



Ms. Karpuk  
SD73 Trustees  
Ms. Sidow  
% Kathleen Karpuk  
Chair  
SD73 Board of Trustees  
[kkarpuk@sd73.bc.ca](mailto:kkarpuk@sd73.bc.ca)

January 20th, 2020

Re: Sun Peaks Elementary Reconfiguration

Dear Ms. Karpuk, School District 73 Trustees and Ms. Sidow,

This letter has been written by the Sun Peaks Education Society (SPES), on behalf of the Sun Peaks school community as a whole concerning the School District (SD73)'s proposed planning process "to re-configure Sun Peaks Elementary to fully integrate grades 8 and 9 for the 2020-2021 school year; and, to implement the 5-day per week school calendar to best accommodate hours of instruction; and to consult the community on the name change to Sun Peaks School from Sun Peaks Elementary."

Firstly, allow us to fully recognize how grateful we, as a school community, are to have the commitment and support of SD73 in moving the vision of our community school forward. SD73 has been instrumental in the expansion of Sun Peaks Elementary since its inception as the Discovery Centre for Balanced Education back in 2010. The community and its stakeholders have worked tirelessly year after year to ensure suitable education is available for our students in a way that embraces our "mountain lifestyle."

The unique K-12 educational experience of Sun Peaks Elementary and Sun Peaks Secondary Academy have both grown to become a primary draw for families to join our community, contributing to the growth of Sun Peaks, the local economy, and the additional development of important community resources such as a health clinic, and community centre.

SPES has worked closely with the Sun Peaks Elementary Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) to ensure the main concerns raised by the school community have been summarized in this document for consideration in the elementary school expansion planning process. A large part of this effort was to conduct a survey of our school community and allow individual feedback. While we acknowledge that there are many opinions in the community, this letter represents the consensus of the majority and will assist SD73 Trustees and Administration understand considerations affecting the community. The survey results are being presented in detail by the Sun Peaks Elementary PAC in a separate document.

The strategic plan for SPES has always been for SD73 to undertake K-12 programming on a full-time basis. Our community has made it overwhelmingly clear: we are all excited for and in full support of SD73 moving forward to re-configure Sun Peaks Elementary to fully integrate grades 8 and 9 for the 2020-2021 school year. We are also in full support to change the name to Sun Peaks School. This additional programming is viewed as a positive step with many benefits to our school community.

Preliminary plans to locate the additional portable classroom for grades 8 and 9 in proximity to Sun Peaks Secondary Academy, operated by SPES with support from SD73's Kamloops Open Online Learning (@KOOL), is also acknowledged and seen as a practical benefit for co-locating teenagers.

Having an additional portable to accommodate grades 8 and 9 as part of the expansion plans have not yet addressed the current problem of space for the growing number of students enrolled in K-7 at Sun Peaks Elementary. In the 2018-2019 school year, Sun Peaks Education Society, together with the Sun Peaks Elementary PAC requested SD73 provide an additional portable for the K-7 school. We appreciate SD73's renovation/reconfiguration in summer 2019 to assist in addressing this problem, however it has not resolved the overall space issues for grades K-7. The school community still

has a real concern about space at the Sun Peaks Elementary location. Our Mayor, Al Raine, has stated that the municipality feels there is room for one more portable at the current school site and that this is still a viable option in the short term should another portable be available. We appreciate that this topic remains a priority for SD73 in the short and long term planning.

Questions have been brought up regarding the transition plan for current grade 8s going into grade 9 for the 2020-2021 school season. Parents have expressed concern that they do not want their students, who have worked hard in the 2019-2020 school year to learn the @KOOL system, transition back to a more traditional learning model, and then return to @KOOL for grades 10-12. Some are also worried about losing the flexibility that @KOOL offers. The intent of the educational system is for students to move forward in their development. Past elementary school expansion plans have only ever included one grade at a time so this situation is unique. The incorporation of grade 9 in the elementary expansion will impact 5 students currently enrolled in grade 8. Incorporating independent learning expectations in grade 8 and 9 prepare students as they transition to Sun Peaks Secondary Academy for grades 10-12 under @KOOL. We respectfully request to be involved in transition planning concerning the grade 9 programming for the 2020-2021 school year.

Concerning the proposed 5-day week model, SPES has heard loudly from the community of the importance in maintaining the current 4-day week model. Students and families use the 5th day for extra curricular activities, supplemental educational opportunities and inter-provincial sport competitions. Furthermore, Sun Peaks Elementary was ranked 1st in public schools for SD73 and 2nd after St. Ann's Academy, a private school, in the last published rankings from Fraser Institute (2017-2018). This ranking is reflective of the commitment of our families in balancing school work and parent-driven educational enhancement programs, that are only possible when combined with a 4-day school week. A detailed document for consideration of the 4-day week model, including sample schedules for the required extra educational hours have been prepared by the Sun Peaks Elementary PAC on behalf of the school community. We are therefore requesting that SD73 reconsider the proposed 5-day week schedule.

On behalf of SPES and the school community as a whole, we would like to thank the SD73 Trustees and Administration for the consultation and opportunity to incorporate feedback in this important planning process. The planned expansion of Sun Peaks Elementary to integrate grades 8 and 9 is an important move forward in creating a sustainable future for our school community and we undeniably support SD73 in this planning process.

On behalf of the Sun Peaks school community, we look forward to working with you,



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