

WESTERN
School Division
Morden, Manitoba

*"Rooted In Caring;
Committed to Learning"*



Western School Division Community Presentation

June 11, 2018

Agenda

- A Brief History
 - Advocacy & Accommodation
 - Reality Check
- A New Approach to our New Reality
 - Configuration & Programming
 - Running Out of Space
 - Compounding Challenges
 - Community Empowerment

A Brief History

- Minnewasta built in 1990 - our last new school
- Portables started arriving – EMMS, Minnewasta, Maple Leaf, MCI
- Monopoly Plan – get enough portables to upgrade to a school?
- New school requests - 5 year Capital Plan
- Bought land for a new school - approval received from Public Schools Finance Board
- “Just wait, you’re soon.”
- School Tours



- Our last school was built almost 30 years ago. Since that time there has been a history of steady growth.
- It didn't take long and there were already portables added on to Minnewasta. At the end of the east wing there are two portables attached to the building. Similarly, the end of the east wing of EMMS also has two portables attached to the building.
- Around 10 years ago, growth picked up, and we started adding more portables at our Early Years schools. Minnewasta now has four more on top of the original two. Maple Leaf has seven, and EMMS has one more. Morden Collegiate also has three newer classrooms at the north end, two of which were built in lieu of portables, with a third that we paid for locally.
- Minnewasta has almost doubled the number of classrooms with portables since its original design, and Maple Leaf has added 50% more classrooms with portables.
- It felt like all of this was a part of a Provincial strategy to have us get enough portables to be able to upgrade to a full school – much like Monopoly.
- New School Requests have been a part of the 5 year capital plans we submit annually to Public Schools Finance Branch since I became a trustee in 2006. Based on conversations we have had with them over time, we bought some land in anticipation of a new school announcement. The board and senior admin

determined the best location for a new early years school based on the future development plans in Morden.

- What we have continued to hear for the last many years is "Just wait, you're soon." Or "You are on the list."

- Last year we were told that it would be a good idea to get some ideas of what we would like to see in a new school by touring other schools in the province that have been built recently, and so we did.

- But that brings us to today, and we still have no announcement.

Enrolment Growth

- Enrolment Growth
- 20 years ago - 1375
- 10 years ago - 1598
- 5 years ago - 1679
- Today - 1810
- Next year - 1878 projected
- 5 years - 2220 projected



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Advocacy



- Ongoing:
- Meetings with Public Schools Finance Board
- Meetings with MLA & Ministers of Education
- Attend Legislative Assembly Functions
- Conversations with our Community

- In recent years the Board has stepped up its advocacy game.
- We have met with our MLA and current Minister of Education enough times to be on a first name basis. When they see us, they know who we are and what we want to talk about.
- We have regular meetings with Public Schools Finance Board – in fact we have one coming up next week.

Accommodation

- Told to be patient
- Made use of shared space
- Denied 4 portables - converted computer labs
- Started 2017 in libraries



- Western School Division has a long history of accommodation. And most of the time it makes sense. We are a geographically small school division with a shared middle school and high school complex. We are able to be extremely efficient with our resources. But it comes at a price. We have had to develop our own solutions to some challenges when we have not been able to get enough space in the past.
- For example, we have converted the computer labs in three schools into classroom spaces. And this past fall we had two classes that had to start in libraries while we waited for portable classrooms to arrive.
- We are also feeling the pinch in middle school and high school as demand for our shared spaces is increasing with enrolment.



Reality Check

- We have been referred to as Lobbyists.
- We've been told "No, there's no money," and then we see multiple new school announcements – in school divisions with more square footage per student than us.
- Are we being heard?



- It is difficult to gain traction with government. Despite the fact that we, as trustees, have been elected to represent the residents of Western School Division, we are referred to as lobbyists. What does that mean? That means that when we talk with government officials, we are heard through a filter. It is as though we say we need a new school because that's what Trustees do, so we aren't taken seriously. We are told there is no money. Yet, there are more new schools being built in the next couple of years than there have been in many years. And most of those new schools are being built in school divisions that already have more space per student than we have.

Rank	2017-18 FRAME Budget	SQ. FT. PER PUPIL ⁽²⁾	Announced since April 2017	
			New School	Major Addition
1	SEVEN OAKS	121.9	Yes	Yes
2	WESTERN	123		
3	BRANDON	123	Yes	
4	PEMBINA TRAILS	132.6	Yes	
5	HANOVER	134.9	Yes	
6	SEINE RIVER	137.3		Yes
7	GARDEN VALLEY	149.3	Yes	
8	BEAUTIFUL PLAINS	152.3		Yes
10	RIVER EAST	155.4		Yes
12	SUNRISE	164.3		Yes
13	WINNIPEG	166.5	Yes	
AVERAGE	MANITOBA	164		

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New Approach to The New Reality



With what we know now, a new school announcement could be at least 3 years away.

What we are doing isn't working. We need to change...something.

- With a new school announcement at least 3 years away, that means that at best, we would be looking at opening a new school 5 years from now.

Configuration & Programming

Creative with Shared
Programming EMMS - MCI

Band, Industrial Arts, Home
Economics

But in both Early & Middle
Years we are seeing
pressures for Music and
Phys Ed. space



- We are seeing increased pressure on our shared programming. When new space is just around the corner it makes sense to tough it out a little longer. With a different understanding of when we could see a new school, we have to find other ways to relieve the pressure.

Supports in Space

- Overall we are short 46,000 sqft according to Public Schools Finance Board Space Standards
- Life Skills, English as an Additional Language, Library, Resource, and Guidance.
- This is almost the same space as Maple Leaf and Minnewasta combined – including portables.



- Understanding that our schools were built in a different era, if we applied our current enrolment to current Public Schools Finance Board Space Standards, we would find ourselves 46,000 square feet short.
- A fair chunk of that shortage falls into the "educational support" category.

Population Growth Break Down

	2007-08	Current
EY	536	750
MY	482	550
SY	580	510
	1598	1810

- Early Years - 214 **more** students – 40% increase
- Middle Years – 68 **more** students – 14% increase
- Senior Years – 70 **fewer** students – 12% decrease



- A deeper look at our growth tells a story that is hidden by a superficial look at our overall numbers.

- 10 years ago, we were at the tail end of a several year immigration boom that saw many families move into Western School Division, including older children who did not speak much English. This led to a residual effect in our student enrolment because some of those older students stayed in classes for a few years after they were 18 so they could take the courses they needed and improve their English skills.

- Now, without that residual effect, and with a different demographic of younger families moving to the area, we are seeing a bubble of growth in the Early Years. And it will not take much longer for this to spill into the Middle School.

- Current enrolment in grades 1 – 4 includes 31 classrooms. Four years from now – before we have a new school – those 31 classes are likely to become 35 classrooms based on enrolment growth, and they will need to fit in EMMS where we have 24 classrooms. A shortfall of 11 classes.

- Looking closer at our Early Years numbers, we currently have 39 classes in K-4. Five years from now, after a complete turn-over of those kids, we project that there will be 46 classes in those same grade levels.



The Skinny on Space

- Maple Leaf- 83 sqft / student
- Average in WSD – 123 sqft / student
- Minnewasta - 90 sqft / student
- Average in MB – 164 sqft / student
- EMMS - 96 sqft / student
- MCI - 189 sqft / student



- Earlier I showed a slide with the average divisional square footage for some of the divisions in Manitoba that are more short on space. Here is a closer look at how our division breaks down by school.

- You will note that the schools where growth has been strongest are noticeably lower than the high school.

- But it should also be noted that we did a multi-purpose space and classroom expansion at the high school a few years ago, and we have added some space for new vocational programming.

Houston we have a Problem

- 120 new families expected (Immigration)
- 40% Early Years enrolment increase from 2007/2008 - 2017/2018
- Life skills – short 3000 sqft
- Multipurpose / Music – short 700 sqft
- English as an Additional Language – short 2400 sqft
- Library – short 2400 sqft
- Resource/Guidance - short 2500 sqft
- Phys. Ed. - short 2200 sqft
- Industrial Arts, Home Ec, Band – short 6000 sqft
- Losing green space to portable classrooms



- This is me trying to put on a pair of 28" jeans. No matter how hard I try, I'm not going to be able to do up the button!

Compounding Challenges

- Limited ability to increase revenue proportionally to growth through taxation.
- Land holding costs will last longer than expected.



- Last year every school division was instructed that it could not increase its special requirement (local tax burden) by more than 2%. I doubt there was much complaining about the fact that we lowered the average residential education tax bill. But if this kind of prescription continues, we will not be able to sustain the growth that we are experiencing for very long.

- Also, a number of years back the board decided that it was a priority to purchase land in an area that would be well-suited to a new school. We still think it is the best spot. The only thing that is missing is the new school. Until it is built, we are left paying for the interest on the loan to purchase that land with local tax dollars.



- Portables - given direction to administration on class size and portable requests.
- Stacked Class request denied.
- Pending request for two more portables at EMMS.



- In the absence of a new school, we anticipate that the next number of years will have regular portable requests. The Board has clarified its direction to administration on when to trigger a new request.

- Earlier this year we tried to work creatively with Public Schools Finance Board and develop a longer-term solution that would see us accommodate our growth. We need some classrooms at EMMS next year. We also have a spot that is prepped and available to build three permanent classrooms at the far north end of the high school – seen in the picture. We suggested to PSFB that we could temporarily transfer some of the classrooms at the south end of Morden Collegiate to EMMS, and make use of these three classrooms in the high school. In the long run those classes will be needed anyway, and all the foundation work was done when we did the expansion a number of years ago, so it would be a relatively quick build. Unfortunately, that request was denied. In the mean time we have modified our request to have two more portables at EMMS. We are meeting with PSFB next week.

- It is possible that this request will be denied as well. If it is, we will have to find space for two classrooms within the space that we already have. Preliminary plans are in place to work with the existing music and library spaces.

Community Empowerment

Our long-term struggle with space in schools has an impact on kids, staff, and the community. Our Ministers need to understand that this is not going to get better on its own any time soon.

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- We are going to continue advocating for our new school. But what we are doing as a Board and Administration team has not been effective enough to get us our new school yet. And the last we heard, we are looking at a three year wait before an announcement. After the announcement we can start planning and designing ... and then building. In the mean time, we are facing ever growing challenges with the space that we have.
- Our government has said that they want to make decisions based on facts. We want to empower you to tell your stories to our provincial government about how the facts of our circumstances in Western School Division are impacting your children, yourselves, and those around you.
- We do ask that communication with government officials be respectful. The mission of Western School Division is "Developing people who are rooted in caring and committed to learning". Let's not forget that we are rooted in caring.
- We have some contact information available for specific Ministers.