

Minister of Education
PO Box 9045
STN PROV GOVT
Victoria BC V8W 9E2
BY EMAIL: EDUC.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Dear Minister Jennifer Whiteside,

On October 21, members of the SD40 New Westminister District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC) unanimously passed the following motion:

That the SD40 DPAC write a letter to MLA Jennifer Whiteside (New Westminister), and to the Ministry of Education in support of the District Capital Plan submission for 2022-23.

On behalf of the SD40 DPAC, I am writing to express support for our District's Capital Plan submission for 2022-23. We urge the Ministry to approve and fully fund the district's capital requests to accommodate population and enrollment growth in one of the fastest growing districts in the Province. According to City of New Westminister projections, the City of New Westminister will grow by approximately 36,000 new residents to approximately 104,000 people by 2041. Much of that growth will happen in the Queensborough and Fraser River Downtown zones.

The District did not receive approval for any major capital projects put forth in the 2021-22 capital plan even though Fraser River Middle School and Ecole Qayqayt Elementary School are currently over capacity. The priorities and enrollment pressures remain and the District has once again put forward the priorities for the 2022-23 capital plan. The District's main priorities are, first and foremost, the elementary school in the Fraser River Zone followed closely by a new middle school in the Fraser River Zone.

DPAC supports the entire 2022-23 Capital Plan submission which includes:

- Expansion of Queensborough Middle School (\$35M)
- New Elementary School in Fraser River Zone (\$47.6M)
- New Middle School in Fraser River Zone (\$58.1M)
- Replacement of Hume Park Elementary (\$31.4M)
- Hume Park Seismic Upgrade (\$509K)
- Acquisition of Land for Fraser River Middle School (\$25M), Queensborough (\$25M)
- Total: \$222.6M

Without this funding, our already over-capacity schools will experience worsening overcrowding. Overcrowding affects students and teachers alike resulting in overwhelmed and even discouraged students and staff. Schools are not just buildings - they are environments for learning. If the environment is not conducive to learning due to overcrowding, student achievement and teacher planning are negatively affected.

Thank you for your consideration. Please feel free to contact me to discuss this issue further.

Yours Sincerely,

Kathleen Carlsen
Chair, SD40 District Parent Advisory Council
newwestdpacchair@gmail.com

CC:

Karim Hachlaf, Superintendent New Westminister School District
Gurveen Dhaliwhal, Chair, New Westminister Board of Education
Anita Ansari, Trustee, New Westminister Board of Education
Dee Beattie, Trustee, New Westminister Board of Education
Danielle Connelly, Trustee, New Westminister Board of Education
Mark Gifford, Trustee, New Westminister Board of Education
Mary Lalji, Trustee, New Westminister Board of Education
Maya Russell, Trustee, New Westminister Board of Education