
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Education

ALMOST \$100M FOR SEISMICALLY SAFER CHILLIWACK SCHOOLS

CHILLIWACK – Four Chilliwack schools that require seismic upgrades will be replaced by three new schools with an investment of \$99 million, Chilliwack-Kent MLA Barry Penner and Chilliwack-Sumas MLA John Les announced today.

“This is a huge investment by the B.C. government in Chilliwack’s future,” said Penner. “The new buildings will cut energy costs and provide a safer, more comfortable environment for students, teachers and staff.”

“Replacement was the most cost-effective way to ensure we meet the latest seismic safety standards,” said Les. “Projects of this magnitude will create jobs and provide a welcome boost to our economy.”

The Chilliwack board of education will replace Chilliwack Senior Secondary at a cost of \$52.3 million and Yarrow Community Elementary at a cost of \$15 million. Rosedale Elementary and Rosedale middle school – two high-priority seismic projects – will be consolidated into a single school for kindergarten to Grade 9 students at a cost of \$31.4 million. All three new schools will meet the latest requirements for seismic safety and will be constructed to LEED Gold or equivalent standards.

“We are thrilled to be able to provide safer, state-of-the-art learning environments for our students,” said Chilliwack board chair John-Henry Harter. “It is comforting to all involved that we will be able to address these high-priority seismic projects in a timely manner and with as little disruption as possible to students and staff.”

Construction on all three new schools is expected to begin in the winter of 2009/10.

“These replacements are part of our 15-year Seismic Mitigation Program,” said Shirley Bond, Minister of Education. “Ours is the first government in B.C. to take such a comprehensive approach to school seismic safety.”

Since 2001, seven capital projects worth \$40.6 million have been completed in the Chilliwack school district. Currently, 88 seismic projects across British Columbia have been completed, are under construction, or are proceeding to construction. During the same period, the B.C. government has spent over \$1.4 billion to complete 73 new and replacement schools, 147 additions, 25 renovation projects and 20 site acquisitions across British Columbia. All new and replacement schools have been constructed to meet the latest seismic standards.

In addition, every year, the B.C. government provides a total of \$5 million to districts in seismic-designated zones to complete “non-structural” seismic work. This includes work such as attaching cabinets to walls, covering windows with protective film and securing lights. By the end of 2008/09 the Province will have committed more than \$3.1 billion in school capital and maintenance projects across B.C.

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