



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

October 25, 2021, 10:30 a.m.  
Kootenay Learning Campus - Fernie

Members

**Co-Chair Trustee Krista Damstrom  
Co-Chair Trustee Doug McPhee  
Trustee Chris Johns  
Trustee Kathryn Kitt**

**Pages**

**1. COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING**

1.1. Call to Order

1.2. Approval of the Agenda

1.3. Approval of the Minutes

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Approval of the minutes from September 27, 2021

**2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

2.1. SELC Update

2.2. SLP Redistribution

**3. PRESENTATIONS**

**4. REPORTS**

4.1. School Psychology Assessment update

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**5. NEW BUSINESS**

**6. ACTION ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

**7. CORRESPONDENCE**

## 8. ADJOURNMENT

Have we effectively addressed the needs of our most vulnerable students and their families?



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

**September 27, 2021, 10:30 a.m.  
Cranbrook Board Office**

Committee Members in Attendance: Co-Chair Trustee Krista Damstrom (remotely)  
Co-Chair Doug McPhee  
Trustee Chris Johns  
Trustee Kathryn Kitt

Board/District Staff in Attendance: Trustee Trina Ayling  
Chairperson Frank Lento  
Trustee Bev Bellina (remotely)  
Trustee Wendy Turner (remotely)  
Trustee Patricia Whalen (remotely)  
Superintendent, Silke Yardley  
Secretary Treasurer, Alan Rice  
Secretary Treasurer, Nick Taylor (staff as of Oct. 1) (remotely)  
Director of Student Learning and Innovation, Diane Casault  
District Principal of Student Services, Darcy Verbeurgt  
Executive Assistant (recorder) Laurel Giesbrecht

**1. COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING**

**1.1 Call to Order**

The Student Services meeting of September 27, 2021, was called to order at 10:35 a.m. by Co-Chair Trustee McPhee.

**1.2 Approval of the Agenda**

Moved/Seconded by: Kitt/Damstrom

THAT the agenda for the Student Services Meeting of September 27, 2021 be approved as circulated.

**1.3 Approval of the Minutes**

Moved/Seconded by: Kitt/Damstrom

THAT the minutes of the Student Services meeting of August 30, 2021, be approved as circulated.

## **2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

### **2.1 Update on the Social Emotional Learning Centre (SELC) program**

SELC team finished the year at PES. Very successful program. SELC teacher went back to classroom. Staffed supported at SES in June. We will be starting with a brand-new SELC team. Jessica Bartraw has accepted the position of the new SELC teacher. YCW will be Dana McLean. We will deliver a program like what we've designed and have used in the past. There will be collaboration between the outgoing and incoming SELC teachers. We are looking at starting in grades 2 and 3 in both English and French Immersion. The start date of SELC program is yet to be determined.

### **2.2 Update on Individual Education Plans (IEPs)**

May budget IEP numbers = 794  
Current IEP numbers = 886  
level 1,2,3 = 550  
level 1,2,3 Kindergarteners = 28

IEPs are a bridge from Spring to the current year. Last years team is certainly most familiar with the student. Meetings happen late September and October. IEPs updated in MyEd no later than Dec 3, 2021

There is an uptake in number of kids needing additional supports. We are up about 30% in the intensive behaviour support. COVID is having an effect on kids. We had lots of referrals in PsychEd last year. 50-70 assessments a year per psychologist. It will be hard to meet all assessments within the one-year standard. We need to get the resources to advocate for those kids. Our psychologists are going a great job. Triage does lean towards kids with intellectual disabilities and kids nearing the end of their school career. Our psychologists carry out the triage. The goal is to get to kids within one year. They stay on the list until they are served, leave the district or the team decides it's time for them to come off.

#### **RECOMMENDATION A**

Moved/Seconded by Johns/Damstrom:

THAT the Board obtain a report on the issue of student assessment in relation to school psychology.

### **2.3 Update on Staffing**

Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) postings

- Maternity Leave May 1, 2021 – Oct 31, 2022
- 0.7 FTE continuing – starting Sept 1, 2021
- Contract offered to three SLP candidates – all declined
- Will redistribute remaining 4.4 FTE to all schools starting Oct. 4.

Behaviour Resource Teacher (BRT)

- Hired in June
- Currently working 0.5 FTE until winter break. Leave will be reviewed at that time.

Social Emotional Learning Centre (SELC) postings

- Teacher – starts Oct 4
- YCW – started Sept 20 – placed at TMRES to cover absences
- EA – still looking

Youth Care Worker (YCW)

- Total YCWs = 25
- Nine schools/programs have 2 FTE
- Four schools share two YCWs
- Mini conference for YCW on October 22

Education Assistants (EA)

- Postings are still going out every day. HR is working to ensure people are available.

### **3. PRESENTATIONS**

### **4. REPORTS**

#### **4.1 SLP Data Summary**

Total students served January to the end of June was 858. 29% continued from the fall or from the prior year. 51% are new referrals. 19.7% are students of aboriginal ancestry. Aboriginal ancestry students receiving support was documented as it relates to a subgroup when reporting to the Ministry.

A total of 888 FTE days were worked in schools during this 98-day instructional period. Directed hours comprise 53% of the total hours worked by the Speech Language pathologists and Assistants. Expectedly, the direct hours are more before Spring Break (59%) than after (43%) as focus moves to reporting and preparing summer home programs in the later third of the year. These data are commensurate with other jurisdictions as reported by Speech and Hearing BC.

The Speech-Language staff find the data collection time consuming. They indicate that assessments and reports are often completed in late hours and on the weekends so that they can increase the direct hour numbers at schools to ensure the numbers look good in the report. One staff member worked into her maternity leave to ensure reports and transition notes were available for the replacement SLP. It has been recommended that we cease daily data collection and term reporting. A more efficient data collection and summary process will be followed from now on.

### **5. NEW BUSINESS**

### **6. ACTION ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

#### **6.1 Updates to the Inclusive Education Working Group**

#### **6.2 Prevalence Model Discussion**

### **7. CORRESPONDENCE**

### **8. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting of the Student Services Committee was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

At the September 27, 2021 Student Services Committee Meeting a brief update was delivered on where the District was in regards to the School Psychology assessment work list. Several issues were identified, and several questions were raised. A recommendation was made that the Board obtain a report on the issue of student assessment in relation to school psychology.

#### Purpose of Assessment by School Psychologists

School Psychologists formally assess students when considering learning disabilities and intellectual disabilities. School Psychologists diagnose Learning Disabilities and Intellectual Disabilities.

The information obtained in the assessment process is always beneficial in understanding the cognitive strengths and challenges of a particular student. This aids in a better understanding of how they learn and is instrumental in planning for students. Assessment often confirms what we have already identified and know about students. The report that culminates the process is called a Psychoeducational Assessment Report.

School Psychologists do complete some assessments for emotional, social, and behavioural domains for other assessment teams. School Psychologists cannot diagnose mental health, behavioural, or substance use conditions or disorders.

#### How Long Does It Take to Complete a Psychoeducational Assessment?

Each assessment process starts with a referral from the School Based Team to the School Psychologists. The referral includes information on what has been attempted and the concerns the parent and school staff have. As the School Psychologist approaches the assessment date, a complete student file review, taking up to 5 hours, is undertaken and summarised for the Psychoeducational Assessment Report.

A truly comprehensive evaluation takes at least 5 hours and can take up to 9 hours, sometimes more. The School Psychologist often administered the assessment in one day, but can be separated into two or more days, depending upon the child. Occasionally, the School Psychologist requests a Speech-Language Assessment to be completed to provide a more comprehensive picture of the student.

The School Psychologist analyses all assessment information, interview questions from the parent(s)/guardian(s) and completes the Psychoeducational Assessment Report. The completion of the report and presentation to school staff and the parent(s)/guardian(s) can take several days.

In theory, a full 1.0 FTE would provide approximately 50 to 60 assessments in a full school year.

### Frequency of Completing a Psychoeducational Assessment

A Psychoeducational Assessment should be completed twice, and in very rare situations, three times in a student's Kindergarten to Grade 12 school career.

### The Psychoeducational Assessment Worklist in SD5

There has been a traditional, approximately ten-month worklist in the District. One of the reasons we want to keep this to a lower number is that the achievement assessments that are used in comparison with cognitive assessment needs to be within a one-year timeframe to be valid. If this is not accomplished the Student Service teacher needs to complete another achievement assessment.

Schools and the School Psychologist prioritize assessments that are more urgent rather than taking students on a date order of referral and entry onto the worklist. Many students are assessed and reported out in significantly less time than ten months and sometimes are completed within a two-month timeframe. In a ten-month timeframe, our current 1.5 FTE School Psychologists could theoretically complete 75-90 assessments.

Our current ten-month (October 20, 2021, to October 13, 2022) worklist has 19 assessments in progress and 125 additional referrals. We would need 1.92 FTE school Psychologists to ensure the assessments were completed within a one-year period.

The School Psychologists of BC recommends a ratio of 1.0 FTE School Psychologist to 2500 students. With a student enrollment of 5942 our recommended School Psychologist staffing would be 2.38 FTE.

Respectfully submitted,

Darcy Verbeurgt  
District Principal of Student Services