

# FAQ: Budget Advisory Committee #4 - February 8, 2022

## Section 1:

Please enter the questions you have from the **PRESENTATION** below (there is a heading for each department)

### **General questions:**

- In the last 2 meetings, we set aside only a few minutes at the end of the meeting to hear about music - I say "hear" because it was very short and no time was allocated for discussion. Could we please address music closer to the beginning of the next meeting to ensure we have enough time to "dig in"?
- I would really appreciate a chance to get into breakout rooms again and have some discussion. I find that we have some really insightful conversations when we do that and I quite often will hear thoughts that I may not have otherwise contemplated.

### **Communications and Community Engagement:**

- Your department does an incredible amount of work for one person!

Thank you. We are very appreciative to work in an organization that values engagement and the role communications play in uniting staff, students, families and the broader community.

- If a communications assistant was added to the communications department, would this reduce the amount of money that is outsourced for video, graphic design, and other content work?

The intention is to hire a communications professional who has the qualifications to assist with content creation (writing, graphic design, videography, etc.) As a result, this would directly impact the amount currently being contracted out and would support the department's capacity to produce more engaging content regularly.

- What are some ways that you can identify that the district could save money in your department?

As mentioned above, by having qualified in-house support we could save costs on external support.

In addition, a communications assistant would free up the manager's time to further develop policy and systems to streamline process within the organization.

- It sounds like the communications role is fairly recent. Who did this before the communications department was established?

This department was created in 2016. At that time, there was a manager and a communications assistant. In 2017, the department was reduced to one with a budget for external assistance.

Prior to the communications department, the Superintendent's Executive Assistant assisted with media releases and correspondence for the Superintendent. To give context, prior to the creation of this department, there was 28 media releases total for a 5 period year period. We now average that each year. In addition, there was limited public engagement/consultation. In just 2021, we have had five engagements, some concluded and some are on-going, they include: Lansdowne North Land Disposal, School Police Liaison Officers, Renaming of George Jay, Cedar Hill Seismic Replacement and Lansdowne South Land Disposal.

### **International Student Program (ISP)**

- Can you speak to what are the limits that we can grow the ISP program? Are many of our secondary schools near capacity so that we may not have room for more ISP students?

There are several methods to grow our International Education Program from an enrolment perspective and a revenue perspective. These include increasing enrolment in 1) short-term / summer programs hosted at Uplands Campus and District Schools 2) Focusing on increasing international enrolment at Middle and Elementary levels consistent with international enrolment levels of Metro Vancouver School Districts. 3) Increasing enrolment at secondary schools that are not yet at capacity for international students. From a revenue standpoint, we will increase tuition fees in 2023-2024 and this will increase revenue. A reduction in the number of homestay families in the Greater Victoria area may limit potential growth for the International Education Program over the next 3 years.

- What have been the ramifications of reducing the international student/teacher ratio in our secondary schools? Has this been a detriment to international students? Has this affected our local students? Would you recommend that this budget cut be kept in the 2022-23 budget?

As we are in the first year of this change, it is difficult to comment. My understanding is that this change has not impacted service levels for international students at the school level as the School Advisor Allocation (to provide support at school level) has not changed. This change may have reduced the overall number of sections of courses offered at specific schools. This may impact local and international students. I would recommend maintaining this change in ratio in 2022-2023 and while monitoring impact on students.

- I saw FTE rates for the past year or so - what was the pre-COVID level FTE for International students?

In the 2018-2019 school year, the FTE for international students was 1008 FTE.

## District Team

- I thoroughly enjoyed your presentation – the passion and enthusiasm were great to see.
- It is clear the district has some amazing programs - thank you so much for presenting them!
- This isn't meant as a criticism but I am still unclear what the District's Learning Team's role is in these programs. I see some of these programs in our schools being delivered by school staff, how does the District Learning Team fit in? How do **school** administrators fit in?

Both District Team and school based administrators roles will vary depending on the program they are supporting. For example if we look at StrongStarts, District Team maintains regular contact with the ministry and establishes overall direction and vision. District Team schedules regular meetings and professional development with ECE's, who facilitate these programs, and answer ongoing questions and feedback from families and community. School based administrators provide the daily ongoing supervision of staffing and supports for StrongStart Programs.

- I would have loved to hear more about the role/job description of a District Administrator (Principal/Vice Principal) - kind of like a "day in the life" - again, not a criticism but I have MANY parents asking why we have so many and it would be great if we could answer that question with some intelligence. It would be helpful to know the roles of each Principal and Vice Principal.

As with every role in our learning community it is hard to describe a day in the life, as no two days are alike. Having said that, please refer to the slide 53- Levelled Responsibilities and slide 54 - Additional Responsibilities which highlight all of the work for our team of five (three Principals and two Vice Principals). The levelled responsibilities work is the work that occurs for most, if not the entire team. For example, the entire team is responsible for supporting our Principals and Vice Principals in schools with complex or emergent issues. The added responsibilities slide recognizes the individual tasks that have been assigned to one or two District Administrators, dependent on level or qualification.

- For every PAC meeting I have attended, a school administrator is in attendance at every meeting. Why is there no representation from the District at VCPAC meetings?

We would be happy to discuss a role for District administration connected to VCPAC meetings.

- The competency based IEPs sound interesting. Are there increased costs to moving to this type of format? Do they take inclusive ed staff/case workers more time to do? Do teachers need to spend more time on them? I would love to hear more details about how these work.

There are no increased costs to moving to CB IEPs. The time commitment for case managers is similar, and the resulting documents will ideally be more relevant and useful for classroom teachers, but not require any more time from them.

- Re: MDi - how is this distributed to students?

MDI is organized by District Team and the online survey is administered by staff (teachers, and in some instances administrators) in schools.

- Tammy mentioned the Student Learning Survey - what is/was the participation rate in this survey?

Participation rates for 2019-20 were as follows: Grade 4: 65%, Grade 7: 66%, Grade 10: 30% and Grade 12: 14%. *Note: Covid April to June 2020; survey open and completed April 2020 during remote learning therefore results are not a typical year.* Participation rates for 2020-21 (covid year) were as follows: Grade 4: 79%, Grade 7: 77%, Grade 10: 73% and Grade 12: 53%.

- Re: request for more ECE's in the schools (kindergarten) - how does that affect the roles of the EA's and their union? Is there a conflict?

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ECE's and EA's are both part of CUPE947. District Team is working alongside the ministry and district staff in providing clarity to the role of ECE's in schools. Strengthening early years partnerships between ECE's and kindergarten teachers is part of the work District Team continues to do through the early years initiatives.

- I am wondering why Island Ukulele is funded through the District Team budget. Is this because it is a district program, unlike the rest of music?

An allocation of \$12,000 was earmarked by the district to fund school music programs participation in events supported and led by Island Ukulele, Victoria Sings, and the Victoria Orchestra.

- Now that all schools are not doing Reading Recovery, are they all doing different literacy programs? Do schools get to choose their own literacy program? Does this end up being more expensive?

Historically, 16 of our 28 schools used Reading Recovery as an intervention model to support young readers. Schools who did not participate in Reading Recovery used various literacy supports and models to meet student needs. Each elementary school works to develop a literacy framework using their allocated funds to best serve their communities. District Team continues to support literacy planning and professional learning via the K-5 Literacy framework outlined in the budget presentation.

- If 1 or 2 late FI programs are run with “under the floor” enrollment, is that sustainable? Should this be examined more carefully in a deficit budget? Do the same schools consistently have low grade 6 enrollment for French Immersion or does it vary across the district?

We currently have two schools: Shoreline and Cedar Hill that have below the floor enrollment for the upcoming year. As shown in the presentation, the two schools have usually shown low registration numbers. I am willing to come back in front of the Budget committee to answer further questions.

- Re: Pathways and Partnerships - what an amazing program. Thank you for showcasing a female student and her journey! It looks like you have more ITA revenue than expenses - where does the surplus land? How is it used? Is it set aside for your program for the next year?

Thank you for your kind words about our programming! If you refer back to slides 75-77 you will see that our expenses are more than the ITA revenue that we receive. The ITA revenue goes towards the ITA School Payouts, but it also helps to pay post-secondary trades training tuition, and supports the students, programs, and spaces in our schools that inspire students to pursue a trades pathway. Due to this, we do not typically have a surplus at the end of the year. Our goal is always to spend each year’s budget on that year’s students. However, if there was any surplus in the past, it was either absorbed by the District, or it was held for a larger project or piece of equipment for the following year.

- TOC shortages – what are your thoughts for how to address this and what would this mean for next year’s budget?

We continue to explore synchronous and asynchronous professional learning opportunities which can be offered outside school hours when encountering a TTOC shortage. Funds that were earmarked for TTOC’s can then be distributed in a different way. For example, a scheduled professional learning event requiring TTOC’s was redesigned into a webinar that was offered on our website. Funds that were originally allocated for TTOC’s went to the purchase of books for schools that connected to the lessons in the webinar.

- What can we do to increase the IBI/SMI success rates? What programs should be prioritized to see this increase?

Increasing the success rates of our students who are designated under the Ministry category of Intensive Behaviour Intervention/ Serious Mental Illness requires both community and school-based supports which are already well underway in all our schools. Community-based supports (e.g. in-depth therapy, counselling and/or support for student and family in the community, care of a physician) should complement and be coordinated with the supports in place at the school which include whole school supports and student specific interventions by Learning Support Teacher, Counsellor and EA to promote behavioural change or provide emotional support. To enhance this work, continued focus on coordinated planning between

school and community partners to develop truly “wrap-around plans” for students is required, along with continued implementation of proactive and reactive strategies across our district.

Proactive strategies in place to support students who present with behaviour challenges include our District Team providing ongoing support and learning for school staff on how to develop, implement, monitor and review school and classroom based behavioural support and interventions including the use of data to inform and guide interventions and explicit teaching of alternate strategies. In addition we continue to offer broader implementation of CPI training and supports offered through the Provincial Outreach Program for Autism Related Disorders for all staff, specific EA pro-d focused on seeing Behaviour as Communication.

We continue to work on developing proactive strategies to support positive mental health with our students to hopefully lower the number of students who need an IBI designation. Such programming include EASE in elementary schools, Second Step in Elementary School, and Mental Health Literacy in our Middle and Secondary Schools. We also use our Snapshot Series to share information about mental health with families so we are having these conversations in a variety of environments.

The District team works side by side with School Based Teams and school staff to implement a number of reactive strategies that focus on consultation and planning support. These include Behaviour Support Planning, Violent Threat Risk Assessments, Mental Health Plan Planning, Integrated Case Management Meetings and District Based Team Meetings.

Looking forward, we want to continue to build the capacity of School Based Teams and school staff so that all schools have the skills and tools needed to offer alternate learning environments within their schools to support self and co regulation within catchment placements. We also continue to reach out to community partners to look at alternate learning environments for students struggling with internalized or more overt behaviours. Examples include Human Nature Counselling, new programs with the Native Friendship Centre and Connect Parent Sessions. All of this work is directly related to the additional request for a targeted mental health budget, as outlined in the District Team presentation.

### **Indigenous Education**

- **Thank you for your passion! You gave us lots of information to think about.**
- **From what I understand, federal funding for Indigenous education is given to the district on behalf of the nations and is supposed to be specifically allocated for this purpose. How is that money being spent?**

Indigenous students are funded three ways:

1. If they live on reserve, Federal funding is paid to the Nation and the Nation is invoiced by the School District in which the students attend.
2. If they do not live on reserve, the Ministry of Education funds the School District in which they attend with the block or per pupil funding in the operating grant.
3. Regardless of where they live, a student self-identifying as Indigenous also receives supplementary targeted funding under the Unique Student Need section of the operating grant



- Does the District supplement this? Is this targeted funding separate from the Operating Grant? How does that show on the FS?

The targeted funding is part of the operating grant:

<b>September 2021 Enrolment Count</b>				
	School-Age Enrolment	Funding Level	Funding	Total Supplement
Standard (Regular) Schools <b>BLOCK FUNDING</b>	19,097.7450	\$7,885	\$150,585,719	
Continuing Education	13.1250	\$7,885	\$103,491	
Alternate Schools	198.0000	\$7,885	\$1,561,230	
Distributed Learning	13.5000	\$6,360	\$85,860	
Home Schooling	130	\$250	\$32,500	
Course Challenges	5	\$246	\$1,230	
<b>Total Enrolment-Based Funding (September)</b>	<b>19,322.3700</b>			<b>\$152,370,030</b>
	<b>Total Enrol. Change</b>	<b>Funding Level</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Total Supplement</b>
1% to 4% Enrolment Decline	-29.5717	\$3,943	\$0	
4%+ Enrolment Decline		\$5,914	\$0	
Significant Cumulative Decline (7%+)	-155.4999	\$3,943	\$0	
<b>Supplement for Enrolment Decline</b>				<b>\$0</b>
	<b>Enrolment</b>	<b>Funding Level</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Total Supplement</b>
Level 1 Special Needs	20	\$44,850	\$897,000	
Level 2 Special Needs	805	\$21,280	\$17,130,400	
Level 3 Special Needs	420	\$10,750	\$4,515,000	
English Language Learning	1,844	\$1,585	\$2,922,740	
Indigenous Education <b>TARGETED FUNDING</b>	1,354	\$1,565	\$2,119,010	
Adult Education	9.5938	\$5,030	\$48,257	
Equity of Opportunity Supplement			\$958,268	
<b>Supplement for Unique Student Needs</b>				<b>\$28,590,675</b>

The expenditures are shown on the Financial Statements on Schedule 2C in the left hand column entitled 1.31 Indigenous Education. Note: 2C is a two-page document.

<https://www.sd61.bc.ca/our-district/financial/financial-statements/>



The District supplements the targeted funding as follows (note: this request is for 2022-2023 and requests an increase of \$182,000)

## Core Funding from Block

	2022/23
Indigenous Kindergarten Support at Craigflower	\$ 25,890
Songhees Nation LEA Support	137,085
Esquimalt Nation LEA Support	62,307
TTOC Relief Costs	7,315
0.50 FTE AA2N	28,787
TTOC Release re: Indigenous Drumming	10,000
Teacher Staffing Support	181,319
<b>Total District Support</b>	<b>452,703</b>

## New Considerations from Core

- **Contract to FTE Support for the Local Education Agreements**
- **1.5 FTE Teacher Staffing for the IED**



- Approved in last year's budget was a 0.2 FTE for Indigenous drumming. According to staff, this was never posted or filled. Where is that budgeted \$\$ going?

The funding we received for Indigenous Drumming is being used to support the Drum Program across the School District – we do have (1) staff member who is working one day a week on this. In addition, we also have provided TTOC time for the Arts and Culture Facilitator to be connected to the Provincial Conference 'Everything is Connected' Music Education Conference who is a part of planning committee and is a representative of SD61 and the Drumming Program for IED SD61. Further, we have also provided TTOC funds to send 3 Music Educators to this Conference and also funds set aside to have further release time for these same 3 Music Educators to assist the Department and these 2 staff on the further development of the Drum Framework. An initial meeting has already been held in this regard. The expectation of this funding was not to hire a .2 FTE Music Teacher, this .2 funding for Drumming was to support the overall Drum Program and ensure proper stewardship of the over 800 drums we currently have in the district. We are pleased with all of these various pieces we are able to support because of the funding we were provided.

*Special Note* \* This funding was not to begin a Drumming Program we have been offering a drumming program for several years in SD61 and working with Indigenous community and schools on making drums and learning the songs, and following the proper protocols on how to be a caretaker of drums. This funding provided was to further support the drum program in what

we were already doing and to honor and acknowledge that this is a critical part of some of the work the IED provides across SD61 and the communities we serve.

### **Music Continuation**

- What is the mission of the music working group? Are there representatives from elementary and high school as well as middle schools?

The music working group includes an administrator and music teacher from each of the 10 middle schools in the district. The purpose of the working group was to clarify the budget process for the upcoming budget and discuss the Budget Advisory Committee and its role in the budget development. In last year's budget process when music was reviewed, we heard there could be more options to meet the funding shortfall for middle school music. This was a topic that was added to the workplan that the Committee reviewed during this year's process. The music teachers shared the importance of music in middle school and will be presenting at the upcoming February 22nd Budget Advisory Meeting.

