



Memorandum *VSB* vancouver school board

ITEM 2

Date: April 13, 2017

To: Joint Committee II/III (Planning and Facilities/Education and Student Services Committee)

From: Scott Robinson – Superintendent of Schools

Re: Laurier Annex – Recommendation for Closure

INTRODUCTION

This report contains a recommendation.

BACKGROUND

Laurier Annex is a K-4 annex located at 590 West 65th Avenue. It shares the same catchment as Laurier Elementary (Main), located at 7350 Laurel Street. Prior to the 2016/17 school year, parents who live in the Laurier catchment had the option of sending their children to either location for Kindergarten through grade four, then all students attended the Main school for grades five through seven.



Historical Enrolment – Laurier Annex and Laurier (Main) Elementary:

School Year:	Annex Enrolment:	Annex Number of Divisions:	Main School Enrolment:	Main School Number of Divisions:	TOTAL CATCHMENT ENROLMENT
2007-2008	136	6	349	14	485
2008-2009	130	6	337	13	467
2009-2010	122	6	327	13	449
2010-2011	126	6	305	12	431
2011-2012	103	6	293	12	396
2012-2013	90	5	284	11	374
2013-2014	79	4	274	11	353
2014-2015	64	3	299	12	363
2015-2016	44	2	289	12	333
2016-2017	0	0	317	12	317

Registration for 2016/17

During the registration period for the 2016/17 school year, it became apparent that Annex enrolment was continuing to decrease, with an early March total enrolment of 18 students in Kindergarten through grade four. After a meeting on March 4, 2016 with school administration about the educational and social opportunities available at the main school compared to the Annex, parents of all remaining students ultimately chose to have their children attend the Laurier Main School for the 2016/17 school year. As of March 7, 2016 there were no students registered at Laurier Annex for 2016/17. As a result, an educational program was not offered at Laurier Annex for the 2016/17 school year and as per policy FL-R School Closures staff initiated the school closure process on April 18, 2016.

FUTURE PROJECTIONS

Future Enrolment Projections for Laurier (Total Catchment)

Laurier Elementary (Main) has a functional capacity of **320** students, as currently organized, and also has a portable on site for a total possible functional capacity of **350** students. Enrolment projections for the entire catchment indicate that the main school will be able to accommodate all students in the catchment for at least the next several years. Enrolment projections indicate that there will be new residential development in the catchment which will likely yield an increase in school-aged children. District staff will monitor enrolment carefully and, should it be required, steps would be taken to ensure there is an appropriate number of spaces available for in-catchment students.

Year:	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Projected Enrolment	335	333	331	329	335	339	345	347	347

The recent settlement between the British Columbia Teachers' Federation and the Government of British Columbia has resulted in the restoration of the previous Collective Agreement language affecting class size and composition. This will result in the need for additional enrolling divisions in many schools. Although the final school organization has not yet been determined, it is anticipated that Laurier Elementary will require 14 divisions for the 2017/18 school year. The school is able to accommodate that number of enrolling classroom spaces.

CONSULTATION

Pursuant to Board policy FL and FL-R *School Closures* (Appendix A), the following steps were taken to ensure an appropriate level of consultation occurred:

April 18, 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration for Closure process initiated • Notices posted on VSB website and at annex and main school <p>Notification of consideration for closure letter to principals and PAC</p>
June 15, 2016 5:00 pm	Administrative report of schools recommended for closure brought to Joint Committee II/III
June 20, 2016 7:00 pm	Board approved proceeding to consider closure and consultation.
June 21, 2016	School(s) notified of outcome of Board decision as to whether to consider for closure.
Sept 20, 2016 7:00 pm	Public Meeting – public communication and consultation at Laurier Elementary
October 4, 2015	Deadline for further public input through written submissions
April 19, 2017	DMT consultation report summarizing results of public consultation to Joint Committee II/III
April 24, 2017 7:00 pm	Final decision at public Board meeting

NOTIFICATION TO THE COMMUNITY AND SCHOOL REGARDING PUBLIC MEETING

Letters were sent to the Laurier Annex parent community in April, and June 2016 to notify them that Laurier Annex was under closure consideration with information about process and future dates. Translations included Chinese (traditional and simplified versions). In September 2016 the Laurier Elementary parent community again received letters regarding Laurier Annex closure consideration and Open House information. Copies of the letters were posted on the doors of Laurier Elementary and also posted in the local community centre.

Open house information was posted on the VSB website. An ad was placed in the September 1, 2016 edition of the Courier about the Open House to be held on September 20th.

RESULTS OF CONSULTATION

Feedback for the closing of Sir Wilfred Laurier Annex was collected from a public meeting held on September 20, 2016 at the main school. A total of 11 adults attended the public meeting. A total of six

feedback forms were received at the meeting with no additional received by email in the 14 days that followed the meeting.

Key issues raised at both the event and via the feedback forms include:

- Future use of the site and the potential loss of green space
- Maintaining the site as a community amenity, either as a place for education, child or seniors' care, or as green space for recreation

Detailed summaries of the public meeting and the feedback forms:

Public Meeting

The public meeting held at the main school on September 20, 2016 from 7:00-8:30pm was conducted as an informal open house. Following is a summary of the key questions and issues raised at the meeting:

- Will the school potentially reopen if the demographics of the area change?
- What will happen to the land?
- Will there be a process to decide how it will be used?
- Will the green space remain a community amenity?
- A preferred outcome would have been to have the school remain open
- Efforts by the receiving school to make displaced students feel welcome was noted as appreciated by parents and helpful to children

Feedback Forms

A total of six feedback forms were received, broken down as follows:

- 4 forms completed by self-identified "Parent(s) of Laurier Student"
- 1 form completed by self-identified "Resident(s)"
- 1 forms completed by those who self-identified as "Other"

Issues:

- Keep the school grounds accessible for community recreational use
- Changing demographics and neighbourhood developments will increase area population

Ideas for alternate uses of the school site:

- Adult day centre
- Other school uses such as a place for education, child or seniors' care
- Green space, community park, or recreation space

CONCLUSION

Based on future enrolment projections, it is not anticipated that the school district will require the use of Laurier Annex as an educational facility in the near future. As noted above, it will be important to monitor catchment enrolment carefully. One option would be to consider compatible alternate lease use for this school. All expectations regarding school closure consultation contained in both the School Act and Board policy have been met.

RECOMMENDATION

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT Laurier Annex be closed effective April 24, 2017 or such date as the Board determines appropriate.