



SCHOOL DISTRICT 5

S O U T H E A S T K O O T E N A Y

January 25th, 2019

SD5 Features in the Select Standing Committee's New Budget 2019 Consultation Report to Government

On September 25th, 2018, School District 5 (SD5) Southeast Kootenay presented a Brief to the BC Legislative Assembly's Select Standing Committee on Finances and Government Services (SSCFGS). The all-party Committee is tasked with compiling a report each year on public feedback with regard to the next provincial budget and is empowered to make budget recommendations in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*.

According to Trustee Chris Johns, who delivered the presentation on behalf of the District, this year's SD5 recommendations continued to focus on the need for capital funding and the ongoing need –and persistent efforts of the District— to replace Mount Baker Secondary School (MBSS) in Cranbrook, and the emergent needs for increased educational space in Fernie.

The report on Budget 2019 Consultation was released on November 15th, 2018. The Board discussed the report at the December Public Board Meeting in Cranbrook and were both surprised and pleased to note that, listed under the section on *K – 12 Education*, under the *Capital Funding* subheading, the report dedicated almost an entire paragraph to the plight of SD5, providing information based on Johns' presentation,

"School District No. 5 (Southeast Kootenay) described...challenges with overcapacity and the use of portables in Fernie, a city with a growth rate of 18 percent, the fastest in the country. The District highlighted issues at Mount Baker Secondary School in Cranbrook where almost \$400,000 in emergency repairs are required for the music and drama room in order to maintain the structural integrity of the building. They advocated for a full replacement of that school."

According to Frank Lento, Board Chair and long-time Fernie resident, the Board is hoping the Ministry of Education will seriously consider the recommendations contained in the SSCFGS Report, and invest some of their capital infrastructure monies further east of the lower mainland.

“Under the previous government, capital investment to education was at an all-time low so our Board is certainly pleased to witness the current government’s investment in school infrastructure. We are however, disappointed to note that of the 70 most recent capital projects being undertaken or recently completed, less than 10% fall outside Vancouver Island or the lower mainland”, says Lento, adding that the closest capital projects undertaken near our region are two schools in Kelowna and one in Prince George.

To view the Board’s presentation to the SSCFGS, any of the correspondence related to the SSCFGS or replacement efforts for MBSS, visit <http://www.sd5.bc.ca/Board/advocacy/>. To view the SSCFGS Budget Report 2019, visit www.leg.bc.ca/cmt/finance.

Contact:

Frank Lento, Chairperson, SD5 Board of Education	250-430-7175
Trina Ayling, SD5 Media/Communications Committee	250-489-1006