

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SHORT-SIGHTED GOVERNMENT PLANS COST TAXPAYERS \$8.8 MILLION Join the #GetSeismicRight Rally today at Edith Cavell Elementary

Nov 13, 2018

Vancouver, BC - A newly released report reveals government waste with the Province's seismic upgrade project. The BC government recently announced that it would seismically upgrade Edith Cavell Elementary (Cavell) rather than **rebuild** the dilapidated 98-year-old school. The Province's own Project Development Report (PDR) reveals that while this requires less upfront spending, in the long run this will cost taxpayers \$8.8 million more – \$2.7 million in building lifecycle costs plus \$6.1 million in deferred maintenance. This shortsighted way of thinking will cost taxpayers millions more with 50 Vancouver schools still on the Seismic Mitigation Project list. The PDR states Cavell's infrastructure is well past its service: boilers operating at low thermal efficiency, air-handling systems do not provide adequate ventilation, lighting systems not efficient, and the plumbing is at end of life. Most disturbing are the discoveries of asbestos throughout the building, the presence of lead in pipes and paint, and the findings of other hazardous materials including silica, mercury, and PCBs.

Most notably, the PDR states that Cavell is located in the heart of Cambie Village, where the City's planning initiative is to 'increase density to allow more housing options for families with children'. The 10-year enrollment projection for Cavell is estimated at 128%, an increase from the current 118% enrollment. There is a lottery to get into the school. Cavell was moved up the seismic upgrade list because of the need for expansion. Why then, families are asking, did the PDR scope not cover a costing option for seismic *upgrade including expansion*? During other seismic mitigation projects, schools have been 'right-sized' to reflect current and projected enrollment. Cavell needs to be right-sized up to reflect increasing enrollment.

Edith Cavell PAC spokesperson, Kevin Harris expressed, "We were stunned when we read the PDR because there was no coordination with the planned expansion; the final recommendation is not the cheapest when considering the life span of the school. Recent decisions for other schools have all chosen the most cost efficient project over the long-term. Furthermore, this decision was made in secret without consulting with parents, staff or even VSB trustees."

In addition, families were shocked to learn that, during the 2.5 years of upgrades, the school would be split and students shuffled by buses to two schools (swing sites) in the furthest possible location in Vancouver. Students have never been placed so far away from their home community in any other VSB seismic upgrade or school re-build. The Edith Cavell PAC is requesting meaningful consultation with the VSB, the Vancouver Project Office, and the Ministry of Education so appropriate solutions to the key issues can be found.

Now friends and family of Edith Cavell Elementary have come together and formed the #GetSeismicRight movement. More than 100 people will be wearing our red shirts, carrying banners and making sure the Education Minister and Vancouver School Board hears our voices. We want our children to be safe, but let's do it right. Education Critic, Dan Davies and former VSB trustees are joining our #GetSeismicRight movement.

Rally Details:

Date: Tuesday, November 13

Location: Edith Cavell School, 500 West 20th Ave, meet on the gravel field

Time: 3:15pm

Interviews available: PAC spokesperson Kevin Harris along with select families (including those with special needs children) will be available for interview.

Education Critic Dan Davies and former VSB trustees will also be on hand.

Contact For more information, please contact Rachel, Edith Cavell Elementary PAC Seismic Committee representative at 604-561-5337

EDITH CAVELL FACT SHEET

- Located in the heart of the booming Cambie Corridor
- Already over capacity (327 students with capacity of 271)
- Turning away in catchment children every year with a projected acceptance rate of only 52% for 2019
- Urgently in need of expansion according to VSB but that has not been funded by the Ministry of Education
- Students will move to swing site in Fall 2019
- Students will move back into school **December 2021**
- 45min bus ride each way to swing site

Project Definition Report Attached with highlighted portions