

Sir John A. Macdonald School Name Engagement & Communication Plan



Calgary Board
of Education

dialogue)))

Date: May 24, 2024

1. CONTEXT

The CBE Board of Trustees passed a motion on April 26, 2022 to form a name review committee for Sir John A. Macdonald School. The name of this school will be reviewed by the name review committee to support the Board in making an informed decision on whether or not to change the name. The committee is comprised of seven individuals including trustees, CBE staff, the school council chair and members of the community. The work of this committee is underway.

The committee's work includes:

- reviewing and considering historical research and analysis related to the school name;
- engaging with affected communities;
- following guiding principles when conducting review and making recommendation(s); and
- providing recommendation(s) to the Board.

This plan identifies the committee's approach to engaging people and groups that are affected by this decision. This decision is being considered at this time because of concerns that have been raised about the appropriateness of the name in promoting an inclusive learning environment. At the same time, others suggest there may be other ways to address concerns without changing the name of the school. This engagement process will provide an opportunity for those who would be affected by a decision to keep or change the name to express their views. Those views will then be considered, along with the following, in making a decision:

- The [CBE values](#)
- The CBE's support in implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action
- The Board of Trustees' priorities for student success: achievement, equity and well-being

This engagement process will be conducted in alignment with [GC-5E – Name Review Committee Terms of Reference](#) and the [CBE Dialogue Framework](#) for community engagement.

2. PURPOSE: WHAT IS TO BE DECIDED?

By January 2025, the CBE Name Review Committee for Sir John A. Macdonald School will submit a recommendation to the Board of Trustees to keep or change the name of Sir John A. Macdonald School. This recommendation will be made considering input provided by CBE students, staff, families and other members of the Calgary community.

3. DECISION MAKER

The Name Review Committee for Sir John A. Macdonald School will decide what is recommended to the Board of Trustees.

4. ENGAGEMENT PLANNING TEAM

The planning team will be responsible to develop and execute this engagement and communication plan, and it includes the following members:

- The Name Review Committee for Sir John A. Macdonald School (seven members including trustees, CBE staff, the school council chair and members of the community)
- Chief Communications Officer
- Manager, Community Engagement

The CBE Indigenous Education team will also play an important role in supporting the work of the engagement planning team.

5. IN SCOPE OF ENGAGEMENT

Participants can influence the following factors through this engagement process:

- Affect/impact of school name on:
 - The quality of education at Sir John A. Macdonald School
 - The opportunity for students, staff and families of Sir John A. Macdonald School to experience a safe, welcoming, caring and inclusive learning environment
 - The experience of people, groups and communities affected by actions taken by Sir John A. Macdonald, including Chinese and Indigenous peoples
- Alignment of school name with CBE values:
 - Students come first
 - Learning is our central purpose
 - Public education serves the common good
- Alignment of school name with Board priorities for student success:
 - Equity
 - Achievement
 - Well-being

6. OUT OF SCOPE/GIVENS

Participants are not able to influence the following through this engagement process:

- Other school naming recommendations, questions or concerns.
- Options for school names that might be considered should a decision later be made by the Board of Trustees to change the name.
- School curriculum, which is determined by the Government of Alberta.
- Cost implications of potentially re-naming the school.
- Community designations/attendance boundaries for Sir John A. Macdonald School.
- Programming offered at Sir John A. Macdonald School.
- Historical facts and interpretations related to the life of Sir John A. Macdonald.
- The school will make decisions in accordance with provincial government legislation, CBE Board policies and administrative regulations.

7. AFFECTED GROUPS

The following groups will have an opportunity to share their perspectives through this engagement process, as have been identified as affected by the decision:

- Students of Sir John A. Macdonald School and its feeder schools
- Staff of Sir John A. Macdonald School and its feeder schools
- Families of students who attend Sir John A. Macdonald School and its feeder schools
- Indigenous peoples within Calgary
- Members of the Calgary Chinese community

There will also be opportunities for residents of Calgary to share their perspectives on this decision.

8. ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

- Share information about this engagement initiative through multiple CBE communication channels (school websites for SJAM and feeder schools, social media, email messages etc.) to encourage active participation.
- Consider perspectives shared by representatives of affected groups in identifying appropriate approaches and tactics within the engagement and communication plan. It's important to do this in the early stages of plan development to ensure the plan is inclusive and reflects the ways in which communities can most effectively be engaged.
- Engagement tactics may vary for each group affected by this decision, based on the needs and preferences of those groups.
- There will be a combination of online and in-person engagement opportunities provided.

9. ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES

This engagement seeks to achieve the following goals:

- Build awareness and understanding for values-based dialogue that focusses on the impact of school name on inclusive learning environments and
- Facilitate inclusive dialogue among affected groups to gather feedback that will be considered, along with other factors, in decision-making.

This enables the CBE to meet several objectives, which will result in outputs (tangible deliverables) and outcomes (changes in understanding, perspective, relationships, level of trust, etc.). Both the outputs and outcomes will support the CBE Board of Trustees in its decision-making.

Communication Objective #1: To *inform and communicate* with affected groups about opportunities for them to share their perspectives on keeping or changing the name of Sir John A. Macdonald School.

Outcome: Affected groups understand the rationale behind considering a possible change to the school name.

Outcome: Affected groups can have their questions answered related to the renaming process.

Outcome: Participants understand how to provide input on the decision, as well as the scope of their influence.

Outputs: Communication and messaging provided at engagement sessions and on the CBE website, Sir John A. Macdonald School website, social media, direct emails and other communications.

Engagement Objective #1: To *gather input* on keeping or changing the name of Sir John A. Macdonald School.

Outcome: Participants say they have been listened to and engaged meaningfully in the engagement process.

Outcome: The Name Review Committee has an understanding of the impacts of keeping or changing the school name.

Outcome: Input from affected groups is considered in the decision to keep or change the school name.

Outputs: Records of input and feedback gathered through engagement activities.

Communication Objective #2: To *inform and communicate* with affected groups about how their participation influenced the decision/recommendation to the Board of Trustees.

Outcome: Increased support of the decision based on the engagement process.

Outcome: Members in the affected groups can see their input has influenced the decision.

Outputs: Communication summarizing input and how it influenced decision-making.

10. ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNICATION TIMELINE

DRAFT Timeframe	Key Actions
September to October 2023	Interviews to inform development of the engagement and communication plan, with: students, staff and parents at Sir John A. Macdonald School, members of the CBE Elder Advisory Council, members of the CBE Indigenous Education team, members of the Calgary Chinese community.
December 2023	Request made to Alberta universities for historical timelines.
March - April 2024	Historical timelines submitted to name review committee.
Late August – Early September 2024	Announce plans for engagement publicly, share ways for people to participate in fall 2024. Acknowledge John G. Diefenbaker school-led engagement process happening at same time.
October 2024	Active engagement: provide opportunities for input. Students, staff and members of the Calgary community will share their input through online surveys. There will be additional opportunities and communications to families of students at Sir John A. Macdonald School and its feeder schools as well as members of Calgary Indigenous and Chinese communities. More information will be shared about additional opportunities in September 2024.
January 2025	Engagement results posted on CBE website, next steps communicated.
January 2025	Engagement results and recommendation to keep or change the school name submitted to the Board of Trustees.

11. MEASUREMENT & EVALUATION

We will determine the success of this engagement initiative by the feedback provided from participants, including session evaluations.