Vancouver School Board

NOTICE OF MEETING
FACILITIES PLANNING COMMITTEE

Secretary Treasurer's Office
January 14, 2026
Public viewing via live broadcast

Preeti Faridkot (Chair)
Joshua Zhang (Vice-Chair)
Victoria Jung
Christopher Richardson

Helen McGregor, Superintendent of Schools
Flavia Coughlan, Secretary Treasurer

Notice of Meeting

A Meeting of the **Facilities Planning Committee** will be held in room 180 of the VSB Education Centre (1580 West Broadway, Vancouver BC) for **participating trustees, staff, inherent rights holder representatives and stakeholder representatives** on **Wednesday, January 14, 2026** at **5:00 pm.** The meeting will be live broadcast for the public.

Trustees:	Lois Chan-Pedley	Suzie Mah (Alternate)
	Alfred Chien	Jennifer Reddy (Alternate)
	Janet Fraser	
Student Trustee:	Freddie Zhang	
Other Senior Team Staff:	Pedro da Silva	Janis Myers
	Michael Gray	Alison Ogden
	Jessie Gresley-Jones	Lorelei Russell
	Maureen McRae-Stanger	
Inherent Rights Holder Representatives:	Faye Mitchell, xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam)	
	Kirsten Baker-Williams, Sḵwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation)	
	Kirsten Touring, səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh Nation)	

Representatives:	Justin Chapman, BCVSBCMTU	Alternates:	Mike Logan, BCVSBCMTU
	Suzette Magri, CUPE 15		Vanessa Mani, CUPE 15 (Alt 1)
			Susan Gee, CUPE 15 (Alt 2)
	Henry Munns, CUPE 407		Adam Crawford, CUPE 407
	Melanie Cheng, DPAC		Michael Menashy, DPAC
	Tim Chester, IUOE		Tim De Vivo, IUOE
	Paul Loeman, PASA		Kerry Chuah, PASA
	Dale Ambrose, VASSA		James Francom, VASSA
	Larissa Lam, VDSC		
	Françoise Raunet, VEAES		
	Laura Rhead, VEPVPA		Riley McMitchell, VEPVPA
	Carl Janze, VSTA		John Silver, VSTA

Vancouver School Board

FACILITIES PLANNING COMMITTEE
MEETING AGENDA

Wednesday, January 14, 2025, 5:00 to 6:30 pm
Room 180, VSB Education Centre

With deep gratitude and respect, we are honored to be learning and unlearning on the ancestral and unceded lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) & səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh Nation).

The meeting is currently being broadcasted live, and both the audio and video recordings will be accessible to the public for viewing even after the meeting ends. Footage from this meeting may be viewed from Canada or anywhere else in the world.

Meeting Decorum:

The Board has a strong commitment to ethical conduct. This includes the responsibility of committee participants (i.e., committee members, staff, inherent rights holder representatives, stakeholder representatives) to conduct themselves with appropriate decorum and professionalism. It is the responsibility of the Chairperson of the Committee to see that decorum is maintained at Committee meetings so that:

- Committee participants engage in discussion by requesting to speak through the Chairperson, ensuring inclusive and orderly dialogue.
- A respectful and collegial environment is maintained as participants share diverse perspectives and contribute to meaningful discussions.
- Staff are trusted to provide objective, high-quality reports that reflect their professional expertise. Their contributions are respected and form a vital part of informed committee decision-making, free from external pressure or influence.
- Committee discussions are conducted in a constructive manner, with participants avoiding language or actions that could be perceived as personal, inflammatory, or accusatory.
- All participants are expected to demonstrate professionalism and courtesy in their interactions, contributing to a positive and productive committee culture.

Please see reverse for the Purpose/Function and Power and Duties of this Committee.

	Presenters
1. Items for Approval	
1.1 Environmental Sustainability Plan	Jessie Gresley-Jones, Executive Director of Facilities Chris Lum, Manager, Energy and Climate Action
1.2 Lord Roberts Annex Replacement School Project Funding	Jessie Gresley-Jones, Executive Director of Facilities
2. Discussion Items	
2.1 None	
3. Information Items	
3.1 None	

Facilities Planning Committee

B. Responsibilities:

B.1 Review and provide recommendations to the Board regarding assigned facilities planning matters.

B.2 Annually review and make recommendations to the Board regarding the five-year capital plan and the spending plan for the annual facilities grant.

B.3 Review and make recommendations to the Board regarding the long-range facilities plan.

B.4 Review and make recommendations to the Board regarding catchment areas for schools and District programs.

B.5 For the purpose of naming and renaming schools, provide recommendations to the Board, adhering to the guidelines and direction set by the Board at the beginning of any potential school naming or renaming process.

B.6 Review matters referred to the Committee by the Board and make recommendations as requested.

Vancouver School Board

ITEM 1.1

January 14, 2026

TO: **Facilities Planning Committee**

FROM: **Jessie Gresley Jones, Executive Director, Facilities**
Chris Lum, Manager, Energy and Climate Action
Ashley Bangsund, Sustainability Coordinator

RE: # Environmental Sustainability Plan

Reference to Education Plan

GOAL 2: The Vancouver School Board will increase equity by…

OBJECTIVE: Improving stewardship of the District's resources by focusing on effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability.

INTRODUCTION

The Vancouver School Board (VSB) serves over 50,000 students across 107 schools. VSB plays a vital role in shaping sustainability and climate action. Building on the foundations of the 2018 Environmental Sustainability Plan, this updated plan outlines VSB's next phase in advancing sustainability and climate action and incorporates input from inherent rights holders, formal stakeholders, educators, students, and their families. While many elements of the original plan remain relevant, this update introduces new actions and initiatives to address emerging priorities.

This report contains a recommendation for the Board to approve the updated Environmental Sustainability Plan.

BACKGROUND

The updated plan was guided by an internal evaluation of progress to date and an engagement process.

Internal Review

The internal review found that many sustainability initiatives were successfully completed at both the district and school levels. Key findings include:

- Each of the plan's five theme areas has seen activity.
- The breadth of the plan has allowed both planned and opportunistic activities.
- Guidelines for sustainability-related infrastructure and initiatives have been well received.
- Relationships with the partners have contributed to the goals by increasing the number of opportunities and resources available to students and educators.
- VSB's sustainability goals and actions apply across all areas of VSB operations. Achieving them requires the committed participation of all district departments and stakeholders.

Engagement Summary

Engagement with inherent rights holders and stakeholders helped shape this updated plan with valuable insights to identify sustainability priorities at necessary areas of focus.

Three main groups participated in the engagement process:

- Teachers, principals, and vice principals
- Inherent rights holder representatives
- Formal stakeholders representatives
- Students and their families

Engagement activities included two online surveys and two in-person workshops:

- January 15, 2025 – Facilities Planning Committee Meeting (in-person)
- April 14, 2025 – Online Survey for Educators
- April 28, 2025 – Student Sustainability Conference (in-person)
- May 14, 2025 – Online Survey for Families
- May 28, 2025 – Inherent Rights Holders and Stakeholders workshop (in-person)

The survey for educators received 198 responses, while the survey for families received 2,541 responses. The student engagement activity had approximately 42 participants, and the workshop was attended by 10 representatives from inherent rights holders and stakeholder groups.

THEME AREAS

The updated plan is structured around five sustainability theme areas with updated objectives and actions that reflect current sustainability priorities at the VSB.

1. **Leadership in Sustainability** – Embed sustainability in VSB's culture and decision-making, ensuring accountability and transparency.
2. **Sustainability in Education** – Empower students and educators with hands-on sustainability learning and land-based education opportunities.
3. **Green Spaces** – Enhance biodiversity and outdoor learning environments across school sites.
4. **Sustainable Transportation** – Promote active travel and electrify fleet vehicles to reduce emissions.
5. **Resource Conservation & Climate Action** – Reduce waste, cut greenhouse gas emissions, and improve efficiency in energy, water, and resource use while improving our schools' climate resilience.

PLAN'S IMPACT

VSB's Environmental Sustainability Plan reflects both continuity and alignment with the current context. Some of the anticipated impacts of the updated plan are as follows:

- By 2030, electrifying 25% of eligible fleet vehicles is projected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by approximately 100 tCO_2e annually. In addition, utilizing renewable fuels where feasible, such as 100% renewable diesel, will further decrease fleet-related emissions and advance our transition to a low-carbon transportation fleet.

- The proposed capital investment strategy included in the plan identifies 51 priority projects requiring approximately $1.4 billion in funding through major and minor capital programs. Full implementation of the plan would deliver significant sustainability outcomes, including an estimated reduction of 1,612 tCO_2e in building-related GHG emissions, and delivering annual energy cost savings of approximately $359K.
- By 2032, it is anticipated that most VSB schools will have improved access to nature and outdoor learning spaces.

CONCLUSION

The updated objectives and actions in this plan aim to create healthier schools, reduce environmental impact, and empower educators and students to lead sustainability efforts. It guides actions that combine operational improvements with educational benefits. Successful implementation of the plan relies on sustained provincial capital funding and grant funding to ensure continuous progress and upholds VSB's commitment to providing safe, healthy, and climate-resilient learning environments.

RECOMMENDATION

The Facilities Planning Committee recommends:

That the Board of Education of School District No.39 (Vancouver) approve the Environmental Sustainability Plan.

Attachments:

A. Environmental Sustainability Plan (Draft)
B. Five Year Review (January 2024)
C. Engagement Summary

ATTACHMENT A

Vancouver School Board

Environmental Sustainability Plan

2026 - 2032

DRAFT

Acknowledgements

With deep gratitude and respect, we are honoured to be learning and unlearning on the ancestral and unceded lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) & səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh Nation).

Thank you to those who contributed their valuable time and perspectives that helped shape the updates to this plan:

Vancouver School Board

Board of Trustees

Business Development

Communications Department

Educators, Students and Families

Indigenous Education Department

Maintenance & Construction Department

Operations Department

Planning Department

Procurement Department

Senior Leadership Team

Sustainability Department

Vancouver Project Office

Inherent Rights Holders

xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam)

Sḵwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation)

səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh Nation)

Stakeholder Groups

District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC)

Professional & Administrative Staff Association (PASA)

Vancouver Association of Secondary School Administrators (VASSA)

Vancouver District Student Council (VDSC)

Vancouver Elementary and Adult Educators' Society (VEAES)

Vancouver Elementary Principals and Vice-Principals Association (VEPVPA)

Student Groups

VSB Sustainability Connection

Executive Summary

The Vancouver School Board (VSB) serves over 50,000 students across 107 schools. VSB plays a vital role in shaping sustainability and climate action. This Environmental Sustainability Plan (2026–2032) builds on the 2018 plan and incorporates input from formal stakeholders, inherent rights holders, educators, students and their families. It aligns with provincial GHG emissions reduction targets and VSB's Education Plan, ensuring our actions support both environmental stewardship and student learning. The updated plan is structured around five sustainability theme areas with updated objectives and actions that reflect current sustainability priorities at the VSB.

Five Theme Areas:

1. **Leadership in Sustainability** – Embed sustainability in VSB's culture and decision-making, ensuring accountability and transparency.
2. **Sustainability in Education** – Empower students and educators with hands-on sustainability learning and land-based education opportunities.
3. **Green Spaces** – Enhance biodiversity and outdoor learning environments across school sites.
4. **Sustainable Transportation** – Promote active travel and electrify fleet vehicles to reduce emissions.
5. **Resource Conservation & Climate Action** – Reduce waste, cut greenhouse gas emissions, and improve efficiency in energy, water, and resource use while improving our schools' climate resilience.

Plan Highlights:

- The proposed capital investment strategy contained in the plan identifies 51 priority projects requiring approximately $1.4 billion in funding through major and minor capital programs. Full implementation of the plan would deliver significant sustainability outcomes, including an estimated reduction of 1,612 tCO_2e annually in building-related GHG emissions, and delivering annual energy cost savings of approximately $359K.
- By 2032, it is anticipated that most VSB schools will have improved access to nature, outdoor learning spaces, and receive biodiversity improvements through implementation of physical improvements facilitated by external grants.
- By 2030, electrifying 25% of eligible fleet vehicles is projected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by approximately 100 tCO_2e annually. In addition, utilizing renewable fuels where feasible, such as 100% renewable diesel, will further decrease fleet-related emissions and advance our transition to a low-carbon transportation fleet.

Advancing Climate Action and Sustainability

The updated objectives and actions in this plan aim to create healthier schools, reduce environmental impact, and empower educators and students to lead sustainability efforts. It guides actions that combine operational improvements with educational benefits. Successful implementation of the plan relies on sustained capital and grant funding to ensure continuous progress and upholds VSB's commitment to providing safe, healthy, and climate-resilient learning environments.

Table of Contents

Introduction

The Vancouver School Board (VSB) is an urban and diverse school district, serving approximately 50,000 students, including adult learners and students from Kindergarten to Grade 12 across 107 enrolling facilities. To continue to thrive, VSB's diverse student population needs safe, healthy, and climate-resilient learning environments. The VSB plays a critical role in advancing sustainability and climate action for future generations.

The Environmental Sustainability Plan 2026-2032 builds on the foundations of the 2018 Sustainability Plan, deepening VSB's commitment to climate leadership and environmental stewardship. This update aligns with VSB's core values, as outlined in VSB Education Plan 2026, which envisions students as well-educated, respectful and critical thinkers, leading them to become compassionate individuals who care for themselves, others and the planet.

Scope

This plan is applicable to all VSB-owned buildings and sites, including elementary and secondary schools and administrative facilities. Alongside improvements to facilities, the plan also aims to support students in becoming conscientious, engaged citizens who can make a positive impact beyond their time at VSB. The actions detailed in the plan focus on four priority areas:

1. **Adapting to Climate Change**
   Making changes to buildings and outdoor spaces to prepare for climate-related risks.
2. **Improving Operational Efficiency**
   Finding ways to better manage water, energy, and waste across our facilities.
3. **Supporting Sustainability Education**
   Helping educators and students lead school-based sustainability projects and learn about sustainability – connecting students to the natural world, empowering personal action, and building critical thinking skills in all our learners.
4. **Reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions**
   Looking at ways to lower emissions from our buildings, vehicles, and paper use.

Developing Conscientious Citizens

In 2013, VSB conducted a sustainability audit to help assess our progress and identify opportunities for meaningful sustainability measures.

The audit identified a need for a strong focus on the educational aspects of sustainability – connecting students to the natural world, empowering personal action, and supporting critical thinking in all our learners. Student learning and the ability to help develop conscientious citizens continues to be relevant today, and a strength of VSB as an organization.

"…the VSB will address all its activities that directly and indirectly impact the environment. Our most significant opportunity is developing conscientious citizens."

Environmental sustainability often highlights important issues like waste, water use, air quality, and climate change. While these topics can inspire action, research shows that introducing serious environmental problems to children too early or in the wrong way can lead to stress and anxiety. This reaction is known as eco-anxiety or ecophobia — a fear of environmental disaster that may discourage children from engaging with nature.

To support student well-being, it is important to:

- Share age-appropriate information;
- Focus on positive, hopeful actions and;
- Encourage hands-on experiences with the natural world.

An effective approach begins with helping students understand their place within nature. Simple opportunities to explore and connect with the outdoors offer hands-on educational experiences. This land-based approach is grounded in Indigenous principles, allowing learners to reflect on their identities, their role in the environment, and their understanding of the world around them.

By fostering curiosity and connection, we can help students build a healthy relationship with nature and feel empowered to make a difference.

"If we want children to flourish, we need to give them time to connect with nature and love the Earth before we ask them to save it!"
David Sobel, "Beyond Ecophobia"

Context

Provincial Framework

The B.C. provincial government sets targets for public sector organizations to reduce overall Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions. B.C.'s Climate Change Accountability Act sets province-wide GHG reduction targets (based on 2007 emissions data):

- 16% reduction by 2025
- 40% reduction by 2030
- 60% reduction by 2040
- 80% reduction by 2050

According to the CleanBC Roadmap to 2030 plan, targets for public sector organizations (PSO) are defined as:

- 50% reduction below 2010 levels in building emissions by 2030
- 40% reduction below 2010 levels in fleet emissions by 2030

VSB's Greenhouse Gas Emissions

VSB has been tracking its GHG emissions annually since 2007, as shown in Figure 1. This is part of the annual reporting requirements of the British Columbia's Carbon Neutral Government Regulation, which mandates public sector organizations to measure, reduce and offset their emissions each year to achieve carbon neutrality. VSB has implemented initiatives to reduce its GHG emissions. These include upgrading boilers, adding heat pumps, and adjusting heating and cooling systems to operate more efficiently.

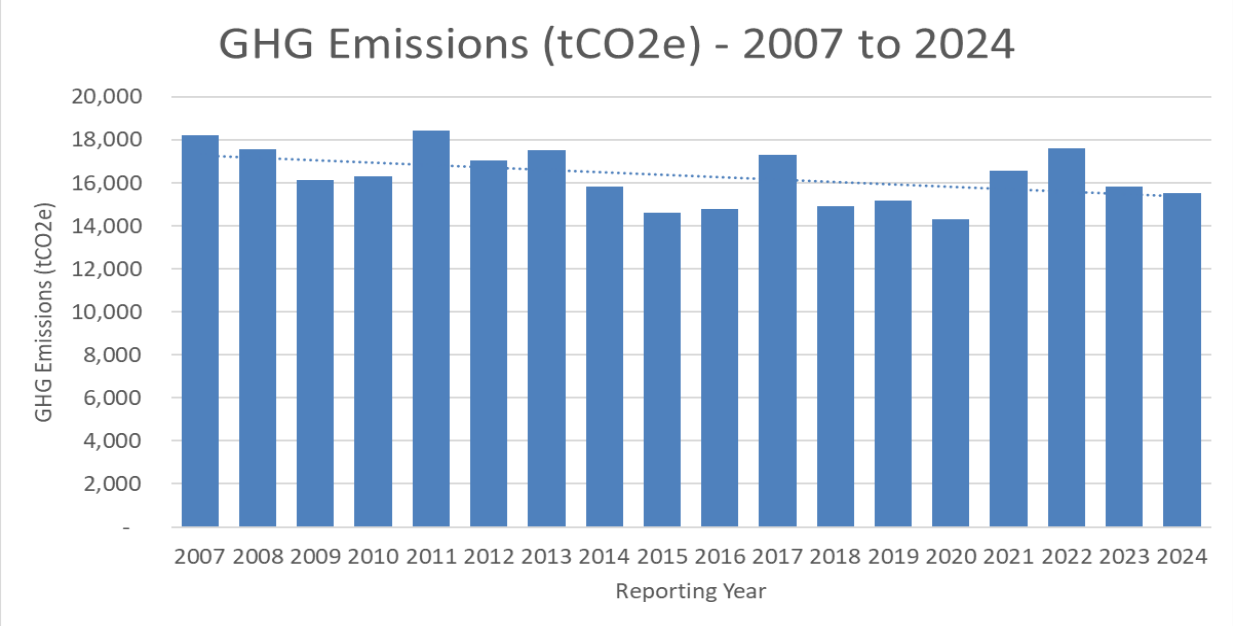


Figure 1: Historical VSB GHG Emissions (all reportable sources) in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO_2e)

In 2007, VSB's GHG emissions were 18,232 tCO_2e. By 2024, emissions lowered to 15,548 tCO_2e – representing a 15% decrease compared to the 2007 baseline.

Most of VSB's GHG emissions come from the natural gas used to heat buildings and hot water. This makes up 93% of all emissions. Using paper adds 4%, electricity adds 2%, and fleet vehicles add 1% (see Figure 2).

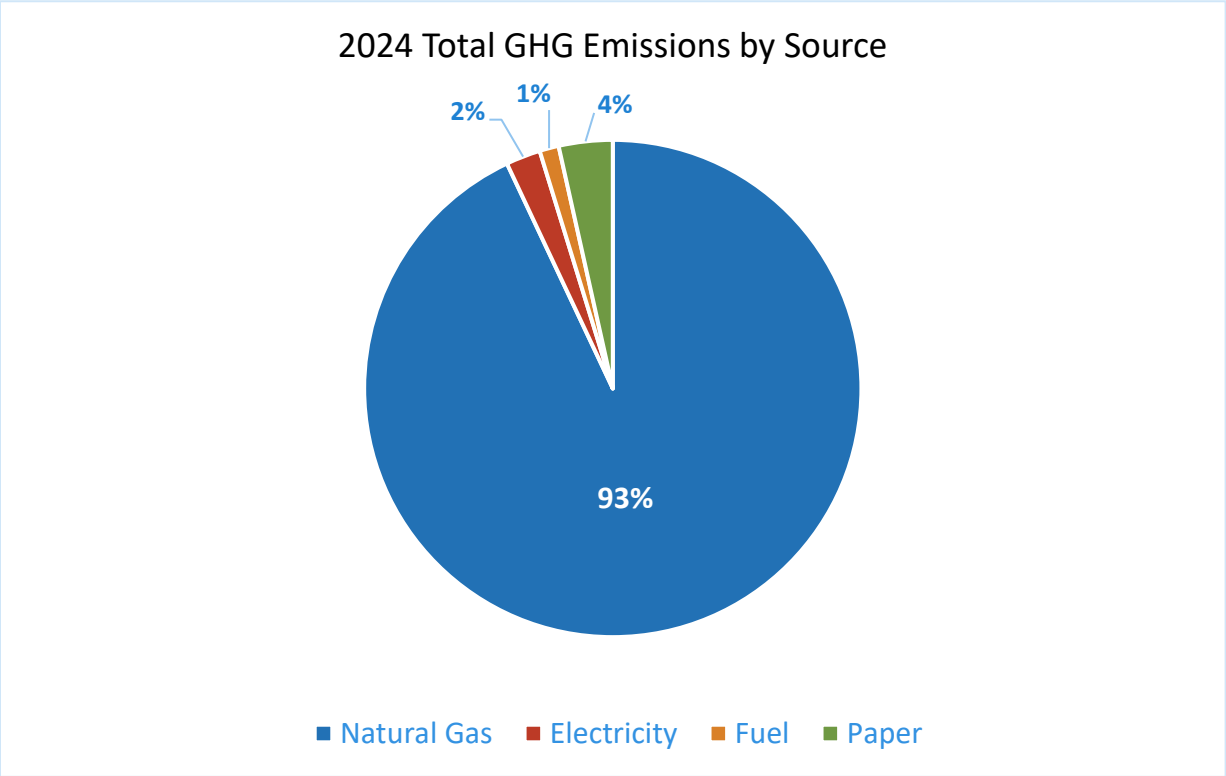


Figure 2: 2024 Total GHG emissions by reportable source

Our Plan and Approach

The Environmental Sustainability Plan 2026-2032 outlines VSB's next phase in advancing sustainability and climate action. Growing from the groundwork established by the 2018 Environmental Sustainability Plan, this updated version reflects an internal evaluation of progress to date, a renewed engagement process, and an action plan for the years ahead.

Internal Review

To help guide updates to the plan and subsequent actions, an internal review and evaluation of the progress made on the 2018 plan was completed. This review found that many sustainability initiatives were successfully completed at both the district and school levels. While much of the original plan is still relevant, new actions and initiatives to address emerging priorities are needed. Key findings include:

- Each of the plan's five theme areas has seen activity, which is carried out at all levels of the district in multiple departments.
- The breadth of the plan has allowed both planned and opportunistic activities, and the guiding principles have provided a focused way to evaluate activities as they arise.
- Guidelines for sustainability-related infrastructure and initiatives have been well received by schools and district departments and have made approval processes easier.
- Relationships with the City of Vancouver, post-secondary institutions, and nonprofit organizations have contributed to the goals by increasing the number of opportunities and resources available to students and educators.
- VSB's sustainability goals and actions apply across all areas of VSB operations. Achieving them requires the committed participation of all district departments and stakeholders.

All 17 actions were evaluated to determine whether they had been completed, if they still have room for progress, or if they were no longer relevant. The five theme areas will remain consistent:

- Eight actions are advancing into the new plan with updated language to reflect the current context.
- Two actions will broaden to become objectives (formerly called goals).
- Four actions will be expanded to encompass more specific measures and initiatives.
- Two actions will be combined.
- Three actions will be updated and relocated into other themes.
- Two new objectives (formerly called goals) will be created, with one goal removed in favour of the new expanded objectives.

Further information about the plan's internal evaluation can be found in Attachment B.

Engagement Summary

Engagement with inherent rights holders and stakeholder groups has helped shape this updated plan. The valuable insights helped to identify sustainability priorities across all five of VSB's sustainability themes. Engagement activities included two online surveys and three in-person sessions, as illustrated in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Engagement activities timeline

The Facilities Planning Committee was engaged at the outset of the process to provide guidance. The educator survey received 198 responses, while the families survey received 2,541 responses. The student engagement activity had approximately 42 participants, and the inherent rights holders and stakeholder workshop was attended by 10 representatives. Engagement activities were structured around the five theme areas to guide conversations, reflect on past work and develop future actions.

Key takeaways included:

Theme:	Key Takeaways:
Education	• Strong support for outdoor and nature-based learning – educators, families, students, inherent rights holders, and formal stakeholders all highly value hands-on, experiential, land-based learning. • Concerns about eco-anxiety highlight the need for age-appropriate, empowering education. • Students prefer to take a leadership role in their learning. • Students benefit from hands-on, solutions-oriented learning that fosters leadership and agency. • Students value everyday sustainability actions and prefer participating in them over studying them in depth. They see visible efforts, like walking or biking to school, as meaningful ways to make a difference.
Resource Conservation and Climate Action	• Climate-resilient infrastructure (e.g. heat pumps, insulation, solar panels) are seen as important. • Families and educators support practical sustainability actions like energy and water conservation. • Waste reduction, especially through expanded recycling and composting, is a strong priority.
Active Transportation	• Many staff and families live within walking or cycling distance, but bike infrastructure is lacking, not secure, and underutilized. • There is limited awareness of and participation in active transportation programs happening at schools.

Green Spaces	• Strong calls for more green spaces and covered areas to support outdoor learning. • Existing outdoor infrastructure is valued and utilized but could benefit from enhancements. • Equity concerns were raised by families about uneven access to green spaces and differences in school upgrades across neighborhoods.
Leadership	• Families want more communication and involvement opportunities in school sustainability efforts. • There is a call for demonstrable leadership in sustainability, including clearer sustainability directives, and equitable investment in infrastructure improvements. • High engagement with Indigenous education resources shows strong alignment with sustainability goals. • Intrinsic motivation and peer collaboration are key enablers of sustainability education. • Administrative support is helpful but secondary to educator initiative. • Sustainability efforts vary widely between schools, often depending on individual staff.

Further information about the stakeholder engagement can be found in Attachment C.

Environmental Sustainability Plan 2026-2032

Building on the insights gained through the internal evaluation of the 2018 Environmental Sustainability plan and engagement process, VSB's Environmental Sustainability Plan 2026-2032 reflects both continuity and alignment with the current context. The internal review confirmed the value of many existing actions while identifying opportunities to expand, refine, or reframe others. Engagement feedback added depth and clarity to VSB's sustainability priorities, ensuring the revised plan is responsive, inclusive, and forward-looking.

Guiding Principles

The following principles will help advance the objectives in the plan. They are built upon the values statement from the Education Plan, offer strategic alignment to the organization, and will guide sustainability efforts for the district.

1. Empowering our VSB community

The actions in this plan are shaped by the needs and interests of students, educators, and staff. We will support and facilitate the efforts of the many people across VSB who are already leading sustainability, while empowering others to join the effort.

2. Enhancing Learning through Sustainability

VSB's most unique opportunity to advance sustainability is through our mandate to help prepare students to be active, productive and socially responsible citizens. Sustainability initiatives should support student learning and be connected to the curriculum, enabling educators to bring these topics into the classroom.

3. Aligning Projects for Lasting Improvements

VSB will focus on projects that have the biggest impact. This includes work that supports climate goals and fits with long-term plans for building upgrades and safety improvements. Projects will be prioritized when they offer lasting benefits through the asset's useful life and align with other major initiatives.

To help navigate the plan, Figure 4 explains the purpose and structure of the action tables. Each table shows what is being worked on, who is responsible for coordinating efforts and highlights shared roles across teams, time commitments, and where funding is expected to come from. Point-form lists highlight more detailed actions; these are included to make the plan easier to follow and more transparent for all readers.

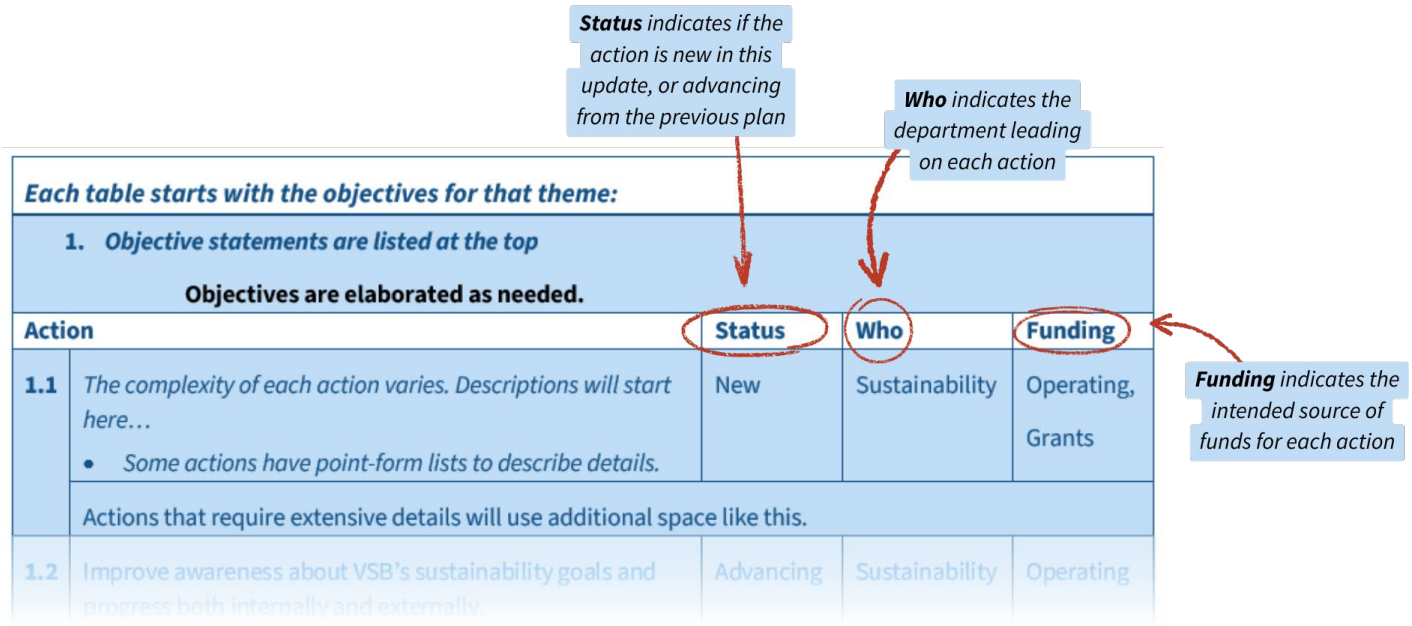


Figure 4: Example of an action table and how to interpret the information.

Theme 1: Leadership in Sustainability

Creating a more sustainable future at VSB requires strong leadership and commitment from all departments and parts of the organization. Each action in the plan identifies a lead department to ensure this commitment is achieved. Continuous, step-by-step improvements in how the VSB operates will shift the culture to embed sustainability and help meet our climate goals. To track progress, VSB is committed to transparent and honest reporting through monitoring actions and sharing updates so our community can see how we are moving forward.

VSB is also positioned to lead and learn alongside other school districts. Many of the challenges we face, such as climate change and resource management, are shared across British Columbia. By working together, we can share solutions and build a stronger, more sustainable education system.

Objectives for Theme 1: Leadership in Sustainability

1. Foster sustainability in VSB's organizational culture

Meaningful progress in sustainability will require a concerted effort from all areas of the organization.

Action		Status	Who	Funding
1.1	Identify and advocate for funding and resources to implement the plan by ensuring actions are tangible, costed, and ready to advance if funding is available.	New	Sustainability	Minor Capital, Major Capital, AFG[1], External grants
1.2	Increase awareness about VSB's sustainability goals and progress, both internally and externally, by tapping into existing communications channels to share stories and updates.	New	Sustainability, Communications	Operating
1.3	Foster opportunities for collaboration to aid the expansion and adoption of sustainability practices across operations. • All teams within the organization will be included in advancing sustainability.	New	Sustainability	Operating
1.4	Implement a system to track, analyze, and report on school-based sustainability initiatives to recognize their contributions as part of the VSB sustainability plan. Gain further insight into "scope 3" emissions data, which includes sources of greenhouse gas related to schools that are not directly produced by school operations, such as waste collection and disposal, and commuting habits of families and staff to understand a more complete picture of ongoing impacts.	New	Sustainability	Operating
1.5	Share and exchange learnings and ideas with other school districts, local and regional governments, and other relevant agencies.	Advancing	Sustainability	Operating
1.6	Continue to engage in the learning standards of the BC curriculum at all grade levels that specifically support the skills and attitudes to foster sustainability including: • Student- and staff-led sustainability measures such as waste reduction, gardening, etc. • Teaching and learning initiatives such as land-based learning and climate action.	New	Sustainability	Operating
1.7	Review and update administrative procedure 546 to increase infrastructure and facilities support for land-based learning and student-led action projects. • Complete review and provide recommendations in 2026/27	New	Facilities	Operating

[1] Annual Facilities Grants

Theme 2: Sustainability in Education

VSB supports and encourages land-based learning in our schools and programs. Rooted in Indigenous ways of knowing and being, land-based learning recognizes the land as a teacher and emphasizes hands-on experiences outside the classroom. This approach helps students:

- Build a strong connection to nature and place
- Understand their role and responsibility in caring for the land
- Experience learning through reconciliation, respect, reciprocity, and stewardship

Land-based learning is more than spending time outdoors; it is about forming meaningful relationships with the natural world. It offers a broader and more positive scope for education than focusing solely on environmental problems. By exploring the interconnectedness of the biosphere, students gain a deeper understanding of themselves, their place in the world, and their ability to make a difference.

Educators, families, students, inherent rights holders and stakeholder groups across VSB value this experiential approach. It also helps address concerns about eco-anxiety, especially among younger learners. An experiential learning model supports a natural progression that ensures students engage with sustainability in age-appropriate, empowering ways — building confidence, curiosity, and care for the world around them:

- Primary years: discover and connect
- Intermediate years: grow awareness
- Secondary years: take informed action

Objectives for Theme 2: Sustainability in Education				
1. Foster connection to the natural world *Land-based learning provides opportunities for students to connect with their environment and embody Indigenous ways of knowing and being.* **2. Support learning initiatives that develop environmentally conscientious citizens** *Following a strong connection to the natural world, students will be ready for deeper engagement with environmental issues that matter to them.*				
Action		**Status**	**Who**	**Funding**
2.1	Offer professional development opportunities for educators to build capacity for carrying out sustainability-focused learning including land-based learning and student-led action projects. • Offer at least one Pro-D session per year	Advancing	Sustainability and other VSB departments	Operating
2.2	Continue to provide support to school administrators to enable more land-based learning and student-led action projects.	New	Associate Superintendents and Directors of Instruction	Operating
2.3	Facilitate opportunities for peer mentorship and collaboration among educators in collaboration with the Environmental Educators Provincial Specialist Association (EEPSA).	Advancing	Sustainability	BCTF, Operating
2.4	Facilitate opportunities for student leadership, peer mentorship and collaboration among students. • Through the annual Sustainability Conference and other opportunities • Continue to encourage students to participate in the student leadership grant process through the VDSC • Seek out external grant opportunities as they arise	Advancing	Sustainability	VSB Funding, External Grants
2.5	Create learning opportunities from sustainability actions in our facilities (for example, solar panels, passive house designs, energy conservation, etc.). • Highlight at least three features by 2030	Advancing	Sustainability	Operating

Theme 3: Green Spaces

VSB's school grounds offer valuable opportunities for learning, play, and environmental stewardship. These green spaces contribute to Vancouver's urban ecosystem by supporting biodiversity, improving air quality, managing rainwater, and helping cool the city.

Educators, families, and students are increasingly interested in using school grounds for learning through activities such as gardening, nature exploration, art projects, biodiversity improvements, and more. In addition, visits from Indigenous knowledge keepers help connect students to the land and enrich their educational experience.

We have a unique opportunity to make green spaces a central part of every school's learning environment. To do this, outdoor infrastructure must be:

- Durable, safe and resilient
- Accessible to all students
- Respectful of the past, present, and future of the land

Learning outdoors is not limited to school property. Local parks and regional resources also offer rich opportunities for students to explore, connect with nature, and deepen their understanding of sustainability.

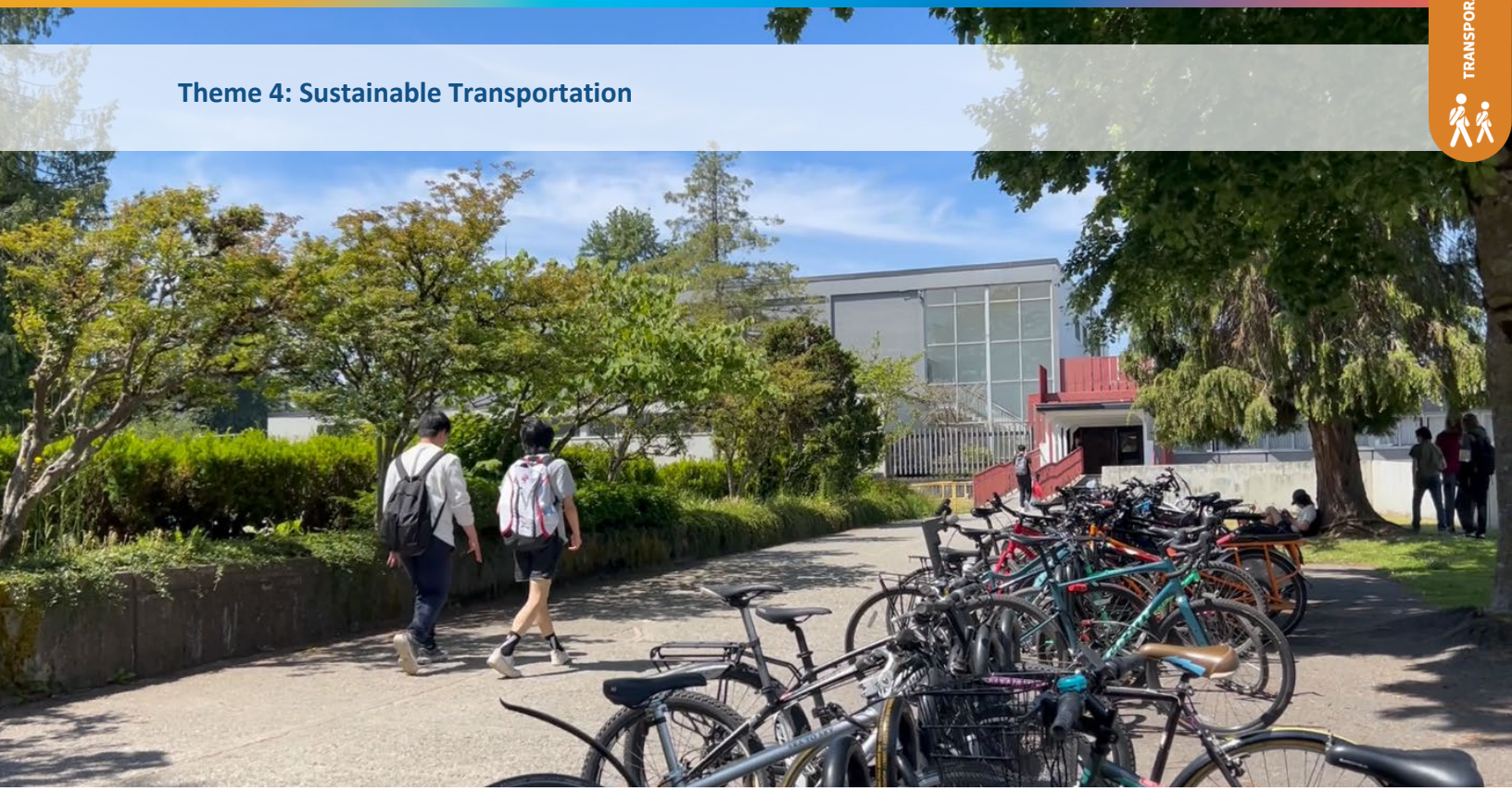
Objectives for Theme 3: Green Spaces

1. Support and improve outdoor focused spaces and activities at schools
Invest in the improvement and maintenance of our school grounds as extensions of the learning environment to empower educators and students to access and steward these places.

Action		Status	Who	Funding
3.1	Increase biodiversity at schools, prioritizing native and culturally significant plants wherever possible. • Improvement to approximately 10 sites per year • Targeted annual spending based on grant availability of approximately $30,000 • Students and educators will co-lead these improvements • Plant selection and maintenance procedures will be reviewed and adjusted • School-led gardens continue to be a high priority	New	Facilities	BC Parks Foundation Grants
	Increasing biodiversity means improving the variety of plants and organisms that live in our environment. This aids in pollinator habitat, rainwater management, air quality, soil quality, and access to nature. VSB aims to increase biodiversity at all sites through landscaping installation and maintenance practices (including trees). VSB continues to support and encourage schools to install, expand, and maintain raised garden beds for educational purposes. These gardens offer accessible and rich opportunities for cross-curricular hands-on learning. They also contribute greatly to the biodiversity on school grounds. In particular, native plant species attract beneficial insects and birds, are suited to local water/drought cycles, and offer opportunities for cultural learnings. To support this action, VSB is committed to the BC Parks Foundation Learning by Nature movement, which provides resources to improve access to nature across the province. By 2032, it is anticipated that many VSB schools will have received improvements through this program, which includes school-led initiatives, and Facilities-led projects.			
3.2	Improve outdoor infrastructure to enhance opportunities for accessible outdoor learning. • Improvements to approximately 4 sites per year based on available grant funding • Anticipated annual spending of approximately $400,000 • Students and staff will co-develop improvements wherever possible • Guidelines for changes and improvements will be developed, adjusted, and maintained as needed	New	Facilities	Grants, Minor Capital
	Outdoor infrastructure includes school gardens, outdoor learning areas, shade and shelter, fields, and other enhancements to the outdoor learning environment at schools. This action will be supported through the BC Parks Foundation Learning by Nature program, which provides limited, large grants to develop sustainable and functional areas for land-based learning at schools throughout BC. These innovative projects will provide assets to encourage educators and students to bring learning outdoors without leaving the school grounds. This will reduce barriers and increase access to nature. Types of installations can include, but are not limited to:			

	• Trees and groves • Lawn alternatives • Mud kitchens • Raised garden beds • Gathering spaces with seating • Pollinator meadows • Rainwater management solutions			
3.3	Engage with the nonprofit sector to bring diverse outdoor learning activities to schools and to bring students to offsite outdoor learning places. • Track services provided by the nonprofit sector	Advancing	Sustainability, Community Connections	Grants, Donations
3.4	Improve understanding of the connection between Indigenous principles of learning and environmental sustainability through outdoor land-based learning. • Increasing awareness, appreciation of, and respect for the oral traditions and living history of the land and environment of the school neighbourhoods and broader region supports VSB's journey of truth and reconciliation, while fostering ongoing environmental stewardship in our learners.	Advancing	Indigenous Education, Sustainability	Operating
3.5	Evaluate access to, and quality of green spaces across the VSB. • Identify priority areas for increased access and report on findings by 2028	New	Facilities	Operating
	In response to concerns about the distribution of green spaces across the district, VSB is committed to evaluating green assets at schools and identifying potential improvements. This assessment and evaluation will involve a review of VSB's outdoor infrastructure contextualized in the broader community. It is expected that a report will quantify the availability and access to nature that VSB students have, and where there are opportunities for VSB to improve upon inequities.			

Theme 4: Sustainable Transportation



Active transportation to-and-from school promotes physical activity, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, improves air quality, and eases vehicle traffic around schools. Many school catchments are well-suited for walking and biking. Where active transportation is not an option, we encourage the lowest carbon-emitting options for families and staff alike.

We are planning a range of strategic actions in collaboration with municipal partners, nonprofit organizations, and regional authorities. These actions include maintaining key partnerships, enhancing infrastructure, promoting sustainable commuting for students and staff, and transitioning our fleet toward low-carbon alternatives. These efforts will help reduce transportation-related emissions, improve accessibility, and support vibrant, walkable school communities.

Objectives for Theme 4: Sustainable Transportation

1. **Support active transportation choices for school communities and staff**
   Empowering school communities to choose active transportation which supports healthier lifestyles, cleaner air, and more connected, vibrant neighbourhoods.

2. **Operate an efficient and low-carbon fleet**
   Transitioning to cleaner vehicles will build a fleet ready for a sustainable future.

Action		Status	Who	Funding
4.1	Maintain and expand the "School Active Travel Program Partnership" agreement with the City of Vancouver's Transportation Department.	Advancing	Sustainability, Planning	Operating
	VSB works with the City of Vancouver's Transportation team to support and encourage active transportation initiatives and opportunities for school communities. The primary goal is to increase the number of families choosing active transportation to and from school. Initiatives to support this have included: • **School Streets** (and the National Active School Streets Initiative): Temporary street closures in front of schools to allow space for active arrival and pick-ups. • **Walk Bike Roll Mini Grants**: City of Vancouver has provided annual small-scale grants directly to schools to support active travel activities, celebrations, and incentives. • **Walking School Bus and Bike Bus**: A leader walks or rides a group of students to and from school on a predetermined route with scheduled meeting spots along the way like bus stops. • **Better Bike Parking Initiative**: City of Vancouver has provided funding for VSB to increase the number of bike parking spaces at numerous schools. • **Ride the Road Active Travel Program:** bike and pedestrian training program for grades 6 and 7: City of Vancouver provides bike proficiency and safe walking education for grades 6 and 7 annually. • **School Travel Planning Program**: City of Vancouver works with 3 to 6 school communities annually on this comprehensive process to improve active transportation safety for families.			
4.2	Continue to work with local nonprofit groups, regional governments, and transit authorities to increase awareness of active travel resources and programs for families.	Advancing	Sustainability	Operating
	Many local organizations offer active travel programs and support that VSB school communities can pursue to increase active transportation choices and decrease reliance on cars. We endeavor to promote and encourage these opportunities. Examples include: • TransLink: Walking School Bus, Kids Ride Free • HUB Cycling: Bike Bus, Ride the Road, Bike to School Week • Vancouver Bike Share: Mobi Youth Community Pass			
4.3	Enhance and expand bike and scooter parking infrastructure to improve security and usability.	Advancing	Facilities	Grants

4.4	Explore incentive programs for staff to choose active and low carbon modes of travel for commuting to and from their place of work.	New	Sustainability, Employee Services	Grants
4.5	Promote the use of car- and bike-sharing services for staff trips, where practical.	Advancing	Sustainability	Operating
4.6	Replace 25% of eligible gasoline fleet vehicles with electric vehicle models by 2030. • install electrical charging infrastructure • apply for eligible rebates/incentives	New	Facilities	Local Capital, Grants

VSB is advancing an efficient and low carbon fleet, replacing existing gas-combustion vehicles with suitable electric vehicles where possible, and transitioning away from burning fossil fuels.

Current Fleet Overview

As of 2025, VSB operates a fleet of 77 vehicles, including 44 gasoline-powered, 32 diesel-powered and 1 electric vehicle (EV). Of the total fleet, 62 are leased and 15 are owned. Of the leased vehicles, 38 are committed for purchase in 2027/28 when their leases end. This leaves 24 vehicles (20 gasoline, 1 electric and 3 diesel) available for potential replacement with EVs. Electrification is most feasible for light-duty gasoline vehicles, as diesel vehicles already operate on a low-carbon fuel (i.e. 100% renewable diesel or R100) and suitable electric alternatives for these types are limited. See Table 1 for an inventory of fleet vehicles.

Subject to budget availability for new EVs and the electrical infrastructure provisions required, VSB can add up to 11 new EVs in 2025/26. In addition, based on existing lease agreements, the fleet could expand to as many as 21 additional EVs by 2026/27, representing approximately 25% of the total fleet.

Assuming an average light duty gasoline vehicle emits approximately 4-5 tCO_2e per year, the estimated annual GHG reduction from replacing 21 gasolines vehicles with EVs is approximately 100 tCO_2e per year or 0.60% of total emissions.

Fleet Inventory and Leases					
Vehicle Fuel Type	**Purchased Vehicles**	**Leased Vehicles**			**Total**
		Expiring 25/26	**Expiring 26/27**	**Expiring 27/28**	
Gasoline	2	7	13	22 *	**44**
Diesel	13	3	-	16 *	**32**
Electric	-	-	1	-	**1**
Total	**15**	**10**	**14**	**38**	**77**
Eligible EV replacements	-	7	14	N/A	21

Table 1: Fleet inventory and leases

** At the end of the lease, vehicles are committed to being purchased at their residual value*

EV Charging Infrastructure

To support the transition to EVs, capital investment in EV charging infrastructure is required. This ensures there is available charging capacity at overnight parking sites. Some locations may require electrical upgrades to accommodate the increased load requirements. Advancements in EV charger technology, such as power sharing or load management, can support up to 10 chargers on a single circuit – though charging times will take longer when multiple vehicles are actively charging at once.

	Preliminary assessments of electrical capacity at overnight parking sites at both the maintenance and grounds yards (where most fleet vehicles are stationed overnight) indicate that electrical service upgrades may be required to support full electrification of the fleet. A detailed electrical capacity assessment will need to be completed to align with the fleet renewal strategy – anticipated to be complete by 2026/2027.			
4.7	Purchase 100% renewable diesel or low carbon fuels for all eligible fleet vehicles where available.	New	Facilities	Operating
	As part of VSB's strategy to reduce GHG emissions from fleet operations, VSB will continue to purchase 100% renewable diesel (R100) for applicable diesel vehicles. R100 is produced from vegetable oils, contains no petroleum content, and offers significant emission reductions compared to conventional diesel. Unlike some biodiesel blends, R100 is certified to the same standard as petroleum diesel, allowing it to be used in existing diesel engines without any modifications. This makes it a practical and impactful solution for transitioning fleet operations toward low-carbon alternatives.			
4.8	Assess school facilities to identify opportunities to expand EV charging infrastructure through new construction or retrofit opportunities. • Collaborate with local utilities and municipalities to coordinate opportunities to enhance EV infrastructure for the public where feasible	New	Sustainability	Grants, Major Capital
4.9	Conduct an annual review of EV charging rates to ensure they reflect current market rates.	New	Sustainability	Operating
4.10	Explore bike and scooter parking solutions at school sites that encourage sustainable transportation choices and reduce vehicle congestion at schools.	New	Sustainability, Business Development	AFG, External Grants

Theme 5: Resource Conservation and Climate Action

VSB is uniquely positioned to build a more sustainable school district by managing our resources, reducing waste, and responding to climate change. In 2026, we are increasing focus on reducing carbon emissions and adapting to climate risks, guided by data and aligned with available budgets.

Efforts will focus on:

- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions, especially from natural gas use (93% of our total emissions)
- Improving operational efficiency in energy, water, and waste
- Supporting climate literacy through staff training and student learning
- Planning for long-term emission reductions, including costed pathways for future decision-making

Success will be measured by:

- Tracking and reporting annual GHG emissions
- Benchmarking progress against provincial climate targets
- Engaging school communities in sustainability initiatives
- Demonstrating reductions in emissions from key sources like heating, paper use, and fleet vehicles

By combining operational improvements with meaningful education, VSB is preparing for a low-carbon, climate-resilient future.

Objectives for Theme 5: Resource Conservation

1. Reduce waste and consumption of resources
Improve resource consumption and expand waste reduction initiatives throughout VSB

Action		Status	Who	Funding
5.1	Maintain an active energy management and conservation program, leveraging the funding opportunities available from FortisBC and BC Hydro. • Participate in at least two energy efficiency programs per year that aim to improve building efficiency and performance	Advancing	Sustainability	Grants, Rebates
	VSB has been an active participant in the BC Hydro Energy Manager program since 2009. Participation in the program provides support and training for energy efficiency initiatives and exclusive access to rebates and incentives. VSB will continue to maintain its partnership with BC Hydro and participate in commercially available programs that support improving building energy performance, including BC Hydro's Custom Program and Continuous Optimization Program.			
5.2	Determine whether expanding recycling systems and waste diversion programs can be achieved with a target for improvements by 2030 • Determine the feasibility of launching a long-term flexible plastic collection program • Improve recovery of refundable containers from the Food4Schools program	Advancing	Sustainability, Food Services, Operations	Operating
5.3	Upgrade district facilities with efficient low-flow water fixtures and infrastructure by 2030 • Apply for applicable grants and rebate programs	Advancing	Maintenance	AFG
5.4	Review purchasing guidelines to reduce the availability of non-recycled paper (i.e. limiting the purchase of paper to 30%, 50% or 100% recycled content when available). • Seek opportunities to explore alternative fibres	Advancing	Sustainability, Procurement	Operating
	Paper consumption is the VSB's second largest source of reportable GHG emissions. VSB is exploring ways to reduce the environmental impact of paper use across schools and offices, where possible. This includes: **Increasing Digitization** Reduce paper use by shifting more processes and communications to digital formats where possible. This includes online forms, digital learning materials, and electronic record-keeping. **Using More Recycled Content** Increase the amount of recycled content in the paper we purchase. This helps lessen the environmental impact of the paper we do use for our operations and reduces the cost of carbon offset purchases. **Exploring Alternative Fibres** Explore the feasibility of paper made from alternative sources such as sugarcane bagasse, a byproduct of sugar production. These fibres offer a more sustainable option compared to traditional wood-based paper and can help reduce deforestation and carbon emissions.			

Track the impacts of utilizing VSB Printshop

Centralize printing through the VSB Printshop, may help reduce misprints, printing errors, paper and toner waste. This facility is operated by trained staff who use efficient equipment and processes that can optimize layouts to minimize excess pages and offer various sustainable paper options. Establish reporting metrics on printshop use and the impacts on paper use, cost and overall efficiency.

By combining these strategies, VSB is committed to making paper use more sustainable while supporting learning and administrative needs.

Figure 5 illustrates that in 2024, there were more than 43 million paper sheets purchased at the VSB, with elementary schools as the largest consumers using more than 23 million sheets (54%), followed by secondary schools consuming more than 16 million sheets (38%) and administrative offices consuming 3.6 million sheets (8%).

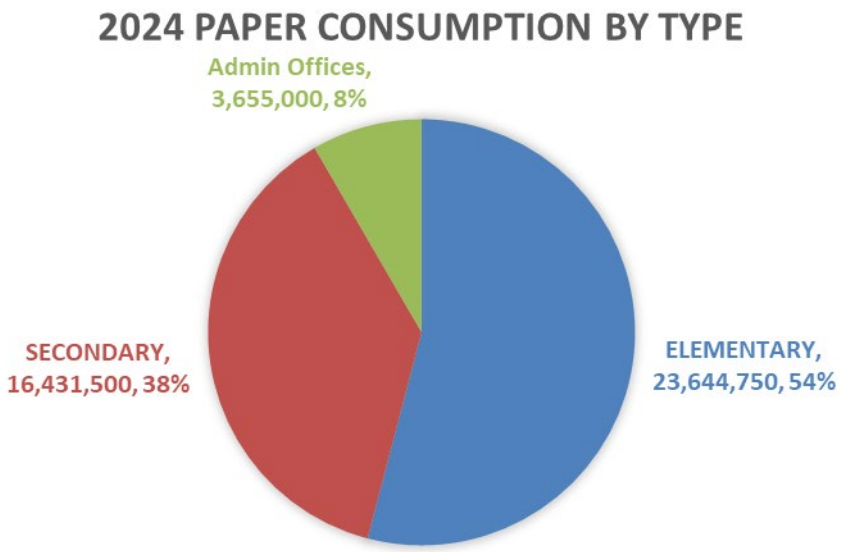


Figure 5: 2024 paper consumption breakdown

Objectives for Theme 5: Climate Action

2. Prepare for climate change and its impacts

Prepare facilities and outdoor spaces to adapt to climate-related risks, and support climate education for students

Action		Status	Who	Funding
5.5	Develop a climate readiness plan that identifies climate preparedness and response mitigation measures by 2030. • High level assessment of vulnerabilities • Targeted building-level assessments • Integrate measures into facilities planning processes	Advancing	Sustainability	Grants & Operating
	This plan will outline how the VSB can prepare for and respond to the current and future impacts of climate change. This includes improving resiliency to climate related risks to its facilities such as extreme heat, drought and increased rainfall events.			
5.6	Review and update VSB building design standards to ensure new and replacement facilities are designed and constructed to include low-carbon heating/cooling systems and climate-resilient materials • Climate risk assessments will be considered for new and replacement seismic projects	Advancing	Vancouver Project Office	Major or Minor Capital
5.7	Identify curriculum opportunities and develop ready-to-use resources to increase education and awareness about the impacts of climate change	Advancing	Sustainability	Operating

Objectives for Theme 5: Climate Action – GHG Emissions

3. Reduce energy consumption and GHG emissions

Focusing on energy efficiency and carbon reduction will advance our progress towards provincial targets

Action		Status	Who	Funding
5.8	Develop a **strategic framework for reducing GHG emissions** and advancing the use of clean and renewable energy by 2030 Explore renewable natural gas (RNG) investment as an option to achieve GHG reduction targets	New	Sustainability	Operating
	This framework outlines how the VSB can manage its energy use (and its associated GHG emissions) to support provincial climate goals and GHG reduction targets. It includes a structured approach to advancing GHG reduction targets through a *capital investment strategy (see 5.7.2)* as well as *supplementary measures (see 5.7.3)*, including phasing in renewable fuels, such as renewable natural gas (RNG), over time. **The framework is outlined on pages 27-36.**			
5.9	Prioritize projects that directly contribute to GHG reduction and climate change preparedness, including adaptations to HVAC systems, operational efficiencies, innovative technologies Target a minimum GHG reduction of 5% by 2030	Advancing	Sustainability, Maintenance, Operations	AFG

5.10	Replace at least 50% of all eligible gasoline-powered tools with electric alternatives by 2030, where feasible	New	Grounds	Operating

Strategic Framework for Reducing GHG Emissions

5.8.1 History of Projects and Work to date

VSB has implemented numerous HVAC projects that aim to reduce energy consumption and to improve building performance. From building control measures to infrastructure upgrades, VSB has participated in energy management initiatives, minor capital, and major capital programs offered through the Ministry of Education and Child Care and Ministry of Infrastructure.

Energy Management Projects

In 2009, VSB joined the BC Hydro Energy Manager program and implemented numerous energy management and conservation projects, leveraging utility incentives to make these projects more cost-effective. A summary of the projects implemented since 2014 is shown in Table 2 below. Total energy savings of $1.1 million can be attributable to the Energy Management Program.

Energy Management Projects				
Year	Electricity Conservation Projects		Natural Gas Conservation Projects	
	Project Locations (number)	Total Electricity Savings (kWh/ year)	Project Locations (number)	Total Natural Gas Savings (GJ / year)
2014/15	8	495,000	8	1,470
2015/16	7	536,000	15	0
2016/17	18	662,000	2	4,500
2017/18	13	1,302,000	2	9,500
2018/19	7	587,000	1	1,175
2019/20	14	709,000	4	6,880
2020/21	6	455,000	5	3,300
2021/22	5	341,000	2	1,200
2022/23	10	325,000	9	4,500
2023/24	12	412,000	6	5,696
2024/25	8	317,668	3	2,000
Totals	**108**	**6,141,668**	**57**	**40,221**
Annual Utility Savings		**$ 698,000**		**$ 458,000**
Total (Electricity and Gas savings)		**$1,156,000**		

Table 2: Energy Management Projects

Carbon Reduction achieved through Minor Capital Projects

Over the past decade, VSB has upgraded its mechanical systems and heating plants through the Carbon Neutral Capital Program (CNCP). CNCP is a program that provides capital funding specifically for projects that improve overall energy efficiency and reduce GHG emissions. The benefits of this capital funding include operational cost savings, reduced facility condition index, renewed infrastructure, and potential to supplement funding to major capital programs. A summary of the projects implemented since 2017 is shown in Table 3 below. The impacts of these projects on GHG emissions varies. Since 2017, seven heating plant upgrades were completed, achieving a net GHG reduction of 42 tCO_2e (representing a 6% reduction).

Minor Capital Program – Completed Projects							
Year	Type	School	Funding Program	GHG Emissions Before (tCO_2e)	GHG Emissions After (tCO_2e)	GHG Change (tCO_2e)	% change
2017	Elementary	McBride	AFG	105	59	(45)	(43)%
2019	Elementary	Roberts	CNCP	141	126	(14)	(10)%
2020	Elementary	Hastings	CNCP	153	113	(40)	(26)%
2020	Elementary	Selkirk	CNCP	115	133	18	15%
2021	Elementary	Norquay	CNCP	119	161	42	35%
2022	Elementary	MacCorkindale	CNCP	76	75	(1)	(1)%
2024	Elementary	Beaconsfield	AFG	-	-	-	-
2024	Elementary	Britannia	CNCP	-	-	-	-
2024	Secondary	Magee	CNCP	-	-	-	-
			TOTAL	**709**	**667**	**(42)**	**(6)%**

Table 3: Projects completed through the Minor Capital Program

Carbon Reduction achieved through Major Capital Projects

The Seismic Mitigation Program (SMP) has delivered seismically safe facilities while improving infrastructure, energy efficiency and reducing overall GHG Emissions. A summary of the projects implemented since 2016 is shown in Table 4 below. The impacts of these projects on GHG emissions varies. Since 2016, twenty-three SMP projects have been completed, achieving a net GHG reduction of 703 tCO_2e (representing a 26% reduction).

Seismic Mitigation Program – Completed Projects								
Year	Type	School	Heat Pump	Project Type	GHG emissions Before(tCO_2e)	GHG Emissions After(tCO_2e)	GHG Change (tCO_2e)	% change
2016	Elementary	Queen Mary	-	Partial	171	72	(99)	(58)%
2016	Elementary	Gordon	Yes	Replacement	115	25	(90)	(78)%
2016	Elementary	L'Ecole Bilingue	-	Replacement	110	48	(62)	(57)%
2017	Secondary	Kitsilano	Yes	Replacement	475	240	(236)	(50)%
2017	Elementary	Strathcona	-	Upgrade	332	345	14	4%
2018	Elementary	Jamieson	-	Upgrade	87	70	(17)	(20)%
2018	Elementary	Kingsford-Smith	-	Upgrade	74	85	11	16%
2019	Elementary	Nelson	-	Replacement	101	69	(32)	(32)%
2020	Elementary	Maple Grove	Yes	Replacement	108	41	(67)	(62)%
2020	Elementary	Fleming	-	Replacement	76	52	(24)	(32)%
2020	Elementary	Tennyson	-	Replacement	78	70	(7)	(9)%
2021	Secondary	Byng	-	Upgrade	293	305	12	4%
2021	Elementary	Maquinna	-	Upgrade	47	93	46	96%
2021	Elementary	Selkirk	-	Upgrade	121	133	12	10%
2021	Elementary	Wolfe	-	Upgrade	86	85	(1)	(1)%
2022	Elementary	Weir	Yes	Partial	58	13	(45)	(78)%
2022	Elementary	wək ʷaʔas tə syaqʷəm	-	Replacement	81	39	(42)	(52)%
2023	Elementary	Bayview	Yes	Replacement	69	22	(47)	(68)%
2023	Elementary	Lloyd George	-	Replacement	103	66	(37)	(36)%
2023	Elementary	Cavell	-	Upgrade	77	77	0	0%
2023	Elementary	Livingstone	-	Upgrade	57	66	9	16%
2024	Secondary	Hamber	Yes	Replacement	--	--	--	--
2024	Elementary	Hudson	Yes	Replacement	--	--	--	--
Total					**2,719**	**2,015**	**(703)**	**(26)%**

Table 4: Projects completed through the SMP
Note: Totals do not include recent projects that do not have post-project data (i.e. Hamber and Hudson).

5.8.2 Capital Investment Strategy

This investment plan outlines a prioritized list of 51 projects aimed at advancing energy efficiency and GHG reduction through the renewal of aging heating, cooling, and ventilation (HVAC) systems, integration of low carbon technology and high efficiency equipment in new construction and retrofit opportunities.

The prioritization process was guided by a set of criteria to ensure alignment with organizational and operational needs:

- Alignment with the 2026/27 Major and Minor Capital Plan priorities
- Renewal of appliances and equipment at, or reaching end of service life
- Energy Management Score rank higher than the median of 57

The Energy Management (EM) Score allows for a high-level comparative assessment through a ranking system using defined weighted criteria. The system provides each building with an EM Score and respective ranking from 1 to 113 – where 1 is the best performing school overall and 113 being the poorest performing overall. See Appendix A for EM scores.

The factors and their weighted criteria in determining scores are shown in Table 5 below.

Energy Management Score Factors	
Factor	**Weight**
Facility Condition Index (FCI)	0.4
Energy Use Intensity (EUI)	0.25
Energy-related GHG emissions	0.35
Total	**1**

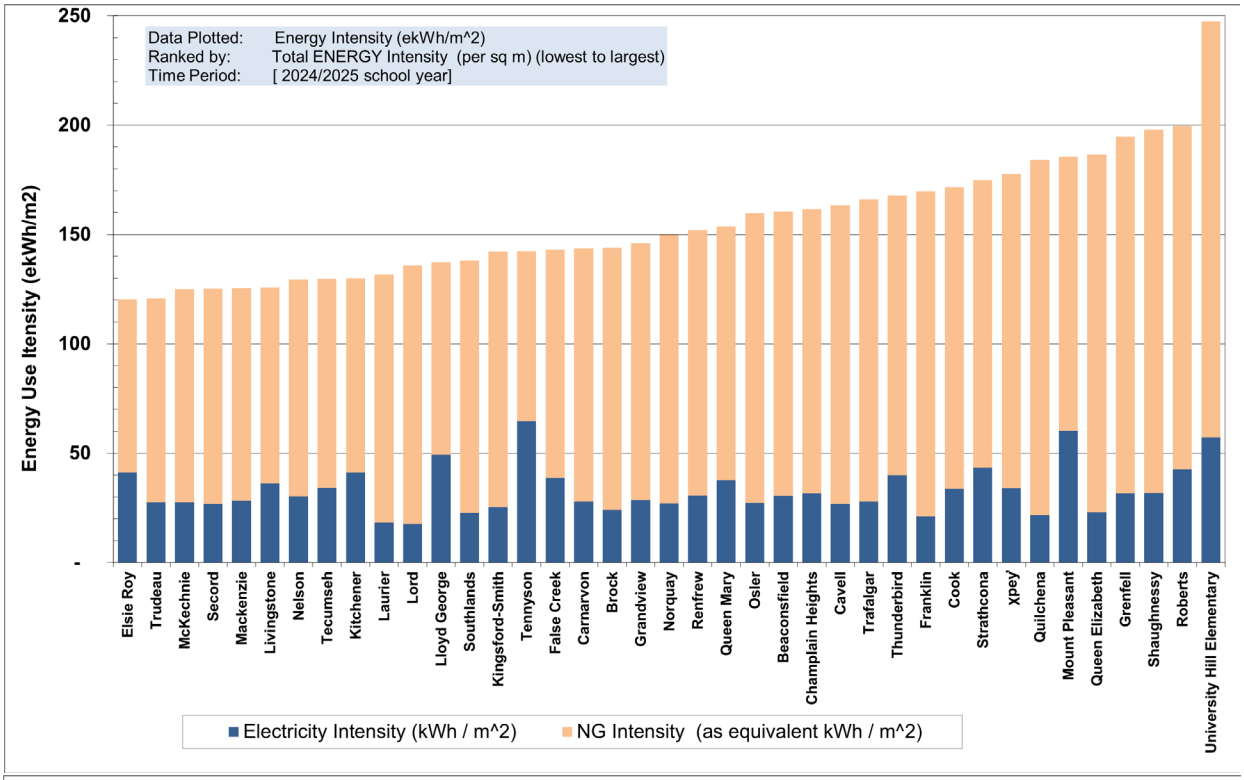
Table 5: Energy Management Score factors

Energy Use Intensity

As buildings represent such a significant portion of VSB's emissions, it is important to understand where opportunities exist. Energy Use Intensity (EUI) is a metric that measures a building's energy performance. It represents the amount of energy consumed per unit of floor area – to allow for fair comparisons between buildings. For context, a typical older mechanical system such as an inefficient gas boiler might correspond to an EUI of approximately 150 - 300 ekWh/m² per year, whereas a modern high-efficiency system or heat pump system can achieve EUIs closer to 50 - 150 ekWh/m² per year. This comparison highlights the potential for significant reductions in energy use and emissions through system upgrades.

Energy Use Intensity: Elementary Schools

VSB operates 89 elementary schools, each averaging 4,700 m^2 in floor area. Figure 6a and 6b below shows total EUI values range between 34 to 250 ekWh/m^2, with an average EUI of 128 ekWh/m^2 across all elementary schools. Note: due to page size constraints, the figure is split into two parts: 6a shows the lowest 50% of EUIs, while 6b shows the highest 50% of EUIs - both share axis and color schemes to maintain comparability.



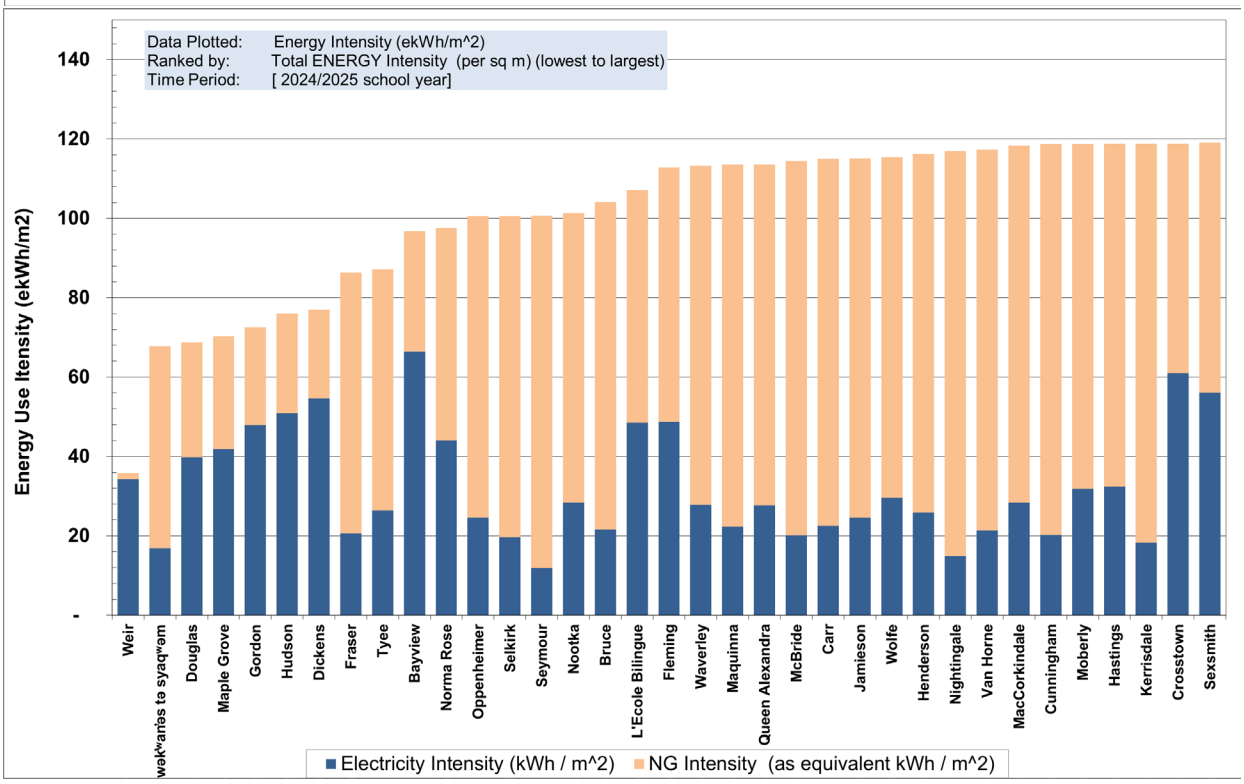


Figure 6a & 6b: Energy Use Intensity – Lowest and Highest 50% of Elementary Schools.
Note: Energy data for Britannia Elementary is not known due to insufficient sub-metering within the Britannia School and Community Center Complex.

Energy Use Intensity: Annexes

Annexes average 1,758 m^2 in floor area. Figure 7 shows total EUI's range between 103 to 177 ekWh/m^2, with an average EUI of 131 ekWh/m^2 across all annexes.

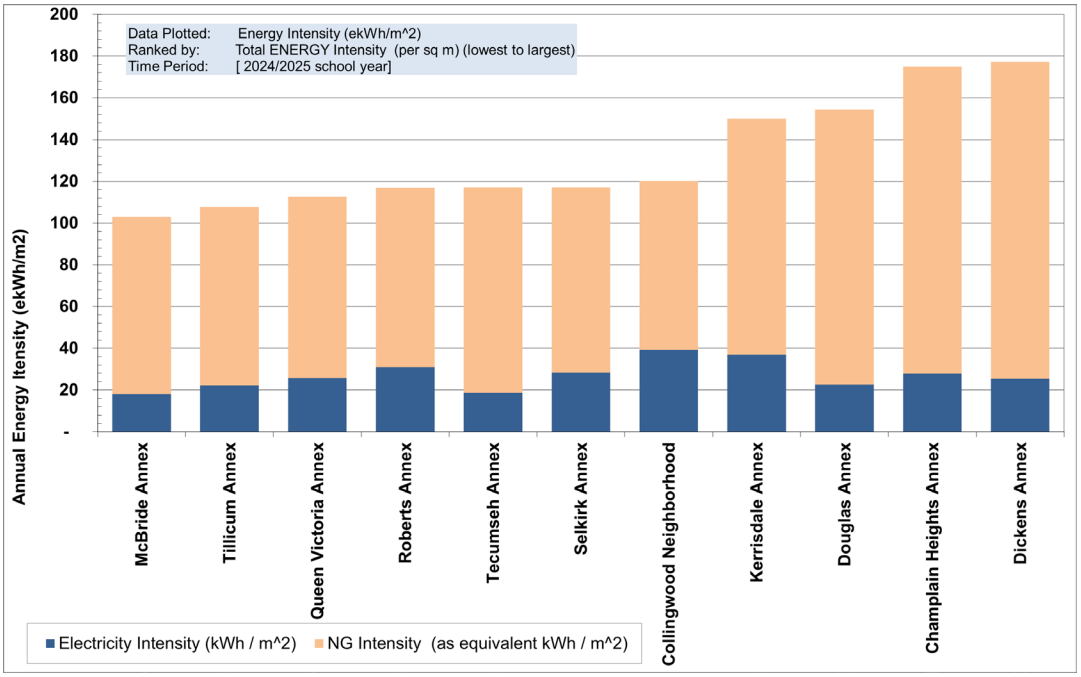


Figure 7: Energy Use Intensity – Annexes

Energy Use Intensity: Secondary Schools

VSB operates 18 secondary schools, each averaging 19,000 m^2 in floor area. Figure 8 shows total EUI's range between 89 to 188 ekWh/m^2, with an average EUI of 132 ekWh/m^2 across all secondary schools.

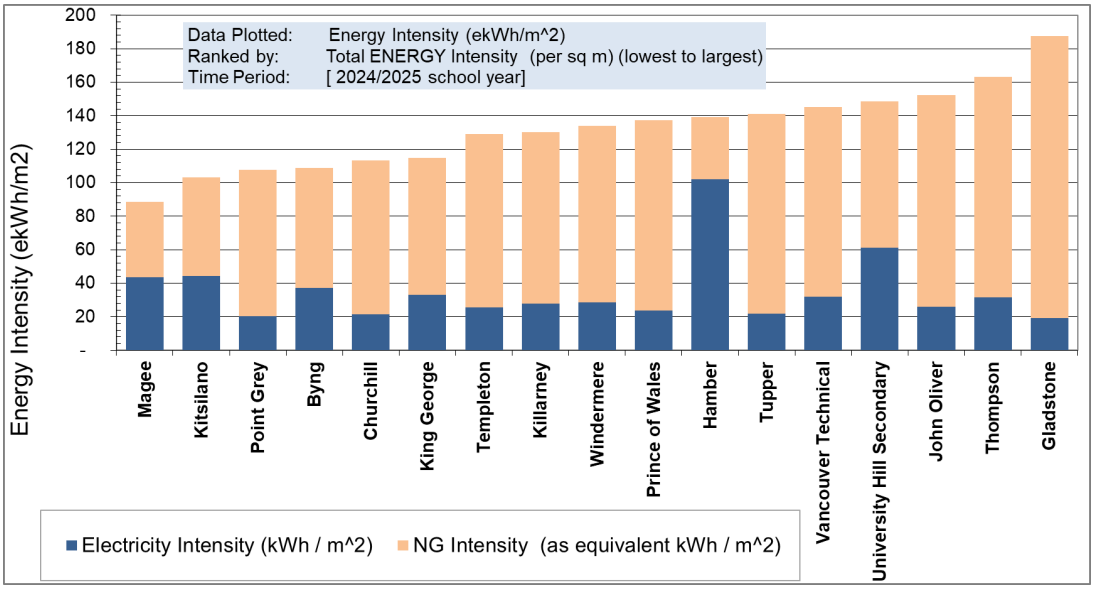


Figure 8: Energy Use Intensity – Secondary schools
Note: Energy data for Britannia Secondary is not known due to insufficient sub-metering within the Britannia School and Community center complex.

Energy Use Intensity: Other Buildings

Other buildings comprise of district facilities, closed sites (i.e. Carleton, Lloyd George), and sites used as Swing Spaces (i.e. wəḵʷaṅəs tə syaqʷəm, Hamber, Maple Grove, South Hill). These buildings average

4,912 m^2 in floor area. Figure 9 shows total EUI's range between 49 to 247 ekWh/m^2, with an average EUI of 131 ekWh/m^2.

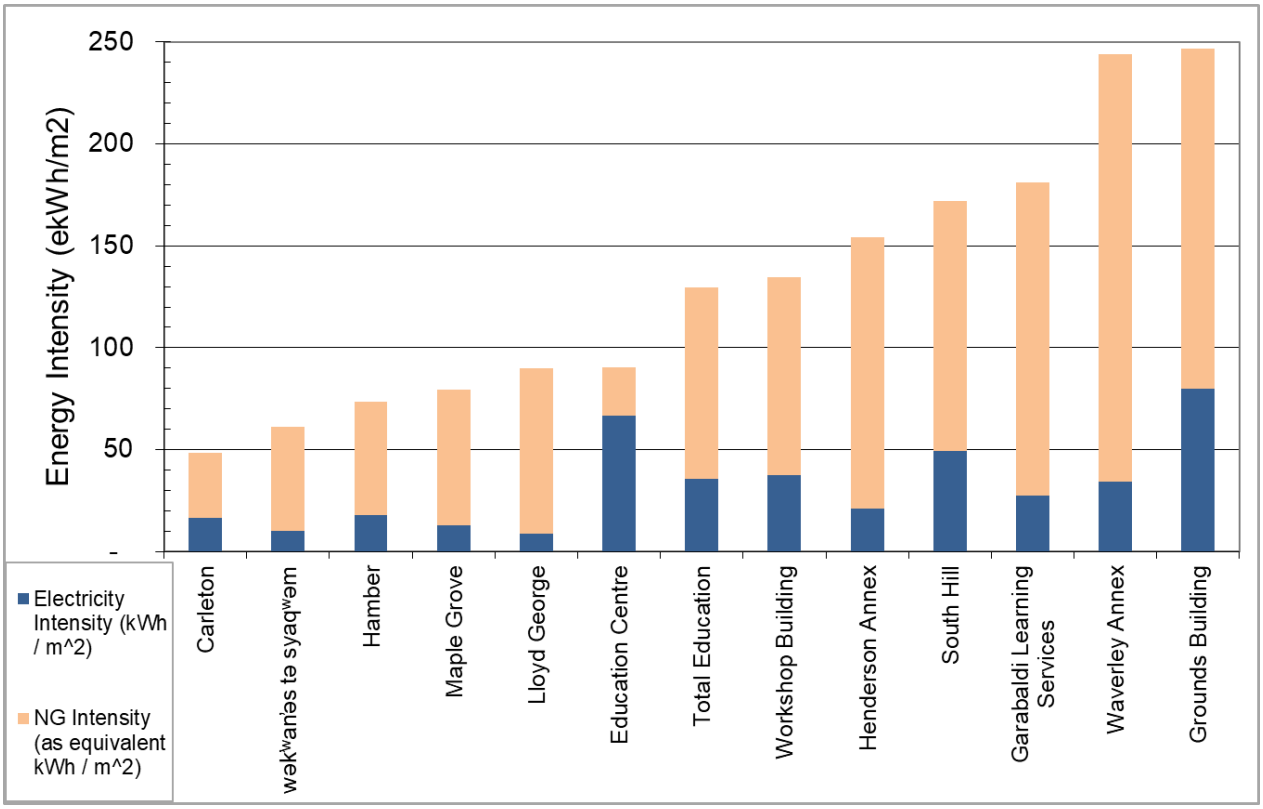


Figure 9: Energy Use Intensity – Other Buildings
Note 1: Leased sites are excluded as utility data is available for some, but not all locations.

Project Priorities

The projects fall into the following categories:

- HVAC upgrades
- major capital projects
- efficient lighting upgrades
- building controls optimization

The project list below comprises of various project types, many of which are anticipated to be funded through different sources including: Major Capital programs - including the SMP and School Expansion Program (EXP), Minor Capital programs including CNCP, AFG or School Enhancement Program (SEP). These funding sources are administered by the Ministry of Infrastructure and the completion of these projects relies on their sustained funding. Note that the project list may evolve over the course of the plan as priorities shift.

The project list has identified 51 projects that have the potential to achieve total GHG reductions of 1,612 tCO_2e annually, $359K annual energy savings, requiring total capital funding of approximately $1.4 billion.

Project Priorities: HVAC Upgrades

Many existing school facilities operate ageing and inefficient HVAC equipment, resulting in higher energy consumption, increased GHG emissions and rising operation and maintenance costs. HVAC

upgrades included in this plan are selected based on the urgency of the need, focusing on systems that have reached end of service life, as well as critical systems required for core functionality of the facilities. All boiler upgrade projects listed have an end-of-life heating plant which is the primary factor determining their timing. Table 6 shows there are 25 opportunities identified requiring approximately $15 million in funding, total GHG reductions of 315 tCO_2e annually and $68K annual energy savings.

HVAC Upgrades							
Year	Facility/Site	Project Type	Total Project Cost (Estimated)	Annual Energy Savings	Payback (years)	Annual GHG Reduction (tCO_2e)	Anticipated Funding Source
2026	Education Centre	Chiller Upgrade	$903,700	$1,500	> equipment life	1	AFG
2026	Grounds Building	Furnace Upgrade	$15,000	$480	31	2	AFG
2026	Xpey̓ Elementary	Furnace Upgrade	$15,000	$720	21	3	AFG
2026	Queen Alexander Elementary Portable	Furnace Upgrade	$15,000	$480	31	2	AFG
2026	Kerrisdale Annex	Boiler Upgrade	$420,000	$2,784	> equipment life	12	AFG
2026	Waverly Annex	Boiler Upgrade	$210,000	$2,400	> equipment life	10	AFG
2026	Brock Elementary (Frame)	Boiler Upgrade	$460,000	$480	> equipment life	2	Minor Capital
2026	Cavell Elementary	Boiler Upgrade	$630,000	$4,320	> equipment life	18	Minor Capital
2027	Crosstown Elementary (Phase 1 & 2) *	HVAC Upgrade	$2,820,000	N/A	N/A	N/A	Minor Capital
2027	Kingsford Smith Elementary	Steam to Hot Water Conversion	$1,600,000	$2,988	> equipment life	12	Minor Capital
2027	Shaughnessy Elementary	Boiler Upgrade	$800,000	$7,200	> equipment life	36	AFG
2027	Dickens Annex	Boiler Upgrade	$450,000	$1,872	> equipment life	15	Minor Capital
2028	Nootka Elementary	Boiler Upgrade	$420,000	$2,280	> equipment life	15	Minor Capital
2028	Tillicum Annex	Boiler Upgrade	$350,000	$2,400	> equipment life	15	AFG
2028	Queen Elizabeth Elementary	Boiler Upgrade	$560,000	$4,800	> equipment life	20	AFG
2029	South Hill	Boiler Upgrade	$700,000	$7,200	> equipment life	30	AFG
2029	Jamieson Elementary	Steam to Hot Water Conversion	$1,600,000	$2,592	> equipment life	11	Minor Capital
2030	Carnarvon Elementary	Boiler Upgrade	$560,000	$4,116	> equipment life	17	AFG
2030	McBride Annex	Boiler Upgrade	$280,000	$2,400	> equipment life	16	AFG
2030	Queen Victoria Elementary	Boiler Upgrade	$560,000	$4,800	> equipment life	20	Minor Capital
2030	Selkirk Annex	Boiler Upgrade	$420,000	$2,400	> equipment life	16	AFG
2031	Douglas Annex	Boiler Upgrade	$420,000	$2,400	> equipment life	10	AFG
2031	Garibaldi Annex	Boiler Upgrade	$280,000	$2,400	> equipment life	10	Minor Capital
2032	Selkirk Annex	Boiler Upgrade	$560,000	$2,400	> equipment life	10	AFG
2032	Maquinna Elementary	Boiler Upgrade	$560,000	$2,600	> equipment life	12	Minor Capital
Total			**$15,608,700**	**$68,012**	-	**315**	

Table 6: HVAC projects (2026 – 2032)

*Funding Approved

Project Priorities: Major Capital

Each year, VSB prepares and submits a five-year major capital plan to the provincial government for funding consideration. Table 7 below shows the capital plan priorities, forecasting 14 projects requiring approximately $1.3 Billion in funding, total GHG reductions of 1,173 tCO_2e annually, and $213K in annual energy savings.

Note: Seismic mitigation replacement projects are assumed to include mechanical system provisions and low carbon infrastructure, as implementation of such projects have typically included heat pumps and high efficiency heating plant upgrades.

Major Capital						
Year	**Facility/Site**	**Project Type**	**Total Project Cost (Estimated)**	**Annual Energy Savings**	**Annual GHG Reduction (tCO_2e)**	**Anticipated Funding Source**
2026	cə̓was Ch'elxwá7elch Skwuláẃtxw Seaside Elementary *	New School	$42,000,000	N/A	(5)	Various
2026	Grenfell Elementary *	Upgrade	$29,200,000	$2,400	10	SMP
2029	Olympic Village Elementary *	New School	$150,607,519	N/A	(10)	EXP
2029	Mackenzie Elementary	Replacement	$49,599,313	$18,960	79	SMP
2029	Renfrew Elementary	Replacement	$51,838,315	$20,800	145	SMP
2030	Thompson Secondary	Upgrade	$153,806,841	$5,060	23	SMP
2030	Killarney Secondary	Upgrade	$164,640,000	$9,680	44	SMP
2030	Carr Elementary	Replacement	$33,898,845	$13,680	57	SMP, EXP
2030	Waverley Elementary	Replacement	$43,035,291	$14,880	62	SMP
2030	Nightingale Elementary	Replacement	$37,886,380	$19,440	81	SMP
2030	King George Secondary	Replacement	$99,750,785	$17,760	74	SMP, EXP
2030	Roberts Annex	Replacement	$194,164,993	$6,960	29	EXP
2032	Churchill Secondary	Replacement	$180,777,273	$36,540	257	SMP
2032	John Oliver Secondary	Replacement	$167,203,776	$46,940	327	SMP
Total			**$1,398,409,331**	**$213,100**	**1,173**	

Table 7: Major Capital Projects (2026 - 2032)
*Funding Approved

Project Priorities: Lighting Upgrades

Lighting retrofit opportunities at VSB are nearing completion. However, some facilities remain that operate inefficient lighting technologies. Upgrading to modern lighting solutions, such as LED technology, offers significant energy savings and operational improvements. Additionally, lighting upgrades typically involve ceiling access, creating a strategic opportunity to address seismic safety requirements for overhead lighting components. Table 8 below shows there are 6 identified lighting upgrades requiring approximately $550K in funding, total GHG reductions of 8.5 tCO_2e annually and $52K annual energy savings.

Lighting Upgrades							
Year	Facility/Site	Project Type	Total Project Cost (Estimated)	Annual Energy Savings	Payback (years)	Annual GHG Reduction (tCO_2e)	Anticipated Funding Source
2026	Norquay Elementary	LED upgrade	$50,000	$7,500	7	1	AFG
2027	Hastings Elementary	LED upgrade	$50,000	$7,500	7	1	AFG
2028	Elsie Roy Elementary	LED upgrade	$50,000	$7,500	7	1	AFG
2029	Kerrisdale Elementary	LED upgrade	$50,000	$7,500	7	1	AFG
2030	McKechnie Elementary	LED upgrade	$50,000	$7,500	7	1.5	AFG
2031	Killarney Secondary	LED upgrade	$300,000	$15,000	21	3	AFG
Total			**$550,000**	**$52,500**	**10**	**8.5**	

Table 8: Lighting Upgrades (2026 – 2032)

Project Priorities: Building Controls Optimization

Building controls optimization, also known as building tune-ups, is the process of systematically inspecting, testing, and adjusting an existing building's systems to ensure they operate as intended and at optimal efficiency. Table 9 below shows there are 6 building tune-ups identified requiring approximately $45K in funding, total GHG reductions of 115 tCO_2e annually and $25K annual energy savings.

Building Controls Optimization							
Year	Facility/Site	Project Type	Total Project Cost (Estimated)	Annual Energy Savings	Payback (years)	Annual GHG Reduction (tCO_2e)	Anticipated Funding Source
2026	Tennyson Elementary	Controls Optimization	$8,760	$4,960	1	12	AFG
2026	L'ecole Bilingue Elementary	Controls Optimization	$7,309	$3,570	2	7	AFG
2027	Norma Rose Elementary	Controls Optimization	$3,102	$5,383	1	65	AFG
2028	Gordon Elementary	Controls Optimization	$3,309	$3,900	1	10	AFG
2029	Queen Mary Elementary	Controls Optimization	$13,155	$4,170	3	11	AFG
2031	Secord Elementary	Controls Optimization	$10,000	$4,000	2	10	AFG
Total			**$45,635**	**$25,983**	**2**	**115**	
Total (All Projects 2026 – 2032)			**$1,414,613,666**	**$359,595**	-	**1,612**	

Table 9: Building Controls Optimization Projects (2026 - 2032)

Capital Investment Outlook

The 2030 provincial GHG reduction target aims for a 40% reduction from the 2007 baseline (VSB's emissions were 18,232 tCO_2e in 2007). In 2024, VSB has successfully reduced overall emissions (2024 emissions were 15,548 tCO_2e), however, emissions must decrease to 10,939 tCO_2e to meet the 2030 target.

If the proposed plan is fully funded and implemented, including the completion of all planned seismic mitigation projects and HVAC upgrades, it could achieve an estimated annual reduction of 972 tCO_2e - lowering total emissions to 14,576 tCO_2e by 2030, representing a 20% decrease from the 2007 baseline. This leaves a remaining gap of 3,637 tCO_2e, a shortfall of approximately 20% from the 2030 target. Figure 10 presents a modelled projection of this outlook, highlighting that despite the proposed completion of all planned projects, additional measures will be needed to fully meet the target.

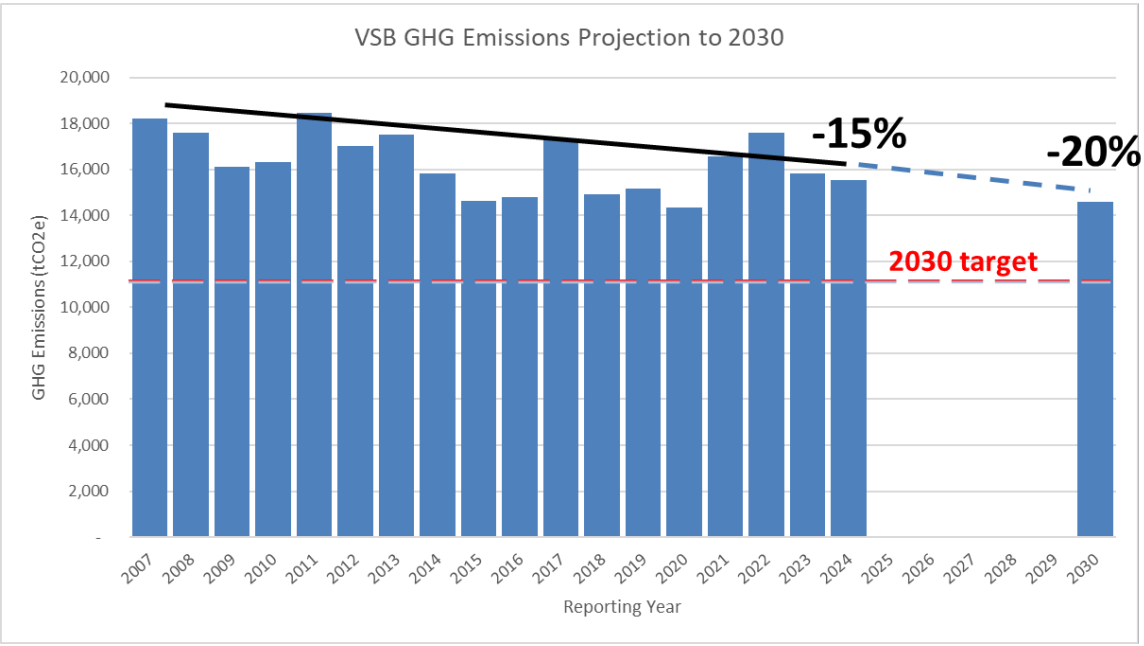


Figure 10: VSB GHG Emissions Projection to 2030

Additional efforts are needed to close the gap to meet the 2030 provincial target. VSB is exploring other strategies to improve progress towards these targets, such as evaluating alternative fuel blends with renewable components for both fleet vehicles and building heating systems.

5.8.3 Supplemental Strategies

Renewable Natural Gas

Renewable Natural Gas (RNG) is a low carbon alternative to conventional natural gas and can serve as a pathway to reducing GHG emissions in buildings, particularly when fuel-switching to clean electricity is technically challenging or cost-prohibitive. Produced from organic waste sources, such as food scraps, RNG can be seamlessly integrated into existing natural gas infrastructure. VSB currently buys natural gas from FortisBC, which includes 2% RNG as part of its standard gas supply. This percentage is expected to grow as more RNG supply becomes available over time.

As of July 2025, VSB can elect to purchase additional RNG at a premium – roughly four times the cost of conventional natural gas. However, because RNG is considered a low carbon fuel, purchasing RNG avoids the requirement to purchase carbon offsets for the proportion of RNG used.

As outlined in section 5.7.2, even with full funding and implementation of the plan, a gap remains in meeting the 2030 GHG reduction target. RNG presents a strategy to help address this gap, especially where upgrading heating systems cannot be achieved. Addressing this gap with RNG is estimated to cost approximately $650K annually, while saving approximately $100K annually in carbon offset costs. Although purchasing RNG can lead to significant emissions reductions, the cost far exceeds the offset savings and represents a negative-value investment strategy. Full adoption of RNG would cost millions annually, therefore only a partial strategy is financially prudent.

Figure 11 below illustrates the projected GHG emissions in 2030 and how various initiatives contribute to closing the gap toward the 2030 emissions reduction target. It also highlights the remaining shortfall, and illustrates the proportion of RNG that could be utilized to meet the 2030 target.

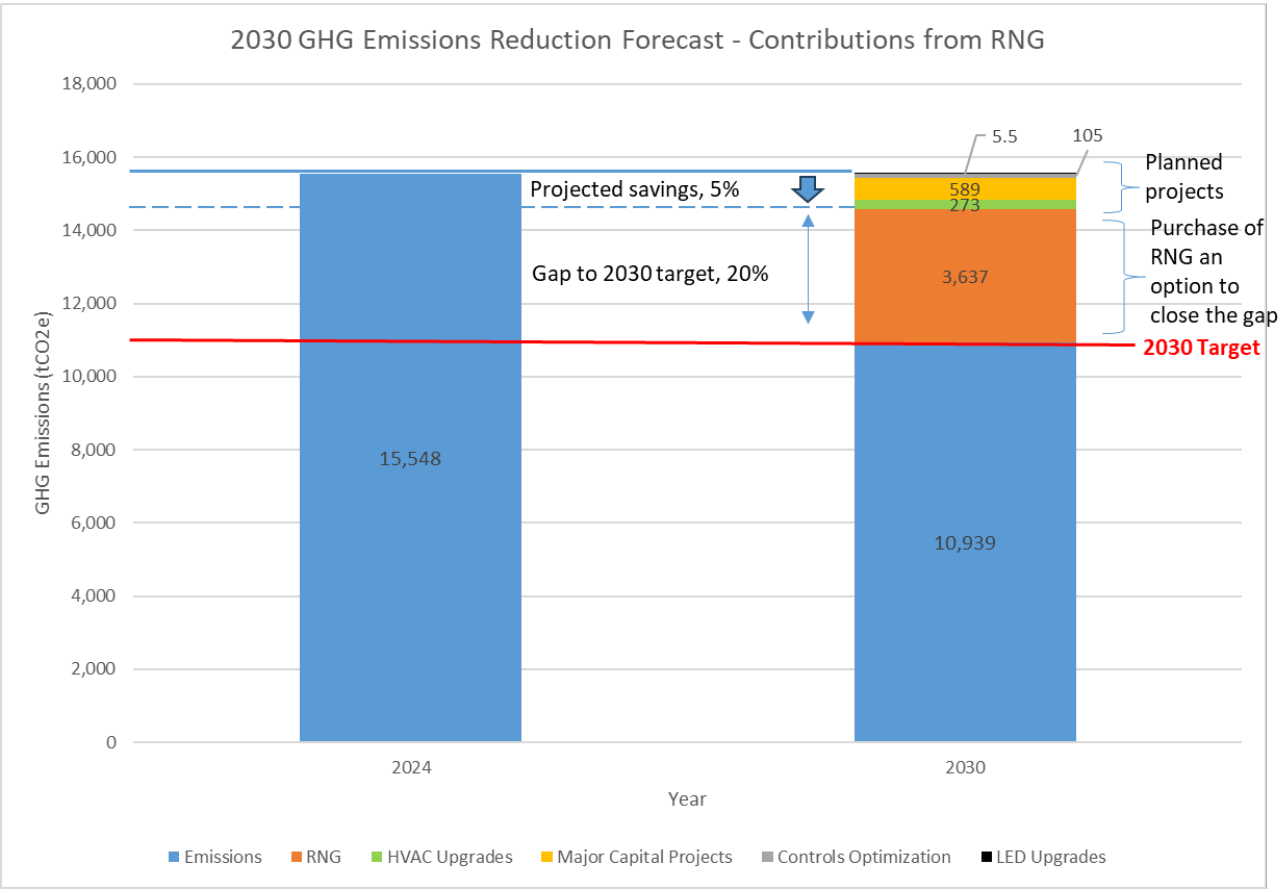


Figure 11: 2030 GHG Emissions Reduction Forecast – Contributions from Renewable Natural Gas (RNG)

Implementation

Risk Assessment

The following challenges may impact the plan's implementation:

- Uncertain funding:
  We rely on capital funding from the province and others to complete many of our projects. Insufficient funding may prevent us from completing enough projects to meet greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction goals.
- Building performance of new schools:
  New schools are designed to be energy-efficient, but their actual performance may differ from what was predicted. This could lead to lower GHG emission reductions than planned.
- Competing priorities for heating and cooling upgrades:
  Although the plan lists HVAC upgrades by year, projects may proceed based on operational needs, even if they do not offer the largest GHG reductions.
- Environmental conditions:
  Changes in climate and other environmental factors may affect how buildings perform and how much energy they use, which could impact our ability to reduce emissions.

Funding the Plan

To carry out this plan successfully, funding is essential for all identified project activities. At present, VSB relies on external grants and provincial funding. These funding sources will continue to support our work, but consistent multi-year funding will better allow us to achieve our sustainability goals. We will continue to advocate for stable funding, both internally and externally, to support:

- Upgrades to buildings and equipment that help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Expanded services to save energy, water, and reduce waste.
- More green spaces that support learning and help the environment.
- Educational tools to support sustainability learning in classrooms.
- Sustainability department to lead initiatives, track progress, and share regular reporting.

This will be achieved by maintaining a costed Capital Investment Strategy that enables clear decision making and an ability to clearly articulate trade-offs, while advocating for multi-year funding commitments, identify recurring grant programs and build reserve funds where possible.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Progress on the Sustainability Plan will be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis by the sustainability department. Updates on key initiatives, milestones, and performance metrics will be reported quarterly to senior leadership.

An annual progress report and review of the Environmental Sustainability Plan, including achievements, challenges, and future priorities, will be prepared by the sustainability department and reported through the Facilities Planning Committee to the Board.

Glossary of Terms

AFG (Annual Facilities Grant) – A provincial grant provided to school boards to help maintain and extend the life of school buildings.

CNCP (Carbon Neutral Capital Program) – A provincial grant available to school boards that help reduce carbon emissions and improve energy efficiency.

EUI (Energy Use Intensity) – A measure of the energy used by a building on a "per floor area" basis (typically kWh/m^2).

EXP (School Expansion Program) – A provincial grant which funds site acquisition, construction of new schools, and additions to existing facilities.

FCI (Facility Condition Index) – A measure of a building's physical condition relative to its replacement cost.

GHG (Greenhouse Gas) – Heat-trapping gases contributing to climate change; VSB tracks emissions from reportable sources including natural gas, electricity, fleet vehicles, and paper use.

GJ (Giga Joule) – A unit of energy most commonly used in the context of natural gas consumed over time.

HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning) – Systems responsible for indoor climate control

kWh (Kilowatt-hour) – A unit of energy most commonly used in the context of electricity consumed over time.

Land-Based Learning – Experiential education rooted in Indigenous knowledge, emphasizing connection to nature and stewardship.

Major Capital – Funding for large-scale projects that involve seismic upgrades and school expansions/additions.

Minor Capital – Funding for smaller-scale infrastructure upgrades, such as HVAC improvements.

Operating Budget – The portion of a school district's annual financial plan allocated for recurring expenses such as salaries, supplies, etc. It excludes major capital projects and is intended to cover day-to-day operational costs.

R100 (Renewable Diesel) – A 100% renewable fuel that is an alternative to petroleum diesel compatible with existing diesel engines.

RNG (Renewable Natural Gas) – A low-carbon alternative to conventional natural gas, produced from organic waste.

SEP (School Enhancement Program) – A provincial program that supports targeted upgrades in existing schools, including roofing, safety improvements, and other critical infrastructure.

SMP (Seismic Mitigation Program) – A provincial program that ensures public K–12 schools are protected against earthquakes and meet life-safety standards.

tCO_2e (tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent) – A standard unit for measuring greenhouse gas emissions by converting different sources into the equivalent amount of CO_2.

Appendix A: VSB Energy Management Scores

The energy management (EM) scores for VSB facilities are shown in Table 10 below. Buildings with an EM score between 56 to 113 could benefit from a detailed energy assessment during the development of any capital projects that have the potential to impact their energy use and GHG emissions. Facility Condition Index (FCI) data was sourced from the BC Ministry of Education and Child Care's VFA database (2025), while energy use intensity (EUI) and GHG emissions data reflects the 2024/25 school year.

Building	FCI Rank	EUI Rank	GHG Emissions Rank	EM Score	EM Score Rank
Gladstone Secondary	104	107	113	108	113
John Oliver Secondary	90	86	112	97	112
Thompson Secondary	90	91	107	96	111
Workshop Building	93	77	94	89	110
South Hill Education Centre	93	96	77	88	109
Champlain Heights Annex	93	90	81	88	108
Queen Elizabeth Elementary	66	106	99	88	107
Prince of Wales Secondary	82	68	103	86	106
Windermere Secondary	81	65	104	85	105
Kerrisdale Elementary	102	48	92	85	104
Lord Elementary	112	66	67	85	103
Carnarvon Elementary	105	75	68	85	102
Quilchena Elementary	62	104	88	82	101
Waverley Annex	98	111	37	80	100
Tupper Secondary	62	71	106	80	99
Cook Elementary	70	97	78	80	98
Templeton Secondary	66	59	105	78	97
Grenfell Elementary	60	108	76	78	96
Britannia Secondary	44	82	111	77	95
Churchill Secondary	78	30	108	77	94
Killarney Secondary	56	63	109	76	93
Osler Elementary	72	88	71	76	92
Vancouver Technical Secondary	44	78	110	76	91
Garibaldi Learning Services	86	103	39	74	90
Xpeẏ Elementary	106	102	15	73	89
University Hill Elementary	34	112	90	73	88
Renfrew Elementary	42	85	98	72	87
Brock Elementary	72	76	70	72	86
Van Horne Elementary	93	43	69	72	85
Douglas Annex	87	100	34	72	84
Strathcona Elementary	28	99	102	72	83
Grounds Building	98	113	11	71	82
Franklin Elementary	47	95	82	71	81

Building	FCI Rank	EUI Rank	GHG Emissions Rank	EM Score	EM Score Rank
Shaughnessy Elementary	30	109	91	71	80
Tecumseh Elementary	84	61	63	71	79
MacCorkindale Elementary	106	44	48	70	78
Laurier Elementary	79	64	62	69	77
King George Secondary	87	34	74	69	76
Henderson Elementary	98	38	57	69	74
Thunderbird Elementary	28	94	97	69	74
Waverley Elementary	98	29	61	68	73
Mackenzie Elementary	62	56	80	67	72
Trafalgar Elementary	32	93	87	67	71
Mount Pleasant Elementary	27	105	84	66	70
Total Education	111	58	18	65	69
Carr Elementary	90	35	58	65	68
False Creek Elementary	72	74	50	65	66
Grandview Elementary	40	79	83	65	66
Seymour Elementary	82	17	75	63	65
Roberts Elementary	44	110	51	63	64
Beaconsfield Elementary	26	89	86	63	63
Nightingale Elementary	62	39	79	62	62
Selkirk Annex	109	42	23	62	61
Kerrisdale Annex	87	84	16	61	59
Point Grey Secondary	51	24	100	61	59
McKechnie Elementary	84	54	40	61	58
Queen Victoria Annex	113	27	25	61	57
Roberts Annex	110	40	17	60	56
Kingsford-Smith Elementary	47	72	65	60	55
Queen Mary Elementary	20	87	85	60	54
Cavell Elementary	70	92	24	59	53
University Hill Secondary	16	80	93	59	52
Norquay Elementary	72	81	28	59	51
Cunningham Elementary	55	45	73	59	50
Nootka Elementary	102	18	36	58	49
Britannia Elementary	39	82	59	57	48
Byng Secondary	36	26	101	56	47
Southlands Elementary	40	69	64	56	46
Champlain Heights Elementary	51	98	29	55	45
Hastings Elementary	47	47	66	54	44
Secord Elementary	21	55	89	53	43
Hamber Secondary	1	70	95	51	42
Magee Secondary	37	11	96	51	41
Queen Alexandra Elementary	56	32	54	49	40

Building	FCI Rank	EUI Rank	GHG Emissions Rank	EM Score	EM Score Rank
Dickens Elementary	30	100	35	49	39
Dickens Annex	106	8	13	49	38
McBride Elementary	97	33	5	49	37
Maquinna Elementary	54	31	55	49	36
Trudeau Elementary	51	53	42	48	35
Oppenheimer Elementary	66	15	52	48	34
Jamieson Elementary	42	36	56	45	33
Moberly Elementary	47	46	41	45	32
Wolfe Elementary	60	37	31	44	31
Tillicum Community Annex	72	23	21	42	30
Livingstone Elementary	56	57	14	42	29
Carleton (closed facility)	72	2	33	41	28
Tyee Elementary	79	10	9	37	27
Bruce Community Elementary	32	21	53	37	26
Lloyd George Elementary	8	67	47	36	25
Elsie Roy Elementary	24	52	38	36	24
Fraser Elementary	66	9	19	35	23
Education Centre	37	12	49	35	22
Quesnel Elementary	18	25	59	34	21
Selkirk Elementary	34	16	45	33	20
Kitchener Elementary	6	62	44	33	19
Sexsmith Elementary	14	50	43	33	18
McBride Annex	59	19	12	33	17
Norma Rose Point Elementary	8	14	72	32	16
Tecumseh Annex	25	41	27	30	15
Collingwood Neighbourhood School	21	51	20	28	14
Nelson Elementary	19	60	8	25	13
Crosstown Elementary	6	49	30	25	12
Douglas Elementary	15	4	46	23	11
Tennyson Elementary	5	73	7	23	10
Fleming Elementary	23	28	3	17	9
L'Ecole Bilingue Elementary	1	22	32	17	8
Maple Grove Elementary	8	5	22	12	7
wək ʷaʔəs tə syaqʷəm Elementary	1	3	26	10	6
Kitsilano Secondary	8	20	4	10	5
Weir Elementary	17	1	1	7	4
Bayview Elementary	8	13	2	7	3
Hudson Elementary	8	7	6	7	2
Gordon Elementary	4	6	10	7	1

Table 10: Energy Management Scores

Note: Leased and Swing sites (temporary school locations used when existing school facilities are undergoing major renovations) are not included in this scoring assessment.

OUR VSB

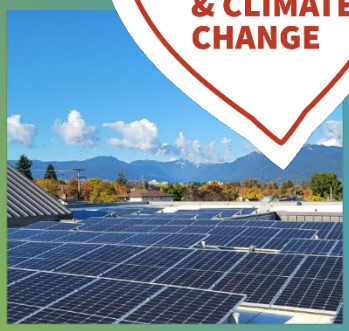
ATTACHMENT B

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

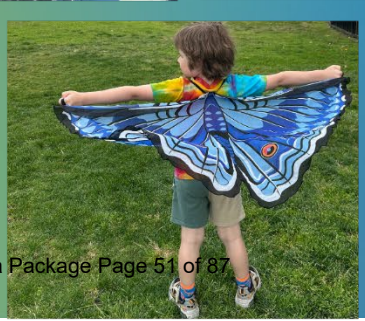
Five Year Review

January 2024









Summary

In 2018, the Vancouver Board of Education approved the Vancouver School District's first Environmental Sustainability Plan (the Plan), which established eight goals and 17 actions structured within five theme areas. This document provides an internal review of the Plan, which will serve as the five-year review as stated in Action 17: Report on Progress (page 12 of the Plan).

The Plan was developed to guide the District's sustainability efforts in Facilities, Operations, and Education, and to provide the opportunity to follow students' and teachers' sustainability priorities. It is now time to consider the future of the Plan to ensure current relevancy and integration.

This internal review of the Plan:

- Evaluates the District's progress on the Plan's goals and actions.
- Summarizes major sustainability projects and activities.
- Assesses whether the Plan's goals and actions are relevant today and for the next five years.

Key findings include:

- Each of the Plan's five theme areas has seen activity from multiple departments.
- The creation of sustainability guidelines has benefited District operations.
- Relationships with external organizations have contributed opportunities and resources to the District.
- The Plan's implementation necessitates the committed participation of all District departments and stakeholders.

Over the next five years the Plan will continue to shape the development of our learners into environmentally conscientious citizens, and lessen the environmental impact of District operations through:

- Continuing to implement the Plan's framework and principles.
- Updating the goals and actions within the plan's framework to reflect the review and engagement conducted in 2025.
- Increasing awareness of the Plan and the role that all VSB stakeholders have in contributing to the Plan's goals and actions.

Table of Contents

Background and Context

In 2018, the Vancouver Board of Education approved the Vancouver School District's first Environmental Sustainability Plan (the Plan), which established eight goals and 17 actions structured within five theme areas. The Plan was developed under the guidance of a Sustainability Advisory Committee representing the District's stakeholder groups; was based on the Board-approved "Sustainability Vision and Framework" from 2010; and incorporated input from the organization at multiple levels.

The Plan's eight goals and 17 actions are structured into five theme areas:

Theme 1: Sustainability in Education

- Goal 1: Foster a connection to the natural world.
- Goal 2: Support learning initiatives that develop environmentally conscientious citizens.
    - Action 1: Support nature-focused learning.
    - Action 2: Develop professional development and other resource materials.
    - Action 3: Support networks and relationships between educators.
    - Action 4: Make our facility activities learning opportunities.
    - Action 5: Support Student networks for dialogue and sharing.

Theme 2: VSB Green Spaces

- Goal 3: Support outdoor-focused spaces and activities at school sites.
    - Action 6: Develop guidelines for new types of infrastructure.
    - Action 7: Engage community partner groups and First Nations to enhance outdoor learning activities.

Theme 3: Resource Conservation and Climate Change

- Goal 4: Reduce Energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Goal 5: Reduce consumption of resources and waste generation.
    - Action 8: Maintain an active energy management program.
    - Action 9: Develop a Climate Change Adaptation Strategy.
    - Action 10: Implement long-term resource conservation initiatives.
    - Action 11: Support school-level conservation projects.
    - Action 12: Develop VSB-relevant resources and guides for schools.

Theme 4: Sustainable Transportation

- Goal 6: Support active transportation choices for school communities.
- Goal 7: Support low-carbon transportation.
    - Action 13: Promote active transportation events and training.
    - Action 14: Improve infrastructure for cycling, wheeling, and walking.
    - Action 15: Promote low-carbon transportation within the VSB.

Theme 5: Leadership in Sustainability

- Goal 8: Lead by example.
    - Action 16: Continuously improve and update policies and practices.
    - Action 17: Report on progress.

In the creation of the Plan, three guiding principles were developed (also referred to as implementation principles, page 16 of the Plan). These principles provide direction to focus resources and aid implementation.

1. **Education is our leverage** - we can utilize the curriculum to help students reach their potential as conscientious, critical thinkers.
2. **Our people are our leaders** - we support the sustainability interests and priorities of our teachers and students foremost.
3. **Our efforts are lasting** - our precious resources are invested in opportunities that will grow and become sustainable in our organization.

These guiding principles have become the criteria through which activities, both planned and opportunistic, are evaluated. Sustainability activities that the District supports should be educational, should support our learners, and should provide a lasting impact. See Appendix A for a brochure summarizing the Plan.

2018-2024 Context

Since 2018, the District has experienced a number of external influences that have had an effect on sustainability operations and progress.

- The Board of Trustees' Declaration of a Climate Emergency and related motion in support of student advocacy
- The global COVID-19 pandemic
- The implementation of, and amendments to, sustainability-related Provincial, Regional and municipal policies and bylaws regarding waste, climate change, development and construction, transportation, and trees

Thus, the sustainability practices of students, educators, and District staff have shifted over time.

Student Learning as a Priority

The recognition of learners as developing citizens is integrated into the Plan. From page 3 of the Plan, (in response to the 2010 Board motion to approve the District's Vision of becoming the most sustainable school district):

"*A 'sustainable school district' must provide positive exposure to the natural world – not only environmental crises. A positive connection to nature [leads] to deeper engagement and action. Our most significant opportunity as educators is to develop conscientious citizens.*"

The importance of this progression has become more evident. Students begin navigating environmental engagement in a phase of Discovery in the primary years, move into Awareness in the intermediate years, and transition to Action in the secondary years. See Appendix B for an infographic that illustrates these profiles of engagement.

The guiding principles and age-appropriate engagement provide important assistance for implementing the Plan.

Pandemic Impact

The COVID-19 pandemic caused the focus to shift towards the goals and actions related to outdoor learning. VSB leveraged new digital tools to foster networks and resource sharing in a time when close, in-person contact wasn't possible.

Two online professional learning communities (PLCs) were established and continue to grow:

- Outdoor Learning (for all educators) at 265 members
- Sustainability (Secondary Teachers) at 50 members

The pandemic also influenced the creation of the Vancouver chapter of the Environmental Educators Provincial Specialist Association (EEPSA). Current membership is 45 educators.

Review

This internal review of the Plan will:

1. Evaluate the District's progress on the Plan's goals and actions since Board approval in 2018.
2. Summarize major sustainability projects and activities throughout the District.
3. Assess whether the Plan's goals and actions are relevant today and for the next five years.

Evaluation

Every theme area in the Plan has seen progress towards its goals and actions. The number of activities provides only part of the picture; this review considers the activities tracked by the Sustainability team. Many sustainability-related activities are undertaken daily at school sites, by educators, students, and staff, that are not recorded centrally. These activities are difficult to quantify, and they depend on schools sharing details about the learnings, relationships, and incremental changes made at their schools. Where possible, this review includes details shared by schools and educators about their sustainability activities.

To evaluate the quality of progress in each action, a rubric was modeled after student self-assessment scales. The four levels of progress are **planting, sprouting, growing,** and **thriving**. Actions in the planting stage are in the earliest stages of planning or implementation and are ready for next steps. At the other end of the scale, actions in the thriving stage have developed extensively and are ready for evolution. In between these, actions in the sprouting and growing stages have gained momentum and require sustained stewardship to thrive.

Theme 1: Sustainability in Education

Efforts have been made to support activities that shape learners into environmentally conscientious citizens.

Highlights and achievements:

- Expanded and delivered the sustainability grant program which funded 246 student and teacher-led sustainability activities since 2018.
- Built and expanded peer networks of both educators and learners and offered ongoing facilitation and administrative support.
- Offered relevant and engaging professional development opportunities and resources for educators.
- Facilitated connections between educators and numerous experts in non-profit, public sector, and post-secondary organizations.
- Connected educators with district facilities and operations to extend the learning environments beyond classrooms.

Deferred or incomplete actions:

- Action 4 specified the intention to use sustainability features and practices in VSB facilities to enhance student learning. While there have been numerous sustainability improvements deployed in the operations at many sites, the opportunities to showcase these for learning have been minimal. Conversely, when students are directly involved in implementing school-based sustainability practices, learning is abundant.

Recommendations for the future:

- Increase opportunities for experiential learning through student-led action.
- Increase professional development and peer mentorship opportunities for educators with an emphasis on capacity building.

Progress	Planting	Sprouting	Growing	Thriving
				
Goal: Foster a connection to the natural world				
Action 1: Support nature-focused learning			✓	
Goal: Support learning initiatives that develop environmentally conscientious citizens				
Action 2: Develop professional development and other resource materials			✓	
Action 3: Support networks and relationships between educators				✓
Action 4: Make our facilities learning opportunities		✓		
Action 5: Support student networks for dialogue and sharing			✓	

Theme 2: Green Spaces

Support for outdoor-focused spaces and activities at school has increased since 2018.

Highlights and achievements:

- Developed guidelines for outdoor learning infrastructure improvements on school grounds, leading to streamlined approvals and decreased timelines for installation (school gardens, outdoor learning areas, and tree plantings).
- Deployed 32 outdoor learning areas and numerous other school ground initiatives during the Covid-19 pandemic to support the need for increased outdoor learning.
- Explored new opportunities for outdoor learning via collaborative pilot projects including the Think and Eat Green initiative and the Indigenous Foodscapes project.
- Supported educators in peer mentorship by sharing success stories and proven resources (such as the "Take it Outside" and "(Un)Learning" teacher-led Pro-D conferences).

Deferred or incomplete actions:

- Action 7 specified engagement with local host nations to enhance outdoor learning activities. While there has been overall progress in integrating First People's Principles of Learning and Aboriginal Ways of Knowing and Being into VSB practice (i.e. learning is connected to the land), direct engagement with local host nations for the purpose of enhancing outdoor learning is ongoing through VSB's Indigenous Education team.

Recommendations for the future:

- Offer professional development opportunities and resources for educators to support experiential, land-based learning at school and in the broader community.
- Support K-7 teachers to focus on outdoor learning and small-scale action projects to prepare elementary students for further engagement when they reach secondary school.
- Work with the Indigenous Education department to facilitate more opportunities for educators to incorporate local land-based Indigenous knowledge into their practice.

Progress	Planting	Sprouting	Growing	Thriving
				
Goal: Support outdoor focused spaces and activities at schools				
Action 6: Develop guidelines for new types of infrastructure			✓	
Action 7: Engage community partner groups and First Nations to enhance outdoor learning activities			✓	

Theme 3: Resource Conservation and Climate Change

The activities supporting the reduction of energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions contribute progress towards the provincial targets laid out in the VSB Strategic Energy Management Plan (SEMP).

Highlights and achievements:

- Completed 57 energy conservation projects since the 2018/19 school year. Combined, these projects result in savings (or avoided increases) of $552,000 annually.
- Funded and installed two solar photovoltaic arrays on schools.
- Implemented a pilot project to convert high-flow water fixtures to low-flow technologies in schools.
- Developed a waste reduction toolkit for schools.
- Maintained and communicated waste sorting guidelines and encouragement.
- Facilitated school-level initiatives for enhanced recycling and waste reduction.

Deferred or incomplete actions:

- Action 9, "developing a climate change adaptation plan," was created as a requirement of BC's "Climate Leadership Plan" which was eventually removed in favour of the "CleanBC" plan, with no such requirement. However, as climate change has advanced, VSB has acknowledged that regardless of a provincial mandate, an adaptation strategy will be essential for preparing for the anticipated potential impacts of climate change on VSB facilities, operations, and school communities.

Recommendations for the future:

- Set specific Greenhouse gas reduction targets.
- Develop a climate change adaptation strategy informed by a study of facility vulnerabilities.
- Increase participation in resource conservation initiatives, expanding on energy conservation, water conservation and waste diversion programs.

Progress	Planting	Sprouting	Growing	Thriving
				
Goal: Reduce Energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.				
Maintain an active energy management program.			✓	
Develop a Climate Change Adaptation Strategy.	✓			
Goal: Reduce consumption of resources and waste generation.				
Implement long-term resource conservation initiatives.		✓		
Support school-level conservation projects.			✓	
Develop VSB-relevant resources and guides for schools.			✓	

Theme 4: Sustainable Transportation

Active transportation to and from school promotes health, reduces carbon emissions, and reduces vehicle congestion at school sites. With support from the City of Vancouver, the District has seen a surge in the available options for families to choose active travel to and from school.

Highlights and achievements:

- City of Vancouver funded programs:
  - School active travel planning program
  - Walk Bike Roll Mini Grants to support school-level projects
  - School Streets program
  - Ride the Road bike instruction program (delivered by HUB Cycling)
  - Walking School Bus pilot (with TransLink)
  - Better Bike Parking initiative
- Bike to School Week/Go by Bike Week
- Partnership with Vancouver Bike Share (aka Mobi) to provide subsidy memberships for students
- Installation of 30 EV charging stations
- Deployment of one fully electric fleet van

Recommendations for the future:

- Support the lowest-carbon emitting options:
  - The deployment of additional electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure is underway to support staff in shifting from gas-powered to electric vehicles.
  - Continue to evaluate the feasibility and seek opportunities for electrifying fleet vehicles as leases expire on current fleet.

Progress	Planting	Sprouting	Growing	Thriving
				
Goal: Support active transportation choices for school communities				
Action 13: Promote active transportation events and training			✓	
Action 14: Improve infrastructure for cycling, wheeling, and walking			✓	
Goal: Support low-carbon transportation				
Action 15: Promote low-carbon transportation within the VSB			✓	

Theme 5: Leadership

Sustainability improvements have been cumulative and continuous. Clarifying policies and standardizing practices places the district as a sustainability leader for educators and students, as well as for other school districts and regional partners.

Highlights and achievements:

- Maintained annual climate change accountability report.
- Maintained strategic energy management plan.
- Member of BC Hydro Energy Management program.
- Shifted purchasing practices in Food Services department to prioritize energy efficiency and waste reduction.
- Piloted electrification of 20 landscaping tools to move away from gas-powered tools
- Fostered knowledge exchange with other school districts, local governments, and post-secondary institutions.

Deferred or incomplete actions:

- Action 16 ("continuously improve and update policies and practices") has seen some progress, and there remain abundant opportunities to review and update policies and practices to improve the VSB's overall sustainability.

Recommendations for the future:

- Foster sustainability in VSB's organizational culture.
- Improve awareness of the VSB's sustainability plan through regular communication with all levels of the VSB and its stakeholders.
- Embed sustainability objectives in interdepartmental policies and practices.

Progress	Planting	Sprouting	Growing	Thriving
				
Goal: Lead by example				
Action 16: Continuously improve and update policies and practices		✓		
Action 17: Report on progress			✓	

Conclusion

The sustainability activities undertaken since 2018 have contributed to all five theme areas of the Plan.

- Each of the Plan's five theme areas has seen activity, which is carried out at all levels of the District in multiple departments.
- The breadth of the Plan has allowed for both planned and opportunistic activities, and the guiding principles have provided a focused way to evaluate activities as they arise.
- Guidelines for sustainability-related infrastructure and initiatives have been well-received by schools and District departments and have made approval processes easier.
- Relationships with the City of Vancouver, post-secondary institutions, and community organizations have contributed to the goals and actions in the Plan by increasing the number of opportunities and resources available to educators and students.
- While the Sustainability Team initiated the Plan, and helps facilitate its realization, its scope spans all aspects of District operations. The goals and actions outlined in the Plan necessitate the committed participation of District Departments and stakeholders.

Suggestions for the future Environmental Sustainability Plan:

- Continue to use the Environmental Sustainability Plan framework and principles as approved in 2018 with updated language where required. It is aligned with the District's Education Plan and has been proven to allow for evolution of the District's needs, and for opportunities to follow student and teacher priorities.
- Update the goals and actions within the plan's framework to reflect the review and engagement conducted in 2025.
- Increase interdepartmental awareness of the Environmental Sustainability Plan and the role that all District departments have in contributing towards the achievement of goals and actions in the plan.

Appendix A: Environmental Sustainability Plan Brochure

EDUCATION
connect to nature and to each other to be better environmental citizens

GOALS
Foster a connection to the natural world

Support learning initiatives that develop environmentally conscientious citizens

ACTIONS
Support nature-focused learning

Develop professional development and other resource materials

Support networks and relationships between educators

Make our facility activities learning opportunities

Support student networks for dialogue and sharing

GREEN SPACES
enhance our outdoor spaces for learning

GOALS
Support outdoor-focused spaces and activities at school sites

ACTIONS
Develop guidelines for new types of infrastructure

Engage community partner groups and First Nations to enhance outdoor learning activities

RESOURCE CONSERVATION & CLIMATE CHANGE
use less and shrink our footprint

GOALS
Reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions

Reduce consumption of resources and waste generation

ACTIONS
Maintain an active energy management program

Develop a Climate Change Adaptation Strategy

Implement long-term resource conservation initiatives

Support school-level conservation projects

Develop VSB-relevant resources and guides for schools

TRANSPORTATION
make active transportation easier

GOALS
Support active transportation choices for school communities

Support low-carbon transportation

ACTIONS
Promote active transportation events and training

Improve infrastructure for cycling, wheeling, and walking

Promote low-carbon transportation within the VSB

LEADERSHIP
share our work and build relationships

GOALS
Lead by example

ACTIONS
Continuously improve

Guiding Principles

LEVERAGE EDUCATION
Activities will support and enrich our students' education

FOLLOW AND SUPPORT OUR PEOPLE
Actions will be guided by student and educator needs and interests

MAKE OUR EFFORTS LASTING
Efforts will endeavour to create lasting impact through infrastructure changes and program development

VSB Vancouver School Board

Environmental Sustainability Plan

A "sustainable school district" must provide positive exposure to the natural world – not only environmental crises. A positive connection to nature is a seed from which will grow empathy and understanding, leading to deeper engagement and action. Our most significant opportunity as educators is to develop conscientious citizens.

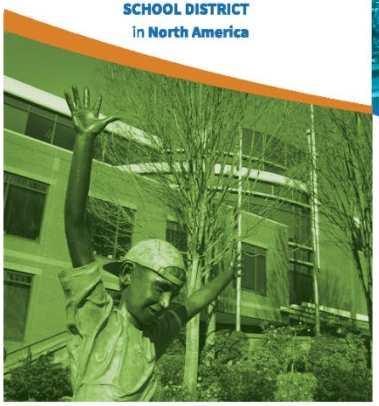
WE WILL GET THERE, **TOGETHER.**
LET'S BE THE **GREENEST** SCHOOL DISTRICT.

sustainability@vsb.bc.ca

govsb.ca/sustainability

VSB

OUR VISION TO BE the **GREENEST**, most **SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL DISTRICT** in **North America**



If we want children to flourish, we need to give them time to connect with nature and love the Earth before we ask them to save it.

– David Sobel, "Beyond Ecophobia"

Appendix B: Environmental Engagement Infographic

"Navigating Environmental Engagement" infographic developed by the VSB's Sustainability Team:

Appendix C: Previous Activities and Current Highlights

Sustainability in Education	Actions
Administering the annual Sustainability Grant program for elementary and secondary schools, supporting both educator- and student-led sustainability projects. Since the 2018-19 school year, we have funded: • Elementary: 98 projects totaling $47,200 • Secondary: 61 projects totaling $51,410	1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17
Developed the "**Rooted in Place**" Pro-D book and workshop, delivered annually, including follow-up garden consultations with Society Promoting Environmental Conservation (SPEC).	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 12, 16
Developed "**Your Community, Your Climate**" Pro-D program for teachers to engage their students on Climate Change in an action-oriented way. Collaboration with UBC's Faculty of Forestry (CALP: Collaborative for Advanced Landscape Planning). Expanding the format and offering again in 2024.	2, 3, 7, 11, 12, 16
Facilitating connections with numerous local non-profit and public sector organizations working in the areas of sustainability, outdoor learning, active travel, conservation, and climate change. Examples include: • Classrooms to Communities • Be the Change Earth Alliance • Fresh Roots Urban Farm Society • Elements Society • HUB Cycling • Farm to School BC • DreamRider Theatre and Planet Protector Academy • Society Promoting Environmental Conservation • Earthbites • City of Vancouver • Vancouver Coastal Health • Metro Vancouver • The University of British Columbia • Simon Fraser University	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 16
Established two MS Teams Professional Learning Communities to facilitate online networking and collaboration between educators ("Outdoor Learning" and "Sustainability (Secondary Teachers)". Providing ongoing management of and support for these communities.	3, 16
Supported and facilitated the creation of the first Vancouver chapter of the Environmental Educators Provincial Specialists Association (EEPSA) (named UNITE: Urban Nature Inclusive Teaching Environment) in 2021. Providing ongoing facilitation and administration support.	1, 2, 3, 7, 16

Coordinated the first "**Take it Outside**" Pro-D conference in collaboration with UNITE and the VSB's Curriculum Assessment Mentorship team in 2023. Planning subsequent conference for 2024.	1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 16
Providing ongoing support for the annual Student-led VSB Sustainability Conference (VSBSC) and the team's associated year-round activities.	5
Green Spaces	**Actions**
Supported the City-funded reboot of **Think and Eat Green at School** (TEGS) in collaboration with UBC' Faculty of Land and Food Systems.	1, 2, 3, 7
Developed and maintaining numerous guidelines and toolkits for our staff, educators, learners, and caregivers, including: • Garden Guide • Outdoor Learning Areas Guide • Tree Planting Guide	1, 2, 4, 6, 16
Co-piloted the Indigenous Foodscapes initiative with Farm to School BC, the VSB's Indigenous Education department, and the nine participating schools.	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
Providing ongoing administrative, programming, and utility support to Fresh Roots Urban Farm Society involving their educational farm operations at Vancouver Technical Secondary and David Thompson Secondary schools.	1, 4, 7
Resource Conservation & Climate Change	**Actions**
Created the "Where does this go?" poster series targeting problem items in the organics, recycling and garbage system. Providing ongoing expansion as needed.	12
Developed and maintaining numerous guidelines and toolkits for our staff, teachers, learners, and caregivers, including: • Waste Reduction Toolkit • Recycling and Organics Guide	11, 12, 16
Completion of 57 energy conservation projects since the 2018-2019 school year. Combined, these projects result in savings (or avoided increases) of $552,000 of utility costs annually. Projects are divided into the following categories:	8, 10, 16
Continuous Optimization Program (C.Op) • Improving the efficiency of heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems through tune-up and recommissioning of automated programs and controls. • Displacing fossil fuel consumption through heat pump recommissioning for existing buildings. • Improving the comfort of the learning environment for educators and students.	
Lighting Improvements	

• Upgrading low efficiency fluorescent tubes to high efficiency light-emitting diode (LED) technology. • Removing banned fixtures and tubes (i.e., incandescent lightbulbs, mercury vapor lamps, and fluorescent tubes as of 2025). • Enhancing the learning environment for educators and students.	
Boiler replacements and heat pump installations • Collaborating with the Maintenance Department to upgrade ageing low efficiency equipment to high efficiency options. • Advocating for the installation of low carbon heat pumps in new schools.	
Championed and funded the installation of two solar photovoltaic arrays (at Tupper Secondary and wə̓k ʷaṉ əs tə syaqʷəm (formerly Begbie) Elementary).	10, 16
Collaborated with the Vancouver Project Office to update electrical and mechanical construction standards to maximize energy efficiency of new schools.	8, 10, 16
Reducing the use of virgin paper by limiting the purchase of paper to 30%, 50% or 100% recycled content (from contracted suppliers). Reducing transport costs and emissions by limiting paper deliveries to District sites to once weekly.	10
Collecting water usage data to identify usage problems and opportunities to make repairs and influence water conservation behaviours.	10
Switching to electric vehicles and equipment at the Workshop, Grounds department, and in the procurement of appliances for food preparation.	15, 16
Transportation	**Actions**
Established the "**School Active Travel Encouragement Partnership**" with the City of Vancouver's Community Transportation team to facilitate: • School Streets pilot • Walk Bike Roll mini grants • HUB Ride the Road program and companion teacher Pro-D • Walking school bus pilot • Bike to School Week/Go by Bike Week activities and promotion	13, 14, 15
Working with VSB Planning and City of Vancouver Transportation on the **School Active Travel Planning Program.**	13, 14, 15, 16, 17
Partnered with Mobi to pilot the community pass subsidy program for Britannia Secondary students. Working to expand to six more secondary schools in 2023-24.	13, 15
Developed and maintaining numerous guidelines and toolkits for our staff, teachers, learners, and caregivers, including: • Active Travel Toolkit • Bike Parking Guide	13, 14, 15
Installed and upgraded electric vehicle charging facilities at various sites across the District as a part of the seismic mitigation program.	15

Leadership	Actions
Maintaining the annual **Climate Change Accountability Report**.	17
Maintaining the annual **Strategic Energy Management Plan**.	17
Contributing to BC Hydro's regional K-12 sector for energy management by sharing progress, achievements, and best practices with the network. Maintaining accountability to BC Hydro.	16, 17
Working to influence energy efficiency standards throughout the District.	16
Collaborating with North Vancouver School District on Regional Initiatives, amplifying school district presence in municipal and regional sustainability activities.	16, 17

Vancouver School Board

Engagement Summary

Executive Summary

Introduction

The 2018 Environmental Sustainability plan set the foundation for sustainability at the VSB. To understand the VSB's current sustainability priorities, an engagement process was undertaken to help shape updates to the plan.

Engagement Process

The engagement process ensured that priorities were heard from educators, students, families, inherent rights holders and formal stakeholder groups. Across all engagement activities, more than 2,700 individuals participated.

Engagement and Analysis

A mix of quantitative and qualitative engagement activities were conducted and information gathered through each was analyzed to arrive at key takeaways.

Key Takeaways

Feedback gathered through the various engagement activities, indicates strong support for the following priorities:

- Increase biodiversity and nature education at schools
- Foster sustainability into VSB's organizational culture
- Continue to offer more outdoor learning opportunities for students
- Improve awareness, communications and outreach about sustainability initiatives
- Invest in the expansion or enhancement of specific outdoor features to improve user experience and support broader goals like outdoor learning, community engagement, and climate resilience
- Increase professional development (Pro-D) offerings
- Participate in resource conservation initiatives
- Set greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets

1.0 Context

Background

The sustainability team has been gathering information and feedback for the purpose of updating the 2018 Sustainability Plan. The update to the plan will maintain existing core sustainability themes, and the original goals and actions will be updated and expanded to reflect VSB's current and future sustainability priorities.

2.0 Purpose of Engagement

To guide the process of updating the 2018 Environmental Sustainability Plan, an engagement process was conducted to determine the VSB's current sustainability and climate action priorities. Guidance and input were sought from educators, students and families, and representatives of inherent rights holders and representatives of formal stakeholder groups. This report summarizes the engagement activities and key takeaways.

Engagement Process

The goal of this engagement was to seek input from key interest groups, ensuring appropriate representation of the VSB community has been considered. The following groups were engaged:

- Educators, Principals and Vice Principals
- Facilities Planning Committee members
- Inherent rights holders representatives
- Formal stakeholder representatives
- Students and their families

The engagement activities included online surveys and in-person activities as shown below.

Participants	Engagement Method	Communications Method	Schedule
Facilities Planning Committee	In-person	Facilities Planning Committee meeting	January 15, 2025
Educators	Online Survey	AMC Teams channel & distributed through administrators at each school	April 22 - May 13, 2025
Students, including the District Student Sustainability Club ("VSB Sustainability Connection")	Dotmocracy activity	Students were invited to participate in the activity at the VSB booth at the Student Sustainability Conference	April 28, 2025
Families	Online Survey	MyEd email distribution	May 14 – 21, 2025
Inherent rights holders representatives and formal stakeholder representatives	In-person workshop	Representatives were invited to attend via email	May 28, 2025

3.0 What We Heard

This section summarizes the engagement activities and insights shared by participants through the engagement process. This report presents highlighted feedback from the engagement activities. The complete survey results are provided in the Appendices.

3.1 Facilities Planning Committee

At the Facilities Planning Committee on January 15, 2025, staff presented a report titled Sustainability Plan Update. The report provided information on sustainability initiatives including energy management during the history of the Vancouver Board of Education. The report provided a proposal to update the 2018 Sustainability Plan to further advance activity on addressing climate adaptation, mitigation and sustainability within the District.

Three key areas of focus were outlined to the committee that would be brought back as part of the updated plan:

- Review and report on all 17 actions from the 2018 Sustainability Plan to determine which goals have been completed, which are no longer relevant, and which need to be continued or modified.
- Conduct a detailed review of all future energy retrofit projects and requirements for the District. This will include a building-by-building assessment of GHG reduction potential, planning-level costs, and recommended steps to improve progress towards provincial targets.
- Advance planning for low-carbon transport and transitioning to electric vehicles (EVs) and equipment.

Committee members, trustees and stakeholder representatives provided feedback and staff answered questions and provided clarification on various points.

3.2 Educator Survey

This online survey was open from April 22, 2025 to May 13, 2025. The survey sought feedback from teachers, principals and vice principals to gain insight into their sustainability-related teaching practices, and to help identify sustainability priorities across five sustainability themes. Periodic reminders were sent to encourage participation in the voluntary survey and improve response rates. The responses were recorded anonymously, and all questions were required to complete the survey.

The survey questions were designed to better understand how aspects of existing infrastructure influence and support sustainability education and activities at the VSB. The survey included a mix of multiple-choice questions, rating scale questions, Likert scale questions and open-ended questions.

There were 198 respondents to the educator survey:

Demographic	Share	Sample
Elementary teachers	55%	109
Secondary teachers	26%	51
Principals & vice principals	15%	30
Other	4%	8
Total	**100%**	**198**

What We Heard

Key insights are included below, with a full summary of each sustainability topic following.

- Educators prioritized highly visible and tangible sustainability themes connected to community and nature, to showcase VSB's leadership in sustainability, while technical and infrastructure-focused initiatives were rated as less important.
- Outdoor infrastructure gaps (covered areas, outdoor classrooms, seating) limit outdoor learning; investments towards these will likely be well received and see increase usage.
- Amongst the majority of educators, there is a perceived lack of adequate bike/scooter parking infrastructure at schools, and a significant majority who do not use bike parking infrastructure. This highlights an opportunity to promote active transportation and enhance bike rack infrastructure.
- When considering the impacts of climate change on education delivery, educators indicated a clear preference for climate adaptation measures that protect both the indoor and outdoor environments against rising temperatures, increased rainfall and drought.

A) Sustainability in Education

Educators were asked to share all the sustainability themes they incorporate into their teaching practices. All themes were represented to some extent.

Topic	Most Frequently	Moderately	Least Frequently
Sustainability themes incorporated in teaching	Learning outdoors Land-based learning Nature connection Waste reduction Gardening	Active transportation Climate change Water conservation Energy conservation	Environmental justice/activism Climate adaptation

B) Green Spaces

Educators shared opinions on various outdoor infrastructure at schools and their frequency of use.

Topic	Good	Fair	Poor
Infrastructure quality/conditions that support educational needs	School gardens Sports fields Shade trees Accessibility/inclusivity	Picnic tables Benches Outdoor classrooms	Covered areas Exploration areas

Topic	Most used	Moderately used	Least used
Infrastructure utilization for outdoor learning	School gardens Shade trees Picnic tables and benches	Outdoor classrooms Neighbourhood gardens	Compost systems Portable planters Pollinator habitats

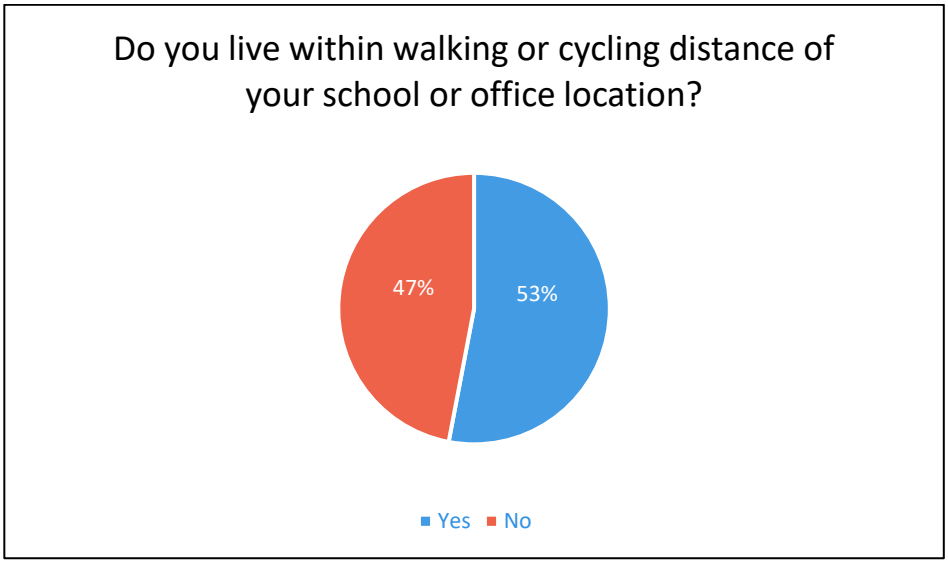
C) Leadership in Sustainability

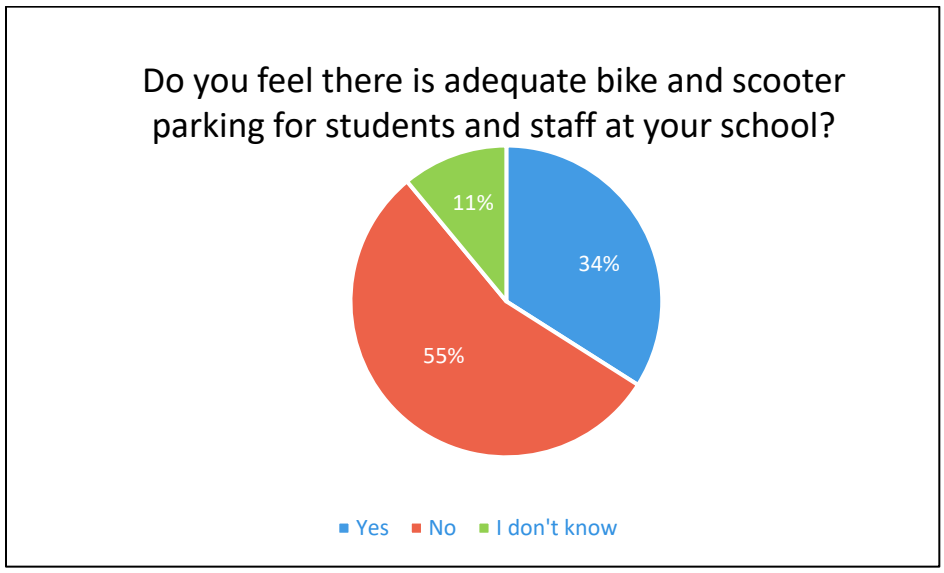
When the survey shifted to leadership in sustainability, educators shared their opinions on what demonstrates VSB's leadership in sustainability.

Topic	High Impact	Medium Impact	Low Impact
Initiatives that best demonstrate VSB's leadership in sustainability	Outdoor classrooms Green infrastructure Waste reduction	Climate adaptation strategy Active transportation programs Efficient building and HVAC systems	Water conservation Energy and carbon reduction plans Electric vehicles

D) Active Transportation

Educators shared opinions about their participation in active transportation and existing bike infrastructure at their places of work.





E) Resource Conservation & Climate Change

When the survey shifted to the topic of resource conservation and climate change, educators were asked to indicate how the VSB can best prepare for climate change.

Topic	High Priority	Medium Priority	Lower Priority
VSB actions to address the impacts of climate change	Enhancing outdoor spaces to mitigate extreme heat and drought events and improving those same spaces to manage rain and storm events	Adjusting HVAC systems to better handle warmer temperatures in spring and fall	Implementing backup power and emergency procedures and building improvements to address extreme cold events.

3.3 Survey for Families

The online survey for families was distributed to all VSB families via MyEd BC and was open May 14 to May 21, 2025. The survey sought feedback from families to help gain insight into their sustainability-related priority areas. Families had no obligation or incentive to participate in the survey. Their responses were recorded anonymously, and questions were designed for flexibility (questions could be skipped). The survey included a mix of multiple-choice questions, rating scale questions, Likert scale questions and open-ended questions.

There were 2,537 responses.

Demographic	Share	Sample
Elementary families	58%	1,488
Secondary families	26%	662
Both elementary & secondary	16%	387
Total	**100%**	**2,537**

What We Heard

Key insights are included below, with a full summary of each sustainability topic following.

- A significant majority of families strongly support resource conservation and climate action.
- Outdoor learning opportunities exist but need expansion and infrastructure upgrades.
- Active transportation programs have low visibility and participation.

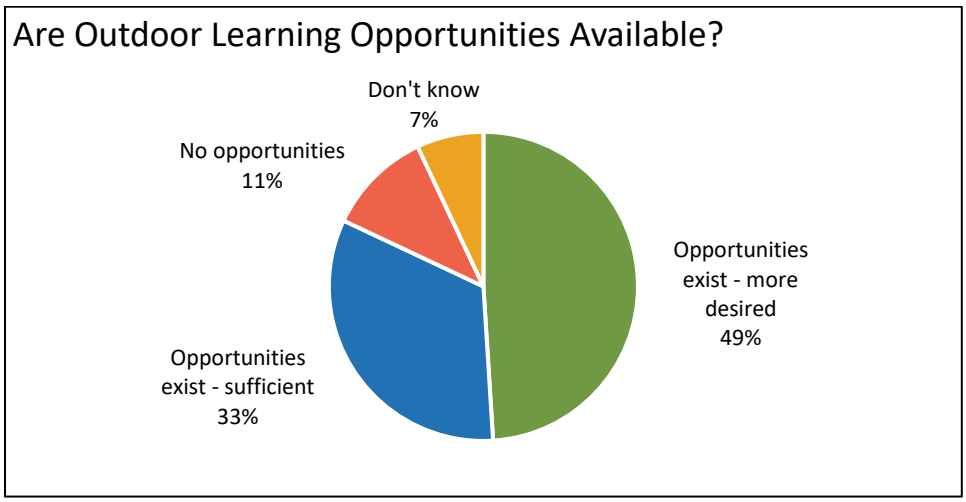
A) Sustainability in Education

Most families expressed strong support for all themes, indicating a broad interest in sustainability.

Topic	Most Important	Important	Somewhat important but still valued
Sustainability themes	Resource Conservation	Climate change and adaptation Active Transportation	Land-based learning Environmental justice

B) Green Spaces

Most families (82%) recognize that there are opportunities for outdoor learning at schools, and nearly half of respondents (49%) want even more opportunities to be provided.

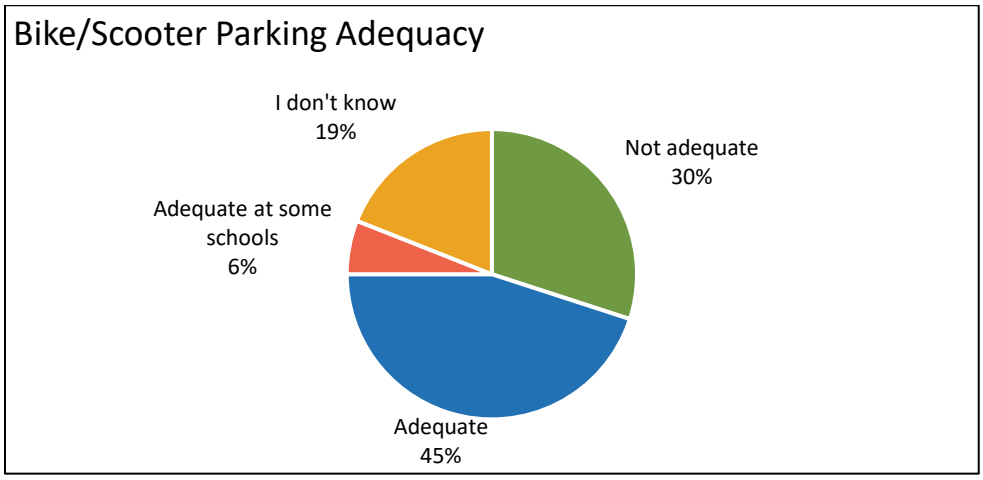


When asked to rate various outdoor infrastructure in terms of how well they support outdoor learning, families shared their opinions from school gardens to covered areas.

Topic	Good	Fair	Poor
Outdoor infrastructure and how well they support outdoor learning	Sports fields School gardens Shade trees Accessibility Exploration areas	Outdoor classrooms Picnic tables	Covered areas

C) Active Transportation

Families were asked about the adequacy of bike and scooter parking at schools:



15% of respondents reported that their school participates in an active transportation program such as Bike to School Week, Schools Streets, Walking School Bus, Bike Bus, and general encouragement from school staff and PAC.

D) Resource Conservation and Climate Change

Families strongly support resource conservation and climate action. Waste reduction was a particularly prominent topic, with strong calls to expand recycling systems and improve student awareness and waste sorting compliance.

The majority of families feel that reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions at the VSB is a priority.

Topic	Very Important or Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Reducing GHG emissions	71%	19%	10%

3.4 Workshop

On May 28, 2025, inherent rights holders representatives and formal stakeholder group representatives were invited to attend a facilitated workshop. Staff presented an overview of the 2018 Environmental Sustainability Plan, including the summary results from the family survey, educator survey, and student engagement. Following the presentation, a participatory activity focused on five sustainability themes. Representatives were invited to provide their feedback and perspectives through discussions and a post-it note activity.

The representatives of the following inherent rights holders were in attendance:

- xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam)
- Sḵwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation)

The representatives of the following formal stakeholder groups were in attendance:

- Professional & Administrative Staff Association (PASA)
- Vancouver Association of Secondary School Administrators (VASSA)
- Vancouver District Students' Council (VDSC)
- Vancouver Elementary Principals and Vice-Principals Association (VEPVPA)
- Vancouver Elementary and Adult Educators' Society (VEAES)

What We Heard

Feedback from the workshop was insightful and the following themes emerged:

Themes	What we heard
Connection to land	• Continue to integrate Indigenous principles of learning into land-based learning at schools • Increase biodiversity at school sites • Refine definition and design of outdoor classrooms to include more vegetation • Increase covered areas at schools
Facilities maintenance and enhancements **Climate adaptation and resilience**	• Improve bike and scooter parking infrastructure to encourage active travel choices and mitigate theft issues • Implement climate adaptation strategies to protect both indoor and outdoor environments
Recycling and waste reduction	• Expand recycling systems and waste diversion programs

Staff also received written input from the District Parent Advisory Committee (DPAC), providing additional considerations. These include:

- Opportunities for expanding the tree canopy on school sites in alignment with the City of Vancouver's broader green infrastructure goals.
- Desire for greener school yards (i.e. preference for grass fields instead of gravel) to improve stormwater absorption, heat mitigation, and more comfortable outdoor play time.
- Suggestions to invest in HVAC improvements as a climate adaptation strategy.

3.5 Student Engagement

On April 28, 2025, the Annual Student Sustainability Conference was held at David Thompson Secondary where approximately 100 students attended. The theme of the conference ('Oasis'), highlighted biodiversity and natural systems. VSB staff hosted a booth at the exhibition fair where a dotmocracy activity was presented. Students were given a set number of dots they could use to provide their preference. The dotmocracy activity queried student preferences in the areas of sustainability education, climate change preparedness, and leadership in sustainability. Approximately 42 of the 100 students participated in the activity. Most participants were secondary students from various schools within the VSB.

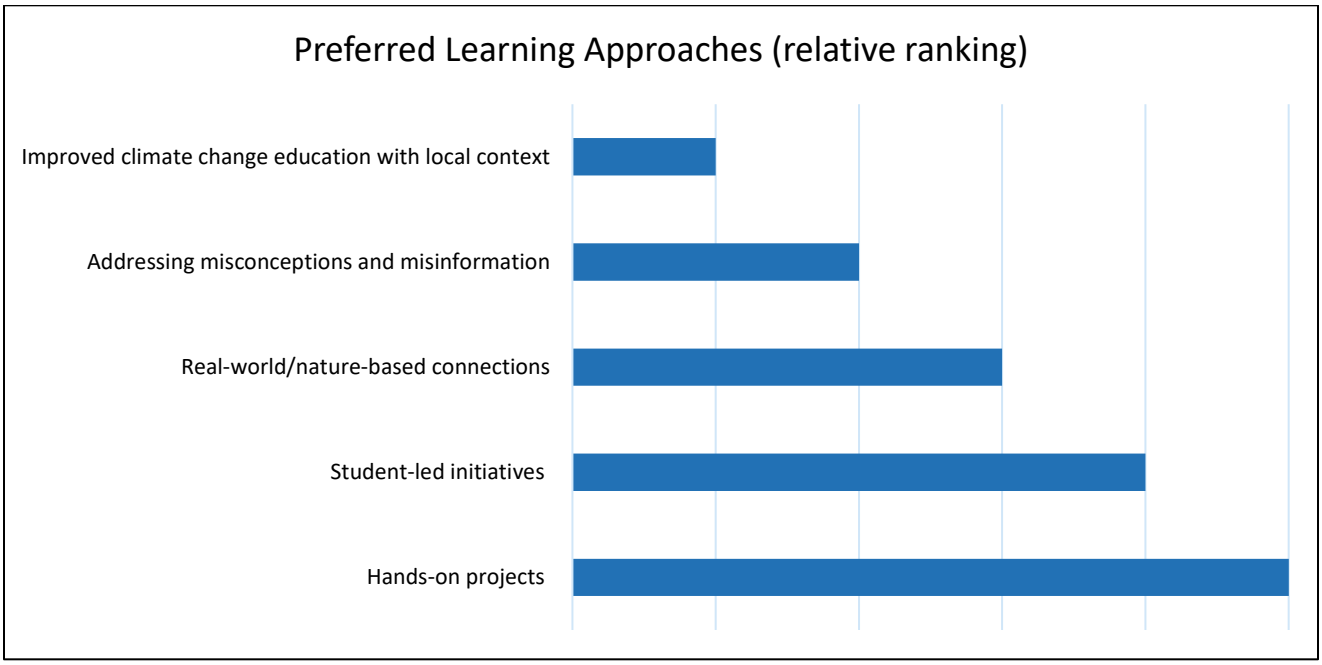
What We Heard

Key Insights from Student Engagement:

- Students indicated a clear preference for hands-on, student-led, experiential learning methods.
- Students viewed visible and nature-based initiatives that directly engage them as key indicators of VSB's leadership in sustainability.
- There is a contrast between students' learning interests and their views on active transportation. Although it was the least selected learning theme, it was ranked among the top indicators of leadership.

A) Preferred Learning Approach

Students were asked to identify their most preferred learning approach that would best prepare them for the impacts of climate change.



B) Sustainability Themes of Interest

Students expressed interest in all themes presented and were asked to choose their top 3. Aggregated results showed:

Topic	Top ranked themes overall	Moderately ranked themes	Lowest ranked themes
Sustainability themes of interest	Environmental justice/activism Climate adaptation Waste reduction	Water conservation Energy conservation Land-based learning	Active transportation

C) Leadership Priorities

Students were asked to choose the 3 most important actions VSB could do to demonstrate leadership in sustainability.

Topic	Top ranked actions overall	Moderately ranked actions	Lowest ranked actions
Actions that demonstrate leadership	Active transportation Outdoor classrooms Green infrastructure Energy and carbon reduction plans	Efficient building and HVAC systems Waste reduction Water conservation	Climate adaptation strategy Electric vehicles and charging stations

Conclusion

In consideration of the engagement results across all activities and groups, and the assessments presented in this report, the following key takeaways are presented for consideration.

Key Takeaways by Theme

Education

- Strong support for outdoor and nature-based learning – educators, families, students, inherent rightsholders, and formal stakeholders all highly value hands-on, experiential, land-based learning.
- Students prefer getting the chance to take a leadership role in their learning.
- Students benefit from hands-on, solution-oriented learning that fosters leadership and agency.
- Students recognize visible everyday actions (like active transportation) as meaningful, even if they don't want to study them in depth.

Resource Conservation and Climate Change

- Families and educators support practical sustainability actions like energy and water conservation.
- Climate-resilient infrastructure (e.g., heat pumps, insulation, solar panels) are seen as important.
- Waste reduction, especially through expanded recycling and composting, is a strong priority.

Active Transportation

- Many staff and families live within walking or cycling distance, but bike infrastructure is lacking, not secure, and underutilized.
- There is low awareness and participation in active transportation programs happening at schools.

Green Spaces

- Strong call for more green spaces and covered areas to support outdoor learning.
- Existing outdoor infrastructure is valued and utilized but could benefit from enhancements.
- Equity concerns were raised by families about uneven access to green spaces and differences in school upgrades across neighborhoods.

Leadership

- Families want more communication and involvement opportunities in school sustainability efforts.
- There is a call for demonstrable leadership in sustainability, including clearer sustainability directives, and equitable investment in infrastructure improvements.
- High engagement with Indigenous education resources shows strong alignment with sustainability goals.
- Intrinsic motivation and peer collaboration are key enablers of sustainability education.
    - Administrative support is helpful but secondary to educator initiative.
    - Sustainability efforts vary widely between schools, often depending on individual staff.

Vancouver School Board

ITEM 1.2

January 14, 2026

TO: **Facilities Planning Committee**

FROM: **Jessie Gresley-Jones, Executive Director of Facilities**

RE: # Lord Roberts Annex Replacement School Project Funding

Reference to Education Plan

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

Goal 1: The Vancouver School Board will improve student achievement, physical and mental well-being, and belonging by…

- Improving school environments to ensure they are safe, caring, welcoming, and inclusive places for students and families.

Goal 2: The Vancouver School Board will increase equity by …

- Improving stewardship of the District's resources by focusing on effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

INTRODUCTION

This report includes a recommendation for project funding approval and provides an update on the Lord Roberts Annex (LRA) Replacement School Project, including:

- Updates on the LRA Project and summary of major milestones;
- Updates on the BC Hydro West End Substation Project;
- Mitigation measures and Ministry of Infrastructure Funding Approval letter (Attachment A).

BACKGROUND

BC Hydro 2018 Underground Parcel Purchase and Sale Agreement

In 2018, the Vancouver School Board (VSB) received $65 million from the sale of the underground parcel at the LRA site to BC Hydro, along with the grant of access and surface rights. An additional $8 million will be paid when the site is handed over to BC Hydro for construction. BC Hydro will also construct a play field and greenspace above the substation for the VSB to use as a school grounds, valued at up to $2 million.

The funds received from BC Hydro were intended to support the design and construction of two schools in the downtown area of Vancouver. cə̓was Ch'elxwá7elch Skwuláẇtxw Seaside Elementary is currently under construction and scheduled to be completed and ready for students for the start of the 2026/2027 school year.

The LRA replacement school is being designed to have the enrolment capacity of 450 elementary and 60 kindergarten students. The three-storey school will be constructed above a limited-scope underground parkade that will share the same vehicle entry and ramp as the BC Hydro substation. The school will be located directly adjacent to the underground substation and will be designed to use the waste heat extracted from the substation for heating, supporting enhanced sustainability objectives.

FUNDING

Since the time of the original agreement, significant cost escalations have occurred across all types of capital projects. This has resulted from material costs, supply chain challenges, shifting labour availability, and overall escalation.

These same cost pressures have impacted the anticipated total cost of the LRA project. As a current reference, the recently approved new school at Olympic Village has a budget of $140 million and is located on a site that does not have similar challenges with physical integration with another structure.

As a result, there is now a funding gap to develop the LRA replacement school. $41.96 million has been committed thus far to the cə̓was Ch'elxwá7elch Skwuláẇtxw Seaside project from the BC Hydro funding.

In recognition of this limitation, this project has been added to the Five-Year Major Capital Plan submissions to the Province to secure full funding of the project. The Project was submitted as the second priority expansion project in the 2025/26 Five Year Major Capital Plan. The project was again submitted in June 2025 as part of the 2026/27 Five Year Major Capital Plan as the first priority in the Expansion (New School) category. This submission identifies an estimated project budget of $194 million. Capital response letters from the Ministry are typically sent to school districts in February or March and will identify if funding has been allocated for any of the priorities identified in the submission.

LRA PROJECT UPDATES

Since 2021, VSB and its Architect team have been advancing the school design which has included a series of visioning sessions. Between 2021 and 2025, meetings and engagement workshops were held with VSB leadership, school communities and various stakeholders to confirm objectives, define goals and refine design concepts. Incorporating this feedback, the school design has continued to evolve in parallel with the design of the substation.

Below are the project major milestones to date:

Mar 2017	Feasibility study to examine project options and viability
May 2018	Summary of development approaches to identify costs and risks
Jul 2018	VSB signed the agreement with BC Hydro
Fall 2018	Substation pre-design begins
Jun 2021	School consultant team contracted
Sep 2021	School design begins
2021-2025	Design visioning and engagement
Nov 2021	Project Definition Report (PDR) draft
Jun 2024	Five-Year Capital Plan Submission
Jun 2025	Five-Year Capital Plan Submission
Nov/Dec 2025	Shadow DP submission for substation and school parkade

BC Hydro submitted their Development Permit (DP) with the City of Vancouver in November 2025. The VSB design aligns with this submission as it shares sub-grade elements. Submission of the full DP for the school will also occur in the coming months to ensure these projects remain coordinated in their design and design review. The BC Hydro consultant team is also collaborating to develop the playfield and play areas design which is located above the substation roof. This ensures a harmonized design of exterior BC Hydro elements with the school design.

There are significant benefits to progressing the design, permitting and construction of the school concurrently with the substation. In a recent preliminary procurement process undertaken by BC Hydro, contractors were engaged to seek input on the design and construction feasibility of the hydro substation and school. Contractors emphasized the advantages of constructing the school foundation and underground parkade concurrently with the substation. Commonly cited advantages included improved scheduling, cost savings, avoiding site conflicts and the ability to share resources between the two structures.

BC Hydro has indicated that school construction work undertaken after the substation is complete may disrupt sensitive equipment that has been installed within the substation. The City of Vancouver has also advised that the below-grade components of the site (the substation and the school parkade) should be coordinated within a single Development Permit (DP) submission. They further noted that the full DP for the above-grade school building should be submitted shortly after the below-grade DP to ensure proper integration of both proposals.

Given the complexity and level of integration between the two projects, it is prudent for the VSB to coordinate their design concurrently to avoid conflicts. There is also less risk with a single contractor overseeing construction of both the substation and the school, given the limited site footprint and the interconnected nature of the work. Engaging a separate contractor to share the site with BC Hydro's contractor and complete work would introduce risks. An even greater risk would arise if a separate contractor were required to work on or near the below grade portions of the substation once the sensitive equipment is operational. For these reasons, design coordination between the VSB and BC Hydro must be well established before construction begins.

NEXT STEPS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The following highlights major upcoming milestones:

Feb 2026	Full School Development Permit Submission
Spring 2026	Start of BC Hydro's pre-construction/construction contract
Spring 2026	School Construction Documents completed
September 2026	Students will be relocated and attending cə̓was Ch'elxwá7elch Skwuláẇtxw Seaside
Late Fall 2026	LRA demolition by BC Hydro, construction of substation begins
2027	School Building Permit Submission

VSB will continue to advance design in parallel with the substation. The DP for the school building is scheduled to be submitted in early 2026. BC Hydro has submitted initial documents to the British Columbia Utility Commission (BCUC) for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to construct the substation. They will advance to construction after they receive approval from the BCUC.

In absence of funding certainty for the construction of the new school, mitigation plans have been developed. This requires that the Development Permit and Building Permit occur concurrently with BC Hydro and that shared elements of construction occur concurrently. The shared elements of the school will be constructed to prepare the site for future construction of the school. This will include building all below-grade structures aligned with the ultimate design.

In September 2025, the Ministry requested the VSB to submit a plan and costing for the minimum viable project scope. The VSB worked with the Design and Cost Consultant teams to define the "Minimum Viable Project" for the school and provided a response to the Ministry in October 2025.

Because of the long timeline for substation construction, the construction of the above grade school components is not anticipated until 2030 or later. With this mitigation strategy in place, the site is future proofed to deliver the school when funding is secured for the construction of the above grade component of the school and can still align with a continuous construction of the entire site as originally envisioned. To enable this mitigation strategy, use of Ministry restricted capital and local capital secured from the original BC Hydro funding agreement is required.

PROJECT FUNDING

The School District submitted a letter to the Ministry of Infrastructure requesting continuation of Minimum Viable Project at the Lord Roberts Annex site in October 2025. The scope includes designing and constructing a minimal below grade parking and other related soft costs. At a minimum, funding to continue design development, permitting, landscape design, and public engagement associated with preparing the site so that a school replacing the existing Lord Roberts Annex could be accommodated in the future has been requested.

On January 8, 2026, the Ministry provided their approval for the use of up to $2,243,000 from Ministry restricted capital towards this project. As indicated in the Response Letter (see Attachment A) regarding Project Continuation at Lord Roberts Annex.

To date we have spent $1.04 million from local capital for the LRA project. Available local capital for LRA project is $2.96 million. The Ministry approval brings the total funding allocated for the LRA project to $6.24 million.

RECOMMENDATION

The Facilities Planning Committee recommends:

THAT School District No. 39 (Vancouver) approve the use of up to $2,243,000 from Ministry restricted capital for the Lord Roberts Annex Replacement project.

Attachment:

A. Capital Response Letter (dated January 8, 2026)

ATTACHMENT A

January 8, 2026

Ref: 23965

Flavia Coughlan, Secretary-Treasurer
School District No. 39 (Vancouver)

Dear Flavia Coughlan:

Re: Project Continuation at Lord Roberts Annex | Minister-Restricted Capital Request Approval

Thank you for the letter dated July 18, 2025, requesting access to Minister-Restricted Capital funding in the amount of $2,243,000, to continue design development, permitting, landscape design, and public engagement associated with preparing the site so that a school replacing the existing Lord Roberts Annex could be accommodated in the future.

I understand that the Vancouver School District is progressing this work to support coordinated development permitting with BC Hydro (including simultaneous Development Permit submissions) and to enable consideration of constructing below-grade works to accommodate a future school concurrently with the substation. Due to the constrained site, undertaking this work concurrently will reduce schedule, constructability, and cost risks.

I am pleased to advise that the Vancouver School District has received Minister of Infrastructure approval to access up to $2,243,000 in Minister-Restricted Capital to support these activities.

Thank you for your dedication to the students of the Vancouver School District.

Sincerely,

[redacted]

Damien Crowell
Executive Director, Education and Child Care Capital Branch

pc: Education and Child Care Capital Branch, Ministry of Infrastructure (CMB@gov.bc.ca)

Ministry of Infrastructure
Education and Child Care Capital Branch
Community Capital Division
Mailing Address:
PO Box 9194 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9E6
Location:
835 Humboldt Street
Victoria BC V8W 9B5