
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2024ECC0088-001217
July 31, 2024

Ministry of Education and Child Care

Seismically safer school coming for students in Richmond

RICHMOND – Students and staff in Richmond will soon have safer classrooms after Diefenbaker Elementary school is rebuilt to the latest seismic safety standards.

“Today’s announcement marks another step forward in our government’s commitment to ensuring all students are learning in safe, supportive environments,” said Rachna Singh, Minister of Education and Child Care. “This replacement school will provide a safer, brighter future for the students of Richmond for many years to come.”

The Province is providing more than \$52 million to replace Diefenbaker Elementary school and to make sure 465 students will learn in a seismically safer school. The new school will include the addition of a neighbourhood learning centre, which will provide services, such as child care. In keeping with the Province’s CleanBC emissions-reduction goals, the school will be designed with the aim of reducing greenhouse gases by more than 75% compared to a LEED Gold standard building. The project is expected to be ready to welcome students and staff in April 2028.

“I’m proud of our government’s ongoing dedication to safeguarding this community’s students through continued investments,” said Kelly Greene, MLA for Richmond-Steveston. “As a former Diefenbaker Bulldog, I know how important the school has always been to the fabric of the neighbourhood. I am thrilled we are delivering on this much-needed replacement school so that a new generation of Diefenbaker students and staff have safe learning environments for years to come.”

Over the past seven years, the provincial government has approved \$245 million for seismic upgrades and school expansions to create more than 500 new student seats and more than 5,500 seismically safe seats in the Richmond School District. This includes projects at James Whiteside Elementary, William Bridge Elementary and Howard DeBeck Elementary.

“Our ongoing partnership with the provincial government reflects our shared commitment to the safety and well-being of our students and staff,” said Heather Larson, board chair of the Richmond School District. “The replacement of Diefenbaker Elementary with a seismically safe learning environment that is built with sustainable design principles will ensure that our students have a secure, sustainable and inspiring place to learn and grow.”

Since September 2017, the B.C. government has approved \$4.9 billion for new and improved schools, and land purchases for schools in the province. This has resulted in more than 35,000 new student spaces and more than 35,000 seismically safe seats at B.C. schools.

Budget 2024 includes \$3.75 billion for school capital projects over the next three years, including new and expanded schools, seismic upgrades and replacements, and land purchases

for schools.

Learn More:

To learn about the Richmond School District, visit: <https://www.sd38.bc.ca>

For more information about major public school capital projects underway, visit:
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/capital/major-capital-projects>

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