



June 14, 2021

The Board of Education of School District No. 73

Dear members:

We are writing this letter regarding the proposed school catchment change affecting Juniper Ridge and Marion Schilling. We moved to Juniper Ridge in 2016 specifically so our son could attend a neighbourhood school at Juniper Ridge Elementary (JRES). JRES is among the top two most highly regarded Kamloops elementary schools and is situated within a tight-knit community which really appealed to us. Our son was also able to attend the Juniper Early Learning Center daycare from the age of three and then continue in their after-school care program.

We live on [REDACTED] which would require our son to switch to Ralph Bell Elementary if the catchment changes are approved. Our son has [REDACTED] and participates in an IEP within JRES. He has faced many struggles in school including social aspects. We are so proud of his progress and so thankful for the team at JRES. However, we are very concerned about the potential affects of this transition. Not only would he lose his beloved school and IEP team, but he would also be leaving all his close friends from kindergarten on, and he would no longer be able to attend his daycare as they only have one bus for pick-up. It would be a dramatic change for him, and if it does not go well, his mental health will be greatly affected. He suffers from self esteem issues due to his [REDACTED], and we need him to remain in his current supportive school, daycare, and social group.

We are also concerned about the location of Ralph Bell Elementary. It is too near undesirable hotels with criminal activity as well as being on a very busy road. This is not what any of the parents in Juniper Ridge wanted for their children.

Our property values will be negatively affected as well. Houses in the JRES catchment will be more desirable than houses that fall into the Ralph Bell catchment due to the lack of a neighbourhood school. You have stated that you do not want to impact all Juniper Ridge families by using Ralph Bell as a 6/7 school, yet this would even the playing field for all families. It would keep friends together and keep property values comparable. A 6/7 school would also help prepare students for high school and ease that transition. It's quite an abrupt change to go from elementary school to high school.

The radio announcement regarding the approval of the other three catchment changes stated that the numbers just didn't add up for any other options. While we understand that, we cannot think of our children as numbers. There are so many other considerations that are more important.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kim and Scott H [REDACTED]