



The Board of Education of
School District No.5 (Southeast Kootenay)
AGENDA - STUDENT SERVICES MEETING

February 22, 2021, 10:30 a.m.

Meeting via Zoom

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**The Board of Education of
School District No.5 (Southeast Kootenay)
MINUTES - STUDENT SERVICES MEETING**

**January 25, 2021, 10:30 a.m.
Meeting via Zoom**

Committee Members in Attendance: ___ Co-Chair Trustee Damstrom
 ___ Co-Chair McPhee
 ___ Trustee Johns
 ___ Trustee Kitt

Board/District Staff in Attendance: ___ Chairperson Lento
 ___ Trustee Ayling
 ___ Trustee Bellina
 ___ Trustee Turner
 ___ Trustee Whalen
 ___ Superintendent, S. Yardley
 ___ Secretary Treasurer, A. Rice
 ___ Director of Student Learning/Aboriginal Education, J. Tichauer
 ___ Director of Student Learning/Innovation, D. Casault
 ___ District Principal/Student Services, D. Verbeurgt
 ___ District Principal/Transformative Learning, J. Roberts
 ___ L. Giesbrecht (recorder)

1. COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING

1.1 Call to Order

The Special Education Student Services meeting of January 25, 2021 was called to order at 11:15am by Trustee McPhee.

1.2 Approval of the Agenda

M/S that the agenda for the Special Education Student Services Meeting of January 25, 2021 be approved as circulated.

1.3 Approval of the Minutes

M/S that the minutes of the Special Education Student Services meeting of November 23, 2020 be approved as circulated.

2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

2.1 Full Audit Report

Full audit report as listed on the Ministry of Education's website was referenced as well as SD5's district summary and next steps. Discussion was had regarding category identifications. Information received from the auditor will allow us to move forward with their recommendations. We will continue with our quality indicators as this was recognized as a good practice by the auditors. Funding of our most vulnerable students remains a concern.

We are in the process of updating our Inclusive Education handbook for all employee. Part of our budget now is strictly for Inclusive Education Plan consultation and IEP writing. Next steps will be put on the May 2021 district management meeting.

Recommendation A:

M/S that the board write a letter and send to the Ministry of Education outlining our concerns about the audit report specifically targeting the issue of adequate provincial funding.

2.2 Inclusive Education Working Group

The group has moved from sharing to our next steps and referred to the attached minutes. They will be bringing forward recommendations in the budget process. The professional development funds allocated to each union was discussed. This week, we'll discuss budget and our 3 year vision.

At this weeks meeting, Mr. Tichauer will be joining us as a guest speaker. He's going to share with the group how Alternate Education fits into Student Services.

Dr. Ross Green was referenced and an explanation of his work was given.

2.3 Speech Language Pathologist Data

Mr. Verbeurgt introduced a new data collection form. A summary sheet indicating services at each school will be provided showing direct hours in relation to their total hours worked. We started collecting data as of January 2021. It was determined the frequency of data would be reported out quarterly.

2.4 Behaviour Resource Teacher update

The 0.5 continuing Behaviour Resource Teacher position in the Elk Valley continues to be posted without success. It was suggested this topic be moved to the Finance/Ops Committee for further discussion. Discussion was had regarding potential options for in-school support. Again, this speaks to the difficulty of recruitment and retention of specialized positions.

3. DELEGATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

4. REPORTS

5. NEW BUSINESS

6. ACTION ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

6.1 Updates of the Social Emotional Learning Centre

6.2 Prevalence Model Discussions

7. CORRESPONDENCE

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:11pm

DRAFT

**School District No 5 (East Kootenay)
Inclusive Education Working Group**

**MINUTES
January 27, 2021**

***Ki?su?k kyukyit! We are honoured to live, work and play
on the homelands of the Ktunaxa people.***

In attendance: Diane Casault, Scott Holt, Shelley Balfour, Lois Ehman, Chris Kielpinski, Irene Bischler, Darcy Verbeurgt, Jason Tichauer, Connie White, Julie Russchen, Kim Sparks, Constance Merz, Adrienne Demers, Donna Cameron, Kim McKeown

Acknowledgement of Homelands of the Ktunaxa people - Diane

Welcome back - Darcy

Guest Speaker – Director of Student Learning and Aboriginal Education, Jason Tichauer

Question was asked at our last meeting about how Alternate Education fits into the Student Services budget?

What is formally the designation of Alternate Ed as defined by the ministry?

For something to be an Alternate Program, it could be a separate site, but must be unique identified at the Ministry level. Alternate schools are fully funded on September 30, regardless of whether a student is working on course part or full time.

How does this affect Student Services funding?

Even if the Alternate school has no Student Services funded kids, it still operates like other schools. Funding for Students Services is the same as any other school where funding is received on designated categories.

What does it take to get Alternate Education status?

Alternate delivery programs currently at Fernie Secondary School (FSS), Sparwood Secondary School (SSS) and Laurie Middle School (LMS). These schools use term alternate, meaning ‘not regular program’. There is no special funding for in-house, small alternate programs at a school level. These are funded partially by Student Services allocations as well as per block funding on a time table. They are not coded as Alternate Programs. When you have in-house alternate programs in high or middle school, there is often some individual education plan (IEP) responsibility from the Student Services teacher. KES is the only Alternate Program in our District.

Who determines the eligibility?

The KES team decides on Alternate eligibility based on Ministry requirements. Their school attendance does need to be tracked and requires support of ABED, YCW and counsellors. It’s mandatory face-to-face schooling.

What will happen with school-based alternate education plans going forward?

Plans must be sustainable and funded by the Ministry of Education. We have the ability here to claim kids at 1.0 (full time) under their timetable, but create more flexibility than at the school level. Modern Distributed Learning does have a face-to-face component. We could see DL, Alternate and Continuing Education branches at brick-and-mortar schools in the future.

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Inclusive Education Working Group**

Some examples of Alternate program in schools.

We've modernized the DL programs. We have been able to implement that in Fernie for the Primary Elementary Program and in Cranbrook for Grades 7, 8, 9 & 10. There were plans and discussions in schools last spring to carve out spaces for DL support, then they came to a full stop due to the pandemic.

Fernie and Sparwood are able to run in house successful programs and there is no need to categorize them as true Alternate programs. Some kids are not successful in a brick and mortar school and require alternate delivery for success.

Do students have to be grade 10-12 to be eligible?

It is possible to increase the number of grades. Currently it is funded as a 10-12 building.

Cross enrollment is not an option in the Alternate school program.

Pro-d money/budgeting – Darcy Verbeurgt

It was confirmed that \$30,000 was identified for each of the CTFA and CUPE Unions for professional development this year. Another \$60,000 will be available for 2021-22.

For teachers, schools have been allocated a set amount based on their teacher FTE. Each school has already been given their budget codes for collaboration. These funds can be accessed for collaborative teacher release time only. It was originally thought there were no parameters, but it has been since confirmed that it is for release only.

CUPE staff executive committee will meet with Mr. Verbeurgt to discuss distribution plans.

Proposed solutions:

What do we want to see different in the staffing and budget cycle? What is our vision?

The budget timeline was discussed as well as how the budget is developed. We have to determine where kids will be going to school, identify those with needs and try to plan for those that we don't know about. Mr. Verbeurgt then meets with the Secretary-Treasurer to look at those numbers going forward. PVP will have meetings with their staff in regards to their needs and join the budget conversation in March.

Workloads need to be determined based on IEPs, EA staff supervised, balance of work for SSTs and other support staff in buildings. We look at case management/number of students and try to keep balance in schools. We've increased the number of YCWs as they have a more specialized skill set. With some COVID funding we've increased our team of YCWs to 17. We have to be cognisant that we may not have as much funding support next year.

The District Principal of Student Services brings for proposals to the Board for SLPs/SLAs staffing levels while the Director of Student Learning and Aboriginal Education does the same for ABED workers and counsellors. By May/June, we've solidified our budget to about 97% accuracy, but finalizing of the budget won't happen until Sept 30 of next year. The MOE funding announcement should be available by mid-April.

Concerns in regards to mental health funding in the coming years was raised. We will have to be very mindful of this going forward. We could anticipate all students have suffered some kind of trauma as a result of the pandemic. It is expected that for 3-5 years we'll continue to see the effects.

The need for more elementary school level counselling was discussed. Kids will be coming in with less and less skills. If no provincial or federal funding to support more counselling, we'd have to

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Inclusive Education Working Group**

look elsewhere. Additional counselling and more YCW support this year, during COVID, has made a significant impact in a positive way.

Would learning support teachers be a possibility for the next year or two for those unable to attend class in-person? Gaps, not only academically, but socially are not closing. We will be seeing kids entering early year programs and school struggling with different aspects of life.

Everyone seems to have fatigue of one kind or another. Definitely a part of what is happening and it was brought up that it will have an affect on the staff as well. As kids enter our system, more and more, we'll have to be supporting the whole child, including the emotional side of kids. There will be struggles and need for supports early on. We will be working in very difficult years coming up, from staff to students, and schools need to be supported.

Social Emotional Health needs to remain a focus. Funding should go beyond education to provide access to help with mental health for students. Funding is already provided that is dedicated to mental health at the Ministry level. The Health Promoting Schools grant is available as well. In a lot of instances, this funding is not ear marked for staffing, but potentially for programming.

We had Learning Assistants in the past, but more recently SST's are trying to do both roles. It was asked if the roles could be separated. There is an understanding there was never a decrease in funding through District efforts even though the formulas changed. There is funding in the school allocation to deal with kids that require learning assistants. There is some ability to separate roles, but that's up to PVP to do that part of it in accordance to their budget at a school level. We have funding to work with kids that have severe behaviour and mental illness. The question was raised, Do we have the people with the right skillset working with those kids?

How do we lessen the workload on SSTs as to not burn out staff and improve retention? SSTs need to advocate for what they need in their school as our schools and kids are much more complex than ever before. We need to hire the right people for the right jobs. Are EAs the right people to have? If we're talking about a student that doesn't have a designation, but needs help, SST's speak up and want to help that student, adding more to their workload. This is why they're burning out. They want everyone to be successful.

Could there be room for a part time staff that does the role of the Learning Assistant? Yes, within the allocation schools receive.

Perhaps we look at support more at a school level than district support. There could be different ways that we could adjust services to support those at a school level. Learning assistants at a middle and high school level offering numeracy and literacy supports could help in those academic areas without taking away from in house supports. We could consider that if there is enough flex in a support block, a drop in for assistance could be offered.

We need to look at whether learning assistance is more of a middle or elementary issue than high school issue. We don't want kids falling through the cracks, yet it's difficult for a SST to see all the kids in their caseload in the course of a week. Learning assistance applied at the elementary level diminishes the work required when it comes to middle and secondary levels.

SST's now have significant training on social emotional learning. Training to teach social emotional and be proactive is a huge benefit. Mental health is taking much more time. It has gone up a lot over the past number of years causing a lot more of a SSTs day to be spent with the mental health issues. YCW and ABED workers help where they can.

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Category H students could be serviced through counsellors as they were already involved with them on a mental health level. Doing this could free up some of the SST work load and might be worth looking at the funding.

Currently there are regular teachers doing a lot of work in social emotional learning. They are really learning and using those skills. If elementary teachers are doing a lot of behavioural management stuff, could this be useful in reducing the number of referrals to Student Services? Though we have lots of people getting a skill base in social emotional learning with kids, the struggle is that there are more kids coming in with complex needs. Good for SST to be in the school regularly so that the students get to know them. It is complex to schedule but having the people that can get in and support the class for portions of the day is important for these inclusive classrooms.

Questions from minute Notes of February 28, 2020 meeting and Parking Lot questions addressed:

Do we need to be creating general roles and responsibilities teachers, principals, vice principals, education assistants, etc. or do they need to be more specific to better serve our students?

There are roles and responsibilities for a variety of positions in the School Act, in the Policy Manual, in the Ministry of Education Policies, Procedure and Practices Manual for Special Education. These will be pulled together in the Inclusive Ed Handbook to ensure understanding at all staffing levels. We may be waiting on the MOE to update their policies.

The Teacher's Handbook needs to be posted on the SD5 website for teachers to access. It's on the teachers' union website already.

End of meeting summary

We will summarize what was shared for budget priorities. Let Mr. Verbeurgt know if we're on track with our vision and what some of the hot spots are, if not identified. How we can support some of those things. What can we do to shift or reallocate our current funding allocations?

Parking lot questions will be reorganized to see which ones have been answered. We will send them back out with a summary of what is remaining with the expectation that unanswered questions will be prioritized.

In terms of who you are representing, what are the things coming from your group in terms of prioritization? Mr. Verbeurgt and Mrs. Casault will speak to this at a Board or committee meeting.

For the next meeting, we want to be sure that we are articulating what is being said. Please share what you're thinking. We know it's hard as we're speaking of making cuts. Take a look at last parking lot questions, and determine priority.

Deliverables:

Plan on where we want to be in 3-5 years. Darcy will compile in a longitudinal calendar. Some things could be immediate, others may require a budget shift.

Next Meeting: Feb. 24, 2021 (1:00-3:30)

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Inclusive Education Working Group**

Parking Lot Questions Needing To Be Addressed	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Think about the staffing and budget cycle. What do we want to see different? What is our vision? What would be our recommendations to the board? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do we support our schools using the BASIC allocation? Is there flexibility? How do we support our schools? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can we create general roles and responsibilities for teachers, principals, vice principals, education assistants, etc.? Or do they need to be more specific to better serve our students? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do we ensure consistency in the delivery of Student Services between buildings? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do we ensure consistency in the delivery of Student Services between buildings? – Darcy to push back out to the PVP for clarification. 	12/10/2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do we get EVERYONE on the same page regarding inclusion? Are we addressing all vulnerable students? – Could be an area we need to look at and change over three years. Where do we want to be with this? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How are we supporting vulnerable students who are not graduating? Diane, Jason and Darcy have been working over this with a partner group. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How can we more effectively plan for school to school transitions at all levels and at all times throughout the school year? May look at with SSC. Darcy attended sessions with international council of early childhood educators. Transitions are an important part. To make seamless would be better. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do we communicate about students with disruptive behaviour? Not sure about communication side. Please clarify if you asked this earlier 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do we need a formula for support? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can we add Behaviour Resource Teacher time for all schools? – Would like to know whether we need to add time to SST in each building or do we allocate a BHT to the Elk Valley. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do Principals and Vice Principals have a good support network? Can they share their experiences and help one another? 	

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Parking Lot Questions That Have Been Addressed		
✓	Why do Speech Language Pathologist Services stop at elementary school level?	12/10/2020
✓	What are the Ministry Designations and what do they mean for “typical” support? How do we apply this support to different needs of our children?	01/16/2020
✓	Should certain children have different staggered start times in September and is it possible to have school starting plans in place?	01/27/2021
✓	How can we get equitable access to services across School District (i.e. in the Elk Valley)?	12/10/2020
✓	How do we proactively support and plan for our upcoming Kindergarten students with unknown designations and needs?	12/10/2020
✓	Are we supporting our Category H students?	01/27/2021
✓	Can we create general roles and responsibilities for teachers, principals, vice principals, education assistants, etc.? Or do they need to be more specific to better serve our students? – Will touch base with Lois and Scott on this piece.	12/10/2020