

To whom it may concern,

RE: Kamloops: Juniper Ridge/Marion Schilling Catchment Change

I would like to share with you why I am against this change.

I have lived in Kamloops my entire life, and deciding on where to raise a family didn't come lightly. We chose a home in the Juniper area because of its primary focus being on families, as well as having an elementary school with an excellent reputation.

I am very concerned with the environment surrounding Ralph Bell. Safety is a huge concern for me, with drug use and crime frequenting the area. I do not feel comfortable sending my children there. There is simply not enough staff to monitor every event surrounding the school with that many students. Having to make sure the school field is "needle-free" is something I never wanted to have to consider, let alone worry about when it comes to my child's elementary education. Like so many other parents, I too feel as if we are being "down-graded" or "punished" for choosing to raise a family in Juniper West. This change could considerably affect the dynamic of our family-oriented neighbourhood. It will also contribute to a major increase in traffic during peak hours on the only Juniper Ridge entrance/exit.

This change for Juniper West seems like a contradiction; since, the purpose is supposed to be in support of the children. Moving these students from a school that's over capacity, yet safe, familiar, and with friends; to another school that's over capacity, but not as safe, unfamiliar, requires upgrading, and with kids from multiple neighbourhoods, doesn't seem like it's in the best interest of the students. I fear it will only negatively impact Juniper West families, increase stress and upset mental health for the kids involved as well as parents. I personally have been quite anxious and unsettled about how this will move forward.

As I understand it, funding is always a tender topic. I would like to see an addition made to the existing Juniper Ridge Elementary School, until a second school in Juniper West can be built. Juniper is growing exponentially, with multiple developments in production, as well as many planned "multi-family" designations slated for future development. I love that Juniper Ridge is growing into a larger family community. That being said, we are in desperate need for a second school in the area and I strongly feel that that should be a main focus for the very near future. For now, if we were to have an addition to Juniper Ridge Elementary School to accommodate some of the growth, our children could remain a part of the neighbourhood we chose for them, without having to re-locate.

Regarding this change, please really consider how the negative outweighs the positive. I don't believe that this move would be in the students best interest. It is not solving the problem, but only moving the problem, while adding additional stress and anxiety. The reason for the change contradicts the purpose.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Sincerely,

Kristyne deFouw
Kristyne_mik@hotmail.com