

DATE: May 11, 2021

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Responses to Trustee Janz' Questions from the April 13, 2021 Board Meeting
(Request for Information #100)

ORIGINATOR: Kathy Muhlethaler, Assistant Superintendent

RESOURCE

STAFF: Todd Burnstad, Leanne Fedor, Terri Gosine, Jeremy Higginbotham, Christopher Wright

REFERENCE: N/A

ISSUE

At the April 13, 2021, Board meeting, Trustee Janz requested the following information:

1. An overview of the leases or funding agreements around parent societies and facility use payments.
2. A cost to ensure that all schools have bike racks compliant with the City of Edmonton standard and cost to provide bike cages to schools. Could this be provided through Division surplus?
3. Funding implications if the Division were to amend the funding formula for next year to ensure that a level eight is provided for a full-time unit cost and a level seven to equate to .75 of an Education Assistant.

BACKGROUND

Administration conducted research, compiled data, and generated cost estimates related to the questions posed in the Request for Information (RFI). Responses are provided below and correspond with the question numbers forwarded through the RFI.

CURRENT SITUATION

1. In the 1970's the Division began work to explore offering alternative programs to Division students. As part of this initiative, the Division engaged with society groups to explore the feasibility of incorporating their unique programs into the Division under the lens of alternative programming. As this concept gained momentum, over time, more societies approached the Division for partnership opportunities and, subsequently, more alternative programs were added to the Division.

Specific to programs that have societal ties and own their school buildings, the Hebrew Alternative program was approved by the Board in October 1975 to retroactively recognize the program that began in September 1975. The Edmonton Christian Alternative Program was approved by the Board in May 1999 to begin programming in September 1999. Millwoods Christian Alternative Program was approved by the Board in May 2000 to begin programming in September 2000. Finally, Meadowlark Christian Alternative Program was approved by the Board in May 2004 to begin programming in September 2004. Once these programs were approved, the Division then entered into master agreements with each corresponding Society whereas the Division would deliver alternative programming to Division students in school buildings owned by these Societies.

Currently, we have the following Society-owned school buildings which accommodate Kindergarten to Grade 12 education for Edmonton Public students:

- Talmud Torah
- Edmonton Christian West (Building 1 and Building 2)
- Edmonton Christian High School
- Edmonton Christian North East
- Millwoods Christian School
- Meadowlark Christian School

As a derivative of the Master Agreements, there are also individual Facility agreements that have been in place since the inception of the respective Master Agreements. Many of the societies already had school facilities before joining the Division and the Division decided to proceed with the leasing of these buildings instead of utilizing existing Division instructional space. In all facility agreements, the Division is the Tenant and the Society is the Landlord. The Facility agreements reflect a standard lease agreement that speaks directly to the operation of the facility.

Within these facility agreements, the responsibilities for the costs associated with the ongoing repair, maintenance and operation of those facilities is outlined. In some agreements the ongoing costs associated with the upkeep of these facilities is the responsibility of the Landlord (Societies), in which case the Division provides an annual facility use payment to the landlord. In some agreements, where the Tenant (Division) is responsible for routine maintenance and repairs, there is no rent (or facility use) payment contemplated.

2. The provision of bicycle enclosures in order to ensure a consistent standard and compliance with current zoning bylaws would involve the following costs and considerations:
 - a. The current zoning bylaw requires one bicycle parking space per 140 square meters of building floor space. As all of our schools are various sizes, each school would have a different requirement. On average, an elementary school would require four racks (40 bicycles), a junior high would require five racks (50 bicycles), a K-9 would require seven racks (70 bicycles) and a high school would require 20 racks (200 bicycles). As zoning bylaws have changed over the years, not all schools would currently meet this requirement. The majority of our schools have racks that meet this standard; however, some schools may have an inadequate number of racks or the racks may be aging. The cost to replace/add bike racks to ensure that all schools meet the zoning bylaw is estimated at \$750,000.
 - b. Providing a fenced enclosure at each school, assuming that it is a chain link fence that is eight feet high and has one lockable gate, would cost approximately \$3.5 million. This estimate is based on the dimensions contemplated by the zoning requirements noted above.
 - c. Often, we install shale around the bike racks as it is difficult to cut grass around the bike racks. Fencing would make landscaping maintenance even more difficult, so Integrated Infrastructure Services would recommend installing shale in order to limit potential lifecycle costs and limit potential damage to personal property. The cost to add shale to the schools that do not currently have it is estimated at \$1 million.
 - d. Since 2019, the Division has received three requests for additional bike racks and one request for removal of a bike rack.
 - e. In total, potential costs for the installation of consistent bike enclosures across the Division could reach approximately \$5.25 million.

Additional considerations related to the installation of bicycle enclosures may involve logistics, such as:

- Integrated Infrastructure Services often places bike racks in multiple locations around school buildings in order to allow students to lock up their bikes near their designated entrance. This would not be possible with the placement of a single bike enclosure at each school.
 - The Division would need to determine the ability of each individual site to accommodate a bike enclosure, within the context of existing buildings, current or anticipated portables, and the available land.
 - The scope of the work would likely require two summer seasons for procurement, supply, and installation work. As such, Division surplus funds would need to be available for two successive fiscal years.
 - The Division would need to work with schools to ensure a consistent approach to operationalizing the bike enclosures. Matters such as responsibility for locking and unlocking the enclosure, access times and staff resource to ensure events such as late student arrivals, etc. would need to be addressed.
3. Based on the September 2021 projected enrolment, the table below reflects the total unit costs of providing a full-time Educational Assistant for students identified with a level eight and 0.75 for students with a level seven code (i.e. severe special needs).

	September 2021 Projected Enrolment	Educational Assistant Level E (10 month) - Unit Cost
Division Level 7 & 8 Coded	Normalized	
Students	Enrolment*	\$
Level 7 students	2,250.0	\$ 96,212,812
Level 8 Kindergarten	59.5	\$ 3,392,393
Level 8 Full Day Kindergarten	32.0	\$ 1,824,480
Level 8 students	1,077.3	\$ 61,419,409
TOTAL	3,418.8	\$ 162,849,094

* - Normalized enrolment factors in half day Kindergarten as 0.5.

In terms of funding implications, the normalized enrolment of students coded either seven or eight of 3,418.8 represents 3.4 per cent of the total Division’s normalized projected enrolment of 101,071. The total unit cost of the Educational Assistants as reflected in the table of \$162.8 million would equate to 20.6 per cent of the total funds directly allocated to schools of \$790.7 million.

KEY POINTS

- Currently the Division has six Society-owned school buildings which accommodate Kindergarten to Grade 12 education for Edmonton Public students. Once these programs were approved by the Board, the Division then entered into individual Facility agreements that allowed for the leasing of Society buildings instead of utilizing existing Division instructional space. In all facility agreements, the Division is the Tenant and the Society is the Landlord. Societies are responsible for general maintenance in most instances.

- The provision of bicycle enclosures in order to ensure a consistent standard and compliance with current zoning bylaws could reach approximately \$5.25 million.
- Based on the September 2021 projected enrolment, the total unit costs of providing a full-time Educational Assistant for students identified with a level eight and 0.75 for students with a level seven code would be \$162,849,094.

CW:kk