

NEWS RELEASE
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Ministry of Education

New Pitt River school will welcome community

PORT COQUITLAM - Ground was broken today for a replacement Pitt River Middle Community school, which will feature a Neighbourhood Learning Centre that will act as a hub for community activities and programs.

Due to the high cost of seismic upgrading needed on the existing Pitt River Middle Community school, it was decided to build a replacement and demolish the existing school on completion. The new school will have a capacity of 450 students with a total cost of \$20 million. Anticipated completion of the project is the summer of 2013.

The school will be constructed to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Gold standard. Technology will be integrated into all learning spaces (charging stations in each area, short throw projectors, and wireless throughout the school). The school will also feature community gardens and an outdoor amphitheatre.

Project goals for the new school include:

- * Optimizing energy performance.
- * Maximizing natural light and views.
- * Supporting a team approach to learning and teaching.
- * Allowing flexibility in classroom planning and utilization.
- * Creating a variety of student work, presentation, and social spaces.

The new school will feature a Neighbourhood Learning Centre that will host:

- * An Aboriginal Welcoming Centre.
- * Community School Program offices and classroom.
- * Settlement Workers in Schools satellite office.
- * Sport Co-ordination and Development Centre.
- * Fraser Health Community Programming Office.

Quotes:

Education Minister George Abbott -

"This new school will feature a Neighbourhood Learning Centre offering programs and services for the whole community and will be built to support new technology and the flexibility to embrace collaborative learning, a central idea within our new BC's Education Plan."

Coquitlam board of education chair Melissa Hyndes -

"This much anticipated new facility will be more than a safe, comfortable, environmentally responsible school; it will become a gathering place for community members of all ages and interests."

Quick Facts:

- * Since 2001, the government has spent \$96.5 million to complete 24 capital and seismic projects in the Coquitlam school district, including \$27.5 million for Heritage Woods Secondary school.
- * In addition, the Province is investing more than \$9.1 million for additional space for full-day kindergarten in the district.
- * Currently, 136 school seismic upgrade projects across B.C. have been completed, are under construction or are proceeding to construction.
- * Seismic safety is also a key component of government's revitalization of school infrastructure. All of the 83 new and replacement schools built since 2001 are modern, safe, seismically-sound buildings.

Learn More:

- * Pitt River Middle Community School Construction:
<http://www.sd43.bc.ca/SCHOOLS/NEWSCHOOLCONSTRUCTION/PITT%20RIVER%20COMMUNITY%20MIDDLE/Pages/default.aspx>
- * Neighbourhood Learning Centres:
www.neighbourhoodlearningcentres.gov.bc.ca/
- * BC's Education Plan: www.bcedplan.ca

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