

# The Future of CBE High Schools Engagement Roadmap



Calgary Board  
of Education

*dialogue*)))

November 2020

## 1. [CONTEXT](#)

The CBE conducted impacted school engagements in the 2017-18 (Areas 6 & 7) and 2016-17 (Areas 1, 2 & 5) school years for elementary and junior high/middle schools impacted by new school openings in those Areas. High schools were not included in these community engagement initiatives as it was determined at that time that it would be more appropriate to consider all high schools together as a group in making decisions that could affect programming and use of learning spaces at individual schools.

New high schools have opened in recent years (Robert Thirsk, Nelson Mandela and Joane Cardinal-Schubert) and these openings have resulted in lower student numbers in other high schools. The significant difference in enrolment numbers and utilization rates at high schools can create challenges in providing access, flexibility and choice to all our students. In schools with small student populations it may not be possible to offer the same number of complementary/option courses and extracurricular activities as in larger schools. The CBE is committed to providing similar access to learning opportunities for all our high school students in keeping with the expectations of Alberta Education and the CBE High School Success Strategy. This engagement initiative is intended to help us do that.

All CBE community engagement initiatives are conducted in alignment with the [Dialogue Framework](#).

## 2. [THE CHALLENGE](#)

There is a significant imbalance in student enrolment across CBE high schools. This imbalance impacts our ability to provide access, flexibility and choice for all our high school students. We need to develop a sustainable system-wide plan for our high schools that reduces the imbalance we are currently experiencing and effectively manage the use of space to optimize learning now and into the future.

## 3. [PURPOSE: WHAT IS TO BE DECIDED?](#)

The CBE's high school success strategy recognizes that there are many choices in high school and no one path suits everyone. High school has programs and pathways that lead to work, college, technical schools or university. Our strategy is to provide all students with the access, flexibility and choice to pursue the path that is right for them. With this in mind, the CBE has decided that:

*By fall 2021, the CBE will communicate a sustainable system-wide plan for high schools that continues to offer students access, flexibility and choice in programming given available space and resources. The plan will be developed through consultation with affected students, staff, parents and community members, with full implementation of the plan beginning in 2022-2023.*

#### 4. DECISION MAKER

##### CBE Superintendents' Team

#### 5. IN SCOPE OF ENGAGEMENT

Aspects that will be considered within the scope of this high school engagement are as follows:

- a. Location and designated communities/boundaries of existing programs:
  - Regular program
  - Alternative programs
  - Advanced Placement
  - International Baccalaureate Programme
  - International Baccalaureate Career Programme
- b. Expansion and contraction of the following existing programs:
  - Alternative programs
  - Advanced Placement
  - International Baccalaureate Programme
  - International Baccalaureate Career Programme
- c. Grade configurations
- d. Implementation (timing and considerations)

Stakeholders will have the opportunity to provide feedback and input related to the four aspects noted above. The CBE will need to consider budget and resources in developing options/scenarios that will be sustainable over time.

#### 6. OUT OF SCOPE/GIVENS

Givens are those aspects of strategy development that are outside the scope of influence by stakeholders for this engagement. Givens are not constraints to engagement; they provide predictability and structure to stakeholder conversations that will influence decision making. The givens for this engagement will include the following:

## **Government Decisions**

Aspects determined by government will not be part of this engagement. This includes:

- Funding
- Curriculum (Alberta Education continues to guide the work of high school success as represented in the documents: Three outcomes for high school redesign, Nine Foundational Principles for Moving Forward with High School Redesign (MFWHSR) and Four Conditions for Student Success)
- Diploma exam timing
- Required number of instructional hours
- Locations and timing for modernizations and new school construction

## **Partnerships With Other Organizations**

Opportunities provided in partnership with other organizations will not be part of this engagement as they are not governed solely by the CBE. This includes off-campus education and the Calgary Senior High School Athletic Association.

## **System Decisions**

- Budget - the CBE must make financially responsible and sustainable decisions. Budget constraints mean that some programs (career and technology, unique settings, exceptional needs) may be offered in fewer locations. Decisions about the location of these programs must be made at a system-level considering available space and resources and are therefore outside the scope of this engagement. The availability of funds to move or expand existing programs may also be limited.
- System-wide target utilization range for all high schools - will be determined by the CBE, taking into consideration available space now and into the future, optimal enrolment, financial factors and government requirements. The target range for each high school will be 85-95 per cent, assuming that additional high school space will be available through expected new school construction in the next five years. If construction does not occur, this target range may need to be adjusted.
- The CBE continues to provide student learning opportunities in alignment with the direction set by Alberta Education providing: access to high quality teaching, flexible learning environments, and strong relationships where each student feels known, connected and supported in their learning.
- Consistent timetable – has been established for CBE high schools and this consistency must be maintained to ensure students continue to access programs outside their home school if they choose.
- System calendars - these are developed through an ongoing, established process.
- Bell times and transportation services – these are outside the scope of this engagement as they are determined at a system level in alignment with the CBE’s long-term transportation strategy.
- New alternative programs – these will not be considered as part of this engagement process. There is an established [Alternative Program Proposal Process](#) available for those who may be interested.

- Transfers for out-of-boundary attendance - any decisions made regarding transfers and out-of-boundary attendance will be made in alignment with [Administrative Regulation 6090 – Student Registration and Admission](#).
- International students – these students will continue to have opportunities to learn in CBE schools. The school location of international students will be determined at a system level based on the space and resources available across our high schools. [More information is available here](#).
- School funding model - the formula and method used to allocate funds to schools (Resource Allocation Method) will be outside the scope of this engagement.
- Flexibility for individual learners - the CBE will continue to provide students with the flexibility needed to support student learning. Pacing, opportunities to learn online and other factors may be considered. This is outside the scope of this engagement as these are decisions made specific to individual learners.

### **School-Based Decisions**

- School-based decisions - some school-based decisions that respond to the needs and interests of their communities will not be part of this engagement. This includes: course offerings, program enhancement, extracurricular activities, schedules, class sizes, months and hours of operation. If families have questions about these aspects of high school programs and operations, they should contact their school principal.
- Flexibility for individual learners - schools will continue to provide students with the flexibility required to address the needs of individual learners. Pacing, opportunities to learn online and other factors may be considered.

## **7. STRATEGY**

The number of schools participating in this engagement process (65-70 junior high/middle and high schools) will make this a challenging process to manage. The following strategies will be used to make the engagement manageable and relevant to participants and communities.

1. Clearly identify for stakeholders what will guide and influence decision-making:
  - CBE Values: students come first, learning is our central purpose and public education serves the common good
  - CBE Planning Principles:
    - minimize disruptions for students
    - provide program continuity from kindergarten to Grade 12
    - keep cohort groups of students together
    - allow students to attend school as close to home as possible

- provide long term sustainability
    - use space and resources effectively
    - provide equitable access for all students to quality learning environments and choice of programs
  - Financial sustainability and available resources (human resources, space etc.)
  - Stakeholder input and feedback gathered in engagement process
2. School leaders will play a leading role in facilitating and leading conversations within their school communities.
  3. We will provide stakeholders with time prior to the active engagement period to learn about factors influencing the development of a sustainable system-wide plan for high schools.
  4. Communication of background information and engagement opportunities (times, dates and venues) to parents will happen in a reasonable time prior to engagement.
  5. We will work with a representative advisory group at key points throughout the engagement process to provide guidance and input throughout the engagement process. We may also work with other smaller groups of stakeholders not represented on the advisory group at key points throughout the process to ensure their voice is represented.
  6. Existing communication channels and mechanisms will be fully utilized. This includes communication through schools, the CBE website, Twitter and others.
  7. Both internal and external stakeholders will be engaged and have opportunities to provide input.
  8. Participant concerns and aspirations will be considered in the formulation of options.
  9. Stakeholders will have opportunities to contribute in multiple ways (online and in-person, at a school level and at a system level).
  10. A plan will be developed to provide opportunities for some participants whose first language is not English to provide input and feedback in their first language, which will include offering interpretation services at in-person sessions.
  11. CBE trustees and senior staff are encouraged to attend engagement events. Their primary role is to listen to the concerns and aspirations of stakeholders.
  12. System-level engagement opportunities will be structured around geographical groupings of schools, ensuring that discussions amongst participants are focused, relevant and meaningful to them.

## 8. ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

This engagement seeks to achieve three goals:

1. Build understanding and support for decisions on proposed plans for high schools across our system.
2. Facilitate inclusive dialogue among stakeholders to gather feedback that will be considered, along with other factors, in decision-making.
3. Use the input and feedback gathered to influence decisions about the plan and its implementation.

This requires the CBE to meet several objectives, which will result in outputs (tangible deliverables) and outcomes (changes in understanding, perspective, relationships, level of trust, etc.). Both the outputs and outcomes will support the CBE in its decision-making.

**Objective #1:** To inform and communicate with stakeholders about plans to develop a sustainable system-wide plan for high schools.

- a. *Outcome: Stakeholders understand why changes are needed.*
- b. *Outcome: Stakeholders understand the factors affecting decision-making.*
- c. *Output: Communication collateral and messaging.*

**Objective #2:** To gather input from stakeholder representatives about the engagement process.

- a. *Outcome: Stakeholders know how to participate in the engagement process.*
- b. *Outcome: Stakeholders are motivated and participate in engagement activities.*
- c. *Outcome: Stakeholders participate in an ongoing conversation about high schools.*
- d. *Outcome: Advisory group members provide ongoing input on the engagement process.*
- e. *Output: An engagement plan that identifies the engagement process (this document).*

**Objective #3:** To gather input from stakeholders on possible options for a sustainable system-wide plan for high schools.

- a. *Outcome: Stakeholders say they have been listened to and engaged meaningfully in the engagement process.*
- b. *Outcome: Stakeholders understand the opportunities and challenges of proposed options.*
- c. *Output: Stakeholder input is considered in plan decision-making and implementation.*
- d. *Output: Detailed records of engagement activities.*
- e. *Output: Sign-in sheets and contact lists of stakeholders who wish to be involved in the dialogue on the development of a sustainable system-wide plan for high schools.*

**Objective #4:** To inform and communicate with stakeholders how their involvement influenced the sustainable system-wide plan for high schools.

- a. *Outcome: Stakeholders support the decision, based on the engagement process.*
- b. *Outcome: Stakeholders can see they have influenced decision-making as a whole.*
- c. *Output: Timely and transparent communications to stakeholders summarizing input and how it influenced decisions.*

d. *Output: A summary of participant evaluations of the engagement opportunities.*

## 9. STAKEHOLDERS TO PARTICIPATE

### **Directly affected**

Directly affected stakeholders include students, parents and staff from junior high/middle schools and high schools across our system. Given the timeline, junior high/middle school families may be most immediately affected by decisions but all families with current high school students or students entering high school in the future could be affected by these sustainable decisions.

### **Other stakeholders**

Other stakeholders that may be considered through the process include:

- Students, parents and staff from elementary schools across our system
- Community associations and community members
- School councils at high schools and junior high/middle schools
- Student groups at high schools and junior high/middle schools
- School partners of affected schools
- Union groups
- Government
- General public

## 10. COMMUNICATIONS & EDUCATION

A comprehensive communications and education effort is critical to the engagement's overall success. Stakeholders will need to have a clear understanding of the aspects of this engagement that are in-scope and the need to develop a sustainable system-wide plan for CBE high schools. Communications for awareness and education will launch after plans for engagement are confirmed.

A full communications plan will be developed in the near future.

## 11. ENGAGEMENT TIMELINE

Phase 1: Engagement Design	Sept. 2018 – April 2019
Phase 2: Awareness & Education	May 2019
Phase 3: Active Engagement, In-Scope Aspects	May – Oct. 2019
Phase 4: Full Analysis and Review of Phase 3 Input, Scenario Development	Nov. 2019 – Oct. 2020
Phase 5: Active Engagement, Possible Scenarios	Jan. – Feb. 2021
Phase 6: Full Analysis and Review of Phase 5 Input, Proposed Plan Developed	Feb. – April 2021
Phase 7: Active Engagement, Proposed Plan	May – Sept. 2021
Phase 8: Full Analysis and Review of Phase 7 Input	Oct. – Nov. 2021
Phase 9: Finalize and Communicate Decision	By no later than Dec. 2021

Updates on the timeline will be provided on an ongoing basis through our high school engagement e-newsletter. You can subscribe at [www.cbe.ab.ca/highschoolengagement](http://www.cbe.ab.ca/highschoolengagement).