



SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 73
(Kamloops-Thompson)

PUBLIC CONSULTATION MEETING
Held at David Thompson Elementary School
January 30, 2019
7:00 PM

PUBLIC PRESENTATION AND COMMUNITY FEEDBACK
WESTSYDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL – RE-OPENING

(Notes from electronic Transcription)

Present:

Superintendent Alison Sidow
Secretary-Treasurer Kelvin Stretch
Assistant Superintendent Rob Schoen
Director of Facilities & Transportation
- Art McDonald
Director of Elementary Education
- Trish Smillie
Communications Manager Diana Skoglund
Vice-Principal Jennifer Boyle
Executive Assistant Dana Heyman
Video Conference Specialist Travis Ray

BOARD OF EDUCATION:

Chair – Kathleen Karpuk
Vice-Chair – Rhonda Kershaw
Trustee – Shelley Sim
Trustee – Joe Small
Trustee – Cara McKelvey
Trustee – Meghan Wade
Trustee – Heather Grieve
Trustee – John O’Fee
Absent – Trustee Diane Jules

1. Welcome

Assistant Superintendent Schoen opened the meeting at 7:00 pm and provided the welcome and acknowledgement of the traditional territory of the Secwepemc people. He introduced Superintendent Sidow and Chair Karpuk before explaining that the purpose of this meeting is to share the recommendation that the catchment area for David Thompson Elementary be changed and in doing so allow for the consideration of the re-opening of Westsyde Elementary School.

2. Board of Education – Introductions and Opening Remarks

Chair Karpuk introduced the Board of Education for School District No. 73 (Kamloops-Thompson). She noted that it is the Board’s duty to listen this evening to the public presentation by staff and hear the comments, questions and feedback from the community. As such, the Board will not be participating in the discussion and will remain open and neutral. Chair Karpuk thanked everyone for attending the community consultation meeting.

3. Superintendent of Schools – Introductions and Opening Remarks

Superintendent Sidow thanked everyone for coming and representing the community. She introduced the senior administration staff present. The public was given information on what to expect from the evening. She explained that staff are present to provide clarification on the consultation process and will provide responses to questions from the public.

If a question is raised that requires information that cannot be provided this evening, the answer will be posted on the district website and form part of the Q&A section of the public consultation. Everyone will have an opportunity to share their perspectives and opinions and can expect to have those heard by the Board of Education in a very open format.

Superintendent Sidow explained that staff has made a recommendation to the Board of Education, but want to hear from the community to ensure that all perspectives have been considered. She provided instructions on speaking at the podium this evening and asked that presenters please add their name to the speaker list provided. All feedback is being recorded. The transcript of the proceedings will be posted on the website for your review after the meeting. Superintendent Sidow reminded attendees that we all have the best interests of our students in our hearts and we want the very best for them.

Assistant Superintendent Schoen thanked everyone for coming and introduced Vice-principal Jennifer Boyle, thanking her for setting up the meeting this evening.

4. PowerPoint Presentation

Assistant Superintendent Schoen provided background to the rationale of adjusting the catchment area of David Thompson Elementary to provide appropriate student enrolment levels to maintain quality educational programs supported by appropriate staffing levels. Each school has a limited capacity and the neighbourhood that it serves is constantly changing.

Art McDonald, Director of Facilities and Transportation, provided district level context to current enrolment and capacity utilization as well as projected enrolment growth and continued capacity issues. He noted that during his first 12-13 years with the district, we were experiencing declining enrolment, but over the last few years we have seen that trend reverse. At this point, we are fairly confident in our enrolment projections for the coming years, and are anticipating continued enrolment growth. He explained capacity utilization and listed key areas experiencing significant enrolment pressures across the district, including the catchment area of David Thomson Elementary.

In discussions with elementary principals, 420 to 450 students in an elementary school is considered the maximum number for an optimal learning environment.

He reviewed the interim measures being considered for the next 5 years to respond to enrolment pressures internally, without capital funding from the Ministry of Education. This includes the addition of 24 new portables across the district and further potential catchment changes between 2019 and 2023.

With the proposed catchment change for David Thompson Elementary and the re-opening of Westsyde Elementary, K-7 enrolment for 2019 is projected to be 250 students at David Thompson Elementary and 175 students at Westsyde Elementary.

By 2023, projected enrolment at David Thompson Elementary is 299 and at Westsyde Elementary, it would be 208 if enrolment trends continue.

Assistant Superintendent Schoen explained the proposed catchment change that runs along Sicamore Drive. This line was established based on how the enrolment numbers lined up on either side of this proposed catchment boundary.

He projected nine divisions for Sept. 2019 that could be expanded to ten divisions if necessary. He outlined the improvements scheduled for Westsyde Elementary, along with advantaged for David Thompson Elementary when enrolment pressures are addressed and space is used more optimally.

Director McDonald reviewed the costs of re-opening Westsyde Elementary and the capital improvements planned for the building. He reviewed the list of improvements budgeted to bring the school up to current standards, which include; WiFi and technology, accessibility upgrades, interior and exterior painting, lighting upgrades, flooring upgrades and miscellaneous renovations as required.

Capital Improvements scheduled for Westsyde Elementary include; furniture, equipment, library books, shelving, playground and paved play area.

Assistant Superintendent Schoen noted that the district is working with rental groups that are currently using the Westsyde Elementary building and assisting with accommodating their needs as best as possible.

Feedback process was reviewed, with the collection of feedback from the public from January 31, 2019 to February 28, 2019. Upon conclusion of the public consultation process, the Board of Education will make a final decision on the catchment change for David Thompson Elementary at the Public Meeting of the Board of Education on Monday, March 11, 2019, 7:00 pm at the School Board Office, 1383 Ninth Avenue, Kamloops, BC.

5. Community Presentations – Question and Answer Period

Communications Manager Diana Skoglund explained that public feedback, comments and questions can be emailed to facilitiesinput@sd73.bc.ca. The public has until February 28, 2019 to provide input. Additional information and all feedback will be posted on the SD73 website at www.sd73.bc.ca for review. The Q & A format on the website is not intended as a back and forth discussion. It is a static list of questions and responses compiled for the public's review. It is meant to be a very transparent and open process, but not a running dialogue format.

Superintendent Sidow thanked the staff for their presentation and reiterated that we want to ensure that our students have the best learning opportunities possible in the best learning environment possible.

(Community feedback attached)

Superintendent Sidow thanked everyone for attending the public consultation meeting and for welcoming the Board of Education and School District No. 73 staff to the community. The public is invited to the Public Board Meeting on March 11th, 2019, 7:00 pm at the School Board Office, 1383 Ninth Avenue, Kamloops, BC.

7. Adjournment