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Open letter to Qualicum School District 69 Board of Trustees,

Last evening's public meeting was cancelled because of snow: therefore, I write again to share an opportunity to better understand the changing, fluctuating age distributions occurring in our communities and district.

Canadians have arguably the best data in the world with which to consider the future population and enrolment by age groups, namely, Statistics Canada's Census of Population conducted every five years.

The Population Projection Project uses Statistics Canada's Census of Population data with methods that the United Nations calls "census survival ratios" (aka cohort change ratios) because

"the resulting projections not only have internal validity but, also, 'face validity'" ("State and local population projections: Methodology and analysis." Smith, S., Tayman, J., & Swanson, D., 2001, pp. 282-285).

... and because the method is

"very useful ... transparent and easy to explain to a wide range of audiences." ("Forecasting the Population of Census Tracts by Age and Sex." David A. Swanson, Alan Schlottmann, Bob Schmidt, 2009, p. 60).

The Population Projection Project, developed here to address concerns about how projections are created, provides population projections by age with several scenarios (including high, medium, low growth scenarios). According to Statistics Canada's former Chief Statistician, Ivan Fellegi, more than one scenario is important.

" The issue of scenarios is important: in order to underline the analytic character of projections, it is our policy to publish always a set of possible projections, each corresponding to a well defined analytic scenario." (Analytic Activities At Statistics Canada, Ivan Fellegi, 1999)

You may recall the efforts in 2010-11 to include high, medium, low growth scenarios. As you know, this QSD facility review only provides one forecast and does not include the method used to create the forecast. The Population Projection Project provides the methods and input data used, as well as several well defined analytic scenarios based on current demographic trends. Understanding current trends is also important for the facility review.

" How can society intelligently participate in the setting of ... priorities if the population does not understand where we are, and where we are heading on current trends." Statistics Canada's former Chief Statistician, (Analytic Activities At Statistics Canada, Ivan Fellegi, 1999)

As you know, the facility review only provides one forecast. The School Act requires the "consideration of future enrolment growth in the district of persons of school age, persons of less than school age and adults" SCHOOL OPENING AND CLOSURE ORDER, BC Ministry of Education, October 15, 2009, Authority: School Act, section 73 and 168 (2)(p) Section 5. (1) (b)

Will you endorse allowing population projections of persons of school age, persons of less than school age and adults, reflecting current trends, with more than one scenario, as set out in the Population Projection Project, to be included in the Facilities Review?

Yours truly,



Wm. Warren Munroe, M.A.

Population Projection Project at www.wminformatics.com/PopulationProjections/About.html

This Population Projection Project was accepted for presentation by the Population Specialty Group of the American Association of Geographers AGM, the 2013 Congress "Methods for Projections" session hosted by the Canadian Population Society, and the International Conference of Population Geographies, the Netherlands