

LONG RANGE FACILITIES PLAN

2021-2031



NANAIMO LADYSMITH
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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ADDRESSING GROWTH AND SAFETY

2021-2031



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INTRODUCTION

We are at a pivotal point in the history of Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools (NLPS). The Board of Education (the “Board”) has ambitious goals that are the basis of ***Addressing Growth and Safety 2021-2031: Long Range Facilities Plan*** for Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools (the “Plan”). They are as follows:

- ▶ Continuous improvement of instruction and assessment.
- ▶ Safe, caring and healthy learning and working environment that is inclusive of the diversity of our entire learning community.
- ▶ To be a leader in environment stewardship and sustainability.
- ▶ Truth and Reconciliation

In the area of facilities planning, meeting these goals is a challenge that will focus the work of staff for years to come.



We face a capacity crunch.

We have just ended a period of significant enrolment decline. Increasing enrolment combined with the return of collective agreement language, which reinstated class size and composition, has put NLPS at its capacity leading to an increase in the use of portable and modular space as well as a loss of space for amenities in many of our schools. Our projections indicate that we will see continued growth as our region continues to be a desirable location to live for Canadians and newcomers.



We face a seismic safety and maintenance challenge.

Due to changes to the National Building Code, the majority of schools have portions (also called blocks) of their building that are a high seismic safety risk. In addition, we have a major long-term maintenance deficit due in part to the age of the facilities, which is reflected in the Facilities Condition Index (FCI) scores.

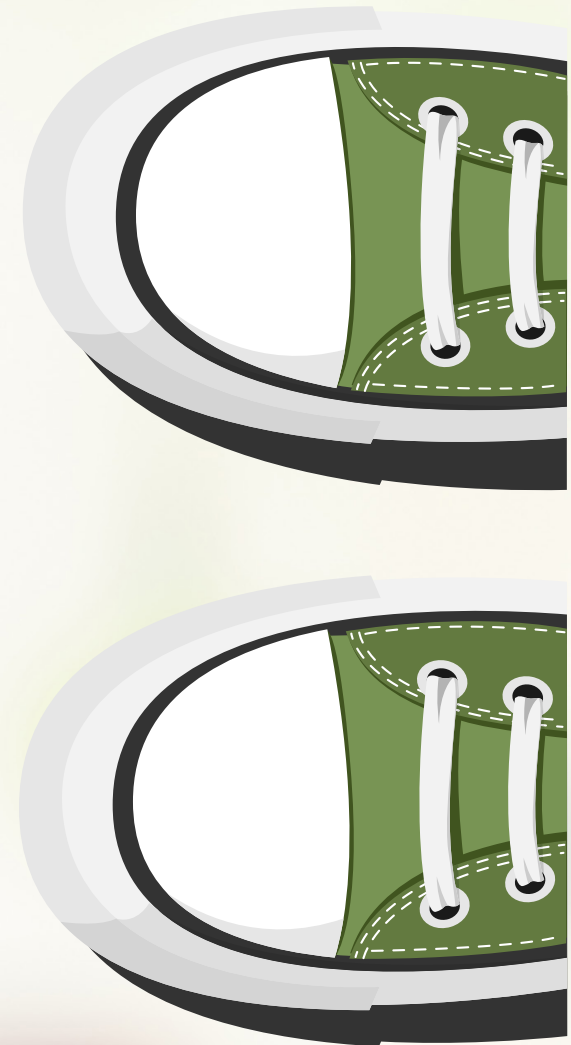
The Board is committed to reconciliation and ensuring that its facilities meet the needs and aspirations of its Indigenous students with the adoption of the [Syeyutsus Reconciliation Policy & Framework](#).

The Board recognizes that we are facing a climate crisis that calls for immediate action both in educating its students with respect to sustainability as well as to be leaders in reducing its environmental footprint and specifically reduce GHG emissions, as laid out in Board [Governance Policy 1.5 - Environmental Stewardship](#).

The Board is also committed to ensuring that its students have access to top quality facilities and amenities to support their learning. The Board recognizes that schools are often the centres of communities with close connections to the community and our municipal and regional partners.

The Board's resources are limited as most of the capital funding comes from the Ministry of Education. The Board can only tackle a finite number of issues at any given time due to limited resources (funding) and competing interests across the province. In addition, the Board is aware that changes in the economy, changes in regional planning, and potential long-term impacts of COVID could impact its assumptions and may require changes during the length of the Plan.

There is real opportunity to use these challenges to set NLPS on a positive footing for years to come. NLPS is confident that the Plan will help it proactively address its significant challenges while also allowing flexibility, appropriate accountability and public oversight mechanisms to ensure confidence from the community.



WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PLAN?

In addition to meeting the goals of our Board, the premise of the Plan is to provide a mechanism for NLPS to demonstrate that it is managing its facilities in an effective, economic and efficient way in support of its long-term educational goals. This Plan is designed to set out a long-term vision for the delivery of education in NLPS and how facilities will support meeting this vision. The Plan will:

- ▶ Direct the Boards' annual Capital Plan submission for funding from the Ministry of Education;
- ▶ Influence funding decisions of the Board with respect to the acquisition and use of local capital;
- ▶ Impact the Board's input into local planning and growth decisions including Official Community Plans (OCPs) and rezoning applications;
- ▶ Set expectations for staff with respect to creating partnerships with our community;
- ▶ Assist in the determination of potential land acquisition and/or disposition to support student needs;
- ▶ Create a mechanism for the oversight and revision of the Plan; and
- ▶ Will provide a basis for capital funding advocacy beyond the Board's annual Capital Plan submissions to the Ministry of Education.

HOW DO I NAVIGATE THIS PLAN?

The Plan provides a short background of the process used to create the Plan, including public input, demographic and growth information.

It then provides 34 recommendations with brief rationale and next steps to implement and monitor the Plan.

It is important that the Plan also have lengthy appendices and informational links to allow the reader to delve deeper into previous plans, school specific information, demographic and growth information, seismic and condition information and information on NLPS's land holdings.

The structure is intended to allow easy access to the Plan's recommendations with the ability to scrutinize the assumptions and information that support the recommendations.

Upon final approval of the Plan, there will be links on NLPS's website to monitor the Plan's progress.



FAQS



DOES THE PLAN CONTEMPLATE SCHOOL CLOSURES?

Based on growth patterns and current capacity, the Plan does not contemplate school closures. In fact, while there are no specific recommendations at this time, there is a strong possibility that NLPS will be required to open a school or schools during the life of the Plan.



DOES THE PLAN CONTEMPLATE CATCHMENT BOUNDARY CHANGES?

Yes, the Plan contemplates reviewing boundaries to ensure that there are balanced numbers in schools. It does not recommend a district-wide review of the entire District, however; any review would be guided by the proposed Long Range Facilities Plan (LRFP) Advisory Committee. It also recommends reviewing whether the realignment of a feeder school or schools may alleviate capacity issues in the future.



DOES THE PLAN CONTEMPLATE SELLING SCHOOL LAND?

The Plan recommends against selling sites that could be used for future school purposes. Although, it does contemplate the potential disposition of parcels of land that are too small for future school use or parcels of existing sites that are not required for school use. Notably, there are no specific parcels identified at this time.



DOES THE PLAN CONSIDER CLOSING OR MOVING PROGRAMS OF CHOICE?

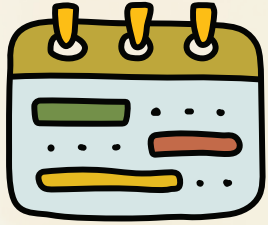
The Plan does not recommend the closure or moving of programs of choice but does leave open the possibility of limiting access to programs and potentially moving them in future if capacity to serve our regular program students is put at risk.



WHAT IS THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN A PORTABLE

students/portable- Elementary 24

students/portable- Secondary 30



HOW DID WE GET HERE?

The previous LRFP was last completed in [2015](#) and [updated in 2017](#). This previous plan recommended school closures and consolidation as one of the strategies to reduce annual operating costs, reduce future capital expenses, and identify capital assets for future consideration in response to years of declining enrolment. Additional plans are available here:

- ▶ [District Facilities Plan 2010](#)
- ▶ Proposed 10-Year Enhanced Facilities for Learning Plan [2013](#)
- ▶ 10-Year Enhanced Facilities for Learning Plan – Updated June [2014](#)

As noted above, NLPS’s circumstances have materially changed since the last LRFP update. As a result of these changing circumstances, in the fall of 2019 NLPS initiated the beginning stages of the Plan including gathering information and input on what should be included in the Plan. Information was posted to the [website](#) and promoted on various social media channels.

Even though a planned open house for the community was cancelled due to COVID-19, NLPS moved to a “Thought Exchange” in the summer of 2020 and reported to the [Business Committee on September 16, 2020](#). In addition, during budget deliberations for 2020-21, student input was gathered which included a number of important facilities plan issues. Further, given the impact of COVID-19, NLPS engaged an external consultant to ensure our future projections were tested for accuracy. This process was ongoing in the fall of 2020 and completed in early 2021.

The draft Plan will be presented to our community partners and the Board in February 2021 for initial feedback, including meeting with local partners from the City of Nanaimo, District of Lantzville, Regional District of Nanaimo and Town of Ladysmith. Upon Board approval of the draft Plan, NLPS will move to consultation via electronic open houses in March and/or April of 2021, with appropriate changes to be shared with the Board for consideration in Spring of 2021.

WHAT INFORMATION IS THIS PLAN BASED ON?

The Board goals were the starting point of the Plan.

In addition, the feedback provided by our community influenced the Plan in a number of important ways including:

- ★ Ensuring that NLPS focused on environmental sustainability and outdoor learning;
- ★ Encouraging the Board to advocate to the Provincial government for appropriate resources;
- ★ Ensuring that the Board review our closed facilities and excess lands to support the Plan;
- ★ Ensure that the NLPS is proactive in addressing capacity growth;

To determine future student enrolment data, NLPS relied on [regular projections provided by Baragar Systems \(pages 7-10\)](#). This data influenced short-term recommendations and assisted in determining where additional capacity may be required in the next three years.

[NLPS also engaged Licker Geospatial \(LG\)](#) to provide longer term growth data. This group liaised with local municipal and regional district authorities to understand future growth patterns. Specifically, they determined the number of dwellings that can be expected to be built over the next 10 years, where they will be located and how many children those dwellings will produce. They then applied this information to current catchments to determine future capacity requirements and assisted with running scenarios of expansions, new schools and/or catchment boundary changes to determine the next steps.

The data produced by LG allows NLPS to review catchments for current and future student populations and also create scenarios that balance populations and ensure that a catchment is safe and walkable from a transportation perspective. It will be an important tool for the proposed LRFP Committee.

The seismic information is from [Seismic Risk Assessments](#) of facility Blocks as required by the Ministry of Education, completed in 2018. NLPS facility condition is from Ministry Facility Condition data which is informed by evaluation teams and tracking of changes to facilities.

HOW MUCH ARE WE GROWING?



Based on the projections presented in the table on page 8, NLPS is going to see significant growth in the next decade. If the projected growth occurs our schools, not including portables, will be 25% over capacity by 2030.

In some cases schools will simply not be able to serve the student population.

Examples are:

Pleasant Valley (81% over capacity)

Chase River (94% over capacity)

Note:

Average # students/portable

- Elementary 24

Average # students/portable

- Secondary 30



SCHOOL	OFFICIAL CAPACITY (NO PORTABLES)	# PORTABLES	CAPACITY (WITH PORTABLES)	2020-21 FINAL ENROLMENT	INTERNAL PROJECTIONS (2021-22)	INTERNAL PROJECTIONS (2022-23)	INTERNAL PROJECTIONS (2023-24)	CONSULTANT PROJECTION FOR (2030-31)	% CAPACITY (2020-21) ENROLMENT OVER OFFICIAL CAPACITY	% CAPACITY (2030-31) ENROLMENT OVER OFFICIAL CAPACITY
CEDAR SECONDARY	425	0	425	272	284	296	308	425	-36%	0%
CEDAR ELEMENTARY	290	3	362	313	309	319	306	435	8%	50%
CINNABAR VALLEY ELEMENTARY	245	4	341	281	291	287	285	281	15%	15%
QQS	150	0	150	97	89	86	84	97	-35%	-35%
DOVER BAY SECONDARY	1225	8	1465	1284	1328	1397	1481	2155	5%	76%
FRANK J. NEY ELEMENTARY	415	1	439	385	396	395	395	618	-7%	49%
MCGIRR ELEMENTARY	390	3	462	406	409	412	386	460	4%	18%
PLEASANT VALLEY ELEMENTARY	345	2	393	372	387	398	397	719	8%	108%
RANDERSON RIDGE ELEMENTARY	415	2	463	439	450	448	467	474	6%	14%
SEAVIEW ELEMENTARY	320	0	320	231	242	244	221	384	-28%	20%
JOHN BARSBY SECONDARY	1000	0	1000	624	673	734	746	925	-38%	-8%
BAYVIEW ELEMENTARY	220	1	244	177	172	170	180	342	-20%	55%
CHASE RIVER ELEMENTARY	195	4	291	218	236	237	233	387	12%	98%
GEORGIA AVE ELEMENTARY	465	1	489	338	410	431	441	581	-27%	25%
PARK AVE ELEMENTARY	320	2	368	301	299	302	302	360	-6%	13%
LADYSMITH SECONDARY	800	0	800	604	629	663	663	775	-25%	-3%
LADYSMITH INTERMEDIATE	300	0	300	255	327	344	378	316	-15%	5%
LADYSMITH PRIMARY	210	5	330	282	330	330	304	302	34%	44%
NORTH OYSTER ELEMENTARY	295	5	415	352	366	365	369	385	19%	31%
NANAIMO DISTRICT SECONDARY	1400	4	1520	1363	1408	1426	1453	1556	-3%	11%
BRECHIN ELEMENTARY	220	1	244	172	167	165	166	166	-22%	-25%
FOREST PARK ELEMENTARY	345	3	417	352	380	374	376	396	2%	15%
GABRIOLA ELEMENTARY	270	0	270	139	152	163	170	170	-49%	-37%
HAMMOND BAY ELEMENTARY	535	0	535	334	352	372	386	535	-38%	0%
FAIRVIEW ELEMENTARY	415	0	415	355	421	427	432	551	-14%	33%
MOUNTAIN VIEW ELEMENTARY	395	2	443	398	410	457	467	495	1%	25%
PAULINE HAARER ELEMENTARY	220	1	244	213	214	210	207	213	-3%	-3%
QUARTERWAY ELEMENTARY	365	3	437	411	416	402	391	411	13%	13%
WELLINGTON SECONDARY	900	2	960	837	858	886	916	1200	-7%	33%
CILAIRE ELEMENTARY	220	1	244	154	151	144	130	167	-30%	-24%
COAL TYEE ELEMENTARY	315	2	363	340	390	415	409	478	8%	52%
DEPARTURE BAY ELEMENTARY	295	3	367	345	385	402	428	436	17%	48%
ROCK CITY ELEMENTARY	340	3	412	339	355	364	357	374	0%	10%
UPLANDS PARK ELEMENTARY	370	1	394	298	336	317	318	397	-19%	7%
TOTALS	14630	67	16322	13281	14022	14382	14552	17966	-9%	23%
TOTAL ELEMENTARY	8880	53	10152	8297	8842	8980	8985	10930	-7%	23%
TOTAL SECONDARY	5750	14	6170	4984	5180	5402	5567	7036	-13%	22%

HOW SAFE ARE OUR SCHOOLS?

Changes to the 2015 National Building Code reflected significantly increased assumptions for ground force motions from a Cascadia Fault subduction event off the west coast of Vancouver Island and Haida Gwaii. Specifically, the expectations are for more intense shaking on Vancouver Island as well as greater impacts on areas with softer soils.

Recently all of our sites have been reassessed and 36 sites, or 84% of all sites in NLPS are identified as requiring seismic upgrading, not including previously assessed South Wellington. By comparison, only three schools had been previously identified under the old building code guidelines.

NLPS Seismic Assessment

This reality has put NLPS at the center of seismic safety in the province. To date, two facilities – Pleasant Valley and Cilaire elementary schools - have been approved for upgrades.

Facilities are listed in descending order of sum total of floor area of all **H1** Blocks in that building (Green).

Facilities with no H1 blocks are listed alphabetically (Blue).

NANAIMO LADYSMITH PUBLIC SCHOOL	SEISMIC UPGRADE
NANAIMO DISTRICT SECONDARY SCHOOL	YES
LEARNING ALTERNATIVES (WOODLANDS SECONDARY)	YES
JOHN BARSBY SECONDARY	YES
LADYSMITH SECONDARY	YES
FAIRVIEW ELEMENTARY	YES
DUFFERIN CRES. ELEMENTARY (CLOSED)	YES
UPLANDS ELEMENTARY	YES
ROCK CITY ELEMENTARY	YES
MCGIRR ELEMENTARY	YES
WOODBANK PRIMARY (CLOSED)	YES
FOREST PARK ELEMENTARY	YES
HAMMOND BAY ELEMENTARY	YES
PARK AVENUE ELEMENTARY	YES
CILAIRE ELEMENTARY	YES
CHASE RIVER ELEMENTARY	YES
LADYSMITH INTERMEDIATE	YES
BAYVIEW ELEMENTARY	YES
QUARTERWAY ELEMENTARY	YES
GEORGIA AVENUE ELEMENTARY	YES
NORTH OYSTER ELEMENTARY	YES
GABRIOLA ELEMENTARY	YES

NANAIMO LADYSMITH PUBLIC SCHOOL	SEISMIC UPGRADE
CEDAR ELEMENTARY	YES
DEPARTURE BAY ELEMENTARY	YES
SEAVIEW ELEMENTARY	YES
BRECHIN ELEMENTARY	YES
PLEASANT VALLEY ELEMENTARY	YES
ISLAND CONNECTED	YES
HAREWOOD GYMNASIUM	YES
JOLLY GIANT SELBY (NOT IN USE BY NLPS)	YES
NDSS ANNEX	YES
MOUNTAIN VIEW ELEMENTARY	YES
DAVIS RD. ELEMENTARY (CLOSED)	YES
LADYSMITH PRIMARY	YES
RUTHERFORD ELEMENTARY (CLOSED)	YES
PAULINE HAARER ELEMENTARY	YES
VAST	YES
CEDAR SECONDARY	NO
CINNABAR VALLEY ELEMENTARY	NO
COAL TYEE ELEMENTARY	NO
DOVER BAY SECONDARY	NO
FRANK J NEY ELEMENTARY	NO
RANDERSON RIDGE ELEMENTARY	NO
WELLINGTON SECONDARY	NO

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

Upon final approval of the Plan by the Board, the next steps are to:

1. Immediately activate the LRFP Advisory Committee to provide input on their Implementation of the Plan and recommend potential changes to the Board;
2. Confirm the implementation of School Site Acquisition Charges with appropriate jurisdictions;
3. Have the Plan reflected in the 5-year capital plan for the 2022-23 school year;
4. Report to the Business Committee as required (but at least semi-annually) on the status of the Plan;

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Engagement timeline:



★ *Report back to Business Committee (April 2021)*



ENGAGEMENT TACTICS:

- ★ Individual student, PAC and general public “Town Hall” virtual sessions
- ★ Individual meetings with stakeholders
- ★ Thoughtexchange
- ★ Social media engagement
- ★ Email feedback

The feedback received helped shaped the LRFP



click here for
Full Communications Engagement Plan



WHAT IS THE CONDITION OF OUR FACILITIES?

NLPS does a good job in reacting to emergent maintenance issues and in keeping our schools healthy and clean. Proactive maintenance, however, is an ongoing challenge. Currently, our [Facility Condition Index \(FCI\)](#) is .434. A lower FCI is better and .30 is our goal. To bring the FCI to a reasonable level would cost tens of millions of dollars. NLPS continues to be proactive, however, additional dollars are required to address this deficit.


HOW DO I FIND OUT ABOUT MY SCHOOL?

[The following link](#) will show your school's seismic rating, condition, capacity, growth projections, land profile and school layout.



IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE WE SHOULD KNOW?

It is important to understand that the Plan, like any LRFP, is a guide for future work and in many ways is not a prescriptive document. Specifically, NLPS needs to test assumptions prior to making decisions. For instance, if the current projections show a need for additional secondary school capacity in 10 years, the action would be to monitor and plan to address the issue. Opening a school to address a need that is not yet confirmed carries a significant and long-term financial risk, so aspects of this Plan may not come to fruition. What the Plan will prevent, however, is NLPS missing a trend that could impact the ability to serve its students.

 NLPS is confident that the information is based on the best data available, however, determining exactly how many students there will be in 2030 is not a certainty. Due to changes to regional and local growth patterns, collective agreements, the regional and national economy (e.g. Alberta) and unforeseen pandemics the school age population can shift quickly. It should also be noted that a number of the recommendations are not calling for immediate action but rather active monitoring of trends to trigger events or alternatively, provide flexibility to take advantage of opportunities that arise outside of the plan. The Plan will help guide the work so the focus is working on the Plan.

ARE THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONNECTED?

Yes. It is important to note that there are connections between recommendations and that they should not be read in isolation. The recommendations have been broken down into thematic areas for ease of reading and consistency.

WHAT ARE SOME OF OUR RECENT SUCCESSES?

Some of our recent successes include funding to seismically upgrade [Cilaire](#) and Pleasant Valley Elementary schools, an expansion at [Hammond Bay Elementary](#), the near completion of our HVAC Upgrade Program and the expansion of childcare opportunities on school sites.



RECOMMENDATIONS RATIONALE



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- ▶ **Seismic Safety and Maintenance**
8 Recommendations
- ▶ **Environmental Sustainability**
5 Recommendations
- ▶ **Partnerships**
4 Recommendations
- ▶ **Land Acquisition and Disposition**
3 Recommendations
- ▶ **Accessibility and Equity**
3 Recommendations
- ▶ **Governance and Policy**
3 Recommendations



CAPACITY AND GROWTH



Objective

Ensuring there is sufficient space in schools to serve communities is a top priority. There are a variety of options available to the Board of Education to address capacity, including opening new schools, opening previously closed schools, changing school catchment boundaries, adding portables and/or permanently expanding existing schools. There is no silver bullet to address capacity and this plan envisions a combination of strategies to address issues.



Recommendation 1

Alleviate medium and long-term capacity issues by working through the LRFP Advisory Committee to consider expanding existing school(s), opening a new school(s) and/or re-opening school(s).



Rationale

While projections do not suggest the immediate need to open or reopen a school to serve the current population, particularly with the unknowns caused by COVID-19, the growth numbers and NLPS's need for portables indicate that additional space may be required near Seaview, Pleasant Valley, Departure Bay, Frank J. Ney, Bayview, Chase River, Dover Bay, Wellington and possibly Ladysmith. The LRFP Advisory Committee will be best positioned to monitor these trends and determine next steps. This may include the expansion of a school, the reopening of a closed school or the opening of a new school. Based on immediate numbers Departure Bay would need a review in the short-term.

There are a number of closed facilities in areas of potential future growth that may be required to reopen including Rutherford, Island ConnectED and Davis Road (with an expansion or annex) at the elementary level. In other examples, an expansion of an existing school may be sufficient to meet our needs. Finally, there may be areas of growth that require a new school including at or near Lantzville.

Recommendation 2

Institute a School Site Acquisition Charge (SSAC).

Rationale

The *Local Government Act* and *School Act* allow a district to request that a municipality or regional district institute a development charge to go towards the purchase of future school sites in areas of anticipated growth. Find out more in the [Ministry guidance document](#). Given the region's anticipated expansion, there are areas that new schools may be required including Lantzville and parts of Nanaimo. Currently there is no such charge and NLPS is missing out on hundreds of thousands of dollars to support land acquisition.

Recommendation 3

Apply to the Crown for a grant(s) of land if located in future growth areas.

Rationale

Our region continues to have Crown land in proximity to potential growth areas. A [Crown grant](#), if approved, provides school land for no cost to the Board but subject to revert to the Crown in the event the site is no longer required for school purposes. Crown land may be available in areas of projected growth. ([Crown maps](#)).

Recommendation 4

Design and Cost Permanent Annexes Built with Portables.

Rationale

Given the massive seismic and expansion needs of NLPS, it is unlikely that the Ministry will be able to support all of the growth requirements. In some circumstances a school may have 4-6 modular units that are largely permanent. These schools essentially have a “portable city”. To support a positive learning environment and increase amenities an annex would be a semi-permanent structure incorporating the existing portables in a [single structure](#) to enhance the aesthetic of the site, add indoor amenities and create a more unified learning environment.

Recommendation 5

The LRFP Advisory Committee will identify schools with immediate and medium-term capacity issues for expansion.

Rationale

In some areas, rather than opening a school an expansion may make more sense from a geographic and educational perspective. Secondary schools are excellent examples of this given their relatively rational current geographic distribution. Further, some sites have significant land assets that allow expansion with limited site impact.

Continued on next page.



Rationale 5 continued

Potential immediate expansions include Pleasant Valley, Chase River, Departure Bay and Dover Bay.

The Committee is well placed to assist in consulting on the appropriate solution to capacity issues including:

1. Additional modular units would solve the issue.
2. Catchment changes may assist.
3. Expansion may be required.
4. A new school or previously closed school should be considered.

The group is also able to drive consultation with the local community and municipal and regional partners to discuss options prior to any submission to the Ministry of Education for funding. (See previous submissions below)

- [Ministry of Education response to 5-year capital plan 2019-2020](#)
- [Ministry of Education response to 5-year capital plan 2020-2021](#)
- [2020/21 5 Year Capital Plan Submission](#)
- [2021/22 5 Year Capital Plan Submission](#)



Recommendation 6

Proactively acquire additional lands using local capital, school site acquisition dollars and/or Ministry Capital to support the expansion schools.

Continued on next column



Rationale

NLPS has a number of schools that are geographically well-situated to serve students, but the size of the property or other logistical issues such as parking and pick up or drop-off, limit the ability to expand the site. This recommendation would allow the purchase of adjacent land to support future expansion. Further, depending on the nature of funds for the purchase (e.g. local capital, School Site Acquisition Charge (SSAC) funds or ministry capital) the lands could be rented (Local Capital) or used as parks (SSAC) while waiting for the expansion.



Recommendation 7

Review catchments and families of schools to determine whether there is any possibility of moving enrolment from schools at or over capacity to schools under or slated to be under capacity.



Rationale

While most schools show incoming growth, some schools indicate a stagnant or declining enrolment (Cilaire and Brechin are two examples). The realignment of catchments may be able to assist in avoiding the need for expansion in certain areas and address overcrowding. Further, there may be examples of feeder schools that may be realigned to different secondary schools. For instance, in examples where the feeder is geographically close to multiple secondaries or where busing is prominent such a shift could alleviate capacity pressures and potentially create safer routes to schools. This is also an item the Ministry considers with requests for school expansion.

Recommendation 8

Reviewing programming including French Immersion, International Education and Academies to determine implications for capacity issues.

Rationale

Programs of choice have obvious benefits to students in NLPS. They also create planning challenges making it more difficult to predict the flow of students from their catchments. Further, students have a legal right to a regular education program and priority access to catchments. While programming, including French Immersion, has helped alleviate capacity issues by attracting students out of their catchments, some programming is in geographic areas with large future demand. A review is required. Further, International Education programming has provided both positive educational and financial opportunities for NLPS. In future, International Education programming may be limited by capacity, or alternatively may support funding additional capacity. A review, however, is required to determine next steps.



SEISMIC SAFETY AND MAINTENANCE



Objective

This Plan is drafted to illustrate to our community and the Ministry of Education that NLPS has a purposeful plan to have our facilities seismically upgraded in as timely a fashion as possible while respecting the public purse and providing enhanced facilities from a functional and maintenance perspective.

Recommendation 9

Prioritize the Upgrade of NDSS.

Rationale

NDSS is at the end of its useful life. It is a seismically high priority, needs a significant investment in maintenance and is environmentally unfriendly. Across the province and on the island, the Ministry has supported new high schools (e.g. Greater Victoria, Cowichan and Sooke). It is time that NDSS is addressed and this recommendation is intended to send a message to our community that it is a priority.

Recommendation 10

Align seismic upgrades with other priorities in the facilities plan including environmental upgrades and expansions.

Rationale

This recommendation is intended to ensure that NLPS does not miss an opportunity to cover multiple projects at the same time. This will create cost savings through efficiencies and limit the amount of disruption that students and staff face during construction.

Recommendation 11

Explore partnerships with external parties, including BC Housing, while planning seismic upgrades to allow for additional locally sourced amenities.

Rationale

When the Ministry of Education funds a seismic program the funds only support seismic mitigation. They do not provide additional funds to improve the functionality of the site or other additional items that NLPS or schools may desire. Finding partners, including Housing or community partners to come on the site at the same time as the upgrade, can financially support additional amenities for the long-term benefit (and potentially enrolment) of the school.

Continued on next column

Recommendation 12

Use “Swing Space” when doing seismic upgrades to limit the disruption of an educational program of a school.

Rationale

“Swing Space” is when a school moves into another facility for the time it takes to seismically upgrade a school. In 2021-22 both Cilaire and Pleasant Valley will move to alternative sites. This recommendation is intended to communicate to our public what can be expected during a seismic upgrade. It also directs NLPS to ensure that we have a swing space available. For instance, if one of our current swing spaces was to re-open as a school then NLPS would take steps to activate another site (e.g. Rutherford, Dufferin etc.)

Recommendation 13

Ensure upgrades are distributed across jurisdictional boundaries of NLPS

Rationale

While the majority of NLPS’s facilities are in the City of Nanaimo, it is important that upgrades are balanced throughout the region, particularly given our later recommendation to try to co-site governmental infrastructure with our partners. This recommendation is intended to send a message to our community that all parts of NLPS are equal priorities, and they will see themselves in our capital planning. The Board would like to recognize the desire expressed by the Town of Ladysmith to be involved in our planning.

Recommendation 14

Complete HVAC Upgrade Program to ensure modern health and safety in all facilities.

Rationale

For many years, with the support of the Ministry of Education, NLPS has been upgrading sites to ensure there is modern mechanical ventilation in all facilities. COVID-19 has brought the issue to the forefront. We have two facilities with partial modern ventilation but are not completely upgraded. Cilaire Elementary will be complete with the seismic upgrade in 2021-22 and NLPS is advocating for support for Ladysmith Intermediate.

Recommendation 15

Ensure that rental rates for facilities, including childcare, operate on a cost recovery basis at minimum.

Rationale

NLPS subsidizes user groups and rental groups. While certainly being a community partner is important and many of the rental groups include families, NLPS has insufficient funding to maintain assets for school use, let alone external use. The outcome of this recommendation would be a review of rates and a consultation process prior to any changes above that would include recommendations for yearly adjustments due to inflation.



New Build at Forest Park

Recommendation 16

Advocate for additional Annual Facilities Grant (AFG) funding.

Rationale

The annual facilities grant from the Ministry of Education is currently insufficient to bring facilities up to an appropriate level. At a minimum, the grant should be tied to the cost of inflation as the funding allotment does not necessarily increase on a year-to-year basis resulting in less service by NLPS due to inflation.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY



Objective

Students will be impacted the most by climate change as they age and have children. NLPS has a responsibility to address this issue through education and operations. The Plan is drafted to try to meet the Board of Education's goal of reducing GHG emissions by 4.5%, support increased outdoor and environmental learning, support the Syeyutsus Framework, and respond to the communities' input for increased sustainability in business practices.



Recommendation 17

Lower GHG emissions through the acquisition of electric buses and other vehicles for the NLPS fleet.

Rationale

Given the number of bus routes in the system (16), the amount of GHG emissions emitted by the transportation system is significant and the shift to an electric bus fleet will have a major impact in lowering emissions.

Recommendation 18

Review alternate funding sources for immediate environmental upgrades outside of the Ministry of Education processes.

Rationale

While most of the major GHG emission lowering programs will be a result of successful funding from Ministry supported infrastructure upgrades through their many capital programs. There may be other opportunities to partner with public or private sector enterprises interested in piloting new technology with us. This recommendation is intended to signal to the community that NLPS continues to make efforts outside of typical funding.

★ Recommendation 19

That the Board of Education encourage government to make electricity as cost effective for school districts as natural gas.



Rationale

Moving to electricity in British Columbia can be more expensive than natural gas. NLPS understands that GHG associated with BC Hydro are quite low. Unfortunately, the choice to move to electricity for heating is more costly than natural gas, despite its positive GHG impact. If public sector organizations were to have access to lower electricity costs or lower infrastructure upgrade costs, NLPS would have both a positive GHG impact and be able to upgrade its infrastructure more quickly.

★ Recommendation 20

Incorporate the expansion of outdoor learning spaces and schools gardens into NLPS's Annual Facilities Grant and/or local capital planning.



Rationale

The public feedback with respect to the Plan overwhelmingly supported increased environmental education and outdoor learning opportunities. This recommendation will allow NLPS to expand outdoor learning opportunities on school sites.

★ Recommendation 21

Create an active transportation plan for staff and students and ensure that walkable neighborhoods are considered when reviewing catchments.



Rationale

NLPS has worked with municipal and regional partners on active and [safe transportation to schools](#). However, there is not a systemic plan currently in place. This recommendation would require such a plan to be created and publicly accessible. There may be future opportunities if a catchment is reviewed to make alterations to focus on walkable neighborhoods.



PARTNERSHIPS



Objective

NLPS has a long history of positive partnerships with a variety of partners including municipalities, our local land-based and community-based First Nations and local community service providers. Feedback from the community confirms this. As we look to upgrade, expand and/or build facilities there are a variety of opportunities to include community amenities that also benefit students. These recommendations help to ensure this community demand is met.



Recommendation 22

Partner to bring municipal and regional infrastructure onto sites (e.g. turf fields, childcare, community centres).



Rationale

NLPS has a number of positive examples of partnerships with municipal and regional partners including the Nanaimo District turf field, environmental initiatives with the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) and our current lease of Davis Road to the Town of Ladysmith. This recommendation would require staff to share all capital planning with local partners and align capital priorities between the parties to co-site a variety of community-oriented infrastructure.



Recommendation 23

Continue our work with Snuneymuxw First Nation (SFN) at Te'tuxwtun and Qwam Qwum Stuwixwulh childcare. Expand to other opportunities with SFN and our other land and community based First Nations partners.



Rationale

The [Syeyutsus Reconciliation Policy & Framework](#) is incorporated in all the work NLPS is responsible for. The more partnerships created, the stronger the relationships will become. Joint infrastructure to support education and community goals can play a significant role in the work of Syeyutsus.

Recommendation 24

Partner with Community Agencies and other Groups to enhance opportunities for our students and the broader community.

Rationale

From gardens to food, to athletics to arts, our District has a long history of engaging with community partners. This recommendation is intended to highlight to the community the District's aspiration to connect our students to our community through the use of our facilities.

Recommendation 25

Create a District Childcare Strategy.

Rationale

A childcare strategy, aligned with the early years' framework, can assist the Board in expanding childcare (both from 0-5 years and before and after school care) to all sites in NLPS. This would provide parents/guardians a convenient "seamless" solution to childcare as well as positively connect pre-K students to NLPS.



LAND ACQUISITION AND DISPOSITION



Objective

The Plan focuses on maintaining all assets that may be used for future educational purposes and suggests limiting the disposition of any unused site not needed for the foreseeable future to leases of up to 30 years. It also foresees using sites unusable for future educational use or portions of existing sites unneeded for future use to support local capital initiatives in the Plan.



Recommendation 26

Maintain fee simple ownership of all closed sites and consider leasing closed school sites not needed for the foreseeable future to support local capital or the upgrade of the site.



Rationale

While projections indicate potential medium-term need for a number of sites, the projections indicate that not all closed schools may be needed with the projections available to NLPS. Given this, medium-term leases that support local initiatives and/or provide for appropriate investment in the leased facility will assist NLPS in the long-term.



Recommendation 27

Consider the disposition on a long-term or permanent basis of sites not required for educational purposes and which are too small for future school use.



Rationale

While the Plan envisions the Board holding on to sites that could be schools in the distant future, smaller parcels that have no future

Continued on next column

educational use may be appropriate for disposition. The Board may also wish to consider the up-zoning of a property to garner additional funds. We have avoided any specific examples as such consideration would have to be individualized and subject to significant public consultation.



Recommendation 28

Consider the disposition on a long-term or permanent basis of portions of active sites that are excess to the immediate and long-term needs of NLPS to support local initiatives.



Rationale

NLPS has many large sites that contain land that may be excess to the schools' needs. These lands, if subdivided, may bring local capital to assist in the ambitious agenda of the Board. In addition, if housing were built they could maintain the long-term viability of a school slated with declining enrolment.



ACCESSIBILITY AND EQUITY



Objective

Given many of our schools were built at a time when accessibility was not a significant consideration, as we upgrade and/or expand facilities, the recommendations in this area are intended to ensure that accessibility is considered as part of the work. We are committed to ensuring that all students have equal access to an education including amenities and modern facilities.



Recommendation 29

When applicable, review contemplated legislated changes with respect to accessibility and pursue an accessibility audit that reflects current legislation.



Rationale

We understand that the province will be issuing new accessibility standards in the near future. It would be appropriate to conduct an audit with the new framework as its guide. This does not mean that immediate accessibility issues will not continue to be addressed as identified.



Recommendation 30

Develop funding streams for short and medium-term accessibility requirements as identified in internal and/or external audits through allocating operating, AFG, local capital and Ministry funding dollars as required.

Continued on next column



Rationale

If NLPS is committed to accessibility, we need to fund it. This recommendation will require proactive planning to address the findings of the audit.



Recommendation 31

Continue investments in the Access to Technology Plan (Wi-Fi infrastructure upgrade).



Rationale

Infrastructure to support technology in our schools is outdated and requires a significant upgrade to incorporate modern pedagogy. The Board has recently invested millions of dollars to support the upgrades. To complete the upgrades at all schools the Board will need to continue to make investments for the next 3-4 years.

GOVERNANCE AND POLICY



Objective

The Board governs NLPS through policy and through delegation to the Superintendent. In addition, the Board creates advisory committees as required to address important issues with policy and accountability. The recommendations in this section are meant to provide staff clarity and a mechanism to support the Plan, including diverse voices in the community as part of the implementation.



Recommendation 32

That when upgrading our facilities NLPS commit to upgrades that align with modern ways of teaching and learning, including considering flexible spaces and a cross curricular focus.



Rationale

NLPS is committed to meeting the needs of all of our students, and the BC curriculum is an important mechanism to achieve this goal. Our infrastructure plans should align with our way of learning. This recommendation, strongly stated by our public in feedback on this plan, will lead our capital planning upon major renovations and/or the creation of new schools by connecting our way of learning and teaching to the buildings in which this work is done.



Recommendation 33

Create policy and procedure to ensure that staff is more active in influencing local and regional planning.



Rationale

Schools are an integral part of the communities we serve. While municipal governments oversee land use and development, there are various planning initiatives that may have an affect on or could benefit our students. Being an active participant in community planning and development helps foster partnerships and close working relations with municipal partners to support education and common goals. This recommendation will encourage active participation by the Board and staff in local planning initiatives by creating a policy framework that guides District input.

Last Recommendation on next page.

Recommendation 34

Create a Long Range Facilities Plan Advisory Committee.

Rationale

Using the lens of Syeyutsus this committee would be tasked with creating a work plan to monitor the progress of the Plan, report to the business committee of the Board as needed, or at least twice a year on the implementation of the Plan and recommend change or updates to the Plan. The committee would assist in the creation of the annual Capital Plan letter to the Ministry prioritizing capital requests as well as plan consultation with impacted communities and create sub-committees to address specific issues as required (e.g. Ladysmith or other specific priorities).



September

Create a Work Plan



Fall

Consult on Priorities



Winter

Review Enrollment Trends



Spring

Review Annual Facilities Grant Submission



Late Spring

Review the Capital Plan Submission

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