



ADVOCATES: The advocacy group pushing for a new school in the city's north-east. Standing from left: Rae Mills, North East Secondary Education committee chair Amanda Williams and Angela Wilson. Sitting: Elissa Smith and Kerri Rowlands.

Call for NE high school endures

By ANNA PRICE

A NEW high school proposed for the city's fast-growing north-east is back on the agenda with the imminent release of the Government's education recovery plan for Christchurch.

North East Secondary Education committee chair Amanda Williams is urging people to have their say on the Ministry of Education's plan to be aired for public comment this month.

The idea gained traction two years ago, backed by a 3664-name petition seeking a high school in the zone identified by the 8083 postcode.

The 33-page proposal cited pre-quake figures at that time showing around 2200 children across six primary schools in the area waiting in the wings.

It was introduced to Parliament's education and science select committee in Wellington in March 2010.

Plans were put on hold after the February 22 quake last year.

A co-ed state high school with a wide curriculum and which may have a more outdoor pursuits flavour given the environment of the area, should attract good teachers, Ms Williams said.

The 2000 baby boomers would be ready for high school next year and construction would start early next year on around 600 family-size houses at the Prestons subdivision.

"We'll see quite a big bulge in the population out here," she said.

Earthquake-chary residents sprinkled across the Port Hills, had also been moving to the flat land

toward the north-east.

The expected influx of 30,000 people to work on the city's rebuild would include families with school age children – many of them likely to settle in the eastern suburbs where housing would be more readily available, she said.

■ The numbers

According to NESE, only hazy school roll projections are available post-quake, because:

■ Christchurch schools did not have to submit their July 2011 student roll statistics.

■ The city census was cancelled after the 2011 February earthquake resulting in student number predictions and projections only.

■ Student capacity at badly damaged Avonside Girls' High and Shirley Boys' was down although both schools had returned to their original sites, but a decision on their future was to yet to be made.

■ Student numbers at Aranui High and Linwood College were also down.

■ Since the big quake 4000 students had moved schools with roll losses at some primaries including Burwood, Avondale and Banks Avenue.

■ The remaining capacity city-wide was still not sufficient to provide for the remaining students.

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Show tickets are \$45 and \$25 from Ticketek.

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