



Engaging the Community - Altario Discussion Results June 11, 2008 Meeting

If student enrolment continues to decline and funding is continuously reduced and the school Board has to make a decision about the future of Altario School, what is your preferred option for educating your children?

Group 1

- Video Conferencing is not effective for all students/aide be supplied
 - Efficiency assessment of head office / # of staff admin.
 - Is it a revenue issue or a spending issue
 - Cost cuts should start at head office level first, not start at school level
 - This school is the hub of 3 communities
 - Analysis should be completed to monitor academic effectiveness of VC and results supplied to schools
 - Why are buses going to Hanna for servicing
 - Need to ensure that best staff is utilized when delivering VC
 - Delete career counselor and add another teacher if cuts needed
 - Community group petition to government for funding
 - What is cost comparison between teacher vs. VC technology
 - Moving junior/senior high school is not an option.
-

Group 2

- Junior/Senior high combine is not ideal
 - Combine elementary is ok up to 3 grades
 - Kindergarten being separate (private)
 - Longer school day for 4 days/week
 - V/C classes clarified help i.e. Aide
 - Mix of teacher and VC courses
 - In Altario closing the high school would be detrimental to the KAC communities
 - Teacherages in Altario to have priority for staff
 - Small schools provide a supportive basis for furthering student education
 - Children from Monitor and Bodo coming to Altario on a 4 day school week
 - Funds to entice teachers to stay i.e. payoff student loans, isolation pay, signing bonus, comfortable housing
-

Group 3

- Keep school bus ride times within reason
 - Have a basis education that fits the students needs
 - VC would be needed to keep students at the local school
 - A look at trying to get program funding instead of per pupil funding
 - Use of new technology of the 21st Century
 - Expanding of the boundaries
-

Group 4

1. It's a funding issue
 - Why does our tax money not stay in our own area?
 - Can some funding formulas be changed?
 - We need a say in our own funding
 - We need to be in control of our own destiny
 - Small schools seem to sacrifice for the bigger schools
 - Put pressure on the right people on the provincial government, things might change.
 2. VC
 - Wouldn't function well at the elementary level
 - If they expect kids to VC, why don't school board members use VC
 - How can there be a rule not allowing trustees to vote if they're not physically there?
 3. Central Office
 - Every year one of the teachers quits and takes a job in central office
 - How could this be changed?
 - Pressure comes from Alberta Education to create these new positions in Central Office
 4. Busing
 - Difficult on younger students; longer bus rides are not a viable solution
 5. It's just because Alberta is so rich, the separate school system continues. It should be just one school system
-

Group 5

- Adamant to not close the school. Bus routes are too long to Consort, New Brigden and Oyen
- Push to bring back the infrastructure money (this includes the industrial tax \$) and have a plausible plan. Funding on a region basis, rather than per capital.

Options:

- VC with a T. A. @ the high school level – there needs to be a way to assess progress in a timely and regular fashion
 - Look at school boundaries in order to enlarge our drawing area
 - Niche school. Make us the place to go for multi-media or Fine Arts
 - Needs to become a community project in terms of jobs, housing, etc.
-

Group 6

- Children are already bussed long distance to get here
- Consider a 4 day school week – extend school days (hours/day)
- Our limitations are school sports due to class size – extra curricular activities are also compromised.
- Triple grading is completely acceptable. Video conference classes increase
- What happens to children with learning disabilities when in larger classes or in video conference classes?
- Education is our Priority over school sports – why can't Altario kids play school sports at Consort
- Re-routing our Focus - bringing kids to Altario with specialized programs as mentioned
- We have a tough geographical area – give us the basics
- Our preference: keep our school open with all grades
- Streamline central services in head office in Hanna to reduce costs
- Are we utilizing these individuals to their fullest?
- Look at ways to cut costs within our school to provide the maximum education for our students
- Look at the cost of efficiency of heating/ventilating/lighting
- There is a concern here that this is not operated within the school, its operated externally which is not effective for the school environment