

## EIPS Disappointed in Alberta Utilities Commission Heartland Transmission Project Decision

*Sherwood Park...* Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) is disappointed in today's decision by the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) regarding the Heartland Transmission Project, which includes a 500-kilovolt, double-circuit transmission line that will run above ground adjacent to one of its schools.

With the East TUC Route designed to run parallel to Anthony Henday (Highway 216) east of Edmonton and west of Sherwood Park, the lines will be located in close proximity to the grounds on which Colchester Elementary sits.

"This is very disappointing news, as we know parents and residents in Strathcona County have put forward serious safety concerns regarding the above-ground power lines and were pushing to have the lines buried below the ground," says Superintendent Bruce Beliveau.

In light of the AUC decision, EIPS' administration will work with the members of the Colchester Elementary School community to gauge their reactions, discuss options, and determine a course of action for the future.

"We share parents' concerns regarding the potential safety issues and are committed to working with the members of our educational community to ensure the staff and students of Colchester Elementary continue to receive quality instruction in a safe and caring environment," adds Board Chair Barb McNeill.

As the school division awaits further information regarding the schedule for the power line construction, EIPS will be resuming talks with Alberta Education, Alberta Infrastructure, local MLAs, and County Council to work through the process. Modernization of Fultonvale Elementary Junior High is one possible solution that has been put forward.

Colchester Elementary School is located at 23358 Township Road 520 in Sherwood Park and serves approximately 180 students in Kindergarten to Grade 6.

EIPS is one of Alberta's largest school divisions serving approximately 16,200 students in Sherwood Park, the City of Fort Saskatchewan, the Town of Vegreville, Strathcona and Lamont counties, and the western portion of the County of Minburn.

-30-