

LIVINGSTONE RANGE SCHOOL DIVISION

JUNE 17, 2025

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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A. INTRODUCTION

Livingstone School in Lundbreck is the Livingstone Range Board of Trustees' next priority capital project. On March 14, 2025, the Alberta Government approved Pre-Planning funding of up to \$50,000 to support the early identification of future capital needs. This preparatory work includes community and stakeholder engagements to seek feedback that will support future planning, and the determination of what options are available.

Parents and community members from Lundbreck, Cowley, and the Livingstone School attendance boundaries were invited to provide feedback and input about the future of Livingstone School. As part of the Pre-Planning Funding phase, Livingstone Range School Division sought community perspectives and input about future programming, potential partnerships, and what alternatives may be available in terms of modernization or building a replacement school. In addition, representatives of both the Elementary and Secondary Students were invited to engage in processes to have a voice in this early stage of planning. The information gathered from the daytime student sessions and the evening community session will be used in a future value scoping of the Pre-Planning Funding phase.

This initial consultation process, on Tuesday, June 17, 2025, was facilitated by two external consultants, Cal Hauserman and David George. Three consultation sessions took place at Livingstone School: one in the morning for Secondary School Students at Livingstone School, an afternoon session for Elementary Students, and an evening session for parents and community members. The inclusion of student voices was seen as an essential element, and both groups of students, and the parent/adult/community group noted this as being positive and inclusive. The students expressed appreciation for the opportunity to share their ideas, and the adults were impressed with the inclusion of the students.

The discussion questions for each session were provided to LRSD Administration prior to the consultation day. The questions for each of the sessions were similar with only minor alterations to ensure they were age appropriate. Each session began with a brief warm-up activity, followed by an explanation of the “Sand Box” or parameters of the session, with the addition of a “Parking Lot” wherein participants could add other ideas or comments they wanted recorded which may not be within the pre-established parameters. The stated parameters were to focus on preferences and points of emphasis for consideration in school building design, plus future

programming at the school and its impact on building design. Participants were invited to state their ideas in the positive and were asked to avoid “cold water comments.”

Every idea offered in each of the sessions was recorded. In the two student sessions, one of the facilitators served as recorder, while the other facilitated the discussion and sharing of ideas, paraphrasing each idea to check for understanding, and to ensure that the intention of the comment was accurately recorded. In the community evening session, a recorder was provided for each of seven tables, and everyone was invited to consider and respond to each of the questions. All responses for each question were recorded on posters at each table. Throughout each session, all participants were able to contribute thoughts, suggestions and comments outside of the questions which were recorded on the “Parking Lot” posters to ensure those ideas would be included in the report. It is interesting to note that the “Parking Lot” posters in both of the student sessions did not include ideas extraneous to the focus questions, but just additional ideas for some of the questions, so those items were added to the question data where they fit best. The “Parking Lot” from the adult session included ideas that the participants requested be recorded and included in the report which they recognized were outside the parameters of the consultation session but felt important to be communicated in the report to the Board.

The sessions were concluded with an opportunity for each participant in every group to provide feedback on the process, facilitation and outcomes as either “Gots” or “Wants.” A “Got” is an idea received, something learned, or a positive response to the work, process and facilitation. A “Want” might be a suggestion, critique, or comment about the process, request for information, or a thought about the ideas shared.

Following the consultation day, the facilitators first collated every idea offered in each respective session around the focus questions for that session. Then the data was re-organized under common headings to simplify analysis of the input from each of the three groups. Rather than recording single ideas several times, repeated items were given an asterisk (*) for each person or group which shared the same idea at a different table. This simplified the task of identifying points of emphasis and commonality within the participant feedback. Finally, an analysis of the data by session was completed, and then overall analysis and synthesis was done in order to assist the Board of Trustees and others who read the report to identify themes, common ideas and points of emphasis.

This report will include summaries from each of the three sessions, noting themes and points of emphasis, and additional observations from the consultants’ perspective.

B. ELEMENTARY STUDENT CONSULTATION

The Elementary School consultation included 10 Grade 4-6 students. The facilitators engaged the students in brainstorming, discussion and sharing activities around four main questions:

1. What might be some of the qualities of a great school? What makes you happy at school? What do you enjoy doing at school?
2. What happened at your best day at school? What parts of the building do you use the most? What is important to you at school?
3. What are the activities you enjoy most in the classroom? What are the special events/activities you enjoy at school? What are some things outside of the classroom you like to do at school?
4. What are some possible ways the school and the community might work together in partnership for the benefit of the students and the community? What might be some uses of the school by community members?

Each idea offered by each of the Elementary School Students was recorded on posters under the respective questions. It was clear by the enthusiasm and engagement of these students that they came to the session prepared with diverse ideas and suggestions that were shared with confidence.

During this session, the students demonstrated that they were eager to get to the main topics on their minds of what should be included a new or remodelled school rather than on the first set of questions. For example, their concept of the qualities of a great school focussed on the student preferences for things to include in the building. These priorities include bigger gymnasium, air conditioning, larger library, cafeteria, and better playground with more outdoor sports facilities/courts/fields.

There were no Elementary Parking Lot items added during the session.

In terms of feedback on the process through “Gots and Wants,” the Elementary Students provided numerous positive comments about the consultation process and time spent. These students felt that they accomplished a lot during their session. The “Wants” list simply re-emphasized the priority wish for a new school, namely, “We want a bigger gym.”

These students, without exception, demonstrated maturity, confidence, insight, leadership, and well-considered responses.

C. HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT CONSULTATION

The High School Consultation included 10 secondary students from Grade 7-11. The questions designed for them were similar to the Elementary questions with a few more specifics. These questions included:

1. What might be some of the qualities of a great school?
2. What competencies and skills are needed for the future? What do you need to know and be able to do? What might be important skills and knowledge you can acquire at school in addition to academics?
3. What programs (Academic, Co-curricular and Extracurricular) might be important to include in the design of a modernized or new school?
4. What are some possible ways the school and the community might work together in partnership for the benefit of students and the community? What might be some uses of the school by community members?

While the High School input reflects a higher level of maturity and experience than those of the Elementary Students, many of the details and points of emphasis are similar, starting with the desire for a more adequate gymnasium facility. The life experiences of high school students were shown in many responses, such as enhancing and preserving the positive school environment and culture, practical life skills, learning supports for students, teachers who understand student needs, leadership opportunities, the importance of relationships at school and strong school spirit as qualities of a great school.

The High School Students' list of academic, co-curricular and extra curricular programs important to include in school design were creative, and multi-dimensional and grew out of the school and community cultures specifying a desire for options and programs that support that culture and background and contribute to future student success. They are asking for options in career-based areas such as agriculture and the trades; outdoor programming, sports, performing and visual arts. These programs ranged from athletics and sports to agriculture, trades, outdoor learning, performing and visual arts and a variety of CTS offerings. These students' perceptions on school-community partnerships reflect a sound understanding of many opportunities within the Lunbreck community for the community to utilize the school facilities and for students to engage in various elements of the community outside of the school building.

The High School Students recognized the need for larger classrooms, air conditioning, and enhanced equipment for sports, technology and in classrooms. These students detailed specific and diverse priorities for specialized spaces in a new school including a larger library, shop areas, performing arts in drama and music, and computer lab. They also expressed a desire for a cafeteria, common areas for students to congregate and socialize, plus a better breakfast program.

With these older students, the Parking Lot had several items that included school parking and traffic, bussing, teacher qualities.

The Feedback through "Gots and Wants" resulted in 9 "Gots" that were positive and complimentary of the process, the ideas generated and the fact that the student voices were heard. In terms of "Wants," there were 3 responses, asking for the new school to be completed before "I am in Grade 10," and suggesting more discussion on the whole school.

D. COMMUNITY MEMBERS CONSULTATION

The Community Members' Consultation filled half of the room, and a few additional seats were added. There were over 50 people in the room, including the facilitators, LRSD Division and School Staff members, Trustees and community members. This seemed to be an optimal number to permit maximum engagement as there were about 6 people per table. The recorders (staff members) had been invited to participate by sharing additional information, ideas and suggestions, but their primary tasks were to encourage participation from the community members and ensure each idea offered was recorded for every question. Every table had the opportunity to discuss and have input into each question, which gave voice to everyone, and resulted in a tremendous amount of data to be organized and analyzed. There were 45 posters of data from this group. In organizing and displaying the data, efforts have been made to limit repeated responses by placing asterisks (*) to demonstrate the number of tables/groups that had the same idea.

The questions posed for community members were essentially the same as the High School questions, with very minor amendments for clarity. These questions are:

1. What might be some of the qualities of a great school?
2. What competencies and skills are needed for students' future success? What do they need to know and be able to do? What might be important skills and knowledge students may acquire at school in addition to academics?
3. What programs (Academic, Co-curricular and Extracurricular) might be important to include in the design of a new or modernized school?
4. What are some possible partnerships that might be created to support the development of a new or remodelled school? What might be some uses of a new or remodelled school by community members?
5. What might be some Pros, Cons and Considerations in remodelling?
6. What might be some Pros, Cons and Considerations in building a new school?

As would be expected, due to the maturity, life experience and sheer numbers of participants in this session, there were far more responses and more detail in the responses than the either of the student groups. Having said that, many of the same priorities emerged from all of the groups' response summaries.

Qualities of a Great School **(Question #1)** details have been organized under the following headings: Facility, Location, School Environment and Culture, Student Learning and Staff, Programs, Parents and Community. Reading the entire list of qualities reflects the depth and breadth of the perspectives and ideas shared throughout the evening. Analysis of the data suggests the following priorities from the Livingstone School Community: large gym with bleachers; cafeteria and student gathering spaces; creating a positive school culture; making the school the "hub" of the community; enhancing student learning; providing diverse programming; and engaging parents and community.

Competencies and Skills needed for the Future (**Question #2**) has numerous highly emphasized categories that were identified by several table groups including life skills; character development based on principles; leadership; basic education; post-secondary preparation; and options in the trades. In addition to these repeated responses the groups identified a wide array of competencies students can acquire at school to enhance their future success and happiness. The community participants provided exhaustive lists of practical life skills and principles as key competencies that build or reflect character.

Programs (Academic, Co-curricular and Extra-curricular) to Include in the Design of a Modernized or New School (**Question #3**) saw the table groups highlight or have similar emphasis on the following programming areas:

- Sports, Athletics, Physical activity – Gymnasium size, equipment, programs, seating
- Academics – library, science labs
- Arts – band, drama, art – spaces for practice, performance, and seating – theatre; stage
- CTS – wide variety of options in Trades, Technology – space, equipment, staffing
- Leadership Programs and opportunities
- Agriculture, outdoor, place-based learning, etc.

The details under each of these, and other headings for Question #3 provide insights into the priorities of the participants, which may be reflective of community goals and paradigms as well. A theme growing out of these priority areas was adequate space for high quality programming prioritizing a larger gymnasium with adequate seating and other sports-related ideas; library; cafeteria; larger classrooms and spaces for students to gather.

Question #4 focussed the discussion on possible partnerships between the school and the community. Responses here focussed on a reciprocal relationship whereby the community members access school facilities and come into the school to share expertise, while students were also seen to be going out into the community for a wide range of purposes and activities. There was a sense of urgency in creating these partnerships initially to support the substantial fund-raising that will likely be required to achieve the goals for a new or modernized school facility. The details of both of aspects of School-Community Partnerships show great breadth of opportunities to maintain, create, and sustain this set of relationships for the mutual benefit of the individuals, families, and organizations. The conversations and the recorded results indicate that such partnerships are viewed as vital in the community of Lundbreck.

Question #5 invited participants to identify the Pros, Cons and Considerations involved in remodelling the current school building. The Cons (negatives) of the remodelling option outnumbered the Pros significantly with the most common concern stemming from the problem related to decanting. The adult participants expressed concern that the current building could not house the students while being under remodelling construction and there seem to be no options

for students to relocate. The inadequacies of the current building were identified as stemming initially from the small size of the facility that does not meet the needs of students, staff and community and there are limited options for making the building larger on the current site.

Question #6 asked participants to detail Pros, Cons and Considerations for building a new school. Here the Pros significantly outnumbered the Cons. Reviewing this data suggests that the preferred alternative for this community is to build a new school rather than remodel the current building. The most obvious consideration and Con is to identify an appropriate location for a building of the size that is hoped for. The suggested options for locating a new school included the East Field of the current building, M.D. land adjacent to Patton Park and the Old Hotel. This is a key decision for the Board of Trustees in consultation with the Lundbreck Community, M.D. and hamlet.

It is important for the Board of Trustees to review the “Parking Lot Items” from the Community Consultation. Several individuals who placed items on the Parking Lot chart, specifically requested that, while their ideas were not within the parameters of this consultation’s questions, they were important to be considered.

The “Gots and Wants” feedback on the process had numerous feedback ideas. Several were positive expressions about the opportunity to be heard and to generate ideas with others of the community. It was also appreciated to receive accurate, current information about the realities and challenges inherent in such an ambitious project related to a new school. Several “wants” included a request for several effective ways to ensure that the Community of Lundbreck, and the Livingstone School Community are provided with consistent, transparent, updates and information throughout each of the stages of this project. Communication is essential.

E. CONCLUSION

The consultation process was well-received by each of the three groups of participants as expressed by gratitude for the opportunity to have a voice in this process providing input to the LRSD Board of Trustees and Leadership Team as they move forward in next steps in the process and decisions regarding a new or remodelled school. The sheer volume of data that has been created through the three consultation meetings on June 17th is almost overwhelming, but provides meaningful insights into the perspectives, paradigms and priorities of the participants, who, one would hope and assume, represent their peers in the school system and community.

In each contact with School Division leaders, the Livingstone School Principal and secretary prior to the Consultation Day, the facilitators were told to expect to hear the first priority expressed by participants would be a bigger gymnasium. That was indeed the case in every session. Clearly this sports-minded school community requires a much better gymnasium facility to serve the needs of such a strong emphasis and tradition in athletics.

While the amount of data is substantial, it is important that the Trustees read through it carefully over time, searching for themes, common ideas, and priorities as they work to make next level decisions in this process. Data-based decisions are the most defensible. The Board is to be commended for seeking such extensive and innovative input, giving voice to elementary and secondary students, parents and members of the community.