



COMMONWEALTH

VANCOUVER SCHOOLS

Establishing Their Heritage Value

City of Vancouver • Vancouver School Board

September 2007 (revised)

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Contents of CD-ROM

- This printed report
- The Excel Database with information on all school sites
- Assessment Forms for all school sites
- Twelve Statements of Significance prepared as part of the project

Executive Summary

Background and Objective

The City of Vancouver (COV) and the Vancouver School Board (VSB) are working together to establish the heritage value of Vancouver's schools. This project has been undertaken in response to the BC Schools Seismic Mitigation Program, by which schools that are at risk from earthquake damage will be seismically upgraded over the next fifteen years; and the Historic Places Initiative, by which the COV undertakes to increase the documentation of the heritage value of its building stock.

The objectives of the present study are to provide information on the heritage value of VSB schools, in order to identify schools with heritage significance that may be added to the Vancouver Heritage Register; and to prioritize schools with heritage significance, in order to ensure that decisions for upgrading or replacing schools in the VSB's Seismic Mitigation Program are informed by heritage values.

The VSB has 109 active school sites, as well as 5 former school sites that are still in use outside the public school system. Most sites contain multiple buildings. Many were built before 1967, when seismic requirements were first included in the building code. As a result, many Vancouver schools are at risk in the event of an earthquake. Many also have heritage value. Some 38 schools are currently listed on the Vancouver Heritage Register. This report proposes that an additional 26 schools have strong community heritage values and therefore should be included on the Register and be given serious consideration for retention.

Study Components

The study has several distinct components, each building upon its predecessors:

Contextual Essay

The Contextual Essay (Chapter 1) is an in-depth research paper that provides the intellectual framework for the study. It is a history of education and school-building in Vancouver, set in the context of social, political, and pedagogical trends in British Columbia and elsewhere. It creates an information base for the remainder of the study, and forms the basis for assessing the significance of Vancouver Schools. The contextual essay will be published as a stand-alone document.

Themes and Criteria

Using the Contextual Essay as a basis for discussion, a set of themes representing school development in the context of City and community evolution was prepared. This was

done jointly by the consultant and the Working Group, an advisory body that was representative of many areas of interest, including teachers, historians, heritage advocates, architects, the community at large, and VISION Implementation Committees. The participation of the Working Group helps to ensure that the themes are representative of community heritage values.

The themes, in turn, were used as the basis for the assessment criteria. The criteria are grouped under four categories: Aesthetic and functional values, Educational values, Historical values, and Social values. The Themes and Criteria are found in Chapter 2.

Database

An information database of all 114 VSB school sites (109 active schools and 5 in alternative uses) was created, using Microsoft Excel. The database contains information on every individual school building, including dates of construction, use, architects, and style, as well as recording the results of the heritage assessment. The material was collected from numerous available sources, including VSB Annual Reports and historical material, school histories, previous reports, published material, photographs, and research done for the Contextual Essay. The Database is described in Section 3.1 and is submitted separately as an electronic file.

Heritage Assessment

All the school sites were assessed to determine their heritage value, using the theme-based criteria and the information in the database. The consultant, the clients, and the Working Group participated in developing the assessment system and in the actual assessment. The assessments were based mostly on pre-existing research and on new research done for the Contextual Essay and the Statements of Significance, which are described below. The scope of work did not allow for new systematic, primary research.

The assessment was carried out on a purpose-designed Assessment Form. For each of the four categories of values (Aesthetic and functional, Educational, Historical, and Social), school sites were scored as one of three grades – Superior (5 points), Noteworthy (3), or Representative (1). When there was insufficient information with which to make the assessment for a particular criterion, this was noted and assigned 1 point. The score was doubled for Aesthetic and Functional Value, following the Working Group's recommendation for this weighting. Scores therefore ranged between 5 (Representative or No Information for all four categories) and 25 (Superior for all four categories).

The database, the assessment method, and the results are described in Section 3.2. The Assessment Forms, which record the rationale for each assessment, are submitted separately in electronic form.

Identification of Significant Schools

The outcome of the Heritage Assessment provided the information from which the consultants prepared the list of schools with heritage significance. The strategy for preparing the list, which is described in detail in Chapter 4, was developed collaboratively by the consultant, the client steering committee, and the Working Group.

The list of schools to be added to the Heritage Register began with all school sites that scored 15 or more in the assessment. In order to reach this threshold, the schools had to have scored well in at least three of the four categories. To this ‘raw’ list, ‘filters’ were applied to ensure that the list is representative of all styles, groups (i.e., the character of the site), geography (i.e., original jurisdiction for pre-1930 sites), as well as some sub-themes.

Schools lacking extensive data generally received low scores. In the months and years ahead, SOSs will be required for all schools for which the development application process for seismic mitigation takes place. Additional research will be done at that time, enabling a better understanding of those schools.

Applying the threshold score and the filters yielded a list of 26 school sites to be added to the Vancouver Heritage Register, and to be given special consideration in the seismic mitigation program. Because some of these schools may be replaced, the report provides substitution strategies to ensure adequate representation on the list.

The 64 schools proposed for inclusion on the Register (i.e. the 38 currently on the Register plus the 26 proposed additions), with their scores in parentheses, are:

- Bayview Community (25)
- Beaconsfield Elementary (15)
- Britannia Elementary (19)
- Britannia Secondary (25)
- Brock Elementary (11)
- Bruce Elementary (15)
- Byng Secondary (21)
- Carleton Elementary (23)
- Carr Elementary (17)
- Cavell Elementary (17)
- Champlain Heights Community (21)
- Churchill Secondary (17)
- Dickens Elementary (23)
- Douglas Annex (15)
- Douglas Elementary (21)
- False Creek Elementary (15)
- Franklin Elementary (15)
- Gladstone Secondary (17)
- Gordon Elementary (13)

- Grandview Elementary (21)
- Grenfell Elementary (13)
- Hamber Secondary (15)
- Hastings Elementary (23)
- Hudson Elementary (15)
- John Oliver Secondary (23)
- Kerrisdale Elementary (15)
- Kingsford-Smith Elementary (19)
- Kitchener Elementary (17)
- Kitsilano Secondary (25)
- L'École Bilingue Elementary (23)
- Livingstone Elementary (15)
- Lloyd George Elementary (19)
- MacCorkindale Elementary (17)
- Macdonald Elementary (21)
- Mackenzie Elementary (17)
- Maple Grove Elementary (15)
- McBride Elementary (19)
- Moberly Elementary (17)
- Mount Pleasant Elementary (15)
- Nightingale Elementary (17)
- Norquay Elementary (15)
- Point Grey Secondary (21)
- Queen Alexandra Elementary (17)
- Queen Elizabeth Elementary (15)
- Queen Mary Elementary (17)
- Renfrew Elementary (17)
- Roberts Elementary (15)
- Secord Elementary (19)
- Selkirk Elementary (23)
- Sexsmith Elementary (21)
- Seymour Elementary (17)
- Shannon Park Annex (19)
- Shaughnessy Elementary (17)
- South Hill Elementary (19)
- Strathcona Community (25)
- Tecumseh Elementary (17)
- Templeton Secondary (19)
- Tennyson Elementary (19)
- Trafalgar Elementary (9)
- Thunderbird Elementary (21)
- University Hill Secondary (15)
- Van Horne Elementary (11)
- Vancouver Technical Secondary (25)
- Wolfe Elementary (17)

The lists of the 26 schools proposed for addition to the Register and the 51 schools that do not qualify for inclusion on the Register are found in Section 4.3. The report recommends that no schools currently on the Register be deleted from it.

Statements of Significance

The consultants prepared Statements of Significance (SOSs) for 12 schools. They are:

- Bayview Community
- Dickens Elementary
- Gordon Elementary
- Kitchener Elementary
- Maple Grove Elementary
- Queen Mary Elementary
- Secord Elementary
- Sexsmith Community
- Strathcona Community
- Templeton Secondary
- Tennyson Elementary
- Wolfe Elementary

The SOS includes a statement of the historic place, which explains to what the formal recognition applies; a statement of heritage value, which explains why the place is significant; and a list of character-defining elements, which explains which principal features of the place must be retained in order to preserve its heritage value. This is explained more fully in Section 3.3. A sample SOS is included in Appendix B. The remaining SOSs are submitted separately from this report.

Public Consultation

Comprehensive public consultation has been seen from the start as an important component of the project. A formal Public Consultation Plan was prepared at the outset. Consultation has included significant involvement by the Working Group (who are mentioned above), an advisory group composed of members of community stakeholder groups. The Working Group's role was to assist the heritage consultant. Its terms of reference and members are contained in Appendixes C and D. Further public input was obtained at three public open houses, held in mid-May, at schools in different VSB district areas. In addition, the City of Vancouver procured comments to some of the SOSs from school principal and others.

The report that follows provides details on every aspect of the project.

Introduction

The Purpose of the Study

Background

The Vancouver School Board (VSB) has 109 school sites within the City of Vancouver (COV). The Vancouver school district is one of the oldest in the province. Nearly 90 schools were built before 1967, when seismic requirements were first included in the building code. As a result, many Vancouver schools are at risk in the event of an earthquake.

A province-wide seismic survey was conducted for all BC schools in 2004. As an outcome of that survey, the Provincial government, through the Ministry of Education (MOE), has committed \$1.5 billion to make BC schools earthquake-safe over the next fifteen years. Under the guidelines of the MOE's seismic program, if the seismic upgrade costs would exceed 70 per cent of the cost of a replacement school, the replacement option must be considered as part of the economic analysis. In some cases, the costs of upgrading VSB schools will exceed the 70-percent threshold. There are also many VSB schools that are not at risk of replacement. A number of schools have already been seismically upgraded as part of the seismic mitigation program, with their heritage character retained.

Many schools in the VSB system have heritage value. Of the 109 school sites, 38 are currently listed on the Vancouver Heritage Register. Many of these and other schools with heritage value are older buildings with unreinforced masonry construction, which are at particular risk from seismic damage. As a consequence, some schools that would be replaced under the provisions of the MOE seismic mitigation program are also schools that could merit protection on the basis of their high heritage value. This poses a significant problem.

Fortunately, the COV and the VSB are in full agreement in identifying this problem. They have commissioned the present study in order to seek a mutually beneficial solution. From the methodology developed in this study and the resulting assessments of the heritage value of schools, VSB and COV will work with the MOE to protect important heritage resources in the seismic upgrading of school buildings.

The Heritage Branch of the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts of the Province of British Columbia and the Vancouver School Board have provided funding for this study. A portion of the Provincial share has come from the Federal Historic Properties Initiative. The City of Vancouver has provided primary administrative and graphic support and the VSB has also provided staff support. A Steering Committee comprised of staff from both COV and VSB has worked closely with the consultants through the study.

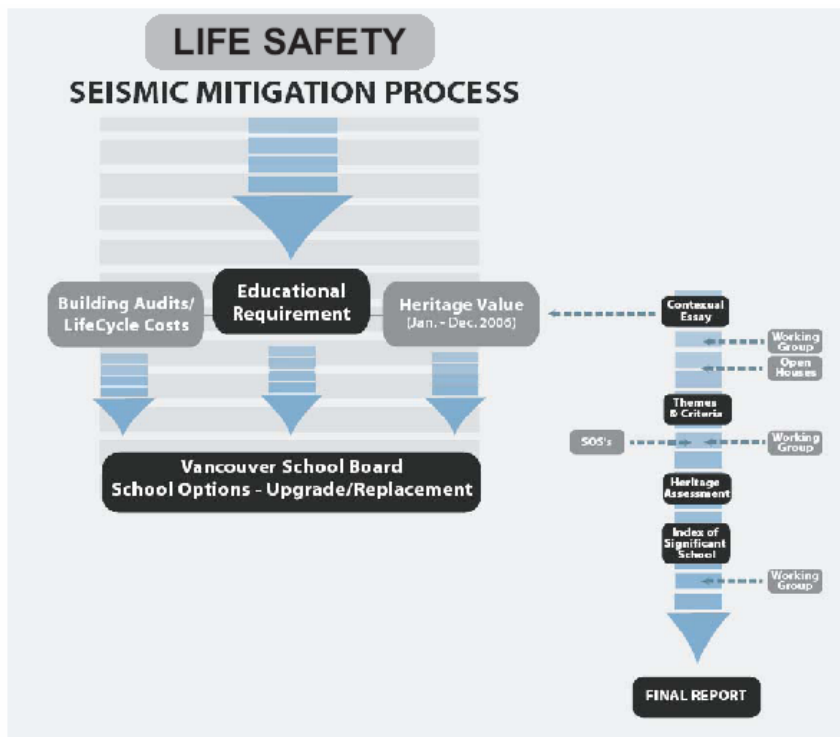
The inception meeting was held on 15 December 2005. Work proceeded through 2006. Draft Reports were submitted in June, September, and December 2006. This Final Report is submitted in June 2007.

A concise description of the project is found in the Background in Appendix A, prepared by COV and VSB.

Objectives

The overall objective of the present study is to provide information on the heritage value of VSB schools, in order to identify schools with heritage significance that may be added to the Vancouver Heritage Register. This information can be given particular consideration in the decision-making process with respect to the selection of schools for upgrading or replacement as part of the seismic mitigation program.

The COV's particular interest is to develop criteria for adding schools to the Heritage Register and to provide a short list of potential Register candidates. The VSB's particular interest is to use the list of potential Register candidates internally and in discussions with the MOE, in order to make a rational determination as to which at-risk schools will be upgraded and which ones replaced. Heritage Value is one of several criteria by which the VSB will make these decisions. The other criteria are Life Safety, Building Life Cycle Costs, and Education Program Requirements. This process is illustrated in the chart.



Several factors have driven the City's interest in the present study. Firstly, the heritage values of most schools currently on the Vancouver Heritage Register were assessed with a bias towards architecture and tangible heritage. At the time the Council-adopted Register was developed in 1986, only limited research was done to identify the cultural and historical values associated with the schools (and other building-types). Secondly, the community was not consulted then, or over the subsequent two decades, when the heritage values of schools were evaluated and they were added to the Register.

The prioritization of schools will be done in consultation with the community, to ensure that the evaluation of heritage values better represents City and community heritage values and meaning beyond architectural significance.

For Council, the VSB, staff, advisory bodies, and heritage interest groups, this study will be a stronger, more effective planning tool for managing change to schools with heritage significance. For the VSB an up-to-date prioritization of schools will increase predictability and certainty, and will reduce processing times.

For all stakeholders, the Upgrade Program will provide a comprehensive approach to identifying and prioritizing schools and will provide clarity as to why each school on the 'List of Significant Schools' merits inclusion on the Vancouver Heritage Register, seismic upgrading, and heritage incentives.

Methodology

The flow diagram at the right of the chart on Page 7 ('Heritage Value') provides an overview of the present study. This section describes its methodology.

Contextual Essay

The intellectual framework for the study is contained in the Contextual Essay (also called the Historical Context Statement and the Contextual History), a socio-cultural history of Vancouver schools. The purpose of the Contextual Essay is to draw out the pedagogical theories and the provincial policies that have influenced the development of education in Vancouver; to identify the major events and people in the history of education in Vancouver; and to articulate the relationship between these ideas and their actualization in school-building. The practical application of the essay was to enable the school assessments to be made on an informed basis, so that it was understood just how significant a particular feature of a school might be in the context of all Vancouver schools.

Commonwealth historian Meg Stanley was the author of the essay. Professor Mona Gleason, a specialist in the history of education and childhood at UBC who served as the project's academic adviser, critiqued the essay at several stages.

The Contextual Essay is found in Chapter 1 of this report.

Themes and Criteria

Using the Contextual Essay as the basis, a thematic outline was developed. The project's Working Group, an advisory group representative of many areas of interest, participated directly in the identification of the principal themes at a workshop facilitated by the consultants. (See below for an explanation of the Working Group.) This ensured that the themes are representative of community heritage values.

The consultants then drafted a set of criteria for assessing the heritage value of the schools and proposing Heritage Register additions. The criteria are based directly on the themes. The Working Group was consulted a second time to provide input into the criteria, as well as further input into the themes.

The Themes and Criteria are found in Chapter 2.

Database

A database of 114 school sites was created by the consultants, using Excel. This comprises all 109 current VSB school sites, as well as five former school sites still owned by the VSB but used by the VSB or others for non-VSB-school purposes. The information in the database was collected from a variety of sources, including an existing VSB Excel database on school sites, VSB Annual Reports, a selection of historical architectural drawings, the VSB's 'history binders' (a set of 3-ring binders that compile information on individual schools), school histories, published material, and photographs of the schools provided by the VSB. The project budget did not allow a sustained primary research effort or visits to the school sites. The information is generally dependable, certainly sufficient for reliable assessments.

Heritage Assessment

All the school sites were assessed to determine their heritage value, using the criteria and the information in the database. Individual school buildings were not assessed. The assessments were based mostly on pre-existing research and new research done for the Contextual Essay and the Statements of Significance (SOSs; see below). The scope of work did not allow for new systematic, primary research. A more formal evaluation of the sites would be feasible if SOS-level research were done for all schools.

The database, the assessment method, and the outcome of the assessment are described in Chapter 3. The database and the assessment sheets are submitted in electronic form as part of this report.

Identification of Significant Schools

The outcome of the assessment provided the information from which the consultants prepared a list of schools with heritage significance. The schools on this list are intended to be proposed as Heritage Register additions and for special consideration under the seismic mitigation process. A third meeting of the Working Group and the client group was convened to determine a strategy for identifying the schools to be placed on the list. The meeting was very constructive and provided many useful ideas, but it did not achieve a consensus. The significant schools are listed in Chapter 4 of this report.

Statements of Significance

As part of the agreement with the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts, the COV agreed to prepare Statements of Significance (SOSs) for 17 school sites. The SOS is a compilation of data on a historic place. Its central component consists of three sections: a statement of historic place, which explains to what the formal recognition applies; a statement of heritage value, which explains why the place is important or significant; and

a list of character-defining elements, which explains which principal features of the place must be retained in order to preserve its heritage value.

SOSs were produced for some, but not all, of the schools under consideration for seismic upgrading. The SOS provides guidance to property owners, planners, architects, and others involved in the conservation or rehabilitation of historic places.

Commonwealth prepared ten new SOSs for this project, all addressing schools that are on the seismic high-risk list. They are submitted separately from this report. One SOS, for Lord Strathcona Community School, has been included in Appendix B as a sample.

Public Consultation

Public Consultation Plan

Public consultation has been seen from the start as an important component of the project. It is necessary that the outcomes of the work reflect community values, and those values can be determined only through a good communications process.

Commonwealth retained Andrew Hume & Associates to serve as the project's communications consultant. After an additional 'discovery meeting' and several subsequent meetings, Hume produced a formal Public Consultation Plan.

Working Group

Members of community stakeholder groups with an interest in historic schools were invited to sit on a Working Group. The role of the Working Group was to:

- Provide input and assist the heritage consultant by bringing a diversity of viewpoints, knowledge, and experience to the project; and
- Inform the development of relevant background reports and assessments.

The members of the Working Group are identified in Appendix D.

The Working Group's initial task was to provide comments to the draft Contextual Essay and to use the essay as the basis for deriving themes. The group assembled at a workshop on 21 April 2006 for this purpose. The outcome was a comprehensive list of themes and sub-themes. The consultants subsequently refined the list and used it to develop assessment criteria. The themes and criteria were discussed and improved by the Working Group at a second meeting. At a third meeting, on 15 June, the Working Group reviewed the draft assessments and helped to produce a strategy for producing a short list of schools to be proposed for the heritage register and for retention. The Group convened for a final meeting on 14 December to review the list of significant schools.

One member of the Working Group, retired teacher Valerie Hamilton, participated in the full assessment process. Some others took part in a few assessment sessions.

The consultants extend their sincere appreciation to the Working Group for their extensive contributions.

The terms of reference for the Working Group are included as Appendix C.

Public Open Houses

Three public open houses were held in mid-May, at schools in different VSB district areas (Central, North, and South). The purpose of the open houses was to invite the public to familiarize themselves with the project and its objectives, and to review the Themes and Criteria. The open houses were advertised widely by the VSB. Attendees reported having heard about the meetings from advertisements run in the *Courier*, posted at City Hall, and on the City's web site. Others received notice through committees on which they sit, from e-mail listserves, and by word of mouth.

Twelve attendees provided responses to a questionnaire that was circulated, and two took the time to grade the heritage value of schools in their part of the city. The responses were considered in the consultants' subsequent work.

Final Report

This document is the Final Report of the project. Draft Final Reports were submitted in June, September, and December 2006. This printed report is accompanied by a CD-ROM that contains additional products of the study. The CD includes:

- This printed report
- The Excel Database with information on all school sites
- Assessment Forms for all school sites
- Twelve Statements of Significance prepared as part of the project

Supplementary material of interest may be found in the VSB's information sheets on the physical components of each school, compiled as part of the Seismic Risk Reduction Program, available at <http://www.vsb.bc.ca/schools/Seismic.htm>.

1. Contextual Essay

1.1 Introduction

Preface

This Contextual Essay provides a history of education and school-building in Vancouver, set in the context of social, political, and pedagogical trends in British Columbia and elsewhere. It offers a historical and intellectual framework for the present study. The essay creates an information base from which to assess the significance of Vancouver schools. It describes, for example, the introduction of various reforms and innovations that manifested themselves in the way schools were built and fit out, enabling us to recognize and understand the importance of schools that possess those features.

The essay was presented as a draft in Spring 2006 to the Working Group that assisted with the larger project undertaken by the City of Vancouver and the Vancouver School Board to establish the heritage value of Vancouver's schools. The Working Group used it to assist it in drafting a thematic outline to inform the assessment of the heritage value of Vancouver schools. In its completed form the essay is intended to be used as a reference for heritage assessment, including the preparation of Statements of Significance, a heritage planning tool used by the City of Vancouver and the Province.

Useful feedback was received from the Working Group on the draft and this has helped to shape the final product. Dr. Mona Gleason, Associate Professor, History of Education, Children, and Childhood, Department of Educational Studies, Faculty of Education, UBC, provided valuable assistance throughout the process.

The Rise of Mass Public Education

Children have, of course, always been educated. However, for the most part, through history and across cultures, education has taken place at home, in the course of day-to-day life and work, or in religious institutions. For most children, contact with what today are understood as formal educational institutions was brief, episodic, or absent altogether. Schooling was neither compulsory, free, nor universal.

Mass public education in Western nations is a product of the combined forces of the Industrial Revolution, the rise of democracy, and the spread of nationalism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.¹ Each of these forces, in different, ways, drove forward the cause of public education: Industry wanted trained and clock-disciplined workers; democracies required educated, or at least semi-literate, voters; and nationalists found in schools the tool needed to create patriotic citizens.²

Closely related to the rise of mass public education is the design and construction of purpose-built schools, separate from home and work. Nineteenth-century educators 'invented the idea that schooling and the schoolhouse were indispensable to education.

They tied the schoolhouse to educational theory and curriculum, making it a full partner in the learning process.’³ For many, the construction of what was deemed a ‘good’ school became a measure of the progress and quality of public education in the community, as well as an indicator of its prosperity and civic pride. Today, ‘most people see the creation of the free public schooling as a sign of enlightened progress and the advance of democracy.’⁴ There is, of course, an aspect of social control to public education. Critics point out that it does not serve everyone equally and that it tends to sustain the *status quo*. ‘In reality,’ educational historian Ken Osborne notes ‘schools have been both a step towards democracy and a form of social control.’⁵

This essay traces the establishment of public schools in the City of Vancouver, setting out the specifics of how public schooling took shape here. It begins with an outline of the establishment of public schools in British Columbia. It then reviews the development of the school system in Vancouver, relating this to the history of the City and of education more generally. With this groundwork in place, the discussion turns to the specifics of school-building in Vancouver – exploring the question of why Vancouver schools took the physical form they did. That part of the essay addresses, in the context of Vancouver, how Vancouver’s ‘schoolmen’ linked schools and schooling, and what the results were.

The essay takes a broadly chronological approach, with important themes clearly identified within this narrative framework. The chronology is divided into two parts – before and after 1940. Tables and charts in ‘Appendix A’ list most of the still extant public schools built in Vancouver, Point Grey, and South Vancouver, as well as some of some of the schools that no longer exist.

A range of sources was used to prepare the essay. These included published work, annual reports of the constituent school boards, and individual school histories.

Mass Public Education in British Columbia

The structure of public education in British Columbia took shape in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Its development coincides with the creation of first the Colony and later the Province of British Columbia. The crucial debates about education – who would pay for it, who would have access to it, and the role of religious organizations in its content and delivery – took place in the 1860s, just prior to British Columbia joining Confederation (1871). These debates pitted English against Canadians and Americans; Anglicans against non-conformists and Catholics; rich against the poor; and each against each other. The structure that emerged, argues historian of education Jean Barman, while influenced by ideas about public education brought from other parts of North America and from England, was particular to British Columbia and reflected ‘the needs of families living in British Columbia for schools that were universally accessible by virtue of being non-sectarian and free of cost. ... The consequence was an educational consensus so well-suited to the particular conditions of British Columbia that it would endure virtually unaltered for almost a century.’⁶

Under the *British North America Act*, education was a provincial responsibility. One of the first things British Columbia's government did was pass a *Public Schools Act* in 1872. It explicitly stated that all public schools would be officially non-sectarian, distinguishing British Columbia from all other Canadian provinces; and that education would be free. The purpose of public education was clearly expressed in the *Act* as being 'to give every child in the Province such knowledge as will fit him to become a useful and intelligent citizen in after years.'⁷ As white settlers took up space in the province, the needs for a civilizing and 'Britishizing' force – i.e., public schooling – was the next logical step.

With its scattered population and small tax base, British Columbia's early public school system was highly centralized. The Province controlled all aspects of the operation of the system and paid all the bills. Locally-elected school trustees were simply responsible for seeing that the provincial regulations were followed and that property was kept in decent condition.⁸

By 1875, British Columbia had 45 public schools in operation; of these, 25 had been built since 1872. Most schools were publicly owned. Most were one-room wood-frame buildings, with a few more substantial brick buildings erected in Victoria, beginning in 1876.⁹ The standardization of plans happened quite quickly. By 1881 the Department of Lands and Works, which was responsible for new rural school construction, had developed a standard plan for one-room schools. This plan for a 'Country School House' was printed by 1885, along with specifications.¹⁰ In his survey of British Columbia school architecture, Ivan Saunders argues that central control meant that British Columbia had 'a high and consistent standard of pioneering school construction.'¹¹

Vancouver's First Schools

The first school to be established by the settler community on the south side of Burrard Inlet (later known as 'Vancouver') was built in 1872, the same year in which the *Public Schools Act* was passed.¹² Located at Hastings Mill, at the foot of Dunlevy Street, the school was a 18' x 40' frame building set in a stump-filled clearing.¹³ The student population (of about 15) reflected the diversity of the indigenous and settler population of Burrard Inlet, including mixed race (First Nations and other), Kanaka (Hawaiian), and white children. Miss Georgia Sweeney, the sole teacher, taught the group. A small local board was directly responsible for the operation of the school, but almost all major decisions, and the related funding, flowed from Victoria.

Not everyone was thrilled by the appearance of a 'proper' school. Adelaide Patterson, who started at the school at Hastings Mill in 1872, remembers that her older sister, Abbie, liked learning at home from her mother and thought that 'learning about other parts of the world from the sea captains who came to visit the settlement was a lot more interesting than sitting in a stuffy classroom.'¹⁴ Vancouver's second school, located near today's Fraser Street and SE Marine Drive, was known as North Arm School. Established in 1877, it served the fishing and farming families that settled along the Fraser. This school is the forerunner of present-day Moberley School.¹⁵



A view of North Arm School, the second school in present-day Vancouver, established in 1885. (Photo: Vancouver School Board)

History of Childhood

Childhood, like education, has a history – in fact many scholars see educational history as a subset of the history of childhood. As with any complex subject, there are different ways of understanding childhood. Some scholars focus on childhood as a biological fact while others are primarily interested in changing social definitions of childhoods/children. In general, historians tend to make a distinction between the history of *childhood*, which focuses on changing ideas about what it means to be young, and the history of *children*, which tends to focus on the individual experiences of young people. As might be expected, it is often much easier to find historical sources that speak to the former rather than the latter. Given that children rarely generated textual sources that were deemed worthy of keeping, we know much about how children were supposed to act and think (often based on documents generated by adult experts such as doctors, teachers, and the clergy) than we do about how actual children responded to shifting conditions in their lives. Public discussions about the behaviour (usually 'bad') of children and adolescents are another common theme in writing about Canadian childhood. In very general terms, childhood in Canada in the twentieth century has become longer – in fact, a 'good' childhood now extends well into adolescence. 'Teenagers' are often described as invention of the twentieth century – it is now uncommon for teenagers to work full time where once it was normal. Likewise, families are now much less likely to depend on the labour of children and teenagers than they were before c. 1945; in the twentieth century children have been much more valued for their emotional rather than material contributions to family life. While it is difficult to say which came first, more years of schooling or the extension of childhood, there is an obvious relationship between the two.

1.2 Education in Vancouver 1886-1940

Background

After much negotiation and horse-trading, the Canadian Pacific Railway agreed, in 1884, to move its western terminus from Port Moody, at the eastern end of Burrard Inlet, to Coal Harbour, closer to the mouth of the Inlet. This decision, and the subsequent arrival of the railway in 1885-86, transformed the small communities on Burrard Inlet and led to the incorporation of the City of Vancouver in 1886. Vancouver's boundaries, first defined in 1886, extended east to Nanaimo Street, south to 16th Avenue, west to Alma Street, and north to Burrard Inlet. The local economy went 'from servicing the lumber industry to servicing urban growth'¹⁶ and the population exploded. The rate of growth is difficult to comprehend: in 1881 there were 243 people living in Granville (Vancouver); by 1891 there were 13,647.¹⁷ This increased to 27,010 in 1901 and 100,401 in 1911.¹⁸ The peak of growth occurred between 1908 and 1912, when a number of factors came together to create a tremendous economic boom.¹⁹ As a result, the geography and the built form of the City were transformed. Both remained essentially in place past World War II, and both can still be easily read in the landscape.

Present-day Vancouver is much larger than the city of 1886. Areas that were subsequently annexed include the large District of South Vancouver (incorporated in 1892 and divided in 1908 into Point Grey and South Vancouver), both of which joined Vancouver in 1929; and Hastings Townsite and District Lot 301, which joined the city in 1911. Early settlement in these areas occurred where streams intersected the trails, roads, and electric street railways that connected Vancouver to the Fraser River and New Westminster. Encouraged by the urban markets of Vancouver and New Westminster, settlers established dairy farms, breweries, nurseries, market gardens, and slaughterhouses. Large areas remained unsettled. Significant geographic barriers, such as the 'Great Fraser Beaver Swamp,' separated the individual settlements.²⁰

Vancouver has often been described as a city of suburbs. The story of how these suburbs took shape had important implications for school construction. Until about 1930 development was entirely market-driven. The 'role of government was minor in moulding the form and structure of the City.'²¹ The CPR owned large tracts of land – from Ontario to Trafalgar and from 16th almost to the Fraser River. Here development proceeded in an orderly fashion, block by block. Shaughnessy Heights is one example of a CPR subdivision. Outside the CPR lands, in both South Vancouver and Point Grey, large tracts of land were subdivided and settlement proceeded in a more haphazard manner and stretched over a period of many decades.²²

Numerous schools, both in Vancouver and suburban South Vancouver and Point Grey, owe their genesis to the extension of streetcar service to newly subdivided areas during the 1908-12 boom years. The 'organic' character of many Vancouver schools, built in stages over a period of many years, is to a large extent a direct consequence of the patterns of residential development, reflecting in their built form the history of the City

and the stages of development in their particular neighbourhood. Naturally, the vicissitudes of school funding also played a role.

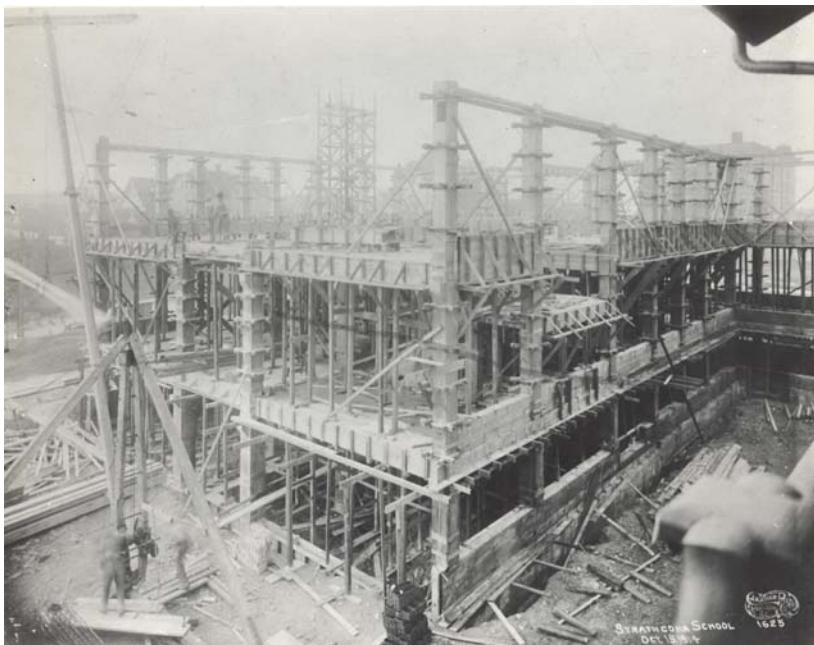
Streetcar Service

The major streetcar lines included:

- Fourth Avenue and Broadway, servicing Kitsilano, Dunbar, and into West Point Grey
- Fairview and Mount Pleasant, with an extension into Shaughnessy; radial lines southeast on Fraser and Main Street
- Interurban line along Kingsway to New Westminster and from downtown along Arbutus to Marpole and then across the Fraser River to Richmond and Steveston
- Along Hastings and Powell Streets to Grandview and Hastings East²³

With the increased population, the racial and ethnic character of the City took shape. So too did the city's class structure. By 1911 more than 85% of all Vancouver residents had been born in Canada, the United Kingdom, the United States, or 'European parts of the Empire'.²⁴ The greatest number of residents was of Canadian origin, followed by those from Britain. Vancouver was 'a relatively homogeneous society'.²⁵ This racial and ethnic homogeneity was tempered somewhat by class differences, which found expression in residential differentiation. 'Contemporary and historical commentators portray Fairview Heights, Mount Pleasant, Grandview, and South Vancouver as neighbourhoods of middling status. ... Kitsilano was more uniformly white collar,' as was Point Grey. Shaughnessy was home to the 'lumber barons'.²⁶ Chinese people were precluded from owning land in Point Grey, Shaughnessy, and parts of east Vancouver through 'informal agreements'.²⁷ There were areas of the City that did not conform to this pattern of homogeneity. Strathcona, and nearby Japantown and Chinatown, were home to the working poor and 'foreigners.'

Settlers of 'northern European' origin brought with them the belief that 'their culture and their institutions were superior to all others'.²⁸ This idea of superiority was used to exclude 'foreigners' – which included southern Europeans and Asians – from power and opportunity. Asians, in particular, were denied political rights. Schooling, seen by those in power as a tool of assimilation (and, ironically, the cultivation of citizens), was open to the children of this group, although the segregation of Chinese students was seriously considered and opportunities for Asian graduates, including citizens, were severely limited. First Nations were not educated in public schools; until the late 1940s, they were required to attend separate federally funded day and residential schools.²⁹



The present Senior Building at Strathcona Community School under construction in 1914, near the end of the boom years. (Photo: Vancouver School Board)

Leften Stavrianos, who started school at Strathcona in 1919, remembers that in his classes ‘behind the desk always sat a teacher with an English or Scottish or Irish name, while the pupils seated in front of that teacher had names like Wong and Hideyoshi and Bertolini and Svenson and Yerchenko, and one Stavrianos. The resulting culture gap seemed at the time a chasm as wide as the Grand Canyon’³⁰ Neil Sutherland, in his work on education in Vancouver in the inter-war period, concludes that parents across the City agreed in general about the form schooling should take. He found that while childhood experiences differed quite considerably from neighbourhood to neighbourhood outside of school, in school their experiences were remarkably similar. This meant that all children were exposed to a uniform curriculum that shored up ‘Anglo’ values. From this Sutherland concludes that ‘Vancouver schools sorted children within schools rather than between schools.’³¹

The formation of Planning Commissions in Vancouver and Point Grey in 1926, and the subsequent commission of a city and regional plan, signalled a change in the role of government in shaping urban development. The master plan for Vancouver, completed by American planner Harland Bartholomew in 1928, set out a blueprint that guided development into the 1950s. More immediately, following the completion of the Bartholomew Plan, Point Grey, South Vancouver, and Vancouver amalgamated in 1929 to form the present-day City of Vancouver.

These local initiatives reflected many priorities of urban reform that shaped urban development in western Europe and North America in the early twentieth century. Emphasis was placed on the role of the expert in planning and on the capacity of planning to improve the physical environment and ameliorate social ills through the application of

knowledge gleaned from science (including social science). The rational application of knowledge was described as ‘efficient’; and maximizing efficiency was the goal of planning. This movement was not restricted to planning. It shaped thinking across various domains, including education, business, and architecture. In fact, the business model was held out as an example to government, which was urged to be more business-like and hence more efficient. Between 1910 and the post-World War II years, historians point to the ascendancy of ‘modernism’ as a cultural movement that had tremendous influence in art, architecture, music, and a vast array of social arenas. Strands of this thought continue to have considerable influence in the west. This spirit of planning was embraced in Vancouver in the 1920s and influenced thinking about the location and design of schools.

Creating a School System

With the growth of the population, Vancouver’s school enrolment increased quickly, from 1,750 in 1890 to 19,000 in 1923.³² While this may seem axiomatic, it is worth noting that a number of other factors also pushed up enrollment. Compulsory school attendance was introduced to British Columbia cities in 1901 for children aged 7-14³³; in 1912 this was extended to all municipalities and in 1921 to the entire province.³⁴ In addition to rising enrollment caused by immigration and migration, school attendance also rose between 1891 and 1901 because of increasing participation rates. In 1891, according to educational historian Timothy Dunn, 42% of the school age population (aged 5-19) in British Columbia attended school for some time. By 1901 the figure had risen to 63%, and elementary education was ‘almost universal.’ Most of these students attended elementary school, which went to grade seven (later eight), and only a very tiny fraction went to high school.³⁵ What happened in British Columbia was part of a larger pattern that extended more generally across Canada and western nations. While the numbers of students attending high school remained smaller than those in elementary school, secondary school growth increased faster than elementary. Thus in 1890, 244 students in BC attended public secondary school, and by 1920, some 6,636 were enrolled.³⁶ Vancouver’s figures reflect the provincial trend; in 1890 there were thirty-one students enrolled in high school; by 1920 there were 2,280 students enrolled in high school. The Vancouver figures reflected increased enrolment as well as the fact that students moved to Vancouver to attend high school.³⁷ Enrollment growth had bulges as well as a geography, which meant that crises in accommodation occurred at different levels in the system at different times, and in different places.³⁸ Overall, enrollment growth is an important factor in the development of Vancouver’s schools.

Bureaucratization was one way that society responded to the pressures of increased urbanization and industrialization, as well as to the resulting social unrest. Through efficient administration, the panacea of public and business administration of the time, it was hoped that there would be a ‘wider sharing of greater productivity.’³⁹ During the 1890s, Vancouver’s educational system developed all the characteristics typical of emerging bureaucratic urban school systems in North America at the time. These included:

- A hierarchy with a superintendent at the top and orders flowing from the top to the bottom of the organization. From 1901, in urban British Columbia, the superintendent (or municipal inspector), were appointed locally, but the Province retained final say over the appointment and their salary.⁴⁰
- Clearly defined differences in roles of superintendent, principals, assistant principals, and teachers
- Graded schools in which students progressively moved from one grade to another
- A graded course of study for the entire school system, to assure uniformity in teaching in all grades in the system
- An emphasis on rational planning, order, regularity, and punctuality⁴¹

Industrialization, urbanization, immigration, and social unrest also resulted in pressure for educational reform. The Vancouver school system took shape during a period of educational reform in Canada. According to Neil Sutherland, ‘from the 1880s to the 1920s, Canadians wrought enormous changes in the schooling of their children,’⁴² implementing an array of changes to curriculum and pedagogy which, taken together, were known as the ‘new education’. Progressivism is closely, but not exclusively, associated with the thinking of American John Dewey. Dewey believed that learning involved both child and curriculum in a dynamic and fluid process.⁴³ Notable reforms that flowed from Dewey and others of similar-mind included efforts to adopt pedagogical approaches less dependent purely on memorization and recitation and to relate what was taught to the child’s ‘world’; and attempts to make school more practical, with the addition to the curriculum of manual training, domestic science, and other subjects. Concerns about physical health, especially in the context of urbanization, led to the development of physical education programs⁴⁴ – which at first took on a military character – and to introduction of health services in schools. The latter featured the application of ‘scientific knowledge’ to childhood, with children categorized as healthy or unhealthy. As part of this overall program of reform, training standards for teachers increased.

The Annual Reports of Vancouver’s Board of School Trustees reveal the progress of reform in Vancouver:

- 1900: manual training courses were introduced in elementary schools
- 1901: the Provincial Normal School (Teacher’s College) opened in Vancouver
- 1902: physical education drills, led by the infamous Major Bundy, were introduced
- 1905: domestic science courses were introduced in elementary schools and commercial courses in the high school
- 1905: a Medical Inspector of Schools was appointed
- 1913: school gardening was introduced



The King Edward High School basketball team won the Thomson Cup in 1912-13. (Photo: First Fifty Years: Vancouver High Schools 1890-1940)

Reforms intended to provide wider access to secondary education and the introduction of adult education (night school and post-secondary) also characterized this period.

Vancouver established its first high school, with the typical academic curriculum, in 1890. In 1911 the Board's Chairman, Dr. W.D. Brydone-Jack, clearly expressed a broad vision of whom education was to serve: 'In a cosmopolitan city like Vancouver is, our educational system should be able to reach out and benefit all classes and all ages, it should be our endeavour to raise the standard of our citizens morally, socially and financially from the youngest to the oldest.'⁴⁵ Debates about the purpose of secondary education tended to focus on the question of academic vs. vocational programs. Some saw vocational programs, whether at the elementary or secondary level, as providing practical opportunities tailored to students' interests and abilities. Others charged that they limited students and reproduced existing class differences.

The rhetoric of citizenship informed much of the debate about the purpose of secondary education, with advocates for a more general program arguing that without adequate and appropriate secondary education, children could not find their place as socially well adjusted and productive citizens. In short, secondary schooling would assure social order.

Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education

In Vancouver, as elsewhere in North America, the history of adult, vocational, and technical education are closely related. The popularity of practical night school classes, first offered at Seymour School in 1909, led the VSB to identify, in 1911, the need for a centrally located technical high school.⁴⁶ These night school classes, aimed at adults interested in gaining promotion at work, formed one aspect of Vancouver's early forays into vocational education. Manual training, offered at the elementary schools, represented another thread in the early development of vocational education. At the high school level, Vancouver introduced a work-preparation program (pro-vocational) in 1916 and technical courses in 1919, both at King Edward High School.⁴⁷ The purpose of these courses varied from providing specific skills training to preparation for work through general exposure to the routines of work. The difficulty of the courses also varied, from preparation for university engineering programs, to trades-focused programs, to remedial classes. Support for these programs came from both the Provincial and Federal governments. Federal involvement in the field of technical education began with a Royal Commission on the subject in 1910. Legislation providing federal funding for technical education followed in 1919 (*Technical Education Act*). Vancouver Technical School opened in 1921 – downtown at the former Labour Temple. This temporary site was abandoned in 1928 when the new Vancouver Technical High School was erected on East Broadway. Federal, as well as provincial, monies and programs continued to play an important part in shaping technical education in Vancouver through the Depression years and into the post-war era.

The planning and layout of early Vancouver schools reflected a consensus as to how education should be organized within the school building. The elementary school was divided into eight grades, defined by age. Each grade was assigned to separate classrooms. Seemingly obvious, since it became so ubiquitous in urban settings, this organizational strategy represented a specific and significant mid-19th-century educational reform, so clearly expressed in school architecture. Devised in Prussia, classrooms replaced large halls housing groups of up to 100-150 mixed-age students, which had characterized schools before the 1850s.⁴⁸

In a development of the classroom system, several Vancouver schools adopted the platoon system. Promoted by efficiency experts, platoons were intended to maximize efficient use of the school plant by rotating classes through the school. This system of organization was introduced at Lord Tennyson School in 1924-25, and was introduced to progressively more schools through to the 1940s. Drawing on the industrial model, systems of electric bells manufactured by IBM, still in evidence in many Vancouver schools, were used to signal and time the rotations precisely.



Miss Howard and her class at Bayview School, 1920. (Photo: Bayview Community School 1914-1989)

Early classrooms were designed to facilitate teacher-centred instruction, with rows of desks, usually fixed in place, facing the front of the room. The class was taught as a group or, sometimes, broken down into smaller groups by ability. Large classes, with as many as 50-60 students, precluded individual instruction and made classroom discipline very important. Typically, primary classes were larger than senior classes. Women formed the bulk of the teaching workforce, with men teaching the smaller, senior classes and also supervising. Men were always paid more than women regardless of how much work they did. This structure resulted in what educational historians describe as a ‘pedagogical harem’ that reproduced the paternalistic hierarchy of the wider society.⁴⁹

J.H. Putnam, Senior Inspector of Schools, Ottawa, and G. M. Weir, Professor of Education at UBC and later Minister of Education conducted a systematic survey of the British Columbia school system in 1925. They found that school reformers had done a better job of adjusting the list of subjects than changing the actual spirit of education. Thus, most classrooms remained quite formal – lessons were teacher-led and subjects were differentiated rather than integrated.⁵⁰ The public and many educators alike believed that education involved training the mind’s ‘faculties’ of reason and memory through the study of discrete subjects. The emphasis was on learning from books through drill. Copy-work, often from the board, was an important part of the instructional routine, and so blackboard space was carefully managed and maximized. This is evident in various Vancouver schools, where fixed boards are supplemented with sliding boards on top, thus maximizing the writing surface (see, for example, Maple Grove).⁵¹ Neil Sutherland, who argues that formalism dominated education in British Columbia well into the 1950s, writes, in a rather gloomy assessment that invokes an exceedingly boring purgatorial experience, that formalism ‘discouraged independent thought ... provided no opportunity to be creative ... blamed rather than praised ... made no direct or purposeful effort to build a sense of self-worth.’⁵²

One notable exception found by Putnam and Weir was the effort made to break down the formal subject approach in some of Vancouver's primary classrooms in the 1920s. This method let children explore their world and develop skills through the use of tools such as sandboxes and activities such as paper-cutting and modelling in Plasticine.⁵³ Putnam and Weir, recognizing the relationship between classroom furnishing and pedagogy, suggested carrying this experiment further by replacing the standard fixed desks with movable desks or simply tables and chairs.

The incremental reforms undertaken early in the century were given more formal shape by Putnam and Weir's survey. Its primary recommendations, many of which were administrative, included:

- standardization and broadening of the curriculum, including more practical subjects and physical education
- standardizing the time allotted to subjects
- introduction of 'junior high school' and the shifting to a program of six years of elementary schools, three years at junior high school, and three at high school, with the high school program divided into academic, commercial, general, and normal school preparation
- elimination of high school entrance examinations
- higher standards for admission to teachers' training
- more use of the project method of instruction⁵⁴

The impact of these recommendations percolated through the Vancouver school system in the 1930s and 1940s. Most changes were structural and administrative – new subjects were introduced and junior high schools were built and opened in 1928-29. Facilities for technical education were improved. Very little, for a number of reasons, changed in terms of how instruction happened.⁵⁵ By the 1930s, at the Board level, there was a small group of experts, overseeing school-based programs.

Within this broad context, individual teachers' personalities made a tremendous difference to students.⁵⁶ Most students remember some of their teachers, often for their 'special' talents, such as being able to write with both hands in multi-coloured crayons.⁵⁷ In student's eyes, fairness – i.e., an equal application of the rules in a rule-bound environment – was an important measure of a teacher.⁵⁸ Particular events, such as the Christmas Concert and Sports Day, stand out. Many Vancouver schools included among their staff teachers who spent almost all their career (as many as 45 years) at a single school. Likewise principals, once appointed, tended to stay. This meant that staff and school were closely identified with individual personalities. It is not unusual to find photographs of long-standing principals in the administrative offices (for example at General Wolfe) or prizes named in honour of long-serving teachers (for example the Batchelor cup at Sexsmith). In fact it is at the level of the individual elementary school that the memory of the labour of female teachers – who dominated the workforce – is most evident.

School histories often combine the history of the neighbourhood with that of the institution. Thus the history of General Wolfe School begins with an evocative description of the characteristic landscape of skunk cabbage swamp populated by frogs.⁵⁹ Likewise a former pupil of Laura Secord School remarks on his school years that ‘You all know there are no more bears near the school; we chased them all away. Trout Lake doesn’t have any more fish; we ate them all.’⁶⁰ Student memories and teachers’ careers bind together the physical school with the neighbourhood and individual histories, forming an important theme in the history of schools and schooling in Vancouver.

Perhaps the biggest change in Vancouver’s educational system in the interwar period was the continued broadening of the secondary school curriculum. Junior high schools were promoted as a way to hold students longer in school by providing them with a transitional bridge between elementary and high school, one in which they could explore their vocational options. Senior high school options were also diversified, with vocational alternatives added and with the continued development of specialized high schools, such as Vancouver Technical, which opened at its present site in 1928. Individual timetables and promotion by subject were innovations that helped hold students longer in school.⁶¹



A view of Vancouver Technical Secondary School in 1957. (Photo: Vancouver School Board)

These schools emphasized the ideals of ‘social co-operation, leadership, and democratic citizenship.’ While these courses broadened access, they were established within an environment that stressed the use of scientific tools, such as intelligence-testing, to stream students into the vocational stream that best reflected their ‘abilities.’⁶² While this was seen as the most efficient use of educational resources at the time, the streaming system tended to perpetuate and reproduce social inequalities based on class and race. At Kitsilano (under H.B. King, later Chief Inspector of Schools and an keen advocate of

progressive education) and Templeton Junior High Schools, students were streamed in grade eight so that they would be prepared for the work of whichever specialized high school course they were planning to follow – academic, commercial, or technical.⁶³ Various devices, such as school papers (*Tee Jay* at Templeton), houses, and student council were utilized to try to bring this divided student body together. Former students of Templeton remember the emphasis on order and discipline enforced through student monitors. For example, the first act of the student council was to establish a system of patrol ‘officers’ and demerit/merit points.⁶⁴ Vancouver high schools also had quite distinct ‘personalities’ or ‘cultures.’ Neil Sutherland provides some insight into this, based on his own experience at John Oliver in the late 1930s. Sutherland remembers his school as being ‘famous for track and field, high academic standards.’ John Oliver was ‘intense’ and this intensity was closely associated with the personality of its principal, J.T.E. ‘Jake’ Palmer, and the excellent teachers he recruited.⁶⁵

Building Schools in Vancouver

The quintessential image of the early North American school building is the ‘little white schoolhouse’ – a wood frame building that was domestic in scale and contained one or two rooms. Some of the earliest schools in Vancouver fit this image, and a few survive today, as at Sir Guy Carleton (1896; yellow today) and Tecumseh (1910).



The wood school built in 1896, a component of Sir Guy Carleton Elementary School. (Photo: Vancouver School Board)

When communities could afford them, schools were more than expedient classrooms. They were public buildings that expressed the community’s aspirations. Most school buildings were substantial in appearance as well as in size, reflecting the architectural styles of their day. In the first decade and a half of the twentieth century, most public buildings were designed in a classical vocabulary, based ultimately on architectural sources from classical Greece and Rome, as passed down by the Renaissance. So too were schools. The archetypical school in both Vancouver and South Vancouver was

symmetrically designed, its centrepiece adorned with classical columns and pilasters, topped by a triangular pediment bearing an elaborate cornice. This is seen both in wood, as at Seymour (1900), and in brick, in dozens of schools across the city. In the years after the First World War other popular styles were introduced into schools as well, particularly Collegiate Gothic, first seen at Queen Mary (1915) in Point Grey – an affluent municipality whose larger houses often similarly followed mediievally-inspired models.

At first the Province paid the full bill for property acquisition and school construction. However, it quickly retreated from this irksome financial responsibility. And so in 1888, the cities of Victoria, Vancouver, Nanaimo, and New Westminster became responsible for one third of their teachers' salaries, and from 1891 they were required to pay, through property taxes, the full cost of providing school properties and buildings.⁶⁶

The transfer of responsibility to the City of Vancouver resulted in the development of administrative and management capacity. The Board appointed a Superintendent and established a permanent building committee responsible for overseeing school-siting and construction. Schools built in Vancouver in the 1890s and early 1900s were designed by individual architects hired through a competitive process.⁶⁷

Until 1909 the Board addressed school construction on a site-by-site basis, with individual architects for each project. As a result, the schools built during his period show considerable variety. Douglas Franklin and John Fleming, in their study of early Vancouver school architecture, argue that 'there was no widely accepted model for the form or appearance of a school building.' They suggest that this was an expression of late Victorian individualism.⁶⁸ In addition to brick schools, a number of large wood structures were built during this period. The choice of material was a function of economy. Franklin and Fleming believe that for both the wood and brick buildings cost was the overwhelmingly most important factor driving design. They write that, 'the series of large buildings erected in the Vancouver school district from 1900 to 1909 presents a broad array of architectural forms and styles, decoration and material. Such variety of building types reinforces the notion that the school board was more concerned with economies and expediency than architectural significance or uniformity.'⁶⁹ Ivan Saunders, who also writes about school architecture in Vancouver, concurs, stating: 'In style, decorative detailing and construction materials they [the schools built between 1892 and 1908] are indicative of a school board building modestly and conservatively under some financial constraints.'⁷⁰

Typically, these early schools were built in eight-classroom units, with two floors, each with four classrooms. The basement contained play space divided into girls' and boys' rooms. Sometimes the attic housed an assembly hall. Until after 1900, no provision was made for specialized classrooms and administrative spaces were 'found' in hallways or classrooms. None of these early schools had a dedicated library.⁷¹ Most classrooms accommodated between 30 and 50 students.

The decision to hire an in-house architect in 1909 represented an important moment in the Board's history. This brought design expertise 'in house' and incorporated school architecture into the emerging VSB educational bureaucracy, solidifying through administration an important intellectual connection. By the early 1900s a small cadre of specialists in school architecture had emerged within the new colleges of education in the U.S., where teachers and administrators, including many Canadians, trained. These specialists further promoted central control and standardization of school design and construction.⁷² Just as there has been tension over the purpose of public education, there has also been debate about its architecture, with critics arguing that schools were not factories and should not all look the same. In the end, though, 'the savings to be achieved by standardization were difficult to ignore, and in many school districts' imagination and flexibility in building design and construction were sacrificed to economy.'⁷³ Although standardized designs were not popular in city-districts, they were well-established in rural areas. Beginning in the mid-1880s, the Provincial Department of Public Works provided architectural plans to rural and assisted school districts. A few schools in what is now Vancouver have been attributed to DPW standard designs, including the wood-frame buildings at Lord Kitchener, Emily Carr, and Carleton schools.⁷⁴

British Columbia already had a tradition of standardized buildings to draw on, as in railway stations, police stations (many early police detachments throughout BC followed a single model; one survives as the museum in Oliver), and even banks (the Canadian Bank of Commerce used prefabricated structures in BC and the Prairies).

In Vancouver, the hiring of an in-house architect coincided with an upswing in enrollment and the Board's realization that it needed to undertake a major building program to provide adequate accommodation. The Board held a competition, which was won by Archibald Campbell Hope. His duties included 'the planning and designing for all new schools, supervising major repairs or additions to existing buildings and the setting of construction specifications in consultation with the Board.' Retained on contract, Hope was paid \$2,500 for one year's work.⁷⁵ He continued to devote time to his private practice, and during the year he worked for the VSB, he designed only one school – Simon Fraser.

Rather than renew Hope's contract, in 1910 the Board chose the South-African-born Norman A. Leech as its architect. During Leech's tenure with the Board, which lasted from 1910 to 1912, he designed and oversaw the construction of some 8 to 10 large brick schools and the modernization of older buildings. Leech's major contribution was the development of a standard plan often described as a 'barbell' plan, having a central lateral spine, with the entrance in the centre of one long side, and a wing at either end, projecting both towards the front and the back. Typically the schools had two floors of classrooms with ancillary spaces in the basement. The spine usually contained classrooms and the school office, accessed by a corridor and a central hall at the entrance; and each wing would have a further eight classrooms. So, in a sense, the plan connected two traditional 8-room schools with a link (the 'bar' of the 'barbell'). In many cases the full scheme was achieved only in discrete construction phases, and in some cases one of the

end wings would be built first (e.g. Charles Dickens School). Provision was made for the addition of assembly halls.



L'École Bilingue, formerly Cecil Rhodes School (1910-12), is an example of a school with restrained classical features and a 'barbell' plan designed by VSB architect Norman A. Leech. (Photo: Commonwealth)

Leech usually adopted a restrained classical architectural vocabulary, the manner used for most public buildings of the day (e.g. the Vancouver Court House, now the Vancouver Art Gallery) because of its associations with authority and permanence. Architectural historian Douglas Franklin writes that 'stylistically Leech adopted many of the principles of the Beaux Arts academic revival, particularly the emphasis on studied composition and rational planning for civic buildings. All of his work utilized a symmetrical and harmonious facade, a strong horizontal format and a consistent treatment of decorative details.'⁷⁶

In 1911 the Board estimated that it had saved \$30,000 in architects' fees by hiring Leech.⁷⁷ The pressures on the Board during this period of growth were intense. The Chair of the Building and Grounds Committee, William Clubb, expressed the situation well in 1912 when he wrote that 'it is a very hard thing to keep up the schools to the necessary capacity.'⁷⁸ Leech worked closely with the Board's Building Committee, which described the planning of school buildings as 'a problem of convention and efficiency, but also a problem of aesthetic training.'⁷⁹ In theory the Committee endorsed the idea that 'there ought not to be in our City one school without ornamentation, no more than there should be a cheerless, bare schoolroom. The flowers, as well as pictures make much for culture and refinement.'⁸⁰ Nevertheless the Board recognized that the 'buildings must be of the best, and at the least cost.' In this careful balancing act, the Board's Building Committee – perhaps anticipating the Trustees of today – was most keenly interested not in aesthetics, as one might assume, but rather in the construction of schools that promoted

health and safety. To this end they specified buildings that would be well lit, ventilated, and properly heated. (This is ironic, given the state of many rural schools, which barely had outhouses.) Reinforced concrete construction was used to fireproof the buildings, washrooms were made sanitary with careful tiling and the provision of individual flushing mechanisms. These features, in the estimation of the Committee, made for modern schools that were the envy of Canada.⁸¹

Aspects of these values are still very much in evidence in Vancouver schools. For example, schools built during the period make generous use of natural light, which penetrates into hallways through the use of clerestory windows, and the emphasis on ventilation, so that air vents are still found in some classrooms.

Spaces inside the school were carefully segregated on the basis of gender and status. Thus, schools had separate entrances for adults and children. Staff lunchrooms were mixed, but separate retiring rooms were provided for male and female staff. Only principals had proper offices; teachers were typically provided with a dedicated classroom cupboard built to standard design. Both indoor and outdoor space was gendered – girls and boys generally played in segregated spaces both inside and outside. They also entered the building through separate entrances; this segregation was often clearly expressed in the architecture with the ‘Boys’ and ‘Girls’ entrances clearly labelled. Basement spaces for indoor play were also segregated. Within these spaces there was also further segregation, by age, and by association.

Educational reforms were reflected in the work of the Building Committee. Specialized classrooms for subjects such as domestic science and manual training (often in a separate building) were included in the new schools or added to existing buildings. The breadth of the Board’s ambitious plan to serve all Vancouverites, regardless of age, was expressed in its rationale for building assembly halls in its new schools. These halls, it hoped, ‘should be made practically useful in connection with the social work in their respective districts, that lectures, illustrative or otherwise, might be given ... whereby our young people and those more mature age might be benefitted socially and intellectually.’⁸² Evidently assembly halls could be justified, but even in the heady days of 1910-11, when money was plentiful, the Board drew the line, excluding gymnasiums and swimming pools from the new schools. These it said ‘do not greatly assist in the actual work of the school.’⁸³

In the end, the intense pace of construction seems to have overwhelmed both the Board’s architect and its Building Committee. In 1913 the Committee’s Chair, W.H.P. Clubb, reported that it had ‘a considerable amount of internal organization to cope with since the first of the year, owing to the unsatisfactory condition of the Architectural Department brought forward from last year.’⁸⁴ Not too surprisingly, there had been considerable growing pains, and numerous complaints about the inadequacies of the modern ventilation and heating systems. As a result the Board chose to retreat from its decision to retain an architect and returned, as the pace of construction slowed, to commissioning consulting architects as well as engineers. Expertise in construction supervision, however, was retained in house. The design attribution for a number of schools built

between 1913 and 1915 is difficult to ascertain. Different sources list different architects. It is entirely possible that these architects simply saw through, perhaps with some modifications, Leech's designs. The last permanent brick school built before the war shut down construction was Strathcona Senior School, which opened (with eight classrooms) in August 1915.⁸⁵

The war years were tough on Vancouver and its School Board. Money was exceedingly tight. Even though school enrollment continued to grow, albeit not at the frantic pace it had in the pre-war years, no funds were available for new construction. The Board also faced a difficult break-in period with its new buildings; having invested heavily in various 'modern' systems, it was disappointed when they did not always work. Inquiries were held and administrative re-organization undertaken. Maintenance also became an issue, a theme that recurs in annual reports. In 1916 the Committee noted, in a statement that expressed a pride tinged with worry, that Vancouver had 'a splendid pile of school buildings; few cities can boast of anything better. Our citizens are proud of them; but they will soon lose their admiration if they are allowed to go into decay for want of proper care and attention.'⁸⁶

The end of the First World War did not resolve Vancouver's woes. Unlike Point Grey and even South Vancouver, Vancouver was unable to convince ratepayers to endorse expenditures on school construction. The Building Committee had to adapt to this situation. Putting on a cheery face, it described the wood-frame buildings it built in lieu of 'modern' fireproof concrete schools as 'cottage schools' that were well-ventilated and well-lit.⁸⁷ Others were less impressed with the situation. Children were being crowded into non-instructional spaces, transferred from school to school, and, in the primary grades, half-time instruction was substituted for full-time. When this proved unsatisfactory, an average class size of 45 was established. The most extreme example of the consequence of this policy was found at Franklin School, which consisted entirely of a series of small 'temporary' wood-frame buildings. All told, by 1924 Vancouver had 167 temporary classrooms.⁸⁸

By 1925, when Putnam and Weir concluded their survey of British Columbia's school system, which included a detailed review of Vancouver's situation, no permanent (e.g., brick or concrete) school buildings had been constructed in Vancouver since 1914. Putnam and Weir were very critical of Vancouver's school building program finding that:

Many schools show an inexcusable waste of public money in their construction. Domes, turrets, cupolas, cut-stone trimmings, ornate cornices, mouldings and beamed ceilings [the gymnasium at Britannia was explicitly criticized], unnecessary outside entrances, are features that have cost the ratepayers an enormous sum and contribute nothing to the efficiency of the school system. In many cases they have added nothing to the architectural appearance of the schools.⁸⁹

Putnam and Weir had a very clear idea of what constituted good school design, and it certainly did not include architectural or engineering 'frills.' In a phrase that middle-

class, Protestant Canadians might recognize as reflective of their values, they wrote that ‘everything really essential can be had at moderate expense.’ By everything they meant ‘good lighting, good ventilation, satisfactory heating and sanitary conveniences.’⁹⁰ These facets of school design were very much catchwords in the ‘hygiene’ movement, which tended to overlay school operation. The obsession with good light was well founded. Some schools were without artificial light, so good lighting meant appropriate design to let in natural light, in order to save children’s eyesight. Ventilation was also a very real issue. Schools were notoriously unhealthy places – especially during the era of contagious diseases and before widespread vaccinations. Washrooms in schools with running water were seen as a boon to attempts to curtail contagious diseases, which ran through schools. Thus, while Putnam and Weir found the temporary buildings inadequate, they suggested that Vancouver examine its priorities and focus its future school-building efforts on the ‘real essentials.’ They cited the recently completed high school in the City of North Vancouver as a model for coastal communities. Using native materials (wood, hollow tile, and grey rock-stucco), the school had been constructed for \$90,000. Fire risk was reduced by placing the furnace outside the building in a fireproof pit.⁹¹

After ten years of minimal funding, Vancouver succeeded convincing ratepayers to pass school-building bylaws from 1924 to 1928. These bylaws funded the completion of a number of the schools built during the 1910-14 era, including most of those designed by Norman Leech. The Board took aspects of Putnam and Weir’s advice to heart and completed these schools for less than the cost of the original construction.⁹² The impact of Putnam and Weir’s critique and recommendations can also be clearly read in the new construction that occurred in Vancouver system after 1925. Kitsilano and Templeton Secondary Schools were first built at junior high schools, in direct response to the survey’s recommendations. Cheaper building methods were adopted across the system, with stucco finishes evident at Kitsilano, Templeton, and most other schools of the period. Exterior ornamentation was more restrained, although not entirely eschewed. The new elementary schools, all of which were built on the east side, were arranged on a simple rectangular plan. Where the Board did not compromise was on the question of fireproof construction (e.g., concrete rather than wood ‘millwork’ construction), arguing that children should be housed in schools should that were ‘artistic, clean, and solid.’ In the long term this would prove to be a good investment, with reduced insurance charges and maintenance, and therefore, in the language of the day, to be more efficient. In addition it was felt that ‘the public generally take pride in their public buildings, which possess a high advertising value to the City.’⁹³ With its shops, auditorium, gymnasium, domestic science, and commercial rooms, Templeton clearly reflected the expanded curriculum of the time as well as the increased emphasis on vocational training.

From the mid-1920s onward, most new schools began to show modernistic tendencies in their design, seen mainly in a comparatively planar and linear exterior treatment that expresses volume more than it does mass. This is seen, for example, in the reduced Classical Revival of Kitchener (1925) and in the concrete classroom building erected at Queen Mary in 1926, which forms a nice contrast with more robust and ornate brick Queen Mary of 1915. In some cases the schools continued to use a decorative vocabulary derived from the Classical Revivals, as at Mackenzie (1930; considered Classical because

of the pilasters beside the entry), or from Collegiate Gothic, as at Point Grey Secondary (1929; Gothic because of the pointed arches). Both were designed by architects Townley and Matheson. In both cases, however, the decoration is quite abstracted and has features of the geometric ornamental style that we call Art Deco, which is familiar locally from the same architects' City Hall (1935-36). By contrast, Quilchena (1926) and Renfrew (1928) are much simpler in form; their style is sometimes known as Moderne or Modern Classicism. However neatly this simplification of form may be associated with the advice dispensed by Putnam and Weir, it remains to be debated whether school architects were following the advice of the two school critics, or whether Putnam and Weir were responding to the universal simplification of architecture in an era when the modern movement was gradually taking hold.



Renfrew Elementary School, built in 1928 to designs by VSB Architect Frank A.A. Barrs and photographed in 1957. (Photo: Vancouver School Board)

A problem that faced Vancouver, Point Grey, and South Vancouver was the absence of any kind of long-term plan. Schools were built in reaction to development, not in advance of it. As discussed above, development in the City and its suburbs was not formally planned. As a result sites were often expensive because they were bought late in the development process. They were also often smaller than desired. An accommodation crisis often preceded construction. Putnam and Weir emphasized the importance of planning, writing:

The question of choosing suitable school sites for Vancouver and especially for a Greater Vancouver is scarcely second in importance to a reorganization of the schools themselves. Upon it depends, in great measure, the wise and economic expansion of a metropolitan school system. As yet Vancouver is a mere outline or sketch of what it will be. It

is a framework with the scaffolding plainly visible. What the City will be and what its schools will be cannot be separated. Now, while great open spaces are available, is the time to choose school sites.⁹⁴

Putnam and Weir saw this problem as one to be addressed by school experts, not by businessmen or other ‘lay’ people. There was a need for both short-term planning and planning for the longer term of at least 25 years. Putnam and Weir’s insights were not unique. In parallel with city-planning effort, and informed by the same urban reform ethos, efforts to address this situation had begun as early as 1920, when a relatively informal survey of potential school sites was conducted on the initiative of the Assistant Municipal Inspector, T.A. Brough, in his noon hours.⁹⁵ This grew into a full planning process, with formal reports in the early 1930s.⁹⁶ Board officials and committees drew on the work of the Town Planning Commission to determine possible school locations and determine their size.⁹⁷

School grounds were also the subject of considerable discussion among educators and planners. Three factors drove the development of school grounds. There was the issue of aesthetics: citizens complained about muddy, unfinished grounds. Pragmatic concerns also came into play, Trustees fretted about school grounds that were quite literally washed away in heavy rainfall. A grounds superintendent who was also a trained architect, Frank A.A. Barrs, was hired in 1914 to manage the ‘improvements to grounds of a permanent character.’⁹⁸ Another factor was related to the educational reform movement, which combined with urban reformists to urge the development of physical education and supervised playgrounds in schools and parks. In 1920, H.B. King introduced supervised play at General Gordon School, where he was principal. Playgrounds, it was argued ‘are scarcely second in importance to good school buildings.’⁹⁹ A logical extension of this, attractive to the efficiency experts, was that the school grounds could then be counted as an additional classroom and therefore as productive space.¹⁰⁰ When Harland Bartholomew prepared his plan for Vancouver in 1928 he reviewed the city’s public recreation assets, including its school grounds. He found that, in general, Vancouver’s schools ‘had not been properly fitted into the recreational scheme.’ Play areas were small and underdeveloped.¹⁰¹ Bartholomew recommended the development of elementary schools, housing between 850 and 1,300 children, on sites of 5 acres. High schools sites, with playing fields, needed to be even larger – occupying some 15-25 acres. He saw school sites as community resources and believed that schools should be designed and used as community centres housing gymnasium, auditorium, library, art gallery, and other community facilities.¹⁰²

It was the exigencies of the Depression that resulted in action on a number of Bartholomew’s recommendations. Funds made available by the provincial and federal governments were used to pay unemployed men to ‘make more beautiful our grounds, more comfortable our playing fields, and more permanent our fencing.’¹⁰³ Many of the retaining walls found at Vancouver schools can be traced back to the work of these men. Provincial and federal funds were also made available to support recreation and community drama programs designed to ‘protect the youth of British Columbia from degenerating effects caused by enforced idleness, and to build up the morale and

character which rest on a good physical basis.’¹⁰⁴ School facilities were pressed service for these programs which continued to function through the war years and can be linked directly to the development of local recreation commissions and community centres.¹⁰⁵ This trend, combined with changes in the provincial curriculum in 1933, which placed a new emphasis on physical education, created pressure for new recreational facilities.¹⁰⁶ The Board’s post-war gymnasium building program is likely a direct product of these pre-war initiatives.

A key pressure point that emerged in the 1920s was secondary education. The increased breadth of the curriculum, combined with the depressed economy, and a small post World War I baby boom, meant more students were starting and staying in school. New facilities, including Kitsilano, Templeton, and Point Grey High Schools, as well as Vancouver Technical, were built in the late 1920s. Between 1930 and 1950, no new high schools were built in Vancouver. This was particularly problematic in the late 1930s, when high school enrollment peaked and the City refused to endorse the necessary spending to provide accommodation.¹⁰⁷ The scope of the problem can be seen in the enrollment numbers: in 1929 there were 5,955 students enrolled in high school, by 1937, there were 9,463.¹⁰⁸

The Vancouver Board retained architectural expertise in house through the 1920s and 1930s. Frank Barrs, who started as grounds superintendent, acted as the Board’s architect in the 1920s, retiring in about 1933.¹⁰⁹ He was followed by Harry Postle, who started with the Board in 1928. The Board also retained outside architects during this period. For example, architects Sharp and Thompson were responsible for the design of Templeton Junior High School. Queen Elizabeth Elementary, which opened in 1940, shows the influence of English school architecture on Postle, who designed it, and the Board more generally (Superintendent MacCorkindale toured the United Kingdom in the summer of 1937 and filed a glowing report on school facilities there).¹¹⁰ The cottage-style of the school is unique in the Province and sets it in contrast to earlier and later schools. The full gymnasium/auditorium reflects the increased emphasis on physical education in the curriculum and the idea that the school should be a community facility. The grounds, developed in conjunction with the Parks Board, reflected the spirit of the recommendations of the Bartholomew report.¹¹¹

The problems of school accommodation, described in the Board’s Annual Report of 1937, as a ‘hardy annual’¹¹² were exacerbated by the Depression. The challenges of the Depression changed the Vancouver School Board and its approach to funding school construction. New sources of funding were developed – for example, the money that paid for the extension of Vancouver Technical and construction of Queen Elizabeth School, among other projects, was borrowed from the federal government using the revenues raised through tuition-based adult education and facilities rental as collateral.¹¹³ Additional funds were raised by leasing commercially valuable property, such as that at Broadway and Granville, the site of the Fairview High School of Commerce, to businesses. At the same time, social dislocation caused by unemployment accelerated the trend toward the integration of community and school planning and programming. The experience gained by Board during the Depression, in tandem with educational changes

through the inter-war period, set the stage for the intense wartime planning and post-war school building discussed below.

Early School Construction in South Vancouver, Point Grey, Hastings Townsite, and DL 301

In South Vancouver before the creation of Point Grey in 1908 and in the Hastings Townsite / District Lot 301 before their absorption by the City in 1911, school districts were organized around individual schools and settlement centres. This system of organization ended in 1906, when the Province consolidated the school districts to match municipal boundaries.

Until 1901, the Provincial government paid the full cost of school construction and managed the whole process, from property acquisition to furnishing, outside of the major cities. After 1901, it reduced its financial role, but continued to provide design advice and, where necessary, standardized architectural plans.¹¹⁴ The best known and documented example of standardized Department of Public Works school architecture, symbolic of the important role the provincial government played outside of Vancouver in shaping school architecture, is found at Sir Guy Carleton School, where two wood structures date from 1905 (one room) and 1907 (two rooms) respectively.¹¹⁵ These buildings are not only examples of early provincial school architecture, but are also important material symbols of the distinct early settlement history, with its rural character, of the Collingwood neighbourhood, and of South Vancouver more generally.

School Construction in South Vancouver to 1929

Rapid suburban development in South Vancouver between 1908 and 1912 resulted in an increase in school enrolment, from 569 students in 1906-07 to 3,621 in 1912-13.¹¹⁶ This rapid increase resulted in a crisis of school accommodation, which saw students scattered through the area in rented premises. As in Vancouver and Point Grey, school construction followed rather than anticipated an increase in enrolment, resulting in a chaotic transition period during which there were far more students than classroom spaces for them. A school-building program began in 1910 and continued through 1914; under this program twelve schools were built in South Vancouver with a total of 128 classrooms. The majority of these schools were located along Kingsway (Selkirk, Carleton) along 41st Avenue, and on the southern slope, reflecting the pattern of settlement and the closely related street-railway routes.¹¹⁷ At Sexsmith, a small one-room school was built in 1912 with the bigger brick school constructed the following year. These new schools were described as 'a better type of building' with 'more permanent materials used in construction. The walls were of brick, the basement of concrete, while partitions and floors were built of wood, "mill" construction.'¹¹⁸ South Vancouver schools are readily identified, not only by their location, but also by their names which were taken from Canadian history – an idea originating with the students of Cedar Cottage (renamed Selkirk) in 1910.¹¹⁹

During this period, South Vancouver developed the basic components of what was then considered a modern educational system. It established a high school (John Oliver) in 1912 and developed manual training and domestic science centres for its upper elementary students. An educational bureaucracy was established with the appointment of a superintendent. The Municipality took a slightly different approach to school construction than Vancouver. South Vancouver established an ongoing relationship with one architect, Joseph Henry Bowman, who designed most schools built in South Vancouver during this period. The charts at the end of this section enumerate the schools built in South Vancouver during this period. It is interesting to note that some of these sites feature more than one school building designed by Bowman. Sexsmith is an interesting example of this, with a small wood-frame building and a larger brick structure, both designed by Bowman, built in quick succession. Set side by side, the pairing speaks eloquently to the rapid growth in enrollment experienced in South Vancouver between 1908 and 1912.

After 1912, South Vancouver's building program collapsed along with its tax base. By 1918 the economic depression that accompanied World War I had resulted in loss of population and the Municipality was bankrupt. Enrollment in South Vancouver's schools increased at a slower pace through the 1920s, and although only one entirely new school building was constructed (the high school at 45th and Draper), many of the schools built in the period 1908-12 were added to. Some additions were small 'temporary' wood-frame structures, but others were substantial brick edifices. J.H. Bowman continued to serve as the Board's architect, giving South Vancouver a continuity of design advice not found in Vancouver or Point Grey.



J.W. Sexsmith Community School has a two-room wood school (1912) and an eight-room brick school (1912-13), both designed by South Vancouver School Board Architect J.H. Bowman. (Photo: Commonwealth)

School Construction in Point Grey to 1929

Point Grey's story is similar to that of South Vancouver, but without the dimension of bankruptcy. Rapid suburban development along developing transit routes resulted in severe enrollment pressures. Small 'temporary' schools dealt with the immediate problem; more permanent accommodation followed. Typically this was adequate to deal with immediate needs, but further enrollment growth, both in existing population nodes and at new nodes, resulted in pressure for new schools. Sometimes temporary buildings remained at school sites and were pressed back into service as school enrollment grew.

As was common in municipal systems throughout the Province, school construction was dependent on funding approved by the ratepayers at municipal referendums. Point Grey's ratepayers approved major funding bylaws in 1909 and 1911-13. Classified as a 'Rural Municipal School District,' Point Grey received assistance from the Province, which donated a number of early school sites, including Queen Mary and Lord Kitchener (the 'Department' also 'erected there a four room school in 1914.)¹²⁰ School design was taken seriously. In 1912 the Board held a competition to select 'the most suitable plans as the basis for a building programme.'¹²¹ As elsewhere, value was placed on fireproof construction and good ventilation – the two criteria that seem to have defined 'modern' in the context of school construction. As in South Vancouver and Vancouver, school construction ceased during World War I. In contrast to Vancouver, Point Grey was able to resume construction quite soon after the War, with another major funding bylaw passed in 1923. Ventilation seems to have especially interested Point Grey which was the first in the Province to install a combined heating and ventilation system (Univent).¹²²

Point Grey's building program came in for some criticism from Putnam and Weir in their 1925 report on British Columbia schools. The Municipality, which received provincial assistance to build its schools, had also borrowed money and built fireproof buildings at the same time as Vancouver, which did not receive provincial funding, could not. This struck Putnam and Weir as 'unjust.' Their report infers, although it does not say overtly, that Point Grey was exploiting the funding formula and that British Columbians generally were subsidizing the construction of expensive schools in a wealthy municipality.¹²³

Enrollment in Point Grey increased from 2,315 in 1921 to 4,977 in 1926, and 'the heavy building program recently completed again proved inadequate.' By 1925 the public seems to have wearied of the problem or the resulting debt load. The Board responded by scaling back its building program. It eschewed its ambitious program of fully fireproof concrete schools and instead built 'exterior walls, heating plants and hall stairways ... of reinforced concrete, the remaining interior to be mill and open joist construction.'¹²⁴ If the earlier schools could be called 'expensive modern' we might label these schools 'cheaper modern.' The fickleness of the public, with which the Vancouver Board struggled in the early 1920s, was visited on the Point Grey Board in 1927 and 1928. First, in 1927, the public rejected a funding bylaw to improve high school accommodation¹²⁵; a year later (likely in response to the accommodation crisis and public relations campaign conducted by the PTA and the Ratepayer's Association that followed),

a bylaw supporting the construction of a junior high school passed with the largest majority of any previous funding bylaw.¹²⁶

Like Vancouver and South Vancouver, Point Grey also developed a small educational bureaucracy to administer its school system. This system, by 1928, included 11 elementary schools and two high schools (Magee and Lord Byng). A junior high (Point Grey), one of the innovations of education in British Columbia in the inter-war period, was under construction when Point Grey amalgamated with South Vancouver and Vancouver in 1928. This building, designed by the architectural firm Townley and Matheson, is notable for its architecture. It used the Collegiate Gothic style – then being adopted at the University of British Columbia – in new, concrete, construction, evoking ‘the “dreaming spires” of Oxford and the academic Gothic of Cambridge’ and is considered ... a fine example of the artistic possibilities of poured-in-place concrete that were explored by architects in the late 1920s and early 1930s.¹²⁷ Other schools built in Point Grey during the 1920s were designed by other architectural firms, including Twizell and Twizell (who had done work for the Board before World War I) and Gardiner and Mercer (where Harry Postle, later the VSB’s architect, was employed).¹²⁸ Fleming describes Point Grey’s buildings as maintaining the picturesque appearance of late Victorian buildings’ into the 1920s.¹²⁹ This was true of some of the schools built in the early 1920s in Point Grey, but not of all. The addition to Queen Mary School, designed by Gardiner and Mercer and opened in 1927, is a remarkably simple rectangular box.

1.3 Education in Vancouver after 1940

Background

Vancouver’s population grew slightly during the 1930s and then, with the influx of war-workers and post-war prosperity and immigration, expanded rapidly – from 275,353 in 1941 to 344,833 in 1951, and 384,522 in 1961.¹³⁰ With the exception of a dip in 1981, reflecting the nation-wide recession that hit BC particularly hard, Vancouver’s population has continued to increase up to the present. The table below traces this:

| | |
|------|------------------------|
| 1961 | 384,522 |
| 1971 | 426,256 |
| 1981 | 414,281 (recession) |
| 1991 | 471,844 |
| 2001 | 545,671 ¹³¹ |

While Vancouver’s population grew in absolute terms, it was the regional population that exploded, as transportation infrastructure and planning decisions fuelled suburban development beyond the city’s boundaries.¹³² This expansion reflected the general growth of British Columbia’s economy, with Vancouver as the commercial hub, as well as the overall urbanization of Canada’s population.

The story of the baby boom and its aftermath is an important theme in the post-war development of Vancouver and its schools, affecting not only the number of schools, but where they were built. Writing about the history of the baby boom generation, historian Doug Owsram points out that most authorities seriously underestimated the size of the boom, believing that it would be a short-lived phenomenon. This was evident in a planning documents prepared by the VSB's Bureau of Measurements. The Bureau anticipated the boom and anticipated the need for new school accommodation—Vancouver's birth rate was already on the rise in 1943,¹³³ but it did not anticipate the scope or duration of the boom. In a 1945, the Bureau of Measurements advised the Board that:

All students of population agree ... that the long-range trend of births will be lower than it was prior to 1940, and no rapid increase is expected in the school enrollment. Thus, probably less than 7 percent of the total population, or not more than 30,000 children, will be attending public elementary schools by 1971.

What the report did predict was increased secondary enrollments: 'more and more youths can be expected to obtain a high school education.'¹³⁴



Intramural athletes wave to the camera at McBride Elementary School, 1961. (Photo: Vancouver School Board)

The Board's 1945 predictions were based on past trends; the baby boom defied these trends. It was a product of a number of factors: post-war prosperity and strong social pressures – and desire, after years of war – to marry. These factors, and a relatively large numbers of men and women of 'marriageable age,' combined to mean that in 1946 'more families were formed than ever before in Canada.'¹³⁵ The rate of marriage remained high through to the mid-1950s. The baby-boom children started school in 1952. Enrollment in British Columbia schools increased from 130,605 in 1945 to 321,760 in 1961¹³⁶ to 489,596 in 1969¹³⁷, the fastest rate in Canada. In Vancouver, enrollment grew from 38,581 in 1949 to 59,854 in 1959;¹³⁸ total enrolment seems to have peaked in 1969 at 72,024 (elementary enrollment peaked in 1967; secondary in 1975).¹³⁹ Enrollment in Vancouver began to drop by the mid-1970s, as the end of the baby boom and regional development patterns saw families moving to the suburbs. This meant that even though Vancouver's population continued to grow, the number of children under 15 actually dropped – by 26% between 1971 and 1981.¹⁴⁰ This is a reminder that population and school enrollment do not rise and fall in parallel. By 2004 enrollment stood at 55,487, less than in 1959. Projections call for a slow decline in enrollment, with 54,681 expected in 2014.¹⁴¹

The particulars of Vancouver's history and geography had a direct impact on how the baby boom affected development and schools. Vancouver's housing situation, already tight because of the influx of war workers, became even tighter with the return of veterans and the rapid rate of family formation. Planning for post-war reconstruction, which began at all levels of governments around 1943, had anticipated this, but had not come to grips with the relative roles of the private and public sectors. In Vancouver tremendous pressure from housing activists and veterans, which took the form of eviction protests and extended to squats at the Hotel Vancouver and army camps, resulted in action. Construction of 1,000 houses by Wartime Housing (predecessor of CMHC), a Crown Corporation, began in 1944-45 on already-serviced lots in the area bounded by Main, Fraser, Broadway, and Marine Drive. The first of these houses, located at 5149 Elgin, was occupied in 1945.¹⁴² Systematic development of two subdivisions, expressly built for veterans, followed, with houses in Renfrew Heights ready for occupation in 1948 and in Fraserview two years later. These developments caught the Board off-guard. It had predicated in 1945 little growth in the south and east sections of the City and expected the existing schools in these areas to absorb most population growth for some time to come.¹⁴³

According to historical geographer (and later City Councillor) Walter Hardwick, 'Vancouver became the site of a vast new urban expansion after World War II.'¹⁴⁴ Many people who had not been able to establish themselves in careers during the Depression and through the war finally found themselves able to – and, just as Los Angeles drew people to the west in the United States, Vancouver served a similar function in Canada.¹⁴⁵ Thus, in addition to the planned veterans developments, there was also, throughout Vancouver, a general intensification of residential development, with the tracts of empty land and the numerous empty lots within the existing city boundaries filled in through the 1950s and into the 1960s. The 'episodic' character of development is especially evident in east and south Vancouver, where residential construction dating

from each of Vancouver's building boom periods is evident in the streetscape. Streetcar access, which had driven development in the pre-World War I boom, was not as relevant in this post-1945 world, as the private automobile became more available and transit systems switched to the more flexible diesel buses.

The School Board responded to this pattern of development first by expanding and modernizing many existing schools. As a result, many Vancouver schools have a classroom wing or auditorium / gymnasium / lunchroom built during the 1950s or 1960s. Many neighbourhoods with pre-war schools also saw small primary annexes built to absorb overflow. These additions and annexes – often overlooked – are an important part of the history of Vancouver's schools. The layering of buildings on many school sites directly reflects the layered chronology of neighbourhood histories.



Walter Moberly Annex B (now Douglas Annex), built in 1957 and designed by VSB Architect Alan B. Wilson, is one of many primary annexes built at the time to absorb the growing school enrollment. (Photo: VSB)

In some areas, such as the West End, the character of residential development continued the shift that began before the War to densification, with apartment buildings and rooming houses taking the place of single-family dwellings. Other areas, including parts of Kitsilano, Kerrisdale, Grandview, Mount Pleasant, Marpole, and Hastings East, saw low-density housing torn down and replaced with low-rise apartments.¹⁴⁶ In contrast with earlier trends, this redevelopment was the direct product of planning decisions made by the City. Champlain Heights and the remains of the CPR landholdings were developed in the 1970s and 1980s. The former, an intensively planned community, was the last major 'greenfield' development in the City. Conversion or redevelopment of 'brownfield'

industrial sites, including Yaletown / Concord Pacific lands, False Creek South, and Fraserlands have characterized residential development since the 1980s.

New school populations took shape in places that either never had schools, or had not had one for many years. False Creek School and the recently built Elsie Roy School, in Yaletown, were built in response to this new pattern of development. More than twice as many children lived downtown in 2001 than in 1991.¹⁴⁷ At the extreme western edge of the City, UBC, which lies within the School District, although it is not in the City, is now in the process of developing ‘University Town.’ Both Elsie Roy and University Hill are already full and students are travelling to older schools. The ups and downs of provincial funding and related formulas are part of the issue here, but there has been an enduring caution and a longstanding fear of overbuilding generally both at the Board and Provincial levels.¹⁴⁸ Thus, the 1950 Annual Report of the VSB warned that ‘the danger of overbuilding is always present’ with building programs only recommended after ‘cautious investigations.’¹⁴⁹ Just as it has been in the past, the geography of school populations is a factor. Today, this is complicated by the fact that funding is based on the space available in the District and not in sub-areas or neighbourhoods.

British Columbia in general, and Vancouver in particular, became less British in the post-war period as immigration from continental Europe and later from Asia, shifted the demography. Significant attitudinal and legislative changes that flowed from wartime experiences made Canada more welcoming to non-British newcomers. Some longstanding injustices were addressed in the late 1940s, with legislative changes that made it possible for Asian residents to become citizens and participate more fully in Canadian society. Similar rights were not granted to First Nations people until 1960, who were granted the right to vote in federal and provincial elections only in that decade. In 1966 Canada’s immigration policy ceased to formally favour Europeans, by adopting a ‘blind’ point system.¹⁵⁰ During this period the number of people of Chinese descent living in British Columbia rose by four times, to 100,000, with most settling in the Vancouver area.¹⁵¹ By 1982, more than half of Vancouver school students did not speak English as their first language.¹⁵²

By the 2001 census, the number of people living in Vancouver who were part of a visible ‘minority,’ born here or elsewhere, was 264,495, close to half the population. Of this group, 161,110 were Chinese. Many Vancouverites – whether or not they were born here – do not speak English or French as their first language. In 2001, 268,225 people had learned another language first.¹⁵³ These trends mean that within schools there is much greater diversity of both the teaching staff and student population. Programs in English as a second language (ESL) are very important and the Board has made formal efforts to build mutual respect and understanding through support programs and services such as those provided by multicultural liaison workers. Funding for these programs is an ongoing issue between school boards, provincial, and federal governments. ‘Canadianization’ has continued to be part of what happens at school, while race remains an important issue.¹⁵⁴

Neighbourhoods within Vancouver continue to have ethnic identities, but they are no longer enforced by restrictive covenants or other legal / official means. Class, as defined by income, plays an important role within all ethnic communities in determining residential choices. In fact, arguably it is the intersection of class, race / ethnicity, and often, but not always, recent arrival in Canada, that has remained important in driving neighbourhood identity. When Vancouver designated eight 'inner-city' schools with marked levels of poverty in 1988-89, these included the same schools and neighbourhoods where, in 1920, the Board's medical staff reported significant levels of malnutrition.¹⁵⁵ In 1920 this was addressed with the organization of a free-milk program for students at Strathcona, Seymour, Queen Alexandra, and Grandview.¹⁵⁶ An 'Open Air' School, established in 1925 in Charles Dicken's old annex, took this program further providing food and medical care to seriously undernourished and 'pre-tubercular' students.¹⁵⁷

Major Trends in Education

Described as a 'shock wave of children' the post-war baby boom created a society that 'seemed to revolve around babies.'¹⁵⁸ Superficially at least, this was a child-centred society – more so than previous generation and more so than subsequent generations. Historian Doug Oram, drawing from the books and magazine articles written by experts' notes that parents, shaped by depression and war, were urged to create homes where 'at the centre of a web of social and familial values were the children themselves.' In Oram's estimation, 'this social structure was neither an accident, nor, even in the child-oriented twentieth century, normal.'¹⁵⁹ Of course expert advice and reality are often quite removed from one another, and the 'golden age' of the family, which the experts urged parents to create, has eluded historians who have looked closely at day-to-day life in 1950s Canada.¹⁶⁰

Canadian classrooms did not so much change as they adjusted, slowly, to this generation of children and their parents. The tension between formalism and progressivism continued to influence what happened in the classroom. The progressive agenda was particularly evident in the physical form of schools; especially the kinds of spaces they contained and the physical arrangement of those spaces. New schools were part of the program, but so were additions and alterations to existing facilities. Many of the latter advanced ideas that had been established before the 1940s; post-war prosperity made it possible to, at last, apply these ideas generally.

In 1944 a Vancouver elementary school building committee described the purpose of elementary education as being 'that each child may develop his personality through activities designed for his well -being ... to develop in each individual child the knowledge, interests, habits, ideals, and powers whereby he will find his place to help shape himself, and eventually, our society, towards a fuller life.'¹⁶¹ This approach, which called for learning based on 'project' or 'enterprise,' required flexible learning spaces that facilitated rather than discouraged activity.¹⁶² While never whole-heartedly adopted by teachers for a host of practical and philosophical reasons, new and refurbished

classrooms were built on an ‘open plan.’ In the 1940s and 1950s, this simply meant desks were not fixed in place in rigid rows (although that was still how most teachers chose to arrange them), and in some primary rooms, tables replaced desks. Primary classrooms were provided with equipment that facilitated activity, including a sand table, number table, work bench, and, if possible, a sink. These furnishings can still be found in many Vancouver elementary schools.

The physical legacy of progressive education is evident in both large and small details at many Vancouver schools. For example, audio-visual aids were an important adjunct to progressive education. Seen as a means of breaking down the dominance of book-driven memory-based learning, these aids were introduced in Vancouver schools beginning in the 1920s. The Board officially established an Audio-Visual Department in 1937.¹⁶³ Schools carefully husbanded this expensive equipment with special ‘audio-visual’ storage spaces (see for example Maple Grove School). Projection booths, with their heavy fireproof doors, can be found at many schools. These doors and spaces, vestigial evidence of past uses of technology in education, puzzle and fascinate contemporary students and staff. Likewise, specialized rooms, including art, science, music rooms, and libraries, were added to many Vancouver elementary schools in modernization campaigns undertaken in the 1950s, completing a process begun in the 1930s as elementary schools adopted the platoon system.¹⁶⁴ These spaces were intended to help to foster a more flexible, activity-based education. Many of these spaces are still clearly legible, and some even are still used for their original purpose, in elementary schools.



The Strathcona School Band, seen in an undated photo. (Photo: Vancouver School Board)

Progressivism also provided an impetus to those interested in addressing the needs of children not well provided for in the standard classroom. Vancouver began work in this direction as early as 1913, when it was informed by the eugenics movement, which focused on the need to segregate disabled children so that they did not ‘taint’ normal children.¹⁶⁵ This led to the establishment of classes for mentally and, later, physically disabled children.¹⁶⁶ In the 1950s, this work continued, albeit with a more progressive, child-centred, rationale, with the establishment of enriched classes for the gifted, a school for mentally retarded children, and programs for emotionally disturbed children.¹⁶⁷ Some experiments were also undertaken in the instruction of mathematics and with the introduction of French at the elementary level at Queens Mary and Elizabeth Schools and Lord Kitchener School.

The expansion of the role of the state in the lives of individuals continued to be debated in the context of the school being part of a larger social welfare system. The Chair of the Vancouver School Board articulated this in 1945, writing in the Annual Report that ‘whether we like it or not, home training no longer plays the predominant role it used to play in the development of the qualities which will make a people great. More and more services are being demanded of the schools. THIS is a trend that will not halt.’¹⁶⁸

Vancouver used schools to deliver dental and medical services beginning early in the twentieth century. These services, severely cut back during the Depression, were revived after the war. Purpose-built medical rooms were included in all new schools and inserted into older ones. Additional dental clinics were built. Lunchrooms were also added to many Vancouver schools in the post-war period. Hot lunch programs, organized by parents are mentioned in numerous school histories in the context of the Depression and malnourished students. By the early 1940s, the Board was under pressure to provide facilities for preparation and consumption of a hot lunch. Whether the pressure for hot lunches stemmed from nutritional concerns or increased numbers of families where parents were not home at the noon hour is not articulated in the Board’s Annual Reports, but what is clear is that Parent-Teacher Associations took on the provision of this service in many of the Board’s schools in the 1940s and that lunchrooms, with kitchens, were built to facilitate this.¹⁶⁹

One of the most significant developments was the establishment of Vancouver’s first kindergartens, at Henry Hudson and Dawson Schools in 1944. The importance of kindergartens had been recognized in 1922, when the Public School Act was amended to permit school boards to establish them, but their establishment was delayed for many years because of ambivalence about funding, combined with social norms that prescribed at-home care for young children. For many years it was seen as a social service to mothers in the ‘abnormal’ situation of needing to work rather than as educationally important for all children. It was not until 1944 that the Province agreed, on an experimental basis and in the context of the exigencies of war, to fund the first classes. By this time the educational importance of kindergarten had gained relatively wide acceptance. More kindergartens were opened following war, and in the 1950s kindergarten rooms were included in new schools and added to modernized ones. The pace of the growth of this program was slower than the Board and parents hoped for because the Province remained ambivalent about funding it. It was not until 1961, when

the Province agreed to fund kindergarten, that the Vancouver board was able to move forward with opening kindergartens in all its elementary schools. Kindergarten was made mandatory in British Columbia in 1973.¹⁷⁰

Staff Demographics and Organization

Elementary schools in the post-war period saw a shift in staff demographics. The shortage of teachers forced school administrators to allow married female teachers to continue their careers. At first, married women were hired only on temporary contracts, but beginning in 1955 they could be appointed to the permanent staff. Married women continued to be seen not as experienced teachers, but as an unfortunate, if necessary, evil. Maternity leave, in particular, was problematized and women were required to leave their jobs 5 months before giving birth and to stay away for a full year.¹⁷¹ The post-war period also saw the end of at least one aspect of wage discrimination as the principal of equal pay for the same job was established in legislation.¹⁷²

Membership in the BCTF became automatic for all teachers in 1948. Teachers worked hard through the post-war period to improve their working conditions with wages and pensions being major issues on which progress was made. In Vancouver, for historic reasons, different organizations represent the secondary and elementary teachers.

As pointed out by Neil Sutherland, there was a large gap between the rhetoric of progressive education and the classroom reality.¹⁷³ This gap was not always well understood by the public. In the 1950s traditionalists in the United States and Canada attacked progressivism as a ‘watered down’ education, especially at the high school level. It was charged with not preparing students adequately to defend democracy, and so, it was said, communist nations such as the USSR were bounding ahead. Their more rigorous subject-based, traditionally-taught educational programs were held up as the reason for this. This critique was articulated by historian Dr. Hilda Neatby, in her popular critique of progressive education in Canada, *So Little for the Mind* (1953). When the first Sputnik satellite was launched by the Soviets in 1957, putting them ahead of the Americans in the race for space, many pointed to the ‘lax’ school system as the cause. Thus, when the Vancouver School went to the voters in 1957 to ask for funding to build new schools, its advertisements read ‘Catch Russians: Money for Education.’¹⁷⁴

In British Columbia, the recommendations of the 1960 Royal Commission on Education, chaired by S.N.F. Chant, reflected the traditionalists’ (as personified by Neatby) critique of progressivism. The Commission recommended that the aim of education in British Columbia should be ‘promoting the intellectual development of the pupils, and that this should be the major emphasis throughout the whole school program.’¹⁷⁵ More time and effort was to be spent on ‘central subjects’ and less on ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ subjects. Secondary students in particular felt the effect of the Commission; school days were made longer and the overall program was restructured. For mostly practical reasons, grade 7 was returned to elementary schools.¹⁷⁶ Among the numerous other changes, the length of teacher training was to be extended; and, all teachers, it was hoped, would soon be required to have a university degree.

In his report Chant observed that progressive methods had a place in British Columbia schools as long as they were applied with careful moderation – as he found they generally had been. Neatby's critique, it was felt, did not reflect the classroom reality. Doug Owsram, a historian who has written about the history of the baby boom in Canada, contends that even if instruction in most classrooms remained formal, the content and spirit of what was taught did change in the 1950s. The war had shaken many old assumptions about race and authority. Textbooks placed a greater emphasis on tolerance and equality. This had a real impact on the values of the baby-boom generation and its impact was felt gradually as the generation came of age.¹⁷⁷

High Schools, Comprehensive Schools, Community Schools, and Other Changes

In the 1950s, Vancouver built five new secondary schools (Gladstone, Sir Winston Churchill, Killarney, David Thompson, and Sir Charles Tupper) and modernized its existing high schools. Continuing a policy begun in 1938, it combined junior and senior high schools at single sites, and using federal monies (this also began pre-war), it developed its vocational programs. Vocational education is one of the few places the federal government has played a direct role in education below the university level; this involvement has been justified in the context of federal responsibilities relating to labour force development. The result was the creation of comprehensive (or composite) high schools that offered a wide range of courses and programs to a diverse student body, rather than specialized high schools that offered only academic, vocational, or commercial courses.

Enrollment rose through the decade (John Oliver had 3,290 students in 1955).¹⁷⁸ The increased enrollment reflected the fact that the general population attached more importance to obtaining a high school education. More students were starting and staying in high school through to graduation. The locations of the new high schools reflected not only the growth of the City, but the fact the children from the less affluent southern and eastern areas of the City were now not only starting high school, but staying to graduate. These new schools were symbolic of the promise of post-war society – and public conversations about youthful behaviour reflected social hopes and fears for the future. The behaviour of young people was scrutinized in the press; class played an important part in this with middle class youth represented as the promise of the future and working class youth as disorderly and threatening.¹⁷⁹ These tensions were reflected in how schools in different areas of the city were portrayed, thus, for example, Templeton was represented as 'tough.'

The VSB and Post-Secondary Education

The Vancouver School Board played a direct and significant role in the development of post-secondary education in the City. Adult education began in 1909 with night school programs. By the 1930s, adult education included vocational, commercial, and academic courses. As well, from 1925, the Board operated the Vancouver School of Art (now the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design). Following World War II, in 1949, the Board established the Vancouver Vocational Institute, built on the site of the original Central School. Adult education was heavily subscribed in the post-war years with returning veterans eligible for assistance under the Canadian Vocational Training Scheme.¹⁸⁰ Vancouver City College (later Vancouver Community College) was established in 1965 by combining the Vocational Institute, School of Art, and King Edward Continuing Education Centre (the latter located at the site of old King Edward High School). Langara College was later developed as a campus of VCC. Vancouver City College remained tied to the VSB until 1974.

The emphasis on a moderate approach or middle-road that characterized Chant's report did not preclude further development of the progressive aspects of Vancouver's educational system. In 1964-65 an entire section of the Annual Report was devoted to 'experiments,' which included:

- planning for a new open area school (MacCorkindale) at 46th and Battison
- extension of continuous progress experiment for grades 1-3 from Henderson to additional schools
- construction of new wing at Hamber and designation of the school as an experimental secondary school, with large group instruction, seminar work, and independent study.
- pilot project funded by the Ford Foundation in graphic design at a number of secondary schools¹⁸¹

The connection between experimentation and facility development is clearly indicated here, with two of the programs involving construction of new facilities. The first open area school in the Province, MacCorkindale, was built with four areas (named A, B, C, and D), rather than discrete classrooms, grouped around two courtyards. This was designed to accommodate more activity-based education and an emphasis on individual student programs (vs. strict grading by age), with more trust placed in students to initiate their own learning. It was seen as 'a bold new vista,' the height of educational innovation at the time and an indicator of the City's modernity.¹⁸² The open area concept was adopted at many schools in the Vancouver system in the 1970s, with existing classrooms and corridors combined to create new learning areas. These spaces remain in place in many schools.¹⁸³ Interestingly, these spaces continue to be seen as 'experimental' – school web sites describe their schools as including both open areas and 'regular' classrooms. Some schools have retained open areas, but others have either re-introduced classrooms (Britannia) or operate separate classes within an open area (MacCorkindale).¹⁸⁴ Dickens Annex, built in 1971, since it opened offered a program of

continuous progress/individualized instruction. It is one of few examples of very long running use of this approach to instruction, and is now a bit of an anomaly in the larger system.

By the mid-1960s there was a noticeable shift in the tone of the change. As the baby boom came of age, it subjected society generally to a radical critique that questioned most existing systems – including the educational system.¹⁸⁵ The BCTF's 1967 report, *The Key to Better Schools*, reflected this climate. It called for more individualized instruction, more experimental schools, and an end to corporal punishment. Alternative programs at the high school level were introduced in Vancouver in 1968 (e.g., Point Grey's Experimental Integrated Programme).¹⁸⁶ A 1969-70 report encouraged the Vancouver to be more flexible – to offer parents greater choice and to involve local communities in determining educational objectives for their schools.¹⁸⁷ Some schools experienced considerable tension over the changes. At Templeton Secondary there was a short-lived free speech 'riot' in 1967.¹⁸⁸ At Lord Tennyson, Principal G.W. Harris found his parents divided into two camps – one that wanted traditional classrooms and the other, principally 'hippies,' that wanted a much less structured learning environment.¹⁸⁹ In the end, Tennyson offered both open area and traditional classrooms.

Ironically, given the tendency to reject tradition, it was during the mid-1960s, that the VSB undertook a concerted effort to document its history; every school in the district produced a history and many schools also created scrapbooks. This systematic work has not been matched since, although major anniversaries have, at some schools, resulted in updated histories being produced. Some new schools, such as Kingsford Smith, seized the opportunity to document their neighbourhood history, contacting early residents and creating as a result an important record of school and neighbourhood history.¹⁹⁰



Children at Waverley Elementary School declare that art, gym, and recess are their favourite activities in a 1971 event. (Photo: Vancouver School Board)

Community Schools, with programs designed to better integrate neighbourhood and school, were one of the outgrowths of this movement. In 1973-74, Sexsmith and Bayview were the first schools in Vancouver to be designated as community schools. The impact of these programs can sometimes be seen in the physical form. Spaces were adapted for community programs or, in a few instances, new spaces came into being. Britannia Community Services Centre, which combined school, community centre, and library at a single 'site' is a particularly complex example of the latter. It opened in 1974-75. The community schools movement reflected the pressure that schools (and other government agencies) felt to engage with and reflect more fully the neighbourhoods of which they were part.

The late 1960s and early 1970s also saw the transformation of school grounds at numerous Vancouver schools as a result of parental involvement in the creation of adventure playgrounds (ironically, at the same time as formal parental organizations were struggling to attract members). At some schools, the children took a direct role in the design of the playground. Elsewhere they, and their parents, participated in building the playground or planted trees. Some of these playgrounds, such as the one at Emily Carr, where 'Rudolph' the fire engine is resident, are unique, and are seen as part of the neighbourhood's history.¹⁹¹ At Templeton Secondary, students looking for an appropriate centennial project in 1966-67 initiated a neighbourhood campaign to get a pool built. Templeton Pool opened in 1976.¹⁹² Parents, through the Parent Teacher Associations, which date back to 1915 in Vancouver, have helped purchase innumerable pieces of equipment, from gramophones, to pianos, to computers. The recent history of parental involvement continues this tradition, but also includes more engagement in educational issues, and, in Vancouver, in school-building safety.¹⁹³

There was, through the 1970s, a continued diversification of educational choices. With the Provincial decision to fund independent schools in 1977, the century long tradition of not using public monies to support religious schools ended.¹⁹⁴ The bureaucratic structures that had been established early in the century, at both the Provincial and local level, began to fracture. The school system became less authoritarian and less uniform. Provincial exams and the strap were both abolished in 1972. At the administrative level, local districts took over the role of appointing superintendents, something Victoria had always controlled. Educational historian Alastair Glegg argues this trend continued into the 1990s, with the result that the 'the school system of the 1990s in British Columbia looks very different from that which was in place two decades ago.'¹⁹⁵ Strong provincial control (exercised in a less personal, more technocratic manner, through standardized tests and financial means) remains,¹⁹⁶ but 'there is more choice for parents, as alternative public schools, ranging in their approach from progressive to traditional, become more commonplace.'¹⁹⁷ Choice has also meant that the close link between neighbourhood and school history and tradition have been somewhat weakened. These observations certainly apply to the situation in Vancouver.

By the 1980s, close to half Vancouver's students were designated as needing instruction in English as a Second Language.¹⁹⁸ The introduction of a five-year cap on eligibility for

ESL instruction in 1999 reduced the overall number of students classified as ESL from 28,435 in 1998-99 to 16,361 in 2001.¹⁹⁹ Issues over funding have been very much part of the public dialogue about education in the City and the Province more generally; budget cutbacks have effected program as well as physical infrastructure.

Building Schools after 1940

The quickly rising enrollment of the baby-boom period meant that school systems across the country simply struggled with the problem of providing sufficient numbers of teachers and classrooms to meet the demand. According to Doug Owsram, ‘governments, educators, and parents scrambled to expand a system pushed to the edge of chaos.’²⁰⁰ In the late 1940s and early 1950s, a number of schools in Vancouver were operating on shift systems, usually with students attending morning or afternoon sessions. Gymnasiums and other spaces were converted to classroom use. School boundaries were adjusted and the transition from elementary school to high school either accelerated or delayed, depending on the area of the city and the particular situation.²⁰¹

Planning for new construction began before the war ended. The School Board established committees, which included teachers, administrators, parents, custodians, and others, to prepare guidelines for secondary and elementary school construction. Early in 1944 it appointed E.D. King its architect. He replaced Harry Postle, who had retired in 1942.²⁰² The principles established by these committees, and by the Board’s Building Committee, in the mid-1940s, influenced site selection and school design through the 1950s.

The general direction of the building program is established in the introduction to the ‘Elementary Schools Building Committee Report,’ issued in June 1944. The report’s premise was that ‘the old conception of the schoolhouse is already obsolete. The sooner the change is understood, the fewer dollars will be wasted in school construction along traditional lines.’²⁰³ Like Putnam and Weir, who wrote in the mid-1920s, the committee was did not believe schools should be architectural monuments:

Many traditional and antiquated practices in construction and architecture seriously impede the educational process and must be reconsidered ... the erection of ‘monuments’ to architects at the expense of many thousands of dollars to ratepayers of utility and efficiency in education must be avoided. The ultimate aim in school planning must be to realize a healthful and happy environment which functions for the education and growth of children.²⁰⁴

These ideas reflected contemporary thinking in the fields of architecture and education. The Committee read widely, primarily in the American literature on the subject of school design. It also toured recently-built schools in Washington State.²⁰⁵ The committee’s report is highly detailed, providing specific details for lighting, ventilation, classrooms of various types, and specialized spaces. For example, it recommended that the standard classroom should be, at minimum, 24ft x 38ft x 12ft. Rooms should be ‘cheery and

attractive,’ with more than one colour used in a room and colour varying from room to room. One suggested combination was dusty rose and pale green. Generous use of natural light was recommended, with windows extending from floor to ceiling.²⁰⁶ Clearly, the Committee knew what it took to create healthful and happy children.



Superintendent H.N. MacCorkindale advocated that a school's activities should determine its plan. The first open area school in Vancouver, begun in 1966, was named after him. (Photo: First Fifty Years: Vancouver High Schools 1890-1940)

Superintendent H.N. MacCorkindale also expressed clear ideas about school architecture and architects. Quoting from an ‘outstanding school architect’ he asserted that post-war schools should not be balanced in either plan or elevation. Rather, the plan of the school should emerge from function. The plan should grow out of the school activity rather than the school activity conform to a preconceived plan.’ He thought a school architect should ‘interpret the curriculum in terms of architecture.’ On a less abstract level, MacCorkindale was especially clear of the subject of stairs; he thought they were dangerous to small children.²⁰⁷

Physical expression was given to MacCorkindale’s ideas and the Elementary Schools Building Committee recommendations in 1945 with the completion of Begbie Annex in January 1946 (now Thunderbird) and David Lloyd George Annex (later Shannon Park, now closed) in April 1946. Elsie Roy, the Primary Supervisor, credited E.D. King’s ‘extraordinary appreciation of primary methods’ for the creation of two ‘almost perfect primary buildings, in which the teaching staff and pupils take the utmost pride.’²⁰⁸ The first phase of Trafalgar, built as a four-room annex to Kitchener and opened in 1947, was built to similar plans.²⁰⁹



Begbie Annex, now Thunderbird Elementary School, was built in 1945-46 to designs by VSB Architect E.D. King. It was praised as the first school to reflect contemporary ideas about architecture and education. (Photo: Vancouver School Board.)

How these ideas were implemented in Vancouver is spelled out quite succinctly in the Board's 1955 Annual Report, which stated that Board architect E.D. King aimed for simplicity of design and the use of economical materials. Schools were built without basements, attics, or ornamentation. The interiors were made attractive with 'a) lively colour combinations b) modern efficient lighting units c) coloured asphalt tile or marboleum on the floors d) tile washrooms e) greater tackboard areas f) improved classroom furniture g) acoustical tile where ever required to affect proper control sound and control.'²¹⁰ The economy of Vancouver's approach was confirmed through research, which demonstrated it had one of the lowest costs of construction per square foot on the continent.²¹¹ With the exception of the primary annexes, which were of frame construction with plywood interior walls, all elementary and secondary school buildings were constructed of reinforced concrete, with pumice brick partitions. From 1963 onwards the annexes were also built of fireproof materials – steel frame and concrete and brick infills, with roofs of prestressed and precast concrete and walls of precast concrete with exposed aggregate. This followed a fire at Edith Cavell Annex in the late 1950s, which completely destroyed it.²¹² The economy of construction must have been of some comfort to sceptics; not all school authorities were convinced of the direct relationship between good schooling and good school buildings. Vancouver's Supervisor of Instruction commented in 1950 that 'good equipment and classrooms are very helpful, but these have very little influence if the teaching is not strong.'²¹³

Architectural historian Rhodri Windsor Linscombe describes the 'socialized architecture polemic' that emphasized the role of the architect as organizer rather than stylist, as the main idea that infused architecture, and informed school design in western Europe and North America in the 1940s and 1950s.²¹⁴ Writing about the British Columbia schools

designed by Vancouver-based Robert Berwick, of the firm Thompson Berwick Pratt, Windsor Linscombe quotes Berwick on his approach to school architecture: ‘A new school must be a pleasant place for children to spend a great proportion of their lifetime, as well as to be practical and efficient workshop for learning.’ While Berwick did not design any of Vancouver’s schools, he did influence the design guidance offered by the Department of Education to school districts throughout the province.²¹⁵

In 1949 the Province established an Office of School Planning and Construction to oversee the massive expansion of the public system.²¹⁶ The office subsequently issued a *School Building Manual* (Victoria, 1954), which defined in some detail what costs the Government would share with districts, including Vancouver, on a 50:50 basis. It also included detailed drawings of interior layouts and specification for architects to follow. After 1956 Vancouver conformed to the guidelines. As a consequence, ‘all Vancouver school construction was shareable.’²¹⁷ Despite the financial benefits, the Board chafed under Provincial ‘supervision.’ In 1958-59 it complained of provincial rigidity, which meant that ‘school design is not adequately adapted to local conditions.’²¹⁸ The Vancouver Board was ambivalent about standardization, whether self-inflicted or provincially mandated. In developing its post-war building program it did not attempt to develop a standardized plan for ‘any type of school;’ although it did set about creating standardized lists of equipment²¹⁹ and in 1946 designed a standardized gymnasium ‘which can be applied to the grounds of a number of elementary schools.’²²⁰ The special committee reports, made in 1944, were highly prescriptive in their detail. It seems likely that some standardization also occurred in the 1940s and 1950s, because it undertook almost all the design work in house under architect E.D. King.

The Board’s ambivalence about the standardization of plans did not extend to planning more generally. Following the model established prior to World War II, the Board worked with various authorities, including the Town Planning Commission, to identify potential school locations well ahead of need. As mentioned above, population projections played an important part in this process. The Board expected, given population densities, that most students would live within no more than one-half mile from an elementary school and one mile from a high school – distances which they could reasonably be expected to walk.²²¹ Annexes were built where ‘enrollment does not yet justify a complete elementary school.’²²² Certainly, annexes were not new in the post-war era.

Of considerable interest to the Board was the size of school sites for physical education and as recreational facilities more generally. The School Board worked with the Park Board to create larger school sites. This strategy was used for the first time when the site for Osler Elementary School and Montgomery Park was acquired in 1941-42.²²³ Interest in scientific planning increased in the 1950s, and it is not surprising to find the Chair of the Building Committee in 1950 hopefully suggesting that the time might be ripe, for the sake of efficiency, to prepare a master plan for the system.²²⁴

The building program of the 1940s to 1960s had a number of components. First, there was new permanent construction – of elementary schools, annexes, and high schools.

Portables, designed in 1950 by E.D. King, were used at sites where the peak enrollment was not anticipated to endure for any period of time. Portable classrooms were preferred over transportation, which was discussed and rejected.²²⁵ Then there was the construction of major additions, mostly to elementary schools, of classroom wings, auditoriums / gymnasiums, and lunchrooms. Next, there was an aggressive modernization program undertaken at older elementary and high schools, which significantly changed their interiors. The tally for new construction between 1950 and 1959 amounted to:

- 5 new secondary schools
- 4 new elementary schools
- 13 new elementary annexes
- 48 portable classrooms
- 51 additions to elementary schools
- 15 additions to secondary schools

The facilities constructed included:

- 829 regular and special classrooms
- 32 gymnasiums / auditoriums
- 4 single and 11 double gymnasiums
- 34 lunchrooms and 10 cafeterias
- 17 activity rooms and 6 auditoriums²²⁶

The capital cost of this program was \$39 million. So huge an outlay of money was only possible, according to historian Douglas O'wram, because governments at the time had relatively low debt loads and the economy generally remained prosperous through the most intense building period.²²⁷ School-building continued apace through the 1960s (3 secondaries, 5 elementaries, 9 annexes, plus additions and modernizations to existing facilities). Alan B. Wilson succeeded E.D. King as architect during this period and there was a shift to using outside architectural firms on some projects.²²⁸

The new schools and the additions that were erected during this aggressive post-War building campaign utterly transformed the image of the Vancouver school. The design approach and vocabulary had become entirely modernist, turning its back on the revival of historical styles and adopting the progressive features of the new International Style. Schools feature large windows set in flat walls; their designs reduce or eliminate the ornament, contrasts in materials, and relief effects of earlier schools. E.D. King's work at Thunderbird, Shannon Park, and Trafalgar, all designed in 1944-45, introduced this Early Modern manner. John Oliver Secondary School, built in 1949-50 to designs by architects Mercer and Mercer, and an extension to Sir James Douglas Elementary School, designed in 1950 by Davies and McNab, provide the first mature expressions of the International Style. They set the tone for the classroom and gymnasium buildings of the 1950s and 1960s, both those that were designed in house and the ones commissioned from outside architects. Some achieved excellence in design, while others were far less inspired and simply followed earlier examples – a new version of architectural standardization that was not unlike the repeated formulas often seen early in the century.



John Oliver Secondary School, designed by Mercer & Mercer and built in 1949-50, is a fine early example of the modernist International Style. (Photo: Vancouver School Board)

It was not until the 1970s that the pace of construction slackened, as enrollment growth tapered off. New schools were built in Champlain Heights and False Creek and a number of older schools were replaced (Simon Fraser, Mount Pleasant), but between 1970 and 1986 only nine new school construction projects were undertaken. In 1970 the Board embarked on a ‘new approach to school design when it sponsored an architectural competition for the construction of a new elementary school in the southeast sector of Vancouver.’²²⁹ The competition was intended to give BC architects a chance to ‘create and submit designs embodying new and stimulating ideas for school facilities in tune with modern concepts of education.’ The celebrated firm of Erickson / Massey won the competition for the school, called Champlain Heights. Subsequent annual reports say much less about new construction and more about the issues of managing an aging portfolio of buildings

1.4 Conclusion

As the twentieth century came to a close, in the absence of a concerted building program, new schools were – and are – less alike. The tendency towards standardized design, seen from the earliest days of school design in BC through to the 1960s, passed over. Still, the basic challenge facing school architects has not changed significantly: to provide economical and efficient designs, reflecting contemporary pedagogy in what is understood, according to the design values of the day, an attractive form. The Province continues, through its funding formulas, to shape what gets built. There was, until the

early 1990s, greater leeway given to design, but a backlash followed. Economy has once again trumped design, as it did in the 1920s.²³⁰ The Vancouver School Board initiative that has led to the present project and the writing of this contextual essay results from yet another Provincial funding formula, this one for seismic upgrading.

This essay has examined how Vancouver's 'schoolmen' linked schools and schooling, and what the results were. Vancouver's schools tell important stories. With schools ranging in age from more than 100 years to only one or two years, there is an exceptional diversity in the built form. The elapsed time and the diversity mean that Vancouver schools represent no single moment in education history. Some school sites contain within themselves essays in educational and architectural history, revealing the ongoing dialogue between pedagogy and architecture. Clearly, schools are more than buildings – they are communities built over time and connected to place. Some are important icons in their neighbourhood or in the city in generally. All are invested with meaning and memory for neighbourhood residents, past and present students, and staff.

1.5 Table and Charts

Schools built before 1891 in the City of Vancouver

| Name/Status | Date Opened | Location |
|---|---------------------------|---|
| <i>Hastings Mill</i> Closed 1886 following fire | 1872 | Foot of Dunlevy |
| <i>Oppenheimer</i> Closed in 1895 (later <i>East</i>) | 1887 | Cordova Street |
| <i>West</i> later <i>Aberdeen</i> | 1888 1908 | Burrard and Barclay |
| <i>False Creek</i> Replaced by Mount Pleasant in 1892 | 1887 | Broadway and Kingsway |
| <i>Central</i> Building demolished, site still in use by VCC | 1889 1890 | Vancouver Vocational Institute site, now downtown campus of VCC |
| <i>East</i> 1891 building demolished, 1897-98 building standing, site still in use | 1891; addition in 1897-98 | Strathcona school site |

Sources: Diana Bodnar, 'Heritage Inventory of Vancouver Schools' Report Prepared for the City of Vancouver, 1982; Douglas Franklin and John Fleming, 'Early School Architecture in British Columbia: An Architectural History of Buildings to 1930', Report prepared for the Heritage Conservation Branch, Victoria, 1980; Valerie Hamilton, *The Schools of Vancouver*, (Vancouver: VSB, 1986), Ivan J. Saunders, *A Survey of British Columbia School Architecture to 1930*, Parks Canada Research Bulletin No. 225, (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1984.)

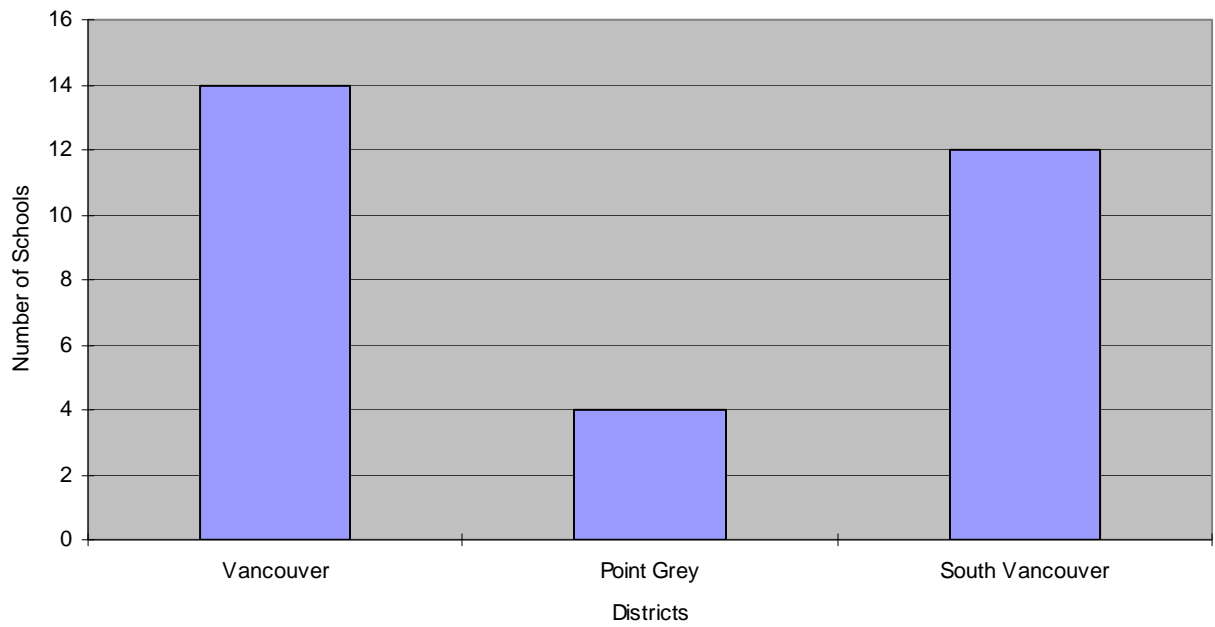
Schools built between 1891 and 1909 in the City of Vancouver

| Name/status | Date Opened | Location |
|--|--|---|
| <i>Mount Pleasant</i> Demolished | 1892; addition in 1897-98 | Main and Kingsway |
| <i>New West (Dawson)</i> Demolished | 1892; addition in 1897-98 | Burrard and Helmken |
| <i>High School</i> (permanent building) Demolished | 1893 | Dunsmuir and Cambie |
| <i>Fairview</i> Opened at 7 th and Granville, moved to Broadway and Granville demolished | 1893 1895; additions in 1900 and 1910 | 7 th and Granville Southwest corner of Broadway and Granville |
| <i>Admiral Seymour</i> Extant | 1900 1907 | 1130 Keefer Street |
| <i>Lord Roberts No. 1</i> Demolished <i>Lord Roberts No. 2</i> Extant | 1900 1907 | 1100 Bidwell |
| <i>King Edward High School</i> Destroyed by fire | 1904 | 12 th and Oak |
| <i>Model</i> Extant, adapted for commercial use | 1905 | 12 th and Ash Part of City Square |
| <i>Grandview</i> demolished | 1905 | 1 st and Commercial |

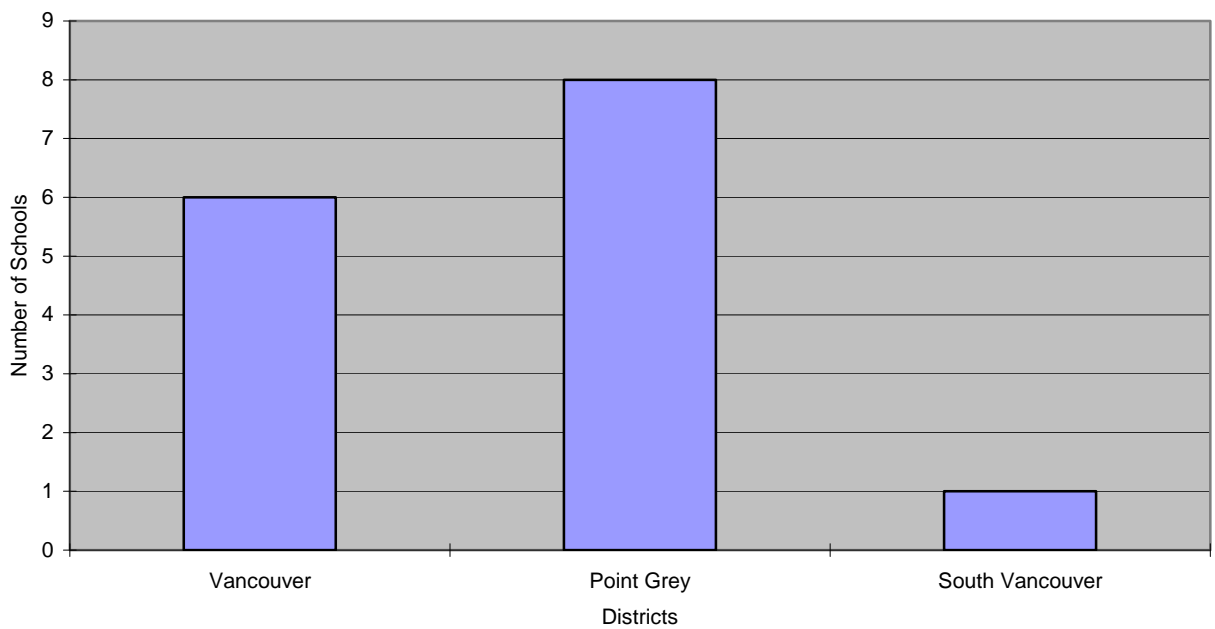
| | | |
|---|--|-------------------------|
| <i>Fairview West</i> Replaced by Kitsilano, Seaview Burned | 1905 | 4 th and Yew |
| <i>Macdonald (Cedar Cove)</i> 1908 part exists | 1903 1905 1908 1929 additions | 1950 Hastings |

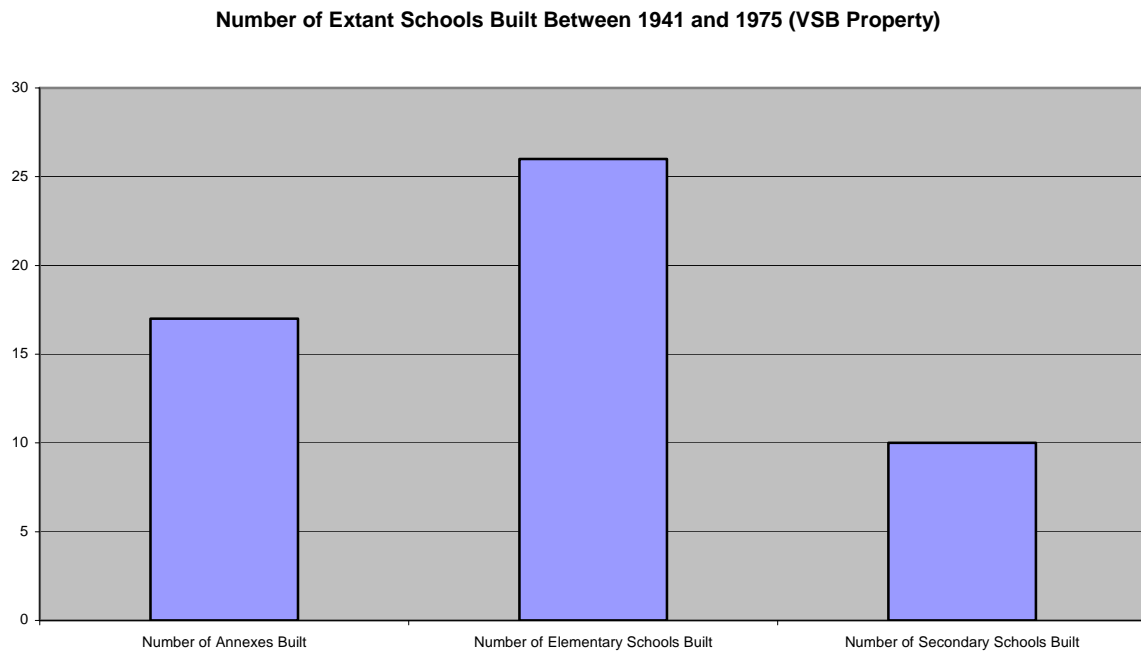
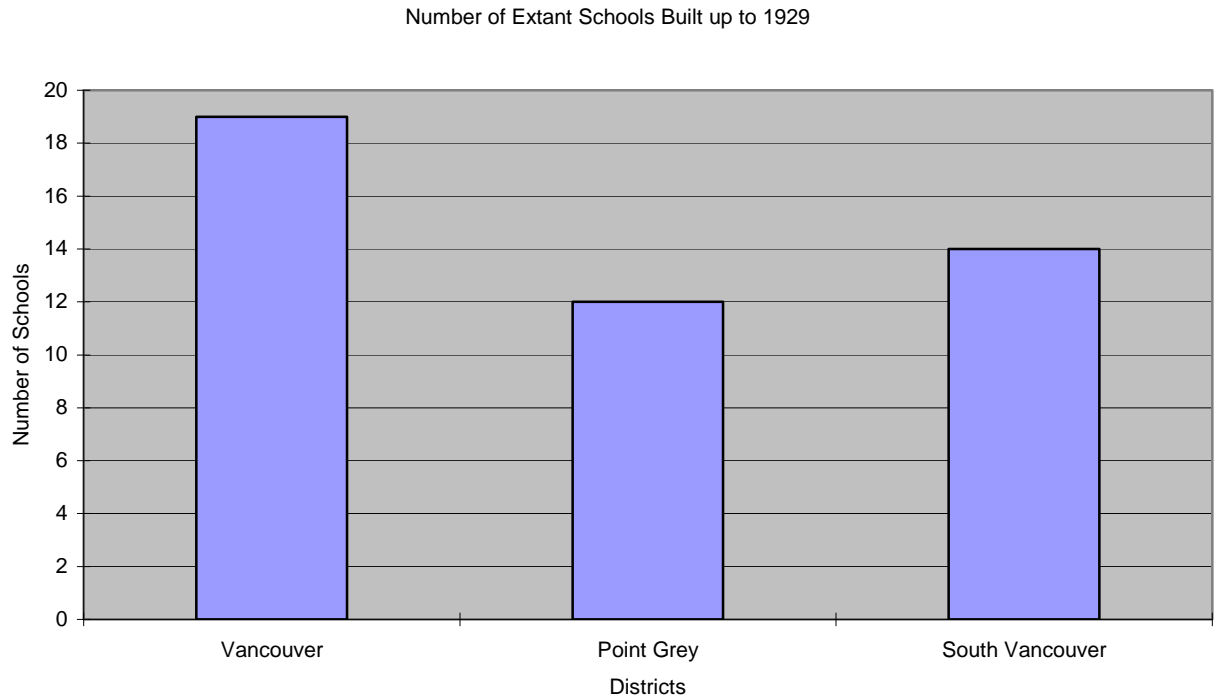
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Number of Extant Schools Built From 1905 to 1915

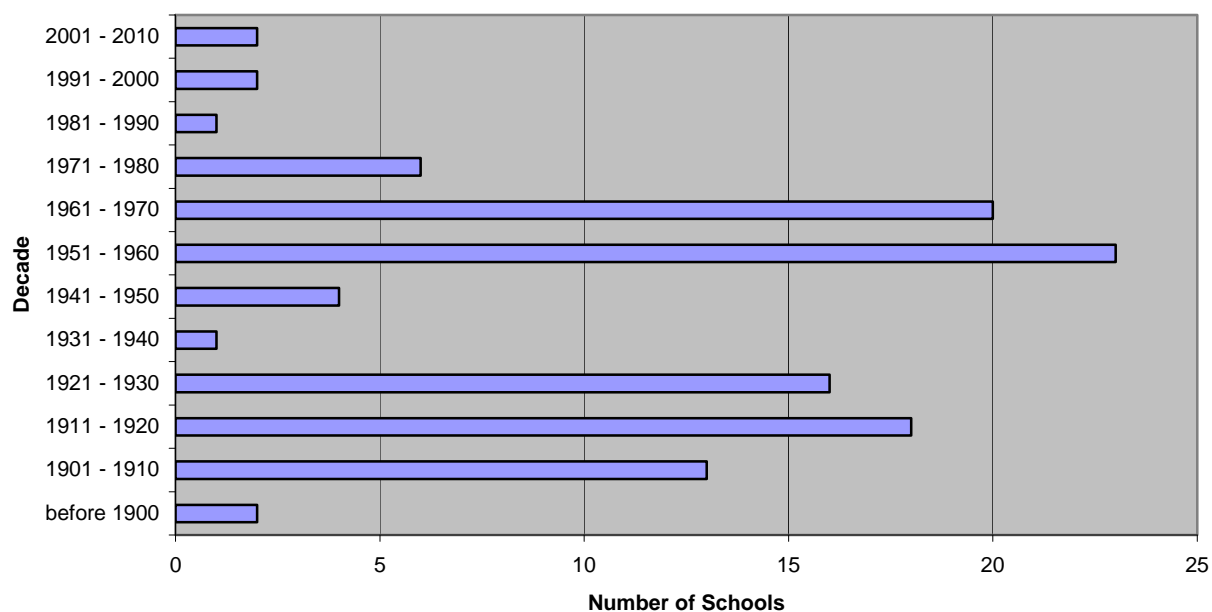


Number of Extant Schools Built 1916 - 1929

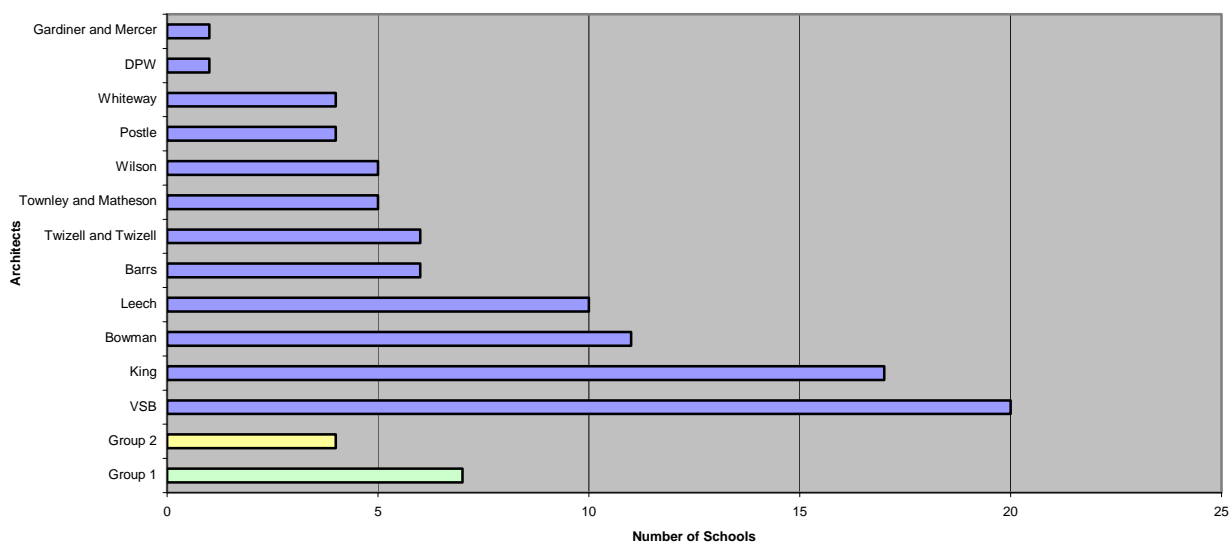




Total Number of Extant Schools Built Each Decade in Vancouver (Including Point Grey and South Vancouver Districts Before 1930)



Number of Schools Each Architects Designed



Group 1 - Architects in Private Practice After 1970: Hughes, Howard, Henriquez and Todd, Davidson, Yuen and Simpson, Erickson and Maeesey, Howard and Yano

Group 2 - Architects in Private Practice Before 1970: Blackmore, Watson, Mitton, and Sowichsia

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- ²¹⁵ Windsor Liscombe, 29-30.
- ²¹⁶ The Homeroom: British Columbia's History of Education website, Timeline:
<http://www.mala.bc.ca/homeroom/content/timeline/1840s/1940.htm>.
- ²¹⁷ VSB, *Annual Report*, 1959-60.
- ²¹⁸ VSB, *Annual Report*, 1958-59.
- ²¹⁹ VSB, *Annual Report*, 1945.
- ²²⁰ VSB, *Annual Report*, 1945 and 1946, 86.
- ²²¹ City of Vancouver Archives (CVA), 'School Facilities – Past Trends and Existing Conditions,' 8 March 1945, 58-B-5, f. 12. 1945.
- ²²² VSB, *Annual Report*, 1951.
- ²²³ VSB, *Annual Report*, 1941 and 1942, 12.
- ²²⁴ VSB, *Annual Report*, 1950.
- ²²⁵ VSB, *Annual Report*, 1950.
- ²²⁶ VSB, *Annual Report*, 1959.
- ²²⁷ Owram, 121.
- ²²⁸ VSB, *Annual Report*, 1964-65.
- ²²⁹ VSB, *Annual Report*, 1969-70.
- ²³⁰ Adele Weber, 'Remedial Economics,' *Canadian Architect*, August 2001.

2. Themes and Criteria

The Thematic Outline and Criteria for grouping and assessing schools resulted from collaboration among the consultant team, the client group, and the Working Group. (See Introduction.) The Themes were developed directly from the Contextual Essay. The Themes and the Criteria clearly overlap and are not fully differentiated.

2.1 Category A: Aesthetic and Functional Values

THEMES

For most of the twentieth century, school-builders wanted clean, safe, and modestly ornamented buildings in a contemporary architectural style that would reflect well on the community and reflect the value that the community placed on public education ... without costing too much.

- **Style and Form:** Vancouver's schools were designed in architectural styles and forms that reflect the architectural values of their day and the fiscal constraints placed on the builders. Early schools tended towards individualism, later ones towards standardization. Some of the common styles are Beaux-Arts Classicism, Early Modern, and Modern; some of the common forms are 'barbell' (early 20th century), rectangular (between the wars), and irregular (later 20th century).
- **Prototypes:** Some schools were innovative in design and became prototypes for later ones. These include the 'pioneer' or 'starter' school and the standardized post-war school.
- **Architects:** Some architects are closely associated with schools in Vancouver and its former suburbs. The VSB retained staff architects. Some names closely associated with schools include VSB architects Norman Leech, F.A.A. Barrs, H.W. Postle, and E.D. King; Bowman in South Vancouver; and Twizell & Twizell, Gardiner & Mercer, and Townley & Matheson in Point Grey.
- **Materials:** School architecture reflects the values of 'school-builders' (elected trustees and professional educators) as well as architects. The choice of materials reflected the importance assigned to creating a strong impression (see 'civic icon,' below), making fireproof buildings (see 'health and safety,' below) and, in recent times, the demand to build economically. Some early schools were built in wood, but most permanent construction was in brick, concrete, and/or steel.
- **Civic Icon:** Some schools are 'civic cathedrals' that were built to impress and reveal the high value that the community placed on public education. They are the most substantial buildings – and sometimes one of few older buildings – in many neighbourhoods. Often placed on prominent sites, schools are local landmarks.
- **Health and Safety:** School interiors were designed to be well-lit and ventilated, and were fitted with progressive plumbing features, all seen as good sanitation and a key defence against disease. The efforts can still be seen in many Vancouver schools, with large windows, transoms over doors, and large ventilators. Fireproof construction is an enduring theme related to safety.

- **School Site and Landscape:** Many school sites were developed in stages, each reflecting a different approach to architecture and a different stage in a neighbourhood's development. They reveal changing approaches to both school architecture and neighbourhood history. Some show this 'collage' particularly well. Some school sites are also noted for the quality of their landscape or individual landscape features.

CRITERIA

A.1 Architectural History: The building and/or the school site is recognized as an excellent, innovative, or early example of a particular architectural style, form, or era, within the scope of the history of Vancouver architecture.

- This is a measure of how useful the school would be in teaching the history of Vancouver architecture.
- An important prototype of a style or a form – i.e. an early or particularly good 'barbell' plan – would be recognized here.
- Includes consideration of the merit or recognition of the architect.
- The integrity of a building, particularly of the exterior (but not of a school site), should be taken into account.

A.2 Architectural Quality: Valued for the excellence of its design, use of materials, details, and/or craftsmanship, both outside and inside.

- This is a measure of 'beauty' – of the quality of design and detail.

A.3 Civic Icon: Recognized as a landmark in the neighbourhood or city-wide.

- Reflects the physical prominence of the school and/or its site within its neighbourhood context, or within the larger city context.
- Reflects the high value that citizens place on public education, and the desire to reflect that value aesthetically.

A.4 Health and Safety: Reflects the creation of a beneficial educational environment.

- Has design features that responded to the need for abundant natural light, good ventilation, or fireproof construction.

A.5 School Site: Illustrates particularly well the 'collage' of having been built in stages; or has landscape features of considerable interest or quality.

- The 'collage' illustrates the evolving approach to the totality of a school and its site.
- This criterion also illustrates the evolution of the relationship between architecture, the site, and the community.
- This criterion applies only to the assessment of an entire school site, and not to an individual building.

2.2 Category B: Educational Values

THEMES

- **Curriculum and Pedagogy:** School buildings and grounds reflect changing ideas about what teachers should teach (curriculum) and how they should teach it (pedagogy). Some schools reflect specific educational experiments, ranging from the introduction of manual training at Strathcona in 1900 to open learning at MacCorkindale in the 1960s. Increased attention was paid to schooling as training in the post-war, post-Sputnik era. All schools embody the educational values of their day.
- **Formalism vs. Progressivism:** Disagreements about pedagogy and curriculum have always been part of education. ‘Formalists’ have focussed on training memory in a disciplined environment. Often called ‘child-centred,’ ‘progressives’ have promoted a broader curriculum, more room for creativity, and less formal discipline. This tension is evident in Vancouver and has informed what schools have taught, how they have taught it, and thus how schools are built or modified.
- **Childhood and School Attendance:** Going to school has not always been a part of childhood. School attendance became mandatory in BC only in the twentieth century. As children moved from being workers to being students, and attended school for longer periods of time, more schools had to be built. The schools reveal changing notions as to a ‘proper’ childhood. Increased enrolment among adolescents changed what secondary schools taught, as they offered a broader range of subjects. This in turn changed schools, for example, as vocational training became part of secondary education, space was added to accommodate it.

CRITERIA

B.1 Curriculum: Reflects changing ideas about *what* to teach students.

- For example, the school contains a room or space that was purpose-built to teach a new subject, such as physical education (a gymnasium), manual training, domestic sciences, or may have a library or auditorium.

B.2 Pedagogy: Reflects changing ideas about *how* to teach students.

- Reflects a particular style of learning, such as formal or progressive methods, and/or new ideas about educational opportunity and access.
- This is therefore a measure of whether the school has features such as open learning area or family groupings; or whether the physical arrangement, size, and type of classrooms / furnishings illustrate a particular moment in educational values.

B.3 Childhood: Reflects changing ideas about childhood – who should be educated and for how long.

- For example, the establishment of a school to serve a certain age group, such as a junior high school, reflects the desire to keep this age group in school longer, as well as ideas about what kind of education this age group needed or wanted.

2.3 Category C: Historical Values

THEMES

- **Part of Neighbourhood and Community History:** Schools are part – and microcosms – of the history and the culture of neighbourhoods. School construction often coincided with the establishment of the neighbourhood and additions reflect the growth of the neighbourhood. Schools and their grounds are also formal and informal meeting places for the community, places of shared experience. School grounds often have climbers, other equipment, and community gardens, which make them important gathering spaces for neighbourhoods.
- **Part of Vancouver History:** Schools are also part of the history of the larger City. The schools that were built before amalgamation of Vancouver and its former suburbs are reminders of one aspect of this history. School building in Vancouver has always been tied to the economic situation, with far more schools built during prosperous times than in recessions. The City grew in size and population during boom periods, especially in 1905-14 and 1945-70 (with the VSB being one of Vancouver's major builders during the 1950s and 1960s). Many schools reflect the way the City and its suburbs grew, whether reflecting the population growth that stemmed from the extension of streetcar service, or the large tracts of land were not developed for housing until after World War II.
- **Part of Canadian History:** Schools can also tell us about Canadian history. Some post-war schools were built in direct response to population growth that resulted from government housing programs for veterans or as a result of the baby boom.

CRITERIA

C.1 Boom Times / Bust Times: Reflects the historical or economic development of the neighbourhood, Vancouver, its former 'suburbs,' or Canada at the time the school was built.

- This criterion looks for good illustrations of each era: e.g., before the 1905 boom, 1905-14, between the wars (bust times, and so very little construction), 1945-70, and since 1970.
- This considers the connection between neighbourhood history and civic history. For example, the first school established in a particular area (eg. Carleton as Collingwood's original school, Queen Mary in West Point Grey, and so on).

C.2 Community Service: Has a long history of community use and engagement.

- Relates to the school's role (inside or outside) as a meeting place for non-school community activities and as a place the community has actively shaped.

C.3 Legacy and Moment: Associated with particular persons, organizations, events, or historical patterns that are important in the history of Vancouver and its schools.

- This identifies civic figures, important teachers or principals, highly valued events over the years, considers graduates/alumni of the school, and more.

2.4 Category D: Social Values

THEMES

- **Boys and Girls, Children and Adults:** School buildings and programs reflect the differences society saw between girls and boys. Early schools had separate boys' and girls' entrances. Schoolyards were also segregated. Boys took classes in manual training and girls learned sewing and cooking. At high school, boys took 'shop' and girls learned to type. The hierarchical structure of earlier schools, in which teachers and principals have authority over children, has been flattened somewhat in recent school buildings with open areas and other such features.
- **Ethnic Diversity:** Different ethnic groups experienced school differently. Until the 1960s, Vancouver was predominately white. Since the 1970s, schools have become much more diverse, and proactive in offering English as a second language and celebrating cultural differences. Changes in the legal status of minorities also contributed to changing attitudes toward education. Some schools are associated with the history of specific cultural groups. For example, Strathcona is closely associated with the Chinese community, General Gordon is important to the Greek community, and Grandview / Uqinak'uuh to First Nations.
- **Citizenship:** Schools have always played a role in training children to fit into society and to play a role as citizens. Schools have been encouraged to be 'clearing-houses of democracy' and to play an important role in cultivating nationalism and Canadianization. This is seen in school names: earlier schools reflect the attachment to Britain, whereas newer names commemorate noteworthy Vancouverites (e.g. Elsie Roy).
- **Opportunity:** Schools have been asked to be 'social levellers.' In Vancouver, this meant most children had similar opportunities at all schools. Children were 'sorted' within schools, rather than between them.
- **The Ties that Bind:** Shared narratives, school experiences, and routines connect people to community, to siblings and parents who attended the school, and to the physical place. They represent a collective attachment to schools that embody meanings that are important to the community. They also bind together students and staff, and people of different backgrounds. Many staff in the Vancouver system had longstanding associations with particular schools; their life's work is associated with one or two schools. People value schools' names and personalities.

CRITERIA

D.1 Gender, Ethnicity, and Special Needs: Reflects changing social values with respect to gender and ethnic differences and towards students with special needs.

- This can be seen in a number of things, such as the separation of girls and boys, reflecting a multi-cultural student body, or accommodating students with disabilities, and is revealed both in the physical characteristics of the school as well as its history.
- Also reflects the school's links to a particular ethnic community. For example, the school may have a history of service or engagement with one or more particular ethnic communities.

D.2 Identity and Memory: Valued particularly highly by the neighbourhood community and by the school's alumni and former staff.

- The school has a significant story to tell about the community; these narratives explore interrelationships and speak across gaps.
- Evokes memories, personal values, or a sense of 'who we are.'
- Some measures of this are the closeness of contact among alumni, the frequency of reunions, the number of school histories that have been written, or the existence of a local historical group.
- May reflect the presence of long-standing school traditions or pride in the attendance of multiple generations of families.

3. Database and Assessment

3.1 Database

As described in the Introduction, a database of 114 school sites was created by the consultants, using Excel. This comprises all 109 current VSB school sites, as well as five former school sites still owned by the VSB but used by the VSB or others for non-VSB-school purposes. The five non-school sites, with their last VSB school name (used on the database) and their current use, are:

- Brock Annex (Total Education Program)
- L'École Anne Hébert (operated by the Conseil scolaire francophone de la CB)
- Shannon Park Annex (Vancouver Hebrew Academy)
- South Hill Elementary (South Hill Education Centre)
- Waverley annex (two alternative high school programs and the District Reception Centre)

The information in the database was collected from numerous sources, primarily:

- An existing VSB Excel database on school sites
- VSB Annual Reports
- VSB 'history binders' (a set of 3-ring binders that compile information on all individual school sites)
- A selection of architectural drawings held by the VSB
- Photographs of schools provided by the VSB
- Block plans of each school site prepared by the VSB for the Seismic Risk Reduction Program (available at <http://www.vsb.bc.ca/schools/Seismic.htm>)
- Histories of schools, including printed histories and summary histories available on the schools' web sites
- Previous reports
- Published material

All the material was read and documented; however much of it has only limited reliability. The project budget did not allow systematic primary research or visits to the school sites. Nevertheless the information that has been collected is dependable and was certainly sufficient for producing reliable assessments. Dates in the database should be considered to be accurate to within one or two years. However, it should be noted that the data are not complete, nor are they perfectly accurate.

The VSB provided block plans for all school sites, which were prepared for the Seismic Risk Reduction Program (December 2004). Each school is divided into blocks that are dated. The blocks refer, however, to units with comparable seismic risk, and not to units that were necessarily constructed in a single building campaign. Some dates are inaccurate. Nevertheless, the block plans were a useful check to help us understand the layout of the school sites.

The top worksheet of the Excel file is the database. A number of columns have been hidden; they contained detailed data are not relevant to the assessment, and which have not been updated since they were entered in April. The additional worksheets (accessed by tabs at the bottom of the screen) provide sources and explanations of some fields:

- Architect list
- Sources
- Type
- Vancouver Heritage Register List
- Styles
- Groups
- Scores
- Materials

‘Type’, ‘Styles’, and ‘Groups’ were used in order to enable the schools to be organized into groups, which was as requirement of the project:

Type

This refers to the type of school, from the point of view of the VSB. The choices are:

- E: Elementary
- A: Annex
- S: Secondary
- C: Community
- O: Other

Style

Previous descriptions of schools have introduced a host of architectural styles, always somewhat confusing and often too vague to receive universal acceptance. The present study has reduced the number of styles, in the interest of simplification. The Style refers to an individual school building.

| Styles | | | |
|----------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| Typical Years | Abbreviation | Styles | Includes |
| 1890s-1950s | EV | Early Vancouver (wood vernacular) | Classic Box, Wood frame |
| 1910s-1920s | AC | Arts and Crafts | Bungalow, Prairie School |
| 1900s-1930s | CR | Classical Revival | All Classical, Georgian, Renaissance, Baroque, and Beaux-Arts variants |
| 1910s-1930s | SG | School Gothic | Gothic Revival, Collegiate Gothic, Tudor Revival |
| 1930s-1940s | MO | Moderne | Art Deco |
| 1945 - 1970 | EM | Early Modern | International Style, West Coast Modern |
| 1970 and later | CO | Contemporary | All recent architectural styles |

Group

The Group refers to the character of both the individual unit (building) and the dominant character of the site. Unlike Style, which is based on architectural vocabulary and the historical source for design inspiration, Group refers to chronology and building material. The dominant unit – the Group, or character, of the entire site – is a judgment call. Sometimes no particular Group dominated, and these sites were described as DNO (no dominant character).

Groups

| Approx Date Range | Abbreviation | | Group Type |
|-------------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| | <i>Dominant Unit</i> | <i>Individual Unit</i> | |
| 1890s ff | DSW | SW | Small wood school |
| 1905-14 | DPW | PW | Pre-WW1 permanent wood school / bldg |
| 1905-14 | DPB | PB | Pre-WW1 permanent brick school / bldg |
| 1915-45 | | IW | Inter-war wood building |
| 1915-45 | DIB | IB | Inter-war brick school / bldg |
| 1915-45 | DIC | IC | Inter-war concrete school / bldg |
| 1946-72 | DPS | PS | Post-WW2 permanent school/ bldg |
| 1946-72 | | PA | Post-WW2 permanent school add'n |
| 1946-72 | DAN | AN | Post-WW2 annex |
| 1970s ff | DRC | RC | Recent commissioned school / bldg |
| | DNO | | No dominant character |

The excerpt from the Excel database reproduced below shows the format of the database, here indicating the data for three schools. In the illustration, the spreadsheet has been divided into two segments in order to be legible. The many hidden columns do not appear. The excerpt shows the data on the first three schools in alphabetical order.

| School | Type | Other school names | VSB Bldg # ¹¹ | Year earliest | Year latest | Function | Current Street Address ¹¹ | Postal Code ¹¹ | Original jurisdiction ⁸ | Neighbourhood ¹² |
|---------------------------|----------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|-------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Bayview Elementary | E | | 38 | | | | 2251 Collingwood St. | V6R3L1 | Vancouver | Kitsilano |
| Bayview Elem. | | West Kitsilano | 38 | 1913 | 1913 | Classrooms | 2251 Collingwood St. | V6R3L1 | | Kitsilano |
| Bayview Elem. | | | 38 | 1929 | 1929 | Gym | 2251 Collingwood St. | V6R3L1 | | Kitsilano |
| Bayview Elem. | | | 38 | 1962 | 1962 | Gym | 2251 Collingwood St. | V6R3L2 | | Kitsilano |
| Beaconsfield Elem. | E | | 24 | | | | 3663 Penticton St. | V5M3C9 | Hastings Townsite | Renfrew-Collingwood |
| Beaconsfield Elem. | | | 24 | 1914 | 1915 | Classrooms | 3663 Penticton St. | V5M3C9 | Vancouver | Renfrew-Collingwood |
| Beaconsfield Elem. | | | 24 | 1949 | 1950 | Classrooms, Lunchroom, Gym | 3663 Penticton St. | V5M3C9 | | Renfrew-Collingwood |
| Begbie Elem. | E | Lord Nelson Annex, Franklin Annex | 11 | | | | 1431 Lillooet St. | V5K4H7 | | Hastings-Sunrise |
| Begbie Elem. | | | 11 | 1930 | 1930 | Classrooms | 1431 Lillooet St. | V5K4H7 | Vancouver | Hastings-Sunrise |
| Begbie Elem. | | | 11 | 1949 | 1949 | Classrooms, Gym | 1430 Lillooet St. | V5K4H6 | | Hastings-Sunrise |

| Date of first school at current location | Architect | Style | Group | Form ¹⁸ | Material: Façade | Material: Trim | Material: Structure | Alterations |
|--|-------------------|-------|-------|----------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------|--|
| | | | DPB | | | | | |
| | Egan, Leech [?] | CR | PB | Barbell | Brick | Stone | | |
| | Postle | CR | IB | irregular | | | | 1929 Completion of southern wing |
| | | MO | PA | rectangular | | | | |
| | | | DPB | | | | | |
| 1915 | Sowichsia | CR | PB | Barbell [unfinished] | Brick | Stone | | Classical ornament removed |
| | Watson and Baxter | EM | PA | irregular | Concrete | | Concrete | |
| 1922 | | | DIC | | | | | Orig bldg moved and became Norquay Annex |
| | Postle | SG | IC | square | Concrete | | Concrete | |
| | Wilson | EM | PA | rectangular | Concrete | | Concrete | |

The Excel database is submitted in electronic form, containing all the data, including the hidden columns. The primary worksheet extends to Column BO (41) and Row 419, and contains 17,179 cells in all. Several additional worksheets provide clarification on the terminology. The extra database is available on the CD-ROM that accompanies this report.

3.2 Assessment

The purpose of the assessment is to determine the relative heritage value of each of the VSB's school sites. The assessment system was developed in workshop sessions by the consultants, the Working Group, and the clients. The system selected combines and simplifies aspects of the evaluation system used by the COV Heritage Group (which in turn was derived from the system described in Harold Kalman, *The Evaluation of Historic Buildings*, 1979), and the method of identifying heritage values used by the Historic Places Initiative and seen in Statements of Significance.

The assessment of schools was done casually and not systematically. We do not consider it to be a formal evaluation, because evaluation requires sound research and, as noted in the Introduction, the primary research has not yet been done. A formal evaluation of the sites would be feasible after SOS-level research has been completed.

The assessment was carried out on a purpose-designed Assessment Form, which is reproduced on the next page. (The Number of the school on the top line was taken from the existing VSB schools database; its meaning is uncertain.)

VANCOUVER SCHOOLS

Establishing Their Heritage Value

City of Vancouver • Vancouver School Board

Assessment Form

School:

No:

A. Aesthetic and Functional Values

A.1 Architectural History

A.2 Architectural Quality

A.3 Civic Icon

A.4 Health and Safety

A.5 School Site

B. Educational Values

B.1 Curriculum

B.2 Pedagogy

B.3 Childhood

C. Historical Values

C.1 Boom Times / Bust Times

C.2 Community Service

C.3 Persons, Events, Patterns

D. Social Values

D.1 Gender, Ethnicity, and Special Needs

D.2 Identity and Memory

The research material was reviewed carefully on a school-by-school basis, using data that had been collected in the research phase as well as using the Excel database. The values were identified, where known, for the various criteria.

Two people participated in the assessment at all times: Meg Stanley, Commonwealth's historian; and Valerie Hamilton, a member of the Working Group who is a retired teacher and a published school historian. Other members of the consultant team, client group, and Working Group participated in the assessment from time to time. The assessment was done in the office, with reference to photographs of the school that had been provided by VSB.

An overall grade was assigned to each of the four categories, depending on the number and significance of values that had been identified. Each category received one of three grades:

- Superior (indicated by +)
- Noteworthy (indicated by ✓)
- Representative or No Information (indicated by -)

Should additional information become available in the future, the grade would be revised accordingly. In the absence of information, the category was treated as being Representative.

The grades were in turn scored. The score was doubled for Category A (Aesthetic and Functional Value), following the recommendation of the Working Group felt (with which the clients and consultants agreed) that the scores should be weighted in this way. The scores assigned were:

| | A. Aesthetic & Functional Values | B. Educational Values | C. Historical Values | D. Social Values |
|----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| Superior | 10 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| Noteworthy | 6 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Representative | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| No Information | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

Each school site therefore received an overall score of between 25 (all Superior) and 5 (all Representative or No Information)

The values expressed at a particular site were identified and summarized on the Assessment Forms. Particularly strong values were highlighted for emphasis. The Assessment Forms contain a kind of shorthand version of the values.

The form for Bayview School, one of the schools that received the highest score, is reproduced on the pages that follow.

VANCOUVER SCHOOLS

Establishing Their Heritage Value

City of Vancouver • Vancouver School Board

Assessment Form

School: **BAYVIEW COMMUNITY**

No: 38

Aesthetic and Functional Values + SUPERIOR

A.1 Architectural History

- Pre-WW1, Norman Leech, VSB architect
- 6th Avenue windows different; can read development of barbell
- Stairwells curved, to ease cleaning
- Not a prototype
- Auditorium by Postle, 1929
- Gym 1962

A.2 Architectural Quality

- Good tiling, esp teachers' washrooms
- Excellent example of a Pre-WW1 brick 'barbell' design

A.3 Civic Icon

- **Neighbourhood landmark: iconic Pre-WW1 school**

A.4 Health and Safety

- **massive ventilation panels (in early unit)**
- Good light

A.5 School Site

- Boulevard attractively planted

B. Educational Values + SUPERIOR**B.1 Curriculum****B.2 Pedagogy**

- Open learning, late 1960s-early 1970s
- 'Thinking box', etc.
 - o These innovations in Barbell building
 - o Currently used for 'HDP'
- Debate how to educate, with community that was involved (see also C2)

B.3 Childhood**C. Historical Values + SUPERIOR****C.1 Boom Times / Bust Times**

- Rapidly-developing neighbourhood
- Bldg has been there for whole life of the community (*as with most schools that developed with the neighbourhood pre-WW1*) ... the 'grandfather' of the community

C.2 Community Service

- Becomes early Community School, 1972-3 (first wave)
- Real engagement with community
- Site 'littered' with parent-initiated things
- Still see community involvement: daycare, preschool, community services
- Auditorium = idea of community, 1920s
 - o Planned pre-war, fulfilled post-war

C.3 Persons, Events, Patterns

- 1960s-70s initiatives in a Hippie-dominated area

D. Social Values + SUPERIOR**D.1 Gender, Ethnicity, and Special Needs**

- Greek community
- Hippie history

D.2 Identity and Memory

- Strong stories to tell: communicated physically, but stories will remain even after physical changes

The individual Assessment Forms for all school sites are submitted separately from this report.

The table on the pages that follow lists all the school sites in order of total score from 25 to 5. It also shows the score received for each category. A selection of other database fields is included as well.

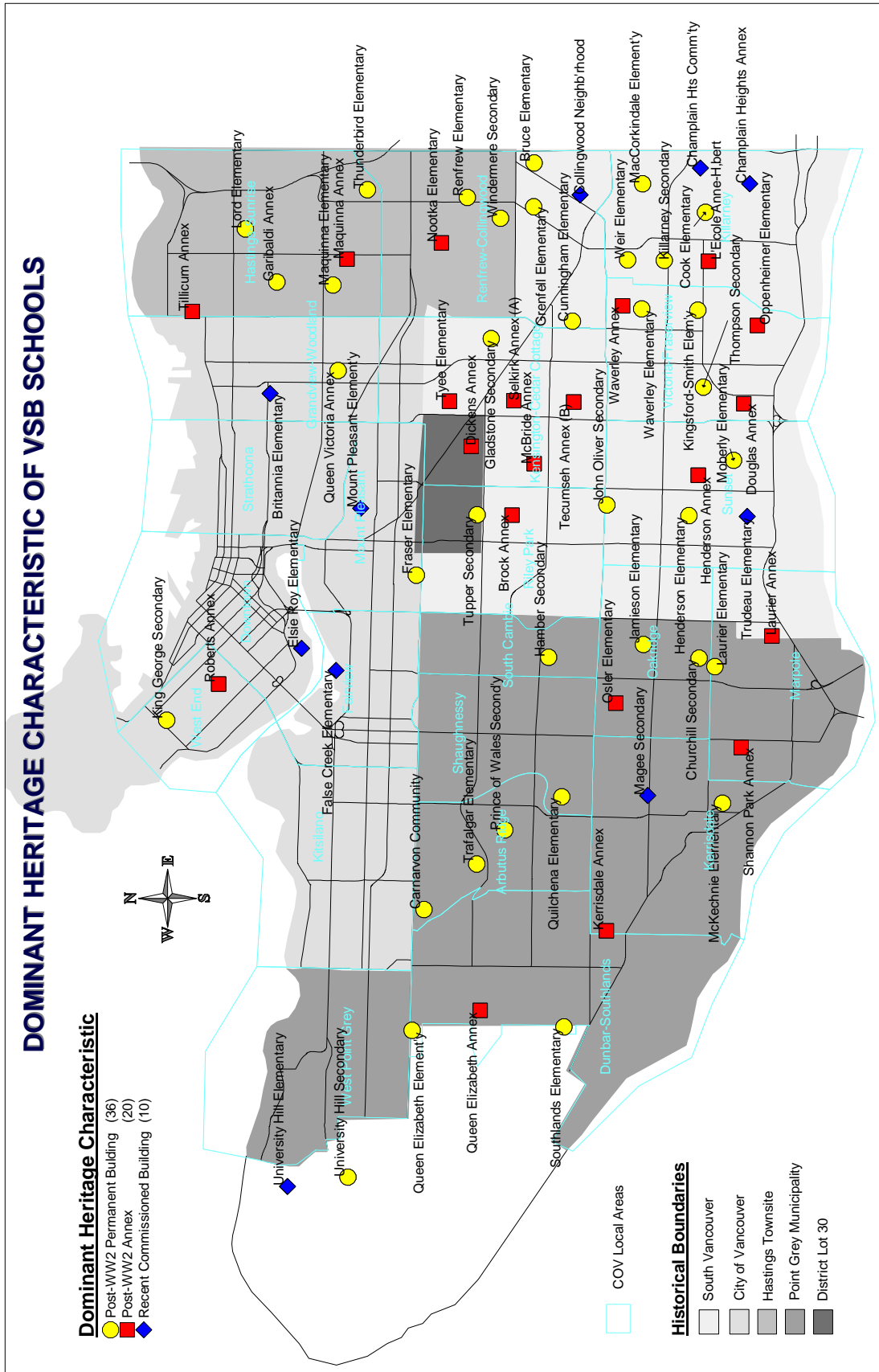
It is important to recognize that the assessment has addressed the school *sites* and *not* the individual school *buildings*. The relative values of individual buildings are often indicated on the Assessment Forms, but they are not formally assessed. The consultant, the client, and the Working Group together recognized that it is difficult – perhaps impossible – to determine whether the values, other than architectural (‘aesthetic and functional’) values, are attributable to sites or to individual structures, and so scoring would be challenging.

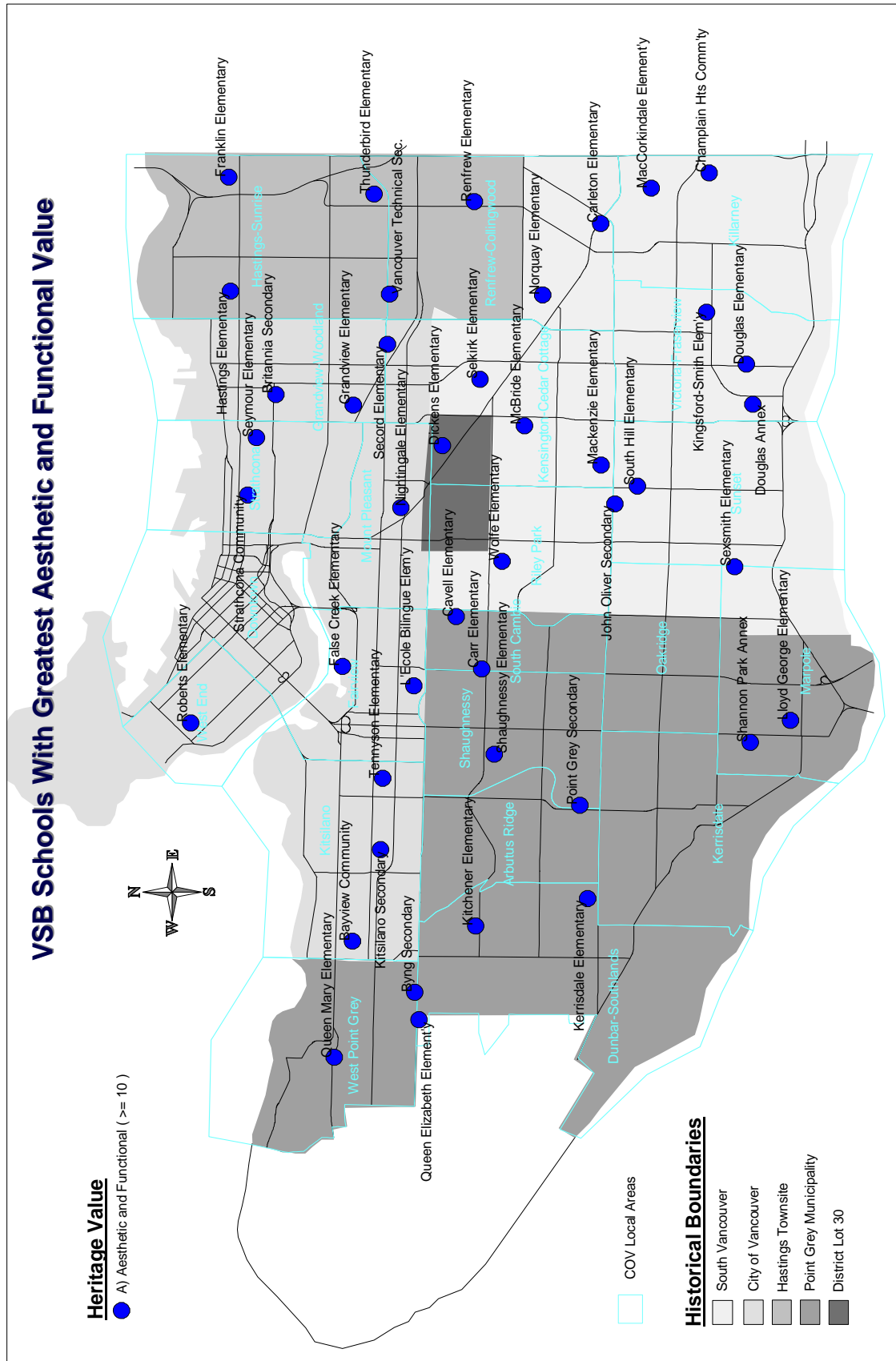
The value of individual buildings within a school site will be addressed when Statements of Significance are written, which will occur as school sites enter the application process for seismic mitigation. Thus no interventions will be made to school sites until the values of individual school buildings have been determined.

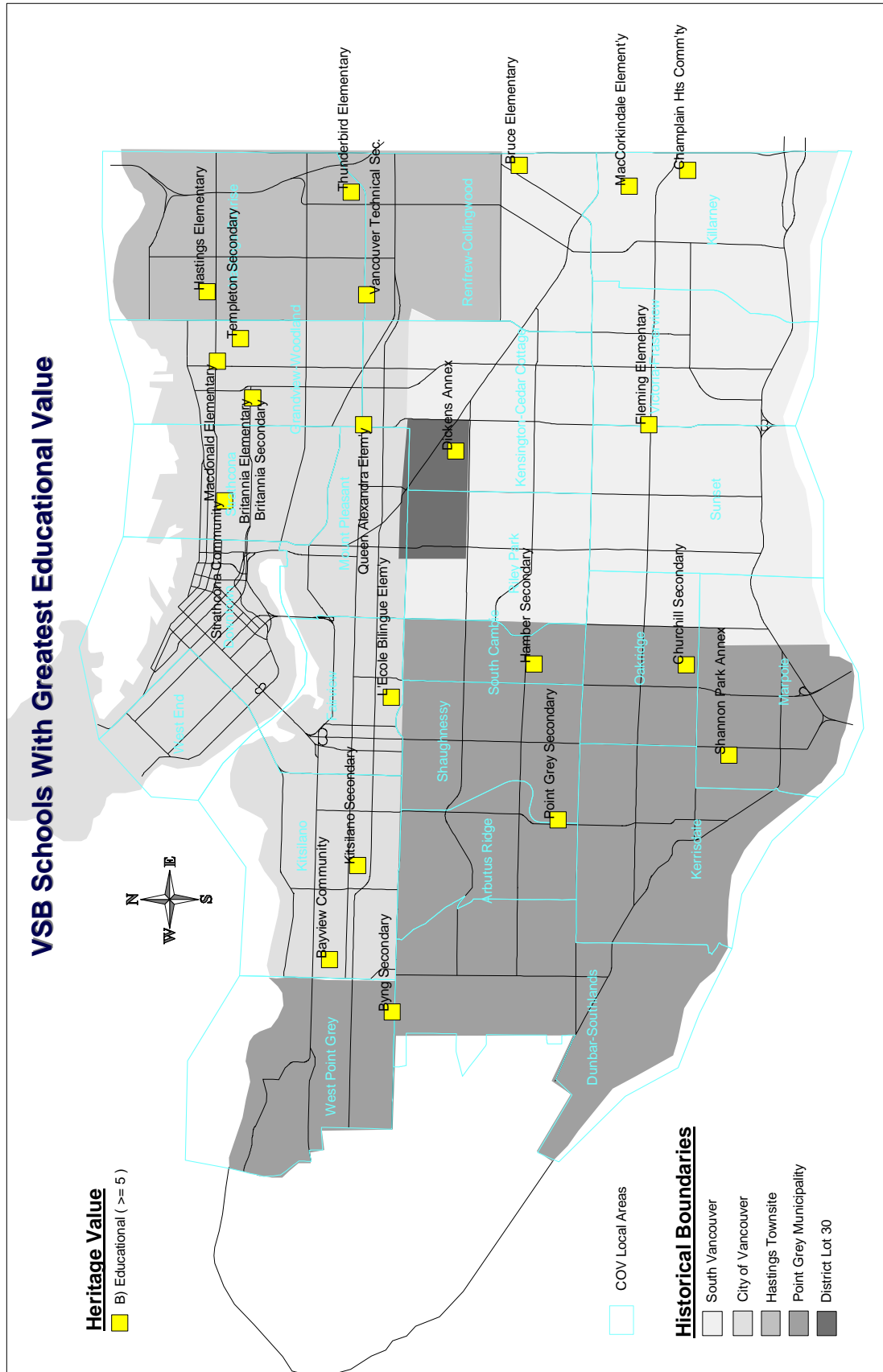
| School | Original jurisdiction ⁸ | Neighbourhood ¹² | Group | A | B | C | D | Total |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------|----|---|---|---|-------|
| Bayview Community | Vancouver | Kitsilano | DPB | 10 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 25 |
| Britannia Secondary | Vancouver | Grandview-Woodland | DPB | 10 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 25 |
| Kitsilano Secondary | Vancouver | Kitsilano | DIC | 10 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 25 |
| Strathcona Community | Vancouver | Strathcona | DPB | 10 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 25 |
| Vancouver Technical Sec. | Vancouver | Renfrew-Collingwood | DIC | 10 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 25 |
| Carleton Elementary | South Vancouver | Renfrew-Collingwood | DNO | 10 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 23 |
| Dickens Elementary | Vancouver | Kensington-Cedar Cottage | DPB | 10 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 23 |
| Hastings Elementary | Vancouver | Hastings-Sunrise | DPB | 10 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 23 |
| John Oliver Secondary | South Vancouver | Sunset | DPS | 10 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 23 |
| L'Ecole Bilingue Elem'y | Vancouver | Fairview | DPB | 10 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 23 |
| Byng Secondary | Point Grey | West Point Grey | DIB | 10 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 21 |
| Champlain Hts Comm'ty | Vancouver | Killamey | DRC | 10 | 5 | 5 | 1 | 21 |
| Douglas Elementary | South Vancouver | Victoria-Fraserview | DPB | 10 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 21 |
| Grandview Elementary | Vancouver | Grandview-Woodland | DIC | 10 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 21 |
| Macdonald Elementary | Vancouver | Grandview-Woodland | DIB | 6 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 21 |
| Point Grey Secondary | Point Grey | Shaughnessy | DIC | 10 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 21 |
| Selkirk Elementary | South Vancouver | Kensington-Cedar Cottage | DNO | 10 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 21 |
| Sexsmith Elementary | South Vancouver | Marpole | DPB | 10 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 21 |
| Thunderbird Elementary | Vancouver | Hastings-Sunrise | DPS | 10 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 21 |
| Britannia Elementary | Vancouver | Grandview-Woodland | DRC | 6 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 19 |
| Kingsford-Smith Elem'y | Vancouver | Victoria-Fraserview | DPS | 10 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 19 |
| Lloyd George Elementary | South Vancouver | Marpole | DIB | 10 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 19 |
| McBride Elementary | South Vancouver | Kensington-Cedar Cottage | DPB | 10 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 19 |
| Secord Elementary | Vancouver | Kensington-Cedar Cottage | DPB | 10 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 19 |
| Shannon Park Annex | Vancouver | Marpole | DAN | 10 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 19 |
| South Hill Elementary | South Vancouver | Sunset | DPW | 10 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 19 |
| Templeton Secondary | Vancouver | Grandview-Woodland | DIC | 6 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 19 |
| Tennyson Elementary | Vancouver | Kitsilano | DPB | 10 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 19 |
| Carr Elementary | DL 472 / Point Grey | South Cambie | DPW | 10 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 17 |
| Cavell Elementary | Point Grey | South Cambie | DIB | 10 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 17 |
| Churchill Secondary | Vancouver | Oakridge | DPS | 6 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 17 |
| Gladstone Secondary | Vancouver | Kensington-Cedar Cottage | DPS | 6 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 17 |
| Kitchener Elementary | Point Grey | Dunbar-Southlands | DIB | 10 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 17 |
| MacCorkindale Element'y | Vancouver | Killamey | DPS | 10 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 17 |
| Mackenzie Elementary | South Vancouver | Kensington-Cedar Cottage | DIC | 10 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 17 |
| Moberly Elementary | South Vancouver | Sunset | DPS | 6 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 17 |
| Nightingale Elementary | Vancouver | Mount Pleasant | DPB | 10 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 17 |
| Queen Alexandra Elem'y | Vancouver | Kensington-Cedar Cottage | DPB | 6 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 17 |
| Queen Mary Elementary | Point Grey | West Point Grey | DNO | 10 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 17 |
| Renfrew Elementary | Vancouver | Renfrew-Collingwood | DPS | 10 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 17 |
| Seymour Elementary | Vancouver | Strathcona | DNO | 10 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 17 |
| Shaughnessy Elementary | Point Grey | Shaughnessy | DPB | 10 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 17 |
| Tecumseh Elementary | South Vancouver | Victoria-Fraserview | DPB | 6 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 17 |
| Wolfe Elementary | South Vancouver | Riley Park | DPB | 10 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 17 |
| Beaconsfield Elementary | Hastings Townsite | Renfrew-Collingwood | DPB | 6 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 15 |
| Bruce Elementary | Vancouver | Renfrew-Collingwood | DPS | 6 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 15 |
| Douglas Annex | Vancouver | Victoria-Fraserview | DAN | 10 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 15 |
| False Creek Elementary | Vancouver | Fairview | DRC | 10 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 15 |
| Franklin Elementary | Hastings Townsite | Hastings-Sunrise | DIC | 10 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 15 |
| Hamber Secondary | Vancouver | South Cambie | DPS | 6 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 15 |
| Hudson Elementary | Vancouver | Kitsilano | DPB | 6 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 15 |
| Kerrisdale Elementary | Point Grey | Dunbar-Southlands | DIB | 10 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 15 |
| Livingstone Elementary | Vancouver | Riley Park | DPB | 6 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 15 |
| Maple Grove Elementary | Point Grey | Kerrisdale | DIC | 6 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 15 |
| Mount Pleasant Element'y | Vancouver | Mount Pleasant | DRC | 6 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 15 |
| Norquay Elementary | South Vancouver | Renfrew-Collingwood | DPB | 10 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 15 |
| Queen Elizabeth Element'y | Vancouver | Dunbar-Southlands | DPS | 10 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 15 |

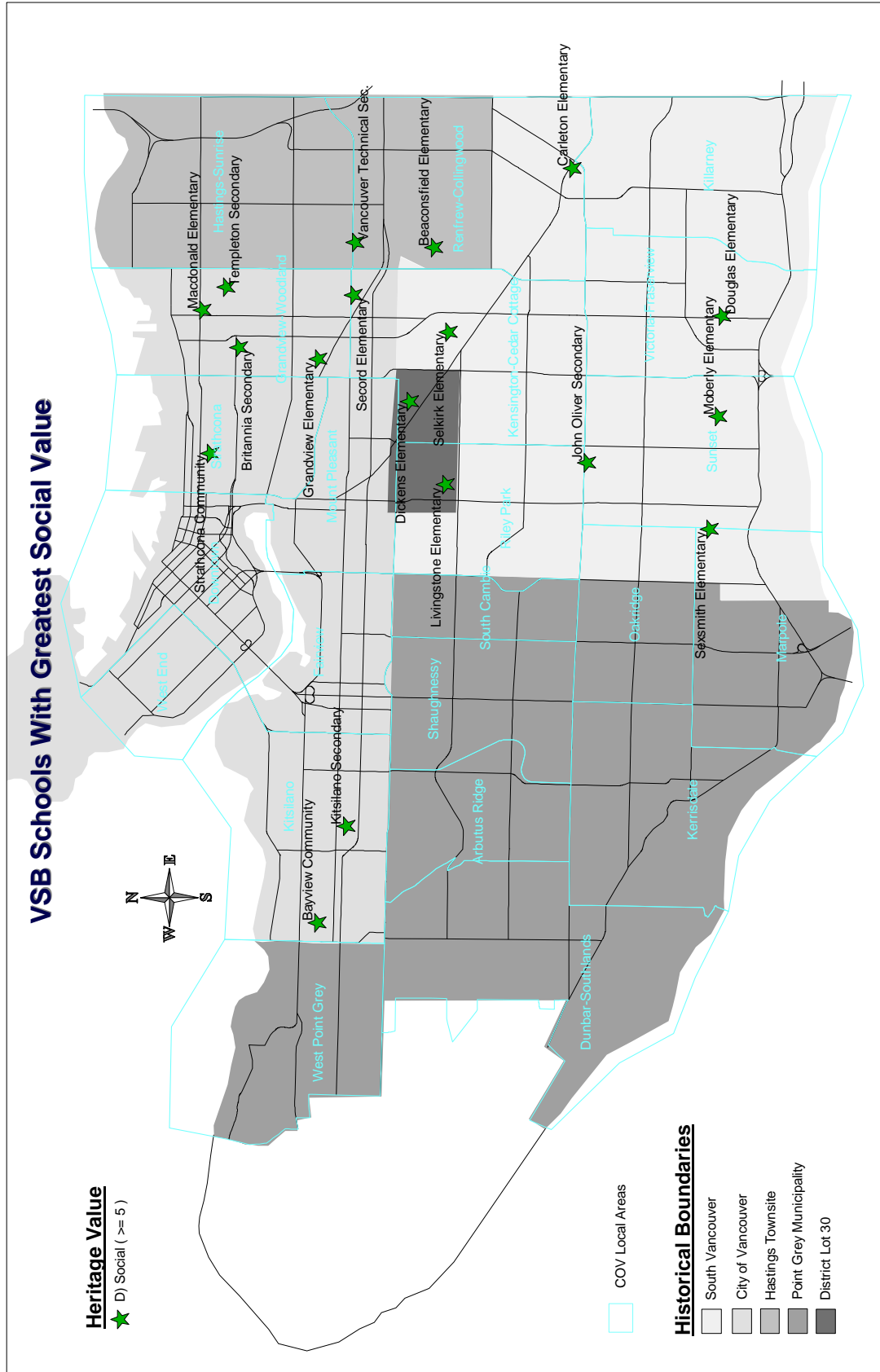
| School | Original jurisdiction ^a | Neighbourhood ¹² | Group | A | B | C | D | Total |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------|----|---|---|---|-------|
| Roberts Elementary | Vancouver | West End | DPB | 10 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 15 |
| University Hill Secondary | University Endowment Lands | Univ. Endowment Lands | DPS | 6 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 15 |
| Fleming Elementary | South Vancouver | Victoria-Fraserview | DPB | 6 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 13 |
| Gordon Elementary | Vancouver | Kitsilano | DPB | 6 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 13 |
| Grenfell Elementary | Hastings Townsite | Renfrew-Collingwood | DPS | 6 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 13 |
| Killarney Secondary | Vancouver | Killamey | DPS | 6 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 13 |
| King George Secondary | Vancouver | West End | DPS | 6 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 13 |
| Nelson Elementary | Vancouver | Grandview-Woodland | DPB | 6 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 13 |
| Southlands Elementary | Vancouver | Dunbar-Southlands | DPS | 6 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 13 |
| Thompson Secondary | Vancouver | Victoria-Fraserview | DPS | 6 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 13 |
| Tupper Secondary | Vancouver | Riley Park | DPS | 6 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 13 |
| University Hill Elementary | University Endowment Lands | Univ. Endowment Lands | DRC | 6 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 13 |
| Begbie Elementary | Vancouver | Hastings-Sunrise | DIC | 6 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 11 |
| Brock Elementary | South Vancouver | Riley Park | DPW | 6 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 11 |
| Carnarvon Community | Vancouver | Arbutus-Ridge | DPS | 6 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 11 |
| Collingwood Neighbourhood | Vancouver | Renfrew-Collingwood | DRC | 6 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 11 |
| Elsie Roy Elementary | Vancouver | Downtown | DRC | 6 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 11 |
| Jamieson Elementary | Vancouver | Oakridge | DPS | 6 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 11 |
| Laurier Annex | Vancouver | Marpole | DAN | 6 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 11 |
| Prince of Wales Second'y | Point Grey | Arbutus-Ridge | DPS | 6 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 11 |
| Quesnel Elementary | Point Grey | West Point Grey | DIC | 6 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 11 |
| Quilchena Elementary | Point Grey | Shaughnessy | DPS | 6 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 11 |
| Van Horne Elementary | South Vancouver | Oakridge | DPB | 6 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 11 |
| Champlain Heights Annex | Vancouver | Killamey | DRC | 6 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 |
| Cook Elementary | Vancouver | Killamey | DPS | 2 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 9 |
| Dickens Annex | Vancouver | Kensington-Cedar Cottage | DAN | 2 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 9 |
| Kerrisdale Annex | Vancouver | Kerrisdale | DAN | 6 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 |
| Laurier Elementary | Vancouver | Marpole | DPS | 6 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 |
| Magee Secondary | Point Grey | Kerrisdale | DRC | 2 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 9 |
| Maquinna Annex | Vancouver | Hastings-Sunrise | DAN | 6 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 |
| Maquinna Elementary | Vancouver | Hastings-Sunrise | DPS | 6 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 |
| Oppenheimer Elementary | Vancouver | Victoria-Fraserview | DAN | 2 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 9 |
| Osler Elementary | Vancouver | Oakridge | DAN | 6 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 |
| Roberts Annex | Vancouver | West End | DAN | 6 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 |
| Trafalgar Elementary | Vancouver | Arbutus-Ridge | DPS | 6 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 |
| Tyee Elementary | Vancouver | Kensington-Cedar Cottage | DAN | 2 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 9 |
| Waverley Annex | Vancouver | Victoria-Fraserview | DAN | 6 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 |
| Windermere Secondary | Vancouver | Renfrew-Collingwood | DPS | 6 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 9 |
| Brock Annex | Vancouver | Riley Park | DAN | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 7 |
| Cunningham Elementary | Vancouver | Renfrew-Collingwood | DPS | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 7 |
| Fraser Elementary | Vancouver | Mount Pleasant | DPS | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 7 |
| Henderson Annex | Vancouver | Sunset | DAN | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 7 |
| Henderson Elementary | Vancouver | Sunset | DPS | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 7 |
| L'Ecole Anne-Hébert | Vancouver | Killamey | DAN | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 7 |
| Nootka Elementary | Vancouver | Renfrew-Collingwood | DAN | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 7 |
| Waverley Elementary | Vancouver | Victoria-Fraserview | DPS | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 7 |
| Weir Elementary | Vancouver | Killamey | DPS | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 7 |
| Garibaldi Annex | Vancouver | Hastings-Sunrise | DPS | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| Lord Elementary | Vancouver | Hastings-Sunrise | DPS | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| McBride Annex | Vancouver | Kensington-Cedar Cottage | DAN | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| McKechnie Elementary | Vancouver | Kerrisdale | DPS | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| Queen Elizabeth Annex | Vancouver | Dunbar-Southlands | DAN | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| Queen Victoria Annex | Vancouver | Grandview-Woodland | DPS | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| Selkirk Annex (A) | Vancouver | Kensington-Cedar Cottage | DAN | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| Tecumseh Annex (B) | Vancouver | Kensington-Cedar Cottage | DAN | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| Tillicum Annex | Vancouver | Hastings-Sunrise | DAN | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| Trudeau Elementary | Vancouver | Sunset | DRC | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 |

[illegible]









3.3 Statements of Significance

As part of an agreement with the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts, the City of Vancouver undertook to prepare Statements of Significance (SOSs) for 17 school sites. The SOS is a compilation of data on a historic place. Its central component consists of three sections: a statement of historic place, which explains to what the formal recognition applies; a statement of heritage value, which explains why the place is important or significant; and a list of character-defining elements, which explains which principal features of the place must be retained in order to preserve its heritage value. The SOS provides guidance to property owners, planners, architects, and others involved in the conservation or rehabilitation of historic places.

Commonwealth prepared ten new SOSs for this project, and revised two additional SOSs that had previously been prepared for the VSB. All address schools that are on the seismic high-risk list. The twelve schools are:

- Bayview Community
- Dickens Elementary
- Gordon Elementary
- Kitchener Elementary
- Maple Grove Elementary
- Queen Mary Elementary
- Secord Elementary
- Sexsmith Community
- Strathcona Community
- Templeton Secondary
- Tennyson Elementary
- Wolfe Elementary

The SOSs are submitted separately from this printed report, but are included in the CD-ROM that accompanies the report. One SOS, for Lord Strathcona Community School, has been included in Appendix B as a sample.

SOSs will be required in the future for schools that enter the application process as part of the seismic mitigation work. At that point additional research will be done and there will be an opportunity to look at the constituent school structures on multi-building sites.

4. Identification of Significant Schools

As noted in the Introduction, a key objective of the study is to identify schools with sufficient heritage significance that they may be added to the Vancouver Heritage Register, and which in turn merit particular consideration in the seismic mitigation process. This section develops principles and strategies to form that list, and proposes the list of significant schools.

4.1 *Current Heritage Register Listings*

At present, 38 schools are listed on the Register. They are, in alphabetical order:

- Bayview Community
- Britannia Secondary
- Brock Elementary
- Byng Secondary
- Carleton Elementary
- Carr Elementary
- Cavell Elementary
- L'École Bilingue
- Franklin Elementary
- Gordon Elementary
- Hastings Elementary
- John Oliver Secondary
- Kerrisdale Elementary
- Kitchener Elementary
- Kitsilano Secondary
- Lloyd George Elementary
- Mackenzie Elementary
- Maple Grove Elementary
- McBride Elementary
- Nightingale Elementary
- Norquay Elementary
- Point Grey Secondary
- Queen Alexandra Elementary
- Queen Elizabeth Elementary
- Queen Mary Elementary
- Roberts Elementary
- Secord Elementary
- Selkirk Elementary
- Seymour Elementary
- Shaughnessy Elementary
- Strathcona Community
- Tecumseh Elementary
- Templeton Secondary

- Tennyson Elementary
- Trafalgar Elementary
- Van Horne Elementary
- Vancouver Technical Secondary
- Wolfe Elementary

4.2 Strategies for Identifying Significant Schools

Identifying the significant schools formed the central discussion at the third meeting with the Working Group, held on 15 June 2006. The participants were asked to comment on the assessment process and then to provide a strategy for nominating additional schools to the Heritage Register. These same schools will be identified as being significant in the seismic mitigation process and an effort will be made to retain them.¹

This section provides a series of Principles and Strategies for identifying significant schools.

Principles

The principles to be used to determine significant schools follow the consensus at the Working Group meeting: namely, that the list should include representative examples of many types of schools. The primary principle is that it is important to retain representative examples of each type of school, preferably by geographical area, style, group, and theme (aesthetic/functional, educational, cultural, and social). Therefore the list of significant schools should include:

1. Schools with strengths in all four heritage themes
2. Representation of:
 - a. Types
 - i. Style
 - ii. Group
 - iii. Historical jurisdiction
 - b. Context
 - i. 22 Neighbourhoods
 - ii. Civic icons

The process of extracting the significant schools was described as applying ‘filters’. It was generally agreed to adopt a ‘bottom-up’ approach, whereby those schools towards the bottom of the list (i.e., with lower scores) can be overlooked for the purposes of this study, particularly if their type is represented elsewhere. As a corollary of this, a

¹ The members of the Working Group were reminded that not all high-ranking schools will be retained, but rather that heritage value is one of several independent considerations to be reviewed when making decisions as to retention vs. replacement. (See the chart in the Introduction.)

‘threshold’ should be declared, above which value the school should be placed on the list of significant resources.

It was agreed that some values that relate to a particular school site could be carried over to a new school building on the site.

Strategies

We adopted the following strategy to arrive at the list of significant schools:

1. All schools with a threshold score of 15 (or more) should be placed on the ‘raw list.’

The raw list is based on a school’s strength with respect to the four themes: Aesthetic & Functional, Educational, Historical, and Social. This follows Principle 1. It should be noted that a low score may have resulted for one of two reasons: because the school is no better than ‘Representative’ for several themes, or because of a lack of historical information. The scope of the present project did not enable a significant effort at primary research, other than for the schools for which SOSs were written. Therefore schools lacking extensive data generally received low scores. In the months and years ahead, SOSs will be required for all schools for which the development application process for seismic mitigation takes place. Additional research will be done at that time, enabling a better understanding of those schools.

Considering only the score does not recognize geographical, stylistic, sub-thematic, or typological filters (i.e., Principle 2). Consequently a second strategy:

2. Apply filters to determine which types of schools are *not* represented on the raw list, and add an appropriate number of these schools, to produce the ‘revised list’.

The filters should be address styles, groups, some sub-themes (e.g. Civic Icon), and geography (original jurisdiction and neighbourhood). The revised list should include the ‘best three’ of each type of school, where practicable.

.

Raw List

Some 59 schools scored 15 or higher on the evaluation. They comprise the ‘raw list’ and are listed here. Those that are not currently on the Vancouver Heritage Register are indicated with an asterisk.

- Bayview Community (25)
- Beaconsfield Elementary (15)*
- Britannia Elementary (19)*
- Britannia Secondary (25)
- Bruce Elementary (15)*
- Byng Secondary (21)
- Carleton Elementary (23)
- Carr Elementary (17)

- Cavell Elementary (17)
- Champlain Heights Community (21)*
- Churchill Secondary (17)*
- Dickens Elementary (23)*
- Douglas Annex (15)*
- Douglas Elementary (21)*
- False Creek Elementary (15)*
- Franklin Elementary (15)
- Gladstone Secondary (17)*
- Grandview Elementary (21)*
- Hamber Secondary (15)*
- Hastings Elementary (23)
- Hudson Elementary (15)*
- John Oliver Secondary (23)
- Kerrisdale Elementary (15)
- Kingsford-Smith Elementary (19)*
- Kitchener Elementary (17)
- Kitsilano Secondary (25)
- L'École Bilingue Elementary (23)
- Livingstone Elementary (15)*
- Lloyd George Elementary (19)
- MacCorkindale Elementary (17)*
- Macdonald Elementary (21)*
- Mackenzie Elementary (17)
- Maple Grove Elementary (15)
- McBride Elementary (19)
- Moberly Elementary (17)*
- Mount Pleasant Elementary (15)*
- Nightingale Elementary (17)
- Norquay Elementary (15)
- Point Grey Secondary (21)
- Queen Alexandra Elementary (17)
- Queen Elizabeth Elementary (15)
- Queen Mary Elementary (17)
- Renfrew Elementary (17)*
- Roberts Elementary (15)
- Secord Elementary (19)
- Selkirk Elementary (21)
- Sexsmith Elementary (21)*
- Seymour Elementary (17)
- Shannon Park Annex (19)*
- Shaughnessy Elementary (17)
- South Hill Elementary (19)*
- Strathcona Community (25)
- Tecumseh Elementary (17)
- Templeton Secondary (19)

- Tennyson Elementary (19)
- Thunderbird Elementary (21)*
- University Hill Secondary (15)*
- Vancouver Technical Secondary (25)
- Wolfe Elementary (17)

The filters can now be applied to produce the revised list:

Style

The database identifies seven styles:

- Early Vancouver (wood vernacular)
- Arts and Crafts
- Classical Revival
- School Gothic
- Moderne
- Early Modern
- Contemporary

Following are illustrations of examples of each style.

Early Vancouver (EV)



Carleton Elementary #1, 1896



Brock Elementary, W.T. Whiteway, 1908

Arts and Crafts (AC)



Fleming Elementary, 1914



Brock Elementary, 1923

Classical Revival (CR)



Douglas Elementary, J.H. Bowman, 1912



Nightingale Elementary, N.A. Leech, 1912

School Gothic (SG)



Point Grey Secondary, Townley & Matheson, 1928



Queen Mary Elementary, Twizell & Twizell, 1914

Moderne (MO)

Mackenzie Elementary,
Townley & Matheson, 1930

Franklin Elementary, F.A.A. Barrs, 1926

Early Modern (EM)



John Oliver Secondary,
Mercer & Mercer, 1949



Douglas Elementary, Davies & McNab, 1950

Contemporary (CO)



Champlain Heights Community,
Erickson / Massey, 1972



Britannia Elementary, Downs / Archambault,
1972

Styles apply to individual school buildings, of which there are more than 300 in the VSB system. The style of each building is identified in the Excel database that accompanies this report. The values and the scores in the assessment, on the other hand, have been assigned to entire school sites, which in some cases comprise five or more buildings. Since individual school buildings have not been assessed, the ‘best three’ buildings in any style cannot be identified from the database.

As an alternative, the consultants have reviewed the final list of significant schools (see below), and have determined that the school sites on the list appear to contain at least three examples of each style (regardless of style merit, which was not assessed).

Group

The Group refers to the dominant character of the site – i.e. the type or style that dominates. The database identifies eight groups organized by the dominant unit.² The following are the ‘best three’ (i.e. highest scores) for each group, with the score indicated:

DSW Small wood school

- none

DPW Pre-WW1 permanent wood school / building

- South Hill Elementary (19)
- Carr Elementary (17)
- Brock Elementary (11; on the Vancouver Heritage Register)

DPB Pre-WW1 permanent brick school / building

- Bayview Community (25)
- Britannia Secondary (25)
- Strathcona Community (25)

DIB Inter-war brick school / building

- Bing Secondary (21)
- Lloyd George Elementary (21)
- Macdonald Elementary (21)

DIC Inter-war concrete school / building

- Kitsilano Secondary (25)
- Vancouver Technical Secondary (25)
- Grandview Elementary (tied with 21)
- Point Grey Secondary (tied with 21)

DPS Post-WW2 permanent school / building

- John Oliver Secondary (23)
- Kingsford-Smith Elementary (19)
- Churchill Secondary (17)
- Gladstone Secondary (17)
- MacCorkindale Elementary (17)
- Moberly Elementary (17)
- Renfrew Elementary (17)

² It would be desirable to illustrate each category of group with a photograph, but there is no body of photographs showing the entire complex of each school site.

DAN Post-WW2 annex

- Thunderbird Elementary (21)
- Shannon Park Annex (19)
- Douglas Annex (15)

DRC Recent commissioned school / building

- Champlain Heights Community School (21)
- Britannia Elementary (19)
- False Creek Elementary (15)
- Mount Pleasant Elementary (15)

Applying this filter, no additional schools are added to the list.

Sub-Theme

Strategy 2, above, determines that only Civic Icon will be addressed as a Sub-Theme to be filtered. Civic Icon is already considered as a component of Theme A (Aesthetic and Functional Values), which in turn has been weighted to have twice the score of the other three themes. Further weighting Civic Icon would favour one theme disproportionately. Therefore no action has been taken.

Geography: Original Jurisdiction (pre-1930 School Sites)**Vancouver**

- Bayview Community (25)
- Britannia Secondary (25)
- Kitsilano Secondary (25)
- Strathcona Community (25)
- Vancouver Technical Secondary (25)

South Vancouver

- Carleton Elementary (23)
- John Oliver Secondary (23)
- Selkirk Elementary (23)

Point Grey

- Byng Secondary (21)
- Point Grey Secondary (21)
- Four tied with 17

Hastings Townsite

- Beaconsfield Elementary (15)
- Franklin Elementary (15)
- Grenfell Elementary (13)*

D.L. 472

- Carr Elementary (17)

University Endowment Lands: not within the City of Vancouver and hence not considered in this study.

Applying this filter, only one school is added to the list: Grenfell Elementary.

Geography: Neighbourhood

All significant schools that have been identified were highlighted on a map of VSB schools. We observed that in general a good balance has been achieved among neighbourhoods and among secondary school catchment areas, and so it is unnecessary to add more schools to adjust the distribution.

The only neighbourhood that is thinly represented is Downtown Vancouver. This is because most old downtown schools were demolished in past decades as changing demographics reduced the school population. We suggest that Vancouver Community College, which has been recognized as a recent landmark, be considered as a downtown school, because even though it is no longer owned by VSB, it forms an important part of Vancouver's educational history.

Substitution Strategies

We recommend that VSB and the City of Vancouver apply several 'substitution strategies' to compensate for schools that may be replaced as a part of the seismic mitigation program:

- If the VSB has already determined that a school on the 'best three' list will be replaced, and this determination has received community acceptance, then the next-highest-scoring school within that group (and preferably from the same historical jurisdiction) will be added to the list of significant schools in its place.
- If subsequent deliberations within the VSB determine that a school on the 'best three' list will be replaced, then the same process will be used to find a replacement for the list of significant schools. However, the VSB is expected to make every reasonable effort to retain schools on the list of significant schools.
- If an individual school building within a school site that is on the list of significant schools should be proposed for replacement, then the value of that building will be considered on an individual basis by the Heritage Group and the community, to determine whether its replacement would be acceptable.

- This report cannot anticipate these situations; moreover, the assessment considered school sites and not individual school buildings.

When an appropriate substitution is being sought, consideration should be given to the five VSB-owned school buildings and sites that are not currently being used as schools. They are included on the database.

4.3 List of Significant Schools

Proposed Additions to the Vancouver Heritage Register

Following the strategies identified in the previous section, we propose that the following 26 schools be added to the Vancouver Heritage Register. Grenfell Elementary is proposed for being the third best from Hastings Townsite, while the others are proposed for having scores of 15 or higher. We recognize that the VSB has already made decisions to replace some of these schools, and so the substitution strategies above will have to be implemented.

- Beaconsfield Elementary (15)
- Britannia Elementary (19)
- Bruce Elementary (15)
- Champlain Heights Community (21)
- Churchill Secondary (17)
- Dickens Elementary (23)
- Douglas Annex (15)
- Douglas Elementary (21)
- False Creek Elementary (15)
- Gladstone Secondary (17)
- Grandview Elementary (21)
- Grenfell Elementary (13)
- Hamber Secondary (15)
- Hudson Elementary (15)
- Kingsford-Smith Elementary (19)
- Livingstone Elementary (15)
- MacCorkindale Elementary (17)
- Macdonald Elementary (21)
- Moberly Elementary (17)
- Mount Pleasant Elementary (15)
- Renfrew Elementary (17)
- Sexsmith Elementary (21)
- Shannon Park Annex (19)
- South Hill Elementary (19)
- Thunderbird Elementary (21)
- University Hill Secondary (15)

The Complete Revised List

This list is the ‘Revised List’ of 64 school sites that are proposed for the Vancouver Heritage Register and for special consideration in the seismic mitigation process. The list combines the schools already on the Heritage Register with the proposed additions.

- Bayview Community (25)
- Beaconsfield Elementary (15)
- Britannia Elementary (19)
- Britannia Secondary (25)
- Brock Elementary (11)
- Bruce Elementary (15)
- Byng Secondary (21)
- Carleton Elementary (23)
- Carr Elementary (17)
- Cavell Elementary (17)
- Champlain Heights Community (21)
- Churchill Secondary (17)
- Dickens Elementary (23)
- Douglas Annex (15)
- Douglas Elementary (21)
- False Creek Elementary (15)
- Franklin Elementary (15)
- Gladstone Secondary (17)
- Gordon Elementary (13)
- Grandview Elementary (21)
- Grenfell Elementary (13)
- Hamber Secondary (15)
- Hastings Elementary (23)
- Hudson Elementary (15)
- John Oliver Secondary (23)
- Kerrisdale Elementary (15)
- Kingsford-Smith Elementary (19)
- Kitchener Elementary (17)
- Kitsilano Secondary (25)
- L'École Bilingue Elementary (23)
- Livingstone Elementary (15)
- Lloyd George Elementary (19)
- MacCorkindale Elementary (17)
- Macdonald Elementary (21)
- Mackenzie Elementary (17)
- Maple Grove Elementary (15)
- McBride Elementary (19)
- Moberly Elementary (17)
- Mount Pleasant Elementary (15)
- Nightingale Elementary (17)

- Norquay Elementary (15)
- Point Grey Secondary (21)
- Queen Alexandra Elementary (17)
- Queen Elizabeth Elementary (15)
- Queen Mary Elementary (17)
- Renfrew Elementary (17)
- Roberts Elementary (15)
- Secord Elementary (19)
- Selkirk Elementary (23)
- Sexsmith Elementary (21)
- Seymour Elementary (17)
- Shannon Park Annex (19)
- Shaughnessy Elementary (17)
- South Hill Elementary (19)
- Strathcona Community (25)
- Tecumseh Elementary (17)
- Templeton Secondary (19)
- Tennyson Elementary (19)
- Trafalgar Elementary (9)
- Thunderbird Elementary (21)
- University Hill Secondary (15)
- Van Horne Elementary (11)
- Vancouver Technical Secondary (25)
- Wolfe Elementary (17)

Schools that do not Qualify

The following 51 schools did not qualify, using the strategies in this section, and therefore are *not* recommended for addition to the Vancouver Heritage Register:

- Begbie Elementary (11)
- Brock Annex (7)
- Carnarvon Community (11)
- Champlain Heights Annex (9)
- Collingwood Neighbourhood (11)
- Cook Elementary (9)
- Cunningham Elementary (7)
- Dickens Annex (9)
- Elsie Roy Elementary (11)
- Fleming Elementary (13)
- Fraser Elementary (7)
- Garibaldi Annex (5)
- Henderson Annex (7)
- Jamieson Elementary (11)
- Kerrisdale Annex (9)
- Killarney Secondary (11)

- King George Secondary (13)
- Laurier Annex (11)
- Laurier Elementary (9)
- L'École Anne-Hebert (7)
- Henderson Annex (7)
- Lord Elementary (5)
- Magee Secondary (9)
- Maquinna Annex (9)
- Maquinna Elementary (11)
- McBride Annex (5)
- McKechnie Elementary (5)
- Nelson Elementary (13)
- Nootka Elementary (7)
- Oppenheimer Elementary (9)
- Osler Elementary (9)
- Prince of Wales Secondary (11)
- Queen Elizabeth Annex (5)
- Queen Victoria Annex (5)
- Quesnel Elementary (11)
- Quilchena Elementary (11)
- Roberts Annex (9)
- Selkirk Annex (A) (5)
- Southlands Elementary (13)
- Tecumseh Annex (B) (5)
- Thompson Secondary (13)
- Tillicum Annex (5)
- Trudeau Elementary (5)
- Tupper Secondary (13)
- Tyee Elementary (9)
- University Hill Elementary (13)
- University Hill Secondary (15, but not in Vancouver)
- Waverley Annex (9)
- Waverley Elementary (7)
- Weir Elementary (7)
- Windermere Secondary (9)

4.4 Register Deletions

With respect to potential deletions from the Vancouver Heritage Register, the consultants concur with the Working Group that schools already on the Heritage Register should not, at present, be considered for removal from the Register if they scored low. Heritage Vancouver was particularly resolute in this in its subsequent submission. There was an acknowledgement that Register removals could be the subject of a future initiative, but only after a thorough re-examination of why a building was put on the Register in the first place, and why it was assessed differently in the present process.

Making reference to the assessment, it turns out that 34 of the 38 schools on the Register scored 15 or higher. Only four did not:

- Brock Elementary (11)
- Gordon Elementary (13)
- Trafalgar Elementary (9)
- Van Horne Elementary (11)

We recommend that there be no deletions from the Heritage Register as an outcome of the present study. The possibility of deletions should be raised only in the context of a city-wide review of the Vancouver Heritage Register, and if deletions to other building-types are being considered as well.

4.5 Conclusions

This report has increased the understanding of the history and heritage value of Vancouver schools. It has achieved this by writing a contextual history of education and school-building in Vancouver, creating a thematic outline of school development, and using the themes as the basis for assessing the heritage value of 114 school sites owned by the Vancouver School Board. A strategy was developed whereby the that assessment was utilized to produce a list of 26 schools that are proposed to be added to the Vancouver Heritage Register and given special consideration for retention in the seismic mitigation process. A substitution strategy was developed to address listed schools that may be replaced for seismic reasons.

In addition to developing this broad base of information, the consultants researched and wrote Statements of Significance for 12 individual school sites.

A diverse program of public consultation was held throughout the process. This included a series of meetings with an advisory Working Group and a number of public open houses.

This report and its findings now become a key tool in the management process whereby the Vancouver School Board, in consultation with the City of Vancouver, will make decisions as to which schools to retain and which to replace in the seismic mitigation process. It will also inform the VSB's heritage management process in a more general way over the long term.

Appendixes

- A. Backgrounder
- B. Sample Statement of Significance
- C. Terms of Reference for Working Group
- D. Working Group
- E. Client Steering Committee
- F. Consultant Team

Appendix A. Backgrounder

Open Houses

The City of Vancouver and the Vancouver School Board are working together to establish the community heritage values of Vancouver public schools. As part of the BC Schools Seismic Mitigation Program, at risk schools will be seismically upgraded over the next 10 to 15 years. Heritage values are important to identify, as seismic upgrading may include options for partial or complete replacement of some schools. Heritage value is one of several factors that will be considered in the seismic upgrading of public schools in Vancouver.

This project will establish the heritage values of schools and rank schools accordingly. The public has an important role to play to provide information and insights into the heritage values that will contribute to a better understanding of the human/social/architectural history of schools and the role these schools have played in the lives of Vancouver residents and communities. The project process is as follows:

- Consultants produce an Essay on the History of Vancouver School through targeted research.
 - Working Group and consultants critique the Essay, identify the important themes of Vancouver's school history, and develop criteria for ranking the heritage value of individual VSB schools. The Working Group is comprised of individuals that represent general community interests and have expertise in the local history of Vancouver schools.
 - May: Public Open Houses to present themes and evaluation criteria for feedback
 - Consultant researches individual schools, considers public feedback from the Open House and then sorts and groups VSB schools according to evaluation criteria.
 - Working Group reviews findings on the evaluation of schools.
 - Fall: Public Open House to present a final report on the ranking of schools.
 - Fall: Public Open House to present other factors of importance: seismic standards and public safety; educational / programming needs; functionality of schools, and costs.
 - Project conclusions are presented to the Vancouver School Board and Vancouver City Council with staff recommendations.
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For more information, contact:

City of Vancouver, Heritage Group - Planning
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Appendix B. Sample Statement of Significance

Lord Strathcona Community School
592 East Pender Street
Statement of Significance
Commonwealth, rev. September 2007



Description of Historic Place

Lord Strathcona Community School, located at 592 (or 500-594) East Pender Street, is a five-building complex occupying a city block and surrounded by East Pender, Jackson, and Keefer Streets, in Vancouver's historic Strathcona neighbourhood. The five components, in order of construction, are the Junior Building (1897), facing Keefer Street; the Senior Building (1914, 1929), facing Jackson Street; the Primary Building (1921), facing Pender Street; the Auditorium Building (1929), facing Pender Street; and the New Building (1971-72), facing Keefer Street.

Other institutions that occupy one or another of the buildings are the Strathcona Childcare Centre, the Strathcona Community Centre, and a branch of the Vancouver Public Library. Modern overlays include parking spaces, a portable schoolroom, an adventure playground, picnic tables, and bench seating. The adjacent city block to the east, used as a playground, is not included in the historic place. The site is surrounded by a chain link fence. Evenly-spaced mature deciduous street trees encircle its perimeter.

Heritage Value

Established in 1891 as East (or East End) School, Lord Strathcona School was built in stages between 1897 and 1972. Its value lies in its history and its architecture. It is the oldest continuously used school site in the City; and the Junior Building is the oldest in the system still in school use. The school serves Strathcona, the City's oldest residential neighbourhood. Its history and that of the City are reflected in the history of the school.

Dominating the neighbourhood, the school was designed to enhance the status of public education and to promote the good taste and prosperity of Vancouver. The five buildings are valuable as a model of changing school architecture, each a very good representative of its time. Other than the modernist concrete New Building (1971-72), all are brick-clad and designed in a classical revival vocabulary. The Junior Building (1897) has a wood frame and is vertical in proportions, characteristic of the late Victorian era. The Senior Building (begun 1914) has a fireproof concrete structure and is more horizontal. The Primary Building (1920) is of interest for having been built when the School Board had little money. The bricks were recycled from the demolished original school (1891) and the frame was wood in a day when concrete was king. Further value is seen in the distinguished architects involved, including William Blackmore (Junior Building) and School Board architects F.A.A. Barrs (Primary Building) and H.W. Postle (completion of Senior Building, Auditorium).

Strathcona has the largest student body of any elementary school in Vancouver. The growth over time is seen in the internal urban courtyard, also significant because it marks the site of the original school.

The buildings have features that represented good school design and responded to changing curricula. Innovations include manual training and domestic science (later called home economics), introduced in 1906; this was one of the first schools to offer these subjects. The additions and alterations of the late 1920s provided improved space for these subjects and also an auditorium, which is especially valued by the community. So too is the stained-glass window in the senior building, restored in 1991 as part of the centennial celebrations.

Strathcona has been an important point of contact between mainstream society and new immigrants, especially those from China, Japan, and Europe (Italian, Jewish, Russian, Ukrainian, Gypsy). Alumni have clear memories, whether positive, bittersweet, or negative, of adjusting to the school's culture and learning English. Historically, Strathcona has been home to working-class and poor Vancouverites, and so the school

has a long tradition of providing health and food programs. This is reflected today in the integration of school, library, community centre, and dental clinic on a single site, as well as having the only all-day junior kindergarten in the VSB system.

The strong custom of alumni involvement has led to many reunions. The school takes pride in its many ‘distinguished graduates’ and in its strong connections to the community. The school has a good collection of historic photographs and documents that together form an important record. Class pictures going back to the 1930s are displayed in the halls. This sense of history contributes to the heritage value of the school.

Character-Defining Elements

The character-defining elements of Lord Strathcona Community School include:

General

- Tradition of use as a school for more than a century
- Gently sloped site, with views to the North Shore mountains
- Location on a high point in the historic Strathcona neighbourhood, which formerly made it a city-wide landmark (the view is now obstructed)

The four brick buildings (i.e. all but the New Building) exterior and plans, including:

- Sense of permanence in the design, as expressed by the Classical vocabulary and symmetrical elevations
- Barbell plan (linear spine with projecting wings at each end) of the Primary and Senior Buildings.
- The Classical decorative vocabulary, including pediment-like gables, cornices with dentils (modillions) and friezes, stepped parapets, cupola (on the Primary Building), vertical piers
- Multi-paned double-hung wood sash windows, multi-paned transoms, and semi-circular lunette
- Masonry construction, particularly the brick walls, stone foundations, running string courses of stone or concrete, stone window sills and heads, and rustication (on the Junior Building)
- Second floor as principal floor, accessed by a grand exterior staircase
- Separate entrances for girls and boys
- Decorated pressed-tin rainwater gutters and leaders
- Original paneled wooded doors with glazing
- Sign reading ‘LORD STRATHCONA SCHOOL’ above the formal front entrance

Interior features, including:

- Intact spatial configuration of many interior spaces; high ceilings; generously proportioned wood-panelled doors with glazing and original hardware; classroom doors with hopper transoms; built-ins and millwork in classrooms
- Auditorium: clerestory windows; balcony with metal seats and railing; dressing rooms with built-ins and fixtures; stage with stair access on either side; moulding at hip height
- Photos of Royalty and Lord Strathcona in the main hall, class photos in many halls

The New Building

- Characteristic of modernist design of the 1970s
- Pre-cast concrete exterior walls

Landscape features

- The 'urban courtyard' between the buildings, which provides entrances to all the buildings
- Grass and plantings, such as the rhododendrons flanking the main staircase and memorial trees in the ceremonial area
- Metal flagpole
- Stepped approach to sloped site, with 5-foot-high curved concrete piers on northeast and northwest corners
- Children's games on the asphalt

Appendix C. Terms of Reference for Working Group

Vancouver Schools: Establishing their Heritage Value

WORKING GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

April 2006

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Working Group Chair | Hal Kalman Commonwealth Historic Resource Management Ltd |
| Primary Project Sponsors | City of Vancouver – Heritage Planning Group Vancouver School Board |
| Meeting Coordinator | Liberty Walton City of Vancouver |
| Content Coordinator | Meg Stanley Commonwealth Historic Resource Management Ltd |

Background

The City of Vancouver and the Vancouver School Board are working together on a project to better understand the heritage values of Vancouver schools. This work is prompted in part by the fact that over the next 10 to 15 years a number of high-risk school buildings in Vancouver will be upgraded or replaced to improve their seismic safety. Heritage value will be one of several factors taken into account in the school planning process. The project further involves documenting the heritage value of a number of specific school sites.

Goals

The goal of the project is to provide framework documents that will improve the City's and the School Board's understanding of the heritage values of Vancouver schools and to begin to develop a long-range heritage management plan for Vancouver schools.

Objectives

The specific objectives, expressed in terms of products, of the project are to:

- Produce a contextual essay documenting the development of Vancouver's schools.
- Use the contextual essay to inform the development of a thematic framework and criteria that will group the schools according to the themes.
- Apply the framework and criteria to the Vancouver School Board's 109 school sites.

The essay, framework, and criteria will be planning tools that will ultimately assist the City and the School Board in planning for individual schools.

Role

The role of the working group is to:

- Provide input and assist the heritage consultant by bringing a diversity of viewpoints, knowledge, and experience to the project; and
- Provide information that will contribute to the revision and completion of the contextual essay, thematic framework, and evaluation criteria.
- Working group members will not be asked to participate in the process of documenting individual school sites, although information will be shared should there be an interest.

The contributions and support of the Working Group will be an important factor in both the short-term success of the project and the longer-term usefulness of the resulting products. The Working Group will not have authority to approve or disapprove work. Input from the Working Group will be co-ordinated through the Chair.

Working group members who represent specific stakeholder groups should see themselves as representing the interests of that group. It is expected they will communicate with their groups regarding the progress, scope, and purpose of the project.

Schedule: Meetings, Time Commitment and Communications

The working group will be asked to:

1. Read the draft contextual essay in mid-April and bring their specific knowledge to its revision.
2. Participate in a two-three hour workshop in April, at which a draft thematic framework and evaluation criteria will be developed. The workshop will be held at the VSB Education Centre, located at 1580 West Broadway, Room 102 A/B.
3. Review and comment on the thematic framework and criteria following the workshop.
4. Attend, as members may see fit, community open houses to be held in Vancouver likely in mid-May.
5. Review and comment on the consultants' grouping of 109 school sites in Vancouver, which will apply the thematic framework and criteria, likely in mid-June.
6. Communicate the study process and its results to the groups or interests they represent.

Communication with working group members will be primarily by e-mail and telephone. Copies of documents will be mailed or e-mailed, depending on the participants' preferences.

The overall time commitment is expected to be a total of 3 days, between April and June.

Key Success Factors

- Materials are delivered on time to working group members.
- Working group members prepare for the workshop by reviewing the material.
- The workshop is structured to draw out knowledge of the working group in a way that results in the development of the framework and criteria.
- Working group members commit the necessary time to participate.
- Technology facilitates communication so that working group members have the opportunity to comment in writing or verbally, depending on available time and their personal preferences.
- Sufficient time is provided to make good use of the knowledge of the working group, and there is a willingness on the part of all participants to learn from each other.
- Working group members communicate with their constituency groups.

Working Group Contact Information

| MEMBER | POSITION – JURISDICTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---|---|--|
| Meg Stanley, Content Coordinator Hal Kalman, Chair and Facilitator | Heritage Consultants Commonwealth Historic Resource Management Ltd. | PH: 604 734 7505 FX: 604 734 7991 EM: meg@chrml.com |
| To be completed as members are confirmed. | | PH: EM: |
| To be completed as members are confirmed. | | PH: EM: |

Note: In the interest of transparency, the Working Group Terms of Reference is considered a public document. If any member wishes to have his/her phone and e-mail contact information removed from a published version of this document, he/she should inform the Working Group Chair.

Appendix D. Working Group

The following people served on the Working Group.

Working Group Contact Information

| MEMBER | POSITION – JURISDICTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---|---|---------------------|
| Meg Stanley, Content Coordinator / Hal Kalman, Chair and Facilitator | Heritage Consultant Commonwealth Historic Resource Management Ltd. | PH: 604-734-7505 |
| Anne Lee, Facilities Planner | Vancouver School Board | PH: 604-713-5744 |
| Les King, Director of Facilities | Vancouver School Board | PH: ? |
| Gerry McGeough, Senior Heritage Planner | Heritage Group, City of Vancouver | PH: 604-873-7091 |
| Liberty Walton, Heritage Planning Analyst | Heritage Group, City of Vancouver | PH: 604-873-7091 |
| Wesley Joe, Planning Analyst | Community Visions, City of Vancouver | PH: 604-873-7091 |
| Susan Boissonneault | Heritage Vancouver Society | PH: 604-688-1218 |
| Donald Luxton | Heritage Vancouver Society | PH: 604-688-1216 |
| Mona Gleason | Associate Professor, History of Education, Children & Childhood, Department of Educational Studies, Faculty of Education, University of British Columbia | PH: ? |
| Val Hamilton | Vancouver Branch, Retired Teacher's Association | PH: ? |
| Kim Maust | Vancouver Heritage Commission | PH: 604-788-0176 |
| Shirley Wong, Trustee | Vancouver School Board/Chair of Planning and Facilities | PH: 604-897-8389 |
| Allan Wong, Trustee | Vancouver School Board/VSB Representative to the Heritage Commission | PH: 604-437-6074 |
| Patrick Mueller | Hastings-Sunrise Implementation Committee | PH: ? |
| Louise Seto | Sunset Implementation Committee | PH: ? |
| Gary Shilling | Kensington Cedar Cottage Implementation Committee | PH: 778-863-5687 |
| Bruce Macdonald | Historian | PH: 604-251-4222 |
| Al Hepburn | Architectural Institute of British Columbia | PH: 604-669-4166 |
| Marguerite Ford | Former City of Vancouver Cllr. | 604-224-3607 |

The following groups were invited to sit on the Working Group, but declined:

- Vancouver Elementary Principals and Vice-Principals Association
- Vancouver Association of Secondary School Administrators
- District Parent Advisory Council
- Vancouver District Students' Council
- Riley Park South Cambie Implementation Committee

Appendix E. Client Steering Committee

City of Vancouver Heritage Group

- Liberty Walton, Heritage Planning Analyst and Project Manager
- Gerry McGeough, Senior Heritage Planner
- John Ward, Heritage Planner

Vancouver School Board

- Anne Lee, Facilities Planner
- Henry Ahking, Manager, Planning and Facilities

Appendix F. Consultant Team

Commonwealth Historic Resource Management Limited

- Hal Kalman, Principal, Project Manager, and Heritage Planner
- Meg Stanley, Historian
- Christin Doeinghaus, Architectural Research
- Maria J. Cruz, Research and Administration
- Adrian Chan, Graphics
- Cheryl Wu, Review of Assessments, Production

Sub-Consultants

- Mona Gleason, Associate Professor, History of Education, Children & Childhood, Department of Educational Studies, Faculty of Education, University of British Columbia
- Emma Hall, Phillips Farevaag Smalberg, field investigation for SOSs
- Andrew Hume, Principal, Andrew Hume & Associates Ltd., Communications Consultant
- Ron Phillips, Editing of Assessments