

# NORTH SAANICH MIDDLE SCHOOL

**LOCATION**

Sidney, British Columbia

**SIZE**

5,100 m<sup>2</sup>, two storeys

**COMPLETION**

2012

**CAPACITY**

400 students; Grade 6 to 8

**ARCHITECT**

Chang Holovsky Architects  
(now Iredale Architecture)

**CONSTRUCTION COMPANY**

Durwest Construction  
Management Inc.

**PROJECT OWNER**

School District No. 63 (Saanich)

**B.C. GOVERNMENT MINISTRY**

Ministry of Education

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

North Saanich Middle School was custom built for middle level learners aged 11 to 14 – and to serve as a model for environmental sustainability and community partnership.

Wood was a natural choice for the two-storey school because it offers a lower energy and carbon footprint as well as being durable, adaptable and versatile. Wood is a great choice for schools because it creates relaxed, productive and high quality learning spaces with a tangible connection to nature and reduced stress.

North Saanich Middle School is a hybrid glulam, structural steel and tilt-up concrete building with 14 classrooms, a gymnasium, theatre auditorium, multi-purpose room, music and applied arts room and administration offices.

Its green features include abundant natural lighting, high thermal mass tilt-up walls, radiant floor, and natural ventilation through classroom windows and thermal chimneys. It has geothermal heating and cooling, with solar collectors and a wind turbine for additional energy. The school also has an automatic light adjustment system to conserve energy, and a greenhouse to teach children about growing food.

The school, which opened in March 2012, was designed to the LEED gold standard, and includes a Neighbourhood Learning Centre in partnership with the Peninsula Recreation Commission, the Town of Sidney and the Municipality of North Saanich. Community fitness, fine arts and recreational programs are offered through the learning centre after school hours.



Photo courtesy of Durwest Construction Management Inc.

*“Given the reduced cost and the superior fire rating of wood in its use as a seismic component, it was an easy decision to incorporate this aesthetically pleasing option into the construction of North Saanich Middle School.”*

**Barry Bodner**, Director of Facilities, School District No. 63 (Saanich)

## WOOD USE

### LOCAL JOBS, LOCAL BENEFITS

Many of the 75 contractors and subcontractors involved in the project were local; construction of the school created work for close to 200 people.

### RELAXED LEARNING

**ENVIRONMENT** – Wood trim and panelling throughout the school provides a tangible connection to nature, something that cannot be matched by other building materials. Wood creates a high-quality learning environment for students and teachers, and research has concluded that wood interiors reduce stress.

### BEST CHOICE FOR

**COMMUNITY SPACE** – Wood is hypo-allergenic and, unlike carpeting, prevents the build-up of dust and is easier to clean, making it a great choice for North Saanich Middle School, which has an enlarged gym and auditorium for community meetings or events after school hours.



*Photos courtesy of Durwest Construction Management Inc.*

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

This profile is published by Forestry Innovation Investment, the Government of British Columbia's market development agency for forest products.

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