

Modular Classroom Project



“The investment in modular classrooms will help support our youngest learners and their families through the provision of high-quality learning spaces.”

– George Abbott, Minister of Education

Project Overview

The Province made a commitment to provide full day kindergarten (FDK) to all five-year-olds by September 2011, to support children and working families. The Ministry of Education (the Ministry) is phasing in universal access to full day kindergarten over two years. The first phase of full day kindergarten was introduced in September 2010 and students were accommodated in existing facilities. Additional classroom space is required to implement the second phase of full day kindergarten for September 2011.

A number of options were examined to determine how to deliver additional classroom space, including building new schools, additions/renovations, re-opening closed schools and modular classrooms. Based on the analysis, modular classrooms were identified as the preferred service delivery option that would meet the majority of FDK classroom requirements within the September 2011 timeframe; modular classrooms were also considered a cost-effective and adaptable solution.

Following the decision to use modular classrooms, the Ministry analyzed procurement delivery options, including the traditional procurement method used by school districts.

The analysis undertaken indicated that project objectives could best be met by using the design-build centralized delivery method.

Partnership Highlights

Following a one-stage competitive process based on the principles of openness, transparency and fairness, Shelter Industries Inc. (Shelter Industries) was selected as the partner for the design, production, delivery, installation, commissioning and associated work for 133 modular classrooms.

Modular classrooms are designed to create an optimal learning environment for students, with high ceilings and windows to maximize the amount of natural light and cross ventilation. The design and production of classrooms will feature an extensive use of wood and will be designed to be energy efficient. These modular classrooms are quality structures with a life expectancy of 40 years; modulators can be relocated or clustered in groups as demographics and educational needs change, giving school boards additional flexibility.

The Ministry will provide funding to school districts to cover the costs of the modular classrooms and site works, including delivery and installation. Each school district will pay the contractor a portion of funds as each modular classroom is completed; however, the final payment will be withheld until all modular classrooms for a school district are complete. Each school district owns the modular classrooms and is responsible for maintenance.

Expected Benefits

The estimated total project cost using the design-build centralized method is \$36.6 million and is expected to achieve value for taxpayers' dollars of \$5.9 million compared to the design-build decentralized delivery method. Additional benefits from the centralized procurement delivery model include:

- Schedule certainty and associated payment mechanism to incent on time delivery of modular classrooms;
- Budget certainty through centralized management of the project budget;
- Production of consistent and high-quality classrooms across the province through the use of a standardized design;
- Flexibility in the design process while still preserving the benefits of bulk production;
- Collaboration during detailed design development that encouraged innovative solutions that were conducive to bulk production;
- Effective and efficient supply chain management with a single modular supplier; and
- Effective risk allocation and management between Shelter Industries and the Province/school districts.

Public Sector Partners

- Ministry of Education
- Boards of Education

Private Sector Partners

Shelter Industries Inc.

Partnerships BC's Role

Partnerships BC acted as the procurement manager for this project.