

March 31, 2023

QUEEN ELIZABETH ANNEX SURPLUS CONSIDERATION ENGAGEMENT REPORT

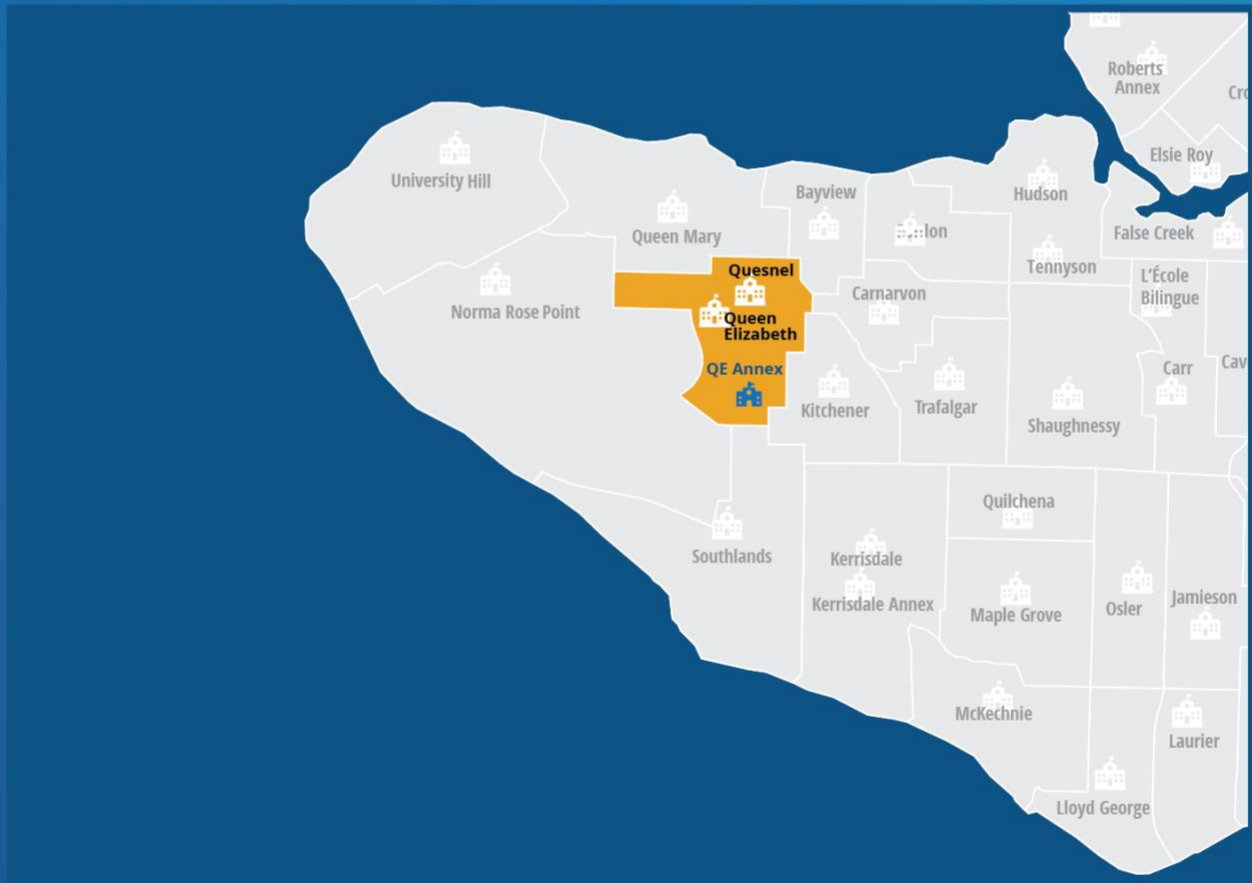


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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In June 2022, the Vancouver School Board (Board) decided to [close Queen Elizabeth Annex](#) (QEA). Located at 4275 Crown Street, QEA is the annex to École Jules Quesnel Elementary (JQ) with an operating capacity of 98 students in kindergarten to Grade 3.

On November 28, 2022, as announced at its public meeting, the Board approved the commencement of the engagement process “to consider the potential declaration of the QEA site as surplus to the educational needs of the District”. Following this approval, District staff presented a [report](#) about the surplus considerations and engagement process at the [January 18, 2023 Facilities Planning Committee](#) (agenda item 3.2 pp 59 – 67).

A publicly available project information page was published on govsb.ca/QEAsurplus on February 15, 2023. The web content details surplus considerations as outlined in Policy 20 and engagement opportunities.

The goal of the engagement process was to provide opportunity for those interested and impacted by the surplus consideration to share their feedback for the Board’s review and consideration.

The engagement process began on February 15, 2023 with a stakeholder engagement workshop, followed by focused discussions with Rightsholders. Engagement continued until March 8, 2023, with email submissions being accepted from January 18 to March 27, 2023 (11 emails received). The primary methods used to engage with the community included a public online survey (286 completed surveys received) and virtual information sessions (35 unique participants attended). The District also reached out to other civic agencies such as the City of Vancouver to solicit their feedback about the surplus consideration.

Focused Discussion with three-host Nations

On January 13, 2023, District staff reached out to the three-host Nations which include xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations to gather their feedback about the surplus consideration. Two separate meetings were held with Rightsholders from xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) and representatives from Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish) Nations. The District did not receive a response from səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nation.

Rightsholders from xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Nation asked the District not to have their feedback publicly summarized. Instead, they requested time to go back to their community and band council to gather feedback. The District has not yet received further feedback from xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Nation regarding the potential surplus declaration of the site.

The Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish) Nation asked clarifying questions about the ownership history of the site, community feedback received thus far, and the District’s enrolment forecasts. In terms of feedback, representatives mainly expressed a need to return the land back to Rightsholders if the site were to be declared as surplus. There was strong interest in collaborating with the VSB in the future.

Stakeholder Engagement Workshop

In total, 11 stakeholder representatives attended the stakeholder engagement workshop. Suggestions for alternate uses of the site include:

- Using the site for outdoor education given its close proximity to Camosun Bog
- Using the site for mixed-use purposes such as a community centre, daycare or VSB housing
- Explore other options to meet CSF's needs for a school site on the west side of Vancouver
- Support for long-term lease, but not sale of the land
- Return the land to Rightsholders

Civic Agency Feedback

The District also reached out to the City of Vancouver, the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, BC Housing and Vancouver Coastal Health in February to solicit their feedback about the surplus consideration. Replies were received from all four agencies with each noting that they had no objection to declaring the land surplus.

Virtual Information Session

The District held two virtual public information sessions for community members (February 23, 2023 and March 8, 2023). The second information session was added as a result of a technical difficulty in accessing the first session experienced by some community members. Community feedback indicated the desire for a second information session, which was held on March 8.

In total, from both sessions, 107 registered and 35 joined the information sessions. The purpose of the information session was for staff to inform participants about the surplus consideration. Staff spent the latter half of the session answering participants' clarifying questions. The main clarifying questions that emerged were:

- Accuracy of VSB enrolment data
- Need to preserve the site for future use
- Demand for French immersion in the area
- Frustration over the engagement process
- Seismic safety concerns about JQ (the school where QEA students are intended to be enrolled in after it is closed).

In terms of feedback, participants expressed the desire to keep QEA open. There was also a strong desire to keep VSB land in the hands of the public.

Online Survey

A 10-minute [survey](#) was open to the public from February 23 to March 9, 2023. The survey sought information about demographics, feedback about virtual information sessions, surplus considerations, District priorities, the overall engagement process as well as provided opportunity to submit open text responses.

In total, 286 responses were received, with most identifying themselves as a family member of a student at QEA or a school community surrounding QEA (49 per cent). Most of the survey respondents did not attend a virtual information session (87 per cent).

Responses to the question of whether the QEA site should be declared as surplus were closely split. A combined 48.2 per cent indicated somewhat oppose or strongly oppose versus a combined 46.4 per

cent indicated strong support or somewhat support. The remaining 5.4 per cent did not know or preferred not to answer this question.

The survey asked participants to identify priorities for the Board's consideration if the site were declared surplus. **Future population growth in the District** (41 per cent), **fiscal responsibility** (35 per cent), **population growth in the high-density areas** (33 per cent), and **ability to generate capital funds** (31 per cent) were identified as high priorities.

When responding to potential future uses should the Board decide to move forward with the land disposal process:

- 32 per cent of respondents indicated support for disposition to CSF
- 28 per cent of respondents indicated "other" community use for the site
- 26 per cent were unsure about what the site should be used for
- 14 per cent did not support any alternative community use of the QEA site

In terms of preference toward lease or sale if the Board decides to move forward with the land disposal process:

- 50 per cent of respondents indicated support for a long-term lease
- 37 per cent of respondents were not in favour of disposing the site
- 13 per cent of respondents favoured a sale of the site.

In response to the optional open-text question, 92 written comments were received. Of those, the top three themes that emerged were: **opposition to declare the site surplus, concerns about District enrolment/forecasting** and **preference for lease over sale of the site**.

Participants were also asked a series of questions in relation to the engagement process.

- A combined 97 per cent of respondents strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that they appreciated being able to provide input into this decision.
- A combined 88 per cent of respondents strongly agreed or somewhat agreed they understood the land disposal process.
- A combined 86 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed it was easy to participate in the survey.

Email feedback

In total, 11 emails were received during the email submission period of January 18 to March 27. Four themes emerged which include: **preference for lease over sale** (4 emails), **opposition to surplus** (3 emails), **engagement process concerns** (3 emails) and **concerns about enrolment/forecasting** (1 email)

BACKGROUND & Context

Policy Requirements

Selling or leasing VSB property is governed by the *School Act* through the [Disposal of Land or Improvements Order](#) and Board [Policy 20 – Disposal of Land or Improvements](#). “The Board has the responsibility for the disposal of its Real Property and may, after considering future educational needs and school space requirements for the school district, deem a property no longer required for further educational purposes or other Board purposes and determine to proceed to dispose of such property.”

As part of the surplus consideration, and in alignment with [Policy 20](#), the Board directed District staff to engage with stakeholders, local governments, community organizations and/or the public, prior to determining future land use. The engagement process included:

- Consideration of [future enrolment growth](#) in the school District, including kindergarten to Grade 12, adult programs and early learning
- Consideration of [alternative community use](#) of surplus space in school buildings and other facilities
- Fair consideration of community input, and adequate opportunity for the community to respond to the Board’s plan for the Real Property

Staff Recommendation

As discussed during the [consideration to close QEA](#) and detailed in [future enrolment growth](#) and [future development considerations](#) on the project information web page, the site is not needed for educational purposes now, or into the future.

The Francophone public school board, [Conseil scolaire francophone de la Colombie-Britannique](#) (CSF), is interested in acquiring the QEA site. Given this, future development considerations, and that CSF is another public education school district, staff recommends the Board declare QEA as surplus to District needs and proceed with disposition of the site and its buildings to CSF. See [alternative community use](#) on the project web page for more information.

Potential funds generated from a sale or long-term lease of the land would provide capital revenue for the Board, that can then be directed for priority capital investment such as building a new school in an area with enrolment demand, as well as expanding or seismically upgrading existing schools.

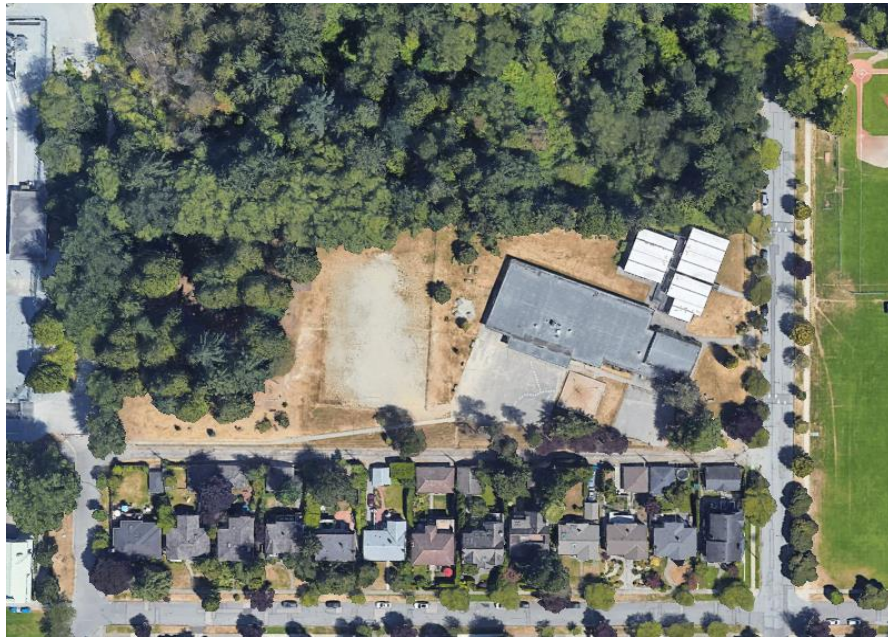
QEA School Information

Queen Elizabeth Annex (QEA) accommodates students in the District choice early French immersion (EFI) program. QEA is the annex to JQ. After completing Grade 3, students from QEA move to JQ to continue their EFI program.

In the past several years, QEA has accommodated about 70 kindergarten to Grade 3 students.

As a District choice program, QEA is not a catchment school and is not needed to accommodate catchment enrolment. Instead, students in the area are accommodated at other nearby schools.

On June 6, 2022, at a special Board meeting, the Vancouver School Board approved the closure of Queen Elizabeth Annex (QEA) effective June 30, 2023. Current students at QEA will be relocated to JQ, about one kilometre away the QEA site.



Address: 4755 Crown Street, Vancouver

Site Area: 1.54ha

Building age: 59 years (built in 1964)

Number of classrooms: 5 classrooms, 1 resource room, 1 library and 1 activity room

Number of portables: 7 (including 2 coded as washroom portables)

Operating capacity: 98

Seismic rating: High seismic risk (category 3)

2023 BC property assessed value: \$46,359,000

ENGAGEMENT

The District follows best practices for engagement as guided by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum of engagement (see [Appendix E – IAP2 Spectrum](#)).

Engagement Goal

The engagement goal was to provide opportunity, as outlined in Board policy, for those interested and impacted by the QEA site surplus proposal to share feedback. Findings from the engagement process will be considered by the Board as it decides the surplus considerations of the site.

Engagement Objective

The engagement objective was to gather feedback by March from [target audiences](#) (see below) about the future educational needs, potential disposition to CSF and other alternative community uses of the site.

The engagement objective at this level rests at the “Consult” level in the IAP2 spectrum as activities seek feedback about the proposed decision and keep interested individuals informed, listened to and acknowledge their concerns and aspirations through the engagement summary report.

Engagement Activities

The following engagement activities were developed to meet the engagement objective and goal.

Activity	Date
<p><i>Stakeholder workshop*</i> See stakeholder engagement workshop on page 13 for more details.</p>	<p>Feb 15</p>
<p><i>Solicit feedback from civic agencies</i> Solicit feedback from potentially interested agencies including City of Vancouver, Parks Board, Vancouver Coastal Health and BC Housing. See their responses in Appendix C – Civic agency feedback.</p>	<p>Feb 15 – Email sent to civic agencies</p>
<p><i>Focused discussion with three-host Nations*</i> On January 13, 2023, District staff invited x^wməθk^wəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵw̓xwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), and səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations to participate in a focus discussion with District staff. See focused discussions on page 14 for more details.</p>	<p>Feb 21 – Met with representatives from Sḵw̓xwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish) Nation</p> <p>Feb 22 – Met with Rightsholders from x^wməθk^wəy̓əm (Musqueam) Nation</p> <p>Tsleil-Waututh Nation did not respond</p>

<p><i>Virtual information session</i> District staff informed interested community members about the surplus considerations and answered clarifying questions. See virtual information session on page 16 for more details.</p>	<p>Feb 23 & Mar 8</p>
<p><i>Online survey</i> See online survey on page 19 for more details.</p>	<p>Feb 23 – Mar 9</p>
<p><i>Receive email feedback</i> A total of 11 emails providing open feedback from the public to the Board were received through engage@vsb.bc.ca. Emails received during the submission period can be found in Appendix D – Email feedback. For privacy reasons, personal identifying information has been redacted from the emails.</p>	<p>Jan 18 – March 27 – Email submission period</p>
<p><i>Special delegation meeting</i> Based on feedback from the community, the District added a special delegation meeting for the Board to specifically hear about the QEA land surplus declaration consideration from the public. Delegations will be listed on the District’s website. The meeting will be livestreamed.</p>	<p>Mar 10 – Informed the community about the added delegation Apr 5 – special delegation meeting scheduled</p>

*During each of these engagement activities (stakeholder workshop and focused discussions with the three-host Nations), staff delivered a presentation on the Board’s consideration of declaring the QEA site and its buildings as surplus. Jiana Chow, Communications Manager outlined the surplus declaration process and provided an overview of the timeline and engagement activities planned. John Dawson, Director of Educational Planning and Student Information then provided district and local demographic and enrolment information, as well as information about how the District would accommodate potential future long term enrolment growth on the west side of Vancouver and UBC/UEL. Given CSF’s interest in the QEA site for public educational programming, staff also outlined the District’s recommendation to dispose the site to the Francophone public school board, either through sale or long-term lease. See [Appendix A – Staff Presentation](#).

COMMUNICATIONS

Communications plays a key role in ensuring an engaged audience. As per IAP2 standards, sharing information provides participants with information they need to participate in a meaningful way.

Communications Goal

The communications goal for this public engagement process was to provide community members, interested and affected parties, and three-host Nations the information they need to meaningfully participate in the engagement process.

Communications objectives

There are several communications objectives which will help to achieve the goal. Based on the IAP2 spectrum of engagement, the following communications objectives are rest at the “Inform” level of the spectrum.

By January 13, 2023, share information with District stakeholders, three-host Nations as well as school communities and neighbourhood associations near QEA about the upcoming engagement opportunities and timeline.

In February, launch the project website and share information with all target audiences about:

- The land disposal process and the engagement process
- Future enrolment growth considerations
- The District’s recommendations to surplus the site and dispose it to CSF, as well as the rationale
- How participant feedback will be considered in the Board’s decision

By March 31, 2023, share information with all audiences about what was heard in the engagement process.

After April 11, 2023, share information with all audiences about:

- The Board’s decision.
- Next steps based on the Board’s decision.

Communication Activities

To fulfil the above objectives, the following materials were developed and distributed/published:

[Project information web page](#) (launched Feb 15) – resource hub for all materials related to the surplus consideration including:

- [Engagement process](#)
- [Future enrolment growth](#)
- [Future development considerations](#)
- [Alternative community use](#)
- [Other considerations](#)

Jan 13 - [Letter to QEA school community re: the Board’s decision to begin public engagement](#)

Jan 13 - [Invite to three-host nations to participate in the engagement process](#)

Feb 14 - [Letter to school communities and neighbourhood associations near QEA \(the community\) re: engagement opportunities](#)

Feb 15 - [Letter to civic agencies re: feedback about the Board's surplus consideration](#)

Feb 24 - [Reminder letter to the community re: engagement opportunities](#)

Mar 1 - [Letter to the community re: virtual information session added](#)

Mar 10 - [Letter to the community re: special delegation added](#)

[Staff presentation for engagement activities](#)

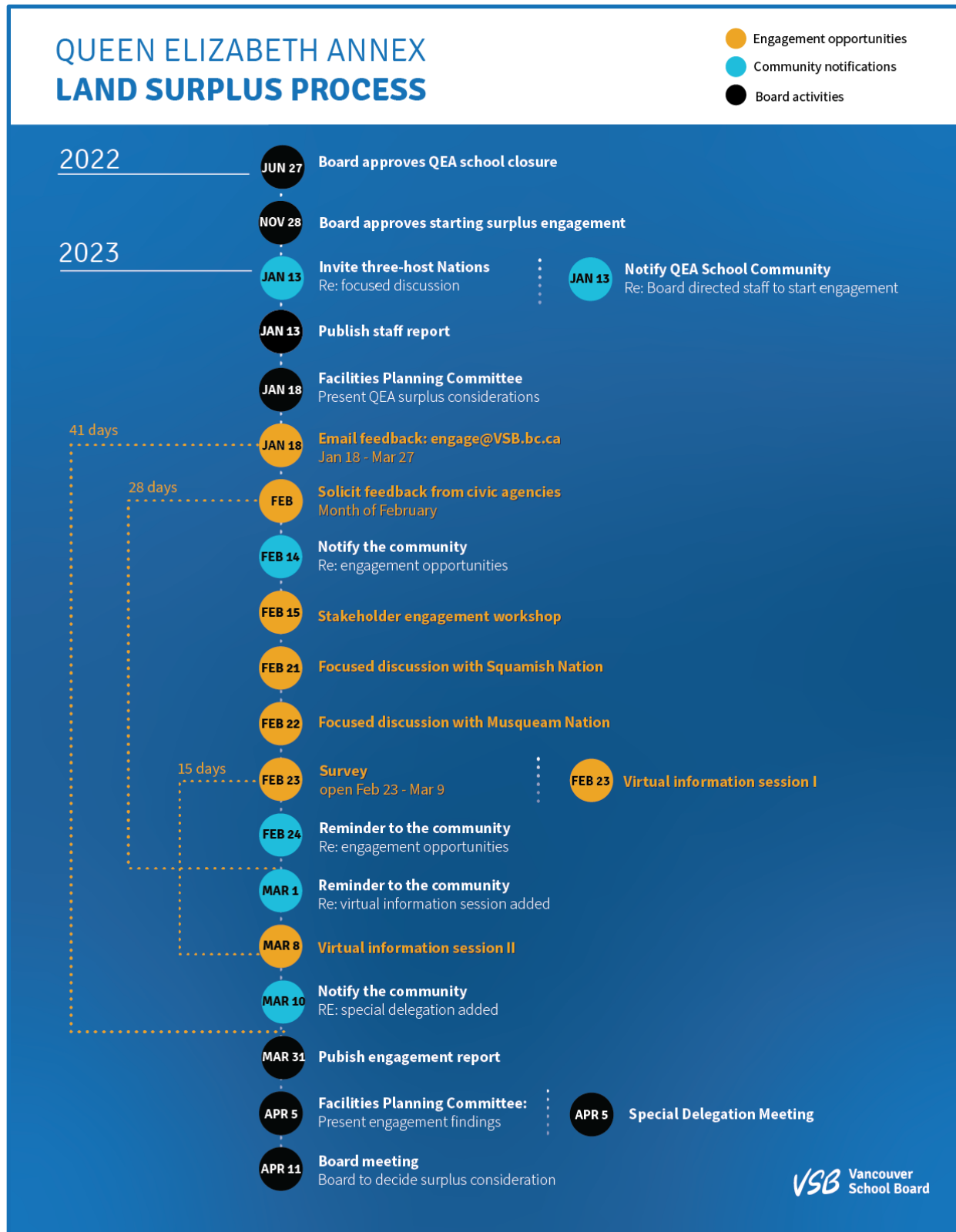
[Recording](#) of information session

TARGET AUDIENCE

The following groups were identified as interested parties regarding the QEA land surplus consideration.

- District's formal stakeholder groups
 - Building Trades
 - Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 15/ Vancouver Municipal Education and Community Workers (CUPE 15)
 - Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 407 (CUPE 407)
 - International Union of Operating Engineers Local 963 (IUOE)
 - Vancouver Elementary Principals and Vice-Principals Association (VEPVPA)
 - Vancouver Elementary and Adult Educators' Society Association (VEAES) (formally VESTA)
 - Vancouver Secondary Teachers Association (VSTA)
 - Vancouver District Parents' Advisory Council (DPAC)
 - Vancouver Association of Secondary School Administrators (VASSA)
 - Professional and Administrative Staff Association (PASA)
 - Vancouver District Student Council (VDSC)
- Representatives or Rightsholders from x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Sk̓wxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), and səlilwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations
- School communities in the vicinity of the QEA site
 - School communities include: Queen Elizabeth Annex, Queen Elizabeth Elementary, Jules Quesnel Elementary, Kitchener Elementary, Queen Mary Elementary, Norma Rose Point Elementary, University Hill Elementary, University Hill Secondary and Byng Secondary.
- Neighbourhood associations in the vicinity of the QEA site
 - Associations include Dunbar, Kitsilano, West Point Gray, UBC and Arbutus Ridge areas. *(These are the same neighbourhood associations identified during the QEA closure as interested groups by the QEA and JQ PAC executives.*
- Other civic agencies such as City of Vancouver, BC Housing, Vancouver Coastal Health, Park Board
- Elected officials in the QEA site area such as Honourable Joyce Murray, MP for Vancouver Quadra, Honourable David Eby, MLA for Vancouver - Point Grey and Kevin Falcon MLA for Vancouver - Quilchena.
- Members of the Vancouver public

PROCESS AND TIMELINE



FOCUSED DISCUSSIONS WITH THE THREE-HOST NATIONS

The Vancouver School Board – a large, urban school district located on the unceded ancestral lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations – respects and supports Indigenous ways of knowing and learning. The District’s Education Plan makes direct reference to continuing its reconciliation journey with the three-host Nations.

To this end, feedback for this engagement was requested of Vancouver’s three-host Nations. The District sent out invites in mid-January to the Nations and separate virtual meetings were arranged with the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Band and Sḵw̓x̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish) Nation. The District did not receive a response from səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nation.

Format

The meetings began with a land acknowledgment, introductions and then a [staff presentation](#). There were opportunities to ask clarifying questions through the presentation. Following this, District staff asked each participants the following three focused questions:

- *Question 1:* Having heard the information in the presentation and discussion guide, are there other challenges or opportunities not identified yet with the District’s proposal to surplus QEA?
- *Question 2:* If the Board approves the surplus, declaration, the District is recommending disposition of the site to CSF. Are there any other alternative community uses the Board may wish to consider?
- *Question 3:* If the Board approves the QEA site surplus declaration, the next step is the disposition through either sale or long-term lease (99 years) of the land and buildings. Would you recommend sale or long-term lease of the site, and why?

Most of the meeting time was spent receiving feedback about the three focused questions. The meetings concluded with District staff thanking the Nations for participating in the engagement process.

The following feedback was gathered from each session.

xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Band

A meeting was held between District staff and the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Band Rightsholders on February 22, 2023. Rightsholders from the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Band included a staff member from the Intergovernmental Affairs department and a member of council. District staff delivered a presentation on the Board’s consideration of declaring the QEA site and its buildings as surplus. xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Rightsholders asked clarifying questions during the presentation. District staff then asked the three focused questions, as mentioned above.

xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Rightsholders requested that the District not share their feedback publicly. Instead, they requested time to go back to their leadership and council for guidance about how they would like to engage with the VSB. District staff provided the presentation materials to xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) and asked for their feedback before March 10, 2023. The District did not receive further feedback from xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam).

Sḵw̓xwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish) Nation

The District engaged with two staff members from Sḵw̓xwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish) Nation's Rights and Title department the afternoon of February 21, 2023. Staff delivered a presentation on the Board's consideration of declaring the QEA site and its buildings as surplus. Sḵw̓xwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish) representatives then asked clarifying questions regarding the historical use of the land prior to the VSB's acquisition.

The following are ideas, concerns and key themes that emerged during the discussion with Sḵw̓xwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish) Nation representatives:

- *Historical use*
Sḵw̓xwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish) representatives had questions around the historical use of the land and who owned the site prior to the VSB's acquisition of the land. District staff noted that there was simple fee ownership transfer from the City of Vancouver to VSB in 1963.
- *Community engagement*
Sḵw̓xwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish) representatives expressed a desire to understand the community's response to both the school closure as well as the potential declaration of the site as surplus.
- *Future enrolment*
Sḵw̓xwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish) representatives sought to understand current enrolment versus projected enrolment to ensure that the District had enough capacity to accommodate future growth of the school-aged population.
- *Indigenous Rights*
There was a strong opinion expressed to return the land back to Indigenous Rightsholders if the QEA site were to be declared as surplus. Sḵw̓xwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish) representatives emphasized that collaboration with Vancouver's three-host Nations was imperative.

Representatives also had concerns that the interests of second language rightsholders would be placed ahead of the rights of the Indigenous peoples if the site was disposed to CSF.

- *Collaboration*
Sḵw̓xwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish) representatives expressed a strong interest in future collaboration with the VSB. Recognizing the power that public education holds to right historical wrongs, representatives noted the opportunity that collaboration affords to advance reconciliation.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOP

VSBC stakeholder groups include staff, parents and students who are directly influenced by the work of the District. Stakeholders provide diverse perspectives as representatives from various employee groups and school communities. They participate in committee meetings, engagements and other activities to provide valuable feedback to the Board.

To this end, the District invited representatives of all formal stakeholder groups to participate in an in-person engagement workshop on February 15, 2023. Stakeholders included representatives from the following groups:

Stakeholder Group	Members in Attendance
Professional and Administrative Association (PASA)	2
Vancouver Association of Secondary School Administrators (VASSA)	1
Trades	0
Vancouver Principals & Vice Principals Association (VEPVPA)	2
CUPE 15	1
Vancouver Secondary Teachers' Association (VSTA)	1
CUPE 407	0
Vancouver Elementary and Adult Educators' Society (VEAES)	1
Vancouver District Student Council (VDSC)	0
The International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE)	1
District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC)	2
Total Stakeholder Representatives:	11

Recognizing there is comprehensive data to review, stakeholders were provided with a [discussion guide](#) a week before the workshop to support their informed engagement.

Format

The meeting began with a land acknowledgment, introductions and then a [staff presentation](#). The presentation was an extension of the discussion guide. There were opportunities to ask clarifying questions throughout the presentation. Following this, stakeholders were divided into three groups.

Participants were asked three focused questions (below) and were given approximately 50-minutes to discuss the questions in their groups. Each group chose a notetaker, who captured the thoughts and ideas of the group and a spokesperson to present the group's ideas.

District staff asked the groups the following three focused questions:

- **Question 1:** Having heard the information in the presentation and shared in the discussion guide, are there other challenges or opportunities not identified yet with the District's proposal to surplus QEA?
- **Question 2:** If the Board approves the surplus declaration, the District is recommending disposition of the site to CSF. Are there any other alternative community uses the Board may wish to consider?

- *Question 3:* If the Board approves the QEA site surplus declaration, the next step is the disposition through either sale or long-term lease (99 years) of the land and buildings. Would you recommend sale or long-term lease of the site, and why?

The following ideas, concerns and key themes emerged from the discussion with stakeholder representatives:

- *Outdoor education*
There was discussion about using the site for an outdoor education centre where students throughout the District could go to learn about and get in touch with nature. One group also expressed interest in incorporating Indigenous ways of learning on x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam) land.
- *Mixed use or multi-purpose site*
Another idea that was expressed was to use the site as a community centre, daycare or a mixed-use site staffed with Indigenous educators. Some participants suggested using the site for housing VSB staff. Other suggestions included using the site to rent out to film crews, using it as a health or mental health clinic, leasing the land to the City of Vancouver as a park or generally using the site to support the overall community.
- *Addressing CSF's needs*
There were ideas put forth about disposing an alternate site for the CSF. Some participants were in favour of exploring a possible subdivision of the Prince of Wales Secondary site.
- *Support for lease instead of sale*
If land disposal should come to pass, there was strong support by several stakeholder representatives for the District to enter into a long-term lease instead of a sale. Participants noted that a lease would provide an ongoing revenue stream. Some noted that a sale is final and the land the District holds will only appreciate in value.
- *Indigenous Rights*
There was also an idea put forward to return the land back to the original Rightsholders.

At the end, stakeholders were encouraged to submit additional questions or comments through the survey and the engage@vsb.bc.ca email address.

CIVIC AGENCY FEEDBACK

The District reached out to the City of Vancouver, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, BC Housing and Vancouver Coastal Health in February to solicit their feedback about the surplus consideration. Replies were received from all four agencies with each noting that they had no objection to declaring the land surplus. Feedback from each agency is summarized below.

Civic Agency	Summary of Feedback
Vancouver Coastal Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land should continue to be used in a way that would benefit health and development of children. • Advised VSB to consider walkability and proximity to green space in future educational facilities to promote health and development of children.
City of Vancouver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sale or lease of property to CSF and reinvestment of proceeds into school infrastructure is seen by the City as positive.
BC Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No interest in pursuing this property. • Appreciative of the opportunity to engage.
Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No concerns with potential disposition to CSF. • Neighbourhood is well served for open space needs by adjacent Chaldecott Park and the University of British Columbia endowment lands.

See their full responses in [Appendix C – Civic agency feedback](#). Please note, personal information has been redacted for privacy reasons.

VIRTUAL INFORMATION SESSION

Two virtual public information sessions were held on the Teams platform on February 23 and March 8, 2023. Invitations were sent to school communities and neighbourhood associations near the site (see [target audience](#)) nine days beforehand. Participants were required to register beforehand in order to receive the virtual meeting link.

After hearing that some potential participants were sent an incorrect automatic meeting link for the first session on February 23 via the EventBrite registration platform, the information session on March 8 was added to ensure that all community members had an opportunity to participate and ask questions. The second information session used Microsoft Forms during the registration process to avoid potential confusion caused by EventBrite. The same community members were [notified](#) of the added session on March 1, a week before the second information session.

The staff presentation of the first information session was recorded and posted online the following day. Staff presented the same content for both the first and second session. Many participants chose to remain anonymous. Names and identities were not documented.

Format

The hour-long information sessions started with a staff presentation, followed by approximately 30 minutes for participants to ask clarifying questions. To ensure there was no lag time and the virtual session ran smoothly, participant cameras and microphones were disabled. Participants asked questions through the Teams live event chat feature through direct message to moderators. Due to the volume of questions, staff moderated and paraphrased the questions to ensure common themes would be addressed.

At the end of the session, participants were encouraged to submit additional questions or comments through the survey and the engage@vsb.bc.ca email address.

Dates & Attendees

A combined 35 participants virtually joined an information session. Approximately 25 unique participants attended the information session on February 23 and approximately 10 unique participants attended the session on March 8.

Date/Time	Event	Participants Registered	Participants in Attendance	Number of comments/questions received
February 23, 2023 @6-7pm	Virtual Information Session #1	82	25	97
March 8, 2023 @4-5pm	Virtual Information Session #2	25	10	38

Clarifying questions

In both sessions, participants raised several questions about the consideration to surplus the QEA site. Below are the themes that emerged during the online information sessions.

Theme	“In their words” <i>Selection of submitted comments</i>
<p><i>VSB’s enrolment data</i> (23 per cent)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question raised about why area enrolment is a concern if QEA runs a French Immersion program which is District-wide. • Concern that demand is heavily understated with the pandemic. Participants stated that new developments in the Dunbar and Point Grey area could lead to population growth as well as growth in the school-aged population. • Concern that QEA students at JQ would put JQ over capacity. • Question about the number of Vancouver students attending independent schools vs VSB schools 	<p>“Saying there is capacity at JQ despite a lack of operating capacity is confusing - can you say more about what you mean by the organizational capacities that allow the VSB to overcome the operating capacity limits?”</p> <p>“You say that QEA was not over enrolled but I think the point was that the French immersion waitlists are massive. QEA has emptied our waitlist due to closure threat over the last 8 years. As an example our friends daughter was # 170 on the Kerrisdale French immersion waitlist and ended up having to wait until grade one for a spot that opened at JQ.”</p> <p>“The presenter just said there is enough space for accommodating QEA, can the presenter please explain how he believes that is the case given EIQ has 356 now and there is an operating capacity of 398. There are 71 QEA students. 356 + 71 is 427, so that’s 29 students overcapacity. How can the presenter insist publicly there is sufficient space? Especially given the total lack of outdoor play space and the 3 floors for dangerous evacuation scenarios. Please explain. Thank you”</p>
<p><i>Forecasting and facilities planning</i> (19 per cent)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns were raised that the District’s forecast model has not been very accurate and has generally understated needs and demand. • Participants highlighted the variance between District enrolment projections and Ministry projections. Ministry is projecting an increase in District enrolment while VSB is projecting a trend of continued decline. • Concern that the Long Range Facilities Plan only looks at a 10-year window instead of a 25-50 year period. 	<p>“Considering future enrolment growth needs to consider the development happening in the area as well all the data on projected population as well as census data. The VSB focuses on historical data and doesn't consider Provincial statistics showing growth, doesn't consider census figures (per Deputy Superintendent), and is not factoring in needs of the community including Dunbar Residents and also the incoming residents who will live in the developments in Dunbar, Point Grey.”</p> <p>“Will forecast models account for the increase in 2022 from 2021? Is new immigration trend accounted for?”</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criticism that future enrolment growth is not being considered by the District and that the VSB focuses on historical data while not taking into consideration provincial statistics showing growth or census data. • Frustration expressed about why an “existing, functioning, in-demand, beloved community cherished school be put up for closure and surplus” given that other vacant sites in the District are available. • Question about the lack of available schools downtown (citing promised Olympic Village school) 	<p>“Presenter mentions VSB forecasts are more accurate than the Province, can the VSB share the deviation from forecasts from what happens in reality? Isn't it true that VSB enrolment forecasts are typically very inaccurate resulting in a lot of issues each year?”</p>
<p><i>Technical difficulties</i> (14 per cent)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments received about some having difficulties logging into the virtual session. • Frustration with the Teams platform and participants’ difficulties joining via mobile. 	<p>“Many parents are unable to log on. They are asked for a code to join.”</p>
<p><i>Engagement and process</i> (14 per cent)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frustration with the overall engagement process. • Criticism expressed with regards to the District’s overall engagement practices. • Questions about the engagement process 	<p>“If this is intended to be an honest good faith engagement with the community, why is the survey so clearly skewed to generate particular responses?”</p>
<p><i>French Immersion</i> (14 per cent)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments expressed that there are still waitlists for French Immersion and that QEA is a much-needed valuable site and program for French Immersion. • Strong support for increasing French immersion seats in the District. 	<p>“There has not been a declining demand for French Immersion. You say applications were not above last year - even if true, that is not a decline. Furthermore, the VSB's own French Immersion review document contradicts your claim saying there is high and growing demand. Likewise, your comment about not having sufficient teachers for French Immersion is not the same as a decline in demand, which again your report says is not the case.”</p>
<p><i>Appreciation for the information presented</i> (four per cent)</p>	<p>“Appreciate that you are asking the tough questions and being realistic in your answers.</p>

	Much better than last year's QEA closure engagement where every tough question was not asked and answers were vague and slick."
<p><i>Future uses</i> (four per cent)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions or comments about alternative future uses for the QEA site 	"what are alternative community uses that VSB has done in the past or knows of? (Apart from leasing to another school board)"
<p><i>Seismic safety</i> (three per cent)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question about the seismic safety of QEA versus JQ when QEA has one storey and a door in every single room for easier evacuation versus JQ which has long old hallways, three stories and switchback stairs. 	"Does poor seismic condition impact low enrollment in VSB schools? Is that a factor in VSB enrollment forecasts -- that families choose private / other school boards to avoid schooling their children on seismically poor VSB buildings?"

Overall, there was a strong desire from participants to keep QEA open for its unique nature as a small school site and a desire to keep VSB land in the hands of the public. There was strong opposition to divesting of any public land assets in Vancouver given rising land values. No participant was vocal in their support of the consideration to surplus the site.

ONLINE SURVEY

From February 23 to March 9, 2023, a survey was promoted via email to the school communities and neighbourhood associations surrounding the QEA site (see [Target Audience](#) for details). Reminder emails were also sent to the same groups on [February 24](#) and [March 1](#). Out of 8,306 emails sent, 286 survey responses were received.

The 10-minute online survey sought information about participant demographics, feedback on virtual information sessions, surplus considerations, District priorities, the overall engagement process and provided the option for open text responses. The survey consisted of 20 questions, three of which were optional.

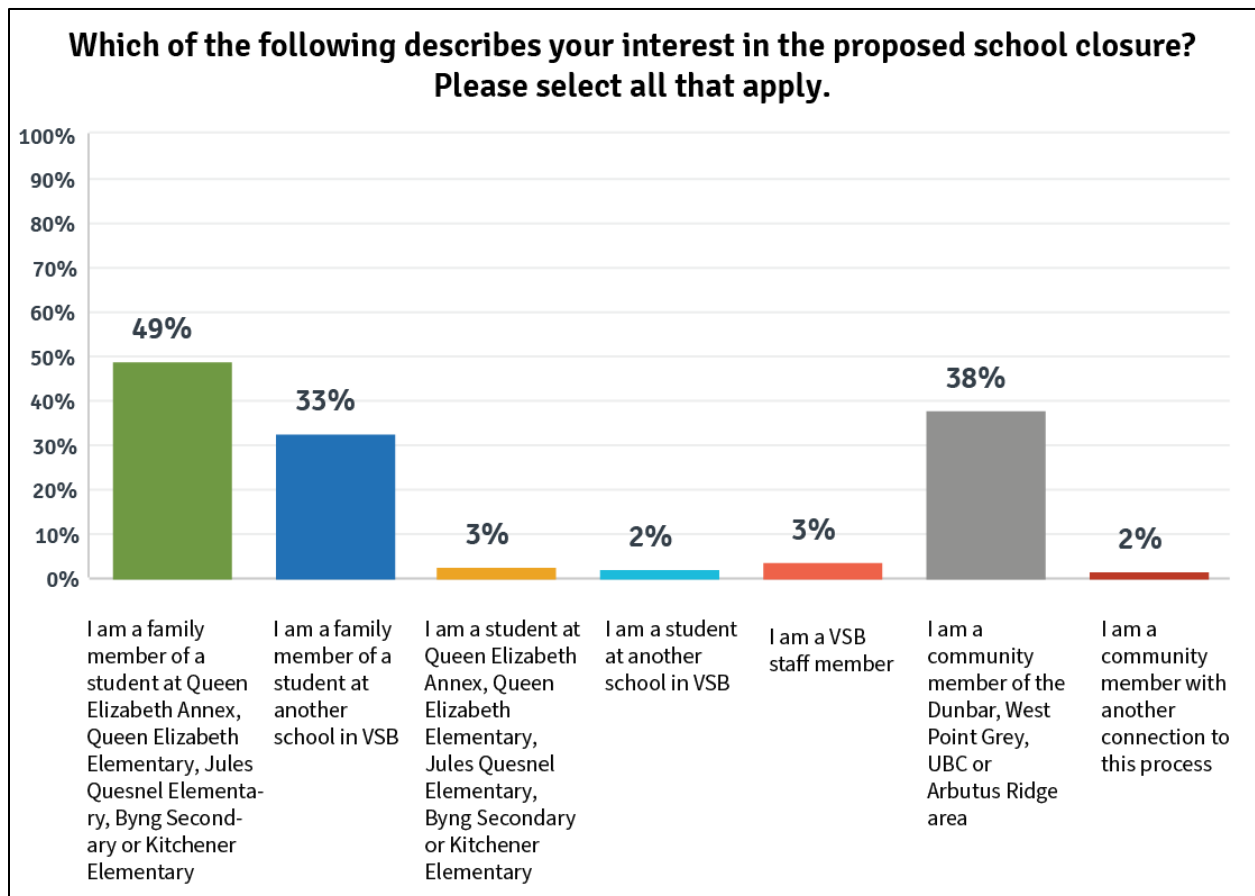
The following is a summary of survey responses, grouped by question theme.

Demographics

The top three demographic groups of those who completed the survey were:

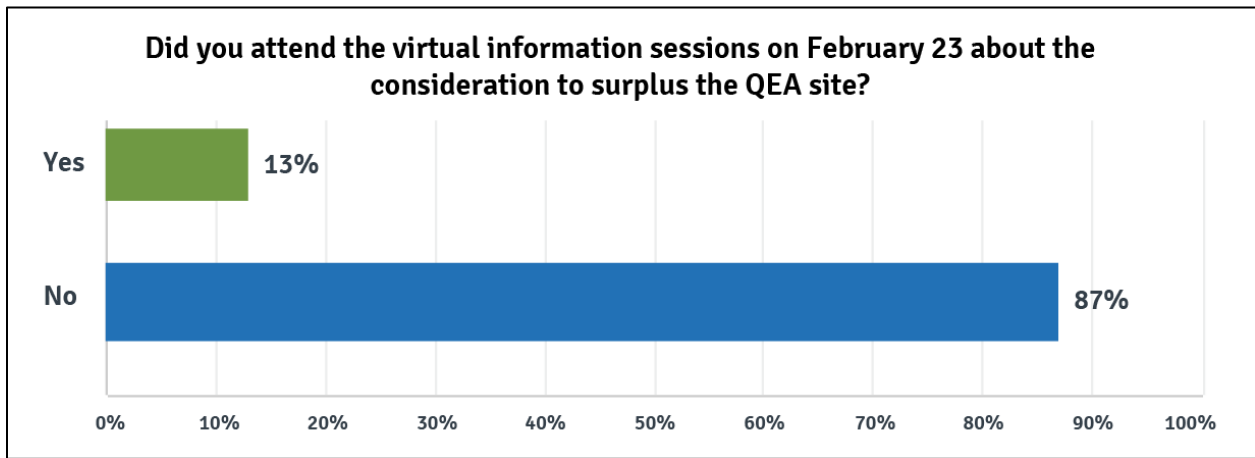
- Family members of a student at QEA or a school community surrounding QEA (49 per cent).
- Family members of students in other VSB schools (33 per cent).
- Community members of the Dunbar, West Point Grey, UBC or Arbutus Ridge area (38 per cent).

Please note, participants were invited to make more than one selection.



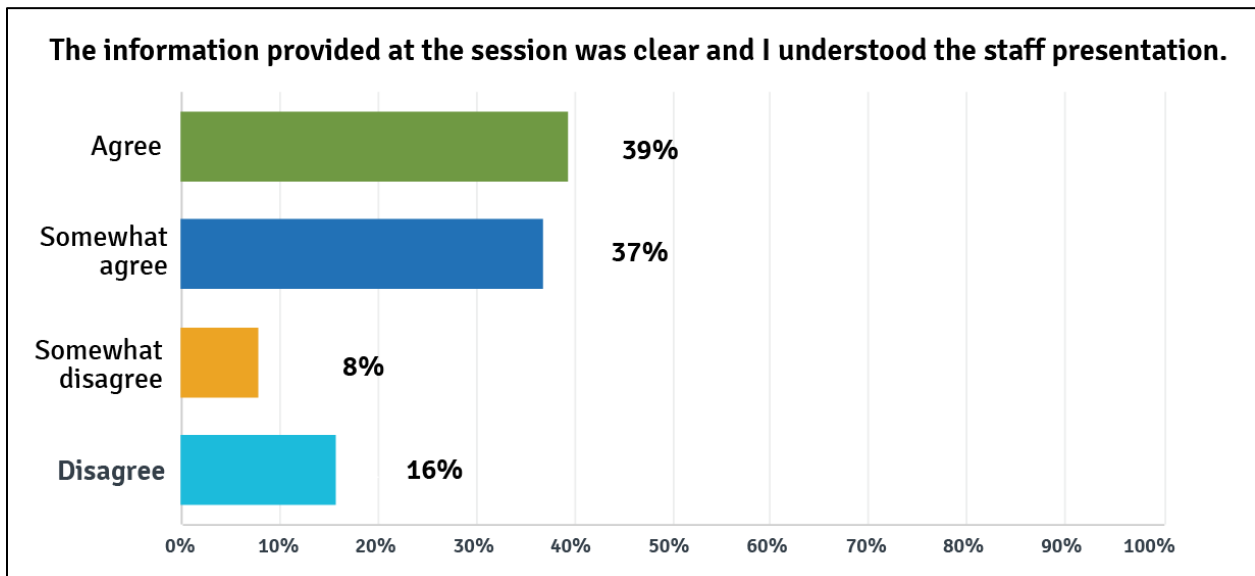
Virtual information sessions

Participants were asked, “Did you attend the virtual information sessions on February 23 about the consideration to surplus the QEA site?”



Most of the survey respondents did not attend a virtual information session (87 per cent) while the remaining minority (13 per cent) did attend.

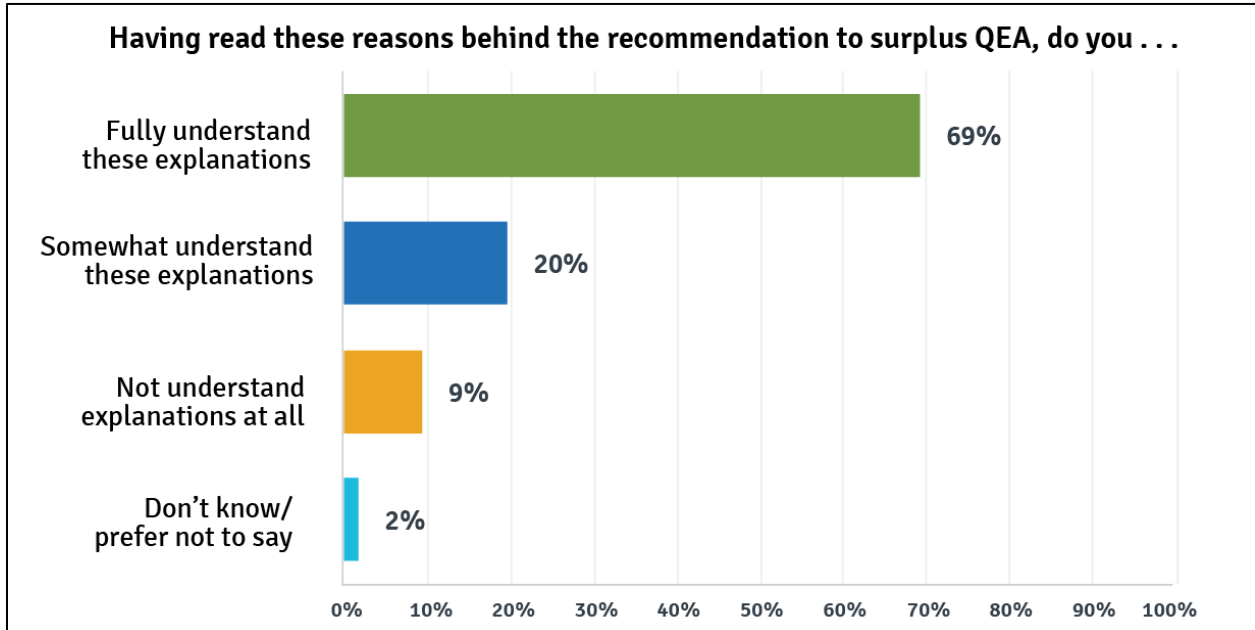
Participants were given the statement, “The information provided at the session was clear and I understood the staff presentation.”



A combined 76 per cent of respondents that attended a virtual information session agreed or somewhat agreed that the information provided at the session was clear and they understood the staff presentation. Just under a quarter (24 per cent) disagreed or somewhat disagreed with that statement.

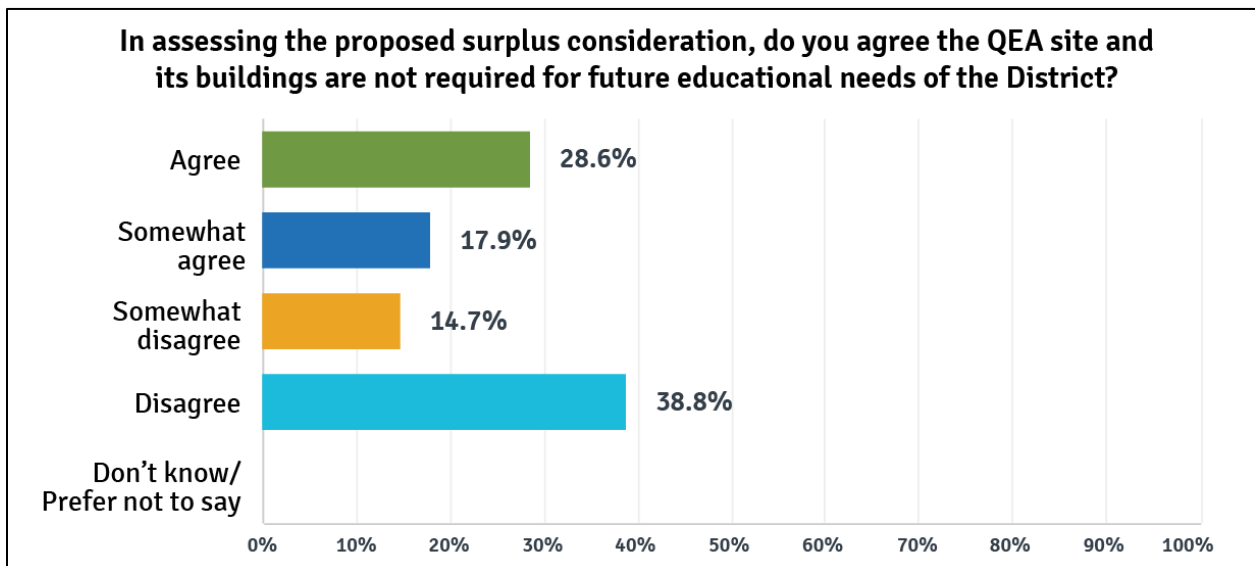
Surplus considerations

Participants were given an explanation for the District’s recommendation to surplus the QEA site and asked, “Having read these reasons behind the recommendation to surplus QEA, do you...Fully understand these explanations, Somewhat understand these explanations, not understand explanations at all or Don’t know/prefer not to say.”



After having read the reasons behind the recommendations to surplus QEA, a combined 89 per cent of survey respondents fully or somewhat understood the explanations. While nine per cent of respondents indicated they did not understand the surplus considerations. The remaining two per cent did not know or preferred not to say.

Participants were asked, “In assessing the proposed surplus consideration, do you agree the QEA site and its buildings are not required for future educational needs of the District?”



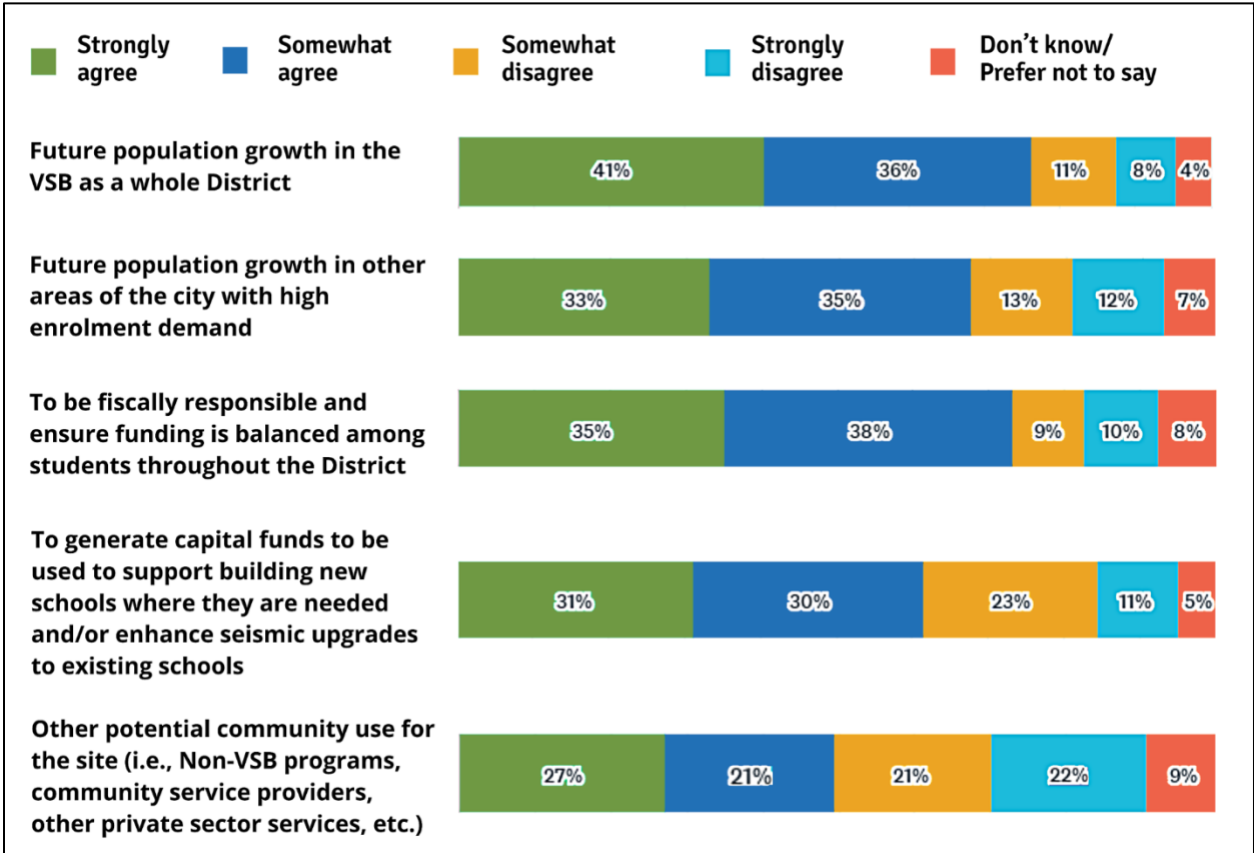
In assessing the proposed surplus consideration, a combined 46.5 per cent of respondents agreed or somewhat agreed that that the QEA site and its buildings are not required for future educational needs of the District. A combined 53.5 per cent of respondents disagreed or somewhat disagreed.

Priorities if site is declared surplus

Participants were asked “to what extent the following should be a priority for the Board as it considers the surplus declaration of the QEA site:

- Future population growth in the VSB as a whole District (77 per cent strongly/somewhat agreed)
- Future population growth in other areas of the city with high enrolment demand (67 per cent strongly/somewhat agreed)
- To be fiscally responsible and ensure funding is balanced among students throughout District (73 per cent strongly/somewhat agreed)
- To generate capital funds to be used to support building new schools where they are needed/and or enhance seismic upgrades to existing schools (63 per cent strongly/somewhat agreed)
- Other potential community use for the site i.e., Non-VSB programs, community service providers, other public sector services, etc. (48 per cent strongly/somewhat agreed)
- Other suggestions (collected via open ended text box, themed below)

Four out of the first five factors tested were seen as a high priority by most respondents, with “future population growth in the VSB as a whole District” as the most important priority.



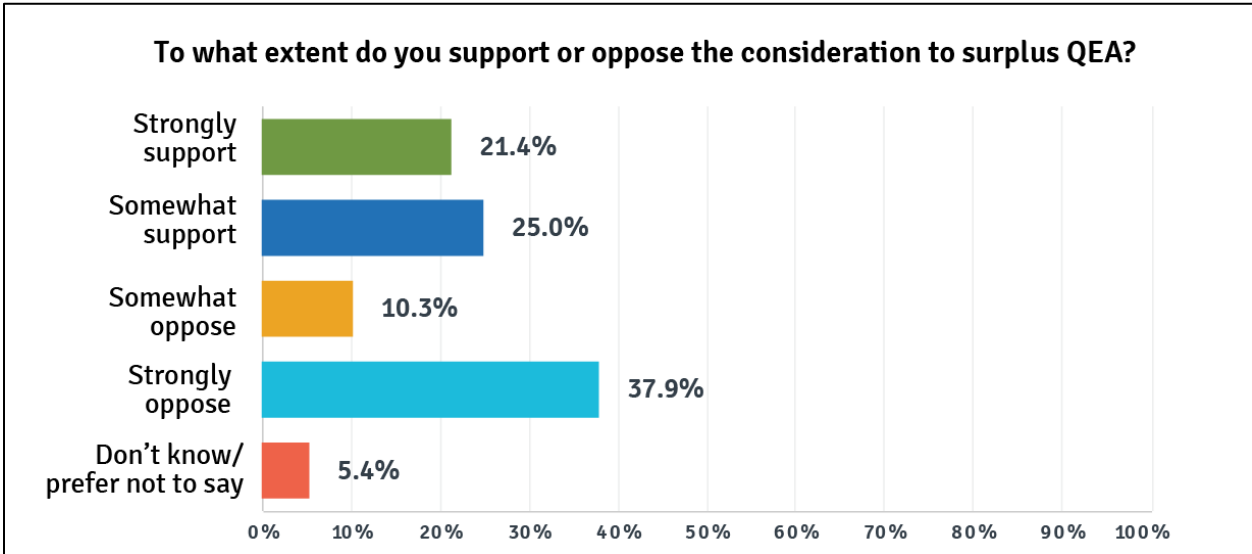
Out of 286 survey responses, 76 provided other suggestions in the open text box. Themes that emerged include:

Theme (percentage out of 75 total comments)	“In their words” <i>Selection of submitted comments</i>
<p><i>Alternative community use</i> (35 per cent)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature school • Community centre • After school/daycare • Senior support • Housing 	<p>“That building could be a community centre, a nature centre on the edge of the park, an extra curricular events location, a continuing ed facility...”</p> <p>“After school daycare demand is high. Many kids are on waiting list for years before getting a spot.”</p> <p>“Convert into a pickleball court for families to play year round.”</p>
<p><i>Comments about enrolment/forecasting</i> (21 per cent)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disagreement with VSB forecasting • Future neighbourhood density 	<p>“I do not agree with projection of enrollment decline.”</p> <p>“The whole area will grow in population in the future and the number of children will increase.”</p> <p>“Don't close schools- be more transparent with your numbers and enrolment projections – they don't make sense- why are they so different to the census and other schools age population projections?”</p>
<p><i>Preference for lease over sale</i> (13 per cent)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain ownership of site • Consider rising land values • Keep land for future use 	<p>“If it has to happen, lease it to CSF, so at least the land remains used for education.”</p> <p>“Lease the land but keep ownership in case of future use.”</p> <p>“Hold the land and consider a mid-term lease to community services providers.”</p>
<p><i>French immersion</i> (11 per cent)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of French Immersion spots • Advocacy for French Immersion school 	<p>“You should open a new French Immersion School even if you close this one.”</p> <p>“We need more French Immersion places for children, not less.”</p>
<p><i>Opposition to surplus</i> (seven per cent)</p>	<p>“It is extremely short-sighted to dispense of these grounds as a school now.”</p>
<p><i>Special education</i> (five per cent)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use site to provide special educational programming 	<p>“How about a vsb school for kids with dyslexia or other learning needs. Etc.”</p>

<p><i>Comments about survey design and engagement process</i> (four per cent)</p>	<p>“This survey is completely misleading. The VSB admits it is facing elementary school enrolment increases, and yet has presented the opposite information in the preamble to the survey.”</p>
<p><i>Strengthen Indigenous ties</i> (three per cent)</p>	<p>“I think the land should be used to further our community ties with Musqueam.”</p>

Support or oppose consideration to surplus QEA

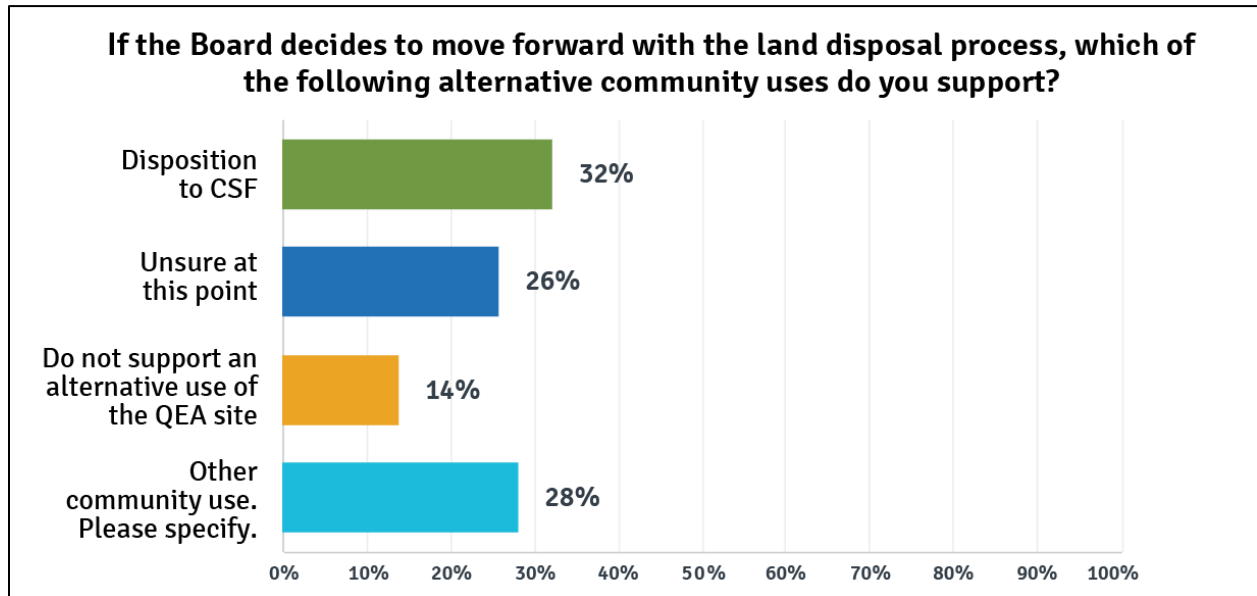
Participants were asked “to what extent do you support or oppose the consideration to surplus QEA?”



Responses to this question were closely split. A combined 46.4 per cent indicated strong support or somewhat support towards the surplus consideration versus a combined 48.2 per cent indicated somewhat oppose or strongly oppose. The remaining 5.4 per cent did not know or preferred not to answer this question.

Future uses

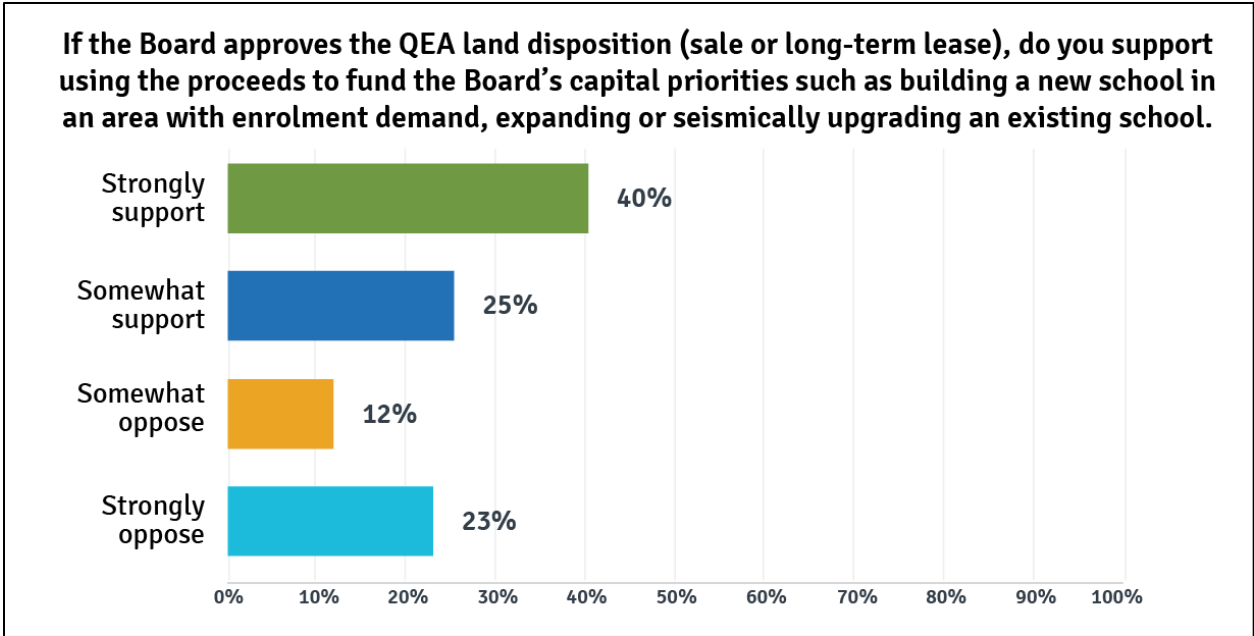
If the Board decides to move forward with the land disposal process, participants were asked, “which alternative community uses do you support?” Options given were, “Disposition to CSF”, “Unsure at this point”, “Do not support an alternative community use of the QEA site” or “Other community use. Please specify.”



Thirty-two per cent of respondents indicated support for disposition of the site to CSF, while 14 per cent did not support any alternative community use of the QEA site. Twenty-eight per cent of respondents indicated “other” community use for the site. Just over a quarter (26 per cent) were unsure about what the site should be used for.

Funding capital priorities

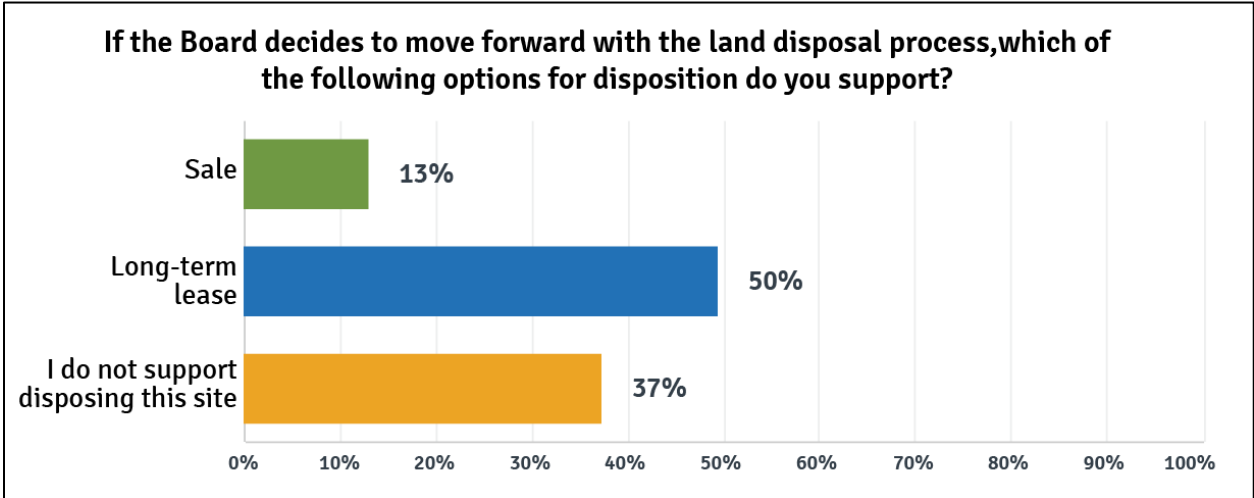
If the Board approves the QEA land disposition (sale or long-term lease), respondents were asked, “do you support using the proceeds to fund the Board’s capital priorities such as building a new school in an area with enrolment demand, expanding or seismically upgrading an existing school.”



More than half of respondents (65 per cent) indicated strong support or somewhat support for using the proceeds of the land disposal to fund capital projects. Thirty-five per cent of respondents were strongly opposed or somewhat opposed to using proceeds to fund capital projects.

Sale or lease

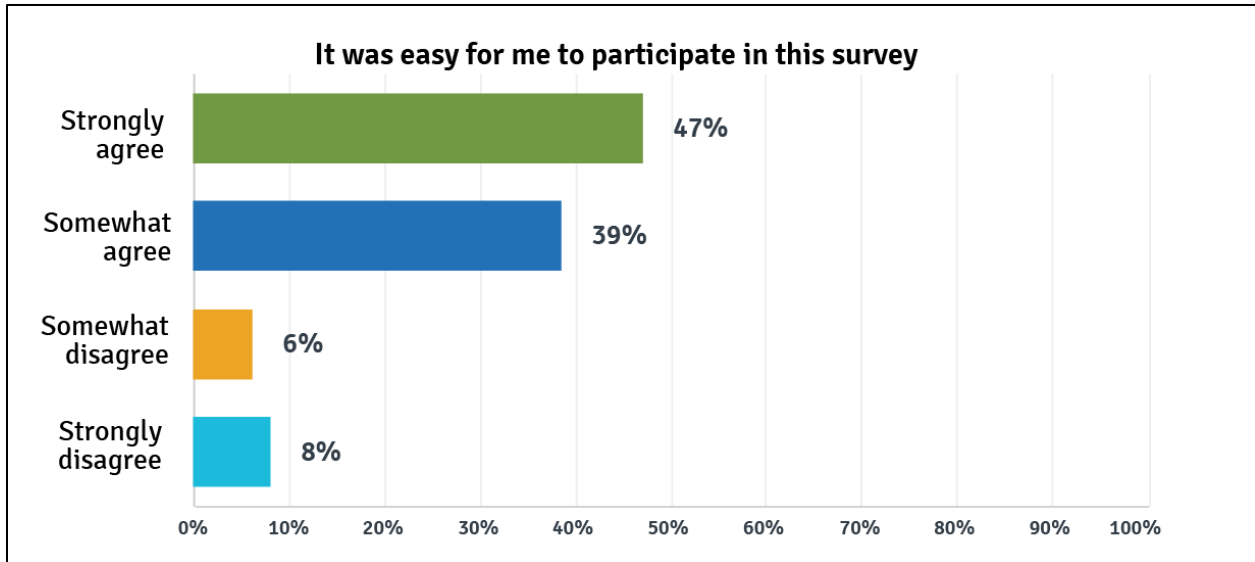
If the Board decides to move forward with the land disposal process, respondents were asked, “which of the following options for disposition do you support?” Options given were “sale”, “long-term lease” or “I do not support disposing this site.”



Half of respondents (50 per cent) indicated support for a long-term lease. Thirty-seven per cent of respondents were not in favour of disposing the site, while the remaining 13 per cent of respondents favoured a sale of the site.

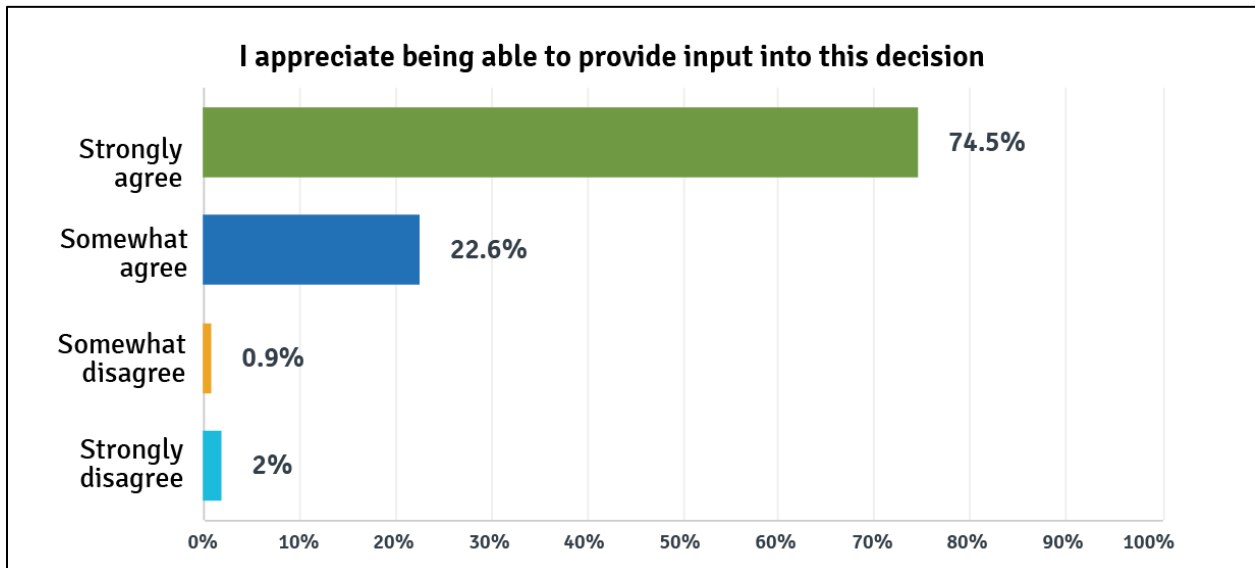
Engagement process

Participants were presented the statement, “It was easy for me to participate in this survey.”



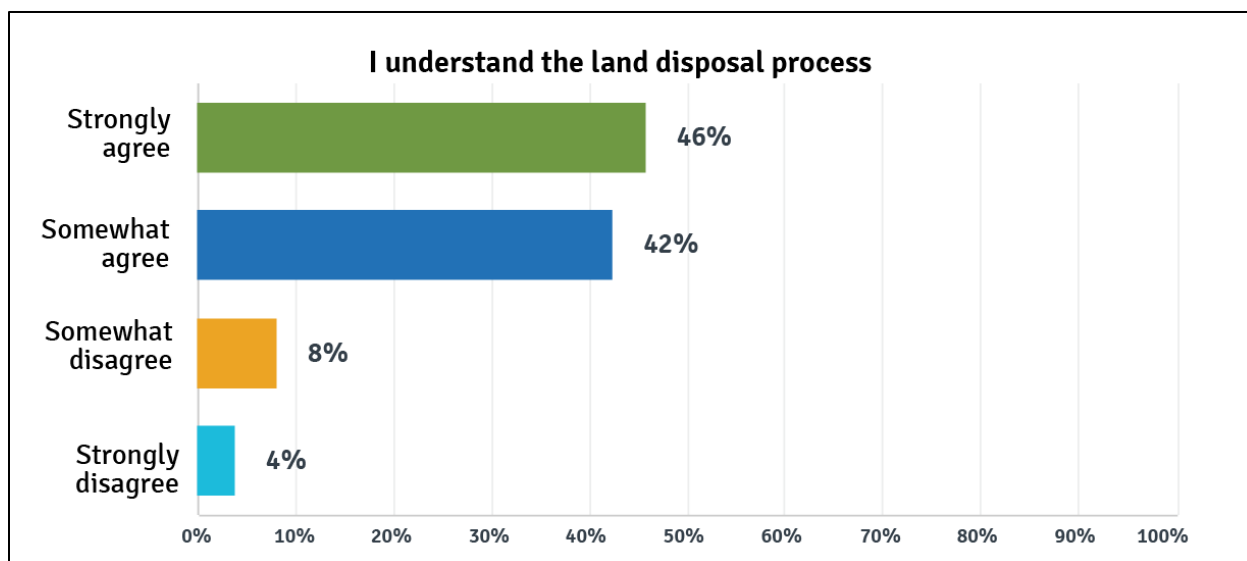
A combined 86 per cent of respondents indicated that it was easy to participate in the survey, with 47 per cent strongly agreed and 39 percent that somewhat agreed. The remaining respondents either somewhat disagreed (six per cent) or strongly disagreed (eight per cent).

Participants were presented the statement, “I appreciate being able to provide input into this decision.”



A combined 97 per cent of respondents strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that they appreciated being able to provide input into this decision. Two per cent of respondents strongly disagreed and the remaining one per cent somewhat disagreed.

Participants were presented the statement, “I understand the land disposal process.”



The majority (88 per cent) of respondents indicated that they understood the land disposal process, with 46 per cent strongly agreed and 42 per cent that somewhat agreed. Eight per cent somewhat disagreed and four per cent strongly disagreed.

Comments and concerns – Open text responses

Respondents were given the option to provide “any other comments or concerns about the QEA surplus considerations” through an open text box. Providing written comments in the open-text fields was optional. Respondents had the option to skip this question and still submit the survey. Out of 286 responses, 92 written comments were submitted.

The open-ended responses were reviewed and coded (assigned to categories) and reveal the following high-level themes.

Theme (percentage out of 92 total comments)	“In their words” <i>Selection of submitted comments</i>
<p><i>Opposition to surplus</i> (35 per cent)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the cost of rising land values • Consider future needs of area/District • Consider future densification of area 	<p>“VSB shouldn’t be selling off a great public asset ... Building new schools is vastly more expensive than utilizing existing ones, as will purchasing land fit for educating children.”</p> <p>“I would prefer school board to keep the site for future needs.”</p> <p>“Selling this land would be a massive mistake. There simply isn’t more land available like it on the west side of Vancouver yet infilling and densification at UBC, Dunbar, West Point Grey, Kitsilano, and Kerrisdale remain high priorities for city development.”</p>

<p><i>Concerns about enrolment/forecasting</i> (21 per cent)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Losing students to private schools • Future densification of area • Distrust in VSB forecasting 	<p>“Would be concerned what the impact of the Jericho Lands Development would have on West Side schools.”</p> <p>“I don't think your enrolment projections fully take into account the ongoing growth and future construction in the Uhill/NRP catchment.”</p> <p>“Once this property is sold then there is no going back. We know that enrolments will increase in the next five to ten years.”</p> <p>“You really need to see if your enrolment projections are accurate. There are a shortage of school spaces at VSB.”</p>
<p><i>Preference for lease over sale</i> (12 per cent)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider short term lease • Maintain ownership of site • Consider rising land values 	<p>“As evident from current housing crisis and unrealistic real estate prices, the value of any property is in the land itself, and once this is sold, the value of the revenue generated will always depreciates due to inflation, whereas the land value will always go up. It would be extremely shortsighted for VSB to sell off this piece of prime real estate, leasing will at least allow long-term and sustainable revenue source without giving up the ownership of the land.”</p> <p>“DO NOT SELL ANY CITY OR GOVT LAND!!! Only leases. We must preserve capital for future generations.”</p>
<p><i>Alternative community use</i> (11 per cent)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use site for nature school • Use site for housing • Use site for community centre 	<p>“Creating a Nature/Forest School Choice program to run alongside QEA existing K-3 French Immersion or even integrating the Environmental and Sustainability programming. The unique location and attributes of the site make it perfect for such a program (the sacred Camosun Bog which is very biodiverse and also Pacific Spirit Park just steps away).”</p> <p>“Use the site for temporary housing until needed by VSB.”</p> <p>“I support the repurposing of the land for community enhancement to enrich the lives of children and families and my top choice would be a local community centre.”</p>

<p><i>Comments about survey design and engagement process</i> (nine per cent)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confusing wording • Biased survey design 	<p>“When you ask a question such as number 13, that contains two choices (this OR that), we have no option to support one but not the other. Even if not meant to be, this comes across as rather manipulative and contributes to public distrust of entities involved in this kind of process.”</p> <p>“This survey did not offer the types of answers I was looking to provide.”</p>
<p><i>French Immersion</i> (seven per cent)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of French Immersion spots 	<p>“There are serious wait lists to get into French immersion and to see these spots go is hard.”</p> <p>“There is no mention anywhere that QEA provides French Immersion spaces. How will that be affected?”</p>
<p><i>General support for disposal</i> (five per cent)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equitable distribution of resources 	<p>“The board absolutely should make decisions on the basis of the best interests of the whole district, even though that may well mean capital /resources leaving this area to support public education in another area.”</p> <p>“Declaring QEA surplus seems *perfectly reasonable* to me and just want to reiterate my*strong support* for the School Board taking this action.”</p>
<p><i>Opposition to commercial or private use</i> (five per cent)</p>	<p>“a)This is public land and should never be surrendered to private interests. b)It should support educational programs and never support capital plans whose funding should come from other sources.”</p>
<p><i>Special education</i> (five per cent)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use site to provide special educational programming 	<p>“What about a Sign Language School, Special Education or Childs Occupational Therapy Training Centre.”</p> <p>“Special needs children are in critical need of support; if the land is sold, all proceeds should go to support these children and their inclusion at all levels of education (K-12)”</p>
<p><i>Balanced/equitable distribution of funds for all schools in District</i> (four per cent)</p>	<p>“The province should be funding new schools etc. if QEA is sold, these funds should be used to improve or maintain existing schools ie. New playgrounds, painting etc.”</p>

<i>Seismic considerations</i> (two per cent)	“Capital funds should be used to seismically upgrade Queen Elizabeth Elementary.”
<i>Support for small schools</i> (two per cent)	“I do not want mega schools. Young children learn better in smaller environments.”

Engagement updates

Participants were invited to provide their email addresses to receive updates about this engagement. Forty-seven email addresses were received. All responses received remain anonymous.

EMAIL FEEDBACK

From January 18 to March 27, 2023 email feedback was accepted through engage@vsb.bc.ca. This form of feedback was an additional way for the public to share their feedback directly to the Board. A total of 11 emails were received from the public. Below are themes that emerged.

Theme	Frequency (Number of emails received)
Preference for lease over sale	4
Opposition to surplus	3
Engagement process concerns	3
Comments about enrolment/forecasting	1

See [Appendix D – Email Feedback](#) for all the emails received in its entirety. For privacy reasons, personal identifying information has been redacted.

NEXT STEPS

This report describes in detail the engagement and communications efforts planned and implemented to support public engagement related to the QEA land surplus consideration in alignment with Board Policy 20.

The Board will make its decision regarding the potential surplus of the QEA site at a [special public Board meeting](#) on April 11, 2023 at 7:00 pm. In making their decision the Board will consider all feedback and input received through the engagement process, as well as the April 5, 2023 Facilities Planning Committee and Special Board Delegation meeting.

APPENDIX A – STAFF PRESENTATION

OUR VSB

VIRTUAL INFORMATION SESSION

QEA Land Surplus Consideration

March 8, 2023

INDIGENOUS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Please join me in acknowledging that we are unlearning and relearning on the traditional and unceded lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səllíwetəl (Tsilil-Waututh) nations

xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam)

Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish)

səllíwetəl (Tsilil-Waututh)

Agenda

- Introductions
- Staff presentation
- Clarifying questions
- Share your feedback

QEA Surplus Consideration

Taʷáwəwə: Stəp Éasíwəwəwəwəwə . .

The surplus declaration of the QEA site and its buildings

Governance

Selling or leasing VSB property is governed by the School Act through [Disposal of Land or Improvements Order](#) and Board [Policy 20 – Disposal of Land or Improvements](#).

Policy 20

“The Board has the responsibility for the disposal of its Real Property and may, after considering future educational needs and school space requirements for the school district, deem a property no longer required for further educational purposes or other Board purposes and determine to proceed to dispose of such property.”

VSB Vancouver School Board

Process

- 1. Conduct title search**
Confirmed the site is registered to VSB
- 2. Undertake engagement**
Engage with stakeholders, local governments, community organizations and/or the public
- 3. Board surplus decision**
Scheduled for April 11, at a public Board meeting
- 4. Board disposition decision**
If the site is deemed surplus, then the disposition process begins

Engagement Requirements

As per Board Policy 20, consultation process shall include:

“

- Consideration of future enrolment growth in the School District, including K-12, adult programs and early learning;
- Consideration of alternative community use of surplus space in school buildings and other facilities; and
- A fair consideration of the community's input and adequate opportunity for the community to respond to the Board's plan for the Real Property

”

VSB Vancouver School Board

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Timeline

VSB Vancouver School Board

8

Timeline

VSB Vancouver School Board

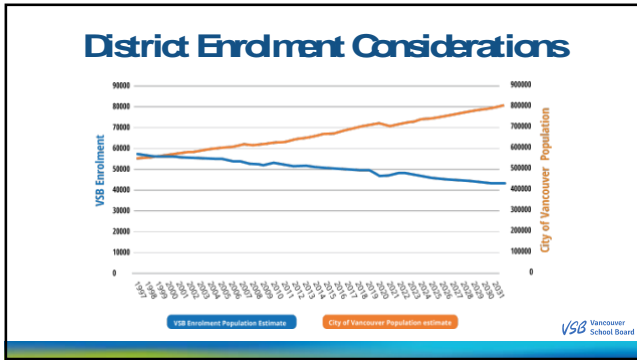
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QEA Site Information

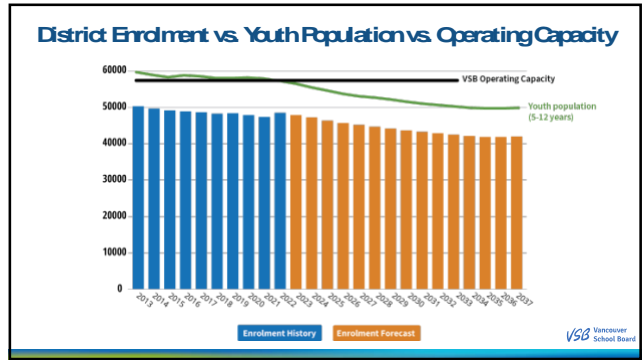
- Address:** 4755 Crown Street, Vancouver
- Site Area:** 1.54ha
- Building age:** 59 years (built in 1964)
- Number of classrooms:** 5 classrooms, 1 resource room, 1 library and 1 activity room
- Number of portables:** 7 (including 2 coded as washroom portables)
- Operating capacity:** 98
- Seismic rating:** High seismic risk (category 3)
- 2023 BC property assessed value:** \$46,359,000

VSB Vancouver School Board

10



11



12

Engagement Requirements

As per Board Policy 20, consultation process shall include:

“

- Consideration of future enrolment growth in the School District, including K-12, adult programs and early learning;
- Consideration of alternative community use of surplus space in school buildings and other facilities; and
- A fair consideration of the community's input and adequate opportunity for the community to respond to the Board's plan for the Real Property

”

VSB Vancouver School Board

7

Timeline

VSB Vancouver School Board

8

Timeline

LEGEND: Engagement opportunities

VSB Vancouver School Board

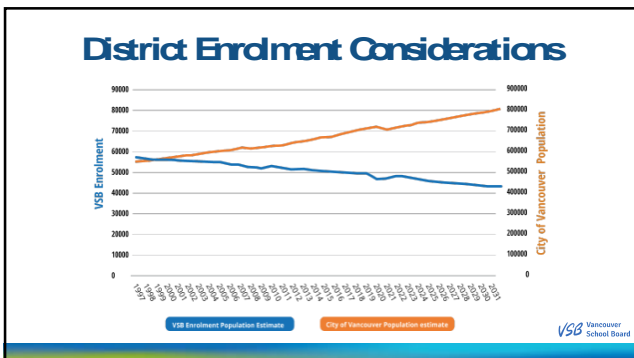
9

QEA Site Information

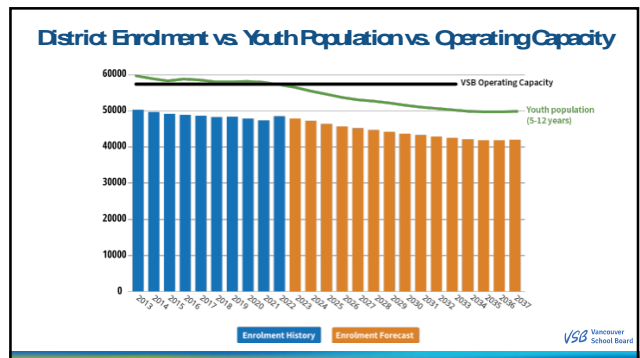
- Address:** 4755 Crown Street, Vancouver
- Site Area:** 1.54ha
- Building age:** 59 years (built in 1964)
- Number of classrooms:** 5 classrooms, 1 resource room, 1 library and 1 activity room
- Number of portables:** 7 (including 2 coded as washroom portables)
- Operating capacity:** 98
- Seismic rating:** High seismic risk (category 3)
- 2023 BC property assessed value:** \$46,359,000

VSB Vancouver School Board

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APPENDIX B – SURVEY



QEA Surplus Consideration – Survey

Welcome

On behalf of the Vancouver School Board, thank you for your participation in this survey.

Following the June 2022 decision to close Queen Elizabeth Annex (QEA), the Board is now considering staff's recommendation to declare the QEA site as surplus to the District. Based on the enrolment forecasts, the site is not, and will not be needed for educational purposes moving forward. Under the [School Act](#) and [Board Policy 20 – Disposal of Land or Improvements](#), the Board must first decide to surplus the land before exploring alternative land use possibilities.

The Board will decide if the site is surplus, at a public Board meeting on April 11, 2023. Feedback from the engagement, including results from this survey, along with the District staff's recommendation will help inform the Board's decision.

If the Board declares the QEA site as surplus, it may then instruct staff to proceed with the land disposition process, which includes either sale or long-term lease of the land.

Potential funds generated from a sale or long-term lease of the land would provide capital revenue for the Board, that can then be directed for priority capital investment such as building a new school in an area with enrolment demand, as well as expanding or seismically upgrading an existing school.

The Survey

The survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

Anonymity

Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. Your answers will be kept anonymous and confidential. The responses you provide will be combined with the responses of other survey participants and individual responses will not be identified.

Please do not include personal identifiable information, such as your name, email address, phone number, address, etc. in the comments.

Next

QEA Surplus Consideration – Survey

* 1. Which of the following describes your interest in the proposed school closure? Please select all that apply.

- I am a family member of a student at Queen Elizabeth Annex, Queen Elizabeth Elementary, Jules Quesnel Elementary, Byng Secondary or Kitchener Elementary
- I am a family member of a student at another school in VSB
- I am a student at Queen Elizabeth Annex, Queen Elizabeth Elementary, Jules Quesnel Elementary, Byng Secondary or Kitchener Elementary
- I am a student at another school in VSB
- I am a VSB staff member
- I am a community member of the Dunbar, West Point Grey, UBC or Arbutus Ridge area
- I am a community member with another connection to this process (please specify)

* 2. Did you attend the virtual information sessions on February 23 about the consideration to surplus the QEA site?

- Yes
- No

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Next



QEA Surplus Consideration – Survey

* 3. The information provided at the session was clear and I understood the staff presentation.

- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree

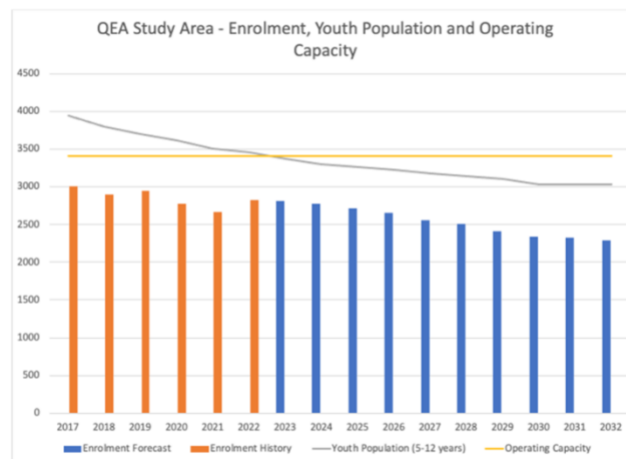
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QEA Surplus Consideration – Survey

Despite an overall increase in Vancouver’s population, both the birth rate and the number of school-aged children continue to decline in the city, resulting in a 26-year history of generally declining enrolment at the VSB. In alignment with this decline, enrolment near QEA* has also been declining for many years.

* To assess the potential future impacts and District needs for the QEA site, a thorough study of the enrolment and demographic trends near QEA was analyzed. The study area included elementary schools at QEA, JQ, Bayview, Carnarvon, Lord Kitchener, Norma Rose Point, Queen Elizabeth, Queen Mary, Southlands and University Hill elementary.



As illustrated by the graph above, at present there is no indication that there will be sustained or substantial enrolment growth in the vicinity of QEA. This area has experienced overall enrolment decline for many years, and there is space at many surrounding schools. A total of 583 spaces are currently available. Forecasts indicate there could be more than 900 more spaces available 10 years from now.

If enrolment growth does materialize, the annex building a minimal capacity of only 98 spaces. That means, the District would likely not use the annex building to accommodate students because of its limited size. If there was an unexpected increase in school-age children in the area, there is sufficient room at other existing elementary schools to accommodate any potential future enrolment growth.

Additionally, the current QEA building is not seismically safe, meaning it does not advance the Districts’ long range planning objectives of accommodating students in modern, safe, healthy schools located in their catchment. As such, the District would not consider building, nor would the government consider funding a new school on the QEA site because there are several other options available on the west side of Vancouver and at UBC.

Given the enrolment decline, significant surplus capacity at nearby schools to accommodate potential enrolment growth and the unlikelihood of receiving government funding to expand, seismically upgrade or build a new school, the District does not see a need from an educational perspective to keep the QEA site now, or into the future.

* 4. Having read these reasons behind the recommendation to surplus QEA, do you...

- Fully understand these explanations
- Somewhat understand these explanations
- Not understand these explanations at all
- Don't know / prefer not to say

* 5. In assessing the proposed surplus consideration, do you agree the QEA site and its buildings are not required for future educational needs of the District?

- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Don't know / prefer not to say

Please tell us to what extent each of the following should be a priority for the Board in its consideration to declare the QEA site as surplus.

* 6. Future population growth in the VSB as a whole District

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know / prefer not to say

* 7. Future population growth in other areas of the city with high enrolment demand

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know / prefer not to say

* 8. To be fiscally responsible and ensure funding is balanced among students throughout District

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know / prefer not to say

* 9. To generate capital funds to be used to support building new schools where they are needed and/or enhance seismic upgrades to existing schools.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know / prefer not to say

* 10. Other potential community use for the site (i.e., Non-VSB programs, community service providers, other public sector services, etc.)

- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree
- Don't know / prefer not to say

11. Other suggestions?

* 12. To what extent do you support or oppose the consideration to surplus QEA?

- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- Somewhat oppose
- Strongly oppose
- Don't know / prefer not to say

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QEA Surplus Consideration – Survey

Alternate community use

As discussed during the [QEA closure](#), if the Board decides to surplus the QEA site, the District is recommending the Board dispose the site to the Francophone public school board, Conseil scolaire francophone de la Colombie-Britannique (CSF), either through sale or long-term lease. CSF is a public education school district, providing education to French language rightsholders.

There is serious interest from CSF to acquire the QEA site. CSF has filed two separate legal proceedings to resolve the land dispute. In addition, CSF would likely use the site for public educational programming. Furthermore, in April 2022 [legislative amendments](#) made to the School Act gives the Province the ability to transfer land held by a board to CSF. This power will only be used when all other avenues to fulfil the Province’s obligations to minority language education rightsholders have been exhausted.

* 13. If the Board decides to move forward with the land disposal process, which of the following alternative community uses do you support

- Disposition to CSF
- Unsure at this point
- Do not support an alternative community use of the QEA site
- Other community use. Please specify. (Maximum 100 characters.)

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QEA Surplus Consideration – Survey

Land disposal consideration

If the Board approves the land disposition, potential funds generated from a sale or long-term lease of the land would provide capital revenue for the Board, that can then be directed for priority capital investment such as building a new school in an area with enrolment demand, as well as expanding or seismically upgrading an existing school.

* 14. If the Board approves the QEA land disposition (sale or long-term lease), do you support using the proceeds to fund the Board's capital priorities such as building a new school in an area with enrolment demand, expanding or seismically upgrading an existing school.

- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- Somewhat oppose
- Strongly oppose

* 15. If the Board decides to move forward with the land disposal process, which of the following options for disposition do you support?

- Sale
- Long-term lease
- I do not support disposing this site

16. OPTIONAL: Do you have any other comments or concerns about the QEA surplus considerations that you would like to share?

[Prev](#)[Next](#)



QEA Surplus Consideration – Survey

To what extent do you agree or disagree that...

* 17. It was easy for me to participate in this survey

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

* 18. I appreciate being able to provide input into this decision

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

* 19. I understand the land disposal process

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

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QEA Surplus Consideration – Survey

20. OPTIONAL: To receive updates about this engagement, please provide your email address:
(Note: your responses to this survey will remain anonymous)

Name

Email Address

Prev

Next



QEA Surplus Consideration – Survey

Thank You

Thank you for completing this survey. Your input will help inform the Board's consideration as to whether or not to declare the QEA site and its buildings as surplus.

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Done

APPENDIX C – CIVIC AGENCY FEEDBACK

Please note personal information has been redacted for privacy reasons.



Office of the Chief Medical Health Officer

#800 - 601 West Broadway
Vancouver, BC V5Z 4C2
604-675-3900

David Nelson, Deputy Superintendent
Vancouver School District
1580 West Broadway
Vancouver, BC V6K 5K8

February 21, 2023

Re: Queen Elizabeth Annex Surplus Consideration

David,

Thank you for consulting with Vancouver Coastal Health on the closure of Queen Elizabeth Annex and considerations related to a decision to surplus the land and explore alternative land use possibilities. I am responding in my capacity as School Medical Officer for Vancouver School Board (VSB) and Medical Health Officer for the City of Vancouver.

I have no objection to a decision to consider the land surplus if VSB has been determined that it is not needed for educational purposes in the future.

In terms of alternative land use possibilities, I would recommend that VSB ensure that the land continue to be used for purposes that benefit the health and development of children and the wellbeing of the community such as education, child care or recreation.

I note that respondents raised issues related to walkability and proximity to green space during the public engagement. As such, I also recommend that VSB consider these issues when planning educational facilities as they are known to affect the health and development of children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark Lysyshyn".

Mark Lysyshyn MD MPH FRCPC
Deputy Chief Medical Health Officer
Vancouver Coastal Health

Cc: Patricia Daly, Vice President, Public Health and Chief Medical Health Officer

February 27, 2023

David Nelson, Deputy Superintendent
Vancouver School Board
Email: dnelson@vsb.bc.ca

Re: Queen Elizabeth Annex Surplus Consideration

Dear David,

Thank you for your recent letter welcoming public feedback ahead of the Vancouver School Board's decision whether to declare the Queen Elizabeth Annex site surplus to the school district's needs.

I understand the Vancouver School Board (VSB) voted in 2022 to move forward with closing Queen Elizabeth Annex. I appreciate that that decision was not made lightly and required balancing a number of factors including seismic risks, the responsible use of public resources and the needs of students.

The City of Vancouver would not have an objection to a determination that the Queen Elizabeth Annex site is surplus to the educational needs of the VSB. Subject to other feedback that the Board might receive regarding the disposition of the site, the sale or lease to CSF and reinvestment of the proceeds into other school infrastructure in Vancouver would be positive.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide our input ahead of the VSB's deliberations.

Sincerely,



Paul Mochrie
City Manager
604.873.7666 | paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca

From: Michael Pistrin <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, February 28, 2023 8:27 AM
To: Donna D. Wong <[REDACTED]>
Subject: {EXT} RE: Queen Elizabeth Annex Surplus Consideration

Thank you Donna.

BC Housing does not have interest in pursuing this property at this time. We do, however, appreciate the opportunity.

Regards,

Mike



Michael Pistrin | Acting VP, Development and Asset Strategies
<[REDACTED]> | www.bchousing.org

From: Donna D. Wong <[REDACTED]>
Sent: February 15, 2023 4:31 PM
To: Michael Pistrin <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: Queen Elizabeth Annex Surplus Consideration



Sent on behalf of David Nelson, Deputy Superintendent, Vancouver School District

Good afternoon Michael,

Attached please find the letter for your feedback re Queen Elizabeth Annex Surplus Consideration

Thank you.

David Nelson

Donna Wong (she/her)
Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent
Vancouver School District
1580 West Broadway, Vancouver BC V6J 5K8
e: <[REDACTED]>



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RE: [EXT] Re: Queen Elizabeth Annex Surplus Consideration - response from VPB



Mack, Tiina

Monday, March 6, 2023 at 8:58 AM

To: Donna D. Wong; engage; Cc: Shearer, Doug; Rosa, Donnie

2023Feb15 re QEA I...
273.4 KB

[Download](#) · [Preview](#)

Dear David Nelson and VSB Engagement Team,

I am emailing to advise that the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation has no specific concerns about the potential transfer of the Queen Elizabeth Annex to the Conseil scolaire francophone de la Colombie-Britannique (CSF). This neighbourhood is well served for its open space needs by the adjacent Chaldecott Park and University of British Columbia endowment lands and the Vancouver Park Board has no interest in these lands.

If you would like a written letter of response in addition to this email please advise.

Thank you for including Park Board in the consultation for this project.

Yours truly,



Tiina Mack | Director, Planning and Park Development
[Vancouver Park Board](#) | 2099 Beach Avenue

pronouns: she/her/hers

I am thankful to live, work, and play on the unceded, ancestral territories of the x^wməθk^wəyəm ([Musqueam](#)), Skwxwú7mesh ([Squamish](#)), and səliłwətaʔ / səliłwítulh ([Tsleil-Waututh](#)) nations.

APPENDIX D – EMAIL FEEDBACK

Please note personal information has been redacted for privacy reasons

Engage

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2023 4:06 PM
To: engage@vsb.bc.ca
Subject: Closure of QEA

Hi,
Just a comment - given the growing push to increase housing density throughout Vancouver, it seems very shortsighted to be unloading school property at this time. Inevitably this will lead to the need to acquire assets in the future (if there would even be any sites available) at a much higher cost.

[REDACTED]
Dunbar resident

Engage

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 21, 2023 9:50 AM
To: engage@vsb.bc.ca
Subject: QEA

Dear Sir or Madam,

VSBC should never sell the land that the QEA sits upon, the population is only going to grow, it would be extremely shortsighted to sell it.

The site could be leased if needed, however, with the number of school upgrades constantly happening it's important to have a site to move children and to stop putting a strain on other schools like Queen Elizabeth Elementary. My children went there and sharing with another school was far from ideal.

Again, I can't stress enough, please don't sell this site.

Sincerely,
[REDACTED]

Engage

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 21, 2023 10:53 AM
To: engage@vsb.bc.ca
Subject: Closure of Q.E. Annex

Greetings: I live close to the Annex and my children went there in the 1980's for a wonderful start in the school system. The school is in a special location between Southlands and Queen Elizabeth Main schools and opposite Chaldecott Park.

The idea that CSF wishes to use the property is a good one as I feel that the property should continue to be used for educational purposes.

As an aside, last Saturday I attended the Information Session at Dunbar Community Centre regarding Missing Middle housing options. I presume that this will enable families to afford to live in the neighbourhood..... which means more children will be coming into the neighbourhood ... and my wish is that the property should not be sold by School Board.

[REDACTED]

Engage

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 21, 2023 12:52 PM
To: engage@vsb.bc.ca
Subject: Queen Elizabeth Annex

I am writing in regards to the decision about the future of the land use of Queen Elizabeth Annex.

Queen Elizabeth Annex should be reserved for VSB's educational purposes. In other words, the land and the building should remain as a school, and should be available for educational purposes.

Reasons:

1. The CoV forecast indicates a significant *growth* in population. This means more children, and possibly adults, requiring education.
2. The CoV plans to *densify* the entire city including the West Side of Vancouver. This means more children, and possibly adults, requiring education.
3. Use of schools is always dependent on demographic fluctuations. A *temporary* decline in school age demographic should not be taken as a reason to sell VSB assets or lease them for non-educational purposes including non-education purpose development.
3. The VSB's mandate is to provide education and not to engage in speculative or non-speculative land sales and purchases to provide liquidity, savings or investment funds for its plans and operations. VSB should seek to increase its budget as needed from *other* sources, not its real property or any other physical and material assets it already possesses.

Respectfully,

--
[REDACTED]

Engage

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 23, 2023 2:29 PM
To: engage@vsb.bc.ca
Subject: QEA Site

Dear Board Members,

Having three out of my four children attend QEA over the last two decades with my last child scheduled to attend kindergarten in September, but at JQ due to QEA's closure, it is with great concern that the District's recommendation to surplus the QEA site in order to fund other potential schools with increasing demand be considered for approval. QEA has been a small, yet important, part of the Dunbar community as it has brought together families not otherwise in the same school boundaries because of the early French immersion program, which has been excellent in its provision. QEA has also provided the local community another play and recreational area to use outside of school hours unique to the surrounding community centres and schools given the site's topography and layout beside Pacific Spirit Park/Camosun Bog.

<https://blogs.ubc.ca/newproposals/files/2009/03/locationofstudentsattendingqueenelizabethannex.pdf>

In my humble opinion, it would be a pity to "completely dispose" of the property and thereby lose any potential future District use, as acquiring such a property in this part of the city ever again is never going to happen. The problems caused by this in the past are clearly evident.

<https://vancouversun.com/news/local-news/b-c-has-sold-50-schools-and-educational-land-lots-in-six-years>

Perhaps the best solution for the Board to consider given the parties currently involved, the School Act, Board Policy 20, the demographical academic need, the current real estate situation and any potential future needs or uses, would be a lease to CSF. This hopefully could allow the District to maintain ownership of the site, allow the site to continue to be a school and allow for community use of the property outside school hours, yet also allow fund proceeds to be directed as proposed for capital expenditures at other required sites. I am unsure if deeming QEA "surplus" and "disposing it" are synonymous, or if to allow this proposed solution to occur requires special legislation or other legal instruments for the District/Ministry to maintain site ownership. Please clarify if the proposed solution could work whilst maintaining land ownership so as to not completely dispose of the site and allow for the possibility for the District to utilize it as required in the future.

Respectfully,

[REDACTED]

Engage

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 22, 2023 8:34 PM
To: engage@vsb.bc.ca
Subject: Surplus consideration

The closing of annexes feels to me like a great loss to the school system. I taught in the former primary building at A.R. Lord, and the rest of my teaching years at Tecumseh Annex. Both created a close community...the teachers knew each child by name, and the children felt comfortable coming to any of us with their comments and concerns. They felt secure and confident in the cozy atmosphere of an annex. We teachers were a cohesive group as well, and created many whole school projects and field trips that wouldn't have happened in a large school. The parents were very involved as well, and volunteered, and filled the gym for all our special events. It was a truly neighbourhood school. I'd like ALL kids to be able to walk to their neighbourhood school, and feel part of a community, as opposed to being driven across town and live far from their class friends. People write about the loneliness of our city and the lack of community. Schools can create that community!

Also, every June when school has ended, I notice a drop in rush hour morning traffic! Some families do choose schools that need driving to, but not all! Many parents would prefer to have their kids in walking distance of their schools.

It's worth the extra cost to keep annexes open. Couldn't any empty classrooms be rented out for before and after school care? or daycare? Those services always seem in short supply! I'm sure the VSB can be creative with those extra spaces, where there are some.

In hope, [REDACTED]

Engage

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, February 27, 2023 9:19 AM
To: engage@vsb.bc.ca
Subject: QEA Land Surplus question

I would like to register my opinion that the land should NOT BE CONSIDERED SURPLUS. Right now Vancouver is in the midst of a significant shift in their approach to zoning. The outcome will be significantly increased density throughout Vancouver and especially in those area like the QEA area where density is now low and thus will increase proportionally more. Vancouver has seen this scenario play out in other areas of increased densification (West end and False Creek) where insufficient land is now available for school age children living within these catchment areas. This is even true, as I understand it, for Kitsilano elementary schools that have recently been upgraded. Vancouver will grow and densify. More schools will be needed. This land is NOT SURPLUS.

S

[REDACTED]

Engage

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 3, 2023 4:41 PM
To: engage
Subject: Re: Virtual Information Session

Dear VSB Engage Team,

I wanted to reach out to let you know that the engagement process around the QEA surplus land decision is deeply problematic.

First, as you have acknowledged, the registration process for the first information session was extremely troubling. The change from zoom to Teams at the last minute and the fact that one of the two links in the Teams announcement didn't actually work meant that many people were unable to participate or joined the session late. I heard from many families that they were unable to join due to these technical difficulties.

Second, it is concerning that your second information session is being held from 4-5pm. That is an extremely challenging time for parents, or any working person, to participate in an information session. As you may know, many if not most parents work and it is hard to imagine how this timing is any way compatible with employment. How do you imagine that parents and community members would participate in an information session during working hours?

Third, and most importantly, the information session format is extremely concerning. The fact that attendees are muted and not visible and merely listen to a presentation turns the session into an extremely one-sided and dogmatic experience. In many years of teaching and participating in participating planning, I have never experienced an information session like this. Why make all participants both unable to be heard and unable to be seen? This does not build trust and confidence in the VSB and is a remarkably hostile experience. Finally, it was highly abnormal that the only way people could pose questions was through the chat box (and with those typed questions not visible to any other participants). And, the questions were then only posed through the mediation of a VSB staff member, who paraphrased the text questions. This is extremely limiting and really is remarkably top-down. While it is in keeping with the VSB's approach to engagement more broadly, this is honestly really quite extreme. Why would people even bother showing up to such an "event"? Both myself and other attendees noticed that few if any of our questions were asked of the VSB presenter and when they were they were paraphrased in a way so as to change their meaning considerably. I hope that you will include all the questions typed in the chat function and posed to the VSB presenter, even if these rarely made it through the VSB's mediator.

I believe the VSB can, and must, do better than the approach adopted to these information sessions.

Sincerely,
[REDACTED]

Engage

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 8, 2023 12:03 PM
To: engage
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Virtual Information Session
Attachments: Selection of questions asked on Feb 22_2023 during meeting on QEA Surplus proposal.pdf

Dear Engage Team,

Thank you for the response and appreciate the consideration of the issues leading to the addition of another session.

Understand that time is a factor, but the result of the timeframe being constrained to a relatively short window for an important issue, the vast majority of questions couldn't be addressed. Also, certainly appreciate the efforts of the facilitator to attempt to pull out themes, but some of the paraphrasing changed the meaning of the points/questions and many high priority queries were lost in the mix.

A number of participants indicated that they asked multiple questions and in most cases there wasn't time to address any of the queries or in some cases a paraphrased query seemed to be related tangentially but didn't directly get to the crux of their issue or their question.

I can confirm that the facilitator and presenter were unable to cover off the queries that I put in writing in the chat (please see attached pdf for a full copy+paste of the questions typed in - apologies for any typos or perceived abruptness in wording that may be noted - hope you will appreciate the enormous amount of stress and time pressure trying to follow along and ask questions real time in such a short period of time on such a monumentally important issue with so many important factors that haven't been considered and questions that haven't been answered).

As noted, the experience is consistent with many participants who felt many key matters weren't addressed and the vast majority of queries couldn't be responded to.

Consistent with the previous virtual sessions that led to the closure decision, everyone was muted, there is no chance to engage in dialogue, you could not see the other participants, and there is no public chat function. All of this means there is unfortunately literally no opportunity to 'engage' and greatly impairs any participants ability to understand who else is in the room, there is no way to see other questions/comments from fellow members of the public which could lead to other thoughts/questions, and no way to see the universe of questions posed/issues raised which means there is no way for the public or any participant to ensure accountability.

It is our sincere hope that outside of these virtual information sessions, there can be some meaningful public engagement where the staff and trustees allow the public (kids, parents, families, community members, other stakeholders) to engage in the process and have some actual dialogue and be in a position to be in a public forum as a whole and have a system where it is open/transparent. This process would not only allow for accountability, it would lead to better information sharing, appropriate follow up, enhanced decision making,

and a better result for the public, the city, the school board, and the students/families that a duty of care is owed to.

We remain hopeful that these important matters can be fully shared with the trustees and staff so that they can be discussed/considered by the trustees and staff to lead to a better process that is fair, transparent, collaborative, well thought out, mindful of students/families, complete community focused, in-line with broader city plans, and based on comprehensive long term strategic planning for public assets.

Sincerely,

On behalf of all QEA parents/families

On Wednesday, March 1, 2023 at 04:48:34 PM PST, engage <engage@vsb.bc.ca> wrote:

██████████

Thank you for reaching out. We became aware of the automatic reminders sent by Eventbrite and understand they may have caused confusion. As such, we have changed our registration process for future engagements. In addition, we have added another virtual information session. An email providing the details about that additional session will be sent shortly.

It is also important to note that the presentation provided during last week's session was [recorded](#) and posted on our website. Information discussed in during the session is also available on the website at govsb.ca/QEAsurplus.

As shared in the email last Friday to school community members and neighbourhood associations near the QEA site, there are multiple ways to provide feedback including an [online survey](#) (until March 9) and/or email to engage@vsb.bc.ca (until March 27). All feedback received will help inform the Board's decision to determine if the QEA site is to surplus the District's needs.

Regards,

VSB Engage Team

From: ██████████
Date: Friday, February 24, 2023 at 12:53 AM
To: engage <engage@vsb.bc.ca>

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Virtual Information Session

Dear VSB,

Thank you for putting together the virtual information session.

While it was unfortunately not possible for the facilitator/presenter to correctly interpret all the questions or fully address the questions that were selected for paraphrasing during the session, their time and efforts were still appreciated.

A number of parents and family members were able to attend, but many concerned/interested parents, extended family members, and community members had some challenges accessing the meeting.

Given the importance of engaging with the public and the importance of getting input for such an important decision, we thought it was important to let you know that a number of people were unable to join.

It appears that the challenges stem from the way the invitation system is set up. While there was an email from 'engage' that had a link to get to the Teams meeting, this email was preceded by an email from Eventbrite and was also followed by an email from the Eventbrite system.

In most email systems, the sender for both emails appears in the inbox view as "Vancouver School District" and the subject of the first email appeared as "Starting in 2 hours: QEA Surplus Consideration | Virtual Information Session" then a subsequent email appears as "Starting Now! QEA Surplus Consideration | Virtual Information Session". In addition, the email contains Eventbrite in the header and a comment about using an event link to join.

As a result, anyone who saw the reminder from Vancouver School District / Eventbrite, would have seen the instructions (more on that below) or if they didn't read it in detail, they would expect to go back and search for this email to enter the meeting prior to 6pm. So when people wanted to join the meeting, they ended up using the search function to find the email to help them access the

meeting. Logical and common search terms to use included "Vancouver School District", "Eventbrite", and "Event". All of these result in both of the Eventbrite "Vancouver School District" emails to show up and these search terms do not pull up the 'engage' email. Essentially for most people the 'engage' email got lost in the mix and understandably so given the tickets were secured on Eventbrite so people all expected to get something from Eventbrite and went looking for just that (which they found).

Then upon opening these Eventbrite emails, these emails both appear to be THE conduits for the meeting and there is even a "Join the event" button which leads would be participants to try either the very large bold blue font hot link "QEA Surplus Consideration / Virtual Information Session" or the bright orange "Join the event" button. Both of these actions then lead to a complex procedure to 'log in' but it is not set up to allow new ID set up for logging in. This resulted in many would be participants frantically trying repeatedly to sign in to no avail. Despite a lot of frustration, many persevered with this loop of failure and then trying the email links or buttons again and again (oftentimes struggling for 30 minutes, with one would be participant attempting to join for almost a full 50 minutes).

It is important to ensure you are aware of this situation which unfortunately impacted the number of attendees on record and it is now likely that there were a number of important questions/comments that were missed from this piece of the process.

In addition, suggest that this would seem like something to address going forward when setting up such meetings and let the users know of this situation so they are prepared and able to access the meetings which would be better with more in attendance.

Sincerely,



Concerned parent, Strong believer in taking care of public assets/funds, Active community member

Engage

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, January 21, 2023 9:40 PM
To: engage
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: QEA Surplus Consideration

Hi,

I recently watched a VSB board meeting that mentioned the engage@ email would be monitored for items related to the QEA Surplus Consideration.

I am emailing with regard to information that seems out of date and I'm hoping it can be corrected.

A report in the agenda of the January 18, 2023 Facilities Planning Meeting under item **3.2 Queen Elizabeth Annex - Surplus Consideration** states, "enrolment in Vancouver schools has been declining since 1997. Throughout the past 10 years, the District has seen an 8.4 per cent decline in enrolment at standard K-12 schools, representing approximately 4,400 fewer students."

However, the same meeting's agenda included **3.1 Enrolment Update** which stated, "widespread increases in enrolment were experienced in September 2022" and "September 2022 enrolment increased by 1,204 students or 2.5% in comparison with September 2021"

How can there be 10 years of decline if the most recent year has had a surge of over 1200 students added to VSB enrolment? I would also like to know if the "4400 fewer students" has been updated to the time of the report (January 18, 2023), and if not, would greatly appreciate understanding to what point in time it is referring.

Sincerely,
[REDACTED]
(Parent of children at QEA)

Engage

From: engage <engage@vsb.bc.ca>
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2023 3:31 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: challenges accessing the meeting via the link provided, other virtual session comments, and surplus proposal matters

Hello [REDACTED]

Thank you for providing your feedback.

We will include your email in the engagement summary report for the consideration of trustees. Should you have any additional feedback you wish to bring to the attention of the Board you are welcome to send it to this email and we will include it in the engagement summary report.

As you may have seen the email from March 10, we have also added a special delegation meeting regarding the QEA land surplus consideration on April 5 at 7 pm. This meeting will give community members an opportunity to provide feedback directly to the Board regarding the surplus consideration. A member of the community wishing to present as a delegation should submit a request to delegations@vsb.bc.ca.

Please include your name and a copy of the brief and/or presentation you intend to make. Requests must be received (preferably electronically) by April 3 at 4:30pm. As per standard delegation practice, all delegates will have five minutes to present to the Board

Regards,
VSB Engage

From: [REDACTED] >
Date: Wednesday, March 8, 2023 at 11:42 PM
To: engage <engage@vsb.bc.ca>
Cc: QEA PAC <qea.parents@gmail.com>, QEAParentsSociety@gmail.com <qeaparentssociety@gmail.com>
Subject: Re: challenges accessing the meeting via the link provided, other virtual session comments, and surplus proposal matters

Dear Engage Team,

Thanks for the response.

For your reference, there were actually quite a few people who had issues signing in. As we were struggling to get on, I heard directly from at least 7 people real time who were having issues and struggling to get on.

Doesn't seem like it was a cookies issue, in some cases it just kept stalling for no apparent reason and in other cases there was a requirement to install the Teams app which is both difficult and time consuming and not always supported by the cell phone firmware or OS. Two people I know actually did attempt to take the step of installing from Google Play store or Apple store but still couldn't get on in the end.

I personally made many attempts to get on with my mobile phone but was ultimately unsuccessful and was eventually able to get on with my computer, but only after accessing an existing Teams account to activate the live event link.

As these Teams links are quite challenging to access/use and it would seem to be a good idea to consider using a different system given all the issues that persist.

In addition, there were a few other matters around the sessions:

(1) While the added session is a positive move, there was not a sufficient notice, both time and also extent of communications to really allow for more fullsome community/public engagement (which should be the true purpose and goal of this process)

(2) It should be noted that the timing of the sessions has made it very hard for parents. 6pm is already a hard time for families with young kids, but 4pm is truly impossible (the only conceivably worse time might be 3pm when the school bell rings). One can only assume that this scheduling was unintentional and whomever set these times doesn't have a family or it's been so long since they had school age kids they've forgotten about these slots being completely hectic with people in transit while juggling multiple children going to different locations and potentially also stickhandling work at the same time.

(3) The length of the sessions don't seem to be sufficient evidenced by the fact that both sessions ran out of time and had to be cut off with many unanswered questions.

(4) While it was appreciated that there were some efforts to raise questions being put forward, the unfortunate reality was that the paraphrasing/interpretation of the questions appears to be challenging so many questions are not getting to the point of the question. As noted a number of times by the facilitator and the presenter today, neither person was clear on the meaning of many queries thus there was either no response, an incomplete response, or an irrelevant response not addressing the point at all. It would be much more effective and appropriate if people were not muted and could actually ask questions (ie. some actual engagement and dialogue). Also, it would be useful if they could actually engage in a conversation with facilitator/presenter to clarify or follow up on answers. Without that, the questions don't get addressed and any responses don't get clarified/follow up which is not a satisfactory result for the participants and also doesn't get the VSB and trustees much needed perspectives, the real feedback/views of the public, and valuable information for decision making (which should be key goals in any engagement/consult session).

(5) In general, the style of using much of the scarce time slot to present the VSB view and justification for the proposal does not set up an environment for public/community dialogue. Furthermore, the muting of all participants, inability for any participant to tell who else is also online, and also insistence on not having chat function be live for all comments/questions to be seen by all is a major issue. This effectively muzzles the entire public and prevents accountability. It is the opposite of being transparent and/or collaborative (both of which I believe are still VSB published values).

(6) The ongoing use of misleading information and questionable data is something that continues to be a major concern, as is the consistent approach to defend/justify these tactics when challenged. The ability of the facilitator and presenter to completely control the narrative and meeting allows for easy avoidance of questions, deflection of challenges, and passing off irrelevant/inaccurate/misleading comments as responses to queries. Just one small example is the multiple references to Open Data as an answer (the questions' key points were about how VSB published Open Data information contradicts the information presented to

support closure and support the surplus proposal but this was simply not addressed and surprisingly somehow using Open Data as an explanation implying transparency, data quality, and data consistency). Even the closing comment assuring the participants that all questions had been addressed is itself highly inaccurate and since there is no publicly visible chat and all people are muted, this can simply be spoken as a 'fact' and presented as 'truth' despite it not being the case with no way to challenge such a statement. Due to lack of transparency, the recording that will be filed will include this comment for the permanent record without the context that it is an inaccurate statement made in public which is not a fair/appropriate situation.

(7) There were also multiple mentions of no intention to hide anything or mislead, but the lack of transparency, inconsistent information presented over time from consultation to closure to surplus, constant "cherry picking" of data sets (which the presenter made a point of saying was not being done), and manipulation of visuals/statistics to steer viewers point to a concerted effort to drive to a predetermined end result. It is hard to imagine anyone looking at this can truly believe that this format and approach is what public engagement should look like. How is a process like this fair, democratic, transparent, collaborative, or striving for excellence? The purpose of consultation/engagement is to seek out perspectives and views from the public that the VSB serves. This new information from the public should be sought out, valued and acted upon. From the push for going to consultation, through to the closure vote, and now the surplus proposal, there has been no apparent interest in actually hearing the heartfelt views/concerns of the public, answering the very important questions raised by the people, following up on any of the many issues raised, and taking decisions in line with feedback or ensuring decisions are based on quality analysis/strategic thinking/sound judgement. [When there are meetings discussing market share trends and/or enrolment trends, it would be useful to take a hard look at how parents, students, families, and the community have been treated over the years.]

Despite all that has happened to date, the well meaning public continue to invest their own time and resources working tirelessly in good faith to reach out, provide information, raise concerns, and offer new ideas with the hope that trustees and staff will be able to do the additional work that is needed before going into a decision of this magnitude. We truly hope that the staff and new trustees can see what is right and reevaluate how things are being done and revisit the decisions around closure and the proposal to designate QEA as surplus.

"We live in a world in which we need to share responsibility. It's easy to say 'It's not my child, not my community, not my world, not my problem.' Then there are those who see the need and respond. I consider those people my heroes."

— Fred Rogers, host of the educational television series Mister Rogers' Neighborhood

Every school day I am grateful for the work that the teachers and administration are doing for our children at QEA. We can also see what this process and this closure decision and proposed surplus have done to them and continue to do to them mentally and physically. This has also taken a huge toll on the children, the parents, the families, and the community (much of it happening during peak pandemic times where mental and physical health was already a major ongoing issue). Is anyone thinking about taking care of these truly heroic VSB people who forge on doing their duty despite the prevailing circumstances inflicted upon them by their very own organization? Why isn't it a priority to protect/nurture our most vulnerable citizens/most valuable resource, the children? Is this what we want for our city/province/country? Do we want to chip another piece out of the public education foundation? How much will this damage our society in the years and decades to come?

Sincerely,

■■■■■
Parent / Community Member / Concerned Citizen

On Wednesday, March 8, 2023 at 04:23:24 PM PST, engage <engage@vsb.bc.ca> wrote:

■■■■■, we have not heard of trouble signing in from others. Perhaps this person can clear their cookies to try again.

From: ■■■■■
Date: Wednesday, March 8, 2023 at 4:00 P M
To: engage <engage@vsb.bc.ca>
Subject: Link to today's team seems to be stalling ...

APPENDIX E – IAP2 SPECTRUM

