

LONG RANGE FACILITY PLAN

School District No. 19 (Revelstoke)

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Introduction

The Ministry of Education requires a board of education to have a Long-Range Facility Plan (LRFP) in place for its school district. The LRFP should lay out various management strategies regarding its inventory of capital assets, to support changes in student enrolment, and educational programming goals. The LRFP should present a wide-ranging vision for the use of a board's current and potential future inventory of capital assets, providing board strategies for the most cost-effective delivery of education programs.

The Revelstoke Board of Education has developed this Long-Range Facility Plan to assist in planning and developing education program delivery for the medium term (i.e. 10 years), to enable district staff to manage capital asset inventory, and reasonably determine and plan for the district's capital requirements over that period.

The District

The Revelstoke School District is relatively large in terms of geographic area, stretching from the Mica Dam in the north to Arrow Lakes (Galena Bay) in the South and East from near the Columbia River to Rogers Pass. It includes the traditional territory of the Sinixt, the Ktunaxa, the Secwepemc, and the Syilx nations. The area is somewhat geographically isolated by mountainous terrain, although the district is bisected by the Trans-Canada Highway, which runs through the City of Revelstoke and provides a major transportation link to the nearby Kootenays, Shuswap, and North Okanagan, as well as the rest of BC and east to Alberta.

Despite the relatively large geographic area of the school district, virtually all of the enrolled students live either in the City of Revelstoke or within the immediate surrounding area. The City of Revelstoke is a small community; according to the 2016 Census, the population was about 7,700. More recent estimates, based on cellular phone data and usage, put the population closer to 14,000 when taking into account seasonal residents and the area surrounding the city boundaries.

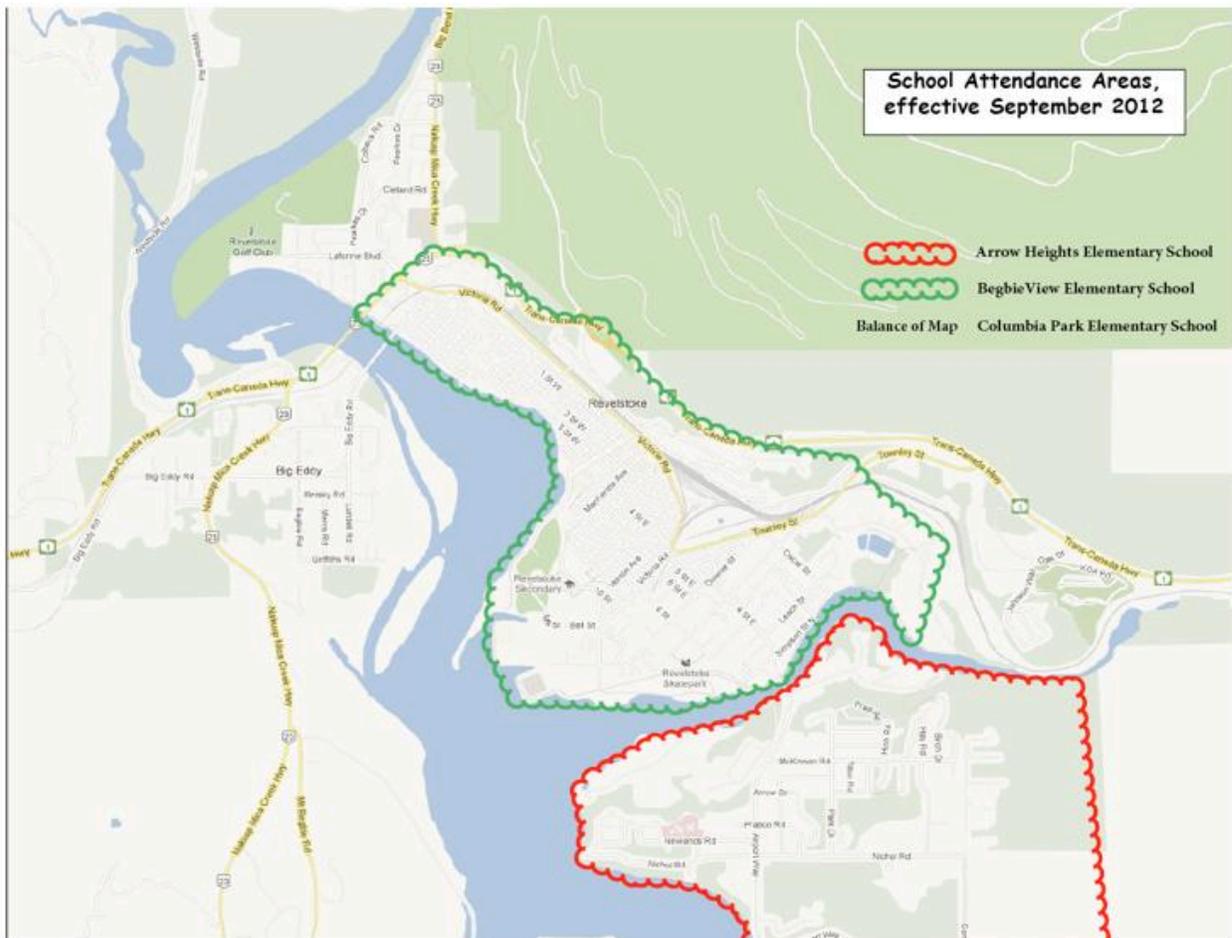
The District enrolls approximately 1,050 students in three K-7 elementary schools (Columbia Park, Arrow Heights, and Begbie View) and one 8-12 secondary school (Revelstoke Secondary). Student enrolment has been relatively flat for the recent past, and this trend is likely to continue in the near to medium-term future, although enrolment may increase moderately as planned development around the Revelstoke Mountain Resort continues.

The Board recognizes and encourages a long tradition of community participation and consultation toward education and partnership, and its school facilities are widely seen

and utilized as community resources. Local organizations and citizens in general enjoy liberal access to the schools and properties, and community pride is demonstrated in the use and care of these facilities.

School Information

The three elementary schools (Columbia Park, Begbie View, Arrow Heights) are well located to serve district students. The catchment area for each school is naturally defined by Highway 1 and the Illecillewaet River that divide the area into three distinct areas, as shown in the district map below. Columbia Park, located north of Highway 1, accommodates students from west of the Columbia River (former Big Eddy catchment) as well as those in the school's immediate neighbourhood. Begbie View serves the central Revelstoke area, and Arrow Heights is located in the south portion of the city, below the Illecillewaet River close by the Revelstoke Mountain Resort, and extending south past the Revelstoke Airport by about 8 kilometres. The District provides transportation services to Arrow Heights and Columbia Park students, as well as to Revelstoke Secondary, which is centrally located near Begbie View Elementary.



The district is fortunate to have two recently completed schools in its inventory (Begbie View Elementary and Revelstoke Secondary). Although building age is not necessarily a negative factor, newer schools are almost always designed and constructed to optimize the most important criteria for the learning environment: school climate control; natural light; and audio quality/noise abatement. Older schools, including those with multiple additions, may not be able to achieve such a high standard for these factors. That said, the district has maintained its schools very effectively, so its older facilities remain in good condition and effectively meet student needs.

Columbia Park Elementary:



The school was constructed in 1974, with additions and renovations in 1975 and 1977. The school has capacity for 20K/275 Elementary students and current enrolment is 28K/156E. Interior renovations to the school changing rooms and gymnasium layout in 2017/18 created an additional classroom and more functional storage area. An addition to the school entrance was provided in 2019, and a number of additional required upgrades were identified in a subsequent review. These were summarized in the District's 2019/20 capital plan in the School Enhancement Program request at an aggregate estimated cost of \$1.308 Million. As these enhancements continue to be carried out, the school overall condition will improve and the useful life of the building will be extended, enabling the school to meet student needs past the timeframe of this report, with continued maintenance.

Arrow Heights Elementary:



The school was constructed in 1978, with additions and renovations in 1987, 1998, and 1992. The school has capacity for 20K/250 Elementary students and current enrolment is 29K/151E. Given its location near the Revelstoke Mountain Resort facility, the Arrow Heights area is one that future development may create additional enrolment pressure for the school.

The Ministry Facility Condition Report (2018) rated the building as being well maintained and in good condition, with a number of recommended upgrades to be undertaken over the short to medium term. As these upgrades occur, the overall school condition will improve and the useful life of the building will be extended, enabling the school to meet student needs past the timeframe of this report.

In addition to enrolling district students, this school provides leased space and site area to the Conseil scolaire de la Colombie-Britannique (CSF). The CSF enrolls approximately 75 students that occupy two classrooms in the school and four portable classrooms on the school site. Future enrolment pressure for either the CSF or SD19 will exert pressure on the building and site, and should be identified as an issue for the Board to deal with. It is understood that there is regular communication between the two Boards on this issue, as well as cooperative means to enhance student education and experience.

Begbie View Elementary:



The school was constructed in 2012 as a replacement for Mountain View Elementary and Mount Begbie Elementary, both of which had reached the end of their useful life. Begbie View has capacity for 80K/250 Elementary students, as well as a Neighbourhood Learning Centre and Early Learning/Strong Start, which reduces the effective capacity to 40K/225E. Current year enrolment is 40K/217 E. The school is a community hub, and is host to several community programs and services, including a local acrobatic program. The Ministry Facility Condition Report (2018) rated the building in excellent condition and identified only minor items such as painting and routine maintenance required. The school is nearing capacity, and the Board has included a four-classroom addition in its most recent capital plan request. If approved, this project could be relatively easily done, as the school was constructed to accommodate such addition as the need arose.

Revelstoke Secondary School:



The school was constructed in 2012 to replace the previous secondary (on site) that had reached the end of its useful life. The school has capacity for 500 secondary students and current enrolment is 402 students. The building also contains a 275-seat theatre, and an oversized gymnasium, both part of the Neighbourhood Learning Centre program. The theatre and gymnasium are widely used by the community as well as contributing to the curriculum and development of students. It is also in very good condition, requiring only typical ongoing maintenance at this time. The Ministry Facility Condition Report (2018) did not identify any building or site issues beyond minor maintenance requirements, although a few minor deficiencies remain from the school construction project. These are being dealt with and will be fully remediated in the immediate future.

Surplus Properties

Farwell Elementary School



This school is located south of Highway 1 approximately midway between Begbie View and Columbia Park Elementary. It was constructed in 1956 and ceased operation in 1988. The building is currently leased to Okanagan College and a childcare organization. The school is in fair operating condition and with refurbishing and upgrading could be re-opened as an elementary school should enrolment pressure occur. Required upgrades include updating mechanical and electrical systems, enlarging the original gymnasium, and modernizing the facility to meet current educational standards. Farwell does represent a valuable asset to the district, however, and there may be an opportunity to expand the Board's relationship with Okanagan College through joint facility use for secondary and post-secondary students toward expanded trades-training or other programs that could be offered at both Farwell and Revelstoke Secondary. It may be in the Board's interest to pursue these opportunities with the College.

Mountain View Elementary (Site)



Mountain View school was closed in 2012 with the opening of Begbie View Elementary. The heritage building, along with a portion of the site, were subsequently sold, but the district retains ownership of five remaining lots. There are several options that the Board could consider for the ultimate use of the lots, however there is no pressing need for disposal or development at this time. It may be in the Board's best interest to hold the sites as a community asset that may contribute to the cost of future educational priorities.

District Enrolment

By nature, and due to many unforeseen elements, enrolment projections are unlikely to be precise. They should, however, be relatively accurate within an order of magnitude that factors in the total student numbers, district-wide population, and number and proximity of communities within district boundaries. Actual future enrolment may still be higher or lower than projected, or in more populous districts, actual enrolment may be within the scope of overall projections but impacted by the shift of populations within the district. Given the relatively compact size of the City of Revelstoke and central location within the District boundaries and a lack of significant community outside the City, this third scenario is very unlikely to impact enrolment or facility needs.

Higher than forecast enrolment will drive the need for better utilization of existing space through catchment area change (where not restricted by geographical impediments such as highway, river, or railways), reallocation of student space within schools (perhaps by limiting community access, reclaiming childcare or other leased-out space), school alterations or acquisition of portables. As these options are exhausted, the permanent addition of space through addition or new school construction must be undertaken.

Should future enrolment decline significantly below projections, the Board may be required to make difficult decisions including school consolidation and/or closure in order to maximize the use of its resources. This is a very unlikely scenario however and decline, if any, should be modest, given the relatively stable local economy

Enrolment in Revelstoke has been relatively constant at between 950 and 1,050 students over the past decade; current year reported FTE is 1,012.75. District projections call for this trend to continue, although there are factors that may bring upward pressure on these estimates.

The most significant of these is the continued development of Revelstoke Mountain Resort and other recreational developments in the surrounding area. The Resort is a major recreational attraction, offering year-round amenities including downhill and cross-country skiing, mountain biking and hiking/trail running, spa and hot springs. The Resort is known world-wide and attracts a large number of foreign and domestic visitors. The Resort currently plans for development of additional residential properties as well as a golf course and new hotel and convention facility space, all of which will create the need for workers in hospitality and tourism.

The natural beauty and unique ambience of Revelstoke combined with relatively easy access to major transportation is an attraction to lower mainland or out of province residents seeking a change in lifestyle or an opportunity to take advantage of comparably lower real estate values. The area's high-speed internet connectivity and excellent online access enables easy remote working ability which is also an attraction. High quality local schools and education opportunities within a relatively small community are an attractive option to residents of crowded and busy urban centres.

The exact potential impact of these factors on school enrolment is difficult to predict; however, it is likely that the current facility capacity will be able to absorb the additional students that may result at least in the short to medium term. As is common in districts that face enrolment pressure continually, on-site portables and creative scheduling are used as temporary measures pending approval and construction of permanent additions or new schools.

Student Transportation

The district provides transportation services to three schools: Arrow Heights and Columbia Park Elementary, and Revelstoke Secondary. A transportation allowance is provided to assist the small number of outlying residents whose children attend these schools. Any future potential enrolment pressure from increased development is much more likely to occur within the immediate area of the City, which will have minimal impact on the need for expanded student transportation. The rural and distant areas are much less likely to see such development in the foreseeable future. It is therefore not anticipated that significant increase in the need for student transportation is likely to occur within the scope of this report.

Community

The district has a strong relationship with the City of Revelstoke at both the elected official and staff level. Elected official meetings are held as required, and district staff are kept apprised of City development plans that will impact on school resources. The Board participates with the City in development of the Official Community Plan, and staff meet 3-4 times annually to explore opportunities for joint use of Parks and recreational facilities as well as school-based sites and facilities including the Community Theatre at RSS.

There is an ongoing relationship with the Okanagan College, primarily through the College leasing the Farwell site, but also through discussion and planning for programming that will be a mutual benefit to both organizations and their students.

Communication and consultation with parents and the community at large is something the Board has done extremely well for several years. The Board invited full community participation in the planning for the new schools, and continued that process to determine the ultimate best use for the closed facilities and sites. This is well documented on the district website, and was personally observed within the Ministry of Education as the projects were planned and carried out. This policy continues with the development of community participation in and around district schools, and has the very positive effect of fostering a real feeling of pride in ownership locally.

Educational Programming

The district has adopted a number of goals to achieve and improve excellence in education for its students and community. These include maintaining and improving schools to provide a safe and healthy learning environment; increasing district technological capabilities; effective communication with the community and local government; and encouraging participation by parents, other volunteers, and local businesses. Working within this context, Revelstoke provides a well-rounded compendium of educational services to district children and students from pre-school age through secondary graduation. The natural amenities available in the immediate area also allow for a full range of outdoor recreational education opportunities, complementing classroom and on-line learning. Outdoor classroom areas are provided in each of the elementary schools, to enhance student experience and allow full exposure to the natural environment.

Strong Start, a free drop-in early learning program for preschool-aged children accompanied by a parent or a caregiver, is provided at Begbie View Elementary. This well-attended program provides a qualified early childhood educator to lead activities that help children develop linguistically, physically, emotionally and socially, and become comfortable in the school setting.

The district does not operate schools of choice, and full elementary instruction is provided in all three locations. There is no French immersion program and none is contemplated over the scope of this report.

The district also hosts approximately 25 offshore students through its International Student Programs at Revelstoke Secondary.

The district serves four first nations communities: the Sinixt, the Ktunaxa, the Secwepmec, and the Syilx. Indigenous programs are provided in all district schools, including dedicated space at RSS and there are approximately 110 self-declared indigenous students district-wide.

The district does not offer a Distributed Learning Program; DL students can enrol with School District No. 6 (Rocky Mountain) through an inter-district agreement.

Revelstoke Secondary educational amenities include Woodworking, Automotive, Food Services, Science and Computer Labs to enhance student educational experience. With a relatively small secondary school population, some of these resources, while valuable, may be underutilized. There may be a market for the district to consider via agreement with Okanagan College, Revelstoke Mountain resort, and even local businesses to provide access for post-secondary and/or industry-specific training. These may also provide a source of future employment for graduating students and encourage graduates to remain in the community with a fulfilling career.

Trends and Expectations

The district has managed its inventory very effectively over the past years; schools are centrally located and accessible to students; older schools are well maintained and in good condition; the two new schools were constructed in the most appropriate locations, to take advantage of sites already district-owned and to be most easily accessible to students.

Student enrolment has been relatively flat at approximately 1,050 students over several years. This trend is expected to continue over the coming years, with any increase expected to be driven by planned and future development of recreational facilities associated with the Revelstoke Mountain Resort. Such enrolment pressure is expected to be moderate, and to occur within the City boundaries, and can be accommodated within the existing school inventory.

Recognizing this potential demand, the district has included a 4-classroom addition to Begbie View Elementary in its current capital plan request to the Ministry of Education. Given the availability of capacity within the district, including spaces leased to the CF and Okanagan College, it is very unlikely any additional spaces will be approved for Ministry funding in Revelstoke for at least the next five years.

The district educational program incorporates classroom instruction with outdoor education to take advantage of the natural beauty and recreational/educational amenities in the local environment. Involvement of local business and industry in program development and availability enhances the value of local educational opportunities for students. Cooperation and collaboration with local First Nations assists a robust Indigenous Education Program, as well as a fuller educational experience for all students.

The district maintains excellent relationships with local government and the community at large, through strong communication links and by encouraging volunteer participation, local input, and wide community use of schools and sites. There is a distinct degree of community pride in the schools and educational experience enjoyed by students.

Existing schools are generally well maintained, therefore low likelihood of need for major renovation or replacement. In the absence of changes in educational programming the district should focus on minor maintenance and upgrading to its existing schools.

Summary

The Long-Range Facility Plan reviews demographics, enrolment, and educational programs to determine how the districts' inventory will best serve and support the student population, and where changes may be required to adjust to changing conditions. At this time, it is observed that Revelstoke is well served with its existing schools and support facilities. While student enrolment is forecast to increase slightly over the coming decade, the change is not expected to be sufficient to require significant changes in the district schools.

In district schools there is available capacity now for approximately 200 Elementary and 125 Secondary students, including the area now leased to the CSF. Both Begbie View Elementary and Revelstoke Secondary were constructed with the ability to add classroom capacity to meet future enrolment demand.

The Board may wish to continue to work with CSF at Arrow Heights Elementary recognizing the education being offered to students, albeit those from "outside" the district enrolment, and in view of the lease income earned from this arrangement. At the same time, the Board may wish to limit CSF expansion opportunities at the school in recognition of the available capacity and potential for further district enrolment pressure. Removing the CSF from Arrow Heights will provide an additional two classrooms for future needs, plus provide increased site availability through the removal of portable classrooms.

Reclaiming Farwell could add a further 200-250 Elementary spaces if and when needed, although that will require significant consultation with Okanagan College and the childcare provider who currently occupy the site. As well, the school will require extensive renovation and updating to be converted for elementary school use. A benefit to the district exists in the potential for increased utilization of facilities at both Okanagan College and Revelstoke Secondary to provide enhanced secondary and post-secondary programs in technical and trades areas. Enhancement of these programs will mutually benefit students from both streams, as well as the community at large. These should continue to be explored for current students and be fully considered in any discussion of reclamation of Farewell to meet enrolment pressure.

As stated above, Revelstoke schools are in very good condition, and well maintained, through a well managed program using AFG and Ministry capital funding. Continuation of this policy and practice will ensure all schools remain in condition to meet student health and safety requirements and provide educational value for many years.

The district has accumulated a reserve of capital from the net sale proceeds of properties including the former Big Eddy Elementary, Mt. Begbie Elementary, and portions of the Mountain View Elementary. Continuing to hold the remaining Mountain View site will provide an additional contribution to those reserves should other major

capital projects be considered. With current and future pressures on Ministry funding priorities, it is very likely that a district contribution will be required by the Ministry as a prerequisite to consideration of project approval.

In summary, to continue to be successful the district should do in the future that which it does well now, and has done well in the past: maintain its schools in optimal condition; meet and consult with local government officials over items of mutual interest; plan educational services with local community input; build on existing good relationships with education partners in the community; and utilize its facility inventory efficiently and effectively.