



SCHOOL DISTRICT 5

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

CHILD CARE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

When did the Ministry of Education change to the Ministry of Education and Child Care?

On February 8, 2022, the Government of British Columbia announced that childcare and education would integrate to form the new Ministry of Education and Child Care effective the beginning of April 2022.

Does this change mean that school districts are now responsible for all the child care needs of the communities in their district?

School districts are not responsible for all the child care needs of the communities within each district. School districts are encouraged to help meet the demand for more before- and after-school care, although they are not required to do so under the School Act.

The Minister of State for Child Care is working toward universal access to before and after school care by continuing to build spaces on school grounds and is finalizing development of a capital plan for child care.

How does this change affect privately-owned child care centres?

School districts are not taking over the management of child care in the province. Existing child care facilities remain independent of school districts. Every child care provider is a valued partner in the ChildCareBC plan.

What steps has School District No. 5 (Southeast Kootenay) (the District) taken to provide child care in its communities? Will child care be available at every elementary school in the District?

The District is working toward before and after school care on school grounds in the Southeast Kootenay communities of Cranbrook, Fernie, Elkford, Sparwood and the South Country.

In the spring of 2024, the District, in partnership with not-for-profit providers, was successful in its application to the province's ChildCareBC New Spaces Fund. The District received approval for more than \$2.5 million through this fund. The District will continue to build upon relationships between early years and schools as well as explore new opportunities for connecting and collaborating.

When can I expect to see new child care spaces open in my community?

New child care spaces will be created across the District and will be opened as early as September 2024.



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What is the approval process for new child care spaces?

Partnerships and spaces are the two major factors that play a role in the approval process.

What are the ages of the children and hours of operation that will be available for school aged care?

Children will be school aged from kindergarten to grade 6. The hours of operation will be determined by the third-party providers, based on the needs of each community.

Is the old Mountainview Elementary school in Sparwood going to be converted to a child care hub?

In partnership with the District, the Society for Kids' Care has received funding from Teck Resources Limited and Community Futures East Kootenay to proceed with a feasibility study to create the Mountainview Child Development Hub, which would possibly house a kindergarten to grade 3 public school and expand existing child care operations with the creation of additional preschool and before and after-school care spaces.

The feasibility study will also assess the size of each of the proposed programs and determine the possible modifications or extensions to the building. Once completed, the Board of Education will review the proposal to determine whether or not the District is able to move forward with the project.

Why is the District not going to offer full day child care?

Based on the preliminary findings, the District and the Province are facing challenges in staffing full child care facilities. The terms and conditions attached to the available funding require a significant time commitment, and if the District is unable to staff the facilities, it will incur costs. Furthermore, it's important to note that there is no additional government funding for child care beyond the New Spaces Funds. This means that operations, administration, and other related expenses must be covered by the District if child care facilities cannot operate on a cost recovery basis due to a lack of staff or other reasons.

For more information click on the following links:



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