

Framework for Enhancing Student Learning



SCHOOL DISTRICT 5
SOUTHEAST KOOTENAY

School District No. 5 (Southeast Kootenay)
Learning Services



September 2026

Learning Services

Over the past year, Learning Services has continued to expand staffing, strengthen professional learning, and enhance school-based supports to ensure students receive timely, responsive, and equitable support. Through a multi-tiered approach focused on communication, literacy, social-emotional learning, behaviour regulation, accessibility, and inclusion, Learning Services is building capacity within schools and strengthening early supports for students. These investments reflect a strategic shift toward proactive, sustainable systems that support student success and well-being.

Early Intervention and Communication Supports

Recognizing the importance of early intervention, Learning Services has expanded both speech-language and literacy supports across schools. Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP) staffing has increased by 1.0 FTE in both the Elk Valley and Cranbrook, improving access to assessment, consultation, and intervention services. This expansion also strengthens support for students attending Kootenay Discovery School and those using Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) systems in middle and secondary schools.

Each of the District's ten elementary schools now benefits from a dedicated 1.0 FTE Speech-Language Assistant (SLA), ensuring equitable access to communication and literacy support across the District. Working in collaboration with the Early Learning District Principal, SLAs are trained in UFLI Foundations and provide evidence-based literacy and communication interventions that help address learning challenges before they become barriers to success.

Every school is supported by a minimum of 1.0 FTE Learning Services Teacher (LST), ensuring consistent access to specialized expertise, student support planning, consultation, and targeted interventions. This model strengthens inclusive practices and helps ensure students receive timely support within their school communities.

To further support successful transitions to school, Kindergarten Educational Assistant support has been extended from September through the end of October. This additional time helps students establish routines, build social connections, and develop self-regulation skills, while allowing school teams to identify and respond to student needs earlier.

Social-Emotional Learning and Neuro-Affirming Practices

Learning Services continues to prioritize social-emotional learning through a collaborative model that places specialists directly in schools alongside teachers and students. Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Teachers and a Neuro-Affirming Behaviour Consultant provide coaching, professional learning, classroom support, and individualized consultation. The success of this approach has resulted in an additional 1.0 FTE SEL Teacher, increasing support across the District.

The team works with educators to embed self-regulation, executive functioning, and mindfulness strategies into daily instruction while building staff confidence and capacity. Through collaboration with families and school teams, they support students using inclusive, strength-based approaches that promote well-being and reduce barriers to learning.

This work aligns closely with the District's commitment to Compassionate Systems. Building on Reframing Behaviour, SEL Teachers are incorporating the Collaborative and Proactive Solutions (CPS) model, which focuses on understanding lagging skills, strengthening relationships, and

solving problems collaboratively with students. These approaches help create supportive learning environments that foster belonging, engagement, and success.

Accessibility and Inclusion

Learning Services remains committed to removing barriers and improving accessibility for students, staff, families, and community members. Through the Accessibility Plan and public reporting processes, we continue to identify opportunities to enhance participation and belonging across schools.

Recent accessibility improvements include lowered countertops in the Parkland Middle School foods classroom to improve wheelchair access, standing desks in multiple classrooms, and adaptive equipment that supports participation in school activities. Examples include a water float to support a Steeples Elementary School student participating in swim programming and an adaptive sled for a student at Rocky Mountain Elementary School.

The District has also contracted an Orientation and Mobility Specialist who supports students at Mount Baker Secondary School, Parkland Middle School, Kootenay Orchards Elementary School, TM Roberts Elementary School, and Gordon Terrace Elementary School. This specialized service helps students develop skills related to classroom navigation, environmental awareness, mobility in busy and shared spaces, and personal safety, promoting confidence and independence across school settings.

As part of the District's broader commitment to inclusion, the Inclusive Calendar continues to evolve to honour the diverse cultures, identities, languages, abilities, and lived experiences represented throughout the Southeast Kootenay District.

Professional Learning and Capacity Building

Learning Services continues to strengthen staff capacity through ongoing professional learning and collaboration with Provincial Outreach Programs. Recent learning opportunities, including *Leveraging AI*, *Video Modelling*, and *Why Wait on the WIAT?*, have encouraged educators to explore innovative approaches that improve access, efficiency, and responsiveness in supporting students.

This work reflects a growing shift from identifying deficits toward strengthening supports. Rather than focusing solely on assessment, school teams are increasingly asking what interventions and strategies can be implemented immediately to support student success.

Participation in professional learning related to UFLI Foundations, Compassionate Systems, Reframing Behaviour, and Collaborative and Proactive Solutions continues to grow across the District, creating greater consistency in literacy instruction, behaviour support, and inclusive practices.

Learning Services also uses student achievement data, school-based feedback, service trends, and emerging research to guide resource allocation, staffing decisions, and program development. This ensures supports remain responsive to student needs while promoting continuous improvement across schools.

Psychological Services and Responsive Assessment Practices

The Psychology team continues to play an important role in supporting students with complex learning and developmental profiles. An increase of 0.1 FTE has strengthened the team's capacity to provide assessments, consultation, and recommendations that support student success.

While psychoeducational assessments remain an important tool for understanding student needs, Learning Services continues to emphasize timely support rather than waiting for formal testing. School teams are focusing on implementing evidence-informed interventions as soon as learning challenges are identified.

To improve efficiency and consistency, two designated Learning Services Teachers, one in the Elk Valley and one in Cranbrook, continue to administer the WIAT-III. This model allows school-based Learning Services Teachers to spend more time supporting students, collaborating with teachers, and strengthening classroom-based interventions while helping streamline assessment processes.

Summary

Learning Services continues to support the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning by creating responsive, inclusive, and compassionate learning environments. Investments in speech-language services, literacy intervention, social-emotional learning, neuro-affirming practices, accessibility, professional learning, and psychological services are strengthening student well-being, engagement, and achievement.

Through a focus on early intervention, capacity building, and collaborative problem-solving, Learning Services is moving beyond a model centred primarily on identification and remediation toward one that emphasizes prevention, inclusion, and timely support. This work reflects an evidence-informed approach that strengthens school communities and creates equitable opportunities for all learners.