



Mar 14, 2024

Three-Year Capital Plan 2025/26 to 2027/28

Priority:

New Horizons Charter School Society requests that the Ministry approve the addition to and renovation of the current New Horizons Charter School facility to accommodate the first gifted 'high school' educational program in the greater Edmonton region. The former Minister of Education provided a one-time grant of \$50,000 to support a facility solution and enhancement to address enrollment growth. New Horizons School used this grant to fund a Value Scope to determine the viability of multiple renovation/expansion options. New Horizons School is ready to expand to include high school programming in the 2024-25 school year with temporary classroom space until the proposed renovation/expansion is complete.

Currently, New Horizons Charter School has two classrooms per grade for Kindergarten through grade 9 students. The Charter mandate addresses the need for Gifted High School education with specific attention to social and emotional support as well as rigorous academic needs for each student; however, due to the current over-utilization rates for New Horizons Charter School facilities prohibit any further growth to high school.

Rationale:

Since its establishment in 1995, New Horizons Charter School has diligently adhered to its Charter, encompassing a comprehensive gifted program tailored for gifted individuals. The Charter aims to grow to accommodate the K-12 population of gifted learners. The limitations of our facilities over the years have impeded natural growth to include a high school. After four separate relocations, we reached maximum capacity almost immediately.

New Horizons meets the intention of the Charter up to Grade nine. However, there is yet to be a solution for high school gifted programming in the region, which is the impetus for our plan. Consequently, this limits "choice in education" for families who require specialized programs that New Horizons offers for gifted and talented students. Continuous social and emotional support for our students is essential beyond K-9 and just as crucial to student success in high school.

The Board has garnered substantial support from students, parents, and the local community to extend our educational provision to the high school level. This extension is imperative to cater to gifted high school students' nuanced social, emotional, and academic requirements, ensuring their holistic development and academic excellence. Regrettably, the current infrastructure constraints at New Horizons Charter School impede any further high school expansion efforts. The existing facilities are operating beyond capacity, rendering further growth untenable.

While the graph illustrates 20 years of growth, our average annual growth rate has been 11% per year over the last ten years, and we have increased 212% overall.

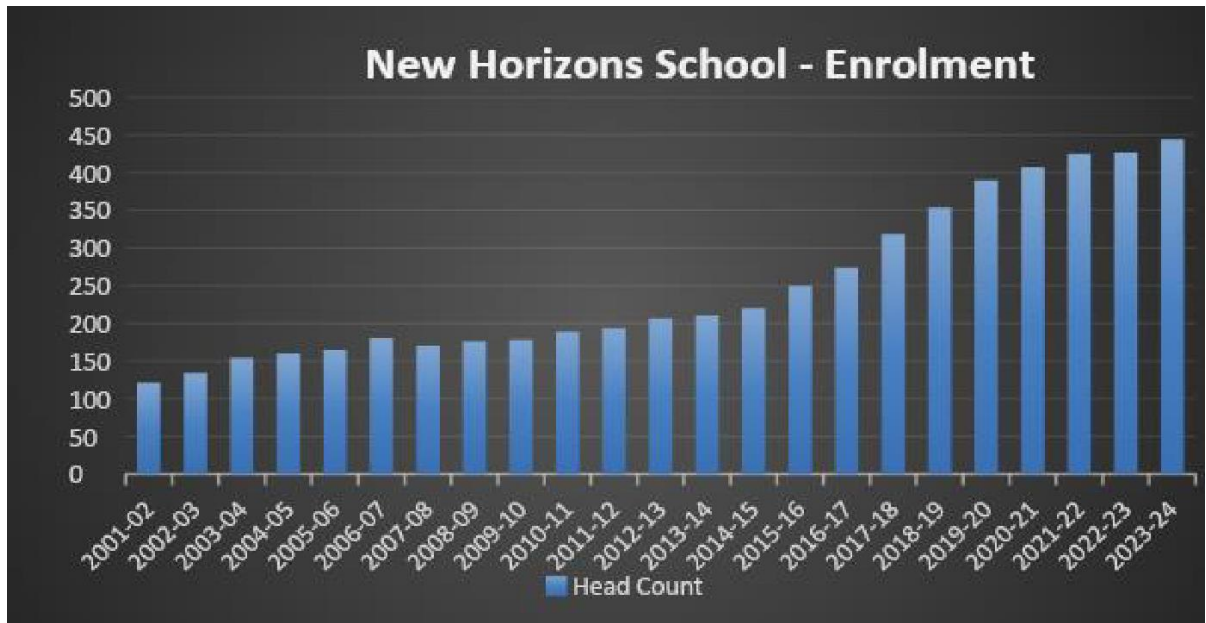


Figure 3 illustrates the projected enrollment of the high school from 2024/25 through 2027/28.

Class/Grade	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Grade 10	45	45	45	50
Grade 11	0	45	45	50
Grade 12	0	0	45	50
Total Head Count	45	90	135	150

Figure 3: Four-Year High School Enrolment Projection at New Horizons School

High School Organization:

New Horizons Charter School provides gifted education to over 445 kindergarten through grade 9 students. With enrollment projections of 45 students per grade, determining ways to expand our ability to offer a broad range of courses is essential.

Addition and renovation plans include two high school classes per grade to accommodate additional gifted students who may need this educational program to accommodate 50 current students per year over the next three years and any new students who will benefit from this specialized program.

A value scope was conducted in March 2024, providing a detailed examination of a complex school capital project involving the jurisdiction and key stakeholders to investigate opportunities and challenges related to school building functionality, space utilization, and physical condition. The intent was to develop criteria for what is essential for the school and community and develop options to address those items best.

The result was a solution representing the best value for addressing functional needs and financial and program implications.

Addition to and Renovation of our Existing School:

The Board of New Horizons Charter School requests approval to add to and renovate our existing facility to accommodate K-12 School to include teaching space for grades 10, 11, and 12, a new gym, and programming space. Our current K-9 occupancy percentage is over 110%, and we require additional space to provide an enhanced educational program tailored to the special education of our gifted learners.

To address the current utilization constraints and accommodate an expanded high school program, adding to and renovating our facility is essential. Based on the current and projected enrolment of 563 students, this could take the form of a 670 student capacity facility for an anticipated utilization of 84% with space for further expansion. The proposed request would involve the removal of the existing modular classroom units, renovating portions of the existing school, and the addition of approximately 3,500m² of instructional space. Reconfiguring the existing drop-off lane and expanding the existing parking lot would also be required. This solution would address the existing neighbourhood traffic challenges.

The current modular structure would impede the creativity of gifted education and address future enrollment projections. The existing modulares could be repurposed and returned to Alberta Education upon completion of the renovation.

This solution allows us to address the current transportation issue, which comprises safety and disrupts the neighborhood. As identified in the value scope from the County of Strathcona and START Architecture representatives, the existing site and footprint are site-ready. The solution supports occupying the recently modernized school. Expanding the current K-9 school to include a high school on the same site would minimize our administration staffing and allow program continuity and the opportunity for collaboration and leadership between high school and elementary students, providing a sense of community. After having moved several times, we have been in this facility since 2015 and would like to maintain our presence in the community.