

Board Motion

In relation to the proposed new school in the Silver Valley area, the Board approved the following motion to reaffirm its strong commitment to this critical project:

THAT the Board reaffirm its commitment to securing a new school site in the Silver Valley area and advocate to the Ministry of Education and Child Care, the Ministry of Infrastructure and the Government of British Columbia for immediate funding to support the acquisition of the Silver Valley elementary school site;

AND FURTHER THAT the Board call on the provincial government to honour its public commitment made on October 7, 2024, to deliver a new school for the Maple Ridge community;

AND FURTHER THAT the Board direct the Chairperson to write a formal letter to the Minister of Education and Child Care, the Minister of Infrastructure, the Premier of British Columbia and local MLAs expressing the urgent need for site acquisition and new school construction in Silver Valley and requesting a timeline for provincial action;

AND FURTHER THAT the Board encourage continued advocacy and support for this project from key partners and stakeholders, including the City of Maple Ridge and the District Parent Advisory Council.

The Chairperson also encouraged all interested parties to actively advocate for the provincial government to expedite funding for both the site acquisition and construction of the new school in Silver Valley.

Attachment



May 21, 2025

Honourable Lisa Beare, Minister of Education and Child Care
 Honourable Bowinn Ma, Minister of Infrastructure
 Honourable David Eby, Premier of British Columbia
 MLA Lisa Beare, MLA for Maple Ridge–Pitt Meadows
 MLA Lawrence Mok, MLA for Maple Ridge–Mission

Subject: Urgent Need for Site Acquisition and New School Construction in Silver Valley, Maple Ridge

Dear Premier Eby, Minister and MLA Lisa Beare, Minister Ma, and MLA Mok,

On behalf of the Board of Education of School District No. 42 (Maple Ridge – Pitt Meadows), I am writing to express our deep concern and continued urgency regarding the need for site acquisition and new school construction in the rapidly growing Silver Valley area of Maple Ridge.

Silver Valley has been identified as a high-priority growth area in our district for over a decade. Despite being included in every annual capital plan submission since 2012, no site acquisition approvals have been received to date. As noted in our Strategic Facilities Plan and confirmed by the City of Maple Ridge, the area is undergoing significant residential development and will continue to grow for the foreseeable future.

Currently, 805 elementary-aged students reside in Silver Valley. Of these, 649 (81%) attend Yennadon Elementary, which is operating far beyond its designed capacity. Temporary accommodations—including the use of a detached Annex building (located a considerable distance from the main school building) which contains five classrooms, and three portable classrooms—have allowed us to manage enrolment pressures, but there is no space available for additional expansion. All other elementary schools in the district's Central East Capital Zone are also over capacity.

The need for a new school is not only pressing—it has been publicly acknowledged. On October 7, 2024, Premier Eby announced a campaign commitment to deliver a new school for the Maple Ridge community. This commitment was publicly supported by Minister Beare and referenced in media and social media. However, we were deeply disappointed that the Ministry of Infrastructure's March 25, 2025 Capital Response letter did not include approval for either the site acquisition or school construction in Silver Valley, despite our project being listed as the district's #1 capital priority for a site acquisition and new school.

The Board of Education passed a motion on May 14, 2025 reaffirming its commitment to the Silver Valley project and calling on the provincial government to honour its previous commitment to this community. We are requesting an immediate update on when the provincial government will approve funding to support the purchase of a site and the construction of a new elementary school in Silver Valley. A recent land appraisal confirms the current estimated cost of site acquisition remains at \$26.09 million.

We urge you to act now to ensure the students and families of Silver Valley receive the educational infrastructure they deserve. We would appreciate a timely response that outlines the government's intended course of action and timeline for advancing this long-standing and urgently needed project.

Sincerely,

Elaine Yamamoto, Chairperson
 Board of Education

Cc: The Board of Education, School District No. 42 (Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows)
 Teresa Downs, Superintendent of Schools & CEO
 Richard Rennie, Secretary Treasurer
 Mayor and Council, City of Maple Ridge
 Chris Schultz-Lorentzen, Chairperson, District Parent Advisory Council
 Martin Dmitrieff, President, Maple Ridge Teachers' Association
 Chad Raible, President, Maple Ridge Principal/Vice Principals' Association
 Jason Franklin, President, CUPE Local 703

June 11, 2025

Honourable Lisa Beare
Minister of Education and Child Care
Victoria, BC

via email: ECC.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Re: Advocacy for Immediate Funding to Support Acquisition of Silver Valley Elementary School Site

Dear Minister Beare,

I am writing to you on behalf of the City of Maple Ridge Council following our resolution passed on May 27, 2025. Our Council unanimously endorses the motion put forward by the Board of Education for School District 42 concerning the urgent need for the acquisition of a new school site in Silver Valley. This effort is in response to the increasing educational demands in our rapidly growing community. Our city is experiencing substantial growth, as evidenced by projections indicating 8,091 new housing units over the next decade within School District 42. Maple Ridge alone accounts for 7,211 of these units, potentially bringing an estimated 1,201 school-age children. Although these figures represent a decline from last year's projections, they continue to underscore the pressing requirement for expanded educational capacity.

To accommodate this growth, School District 42 has identified a suitable site in Silver Valley, approximately 3.42 hectares in size, with an estimated acquisition cost of \$26.09 million. This site is strategically aligned with our city's long-term development goals, as detailed in our Housing Needs Report and Official Community Plan updates. Silver Valley is a key area for future residential and family-oriented growth, making it an ideal location for a new elementary school.

The proposed school site acquisition fits seamlessly with both the School District's Strategic Facilities Plan and our city's growth planning framework. As such, it is crucial that the Province honor its commitment, made on October 7, 2024, to support the establishment of this vital educational infrastructure.



We respectfully urge your Ministry to provide immediate funding and support for the acquisition and development of this educational site. Furthermore, we request a timeline for the necessary provincial actions to expedite the school construction process to meet the impending demands of our community.

In conclusion, ensuring that Silver Valley has the necessary educational facilities is critical to sustaining our community's growth and prosperity. The City of Maple Ridge remains committed to collaborating with your Ministry and School District 42 to facilitate this essential development.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. Please feel free to contact me at druimy@mapleridge.ca or at 604-467-5288 should you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,



Dan Ruimy
Mayor of Maple Ridge

cc: Premier David Eby
Honourable Bowinn Ma, Minister of Infrastructure
Honourable Lawrence Mok, MLA Maple Ridge East
Elaine Yamamoto, Chairperson, Board of Education, School District No 42 (Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows)
Teresa Downs, Superintendent of Schools & CEO, School District No 42 (Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows)





July 8, 2025
Our Ref. 23565

Elaine Yamamoto, Chair
Board of Education
School District No. 42 (Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows)

Email Address: c/o Rebecca_Lyle@sd42.ca

Dear Elaine Yamamoto:

Thank you for your letter of May 21, 2025, which was also addressed to the Honourable David Eby, Premier; the Honourable Lisa Beare, Minister of Education and Child Care; and to Lawrence Mok, MLA for Maple Ridge-Mission, regarding a site acquisition and new school construction in Silver Valley, Maple Ridge. As your enquiry falls under the purview of the Ministry of Infrastructure, I am pleased to respond on behalf of Premier Eby and my colleagues.

Firstly, thank you for sharing your concerns regarding the ongoing need for a school site acquisition in the Silver Valley area. We acknowledge your concerns, and recognize the efforts made to include a Silver Valley site request in your capital plan submissions. In the last two and a half years, the province has experienced record population growth with 350,000 new residents calling British Columbia their home. As a result, many BC school districts are seeing significant enrolment growth. To support districts with this enrolment growth, *Budget 2025* includes a record \$4.6 billion investment in capital funding to build new schools and upgrade existing ones.

Since 2017, government has approved the investment of over \$258 million, which includes a District contribution of \$14.4 million, to support the Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows School District respond to their localized enrolment pressures. These investments include two school replacements, one new school, two seismic upgrades, two additions, and one site acquisition in East Albion to create 3,230 seismically safe seats and 1,190 new seats. Looking forward, Ministry of Infrastructure staff will continue to work closely with the School District to identify solutions that best meet the needs of communities like Silver Valley.

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The Ministry of Infrastructure reviews the capital plans from all 60 school districts across the province and supports projects based on many criteria, including enrolment demand. As you likely already know, all 60 public school districts are in the process of developing their 2026/27 5-Year Major Capital Plan submissions. These requests will be submitted to government for consideration as part of the annual budget process to be considered for *Budget 2026*.

Thank you for taking the time to write and for your continued advocacy for the students in your community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bowinn", written in a cursive style.

Honourable Bowinn Ma
Minister of Infrastructure

pc: Honourable David Eby, Premier
Honourable Lisa Beare, Minister of Education and Child Care
Lawrence Mok, MLA, Maple Ridge-Mission