



**NANAIMO LADYSMITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION
PUBLIC MEETING
INFORMATION SHEET**

DATE: January 29, 2025
TO: Board of Education
FROM: Mark Walsh, Secretary-Treasurer
SUBJECT: School Site Acquisition Charge Bylaw Update

Background

In 2022, following extensive consultation, the Board passed a School Site Acquisition Charge Bylaw. This information sheet is intended to provide a reminder of what the charge is and the current financial status of the account.

Discussion

The *Local Government Act* provides a mechanism for School Districts projecting future enrolment growth and capacity issues to institute a charge on certain developments to assist in the purchase of land for school sites. In depth information is posted on the District website at the following link <https://www.sd68.bc.ca/board/school-site-acquisition-charge/>.

In 2021 and 2022 District staff hired an external geospatial company to predict medium term enrolment in the District based on local housing data from local municipalities and regional districts. The District then applied a formula based on an expected number of students per unit. The resulting numbers indicated significant growth and a space deficit for the District. Areas of concern for potential future sites included green field areas in Lantzville, potentially Ladysmith (subsequent plans somewhat mitigated the need), Pleasant Valley and Sandstone. There are also brown field needs around Bayview due to infill and potentially a number of other areas. For instance, the District acquired a single family lot to expand the Bayview site in 2023. We continue to monitor for similar opportunities.

Based on this, the District then determined the approximate costs to acquire land and instituted the SSAC with the support of our local jurisdictions following consultation and presentations directly to their councils and boards.

Subsequently, the District has reran the numbers each year. It should be noted that due to increased outmigration and softer birthrates for existing families, our numbers are projected to be slightly less than our early projections. However, the growth (and particularly the areas of growth) continue to support the SSAC.

The SSAC currently has a balance of \$506,674 (\$475,449 North and \$31,225 South). Note that while the SSAC is legislatively intended for the entirety of the District we have segregated the collection into a "North" and a "South" area to ensure transparency. For instance, the intention would be for growth in the "South" to support additional capacity where the charges were collected and similarly for the North.