

## report to Board of Trustees

### 2022-23 Modular Classroom Program

Date	January 25, 2022
Meeting Type	Regular Meeting, Public Agenda
To	Board of Trustees
From	Christopher Usih Chief Superintendent of Schools
Purpose	Decision
Originator	Dany Breton, Superintendent, Facilities and Environmental Services
Governance Policy Reference	Operational Expectations OE-7: Communication With and Support for the Board OE-8: Communicating and Engaging With the Public OE-9: Facilities
Resource Person(s)	Sanjeev Sharma, Acting Director, Facility Projects Latosia Campbell-Walters, Director Planning Conor McGreish, Acting Manager, Planning Erin Hafichuk, Manager, Capital Planning & Development

#### 1 | Recommendations

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It is recommended:

- THAT the Board of Trustees approves the 2022-23 Modular Classroom Program submission.

#### 2 | Issue

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The provincial government requires a prioritized list of modular classroom requests from all school boards annually.



### 3 | Background

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By relieving accommodation pressures within a school, modular classrooms can make an important contribution to bettering the student learning experience. In May 2014, the CBE undertook a public engagement to solicit input on considerations for prioritizing modular classroom requests. Informed by this feedback, a set of filters and ranking criteria were developed and approved by the Board of Trustees in October 2014 and consist of the Eligibility Filters for Modular Classrooms (**Attachment I**) and the Modular Classroom Ranking Criteria (**Attachment II**).

The addition of modular classrooms is dependent upon Provincial approvals and funding. For the past four years, the province has only approved new modular classroom requests for schools with a utilization rate that exceeds 100%. Of note, Alberta Education has retained ownership of modular classrooms provided to school jurisdictions since 2006, which means that in addition to approving the requests, Alberta Education must also approve requests to relocate or demolish existing modular classrooms.

In the 2020/2021 Modular classroom submission, CBE requested a move of four modular classrooms from existing schools with low utilization to Ian Bazalgette School. CBE received funding to move three modular classrooms to Ian Bazalgette as follows:

Donor School	Number of Modular units	Destination School
Dalhousie	1	Ian Bazalgette
Midsun	1	Ian Bazalgette
Robert Warren	1	Ian Bazalgette

These modular units were relocated in fall 2021 to address population growth in the 2020-21 school year.

### 4 | Analysis

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In summary, the analysis below recommends the following submission for the 2022-23 Modular Classroom Program:

- no new modular classroom requests; and
- the removal of 14 modular classrooms from seven schools.

#### New Modular Classroom Additions

A Modular Classroom Eligibility Filter Review was conducted using September 29, 2021 student enrolment data and a list of all schools over 90% utilization (based on provincial capacity) was assembled. (**Attachment III**)

Three schools had a utilization of 90% or more based on their opening day enrolment and met all the filters to be eligible for points ranking. They are as follows:

- FE Osbourne School
- Willow Park School
- Killarney School

The Modular Classroom Points Assignment (**Attachment IV**) summarizes the point assignments for the schools listed above. Please note Willow Park School was not included in **Attachment IV** based on the recognition that there continues to be underutilized spaces in the school facility.

Additional factors considered in recommending locations for new modular classrooms include whether:

- there is firefighting access to the proposed location;
- the proposed location maintains access to existing garbage enclosures and parking areas;
- there is unrestricted access for modular delivery;
- the proposed location impinges the buffer zone of existing City or CBE playfields; and
- connection corridors can be used to tie new modular classrooms into existing schools.

These are all additional factors that affect the viability and cost of the units.

After review of the school sites and consideration of all factors, administration does not recommend requesting the addition of modular units at these locations for the following reasons:

#### FE Osbourne School

The FE Osborne School utilization rate based on September 29, 2021 enrolment numbers is 109%. FE Osborne School offers a Grade 7 to Grade 9 regular program as well as a Grade 6 to Grade 9 French Immersion program.

In September 2019, a French Immersion program for students in GR6 to GR9 was started at FE Osbourne School. The addition of GR6 students to the school resulted in a change to the capacity calculation using the Provincial formula for calculating Instructional Area. Specifically, although the gym and learning commons space are included in calculating the Instructional Area for schools with students from GR7 to GR12 these spaces are not included if the grades offered in a building that includes any grade from K and GR6. Prior to the addition of GR6 students, the provincial capacity of FE Osbourne was 794 and after the grade configuration change it is reduced 719. Provincial utilization calculated using the pre-GR6 capacity would be 99%.

Additionally, the cost to add modular classrooms to the FE Osbourne School site is estimated to be 60% more expensive than the average cost to add modular classrooms to a school. This is primarily due to the need to undertake the redevelopment of the parking lot to provide the appropriate fire lane access. The parking lot is currently shared with Marion Carson School and a change for fire access would result in a loss of parking stalls for both schools. For these reasons, alternate solutions will be considered to maintain the FE Osbourne School utilization rate below 100% into the future.

### Willow Park School

The Willow Park School utilization rate based on September 29, 2021 enrolment numbers is 96%. Willow Park School offers an Arts Centred Learning alternative program for GR5-9 students. Enrolment in the school is capped and therefore is not projected to exceed 100% utilization in the future.

As with FE Osbourne, because the school is a middle school, the provincial capacity does not include the gym and learning commons. Educational programming for middle school students is aligned with GR7-9 students and as such, use of the Learning Commons and Gym functionally operates in the same manner it would if the school only accommodated GR7-9 students. The school has two classrooms that are currently being used as multi-purpose spaces and another two classrooms that are not heavily used on a daily basis. For these reasons, as well as the fact that for the past four years the province has not approved any modular classroom requests unless utilization exceeds 100%, modular classrooms are not being requested for Willow Park School at this time.

### Killarney School

The Killarney School utilization rate based on September 29, 2021 enrolment numbers is 99%. Killarney School offers a Montessori alternative program for K-6 students. The school accommodates students from a large geographic area which includes west, central, east, and northeast Calgary. Enrolment in the school is capped. For the past two years enrolment intake at Kindergarten and Grade 1 has been lower than the capped enrolment level. The school has also been able to accommodate all students from West Calgary which is where the school is located. Enrolment is projected to remain at similar levels in the future. The cost to add modular classrooms to the Killarney School site is estimated to be 40% more expensive than the average cost to add modular classrooms to a school. For this reason and given that the school is not over 100% capacity, and is able to accommodate all students in proximity to where the program is located, modular classrooms are not being requested for Killarney School at this time.

## **Demolition/Removal of Existing Modular Classrooms**

Alberta Education approves the use of modular classrooms for both new school construction and emergent, short to medium-term growth pressures in a jurisdiction. This approach is intended to address the typical growth cycle of a neighbourhood. At some point, a neighbourhood's school-aged population peaks and begins to decline, leaving schools with utilization rates that are lower and result in higher operating costs per student. Removal and relocation of modular classrooms to other schools or jurisdictions where demographic pressures are high offers an alternative approach to adjusting catchment areas or grade configurations to maintain utilization rates. Moreover, with recent changes to the Operations and Maintenance Funding Grant (O&M) it is desirable to have schools operating at 85% utilization or higher.

Some CBE-owned modular classrooms in the inventory are older and have exceeded their design lifecycle. Units that have exceeded their design lifecycle may require significant investment to improve their condition. Demolition of modular units that have exceeded their lifecycle will also raise utilization rates at

schools and reduce the cost of maintenance for aging infrastructure that is not required to accommodate students now or in the foreseeable future.

Modular classrooms constructed at schools within the last 15 years are eligible to be considered for relocation and redistribution to sites with high demographic pressures. As Alberta Education retains ownership of these modular classrooms provided to school jurisdictions, school jurisdictions may request to relocate modular classrooms to other schools, or return modular classrooms to Alberta Education once utilization rates have fallen at a school.

Where modular classrooms are approved for relocation or demolition, site remediation work will be required at the affected school to disconnect services, rehabilitate the site and associated landscaping. Costs for professional consulting, demolition, and site remediation are requested from the Province to support this work.

Modular classrooms identified for demolition and/or demolition and replacement are selected by administration based on condition and school utilization, not through the ranking process used to identify placement of new modular classrooms.

Nine modular classrooms at five schools are recommended for demolition as part of the 2022-23 Modular Classroom submission (i.e. removal of 225 student spaces), as follows:

School	2021 Provincial Capacity	2021 Provincial Utilization	# of Modular Classrooms to be Demolished	Estimated Reduction to Provincial Capacity*	Estimated Provincial Capacity after Demolition	Estimated Provincial Utilization in 2022	Estimated Provincial Utilization in 2024
Colonel Walker	597	53%	1	25	572	60%	60%
Nickle	714	82%	3	75	639	44%	31%
Sam Livingston	576	69%	1	25	551	68%	68%
Silver Springs	286	81%	1	25	261	92%	91%
Varsity Acres	628	74%	3	75	553	88%	88%

*\*The estimated reduction to Provincial Capacity assumes 25 student spaces per unit.*

This year, as no modular classroom expansion is being requested, five modular classrooms at two schools are also recommended for return to Alberta Education, as follows (i.e. removal of 125 student spaces). These units are owned by Alberta Education.



School	2021 Provincial Capacity	2021 Provincial Utilization	# of Modular Classrooms to be Returned to A.I.	Estimated Reduction to Provincial Capacity*	Estimated Provincial Capacity after Demolition	Estimated Provincial Utilization in 2022	Estimated Provincial Utilization in 2024
Midsun	975	77%	1	25	950	73%	66%
Samuel W. Shaw	1,008	79%	4	100	639	83%	75%

*\*The estimated reduction to Provincial Capacity assumes 25 student spaces per unit.*

These recommended reductions in space will result in a net decrease of approximately 350 student spaces across the CBE.

## 5 | Financial Impact

Typically, Alberta Education funds the demolition and relocation of modular classroom units, including consulting and site rehabilitation costs.

Demolishing the proposed modular classrooms will result in an overall net positive impact to the annual operational costs and operations and maintenance (O&M) grant associated with these schools. Specifically, Table 4 shows a net overall increase in the annual O&M grant funding attached to these schools, and an associated reduction in O&M costs for each school location. This is attributable to an overall increase in utilization, and the estimated reduction in utilities, custodial and maintenance costs associated with each school through the demolition of these units.

Additionally, a significant one-time reduction in the deferred maintenance values attributed to these modular classrooms can be realized through demolition. The CBE defines deferred maintenance as building components and systems requiring immediate replacement, regardless of age and design lifecycle. This is distinguished from deferred lifecycle replacements, which reflect building components and systems that have exceeded their design lifecycle but do not require immediate replacement. Planned replacement for both deferred maintenance and deferred lifecycle items is funded through the annual Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal (IMR) grant.

School	Recurring Grants & Expenses			One-Time Reduction
	2021-22 Change to O&M Grant w/ Modular Demolition	Estimated 2021-22 O&M costs for Modular Units	Estimated Reduction in Cost of Ownership – O&M	Estimated Reduction in Deferred Maintenance (as of 2021)
Colonel Walker	(\$1,724)	\$1,818	\$94	\$282,000
Midsun	(\$1,364)	\$3,493	\$2,129	\$0
Nickle	\$11,315	\$4,489	\$15,804	\$377,000
Sam Livingston	(\$1,920)	\$2,641	\$721	\$147,000
Samuel W. Shaw	\$15,476	\$12,915	\$28,391	\$0
Silver Springs	\$3,969	\$5,432	\$9,401	\$257,000
Varsity Acres	(\$6,312)	\$7,712	\$1,400	\$428,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$19,440</b>	<b>\$38,500</b>	<b>\$57,940</b>	<b>\$1,491,000</b>

The average cost of consulting, demolition and site rehabilitation is approximately \$50,000 per unit, with a total estimated cost of demolition and rehabilitation of all nine units at the five affected sites is approximately \$450,000. These costs are summarized as follows:

Schools	Estimate of demolition and rehabilitation costs (typically covered by the province)	Estimate of costs (typically covered by CBE)
<b>Colonel Walker</b> <i>One Unit</i>	\$50,000	\$0
<b>Nickle</b> <i>Three units</i>	\$150,000	\$0
<b>Sam Livingston</b> <i>One Unit</i>	\$50,000	\$0
<b>Silver Springs</b> <i>One Unit</i>	\$50,000	\$0
<b>Varsity Acres</b> <i>Three units</i>	\$150,000	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$450,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>



In this year’s modular classroom request, CBE is also recommending the return of 5 modular units to Alberta Education. The average cost of consulting, transportation, and site rehabilitation is approximately \$60,000 per unit. The additional cost per unit compared to demolition is attributable to the cost of relocation of the modular unit to Alberta Infrastructure’s storage location. This results in a total estimated cost of \$300,000 for relocation of the 5 units and rehabilitation at the two affected sites. These costs are summarized as follows:

<b>Table 6: Summary of Relocation and Rehabilitation Costs Associated with Modular Classrooms</b>		
<b>Schools</b>	<b>Estimate of relocation and rehabilitation costs (typically covered by the province)</b>	<b>Estimate of costs (typically covered by CBE)</b>
<b>Midsun</b> <i>One Unit</i>	\$60,000	\$0
<b>Samuel W. Shaw</b> <i>Four Units</i>	\$240,000	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$300,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>

## 6 | Implementation Consequences

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Alberta Education normally requires school jurisdictions to submit their annual modular classroom program requests by November 1 each year. This year, Alberta Education communicated with school jurisdictions on December 23, 2021 and asked that modular classroom submission be made as soon as possible.

If Provincial approval is obtained before February 2022, it is assessed that there would be adequate time to tender, award and remove modular classrooms in time for the 2022-2023 school year. If approval and funding for the demolition and relocation of modular classrooms is delayed beyond that date, work might not be completed until after the start of the 2022-2023 school year.

## 7 | Conclusion

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A thorough review and assessment of all schools that are over 90% utilization has been conducted and three schools met the eligibility filters. CBE is not requesting the addition of modular classrooms at this time. CBE is requesting the demolition

of nine modular classroom units, and the return of five modular units to Alberta Education.

**CHRISTOPHER USIH  
CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

Attachment I: Eligibility Filters for Modular Classrooms  
Attachment II: Modular Classroom Ranking Criteria  
Attachment III: Modular Classroom Eligibility Filter Review September 2021  
Attachment IV - Modular Classroom Points Assignment September 2021

**GLOSSARY – Developed by the Board of Trustees**

Board: Board of Trustees

Governance Culture: The Board defined its own work and how it will be carried out. These policies clearly state the expectations the Board has for individual and collective behaviour.

Board/Chief Superintendent Relationship: The Board defined in policy how authority is delegated to its only point of connection – the Chief Superintendent – and how the Chief Superintendent's performance will be evaluated.

Operational Expectations: These policies define both the nonnegotiable expectations and the clear boundaries within which the Chief Superintendent and staff must operate. They articulate the actions and decisions the Board would find either absolutely necessary or totally unacceptable.

Results: These are our statements of outcomes for each student in our district. The Results policies become the Chief Superintendent's and the organization's performance targets and form the basis for judging organization and Chief Superintendent's performance.