



School District #8 (Kootenay Lake)

Press release:

School District No. 8 Adopts 2016/2017 Preliminary Budget

At the Regular Open Board Meeting held on April 19th, the SD8 (Kootenay Lake) Board of Education passed the Preliminary Budget for the 2016-2017 school year in the amount of \$59.4 million. The preliminary budget was developed by the District's 23 member Budget Stakeholder Engagement Committee comprised of voting members from Kootenay Lake Teachers' Union, CUPE, Principal/Vice Principals' Association, District Parent Advisory Committee, Superintendent, Secretary-Treasurer, Directors and Trustees.

The Board of Education is required by law to submit a balanced budget to the Ministry of Education. The budget process is ongoing and extensive. Planning for this preliminary budget commenced in October 2015. Although the preliminary budget was approved April 19, 2016 – we will continue to work with this budget until the final amended budget is submitted to the Ministry in February, 2017.

We would like to express our appreciation to each of the Committee members for their participation in numerous meetings, data gathering exercises and debates. As in previous years, Principals and Vice Principals had opportunities to engage in discussions regarding learning and budget with Trustees. A Student Symposium provided further insight for the Committee and the Trustees. New to the process this year was a "talking tables" dinner event where teachers, CUPE members and parents were engaged in facilitated discussion around broad budget topics with Trustees, Principals and Vice Principals and members of the Senior Leadership Team. In total, 76 participants joined together to talk about learning and resource allocations. Processes to involve and engage more stakeholders in School District No. 8 improve each year and the addition of this event was greatly appreciated by the Board as Trustees gathered the information needed to pass a balanced budget.

Two major philosophical changes were made in this year's budget:

1. Surplus dollars were not added to revenue. At this time last year and the two years subsequent, the budget contained \$400,000 anticipated surplus in the revenue section. The Board is facing significant facilities requirements over the coming years and once the Board passes its facilities plan, significant investment will need to be made in SD8's facilities. At this time, it is anticipated that 100% of operating surplus will be allocated to Local Capital for future investment in renovations, new space construction and improvement to learning environments in SD8. However, before surplus is allocated in Fall 2016 for the 2015-2016 year, the discussion will go to committee for recommendation to the Board; and
2. Where funding became available or was identified in the bare bones budget, it was allocated to teacher staffing.

Some highlights of the Preliminary Budget for the 2016-2017 school year are categorized in three broad categories:

Focus on Student Learning

- A total of \$292,000 dollars has been committed to early learning for education assistant time in K-3 classrooms, curriculum implementation and other initiatives to transform learning in SD8.
- \$565,855 Community Links dollars continue to be focused on attending to the specific needs of our vulnerable learners including meals, Read by 3, intermediate core literacy and third party contracts providing counselling, art therapy, mental health clinicians and after school programming.
- Continuation of Student Symposia to engage learners in building awareness for decision makers in SD8 around students' learning, priorities and advocacy.

Human Resources

- In total 7.5 FTE teachers or \$750,000 has been added to the teacher staffing component of the budget to attend to a projected increase in students, and to support transformation throughout the District as the BC revised curriculum is implemented. Over the next few months we will be adding staffing for targeted funds, such as Aboriginal Education and the Learning Improvement Fund among others.
- A commitment to include Teachers Teaching On Call (TTOC's) and Part Time Teachers in the 2016-2017 Non-Instructional Day to implement the re-designed curriculum. To have all teachers in the district, including TTOC's and part time teachers, working on this important project will positively impact students when the curriculum is fully rolled out.

Commitment to Capital Investments

The Board of Education recognizes, now more than ever, that it is important to responsibly maintain our capital investments, and to make further investments in areas where we are challenged.

- \$200,000 Technology Evergreen Fund to replace and enhance technology for work and learning throughout the District
- \$214,000 in the Next Generation Network, a provincial infrastructure project providing faster and more reliable internet at all sites.

The 2016-2017 budget did not come without its challenges. As in any budget year, the Board was not able to fulfill all of the very important initiatives and staffing requests put forward. Two priorities were at the forefront of the Board's mind during this budget process: looming facility pressures, responsibilities and liabilities; and the desire to put as much staffing into schools as possible. The 2016-2017 budget has made room to direct resources to these priorities.

Quick Facts

Projected Enrolment increase (February, 2016):	66 FTE students
Ministry of Education Operating Grant increase:	\$900,000
Budget By-Law decrease (resulting from surplus reallocation):	\$1 million

For more information about the Budget process, please visit our website at:

http://www.sd8.bc.ca/?page_id=4407

April 25, 2016, Nelson BC