



Long Term Facility Plan– 2010 to 2025
Cowichan Valley School District

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Preface

Executive Summary

Introduction

Background to the Long Term Facility Plan

Before the formation of school districts in 1946, there were over 800 local and rural school districts across BC. Most were supervising one or two schools, and there were many schools scattered throughout the Valley, servicing families generally involved in forestry, the region's economic mainstay. Many provided education up to grade 10 in one or two room schools.

These schools continued to provide the core educational service through the 1950s as the post war baby boom got into full swing. By the early 1960s, the school population was overwhelming these small schools, local transportation was improving, and the value of larger schools was being accepted. The cores of many of the District's elementary schools date from this period, although many small schools of one to four classrooms, especially in more remote parts of the region, lasted into the 1990s and early years of this century.

Secondary school education, especially beyond age 15, was also largely a product of the post war years. Three of the region's four secondary schools were built in that period: Cowichan Secondary School's oldest current buildings date from 1949, and Chemainus Secondary from 1950 (although there were previous buildings on these sites). The same is true for Lake Cowichan Secondary.

The broad lines of the current pattern of schools was therefore in place by the end of the 1960s and is a reflection of those baby boom years. Birth rates plummeted in the mid-1960s, and by the early 1970s 'declining enrolment' was a topic of discussion among school administrators and trustees. However it was also seen as an opportunity for reducing class sizes and providing some specialized rooms in elementary schools, such as band rooms and, a little later, computer rooms.

However there was less building in the 1970s and 1980s, as governments responded to reducing enrolments by reducing capital budgets. Renovation continued to upgrade and replace many of the oldest elements of schools, but often needed renovations failed to be funded within the provincial government's increasingly centralized capital funding processes.

By the 1990s, capital budgets were increasing as 'the echo of the boom' started to increase school enrolments once again. New schools, such as Frances Kelsey (1995) were built and many

Under the public education system in British Columbia, the provincial government is responsible for:

- *providing area standards for the design and construction of schools; and,*
- *allocating funds for capital projects fairly, based on school district needs.*

School boards are responsible for:

- *designing and constructing schools buildings to specified standards, including LEED Gold; and,*
- *ensuring that school buildings and grounds are safe, secure and properly maintained; and,*
- *operating and utilizing schools as efficiently as possible.*

Each year school boards submit five-year capital plans that include details on school building projects they wish to undertake. Each capital request is analyzed and assigned a priority ranking. The criteria used to determine priority are applied consistently, thereby ensuring that proposed capital projects are ranked fairly. Based on detailed analysis of district submissions, government establishes an overall capital budget for schools. Resources are allocated to the highest-priority projects, and school boards are advised which projects may proceed.
Source: Ministry website

renovations/additions carried out. However this period of boom was less dynamic than that of the 1950/60s, and by 2000, provincial capital budgets were reducing again.

Historically, three factors have driven the capital budgeting for school districts and for the Ministry of Education:

- Addressing enrolment pressures and growth.
- Maintaining the integrity of existing buildings.
- Adapting school facilities to meet changing educational goals.

The requirement for a long term facility plan is the most recent addition by the Ministry to the capital planning process. The purpose of the Long Term Facilities Plan is described in the Ministry's Capital Plan Instructions:

As described in the resulting Education Facilities Planning and Procurement Process Review report, a district-wide comprehensive SDFP should form the basis for investment decisions. Such plans should take into consideration education program requirements and trends, operating capacities and current condition of existing facilities, current land use, anticipated changes in land use, absorption rates, yield rates, community demographics, local community and economic development strategies, and other considerations. In terms of capital plan submissions to the Ministry, the SDFP would provide a comprehensive rationale for specific capital projects that may be proposed as part of the district's five-year capital plan. In addition, the SDFP provides a district-wide framework for other key local decisions such as school consolidations, locations for district programs and maintenance priorities. The SDFP should outline concrete plans for a ten-year planning horizon with more general consideration for the longer term. The scope and emphasis of each SDFP will vary depending on the specific circumstances and priorities of each school district.

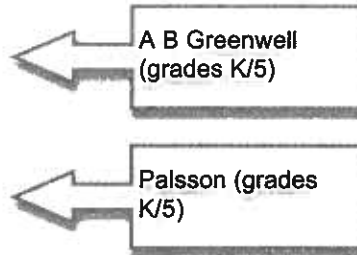
Source: 2009/2010 Capital Plan Instructions

District Overview

The District is divided administratively into four zones. In addition, French Immersion programs operate out of two elementary schools, and a middle and secondary school:

Lake Zone

Lake Cowichan Sec.
School (grades 6/12)

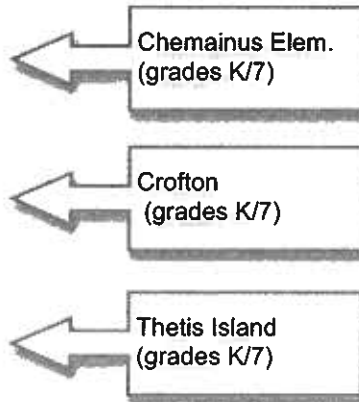


In the Lake Zone, several schools have been closed over the past decade. At the present time, A B Greenwell students are bused to Yount Elementary while a decision on the replacement of their school, closed due to issues of mold, is determined.

The grade configuration in this zone was changed when Stanley Gordon Middle School was closed in June 2002. Although there are two elementary schools at present, the current school district position is that in the long term one elementary would better serve the students of the zone.

North Zone

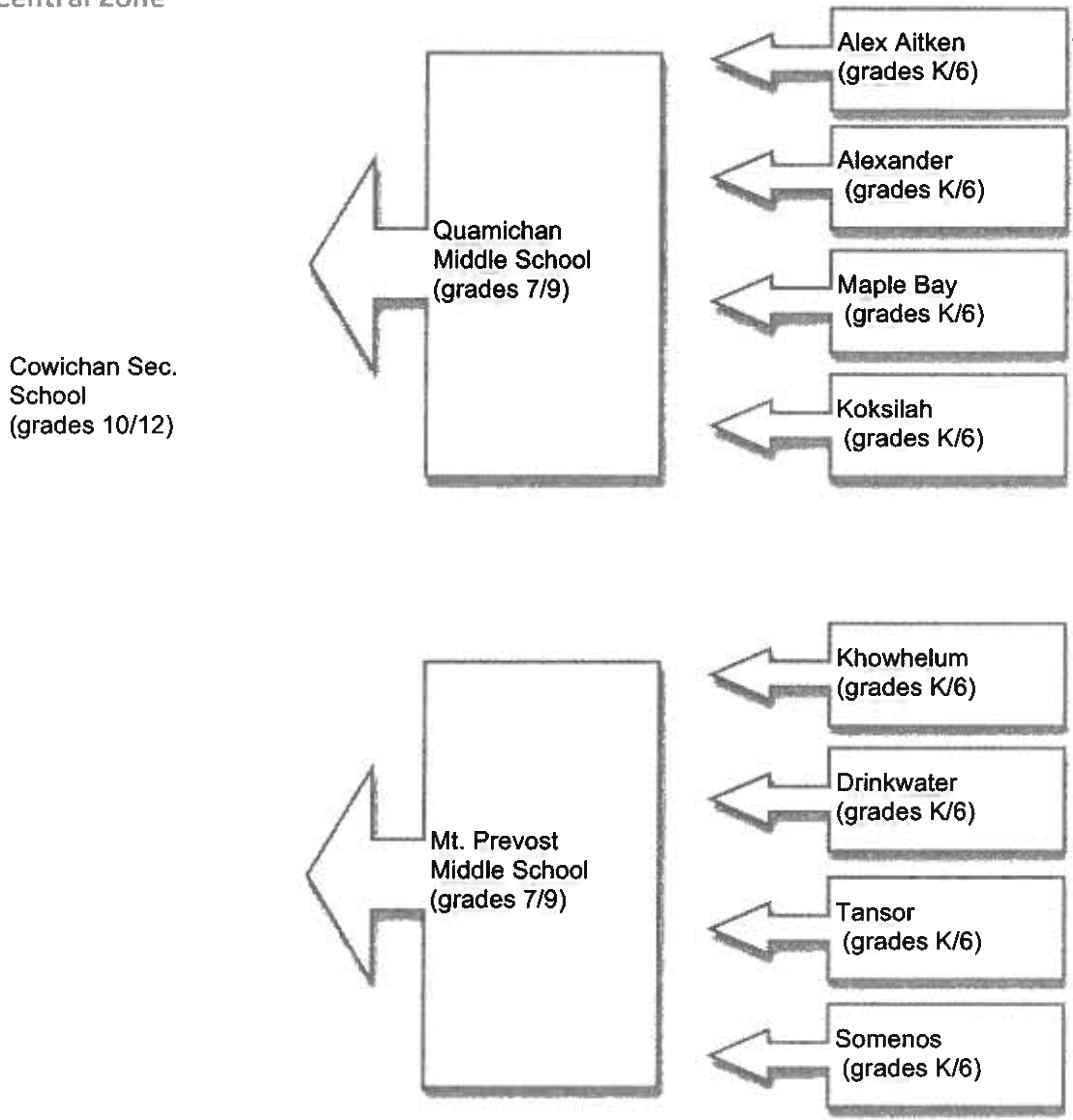
Chemainus Sec.
School (grades 8/12)



The North Zone has also seen several schools closed over the past decade. At the present time, the grade configuration in this zone has a transition at grade 7/8, with grade 7 students in the elementary system transitioning to grade 8 at Chemainus Secondary.

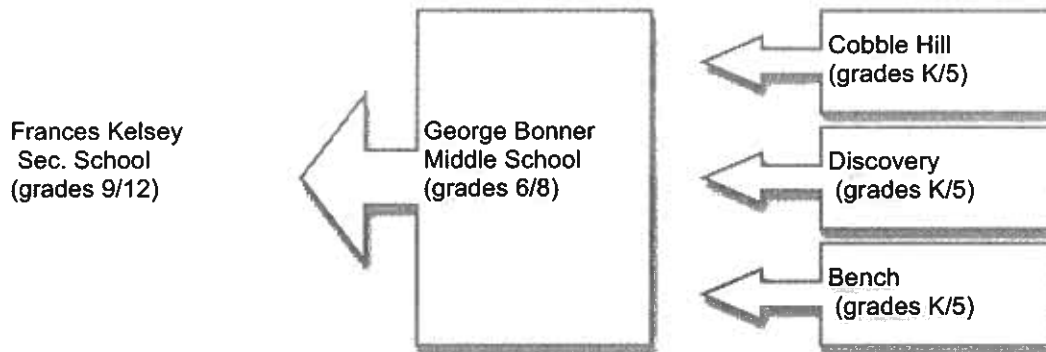
The two major elementaries are of recent vintage, Chemainus opening in 2001 and Crofton in 2009. Chemainus Secondary has had some major renovation in the last ten years, but still requires more upgrading for educational reasons and to maintain building integrity. Thetis Island school serves the needs of the few remaining children on the island.

Central Zone



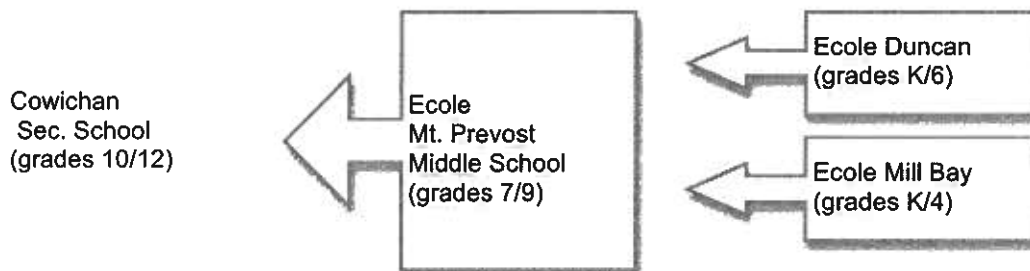
The Central Zone enrolment has been a little more stable over past years, and its larger size and more urban densities have served to keep most schools in operation, although all are significantly smaller than they were 10 years ago. The elementary schools all run to grade 6, with the two middle schools operating grades 7 through 9, and Cowichan Secondary operating grades 10 through 12. Students therefore start their graduation program in grade 9 at the middle school, not an educationally preferred alternative. There is great diversity in the condition of the 11 schools in the zone: Maple Bay is the newest, being built in 2001; most of the rest are products of the 1950s and 1960s, with an old core and multiple additions; and Cowichan Secondary itself was built in the late 1940s, with numerous additions and renovations – it is a school with character and history, but in great need of total renewal.

South Zone



The South Zone has the grade configuration that is the preferred option throughout the district, with transitions at grades 5/6 and 8/9. This part of the district has seen its enrolments in all schools decline, and this has been hastened by the opening in 2005 of a French Immersion school in the old Mill Bay Elementary building (regular program closed in 2003). This has drained students from Discovery and Cobble Hill in particular. Several other schools have closed in the last ten years: Elsie Miles and Cowichan Station. The schools are generally new or renovated in this zone: Frances Kelsey Secondary opened in 1995, while George Bonner was completely renovated and expanded in 2005. Cobble Hill Elementary was newly constructed in 2001. Both Discovery and Bench are older, but are both in relatively good condition.

French Immersion



The district's French Immersion program started in the early 1990s, with the historic Duncan Elementary being transformed into Ecole Duncan. These original students moved through Mt Prevost for middle school years and on to Cowichan Secondary for grades 10/12. In 2005, a second elementary program was started in the old Mill Bay Elementary school buildings. It has grown to grade 4 at present and it is planned for these students also to attend Mt Prevost and Cowichan for middle and secondary schooling. Comments about the buildings at Mt Prevost and Cowichan are noted above. Ecole Duncan's main building, a heritage structure, was renovated in 1999, but it still has numerous low quality other buildings on its site which it uses to enrol classes. Ecole Mill Bay is an old school, once closed, and in fair but not good condition.

The Current Capital Plan

Every year, the District is required to submit a capital plan to the Ministry. In its guidelines, the Ministry lays out the priorities that it will be following in evaluating and approving projects, termed Capital Cost Drivers. In its 2009/10 Capital Plan Instructions, it noted four primary drivers:

- Enrolment changes – essentially more students are recognized as requiring new space, although there are many provisos to this simplistic statement.
- Facility Age and Building Condition – buildings that have 'reached the end of their functional or economic life' can either be renovated or replaced. The Ministry only funds projects over \$1.5m¹.
- Seismic Risk – the Ministry notes 'Seismic remediation must be integrated into a board's overall capital planning strategy to effectively plan and implement priority seismic projects.
- Student Transportation Services – new or replacement school buses.

In 2009, the CVSD's Five Year Capital Plan Submission was as follows:

Priority	Project	Funding Request (rounded to nearest thousand)
1	AB Greenwell Elementary - Replace	\$12.080m
2	Cowichan Secondary – Replace	\$42,314m
3	Koksilah Elementary – Seismic Upgrading	\$2.830m
4	Chemainus Secondary – Seismic Upgrading	\$3.241m
5	Mt Prevost Middle – Seismic Upgrading	\$4.200m
6	Quamichan Middle – Seismic Upgrading	\$3.123m
7	Duncan Elementary – Seismic Upgrading	\$1.661m
8	Khowhemun Elementary – Seismic Upgrading	\$0.984m
9	Bench Elementary – Seismic Upgrading	\$2.361m
10	Alexander Elementary – Seismic Upgrading	\$2.674m
11	Tansor Elementary – Seismic Upgrading	\$1.008m
12	Alex Aitken Elementary – Seismic Upgrading	\$0.541m
13	Somenos Elementary – Seismic Upgrading	\$1.602m
14	Mill Bay Elementary – Seismic Upgrading	\$1.049m
15	District Resource Centre – Seismic Upgrading	\$0.719m
16	Bus Replacement	\$0.149m
17	Bus Replacement	\$0.118m
18	Bus Replacement	\$0.447m
	TOTAL	\$81.105m

¹ The Ministry Guidelines note: "Any renovation projects less than \$1.5 million are expected to be managed using Annual Facility Grant funding, with work scheduled over several years, if necessary, to complete the project.' However for the 2009/10 fiscal years, the Ministry is not funding this particular program.

The Educational Planning Context

It is important to remember that school facilities are there to allow educational programs to take place. Therefore in discussing long term facility needs, we must also address long term educational needs.

The Board's Strategic Plan

In January 2010, the Board approved its 2010 to 2015 Strategic Plan, which focused on ensuring Success for All Students. It noted:

The purpose of the Strategic Plan is to guide the improvement of educational opportunities for all students and effectively manage school sites and financial resources over the next five years.

The Strategic Plan provided goals in five broad areas: Programs and Services, Equitable Access, Community Engagement, Facilities and Educational Funding.

Clearly the goals on Facilities concern this plan:

- A new elementary school at Lake Cowichan.
- Replace the Cowichan Secondary facility with a new facility at Cowichan Place.
- Consistent district standards for maintenance and custodial services.
- Develop this Long Term Facility Plan.

However achieving the other educational goals related to Programs and Services, and Equitable Access may have facility implications. Those goals are as follows:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Continue to nurture academic, fine arts, social development and physical education</i> | <p>Ensuring the appropriate facilities for regular and enrichment programs will be a challenge that can be met in a number of ways. Firstly, changes to the grade configuration which increase the exposure of students to specialist teachers and specialist facilities; in particular extending the reach of middle schools, or middle school programming opportunities, throughout the district. Secondly, ensuring that fine arts facilities and physical education facilities meet or exceed ministry standards at all schools. Thirdly, by ensuring that support staff who deliver social development programs are afforded adequate accommodation within all schools.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Maintain current educational choices and opportunities</i> | <p>Maintaining educational opportunities is a particular challenge in schools which are experiencing declining enrolment. When schools fall below an acceptable enrolment level, a consolidation process will likely be the best way of maintaining educational choices.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Improve transition and graduation rates</i> | <p>The district's transition rates for grade 10 through to grade 12, its graduation rate, and its six year completion rate are all below provincial average. Improving facilities for the senior grades, and ensuring that all secondary schools within the district incorporate grade 9 students have significant facility implications for secondary schools in particular but also for all schools if indeed a reconfiguration of grades is determined to be appropriate.</p> |

- *Strengthen curriculum and teaching that reflects the Hwulmuhw language and culture* Ensuring that the schools within the district which serve first Nations children are designed and equipped to strengthen first Nations community values.
- *Support at risk students and students with special needs* It is important that all schools have the appropriate accommodation for individual special needs students and accommodate programs tailored to their needs.
- *Expand trade and employment training programs* Providing a range of trades and employment training programs is one way in which student success can be enhanced. It is also important that secondary school students are able to access programs at Vancouver Island University's campus in Duncan. The opportunities for meeting both these goals will be enhanced by the redevelopment on the Cowichan Place site of a replacement for Cowichan Secondary School.
- *Enhanced program opportunities for small secondary schools and alternate/adult options*
- *Strengthened the French Immersion program* The school board have developed a plan for the short-term development of the French Immersion program, however consideration of the available facilities for the program at all levels in the long-term should be addressed as part of this facilities plan.
- *Support early learning opportunities* Facilities must be available to accommodate the transition to full day kindergarten in 2010 and 2011, and also to accommodate children aged four years in schools on a part-time or full-time basis commencing in 2015 as is the current Ministry of education plan.
- *Incorporate outreach and technological opportunities* The opportunities to enhance programs at the two small secondary schools are more problematic, but ensuring that their facilities are upgraded to accommodate distance learning will be important if this goal is to be achieved.

The Board's Facility Planning Principles

As part of the 2004 Strategic Facilities Plan, goals for planning district facilities were developed and approved by the board in 2004. These goals still provide an important and effective framework for facility planning. They are as follows:

- Use periods of declining enrolment to shed old and obsolete facilities
- Use periods of growing enrolment to add new capacity
- Capitalize on the underutilized value of land
- Move to a consistent grade configuration as soon as possible/feasible
- Keep the size of elementary schools between 200 and 400 students
- Keep middle school size between 450 and 750
- Keep secondary school size between 600 and 1200 for grades 9/12
- Achieve utilization of as close to 100% of the ministry operating capacity as possible
- Partner with other agencies where both feasible and educationally desirable

Our consultation with district officials has indicated that the long-term facility plan should again be built around the achievement of these goals.

Current Condition, Capacity and Utilization of Schools

District Overview of Capacities

The Ministry of Education has a series of formulae which calculate both allowable space when a school to serve a given enrolment is built, and the capacity of a school with a certain number of classrooms and other spaces. These capacities have been agreed for every school in the province. There are separate capacities assigned for kindergarten², for elementary (grades 1 through 7) and for secondary (grades 8 through 12) schools. The capacity of middle schools is assigned as part elementary and part secondary. In addition, there is a 'nominal' capacity which is based on 20 students/classroom in kindergarten and 25 students/classroom in other grades; and an operating capacity which acknowledges class size agreements. School capacities in the Cowichan Valley are as follows:

	Capacity					
	K	Nominal Elem	Sec	K	Operating Elem	Sec
Central Zone						
Alex Aitken	40	225		38	207	
Alexander	80	300		76	276	
Koksilah*	40	200		38	184	
Maple Bay	80	350		76	322	
Quamichan		200	400		200	400
Drinkwater	80	325		76	299	
Khowhemun	80	325		76	299	
Somenos	40	100		38	92	
Tansor	80	275		76	253	
Mt Prevost		100	275		100	275
Cowichan			900			900
Total	520	2,400	1,575	494	2,232	1,575
North Zone						
Chemainus El*	80	350		76	325	
Thetis Island		50			46	
Crofton	40	175		38	162	
Chemainus Sec			550			550
Total	120	575	550	114	533	550
South Zone						
Bench	80	325		76	293	
Cobble Hill	80	350		76	316	
Discovery	80	325		76	293	
George Bonner		450	250		450	250
Frances Kelsey			1,000			1,000
Total	240	1,450	1,250	228	1,352	1,250
Lake Zone						
AB Greenwell	40	175		38	158	
Palsson	70	125		38	113	
LCSS			600			600
Total	110	300	600	76	271	600
French Immersion						
Duncan El	80	250		76	230	
Mill Bay (D.E.)	80	175		76	147	
Mt Prevost		75	100		75	100
Cowichan			100			100
Total	160	500	200	152	452	200
District Total	1,150	5,225	4,175	1,064	4,840	4,175

Figure 1 - District Nominal and Operating Capacities

² The original purpose of separating kindergarten capacity was to reflect its half-day program. No doubt once all kindergarten students are full day (as of September 2011), the Ministry will no doubt change this approach.

In total therefore, the District has an operating capacity that will accommodate just over 1,000 kindergarten students (1,064), over 4,800 elementary students (4,840), and just over 4,000 secondary students (4,175).

District Overview of Facility Conditions

The Ministry of Education funds all capital construction and renovation of school facilities in BC. In addition, the purchase of school buses is managed out of this same capital account. Managing this annual budgetary process is complex, with a primary goal of allocating funds to the projects of greatest need on a province-wide scale. In order to manage this task, the Ministry has various methods of gathering data on schools and evaluating the projects that school districts propose for funding. Some of these processes and data sources are as follows:

Facility Audits and Project Identification Reports - All schools in the province have received a level 1 Audit. This includes a review of all its structures and utilities, with a rating scale prepared for over 200 different variables. Each is scored and the total summed, and then expressed as a percentage of the potential maximum. All CVSD schools were rated in 2000, and again in 2008. When schools are considered candidates for major renovation, the Ministry will fund a level 2 audit prior to determining the exact nature of the renovation project. In addition, the Ministry will also fund a Project Identification Report where there are multiple different courses of action; such a report was prepared in April 2009 concerning the replacement of A B Greenwell Elementary.

Seismic Upgrade Program – the Ministry has allocated funding (\$1.5 billion over 15 years) to upgrade all schools to meet the risks related to future seismic activity. In 2004, all school buildings in the District were assessed, and required remediation funding identified. In each capital budget since then, there has been funding allocated for seismic upgrading. Lake Cowichan Secondary and Drinkwater Elementary are the first two CVSD schools in this program

Building Envelope Program – the building envelope program assists School Districts with the identification and remediation of the causes and resultant damage from water ingress where premature failure of the building envelope has occurred. This work often occurs in conjunction with seismic upgrading.

District Overview of Utilization

Utilization measures the amount of a school’s operating capacity that is occupied by students. The overall district utilization is as follows:

<i>District Totals</i>	K	Elem	Sec
Capacity	1,064	4,840	4,175
2009 Enrolment	507	4,121	3,427
Utilization	48%	85%	82%

Figure 2 - Utilization - District Overview

Clearly, the declining enrolment trend of the past decade has left some capacity unutilized, although in reality, the district has used these spaces for district and other programs. The move to full day kindergarten will significantly increase the utilization at the kindergarten level. Utilization at the zone level is discussed in the next section of the report.

Lake Zone

Five schools serve the Lake zone, although two have been closed for regular school purposes:

- Stanley Gordon Middle School closed in 2002, although the gym is still used for middle school PE and for district storage.
- Yount Elementary was closed in June 2006, but is currently housing the students from A B Greenwell while a decision is made concerning that school's future.

The three other schools are as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| AB Greenwell Elementary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This 1968/9 constructed school is currently closed due to the discovery of mold. Estimates for its renovation are in the region of \$5.6m (2009 estimate), while it would cost \$7.7m to replace the building with a new school of the same capacity. The Ministry and the District are reviewing options for its future. • Its replacement at a larger size (80K + 300) was the District's #1 2009/10 capital priority, with an estimated cost of \$12.080m. |
| Palsson Elementary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small compact school built in 1975. Its seismic risk rating is low. It has a few building issues and some of its facilities, such as the gym, are undersized. • It sits on a large site of 15.4 acres, but only 30% of this is usable, the remainder being ecologically sensitive, and could be transferred to community or municipal ownership. |
| Lake Cowichan Secondary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is undergoing a seismic and building envelope rehabilitation in 2009/10. Heating costs are high – this school, like others in the Lake Zone, is heated by oil, since there is no natural gas in the area. • It should be noted that the old Stanley Gordon School is located on/adjacent to the LCSS site. The only part of the building still used is the gymnasium, and this usage could be accommodated in the main school gymnasium. The school is used for storage by the District. Its demolition in the near future should be considered since there are some mold issues (not in the gym, which is on a separate air handling system), and the retaining wall between LCSS and Stanley Gordon is showing signs of 'slope creep'. |

The overall capacity and utilization situation in this zone is as follows:

	Audit Scores	Capacity Operating		
		K	Elem	Sec
Lake Zone				
AB Greenwell	not rated	38	158	
Palsson	60	38	113	
LCSS				600
Total		76	271	600
2009 Enrolment		42	303	275
Utilization		55%	112%	46%

Figure 3 - Audit Scores, Capacity and Utilization - Lake Zone

The grade configuration in this zone does not match the Ministry's approach to expressing capacities, however when the 91 grade 6 and 7 students are included with the secondary school enrolment, utilization at the elementary schools reduces to 79%, and the secondary school increases to 61%.

North Zone

The north zone has two main elementary school and a two room school house on Thetis Island, which all feed to Chemainus Secondary School.

The condition of these four schools is as follows:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Chemainus Elementary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New school constructed in 2001. It is in excellent condition, although there are some ground water issues on the site. It should be noted that community use of the school results in both higher energy costs than found at the other two comparable schools (Maple Bay and Cobble Hill), and greater wear such as on the gym floor. These issues result from the designation and use of the school as a community school. |
| Thetis Island Elementary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single classroom wood frame building built in 1950, with a second classroom added in 1997. Quite adequate for what it is. |
| Crofton Elementary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crofton Elementary is a new school opened in February 2009. Its site development was not completed during construction and continues to be an issue. |
| Chemainus Secondary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2003, new portions of the building were brought up to current standards and portions of the roof membrane were replaced including new roof diaphragm in those areas but it should be noted that this was not a seismic upgrade. The academic wing and the IE shops were not upgraded at all in 2003. Completion of the seismic upgrading was the District's #4 2009/10 capital priority. |

The overall capacity and utilization situation in this zone is as follows:

	Audit Scores	Capacity Operating		
		K	Elem	Sec
North Zone				
Chemainus El*	79	76	325	
Thetis Island	46		46	
Crofton		38	162	
Chemainus Sec	61			550
Total		114	533	550
2009 Enrolment		52	441	385
Utilization		46%	83%	70%

Figure 4 - Audit Scores, Capacity and Utilization - North Zone

Once full day kindergarten is instituted, the low kindergarten utilization will be removed. Capacity at both elementary schools is over 90% when Thetis Island School's capacity is excluded. At 70%, the utilization at the secondary level is lower than the Ministry like to see.

Central Zone

Details on the condition of the 11 schools in the central zone are given below:

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Alex Aitken
Elementary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small, well built school, with core of older classrooms, but the majority dating from a major addition in 1992 and 2000 upgrade. The seismic upgrade requirement is limited, estimated in 2004 at \$389,000. A more comprehensive upgrade is required. • Seismic upgrading was the District's #12 2009/10 capital priority. |
| Alexander
Elementary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This school dates from 1957, with additions in 1965 and 1970; a new gym was built in 1973. It seismic rating throughout is moderate/high, except for the gym which is low. • Seismic upgrading was the District's #10 2009/10 capital priority. • The school was affected by the flooding in crawlspace areas and below grade ducting at Christmas 2009. Both this school and Quamichan Secondary are located in the flood plain so this is a recurring problem. However the construction of this school makes this a more complex issue: slab on grade with ducting under the slab. There are also a variety of air quality issues. |
| Koksilah
Elementary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A school with many small units, some joined together, most separated by outside walkways. The original school dates from the 1950s, with separate gym and kindergarten blocks being added to the site in 1962 and 1968, with a two storey building being added in 1978. Most of the roofing has been replaced in the last several years. • The seismic ratings of these buildings is moderate to high. The 2004 upgrade estimate was \$1.371m. • Seismic upgrading was the District's #3 2009/10 capital priority, now estimated at \$2.830m. • The overall condition (eg asbestos tiles) and image of the school is poor, as is its location between the highway and the E&N tracks in an industrial area. This results in various air quality issues. • However if this school is to remain open on this site, substantial rebuilding should be planned to address the multitude of problems. |
| Maple Bay
Elementary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New school constructed in 2001. Its field was recently upgraded with funding assistance from the District of North Cowichan. |
| Quamichan Middle | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This school was built in 1961, but the main part received a major upgrade including seismic refit in 2001. However two parts of the building, the two storey and one storey front wings, were not included in the upgrade and still require upgrading, which was estimated in 2004 to cost (seismic only) \$1.551m. • Seismic upgrading was the District's #6 2009/10 capital priority, now estimated at \$3.123m. • The school was affected by the flooding in crawlspace areas and below grade ducting at Christmas 2009. While flooding will always be an issue, this school is built in a substantially better manner than Alexander Elementary (on crawlspace, not slab, with ducting above ground, and a good intercept drain to keep the crawlspace dry). |

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Drinkwater Elementary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While a small amount of this school is the original 1960s core (part renovated in the 1980s), the majority was built in the 1990s. It is currently undergoing seismic and building envelope upgrading. |
| Khowhemun Elementary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Another school first built in the 1960s, but upgraded and extensively renovated in 1993 and 1999. It is also all one building and has a high degree of internal coherence. • The original part of the building does need a seismic upgrade, estimated in 2004 at \$488,000. It is #8 on the District's 2009/10 Capital Plan priority list, for this seismic work, now estimated at \$985,000. • The school is built on First Nations Band Land, although this does not markedly impact its operation. |
| Somenos Elementary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a 1960s wood frame structure with activity room added in 1965. Its upgrade cost for seismic purposes was estimated in 2004 as \$636,000, with a rating of moderate/high for the classroom block. There are several disused in-ground oil tanks that need removal. • Seismic upgrading was the District's #13 2009/10 capital priority, now estimated at \$1.601m. • Its age and upgrade needs, together with its small size and educational inadequacies, make it a candidate for complete replacement. |
| Tansor Elementary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The original school was built in 1957, with additions through the 1960s and 1970s. It was again renovated and significantly expanded in 1999. Only the oldest parts of the school are rated moderate or high in terms of seismic risk; the upgrade cost for seismic purposes was estimated in 2004 as \$501,000. Its has some settlement issues. • Seismic upgrading was the District's #11 2009/10 capital priority, now estimated at \$1.008m. |
| Mt Prevost Middle | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of the Mt Prevost building dates from the early and mid-1960s. An addition was constructed in 1994. The seismic study of 2004 assessed the seismic risk of the original two storey structure as 'high' and that of the one storey structure as moderate to high. • The School District rated Mt Prevost as #5 on its 2009/10 Capital Plan priorities, with the cost estimated at \$4.2. It would be wise to include a Building Envelope upgrade while this seismic work is underway. • The 1994 addition was not assessed in 2004, presumably because it met current codes. The building is in generally good condition with the exception of the required seismic upgrading. |
| Cowichan Secondary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main structures of Cowichan Secondary date from 1949, with various IE, commercial and band buildings being added in the 1960s and 1970s. The age and two storey construction of the buildings combine to make them a high seismic risk. • The complete replacement of these buildings was the district's #1 capital priority in 2009/10, at a projected cost of \$42.314m. This is |

a joint project with Vancouver Island University, who are moving along with their parts of the overall plan.

The overall capacity and utilization situation in this zone is as follows:

	Audit Scores	Capacity Operating		
		K	Elem	Sec
Central Zone				
Alex Aitken	66	38	207	
Alexander	63	76	276	
Koksilah*	53	38	184	
Maple Bay	84	76	322	
Quamichan	74		200	400
Drinkwater	60	76	299	
Khowhemun	71	76	299	
Somenos	47	38	92	
Tansor	68	76	253	
Mt Prevost	63		100	275
Cowichan	58			900
Total		494	2,232	1,575
2009 Enrolment		200	1,716	1,402
Utilization		40%	77%	89%

Figure 5 - Audit Scores, Capacity and Utilization - Central Zone

Low kindergarten utilization will soon be largely eliminated with the move to full day kindergarten. Utilization at elementary, middle and secondary levels is between 75% and 90%.

South Zone

The condition of the schools in the south zone is as follows:

- Bench Elementary
 - Bench is another school dating from the late 1960s and early 1970s. While it has four ages of additions, all meld together into a coherent single school building. The original dates from 1967 (although there was likely an older school building on the site), to which an addition was added in 1971. The gym was rebuilt in 1976, and an addition completed in 1999.
 - Its seismic rating varies, and the 2004 estimate for upgrading was \$1.394m.
 - Seismic upgrading was the District's #9 2009/10 capital priority, now estimated at \$2.361m.
 - The site has some minor storm water issues.

- Cobble Hill Elementary
 - New school constructed in 2001.

- Discovery Elementary
 - Discovery School was built in 1980, with renovations in 1988 and 1992 to the classrooms and in 1998 to the gym. Seismic risk is low in the classroom block and moderate/low in the gym, although the 2004 seismic upgrade estimate was \$232,000.
 - There are no significant issues although the school playfield still needs upgrading.

- George Bonner Middle
 - Bonner was completely renovated and upgraded in 2005.

- Frances Kelsey Secondary
 - New school constructed in 1995, with an addition in 2003.

The overall capacity and utilization situation in this zone is as follows:

	Audit Scores	Capacity Operating		
		K	Elem	Sec
South Zone				
Bench	62	76	293	
Cobble Hill	83	76	316	
Discovery	62	76	293	
George Bonner	87		450	250
Frances Kelsey	84			1,000
Total		228	1,352	1,250
2009 Enrolment		104	1,141	1,257
Utilization		46%	84%	101%

Figure 6 - Audit Scores, Capacity and Utilization - South Zone

Low kindergarten utilization will soon be largely eliminated with the move to full day kindergarten. There is some spare capacity in the elementary system, less at the middle school level, and at the secondary level, Frances Kelsey is over capacity.

French Immersion

The four schools in the French Immersion system are also rated for capacity, and details on their condition is as follows:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Ecole Duncan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecole Duncan has four buildings on one site, and a fifth building across the road which is now used exclusively by a district alternative program. • The original building dates from 1912/13, and was completely upgraded in 1999. It is designated as a historic building. Its 1999 upgrade brought it up to all current seismic and other codes. • The second block of classrooms is the MacKirdy building, which houses seven classrooms. It is single storey and was constructed in 1962, upgraded in 1998. • The other two buildings are gymnasiums, one dating from 1960 and one from 1966. Both are in poor condition, especially the 1960 gym. • Apart from the renovated original building, the overall condition of the other three buildings is poor. All are rated moderate to high in terms of seismic risk, and they should all be considered to be at the end of their lifespan. The cost to upgrade them for seismic purposes was estimated in 2004 as \$766,000. • Seismic upgrading was the District's #7 2009/10 capital priority, now estimated at \$1.661m. • Replacement of all three buildings with one new building/addition of equivalent capacity should be considered. |
| Ecole Mill Bay | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The original school dates from 1913. It is no longer used for school purposes. Indeed the whole school was closed in 2003, but reopened in September 2005 as a French Immersion program. • It is really three separate buildings built separately between 1962 and 1974, two of which received additions. While the seismic rating of the buildings ranges from moderate/high to moderate/low, the overall quality of the construction and general age and aging of the building mean that it should be replaced. • Seismic upgrading was the District's #14 2009/10 capital priority, now estimated at \$1.049m. |
| Ecole Mt Prevost | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See above. |
| Ecole Cowichan Secondary | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See above. |

The overall capacity and utilization situation in this zone is as follows:

	Audit Scores	Capacity Operating		
		K	Elem	Sec
French Immersion				
Duncan EI	55	76	230	
Mill Bay (D.E.)	55	76	147	
Mt Prevost	63		75	100
Cowichan	58			100
Total		152	452	200
2009 Enrolment		109	520	108
Utilization		72%	115%	54%

Figure 7 - Audit Scores, Capacity and Utilization - French Immersion Schools

The combination of kindergarten utilization at 72% and elementary enrolment at well over 100%, will cause difficulties as full day kindergarten is instituted over the next two years. This will be further exacerbated as Mill Bay grows to a full K/6 school. The secondary utilization figures are somewhat notional, based as they are on an arbitrary division of capacity between the French Immersion and regular streams at the middle and secondary schools.

District Enrolment – Past, Present and Projected

Changing Provincial Projections and Assumptions

The Ministry of Education provides a set of enrolment projections to each District annually³.

It is interesting to look firstly at the key figure of kindergarten enrolment. Kindergarten enrolment in the province has been declining for many years, since a peak in the mid-1990s. In 2002/2004, the decline in the number of births in BC 'bottomed out' and started to grow, albeit very slowly at first. The first year with increased provincial kindergarten enrolments was 2008.

Both the 2003 projection⁴ and the 2007 projection⁵ projected a relatively slow increase of kindergarten enrolment over the next few years in the province, growing from the base of 35,000 to just under 40,000 by 2017 (the end date of the 2007 projection).

However the 2008 Ministry projection, the current one (produced in April 2009), is more optimistic as shown in the following chart:

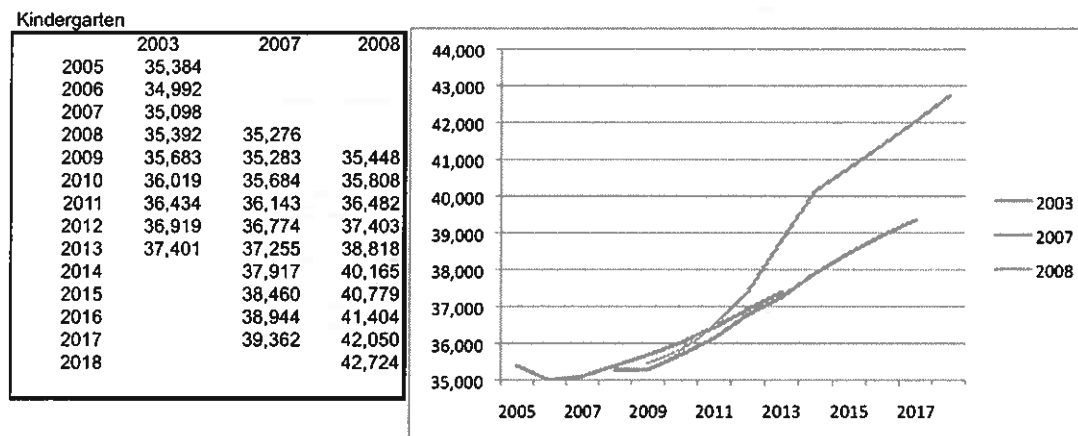


Figure 8 - Provincial Kindergarten Projections, 2003, 2007, 2008

It projects a more rapid increase in kindergarten enrolments, reaching almost 43,000 by 2018. While this seems a little optimistic based on past trends, there is evidence that birth rates in women in their 30's and 40's are increasing, so we are all hopeful that this projection bears out.

Faster growth in kindergarten enrolments means faster growth in elementary and eventually secondary enrolments. The province's current projection is for an elementary enrolment of almost 340,000 in 2018, whereas their previous estimate was for only 317,000 in 2017.

Close examination of the province's projections indicates that they are also assuming higher retention ratios between the elementary grades. BC has always had net positive retention between grades at all levels, but the Ministry has increased these in its most recent projection.

³ Report 1558B Projection Report for Public School Aged Headcount Enrolments (excludes adults) – Ministry of Education – accessible from <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/capitalplanning/resources/>

⁴ Included in the District Facilities Plan prepared by Yates, Thorn & Associates in 2003.

⁵ See 2008 Demographic Assessment, prepared by Yates, Thorn & Associates in 2008.

Conversations with BC Stats staff indicate that these are based on recent studies of international migration to BC and expectations of higher birth rates within these immigrant populations.

Given the lower levels of international migrants into the Cowichan Valley, it is unlikely that all this growth projected by the Province will be felt in the District, although some, such as through higher birth rates in older females, will be.

		Elementary	Secondary
Actual	2000	352,089	250,251
	2001	348,545	249,946
	2002	341,201	248,632
	2003	334,754	248,003
	2004	327,893	249,132
	2005	321,540	249,764
	2006	314,897	245,680
	2007	309,287	247,119
	2008	305,416	244,939
Projected	2009	302,350	240,845
	2010	301,000	237,036
	2011	301,324	233,249
	2012	303,013	229,771
	2013	306,799	226,340
	2014	312,348	223,235
	2015	318,489	221,140
	2016	324,926	220,347
	2017	331,833	220,338
	2018	339,048	221,138

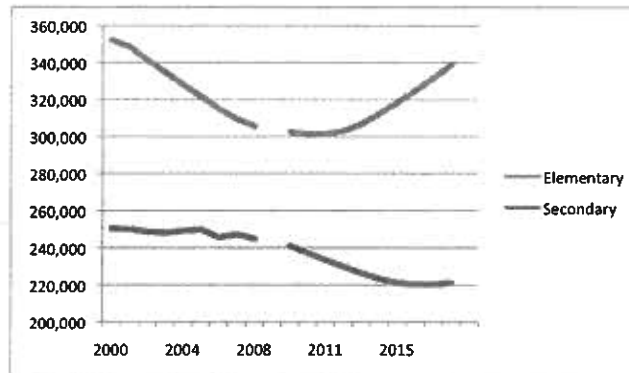


Figure 9 - Provincial Enrolment Projections to 2018

At the secondary level, the province is projecting continuing decline over the next ten years to 2018. This is the same amount of decline as previously projected, although it is likely that 2018 will be about the lowest point for secondary enrolment, growing from there as the resurgence in elementary grades starts to work through grades 8 through 12.

Projecting District Enrolment

The more positive Ministry provincial projections are somewhat reflected in the Ministry's projections for SD79.

At the kindergarten level, the Ministry 2007 projection assumed that enrolments would bottom out at the 2006/2007 levels of around 500 students, and start growing from there. However 2008's kindergarten enrolment was even lower, at 477 students⁶. Their current projection assumes a 2009 figure of 475 and 2010 of 491, growing rapidly from there.

In fact, 2009's actual kindergarten enrolment was 503, so hopefully kindergarten enrolments have 'turned the corner' and will continue this growth trend for several years. Births are already 11% above their lowest level, and are projected to grow to 24% above the current level over a 20 year period. This puts the peak kindergarten enrolment at around 590/600 by 2027.

⁶ All kindergarten numbers in this report are head-counts, not FTEs.

	2007	2009
2000		608
2001		550
2002		563
2003		553
2004		525
2005		539
2006		498
2007	503	503
2008	522	477
2009	519	475
2010	541	491
2011	542	504
2012	541	517
2013	527	529
2014	537	539
2015	548	549
2016	558	559
2017	565	568
2018		580

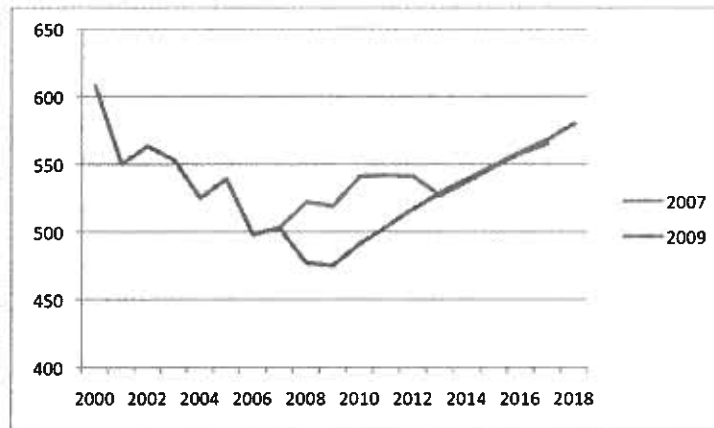


Figure 10 – SD79 Kindergarten Projections, 2007 and 2009

This higher level of kindergarten projection has been worked into our school-by-school projections.

In addition to these trends, the decision of the provincial government to focus on early learning through funding school districts to provide full day kindergarten by 2011 will also boost kindergarten enrolments. This is because there are two main reasons that parents do not enrol children in half day kindergarten: firstly they think that their child is not ready for kindergarten and should continue to be 'home schooled' until age 6 (or later); secondly, a half day program does not work for working parents. It is the second group who will be attracted by the full day program. However there will be no long term impacts on enrolment beyond increased kindergarten numbers⁷.

These kindergarten factors – delayed bottoming out, and faster than previously projected growth from the base – are evident in the Ministry's current elementary projections. The new projection is for enrolments to stabilize around the current figure of around 4,500/4,600 students, but to grow from there to over 5,000 by 2018 (the end of their projection period). Our projection is for the 2025 enrolment to be close to 5,500 students.

⁷ For this reason, we have not changed the projection model, and will not do so until the impacts of the change area known, which will be in 2011 at the earliest.

	2007	2009
2000		5,961
2001		5,817
2002		5,597
2003		5,433
2004		5,237
2005		5,168
2006		4,942
2007	4,792	4,792
2008	4,699	4,633
2009	4,635	4,573
2010	4,621	4,554
2011	4,602	4,552
2012	4,589	4,573
2013	4,565	4,606
2014	4,588	4,677
2015	4,641	4,777
2016	4,676	4,872
2017	4,717	4,972
2018		5,069

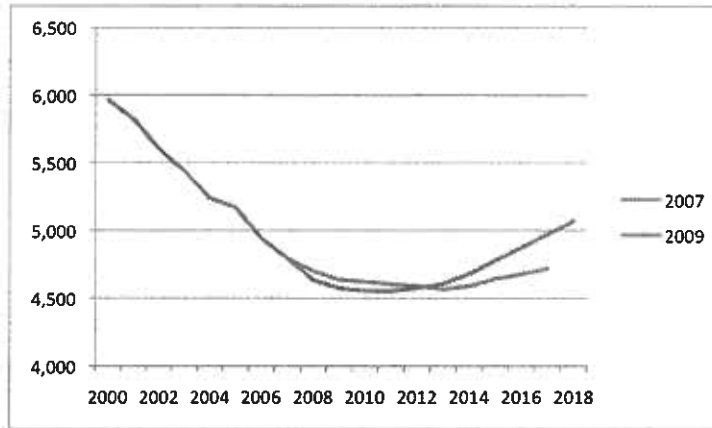


Figure 11 - SD79 Elementary Enrolment Projections, 2007 and 2009

The Ministry's secondary projection for the district did not change between 2007 and the current projection. The elementary decline of the past ten years has a good few years to go before it bottoms out. Our projection is that 2018 will be the 'bottom out' year, with enrolments growing to around 3,600 by 2025.

	2007	2009
2000	4,259	4,259
2001	4,184	4,184
2002	4,173	4,173
2003	4,285	4,285
2004	4,363	4,363
2005	4,294	4,294
2006	4,146	4,146
2007	4,022	4,022
2008	3,867	3,895
2009	3,721	3,721
2010	3,611	3,605
2011	3,542	3,525
2012	3,475	3,449
2013	3,413	3,385
2014	3,341	3,320
2015	3,279	3,258
2016	3,239	3,227
2017	3,204	3,199
2018		3,190

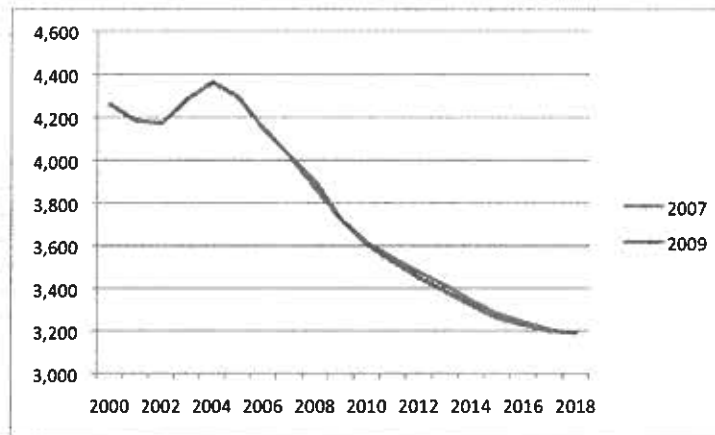


Figure 12 - SD79 Secondary Enrolment Projections, 2007 and 2009

Growth and Change in the Distribution of Population in the District

The population of the district is not static. Houses are sold and new families move out and in, often with a different number of school aged children. New developments also add to the number of houses which can have children living in them. There are two key variables that need to be examined to understand how changes that have shaped the past decade will continue into the future; and where new housing developments will bring new residents and new children.

Differential Growth

Over the past decade, most of the region has seen increases in population, as shown in the following chart.

The most rapid growth has been in the three Electoral Areas that make up the south zone – A, B, and C. There, Area A has grown most rapidly, with Area C growing as fast before 2000, but showing little growth since then. North Cowichan has also shown consistent growth through this period.

The areas that have not grown or have lost population have been the rural areas around the Town of Lake Cowichan.

But growth in total population has not necessarily led to growth in school age population. The chart below shows the size of the under 20 year old population in 1996 and in 2006 (for the four areas which have the same boundaries at these two dates).

	1996/2001	2001/2006
CVRD - Area A	5%	19%
CVRD - Area B	7%	7%
North Cowichan	3%	5%
Duncan	2%	6%
CVRD - Area C	6%	0%
CVRD - Area D	-1%	5%
Lake Cowichan	-1%	4%
CVRD - Area G		2%
CVRD - Area E	-1%	2%
CVRD - Area F	0%	-1%
CVRD - Area I	-19%	2%

Figure 13 - Growth Rates in the Region

Even though all four areas have grown in total population, only Area A has seen a growth in the size of its school age population...and then only from 900 to 950. The other three areas have seen their youth population shrink.

What is causing this decline? Two factors are at work:

- Overall aging of the population, which, within the existing housing stock, has seen children leave home but their parents to remain as 'empty nesters'. Even when they do move, their houses are more likely to be purchased by older couples with no children than by families with children.

	1996		2006	
	Total	Under 20	Total	Under 20
CVRD - Area A	3,259	900	4,073	950
Lake Cowichan	2,858	925	2,948	720
Duncan	4,588	1,065	4,986	1,015
North Cowichan	25,305	7,125	27,557	6,635

Figure 14 - Under 20 year olds - Growth Rates

- Employment change, in particular the exodus of jobs in forestry from all areas, especially in the Lake Zone.

New Housing Growth

The majority of development pressure in recent years has been in the south of the region, in areas A, B, and C. A new OCP is being developed by CVRD staff. It is anticipated that this process will continue into 2011, although broad development scenarios will be released in late spring 2010. While the area does have large areas of undeveloped land, it also has significant development challenges, especially sewerage issues, which will be costly and lengthy to resolve.

The following are the major development proposals currently under review by the CVRD Development Services:

Stonebridge Lands - *approximately 150 acres of gorgeous rolling terrain bounded by the Island Highway to the east, Shawnigan Mill Bay Road to the north and Deloume Road to the south*⁸.

A rezoning application has been submitted and is proceeding through the appropriate processes. The site has challenges with riparian lands, sewerage and access, but will eventually be developed. It is planned for a mix of housing with around 1000 units, of which the current plan is for 600/700 family units, mostly smaller and more affordable. There has been discussion regarding the potential of land within the development site for a community building of some sort.

South West Mill Bay – *almost 600Ha (1,500 acres) of freehold land abutting the town of Mill Bay*⁹

A planning application has been submitted for the SW Mill Bay lands, and this application will go through a thorough review as it requires a rezoning. The application proposes a total of 2,900 units.

Bamberton Lands – *the old Bamberton cement works site, plus various lands up to and in one place crossing the Malahat Highway.*

The current rezoning application will likely proceed to public hearing and if approved will start a lengthy development process. The current application is for 3,224 residential units, which will yield around a 7,000 population community when completed. Build out will be anywhere from 20 to 40 years. It is planned to offer a mix of homes and affordable options for families.

While there are some smaller housing developments both proposed and potential, these are the only major developments. There will be some development in the rural areas close to Duncan, both north and south, but none of these are of a size that is likely to produce more than a handful of children.

However these three developments in Mill Bay have the potential to generate significant children of school age. And the next ten years will be different from the last ten, since the general demographic trend is upward as opposed to downward.

Any estimate of the yield of school age children from these developments is pure extrapolation, but, if all three go ahead, then they could generate at a minimum 50 school age children per year over at least a 15 to 40 year time horizon. However this is unlikely to happen before around 2013 at the earliest, and the Ministry of Education is unlikely to approve additional facilities until it sees children on the ground. However the Mill Bay area is the only one in the district where this kind of growth potential is a factor, and it should be factored into the planning for the period from 2015 to 2025.

⁸ www.dtzbarnicke.com/

⁹ www.sw-millbay.com

Lake Zone Projections¹⁰

Our projections in 2008 were for total enrolments across the Lake Zone to stabilize at around the 2007 level of approximately 700 students. It was assumed that the zone was close to the bottom of its long enrolment decline although it would dip slightly between 2008 and 2013 to a low of 675. This assumed that the zone would lose some of its share of the District's kindergarten enrolment.

Enrolments in 2008 and 2009 have been a disappointment and indicate that the 2007 projection was likely too optimistic. The total zone enrolment dropped from 713 students in 2007, to 641 students in 2008 and 620 students in 2009.

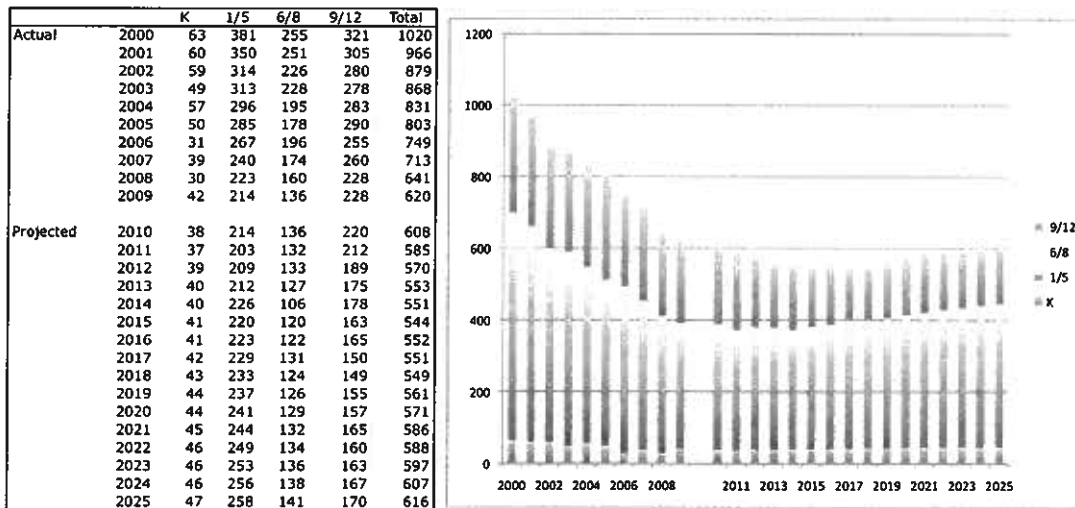


Figure 15 - Enrolment Projections - Lake Zone - to 2025

At the elementary level, enrolments in 2008 and 2009 were significantly less than projected:

- In 2008, the projected 241 students turned into 223 actual students
- In 2009, 264 projected turned into 214 actual.

These 'lost' students work their way through the system to give lower projections at all three levels:

- At the elementary level, it was projected that enrolment would grow through to 2013 and decline slowly from there. It is now projected to be stable at around 220 to 240 students through to 2020, increasing slightly beyond that to around 260 students. This latter growth reflects the slightly higher kindergarten projections for the district and zone.
- At the middle school level, the pattern will be similar to that projected in 2007, but at a lower level, with a long term enrolment of around 140 students.
- The same is true of the secondary level where the long term enrolment is projected at around 230 students.

Based on this projection, it is proposed that, for the projection period to 2025, the Lake Zone have the capacity to accommodate at least 50 kindergarten and 260 students in grades 1/5; and that

¹⁰ A note of caution for those trying to add together all the school projections to see if they add to the District totals in the previous section. They do not...for two reasons: firstly the District students in alternate education and home schooling are not allocated to schools by the District, but are included in the Ministry's totals; secondly, our school based projection model adds to a total that is close to but not identical to the Ministry's figures; this difference is small in total, and negligible at the school level.

for grades 6/12, capacity for 400 students should be provided (assume 60 elementary, 340 secondary spaces).

The projected capacity utilization is therefore as follows:

Lake Zone	K	Elem	Sec
Current Capacity	76	271	600
Projected Enrolment	50	320	340
Utilization	66%	118%	57%

Figure 16 - Lake Zone - Utilization

The Ministry expects school districts to be as close to 100% utilization as possible across the district as a whole, thus the low utilization figure for secondary capacity poses some difficulties for the District. However this issue is already being addressed to the greatest degree possible by accommodating grades 6 and 7 at LCSS. This projection also implies the required elementary school capacity of 50K + 260, which is better met with one school than two.

North Zone Projections

Projections made in the 2008 *Demographic Assessment* for elementary and secondary enrolments in 2008 and 2009 were both slightly higher than occurred. Consequently, the projections have all been revised slightly downward.

Kindergarten enrolments however were as projected.

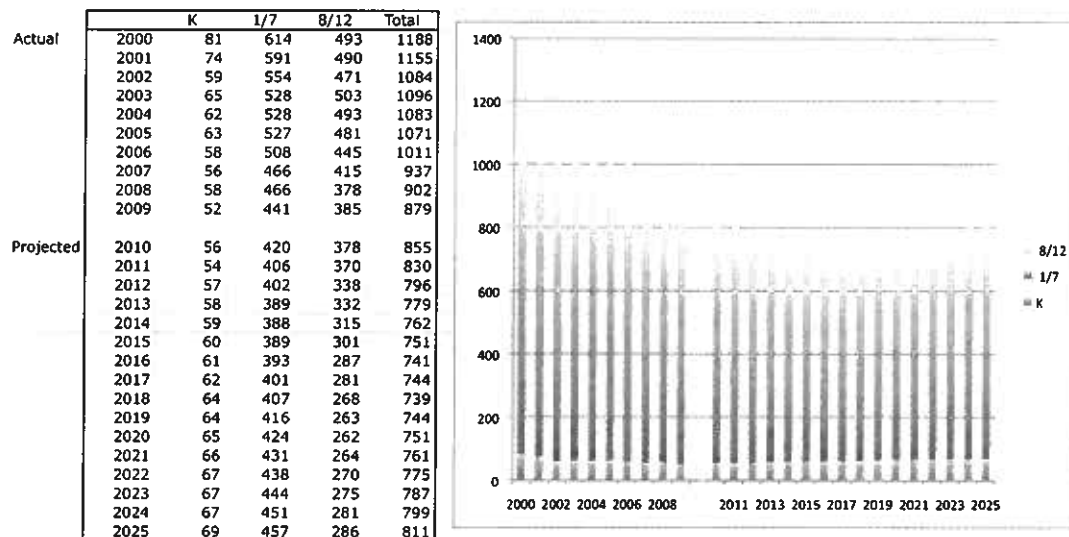


Figure 17 - Enrolment Projections - North Zone - to 2025

It is projected that the zone's elementary enrolment will dip slightly over the next few years but eventually grow to around 460, with secondary enrolment remaining in the 280 to 300 range over the projection period.

Based on this projection, it is proposed that, for the projection period to 2025, for the North Zone, capacity needs to be provided for at least 70 kindergarten and 460 students in grades 1/7. For grades 8/12, capacity for 300 students should be provided.

The projected capacity utilization is therefore as follows:

North Zone	K	Elem	Sec
Current Capacity	114	533	550
Projected Enrolment	70	460	300
Utilization	61%	86%	55%

Figure 18 - North Zone - Utilization

Again, utilization is well below the levels that the Ministry like to see.

Centre Zone Projections

Centre zone projections were higher for 2008 and 2009 than actually occurred:

- Elementary enrolments were projected at 1258 and 1260 for 2008 and 2009, but came in at 1180 and 1158.
- Middle school enrolments were projected at 842 for each year and came in at 825 and 833.
- Secondary enrolments were projected at 1271 and 1218 and came in at 1198 and 1127.

Overall therefore the total zone enrolment was almost 200 students less than projected.

The reasons for this are:

- A slightly lower than projected 2008 kindergarten enrolment which, while only 17 students, which will ripple across the system in the future.
- A significantly higher than projected enrolment in French Immersion, which draws students from the regular schools covered in this projection.
- Every elementary school with the exception of Alex Aitken was 10 to 30 students below projections in both 2008 and 2009.
- While the middle schools were very close to the enrolments projected for them, Cowichan Secondary was 70 students below projection in both years¹¹.

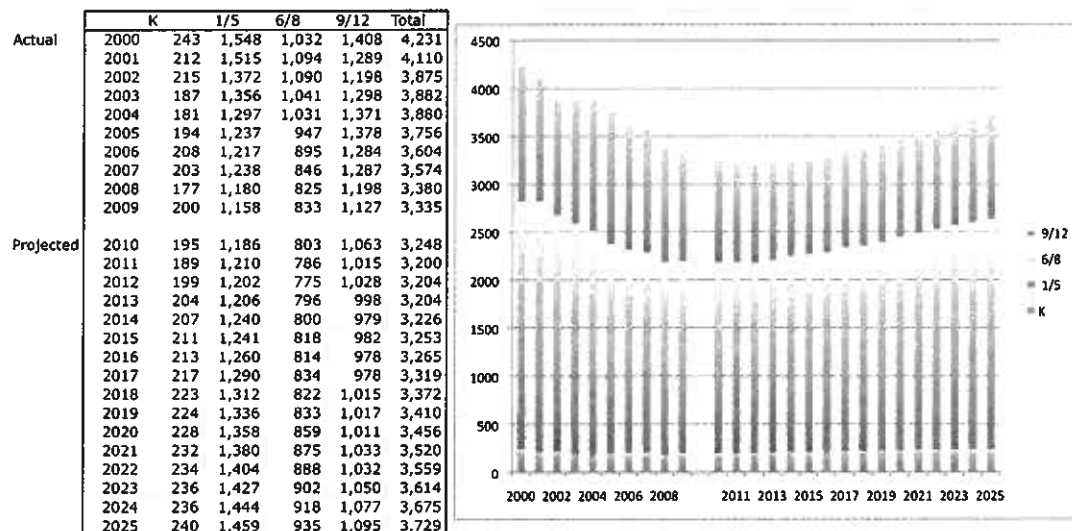


Figure 19 - Enrolment Projections - Central Zone - to 2025

¹¹ Although there may be some discrepancies in these numbers due to how alternative education and non-grade assigned students are recorded in different years

Current projections are therefore for elementary enrolments in the zone to be somewhat below 1500 students with 240 in kindergarten (head-counts not FTE); for middle school enrolments to rise to around 950 students, and for these eventually to be around 1100 students in grades 9/12, which is virtually the number enrolled in 2009.

In the Central Zone therefore, capacity should be provided for at least 240 kindergarten and 1500 students in grades 1/5. For grades 6/8, a capacity of 950 students will be required in the regular program (assume 600 elementary, 350 secondary spaces), and for grades 9/12, a capacity for 1100 students should be provided.

The projected capacity utilization is therefore as follows:

Central Zone	K	Elem	Sec
Current Capacity	494	2,232	1,575
Projected Enrolment	240	2100	1,450
Utilization	49%	94%	92%

Figure 20 - Central Zone - Utilization

This utilization level is over 90% for both 1/7 and 8/12. Kindergarten capacity will adjust well to full day enrolments.

South Zone Projections

Again, the pattern of other zones are repeated in the South Zone. Projections for 2008 and 2009 were not met, and consequently all projections have been downscaled. A total of 20 kindergarten students and at least ten per grade at other levels, ripples across the zone's projections. Part of the kindergarten shift is likely to Ecole Mill Bay's French Immersion program, but the other 'losses' are simply reality catching up with projections.

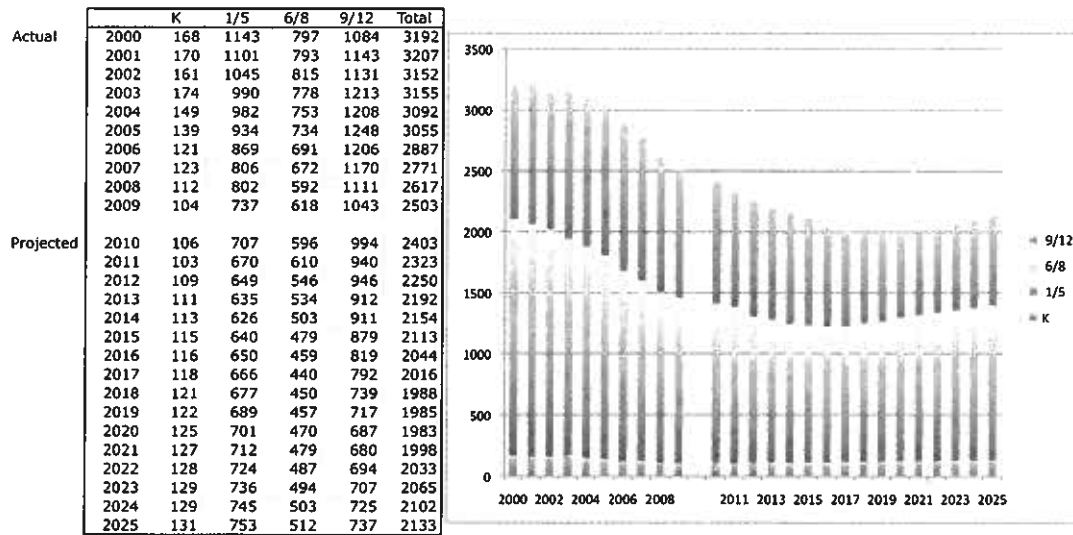


Figure 21 - Enrolment Projections - South Zone - to 2025

In addition, a previous assumption that kindergarten enrolments would increase in the south zone as a percentage of the total district enrolment, were relaxed, further downgrading the kindergarten and therefore all other projections.

Current projections are as follows:

- Kindergarten enrolments will reach a peak of around 130 students.

- Elementary enrolments will decline slightly but rebound to around their present level of 750 students.
- Middle school enrolments will remain at 500/550.
- Secondary enrolments will decline steadily, but will be back to 740 by the end of the projection period, with some further growth beyond that.

In the South Zone, capacity should be provided for at least 130 kindergarten and 750 students in grades 1/5. For grades 6/8, a capacity of 520 students will be required in the regular program (assume 350 elementary spaces and 170 secondary spaces), and for grades 9/12, a capacity for 740 students should be provided

The projected capacity utilization is therefore as follows:

South Zone	K	Elem	Sec
Current Capacity	240	1,450	1,250
Projected Enrolment	130	1100	910
Utilization	54%	76%	73%

Figure 22 - South Zone - Utilization

All these utilization levels are lower than the Ministry likes to see.

In the longer term, the impact of new housing developments in the Mill Bay area should be factored into the enrolment projections for this zone, and related facility planning.

French Immersion

The major difference between the projection made in 2008 and the current projection is how the potential growth of French Immersion has been handled. In the earlier projection, it was assumed that kindergarten enrolment would be capped at 86 students, 50 at Duncan Elem. and 36 at Mill Bay. However this policy decision was not made and 2008 and 2009 kindergarten enrolments were well beyond those levels, totaling 102 in 2008 and 109 in 2009. The current projection assumes that kindergarten enrolment will continue to grow at the same rate as the district as a whole, which will take it eventually to the 130/140 level.

And of course all other grades will increase as these higher kindergarten levels work their way through the system. If these assumptions hold true, there will be over 600 students in grades 1/5, 280 in middle schools, and 180 in grades 9/12 by the end of the projection period.

	K	1/5	6/8	9/12	Total
2000	68	226	82	68	444
2001	54	224	88	63	429
2002	69	231	99	74	473
2003	73	258	85	69	485
2004	82	281	80	76	519
2005	88	296	89	77	550
2006	83	308	109	68	568
2007	89	347	120	75	631
2008	102	382	135	69	688
2009	109	421	128	79	737
2010	112	457	144	76	788
2011	108	473	170	86	837
2012	114	485	192	89	880
2013	116	505	206	93	919
2014	118	513	215	114	961
2015	120	522	227	125	995
2016	122	530	241	133	1026
2017	124	543	241	148	1055
2018	127	552	245	153	1076
2019	128	562	249	160	1098
2020	131	571	256	164	1121
2021	133	580	261	167	1141
2022	134	590	265	170	1159
2023	135	600	269	173	1176
2024	135	607	274	177	1192
2025	137	613	279	180	1208

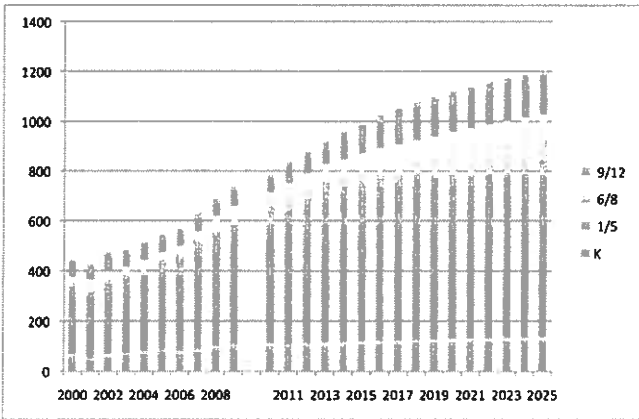


Figure 23 - Enrolment Projections - French Immersion - to 2025

This projection will of course draw over 250 more students from other schools in the district.

If current trends are continued, the capacity required within the French Immersion system in the District should be for 140 kindergarten students, for 620 students in grades 1/5, for 280 middle school students (assume 200 elementary spaces and 80 secondary spaces), and 180 students in grades 9/12.

The projected capacity utilization is therefore as follows:

French Immersion	K	Elem	Sec
Current Capacity	152	452	200
Projected Enrolment	140	820	260
Utilization	92%	181%	130%

Figure 24 - French Immersion Programs - Utilization

Clearly additional capacity needs to be allocated to this program if the current growth in enrolment is to continue.

Issues and Options

Clearly there are many issues which have been identified and which confront the school district as it plans its usage of facilities over the next 10 to 15 years. Some of these issues concern underutilization of school capacity, some concern the physical condition of the schools, and some concern the constraints that the facilities place on providing for education opportunities. And in reality, none of these issues exist in isolation; the resolution of one may assist in the resolution of another or conversely may hinder its resolution. And for every issue there are a number of options and alternatives which the District can follow. However there is one thing we know for certain: taking no action will ensure that the issue remains unresolved.

The following are the major issues which the district needs to address within this facility plan. In this section, we will analyze the issues and suggest various options for dealing with them. In the following section, we will propose a series of recommendations which will assist the District in achieving its vision.

Supporting early learning initiatives

The Ministry of Education has announced its intention to implement full-day kindergarten for all students. This program will be phased in over two years starting with September 2010. The schools selected for this first year of implementation are generally the ones that both have a particular social/educational need and have sufficient space to accommodate students for a full day.

StrongStart programs are already in operation in five of the district's elementary schools:

- Koksilah Elementary
- Alexander Elementary
- Khowhemun Elementary
- Chemainus Community School
- Bench Elementary

The District also has two Outreach *StrongStart* programs.

In addition the provincial government has indicated its intention to investigate the feasibility of extending early learning opportunities to four-year-olds by 2015 with the possibility of also offering programs for three-year-olds¹². Whether these opportunities would be provided in schools has not yet been determined, but is certainly one option under investigation.

In the short-term, the accommodation of students for full-day kindergarten would involve the following:

- For schools which currently enrol only one half day program, expansion to full-time will only involve use of the kindergarten room for the other half day. The schools for which this is the case are as follows:
 - AB Greenwell
 - Somenos
 - Koksilah
 - Alexander

¹² In the 2008 Throne Speech, the B.C. government made a commitment to "assess the feasibility and costs of full school day kindergarten for five-year-olds." It also promised to "undertake a feasibility study of providing parents with the choice of day-long kindergarten for four-year-olds by 2010, and for three-year-olds by 2012". More recently (Education Report, #61, February 2010) the Minister noted "...over the next five years we will be partnering with parents and care-givers to support early learning for three- and four-year-olds."

- For schools with kindergarten enrollments between 22 and 44 students, which currently use their kindergarten room in the morning and afternoon, expansion to full-day kindergarten would involve an additional classroom being converted to meet the kindergarten room standards. The schools for which this is the case are as follows:
 - Crofton
 - Tansor
 - Maple Bay
 - Khowhemun
 - Cobble Hill
 - Chemainus
 - Palsson
 - Alex Aitken
- For schools with kindergarten enrollments over 44 students, which are already using two kindergarten classrooms, one or two additional rooms will be required. At the present time, the only schools in this situation are as follows:
 - Ecole Duncan – currently at 67 kindergarten students and projecting up to 81. Currently using two kindergarten rooms and may require two more.
 - Ecole Mill Bay - currently at 42 kindergarten students and projecting up to 56. Currently using one kindergarten room and may require two more.
 - Discovery – projecting 46 kindergarten students, therefore possibility of three rooms being required.
 - Drinkwater - projecting 49 kindergarten students, therefore possibility of three rooms being required.

Thus in many schools, this expansion to full day kindergarten will place additional pressures on the available space. As we have seen in the review of elementary space utilization in each zone, there is theoretically enough space to accommodate these pressures. However much of this space has been used to accommodate other community programs such as child care, or school district programs such as the five *StrongStart* programs noted about. The ministry has also indicated that the accommodation of full-day kindergarten must be done without displacing these district and community programs. The reasons for this are clear: the idea is to strengthen early learning opportunities not to replace community programs with district ones.

In the longer term, the incorporation of four-year-olds, and perhaps, within the timeframe of this plan, even three-year-olds, will place additional pressures on space in elementary schools. Even if these programs are only half time programs and in schools designated as having social or educational issues, the requirement for space will be significant.

The addition of these younger children in elementary schools would also extend the age range at those schools, especially those which still run to grade 7. The presence of 13 year olds and 3 year olds in the same school may be problematic to some parents, teachers and administrators.

The options for providing for this expansion of early learning initiatives will differ in the short-term depending on the amount of spare capacity at the school. However in the longer-term it is likely that all elementary schools will have to address these space issues. Short term options obviously include the placement of portable classrooms on school sites and the recapturing of underutilized space within the school building. Long-term options include changing the grade configuration to transfer older students to middle schools; this is particularly attractive with elementary schools which still incorporate grades six and seven (those in the north and central zones). Other longer-term options include the construction of new spaces at schools, although the Ministry will be reluctant to consider this option unless all other options have been ruled out.

Lake Cowichan elementary schools

For several years, the delivery of elementary education in the Lake Cowichan area has been disrupted by the discovery of mold and subsequent closure of A.B.Greenwell elementary. In 2009 the Ministry and the District commissioned a project identification review to examine the various options. These options included:

- The refurbishment of A.B.Greenwell elementary at 40 k./175 grades 1/5.
- The replacement of A.B.Greenwell elementary at 40 k./175 grades 1/5
- Construction of a new elementary school to replace both A.B.Greenwell and Palsson elementary schools at 80 k./300 grades 1/5
- Renovation and expansion of Palsson elementary at 80 k./300 grades 1/5
- The replacement of both A.B.Greenwell and Palsson elementaries on the Palsson site at 80 k./300 grades 1/5
- The replacement of both A.B.Greenwell and Palsson elementaries on the Stanley Gordon site at 80 k./300 grades 1/5

Of these options, the consultants recommended that the district move to build one new elementary school to serve the whole of the region, proposing that the size of the school should accommodate 80 k./300 grades 1/5. They recommended that the new school be located on the A.B.Greenwell site, but also noted that it was not markedly superior to the Palsson site.

We would generally concur with these recommendations, although it may be appropriate to review the recommended capacity to ensure that there is space for all the early learning potentials discussed earlier; two kindergarten rooms will accommodate up to 44 kindergarten students, but the need and potential for a *StongStart* program and other early learning options in this part of the district should be planned for. In addition, the potential to incorporate the elements of the Ministry's Neighbourhoods of Learning program in this new school should also be pursued.

Grade configuration in the North zone

Currently the schools in the north zone have only one transition, at grade 7/8, with elementary schools accommodating grades K/7 and Chemainus Secondary offering grades 8/12. Without question, this limits opportunities for students who wish to move to other secondary schools, since Cowichan Secondary starts at grade 10 and Kelsey at grade 9. Students are unlikely to transfer to either of the middle schools for just one or two years.

At present, the two elementary schools, Chemainus and Crofton, have some spare capacity, but both also have a variety of community early learning programs occupying this 'spare' space. Full day kindergarten will require one more classroom at Chemainus and possibly also at Crofton (if not in 2011, then in subsequent years).

Moving grades 6 and 7 at both schools to Chemainus Secondary, using the experience gained when this same process occurred at Lake Cowichan Secondary, will free up sufficient space at both elementary schools for this early learning program to be delivered successfully.

The enrolment of Chemainus Secondary is projected to decline over the next few years from its current 385 to as low as 260, but more likely closer to 300 students. The addition of the 110 students in grades 6 and 7 could easily be accommodated in the secondary school (capacity 550).

Will this reconfiguration mean more Chemainus students will take grades 9/12 at other secondary schools? Possibly, especially if a new Cowichan Secondary school is built; but this is after all a

case of offering students opportunities that keep them in school and equip them with the best education possible.

The replacement of Cowichan Secondary School

This is the District's #1 capital project, according to its 2009/2010 Capital Plan Submission, and builds on a Ministry commitment that provided funding to purchase a site in the new Cowichan Place development.

The school's operating capacity is 1,000 (900 allocated to the regular stream and 100 to French Immersion). Its current enrolment is 895 students (848 plus 47), although this is the first year that enrolment has been less than capacity. Its regular program enrolment will continue to decline through to about 2018, when it will start a slow increase to around 800 students by the end of the plan's time horizon. Its French Immersion enrolment will increase to about 115 by the same time frame, for a total of about 915 students.

Its current regular program grade 10 class is 267 students, plus 19 in French Immersion. This will stay quite stable through to about 2018 (regular program declining slightly, French Immersion program increasing), while after 2018, there will be a slow increase, reaching around 325 by 2025.

This would indicate that the capacity of a new school should be in the region of 1250 students. Since its current capacity is only 1000 students, this would increase overall district secondary capacity, and decrease the utilization rate. However this could be offset by the accommodation of grade 6 and 7 students in secondary space at Chemainus.

Is this capacity necessary all at once? At its lowest enrolment in 2016, it will have about 710 regular grade 10/12 students, about 85 in French Immersion, and about 260 potential grade 9 students. This totals to 1055 students, to which should be added a few adult and alternative learners. Thus 1050 might be acceptable for initial construction, but an addition would be almost immediately required.

Strengthening facilities for trades and employment training, and linkage with Vancouver Island University's new Duncan campus and programs

The Cowichan Place development will bring together a new college campus and a new high school. This will allow secondary-post-secondary programming to be developed in a way that maximizes the educational opportunities and strengthens the facility base for a range of trades and employment training. The School District should move forward with this initiative.

At the same time, the educational opportunities at other secondary schools should be investigated, and where possible, program upgrading built into other initiatives to upgrade these schools for seismic and other building improvements. The only secondary school this might apply to in the short term is Chemainus Secondary, since Lake Cowichan is being upgraded at the moment, and Frances Kelsey is a relatively new building.

Grade configuration in the central zone

Comments have already been made regarding the need to rebuild Cowichan Secondary and to accommodate early learners in the elementary schools. The Central Zone currently is one year adrift from the School District's preferred grade structure, accommodating as it does grade 6 students in the Elementary schools not middle, and grade 9 in the middle schools, not the high schools.

However the limiting factor in this is the lack of capacity at Cowichan Secondary. There are few options that could occur without the additional 250 student capacity there; this was the case in the past and will continue to be for the next 15 years. One option would be to move the French Immersion secondary program to Frances Kelsey, although Cowichan Secondary School is a more central location....or have secondary French Immersion programs at both schools, although this would very much dilute the program potential at both sites.

However the other issue which needs to be examined in parallel to this is the future of elementary schools in the zone.

The future of elementary schools in the central zone

There are currently nine elementary schools in the central zone, of which one is dedicated to French Immersion and the others to regular programming. At the present time, there are over 450 'empty' seats for grades 1/6 in these schools, with a utilization of 76%.

However this will change as elementary enrolments grow, and by the end of the timeline of this plan, enrolment will have grown by over 300 students, and utilization will be over 90%.

Central Zone	K	Elem
Op. Capacity	494	1,932
2009 Enrolment	200	1,461
2009 Utilization		76%
2025 Enrolment	240	1,780
2025 Utilization		92%

Figure 25 - Changing Enrolments and Utilization - Central Zone

Kindergarten enrolment is currently also well under capacity, but that capacity is still measuring half day students. With the growth of kindergarten age students in the next few years, and the reassessment of these spaces to reflect full day kindergarten, the kindergarten spaces across the zone will also be close to 100% utilization by 2011.

However the picture is more complex when viewed at the school level due to two factors: uneven distribution of students and out-of-catchment flows, and small size of schools.

In terms of school size, recognizing that one of the Board's planning principles is to keep elementary enrolments between 200 and 400 students, several schools are too small, some by enrolment and some by both capacity and enrolment:

- Alexander – is a well sized school (76 + 276) with a low enrolment and utilization. It has considerable out of boundary flows primarily to Alex Aitken School which is well over its capacity.
- Koksilah – is a small school (38 + 184) with low enrolment and utilization.
- Somenos – is a small school (38 + 92) with low enrolment and utilization.

All three of these schools has building issues, and all three will need substantial renovation in the next 15 years if they are to continue as operating schools. The question is should that money be spent on those buildings or would it be better spent on other schools? Comments on each one are as follows:

Alexander – this is a poorly constructed school built in a flood plain and will always have building issues. Many of its catchment students prefer to attend Alex Aitken, although it is already over capacity and will become more so as this trend continues. The other elementary in that sector of the zone is Maple Bay; it has considerable space capacity and, given the attraction of the area to

retirees, is likely to continue to have spare capacity well into the future. Alexander's spare space is however well used by other district programs which would need to be relocated.

Koksilah – is poorly located in an industrial area, in a building which lacks any sense of functional integrity and has a range of undersized amenities, especially its gymnasium. Most of its students either cross the highway by overpass from the First Nations lands, or are driven to school. It likely loses students to Khowhemun, but otherwise is quite isolated. It has been slated for closure in the past, but the Board has been adamant in terms of retaining it and strengthening its community and cultural programming.

Central Zone		K	Elem
Alex Aitken	Op. Capacity	38	207
	2009 Enrolment	39	220
	2025 Enrolment	36	333
	2025 Utilization		161%
Alexander	Op. Capacity	76	276
	2009 Enrolment	15	108
	2025 Enrolment	21	130
	2025 Utilization		47%
Koksilah*	Op. Capacity	38	184
	2009 Enrolment	14	114
	2025 Enrolment	15	91
	2025 Utilization		50%
Maple Bay	Op. Capacity	76	322
	2009 Enrolment	28	189
	2025 Enrolment	31	199
	2025 Utilization		62%
Drinkwater	Op. Capacity	76	299
	2009 Enrolment	38	286
	2025 Enrolment	49	337
	2025 Utilization		113%
Khowhemun	Op. Capacity	76	299
	2009 Enrolment	29	269
	2025 Enrolment	36	309
	2025 Utilization		103%
Somenos	Op. Capacity	38	92
	2009 Enrolment	11	95
	2025 Enrolment	14	142
	2025 Utilization		155%
Tansor	Op. Capacity	76	253
	2009 Enrolment	26	180
	2025 Enrolment	36	238
	2025 Utilization		94%

Figure 26 - Changing Enrolments and Utilization - Schools in Central Zone

Somenos – is a small school which, if it keeps its kindergarten at the mid-teens instead of around ten, will grow over the next few years. However it will always be well below the Board's 200 enrolment minimum. Its building is also small and old. Its closest school is Drinkwater which is currently undergoing renovation (seismic and BEP).

It should be noted that all these enrolment figures assume that the grade structure remains at kindergarten to grade 6. If the Board were to change to kindergarten to grade 5, all these schools would see decreased utilization, with many that are projected to be over capacity by 2025, returning to a level much closer to or often below 100% utilization. At some schools, this additional capacity will be needed for full day kindergarten, although it is likely that all schools except Drinkwater can accommodate full day kindergarten in their current capacity allocation of kindergarten rooms.

What is the desired future of elementary schools in this zone? Most of the answers related to policy decisions which are within the Board's purview, although it must be stressed once again that no action will simply leave the issues unresolved.

Enhancing the 'community' nature of schools with high First Nations enrolment

The Board's commitment to improve curriculum and teaching for First Nations students is to be lauded. However there are also facility approaches that can be adopted to build a greater sense of community within the First Nations. In particular, the Ministry of Education's Neighbourhoods of Learning program encourages:

School districts ... to consult with community partners and organizations to find unique and innovative ways to design schools with community use in mind and create places where people have better access to educational and community services. All school districts are now being encouraged to move towards this inclusive approach to planning the use of new school space and including elements of Neighbourhood Learning Centres in all new and replacement schools.

Neighbourhood Learning Centre schools may include many services, such as child-care programs, office space, health clinics, sports programs, seniors' centres or family resource centres.

<http://www.neighbourhoods-of-learning.gov.bc.ca/about.html>

As the district prepares its facility plan, where there are new buildings, consideration should be given to including, or discussing with the Ministry the potential for including, Neighbourhoods of Learning within the overall plan for replacement or new schools.

In addition, efforts should be made to ensure that schools with a high First Nations population, which could be renovated, are included for Neighbourhoods of Learning funding as well as other perhaps more structural upgrading.

The impact of French Immersion on South zone school enrollments

The fastest growing element of the district's programming is French Immersion, especially at the elementary level (although experience so far has been that, once established in the program, a high percentage of students carry on to middle and secondary programs). With the establishment of Ecole Mill Bay, a considerable percentage of students in the south zone started French Immersion as opposed to attending their neighbourhood school. Over these years (2005 to date), even as the demographic based enrolment decline was abating, the size of kindergarten classes at Discovery and Cobble Hill Elementaries and to a lesser extent Bench Elementary, declined considerably.

	Discovery	Cobble Hill	Bench	Mill Bay	Total
2003	79	49	31	0	159
2004	59	31	37	0	127
2005	41	45	37	26	149
2006	44	33	41	26	144
2007	44	43	36	36	159
2008	30	34	48	44	156
2009	46	29	29	42	146

If this pattern continues, with kindergarten enrolments stabilizing around their present levels with only changes due to the slight overall demographic growth trend, then the situation in 2025 will look somewhat as follows:

		K	Elem
South Zone			
Bench	Op. Capacity	76	293
	2009 Enrolment	29	289
	2025 Enrolment	44	300
	2025 Utilization		102%
Cobble Hill	Op. Capacity	76	316
	2009 Enrolment	29	222
	2025 Enrolment	41	218
	2025 Utilization		69%
Discovery	Op. Capacity	76	293
	2009 Enrolment	46	226
	2025 Enrolment	46	235
	2025 Utilization		80%

Figure 28 - Enrolment and Utilization - Elementary Schools in South Zone

At Bench, enrolment will be little changed from the present and largely in line with capacity, but at Discovery and Cobble Hill, the current low utilization will continue. All have two classrooms allocated for kindergartens, so they can accommodate up to 44 students – all are expected to be close to this level. However it is anticipated that new growth in this area will, over the next 15 years, provide additional enrolment which will feed to these two schools.

The establishment of the French Immersion program in the south zone will also channel students into the middle school French Immersion program which is at Mt Prevost in the centre zone, and on to Cowichan Secondary for grades 10/12. This will cause the enrolments at George Bonner and Frances Kelsey to fall significantly from their current levels.

South Zone		Elem	Sec
George Bonner	Op. Capacity	450	250
	2009 Enrolment	404	214
	2025 Enrolment	340	172
	2025 Utilization	76%	69%
Frances Kelsey	Op. Capacity		1,000
	2009 Enrolment		1,043
	2025 Enrolment		737
	2025 Utilization		74%

By 2025, both schools will have utilization rates of between 70 and 80%. As with the elementary schools this provides plenty of room for growth from new developments. Another strategy would be to initiate a second middle school French Immersion program at George Bonner (it is unlikely that the enrolment in the program could support a second district secondary program at Frances Kelsey, although the transfer of this program to Frances Kelsey might alleviate capacity issues at Cowichan Secondary).

Strengthening the French Immersion program

The recent French Immersion Task Force report proposed a number of initiatives to strengthen the program; its recommendations were accepted by the Board. With regard to facilities, the recommendations were for a continuation of the current configuration of two elementary programs and one middle and one secondary program. The projected impact on enrolments in the program are as follows:

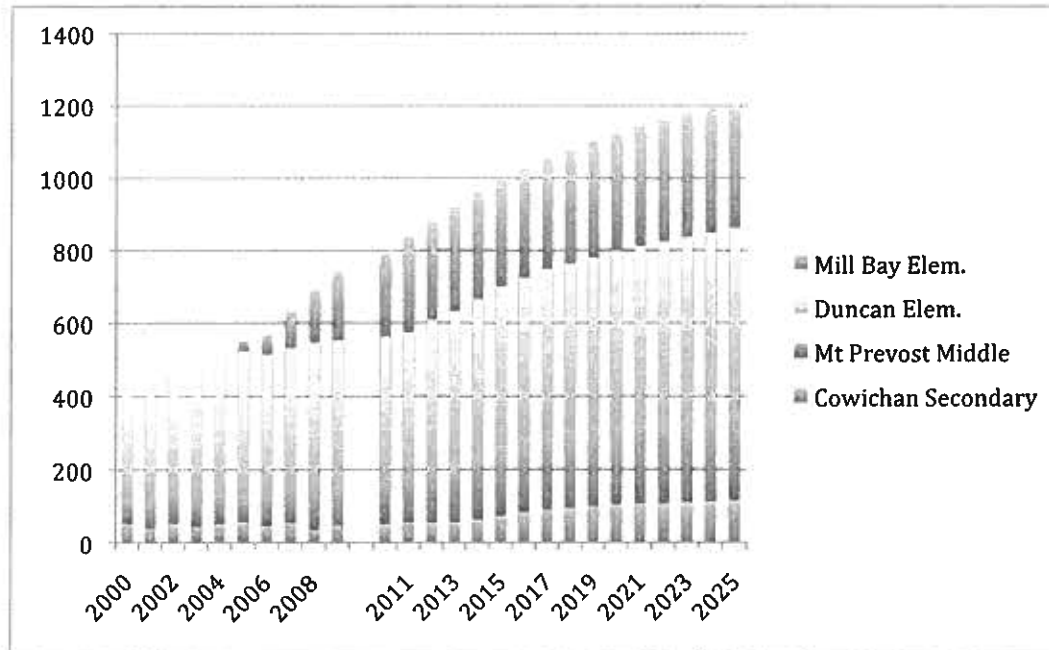


Figure 30 - French Immersion Enrolment Growth - 2000 to 2025 - by School

This projection assumes that the transitions from elementary to middle to secondary programs occur at the same rate as in the past. This is based on Duncan to Mt Prevest to Cowichan. The geographical distance is significantly greater from Mill Bay to Mt Prevest, and the retention ratios may be significantly lower. Another option, which is discussed above, would be to establish a middle school program at George Bonner, although this may be seen as less attractive in educational terms. However, as decisions are made, it is clearly an option which should be considered.

Long-term planning for elementary facilities in the South zone

The Mill Bay area (EA A) is the only part of the district that is likely to see substantial growth in the next 15 years to 2025. And it has the potential for significant growth from the three major developments that are in the planning and approval process at the present time. While there are too many variables to project the rate at which this new housing will generate students, if any of the developments goes ahead, there will be an influx of students.

As noted above, with the establishment of the French Immersion program at Ecole Mill Bay, there is and will continue to be spare capacity in the schools at all levels, therefore the generation of new students from new housing can be absorbed without new building. However in the long run, between 2020 and 2025, there is a likelihood that new capacity will be required. All these housing developments are large enough to require land to be set aside for school purposes; the preferred location should be the development that is most central to the urban core of Mill Bay, and which is

likely to generate the most children through a focus on the development of family housing. In the short term (next five years) a site for a school should be acquired.

Upgrades to Ecole Duncan and Ecole Mill Bay

Both physical structures of the two French Immersion elementary schools are not in good condition:

- Ecole Duncan has a beautifully renovated main block, but the other collection of buildings that make up the school are in poor condition physically and educationally.
- Ecole Mill Bay was closed and has been reopened as a school. It too is functionally, structurally and educationally at the end of its life.

Both these schools should be completely renovated during the time horizon of this plan, the sooner the better. While both are slated for seismic upgrading, it is, in our opinion, likely that this money would be better invested in new construction, rather than patching up structures that are at or beyond the end of their functional life.

If a decision is made to rebuild rather than renovate, the question of location must be addressed. With Ecole Duncan the fine condition and heritage nature of the main building indicates that the current site is the right one. This is not the case with Ecole Mill Bay: all of its building is in poor shape and its current location has little to recommend it. An alternate location could be sought, and one closer to the Mill Bay urban core would be preferable. If this is the case, then the discussion in the previous section about finding a long term location for a new school for the regular program in the Mill Bay area, becomes relevant. Eventually, a new elementary school could be dual track, with all the administrative efficiencies that come from one larger school as opposed to two smaller schools. An alternative would be to relocate the French Immersion program to Cobble Hill School and relocate its students to the new Mill Bay school which could/would then be single track, and require less capacity.

Addressing educational upgrading of schools to meet Board strategic planning goals:

- **Educational upgrades at all schools to meet academic, fine arts, and physical education requirements**
- **Upgrading all schools to meet the needs of special needs students**
- **Incorporating distance-learning, outreach, and technological opportunities at small secondary schools**

It is always a frustration to teachers, administrators and parents that major renovations to schools often address building safety issues and only to a lesser extent improve educational facilities. This is not to say that such safety upgrades as seismic upgrading are not welcomed, but the incremental cost of doing educational upgrades is always less when other major work is being done, and is almost always ruled out as pushing the project 'over budget'. Many of our grandmothers would have said 'penny wise, pound foolish'.

The board has indicated that it wants to see improvements to a range of facilities and amenities. Of those noted, only upgrading to meet the needs of physically challenged students would automatically be undertaken (since it is covered by the National and Provincial Building Codes).

There are several ways that this situation can be addressed. For instance, by proposing to the Ministry a reallocation of funding. Long term planning can identify the schools and buildings which are required in the long term, and those which are not. The upgrading budgets of those schools not required, could, theoretically be reallocated to educational upgrading of schools with a long term future.

A second option is to partner with other agencies and cost share the upgrading of school facilities: the municipal recreation and community sport groups may be interested in partnering on upgrades to physical education facilities as long as they get assured long term access agreements. The same applies to public and community arts organizations re fine arts facilities. VIU may be interested in the creation of distance learning facilities in the two small secondary schools.

Recommendations

Lake Zone

After reassessing the required capacity to take into account the Ministry's Early Childhood Learning initiatives (full day kindergarten, *StrongStart*, etc), build a single new elementary school in Lake Cowichan either by expanding Palsson Elementary or by building a new school on the A.B.Greenwell site. Application should be made for Neighbourhoods of Learning funding for this school to enhance its community programming.

Demolish the closed Stanley Gordon School but retain ownership of the site.

North Zone

Reconfigure the grade structure in the north zone to Kindergarten through grade 5, with grade 6 and 7 students attending Chemainus Secondary School.

Central Zone

Reconfigure the grade structure in the central zone to Kindergarten through grade 5, with grade 6 students attending the two middle schools and grade 9 students attending Cowichan Secondary School.

Continue with the planning for a new Cowichan Secondary School on the Cowichan Place site, with a capacity for 1250 students.

Close Alexander Elementary with students allowed to attend Alex Aitken, Maple Bay or Koksilah Elementaries.

Close Somenos Elementary with students attending Drinkwater Elementary.

Add a four classroom addition on to Drinkwater Elementary.

When seismic upgrading of Alex Aitken Elementary becomes a Ministry priority, reassess the enrolment situation in the Quamichan zone to determine whether an addition is required.

Renovate Koksilah as a community school with a strong First Nations culture. Consider a major addition to the school to replace the various ancillary buildings that currently make up the school, and expand the gymnasium to full size. Incorporate seismic upgrading into this renovation. Apply to the Ministry for Neighbourhoods of Learning funding.

Demolish the various outbuildings at Ecole Duncan and replace them with a new addition of equal capacity. Hold a design competition to ensure that the design of the addition is respectful of the original 1913 school.

South Zone

Acquire land closer to the Mill Bay urban core.

And

Develop plans for a dual track regular/French Immersion school, with French Immersion as the first phase (capacity 60K + 250 Gr.1/5 or 300 Gr.1/6) and the regular program as the second phase.

Or

Relocate the current south zone elementary French Immersion program to Cobble Hill Elementary, and relocate Cobble Hill Elementary students to a new school in Mill Bay (phase 1 capacity 40K + 200 Gr. 1/5).

Close the current Ecole Mill Bay building once the new school is built, and demolish/dispose of the building and land.

Start a new French Immersion middle school program at George Bonner Middle School.

Maintain a watching brief on secondary school enrolments and consider relocating the secondary French Immersion program to Frances Kelsey if its enrolment/capacity allow it, and if the Ministry balks at constructing Cowichan Secondary at 1250 student capacity.

Other Recommendations

Lobby the Ministry to take a more holistic approach to programmed renovations such as seismic upgrading, to ensure that educational upgrading is accomplished as well as safety and building upgrading.