

The Calgary Board of Education

Minutes of the Public Input Meeting Regarding Consideration of Closure of National Sport School, held virtually through Microsoft Teams, on Wednesday, November 4, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE (Virtual)

Board of Trustees:

Ms. M. Dennis, Board Chair, Trustee – Wards 5 & 10
Ms. T. Hurdman, Trustee – Wards 1 & 2
Ms. A. Adams, Board Vice-Chair, Trustee – Wards 3 & 4
Mr. R. Hehr, Trustee – Wards 8 & 9
Ms. J. Hrdlicka, Trustee, Wards 11 & 13
Mr. M. Bradshaw, Trustee, Wards 12 & 14

Administration:

Mr. C. Usih, Chief Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Superintendent Breton, Superintendent, Facilities and Environmental Services
Ms. D. Unruh, Acting Superintendent, School Improvement
Ms. K. Fenney, General Counsel and Procedural Advisor to the Board
Ms. L. Campbell-Walters, Director, Planning
Mr. R. Jewan, Acting Principal, National Sport School
Ms. J. MacDonald, Principal, Bowness High School
Ms. Director Randhawa, Education Director, Area 1
Mr. E. Sutlic, Director, Corporate Finance
Ms. T. Minor, Corporate Secretary
Ms. M. Geyer, Communications Advisor
Ms. D. Perrier, Board Administrator

WELCOME, ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND INTRODUCTIONS

Board Chair M. Dennis called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. and noted she would Chair the Meeting. She noted that to ensure the CBE is complying with COVID-19 related health measures, whenever possible meetings are being hosted virtually. Chair Dennis acknowledged the traditional territories and oral practices of the Blackfoot Nations, which includes the Siksika, the Piikani, and the Kainai. She also acknowledged the Tsuut'ina and Stoney Nakoda First Nations, the Métis Nation (Region 3), and all people who make their homes in the Treaty 7 region of Southern Alberta.

Introductions were made of The Calgary Board of Education (CBE) Trustees and Administration in attendance. The Chair also welcomed CBE teachers, staff, members of the public and students.

Chair Dennis stated that the meeting was being recorded for the purpose of maintaining an accurate internal record of the proceedings, and that minutes of the meeting will be available on the CBE website at www.cbe.ab.ca prior to the Board of Trustees making a decision on this matter.

Chair Dennis reviewed the agenda for the meeting, as follows:

1. Opening Remarks
2. Meeting Purpose and Outline
3. Meeting Guidelines
4. CBE Administration Presentation
5. Questions and Comments
6. Closing Remarks

OPENING REMARKS

Chair Dennis spoke to the role of the Board of Trustees in the closure consideration process. She noted that the Board of Trustees has the sole responsibility and authority to make closure decisions, and she clarified that no decision has been made at this time.

In accordance with Alberta legislation and the Board's Closure of Schools Procedure, the consideration of closure process has many steps to it.

As part of the process, at the regular Board of Trustees' meeting held Tuesday, October 13, 2020, the Board passed a motion to commence the public input process to consider the closure of National Sport School. This was a decision to initiate the consideration of closure process - not a decision to proceed with the closure.

The rationale, pertinent facts, and information about the proposed closure is available on CBE's public website and National Sport School website. This information is one part of the information that has been, and will be, reviewed and considered by Trustees. Before making any final decision on the closure of a school, the Board follows a process to secure additional input from parents and the general public, including:

- convening this public input meeting to provide important and relevant information; and
- providing an opportunity for the public to share their perspectives with the Board.

Following this meeting, additional public comments or concerns may be provided in writing by Wednesday, November 18, 2020. The details for written submissions are set out in the parent letter sent through School Messenger on October 15, 2020 and the details for submissions are also available on the CBE public website. Trustees are here to listen to your comments and questions as your input will inform the Board's decision-making on this matter. Throughout tonight's discussion and the entire consideration of closure process, Trustees will be paying close attention to what the public have to say.

All of the information collected during the consideration of closure process will be weighed very carefully by Trustees before any final decision is made.

The Board of Trustees tentatively anticipates debating the merits of this matter and making a decision regarding the proposed closure on Wednesday, November 25, 2020 at a public meeting of the Board of Trustees.



The Board's ongoing commitment is to provide educational programs and services in suitable facilities throughout Calgary. To honour that commitment, the Board needs to take into consideration many factors including student enrolment levels, the ability to resource instructional programming, the health and safety of students, and accessibility. The Board also considers financial factors, to ensure the CBE is using resources effectively. The Board takes the information received and makes decisions, on a system-wide basis, serving the overall interests of public education within the CBE.

Consideration of closure of a school is a serious matter to the Board of Trustees. The Board also appreciates that it is very significant to the students, parents and other members of the community.

The attendance of CBE administration is to assist the Board with the presentation, to respond to the public's questions, and to help Trustees manage the process for this meeting.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, Chair Dennis thanked everybody for attending the meeting.

MEETING PURPOSE AND OUTLINE

Chair Dennis noted the purpose of the meeting is two-fold: firstly, it is for Administration to outline the rationale for the proposed closure, and share information about the timing of the proposed closure and the accommodation plan for students affected; secondly, it is to provide the public an opportunity to share their perspectives about the proposed closure with the Board.

The agenda has been arranged to ensure that everyone will have ample opportunity to ask questions and make any comments they may have. The public's comments and questions at this meeting will form part of the formal material that the Board of Trustees will consider, as they review this matter and ultimately reach a decision.

MEETING GUIDELINES

Chair Dennis asked everyone to observe the meeting guidelines, which included:

- muting microphones except when called on to speak;
- comments and questions to be addressed following the presentation portion of the meeting;
- limiting questions or comments to three minutes; and
- being respectful of differing opinions and everyone's right to speak.

ADMINISTRATION PRESENTATION

CBE Planning Principles

Administration shared the factors considered when planning for student accommodation, as outlined in the CBE Administrative Regulation 1090. These principles include:

- Use space and resources effectively
- Provide long term sustainability



- Provide equitable access for all students to quality learning environments and choice of programs
- Keep cohort groups of students together

Rationale for the Proposed Closure

Administration provided an overview of following factors considered in bringing a recommendation to the Board of Trustees to commence the public input process to consider the closure of National Sport School:

- The National Sport School lease was intended to be temporary
- National Sport School was previously supported within other CBE high schools
- Bowness High School offers high quality programming and has experience with high performance athletes
- Opportunities to support students in a more financially sustainable way

Background – Program Timeline

The National Sport School was created as a special focus/interest program offered through the CBE and Canada Olympic Development Association (CODA) in 1994. It was designed as a unique setting and delivery focus accommodating the sporting and learning needs of athletes in Grades 9-12. For the first 17 years of its existence, National Sport School operated out of two different high schools – William Aberhart High School and then the old Ernest Manning High School. There was insufficient space for the program at the new Ernest Manning High School and the program moved in 2011 to WinSport at Canada Olympic Park on a temporary lease.

The Alberta Government had pledged money for a capital project based on negotiation for the old Ernest Manning High School site, where the school was demolished to make way for the new C-train line. The money pledged was contingent upon the CBE covering the remaining cost of building a new school at WinSport.

The National Sport School was first identified on the Three-Year System Student Accommodation Plan (SSAP) 2013-2016. At that time, the SSAP referenced that the construction of a new facility for National Sport School was on hold and that an alternative accommodation plan may need to be determined. This school has remained on the SSAP since that time.

With the National Sport School lease expiring in June of 2020, the CBE reached out to parents, students, staff and the community in November 2019 and then in June 2020 to discuss the possibility of closure of the school. Feedback was also collected through an online survey at that time. In November of 2019 WinSport offered an extension of the lease for National Sport School for one year, for \$1.00. The CBE accepted that very gracious offer in March 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic then came about and the matter was essentially put on hold.

Current Student Enrolment

As of September 30, 2020 there were 185 students enrolled in the program. One-fifth (1/5) or 37 students were from outside the CBE. There were no international students enrolled.



Projected Enrolment for National Sport School

Enrolment in the program is expected to decline over the next five years – a decline from 185 students in 2020 to 143 students by 2025. There was recognition that Administration may have created uncertainty by discussing the possibility of closure which may have impacted the attractiveness of the school. As such, parents and students may not want to commit to a school that is experiencing these circumstances.

Financial Impacts of the School

For the 2019/2020 school year, operating costs to the CBE were \$1.8 million, which includes a combination of staffing costs, supplies for delivering the program and miscellaneous operating costs including the WinSport lease. Staffing represents approximately 90% of the costs, which are a combination of administration, teachers, learning leaders and other support staff.

For the 2020/2021 school year, the Resource Allocation Method (RAM) is approximately \$1.25 million.

If the school were to close, the CBE's cost would be reduced by a further \$350,000 per year. These costs include over \$242,000 in school administration and support staff, and \$108,000 in lease costs. The remaining amount from the RAM allocation would be re-assigned to Bowness High School or other designated high school through the CBE methodology for allocating resources to schools (known as the RAM).

In total, the net reduction of both the modified program support and possible closure amount to approximately \$900,000.

Proposed Student Accommodation Plan

Should the Board of Trustees decide to close the National Sport School, students will be accommodated at either Bowness High School or within their designated high school. All current National Sport School students that have an interest in attending the Bowness High School will be integrated with other students for some classes, and could access WinSport by self-transportation or transit.

This accommodation plan was informed by community feedback in addition to the planning principles of keeping cohorts of students together, providing long-term sustainability and using space and resources effectively within the CBE.

Bowness High School – Capacity, Space and Access

The current capacity at Bowness High School is 1647. Current enrolment is 1149 students as of September 30, 2020: 889 students in the regular program; 18 students in special education; and 242 out-of-attendance area students

At a current utilization rate of 70%, Bowness High School has the space and capacity to accommodate all National Sport School students for the 2021/2022 school year and beyond. With



the addition of National Sport School, the utilization rate of Bowness High School is projected to reach over 80% by the 2021/2022 school year.

Additionally, the CBE has implemented precautionary measures to reduce the risks presented by COVID 19 in schools. These measures align with Alberta Health Services, and Alberta Education.

Bowness High School also has the advantage of being close to WinSport (3 km away). Transportation to school and between Bowness and WinSport would be private or City Transit as a responsibility of families.

Projected enrolment for Bowness High School (2020-2025) indicates that the school will have capacity to have more students in the next few years.

CBE Capital Plan Impacts

The Ten-Year Student Accommodation and Facility Strategy identifies elevated high school enrolment. Requirements for Bowness High School to accommodate students is projected for the foreseeable future.

Education and Program Impacts

Plans for transitions is a collaborative effort involving students, families and staff. Should the Board decide to close the National Sport School and the students are accommodated at Bowness High School, the transition plan would see students attend mainstream classes with other National Sport School students throughout the day. Timetabling and scheduling for each semester will be done with the Guidance team and will be personalized to support students. Programming will include both a blended and flexible approach, with accessibility to on-line learning. Attending Bowness High School also opens up a greater opportunity for selection of complementary courses.

Some National Sport School staff will have an opportunity to move with students to Bowness to support learning continuity. A learning leader will be allocated for the 2021-2022 school year to support the National Sport School student body transitioning to the school and would remain closely connected to the students.

Grade 9 is currently not offered at Bowness High School, but this grade level can be added to accommodate students wishing to attend from National Sport School if a minimum cohort size of twenty-five (25) is attained for the 2021-2022 school year. Interested future Grade 9 students would have opportunities to engage in and attend the open-house opportunities.

Proposed Timeline for Implementation

The proposed timeline for implementation, should the decision be made to close the school, was reviewed:

- This public meeting of November 4
- Board of Trustees' public meeting, decision for National Sport School on November 25



- If the Board of Trustees' decision is to close National Sport School, transition planning for students will be initiated between January and June 2021
- Implementation – school's relocation to Bowness High School September 2021/2022

OPEN DISCUSSION, QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM PARENTS AND PUBLIC

Chair Dennis reiterated the Trustees were present to hear public input and that they will ultimately be the sole decision makers regarding the status of the National Sport School. She pointed out it would not be appropriate in the middle of the process for Trustees to respond directly to questions or to engage in debate. She asked that questions or comments be indicated in the chat box, and as the meeting Chair she would direct the question to an appropriate CBE staff member for response. She asked the public to state their first and last name and spell it for the record, and identify their interest or relationship to National Sport School.

Chair Dennis opened the meeting to questions or comments from the public.

Karl Riabowol, parent, noted the total budget for CBE is approximately \$1.375 billion and a potential savings from closure of the National Sport School is \$1.25 million. He felt this was a trivial amount in savings and questioned the rationale for the proposal to close National Sport School, which he noted to be a high point for sport in Calgary and a gem of a school to current and past students.

Superintendent Breton stated when the CBE looks at the overall portfolio of schools, it is necessary to look at the wellbeing of over 120,000 students and to attend to their learning needs. The CBE has a multitude of different schools and different settings for students, according to their needs, and attempts to balance that to the best extent possible. As the pressures on the province increase, CBE finances are further pressed, and it is challenging to find better opportunities and ways to serve our students. He point out that all along, and throughout the years, the CBE had its sights on how the National Sport School could be better served and this is an opportunity to do that; and, at the same time allow financial resources to be redirected elsewhere for continued support of learning opportunities in the system.

Lauchlan Currie, member of Parents and Friends of the National Sport School, noted the difference with the program of past was that it was not integrated within the school, but was a school within a school. He shared his opinion that Bowness High School is not a viable solution, and that he heard from parents a resounding negative response on the Bowness option. He believed the class sizes will be large, there will be pressure placed on teachers with having to manage both regular students and the National Sport School students; and that a resentment amongst regular students will be created with the flexibility of timetabling offered to students from the National Sport School. He shared that WinSport is a first class, World Class facility; that there is a very strong culture built within the school and it has a very strong academic standing. He commented on the pursuit of another option, that being a smaller school board bringing the National Sport School into its jurisdiction, which he believed would be a win-win for the CBE and for National Sport School students.

Karl Riabowol expressed his hope that a solution will be found that works in the best interest of students. He pointed out that the academics ranking for National Sport School is very high. He shared that the arithmetic does not add up for him in regards to savings, and questioned how



saving on average \$10 per student in the CBE is worth shutting a school that is renowned for what it does. He concurred with the previous comment that not many families are keen on the option presented by the CBE. If there is an alternative for having the National Sport School under some other auspices, he looks forward to that.

Lindsey Fair, parent of a student attending the National Sport School, shared her understanding of the difficulty Trustees are facing with cuts across the province and throughout the school division, and that Trustees must imagine the hard decisions that parents have to make. She shared that the proposed transition for her son would not be viable for her child. In her understanding, it would involve a bus ride of about one minute with a walk of about 34 minutes, along busy roads; workouts three times a day at the National Sport School; additional trips if he should have to attend physiotherapy treatment due to injury, or meet with his sport therapist or nutritionist. She questions how much school time could fit into one day with that number of walks between the National Sport School and Bowness High School. She stated her son would be absent from school for six weeks for travel and as a member of a national team. She requested the Board of Trustees to close the National Sport School and support its transition to Palliser School Division.

Kevin Barr, member of Parents and Friends of the National Sport School, expressed appreciation to the Board of Trustees and the CBE for taking interest and hearing the public comments. He echoed comments made in support of closure of National Sport School, so long as a transition could occur to the Palliser School Division. He referenced statements on the webpage of Bowness High School, with respect to the High Performance Athlete Development Pathway, noting that they are unable to accommodate student absences of more than two weeks, and suggests that families look into the National Sport School. He thanked all teachers and administrators at National Sport School for their tireless work through these issues over the past two years. He referenced a press release back in 2011, when the National Sport School moved to WinSport, and that shared the importance of the personalization of learning for CBE students. He pointed out that no reference at that time was made of the move being a temporary solution. He noted if the CBE continues to be committed to personalized learning for each student every day, no exceptions, then the Board should support the closure of the National Sport School and its transition to Palliser School Division so that those fundamental core values can be recognized in the future and ensure the viability of National Sport School at WinSport.

Lorèn Lailey-Irvine, parent of a student attending the National Sport School, commented on the uniqueness of the school and on the focus and dedication of students to succeed at their sport while maintaining their academic success. She noted that the dedicated vision of the CBE and its prioritization of student needs was responsible for the creation of this program back in 1994, and countless Canadian athletes have found academic, sport and life successes as a result of this commitment. She shared her hope that the alternative to the Bowness option is worthy of the Board's consideration; and that parents and community of the National Sport School and the CBE can work together to ensure the continuation of the National Sport School at WinSport, within a new school division.

Janine Heiderich, parent of a student with special learning needs attending the National Sport School, noted that her family provided a letter to the Board of Trustees. She shared some of their reasons for choosing the National Sport School over Bowness High School. She noted the small class sizes, increased access to medical professionals and flexible timetabling has had a positive



impact on the well-being of her child. The proposed transition would see her child hauling skates every day on the bus between the two schools and their home. She expressed support for the transfer of the National Sport School to the jurisdiction of the Palliser School Division.

Bruce Irvine, parent of a student attending the National Sport School, expressed his opinion that this matter is not an enrolment issue; that most of these kids will not transfer to Bowness High School; and that the CBE administration's assumption that this will help Bowness High School is faulty. He expressed his belief that the Board of Trustees would not want to make a decision that is not in the best interest of these students. He believed there to be a win-win solution available, which he was hopeful the Board would discuss such options with the public who were present for this engagement.

Ali Smith, parent of a student attending the National Sport School, shared her understanding that prior to WinSport, the National Sport School was a school within a school. Students were not integrated with mainstream classes, as is suggested in the proposed student accommodation plan for Bowness High School. She spoke about sport injuries and student accessibility to physical therapy at the National Sport School, noting that many of these athletes suffer injuries and require additional time off from their academic learning classes, over and above the time required of them for their sport. She reiterated that the webpage for Bowness High School states they are unable to accommodate student absences of more than two weeks. Ms. Smith stated that the high level of athletes and Olympians produced, the support to students and high academic achievement of students, speaks highly of the National Sport School at WinSport. She requested that Trustees help make the transition of students as smooth as possible, to close the program and help students transition to the Palliser School Division.

Director Randhawa acknowledged elements seen on the website for Bowness High School are the current representation. She stated that should the Board of Trustees make the decision to close the National Sport School, within the transition plan for students Administration would look at offering flexibility for students in the High Performance Athlete Development Pathway.

Eva Glod, parent of a student attending the National Sport School, noted that her daughter's athletic training amounts to approximately 12 to 40 hours per week, and two months of absence from school over the year. She shared how the National Sport School works so well for her daughter in both sports and academics. She stated that she would not place her child in Bowness High School and requested Trustees to keep the National Sport School in operation at WinSport.

Chris Luscombe, parent of a student attending the National Sport School and a student attending Bowness High School, noted that the training and competition schedule make it impractical for his daughter to attend Bowness High School. He recommended that Trustees cease operations of the National Sport School and help transition the program to the Palliser School Division.

David Krease, parent of a student attending the National Sport School and a student attending Bowness High School, stated his high regard for both schools. He explained the training needs for his athletic child and rationale for choosing the National Sport School, which included the proximity of the school to the Calgary Gymnastics Centre. He noted that he sent correspondence to the Board of Trustees explaining how they receive much more from the National Sport School, in terms of the caring, the teachers and small class sizes. He shared his understanding that Calgary Transit route from Bowness High School takes a traveler to the downtown, where a transfer must



be made to travel back to the National Sport School. He requested that the Board of Trustees transition the school to the Palliser School Division and keep it at WinSport.

David Planden, parent of a student attending the National Sport School, expressed how engaging and open to successful opportunities the school is. He questioned due diligence in terms of what was done with respect to the economics; what options were considered; what was the process for consideration of program changes; what other funding mechanisms were looked at; and whether further parental support could address some concerns. He expressed his belief that the CBE has put forward mixed messaging.

Superintendent Breton stated this is not a relocation of the National Sport School – it is a closure consideration with the proposed accommodation of existing students into another high school and in the mainstream programming. He commented on the process that included the review and monitoring of the Ten-Year Student Accommodation and Facilities Strategy and the Three-Year System Student Accommodation Plan (SSAP). He noted that the bulk of funding provided by the provincial government is on a per student basis, not necessarily on a per facility basis. The CBE aims for a mid to high 80% utilization rate for schools, meeting the provincial requirements for maximizing the dollar received from a facility perspective, and maximizing the flexibility within the school for learning opportunities. He stated that Rosscarrock School is also undergoing a closure consideration process and there are other schools identified in the SSAP that are under review. He noted the provincial financial framework under which the CBE operates has changed dramatically through the school year. The CBE model of operating does not necessarily lend itself to small schools, whereas other school divisions are better equipped to operate small schools, as they have better mechanisms and processes in place that can allow them to fund these schools in a different way that is not available to CBE. He pointed out the report to the Board on October 13, 2020 did not include the option of transitioning the National Sport School to the Palliser School Division because other school jurisdictions are not within the control of the CBE.

Erick Salkeld, grandparent of a student attending the National Sport School, commented that his granddaughter's academics, athletics and social skills are at 100% as a National Sport School student. He questioned the CBE financials showing a \$1.8 million cost for operations of the National Sport School and asked if that is a net cost, noting that parents pay fees to the National Sport School. He also asked what the cost savings would be aside from the administration area.

Superintendent Breton noted parents pay a fee of \$4,750 directly to WinSport for the provision of services and access to their facilities. He pointed out that none those dollars flow back to the CBE. The costs depicted in the financials are entirely born by the CBE. Director Sutlic added that some of the administrative costs would be assimilated into the other schools that the students would move to, so there would be some duplication that would result and there would be some synergies of those people moving back into schools.

Mark Heiderich questioned the status of the Alberta government grant of \$3 million if the CBE closes the National Sport School. He noted that socially, academically and athletically, the National Sport School has been a fantastic fit for their son and that Bowness High School is not an option for their family. He shared that with these students having to train for up to 40 hours per week, two times per day, the travel between schools will be offbeat and in the dark, and some of these students are still quite young. He commented that it is important to have flexibility for these



students. He felt that motivation for the proposed closure may be related to the under-utilization of Bowness High School.

Superintendent Breton reiterated the \$3 million pledge by the province was offered in 2011, when the new Ernest Manning High School was built and at that time was contingent on CBE finding the remaining funds for a purpose-built facility for the National Sport School. Whether that money is still available would be a question for the government.

James Waddock, parent of a student attending the National Sport School, questioned how the transition of the National Sport School to another school division would occur and whether parents would be participants in that process.

Superintendent Breton shared the CBE made a commitment to work with other jurisdictions that might be interested in operating the National Sport School. Discussions commenced between the CBE and the Palliser School Division on October 13, 2020 and the CBE is sharing with them the financials, the structure of the school, etc., to allow them to consider making a business case to operate the school should our Board of Trustees make the decision to close National Sport School. It would then be up to the incoming school division to decide on the implementation plan and work with parents.

Lucy Philip, parent of a student attending the National Sport School and a graduate of the school, shared that both her children thrived both academically and athletically at the school. She shared her knowledge that high school girls drop out of sport at twice the rate of boys, and that Canadian research done this year indicates that high school girls drop out at more than three times the rate of boys. She shared her belief that the National Sport School bucks that trend and asked how Bowness High School will create a culture that promotes females in sport that differs from the average high school. She stated that she supports any solution that allows the school to retain the WinSport location and the athletes' specialism.

Principal MacDonald noted that over 50% of the students in the High Performance Athlete Development Pathway at Bowness High School are females, and that the attrition rate at the school does not differ between males and females from either sports or athleticism.

Kevin Barr shared that missing from the enrolment projections is information to back up the numbers and he challenged those projections. He expressed his concern that he is not hearing full on that Bowness High School would support long-term student absences. He shared his belief that the National Sport School is operating this year on a skeleton staff and that keeping the school at WinSport in its current form is not sustainable.

Superintendent Breton acknowledged the uniqueness of the school adds an additional degree of complexity in terms of identifying enrolment projections. He noted the numbers show that Bowness High School has more than enough space to accommodate and support students from the National Sport School should the transition follow through as proposed. Director Randhawa confirmed flexibility around extended absences would be made possible at Bowness High School; and as a result of the pandemic the move to on-line learning has allowed the CBE to create very strong on-line digital platforms.



Superintendent Breton added that new funding seen for the National Sport School is reflective of the funding that other CBE high schools receive. In previous years, students at the National Sport School received a substantial top up, above and beyond the resource allocation model, and that has now been adjusted to align to new circumstances and the new funding framework.

Beth Huckerby, parent, questioned whether consideration was given to the sense of community for these athletes, and recognition given to the commitment of these very young athletes to bring exposure to the city through their sport. She shared her belief that this conversation seems a bit in reverse, when we should be doing everything possible to support this commitment of our future athletes.

Gaylene Layden, parent of a student attending the National Sport School, asked about the different timetable, where students attending the National Sport School have a fixed one and Bowness High School students are on a rotating timetable. She also questioned the comparison of costs for 2019/20 against funding for 2020/21, knowing the funding model has changed.

Principal MacDonald noted students have four classes during a typical day, morning classes are always morning classes and afternoon classes are always afternoon classes, with some minor toggling of start/end times. The timetable at Bowness High School is as flexible as possible to meet student needs, including those students who have courses off campus.

Superintendent Breton clarified the slide showing the 2019-20 budget for the National Sport School of \$1.8 million was identified to help put in perspective what it was when the CBE was under the old funding framework, and the topping up of additional funding above what other CBE high schools were receiving. The \$1.25 million shows what it is today, with the shift made to funding the National Sport School in the same fashion as funding other CBE high schools.

Bruce Irvine shared his concern that assumptions may have been made in the school enrolment projections for Bowness High School. He shared that it appears a significant driver of the proposed transition of students to Bowness High School is to increase capacity at the school. He reiterated previous public comments on the uniqueness of the National Sport School and the frequency of trips the students would have to make between schools, which he stated was not viable.

Superintendent Breton noted there was a time in the CBE when the personalization of learning equated to the creation of programs or schools, each one specific to a certain group. For the CBE of the future, as it comes to grips with the new funding realities, it is trying to place emphasis on the strength that exists within a community school and personalized learning that can happen within that community school. Administration recognizes the risk that students from the National Sport School will not opt in to the proposed transition plan.

Matthew Fair, parent, asked with the budget savings presented, what was the assumption on the percentage of students that would move to another high school.

Superintendent Breton noted the financial impacts reflect the actual costs and the new operating budget of \$1.25 million, aligning with the new funding framework and no top up of funds for the National Sport School. He stated there is no assumption of how many students would stay with



the program, because those numbers reflect the actual number of students that were at the school in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021.

In response to CBE revenue from the National Sport School, Superintendent Breton noted the savings is a result of the overhead within the school administration. It is not a question of accounting for students as revenue, especially given that the new funding framework dilutes that. In the past, Alberta Education funded school boards based on the actual student enrolment. As of September 1, 2020, funding moved to a weighted moving average based on projected and actual student enrolment over a three-year period. It accounts for 50% of projected enrolment for the upcoming school year, 30% of the actual number of students enrolled in the previous year and 20% of the enrolment the year prior to that. This formula is very good for protecting school jurisdictions that have either stable enrolment or declining enrolment, but for growing school jurisdictions, it has the opposite effect. He noted the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) funding component of the grants received from the government attempts to incent school boards to maximize utilization of their schools by only funding O&M at 100% if a school is at 85% utilization or higher; a leased facility does not attract any such funding.

Karl Riabowol, parent of a child thinking of joining the National Sport School, noted his child's aspirations to represent her country and spending between 30 and 40 hours per week practicing her sport, while maintaining a very good academic average. He shared his understanding of the CBE trying to optimize on the high utilization of its buildings and its financial constraints; but he does not hear how the CBE recognizes that these students have "special needs" in terms of their goals for high achievement in sports and academics. He expressed that it does not make sense to him what the CBE is willing to lose, which includes a gem of a school with a high ranking of academic achievement. He shared his belief that a savings of \$10 per student is not worth all of the effort in this closure consideration.

Superintendent Breton stated if you take 120,000 students and multiple that by \$10 per student you arrive at the figure of \$1 Million in savings, per year. The CBE perspective goes back to the former funding framework where CBE would provide specialized programs; going forward the focus is on the strength that can exist within community schools, knowing that budgetary concerns are not going to be resolved in one, two or even three years. The CBE has to adjust and rapidly. Looking at the Ten-Year System Student Accommodation Plan, with lower birth rates within the city, we are actually seeing a decline of enrolment in the elementary schools, which will roll up over time into the middle and then the senior high schools. In closing, he remarked that the 120,000 students in the CBE must be treated equitably.

CLOSING REMARKS

Chair Dennis reiterated that following this public meeting the public has until Wednesday, November 18, 2020 to provide further written submissions for the Trustees regarding this closure consideration, to the following:

Attention: Prem Randhawa
CBE
728 – 32 Street NW
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Chair Dennis thanked everybody for attending the meeting and for providing respectful comments and input. The Board of Trustees tentatively anticipates debating the merits of this matter and making a decision regarding this school closure consideration on or about Wednesday, November 25, 2020 at a public meeting of the Board. The observations, comments and questions by the public are valued and will form part of the material that Trustees will consider as they review the matter and ultimately reach a decision. She noted that the public's input at this meeting has been an important contribution to the Board of Trustees' decision-making process.

Chair Dennis declared the meeting closed at 9:33 p.m.

Note to Reader:

The Minutes of the Public Input Meeting Regarding Consideration of Closure of the National Sport School, held virtually through Microsoft Teams on Wednesday, November 4, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. include the major points of discussion - they are not a verbatim transcript of the meeting.

