

# **Enhanced Facilities for Learning: A Ten Year Plan**

**Submitted to:**

**The Board of Education**

**School District #68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith)**

**Dr. Doug Player**

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## **Introduction:**

**This document is not designed as a report, but rather, as a plan that provides specific timelines and recommendations to meet the Board’s goal to ‘enhance facilities for learning’. It is meant to complement the other two goals addressed in the District’s strategic plan of ‘the continuous improvement of instruction and assessment’ and ‘meeting each student’s unique needs’.**

**This plan is directed to accomplishing the following goals:**

- ✓ First and foremost, to enhance learning opportunities for all students;**
- ✓ Second, to garner new (and long overdue) state of the art replacement facilities;**
- ✓ Third, to consolidate costly positions so funding can go to the classroom;**
- ✓ Fourth, to save wasted maintenance funds; and,**
- ✓ Finally, to improve the long term fiscal position of the Board.**

**The expectations of the plan are that it will also:**

- Improve the student achievement results;**
- Improve program offerings for students;**
- Renew the approach and improve conditions for alternate program students;**
- Assist in the achievement of the Board goals; and,**
- Assist in balancing the budget long term.**

**The current status of the District related to this plan's objectives is characterized by:**

- **Deteriorating facilities, including 40% beyond their useful life;**
- **Costly empty space;**
- **Unnecessary staffing duplication;**
- **Dysfunctional buildings;**
- **Lack of program enrichment; and,**
- **A five million dollar deficit.**

**Action in renewing facilities is long overdue! As a result, this plan proposes reconfigurations, consolidations, renovations, rebuilds, and property disposal. The plan has been developed in concert with the building administrators who, as the key educational leaders, know the children's needs and the district's deficits. While the consolidation of the buildings will result in the loss of some positions, it is recommended that in so far as possible, the reductions be undertaken through attrition.**

**The plan has also tried to use this opportunity to improve the offerings for students at all levels. Hence, there has been a deliberate attempt to improve the conditions and the programs for students in the alternate and life skills programs. Attention has been paid to the needs of the French immersion program but more importantly there has been a concerted effort to improve the district's achievement results by adding more challenging academic programs in an equitable manner throughout the district. There is also a proposal to pilot an elementary arts program using outstanding facilities and expertise. Early development of the arts has been linked to improved academic achievement and the pilot is designed so it could be duplicated in**

**other elementary schools. One of the plan's objectives is to ensure there is adequate population in each school to offer as wide a course selection as possible.**

**The plan is a ten year plan divided into three stages: immediate actions to be undertaken in years one and two; medium term actions to be undertaken in years three through five, and long term which includes recommendations for years six through ten. The plan recommends that the Board take the following actions:**

- Consolidate ten facilities;**
- Rebuild four facilities;**
- Rethink and repurpose the DRC/LRC;**
- Institute three new enrichment programs;**
- Relocate and renew the approach to the alternate programs;**
- Adjust the immersion program; and**
- Relocate the administrative functions.**

**Above all, it is important that the Board focus on its core business which means disposing of a number of properties so that the money can be added to their capital account allowing for upgrading and maintaining buildings that are not directly addressed in this plan.**

## **The Plan**

### **Year One and Two**

#### **Year One (2013)**

**1) Move Junior Learning Alternatives and Senior Learning Alternatives to the NDSS Career and Technical Wing.**

**These programs have been housed in inferior buildings with very limited programming opportunities and little chance of reintegration into the mainstream. The move to NDSS offers the opportunity to carry out the well-designed reforms recommended by Principal as well as the hope that some of the students will reintegrate into the mainstream. The ABOUT program has already been successfully relocated at NDSS.**

**2) Move the Junior Life Skills program from Rutherford to Fairview Community School.**

**Currently students are transported all the way from Ladysmith to Rutherford. This program needs to be located more centrally, as is recommended by the district's special education specialist, and there is ample space at Fairview. Any required special equipment should be provided to the rooms that house these students.**

**3) Remove the English stream from Quarterway and relocate them in Brechin and Forest Park.**

**The demand for Early French Immersion can be met by turning Quarterway into a single track school. This move also**

**enables the English students to experience fewer split classes and more specialist services while reducing staffing costs.**

**4) Initiate the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (IBPYP) process at Randerson Ridge.**

**There is a perception that the only way for parents to ensure a challenge program for their children is to enroll them in French Immersion. Beginning the IBPYP program offers another option for parents seeking enrichment and will likely stem the rising demand for immersion. It will also signal to all an increasing emphasis on improving the achievement results in the District. Randerson Ridge has the space to add students who may choose to go to IBPYP and the school has the District's best basic skills results so it is a good starting place.**

**5) Close the DRC/LRC and initiate negotiation with the Vancouver Island Health Authority for disposition of the property.**

**The availability of resources through technology begins to reduce the need for centralized resources so it is recommended these resources be housed in the school buildings themselves. Their distribution should be determined through a collaborative process with the affected teachers with consideration being given to housing of the kits in the local secondary school libraries. The district should initiate negotiations on this land with the local health authority with a view to meeting each other's mutual needs.**

**6) Reconfigure Ladysmith Secondary School to enroll grades six through twelve.**

**a. Ladysmith Secondary School (LSS) is underutilized while Ladysmith Intermediate and Davis elementary schools are in poor condition. This reconfiguration is the first move designed to enable all students in Ladysmith to be taught on one campus in this unique community. LSS has an operational capacity of eight hundred students and by adding grades six and seven the school approaches capacity as is noted in the chart below. The students in grades six to eight could operate under a middle school philosophy allowing a smooth transition to secondary programs while the younger students would have access to facilities not normally available to that age. As can be seen in the appendix the principal of LSS believes this change would enhance the school’s ability to offer wider programming and would have the support of the community.**

<b>Gr. 6-12</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
<b>Davis Road FI</b>	29	26	23	23	24	22	22	22	21	22	22
<b>Davis Road REG</b>	23	19	19	19	25	24	29	30	25	30	34
<b>Ladysmith Int.</b>	114	110	112	108	112	117	109	106	108	108	113
<b>North Oyster .5</b>	7	9	8	9	10	15	16	13	13	13	12
<b>Ladysmith SEC</b>	551	529	524	501	510	523	529	539	555	562	570
<b>Total</b>	724	693	686	660	681	701	705	710	722	735	751

**7) This reconfiguration of Ladysmith Secondary opens room within Ladysmith Intermediate School to enable the consolidation of the remaining K to 5 Davis Road Elementary School population within Ladysmith Intermediate. This would act as an**

intermediary step to the accommodation of all Ladysmith students on the single campus. By doing so the Davis Road population would no longer be accommodated in so many portables. Ladysmith Intermediate has an operating capacity of 300 which, as the chart below indicates, enables this consolidation to take place comfortably. This move accomplishes the goal of improving the students learning spaces while ensuring adequate numbers in the building. It also enables savings of approximately \$100,000 in a difficult budget year.

Ladysmith Intermediate  
(OC 300) K-5

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
N.O.	10	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
L .I.	102	107	102	117	109	106	108	108	113	105	108
Davis	193	177	184	188	188	197	197	205	211	216	220
Total	305	296	298	317	309	315	317	325	348	333	340

## 8) Begin funding discussions with the Ministry of Education

It needs to be noted that as soon as this plan is adopted by the Board, the District will need to enter into funding negotiations for the recommended replacement schools. Judging by the previous amount offered to the Board, this plan should be well within the Ministry's expectation for funding. The first priority should be to acquire the funding to create a full gymnasium at Hammond Bay.

## Year Two (2014)

### 9) Move all Cedar Grade 8-12 students to John Barsby Secondary School

Secondary Schools require a certain mass of students in order to offer a full range of programs to the students. John Barsby is currently underutilized and the addition of the Cedar community enables John Barsby to operate at full capacity so that the students benefit from a full range of opportunities. As can be seen from the chart below the numbers are within the John Barsby capacity and ideal for offering programs.

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Cedar	436	432	425	415	407	416	407	408	434	443	439
John Barsby	583	552	490	456	454	469	479	524	559	583	605
Total	1019	984	915	871	861	885	886	932	993	1026	1044

### 10) Add Advanced Placement programs to the offerings at John Barsby.

This addition will help raise the expectations of students and offer an excellent challenge factor to the curriculum in this school. It again emphasizes the District's desire to improve its achievement results and provides these students with similar advantages to the other secondary schools.

**11) Consolidate North Cedar Intermediate, North Oyster, South Wellington and Woodbank in a new elementary school in the former Cedar Secondary building.**

**The four elementary schools in the Cedar area have become too small to offer the opportunities that should be available to each of the children. This change provides outstanding facilities not typically available to younger children and a population base that reduces split classes while making available required support resources within the building. Much more teacher choice is also available. Net annual savings of over three quarters of a million dollars become available in the district’s operating budget. Using Ministry capacities, Cedar has an operational capacity of 475 as an elementary school with the ability to expand if required.**

	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
North Cedar Int	188	201	196	196	199	192	177	180	172	176	189
North Oyster (.5+)	51	57	58	60	63	64	65	63	62	62	62
South Wellington	64	66	66	73	72	70	71	71	71	67	67
Woodbank	161	152	138	146	139	143	154	154	154	154	154
<b>Total</b>	<b>464</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>458</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>473</b>	<b>469</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>472</b>

**12) Initiate a pilot program in the Arts at the new Cedar Elementary**

**The school has exceptional facilities in its elective wing that offer the opportunity to offer a unique enrichment program in the arts. Building a student’s capacity in the arts has been linked to improved academic success and this is another positive approach to improving the district’s achievement results. The suggested program**

has been designed by a Cedar teacher who has expertise in this area and who knows this community well. A brief description is in the Appendix. Cedar could become one of the most exciting elementary schools in the province.

**13) Reconfigure Woodlands to return to its original junior high purpose housing grades eight to ten with grades eleven and twelve moving to NDSS.**

In this plan Woodlands is slated for consolidation as it was built as a junior secondary and is not the appropriate site for a large replacement secondary school. By moving the senior students now, the building is better able to serve the junior population until they too are consolidated with NDSS. Meantime, the senior students will not suffer from a lack of course and program opportunities as the numbers at NDSS will enable a full range of programs. The numbers below indicate how significantly the opportunities for the transferred Woodlands population would improve.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Gr11/12											
NDSS	410	422	430	305	397	409	406	425	411	394	377
Woodlands	271	243	228	205	204	191	189	209	195	201	236
Total	681	665	658	510	601	600	595	634	606	595	613

At this time it also makes sense to deal with the academies housed in Woodlands as both junior and senior academy

**students need to be in the same building. The hockey academy should be moved to NDSS as it is close to the arena in which they train. The soccer academy should move to Wellington which is in closer proximity to the all-weather field at Beban Park where training takes place. Both intake schools have the capacity to handle the population of each academy.**

**14) Build an addition to the gymnasium at Hammond Bay Elementary School.**

**This school is full but operating with half of a gymnasium. The Gymnasium needs to be doubled in size.**

**Years Three to Five (2015-2017)**

**Year three (2015)**

**1) Begin the rebuild of NDSS and Ladysmith Elementary.**

**This recommendation is intended to create a new vibrant culture on two individual campuses that boast exceptional sites. It is important that the district move forward with dispatch so that the students and staff have access to modern state of the art facilities.**

**2) Introduce the advanced Placement program to Wellington school.**

**This school has a twenty two million dollar upgrade approved and moving forward. The Advanced Placement program introduction continues the plan to ensure that appropriate enrichment is available in every secondary school and that there are the same high expectations of all students in the District as well as a similar emphasis on boosting achievement in all schools.**

**3) Introduce the International Baccalaureate (IB) program in Dover Secondary**

**The IB program offers yet another enrichment opportunity at the secondary level and begins the process for this school to receive the students taking the IBPYP at Randerson Ridge. Again, the addition of the program places the emphasis on the district's core business of raising the achievement of its students.**

**Year four [January](2016)**

**1) Begin the rebuilding of Cilaire such that it can accommodate both the Cilaire and the Departure Bay population.**

**Cilaire is one of the lowest schools on the Ministry's facility condition index and has outlived its useful life. It makes sense when replacing an elementary school to enable it to house enough students to avoid too many split classes while providing the required resources onsite. In this case by consolidating Departure Bay, which is also in need of renovation, and Cilaire, the District accomplishes its desired intent to create better learning opportunities for**

**the children in a more affordable manner in better facilities.**

### **Year Five (2017)**

- 1) Complete the consolidation of Woodlands School by moving the junior students to the new NDSS facility allowing the option for some to choose Wellington.**

**The NDSS rebuild should be complete and all students should move into the new school.**

- 2) Move into the new Ladysmith Elementary School  
This will consolidate all Ladysmith students on the same campus.**

### **Year Six to Ten**

#### **Year Six (2018)**

- 1) Move into Cilaire and initiate an IBPYP process**

**Cilaire will add the Departure Bay population and by reopening with the IB program more students may avail themselves of this enrichment program.**

- 2) Consolidate Departure Bay school with the new Cilaire**

**There are too many schools in the same area and these students will now have the advantage of attending a brand new state of the art school with a full cadre of resources. This also removes another school on the low end of the Ministry's facility condition index.**

### **3) Begin building the new Board Office on the Selby site**

**The Board Office is likely the most architecturally dysfunctional building in the District. Moving off a school site makes sense particularly when the office is being moved in close proximity to the Municipal offices.**

### **4) Begin the building of a new Facilities operation on the Old Victoria Road site**

**The current location for the Facilities operations is in conflict with the operation of a new NDSS campus and inappropriate for a residential neighbourhood. This operation belongs in better facilities in a more industrial neighbourhood.**

### **5) Begin the rebuild of Rutherford School**

**Rutherford is an outstanding school site but the school has been created through a series of additions. This is a school with nine furnaces! There is room on this site to rebuild while the current building remains in operation.**

## **Year Seven (2019)**

### **1) Renovate Seaview School**

**At this point of the plan, Seaview is the only school left on the low end of the Ministry's facility condition index and the district will have added funds to its local capital from the property disposal making this renovation feasible.**

## **Year Eight (2020)**

- 1) Move into the new Board Office and the new Facilities buildings.**

**This frees the NDSS campus to be used for its core purpose and removes the industrial activities from the site. It also results in a more functional Board Office. For further efficiencies, the Board should consider the potential of shared functions with the Municipality.**

## **Years Nine (2021) and Ten (2022)**

- 1) This is a time to use some of the local capital accumulated to update and upgrade schools such as Chase River. Assuming initial implementation of IB and AP programing have been successful and well received, then the programs should be considered for further implementation in other schools.**

## **Financial Benefits**

### **Potential Annual Operation Savings**

**Annual operational savings are calculated by adding the costs saved from reduced maintenance, administration, custodial, clerical, supervision, utilities, water, and sewage costs for specific sites. The approximate annual operational savings, if each step of the plan is undertaken, are as follows:**

**Years 1 and 2:           \$1,320,003**

**Years 3 to 5:           \$1,332,009**

**Years 6 to 10:         \$ 329,846**

**Grand Total Annual Savings: \$2,981,858**

### **Capital Accumulation from Disposal**

**The capital accumulation from the disposal of specified land and facilities was calculated by adding only those properties that appeared not to be crown grants meaning the funds are likely to be available for local capital. The figures used were the estimates within the capital asset report commissioned in 2012 by the school district. It is recommended that, before assets are disposed of, two appraisals be acquired to ensure the Board receives fair market value. Dollars accumulated from land disposal could be increased by selling some of the crown grant sites but these dollars are not likely to be allocated to local capital reserves. The estimated dollars likely available for local capital projects from each stage of the plan are:**

**Year 1 and 2:**

- Diamond Elementary: \$150,000**
- North Oyster: (undeveloped portion): \$360,000**
- Old Waterloo School: \$267,000**
- Five Acres: \$210,000**
- Uplands: extra land) \$ 1,700,000**

**Total: \$2,687,000**

### **Years 3 to 5**

- **Ladysmith Intermediate: \$350,000**
- **Woodlands: \$3,400,000**

**Total: \$3,750,000**

### **Years 6 to 10**

**To Be Determined**

**Minimum Capital Grand Total: \$6,437,000**

### **Other Considerations:**

**The Learn at Home program handles a significant number of students. This Facilities plan should have the effect of reducing some of the demand for this program by virtue of more options being available for students in the larger secondary and elementary schools. However, there will still be a need for the accommodation of this program. As such the program needs a thorough study of its effectiveness and efficiency so that the appropriate design is applied for the location of this program. Blended learning makes sense when technology is used but the model applied here needs to be examined.**

### **International Program**

**As this plan calls for filling schools to capacity some reduction in spaces available for international students may occur. In examining this program the return on investment (ROI) appeared low. This program should be evaluated with a view to increasing the ROI to the District.**

## **Reductions in Force**

**This plan will result in some reduction in workforce that could include administration, teaching, maintenance, supervisory and clerical staff. It is recommended that where possible any reductions be handled through attrition. It should be noted that the additional busing required to John Barsby and Cedar will increase these positions.**

## **Property Assets**

**Even with the disposals recommended here, the district continues to hold too much land. The Board needs to stick to its core purpose of education and further devolve itself of some of this real estate in a way that gains assets for the education program.**

## **French Immersion**

**The recommendations for increased enrichment programs throughout the District will likely decrease the demand for French Immersion. If the demand stays high, it is recommended that the next site chosen be Georgia Avenue Elementary School. This would make the school a dual track program but may also serve to stabilize the population.**

## **Consultation**

**This plan involves significant change which requires implementation planning on the part of students, parents and the school district. Hence there is a sense of urgency required. It is recommended that the consultation process be completed by June 2013 so that parents, students and district staff have time to plan for the future. The students and staff have suffered too long under conditions that are less than ideal and the time for action is now!**

## **Summary**

**This plan will give the students the facilities they deserve and the program choice they need. It will raise the achievement expectations throughout the district while giving students more challenging learning opportunities. Teachers will have better working conditions with fewer split classes, decreased preparations and more resources. The plan removes all schools from the low end of the facility condition index ensuring better use of maintenance funds and better situations for custodians. As a byproduct, the plan improves the operating budget and provides additional funding for capital costs. In short, this plan provides for renewal throughout the district in a manner that will enhance learning for all students.**

# Appendix 1

Model of a Coordinated

Fine Arts Program in Elementary Schools

utilizing 1640 MacMillan Road as a pilot site.

## Rationale for Fine Arts in the Public School System

Albert Einstein said, “I am enough of an artist to draw freely upon my imagination. Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world.” And yet the arts remain on the margins of education despite persuasive studies that have found students with high arts involvement perform better on standardized achievement tests than students with low arts involvement. Although the arts are often the last to be added and the first to be dropped in times of strained budgets and shifting priorities, School District #68’s current strategic plan includes Fine Arts Programs – the only *curriculum* itemized - among their list of “positives”. Progressive literature such as The World Is Flat, The Outliers, and A Whole New Mind support the significance of fine arts for the future success of our students in the new global market.

## 1640 MacMillan Road as an Elementary School

The conversion of Cedar Community Secondary School to an elementary school provides an amazing opportunity for a pilot program designed to emphasize and enhance learning in the fine arts. Approximately 16 rooms will turn into regular classrooms and there are 4 portables. The library will house desktop computers for research and word-processing. However, the existing electives wing with music room, visual arts room, shop, and media arts room, will be costly to convert to general classrooms. These specialty rooms should be preserved as a fine arts wing. Here is an area for learning visual arts, dance, drama, classroom music, and digital media arts (including audio/video production). The shop area will be used for storage of art materials and projects, props, costumes and oversized or rolling equipment such as classroom laptop carts.

A Fine Arts Specialist will be in the building to receive students from teachers who are on their prep. There will be an integrated arts program where music, visual arts, digital media, etcetera amalgamate to produce expressive projects. Further, the projects will be integrated with classroom learning in social studies, math, english, et al. In this school, Fine Arts will complement the learning in other subject areas such that students learn the value of the Fine Arts as a way to express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas about what they have learned about the world.

## Fine Arts specialists across the district

Cedar's community will enjoy the benefits of a most progressive Fine Arts program and other schools in the district will soon follow. After a time of piloting in Cedar, the Fine Arts Specialist will coordinate a district-wide program and train other specialists to implement integrated arts programs. One major consideration will be space. Teachers on preps will allow for their rooms to be used by the specialists, or; other areas such as multi-purpose rooms, portables, and existing music rooms could otherwise be used for student working areas. District carts with laptops and audio/video equipment will be scheduled for deployment across the district.

Through the implementation and integration of a significant Fine Arts program, School District 68 students will truly understand Albert Einstein who said, "When I examine myself and my methods of thought, I come to the conclusion that the gift of fantasy has meant more to me than any talent for abstract, positive thinking."

# Appendix 2

## Email dated 24/03/13

What I wanted to share was in relation to your thoughts on LSS and the consolidation of 6, 7's into the configuration of the secondary school.

LSS has gone through significant change over the past 5 years. Decreasing enrollment is the main driver to that change. Staff have worked together on what we have referred to as "the Change Project" since September 2010. The crux of this project focused on:

- Creating an environment where all participants chose to share their ideas, skills and experience in creating future directions for LSS
- To surface the gifts, skills, abilities and knowledge that each person wants to contribute to the process of creating future direction
- To engage all staff in understanding the reality facing LSS
- To develop a roadmap to discover, discuss and create a vision for LSS's future

Suffice to say, LSS is both **READY and EAGER** for change and have already made significant sacrifice as a school community to ensure that the needs of students and this community of learners is best served now and in the future. Indeed, many LSS programs already have a connection to our feeder schools. Some of these are:

- Band
- Trades
- Dance
- Abed
- Leadership
- Peer Tutoring
- Science
- Alternate

In addition to this, there are several staff members who have expressed interest in a middle / secondary school model running in tandem well before these proposed changes were discussed. We have a group of instructors who have worked this past year on investigating and fostering a “culture of care”. Looking into what it means to build collaborative learning and teaching environment at the secondary school level and the implementation of multi-graded, interdisciplinary teaching teams.

As principal, I have also spoken to large groups of LSS parents over the past years as it applies to change in our community. Demographics, enrollment projections, on-line learning and facilities renewal are not uncommon topics of focus. Our community knows change is coming and are expecting it.

I am recommending that any merger of intermediate grades **NOT WAIT**, but take place immediately (September 2013). The connections, relationships and program opportunities are ready **NOW**. Given the established relationships of the educational community in Ladysmith, the foundation in place with staff and community partners / families, and the logic behind the merger...it makes the most sense to move now.

I trust you will consider these points. I appreciate (as I know my colleagues do as well), your support of our district and schools. Thank you for your efforts in helping School District 68.

*Principal - Ladysmith Secondary School*