

November 30, 2018

From: Queensborough Residents Association (QRA)

In support of School Board Trustee
Mary Lalji motion of November 13, 2018

To: Board of Education of School District No. 40
City of New Westminster, Mayor and City Council

RE: Student Street Traffic and Crossing Safety at;

QEES Queen Elizabeth Elementary School (K to 4)
921 Salter Street, New Westminster, BC, V3M 6G8

QMS Queensborough Middle School
833 Salter Street, New Westminster, BC, V3M 6G8

This letter is written to convey the QRA’s support for changes to safety measures and street infrastructure around Queen Elizabeth Elementary and the surrounding school/community complex. Both QEES and QMS are located on Salter Street; one of the three main residential thoroughfares running east/west in Queensborough. In addition, Howes Street to the south is a significant corridor to the 91A (including non-residents avoiding traffic disruptions). There have been several complaints within the community regarding both volume and speeding on both routes. Furthermore, parking and safety infrastructure is also inadequate to ensure child welfare, particularly at the Elementary school.



The QRA's concern with safety regarding the street condition, road markings, signage and parking around QEES has been ongoing for a very long time. The QE PAC has highlighted their concerns with Trustees while the QRA Traffic Rep has reported concerns to the City/NTAC. With traffic, population and student increases throughout the area, this situation is becoming increasingly unsafe for the children and residents.



There are several specific instances of unsafe conditions of note:

1. There are no sidewalks on the south side of Salter St from Howes to Campbell. While this limits safety, further danger is posed due to the proximity of the south ditches and banks along this stretch. *We should also note that there is extremely limited street lighting between Howes and Campbell on Salter Street.*
2. There is no crosswalk spanning Salter Street from Queen Elizabeth to the south side of the street. Signage denotes a No Parking Drop Off Zone south of the street. This requires children to cross the street unattended or force parents to park illegally to

bring their children across the street. There is no sidewalk on the south side, thus no cross walk nor crossing guards.

3. In some areas, general signage along Salter Street and Spruce Street is either lacking or knocked down. There is no parking permitted on the north side of Salter between the school and Howes, a safer alternative for Drop Off. There is no signage along Spruce, a narrow road with deep ditches on both sides.
4. There are no road markings such as a large white letter X or School painted on the road adjacent to QEES.
5. The corner of Howes and Salter (4-way stop) is missing crosswalk markings.
6. The south side alignment of Salter Street from Howes to Campbell is poorly planned and the road width varies along this route.
7. There are five speed bumps on Salter between Howes and Campbell street. They appear to be inadequate in slowing vehicle traffic and in certain areas appear too far apart.
8. Parents occasionally use the service road to the Queensborough Community Centre to pick up children, an extremely unsafe practice due to the volume of people on the road before/after school. Although Principal Manville has worked hard to ensure parents do not drive on this stretch, there is nothing to prevent them from using it or disregarding the request. In a specific case, one parent would routinely drive the road in reverse so he didn't have to worry about turning around after pickup.
9. While there is currently a crosswalk at the 800 block of Ewen (running north-south to the Community Centre and school properties), it is not currently lit with a signal for school children's safety. Visibility around parked cars is a considerable concern here.

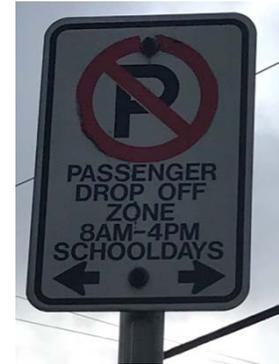




Figure 1 – Traffic lined up down Salter to Howes (note white truck parked beside barrier)



Figure 2 – Family crossing Salter Street (NO CROSSWALK)



Figure 3A – Parking congestion on Spruce Street (note child in street). There are significant ditches on both sides of Spruce, with parents parking on both sides due to lack of parking restrictions along the street.



Figure 3B – A second image of Spruce Street. Note parking right at stop line (not uncommon).



Figure 4 – Howes and Salter Streets: families use all four sides of the crosswalk yet only one is painted.

One further complication with the parking situation at QEES is the School Board policy that students from K to Grade Two need to be physically handed off to their teachers for the morning bell and again received following the afternoon bell. While this is an understandable policy for child safety, a significant population are not in walking distance from the school, meaning that many parents are leaving their vehicles in No Parking zones or unsafe spaces to collect their children. Salter, Howes, Sprice and surrounding streets end up filled with cars, often double parked along deep ditches while parents wait to receive/hand off their children. This parking issue overuses side streets, and creates hazards for pedestrians and other drivers. One possible solution could be for Roma Hall (at the corner of Howes and Ewen) to accommodate parent parking at weekday pickup and drop off only. If that is an amenable comprise, it would be helpful for both the City and School Board to recognize or incentivize Roma Hall for this alternative.

We at the QRA sincerely thank you for reviewing our concern and request for assistance. Parking and road issues alongside the Queensborough schools have been a long standing issue. It is our deep concern that the City and School Board move to rectify this issue as soon as possible. Our population is growing. Our traffic is increasing. This matter needs to be addressed shortly, especially before someone is hurt.

Many thanks for your time.

Best wishes,

Laurie Moore
President, QRA

Laura Ranalletta
Director, QRA

CC: Gurveen Dhaliwal – SD 40 Trustee,
Paul Manville - QE Principal
Renee Chadwick – QCC Facility Manager
Bernadette Gourlay – QE PAC Chair
Michelle Pastro – QMS PAC Chair
Lisa Nasato – QMS Principal