

NANAIMO LADYSMITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BUSINESS COMMITTEE
PUBLIC MEETING

INFORMATION SHEET

DATE: December 7, 2022
TO: Business Committee
FROM: Mark Walsh, Secretary-Treasurer
SUBJECT: Nanaimo District Secondary School – Capacity Issue

Background:

Nanaimo District Secondary School (“NDSS”) is the District’s largest secondary school and is at its biggest enrollment since 1989. This memo is intended to introduce the Board to the issue and indicate the steps that the District is currently taking to address the problem.

Discussion:

Capacity

NDSS’s was built for 1400 students. However, the impact of CEF drops the capacity to approximately 1275. Further, the District has 6 portables on site which are roughly counted as 25 students per portable. This means that NDSS has an official capacity of 1550 but accounting for CEF that number is 1425. Notably, secondary schools can timetable in a manner which allows for additional capacity.

In any event, with either calculation the school is over capacity.

Enrollment

NDSS’ headcount is currently 1657. Based on short-term preliminary enrolment estimates NDSS is slated to continue its upward enrolment trend over the next couple years (2023/24 – 1,680 & 2024/25 – 1,700).

Longer term projections are more difficult to estimate with certainty but with the growth at elementary over the last number of years now entering secondary we anticipate continued capacity issues as these larger cohorts move through to graduation. Further, if local development proceeds as predicted by the City, and the developments yield the estimated school aged children projected by Licker Geospatial (Long-Term growth projection consultants), we will be facing additional capacity issues. Also note that in 6 years an additional cohort of students will be entering from École Hammond Bay.

Programming and Feeder Schools

Currently, NDSS has the following programs of choice (with enrollment broken down by in and out of catchment students):

NDSS Program Enrolment - Where attending students live

School Catchment of Residence	Hockey	Lacrosse	Soccer	Volleyball	FI	SD93
Nanaimo District Secondary	10	16	21	19	155	16
Wellington Secondary	7	5	6	3	113	11
John Barsby Secondary	5	5	2	1	53	5
Cedar Secondary	3	7	1	3	28	2
Dover Bay Secondary	2	4	3	1	103	12
Ladysmith Secondary	2	2		1	2	2
OOD Comox Valley		3				
OOD Port Alberni		1				
OOD Qualicum		1			1	
OOD Cowichan					3	
Total Enrolment by Program	29	44	33	28	458	48

Source - 2022-23 Baragar GeoSchool

NOTE: OOD stands for Out of District

The feeder schools (with NDSS student numbers from the catchment of those schools) are as follows:

NDSS Feeder School Catchments - Where attending students Live

Mountain View (Includes some bussing)	281
Fairview	154
Forest Park	145
Brechin	78
Gabriola (Bussed)	83
Total Enrolment by Program	741

Source - 2022-23 Baragar GeoSchool

* Note that Quarterway, Pauline Haarer and Hammond Bay French Immersion students feed into NDSS but FI is a District Program with no catchments, so catchment data is not available.

Actions Previously Taken to Address Capacity

The District has already limited cross boundary transfer to NDSS (note that programs of choice continue to enroll cross boundary students). With respect to our International Students, those enrolled are fit into classrooms with space following the enrollment of our domestic students. ISE students are also largely limited to grades with specific spaces available or by the flexibility of the student’s ability with respect to course load. For instance, German students have very flexible timetables as they do not have the same requirements for academics as most other countries we enroll students from. We also note that student headcount differs from FTE funding as some students do not have full course loads and some international students are only attending for a single semester.

There are a total of 63 International Students currently attending NDSS with the following grade levels Grade 8 = 1, Grade 9 = 1, Grade 10 = 24, Grade 11 = 26, Grade 12 = 11.

In 2021-22 the District removed central District functions from NDSS (including meeting space and the District's student enrollment staff). Further, in 2022-23 the District added a portable to the site and assisted the Nanaimo Ladysmith School's Foundation to relocate their offices.

There is a tentative plan to relocate 4 additional portables to the site. Initially the portable moves were anticipated to be completed in time for spring semester. However, due to delays at Hammond Bay such a completion is unlikely.

Further, NDSS has an expansion on our capital plan and the Ministry of Education and Child Care is fully apprised of the capacity issues that the school faces.

Next Steps

Currently, staff are reviewing possible next steps to be discussed at the LRFP committee and brought to the Board. Staff envision a similar process to the North End and Ladysmith consultation processes. However, there are some important considerations that make an accelerated decision preferable. Specifically, if the District can avoid the need to place 4 portables at the site it would save over \$400,000. Further, those portables could be allocated to schools with potential need.

Options being explored include:

1. Expansion of NDSS. Note that an expansion to 1700 is not desirable and a minor expansion (e.g. to 1500) along with another option will be explored;
2. A minor expansion of Wellington (other options would also be required);
3. Reallocation of programming. Similarly, this option would have to be combined with other options to be considered;
4. Change of feeder schools (e.g. a move of a school or two to John Barsby or Cedar);
5. Reopening of a school such as Woodlands. Such an option may be prohibitively expensive from a capital perspective and impact Ministry support for other options;
6. Given the continued growth in the South End, there is not realistically enough space to support a move of French Immersion and the SD93 students, so this option is unlikely to be explored seriously.

Notably, at this point data is being gathered including enrollment projections, capacity, capital cost considerations and Facilities Condition Index information.

The goal is to have a report with the recommendation to move to public consultation by February 2023.