

Slocan Valley of Schools

Presentation to the Board

April 19th, 2016

2016-2024 Facilities Plan

Draft Plan 1



The Slocan Valley

“The demographic of the Slocan Valley is a changing one.

Seniors are moving closer to town, and more and more younger families are moving to the area.”

- Walter Popoff

Regional Director – Area H



Slocan Valley Students

- We are Rural Schools

The value of rural education

“The value of a school in a rural community goes far beyond its primary purpose of educating children” – BC Teacher’s Federation

- **Heart of the community**

Linda Farr-Darling, a professor with the Faculty of Education at UBC has said, “...schools are often at the heart of a small community.”

- **Safe & nurturing environment**
- **Close community bonds**
- **Strength of volunteerism**



Winlaw Elementary School

- WILD: Winlaw Indigenous Leadership Development
- Access to Rail Trail for a multitude of environmental studies and PE
- Nature Park (riparian studies)
- Limited WiFi with on/off options
- High ratio of committed parent volunteers
- Music Program
- K-6 cross country and downhill ski program
- 7 week swim, drama, skate program
- Multi-Age program biweekly; Dance, pottery, painting, mechanics, tech, experiments, cooking, sewing, choir, drama, building
- \$7900 fundraised with added in-kind donations and volunteerism to build outdoor classroom
- Wildsight Program with Shannoon Bennet
- Skilled and dedicated faculty
- Strong and committed PAC with great fundraising to enhance school programming

Socio-Economic Benefits of Winlaw School

- School is integral hub of rural community
- Without other social service resources, teachers are crucial to safety net of vulnerable families
- Breakfast and hot lunch program
- Strong Start and early childhood parent support help with early interventions
- Central location in the valley increases accessibility
- Increased opportunities with CBAL, parent and community volunteers
- Vulnerable children are recognized and have nurturing support from the community



Rural Education Challenges

- Economic and Population Effects
- Distances & Transportation
- Educational Equity

And yet.....

- Winlaw is one of the mostly highly utilized schools in the District.
- N3 or N16 would further complicate the issue of transportation.
- Outstanding Instructional Quality, Vibrant Programming, Exemplary Volunteers



How can we increase WEG utilization?

Programming

- Wildflower
- Expanded Outdoor Education programming
- Late French Immersion
- K-12
- StrongStart
- International Baccalaureate
- International Students

Community Partnerships

- Decrease capacity with leasing/selling space



Slocan Valley Schools Survey

Help us inform School District 8 about the unique nature of the Slocan Valley Family of Schools.

Where do you live (Circle One)?

Winlaw /Slocan/ Passmore/ Slocan Park/ Appledale
Lemon Creek / Vallican / Crescent Valley/ Other

Indicate the no. of preschool/ school age children in your household and the schools they currently attend:

Homeschool	<input type="checkbox"/> #of Children
WE Graham	<input type="checkbox"/> #of Children
Brent Kennedy	<input type="checkbox"/> #of Children
Winlaw Elementary	<input type="checkbox"/> #of Children
Strong Start (Winlaw)	<input type="checkbox"/> #of Children
Mt. Sentinel Secondary	<input type="checkbox"/> #of Children
Vallican Whole School	<input type="checkbox"/> #of Children
Other	<input type="checkbox"/> #of Children

What schools would your children attend if Winlaw Elementary School were closed?

Homeschool	<input type="checkbox"/> #of Children
WE Graham	<input type="checkbox"/> #of Children
Strong Start (WE Graham)	<input type="checkbox"/> #of Children
Brent Kennedy	<input type="checkbox"/> #of Children
Mt. Sentinel Secondary	<input type="checkbox"/> #of Children
Vallican Whole School	<input type="checkbox"/> #of Children
Other	<input type="checkbox"/> #of Children

What schools would your children attend if WE Graham School were closed?

Homeschool	<input type="checkbox"/> #of Children
Winlaw Elementary	<input type="checkbox"/> #of Children
Brent Kennedy	<input type="checkbox"/> #of Children
Mt. Sentinel Secondary	<input type="checkbox"/> #of Children
Vallican Whole School	<input type="checkbox"/> #of Children
Other	<input type="checkbox"/> #of Children

Reasons Influencing Change in School Choice (Please rank using 1 as most important):

Proximity to Household (Shorter Bus Trip)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proximity to Workplace	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proximity to a School other Siblings Attend	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Programming	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Staffing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/>

If your child presently does not attend WE Graham, would any of the following changes make it an attractive option for your family:

Expanding WE to include grades 11/ 12	<input type="checkbox"/>
French Immersion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wildflower Education	<input type="checkbox"/>
Valhalla Wild. Program/Outdoor Ed. Leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strong Start at WE Graham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Return to General Programming (No Specialty)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staffing Changes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/>

Would your family support a 4 -day school week to reduce school district operating costs (Circle One):

Yes/No

Would your family consider hosting an international student:

Yes/No

Would your family consider re-locating if the school your children currently attend is closed (Circle One)?

Yes/No

Please enter the first 2 digits of your fire address and the last 2 digits of your phone number as a non-specific survey identifier (to prevent multiple surveys of the same households).

STAY INFORMED! Kindly add your email address if you would like us to include you in future correspondence:

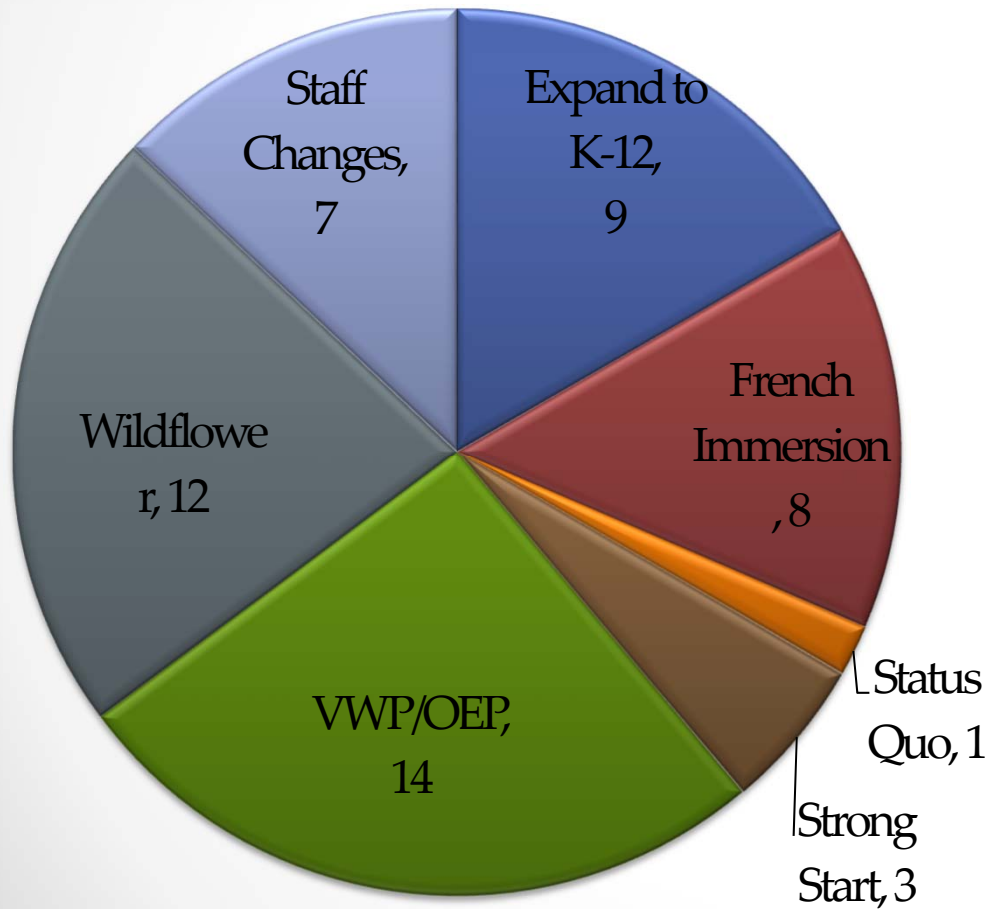
Surveys from Winlaw Dot Day April 9, 2016

- 22 surveys collected
- Surveys represent 46 children

Current School	
Brent Kennedy	2
Home School	8
WEG	1
Winlaw	20
Strong Start (Winlaw)	6
Whole School	3
Other	6

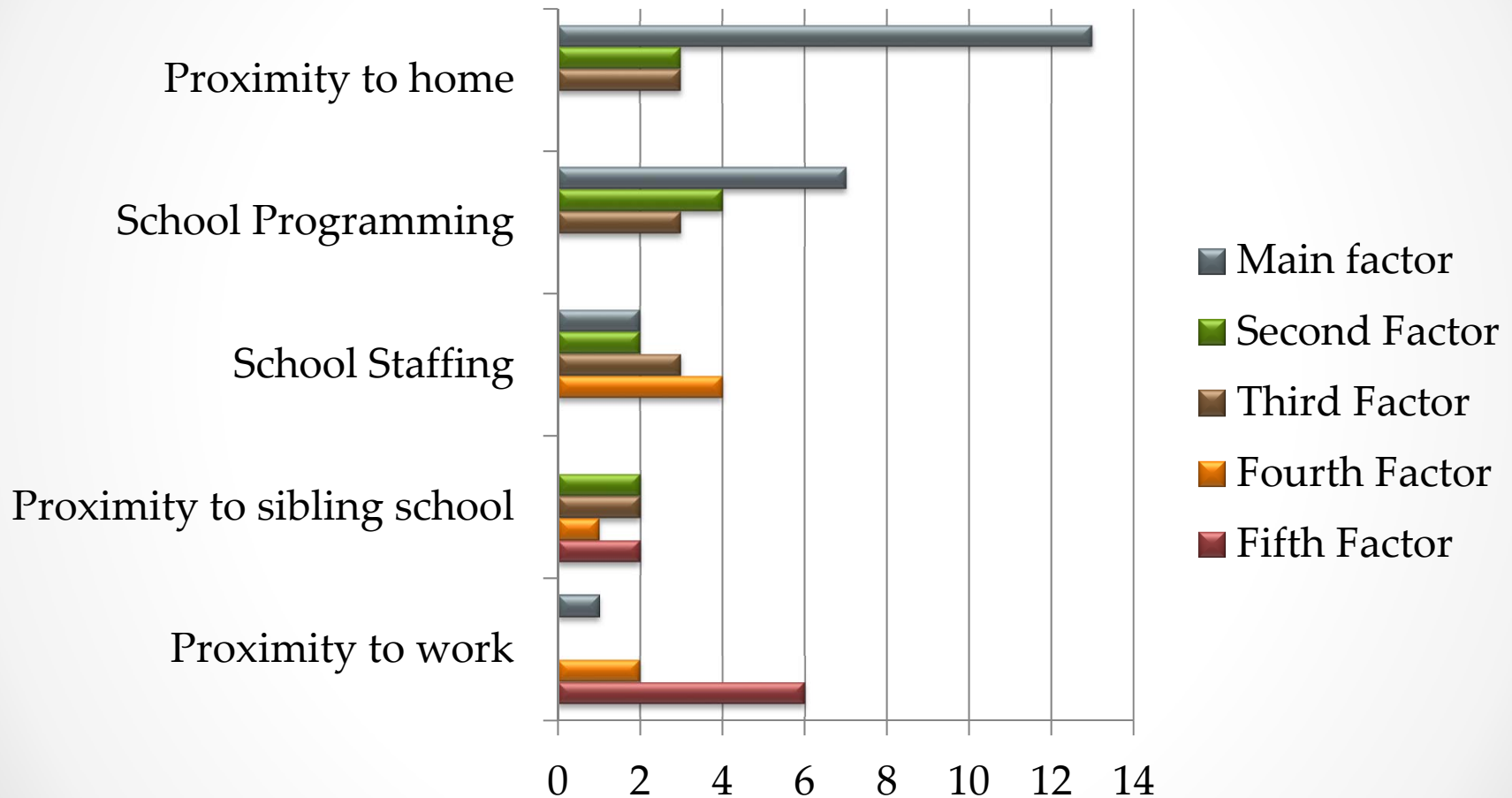
Residence	
Appledale	1
Passmore	4
Slocan	1
Slocan Park	2
Vallican	3
Winlaw	11

Interests in other options at WEG

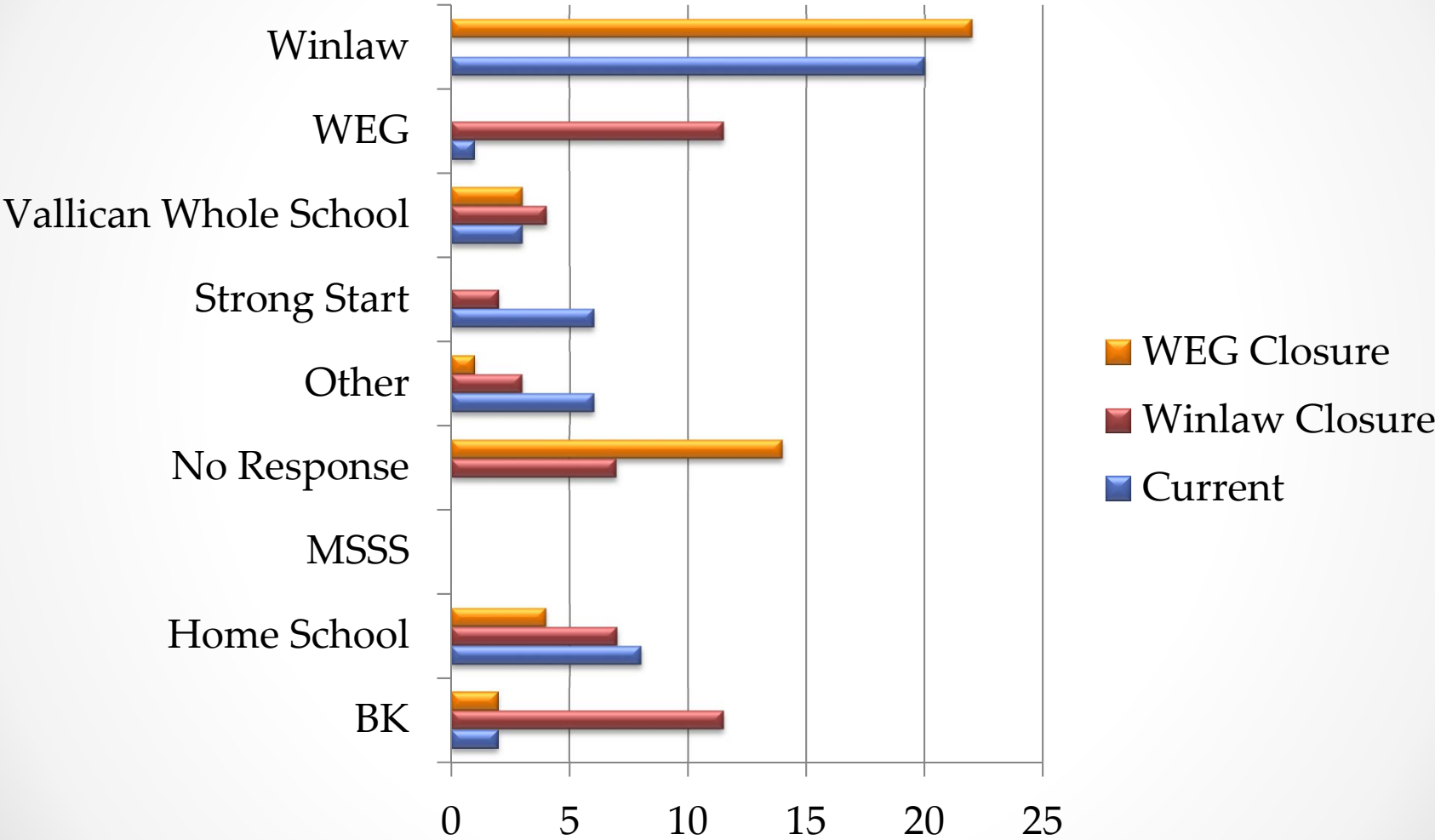


	1 st choice	2 nd choice	3 rd choice	4 th choice	5 th choice
VW P/O EP	13			1	
WF	11	1			
K-12	9				
FI	7		1		
SS	2				1
SQ					1
Staff	7				

Survey of reasons influencing school choice



Transfer Choices to Potential School Closures



Petitions

- We the undersigned are deeply concerned about School District 8's plans to close either Winlaw Elementary or W.E. Graham Community School. Closing either school will result in profound negative effects on school-age children, their families and entire communities.
- We request the district to delay a final decision about school closures in the Slocan Valley communities until after September 6, 2016 to allow the communities adequate time to research, develop and propose viable alternatives to school closure.
- Tally as of 10:00am April 19, 2016 is 218 signatures

School Act: Section 65(2) A board may

- (a) establish committees and specify the functions and duties of those committees,
- (b) establish a district advisory council comprised of persons representing parents' advisory councils and other organizations in the community,

Data Inquiries

- How will Deferred Maintenance costs be reviewed to determine priorities and lower cost solutions?
- Data collections on our most vulnerable families is challenging to due multiple barriers
- Is data from BC Stats used?
- SD8 'Enrolment trends' may not actually reflect what is happening in our communities. How can we help to contribute more accurate data?
- Criteria 6 was scored equally for both scenarios but the reality is not the same

Name	Area Type	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015		2011-12 Changes	2012-13 Changes	2013-14 Changes	2014-15 Changes
Nelson	CY	10,371	10,261	10,301	10,469	10,802		-1.1%	0.4%	1.6%	3.2%
Unincorporated Areas	RDR	30,913	30,776	31,033	31,608	31,883		-0.4%	0.8%	1.9%	0.9%
Slocan	VL	297	297	301	300	300		0.0%	1.3%	-0.3%	0.0%

Draft Plan Challenges

- The 2 highest scoring scenarios for Winlaw deemed by administration as unfeasible, assuming Ministry will only support one SD8 rebuild.
- Why is Winlaw rebuild not priority, considering scoring and FCI?

Schools with highest FCI;

- Salmo Elem 61% - closing
- Trafalgar 62% - closing
- Gordon Sargeant 56%, potential sale
- Central 49% - reconfiguring
- Yahk 48% - closing
- Winlaw 48% - **rebuild or reno**

Cost analysis with other closures while working for solutions in Slokan Valley:

Operating Savings	Capital Savings	Proceeds of Disposal	Capital Costs
550,345	21,714,220	1,100,000	11,572,000 plus adaptations to SV schools

Slocan Valley Advisory Committee 2011 Resolutions

From the Feb 22, 2011 regular open board meeting

10/11-128

MOVED by Trustee Wright, seconded by Trustee Hambler-Pruden

AND RESOLVED THAT: (Motion as amended) The Board of Education supports the development of a family of schools working together on behalf of all learners in the Slocan Valley. Be it resolved that the Board of Education directs the Superintendent to advance from the status quo at Winlaw and WE Graham Schools while developing an educational program that will:

- Commit to examine east and west catchment boundaries for schools in the Slocan Valley.
- Encourage increased enrolment.
- Bring class sizes more in line with the district.
- Support the further development of student access to learning in a variety of methods in the Slocan Valley.
- Be reviewed and reported annually.

Followup action taken:

Superintendent met with WE Graham staff on February 24, 2011 and Winlaw staff on April 1, 2011. The Superintendent will be working to combine the Valley PACS to discuss broader engagement with the community.

Family PAC meeting was held November 28th, work continues.

Slocan Valley Family of Schools met January 9, 2012 and March 29th.

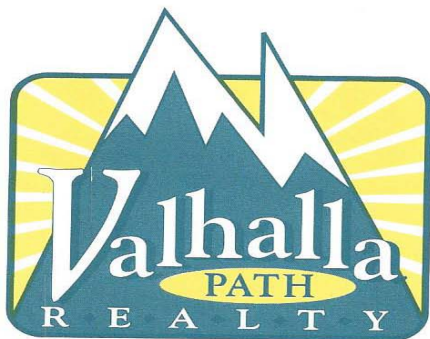
Next Family PAC meeting is scheduled for May 7th

Ad Hoc committee formed to review boundaries Resolution No. 11/12-155 – April 27, 2012

Impacts of Winlaw School Closure

- Could decrease district enrollment as people choose other options, such as homeschooling or private
- Demographic impact of younger families choosing not to move here.
- Relocation of current demographic, people choosing to leave the area.
- Property values decrease without a neighbourhood school.
- Local businesses will be adversely affected.
- Relocation of students to BK could create issues with enrolment of SD20 students at the junction.
- Volunteer base may not be able to travel the longer distances.
- Thriving and efficient PAC would be disbanded.
- Outstanding grants for outdoor education would have to be returned to funding agencies.





Created for the Kootenays!

Winlaw and W.E. Graham Parent Advisory Council

April 18, 2016

Re: Potential school closures

To whom it may concern,

I have resided in the Slocan Valley for 60 years and since 1982 I have been a licensed real estate agent who has specialized in the sale of rural properties primarily in the Slocan Valley.

Schools are a focal point of a community and an extremely important factor when considering moving to a specific location. Not only is the quality of the education important to the parents of the children attending those schools, but the proximity of the facility is integral to the process families go through when they are making a major decision such as purchasing a home. Parents feel a sense of security knowing that their children are nearby. They can organize their schedules around the school timetable and can coordinate with teachers, friends and neighbors to cover for each other when the need arises. There is also a sense of safety knowing that your children are attending a school in a community where people are familiar with one another.

Schools tend to bind communities. They provide a comfortable venue for people to meet and exchange ideas, not only about their children, but about community issues in general. Schools provide jobs, which in turn contribute to the financial health of a community. They provide their children with a venue for recreational activities which contributes to good physical health.

School closures are detrimental to the communities where they have been located. Residents are forced to rearrange their day to day schedules which may affect their employment, which in turn, may affect their ability to remain in that community. Real estate values are negatively affected when communities lose their schools. Key components in the decision to live in a certain location are; proximity to schools, shopping, transportation and communication networks. Children are our greatest assets, so having a well-run school in a community is, perhaps the primary consideration for families to live there.

Thank you.

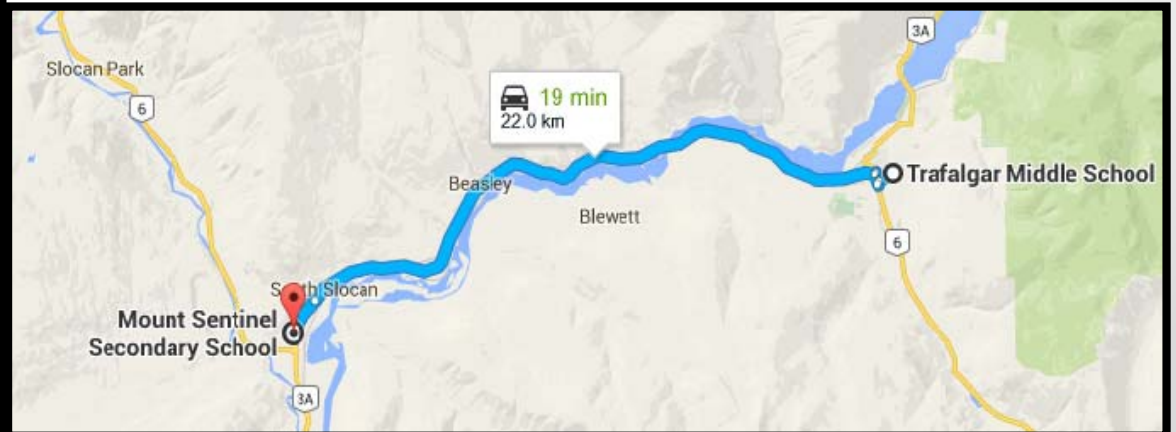
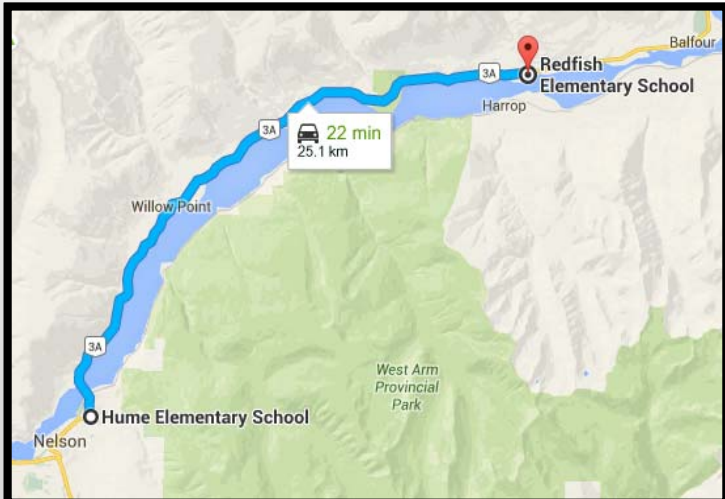
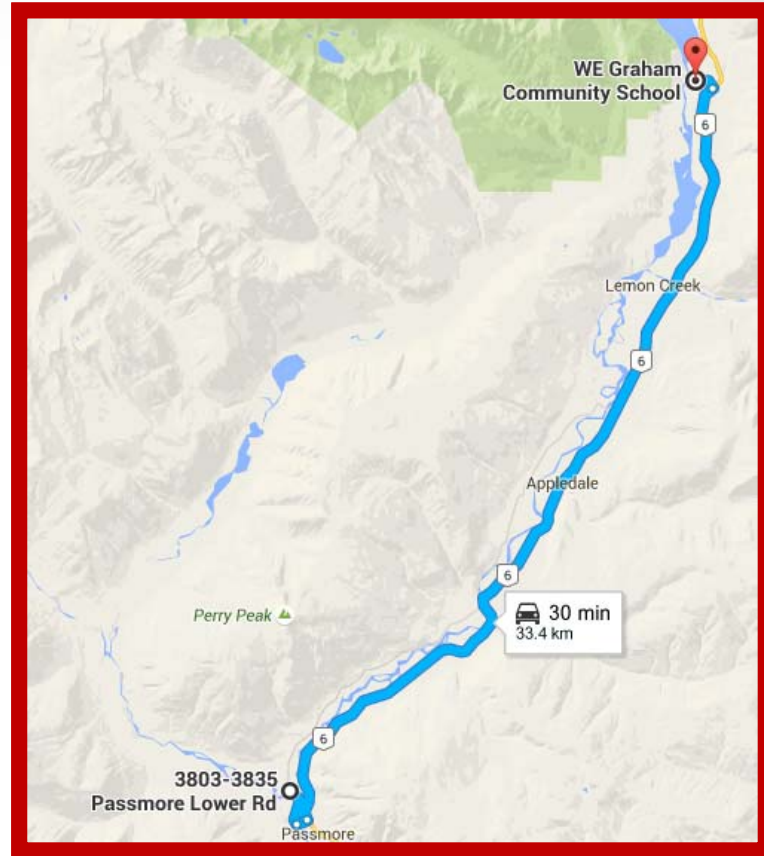
Norm Zaytsoff Owner: Valhalla Path Realty

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Norm Zaytsoff', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Direct impact on our children

- Families will leave the area, greatly impacting child attachments
- Not all children would migrate to same school, breaking relationships, contributing to insecurity and challenges in assimilating to new groups
- Significantly longer bus rides, over 2 hours a day for some
- Long and late travel times may inhibit opportunities for students to access extracurricular activities
- Longer unsupervised bus rides leads to increased possibilities of social bullying.
- Established local afterschool program opportunities no longer available.
- Children taken outside of their immediate community may become more vulnerable.
- Our school culture will be lost.
- They will not have the same cohort opportunities as their siblings.





Recommendations for a Rural Education Strategy

- Recognize the contributions of rural schools.
- Make the improvement of rural-urban equity of educational outcomes a Ministry of Education priority.
- Create the provincial vision for rural education by focusing on how to foster equitable student achievement in all areas of the province.
- Encourage partnerships and co-ordination across social service agencies to support students in communities undergoing economic hardship.
- Enable creative solutions to reduce school operating costs.
- Use shared services among school districts, regions and small communities to find cost savings. Use the saving to support rural education.
- Build local capacity in accessing grants, federal funding and corporate partnerships that could provide additional funding to rural schools.
- Increase connections with all parents, including those of students who currently receive public education through an alternate delivery system such as homeschooling.
- Build on the strength of volunteerism in rural communities.
- Review rural schools funding.
- -2003 Enhancing Rural Learning Report of the Task Force on Rural Education

Slocan Valley of Schools

We are prospering.
Don't close us down.
Invest in us!

