

April 5, 2016

Dear Parents and Staff,

Re: Long Range Facilities Plan
Next Steps

As you may be aware, Richmond School District has been involved in a Long Range Facilities Plan review for the last number of months. This plan looks at school capacity, declining enrolment, building condition and underutilization of school sites. The process to this point, has involved public meetings and an online site for information and feedback. Feedback from the community will support the Board in its need to increase utilization of school buildings from the current 85% to 95% capacity. In addition, 23 elementary schools have been rated as being high risk for significant damage in the event of an earthquake. Trustees are looking to ensure that facilities are used in an effective and fiscally responsible way and that the District can access funding to remediate schools to keep our students safe. To achieve this goal the District may need to close 4-5 schools. **This decision will not be made until October 2016**, to allow time for consultation with the school communities and the public.

You are receiving this letter because your school has been identified for further discussion regarding closure. In a report to the Board of Education that was presented last evening, senior staff outlined a group of schools which could be explored in the application of Policy 704 (with regulation 704R) which determines how schools are considered for closure. **It is important to understand that this does NOT mean that your school will definitely close**, rather that information needs to be gathered about your school and then be brought before the Board for consideration.

To that end, a consultation committee will be formed at your school, comprised of the school principal, two parent representatives, one teacher and one CUPE representative from your school's staff. The committee will meet with myself and other district staff and will be the means by which the unique factors that each school community values can be considered. We expect that these consultation committee meetings will take place through April. District staff will present options for possible closure at public meetings scheduled for May 17 – 19, 2016. This will be another opportunity for input from the school community, as well as the public. Once the four or five schools have been identified in the fall of 2016, there will be another opportunity for input before the final decision is made.

Many of you will have participated in the open houses that were held in October 2015, or in the on-line surveys on the district's public engagement website (Our Schools, Our Students, Our Future <http://letstalksd38.ca/our-schools-our-students-our-future>). If you haven't, I encourage you to visit the site and review the information that has been presented. You may even want to register on the site so that you can be notified when the site is updated.

I recognize that the need to close schools because of the combined factors of seismic risk and declining enrolment is difficult for all involved. It is the District's intent however, to provide school communities with relevant information, multiple

opportunities for feedback and a plan that allows the District to move ahead into the future with buildings that are safe, sustainable and responsive to enrollment.

Please participate in the process whatever way you can.

Sincerely,



Sherry Elwood
Superintendent of Schools