



St. Mark Junior High School will remain open

At a public Board meeting this afternoon, Trustees voted to keep St. Mark Junior High School (11625 – 135 Street) open.

The school has seen a declining enrolment since the 2004/05 school year. In 2004/05 the enrolment was 222 students and as of September 30th, 2011, there were only 111 students attending the school, 77 in the regular program and 34 special needs students in a special education program. A Science and Technology Academy was introduced in the 2003/04 school year and a Youth Apprenticeship Strategies program in 2008 but enrolment continued to decrease.

“The Board struggled with this decision but has decided that the school will remain open in the hopes that this might lead to additional families moving into the community, and ultimately an increase in enrolment,” said Board Chair Debbie Engel. “We heard from parents and students that keeping the school open will be the best for this community in the long run, and the Board agrees,” Engel added.

An enrolment projection for the 2012/13 school year indicates a slight increase to 89 students and deficit funding will be required. In the 2010/11 school year, the District contributed an additional \$100,000 for programming in order to keep the school operating and in 2011/12 the school is expected to operate with a \$290,000 deficit. In addition, over \$1.1 million will be needed to meet life cycle replacement needs of the school building. These include a replacement to heating, ventilation and control systems as well as a major electrical upgrade.

“The District will continue to profile St. Mark in the hope of attracting more students to the school,” said Superintendent Joan Carr.

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