

DATE: September 12, 2017

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Highlands School Consolidation Project – Closure of Montrose and Mount Royal Schools

ORIGINATOR: Dr. Lorne Parker, Executive Director

RESOURCE STAFF: Josephine Duquette, Terri Gosine, Kim Holowatuk, Roland Labbe, Christopher Wright

REFERENCE: [Board Policy EA.BP - Infrastructure Planning Principles](#)
[School Act: Closure of Schools Regulation \(Alberta Regulation 238/1997\)](#)
[June 23, 2015 Board Report – Greater Highlands Area Consolidation Plan](#)
[November 24, 2015 Board Report – Amendment to the Three-Year Capital Plan 2016-2019](#)

ISSUE

To present to the Board of Trustees (the Board) the Superintendent’s recommendation for school closures in order to facilitate the Greater Highlands Area consolidation concept.

BACKGROUND

In accordance with the *School Act: Closure of Schools Regulation (Alberta Regulation 238/1997)*, the first step for the Board is to approve motions to consider the closure of Montrose and Mount Royal schools. These motions were approved at the [June 6, 2017 public Board meeting](#).

A motion was also approved for the Board to seek Ministerial approval for exemption from Sections 4 through 7 of the *Closure of Schools Regulation*. These sections include the requirement for consultation. Since extensive consultation has already occurred (Attachment I), going through this process again would delay the process now that funding has been approved and is viewed as unnecessary given the support for the project in the Greater Highlands community. A letter was sent to the Minister of Education on June 8, 2017 requesting exemption from Sections 4 through 7 of the *Closure of Schools Regulation* (Attachment II).

On July 5, 2017, the Minister of Education granted exemption from Sections 4 through 7 of the *Closure of Schools Regulation* for the permanent closure of Montrose and Mount Royal Schools (Attachment III). The Board may now consider motions for the formal closure of these schools.

RELATED FACTS

- An extensive consultation process took place in the Greater Highlands Area between April 2014 and April 2015 regarding consolidation of Highlands, Montrose and Mount Royal schools into a single K-9 school.
- Modernization Concept 2, supported by the community, was approved as the preferred design concept. The concept was included in the *Three-Year Capital Plan 2016-2019* and the *Three-Year Capital Plan 2017-2020*.

- Correspondence with the Minister of Education, regarding support for exemption from Sections 4 through 7 of *Alberta Regulation 238/1997*, was received in August 2015.
- Funding for Highlands Modernization Concept 2 was announced on March 22, 2017.
- Motions to consider closure of Montrose and Mount Royal schools was approved June 6, 2017 and a letter was sent to the Minister requesting exemption from Sections 4 through 7 of the *Closure of Schools Regulation*.
- On July 5, 2017, the Minister of Education granted exemption from Sections 4 through 7 of the *Closure of Schools Regulation*.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Board approve a motion to close Montrose School, effective on the last operational day prior to the opening of the newly modernized K-9 Highlands School.
2. That the Board approve a motion to close Mount Royal School, effective on the last operational day prior to the opening of the newly modernized K-9 Highlands School.

OPTIONS

Based on the information provided in this report, the following options are considered most appropriate:

1. Approve motion 1.
2. Approve motion 2.
3. Not approve motions.

CONSIDERATIONS and ANALYSIS

See [June 6, 2017 Board Report - Highlands School Consolidation Project – Consideration to Close Montrose and Mount Royal Schools](#).

NEXT STEPS

If approved, the Board Chair will communicate, in writing, to the Minister of Education, the Board Motion and the effective date of the closures.

ATTACHMENTS and APPENDICES

ATTACHMENT I	Process of Public Consultation
ATTACHMENT II	Letter to Minister of Education
ATTACHMENT III	Response from the Minister of Education

KH:kk

Process of Public Consultation for the Greater Highlands Area Consolidation Project and Consideration of School Closures

April 15, 2014	Letters* provided to parents of students in the Highlands cluster outlining the project and notifying them of the dates and times of the first and second public meetings.
April 15, 2014	Editorial board meeting with The Edmonton Journal.
April 16, 2014	Media release* and technical briefing – all major media outlets. Launch of “Space for Our Students” website. Release of advertising posters* to schools.
April 16-23, 2014	Advertisements* ran in the Edmonton Examiner – all zones.
April 16-25, 2014	Roadside signage – 2 in Highlands cluster.
April 17, 2014	Letters* provided to parents of students in the schools surrounding the Highlands cluster that may be affected by the replacement school, outlining the project and notifying them of the dates and times of the first and second public meetings.
April 17-25, 2014	Facebook advertising and ad graphics* posted to EPSB Facebook platform.
April 22, 2014	Letters* sent to City of Edmonton administration and community leagues.
April 22-24, 2014	3 Public Meetings – Highlands, Lawton, Westmount. Format: General presentation followed by small group discussion and feedback. Each breakout session consisted of a facilitator and a note taker. All notes were captured onscreen for participants to see. All comments* were later collated and shared back on our website on May 5.
April 22, 2014	Survey #1 launched to gather initial feedback on the project including concerns, questions, vision for a new K-9 facility and the use of closed buildings.
May 5, 2014	Notes* from April meetings available online for public viewing.
May 6, 2014	Meeting with EPSB community partners.*
May 5-9, 2014	Posters received by schools advertising upcoming public meetings May 20-22. Digital posters* sent to community partner agencies.
May 11, 2014	Survey #1 closed, data collated* and shared back via website.
May 7-21, 2014	Advertisements* ran in the Edmonton Examiner – all zones. Note: all advertisements clearly articulate that school closures will be considered.
May 7-22, 2014	Facebook advertising and ad graphics* posted to EPSB Facebook platform.
May 12, 2014	Digital posters* sent to community leagues.
May 12-16, 2014	Advertisements* provided to schools for school newsletters and for posting on Schoolzone.
May 13, 2014	Survey #2 launched to gather feedback on developed options for each site within the cluster. Each option clearly articulates which schools would be considered for closure.
May 15, 2014	Letters* provided to parents of all students in cluster schools and potentially affected surrounding area schools outlining the proposed options for each site and providing notification of the upcoming public meetings as well as directing them to the website and feedback survey. Provided for all students at Montrose, Highlands, Mount Royal and Virginia Park schools.
May 16, 2014	Meeting with City of Edmonton administration.
May 20-22, 2014	3 public meetings – Highlands, Lawton, Westmount. Format: General presentation followed by small group discussion and feedback on presented options. Each breakout session had a facilitator and a note taker.

	All notes were captured onscreen for participants to see. All comments later collated and shared on our website May 30.
May 30, 2014	Notes* from May meetings available online for public viewing.* Survey #2 closed – data collated.*
June 11, 2014	Advertisements* ran in the Edmonton Examiner – all zones.
June 11-17, 2014	Facebook advertising and ad graphics* posted to EPSB Facebook platform.
June 17, 2014	Letters* provided to parents of all students in cluster schools and potentially affected surrounding area schools outlining the recommendations to be presented to the Board of Trustees on June 24, 2014. The letters also invited them to attend the final public meetings and directed them to the website where they could provide additional feedback. Letters provided for all students at Montrose, Highlands, Mount Royal and Virginia Park schools. Website updated to share details of the recommendations to be presented to the Board of Trustees. Final online feedback survey open.
June 18, 2014	Final public meetings in each cluster community to share details of the recommendations to be put forward to the Board of Trustees and final opportunity to provide feedback.
June 19, 2014	Recommendation report posted to website.*
June 23, 2014	Feedback from final meetings and web survey provided to the Board of Trustees.*
June 24, 2014	Public Board meeting. Trustees vote on the recommendations. Greater Lawton Area – Rundle School site – selected as the location for the replacement school. Motions approved to consider the closure of R.J. Scott, Rundle and Lawton schools. Motion approved for the Board Chair to send a letter to the Minister of Education requesting exemption from sections 4 through 7 of the <i>Closure of Schools Regulation</i> in the <i>School Act</i> .
Sept. 16, 2014	Public Board Meeting – Motion to close R.J. Scott, Rundle and Lawton schools upon the opening of the replacement school approved.
Sept. 22, 2014	Consultation with the principals of Highlands, Mount Royal, Montrose and Eastglen schools regarding consolidation of schools in the Greater Highlands Area – a continuation of the conversation begun April 15, 2014.
Sept. 29, 2014	Letters* sent to all parents of students at Highlands, Mount Royal and Montrose schools inviting representatives to serve on a Working Committee. Letter sent to the City of Edmonton inviting representation on the Working Committee. Letters sent to the Bellevue, Highlands, Montrose, and Newton Community Leagues inviting representation on the Working Committee.
Oct. 27, 2014 Nov. 12, 2014 Nov. 25, 2014 Jan. 26, 2015 Feb. 10, 2015	Working Committee meetings. November 12 meeting included interested members of the general public. All meeting minutes and shared information posted to District website after each meeting.
Feb. 11 & 18, 2015	Advertisements* ran in the Edmonton Examiner – Zone 2.
Feb. 18, 2015	Facebook advertising and ad graphics* posted to EPSB Facebook platform. Release of advertising posters* to schools for use on Schoolzone. Concepts for public feedback and online survey posted to District Space for Students website. Survey ran February 18 to March 2.

Feb. 24, 2015	Format: General presentation followed by small group discussion and feedback on presented concepts. Each breakout session had a facilitator and a note taker. All notes were captured onscreen for participants to see. All comments later collated and shared on our website March 16.
April 8, 2015	Superintendent approved Highlands School Modernization Concept 2 as the preferred design approach for the K-9 Replacement School in the <i>Three-Year Capital Plan 2016-2019</i> .
April 15, 2015	Digital posters* sent to schools and community leagues re: upcoming public meeting April 29, 2015.
April 15 & 22	Advertisements* ran in the Edmonton Examiner – Zone 2.
April 17, 2015	Email sent to Working Committee members outlining the Superintendent’s decision and next steps in the process. Advertisement attached for distribution to respective stakeholders.
April 22, 2015	Letters* provided to parents of all students at Highlands, Montrose, and Mount Royal schools outlining the Superintendent’s decision and the consideration of closure recommendations to be presented to the Board of Trustees on June 24, 2014. The letters also invited them to attend the final public meeting and directed them to the website where they could provide additional feedback. Website updated to share details of the recommendations to be presented to the Board of Trustees.
April 23, 2015	Facebook advertising and ad graphics* posted to EPSB Facebook platform.
April 29, 2015	Final public meeting at Highlands School. Format: General presentation followed by small group discussion and feedback on preferred design concept and next steps including closure motions for Montrose and Mount Royal schools. Each breakout session had multiple District staff to lead discussion and answer questions and a note taker. All notes were captured onscreen for participants to see. All comments later collated and shared on our website May 12.
April 29, 2015	Final online feedback survey open.
May 12, 2015	Public feedback received at April 29 meeting and online survey posted to District website.
June 23, 2015	Public Board meeting. Trustees to vote on recommendations for the Board Chair to send a letter to the Minister of Education outlining the consultation process and feedback and the intention to request exemption from sections 4 through 7 of the <i>Closure of Schools Regulation</i> in the <i>School Act</i> once funding is announced.
May 17, 2017	Letters* provided to parents of all students at Montrose and Mount Royal schools outlining the Superintendent’s intent to bring a recommendation to the Board of Trustees asking them to consider the closure of these schools as part of the consolidation project. Notice of a meeting to be held May 31 included.
May 17 & 24, 2017	Advertisements* ran in the Edmonton Examiner – Zone 2.
May 17, 2017	Facebook advertising and ad graphics* posted to EPSB Facebook platform.
May 31, 2017	Public Meeting at Highlands School Format: Brief presentation followed by an opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback.

*Copies available upon request



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

WARD A Cheryl Johner
 WARD B Michelle Draper
 WARD C Orville Chubb
 WARD D Ray Martin
 WARD E Ken Gibson
 WARD F Michael Janz
 WARD G Bridget Stirling
 WARD H Nathan Ip
 WARD I Sherry Adams

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Darrel Robertson

 Centre for Education
 1 Kingsway NW
 Edmonton AB T5H 4G9
 T 780-429-8000
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 E info@epsb.ca

June 8, 2017

The Honourable David Eggen
 Minister of Education
 424 Legislature Building
 10800 – 97 Avenue
 Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Dear Minister Eggen:

Re: Exemption from Alberta Regulation 238/97

Beginning in April 2014, the Board of Trustees (the Board) for Edmonton Public Schools engaged in an extensive consultation process with the communities for Highlands, Montrose and Mount Royal schools regarding possible consolidation of the students from Montrose and Mount Royal schools into a modernized Highlands School. At the end of a 15 month consultation process, with the support of the community, Administration approved a preferred consolidation concept and the Board approved its placement in the *Three-Year Capital Plan 2016-2019* and the *Three-Year Capital Plan 2017-2020*. We are so pleased that this project has been approved for provincial funding.

In June 2015, we corresponded with you regarding our desire to seek exemption from the requirements of Sections 4 to 7 of Alberta Regulation 238/97, pursuant to Section 1.2(2) of the regulation, once funding was provided for this project. Now that it has been funded, we are taking the next step of formally closing Montrose and Mount Royal schools.

On June 6, 2017, the Board passed a motion to consider the closure of both Montrose and Mount Royal schools. The full report can be accessed on the District website at: <http://www.epsb.ca/ourdistrict/board/meetings/june62017/>.

The process of consultation (attached) has closely aligned with and exceeded the requirements outlined in Sections 4 to 7 of the Closure of Schools Regulation (Alberta Regulation 238/97). As the motion to consider the closure of Montrose and Mount Royal schools was initiated upon the conclusion of the consultation, we are respectfully requesting an exemption from Sections 4 to 7 of the Closure of Schools Regulation (Alberta Regulation 238/97).

Should you grant the exemption, Edmonton Public Schools' administration will recommend that the Board close both Montrose and Mount Royal schools, effective on the last operational day before the modernized Kindergarten through Grade 9 Highlands School is able to accept all students from these schools.

.../2

We are excited about the new learning opportunities that will be available to students at the newly modernized K-9 Highlands School and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle Draper". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "M".

Michelle Draper
Board Chair

MD:kh

Enclosure

Process of Public Consultation for the Greater Highlands Area Consolidation Project and Consideration of School Closures

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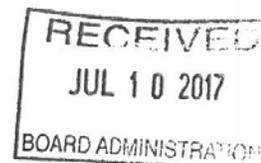
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ALBERTA
EDUCATION

Office of the Minister



JUL 05 2017

AR99054

Ms. Michelle Draper
Board Chair
Edmonton Public Schools
Centre for Education
1 Kingsway NW
Edmonton AB T5H 4G9

Dear Ms. Draper:

Thank you for your June 8, 2017 letter requesting an exemption from Sections 4 through 7 of the *Closure of Schools Regulation (238/97)* pursuant to Section 1.2(2) of the regulation with respect to the closure of Montrose and Mount Royal schools.

I appreciate the information you provided regarding the community engagement that has taken place on the closure of both schools, as well as the opportunity for Edmonton Public Schools to incorporate community ideas into the modernized Highlands School in response to stakeholder feedback. As Minister of Education, I recognize that the consolidation of schools may create efficiencies that improve student learning while getting the best value for Albertans.

As you are aware, the *Closure of Schools Regulation* makes provisions for school boards to be exempted from the requirements outlined in Sections 4 through 7, "if the Minister is satisfied that the board has consulted with the community regarding any change in grades and programs in one or more schools operated by the board."

Based on your June 6, 2017 notice of motion for the closure of Montrose School and Mount Royal School, and in consideration of the evidence of public engagement and consultation undertaken by the board, I hereby grant the board exemption from Sections 4 through 7 of the *Closure of Schools Regulation* for the permanent closure of Montrose and Mount Royal schools.

Your board may now proceed with the plan for the formal closure of Montrose and Mount Royal schools. Please communicate the effective date of the closure by forwarding the board motion, in writing, to my office.

I wish you success in this undertaking.

Sincerely,

David Eggen
Minister