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# EDUCATION FACILITIES PLAN

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Grande Prairie  
Public School  
Division

Grande Prairie Public School Division

Executive Summary, 2021-2024 Capital Plan – April 2020

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## 2021-2024 Capital Plan

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## 2021/2024 – 3 YEAR CAPITAL PLAN

<b>Identified Project</b>	<b>Priority</b>
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### Permanent Addition – Charles Spencer High School 9 – 12

Two story addition to accommodate increasing enrolment

1

Planning Period:	2020-2021
Opening Date:	2021
Capacity:	200
Total Budget:	\$4,500,000

### Modernization – Crystal Park School K – 8

Facility modernization

2

Planning Period:	2020-2023
Opening Date:	2023
Total Budget:	\$ 42,150,000

### Gym and or partial modernization – Aspen Grove School K – 8

English K - 8 Redeployment

3

Planning Period:	2021-2022
Opening Date:	2022
Total Budget:	\$ 5,000,000 - \$6,000,000

### New School – New School in Southwest Grande Prairie K – 8

Accommodate Population growth

4

Planning Period:	2023-2025
Opening Date:	2025
Capacity:	600 students
Total Budget:	\$26,000,000

End of list for all capital projects new or modernization.

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## BACKGROUND

The Division has identified its facility needs by reviewing its facility review report prepared in 2018 which summarizes the facility configurations and assessed areas requiring maintenance and capital investment in the short term and longer term. The three-year capital plan highlights the priorities that were identified from that process and the priorities are detailed below.

## DISCUSSION

### Enrolment Perspective

Despite a change in the economic environment in the recent five years, the City of Grande Prairie and area did not experience as harsh of an economic environment as Calgary and the rest of the province. The unemployment rate for the area remained lower than the rest of the province over the recent years. A review of the city's Economic Profile – 2019 on its website indicates a population growth of 37.6% from 2007 to 2016 and a population growth rate of 3.69% between 2000 and 2018. Of note in the city's demographics is that the median age is 31.9 which is within the prime childbearing years. Because of the population demographic in the city, our Division will continue to grow. Also, from the city's Economic Profile, the city has more residents under 5 than over 65 again supporting the expected enrolment growth we are projecting. The trends indicate the continuation of young families and increasing births.

In addition, in October 2016 the Grande Prairie and District Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with local municipalities and regional stakeholders, released a report on the economic impact of the new hospital which is nearing completion and scheduled to open within the next year. The opening of the new hospital is expected to encourage residential development in the surrounding area.

The opening of the new Grande Prairie Regional Hospital (GPRH) will create a need for 507 new healthcare workers, more permanent housing and more schools, according to the study.

Over the last five years the Division has experienced growth of 4.8% in funded enrolments. To consider the projected growth of the city and the predicted growth in the Division high schools we refer to the Division 3-year projection indicating an increase of approximately 360 students.

#### **Charles Spencer High School Permanent Addition**

The Division will see greater growth in the high schools due to the student population bubble that is making its way from the 4-9 grade levels into the high schools over the next three to four years. This progression is illustrated graphically below in the two graphs showing the enrolment trends in both the 4 to 9 grades and the 10 to 12 grades.

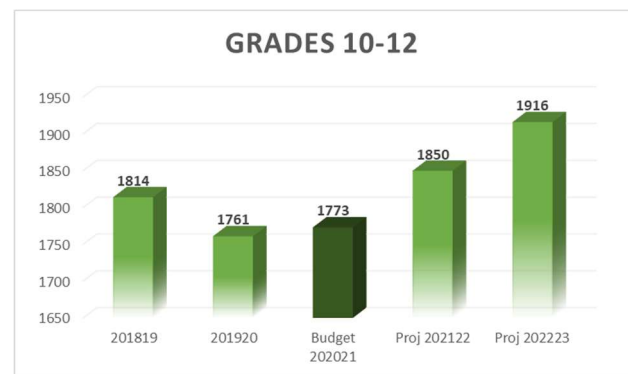
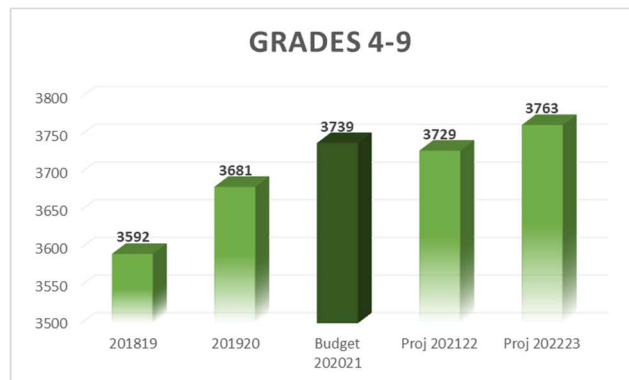
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It is in the number of high school spaces where our enrolment needs will be acutely felt in the near future. Charles Spencer High School is a 1252 capacity school with enrolments of approximately 1164 students on September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019. That is 93% of current capacity and we anticipate these numbers to grow with the anticipated growth of the city and the bubble moving from the 4 to 9 grades into high school. As a temporary measure two modular classrooms were added to the school in the summer of 2018. However, we have reached the limit on how many modulars we can place on the school site as we will encroach on the property line with these last additions.

<b>Enrolment Growth Projection</b>						
<b>(Using 2019/2020 enrolments)</b>						
	<b>2020-2021</b>	<b>2021-2022</b>	<b>2022-2023</b>	<b>2023-2024</b>	<b>2024-2025</b>	
1%	1176	1187	1199	1211	1223	
2%	1187	1211	1235	1260	1285	
3%	1199	1235	1272	1310	1349	
4%	1211	1259	1309	1362	1416	
<b>Total Capacity</b>	1252	1252	1252	1252	1252	
<b>2% Growth</b>	<b>1187</b>	<b>1211</b>	<b>1235</b>	<b>1260</b>	<b>1285</b>	
<b>Capacity Utilization</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>97%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>103%</b>	

The enrolment projection illustrated in the table above shows with an achievable annual growth of 2% the school will be at maximum capacity with no more room to add modular classrooms on the site. Therefore, it is necessary to add the planned permanent addition to add classroom space for another 200 students.

## **New School in Kensington Development**

Another identified area that will drive increases in enrolment, is the development of a new residential subdivision. Included in this report is information on the city's Kensington Area Structure Plan (ASP) subdivision in the southwest corner of the city. Originally this ASP indicated 122 hectares of subdivision development, but a subsequent application made to the city has now increased this area to 190 hectares. This is a significant increase in the ASP from what we were originally planning to accommodate. In

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reviewing the city's data on the draft ASP it is anticipated the dwellings developed in this area will tend to be towards families who have a higher number of children with market prices at a level that attract young families or new families. The ASP data projects a total population at build out of 7,312 residences. Below is a table projecting the subdivision to have the following student population:

Table - Student Generation		
Total Students	19.0% of Area Population**	1389
Public School Students	66% of Total Students	917
Grades K-8	70% of P.S. Students	642
Grades 9-12	30% of P.S. Students	275

As shown in the table above, an additional 642 Kindergarten to Grade 8 public school students are projected to join our schools. Currently our closest schools to this area, Derek Taylor Public School and Isabel Campbell Public School which are at 64% and 92% utilization respectively. Isabel Campbell Public School is in an area that is still under development and will experience continued enrolment growth in the short term. The future student population in the Kensington development cannot be accommodated in the existing schools in the area. A significant factor in the request of a new school is the presence of a major arterial road separating the development from our existing Division schools. Kensington area students attending Derek Taylor Public School and Isabel Campbell Public School would require bussing from the Kensington development. Because of all these factors, our board has identified this area as priority for a new school.

## Facility Perspective

### Aspen Grove School (Kindergarten to Grade 8)

Aspen Grove School was originally built as a Kindergarten to Grade 6 school and over the years it has had a larger student population than was intended for the school. With recent school additions and change in attendance boundaries in the Division, the enrolments have decreased, and the school is currently at 76% of its built capacity. However, the school programming offered is now Kindergarten to Grade 8.

The gymnasium was never constructed to accommodate junior high students and does not meet the physical education needs for this level of programming and it restricts what can be accomplished at this level. The current Aspen Grove School gymnasium is approximately 402 meters square. The standard gym configuration for a newly built Kindergarten to Grade 8 schools is approximately 550 square meters.

Since the school is thirty years old, the administration office configuration is not ideal in today's environment where safety is a priority for schools. There is no line of sight to the school's entryway to facilitate supervision of the main entry. Also due to the school's configuration change there are not enough offices for the current administrative staff requirements being a Kindergarten to Grade 8 configured school. For these reasons, it is included in our capital plan to expand the gymnasium as well as reconfigure the administrative offices to meet our current and future needs.

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## *Crystal Park School (Kindergarten to Grade 8)*

The Crystal Park School is thirty-seven years old and has never been modernized in its years of operation. This is a unique school in our Division as it was built as a school focused on special needs programming. Its construction consists of wide hallways to ensure ease of access for students who require mobility assistance. It is one of a very few schools in Alberta which has a swimming pool. The classrooms are structured in four pods that extend from a common central area. There are specialized built areas such as the physiotherapy pod which were built for the specific use at the time. However, with today's programming needs, the building is inefficient, and these specialized areas need to be reconfigured to allow for better use with today's programming needs.

A mechanical systems assessment was commissioned in October of 2017 which highlights many deficiencies. In summary the report findings indicate:

1. The existing mechanical systems are at the end of their service life.
2. The mechanical systems are not configured to good engineering practice.
3. Significant upgrades to the mechanical systems are required to bring the systems to good design practices, guidelines, and standards.
4. The existing mechanical systems use a disproportionate amount of energy.

The estimated cost for the upgrades required of the mechanical systems are approximately \$1.4 million at the time the assessment was done, almost three years ago. In addition to the mechanical systems, the school flooring, interior finishing and cosmetics require updating to refresh the overall appearance of the school as it is showing its age. The Division is continually striving to minimize school operating costs such as switching to energy efficient light bulbs. Crystal Park School has been identified as the least energy efficient school in the Division with utility and energy costs running higher than the average of our remaining schools. This situation is also observed even in the summer months when the school is closed.

Note that the cost estimate will have to be determined with a scoping exercise done in the designing phase because of the reconfiguration of the physiotherapy and administration office areas would have to be analyzed to make determinations on the most effective use of the available space.