

April 18, 2023

Honourable Adriana LaGrange
Minister of Education
228 Legislature Building
10800 - 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Dear Minister LaGrange:

Subject: Edmonton Public Schools Updated *Ten-Year Facilities Plan 2023–2032* and *Three-Year Capital Plan 2024–2027*

I am pleased to present Edmonton Public School's updated [*Ten-Year Facilities Plan 2023–2032*](#) and [*Three-Year Capital Plan 2024–2027*](#), both approved by our Board of Trustees on March 21, 2023.

The updated *Ten-Year Facilities Plan 2023–2032* identifies the Division's long-range facility needs and incorporates a strategic focus aimed at ensuring the effective and efficient use of capital funding. The plan highlights the challenges facing the Division today and in the decade to come. Our most pressing infrastructure challenges can be summarized within two prevailing themes:

- a lack of available space due to continually rising enrolment
- the mounting deferred maintenance in our aging buildings

Fundamentally, choice for students and families will continue to be reduced as available space declines, and our extensive portfolio of aging buildings requires adequate maintenance and renewal funding, while the oldest urgently require renewal or replacement.

The declining amount of available space within our Division schools is compromising our ability to provide access to schools close to where students live, to provide a range of alternative and Division centre special needs programs, and to maintain reasonable ride times and yellow bus service levels. Enrolment from September 2021 to September 2022 increased by 4.2 per cent, or 4,455 new students. This growth is the largest one-year enrolment increase for the Division since 1964–1965, when the West Jasper Place School Division was amalgamated with Edmonton Public Schools. Further projected enrolment growth will see our Division reach 90 per cent utilization by 2027 and 100 per cent by 2030, unless *significant* new school space is approved for construction. Considering that new schools take between three and five years to build and open, construction funding for our Division's highest priorities is needed urgently in order to avoid reaching 100 per cent utilization across the entire Division.

As well, the condition of many schools continues to decline as funding limitations are leading to a mounting deferred maintenance deficit in our aging buildings. This limits the Division's ability to deliver quality learning environments for all students, regardless of where they live, and to provide diverse learning environments to accommodate student needs.

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This challenge will be magnified with the City of Edmonton's City Plan, a growth plan seeking to bring over 600,000 new residents to established areas of the city over the coming decades. Upgrading or replacing our oldest school buildings will play a crucial part in accommodating new students and families that come with this anticipated growth.

The **Three-Year Capital Plan 2024–2027** establishes the Division's highest priority school facility needs for the forthcoming three-year period. The Plan features three main areas of focus:

- new school construction
- existing school modernization
- solution consolidation/replacement projects for aging buildings in some areas of the city

Five new school construction projects to serve the most rapidly developing areas of Edmonton top our priority list, while two modernization projects that have been top priorities for *over 14 years now* remain as Year One priorities. Building new schools in relatively affluent burgeoning new suburbs must not continue to come at the expense of providing accessible, quality learning spaces to vulnerable student populations closer to the urban core. To that end, I would strongly urge you to reconsider the ranking system that forces growth to compete against serving mature neighbourhoods.

Our Board is appreciative of your recent commitment to fund the design and construction of a new K–9 school in the Edgemont neighbourhood, our number two priority from last year. We look forward to understanding how the pre-planning, planning and design funding announced for four of our other priorities will lead to expedited construction funding approvals for those desperately needed projects.

All priorities identified in the **Three-Year Capital Plan 2024–2027** have been entered into the provincial Building Land Information System (BLIMS). We look forward to working with provincial staff to advance all of these projects to construction in the near future.

I trust the information provided meets your requirements for consideration of funding approval by your Government. Should you wish to discuss these plans or any other matter, please contact me at 780-429-8016.

Sincerely,



Trisha Estabrooks
Board Chair

c: Honourable Nathan Neudorf, Minister of Infrastructure
Andre Tremblay, Deputy Minister, Alberta Education
Christine Sewell, Assistant Deputy Minister, Financial Services and Capital Planning, Alberta Education

Attachment: [Capital Plan Overview](#)

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