

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

DATE: October 12, 2022  
TO: Business Committee  
FROM: Mark Walsh, Secretary - Treasurer  
Pete Sabo, Executive Director Planning & Operations  
Paul Kingsbury, Operations Manager  
Phil Barkhouse, Maintenance Manager  
SUBJECT: Vandalism Report

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**Background:**

Vandalism or damage caused by willful behavior to Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools (NLPS) Facilities is currently guided by AP 527 – Anti-Vandalism (the 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. This report discusses vandalism from January 1, 2022 to August 31, 2022.

Currently the reports are generated semi-annually. The Board was previously updated in February 2022.

**Overview:**

The 2021/2022 school year saw an increase in vandalism costs from the prior school year of approximately 36%. The following schools share a higher percentage (total of 47%) of the vandalism costs in 21/22.

- Brechin Elementary
- Fairview Community
- Georgia Avenue
- John Barsby Secondary
- Nanaimo District Secondary School

**Areas of Success:**

École Pauline Haarer had significant issues in the past and for the last number of years have been dealt with effectively through the implementation of a security shift jointly funded with City of Nanaimo. We can report that École Pauline Haarer has had less than \$600 worth of damage at the school each of the past two years. The static guard on school days and frequent patrols at other times limit the damage at the school.

Several schools have had minimal vandalism due in part to retractable window shutters. Shutters continue to be a consideration in Major Capital works.

### 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 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 - reduce access to roofs
- Seismic Film installed on inside of all windows – assists in vandalism clean up and seismic response
- Consideration to CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles.
- 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, other initiatives to reduce unwanted behaviors around schools include:

- Transients and after-hours groups asked to leave properties by Security/NLPS staff
- RCMP called as required to move individuals along
- NLPS Emergency Caretaker responds daily to sites of concern prior to school start-up
- Security patrols increased overnight at areas that have been targeted by vandals

### Updates on Projects from Previous Report:

Security Cameras (exterior) were installed and are operating at the following locations:

- NDSS exterior high vandalism areas– February 2022
- Georgia Avenue Community School – Spring 2022
- Fairview Community School – June 2022
- Facilities Compound – July 2022
- NDSS Artificial Turf field – Jointly funded with City of Nanaimo – July 2022

Security Cameras (exterior) were approved to be installed at the following locations:

- John Barsby Secondary – estimated to go live in December 2022

Staff are considering vandalism statistics both internally and from the RCMP to determine location and use of remaining funds.

The Mid-Year Vandalism Report (February 2023) should give some indications as to the effectiveness of Security Cameras. For instance:

- The RCMP has successfully apprehended vandals based on footage from the Security Cameras at several schools.

A portable camera pilot has had limited success at prevention. The quality of images after sunset has proven to be problematic.

### **Trespass Issues:**

- NLPS has concerns with respect to drug use and homelessness on school property.
  - Generally, there is not a significant amount of drug use on school sites.
  - Most of the homeless population respects school property.
  - However, removal of drug paraphernalia (e.g. needles) as well as human by-products is a continuing problem.
- NLPS assigns 1 FTE position to support Schools with cleanup
  - Together with supplemental funding the cost to NLPS is approximately \$100,000 per year.

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

### **Conclusion:**

Staff continue to be guided by the AP – “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.

Vandalism of SD68 properties continues to be a concern. It is expected that increased use of security cameras will reduce future vandalism and aid RCMP to apprehend those responsible.

### **Appendix A:**

- Yearly vandalism costs (attached)
- Detail by School (attached)
- Summary reports (2)