

FACILITY CLOSURE RECOMMENDATIONS FACILITY PLAN 2015-2025

Presented to the Board of Education on January 12, 2016



School District 72 (Campbell River)

Introduction

At their December 8, 2015 public meeting, the School District 72 Board of Education voted unanimously to approve recommendation 1 (close two elementary schools within the greater Campbell River area) contained within the 2015-2025 Facility Plan. **The greater Campbell River area was identified as all locations within the City of Campbell River and the Strathcona Regional District boundaries that have Campbell River mailing addresses.*

The Board of Education then passed a motion directing senior management to prepare a report identifying which two schools the board should consider for possible closure and the rationale, for presentation to the board at their January 12, 2016 public meeting.

The consideration of closing schools is not easy, nor has it been taken lightly. There is a clear understanding of the strong connection between a school and its community. However, the board recognized the impact of declining enrolment, increasing maintenance demands, and the need to ensure that our limited funds are invested into students – not buildings.

This facility closure recommendation report was prepared by the Campbell River School District senior management team working within the following assumptions (as requested by the Board of Education in the development of the 2015-2025 Facility Plan):

- That the current grade configuration (K-5 elementary; 6-8 middle; 9-12 secondary) be retained;
- That the district's special programs, such as Early French Immersion, continue to be offered without an enrolment cap within operational limits;
- That space continue to be provided for music programs and libraries; and
- That programs housed in Robron Centre continue to have a centralized base within the district.

As such, senior management recommends that the Board of Education consider:

- Closing Discovery Passage Elementary and relocating the student population to Ripple Rock Elementary.
- Closing Oyster River Elementary and relocating the student population to Ocean Grove Elementary.

It is the opinion of the senior management team that closing Discovery Passage Elementary and Oyster River Elementary would allow the school district, as a whole, to better meet the educational objectives stated in the 2015-2025 Facility Plan:

- Reliable technology at the point of instruction;
- More effective allocation of district support services;
- Increased educational services and closer coordination with community services in areas with vulnerable students and families; and
- More flexible learning environments to enable personalized learning initiatives.

Respectfully submitted by:

Thomas G.S. Longridge, Superintendent of Schools
Kevin W. Patrick, CPA-CGA, Secretary Treasurer
On behalf of the senior management team

RATIONALE:
DISCOVERY PASSAGE ELEMENTARY

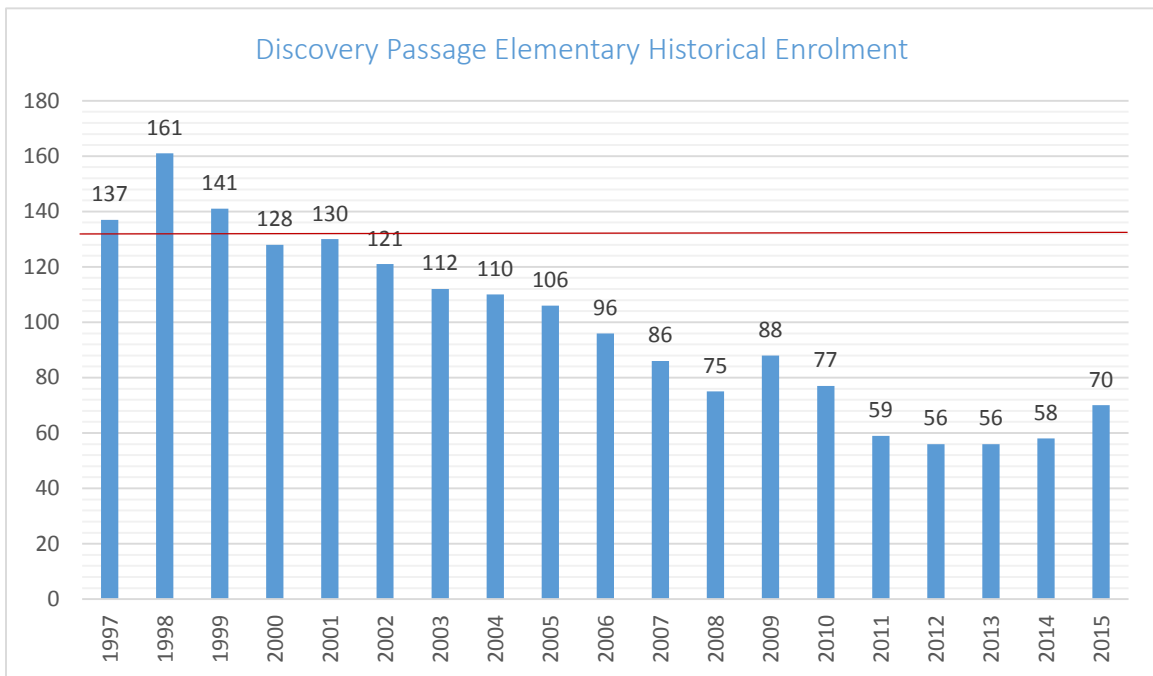
Closure of Discovery Passage Elementary

Recommendation

To close Discovery Passage Elementary and relocate the student population to Ripple Rock Elementary. If, following the school closure consultation process, the Board of Education decides to close Discovery Passage Elementary, students currently attending Discovery Passage Elementary would be moved to Ripple Rock Elementary effective September 1, 2016.

Rationale: Student Enrolment

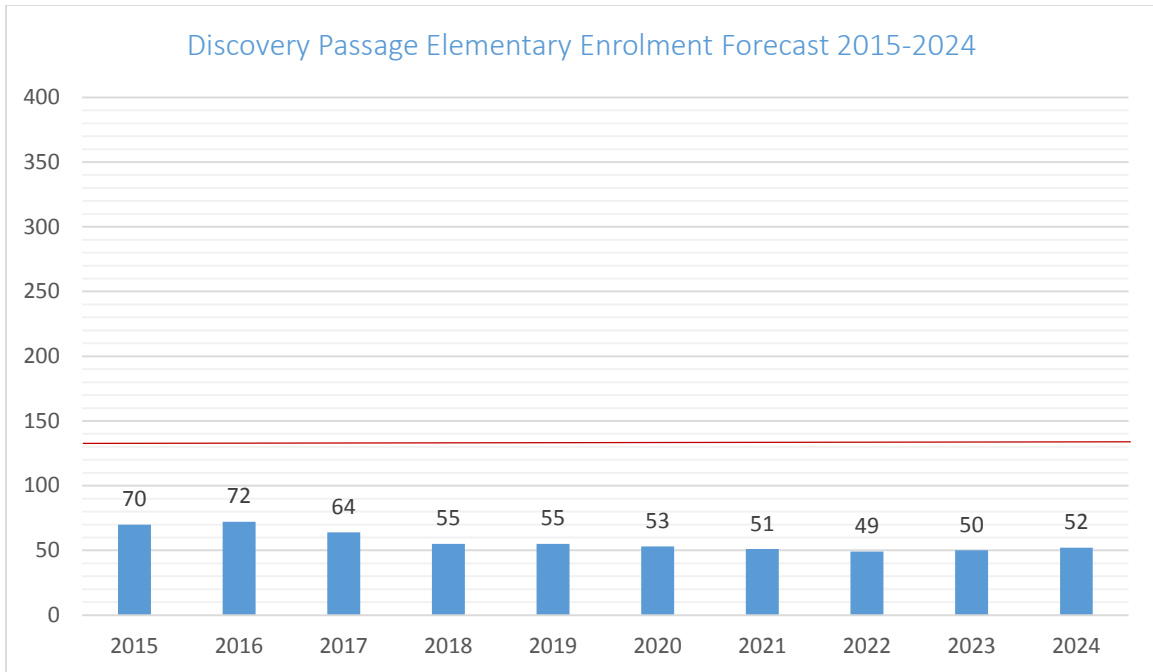
Enrolment in the Discovery Passage Elementary catchment has experienced a significant decline since its peak in 1998 when the student population was 161; its historic low was 56 students. The student population for the 2015/2016 school year, as of the September 30 enrolment count, rebounded slightly to 70 students.



*Red line indicates Discovery Passage Elementary operating capacity, which is 132.

The Discovery Passage catchment is forecasted to decrease further over the next 10 years, reaching its lowest population of 49 students in 2022. This is keeping with the trend experienced throughout the school district of student population migrating to the south end of the city.

Provincial school of choice legislation has also impacted Discovery Passage Elementary as there are currently 23 students living in the Discovery Passage catchment whose families have chosen to enroll their children elsewhere in the district. Of those 23 students who have transferred to another school, the majority attend Ripple Rock Elementary.



*Red line indicates Discovery Passage Elementary operating capacity, which is 132.

Student enrolment is forecasted using a demographic planning tool called Baragar Demographics. Baragar uses Statistics Canada, tax records, birth records, and historical trends to forecast enrolment. The system also uses current grade cohort data and can forecast based on past trends on whether that student total will grow or decline from year-to-year. School District 72 has been using Baragar successfully for over 20 years and, over the last 10 years, the Baragar forecasts have been accurate to 0.5% on 5,000 students.

Rationale: Building Condition

The Ministry of Education provides an independent firm (VFA) to assess the condition of all BC K-12 education buildings. This process allows all buildings in the province to be equally assessed and provides a fair comparative measurement from district-to-district and school-to-school within a district.

As of the 2015 assessment, Discovery Passage Elementary was ranked with a Facilities Condition Index (FCI) of 0.58, with 0.30 to 0.60 classified as ‘poor’. Facility Condition Index ratings of 0.60 to 1.00 are classified as ‘very poor’, the worst possible rating within the assessment. Discovery Passage Elementary was opened in 1959 and is 57 years old.

Ripple Rock Elementary, the proposed receiving school of Discovery Passage’s student population, was ranked with an FCI of 0.08, or ‘good’. Ripple Rock Elementary was opened in 2005 and is 11 years old.

The Facilities Condition Index (FCI) is an industry benchmark and provides a comparative indicator of the relative condition of facilities. The FCI is expressed as a percentage of the cost of remedying maintenance deficiencies to the current replacement value. This calculation also provides a corresponding rule of thumb for the annual reinvestment rate (funding percentage) to prevent further accumulation of deferred maintenance deficiencies.

The firm which performed the assessment is recommending \$2,293,162 in required long-term upgrades to Discovery Passage Elementary.

As the school district has limited funds in both its maintenance budget and annual facility grant, the district would have to apply to the Ministry of Education for funding through the Routine Capital Program to cover these upgrade costs. In the past, the Ministry of Education has not funded school upgrades if the student population can be accommodated in nearby schools.

The district's last seismic study in 2012 also identified Discovery Passage Elementary as at moderate risk in the event of an earthquake. Ripple Rock Elementary was found to have no identifiable risk.

Rationale: Educational Benefits

Student Supports

District support to both the school and individual students is provided by itinerant staff whose time is divided among several school sites. If we could decrease travel time, we could increase the time spent at each school with students and thus improve direct service. As our number of itinerant staff is limited, the greater the number of sites, the more challenging it is to provide service. Also, the time at each site could be increased, which would allow for a greater number of students to receive service.

Our technology support staff would also have less sites to support, which would increase their ability to keep the system and each piece of hardware running, allowing for greater access and reliability for student learning.

Increased Learning Options and Flexibility for Students

Larger schools allow for greater flexibility in creating positive and supportive learning environments within the classroom, and the school as a whole, as there are more opportunities to differentiate and personalize instruction through flexible grouping of students.

In addition, the diversity of experience and areas of expertise afforded amongst a larger teaching staff can allow for more professional development opportunities through teacher collaboration, as well as the creation of more diverse learning experiences based on both student and teacher areas of interest.

Larger student populations also equal more adults within the school community (staff and parents) that can share the responsibilities for the 'extra' activities that create, reinforce and sustain the culture of a school community and better ensure their continuation. Events like movie nights and bike rodeos, or extracurricular clubs and sports like student leadership, chess club, and running club would be examples.

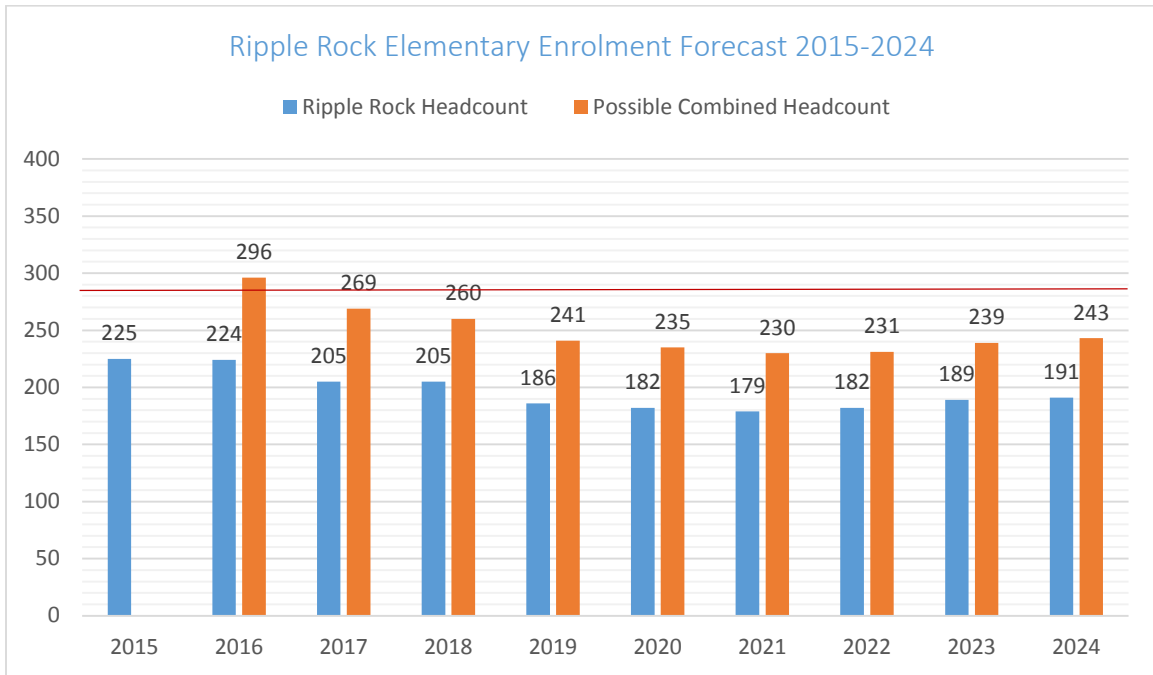
Alternatives Considered

The option of moving a district program to share Discovery Passage Elementary was considered. However, funding limitations, distance from the majority of the school district's population, and the age and condition of the building when compared to alternatives, did not support this option.

Some may question why the district doesn't change the school catchment areas to direct more students to Discovery Passage Elementary. This is not an option guaranteed to address Discovery Passage's low enrolment as provincial school of choice legislation allows parents to select which school they would like their child to attend. Provided there is space and the appropriate resources available at the requested school, the district is obligated to honour the request. As stated earlier, there are currently 23 students living in the Discovery Passage catchment whose families have elected for the students to attend school elsewhere.

Implications: Student Enrolment

It is recognized that by possibly combining the Discovery Passage Elementary and Ripple Rock Elementary populations in September 2016, Ripple Rock Elementary is anticipated to be overcapacity for the 2016/2017 school year. A portable may be required to address this temporary overage.



*Red line indicates Ripple Rock Elementary operating capacity, which is 283.

While Ripple Rock catchment has development potential, consultations with the City of Campbell River’s planning department indicate that growth is anticipated to be slow unless there are policy changes. Should this happen, the school district could adjust boundaries for the south end of the Ripple Rock catchment to Pinecrest Elementary, which has sufficient capacity.

The Board will consider school boundary changes in phase II of the 2015-2025 Facility Plan. If a boundary change was made to adjust the southern Ripple Rock Elementary catchment to Pinecrest Elementary, students attending Ripple Rock Elementary at the time and their younger siblings would be considered continuing students, grandfathered into Ripple Rock, even if they lived outside of the new catchment area. New kindergarten registrations and new student registrations outside of the new catchment area would be required to register at Pinecrest Elementary. Boundary changes would not come into effect until September 1, 2017.

Student enrolment is forecasted using a demographic planning tool called Baragar Demographics. Baragar uses Statistics Canada, tax records, birth records, and historical trends to forecast enrolment. The system also uses current grade cohort data and can forecast based on past trends on whether that student total will grow or decline from year-to-year. School District 72 has been using Baragar successfully for over 20 years and, over the last 10 years, the Baragar forecasts have been accurate to 0.5% on 5,000 students.

Implications: Education

Change and building new relationships can be a difficult transition for both students and families. Should the board decide to close Discovery Passage Elementary, we would endeavour to implement strategies to help support this transition, similar to those used when students transition from elementary to middle school and in previous school closures. Some examples include: school tours and open houses, joint Parent Advisory Council meetings, and shared special events, such as beach day.

Opportunities would also be provided for educators and student support services to share information about the individual learning needs of the transitioning students. This would be used to begin planning classroom learning environments and the allocation of learning supports.

Implications: Transportation

Our transportation procedure (E-1), states the walk limit for primary students is 4 km and for intermediate students is 4.8 km. The procedure also allows for the provision of transportation to students who live north of Perkins Road and who must walk more than 0.5 km along a provincial highway. Students currently attending Discovery Passage and who meet this criteria would be provided bus transportation to Ripple Rock Elementary in accordance with the district's transportation procedure. It would be recommended that the board consider supporting a change to the transportation procedure to allow for the provision of bus transportation of all Discovery Passage students to Ripple Rock Elementary.

Implications: Financial

Due to the age and condition of Discovery Passage Elementary, the closure of the facility would reduce the need for the VFA forecasted cost of \$2,293,162, or possibly more, as the VFA forecast has proven to be low when actually quoted on by contractors.

In addition to the identified costs below, there are additional potential savings to both maintenance and administration as these would be reduced through efficiencies of fewer facilities. Tasks like drive time and ordering would be saved, allowing for that time to possibly be redirected to other facilities.

We recognize that there would be transition costs related to combining two schools. To ensure as smooth a transition as possible, we recommend that the Board set aside funds to support the necessary transition and renovation costs. These one-time costs would be offset by the long-term annual savings.

Discovery Passage Elementary Costing

Direct School Costs:	Current Cost		Projected Savings	
	FTE	Costs	FTE	Savings
Principal	0.40	44,441	0.30	33,331
Teacher	3.00	272,443		
LA	0.20	12,878		
Other (Music, Library)	0.26	12,681		
Learning Improvement Fund		16,466		
Itinerant/Teacher Professionals		15,000		5,000
	<u>3.86</u>	<u>373,909</u>	<u>0.30</u>	<u>38,331</u>
Support Staff:				
Clerical	0.82	41,202	0.68	34,022
EA	2.14	102,090	0.57	27,233
Library Clerk	0.10	4,748		
Student Supervisor		7,000		7,000
Custodial	0.75	44,703	0.45	26,822
Information Technology	0.20	14,400	0.20	14,400
	<u>4.01</u>	<u>214,142</u>	<u>1.22</u>	<u>109,477</u>
Other:				
School Supplies		9,918		4,000
Copier Lease		3,268		3,268
IT Equipment/Supplies		5,000		5,000
		<u>18,186</u>		<u>12,268</u>
Maintenance				
Building Expenses		28,724		18,724
Operating expenses		140,500		120,500
AFG		375,000		375,000
		<u>544,224</u>		<u>514,224</u>
Transportation				
Driver			-0.25	-15,500
Services				-4,000
		<u>0</u>		<u>-19,500</u>
Loss of small community Grant		-162,400		-162,400
		<u>-162,400</u>		<u>-162,400</u>
Total Cost		988,062		
Discovery cost per student		14,115		
Ripple Rock cost per student		8,260		

TOTAL ESTIMATED SAVINGS \$ 492,400

Building Condition			Capital Expenditures avoided by closure	
VFA Replacement Value**	FCI Cost***	FCI*	Capital Expenditure	Cost Avoided
3,413,562	2,293,162	0.58	HVAC/Plumbing	569,771
			Gym	131,383
			Interior	1,070,395
			Exterior	154,622
			Roofing	245,238
			Windows	121,753
				<u>2,293,162</u>

*FCI - Facility Condition Index is the total cost of remedying deferred maintenance requirements (FCI) divided by the total replacement value. The higher the FCI, the poorer the building condition.

.60 - 1.00 = Very poor

.30 - .60 = Poor

.15 - .30 = Average

.05 - .15 = Good

.00 - .05 = Excellent

**Current market value to replace school

*** FCI Cost is the cost to remedy all deficiencies

After closure, land and building could be leased or sold increasing maintenance and generating revenue either ongoing or "one time".

RATIONALE:
OYSTER RIVER ELEMENTARY

Closure of Oyster River Elementary

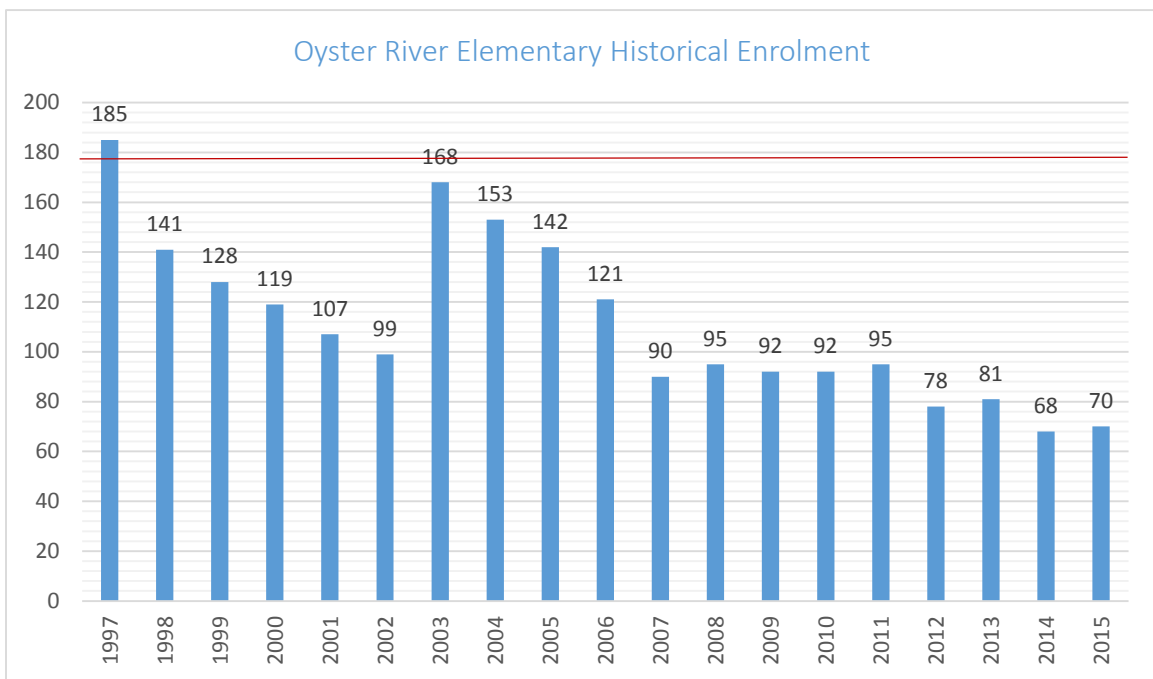
Recommendation

To close Oyster River Elementary and relocate the student population to Ocean Grove Elementary. If, following the school closure consultation process, the Board of Education decides to close Oyster River Elementary, students currently attending Oyster River Elementary would be moved to Ocean Grove Elementary effective September 1, 2016.

Rationale: Student Enrolment

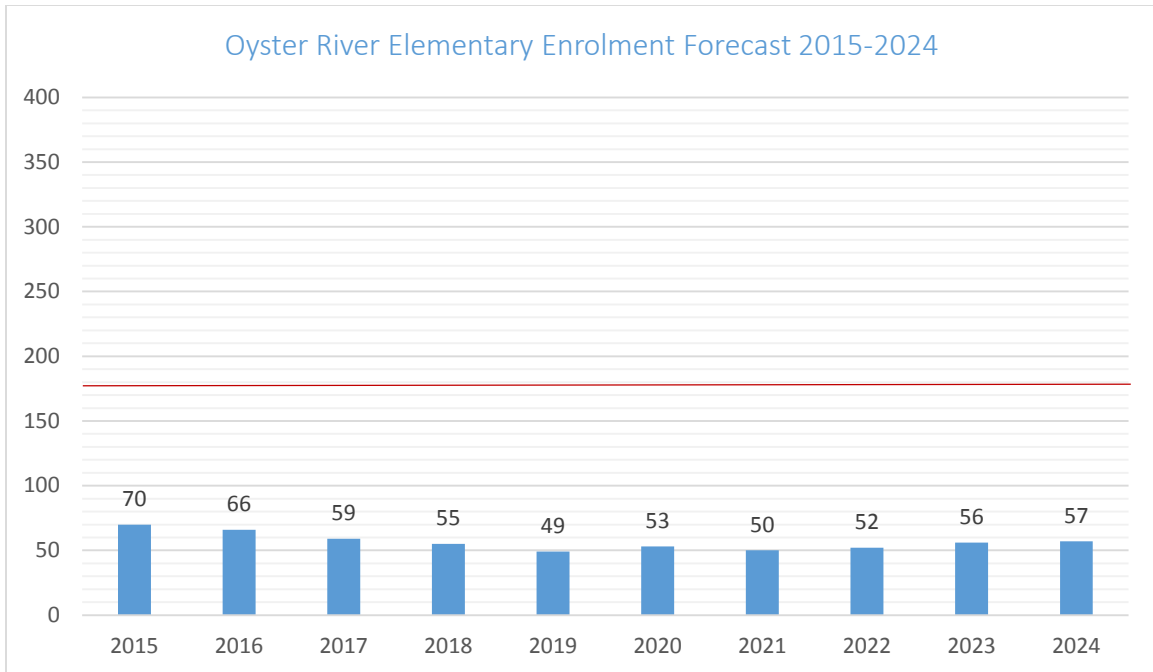
The population of school aged children in Area D of the Strathcona Regional District has continued to significantly decline since the closure of Maple Elementary in June 2002. The peak was in 1997, when 360 students attended both Maple and Oyster River Elementary Schools. Over the past 18 years, the area enrolment has dropped 81% and since consolidating the two schools, Oyster River Elementary has lost 58% of its student enrolment from 168. The student population for the 2015/2016 school year, as of the September 30 enrolment count, was 70 students.

Twenty-eight students living in the Oyster River catchment have elected to attend school elsewhere. Of those 28 students who have transferred to another school, 15 currently attend Ocean Grove Elementary.



*Red line indicates Oyster River Elementary operating capacity, which is 177. 2003 enrolment of 168 was the first year following closure of Maple Elementary.

The Oyster River catchment is forecasted to decrease further over the next 10 years, reaching its lowest population of 49 students in 2019.



**Red line indicates Oyster River Elementary operating capacity, which is 177.*

Student enrolment is forecasted using a demographic planning tool called Baragar Demographics. Baragar uses Statistics Canada, tax records, birth records, and historical trends to forecast enrolment. The system also uses current grade cohort data and can forecast based on past trends on whether that student total will grow or decline from year-to-year. School District 72 has been using Baragar successfully for over 20 years and, over the last 10 years, the Baragar forecasts have been accurate to 0.5% on 5,000 students.

Rationale: Building Condition

The Ministry of Education provides an independent firm (VFA) to assess the condition of all BC K-12 education buildings. This process allows all buildings in the province to be equally assessed and provides a fair comparative measurement from district-to-district and school-to-school within a district.

As of the 2015 assessment, Oyster River Elementary was ranked with a Facilities Condition Index (FCI) of 0.52, with 0.30 to 0.60 classified as 'poor'. Facility Condition Index ratings of 0.60 to 1.00 are classified as 'very poor', the worst possible rating within the assessment. Oyster River Elementary was opened in 1982 and is 34 years old.

Ocean Grove Elementary, the proposed receiving school of Oyster River's student population, was ranked with an FCI of 0.39, which while still classified as 'poor' means the building requires less work comparative to Oyster River. Ocean Grove Elementary was opened in 1993 and is 23 years old.

The Facilities Condition Index (FCI) is an industry benchmark and provides a comparative indicator of the relative condition of facilities. The FCI is expressed as a percentage of the cost of remedying maintenance deficiencies to the current replacement value. This calculation also provides a corresponding rule of thumb for the annual reinvestment rate (funding percentage) to prevent further accumulation of deferred maintenance deficiencies.

The firm which performed the assessment is recommending \$2,005,338 in required long-term upgrades to Oyster River Elementary.

As the school district has limited funds in both its maintenance budget and annual facility grant, the district would have to apply to the Ministry of Education for funding through the Routine Capital Program to cover these upgrade costs. In the past, the Ministry of Education has not funded school upgrades if the student population can be accommodated in nearby schools.

The district's last seismic study in 2012 also identified Oyster River Elementary as at moderate risk in the event of an earthquake. Ocean Grove Elementary was found to have no identifiable risk.

Rationale: Educational Benefits

Student Supports

District support to both the school and individual students is provided by itinerant staff whose time is divided among several school sites. If we could decrease travel time, we could increase time spent at each school with students and thus improve direct service. As our number of itinerant staff is limited, the greater the number of sites, the more challenging it is to provide service. Also, the time at each site could be increased, which would allow for a greater number of students to receive service.

Our technology support staff would also have less sites to support, which would increase their ability to keep the system and each piece of hardware running, allowing for greater access and reliability for student learning

Increased Learning Options and Flexibility for Students

Larger schools allow for greater flexibility in creating positive and supportive learning environments within the classroom, and the school as a whole, as there are more opportunities to differentiate and personalize instruction through flexible grouping of students.

In addition, the diversity of experience and areas of expertise afforded amongst a larger teaching staff can allow for more professional development opportunities through teacher collaboration, as well as the creation of more diverse learning experiences based on both student and teacher areas of interest.

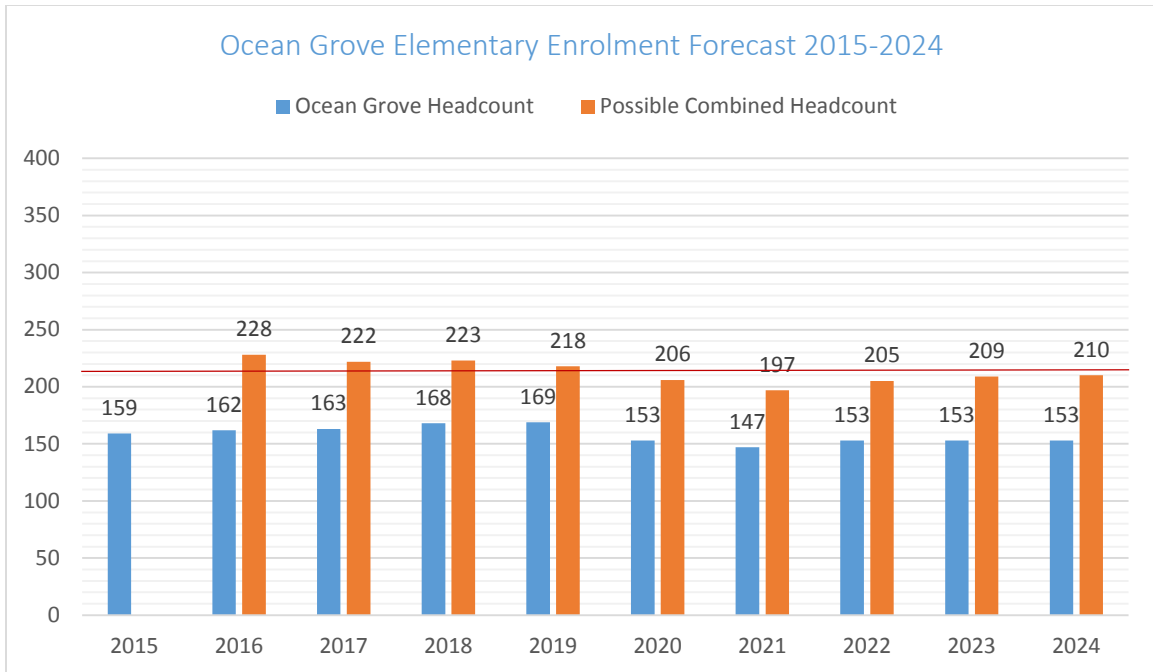
Larger student populations also equal more adults within the school community (staff and parents) that can share the responsibilities for the 'extra' activities that create, reinforce and sustain the culture of a school community and better ensure their continuation. Events like movie nights and bike rodeos, or extracurricular clubs and sports like student leadership, chess club, and running club would be examples.

Alternatives Considered

An alternative to closing Oyster River Elementary considered by the senior management team was to close Ocean Grove and relocate Ocean Grove students to Oyster River. The limitations with this option include: Oyster River Elementary has less capacity than Ocean Grove Elementary; the Oyster River building is in worse condition than Ocean Grove; and 159 Ocean Grove students would require transportation by parents, whereas 70 Oyster River students would require transportation.

Implications: Student Enrolment

It is recognized that by possibly combining the Oyster River Elementary and Ocean Grove Elementary populations in September 2016, Ocean Grove Elementary is anticipated to be overcapacity for the 2016/2017, 2017/2018, 2018/2019, and 2019/2020 school years. Portables may be required to address this overage.



*Red line indicates Ocean Grove Elementary operating capacity, which is 215.

The Ocean Grove catchment has development potential which has been built into the forecast. The forecast factors in housing density similar to what currently exists. More affordable or family-focused housing may increase the forecast slightly. To allow room for growth at Ocean Grove the boundary north of Jubilee Parkway could be redirected to Georgia Park Elementary.

The Board will consider school boundary changes in phase II of the 2015-2025 Facility Plan. If a boundary change was made to adjust the northern Ocean Grove Elementary catchment to Georgia Park Elementary, students attending Ocean Grove Elementary at the time and their younger siblings would be considered continuing students, grandfathered into Ocean Grove, even if they lived outside of the new catchment area. New kindergarten registrations and new student registrations outside of the new catchment area would be required to register at Georgia Park Elementary. Boundary changes would not come into effect until September 1, 2017.

Student enrolment is forecasted using a demographic planning tool called Baragar Demographics. Baragar uses Statistics Canada, tax records, birth records, and historical trends to forecast enrolment. The system also uses current grade cohort data and can forecast based on past trends on whether that student total will grow or decline from year-to-year. School District 72 has been using Baragar successfully for over 20 years and, over the last 10 years, the Baragar forecasts have been accurate to 0.5% on 5,000 students.

Implications: Education

Change and building new relationships can be a difficult transition for both students and families. Should the board decide to close Oyster River Elementary, we would endeavour to implement strategies to help support this transition, similar to those used when students transition from elementary to middle school and in previous school closures. Some examples include: school tours and open houses, joint Parent Advisory Council meetings, and shared special events, such as beach day.

Opportunities would also be provided for educators and student support services to share information about the individual learning needs of the transitioning students. This would be used to begin planning classroom learning environments and the allocation of learning supports.

Implications: StrongStart Program

A Strong Start program currently operates one morning per week at Oyster River Elementary. Some families within the Ocean Grove area currently attend the Georgia Park Strong Start Program. However, as we realize that families within the Oyster River neighbourhood could benefit from this Strong Start program, we would endeavour to work with the local community to explore ways that we could continue to make this program accessible to the Oyster River community.

Implications: Transportation

Our transportation procedure (E-1), states the walk limit for primary students is 4 km and for intermediate students is 4.8 km. Students currently attending Oyster River Elementary would be provided bus transportation to Ocean Grove Elementary in accordance with the district's transportation procedure. Presently, 60% of Oyster River Elementary students live north of York Road, making Ocean Grove Elementary closer than Oyster River Elementary.

Implications: Financial

Due to the age and condition of Oyster River Elementary, the closure of the facility would reduce the need for the VFA forecasted cost of \$2,005,338, or possibly more as the VFA forecast has proven to be low when actually quoted on by contractors.

In addition to the identified costs below, there are additional potential savings to both maintenance and administration as these would be reduced through efficiencies of fewer facilities. Tasks like drive time and ordering would be saved, allowing for that time to possibly be redirected to other facilities.

We recognize that there would be transition costs related to combining two schools. To ensure as smooth a transition as possible, we recommend that the Board set aside funds to support the necessary transition and renovation costs. These one-time costs would be offset by the long-term annual savings.

Oyster River Elementary Costing

Direct School Costs:	Current Cost		Projected Savings	
	FTE	Costs	FTE	Savings
Principal	0.40	49,053	0.10	12,263
Teacher	3.40	283,797		19,200
LA	0.30	19,317		
Other (Music, Library)	0.26	12,681		
Learning Improvement Fund		40,071		
Itinerant/Teacher Professionals		15,000		5,000
	<u>4.36</u>	<u>419,920</u>	<u>0.10</u>	<u>36,463</u>
Support Staff:				
Clerical	0.79	39,695	0.79	39,695
EA	1.43	68,155	0.57	27,167
Library Clerk	0.10	4,748		
Student Supervisor		7,000		7,000
Custodian	1.00	57,601	0.60	34,561
Information Technology	0.20	14,400	0.20	14,400
	<u>3.52</u>	<u>191,599</u>	<u>1.37</u>	<u>122,823</u>
Other:				
School Supplies		10,992		4,000
Copier Lease		3,443		3,443
IT Supplies		5,000		5,000
		<u>19,435</u>		<u>12,443</u>
Maintenance				
Building Expenses		52,056		42,056
Operating expenses		205,379		185,379
AFG		250,600		250,600
		<u>508,035</u>		<u>478,035</u>
Transportation				
Driver	0.25	15,500		
Services		4,000		-10,000
		<u>19,500</u>		<u>-10,000</u>
Loss of small community Grant		-162,400		-162,400
Loss of student Location Grant		-73,440		-55,590
		<u>-235,840</u>		<u>-217,990</u>
Total Cost		922,649		
Oyster River cost per student		13,181		
Ocean Grove cost per student		8,807		

TOTAL ESTIMATED SAVINGS \$ 421,774

Building Condition				Capital Expenditures avoided by closure	
VFA Replacement Value**	FCI Cost***	FCI*	Capital Expenditure	Cost Avoided	
4,021,000	2,005,338	0.52	HVAC/Plumbing	198,686	
			Water Distribution	188,231	
			Interior	1,045,902	
			Exterior	133,257	
			Roofing	340,231	
			Windows	99,031	
				<u>2,005,338</u>	

*FCI - Facility Condition Index is the total cost of remedying deferred maintenance requirements (FCI) divided by the total replacement value. The higher the FCI, the poorer the building condition.

.60 - 1.00 = Very poor

.30 - .60 = Poor

.15 - .30 = Average

.05 - .15 = Good

.00 - .05 = Excellent

**Current market value to replace school

*** FCI Cost is the cost to remedy all deficiencies

After closure, land and building could be leased or sold increasing maintenance and generating revenue either ongoing or "one time".