

***North Vancouver School District
Public Dialogue Summary Report
May 29, 2012***



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Table of Contents

I. INTRODUCTION.....	3
II. EVENT DETAILS.....	3
III. PUBLIC DIALOGUE PROCESS.....	4
<i>PUBLIC DIALOGUE: TRANSCRIPTION OF Q & A</i>	5
<i>OPEN HOUSE FEEDBACK FORM RESPONSES</i>	11
APPENDIX	18
<i>TWITTER POSTS</i>	18
<i>FACEBOOK POST</i>	18
<i>NORTH SHORE NEWS ADS</i>	20

I. INTRODUCTION

On May 29, 2012 the North Vancouver School District held a Public Dialogue with the Trustees to invite the community to learn more about the School District's land management strategy and to provide opportunities for citizens to provide input on the eleven properties within the City and District of North Vancouver.

A total of **fifty-five (55) community stakeholders** attended the Public Dialogue, of these individuals **sixteen (16) submitted Public Dialogue feedback forms** and one (1) individual submitted a feedback form from the NVSD April 25 Open House. This will be added to the Open House feedback.

II. EVENT DETAILS

Open House

Event: NVSD Land, Learning and Livability Public Dialogue
Date: Tuesday, May 29, 2012
Time: 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM
Location: Lucas Centre
Participants: 55

Notification - update

- Two half-page (double NVSD usual size) advertisements in the North Shore News on Friday, May 25th and Sunday, May 27th.
- Two email blasts to 130 subscribers that have opted-in to receive electronic Land Asset News Updates. Each email contained a brief description of the event and a link for more information at <http://blog44.ca/landmanagement/land-management-news-updates/>
- Promoted on NVSD website (www.nvsg44.bc.ca) on the land management webpage and the news & events webpage. In addition visitors to the NVSD44 website can click on the "how we keep you informed about consultation link to learn more or to sign up for updates. <http://blog44.ca/landmanagement/how-we-tell-you-about-consultation/>
- Distributed email invitations to local community organizations and both CNV and DNV councils
 - Federation of North Vancouver Community Associations
 - Blueridge Community Association
 - Capilano Gateway Association
 - Deep Cove Community Association
 - Delbrook Community Association
 - Edgemont and Upper Capilano Community Association
 - Edgemont and Upper Capilano Community Association
 - Lions Gate Neighbourhood Association
 - Lower Capilano Community Residents Association
 - Lynn Valley Community Association
 - Maplewood Community Association
 - Norgate Park Community Association

- Norwood Queens Community Association
 - Pemberton Heights Community Association
 - Save Our Shores Society (North Vancouver)
 - Seymour Community Association
 - Seymour Valley Community Association
 - Strathcona Community Association
 - Woodlands Sunshine Cascade Ratepayers Association
 - Edgemont Village Merchants Association
 - Grousewoods/Capilano Residents Association
 - Keith Lynn/Brooksbank Community Association
 - Panorama Drive Ratepayers
- Posted to Superintendent's blog <http://blog44.ca/superintendent/category/community-connections/>
 - Posted to Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/nvsd44>
 - Advance tweeted notification of Public Dialogue three times to approx. 1,300 followers on #nvsd44. In addition individual trustee's also tweeted messages about the May 29, 2012 Public Dialogue. Examples of the NVSD tweets and individual Trustee tweets are contained in the appendix.
 - Ads placed in North Shore News were also posted in advance on NVSD Employee electronic bulletin board for employees

III. PUBLIC DIALOGUE PROCESS

Citizens were welcomed to the Public Dialogue and presented with a handout of the power point presentation, that included space for discussion notes and a feedback form. Each table had a number of resource materials including an updated Q&A document with responses to questions submitted at the April 25th Open House and on line as part of the ongoing survey process.

Citizens were invited to participate in an introductory activity that involved placing a green sticky dot on a map of North Vancouver to indicate where they lived. The purpose of this activity was to provide a visual reference of who was in the room at the Public Dialogue.

Attendees were welcomed to sit at tables arranged in a semi circle facing the front of the room. At the front of the room seven chairs were arranged in a semi-circle on a small riser to ensure that all attendees would have a good view of each trustee during the dialogue. The set up was designed to create a comfortable environment for the public and the trustees to engage in conversation.

Franci Stratton, Board Chair welcomed attendees to the Public Dialogue. She introduced the Trustees and Catherine Rockandel, the certified professional facilitator that would be supporting the dialogue.

Catherine Rockandel provided an overview of the agenda and she reviewed the participation guidelines that would support the process.

The dialogue began with a six-minute video "Land, learning and livability: Students speak" produced and filmed entirely by students in the Argyle School Digital Media Academy. In the video the students asked their peers what they thought about options for surplus properties and how any revenue generated should be used.

Franci Stratton, Board Chair provided an introduction for the trustee presentation. The power point is available at <http://blog44.ca/landmanagement/may-29th-public-dialogue-event>

After the presentation the facilitator encouraged each table to discuss what they had heard or seen in the presentations or read in the handout materials that stood out for them. After approximately ten minutes of individual table discussion, each table was encouraged to share questions and comments with the whole group. A roving microphone was used and one person from each table led the discussion. After the first round after one person from each table had spoken, the facilitator continued the room discussion encouraging a different person at the table to build on what they had heard others say. The discussion continued around the room with most people sharing comments or asking questions. The Trustees answered most of the questions with NVSD staff answering technical questions.

The facilitator encouraged participants to share questions or comments on the six-foot piece of paper on the wall titled: Scrawl Wall: What questions and/or concerns need more attention? She encouraged participants to also fill out the feedback form distributed to them at the beginning of the evening.

The NVSD hired a professional transcriber to capture citizen comments during the Public Dialogue. These were projected on the screen for attendees to view during the discussion. The transcribed comments are contained below. In addition feedback form comments submitted at the Public Dialogue are included below.

PUBLIC DIALOGUE: TRANSCRIPTION OF Q & A

Q1: Is there an opportunity for the surplus properties to be redeveloped as community centres or to be used for sports facilities, as park space?

A1: The North Vancouver School District (NVSD) has heard that the health of the community is paramount. These are ideas that we have also heard from others during the engagement process and they will all be considered.

Q2: What part does the District of North Vancouver (DNV) or the City of North Vancouver (CNV) play in deciding what is done with the surplus properties?

A2: School sites are zoned for public use and if the use of the property is changed, a rezoning process will be triggered that will involve the municipal government.

Q3: Is there an opportunity to combine Windsor House with a daycare?

A3: No decisions have been made as yet and the NVSD is open to all ideas. Any ideas for specific facilities are welcome.

Q4: Will the proceeds from the sale of properties be retained by NVSD or will they be returned to the Province?

A4: 100% of the proceeds of the sale will be retained by the NVSD. Depending on whether the provincial or local government purchased the property, the proceeds may be split between restricted capital (75%) and local capital (25%). The Ministry of Education has criteria on the expenditure of restricted capital and the NVSD Board is the authority on the use of local capital.

Q5: Has the Seaspan contract been considered in the demographic changes resulting in declining enrollment?

A5: The overall capacity in the NVSD is 22,000 students, the number of students during the height of the baby boom. This capacity will be able to accommodate the infusion that may result from the Seaspan contract.

Q6: The CNV is revisiting its Official Community Plan (OCP). What steps are being taken by the NVSD to ensure that its decisions will be congruent with the new OCP that will be delivered by the end of 2012?

A6: Decisions are not being made at this stage of the engagement process. The NVSD is working and consulting on a regular basis with the CNV to ensure that its decisions will mesh with the new OCP.

Q7: Are the NVSD lands included in the CNV's Parks Master Plan?

A7: The participant who posed the question reported that school lands are included in the park inventory and disposition will reduce the amount of parkland per capita if they are repurposed.

Q8: There appears to be a baby boom on the North Shore because there are waiting lists for baby and preschool programs. This emphasizes the need for collaboration with the CNV and DNV as they develop OCPs.

Q9: Cloverley School and Ridgeway Annex are both located east of Lonsdale and there is no room for future population growth. Is it possible to repurpose Cloverley School as a community centre to accommodate ice sports and Ridgeway Annex as a daycare so both can be returned to educational use if required in the future?

A9: The NVSD has not made any decisions on use of the surplus properties and all suggestions will be considered.

Q10: Is the NVSD working with the North Vancouver Recreation Commission to amalgamate all ideas?

A10: Yes, but there are historical barriers that all parties are working hard to break down. A representative from the North Vancouver Recreation Commission participated in the May 8th Municipal Workshop. The purpose was to build understanding

Q11: Kenneth Gordon School (currently operating from Maplewood Elementary) and Windsor House (currently operating from the Lucas Centre) are the only options available to address

the needs of special needs students on the North Shore. Kenneth Gordon was cost prohibitive and the participant's child is thriving at Windsor House.

Q12: There has been discussion about the possibility of establishing an endowment. How does an endowment work?

A12: An endowment provides an opportunity to convert revenue from a sale to an annual revenue flow. The proceeds from the sale would be invested and the income generated from the investment would be used to supplement future operating costs.

Q13: Has an endowment be used by others?

A13: Both UBC and SFU have endowments. The Gordon Smith Foundation uses the endowment concept to support its arts education program.

Q14: A participant expressed gratitude to the NVSD for allowing Windsor House to consolidate with the Gulf Islands School District and to stay on the North Shore. The NVSD was urged to continue to partner with future developers, the Ministry of Education and others during the disposition process to ensure Windsor House can remain on the North Shore.

Q15: A participant urged the NVSD to have a realistic focus as it implements high tech learning options. In class spaces are still required in the high tech learning environment. The experience at Langara Community College was that in-class spaces filled up while on-line spaces did not. Students recognized the need to be disciplined to succeed in the on-line learning option and selected the in-class spaces. NVSD needs to recognize that there is a wide variety of learners and learning styles.

A15: The distributed learning model in the NVSD is a blended model that includes both on-line and in-class components.

Q16: What plans does the NVSD have for replacing the Handsworth track when the school is rebuilt?

A16: The capital request for the new Handsworth School is in process. The rebuilding of the track is a separate project. The NVSD recognizes the need to work with the DNV and Handsworth School regarding the replacement of the track. Funding for the track is an issue and there is a need to find a way to pay for it.

Q17: Is the NVSD willing to work with the North Vancouver Sports Council and the North Vancouver Recreation Commission? Is the NVSD willing to consider using the Lucas Centre as a site for a track?

A17: NVSD is committed to working together with all parties. A process to collaborate needs to be developed.

C18: A participant expressed support for Windsor House.

C19: A participant expressed the opinion that walking to school is a wonderful thing for students and also understands the difficulty of having small community schools. There are advantages to having schools as a strong community hub and would like to see a way for schools not to shut down. It was suggested that schools be used on weekends, evenings and summers as centres for the community. An example was given where a bicycle building shop operated from a school that provided a learning opportunity for the community. The NVSD needs to find creative solutions.

A19: The NVSD agrees with the need to use schools as a community hub. The District as a whole is becoming a bigger community and it is difficult to provide the opportunity for all children to walk to school.

Q20: How long will the Lonsdale Creek Daycare continue to operate at the existing site?

A20: A decision has not been made regarding the Lonsdale Creek Annex.

Q21: What will the timelines be once the NVSD has made a decision on the Lonsdale Creek Annex property?

A21: The first phase of the consultation process will be completed in June and discussion will follow in the fall in individual neighbourhoods. It could be up to 2 years before a decision is made on any particular property.

C22: Once lands are sold, they cannot be retrieved. The NVSD was urged to hold onto the land. The projection is for the doubling of the density in Metro Vancouver in the next 30 years. There is a need for community spaces, especially when the population doubles, and where there can be intergenerational contact.

A22: The NVSD must balance the need to hold land with having vacant schools. Land planning issues require partnering and community connections. The NVSD has heard loud and clear the community's desire for it to hold the land and recognizes the need to find better ways to work together with community partners. The NVSD needs the energy from the community as it moves forward in this process.

Q23: Are there any options for partial leases of schools that are too large for the student population?

A23: The NVSD is open to all options. The ability to proceed with a partial lease depends on the property being considered.

C23: Windsor House fits the model of individual based learning. Students are able to utilize the property around the Lucas Centre as part of their education. The Lucas Centre is always in use. What is happening to the programs that are in the Lucas Centre Keep the Lucas Centre as is and have other partners come in to utilize the remainder.

A23: The Artists for Kids program and the administration and storage facilities will be moved from the Lucas Centre to the new Education Services Centre on Lonsdale Avenue in June and the Community Learning Program will be leaving the Lucas Centre in the fall of 2012. The NVSD

is looking at what the land and building can offer the community in the future. Work is in progress to balance the needs of the community and students.

Q24: The NVSD is fortunate to be in a position where it has lands that can be used to fund education. With the OCP revision, there will be increased density but there are no plans for additional schools. There is a need for a buffer for additional students. There is a dire need for daycare spaces. If the cost of maintaining the facilities is too high and buildings have to be taken down, can the land be kept for use as a sports fields, etc?

A24: There are 18 schools that currently have daycare facilities. The potential exists for the NVSD to respond to increases in population and the need for daycare spaces. The NVSD is not ignoring the potential for future growth.

Q25: What will happen to the fields and creeks around the Lucas Centre if the land is sold? What plans are in place to protect the environmentally sensitive areas? Will the fields disappear or will they be kept?

A25: The gravel fields belong to the CNV and the grass fields belong to the NVSD. Any changes to these properties would comply with environmental requirements to the sensitive areas.

Q26: What strategies are in place for working with the CNV and DNV to address traffic concerns of local governments and citizens?

A26: The NVSD understands the need to find solutions to traffic issues. The NVSD has a good working relationship with staff and municipal Councils. The approval of the local governments is required for any rezoning of school properties.

C27: Has there been any thought given to establishing microbusinesses or green businesses in schools? This may give rise to programs where students can learn to work in businesses as part of their education.

A27: The NVSD would have to consider zoning implications for microbusinesses but does support school apprenticeship programs.

Q28 What discussions have taken place with developers thus far?

A28: No discussions have taken place to date. All suggestions for potential uses of school properties will be considered.

C29: A participant urged the NVSD to retain the land and pointed to a situation where Hillside school in West Vancouver was sold and the adverse impact on the community.

Q30: Are there barriers to mixed-use facilities operating from Cloverley School? Why is this not happening any more?

A30: The NVSD would put out a call for proposals to be submitted and all proposals will be considered. It is the responsibility of the proponents to gather groups together to develop a mixed-use proposal.

Q31: Has the ability for proponents to submit a mixed-use proposal been communicated?

A31: Yes, this was communicated in the Request for Proposals document.

Q32: What is the present value of the outdoor school and is it still needed?

A32: The outdoor school offers a unique learning opportunity in Metro Vancouver. It provides learning that cannot take place in the classroom. It is difficult to put a value on the outdoor school. A covenant is in place requiring the property to be used as an educational facility and this has a bearing on the value of the land.

C33: A participant relayed her experience in the planning of two health care facilities where the facilities were already too small when they were opened. This situation also occurred with respect to the opening of a new school. Population increases are expected in the future yet demographers are predicting smaller families and declining school enrolment.

A33: Nobody can predict the future. When the Ministry of Education allowed students to attend schools outside of their catchment areas, it resulted in increased traffic flows. This is an example of an unintended consequence from a policy decision. Many factors are beyond the control of the NVSD who are elected to provide the best education to students. This must be balanced with the needs of the community.

C34: The NVSD was urged not to take a short-term view and to project needs out for 20 or 50 years.

C35: Concern was expressed about the original contractual arrangements around the cost of the outdoor school. There are other good programs available and the outdoor school is one of the things that can go.

A35: The NVSD exercises careful financial stewardship of all of its programs, including the outdoor school. The value of the outdoor school experience cannot be quantified. The preliminary budget that was approved for the next year included a downsizing of the staff at the outdoor school.

Q36: Is there a difference between the funding for the outdoor school and the gifted program?

A36: The outdoor school is a fee-paying program although it does not always cover its costs in full. The gifted program existed in the 1980s.

Q37: The school lands are a public trust. There is concern about the sale of school lands and that decisions have already been made. It appears to the community that the Lucas Centre will be sold because programs are being moved out of it. Is the deciding factor for whether land will be sold the value of the property?

A37: The value of the property is not the deciding factor. No decisions have been made to date about the future of the Lucas Centre and the movement of programs and staff from the Lucas Centre are not related to any potential sale

Q38: What happened with the Park Place Daycare application for space in the Lucas Centre?

A38: The Park Place Daycare requested space in the Lucas Centre in 2011 because their existing space was to be renovated over the summer. An agreement was reached on the summer rental of the property. Subsequently, the Daycare's landlord decided not to renovate and Park Place Daycare chose to stay in their existing premises.

Q39: A suggestion was made that the Lucas Centre be converted to a sports complex. Have CSA funding requirements been considered?

A39: The NVSD has heard the idea for a sports complex. The NVSD is not familiar with the CSA funding requirements

OPEN HOUSE FEEDBACK FORM RESPONSES

Index: R = Respondent #, please see individual comment forms for names and contact information.

1. Based on everything that you have heard this evening, if you were the decision maker, what criteria would you use to balance neighbourhood concerns, the broader community and student needs?

R1: Revisit neighbourhoods that are now experiencing family growth, assess their needs – short term and long term. Design schools that can house three levels of education – grade, junior and high school for sustainability

R2: Every viewpoint should be considered fairly - The student's needs are the most important

R3: It depends on how you define "broader community". In no way should broader community include members of the property development community as by and large they are motivated by profit and not the genuine needs of the community. People in the neighbourhood and the larger citizenry should be able to vote on final land use options.

R4: If you don't have to sell property, don't

R5: Lease unused buildings – do not sell properties – tear down and make use of property as fields, tracks, etc.

R6: Developers should be the last people consulted in these types of decisions. I would say you must be only concerned with ideas to enhance education and community – without community there is no reason. The rest is a waste of time

R7: Do not sell the land – use for community purpose

R8: Open and transparent discussions and decisions. Keep elected reps (trustees) in the loop and involved in these decisions

R9: Keep school lands, don't sell

R10: Windsor House school is a perfect example of the direction the province is going in education with its emphasis on individualized learning. I think it would be wonderful if the board could give priority to continuing renting to the school

R11: Due to no more land being made! I propose we make creative use of the properties/ budget we have / do not destroy the present holdings of the school board – spend time on creative uses for community and to make money

R12: Priority would be the closed and empty schools first, combined neighbourhood needs, long term financial and revenue opportunities

R13: Holding public school land over the long term – even if it means demolition and conversion to park/playing fields in the shorter term – land will be even more valuable with density

R14: Hold on to the properties, use the building as long as possible (daycares, community centres, etc) see what the future brings

R15: Future requirements and scarcity of land

R16: Don't sell off land – break buildings into sections and lease to smaller organizations – use tiny buildings for daycare

2. Based on the presentations and the dialogue this evening, did you learn anything new? If yes, what new knowledge or understanding did you gain?

R1: Learned more about the Parks inventory and the 11% is to be kept and recreating the next generation of babyboom. Also about how the Smith Foundation works – interest on the investment used to support Arts program

R2: the gravel fields belong to the city – many kids already have a long journey to school

R3: I learned that there are specific developers who have lobbying strength with identifiable “players” and lobbyists at the ministry level, and who have plans to use their provincial affiliations and possible links to key NVSD administration to achieve their acquisition goals.

R4: No response

R5: No response

R6: It sounds like there is a strong movement towards selling property and possibly education may be headed for privatization and that schools may not exist in the future. If education is the main reason for the board's existence, then Windsor House should remain.

R7: I now have a better understanding of what community is wanting

R8: Outdoor school info – Community is overwhelmingly against the sale of school lands but seems to think that it is being set up. Trustees are saying that no decisions are made

YET it appears that movements of programs are leading that way....
staff/administration/ superintendent seem to be in the know

R9: I learned about Windsor House and how passionate the parents are about the facility

R10: I did learn a lot and thank you for the opportunity. I do see that there are a lot of competing interests and weighing everything is a challenge. I think Windsor House deserves priority because of its importance to the province.

R11 Sincerity

R12: School land being included in the parkland % - silos are hampering the overall good and development potential for the NVSD

R13: Please, please, make numbers of budget slides legible both on projected slides and handouts. Totally illegible

R14: The school board problems

R15: No comment

R16: A little bit – about “lead tenants” etc – learning about where dollars go if sale happen (thought some of it went to the province)

3. Other comments:

R1: Lower Lonsdale has lots of young families moving in, need to address, what school is available close by or developing a school and field near by. For other opportunities - look at international school centres, tourist attractions Science World – educational; media centre, community live theatre, community agriculture, mini orchards/farming, sustainability – 100 mile challenge

R11: Future prediction: budgets are not going to balance either and land prices are not going to go down!

R16: Read community report and news stories. Thanks for listening to Windsor House questions appreciate the use of Lucas Centre this past year

4. Did you attend NVSD Open House on April 25th?

R1: Yes

R2: No

R3: No

R4: No

R5: No

R6: No

R7: Yes

R8: Yes

R9: Yes

R10: No

R11: Yes

R12: No

R13: No

R14: Yes

R15: Yes

R16: No

Summary: Seven (7) attended Open House - Nine (9) did not attend Open House

5. If yes, did you complete a feedback form?

R1: Yes

R2: No

R3: n/a

R4: n/a

R5: n/a

R6: No

R7: Yes

R8: No

R9: Yes

R10: No

R11: Yes

R12: n/a

R13: No

R14: Yes

R15: Yes

R16: n/a

Summary: Six (6) that attended Open House filled out a feedback form

6. Have you visited the NVSD Land Management website to look at resource materials?

R1: Yes

R2: No

R3: Yes

R4: Yes

R5: No

R6: No

R7: Yes

R8: Yes

R9: Yes

R10: Yes

R11: Yes

R12: Yes

R13: No

R14: Yes

R15: Yes

R16 No

Summary: Eleven (11) have visited the website and five (5) have not

7. Have you completed an online survey?

R1: Yes

R2: No

R3: No

R4: Yes

R5: No

R6: No

R7: Yes

R8: No

R9: Yes

R10: No

R11: No

R12: No

R13: No

R14: Yes

R15: Yes

R16: No

Summary: Six (6) had completed an online survey and ten (10) had not

8. Do you have any recommendations on how the NVSD can improve its community engagement?

R1: Shaw 4 or City Line 13 be televised to reach out to the public. Local radio station AM690 report

R2 Be open about the role that developers have in the process – we all know they're involved – involve enrolled students

R3: Invite input from all ages – especially seniors. Make sure meetings and decisions are transparent – including the lobbying parties identification

R4: No response

R5: No response

R6: Listen to the people of the community – the main use of the land and buildings needs to be educational. Windsor House offers that

R7: Do what you are doing

R8: Keep listening - be open minded and transparent with your process. Do not consider selling land unless it is required (ie: for the new highway interchange)

R9: Keep sending emails, but not too much information on each one

R10: These kinds of events are great!

R11: Continue to be 'honest' and future orientated

R12: Individual mailers to house holds, better links to CNV and municipal websites

R13: Please align with other community processes

R14: Keep going for as long as it takes

R15: No comment

R16: Bring recommendations to public meetings – it is hard to believe there is not a tentative plan in place – things that the board knows is going to happen – makes the public cynical when input seems to be pointless – knowing the plans in advance would maybe help

9. Resident of:

R1: DNV

R2: CNV

R3: no response

R4: CNV

R5: CNV

R6: Vancouver

R7: CNV

R8: CNV

R9 DNV

R10: DNV (we moved to NV 10 years ago because of Windsor House)

R11: DNV

R12: CNV

R13: CNV

R14: CNV

R15: CNV

R16: CNV

Summary: 4 DNV; 10 CNV; 1 Vancouver; 1 no response

10. Do you have children in school?

R1: Yes, did not answer which grades or school

R2: No response

R3: Yes, did not answer which grades or school

R4: No

R5: Yes, grade 10

R6: Yes, primary

R7: Yes, grand children

R8: Yes, preschool at Ridgeway

R9: Yes, Grades 9 and 12 at Carson Graham

R10: No

R11: Did have 3 in school

R12: No

R13: Yes, daycare

R14: No

R15: Yes, kindergarten, Westview

R16: No

Summary: Nine (9) had children in school; five (5) no children; one (1) no response

11. I am a:

R1: Parent

R2: Community member and former student

R3: parent

R4: Community member

R5: Parent

R6: Parent

R7: Community member

R8: Parent

R9: Parent

R10: Parent (of a former NVSD student that is now volunteering at school)

R11: Community member

R12: Community member

R13: Community member/ Parent

R14: Community member

R15: Parent

R16: Community member

Summary: Nine (9) people identified themselves as parents; eight (8) as community members

For more information contact:

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Website: nvsd44.bc.ca Land Management 2012

APPENDIX

TWITTER POSTS



Barry Forward @BarryForward

29 May

NV community invited to NVSD44 Board of Education **Public Dialogue** on 11 'surplus' properties tonight at 6pm bit.ly/MYuSJU
[#bced](#) [#nvan](#)
📍 from Greater Vancouver, British Columbia



School District 44 @NVSD44

28 May

"Land, learning and livability" Board of Education Public Dialogue event takes place Tuesday, May 29th. Learn more at: bit.ly/MYuSJU
[Details](#)

FACEBOOK POST

 **North Vancouver School District** shared a link.
Monday 

Just a quick reminder to the community about the May 29th Public Dialogue on "Land, learning and livability" that the Board will host at the Lucas Centre (2132 Hamilton Avenue). Doors open at 6 for a 6:30 start time. We look forward to seeing you there. <http://blog44.ca/landmanagement/attend/upcoming-events/>

 <p>North Vancouver School District the natural place to learn™</p>	<p>Upcoming Events NVSD44 Land Management blog44.ca</p> <p>// Upcoming Public Events The Board's community engagement program includes two Open Houses and a local government</p>
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NORTH SHORE NEWS ADS

Land, Learning and Livability

The Board of Education is reaching out to the community this spring regarding the School District's land management initiatives.

During this process, trustees have received a broad range of questions from members of the community, including the ones presented here. The complete list of questions and answers is available at blog44.ca/landmanagement/faq. We hope you find the information useful and we encourage you to continue the dialogue with us.

How has the School District determined that these sites are surplus?

Declining enrollment, population demographics, educating in an environment of choice (growth of independent schools, cross-boundary and cross-catchment enrolment) are some of the factors that influence student population numbers.

Identifying where schools can operate more efficiently – to ensure we are directing maximum funding to the classroom, and student learning – has resulted in some school closures over the past several years and created the need to address what to do with vacant buildings and space.

Don't we need this land to accommodate future population growth? Aren't we just at the bottom of a cycle where the number of children will increase again?

Demographers simply don't see another boomer explosion similar to the 50s and 60s when many of the School District's properties were established. The aging population, smaller families and the high cost of housing on the

North Shore mean fewer children and, as a result, not all current NVSD properties will be required to serve as public schools over the long-term. The School District believes it can accommodate potential future enrolment growth within existing operational schools, along with retaining capacity for potential growth through short and medium term leases.

The Board believes that it is wise to retain some of its surplus property to ensure flexibility and accommodate new growth as identified in City and District official community plans. We have an over-supply of buildings today that are not needed over the long-term. The question becomes what do we need to retain as learning environments in the future and what might be repurposed to serve other community and local needs?

Why is this happening in North Vancouver when Surrey is bursting at the seams?

The high cost-of-living on the North Shore and an aging demographic are two major factors in North Vancouver's ongoing declining enrollment and subsequent school closures.

Surrey's patterns of growth and greater options in affordable living for families have created burgeoning student populations in some areas of their school district. The Ministry of Education recently announced a projected decline of 5245 students for the Province in the 2012/13 school year. In the past ten years, provincial enrolment has declined by 30,000 FTE students.

It seems like selling off properties is a short-term solution to budget shortfalls. What innovative thinking has been made around attractive programs to entice more students into the district?

The Board is not selling properties to fund budget shortfalls. Good budget management has allowed the School District to add back \$1 million of program spending in each of the past two fiscal years. In the last five years, the School District has added new programs such as the International Baccalaureate, Soccer Academy, Digital Media Academy and additional Distributed Learning courses to provide more options and enriched opportunities for students.

Maintaining old surplus schools even at a minimal level is extremely expensive. This becomes a financial liability that reduces the maintenance budget for functioning schools.

What will the Board of Education do with the feedback from the community engagement process?

All the input that is collected will be reviewed by trustees and will help to broaden their understanding of community perspectives, ideas and priorities. Final decisions are the responsibility of the Board of Education.

NVSD Board of Education invites you to a Public Dialogue

**Tuesday, May 29, 2012
6:00 pm - 9:00 pm
Lucas Centre
2132 Hamilton Avenue
North Vancouver**

Presentation to begin at 6:30 pm

**Share your input online at
www.blog44.ca/landmanagement**



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Land, Learning and Livability

The Board of Education is reaching out to the community this spring regarding the School District's land management initiatives.

During this process, trustees have received a broad range of questions from members of the community, including the ones presented here. The complete list of questions and answers is available at blog44.ca/landmanagement/faq. We hope you find the information useful and we encourage you to continue the dialogue with us.

What are the Board of Education's goals and objectives in leasing or selling surplus land?

There are several objectives. First, we would like to retain sufficient land to provide for long-term school district needs, including sufficient space to accommodate future enrolment growth that may arise. Second, as stewards of public funds, we have a duty to explore maximum financial returns while pursuing solutions that balance both students' needs as well as the needs of the community. Third, proceeds from any land transactions (leases, rentals, sales) would be allocated to enhance the student learning experience and to fund capital projects that are not eligible for government funding.

What benefits to students can be achieved through the leasing or disposition of surplus land?

Enriched educational programs; facilities upgrades (e.g., the heritage restorations of Ridgeway and Queen Mary schools would not be possible without the financial

contribution from the sale of land parcels on Lonsdale and Chesterfield Avenues); Outdoor School campus improvements; and school and classroom technology may potentially benefit from the proceeds of land sales or leases. The Board could consider creating an endowment fund from the proceeds of land leases and spend only the interest to support enriched programs.

If land is sold, who gets to keep the money and what will it be used for? If land is leased, who keeps the money?

The School District would keep all land sale proceeds which are allocated to restricted capital or local capital. The Board has authority over spending local capital. The Minister of Education must approve expenditures of restricted capital funds. Proceeds of land sales must be spent on capital assets such as computers and buildings (including replacement and repairs). The School District retains and has authority over 100% of the proceeds of lease revenue.

Why is the NVSD holding on to certain properties it no longer needs as public schools, and how much is it costing to maintain them?

It makes sense to hold on to properties where there is reasonable probability of the site being required for future growth.

The School District is presently leasing its Westover, Maplewood and Fromme properties which enhances our operating budget by \$1 million annually. These schools have been identified for long-term retention in the NVSD Surplus School District Land Retention and Disposition Strategy.

The annual cost of retaining an empty school varies between \$15,000 to \$30,000. This pays for the security system, minimal heat in winter and some repairs that arise from vandalism. A vacant school may attract more vandalism over the long term, which is not good for the local neighborhood. Old schools require large capital upgrades on a periodic basis to maintain them at a functional level. For example, a boiler replacement or a roof replacement can each exceed \$300,000 for an elementary school.

The expected useful life of a school building is 50 years unless it has had substantial upgrades. The School District's surplus facilities are all between 43 and 59 years old.

Has the School District considered alternate uses for surplus school properties?

In terms of alternate uses, schools are purpose-built and function well for some independent schools, fine arts groups, pre-schools and day-cares because they generally require minimal renovations.

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