

What's in a Name?

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Summary

The process to "name" the established school already known as "Acadia Road Elementary School" is deeply flawed and biased. Any decision to impose a new name on the school will ignore the fact that the school is in its second year of operation. The errors include, *inter alia*:

- the decision to treat and advertise this as *naming* a school which *will* open in 2014, rather than as *renaming* a school which already exists, albeit in temporary and substandard facilities;
- the subsequent applications of policies to *name* the school deliberately excluded those who *already comprise the extant school*: the pupils, the staff, the parents and families; the policies regarding *renaming* schools requires participation of the school community;
- the nebulous composition of the "Naming Committee";
- technological weaknesses with respect to the "Name That School!" website and online submission form;
- biased communications through the media, advertising, and the "Name That School!" website;
- an apparent organised lobbying campaign, spearheaded by one member of the "Naming Committee";
- a lack of clear Terms of Reference to govern the workings of the committee, the mechanisms of decision-making, and the expectations placed on the members with respect to their roles as "representatives" of specific constituent groups.

As a result of these many failings, no new name must be imposed upon the school at this point. Should the current name be considered unacceptable – and a compelling case made for this – the policies to *rename* schools must be applied and the established school community included. Indeed, this would present an opportunity to further cultivate school culture and promote community-building.

A second new elementary school will be built in the UBC area within the next few years; the names suggested under this process should be carried over for consideration for the next new school.