
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2016EDUC0096-001713
Sept. 16, 2016

Ministry of Education

Partnership invests \$67 million to create up to 1,700 new student spaces

LANGLEY – The Province and the Langley school district are tackling rapid community growth and increasing student enrolment with more than \$67 million to create more seats, classrooms and a new school for students and families in the Willoughby Slope area.

MLA for Fort Langley-Aldergrove Rich Coleman and MLA for Langley Mary Polak were joined by the Langley Board of Education, school district staff, teachers, parents and students at R.E. Mountain Secondary school to make the announcement today on behalf of Education Minister Mike Bernier.

The \$67.1 million investment includes:

- Building a new 1,500 seat Willoughby Slope Secondary;
- Expanding R.C. Garnett Elementary to create up to 200 more seats; and,
- Purchasing land for a future elementary school in northeast Latimer.

The Ministry of Education and the Langley school district have been working together over the past year to define the scope of these capital projects to address student enrolment pressure by creating more student spaces.

Once the new Willoughby Slope Secondary is complete, the district intends to convert R.E. Mountain Secondary to a middle school to create more seats for grade 6 to 8 students. R.E. Mountain is operating at 138% capacity and using sixteen portables. The new secondary will be more than double the size of R.E. Mountain Middle school, which will alleviate this pressure and get students out of portables and into classrooms.

The total budget for the three school projects is \$67.1 million, including \$55.2 million for the new secondary, \$4.7 million for the elementary school expansion and \$7.2 million for land for a future elementary school. In total, the province contributed \$46.8 million towards the projects and the Langley school district contributed \$20.3 million. The province also previously contributed \$4.5 million to purchase the land for the new secondary and the district contributed \$2.5 million.

Design work is expected to start this fall on the new secondary, and construction is expected to start this winter for the expansion at R.C. Garnett Elementary.

Government is able to make capital investments in the Willoughby Slope area thanks to the Province's fiscal discipline and strong economy. The Willoughby Slope Secondary project will also help ensure young people get a chance to learn the trades as it will be built under B.C.'s Apprentices on Public Projects Policy.

Quotes:

Rich Coleman, Minister of Natural Gas Development and Minister Responsible for Housing and MLA for Fort Langley-Aldergrove –

“Today’s announcement brings some awaited resolution to families in the rapidly growing community of Willoughby. The Langley school district has worked hard with the Ministry of Education to make these projects happen. We’re all very happy to be here today to announce a further \$67 million dollar investment in education for Langley – up to 1,700 new seats will be created to support students and families in the area.”

Mary Polak, Minister of Environment and MLA for Langley –

“I’m thrilled to see these important school capital projects moving forward. This investment will give families moving to the area the support and assurance they need and ensure their children have the space they need to thrive and succeed in B.C.’s education system.”

Rob McFarlane, chair, Langley Board of Education –

“The new Willoughby Secondary school, expansion of R.C. Garnett Elementary and the land acquisition in northeast Latimer are very significant next steps in our efforts to address the continuing need for more student spaces in our schools. All of these projects are consistent with input received from our community during consultations. We want to thank Minister Coleman and Minister Polak for their direct personal involvement in advocating for these projects and helping to secure the necessary funding and approvals.”

Quick Facts:

- Rapid growth is expected to continue in the Willoughby Slope area, as it has the largest portion of undeveloped land in the Lower Mainland.
- According to the Township of Langley, there were 368 new residential units in the Willoughby Slope area between January and April 2016. This accounts for 71% of construction in the entire township.
- In the last 10 years, enrolment in the Willoughby Slope area of the Langley school district has increased by 9% and is forecast to grow by over 40% in the next ten years due to rapid residential development.
- Including today’s announcement, government has invested \$151.6 million on capital projects in Langley since 2011.
- This includes the recent \$26.2 million investment to seismically upgrade Langley Secondary.

Learn More:

Langley School District: <https://www.sd35.bc.ca/>

Apprentices on Public Projects Policy:

<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/construction-industry/apprentices>

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