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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Education

### **MINISTRY SUPPORTS REPLACEMENT FOR M.V. BEATTIE SCHOOL**

ENDERBY – The Province will accelerate plans to replace M.V. Beattie Elementary school in Enderby, Shuswap MLA George Abbott announced today.

“I was pleased to meet with teachers, students and school board officials today to kick off the first stage of the replacement process,” said Abbott. “The Ministry of Education and the government consider M.V. Beattie Elementary to be a high priority for replacement, and I understand it has been identified as the school district’s top priority.”

The first stage of a school replacement is a feasibility study, and the Province is investing \$100,000 in that study. The oldest part of M.V. Beattie Elementary was built in 1914, with additions constructed in 1965 and 1970. The feasibility study will be conducted to review the options and cost. A replacement for the school is estimated to cost approximately \$10 million.

“The Interior Health Authority, WorkSafeBC and independent consultants have all determined that there are no immediate health and safety concerns at the school,” said Education Minister Shirley Bond. “But because of the age of M.V. Beattie Elementary, the Province will accelerate the process for replacement of the school.”

“This is tremendous news for the board and school district. The replacement of the original brick building has been a top priority of the board,” said North Okanagan-Shuswap board chair Teresa Hebert. “Replacing the school will provide the community of Enderby with a new environmentally friendly, healthy learning environment, which will assist us in preparing students to reach their full potential.”

The school was deemed safe by a number of inspections earlier this year, including a visual on-site inspection conducted by WorkSafeBC. No health hazards were raised in the inspection report. The district also hired independent consultants to conduct a mould and air quality test. After reviewing that report and making its own on-site inspection, the Interior Health Authority concluded that preliminary results indicate no health risks.

“Like parents, the ministry expects schools to be healthy and safe learning environments,” said Bond. “The feasibility study is the first step in ensuring that student and community needs are met in North Okanagan-Shuswap in the years ahead.”

Since 2001-02, four capital projects worth \$9.2 million have been completed in the North Okanagan-Shuswap district.