

Lethbridge School Division

Board of Trustees Special Meeting Agenda

October 29, 2024

7:00 p.m.

Board Room/Microsoft Teams



7:00 p.m.

1. Territorial Acknowledgement
2. Approval of Agenda
3. West Lethbridge Elementary School Boundary Changes Enclosure#1
4. Adjournment

MEMORANDUM

October 29th, 2024

To: Board of Trustees

From: Christine Lee, Associate Superintendent, Business and Operations

RE: Special Meeting- West Lethbridge Elementary School Boundary Changes

Background

Christine Lee, Associate Superintendent of Business and Operations, presented the *Proposed Boundary Changes for West Lethbridge Elementary Schools* report to the Board on behalf of the School Boundary Alignment Committee on September 24, 2024.

The presentation will include the Committee's recommendations for the Board's consideration, answers to frequently asked questions, and the full survey results from the April 30th Open House. The presentation and the report is posted on the Division's website, for feedback from the community until October 18th, 2024. The report and summary of feedback are included in the agenda package.

Based on the feedback, the committee's recommendations are presented to approve new boundary changes to be in effect for the 2025-2026 School Year.

Recommendation

It is recommended the Board of Trustees approve the following:

1. Move to approve the new boundaries under **Option 3**, which includes relocating the Spanish Bilingual Program to West Coulee Station Elementary School for the 2025-2026 school year.
2. Move to direct administration to provide a **transportation solution** for eligible students in the Spanish Bilingual Program, both elementary and middle school, starting the 2025-2026 school year.
3. Move to grant students enrolled in Grade 4 during the 2024-2025 school year at Mike Mountain Horse and Nicholas Sheran Elementary Schools the option to remain at their current school for Grade 5 in the 2025-2026 school year, rather than transferring to the newly designated boundary school. This option will also be extended to their siblings and will apply exclusively for the 2025-2026 school year.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Lee, Associate Superintendent, Business and Operations

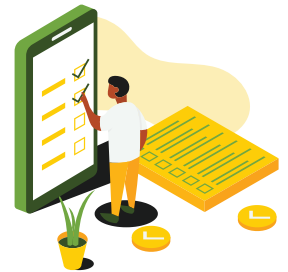
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



WEST LETHBRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROPOSED BOUNDARY CHANGES SURVEY

Respondents
97

**SURVEY
RESULTS**



On September 24th, 2024, the School Boundary Realignment Committee presented suggested boundary adjustments for West Lethbridge Elementary Schools, set to take effect in the 2025-2026 school year. After the presentation, a survey was made available on the Division's website to gather feedback and address any questions from the community regarding the proposed changes. A summary of the survey results can be found on the following pages.

A brief summary of the recommendations:



Next Steps

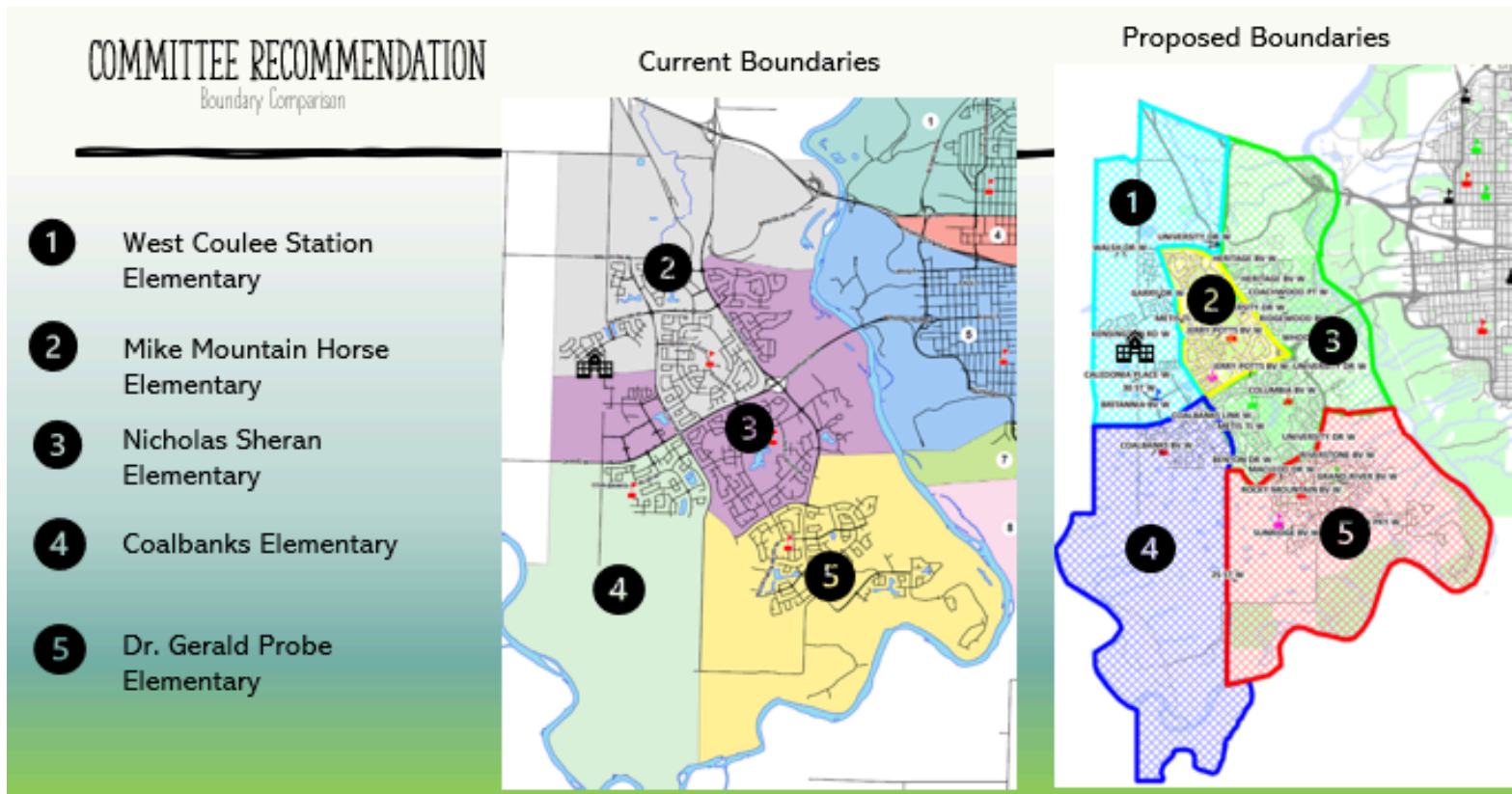
Special meeting
scheduled for October
29th to approve new
boundaries.

The School Boundary Alignment Committee recommends the following changes based on community feedback and the outlined principles:

1. Approval of the new boundaries under **Option 3**, which includes relocating the Spanish Bilingual Program to West Coulee Station Elementary School for the 2025-2026 school year.
2. Provide a **transportation solution** for eligible students in the Spanish Bilingual Program.
3. **Exemption Option:** Allowing grade 4 students from Mike Mountain Horse and Nicholas Sheran Elementary Schools in the 2024-2025 school year to choose to remain at their current school for the 2025-2026 academic year for grade 5.

WEST LETHBRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROPOSED BOUNDARY CHANGES SURVEY

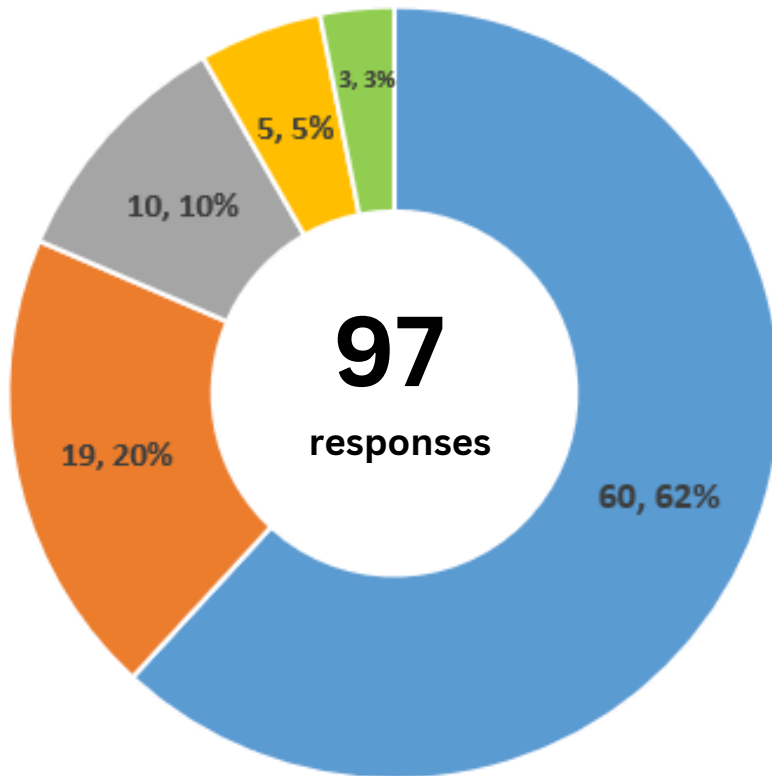
Boundary Maps, Before and After Committee Recommendations



WEST LETHBRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROPOSED BOUNDARY CHANGES SURVEY

We Asked: I am...

You Answered:



I am

- A parent/guardian/staff member of Coalbanks Elementary School
- A parent/guardian/staff member of Nicholas Sheran Elementary School
- A parent/guardian/staff member of Mike Mountain Horse Elementary School
- A parent/guardian/staff member of Dr. Probe Elementary School
- Interested community member



WEST LETHBRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROPOSED BOUNDARY CHANGES SURVEY

We Asked:

After reviewing the information package " Proposed Boundary Changes for West Lethbridge Elementary Schools", are there any questions or concerns that were not addressed in the FAQ section of the document?

You Answered:

45 with no comment provided or nothing to add



Questions:

1. Has the YMCA BASC program been consulted for before and after school care, and will they offer bussing to the new school? Will families lose their current care spots?
2. Will there be a BLAST program at the new West Coulee School?
3. Why was the Spanish program relocated instead of placing boundary limits? Why not expand Spanish to more schools, like French?
4. Will students in the Coalbanks' Spanish Bilingual Program be able to finish their years there? Will Grade 5 students be allowed to complete their final year at Coalbanks?
5. Why can't the Spanish program remain at Coalbanks for children in Copperwood?
6. Will parents have to pay for bussing to the Spanish program, and what are the boundaries for eligible students? What about drop-off/pick-up lanes at Garry Station?
7. Were transiency rates or socioeconomic factors considered in these decisions?
8. Is there a plan to complete road access to the new Coulee Station school from Whoop Up Drive?
9. When is another school expected to be built to accommodate future growth at Copperwood?



Concerns expressed:

1. Staffing and Program Continuity:

- a. Concern about the teaching staff at the new school being all brand new.
- b. General concerns about staffing and continuity for students transitioning between schools or programs.

2. Sibling and Student Placement:

- a. Concern about siblings staying together if one is in Grade 5 and another is starting Grade 1.

3. Spanish Program Relocation:

- a. Concern about whether students will switch to English instead of relocating with the Spanish program, especially if parents do not plan to continue in the program after the move.
- b. Concerns about the impact of moving the program on enrollment, including potential challenges with recruiting new students and limiting access beyond Grade 1.

4. Enrollment and Future Growth:

- a. Concerns about enrollment pressure and future growth at Mike Mountain Horse and Copperwood schools due to the relocation of the Spanish program.
- b. Concern about whether relocating the Spanish program will significantly change enrollment numbers at the schools involved.

5. Safety and Accessibility:

- a. Request for a safe pedestrian path along 30th Street for walking and biking to the new school.
- b. Concerns about road safety, accessibility, and transportation infrastructure, including recommended pedestrian paths and school transportation options.

WEST LETHBRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROPOSED BOUNDARY CHANGES SURVEY

We Asked:

Please provide feedback on the proposed new boundaries for West Lethbridge Elementary Schools, that would come into effect for the 2025-2026 school year.

You Answered:

No feedback provided by **55** respondents



There were **26** comments provided that were supportive of the proposed boundary changes. Below is a summary of those comments:

- Many respondents expressed support for Option 3, believing it will be beneficial for students, schools, and overall enrollment balance.
- Multiple comments highlighted satisfaction with the relocation of the Spanish bilingual program, noting it would reduce overcrowding at Coalbanks and allow the program room to grow.
- Several individuals expressed gratitude for the planning process, commending the committee's work and decision-making.
- Support was shown for the proposed boundaries, with a few requesting the inclusion of safe walking/biking paths for students.
- A few noted specific approval of Dr. Probe's boundaries and appreciation for not splitting the Copperwood community.
- Overall, most comments indicated that the proposal was well-received, with respondents pleased that it addressed key concerns effectively.

WEST LETHBRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROPOSED BOUNDARY CHANGES SURVEY

We Asked:

Please provide feedback on the proposed new boundaries for West Lethbridge Elementary Schools, that would come into effect for the 2025-2026 school year.

You Answered:



There were **16** comments provided that were not supportive of the proposed boundary changes. Below is a summary of those comments:

- Several individuals expressed disappointment with the decision to move the Spanish program from Coalbanks, where it is well-established and thriving. Many preferred it to remain at Coalbanks.
- Concerns were raised about dividing the Copperwood community, noting that 61% of Copperwood students are in the Spanish program, and the relocation will still split the community.
- Some felt that moving the Spanish program to West Coulee Station was not the best option, with preferences for Nicholas Sheran as the new location.
- Logistical challenges were mentioned, with parents worried about disruption to their children's education and community connections, particularly for those already attending Nicholas Sheran or living near the school.
- Some were concerned that moving the program will decrease enrollment in Spanish and fail to address overcrowding at Coalbanks, while also limiting growth of the Spanish program in the new location.
- There were also emotional reactions from parents sad or frustrated that their children won't attend the neighborhood school they can see from their homes.

Most comments concern the relocation of the Spanish Bilingual Program.



Lethbridge
SCHOOL DIVISION

PROPOSED BOUNDARY CHANGES FOR WEST LETHBRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

2025–2026 SCHOOL YEAR

School Boundary Alignment Committee Report
to
The Board of Trustees
September 24, 2024

This report details the suggested changes to the West Lethbridge Elementary School boundaries, set to take effect in the 2025–2026 school year.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 About the Boundary Review Page 2

This section discusses the rationale behind boundary adjustments, sets out the principles for the review, and offers key details on capacity and usage. These are vital aspects to consider when redefining school boundaries.

2 Community Engagement Page 4

This section offers a concise overview of community feedback collected from in-person interactions or surveys. The insights gathered from community engagement sessions play a crucial role in shaping the School Boundary Alignment Committee's recommendations.

3 Committee Recommendation Page 6

This section outlines the School Boundary Realignment Committee's recommendation to modify boundaries for the 2025-2026 school year. It discusses the potential consequences and additional considerations related to the Committee's chosen option.

4 Frequently Asked Questions Page 9

This section addresses inquiries regarding the boundary review, potential choices, and the upcoming steps in the process.

5 Appendices Page 12

- Current West Lethbridge Elementary School Boundaries
- Option 1: Copperwood Split
- Option 2: Moving the Spanish Bilingual Program to Nicholas Sheran School
- Option 3: Moving the Spanish Bilingual Program to the new school (West Coulee Station Elementary School)
- Survey Results regarding the options introduced at the Open House on April 30th


1

About the Boundary Review

Why we are adjusting West Lethbridge Elementary School boundaries:


- Designate areas of west Lethbridge as **attendance areas** for the new K-5 Elementary School in Garry Station for September 2025.
- Address **capacity concerns** at Coalbanks and Mike Mountain Horse Elementary Schools. For example: Coalbanks has 13 modular classrooms and is currently at **105%** utilization/ **218%** core utilization in an area of future residential development. Mike Mountain Horse Elementary School has 21 modular classrooms with capacity at **77%** utilization/ **169%** core utilization.

Why do we change boundaries?




New Schools

When a new school is built it is necessary to redraw boundaries, due to new community and relieving pressure in an existing school




Facility Capacity

A school may be considered at or above capacity and there may be space in another school in the sector




Future Residential Growth

Future growth of a community in an area where a school is reaching capacity may require boundary adjustments



Program Alignment

Due to several other factors, it may be necessary to facilitate programming

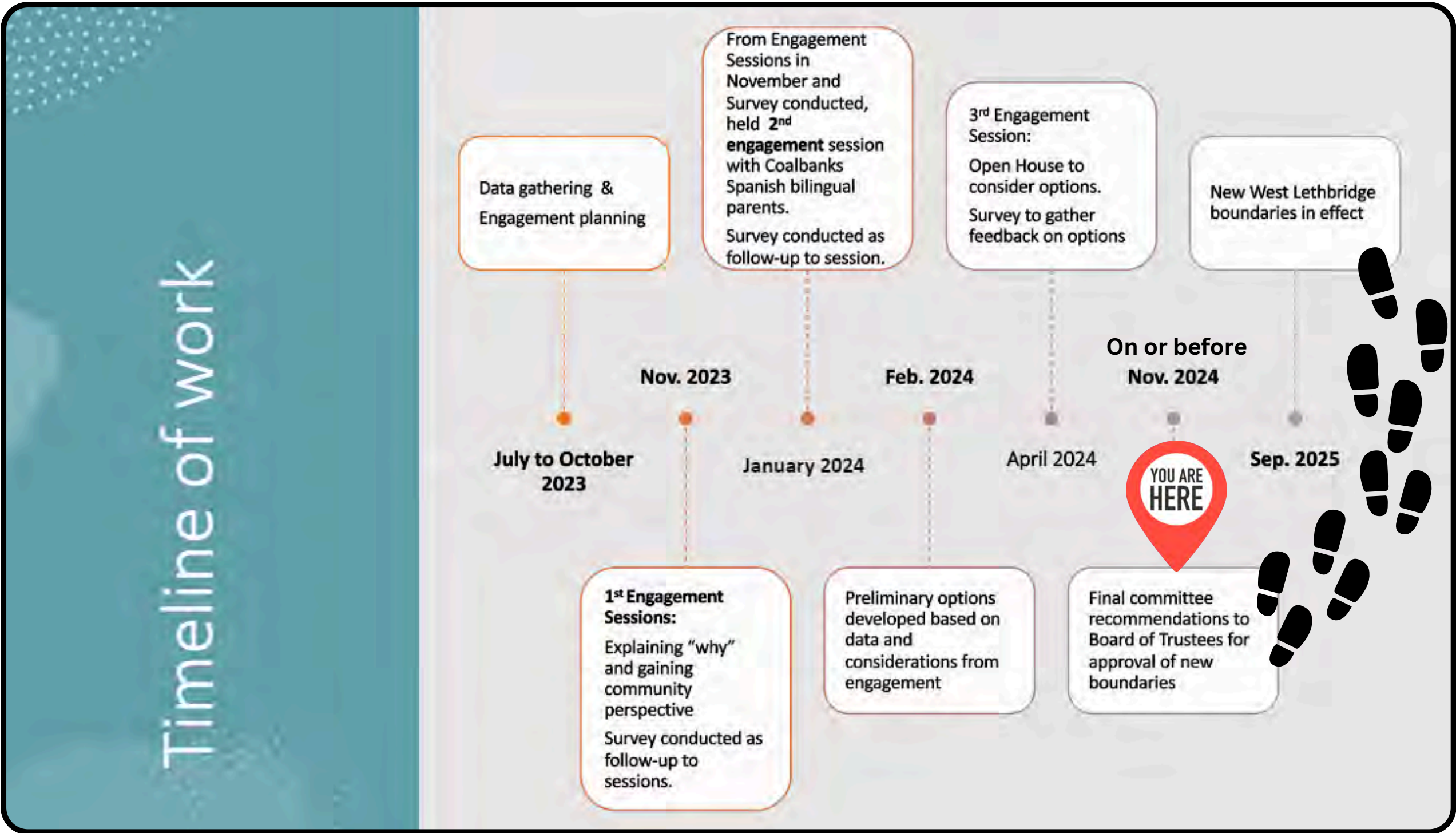


Functional Realignment

Due to growth in a sector the current configuration may not be functional, and boundaries may require realignment

Guiding Principles for the review:

- To support the **successful opening** of the new elementary school in Garry Station.
- To address **capacity concerns** at Mike Mountain Horse and Coalbanks elementary schools.
- To **balance out enrolment** at westside elementary schools with the goal of ensuring that enrolment at schools is neither too low or too full.
- Try to **limit disruptions** to students, families, staff and school communities created by boundary changes.
- To minimize the short term need for additional boundary changes for westside elementary schools .

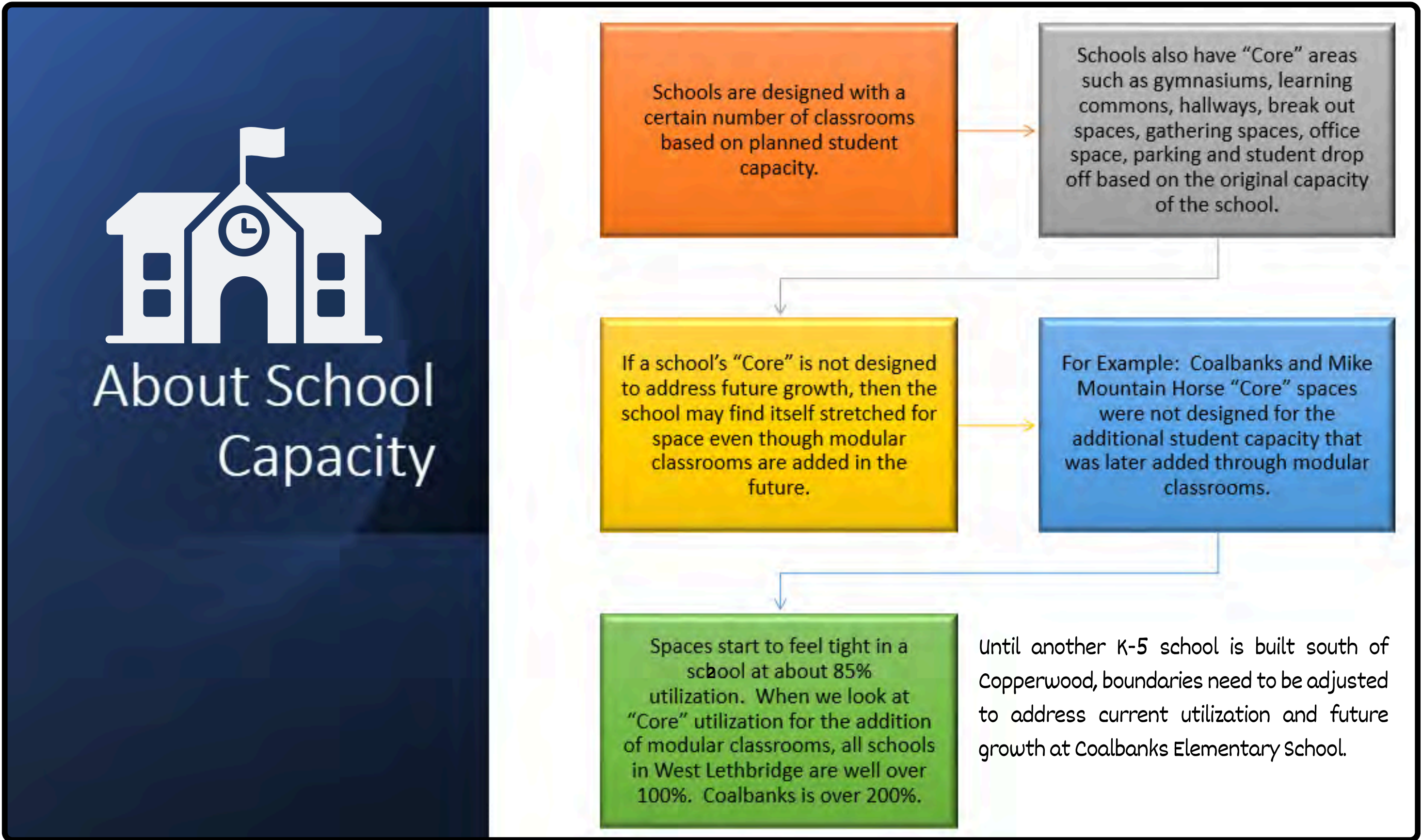


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West Lethbridge Elementary School
Capacity and Utilization

School	Enrolment Capacity and Utilization (as of the 2023-2024 school year)				Enrolment
	Enrolment *Core Area Only	Enrolment Total Area	Utilization % Core Area Only	Utilization % Total Area	2023-2024
Coalbanks Elementary School	300	632	221%	105%	664
Dr. Gerald B. Probe Elementary School	325	668	145%	71%	471
Nicholas Sheran Elementary School	300	727	131%	54%	392
Mike Mountain Horse Elementary School	350	771	169%	77%	593
* Core utilization does not include modular facility additions					

The new K-5 School in Garry Station, opening September 2025 is built to reduce utilization, reduce over crowding, and address future growth at the only elementary school in the north end of west Lethbridge.



How many modular classrooms are at the schools?

DID
YOU
KNOW?

21
Mike Mountain Horse

14
Nicholas Sheran

13
Dr Probe

13 + 2
Coalbanks
Approved
March 2024

2

Community Engagement

In order to gather as much information and community input as possible, the Committee held four engagement sessions and provided a number of survey opportunities to gather differing perspectives in considering which option to choose. Below and in the following pages outlines a little bit about those engagement opportunities and what was heard.

The Division held two engagement evenings in **November 2023** to present “**Why**” west Lethbridge elementary school boundaries needed to change. A video presentation was posted on the Division’s website and a survey was conducted as follow-up to these sessions.

What we heard:



1

To address growth and capacity concerns:

- Relocate the Spanish bilingual program and involve the community
- Address overcrowding and equalize school areas
- Proactive planning and use of modular classrooms
- Transparent communication and long-term planning
- Transportation solutions need to be provided



2

Neighbourhood factors to consider:

- Program and community cohesion
- Proximity to school (walking distance)
- Community and friendship continuity
- Diversity of school community



3

To Minimize disruption to students and families:

- Phased implementation
- Siblings' enrolment
- Early transparent communication
- Community involvement
- Transportation solutions
- Long-term solutions



Based on information received from the November 2023 engagement, there was a need to further engage with families of students enrolled in the Spanish bilingual program at Coalbanks Elementary School. An engagement session was held in **January 2024**, followed by a survey to all families in the program.

What we heard:

Students are enrolled in the Spanish bilingual program because:

- Language and cultural enrichment
- Benefits of bilingual education
- Alignment of program values and aspirations
- Cognitive benefits
- Community and peer interactions
- Family background



Factors that would influence continued enrolment in Spanish bilingual program if relocated:

- Location, proximity and convenience
- Westside location preference
- Transportation solution provided
- Program integrity
- Commitment to Spanish bilingual program
- Family schedules and complexity

Out of **135** respondents:

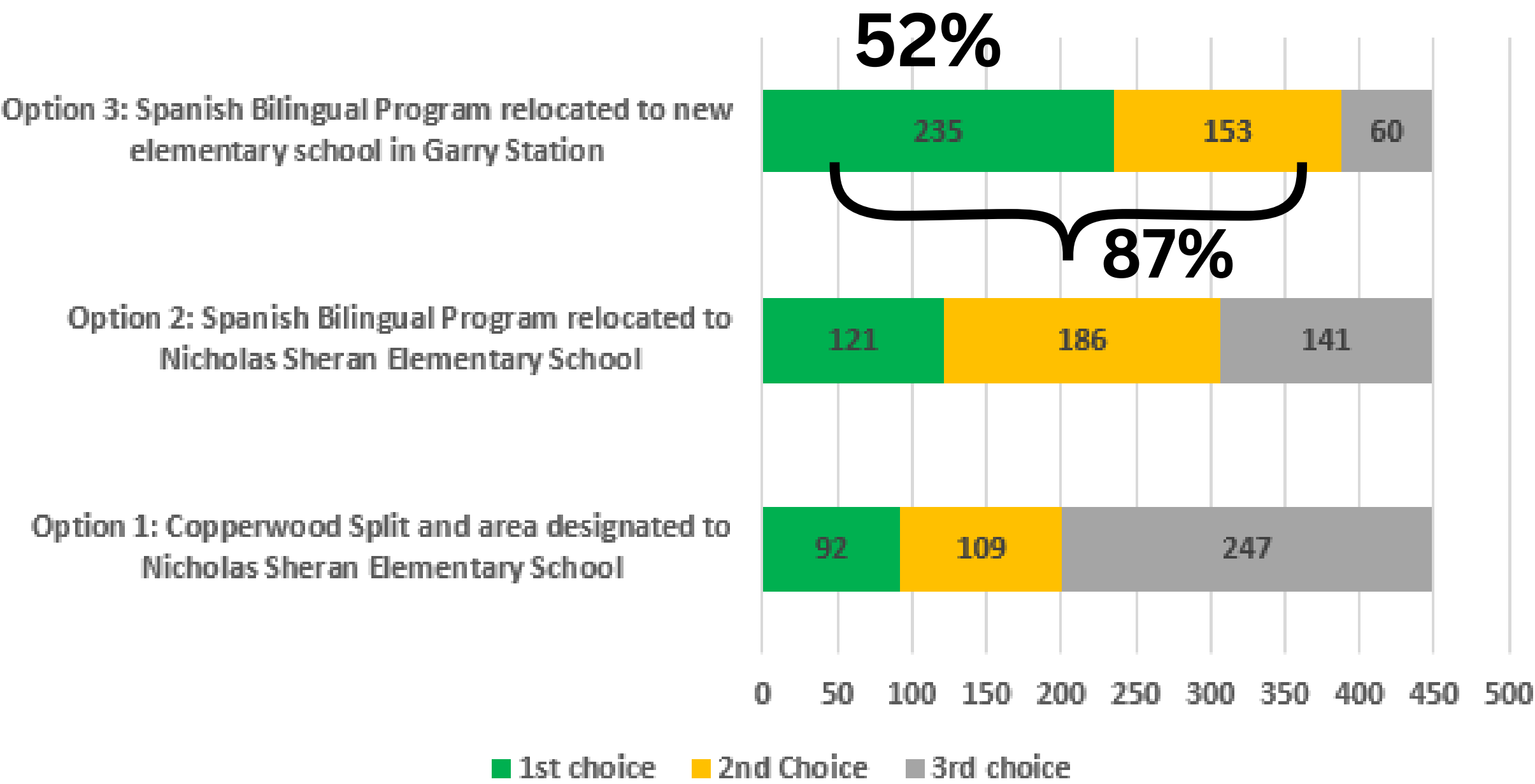
2

Community Engagement

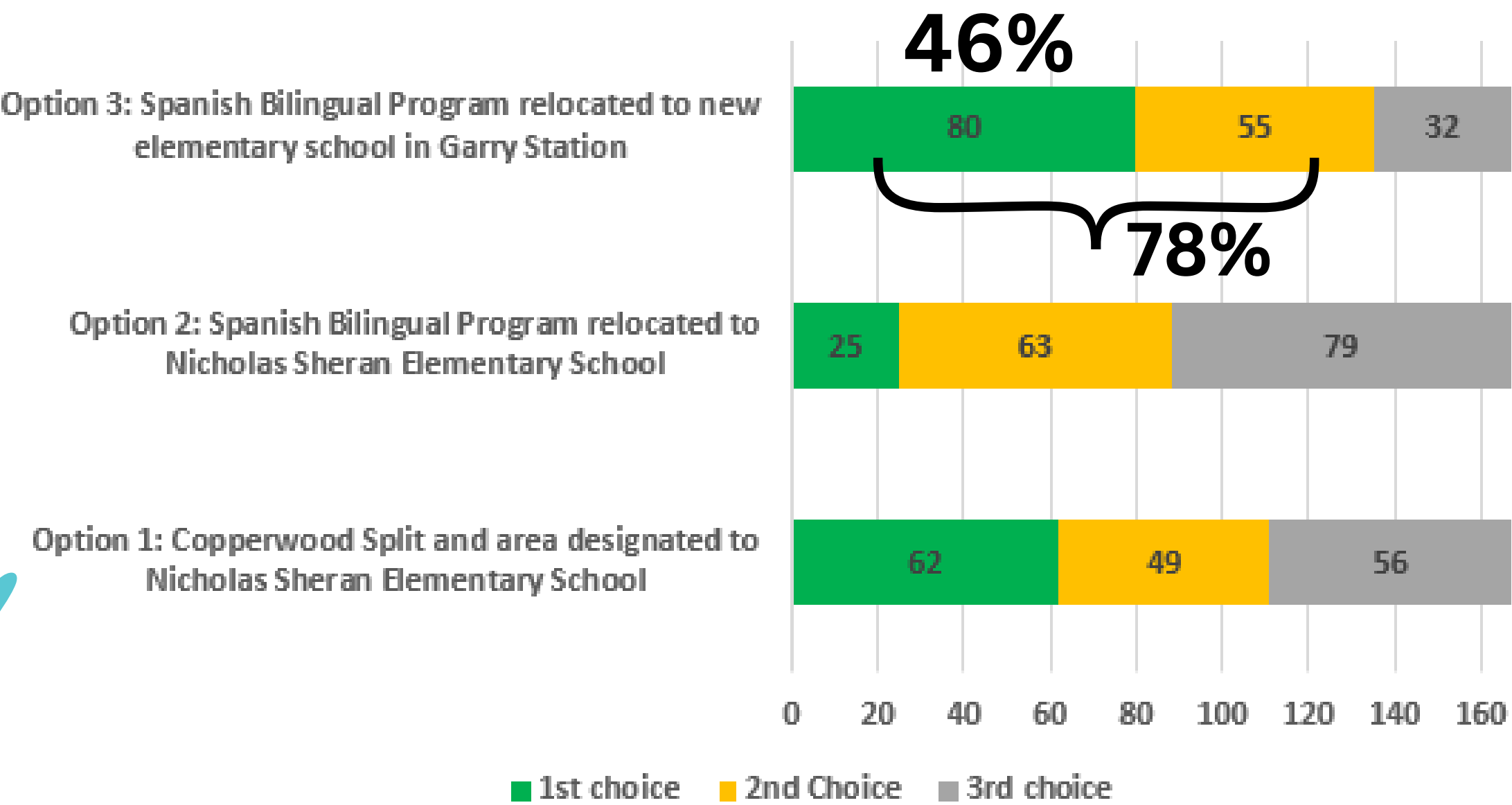
Respondents
448

An Open House was held on April 30th at G.S. Lakie Middle School to present potential boundary realignment options for elementary schools in west Lethbridge starting in the 2025-2026 school year. Three alternatives were proposed to tackle growth and capacity issues at Mike Mountain Horse Elementary School and Coalbanks Elementary School, while establishing a new enrollment catchment for the upcoming K-5 Elementary School, West Coulee Station Elementary, in Garry Station. Attendees and the public were urged to participate in a survey to provide feedback on the options. Option 3, relocating the Spanish Bilingual Program to the new elementary school, emerged as the top choice overall and among participants in the Spanish Bilingual Program. However, it is recognized that most families in both programs would prefer the option to not change and remain at Coalbanks Elementary School. Detailed survey results can be found at the end of the document, outlining the preference for Option 3.

Overall:



Spanish Bilingual
Program:



3

Recommendations

Committee Recommendation

The School Boundary Alignment Committee recommends the following changes based on community feedback and the outlined principles:

- Approval of the new boundaries under Option 3, including relocating the Spanish Bilingual Program to West Coulee Station Elementary School for the 2025-2026 school year.
- Providing a transportation solution for eligible students in the Spanish Bilingual Program.
- Allowing grade 4 students from Mike Mountain Horse or Nicholas Sheran Elementary Schools in the 2024-2025 school year to choose to remain at their current school for the 2025-2026 academic year for grade 5. (Exemption Option)

How does Option 3 address the following guiding principles?

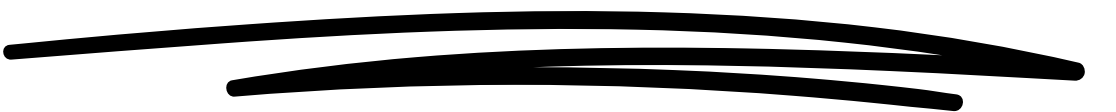
- **To support the successful opening of the new elementary school in Garry Station.** The new boundaries and addition of the Spanish Bilingual Program will ensure that West Coulee Station Elementary School opens with sufficient enrolment. West Coulee Station has the capacity to grow beyond 600 students to 900 students in the future as the school has been built with a core capacity of 900. Twelve modular classrooms may be added to provide an additional 300 spaces beyond the 600 the school will open with in 2025-2026.
- **To address capacity concerns at Mike Mountain Horse and Coalbanks elementary schools.** The new boundary for Mike Mountain Horse Elementary School will draw down enrolment significantly and will allow for the removal of 10 relocatable classrooms that have reached end of life. This will bring the school to a reasonable capacity. With the relocation of the Spanish Bilingual Program, Coalbanks will have some breathing room for a few years until a new elementary school can be funded by Alberta Education and built in the south end of West Lethbridge. Should growth occur faster than anticipated or more Spanish Bilingual Program families than anticipated switch to the English program at the school, then an overflow school may need to be designated in the future. See the chart on the next page illustrating Option 3 impact on utilization.
- **To balance out enrolment at westside elementary schools with the goal of ensuring that enrolment at schools is neither too low nor too full.** Option 3 provides the best balance for enrolment.
- **To try to limit disruptions to students, families, staff and school communities created by boundary changes.** Although all boundary changes will cause some disruption, Option 3 is the least disruptive by designating communities, where possible, closest to the boundary school and by moving a specialized program that attracts enrolment from all areas of the city. Transportation is also a key consideration in easing disruption. An exemption option for some students going into grade 5 is considered to limit disruption.
- **To minimize the short-term need for additional boundary changes for westside elementary schools.** West Lethbridge has had the fastest population growth in Lethbridge for a number of years and it is anticipated to continue to outpace North and South Lethbridge. There are a number of developing and proposed new communities for West Lethbridge. The pace of this development is influenced by a variety of factors such as migration, immigration, and economic conditions. It is anticipated that Option 3, provides for the greatest flexibility to address growth until a new school is built in the south end of West Lethbridge.

3

Option 3:
Relocate Spanish Bilingual Program to
New K-5 Elementary School (West Coulee Station) in Garry Station

About this option:

- Spanish bilingual program at Coalbanks Elementary School will be relocated to the new K-5 Elementary School in Garry Station. Spanish bilingual program enrolment is 41% of Coalbanks.
- A **transportation solution** will be provided to all eligible students attending the Spanish bilingual program at the new school.
- Moved from Nicholas Sheran Boundary:** Crossings to new K-5 School.
- Moved from Mike Mountain Horse boundary to new school in Garry Station:** Mountain Meadows, Garry Station.
- No change to Dr. Probe boundary.
- No change to Coalbanks Elementary School Boundary.

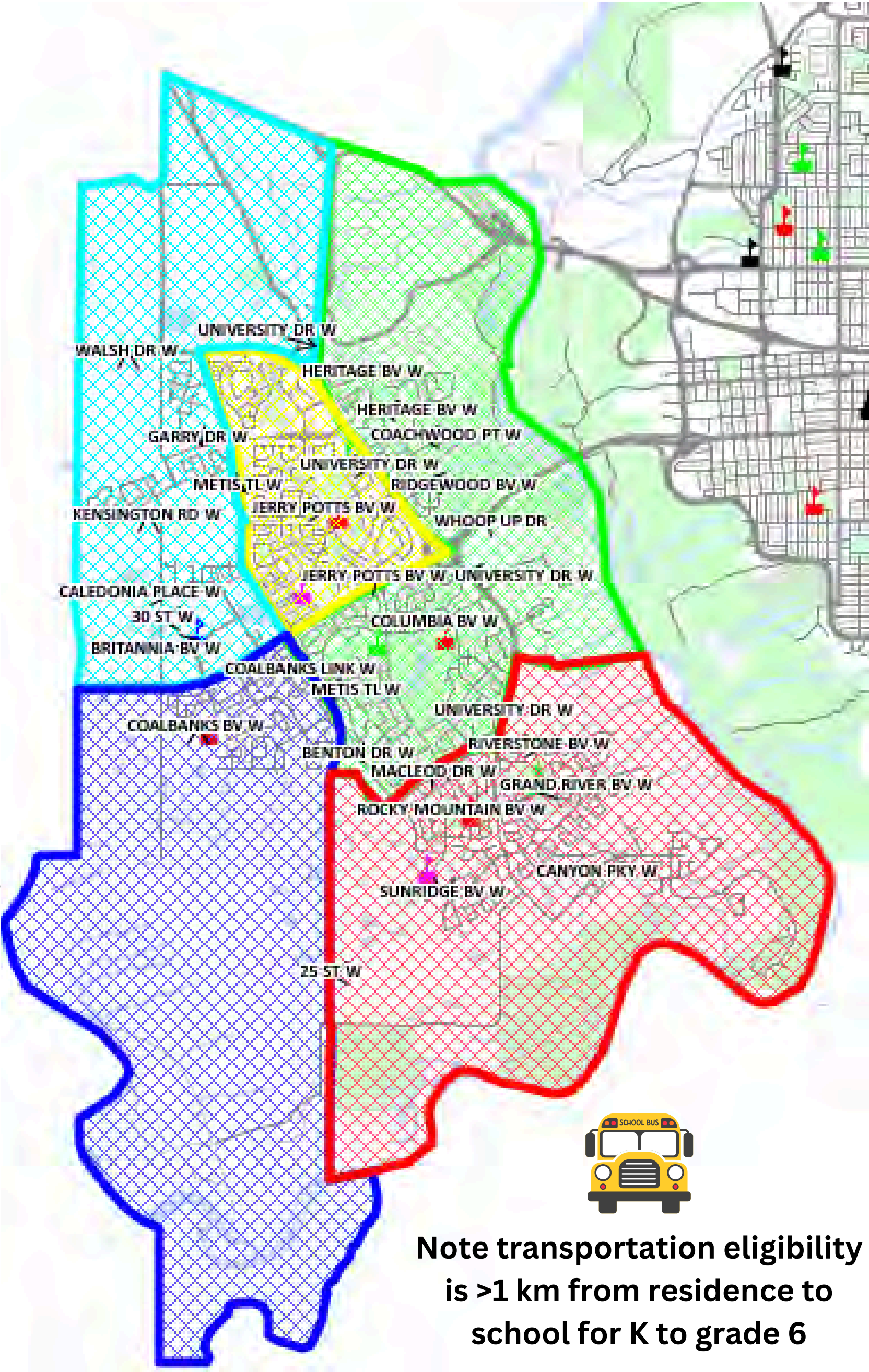


Option 3

ProsCons

- Balances enrolment amongst the elementary schools.
 - Significantly reduces Coalbanks utilization to allow for future growth.
 - Allows regular program at Coalbanks to remain unaffected.
 - Alleviates capacity concern at Mike Mountain Horse.
- Means disruption to Spanish bilingual program families by moving to a new school, however transportation solutions will be provided for eligible students.
 - New school in Garry Station will open at significant utilization. There is the ability to request up to 12 modular classrooms for this school to accommodate future growth without impacting core spaces. Under this option, these modular classrooms may need to be requested sooner than anticipated.

Approximately 275 students in the Spanish Bilingual Program could be relocated under this option.



Note transportation eligibility is >1 km from residence to school for K to grade 6

Impact on Utilization:

Option 3					
School	Current Capacity	Current Enrolment	Current Utilization%	Enrolment	Utilization %
Coalbanks	632	664	105%	392	62%
Mike Mountain Horse	771	593	77%	451	58%
Garry Station	0/600 (complete)	0	0	441	74%
Nicholas Sheran	727	392	54%	365	50%
Dr. Probe	668	471	71%	471	71%
Total	2798/3398	2120	76%	2120	62%

Notes:
** Mike Mountain Horse has 10 relocatable classrooms that need to be removed. This eliminates 250 student spaces and will increase utilization by 24%.

3

Potential Consequences
and Other Considerations

Potential Consequences of Option 3

What if Cooperwood residents attending the Spanish Bilingual Program at Coalbanks decide to not move and enroll in the English program to stay at Coalbanks? The chart below illustrates the impact on Option 3 utilization at the schools based on a variety of scenarios. In 2023-2024 there were approximately **167 students** in the Spanish Bilingual Program that live in the community of Copperwood.

School	1			2			3			4		
	20% Remain English / 80% Spanish move			40% Remain English / 60% Spanish move			60% Remain English / 40% Spanish move			80% Remain English / 20% Spanish move		
	Enrolment	Capacity	Utilization %	Enrolment	Capacity	Utilization %	Enrolment	Capacity	Utilization %	Enrolment	Capacity	Utilization %
Coalbanks	425	632	67.25%	459	632	72.63%	492	632	77.85%	526	632	83.23%
West Coulee Station	403	600	67.17%	369	600	61.50%	336	600	56.00%	302	600	50.33%
Mike Mountain Horse	451	771	58.50%	451	771	58.50%	451	771	58.50%	451	771	58.50%
Nicholas Sheran	370	727	50.89%	370	727	50.89%	370	727	50.89%	370	727	50.89%
Probe	471	668	70.51%	471	668	70.51%	471	668	70.51%	471	668	70.51%
	2120	3398	62.39%	2120	3398	62.39%	2120	3398	62.39%	2120	3398	62.39%

Note the above scenarios are using 2023-2024 enrolment data and do not assume any future growth. Analysis also assumes that Spanish Bilingual Program enrolment from areas outside of the Copperwood Community would move to the new school.

In scenarios 1, 2, and 3, the objectives of balanced enrollment and facilitating growth in all schools would be met. However, scenario 3 offers limited space for comfortable expansion at Coalbanks. In scenario 4, with 80% remaining in the English program, Coalbanks is already operating at full capacity and lacks room for future growth. Both scenarios 3 and 4 increase the likelihood of needing an overflow school designated for Coalbanks to accommodate future expansion.

Other Considerations

What is the impact of students who are going into grade 4 or 5 at Mike Mountain Horse or Nicholas Sheran and they are allowed to remain in their current school? Exemption consideration will not be available for the Spanish Bilingual Program as the program will no longer be offered at Coalbanks Elementary School.

Assuming scenario 2 above with 60% of Spanish Bilingual Students moving to West Coulee Station to remain in Spanish Bilingual programming, the chart below shows the impact of allowing grade 4 and 5 or just grade 5 students the option to remain at the school they are enrolled in 2024-2025 for the 2025-2026 school year.

School	Enrolment before legacy option	Attended Mike Mountain Horse in 2023-2024		Attended Nicholas Sheran in 2023-2024		New Total if current gr 2 and 3 legacy (gr 4's and 5's)	Utilization	New Total if only current gr 3 legacy (GR 5's)	Utilization
		Grade 2 (be gr 4) and moved to new school	Grade 3 (grade 5) and moved to new school	Grade 2 (be gr 4) and moved to new school	Grade 3 (grade 5) and moved to new school				
Coalbanks	459	NA	NA	NA	NA	459	72.63%	459	72.63%
West Coulee Station	369	-19	-21	-3	-3	323	53.83%	345	57.50%
Mike Mountain Horse	451	19	21	NA	NA	491	63.68%	472	61.22%
Nicholas Sheran	370	NA	NA	3	3	376	51.72%	373	51.31%
Probe	471	NA	NA	NA	NA	471	70.51%	471	70.51%
Total	2120					2120		2120	

According to the chart, providing exemption consideration to students at Mike Mountain Horse or Nicholas Sheran Elementary Schools due to the boundary adjustment shows minimal impact. The proposal recommends that students entering grade 5 in the 2025-2026 academic year have the option to remain at their 2024-2025 school, excluding those joining the Spanish Bilingual Program, which will not be available at Coalbanks in 2025-2026.

4

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Decision Timeline and next steps:**

- **When will a final decision be made regarding the school boundaries and program changes?** The Board of Trustees will make a decision on or before November 30th, 2024. This decision will be communicated to the community and parents of impacted schools and programs.
- **What are the next steps after the Board of Trustees approve a new boundary change?** New school boundary maps will be created, and families impacted by the change in boundaries will receive notification. The new boundary maps will be used to determine transportation eligibility and the Division will work with our transportation provider to coordinate busing. This will also include determining the best transportation solutions for Spanish Bilingual families (see Transportation and Access below).

- **Student Stay Duration: Can current students remain at Coalbanks Elementary until Grade 5, or will they have to move schools in 2025?** Students who continue enrolment in the Spanish Bilingual Program will be required to move to West Coulee Station Elementary School for the 2025-2026 school year. The Spanish Bilingual Program will no longer be offered at Coalbanks Elementary School, and it is not feasible to host the program at two locations and maintain program cohesion. For students in Nicholas Sheran or Mike Mountain Horse, see Exemption Option on next page.

- **Consideration of Future Schools: How does the school board consider future schools to avoid frequent boundary adjustments?** The Division reviews city planning and development information, census data and demographic data to consider areas of growth that may impact one of more schools. The Division prepares a business case for a new school(s) in the Three-Year Capital Plan and submits a request to Alberta Education to fund the requested new school(s). The Province of Alberta through Alberta Education and Alberta Infrastructure review all capital requests within the province and determine funding priorities. Capital announcements are normally made by the Province with the spring budget, in February or March.

- **Staffing for Spanish Program: How will the Spanish bilingual program be staffed if it is moved to another school?** There will be no change to the current staffing process. The Human Resources department has a process in which they collaborate with school administration to find staff to meet a school's programming needs. These staffing needs may be addressed by current staff within the Division or when required, other recruitment efforts to find staff for a school.

- **Transportation and Access: Will transportation be provided for students who are attending the Spanish Bilingual Program at West Coulee Station Elementary School in West Lethbridge as well as from the south or north side if there is interest in the Spanish Bilingual program?** A transportation solution will be provided for all students attending the Spanish Bilingual Program at West Coulee Station Elementary School and G.S. Lakie Middle School beginning in 2025-2026, who meet the distance requirements to be eligible for transportation, which is 1 Km or greater at kindergarten to grade 6 and 2 km for grades 7 - 8. Where feasible a yellow school bus will be provided as the transportation solution. Where there may not be enough ridership for a yellow school bus, such as North or South Lethbridge, another solution may be available such as a City of Lethbridge Transit pass or a parent provided transportation arrangement.

4

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Capacity and Infrastructure: Why doesn't the school board build larger schools to accommodate future growth instead of adding portables?** The school division has recently been able to advocate for schools that have a larger core capacity and have the ability to accommodate additional students as the school grows through modular classrooms. This is the case with the new elementary school in West Lethbridge, West Coulee Station Elementary School. This school is built to a core capacity of 900 students, which means that the gymnasium, learning commons, gathering space, hallways etc., are constructed to support 900 students. The school will open with classrooms to support 600 students with the ability to add 12 modular classrooms as enrolment grows to support 900 students. In the Division's Three-Year Capital Plan, another 900-student elementary school has been requested for the south end of West Lethbridge and a 1500 student high school.
- **Exemption Option: What is the exemption option in the proposal and how does that impact my child?** An exemption option considers providing the option for a student that is impacted by the boundary changes to complete a grade(s) at their current school rather than changing to the new boundary school. In the case of the proposed boundary changes, students who will be going into grade 5 at either Nicholas Sheran or Mike Mountain Horse, and impacted by the boundary changes, will have the option to remain at their current school. If a parent wishes to keep their child in the school for grade 5 and not move to the new designated boundary school, they do this with the understanding that transportation will not be provided. Parents will be notified of the process to register students in their new designated boundary school or to request to enroll under the exemption option with their current school. There will be no exemption option for the Spanish Bilingual Program as the program is relocating to West Coulee Station Elementary School.
- **Spanish Bilingual Program Viability: Will the Spanish Bilingual Program remain a viable program if families living in Copperwood choose to switch to the English program?** Approximately 61% of the students in the Spanish Bilingual Program reside in the Coalbanks Boundary which is the community of Copperwood. Certainly, there will be families that may choose to switch to the English Program and not move to West Coulee Station Elementary School for the Spanish Bilingual Program. It is possible that there may be a dip in enrolment in the program in 2025-2026. The Spanish Bilingual Program has been a program that has attracted students from west, north, and south Lethbridge. It is our belief that even with some families choosing to remain at Coalbanks, due to the quality teaching and cultural programs provided in the program, the Spanish Bilingual Program will continue to be viable into the future.
- **I have a child with exceptionalities and would have to transfer to a new elementary school. I am worried that this transition will be difficult for them. What can I do?** The school will have the same support levels as any other elementary school (Learning Support Teacher, EA support, access to special services and counselling). Because an Instructional Support Program is individualized, your child's program will continue at the new site. If you have any concerns or questions please book a meeting with the Principal (or the Inclusive Education department) and they can support you and your child in this transition. It is important to note that West Coulee Elementary is a two level building and has an elevator that students with mobility challenges will be able to access.

4

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Middle School Zoning Impact: How will changes to elementary school boundaries affect middle school zoning and student transitions?** Middle School Boundaries will not change. The change in boundaries has minimal impact on transition to middle school. Spanish Bilingual students regardless of residence will attend G.S. Lakie Middle School for the middle school Spanish Bilingual Program. See the chart below to see how elementary schools feed to middle school.

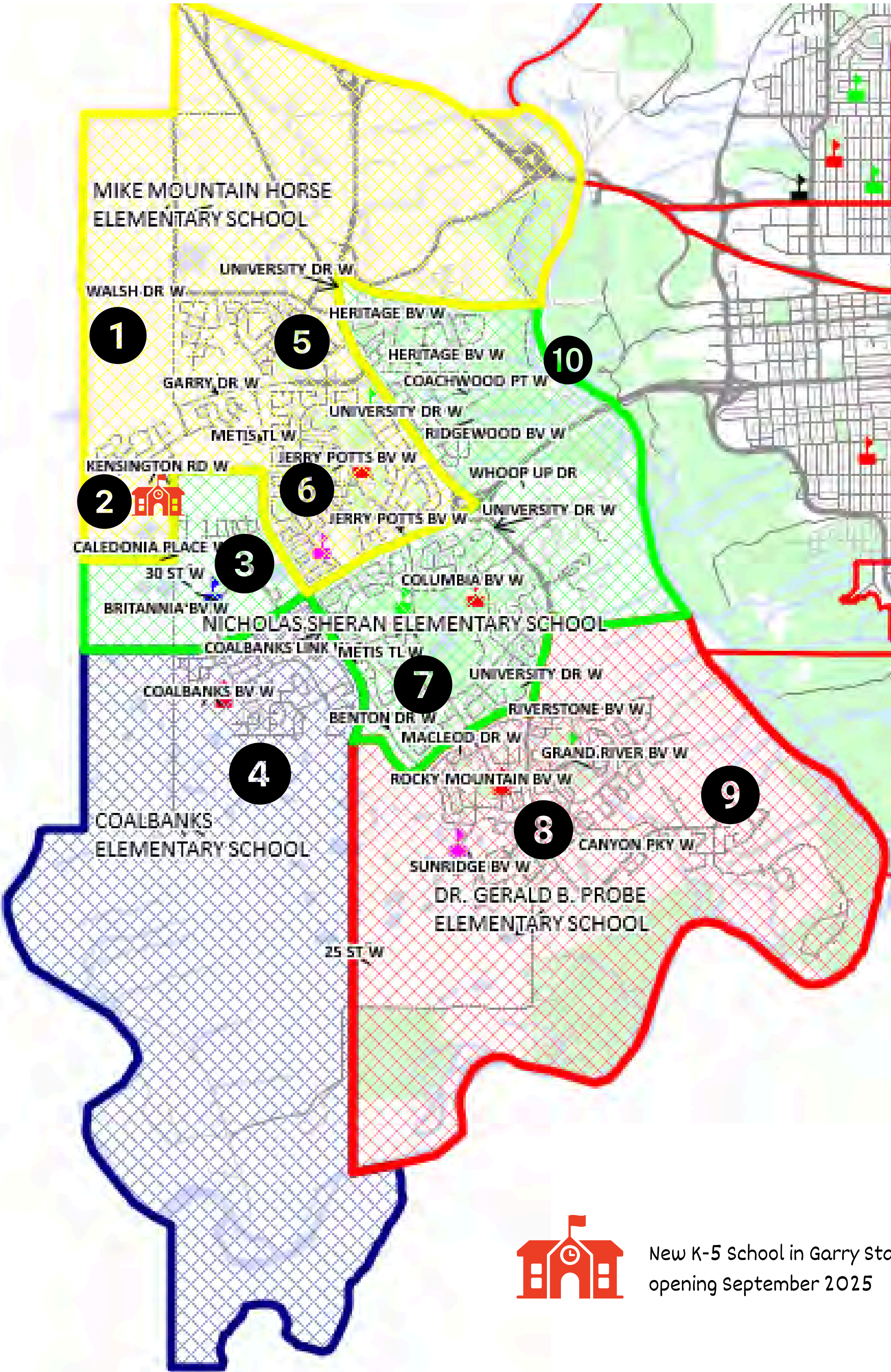
Elementary School Boundary	Middle School	Notes
Coalbanks	Senator Joyce Fairbairn	
Dr. Probe	Senator Joyce Fairbairn	
Nicholas Sheran	Senator Joyce Fairbairn	*Varsity Village south of Columbia Blvd
	G.S. Lakie	*Varsity Village north of Columbia Blvd, Heritage Heights and Ridgewood
Mike Mountain Horse	G. S. Lakie	
West Coulee Station	G. S. Lakie	Spanish Bilingual will also attend G.S. Lakie

*refer to middle school boundary map for exact street transition

- **Options and Alternatives:**
 - **Why was the option (option 1) to split up the Coalbanks boundary not recommended instead of moving the Spanish Bilingual Program?** The survey and community feedback clearly indicated that moving a specialized program was preferable to splitting a community.
 - **Why was the option (Option 2) to move the Spanish Bilingual Program to Nicholas Sheran Elementary School not chosen?** The survey and community feedback indicated that moving the Spanish Bilingual Program to the new school, West Coulee Station Elementary School was preferable. Also, Nicholas Sheran School has had to go through a significant number of changes over the last seven years. The school became a dual track French Immersion school in 2017-2018 then back to a single track school when French Immersion moved to Agnes Davidson in 2021-2022. This has been difficult on the school staff and community.
- **School Choice: What if I would like to enroll my child in a school that is not considered our boundary school?** Requests being made to attend a school outside of the designated attendance area is referred to as school choice. Fair and just consideration shall be made for requests by parents/guardians to have their child(ren) enrolled in a school outside of their attendance area. Factors that will be considered in allowing a student to enroll in an out of boundary school, included ability to provide resources and programming and enrolment in the school. It is important to note that transportation may not be provided if a child is enrolled in a school outside their attendance area (except for specialized programs such as the Spanish Bilingual Program). Please refer to *Policy 501.3.1 School Choice*.

5

Current
West Lethbridge Elementary School Boundaries



Neighbourhoods

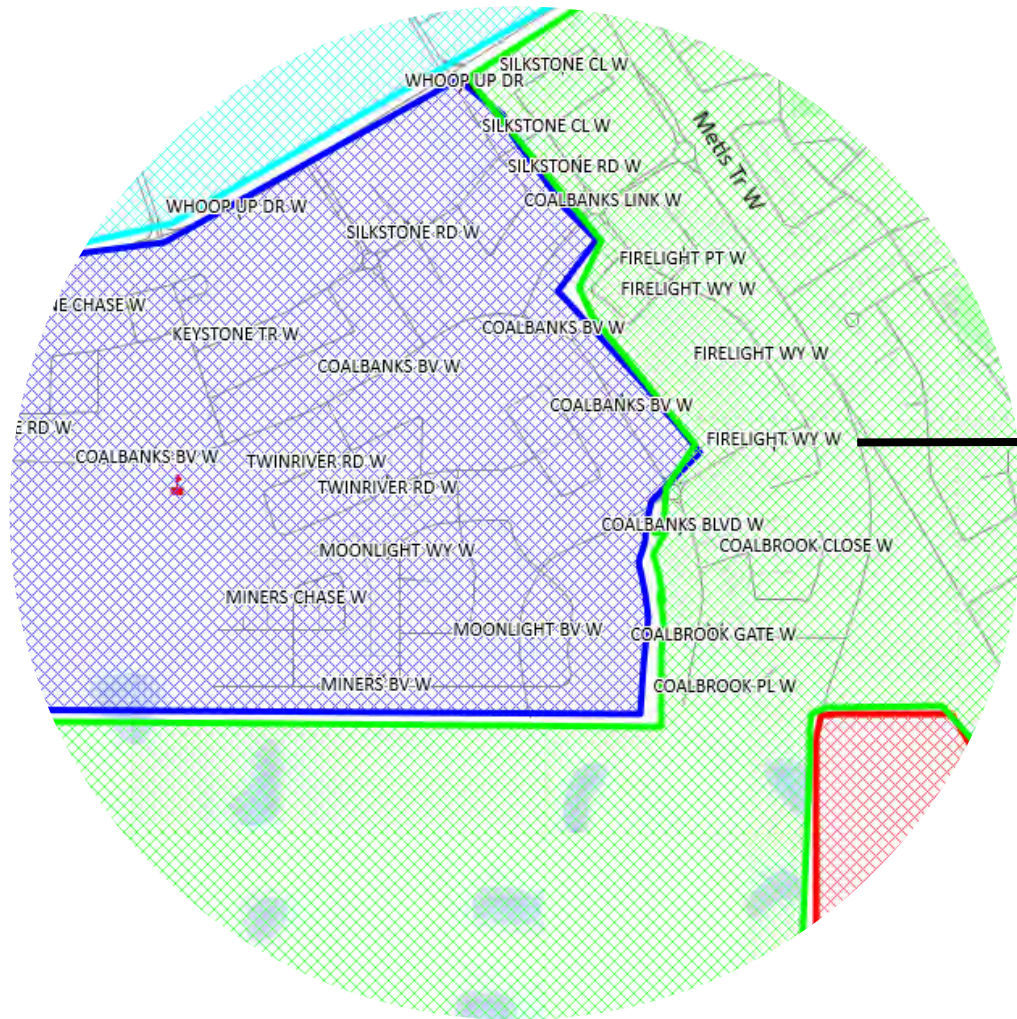
- 1 Country Meadows
- 2 Garry Station
- 3 Crossings
- 4 Copperwood
- 5 West Highlands
- 6 Indian Battle Heights/
Willow Brook
- 7 Varsity Village
- 8 Mountain Heights/
Sunridge
- 9 Riverstone/
The Canyons
- 10 Ridgewood/
Heritage Heights



New K-5 School in Garry Station,
opening September 2025

Option 1: Copperwood Split

- **Moved from Coalbanks Elementary to Nicholas Sheran Elementary:** Area east of Coabanks Link and Coalbanks Blvd W and west of Metis Trail will be redesignated as part of the Nicholas Sheran boundary (see detail below). This area will be eligible for transportation.
- **Moved from Nicholas Sheran Boundary:** Heritage, Ridgewood and designated to Mike Mountain Horse Elementary. Crossings designated to new school in Garry Station.
- **Moved from Mike Mountain Horse boundary to new school in Garry Station:** Mountain Meadows, Garry Station, and West Highlands.
- No Change to Dr. Probe boundary.



Elementary:
 Metis
 Boundary
 and
 Passages
 Garry

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 n may

Note transportation eligibility
 is >1 km from residence to
 school for K to grade 6

- Allows for future growth at new school in Garry Station.
- Reduces Coalbanks capacity slightly with all new growth south of Coalbanks going to Nicholas Sheran Elementary.
- Alleviates capacity concerns at Mike Mountain Horse.
- The two new modular classrooms approved for Coalbanks, may allow for the ability to reclaim flex space.
- This option will result in some families living in Copperwood not attending community school.
- New school in Garry Station may open lower than 50%.

Option 1

School	Current Capacity	Current Enrolment	Current Utilization%	Enrolment	Utilization %
Coalbanks	632	664	105%	569	90%
Mike Mountain Horse	771	593	77%	450	58%**
Garry Station	0/600 (complete)	0	0	236	39%
Nicholas Sheran	727	392	54%	394	54%
Dr. Probe	668	471	71%	471	71%
Total	2798/3398	2120	76%	2120	62%

Notes:

- ** Mike Mountain Horse has 10 relocatable classrooms that need to be removed. This eliminates 250 student spaces and will increase utilization by 24%.

5

Option 2:
Relocate Spanish Bilingual Program to
Nicholas Sheran Elementary School

About this option:

- Spanish bilingual program at Coalbanks Elementary School will be relocated to Nicholas Sheran Elementary school. Spanish bilingual program enrolment is 41% of Coalbanks.
- A transportation solution will be provided to all eligible students attending the Spanish bilingual program at Nicholas Sheran.
- Moved from Nicholas Sheran Boundary: Heritage, Ridgewood and designated to Mike Mountain Horse Elementary. Crossings designated to new school in Garry Station.
- Moved from Mike Mountain Horse boundary to new school in Garry Station: Mountain Meadows, Garry Station, and West Highlands.
- No change to Dr. Probe boundary.
- No change to Coalbanks Elementary School Boundary.



Option 2

ProsCons

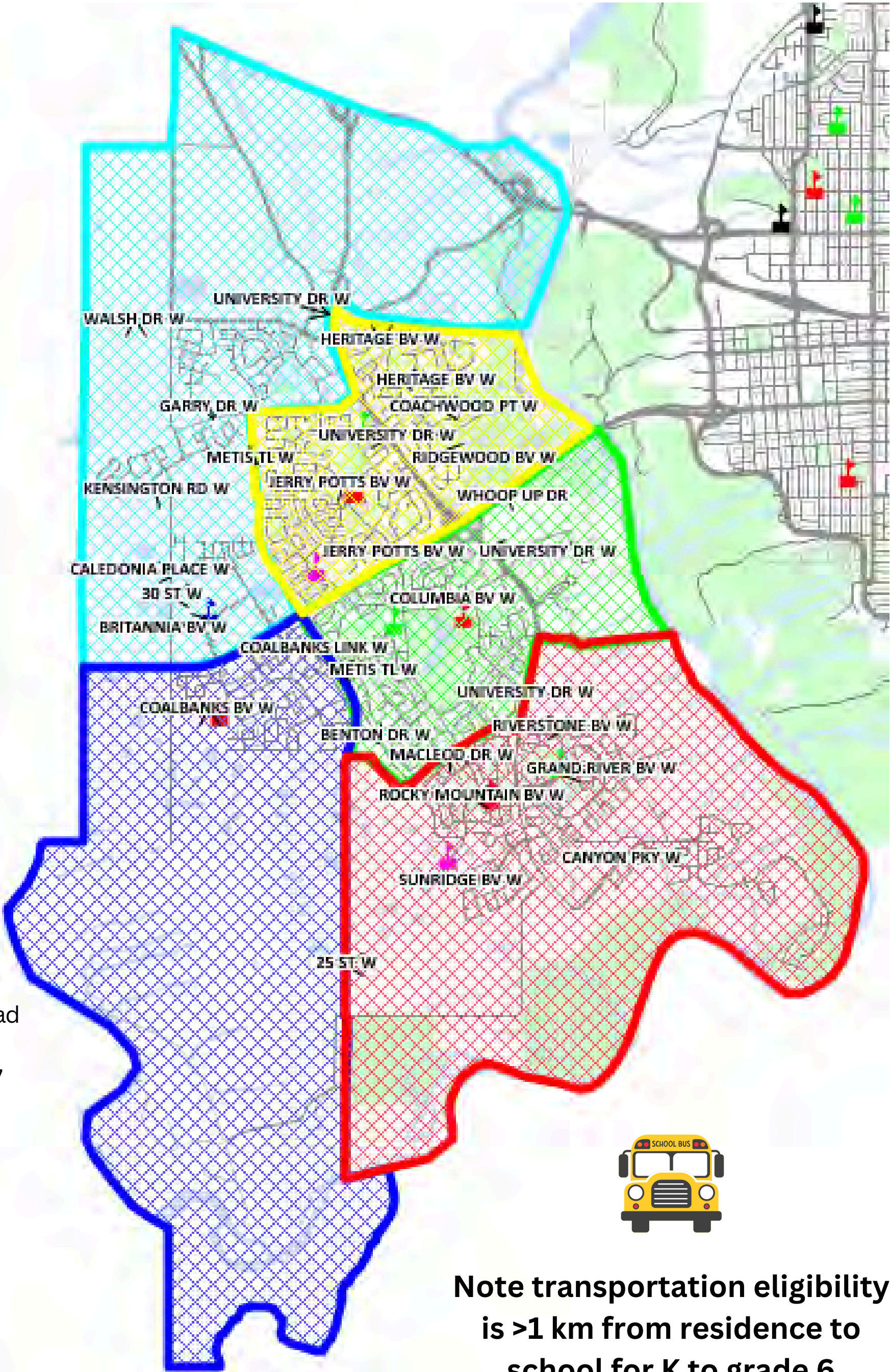
- Balances enrolment amongst the elementary schools.
 - Significantly reduces Coalbanks utilization to allow for future growth.
 - Allows regular program at Coalbanks to remain unaffected.
 - Alleviates capacity concern at Mike Mountain Horse.
- Means disruption to Spanish bilingual program families by moving to a new school, however transportation solutions will be provided for eligible students.
 - Nicholas Sheran School has had to go through a significant number of cultural shifts last 7 years. Became French Immersion in 2017-2018 then French Immersion moved to Agnes Davidson in 2021-2022. This has been difficult on the school staff and community.

Approximately 275 students in the Spanish Bilingual Program could be relocated under this option.

Impact on Utilization:

School	Current Capacity	Current Enrolment	Current Utilization%	Enrolment	Utilization %
Coalbanks	632	664	105%	392	62%
Mike Mountain Horse	771	593	77%	384	50%
Garry Station	0/600 (complete)	0	0	302	50%
Nicholas Sheran	727	392	54%	571	79%
Dr. Probe	668	471	71%	471	71%
Total	2798/3398	2120	76%	2120	62%

Notes:
** Mike Mountain Horse has 10 relocatable classrooms that need to be removed. This eliminates 250 student spaces and will increase utilization by 24%.



Note transportation eligibility is >1 km from residence to school for K to grade 6

Option 2

5

Option 3:
Relocate Spanish Bilingual Program to
New K-5 Elementary School (West Coulee Station) in Garry Station

About this option:

- Spanish bilingual program at Coalbanks Elementary School will be relocated to the new K-5 Elementary School in Garry Station. Spanish bilingual program enrolment is 41% of Coalbanks.
- A **transportation solution** will be provided to all eligible students attending the Spanish bilingual program at the new school.
- Moved from Nicholas Sheran Boundary:** Crossings to new K-5 School.
- Moved from Mike Mountain Horse boundary to new school in Garry Station:** Mountain Meadows, Garry Station.
- No change to Dr. Probe boundary.
- No change to Coalbanks Elementary School Boundary.

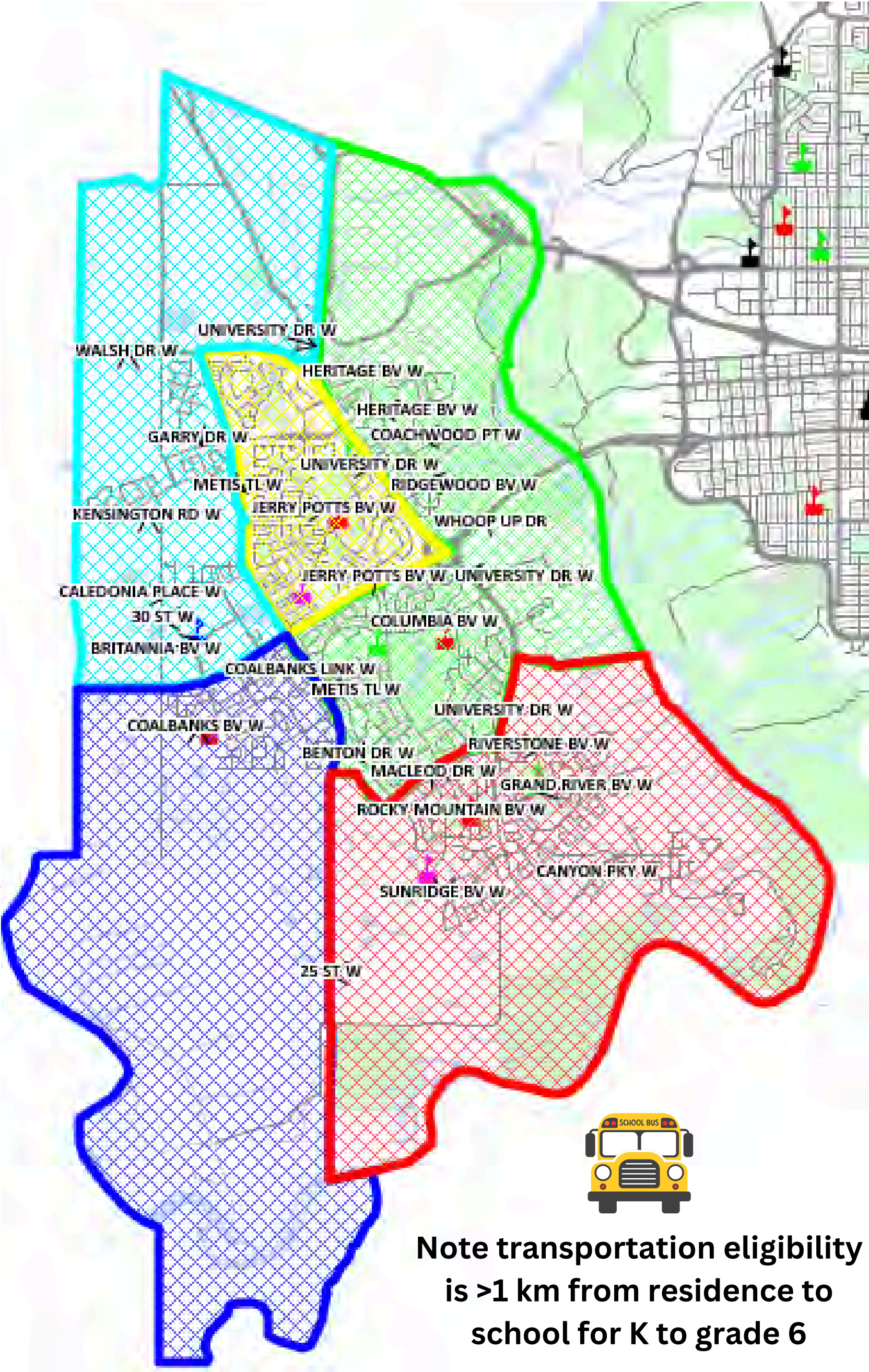


Option 3

ProsCons

- Balances enrolment amongst the elementary schools.
 - Significantly reduces Coalbanks utilization to allow for future growth.
 - Allows regular program at Coalbanks to remain unaffected.
 - Alleviates capacity concern at Mike Mountain Horse.
- Means disruption to Spanish bilingual program families by moving to a new school, however transportation solutions will be provided for eligible students.
 - New school in Garry Station will open at significant utilization. There is the ability to request up to 12 modular classrooms for this school to accommodate future growth without impacting core spaces. Under this option, these modular classrooms may need to be requested sooner than anticipated.

Approximately 275 students in the Spanish Bilingual Program could be relocated under this option.



Impact on Utilization:

Option 3					
School	Current Capacity	Current Enrolment	Current Utilization%	Enrolment	Utilization %
Coalbanks	632	664	105%	392	62%
Mike Mountain Horse	771	593	77%	451	58%
Garry Station	0/600 (complete)	0	0	441	74%
Nicholas Sheran	727	392	54%	365	50%
Dr. Probe	668	471	71%	471	71%
Total	2798/3398	2120	76%	2120	62%

Notes:
** Mike Mountain Horse has 10 relocatable classrooms that need to be removed. This eliminates 250 student spaces and will increase utilization by 24%.

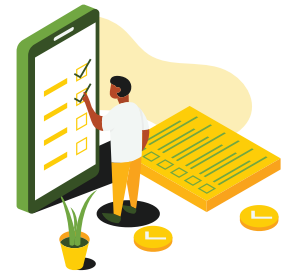
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



WEST LETHBRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BOUNDARY REALIGNMENT SURVEY

Respondents
448

SURVEY RESULTS



An Open House was held on April 30th at G.S. Lakie Middle School to invite members of the public to view potential options to realign boundaries for elementary schools in west Lethbridge beginning the 2025-2026 school year. There were three options presented that may address growth and capacity concerns at Mike Mountain Horse Elementary School and Coalbanks Elementary School while creating a new enrolment catchment for the new K-5 Elementary School in Garry Station. Participants at the Open House and the public were asked to complete a survey to provide feedback on the options. The survey closed on May 16th. The results of the survey are below.

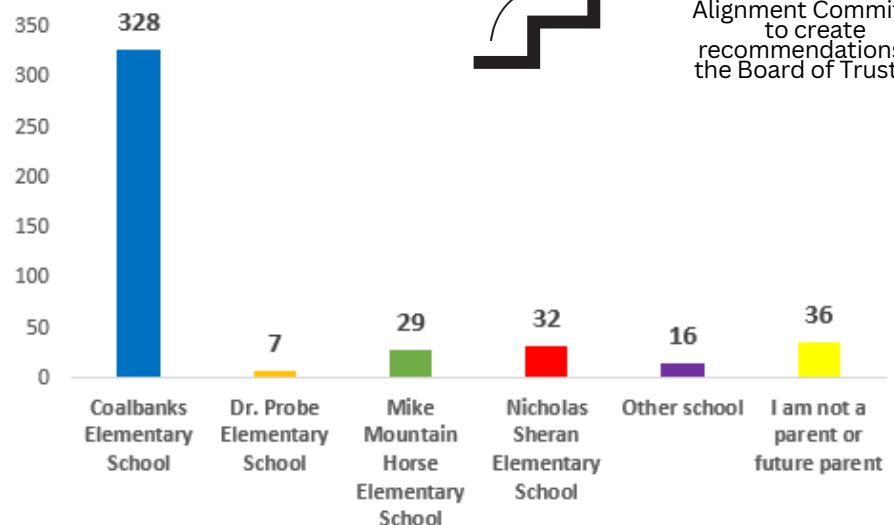
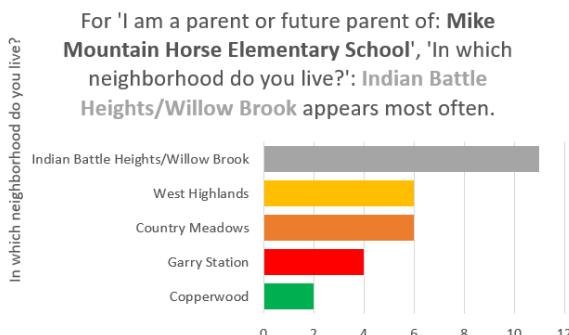
We Asked: I am a parent or future parent of:

You Answered:



Next Steps

The information from this survey will be carefully reviewed by the School Boundary Alignment Committee to create recommendations to the Board of Trustees

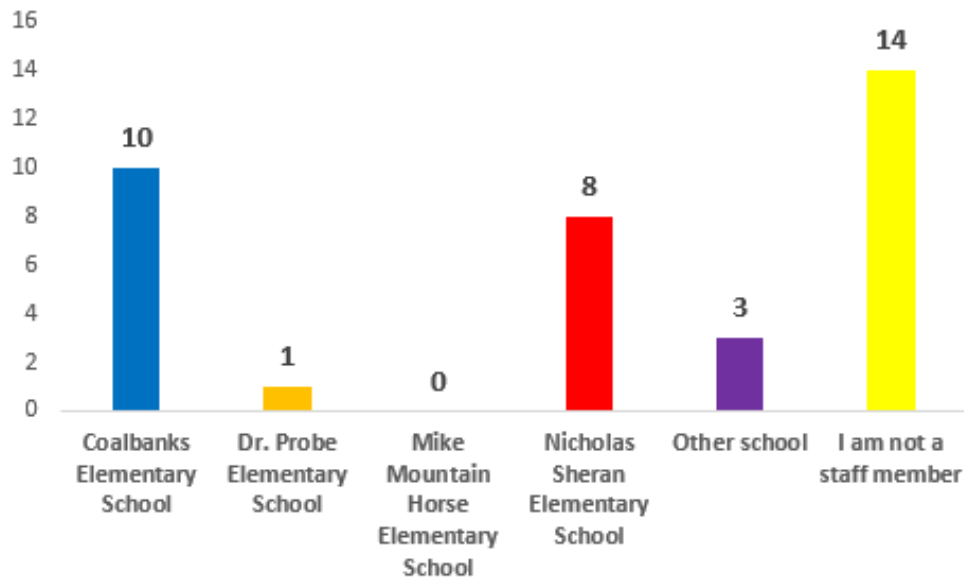


WEST LETHBRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BOUNDARY REALIGNMENT SURVEY

We Asked:

I am a staff member of:

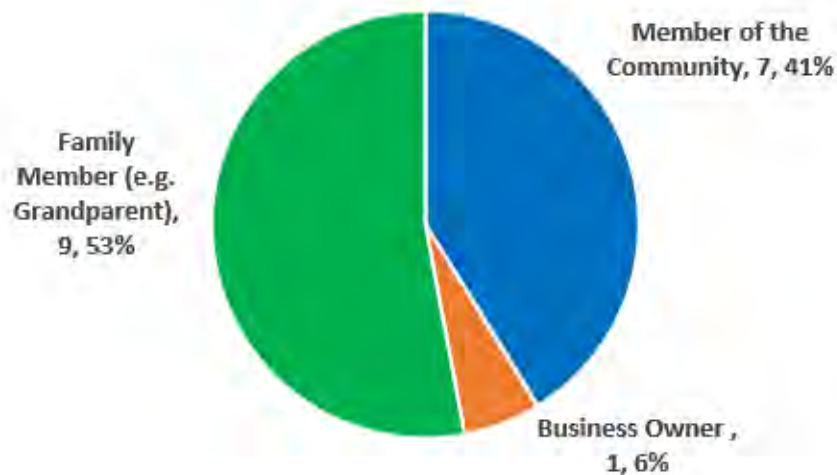
You Answered:



We Asked:

I am not a parent or a staff member, but I am:

You Answered:



WEST LETHBRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BOUNDARY REALIGNMENT SURVEY

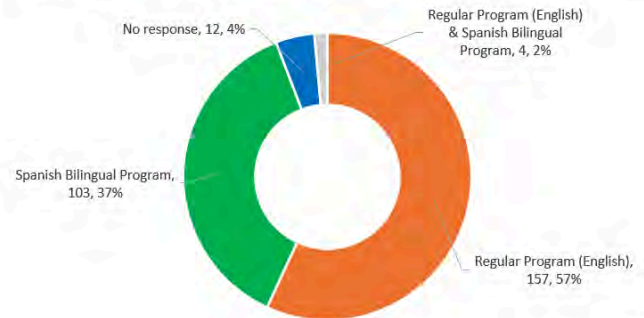
We Asked:

If your school is Coalbanks Elementary School, please indicate which program:

You Answered:



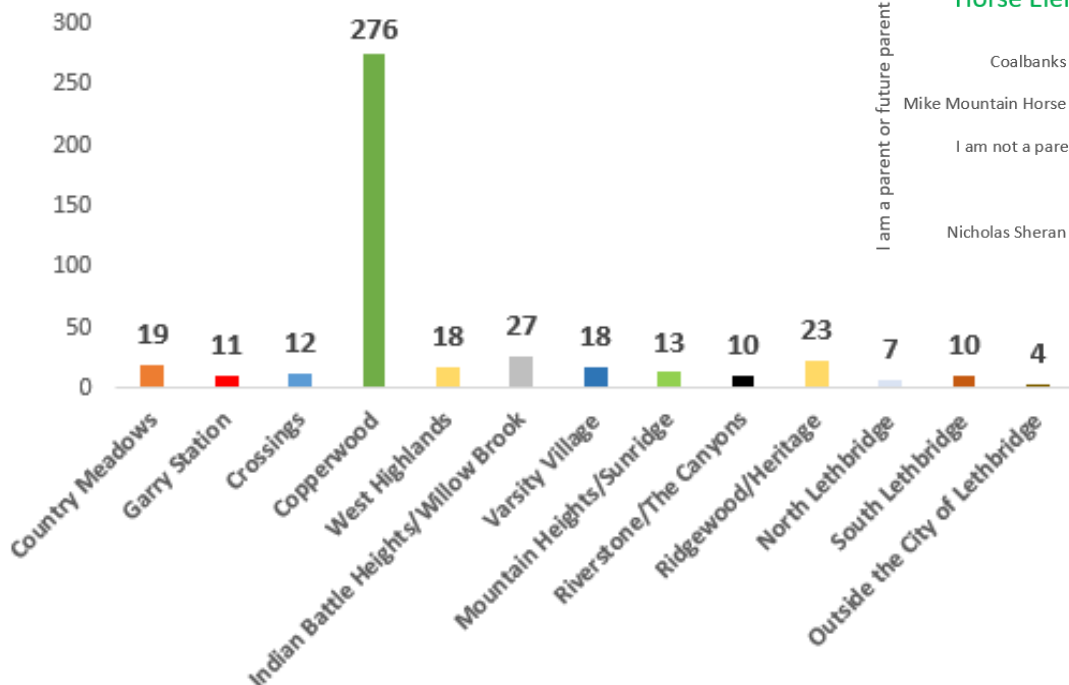
For 'In which neighborhood do you live?: Copperwood', Regular Program (English); accounts for the majority of 'If your school is Coalbanks Elementary School, please indicate which program:'.



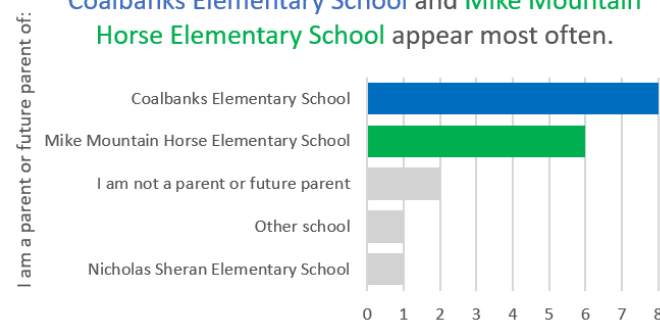
We Asked:

In which neighborhood do you live

You Answered:



For 'In which neighborhood do you live?: West Highlands', 'I am a parent or future parent of:': Coalbanks Elementary School and Mike Mountain Horse Elementary School appear most often.



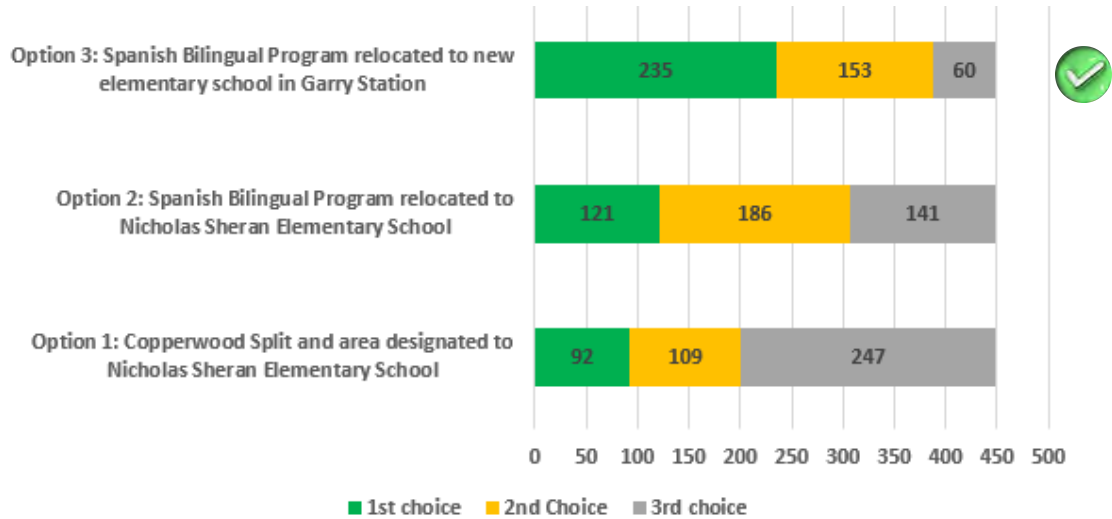
WEST LETHBRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BOUNDARY REALIGNMENT SURVEY

We Asked:

Based on the three boundary options presented at the Open House, please rank them in order of preference.

You Answered:

Overall:

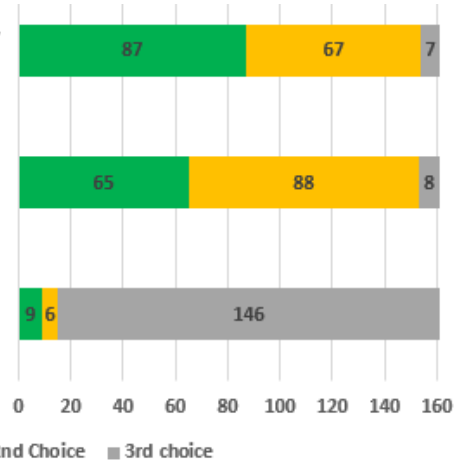


By Parents, School, Program

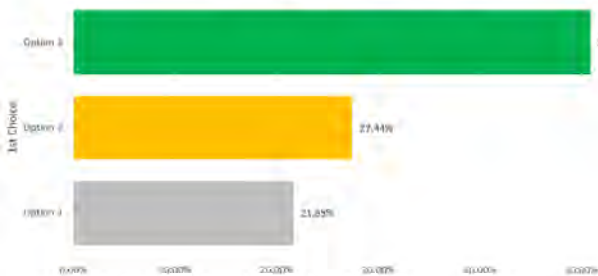
Coalbanks - Regular



Option 3: Spanish Bilingual Program relocated to new elementary school in Garry Station



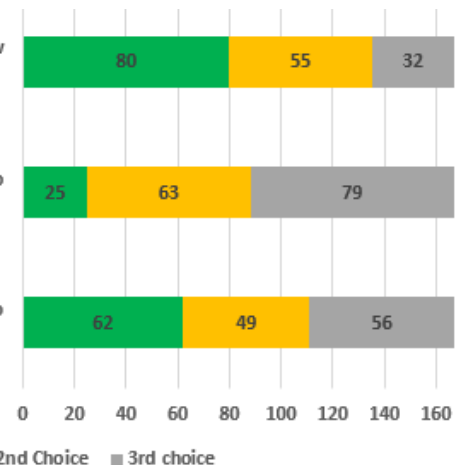
For 'I am a parent or future parent of: 'Coalbanks Elementary School',
Percentage distribution of '1st Choice'



Coalbanks - Spanish Bilingual Program



Option 3: Spanish Bilingual Program relocated to new elementary school in Garry Station



WEST LETHBRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BOUNDARY REALIGNMENT SURVEY

We Asked:

Based on the three boundary options presented at the Open House, please rank them in order of preference.

You Answered:

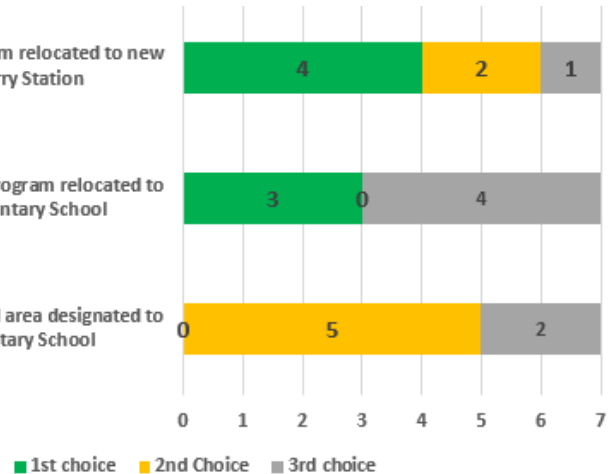
Dr. Probe



Option 3: Spanish Bilingual Program relocated to new elementary school in Garry Station

Option 2: Spanish Bilingual Program relocated to Nicholas Sheran Elementary School

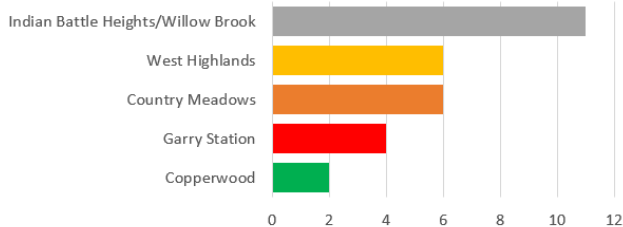
Option 1: Copperwood Split and area designated to Nicholas Sheran Elementary School



Mike Mountain Horse

For 'I am a parent or future parent of: Mike Mountain Horse Elementary School', 'In which neighborhood do you live?': Indian Battle Heights/Willow Brook appears most often.

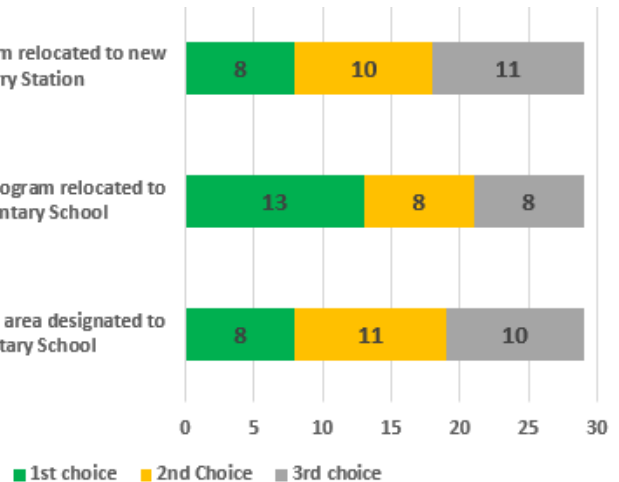
In which neighborhood do you live?



Option 3: Spanish Bilingual Program relocated to new elementary school in Garry Station

Option 2: Spanish Bilingual Program relocated to Nicholas Sheran Elementary School

Option 1: Copperwood Split and area designated to Nicholas Sheran Elementary School



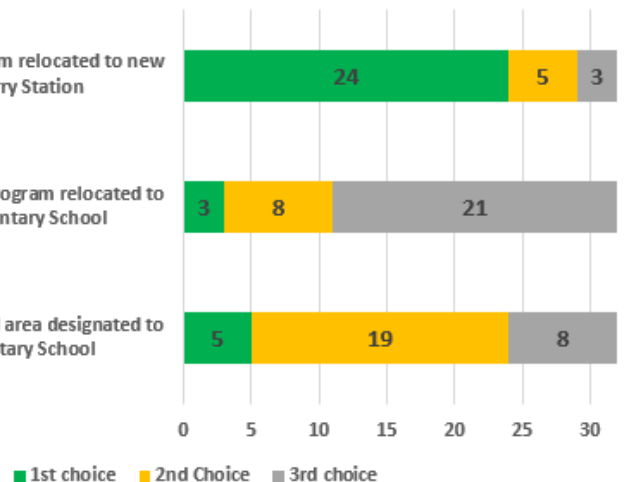
Nicholas Sheran



Option 3: Spanish Bilingual Program relocated to new elementary school in Garry Station

Option 2: Spanish Bilingual Program relocated to Nicholas Sheran Elementary School

Option 1: Copperwood Split and area designated to Nicholas Sheran Elementary School



WEST LETHBRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BOUNDARY REALIGNMENT SURVEY

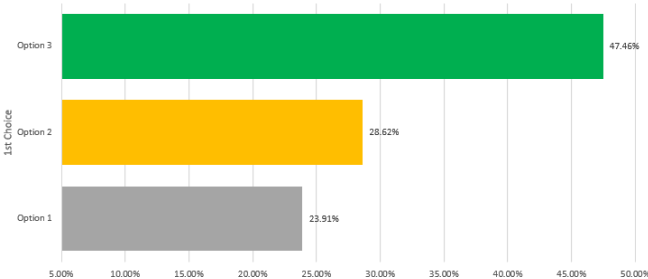
We Asked:

You Answered:
By Neighborhood

Based on the three boundary options presented at the Open House, please rank them in order of preference.

Copperwood

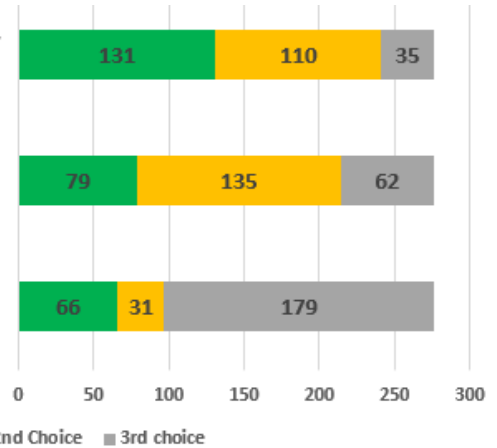
For 'In which neighborhood do you live?' 'Copperwood', Percentage distribution of '1st Choice'



Option 3: Spanish Bilingual Program relocated to new elementary school in Garry Station

Option 2: Spanish Bilingual Program relocated to Nicholas Sheran Elementary School

Option 1: Copperwood Split and area designated to Nicholas Sheran Elementary School



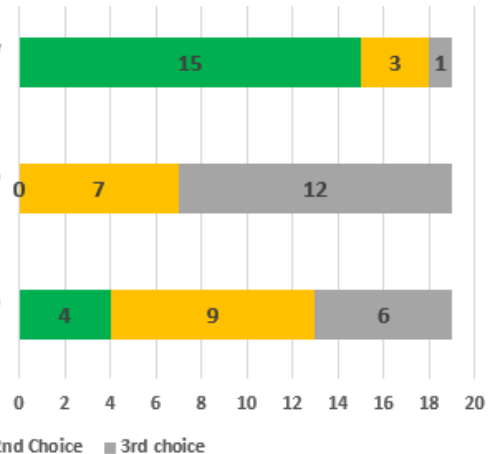
Country Meadows



Option 3: Spanish Bilingual Program relocated to new elementary school in Garry Station

Option 2: Spanish Bilingual Program relocated to Nicholas Sheran Elementary School

Option 1: Copperwood Split and area designated to Nicholas Sheran Elementary School



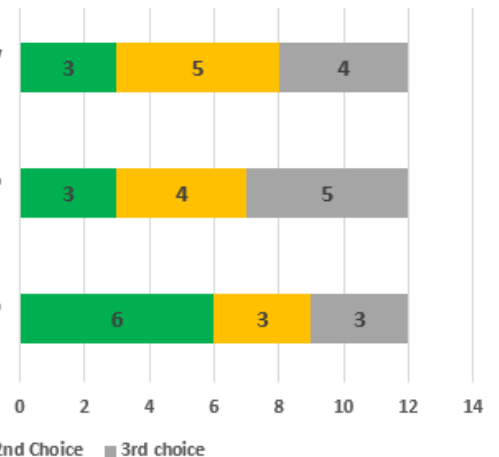
Crossings



Option 3: Spanish Bilingual Program relocated to new elementary school in Garry Station

Option 2: Spanish Bilingual Program relocated to Nicholas Sheran Elementary School

Option 1: Copperwood Split and area designated to Nicholas Sheran Elementary School



WEST LETHBRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BOUNDARY REALIGNMENT SURVEY

We Asked:

You Answered:

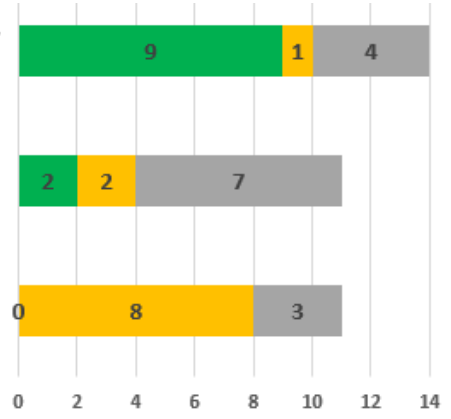
By Neighborhood

Garry Station

Based on the three boundary options presented at the Open House, please rank them in order of preference.



Option 3: Spanish Bilingual Program relocated to new elementary school in Garry Station

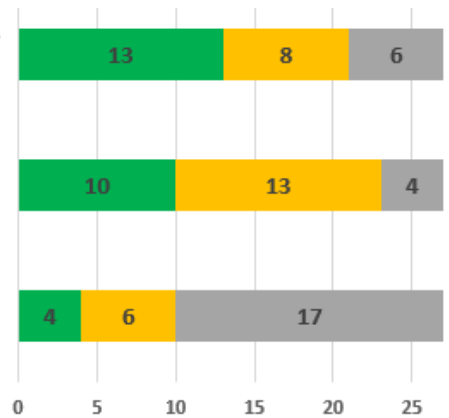


■ 1st choice ■ 2nd Choice ■ 3rd choice

**Indian Battle Heights/
Willowbrook**



Option 3: Spanish Bilingual Program relocated to new elementary school in Garry Station

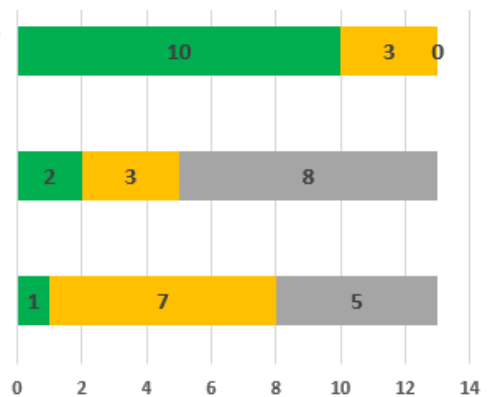


■ 1st choice ■ 2nd Choice ■ 3rd choice

**Mountain
Heights/Sunridge**



Option 3: Spanish Bilingual Program relocated to new elementary school in Garry Station



■ 1st choice ■ 2nd Choice ■ 3rd choice

WEST LETHBRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BOUNDARY REALIGNMENT SURVEY

We Asked:

Based on the three boundary options presented at the Open House, please rank them in order of preference.

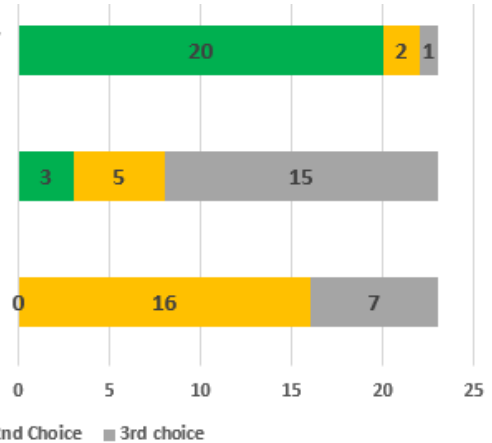
You Answered:

By Neighborhood

Ridgewood/Heritage



Option 3: Spanish Bilingual Program relocated to new elementary school in Garry Station



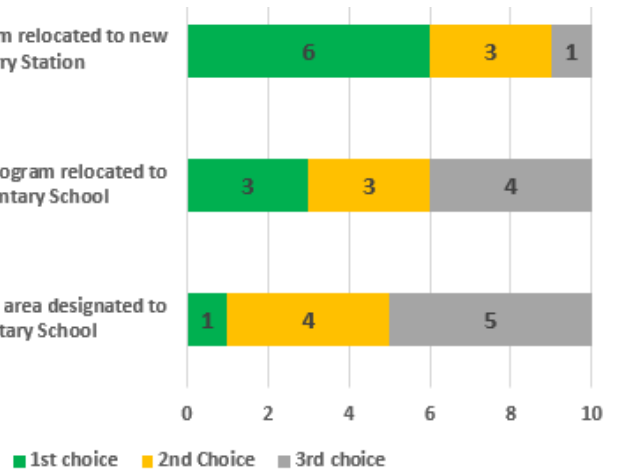
Riverstone/ The Canyons



Option 3: Spanish Bilingual Program relocated to new elementary school in Garry Station

Option 2: Spanish Bilingual Program relocated to Nicholas Sheran Elementary School

Option 1: Copperwood Split and area designated to Nicholas Sheran Elementary School



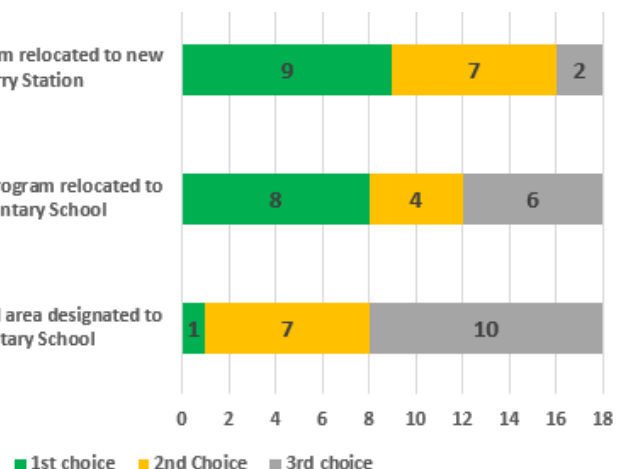
Varsity Village



Option 3: Spanish Bilingual Program relocated to new elementary school in Garry Station

Option 2: Spanish Bilingual Program relocated to Nicholas Sheran Elementary School

Option 1: Copperwood Split and area designated to Nicholas Sheran Elementary School



WEST LETHBRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BOUNDARY REALIGNMENT SURVEY

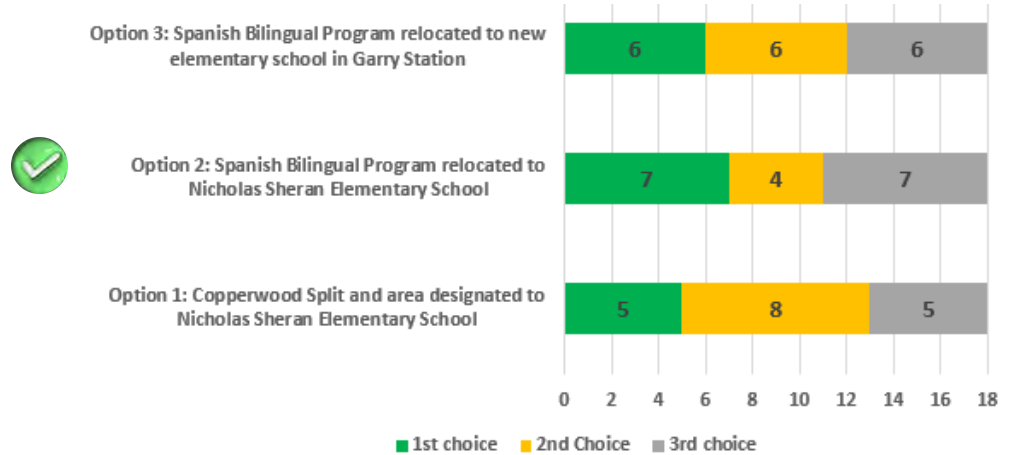
We Asked:

Based on the three boundary options presented at the Open House, please rank them in order of preference.

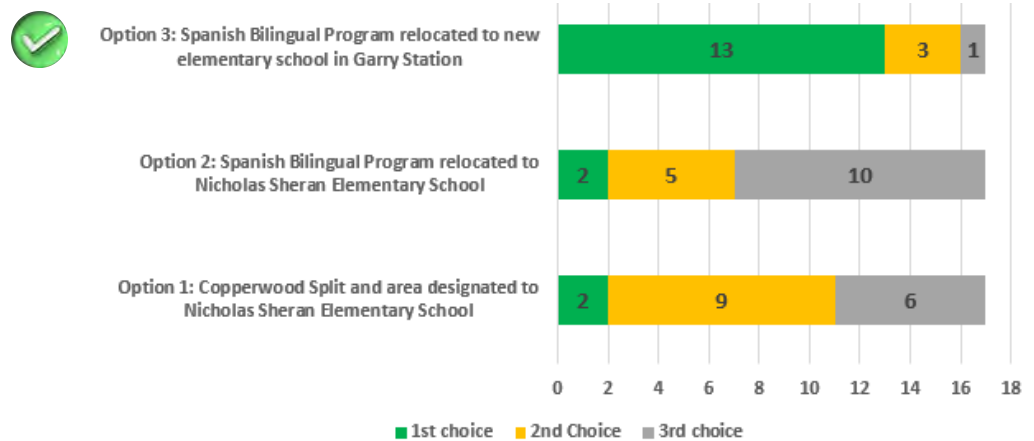
You Answered:

By Neighborhood

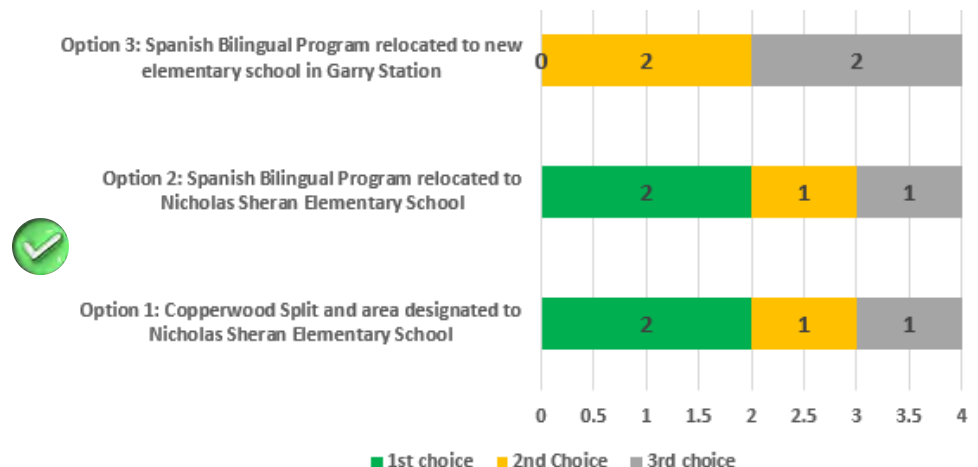
West Highlands



South and North Lethbridge



Outside Lethbridge



WEST LETHBRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BOUNDARY REALIGNMENT SURVEY

We Asked:

You Answered:

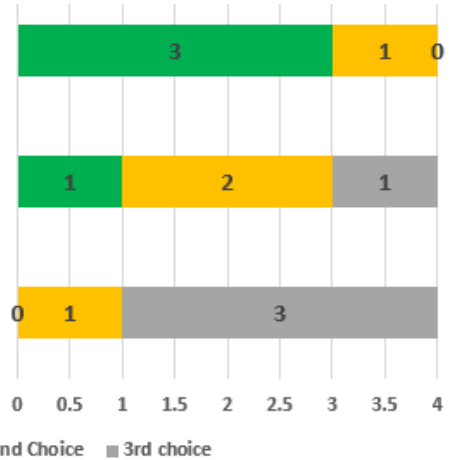
Based on the three boundary options presented at the Open House, please rank them in order of preference.

By Staff & School

**Coalbanks -
Regular Program**



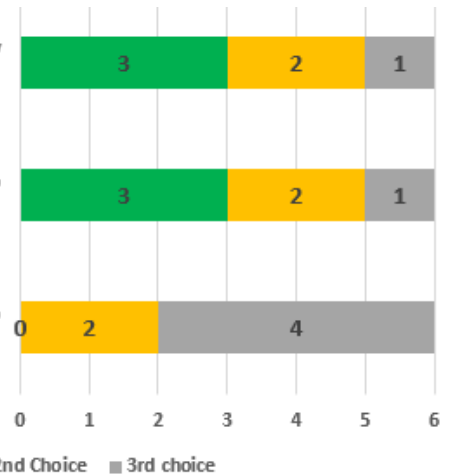
Option 3: Spanish Bilingual Program relocated to new elementary school in Garry Station



**Coalbanks
Spanish Bilingual Program**



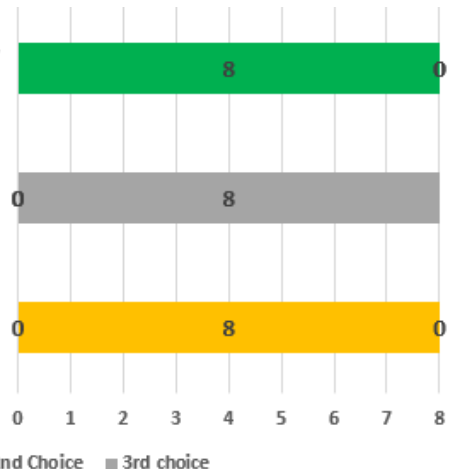
Option 3: Spanish Bilingual Program relocated to new elementary school in Garry Station



Nicholas Sheran



Option 3: Spanish Bilingual Program relocated to new elementary school in Garry Station



WEST LETHBRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BOUNDARY REALIGNMENT SURVEY

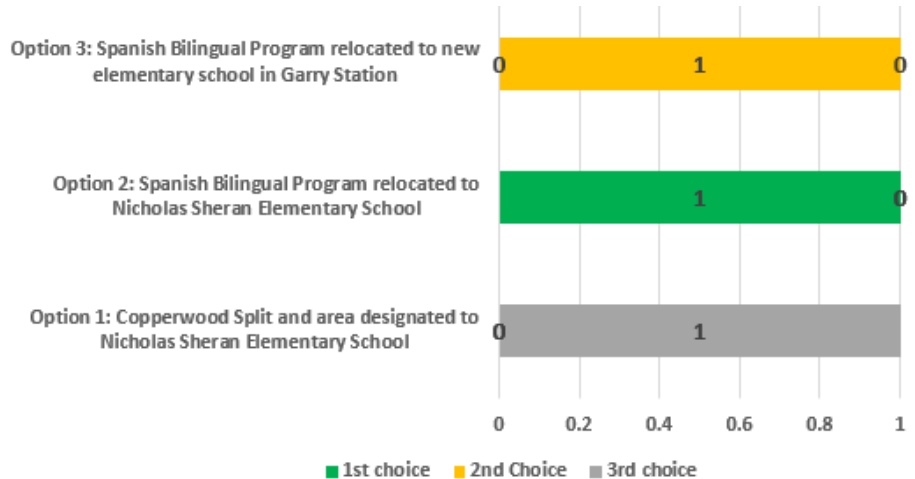
We Asked:

Based on the three boundary options presented at the Open House, please rank them in order of preference.

You Answered:

By Staff & School

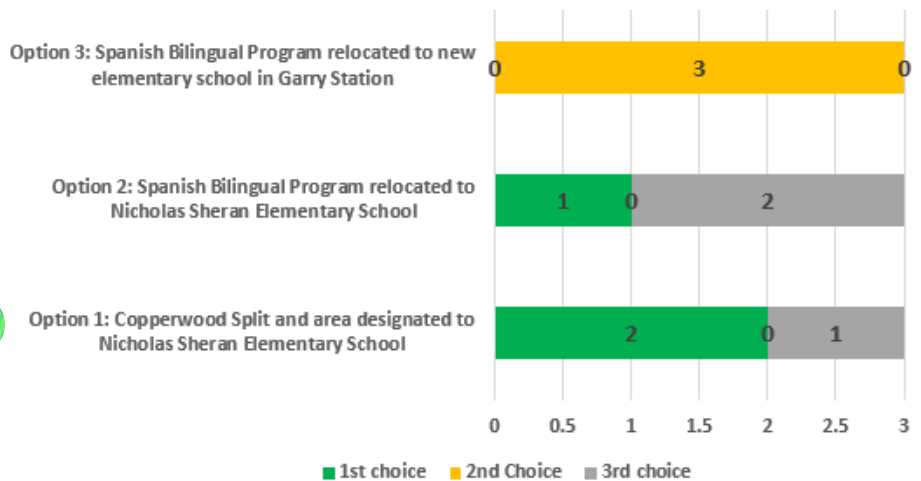
Dr. Probe



Mike Mountain Horse

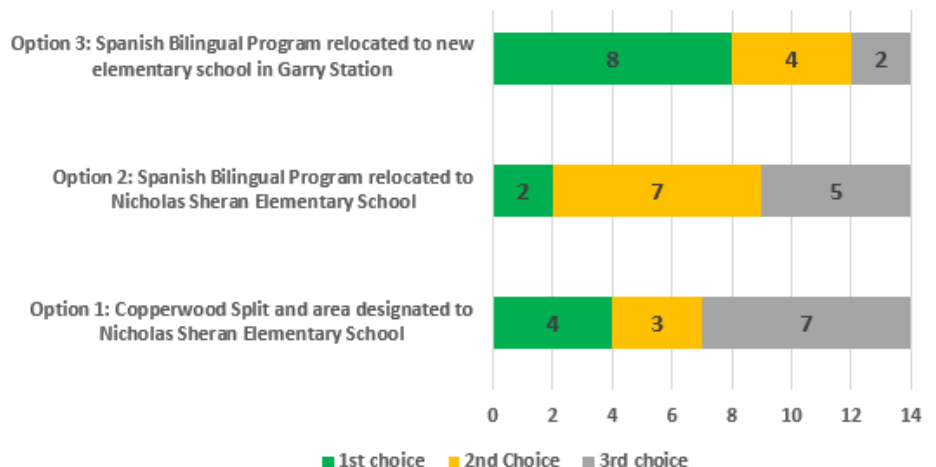
No staff responses

Other School Staff



By other:

not a parent or staff member

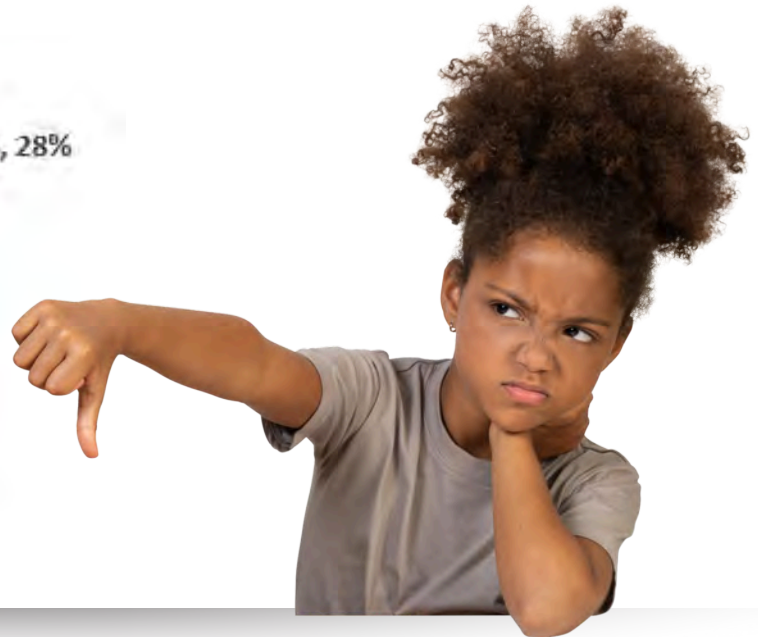
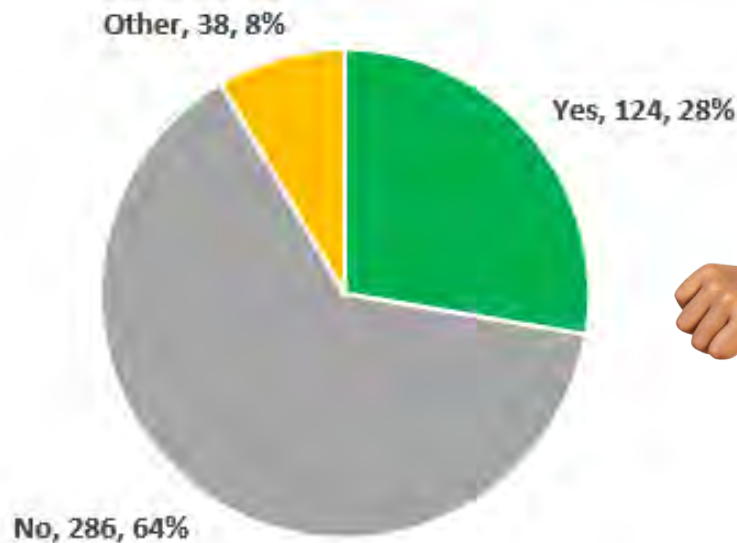


WEST LETHBRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BOUNDARY REALIGNMENT SURVEY

We Asked:

Would Option 2, Relocate Spanish bilingual program to Nicholas Sheran, be a better choice if the relocation of the Spanish bilingual program was phased in by grade over 5 years?

You Answered:



Other included the following comments:

- The Spanish program has no bearing on my decision I'm just upset that after moving us out of Mike Mountain Horse 2 years ago that we would be moved back into it.
- Very bad idea as it would not solve an immediate capacity issue at Coalbanks.
- What about moving the Spanish program to the new school regardless, and then allowing more students from their current schools to remain at their current schools?
- Move Spanish program to Nicholas Sheran now
- Maybe but families could end up with kids at two different elementary schools
- May cause issues to parents with more than one child in the Spanish program
- Just move the Spanish program!
- No, unless parents of Spanish program kids prefer it.
- It would be better for parents, but harder for teachers
- Yes I think this is a better general approach but personally that splits my family up between 2 schools so I don't like it
- No, I believe this would be the end of the Spanish program. Parents would not want their young children to be separated from their siblings'.
- No, I feel that this would overcomplicate things.

WEST LETHBRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BOUNDARY REALIGNMENT SURVEY

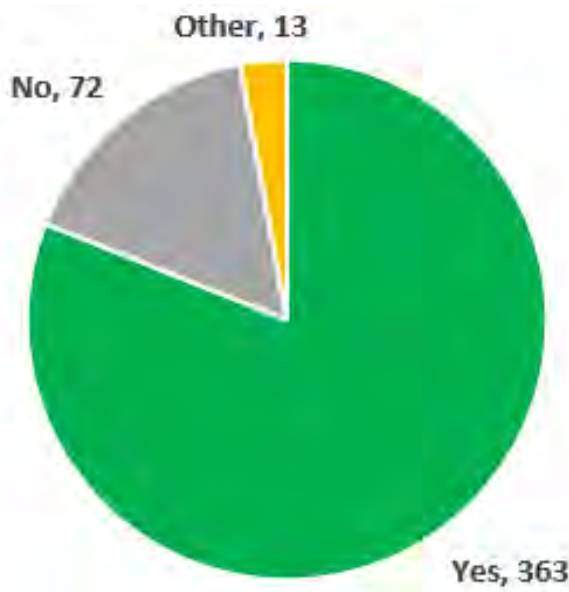
We Asked:

In the options, some communities have been designated to a different school to create an attendance area for the new school in Garry Station and attempt to balance enrolment amongst other schools.

For example, in all options, Country Meadows, Garry Station and Crossings are designated to the new school. In option 1 and 2, Heritage and Ridgewood previously with Nicholas Sheran, will be designated to Mike Mountain Horse.

Based on these adjustments, do you believe that students in some grades should be allowed the option to remain at their current school until completing grade 5? (e.g. 2024-2025 students in grade 3 or 4 would be in grade 4 and 5 in 2025 and would have the option to attend newly designated school)

You Answered:



Other included the following comments:

- Once again keeping family groups in the same program together as well as keeping family groups in the same area in the same school would be my preference.
- Case by case consideration. Capacity is the issue, so if you allow legacy, then you will not solve the problem and may have schools under capacity for up to 5 more years
- Partial, depending on grade level, allow for legacy for kids finishing up final year (gr4 going to gr5) only.
- Providing legacy for longer would create issues for enrolment projections and transportation.

WEST LETHBRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BOUNDARY REALIGNMENT SURVEY

We Asked:

Lethbridge School Division has provided three potential options for west Lethbridge elementary school realignment. What questions do you have about these options?



You Answered:

Below are the top 10 themes for this question:

1. **Decision Timeline:** When will a final decision be made regarding the school boundaries and program changes?
2. **Student Stay Duration:** Can current students remain at Coalbanks Elementary until Grade 5, or will they have to move schools in 2025?
3. **Consideration of Future Schools:** How does the school board consider future schools to avoid frequent boundary adjustments?
4. **Staffing for Spanish Program:** How will the Spanish bilingual program be staffed if it is moved to another school?
5. **Impact on Copperwood Community:** Why is splitting the Copperwood community being considered, and how will it impact the residents and their children's education?
6. **Transportation and Access:** Will transportation be provided for students from the south or north side if there is interest in the Spanish program?
7. **Capacity and Infrastructure:** Why doesn't the school board build larger schools to accommodate future growth instead of adding portables?
8. **Middle School Zoning Impact:** How will changes to elementary school boundaries affect middle school zoning and student transitions?
9. **Teacher and Program Support:** How are the current Spanish program teachers being consulted in this decision, and what do they think is best for the program's growth and stability?
10. **Options and Alternatives:** Why are the current options the only ones being considered, and why isn't limiting Coalbanks enrollment to current boundaries or adding a Spanish program to another school an option?

WEST LETHBRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BOUNDARY REALIGNMENT SURVEY

We Asked:

Are there any comments you would like to provide related to the options presented?

You Answered:

Below are the top 10 themes for this question:

Opposition to Splitting Copperwood:

Many comments express strong opposition to splitting the Copperwood community and sending students to different schools. Families chose to live in Copperwood specifically for its proximity to Coalbanks Elementary, and they want their children to continue attending their community school.

Support for Relocating the Spanish Program:

There is significant support for moving the Spanish program to another school, as it is seen as a specialty program that can be relocated without disrupting the local community. Many believe this would alleviate overcrowding at Coalbanks and allow all Copperwood residents to attend their community school.

Minimizing Disruption:

A recurring theme is the desire to minimize disruption for current students. Comments suggest that any changes should strive to keep students in their existing schools to avoid upheaval and stress for families.

Community Integrity and Cohesion:

Maintaining community integrity is important to many commenters. They emphasize the value of keeping neighborhood children together in the same school to foster a sense of community and stability.

Long-term Planning and Boundary Consistency:

Comments highlight the need for a solution that will provide long-term stability and minimize the need for future boundary changes. Some believe that moving the Spanish program now will prevent overcrowding and boundary redraws in the near future.

Parental and Student Preferences:

There are calls to consider the preferences of Spanish program families regarding relocation. Some comments suggest directly asking these families for their input to ensure their needs and desires are considered in the decision-making process.

School Capacity and Utilization:

Concerns about school capacity and effective utilization are prominent. Commenters argue that Coalbanks is over capacity and that moving the Spanish program to a school with more space, like Nicholas Sheran, would make better use of available resources.

Impact on Transportation and Proximity:

Proximity to school and the ability for children to walk to school are significant factors for many families. Comments indicate that moving children to a farther school would create transportation challenges and reduce the convenience of having a neighborhood school.

Equity and Fairness:

There is a sense of unfairness in prioritizing a specialty program over community children. Many believe that community residents should have priority access to their local school, and specialty programs should be relocated if there are capacity issues.

Concerns about Future Growth:

Comments reflect worries about the future growth of Copperwood and surrounding areas. There is concern that current plans may not adequately address the anticipated increase in population and school enrollment, leading to further capacity issues down the line.