in a school, the availability of space for leased groups becomes increasingly limited. As utilization rates increase overall, lease space in available schools is reduced and current leased space may be removed to accommodate enrolment growth. For the upcoming school year, 14 classroom spaces (from 11 schools) were reclaimed due to enrolment growth. Aleda Patterson, Athlone, Donnan, Dovercourt, Duggan, Garth Worthington, Inglewood, King Edward, LaPerle, McKee and Soraya Hafez schools reclaimed classroom spaces to accommodate additional students for the 2023–2024 school year.

The amount of space available to accommodate Division students is declining making it difficult to offer choice for students, including the ability to maintain open attendance area boundaries. The number of closed boundary schools continues to grow each year. Up from 32 schools during the 2022–2023 school year, there are 44 schools with closed boundaries for 2023–2024.

### Number of Closed Boundary Schools



Pressure for new school construction in developing areas is expected to continue, as most projected new students reside in developing areas where schools are at or nearing capacity. Further increases in utilization rates reduce choice for families through greater travel distances for students, fewer seats for Division centre and alternative programming, elimination of open boundaries for schools and reclamation of spaces used for CTS, music, library and art programming.

In scenarios where continued enrolment growth is putting pressure on existing capacity, the Division can request modular classrooms from the Province. Since 2010–2011, the Division has installed (or relocated) 475 modular classrooms in place of receiving funding for new school construction. Annually, the Division submits a request to Alberta Infrastructure for new modular classrooms or funding to relocate existing units. Over the past few years, the Division has not received funding for all requested modular classrooms and has been required to use Capital Reserve funds to acquire and install unfunded

requests. Last year, the Division received only five of the 30 requested portables for the 2023–2024 school year. This is an unsustainable practice moving forward. Where it is not possible to add modular classrooms, facility modifications may be completed to create additional capacity in non-traditional learning spaces such as learning commons or even staff lunch rooms.

As long as enrolment growth continues to outpace provincial funding for new construction projects, the amount of available space, and ultimately the amount of choice in public education, will continue to decrease. In response to growth in enrolment and decreasing space in the Division, an increasing number of schools may move to Levels Two and Three on the Growth Control Model.

### Level Three – Restrict Access (Lottery Process)

The lottery process allows schools at (or reaching) capacity to stabilize enrolment while maximizing the capacity of a school by limiting the intake of students. It determines which attendance area resident students can access their designated school when there are too many resident students compared to spaces. The lottery process only impacts resident students who are new to a school. Non-resident students are not able to attend a Level Three school. For those resident students not selected to attend the school through the lottery process, Administration has provided an overflow designated school.

This process is transparent and provides a straightforward answer to both staff and families, concerning the order in which a school accepts resident students when the school does not have enough space for all resident students from the attendance area. A benefit to this process is that it can be applied to individual grade levels and be turned on and off yearly, as needed.

During pre-enrolment for 2023–2024, two more schools used the lottery process for the first time. There are now seven Division schools at Level Three on the Growth Control Model and a total of 12 overflow designated schools. Jan Reimer and Shauna May Seneca schools moved to Level Three as a result of enrolment pressure within their attendance areas. The lottery process did not impact students currently attending these schools but did impact resident students new to the school. Resident students not selected to attend these schools through the lottery process were provided with an overflow designated school or could choose to attend another Division school with space.

### Student Accommodation Plan

The annual Student Accommodation Plan provides consistent and ongoing communication with Trustees, Administration, parents and community stakeholders. It outlines the Growth Control Model level assigned to the school for the 2023–2024 school year.

Initiatives to manage growth challenges may include:

- closing boundaries
- reclaiming leased spaces
- addition of modular classrooms
- facility modifications
- new neighbourhood designations
- suspending the sibling rule
- reconfiguring grades (including the removal of grades)
- school or program consolidations
- new school construction
- program establishments

## KEY POINTS

- The Student Accommodation Plan is updated annually to provide timely and transparent information to stakeholders and to build an awareness of the intricacies of student accommodation. It provides consistent and ongoing communication with Trustees, Administration, parents and community stakeholders.
- The Province determines new school funding. The Board of Trustees has been tireless in their advocacy for new school funding.
- The Growth Control Model was developed, as per feedback received following stakeholder engagement, to help manage enrolment at schools as our Division continues to grow.
- The Growth Control Model toolkit was developed to support school administration when having conversations with their school community about the levels within the model and the level for their school.
- A Communication Plan with updated information will be developed to keep communities and families informed and ensure transparency is reflected through ongoing student accommodation work. Updated information will be added online to school profiles to allow parents easy access to this information.

## ATTACHMENTS and APPENDICES

ATTACHMENT I      Growth Control Model: List of Schools by Level and Closed Boundary List  
(2023–2024)

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### Growth Control Model: List of Schools by Level and Closed Boundary List

#### Level One (2023–2024)

Abbott	Gold Bar	McNally
Academy at King Edward	Grace Martin	Michael A. Kostek
Alberta School for the Deaf	Greenfield	Millwoods Christian
Aldergrove	Greenview	Mount Pleasant
Aleda Patterson	Grovenor	Northmount
amiskwaciy Academy	Hardisty	Old Scona
Argyll	Harry Ainlay	Oliver
Athlone	Hazeldean	Ormsby
Avalon	Highlands	Ottewell
Avonmore	Hillcrest	Parkallen
Balwin	Hillview	Parkview
Bannerman	Holyrood	Prince Charles
Beacon Heights	Homesteader	Princeton
Belgravia	Horse Hill	Queen Alexandra
Belmead	Inglewood	Queen Elizabeth
Belmont	J. Percy Page	Richard Secord
Belvedere	J. A. Fife	Rideau Park
Bisset	James Gibbons	Rio Terrace
Braemar	Jasper Place	Riverdale
Brander Gardens	John A. McDougall	Ross Sheppard
Brightview	Johnny Bright	Rosslyn
Britannia	Kameyosek	Rutherford
Brookside	Kate Chegwin	S. Bruce Smith
Calder	Keheewin	Sakaw
Callingwood	Kenilworth	Satoo
Clara Tyner	Kensington	Scott Robertson
Coronation	Kildare	Sifton
Crawford Plains	Killarney	Spruce Avenue
D. S. Mackenzie	King Edward	Steele Heights
Daly Grove	Kirkness	Steinhauer
Delton	kisêwâtisiwin	Stratford
Delwood	L. Y. Cairns	Strathcona
Dickinsfield	Lansdowne	Sweet Grass
Donnan	Lauderdale	T. D. Baker
Dovercourt	Laurier Heights	Talmud Torah
Dr. Anne Anderson	Lee Ridge	Thelma Chalifoux
Duggan	Lendrum	Thornccliffe
Dunluce	Londonderry	Tipaskan
Earl Buxton	Lymburn	Vernon Barford
Eastglen	Lynnwood	Victoria
Edith Rogers	M. E. LaZerte	Vimy Ridge
Edmonton Christian High	Malmo	Virginia Park
Edmonton Christian Northeast	Mary Butterworth	W. P. Wagner



### Growth Control Model: List of Schools by Level and Closed Boundary List

#### Level One (2023–2024) (continued)

Edmonton Christian West Ekota Elizabeth Finch Elmwood Esther Starkman Evansdale Forest Heights Fraser Garneau George P. Nicholson Glengarry	Mayfield McArthur McKee McKernan Meadowlark Meadowlark Christian Mee-Yah-Noh Menisa Michael Phair Mill Creek Millwoods Christian Minchau	Waverley Westbrook Westglen Westminster Westmount Windsor Park York Youngstown
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#### Level Two (2023–2024)

A. Blair McPherson Alex Janvier Allendale Baturyn Bessie Nichols Caernarvon Centennial Constable Daniel Woodall Crestwood Donald R. Getty Dr. Donald Massey Ellerslie Florence Hallock Garth Worthington George H. Luck Glenora Grandview Heights Hilwie Hamdon Ivor Dent Jackson Heights Joey Moss John D. Bracco	John Barnett Julia Kiniski Kim Hung Lago Lindo LaPerle Lorelei Major General Griesbach Malcolm Tweddle McLeod Meyokumin Michael Strembitsky Nellie Carlson Overlanders Patricia Heights Pollard Meadows Riverbend Roberta MacAdams Soraya Hafez Velma E. Baker Weinlos Winterburn
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**Level Three (2023–2024)**

David Thomas King Dr. Lila Fahlman Dr. Margaret Ann-Armour Jan Reimer	Lillian Osborne Shauna May Seneca Svend Hansen
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**Schools with Closed Boundaries 2023–2024**

Alex Janvier Baturyn* Bessie Nichols Caernarvon (Regular Program) Centennial* Constable Daniel Woodall David Thomas King Dr. Donald Massey Dr. Lila Fahlman Dr. Margaret-Ann Armour Donald R. Getty Ellerslie Garth Worthington* George H. Luck* Glenora* Hilwie Hamdon Ivor Dent (Junior High Only) Jackson Heights* Jan Reimer Joey Moss* John Barnett John D. Bracco	Julia Kiniski Kim Hung Lago Lindo* LaPerle* Lillian Osborne Lorelei Major General Griesbach Malcolm Tweddle (Regular Program)* Meyokumin (Regular Program) Michael Strembitsky Nellie Carlson Overlanders* Patricia Heights* Pollard Meadows (Regular Program)* Riverbend Roberta MacAdams Shauna May Seneca Soraya Hafez* Svend Hansen Velma E. Baker Weinlos Winterburn
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*\*indicates new for 2023–2024*