

May 27, 2024

The Honourable Demetrios Nicolaides
Minister of Education
228 Legislature Building
10800 - 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Dear Minister Nicolaides,

Edmonton Public Schools Updated Ten-Year Facilities and Three-Year Capital Plans

Our Board recently approved an updated [10-Year Facilities Plan](#) and our [Three-Year Capital Plan](#). I'm sharing them with you because they tell a very clear story that requires multi-layered and immediate action. With record enrolment growth, it will take 50 new schools to open in the next 10 years to accommodate our growing student numbers.

This reality underlies the importance of viewing our Three-Year Capital Plan as truly a three-year plan for construction announcements. Keeping in mind it takes three to five years to build a school, the current pace of new construction will not be fast enough and additional solutions are required. We also know that we are not the only school division facing the space crunch due to growing enrolment.

We are very appreciative of the new funding announced on March 1 (construction funding for Glenridding Heights 7–12; design funding for a Glenridding Heights K–6, Rosenthal K–6, and McConachie 7–9; and planning funds for a Delton K–6 replacement and Spruce Avenue 7–9 replacement/modernization). We anticipate the much needed Glenridding Heights 7-12 school to open in 2027, one year after our Division surpasses 100 per cent utilization city-wide. Similarly, Edgemont will open two years after we surpass 100 per cent, including the new capacity added with the Glenridding 7-12. While this certainly is a dire situation for students, families, our Division, and Alberta's call for families to make their home here, I am confident that our Division and the Government of Alberta can work together to find innovative, pragmatic and timely solutions.

We have considered many options and have suggestions for a multifaceted approach to meet the demand for the school infrastructure required to accommodate a world class education for Albertans. We feel the multiple approaches, when taken together, are balanced, practical and potentially applicable to other growing school divisions.

Please find appended this letter additional quick facts you may find helpful. I respectfully request a time to meet so that we discuss opportunities to address these challenges and chart a path forward that maintains world class learning environments for all students. I can be contacted at trustee.julie.kusiek@epsb.ca or 780-429-8087 to set up a meeting time.

Sincerely,

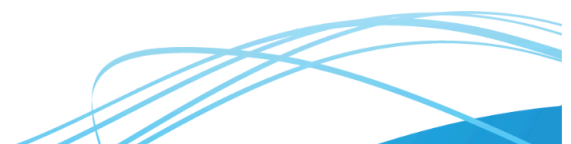


Julie Kusiek
Board Chair

c: Honourable Pete Guthrie, Minister of Infrastructure
 Honourable Nate Horner, Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board
 Honourable Matt Jones, Minister of Jobs, Economy and Trade
 Lora Pillipow, Deputy Minister, Alberta Education
 Jeff Willan, Assistant Deputy Minister, Financial Services and Capital Planning, Alberta
 Education

Attachments: Quick Number fact sheet
 Infrastructure Overview [Two-Pager](#) (also attached)

JK:km



Quick Numbers - Edmonton School Division

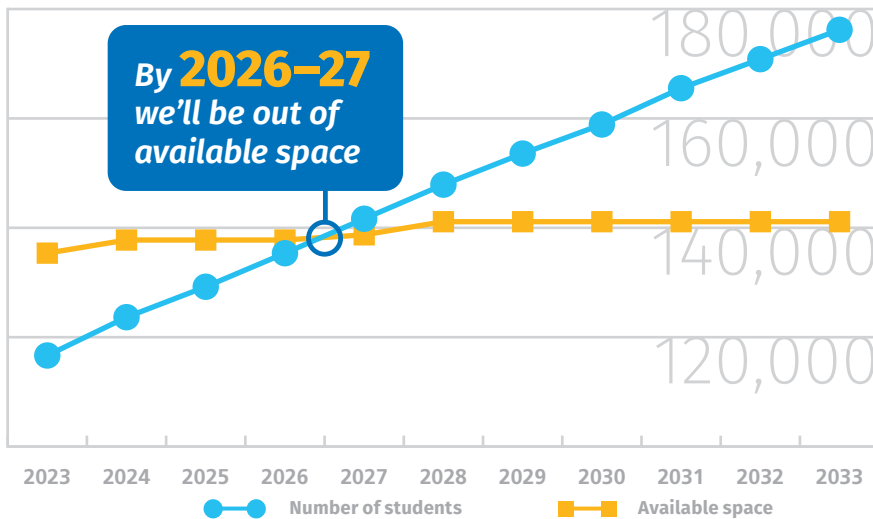
- 60,000 - Number of students above seats available without additional new construction in the next 10 years
- 5,336 new students - The number of new students this year (the largest one-year enrolment increase since 1964 when the City annexed the town of Jasper Place)
- 100 - average number of new students enrolling each week, *after* the September 30 count date
- 6,614 - projected number of new students in the coming school year (that's equivalent to seven K-9 schools of 950 students each)
- 4% - increase in utilization rate from September 2022 to September 2023
- 7% - increase in utilization rate from September 2022 to April 2024
- 82% - utilization rate in September 2022
- 86% - utilization rate in September 2023
- 89% - utilization rate in April 2024
- 100%+ - utilization rate projected by the 2026-2027 school year
- 95% - utilization rate of our 14 attendance area high schools, including opening of Elder Dr. Francis Whiskyjack school in September 2024 (three high school projects are included in Year One priorities in our Capital Plan)
- \$1 billion - value of deferred maintenance by 2024-2025
- 29 - number of child care tenant classrooms we have had to reclaim since 2022

All priorities identified in the Three-Year Capital Plan 2025–2028 have been entered into the provincial Building Land Information System (BLIMS). To meet demand for education with Edmonton Public Schools, all Year One priorities will require construction funding in Spring 2025, and each year thereafter until approximately 60,000 new permanent student spaces have been constructed.

Space to learn is critical to a good education.

Every year, more students enrol in Division schools. With this growth and few new school announcements, there is more pressure on existing school space.

Number of students vs. available space




It takes
3-5
years to
build and open
a new school.

When space is limited, so are parents' options.

As school space fills up, families will have fewer options when schools close boundaries and implement lotteries for registration.



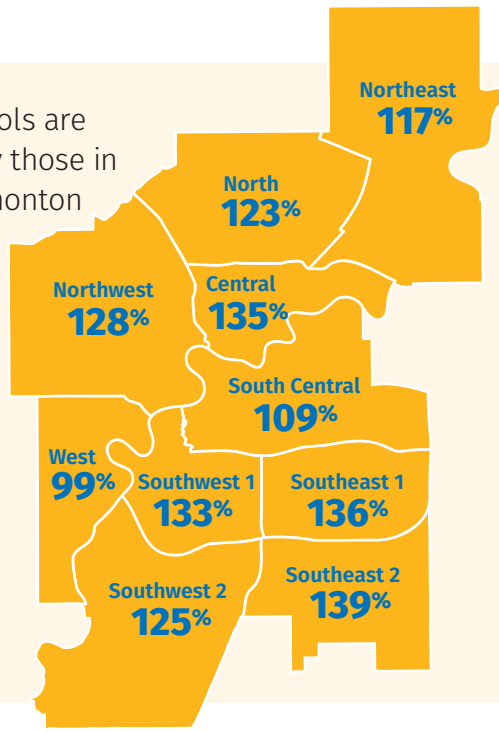
In 2024-25 there will be 7 lottery schools.



We introduced growth control measures in 2020. A **lottery system** is the final stage.

Many Division schools are filling up, especially those in growing, south Edmonton communities.

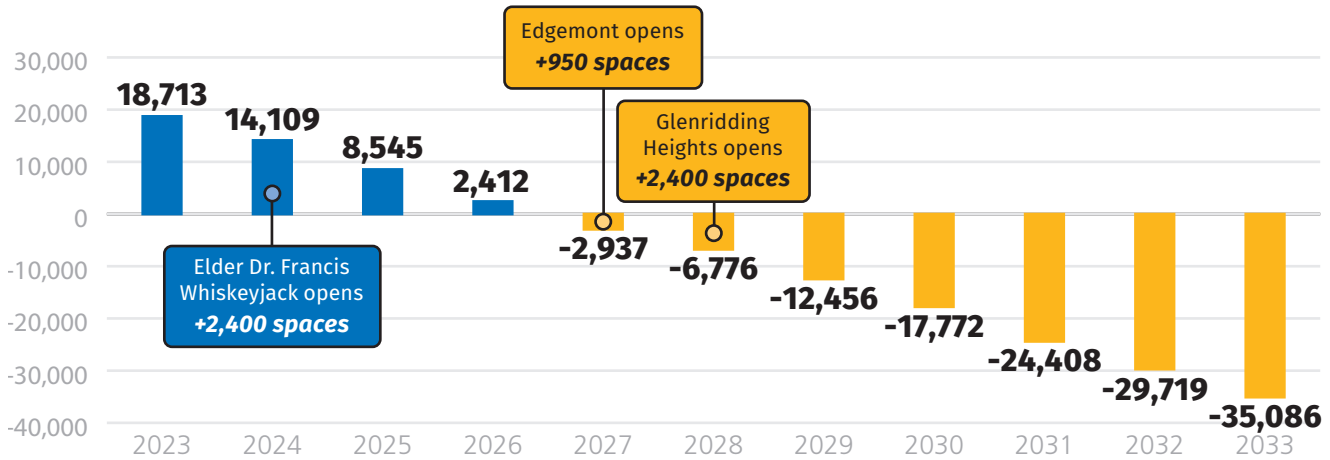
School space usage by 2033



When space is limited, schools prioritize classrooms, so:

- ✓ common areas that benefit students, such as learning commons and art rooms, are turned into full-time classrooms
- ✓ schools reclaim leased space from community partners, such as childcare providers

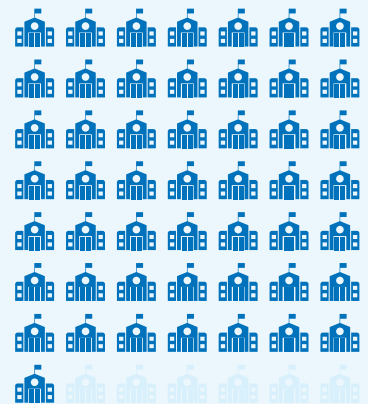
The **growth in Edmonton Public Schools** continues to **outpace the number of student spaces** being added.



By **2033** there will be almost **60,000 more students** than we have spaces for.

115,176 → **176,106**
Students in 2023 → Students in 2033

We need **50 new schools** in the next **10 years** to accommodate our growth.



Visit epsb.ca/schools/spaceforstudents for more information.

