

# PAC Version: Transparent Planning First Motion

October 28th, 2021

**Notice of Motion:** Transparent planning first

**Reference to Strategic Plan:**

*Goal 4: Provide effective leadership, governance and stewardship.*

**Passed Motion:**

That the Vancouver Board of Education not advance any decisions that impact school closure, school consolidations, or land disposal, for two years (December 2021-December 2023) or until:

- Policies and plans (including the Long Range Facilities Plan) are based on enrollment projections that include the latest data on current population (Census 2021) and approved plans and policies (such as Vancouver Plan, etc.)
- All underlying enrollment assumptions are shared publicly in an accessible way
- The Trustee Vision, including definition of Neighbourhood Schools, is coded into plans and policies
- A school capacity utilization target is articulated and explained
- School facilities are scored and prioritized using clear criteria, including equity

**Rationale:**

WHEREAS (1)

The Vancouver School Board Trustees are holding public lands and buildings on behalf of current and future generations of children, youth, and families in Vancouver.

WHEREAS (2)

The ongoing mental health impacts of stress and uncertainty from COVID-19 and previous closure considerations in 2019, 2016 and 2010, as well as consolidation (i.e. closure) considerations mentioned in the 2021 LRFP continue to cause a great deal of stress for students and parents, who need time to recover.

WHEREAS (3)

The Long Range Facilities Plan approved in January 2021 is based on enrollment projections that do not take into consideration the latest data on where families live and upcoming plans that have major impacts on the number of families living in Vancouver and where they will live. These include [Canada Census 2021](#) (results available in 2022), the [Vancouver Plan](#), [Broadway Plan](#) and [Jericho Lands Policy Statement](#) (expecting to be approved in 2022).

WHEREAS (4)

Enrollment projections that form the basis of policy and planning for the VSB project a continued decline in enrollment, despite regional and provincial data indicating a continued increase in the population of children in Vancouver. VSB's underlying assumptions that result in the projected decline have not been shared publicly and are hidden behind a curtain of proprietary data. This not only erodes public trust in the enrollment projections, it also communicates that VSB's vision for the district is for more families to seek alternatives to a great public education in Vancouver.

WHEREAS (5)

The Long Range Facilities Plan approved in January 2021 has a Trustee Vision that has yet to be codified into the planning, specifically around the definition of Neighbourhood School.

WHEREAS (6)

Unlike many other districts, Vancouver's Long Range Facilities Plan does not articulate a school utilization target to provide flexibility for the district to accommodate fluctuations in student populations. For example, in Richmond's Long Range Facilities Plan, a target of 85% capacity utilization is set to provide a consistent and equitable range of programs to all schools and support capital funding requests.

WHEREAS (7)

Seismic upgrade prioritization, school closures / consolidations and new school proposals are ever-changing and rely on cross-referencing several different VSB policy documents, including the Long Range Facilities Plan, the Seismic Mitigation Program, the School Expansion Program, the Five-Year Capital Plan submission, and the recent Long Term Investment Plan. A scorecard, such as Seattle's Facilities Master Plan Update Scoring Criteria, that prioritizes school facilities, with transparent weighted scoring criteria that includes right size capacity, equity, health, safety and security, building condition, educational adequacy, etc. as the basis for these policies would make decisions more data-driven and transparent.

WHEREAS (8)

The need for a site for a Conseil Scolaire Francophone school "West of Main" can be met via available sites, and does not require closing a school that displaces students. Parents encourage the VSB to consult with the parent community on options at the earliest opportunity.