



June 8, 2021

Ref: 247368

Frank Lento, Chair  
School District No. 5 (Southeast Kootenay)  
**Email: [frank.lento@sd5.bc.ca](mailto:frank.lento@sd5.bc.ca)**

Dear Frank Lento:

Thank you for your letter of May 13, 2021, addressed to the Honourable Selina Robinson, Minister of Finance and me, regarding funding in Special Education in Southeast Kootenay Schools District. I commend you, the Board, the administration and staff of the District for your commitment to providing quality education to your students, particularly those with disabilities and diverse abilities.

I understand your concerns about these students and their additional needs. Funding for students designated in categories A to H is provided as a supplement within the operating funding that is not targeted. Funding for students in categories K, Q, R and P was incorporated into the basic per student FTE allocation when the current funding model was introduced in 2001.

Provincially, government has increased overall funding for students with special needs by 43 percent (\$200 million) since the 2016/17 school year, and for the 2021/22 school year an additional \$37.3 million has been allocated for students with special needs, a 6 percent increase. This is part of an additional \$260 million in operating grants to school districts that has been announced for 2021/22, increasing operating grants to \$5.756 billion.

I will consider the points you have raised as we contemplate the Phase 2 of the funding model review recommendations.

Again, thank you for writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Whiteside". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jennifer Whiteside  
Minister

pc: Honourable Selina Robinson, Minister of Finance