

January 24, 2023

RE: Kamloops-Thompson Board of Education Meets with MLAs Milobar, Stone, and Tegart

On January 13, 2023, our Board of Education met with MLAs, Todd Stone, Peter Milobar, and Jackie Tegart to review our capital needs, a budget update, and to discuss how we can communicate to the community what we do together. In that meeting, we discussed the importance of sharing our meetings with the community through public summaries in the form of a brief.

Capital Needs Discussion

Kamloops is growing rapidly and we need new schools.

- Enrolment has increased in every year for six years;
- Kamloops is one of the top five fastest growing communities in BC;
- Approximately 9% of students (1500 students) are learning in portables;
- Kamloops area schools- capacity utilization is projected to grow rapidly: elementary schools from 117% (2021-2022) to 129% (2031-2032) and secondary schools from 98% (2021-2022) to 107% (2031-2032) with Parkcrest Elementary completed by 2024;
- We emphasized that since April 2021, we have completed 13 school catchment changes impacting 25% of our K-7 schools and re-opened a school in Southwest Kamloops.
- We shared our [capital advocacy booklet](#) and provided an overview of all priorities.

We focused on our immediate, pressing needs: A new elementary school in Pineview Valley.

- We discussed how McGowan Park Elementary School is at 160% utilization capacity with four (4) portables. The three (3) nearby schools that would be eligible to undergo a redistribution of students through a catchment change are also, on average, at approximately 150% utilization capacity so they are overly full and relying on portables;
- There is no room in nearby schools to do a catchment change, so our only option is a new school in Pineview Valley;
- We also indicated that we had written to Minister Whiteside on June 14, 2022, June 27, 2022, and to Minister Rachna Singh on December 28, 2022

(See [Board correspondence](#)) to share the urgent need for a new elementary school in Pineview Valley.

We shared that we urgently need a small financial contribution (\$7.5 M) in the February 2023 budget to purchase the site for the Secondary School in Aberdeen.

- In 5 years, students in southwest Kamloops will need a secondary school.
- The current high schools are projected to be at 146% capacity.
- On April 11, 2022, we wrote to Minister Whiteside to share that we have a one-time chance to buy the only existing land available in Aberdeen for a price of \$6.1M, prior to December 31, 2022. We still have this option; however, there is immense pressure on the owner to sell, and the cost of the land has increased.
- Our Board has the required School Site Acquisition Charge system in place with the City of Kamloops. As of February 17, 2022, the School District had \$10,948 in School Site Acquisition Charge funds to contribute to the purchase of the site. As of January 18, 2023, the school district has received approximately \$163,000.
- Securing this land is crucial to support our current and future secondary capacity needs in the southwest of Kamloops.

Operating Budget Discussion

There was no increase in FTE this year, and COVID-19 funding was not allocated this year.

- Expectations for providing supplies (masks, hand sanitizer, MERV-13 filters, increased ventilation) continue without the funding.
- Relief costs had increased by \$1.8M in the 2021-2022 school year due to a change in the Employment Standards Act sick leave provisions and due to the expectations of regional health authorities.

If you have any questions, please contact us:

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