



October 30, 2014

Dear Community Member:

Re: Modulars at Westgate School

Thank you for your patience. It has taken us some time to investigate all of the issues brought forward by the community in order to respond appropriately.

Over the past few weeks the Calgary Board of Education (CBE) has heard the concerns expressed by community members and parents regarding the addition of eight modular units at Westgate School. Questions have been raised about the number of students at the school, traffic safety, loss of green space and the lack of community consultation regarding the school. We appreciate the initiatives of community members and acknowledge the importance of these concerns.

There is an immediate need for more student learning spaces in West Calgary. The addition of seven modular classrooms and a washroom to Westgate School is an interim measure to meet student needs until new, permanent student space becomes available. The Province has recently approved three new CBE schools in the west-side; however, these schools will not be available for students until 2016 and 2017. Meanwhile, the CBE must find a way to accommodate the increasing numbers of students in these programs for the fall of 2015.

The CBE and the Province shared in the modular classroom decision as a short-term response to an urgent situation. The Province and the CBE were in discussions during the month of June regarding modular classrooms. When the Province indicated its willingness to consider modular classrooms at Westgate School, the CBE submitted its request which was subsequently approved at the ministerial level.

As a result, the CBE does not have the jurisdiction to hear an appeal of this decision. The CBE is not in a position to review the processes of a higher level of government.

Community concerns regarding use of green space and traffic flow are best directed to the City's development permit process. As with any new building, the CBE is required to submit a development permit application to the City of Calgary's Building and Development department. The process includes posting a "notice" on the site which indicates to the local community that comments may be provided to the City's file manager. The City of Calgary circulates the development permit plans to the local community association for comments. The CBE invites you to articulate your concerns in this process when the development permit application is submitted to the City in November.

The accommodation of students in the programs at Westgate School is a long-standing issue driven by the growth of these programs and the limits of available student spaces within our system. The complete timeline and evolution of this issue

can be located at http://www.cbe.ab.ca/Schools/ceop/pp12-13/westgate_french_immersion_spanish.asp.

Now our situation has changed again as a result of recent government announcements. The CBE is searching for an approach which would achieve the accommodation goals outlined in previous communications.

CBE Planning staff are currently working through different options, grade configuration possibilities and solutions for the accommodation issues at Westgate School. The goal is to maximize benefits for all students attending both programs at Westgate School. Viscount Bennett Centre was identified as a possible interim location for the Spanish Bilingual Program; however, this is no longer an option as other programs will be relocated to the Chinook Learning Centre in January 2015. We expect to bring options to parents and community members for consideration before the year-end winter break.

This school is important for our students in both programs and to the community. Our Area Director, Director of Planning, and the Principal of Westgate School are committed to ongoing communication with the community and parents on the future of Westgate School.

Sincerely,



David Stevenson
Chief Superintendent of Schools

