



**The Board of Education of  
School District No.5 (Southeast Kootenay)**

**MINUTES - STUDENT SERVICES MEETING**

**November 22, 2021, 10:30 a.m.  
Cranbrook Board Office**

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

Board/District Staff in Attendance: Chairperson Frank Lento  
Trustee Trina Ayling  
Trustee Bev Bellina (remotely)  
Trustee Wendy Turner  
Trustee Patricia Whalen (remotely)  
Superintendent Silke Yardley  
Secretary Treasurer Nick Taylor  
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 Committee meeting of November 25, 2021 was called to order at 11:45 a.m. by Co-Chair Trustee McPhee.

**1.2 Approval of the Agenda**

Moved/Seconded by Johns/Damstrom:

THAT the agenda for the Student Services Meeting of November 22, 2021 be approved as circulated.

**1.3 Approval of the Minutes**

Moved/Seconded by Johns/Kitt:

THAT the minutes of the Student Services meeting of October 25, 2021 be approved as circulated.

**2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

**2.1 Speech Language Pathologist contract adequacy review**

Moved to in-camera.

## 2.2 1701 Update

Designation	Description	Designation Count	Level Count
A	Physically Dependent	12	12
C	Mod to Profound Intellectual Disability	31	331
D	Chronic Health Physical Disability	80	
E	Vision Impairment	3	
F	Hearing Impairment	12	
G	Autism Spectrum Disorder	205	
H	Intensive Behaviour Support/Serious Mental Illness	215	215
K	Mild Intellectual Disability	44	341
P	Gifted	3	
Q	Learning Disability	185	
R	Moderate Behaviour Support/Mental Illness	109	
<b>Total</b>		<b>899</b>	<b>899</b>

Category A - Physically dependent students require Education Supports at all times for all daily activities including mobility.

Category G - Autism Spectrum. This continues to increase as kids become less socially interactive and less communicative. Not all with autism have a designation. Autism is a spectrum ranging from the non-verbal student requiring a communication device with repetitive behaviour, social interaction is nearly zero to the student on the far end of the spectrum where they like order. We need to see some impact of autism on the student's education. Interior Health Children's Assessment Network (IHCAN) must do the assessment through the paediatrician. Diagnosis must happen with a multi-disciplinary team.

Category H – The highest count ever in our district at 215. Recent additions include kids with significant trauma. There is an uptick in kids with mental illness overall. More kids are holding trauma and coming to school with it. A variety of groups are saying this is our new normal.

Our district has always been held under a microscope over the number of kids we have in Category H according to provincial standards. Mental Health will be our next pandemic caused by financial and social strain. Grant funding for mental health has been doubled for this year though this remains very small.

Within Ministry of Education, we haven't heard much around where they are going with their approach and being more inclusive and identifying these students without labelling. Somewhat being financially backed. We need to advocate strongly in the direction, or we could be in a tough situation in the future. School District's are taking on more of a mental health role.

Services that communities offer are not enough. Services in place include Counseling, Aboriginal Education Workers (ABED), Youth Care Worker's (YCW) and connections with outside agencies. It's becoming more common place to make sure that we have enough support staff around them in school that understand how to work with kids while coping through trauma. More kids were in harms-way in their homes during the past year. We have been able to hire more staff to address these needs.

The BC teachers Federation state School Districts spend disproportionately more than what is budgeted. Trustee Johns would like this report in writing, and for the next committee meeting.

### **2.3 Education Assistant (EA) numbers and placements**

Compliments of HR:

- EA with positions – 184
- EA on medical leave – 11 (5 unfilled)
- EA Currently in Budget – 169
  - Filled by certified EAs – 121
  - Filled by uncertified EAs – 38
- EA positions unfilled (but staffed with casual staff) – 10
  - Out for round 1 = 4
  - Out for round 2 = 5
  - Out for round 3 = 1
- Community difficulty – Cranbrook
- Hardest to fill – Social Emotional Learning Centre

At 168 EA's it is the highest number we have ever had. We have 2 levels: certified and uncertified. Outside the school level budget, there are 5 Speech Language Assistants (SLA's). These staffing difficulties were also reflected in the Select Standing Committee report last Spring by Trustee Johns.

### **2.4 Progress with Behaviour Services**

Behaviour Support Services Teacher is on a full time leave for two weeks. She has redone the menu of supports. It shows options on what she can offer to schools and classroom in different areas. The menu helps give schools an idea of what she can help with. Several kids on her radar that are trickling in for support. Hot spots are SES, TMRES and FJMES where they seem to need more support.

## **2.5 Progress with Social Emotional Learning Centre program**

The SELC teacher has been preparing at Highlands Elementary School (HES). She is learning how to use supports housed in the SELC room there. The SELC YCW started there in November. We are still looking for an EA for the program - we may need to hire another uncertified EA to be trained to help out here. The SELC program at HES has been running for 3-4 weeks now and will continue up to Winter Break.

The program is coordinated between the SSC, BRT, and the SELC teacher, with oversight by the District Principal of Student Services. A small committee comprised of Speech Language Pathologist (SLP), Behaviour Resource Teacher (BRT), Itinerant staff, SELC teacher and Student Services Coordinator (SSC). A decision will be made in late November. The schools will be informed as to where the team will be starting. We are looking at TMRES or SES in terms of needing support in the winter months. We will have a meeting with those schools to discuss supports to put in place.

SELC works with classrooms and larger groups of students applying tiered level of supports. BRT works more closely with small groups. 6 weeks is a good time for the targeted portion of the program. The teacher keeps in touch after the program and If things start to bubble up at the prior school, the SELC Teacher will reconnect to consult.

## **3. PRESENTATIONS**

## **4. REPORTS**

### **4.1 School Psychologist Staffing recommendation** Moved to In-Camera

## **5. NEW BUSINESS**

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

## **7. CORRESPONDENCE**

## **8. ADJOURNMENT**

Moved/Seconded by Johns/Damstrom:

THAT the Student Services Committee meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

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