



Addressing Growth in Camrose Information Sheet

Our EICS schools in Camrose are currently at 81% utilization (St. Patrick Catholic School is at 101% capacity and Our Lady of Mount Pleasant School is at 62%). If ECS numbers continue at to rise as expected, we will see a utilization of over 102% by 2021. The current overcrowding at St. Patrick Catholic School has resulted in higher class sizes, reduced physical education time and crowding of the playground areas and school amenity spaces.

In following past practice, EICS engaged Thought Exchange to conduct a community engagement to determine what solutions and questions the community had to address the space issues in Camrose. These responses were then shared with the community, who was provided the opportunity to prioritize the thoughts through a starring process. 891 people participated in this exercise throughout the late Fall of 2016. All the responses and results of this consultation are available at the following EICSTalks website:

[Camrose Consultation Results](#)

EICS Leadership and the Board of Trustees also held a public meeting on November 23rd. Based on the feedback, EICS produced 3 options for configuration in Camrose for which we once again went to the community for feedback and received approximately 50 written submissions and a number of verbal and face to face submissions on these three options.

- Continue with the status quo.
- Grade 6 students from St. Patrick Catholic School (STP) move to Our Lady of Mount Pleasant Catholic School (OLMP)
- Grades 5 and 6 move to OLMP and create a separate middle school within the school.

Within these three options, we provided the community with both the opportunities and challenges for each of the options which are contained below:

Option 1: Status Quo

Opportunities

- No changes for students until a new school is built.
- Temporarily allows for lower class sizes.
- Playground space available for Grades 5s and 6s.
- Less age discrepancy at OLMP.

Challenges

- Further reduction of physical education time and stress on other amenity, hallway and playground space as more students share it.
- Elimination of play space to accommodate additional modulars.
- Additional lockers and parking required to meet code if modulars are added at EICS' cost.
- \$150,000 water management work will be required if modulars are added to St. Patrick and it is unknown if the government will fund it.
- Only a short-term solution that does not resolve issues until a new school can be built.

Option 2: Move Grade 6s to OLMP

Opportunities

- Temporarily allows for lower class sizes.
- Grade 5s attending OLMP on Fridays could free up amenity and gym space.
- Can create a distinctive 6-8 and 9-12 campus with two separate common areas with a revisioning of the library.

Challenges

- The government has confirmed EICS will not be eligible for any modulars in this scenario.
- Modulars required at St. Patrick the next year to keep same level of class sizes.
- Additional lockers and parking required to meet code if modulars are added at EICS' cost.
- \$150,000 water management work will be required if modulars are added to St. Patrick and it is unknown if the government will fund it.

- Significant concerns from parents having Grade 6s on 4 day week and only a 25 minute lunch break.
- Logistics of operating 2 schedules in one school at OLMP.
- Concerns regarding having Grade 6s with high school students.
- Grade 6s will no longer have a playground.
- Only a short term solution that does not resolve issues until a new school can be built

Option 3: Move Grade 5s and Grade 6s to OLMP

Opportunities

- Permanent solution for St. Patrick's that provides amenity space, all day gym and reduced class sizes.
- Allows for the development of a middle school program that will continue on when the high school is built, providing significantly improved programming opportunities for these students.
- Can create a distinctive 5-7 and 8-12 campus with two separate common areas with a revisioning of the library.
- EICS is eligible for the requested modulars under this scenario, which would be installed on OLMP, which doesn't require the extra EICS supported costs that St. Patrick does and is easily expandable beyond the 4 modulars.

Challenges

- Significant concerns from parents having Grade 5s and 6s on 4 day week and only a 25 minute lunch break.
- Significant change management will be required as it will be a large change for students, staff and parents.
- Logistics of operating 2 schedules in one school at OLMP.
- Concerns regarding having grade 5s and 6s with high school students.
- Grade 5s and 6s will no longer have a playground.

Recommended Solution and Implementation:

Administration believes that the creation of a distinct middle school and high school program within OLMP creates the best educational program for students both at St. Patrick and at OLMP. Administration is recommending the movement of both Grade 5 and 6 students to OLMP in the Fall of 2017 with the following implementation plan:

Implementation Plan for September 2017

School Configuration

Based on student engagement, OLMP is currently revisioning its library into a student commons for younger students. Grades 5-7 and 8-12 students will have their own wing of the school with a commons area and entrance, creating distinct areas for the middle school and high school programs.

Schedule

There will be no change to St. Patrick's bell times and they remain on Camrose 5 day schedule. At OLMP Grades 5-7 students are on Camrose 5 day schedule and their Block 4 is reduced to provide a 55-minute lunch break and they do not attend Block 8. Grades 8-12 students remain on current 4 day schedule.

Programming

OLMP will be developing a middle school program to take full advantage of the amenities of the school. Students will be provided with a variety of options in Career Technology Foundations, Sports and Fine Arts. OLMP will be able to accommodate every day gym for all students in Physical Education.

Outdoor Amenities

EICS is currently reviewing the possibilities for amenities for middle school aged students on the OLMP lands.

Camrose School Transportation

Catholic students located in the rural areas surrounding Camrose are currently being served by Battle River School Division through an informal transportation arrangement. The Board reviewed the current arrangement and a comprehensive analysis of the educational and transportation requirements of the Camrose area. After discussion, the Board of Trustees unanimously approved that next school year, all students in Camrose schools will now be transported by routes managed by Elk Island Catholic Schools Transportation. The Board has determined the following advantages to this change:

- Equal instructional time for rural and urban students
- Enhanced flexibility and the ability to have a more effective school calendar
- Ride time improvement for the majority of EICS students
- Financial benefit to EICS transportation operations

Questions and Answers

Why is EICS reconfiguring the grade levels in its Camrose schools?

St. Patrick's is currently overcrowded and the situation is predicted to worsen in the near future. Moving the grade 5 and 6 students to OLMP is one step toward establishing a middle school program of grades 5-8 while we await the creation of a new high school for grades 9-12. The final phase would see St. Patrick as a K-4, OLMP as a 5-8 and the new high school as a 9-12 configuration.

How will this benefit our students?06634

St. Patrick's as a Pre-Kindergarten-Grade 4 will enable the school to have lower class sizes and to resume with the ability to have Physical Education classes on a daily basis. Overcrowding of the amenity space, including the hallways, alternate classrooms and playground will also be substantially reduced.

Grades 5 and 6 students moving to OLMP will now have access to substantially improved facilities that will enable more educational opportunities for students. EICS' past experience has found that a middle school program operating with the offerings of a high school creates an extremely dynamic and attractive program for students.

Within this model, students at both schools will now be provided with every day physical education with the gymnasiums being able to accommodate reconfigured classes.

Why mix high school students with elementary age students?

Housing elementary age students with high school students is not new. There are many very successful elementary - grade 12 schools throughout the province, including Tofield school, which is a 5-12 school. Within the Battle River Public School Division, there are numerous examples of Kindergarten-Grade 12 schools, including: Bashaw, Bawlf, Daysland, Viking and Sedgewick.

It is important to know that the school administration will concentrate on having distinct programs within the building by creating common areas specifically for the younger students and separating the programs into separate wings. Separate entrances may be possible as well.

Will my elementary age child be taught by high school trained teachers?

Absolutely not. Elementary students will continue to be taught by professionals trained and experienced in elementary education. Staffing will follow the Division's regular staffing process to meet the needs of students and the school's programming.

What will be the transition process?

OLMP staff, in conjunction with the staff of St. Patrick are well equipped to plan this transition. A variety of activities will be designed to make the move as seamless as possible.

Where will my younger students play at OLMP?

EICS is currently reviewing the amenities on the OLMP site in addition to the playground located across the street. EICS will ensure that students are provided with age appropriate space for active outdoor activities.

OLMP currently runs a four day week. How does that impact my grade 5/6 student?

Grades 5,6 and 7 students will operate on a traditional 5 day school week and will have a 55 minute lunch and will be dismissed at 3:00 rather than 3:50. The four day high school schedule will continue for grades 8-12 students.

Will bussing be available for my child to and from OLMP?

EICS can accommodate transportation with multiple schedules at OLMP. All OLMP students (5-12) will take the bus together in the morning run. In the afternoon, grades 5-7 students who are let out 50 minutes earlier will take a bus to St. Patrick to transfer onto a St. Patrick run bus home. Grade 8-12 students will continue to ride the second run home in the afternoon.

Feel free to contact EICS Central Office at (780) 467 8896 or speak with your Principal if you have any further questions or thoughts to share with us.

