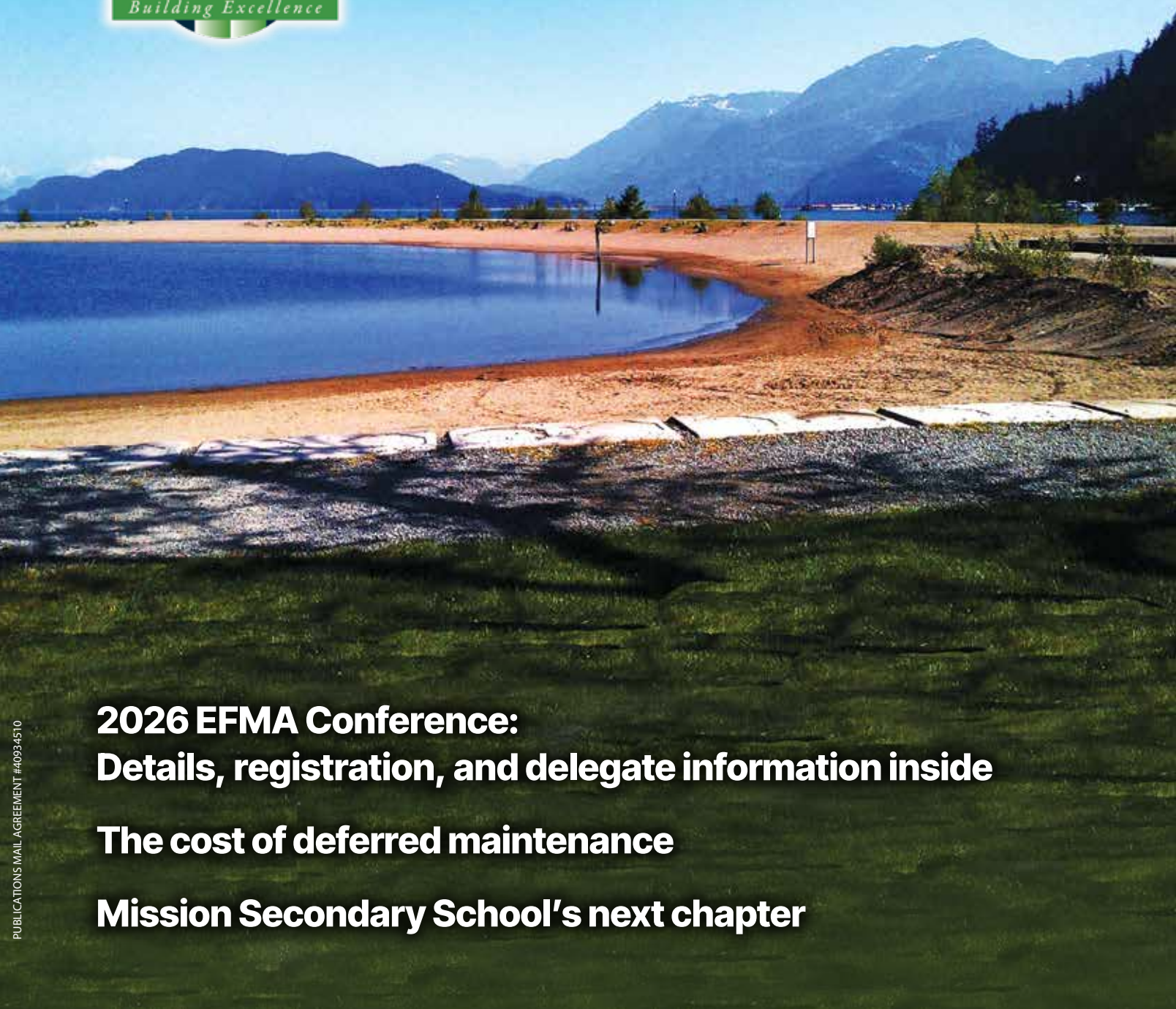


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**2026 EFMA Conference:  
Details, registration, and delegate information inside**

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## ON THE COVER

Harrison Lake, looking north from the resort, with a warm lagoon in front. North from the resort, the lake is 40 miles long and offers great boating, fishing, and a myriad of awesome campsites from the south to the north end. After you park your school district tasks, then you can relax for a few days here (or on the lake) to recharge. Might see you there!

*Photo by Chuck Morris.*



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MESSAGE FROM THE  
EFMA PRESIDENT

# Megan MacDonald



As we move into another busy spring season, I am pleased to share an update on the work underway across the Educational Facility Managers Association of B.C. This year carries special significance as we prepare to gather in Penticton from June 1-5 to celebrate 60 years of building excellence. Reaching this milestone is a testament to the dedication, professionalism, and steady leadership of facility managers across our province.

Our Executive Team and Education Committee have been working diligently to shape a conference that honours both the history and the future of our profession. A tremendous amount of planning goes into creating an event that informs, inspires, and connects our members, and we look forward to welcoming you to what promises

to be a memorable and meaningful 60th anniversary conference. We are also delighted to welcome back our colleagues from the Alberta Educational Facilities Administrators Association, whose continued participation strengthens the collaborative spirit between our organizations.

Advocacy remains a central priority for EFMA. I would like to recognize Heather Simm for her continued work representing our association on the Exempt Compensation Working Group with BCPSEA. Heather has been actively gathering input from members, and your voices are essential. If there are considerations or recommended changes you feel should be brought forward, please reach out to Heather as your feedback directly shapes the conversations taking place on your behalf.

Another cornerstone of EFMA's strength lies in our zone meetings. These regional gatherings create invaluable opportunities for members to share experiences, discuss challenges, and support one another. We are deeply grateful to our zone representatives for the time, commitment, and leadership they dedicate to organizing and facilitating these meetings. Their work ensures members across the province remain connected, informed, and supported.

I also want to take a moment to acknowledge the heartbreaking events in Tumbler Ridge, which have touched several of our EFMA members and their families, colleagues, and staff. Our hearts are with you, and we are holding your community close during this painful time. Moments like these remind us of the strength and importance of the community that defines our association.

As we look ahead to our 60th Annual Conference, we do so with gratitude, for your work, your dedication, and the support you provide to your districts and to one another. We look forward to seeing many of you in Penticton as we honour our past, celebrate our present, and continue building excellence for the future.

**Megan MacDonald** ■

The advertisement for Titan Sport Systems is presented in a vertical layout. On the left side, there is a logo consisting of a shield with a stylized 'T' and 'S' in orange and grey. Below the logo, the text reads 'TITAN SPORT SYSTEMS' in large, bold, black letters. Underneath that, it says 'COMMERCIAL SPORT CONTRACTOR ATHLETIC FLOORING &amp; EQUIPMENT, SPECTATOR SEATING'. A list of services follows: 'Installations', 'Maintenance', 'Consulting', 'Inspections', 'Repairs', and 'Design'. At the bottom of this text block are three circular icons for Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. Below the icons, the contact information is provided: 'TF: 1-866-705-7550', 'info@titansportssystem.com', and 'www.titansportssystem.com'. On the right side of the advertisement, there are three stacked photographs showing different views of indoor sports facilities, including basketball courts and ice hockey rinks, illustrating the company's work.

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# MESSAGE FROM THE AEFAA PRESIDENT **Robert Krahn**



Providing a safe environment for our students is a priority for us as educational facility managers; this isn't always possible when there are potential threats within our schools.

Not too many years ago, our school divisions had open doors, which gave students, parents, and the community a welcoming feel. Now my school division is fully locked down, and we use video intercoms at the entrances for access. We've done a lot to protect our schools from external threats; unfortunately, more often than not, the threat comes from inside. Which begs the question, what will school security look like in another ten years? Only time will tell, but we do know that the world is a different place now than it was when we grew up, and it will continue to evolve.

The tragic loss of life in the Tumbler Ridge school shootings hit home, as we all know, it's a possibility in our own schools. It's something we all have in the back of our minds but hope to never have to deal with. On behalf of AEFAA, our thoughts and prayers go out to all EFMA school divisions and those affected by the tragic loss in Tumbler Ridge.

As many of us have, I started my career in the trades. The trades gave me a strong foundation in facility knowledge and has been a key to my success in my current role. I've always had a passion for trades, which is why I am excited to announce that this year's conference will be "Salute to the Trades". The executive and I have worked hard to include sessions that directly relate to trades. For the first time, we will have a two-day conference package option that is focused on providing value to our tradespeople. Trades and tradespeople are the backbone of facility operations; they provide the vital infrastructure that ensures education can happen safely and comfortably in our school facilities.

When I stepped into the role of AEFAA President in the spring of 2024, increasing the value of membership was my top priority. The launch of our virtual round tables was met with a fantastic response. These sessions

have created a way for our members to remain engaged and connected throughout the year. This spring, we are offering a dual stream of sessions at the spring conference, with one focused on our maintenance/trades staff.

We sent out a Facilities Questionnaire to our members this year, which was a great way for our members to see what other school divisions are doing with their resources. We focused our Fall Workshop professional development to facility focused sessions. We have moved our management skills session to a separate, standalone event, as we continue to recognize the importance of developing leadership skills.

In addition to these changes, the executive has reviewed and updated the bylaws, executive job descriptions, including adding a new administrative assistant to support the AEFAA executive. I've been fortunate to have a strong, dedicated executive who has been key to achieving these goals.

Networking can be an underrated benefit of being a part of an organization like AEFAA or EFMA, but in reality, it is one of the greatest values. I had the privilege of attending my first EFMA conference in 2018, and it's been a pleasure to work alongside their executive for the last eight years. I look forward to what the future holds for both our organizations. My network continues to grow, and I'm very appreciative of the connections and friendships I've gained throughout the years. I look forward to the years ahead, as AEFAA and EFMA continue our collaboration to support safe and caring environments for our students.

Following the spring conference, I will be transitioning to the role of Past President. I look forward to continuing to serve the AEFAA membership in that role. It's been a busy two years as president, and I am so thankful for an executive team that stood by the vision and did so much to make it happen.

Best regards,  
**Robert Krahn** ■

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# HONOURING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF **Kalyse Kerr**



The Kalyse Kerr Legacy Fund was created to honour the life, leadership, and passion of Kalyse Kerr — a young woman who left an indelible mark on her community. Through scholarships, bursaries, and support for student athletics, her spirit will continue to uplift and empower young people for years to come.

Kalyse Kerr left us far too early on July 3, 2025, just after graduation. She had a remarkable passion for supporting women and young people as they found their place in the world. She believed deeply in fairness, equality, and opportunity — especially in the areas of Human Rights and Women’s Rights.

Accepted to MacEwan University in Edmonton as a Paralegal, Kalyse was about to begin her journey in the legal field — a path she chose because she wanted to make a

meaningful difference. We have no doubt she would have been a powerful advocate and voice for those who needed one.

Rugby quickly became a defining part of Kalyse’s high school experience. More than a sport, it was a community where she thrived. She was instrumental in helping revive the L.V. Rogers Rugby program after COVID, demonstrating leadership, hard work, and commitment well beyond her years.

In Grade 11, she was among the athletes selected to attend the B.C. Summer Games in Abbotsford in the summer of 2024 — an accomplishment she was incredibly proud of. In Grade 12, she was named co-captain, serving as a genuine leader and encouraging example to her teammates. She led not just with skill, but with heart.

Kalyse loved the camaraderie of the rugby community — the teamwork, the laughter, and the lifelong friendships formed on and off the field. She was always the one cheering others on, lifting spirits, and reminding her teammates of

their strength. She was known for her intense passion and genuine true grit. If something mattered to Kalyse, she made it happen.

It is an incredible honour to introduce the Kalyse Kerr Legacy Fund — a tribute to a shining star extinguished far too early. Kalyse lived with passion, conviction, and a deep love for her community. While our hearts continue to search for meaning in this unimaginable loss, we have created this legacy as a way to carry forward the light she brought into the world. Through this fund, her spirit will continue to uplift, encourage, and empower others — just as she did every day of her life.

The Kalyse Kerr Legacy Fund has been created to reflect these passions and values. Each year, an award will be presented to an outstanding female rugby player, honouring leadership, perseverance, and dedication — qualities Kalyse embodied. This award will be proudly displayed at L.V. Rogers Secondary School as a lasting reminder of her impact.

In addition, the fund will provide

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Each year, an award will be presented to an outstanding female rugby player, honouring leadership, perseverance, and dedication – qualities Kalyse embodied. This award will be proudly displayed at L.V. Rogers Secondary School as a lasting reminder of her impact.

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bursaries to one male and one female student pursuing post-secondary education. The amount raised each year will determine the size of these bursaries, allowing the fund to grow and evolve as support increases.

We know firsthand how transformative team sports can be – building confidence, resilience, friendships, and lifelong memories. Students who lack financial means may miss out on these invaluable

experiences. Through this fund, we also aim to remove those obstacles and open doors, just as Kalyse would have wanted.

We humbly invite you to consider donating to the Kalyse Kerr Legacy Fund (kalysekerrlegacy@gmail.com). Your generosity will help ensure Kalyse’s dream of empowering students – especially young women – to pursue their goals with courage and confidence.

In June 2025, Kalyse received an EFMA bursary in the amount of \$1,000 which was donated to The Kalyse Kerr Legacy Fund

Kalyse lived boldly, loved fiercely, and encouraged others without hesitation. She would be deeply proud to see the continued support for students as they chase their dreams and discover their potential.

Her light lives on through all of us. ■

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# THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF SPOA / EFMA ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

## Celebrating 60 years of our annual conferences

Reaching a 60-year milestone for an association's annual conference is more than just a number — it's a testament to decades of connection, collaboration, and shared vision. Over the years, this gathering has evolved from a modest meeting of like-minded professionals into a cornerstone event that inspires innovation, strengthens networks, and shapes the future of the field.

From its early days — where conversations happened over coffee in small meeting rooms — to today's dynamic, multi-day programs filled with keynote speakers, workshops, and celebrations, the conference has been a living record of the association's growth and resilience.

This diamond anniversary is not only a chance to honour the pioneers who laid the foundation but also to celebrate the members, partners, and volunteers who have kept the tradition vibrant. It's a moment to look back with gratitude, celebrate the present with pride, and step boldly into the future with renewed purpose.

As facilities and operations professionals, we understand the balance between maintaining what already exists and adapting to what lies ahead. Rooted in a 60-year tradition, this annual conference continues to evolve with the times, guided by the enduring values that have shaped our work from the very start.

We welcome all our members and there are many over the past few years as retirements are catching up to a lot of people.

We have come this far and developed a great many educational opportunities along the way, benefitting hundreds of members and supporting them as they delve into facilities and the staff that maintain them!

As we move forward, we will continue to build the impetus to keep the conference moving while remembering the past and why we are all here in the first place!

Happy 60th Anniversary to EFMA's Great Annual Conference!

CM ■



This diamond anniversary is not only a chance to honour the pioneers who laid the foundation but also to celebrate the members, partners, and volunteers who have kept the tradition vibrant



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# Why school bus driver training matters

PROVIDED BY THE ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION SERVICES OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



Each day, approximately 1,700 school bus drivers across British Columbia begin their work with one single goal: to transport students to and from school, ensuring everyone makes it home safely.

This is no simple task. School bus drivers must manage student behaviour inside the bus while simultaneously identifying and mitigating risks outside of it. Along every route there are numerous hazards and distractions, but the most dangerous moments of the school day occur when students are loading or unloading the school bus.

Every day, school bus drivers across the province report motorists who illegally pass their school bus while the red alternating lights are activated. These lights are a clear signal to the public that children are

entering or exiting the bus and may be crossing the roadway directly in front of it.

Many school district transportation departments actively run public awareness campaigns to highlight the dangers of passing a stopped school bus. Despite ongoing messaging through social media, radio, posters, and videos, school districts continue to receive near-miss and incident reports from school bus drivers, on a daily basis!

Passing a school bus while its red alternating lights are activated is a violation of Section 149 of the British Columbia Motor Vehicle Act and may result in a \$368 fine and three demerit points on the driver's record.

Given the frequency of this dangerous action, it is worth

reflecting on how these student-safety heroes — our school bus drivers — manage to do their jobs safely, day after day.

Comprehensive school bus driver training is essential. It ensures student safety, reinforces driver professionalism, and provides parents and communities with peace of mind and trust, that children are being transported safely.

The Association of School Transportation Services of BC (ASTSBC) School Bus Driver Training Program is a professional safety-focused curriculum designed specifically for school bus drivers in British Columbia. The program equips drivers with the knowledge and confidence needed to operate school buses safely and effectively. This program is widely adopted by



school districts and transportation companies across the province as the standard for driver training.

The curriculum provides comprehensive instruction on proper loading and unloading procedures, including the correct use of alternating red and yellow warning lights. Through this training, drivers are also equipped to teach students safe road-crossing practices and to recognize danger zones and blind spots surrounding the school bus.

These standardized training procedures play a critical role in reducing the risk of serious injury or death and have been proven to save lives.

School bus drivers are held to higher legal and professional standard than most drivers on the road. To achieve this, training must be provided in a consistent manner with clear instruction. Effective training goes beyond vehicle operation. It develops a driver's ability to anticipate risk and make sound decisions under pressure.

The BC School Bus Driver Training Program includes comprehensive training for drivers who are preparing for their class 2 or 4 license (S-Belt - School Bus Entry Level Training) or for current drivers who need that refresher.

- The training program consists of eight classroom modules plus a practical coaching session.
- Upon completing all modules and the practical assessment, drivers will receive certification through Thinking Driver which supports qualification for provincial recognition.

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School Bus Inspection & Maintenance

**Module 3:**

Attitude (Personal factors, stress, aggression)

**Module 4:**

Driving A School Bus (Driving techniques & Risk Management)

**Module 5:**

Loading and Unloading Students

**Module 6:**

Student Relations and Management.

**Module 7:**

Emergencies, Evacuations, Emergency Equipment and First Aid



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**PREREQUISITES**

- 1) Students must obtain their Class 2 or 4 learners license prior to starting the course.
- 2) Students must obtain their airbrake endorsement prior to starting the course (applicable if operating a bus with airbrakes).

**Course Content: (Practical & Theory Training)**

**Module 1:** Overview of the Student Transportation Industry

**Module 2:** Components & Systems

**Module 3:** Trip Inspection

**Module 4:** Basic Driving Techniques

**Module 5:** Professional Habits and Attitude - Defensive Driving

**Module 6:** Off Road Tasks and Maneuvers

**Module 7:** Legal and Regulatory

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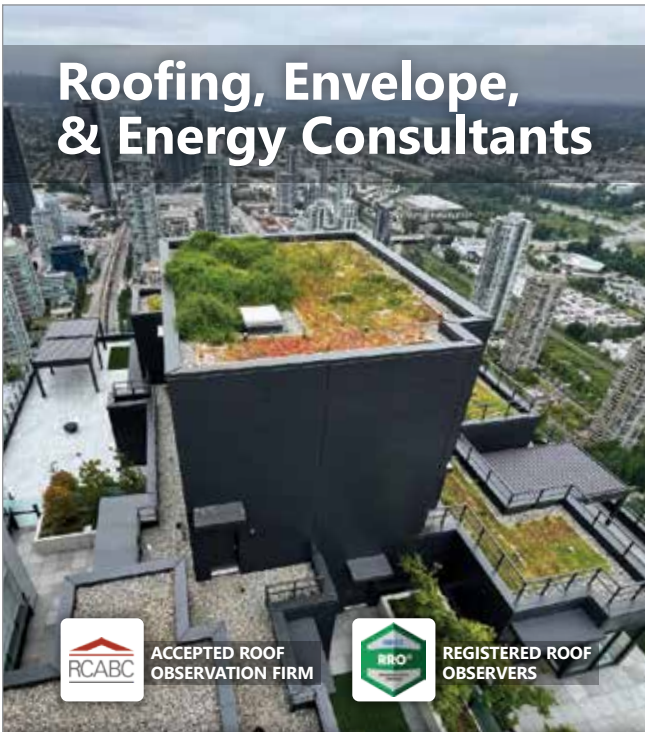
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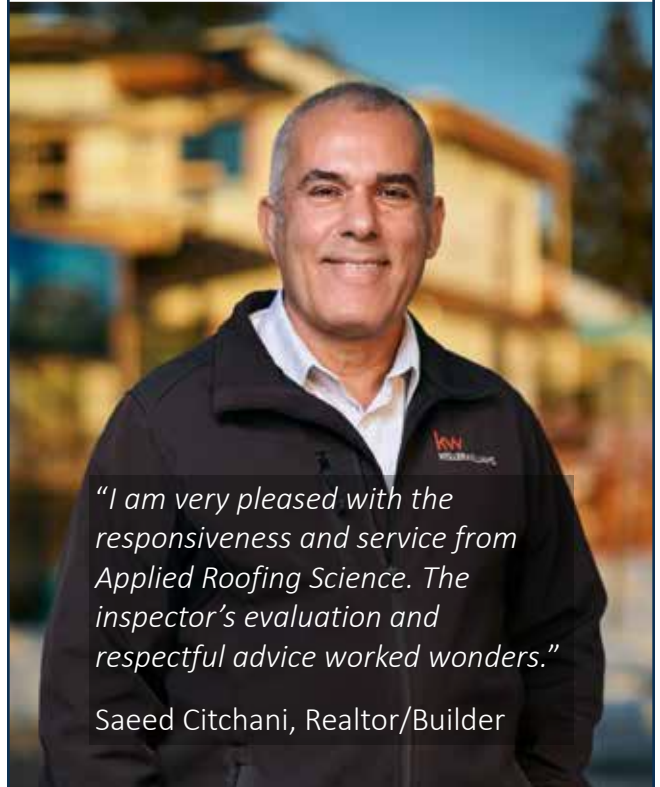


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**PENTICTON TRADE & CONVENTION CENTRE**  
**June 1<sup>st</sup> – June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2026**  
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**MONDAY, JUNE 1**

**Professional Development A:**

***Pre-Registration is Required for Professional Sessions***

8:00am – 12:00pm Excel - Advanced  
Presenter: Thonda Darbyson, Okanagan College

Designed for learners with a solid foundation of MS Excel skills, this advanced session focuses on using Excel as a practical data management and decision-support tool. Participants will learn to structure and analyze operational data, summarize complex information for reporting, and build reliable models that support planning and oversight. Topics include working with large datasets, applying advanced formulas and logic, automating calculations, creating clear summaries and dashboards, and improving data accuracy and consistency. Emphasis is placed on interpreting results, supporting budget and resource decisions, and communicating insights to stakeholders. By the end of the course, learners will be able to use Excel more confidently to monitor performance, identify trends and risks, and support effective operational and strategic decision-making in a facilities or operations environment.

12:30pm – 4:30pm Construction Contracts, Builders Liens and Common Pitfalls  
Presenter: Devon Lehrer, Construction Lawyer, Jenkins Marzban Logan LLP

An overview of common terms found in tender documents and contracts (with a focus on common CCDC language). Common misconceptions about contractual terms and how to avoid common pitfalls when negotiating and following your contract. An overview of the Builders Lien regime in British Columbia with a focus on common misconceptions and missteps when claiming and enforcing claims of builders lien.

**TUESDAY, JUNE 2**

**Professional Development A:**

8:00am – 10:00pm Indigenous Cultural Competency in the Education System  
Presenter: Mike Bowden, SD#73 Kamloops

This session introduces facilities and operations leaders to the concept of cultural humility and its practical application in education systems. Participants explore Indigenous terminology, Local Education Agreements, and protocols, while building skills to lead respectful, relationship-based practices across teams and systems. The program emphasizes reflection, real-world scenarios, and actionable strategies to support culturally responsive and inclusive school environments.

10:00am – 12:00pm Prime Contractor / Refusal of unsafe Work  
Prevention and Program Services, WorkSafeBC

**Professional Development B:**

9:00am – 1:00pm Mental Fitness: The Most Practical Mental Health Strategy You've Never Heard  
Presenter: Joshua Froc, Josh Froc Consulting Inc.

Josh founded and grew a 6-figure 1-person coaching business, helping great leaders become even better, starting with re-learning how to lead themselves. Josh goes beyond “mental health” and teaches leaders how to have the kind of presence that moves rooms, even after they are gone, and the kind of work-life balance that transforms people and cultures.

## TUESDAY, JUNE 2 con't

1:00pm – 5:00pm	EFMA 28 <sup>th</sup> Annual 9 Hole Golf Tournament Sponsored by: <b>BC Building Science</b> <b>Canstar Restorations</b> <b>Core Products</b> <b>GDL Property</b> <b>Kimco Controls</b> <b>National Air Technologies</b>	<i>Penticton Golf &amp; Country Club</i>
3:00pm – 7:00pm	Registration – Members and Exhibitors <b>Sponsored by: Victaulic</b>	<i>South Lobby</i>
3:00pm – 7:00pm	Exhibitors Set-Up	<i>Ballroom II/Salon A</i>
7:00pm – 10:00pm	Presidents Reception Sponsored by: <b>Caliber Sport Systems</b>	<i>North Lobby</i>
10:00pm – 12:00am	Hospitality Suite – Everyone Welcome Sponsored by: <b>RCABC</b> <b>Rocky Point Engineering</b> <b>Soprema</b>	<i>Station Public House (Balcom)</i>

## WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3

7:30am – 9:00am	Registration – Members and Exhibitors <b>Sponsored by: Victaulic</b>	<i>South Lobby</i>
8:00am – 9:30am	Breakfast <b>Sponsored by: Kimco Controls</b>	<i>Salon B/C</i>
8:00am – 10:30am	SSABC Annual General Meeting and Meet and Greet	
8:30am – 9:00am	New Member Orientation	
9:00am – 9:30am	Zone Meetings Zone 1 – Room 3                      Zone III & Zone VI – Room 6 Zone II – Room 8                      Zone IV – Room 5                      Zone V – Room 7	
9:00am – 9:30am	Exhibitor Training – Conference Overview	<i>Ballroom II/Salon A</i>
9:30am – 10:00am	Zone Chair and Executive Meeting	<i>Boardroom</i>
9:30am – 11:30am	Visit Exhibitors Booths - Coffee Sponsored by: <b>Station One Architects</b>	<i>Ballroom II/Salon A</i>
11:30am – 1:30pm	Opening Ceremonies Delegates, Exhibitors and Partners Luncheon Keynote: <i>Tom Watson, Handshakes to Hugs, Who You are Makes a Difference</i> Sponsored by: <b>Quantum Lighting</b>	<i>Salon B/C</i>
1:30pm – 3:00pm	Visit Exhibitors Booths - Coffee Sponsored by: <b>Breakwater Engineering</b>	<i>Ballroom II/Salon A</i>

## WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3 con't

11:30am – 1:30pm	Opening Ceremonies Delegates, Exhibitors and Partners Luncheon <i>Keynote: Tom Watson, Handshakes to Hugs, Who You are Makes a Difference</i> Sponsored by: <b>Quantum Lighting</b>	Salon B/C
1:30pm – 3:00pm	Visit Exhibitors Booths - Coffee Sponsored by: <b>Breakwater Engineering</b>	Ballroom II/Salon A
3:00pm – 4:30pm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Unlocking the Value of Cooperative Procurement                      Presenter: Kim Theissen, Canoe Procurement Group of Canada                       This session introduces how cooperative procurement supports school districts by meeting trade agreement requirements, reducing administrative workload, and simplifying complex purchasing. Participants will learn how to use cooperative contracts strategically to support their organization's goals, strengthen procurement outcomes, and streamline purchasing processes.</li> <li>2. Shops 2026 – Injuries, WorkSafe &amp; Shop Safety                      Presenter: Alan Kavanaugh, Noratek Solutions Inc.                       We will discuss the ongoing concerns and safety related requirements for IA Shops operated by Schools and Maintenance operations. The requirements for Guarding, Safe Workspaces, Ventilation &amp; Dust Mitigation, Safe Work Procedures, Training and Supervision will be discussed. Join Alan for an in-depth discussion on Injuries, WorkSafe, Shop design and Shop Safety for the future.</li> <li>3. Energy Project Underperformance: Discussion of Factors and Strategies to Mitigate                      Presenter: Kyle Hasenkox, Rocky Point Engineering,                       Energy saving projects sometimes fail to reach their desired targets, we will discuss factors that can impact project results, strategies to mitigate them and methods to verify. We have been involved in a number of projects during various stages including post implementation where we are attempting to understand why expectations differed from reality.</li> <li>4. Custodial Workload                      Round table open discussion. Custodial cleaning schedules</li> </ol>	
6:30pm – 9:00pm	Exhibitors Hosted Evening Costume: <b>Casino Royale</b> ( <i>costumes encouraged</i> )	Ballroom II/Salon A
9:00pm – 12:00am	Hospitality Suite – Everyone Welcome Sponsored by: <b>RCABC</b> <b>Rocky Point Engineering</b> <b>Soprema</b>	Station Public House (Balcomo)

## THURSDAY, JUNE 4

7:00am – 8:00am	Buffet Breakfast - Everyone Welcome Sponsored by: <b>FortisBC Energy Inc.</b>	Salon C
8:00am – 10:00am	EFMA Annual General Meeting and Elections	Salon B/C
8:30am – 10:00am	The Journey of a Mental Health Claim with WorkSafeBC	
9:30am – 10:00am	Exhibitors Meeting - Appointing New Exhibitor Representative	Ballroom II/Salon A
10:00am – 1:00pm	Visit Exhibitors Booths / Hosted Luncheon Sponsored by: <b>SMcN Consulting Inc.</b>	Ballroom II/Salon A
1:00pm – 3:00pm	<p>5. Ministry</p> <p>6. Cultural Safety and Humility Presenter: Jared Basil, Ktunaxa Cultural Framework Ambassador</p> <p>Cultural Safety and Humility, Cultivating Safe Space, Showing Up, Trauma Informed Practice</p> <p>7. Energy Landscape of BC and Where Do We Go From Here Presenter: Ben Nishi and Vlad Kostka, Fortis Energy Inc.</p> <p>Presentation on energy delivery, history, pricing in BC over the years and what we might see in the near future.</p> <p>8. Practical Enclosure Improvements through Maintenance and Renewal Presenter: James Bourget, RDH Building Science</p> <p>This presentation introduces core building science principles using clear, applied language tailored to facilities and operations teams. It explains how heat flow, moisture control, airtightness, and thermal bridging influence performance, durability, and service life in British Columbia school buildings. The session emphasizes incremental, low-risk enclosure improvements that can be incorporated during planned repairs or renewals, supporting informed maintenance planning, effective consultant engagement, and more durable project outcomes. Practical wildfire-resilient detailing is also covered, including non-combustible roof and wall assemblies, ember-resistant vents and soffits, improved air-sealing, and cladding/interface upgrades that reduce ignition risk and extend building survivability during wildfire exposure.</p> <p>9. Supporting Inclusion when Safety is of Concern: Practical and Statutory Considerations (Part 1) Presenter: Vince White, Director – Provincial School Outreach</p> <p>This session will explore both statutory and practical considerations for rare circumstances in which supporting a student's inclusion is raising concerns about their safety and/or the safety of others. The presentation will include a framework for supporting balanced decision making that is informed by statutory obligations. Session attendees will gain insight into what decisions school leaders need to make regarding safety and inclusion and how this shapes some of the requests facilities personnel receive. (See session 13 for Part 2)</p>	

## THURSDAY, JUNE 4 con't

- 3:15pm – 5:00pm
- 10. Energy Manager Round Table  
Chair: Adrian Pettyfor, Energy Manager, SD#43 Coquitlam and Aron Garrecht, BC Hydro
  - 11. Maintenance Round Table  
Chair: Justin Taylor, SD#68 Nanaimo/Ladysmith
  - 12. Operations/Custodial Round Table
  - 13. What Happens Outside the Classroom: A School Leader's Perspective on Inclusion and Safety (Part 2)  
Presenter: Sydney Harrison, Vice-principal – Provincial School Outreach
- Inclusive education extends beyond classrooms into hallways, resource rooms, playgrounds, and shared spaces often managed by facilities and safety teams. Drawing on experience as a school vice-principal and counsellor in the inclusive and Indigenous education contexts, this session examines how physical environments influence regulation, behaviour, safety and relationships. Participants will explore how design choices, lighting, layout, equipment, and supervision affect escalation and risk, and how unclear roles can unintentionally compromise safety. The session clarifies the difference between safety plans and behaviour plans and highlights how facilities and safety staff can proactively support inclusion while meeting occupational health and safety obligations.
- 6:00pm – 7:00pm Reception
- 7:00pm – midnight Dinner, and Social *Penticton Trade and Convention Centre*  
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## FRIDAY, JUNE 6

- 9:00am – 10:30am
- 14. Disability Management: Learning from Case Studies  
Presenter: Mark Somerville, Manager Health and Safety, SD#36 Surrey
- This session reviews four common disability management scenarios in education, including scent-related and lighting-related accommodations. Using real cases, participants will explore practical strategies for responding early, reducing barriers, and supporting safe, productive workplaces.
- 9:00am – 12:00pm
- 15. a) BCPSEA *Salon B*
    - b) School Protection Plan
    - c) Ministry Update

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### Conference Fees

Active Members Full Conference Package (includes banquet)	\$550	_____
Non-Members Full Conference Package (includes banquet)	\$700	_____
Members One Day Pass (does <b>not</b> include banquet) Wed ___ Thurs ___ Fri _____	\$300	_____
Non-Members One Day Pass (does <b>not</b> include banquet) Wed ___ Thurs ___ Fri _____	\$450	_____
ProD "A" Monday, June 1 & Tuesday, June 2	\$400	_____
ProD "A" Monday, June 1 only	\$250	_____
ProD "A" Tuesday, June 2 only	\$150	_____
ProD "B" Tuesday, June 2	\$200	_____
Partners Program (includes banquet)	\$150	_____
<b>Additional</b> Banquet Dinner ticket only	\$ 75	_____
Golf Tournament (handicap _____)	\$ 75	_____
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**Please indicate your selection of sessions and social events:**

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### Tuesday – June 2

President's Reception

#### Wednesday – June 3

Breakfast

Luncheon

Exhibitors Hosted Evening

Session 1

Session 2

Session 3

Session 4

#### Thursday – June 4

Buffet Breakfast

Hosted Luncheon

Session 5

Session 6

Session 7

Session 8

Session 9

Session 10

Session 11

Session 12

Session 13

Reception, Dinner & Social

#### Friday – June 5

Session 14

Session 15

**Sweatshirt Size:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please inform us of any dietary needs:**  
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**2026 CONFERENCE PROGRAM  
 PENTICTON TRADE & CONVENTION CENTRE  
 June 2 - 5, 2026**

**PARTNERS PROGRAM**

**TUESDAY, June 2**

1:00pm – 5:00pm	EFMA 28 <sup>th</sup> Annual 9 Hole Golf Tournament	Penticton Golf & Country Club
3:00pm – 7:00pm	Registration	South Lobby
7:00pm – 10:00pm	Presidents Reception	North Lobby
10:00pm – 12:00am	Hospitality Suite – Everyone Welcome	Station Public House (Balcomo)

**WEDNESDAY, June 3**

9:00am – 10:00am	Meet & Greet Breakfast at Penticton Conference Centre	Atrium
10:00am – 11:30am	TBD	
11:30am – 1:30pm	<b>Opening Ceremonies</b> Delegates, Exhibitors and Partners Luncheon <i>Keynote: Tom Watson</i>	Salon B/C
1:30pm – 3:30pm	TBD	
6:30pm – 9:00pm	Exhibitors Hosted Evening Costume: <b>“Casino Royale”</b>	Ballroom II/Salon A
9:00pm – 12:00am	Hospitality Suite – Everyone Welcome	Station Public House (Balcomo)

**THURSDAY, June 4**

9:30am – 4:00pm	Tour	
6:00pm – 12:00am	Reception, Dinner, and Social	Penticton Trade & Convention Centre



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# Accelerating school expansion across B.C. with panelized building systems

BY EXO CONSTRUCTION GROUP



Across British Columbia, school districts continue to face the challenge of expanding learning space quickly while maintaining quality and minimizing disruption to active campuses. Panelized modular construction is an effective approach to meeting these demands, combining the speed of off-site fabrication with the permanence and flexibility of traditional construction.

Based in Surrey, B.C., EXO Construction Group has been delivering school additions using its EXO Panelized Building System since 2015. The system was developed specifically to support institutional and educational construction, allowing project teams to accelerate

schedules while maintaining high standards for durability, design flexibility, and long-term building performance.

EXO's panelized projects range from a 2,880 square-foot, one-storey secondary school addition with three classrooms to a 31,000 square-foot, two-storey elementary school addition currently under construction. The system is also being used in the design-assist phase of a new elementary school that will include classrooms, collaborative learning spaces, staff areas, childcare spaces, a neighbourhood learning centre (NLC), and multipurpose areas.

Projects are located in School

District 62 (Sooke), including the Ruth King and David Cameron Elementary School additions; School District 43 (Coquitlam), including Scott Creek Middle School Addition and Dr. Charles Best Secondary; and School District 41 (Burnaby), including the Kitchener Elementary Integrated Addition, to name a few.

Because panelized construction relies on prefabricated structural and envelope components, early coordination during design and pre-construction is critical. EXO frequently works in a design-build capacity, collaborating closely with school districts, facilities teams, architects, and consultants to ensure building systems are coordinated

before fabrication begins. This process allows prefabrication to deliver its full schedule advantages while ensuring quality and constructability on site.

“All of our projects start with the same goal,” says Carl Philibert, President and Project Executive at EXO. “We want to deliver buildings that genuinely serve the communities they’re built for. Schools are long-term investments, and we take pride in helping districts and architects create learning environments where students and staff can thrive.”

All components of the EXO Panelized Building System are designed, engineered, and manufactured in-house at EXO’s facility in South Surrey. Wall and roof panels, available in both steel and wood construction, are fabricated with integrated structural and envelope elements before being delivered to site for installation.

This approach allows significant work to be completed in a controlled manufacturing environment while reducing on-site construction time. The flat-pack panel delivery system also allows projects to be



constructed efficiently within tight site layouts, with reduced disruption on active campuses.

With a multidisciplinary team spanning design, manufacturing, and construction, EXO supports projects under a variety of delivery models, including design-build, general contracting, construction management, and panel supply. Through collaboration and technical expertise, EXO continues to support school districts and architects across

British Columbia, Alberta, and the Pacific Northwest in delivering high-quality educational facilities that meet the evolving needs of students and communities.

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# Deferred maintenance: The unavoidable reality in public education facilities

We work in a great industry serving public schools and higher education facilities. While our roles and challenges may vary, one issue unites us all: deferred maintenance.

Why? Simply put, demand far outpaces available funding.

The B.C. School Trustees Association reported a few years ago that, despite increased investment, capital funding for schools continues to fall short. Their findings indicated that nearly \$9 billion would be required over five years to address

life cycle renewals and deferred maintenance across the province. That number alone speaks volumes.

Rather than getting mired in questions that have no immediate answers, we do what facilities professionals have always done: we acknowledge the reality, shake our heads, and do the best we can within an untenable situation that offers little immediate relief.

Even when capital or grant funding becomes available, the announced figure is rarely the true project

cost. Escalating construction prices since COVID, limited contractor availability, and phased project requirements all erode purchasing power. The same applies to annual Minor Capital grants what once funded a complete project may now only cover a phase or two.

As our staff go about their work, often stretched thin, the backlog remains. Deferred tasks wait their turn until funding, capacity, or timing allows them to be addressed again.

The risk, of course, is that deferral compounds cost.

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When structural maintenance is postponed, repairs inevitably become more expensive and more invasive. Minor issues left unattended will, over time, evolve into major problems and it is not a question of if, but when.

Much like maintaining mechanical systems, facilities are affected by multiple competing factors. Boilers, HVAC systems, and other major assets often exceed their intended service life simply because replacement funding is unavailable. Meanwhile, aging buildings remain occupied and operational.

Consider an older facility still serving students today. During an inspection, cracking is observed in a tile roof. Is it merely surface deterioration or an early indicator of

structural failure beneath the added weight of aging materials? Does the roof require immediate replacement before the next Annual Facility Grant? More importantly, is it safe?

These are not hypothetical concerns. They are the real, daily decisions facilities teams must make with incomplete funding and increasing risk.

Whatever the reason for deferring maintenance financial, logistical, or capacity related extended delays almost always lead to significantly higher costs in the future. When the issue is structural, occupant safety quickly becomes paramount, and a response plan must be developed without delay.

Deferred maintenance is not just a facilities issue. It is a financial,

operational, and safety issue, and one that requires realistic funding models and long-term planning if we are to truly protect the buildings entrusted to our care.

Deferred maintenance is not the result of inaction or poor planning; it is the predictable outcome of chronic funding gaps colliding with aging infrastructure and rapidly escalating construction costs. Facilities teams routinely extend asset life beyond design intent, absorb increasing operational risk, and defer renewal work to keep buildings functioning. However, risk mitigation is not a replacement for capital investment.

Industry data consistently shows that every dollar of deferred maintenance can cost three to five dollars when repairs are eventually



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undertaken due to deterioration, emergency response, and disruption. Construction costs have increased dramatically since COVID, meaning projects delayed even a few years now require significantly more funding to achieve the same outcome. At the same time, many building components, roofs, boilers, HVAC systems, and structural elements are operating well beyond their intended service life, increasing the likelihood of failure.

Each year of deferral accelerates asset degradation, shortens remaining useful life, and raises the probability of unplanned outages or safety-related closures. What begins as a manageable maintenance issue can quickly evolve into a high-risk event requiring emergency funding, temporary relocation of occupants, or restricted building use all at substantially higher cost.

To reverse this trajectory, deferred maintenance must be treated as a strategic risk management issue, not a discretionary expense. This requires sustained, predictable capital funding that:

- Reflects current construction and escalation costs.
- Enables complete project delivery, rather than fragmented, phased repairs.
- Supports proactive life-cycle renewal instead of reactive emergency response.

Early investment extends asset life, stabilizes operating costs, and materially reduces safety and operational risk. Continued deferral, by contrast, guarantees higher future expenditures and increased exposure.

CM ■

Facilities teams routinely extend asset life beyond design intent, absorb increasing operational risk, and defer renewal work to keep buildings functioning. However, risk mitigation is not a replacement for capital investment.

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# A new chapter for learning: Mission Senior Secondary School project takes shape

BY DEL STAFF



A transformative new educational facility is underway in Mission, one that reflects the community's

growth, cultural diversity, and modern learning needs. After a competitive procurement process,

Ventana Construction Corporation, in partnership with Thinkspace Architecture Planning Interior Design Ltd., has been selected to design and build the new Mission Senior Secondary School — a landmark investment in public education worth approximately \$176 million.

The project, initiated by the Province of British Columbia and School District No. 75 (Mission), responds to urgent needs to replace the aging existing school and to provide expanded capacity for students. Designed to serve 1,500 students in Grades 10–12, the four-storey facility also includes the ability for future expansion to 1,650 seats as enrolment grows. Construction is slated to begin in early 2026, with students expected to move into the new facility for the 2028–29 school

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year and final site work complete by 2029.

Located on the existing school site, the new Mission Senior Secondary School is being delivered under a design-build model, meaning the design and construction are integrated under a single contract. This model helps streamline coordination and ensures alignment between architectural vision and construction execution. Ventana, a Burnaby-based contractor with deep institutional experience, leads the build, while Thinkspace brings its architectural expertise to the forefront.

The facility's design combines contemporary educational planning with strong community orientation. Beyond traditional classrooms, the school will include:

- A dedicated Halq'eméylem language and cultural centre, honouring the local Indigenous heritage and providing space for cultural learning and language revitalization.
- Indigenous education and gathering areas, with local culture integrated throughout the building design.
- A Neighbourhood Learning Centre, with community-centric facilities including childcare, meeting rooms, a community kitchen, and shared spaces.
- Outdoor classrooms and enhanced



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sports and recreation amenities, including courts and fields to support athletics and student wellness.

Sustainability is another key priority. The design team has committed to incorporating significant greenhouse-gas reduction measures and energy-efficient strategies, aligning with broader provincial goals for low-carbon public infrastructure. The school's material palette and mechanical systems are being selected with

durability and low maintenance in mind, ensuring long-term operational value.

The project schedule reflects careful planning to minimize disruption. The existing Mission Secondary School will remain open for students throughout construction, with demolition only beginning once the new building is ready for occupancy. The overall build is conceived in three phases: construction of the new facility, demolition of the old school, and

final site work including playfields, courts, and parking areas.

For Mission and its surrounding communities, this investment represents an opportunity to shape future generations' educational experiences. With innovative design, cultural inclusivity, and community-oriented spaces, the new Mission Senior Secondary School is poised to become a vibrant hub of learning and connection for decades to come. ■

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Early decisions shape how a school serves its community for generations. Thoughtful planning ensures smoother projects—keeping timelines, budgets, and performance goals on track. For over 30 years, we've guided school districts across British Columbia from planning through construction, delivering high-performing learning environments as a trusted partner every step of the way.



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# Investing in facility managers: A strategic imperative for public schools



When school doors open each morning, education begins. But the learning that happens inside classrooms depends more on than teachers and curriculum; it depends on the people who ensure the building itself works. Facility managers are the unsung leaders behind safe, functional, and inspiring school environments. Their work is a direct investment in student success, staff wellbeing, and community confidence.

## Facility management: More than maintenance

Public school facility managers oversee every aspect of a district's physical assets, buildings, grounds, systems, and fleets. Their work is essential to student health and learning outcomes, and properly maintained HVAC systems, lighting, and indoor air quality improve concentration and reduce absenteeism. Studies show that students in well-maintained, well-ventilated schools perform better academically.

Facility managers coordinate fire safety, emergency preparedness, accessibility compliance, hazard mitigation, reducing risks to students, staff, and visitors while supporting safety and compliance. Preventive maintenance, energy management, and strategic planning save money over time and extend the life of buildings and equipment and protecting public investment with a sustainable focus.

A school that is safe, efficient, and healthy does not happen by chance,



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Facilities management is a career of real-world impact. It combines technical expertise, leadership, and public service. Professionals in this field solve complex operational challenges every day. They lead teams across buildings, systems, and fleets.

it is the result of professional, dedicated facility leadership.

### Healthy and inclusive design

Modern educational spaces are designed to support learning, creativity, and inclusion. Facility managers ensure that schools use natural light, open layouts, and flexible spaces that enhance wellbeing and learning wherever possible. They incorporate universal design principles, making schools accessible to students of all abilities. They serve as community hubs, where recreation, adult education, and public programs can thrive after school hours.

By translating educational vision into practical, sustainable spaces, facility managers directly enhance student experience and community engagement.

### Fleet

For many districts, especially rural communities, transportation is a lifeline. Facility managers oversee vehicle fleets, ensuring that:

- School buses meet inspection standards and operate safely in all conditions.
- Maintenance programs prevent breakdowns and delays.
- Service vehicles support snow removal, grounds maintenance, and emergency response.

Reliable transportation isn't just a convenience, it's a critical factor in student attendance, equity, and operational continuity.

### Strategic leadership and operational excellence

Facility Managers are not just technical experts; they are leaders who make strategic decisions about

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resource allocation which means managing budgets, contracts, and staffing to maximize efficiencies.

Continuous improvement uses data to predict maintenance needs, prevent failures, and optimize workflows.

Risk management involves identifying liabilities, reducing where possible, ensuring compliance, and maintaining public trust.

Their work ensures that schools operate smoothly, safely, and sustainably, turning behind the scenes challenges into visible benefits for the entire community.

### The case for investment

Investing in facility managers is investing in student success, staff wellbeing, and community trust. Evidence shows well maintained schools have lower absenteeism among students and staff; effective lighting and HVAC systems improve academic performance and reduce energy costs. Proactive maintenance and fleet management reduces costly emergency repairs and service disruptions. Every dollar spent on skilled facility management saves multiple dollars in long term repairs, operational inefficiencies, and lost instructional time.

### A career with purpose and impact

Facilities management is a career of real-world impact. It combines technical expertise, leadership, and public service. Professionals in this field solve complex operational

challenges every day. They lead teams across buildings, systems, and fleets.

It is a profession where commitment, skill, and leadership make a lasting difference; a career that supports education itself!

Public school facility managers are essential, strategic, and highly skilled

professionals. They ensure buildings are safe, systems operate reliably so that learning can happen without disruption. Supporting and investing in this workforce is not optional; it is critical to the future of education, public trust, and community well being.

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# EFMA Annual Conference

BY CHUCK MORRIS

Over the past several years, our association has experienced significant growth in new membership. This is a positive development, particularly as many long-serving members transition into retirement. With this growth comes an important challenge: ensuring that valuable knowledge, experience, and best practices are effectively passed on to newer members, allowing learning and expertise to continue to grow, not only within the association, but across the school facilities that depend on it.

We support our members with a wide range of training aligned to the diverse roles within school district facilities operations. This includes transportation, custodial services, IT, skilled

trades, and those responsible for keeping schools safe, healthy, and operational. It also extends to energy management, project management, risk management, and preparing for the many challenges that Mother Nature can present. It is, without question, a tall order.

As new members join, it is essential that our programs provide the right types of training and learning environments. Many new members may be entering the K-12 environment for the first time, and the learning curve can be steep. The Educational Facility Managers Association is here to support all members, new and experienced alike. We understand the demands of your roles and are committed to bringing forward

the knowledge, resources, and learning opportunities needed to ease that learning curve and help you succeed in your position within your school district.

Our Annual Conference in Penticton is an outstanding experience, and all members are strongly encouraged to register and attend. The conference offers a diverse range of courses, giving participants the opportunity to engage in topics that support every facet of work within their school districts. There are targeted sessions focused on developing management skills, preparing members for increased responsibility, and even equipping those who aspire to move into director-level roles.

That said, many attendees over

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the years have consistently noted that the networking opportunities provide learning at an entirely different level. Whether it's an informal conversation shared between sessions in a quiet corner, or a more structured gathering in one of the ballrooms, these peer-to-peer interactions are invaluable. They offer the chance to see how others approach challenges, to ask the questions you've long wanted answers to, and to gain insights that can only come from shared experience.

Since the association first met in 1964, with the annual conference beginning a few years later, support for the membership has steadily grown year by year. It did not take long to understand what attendees were seeking and how positively they responded as offerings expanded. With each successive year, new ideas were introduced, allowing the conference to evolve into the event we experience today. A trade show, second to none was added, providing attendees with yet another opportunity to broaden their exposure, knowledge, and learning.

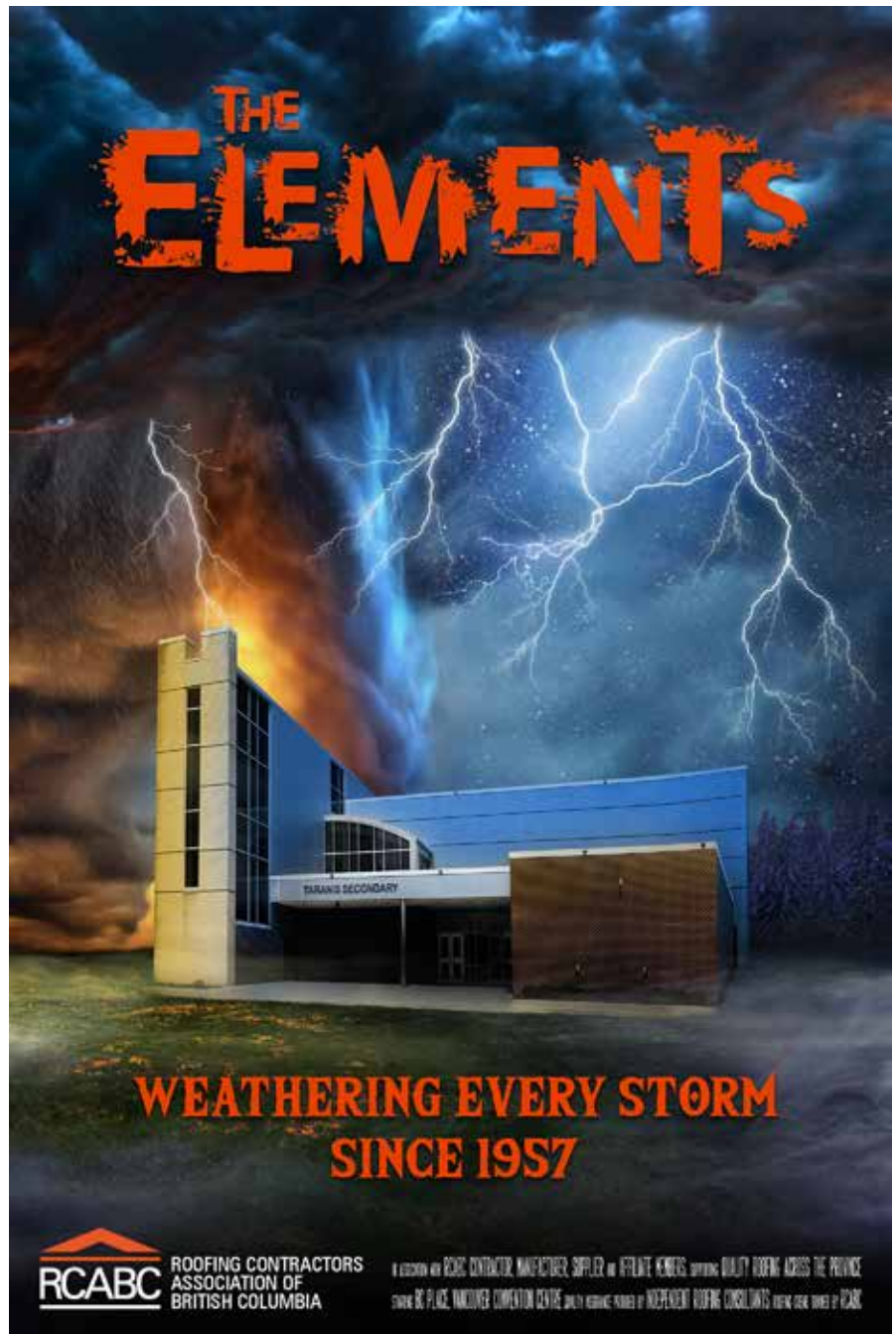
Throughout this evolution, it has always been important to remember who we are and why we are here. While new processes and fresh ideas continue to emerge, each association executive carries a responsibility to build upon the strong foundation established by those before them.

Given the wide range of experience among long-standing members and those newer to the profession, we remain committed to preserving the heritage of the Educational Facility Managers Association of B.C. That history

helps newer members appreciate how far the association has come, often realizing that the past is not as distant as it may seem, and it continues to anchor and strengthen the association's foundation.

Well done to everyone who has contributed to this enduring legacy. ■

The conference offers a diverse range of courses, giving participants the opportunity to engage in topics that support every facet of work within their school districts.



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