

questions & answers

An Interim Solution to Capacity Issues at Ernest Manning High School

Ernest Manning High School (EMHS) opened in 2011, and enrolment has been increasing at a steady rate since that time. Enrolment at EMHS as of Sept. 30 was 1,996. The provincial capacity of the school is 1,676. It's important to note that the building occupant load (the fire code capacity) is 2288 persons.

Without making any changes to the communities designated to EMHS, projected enrolment at the school in 2020-21 would be 2,170 and reach 2,290 in the 2021-22 school year. At that size, it would be challenging for the school to provide optimal learning opportunities for students, as well as exceeding the building occupant load.

With the changes made as a result of this re-designation of communities, the projected enrolment in 2020-21 is 1,860 and 1,675 in the 2021-22 school year.

How did the CBE make this decision?

The CBE had to make a decision, recognizing that any decision would have an impact on families. We needed to find an appropriate number of students to re-designate to alleviate overcrowding at EMHS.

After reviewing the demographics and projected enrolment for the communities currently designated to EMHS, a decision has been made to re-designate the following communities to Central Memorial High School (CMHS) for the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school years:

- Coach Hill
- Cougar Ridge
- Discovery Ridge
- Glenbrook
- Glendale
- Killarney/Glengarry
- Patterson
- Richmond
- Rosscarrock
- Shaganappi
- Spruce Cliff
- Westgate
- Wildwood

This means that students living in these communities who would be in Grade 10 for the 2020-21 school year, as well as students in Grade 11 or 12 moving into these communities, will attend CMHS. Students who live in these communities who are currently attending EMHS will be able to remain at EMHS.

We took the following factors into consideration:

- projected enrolment from feeder schools;



- in-boundary patterns of enrolment for High School, i.e., moving from an alternative program to a regular program at Grade 10;
- proximity to the school; and
- the total number of students being re-designated from each community.

A student who is a resident of these communities and has a sibling already attending EMHS who will still be attending the school in the 2020 school year, will have the option of attending EMHS or CMHS. If they choose to attend EMHS, the new student and sibling must be enrolled and attending the high school at the same time/concurrently.

Why was the community not engaged on the options prior to a decision being made?

The CBE needed to make a timely decision and we were limited in our ability to engage with communities on options.

During the recent high school engagement meetings and online opportunity, we were able to gather feedback from participants about what the CBE should consider in an interim accommodation plan.

Feedback from the group indicated that important principles for the CBE to consider are:

- Equitable access for students to quality learning environments and choice of programs
- Allowing students to attend school as close to home as possible

This feedback was taken into consideration as much as possible when making this re-designation decision.

Why was this decision not made earlier?

The CBE monitors and reviews enrolment data for every school in our system on a regular basis. Though enrolment at EMHS was over capacity from 2014 -17, enrolment was not increasing significantly year over year. In the 2018 school year, the enrolment increased at essentially double the rate from the previous four years.

Year	Total Enrolment	Percentage Increase
2011	1302	-
2012	1449	11%
2013	1671	15%
2014	1708	2%
2015	1729	1%
2016	1783	3%
2017	1792	1%
2018	1879	5%
2019	1996	6%

Principals know their buildings and how spaces and schedules can be used in flexible ways to accommodate students and learning. This is no longer an option at EMHS without impacting student learning. This situation called for an immediate interim decision to relieve this pressure prior to a decision coming forward through the [CBE's High School Engagement project](#) in October 2021.

What other options were presented?

The CBE looked at other combinations of communities to re-designate, but none of the other options would achieve the targeted number of students required while still

attempting to best adhere to our planning principles and respecting the factors we were asked to consider during the high school engagement.

Why are students who transfer from other school systems in Gr. 10 allowed to register at Ernest Manning High School, when this decision means students who have attended CBE schools cannot?

The CBE designates students to schools based on their residential address and the community in which they live, not the school they attend for Grade 9. This is why students from the same middle/junior high school may be designated to different high schools. For example, there are also some CBE students who will return to the regular program after Grade 9 and live in boundary for Ernest Manning.

The CBE is a public school system. Under the Education Act, a student is considered to be a resident of the Calgary Board of Education if the custodial parent(s) / legal guardian(s) with day-to-day care of the student reside in the City of Calgary and at least one of them is not of the Roman Catholic faith OR if the student is an independent student residing in the City of Calgary and not of the Roman Catholic faith. Each legal guardian is required to indicate at registration if they are Roman Catholic or not Roman Catholic.

The CBE is in the process of updating our registration forms for September 2020 to make this declaration of faith clearer to registering parents and administration. Registering students with two parents or guardians of the Roman Catholic faith will be directed to register with the Calgary Catholic School District.

Don't I indicate which school board I support with my tax dollars through the census?

Provincial tax dollars are collected by the government and allocated to school boards based on funding grants, not based on what households indicate in the annual civic census.

A commonly held belief is that people indicate which school board they support through the annual civic census, and therefore those indicating support for the public board have priority. The question asked during the annual census is used solely by the school boards to determine how many students to expect in kindergarten each year, and is not tied to funding support for school boards.

What is the plan for out of boundary student registration for the upcoming school year?

Out of boundary student registration will no longer be accepted at EMHS.

What is the plan for international student registration for the upcoming school year?

EMHS is closed to new international student registrations effective September 2019. Current international students will be allowed to stay at the school.

Can I register my child at a different high school instead, like Bowness High School?

Our high school transfer process is still the same, and all transfers are based on whether space and resources are available at the receiving school.

Please speak to your school's principal for more information about the transfer process.

Transportation

How are express or direct routes planned by Calgary Transit? How can communities request an express bus?

Decisions about dedicated bus routes are made by Calgary Transit and depend on their resources. We will work collaboratively with Calgary Transit to address increased ridership from the communities affected.

Every year, the CBE shares information with Calgary Transit to inform their route planning. Student postal codes are shared with Calgary Transit in the spring, which they use to plan their routes within their guidelines and available resources. School express routes are typically announced in late August and reviewed and revised in the fall based on actual ridership. Calgary Transit revises routes as necessary, typically on a quarterly basis.

School express routes are not charter bus routes and are available for travel to any fare-paying passenger. Students can use the school express service or other routes to get to and from school. School express service is provided as a supplement to regular service.

What was considered when re-designating these communities in terms of transportation? What is an acceptable ride time/number of transfers?

The CBE considers an appropriate ride time for high school to be no more than an hour, with no more than two transfers.

Though we do realize that transportation to and from school is very important, the primary driver behind this decision was the CBE planning principles. We believe reasonable transportation options exist within our guidelines for acceptable ride times.

Can designated yellow bus service be offered from these communities to Central Memorial?

We do not have the resources available to provide dedicated yellow bus service to high school students.