

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
INFORMATION BRIEFING NOTE**

DATE: December 6, 2018

CLIFF: 206719

PREPARED FOR: Honourable Rob Fleming, Minister - **FOR INFORMATION**

SUBJECT: Edith Cavell Elementary School seismic upgrade

PURPOSE: Information for meeting with Janet Fraser December 7, 2018

BACKGROUND:

- In March 2018, the Vancouver School District (District) was requested to create a Project Definition Report (PDR) for the seismic mitigation of Edith Cavell Elementary (Cavell).
- The PDR was received and endorsed by the Steering Committee of the Vancouver Project Office in June 2018.
- The recommended option was a seismic upgrade for \$15.6 million.
- Seismic upgrading was the lowest cost option and enables the heritage value of the school to be retained.
- The Cavell project was announced on September 28, 2018, jointly with a seismic upgrade project at General Wolfe Elementary.
- After the public announcement, concerns emerged from Cavell parents that the bus rides to the swing space schools would be too long and grades would be split to the two swing space schools.
- Parents then began to question the decision to seismically upgrade the school rather than do a full replacement.
- There was then further interest expressed in doing an addition to the school, either as part of an upgrade or a replacement.
- VSB informed Ministry staff that they will inform Cavell community as well as the Magee and Maple Grove communities, that they would move the swing space to Maple Grove/Magee and that the project would be delayed by three months.
- Ministry staff informed VSB that the timeline is stated in the funding agreement and delaying may require Treasury Board approval and any cost impact will be the responsibility of the VSB.

DISCUSSION:

- Ministry staff have been working with VSB staff to explore options that could mitigate the concerns from parents, but remaining within approved scope, schedule and budget.
- Not every seismic project is a full replacement – the Ministry and school districts must remain focused on creating enough safe seats for all students as quickly as possible, which means working within approved funding allocations.

- The District has not managed their cross-catchment boundary enrolments in the past, which has created pressures in some schools in the District and empty seats in others.
 - As a result, Cavell's family of schools currently enrolls 342 students who are attending from outside of the catchments for these schools
- The District has also maintained catchment boundaries for years which have resulted in imbalanced enrolment between schools
 - The District began a catchment boundary review earlier this year which was shelved after it was poorly received
- The District included Cavell as a seismic priority but NOT as an expansion priority in their 2018/19 Capital Plan. The Ministry responded to this Capital Plan in March 2018 supporting the Cavell seismic project to proceed to business case development.
- Cavell was included as an expansion request in their 2019/20 Capital Plan.
- All school district capital plans are under review for Budget 2019 funding.
- For reference:
 - The Vancouver Project Office Steering Committee decided on June 20, 2018 that the Seismic Upgrade (maintaining existing capacity) was Cavell's recommended option
 - The District submitted their 2019/20 Capital Plan on July 4, 2018, that included Cavell as an expansion request (3rd highest VSB priority behind Coal Harbour and False Creek)
- The District currently has over \$65M in Restricted and Local Capital that could be used to augment capital projects.

CONCLUSION:

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