

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 8 (KOOTENAY LAKE)

Press Release

RESPONSE TO THE ELIMINATION OF THE ANNUAL FACILITIES GRANT (September 1ST, 2009)

FACTS:

- On August 27th, 2009 the Deputy Minister of Education announced two things that will affect our 2009/2010 budget process:
 - 1) The 2009/2010 Annual Facilities Grant of (approximately \$1,300,000) which covers the period April 1st, 2009 to March 31st, 2010 will not be received by districts. There has been no confirmation that it will begin again on April 1st, 2010.
 - 2) We cannot charge the Francophone Education Authority for \$30,000 in rent for the use of Gordon Sargent School.
- Our June 30th, 2009 financial statements reflect that the AFG fund was overspent by \$760,565. This is due to an actual over expenditure of \$364,000 and AFG grants not received yet budgeted for (see Fact 1 above) of \$395,662.
- Our anticipated final 2009/2010 transportation budget is in excess of the announced \$2,333,958 Ministry of Education transportation funding.
- The district Operations and Transportation Department serves numerous communities throughout the challenging geography in School District #8, which includes six zones/communities: Crawford Bay, Creston, North Kootenay Lake, Nelson, Salmo, Slocan Valley.

SOLUTIONS:

- A letter will be written from the Board of Education to the Minister asking permission to use our Ministry of Education Restricted Capital funds of \$559,512 to offset the negative effect of the loss of the 2009/2010 Annual Facilities Grant. In correspondence received, the Ministry of Education has made reference to the capacity for districts to access surplus funds and this is the only surplus available to School District No. 8.

- There are currently 120 full and part time positions within the Operations Department. As the bulk of Operations expenditures are found in salaries, this significant budget cut will result in job losses.
- Prior to any staff adjustments being considered all Function 5 and 7 budget line items were reviewed and adjusted accordingly. Significant reductions have been made in:
 - administration
 - travel
 - training
 - technology replacement,
 - supplies
- Staff adjustments are in accordance with minimum service levels specific to safety, security, protection of public health, and infrastructure.
- Specific staffing cuts and adjustments will be announced following communication with affected staff members.

The Board of Education recognizes that this will have a significant impact on the lives of our high-quality employees, as well as service levels throughout the district, but see no other option in approaching the loss of the targeted Annual Facilities Grant.

For further information contact:

- Bill Maslechko, Board Chairperson (250-352-6100)
- Patricia Dooley, Superintendent of Schools (250-505-7037)
- Monica Schulte, Secretary-Treasurer (250-505-7039)
- Larry Brown, Director of Operations (250-354-4871)