



Memorandum

vancouver school board



DATE: May 6, 2020

ITEM 3.1

TO: Facilities Planning Committee

FROM: A. Wong, Trustee

RE: **2020-21 Capital Plan Response Letter - Notice of Motion**

REFERENCE TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

Goal 4: Provide effective leadership, governance and stewardship.

Objectives:

- Implement the recommendations of the Long Range Facilities Plan.
- Effectively utilize school district resources and facilities.
- Support effective communication, engagement and community partnerships.
- Advocate for public education.
- Implement the recommendations of the Sustainability Action Plan.

PROPOSED MOTION:

That the Vancouver Board of Education writes to the Minister of Education requesting an explanation as to why the province has not approved any major capital expansion and seismic projects in response to the District's 2020/21 Five-Year Capital Plan submission. Particularly, given the Board has followed the Ministry's, April 12th, 2019 new approach to long-term capital planning for boards of education with a particular 'requirement' on community consultation.

RATIONALE:

The Minister of Education sent a letter, dated April 12th, 2019, to "All Boards of Education" (Ref: 209332) implementing a new approach to long-term capital planning for Boards of Education. The letter references new guidelines that contrasts with ones from previous governments - to move away from focusing on 'capacity utilization' and shifting to a focus of robust community consultation, including Indigenous communities, to ensure a District's Long Range Facilities Plan reflects the needs and desires of the broad community.

The Board of Education of School District No. 39 (Vancouver) submitted a Capital Plan 2020/2021 requesting that included both Seismic Mitigation Program (SMP) and Expansions (EXP) projects.

The Board has a draft LRFP that is evolving with 17 active recommendations that involves our stakeholders and the community. We agree with the Minister the importance of a consultative process that ensures a Long Range Facilities Plan that is responsive to the needs of the District. There are two concurrent consultations underway to identify those needs. One consultation is entitled Building for Modern Learning which has received 4,200 responses in the first survey phase. The second consultation is focused on developing a Capital Asset Management Plan to address the need to leverage the District's land and assets to support the modern learning focus.

In the March 5th, 2020 'Ministry Response to the Annual Five-Year Capital Plan submission for 2020/21' letter not a single Major Capital Project (SMP, EXP) was approved. Historically, there are usually several new major capital projects approved in every annual capital plan submission. What is curious is the comment that the 'Ministry requires that boards of education maintain an up to date LRFP to support school district capital plan submissions". The District is actively working on the recommendations in our draft Long Range Facilities Plan, including a recommendation that invites the Minister to participate. In addition to the two consultations, work is also underway on a preferred school size model for the District. With respect to the response letter, we would appreciate clarification of why we did not receive any new approvals in spite of the efforts we are undertaking in response to the Minister's new guidelines introduced last April.