



**February 26, 2021**

**To: All Parents/Guardians**

**From: Cheryl Gilmore, Superintendent**

**Re: School Boundary Changes Commencing the 2021-22 School Year**

Dear Parents / Guardians of Lethbridge School Division

At the Regular Board Meeting on February 23, Lethbridge School Division Board of Trustees approved the proposal to change the public school boundaries throughout the city of Lethbridge. More detailed information and a follow-up video message from Board Chair, Christine Light, can be found on the Division webpage [VIDEO](#).

The purpose of this communication is to bring some clarity to some of the follow-up processes with this decision. The information below is presented in this order: (1) access to boundary maps and transportation inquiries; (2) Board Policy and Procedure 501.3.1 *School Choice* and the form for school choice; and (3) "Transition Period" decisions that were made by the Board of Trustees as part of the School Boundary Review Process that apply to a few groups.

If you have comments or questions after your review of this communication and the information on our website, please be guided by the following:

- Your current school may be able to respond to your questions because all administrators have been briefed on the process.
- If your question cannot be addressed by your school, please email your inquiry to [leeanne.tedder@lethsd.ab.ca](mailto:leeanne.tedder@lethsd.ab.ca), Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and Board of Trustees, and your question will be directed to an individual who can provide a response.

#### 1. Boundary Maps and Transportation

Be sure to check the new boundary maps on the Division webpage [BOUNDARY](#) if you have not done so already to see if you are impacted by the boundary change. The maps will be replaced with higher quality maps in the near future. The School Locator on the Division website should be updated with the new boundaries and available by March 5. If you have difficulty finding your residence and determining which boundary you are in, please contact Transportation Coordinator Cheryl Shimbashi ([cheryl.shimbashi@lethsd.ab.ca](mailto:cheryl.shimbashi@lethsd.ab.ca)) and she will assist you.

As has been the case in the past, the provision of bussing for students is guided by Policy 502.5 *Student Transportation/Bussing* [TRANSPORTATION](#) with eligible riders living a distance of at least 2.4 kilometers from the site of their boundary school. The school division is unable to provide specific information regarding routes at this time. **Once regular school registration has been completed in April**, school bus transportation registration forms will be sent to families that meet the transportation eligibility to access bussing for the 2021-22 school year. A new process for the school division, this bus registration process will provide the division and transportation provider, Southland, with more accurate numbers of students intending to access transportation so that we can be as efficient as possible.

#### 2. Policy 501.3.1 School Choice

This policy is important to you if your boundary has been changed AND if a student currently enrolled at an out-of-attendance boundary school wishes to remain enrolled at that school. This policy allows for consideration of

requests made to have students enrolled in a school outside of their attendance area. While consideration is given to registration, transportation is not part of school choice approval. Decisions under this policy are made based on the criteria outlined in the policy including: availability of space; educational considerations; projected enrollment including class sizes at each different grade level, suitability of school programs and services, and student priority of enrolment (as per Regulation 4 of the policy).

The links to the policy, procedure and form are as follows:

Link to [POLICY](#)

Link to [PROCEDURE](#)

Link to [FORM](#)

**Please note that to be given consideration for out-of-attendance boundary, we are requesting that Form 501.3.1 be filled out and submitted by March 23, 2021. Schools will make every effort to have decisions made and families contacted by Friday, April 16<sup>th</sup>.**

At this time three schools have been identified as “full” with no available space for out-of-attendance boundary requests: Coalbanks Elementary School, Dr. Probe Elementary School, and Chinook High School.

Why does this matter to me if my child is already attending a school as an out-of-attendance boundary student?

The Division student information system will automatically move students into their attendance-boundary school for the 2021-22 school year. This movement of students in the system includes all students who are currently attending out-of-attendance boundary schools. This means that to continue being an out-of-attendance boundary student at that school, you will need to complete the Form 501.3.1 “*Grade K – 12 Out of Boundary Application for Admission Transition*” (Link above). Exceptions to this movement in the Student Information System are as follows:

- a. **Chinook High School** students in grades 9, 10, and 11 who reside in the new LCI attendance boundary on the west side. As part of the transition plan, these students will remain enrolled at Chinook High School. If students in this boundary do not want to remain enrolled at Chinook High School and desire to transition to LCI next year, Form 501.3.1 will need to be filled out.
- b. Students enrolled in all **French Immersion** programs (École Nicholas Sheran, École Agnes Davidson, and Paterson Middle School) will be automatically transferred into the appropriate French Immersion program so you do not need to do anything if you intend to stay in French Immersion. If you *do not* intend to stay in French Immersion, you will need to notify your current school so that your child can be enrolled in the appropriate English attendance boundary school. For example, if you are enrolled in French Immersion at École Nicholas Sheran where French Immersion will no longer be a program, and do not want to have your child attend École Agnes Davidson that will become the single tract French Immersion program for all elementary students, you will need to advise the principal of École Nicholas Sheran.
- c. Students enrolled in the **Spanish Bilingual Program** at Coalbanks Elementary School, students enrolled in the **Montessori** program at Fleetwood Bawden Elementary School, and students in the **IB program at WCHS**, and students enrolled in **Victoria Park High School** will remain registered in those schools.

### 3. Transition Period

As part of the Boundary approval process, the Board included “Transition Periods” for some schools and/or neighbourhoods as follows:

- a. **Chinook High School** students living in new west side LCI attendance boundaries. As already explained, grades 9, 10, and 11 students will remain enrolled in Chinook High School and be transported to the school for their remaining high school years: 2021-22, 2022-23, and 2023-24. Siblings of students currently attending grades 9, 10, and 11 at Chinook High School in the new LCI attendance boundary, can request to attend Chinook High School using Form 501.3.1. This request *will* be approved as part of the transition plan. They will also be able to access transportation for the 3 years identified above. In the 2024-2025 school year siblings will

continue to have access to Chinook High School as an out-of-attendance boundary student, but transportation will no longer be provided.

b. **École Agnes Davidson students enrolled in the English program** who live west of Mayor Magrath Drive and north of Scenic Drive will be provided with the choice of attending either Lakeview Elementary School (new boundary school) or Dr. Robert Plaxton Elementary School. Transportation will be provided to both schools starting in 2021-22. Transportation for out-of-attendance boundary students will no longer be provided to Dr. Robert Plaxton starting the 2024-25 school year, but out-of-attendance boundary students who started at Dr. Robert Plaxton in 2021-22 and their siblings will be approved to remain at that school throughout their elementary years.

c. **Crossings:** The Board considered feedback at the February 23 Board meeting from individuals residing in the **Crossings neighbourhood** on the west side, as these families did not have the opportunity to provide their perspectives in the feedback loop. The original decision to have Mike Mountain Horse as the neighbourhood's in-attendance-boundary school was moved to Nicholas Sheran as part of feedback loop changes. The feedback provided at the Board meeting resulted in the Board deciding that students who are currently registered in Lethbridge School Division and live in this neighbourhood can choose to attend the out-of-attendance boundary school, Mike Mountain Horse. These families will fill out Form 501.3.1. This request *will* be approved as part of transitioning. The approved students and upcoming siblings will continue to be approved throughout their elementary school years. Families registering their children for the first time with Lethbridge School Division can also access the *School Choice* policy in upcoming years but are not guaranteed approval. Transportation is provided to the in-attendance boundary school, Nicholas Sheran. Transportation is not provided to the out-of-attendance boundary school, Mike Mountain Horse. It can be noted that the statement in the Board meeting presentation that the Crossings is not within walking distance to Mike Mountain Horse is an error as all current residents with children attending school fall within 2.4 km distance of the school.

To close, I want to let parents/guardians know that it is recognized that boundary changes can be very challenging for families and students. It is our goal to put transition plans in place for families and students with the outcome of students and families feeling confident about the move, knowledgeable about their new school, and welcomed into caring school communities. Once the student information system has moved students in accordance with boundaries and schools are aware of who their new students will be, you can anticipate communication from the school regarding transition plans.

Take care,

Cheryl



*Dr. Cheryl Gilmore*

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