

NO: **R001**

COUNCIL DATE: **January 10, 2011**

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **January 5, 2011**

FROM: **City Manager**

FILE: **School District**

SUBJECT: **Portable Classrooms at Surrey Schools – City of Surrey Actions**

RECOMMENDATION

The City Manager's Office recommends that Council receive this report as information.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to provide information to Council regarding the current state of being and trends with respect to the use of portable classrooms by the Surrey School District. The report also outlines a course of action that is being taken in relation to the City assisting the School District in developing an approach to resolving this important infrastructure issue.

BACKGROUND

The Surrey School District, the largest School District in the Province, has experienced an on-going increase in its student population on a year-over-year basis for many years in succession. For a time during the 80's and 90's this trend was consistent with most other School Districts across B.C., which were also experiencing student enrolment growth. However, over the last decade, the student population in most of BC's School Districts has been declining for a variety of reasons. Despite this general trend across the province, the population of students enrolled in schools in the Surrey School District has continued to increase every year by a significant number. For example, the enrolment for the 2010/2011 school year is 845 students larger than the number of students that were enrolled during 2009/2010 school year. This is the equivalent of almost 2 new elementary schools. Between 2006 and 2010 the total number of students enrolled in the Surrey School District has increased by 3575 students. The Surrey School District has approximately 68,000 students enrolled for the 2010/2011 school year.

During the period between the late 1990s and 2003 the Provincial government provided annual capital funding to the Surrey School District for the construction of new schools in Surrey with a view to responding to the increasing numbers of students that were being enrolled. This capital funding allowed new schools to be constructed to respond to growth so that portable classrooms that were used as a temporary measure could be eliminated. In fact between 1998 the number of portable classrooms in use in the District was reduced from 375 to 165. However, during the last few years (since 2006) the Province has not provided capital funding to the School District for the construction of new schools even though the District has continued to face significant student population growth as noted above. Faced with this circumstance, the School District has had to respond by using annual operating funding to buy and install portable classrooms at many

elementary and high schools across the District. The outcome has been an increase in the number of portable classrooms across the District, which are generally recognized as providing a less than desirable learning environment for the City's children and youth. In 2010 there are a total of 206 portable classrooms in use at 45 schools across the District. The table attached as Appendix "A" to this report documents the current distribution of portable classrooms across Surrey schools and the projected number of portables that will be required at these same schools for each of the years up to 2015. Based on these projections, assuming that no capital funding is provided for new schools, there will be 266 portable classrooms in use in the District in 2015.

The fact that operating funds are being diverted by the School District to purchase capital infrastructure is creating a more constrained operating environment for the School District and limiting its ability to respond to needs and opportunities in the community in relation to its mandate.

DISCUSSION

The graph attached as Appendix "B" to this report illustrates the number of portable classrooms that were in use in the Surrey School District on a year by year basis since the mid-1980s. It is evident from this graph that the problem related to increasing numbers of portable classrooms will continue to grow into the foreseeable future unless action is taken to address the problem.

In recognition of the importance of a properly resourced K-12 education system to the on-going development of Surrey as a vibrant family-friendly city and for the economic health of the City, the Region and the Province, it is important that the City take a proactive role in partnering with the Surrey Board of Education to assist in resolving the portable classrooms issue. In this regard the following initial actions are planned:

1. **A meeting between the Surrey Board of Education and City Council** has been scheduled to discuss the current situation that the School District faces relative to student growth projections and funding constraints and how the City Council can assist the Board of Education in addressing this serious problem of capital funding for school facilities.
2. **A meeting has been scheduled between the Mayor, other City officials and the Executive of the District Parents Advisory Council of the School District** to discuss the views the DPAC Executive in relation to this important matter.
3. **A meeting between the Mayor, other City officials and the Minister of Education** has been scheduled with a view to developing a better understanding of the Province's intentions in relation to school capital funding and to discuss possible approaches that the Province could consider to address the School District needs more effectively.

Further reports to Council complete with recommendations will be provided as information is gathered and a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities are understood.

CONCLUSION

It is clear that the City has a significant stake in ensuring that the Surrey Board of Education is able to effectively deliver on its mandate. The City can play an important role as a partner with the Board of Education to ensure that Provincial decision makers understand the importance of expedient action in relation to addressing the capital funding needs of the Surrey School District and can assist in building effective solutions.

Murray Dinwoodie
City Manager

Appendix "A" (Table) – Portable Classrooms in Use and Projected at Schools in Surrey
Appendix "B" (Graph) – Inventory of Portable Classrooms at Surrey Schools - 1986 to 2015

APPENDIX "A"

22 Dec 16

	2008 ACTUAL PORTABLES	2010 ACTUAL PORTABLES	2011 PROJECTED PORTABLES	2012 PROJECTED PORTABLES	2013 PROJECTED PORTABLES	2014 PROJECTED PORTABLES	2015 PROJECTED PORTABLES
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS							
A-IP MATTHEW	1	1	2	2	2	2	2
A J MCLELLAN	7	8	8	0	0	0	1
CAMBRIDGE	8	9	11	13	18	18	21
CHIMNEY HILL	5	5	6	7	3	3	4
CLAYTON	1	2	4	5	8	7	8
CLOVERDALE TRAD	1	1		2	2	2	2
COAST MERIDIAN	1	3	3	4	4	4	4
COYOTE CREEK	1	1	2	3	3	3	3
DON CHRISTIAN	4	8	0	3	3	0	0
EAST CLAYTON	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
ELLENGALE	1	1	1	1	2	2	2
ERMA STEPHENSON	2	2	2	3	3	3	3
FROST ROAD	1	1	2	2	2	2	3
HALLS PRAIRIE	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
HAZLE GROVE	4	11	12	15	19	22	25
HENRY BOSE	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
HILLCREST	2	2	2	2	2	3	4
NORTH ROAD	6	2	6	8	6	6	6
HOLLY	3	3	4	4	4	4	4
KB WOODWARD	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
MARTHA CURRIE	0	0	1	1	1	2	2
MARTHA J MORRIS	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
MCEOD ROAD	9	0	0	0	0	0	0
MORGAN	0	1	2	2	2	2	2
NORTH RIDGE	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
PACIFIC HEIGHTS	0	0	2	2	3	3	3
RIVERDALE	2	2	3	3	3	3	4
ROSEMARY HEIGHTS	0	1	3	3	4	4	6
SULLIVAN	0	0	1	1	2	2	2
SUNNYSIDE	1	2	2	3	3	3	4
SUNRISE RIDGE	1	1	3	3	3	3	3
SUNSHY CENTRE	0	0	2	2	3	4	4
SURREY TRAD.	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
T E SCOTT	7	8	11	2	2	3	3
WALNUT ROAD	2	2	3	3	3	3	4
WHITE ROCK	1	1	2	2	2	3	3
WILLIAM F DAVIDSON	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
WOODWARD H.L.	0	0	1	2	4	5	6
ELEMENTARY TOTALS	80	96	104	104	119	131	148

SECONDARY SCHOOLS							
CLAYTON HEIGHTS	9	10	10	11	12	13	14
EARL MARRIOTT	7	8	15	13	13	15	16
FLEETWOOD PARK	3	3	3	2	2	2	2
FRANK HURT	1	1	1	1	1	2	2
FRASER HEIGHTS	18	18	18	15	12	10	8
GUILDFORD PARK	8	10	10	9	9	9	3
KWANLEN PARK	11	11	11	11	11	12	12
L A MATHESON	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
LORD TWEDSALFUR	4	3	10	14	15	15	18
NORTH SURREY	6	8	10	10	9	8	7
PANDORA RIDGE	9	12	14	13	12	10	10
PRINCESS MARGARET	4	4	2	2	2	2	2
SEMAHCO	9	9	9	9	5	4	3
SULLIVAN HEIGHTS	4	4	4	4	4	5	6
TAMMARA'S	2	5	9	11	11	10	10
SECONDARY TOTALS	86	110	118	122	118	118	118

TOTAL 186 206 222 226 238 249 266

Portable Inventory 1986 to 2015

