

EIPS Frequently Asked Questions

ANDREW SCHOOL POTENTIAL CLOSURE

LAST UPDATED: April 2023



FAQS: ANDREW SCHOOL POTENTIAL CLOSURE

Q: What are the issues with the building housing Andrew School and the Andrew Village offices?

A: Two major issues have been identified to this point:

- *Fire Suppression System:* The sprinkler system piping is deteriorating because of standing water. The system was not installed correctly, and this has caused condensation, low points and sags in the piping. While temporary repairs over the years mean the system still works and keeps occupants safe, that is not a sustainable solution. The sprinkler system must be replaced entirely to avoid a system failure that would result in the building being closed.
- *Roof:* Because of the roof's original design, leaks and ice damming issues are persistent. Water seeping into the facility has caused damage to the building over the years. The damming also results in ice falling from the roof, causing health-and-safety issues for occupants. The steel roof must be replaced entirely, including ventilation and membrane upgrades, to avoid future damage to the structure.

Q: Didn't EIPS know there was a problem before it reached this point?

A: The Division has been aware of the issue for several years. Between 2015 and 2021, it invested \$633,780 in maintenance and repairs to ensure a safe learning and working environment. However, the systems have now reached a point where temporary repairs aren't enough to address the problems.

Q: Is there a safety risk to students and other occupants of the building?

A: No. Ongoing maintenance and repairs have kept current systems in place, and the building is safe for everyone who learns and works there. The replacement of the sprinkler system and the roof, though, is needed to ensure the building remains safe in the future.

Q: How much would fixing the sprinkler system and the roof cost?

A: An estimate to replace the sprinkler system in its entirety has been provided at the cost of \$1,020,000. The cost to replace the steel roof in its entirety with ventilation and membrane upgrades is \$2,272,900—neither estimate includes contingencies, asbestos abatement or GST. The building is at the end of its functional life, and without a significant investment of approximately \$3,292,900 by both EIPS and the Village of Andrew, the building will not be occupiable in the immediate future.

Q: Who is responsible for paying the costs of the sprinkler and roof replacements?

A: EIPS and the Village of Andrew share financial responsibility for repairs and upkeep of the facility—with EIPS responsible for two-thirds and the Village for one-third of expenses. However, projected costs likely mean the needed system replacements are cost-prohibitive for both organizations.

Q: How many elementary-aged students in the Andrew boundary area are going to other schools?

A: Currently, Andrew School has a student capacity of 385. However, as of Sept. 29, 2022, only 62 kindergarten to Grade 6 students are registered for the 2022-23 school year—for a total utilization rate of 15 per cent.

Data indicates there are 72 students in kindergarten to Grade 6 who reside within the attendance boundary and attend an EIPS school—with 61 attending Andrew School and one additional student from outside the Division.

In reviewing the current enrolment data for the 2022-23 school year, a total of 11 students who reside within the Andrew attendance area chose to attend another EIPS school:

- Mundare School – three students
- Lamont Elementary – eight students

As of March 1, 2023, the total projected student population for the 2023-24 school year continues to decrease with only 44 student registrations—down by 18 students in the 2022-23 school year. The breakdown is as follows:

- kindergarten – three students
- Grade 1 – 15 students
- Grade 2 – eight students
- Grade 3 – three students
- Grade 4 – five students
- Grade 5 – six students
- Grade 6 – four students

Q: How do the low enrolment numbers impact programming?

A: The anticipated attendance numbers would necessitate classroom configurations of a K-1-2 split classroom with 26 students, when the kindergarten students attend the half-time programming, and 23 students, when the kindergarten students do not attend. Furthermore, the second classroom configuration would be a 3-4-5-6 split classroom comprised of 18 students. Neither scenario provides quality programming for learners or teachers.

Q: Where would K-6 students attend school if Andrew School is closed? And, how would that impact those other schools?

A: If the Board decides to close Andrew School, students could be re-designated to Lamont Elementary, Mundare School or A.L. Horton Elementary. Adding these students would have minimal impact on each school's overall enrolment and capacity.

- As of Sept. 29, 2022, Lamont Elementary has 294 students. The school has a total student capacity of 489 and a utilization rate of 62 per cent.
- As of Sept. 29, 2022, A.L. Horton Elementary has 352 students. The school has a total capacity of 453 students and a utilization rate of 80 per cent.
- As of Sept. 29, 2022, Mundare School has 113 students. The school has a total capacity of 241 students and a utilization rate of 48 per cent.

Alternatively, elementary students may choose to follow their junior high and high school siblings to a non-designated school.

Q: How would a change in school designation impact school-bus ride times for Andrew students?

A: In the April 20 Board report, administration presented the trustees with three possible options for student transportation, which depend on the schools to which students are designated when the final decision is made.

Option A – All K-6 students in the current Andrew School boundary are designated to Mundare School. Those attending Mundare School would have a direct bus route to and from school—adding an average of 23 minutes in the morning and 25 minutes in the afternoon to current ride times. These ride times are averages—the actual ride times would differ depending on where the student resides.

Under Option A, transportation may be available if families choose to attend a non-designated school, following Policy 17 and the current junior and senior high boundaries for the Andrew attendance area.

Option B – All K-6 students living in the Village of Andrew are designated to Mundare School. Students residing outside the village, but within the current Andrew School boundary, would fall under the existing Lamont High and Vegreville Composite High attendance boundaries.

For Andrew School K-6 students, the average morning ride time under this option would increase by 16 minutes and the afternoon ride time by 28 minutes. These ride times are averages—the actual ride times would differ depending on where the student resides.

Under Option B, transportation may be available if families choose to attend a non-designated school, following Policy 17 and the current junior and senior high boundaries for the Andrew attendance area.

Option C – All K-6 students in the current Andrew School boundary would move on to or follow their older siblings to the Lamont High or Vegreville Composite High attendance boundaries. Those attending Lamont Elementary would have a direct ride to and from school, and those attending A.L. Horton Elementary would have to transfer buses at Vegreville Composite High.

For Andrew K-6 students, the average morning ride time would increase by 20 minutes and the afternoon ride time by 24 minutes. These ride times are averages—the actual ride times would differ depending on where the student resides.

Under Option C, transportation may be available if families choose to attend a non-designated school, following [Board Policy 17](#) and the current Junior/Senior boundaries for the Andrew attendance area.

Q: Could another school division or organization take over the school and keep it open?

A: Should a closure move forward, EIPS would have to follow the Government of Alberta's [Disposition of Property Regulation](#).

Q: What will happen to the library if the school closes?

A: Should a closure move forward, EIPS would remove its resources from the library for use elsewhere within the Division. If council wishes, they may continue operating the library with their own resources and staff.

Q: If Andrew School closes, what is the process for enrolling my child in another school and making transportation arrangements?

A: Should a closure move forward, the Division will work directly with families impacted to ensure arrangements are made for the upcoming school year.

Q: When will the EIPS Board of Trustees make a final decision?

A: First, there will be a public engagement meeting held to share information with and answer questions from Andrew School families and members of the community on Tuesday, April 25, 2023. Feedback gathered at that public engagement meeting will form part of the report going forward at a special Board Meeting on Thursday, May 4.

Should a motion be made at that meeting to close Andrew School and that motion passed by trustees, the school will close at the end of the current academic year. If the motion is defeated, the matter will go no further.