

# Boundary Review

Process, Feedback, and Boundary Changes



Lethbridge  
SCHOOL DIVISION



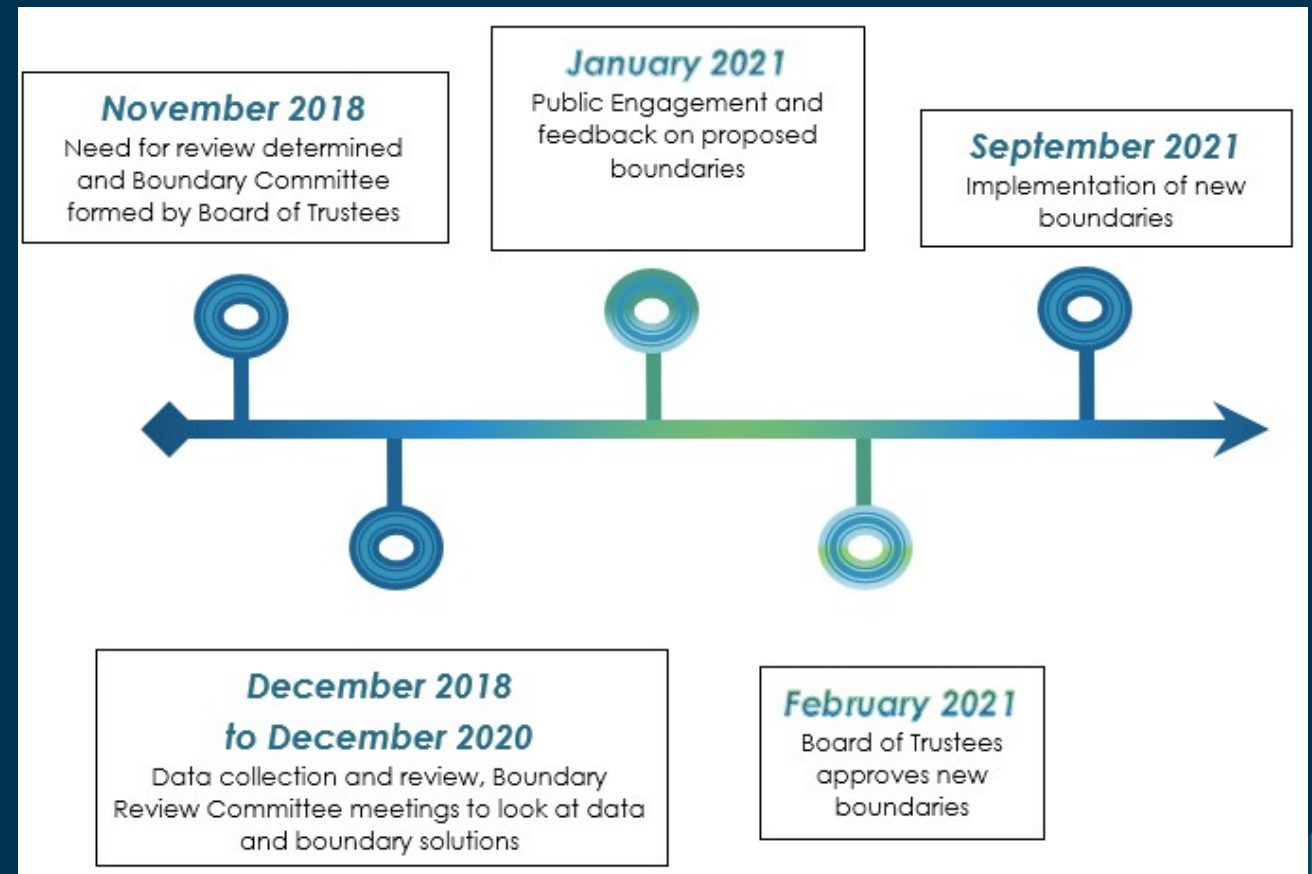
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# Boundary Review Process

Review, Feedback. Decision

# Boundary Review Process

- Committees **reviewing and analyzing information** since December 2018
- **Suggested Solutions** presented January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021
- **Feedback** from community received January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021
- Board met to **review and consider** all feedback received February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021
- Final proposed boundary changes presented February 23<sup>rd</sup> to Board for **approval**.
- New boundaries will be **effective for 2021-2022 school year**



# Feedback Received

+ **2000** views of boundary review presentation

+ **600** comments on the Feedback Web Page

Personal letters and a Change.org Petition received



# Decision Making

- Trustees and senior administration **reviewed and considered** all the feedback received.
- Feedback was considered for **common themes** and what could be done to address some of the concerns.
- The following slides discuss the common themes of concerns expressed and **what could be changed** to address the concerns.





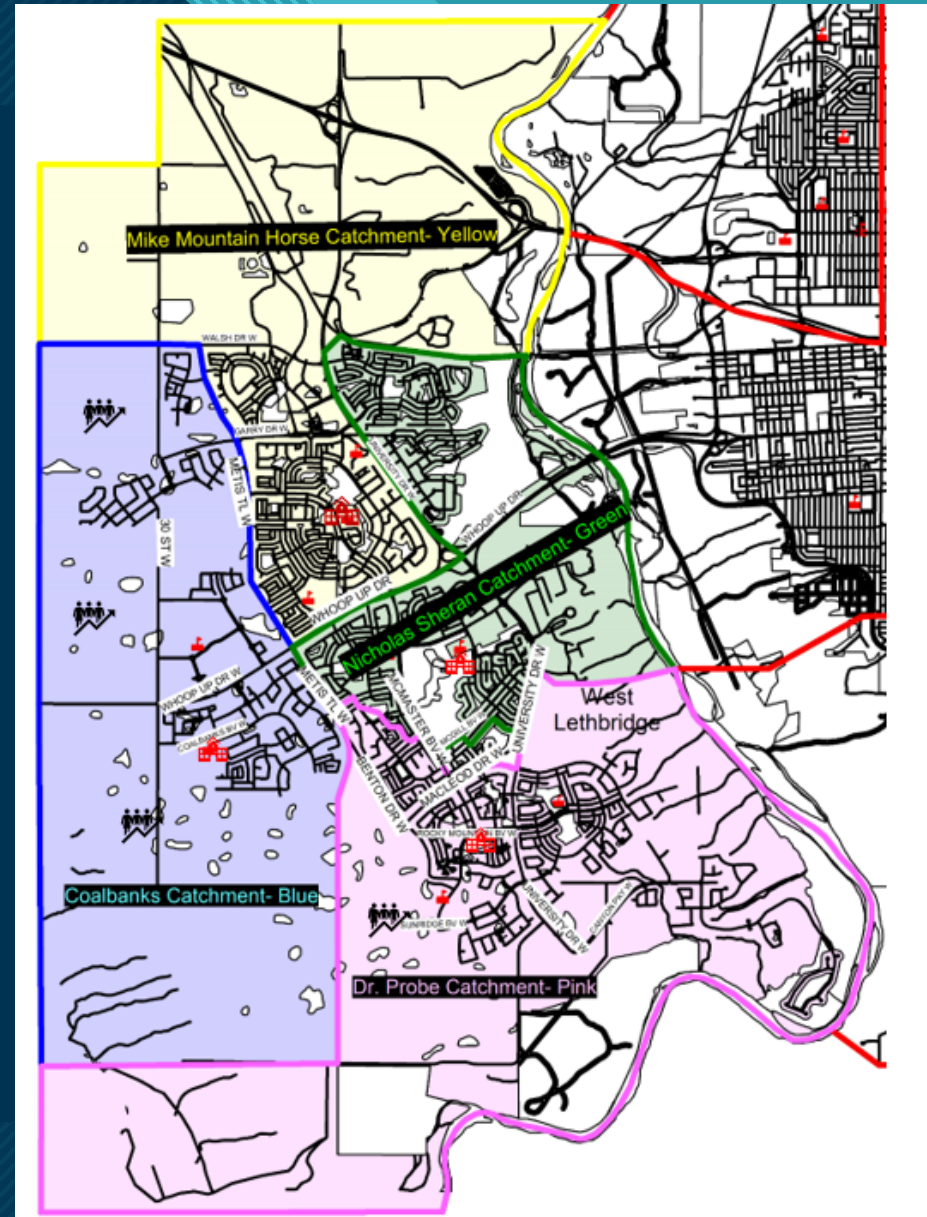
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# School Boundaries

Why change, Proposed changes: What we heard, What we can do

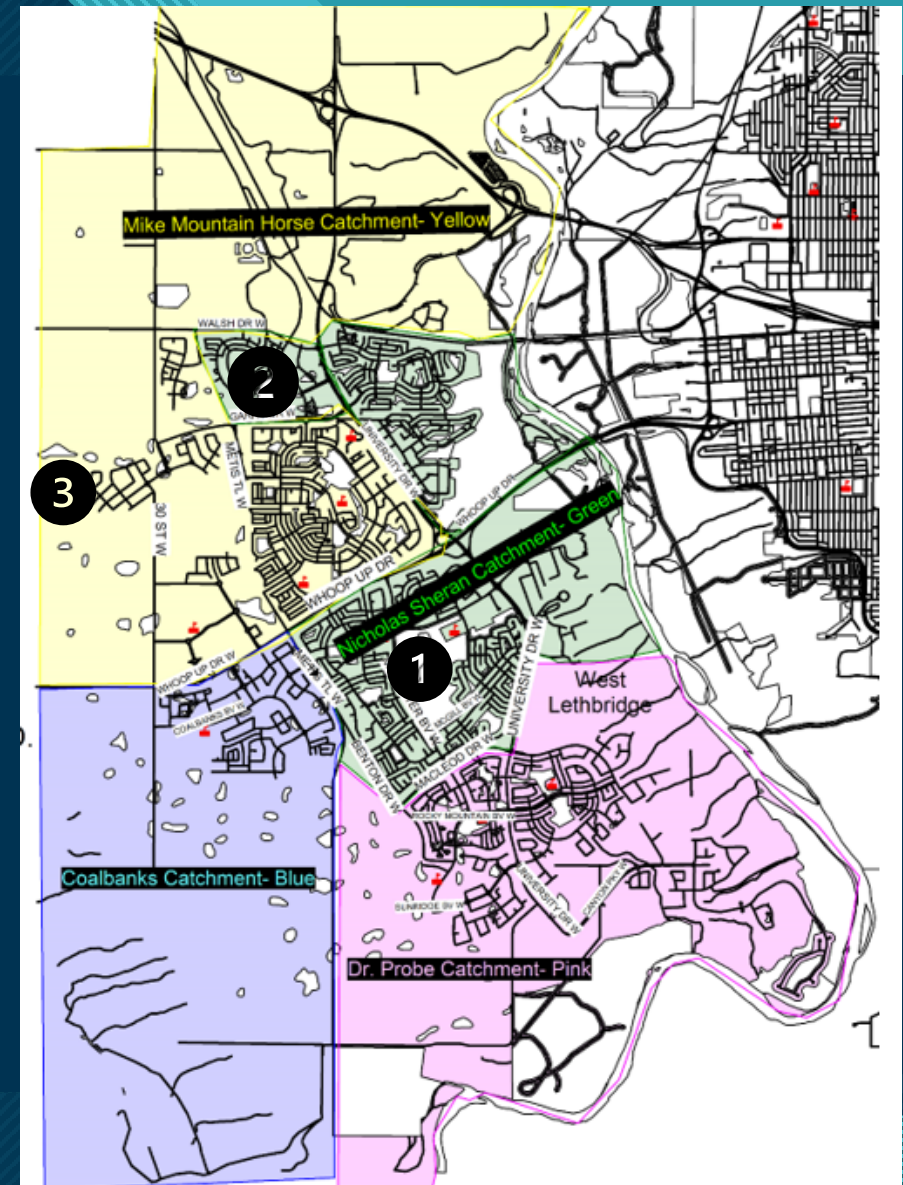
# West Lethbridge Elementary - Why Change

- West Lethbridge **highest rate of growth +10%** in last five years.
- West Lethbridge has **4 out of 6 areas** in Lethbridge of **planned subdivision growth**. Currently there is 1 elementary school in the north end and 3 in south end of west Lethbridge.
- Elementary Schools are at or over capacity and cannot handle more growth. Schools are **80% to 98% Capacity** with the added modular classroom. Discounting the additional modulars, the **core capacity is 175% to 202%** putting stress on core services in the school.
- The **Division's #1 Capital priority is a new elementary school in Garry Station**. However, even if it is announced in the near future, it is **at least 4 years** from opening.
- With current capacity concerns and anticipated growth, **something needs to be done now** to open space in our West Lethbridge Elementary schools.



# West Lethbridge Elementary - Proposed Changes: What We Heard

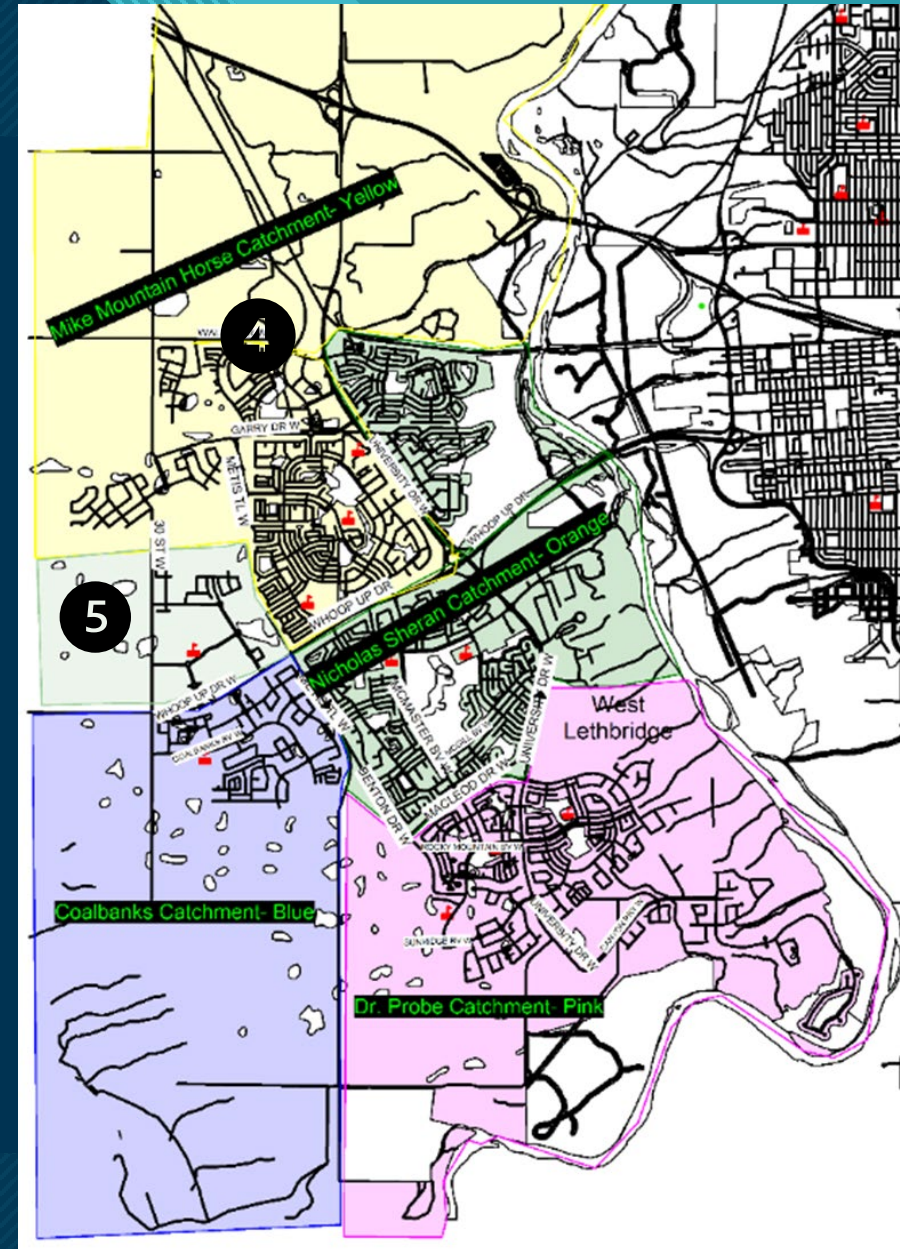
1. Opposition to moving **French Immersion Program** out of École Nicholas Sheran to École Agnes Davidson in the south:
  - as just moved a few years ago,
  - unfair to west Lethbridge families
  - concern over long bus ride
  - mid day pick up/drop off for kindergarten students
2. Movement of **Highlands area** to Nicholas Sheran due to close walking distance to Mike Mountain Horse Neighborhood school.
3. Movement from **Coalbanks Elementary boundary** to Mike Mountain Horse school boundary
4. Moving some students from **Probe Boundary** to Nicholas Sheran.
5. Change will be difficult for students.
6. Some general support overall for the boundary changes as understand the capacity and growth challenges in west Lethbridge.





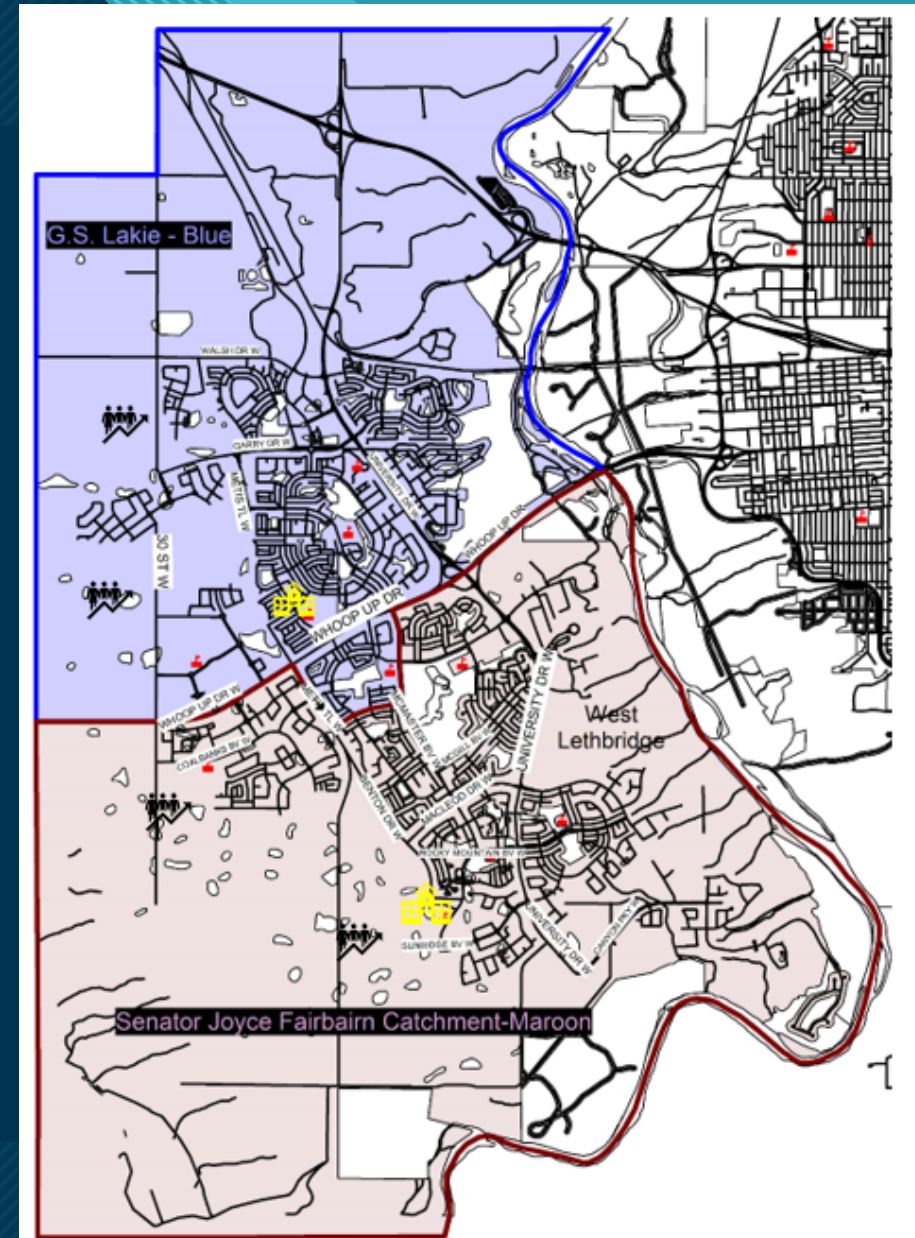
# West Lethbridge Elementary - What We Can Do

1. Not moving students from west Lethbridge is not a reasonable option due to capacity and growth challenges. If a program, such as French Immersion, is not moved, a community of students from an area in west Lethbridge would need to be moved to the south side of the city. This is a difficult challenge to address.
2. Nicholas Sheran currently has 2/3 of French Immersion students being bussed to the school. To help address the concern of bus time to École Agnes Davidson routes will be planned to shorten the # of stops and route length per bus.
3. Full day kindergarten will be explored for École Agnes Davidson to address mid day pick up concerns for families.
4. Highlands area has been moved back to MMH instead of Nicholas Sheran.
5. The Crossings/Piers area will be bussed to Nicholas Sheran instead of Mike Mountain Horse because they were being bussed to Mike Mountain Horse (not within walking distance).
6. Probe is beyond capacity, so difficult to not change the boundary with some Probe students re-assigned to Nicholas Sheran boundary.
7. Coalbanks is beyond capacity, so difficult to not change the boundary with some students re-assigned to MMH boundary.



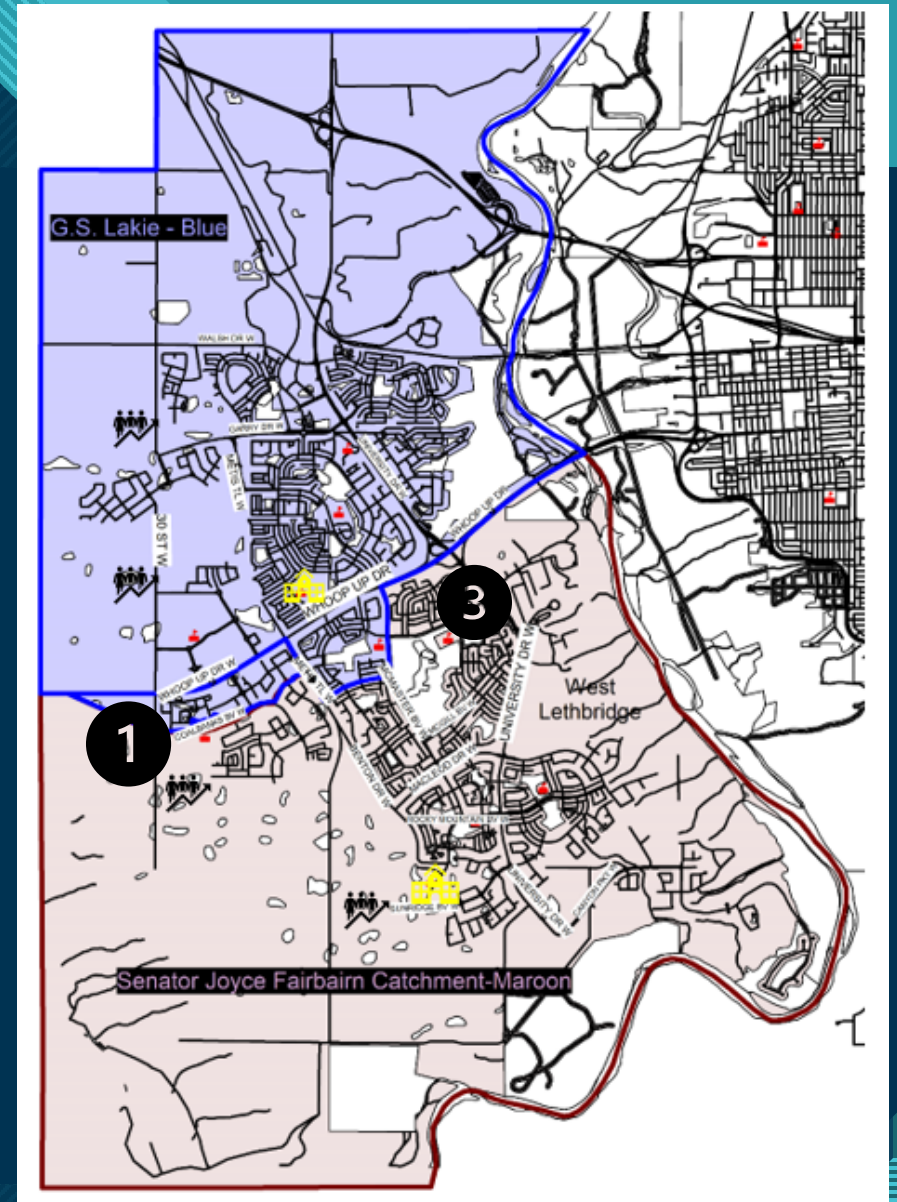
# West Lethbridge Middle School - Why Change

1. Capacity concerns at west Lethbridge middle schools was addressed in 2018 with the opening of Senator Joyce Fairbairn middle school.
2. To ensure **enrolment balance** between the two schools now and into the future, adjustment to boundaries need to redistribute some of the students from the Fairbairn to the Lakie boundary.
3. Balancing enrolment is to ensure **program viability** for both middle schools.



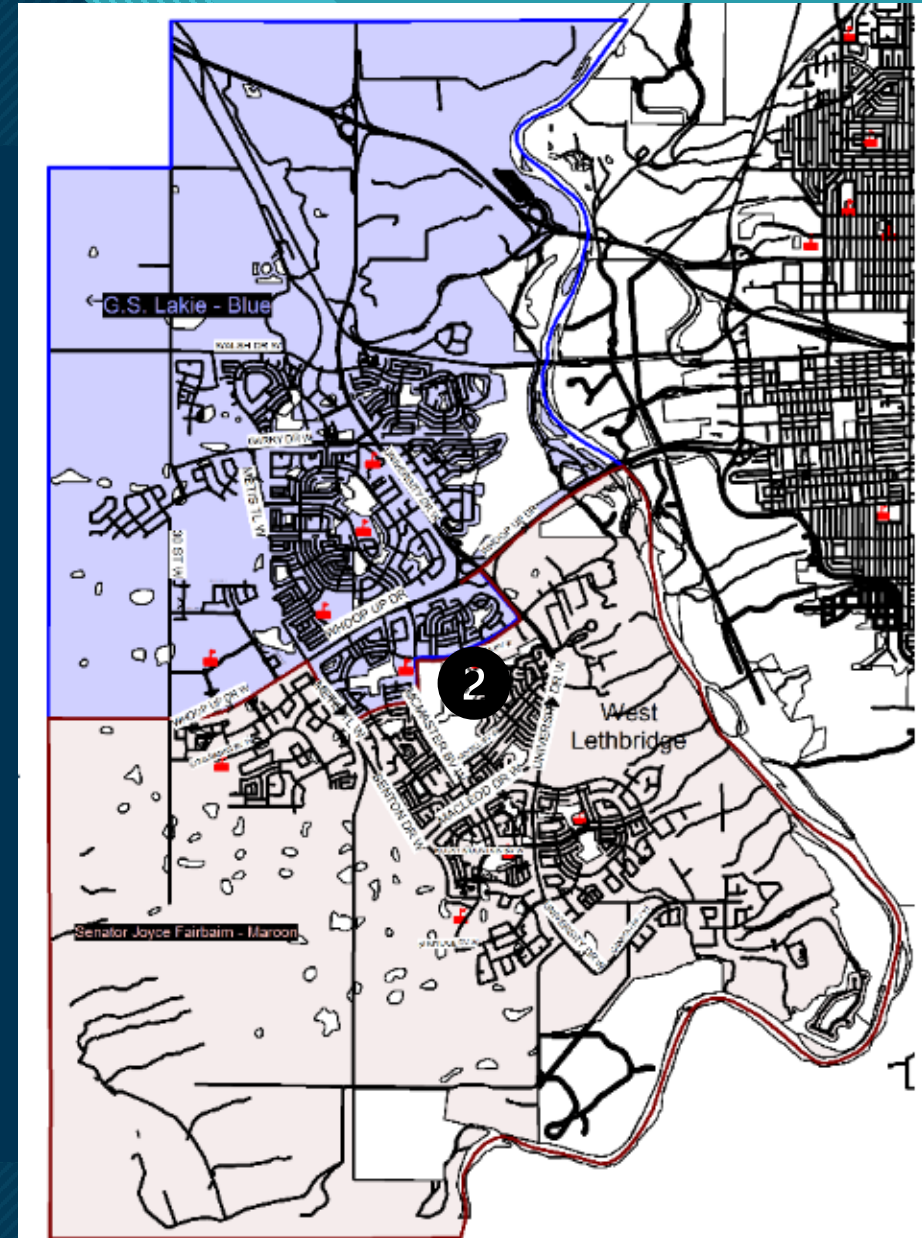
# West Lethbridge Middle School – Proposed Changes: What We Heard

1. Splitting Copperwood community between the two middle schools is a concern to families. It was suggested to **move a geographic area** rather than split a neighborhood.
2. Concern about **walk safety** from Copperwood to Lakie.
3. Suggestion to **extend existing Lakie boundary** to Varsity Village area.



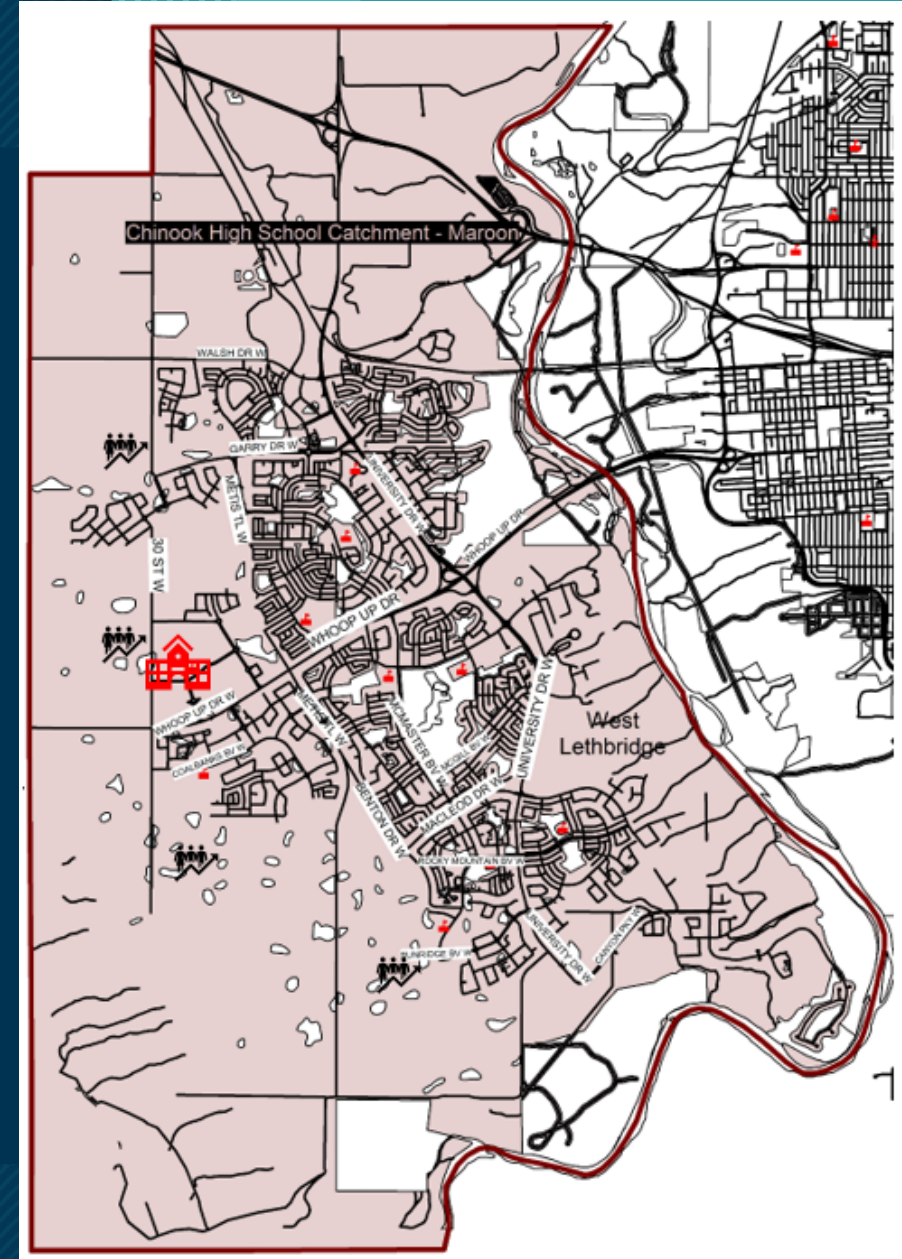
# West Lethbridge Middle School – What We Can Do

1. Agreed that it is not ideal to split a neighborhood if it can be avoided.
2. As recommended in the feedback, extended the Lakie boundary along **Columbia Blvd to University Drive**.



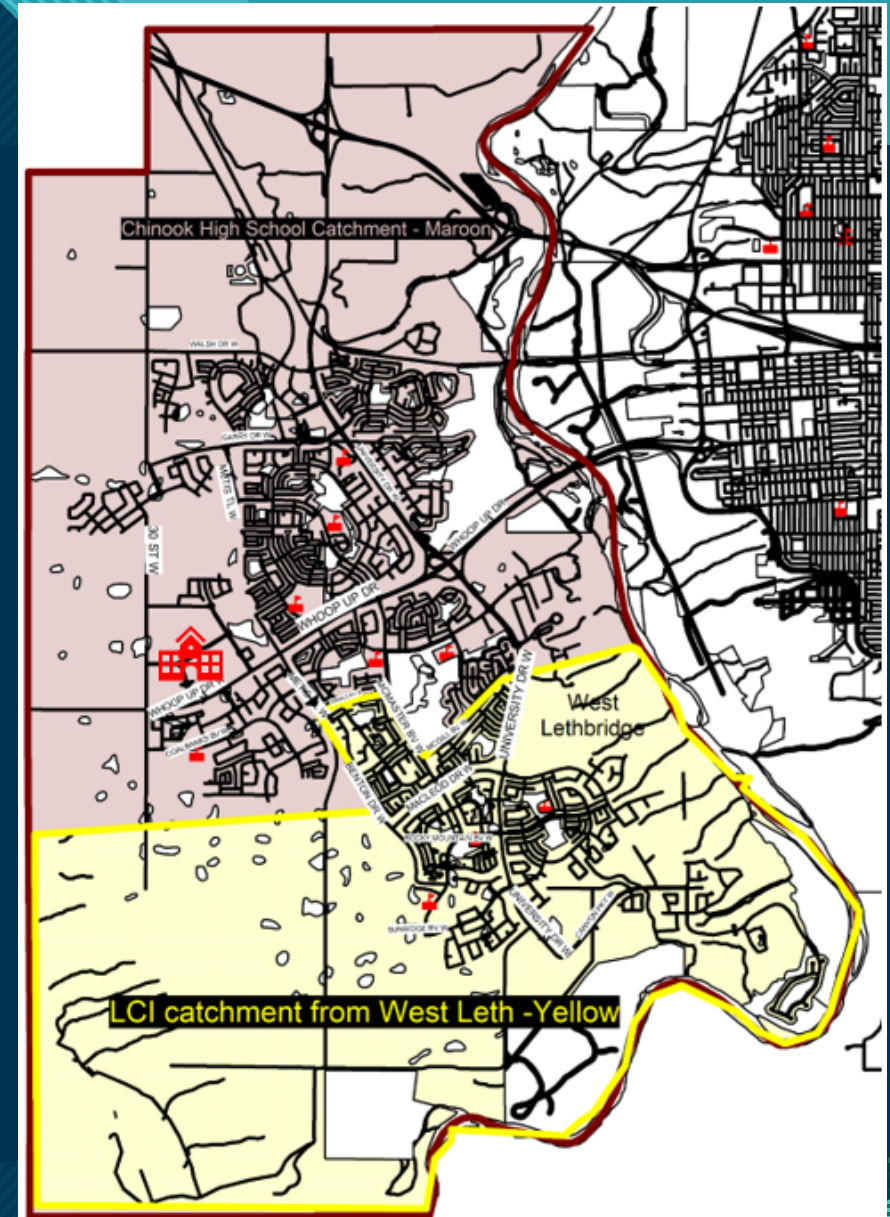
# West Lethbridge High School - Why Change

1. Capacity at Chinook High School is at **86%**. When capacity is over 85% it starts to put stress on core learning spaces.
2. Enrolment projections will have enrolment increasing to around **1600** students in a few years, putting capacity around **112%**.
3. With another high school, LCI, across the river at **42%** capacity, an additional high school will not be approved and funded by Alberta Education.
4. Due to capacity and growth pressures, there is no choice but to move high school students to south Lethbridge.



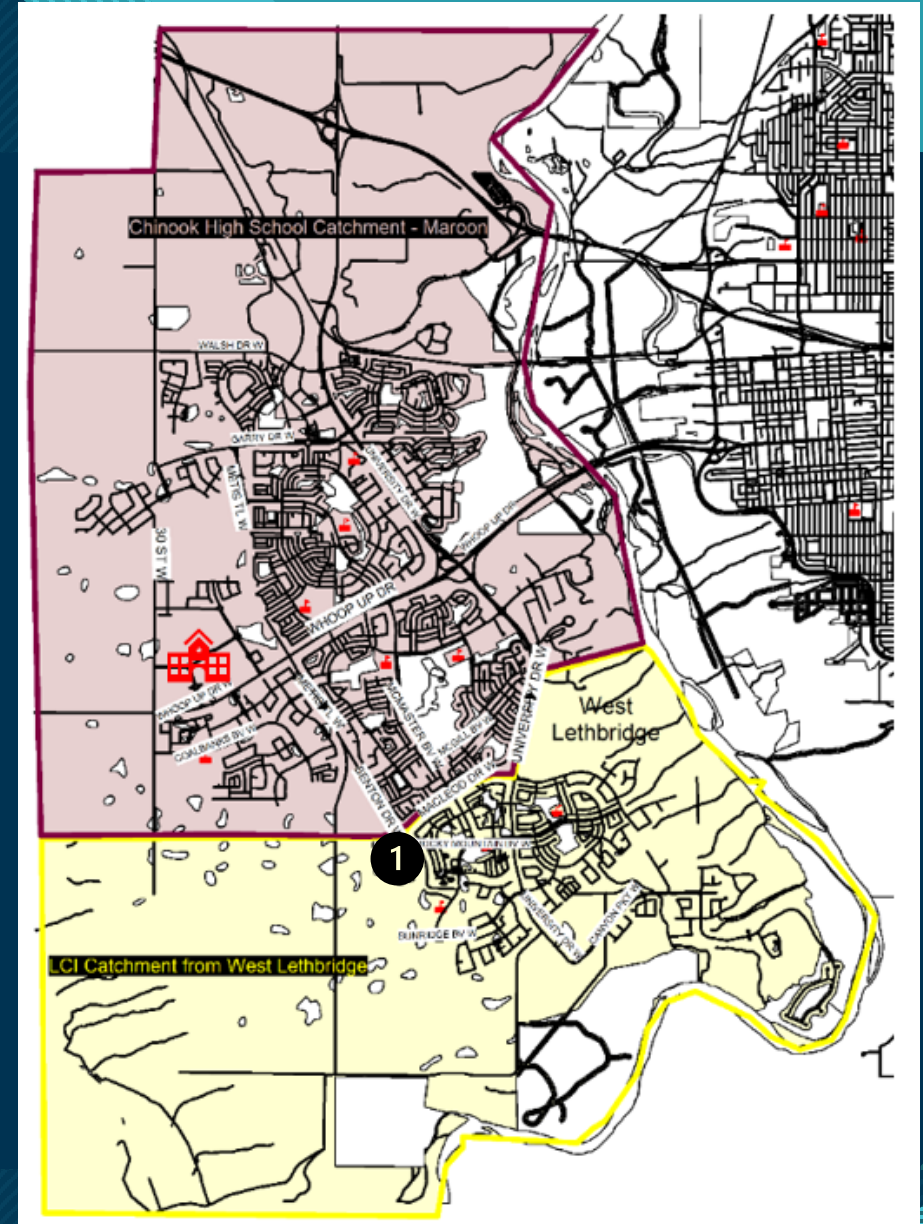
# West Lethbridge High School - Proposed Changes: What We Heard

1. It was proposed that current students attending Chinook High School will be able to remain and finish high school and that movement to LCI will occur with current grade 8's moving into grade 9 in 2021-2022 then 9-10, 9-11 and 9-12 by 2024-2025.
2. Concern raised that **too many students may be removed from Chinook** by proposed boundary upsetting current programming.
3. Concern raised over **siblings** of current Chinook High school students having to move to LCI.



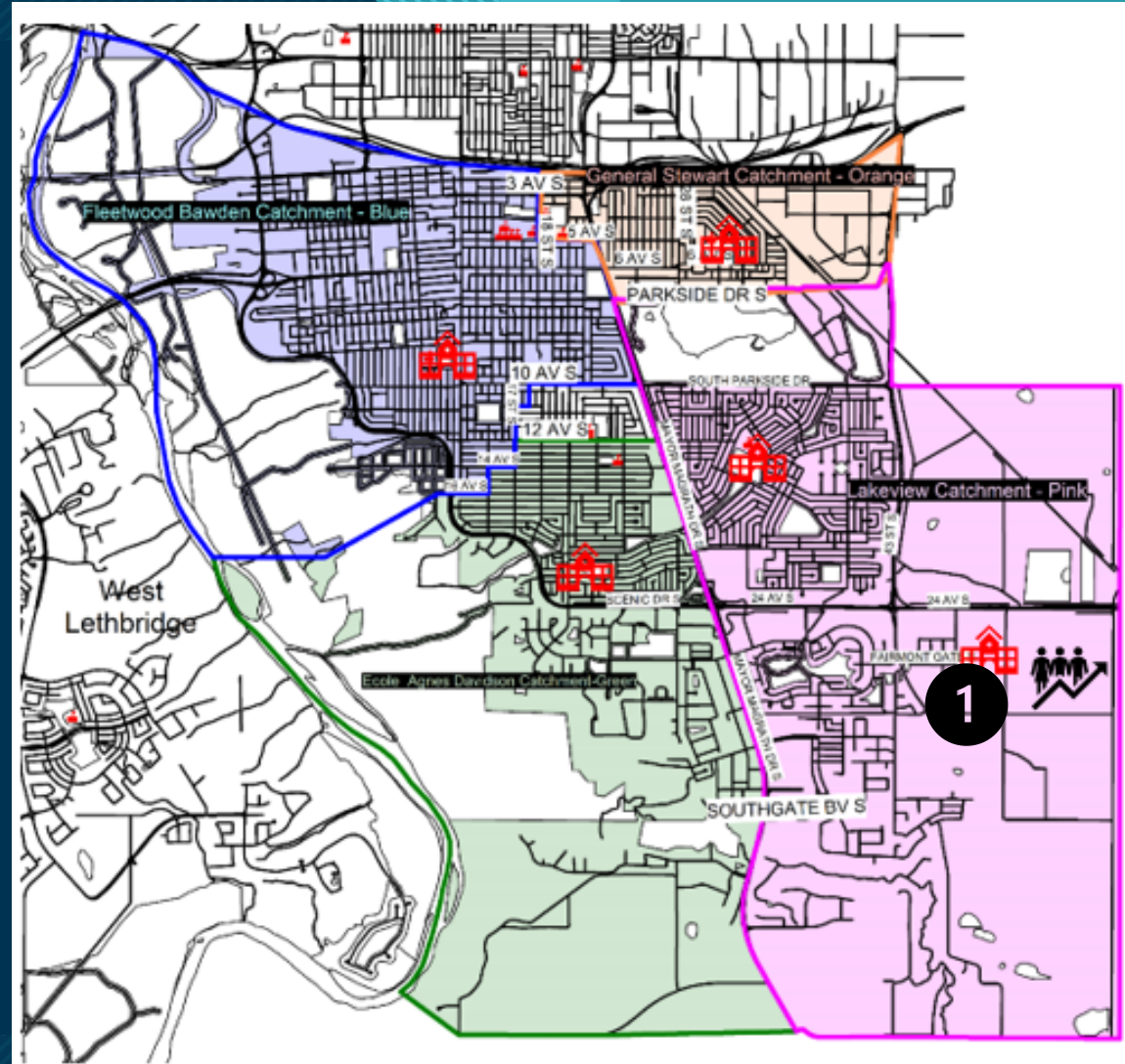
# West Lethbridge High School - What We Can Do

1. Boundary has been moved further south along **McLeod Drive** to add more students back into Chinook boundary.
2. Siblings of students **currently attending** Chinook High school, who reside in the new LCI boundary, will be **allowed to attend** Chinook High School, **if they choose**, and still access transportation during the transition period.
  - This transition period that allows for transportation to Chinook High School will apply **only for the school years up to 2023-2024**.
  - For the **2024-2025** school year, students in the LCI boundary in west Lethbridge that are siblings of students currently attending Chinook will no longer receive transportation services, but will remain students of Chinook as identified siblings during the transition period.
  - Any other students wanting to attend Chinook High School will have to follow the **School Choice Policy**. **The School Choice Policy only applies if a school is not considered “full” at that time.**



# South Lethbridge Elementary - Why Change

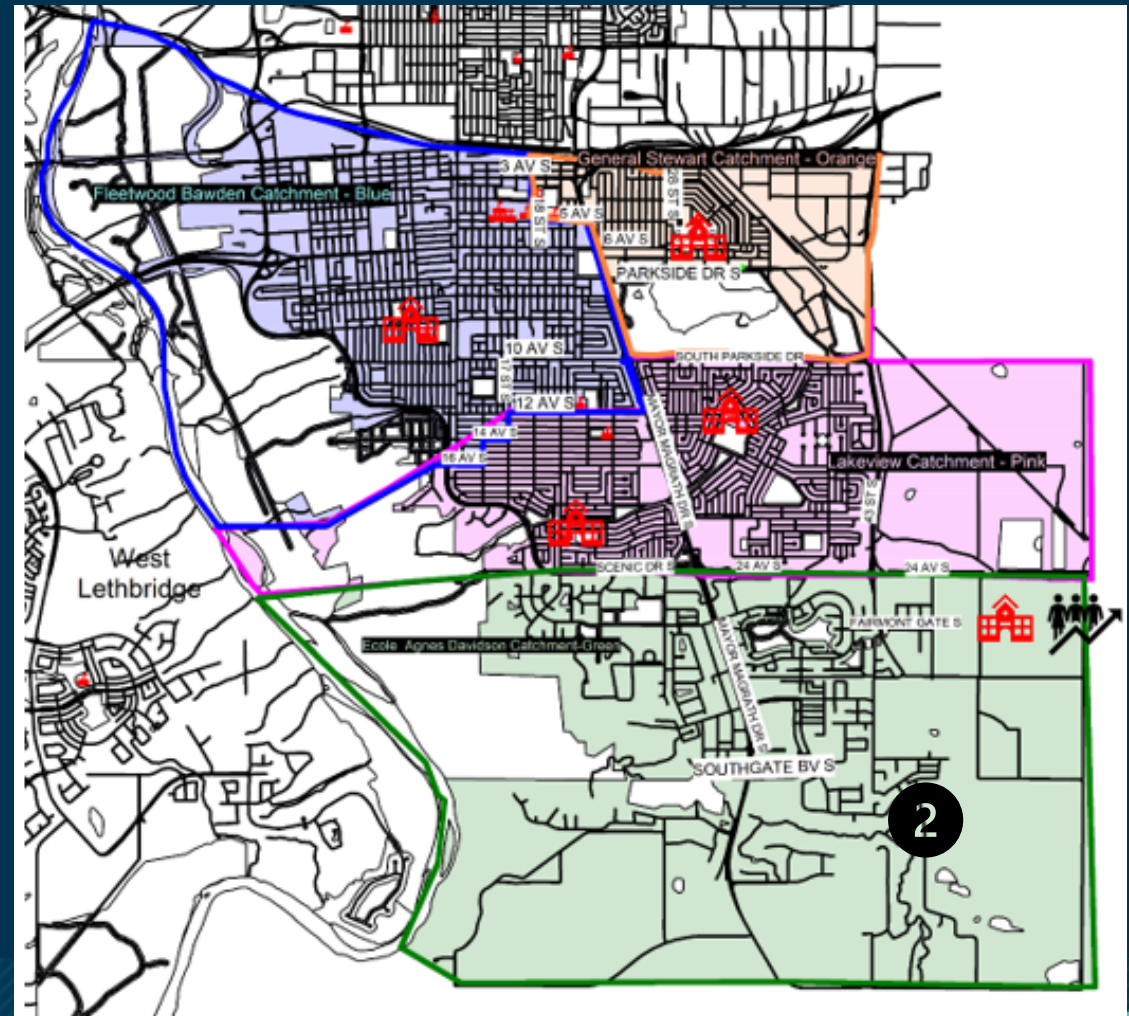
1. A new Elementary School, **Dr. Robert Plaxton** will open for the 2021-2022 school year. This school was approved by Alberta Education to address growth and capacity concerns in south Lethbridge. **Lakeview Elementary capacity is 91%.**
2. There is a new growing community, **Southbrook**, in the south east.
3. A new boundary needs to be created for Dr. Robert Plaxton. This boundary will draw students from École Agnes Davidson and Lakeview Elementary Schools.





# South Lethbridge Elementary - Proposed Changes: What We Heard

1. Moving English Program at École Agnes Davidson to Lakeview and Dr. Plaxton:
  - Crossing Mayor Magrath Drive is dangerous
  - Loss of neighborhood school
  - Loss of dual track French Immersion programming
2. Walking to Plaxton from Sixmile area. No safe walking path or lights.
3. Provide parental choice
4. Some feedback received in support of the changes

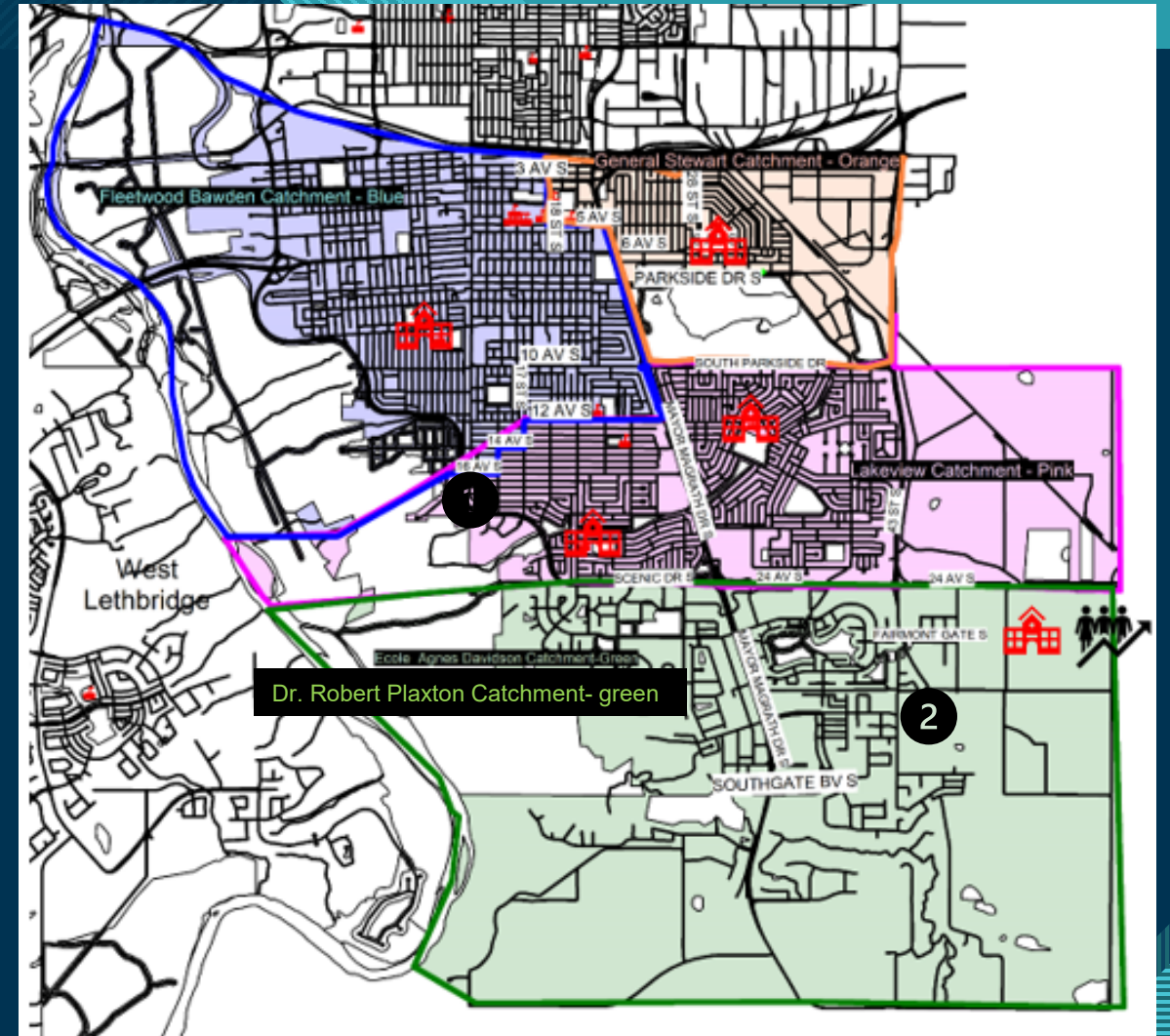


# Single Track French Immersion Program at École Agnes Davidson

- A number of the proposed solutions on the feedback opportunity point to establishing two dual track French Immersion programs (e.g. Lakeview was the recommendation) or move a single track elsewhere (e.g. north or west).
- There is not room on the west side for a single-track French Immersion School and we have the most room on the south side because it is where the new capital project is located (Dr. Robert Plaxton Elementary School).
- The French Immersion program on the Westside was initiated because the south side of Lethbridge did not have any space left in the schools. If there had been space, eventually École Agnes Davidson would have been at capacity with French Immersion and students would need to be re-located.
- Eventually a choice would have been made regarding maintaining two dual track schools or merging for one single track school.
- Neighborhood school access is an important consideration, but there are also considerations for a single-track French Immersion school including efficiencies in resourcing, staffing, and program delivery. There is research that points to the advantages of a single-track French Immersion School and there are many families that support this structure. Single track French Immersion schools are located throughout the province where there are sufficient numbers to support a program of this nature.

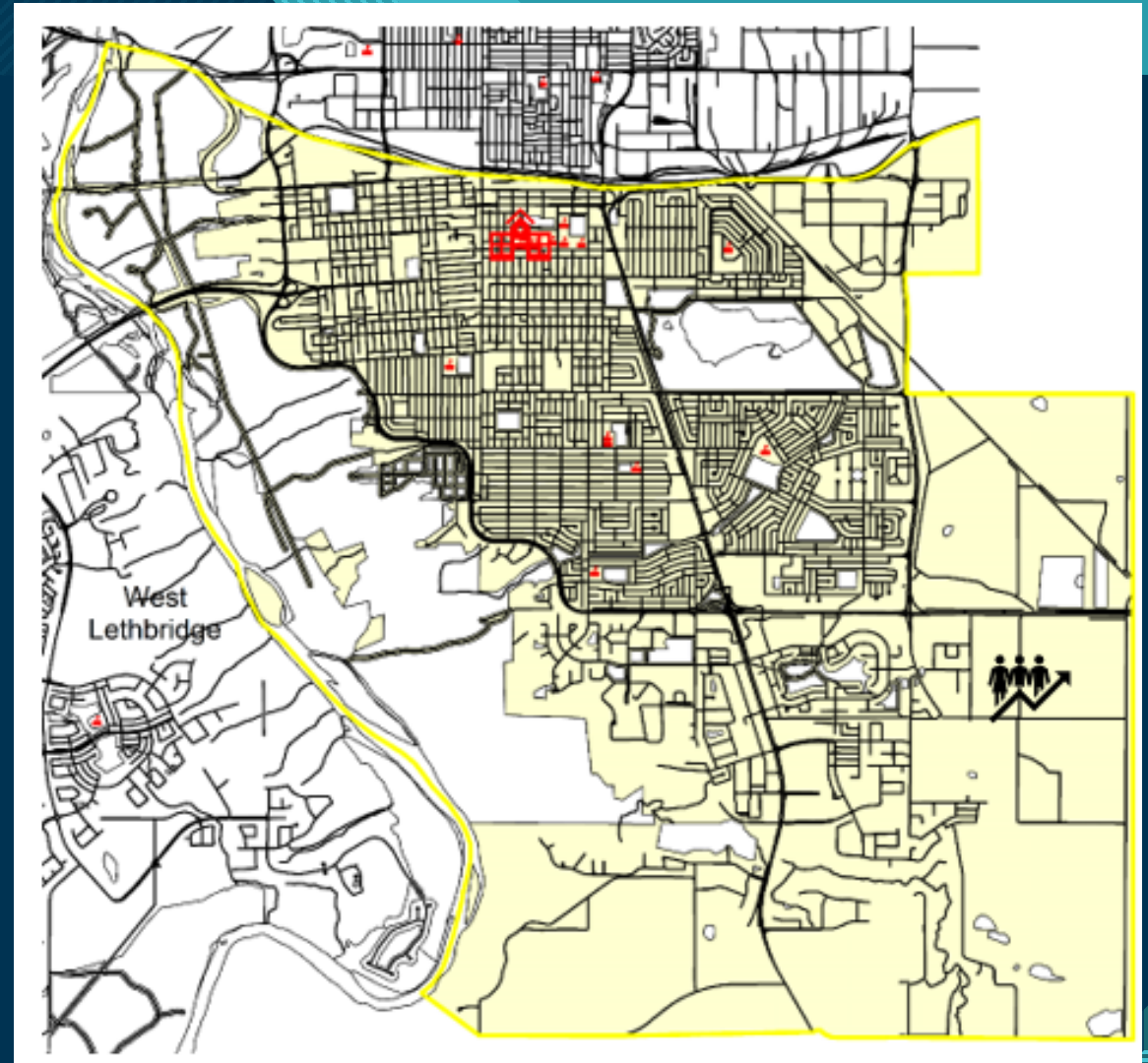
# South Lethbridge Elementary - What We Can Do

1. To recognize the concern over **walking safety to Lakeview school** for students west of Mayor Magrath Drive, **school bus transportation will be provided.**
2. To recognize that English program families have been given no choice due to the elimination of English programming at Ecole Agnes Davidson:
  - Families that are North of Scenic Drive and west of Mayor Magrath Drive **designated to Lakeview** will be **allowed a transition period** whereby they may choose to attend either Lakeview School or Dr. Robert Plaxton.
  - During the transition period, families choosing to send their child to Dr. Robert Plaxton (outside the boundary) **may access student transportation.**
  - The **transition period will be until the 2023-2024** school year (3 years).
  - Starting in the **2024-2025 school year**, the School Choice Policy will be followed if attending Dr. Robert Plaxton and transportation will not be provided.
3. Safety Issue of sidewalks and lights from Sixmile area to Dr. Plaxton has been brought to the City of Lethbridge's attention.



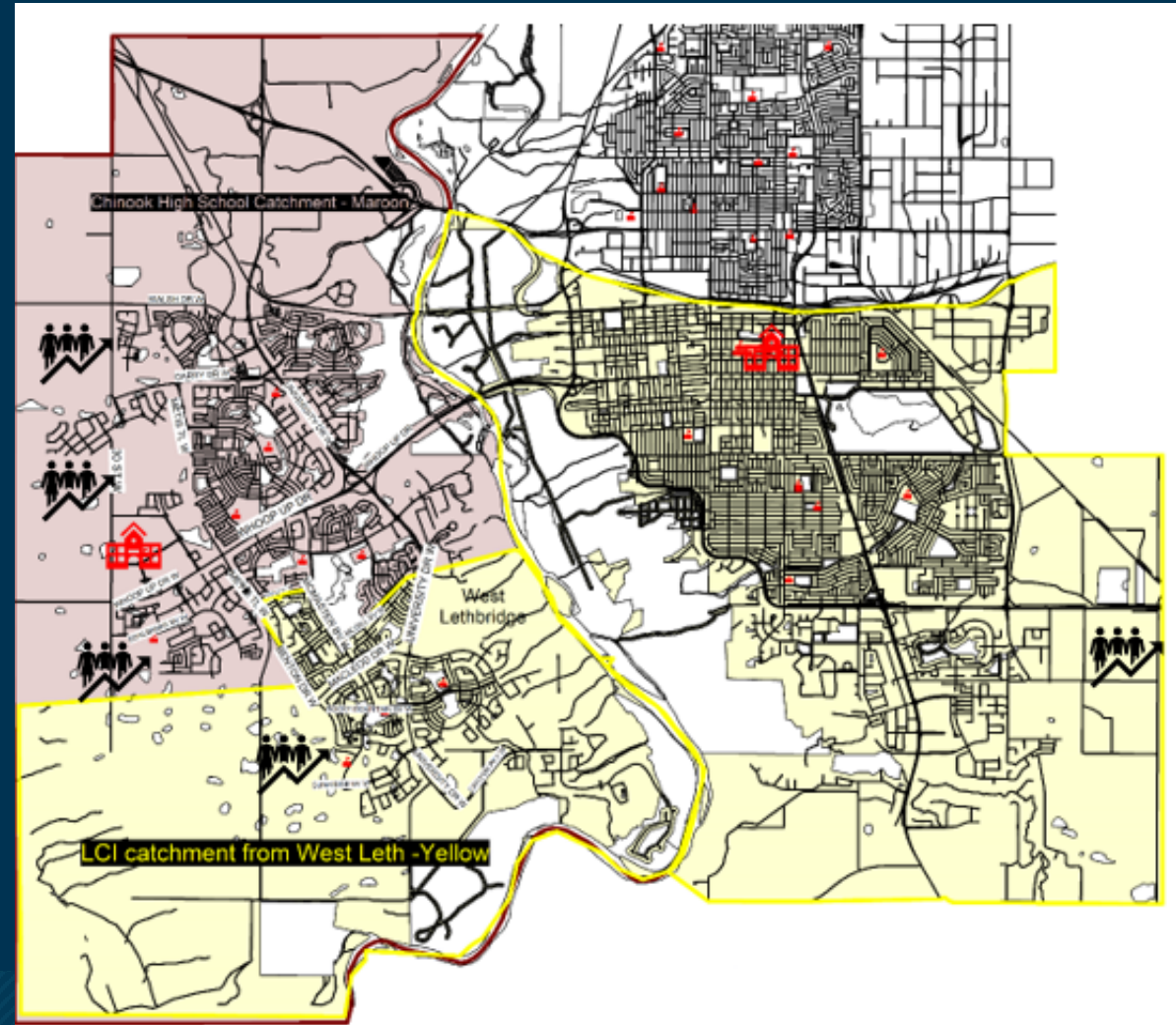
# South Lethbridge High School - Why Change

1. There was a **need to relocate high school students in west Lethbridge** due to facility capacity and growth concerns.
2. The number of high school students in west Lethbridge would exceed space by **over 300** students in five years.
3. The high school in south Lethbridge, LCI, only has **capacity of 42%** and has the space to welcome students from west Lethbridge.



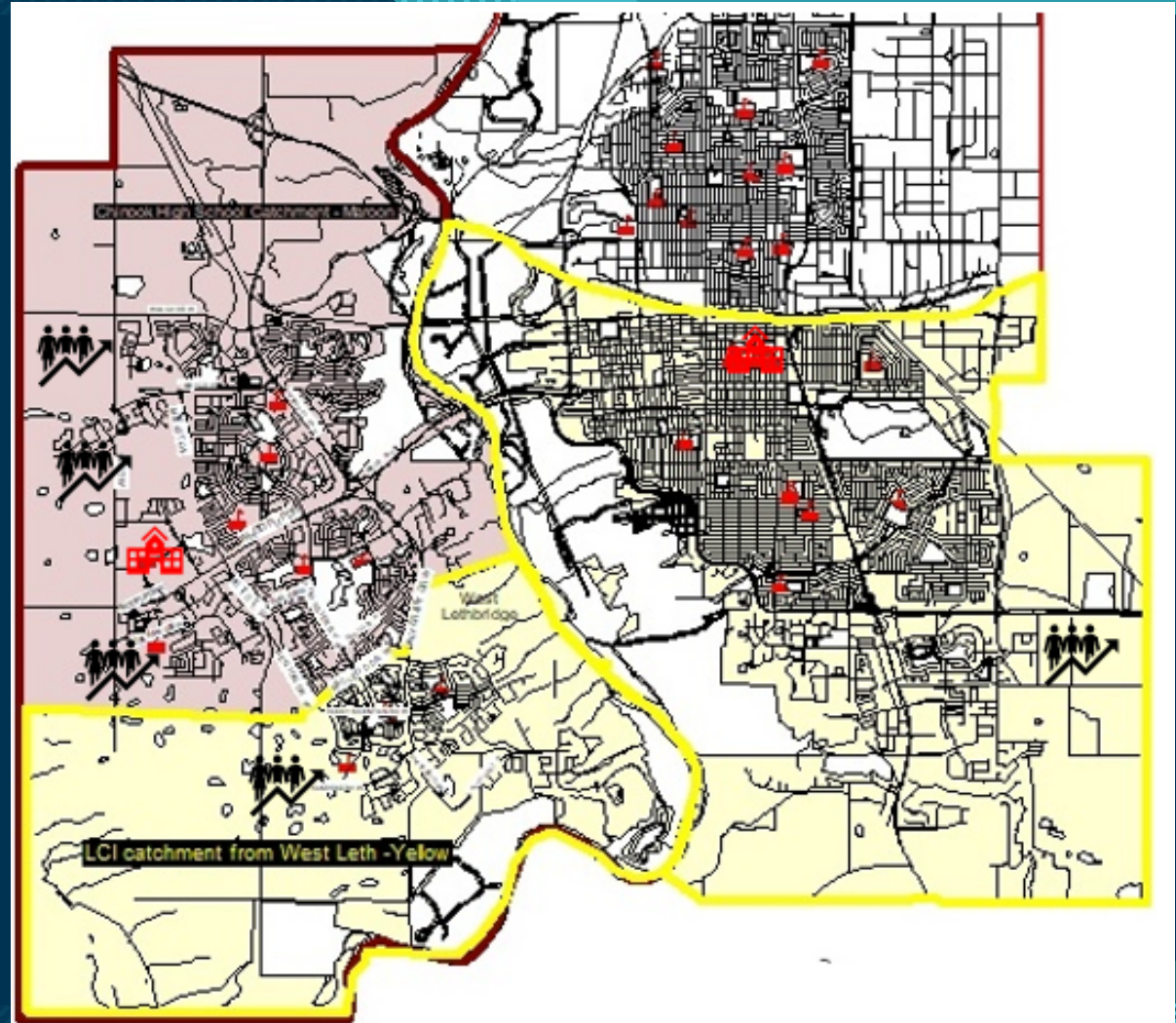
# South Lethbridge High School - Proposed Changes: What We Heard

1. For South side concerns, the concerns mainly related to updating LCI for the additional students.



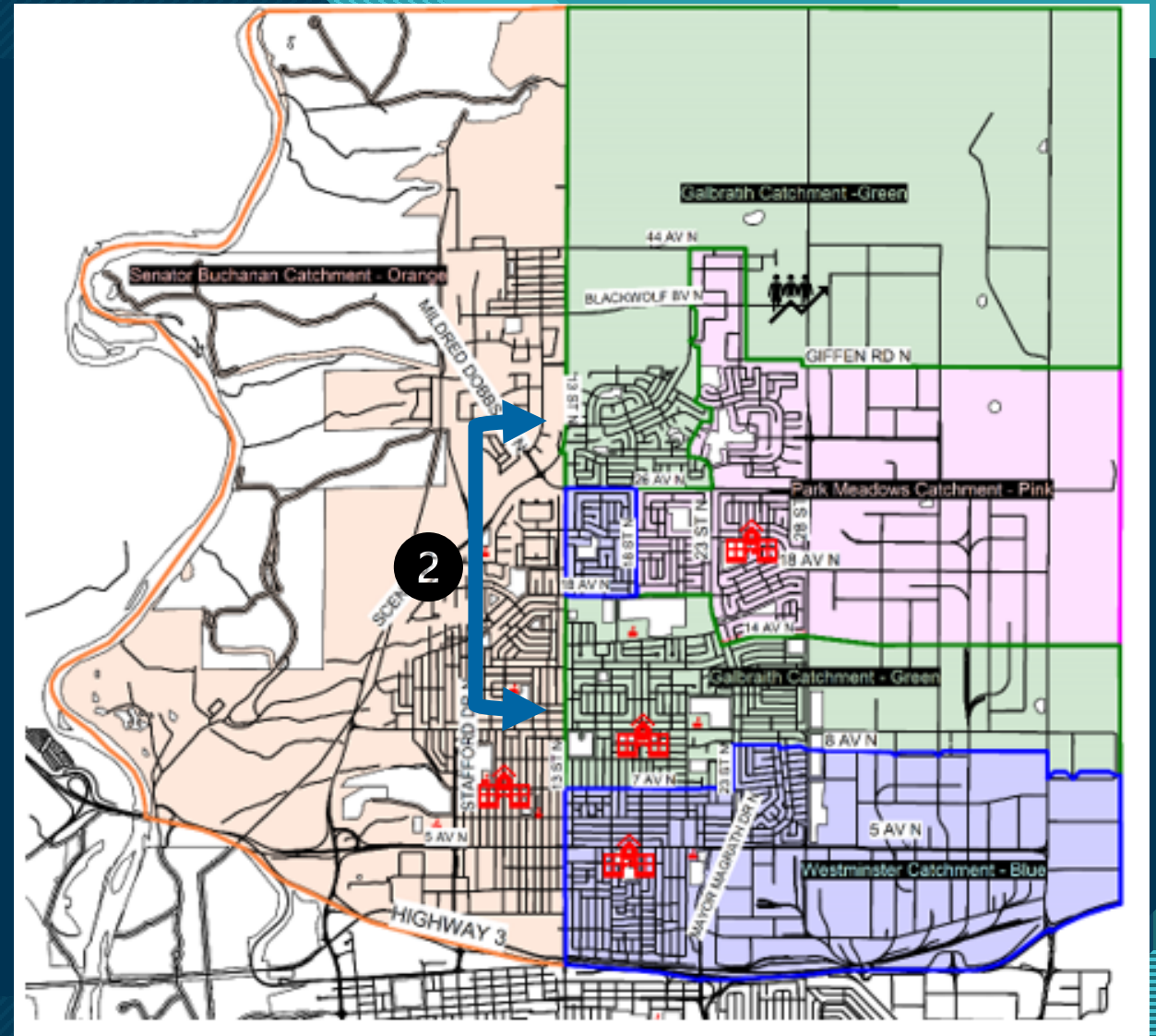
# South Lethbridge High School - What We Can Do

1. Boundary adjusted to address number of students being moved from Chinook.
2. The Division will be looking at some improvements to LCI such flooring and painting as well as more substantial upgrades as capital funding allows in the future.



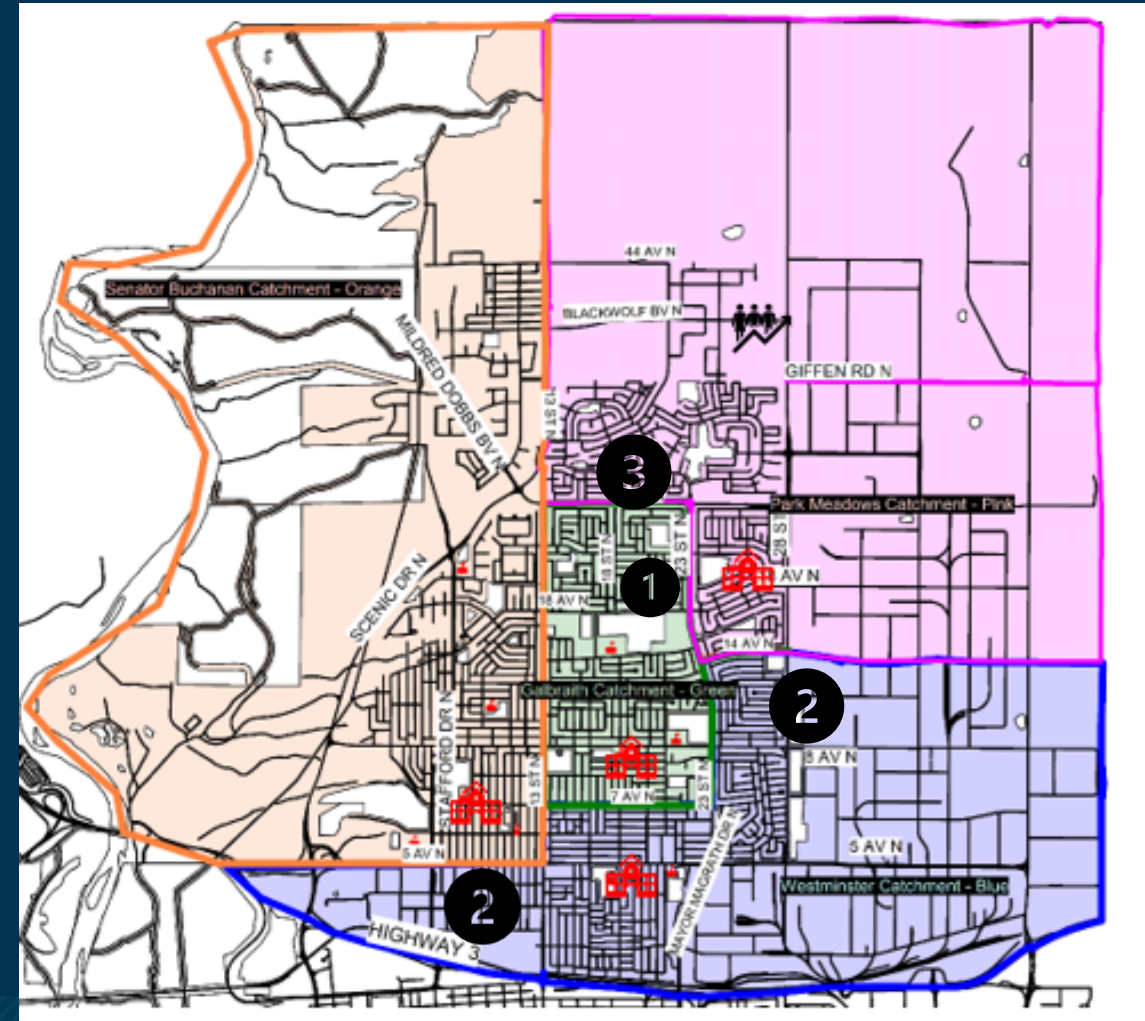
# North Lethbridge Elementary Schools - Why Change

1. Current **facility capacity** in north Lethbridge elementary schools ranges from **54% to 84%**. This does not allow for an equitable breadth of programming opportunities amongst the north side schools.
2. Boundaries as they are currently drawn are **not connected**, resulting in walking concerns.
3. Realignment will create more connected boundaries, and more **even distribution of enrolment**.
4. Realignment will also allow for **space for future growth** from the developing community of Black Wolf



# North Lethbridge Elementary Schools - Proposed Changes: What We Heard

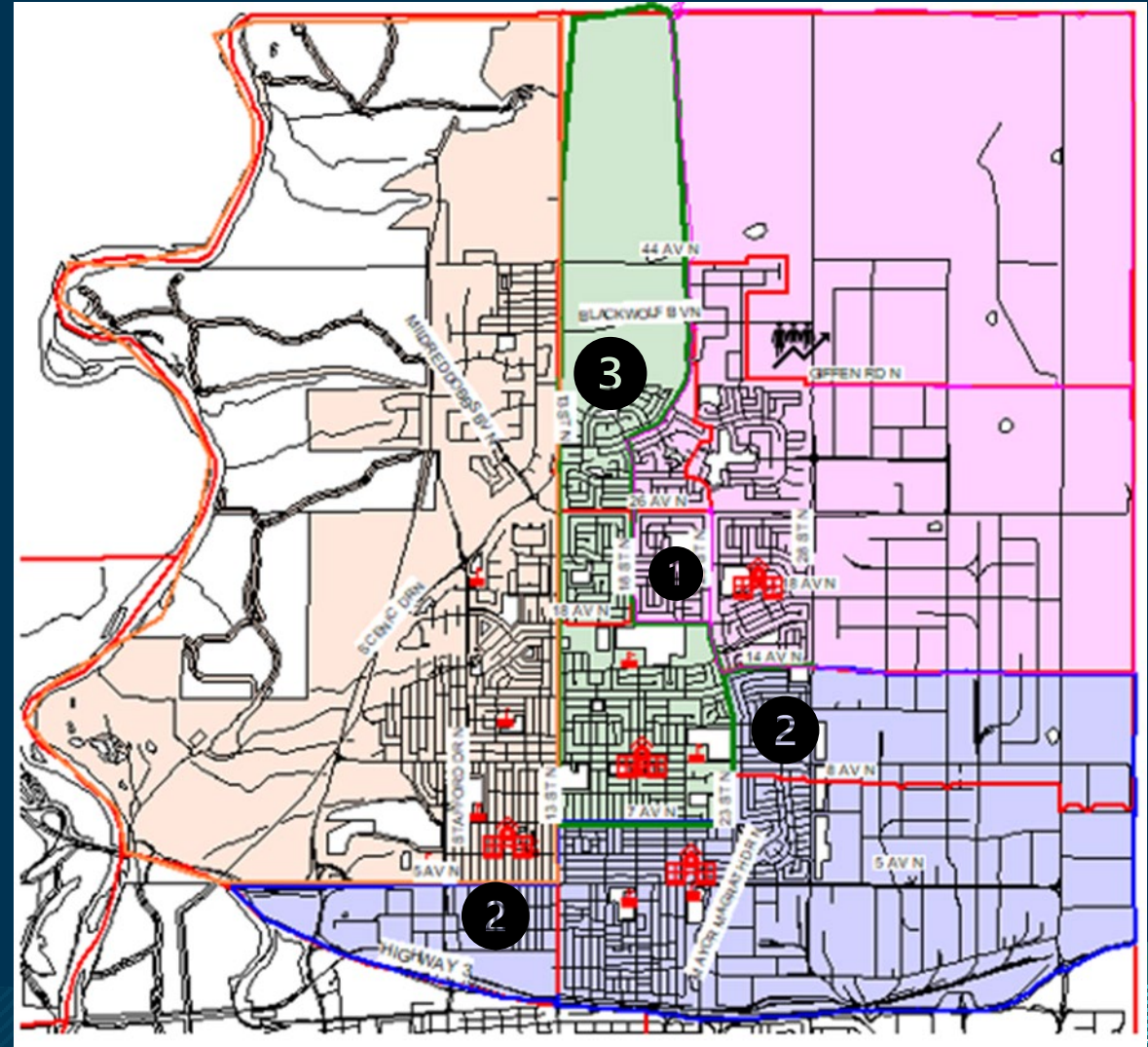
1. Change in Park Meadows Boundary has some students now walking farther to Galbraith.
2. Concern over some areas now designated to Westminster are dangerous to walk.
3. Extend Galbraith boundary to include part of uplands area.
4. Proximity to closest school should be primary consideration, maintain shortest walking distance possible.
5. Provide Choice of Schools





# North Lethbridge Elementary Schools - What We Can Do

1. Move area between 18<sup>th</sup> street and 23<sup>rd</sup> Street between 18<sup>th</sup> avenue and 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue back to Park Meadows as closer proximity.
2. Provide transportation to Westminster where the passage is not safe for walking due to high traffic roadways.
3. Extend Galbraith boundary up 18<sup>th</sup> St North to include Uplands Blvd:
  - All areas west of and including Uplands Blvd will be in Galbraith Boundary.
  - All areas east of Uplands Blvd will be Park Meadows Boundary.
4. Choice of school attendance will follow the **School Choice Policy**. *The application of the Policy* is dependent on a number of factors to allow out of attendance boundary students. Factors include school capacity as well as capacity of classrooms at each grade level (class size).





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# School Choice Policy

School Choice, Transition Period

# School Choice

Enrolment in new school boundaries will **take effect** for the **2021-2022** school year.

There will be strict adherence for students to attend the new established boundaries to address facility capacity and enrolment growth pressures.

The School Division will continue to follow **Policy 501.3.1 School Choice** that allows for fair and just consideration of requests made to have students enrolled in a school **outside of their attendance area**. Decisions will be based on the following criteria, including:

- Availability of space; **(Is a school considered “FULL”)**
- Educational considerations, including class composition;
- Projected enrolment for the school (including enrolment in classes - consideration of class size;
- Suitability of school programs and services for that student;
- Students priority of enrolment (as per regulation 4 of the policy); and
- Additional costs to the school and/or Division.

A school is “FULL” when it reaches 85% capacity or more.

The following schools are considered FULL:

**Dr. Probe Elementary,  
Coalbanks Elementary and  
Chinook High School**

# Transition Period

- A **transition period** is a set period of time whereby an **exception has been made to the *School Choice Policy***, and options have been provided to families that would include school bus transportation during the transition period. **The *School Choice Policy* does not allow for transportation to a school outside the designated boundary.**

## Transition opportunities

- **Chinook High School:**
  - **The new LCI boundary will be in effect for the following grades for new students to Chinook:**
    - **2021-2022 – Grade 9**
    - **2022-2023 - Grade 9, 10**
    - **2023-2024 – Grade 9, 10, 11**
    - **2024-2025 – Grade 9, 10, 11, 12**
  - **Current grades 9 to 12 students** designated to attend new LCI boundary may stay at Chinook High School or choose to attend LCI, transportation will be provided.
  - **Siblings of current Chinook High School students** designated to attend new LCI boundary may choose to attend Chinook High School, however **transportation will only be provided up to including the 2023-2024 school year. In the 2024-2025 school year transportation will no longer be provided to Chinook and the *School Choice Policy* applies.**

# Transition Period

- **École Agnes Davidson English program families:**
  - English programming families residing in the École Agnes Davidson Area, west of Mayor Magrath Drive and north of Scenic Drive South will be **provided the choice of attending either Lakeview Elementary School or Dr. Robert Plaxton Elementary School** for the transition period.
  - During the transition period, **transportation will be provided** to either Lakeview Elementary School or Dr. Robert Plaxton Elementary School.
  - The **transition period is for three years** starting in the 2021-2022 school year and ending in the 2023-2024 school year.
  - **Effective 2024-2025** school year, attending Dr. Robert Plaxton is considered out of boundary and the **School Choice Policy** applies and no transportation will be provided for Lakeview catchment families.



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# Concluding Comments

# Concluding Comments

- There was a real need for the review and the need to change boundaries is pressing due to growth and capacity concerns as well as the opening of Dr. Robert Plaxton Elementary School.
- The Board of Trustees appreciates the significant feedback provided by the community on the proposed boundaries. All this feedback was reviewed and considered.
- The feedback influenced the adjustments to the proposed boundaries that have been presented today. Suggestions provided were thoughtful and appreciated.

# Concluding Comments

- We understand that many concerns were expressed by families, moving French Immersion to École Agnes Davidson from École Nicholas Sheran. Significant concern was also raised about moving high school students out of west Lethbridge.
- The proposal to move students out of west Lethbridge as well as create a single-track French Immersion program was discussed at length by the boundary committees that explored a variety of alternatives. It was discussed at length again by the Board following the feedback provided. The Board understands these decisions impact families around their neighborhood school and involves transportation across the city. The concerns were heard and discussed. An examination of alternatives included understanding unintended consequences both short and long term in both west Lethbridge and south Lethbridge.
- Moving students to LCI was viewed as a sound strategy that addresses over-capacity at Chinook High School and excess capacity at LCI.



## Next Steps

What are the next steps following an approval of new boundaries:

1. **School Registration Process** will begin, including School Choice forms completed
2. **Registration** for school bus transportation
3. New **Boundary Maps** will be created and **School Locator** will be updated
4. **School Bus Route** coordination and route planning will occur with Southland Transportation



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**Thank You** Again to  
everyone who took  
the time to provide  
feedback on the  
boundary review