

General Gordon Elementary PAC Submission VSB Budget 2009/10 Consultations

Gordon Elementary parents support the budget revisions reinstating the Vice Principal positions becoming vacant due to retirements. This decision acknowledges the crucial roles that Vice Principals play in schools both supporting students and ensuring safety and security. Thank you.

We remain extremely concerned, however, that the Vice Principal position at General Gordon has not been reinstated.

The inequity in the allocation of administrators in schools by eliminating our Vice Principal has increased our concerns. Even though General Gordon has demonstrated that enrolment for next year will meet and surpass 400 students, the traditional requirement for assignment of a Vice Principle, we are losing ours. General Gordon has shown a pattern of increased enrolment for the past 3 years. Gordon's growth pattern is consistent with the enrolments of its neighbouring schools and with VSB projections for 2015. This is a neighbourhood that is growing. We ask that the demonstrated enrolment number for next year, which is over 400, be used to determine our need for administrative support rather than enrolment from prior years.

Additionally, Gordon will be the only school in the NCLD pilots that will not have a Vice Principal to assist in the project management and safety and security during construction. We will be the only school with a population at or close to 400 that will not have a Vice Principal while under seismic renewal. Great accommodations have been made in administrative allocations for other school populations, particularly in the case of Jules Quesnel and Queen Elizabeth, to support their seismic process. These decisions clearly acknowledge the significant impact and disruption construction projects impose on the school community. No such consideration has been given to the impact of the NCLD or seismic upgrade project at Gordon.

General Gordon faces many unique issues that were detailed in our previous submission. To highlight one unique challenge, General Gordon has a very high proportion, 41%, of grade 6 and 7 students that make Gordon more like a Middle school with the associated discipline and safety issues. In addition to the higher personal behaviour management needs, these students require more support in successfully transitioning to high school. A Vice Principal is an essential adult on our school.

General Gordon's 2009 population will be over 400 and is home to a diverse learner population with, 41% in grades 6 and 7, over 66% in intermediate grades, 8% ESL, 15% with designations, and two district programs. Student safety, security and learning will be significantly impacted without the appropriate administrative allocation that this district has established as a Vice Principal and Principal for a school of over 400 students. If new criteria are being established they should be clearly communicated to school communities and applied consistently across the district.

General Gordon parents request that the budget be reconsidered in light of the unique characteristics of our student body and our demonstrated student enrolment figures for next year. We further request that our Vice Principal position be reinstated. Thank you.