

EDMONTON  
JOURNAL

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FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2025



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DAVID BLOOM

# SPIKE IN EDUCATION?

Students play volleyball in the University of Alberta quad Thursday during Welcome Week activities. Classes for the fall term at U of A kicked off Tuesday.

## 'Sick and scared': School lotteries create upheaval

Capacity crunch means students  
lose out on spaces close to home

STEVEN SANDOR

Wayne Whitlock has tears in his eyes as he looks across Allan Drive from the entrance to his family's townhouse complex to Dr. Margaret-Ann Armour School. His townhome is located just inside the gates.

Whitlock could grab a baseball and hurl it from the front steps of his abode and break a window at the school.

It's just past 3 p.m. and kids are streaming out. Some are boarding buses that are just across the street from Whitlock's home. Some walk

by the man who looks wistfully at the school.

As the first day of school ends, his 11-year-old son, Nolan, is not coming home from the school across the street. He's in the house. Even though the school is just yards from the Whitlock home, it may as well be time zones away.

That's because Nolan and his eight-year-old sister, Nicole, were not picked in the lottery to attend the at-capacity school.

So, they're required to take the bus out of their neighbourhood south of Anthony Henday Drive to Southgate.

"It's Lotto 6/49 for a kid to get an education," Whitlock says.

It's the reality of the population boom in new communities outside the Henday ring road. Families move in and the school fills up fast.

Dr. Margaret-Ann Armour School held its grand opening in the autumn of 2016. It's not even a decade old and the school is already at 120 per cent capacity. The K-9 school was designed for a little more than 900 students.

### ENROLMENT 'NOT GUARANTEED FOR ANY NEW STUDENT'

Because of the space crunch, Dr. Margaret-Ann Armour School is designated as Level 3 on Edmonton Public Schools' growth scale. That means that all new families who move into the catchment area are subject to lotteries to see if their kids can attend or not.

Kim Smith, a spokeswoman for Edmonton Public Schools, says that the school has been at Level 3 since 2020.

The overflow students are bused to McKee School, at 107 Street and 51 Avenue, near Southgate Centre mall, which had an enrolment of around 350 in the previous academic year.

SEE LOTTERY ON **A4**

## 63% of civil servants vote in favour of mediated deal

JACK FARRELL

A new contract has been reached between some 23,000 civil servants and the Alberta government, averting a strike that could have happened as soon as next week.

The Alberta Union of Provincial Employees says the mediator-recommended deal passed with 63 per cent of voting members in favour and 36.5 per cent opposed.

In a news release Wednesday, the union said 71 per cent of eligible members voted.

The affected employees include administrative workers, some Alberta Sheriffs, social workers and provincial wildfire fighters.

The approved contract stemmed from a last-ditch mediated bargaining effort last month between the union and the province, and includes a 12 per cent wage increase over four years.

SEE VOTE ON **A4**

# Open House

Saturday,  
September 13  
1 – 4 PM



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