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Public feedback shapes vision for Community Learning Campus

Public input is shaping the vision of the Community Learning Campus (CLC). Beginning earlier this month, stakeholders from various municipal and community groups, as well as members of the general public, have actively participated in opportunities to contribute to the CLC vision and plan.

“We are very pleased with the number of participants involved in this process as well as the quality of the comments and insight provided to us,” said Rob Mackenzie, Olds College Vice-President of Student and Support Services. “These comments have enabled us to move from a vision into something more concrete. We can now see how programs might be offered and how the facilities might accommodate them.”

The CLC is currently in the proposal stage. The vision includes moving high school students from Olds High School to a new core school located on the Olds College campus. Beyond the facilities, the vision includes an emphasis on programming and a seamless transition for high school students into the workplace, an apprenticeship, college or university. Once the provincial government approves the project, it will be unique in Canada.

A number of events have focused on gathering input, including a public meeting on January 6th which was attended by approximately 150 people. Also, throughout January there have been visioning sessions and group meetings focused on both programming and facility needs. Individuals have been participating from Alberta Child and Family Services, the University of Alberta, Olds Agricultural Society, the Olds Chamber of Commerce, Chinook’s Edge School Division No.73, Olds High School students, Mountain View County, Olds College Students’ Association, faculty and staff from Olds College and Olds High School, Olds High School Parents Council, and the Town of Olds.

“This is a very intensive visioning process, one in which you become immediately immersed and enthused,” said Linda Yargeau, Manager, Central Alberta Child and Family Services. “Each individual is bringing different skills and priorities to the table, resulting in extremely dynamic input. We are covering all aspects of a learner, from their personal and wellness needs to their learning needs. This process will go far in creating a solid foundation in the overall project plans.



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“In terms of the Community Learning Campus as a whole, I can tell you this project fits perfectly with the current vision of Children’s Services to provide permanency and developmental opportunities for youth, and to create successful transitions into adulthood and careers. Those are the same priorities shared by the CLC vision. Children’s Services is very much a part of a child’s life and we want to be a strong partner with other organizations that prioritize children. That makes the CLC project very exciting for us.”

Dr. George Copa, a consultant to the CLC project who has studied high school and college facilities throughout North America, has helped to facilitate a number of the sessions. Dr. Copa said what makes the CLC project exciting is not only the vision for how programs will be offered to learners, but also in the partnerships that are developing within the community to make it a reality.

“There is a real commitment here to bring the high school together with the college and that makes this project unique,” said Copa. “Adding the community dimension is really the remarkable piece. The focus on community development is striking, not only for the local community but also for its regional and provincial impact. The CLC is a model for things that could happen in Alberta and worldwide.”

CLC WEBSITE LAUNCHED TODAY

The CLC website was launched today. Members of the public can visit the site at www.communitylearningcampus.ca, to learn background information about the project and to find contact information. The website also provides users a chance to ask questions. It is anticipated design plans will be posted as they become available.

Future public sessions in the coming weeks include school council meetings at Olds High School, invited workshops (for various stakeholder groups), and a meeting for the general public on February 22, 2005.

“We would encourage everyone to attend the February 22nd meeting,” said Dot Negropontes, Assistant Superintendent, Chinook’s Edge School Division No.73. “We hope to present some information about the design of the facility, as well as how programming and the facility would work together. We can’t thank the public and stakeholder groups enough for the valuable input they’ve provided. We are excited about how the vision is taking shape, and what it will mean for all learners.”

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