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DAN TOULGOET/RICHMOND NEWS

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Wait until March, says Ramsey

The education minister admits Richmond needs new schools, but won't discuss them until next month

By Mike Howell
News Reporter

Education Minister Paul Ramsey admits there are "unmet needs" in the Richmond school district but he still wouldn't say when those needs will be addressed.

Speaking to reporters Tuesday afternoon, he said Richmond will learn in early March that all four school projects frozen under the government's capital freeze will get the green light.

"There are definitely some projects that need to be

But whether that green light means construction can begin immediately or next year — or who knows when — is a question Ramsey isn't answering until early March.

He spoke to reporters after meeting with Richmond school trustees, school board staff, Mayor Greg Halsey-Brandt, a student council president and others in a B.C. government office located at Canada Place on the Vancouver

"There are definitely some projects that need to be built."
— Paul Ramsey

The Richmond contingent arranged the meeting to get some answers as to why Richmond's four projects — Hugh McRoberts, J.N. Allan Roy MacNeill — were not lifted from the freeze two weeks ago.

"There isn't really any new information," said school board chairperson Sylvia Gwozd after meeting with Ramsey.

"The minister has asked us to sharpen our pencils, and we'll go back and see if there's anything else we can do. I'm not sure how much more there is to save in costs."

announcement on Richmond's projects, Ramsey said his staff will be meeting with Richmond school board to find ways to cut even more from current projects.

While the Richmond contingent was inside with Ramsey, about 100 Richmond students — many with their parents — demonstrated outside the Pan Pacific Hotel. Many of them waved hula hoops in front of television cameras to illustrate the number of hoops school board has already