



RUMOURS & REALITIES



Rumour "Connaught is closing."

Reality The board has not said they intend to close the school. Connaught has a healthy population of over 300 students, and a full pre-K program.

Rumour "The foundation is beyond repair."

Reality The building can be fully underpinned for \$3.75 million, according to an estimate submitted to the board by W&R Foundation Specialists. However, without testing, the extent of required repairs remains unknown.

Rumour "It costs more to renovate than build new."

Reality The \$23 million renovation estimate for Connaught called for demolishing and completely replacing 90 per cent of the building, to accommodate an open concept design. Meanwhile, other school divisions have respectfully renovated buildings of similar age and condition for less than half that amount.

Rumour "The community will get to design a new building."

Reality The board is on record stating all new builds will follow an

open concept design. The province has said new builds will follow a "cookie cutter" pattern. There will be design consultations, but the basic structure will be pre-set.

Rumour "Our children will learn better in a new building."

Reality There is no empirical evidence linking open concept architecture to improved student achievement. Meanwhile, numerous concerns have been raised about the new designs.

Rumour "A new building will be safer."

Reality The board has said Connaught is currently safe for occupancy. It could remain so with repairs and maintenance. New buildings have safety features, but they also have health and safety challenges, including problematic security, unhealthy noise levels and off-gassing from large volumes of synthetic and composite materials.

Rumour "Old buildings cannot be made wheelchair accessible."

Reality Moose Jaw's historic schools, similar in age and structure to Connaught, have been made fully accessible.

Rumour "New buildings are better for the environment."

Reality A recent study by the Preservation Green Lab revealed it can take up to 80 years for a new energy efficient building to overcome the climate change impacts created by its construction. The thick walls and sturdy materials of older schools naturally retain energy, making for highly efficient buildings when retrofitted.

Rumour "Accepting a replacement plan will ensure a public school remains in the Cathedral Area."

Reality New builds have shorter life spans and are designed to be more portable and easily disassembled. As well, it is unclear where a new build would be located, as the school's assigned catchment area is larger than the Cathedral Area, and boundaries are subject to change. Finally, the experience of Athabasca School tells us a promised new school is never a surety.

In contrast, a timely upgrade to a large, immovable, existing building represents a secure, long-term investment in our neighbourhood.

ANOTHER SCHOOL IS POSSIBLE!

Imagine a state-of-the-art renovated heritage school, combining the best features of the past with today's education needs. Such schools exist all over North America.

- * Historic schools elsewhere have won acclaim for student achievement, energy efficiency, architectural innovation and community pride.
- * They showcase the alternative to tossing public buildings on the landfill every few decades.
- * They provide students a living laboratory of history and environmental sustainability.

Why not here in Regina's historic Cathedral Area? What better place? Together we can make it happen!

SAVE OUR CONNAUGHT HERITAGE (SOCH)

Goals

- * Develop an affordable 'renovate & retrofit' option for historic Connaught School.
- * Ensure school board decision-making is open and transparent, and that community input is respected and acted upon.
- * Increase public understanding of the value of Connaught School.
- * Facilitate dialogue and information-sharing.

Activities

- * **Community Action.** Public events and fundraising. Keeping community informed of school board decisions and upcoming meetings
- * **Lobbying.** Petition and letter campaigns. Meetings with community groups and decision-makers.
- * **2nd Opinion.** Working with qualified professionals across North America and internationally to cost out a renovation option.
- * **Legal.** Currently working with lawyers and conservation experts with the intention of pressing for the public's right to enter and inspect a public building.
- * **Future Watch.** Monitoring the board and province's plans for Connaught School and its students. Researching these plans if/when they emerge.

Finances

SAVE OUR CONNAUGHT HERITAGE is a registered non-profit. We fund our activities entirely through donations. Your generous support so far has helped finance:
* Freedom of Information request fees * fees for obtaining school blueprints * photocopying * festival table rentals, and * public outreach activities such as the Paul Bennett talk and the Information Cafe.

WE STILL NEED HELP to cover the costs of building testing and future legal costs. Our goal is to raise \$5,000 in the next two months. Please help us reach this goal by donating online at www.saveourconnaught.ca or send a cheque payable to Save Our Connaught Heritage c/o 2035 Princess St., Regina, S4T 3Z5.

Membership

Anyone can join, free of charge. Sign up online or fill out a volunteer sheet at public events. By volunteering you can:

- * **ENJOY** fun opportunities to meet up with friends and neighbours at community events
- * **EXPLORE** your creative side through action and ideas.
- * **GROW** your knowledge about heritage schools, energy retrofitting, neighbourhood development, building renovation and other fascinating topics.
- * **INNOVATE** new approaches to sustaining schools and neighbourhoods.
- * **DISCOVER** what makes the Cathedral Area a great place to live, and how we can work together to keep it that way.

LEARN MORE AT WWW.SAVEOURCONNAUGHT.CA

saveourconnaught@gmail.com Follow our blog, join us on Facebook!