



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Child Care Spaces Open at Jaffray Elementary Secondary School

Jaffray, BC — The Southeast Kootenay School District (the District) is pleased to announce the opening of 30 new child care spaces for before- and after-school care at Jaffray Elementary Junior Secondary School (JESS). The new spaces will be operated by South Country SPC Society, operating as South Country Kids Care, helping to improve access to child care for families in the Jaffray community.

“Adding new child care spaces at Jaffray Elementary Junior Secondary School will make a real difference for local families,” said Lisa Beare, Minister of Education and Child Care. “Before- and after-school care helps parents balance their day while giving children a safe and welcoming place to spend time. We are committed to creating these spaces to support early learning, build strong connections, and help children develop skills that will carry them forward in life.”

The new spaces reflect the District’s ongoing commitment to supporting young children and families by creating accessible, community-based early learning and child care opportunities. Located within Jaffray Elementary Junior Secondary School, the program will provide families with greater local access to before- and after-school care while strengthening connections between early learning and the school community.

“Canada’s new Government is proud to collaborate with the Government of British Columbia to deliver these new spaces,” said Anna Gainey, Canada’s Secretary of State for Children and Youth. “Investments in affordable child care on school grounds strengthen communities, support parents, and give children the best start in life.”

The grand opening event on April 15 will give families and community members an opportunity to celebrate the new space, learn more about the program, and tour the facility. Opening the program alongside Ready, Set, Learn also highlights the district’s focus on early years transitions and dedicated support for children and families before children enter kindergarten.

The District continues to advance early learning and child care initiatives across the district, with Jaffray among several communities expanding programming to better serve local families in partnership with community organizations such as South Country SPC Society, operating as South Country Kids Care.

The new spaces were made possible with a joint provincial and federal funding of \$1.2 million through the ChildCareBC New Spaces Fund. This fund is jointly supported by provincial investments and federal funding under Canada-British Columbia Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement.

No matter the child care option parents choose, the Canada Child Benefit (CCB) provides direct, tax-free support, helping about 3.5 million families every year, including over 450,000 families in B.C. While families can use the benefit however they need, for many it significantly reduces the burden of child care expenses – in some cases, cutting them entirely thanks to federal, provincial, and territorial investments to reduce child care fees in the Canada-wide early learning and child care system.