



SCHOOL DISTRICT 5

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

September 20th, 2016

Honourable Mike Bernier
Minister of Education
PO Box 9045 Stn. Prov. Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Bernier:

RE: Submission Deadlines of September 30th, 2016

At the September 13th School District 5 (SD5) Southeast Kootenay Board meeting, the Board carried the following motion:

That the Board write a letter to the Ministry of Education re: the lack of adequate time given to Boards of Education to do their due diligence prior to the unreasonably tight deadlines given for submission by government for the newly introduced Capital Plan, School Enhancement Program and Transportation Grant

Our Board is appreciative that government recognizes the dire need of school districts for these additional funding dollars, and as such will make every effort to meet these deadlines while exercising our due diligence.

We would like however, to point out the difficulty for both our excellent administrative staff and our Board in exercising this due diligence, given both the time of year and the tight deadline of this funding.

As you must be aware, professionals in the field of education—including administration, exempt staff and Trustees—typically must reserve their vacation time for July and August in order to accommodate the school calendar and educational needs of their Districts. Summer is also an extremely busy time for Administration who, between trying to squeeze in much needed –and deserved—rest and relaxation, have the daunting task of staffing and preparing schools for the upcoming school year, overseeing capital projects, preparing for financial audits, etc.

In September, this already formidable workload increases, as staff must also focus on welcoming students and adjusting staffing, class configurations, instructional blocks etc. to maximize student opportunities within tight budget constraints.

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• Curtis Helgesen • Chris Johns • Doug McPhee • Patricia Whalen

To request that staff –and Boards-- perform additional research, analysis, planning and coordination at this time of year in order to meet an arbitrary September 30th deadline for monies which government should have recognized as necessary well before the lead-up to or end of summer illustrates a serious lack of planning on the part of government and is disrespectful of the careful planning and hard work demonstrated by Districts and staff across the province.

Again, while we appreciate that government has finally acknowledged *some* of the financial dire straights experienced by Districts across the province, we respectfully request that government reexamine how they fund Districts and instead provide the **stable, predictable and adequate funding** recommended to government by the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services (SSCFGS) in 2015.

Sincerely,



Frank Lento, Board Chair,
SD5

CC: Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services
Christy Clark, Premier, BC
Mike DeJong, Minister of Finance
Bill Bennett, MLA Kootenay East BC
John Horgan, Leader, BC New Democratic Party
Rob Fleming, Education Critic, BC New Democratic Party
Teresa Rezasnoff, President, BCSTA
BCSTA for distribution to member Boards of Education
Mike Lombardi, Chair, Vancouver School Board
Glen Hansman, President BC Teachers' Federation
John Bird, President, BCCPAC
Shelley Balfour & Christina Smith, CFTA Co-Chairs
Debbie Therrien, DPAC Chair
Aaron Thorn, President, SD5 Administrators' Association
Charlie Beresford, Columbia Institute
Catherine Shaw, FACE BC Vancouver
Media

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