



October 26, 2022

Ministry of Education and Child Care  
PO Box 9045 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

**ATTENTION: HON. JENNIFER WHITESIDE**

Dear Minister Whiteside:

The Board of Education of School District No. 5 (Southeast Kootenay) at the regular public meeting of October 11, 2022, passed the following motion:

*“THAT the Board send a letter supporting the concerns raised by School District No. 68 in their letter to Minister Whiteside of July 5, 2022, regarding capital funding, Ministry processes for operating and special purpose funding approvals and additional supports and strategies for mental health.”*

The Board of Education of School District No. 5 (Southeast Kootenay) (the “District”) supports and shares the concerns raised by School District No. 68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith) in their letter of July 5, 2022. Increased capital funding amounts, school district operating funding for coverage of legislative changes such as the Employment Standards Act sick leave provisions, general pay equity, and youth mental health are significant concerns for our District as well.

School District No. 5 (Southeast Kootenay) requires immediate funding for new schools. The learning environment for students, the health, and the safety of our employees are suffering as a result of aging facilities. The average age of our facilities is 49.4 years. As an example, the District has been advocating for a replacement school for Mount Baker Secondary in Cranbrook for over twenty years noting that the building is currently in its seventh decade.

Additional operating funding is required to meet the supports and services (i.e. counselling, occupational therapy, physical therapy, school psychology and speech-language therapy) needed in the District. We also need funding to increase the 91% six-year graduation completion rate for all of the District students. We are unable to provide learning assistance to students that require a minor amount of support due to lack of funding as we already supplement the special education provided for our students with the highest needs. Targeted funding for all students with diverse learning needs and abilities would work best for School District No. 5 (Southeast Kootenay).

Frank Lento (Chair) • Trina Ayling • Bev Bellina • Krista Damstrom  
• Chris Johns • Kathryn Kitt • Doug McPhee • Wendy Turner • Patricia Whalen



# SCHOOL DISTRICT 5

SOUTHEAST KOOTENAY

Youth mental illness is becoming the next crisis caused by financial and social strain. The District believes that providing additional supports for our youth will provide long-term benefits to our communities as a whole. We recognize the importance of supporting the mental health of students before we lose more of our children to suicide and addiction.

In addition to our support of School District No. 68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith)'s July 5, 2022 letter we also invite you to visit School District No. 5 (Southeast Kootenay) in-person to discuss the issues noted above.

With respect,

Frank Lento  
SD5 Trustee, City of Fernie  
Board Chair  
School District No. 5 (Southeast Kootenay)  
Email: frank.lento@sd5.bc.ca

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