



# School District 72

Campbell River, B.C.

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## News Release

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### **School District 72 to delay all-day kindergarten until 2011**

CAMPBELL RIVER, B.C. – The Campbell River School District will not be offering all-day kindergarten in the upcoming school year, with the exception of the already existing Aboriginal full-day kindergarten program.

On December 18, the district received a letter from the Ministry of Education offering funding for all-day kindergarten, beginning in September 2010, for 219 students. However, the district anticipates a registration of approximately 364 kindergarten students, leaving a required funding shortfall for 145 kindergarten spaces or approximately \$300,000.

At their January 12 public meeting, the board debated at considerable length the merit of either accepting the funding for partial implementation, or waiting until September 2011 for complete implementation, at which time the ministry has committed to fully funded all-day kindergarten for all students. The board voted to wait until 2011.

At the heart of this decision are two issues. Adding an essentially new program requires not only extensive preparation within schools, but coordination between schools and the community of preschools, childcare centres, and daycares that work to support parents and children. Major changes require planning, consultation, and cooperation, with adequate time for families and institutions to adjust to new realities. With insufficient funding for the groundwork, a partial roll-out in September 2010 would have made a smooth transition difficult, if not impossible.

The second concern was based on School District 72 policy which states in part that the district will “provide equity for all students.” Placing all-day kindergarten in some schools and not others would have put the district in direct conflict with this fundamental value.

“Although the board is disappointed that our schools will not be expanding their kindergarten programs until 2011, we have made a thoughtful decision which will now give us both the funding and the time to manage an introduction to full-day kindergarten which addresses the social, emotional, and educational needs of our youngest children,” says SD72 Board of Education chairperson, Helen Moats. “We are confident that this decision will support our goal of success for all learners.”

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