

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
ALBERTA

**Hugh MacDonald, MLA**  
**Edmonton Gold Bar**  
**Shadow Minister for Advanced Education & Technology;**  
**Employment & Immigration; Infrastructure**

July 27, 2009

Ms Bev Esslinger, Board Chair Edmonton Public School Board of Trustees  
Centre for Education  
One Kingsway  
Edmonton, Alberta T5H 4G9

Dear Ms Esslinger:

Thank you for the copy of Edmonton Public School's Ten Year Facilities Plan 2009-2018. We received it on July 21, 2009. You note in your cover letter that the plan outlines the future geographic, demographic and fiscal challenges faced by the District. I read the Plan with interest.

Edmonton Public School's enrollment projections for the next five years are based on trends indicated by the Federal Census and district student residency data. A decline in district enrollment of 2,205 students is projected by the year 2012.

Meanwhile, Alberta's 20 year Strategic Capital Plan states that by 2014 we will have more students than ever had in the system. Alberta Education also projects 80,000 **more** students in the next 20 years. Other provincial studies indicate a 4 percent growth rate in student population from 2011 to 2016 in Edmonton. Your projections of a decline in district enrollment will be used in the school closure process which contradicts the Province's enrollment projections.

Edmonton Public Schools is now using Federal Census data from 1996 -- 2006 to project a decline in enrollment. **That data is at least three years old.** The Province of Alberta projects that Edmonton will see an increase in student enrollment between 4 and 10 percent by 2016. Why is the Edmonton Public School District proceeding with a School Closure Process using out of date data, while disregarding the Province of Alberta's Actual and Projected Student Population Growth?

Mature, established neighbourhoods are being reinvigorated and renewed by young families, who will in the near future require schools in the local area. Moving forward, we need these existing schools to accommodate the increased enrollment.

I look forward to your response.

Hugh MacDonald, MLA Edmonton-Gold Bar

Cc: Harry B. Chase, MLA Calgary-Varsity  
George Rice, Public School Trustee, Ward 6

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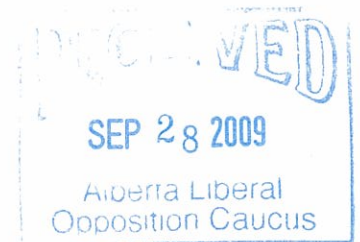
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September 18, 2009

Mr. Hugh MacDonald, MLA  
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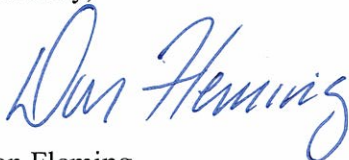
Dear MLA MacDonald:

Thank you for your letter of July 27, 2009 regarding the District's *Ten-Year Facilities Plan 2009-2018*. This plan was first approved by the Board of Trustees on June 10, 2008, and was reconfirmed by the Board on April 28, 2009. Section 2.5 of the plan articulates all of the sources of information and data considered in developing this plan. This included the *Alberta 20-Year Strategic Capital Plan* and Alberta Employment and Immigration's *Growth Pressures and Social Infrastructure in the Capital Region* discussion paper. The 2006 Federal Census was utilized in the development of provincial analysis and projections, as well as the District's *Ten-Year Facilities Plan 2009-2018*.

Forecasts in the province's *Alberta 20-Year Strategic Capital Plan* were made on the assumption that "growth will be robust in terms of population growth and growth in the economy for the next 20 years." Changes to the global economy since the provincial strategies and projections were developed may lead to an adjustment in growth assumptions. As education funding is based on actual students enrolled with the District, use of a more conservative growth projection is prudent.

District student residency data provides the key information source in planning for district school facilities in all areas of the city. This data indicates that growth continues to occur in new neighbourhoods, and remains flat or in decline in mature neighbourhoods, a pattern reaffirmed by Federal and City census data. Student residency data will continue to be the basis for school space planning as the District initiates public engagement on sector planning this school year. Other data sources and projections will continue to be monitored and considered as they become available. High quality learning environments for students in all areas of the city is the desired outcome. We look forward to receiving input through the sector planning public engagement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Don Fleming".

Don Fleming  
Board Chair

DF:rel

cc: Edgar Schmidt, Superintendent, Edmonton Public Schools  
George Rice, Public School Trustee, Ward 6