



**NANAIMO LADYSMITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BUSINESS COMMITTEE
PUBLIC MEETING
INFORMATION SHEET**

DATE: February 9th, 2022
TO: Business Committee
FROM: Mark Walsh, Secretary-Treasurer
Pete Sabo, Executive Director Planning & Operations
Paul Kingsbury, Operations Manager
Greg Paterson, Maintenance Manager
SUBJECT: 2021/2022 Vandalism Report

Background:

Vandalism or damage caused by willful behavior to Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools (NLPS) Facilities is currently guided by AP 527 – Anti-Vandalism (AP). The procedure indicates annual reporting to the Board or more often as circumstances require.

This report is intended to provide an update on Facilities activities related to the AP.

Currently the reports are generated semi-annually. The Board was previously updated in September 2021.

Discussion:

Vandalism takes many forms including (but not limited to) building damage, graffiti, window breakage, grounds destruction, building systems damage, cleanup following overnight homeless occupation, etc.

Initiatives are in place to limit vandalism:

- Graffiti removal program - graffiti is removed immediately and a database of photos is maintained
- Anti-vandalism coatings – on signage, murals, etc.
- Anti-climber protection - reduces access to roofs
- Film installed on inside of all windows – assists in vandalism clean up and seismic response
- Increased site lines on exterior of building
- Participation/Coordination with stakeholders (schools, Parks and Recreation, Bylaw, etc.)
- Engage residents surrounding schools as required or requested
- Restoration activity is tracked and costed
- Pictures and data available to the RCMP and key stakeholders (as identified from time to time)

While not vandalism, initiatives to reduce unwanted behaviors around schools include:

- Transients and after-hours groups asked to leave properties by Security/NLPS staff
- RCMP utilized as required to move individuals along
- NLPS Emergency Caretaker(s) responds daily to sites of concern prior to school start-up
- Security patrols increased overnight at areas that have been targeted by vandals
- In partnership with the City of Nanaimo, a static guard is in place at Pauline Haarer to deter transient activity

Funding recently made available for video surveillance at high incident locations at schools with NDSS identified as a priority by both the RCMP and the Administration. The system is up and operating (for testing) as of Jan 27 with 7 cameras covering the Entrance both inside and outside and the back courtyard. Further systems are in planning, and consideration is being given to systems in capital projects. A system was installed and is operating at Wellington.

As these systems are not prevalent in the District as of yet, staff are working to understand maintenance and capital upgrade requirements. As well, a mobile WIFI camera pilot is in the planning stage. It is envisioned that this system could be relocated quickly and at low operating cost to areas of concern.

It should be noted that there are no vandalism budgets, and all vandalism costs are covered by the affected department. Therefore, vandalism dollars directly represent less funding spent in the classroom.

Trespass Issues

The District continues to see concerns with respect to drug use on school property as well as issues of homelessness. We want to be clear that we do not see a significant amount of drug use on school sites. Further, the vast majority of the homeless population respects school property. Nevertheless, there is a cost to removing drug paraphernalia (e.g. needles) as well as human by-products from camping.

To deal with this, we have a 1 FTE position and supplemental funding at the cost of \$100,000 per year. This position and the flexible assistance respond to immediate issues to ensure student safety. Approximately half of this time is in the early morning ensuring sites are ready for students, and the other half is supporting the emergency needs of operating schools.

Pauline Haarer has heightened issues and are dealt with effectively with via a security shift jointly funded with City of Nanaimo. We also note that our camera systems may discourage drug use and camping at our sites. However, the use of the cameras will be limited.

Conclusion:

Staff continue to be guided by AP-527 – “Develop, recommend and maintain anti-vandalism and communication strategies that are both preventative and reactive”. Reports will continue to be presented to the Board semi-annually.

Staff continue to work to align video surveillance with both existing programs and Capital Projects. Recommendations from the RCMP support Video Surveillance as an effective deterrent to vandalism.

Staff continue to monitor and respond to impacts of transient behavior.

As of January 31, 2022, it appears that NLPS is trending towards an average yearly cost of vandalism.

Reference:

- AP 527 – Anti-Vandalism (attached)
- Yearly and average vandalism costs (1 report)
- Vandalism by year by incident (1 report)
- First 5 months of 2021/22 NLPS vandalism costs (4 reports)

