

October 25, 2017

To: Official Trustee and Elected Trustees of the Vancouver School Board

Cc: Ian Cannon, Principal Henry Hudson Elementary

From: Robert Ford
Henry Hudson Elementary PAC Chair
32-1480 Arbutus St
Vancouver, BC V6J 3W8
robert@quokkasystems.com / HudsonPAC@gmail.com

Re: Henry Hudson Elementary Playing Field Status

Congratulations to all the newly elected Trustees. It's good to have an elected Board providing stewardship during this unusual time in BC Education.

Attached you will find the documents pertaining to the Henry Hudson Elementary playing field, including Ms. Turner's response to our petition for drainage mitigation.

Now that the wet season has started we have had days where the playing field has been closed to students due to safety concerns.

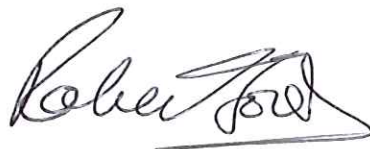
The problem is worse this school year because, due to class size changes, **there is no indoor playing space for rainy days**. This is wrong from the point of view of keeping kids active and keeping kids safe. I.e. hygiene of the field is so bad that I'm investigating how to test soil and water samples. Daily, our Principal cleans up after neighbourhood dogs. *And* we have humans doing their business on the site. Standing water and children's wet footwear. Let *that* sink in for a moment.

The assertion from the VSB is that the cost is prohibitive. This is the case if the field is being replaced. However, it defies logic that there's no way to improve the existing drainage. I spoke with a friend who works in facilities in another school district and he has seen drainage mitigation applied. This led me to Google "draining a wet playing field methods." I found this web site <http://safesportsfields.cals.cornell.edu/drainage> that included 5 different methods for improving sub surface drainage.

I saw this article regarding playing equipment. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/schools-playground-fundraising-government-budget-1.4369556>

Our PAC already funded the replacement of the old wooden playground equipment. Is there any way we can have that money put into the field? (Of course that won't happen until the 2018 provincial budget.)

I must call upon you to find some way to meet the health and safety standards for the Henry Hudson Elementary children. Our parents at the school are willing and able to help. But cannot, obviously, act alone.





Vancouver School Board

School District No. 39

1580 West Broadway

Vancouver, B.C. V6J 5K8

Telephone: 604-713-5000

Fax: 604-713-5049

June 1, 2017

Henry Hudson PAC
Attn: Robert Ford, Interim PAC Chair
1551 Cypress St.
Vancouver, BC V6J 3L3

Dear Mr. Ford,

Re: Henry Hudson field drainage issues

Henry Hudson field has a long history of poor, wet conditions due to lack of a drainage system and improper subsurface materials. Over the years, three grass areas at Hudson, Bayview and Tennyson Elementary schools were converted to "playfields" without having adequate drainage installed. This has resulted in pooling water on these fields following heavy rains.

In 2015, Hudson, Bayview and Tennyson were added to the summer aeration, sand topdressing and over-seeding program at an approximate cost of \$5,000/field. This practice did not resolve the matter but did help alleviate some of the holes etc. Unfortunately this program ended in 2016 due to maintenance budget constraints.

The cost to properly build a grass field with irrigation, proper drainage and a sand base growing medium could range from \$250,000 to \$400,000, depending on site conditions.

While we appreciate that the field is less than ideal at certain times of the year, staff have done the best they can to address the issue with available resources.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Dianne Turner'.

Dianne Turner
Official Trustee

c: Scott Robinson, Superintendent
Guy Bonnefoy, Interim Secretary Treasurer
Rob Schindel, Associate Superintendent
Jim Meschino, Director of Facilities

To: Dianne Turner
Official Trustee
Vancouver School Board
1580 West Broadway
Vancouver, BC V6J 5K8

From: Robert Ford
Interim PAC Chair, Henry Hudson Elementary
1551 Cypress St.
Vancouver, BC V6J 3L3

robert@quokkaystems.com / hudsonpac@gmail.com

Date: May 24, 2017

Re: Petition for Drainage Mitigation for the Henry Hudson Elementary Field

Dear Ms Turner,

I am writing on behalf of the PAC Executive at Henry Hudson Elementary and the parents of and community around the school.

On May 7, we issued the following petition online.

<https://www.change.org/p/vancouver-school-board-fix-drainage-of-the-henry-hudson-elementary-playing-field>

The Parent Advisory Council (PAC) at Henry Hudson Elementary asks that the Vancouver School Board immediately take steps to mitigate the drainage issues of the Henry Hudson Elementary School playing field.

The children at Henry Hudson Elementary in Vancouver, BC are unable to use the playing field most of the year due to drainage issues and the conditions are not sanitary. Standing water is never good. The Parent Advisory Council (PAC) recently learned more about the May 4, 2017 earthquake drill, and that it included a reunification drill in which parents and children are reunited. The PAC realized that in the event of an earthquake this muddy, bog of a field would be used as a first aid station, reunification point and **morgue**. The thought of our traumatized children (those that survive the collapse of the seismically unsafe structure) being tended to in the mud is horrifying.

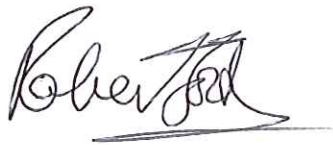
At time of writing our petition had taken 192 signatures. There seems to be broad support in the community for doing something to make the field more usable. The wording of the petition is below, but I want to stress that the parents at Hudson are **not** expecting, nor think reasonable, to have a full field replacement. Some intervention for drainage seems more logical. Even something that could help the field add any usable time would be adequate. We feel this imperative given the over capacity status at the school and the fact we have no dates for seismic upgrading.

Some of the reasons for signing that have been posted include:

- This is pretty brutal, not only for our kids, but for the entire community who use this park.
- all our grandchildren attend Henry Hudson and the field has been in poor shape for far to long, it needs to be fixed as soon as possible
- Kids need and want to play outside, but can't due to the state of their playing field. It's an absolute disgrace and I hope that during the summer break the field will be made 'playable' . Thanking you in advance VSB!
- My son went to Henry Hudson from K-7. He is now in High Scholl. I do still have a daughter attending Henry Hudson. I am really hoping the VSB sends someone who knows what has to be done for good. I've seen in the past workers from VSB working on this issue without success. VSB really needs to start taking important and good actions thinking of the kids. They are our future!!!
- I am signing because obesity rates in North America are rising and children need a place to run. There are close to 400 students at Hudson and the existing playground without the field does not accommodate all students properly and safely at lunch and recess.
- My two boys go to Henry Hudson and can not use it for after school soccer, rugby or track and field. Basically it's used by the ducks as a wading pool. It needs to be fixed!
- My child comes home covered in mud most days as he can't resist these huge mud puddles. They are unsanitary and limit the use of the playing field.

At this point, the Hudson PAC requests a response from the Vancouver School Board outlining what options for draining mitigation are available. Of course if there's any way we can help, please advise.

Thanks,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert", with a horizontal line underneath it.