

September 1, 2020

City of Victoria

1 Centennial Square Victoria, BC, V8W 1P6

Dear Mayor and Council,

RE: Development Variance Permit Application from Glenlyon Norfolk School

To support our ability to safely deliver classroom instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic, Glenlyon Norfolk School is asking Council to support our application for a Development Variance Permit (DVP) to allow for the installation of 2 modular buildings (5 classrooms) and a gym tent (1 classroom) to temporarily expand the school's available teaching space. These would be placed on our Pemberton Woods Middle and Senior School campus at 801 Bank Street, on an undeveloped area currently occupied by a lawn and adjacent to school owned/controlled residential properties. This application does not include the 2 emergency supply shipping containers on site. These structures will be included in a subsequent application.

As Council is aware, the Ministry of Education has directed all British Columbia schools to prepare and submit a School Health and Safety Plan demonstrating compliance with a rigorous set of guidelines and protocols to support the safe operation of full-time in-class instruction in September.

These modular structures will strengthen our ability to adopt optimal safe distancing practices and ensure that our students, staff and faculty have the best chances for a safe return to school during a regular school day. The health and safety of our school and our neighbourhood is our priority.

Like many other schools within the City, we do face the hardship of meeting zoning criteria that is established for single family homes and not for schools. Given that context and our desire to strengthen our safety plan in response to COVID-19, our application seeks the following:

- A variance to the accessory building height. We note that the portable building will be shorter than adjacent buildings at the school.
- A variance to the accessory building floor area. The floor area will allow for standard size classrooms.
- A variance to the location of the accessory building placement on a side yard. The siting of the proposed temporary buildings was selected to minimize its impact on the surrounding neighbourhood and to avoid the removal of trees.
- The classrooms are temporary and are limited to no more than 5 years.

We do wish to acknowledge that our request to Council is consistent with precedent where similar variances have been granted to other schools requiring modular classrooms to meet provincial government education obligations, and we wish to reinforce that the placement of these structures is requested on a temporary basis.

We do not believe that the proposed structures will have any deleterious effect on the livability of the neighbouring properties. All three properties that border the area are owned by the school and mature hedging will provide a buffer between those homes and the proposed portable classrooms.

With regards to sustainability and accessibility, the portable structures include both barrier-free ramps as well as stairs. Furthermore, the structures have been previously

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used as classrooms and will not require the use of additional environmental resources in their construction for our temporary use.

For further clarity it is important to note that our application seeks:

- No variance to parking
- No variance to setbacks
- Complies to existing zoning for land use and density

While our application does signify a change to the school, we want to assure Council that Glenlyon Norfolk School remains committed to long-term engagement with the broader community with all future planning pertaining to any renewal components of the school established in the Gonzales Neighbourhood in 1932.

Further to that end, we do wish to confirm that hand-delivered correspondence was provided to 60 households surrounding the school on August 25 to provide notice of our application. In this correspondence we invited everyone to take the opportunity to review the site with staff and to raise questions and concerns directly with staff. We received two inquiries to our invitation.

Further, GNS did attend the August 27 Gonzales Fairfield CALUC to present this application and received limited comment to the height, floor area or side yard set back variance requested. The primary focus of comment was related to the validity of the public health need of the portables. These challenges were addressed by the school. For clarity, this application is not related to the school's future plans to renew the campus. This application regarding the temporary placement of portable classrooms reflects shifting priorities as we—like every organization—adapts in real time to new and important safety measures relating to COVID-19.

We will engage with the broader community next year (2021) on any renewal components to our school ensuring that our planning includes input from the neighbourhood and the community that has evolved with us since 1932. Any update to the school over the long-term must meet the needs of the school and fit into the context of the Gonzales neighbourhood.

The health and safety of our students, teachers, staff and as well as our neighbourhood is our priority as we return to in-class instruction on September 9.

We thank Council for your thoughtful consideration of our application.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chad Holtum", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Chad Holtum
Head of School