



**C.M. Finch Elementary School**  
Parents  
Advisory  
Council  
Fort St. John, BC



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Subject: Input on the Funding Formula Review  
Date: February 28, 2018

**Situation**

CM Finch Elementary School is one of the 8 Elementary Schools in Fort St. John, School District 60. All of the schools in this district are over capacity for students, as indicated by the number of portables at each school.

This means that all rooms in our school are occupied, there are no facilities for multi-purpose use and space, PHE times and accessibility are impacted because of the demand on gym time, and libraries have been cut down and partially dismantled to allow for increased classroom space. Our school in particular is extended with 3 portable classrooms, 2 of which are not connected to the main building. This means that in the long, cold, dark, snowy winter months, the children have to take the time to dress appropriately for the conditions just to go to the gym or enter the main building.

Next year a new school will be opened next to our catchment, Margaret "Ma" Murray Community School, and this school is already projected to be at maximum capacity when it opens. It gives temporary relief for the numbers in a few of the schools, however a new neighborhood in our catchment area is under construction. It will not be long before "Ma" Murray is over capacity as well. The reality is that Fort St. John is one of the fastest growing communities in British Columbia, year over year, over the last 20 years or so. With a very young population, bringing in school aged children, all the way to Grade 12, and the school capacity has not kept up with increased enrollment.

**- increase school capacity in SD 60**

**Teachers/staff**

SD 60 has long struggled with recruitment and retention of qualified teaching professionals, and continues to have a difficult time filling all required positions. Teachers and support staff roles can earn the same salaries and benefits in the south, as in the north, and so it is more desirable to relocate closer to the urban centers and where there are shorter winters. Incentives need to be provided for those that are choosing to make a career in the north or we will just keep having the revolving door of good, qualified teaching professionals.

**- provide Incentives for teaching professionals in the north (monetary or otherwise)**

**Sports**

It is important that children are involved in extracurricular sports. Since the winters are so long and cold, children spend less time outside. Physical education is critical to overall health. The intramural school based sports programs are an excellent opportunity open to all students and families and provide a real sense of team spirit and sports comradery. Busing to other schools to play intramural games is not included in the program and is then paid by the parents.

**- funding for School sports transportation**

### **Before and After school care**

Before and after school care programs are not available in Fort st. John. After school programs are a great way to further improve a child's development. And it gives parents the option to work both (full-time).

After care programs can increase academic effort and can decrease likelihood of skipping school. Children can be introduced to different subjects and benefit in different ways.

### **- before and after school care**

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