

WE'RE OPENING A NEW ELEMENTARY IN 2020* TO SERVE GRAND RIDGE STUDENTS!



To be or not to be in the Highlands? Your chance to weigh in.

Issaquah keeps growing! More than a decade ago, we built Grand Ridge on a vision and forecast of being able to serve all Highlands children at a single neighborhood school. Housing development soon outpaced school capacity, however, and a significant portion of the Highlands was boundaried to Clark while kindergarteners had to be moved to nearby elementaries. Today, our schools are strained even with these space solutions. We have an immediate need to build a new elementary (*targeted opening of fall 2020). Voters funded this project in the 2016 bond measure. While no boundaries have been set, we expect the new elementary will serve all of the Highlands children who currently attend Clark as well as several hundred current Grand Ridge students.

In partnership with City of Issaquah staff, we've identified a preferred site for the new elementary nearby Swedish Hospital in the Issaquah Highlands (well outside the slope's slide zone, as confirmed by geologic experts). Our extensive real-estate research shows there is no other property available in the Issaquah Highlands at this time suitable for the new elementary—all parcels are significantly outside the project's budget and/or timeframe to acquire.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOU? The new elementary will benefit all Highlands students by providing two right-sized campuses for learning and playing, and Grand Ridge will have room for its kindergartners. We are now at a critical juncture that will determine the location and timeline. The Issaquah City Council on Sept. 5 will begin an important series of land-use decisions about whether to allow a school on the preferred site. Council members are diligently listening to residents, and they have heard many different opinions. If you would like your parent voice to be considered in whether another school is built in the Highlands, now is your chance.

HOW TO CONTACT THE CITY COUNCIL

Email citycouncil@issaquahwa.gov and/or attend the public hearing on annexing and rezoning the Highlands property for school use: 7 p.m., Sept. 5, Council Chambers.

HOW TO LEARN MORE

Visit the [ISSD homepage](http://issaquahwa.gov) and/or contact [ISSD Capital Projects](mailto:ISSD.CapitalProjects@issaquahwa.gov) at 425-837-7040.

WHY IS THIS THE PREFERRED SITE? It:

- Provides capacity to serve all Issaquah Highlands children—including kindergartners—at a neighborhood school within the Highlands.
- Is primed for acquisition and construction, allowing the quickest timeline to alleviate capacity concerns at Grand Ridge and Clark.
- Prevents the need to bus hundreds more students out of the Highlands; walking routes remove traffic from the Highlands and Olde Town corridor.
- Responsibly fulfills the service need created by expanded housing development in Issaquah.
- Is well suited for a specially designed school with a compact footprint to preserve its natural surroundings as much as possible.

Q. What will happen if the City Council does not approve the identified Highlands site for school use?

A. We will immediately shift our focus to property outside the Highlands to keep the project on time and budget.