

# Office of the Secretary-Treasurer

*Kim Morris - Secretary Treasurer*

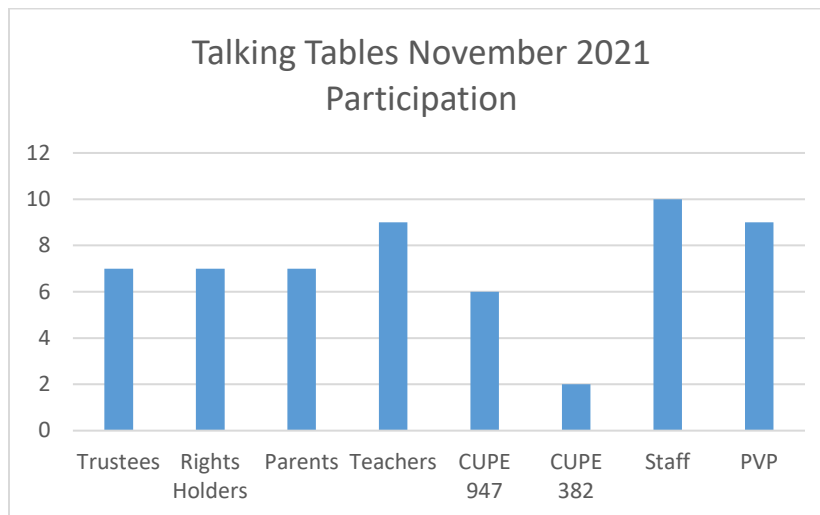
**TO: Budget Advisory Committee and Board of Education**  
**FROM: Kim Morris**  
**RE: Talking Tables 2021**  
**DATE: December 7, 2021 and December 13, 2021**

On November 18, 2021, a “Talking Tables” event for budget was held. Talking tables for budget is an opportunity to hear directly from Rights Holders, parents, unions, staff, and trustees about student learning. Topics are broad and are intended to draw out themes for decision makers to consider when making human and financial resource allocations for 2022-2023.

Intentions of the event were:

1. Social and relationship building
2. Rights Holders and Partner engagement directly with Trustees
3. Maximum Trustee interaction with Rights Holders and Partners
4. Inform decision making
5. Diverse opinion

Approximately 57 participants came together:



*The Greater Victoria School District wishes to recognize and acknowledge the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations, on whose traditional territories, we live, we learn, and we do our work.*

Sites Represented	
SJ Burnside Alternate	Oak Bay Secondary
Arbutus Middle	Oaklands Elementary
Cedar Hill Middle	Quadra Elementary
Central Middle	Reynolds Secondary
Doncaster Elementary	Rockheights Middle
Facilities	Shoreline Middle
George Jay Elementary	Strawberry Vale Elem
Lansdowne Middle	Tolmie Board Office
Marigold Elementary	Trustees
Mt Douglas Secondary	Willows Elementary

Opening comments were provided by:

Deb Whitten, Interim Superintendent  
 Kristely Kelly, Director of Education, Songhees Nation  
 Kalie Dyer, Education Director, Esquimalt Nation  
 Caitlin Bird, President, Métis Nation of Greater Victoria  
 Connor McCoy, President, Principals Vice Principals Association  
 Jane Massy, President, CUPE 947  
 Brian Whin-Yates, Recording Secretary, CUPE 382  
 Angela Carmichael, Vice-President, VCPAC  
 Winona Waldron, President, GVTA

Closing comments were provided by Chair Whiteaker.

Participants were introduced by their table facilitators, after which, a short budget presentation was provided. Participants then moved into the first of three topics: Climate. Facilitators were identified and note recorders were selected at each table. A timer was set for 20-30 minutes and discussion ensued. When the first topic's time was up, Trustees 'moved' (were assigned to a new zoom breakout room) to a new table for topic 2: Framework for Enhancing Student Learning. The same format repeated for topics 3: Budget Process.

The agenda is attached as Appendix "A". The budget presentation slides are attached as Appendix "B" and notes from table recorder on each topic are attached as Appendix "C".

Thank you to all participants and Trustees who were able to attend for part or all of the evening and especially to Rights Holders and Partner executives who found attendees for the evening. To those unable to attend, we hope to see you at future events.

This report will be shared with Rights Holders and Partner groups, will be on a Budget Advisory Committee agenda, will be received by the Board at its December 13, 2021 Regular Board Meeting and will be posted on the budget resources District web page under 2022-2023 School Year Budget at <https://www.sd61.bc.ca/our-district/financial/>.

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One *Learning* Community



**School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)  
VCPAC/CUPE 947/CUPE 382/GVTA/GVPVPA/  
Board of Education/Senior Leadership**

**Talking Tables  
Budget 2022-2023**

**Thursday, November 18, 2021**

**6:00 pm**

**Zoom:**

**<https://qvsd61.zoom.us/j/61525251521?pwd=Z1dxcUpQMXdqYS9yZ2lwU2lrdHEyZz09>**

**AGENDA**

6:00 – 6:20 Welcome

Acknowledgement

Opening Remarks

Deb Whitten, Interim Superintendent

Kristely Kelly, Director of Education, Songhees Nation

Kalie Dyer, Education Director, Esquimalt Nation

Caitlin Bird, President, Métis Nation of Greater Victoria

Connor McCoy, President, Principals Vice Principals Association

Jane Massy, President, CUPE 947

Brian Whin-Yates, Recording Secretary, CUPE 382

Angela Carmichael, Vice-President, VCPAC

Winona Waldron, GVTA

Format of the Evening

6:30 – 7:00 Budget Presentation

7:00 - 7:20 Topic#1

7:20 – 7:50 Topic #2

7:50 – 8:10 Topic #3

8:10 – 8:25 Closing Remarks

Ann Whiteaker, Board Chair

**School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)**  
**VCPAC/CUPE 947/CUPE 382/GVTA/GVPVPA/**  
**Board of Education/Senior Leadership**  
**Talking Tables**  
**Budget 2022-2023**  
**Thursday, November 18, 2021**  
**TOPIC #1**

Over the past months and weeks, and in particular this week, SD61 along with the community and province at large, has experienced challenge related to extreme weather events.

The Board has carried the following motions that are currently in progress:

*That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) recognize that the breakdown of the stable climate and sea level under which human life has developed constitutes an emergency, and that in declaring a climate emergency the Board:*

- a) direct the Superintendent to develop a Climate Action Plan that establishes targets and strategies commensurate with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's call to limit warming to 1.5 degrees;*
- b) direct the Superintendent to report back on specific actions and resources that could be included in future correspondence to the provincial or federal government; and*
- c) demonstrate leadership by directing the Board Chair to write letters to other school boards, local MLAs, and Provincial government encouraging them to declare climate emergencies and develop targets and strategies to combat climate change.*

*That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) direct the Superintendent to re-establish green teams in every school who will work with facilities to create a process where the green teams categorize and weigh soft plastics once a week. This information will be collected by Manager, Building Operations, Facilities Services and recommendations will be made in the spring of 2021-2022 on how to reduce waste of soft plastics.*

*That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) direct the Superintendent to oversee the creation of a Working Committee and consultation process, as outlined in Bylaw 9210, to prepare a draft Compost and Waste policy proposal which is in alignment with our environmental values and goals.*

*That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) direct the Superintendent to prepare a Climate Action Plan as directed by the Board in its motion of 24*

*June 2019, by December 2021 for consideration by the Board and our stakeholders. The plan should also include funding options to support targets and strategies such as available rebates and government funding to meet sectoral targets set by the provincial government.*

**Questions:**

**What does the Board need to consider in its resource allocation decisions (budget) regarding climate change?**

**How should the Board prioritize climate action, and what strategies should the Board use to carry out its climate action plan among all of the other competing imperatives in the K-12 organization?**

**School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)**  
**VCPAC/CUPE 947/CUPE 382/GVTA/GVPVPA/**  
**Board of Education/Senior Leadership**  
**Talking Tables**  
**Budget 2022-2023**  
**Thursday, November 18, 2021**  
**TOPIC #2**

The Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (FESL) was approved by the Board on September 27, 2021 (<https://www.sd61.bc.ca/our-district/financial/>).

As a learning community, we are deeply committed to each student having the opportunity to fulfill their potential and pursue their aspirations. We are becoming increasingly more data literate and are dedicated to having all of our schools be inclusive and culturally responsive learning environments.

FESL complements the District's Strategic Plan and summarizes all students' culturally responsive educational outcomes as well as the goals and strategies for continuous improvement..

**Goal One of the Greater Victoria School District's Strategic Plan is to create an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support and improve all learners' personal and academic success.**

Over the last five years, students in School District No. 61 performed at a rate of one percent lower than the province in the five-year completion rate (see Appendix p. 13). When we analyze the data, we continue to see disparities for students who identify as Indigenous and students with disabilities or diverse abilities. In order to continue to close the achievement gap, Goal One focuses on those students currently experiencing the least success in our system.

To realize this goal, three strategies were developed:

1. Develop and support high-quality learning opportunities
2. Engage and collaborate with students, families, and staff to provide an inclusive learning environment
3. Address the inequity of outcomes for diverse learners

**Goal Two of the Greater Victoria School District's Strategic Plan is to create a culturally responsive learning environment that will support Indigenous learners' personal and academic success.**

To realize this goal, three strategies were developed:

1. Critically examine personal and systemic biases
2. Support Indigenous student identity through collaboration with Indigenous community
3. Address the academic inequity of outcomes for Indigenous learners

**Goal Three of the Greater Victoria School District's Strategic Plan focuses on creating an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support all learners' physical and mental well-being.**

To realize this goal, four strategies were developed:

1. Provide Professional Learning Opportunities for all staff
2. Create a Collaborative Children and Youth in Care team
3. Engage and collaborate with families
4. Address inequity of opportunity

**Question:**

**How have you experienced the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning and the Strategic Plan in your schools/sites? Have you noticed a common language developing? Have initiatives aligned to the goals and strategies impacted your school/site?**

**When you review the goals and strategies that will move success for students forward, how can the Board advance this work through its annual budget process?**

**School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)**  
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**Budget 2022-2023**  
**Thursday, November 18, 2021**  
**TOPIC #3**

The Board of Education typically approves its budget in one meeting and uses surplus from the previous year to balance the upcoming year. In recent years of K-12 regular enrolment growth, along with a steady, robust International Student Program, budget decisions have typically been fairly simple.

During the pandemic the District experienced a deficit for the first time in many years and as a result, the Board adopted a new process for budget 2022-2023 development.

At the same time the Ministry of Education is requiring new/revised policy on surplus and Financial Statement Discussion and Analysis Report to annually report on boards' progress towards meeting board objectives as outlined in their multi-year financial plans (for example, enhanced student educational outcomes (FESL) and other operational needs of the board).

Ministry policies below:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/legislation-policy/public-schools/operating-surplus>

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/legislation-policy/public-schools/financial-planning-reporting>

**Question:**

**How can the annual budget process evolve in ways that build understanding around the complex K-12 context in a large district our size, and provide opportunity for student voice, collaboration and diverse perspectives for the Board to consider in its decision making?**  
**What other budget experiences can you draw on from your own professional career or volunteer activities to inform this discussion?**



# Talking Tables 2022-2023

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**Date:** November 18, 2021

**Presented by:** Kim Morris, Secretary-Treasurer

# Agenda

6:00 – 6:20	Welcome Acknowledgement Opening Remarks Format of the Evening
6:30 – 7:00	Budget Presentation
7:00 - 7:20	Topic#1
7:20 – 7:50	Topic #2
7:50 – 8:10	Topic #3
8:10 – 8:25	Closing Remarks



# Traditional Acknowledgement

The Greater Victoria School District wishes to recognize and acknowledge the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations on whose traditional territories we live, we learn, and we do our work.

# Opening Remarks

**Deb Whitten**, Interim Superintendent

**Kristely Kelly**, Director of Education, Songhees Nation

**Kalie Dyer**, Education Director, Esquimalt Nation

**Caitlin Bird**, President, Métis Nation of Greater Victoria

**Connor McCoy**, President, Principals Vice Principals Association

**Jane Massy**, President, CUPE 947

**Brian Whin-Yates**, Recording Secretary, CUPE 382

**Angela Carmichael**, Vice-President, VCPAC

# Breakout Room Introductions

- Breakout Room 1 – Sean McCartney
- Breakout Room 2 – Jeff Davis
- Breakout Room 3 – Harold Caldwell
- Breakout Room 4 – Katrina Stride
- Breakout Room 5 – Chuck Morris
- Breakout Room 6 – Shelly Niemi

# What is Talking Tables?

Event in the annual budget process

Include all education partners

Include large, diverse group

Social

Opportunity for Trustees to hear from as many voices as possible

Opportunity for individuals to deliver messaging to trustees

Talk about learning before money to align resources

# Format of the Evening

- Unfortunately due to COVID we are not meeting face to face at this time
- Non-COVID, we'd have dinner and social time together
- Tonight after the presentation you'll be placed in a breakout room
- The breakout room will be your team for the evening
- Trustees will move to different breakout rooms after teach topic is discussed
- Intention is you meet as many trustees as possible and that they meet as many of you as possible

# Budget Presentation



# Values/Guiding Principles

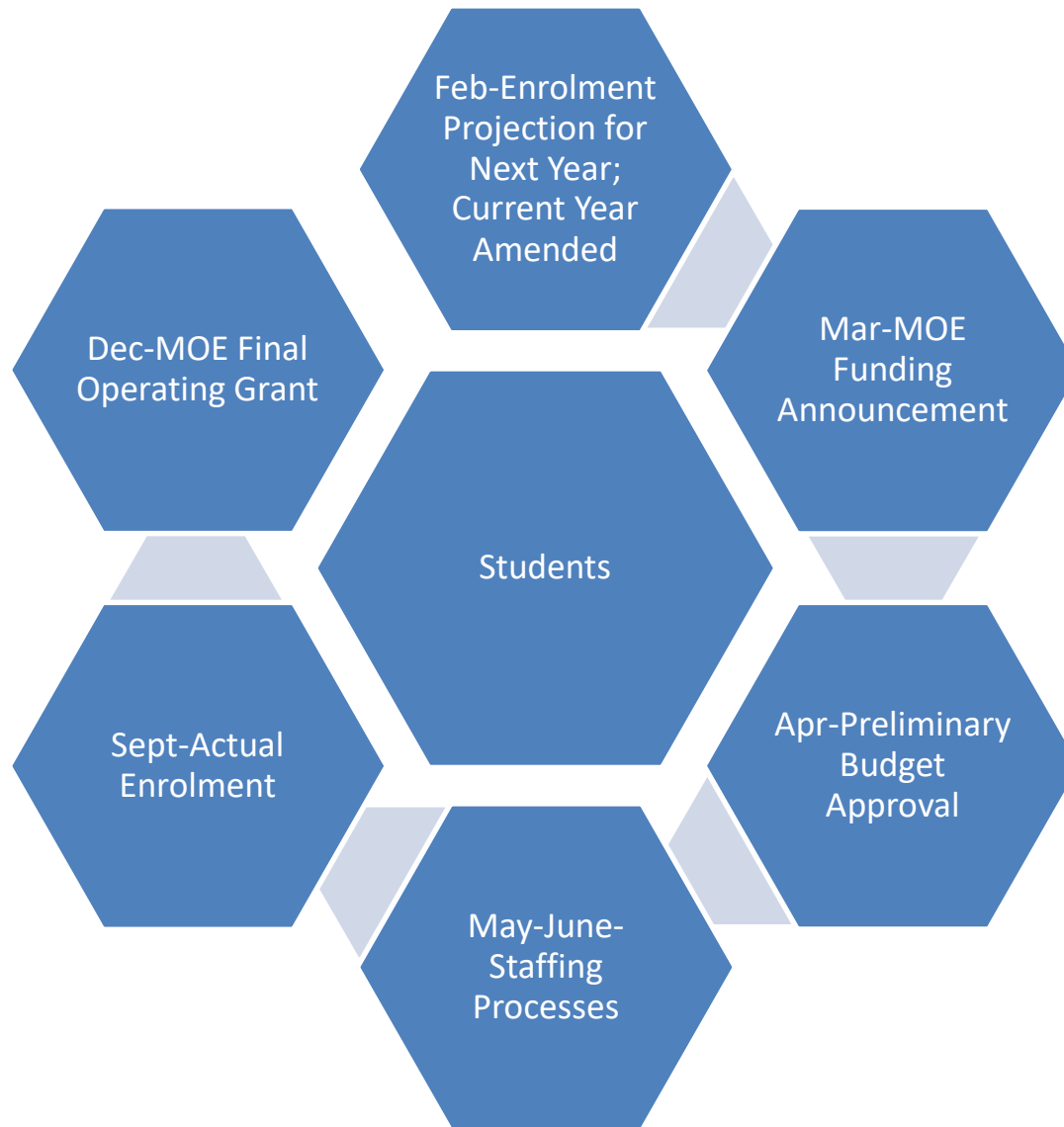
- Students: at centre, service for every student to succeed
- Relationships: respect, expertise, diverse opinions, civil discourse
- Indigenous: culturally respectful and responsive
- Alignment: Strategic Plan, Framework for Enhancing Student Learning
- Timelines: critical for staffing & collective agreement deadlines
- Collaboration: inclusive, understanding, impacts, solution-oriented
- Sustainability/Change: efficiencies, surplus, long term planning, environment

# Budget Advisory Committee

- 34 member committee
- Trustee Duncan is chair
- Agendas and Minutes: <https://www.sd61.bc.ca/our-district/financial/>
- Make recommendations to the Board by:
  - Consensus; or
  - Opposing view made known to trustees
- Board is the decision maker
- Decision deadline: April 2022

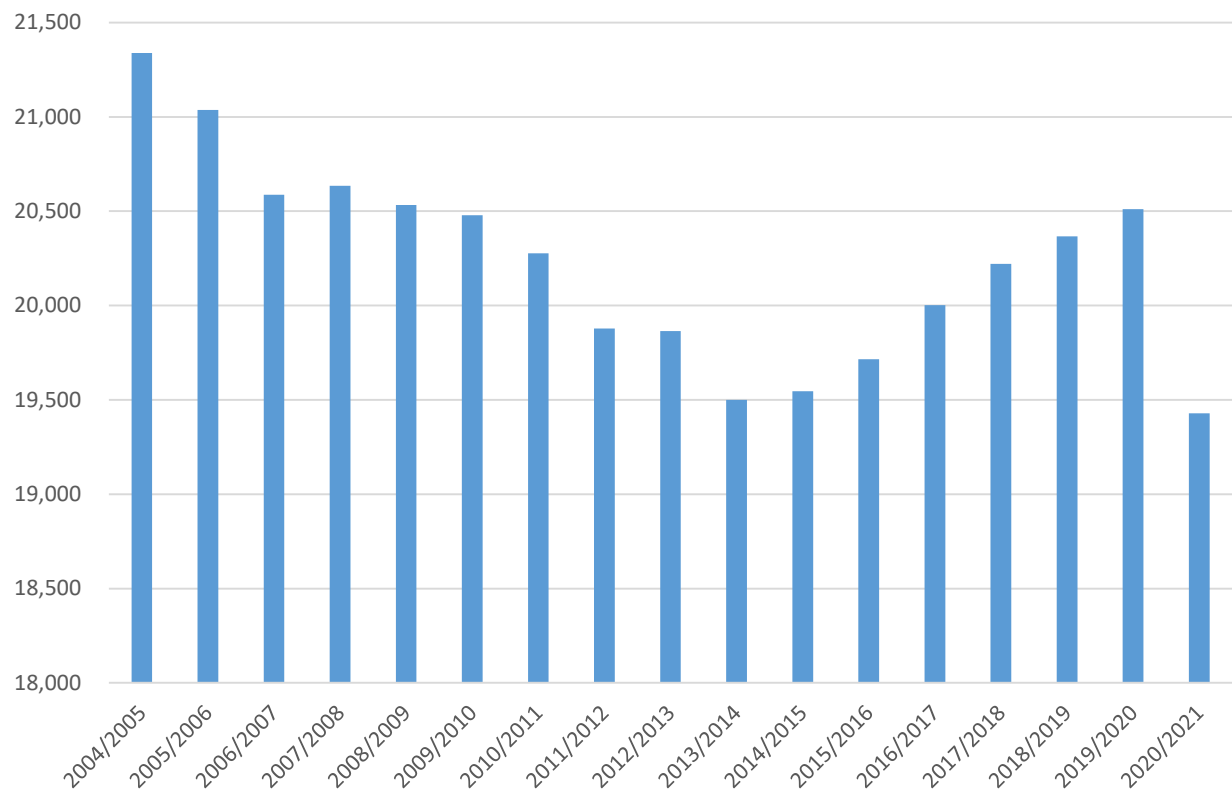
# Process

- Committee meets 7 times between November and April
- Talking Tables
- Student Symposium
- Public Town Hall March 10, 2022
- Bylaw Readings April 4 and April 7, 2022



# Budget Cycle

# Enrolment



## Basic Allocation

Common per student amount for every FTE student enrolled by school type

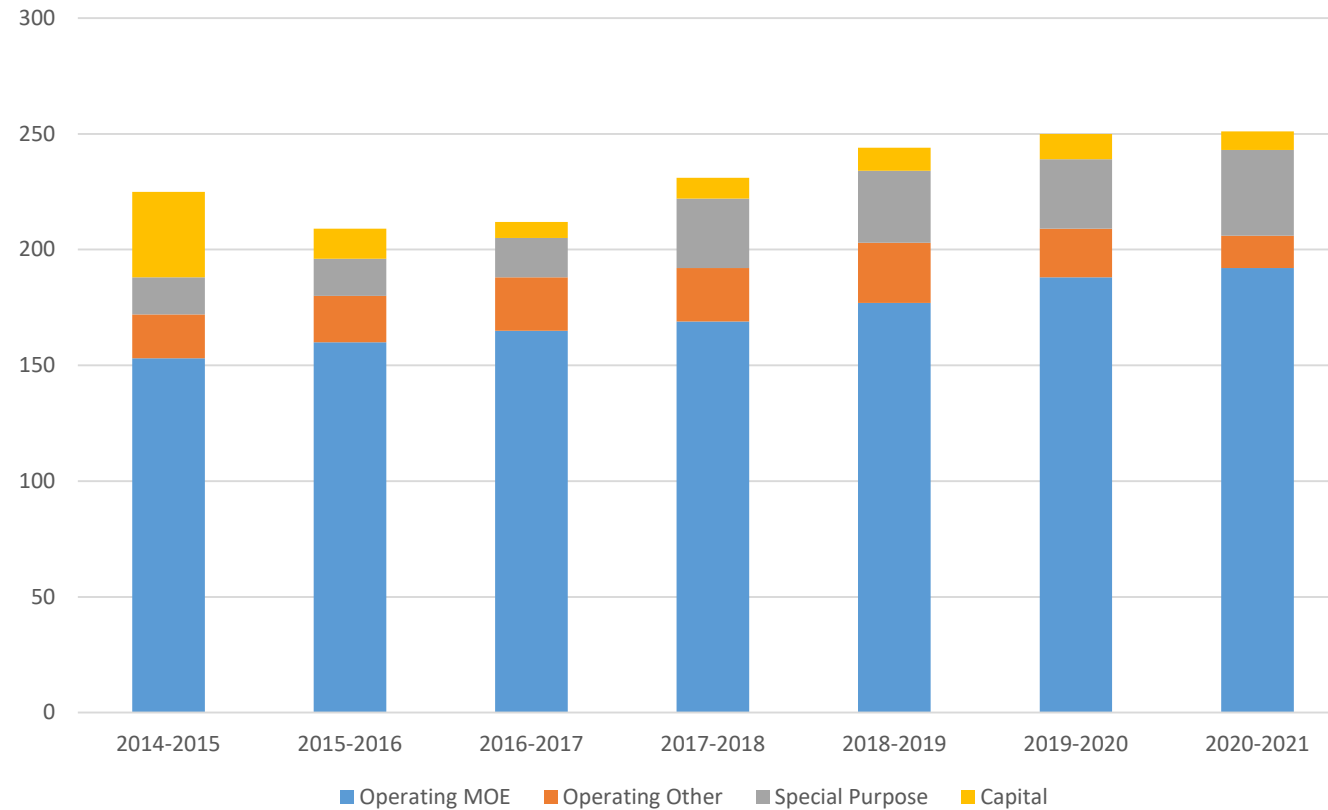
<b>Standard School:</b> \$7,885 per school age FTE	<b>Continuing Education:</b> \$7,885 per school age FTE
<b>Alternate School:</b> \$7,885 per school age FTE	<b>Distributed Learning:</b> \$6,360 per school age FTE

## Unique Student

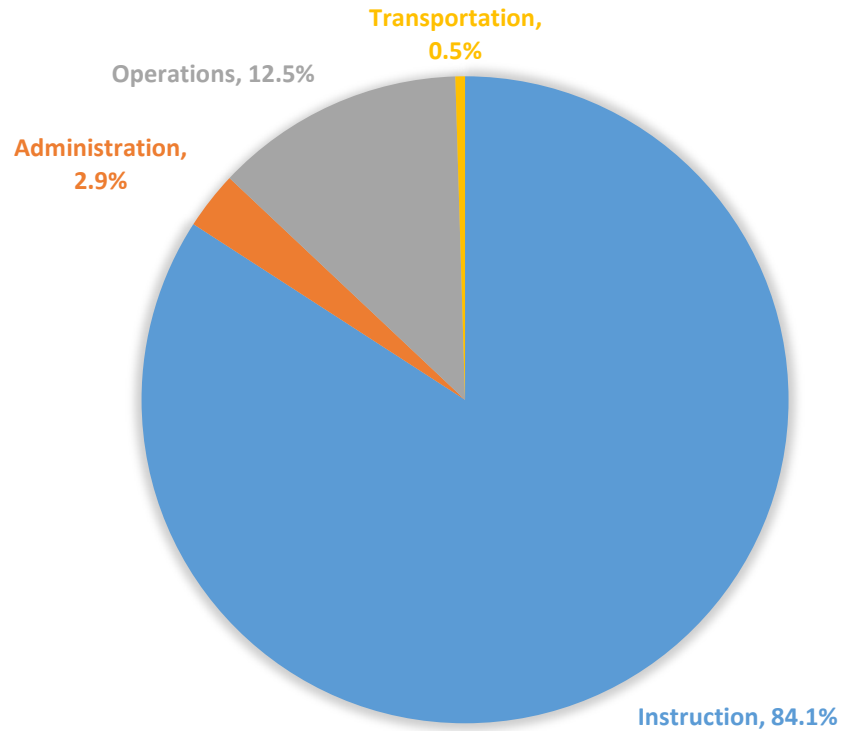
Additional per student funding to address uniqueness of district enrolment and support additional programming

<b>Level 1 Special Needs:</b> \$44,850 per student	<b>Level 2 Special Needs:</b> \$21,280 per student	<b>Level 3 Special Needs:</b> \$10,750 per student
<b>English/French Language Learning:</b> \$1,585 per student	<b>Indigenous Education:</b> \$1,565 per student	<b>Adult Education:</b> \$5,030 per FTE
<b>Equity of Opportunity:</b> Mental health; youth in care		

# Revenue



# Operating Expenses



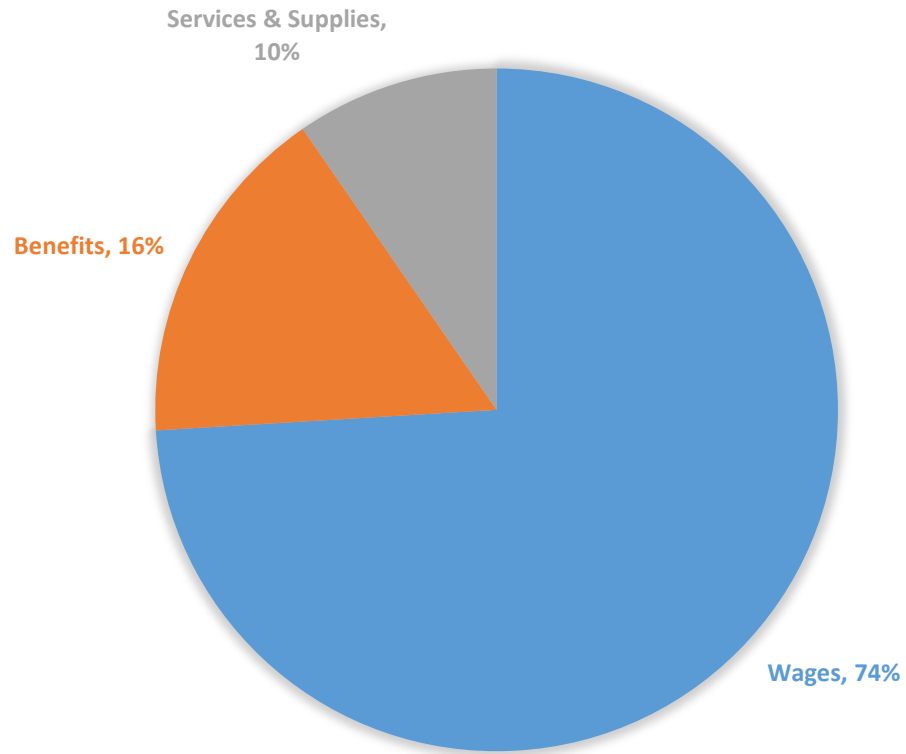
**Instruction** –relates to **delivery of learning experiences**: Teachers, Principals and Vice-Principals, Education Assistants, technology for the classroom, textbooks, curricular and extra curricular travel

**Administration** –relates to **running the district**: Superintendent, learning and special education leaders, finance, human resources, payroll, software, legal, audit

**Operations** –relates to the **maintenance and upkeep of buildings, grounds and technology**: plumbers, electricians, carpenters, custodians, groundspeople, computer technicians

**Transportation** –relates to **getting students to and from school each day** bus contractors and bus monitors

# Operating Expenses

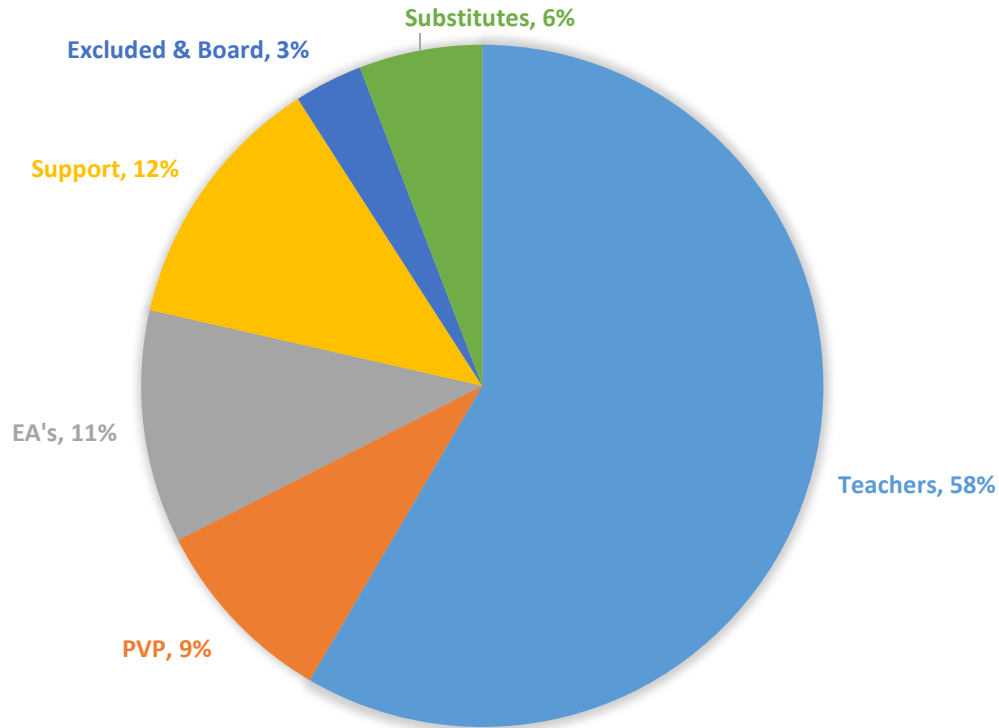


**Paying people** their wages and benefits takes up approximately **90%** of the budget

Paying for **everything else** (services and supplies) like technology, textbooks, fuel, travel, toilet paper, library books etc takes up the remaining **10%**

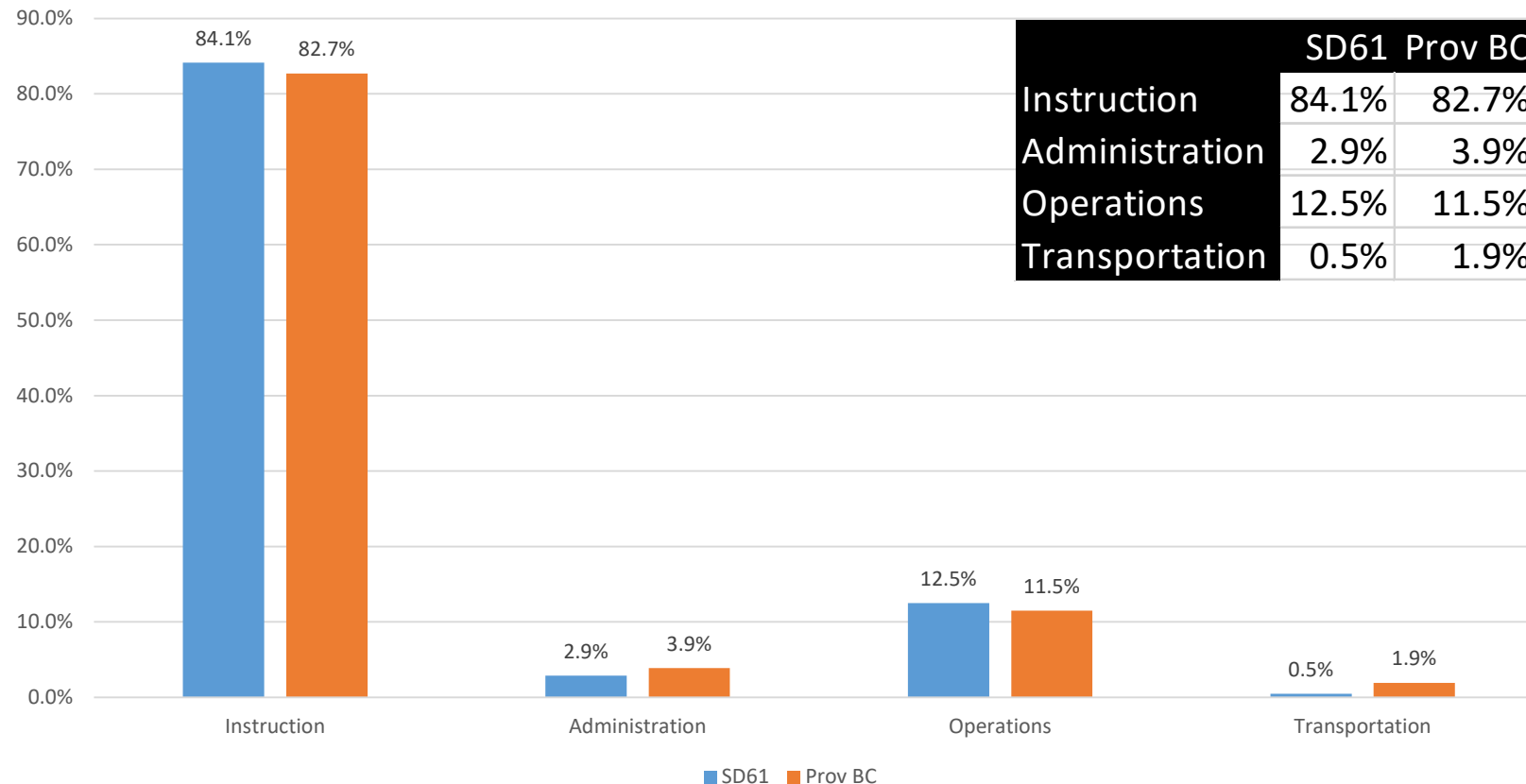


# Operating Expenses

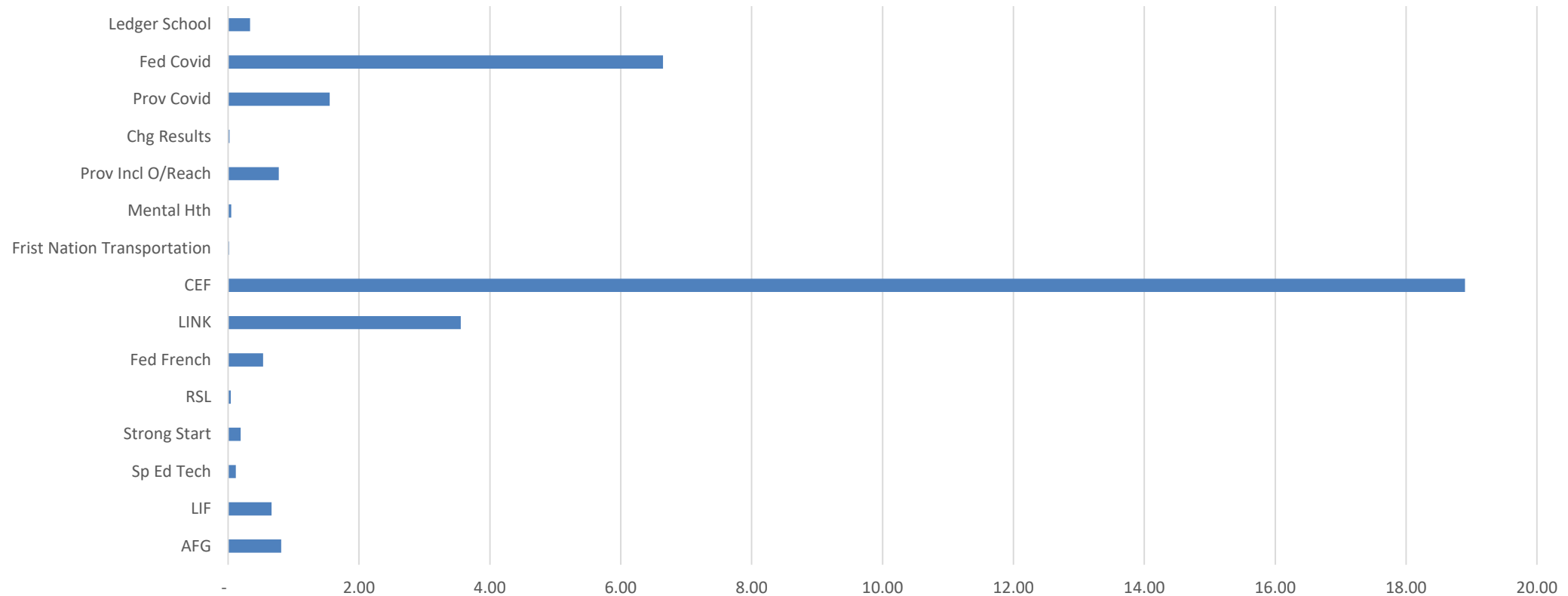


- Education is a **human service**, therefore most of the wages paid are to people **directly servicing students in schools and classrooms day to day**; teachers, counsellors, Principals and Vice-Principals, Education Assistants and Aboriginal Education Workers. These employees are paid 80% of total wages
- **Supporting and foundational** to classrooms are the secretaries, journeymen, custodians, computer technicians, superintendent, accounting staff etc. These employees are paid 15% of total wages
- Finally, when a teacher gets sick or attends a district meeting or a custodian or secretary or education assistant takes vacation, a **replacement or sub** is required to do their work. TTOC's and CUPE Relief employees are paid 5% of total wages

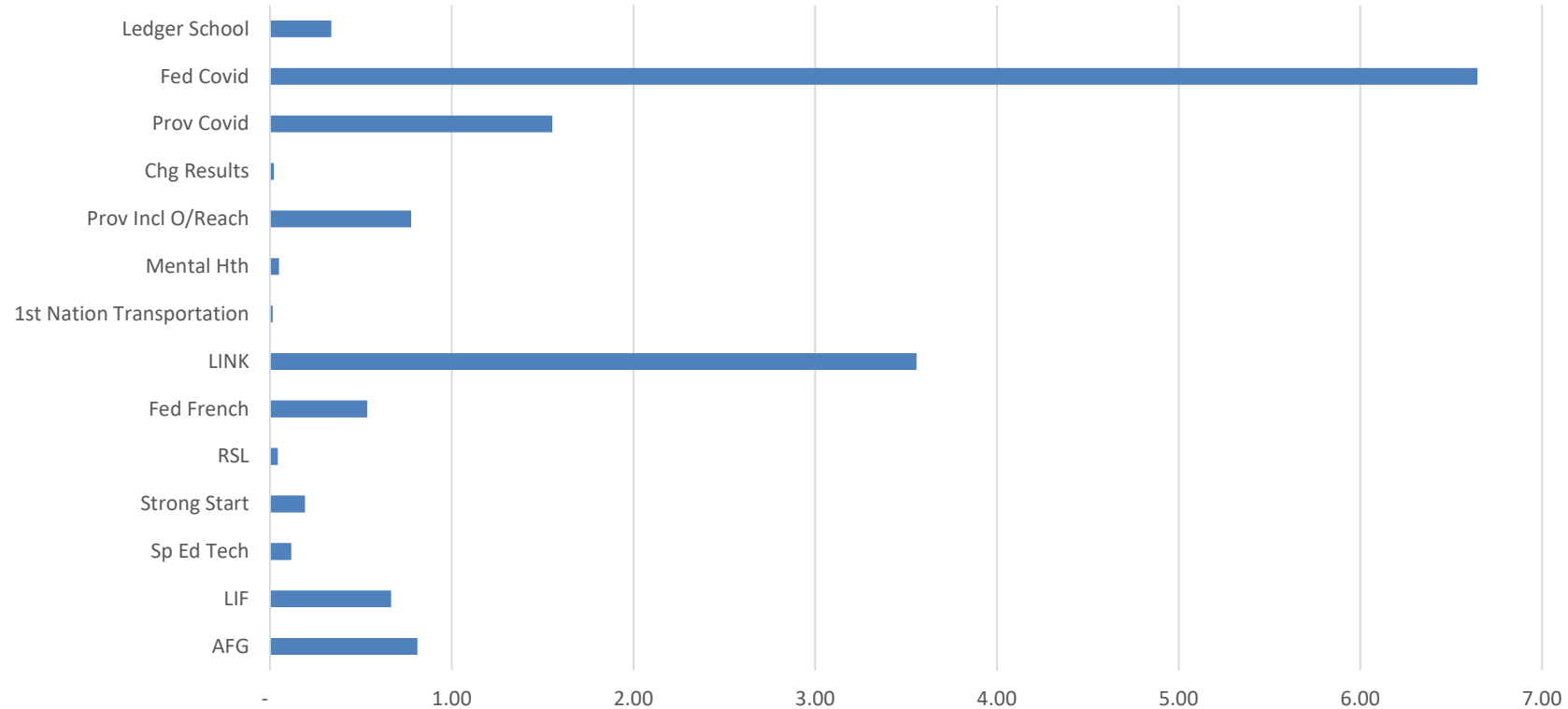
# How Do We Stack Up?



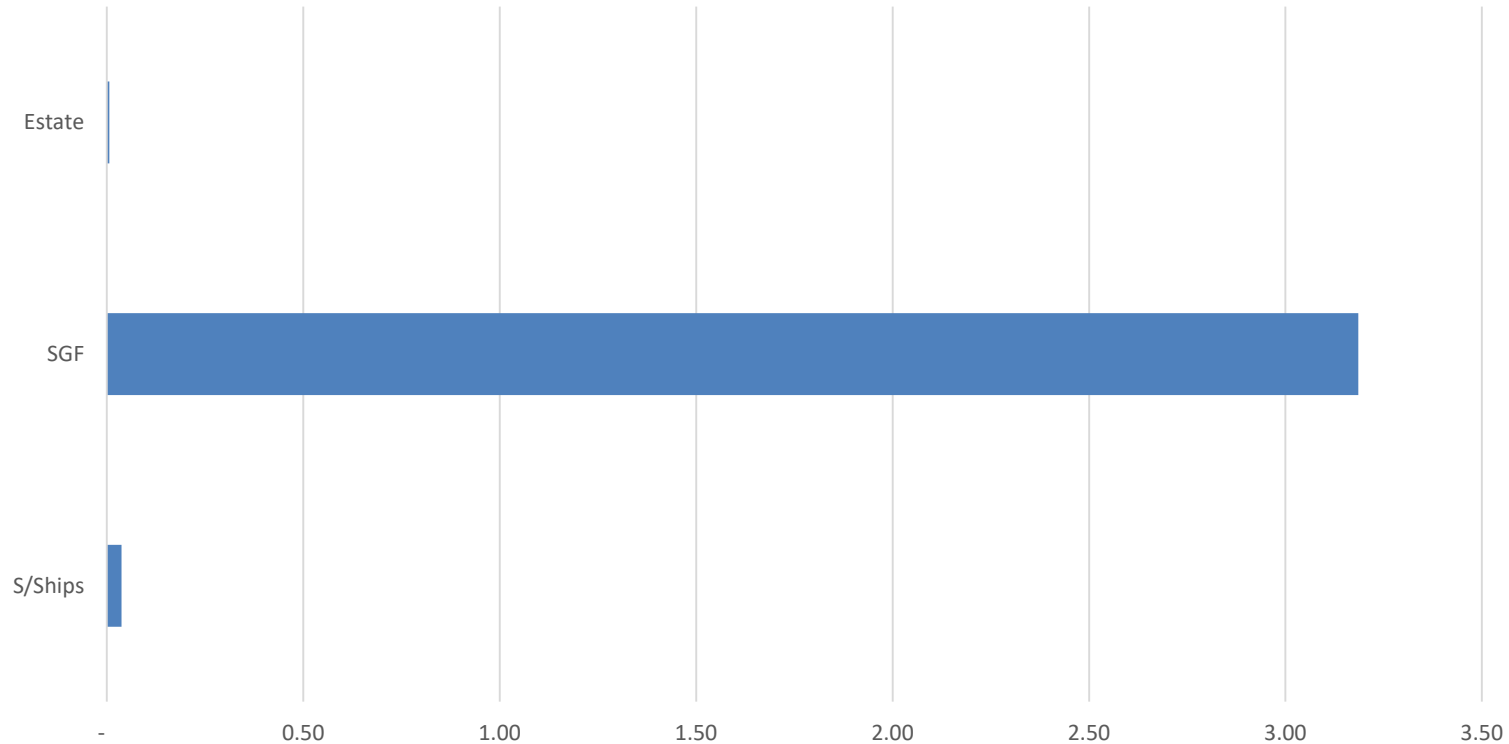
# Special Purpose - MOE



# Special Purpose - MOE



# Special Purpose - Other



# Special Purpose Funds - Ministry

- Ledger School
- Provincial Inclusion Outreach Program
- Mental Health & Well-Being Promotion
- Community LINK - Learning Involves Nutrition & Knowledge
- Federal French (OLEP)
- Ready Set Learn
- Strong Start
- SET BC / Special Education Technology
- Learning Improvement Fund
- Annual Facilities Grant
- Classroom Enhancement Fund
- First Nations Transportation Fund
- Safe Return to School (Provincial) COVID Fund
- Safe Return to Class (Federal) COVID Fund

# Special Purpose Funds - Other

- Estate
- School Generated Funds
- Scholarships

# Capital

## Local Capital

- \$\$ the Board votes to set aside for equipment/projects like technology device replacement, childcare capital reserve, learning studios
- Can be planned as a recurring expense each year, or ad hoc depending on surplus at year end and emerging needs

## Ministry Restricted Capital

- Approved on a project by project case basis
- Projects are submitted each June on the District's Annual 5-Year Capital Plan
- Requires Ministry approval to spend
- Examples include: playground grants, school enhancement grants, seismic projects, school replacement projects, additional student capacity projects; new builds
- Expectation that Districts will contribute some reserves to approved capital projects



# Capital Planning Principles

- Safety
- Enrolment & Capacity
- Existing Building Condition
- Climate
- Funding Categories Available

# Capital - Projects

- AFG
  - Used to maintain assets that are not minor or major capital threshold
  - 41 projects
- Additions
  - Used to increase capacity
  - Sundance Elementary
- New Schools
  - Used to increase capacity
  - Downtown Victoria Elementary site acquisition & construction

# Capital - Seismic 2022-2023

- Used to seismically upgrade existing school to mitigate seismic risk
  - 6 Projects
    - Sundance Upgrade 3 blocks
    - James Bay Upgrade 1 block
    - Reynolds Upgrade 7 blocks
    - Northridge Upgrade 4 blocks
    - McKenzie Upgrade 3 blocks
    - Victoria West Upgrade 3 blocks
    - NOTE: Awaiting response from Nations re: placement of Shoreline/Craigflower TBD

# Capital - School Enhancement Program

- Used to renovate or upgrade buildings that are not big enough for major capital but bigger than AFG can manage
  - 6 Projects
    - South Park – Roofing - Replacement Phase 1
    - Strawberry Vale – Exterior Walls Systems - Siding replacement Phase 1
    - Victoria High – Exterior Wall Systems – Window Replacement Phase 2
    - Victoria High – HVAC – Mechanical Upgrade Phase 2
    - Mount Douglas – Exterior Wall Systems – Window Upgrade Phase 5
    - Esquimalt High – HVAC - Dust Collection System Woodshop

# Capital - CNCP Intake

- Used to improve carbon neutrality
  - 5 Projects
    - Sundance - HVAC – replace unit ventilators
    - Spectrum – Energy - Upgrade DDC to Reliable Controls
    - Doncaster – HVAC – replace air handling units
    - Lambrick Park – HVAC - Boiler replacement
    - Lambrick Park – Energy - Upgrade DDC to Reliable Controls

# Capital - Playgrounds

- Used to add or replace playground equipment that may have previously fallen to PACs to fundraise
  - 3 Projects (all universally accessible playgrounds)
    - Macaulay - replacement
    - Hillcrest - replacement
    - Sundance - new

# Surplus

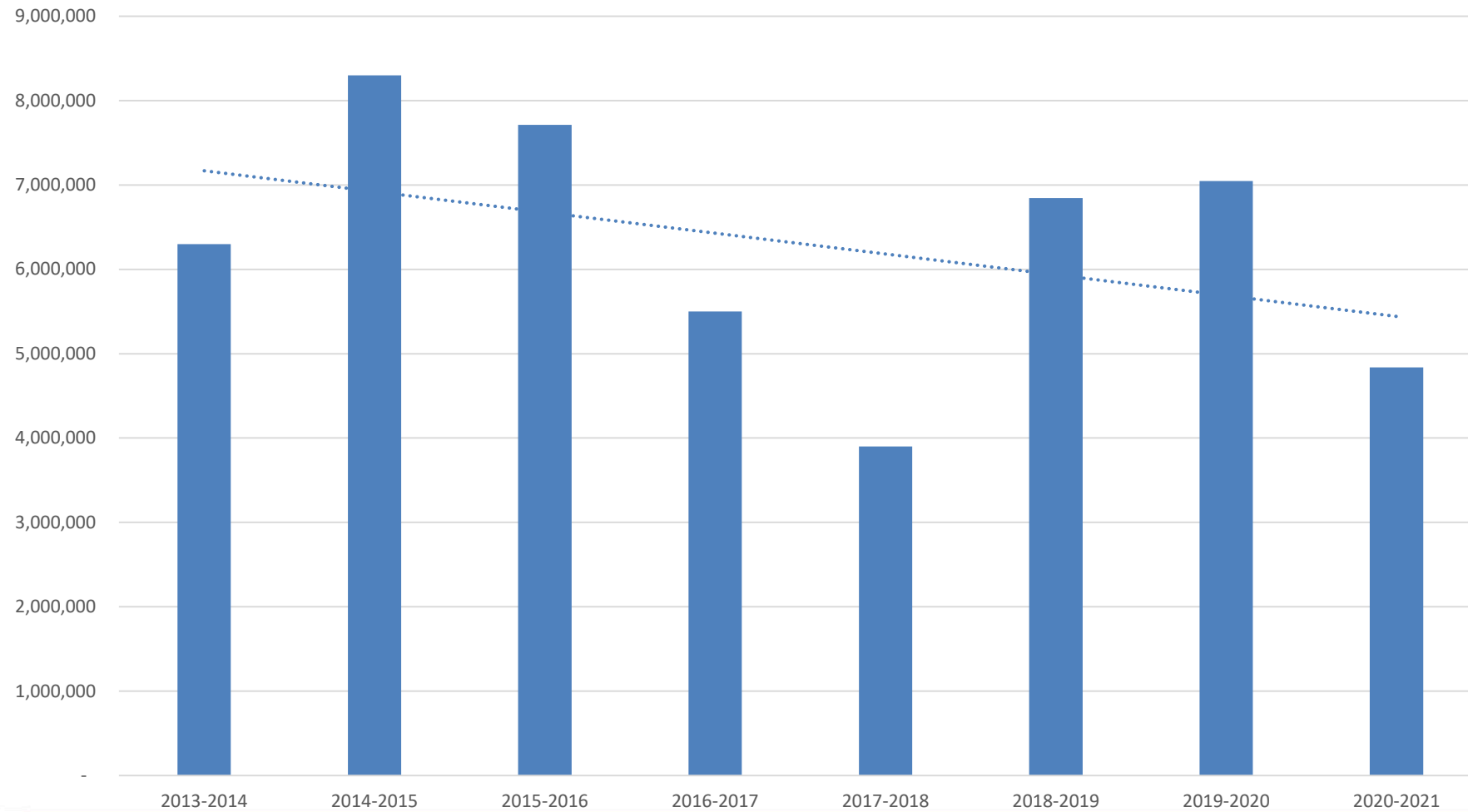
Operating surpluses can be restricted or unrestricted

International program is run like a business with students fluctuating and constant recruiting and enrolment balancing efforts. There is no government/ministry money supporting ISP

Inclusion Education –this program holds a contingency for students with unique needs that arrive in SD61 after the September 30 funding deadline and for students identified for supports between April (projected) and September (actual)

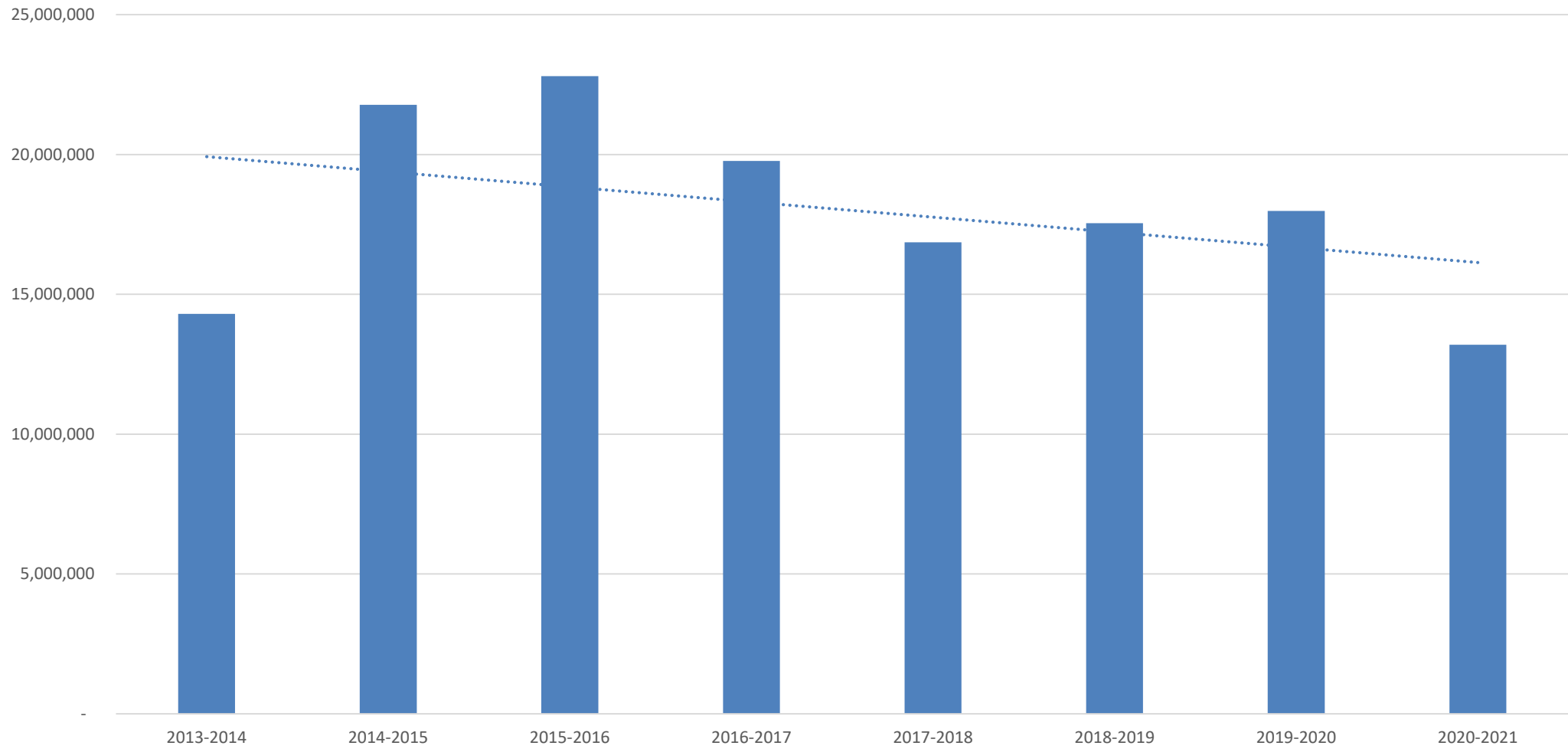
Facilities –SD61 is currently undergoing major capital upgrades and navigating increasing enrolment. Replacement schools do not have the same furniture & equipment budgets as new schools, shops need upgrading and technology infrastructure is requiring renewal

Surplus Budgeted to Balance Next Year





Surplus History - Overall



# Surplus – October 2021

Reserves	
- Reserve - District (Board Approved June 2021)	821,019
- Reserve - District (Board Approved - September 2021)	921,622
- Reserve - International (Board Approved - September 2021)	425,000
Total Operating Reserves (0.98% of revenue)	2,167,641
- Local Capital Fund	320,646
- Ministry of Education Restricted	2,975,006
	3,295,652

# Surplus – Ministry Policy

- Specific purpose
- Limited timeframe
- Alignment to Strategic Plan and Framework for Enhancing Student Learning
- Revised policy being drafted

# Discussion Topics

# Topic 1: Climate

What does the Board need to consider in its resource allocation decisions (budget) regarding climate change?

How should the Board prioritize climate action, and what strategies should the Board use to carry out its climate action plan among all of the other competing imperatives in the K-12 organization?

# Topic 2: FESL

How have you experienced the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning and the Strategic Plan in your schools/sites?

Have you noticed a common language developing? Have initiatives aligned to the goals and strategies impacted your school/site?

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# Topic 3: Budget Process

How can the annual budget process evolve in ways that build understanding around the complex K-12 context in a large district our size, and provide opportunity for student voice, collaboration and diverse perspectives for the Board to consider in its decision making?

What other budget experiences can you draw on from your own professional career or volunteer activities to inform this discussion?

# Agenda

8:20-8:30 Closing Remarks





# Thank You & Goodnight

## TOPIC #1

Over the past months and weeks, and in particular this week, SD61 along with the community and province at large, has experienced challenge related to extreme weather events.

The Board has carried the following motions that are currently in progress:

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### Questions:

**What does the Board need to consider in its resource allocation decisions (budget) regarding climate change?**

## How should the Board prioritize climate action, and what strategies should the Board use to carry out its climate action plan among all of the other competing imperatives in the K-12 organization?

### Table Talk Notes

- We need to empower our young people to take action
- It's about us, as an organization, to model what we need to do draw down our impact and to empower our youth
- We need to look at infrastructure, drive to 5, walking school bus, drive less type initiatives
- So much wisdom within the Indigenous communities on how to lesson our impact on the climate – ways to bring in local Indigenous knowledge to make things better
- Encourage our families and children to look locally for resources/food etc. instead of importing from other lands
- Promote gardens and living locally
- Could the district look at solar power? Conservation and less use of fossil fuels in the buildings
- Incentives and rebates available for using alternate energy resources
- Using electric vehicles for the district fleet vehicles
- Sometimes you have to make an investment up front but the return makes it more than worth it – good for the environment and net profit
- Torquay Elementary has solar panels on their building
- There is a cost associated with green initiatives – we need to look at the cost of changing and the cost of not changing
- Initiatives need to properly researched and these initiatives need to be supported
- Make education of our students a priority and allow for time and funding to support the green team initiatives
  - Recycling was stopped at schools and many schools don't have the capability to compost
- It's so much more than recycling, pack in/pack out - we can't just compost anymore
- New discussions with energy manager - Brian Leslie - need to look at the bigger things:
- Big ticket items in terms of facilities and infrastructure
- Combined with learning and experiences for students and staff
- We really need to hear from our kids/students and follow their lead/voices/input
- Work with other school districts across the province - bring to Ministry - partner with other Districts to create collective voice and possibly strategize and purchase in larger amounts (e.g. solar panels, etc.)
- Invest in helping our kids have high quality access to initiatives and experts that help them know how they can be part of the change - empower them to capitalize on their knowledge and skills to be change makers
- Recommit to greater rentals and use of resources we do have - buildings after hours, neighbourhood partnerships (e.g. Sweden example of community partnership to have after-school tutoring and other programming for students and families)
- Global citizenship and connectedness to nature / place / land

- Local partnerships with examples of innovative facilities, etc.
- When it comes to resourcing climate action, how are we being comprehensive in reviewing where to reallocate from - not just one finite part (e.g. administrative jobs/roles, department budgets, etc.)
- Student Safety – Facilities need to be safe (storms; rain, snow, etc.)
- Students need to see role models – why are we changing light bulbs, solar panels, gardens in schools?
- How do we use Indigenous knowledge to support our conversations on climate?
- Food security is important – no climate, no gardens, no food
- Transportation – move away from fossil fuels
- Priorities are important with children first – safe and sustainable
- Climate needs to be prioritized with other funding sources included – provincial and federal grants
- Start small and with those successes we can go big
- Involve the students
- Needs to be a budget for this
- No cost items:
  - advocate to government for funding
  - joint letter to city of Victoria for bus passes for all students
- Consider a competition to see which school can run their school more climate friendly, every school can be environmentally friendly in its own way (e.g. tree planting, food waste)
- Will cost money, but will cost too much to not make a focus moving forward
- More capital – carbon neutral (boilers etc.)
- When building new schools, making them as efficient as we can (net zero project), requesting Ministry to fund these capital initiatives
- Look at other partnerships for help
- Retrofitting schools with solar panels – extensive presentation made and willingness in community but no action
- Board pays compensation for mileage, but not for taking the bus or riding your bike
- We're seeing more than every pandemic, heat dome, forest fires, floods – really need to put our mind to what we can do for climate action
- Possible for half of schools by 2030, all by 2050
- Clear action plan no later than a year from now
- Looking at moving all vehicles in school district to electric by 2025
- Ensuring that climate accountability committee so all working groups to be sitting together and having these discussions and looking at accountability
- While district has slowly tried to reduce carbon footprint, have a reporting out process to understand what is being done so we have a clear idea
- Important that we understand where we are, where we are going and where we've been
- Look at well-being and climate anxiety specifically Indigenous students on these lands; heard sentiment from a lot of students
- More support for safe streets so students can walk safely, or bike safely
- Climate action-safe outdoor spaces help families get kids to school. Really important.
- Energy uses, geo-thermal, spending money to reduce energy consumption.
- Safe buildings and grounds.
- Solar, self-contained as possible.

- Go away from fossil fuel.
- Top priority-Climate Action-Don't skimp.
- SD a new challenge.
- Question of provincial funding with appropriate to respond to this challenge.
- View it from a one foot to a 10,000 foot view.
- Even 10 year olds know how to do it better.
- Decision through budget process.
- Small steps put together can make bigger decisions.
- Current practices-what goals.
- Can we do better? Yes.
- Education K-12; we as adults need to be the role models. Encourage this through the students.
- Secondary kids-varying resources get moved away from other things.
- Don't drive so much.
- Packaging reductions.
- Students top of mind.
- Model for students.
- Decisions, do better!
- Baseline carbon footprint would be nice to know and measure from.
- Solar, heat pumps-energy.
- Initial outlay \$ to make more green; cost benefits in both short & long term.
- Cut resources and supplies – can redirect; bottled water, paper usage
- Highly complex; consultation up front to see where low-hanging fruit; strategically place funds; net zero
- How will this play out in schools; need champion, can drop-off when you lose your champion.
- Direction from District; guidance and resources, working together w. administration and teaching staff; natural play area, gardens, weather monitoring.
- Sustainable schools document (2001); practical guide; school-wide initiative, engage everyone, empower w. positive stories, speakers and industry leaders (exciting), climate into curriculum in long-run.
- greening; kids in touch w. nature; school garden; remove barriers from getting green projects such as gardens moving forward.
- VSB small book for all environmental projects; can and can't funding – grant writing for green projects, reach out to community for resources; standardize.
- Facilities barriers; long process.
- What are more frequent road blocks schools are experiencing? How to streamline?
- Sometimes just reluctance to do something different.
- Not changing footprint; just shifting it, e.g. pack-in; pack-out; what is global view? Collaboration with municipality.
- School-based initiatives; policies & processes to support community around climate action.
- Make schools greener in long-term budget plans; green roofs, metal roofs, etc.
- Hopeful for more \$ for net zero ready; District needs to take it to the next step; centralize things that need external support; streamline processes.

## TOPIC 2

The Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (FESL) was approved by the Board on September 27, 2021 (<https://www.sd61.bc.ca/our-district/financial/>).

As a learning community, we are deeply committed to each student having the opportunity to fulfill their potential and pursue their aspirations. We are becoming increasingly more data literate and are dedicated to having all of our schools be inclusive and culturally responsive learning environments.

FESL complements the District's Strategic Plan and summarizes all students' culturally responsive educational outcomes as well as the goals and strategies for continuous improvement.

**Goal One of the Greater Victoria School District's Strategic Plan is to create an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support and improve all learners' personal and academic success.**

Over the last five years, students in School District No. 61 performed at a rate of one percent lower than the province in the five-year completion rate (see Appendix p. 13). When we analyze the data, we continue to see disparities for students who identify as Indigenous and students with disabilities or diverse abilities. In order to continue to close the achievement gap, Goal One focuses on those students currently experiencing the least success in our system.

To realize this goal, three strategies were developed:

1. Develop and support high-quality learning opportunities
2. Engage and collaborate with students, families, and staff to provide an inclusive learning environment
3. Address the inequity of outcomes for diverse learners

**Goal Two of the Greater Victoria School District's Strategic Plan is to create a culturally responsive learning environment that will support Indigenous learners' personal and academic success.**

To realize this goal, three strategies were developed:

1. Critically examine personal and systemic biases
2. Support Indigenous student identity through collaboration with Indigenous community
3. Address the academic inequity of outcomes for Indigenous learners

**Goal Three of the Greater Victoria School District's Strategic Plan focuses on creating an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support all learners' physical and mental well-being.**

To realize this goal, four strategies were developed:

1. Provide Professional Learning Opportunities for all staff
2. Create a Collaborative Children and Youth in Care team

3. Engage and collaborate with families
4. Address inequity of opportunity

**Question:**

**How have you experienced the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning and the Strategic Plan in your schools/sites? Have you noticed a common language developing? Have initiatives aligned to the goals and strategies impacted your school/site?**

**When you review the goals and strategies that will move success for students forward, how can the Board advance this work through its annual budget process?**

**Table Talk Notes**

- From facilities, in the last 2 years there has been an apprenticeship program started to allow people to learn and to work at a higher wage. Red Seal programs with the assistance of the district and helps to overcome barriers for our employees
- Community standpoint – supporting Indigenous identity – work with the Metis Nations is ongoing and the Metis students are feeling supported
- Inequity between schools, parent volunteer base is different from school to school
- One of the targets of the FESL is about reducing barriers. Principals encourage communication and targets to be explicit – use the FESL and strategic plan in our decision making processes – alignment is critical for students, staff, parents and community to be successful in meeting our goals
- Where is the doing? Walking the walk and what are we going to explicitly do to meet these goals/targets
- Each goal is equally important
- How do you prioritize areas within each goal and ensure equity amongst the goals
- How do we make the documents more “livable” – a one page summary?
- We need to look at the impact of decisions on all three goals, not concentrating on just one goal at a time they are a collective
- Wellness – things are really tough for all members of our community – students, staff and families
- We will have to move some funds in the budget in order to support the strategic plan
- Is there a disconnect between teachers and the board as to what is seen as supporting the strategic plan. There was a lack of collaboration and communication between teachers and trustees. Teachers feel there is a lack of trust with the process. Teachers would like more input/collaboration with budget decisions
- Communication is very important
- Parent view – we would like choices on budget decisions, more information on why choices were being made
- Public interpretation played into last year’s budget cycle

- It would be valuable to be able to bring people together for these important conversations – coming together helps to build communication and trust (Zoom made last year very challenging to build relationships and communication)
- Relationship and trust is key!
- Removal of behavioral programming has not seemed equitable - not working for students with highest needs, not working for others - desire to recreate these programs
- We need specially trained staff to work with ALL children - trauma-informed practices, social-emotional learning, etc.
- proud/excited to see Strategic Plan with a distinct focus on vulnerable learners
- Ratio of 1:66 for ELL supports is too high - request for trustees to be aware of this
- Examples of case management and workloads/demands
- Bring awareness, professional learning, laser focus on supports and strategies for vulnerable students
- Focus on success stories, capture-celebrate-promote-share
- Priority focus for schools with on-reserve students/families - such as Craigflower, Shoreline, Esquimalt
- We are in a crisis - need to commit stability of funding and resources to support these priority areas in the Strategic Plan for us to see any progress
- EA lens is that they are no longer focused on supporting learning, but rather managing behaviours
- Community resources and supports are still needed - mental health needs have increased dramatically
- EA recruitment/retention and professional learning supports
- How do we connect all of this together - comprehensive, collective vision and action - with community partners
- How can we reconnect disengaged students/families with a 'hook' to draw them in - e.g. land-based learning ... help them be ready to learn
- Example of a program from community that helps kids and parents be engaged with food, connection, activities, learning, belonging ... wraparound supports
- Providing an environment that supports all to feel safe, seen and supported. Welcome and ready to learn.
- Good intentions but implementation lacks resources
- Cultural component is important – meeting students where they are at
- Resources are needed to train P/VP with communication
- More Indigenous Education Assistants needed
- Resources needed to align relationships to education and awareness
- Move slower for a broader picture and awareness
- Vice Principal time is important – improves communication opportunities with families and partners



- Data collection, benchmark app will coincide nicely with early learning collaborative teacher; early intervention is key; see some movement in that area and appreciate work being done by district and learning team in this area
- GVTA trying to engage and align to strategic plan – looking to have educators reflect student body (kids need to see themselves reflected in educators around them)
- Preferential hiring for indigenous teachers agreement, concrete way of supporting students
- Hiring equity for racialized groups (BIPOC) – so more of students can see themselves reflected in their teachers
- Indigenous students lumped in with students with diverse learning or special needs – upsetting; we are separate from this category, should be in own category.
- Some Indigenous students may have diverse learning or disabilities, but not all do
- Language in FESL should be reflective not a deficit way for children
- Within buildings, we are trying to survive; exhausted and trying to focus to a future when we are still trying to get through today is really difficult
- To come up with theories, ideas, directions we want to go – they are so far in the distance, I don't know how we wrap our brain around them
- Can't answer any of these questions as we are busy surviving; until we address what is happening right now, I don't know how we can address these goals for the future
- Unless you are in the school you don't realize the differences from a couple of years ago
- For teachers, dealing with day to day hard to see big picture, feels frustrating on ground as there are so many other things to deal with hard to conceive big picture documents
- Teachers are exhausted and just trying to cope (absences, med leaves unsustainable), new teachers burning out, hard for these big picture topics to grasp
- Earlier intervention supports
- Ensuring all children feel supported as a whole, not just academically
- More one on one support for students – case manager, YFC or someone, needs to be an adult accountable to a student
- Students slipping through cracks, no one is checking in to their success
- EAs are really big area that needs to be expanded on – when ask student who their person is, say EA
- Investing money in family engagement, check in with families, learn so much by talking to family, powerful; see a difference when that isn't there
- Invest in more permanent open spaces for indigenous students; quiet spaces with one-on-one support, learning spaces
- Ensure all schools have these rooms (full capacity due to enrolment growth so quiet spaces are gone)
- Curriculum – Indigenous literature as a course, how to support teachers to incorporate these teachings
- More speech therapists
- Seamless Kindergarten staffed by CUPE 947 before and hour so more hours

- Comes down to pay and hours – has to be appealing to the general public; less hours and not paid as well as Sooke and Saanich
- Tough work – doing multiple classrooms and students, go go go, burning EAs out
- Giving them the support (e.g. meaningful professional development opportunities)
- Can't be any more cuts to library clerk or EA hours – caused total chaos around district, has been really detrimental and are now just seeing impacts of these cuts
- 66 for ELL students is entirely too high
- PTSD in students who are refugees, not feeling safe in Mexico, require much more time for support
- More EAs/Teachers, lens of the "whole child", pro-d on what can be done to support these students
- EAs say they aren't supporting students, they are managing behaviours.
- Budget for specially trained EAs
- Strategic Plan is good and allows richer dialogue.
- Common language piece-need to realize where students have come from, where they are going.
- Shotgun approach is not where we want at Central.
- We focus on equity and diversity.
- Work/focus on vulnerable learners.
- Adults need to move forward in their growth.
- Personal growth for staff is really valuable.
- Focus goals 1 to 3.
- Common language next steps.
- Common language for parents.
- What affects learning?
- Care for each other.
- Link into strategic plan.
- Common language developing.
- More inclusive/differentiation.
- How does a teacher meet these literacy needs?
- Happy removing marks from grades 6 to 8.
- See an attempt to provide learning opportunities for staff.
- School focusing on connectedness.
- Keep class sizes reasonably small.
- Staff developments!
- Cultural, response, awareness.
- Brought in drums, Elders Veterans.
- Worked to bring into the environment.
- Think we have been doing a really good job.
- Support but limited funds.
- Need support.

- We are doing a pretty good job.
- I think we can do more.
- Frustrated in my job in Career Centre.
- Have to break the bubble.
- In my school definitely front of mind. Getting kids to buy in is tough.
- I like where we are going.
- Struggle. Aware of SD Policies.
- Need to do a lot more work.
- Parents need help to understand.
- Common language-parents struggle.
- Reduction of EA's, programs from last year's budget processes.
- Want this front and center.
- Did not like those reductions last year.
- Kids with IEP-educational goal?
- How do you properly record educational goals?
- Diverse student body.
- Worked for years to improve.
- Pandemic teaching.
- Not a lot of energy left in me to sit through 6 weeks of learning.
- How do we get more resources in front of students?
- Put more people in touch with students.
- Data; put data into buckets; fail to see full picture at times; FSA component of assessment in conjunction with more information; allow greater visualization.
- Not sure if we need more data; teachers know where students are at; don't have student learning support that they should have; ratios used = less support; use \$ to support learners not to obtain more data.
- Data informs process; very prevalent at Shoreline that students need support; doing school-wide initiatives; need to measure how they are doing; having resources to do what we need to do is a struggle; wish more \$; short-change kids; short-change society.
- What single resource would have biggest impact?
- Need people who are qualified; more people; how to attract them; employee market; more opportunities for kids to keep them engaged.
- More adults in building; more connection.
- Partner with private industry; gym or room to be active; nutrition is big; habits being cultivated from K; work through all grades.
- Unregulated adult will not be able to regulate a child; student-centred; as adults need to be coming from a place of strength.
- Stress and anxiety; kindness and empathy towards kids; been a long time since they had fun.
- Kids in crisis; even ones who had coped well are not doing well; teacher role has expanded and not trained; feeling spent; nourish teachers; positive impact on students.

- Indigenous; what is happening with those kids who have returned to class after COVID; don't understand where Indigenous funding goes to support those students; incorporating outdoor learning – use existing funding – shift from other areas not necessarily needed at elementary (D. Hovis model at Oaklands); Indigenous person at school to make that connections with all students.
- Partnerships; not off side of Principal's desk; focus on connectedness; find spark for each student and nurture it; need skilled bodies; training and mentorship; acknowledge that we need to look after each other; kindness (value).
- FESL and data collection – data is strategic plan; minimize bias; place for it to inform larger picture; not quick and reactive.

### TOPIC #3

The Board of Education typically approves its budget in one meeting and uses surplus from the previous year to balance the upcoming year. In recent years of K-12 regular enrolment growth, along with a steady, robust International Student Program, budget decisions have typically been fairly simple.

During the pandemic the District experienced a deficit for the first time in many years and as a result, the Board adopted a new process for budget 2022-2023 development.

At the same time the Ministry of Education is requiring new/revised policy on surplus and Financial Statement Discussion and Analysis Report to annually report on boards' progress towards meeting board objectives as outlined in their multi-year financial plans (for example, enhanced student educational outcomes (FESL) and other operational needs of the board).

Ministry policies below:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/legislation-policy/public-schools/operating-surplus>

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/legislation-policy/public-schools/financial-planning-reporting>

#### **Question:**

**How can the annual budget process evolve in ways that build understanding around the complex K-12 context in a large district our size, and provide opportunity for student voice, collaboration and diverse perspectives for the Board to consider in its decision making?**

**What other budget experiences can you draw on from your own professional career or volunteer activities to inform this discussion?**

#### **Table Talk Notes**

- Some questions were not answered during the process last year, lack of follow up
- It would be great for the VCPAC to share information with the schools so it can be shared with all parents with the possibility of having special meetings to help provide input. It was very rushed and parents didn't feel like they had a say. Need more data and time in the process. Data will show why money is needed in some areas and needs to be moved from other areas – the whys and why nots
- Community felt like the decision was already made and presented as a done deal. Not a lot of opportunity for input or feeling like you had a say.
- Lack of trust in the decisions that were made
- Student voice is important in the conversation
- Talking tables is a step in the right direction
- The instability that the process produced made some employees fearful

- Trust and relationship is key. Budget committee is working on building trust, relationship and communication. The committee needs to hear each other's perspectives. There is an expectation that members of the committee push the information out to their groups and then bring feedback back to the committee. Transparency is important and communication will help facilitate this
- Cuts effect people personally. Everyone would love to have more money and you can never have enough to do everything you want to do.
- Always good to have options when you have to cut money and weighing them against the district's priorities and commitments around the Strategic Plan and the FESL
- Clarity is important – we can do anything but we can't do everything
- We need to live sustainably and it may mean that tough decisions need to be made
- Equity in voice is important for the process, not just the loudest voice and the voice that connects with the media should be heard.
- Keep the goals and targets in mind when tough decisions need to be made
- The current process has more opportunity and openness about it
- Building relationship and knowing each other is the biggest shift in this year's process
- Conversation needs to be fluid and open with the long game in mind
- We will get there but it may not be easy but it will be worth it
- Space out the budget readings in front of the board
- Projections in the spring are very conservative, not a good foundation to work from
- Surplus model is not sustainable
- Infrastructure and capital costs/overspends should not infringe on student learning
- E.g. we can't take away supports from students for earthquake priorities
- Needs to go back to the province as feedback
- New committee structure is good - new/more opportunity for better consultation and input
- Need to step away from having an 'us versus them' mindset ... creating adversarial attitudes and competing priorities
- Are there systemically problematic issues with the funding model - how do we raise these and bring forward for feedback and action
- Again - can Districts / Boards work together to surface these barriers (e.g. facilities/capital costs) to bring a more collective voice/approach to the Ministry
- E.g. VISTA, BCSTA = funding and model review
- Share the information with transparency and honoring local protocols
- Include student voices
- Have a transparent fair system – vocal parents had more success in getting the Board's attention
- All voices need to be heard
- Provide rationale for the final decision
- Indigenous Perspective – how do nations work alongside?
- Gather data to help make the decision – how does this impact all, not just a certain group – loud voices get what they want, soft voices lose out.

- Equitable standard regardless of background
- Collaborative conversations are important – do not overwhelm with a lot of information all at once
- Identify schools in district that have extraordinary needs (and every year needs those same supports), do not wait until Sept 30th for extra supports
- If we are looking to spend money in that year, should enact proactive measures to support those schools
- Need to address equity issue first, then look at balancing resources
- When we put barriers up inside our own system and force employees to have to beg for certain supports, affects morale for staff and makes them question whether they are putting their own job in jeopardy for asking for supports for children
- Should be examining what barriers are we putting up internally, staff shouldn't feel apologetic or wrong to advocate for best supports
- Don't feel what we say here will make a difference
- If we put the kids first and money aside, we could put an EA in every class, have space we need for every class, every student would get the attention they needed – could you imagine the number of children who would be successful?
- Kids have to come first!
- More ongoing communication between local First Nations communities rather than just being invited to these types of meetings, space to bring concerns, and have our voices at these tables more regularly. Often the way we are approached isn't right or doesn't make sense.
- GVTA budget – smaller budget, based on year prior
- Don't rely on preparing budget after you know your revenue
- Common for boards to rely on surplus from year prior as enrolment isn't known
- Don't know problem of relying on surplus year to year – change in policy, significant change to not rely on surplus
- School budget & staff committee – tried to spend money for students in that school year
- Get questions answered when they are asked
- Tell parents what's going on and what's happening so PACs can meet, bring back ideas, thoughts and input (felt left out last year and like decision was already made).
- Consultation vs Not ACTUALLY Consulting, no/few opportunities for consultation
- Feeling like decision was made and Indigenous Ad Hoc Committee just asked to rubber stamp
- Speaking with students, include them in the conversation
- Really appreciated the opportunity tonight (step in the right direction)
- If you have to move X amount of money, best to have 2X worth of options
- WE can do anything, but we can't do everything
- Make sure budget is focused on priorities (FESL/Strat Plan)
- Not everyone is going to be happy, but we need transparency and communication
- Equity of voice needs to be included in the process
- More openness to have these conversations around the school community, more collaborative

- Board drafted some good policies around budgets.
- On paper, on a graph-to better understand budget numbers.
- Put it out in lots of different ways so many people can better understand.
- Give me the street version.
- Like to see this info a good week ahead of time.
- Reflecting back on other consultations over process-example catchment consultation-Victor, South Park, Cloverdale conversation.
- February-inclusive learning presentation. Did not like that process.
- Like the budget process when you have a good exchange.
- Listening to conversation is really good.
- Respond to concerns.
- SD 61 staff are really good.
- Show respect for parents, critical choices.
- None of us want to be where we were in June of last year.
- Leadership with Grade 8's.
- Respect.
- Open dialogue-discussion.
- Children most important stakeholders.
- What do you need to be happy at school?
- Type of dialogue.
- Always places to improve.
- Table talk.
- Perplexed with some of the questions.
- Info needs to be introduced in a variety of formats.
- Hope Board hears clearly-music is so important.
- Help kids with skills to keep them for the future.
- Provide funds to allow learning supports.
- Put the money at the beginning of a child's life where they need it the most.
- Advocate to keep music.
- Use simple language.
- Challenging to budget when some voices more prevalent; not all voices are heard; intricate and complex; working with less and trying to do more; trying to balance; better understanding of what the impact will be; reduced administration time had huge impact; how to learn from what happened in last year.
- Opportunity to listen; what are mechanisms to do that?
- Dedicate position as management; didn't know impact until it happened; spend time to understand what actually was impacted.
- Survey in previous job on what is working or not; round table with senior leadership regardless of position.
- Quiet voices; surveys of students to hear their voices.



- Asking questions of people not ordinarily involved in process as to what they see from their perspective.
- Is analysis done prior to major cuts to detail system-wide impact?
- Levelled discussions; potential budget; lots to say once budget hits the table the voices start to come out; some quantitative; some qualitative – story-telling, e.g. music impact. Sometimes unintended consequences with changes – what are we not collecting and should be?
- Collaborative work of everything on the table; come to bottom line together and fully understand what is at stake.
- Limited specificity about priorities in budget; nothing on the table (at this event).
- Mental health of Indigenous students; expand elders in residence; Indigenous workers in schools, not just for Indigenous students but for all students.
- Honour work being done by Indigenous Department; what support is needed? More time to do things well.
- Spend targeted \$ in different ways; used appropriately; are kids getting literacy and oral language support.
- Is there room for talking tables once decisions are on the table; enjoy the perspectives at the table.