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CBE Area V - Schools Impacted by New Schools Openings

R.T. Alderman School

Session Notes and Evaluation

October 18, 2016

This summary of the feedback from the R.T. Alderman School engagement session on the Area V Scenario opportunities, challenges and other questions and comments was compiled and summarized by Stantec Consulting Ltd.

November 2, 2016



Number of Attendees: 71

Affected Schools: Maple Ridge School
R.T. Alderman School

Scenario 1 Discussion

OPPORTUNITIES

- Science program is a very good option for RTA (X 2).
- Prefer weight given to regular programs.
- Home area benefits.
- Best choice for community.
- Want our students in the community.
- Crossing major road ways is a concern. Scenario 1 is safer.
- Wants priority for students at school and in community.
- Would like choice in community for regular and other programs.
- Viable community school most important.
- Everyone staying within the current walk zone
- Opportunity for science program who wanted to be part of but still wants to stay in the same school.
- Keep vibrancy of the community (draw for young couples)
- Reference to keep all kids here at home (RTA) school
- Long wait list for science at Louie Riel. If we don't get a priority for science, then leave the regular program here at RTA.
- Children are amazing and they adapt.
- Looks like science here would keep school brilliant. Better than having a language program.
- My kids are here and great if they could remain here
- It would help make a decision.
- Our kids can should have this as a first option (to stay here) even if the kid needs to go science program
- (Fairview): Children have move a lot already and we don't want to live that again.
- Keep our kids here and do not ship 200 kids to David Thompson.
- Regular program and science is positive because options are available to both programs.
- Community school continues and program continues to be a community school and not a bus receiver.

CHALLENGES

- Some concerns about dual stream – different treatment and opportunities in same school.
- Perception that science program is better than regular program.
- Once regular program is gone, it's never coming back.
- Different programs better for some kids than others.
- Capacity in the long term



- Resources - science school is expensive

Scenario 2 Discussion

OPPORTUNITIES

- Specialized teachers (resources)
- 80% capacity is better for future students
- Dual track in Scenario 1 eventually dies. And turns into specialized program only
- More space utilized
- Good to have many options offered by the CBE
- Good to have one single culture/ compatible culture in one school.
- Good to consolidate two communities (Maple Ridge and Acadia) (X 2)
- Have risk of local people vs bussed people.
- Will keep science at Louis Riel and science wait list here will be kept down.

CHALLENGES

- Safety (crossing Southland Drive.)
- Capacity will be taken up for both scenario 1 & 2
- More difficulties for kids in the "Gap"
- Matching resources (teachers) to demand of the programs. A challenge for teaching capacities.
- Time line to compare programs, make decisions with respect to enrollment deadlines.
- Need to have regular program available in the community.
- Our community is in transition. Younger families are moving in.
- Community needs priority, our community should come first.
- RTA parent prefers science program over French immersion
- When given option: regular vs. science – will pick science due to location.
- Specialty program concerns
- Preference to have community program at community school.
- New school draw kids back to their own community school. Reference made to new school's opening.
- All schools listed here have different reputation. If we had a choice between David Thompson or RTA, we choose RTA.
- Copperfield/Cranston all kids are losing their friends
- Causes extra stress and moves. This goes against one of the core values listed in power point
- Disruptive to students, all will be bussed. Kids in French and Science are already being bussed. If they are already being bussed, continue to bus them and leave our local kids.
- May be a barrier if kids are to be bussed for a regular program; they are already here so don't bus them.
- If I need to bus my kids this might be a time to consider a different program and not leave them here. Parents would keep their kids and not bus them.
- Preference for single program school versus multi-program.



- Brought kids here to stay here to go through 5 – 9. Keep regular program as parents want to keep students here.
- This is a lot of work just for kids to move for 1 year.

Other Questions and Comments

- Can science and regular be a hybrid, take a bit of both?
- Additional scenario required when there is such a huge demand for French immersion at Fairview.
- Make changes soon - rip Band-Aid off quickly.
- Acadia is a community in transition with many new families moving in.
- More information required on how science compares to regular program, more details, examples. (X 3)
What skills needed to teach science? Do you need a science specialty to teach it? Suggest science open house with children in attendance.
- None of these scenarios address oversubscribed problem.
- Do dual track programs work well and will they affect the future of the regular program?
- How will registration work? Will students currently at school or in the community be given priority?
- What's happening with sports NSA (National Sports Academy)?
- Look long term and see what factors impact decision.
- Will teachers tell you if science is not a fit for your child? Movement if not suitable?
- Is transition significant from regular to science?
- Is there a commitment for before and after school care continuing at Maple Ridge?
- Transportation: busing higher in one scenario over another? (X 3). Do we all pay?
- Will there be enough students in science to make program sustainable long term?
- 10 years ago, we were part of similar situation. The CBE listened to parent feedback then.
- How to integrate well into new program to ensure students will be successful?
- Need to know I have all the information to make the best choice.
- Information about growth projections for population required.
- Sam Livingston issue is not being addressed in these scenarios. Sam Livingston and Fairview have both programs listed and both are oversubscribed.
- Need to know capacities to make informed choice. (X 2)
- If people moving schools had before and after school care, will there be a commitment for that to continue at the new school?
- Question about making the government aware of issues related to new schools.
- Can there be Area V athletics with multiple schools on the same team?
- How will they be able to choose the program that is right for the child? Especially young children.
- Principals need to get together to talk about programs.
- No idea about science program. Host an open house with children there suggested.
- How dual track works – more information needed.
- Need right people in place to make programs work at new location.
- Can you switch students from one stream to another mid-year?
- Decisions are also based on other activities (i.e. band) and what the school council will be like. More than just scenario 1 and 2 described.



- Is there going to be enough capacity in a few years when trend shift, i.e. some students are not currently signing up for programs due to the school of choice?
- French immersion – Maple Ridge Walk Zone – stay in the community i.e. science zone priority “zoning”. How far is the projection?
- What is the capacity for Alderman vs. Maple Ridge?
- Options in junior high i.e. band, fashion, need to take in junior high in order to take in high school. Will these options be there?
- Which scenario gives the school the greater population?
- What is the make-up of the school: boys/girls? Some families chose based on this and also based on sports available.
- Riverbend accepted into RT Alderman. What will happen after this?
- Who gets the parent council money (fundraised previously)? Will it follow the facility or students (who will move)? If it follows the student, what if the student goes to different facilities?
- Dual track if science is in high demand and home program is in low demand. If parent choose science, will this be impacted by the demand of these two programs?
- Regarding school time, will previous time be adopted or will it be updated?
- Is French immersion capacity needed in both scenarios?
- If we decide to go with late French immersion, how much room is there, who gets first choice (how does enrollment work)?
- What is different in a “science school” in comparison to a regular school?
- Are registration deadlines in January? We need enough time to register for specialty programs.

Scenario 1

- Disappointed that nobody here to explain science, for instance, we want CBE planners here to answer questions so that we can make a more informed decision.
- How do you know what we want from the scenarios presented?
- Priority questions regarding kids in program and kids in the system. How do you determine the priority regarding who goes in?
- Regarding identifying our values, where we are trying to get to?
- Is there a massive wait list for French immersion? Is there a massive wait list for Science? Will that determine who gets in?
- Will an oversubscribed program be taking in new kids? Will boundaries change? Could kids be bounded for Louis Riel? Will resources be taken away from science in Louis Riel brought over here from RTA?
- Will RTA students get first choice for the program? Can they choose either or?
- More information on how the scenarios were determined, aging demographics and changing demographics is required.
- If kids are able to stay in RTA, do they need to apply for science in order to stay?



- Is there information available regarding pros/cons of having single programs vs dual programs in a single school? (X 3)
- Will the program share buses?
- Acadia added Grade 5 and there is already not enough capacity. So, how can be added in this scenario?
- Parent want reassurance that kids can stay.
- Not enough answers from the makers of the scenarios available at this meeting.
- We live in Riverbend. Will we get a bus so that we can attend Science program at RTA?
- Goal to have school capacity is 80%. What are the #'s to have 80% capacity?
- Don't understand what is involved in science program. For instance, how difficult is science compared to the regular program?
- Sharing buses in this scenario?
- Dual track: what happens if one track goes up and the other goes down? Is math, English, etc. still offered?
- If science opens, is it open to all of Calgary or just Area V people? Is there a priority for Area V?
- We're not given enough information to make a decision.
- Looks like we will be reallocating kids. How do we support a program in an under-capacity school?
- Pie charts and a Q and A sheet are required.
- Why are new spaces added for science program and not French immersion?
- NSA missing from RTA scenario? Told before that they won't need to move again.
- There is enough capacity with regular home program.
- Will this be run as two separate schools or one?

Scenario 2

- What is the difference between regular and science program? If we had that information, it would help us make a decision.
- Why can't Acadia go to Maple Ridge?
- Is science a draw for all Calgary or just Area V?
- Why will regular David Thompson program move here to RTA?
- There are more students at David Thompson schools, so why are they being moved here?
- Why not make Cranston school a French immersion school because they are already being bussed here?
- Do we have a way to evaluate/monitor new families coming into our community?
- If school switches to a specialty school (i.e. science), could the child have first dibs at that program or do they need to switch?
- Why would RTA go to David Thompson and not David Thompson come to RTA?
- Is there going to be enough capacity in a few years when trend shift, i.e. some students are not currently signing up for programs due to the school of choice?
- The French school is bursting at the seams. Open the new Cranston school as a French school and keep Cranston kids here at RTA.



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- Put worst case for scenario 2 to make scenario 1 a better option. Not good to ship Maple Ridge students out.



Participant Engagement Evaluation

R.T. Alderman School – Host Location: October 18, 2016

- R.T. Alderman School
- Maple Ridge School

Number of participants in attendance: 71

Number of evaluations completed: 20

To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements:

P1) I was encouraged to share my thoughts and/or feedback during this engagement.

16 Agree 4 Somewhat Agree 0 Somewhat Disagree 0 Disagree 0 Not Applicable

P2) I was able to ask questions and learn about the opportunity for input/feedback prior to my participation in this engagement.

6 Agree 8 Somewhat Agree 4 Somewhat Disagree 0 Disagree 2 Not Applicable

- Don't understand the question

P3) I had the information I needed to participate in a meaningful way.

0 Agree 5 Somewhat Agree 3 Somewhat Disagree 12 Disagree 0 Not Applicable

- Much for information needed

P4) I was able to provide input on the best way for me to share my thoughts and ideas.

8 Agree 6 Somewhat Agree 3 Somewhat Disagree 1 Disagree 2 Not Applicable

- ?

P5) I clearly understand all of the factors being considered in the decision making process and which of these factors I can and cannot influence.

2 Agree 4 Somewhat Agree 4 Somewhat Disagree 10 Disagree 0 Not Applicable

- Not clear
- A lot of info mission

P6) My input was documented as part of the engagement process.

14 Agree 6 Somewhat Agree 0 Somewhat Disagree 0 Disagree 0 Not Applicable



P7) What did you like most about this engagement? What did you like least about this engagement?

Comment: 18 No Comment: 2

- Stantec is very well organized and capable of facilitating. Glad to see the CBE engaging professionals to assist.
- We needed more CBE planning people here to give /provide detailed info as required and requested.
- More detailed planning info needs to be provided in advance. i.e., school capacity/program capacity/etc. to better understand scenarios.
- Community based schools are essential to sustainable and viable communities. This should be the priority in planning decisions.
- I would have liked more information to be given for each option. How do dual track schools work. What is the science program look like for K-4. What are the actual #s in terms of students being bused in the new scenarios, etc.....
- Most – hearing the communities thoughts and perspectives.
- Least – Not enough information. Having key players @ the meeting so our conversations could have been more productive.
- Most – opportunity for everyone to give feedback
- Least – not enough info provided e.g. science school -> what is/are the catchment areas, area V or all of Calgary?
- Well organized
- Need to know more about the differences between alt programs and home program.
- Least – should have been more CBE info available i.e. science programming, French programming
- Busing info.
- I liked the circle.
- I found that information/answers were somewhat lacking.
- A lot of people were getting confused, worried instead of firm on their choice or preference.
- The ring leader was very good.
- The circle sucked.
- The planning and transportation people were not here to answer questions.
- I liked that our opinion was documented.
- I did not like that most of our questions were not answered regarding priority enrolment for community kids in the science program and what specifically this program is?
- More info from CBE!!
- Good sized, civil discussion groups. Ability to participate.
- Not prepared/aware of format. Missed early part.
- Most – group chat.
- Least – Did not have enough info on the specialized programs before attending.
- Lack of information about programs, # of students enrolling, etc.
- Liked most – input was noted
- Liked least – Lack of info, representation from experienced dual stream teachers, principals, student experience not available. No comments on if program does not fit your child, what happens. Science lens – what does this mean? Description on CBE website should be happening in all curriculum.
- Liked – Sharing ideas. Meeting others from the community.
- Disliked – Scenarios missing the numbers (populations impacted, \$\$\$)
- Least – No one here to answer questions about what the Science programs or French programs. No one here to explain why the 2 scenarios were picked. No one here from planning or transportation.
- The thing I liked the least was the fact that there was no one present from planning etc. who was able to answer our questions so we could understand the options.

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- We should have just been able to sit around and discuss everything instead of the inner circle to talk.
- Well organized.