

CONTEXT

West Vancouver has one of the highest quality educational environments in the Province when measured in academic achievement, graduation level and breadth of program. Public schools provide neighbourhood and community centres of learning, recreation, and socialization; private schools of varied sizes expand the range of educational choices within the community. All school sites are highly valuable in

meeting community needs for open space, playgrounds and sports fields.

Planning for current and future educational needs requires a long-term perspective to accommodate school enrolments that will fluctuate over time and to respond to changes in local demographics, education directions and societal factors.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

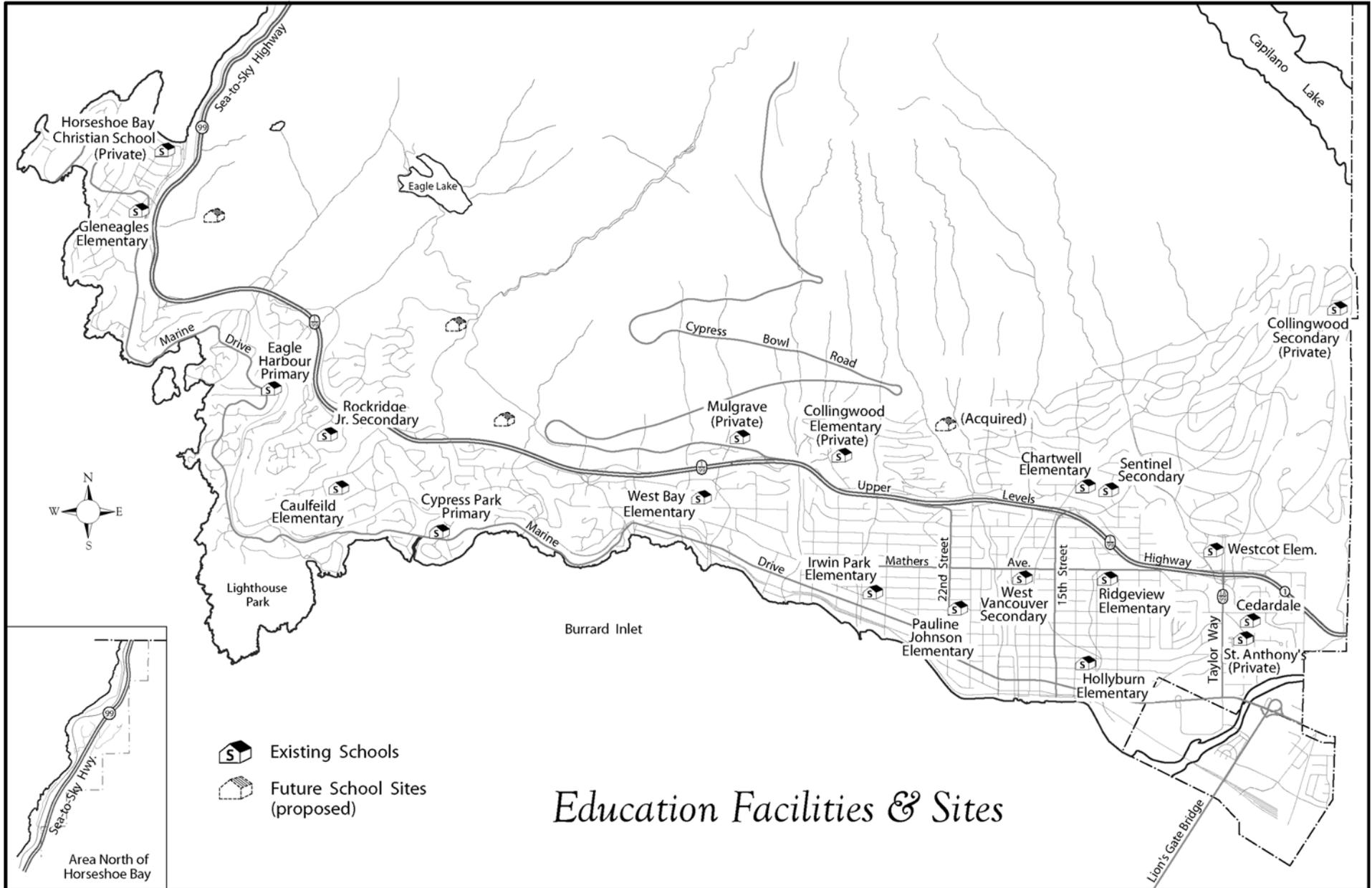
See also
COMMUNITY CONTEXT
(School Enrolment)

West Vancouver School District #45 has 13 public elementary schools, including Bowen Island and Lions Bay, and three secondary schools (West Vancouver Secondary, Sentinel, and Rockridge). Other school facilities include the School Board administration offices on 21st Street, the School District works yard off Cypress Bowl Road, the Cedardale Centre, and the Inglewood Curriculum Centre. The School District operates with an annual budget of approximately \$43 million, a staff of 564 (2002 Full Time Equivalent) and land holdings totalling 136 acres.

The School Board, an elected body, is responsible for both the public education of West Vancouver's children and the management of school assets. West Vancouver Council cooperates with and supports the School Board to fulfill its mandate. Section 881 of the Local Government Act requires consultation with

School Boards when preparing or amending an Official Community Plan and other consultation at least once a year. A joint liaison committee of staff, Council and Board members ensure that this is carried out.

Enrolment in the School District has declined by 1% in the past five years from 6,320 in 1996 to 6,270 in 2002 and has fluctuated substantially over time – from a high of 8,679 in 1969 to a low of 4,800 in 1986. Ministry projections indicate that enrolment in West Vancouver's public schools will continue to decline over the next 10 years, with a flattening out of the trend toward the end of that period. While some of this trend may relate to increased enrolment in private schools, it is more broadly associated with an aging of the population, a societal decline in number of children per family, and a population with few young families.



PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Many parents seek private educational choices for their children. With major expansion of private schools in the community in the past decade, some West Vancouver children who previously attended private schools outside the community can now attend school locally and others have moved to West Vancouver to access the private schools. Total enrolment in private

schools in West Vancouver has doubled over the past six years to 25% of the student population, with approximately 2,100 students attending schools ranging in size from the large Collingwood and Mulgrave schools to small schools of no more than 30 students. Enrolment projections for private schools are not available at the district level.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

West Vancouver has a history of successful partnerships for programs and facilities between schools and the Municipality and community groups, and will continue these partnerships in the future. Sustained shared use practices will ensure the best possible use of our land and facilities.

School Boards and staff are facing social issues that go beyond academic learning. They are becoming increasingly involved in community development at many levels, working with community policing departments, the private sector, non-profit organizations, provincial agencies and municipal staff on a range of initiatives. The School District's 1998–99 Annual Report identified “a renewed focus on the social side of learning” as a critical part of their mandate. It also identified several related initiatives, including welcoming and valuing cultural diversity; addressing issues around safety, bullying and violence; and implementing substance abuse prevention

programs. Similar or related issues have been identified at the municipal level. Partnerships and mutually supportive initiatives in these and other areas will contribute to addressing the intercultural and intergenerational needs of the future.



OBJECTIVES

School policies build opportunities for learning, and are based on the following objectives:

- Support the School Board in its responsibility for public education and management of school assets.
- Maximize the use of school sites for the benefit of the community.
- Consider a range of public and private educational choices in the community.
- Make the best use of resources through community partnerships.

POLICIES

Policy S 1

Maintain a close, collaborative relationship with the School Board to maximize the use of school facilities and services for the benefit of the community.

- Encourage community use of schools.
- Recognize and support the role of schools as neighbourhood focal points and social centres.
- Work with the School Board to examine potential alternative uses, particularly community uses, for school sites that the Board considers to be surplus.
- Maintain a long-term perspective for the use of school facilities that allows for adaptability and maximum community benefit, while ensuring that current and future education needs are met.
- Promote improvements to the accessibility of school facilities and grounds for persons with disabilities.

See also
HOUSING;
SOCIAL PLANNING;
COMMUNITY RECREATION

Policy S 2

Provide strategies for public school site acquisition at no local public cost in the Upper Lands area.

- Plan for two additional elementary school sites in addition to the Whitby Estate site, and possibly one high school site.

See also
UPPER LANDS



Policy S 3

Recognize the role of private schools in the community and consider their varied needs.

- Recognize in bylaws, where desirable and appropriate, the significant variations in size and program focus or delivery that different education models may include.

Policy S 4

Support strategies for housing and services to attract young adults and young families with children.

Policy S 5

Promote community partnerships and joint use arrangements for schools and community facilities.

- Utilize an adopted and current statement of principles to guide joint use of public facilities.



See also
SOCIAL PLANNING;
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT;
PARKS AND OPEN SPACES;
COMMUNITY RECREATION

Policy S 6

Support partnerships and pursue initiatives that address social, economic and environmental issues facing our schools and community at large.