



SCHOOL DISTRICT 5

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

February 21st, 2021

Jennifer Whiteside, Minister of Education
Room 124 Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Whiteside,

RE: Covid Vaccine for School District Staff

At the School District 5 (SD5) Southeast Kootenay Public Board meeting of February 17th, the following motion was carried:

That the Board write a letter to the Minister of Education similar to School District 72's letter of December 2, 2020 supporting and advocating for our school district employees through this Pandemic.

Our Board strongly supports the SD72 request, and rationale, that priority status be given for the Covid vaccination to teachers, educational assistants and others who work with cohorts of students.

It is our observation that those working on the front lines of the educational sector are exposed to both younger children whose actions are harder to "regulate" (ie: coughing and sneezing without masks or having appropriately covered their mouths and/or noses) and older students who do not always limit their activities to family or school cohorts.

These factors expose our staff to emotional stressors and potential physical harm on a daily basis.

We strongly urge your government to reconsider your current assessment and include educators and support workers working with students in the K -12 sector as essential workers.

Sincerely,

Frank Lento, Board Chair

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

Cc*: John Horgan, Premier, BC New Democratic Party
Shirley Bond, Interim Leader, BC Liberal Party
Sonia Furstenu, Leader, BC Green Party
Tom Shypitka, MLA Kootenay East BC
Jackie Tegart, Education Critic BC Liberal Party
Stephanie Higginson, President, BCSTA
BCSTA for distribution to member Boards of Education
Teri Mooring, President BC Teachers' Federation
Andrea Sinclair, President, BCCPAC
Shelley Balfour & Chris Kielpinski, CFTA Co-Chairs
Tara McKee, DPAC Chair
Aaron Thorn, President, SD5 Administrators' Association
107.5 Today FM Radio
Drive 102.9/B104 Radio
Cranbrook Daily Townsman
Elk Valley Herald
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