

Rugby Public School District #5 Frequently Asked Questions Petition to close the street west of Ely Elementary and reroute alleyway

1. How have stakeholders been involved in decision making?

Rugby Public School District (RPSD) created a committee of stakeholders called the Citizen's Committee. The Committee began meeting in November of 2018 to help the school district develop solutions to address overcrowding at Ely Elementary. This committee includes members of the community, parents, teachers, administrators, support staff, and business leaders. The role of the committee included the following tasks: review facility plan, recommend facility improvements, consider options and prioritize, and make a recommendation to the school board. After several meetings, the Citizen's Committee recommended that the school district petition the City of Rugby to close a section of 3rd Ave SW and reroute the alleyway between 2nd ST SW and 3rd ST SW to the north. The committee felt that this was the most sensible solution to begin addressing the facility's needs at Ely Elementary.

The school district met with all impacted business owners in the impacted area. All were supportive of the street removal concept. These business owners include: Dale Neiwoehner, Terry Wentz, and Jon Stork.

The school district also met with property owners that are directly impacted by the proposed petition to gather feedback on the redesign of the alleyway. These meetings occurred on October 4, 2018, and March 13, 2019.

2. Why doesn't RPSD add a modular classroom or build a building that could house additional grade levels on district-owned land to the west?

Each classroom has multiple special classes during the school day, including: physical education, music, band, choir, library, lunch, and some may receive special education services outside of the classroom. This would require the students to cross the street multiple times throughout the day. Our climate is also a concern, students would need to get dressed in winter gear several times a day and would waste valuable instructional time. The committee considered this option and decided that it was not a sensible solution due to crossing the street multiple times during the day, and safety concerns that may arise from being separate from the main building.

3. What are the concerns related to student drop off and pick up?

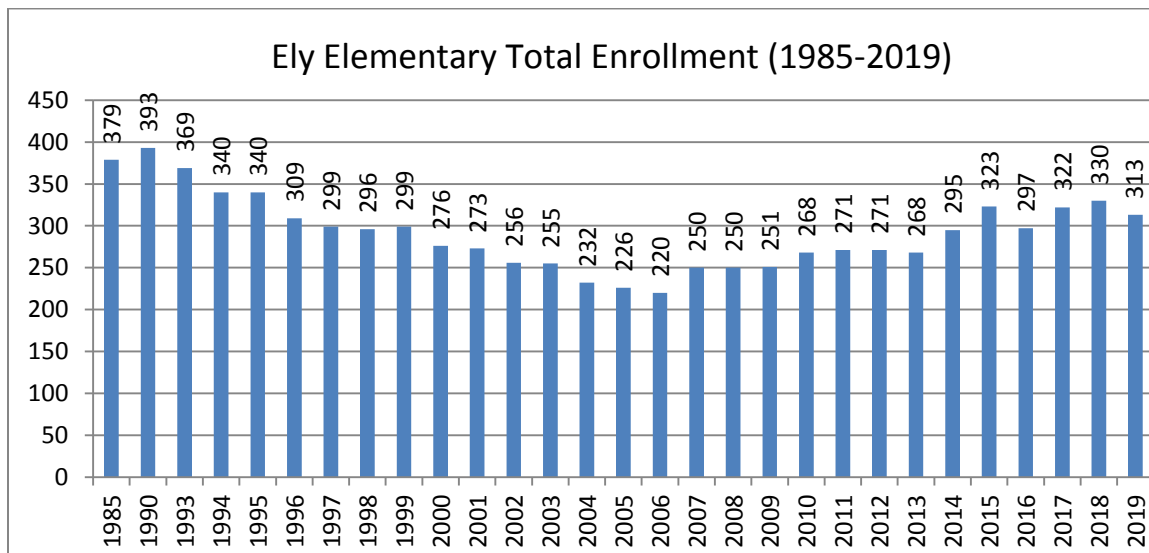
The district will need to address issues related to drop off and pick up of students. The district has purchased land directly to the west of Ely Elementary. The intent of the land purchase is to reroute the alleyway north on district-owned land and close the street in between the school and district-owned land. In the pending plan, rural bus students will be dropped off and picked up on the north side of the school. Parent drop off and pick up will occur on the south side of the school. The school district will also add a parking lot that will take up to 45 cars off the road

in the surrounding areas. The playground will become larger and shift to the west side of the school.

4. RPSD class sizes were larger in the past, why is there a space issue at Ely Elementary now?

Enrollment

The chart below shows the total number of students enrolled at Ely Elementary School from 1985 to 2019. Enrollment reached its peak in 1990 with 393 total students enrolled. In the early 1990s, Ely Elementary’s enrollment began to drop steadily to its lowest point in 2006 with 220 total students enrolled. Since 2007, Ely Elementary’s total enrollment has been increasing at a gradual pace. There are currently 313 students enrolled at Ely Elementary in 2019. This enrollment includes students at Ely Elementary in grades K-6 only.



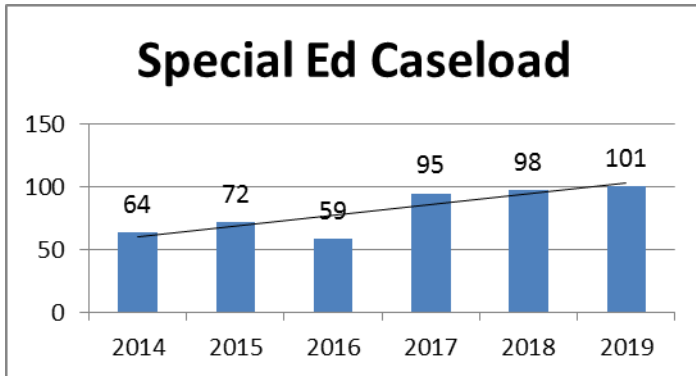
Full-time kindergarten

Full-time kindergarten began in 2009. Before this, kindergarten children attended half days only. This is important to consider from a space standpoint. You could use one room to accommodate 40-50 children. This could be done by splitting the group into three groups and having them attend half days. Currently, there are two to three classrooms needed to accommodate our kindergarten class sizes.

Special education caseload

Since 2014, we have seen an increase in the number of students that qualify for special education services. In 2014, our elementary special education department operated out of one small office area. We have since added a full classroom, a sensory room, a small classroom, an office inside the cafeteria, and continue to use hallway areas often to deliver services. The school district is exploring a classroom modular to be added during the 2020-2021 school year to better meet the needs of our special education population. Expansion of occupational and

physical therapies, speech therapies, and mental health therapies have expanded and consumed more space.



Personalization

Our school district has moved to an intervention model for all students. For example, if a student is behind grade level in reading, we have a timely system of supports established to accelerate that student back up to grade level. This is different than past educational practices. In the 1980s, 1990s, and the early 2000s, students were often given whole group lessons and you either succeeded or failed and the class moved on. There were rarely any organized student supports outside of special education. We have made considerable strides in this area within our school district. Our system of supports requires small groups (between 3-5 students) to accelerate students back up to grade level. A focus on small groups requires additional space and is an area of need for Ely Elementary.

Class size reduction

Teaching and learning have become more personalized over the past 5-10 years. We are focused on creating smaller groups to meet the needs of ALL students. In the past, it was not unheard of to have 30+ students in a classroom. The district strives to keep class sizes small and manageable. Due to the larger class sizes at specific grade levels, we have added three additional classroom teachers to support class size reduction. We are now out of classroom space to add additional sections.

2019-2020 School Year Grade Level Structures

Kindergarten = 2 classrooms, Grade 1 = 3 classrooms, Grade 2 = 3 classrooms, Grade 3 = 2 classrooms, Grade 4 = 2 classrooms, Grade 5 = 3 classrooms, Grade 6 = 2 classrooms

Preschool

We established the Rugby Early Learning Center in 2014. This preschool is not located onsite at Ely Elementary. It is currently located in the Vocational Building to the east of the high school. The school district supports this program and targets four-year-old children that are entering

kindergarten in the fall. This is a partnership between Early Explorers Head Start and Rugby Public School District and currently supports between 30-40 students. These numbers are not included in Ely Elementary enrollment numbers.

5. Why doesn't RPSD move a grade level or two to Rugby High School?

There is a common misconception that there are open classrooms at Rugby High School. The 2010 renovation and addition at Rugby High School redesigned many of the learning spaces. Currently, every classroom is in use and there are no additional classroom spaces available for additional grade levels. The committee discussed grade level movement at length. Eventually due to the lack of space at the high school, concerns about the maturity of 5th and 6th graders and the exposure to older students, the committee decided to focus specifically on addressing overcrowding at the Ely Elementary site.

6. Why doesn't RPSD address space issues to the east or north?

We have reached out to architectural and engineering firms to help study the site and make recommendations for potential expansion. They have advised us to focus on the west due to the location of the main power source, fuel oil tanks, coal delivery and ash removal, building layout, and ground instability to the north.

