



# Looking To the Future

Examining Prairie Spirit schools' infrastructure as to capacity for providing for student needs in the future.

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## Preamble

The continued success of an organization is dependent on its willingness to seek, to understand and then predict and act upon factors and influencers in the future, which impact its ability to serve its mandate and mission. The Vision statement for Prairie Spirit speaks to a desire “to adapt to changing local and global community”.

Prairie Spirit School Division accepts as its mandate the need to continue to provide quality programming for the students it serves. In that regard, its Mission provides direction as to **the what, how, for whom and for what purpose**.

*“To provide quality education in a safe and respectful environment for all learners to create a bright global future.” - Mission of Prairie Spirit*

Further direction is provided through operational belief statements that are enunciated, Policy ACA, Prairie Spirit Policy Manual. Those beliefs serve as filters for ensuring decisions, including those on student placement, are congruent with the Mission statement insistence on **quality programming for all students**. The belief statements include:

- *Everyone has the right to learn in a safe and caring environment*
- *Every learner has the right to be educated to the best of ability/potential*
- *Learning is a life-long process*
- *Education is more than academics*
- *Education is a global learning opportunity*
- *Learning is everyone’s responsibility.*

There is always debate around how these statements should be interpreted and applied and this debate is usually more prevalent when deciding how best to direct scarce resources. Student movement decisions are usually dictated by prioritization on the allocation of resources such that they benefit the most students with the most suitable programming possible. Reflecting on the belief statements provides a moral and ethical compass when making these difficult and often controversial decisions.

The commission of this report is to consider the Prairie Spirit ability to deliver on its mandate to serve students in relation to future changes, which may impact that continued ability to serve within its current configuration of schools. After analysis of what is presently occurring and the significance of expected future dynamics on the capacity of the Division to enact changes, the report will attempt to **suggest a possible blueprint for achieving the most feasible arrangement for school infrastructure which can best accommodate students in the next five to ten years**.

Hutterian schools are not included within the scope of this report because their existence, resourcing, and conditions for operation are subject to separate criteria and arrangements with the Division.

In the consideration of this mandate, the writer is indebted to the Board of Trustees who commissioned the report and then met with the writer in July to clarify and discuss their request; to the senior administration, namely the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Secretary Treasurer, Maintenance/Transportation Supervisor, and Coordinators of Special Education for

providing valuable information and explanation on the current Division structure, resource capacity, staffing component and the current state of programs and infrastructure within the Division. The writer is indebted to the Principals of the schools for information provided on their respective schools and input as to what would be required to ensure their student bodies are well served in the future.

Finally, the writer is indebted to fellow consultant Aime Delaquis for our time spent together visiting schools, where feasible, and for the valuable insight and wisdom he provided regarding building infrastructure and for his understanding of the culture of individual schools and their communities. His report, submitted December 2007, provides an excellent reference point for future decisions and planning regarding facility upgrades and adaptations for better programming utilization and for necessary capital initiatives. It also provides a thorough analysis of one of the critical factors in any student movement consideration, facility capacity and efficient utilization.

The time spent by the writer in the Division and its schools confirmed the existence of a very focused and effective organization with a common purpose and commitment to serve students as well as possible despite the pressures around shrinking school populations. There are many effective examples of Prairie Spirit schools' instructional changes and adaptations designed to provide programming for students despite declining student numbers. Limits to the capacities of these responses have been recognized such that there have been school closures in some small communities of the Division in the last 10-15 years. A common thread woven through those difficult decisions was purposeful planning and open community consultation and these traditions were again evident in the closure decision just made for Cypress River.

There exists within Prairie Spirit a culture of cooperation and of pride and that is a tribute to traditions that have been developed and maintained despite the fact that the current Division configuration is very recent, borne of the amalgamation of three smaller Divisions. The success of the efforts to forge a new Divisional culture from this amalgamation is most commendable.

**The report provides an initial analysis of factors, which are considered critical for consideration of any decision regarding student movement whether it is school closure or movement of grades from one school or another. Recommendations follow from the analysis of the significance of these factors and the challenges they present to future probabilities in the Division.** Information analyzed was provided by Division records, Department of Education documents and the writer's assessment from Division and school visitations. The conclusions drawn through this analysis assume inferences on what the future will be and therefore are subject to debate.

Insert Map of PSSD Ward Boundaries

Insert Map of PSSD School Catchment Areas

## Schools of Prairie Spirit School Division

SCHOOL	GRADE LEVEL	PRINCIPAL	SECRETARY	PHONE	FAX
Baldur School	K-12	Randy Hanson	Val Crowe	535-2314	535-2242
Boyne Valley School	K-12	Abe Friesen	Heather Ferris	526-2533	526-2510
Cartwright School	K-11	Wendy Hamilton-Wear	Lori Hildebrand	529-2357	529-2455
Crystal City Early Years	K-4	Larry Hamilton	Michelle Funk	873-2476	873-2606
Cypress River Elementary	K-6	Bruce Craig	Linda Truelove	743-2094	743-2147
Evergreen School	K-12	Janice Lounsbury	Vicki Adams (Para educator)	744-2030	744-2790
Fairholme School	K-12	Anna Maendel	----	252-2289	252-2313
Glenboro School	K-12	Kevin Newton	Brenda Tosh	827-2593	827-2768
Holland Elementary	K-8	Alex Northam	Arlene Zeghers	526-2179	526-2221
Kamsley School	K-12	Harvey Bridgeman	----	744-2145	744-2799
Manitou Elementary	K-6	Deb Morrow	Donna Thorleifson	242-2844	242-2494
Nellie McClung Collegiate	7-12	Pat Nakonechny	Candy Weeks Jennifer Compton	242-2640	242-2981
New Rosedale School	K-12	Hilda Maendel	----	252-2870	252-2718
Pilot Mound School	9-12	Wade Watson	Angie VanDamme	825-2559	825-2360
Sandy Bank School	K-9	Bob Williamson	----	743-2208	743-2394
Shady Lane School	K-12	Marg Groening	Heather Ferris	723-2097	723-2567
Shamrock School	K-12	Clarence Hofer	----	535-2120	535-2089
École Somerset School	K-12	Greg Lee	Nicole Pantel	744-2751	744-2054
St. Claude Complex	K-12	Jean Godard	Leona Devloo	379-2441	379-2049
Ste. Marie School	K-8	Janice Hamilton	Leona DeSmet	526-2185	526-2361
Thomas Greenway Middle Years	5-8	Bill Harding	Deborah Odlum	873-2147	873-2271
Treherne Collegiate	9-12	Jeff Small	Lauree Warren	723-2781	723-2867
Treherne Elementary	K-8	Penny Lee	Helen Knockaert	723-2737	723-2721
Valleyview School	K-12	Cheryl Delaquis	----	836-2212	836-2170
Westmount Complex	K-12	Marie Rohleder	Janice Temmerman	836-2855	836-2286
West Valley Elementary	K-9	Raymond Mutcheson	Donna Thorleifson	246-2257	246-2255
Whistling Wind School	K-12	Raymond Wollman	----	827-2309	827-2069
Willow Creek School	K-12	Bette Mateychuk	Jeannine Enns (Para educator)	529-2567	529-2624
Windy Bay School	K-12	Alain Deschambault	Darlene Desrochers (Para educator)	825-2049	825-2234

## Executive Summary

The purpose of the report was to examine the sustainability of the current configuration of Prairie Spirit non-Hutterite schools given expected changes in the next five or so years. Hutterite schools were not considered in the report as they are subject to different criteria for examination of viability. Recommendations for possible changes are included for consideration of the Board such that Prairie Spirit can continue to serve its students with a quality programming response.

The report concludes that Prairie Spirit schools are doing a most credible job in responding to the needs of its students. These efforts are supported by the Division in terms of an operational commitment to its Mission and Vision, clear articulated planning, support for an energetic and creative staff team complement and a willingness to find necessary resources. In addition, there is ample evidence of a willingness to make adjustments to operations in order to accommodate declining student numbers, a reality in most of its schools.

When considering the future impact on the current configuration of schools, the report analyzes key factors which should be considered if significant change such as student movement and or school closure is contemplated. These factors are summarized in no order of importance except that maintaining quality programming should be an overriding consideration. It is worthy of note that these factors often interrelate and can complement but may also dominate or can be somewhat neutralized by others in terms of the need to act. Factors reviewed include

### A. Maintaining Quality Programming

1. Maintain initiatives in Special Education where shrinking student populations will result in further division of specialized personnel resources. Needs in this area will not reduce in proportion to student decline and in fact will likely increase.
2. Administrative time allocations presents a similar challenge as decreasing student numbers do not result in less administration time after a certain point
3. Consider the impact on programming of the likely increase in the number of triple grade classes, as they are a challenge to staff ability to meet increasingly diverse student needs. The future projects triple grade elementary classes in a number of schools and also envisages double grades in schools where they do not now exist. The French English elementary program responses in parts of the Division will be further challenged by the need for more multi-grade approaches.
4. At the high school level it will be increasingly difficult for some schools to ensure even a basic high school course offering as student numbers decline. In that regard, IITV maintenance and enhancement is a necessity but it cannot do it all.
5. The emerging importance of Technology Vocational programming opportunity is being met through the innovative CTS approach and Apprenticeship development. This added programming could increase pressure on high schools already struggling to manage the courses they offer.
6. Maintain a strong staff development presence which is the key to ensuring a quality programming response

### B. Student Demographic Trends

Student demographic trends show continued student decline in most if not all schools with a more pronounced drop in the elementary areas. Division projections

are unfortunately given credence by the past history of decline, Census Canada 2006 data for the Division and the absence of any identified future large economic activity infusion. The report relies on projected Division and school enrolment for 2011/12. In that year the Division is projected to have 1980 students as opposed to 2322 in 07/08.

C. Resource Capacity

Resource capacity is a significant factor and the current provincial funding formula, the largest source of revenue, does not adequately account for declining Divisional enrolment. Currently, the Division reliance on local property tax revenue is higher than most of its neighbours and due to its large number of small schools, its per pupil costs are higher than its neighbours and in fact are the sixth highest in the province with Frontier and DSFM being the highest. The community commitment to fund through property taxes is commendable but is dependent on the continuation of quality programming and cannot be expected to always be as receptive as in the past. The solution of looking for efficiencies within existing infrastructures will continue but it is not a long-term solution and can undermine program capacity.

D. Past Practices, Traditions and Policy

An analysis of past practices within the division indicates the presence of a tradition of sound planning and consultation and forward thinking in terms of anticipating and responding to the need to make student movement decisions including school closures. This tradition plus the cooperative tradition for working with others as evidenced by the recent divisional amalgamation exercise will serve the Division well in terms of a model for gaining community acceptance of possible future movement decisions. There exists a feeling of trust amongst staff that the Division will be proactive and will make decisions based on a perception of what is most appropriate for students. Within this tradition, there is a strong policy direction that should become a reference guide for actions

E. Distance and Transportation

Distance for student travel to school is a significant factor in any student movement decision. It can be an overriding issue. The Division's transportation system is developing a tradition for being proactive in ensuring efficiencies while maintaining good service. There is purposeful planning in place and any student movement decision should be accompanied by a working transportation plan.

F. Facilities

The Delaquis report indicates that all schools have adequate program space and some are underutilized to the extent that they could easily accommodate more students. In addition, most schools are functional in terms of program capacity and all are well maintained. There are few major maintenance or upgrade needs in the next five years. However, ongoing maintenance cannot be compromised. There are efficiencies to be realized in school closure possibilities and in increasing student numbers in underutilized schools.

## G. External Factors and Influencers

An analysis of outside factors reveals that in the student enrolment area there is not likely to be an influx of students in or out of the Division in the next five years due to school of choice. In addition, numbers from Swan Lake First Nation are likely to remain similar. The foreign student program is a plus for the Division in terms of additional resources and cultural program enhancement but it is unlikely to impact significantly in reversing student decline. In the area of future program developments, Special Education needs will continue to grow as will increased need to respond in the Vocational Technical area and to remain current to technology and IITV equipment needs. In the resource area, the provincial contribution will likely continue to increase as in the past but it is questionable whether it will do more than meet rising fixed costs that do not decline in proportion to student enrolment decline.

The analysis of the factors outlined produced a series of recommendations aimed at ensuring that quality programming can be maintained and enhanced in the future. The recommendations are presented with the belief that careful preliminary consideration by the Board of Trustees and Senior Administration is necessary to determine what is feasible. This should be followed by a process for careful reflection and discussion with key stakeholders before final decisions are made. The Division has successfully established tradition for the process suggested.

Recommendations include:

1. Board and Senior Administration review of the report and the development of a process for communication and discussion prior to any final decisions. The process would observe provincial guidelines and allow time for community and staff involvement

Specific recommendations:

2. Review of the viability of Holland school.
3. Consolidation of the three schools in the Pilot Mound and Crystal City area into two schools.
4. Configuration change to Somerset and Westmount schools to Westmount, K-6. and Somerset 7-12, similar to the arrangement in the Crystal City - Pilot Mound area.
5. A review of the arrangement at Ste. Marie with consideration to movement of at least Grade 7 and 8 and attention to the lease negotiation as per lease renewal.
6. A review of the Cartwright and Baldur high school situations.

## Factors In Student Movement Decisions - Programming

The most significant factor in the consideration of student movement change should focus on the need to maintain or enhance student programming. Change decisions have to consider what is in the best program interest of the student body as a whole but should be undertaken in a manner that respects individual student needs and preferences. However, it is sometimes difficult to meet all individual needs because of perceived conflict with the larger group consideration and that is usually the genesis for controversy and disagreement when decisions of this nature are deemed necessary. Careful explanation as to programming advantage must be an important part of any student movement change initiative and should be sensitive to the needs of individual student situations wherever possible.

Visitations to all schools of the Division provided the opportunity to review all current programming, K-12, and to discuss current and future program needs. The suitability of school facility infrastructure was observed by the writer. In addition, a building audit report was provided by Consultant A. Delaquis on the current state of each school facility along with an assessment of current programming and the suitability of each facility for its programming. His report contains suggestions for improvement where noted or identified by the school.

### **Divisional Initiatives Common to all Schools**

The programming analysis begins with Divisional initiatives prominent in all schools of the Division. In that regard, the Special Education program response includes a strong Division and individual school commitment to serve special needs situations through the provision of specialized personnel such as Clinicians, Resource Teachers, a Guidance presence in most situations and Reading Recovery specialists. In small schools that often results in itinerant positions and limited time allocation. Staff is allocated for these areas according to a consistent Divisional formula based on student numbers and specialized need. Education Assistants are allocated according to identified levels of student need.

Some schools have been most creative in arranging for facility space for Special Education programming as their buildings were not designed to accommodate office and room spaces for personnel and special programs. It is commendable that office and area space has been arranged for Resource Teachers and Clinician visitations and for specialized space for Reading Recovery instruction often through multiple facility usage. Examples include Crystal City Elementary where the Reading Recovery time is accommodated within a Gymnasium storage area and through multiple usage of the library area in schools such as Baldur. Most schools are handicap accessible.

In the technology area, all schools have well maintained and equipped computer labs as the Division has an excellent plan and support network in place to ensure that equipment is current and is available in sufficient numbers for student usage. Many of the K-12 schools have two labs such that elementary access is assured. All schools are networked to ensure good program and administrative usage. Most school libraries have good technology access and often have a bank of computers available for student usage. The innovative experiment at Crystal City Elementary with a portable lap top lab concept may be appropriate for other schools in the future.

At the secondary level, all schools have excellent computer access and all are equipped with functional videoconference labs. The Division has one of the best-developed and functional IITV systems in the province. The usage of this medium to expand program capacity as a means to maintain and even enhance course offerings for its small high schools is commendable. Without this distance education response some the smaller high schools would not be able to offer even a basic high school program.

Baldur's initiative in providing IITV courses to the Hutterite schools of the Division is an outstanding example of the power of this medium to maintain a basic program response at Baldur and to address the emerging high school needs of small Hutterite schools. The creation of efficient virtual classes allows for the offering of required high school courses.

Divisional attempts to supplement existing high school programming with Vocational Technical course and program offerings, despite small student numbers, are underway through partnerships with the community and neighbouring Divisions. The availability of the Apprenticeship opportunities in most schools and the Career Technology Studies program (CTS) offset a lack of facility and staffing expertise which would be difficult if not impossible to provide within any of the small schools in the Division. Industrial Arts facilities exist in Glenboro, St Claude and Somerset but they are underutilized due to small student numbers at those sites and access issues in bringing other school populations to the facilities for lab time. The movement of Baldur grade 9 and 10s for Industrial Arts and Home Economics at Glenboro is positive. It should be an objective for the immediate future to reestablish Industrial Arts possibilities for Westmount at Somerset, as was done in the past.

The commitment by the Division to provide Coordinator time for the CTS program is a positive assist to the increased need for vocational technology alternatives in the high school program area. The recent Department Technology Initiative grant to a partnership of Divisions, including Prairie Spirit, will provide a welcome addition to efforts in this area.

A Divisional effort seen to be critical to the maintenance and enhancement of programming in all schools is the commitment to ensuring good staff development support to teachers. The emphasis on support for Early Literacy development, inclusive of Guided Reading and Reading Recovery and Later Literacy in all elementary schools, is seen to be more effective because of a strong Divisional staff development commitment recognized and appreciated by staff. The presence, locally, of a recognized provincial expert and Divisional staff development support for her involvement with teachers in working towards more effective delivery of curriculum is not available in most rural Divisions despite the critical value of this kind of support to the maintenance of responsive teaching.

### **CHALLENGES**

**How will the Division continue to maintain these Divisional program initiatives and supports, which are critical to the maintenance of quality programming now and in the future? They must not be compromised despite shrinking student numbers and thus are priorities in any discussion as to how to distribute scarce resources.**

## **Elementary Programming**

All elementary schools offer the prescribed provincial curriculum. All have adequate Physical Education facilities and classroom teachers, for the most part, offer the required physical education program, K-8. Art is taught mostly by classroom teachers in a classroom setting and is supplemented in some schools through community resources and expertise. Music is mostly left to the classroom teacher and is supplemented in most, if not all, elementary schools by making space available for private music lessons. Choral programs are a preferred music response in most schools. There is a vibrant band program at Westmount. As stated previous, all elementary school situations have access to a computer lab and all have library facilities with Library Assistant time assigned according to student numbers.

French language programming within the Division varies with the ethnic and cultural make up of the communities. St Claude and Somerset have developed functional programming to accommodate their larger French population mix by providing an acceptable alternative to the Francais School Division presence within their service areas.

The presence of a dual language response in those schools has been well received by their communities and provincial test results confirm the quality of the programming in both schools. The other elementary schools of the Division work to maintain a basic French program but this is increasingly difficult as student numbers decline, especially in schools such as Holland, Baldur, Cartwright and Westmount.

To this point, most elementary schools in the Division faced with declining numbers have managed programming by combining grades with two grades per class. This is now a reality for Glenboro this year and has been the norm for Treherne, Westmount, Cartwright and Baldur. Somerset and St Claude combine two grades for part of the student day in order for those schools to maintain a necessary French English program pattern. Dual grades task the ability of teachers to respond to individual differences that are increasingly more evident within one grade level much less two. It is a tribute to teacher ingenuity that they manage it well despite the challenges.

Due to an enlarged Manitou catchment area, the result of closing small community schools in the past, and the accommodations between Pilot Mound and Crystal City to combine numbers, those two schools have retained single grade classes. Currently, schools at Bruxelles, Cypress River and Holland have three and in one case four grades per class.

Future student number projections in elementary schools of the Divisions will increase the likelihood of more than two grades per class in Cartwright, Baldur and possibly Westmount and Treherne Elementary. *(See table 7, (1-4) on future student projections by school and Division).* The reality of three grades per class has impacted Holland this year and it is presenting challenges for instruction.

### **CHALLENGE**

**What will be the impact on the system when, in the future, more elementary schools are faced with the prospect of triple grades?**

Specialized personnel services such as Resource; Guidance and Reading Recovery teachers are often allocated as part time and itinerant positions in most schools because of small student numbers. There is an increasing need for these personnel in each school and that need will likely increase despite declining student enrolments, The future probably means more travel and more part time specialized service. School administration time will also be more difficult to maintain in smaller schools. The need for administrative presence is growing in terms of demands in the modern school and does not decrease in proportion to declining numbers.

### **CHALLENGES**

**What will be the impact on division specialized personnel in terms of the maintenance of necessary services for students?**

**Will the Division be able to maintain a required administrative presence in schools that continue to lose student numbers, as is projected?**

### **High School Programming**

All schools, thanks to strategic usage of IITV and web based courses, have managed to offer a minimum basic high school program which this writer defines as all compulsory courses- grades 9 –12; Physics, Chemistry and Biology at grade 11 and 12; three courses of Math - grades 10-12; and at least two courses of English in grade 12. This course component is a required basic minimum in order for students to have access to the widest range of opportunity at University or College level studies. In addition, schools have some basic Technology courses offerings at grade 9 with a few specialized technology courses in most schools at Grade 10 and 11. Most schools offer some Business Education programming especially Accounting and Law. These are most often Web based courses.

In the languages area, Somerset and St Claude have Francais programming through to grade 12 with variations on Francais and French Immersion patterns which allow them to maintain necessary programming in both English and French. Declining student numbers are making this more difficult to maintain, especially at Somerset. Basic French at the high school level in the other schools of the Division is becoming more and more difficult to maintain but this is a reality in many rural schools in Manitoba. High schools at Baldur, Cartwright, Glenboro, Treherne, Westmount and Pilot Mound have no basic French courses except through the Web based option.

Tables #1 and #2 outline the current high school option program offerings, grades 9 –12, in Prairie Spirit schools. Core compulsory courses are offered in all schools and thus are not outlined.

**TABLE #1**

Current High School Course Offerings Grades 9 and 10 by School							
School	Math Options – Grade 10			LA	HE	French	Technical Courses and Other
	Applied Math	Cons Math	PreCalc				
Baldur	IITV	X	IITV	X*	X*	No	Info Tech 20, Car Dev 20
Cartwright	IITV	X	IITV	No	No	No	Kybdg 15, Life Works 20, Art
Glenboro	X	X	X	X	Foods Fam. St.	No	Comp App 20, Dig Pic 25, Choral
Nellie McClung	X	X	IITV	X		Yes	Kybdg 15, Comp App 20, Car.Dev.20, Bus 15/25, Choral
Pilot Mound	X	X	X	X		No	Info Tech 15, Car Dev 15, Choral, Dig Pic/Web Des 20, Drafting/Graph 25
Somerset	X	X	X	X		Yes	Comp App 20
St. Claude	X	X	X	X		Yes	Car Tech St, Dig Pic 25, Web Des 25
Treherne	X	X	X	X	X	No	Data 20, Dig Pic/Film 25, Car Dev 20, Print Comm 25
Westmount	X	X	X	No	No	No	Kybdg10, comp App 20, Choir, Band

\* Notes:

- Baldur students travel to Glenboro for I.A and Home Economics.
- Web based courses are available to schools but are not listed

**TABLE #2**

Current High School Course Offerings Grades 11 and 12 by School							
School	Math Options			Acctg	French	IA	Technical Courses and Other
	Applied Math	Cons Math	PreCalc				
Baldur	IITV	IITV	IITV	IITV	No	No	Info Tech 30 & 40
Cartwright	IITV	X	IITV		No	No	Art/Life Works Modules
Glenboro	X	X	X	IITV	No	Woods	Desktop Pub 35, Foods, Fam St
Nellie McClung	X	X	X	X	Yes		Coop Ed 20/30/40, Car Ed 30
Pilot Mound	X	X	X	X	No	Woods	Desktop Pub 35, Data 35, Anim 35, Law, Wrld Issues
Somerset	X	X	X		Yes	Woods	
St. Claude	IITV	X	IITV	IITV	Yes	Woods	Car Ed 41, Comm Serv 41
Treherne	IITV	X	X	X	No		Car Prep 35, Desktop Pub 35, Data 35, Auto Office 41, Sem in Bus 41, H Ec
Westmount		X	X	IITV	No		Auto Office, Community Service

Notes:

- Web courses available in all schools and not listed
- CTS program available at Nellie McClung, Treherne, and St. Claude
- All schools offer two English courses at grade 12 with Treherne, Pilot Mound and Cartwright offering two English courses in grade 11
- All schools offer three Science courses at grades 11 and 12 with Physics usually offered via IITV. Some schools offer Physics and Chemistry on a two-year rotational basis.

Prairie Spirit is a Division of small high schools and this will be even more pronounced within the next five years. (See Tables 7(1-4) –*Future projections by Division and School*). The future for its small high schools means more pressure on available staff resources to maintain a necessary basic high school pattern in each school. The current formula determining limits to offering options will need to continue but it can't be applied to eliminate compulsory courses, despite low student numbers.

**CHALLENGE**

**Will the Division be able to maintain a necessary basic high school program in small high schools, which will be even smaller in the next five years?**

The high school of today, and increasingly tomorrow, will need to be flexible and responsive to new and varied students interests and needs

**CHALLENGE**

**How will Prairie Spirit small high schools meet the challenge of being flexible to the increasingly diverse needs of its students?**

The maintenance of a reliable IITV network is critical to the maintenance of a basic high school pattern for Baldur, Cartwright, Westmount, Somerset, Treherne and increasingly so in other schools who now rely on it and will need to do so in the future if student numbers continue to decline. As stated previous, the continuance of the IITV program offerings from Baldur to Hutterite schools is necessary not only for a suitable Hutterite high school offering but for the viability of the high school at Baldur.

**CHALLENGE**

**How will the Division maintain the quality, reliability and need for enhancement of its IITV network which must be a priority for retaining viable and responsive high schools?  
What are the limits for the use of this medium in schools?**

Student needs, in terms of opportunities for learning and preparation for life after school, do not remain static. There is an increased emphasis within the last years for more vocational technical

program opportunity. The Division has neither the facilities nor staffing for delivery in this area using conventional approaches. Its response has been proactive in terms of support for the Career Technology Studies program and Apprenticeship opportunities using the community. Initiatives such as the new Divisional-provincial grant will extend the impact.

At the same time, there are vocational facilities that are underutilized because there are not enough students in the sites, which have facilities, and it is difficult to transport students school to school to properly utilize those facilities. In the specialized Technology programming area, facility and equipment could be combined with staffing expertise to possibly offer more course alternatives for students. There are issues, however, in terms of offering this additional programming in all high schools of the Division due to lack of specialized staffing and the impact on other courses within small high school situations.

### **CHALLENGES**

**How will the small high schools meet the future challenges and needs for technology vocational programming, which is or will become a necessary reality in the future?**

***It is suggested that the Division explore the Information Technology Vocational program at Swan Valley Regional Secondary School as a possible means to expand specialized technology course offerings in some of its high schools and as a possible source of provincial revenue for the area. This program relies on the offering of modular individualized technology courses in a number of areas of interest to students. The courses are offered from one or two computer lab rooms. In any one period, there may be five or six courses scheduled with any course available in any period. This provides flexibility for students to schedule the course of choice when they have time available and also permits offering courses of interest to only a few students.***

***Discussions have been held with the Department of Education consultant for this area as to the possibility of vocational technology program funding for such a program in Prairie Spirit such as is provided for Swan Valley. It would require a qualified teacher, prepared to teach the program in a multi-course format.***

## Factors In Student Movement Decisions – Student Demographics

The obvious is worth restating. You must have students to have a school. There is debate on the optimum student number for a well functioning school in terms of a minimum or maximum size for programming and for the ambience that provides the best socializing situation. The debate is further complicated by a perceived difference on what is best in terms of an acceptable minimum support level for elementary versus secondary students. In that regard, a secondary school is more difficult and costly to maintain as staffing patterns must be maintained to a level whereby they can provide at least a basic high school pattern despite reductions in student numbers. (See *Programming section for the writer's definition of a basic high school pattern*).

Within Manitoba, the opinion as to optimum student number for a viable school varies depending on location, community circumstances, and the capacity of a Division to resource small schools. Manitoba Education guidelines for school closure do not consider the issue of student numbers. What is considered for closure varies by Division. In the city of Winnipeg, elementary schools are often considered for closure when they are plus or minus 100 – 150 students. In rural Manitoba, the minimum size is usually lower reflecting the sparsity population factor.

When considering the long-term viability of a small school, the issue of future projected student numbers is critical because in rural Manitoba most schools are constantly faced with long term trends of declining population. Table #3 confirms the existence of this trend, both past and future, in Prairie Spirit School Division. Future Prairie Spirit student projections, supported by 2006 Census Canada data for the area, suggest the continuation of this trend to fewer students in most if not all schools. Prairie Spirit has been most proactive in continuous upgrading of its projections so as to ensure and test their reliability.

In terms of actual numbers for the years 2002 to current September 30/07 student enrolment, the Division has declined from 2640 students to 2322 or 12%. The fact that during that period Hutterite schools numbers have been relatively constant, dropping only by about 5%, implies that the decline in the remainder of the Division has been even more dramatic.

Table #4 outlines actual student enrolment as of September 30/07 and this number is close to what was projected previous. Tables #7 (1-4), Projections by School and Division from 2008/9 to 2011/12 are based on this September 30/07 projection. Those projections show continued decline in most schools outside of the Hutterite schools where numbers are expected to grow marginally.

The projections for the years 2008/09 to 2011/12 are critical to the recommendations for student movement changes. To further check their accuracy, a review of Census Canada 2006 data for the area is sited, (Tables #5 and 6). Population data is available by community and municipality and more importantly by age group. An analysis of the 0-4 age group, representing most of the new student population number for this period, confirms a pattern of continued decline as the 0-4 age group is less than larger age groups in almost all school catchment areas.

The only interruption to this decline trend would come from a population growth spurt in an area provided by new economic activity or by significant in migration of students from other areas. Discussions within the Division indicate no significant growth from either of these possibilities is foreseen. The Division has been proactive in trying to attract foreign students; this will not likely

see a significant increase in student numbers enough to reverse the trend for continued decline in the next five years.

When considering future decisions as to student movement, it is essential to focus on what the school will look like with the numbers projected. **The essential point is that what is now working well may well depend on a current student number that may not be there in the future. It is not a question of changing something that works but rather will it still function, as desired, with a major change to the essential critical student mass.** For that reason, the recommendations provided focus on 2011/12 student numbers, as that is what will likely be reality when those decisions are being finalized.

#### **CHALLENGES - ELEMENTARY**

**How will small elementary schools at Holland and Bruxelles, who will experience continued pressure on program capacity in serving students in multi grades situations, manage three and more grades per class?**

**How will schools at Baldur, Cartwright and even Treherne Elementary manage multi grading beyond two classes per grade unless the staffing formula is changed?**

**How will the likelihood of combined classes of two grades per class at Manitou Elementary, be received?**

**How will St. Claude and particularly Somerset, maintain the necessary pattern of French English programming in the Elementary area given projected enrolment decline?**

**How will decreased efficiency in building utilization of schools at Holland, Ste. Marie, and Treherne Elementary, impact the resource capacity of the Division to meet its budget needs?**

#### **Future - Secondary**

Considering 2011/12 enrolment projections, high schools at Baldur, Cartwright, Somerset and Westmount will find it increasingly difficult to maintain a basic high school course pattern with staffing available. At minimum, Baldur must continue to combine through IITV classes with Hutterite colony schools. Cartwright will need to continue the community contribution to maintain grade 12.

Pilot Mound building utilization will be even more inefficient for the number of students projected for the high school. As the school now gathers students from a huge catchment area, it is unlikely to see any influx of students, grade 9-12

#### **CHALLENGES – SECONDARY**

**Will high schools at Cartwright, Baldur, Somerset and Westmount be able to maintain a basic high school program given shrinking student populations in the future?**

**How will Pilot Mound efficiently utilize its space with a grade 9-12 population projected to be below 90?**

**TABLE #3**

<b>Past Enrolments</b>						
<b>Division and School – As Reported On September 30</b>						
<b>School</b>	<b>2002/03</b>	<b>2003/04</b>	<b>2004/05</b>	<b>2005/06</b>	<b>2006/07</b>	<b>2007/08</b>
Baldur	135	152	144	141	150	144
Cartwright	85	102	87	81	82	98*
Cypress River	38	37	39	48	35	30
Crystal City Elementary	107	95	99	93	107	107
Ecole Rich.	70	59	<b>School Closed</b>			
Glenboro	256	256	244	231	233	219
Holland	70	67	67	61	53	56
Mariapolis	28	13	<b>School Closed</b>			
Manitou Elementary	171	171	173	180	178	166
Nellie McClung	142	143	137	151	147	142
Pilot Mound	156	134	124	121	109	110
Somerset	128	128	171	164	153	151
St. Claude	289	264	246	254	241	231
Ste. Marie	43	43	37	39	36	35
Thomas Greenway	127	125	123	104	96	88
Treherne Collegiate	125	147	137	146	127	122
Treherne Elementary	121	122	109	101	95	88
Westmount	188	194	189	185	173	169
Hutterian Schools	383	368	378	379	372	365**
<b>Division Totals</b>	<b>2640</b>	<b>2620</b>	<b>2502</b>	<b>2479</b>	<b>2387</b>	<b>2322</b>

\*Does not include grade 12 numbers

\*\*Total for all Hutterian students within 13 Hutterite schools of the division

**TABLE #4**

<b>Actual Enrolment by School</b>														
<b>As at September 30, 2007</b>														
<b>School</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Baldur	10	11	6	9	11	9	13	8	14	18	10	15	10	<b>144</b>
Cartwright	7	4	5	4	13	11	6	12	6	9	12	10	(10)	<b>99+10</b>
Cypress River	7	4	7	3	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>30</b>
Crystal City Elem.	19	29	14	23	21	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>106</b>
Glenboro	11	11	13	11	12	15	9	23	30	17	17	28	22	<b>219</b>
Holland	7	7	7	5	4	6	7	8	5	-	-	-	-	<b>56</b>
Manitou Elem.	20	27	20	30	17	32	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>166</b>
Nellie McClung	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	24	25	23	23	22	<b>142</b>
Pilot Mound	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	29	30	25	<b>110</b>
Somerset	9	3	10	10	9	10	14	11	13	18	9	16	19	<b>151</b>
St. Claude	8	12	19	14	11	16	17	23	17	18	29	20	27	<b>231</b>
Ste. Marie	6	3	4	3	8	1	3	2	5	-	-	-	-	<b>35</b>
Thomas Greenway	-	-	-	-	-	18	21	22	27	-	-	-	-	<b>88</b>
Treherne Collegiate	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	37	24	28	33	<b>122</b>
Treherne Elem.	6	7	11	11	11	12	10	9	11	-	-	-	-	<b>88</b>
Westmount	11	5	7	5	12	14	11	14	12	22	19	18	19	<b>169</b>
Hutterian Schools	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>365</b>
<b>Division Totals</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>2322</b>

**TABLE #5**

<b>Population Data Prairie Spirit Catchment Area As Compiled by Census Canada 2001 and 2006</b>				
<b>Towns Reported</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>+ / -</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Cartwright	282	301	-19	-7.2
Crystal City	400	414	-14	-3.4
Glenboro	633	656	-23	-3.5
Manitou	718	775	-57	-7.4
Pilot Mound	630	676	-46	-6.8
Somerset	432	459	-27	-5.9
Treherne	646	644	+2	+2
St. Claude	588	558	-30	-5.4

<b>Rural Municipalities and towns listed within R.M.</b>				
<b>R.M.'s Reported</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>+ / -</b>	<b>% Change</b>
R.M. of Argyle (Baldur)	1073	1145	-72	6.3
R.M. of Lorne (Swan Lake, Bruxelles)	2003	2033	-30	-1.5
R.M. of Victoria (Holland, Cypress River)	1149	1181	-32	-2.7
R.M. of South Norfolk (Treherne)	1170	1248	-76	-6.1
R.M. of North Norfolk (Treherne)	2742	2941	-199	-6.8
R.M. of Roblin (Cartwright)	964	955	+9	+0.9
R.M. of Strathcona (Baldur, Cartwright)	727	628	-99	-13.6
R.M. of Pembina	1712	1769	-43	-3.2

Data: 2006 Census Canada - Census Canada Website

**TABLE #6**

<b>Census Canada 2006 Data Comparison of Age Groups</b>				
<b>Towns Reported</b>	<b>Age 0-4</b>	<b>Age 5-9</b>	<b>Age 10-14</b>	<b>Age 15-19</b>
Cartwright	15	15	10	15
Crystal City	25	20	25	20
Glenboro	40	40	45	35
Manitou	25	35	50	35
Pilot Mound	25	35	35	35
St. Claude	20	35	35	45
Treherne	20	25	35	55
<b>Rural Municipalities and Villages</b>				
R.M. of Argyle	65	70	95	70
R.M. of Lorne	130	130	185	195
R.M. of Grey	120	150	180	160
R.M. of South Norfolk	50	95	95	115
R.M. of North Norfolk	250	240	260	235
R.M. of Roblin	75	95	97	99
R.M. of Pembina	125	135	120	120
R.M. of Strathcona	35	35	30	45
R.M. of Victoria	60	60	75	90

Notes:

- Age 0-4 is the same as or less than the Age 15-19 in all but Crystal City (+5) & Glenboro (+5)
- Age 0-4 represents most of the incoming group to schools while Age 15-19 represents most of the outgoing group during this time.

**TABLE #7 (1)**

Projected Enrolments 2008/2009 Students With 2007/2008 Staffing																	
School	K	K FTE	S S / S E	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Adult	Enrolment Total Actual
Baldur	5	2.5		11	11	6	9	11	9	13	8	14	18	10	15		140
Boyne Valley	0	0		4	1	0	0	1	2	0	3	0	1	3	0		15
Cartwright	2	1		8	5	5	5	13	12	7	12	6	9	12	10		96
Crystal City	20	10	1	19	29	14	23	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		106
Cypress River	4	2		0	0	7	4	7	3	-	-	-	-	-	-		25
Evergreen	4	2		5	5	4	1	5	1	5	3	3	2	3	0		41
Fairholme	1	0.5		0	0	2	2	0	1	0	2	0	5	0	2		15
Glenboro	10	5		11	11	13	10	12	15	18	23	30	17	17	28		215
Holland	2	1		7	7	7	5	4	6	7	8	-	-	-	-		53
Kamsley	0	0		0	3	2	3	1	2	3	1	0	1	1	-		17
Manitou Elem.	8	4		20	27	20	30	17	32	-	-	-	-	-	-		154
Nellie McClung	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	20	25	24	25	23	23		140
New Rosedale	4	2		0	4	5	1	3	4	3	3	2	0	6	0		35
Pilot Mound	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	27	25	29	30		112
Sandy Bank	2	1		4	5	1	2	4	4	2	5	2	2	7	5		45
Shady Lane	1	0.5		7	5	2	5	5	0	2	1	1	0	3	1		33
Shamrock	3	1.5		2	5	1	2	0	4	0	6	3	0	5	0		31
Somerset	2	1		9	4	10	10	9	10	15	11	12	18	9	16		135
St. Claude	10	5		8	13	19	15	11	16	17	24	17	18	29	20		217
Ste. Marie	6	3		6	3	4	3	8	1	3	2	-	-	-	-		36
Thomas Greenway	-	-		-	-	-	-	21	18	21	22	-	-	-	-		82
Treheme Collegiate	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	36	25	29		106
Treheme Elem.	5	2.5		6	7	11	11	11	12	10	9	-	-	-	-		82
Valley-view	1	0.5		0	0	2	1	0	4	0	2	4	2	4	5		25
Westmount	9	4.5		11	5	7	5	12	14	11	14	17	21	20	18		164
West Valley	3	1.5		3	4	8	3	2	6	3	0	7	0	0	0		37
Whistling Wind	4	2		1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	2		12
Willow Creek	0	0		5	1	3	2	2	6	4	4	4	4	3	5		43
Windy Bay	0	0		1	0	1	0	3	1	4	2	0	3	1	1		17
<b>Totals</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>200</b>		<b>2229</b>

**TABLE #7 (2)**

Projected Enrolments 2009/2010 Students With 2007/2008 Staffing																	
School	K	K FTE	S S / S E	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Adult	Enrolment Total Actual
Baldur	5	2.5		5	11	11	6	9	11	9	13	8	14	18	10		130
Boyne Valley	3	1.5		0	4	1	0	0	1	2	0	3	0	1	3		18
Cartwright	6	3		2	8	5	5	5	13	12	7	12	6	9	12		90
Crystal City	23	12	1	20	19	29	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		95
Cypress River	1	0.5		4	0	0	7	4	7	-	-	-	-	-	-		23
Evergreen	5	2.5		4	5	5	4	1	5	1	5	3	3	2	3		46
Fairholme	1	0.5		1	0	0	2	2	0	1	0	2	0	5	0		14
Glenboro	8	4		10	11	11	13	10	12	18	18	23	30	17	17		198
Holland	6	3		2	7	7	7	5	4	6	7	-	-	-	-		51
Kamsley	2	1		0	0	3	2	3	1	2	3	1	0	1	1		19
Manitou Elem.	9	4.5		8	20	27	20	30	17	-	-	-	-	-	-		131
Nellie McClung	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	32	20	25	24	25	23		149
New Rosedale	4	2		4	0	4	5	1	3	47	3	3	2	0	6		39
Pilot Mound	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22	27	25	29		104
Sandy Bank	4	2		2	4	5	1	2	4	4	2	5	2	2	7		44
Shady Lane	4	2		1	7	5	2	5	5	0	2	1	1	0	3		36
Shamrock	4	2		3	2	5	1	2	0	4	0	6	3	0	5		35
Somerset	11	5.5		2	9	3	10	10	9	10	15	11	12	18	9		129
St. Claude	7	3.5		10	8	13	19	15	11	16	17	24	17	18	29		204
Ste. Marie	3	1.5		6	6	3	4	3	8	1	3	-	-	-	-		37
Thomas Greenway	-	-		-	-	-	-	23	21	18	21	-	-	-	-		83
Treheme Collegiate	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	16	36	25		94
Treheme Elem.	3	1.5		5	6	7	11	11	11	12	10	-	-	-	-		76
Valley-view	1	0.5		1	0	0	2	1	0	4	0	2	4	2	4		21
Westmount	12	6		9	11	5	7	5	12	14	11	16	17	21	20		160
West Valley	3	1.5		3	3	4	6	3	2	6	3	0	7	0	0		40
Whistling Wind	2	1		4	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2		12
Willow Creek	4	2		0	5	1	3	2	2	6	4	4	4	4	3		42
Windy Bay	2	1		0	1	0	1	0	3	1	4	2	0	3	1		18
<b>Totals</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>200</b>		<b>2149</b>

**TABLE #7 (3)**

Projected Enrolments 2010/2011 Students With 2007/2008 Staffing																	
School	K	K FTE	S S / S E	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Adult	Enrolment Total Actual
Baldur	3	1.5		5	5	11	11	6	9	11	9	13	8	14	18		123
Boyne Valley	2	1		3	0	4	1	0	0	1	2	0	3	0	1		17
Cartwright	3	1.5		6	2	8	5	5	5	13	12	7	12	6	9		84
Crystal City	16	8	1	23	20	19	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		107
Cypress River	1	0.5		1	4	0	0	7	4	-	-	-	-	-	-		17
Evergreen	5	2.5		5	4	5	5	4	1	5	1	5	3	3	2		48
Fairholme	1	0.5		1	1	0	0	2	2	0	1	0	2	0	5		15
Glenboro	12	6		8	10	11	11	13	10	19	18	18	23	30	17		200
Holland	6	3		6	2	7	7	7	5	4	6	-	-	-	-		50
Kamsley	1	0.5		2	0	0	3	2	3	1	2	3	1	0	1		19
Manitou Elem.	13	6.5		9	8	20	27	20	30	-	-	-	-	-	-		127
Nellie McClung	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	17	32	20	25	24	25		143
New Rosedale	1	0.5		4	4	0	4	5	1	3	4	3	3	2	0		34
Pilot Mound	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21	22	27	25		96
Sandy Bank	6	3		4	2	4	5	1	2	4	4	2	5	2	2		43
Shady Lane	1	0.5		4	1	7	5	2	5	5	0	2	1	1	0		34
Shamrock	1	0.5		4	3	2	5	1	2	0	4	0	6	3	0		31
Somerset	2	1		11	2	9	3	10	10	9	10	15	11	12	18		122
St. Claude	7	3.5		7	10	8	13	19	15	11	16	17	24	17	18		182
Ste. Marie	5	2.5		3	6	6	3	4	3	8	1	-	-	-	-		39
Thomas Greenway	-	-		-	-	-	-	14	23	21	18	-	-	-	-		76
Treheme Collegiate	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	17	16	36		86
Treheme Elem.	3	1.5		3	5	6	7	11	11	11	12	-	-	-	-		69
Valley-view	2	1		1	1	0	0	2	1	0	4	0	2	4	2		19
Westmount	7	3.5		12	9	11	5	7	5	12	14	14	16	17	21		150
West Valley	2	1		3	3	3	4	6	3	2	6	3	0	7	0		42
Whistling Wind	3	1.5		2	4	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0		13
Willow Creek	0	0		4	0	5	1	3	2	2	6	4	4	4	4		39
Windy Bay	0	0		2	0	1	0	1	0	3	1	4	2	0	3		17
<b>Totals</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>198</b>		<b>2042</b>

**TABLE #7 (4)**

Projected Enrolments 2011/2012 Students With 2007/2008 Staffing																	
School	K	K FTE	S S / S E	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Adult	Enrolment Total Actual
Baldur	5	2.5		3	5	5	11	11	6	9	11	9	13	8	14		110
Boyne Valley	6	3		2	3	0	4	1	0	0	1	2	0	3	0		22
Cartwright	3	1.5		3	6	2	8	5	5	5	13	12	7	12	6		81
Crystal City	22	11	1	16	23	20	19	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		100
Cypress River	4	2		1	1	4	0	0	7	-	-	-	-	-	-		17
Evergreen	5	2.5		5	5	4	5	5	4	1	5	1	5	3	3		51
Fairholme	1	0.5		1	1	1	0	0	2	2	0	2	0	5	0		15
Glenboro	10	5		12	8	11	11	11	13	14	19	18	18	23	30		198
Holland	6	3		6	6	2	7	7	7	5	4	-	-	-	-		50
Kamsley	3	1.5		1	2	0	0	3	2	3	1	2	3	1	0		21
Manitou Elem.	4	2		13	9	8	20	27	20	-	-	-	-	-	-		101
Nellie McClung	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	30	17	32	20	25	24		148
New Rosedale	2	1		1	4	4	0	4	5	1	3	4	3	3	2		36
Pilot Mound	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	21	22	27		89
Sandy Bank	2	1		6	4	2	4	5	1	2	4	4	2	5	2		43
Shady Lane	5	2.5		1	4	1	7	5	2	5	5	0	2	1	1		39
Shamrock	3	1.5		1	4	3	2	5	1	2	0	4	0	6	3		34
Somerset	6	3		2	11	2	9	3	10	10	9	10	15	11	12		110
St. Claude	15	7.5		7	7	10	8	13	19	15	11	16	17	24	17		179
Ste. Marie	2	1		5	3	6	6	3	4	3	8	-	-	-	-		40
Thomas Greenway	-	-		-	-	-	-	29	14	23	21	-	-	-	-		87
Treheme Collegiate	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	17	17	16		68
Treheme Elem.	9	4.5		3	3	5	6	7	11	11	11	-	-	-	-		66
Valley-view	5	2.5		2	1	1	0	0	2	1	0	4	0	2	4		22
Westmount	8	4		7	12	9	11	5	7	5	12	15	14	16	17		138
West Valley	2	1		2	3	3	3	4	6	3	2	6	3	0	7		44
Whistling Wind	5	2.5		3	2	4	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0		18
Willow Creek	3	1.5		0	4	0	5	1	3	2	2	6	4	4	4		38
Windy Bay	1	0.5		0	2	0	1	0	1	0	3	1	4	2	0		15
<b>Totals</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>183</b>		<b>1980</b>

## Factors In Student Movement Decisions – Resource Capacity

In the final analysis, student movement decisions must consider the question of how to best use resources so as to produce the maximum result for students in as equitable manner as possible because educational resources seldom if ever match educational needs. That reality necessitates careful planning and a clear articulated Vision and Mission Statement, so as to ensure resources are spent efficiently and are directed to the areas of greatest need. The development of an effective planning process and the acceptance of significant decisions on where and how resources are directed, is directly dependent on the established practices and processes in place within the Division for consulting and communicating with the key stakeholders, parents, staff and community. Prairie Spirit has a well developed planning process and a history and tradition for consulting its stakeholders on significant decisions on resource allocation and distribution. Student movement change is probably the most significant resources decision a Division can make and therefore the process in place for planning and consultation, if continued, will serve to make decisions of this nature easier to effect. School closure decisions in the past ten years and the proactive position taken on Division amalgamation, serve as positive examples of what can be achieved with good planning and consultation.

The availability of future educational resources for Prairie Spirit, as with other Divisions, is dependent on continued support through provincial funding and the ability and capacity of local resident taxpayers to support their schools through the local levy. Outside sources of funding such as the foreign student initiative and revenue from students from outside jurisdictions who choose to attend Prairie Spirit schools are helpful, but cannot replace the significance of provincial grants and the local levy.

Provincial revenue is likely to continue in the same manner, as in the past, unless the recent election pledge to move to 80% funding by the end of this current government's mandate, is actually realized. This could improve the Division's financial situation but may also bring new program requirements and expenditure restrictions because of the old adage "*he who pays the piper calls the tune*". What is likely for Prairie Spirit, is that since provincial funding is ultimately based on student enrolment, not much additional support, other than the norm, can be expected. At minimum, the guarantees and compensations for enrolment decline, which are part of the provincial formula, may just offset annual fixed inflationary increases. It is unlikely provincial funding will reverse the current trend for reliance on the local levy to maintain quality programming.

Table #8 indicates that historically the annual proportion of provincial revenues to local special levy has been relatively consistent for Prairie Spirit and selected Divisions of the area. If this trend continues, as suggested previous, the current financial situation for Prairie Spirit will not improve and will likely worsen because of declining student counts and thus reduced efficiencies in most schools.

**TABLE #8**

<b>Provincial – Local Revenue 2003/2004 to 2007/2008 Projected Selected Surrounding Divisions</b>										
<b>Division</b>	<b>2003/2004</b>		<b>2004/2005</b>		<b>2005/2006</b>		<b>2006/2007</b>		<b>2007/2008</b>	
	<b>Local</b>	<b>Prov.</b>	<b>Local</b>	<b>Prov.</b>	<b>Local</b>	<b>Prov.</b>	<b>Local</b>	<b>Prov.</b>	<b>Local</b>	<b>Prov.</b>
<b>Prairie Spirit</b>	<b>35.1</b>	<b>62.2</b>	<b>38.2</b>	<b>60.8</b>	<b>32.0</b>	<b>65.3</b>	<b>35.6</b>	<b>63.3</b>	<b>33.1</b>	<b>65.4</b>
Portage	35.6	61.0	38.7	59.2	33.3	63.4	32.9	64.3	32.7	64.7
Prairie Rose	39.8	59.0	41.6	57.6	36.3	62.5	38.4	60.9	37.2	62.1
Western	34.2	61.6	35.6	60.7	26.6	70.1	32.3	64.4	30.1	67.3
Turtle Mtn.	39.2	59.6	41.8	58.1	32.8	64.8	35.4	63.0	34.6	64.0
South West	43.0	55.8	42.9	56.6	39.8	59.4	39.8	59.4	40.1	59.2
<b>Prov.Average</b>	<b>37.7</b>	<b>56.5</b>	<b>38.8</b>	<b>56.0</b>	<b>32.1</b>	<b>62.3</b>	<b>33.8</b>	<b>61.0</b>	<b>32.1</b>	<b>62.6</b>

Source: FRAME REPORTS. Manitoba Education Citizenship and Youth  
2003/2004, 2004/2005, 2005/2006 Final, and 2006/2007, 2007/2008 Interim Reports

Notes:

- 2006/2007 is not final and 2007/2008 is projected at this time. Variances to final reports are not usually significant.
- In all years cited, provincial revenue as a percentage of total revenue is higher for Prairie Spirit than the provincial average.
- There is a slight increase in the provincial contribution of about 3% for Prairie Spirit in the last five years and a slight decrease in the percentage for the local levy increases. However, this may be offset for many local areas and taxpayers by re-assessment increases.
- The totals do not add up to 100% because there is additional revenue sources from other Divisions, fees, foreign students, etc.

The other main source of revenue for the Division is the local special levy. Thanks to positive school efforts and successes in meeting student needs, there has been acceptance by the local property taxpayer base of the need for levy increases, to date. Prairie Spirit has historically maintained a special levy rate that is similar or slightly below the provincial average for special levy rates. However, it is higher than those of its neighbouring Divisions. (See Table #9). Politically, the relation to surrounding Divisions can sometimes be a significant deterrent to extending special levy rates. In terms of capacity for revenue generation through the special levy, the Division is in a relatively favorable position in relation to most rural Divisions as a mill will raise 467,000 in 2007.

**TABLE #9**

<b>Special Levy Rates 2003 to 2007 Selected Surrounding Divisions</b>				
<b>Division</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>
<b>Prairie Spirit</b>	<b>21.9</b>	<b>23.3</b>	<b>24.7</b>	<b>21.3</b>
Portage	18.5	19.7	20.9	19.7
Prairie Rose	Diff rate	Diff rate	Diff rate	19.1
Western	21.4	21.4	21.6	20.4
Turtle Mountain	20.7	20.7	21.3	18.8
Southwest	20.4	20.6	21.7	20.0
<b>Provincial Average</b>	<b>23.3</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>25.5</b>	<b>22.8</b>

Source: FRAME REPORTS. Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2003 to 2007.

Division revenues explain only one side of the resources utilization issue. Any discussion of available resources and prioritization of their usage must also assess the expenditure side of the Division. Due to the existence of small schools, and particularly a large number of small high schools that are more costly to maintain, Prairie Spirit experiences higher per student costs than other comparable Divisions, Table#10, and within that a lower Educator/Student ratio, Table #11. The latter exists despite a consistent Divisional pupil/teacher formula for schools and a stipulated student minimum number for the offering of high school options. These formulas are necessary to ensure an equitable distribution of this most important instructional resource on a per pupil basis throughout the Division, but it does produce difficulty for small schools and will increasingly challenge those schools that suffer future declines.

**TABLE #10**

<b>Cost Per Student – Operating Fund 2002/2003 to 2007/2008 Projected Selected Surrounding Divisions</b>												
<b>Division</b>	<b>2002/2003</b>		<b>2003/2004</b>		<b>2004/2005</b>		<b>2005/2006</b>		<b>2006/2007</b>		<b>2007/2008</b>	
	<b>Total Exp</b>	<b>Per Pupil</b>	<b>Total Exp</b>	<b>Per Pupil</b>	<b>Total Exp</b>	<b>Per Pupil</b>	<b>Total Exp</b>	<b>Per Pupil</b>	<b>Total Exp</b>	<b>Per Pupil</b>	<b>Total Exp</b>	<b>Per Pupil</b>
<b>Prairie Spirit</b>	<b>21.7</b>	<b>8690</b>	<b>22.0</b>	<b>8709</b>	<b>22.3</b>	<b>9350</b>	<b>22.6</b>	<b>9419</b>	<b>22.4</b>	<b>9841</b>	<b>22.5</b>	<b>10,070</b>
Portage	24.2	7185	24.8	7289	25.1	7376	27.0	7952	27.1	8092	28.2	8609
Prairie Rose	17.9	7616	18.3	7875	19.0	8436	19.2	8713	20.5	9405	20.8	9696
Western	9.6	6599	10.0	6840	10.3	6794	10.8	7232	11.2	7721	11.8	7922
Turtle Mountain	8.9	7310	9.1	7498	9.3	8070	9.4	8374	9.7	8858	10.0	9387
South West	14.6	8088	15.3	8385	15.6	8438	16.0	9234	16.0	9587	16.7	10,442
<b>Provincial Average</b>	<b>13.32</b>	<b>7432</b>	<b>13.84</b>	<b>7764</b>	<b>14.33</b>	<b>8102</b>	<b>15.00</b>	<b>8622</b>	<b>15.59</b>	<b>8898</b>	<b>16.23</b>	<b>9401</b>

Source: FRAME REPORTS; Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth. 2002/2003 to 2007/2008.

Notes:

- Total expenditures in millions of dollars.

- Prairie Spirit cost per student exceeds provincial average and is higher than its neighbouring Divisions.
- Prairie Spirit projected cost per student for 2007/2008 is the 6<sup>th</sup> highest in the province, with Frontier and DSFM the highest.
- Generally, Divisions with large areas and more small schools have higher costs per student.

**TABLE #11**

<b>Educator-Pupil Ratio 2002/2003 to 2007/2008 Projected Selected Surrounding Divisions</b>						
<b>Division</b>	<b>2002/2003</b>	<b>2003/2004</b>	<b>2004/2005</b>	<b>2005/2006</b>	<b>2006/2007</b>	<b>2007/2008</b>
<b>Prairie Spirit</b>	<b>13.8</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>13.8</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>13.5</b>
Portage	15.1	14.7	14.5	14.6	14.2	14.2
Prairie Rose	15.1	14.1	14.0	14.0	14.0	13.8
Western	16.5	16.3	17.2	14.0	15.8	15.0
Turtle Mountain	13.6	13.7	13.	12.7	13.3	12.9
South West	-	14.2	14.6	15.6	13.5	13.5
<b>Provincial Average</b>	<b>14.9</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>14.4</b>	<b>14.3</b>	<b>14.3</b>	<b>14.0</b>

Source: FRAME REPORTS: Manitoba Education Citizenship and Youth, 2002/2003 to 2007/2008.

Notes:

- Prairie Spirit is below the provincial Educator/Pupil Ratio average and is below all but one of its neighbours. Combined grades and even the IITV medium etc. cannot totally replace the need for a lower student to teacher utilization so as to maintain a basic program component.

In the final analysis, there are few options available to exacting future efficiencies within the current infrastructure if revenues do not match annual fixed cost increases. Declining student enrolment will increase costs per student particularly in smaller schools because programming costs associated with ensuring a desired level of programming, especially at the high school level, remain constant despite fewer students.

### **CHALLENGES – RESOURCE CAPACITY**

**Will the public continue to support possible local levy increases necessary to ensure a required programming base?**

**Will future provincial revenues adjust for enrolment decline and even if increased, will they offset fixed annual cost increases?**

**Will the Division be able to adequately fund priority areas such as Special Education, a functional IITV system, a continued computer technology infrastructure for all schools and continued staff development to support effective teaching of curriculum, especially in the area of literacy and numeracy which are current priorities? With current small schools settings, this will necessitate continuation of lower educator-pupil ratios and higher than average costs per student.**

**Can the Division continue its proactivity in terms of future adaptations to meet changing needs? The initiatives in the area of vocational technical program opportunity such as the CTS program and use of the community for Apprenticeship and career work exposures require resources to implement.**

## Factors In Student Movement Decisions – Traditions, Policies, and Politics

### History and Traditions

Student movement decisions are usually associated with some controversy, especially when the current school situation is considered to be acceptable by the majority of its stakeholders. Introducing change to a comfortable status quo requires careful planning and a heightened sensitivity to concerns. Ultimately, it comes down to a feeling of trust that despite disagreement, it is felt the Board has the best interest of students in mind.

That feeling of trust develops over time and fortunately the Division has a history of being proactive in its deliberations and consultative in its decision-making practices. There is also a tradition within the Division, acknowledged by staff and community, that the Division is proactive to the need to consider solutions that even include significant infrastructure changes.

This tradition for consultation and careful consideration of student movement possibilities is evident in closures of the past years with schools in Snowflake, Ecole Richard, LaRivierre and Mariapolis as well as in the accommodations made to increase efficiencies in the Pilot Mound Crystal City area. In all those situations, the outcome was positive. The recent decision around the future closure of Cypress River in June 2009 was accomplished because of good planning including a process for consultation, and as important because of the tradition that produces a sense of trust that the Board's decision is in the best interest of students.

In addition, there is longstanding tradition for working collaboratively to solve issues regarding programming and administrative efficiencies. In the 70s, a joint Divisions' effort in the O.E.C. area produced a common program in the Pilot Mound Crystal City area and this served as preparation for other working relationships such as a sharing of Industrial Arts and Home Economics facilities between the former Tiger Hills and Pembina Valley School Divisions and the Pilot Mound Crystal City arrangement. Later a Tri Division arrangement developed in the area of staff development and IITV delivery. This history of working together made the difficult choice of Divisional amalgamation easier to manage.

### Policies

There are policies and a planning process in place within the Division for the orderly consideration of possible student movement decisions, including the possibility of school closure. This policy framework includes a moral compass within which to consider and test such issues. Policy AC and ACA, the Mission and Belief statements speak to placing students welfare as a first priority in consideration of any major issue.

Direction as to what to consider and how to proceed are provided through policies that speak to resources consideration and planning such as Policy DA on fiscal goals, DCD on budget planning and DM on school properties disposal. Directions for accommodating students in the most appropriate setting, policies JA, JAA and JB, provide further direction for determining and justifying decisions. Finally, there is guidance for student attendance decisions in a school, Policy JA, and School of Choice guidelines, Policy JCE-1

In terms of policy consideration of student movement, the Division has in place Policy FBC – School Closure/Transfer of Grade(s) Review. This policy provides guidance as to when to consider this issue and then outlines a process for conducting a review according to stipulated timelines. The policy recognizes provincial guidelines for consideration of school closure. These policies provide guidance for the design of a process, and in conjunction with policies in Section K on Consulting Community and Sharing Information, provide a basis for ensuring that direction and the discussion process will be transparent to staff and community.

Student movement decisions are always situational and in that regard local political realities must be accounted for as the process unfolds. It is important to identify these political realities and to accept they are a natural outcome of examining and testing ideas where significant changes are a likely outcome. Politics are not, by definition necessarily negative, but rather represent a contest of competing ideas leading to a decision. Viewed in that context, political realities need to be carefully considered with sensitive listening and reflection and then managed within an orderly process for considering issues. Ultimately, the political arena should provide a valuable test for the validity of a decision.

#### **CHALLENGES – TRADITIONS, HISTORY CONTEXT, POLICIES AND POLITICS**

**To ensure that the key stakeholders are aware of the moral and ethical basis for the Division’s student movement considerations. The reasons for entertaining significant changes of this nature must ultimately be justifiable on the basis of what is in the best interests of the students of the Division.**

**Ensuring that the process of review is open and sensitive to community feelings with opportunity for review and discussion in a manner similar to past traditions for making these decisions in Prairie Spirit.**

**Ensuring policies are consistent with the directions to be undertaken and the process to be followed. It would be prudent to review current applicable policies before undertaking any initiative regarding student movement. In particular, the school student numbers outlined in Policy FBC should be reviewed and compared to possible situations for review. They may require adjustment, if any immediate action is contemplated.**

*“...any school for review when the elementary enrolment falls below an average of 5 per grade/level, and is projected to continue to decline, or when the high school (S1 to S4) enrolment falls below an average of 9 per grade/level and is projected to continue to decline.” – Policy FBC*

## Factors In Student Movement Decisions – Distance and Transportation

Any consideration of student movement to another school must recognize the limitation imposed by time to travel to the new school. The transportation system must be able to transport students to the new facility within a time frame that recognizes time on bus and a reasonable earliest pick up time. These two factors dictate the design of rural bus routes. Prairie Spirit has provided design parameters, Policy EOC -R (4), “... *students should ride the bus to the first school, if possible, for no more than an hour...*”

Route changes need also to consider safety factors such as significant increases in numbers of highway and railway crossings and the use of unfamiliar bus roads. Extra costs or expected savings attributed to the route change(s) should be prepared in the analysis of the student movement decision as well as why the route changes are necessary.

A complicating factor to acceptance of transportation changes which accompany any student movement decision, is the pick up time for young, as opposed to older children who are more able to accommodate an addition to their time on bus. If the movement decision is primarily directed to elementary level students, transportation changes are likely to be more sensitive with the community.

In schools considered for closure where students from the school already travel for high school to the school identified to receive the students, transportation changes are usually less dramatic. Changes may in fact produce efficiencies in time and resources because the feeder school element is removed and changes are usually made to existing routes, which are already established in the area for the transport of high school students. This would be the scenario for the Holland area and the Pilot Mound Crystal City areas.

The politics around bus routes and bus route changes can be significant because of the perception of stability for the route. Rural areas are perceived to be stable in terms of people movement, and therefore it is perceived that bus routes will always remain constant. The recent catchment area review and corresponding reconfiguration of some routes to ensure new efficiencies establishes a new reality that bus routes can and will change and that it is acceptable to do so. Experience with that reality should help to alleviate initial community hesitation over the need to change bus routes because of a student movement decision.

Geography will sometimes outweigh program and resource saving advantages and thus rule out a scenario for possible student movement. As an example, there is a proposal suggested for possible high school configuration into one large central high school for the Division. This would have definite advantages in terms of program, including the development of a technical vocational program component. It would be likely more efficient in terms of building utilization, maintenance expenditures, and staffing allocation, over the current configuration of nine high schools. However, even if PSFB would agree to construct a new building, it would likely not be a viable alternative because the geography of the Division rules out the likelihood that students from the edges of the Division, in the Glenboro, St Claude and Nellie McClung areas would embrace the new school. It would be more advantageous for them to look elsewhere to schools in neighbouring Divisions as they would likely be closer for some and more familiar in terms of trading patterns and even family connections.

There is an ultimate distance limit for student movement changes and this is often situational to an area. For example in the Swan Valley area, some students travel up to 50 to 70 kilometers

per day one way to high school. This has been the established pattern for thirty years as there are no other closer alternatives. No such pattern exists in Prairie Spirit and thus there would likely be little tolerance for creating lengthy daily travel distance situations in order that student movement changes can be implemented

Table #12 provides a summary of distances between schools within the Division. It should be noted that this represents the shortest highway distance and does not factor in the time needed and distances required to pick up students on any route.

**TABLE #12**

<b>Division Travel Distances</b>		
<b>Location</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Distance in kms (one way)</b>
Baldur	Cartwright	41
	Glenboro	27 (now traveled for IA)
	Pilot Mound	48
Cartwright	Baldur	41
	Glenboro	58
	Pilot Mound	46
Pilot Mound	Baldur	48
	Cartwright	46
	Crystal City	8
	Westmount	30
	Manitou	40
	Somerset	39
Somerset	Pilot Mound	39
	Manitou	28
	Westmount	15
	St. Claude	53
Westmount	Manitou	40
	Baldur	40
	Pilot Mound	30
	Somerset	15
	St. Claude	72
Treherne	Glenboro	46
	Holland	15
	Somerset	28
	St. Claude	27

**Considerations – Distance and Transportation**

Any student movement change requires initial consideration of existing policies regarding route design so as to ensure consistency with the past. The guidelines governing time on bus and earliest pickup time should be reviewed and reconfirmed prior to any announcement of student movement consideration.

Those situations where an area already has routes traveling to the target receiving school will be more acceptable of bus routes changes. Holland, Cypress River and the Pilot Mound-Crystal City areas already have routes going to other schools within their catchment areas.

Any student movement change possibility that minimizes adding distances to the new school will see less controversy due to transportation concerns. That would likely have been the case in the Pilot Mound-Crystal City arrangement and may be also be the case in any new arrangement considered for Somerset-Westmount as extra distances required do not seem to be too pronounced.

#### **CHALLENGES – DISTANCE AND TRANSPORTATION**

**Challenges for transportation and geography related factors in student movement considerations necessitate the need to carefully consider the transportation changes required and provide the following:**

- **A plan for reconfiguration of routes that can be made available during the consideration process**
- **Expected changes to time spent on the bus and pick-up time. The less the change the less likely resistance.**
- **Information which accounts for safety concerns due to highway and railway crossings and use of any bridges and roads, etc. which may be controversial**
- **Information on expected savings to be realized in transportation.**

**Can the Division allow a choice of school option, subject to route adjustments being possible, for parents affected by a student movement change? People will accept change to another school if they have some control over choosing where their children can go.**

## Factors In Student Movement Decisions – Building Conditions

The condition and/or need for building facilities changes, whether it be major addition, renovation or repair, can be a significant factor in any decision regarding student movement. The recent facilities report audit of the condition and suitability of current school buildings should be an important resource when considering future directions regarding student movement decisions. That report not only commented on the nature and condition of each school but also assessed issues such as adequate space and suitability for current programming. In addition, the report reviews current PSFB building requirements and what is considered appropriate in terms of program space. As such, it provides a useful guide for Divisional planning.

The writer had the opportunity to accompany the report author, A. Delaquis, on school visitations as possible and has had the opportunity to review a draft of his report. In addition, the excellent cooperation and input from the Maintenance Supervisor has provided important data on the current condition of and the future building needs.

Based on the report and Division maintenance planning information provided, the following conclusions can be made for the benefit of any discussion on the need for student movement decisions and possibilities.

1. All schools have adequate space for current programming, although there are minor deficiencies and alterations that could improve school situations. Schools such as Baldur and Crystal City Elementary need all available space and are creative in meeting new programming needs. (e.g, the need for Reading Recovery space). On the other hand, schools such as Glenboro, Treherne Elementary, Manitou Elementary and Pilot Mound have ample extra space.
2. All schools have ample grounds space and some have excess space.
3. All schools are well maintained
4. All schools have adequate gymnasium space, with the possible exception of Nellie McClung. All have well equipped computer labs and most have recently upgraded science lab areas, not always fully utilized.
5. Most schools are handicap accessible
6. In terms of future building resource needs, the Delaquis report outlines what is necessary in each school to address identified concerns. This provides a manageable blueprint for future maintenance planning.
7. In terms of what could be considered major capital issues for future repair, upgrade or renovation, the report identifies:
  - a) A floor shifting issue in Baldur elementary wing.
  - b) Need for a space audit and a plan for more effective usage of the Cartwright school building after the old wing is demolished.
  - c) Monitoring of roof and heating system at Glenboro.
  - d) An undersized gym at Holland, for Grade 7 and 8 programming.
  - e) Provision of a Home Economics facility from existing space at St. Claude.
  - f) Brick veneer wall upgrades, and roof and heating system concerns at Thomas Greenway.
  - g) Space audit plan for Westmount leading to adjustments in how space is now used.
  - h) Upgrade to the mechanical control management system that manages all schools.

In terms of ongoing maintenance savings, the following information was provided by Secretary Treasurer's office as the annual cost of operations ( 2006/07) for schools that may be at issue in any discussion on school closures.

**TABLE #13**

<b>Costs of Building Operation</b>				
<b>School</b>	<b>Yearly Cost</b>	<b>Provincial Grants</b>	<b>Custodial Costs (using 06/07 costs)</b>	<b>Total Yearly Building Cost</b>
Holland	27,250.43		29,404.16	56,655.31
Ste. Marie	64,429.92		13,476.24	77,906.16
Thomas Greenway	83,082.32		, 35,878.02	118,960.34
Crystal City	55,392.16		26,952.60	82,344.76

**CHALLENGES – BUILDING CONDITIONS**

**How to make the most efficient use of the excess space in some schools, notable Glenboro, Treherne Elementary, Pilot Mound, Thomas Greenway and Manitou Elementary?**

**How to meet the often-expressed need for an upgrade to the Division's mechanical control management system?**

## Factors In Student Movement Decisions – External

There are external influences that may impact both the need for, and the nature of, future decisions regarding student movement, including school closure. External influences may produce unexpected changes to student numbers in schools and also have the capacity to restrict a Division's options in considering solutions when changes are necessary.

### Student Possibilities From Outside the Division

A review of possibilities in terms of student number changes was undertaken with an emphasis on surrounding Divisions and/or jurisdictions with students that may or may not, positively or negatively, affect future student populations of the Division. The situations sited were explored with conclusions drawn as to impact on Prairie Spirit schools within the next five years.

1. The Swan Lake First Nation. The current arrangement of sending high schools students to Treherne and possibly Westmount is likely to continue for the next five years. The First Nation has an excellent elementary school but the size of the school is such that a high school could not easily be accommodated and neither is it in the current plans of either the First Nation Authority or the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. There is little growth to be expected in high school student numbers to Prairie Spirit schools beyond the present number of 20-25 students.
2. There is little school of choice movement to and from surrounding Divisions at this time and this is unlikely to change in the future. Some possibility was sited for growth from the larger Portage situation to choice of the smaller atmosphere at St Claude but this is not likely to have much impact. The situation at Cartwright, if closure of the high school occurred, may result in some students selecting Killarney as opposed to a Prairie Spirit school. .
3. Currently there are private school situations that impact schools within the Division. The choice of Gretna for a number of the Mennonite students from the Crystal City area is likely to continue, as well as the numbers to the private school in the Cartwright and Manitou areas.
4. The Franco-Manitobaine schools at Notre Dame and St. Claude within the Prairie Spirit School Division catchment area provide a program alternative for Francophone parents wishing this opportunity for their children. St. Claude and Somerset provide the availability of French English language programming for those parents who choose a French English program school situation within the Prairie Spirit School Division. It is likely that the present student distribution will remain in similar proportion to what it is today, as long as St. Claude and Somerset can continue to offer a viable French language instructional opportunity.
5. Prairie Spirit has pursued attracting foreign students to its schools with some success. This initiative should continue for the benefits it provides in terms of additional students and revenue and because of the value of expanding cultural awareness for Prairie Spirit students. However, it will not likely affect any decision regarding possible school closure and may require additional resources for English as a second language programming.

In summary, the inflow and outflow of students from areas, which could impact the Division, is such that it will likely maintain the status quo. There is unlikely to be an influx of students sufficient to reverse the student decline trend in schools within the next five years.

### **Future Programming Impacts**

Three program areas which could significantly influence both school infrastructures and future resource needs within the next five years are identified. The first, Special Education programming, will continue to grow but it is likely within the capacity of the Division to manage. There will however, be more pressure in smaller schools where specialized staff will be less available due to declining student numbers. Guidance personnel and Reading Recovery staff distributions are already in short supply and neither of these areas are likely to see decreased need in the next five years, despite shrinking student numbers.

The second area is the increased curriculum requirement for grade 11 and 12 Physical Education. The high schools of the Division are presently looking to meet this new requirement and have scenarios either now being implemented or being planned for next year. Each school has ample facility space for this programming and staffing will be assigned. The impact on the smaller high schools will likely be pressure produced by adding two extra courses which will compete with existing options, ensuring qualified staff, and finding community program possibilities.

The third area is the emerging importance of high school alternatives in the area of Technology Vocational programming. The Division has been proactive with its Apprenticeship facilitation and the Career Technology Studies program (CTS). These programs and the new Department Divisions partnership grant opportunity compensate for a lack of facilities and staffing. Continued emphasis on finding creative ways to provide vocational technical options for interested students requires a resource commitment. This program area needs to remain a priority for resource allocation. At the same time, attention needs to be directed to utilizing existing shops vocational facilities in schools where they exist, as they are now underutilized.

### **Future External Resources Changes**

The only external financial changes which could impact potential student movement decisions would be significant changes to provincial funding directions. The current level of support for public schools is not likely to significantly change, although the recent trend of increased provincial percentage contribution to total budget will likely continue. However, it is likely that this increased level of involvement will do little more than cover fixed cost annual Division budget increases, as is now the case. In those declining enrolment Divisions, such as Prairie Spirit, annual fixed cost increases do not adjust downward in proportion to reductions in student numbers. At the same time, student numbers still determine provincial funding. The election promise of 80% funding by the end of this current mandate might have an impact, if achievable, but it is uncertain as to how it would impact Divisions with student decline.

Possible changes to the position of Public School Finance Board (PSFB) on building renovations and/or new construction required for any student movement proposal, presents another external financial factor. PSFB is unlikely, because of a backlog of capital and maintenance demands across the province, to provide additional dollars for capital projects outside of that which is required for emergency repair and or maintenance. Accordingly, the

facilities issue consideration in any student movement decision within the next five years, would have little hope for any new construction assistance.

**CHALLENGES – EXTERNAL**

**How to maintain a necessary French English program opportunity for the Somerset-St. Claude-Westmount school areas so as to retain students wanting this program option?**

**How does the Division ensure that its Special Education programming remains current to expanding needs in this area?**

**How does the Division effectively meet the challenges of providing for the emerging need for more technology vocational opportunities in its programming?**

**How does the Division manage student movement options such that they do not require extensive capital expenditures as external monies are not likely to be available?**

## Recommendations

It is the opinion of the writer, following an analysis of the factors around student movement decisions, that Prairie Spirit should consider some change to their schools infrastructure within the next five years. Continued student enrolment decline will place significant pressure on resources and program delivery without some change to the configuration of schools. The alternatives will be either a significant increase to the local tax levy, unless Government increases its funding significantly, or forced expenditure reductions that will undermine the efforts of staff to provide continued quality programming.

The recommendations that follow are based on what the future schools' populations are projected to be at the time that decisions could be implemented. Table #14 shows the school populations in 2011/2012 in comparison to 2007/08 and 2003/04.

**TABLE #14**

<b>Enrolments by School 2003/2004 &amp; 2007/2008 Actual and 2011/2012 Projected Enrolments</b>				
<b>School</b>	<b>Actual Enrolments 2003/2004</b>	<b>Actual Enrolments 2007/2008</b>	<b>Projected Enrolments 2011/2012</b>	<b>+/-</b>
Baldur	152	144	110	-34
Cartwright	102 (not inc. Gr. 12)	99 +8	81 + 6	-18
Crystal City Elementary	95	107	100	-7
Cypress River	37	30	Nil	-
Glenboro	256	218	215	-3
Holland	67	56	50	-6
Manitou Elementary	171	166	101	-65
Nellie McClung	143	142	148	+6
Pilot Mound	134	110	89	-21
Somerset	128	151	110	-41
St. Claude	264	231	179	-52
Ste. Marie	43	36	40	+4
Thomas Greenway	125	88	87	-1
Treherne Collegiate	147	1122	68	-54
Treherne Elementary	122	88	66	-22
Westmount	194	169	138	-31
Hutterian Schools	368	366	398	+32
Ecole Richard	59	Closed		
Mariapolis	13	Closed		
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2620</b>	<b>2322</b>	<b>1980</b>	

Notes:

- Cypress River is projected to close June 2009. Numbers are included with Glenboro for 2011/2012.
- Generally those schools, Somerset and Manitou, with less drop in population since 2003/2004 are schools which have been the beneficiaries of past school closures.

It is tempting to opt for the path of least resistance by looking for continued reductions in expenditures. At some point, however, this becomes counterproductive as it begins to erode program capability and thus undermines the Mission and mandate of the Division to provide quality education. This system tinkering is usually not sustainable as an approach to budget management over the long term. If significant adjustments have to be made to ensure long term viability, sooner or later, there will need to be adjustments to the infrastructure within which programming is offered.

In addition, certain program areas should not be further compromised, and in fact, will need support enhancement in spite of student enrolment decline. The IITV system is necessary to maintain high school programming viability in some schools, and particularly for Hutterite schools. This area, plus the whole Technology infrastructure, will take on even more importance in the future and the Division's proactive response in resourcing these expensive areas must continue. The same can be said for the Special Education area and Staff Development components, as they are key to maintaining quality programming for all students. Continuous staff reduction with the expectation that the same programming and extra curriculum effort can be expected in schools with shrinking populations, will place increased and perhaps unreasonable expectations on staff. Finally, there are buildings that will require upgrade work and the Division may find that difficult even with PSFB contributions. As well, buildings that are underutilized will become more and more inefficient.

### RECOMMENDATION #1

**Determine a position on the need for review. If the decision is made to proceed:**

- 1. The Board of Trustees with Senior Administration consider the report and form a consensus on what the Board is comfortable in addressing with their stakeholders and communities, over the next two to three years**
- 2. Review current policies and procedures which pertain to student movement decisions so as to ensure that Board actions will be consistent with stated practices. (See section # 4)**
- 3. Review the Division's experience with this type of issue. The history of the last 15 years provides a positive framework as there exists a successful track record for making decisions which have been accepted by your public and which have proven to be correct over time.**
- 4. Develop a process for consultation and discussion with community and stakeholders over a timeline, which will observe provincial guidelines. The process should allow for open sharing of information, and for explanation and discussion of the Division's rationale, and for the opportunity to listen to other possibilities.**
- 5. Consider a timeline, which would consider 2008/09 as a year for initial discussion of alternatives and sharing of information with significant stakeholders. 2010/11 or 2011/12 would appear to be an appropriate possible target for implementing final decisions.**
- 6. Develop a communication plan for the relaying of information, inclusive of a statement of the Board's position and timeline for decision-making on those situations to be considered.**

**Situations for possible review within the next five years, Recommendations #2-#6.**

**RECOMMENDATION #2**

**A community consultation process which would see the eventual closure of Holland Elementary school, or at minimum, movement of grades 6-8 to Treherne Elementary.**

**Rationale**

1. The school has recently had to move to triple grades per class and this is challenging staff and programs. Grade 7 and 8 is increasingly difficult to program in this manner.
2. The building is now not fully utilized and this will be more pronounced in the future. There are savings to be realized in closing the school. At the same time Treherne Elementary is an excellent facility with ample space for extra students and thus will be more efficiently utilized.
3. Transportation already arranges for grades 9-12 to travel to Treherne, which is the likely destination for students. There should be little difficulty in arranging routes for K-12 student delivery to Treherne and in fact there may be some efficiencies in resources and possibly even time on bus savings for some high school students, as there may no longer need to be a relay or a wait time in Holland.
4. The combination of Holland K-8 with Treherne Elementary will result in a more functional elementary situation in place of two situations that will be faced with triple grading and further division of specialized staff time. It will make for much better utilization of staff time and perhaps even some staffing reduction although that would not be the prime objective in this situation. Table #15 projects enrolment and staffing at the new Treherne Elementary, 2011/12.

**TABLE #15**

<b>2011/2012 Projected Enrolments Combining Holland K-8 with Treherne Elementary</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Treherne Elementary</b>	<b>Holland K-8</b>	<b>Combined Treherne Elementary</b>	<b>Grades</b>
K	9	6	15	.5
1	3	6	9	1
2	3	6	9	
3	5	2	7	
4	6	7	13	1
5	7	7	14	1
6	11	7	18	1
7	11	5	16	1
8	11	4	15	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>126</b>	
<b>07/08 Staffing</b>	<b>5.84</b>	<b>3.5</b>		<b>9+</b>

Notes:

- Staffing of 9: 1 teacher per grade, except ½ and ¾, .63 Admin. .78 Resource and Guidance,; and 1+ for prep relief and other.

## RECOMMENDATION #3

**A review of the current Pilot Mound – Crystal City arrangement with a view to elimination of one building such that Pilot Mound becomes a Grades 6-12 building, and Crystal City Elementary houses Grades K-5 as in the past. It would mean the closure of Thomas Greenway School. In order to retain the historic significance of the name, Crystal City Elementary could be renamed Thomas Greenway Early Years.**

**TABLE #16**

<b>Pilot Mound, Thomas Greenway, Crystal City Enrolments</b>				
<b>School</b>	<b>2003/2004 Actual</b>	<b>2007/2008 Actual</b>	<b>2011/2012 Projected</b>	<b>2011/2012 Combined Projections</b>
Crystal City	95	107	100	129*
Pilot Mound	134	110	89	147))
Thomas Greenway	125	88	87	-
<b>Totals</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>276</b>

Notes:

- \*Includes grade 5
- \*\*Includes grades 6-12.

### **Rationale**

1. Projected numbers for the three schools in 2011/2012 will see Pilot Mound with 89 students. There is currently a whole wing of the building that could easily house Grades 6-8 from Thomas Greenway. (58 students by 2011/2012)
2. Thomas Greenway is projected to have only 87 students by 2011/12. The building is in need of capital expenditures as there are concerns for the roof and the heating system. Significant cost savings could be achieved with closure.
3. Crystal City Elementary is a good facility and has just recently had a Gym expansion such that it is very functional. Grade 5 used to be housed in the building and the addition of grade 5, using 2011/12 projections, would see the school have 129 students. Currently the school has 107 students. If the numbers are seen as excessive for the facility, Grade 5 could easily be accommodated at Pilot Mound. The retaining of grade 5 at Crystal City considers the tradition of sharing the student body between the two communities.
4. Transportation would not require extensive change as the area already has routes going to both communities and distances are not a factor (8 Kms).
5. The loss of the separate middle grades situation at Greenway is partially compensated for at Pilot Mound because there could be a separate middle grades wing.
6. Depending on the condition of the Thomas Greenway building, the Elementary could close instead. Greenway has more room but is the older school and in need of more maintenance upgrade.

## RECOMMENDATION #4

A review be undertaken which would suggest the combining of Somerset and Westmount schools into a Grades K-6 at Westmount and a Grades 7-12 facility at Somerset. Somerset has good vocational facilities that are under-utilized at present and has large recently renovated science lab and library areas and is thus more suited to a high school setting than Westmount. There is a precedent for this type of re-arrangement in the successful Pilot Mound – Crystal City situation.

**TABLE #17**

<b>Westmount &amp; Somerset Enrolments</b>							
<b>To Reflect Projected 2011/2012 Enrolments as K-6 and 7-12</b>							
Grade	2003/2004		2007/2008		2011/2012		2011/2012 Shared
	Westmount	Somerset	Westmount	Somerset	Westmount	Somerset	
K	7		11	9	8	6	14
1	12		5	3	7	2	9
2	16		7	10	12	11	23
3	12		5	10	9	2	11
4	13		12	9	11	9	20
5	14	19	14	10	5	3	8
6	11	10	11	14	7	10	17
<b>Westmount K-6</b>							<b>102</b>
7	11	18	14	11	5	10	15
8	11	20	12	13	12	9	21
9	24	15	22	18	15	10	25
10	22	14	19	9	14	15	29
11	21	16	18	16	16	11	27
12	15	16	19	19	17	12	29
<b>Somerset 7-12</b>							<b>146</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>248</b>

### **Rationale**

1. Both schools are struggling to maintain viable high school course patterns even with present numbers. The combined projections provide better opportunities for students.
2. Both schools could be faced with triple grades in the elementary by 2011/2012. Combined numbers in one building would mean no more combined grades than at present, after taking into account the need for French language elementary programming. Without this combined number, it will be increasingly difficult for the elementary program at Somerset to maintain its present French language programming as it will have fewer students than it has now when it is already challenged to maintain its English French programming.

3. Specialized staff would have more time allocated to one elementary unit as opposed to being divided between two schools (Reading Recovery, Guidance, etc.)
4. The current shop facilities and science lab area at Somerset would be better utilized and would serve more students than at present.
5. Larger high school numbers will make extra curricular opportunities more available.
6. Transportation routes will need to be redesigned but distance between the schools is not great and this should be possible within much the same costs as present.
7. Hopefully, the Westmount band program can be developed for the combined high school.
8. There should be staff savings in the combination of the two schools.

## RECOMMENDATION #5

**Given the small numbers of grades 7 and 8 students and the difficulties presented in creating multi grade class situations that can meet programming needs at this level, it would be appropriate to begin a process of discussion which would see movement of Ste. Marie grade 7 and 8 to their school of choice, likely Westmount, but perhaps Treherne or Pilot Mound.**

### Rationale

1. Ste Marie School presents a unique situation for Trustees wanting to review their entire operation so as to ensure maximum efficiency in program delivery in an equitable manner. With current enrolment of 35 and a projection of 40 by 2011/12 it will be the smallest non-Hutterite school in the Division. Even with the projected increase, it could still be a candidate for small school review according to current policy FBC. The presence of multi grade class situations is a reality and will be in the future as is sparse support from Special Education specialists because, by formula, no more time is warranted.
2. On the other hand, St Marie is a very functional building and has the facility requirements to deliver necessary programming at an elementary level. Limits in terms of opportunity for older grade 7 and 8 students in extra curricular activities, due to small student numbers, is compensated by the family atmosphere within the school. Finally, the strength of commitment by the community, which led to arrangements to build a new school, provides argument in favor of continuing the school.
3. The current lease arrangement, which also involved P.S.F.B., is subject to review in 2010 and will be complete with repayment of the loan for construction. It is not clear what can be negotiated during the renewal negotiations of the lease in 2010.

**It is suggested that during the next lease negotiation period the Division is justified in ensuring the costs per student for building operation, including lease payments, is similar to the operation of other elementary schools within the Division. There may be a need to allow for some deviation because of the uniqueness of the situation but there should be some measure of balance. The Division's responsibility is to ensure as equitable distribution of resources per student as is possible.**

## RECOMMENDATION #6

A review of the viability of a continued high school presence at Cartwright, and perhaps Baldur, should be undertaken as part of the Division review process. These two high school settings are functional now because of the community arrangement regarding supporting grade 12 at Cartwright, and the IITV delivery from Baldur to the Hutterite schools, which also maintains Baldur's program offering sufficient to what should be the minimum expectation of a high school program. Both high schools are dependent on a good IITV delivery system now and in the future.

**TABLE #18**

<b>Current and Projected School Populations for Baldur and Cartwright</b>						
<b>Grade</b>	<b><u>2007/2008</u></b>		<b><u>2011/2012</u></b>		<b><u>Difference</u></b>	
	<b>Baldur</b>	<b>Cartwright</b>	<b>Baldur</b>	<b>Cartwright</b>	<b>Baldur</b>	<b>Cartwright</b>
K	10	7	5	3	-5	-4
1	11	4	3	3	-8	-1
2	6	5	5	6	-1	+1
3	9	4	5	2	-4	-2
4	11	13	11	8	0	-5
5	9	11	11	5	+2	-6
6	13	6	6	5	-7	-1
7	8	12	11	13	+3	+1
8	14	6	11	13	-3	+7
<b>Elementary Totals</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>-23</b>	<b>-10</b>
9	18	9	9	12	-9	+3
10	10	12	13	7	+3	-5
11	15	10	8	12	-7	+2
12	10	(8)	14	(6)	+4	0 (-2)
<b>High School Totals</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>31 (+8)</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>31 + 6</b>	<b>-9</b>	<b>0 (-2)</b>

### **Rationale**

#### **Baldur**

1. Within the next five years, the high school enrolment at Baldur does not change significantly. The continued IITV matching with Hutterite high school students creates viable classroom situations and this can maintain the high school subject to community satisfaction and continued staff involvement with IITV and web based courses. It is the period after 2011/2012 that is a concern as the elementary numbers project significant decline. Those numbers, once in high school, will question the continued viability of the high school at Baldur.

The building is fully utilized and functional except for the floor situation in the elementary wing. This will likely be addressed. There is excellent community involvement within the

school. The sharing of library services between school and community is a good example of school and community working together.

The current travel to Glenboro for Industrial Arts and Home Economics is an excellent initiative program opportunity.

### Cartwright

1. Within the next five years, the high school enrolment at Cartwright is reduced by 10 which does not seem significant; it does mean a high student body of 38 (12s included) which is just above the current policy FBC of 9 per grade for review. When the review is undertaken is a matter of timing; it will likely occur when one considers future elementary projections. The original agreement regarding Grade 12 should be maintained in the interim.

There is an issue regarding the suitability of the building and that may require significant resources to address. It may make an earlier review appropriate. The oldest wing must be removed and the existing structure is in need of some revision. (See Delaquis report)

In any discussion with the community on the continued viability of the high schools in each community, parents should be given the opportunity, as per policy, to exercise school of choice if it is their feeling that they want more opportunities for their student(s). Subject to transportation feasibility, students could attend Glenboro, Pilot Mound, and Killarney or Baldur in the case of Cartwright. The Division would be advised to try and honor these requests.

## Concluding Statement

This report has attempted to provide a basis for discussion on the long-term consideration of the most effective configuration of schools within the Prairie Spirit School Division. In doing so an analysis of past and present practices and programming and of future possibilities was undertaken for their impact on future planning.

It is clear that the past practices of Prairie Spirit and its predecessors included a willingness to confront the future and make changes deemed necessary to ensure quality programming. Examples from the past include adjustment of administrative governing structure, building cooperative alliances for more effective programming, and undertaking student movement where it was deemed necessary. This established tradition for being prepared to looking forward and to act, when deemed necessary, is noteworthy because it provides a basis for acceptance of the need to act and above all trust that the Division responds with the best intentions of students in mind even with decisions which may be initially, controversial. The tradition is evident today in the opinions of staff and the commitment of Prairie Spirit schools to maximize possibilities for students despite the challenge of declining student numbers and the pressure that produces in generating necessary resources.

The Division strives for responsive programming in its schools and is united in reaching for its Mission to provide quality education for students to prepare for life in the global village. The commitment of staff to respond to changing dynamics is obvious and these efforts are guided by adherence to the belief statements that govern the actions of the Division.

The report consideration of past and present involved an analysis of the factors seen as most important for any decisions on student movement. The analysis projects future trends, in terms of student numbers, available and required resources, and programming needs and from that provides a blueprint for discussion along with a process for possible action. In the end, what is considered possible action requires the thoughtful deliberation of Trustees with Senior Administration because it is the primary responsibility of that group to consider what needs to happen for tomorrow in order that quality programming for students continues, unless they are convinced that the future will look no different than what it is today. The need to deliberate speaks to the Vision for Prairie Spirit *“to adapt to the changing local and global economy”*.

## References

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Prairie Spirit School Division Policy Manual. Prairie Spirit School Division