



Vancouver School Board

School District No. 39

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

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To Edith Cavell Elementary, Maple Grove Elementary and Magee Secondary Schools,

Over the past few weeks the District conducted a full review of alternative swing site (temporary accommodation) options for Edith Cavell Elementary while the school undergoes a seismic upgrade project.

The District examined all options and took into consideration the three requests of the Edith Cavell parent community:

1. Keep the school community together during construction
2. Find a swing site closer to Edith Cavell
3. Keep the project on schedule

The review determined that one option, in addition to the original swing site identified at Champlain Heights Elementary and MacCorkindale Elementary (Champlain/MacCorkindale), warranted further exploration and consultation with the impacted school communities. This option would involve the use of eight classrooms within Magee Secondary and six portables on the grounds of Magee Secondary and Maple Grove Elementary (Magee/Maple Grove site).

The District is committed to openness and transparency. In an effort to enable feedback from the school communities to be submitted, and at the request of the affected parent communities, the District delayed making a decision on Cavell's swing site.

What we have heard from school communities:

Through the PAC Seismic Committee Survey, Cavell parents indicated a strong preference for temporary accommodation at the Magee/Maple Grove site instead of at Champlain/MacCorkindale. Parents indicated that the drawbacks of Magee/Maple Grove site are outweighed by the benefits of keeping all students located at one site that is closer to Cavell.

The Magee/Maple Grove communities expressed concern about several issues including increased traffic in the neighbourhood, access to facilities (such as gym and library) for students, playground space, combining secondary and elementary students, and general concerns about crowding on the site. The community expressed particular concern with hosting Cavell while the seismic replacement school for Maple Grove is being constructed.

Parents of students at the Magee/Maple Grove sites also expressed that adding construction activity limits play space and traffic flow even further.

Both the Magee and Maple Grove PACs expressed a desire to delay Cavell moving to Magee/Maple Grove until the replacement school for Maple Grove is complete, which is projected to be in the summer of 2020. This would enable Cavell to occupy the current Maple Grove building once construction of the replacement Maple Grove is complete. This would also eliminate the need for Cavell staff and students to use the space within Magee Secondary. This possibility was also discussed with the Cavell Seismic PAC who expressed support for this approach.

Staff recommendation

Although District staff believe it would be possible to safely accommodate Cavell students at Magee/Maple Grove starting in September 2019, it is recognized and acknowledged that this option would present considerable facilities challenges and limitations. Staff acknowledge that having active construction on site would further complicate access to outdoor play space and traffic concerns.

Based on a review of the Magee/Maple Grove site, and consideration of feedback received from all three school communities, staff have determined use of Magee/Maple Grove as a swing site commencing in September of 2019 is **not recommended**.

Staff then considered two remaining swing site possibilities for Cavell:

- **Option 1:** Maintain the current expediated timeline and use Champlain/MacCorkindale as a swing site starting in September of 2019
- **Option 2:** Delay Cavell's construction until summer 2020, when the replacement school for Maple Grove is expected to be complete. This would enable Cavell to occupy the former Maple Grove building after the Maple Grove community has moved into the replacement school.

Senior Management Decision

Taking into consideration parent, school staff, student, and community feedback from Cavell, Maple Grove and Magee communities, District Senior Management has made the decision to proceed with swing site **Option 2**. This option would see the Cavell community relocated in the summer 2020, when the former Maple Grove school building is projected to be vacant and available as a swing site.

Although this option could result in escalated construction costs for the Cavell project, Senior Management believe this option enables quality teaching and learning for all three school communities, addresses many of the concerns raised by members of the three school communities, and ensures Cavell is seismically upgraded with minimal delay to the original project timeline. Appendix A provides further details about the options considered by Senior Management.

Next Steps

The District is committed to maintaining an open and transparent dialogue with all three school communities as the seismic mitigation program proceeds. Staff will work closely with Cavell staff and parents to ensure students are well supported at the selected swing site. District staff will also continue to collaborate with Magee and Maple Grove school communities in preparation for use of Maple Grove to host the Cavell community in 2020. In addition, the District will engage the Magee and Maple Grove communities in a dialogue about the use of Magee and Maple Grove as a swing site for possible future school communities as the District works to ensure all staff and students are in seismically safe schools as quickly as possible.

On behalf of the District, I extend my thanks and appreciation to members of the Cavell, Magee and Maple Grove PACs, parents, students, and staff for sharing information with us to help make an informed decision.

Sincerely,



David Nelson
Deputy Superintendent

Cc S. Hoffman, Superintendent
Trustees, Vancouver Board of Education

Appendix A: Options and Rationale for Edith Cavell Swing Site Decision

Options Considered by the Vancouver Board of Education

Option 1: Maintain the expediated timeline and use Champlain/MacCorkindale

This option would see the Cavell community relocate to a swing site effective September 2019, as originally identified. Although this option maintains an expediated timeline, where students are not limited to facility access and outdoor play area, it does not keep students at a single site closer to Cavell.

Option 2: Delay Construction and use Magee/Maple Grove*

This option would see a delay in the start of seismic construction for Cavell Elementary until summer 2020, when the replacement school for Maple Grove is expected to be complete. This would allow students and staff of Cavell to occupy the former Maple Grove school as a swing site without the additional construction activity. Although this option keeps students at one site and closer to home, it does delay the project start date (three months from the original timeline), and could result in escalation of construction costs.

Option 3: Maintain expediated timeline and use Magee/Maple Grove

This option would see the Cavell community relocate to the Magee/Maple Grove swing site effective September 2019. Although this option maintains an expediated Cavell project timeline, it presents significant limitations in regard to access to educational facilities and increases concerns about traffic congestion due to an active construction zone.

Rationale

As part of the Seismic Mitigation Program, the District's Senior Management Team established the following criteria when selecting a swing site for Cavell.

- Swing sites selected will facilitate quality teaching and learning for both host and hosted school communities. This includes student safety, access to learning resources, play space and facilities access.
- Swing sites will enable the seismic program to advance quickly ensuring seismically safe schools for all students and staff.
- Swing sites will be located as close to the school undergoing seismic construction as possible.
- Swing sites will make use of existing facilities in the District.

*In the event the replacement Maple Grove School is not completed on time as currently planned (summer 2020), the District will need to reexamine alternative swing site options available for Cavell at that time.