

## EDITORIAL: Old versus new school

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Loaded question: The province was willing to put forth the funds to make the school safe. The sale of lands was not to address safety. - cjk

It's a no-win situation. **Keep school lands in the public trust or rebuild seismically unsound schools to meet the needs of our communities.**

The District of North Vancouver opted for the former on Monday night, turning down the rezoning of an unused chunk of Braemar elementary and halting the \$2.4-million sale of the land to help rebuild Argyle secondary.

As school land sales go, this one is about as innocuous as they come. The impact on the quality of life in the neighbourhood with four extra homes with secondary suites would have been negligible. The land in question, after being purchased by the school district in the 1960s, had never been used as anything but a deciduous backdrop for the neighbours.

Apparently forgetting what they signed up for when filing their nomination papers, a few councillors shied away simply because the issue has become too divisive.

At the very least, this should have gone to a public hearing.

Argyle will still get its rebuild, just smaller and likely with fewer of the public amenities that make a school truly part of a community.

Of course, we have the province to thank for this mess. Despite giving school boards almost no tools with which to raise money, they're now expected to come up with millions of dollars to pay for capital costs. We agree it's a sick practice that should stop immediately.

But you can only play the blame game for so long before someone needs to take responsibility. It was the District of North Vancouver council who had that job Monday night and they shirked it.

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