



The Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)
Special Board Budget Meeting
AGENDA
Via Zoom

Monday, April 4, 2022, 7:00 p.m.
Broadcasted via YouTube
<https://bit.ly/3czx8bA>

A. COMMENCEMENT OF MEETING

This meeting is being audio and video recorded. The video can be viewed on the District website.

A.1. Acknowledgement of Traditional Territories

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.

A.2. Approval of the Agenda

Recommended Motion:
That the April 4, 2022 Special Board Budget agenda be approved.

B. CORRESPONDENCE

B.1. March 8 to April 2, 2022 – Public Correspondence re: Budget

C. 2022-2023 ANNUAL BUDGET

C.1. Budget Engagement Report

C.2. Presentation

C.3. Balancing Options

C.4. Budget Bylaw Readings: 1st and 2nd Reading

Recommended Motion:

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) 2022-2023 Annual Budget Bylaw in the amount of \$_____ be:

Read a first time the 04 day of April, 2022.

Recommended Motion:

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) 2022-2023 Annual Budget Bylaw in the amount of \$_____ be:

Read a second time the 04 day of April, 2022.

D. ADJOURNMENT

Recommended Motion:

That the meeting be adjourned.



Greater Victoria Teachers' Association

#5-515 Dupplin Road Victoria BC V8Z 1C2
t. 250.595.0181 f. 250.595.0189 info@gvta.net gvta.net

March 9, 2022

Kim Morris
Secretary Treasurer
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
556 Boleskine Road
Victoria BC V8Z 1E8

Dear Ms. Morris

RE: Proposed Cuts to Teacher Counsellors

On Friday, March 4th, the Greater Victoria School District announced proposed budget changes for the next school year (2022-2023). Currently, the GVSD has a \$7.239 million deficit, and the school board must make difficult decisions about how to save money and reduce the deficit.

Three of the proposed savings relate to teacher counsellors. The most significant of which would reduce counsellors to the minimum set by the Collective Agreement, a district ratio of one to every 693 students. This consideration would eliminate 8.0 FTE of counsellors for an estimated savings of \$924,480.

The proposed change would:

- reduce the number of full-time counsellors in SD61 at a time when it is already difficult to recruit and retain qualified counsellors;
- reduce the accessibility of qualified mental healthcare for children in what is arguable one of the most significant mental health crises of our lives;
- shift the responsibility for child mental health crises (imminent suicide, self-harm) to other untrained school staff (educational assistants, other teachers, administrators); and
- create further inequality by imposing the greatest negative impact on children and families who cannot access mental healthcare (due to finances, lack of transportation, social injustice, etc.).

In 2017, the Board voted to increase counselling FTE so that there was a minimum of 0.5 FTE at every school. The district saw then the value in supporting student mental health, increasing the presence of counsellors in the school, and increasing the ratio of counsellors to students above the minimum negotiated in the Collective Agreement. The result of this change was an increase in all the services counsellors provide, increased accessibility to qualified mental healthcare for children, and greater support for all school staff.

The proposed savings would reverse the previous increase and have a significant impact on the children, families, and school communities of Greater Victoria at a time when we know the pandemic has exacerbated all the issues that led to this increase in 2017.

In order to understand the gravity of the proposed budget changes, it is important to understand what a counsellor is, what services they provide, and how their unique role fits within the school community.

A counsellor is both a teacher and a mental healthcare professional with a **master's level education and supervised practice.**

The requirements to become a BC Certified Teacher include completing a Bachelor of Education degree, which takes four to five years. This program also **includes a “teaching practicum,” which involves student-teaching experience** under the supervision of a mentor teacher.

A master's degree in counselling takes an additional two to four years. This program includes education in a wide range of specialized subjects relevant to mental health. These include, but are not limited to, abnormal psychology (the study of mental illness), addictions, counselling and psychotherapy theory and practice, ethics and legal standards, trauma theory and intervention, and risk **assessment of suicide and violence. This program also includes a “clinical practicum,” which involves counselling experience under the supervision of a** qualified mental health professional. Some programs also include writing a research-based thesis.

As members of the BC School Counsellors' Association, counsellors also abide by a code of ethics and standards of professional practice.

School counsellors have a unique role and scope of practice in schools. Since they are both teachers and mental health professionals, they weave between many complex situations in the school. On a given day, a counsellor may teach classes, counsel students, collaborate with educational assistants and teachers, write referrals for families, and act as **an advocate for students' needs.**

Counsellors provide educational services to students in the school, including lessons in mental health literacy, mental health promotion, and social and emotional learning. In recent years, the Ministry of Education has emphasized mental health promotion in schools and the BC Curriculum has put an increasing focus on social and emotional learning.

Counsellors also provide educational services to adults in the school community. They can teach school staff about topics such as trauma-informed practice, which aligns with the Provincial Government's BC Mental Health in Schools Strategy. They can also lead workshops for families on topics such as anxiety or grief and loss.

As a mental health professional, counsellors deliver mental health services in the school, including:

- individual and group counselling;
- risk assessment for self-harm and suicide;
- case detection and early intervention with children showing signs of mental illness;
- collaboration with school staff to support student mental health;
- collaboration with services outside school (Child & Youth Mental Health);
- connecting families to services for housing and food security;
- crisis intervention (death of a student or school staff, suicides, traumatic incidents, violent incidents);
- referring children and families to mental health services which fit their needs.

Every child who goes to school can access a counsellor, regardless of their background. School counsellors are highly accessible even to families without means of transportation or for those who cannot afford the steep price of private mental healthcare, since the services of a school counsellor are free. Although other free mental healthcare services do exist, not all children qualify for those services, and even for those who do qualify, the waitlists are long. School counsellors are the most accessible and equitable mental health service for children.

Research evidence shows that lower student to counsellor ratios support academic performance, attendance, and graduation rates, while also reducing disciplinary violations. Research also shows that lower ratios have an even greater impact in high-poverty areas and that students benefit most when counsellors are able to dedicate more of their time to providing counselling services. For these reasons, the American School Counsellor Association recommends a ratio of 250:1.

Although negotiating the ratios in the Collective Agreement rests with the provincial parties, the District can decide to continue to staff above them. Should the proposed reductions be made, student to counsellor ratios would increase, thereby reducing access to the counsellor for the students.

Reduced access matters now more than ever — roughly three quarters of children with a mental illness do not receive treatment, largely due to lack of access. In the last two years, we have all endured the stress and collective trauma of the COVID-19 pandemic. Canadians of all ages have experienced significant impacts to their mental health, while access to mental healthcare has not kept up with increasing need.

Before the pandemic had even begun research with students in the BC School System showed they were experiencing concerning levels of anxiety and depression, post-traumatic stress, self-harm, and suicidal ideation.

Research conducted in BC during the pandemic shows that two-thirds of children ages 6-17 are struggling with their mental health. The Mental Health Commission of Canada has also published statistics showing that people under the age of 18 all across Canada are experiencing increased anxiety, depression, and serious contemplation of suicide compared to the start of the pandemic. Moreover, many children have lost a caregiver in the last two years as a result of the pandemic, which can have serious impacts on mental health.

We are in the middle of a mental health crisis. Right now, our children need care and support more than ever, and access to mental healthcare is scarce. The students in the Greater Victoria School District need more access to mental healthcare, not less. Now is not the time to reduce access to school counselling. Access to a qualified mental healthcare professional inside every school is the **simplest way to meet our children's mental health needs. It is** their right and our duty as educators.

It is the responsibility of all school staff to work together to protect the wellbeing of our students, and to help them learn and grow. Teacher counsellors are an essential part of our One Learning Community, who balance both teaching and mental health services. The services that counsellors provide are essential to the mental health and wellbeing of students, families, school staff, and communities. These “savings” will reduce their ability to provide these services and cost us much for more than dollars.

Please protect our children's mental health by removing the 8 FTE worth of counselling positions from the list of possible savings.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Winona Waldron

President
Greater Victoria Teachers' Association

cc: Deb Whitten, GVSD
GVSD Board
GVTA Executive Committee
Sarah Bourdon, Counsellor LSA

From: Samantha Middleton
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 2:27 PM
Subject: Please don't cut what helps us, please.

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Dear Trustees,

I ask, coming to you as a grade 11 student at Esquimalt high school, that you don't cut the music programs in middle school and the careers counselors, I understand that you feel pressured and scared right now because you have to do an impossible job, but please, just don't cut them.

Music has played a huge role in my life, starting with singing with my grandmother at jam sessions in a little town, to building up my confidence, to eventually being able to join choir and singing in front of a bigger crowd in middle school. My love for music has always been strong but my confidence hasn't, I know for sure I would not be where I am now if it wasn't for the music program. I moved to Victoria, BC in 2017 and of course everyone knows it's hard starting out in middle school, especially in the middle of the year and having no friends. It was hard. feeling like I didn't belong, not knowing where to go and not having friends. I was going through friend groups faster than I could count. It really took a toll on my mental health, not knowing where to go and feeling lost. For the first year and a bit I was lost and it took me a while, but I eventually turned back to music, and that was where I really thrived.

Now I wasn't very good, and I'm still not the greatest but I have never been happier than I have ever been in the music room. It is a place where I could forget about my worries and just feel like myself. It is such a supportive and welcoming community of people, just sharing their love for music and having fun while doing it. In middle school when I finally came back to music it was when I finally met the right people and we became friends, I am still best friends with them today and I am so thankful. I am still involved in the music program today at Esquimalt high school and I am in the Choir, Rhythm and Blues and musical theatre program, and I am still in love with it. As a matter of fact, right now, I am in the aviation program at Mount Doug and because of how I fell in love with the program and the music community, I travel to Esquimalt (which is a 45 minute bus ride) on Tuesday's and Thursday's to continue to do the musical theatre program. If you thought transitioning to middle school from elementary school was a big jump, middle school to high school was even bigger and I know for sure I would not have joined the music program in high school if I hadn't started in middle school.

Now for the career counselors, as mentioned before, I am in the aviation program right now, I'm also taking the TEAC course at Camosun. Now you may be wondering, what are these courses? What do you do within the programs? How can I apply? That's a great question, ask the career counselors. I'm serious, I could explain what it is, but how to apply? I would bring up the aviation program to my teachers and they'd say, "oh how exciting!" but not one of them knew what the program fully entailed, just "Oh right! I thought we had that program."

At this point grade 11's are deciding on their final courses for their grade 12 year, at this point they're all freaking out realizing how soon their grade 12 year is. It's finally setting in that they have to decide soon and they have no clue what they're going to do. That was me, I had no clue what I was going to do, and I'm still figuring it out. My careers counselor emailed me and talked me through every course and helped me decide what classes I'm going to take next year. It was hard considering I'm at Mount Doug right now and communication is difficult, but they were with me every step of the way.

Now that you finally made it to the end of my long email going on and on about me and my experience, I strongly urge you to reconsider cutting the music program and the careers counselors. I don't even want to think about where I would've been now if I didn't have a music program in middle school, and I can't imagine my future without the guidance of my careers counselor.

There has to be another way.

Please include this letter in the April 4th meeting pack up.

Thank you, and please, don't give up on us yet,

Samantha Middleton,
Grade 11 student at Esquimalt High School.

From: Starship
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 10:37 PM
Subject: Allocation of funding

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Dear esteemed Trustees,

It has recently come to my attention that the position of career counsellor may soon be abolished within SD61. I would like to appeal this decision on the grounds that removing academic counsellors would severely hinder the potential of students in developing their vocational abilities by preventing them from learning of opportunities to participate in skilled trades programs. I beg of you to please consider this application and consider allowing students in this district to further develop their skills.

Please include this letter in the April 4th meeting pack up. Thank you.

From: Callum Rudyk

Sent: Thursday, March 17, 2022 11:41 AM

To: Nicole Duncan <nduncan@sd61.bc.ca>; Ann Whiteaker <awhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca>; Ryan Painter <rpainter@sd61.bc.ca>; Jordan Watters <jwatters@sd61.bc.ca>; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>; Elaine Leonard <eleonard@sd61.bc.ca>; Angie Hentze <ahentze@sd61.bc.ca>; Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>

Subject: Don't betray our students

To whom it may concern,

My name is Callum Rudyk and I am a grade 12 student at Esquimalt High School. Over the course of my 13 years as a student in district 61, I have known hundreds of students of every kind of background. If I were to think back to all those people across all those years, I would be hard pressed to find more than a handful that were not touched by our music programs or counselling services.

These parts of my student life, especially in middle school, were not merely a service but a need. Without the opportunity to meet friends and develop skills in my middle school strings orchestra, I would not be going to university next year to pursue Music Education at UBC. Without school counselling services, I may not be here at all.

Please do not cut these programs, you do not realize how many children would suffer.

Lastly, I ask that this letter be read at the April 4th meeting pack-up.

Thank you,
Callum

From: Susan Adamson

Sent: Saturday, March 19, 2022 9:04 AM

To: Nicole Duncan <nduncan@sd61.bc.ca>; Ann Whiteaker <awhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca>; Ryan Painter <rpainter@sd61.bc.ca>; Angie Hentze <ahentze@sd61.bc.ca>; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>; Elaine Leonard <eleonard@sd61.bc.ca>; Jordan Watters <jwatters@sd61.bc.ca>; Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>; Kim Morris <kmorris@sd61.bc.ca>; Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>

Subject: proposed cuts to school music

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Hello,

Please include this email in your Apr 4th board meeting pack up.

My daughter started music in grade 6 at Shoreline Middle School and continues to this day in grade 11 at Esquimalt High School. She has been able to experience concert band, jazz band, musical theatre and choir. Had Shoreline not had the breadth of music options on offer, her school experience would have been very different. In addition to an education in music, it provided her with a community within the school and across the grades. That continues today in high school.

If music were not taught in middle schools, I feel strongly that the music programmes in high schools would be weaker by fewer participants and less experienced musicians. Or, high school music programmes would predominantly be filled with students you had private lessons through their families which is not an option for every interested family. The middle school programmes offer an affordable way – be it the family or subsidised by the school – for any interested child to try music, to try something different. It would also have an impact on post-secondary interest in pursuing music.

There are any number of studies that speak to the value of music in all of our lives. For my daughter, music gave her confidence to try, to work hard even when a piece was difficult, to accept responsibility for her role in a larger group and the commitments that come from same. In particular over these past two years, music has played a pivotal role in her well-being as a welcome constant in an increasingly uncertain world. It's a very hard time to be a teenager. I just asked my daughter what music has been for her over these last two years. Her word: stability.

I would ask that you reconsider cutting music from our school programmes. The impact of doing so is too far reaching, all to the detriment of our kids.

With thanks,

Susan Adamson
parent, Esquimalt High School

From: Hannah Norris-Daley

Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2022 10:58 AM

To: Nicole Duncan <nduncan@sd61.bc.ca>; Ann Whiteaker <awhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca>; Ryan Painter <rpainter@sd61.bc.ca>; Jordan Watters <jwatters@sd61.bc.ca>; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>; Elaine Leonard <eleonard@sd61.bc.ca>; Angie Hentze <ahentze@sd61.bc.ca>; Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>

Subject: April 4 Pack Up

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Dear Board of Trustees,

Hello! My name is Hannah Daley and I'm a student at Mt. Douglas Secondary School. As someone who has benefited from the music program through elementary school to high school, it's disappointing for me to learn about the possible upcoming budget cuts. I know not every student that goes to school has huge connections with music programs offered, but a large portion do. Although this may not seem imperative to students' life at school, I strongly ask you to reconsider. Even though not all students partake in the music program in SD61, it benefits a large number of students, and for many it's a reason to come to school and it gives students something to be truly passionate about. The experiences and knowledge learnt from an in-depth and hands-on music program lasts a lifetime, and the memories I personally have made have been one of the highlights of my school career so far. I understand that this is not an ideal situation and that none of you wish to cut budgeting for any of these programs, but I don't think that the SD61 music program, or counseling can suffer losses when so many students rely on it. From my experience, going to choir, vocal jazz and guitar made me feel comfortable and excited to go to school and I've learned a lot about myself and the evolving culture of music through these programs. I have also talked with other students, and counseling at each of our schools is already suffering. The overall opinion is that staff are overworked and find it difficult to keep up with the amount of students they have to support. The staff are not the problem, as they are very passionate and caring about their students and their job, but the amount of students compared to the amount of counselors is overwhelming for both parties. Counselors are already so overworked with the amount they have to do, that I can only imagine what that will be like after these cuts. Again, I know that none of you wish for this to happen, and you've been put in a place where you have to make a tough decision when it comes to this, but so many students are so passionate about these programs, and I hope that has come across through our attempts to prevent these cuts. I want to thank you for your time and ask that you use this email during the April 4th meeting pack up.

Thanks again,

Hannah Daley (Grade 10 student at Mt. Douglas Secondary)

From: mary

Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2022 4:11 PM

To: Ryan Painter <rpainter@sd61.bc.ca>; Nicole Duncan <nduncan@sd61.bc.ca>; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>; Angie Hentze <ahentze@sd61.bc.ca>; Elaine Leonard <eleonard@sd61.bc.ca>; Jordan Watters <jwatters@sd61.bc.ca>; Ann Whiteaker <awhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca>; Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>

Subject: Planned cuts to music programs in School District 61

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

As a parent and grandparent, I am writing to express my heartfelt distress at the suggestion that School District 61 is considering drastic cuts to its music programs. Both my sons were involved in school strings and orchestra and benefitted greatly from the music, fun, discipline, and social relationships of those years. In the case of my younger son, who had difficulties with ordinary school work, but who proved to have exceptional musical ability, the school music program was a lifesaver. Now my grandson has been looking forward to the same opportunity as soon as he is old enough to qualify.

Also, it should be added that not all parents can afford to send their children to the Victoria Conservatory of Music or to have their children tutored privately. Music is a very legitimate form of learning and enjoyment and should be provided as part of a child's education. It would be a shame to see these programs curtailed.

Please have this included in the April 4th Meeting packup.

Sincerely,
Mary Turner

From: Atticus Dachsel Kerr

Sent: Tuesday, March 22, 2022 3:40 PM

To: Nicole Duncan <nduncan@sd61.bc.ca>; Ann Whiteaker <awhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca>; Ryan Painter <rpainter@sd61.bc.ca>; Jordan Watters <jwatters@sd61.bc.ca>; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>; Elaine Leonard <eleonard@sd61.bc.ca>; Angie Hentze <ahentze@sd61.bc.ca>; Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>

Subject: Walk a mile in my shoes/Endangering lives

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Dear Trustees

I would like for you to just take a moment to reflect as to what you are doing. Take your mind back to when you were in High School. How did you get through the harsh brutality of your academics? Was it music? Or was it sports? Your best friend? Art club? Shop? Now I want you to picture your life with that special thing yanked away from you. You have no choice in this matter. What do you turn to now to cope? Drugs? Alcohol? Sex? And now people are blaming you for getting into this situation. You want to speak to someone about how this isn't your fault. But there are no counselors. There are no friends. There is no music.

This is the reality the children and teenagers of this community face.

Lives of innocent students are at stake.

Atticus Dachsel Kerr, Grade 10
Esquimalt High School

Please include this letter in the April 4th meeting pack up. Thank you.

From: Nathan Skip

Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2022 10:18 AM

To: Nicole Duncan <nduncan@sd61.bc.ca>; Ann Whiteaker <awhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca>; Ryan Painter <rpainter@sd61.bc.ca>; Jordan Watters <jwatters@sd61.bc.ca>; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>; Elaine Leonard <eleonard@sd61.bc.ca>; Angie Hentze <ahentze@sd61.bc.ca>; Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>; Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>; Kim Morris <kmorris@sd61.bc.ca>

Subject: Don't Cut Our Music Programs!!!

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Hello members of the sd61 school board,

My name is Nathan Skip. I'm a grade 11 student at Esquimalt high school who is currently involved in 5 music programs at the school. When I heard of the new budget proposal and the enormous amount of cuts being made to music, I was shocked.

In middle school, I joined the band program and ever since, music has been an essential part of my life. Being in band has given me somewhere to be grounded even when times at home and in regular classes have been stressful, frustrating and chaotic. I have also met all of my close friends through the music programs. They are the type of people who comfort you when you feel terrible and are always there to talk to. I found that everyone in music are the most kind, respectful and thoughtful people in our schools. This is even more true for the music teachers, who are the best teachers I've ever had for any classes and I would be heartbroken if they lose their jobs.

When I graduate high school I plan to pursue a music degree as a career. If it were not for middle school band, I would not have the fundamental music experience to even consider a career in music as an option. Cutting these programs would create a domino effect causing not only the attendance of high school music programs to drop, but the students in them would only be at a middle school level, crushing any hopes of a career in music.

If you cut middle school music programs, not only will you be denying so many incredible students the opportunity for a music career, you will eliminate the chance for students to form the supportive friendships and community that will last until the end of high school and beyond.

Music programs cannot just be thrown away

Please include this letter in the April 4th meeting pack up. Thank you.

Nathan Skip



Jane Massy
President

Shawna Abbott
Vice President

Taily Wills
2nd Vice-President

March 30, 2022

Chair Painter & School Board Trustees
Greater Victoria School District 61
Victoria, BC

Dear Chair Painter & School Board Trustees:

RE: 2022/23 BUDGET

Here we are again discussing another devastating budget deficit. What to cut, what to add and what to keep! Ultimately that will be your decision, but you need to know the potential of your proposed cuts to 947 members and the students they serve.

Further cuts to 947 members are going to provide a devastating blow to your staff. Supports for students, staff and parents will be diminished – you cut hours for office staff last year, and now you are considering whether or not to further cut that same support, in addition to adding other departments to that list.

Career Centre Coordinators: - the purpose of school is to provide an education for students and thus enable them to become the citizens of tomorrow. To abolish this position, that has been in our district for decades, is cutting off that support just as students enter the journey to adulthood. These employees provide one-on-one services, working with these students from Grade 9 and on, to ensure that students transition successfully after grade 12 – either through post-secondary education, apprenticeships, or into the workforce. Career Center Coordinators offer personalized attention to promote equity of opportunities eg. Inclusive ed, indigenous students (cultural responsiveness), and for students with diverse backgrounds and needs/challenges.

Career Centre Coordinators connect students to all professions. These services range from assisting them with resumes and cover letters, preparing them for interviews, finding volunteer opportunities, researching relevant scholarships, potential schools and assisting as they prepare applications to enable them to have the best possible chance at attending the post-secondary institution of their choice. Further, the work these of CUPE members, in partnership with GVTA staff, connect students to opportunities

directly correlated with the course-based and ITA funding that is received by our school district. This funding is related to students in various trades programs taken at Camosun College, in our high school trades classes or programs, and through youth apprenticeships in local industry. These funds are used to directly support the programs, spaces, and students in SD61 that serve to inspire students to pursue a trades pathway, or to have our students participate in college-level courses..

Why would you consider removing these 7 positions just as the students are preparing to leave the very institutions in which we serve. What sense does this make?

School Clerical Staff – just last year you chose to reduce the clerical supports in schools – mostly impacted were the middle and high schools. Now the potential is there to further cut the school office staff at middle and high schools – staff who provide support to students, staff and parents. How do you propose their vital work will get done? I must stress that these are the very same staff who were integral to schools as we navigated a pandemic – who were deemed essential to schools to represent the schools make sure they were open to provide service when we did not really know just what we were dealing with. These are the staff that are counted on time and time again to smooth the waters. If you choose this path, you will lose the adequate supports necessary to effectively run a school office? Administration, the District Office, GVTA, parents and students will all feel this loss, and now, in between potentially covering for the custodial staff, your Administrators will have to address the shortfall within the office.

The rationale for these potential cuts states “staff perform extra work during the year and bank time to use in the summer” This very statement supports our argument. The arrangement to bank time came into place because of the heavy workload required at peak times of the year. It is impossible to complete the additional work required at these peak times during a regular school day. A day that consists of constant visits to the office by students, teachers and parents, as well as the regular day to day activities necessary to support an office. Unlike staff at the board office, the only possible time to use banked time is during the school closure times when the day-to-day tasks associated with schools are less demanding. You must not cut the hours of these staff – to do so will result in schools not functioning with the same efficiency and seamlessness the school community has relied upon. You have asked so much of these employees through the cuts and the pandemic and they are done giving back. These clerical staff work an average of 50-60 hours of extra time a year, taken at straight time – this doesn’t take into account the missed breaks and lunches, phone calls on the weekend and, in the evening, – they are a critical piece of what goes on in a school. With this new plan the district will have no choice but to provide these employees with overtime pay to ensure that deadlines are met and work is complete.

The recruitment and retention of clerical staff in the schools will be severely comprised – each and every one of them can find employment within the provincial government or local municipalities – with better pay and the potential for advancement. There is little potential for advancement with the district and you are considering removing many of the full-time clerical positions in this district-a job that many 10 and 10.5-month clerical staff hope to attain. You realize that this would be a reduction of about 10% or more of their annual wages in one of the most expensive cities in Canada. We already lose 947 staff to other employers. We are a service industry and you are taking away the supports that are necessary to ensure that the school operates efficiently.

School Technologists – just a few short years ago the District determined that we needed these employees to work 11 months – and now, we want to go backwards. The asks in the budget include that the district continue to work on the ITL 5 year plan for network infrastructure, and to reinstate the student device program, also to increase the hardware budget– and included in the potential cuts is a suggestion to reduce the employees who would directly service these computers. A few years back another CUPE member from IT was made exempt at a significant cost to the district and now there is the potential for that to occur again. What sense does this make and is now the time? The impact of preventing the work these Technologists perform after school has closed for the year, and before it restarts in September will have a direct impact on staff and students and result in delays in readiness for a new year. The two weeks of lost productivity will add to much more than two weeks when you factor in that this work will now be done with full complements of staff and students in each location. The additional .5 is used to clean up at year end and check all the technology before start up as well as doing any updates, repairs and such to systems over the summer without disrupting classrooms. Things such as powering on iPads and Chromebooks to ensure network connectivity, checking TEC packages, labs. These impact of losing this time will result in delays accessing technologies at school start up and place more work and stress on our technologists at a time when more and more technology is demanded in the curriculum.

As I review the potential “asks” I do have the following questions – an answer would be appreciated but would hopefully, at the very least, give rise to meaningful discussion amongst yourselves:

1. Reinstate Device Budget - \$339K – and hardware budget -\$250K is this the time? While it does support students directly you are also considering reducing School technologists who would directly support these products within a school.
2. An IT Security Analyst position - \$110K – this is currently done by a CUPE staff member – why is this being considered? . This same scenario occurred a few years ago with a Programmer position - I see this as a potentially dangerous precedent as most "senior" level jobs in IT are simply labelled as

"Systems Analyst" and are currently limited by the collective agreement scale as to remuneration.

3. \$385K for decommissioning PCs and to add to extend educator laptop plan – again I ask, is now the time?
4. The district continually cannot fill EA and is recommending that \$620K is a savings for this. I would recommend that this district use some of these funds to create a minimum of 2 Itinerant EA Peer Support Workers who would work with our EAs, one-on-one, to offer suggestions, strategies, and support. We currently have a workforce that includes many EAs with little training. This could assist them in being more successful and would alleviate the pressure put on existing EAs who are burdened with providing on the job training.

Finally, we are pleased to see that you are considering increasing Educational Assistants to 30 hours. This is welcome news for both staff, parents and students alike. There is an identified problem with recruitment and retention in this much-needed position – what other job is paid by the minute. Increasing EAs to 30 hours will give them an opportunity to provide students with the supports they need, it will give them the opportunity to meet with their teaching partners to discuss the supports in place and how they can be adapted to suit the needs of the individual child. It will provide an opportunity to attend IEP, Staff and other such meetings, and to prepare materials such as pic symbols that help children navigate their day. Providing EAs with 6 hours a day is a great start – please bear in mind that this is only 15 minutes before and after the bell each day and that many EAs are providing this service, unpaid.

You have some tough decision to make and you need to consider cuts that are farthest away from students. Career Centres Coordinators, School Administrative Assistants, Accounts Clerks, My-Ed Operators, School Technologists – any cut to these positions will directly affect services that students receive. It will result in no service or delayed service, that will have direct impacts on students.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of CUPE 947,

Jane Massy

Jane Massy
President, CUPE 947

cc: Kim Morris, Secretary Treasurer
Deb Whitten, Acting Superintendent



Paul Knapik
President
CUPE 382
March 07, 2022

Re: Daytime Custodial Positions

We have been informed that the employer is considering removing daytime custodial positions and laying off some number of CUPE 382 employees. Over the last 25 years, CUPE 382 has seen more than its fair share of cuts. We were once 350 members strong, now we are down to roughly 240 members. I recall sitting in on budget talks and hearing trustees say “we have to cut furthest away from the classroom.” The proposed cuts to daytime custodians would be directly felt in the classroom.

Daytime custodians are essential to the Greater Victoria School District. They are critical to the maintenance, cleanliness, and safety of our facilities. Any cuts to CUPE 382 and daytime custodians would exacerbate current maintenance deficits in our aging buildings and reduce the safety and cleanliness of all buildings throughout the school district.

Cleaning duties

On top of their regular cleaning duties, daytime custodians also respond to emergent cleaning need. They are regularly called to clean up spills, replenish toiletries and soap dispensers, clean up after pizza days, and sweep the floors and wipe the tables down after lunch. Daytime custodians are also a key figure in green initiatives such as the Recycling Program. They empty the outside garbage bins several times a week. They also handle daily biohazards like, vomit, blood, feces and urine. We are worried that without daytime custodians, Principals would have to do this work, or worse, the work would not get done. I would not be proud to see vomit in a hallway, roped off with caution tape, waiting for the afternoon shift. The cleaning that daytime custodians do is paramount for keeping down the spread of Covid and other communicable diseases.

Safety duties

Daytime custodians are the school districts frontline defense for daily safety concerns. At 5 AM they arrive at the school and walk around the building looking for safety issues that may have occurred overnight. This could be needles, broken glass, feces, transient people camping in doorways. They also address any graffiti that was put on the building overnight. This graffiti is often violent or threatening, rude, or offensive. These concerns need to be resolved before students arrive.

Preventing slips, trips, and spills is crucial to the daytime custodian's workload. Slip and trip related injuries can have a tremendous impact on the school district community. During the rainy season, water is tracked into the building on peoples boots and clothing. When left unattended, the water becomes a slipping hazards. Daytime custodians are constantly cleaning up the water in the hallways. They are also integral to the emergency snow removal plan. During extreme weather events, the school district must keep the sidewalks snow and ice free. Daytime custodians are outside, shoveling snow and applying ice melt to the sidewalks and parking lots. Removing daytime custodians would make our grounds and buildings unsafe in poor weather.

They also play critical roles in safety and emergency response plans. Daytime custodians are members of all site-based health and safety committees. Their firsthand knowledge of the facility is indispensable for the success of these committees. Daytime custodians are also critical members of all fire drills, earthquake drills, and lockdown drills. They are one of a few people with keys to the emergency earthquake supplies. They monitor the halls and the grounds to identify people they do not recognize and ask, "hello can I help you?"

Maintenance duties

The school district has some of the oldest buildings in the province. Resolving maintenance concerns in a timely way is critical to preventing larger expenses down the road. Daytime custodians are the keystone of all maintenance work. They are often the first to identify a maintenance need. They are always looking for vandalism and safety issues. When they find a concern, they rope it off and call for an immediate response. They then make work orders and phone calls to the relevant departments. They often communicate with the technician to provide vital information about the job. When the technician arrives, they will consult with the custodian, to help find the specific work area. The custodian will follow up on jobs, to see what the status is on work that has not been done yet.

Covid duties

A science-based decision was made to increase the cleaning and disinfecting of public spaces to avoided COVID related hospitalizations and deaths. All schools in the province reinstated day time custodians. At that time, School District 61 was a leader. They have always had daytime custodians.

Tragically, the virus has killed millions of people worldwide. Since the beginning of the pandemic, daytime custodians have been the school districts first, front-line defense against COVID. They have worked as essential service workers, every day, to keep the schools safe. Unlike other essential service workers, they did not receive the bump in pay.

We are not through this pandemic yet. Vaccine uptake, especially among children, is not where experts would like it to be. Another variant could rise at any time. Even when we move to the endemic phase of this virus, we will still need daytime custodians to keep the community safe. We should be showing our thanks and appreciation to the daytime custodians, not talking about cutting their jobs. We believe it is disrespectful and reckless to consider this as a viable area to cut.

Conclusion

Over the years, there has been significant cuts to our workforce. Every cut has had real impacts on our ability to deliver on the goal of a safe and healthy school environment for students, staff, and visitors.

The worker ratio of 350 workers to 2 managers roughly 25 years ago has shifted to today's reality of 240 workers to 7 managers. That is just for our department. We do not know how many managers have been added to the district as a whole. The delivery of health and safety, and maintenance goals has not changed, only the ratio of workers able to address the problems has changed.

This additional management has put an undue administrative burden on our labour. Many of our workers feel frustrated by the layers of bureaucracy now involved in their work. The cost of these administrative demands is clearly proportional to our ability to deliver on our goals. Our workers take time away from their work to deal with the demands of the additional administration. These demands take workers away from their primary tasks. This cost is measurable.

It is apparent to our local, that without good faith consultation, the current management structure will result in the erosion of the work goal delivery that is in the best interests of all. We have aging infrastructure that other districts don't have. As a result, we have maintenance, safety and cleaning needs that other districts do not have.

Only workers can fix these problems. The best way to address the needs of the community is to keep our workforce strong. Any cuts to CUPE 382 will be directly felt in the classroom. Any cut to CUPE 382 will have an immediate effect on the health and safety of our communities.

We implore you to reconsider cutting daytime custodians.

With respect;
Paul Knapik
President CUPE 382

Mark Schippers

Oak Bay High School
2121 Cadboro Bay Rd
Victoria BC, V8R 5G4
(250) 598-3361 ext 24312
mschippers@sd61.bc.ca

15th March 2022

Board

Greater Victoria School District 61
556 Boleskine rd,
Victoria BC, ST V8Z 1E8

Dear Board members ,

I am writing this letter to express my concern over the proposed cuts to our career center CUPE staff. I have had the great pleasure of working for this district since 1996, during this time the career center support staff has been instrumental in supporting student exploration for careers and post secondary schooling.

Here at Oak Bay our coordinator is the organizational force behind our Dual credit programs as well as enhanced learning opportunities as she is constantly in contact with diverse groups across our city, province and even country. This contact has enriched us with numerous guest presentations and career presentations that link to the content area of my programs (Law, Social Justice and Psychology). Students have the ability to attend university and career events in our school and district due to her hard work.

To lose our career room coordinator would be a loss for both the district and students that she works with, I truly trust that you will be able to find another solution

Sincerely,



Mark Schippers, MEd.



VICTORIA
CONFEDERATION
OF
PARENT ADVISORY COUNCILS
556 BOLESKINE ROAD, VICTORIA, BC V8Z 1E8
TELEPHONE (250) 475 4193
WWW.VCPAC.CA

March 31st, 2022

Dear Chair Ryan Painter and Trustees:

Re: Required Consultation Prior to Setting the Annual Operating Budget

Through communication from the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (the "School District"), we are aware that the first reading of a bylaw intended to pass the Annual Operating Budget is to occur on April 4, 2022.

It is our understanding that the School District may only act in accordance with the authority that it has been given under its enabling legislation and the various legislative authorizations that specifically confer powers. This statutory authority must only be exercised in a manner that is consistent with the Policies and Regulations that are set by the School District. Bylaw 9220 of the School District explicitly states that the School District must comply with the adopted Administrative Regulations to ensure that it is in

compliance with the _School Act_.

The Board of School Trustees recognizes the importance of having specific and detailed instructions in writing for the guidance and decision-making of its personnel. To ensure that the administration of day-to-day matters throughout the School District are in accordance with the School Act, the Board of Trustees requires that Administrative Regulations be formulated and compiled. All regulations will be based on policy statements adopted by resolution at official Board meetings. It shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent of Schools as the Chief Executive Officer to ensure that these resolutions are carried out.

Bylaw 9220 can be found here:

<https://www.sd61.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/91/2014/12/bylaw9220.pdf>

As such, any Administrative Regulation must be complied with prior to, and during, any exercise of statutory power by the School District.

The Annual Operating Budget Policy (the "Policy") and the Annual Operating Budget Regulation (the "Regulation") are the two

Administrative Regulations that govern the exercise of authority by the School District pertaining to setting an Annual Operating Budget.

The Policy can be found here:

<https://www.sd61.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/91/2014/08/pol3501.pdf>;

and the Regulation can be found here:

<https://www.sd61.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/91/2014/08/reg3501.pdf>.

The Policy and Regulation stipulate that certain actions must occur prior to setting an Annual Operating Budget. Included in the Regulation, under sections 1.2 and 1.4, are specific directions as to how the Annual Operating Budget must be developed. For your convenience, we have reproduced sections 1.2 and 1.4 here:

1.2 The Secretary-Treasurer will develop a budget process timeline annually that will ensure that there is time for consultation with parent advisory councils, educational partner groups and the public, and that information will be provided to the Board of Education to meet a timeline that allows the Board of Education to meet the requirements of collective agreements and the Ministry of Education.

1.4 The Board of Education will invite parent advisory councils, educational partner groups as well as the general public to provide input on the budget and the proposed budget recommendations during its deliberations, and will approve the annual budget. Unless otherwise stated, the approved budget will come into effect July 1.

At this time, we are not aware of any steps that have been taken to ensure that the requirements of the Regulation have been satisfied. We therefore respectfully request that you provide us with detailed information as to how the School District has satisfied these legal requirements.

As these are legal requirements that govern the School District's use of its statutory authority, we note that any failure to comply with the Policy and Regulation would render passage of an Annual Operating Budget unlawful.

Respectfully yours,

Angela Carmichael

VCPAC President

250-2176-5534

31 March 2022

School District 61 Budget Advisory Committee

Via email: community@sd61.bc.ca

Dear Budget Advisory Committee

RE: Proposed cuts to school music programs

I am writing on behalf of Pacific Opera Victoria to express our concern about the proposed cuts to School District 61's music programs. We urge you to reconsider.

Music education is an extremely valuable resource to children and young people of all socioeconomic backgrounds. Music education should not be elitist and only available to children in families who are fortunate enough to afford private tuition.

We believe that the short-term financial gain that the proposed cuts will bring to the School District will be at the expense of the longer-term benefits that a music education will provide to Greater Victoria's youth. Music not only helps children to grow in self esteem, but it also builds essential skills such as co-operation, teamwork and patience.

The proposed cuts, which will affect a variety of music programs and other important musical initiatives, such as Pacific Opera Victoria's *Living Opera* music-based workshop program for elementary schools, will have a detrimental and lasting effect on music and culture in Victoria. Making music together is a way for children and young people to find connection, community, a sense of safety and belonging, and the joy of creating something that is larger than themselves. This is the worst time to be cutting these important programs.

By recommending not to approve these proposed cuts, which will restrict these school music programs, you will help to maintain accessibility for all young people.

Yours faithfully


Ian Rye, Chief Executive Officer

CC: School District 61 Trustees trustees@sd61.bc

CAREER CENTER COORDINATOR

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

STUDENT SUPPORTS

What's the Goal: Make meaningful connections with students with the hope of discovering their gifts and abilities as well as developing essential life skills.

- *Collaboration with school-based counselors, administration teams, inclusive education teams, and Indigenous education teams to create personalized programming for students*
- *Career Counseling advice on Course Selection and timetabling*
- *Job and education research assistance*
- *Search and connect students to job and volunteer opportunities*
- *Assistance with post-secondary self-reporting online and student transcript preparation*
- *Post-Secondary Application*
- *Attending Career Springboards, CUE events, PARTY program with students*
- *Communication with post-secondary recruiters*
- *Resume /Cover Letters/Reference Letters*
- *Interview Prep and coaching*

COMMUNICATION

What's the Goal: Providing students/parents/staff/community with relevant and meaningful information in a clear, simple and informative manner.

- *Course selection presentations at grade-wide assemblies & in classrooms*
- *Weekly Newsletter*
- *Daily Announcements*
- *Daily TV Monitor*
- *PAC Presentations*
- *Career Center Website*
- *Classroom Visits*
- *Community Connections*
- *Field Trip Events*
- *One on one parent meetings*



DISTRICT/PARTNERSHIP COURSES & PROGRAMS

What's the Goal: Seek out students with the help of staff and the district to promote opportunities that would compliment a student's personal/career interests.

Student Registration Process:

1. Post Recruitment & Pre-Program: walk students (and families) through the paperwork process (several meetings), liaise with Lindsay Johnson & Camosun/UVic, work with counselors on student timetables, arrange work experience, student follow-ups re: Student Transcript Services & Education Planner, assist with interview preparation & preparations around expectations for program.
2. During Program: check-ins, communication, and trouble-shooting with student, family, and post-secondary
3. Post-Program: liaise with Lindsay Johnson & SIS Operator regarding transcript updates

Courses & Programs

- *Springboards*
- *Dual Credit Cohorts (Camosun)*
- *Dual Credit One-Offs (Camosun)*
- *uStart*
- *AutoTech*
- *TASK*
- *Aviation*
- *TEAC 105*
- *TALE*
- *Graphic Design*
- *Seed the City*
- *Rotary Youth Leadership Conference*
- *DND – FMF CB*
- *DND – Summer Food Service Assistants*
- *Spring Break Fire Camp*

EVENTS

What's the Goal: Organize and implement events with the goal of serving students post-secondary, personal & career interests. To expose students to people and opportunities in the community and outside to help build knowledge, opportunities, and relationships.

Event Coordination Duties

Scheduling



Advertising
Student sign-up
Signage
Secure Classrooms (PSIBC) (CUE)
Transportation Arrangements
Coordinate teacher chaperones and TOC requirements with Principal
Student Attendees List Maintenance
Excuse Student Attendees
Secure Leadership student helpers
Accompany students to events

Events

- *Post-Secondary School information sessions during lunch and evening as co-facilitators*
 - *Kwantlen, Ryerson, UBC, SFU, UVic, Camosun, McGill, Queens, Western, U of T*
- *Information Sessions*
 - *HMCS Malahat, City of Victoria Fire Department, Victoria Harbourside Rotary, VIPAC group, Volunteer Victoria*
- *Post-secondary Institution & Job Fairs*
- *Springboards*
- *Canadian University Event (CUE)*
- *Mock Interviews for students with businesses from the community*
- *Bringing in career experiences: Camosun Food Truck, The Camosun Pipes Trailer*
- *Dream It Be It Conference: Designed to give girls the tools they need to achieve their education and career goals*
- *Fresh Minds Symposium -- University of Victoria*
- *Take Our Kids to Work Day*
- *P.A.R.T.Y. Program at VGH*
- *DND Marine Career Fair*
- *SD61 Career Fair*
- *Camosun College Open House*

MOVING GOALS OF SD61'S STRATEGIC PLAN FORWARDS

What's the Goal: *To help students to find their personal version of success, and to support learners' mental well-being through the accessible, flexible, meaningful, engaging, and individualized services.*

- **GOAL 1:** *Create an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support and improve all learners' personal and academic success.*
 - *Collaboration with Inclusive Education teams to create personalized programming for students with disabilities and diverse needs.*



- o Connect students with inclusive work experience and volunteer opportunities in community
- o Connect students with post-secondary employment training programs such as Pathways for Life
- **GOAL 2:** Create a culturally responsive learning environment that will support Indigenous learners' personal and academic success.
 - o Collaboration with Indigenous Education teams to create personalized programming for Indigenous students.
 - o "What's in Your Wallet?" initiative to support Indigenous student with obtaining necessary identification and status cards
- **GOAL 3:** Create an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support all learners' physical and mental well-being.
 - o Collaboration with counseling and administration teams to create personalized programming for students with anxiety in order to provide them the tools, strategies, and community connections for their confidence to grow.

MISCELLANEOUS DUTIES

- *Pathways and Partnerships Career Center Coordinators monthly meetings*
- *Post-Secondary Career Center Coordinator Meetings*
 - o *University of Victoria*
 - o *Camosun College*
 - o *U.B.C.*
- Display boards/office organization
- Guest speaker coordination and booking for CLE and CLC Classes
- Career Center space booking and tech support for various classes, peer tutoring, etc.

COMMITTEE WORK (SCHOOL SITE SPECIFIC)

- Grad Committee
- Scholarship Committee



March 9, 2022

Emma Zolbrod
2640 Dean Avenue
Victoria, BC V8R 4X6

Greater Victoria School District No. 61
556 Boleskine Rd
Victoria, BC V8Z 1E8

Dear Trustees,

RE: Career Center Coordinator Positions at SD61 High Schools

It has come to my attention that Greater Victoria School District No. 61 is considering the elimination of the Career Center Coordinator position across all SD61 high schools. I am strongly opposed to this proposal as this position is vital to providing critical support to high school students across all grades and maximizing their opportunities for diverse career and educational paths.

I currently have two students at Oak Bay High—one in grade nine and one in grade 11. Ms. Giesbrecht, who serves as the Career Center Coordinator at Oak Bay High, has provided critical information and support to my older child as he explores various post-secondary educational options. Specifically, Ms. Giesbrecht has provided essential support in the following areas:

- **Post-Secondary School Information:** Thanks to the insights that Ms. Giesbrecht has provided, my son became aware of a unique international post-secondary program that aligns perfectly with his interests and educational needs. He never would have found information about this opportunity if the Career Center Coordinator position did not exist. My son's awareness of this opportunity has motivated him to work even harder than before and has prompted him to start dreaming much bigger than he (or we!) could have ever imagined.
- **PSAT:** My son was previously unaware that he could take the PSAT in preparation for taking the SAT. The PSAT turned out to be an excellent way for him to become comfortable taking a standardized test. Again, it was Ms. Giesbrecht that made him aware of this opportunity.
- **SAT:** Ms. Giesbrecht shared valuable information about locally available SAT preparation courses. Such courses are a key part of a student's study plan, especially since the content of the SAT is skewed towards the American educational system.

Moving forward, my son plans to leverage Ms. Giesbrecht's assistance in the following areas:

- **Post-Secondary Applications:** The application process for my son's target universities is complex and involved. He plans to tap into Ms. Giesbrecht's in-depth knowledge in this area in an effort to maximize his chance for admission to his four target schools, including one that only accepts 45 students per year. Without Ms. Giesbrecht's support, the likelihood of admission for my son would drop dramatically as he would not have the guidance or

expertise needed to find unique ways to differentiate himself from thousands of other applicants. The one-on-one support that Ms. Giesbrecht will provide will be essential to my son's success, as a 'one-size fits all' approach to applications is ineffective.

- **Mock interviews:** Part of the admissions process for my son's target schools will involve interviews with the Admissions Committee. This high-pressure situation requires intensive preparation and training, both of which will be provided by Ms. Giesbrecht through her one-on-one support.

Looking ahead, my hope is that my daughter, now in grade nine, will be afforded the same opportunities as her brother when it comes to benefiting from the assistance of Oak Bay High's Career Center Coordinator, Ms. Giesbrecht.

Although one could argue that school counselors might be able to disseminate high-level information about post-secondary options, they lack the critical in-depth knowledge as well as the time required for one-on-one advice. Moreover, school counselors time should be focused on the mental well-being of the students, especially as the students struggle to navigate not only the challenges of high school, but also the stress of COVID and global unrest.

One could also argue that this position is less important in schools where the percentage of students pursuing post-secondary education is low. However, I would counter that argument as it is quite possible that these are the students who need the support the most. These students are less likely to have people at home who have pursued post-secondary education. Moreover, these teens are the ones could benefit greatly from information about different educational options, as well as career options. By eliminating this position, the district is potentially limiting the opportunities that these students to explore, and this could have a lifelong impact on both their professional and personal growth.

From my perspective, the goal of educators is to prepare students for life after high school, and this life can take different forms for different people. By eliminating the Career Center Coordinator position, the District will be making a conscious decision to reduce students' exposure to the opportunities that exist beyond the walls of their high school, home, and city. Leaving these students to their own devices—or to individuals who do not have the appropriate level of training and knowledge—is not only short-sighted, but also completely unacceptable.

I implore you, the Trustees, to make the right decision and maintain the Career Center Coordinator position across all SD61 high schools, so that students across the district can maximize their potential.

Regards,

Emma Zolbrod

SD61 Secondary School Principal

Notes on Impact of Career Center Coordinators

Career Centre Coordinators In general:

- Make connections between the school and community
- Assist the career teachers and other staff to help the career curriculum
- Organize and support events that encourage students to explore their passion
- Connection with post-secondary institutes
- Etc....

Admin Team:

- The CCC position allows for continuous student access throughout the day to explore various school, District and community career options.
- The CCC position supports the need to diversify the educational and career paths of our learners.
- The position aligns with Ministry mandates that include dual credit offerings and without this position finding and advocating for our students with so many offerings may not be possible.
- As we make our way through COVID finding employment for our students and making those connections to future employers has never been so important as now.
- Our Career Center Coordinator has been such a driven individual that not only has a connection to the students but to the school and community. Our numbers in all facets of careers are at their highest participation rates in years.

Our School's Career Center Coordinator:

- Due to CCC's master's degree education, has knowledge and expertise with post-secondary
- Has worked in the community as a Scout Canada and Girls Guide Commissioner and Leader and has many contacts. We rely on the contacts we have developed for the networking for our students
- Previously worked in the Inclusive Ed department, coached basketball with the school
- Has developed a connection with the student population before becoming CCC and uses this as an advantage to understand the needs of the student
- Advocates for all students but takes a special interest in those that require additional support, takes in to account various learning needs, underprivileged students, first nations.
- Has only been in the position for 4 months but has already made an impact
- Recognizes that Pathways and Partnerships is exactly what it means. Students are not expected to work alone in this world and the CCC works as a team member with the Career Teacher, support staff, parents and administration to find student success.
- Examples include:
 1. Transforming a new Career Centre into a place that is welcoming and resembles a professional atmosphere conducive to future careers.
 2. Eager to learn all the new opportunities that are available to students and finds multiple avenues to let students and parent know how to access them, such as newsletters, website, announcements, giving presentations to various classes, "tapping" kids on the shoulder, discussions with teachers, counsellors, administration.
 3. Spends quality time with students that are having emotional difficulties when applying for post-secondary.

4. Has implemented virtual mentoring sessions for students with career prospects and post-secondary institutions
5. Thoughtful consideration of location of work experience placements on how convenient it is to the student's home.
6. Has increased the number of trades students going out on work experience knowing that if they move forward with this as a career pathway, funds will be generated to go back into the programs at Spectrum.
7. Helping a refugee young lady achieve her goal of working with children and applying for a program at Camosun College that could be sponsored to become an Early Learning Care worker. Once the student was accepted we were informed that the birthdate on her Permanent Resident Card was incorrect. Our Career Center Coordinator spent many hours and days with Immigration Canada trying to sort this out. The process was long but our Career Center Coordinator devoted 100% to the cause.
8. Attempting to find a job shadow for a high achieving student that is bored with school. She has called around the city to find an engineer willing to mentor this student for a day (only one example of job shadow opportunity).

Dear Trustees,

We oppose the proposed savings which would reduce 8.0 FTE School Counsellors from our district, restoring student-counsellor ratios to 693:1.

The proposed budget changes would:

- reduce accessibility of qualified mental healthcare for children and families in the middle of a mental health crisis,
- have the greatest negative impact on children and families who cannot access mental healthcare (due to lack of finances/transportation, social injustice, etc.),
- shift the responsibility for child mental health crises in the school (e.g. imminent suicide, self-harm risk) to other school staff (e.g. EAs, Teachers, Administrators)

School Counsellors have a unique role and scope of practice in the schools. They are both BC Certified Teachers and mental health professionals with a master's degree in counselling psychology or a related subject. School Counsellors weave between many complex situations from classroom-based work to individual counselling, to collaboration with teams of educators, to crisis intervention, to sitting with families to find appropriate referrals to mental health services.

Because School Counsellors are Teachers as well as mental health professionals, they are uniquely well-suited to the co-ordination and delivery of mental health literacy, mental health promotion, trauma-informed practice, and social and emotional learning (SEL) programs within the schools. This aligns with the Ministry of Education's Mental Health in Schools Strategy and the increased focus on these areas in the BC Curriculum.

School Counsellors also serve the school staff and the family community through collaboration and education on topics such as anxiety, grief and loss, and trauma.

The proposed budget changes would see a reduction in all services provided by School Counsellors. These impacts may include:

- reduced individual and group counselling for students
- reduced risk assessment for self-harm, suicide, abuse, and neglect for students

- reduced case detection and early intervention for students showing signs of pediatric mental illness
- reduced classroom-based mental health literacy, mental health promotion, and social and emotional learning lessons for students and school staff
- reduced referrals for families to mental health supports
- reduced collaboration with, and support for, school staff
- reduced mental health promotion activities for school staff and families (e.g. trauma-informed practice, grief and loss workshops)
- reduced availability of the School Counsellor for crisis intervention (e.g. death of student or staff, suicide, traumatic incidents, violence)
- reduced co-ordination of school-based services with community-based services such as Child & Youth Mental Health

We are in the middle of a mental health crisis. Right now, our children need more access to mental health services, not less. Before the COVID-19 pandemic began, research in the BC school system had already identified anxiety, depression, self-harm, suicidal ideation, and trauma as main areas of concern (source). Now, two years into the pandemic, two-thirds of children are struggling with their mental health (source), with significant increases in anxiety and depression and serious consideration of suicide (source).

Access to qualified mental healthcare is low, with roughly three quarters of Canadian children with a mental illness not receiving adequate treatment (source, source). School Counsellors are the most accessible and most equitable mental health service for children. All children can access a School Counsellor, regardless of their background, socioeconomic status, or any other characteristic. Therefore, the very presence of School Counsellors is a social justice issue.

The proposed budget changes would increase student-school counsellor ratios and thereby significantly reduce the accessibility of qualified mental healthcare to our students. These proposed changes come in the middle of a mental health crisis, two years into a pandemic, and two years after the beginning of war in Ukraine. Families are stressed, children are suffering, and access to mental healthcare is at risk.

The Swahili proverb “it takes a whole village to raise one child,” is truer now than ever. It is the responsibility of all school staff to work together to protect the wellbeing

of our students, and to help them learn and grow. School Counsellors are an essential member of the village, who balance both teaching and mental health services. The services that School Counsellors provide are essential to the mental health and wellbeing of students, families, school staff, and communities. Reductions will reduce their ability to provide these services.

We request that the current FTE for School Counsellors be retained in the 2022-2023 school year.

CAREER CENTER COORDINATOR **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

STUDENT SUPPORTS

What's the Goal: Make meaningful connections with students with the hope of discovering their gifts and abilities as well as developing essential life skills.

- Job Opportunities/Search
- Volunteer Finder
- Resume /Cover Letters for students who took CLE on line
- Post-Secondary Application assistance and STS support
- Interview Prep and Coaching
- Timetable Help
- Career Counseling advice on Course Selection
- One on one mental health support
- Attending Career springboards, CUE events, P.A.R.T.Y. program at VGH with students
- Supervision in the Career Centre
- Post-Secondary research for all Grades
- Assisting students with district career applications: UVic ustart, South Island Partnership Dual Credit Courses/Programs, Graphic Design, Aviation, T.A.S.K., T.A.L.E

CLE/CLC Support

- Schedule Guest Speakers (10-12/semester)
- Coordinate P.A.R.T.Y. program with V.I.H.A. (bus transportation, payments)
- Speak to classes about upcoming/ongoing opportunities
- Support the Grad Gallery
- Answer CLC assignment questions

Counsellor Support

- Counsellors send students for academic counselling, post secondary research, and problems with transcripts and application errors

COMMUNICATION

What's the Goal: Providing Students/Parents/Staff/Community with relevant and meaningful information in a clear, simple and informative manner.

- Bi monthly parent newsletter
- Organize, display, update – bulletin boards, posters,
- Connect with teachers (scholarship, math, science, CLE, trades, inclusive ed) about targeted opportunities for their students
- Daily Announcements

- Daily TV Monitor
- Career Center Website—design and content
- Classroom visits to CLE to promote Career initiatives
- One on one parent meetings
- Hosting and creating presentations: Volunteering for International students, Ustart Info meeting, and Aviation
- Cohosting evening sessions with parents/students with UVic: “How to Succeed and Thrive in First-Year University,” “Self Reporting 101” and “Making the Transition to Post-Secondary”
- Updated all Career course selection slides for the Mt. Doug website
- Attendance at all Career Centre Coordinator monthly meeting with Career teachers and Careers District VP. Updates to Career Teachers
- Attendance at all UVic, U of T, UBC, McGill and Camosun counsellor conferences/meetings sessions: taking notes and giving them to Career teachers and counsellors
- Booking the Career Centre for all teachers/admin
- Answer enquiries from Mt Doug info email

District/Partnership Courses & Programs

What’s the Goal: Seek out Students with the help of Staff and the District to promote opportunities that would compliment a student’s personal/career interests.

Student Registration Process:

1. Post Recruitment & Pre-Program: walk students (and families) through the paperwork process (several meetings), liaise with Lindsay Johnson & Camosun/UVic, work with counselors on student timetable, arrange work experience, student follow-ups re: Student Transcript Services & Education Planner, assist with interview preparation & preparations around expectations for program.
2. During Program: check-ins, communication, and trouble-shooting with student, family, and post-secondary
3. Post-Program: liaise with Lindsay Johnson & SIS Operator regarding transcript updates

- Springboards
- Dual Credit One-Offs (Camosun)
- uStart
- AutoTech
- TASK
- Aviation
- TEAC 105
- TALE
- Graphic Design
- Seed the City
- Firefighting Camp

EVENTS

What's the Goal: Organize and implement events with the goal of serving students post-secondary, personal & Career interests. To expose students to people and opportunities in the community and outside to help build Knowledge/Opportunities /Relationships

- Post-Secondary School information sessions during lunch and evening as co-facilitators
- Events (PSI & Job Fairs & Springboards)
- Canadian University Event (CUE)
- Co-ordinated Mock Interviews with 120 students and 24 businesses from the community two times a year
- Bringing in Career experiences: Camosun Food Truck, The Camosun Pipes Trailer
- Co-hosting SD61 Career Fair
- Recruiting and coordinating lunch speakers: UVic, Camosun, Indigenous Education Fair, University of Calgary, University of Alberta, Western University, Simon Fraser, McGill, Gustavson School of Business, UBC, High Tech U, Dalhousie, Volunteer Victoria, Latitude Global volunteering
- Assisting with photography for the Grad Gallery (CLC)
- Organized the The Empress Career Fair
- Co-facilitated Dream It Be It Conference: Designed to give girls the tools they need to achieve their education and career goals

MOVING GOALS OF SD61'S STRATEGIC PLAN FORWARDS

What's the Goal: To help students to find their personal version of success, and to support learners' mental well-being through the accessible, flexible, meaningful, engaging, and individualized services.

- GOAL 1: Create an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support and improve all learners' personal and academic success.
 - Collaboration with Inclusive Education teams to create personalized program for students with disabilities and diverse needs.
 - Connect students with inclusive work experience and volunteer opportunities in community
 - Connect students with post-secondary employment training programs such as Pathways for Life
- GOAL 2: Create a culturally responsive learning environment that will support Indigenous learners' personal and academic success.
 - Collaboration with Indigenous Education teams to create personalized programming for Indigenous students.

- GOAL 3: Create an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support all learners' physical and mental well-being.
 - Collaboration with Counseling and Administration teams to create personalized programming for students with anxiety in order to provide them the tools, strategies, and community connections for their confidence to grow.

Misc. Duties

- Display Boards/Office Organization
- Liaise with teachers to set up the physical space for PE curriculum (Sex Education, Mental Health Sessions) and for Peer Tutoring, Math Challenges. Setting up tech and troubleshooting tech problems.
- Transportation arrangements for out of school events
- Secure leadership student helpers
- Scheduling all speakers for CLE classes
- Attending Graduations and handing out awards
- Filing applications. Updating applications quarterly
- Attendance at Career Centre Coordinators monthly meetings

Office of the Secretary-Treasurer

Kim Morris - Secretary Treasurer

TO: Board of Education
FROM: Kim Morris
RE: Budget Engagement
DATE: April 4, 2022

The purpose of this memo is to provide the Board of Education a summary of 2022-2023 Annual Budget engagement efforts.

The 2022-2023 budget process was approved by the Board on October 25, 2021 and a subsequent media release was issued October 27, 2021.

The 31-member Budget Advisory Committee was formed, and met for the first time on November 15, 2021. The Committee met 7 times during the budget process.

In addition to committee agendas, minutes and meeting materials available on the District website <https://www.sd61.bc.ca/our-district/financial/>, verbal updates on the 2022-2023 budget were provided by the Secretary-Treasurer at monthly Operations Policy & Planning Committee meetings, as well as written updates in the Secretary-Treasurer's reports to the Board at Regular Open Board meetings.

Additional engagement efforts included:

- Budget infographic posted to website
- Talking Tables, held via zoom on November 18, 2021 57 Participants
- Public Budget meeting held in person on March 10, 2022 65 Participants
- Student ThoughtExchange, conducted March, 2022 310 Participants
<https://my.thoughtexchange.com/report/4d13686a23dc7b11e495586c15f23e3c>

Infographic, Talking Tables report and public budget meeting presentation can also be found on the District's financial webpage at <https://www.sd61.bc.ca/our-district/financial/>.

At the March 10, 2022 public budget meeting, participants were asked to provide input on savings and asks considerations and risk. Participants submitted comment cards and option creation templates.

The comment card summary is attached for information (Appendix A).

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.

A summary report of asks/savings considerations from March 10, 2022 is also attached for information indicating the number of times a participant listed a particular ask or savings on their option creation templates (Appendix B).

A budget feedback period was open from March 10, 2022 to April 1, 2022.

The submissions received during the feedback period to April 1, 2022 noon are included in this report (Appendix C). Additional feedback received between noon and 4 pm on April 1, 2022 will be collated as a handout and provided on Monday, April 4th.

Special thanks to Budget Advisory Committee members led by Committee Chair Duncan, the Financial Services team led by Katrina Stride and Julie Lutner, and Communications Manager Lisa McPhail for their efforts to make the budget 2022-2023 process informative, progressive and transparent. Thank you to infrastructure departments and District team for their presentations and follow up FAQs to orient the Committee to the District's financial position.

Recommendation:

None. Information only.

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.

March 10, 2022 Public Budget Meeting

Feedback

Cost Reductions:

Financial modeling?

Why not build % efficiency?

Comparables – with other school boards

Shift the focus from cost-cutting to innovative approaches to create new revenue streams. E.g. SD's with large tracts of open and/or forested/vegetate land. Could generate revenue by selling carbon credits.

Treat the organization as an integrated part of community whole – e.g. If a SD has natural assets that could serve as natural infrastructure sites and then collaborate with municipalities by offering them opportunity to serve on infrastructure services by leasing natural asset sites from School District. In other words – leverage your natural assets rather than divesting yourself of them. Extend this notion to all assets: physical, human, technological etc.

Approve:

Communication Assistant – on-going

EA Recruitment & Retention

EA Professional Learning Support

EA to 30 hours/week

All Info Tech asks

Review exempt, administration staff costs for savings

Encourage all areas to look for efficiencies i.e. a 2% cut across the board

Petition/lobby government for more funding through increasing school taxes

Are there savings by concentrating French immersion and/or other program areas at specific schools through bussing?

Can technology enable middle long-term savings? I.e. move to laptops from desktops.

Are there costs (i.e. such as a lunch program) that could be self-funded or community funded?

Could you hire a consultant to review all costs to identify possible savings?

Publicize foundation; do you have endowments?

Class size savings

Is UVic an opportunity for a teaching school e.g. University Elementary in Calgary?

Find and Elon Musk or Bill Gates to vie a onetime gift (smiley face)

PLEASE do not sell off land to balance budgets. Once the land is gone, it can't be brought back. If necessary, lease it but only as a last, last resort. This area is densifying, population growing, green space and natural areas increasingly disappearing, and in a climate emergency they must be saved!

If Admin were to lead by example, our 33 page “Public Meeting: Budget 2022-2023” document would be 3 pages of black and white, in 12 point.

Schools’ reserve funds should be held at the District level.

Funds spend on Indigenous Goal 2, might be reduced by 90%, with the savings used to hire actual Indigenous coaches or liaison who could work with individual Indigenous students who need individual support/counselling/tutoring/bus tickets etc.

Could school generate revenue streams? E.g. Horticultural school classes sell plants, commercial foods classes selling to Seniors, Technology classes operating sign company.

Reduce Admin costs wherever possible. At district and schools.

Tonight’s exercise was interesting but highly inefficient. I do not know what to suggest to make it meaningful and efficient.

Willing to take on risk (budget for the \$2m in June to make it easier to support staffing in September 2022

Our guiding principles: Reducing direct impacts to students

We didn’t like the request to offer all Education Assistants at 30 hours/week at this time.

Focus on keeping counsellors over Education Assistants

Accessibility

Safety

Importance of custodians (custodian 2’s)

** Elementary

Save \$250,000 in custodian

7-9 am grounds – 2 people; when you’re absent – fill in

Rentals back – for revenue – Saanich Parks

Don’t cut daytime custodians

More summer programming – increase rental revenues

ISP will bring in more \$\$

Don’t cut Career Centre Coordinators – they create revenue while helping students

Responsible for all dual credit registrations, courses and programs

We need more info on Special Advisors fees and Legal fees; and a spend over years

No to counselling cuts during a covid complicated mental health crisis.

Can we have a tally of all the “Peter to pay Paul” in the Board minutes instead of Bxxx (can’t read writing)

NO MORE ANTI-RACISM courses for the Board or Senior Admin. It should come out of their own pockets

Our students will not benefit from taking supports out of the schools. If anything, we need more people supporting these vulnerable populations. Our district is very top heavy – and there is a disconnect between the way the top makes decisions for those of us at the bottom in direct service delivery. This is

a mental health crisis. Counselling is not disposable. Please engage our government and advocate for our students and staff.

Budget cut questions with multiple choice answers should be sent(?) to every district employee. Take the pulse of the folds who work directly with and for the students – front line staff. Upper management / directors / associate superintendents make too much money.

The option to cut SA3's to 10.5 or 11 months needs to be re-thought.

Most employees in this position will have 10+ years' service for vacation purposes and this would need to be paid out regardless. Doesn't seem like a savings at all.

SADE take place in July – need SA3's in schools.

A ton of work takes place in the start and end of the year. Not at all realistic to cut these jobs. School would be in chaos when students and parents show up.

Counsellor cutbacks are not a good suggestion. More than ever we need counselling in this anxious time.

The District is too top heavy and many of the cuts look at the little guy. Unfortunate.

SAA3's don't work a 40-hour week.

We may not have enough clerical support in the office and have continuous interruptions.

We frequently work overtime to get work completed in a timely manner

Have you calculated the cost of paying overtime compared to time in lieu, taken in the summer?

Ministry demands (SADE) does not open until after July 2nd.

Remove strings from elementary & ukulele

Remove strings from middle

Cut collaboration time by 75%

Cut custodians to 1/3

Office staff – cut summer hours out

Cut Reading Recovery

Cut French

Reduce school supply allocation

Reduce Education Assistant Relief budget

Reduce Human Resources position

Reduce student & parent education fund

Cut Enrolment Projection Contract

Cut ThoughtExchange

Cut 1 VP from small schools

Cut Director of Facilities (lower hours)

Counselling – Career Coordinators do a lot of academic counselling and take the load off counsellors and mental health supports – we need this.

The Career Coordinator spends most of the time with students one on one – accompanies students to career exploration – don't cut!

Why aren't career teacher hours being cut?

Their non-teaching time can be cut – the Career Coordinator does the same job for less salary

Keep: Band middle; strings middle

Combine: Topics – liberal arts, career Dxxxxxx (?), counsellors

Cut:

Elementary Strings

Ukulele

Advisor at Board Office

Summer clerical

Change management (?)

French Immersion

School supply allocation

Education assistant relief fund

Reading Recovery coordinator

Human Resources position

Student & Parent Education Fund

Enrolment Projection Contractor

VP at small school

Move: Counsellors to CommunityLINK

Cutting one associate superintendent accounts for 60% of all 7 career coordinators' salaries

Decrease middle and secondary daytime custodians by 25% less for each

Cut 1 Assistant Manager

Elementary Strings

ThoughtExchange

Counsellor reduction to maximum collective agreement ratio as one-time instead of on-going

Reason: This will give time until new agreement is made and better utilize the resources elsewhere.

Children facing mental health issues generally 15% ; the impact of COVID19 on children has increased this % to 66%; now is no the time to remove mental health supports, such as counsellors, for children.

Proposed cuts to school counsellors brought to meeting; 32 years working with mental health; shocked;

Goal 3 for mental health of students; savings not in alignment with goal.

Teacher counsellors well trained, able to support teachers, early intervention opportunities in schools (Prevention form progression to clinical care).

75% of kids with mental health issues not getting any treatment

Removing counsellors will put extra pressure on teachers

2 vacant counsellors – understand; additional 8 counsellors doesn't make sense

Use risk/reserves for this “rainy day” item (counsellors)

Some other voices loud and organized well e.g. music; parents/families dealing with mental health are “surviving”.

Consider what is critical, e.g. basic vs enriched; what is basic support needed?

Same with music – exposure vs enriched.

Mental health last thing cut (teacher counsellors)

Worried replacing teacher counsellor with Youth & Family Counsellors because teacher, not same supports/training (YFC more support worker)

Child welfare has Youth & Family Counselor support available; not needed; can get the YFC supports elsewhere

Save teacher counsellors; reduce YFC instead (YFC extra, not core)

My son has already received his late French acceptance letter and is going into the same school as his brother. He and us as parents are distressed to see late French on the list of cuts.

The public would like to have further information/workshop opportunities prior to the April 7 reading of the budget.

We need to be given a complete breakdown of what these items mean or the ability to ask questions of the Board at length. E.g. snow plows and other transportation requests. No explanation of why this is a consideration.

Could the snow plows be considered a capital cost as well as technology asks?

2 post hoist for Cecilia?

What we need to do is present an option to provide feedback on the impact of each of these proposed cuts in a publicly available forum. Preferably available on line. A simple email address would suffice.

The feedback form the experts in each area of impact needs to be made available with the descriptions of the cuts so parents and trustees are aware of the true impact of each cut.

Snow plow and technology should be capital

We are still in a global pandemic “rainy day”. Start with the minimum resource possible. Don’t strive to take funding from today’s rainy day for tomorrow’s sunny day.

Start with “stuff”, the cut “admin”. Keep cuts away from kids.

Asks that are UNfavourable:

Transportation – snow plow

Info Tech – can some of this be pulled form capital? Extend educator laptops – if classroom PC’s are working leave them for a couple more years

Maintenance – mechanical and grounds are asking for huge increases

Transportation – 2-post hoist for Cecilia – can a grant be applied for?

ITL – Continued investment – student tech tools to capital.

Do we really need more tech?

MUSIC BEFORE TECH

Not able to do this year: Education Assistants to 30 hours/week

Savings that are Unacceptable

Middle band and strings

Elementary strings

District Ukulele

Daytime custodians at all levels

Counsellor reduction to minimum collective agreement ratio

Career Centre Coordinators at Secondary

French Immersion class reduction

Savings that would be FAVOURABLE

Board office and facilities Associate Superintendent & Assistant Manager

Reduction of staffing suggestions during summer months: Clerical and School Technologists

PVP at Tolmie

Education Assistant relief

School Supply allocation

ThoughtExchange

Savings not acceptable:

Elementary strings

District Ukulele

Middle School Band and Strings

Use surplus to get through this time

Counsellors are essential but where funding comes from is less important

Savings that are ACCEPTABLE:

Reduce clerical and school tech summer months

Reduce Associate Superintendent – this alone is almost equivalent to Elementary strings

I would rather support opportunities for 100's of students

Reduce Assistant Manager

Reduce VP's at small schools

Reduce school supply allocation

Cutting collaboration time to equalize it all schools. Give small schools less time to be similar to larger schools

Can we ask for the gifted programs to be reinstated?

We get so little snow so we don't need another snow plow or salter

I am an EA- making 30 hours/week would work for a few but many work a second job so it would not work for all. 30 hours/week is still not enough and many EA's would rather work the fewer hours and a second job.

Can tech be considered capital? Can snow plows?

No asks

All cuts except music and French Immersion

Please keep French Immersion class. It is very important for these families whose first language is not English or French. The late French Immersion class really helps our kids to have a chance to learn French at Arbutus Middle School. The teacher is amazing and she creates incentive for my daughter to learn French and basically everything!

Please keep middle band and strings program. The teachers at Arbutus Middle are so good. The band and strings program are the most interesting thing at school to my daughter. She is practicing so hard in her instruments and practices every day! And she makes friends which help kids develop social and interpersonal skills. Do more fundraising events. Parents will support!

In Elementary and Middle schools please consider more mathematics education programs to strengthen our kids' math skill and prepare them for future study in high schools and colleges. Currently math education is lack of consistency and make it difficult for the kids to catch the learning curve in high school and college.

If you have to cut the music program please partially cut, not the whole program!

And find volunteers if you lay off FTE's

I am against any cuts to music. This includes band and strings. I want all children to have equal access to continued music education, especially the ones who cannot afford private lessons. I would like to see the ask of making strings equal (about) for all Elementary schools.

Why can we not have high school or middle school students peer/mentor reading programs to help boost elementary and middle school literacy (and numeracy)? Teaching helps students to learn the skills themselves so this would be a low cost way to help struggling readers and older students. I think this would build more community connections and build teaching and mentorship skills, as well as help readers who need help.

Can we increase our facility rental presence? I imagine that we could increase revenue by having more awareness of rental options.

It would be great to add that VP Admin time back to schools. Our elementary school VP has changed 3x over the last 1.5 years so something needs to change there. The VP at our school tirelessly coaxes crying children who refuse to enter the building every morning.

Please keep middle school band.

I'm against cutting funding for middle school band and strings. I'm also concerned about French Immersion class reduction. I support the addition of strings at all Elementary schools.

In regards to so many students needing extra reading support: I question what is wrong with the curriculum when so many are falling behind? Maybe the teachers should be spending more time on the basics in the classroom.

There are a lot of asks for new Transportation equipment.

I don't support added technology in the classrooms. I feel strongly about screen-free learning.

Priority given to keeping YFC's; mental health is at an all time high in students, and burnout is high in teachers. The support of YFC's is essential; if their time is reduced I am concerned for student safety and teacher retention, especially in this time of so many teachers leaving the job.

ASKS for consideration - OPERATING

March 10, 2022 Public Budget Meeting

Incidents of Agreement Based on worksheets/templates gathered.

Does not incorporate "We are listening" comment cards

Blank=Participant agreed with amount

"Fixed"=Participant agreed with amount

"Variable"=Participant agreed but suggested a lesser amount

	Option	Description	Cost or Savings	Amount	Incidents of Agreement		On-going	One Time	Fixed (F)/Variable (V)	Impact
1	Education Assistants to 30 hours/week	Currently Education Assistants work various hours/week aligned to student need during school hours. One neighbouring school district offers 30 hours/week to all of its Education Assistants	Cost	\$ 1,367,723	2	1 Fixed 1 Variable	X		V	May assist with livable wage for part time employees, recruitment and retention, childcare services moving from MCFD to Ministry of Education, provides EA time "beyond the bell" for collaboration, meeting attendance and other before and after school opportunities.
20	Communications Assistant	Addition of one staff member to support Communications Manager. Improves accountability and transparency for public.	Cost	\$ 68,000	2		X		V	Addition of one staff to support Communications Manager; currently a one-person department in an organization serving 20,000+ students with 3,000+ employees. The role will support internal/external functions, such as providing timely information, assisting with a volume of community enquiries and consultative initiatives. The vision is to further increase accessibility and transparency in a highly engaged learning community.
5	Elementary Schools	Add 0.10 FTE VP Admin Time across the 28 Elementary Schools, to lead learning and assist the principal.	Cost	\$ 326,340	1		X		V	Provides a little time in the day (Elementary VP's teach full-time or close to full-time) for the Vice-Principal to connect with students they are supporting and to collaborate with colleagues. Enables the VP to work alongside the Principal during meetings during the day, which is an important in the support/mentorship relationship to develop future Principals
9	Strings at all Elementary	Addition of 1.57 FTE Teachers to 13 Elementary Schools so that all elementary schools have equal (give or take) strings program	Cost	\$ 181,429	1		X		V	Strings available at all elementary schools but still only to some students at each school
13	Indigenous Education	Teacher & CUPE 947 Indigenous Staffing Support. Addresses Literacy, Numeracy and Completion rates.	Cost	\$ 136,349	1		X		V	Addresses FSA/Completion rates data
17	Transportation	Dump Truck to replace a 1998 GMC	Cost	\$ 100,000	1			X	F	Replaces unreliable vehicle in the fleet. Saves approximately \$10k annually to keep roadworthy. Reliable vehicle for employee safety and security.
26	Learning Support	Accessibility Budget - installation of ramps, elevators and other accessibility elements in schools	Cost	\$ 50,000	1		X		V	Some students will not be able to access the school or some spaces in schools due to lack of ramps, elevators and other accessibility elements of schools. Some schools do not meet accessibility standards.
31	Human Resources	Recruitment & Retention: Education Assistant Professional Learning Support. Opportunities for paid professional development benefits the employee professionally.	Cost	\$ 30,000	1		X		V	Retention of EAs has been a concern. The number of hours the district offers does not always provide a living wage. Opportunities for paid professional development not only benefits the employee financially but also professionally. This impacts the level of service provided to students.
33	Human Resources	Recruitment & Retention: Education Assistant Advertising. Advertising campaigns are necessary for the recruitment process.	Cost	\$ 20,000	1		X		V	Advertising campaigns are necessary for the recruitment process. The demand in schools for Educational Assistants and replacements has been an on-going concern. Without adequate spareboard employees to fill day to day vacancies and qualified employees to fill specialty vacancies services will be reduced for some students.
38	Human Resources	Increase HR Systems Specialist - Records from 11 month employee to 12 month employee for coverage over summer and workload support.	Cost	\$ 9,337	1		X		V	Work has historically been done in 11 months; in deficit years can continue?
40	Information Technology for Learning	eLibrary Websites Maintenance	Cost	\$ 3,320	1			X	V	Sustain and update the elibrary initiative that feeds into every school website (see https://elibrary.sd61.bc.ca for example).

SAVINGS for consideration - OPERATING

March 10, 2022 Public Budget Meeting

Incidents of Agreement Based on worksheets/templates gathered.

Does not incorporate "We are listening" comment cards

Blank=Participant agreed with amount

"Fixed"=Participant agreed with amount

"Variable"=Participant agreed but suggested a lesser amount

	Option	Description	Cost or Savings	Amount	Incidents of Agreement		On-going	One Time	Fixed (F)/Variable(V)	Impact
24	ThoughtExchange On-line Engagement Tool	Eliminates a software app used for engagement.	Savings:	\$ 26,064	11		X		F	One less tool for community engagement; low impact.
11	Elementary Strings	Reduces 1.81 FTE Teachers.	Savings:	\$ 208,817	10	9 Fixed/1 Variable	X		V	Students in 15 out of 28 elementary schools will no longer receive strings programming. Reduces inequity within the District as only some schools (15) offer strings.
6	Collaboration Time	Reduces the TTOC budget to release teachers or Vice-Principals for collaboration regarding school goals and FESL.	Savings:	\$ 559,418	10	8 Fixed/2 Variable	X		V	Impact to capacity building and school goal implementation and Principal's discretion to release teachers for this work
20	Reduction of Human Resources 1.0 FTE	Reduces 1 employee from Human Resources department	Savings	\$ 66,945	9		X		V	CUPE 947 assignments would need to be restructured and the workload for existing CUPE 947 employees would increase. Payroll may be affected regarding information accuracy and/or timeliness. This also will impact CUPE 947 Professional Development services unless time is moved to another department (any time allotted for CUPE 947 Pro D. will reduce the savings)
9	Counsellor Reduction Based on Historical Vacancy Trends	The District consistently has 0.8 FTE Counsellors that are budgeted but are not filled due to the lack of qualified applicants.	Savings:	\$ 92,448	9		X		V	If this staffing was reduced, the District would still meet its collective agreement obligations. Mental health and well-being is goal three of the strategic plan. The District is emerging from a 2 year pandemic where students have faced mental health issues. With reduced counselling service, students may not receive the mental health supports they require. Already happening with inability to fill 2 FTE positions.
16	Principal or Vice-Principal in District Team (Tolmie)	Reduces 1 FTE P or VP at Tolmie	Savings:	\$ 150,174	9		X		V	Schools requiring District supports would have longer wait times; referrals and designations would be impacted by slower response and fewer potential designations.
10	Board Office & Facilities	Reduces 1 Associate Superintendent	Savings	\$ 209,794	9	8 Fixed/1 Variable	X		V	School Administration will have reduced access to a direct supervisor. Levelled meetings may not occur as regularly as current practice. District initiatives will be impacted.
28	Student and Parent Education Funds	Eliminates two services and supplies line items; one for PAC learning opportunities; one for student learning opportunities.	Savings:	\$ 11,000	7		X		V	Reduces opportunity for the development of parent/student driven initiatives
27	Enrolment Projection Contractor	SD61 uses three sources of expertise: Baragar, a local contractor and Board Office staff. This item contemplates eliminating the local contractor.	Savings:	\$ 15,043	7		X		F	Small potential impact on triangulation and accuracy of projection data; increased workload for staff
22	Reading Recovery Coordinator contract	Eliminates the District's contribution to the Reading Recovery coordinator's position	Savings:	\$ 73,525	7		X		V	It would be challenging for the three remaining Reading Recovery Schools to offer Reading Recovery given the reduction in coordinator time and discussion in partner districts relative to the coordinator position.
15	Clerical Staff from 12 months to 10.5 months/year	Reduces clerical staff during summer months.	Savings:	\$ 180,139	7		X		V	May impact summer work and recruitment and retention of qualified personnel. More staff may be required at times during regular months due to increased workload.
5	Education Assistant Relief Budget	Trending shows a savings in EA relief budgets. This item contemplates not budgeting full replacement of EA's based on trending historical data.	Savings	\$ 620,000	7		X		V	Already occurs; impacts to students with disabilities and exceptional needs
17	French Immersion Class Reduction	Late French Immersion: 1.0 FTE Grade 6 Late French Immersion Teacher reduction at middle school due to low enrolment. Historically we have kept the class but could be reduced from 5 schools to 4 schools in 2022 -2023. The students from the 5 grade 6 LFI schools would all attend at the remaining 4 schools with Grade 6 LFI FRIM.	Savings:	\$ 130,005	6			X	F	Some students would be displaced from one class and reassigned to the remaining 4 locations for FRIM in the District
3	Reduction in 22-23 School Supply Allocation	SD61 schools have carried forward between \$1.7m and \$1.8m in the 20-21, 19-20 and 18-19 school years.	Savings	\$ 800,000	6	5 Fixed/1 Variable		X	V	Low impact to all students. One year only; would reinstate or implement recommendations from District Allocation Working Group in 2023-2024 and 2024-2025.
18	Board Office & Facilities	Reduces 1 Assistant Manager	Savings	\$ 105,268	5		X		V	Inability to implement replacement plans, standards, certification programs and environmental initiatives. Employee performance management would be reduced. Developing new revenue streams would be limited.
1	Middle Band and Strings	Reduces 11.03 Teacher FTE. Eliminates middle school music because not funded by block funding.	Savings:	\$ 952,908	5	5 Variable	X		V	Eliminating music at middle will impact some students and may not support further band and other music offerings at secondary.
26	District Ukulele	Reduces 0.14 FTE Teacher FTE	Savings:	\$ 16,525	4		X		F	Ukulele would no longer be offered as a music experience.
23	District Team	K-5 Literacy savings	Savings	\$ 37,000	4		X		V	Less Professional development related to literacy. Strategic goals may not be met fully within the timeframe.
14	Daytime Custodians - Secondary	Reduces 3.38 FTE CUPE 382 custodians and add some CUPE 382 supervision.	Savings:	\$ 187,129	4	2 Fixed and 2 Variable	X		V	Up to 47 Day Custodians would bump 93 other employees, totaling 140 regular position disruptions. 15 spareboard custodians would be displaced. School Administration would take on daytime tasks: {opening school, graffiti/needle check, tradespeople liaison, safety inspections, fire drills, alarm panel troubleshooting, pest control, waste management, delivery receipt}

SAVINGS for consideration - OPERATING

March 10, 2022 Public Budget Meeting

Incidents of Agreement Based on worksheets/templates gathered.

Does not incorporate "We are listening" comment cards

Blank=Participant agreed with amount

"Fixed"=Participant agreed with amount

"Variable"=Participant agreed but suggested a lesser amount

Option	Description	Cost or Savings	Amount	Incidents of Agreement		On-going	One Time	Fixed (F)/Variable(V)	Impact
13	Daytime Custodians - Middle	Reduces 5.31 FTE CUPE 382 custodians; adds 2.0 FTE CUPE 382 fly crew to attend to emergent cleanups and minor repairs through operations , vehicle lease and some CUPE 382 supervision time	Savings: \$ 197,282	4	2 Fixed/2 Variable	X		V	Up to 47 Day Custodians would bump 93 other employees, totaling 140 regular position disruptions. 15 spareboard custodians would be displaced. School Administration would take on daytime tasks: {opening school, graffiti/needle check, tradespeople liaison, safety inspections, fire drills, alarm panel troubleshooting, pest control, waste management, delivery receipt}
12	Counsellors to Community LINK	Moves funding of some school-based teacher counsellors from the operating grant to the Community LINK special purpose grant. Maintains number of school-based teacher counsellors in the District.	Savings: \$ 201,537	4		X		V	No direct impact to classroom (see Community LINK section)
25	School Technologists from 11 month to 10.5 months/year	Reduces technology staff during summer months	Savings: \$ 24,760	3		X		V	We moved away from the 10.5 month model three years ago because it was not servicing the schools to the required level. Technologists need to set up classrooms, computers, labs, etc. before teachers are in the building for school start up. The same requirement is there at the end of the school year. Harold - Summer work cannot be scheduled, retention of technologies would be difficult as private sector work may be more appealing.
21	Vice-Principals in Small Schools or Schools with Low Enrolment	Redeploys 2.0 FTE Vice-Principals. Savings indicated is difference between VP teaching time cost and Teacher teaching time cost.	Savings: \$ 61,494	3		X		V	Admin supports in the small schools would be reduced. The Principal would be responsible for all administrative procedures and leading learning initiatives in schools.
31	Board Office & Facilities	Advisor	Savings \$ 102,526	3		X		V	Reduced service to schools; increased workload
29	Board Office & Facilities	Manager	Savings \$ 120,732	3		X		V	Reduced service to schools; increased workload
30	Board Office & Facilities	Director/Associate Director	Savings \$ 163,138	3		X		V	Reduced service to schools; increased workload
7	Career Centre Coordinators at Secondary	Reduces 8.1 FTE CUPE 947 Career Centre Coordinators at Secondary Schools who serve as a link between students and post secondary institutions and businesses.	Savings: \$ 342,490	3	3 Variable	X		V	Direct services to students in Career Centers will be significantly decreased, negatively impacting the school-wide student supports provided for transition into post-secondary life (school/training/work). Approximately 75% of student registrations are facilitated through CCC's, so \$715,000 in revenue (course-based & ITA funding) could be lost. Recruitment, registration, and collaboration with post-secondary schools and businesses is labour intensive and cannot be shifted elsewhere.
4	Youth & Family Counselor Reduction in Community LINK	Reduction of 7 of 26 contracted Youth & Family Workers (YFC's) and 2 Outreach Workers to move 5.5 school-based teacher counselors into the CL funding allocation.	Savings: \$ 623,110	3	2 Fixed/1 Variable	X		V	Reduces Youth & Family Counsellors & Outreach Worker contractors in order to maintain school based Teacher Counsellor staffing. No money saved but reallocates operating expenses to a special purpose fund so that less savings need to be found in operating.
8	Daytime Custodians - Elementary	Reduces 13.13 FTE CUPE 382 custodians; adds a 4.0 FTE CUPE 382 fly crew to attend to emergent cleanups and minor repairs through operations	Savings: \$ 246,923	2	1 Fixed/1 Variable	X		V	Up to 47 Day Custodians would bump 93 other employees, totaling 140 regular position disruptions. 15 spareboard custodians would be displaced. School Administration would take on daytime tasks: {opening school, graffiti/needle check, tradespeople liaison, safety inspections, fire drills, alarm panel troubleshooting, pest control, waste management, delivery receipt}
19	Clerical Staff from 12 month to 11 month and 11 month to 10.5 month employees	Reduces clerical staff during summer months	Savings: \$ 94,496	1		X		V	May impact summer work and recruitment and retention of qualified personnel. More staff may be required at times during regular months due to increased workload.
2	Counsellor Reduction to minimum Collective Agreement Ratio	The Teacher collective agreement restored language sets the student counsellor ratio at 693:1. This consideration reduces 8.0 FTE counsellors.	Savings: \$ 924,480	1	One-Time Only	X		V	If this staffing was reduced, the District would still meet its collective agreement obligations. Mental health and well-being is goal three of the strategic plan. The District is emerging from a 2 year pandemic where students have faced mental health issues. With reduced counselling service, students may not receive the mental health supports they require.

RISK

March 10, 2022 Public Budget Meeting

Incidents of Agreement Based on worksheets/templates gathered.

Does not incorporate "We are listening" comment cards

Amount	Incidents of Agreement
\$ 500,000	
\$ 1,000,000	1
\$ 1,500,000	1
\$ 2,000,000	
\$ 3,000,000	
\$ 4,000,000	1

RESERVE

Amount	Incidents of Agreement
\$ 500,000	
\$ 1,000,000	
\$ 1,500,000	
\$ 2,000,000	
Use Some	1

2021-2022 Carry Forward \$800k

Incidents of Agreement
1

Lisa McPhail

From: Community Engagement
Subject: FW: STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS - SD61 Music Budget Cuts
Attachments: STUDENT QUOTES 2022 - Google Docs.pdf; 2021 STUDENT VOICES.docx - Google Docs.pdf

From: Lisa McPhail
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2022 10:27 AM
To: Kim Morris <kmorris@sd61.bc.ca>
Cc: Community Engagement <Community@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: FW: STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS - SD61 Music Budget Cuts

Lisa McPhail

Manager, Communications & Community Engagement
 Greater Victoria School District No. 61
 Office: 250.475.4103
 Cell: 778.679.5049

 www.sd61.bc.ca |   @sd61schools



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.

From: Emilia Vozian [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2022 2:12 PM
To: Lisa McPhail <lmcp@mail@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS - SD61 Music Budget Cuts

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Dear Lisa McPhail,

Please take the time to open and read the documents attached to this email!

I am a high school student in School District #61. Over the past week, students across the district have been sharing their voices with the SD61 Board of Education in a student-led survey regarding the current budget cuts proposed to music programs. Their responses are compiled in the first attached document.

The components of the second document are similar to the first, except those quotes were collected during last year's budget planning process. Both documents go to show the positive impact music has in our learning.

Music programs...

- Form **communities**, and friendships
- Support **mental health**, hands-on mindfulness in a highly digital world, and relieve stress
- Allow us to express ourselves in an **inclusive** environment
- Teach us **lifelong skills** such as discipline and being part of a greater team and goal
- Keep us **engaged** in school
- Provide the means for us to connect with **passionate mentors**

For some, these benefits apply to Strings, to others Band... and others Choir. Each holds a significant value.

In middle school, I took part in every possible music class. I'd wake up early in the morning, stay in at lunch, and after school. No matter the challenges I went through as a growing individual, even when I wasn't able to talk about them, I was always able to count on school music classes to brighten my day. Making music gives me the energy to be able to engage in other endeavors as a busy, well-rounded student. Moreover, music is where I've found friends. Currently in high school, the extent to which I'm grateful for everything my middle school music teachers have done for me and my peers is inexpressible - far more than simply teaching us how to make music. It's the passion, the expertise, the kindness and inspiration, the way these individuals go about teaching a subject that is interconnected with every part of our academic and personal lives. Music programs let you be part of something greater than yourself - an inclusive community where everyone matters - and hard work is paid off in the hands-on creation of something beautiful that brings joy to others & yourself. I want more middle school students to experience this, including my younger sister! It is with certainty that I say these programs have made me a better person. The proposed cuts to middle school music will be a *devastating* loss for not only middle schools, but high school programs, the school district as a whole, and local community.

Last year, I was a student presenter at a district Operations Policy and Planning Committee meeting - time and time again, the SD61 community has to defend the inclusion of music programs in students' learning. Please, be a part of protecting these critical programs for future learners.

Thank you for your time, respectfully,

Emilia Vozian

SD61 High School Student and Musician

"Music washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life." - Berthold Auerbach

SD61 MUSIC BUDGET CUTS: STUDENT VOICES

Recall the first point in the Values/Guiding Principles approved for the Budget of 2022-2023:

Students

Students are at the center of all we do in SD61. Students are our primary stakeholder and must have voice and agency in their learning. The budget will focus on provision of service for every student to succeed, recognizing that all learners are unique and have differing needs. Quantitative and qualitative data are both important.

- - -

This past week, students across the district answered this loose prompt.

“What would you like the SD61 board to know as they make the decision of whether or not to cut music programs?”

This document shares their responses with you.

SD61 Board Members,

As you go through the following pages, **please look over every quote**. We are the students, and this is what we need.

We ask you to prioritize our education and direct student services. When it comes to funding, fight to keep music - a critical facet of student success, belonging, and mental health in the district - and the irreplaceable teachers that nurture these beautiful programs that support us in our learning. For some it is choir, for others band, and others strings... the district needs its music programs, especially in students' determinative middle school years.

Please represent our student voices. Thank you.

1. "One of the goals that has been highlighted time and time again by the school district is to create inclusive spaces for students. From my experience, the music program is the best space in the school for this. The program is a group full of friendly and welcoming people, and is one of the most inclusive and accepting places within the building. The impact this program has on the community is immense as well; students often play at retirement homes, for younger students at other schools, and at concerts for the public. Taking away the music program would be taking away the sense of achievement and responsibility that these performances give students, as well as the joy that seeing these kids perform brings the audience. Additionally, it would destroy traditions that have lasted for decades, such as the Reynolds Band playing at the Saanich Municipal Hall every year for Remembrance Day. Although high school bands are not being cut, grade 9 would become the first year of band for most students, and students that are new to their instrument could not successfully play at these ceremonies. The music programs are also essential for bringing money into the school district and economy. Without programs such as this, our schools would no longer be an appealing place to be for exchange students, people who both bring in a lot of money to the district, but also allow students to connect with and learn about other cultures. Students also rent or buy instruments from local businesses that depend on their support to survive, and weakening them after a pandemic that has already hurt these businesses significantly would force many of them to close. Finally, Vancouver Island is a tourist destination, and music is one of the greatest appeals for visitors. They make up a substantial amount of the city's income, and many come to see the buskers in the harbor, the symphony, and the musicals. Without music education in schools, all of these areas will dwindle and slowly die out as less people are learning about and gaining a passion for music."

Anonymous (Gr.12), Reynolds Secondary

Violin, Clarinet

2. "As someone who participated in multiple programs, it would be very sad to know that kids in the future will not be able to go through and learn music until they are older. For a bit the only reason I still enjoyed going to school was because I had the chance to go to choir or vocal jazz. I have made some very good friends through the programs."

MC (Gr.9), Mount Douglas Secondary School

Violin, Guitar, Ukulele, Flute, and Voice

3. "Music has benefited my mental health 100%. My music teachers are my mentors and they deserve their jobs!"

Liya (Gr.9), Reynolds

Saxophone, flute, percussion, choir, violin, guitar, ukulele, recorder

4. "I think they should not cut the music programs. They are very important to me and many other people/students."

AK (Gr. 7), Cedar Hill Middle School

I sing at home, and I am a part of Island Ukuleles

5. "I understand that money might be tight at the moment, but truly, what do you think you're accomplishing with cutting the music programs in the school district? For the past few years, you all have been slowly decimating every. Single. Program, and part of the district that made it unique, and stand out. More difficult academic programs have been pushed back, music programs cut, what are you all doing? Although the music program at my school is a smaller one compared to many other high schools in the district, it's a passion-filled one. With musicians who adore music coming together to jam, have fun, and go further in our explorations of music. Our program is filled with Challenge students like me, who vent of stress from academics with music, and with you stopping the growth, or just plain destroying both of them, I don't think many of us students would like to even go to School District 61 any more. Music helps the growth of the mind, develops creativity and new ways of thinking about the world, without the arts, music, etc. every student in the district would become clones of one another. Rarely will there ever be another great accomplishment in the district, as students who are set to do great things won't even consider your schools to be where they would go to if they had the choice. Please, in all due respect you're destroying your own system. This decision won't make you any more money, for the school district, or for yourself to put into your slimy pockets. Choose wisely, for if you make the wrong decision you won't know what will come for you."

I R (Gr.9), Mount Douglas Secondary

Percussion (not gonna elaborate, there's too many, but mainly bells and timpani), piano, guitar, ukulele, recorder, bass guitar, upright bass, theremin, violin, voice, etc.

6. "It is unbelievable to me that Students keep having to defend the inclusion of necessities like Music in the curriculum. It's difficult to even begin to articulate the profound impact these programs have had on my school experience. Music was a highlight in my middle school years, eagerly awaiting the comfort of having band class on a day full of presentations and tests. Sometimes music was the only thing that excited and encouraged me to go to school. You wouldn't think something could make many students choose to arrive at school an hour early almost everyday of the week, yet music does. Myself and so many of my middle school peers happily stayed before and after school just to play in these ensembles. And this is without even mentioning my middle school music teachers, truly mentors throughout my years spent there. How much time and enthusiasm they put into ensuring the growth and success of their students everyday is immense. They are so hardworking and a driving force in what makes these school programs so phenomenal. Currently at Reynolds I am in multiple ensembles, and I doubt that'd be the case if I hadn't had such a good elementary school foundation. The patience and fun my elementary school music teacher brought to every lesson set the foundation for me proceeding to sign up for every future school music ensemble I had access to. Looking out onto the future years that I will participate in highschool music, I know that it's those incredible teachers and opportunities that got me here. All of this to say, I am where I am in school because of middle and elementary music. It's absolutely devastating to think that these opportunities and

experiences could be robbed from students, and I am sincerely concerned about the future of this school district if these cuts go through. "

Izze M (Gr.9), Reynolds

Violin, Cello, Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, Guitar, Ukulele, Theremin, Voice, Recorder, Xylophone

7. "Everyday music is in my life in someway, if I have choir in the morning or band during the day or musical after school. Elementary school and middle school music where some of the best experiences of my life and I met some amazing people and teachers. The loss of our music teachers would be tragic and the idea of the younger generation not being able to have the amazing experiences that I had is heartbreaking."

Lillian C (Gr.9), Reynolds Secondary School

Trombone, upright bass, electric bass, voice, recorder

8. "I think that they need to stop trying to cut music; it's an essential subject and we already had to protest last year! They need to come up with some different ideas. Music and art are essential subjects! I really enjoy band and music! And I don't think it's fair that the SD61 education board is allowed to keep trying to take away the opportunity to learn music!"

Anonymous (Gr.7), Monterey middle school

Saxophone, Flute , Viola , percussion

9. "Music has been a big part of my life growing up in school, especially in middle school and it helped shape me into who I am today."

Eryn P (Gr.9), Reynolds Secondary School

Voice, Euphonium, Baritone, Trumpet, Violin, Recorder, Ukulele, Guitar, Piano

10. "I'm not in any athletic or leadership groups and music is a fun thing for me every week, without music I would do... Piano outside of school? I don't do much else other than music."

M S (Gr.7), GHMS

Strings: Violin, Choir, Musical Theater

11. "The music program is amazing. The Arts are critically important for every society. This is where we get introduced to music. I also learn critical thinking and math through music. This helps me in other areas. Music concerts have increased my confidence in performing in front of others, this has help me express my ideas in front of my class during lessons. It would be a sad and terrible day if music was canceled."

NF (Gr.7), Gordon Head Middle School

Clarinet

12. "Music provides a place for many students to express themselves and meet new people and have a place if they can't find one at school otherwise. The music teachers I have had are ones I will always remember -- they are so passionate at what they do and are so caring to their students. Music has been such a big part of my elementary, middle and high school experience. If I hadn't had the opportunity to take music, there would have been a lot of memories and people I never would have met. It's inconceivable to think of our schools without music. Trustees, please do not take these programs away from us."

Lucy J (Gr.11), Oak Bay High

Alto sax, violin

13. "Don't cut music"

Nicholas (Gr.6), Lansdowne south

Voila, double bass and trumpet

14. "I chose cello because I like the sound of the instrument. It's fun to play music as a group with friends. I'd miss this social aspect if we had no strings at school."

Sam S (Gr.6), Central Middle School

Cello

15. "Music is very fun and I learn a lot from my teachers. Music is important to me and music classes are some of the best parts of my day. Our music teachers do so much for us and we need them to learn and have fun. I love all the music classes I take and the teachers are awesome so I think that music is an essential part of school and I really, really, really don't want it to be cut."

Isla R (Gr.6), Central middle school

Voice, clarinet, violin

16. "I live my band class. It isn't easy to learn clarinet, but I learned to be patient with myself and that hard work pays off. I have a lot of new friends. I am happy when it's band class and I look forward to it every time. I am learning so much about myself. Why would you ever take this away from kids? It's so important to me and my friends. Please keep band in middle school!!!!!!!!!"

Kate M (Gr.6), Lansdowne South

Clarinet

17. "I would like them to know that music is important because some people can't afford private lessons so they have to rely on school music programs to learn instruments or music. Have you ever heard a song on the radio or have a favorite song? Well those musicians probably started

learning an instrument at school and then they started to get interested and started to do music lessons. Some musicians just learned from their school so we need our Music!"

Tina W (Gr.6), Arbutus

Violin, Piano, Clarinet, Voice, Bass, Recorder, Ukulele

18. "The happiest part of my day is when I'm playing my violin or singing in the choir. I have a lot of anxiety and music makes me feel calm. Middle school can be scary, but in music everyone is equal. If I didn't take music at school, I wouldn't get too. Please don't take away strings and choir."

ZT (Gr.6), Rockheights

Viola, voice

19. "Music is Vital! Cut some high level salaries instead and keep the music program!"

Anonymous

Trumpet, Piano, French Horn, Voice

20. "Cutting away music would mean less musicians and it's one of my favorite things to do. I love to play music but taking it away too early from kids will make them lose interest. I think kids should have an experience with music without making them wait. Everyone should get the opportunity to play in band, strings, ukulele or choir."

Riley (Gr.7), Monterey middle school

Bass drums voice

21. "Please don't make me wait 6 years to be able to join band class! I think if us kids had to wait that long we might lose interest but I play at home but would like to be part of a school band. My older brother plays in concert and jazz band and I can't wait!"

Cohen (Gr.3), Margaret Jenkins elementary

I am in grade 3 so I haven't had the chance yet but hope to join in grade 6

22. "Music is something that makes many people happy and through school they learn their passions for it"

JW (Gr.10), Reynolds Secondary School

Trumpet, clarinet, cello, ukulele, voice

23. "Band was a huge part of my education and I want it to be for my kids as well. I started with music as a young kid and have continued throughout and into adulthood. I traveled with school band and still perform in tuba christmas each year in December, which I now do with my young

cousin who is in high school. I will be extremely disappointed if my son doesn't get the opportunity to have similar experiences."

Anonymous

Tuba, flute, clarinet, violin, voice, recorder, percussion, trombone

24. "Dear SD61 board, knowing that there is a high probability of getting the school music programs cut from budget, it would be the right time for me to say that, not from a bias view, we should keep the budget for music programs. I think this way, from my analytical way of thinking, because this increases creativity, expands the horizons of young kids who aspire such positions, in the music industry, in the future, or plainly for the sake of hobby and relaxation. Taking this away from students, elementary through high school, is taking away undiscovered talents/gifts from kids who desire/enjoy music. Music to me, was, and still is a part of my life. Since I could even remember, singing was what brought me inspiration to sing out loud about my feelings and what I think about all the time. Music had brought me my current friends that I ever do consider close to me and had brought my family together. My father, who is also musically inclined, was my first ever inspiration, and starting point, for me to pursue my passion towards singing. It is thanks to the music programs I had been in, that had got me here standing and fighting peacefully, to say the least, about keeping the budget for the music program. I do not know if you will read this, SD61 board, but do please put a bit more thought."

Sophia B (Gr.12), Mount Douglas Secondary

Voice, Piano, Acoustic Guitar

25. "If I didn't have to do at least some music in school I probably never would have picked up any instruments, and I wouldn't know I liked it so much."

Annina (Gr.7), Lansdowne

voice, recorder, ukulele, violin, percussion

26. "Music is an essential part of the education system because it gives students a place to be, something students can enjoy and look forward to, and somewhere students can make connections with other kids they would never interact with otherwise. The music program and the music teachers have shaped who I am today and it isn't fair to take it away from the kids. The accessibility of music makes it possible for so many kids to enjoy and be involved in music and helps with their mental health. We could not have gotten through the pandemic without it."

RT (Gr.12), Reynolds secondary

Violin, clarinet, flute, ukulele, recorder, viola

27. "Music is pretty good and is an important part of schools"

Jax V (Gr.9), Reynolds secondary

Bassoon tenor sax sousaphone bass drum recorder

28. "Music has been a constant in my life since elementary school when we started learning about stringed instruments. I honestly cannot imagine going through school without music, but I am sure I would have been miserable without a safe and caring environment to learn and grow in. Today I am part of many ensembles and my best friends are people I met through music. Kids need access to music education."

LG (Gr.12), Reynolds Secondary School

Cello, voice, and clarinet.

29. "Music is extremely important for schools. I can't imagine what any school would be like without music. Music is as important as any other subject, and cannot be cut as if it were insignificant and something that we don't need. Cutting music is like cutting math or science, it is something that we need in schools and something that you cannot take away from us."

Kara (Gr.7), Cedar Hill Middle School

Clarinet and Trombone

30. "I feel music is important for learning and mental health. It has helped me and my sister express ourselves freely and I really enjoy music and really want to learn more instruments."

RG (Gr.6), Lansdowne south middle school

Choir, Clarinet and Viola

31. "Music is a language that connects us and brings us to another world, a world of peace free of worries and fears. Free of all the stress and pressure of the world outside. Without those moments of peace and calmness my life would pretty much be chaos. I can't imagine school without music. It would be so very depressing for all the many kids who love and appreciate music as much as I do and even the kids who aren't in any music programs, it still affects them. If the school has the positive energy from music everybody is more likely to be happy."

Harmony P (Gr.6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Voice, clarinet, viola (plus the ones I played in music class, ukulele, recorder, etc.)

32. "Music is part of my life. Music calms me down. Music makes me smile. Music is always with me."

Kanami O (Gr.2), Margaret Jenkins

Piano

33. "I started viola since grade 5 and trombone since grade 6. If I didn't have this opportunity at school, I've have never played those instruments. It's important for kids to have opportunity to play instruments."

Rentaro O (Gr.8), Central Middle school

Viola, trombone and drum kits

34. "They shouldn't cut anything we can find a way to fundraise to earn the money they need"

Mckenna (Gr.5), Breafoot

Voice, ukulele, drumming,

35. "The music program provides such incredible spaces for students to truly show their creative selves. The band room has always been an open, inclusive and fun space for me, even during my worst days. The music program has brightened my school experience and the experience of many others. So many kids need these programs in their lives!"

Devon M (Gr.10), Esquimalt High School

Tenor Saxophone

36. "The choices you are making will damage the well-being of students and teachers for years to come. Many people, including me, often only go to school for the music program, and we wouldn't know what to do without guidance of our music teachers and peers. Stop punishing students for mistakes you made."

Atticus D (Gr.10), Esquimalt High School

Alto Saxophone, Viola, Clarinet, Percussion, Voice

37. "Though I'm no longer in music programs they hold a place in my heart. I loved being in concert band and other ensembles all of middle school. Made me step into the social circle and I learnt so much"

L H (Gr.10), Esquimalt

Voice, flute, cello, alto sax

38. "Music education has saved my mental health on so many occasions. It is the reason I have friends. It is the reason I feel like I have talents. It is the basis of my future career. I owe who I am today to music education. It has taught me individual responsibility, integrity, dedication, curiosity, team building, leadership and how to be a part of a community. Cutting music education hurts every student in our district."

Bree A (Gr.12), Oak Bay High School

Flute, piccolo, voice, viola, ukulele, recorder

39. "They are very much out of their minds. Music is an integral part of the curriculum and is a lot of peoples reason for going to school in the first place."

Dominic B (Gr.10), Oak bay high

Voice, Baritone Saxophone

40. "If you cut music, kids will mentally be unstable. life is better with music. WE NEED MUSIC"

Colleen (Gr.12), Oak Bay

Percussion/ Choir

41. "Without middle school music the entire music program even in high school will dry up. Music programs contribute substantially to many students' wellbeing and some students may not have made it to today without them."

Lucas S (Gr.12), Oak Bay High school

Viola, clarinet and tenor saxophone

42. "I would like the SD61 board to know that music in school has been the most important part of my school life. It encourages me to work hard, and be a better person. I love that I can play music with others who share the same passions. Through music I can express myself and have fun, as well as challenge myself to learn new things."

Aunaleigh M (Gr.12), Oak Bay High School

Piano, clarinet, trombone, viola, voice/choral ensembles

43. "Middle school can be either a terrible experience or a great one, and what made the difference for me was music. Middle school is when everyone is just trying to figure out who they are and who they want to be, and music is something that I know has helped so many kids and will continue to do so if you allow it to. It gives kids a place of community and a sense of belonging, and somewhere where they can go to feel safe and supported. My middle school music teachers, Mr Rawson, Mr Anderson and Mr Georgson, were some of the best teachers I have ever had and they made everyone feel like they could be themselves when they came into the music room. This is such an important thing to have especially in middle school, because think back to when you were a middle schooler. Kids can be ruthless and everyone is trying to be something they're not and trying to fit into what they think they should be. But when you walk into the music room all of that goes away and you can simply be a part of something greater than yourself and be supported by everyone around you."

Claire (Gr.11), Oak bay high school

Voice, flute, piccolo, percussion

44. "I would not be alive today without the music program. It's saved my life multiple Times. The amount of support from the music teachers is overwhelming and I couldn't ask for better people in my life."

Kathleen R (Gr.12), Oak bay high

Flute

45. "i suffer from multiple mental illnesses and most likely would have committed suicide if i didn't have school music as an outlet for creativity. the teachers have also been a huge support when i felt like i had no one else to turn to. i know there are so many more kids like me who can't find this safety and comfort in any other school activities."

lc (Gr.12), oak bay high

voice, saxophone, baritone saxophone, bass

46. "I wouldn't have made it through four years of High school if it weren't for choir."

AWH (Gr.12), Oak Bay High School

Voice, cello, saxophone

47. "These programs are integral to education and should not be cut. As a current post secondary student, the skills and opportunities I gained from these programs cannot be overstressed."

Mahalia, Uvic

flute, piano, ukulele, guitar, voice, recorder.

48. "the music program especially in middle school was my whole life. me and countless other students were in the music room every lunch, morning, and after school on top of the inside the timetable band because it meant that much to us. even now in high school i have one day where i'm not at school from 7:30-5:00 just to be able to do band, strings, orchestra, and choir. the music program was what made my middle school experience and what is making my high school experience. the one reason i switched for my old school to go to lansdowne was because of the possibility of band. i want my younger brothers and their friends to be able to have that experience."

McKechnie B (Gr.10), Oak bay high

flute, violin, alto saxophone, voice

49. "Please do not cut school music programs. Music means so much to so many students in schools across the district and you would be disappointing hundreds of young music lovers. For many, the band or choir room provides a safe place for students to find their people, eat lunch, explore music and have fun. From all of us: please do not cut school music programs!"

AL (Gr.12), Oak Bay High School

clarinet, piano, voice

50. "You cannot cut these programs. They are extremely important to the wellbeing and health of the students. Same goes for the counselors' role for the students. These are the same students whose voices you've deliberately silenced by dissolving the student committee. Shame on you."

Noah G (Gr.11), Esquimalt High School

Alto Saxophone, Voice

51. "Music education in middle schools is non-negotiable and completely necessary. I know for a fact that I would not be the person I am today without SD61's music program. I play clarinet in the school band for seven years; I practically live in the choir room. Without a full middle school music education, I can guarantee that I would not have joined a music program in high school. Without middle school music programs, high school programs will die. Kids will come into high school with far less interest in picking up instruments, and then will be frustrated with their inability to keep up with their peers in other districts' music programs, who have already had three years of music education. It will only take four years for music programs in the school district to completely fall apart, and at least twenty to build them back up again in the event that they are ever funded again. The board is making these decisions in the most underhanded, sleazy way by having votes take place over spring break, hoping to sweep under the rug all the harm that these cuts will cause to students in SD61. The act of finding more funding for a school district should never cause harm to the students inside that district."

Olivia G (Gr.12), Oak Bay High School

Clarinet/vocal

52. "I think music is very important and that it should not be cut. If music is cut, kids will not experience the wonders of getting to learn an instrument. When learning an instrument, you have to learn how to learn from your mistakes, look ahead, multitask (by reading music, counting, and playing your instrument at the same time), and soooo much more. It has so many benefits to a growing mind. Music needs to be a part of school."

Michelle M (Gr.11), Oak bay high school

Voice, and clarinet

53. "Music is something that I care about immensely. Almost all of my closest friends were people I met in music classes. When I didn't want to come to school, I came for music classes. When I felt low, the music community was there for me. For me so many incredible memories, so many character-building moments, took place because of music. The fact that the SD61 school board thinks SO LITTLE of our music programs that they would try not once, but twice(!) to cut them is, in a word, INFURIATING. Not only that, but to cut counseling? NOW? The mental health of youth has never been in such a dire state. Why is the district trying to cut the things that directly impact the mental wellbeing of all students? It's awful. To the school board, you should be ashamed. Who DO you care about, if not your students?"

Elizabeth D (Gr.12), Oak Bay High School

Piano, Trumpet, Tenor Saxophone, Voice

54. "I've gotten to know so many wonderful people who were in band and choir alike. The majority of my close friends are in one or both of them, and they cherish doing what they like so

much. I've grown up with music being in my family that doing it in school was a great way to continue doing what made me happy, and would later give me the opportunity to get closer with my family when we have small music jams. Cutting the music program would contradict the schools saying "school is where you make new friends", when music is one of many things that bring people together."

Jakob T (Gr.12), Oak bay high

I have played the trombone for three years in middle school and was one of the bass guitar players for oak bays R&B band. I currently play the bass guitar and the acoustic guitar, occasionally playing some piano. I am also part of oak bays mens and concert choir.

55. "Music is a huge part of many students' lives. Choir and band rooms can be a place of great joy and self expression for many kids. Music teachers are some of the kindest, most influential educators I know and to take them away would be a terrible injustice to all those who are a part of our schools. It is a proven fact that those who learn how to play an instrument or sing can actually learn better in other areas of school. Music helps with memorization, self discipline and confidence. It is absolutely horrifyingly that the Board of Education thinks they can just take away these programs."

OS (Gr.11), Oak Bay High

Flute

56. "The music program is the primary place I feel connection and a sense of community at school. I have had relatively positive high school and middle school experiences (something many can't say) and I owe it all to the music programs I have been involved in. In band I have made life long friends, and my music classes are honestly what I look forward to most at school. Without them I can say without a doubt that I would not be as happy or successful at school as I am. Music not only gives me social connection and fun in my day but also has given me confidence and other life skills that make me a better learner across all my classes."

SH (Gr.12), Oak Bay High

Cello, Percussion, Piano

57. "Music programs throughout middle school and high school have had a huge positive impact on my life and many many others I am sure. I can only hope that everyone who is younger than me now has the same chance I did to find something they love and a place where they are always welcomed no matter what."

i (Gr.10), oak bay high

voice, flute, violin, piano

58. "Music is an essential part of us and must not be devalued. It's just as important as the sciences."

TC (Gr.10), Esquimalt High School

Clarinet

59. "Our music program is anything but a simple music program. It's a home. A community. A place where timid kids have a voice. A place where students and teachers work together to make something meaningful and beautiful! Taking away elementary and middle school music is taking away the opportunity for our younger peers to experience band trips, concerts, festivals and more. But above all, it takes away potential."

Julianna F (Gr.10), Reynolds Secondary School

clarinet, bass clarinet, voice

60. "Cutting school music programs is not a good idea at all. Music is another part of education that, if you take away, will be a detriment to the learning of students. Many students enjoy band, and if the cuts are made, those students will lose an activity they enjoy."

DK (Gr.9), Mount Doug Secondary

Trumpet

61. "Music is where I found my best friends, the people who have stood with me through the most formative years of my life without judgment. Music is where I found teachers who cared, and were always there for us. Music is a safe space to have fun and learn a life skill."

Anonymous Reynolds

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62. "Band gives students a home and a family. If they take band they will be taking away a whole support system from students."

Archer M (Gr.10), Reynolds

Trombone

63. "Music means a lot to every single one of us and it's a great opportunity to make lifelong friends that gives a great impact in life. Music for me means the world for me and the music program made me the person that I am today. Music teacher made me laugh more than any other teacher and they are the best. Music impacts our and my life in a great positivity and music brings us all together as some of us only look forward to music classes or programs"

Juah Y (Gr.9), Reynolds secondary

Flute

64. "Stripping away the program at the middle school level will make it impossible for high schools to achieve the accomplishments they do now such as parades, festivals, competitions,

etc but mostly they won't even be able to play at the level we do now. These cuts will turn advanced jazz and vocal jazz times into how to read music. Why is it not clear that the entire community is against these cuts and that the community NEEDS the music program?"

Ella H (Gr.11), Reynolds Secondary

Saxophone, voice, dance

65. "We need music as personally it helped give me a sense of belonging. My experience in band, choir, etc. has helped me make many new friends and has significantly helped improve my mental health as well. If you were to remove all of this from schools many other kids wouldn't be able to have this same phenomenal experience!!"

SW (Gr.11), Reynolds Secondary School

Trumpet, voice, guitar

66. "The music program has saved my life. Some days, it is the sole reason I come to school, push through the day or even get out of bed in the morning. These programs are not only a fundamental part of who I am, but they are a constant existence of support, comfort and joy."

KE (Gr.10), Reynolds Secondary

Percussion, ukulele, voice

67. "music is vital to so many students. it is something that has helped us get through our own personal struggles and not to mention a GLOBAL PANDEMIC. Being able to return to school after lockdown and play in band/sing in choir was incredible. i wouldn't have most of the friends i do now if it weren't for the music program. it is without a doubt one of the BEST places to meet people and make amazing friends. music has helped me and my friends so much and it's given us so many opportunities and to take that away from others would be a shame. we need music, don't take it away from us."

Tessa F (Gr.10), Reynolds secondary school

trumpet, voice

68. "For a second time, the school board is trying to cut music and gifted programs. Despite the mad lashbacks from last year, they still want to cut these programs when people have made it clear through protests and petitions that these programs were so important and for them and their children. As someone who struggled and disliked school during the pandemic, music was so important to me as it was one of the few classes I actually enjoyed. Why is the school board so determined to cut the programs, moving faster than last year and repeating the attempt even though they received so much dissatisfaction? How is cutting these programs even an option to consider? We made it work last year; it's almost as if they're actually using budget cuts as an excuse to remove these things that are so important to us. Please don't cut these programs, for some people, it's like taking away a limb."

Anonymous (Gr.9), Mount Douglas Secondary School

Violin

69. "The music program is a place where everyone can feel accepted and loved, it's a community of people that embraces everyone no matter who they are. Our music teachers are a huge part of the reason I love the music program at Oak bay high, they are always kind and understanding and they manage to make a bad day into a good one. Cutting the funding for this program could change that incredible experience into something far less enjoyable for kids just starting out in this amazing program."

Trin (Gr.11), Oak bay high

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70. "Music is essential. Band was a way for me to challenge myself and step outside my comfort zone in a safe way. I became a more enriched person because of it."

Anonymous (Gr.12), Oak Bay Secondary

French Horn, Cello

71. "Music is not WHAT I do, it's WHO I am. Don't cut music from our lives, it's saved countless lives and brought so many of us into the light. The music programs and their teachers give kids a home, a family, and a safe place to voice their opinions and have fun. I always look forward to the days where I have any kind of music class and wish the days without, would be over. I have bonded to all of the music teachers in my schools and I know they will always be there for me if I'm ever feeling upset or just need an extra smile. Whenever I'm in class and having troubles with my work, I just start a playlist and everything becomes clear. I don't know what I would do without music. Think of your future leaders, your kids, grandkids, friends, and all of the next generation. Think of what your actions will do to everyone around you. It's up to you. Make the right choice."

Ari D (Gr.9), Reynolds Secondary School

Voice, Violin, Ukulele, Recorder, Trumpet

72. "although i currently am not in the school music programs, i was in strings and played piano for the jazz band in middle school. music had given me so many opportunities to perform in front of others, step out of my comfort zone and share my love and passion for music. there are so many younger kids out there coming into middle school and high school seeking out opportunities specifically within the music programs and without the schools support this won't be possible. There are so many students out there that consider music as their most important outlet to be able to feel like themselves and have a sense of belonging among the 100's of other students who share the same love and passion for music. music programs are important, there is just no doubt about it."

e (Gr.11), oak bay

I play piano and sing outside of school :)

73. "Throughout my younger years of school I was bullied relentlessly. School was not a safe space for me and brought about lots of distress. As I moved through middle and high school I was able to move past that and form a very strong group of peers via the music program. Being in choir, strings and band I was able to meet and bond with people both similar and alike to me. It gave me a reason to enjoy going to school everyday. Without the music program and the various councilors that helped me through the years I haven't the slightest clue where I would be today but I can say with certainty it wouldn't be a good place."

Kai A (Gr.11), Reynolds Secondary

Percussion, Bass, Cello, Voice,

74. "Music means so much to me and benefits my mental health. This'll impact the future generations and everyone deserves music education. My music teachers are my mentors and they 100% deserve their jobs!"

Liya F (Gr.9), Reynolds

Alto saxophone, violin, flute, choir, vocal jazz, percussion, guitar, ukulele,

75. "Music isn't only our passions but it's part of our lives. I wouldn't have gotten a chance to play and try out all these different instruments without the help of elementary and middle and high school music teachers!!"

E P (Gr.11), Reynolds

Flute, violin, voice, ukulele, recorder, percussion, standup double bass, bells, xylophone

76. "That it isn't a good idea because lots of kids including myself grew up around music and some of us use it as an escape from our lives"

Carter R (Gr.11), Reynolds

Snare, Tenor Sax

77. "Music should not be facing cuts again as it is a huge coping mechanism/safe space for many people"

Grace M (Gr.10), Oak Bay high

Trumpet and viola

78. "Music made me happy in a way that nothing else has ever come close to topping. Enough said."

Dominic G (Gr.11), Reynolds Secondary School

Bb clarinet Bass clarinet Alto saxophone Baritone saxophone Marching cymbals

79. "For some students music is the only thing they look forward to in a school day. The teachers of music classes are more than just teachers to so many of us. School would be a worse place without music."

Nick (Gr.9), Reynolds Secondary

Viola, euphonium, valve trombone

80. "Everywhere you go you'll find music, whether you're in a school on the beach or even in a grocery store! music livens up a place makes people happy and the School board shouldn't be allowed to take away from students or teachers. These programs are needed for students everywhere because every student has at least one thing they're good at and I know many students that love music and want to pursue it in the future. stripping them from their favorite things to look forward to is not fair! I'd also like to consider how SD61 obsesses over their sports but is never as enthusiastic about musicals or band when they are putting as much or even more effort into it. We need more music teachers because we need to keep people employed and we also need to keep people happy which is why I don't understand why are you SD 61 is trying to get rid of music in the school. Overall I think this is an unfair thing happening to students and if they don't let students speak their mind and listen, then not only are they causing the problem but they are the problem."

LT (Gr.10), Mount Doug Secondary

Piano, voice

81. "Music means the world to me. When I was in elementary school watching my older sibling go off to middle school and try all these cool new things I wanted to do the same. I watched as my sibling came home so excited to tell us all about band, jazz band, choir, vocal jazz, show choir and such more. I wanted that same experience. It brings joy to my day when you don't always want to be at school doing tests. I particularly participated in all the music I can't fit into my schedule I'm in multiple ensembles for music over the year I'm currently in 5 music ensembles just in school this year. I've been so lucky to have this opportunity to grow in music and become a family with other musicians who will be my life long friends. Every student no matter the age should get this opportunity. Don't take music away from us!"

Tori-Ann (Gr.9), Reynolds

Cello, Tenor saxophone, Voice

82. "Music programs can have a huge positive impact on a student's mental well being and can help them develop confidence! Being part of a family as amazing as a school music ensemble can also teach students about responsibility and help them learn to be a team player."

Anonymous (Gr.9), Reynolds secondary

Trumpet and Voice

83. "It's a huge part of a lot of students' lives and cutting it would ruin high school for a lot of students."

Joseph C (Gr.11), Mount Doug

Bass Guitar/ Acoustic Guitar

84. "I would not be where I am today if I wasn't in the music program."

Anonymous (Gr.9), Reynolds

Alto saxophone and Viola

85. "Music is as important as any other subject and provides passion through sound which is unique and psychology says it can make a big difference in brightening the mood!"

Jk (Gr.1 st year university), Gardner -Webb University

Voice, violin

86. "Music is an essential part of learning, for me growing up listening, playing, and learning about music has changed my life for the better. It also seems that no other school districts are having these problems that require budget cuts, get it together SD61"

Rowen C (Gr.10), Oak Bay High School

Trumpet, Tuba, Piano, and Percussion

87. "The sd61 Board Of Education should not make cuts to music as it is extremely critical for students as well as teachers. Music allows us to express ourselves in a unique way, which motivates our learning and helps build our self-confidence. Music programs, specifically elementary strings and music classes are very crucial for young children as it provides an opportunity to expose themselves to something new and exciting. In my experience, elementary music has given me new skills that I never knew I had and friends that I'll cherish forever. This experience made me crave more, and led me to joining more music programs in middle school as well as high school. Music programs are also very beneficial for students who might not have the opportunity to take music lessons or programs outside of school. Whether that's because of financial issues or a busy schedule. We are very fortunate to have the privilege of music programs in our schools so please don't take that away from us. Music also helps greatly with mental health. Many of my friends I know and well as myself use music as a tool to help with our mental health and helps us fight stress. So once again, don't cut the music programs in our schools."

Brianna V (Gr.10), Mount Doug Secondary

Violin/orchestra, piano, guitar, and vocals

88. "In regards to the funds being cut out of the music program, I am suggesting to look for an alternative rather than removing what people of all ages love so dearly. Music is something that

many of us relate, enjoy and inspire. Cutting funding of the music program essentially is cutting childrens dream to be a musician, producer or even something more with the lack of education this program would be receiving. I played in an orchestra at a middle school my previous year as well as strings, ranging all the way back to elementary. Those moments, the thrill of creating, playing and learning music was one of the best memories I have had in my whole school career. I understand that the board is having issues with where to cut out the funds, however take to account the impact it will lead for musicians in the future."

JB (Gr.9), Victoria High school

Violin, trumpet

89. "I have been involved in sd61 music programs since elementary school. Ever since then my life has been entirely surrounded by music. It's where I've made nearly every long lasting relationship so far and what I spend most of my time doing. I find it extremely important for kids to have a place like that to go and feel loved and accepted by not only students but the amazing teachers that make these programs happen. I attend somewhere from 1 to 5 music classes per day every week on top of regular classes. If I didn't love it I wouldn't spend that much of my life doing it. The programs provided by the district are also accessible and easy to get into. I for one have not always been fortunate enough to be able to take private lessons for the various things I do with music, so I heavily depend on the free opportunity provided by the district to pursue something I'm passionate about. There are many kids like me who if they get taken away won't have the opportunity to try it out and find something they're interested in. Not only does music help us as students but it helps the community. We play music out in the community for city events and festivals all the time (in a normal year that is). In these programs we learn so much more than just music. We learn responsibility, leadership, teamwork, relationships. I definitely intend on having music around me for the rest of my life whether or not that's the specific field I'm going into. It'll always be a part of me and I can assure you that would not have happened without everything given to me by sd61 music programs. Music is crucial in young lives."

Zamira B (Gr.11), Reynolds Secondary

Voice, cello, violin, trumpet, ukulele, drums, bass

90. "The music program provides a wonderful community for everyone involved. The music program has taught me so many important things and I would not have made it through middle school without the band room!!"

lucy f (Gr.10), vic high

alto and bari sax, cello, voice

91. "Music programs provide a safe space and a loving, supportive community for students of all ages. It is a place where we can learn, grow, and create without judgment and we have the freedom and support to be ourselves. myself, along with so so many others found peace in the music programs when everything else in life was chaos. I don't know if i would be here today without the people i have met and the experiences i have had through music."

Aurora A (Gr.12), Reynolds Secondary

cello and alto saxophone

92. "Although I no am no longer involved in school music programs, I know so many other students who find so much joy in music. It is critical for their mental health and social development"

MP (Gr.11), reynolds

Cello, ukulele, clarinet, voice

93. "Strings and Choir in middle school helped me step out of my comfort zone and try new things. Singing and learning to sing as a group really helped build my self esteem and relationships with other students. Band, strings and choir programs are essential to K-12 learning. They break up the monotony of a long school day and give us opportunities to socialize, create music together, and have fun. Music programs teach us skills on problem solving and teamwork that are hard to create in other places, and while some students might be able to replace this with home lessons and music schools, a lot of them won't because of other after school commitments, financial difficulties and lack of means to get them there."

Rosie (Gr.11), Reynolds

Voice and violin in middle school

94. "Music programs can make a HUGE difference in the lives of students. Music programs can literally save lives, and for some students it is the reason they go to school in the first place. Please don't cut the programs that mean so much to me and so many other students. Music is a HUGE benefit to students' mental health as well...and if school counselors are being cut as well, this could result in a rapid decline in student attendance and mental health, which would end up costing the school way more than keeping the music programs."

MK (Gr.9), Reynolds Secondary School

Violin, percussion (snare, kit, marina, bells, xylophone), voice

95. "Music is a big part of who I am, many of my closest friends have come through music. It has also given me some amazing teachers that have taught me so much, both music related and not. Music has brought me closer to my family and heritage. Music has given me so much and I wouldn't have it if I hadn't been introduced to it early by my elementary and middle school teachers and I would be here today without the opportunities and resources of music programs in my schools."

Klara W (Gr.11), Reynolds

Trumpet, violin, voice

96. "I would like for all of you to just take a moment to reflect as to what you are doing. Take your mind back to when you were in High School. How did you get through? Was it music? Or was it sports? Your best friend? Art club? Shop? Now I want you to picture your life with that just yanked away from you. You have no choice in this matter. What do you turn to now? Drugs? Alcohol? Sex? And now people are blaming you for getting into this situation. You want to speak to someone about how this isn't your fault. But there are no counselors. There are no friends. There is no music. This is the reality the children and teenagers of this community face. Lives of innocent students are at stake. This should not happen."

Anonymous (Gr.10), EHS

Alto Saxophone, Clarinet, Viola, Voice

97. "Music/band is essential, it shows us how to work as a team and make friends. The Music program has brought so many of us together and helps all of us become better people. Taking away Music programs is taking away thousands of kids' passions and destroying our chances of having an enjoyable school environment. If Music programs, counselors, and custodians are limited, schools will be changed so much and not for the better."

Thea (Gr.11), Reynolds

French horn and trombone

98. "I truly cannot imagine what my life would have been like without school music programs. I am the person I am today as a direct result of the guidance and community I experienced and continue to experience in these programs. Playing music in school is a creative outlet, a safe space, and an amazing opportunity. It would break my heart to think future kids will not experience the joy and growth I experienced through music. Being in the band room is the best part of my day. I am continually challenged, but in a completely different way than in the rest of school. Many of my greatest and longest-lasting friendships have been made in music classes and it has been music teachers who have had the greatest impact on my life. Music is the soul of our schools. Please do not take this away."

Zoë v (Gr.11), Oak Bay High

Viola, oboe, voice, guitar.

99. "As someone who has experienced what I would consider to be both ends of the spectrum, having gone from close to zero musical education at Victor-Brodeur to a school rich with music and tradition, I think I can speak on the impact it has had on me personally. Band, jazz band, choir, vocal jazz and musical theater are all classes that I am proud to be a part of this year. When I am in those classrooms, surrounded by supportive people and educators, I feel at home and free to challenge myself to become better and learn from those around me. Going into grade nine, I had very little real experience playing any instruments (although I've always had a passion for it). However, thanks to my wonderful teachers, they have allowed me to reach a level of musicianship that I never thought I would get to so quickly. I cannot wait to see how I will grow into my potential with their support. I've built strong connections over the course of this

academic year with people whom I would have considered strangers a year ago. I've hosted many international students from Italy and Germany whose strong friendships and bonds were essentially formed via music at school. Music brings people together and creates positive change, helping shape people like me into more confident and well-rounded people. I can say with utmost certainty that music will be the most memorable part of most adults' school experience. After witnessing the heart warming speeches between students and teachers on our musical's closing night, it was clear to me how deeply the arts can influence us. Even during a very difficult time in my life after my life-altering spinal surgery in the fall of 2021, music kept me happy and motivated to push through. I would hate to see future kids' experiences tarnished by a lack of funding and therefore learning support, supplies and important opportunities. Now more than ever, WE NEED OUR MUSIC PROGRAMS to promote mental health and make it known to us students that our government and school board cares about us and recognizes just how much we make up the glue of our community. Thank you for taking the time to read this!"

Chloé J (Gr.9), Reynolds Secondary School

Voice, percussion, acoustic/electric guitar

100. "Music in schools save lives. It is just as important as any athletic program and should be taken more seriously when budget cuts are being taken into account. All the productions of musicals and concerts will not be half as good as what they are now. So If you're happy hearing hot cross buns instead of how to train your dragon at a grade 10 music concert. Rethink your decision."

Keelin (Gr.12), Reynolds secondary

Trombone, voice, violin

101. "The band program meant a lot to me when I was still a part of it. I had a lot of fun playing trumpet and met a lot of friends in the band program. Taking that away would mean losing friendships, memories and experiences I never would have made otherwise."

A V (Gr.12), Reynolds

Trumpet

102. "It's like cutting a family, these people are my family. These programs are my safe space. And if you cut these outlets and safe spaces for children they will need to talk to someone but you are cutting counselors. Please listen to us."

Nyomi M (Gr.9), Reynolds secondary school

Clarinet, Alto saxophone, Tenor Saxophone, voice

103. "Music is what gets me through the day, if I am happy or just not in my best state of mind it gets me through the day. Knowing that that could be taken away, it baffles me. So many people not just kids, get so much out of music that it just can't be taken away from us. If they take it away, many teachers will no longer have jobs, or jobs they enjoy, students may not have that

one subject or part of their day that actually makes them happy or matters to them. And honestly some people may never know that music is their talent or passion. People will be lost without music. And whoever disagrees can disappear for all I care."

Seb (Gr.9), it shouldn't matter

Voice, percussion in band, musical theater

104. "Think about how these cuts could affect people mentally. Music is a really large contribution to some people's happiness. With everything that has been going on in this world it is really taking a toll on a lot of people's mental health and music is an escape from reality for a lot of people. It helps them more than anything else could."

OP (Gr.9), Lambrick Park

Flute , Viola

105. "Music was the reason I actually went to school. I would have not made it to grad without it. It provided me with community (a place I actually felt I belonged at school) opportunities & training- which has greatly impacted me both as a person & my career. Since graduating (9 months ago) I've been hired as resident voice over performer for an up & coming corporation. I have booked (was hired for) a touring concert series in which I am starring as a vocalist. I have been offered acceptance & large scholarships from various very well known performing arts schools in Canada & the US. And I can confidently say that the opportunities & experiences I gained from SD61 music programming played a large role in my journey getting to where I am today & wherever I may end up in my career. Having been in a sd61 music program I can say how incredibly important they are. So many kids in these programs depend SO heavily on them. I know SO MANY kids who would consider it the only thing that made school worth it for them, or even who consider it to be what kept them alive & able to reach graduation. Music is so, so undeniably important & even just the THOUGHT of removing those opportunities is absolutely heinous. School is hard enough without having the few things that make it enjoyable & accomplishable, taken away. Please do not leave students without these integral communities & opportunities."

Maya F (Gr.Grad 2021), Reynolds Secondary)

Voice, percussion

106. "The music program from K-8 is crucial for the development of musical hobbies in students. It is also so important for developing friendships with people who are like you."

Sealey C (Gr.9), Reynolds Secondary School

Voice, Trumpet, Guitar, Recorder, Ukulele

107. "Music has always been a constant in my life inside and out of school. I would not be the person I am today without it. Cutting it would not only negatively affect each individual teacher and student involved, but a few years from now there will be a lack of musicians in our community as well. Stages, band rooms, theaters, and homes will fall silent. It is not expendable; everyone in the music program would respectfully request that it isn't treated as such."

Anonymous Oak Bay Highschool

108. "Early programs are the foundation for musicians. Lots of kids' parents can't afford to pay for lessons outside of school, especially at my school. If you cut these programs you're taking away a major opportunity for kids to acquire skills that they wouldn't otherwise have the privilege to get. In some cases, again especially at my school, arts programs motivate kids to get up and go to school everyday. Cutting this would be a major loss."

Isla (Gr.11), Victoria highschool

Voice, Clarinet, Cello, Ukulele, recorder

109. "Being in music programs changed my life. I am graduating this year and without the music program in middle school and high school, I wouldn't have the family and connections I've made. Music has given me confidence and purpose and without it I wouldn't be half the person I am today. Middle school music programs and the teachers brought so much to my life and introduced me to something that I will take with me once I leave highschool. I am also leaving with some of the best memories and connections you can imagine. So many kids will be lost without music in their school experience."

Madea S (Gr.12), Reynolds Secondary

Saxophone(alto, bari, tenor), bass(electric, double), piano, voice.

110. "Music is the community that has kept me going throughout highschool. Without it, I'd be lost. I was welcomed into a community the second I stepped into the Reynolds music program. I had open arms ready to help me grow and develop as a learner and person. Music education builds better students. Students who feel connected to each other, who have support, and regularly practice music have been shown to develop better academic skills as well as overall mental health. Psychiatric practitioners have observed and documented the undeniable connection between rhythmic and group movement and trauma healing. It's not just a distraction, or a niche skill, or "unnecessary learning". Music teaches the skills of life, it teaches calming techniques and breath work, it helps students feel more stable in their sense of selfhood. A well funded band program is the beginning of healthy, driven, and top achieving students. Cutting this program in middle schools would be a great mistake that you would see the effects of immediately. I'm talking lower morale in schools, lower academic and test scores, more mental health crises and strain on already overwhelmed youth services. You have to consider society at large here- as well as the students and communities you're effecting.

Without a middle school band program to prepare me for high school, I wouldn't have gone into the band program that saved my life. I would have never made the lifelong connections with the people I know today. I might not even be here at all. I beg you to reconsider cutting funding. See the effects. Hear our warnings, our outrage, our pleading to you. Cutting music funding is one of the worst decisions you can make. Keep Band Alive, Keep sd61 Alive."

SJM (Gr.12), Reynolds Secondary School

Trumpet, Voice.

111. "Without music in schools, I would not have known what I wanted to study and do for a living. Music is something that helps develop so many life skills, and it's an activity that needs to be taught in all schools."

Jacob W (Gr.12), Oak Bay High

Voice, Bassoon, Trumpet, Clarinet, Violin, Bass.

112. "Music is an opportunity to step back from stressful situations and just enjoy listening and playing. If it wasn't for my middle school band teachers, I would not be in band today. Music education can offer students a chance to explore the wonderful world that is music. If other districts can keep Music Education, why can't we?"

Anonymous (Gr.10), Oak Bay High

Trumpet

113. "Test"

Anonymous

114. "Without music, so many students wouldn't be who they are today and I know that's true for me. I don't know what I'd do without music and I don't know if I would have discovered this passion were it not for music programs at school. Music quite literally keeps me going and to think that there's a chance that there will be students who don't get the same experiences that I did in the music program breaks my heart."

ps (Gr.12), Reynolds Secondary

viola, baritone, percussion, voice

115. "Music gives me a chance to find community, expand my skills, give an outlet, provide a safe space, learn, improve mental health, have fun and of course play/sing music! Music has been such a big amazing part of my middle and high school life and it is very important to me that younger students in Sd61 have the same musical opportunities. Without my music teachers I know that me and my classmates would not be where we are today. By making cuts to Sd61 music programs, you would be taking away such a key part of our schools and opportunities and something that is so important to thousands of Sd61 students! By making the proposed cuts, not only elementary and middle school students would be affected but higher level music

in high school and post secondary would be negatively affected also. Please listen to me and the other students, teachers, alumni and parents and keep our music programs running!"

R (Gr.11), Reynolds

Voice, Viola, Trumpet, Musical theater(voice)

116. "Please don't cut the program. I have some many friends who are enrolled in it and love the program and would be Devastated to learn that it will no longer be running. So many people with musical interest are in the program with a passion to learn and hopes of music being a part of their future."

MH (Gr.11), Claremont

Trumpet

117. "Music gives students an outlet and creates a safe space for self expression. I believe that's vital for kids my age, ESPECIALLY during COVID."

Lilah (Gr.10), Reynolds

I used to play, trumpet, saxophone and guitar

118. "They shouldn't cut the music programs because many students rely on music and having the ability to play music with others in a environment that is already harsh with studying and learning, when students play music it's a way of letting them enjoy themselves and to break free from the stress and having fun with friends and teachers."

Victoria P (Gr.11), Oakbay High Secondary School

Voice, Cello, Flute, Violin and a little bit of piano

119. "That budget cuts in music would hurt morale more than cuts in almost any other department"

Sebastian O (Gr.12), Reynolds secondary

Alto Sax

120. "Don't cut the music program, it has helped a lot of students become who they are. People use music as an outlet, to express themselves. It's unfair to cut the music program, whether the reasons for it being cut there is always another solution. As much as I am not a music student my friends and those around me need and love music. It has helped them so much."

Sarah (Gr.10), Claremont

piano and clarinet

121. "I think that making cuts to music programs of any kind is a terrible decision. The amount of people that music impacts through school is unbelievable and taking that away is simply not fair

to those students and teachers. Personally, I have been a music kid since I was born, doing choir, band, jazz band and more since elementary school and I can say confidently that my life would be so different, in a bad way, without having those programs available to me. Music is such a big part of my life, it brings me joy, helps me find new opportunities and friends and makes my life so much better every day. Taking music and the programs that make it available to students away is not ok from me or from anyone involved in music and should not even be a discussion that needs to be had."

Amelia B (Gr.10), Reynolds secondary

Piano, percussion, tenor saxophone, voice, recorder, ukulele

kathleen r (Gr.12), oak bay high

voice, piano, violin, saxophone

123. "Music is an essential part of education and provides a necessary creative outlet for young children and youth. Music has given me an amazing group of friends and a great community that has supported me through school. I would be a completely different person if I hadn't been given access to music education in my young school years. My music teachers were some of my favorite people to talk to in school and helped me to grow a lot as a person."

Paul W (Gr.12), Reynolds Secondary

Stand up bass, bassoon, tuba and piano

124. "Music programs are vital. They matter just as much, if not more, than sports programs"

Anonymous (Gr.10), Oak bay 122. "after being incredibly lucky to experiment at a young age with the piano, violin, voice and the saxophone, i have kept both voice and piano with me throughout the majority of my education from kindergarten up until now (as a student graduating this year) and plan to continue both as hobbies that i take immense joy in as i graduate and move into the next chapter of my life. choir and voice have brought me the most incredible community of entertaining and kind people who I am lucky to call my friends, and the piano has been a quiet and meditative practice which I cherish deeply. The music programs that sd61 offers have given me the opportunity to experiment with music in so many forms and gifted me the practices in singing and piano that absolutely light up my days. I would hate to see that gift taken from any student in the coming years." *high*

Clarinet, voice, recorder

125. "It can't cut music because it will in turn end all music for kids"

Jeremy H (Gr.10), Oak bay high

Tenor saxophone, viola

126. "You can gain many benefits by just learning the basics. You will develop a taste for the different composers, styles, and genres of music. Not only does this cause you to be more well-versed in music, but it also leads to a higher appreciation of the skill."

Sarah (Gr.11), Claremont

Clarinet

127. "if you cut i will cut"

al (Gr.10), oak bay high

violin, flute, piccolo, saxophone

128. "The Board of Education needs to know how much of a positive effect music and performing have on mental health. The communities built around these programs are inclusive and long lasting and are a pillar in student education for many."

Owen A (Gr.11), Reynolds secondary school

Trombone, guitar, vocals

129. "Choir is a big part of my life and it's always fun and a good time abs it helps a lot of people to have people they can be connected too"

Katie A (Gr.10), Oak bay high

Voice, flute

130. "I think they shouldn't cut it because it provides a great way to meet new people and try new things."

Anonymous (Gr.10), mount doug

clarinet

131. "Music has helped me stay alive and it provides so much for all of us."

Asha R (Gr.10), Oak Bay high school

Clarinet

132. "I have been an international student and the music program has meant a lot for me! Being part of this amazing school band was just fabulous - I have met a lot of people throughout this SD61 music program so I just can say - we need the money!!"

Jule H (Gr.11), VicHigh

clarinet

133. "I find it awful that they are trying to cut it. It helps us kids grow and learn and see what our passions are."

Abby (Gr.6), Glanford middle school

Clarinet

134. "I graduated from Oak bay high school June of 2021. I went to middle school at École Sécondaire / Central middle school. It saddens me to hear even the slightest bit of consideration to cut these programs. Throughout the whole pandemic, no matter if it was school through zoom, remote learning or in person, no matter how I felt with my emotions, I felt like I could live through music, and get the emotional support I needed from my music teachers and classmates. I met many of my close friends today through my coach, mentor, choir teacher, the most amazing person you would ever meet to sum it up- through sd61 music. I thank Tina Horwood, Steven Price, Ross Ingstrup, Maryanne Ing for providing me with the best education a student could ever ask for. In conclusion to this note, I know many students struggle through high school, because I was, and still am one. The one thing at the end of the day that I will take away with pride from my education as a learner will always be my journey through music. No matter what there is going on, there will always be music in my ears with memories, friendships, and mentorship's that will last a lifetime. I strongly believe that the future holds with music and music education. I thank you kindly for reading this, Best regards, Silken L. S. SD61 2021 Graduate"

Ss (Gr.N/A), Oak bay high school - 2021 graduate

Voice, Strings, Band (percussion)

135. "Music programs, and the community that comes with it, has truly been my biggest anchor. Being with my friends, expressing ourselves through music, is the greatest gift. Taking that away would shatter my support system, and in turn, my mental health. The fine arts are equally as important as academics."

Frances K (Gr.11), Oak Bay High

Violin, Guitar, Piano, Ukulele

136. "I need music very much because it always lightens my day! It helps me process everything that is happening. Not only at things that are happening home but mostly on school work! I don't know how I would manage without music. So my final message is: DON'T CUT MUSIC!"

Angelina V (Gr.6), Arbutus Global Middle school

Recorder, ukulele, cello, voice, percussion, trombone

137. "Music is definitely one of the things that helps me get through each day, and if the district cuts the music program, I know for a fact that there are many others who need music as much as the academics of school."

KEG (Gr.8), Cedar Hill

Percussion, Violin and Voice

138. "Music is a necessity for our youth. Do you want a successful school district? One that is boastful and envied by others, one that has the full support of the community? Listen to what that community wants then. What young students need. I'm going to tell you something that I see everyday. I have friends who deeply struggle with their mental health. Who often do not come to school, do not interact with their friends, do not show the youthful enthusiasm that some of their peers do. And what I have witnessed, countless times again, is that entering those band doors, picking up their instrument and making music with those who love and support them, makes a difference I have yet to see anywhere else."

Gabrielle C (Gr.8), Cedar Hill Middle School

Clarinet, Viola, Voice

139. "Music is so important to many kids, myself included. Music lifts us up and can be our means of escape. It is a way we can express ourselves, as well as learning valuable skills. Just because music may not be as popular or "cool" as other programs doesn't mean it's disposable. If music programs are cut, many future students will find themselves without a place to go to be themselves and make art. It is so important and so life-changing. Some might even say life-saving. So please know that if you cut music programs, you are getting rid of an important part of many student's lives, and making a lot of kid's days harder."

Anonymous

140. "I have to level with you, music was never really my thing and still isn't, but I've seen how happy it makes my friends and the other students who really love and excel at musical things. It's a real confidence and learning booster for many, many people, seeing as even if they aren't good with grades or gym or anything, there's one place where they can be skilled and supported and that will and has translated into significant performance improvements in their learning from many students I know and more that I don't. The school district would be a band of fools to cut music education."

Cameron C (Gr.8), Arbutus Global Middle School

Guitar

141. "I love learning about music. Music days are my favorite days at school. Even my Uncle Seth, who plays the cello in a music group in London, says it's amazing what our schools offer. He can't believe how much I know about how to read and play music even though I'm in grade 5. It's all because I get to learn it at school. My family can't afford to pay for me to learn music outside of school. It feels mean to take it away from kids like me who don't have money to pay

for private lessons. It feels like you have to be rich to be able to do anything fun anymore. Please leave the music classes alone. I want to sing in choir in middle school. We couldn't because of covid, so all of us in class have already been talking about how we can't wait for next year so we can sing. Please let us sing."

VK (Gr.5), campus view

recorder, ukulele, viola, xylophone

142. "Music is a big part of my life, and I am sure it is to a lot of other people. I get a lot of musical knowledge from music class at school. Learning about music also helps in other subjects such as math, art and history. When I go to school, I always look forward to band or strings. My teachers are AMAZING. They are so nice and they teach really well."

Clara D (Gr.6), Lansdowne Middle

Viola and flute

143. "Don't cut the music program because it's fun and you can cut the elementary music at Macaulay cuz music there sucked"

CB (Gr.7), Shoreline middle school

Cello

144. "I am no longer in school district 61, but I spent my elementary school years at South Park Elementary school. My music class experiences there were essential in shaping my current work as a composer, pianist, and violinist. It is incredibly important that students are introduced to music and the arts at school. It is fun, and teaches teamwork, creative thinking, and taking a project from start to finish. Removing these programs will rob students of experiences that will help you in any direction your life takes you."

Raine H (Gr.9), Royal Bay Secondary School

Voice, Violin, Recorder, ukulele, indigenous drumming

145. "Music is important to kids"

CL (Gr.6), Lansdowne middle school

Viola and clarinet

146. "Music brings joy to my heart."

VB (Gr.8), École Shoreline

Viola and Choir

147. "I want them not to cut music because music is the best part of my day!! I look forward to from the moment I wake up. If I one day knew that I could not do music I would be so upset! I

feel alive when I play, I just feel like I am being me, you know? I love my music teachers they are so sweet and knowing also if you cut music they will lose their job and I don't want that for them knowing how they enjoy music as so do I. I want to let you know that if you cut music thousands of kids and quit a lot of adults will be soo upset! Please don't cut music for me and all other music students. Thanks"

Clancy I (Gr.6), Lansdown

Piano, trumpet, cello

148. "I want to play ukulele and strings at school! I haven't had a chance yet!"

Fiona (Gr.3), Cloverdale traditional school

voice

149. "Music is important. It's fun and helps us learn. It's one of the main reasons I go to school."

MT (Gr.7), Cedar Hill middle school

Violin/flute

150. "Certain people won't come to school without music and it's an important brain break/learning experience"

SB (Gr.6), Cedar hill middle school

Viola percussion

151. "Music is life changing and I love it so much. I would be devastated without it at our school."

Loden F (Gr.7), Rockheights

Trumpet, Violin.

152. "I didn't have any music classes in elementary school, and I've always looked forward to joining band in middle school. I feel sad that I won't have a chance to learn an instrument."

BW (Gr.5), James Bay Community School

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153. "Music programs in schools have changed countless lives for the better. It has saved lives in fact. Music programs are lifelines for some kids, and taking away the music programs is like cutting off that lifeline, and that is not something any kid of any age should be put through. As a grade 9 student who's been in various parts of the music program, I speak out of personal experience that the music program is a welcoming, inclusive, safe and enjoyable environment in which kids can be true to themselves, are safe from judgment and can easily make friends with similar interests. Music classes allow us to have time to step back and relax, while also being

very educational. Taking away these music programs in the SD61 school district is simply a terrible choice, and would result in a tremendous decrease in mental health for some students. The music programs should be supported instead of cut."

Brianna D (Gr.9), Reynolds Secondary

Violin, Flute, Voice

154. "I think that music is an amazing part of the school community and it would be so sad if you guys cut it. Because music is one of the best parts of school, kids our age come to school everyday so excited to play their instruments at lunch break. And we can't forget our amazing music teachers. They are so amazing and they teach us new things every time we bring our instruments to school and they teach us music and if you cut the music program then what would they teach us? I think it's a really important part of our school community so please don't cut it. It's really important to all of us. It would mean so much to all the students, Teachers, parents, and the whole community so please do us a favor and don't cut our music program that's the only thing I'm asking you it's really really important to us."

Hayden F (Gr.6), Lansdowne Middle school south campus

Voice,clarinet,violin

155. "I love music! Going to school knowing I get to make music with my friends makes my life so much better. All my music teachers make it so fun and the stuff we are learning is so great. We just had our first concert and it was soooooo fun 😊. I would hate for the music program to be cut.Thanks for spending the time to read my letter. I know you must be getting lots of letters because so many kids love music! Audrey M"

Audrey M (Gr.6), Lansdowne Middle School

Voice, Trumpet and Viola

156. "PLEASE DON'T CUT THE MUSIC PROGRAM IT MEANS SO MUCH TO SO MANY OF ARE STUDENTS I LOVE THE MUSIC PROGRAM AND PLEASE DON'T CUT IT 😊👍"

MADDIE M (Gr.8), Gordon head middle

I played the cello

157. "Music has been one of THE defining experiences I've had in school. I've had so many great memories in music and I absolutely hate the idea of younger kids not getting those same experiences. Not only is it a useful skill, but it's a passion, release, and an overall great program. In my opinion it is the most crucial extracurricular department in any school and I really hope the district doesn't make the mistake of taking those opportunities away from so many kids. Please reconsider your decision"

AN (Gr.12), Mount Douglas Secondary School

Clarinet, alto sax, Violin

158. "Please DON'T cut music!!!! I am soooo excited for band next year. I would be really disappointed if I waited 7 years for band and I didn't get to do it."

Mason M (Gr.5), Hillcrest

I have not played any instruments but I am super excited for band next year.

159. "Music, Concert and jazz band are the highlights of my life. They are something I am very passionate about. I treat them as academic subjects and I work extra hard to sound good. Learning more about playing percussion and drums is important to me. As a student with a physical disability, I rely on my band classes to gain credits in order to graduate. Without music and band in middle school, I would not have the foundation and the experience in playing in a high school band. Music and band at school makes me feel happy and calm when I am feeling anxious, stressed or worried. It helps me focus in the moment and helps me stay positive when I need to. Please do not cut our music programs."

AM (Gr.10), Spectrum

Percussion, drums

160. "School would be a lot less enjoyable without band and jazz band. I love the concerts and the feeling of playing in a big group! I love my band teacher."

Caitlin H (Gr.7), Cedar Hill Middle School

flute, cello

161. "For the music students at Reynolds, our band, choir, strings and more are not just musical classes. For many of us, they are the reason we come to school every day, despite covid protocols, masks, bell covers etc. They are a safe space where we can speak what we feel without being judged and where we know that no matter what, we always have the support of our teachers."

Simone L (Gr.10), Reynolds

Clarinet, bass clarinet, percussion, vocal

162. "Music is as important as math and important for mental health. Being in music teaches you the most important way to be an A student and a idea teachers are unable to teach you, working on a small chunk of music knowing it's going to sound terrible the first time and working until it's perfect."

Tanner (Gr.8), Gordon Head

Trumpet, French Horn, Cello, Voice

163. "Do not make the cuts. Music is the best thing about school. I would hate for it to be cut out of the budgets."

Emilio F (Gr.6), Cedar Hill Middle School

Voice, Cello, Guitar, percussion.

164. "By cutting these programs you will not only be destroying dreams of MANY children, but you will also destroy hundreds of teachers' jobs of teachers. You absolutely can't do that to the families that they provide for and their children. I have dreamed of being a famous singer since I was very young and I can be that many other children my age probably have as well. You will be destroying so many dreams if you cut the program. Thank you for reading."

Benjamin f (Gr.8), Cedar hill middle school

Voice, electric bass, violin

165. "MUSIC IS THE ONLY HAPPY THING IN SCHOOL BESIDES PE"

Anonymous

Trumpet viola French horn

166. "Middle school is a place to try new things. If you cut music, students won't learn about music until high school and won't commit to it. I've met so many of my friends through band and without it I wouldn't have met half of them. One of my band teacher's s left last year due to knee injury. This term he's finally coming back to teach part time. If you cut music in middle school, he won't have a job. Many incredible music teachers won't have jobs."

Madeleine B (Gr.8), Central middle school

Recorder, ukulele, piano, guitar, drums, viola, clarinet, voice,

167. "Music for me is my favorite part of school"

GG (Gr.6), Cedar Hill Middle School

Choir, violin, ukulele

168. "Without music programs in our schools us as kids won't have the opportunity to try stuff that we might enjoy. The music programs give us opportunities to play and learn music . Please don't cut music it's really important."

HCS (Gr.6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Viola, Ukulele, Trumpet, Voice

169. "The board should definitely not make the cuts, music is one of the most enjoyed subjects at the school and it means a lot to me and to many of my peers. We need music as it bungs happiness to everyone who takes part, effectively changing the mood of the whole school. The board must not cut the funds!"

JZ (Gr.8), Arbutus Global Middle School

Flute, Violin

170. "It really fun for lots of people and a lot of them spent money that would be wasted if you cut music"

Jeff (Gr.6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Clarinet, Saxophone

171. "Music is important for many people. Cutting the budget will make the classes more difficult, and for people who cannot afford an instrument, will make it impossible to play as they will not be appointed an instrument, due to budget cuts."

KS (Gr.6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Trombone, Cello

172. "I have listened to music my entire life and had a passion for music, my father is a guitarist and my mother a singer. I've always wanted to play music and without it, it would be a lot harder to learn to express my thoughts and feelings, I would hate for music to go. Please keep funding the teachers they don't deserve this."

Payton C (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

173. "We saw in recent years Sd61 attempted to cut music but we've already shown that that's not an option. the board and the district has a lot of problems and this is one of them that needs to be adressed."

Ioewen (Gr.8), Arbutus Global Middle School

Clarinet

174. "In middle school, I took part in every possible music class. I'd wake up early in the morning, stay in at lunch, and after school. No matter the challenges I went through as a growing individual, even when I wasn't able to talk about them, I was always able to count on school music classes to brighten my day. Making music gives me the energy to be able to engage in other endeavors as a busy, well-rounded student. Moreover, music is where I've found friends. Currently in high school, the extent to which I'm grateful for everything my middle school music teachers have done for me and my peers is inexpressible - far more than simply teaching us how to make music. It's the passion, the expertise, the kindness and inspiration, the way these individuals go about teaching a subject that is interconnected with every part of our academic and personal lives. Music programs let you be part of something greater than yourself - an inclusive community where everyone matters - and hard work is paid off in the hands-on creation of something beautiful that brings joy to others & yourself. I want more middle school students to experience this, including my younger sister! It is with certainty that I say these programs have made me a better person. The proposed cuts to middle school music will be a

devastating loss for not only middle schools, but high school programs, the school district as a whole, and local community.”

Emilia V (Gr.9), Mount Doug Secondary

Flute, Voice, Piano, Violin

175. “Please don’t.”

CJB (Gr. 6), AGMS

Trombone, Violin, Ukulele

176. “Please don’t cut the music program we need music in our lives.”

Lilia E (Gr. 6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Voice

377 STUDENT VOICES

“What is one thing you'd like the SD61 board to know as they make the decision of whether or not to cut music programs (strings and choir)?”

In less than 36 hours, students across the district answered this loose prompt.

Please read every quote, every word. Listen openly, before you make up your mind.

Remember every voice.

This is *our* education.

1. " [...] extra programs/activities can really help a person de-stress, whether that be from school or home situations."

Julia W (Gr. 6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Clarinet

2. "If you take away music, you're taking a part of the students away too."

ALD (Gr. 8), Cedar Hill Middle School

Voice, Trumpet, Cello, Violin

3. "After two years of playing cello, I'm suddenly faced with two years without instruction. I want to continue strings in high school, but it'll be hard with such a huge gap in strings education. It's not just about music. It also helps with my mental health."

Matthew E (Gr. 6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Trumpet, Cello

4. "Music makes me feel alive and special and able to communicate with my friends and listen to famous and amazing songs played by us and it feels amazing."

Liam H (Gr. 6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Violin, Clarinet

5. "Through my learning disability the band program is the program that kept me motivated coming to school."

Annika C (Gr. 12), Victoria High School

Flute, piccolo

6. "I think music is very essential in our learning and educational experience. Music is one of the best parts of my day and I love how everyone can join together to create something so beautiful. I know that many students, including myself, consider music very important and exciting too. Learning new songs is always great fun and playing with friend is so rewarding. It's also a way to create, express and make new friends. I think that if sd61 cuts our music we will see that many young children will become less social and creative. I know that many people find music one of the only ways to really express how we

feel and I don't think that cutting music is a good solution. I think everyone should have the chance to play an instrument. Cutting music is not the only way to fix budget problems. We need to find another way to save money because music is not something that we want, it's something that we need."

Leah H (Gr. 5), Campus View

Cello (did many others before Covid-19)

7. "Music has helped me and other students I know immensely."

TD (Gr. 11), Esquimalt High School

Voice, Violin, Alto Saxophone

8. "If you're going to cut the music program[s] I would rethink that, music means sooo much to so many people for some people it's who they are! So if you cut the music program just know you will be cutting out a piece of our community and a piece of most of the music programs heart!"

Finley M (Gr. 6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Clarinet

9. "Music is fun and relaxing."

Jasper (Gr. 6), Monterey Middle School

Violin, Tenor Saxophone

10. "Music programs are essential for developing the artist, community, and passionate spirits in students."

Astrid N-M (Gr. 12), Esquimalt High School

Voice, Trumpet, French Horn

11. "You are taking away the chance to help kids survive."

Will R (Gr. 12), Esquimalt High

Flute, Piccolo, alto sax

12. "It is not just cutting music programs, it's cutting opportunities for kids to make connections and build support systems. By taking away music, it is taking away opportunities for self-exploration and understanding. It is taking away opportunities for kids to learn about the world around them and taking away opportunities for kids to find a place where they belong. By cutting music, it cuts out the opportunity for kids to see the world differently and it can cut off future pathways for them. Music is important, and it is especially important for kids who are still in their developmental stages to have access to something that will allow them to grow and develop into their best selves. By taking music away, it will lead to effects for them in the future and this amazing music culture you see today will no longer be what it once was once you take away the base of it all."

Raine G (Gr. 12), Esquimalt High School

Voice

13. "School will be [...] boring [...] without these things."

Russell K-M (Gr. 7), Colquitz Middle School

Trombone, Alto Saxophone, Choir

14. "I don't know why they think this is ok. Band and choir are literally the best thing about my middle school experience right now and it's not fair to take that away from other students!!!"

SP (Gr. 8), Cedar Hill

Flute, Voice

15. "Music can sometimes take the stress off of students. And when I am having a really bad day I always look forward to band because it cheers me up."

Aaron P (Gr. 7), Cedar Hill Middle School

Baritone Saxophone

16. "Kids need a support system, and music was mine. The community that forms in an ensemble is unforgettable, dynamic, tight knit, and so, so supportive. Middle school is HARD, especially mentally and emotionally. I would not be here if I hadn't forced myself to get out of bed for early morning rehearsals. Music was my small escape, and it still is. I feel alive whenever I'm in the band room and surrounded by beautiful sounds and people."

Lilah W (Gr. 9), Victoria High School

Oboe, Alto Saxophone

17. "Music is very important to the development of kids. It helps them find who they are, and express themselves in ways that may otherwise not be possible. It is a community of creative, kind people, with a whole ton of gifted, wonderful teachers & students who need music in their lives to share with the world. Music changes people and allow them to be themselves and make new friends and find new passions. I speak for my fellow students when I say "We need music. The world needs music." I truly can't imagine my life without it. It makes my days fun and exciting. It makes me who I am. And it's part of who I will & want to be."

Natalie H-J (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Trombone, Violin, Voice,

18. "Music is the one thing I look forward to in my day, no matter how bad my day is going I know things will be better when I get to music. Music brings me joy and a place to belong."

Tori-Ann (Gr. 8), Cedar Hill Middle School

Voice and Tenor Saxophone

19. "I love singing with my friends in choir."

Samantha W (Gr. 7), Cedar Hill Middle School

Voice

20. "Out of everything to cut back on I can't understand why you have to cut strings and choir and band from school. I was so excited to go to middle school next year to continue my cello and to participate in choir and band but now I might not even have the chance to try and music is supposed to be part of the middle school experience. The days of the week that I have cello are my favorite days at school and I get excited to think about learning a new song. I will be so upset if these cuts go through because I was hoping to continue to get better at playing the cello and life without music at school is not nearly as interesting. When I play the cello I feel very happy. It feels good to play music with my friends. Please, don't cut these programs."

Emilio (Gr. 5), Doncaster Elementary School

Cello

21. "In grade 5, I remember being able to play the violin in strings. It was so much fun and helped expose me to the musical environment. I'm so grateful that I had the chance to do that. Why take such an important part of learning away? Music helps us express ourselves and is our voices. Stop the cuts!"

Lillian W (Gr. 6), Cedar Hill Middle School

Electric Bass

22. "If you cut music programs you're cutting a valuable form of collective learning that is fun for everyone."

Grade 6, Lansdowne Middle School

Clarinet

23. "I am very sad because I wanted to do lots of musical activities when I got into middle school and I want the kids who are in grades below me to have the same experience that I did. I got to learn viola and they should be able to."

Jamieson C (Gr. 5), Doncaster Elementary School

Viola

24. "Music brings joy to everyone"

Greg (Gr. 6), Cedar Hill Middle School

Viola, Trumpet

25. "I was involved in 7 ensembles last year at Cedar Hill Middle School (vocal jazz, concert band, show choir, junior strings, concert choir, and orchestra) and I cannot begin to explain the positive effect it has had on both myself and my studies. Music is an incredibly diverse and rich community that allows students to be themselves and express their talents and passions. It is a place where those who don't believe in themselves, or feel like they don't belong, to break out of their shell and have motivation towards their goals. Music is a remedy, a medicine for the wounds that only students in middle school can truly experience. It is the anchor in the ever-changing learning environment that can be so confusing and staggering, and it is often the one thing that students can depend on to be there. Particularly in the midst of this pandemic, music has been instrumental in many lives and provides hope and joy in a time where that may be scarce. To spring these astonishing cuts on us at this crucial time, is cruel. We have already lost so much this year, don't make us lose this too."

Gabrielle C (Gr. 7), Cedar Hill Middle School

Viola, Voice, Clarinet

26. "I think that cutting any music programs will affect so many lives - and not in a good way. The music programs have made my life amazing - they have opened doors for me to try new things and have new experiences and make new friends. When I play my violin I think about how long it took me to get to where I am - it took three years for me to finally be able to play at the level I play at now and I finally feel like I can see myself actually continuing to improve and to think that it could actually be taken away not just from me but my friends and the younger kids and my teachers! It seems so unfair! We are just getting started! Every time I go into choir rehearsal I see the people around me and think about how happy I am that I joined. My life wouldn't be the same without music especially choir - I don't

just sing when I'm there but feel a part of something greater than the music - I feel like I am a part of a bigger family. It makes me so happy - the feeling is indescribable. If these programs are cut I will be so upset. I can't even imagine what school will be like without strings, choir and band. My music teachers mean so much to me. They represent all that is good at school."

Benjamin F (Gr. 7), Cedar Hill Middle School

Violin, Electric Bass, Voice

27. "As it stands, music is a massive part of what makes our school district what it is. The opportunities provided by schools all across the district are highly valuable to the learning of so many students, myself included, and strings and choir are a central part of this. While I may not have participated in strings myself, I see many of my friends take great joy in the music they can create together in that program. Losing out on choir this year was a great disappointment, and I miss the chance I had in years prior to sing in collaboration with such a large group of my peers. The idea that there would be students who would never get to know any of that experience is a travesty. Cutting these programs would be a massive disservice to so many kids, and would strip our school district of one of its most important features."

Kate M (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School

Tenor Saxophone, Voice

28. "Music is so important. It is like a universal language. Everyone in the world hears music and learns to play instruments to show who they are and to express emotions. Not only can you be yourself and free in music, but you also learn a lot - you learn to work in a team, to listen closely, and to let everyone shine. So think about this. When you were young, what helped you learn? Music! You learned the alphabet song, number songs, different animal songs, and much more! And for me, music has helped me so much - from playing music to making math songs that help memorize my times tables. The music program is not just here to teach us how to play instruments or sing a song. It also instills music into us and helps us communicate, express ourselves, and help us in ways you could never imagine! Please don't take away this precious gift! It nurtures us, helps us flourish, and even protects us during such a tender time in our lives. Thank you."

Beata (Gr. 6), Cedar Hill Middle School

Choir, Percussion, Violin

29. "I love choir and it's an important part of my week."

Alyssa LW (Gr. 7), Cedar Hill Middle School

Clarinet, Voice

30. "Music has taught me more than just songs. It has taught me to work as a team, built my confidence by performing in public, math because of the theory, discipline with practicing and a sense of pride performing with my friends. I don't understand why you would take this away from us."

Roman H (Gr. 7), Cedar Hill Middle School

Trumpet, Voice

31. "Don't cut music."

Sophie (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School

Tenor Saxophone, Bassoon

32. "You are meant to improve our education and provide us opportunities not take our beloved programs away. Strings and choir are not second to band. You need to stop treating them that way. Taking away programs is easy. Putting them back will take years of effort, money, and time. So avoid the hassle and keep them. Start making decisions for the benefit of students. Right now your decisions are for your own political gain. You were voted in to improve our school district but instead are making an exorbitant salary (public knowledge) and destroying it. You are a disappointment, a facade, and will probably not be voted in again if you proceed with the proposed budget cuts."

Grade 12, Esquimalt High School

Violin, Viola, Voice, Clarinet, Piano

33. "Please don't cut our music, it means too much to us students. It is the main reason why I gladly get up early in the morning."

Yvie (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School

Baritone, Cello, Voice

34. "Music is crucial, for our wellbeing, for many music is what helps people during the hard times."

Michelle F (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Violin, Flute

35. "There are children out there who look forward to the joys of music and by cutting the budget, you are essentially cutting down the happiness of children."

Thomas G (Gr. 10), Mount Douglas Secondary

Percussion

36. "People use music for different reasons such as maybe playing it makes them feel relaxed, peaceful and calm and lots of kids love playing instruments and it would be very sad if you cut it because you are possibly making them sad and not very happy about it."

Kotomi O (Gr. 9), Mount Douglas Secondary

Trombone

37. "One of the only things I am willing to go to school for is the music program."

Maya C (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School

Flute, Voice

38. "Music is something that so many people do to find that peaceful moment of their day or week, so cutting out that thing that brings so many joy will just add to the mental health crisis and lack of trust in schools. Cutting strings and choir for music kids is just the same as cutting chemistry or biology for science kids, which would never happen. So why should this be able to?"

Grade 12, Victoria High School

Ukulele, Guitar, Voice, Violin

39. "Cutting strings and choir will have a huge impact on future students. Joining choir in elementary school was what really bloomed my love for music, and if I hadn't participated in it, I wouldn't be the same person I am now."

Grade 8, Arbutus Global Middle School

Recorder, Ukelele, Guitar, Violin, Voice, Trumpet

40. "You don't need to cut the music program, so many things have been cut already, and it's not fair to take music away from the students as well."

Grade 9, Mount Douglas Secondary

Violin, Clarinet

41. "I love music too much, please PLEASE do not cut it."

Yvie (Gr. 8), Arbutus Middle School

Baritone, Cello, Voice

42. "So many kids will be impacted by this and it doesn't seem fair to cut so much off to the future generations. There are other ways to cut down on funds as well."

EP (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School

Violin, Baritone

43. "Music is a gift. Cutting middle and elementary school music is cutting opportunities to form long lasting life skills, friends and experiences from thousands of children. Cutting music is cutting opportunities for children to learn and gain confidence in a positive environment. Cutting music means cutting sources of relaxation and fun from many students. Music is a gift, now more than ever. Who doesn't want an extra place to escape to, quite literally at their fingertips. So I ask, why now, and why music."

E. Gibson (Gr. 7), Colquitz Middle School

Clarinet, Tenor Saxophone

44. "Taking away music is an act of violence. To deprive students of having a creative outlet and a community that truly supports us is foul. The pandemic has taught us that connection is something we took for granted. For you to take away what little we have gotten back from this hectic year completely undermines the hard work of our teachers and classmates. I hope you truly understand that this is not just about you breaking your word of keeping our classrooms inclusive AND fulfilling our potential. This is also about how you could easily consider disregarding our wellbeing. Music is not just an "extracurricular" to us. Please consider the damage these budget cuts will do to not only your current students/staff members, but also to your future ones. I beg of you, listen to our cries."

Gheana V (Gr. 12), Esquimalt High School

Voice (Choir, Theatre, R&B)

45. "School music programs provide opportunities that many students wouldn't have the means to experience otherwise. Music is an extremely enriching extracurricular that has the potential to induce a lifelong hobby in students. Many students begin by playing an instrument in school music programs, then transition to private lessons, and some even become professionals. Taking away music programs would take away the opportunity of being a musician from many students. As for the budget, I believe that you should look at where from outside the school system you can get the money from, rather than where from the school system you can take it from. Inhibiting the opportunities of students for a budget cut is not a viable solution."

Lucy Z (Gr. 11), Mount Doug Secondary School

Violin, Voice, Flute, Piccolo, Alto Sax, Guitar, Ukulele

46. "Taking away strings and choir will be detrimental for our Esquimalt community. I remember being in grade 1 and being so excited to join choir and be able to get involved with the other students. Not only is the decision to do this EXTREMELY hurtful but also in a pandemic? Students have lost enough, for many kids music is the only reason they are attending schools right now. It is supporting the mental health of hundreds of students. Taking away this essential learning piece especially for younger students will not just cause negative effects next year but for generations. School is more than being good at math, as a society we have to stop holding such high value to "typical academic courses" and acknowledge that music is essential."

Olivia W (Gr. Grade 12), Esquimalt High School

Violin, Bass Clarinet

47. "Music is very important to many kids out there, including me. Cutting the music program will not benefit students and their learning. Music is like a therapy that can calm certain students and makes the music program very important."

Fiona H (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Violin, Trumpet

48. "Music is so important in life. I am shocked and disappointed that the school board is considering cutting these programs. Middle school music IS NOT ONLY BAND. We NEED choir and strings as well! I don't even know how they could even consider this an option. So many children will be affected by these changes. Will the school board be making the right decision if they decide to remove such an important part of so many people's lives?"

CW (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School

Violin, Percussion

49. "I want them to know that this is a passion and that our future is worth more than 7 million dollars."

Milo M (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Trumpet

50. "Music truly changed my life, the lives of all my friends, and so many others, for the better. It's so essential to have the music program as a creative outlet in schools. Music gives students a place to express ourselves in a healthy, safe way, and gives us a community to fall back on when we're in need of support. It's so heartbreaking to know that our incredible music programs might not be experienced by future learners in the district. Cutting music is absolutely not in the best interest of the students."

Anya R-S (Gr. 11), Esquimalt High School

Voice, Flute, Trombone

51. "Don't cut the music program."

Elijah S(Gr. 9), Reynolds Secondary School

Flute, Violin

52. "They're taking away a valuable opportunity for children as well as depriving them of an amazing growth and learning opportunity, gaining experience in a musical instrument helped me gain so much confidence and I don't want to see children robbed of that opportunity."

Emma J (graduated from Esquimalt High School last year)

Voice, Viola, Flute

53. "As a sibling of special needs, I see how middle school music dramatically benefits my family. Ripping music away from my brother will lower his grades, insure he is not motivated to attend school, and may likely lead to depression. Please do not kill the song. #savethemusic"

Rebecca (Gr. 9), Esquimalt High School

Trombone, Violin, Voice

54. "It's a great opportunity for many students to develop their creative and collaborative/ensemble skills, both which are very applicable to future careers and endeavors. Furthermore, it is a crucial program for many underprivileged students who may want to learn an instrument but do not have the financial means to do so without the support of school music programs."

Connie (previous SD61 student), University of Victoria

Voice, Clarinet, Violin

55. "As a flute player, even though flute is not a part of strings nor choir, I strongly disagree with the cut in elementary/middle school music program. It is always important to offer future generations more options in their art interests as many of them may not be able to afford private lessons outside of school."

Wendy (Gr. 10), Mount Douglas Secondary School

Flute

56. "Directly quoted from the school district's website mission statement: "We nurture each student's learning and well-being in a safe, responsive, and inclusive learning community." Based on the recent budget cut proposal I am feeling the exact opposite of this phrase. Every music program in our district has created a positive impact on each student. This is due to the mental health benefits it provides, and safe spaces it creates. By being responsive you would take the consideration of millions that are being brought to your attention. I would like a sincere response to how, in any way the currently suggested budget cut contributes to the success and potential of students. After all, we are the exact reason you have this job. Do not let the students, staff, families and community members down."

Lassah J (Gr. 12), Esquimalt High School

Violin, Flute, Alto Saxophone.

57. "Music is important to me and lots of other kids. If the SD61 board cuts the music programs kids don't have the chance to learn and have fun. I think that music is important and that it's important for the people in strings and choir to keep doing it and if the SD61 board cuts the funds they can't do any musical things that they love."

Gabriella V (Gr. 6), Gordon Head Middle School

Saxophone

58. "Hey! If you see this, I would just like to let you know that cutting strings and choir would be a terrible idea in the long run. Many people find escapes in those, or enjoyment. If the budget cut goes through, you will be affecting hundreds, possibly even thousands of students. Thank you for listening."

Kaiya B (Gr. 6), Colquitz Middle School

Ukulele, Recorder, Clarinet

59. "I think that the School Board should take the time to realize that we all like music, and don't want it to go. Personally, I think that music classes are one of the best subjects you're taught at school, and I really don't want to wait 2 years to get to play a strings instrument in school again."

Benjamin GS (Gr. 5), Willows Elementary School

Viola, Choir

60. "It is a great program and people you could find a way though this without cutting music ok got it GOT IT?!!!"

Olin (Gr. 6), Lansdowne Middle School

Trumpet

61. "Before I started strings, I never saw myself as a person who played an instrument. Because of strings I realized that playing in instrument is my thing. When I heard about the proposed budget cuts, I was devastated because I thought I wouldn't get the chance to play an instrument in grade 6."

Angela C (Gr. 5), Doncaster Elementary School

Violin

62. "Choir unlocks a different part of your brain and can help you later in life."

Grade 6, Arbutus Global Middle School

Alto Saxophone

63. "Music is a passion of mine, and it scares me to think that a kid like myself might have that outlet stolen from them."

Grade 11, Mount Douglas Secondary School

Voice, Saxophone, Guitar, Cello

64. "Music is a part of who we are, not just what we do."

Esther (Gr. 6), Cedar Hill Middle School

Violin, Clarinet

65. "Music makes me feel happy inside. When I sing I feel free and choir is one of the places I sing the most. I don't agree with any of the budget cuts. Cutting student support is the opposite of what a school board is supposed to do."

Madeleine B-C (Gr. 7), Central Middle School

Clarinet, Piano, Viola, Voice, Guitar, Ukulele

66. "Just reconsider!"

ZM (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Clarinet

67. "I really don't want them to cut band, strings and jazz band. When I joined band at school, I realized that I had quite a passion for percussion. It would be heart breaking if they would cut it. Also, for next year, the 7th graders are allowed to participate in Jazz band, which I really want to do because I might also be able to play the piano, the instrument that's occasionally played only in jazz band."

I play the piano at home, I would like them not to cut jazz band. Also strings, the board said that they could make some saves to band, but not strings. Strings is just as important as band. there are some people who are just in strings, and only want to be in strings. So if it gets cut, they're cutting all music for some people. Also, think about the current grade 5s, they will have a very small music selection to choose from. So that's it, FERMATTA TO ALL MUSIC!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! hehhehheh"

Matilda S-H (Gr. 6), Shoreline Middle School

Violin, Percussion

68. "Music helped me through a lot growing up. It helped me stay in the right crowds at school and to enjoy coming to school everyday. I want younger kids to continue to have this amazing experience going through school."

EB (Gr. 11), Victoria High School

Voice, Baritone, Baritone Saxophone, Cello

69. "People don't have much things to do during COVID and this might be their only way of escape."

Aislinn (Gr. 9), Mount Doug Secondary School

Voice

70. "Music programs have been my lifeblood for 8 years. They've helped me become more responsible and given me many friends and opportunities. Music programs, especially choir in my case, have been the one consistent highlight of my school career. So much so that I am planning on being one! Cuts to these programs deny children access to support, learning and vital socialization, especially in a COVID year."

Bree A (Gr. 11), Oak Bay High

Viola, Jazz Piano, Voice, Flute, Piccolo

71. "Please don't cut things we need, like strings and band. Music helps lift my spirits."

J.S. (Gr. 5), Campus View

Violin, Ukulele, Recorder, Voice

72. "Music is important for school."

Samir K (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Bari Saxophone, Tenor Saxophone

73. "I think it's a bad idea. Why should you cut music, which is fun for us kids, just for, money? Music is so fun which is one reason why I love school. I hope you guys really understand that music is so important and I hope it doesn't get cut off."

KZ (Gr. 6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Flute, Viola, Voice, Recorder, Ukulele,

74. "It's good to express your feelings with music. Please don't cut music."

GS (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Violin, Saxophone, Ukulele, Recorder, Voice

75. "Considering how much Covid has affected the students here mentally, and with the changed schedules and regulations making school way more stressful than it is fun, taking away one of the few things children actually enjoy in school is simply a heartless, awful, cruel thing to do. School is not for studying! It's important to learn but children need to enjoy life, especially now when this is basically the only time people can enjoy things and be, well, children."

Elizabeth D (Gr. 11), Oak Bay High School

Tenor Saxophone, Piano, Voice, Percussion

76. "Don't do it, don't cut the music programs. The music programs have been so amazing, fun and helpful in learning."

Ava (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Voice, Violin, Ukulele, Clarinet

77. "We should have a say in our education too."

Maya I (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Trombone

78. "Music has been, for ages, a way for students to express themselves. Taking this away is taking away a vital part of our education. If you insist on making any sort of cuts, please inform yourselves on which programs students are interested in, and which programs they are not. The music program in SD61 is amazing, and I am part of it. We as students should get a say in OUR education. You are making decisions FOR us about what we should learn about. Please consider everything I have said, and many others have said, before you move forward with this decision."

Saanvi RK (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Alto Saxophone, Violin, Voice

79. "We should get a say in OUR education!"

Sylvie G (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Saxophone, Recorder, Xylophone, Voice, Ukulele, Viola

80. "Music is a language, a special one and a lot of people use it for lots of different reasons. To make money, to have fun, to achieve their goals, to connect, and so many other reasons. Music is a voice, a voice for those who don't have one and It's a part of us, all of us. So if you cut music, you cut us."

AD (Gr. 6), Cedar Hill Middle School

Violin, Trumpet

81. "Taking away music programs is taking away children's creativity and development. Not only does music act as a form of therapy for children, but it also teaches valuable lessons like teamwork that they will hold with them for the rest of their lives."

Anise R (Gr. 10), Victoria High School

Ukulele, Viola, Flute, Alto Saxophone, Voice

82. "Music is a community, don't take that away!"

Isla S (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School

Voice, Guitar, Trumpet, Drums Ukulele

83. "If you cut these programs, you're making a lot of kids lose a part of themselves. Why not cut exploratories like global action?"

Zaima (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Flute

84. "Music was the reason I went to school, it was what made me excited to be at school. The music room was like my second home and I never wanted to leave. Being in the music program gave me a sense of community that I was lacking at school. It also helped boost my confidence and leadership skills. I would not be the person I am today with out the Van Tech music program and the amazing teachers who work tirelessly to make it the incredible experience it is. So I'm asking you to really think about what you are cutting here, it's not just a class, what you're cutting is a community and someone's reason to come to school. Music should not be something so easily thrown away."

Maayan A (graduated)

Violin, Voice

85. "PLEASE don't cut music programs and if you do then a lot of kids who are going in to grade 6 or 5 will not be able to go to music."

Jake B (Gr. 4), Doncaster Elementary School

86. "Hi! Please don't cut the music program, thank u."

Selena (Gr. 5), Doncaster Elementary School

Violin

87. "You should not cut the music program because people enjoy music and it brings joy to their day. So please DON'T CUT the strings program."

Isaak U (Gr. 5), Doncaster Elementary School

Viola

88. "I like that [the sd61 board] help[s] music program[s]."

Grade 4, Doncaster Elementary School

Drums

89. "I want them to know that music is very important part of any kid's life. Music helps you for your mental health."

Priya S (Gr. 5), Doncaster Elementary School

Viola, Voice

90. "Just know that you will be taking away our music, some mental health, and most of our hopes for middle school."

Heidi (Gr. 5), Doncaster Elementary School

Piano (at home)

91. "Because it will take dreams away from kids."

Oliver Z (Gr. 5), Doncaster Elementary School

Violin

92. "Not to cut, because there are so many kids just dreaming to play in an orchestra."

Keaira KC (Gr. 5), Doncaster Elementary School

Violin, Choir

93. "Music means a lot to many students. If you decide to cut music programs, then many students will be VERY angry."

Annika S (Gr. 4), Doncaster Elementary School

Violin

94. "Music shouldn't be cut because some kids need it for mental health and some families may not be able to afford private lessons, so they go to a public school to play an instrument. Also, many grade 5 students, and grade 4 students have been looking forward to being able to play music at school. Some parents might also want their children to play an instrument because they had a chance to do it when they were our age and they want their kids to have the experience too."

Myra H (Gr. 5), Doncaster Elementary School

Violin, Ukulele, Drums, Recorders, Piano, Boomwhackers

95. "Music is very important. Please don't cut it, and it shouldn't be cut anyway. I always wanted to do band in middle school, but if you cut it, lots of kids will be VERY sad. Some kids can't afford private lessons. Think about them. I hope you don't cut any music program."

Elena I (Gr. 5), Doncaster Elementary

Viola, Ukulele, Recorder, Bucket Drums, Boomwhackers

96. "I do not think you should cut sd61 music programs because they help with mental health."

Chloe B (Gr. 4), Doncaster Elementary

Ukulele, Xylophone, Voice

97. "I feel like music is really important thing for everybody."

Kesler (Gr. 4), Doncaster Elementary

98. "The music program should not be cut because kids need this program, they are happy, but especially emotional. If there was no music program then there would not be not much orchestra and not much concert! I do both concert and orchestra at Victoria Conservatory of Music. The music is important to people who is lonely and are sick. Some people who are sick and old got well and the old people felt young."

Juliet K (Gr. 5), Doncaster Elementary School

Violin, Ukulele, Drums, Piano, Boomwhackers, Recorders

99. "I don't think they should cut the music programs in middle school because there are so many new younger kids that want to try out new instruments before they go to high school and have to choose their electives."

Michelle K (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School

Voice, Percussion, Flute, Guitar

100. "Don't cut music!"

KL (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School

Clarinet

101. "Music is so critical for many student's mental well-being. Personally, my music teachers inspire me and I would hate to see them lose their jobs to dumb budget cuts. Don't cut music!! It's critical!"

Liya F (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School

Voice, Alto Saxophone, Flute, Violin

102. "Music is life for me. It's my future! It's what I want to do. I have loved the many instrumental and vocal ensembles I have participated in, and am so grateful for the opportunities. I wouldn't be who I am today without my wonderful music teachers and all the awesome programs I have had the privilege of being a part of."

John H (Gr. 12), Oak Bay High School

Voice, Trombone, Drums, Guitar, Bass, Viola

103. "Music gave me a reason to get up in the morning even on the toughest days of middle school. By cutting programs, you're taking away a place students feel safe and loved."

Lexie K (Gr. 12), Oak Bay High School

Cello, Trombone, Tuba, Voice

104. "Music is the only reason some kids get out of bed in the morning."

Grade 5, Doncaster Elementary School

Viola

105. "Music is an essential part of education and learning, and personally music like strings makes my day brighter and helps me get through the school day. I find it disappointing that they would cut such an important of education."

Matt J (Gr. 8), Arbutus Middle School

Viola, Voice

106. "Music is such an essential part of a student's wellbeing and making cuts to the program will prevent students from performing to their best academic capability."

Seoyoon L (Gr. 12), Oak Bay High School

Piano, Percussion, Drums, Bass, Voice, Violin, and Viola

107. "They are making a mistake."


Dominic B-C (Gr. 9), Oak Bay High School

Voice, Baritone Saxophone

108. "Music keeps a lot of people sane and inspired and gives them a safe place to be themselves."

Madison L (Gr. 10), Oak Bay high School

Voice

109. "Don't do it 

Isha C-S (Gr. 9), Oak bay High School

Violin, Voice

110. "Much less people will participate in school music programs."

Brett S (Gr. 9), Oak Bay High School

Trumpet, Cello, Voice

111. "Do Not Cut Music."

Max Z (Gr. 10), Oak Bay High School

Euphonium, Tuba, Voice, Viola, Guitar, Recorder

112. "It is a mistake to cut music funds."

Ian C (Gr. 10), Oak Bay High School

Voice

113. "Choir was a place that I could go and not feel judged I felt welcome and at home and I am sure lots of kids feel like that so if they do cut the music kids like me will feel more and more alone."

Ariela DB (Gr. 9), Oak Bay High School

Voice, Saxophone

114. "Music means a lot to me and a bunch of other students in the sd61 school district. Cutting the music program will be very damaging to the students who have used it as a safe space."

Sarah E (Gr. 10), Oak Bay High School

Violin, Ukulele, Voice, Flute and French Horn

115. "Choir is the only motivation I have to come to school. I have trouble bringing myself to come to school on days I don't have choir."

Roxanne M G (Gr. 10), Oak Bay High School

Voice, Trumpet

116. "The music groups I am in make me excited to go to school and make want to learn."

Gawah C-S (Gr. 9), Oak Bay High School

Violin, Trombone, Voice, Piano

117. "Choir was my favorite place in middle school. It was a break from academic pressure and a safe place when I wasn't feeling my best."

Maya Wilkinson (Gr. 10), Oak Bay High School

Voice, Flute

118. "The music program creates lasting friendships and provides a safe welcoming community."

Marlow K (Gr. 9), Oak Bay High School

Trumpet, Percussion, Violin, Voice

119. "When I moved here from Toronto in grade 4, I felt completely out of place. The music program completely saved me throughout Elementary and Middle school and most of my current friends were made in band or choir. I have two younger siblings and it breaks my heart to know they won't have the same experience as I did. Please save the music program!"

Annie M (Gr. 9), Oak Bay High School

Violin, Clarinet, Voice

120. "Music is important for everyone. It doesn't just help with learning how to play an instrument but so many different other skills that you can use throughout your whole life. Music is one of the reasons many students enjoy going to school and not having it would only decrease both mental health and educational opportunities."

Isabel (Gr. 10), Oak Bay High School

Trombone, Voice

121. "Music class is the best part of my day every day and it is the thing I look forward to and what gets me out of bed! It is my life and if it gets taken away for me or others it will be devastating for our community."

Claire M (Gr. 10), Oak Bay High School

Flute, Percussion, Piccolo, Voice

122. "Choir is the best part of my day and it brings me so much joy. I cannot imagine my life without it."

Isabel N-M (Gr. 10), Oak Bay High School

Voice

123. "Cutting music programs will divide and isolate communities and connections that have been carefully built for decades. Music teachers provide an entirely different species of education, one that prioritizes said building of community and love for music first and foremost. In-school ensembles are more than just cliques, they are entire worlds that every individual enters to express their most social, personable, and lovable selves."

Gur BD (Gr. 10), Oak Bay High School

Voice

124. "Singing in choir taught me how to cooperate and make harmony with different people. This is what we need on these days."

Dahae Y (Gr. 9), Oak Bay High School

Voice

125. "Music especially during covid means so much to me. In middle school music was beneficial to my learning and always fun. Music at oak bay high makes me feel like a part of something and I get to be part of such a great community. Choir teaches me choral skills but also life skills and is really beneficial to my mental health. Choir is my happy place where I get to hang out with a group of really nice people."

Maia L (Gr. 9), Oak Bay High school

Flute, Clarinet, Voice

126. "I think music is super important to school programs and especially during covid since there aren't a lot of things you can do during this time. It's also something you can always look forward to during school."

Isabelle (Gr. 9), Oak Bay High School

Flute, violin, piano, voice

127. "Strings at lansdowne was like a home me and my friends would stay for hours after school in the music room. It was a safe place that we could go to and where I made a lot of my friends. the only reason I decided to go to lansdowne from my previous school for band, choir, and strings. Others should have that opportunity to have a home at school and it should not be taken away from them."

McKechnie B-N (Gr. grade 9), Oak Bay High

Flute, violin, alto saxophone, and voice

128. "The music program was how I found my community as a new student entering sd61 in grade 7. Having the opportunity to join other students from other classes and unite through music was, and continues to be, irreplaceable. I have been a part of every music program possible and, as a current grade 12 student, I have many friends who have become such incredible musicians through the school districts programs that they are able to pursue music after high school. To be at this level of musicianship, it is essential that music programs start as early as possible, especially programs like choir and strings which are extremely accessible thanks to the districts string library. Sd61 is unique as schools in this district don't have the stereotypical 'music kids.' When 80% of students at Cedar Hill Middle for example are involved in music, there is no longer just a few 'music kids' effected but rather an entire way of musical engagement that touches thousands of students lives. This is not the time to cut music programs. There is never a time to cut music programs. Music is unifying and celebratory and challenging and empowering. #Musicisforeveryone."

Grade 12, Oak Bay High School

Cello, Bass, Bass Clarinet, Bassoon, Voice, Ukulele

129. "One thing I would like to say before you decide to KEEP the music program is that so many people have no other interest other than music, including me, I want to be a singer when I'm older, my dreams will feel even more out of reach if you remove the music program, a program that makes school enjoyable to come to. The sense of community that the music program gives us is incredible, even in difficult times. There is no reason why they should cut the music program other than to crush the dreams of many students that go to school in the SD61 school [district]. I trust you all to make the right decision by keeping the love of music in schools alive and we'll because we deserve this."

Kaya C (Gr. 10), Oak Bay High School

Voice

130. "Without music my life would be meaningless. Music has helped shape who I am today. If you cut music from schools you will be depriving a wonderful asset from kids."

Hudson K (Gr. 10), Oak Bay High School

Trumpet, Voice, Baritone, Alto sax, Viola, Cornet, Cowbell, Guitar, Ukulele

131. "This would crush thousands of kids spirits who were looking forward to music."

Eli R M (Gr. 10), Oak Bay High

Percussion, piano, voice, djembe

132. "Choir."

Cody W (Gr. 8), Colquitz Middle School

Trombone and voice

133. "It would be detrimental to music."

Caleb (Gr. 10), Oak Bay High School

Guitar, Piano, Voice, Violin, Recorder, Percussion, Drums, Harmonica, Tenor Saxophone, Alto Saxophone, Baritone Saxophone

134. "Taking away music will leave an empty space in the education of so many students. I remember having quite a rocky middle school experience and music being a constant I could rely on. It's a place to meet new people, a place to express themselves, somewhere to go and not be judged, somewhere you can feel like you fit in. To take that away would be not only a waste of potential but also a direct hit to the well being of students."

E L (Gr. 10), Oak Bay High School

Tenor Saxophone, Bass Clarinet, Clarinet, Voice

135. "Throughout my three years of going to Arbutus I've learned how important music is for young students and it would be an absolute shame to take that away."

Talib A (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School

Trumpet, Voice, Violin

136. "Music has been a tremendous asset in my journey to self confidence. Choir always pushed me in the best ways and gave me a sense of belonging. Without school music education, I wouldn't be as confident as I am today! I am graduating this year, so technically this budget cut doesn't affect me. But I know how important music is and I believe everyone should get to experience it!"

Keysa (Gr. 12), Oak Bay High School

Voice

137. "This decision has a body count. I know countless people, myself included, who have struggled with mental health and found respite in their school's music program. I know several people who would perhaps not be alive without their middle school/high school music experience. Money cut from music programs will increase costs both in counselling programs, and more importantly, cost in student lives.

Furthermore, studies have shown that learning an instrument correlates with academic success. The skills required to multitask in a manner required for music translate to work habits and skills which foster phenomenal students. Frequent group-singing has been correlated with improved mood and

emotional health. Music programs are as advantageous to education and student health as any other program and provide a level of skill-building equal to any other extracurricular program.

On a purely artistic level, the quality of work attained by senior ensembles would be a drastic and unnecessary sacrifice of these cuts. At the high school level, certain ensembles attain a near-professional level. This would be an absurd and impossible notion if not for the years of experience that performers receive in their middle school music programs. The skills developed in elementary and middle school make the quality of work produced by high school ensembles possible.

For thousands of students in the district, the music program proves a highlight of their day, a highlight of their week, and often a highlight of their education. Reducing and cutting school music programs would be an abhorrent mistake, and would drastically damage the educational experience and well-being of SD61 students."

*KM (Gr. 12), Oak Bay High School
Voice, Clarinet, Saxophone*

138. "Music teachers are important because they teach students how to play different types of instruments and experience new things. Or maybe even help them develop a hobby."

*Leah N (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School
Violin, Recorder, Guitar, Ukulele*

139. "Music is the best part of my life and cutting it would mean you are cutting my life."

*Mikayla (Gr. 6), Cedar Hill Middle School
Electric Bass*

140. "Music is a way to express emotions and connect with others. Taking away music programs would have a larger impact to those who participate than it would be to take their phones away. Removing these music programs also lessens the chances of getting into a professional position in strings & choir."

*Avery H (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School
Voice, Violin*

141. "We get a say in OUR education."

*Isabel T (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School
Percussion, Orff, Choir*

142. "These programs have connected kids to friends and have inspire many students to go on stage and perform what they love, it has also given kids who wouldn't be able to play an instrument regularly a chance to."

*Maya E B (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School
Saxophone, Violin, Voice*

143. "If they cut the budget for music programs, it's makes it worse and I feel like without the money to show our learning, I can't express my feelings through music."

*Juliana O-C (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School
Violin and Trumpet*

144. "Music is like a way of communicating feelings for everyone. It doesn't matter what your limitations are, the way people connect with music basically binds all of humanity together. Music is so much more than just a trumpet or a piano doing its thing, music is everywhere. The way the leaves rustle in the wind, accompanied by birdsong early in the morning is also music. If music programs get cut, a piece of our lives and the way we communicate will get taken away because music is a universal language and it holds a fundamental place in our lives whether we acknowledge it or not. And even if the SD61 board decides to ignore our voice in our OWN future, music will never truly leave us. We will continue to listen, explore, and learn. Our future is in our own hands, and we will really not give up that easily."

ASH (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School

Clarinet, Ukulele, Voice

145. "You saved a few groups from the guillotine of budget cuts, but your bargain deal of saving merely a few groups is not a deal we will take. You have the power to control what we learn, you have the power to choose which projects to fund, and which ones you'll let go. YOU decide our future, and this future you're creating is a bleak outlook on life full of solely academia. A life made only of the shell of an engine and not the fuel that fires it. For a world and country that is in dire need of bright young minds, you, who farm these minds, sure are keen on taking off the life-support of our creativity before it was even cultivated. Music, art, a challenge to life, these are some of the things that are the water and nutrients to us students, to take it away is to take away our reason for living, our reason to continue giving what the world needs in society. Your continued path is one that is moving towards a cold and callous future, filled with factories and warehouses full of young minds made to think alike, in one way, forever in spite."

Irisa R (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School

Piano, Violin, Percussion, Voice, Bass, guitar, ukulele, drum kit

146. "The music program is one of the most essential programs offered in SD61 schools. Studies have shown that music promotes happiness, increases creativity, and boosts learning potential. Neurological benefits aside, the music program also offers an unparalleled experience to all SD61 students, regardless of their gender, race, or financial background. SD61 wants to take away one of the most enjoyable programs offered at its schools. They want to take away a program that leads to lifelong interests and careers for some students. They want to take away an outlet for students to express themselves. They want to take away the happiness of hundreds of students. Countless families will be undoubtedly be devastated - this decision is clearly not the right one."

Patrick H (Gr. 10), Mount Doug Secondary School

Piano, Percussion, Voice, Violin

147. "In elementary and middle, I struggled at school, did not have good grades, and often did not want to go. The one thing that made me want to go to school was music. I knew that no matter what was happening, when I got to strings, or choir, or band, it was something that I was good at. Now I am in grade 11, and I am excelling at school. I have excellent grades in the high 90's, I'm involved with many clubs and leadership initiatives, and I enjoy going to school. Music taught me the skills I needed, it was the sole reason I kept attending school. I'm planning to go into medicine at UBC in two years. Without music, there is no way I could have made it to the point I'm at now."

KA (Gr. 11), Oak Bay High School

Viola, Violin, Ukulele, French Horn, Flute, Voice

148. "Many people have a love and a passion for music that can't be replicated and it is something that should never be taken away from current and future students."

NY (Gr. 7), Lansdowne Middle School

Trumpet, Violin, Voice

149. "They will be demolishing the hobbies and pass times of hundreds of students across the school district and for some students music is the only thing they have [...]"

Grade 8, Lansdowne Middle School

Violin

150. "Students need it! Music makes us feel so much better, especially if we're having a bad day or just don't enjoy school in general. It calms us down and makes us like school so much more."

Eva C (Gr. 7), Glanford Middle School

Percussion

151. "Don't do it. ❤️"

Isha C-S (Gr. 9), Oak Bay High School

Violin, Voice

152. "Music is important to kids and we have to help them learn their passion from a young age, and cutting the music program will not help with that."

Grade 8, Arbutus Global Middle School

Flute, Violin, Voice

153. "Music is medicine."

Bailey (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

154. "Music helps so many people all over the world, it's not just a program, it's also a way to help students. I also have played an instrument before and I know how much people like to do what they love."

Tiffany C (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Violin

155. "One thing is well.... DO NOT CUT IT!! Music is an escape for people that don't have one!"

Haylie (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Clarinet

156. "I want the sd61 board to know that if they cut the music program that means some kids can't explore different instruments and learn, cutting that would be like cutting all exploratories or telling kids that they can't play a sport."

Elise M (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Flute, Viola, Ukulele, Voice

157. "Think of all the kids that will be disappointed that they won't be able to try or continue learning music. A lot of kids can't afford private lessons and rely on public education to provide a variety of enrichment to our learning. Joining band and choir has really helped my confidence and enjoyment of school."

Brianna G (Gr. 8), Glanford Middle School

Voice, Trumpet

158. "Cutting off music will put them a year behind making it hard to catch up in the future making their grades go lower for music."

Lauren (Gr. 7)

Piano, Guitar, Recorder and Clarinet

159. "Music isn't just an extra, it's a reason to get up, it's where you make friends and it's where you can forget all your troubles and just play! Don't think of it as an extra, think of it as a way of life."

Ruby E (Gr. 6), Glanford Middle School

Clarinet, Voice

160. "Don't do it. Music has been proven to improve mental health and make a person happier. It is fun and develops a person's brain in different ways than a person who doesn't play music."

Ella O (Gr. 7), AGMS

Guitar, Piano, Bass Guitar

161. "Music is part of our lives."

Marcus K (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Voice

162. "Music is education and a part of so many lives so when you cut strings and choir you're not just cutting strings and choir but a whole in everyone's heart."

Gabriel DS (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Saxophone, Violin, Choir

163. "Music is beneficial for learning, if you cut music, student learning will suffer. Music can be an escape from anything that is stressful for students. Music is one of the pillars of the school program. Take away one pillar and the roof, all of schooling, can collapse. Money for education should never be cut, and no student should have to fear for their music program."

Emma B (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Saxophone, Ukulele, Voice, Recorder, Violin

164. "I am half and half about the budget cut because on the one hand because of the pandemic budgets are scarce but on the other hand many students would depend on lessons to learn to become future musicians."

Matt (Gr. 7), Arbutus

Piano, Violin, Guitar

165. "Music are education, they are also our life. A world without music is like birds without wings, you just can't take that away from us. Music is a part of us, if you cut out a piece of us we'll be bleeding."

Tanya SS (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Flute

166. "Music can fuel students with passion about stuff and prompt them whether its towards classic or modern its music, and how boring is this world without music, for real! it fuels creativity and after all isnt that what they teach us as students to do, be creative so if you take away the program then you are taking away kids creativity."

Kai JL (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Recorder, Ukulele, Flute

167. "Arbutus' music program is one of our defining traits, without the music program, many students would not have had the opportunity to learn how to play an instrument and a life skill. Many students also enjoy participating in the CBC Music Contest. All of this would not be possible without the music program in Elementary and Middle schools. So please do not cut our music budget."

Mira W (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Cello, Clarinet

168. "Music is a community, Music is a way of life, Music is a way for people to connect and to make friends for life, Music is a part of everyone and everything, Music is my life, Music is me."

Rebecca (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Xylophone, Trumpet, Recorder, Voice, Ukulele, Violin, Tone Chimes

169. "Many students express themselves through music all the way from elementary to high school and even older and its not the best idea to take that opportunity from them. Many kids also come from families with huge music backgrounds and its just as important as families with sport backgrounds, and I think families would rather have kids to start music when they are young rather than waiting for after high school. Some families might not be able to afford music programs outside of school."

Arnika S (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Choir, Violin, Ukulele, Guitar

170. "Choir - When I was in elementary school choir was amazing. We got to do so much wonderful stuff and I think it helped me learn more self confidence. Band- In band it was hard at the beginning, but my music teacher helped me learn how to read music and now playing the French horn in band is always brilliant "

Kaelyn (Gr. 6), Gordon Head Middle School

French Horn, Voice, Clarinet

172. "Just know that lots of kids love strings and choir and most of us will be so devastated if you do cut strings and choir."

Grade 6, Arbutus Global Middle School

Trumpet, Violin

173. "They shouldn't cut band i love band its very fun to attend and learn new things about it i would hate to see it go because it something i enjoy!"

Jeremy Z (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Trumpet

174. "Music is a good outlet for me and helps me channel my creativity into something positive opposed from disrupting class, removing music is like taking a wheel off a car, the car won't work."

Graeme (Gr. 6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Violin, Clarinet, Voice

175. "Even though playing music isn't one of my big interests, I think music is an important thing to a lot of people whether it be singing, instruments etc... I think choir and strings are very important as well as band so i think they should keep choir and strings because it's a very important thing for kids."

Ivey (Gr. 6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Flute, recorder, ukulele, cello

176. "I would like them to know that music helps the brain develop and it helps with creativity so it is just going to make school harder."

Lily C (Gr. 6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Viola, tone chimes, flute

177. "There are a lot of people who need music in their life and maybe they're not good at band."

DB (Gr. 6), Cedar Hill Middle School

Voice, Trombone

178. "Music is one of my mom's favorite memories and one of my favorite things in school and in would make me sad in you cut music."

Luke S (Gr. 6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Clarinet, choir

179. "I think that it is unfair that the school board is cutting the music program because some families cannot afford to pay for outside of school music classes and the schools music program is not just a good opportunity to learn music without paying hundreds of dollars every month for private music lessons but its a chance for kids to make new friends and perform for many people. Music is for everyone and i don't think this is fair for the school board to just take away something so big and prestigious. If you think about it many music teachers will lose their jobs for doing something they love to teach especially at this point in life. So this is why i think you should not cut the music program."

Grace C (Gr. 6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Flute

180. "Music brings me happiness. Kids emotions and my well being is more important than money. "

Isha K (Gr. 5), Campus view

Cello

181. "It's people's passion and it may be the only reason their mental health is hanging on, if you cut it people will lose that."

Taylor (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Flute

182. "This music program could be the only activity (other than school) for some kids here. I think that this program should be kept, and the fact that the students had used their time in music class to go against this."

Lukas B (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Saxophone, Percussion

183. "For some students music is the most important thing in their lives, and for others it provides a great opportunity for intellectual exploration. Music provides invaluable skills such as teamwork, creativity, and is often the first-time students learn to study on their own. "

Max M (Gr. 12), Mount Douglas Secondary

Violin, saxophone, ukulele, flute, guitar, voice

184. "If you do this you will heighten the suicide rates for this district. I can think of no good reason to cut the music ."

GD (Gr. 8), Colquitz Middle School

Voice, trumpet, saxophone

185. "Music is very important and lots of kids and adults use music to express their feelings. If the music program is canceled many kids won't be able to express those feelings and a lot of people can't afford music. Please keep the music program :)"

Mya J S (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Alto Saxophone

186. "I think you should not cut the program it means so much to the people. Music is like therapy to some people and music can be their world."

Mollie (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Clarinet, voice

187. "The music programs LITERALLY SAVED MY LIFE. the music programs make me WANT to go to school, it makes me WANT to LIVE, sometimes its the only thing that i actually live for. "

Jasmine (Gr. 8), Colquitz Middle School

Voice, Ukelele, Recorder

188. "Don't cut the music program as I want to learn more"

Thimath A (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Trombone

189. "I think that they shouldn't cut the music program."

Jillian F (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Flute

190. "For so many music is an escape from reality, a chance to let go of worries and be free. Music is a way to express yourself and a way to be you. Doing music in school is freeing, it's a class so many look forward to and a break from stress. School music is so essential, so many kids discover a passion for music and fall in love with this form of art. Music is so important to me and so many people I know, music is a community, an opportunity to make so many connections and friendships. Music shapes people and become parts of our personality, children need music. The beauty of music is that it can be so many things and do so much. Music is a part of us and to take away music from so many would be like taking away a part of our community. We need music. Music is not yours to take, keep it for the children's sake. "

Taylor W (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School

Trumpet

191. "I would think it's a terrible idea to cut music, first of all tell us the truth about if you are in dbtt district. District I mean it that music is important, if you need to cut something, cut something like vice principals or not as many counselors instead of cutting music, ea's or food programs."

NYD (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Trumpet, cello, choir

192. "I'm not great at music and don't play but I think as kids, it's important to learn a musical instrument"

Harry L (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Violin, Flute, Guitar

193. "I ask you, why? Why are you doing this when you have other options. Yes, they may take more effort or more thinking through, but why of all times now? Students, no, Schools, need music. I know several students that, without music, wouldn't be here today. Do you think that fixing this deficit in the easiest way possible is worth all of the side effects? This cause does not directly affect me, but it will affect my little brother. He is so excited to join band, and choir, and the musical, as are so many others. But if you want to break the news to rooms of hopeful children in the years to come, be my guest. You know what, I'm wrong. This issue does affect me, because all of the kids who won't have had a musical education up until high school will now take down the very structure of how high school's music programs work. So, think about it. If you want to take the dreams of children away, do so. If you wish to say that music is not an important part of education, go ahead. But know this, children have more influence than you think, and it can be dangerous to have that influence put up against you."

Leni H (Gr. 8), Colquitz Middle School

Voice, Alto Saxophone, Oboe, Clarinet, Ukulele, Viola, Violin

194. "People in band and strings will be sad they can't play anymore. I want to learn Saxophone when I get to middle school."

Logan (Gr. 3), Macaulay

Recorder, choir

195. "I would like the school district to know that cutting strings and choir is not okay! Strings, choir, band, whatever you play, it's like a sanctuary. A getaway. It's not only enjoyable and beautiful but it's also essential. For some kids, it can be just as good as seeing a counsellor. And taking it away, is like taking away a safe place. Taking away a part of our own mental health in some cases. And only keeping grade 8 band is not enough! Strings and choir and lower grade bands are just as important. I mean think about the kids tat are going to be left out of a potentially big part of their lives because of

this! I know this is probably a lot longer then you anticipated, and I don't know who is reading this but... it's just how I feel. MUSIC IS ESSENTIAL! "

Malana (Gr. 7), Shoreline middle school

Cello, Percussion, Voice

196. "I have been playing music since the beginning of elementary school and without it I wouldn't have made the friends I have today."

Grade 8, Arbutus Global Middle School

Voice, strings, guitar, ukelele, clarinet

197. "Music is invaluable please don't cut it."

Allen (Gr. 6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Baritone & Alto Saxophone

198. "The music programs are very important to many people, and I think that cutting them would be a very stupid thing to do, as it would enrage, hurt, disappoint, sadden, infuriate, madden, anger, upset, depress, anguish, dismay, and discourage all those people and many, many more."

Kaella (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Voice, Violin, Flute, Tone Chimes

199. "Middle school is a time to try new things and experiment with different and new things and the music program gives people the opportunity. There's something there for everyone and you get the opportunity to meet new people that you would ordinarily meet. The music program is so important and cutting it would be detrimental to all people who have, are currently in or thinking about joining the music program."

Zoe G (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Clarinet, viola and voice

200. "The music program is not only a great way for learning but also for friendship and making good relationships"

Jessica M (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Flute, voice

201. "They are cutting out dreams for students."

Maple I (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Trombone

202. "DON'T CUT THE MUSIC PROGRAM!!!!!!"

M.P (Gr. 7), AArbutus Global Middle School

203. "I love music and you should NOT cut music at all. It is a great opportunity, and you shouldn't cut music just for money. It's not worth it."

Keizhen Z (Gr. 6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Flute

204. "Ff it goes in my ears it goes to my brain"

Chase R-L S (Gr. 6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Clarinet

205. "I think the music programs give a good opportunity to try something, and in the future if you like it, you can get more invested in it. Taking it away gives less opportunities and you might never know the enjoyment of playing a instrument or being in a Choir."

HJ (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Violin, Trombone, Flute

206. "Band is important for all children all shapes and sizes"

Jack W (Gr. 6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Clarinet

207. "Music is important and it is super fun"

Allegra L (Gr. 6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Clarinet and viola

208. "they shouldn't cut it because its a great opportunity for students to learn and gain a new hobby, we should have a say in OUR education"

Loewen RH (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Clarinet

209. "Don't."

Eleni R (Gr. 6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Flute

210. "Lots of people like to do music and they will be sad if you cancel it"

Rio P (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Ttumpet

211. "It's a really important and would be really sad if theses programs got taken away."

Ahri B (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

I played trumpet

212. "Please know the effects that cutting the strings and choir program would have. It would harm so many students mental health. It will effect the future generation, so please consider opposing the budget cuts"

Cadence M (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Violin, Clarinet, Voice :)

213. "Lots of people like it and they would be sad if you cancel it"

Daniel H (Gr. 5), Arbutus Global Middle School

Violin

214. "music is very important to me and many others. it allows us to express ourselves and we need to keep it in schools. some people might not be able to take private lessons and music in school allows them to make and play music. i was very disappointed because i couldn't do choir this year (due to covid) and i was really looking forward to doing it next year. strings makes me and others very happy and i'd be really sad and disappointed if it doesn't happen next year."

Natalie (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Voice, bass, percussion

215. "music is such an important thing and i want the younger generation to also be able to do music. If you take away the arts you take away students pride and joy!"

Thea G P (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Choir

216. "I think music is very important for everyone [no matter what type]. It adds a nice break from the stress of the day where I can have fun and just play my instrument."

G.W (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Trombone

217. "Music brings joy to me (and probably a lot of people). I really don't want the music program to cut because I really want to keep playing the instruments that I enjoy playing. My music teachers have done a lot to teach us, so hopefully the music program does not cut."

Victoria, V.H, Victoria Hou (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Trumpet, Violin

218. "I think the decision to cut the music program was very unwise due to the fact that music is one of the most enjoyed activities in middle school, I usually look forward to getting up early on Tuesday and Thursday morning to play strings with my friends, it's made some of less fun days AMAZING. It makes my days for a 3-6 to a Outstanding 8-9. I really hope you understand the importance of music in middle school and reconsider our decision to cut the findings for it!"

Jason Z (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Violin, Flute

219. "Its good for happiness and good mental health"

Preston S (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Choir, clarinet and strings

220. "Music is a important for kids to learn and it is nice to listen to and if you cut it you might be preventing a career."

M.B (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Used to do voice, viola, and trumpet

221. "Music proves to be again and again, to bring communities together, and this is no different. I have been a part of the music program for around 8 years, and this would be the first time that this decision would be made. Especially children who don't have this at home."

Abigail M (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Tuba, Viola, Baritone, Euphonium

222. "Music is important to kids and if your cutting it you might be ruining their dreams."

Sahaj C (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Voice, Trumpet

223. "I feel like a lot of people think that cutting the music program really stinks."

Eliza (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Trumpet

224. "NO! Please save music!!!!!"

Savannah W (Gr. 6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Choir, recorder, violin, trumpet

225. ""Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything" - Plato

If you want to cut music programs, than just cut happiness along too. If you want to cut music, cut our joy. Let us have our say in what matters most."

Addison C (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Choir, Saxophone, Violin

226. "Investing in music is investing in the adults of the future"

Aiden A (Gr. 6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Alto sax

227. "It makes people feel a part of something, it's a way for students to make friends, and it's a hobby. Some students want to grow up to be musicians and maybe music teachers, and music teacher's may not have a job if the music is taken away. Music makes students happy when their in a tough place, need to take their minds off something, and just performing music even for yourself can make you feel happy. And being able to make music is a talent. It's something lots of people can't do! It makes students proud that they can make beautiful noise with their voice, hands, and just air from their mouths. It's something lots of us are proud we can grow to be able to do. Especially during Covid"

Leighton B (Gr. 6), Glanford Middle School

Flute

228. "Music has helped me manage my anxiety issues. If the school board cuts music programs, I worry that my anxiety levels will spike again. Music helps me calm down and focus on school. "

Kitara R. (Gr. 6), Colquitz

Cello, ukulele, voice, flute

229. "Kids need a support system, and music was mine. The community that forms in an ensemble is unforgettable, dynamic, tight knit, and so, so supportive. Middle school is HARD, especially mentally and emotionally. I would not be here if I hadn't forced myself to get out of bed for early morning rehearsals. Music was my small escape, and it still is. I feel alive whenever I'm in the band room and surrounded by beautiful sounds and people."

Lilah W (Gr. 9), Vic High School

Oboe, Alto Saxophone

230. "Many children view music as their favourite subject in school and i think its unfair that the music program is getting cut."

Alexander S (Gr. 6), Glanford Middle School

Clarinet

231. "Don't cut it"

Roy P (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Tenor Saxophone

232. "music is fun and taking it away means that many people who enjoy it will not be able to do it anymore"

Ryan W (Gr. 7), Glanford Middle School

Clarinet

233. "Music is important for school"

Samir K (Gr. 7), Arbutus

Bari Sax, Tenor Sax

234. "I think that when grade 5's graduate they look forward to all the music programs in middle school, I know I did. I wanted to try every band instrument, and I don't think it's very fair to cut it before other people get a chance to try something new that is really special to so many people."

K.P (Gr. 7), Cedar Hill Middle School

Band: Tenor Saxophone+Bass Saxophone

235. "Music makes learning fun"

Elecia (Gr. 10), Reynolds High School

Voice, piano, violin, double bass, flute, percussion, ukulele, recorder

236. "Music is important to us!"

Myla B (Gr. 6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Drums

237. "Music is not just a program you can cut, it is a group of people that use music as a way of expressing themselves. You can't treat music as if it is like just another extra curricular but a crucial part of the school experience."

Lillian C (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School

Trombone, Stand up Bass, Electric Bass, voice

238. "So many children love to participate in musical oriented programs within school."

Cate L (Gr. 7), AGMS (arbutus)

Cello, choir

239. "This decision doesn't affect me because I'm not in strings or choir, but I think those who are in those programs will be very sad if they are cut."

Grade 6, Arbutus

Clarinet

240. "I need music program and support the program"

Yashika G (Gr. 6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Violin, Clarinet

241. "Kids who don't have the money to participate in band because of renting an instrument can still do choir because it is free"

Sarah (Gr. 6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Voice, Violin, Saxophone

242. "😞"

RWM... (Gr. 6), Arbutus

Ukelele, trumpet, recorder, and voice.

243. "The music program is part of my life and I really enjoy it."

Carson Z (Gr. 6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Violin, trumpet

244. "As a student who has greatly benefited from school music, I strongly oppose this suggestion. I am currently in grade 8, and while I won't be affected by these changes, I know music programs made my middle school experience far better, and I want others to be able to enjoy them too.

Through the band program, music has become a huge part of my life. Over the past couple years I've put hundreds of hours into the program, arriving to school early, and staying late for practices nearly every day. (Very few things can motivate me to get up an hour early)

School band provides music education to those who wouldn't otherwise be able to access it. Music shouldn't be something reserved for those who can afford it, and even then, there's nowhere else kids can learn to play together.

Band, strings, and choir are all highlights of my day, and I know many others who feel the same. "

Lottie C. (Gr. 8), Central Middle School

Tuba, trombone, bass trombone, violin, viola, voice

245. "Some people are too shy to perform in big events of singing, and choir is small but a big step for a shy person. Also, some people have stage fright. They don't necessarily have to perform in front of the school, but they can sit and watch other people perform instead of them having to do it and still be proud of their work and their school!"

Claire B (Gr. 3), Sir James Douglas, Victoria, BC

Voice

246. "I used to really hate music, but the music program made me love it."

Bella Z (Gr. 6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Violin, viola, clarinet, ukulele, recorder, base, alto recorder

247. "Some people want to learn instruments but they can't afford instruments or lessons. It's really good in school they can do that and that is awesome."

Maia Beasse (Gr. 5), Sir James Douglas

Voice, violin, ukulele

248. "I really love playing cello and was looking forward to playing it at Monterey. I was also super excited to join the choir. My mom can't afford lessons so school is my only chance to play cello. I really hope I can still play my instrument and be in the choir next year."

Lucy (Gr. 5), Margaret Jenkins

Cello

249. "Music is one of the best things to do in school, but I know that you don't have a very big budget so I would suggest cutting something no one likes, like Math or Fral."

P.H. (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School

Baritone horn, voice, ukulele, guitar, recorder.

250. "Music is so important!"

Jane (Gr. 5), Willows Elementary School

Voice and violin

251. "Music is amazing in so many ways; it sounds good, it's fun to do, you learn new things, and it makes everyone happy. If you take it away, future students won't get to experience these things in school."

Grade 6, Arbutus Global Middle School

Ukelele, recorder, voice, clarinet, viola

252. "There not programs there subjects. This may be called a program but its part of our education."

NW (Gr. 6), Lansdowne Mlddle School

Saxophone.

253. "Pls do not l'll buy u pizza :("

Pippa (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School

Baritone horn, voice

254. "These programs have connected kids to friends and have inspire many students to go on stage and perform what they love, it has also given kids who wouldn't be able to play an instrument regularly a chance to"

Maya E B (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School

Saxophone, violin, voice

255. "I think that Music is important for our education and when we are done school because I personally really enjoy music, choir and other stuff because I gives me a great opportunity to learn something new."

Don't cut music (Gr. 5), Campus View

Violin Voice Ukulele Recorder Drums Maracas Bells Tone Chimes Xylophone

256. "I don't think it's a good idea because music is something to be a part of at school, and it's a time you can look forward to, and have fun. I don't think cutting music will solve your problems."

Alanna F. (Gr. 6), Glanford Middle School

Piano, Violin, Saxophone

257. "What if I went and randomly cut your job, how would you feel?"

Kayla (Gr. 5), Sir James Douglas

Cello, xylophone, ukulele, voice

258. "Music was a big part of my middle school experience. Without the music program middle school would have been so much more boring, but music filled it with joy instead."

Rachael (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle school

Voice, violin, flute, guitar, ukulele.

259. "Don't cut the music, I love it"

Linden W (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Choir,Flute, Violin

260. "Music is important to us!"

Myla B (Gr. 6),Arbutus Global Middle School

Drums

261. "The music program has a myriad of benefits on students, and helps shapes many individual's futures. I've learned a lot when participating in these programs, it would be unfortunate if you cut them."

Anya Z (Gr. 7), Arbutus

Violin & Saxophone

262. "Music means so much to me it has inspired what my career might be it has opened up new paths that were closed before. Playing music is a language that anyone can learn its simple but so important. When you play in front of a crowd it feels like nothing that I can describe and when its done the applause it makes you feel so amazing. We need music in schools because not everyone can afford lessons and the school can work it out with your parents and help you afford it. The impact is huge I would not know how to count rhythm if it weren't for my elementary schools music program. Music should be for everyone!"

Bridie (Gr. 6), Arbutus Global Middle School

Voice, Viola and Clarinet

263. "Without music my life would be boring. Everyday would be the same. I would have nothing to look forward to."

TC (Gr. 10), Oak bay high school

Voice, flute, guitar

264. "Please SD61 do not cut music from our schools because music is one of the things we go to school for and also thinking of pursuing music as my career and if you cut music that will mean that you are taking my passion and my career away from me."

Manarap S P (Gr. 7), Glanford Middle School

Saxophone

265. "Music is very important and helps expand our 'mind palace'."

Kaue G (Gr. 5), Margaret Jenkins

Violine

266. "I really love music and I love playing/singing it! Music means a lot to me. I think that it's unfair to all of us kids, parents, teachers and everyone else involved in our programs to cut our music programs. PLEASE KEEP OUR MUSIC! Thank you!"

M.V. (Gr. 7), Cedar Hill

I play the electric bass in band and I'm in choir

267. "This is the letter I sent to the School Board Trustees on April 10:

Hi, My name is Amika Crawford, I'm a grade 8 at Central Middle School. I play tenor saxophone in 3 of our school bands. Personally the best part of my day is getting to play in band with my teachers and fellow students. I get up at 6:00 am three mornings a week to play in school bands. The only thing that gets me excited for school is knowing that I get to play music with other young musicians. I know this may seem like I'm over exaggerating but honestly the best part of my day in school is spent in the band room. I have a few questions I'm really hoping you will think over.

1. Do you have any musicians on your school board?
2. If any of you played in school bands do you remember the thrill of playing? That's what we feel everytime we play together. Sometimes when I'm playing for fun with my friends, I can't stop smiling and laughing when one of us gets a melody right or a rythme right for the first time (unfortunately this makes it hard to keep playing)

Imagine the amount of kids such as myself that would fall behind in school work, personally I wouldn't

be able to find any motivation because one of the only reasons I attend school is being able to make music. For the most part, cutting the music programs won't affect me as I'm going into high school next year. I'm hoping that high school bands will keep going. I've been playing tenor sax for three years now but I've played saxophones since I was 4. I've played piano, trombone, ukulele and have always loved making music of any kind.

My younger sister who's in 5th grade has been hoping to play in a band at Central Middle School since she heard the stories I came home with. I always talked about my music teachers and the joy of being part of that community. My band teachers have had a huge influence on my school work as well. They've always encouraged us to play and work hard to exceed in academics and music. Although one of our music teachers is currently out, we always remember the times he made us laugh, the ways he explained 16th notes, rests and when he showed us ways to look at music differently. Personally I remember the moment in 6th grade when I was having trouble playing a dotted quarter note and my teacher came next to me, took out his tenor and played alongside me explaining how to count it. Since then, three years later I count them in that way. These moments for many of my fellow young musicians have made a huge impact on how we look at music.

There are many younger and confident musicians in grades lower than me. I have gotten the chance to play with many of them in different styles such as my school's auditioned band and our jazz band. I want to be able to see them exceed in music next year and following into high school. Music has influenced my academics greatly, because of reading music and being able to think of things in different ways, I'm always creative in projects and other academics. I honestly don't know what I would've done without the influence of music in my life. For as long as I can remember, I've loved making music. I hope to be able to continue this in school and see my sister and younger friends share the same joy towards music without the worry of it being cut.

Again, so many kids I know only come to school because of the joy in being able to play music with fellow students. I hope you'll take this into serious consideration before making the mistake of cutting the music programs.

Thanks for reading if you got this far, I'm hoping you'll make the right decision and find other ways to deal with the budgets. I know other options may not seem as good but I promise, cutting the music programs will greatly affect many students and the academic assets of our school systems."

Amika C (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School

Ukulele, viola, trombone, tenor saxophone, percussion

268. "Music means a lot to me."

Bailey (Gr. 5), Willows elementary

Violin and voice

269. "choir is fun, and if they get rid of it lots of people will be sad:("

J P (Gr. 12), Oak Bay High School

voice, drums

270. "Music is one of the only things that students look forward to when we go to school. It brings us together and spreads a positive light in our lives."

Noosheen M (Gr. 12), Oak Bay High school

Clarinet and Voice

271. "I don't understand why the board would cut some or all of the music programs. It doesn't make a whole lot of sense to me. Band is such a huge part of middle school and makes up so much of most schools. It would be like cutting our sports programs. Even though music and sports are very different things they have very similar aesthetics. So I would like to ask you, would you cut our sports programs? Like I said Band is a huge part of middle school, it brings joy and happiness to so many people's days, including my own. For some people they might just be in band to make new friends, some just might want to experience something new; others might be in band just because they don't want to do the alternative block and there is, of course, the people who are so strongly passionate about music that for them it is what they need to do to pursue music as a job and/or for the rest of their lives.

I know and have known at least one person from each of these categories and in the end, everybody who has been in a music program to some extent has taken multiple good memories out of it.

Being in a music program can be a huge thing for some people and to take that away would be like taking away so much; to name a few: People's only safe place, their social connections, their only way to express themselves, something that they have been looking forward to since early elementary school, a step in their lives that they need to take to get a job they want, lots of lost good memories and loss of friendships and not to mention people's jobs. I think that the music program needs to stay alive and well and I hope that you will be able to understand that taking it some or all of it away would just be a terrible decision. People need and should have the opportunity to participate in all music programs. That is a must. I hope that you will reconsider your current decision and make some changes."

Berlin (Gr. 8), Glanford Middle School

violin and clarinet

272. "Music has been so crucial for helping me develop skills that have not only helped my mental health, but have helped me succeed academically."

Zofia (Gr. 12), Oak Bay High School

Violin and voice

273. "if you cut music programs, those kids that don't have an outlet for their creativity/energy besides athletics, we will see an increase in kids with mental health issues and problems later in life."

Lily (Gr. 11), oak bay high

Voice, saxophone, bass

274. "I love band I have been dying to join band once my brother did when he went to Glanford, he would come home and play so loudly and of course some days i was trying to read and got mad at him for playing too loud, but other days, i would be downstairs with him listening to him play(He plays trumpet) he would teach me the notes and tell me what all the notes meant, and how to read music! it was so much fun, from band I didn't just get to play an instrument, I got to bond, and share laughs with my brother. without band i don't know where me and my brother would be. sometime I am just waking up and my alarm is going off, i will just lay there in my bed. in my mind I start going over my schedule for school, "math, , snack, recess, french, BAND!!!!!! Once I get to band I spring out of bed and run upstairs humming my favourite song. once I am ready to go I leave and walk to school, well sometimes i don't just walk, I will sometimes hop, or skip when I know I have band. and I even walk to school 15 minutes before the time I really have to leave, I am normally the first one there when I do that..... I always am so pumped up going to band, I will rush down the hall caring my music and instrument and sit on the floor and wait till our band teacher opens the door and lets the magic begin. and yes I used the word magic, cause band is not just band and noise. It is harmonies, solos, singing, music and magic. Band keeps me confident of Who I Am, it keeps me going to school. sometimes I think, "WOW, I wish school was

cancelled....Kinda forever. wait....No....That means band is cancelled! THAT CAN'T HAPPEN!" I hope you take me seriously on this, cause band changed my life! it made me bond with my brother, go to school, be happy going to school, get work and chores done, seeing the brightness in me, seeing me and liking me for who I am. band is not just "band", it is one of the most important things in my life, along with family and my cats, chickens, my puppy, oh....wait, my puppy and band are tied in 2nd place..... and band my just reach up to first"

Amelia H (Gr. 6), Glanford

Clarinet, Ukulele, Choir

275. "That if they cut the music programs they are taking away a lot of people memories, hope, inspiration and joy from students. The board should ask all the students and not just decide for themselves because this affects us more then them."

Connor K (Gr. Grade 11), Oak Bay High School

Alto/Baritone Saxophone, Voice, Piano.

276. "Music is an incredibly important aspect of education for many students. It can help them be more engaged and enthusiastic about school, and form valuable relationships."

GRade 12, Oak Bay High

Voice, clarinet, cello

277. "The SD61 music program has effected so many lives in such a great way, without it so many kids would have missed out on so many amazing experiences"

Cyan T (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School

Clarinet, Flute, Viola, Guitar, Ukulele, Recorder, Voice

278. "I'm a student at the Victoria Conservatory of Music and I study under May Ling Kwok, as well as Brian Yoon for Chamber Music. I have performed for the Victoria Symphony Splash, have done Fundraisers for Victoria Symphony, won many awards and performed for Provincials for GVPAF since 2016, and I was a Semi-Finalist for the OSM Competition in Montreal.

My teacher, the experienced faculty At VCM, and I strongly believe that music is one of the most fundamental elements of living. Through Oak Bay's music program, I was able to discover almost every corner of music that I felt was relevant to my main studies of classical piano and the future of my career; concert choir, concert band, chamber choir, jazz band, musical theatre, and vocal jazz. While some might not take the path of music, skills such as singing remain for your entire life and are applicable whether if you are showing off to your friends, or simply finding another way to express yourself."

Carey W (Gr. 11), Oak Bay Highschool

Piano, Clarinet, Voice

279. "Music has had a positive effect on thousands of kids, and taking it away from them is taking away part of their lives. Music isn't something we do. It's a part of us. Taking that away is like taking away a part of yourself. Countless kids will never experience learning how to play or song by cutting music, and that is a horrible thing to do to them. Music is a part of our lives, and it should have a chance to implant itself on every single person."

Brianna D (Gr. 8), Cedar Hill Middle School

Voice, Violin

280. "That every grade 6 person has never done choir."

Grade 6, Shoreline Middle School

Trombone

281. "Music is really important for everyone. It comes hand-in-hand with other subjects like maths and science too. It helps some people have a voice to be heard, and gives others something to look forward to on a tough day.

The Music Program gives you a chance to try something you might never have tried without it. For example, I would have never played trumpet or viola if my school never had a music program. Yes, some people would be able to do music outside of school, in private lessons or lessons with small groups, but it's not the same. Some people don't have the time or can't afford it, and would miss out on a big opportunity in life.

Music Programs give you a chance to play with your friends or in a group, something you could never have done in private lessons. In choir, you get a chance to hear what your voice sounds like mixed with others. In band or strings, you get to learn an instrument AND play in a group with multiple parts to make one big, lovely sound. You can't do that all on your own, which is why you have to keep music programs.

Think about all the kids who would have never known what it's like to play a musical instrument, or just simply learning how to sing in ways that help them save their breath. Maybe someday those kids would have been playing in a famous band or even been a famous singer. Imagine all the kids who will be missing out on a chance to do something they would have loved..."

Anonymous Music Player (Gr. 6), Cedar Hill

Viola, Piano, Trumpet, and Voice

282. "Music in all forms let's people meet new people and build friendships"

Samuel D T (Gr. 6), Cedar Hill Middle School

Euphonium Voice Viola

283. "Every student deserves to have a chance at participating in music education, whether that is strings, choir etc. These music opportunities can be very important based on ones mental health or even just for the fun times of learning how to play an instrument and singing!"

Lucy J (Gr. 10), Oak Bay High

Violin, alto sax

284. "I personally love music and look forward to it every day. Music just brings me joy and a sense of freedom and it's just all around fun. When we have music classes we can take a little break from all of the work that we're doing and just play our hearts out. We also have great bonds these music teachers that have taught us all so much and we know that they love playing and teaching music. I love listening to music as well and a lot of singers started singing when they were very young; some only sang at school. Also a lot of the strings players in symphonies around the world probably played strings at school and grew a great passion for their instruments. One example of this is Victoria born Bryce Dane Soderberg, a bassist for the band Lighthouse. Additionally, music helps so many kids worldwide to cope with stress and depression. Lots of people are going to get mad at the school board and try to fight back which could end badly. Now if it was a different problem, they might be able play music to

relax. Another thing to keep in mind is all of the future children that would be thinking to go into an SD61 school. If the children and/or their parents wanted them to take the music program, that wouldn't be an option at an SD61 school so they would have to take their kids to a different school district, the closest being in Sooke which means that they would probably have to move. If a lot of parents did this that could be bad for the economic growth of SD61."

Ishaan (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School

I currently only play percussion (drums) but played the cello for two years and was in choir for four years in the past. I have also played the ukulele, the guitar, and the recorder in elementary school (Hillcrest Elementary) music classes and Middle school (Arbutus Middle) exploratories.

285. "I'd like them to imagine if they had something that they love so much taken away from them"

Zoe C K (Gr. 5), Doncaster Elementary

viola

286. "That in middle school cello was my favourite thing to go to. I would go to a different school if I can't play music here."

Stella S (Gr. 7), Lansdowne Middle School

Cello and saxophone and voice

287. "I would not want the cuts because hearing music inside my school or listening to concerts makes me really happy. It pumps me up."

Jack Y (Gr. 7), Arbutus Global Middle School

Clarinet

288. "I really like music and some of my friends in grade 4 are really looking forward to do strings. Please don't cut strings. Also are strings teacher is super nice and it would be sad to see her sad."

Violet (Gr. 5), SJD

Viola

289. "Music is good"

Max (Gr. 9), Oak bay High

Trombone, Voice

290. "Strings is very important to me. I like to hear the beautiful sound I can make with my instrument. When it ends I feel happy of what I have done and I go to class feeling good and proud of my self but if strings stops I will not feel the same or feel good of getting better at my instrument . On the day before strings class I feel excited to go to play. So please don't cut strings."

Yaretzi J. S (Gr. 5), South Park Family School

Cello

291. "In grade five, I started to learn violin at school. Now, I love playing violin for my family and friends. If it hadn't been for the offering to join strings at school, things would be impossible to accomplish. I want to keep music for many reasons, and one of them is to make others — and myself — happy."

(Gr. 6), Cedar Hill Middle School

Violin and Flute

292. "Music has been an amazing source of joy and learning for my children. From their very dedicated music teachers the children have learned to read music, play in ensembles, participate in nation wide competitions, musical plays and been introduced to 3 instruments. Playing instruments and singing in choirs teaches so many things - discipline to learn the pieces of music, working with others, listening, patience and so much more. Please don't proceed with the cuts..."

Angelika P. (Gr. 5), Campus View Elementary

Voice, recorder, ukulele, violin

293. "Music develops the brain"

Elizabete C (Gr. 5), Margaret Jenkins

Viola

294. "Without music schools would suck"

M Costa (Gr. 8), Lansdowne Middle

Voice, trombone

295. "Please don't cut this program, please don't take the opportunity to learn an instrument away from my younger siblings!!! I loved learning to play the Viola and doing something other than normal school stuff. I enjoyed being with my friends!!!"

Maximilian S (Gr. 5), Doncaster

Viola

296. "If your going to cut the music program I would re think that, music means sooo much to so many people for some people it's who they are! So if you cut the music program just know you will be cutting out a piece of our community and a piece of most of the music programs heart! :)"

Finley M (Gr. 6), Arbutus global middle school

Clarinet

297. "I myself don't particularly enjoy music but i do understand that it is important for others."

Lord Spencer Grey Paynter-Repay (Gr. 10), Victoria high school

Voice, Cello, Trumpet, Bass Drum

298. "Music helps calm me down even if I'm not good at playing yet. I feel the music is in me."

Armiyah S H (Gr. 6), Arbutus

Trumpet

299. "I would rather have less iPads and have music"

Bh (Gr. 6), Arbutus

Trumpet

300. "I enjoy watching others sing/play. I also enjoy hearing about upcoming competitions or YouTube videos!"

Jam (Gr. 8), Arbutus

361. "I would like the board to know that there are a lot of people who enjoy band, choir, and strings a lot. Sometimes, it's the only thing that makes them excited to go to school. The people in the music programs that you're cutting could have had successful jobs in music, but you're taking that opportunity away. Music is a form of self expression, like art or dance. There is more than just science and math in the world, and even though you might not think that music is important, you're not the one who's getting it stripped away from you. Think about a hobby you love, or maybe your job getting taken away from you because someone else in a higher position thinks that it's not as important. A lot of self expression and passion will be lost from students in the music programs, and the music teachers will have to lose their job because you thought that their job wasn't good enough to keep. You talk about at least having a bit of band, yet it's cut down to barely any classes. You talk about how at least you'll have music in high school. Well, by the time high school comes nobody will be good enough because they didn't get the music classes they needed to learn and grow. You're not just taking away middle and elementary school music anymore, you're taking away the choice to do something that you love. Something that makes it worth getting up in the morning for some people. Maybe you should think about that when you're cutting away our music."

Luke H (Gr. 8), Glandford Middle School

Trumpet in Concert Band

302. "Music has undoubtedly enriched my education and, more so, my life. Music is the central part of so many students' worlds, as it offers community and complex thinking and the opportunity to grow as an individual. Not only does music provide the social aspect of school, but it effectively teaches students the life skills that are often overlooked in academic classes."

Anna F (Gr. 12), Oak Bay High School

Saxophone and violin

303. "The sd61 music program gave me hope to get through school, it's where I made all my friends and I always knew the teachers were there for me no matter what. Because of the sd61 music program I am now finished my first year of university as a music major and I owe everything I am to the sd61 music program. Music affects everyone and huge percentage of students in every school I've gone to have been involved in music."

Holly J D E (Gr. Graduated), UVic

Bassoon, Flute, Saxophone, Violin, Voice

304. "I am an Indigenous student and sometimes I do not feel welcome at school but learning the violin and flute and singing with an Indigenous hand drum circle have been the only thing other than French immersion that has made me want to go to school."

Aidan N (Gr. 6), Cedar Hill

Flute, violin, recorder, hand drum and voice.

305. "Music is important for the mental health of many students and if a student would like to pursue music in the future it's important for them to have this music program"

Gaia B (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School

Violin

306. "I would like the SD61 board to know that by cutting the music programs, they are suppressing the students' musical talents."

(Gr. 8), Arbutus

Flute, voice

307. "They shouldn't cut music because it makes Tuesdays and Thursdays more enjoyable"

Elise N (Gr. 5), Ecole Campus View Elementary

Voice, violin, recorder and ukulele

308. "Music saved my life."

Colleen M (Gr. 12), Oak Bay High

Percussion! Voice

309. "Music makes me feel calm and happy, not every subject does that. I have been playing viola for a year and really want to continue playing at school so I can have the opportunity to play in a group. I also love to sing! It makes me sad to think that the kids that come after me might never get the chance to play an instrument at all. This pandemic has been such a hard time for everyone in the world, the world needs music now more then ever and there is nothing like the feeling of playing your own music or singing. Please don't cut strings and choir, please don't take away our music."

AC (Gr. 5), Doncaster

Viola

310. "I don't think that tis is the way to go. Music is such a big thing in everyone's life. I quote my amazing music teacher; "Imagine your favourite movie without the soundtrack, how BORING would that be?" Band is that 'soundtrack', don't take that away from our movie 😞"

Belén S (Gr. 6), Glanford Middle School

Alto Saxophone

311. "Well music is a good thing to learn in many ways and people deserve to learn it with out lessons out side of school"

Grade 5, Doncaster

Violin

312. "Music was my favorite part about my elementary and middle school years. It was through those programs where I met most of my very best friends who continue to be a major part of my life. Being able to come together and make music is such an important outlet for students and it is such a positive experience to take away from future students. Without music I would not be the person I am today, and I would feel so bad for kids who never got to have those same opportunities as me. These programs are necessary for kids to experience the true joy of music, and for the teachers who make a living off of it to stay employed. The music teachers I had were some of the most amazing influences and they truly cared about their students. Taking away their jobs and passions is just not fair."

Kailen F (Gr. 12), Oak Bay High School

Voice, Clarinet

313. "music class is a great way for me to connect with friends, learn in a creative way, and have some fun during school."

Stella W (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global middle school

Voice, trumpet, viola

314. "DO NOT CUT IT"

Aliyah S (Gr. 6), Gordon head

Choir, saxophone

315. "The music program is exceptional the teachers have been amazing since grade 5 strings. They are welcoming and understanding and a type of humour that Makes 7:30 jazz band even better (if that is possible). Music is my escape from reality. It made the pandemic bearable. I can't imagine my 3 siblings not having music. The entire program has been the best part of my schooling (and I have had amazing teachers). There is no way I would have stood in front of hundred of people but with the nine ensembles a was in last year i was able to stand in front of all of those people and was even a soloist!!!! This is not only about music though you are cutting everything that supports a student in a critical part of our lives. Not only are we dealing with normal teenage struggles we are in the middle of a PANDEMIC. How on earth do you think this is a good idea. You are cutting EAs counsellors food reading and support. How do you think somebody who struggles behaviourally is going to act with no lunch or EA support is going to disrupt the class now. How is Someone who is struggling emotionally (we are teenagers in a pandemic) going to deal with those emotions without counsellors. Someone who has a learning disability going to learn without the EA support they need. I am part of the gifted program and the fundings don't need to be cut they need to be raised because Mr.Clarke is amazing but he is also the ELL teacher (who need him more than us). So i am not challenged in maths and sciences because those are the subjects that i need a challenge in. Back to music music helps academically and socially and brings together musicians from around the school. Getting rid of music is a grave mistake."

Jessie S (Gr. 8), Cedar Hill Middle School

Violin, flute, and voice

316. "I don't think they should"

Paige 🐼 Hall (Gr. 6), Gordon Head middle school

Ukulele

317. "Music is important to me and lots of other kids.If the SD61 board cuts the music programs kids don't have the chance to learn and have fun. I think that music is important and that it's important for the people in strings and choir to keep doing it and if the SD61 board cuts the funds they can't do any musical things that they love,"

Gabriella V (Gr. 6), Gordon head middle school

Saxophone

318. "I am from Manitoba and came to Victoria for Music in university. Choir is very appreciated and involved in Manitoba. There is such an intricate and positive community of choirs, countless friends and memories I have from being in school or community choirs, as well as great skills and memories from band in school. Music is a natural part of living, it's all around us, ever-flowing throughout our lives whether we choose to acknowledge it or not. I cannot imagine not having music as a part of my early education, so many integral skills and friends I've gained from having music in my life."

Carter M (Gr. University), University of Victoria Music

Percussion and voice

319. "Music can be life saving. It can change kids lives, give them purpose, give them a voice. I have an anxiety disorder and being a part of the choir gave me so much more confidence in myself. It made me look forward to coming to school and helped me interact with others when I was struggling to. I also have a complex tic disorder and when I sing I don't tic. It's like magic; it gives a little peace from the constant chaos. If you cut the music programs, you're taking away the opportunity for other kids like me to find their voices through music. For so many kids, school programs are the only way they can participate in music; classes are expensive and many families simply do not have the money. Music is for everyone; it doesn't discriminate between skin colour, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, ability. When you take away music programs you take away opportunities, dreams, second chances, safe spaces. Music changed my life; it gave me control over my own voice when my tics started. It gave me my voice back. If you truly cared about kids education, if you truly cared about kids, period; you couldn't cut music. You wouldn't take away these incredibly important, life changing opportunities for students. Music matters. We matter."

Gemma (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School

Voice

320. "Lots of kids love band/choir/strings because it's a lot of fun to do so I don't think they should cut it, and if they do, so many kids would be sad."

Mikayla S (Gr. 6), Gordon Head Middle School

Saxophone

321. "We enjoy music and so should the rest of the kids coming into these grades that are getting the cuts."

Zoë (Gr. 8), Cedar hill

Cello, voice

322. "Music should not be cut because it helps students relax and creates more opportunities for them to succeed later on in life."

Grace (Gr. 8), Cedar Hill Middle School

Viola, Voice

323. "It may help people to start loving music and find new interests"

Tehya A (Gr. 8), Cedar Hill Middle School

Trombone

324. "i am in grade 5 and my little sister is in grade 2 and she says that she would love to learn an instrument."

Lev Z-S (Gr. 5), EMJS

violin

325. "Music is a school's foundation, and taking it away causes the morale and culture of the school to collapse."

Beatrice M (Gr. 10), Oak Bay High School

Voice, Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, Ukulele.

326. "I think cutting the music funds is stupid. There cutting it because there in debt, that's there fault not the music fault!"

Kaede (Gr. 6), Shoreline middle school

Trumpet

327. "I think our music program is important because it provides a way for students to try instruments they wouldn't normally try. It also provides a way for students to express their creative selves."

Audrey (Gr. 6), Gordon Head

Voice, violin, flute

328. "Being in the music program has giving me a sense of belonging and I feel I can be myself without feeling judged. When I drum I feel great and helps me with my mental health. Being part of music programs has helped me with that for a long time."

MS (Gr. Grade 10), Reynolds secondary

Cello in gr. 5 and 6, choir in grade 4,5 and 6, Percussion, drum kit.

329. "I think that music is the reason some kids wake up in the morning. Music is so important to a student's life; it connects us, gives us inner calm. There is no way that it is fair for the school district to take that away from us. So many people have been out protesting for hours, getting as many honks as possible from many, many cars. I have also been one of those people. I have seen the many people passing by, honking with enthusiasm, hoping as well that the strings/choir programs are not cut. Please do not take something away that is so important in our lives."

Kate P (Gr. 7), Cedar Hill Middle School

Voice, Violin

330. "When you cut down music from even one grade, you affect the rest of the music in which that kid can express themselves. Do you really want to limit passion, creativity, and family?"

Johanna S. W (Gr. 11), Oak Bay High School

Trumpet, voice

331. "Before Grade 5, in elementary school I was had nothing to occupy me, nothing to look forward to. I ended up causing trouble. In Grade 4 I was in the top three people who had the most frequent visits to the principal's office. In Grade 5 with strings, I was only in the office two or three times. In my entire middle school career I have only been into the office because I was in trouble once. I am 100 percent certain, that without all of the music programs to keep me interested, I would still be causing as much trouble as I could."

Nick (Gr. 8), Cedar Hill Middle

Viola, euphonium

332. "There are so many children who love to use they're musical talents but if there is no way for them to express their passions, what are we supposed to do?????"

Megan N (Gr. 6), Gordon Head Middle School

Violin, clarinet, voice

333. "I think cutting the music funds is stupid. There cutting it because there in debt, that's there fault not the music fault!"

Kaede (Gr. 6), Shoreline middle school

Trumpet

334. "As someone who has never been musically gifted, and prefers math and sciences. I will never understand the significance of band, however if someone were to cut the science and math classes I would probably be devastated."

Ryan T (Gr. 12), Oak Bay High School

Saxophone, guitar

335. "Music is just like any other subject and we need it as much as anything else"

Faye B (Gr. 5), SJD

Voice, Violin, Ukulele, Xylophone,

336. "Music is more than just making sounds with instruments, it is art and literature. Music is a way for one to express their feelings and have fun with other students. Music stays!"

Oliver (Gr. 8), Cedar Hill Middle School

Alto Saxophone and Viola

337. "I think music is very important to many children, it has a very powerful impact and I don't think it is at all fair to take it away. Music bonds us and makes us a community. Some people wake up in the morning and all they look forward to is playing music. Music is a very important part of our lives. Music makes people joyful and makes them feel good. When I play music I feel like I'm in a whole different world, when I play music with a group, I feel so connected with others and that our voices can be heard. My older sister Kate is teaching me violin right now and I feel so happy when I play it. I think that it is really outrageous that the sd61 board is taking away music. It's a very, very special part of our lives. Please reconsider."

Juliet P (Gr. 5), Braefoot Elementary School

Ukelele, voice

338. "School music programs have had a profound positive impact on my life. Band and choir have taught me many things including discipline, creativity, and confidence. I can't thank my music teachers enough for everything they've done and I hope that many more SD61 students can have the amazing experiences through music that I've had."

Annalise B (Gr. 11), Mount Douglas Secondary School

Ukulele, viola, clarinet, tenor saxophone, voice

339. "I would like the School board to know that if they cut back the music programs there making a horrible mistake and 1000s of kids are in music programs and I being one of them would like to tell them to NOT CUT BACK THE MUSIC PROGRAMS. Thank you"

Gina J. J (Gr. 7), Shoreline Middle School

Percussion, Violin, Choir before Covid-19

340. "Music is good"

Max (Gr. 9), Oakbay

Trombone singing

341. "Music has helped me as a student become better. It gave me opportunities to learn, grow, make new friend and feel connected to our school community. Taking this opportunity away from students deprives them of musical understanding. Music is a way for many students to escape stress and anxiety and feel welcome. I hope the SD61 school board will rethink their decision. Thank you."

Sofia B J (Gr. 8), Arbutus Global Middle School

Violin, voice, saxophone, flute

342. "Don't cut stuff"

Mim (Gr. 5), Sjd

Viola voice

343. "I think that music is very important for kids and that shouldn't be taken away"

Hailey (Gr. 6), Gordon Head Middle School

Flute

344. "There are so many children who love to use they're musical talents but if there is no way for them to express their passions, what are we supposed to do?????"

Megan N (Gr. 6), Gordon Head Middle School

Violin, clarinet, voice

345. "I think that music is very important for kids and that shouldn't be taken away"

Hailey (Gr. 6), Gordon Head Middle School

Flute

346. "Music is an important part of 1000s of students lives weather you like it or not and that means that you as the school board need to realize that and note for us instead of against us!"

Ryleigh (Gr. 7), Colquitz

Clarinet

347. "I would like the SD61 board to know that in Canada education is a basic human right and it's free because of this, yet you are taking away our right to learn music with the excuse that we can pay for private lessons even though our education is our right."

Emma-Grace P (Gr. 8), Colquitz Middle School

Ukulele, Violin, Clarinet, Voice

348. "if you cut music programs, those kids that don't have an outlet for their creativity/energy besides athletics, we will see an increase in kids with mental health issues and problems later in life."

Lily (Gr. 11), Oak bay high

Voice, saxophone, bass

349. "I feel they should know that the music program, in its full glory, is the reason some kids come to school, it's the thing that gets them through hard days, and some days going to band, choir, or strings is the thing giving them an escape, a way to cope, and part of their will to live. Cutting this off would discourage kids to come to school even more than they already are discouraged, and so many kids mental health would plummet because they're losing their coping mechanism. The school board should at least try to find ways around this problem, because we know there have been ways put forward, instead of ignoring the hundreds and hundreds of kids who say that this isn't okay, because this affects us, and not the adults who caused the problem, and who don't care about the solution as long as the problem is dealt with."

Quinn M (Gr. 7), Colquitz Middle School

Flute, Voice, and hoping to learn Trombone if Jazz Band still continues

350. "Music is important to me. I play piano at home and cello at school. I really enjoy both instruments and it would be hard for my parents to pay for both piano and cello lessons. Music gives me a chance to relax after school. I would not like for music to be cut from the district."

Marton S (Gr. 6), Shoreline middle school

Cello

351. "I understand how hard a decision this is for the school board, but music is vital to many students across the district. I love playing music by myself, but there's a sense of community one gets from being in an ensemble with my classmates and schoolmates. Some people might say, "you can do music at home!". But some students don't have the money, or have other altercations that prevent them from taking music lessons or playing music at home. School music helps us take breaks from academic subjects, allowing our brains to grow in a different way than math or science do. It's a safe, comforting space for many students, and I love my music teachers and how much they do for us. By cutting music, many music teachers will lose their jobs and their passion. In high schools, the amount of recruits will decrease in a few years because students won't have the experience of middle school strings, band (other than grade 8 band) or choir.

Please don't cut music, no matter the costs. It will leave a lasting impact that many SD 61 students will be deeply affected by."

Jeannie S. (Gr. 7), Shoreline Middle School

Violin, Flute, Voice

352. "There cuts are a terrible idea. Music is so useful. Music is important. MUSIC IS ESSENTIAL. You can't simply cut it all off because you need money. It is not our fault as students that the school district is in a multiple million dollar deficit.

Please reconsider. There are hundreds of people loudly asking for you to reconsider. Perhaps you should listen.

Do you know how many students are hopeful to join, or currently enjoying these programs at this moment? Are you aware how many children will be horribly disappointed if you choose to cut it?

When I was in grade 4, I was already excited beyond belief to join strings and band. My younger sisters were as well. I'd already decided exactly what instrument I wanted to play, and I went through with it. It's probably the best decision I made in grade 6. I LOVE my band. My sister LOVES her

band. My other sister LOVES strings and is incredibly excited to move on to band next year.

So much has been lost this year already. There has been so much unfortunate change, sadness and anxiety, and the students are already suffering. Why on earth would you make it worse, as our mental health is already dangling on a dangerous precipice?

For some of my peers, music is the only enjoyable part of their day. It was like this is grade 6 as well. We're begging you, don't destroy it.

None of this "partial cuts" business, either. Keep it all. There are hundreds of other unnecessary things in your school systems that you could cut, AND MUSIC IS NOT ONE OF THESE.

If you plan on only taking out certain parts of it, you should be aware that this will not work. Grade 8s are notoriously unmotivated (I would know, I am in grade 8) and will not join music programs later. Don't remove grade 5, 6 and 7 music programs. The reason the system is this way is because this system works. DO. NOT. TAMPER. WITH. IT. It will end very badly."

Athena D (Gr. 8), Shoreline MS

Tenor Saxophone, Baritone Saxophone, Viola

353. "I love music and if there is not something to keep me from practicing i probably will stop..... Also it is proven that music helps you do better in school and your brain"

Annalise V (Gr. 6), Cedar Hill

Violin, Choir (Voice)

354. "Middle school music is what made me into the person I am today. Thanks to band, strings, and choir, I discovered my passion and had a safe space to learn and grow alongside the many friends I have made over the years and with the guidance of my amazing teachers. Music teachers are by far some of the most passionate and dedicated people I have ever met, and having teachers as caring as them to look up to helped keep me on track. In the fall, I will be starting my undergrad studying cello at UVIC and I would have never even picked up a cello if it hadn't been for school strings. Do not deprive future generations of the same musical opportunities that have put me and so many others on the path to becoming thoughtful and creative human beings. Although not all of us go on to become professional musicians, every student deserves the opportunity to make music. It is an integral part of human identity."

Jayda T (Gr. 12), Oak Bay High School

Clarinet, cello, saxophone, flute, bassoon, percussion, trombone, French horn, viola, voice, oboe

355. "Music means so much to me. After being in music class I always feel it would never end and I want to do more. Mrs Onuma is so fun, funny, creative and musically talented. Mrs Rebstock is musical, so kind and fun and I love spending time learning and being with our music teachers. Music allows all the children to speak the same language without voices and express themselves. It makes me feel calm and able to focus on the rest of my day. "

Zainab EA (Gr. 5), Campus View Elementary

Cello, ukulele, recorder, tone chimes, xylophone

356. "Don't cut the music because it fun and it's joyful and makes us happy ?? and the music teacher is their job because they are so nice and thoughtful to help us"

Stella (Gr. 5), Marigold elementary

Violin ,ukulele , drum,recorder,choir, xylophone

357. "The music teachers put so much effort into this; they deserve better than this."

Jaden (JBN) Berger-North (Gr. 8), Colquitz Middle School

Trumpet, Voice (Musical theatre and a little bit of Euphonium too)

358. "I have friends who whole lives are music and they wouldn't be able to have access to music lessons outside of school. Schools providing music for students is so important, it teaches valuable and fundamental skills"

ZC (Gr. 12), Esquimalt Highschool

Trombone, Voice

359. "Seeing music on different instruments helps me learn better but after the cuts the instrument number will go down"

Sepehr D (Gr. 6), Arbutus Middle School

Violin and Clarinet

360. "I started playing the electric bass because of my dad, he's been so supportive in helping me learn new songs and chords. I'd hate to lose that bond we have. Music means the world to so many students including me "

Imogen (Gr. 7), Colquitz middle school

Electric bass

361. "Think of all the kids that will be disappointed that they won't be able to try or continue learning music. A lot of kids can't afford private lessons and rely on public education to provide a variety of enrichment to our learning. Joining band and choir has really helped my confidence and enjoyment of school . "

Brianna G (Gr. 8), Glanford Middle

Voice, Trumpet

362. "Consider the fact that school is about discovering what you're interested in. One of the primary reasons we have school is to educate and help students make a living doing things they're passionate about. By taking away any program, you're potentially depriving a developing mind the opportunity to discover their passion. I have personally had the opportunity to meet so many people I would have never connected with if there wasn't a music program at my middle school. And I believe that it has also influenced my thought process in a positive way. It really sucks that there might be kids that never get the chance to have what I had. I hate that I could potentially be a "lucky one". There's too much to be lost by cutting this program. But what really kills me is the fact that it's all about the money. This is one of the most baffling decisions I've ever seen and I desperately hope that everything can get back on track. Thanks in advance."

Logan K (Gr. 8), Glanford Middle School

I have played baritone, guitar, bass guitar, violin, tuba, and I am in choir

363. "Don't do it. Music gives so many new opportunities. I never fit in with people in elementary. But when I found music, my life completely changed. I fit in. "

Jack D (Gr. 10), Oak Bay Hlgh

Trombone

364. "Please don't cut the choir program because I love choir and singing. It makes me feel good. I love the concerts because they are fun. "

Fergus J (Gr. 7), Cedar Hill Middle School

Percussion, Voice

365. "I love the music programs and I want to keep playing. "

Megan T (Gr. 6), Cedar Hill Middle School

FLute, Violin

366. "I love strings and I think just cutting all the music programs without regard to anyone else is bad "

Grade 5, SJD

Cello

367. "I would rather the school board not cut the music programs because some people really need music to help them get through everything especially now. I personally love music out of school I play piano and the drums and even though I play music outside of school some people need there music classes to help them with school because sometimes school is really hard and stressful, music can be there escape from everything else. That's why I think we should still have the music programs. "

ER (Gr. 6), Glanford Middle School

Voice, Percussion

368. "I Love music and can't imagine school without it!! I've also been playing piano since grade one and played a piece of music on the piano for the Xmas concert in G 8! My music teacher is amazing and loves what he does!!! Please keep it!! Thank you ❤️"

Benjamin S (Gr. 5), Willows

Viola and choir

369. "I don't want SD61 to Cut Music because i want the new people that are Coming here for 6. I don't want the Music Program to be Cut off. so please keep the Music Program going. I want the new Students to have Music for the new People that are Coming here.
SO PLEASE DONT CUT SD61 MUSIC PROGRAM."

Kara D (Gr.8), Glanford Middle School

Violin, Voice

370. "I don't think it is right to cut something kids love and look forward to coming in to middle school. I love to play music when its the days we practice I'm so exited. Mrs.Kelly is an awesome music teacher and she loves teaching and this would be hard for all music teachers if they cut some music. "

Isabella (Gr. 6), Glanford Middle School

Bass, Voice

371. "Without music life is just meaning less"

Brianna G (Gr. 8), Glanford Middle School

Voice, Trumpet

372. "choir is fun, and if they get rid of it lots of people will be sad:("

JP (Gr. 12), Oak Bay High School

Voice, Drums

373. "Music program are essential to students learning and have a big impact on their life's. It's a source of happiness and should be available to everyone not just band music included as choir and band as well"

Devon W (Gr. 8), Colquitz Middle School

Trumpet

374. "Middle school is a time to try new things and experiment with different and new things and the music program gives people the opportunity. There's something there for everyone and you get the opportunity to meet new people that you would ordinarily meet. The music program is so important and cutting it would be detrimental to all people who have, are currently in or thinking about joining the music program. "

Zoe G (Gr. 7), Arbutus

Viola, voice, clarinet

375. "It's taking away a learning experience "

Quinn T(Gr. 6), Cedar Hill Middle School

Cello

376. "Strings and Choir are just as important as Band. If you're not cutting band, don't cut Strings and Choir!!!! "

PK (Gr. 6), Cedar Hill Middle School

Clarinet

377. "Music is my happy place. "

Benjamin S (Gr. 5), Willows

Viola and choir

Lisa McPhail

From: Kim Morris
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2022 10:20 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Fwd: Don't Cut Our Music Programs!!!

Categories: Green category

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Nathan Skip [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2022 10:18:12 AM
To: Nicole Duncan <nduncan@sd61.bc.ca>; Ann Whiteaker <awhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca>; Ryan Painter <rpainter@sd61.bc.ca>; Jordan Watters <jwatters@sd61.bc.ca>; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>; Elaine Leonard <eleonard@sd61.bc.ca>; Angie Hentze <ahentze@sd61.bc.ca>; Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>; Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>; Kim Morris <kmorris@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: Don't Cut Our Music Programs!!!

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Hello members of the sd61 school board,

My name is Nathan Skip. I'm a grade 11 student at [REDACTED] school who is currently involved in 5 music programs at the school. When I heard of the new budget proposal and the enormous amount of cuts being made to music, I was shocked.

In middle school, I joined the band program and ever since, music has been an essential part of my life. Being in band has given me somewhere to be grounded even when times at home and in regular classes have been stressful, frustrating and chaotic. I have also met all of my close friends through the music programs. They are the type of people who comfort you when you feel terrible and are always there to talk to. I found that everyone in music are the most kind, respectful and thoughtful people in our schools. This is even more true for the music teachers, who are the best teachers I've ever had for any classes and I would be heartbroken if they lose their jobs.

When I graduate high school I plan to pursue a music degree as a career. If it were not for middle school band, I would not have the fundamental music experience to even consider a career in music as an option. Cutting these programs would create a domino effect causing not only the attendance of high school music programs to drop, but the students in them would only be at a middle school level, crushing any hopes of a career in music.

If you cut middle school music programs, not only will you be denying so many incredible students the opportunity for a music career, you will eliminate the chance for students to form the supportive friendships and community that will last until the end of high school and beyond.

Music programs cannot just be thrown away

Please include this letter in the April 4th meeting pack up. Thank you.

Nathan Skip

Lisa McPhail

From: Naomi Muryoi [REDACTED] >
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2022 9:35 AM
To: Trustees; Community Engagement
Subject: Don't cut music program, please.
Attachments: Strings Letter 20210214.pdf

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

March 18, 2022

Dear SD61 Trustees.

We are writing in response to the recent unsettling news that the Greater Victoria School Board is considering removing funding for the Grade 5 Strings Program. As parents of a student that has benefited from this program, we would be remiss if we did not take this opportunity to advocate for the continuation of this program for future students, including our other child, currently in grade 1.

We were fortunate to be able to introduce our son to music at a young age and were excited and grateful that he had the opportunity to learn strings while in elementary school. We understand the limited resources that are available to keep this program operational, and that it is entirely reliant on the skill and dedication of the instructors. However, despite these constraints, the quality of his education, the speed with which he became adept at a novel instrument, and the sense of accomplishment he receives from learning new pieces of music, are all reflections of the commitment the instructors bring to the program.

When he entered middle school, he had the confidence and experience he needed to pursue and achieve his musical goals through continuing with strings and looking for more challenges. He also had the foundation in music theory from elementary school that enabled him to hone his interests and apply them to other instruments. We feel that because of his early introduction to strings he has an appreciation for the challenge of learning an instrument, an understanding of how different genres of music are related, and how music is meditative, contemplative, and instills a sense of accomplishment that has benefits on his mental health.

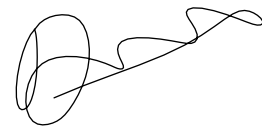
We feel a decision to remove funding for Grade 5 strings would have detrimental downstream effects on the musical enrichment of students, would put undue pressure on students to choose their musical paths without the earlier foundation introduced in elementary school, and would further limit the non-academic development of public-school students.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,



Naomi Muryoi



Daniel Ovachim

Lisa McPhail

From: Jana Stevenson [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2022 7:26 AM
To: Trustees; +community@sd61.bc.ca
Subject: Proposed budget cuts to SD61

Categories: Web

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CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

I'm writing this email to strongly oppose the proposed budget cuts to school counselors and the music programs. It's extremely short sighted to even consider cutting much needed supports and outlets for our children in these unprecedented times when they need these more than ever. I believe that the team of professional adults who are working on the budget can find a way to keep these integral programs in place while cutting costs elsewhere. Please consider the long term effects these cuts will have on our vulnerable youth.

The mental health of our children is too important to risk. The proposed cuts to accessing counselling and the community and structure of music programs during a time in their formative years where they need MORE access to these services is foolish and detrimental.

Find another way to cut costs.

Respectfully,
Jana Stevenson

--
[REDACTED]

Lisa McPhail

From: Paul & Zuzana Brown [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2022 6:48 AM
To: Trustees; Community Engagement
Subject: 2022/2023 Budget cuts

Categories: Green category

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Please don't cut counsellors (mental health and safety), music (mental health) and daily custodians (safety)!!!!!!

Thank you,
Paul & Zuzana Brown

Lisa McPhail

From: Kim Morris
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2022 5:08 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: FW: BUDGET 2022/23
Attachments: 2022 Budget Letter.docx.doc

Categories: Green category

Kim Morris
Secretary-Treasurer/CFO
School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)
556 Boleskine Road
Victoria BC V8Z 1E8
Phone: 250-475-4108

www.sd61.bc.ca
Email: kmorris@sd61.bc.ca
Twitter: @KimKMorris

From: Jane Massy
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2022 4:30 PM
To: Ryan Painter <rpainter@sd61.bc.ca>; Ann Whiteaker <awhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca>; Elaine Leonard <eleonard@sd61.bc.ca>; Nicole Duncan <nduncan@sd61.bc.ca>; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>; Jordan Watters <jwatters@sd61.bc.ca>; Angie Hentze <ahentze@sd61.bc.ca>
Cc: Kim Morris <kmorris@sd61.bc.ca>; Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: BUDGET 2022/23

Good Afternoon,

Please find attached a letter regarding the upcoming budget. I have not had the opportunity to digest yet the changes sent out today.

Thank you,

Jane Massy
President
CUPE 947

Jane Massy

President, CUPE 947



Jane Massy
President

Shawna Abbott
Vice President

Taily Wills
2nd Vice-President

March 30, 2022

Chair Painter & School Board Trustees
Greater Victoria School District 61
Victoria, BC

Dear Chair Painter & School Board Trustees:

RE: 2022/23 BUDGET

Here we are again discussing another devastating budget deficit. What to cut, what to add and what to keep! Ultimately that will be your decision, but you need to know the potential of your proposed cuts to 947 members and the students they serve.

Further cuts to 947 members are going to provide a devastating blow to your staff. Supports for students, staff and parents will be diminished – you cut hours for office staff last year, and now you are considering whether or not to further cut that same support, in addition to adding other departments to that list.

Career Centre Coordinators: - the purpose of school is to provide an education for students and thus enable them to become the citizens of tomorrow. To abolish this position, that has been in our district for decades, is cutting off that support just as students enter the journey to adulthood. These employees provide one-on-one services, working with these students from Grade 9 and on, to ensure that students transition successfully after grade 12 – either through post-secondary education, apprenticeships, or into the workforce. Career Center Coordinators offer personalized attention to promote equity of opportunities eg. Inclusive ed, indigenous students (cultural responsiveness), and for students with diverse backgrounds and needs/challenges.

Career Centre Coordinators connect students to all professions. These services range from assisting them with resumes and cover letters, preparing them for interviews, finding volunteer opportunities, researching relevant scholarships, potential schools and assisting as they prepare applications to enable them to have the best possible chance at attending the post-secondary institution of their choice. Further, the work these of CUPE members, in partnership with GVTA staff, connect students to opportunities

directly correlated with the course-based and ITA funding that is received by our school district. This funding is related to students in various trades programs taken at Camosun College, in our high school trades classes or programs, and through youth apprenticeships in local industry. These funds are used to directly support the programs, spaces, and students in SD61 that serve to inspire students to pursue a trades pathway, or to have our students participate in college-level courses..

Why would you consider removing these 7 positions just as the students are preparing to leave the very institutions in which we serve. What sense does this make?

School Clerical Staff – just last year you chose to reduce the clerical supports in schools – mostly impacted were the middle and high schools. Now the potential is there to further cut the school office staff at middle and high schools – staff who provide support to students, staff and parents. How do you propose their vital work will get done? I must stress that these are the very same staff who were integral to schools as we navigated a pandemic – who were deemed essential to schools to represent the schools make sure they were open to provide service when we did not really know just what we were dealing with. These are the staff that are counted on time and time again to smooth the waters. If you choose this path, you will lose the adequate supports necessary to effectively run a school office? Administration, the District Office, GVTA, parents and students will all feel this loss, and now, in between potentially covering for the custodial staff, your Administrators will have to address the shortfall within the office.

The rationale for these potential cuts states “staff perform extra work during the year and bank time to use in the summer” This very statement supports our argument. The arrangement to bank time came into place because of the heavy workload required at peak times of the year. It is impossible to complete the additional work required at these peak times during a regular school day. A day that consists of constant visits to the office by students, teachers and parents, as well as the regular day to day activities necessary to support an office. Unlike staff at the board office, the only possible time to use banked time is during the school closure times when the day-to-day tasks associated with schools are less demanding. You must not cut the hours of these staff – to do so will result in schools not functioning with the same efficiency and seamlessness the school community has relied upon. You have asked so much of these employees through the cuts and the pandemic and they are done giving back. These clerical staff work an average of 50-60 hours of extra time a year, taken at straight time – this doesn’t take into account the missed breaks and lunches, phone calls on the weekend and, in the evening, – they are a critical piece of what goes on in a school. With this new plan the district will have no choice but to provide these employees with overtime pay to ensure that deadlines are met and work is complete.

The recruitment and retention of clerical staff in the schools will be severely comprised – each and every one of them can find employment within the provincial government or local municipalities – with better pay and the potential for advancement. There is little potential for advancement with the district and you are considering removing many of the full-time clerical positions in this district-a job that many 10 and 10.5-month clerical staff hope to attain. You realize that this would be a reduction of about 10% or more of their annual wages in one of the most expensive cities in Canada. We already lose 947 staff to other employers. We are a service industry and you are taking away the supports that are necessary to ensure that the school operates efficiently.

School Technologists – just a few short years ago the District determined that we needed these employees to work 11 months – and now, we want to go backwards. The asks in the budget include that the district continue to work on the ITL 5 year plan for network infrastructure, and to reinstate the student device program, also to increase the hardware budget– and included in the potential cuts is a suggestion to reduce the employees who would directly service these computers. A few years back another CUPE member from IT was made exempt at a significant cost to the district and now there is the potential for that to occur again. What sense does this make and is now the time? The impact of preventing the work these Technologists perform after school has closed for the year, and before it restarts in September will have a direct impact on staff and students and result in delays in readiness for a new year. The two weeks of lost productivity will add to much more than two weeks when you factor in that this work will now be done with full complements of staff and students in each location. The additional .5 is used to clean up at year end and check all the technology before start up as well as doing any updates, repairs and such to systems over the summer without disrupting classrooms. Things such as powering on iPads and Chromebooks to ensure network connectivity, checking TEC packages, labs. These impact of losing this time will result in delays accessing technologies at school start up and place more work and stress on our technologists at a time when more and more technology is demanded in the curriculum.

As I review the potential “asks” I do have the following questions – an answer would be appreciated but would hopefully, at the very least, give rise to meaningful discussion amongst yourselves:

1. Reinstate Device Budget - \$339K – and hardware budget -\$250K is this the time? While it does support students directly you are also considering reducing School technologists who would directly support these products within a school.
2. An IT Security Analyst position - \$110K – this is currently done by a CUPE staff member – why is this being considered? . This same scenario occurred a few years ago with a Programmer position - I see this as a potentially dangerous precedent as most "senior" level jobs in IT are simply labelled as

"Systems Analyst" and are currently limited by the collective agreement scale as to remuneration.

3. \$385K for decommissioning PCs and to add to extend educator laptop plan – again I ask, is now the time?
4. The district continually cannot fill EA and is recommending that \$620K is a savings for this. I would recommend that this district use some of these funds to create a minimum of 2 Itinerant EA Peer Support Workers who would work with our EAs, one-on-one, to offer suggestions, strategies, and support. We currently have a workforce that includes many EAs with little training. This could assist them in being more successful and would alleviate the pressure put on existing EAs who are burdened with providing on the job training.

Finally, we are pleased to see that you are considering increasing Educational Assistants to 30 hours. This is welcome news for both staff, parents and students alike. There is an identified problem with recruitment and retention in this much-needed position – what other job is paid by the minute. Increasing EAs to 30 hours will give them an opportunity to provide students with the supports they need, it will give them the opportunity to meet with their teaching partners to discuss the supports in place and how they can be adapted to suit the needs of the individual child. It will provide an opportunity to attend IEP, Staff and other such meetings, and to prepare materials such as pic symbols that help children navigate their day. Providing EAs with 6 hours a day is a great start – please bear in mind that this is only 15 minutes before and after the bell each day and that many EAs are providing this service, unpaid.

You have some tough decision to make and you need to consider cuts that are farthest away from students. Career Centres Coordinators, School Administrative Assistants, Accounts Clerks, My-Ed Operators, School Technologists – any cut to these positions will directly affect services that students receive. It will result in no service or delayed service, that will have direct impacts on students.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of CUPE 947,

Jane Massy

Jane Massy
President, CUPE 947

cc: Kim Morris, Secretary Treasurer
Deb Whitten, Acting Superintendent

Lisa McPhail

From: Kate Berniaz [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2022 1:57 PM
To: Community Engagement
Cc: cmpa.victoria@gmail.com; ryan mijker
Subject: No to proposed band cuts

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Dear School District Board members,

I am a parent with three children in the SD61 school system. My eldest is in his first year at [REDACTED] and participating in both band (trombone) and strings (violin). I am writing to urge the Board not to cut these invaluable programs that have brought so much joy and growth to my son and family.

We are coming out of a pandemic where so little of school life was normal for our kids. With participating in strings and band, my son was able to experience what I did in Junior/High School growing up- the challenge and eventual triumph and enjoyment of learning a new instrument and getting to play with his friends and with me as we practice together.

As my son becomes a teenager, I want him to have a range of activities to keep him busy through that difficult time. Not all kids are into sports, etc so it is important that we have artistic options. It is also incredibly important that these options are provided through the school system where they are affordable and accessible. With 3 kids I would not be able to support separate music lessons for each of them.

I am frustrated that after all the fight and support you saw for music last year, this budget cut option is back on the table with a very short timeline for parent and community feedback.

Not many people vote for school trustees, but I do. 2022 is an election year. If the budget is passed with any cuts to music programs or other student services, I will not vote for that person, at any level of government.

Please keep the music programs to ensure all students have the opportunity to enjoy and learn music.

Sincerely,

Kate Berniaz

[REDACTED]
Victoria, BC

Lisa McPhail

From: Paula J Marchese [REDACTED] >
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2022 12:23 PM
To: Trustees; community@s61.bc.ca
Cc: Kim Morris; Deb Whitten; Bruce & Karin Kwan
Subject: Letter to the trustees about the 2022-23 budget options
Attachments: Trustee Letter for April 4 BOE Meeting.pdf

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Dear Trustees,

Please see the attached letter, in which we have shared our ideas and input for you to consider regarding the SD61 2022-23 budget.

Kind regards,

Paula Marchese and Karin Kwan, parents

--

Paula Marchese
[REDACTED]

March 30, 2022

Dear School District 61 Trustees,

Like many parents in the Greater Victoria School District, we have been very concerned about the recently released options that are being considered for the 2022-23 budget.

We are writing to you now because we feel that, as parents, we have a unique perspective on the budget process this year. We feel fortunate that we were able to participate in the first four meetings of this year's budget committee. While we were not able to take part in the budget committee's final decisions, we had an incredible up-close-and-personal view of the inner workings of the district. We'd like to thank the district staff for being so generous with their time and for answering our many questions. In this letter, we would like to share our thoughts about how we think next year's budget could be formed, without severely impacting student programs and services. We hope that our input is helpful to you as you begin the important work of deciding next year's budget.

As the Values and Guiding Principles document, which was passed by the board last fall, states, "Students are at the centre of all that we do in SD61." We agree 100 percent with this sentiment, and we know we speak for many parents in the district when we say that we hope that the trustees will keep cuts **away from as many student programs and services as possible**. That said, we recognize that a \$7-million budget deficit presents huge challenges. If there is no alternative to making some cuts to student programs and services, then we strongly urge the trustees to consider cutting **all line items** in the budget by just a little bit. (This would include district staff positions.) In this way, the pain could be shared across the board and no programs would be eliminated or clawed back in a major way. We know that once programs are removed, it is very unlikely that they will ever be reinstated. In addition, we strongly feel that no asks from the district staff should be approved if student programs and services are being targeted for cuts.

Finally, it has become apparent to us that a close examination of budgets over the past five years, has shown a very conservative approach to revenues and expenses. In fact, in Operating funds alone, the district has, on average, overprojected their yearly deficit (underprojected a surplus) by \$6.7M. In order to protect student services and programs from being targeted as cuts every year, we strongly urge that this Board look first at the amount of risk the district is willing to take on for the budget process. The questions to be weighed here are: "Is this Board willing to cut student services for the sake of conservatism? Is higher risk justified by keeping student services and programs in place?" and "What is this Board's comfort level of risk in order to keep student services and programs in place?"

Thank you for considering our ideas. We hope that you, as trustees, will recognize our concerns and that you will use your power to create a budget that equitably meets the educational and emotional needs of all of the children in our district and that you will continue to maintain the quality student programming and services that have long been at the heart of the SD61 school system. We support you in this important work.

Please include our letter in the April 4 agenda package.

Regards,

Karin Kwan and Paula Marchese, SD61 parents

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2022 3:54 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Fwd: Don't cut music programs

Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250 475 4117
[REDACTED]

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.

From: Jeremy Caradonna <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2022 11:57:22 AM
To: Jordan Watters <jwatters@sd61.bc.ca>; Diane McNally <dmcnally@sd61.bc.ca>; Nicole Duncan <nduncan@sd61.bc.ca>; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>; Angie Hentze <ahentze@sd61.bc.ca>; Elaine Leonard <eleonard@sd61.bc.ca>; Ryan Painter <rpainter@sd61.bc.ca>; Rob Paynter <rpaynter@sd61.bc.ca>; Ann Whiteaker <awhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca>; Shelley Green <sgreen@sd61.bc.ca>; Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: Don't cut music programs

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Dear Trustees, Superintendent, and Deputy Superintendent,

I write on behalf of myself and my two children to urge the School District -- yet again -- to avoid the disastrous decision to cut music programming. My daughter [REDACTED] has survived the difficult years of the pandemic because of the joy and community that she has experienced in [REDACTED] band program. Likewise, my daughter [REDACTED], at [REDACTED], has benefitted enormously from the strings program and looks forward to getting involved in band at [REDACTED] next year.

I will not repeat all the facts and talking points around music programming that are, by now, familiar to all of you. The evidence is well founded that music is essential to learning, wellbeing, and life satisfaction. Further, I will not bore you by rehashing the poor logic advanced by the School District, which enjoys a surplus of funding and yet is constantly clamouring for cuts to essential services, including music and mental health supports. I will not drone on about the negative reputation of SD61, which sinks further into ignominy and disrepute with every passing year. I will not complain about the fact that I have been forced to battle my own school district nearly every year of my kids' schooling careers -- saving the Coastal Kindergarten program, protecting South Park from becoming a mainstream catchment school, keeping LFI at Central (twice!), and now battling to save music education (twice!).

I will, instead, focus on my family and my daughters. We are a family of musicians. I am in a band and play music with my daughters nearly every day. It is core to who we are. As core as math and French and history. It is how we connect. It is who we are. It is what we value.

What I am calling for is a sea change in management of the School District and its attitudes toward music. Music is not a "nice to have" but an essential subject and life pursuit. It is my hope and expectation that the School District will begin to better manage its finances moving forward, in ways that no longer jeopardize essential programs or earn the ire of long-suffering families.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jeremy L. Caradonna

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2022 3:25 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Fwd: SD 61 Budget 2022

Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250 475 4117
[REDACTED]

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.

From: Lora McKay [REDACTED] >
Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2022 12:20:45 PM
To: Ryan Painter <rpainter@sd61.bc.ca>; Jordan Watters <jwatters@sd61.bc.ca>; Elaine Leonard <eleonard@sd61.bc.ca>; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>; Angie Hentze <ahentze@sd61.bc.ca>; Ann Whiteaker <awhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca>; aduncan@sd61.bc.ca <aduncan@sd61.bc.ca>; Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>
Cc: educ.minister@gov.bc.ca <educ.minister@gov.bc.ca>; jackie.tegart.MLA@leg.bc.ca <jackie.tegart.MLA@leg.bc.ca>; rob.fleming.MLA@leg.bc.ca <rob.fleming.MLA@leg.bc.ca>; grace.lore.MLA@leg.bc.ca <grace.lore.MLA@leg.bc.ca>; murray.rankin.MLA@leg.bc.ca <murray.rankin.MLA@leg.bc.ca>; lana.popham.MLA@leg.bc.ca <lana.popham.MLA@leg.bc.ca>; mitzi.dean.MLA@leg.bc.ca <mitzi.dean.MLA@leg.bc.ca>
Subject: SD 61 Budget 2022

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Dear Trustees,

As a parent of a student in School District 61, I ask that you keep cuts as far away from students as possible in the budget process. Our students need all of their current school resources and programs. Nothing can be spared. If anything, a significant increase in investment is required in order to meet the school district's mandate to nurture each student's learning and well-being in a safe, responsive and inclusive learning community.

I am particularly concerned about the proposed cuts to music, student counselling services and daytime custodian hours: all of which have been essential to student health, safety and well-being throughout the pandemic. I also ask that you do not move forward the budget process any further until stakeholders and rights-holders are brought back to the table. It is unacceptable to not have the Songhees Nation, Greater Victoria Teachers Union, Greater Victoria Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils or the unions contributing to these important decisions.

In your budget negotiations with the Province of BC, I ask that you advocate on behalf of our learners and push for net new funding. Funding for the 2022/23 will see no increase in student funding, while the 2021/22 school year only increased by approximately 4%, and in 2020/21, it was 1%.
Total increases in funding have all been directly related to negotiated increases from collective bargaining.

Since 2018, however, CPP rates have increased by 0.75%, and the total maximum annual contribution amount for both CPP and EI combined has increased by almost \$9,095 per employee. The Employer Health Tax (EHT) came into effect in 2019, representing another 1.95% of total remuneration (e.g. salary, bonuses, vacation pay, etc). In addition, there is the rising rate of inflation, and growing infrastructure supply chain costs.

Without a commitment of adequate annual increases in funding from the Province of BC to address these issues, as well as to meet the complex learning and wrap-around support needs of our students, the district will always run a deficit. Thank-you, in advance, for taking the time to seriously consider these requests and concerns.

Sincerely,

Lora McKay

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2022 1:33 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Fwd: Support for Career Coordinators

Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250 475 4117
[REDACTED]

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.

From: Catrin Prevost [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 23, 2022 10:32:14 AM
To: Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: Support for Career Coordinators

Dear Trustees

I am writing to you today in my capacity as Careers Education department head at Mount Douglas Secondary. I work alongside our Career Coordinator daily. She is the heart and soul of the Careers program at our school and helps many students achieve their potential several times a day. The role of the Career Coordinator is paramount in all our schools to help achieve many of School District 61's goals.

In addition to the outstanding work that Career Coordinators do within the SD61 Pathways and Partnership programs, they also support students in other capacities. Below are the comments of six Mount Doug staff members who work with unique groups of students to meet the following District goal:


Goal 3, Strategy 4: Address the inequity of opportunity for all learners.

I wholeheartedly support preserving the jobs of our Career Centre Coordinators in SD61

Name	Connection to Sd61	Comment (optional)
John Sumner	Teacher Woodshop Robotics Aviation	Ms. Dawson has been invaluable in her contributions to my Aviation program and all other shop subjects. Her tireless dedication and commitment to the success of our students is without question. Many many students have benefited from Ms. Dawsons guidance and direction.
Shameem Ebrahim	Teacher/LST	Ms. Dawson has assisted my students with applications to programs, jobs and volunteer positions over the many years I have been at Mt. Doug. She has helped with supporting students with the transition to post-secondary programs. Last year, when I taught CLE 10, Ms. Dawson

		<p>was a huge support as she was able to share so many opportunities with me that I could then pass along to my students as they moved forward in planning for their futures. I was so appreciative to have such a supportive staff member with a huge wealth of knowledge supporting me and many of my students.</p>
Mike Verhagen	Teacher CLE10 Careers Teacher CLC12 WEX12	<p>I work closely with Ms. Dawson on a daily basis as a Careers Teacher and I consider her an integral part of the Pathways and Partnerships Team at Mt Douglas. She is the initial contact for literally dozens of students each day and works relentlessly to support student needs.</p> <p>Her knowledge of post secondary education requirements and institutions is unmatched at Mt Douglas. Students rely on her acquired knowledge and contacts. This can not be easily replaced.</p> <p>Ms Dawson works to connect students to SD61 District and SIP opportunities. Her monthly Newsletters make Mt Douglas families aware of the options for students beyond the classroom. There is no question in my mind that student success would suffer if the Career Center Coordinator position was eliminated.</p>
Hailey Stangowitz	Teacher CLE Art SS	<p>Ms Dawson has been a valuable member of our support system for students. When I taught CLE she shared many opportunities inside and outside of school that I directed students to. While teaching art she shared specific content-related opportunities that my students took and they will undoubtedly help them down the line.</p>
Dana Bailey	Scholarship Prep Teacher	<p>Ms. Dawson's knowledge is invaluable to the students, counsellors and teachers of Mount Douglas Secondary. She frequently liaises with post-secondary schools, keeping everyone up to date of changes with applications, how to submit transcripts, etc. She frequently works one on one with students helping them to navigate post secondary applications and requirements. She organizes university information sessions, in person or via zoom. She also organizes career information sessions, across the board, from jobs in the trades to jobs in high tech and health care. Who will do all of this work, if her position is cut? She is at the forefront of helping students plan their futures. She helps students of all levels and abilities with their career and post-secondary planning. The district is getting very good value for their dollar from Ms. Dawson.</p>
Rebecca Paquin	International Student Program (ISP) Advisor	<p>Post-secondary admission requirements and applications have become increasingly complex, and no institution uses the same process. As newcomers to Canada, ISP students need a great deal of help researching and understanding Canadian post-secondary options, requirements and applications. Many ISP students start at Mount Douglas with the intention of moving on to a Canadian post-secondary institution after graduation. They generally feel a great deal of pressure to be accepted to a "good Canadian university." Ms. Dawson pays meticulous attention to the myriad application processes and post-secondary programs, and she is tenacious about finding information if she does not know it. Ms Dawson's professionalism and commitment to her position allow students</p>

		to be supported and provided with accurate and up-to-date information as they navigate their future paths.
--	--	--

Sincerely,
Catrin Prevost
Teacher, Mount Doug Secondary
Greater Victoria School District No. 61


 www.sd61.bc.ca |   [@sd61schools](https://twitter.com/sd61schools)



Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2022 12:08 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: FW: proposed budget cuts to school music programs, counsellors, and career coordinators

Deb Whitten


Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250.475.4117



 www.sd61.bc.ca |   @sd61schools



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.

From: Janet Millar  >
Sent: Friday, March 25, 2022 8:07 PM
To: Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: proposed budget cuts to school music programs, counsellors, and career coordinators

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CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

School District 61

Re: Proposed Budget Cuts

Hello,

I'm writing to urge you to reconsider the proposed budget cuts to school music programs, counsellors, and career coordinators.

These programs benefit all students, but particularly those who do not have access to these resources outside of school. Students of higher socioeconomic status are more likely to have private music lessons and counselling support, as well as parents who are able to guide them toward their career goals.

One of the crucial functions of public education is to level the playing field and equip all students to participate in society. Money invested in students now means money saved later: healthy, functioning adults use fewer resources in the health and criminal justice systems.

Additionally, gender discrimination would be an effect of the proposed cuts, as the majority of counselling and career coordinator positions are filled by people who identify as women.

I realize the District is faced with a budget shortfall. However, I urge the District to pressure the provincial government for more funding instead of unloading the burden of debt on to the backs of vulnerable students and staff.

Sincerely,

Janet Millar

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2022 12:08 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: FW: Budget Cuts


Deb Whitten

Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250.475.4117

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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.

From: Elsa Yan 
Sent: Friday, March 25, 2022 8:45 PM
To: Angie Hentze <ahentze@sd61.bc.ca>; Ann Whiteaker <awhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca>; dm.education@gov.bc.ca; Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>; Elaine Leonard <eleonard@sd61.bc.ca>; grace.lore.MLA@leg.bc.ca; jackie.tegart.MLA@leg.bc.ca; Jordan Watters <jwatters@sd61.bc.ca>; lana.popham.MLA@leg.bc.ca; murray.rankin.MLA@leg.bc.ca; Nicole Duncan <nduncan@sd61.bc.ca>; rob.fleming.mla@leg.bc.ca; Ryan Painter <rpainter@sd61.bc.ca>; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>
Cc: educ.minister@gov.bc.ca
Subject: Budget Cuts

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March 2022

Dear Trustees,

As a parent of a student in School District 61, I am writing today to thank-you for your commitment to engaging early and meaningfully with our community on the budgeting process. The public Talking Tables and the inclusion of members of the Victoria Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (VCPAC) on the Budget Sub-Committee were strong first steps.

As you undertake this final steps to produce a budget, I ask that you keep cuts as far away from students as possible. Our students need all of their current school resources and programs. Nothing can be spared. If anything, a significant increase in investment is required in order to meet the school district's mandate to nurture each student's learning and well-being in a safe, responsive and inclusive learning community.

In your budget negotiations with the Province of BC, we ask that you advocate on behalf of our learners and push for net new funding. Funding for the 2022/23 will see no increase in student funding, while the 2021/22 school year only increased by approximately 4%, and in 2020/21, it was 1%. Total increases in funding have all been directly related to negotiated increases from collective bargaining.

Since 2018, however, CPP rates have increased by 0.75%, and the total maximum annual contribution amount for both CPP and EI combined has increased by almost \$9,095 per employee. The Employer Health Tax (EHT) came into effect in 2019, representing another 1.95% of total remuneration (e.g. salary, bonuses, vacation pay, etc). In addition, there is the rising rate of inflation, and growing infrastructure supply chain costs.

Without a commitment of adequate annual increases in funding from the Province of BC to address these issues, as well as to meet the complex learning and wrap-around support needs of our students, the district will always run a deficit.

Thank-you, in advance, for taking the time to seriously consider our requests and concerns.

Sincerely,

Elsa Yan (a concerned parent)

--

Regards,

Elsa

Sent from Gmail Mobile

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Tuesday, March 29, 2022 12:08 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: FW: School District 61 - 2022/2023 Budget - No Cuts to Student Services

Deb Whitten

Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250.475.4117

 www.sd61.bc.ca |   @sd61schools



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.

From: Noelle Davis [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 27, 2022 11:01 AM
To: Ryan Painter <rpainter@sd61.bc.ca>; Nicole Duncan <nduncan@sd61.bc.ca>; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>; Angie Hentze <ahentze@sd61.bc.ca>; Elaine Leonard <eleonard@sd61.bc.ca>; Jordan Watters <jwatters@sd61.bc.ca>; Ann Whiteaker <awhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca>; Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>
Cc: Minister, EDUC EDUC:EX <EDUC.Minister@gov.bc.ca>; dm.education@gov.bc.ca <dm.education@gov.bc.ca>; murray.rankin.MLA@leg.bc.ca <murray.rankin.MLA@leg.bc.ca>; jackie.tegart.MLA@leg.bc.ca <jackie.tegart.MLA@leg.bc.ca>; rob.fleming.mla@leg.bc.ca <rob.fleming.mla@leg.bc.ca>; lane.popham.MLA@leg.bc.ca <lane.popham.MLA@leg.bc.ca>; grace.lore.MLA@leg.bc.ca <grace.lore.MLA@leg.bc.ca>
Subject: School District 61 - 2022/2023 Budget - No Cuts to Student Services

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To: rpainter@sd61.bc.ca; nduncan@sd61.bc.ca; tferris@sd61.bc.ca; ahentze@sd61.bc.ca; eleonard@sd61.bc.ca; jwatters@sd61.bc.ca; awhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca; dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca
CC: educ.minister@gov.bc.ca; dm.education@gov.bc.ca; murray.rankin.MLA@leg.bc.ca; jackie.tegart.MLA@leg.bc.ca; rob.fleming.mla@leg.bc.ca; lane.popham.MLA@leg.bc.ca; grace.lore.MLA@leg.bc.ca

March 27, 2022

Dear Trustees,

As a parent of a student in School District 61, I am writing today to thank-you for your commitment to engaging early and meaningfully with our community on the budgeting process. The public Talking Tables and including members of the Victoria Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (VCPAC) on the Budget Sub-Committee were strong first steps.

As you undertake these last steps to produce a budget, I ask that you **keep cuts as far away from students as possible**. Our students need all their current school resources and programs. *Our students can spare nothing*. In fact, a significant increase in investment is required to meet the school district's mandate to nurture each student's learning and well-being in a safe, responsive, and inclusive learning community.

In your budget negotiations with the Province of BC, we ask that you advocate on behalf of our learners and push for net new funding. Funding for the 2022/23 will see no increase in student funding, while the 2021/22 school year only increased by approximately 4%, and in 2020/21, it was 1%. Total increases in funding have all been directly related to negotiated increases from collective bargaining.

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Without a commitment of adequate annual increases in funding from the Province of BC to address these issues, as well as to meet the complex learning and wrap-around support needs of our students, the district will always run a deficit.

Thank-you, in advance, for taking the time to study and contemplate our requests and concerns.

Sincerely,
Noelle Davis and David Tuckey
Parents of children in elementary and middle school in SD 61

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Monday, March 28, 2022 6:35 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Fwd: French Immersion support

Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250 475 4117
[REDACTED]

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.

From: Loren McClenachan [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 28, 2022 2:40:39 PM
To: Ryan Painter <rpainter@sd61.bc.ca>; Nicole Duncan <nduncan@sd61.bc.ca>; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>; Angie Hentze <ahentze@sd61.bc.ca>; Elaine Leonard <eleonard@sd61.bc.ca>; Jordan Watters <jwatters@sd61.bc.ca>; Ann Whiteaker <awhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca>; Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>; Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>
Cc: educ.minister@gov.bc.ca <educ.minister@gov.bc.ca>; dm.education@gov.bc.ca <dm.education@gov.bc.ca>; murray.rankin.MLA@leg.bc.ca <murray.rankin.MLA@leg.bc.ca>; jackie.tegart.MLA@leg.bc.ca <jackie.tegart.MLA@leg.bc.ca>; rob.fleming.mla@leg.bc.ca <rob.fleming.mla@leg.bc.ca>; lana.popham.MLA@leg.bc.ca <lana.popham.MLA@leg.bc.ca>; grace.lore.MLA@leg.bc.ca <grace.lore.MLA@leg.bc.ca>
Subject: French Immersion support

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CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Dear Trustees of the School Board,

As a parent of two students in SD61, I am writing about the proposed budget cuts for next school year, and in particular the proposed cut to the French Immersion program.

We moved from overseas this past year, and chose to come to Victoria because of the strength of the French Immersion program. My husband and I are both children of immigrants, and value foreign language skills highly for our children. We were thrilled that our son was able to enroll in early French Immersion Kindergarten this year and the education he has received so far exceeded our expectations. We were also very happy that our daughter was accepted to the Late French Immersion next year. The news that this may be cut due to budget shortfalls was surprising and extremely disappointing.

Our international move during the pandemic was difficult for our kids, and we made it our priority to remain in the catchment for stability, in particular for our daughter's move to middle school. Once we found out that she had been accepted to the French Immersion program, we decided to purchase a home in our school's

catchment to begin putting down roots. The subsequent news that this program could be cut was very frustrating.

Please do not cut the late French Immersion Program. We have heard from other parents that slightly lower than average enrollments this year are related to the pandemic and demand is certain to remain strong in the future. From our experience, the program is exceptional and should be given continued full support.

Sincerely

Loren McClenachan and Benjamin Neal

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Monday, March 28, 2022 11:58 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: FW: Proposed cuts to student counselling - please don't cut counsellor funding

Importance: High

Deb Whitten

Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250.475.4117
[REDACTED]

 www.sd61.bc.ca |   @sd61schools



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.

From: Sara Steeds [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 27, 2022 8:03 PM
To: Julie Lutner <jlutner@sd61.bc.ca>; Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>; Colin Roberts <croberts@sd61.bc.ca>; Harold Caldwell <hcaldwell@sd61.bc.ca>; Ryan Painter <rpainter@sd61.bc.ca>; Nicole Duncan <nduncan@sd61.bc.ca>; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>; Angie Hentze <ahentze@sd61.bc.ca>; Elaine Leonard <eleonard@sd61.bc.ca>; Jordan Watters <jwatters@sd61.bc.ca>; Ann Whiteaker <awhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca>
Cc: EDUC.Minister@gov.bc.ca
Subject: Proposed cuts to student counselling - please don't cut counsellor funding
Importance: High

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Hello,

I don't know who this needs to be addressed to, so I'm sending to anyone I can think of that I see on the SD61 website.

As a parent with a child in SD61, I feel it is imperative to express my thoughts and concerns on the proposed cuts to counselling services in the current SD61 budget.

Students already have little access to the much needed support of the counsellors due to them working more than 1 school resulting in only being available at 1 school 2 days per week. This is not beneficial in any way to the children that require their supports, and to consider cutting funding to them is appalling. My child has been bullied almost daily since September this year - yes that is another issue that is yet to be addressed by the school admin. If it wasn't for the support he receives from the school counsellor my child would refuse to attend school completely. The thought of these kids that needs these supports the most not having access to them is heartbreaking.

I understand that budgets need to be balanced, and funds need to come from somewhere, but cutting funding for school counsellors is NOT the route to take. Put yourself in the shoes of a child who is bullied constantly and then think about having 1 of the trusted adults that you have little access to being even less available to you when needed. This will only make things worse for the kids that seek support for the counsellors.

Find other ways to save money, perhaps some if not all of the high paid people at the school district should look at a pay cut to balance the budget - DO NOT take away or lessen the availability of counsellors in any way - if anything there needs to be at least 1 FULL TIME counsellor per school, not 1 counsellor per 2 schools.

Please find other ways to balance the budget and don't cut much needed counsellors.

Thank you

Sara

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Monday, March 28, 2022 11:58 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: FW: SD61 budget cuts

Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250.475.4117
[REDACTED]
www.sd61.bc.ca | [REDACTED]@sd61schools

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.

-----Original Message-----

From: David Bigsby [REDACTED] >
Sent: Sunday, March 27, 2022 9:33 PM
To: Ryan Painter <rpainter@sd61.bc.ca>; Nicole Duncan <nduncan@sd61.bc.ca>; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>; Angie Hentze <ahentze@sd61.bc.ca>; Elaine Leonard <eleonard@sd61.bc.ca>; Jordan Watters <jwatters@sd61.bc.ca>; Ann Whiteaker <awhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca>
Cc: rob.fleming.MLA@leg.bc.ca; educ.minister@gov.bc.ca; Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: SD61 budget cuts

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Trustees of SD61,

I am very disappointed to learn that you are again proposing cuts to middle school music programs, and also this year to student counseling and custodial services.

My child is in grade [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] School and has benefited from the counseling services last year and the music program this year.

These are valuable services that keep kids engaged in school and support their mental health. Cutting them diminishes the school experience and will lead to increased social and health problems down the road, which will cost us more overall.

I know SD61 is squeezed between static provincial funding and rising costs, and would like to give SD61 trustees and staff the benefit of the doubt on these cuts. However, the recent controversies about SD61 -- the sale of Vic High and Richmond lands and the suspension of two trustees -- makes me wonder if there are not also issues within SD61, including its ability to engage with its community. I have a very hard time believing a community engagement process led to these proposed cuts.

While this is a group email, I am very much interested in anything you individually can share with me about the concerns I've raised. I would like to be well informed in time for this fall's school trustee elections.

Finally, although this is a critical email, I would like to thank you for your work as a trustee. I am sure the hours you put in far outweigh the remuneration you receive.

--

David Bigsby /



Lisa McPhail

From: L Hansen [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 26, 2022 12:45 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Draft budget

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Hello;

Thanks for accepting public feedback on the school budget. Whatever you cut or reduce i recommend you continue to support the music program and music teachers. Yes students can obtain private lessons but having a music class be it choir or orchestra with your peers is not available elsewhere. Besides the obvious learning of music skills, choir or orchestra also teaches teamwork and Improves listening, hearing and timing. As well a large class size can be easily accommodated which when looked at financially produces more value for money spent.

I am grateful my son was able to be part of the music program in SD 61. It kept him in high school and prevented i feel, mental health issues that so many of his peers developed.

I urge you to keep all music programs and teachers in your school district.

Thank you

Liz

Sent from Home.

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Friday, March 25, 2022 1:52 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Fwd: Budget 2022-2023

Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250 475 4117
[REDACTED]

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.

From: Deanna Pfeifer [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 25, 2022 10:33:37 AM
To: Nicole Duncan <nduncan@sd61.bc.ca>; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>; Angie Hentze <ahentze@sd61.bc.ca>; Elaine Leonard <eleonard@sd61.bc.ca>; Jordan Watters <jwatters@sd61.bc.ca>; Ann Whiteaker <awhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca>; Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>; Ryan Painter <rpainter@sd61.bc.ca>
Cc: EDUC.Minister@gov.bc.ca <EDUC.Minister@gov.bc.ca>; DM.Education@gov.bc.ca <DM.Education@gov.bc.ca>; Murray.Rankin.mla@leg.bc.ca <Murray.Rankin.mla@leg.bc.ca>; jackie.tegart.MLA@leg.bc.ca <jackie.tegart.MLA@leg.bc.ca>; Rob <Rob.Fleming.mla@leg.bc.ca>; Popham.MLA, Lana <lane.popham.mla@leg.bc.ca>; grace.lore.MLA@leg.bc.ca <grace.lore.MLA@leg.bc.ca>; mitzi.dean.MLA@leg.bc.ca <mitzi.dean.MLA@leg.bc.ca>
Subject: Budget 2022-2023

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Dear Trustees,

Thank you for this opportunity to provide feedback regarding the 2022-2023 budget.

I am writing to ask that you not make cuts to the music program. The benefits of music education are well [documented](#) such as the following:

- Enhances fine motor skills
- Prepares the brain for achievement
- Fosters superior working memory
- Cultivates better thinking skills
- Improves recall and retention of verbal information
- Advances math achievement
- Boosts reading and English language arts skills
- develops the creative capacities for lifelong success
- Sharpens student attentiveness
- Strengthens perseverance
- Equips students to be creative
- Supports better study habits and self-esteem
- provides pleasure and enjoyment that can last a lifetime

In your budget negotiations with the Province of BC, I ask that you advocate on behalf of the students and push for adequate annual increases in funding from the Province of BC.

Thank-you, in advance, for taking the time to consider my concerns.

Sincerely ,
Deanna Pfeifer
Saanich

Lisa McPhail

From: Janet Millar [REDACTED] >
Sent: Friday, March 25, 2022 7:05 AM
To: Community Engagement
Cc: editor@oakbaynews.com
Subject: proposed budget cuts to music, counsellors, and career coordinators

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

School District 61
community@sd61.bc.ca

Re: Proposed Budget Cuts

Hello,

I'm writing to urge you to reconsider the proposed budget cuts to school music programs, counsellors, and career coordinators.

These programs benefit all students, but particularly those who do not have access to these resources outside of school. Students of higher socioeconomic status are more likely to have private music lessons and counselling support, as well as parents who are able to guide them toward their career goals.

One of the crucial functions of public education is to level the playing field and equip all students to participate in society. Money invested in students now means money saved later: healthy, functioning adults use fewer resources in the health and criminal justice systems.

Additionally, gender discrimination would be an effect of the proposed cuts, as the majority of counselling and career coordinator positions are filled by people who identify as women.

I realize the District is faced with a budget shortfall. However, I urge the District to pressure the provincial government for more funding instead of unloading the burden of debt on to the backs of vulnerable students and staff.

Sincerely,

Janet Millar

Lisa McPhail

From: Christine Gmail [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 23, 2022 9:12 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Reduce #FTE Career Coordinators if you must BUT do not cut them from SD61

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

RE: Budget 2022-23 Considerations

I am trying very hard to look through your proposed cuts objectively and with an open mind. It cannot be easy to make these decisions and not everyone can be satisfied.

I do not understand the rationale in cutting ALL Career Coordinator positions at the secondary school level. If you must make cuts here, surely you can retain 2-3 coordinators who can act for students at more than one school. Students on work experience can travel outside their school catchment, especially Victoria students who receive a free bus pass.

Please don't remove this role entirely from SD61. It means too much to the students at our school, and it helps local businesses with visibility and recruitment.

Christine Sullivan
Parent, Esquimalt High School

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Tuesday, March 22, 2022 4:45 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Fwd: Walk a mile in my shoes/Endangering lives

Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250 475 4117
[REDACTED]

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.

From: Atticus Dachsel Kerr [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 22, 2022 12:40:07 PM
To: Nicole Duncan <nduncan@sd61.bc.ca>; Ann Whiteaker <awhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca>; Ryan Painter <rpainter@sd61.bc.ca>; Jordan Watters <jwatters@sd61.bc.ca>; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>; Elaine Leonard <eleonard@sd61.bc.ca>; Angie Hentze <ahentze@sd61.bc.ca>; Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: Walk a mile in my shoes/Endangering lives

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Dear Trustees

I would like for you to just take a moment to reflect as to what you are doing. Take your mind back to when you were in High School. How did you get through the harsh brutality of your academics? Was it music? Or was it sports? Your best friend? Art club? Shop? Now I want you to picture your life with that special thing yanked away from you. You have no choice in this matter. What do you turn to now to cope? Drugs? Alcohol? Sex? And now people are blaming you for getting into this situation. You want to speak to someone about how this isn't your fault. But there are no counselors. There are no friends. There is no music.

This is the reality the children and teenagers of this community face.

Lives of innocent students are at stake.

Atticus Dachsel Kerr, Grade 10
[REDACTED] School

Please include this letter in the April 4th meeting pack up. Thank you.

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Tuesday, March 22, 2022 9:44 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Fwd: Proposed Budget Cuts

Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250 475 4117
[REDACTED]

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.

From: Mark Strudwick [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2022 8:38:09 AM
To: Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: Proposed Budget Cuts

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It is with disappointment that I must write another email to our school district's board due to the proposed cuts being voted upon in the near future.

First of all, I have to wonder how a budget with significant changes can be proposed when there is not a board present with its full complement of duly-elected members. The current situation looks like a kangaroo court and the optics are very poor for an organization representing stakeholders to be conducting itself in such a manner. Another unanswered question I have is, what exactly are the circumstances of the previous superintendent's vacating of her post and how much was she compensated for leaving it early?

As you will have previously heard, music education is integral for a child's development, in particular, in encouraging their brain development and problem-solving abilities. It is not chance that even those who may not play professionally, but participate in amateur ensembles, groups, bands etc., tend to be those who are higher-achieving scholastically. In addition to the above, music can be a gateway for others who may not have found their niche elsewhere, but affords them an ability to express themselves, bring happiness and contribute to society.

There has been much talk in the media, and from the district itself, on the importance of student's mental health and the effect the pandemic has had. How can you then propose to cut-back on counsellors to an ineffective student-to-counsellor ratio, when you have already acknowledged their need?

Lastly, teachers and staff in schools the province-over, have never been prioritized by the government for vaccination and throughout the pandemic have been expected to do their jobs and continue to educate our future, with no thanks. While this fact is beyond the board's mandate, these cuts are still another slap in the face and a lack of respect for continuing to show-up over the last 2 years.

My understanding is that the problem here is not so much one of having the funds, it is about allocation of funds. Please allocate appropriately.

Sincerely,

Mark Strudwick
Victoria, BC

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows



Virus-free. www.avast.com

Lisa McPhail

From: Phil Foster <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2022 5:29 PM
To: Community Engagement; Trustees
Subject: Proposed cuts to funding for Career Centres and Career Centre Coordinators
Attachments: To- Trusteesof SD61.docx

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

To: Trustees of SD61

Re proposed cuts to funding for Career Centres and Career Centre Coordinators.

If the proposed cuts to services for students through Career Centres are made it will significantly decrease and negatively impact the school-wide student supports for transition into post-secondary life, whether this be in post secondary education, skills training or work choices.

The Career Centre educators I understand also generate revenue for the District through their signing students up for courses and programs. Approximately 75% of student registrations are facilitated through Career Centre Coordinators, so \$715,000 in revenue (course-based & ITA funding) is at risk. Recruitment, registration, and collaboration with post-secondary schools and businesses is labour intensive and requires contacts and long term relationships.

Students in schools in lower socio-economic areas will feel the most impact as the counselling and assistance of these teachers enables them to find the post secondary opportunities much more readily, which in turn can radically change the futures of families. Having been an educator for over 50 years, and having devised and run programs to facilitate this transition in lower income areas in the UK and Canada I have experienced the difference it can make.

Balancing budgets is not easy nor is it pain free, but the loss of opportunities to students in their lifespan by cutting this service is a far greater cost to our community and society by a hundredfold than the short term \$ saved. The impact of this proposed cut will last for a generation.

Phil Foster, M Ed.

Education Director

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2022 11:28 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: FW: Middle School Music programs

Deb Whitten


Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250.475.4117



 www.sd61.bc.ca |   @sd61schools



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.

From: Phyllis Webster 
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2022 10:43 AM
To: Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: RE: Middle School Music programs

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Dear Trustees of School Division 61

I am deeply concerned (nay horrified) by the news that once again music for middle schools in the division is in danger of being cancelled.

I wonder if you have considered the following:

a. The effect of removing the program will be harmful to the mental health of the students. They have struggled in the last few years with COVID and wearing masks all day. They are growing up in a time when there is a war

in Ukraine, a global pandemic as well as overall climate change. Making beautiful music together helps young people learn that there is hope in the world. My 10-year-old grandson has written that “There is a lot to worry about. Music takes my mind off these worries and is something that I know can help make the world a better place.”

2. Being in a band or orchestra teaches so many life skills such as time organization, a commitment to a group task, and the necessity to cooperate to create a pleasing sound. Discipline, patience, and perseverance spill over into all the other aspects of a child’s life.

3. Children whose parents cannot afford private lessons will never be able to learn about music through performing it which is a tragedy because music brings so much to the mind, heart, and spirit.

Please find a way to support the middle school music program so that all the children of this school district will have the experience of being part of a musical team. Recently, we attended an end-of-term band and orchestra evening at Central Middle School. We came away with our hearts singing because the look of joy on the faces of the students in the orchestras, bands, and choir was so amazing. They had worked hard and done so well. Their teachers and parents (grandparents) felt so proud of their accomplishments.

Please ensure that all students in grades 6 to 8 can have the same experience and “make the world a better place”.

Phyllis Webster (proud grandma of two School District 61 students, former educator and supporter of quality education for all)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2022 7:41 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Fwd: school music program District 61

Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250 475 4117
[REDACTED]

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.

From: Barrie Webster [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 19, 2022 4:19:46 PM
To: Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: school music program District 61

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Deb Whitten

Interim Superintendent of Schools

School District 61

Victoria, BC

March 19, 2022

Dear Superintendent Whitten

The proposal to defund the majority of the group music programs in District 61 schools has again reared its ugly head. I am more than dismayed.

The group music experience in school is singlehandedly the most powerful means of instilling and nurturing cooperative pro-social behaviour in our young people. It is often said that team sports do the same: they encourage teamwork. But the group music experience makes it obligatory. Without cooperation, a band, orchestra, or choir, or even a small ensemble, cannot function. Society benefits from the application of the same skill. You must realize that.

I was fortunate enough to have had the opportunity to take string orchestra (I still play cello) as a full subject for credit all the way through the Kelowna high school system from 1953-1959. It was initiated following the success of the previously established band program by Mark Rose, a remarkable teacher (who, by the way, went on to become a very well respected NDP MLA and MP).

As you are no doubt aware, there are remarkable, creative teachers of group music in School District 61. I had the opportunity of seeing and hearing the results of their dedicated work again this past week at Central Middle School. To discard them is not only wasteful, it is also damaging to the education of our young people in Greater Victoria.

My grandsons have been benefiting from the music program in District 61 over the past several years. They and their fellow students need that enviable program to continue. It is one of the important things that makes going to school fulfilling. As a grandparent and retired educator, I know that a feeling of accomplishment fosters effective education.

So for goodness' sake, please help to make it possible to leave a successful program intact. Music feeds the soul. It is not a frill; group music is highly beneficial for young people who otherwise find it far too easy to simply drift as spectators in life.

Please maintain financial support for the orchestra, band, and choir programs in District 61 schools.

Sincerely

Barrie Webster, PhD, Professor (retired)

Victoria

Lisa McPhail

From: See Spring: Mental Wellness Coalition [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2022 7:00 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Letter of concern about students mental wellness.
Attachments: See Spring MWC SD61 Letter.pdf

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

We are a Coalition of Victoria mental healthcare Advocates and would like to offer our thoughts on proposed budget cuts. Please advise us as to what day and time we could communicate our concerns in person.



See Spring Mental Wellness Coalition

P.O. Box 50041 RPO Fairfield Plaza
Victoria BC V8S 5L8
(236) 508-5988
info@seespringcoalition.org

Statement of concern from our Advocacy Coalition regarding budget cuts to school counselling services in SD 61.

To the Greater Victoria School District,

The See Spring Mental Wellness Coalition is an organization that represents residents with Lived Experience and Mental Health Advocates in Victoria.

We are deeply concerned about the consequences of budget cuts to school counsellor staff positions. We are asking you to instead increase efforts to establish stable funding for these essential services. As well as to ensure that vacant positions are filled.

Students today are recovering from an unprecedented increase in levels of anxiety and depression due to the Pandemic and a world at risk of widespread conflict. Now is not the time to remove any mental wellness tools available to them from our already inadequately funded public mental healthcare systems. For some youth school is where they can access adults who can advocate for their mental health wellbeing and removing that life saving mechanism will have dire consequences. Nothing is, or ever should be of a higher responsibility or priority for your leadership to consider and undertake.

Both of us struggled with mental illness throughout middle school and highschool. Our school counsellors were the first individuals we reached out to and were the reason we got the support we needed, both in school and in the community. Our school counsellors quite literally saved our lives on more than one occasion. They were there for us when nobody else was. We have no doubt that cutting funding for school counsellors will have a detrimental effect on many students within School District 61. Lack of funding will be irrelevant to the families of children who tragically lose their life to suicide because their school did not have a school counsellor available to support them.

See Spring Youth Advocates

Emma Epp

Ella Hale

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2022 6:31 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Fwd: No cuts to music education! Message from a Grade 5 student

Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250 475 4117
[REDACTED]

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.

From: Glenys Webster [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2022 6:46:37 AM
To: Ryan Painter <rpainter@sd61.bc.ca>; Nicole Duncan <nduncan@sd61.bc.ca>; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>; Angie Hentze <ahentze@sd61.bc.ca>; Elaine Leonard <eleonard@sd61.bc.ca>; Jordan Watters <jwatters@sd61.bc.ca>; Ann Whiteaker <awhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca>; Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>
Cc: educ.minister@gov.bc.ca <educ.minister@gov.bc.ca>; dm.education@gov.bc.ca <dm.education@gov.bc.ca>; murray.rankin.MLA@leg.bc.ca <murray.rankin.MLA@leg.bc.ca>; jackie.tegart.MLA@leg.bc.ca <jackie.tegart.MLA@leg.bc.ca>; rob.fleming.mla@leg.bc.ca <rob.fleming.mla@leg.bc.ca>; lana.popham.MLA@leg.bc.ca <lana.popham.MLA@leg.bc.ca>; Grace Lore <grace.lore.MLA@leg.bc.ca>
Subject: No cuts to music education! Message from a Grade 5 student

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Dear SD61 trustees,

My name is Max and I am a Grade [REDACTED] student at [REDACTED] School. Recently, I have become aware that you are considering budget cuts to music programs including in elementary and middle schools.

These cuts would directly affect myself, my friends and hundreds of other students across Victoria. I have been looking forward to playing the saxophone in the amazing [REDACTED] music program for many years. It is one of the only things that excites me about school right now. Taking away the programs that are most meaningful to students is exactly the opposite of what the school board should be doing right now, especially during the COVID pandemic, when many things are already uncertain and a lot of opportunities for students have been unavailable.

Music is a core part of my life. It makes me happy, it helps me connect to others, and it gives me some hope for the future of my generation. I am growing up in a time of a global pandemic, the climate crisis, and with a war happening in Ukraine. There is a lot to worry about. Music takes my mind off of these worries and is something that I know can help make the world a better place.

Private music lessons are expensive. Without music education in schools, many students will never have the chance to see if this is their passion. Cutting music programs in elementary and middle schools will also greatly impact high school and university programs, and reduce the number of musicians and music teachers in the future.

Playing music is also very important for students' mental health. Playing in a group teaches kids how to work with others, how to work on problems together and feel the result of hard work. These are foundational skills for any citizen.

Your job is to help make choices to best support students. How can you possibly cut music programs knowing that this will harm students, rather than support them?

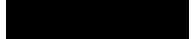
Please listen to the hundreds of students, parents and educators who are calling on you to make the right choice.

Sincerely,

Max Webster (age 10)

PS Please include this email in the SD61 Board meeting package

Glenys Webster



Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2022 6:29 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Fwd: April 4 Pack Up

Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250 475 4117
[REDACTED]

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.

From: Hannah Norris-Daley <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2022 7:58:15 AM
To: Nicole Duncan <nduncan@sd61.bc.ca>; Ann Whiteaker <awhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca>; Ryan Painter <rpainter@sd61.bc.ca>; Jordan Watters <jwatters@sd61.bc.ca>; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>; Elaine Leonard <eleonard@sd61.bc.ca>; Angie Hentze <ahentze@sd61.bc.ca>; Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: April 4 Pack Up

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Dear Board of Trustees,

Hello! My name is Hannah Daley and I'm a student at [REDACTED] School. As someone who has benefited from the music program through elementary school to high school, it's disappointing for me to learn about the possible upcoming budget cuts. I know not every student that goes to school has huge connections with music programs offered, but a large portion do. Although this may not seem imperative to students' life at school, I strongly ask you to reconsider. Even though not all students partake in the music program in SD61, it benefits a large number of students, and for many it's a reason to come to school and it gives students something to be truly passionate about. The experiences and knowledge learnt from an in-depth and hands-on music program lasts a lifetime, and the memories I personally have made have been one of the highlights of my school career so far. I understand that this is not an ideal situation and that none of you wish to cut budgeting for any of these programs, but I don't think that the SD61 music program, or counseling can suffer losses when so many students rely on it. From my experience, going to choir, vocal jazz and guitar made me feel comfortable and excited to go to school and I've learned a lot about myself and the evolving culture of music through these programs. I have also talked with other students, and counseling at each of our schools is already suffering. The overall opinion is that staff are overworked and find it difficult to keep up with the amount of students they have to support. The staff are not the problem, as they are very passionate and caring about their students and their job, but the amount of students compared to the amount of counselors is overwhelming for both parties. Counselors are already so overworked with the amount they have to do, that I can only imagine what that will be like after these cuts. Again, I know that none of you wish for this to happen, and you've been put in a place where you have to make a tough decision when it comes to this, but so many students are so passionate about these programs, and I hope that has come across through our attempts to prevent these cuts. I want to thank you for your time and ask that you use this email during the April 4th meeting pack up.

Thanks again,

Hannah Daley (Grade [REDACTED] student at [REDACTED])

[REDACTED]

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2022 6:29 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Fwd: Stop the budget cuts

Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250 475 4117
[REDACTED]

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.

From: Suzanne Nievaart [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2022 11:19:40 AM
To: Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: Stop the budget cuts

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CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Dear trustees,

This school year, my son had the opportunity to learn the cello thanks to the Grade 6 strings program. It was the main reason he was motivated to go to school. The pandemic has had a multitude of impacts on children and youth and music offers an outlet that is critical for mental health and well being. Research shows that playing music is supportive of brain development as well as positive academic engagement at the school throughout middle school and high school.

It's unacceptable that you are considering cutting music programs. They should be seen as equally essential to academic success as math, science, and English. Our future as a society depends on it.

If a convoy can raise \$10 million overnight, there has to be another way to fund all school programs, so please dig a little deeper. Stop cutting essential programs like music and school counsellors, the children will suffer without them.

Thank you,

Suzanne Nievaart, M.A.

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2022 6:29 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Fwd: The school music program

Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250 475 4117
[REDACTED]

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.

From: blair jensen [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2022 11:38:27 AM
To: Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: Re: The school music program

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Hello,
First, I would like to thank you for your work and commitment to your position up to now.
Secondly, I want to share my joy over attending the recent Spring Concert at [REDACTED] School where my son plays saxophone in Band and viola in Advanced Strings.
With my daughter at my side, it was a delight to listen watch and listen to the entire group's progress since their Winter Concert!
All kids, including our own, have struggled to cope and manage during the past 2 years. Almost everything they have known has changed with very few things remaining constant.
Music has been a constant in their lives since they were 3 and 4 years of age when they were signed up for Island Ukuleles.
That introduction to music was carried on and expanded with the Strings program that started in Grade 5. My daughter's music learning had to be reduced to one-on-one guitar lessons due to suffering a second concussion.
However, was able to continue because of the music program at school. My son has been able to continue his music education because of the school program.
He objects to many of the activities we suggest to him, but he has never objected to music. It is a constant in his life and he enjoys it.
The bottom line is that music is fun, challenging, rewarding, and is therapy for our kids at a time when their mental health is being challenged on a daily basis.
Please do all that you can to not only save the music program in our schools, but to make it a permanent part of learning that will endure through good times and bad.
Best Regards,
Blair Jensen

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2022 6:28 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Fwd: Planned cuts to music programs in School District 61

Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250 475 4117
[REDACTED]

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.

From: maryevt@telus.net [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2022 1:11:11 PM
To: Ryan Painter <rpainter@sd61.bc.ca>; Nicole Duncan <nduncan@sd61.bc.ca>; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>; Angie Hentze <ahentze@sd61.bc.ca>; Elaine Leonard <eleonard@sd61.bc.ca>; Jordan Watters <jwatters@sd61.bc.ca>; Ann Whiteaker <awhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca>; Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: Planned cuts to music programs in School District 61

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CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

As a parent and grandparent, I am writing to express my heartfelt distress at the suggestion that School District 61 is considering drastic cuts to its music programs. Both my sons were involved in school strings and orchestra and benefitted greatly from the music, fun, discipline, and social relationships of those years. In the case of my younger son, who had difficulties with ordinary school work, but who proved to have exceptional musical ability, the school music program was a lifesaver. Now my grandson has been looking forward to the same opportunity as soon as he is old enough to qualify.

Also, it should be added that not all parents can afford to send their children to the Victoria Conservatory of Music or to have their children tutored privately. Music is a very legitimate form of learning and enjoyment and should be provided as part of a child's education. It would be a shame to see these programs curtailed.

Please have this included in the April 4th Meeting packup.

Sincerely,
Mary Turner

From: Anastasia Andrews
Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2022 12:00 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Feedback Re: 2022-2023 Budget

To whom it may concern regarding public and staff feedback about the 2022-2023 budget proposals,

If students truly are at the “centre of what we do in SD61” as stated in the *Values and Guiding Principles of the Budget 2022-2023* (p. 1) the multiple reductions to direct student services and supports, including, school counsellors, youth & family counsellors, and career centre coordinators, would not be on the table during these stressful and challenging times. As a frontline worker in my roles as a classroom teacher, the mental health staff contact for my school, a learning support teacher, chair of the school-based team (SBT), and a school counselling intern for the last year and a half, I have insight from directly supporting vulnerable students throughout the COVID pandemic. These are unprecedented times during which students require direct support during the school day to promote resilience while weathering so many transitions.

Under these extenuating circumstances where student's mental health is a stated priority in the Greater Victoria School District, it is unconscionable to propose cutting funding to:

- 8 - School Counsellors (Going back to the contract ratio of 1:693 students)
- 7 - Youth & Family Counsellors
- Eliminating 2 School Counsellor positions (Due to unfilled vacancies - Not a lack of need.)
- 8 - Career Centre Co-ordinators

How do these proposed cuts align with the [GVSD Strategic Plan](#) 2020-2025, in which, Goal 3 states, “*Create an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support all learners’ physical and mental well-being*”? The strategies that support Goal 3 of the Strategic Plan further state,

Strategy 1: *Continue to provide professional learning opportunities to all staff in K-12 to further support implementation of social emotional learning, physical literacy and mental health literacy that improves outcomes for students and classrooms.*

Strategy 2: Work in collaboration with Ministry of Children & Family Development to provide joint educational planning and support for children and youth in care that helps develop the child’s personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to the fullest for current and future success.

Strategy 3: *Engage and collaborate with families to encourage awareness of and engagement in physical literacy and mental health literacy that improves outcomes for students in classrooms and at home.*

Strategy 4: *Address the inequity of opportunity for all learners to maximize physical health and mental well-being.*

If the Board votes to eliminate any, or all, of these student support positions, which remaining staff will be expected to provide these essential and direct supports to the students the GVSD#61 District claims are their top priority? How is this proposal in the best interest of ALL students during these unprecedented and emotionally challenging times?

In the *Framework for Enhancing Student Learning Report 2021*, it refers to the *Strategic Plan 2020-2025* and then also states that three strategies have been developed to realize Goal One of the Strategic Plan, “(3) *Address the inequity of outcomes for diverse learners*” (p. 2). I hope you will consider students struggling with mental health and their social-emotional well-being within the purview of diverse learners. Again, I ask, how does potentially eliminating these student support positions support the district's goals and strategies?

These proposed budget cuts DO NOT “align with the [Strategic Plan](#) and the [Framework for Enhancing Student Learning](#)” as stated in the Alignment section of the Values/Guiding Principles of the Budget 2022-2023 (p. 2) and will adversely impact the most vulnerable of our student learners.

I am asking that you to reconsider these proposed cuts during a time when mental health literacy, mental support, and social emotional learning needs are paramount and consider taking the money from more indirect student support services if student's truly are at the centre of what we do, then please reconsider how to provide the best possible support through the 2022-2023 budget.

Ms. Anastasia Andrews

English 10/11 & Learning Support Teacher, Case Manager, and School Counselling Intern
Lambrick Park Secondary School
Greater Victoria School District No.61

 www.sd61.bc.ca |   @sd61schools



Lisa McPhail

From: Kim Morris
Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2022 8:12 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Fwd: Letter from the BC Choral Federation
Attachments: BC Choral Federation - School Music Education.pdf

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From: Linda [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 19, 2022 2:24:36 PM
To: Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>; Colin Roberts <croberts@sd61.bc.ca>; Harold Caldwell <hcaldwell@sd61.bc.ca>; Kim Morris <kmorris@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: Letter from the BC Choral Federation

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March 19, 2020

Deb Whitten, Interim Superintendent
Colin Roberts, Interim Deputy Superintendent
Harold Caldwell, Associate Superintendent
Kim Morris, Secretary Treasurer

Dear School District 61 Administrators:

RE: Funding for School Music Programs:

As planning for another school year proceeds, the focus turns to budget and how to address competing district priorities. Music programs, especially in COVID recovery, must not be viewed as an expendable area where budget cuts can be achieved. Research has shown repeatedly that music students demonstrate significantly higher academic achievement compared to other students.... often by large margins. They tend to be more engaged and motivated; less likely to be diagnosed as ADHD or to become involved in substance abuse. These are just some of the reasons that school music education is important.

Music Education: Benefits for Academic Achievement and Personal Efficacy: Current research, both basic and applied, has led to a new, more inclusive understanding of "the basics." Originally coined the STEM disciplines, the acronym has been changed to STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, **Arts**, Mathematics). Music and the arts are no longer seen as peripheral and vague.

<https://artsintegration.com/what-is-steam-education-in-k-12-schools/>.

Students who learn music and are involved in the arts are found to be more adept in skills like collaboration, communication, problem-solving and critical thinking. In general, they demonstrate greater flexibility, adaptability, responsibility and creative thinking. These are all skills possessed by successful people. They are personal efficacy skills.

The Leadership Challenge for Government, District and School Administrators: Government officials, school trustees and administrators are urged to

- 1). learn about and understand the power of music education for student achievement; and,
- 2). commit to providing adequate funding and establishing mandatory time allocations for school music programs that allow for student progression from childhood through to graduation.

The evidence supporting music instruction in schools is compelling. The academic, personal and social/emotional benefits cannot be denied. As leaders in education, you have the huge responsibility to build and maintain strong programs. Your professional support is required to address the challenges presented.

Respectfully,

Willi Zwozdesky, Executive Director
BC Choral Federation

Linda Dier, Advocacy Chair
BC Choral Federation

The British Columbia Choral Federation gratefully acknowledges that our members work, live and sing on the traditional and largely unceded territories in this region of more than 200 First Nations whose rich artistry, culture and traditions surround us.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Music for Every Student

Strong programs in the early years lay the foundation for solid programs (both choral and instrumental) at the middle and senior levels as well. Singing is at the core of music education because it serves as an essential building block for students. **Everyone is born with a singer's instrument.** That means that choral music is accessible to all regardless of financial means. In addition to being a tool for learning, singing fosters social connectedness and self-expression. Without choral opportunities, students, in particular boys, will miss expert coaching to guide them through the changing voice and may entirely miss the opportunity for youth and adult involvement in artistic expression.

Using technologies like Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) and Electroencephalography (EEG), neuroscientists have confirmed a causal connection between music study and cognitive growth. The studies have shown that the brains of musically trained individuals have stronger neural connections and more grey matter. They demonstrate better information processing, higher IQ, better memory and attention as well as better motor coordination. Daniel Levitin, cognitive psychologist and neuroscientist, tells us that music activates every region of the brain that has so far been mapped as well as nearly every neural subsystem. Music is fuel for the brain. https://youtu.be/-c7d5WO_NPA.

Choral and other music programs are essential to student development. Music integrates across the curriculum: music is mathematics based, music reflects and transmits history and world cultures, music is science and technology based (sound production) and music involves understanding and producing language. Music is integral to all aspects of the fine arts.

Music transcends the limits of language. It has no language barrier and it brings people together regardless of ethnicity or background. It also transcends academic barriers. All learners can be successful in music regardless of academic achievement. Often students who struggle in other areas excel in music. All students want the sense of achievement that comes with feeling competent. Participating with others to sing and make music offers community, focus and purpose for students.

School Music Education in Canada: Two Thought-Provoking Studies

CHORAL CANADA (2021) In their study entitled *Singing in Canadian Schools*, Choral Canada studied the impact of COVID-19 on student access to choirs and group singing. 1000 survey responses were received from music educators in all provinces. The results revealed that during the pandemic, 91% of respondents' students were no longer able to sing in extra- and co-curricular programs such as choirs and ensembles. In addition, fewer than 30% of respondents had access to spaces designated for music teaching/learning. The survey results paint a sobering picture of the impact of the pandemic. It is critical that educational leaders assist with post-pandemic recovery by providing tangible program support for choral music programs and opportunities.

https://choralcanada.org/singing_schools_covidimpact_survey.html.

COALITION FOR MUSIC EDUCATION (2021) Another Canadian study reveals that there is significant discrepancy in alignment between provincial policy documents and actual practice. The Coalition for Music Education study entitled *Everything is Connected: a Landscape of Music Education in Canada* identifies and provides data that reflect the elements influencing music education. The report details funding practices and time allocations for music instruction in all provinces. Findings specific to British Columbia reveal that school districts are primarily responsible for funding music instruction. The results show that about 2/3 of school administrators in BC do not have designated funds for music education; however, the majority of them do have flexibility and autonomy over discretionary funds that are provided. This means that music education may or may not receive funding in a school depending upon how decisions are made about the use of discretionary funds. In British Columbia, it is stated that music education is required from Kindergarten to Grade 9. However, there are currently no mandatory time allocations prescribed by the Ministry of Education. <https://www.coalitioncanada.ca>



March 19, 2020

Deb Whitten, Interim Superintendent
Colin Roberts, Interim Deputy Superintendent
Harold Caldwell, Associate Superintendent
Kim Morris, Secretary Treasurer

Dear School District 61 Administrators:

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Lisa McPhail

From: Betty Park [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 19, 2022 9:42 PM
To: Community Engagement; Ryan Painter; Nicole Duncan; Tom Ferris; Angie Hentze; Elaine Leonard; Jordan Watters; Ann Whiteaker; Trustees; educ.minister@gov.bc.ca
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Budget Cuts

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Dear Trustees,

This response is to the SD 61 proposed cuts to music, counselling and daytime custodians. I am not one to usually email, but these proposed cuts would be a colossal and irreversible mistake which compels me to email the school district.

Music programs are invaluable to young people. My children have been exposed to music and musical instruments from a very young age and it is a big part of our life. I am fortunate and grateful that we are able to provide our children with music lessons outside of the school parameters. However, when my child had the opportunity to learn strings in elementary school, she jumped at the opportunity. This love of music is strong as she continues the strings program at middle school, as well as joining the band program. She takes great pride and joy in her new found abilities.

Research shows that music introduced at an early age has huge benefits of motor skills (both fine and large), develops language and relationship skills, builds self confidence, self esteem and teamwork. At this critical and crucial time where children have lost 2 YEARS of socialization and many children have not had any support, music programs bring so much positivity to their surroundings. I attended a live band concert at my daughter's school this past week and the music program has a very positive impact on the school community.

As for school counsellors, there should be more of them readily available to our children. Both my children have used school counsellors and I am sure that there are many more children and parents who rely on this resource. Private sessions are beyond the scope of many families and in this current environment getting mental health services outside of school is a 4-5 month waitlist. There should never be a price on a child's mental health. We cannot take hope away from a child who may not have the support he/she/they need. There is a lot of negativity and anxiety surrounding today's child and to put a child's mental health as a negotiable commodity is NOT AN OPTION.

Daytime custodians are also a much valued position. If you actually take the time and walk around a school with a population of 450+ children, you would understand the value of daytime custodians. The custodians are one of the main reasons we have been able to keep the spread of Covid at bay in SD61. This job is just as important of caring for our children's well being and mental health. Without daytime custodians, the likelihood of shutting down schools due to the spread of germs is infinitely higher. We have been fortunate and are very grateful that we have been able to attend school through this pandemic and only had to have ONE semester of online learning.

Please keep at the forefront of all your decisions that our children are our future. We need to make them the priority in any and all decisions.

I am not sure if any of you have/had children in the public schooling system, but I am sure that if you did these proposed cuts would not be on the chopping block yet again.

If you could advise what other options were on the proposed cuts list as these 3 options cannot have been the only ones, you would not have this influx of incensed and concerned parents. Please rethink the value of all the proposed cuts areas - there must be a better way and we need to find it.

Thank you,
Betty Park Greer

Sent from my iPhone

Lisa McPhail

From: Audra B [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 19, 2022 12:27 PM
To: Community Engagement
Cc: agms.pac@gmail.com
Subject: 22/23 Budget feedback
Attachments: 22-23 SD61 budget.xlsx

Categories: Green category

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Dear SD61 Budget Committee,

I have examined your budget and have some detailed feedback below.

Generally speaking, you should be aware that you have a reputation for over spending on administration at the expense of concrete student education. Parents are tired of initiatives that do not appear to be research-based or add much value. For example, do we really need new report cards? We consider this a waste of money.

We want more money spent on teachers, learning support, gifted learning, music, counselling and French immersion. We want much less spent on administrators and navel gazers who come up with money-wasting initiatives like report cards with no letter grades. Stop fixing things that are not broken and add money to programs with proven benefits, like reading recovery and French immersion.

Unfortunately, I am aware that people in the district make a big show of listening to parents and then do whatever they feel like with complete disregard to the input. However, I have to try. I care about my family too much to give up without giving any feedback.

Regards,
Audra Bassari.

Description	Amount	Item
Add 0.10 FTE VP Admin Time to 10 Middle Schools to lead learning and assist the principal	\$116,550	Ask
Add 0.10 FTE VP Admin Time to 8 Secondary Schools to lead learning and assist the principal.	\$81,585	Ask
Add 0.10 FTE VP Admin Time across the 28 Elementary Schools, to lead learning and assist the principal	\$326,340	Ask
Travel to recruit FRIMM teachers	\$20,000	Ask
Increase HR Systems Specialist \$9k	\$9,337	Ask

Communications Assistant	\$68,000 Ask
District Team Assessment & Proficiency Work	\$55,000 Ask
Business Process Advisor/Trainer	\$75,000 Ask
Snow Plow attachment for Dump Truck	\$250,000 Ask
Dump Truck	\$100,000 Ask
Education Assistants to 30 hours/week	\$683,862 Ask
Increase Hardware Budget - Year 1 of 2 Staff Replacement	\$250,000 Ask
Decommission Classroom PCs and Extend Educator Laptop Program	\$385,000 Ask
Maintenance - Carpentry	\$50,368 Ask
Maintenance - Painting	\$18,358 Ask
Maintenance - Painting	\$35,791 Ask
Maintenance - Electrical	\$55,012 Ask
Maintenance - Mechanical	\$150,836 Ask
Maintenance - Grounds	\$231,239 Ask
Maintenance - Carpentry	\$168,009 Ask
Continued investment in our student technology tools.	\$339,230 Ask
Year 2 of 5 Network Infrastructure maintenance	\$502,850 Ask
New Reporting Tool Support & In-Service to teachers to align with the new reporting order.	\$64,000 Ask
Increase Early Childhood Educators to support student transition to primary grades.	\$178,000 Ask
Manager \$120k	\$120,732 Sav
Director \$163k	\$163,138 Sav
Advisor \$103k	\$102,526 Sav
Enrolment Projection Contractor	\$15,043 Sav
Reduction of Human Resources 1.0 FTE	\$66,945 Sav
Counsellor Reduction Based on Historical Vacancy Trends	\$231,120 Sav
Reduces 1 Associate Superintendent	\$209,794 Sav
Reduces 1 Assistant Manager \$105k	\$105,268 Sav

Reduction in 22-23 School Supply Allocation	\$800,000 Sav
Vice-Principals in Small School	\$61,494 Sav
Principal or Vice-Principal in District Team (Tolmie)	\$150,174 Sav
Clerical Staff from 12 months to 10.5 months/year	\$180,139 Sav
Clerical Staff from 12 month to 11 month and 11 month to 10.5 month employees	\$94,496 Sav
School Technologists from 11 month to 10.5 months/year	\$24,760 Sav
"Services" in the budget increased by \$1.6M. Put it back to last year's level	\$1,600,000 Sav
Professional Development and Travel can go back to last year's level	\$200,000 Sav
Cut student transportation	\$150,000 Sav
Cut more staff at district head office	\$1,775,000 Sav
	<hr/>
	\$6,539,996 Tot
	\$5,815,589 Ask
	\$4,214,367 Ask
	<hr/>
	\$1,601,223 Ask
	\$6,050,629 Sav
	<u>Solution to Budget</u>
Deficit	-\$7,239,021
Savings	\$6,050,629
Asks to keep	-\$1,601,223
Risk - Reduces Expenses or Adds 21-22 Surplus	\$2,000,000
Use of Projected 21-22 Surplus	\$789,144
	<hr/>
Total	-\$471

Lisa McPhail

From: Lewis Rhodes
Sent: Saturday, March 19, 2022 9:52 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Letter in Support of Career Coordinators

Categories: Green category

Hi,

I just wanted to write a short letter in support of the career coordinator positions. In my experience they are invaluable members of the secondary school community and make a significant impact on the lives of students.

I have found their presence is most felt amongst vulnerable students who are less likely to have the resources or support at home to plan for the transition to post-secondary life.

I hope that we are able to find cost savings in areas that do not have such a significant impact on vulnerable students, but I would also like to thank you for working to keep our school district operational. I do not imagine this budgetary process is an easy one for anyone involved.

Sincerely,

Lewis Rhodes

Link at Lambrick Program Coordinator
Greater Victoria School District No. 61

Lisa McPhail

From: Kaye Low [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 19, 2022 9:24 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Budget 2022 2023: recommendations

Categories: Green category

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Greeting.

I have read recent board presentations on the recent budget. The board has put together some thoughtful options, in a time of difficult choices. I am concerned that districts aren't receiving sufficient funding so will be writing my MLA and the Education Minister in respect to that.

With regard to the necessary cuts, I support continuing programming for Indigenous and neuro-diverse students (reading recovery), especially those without additional Ministry funding (IEP's?). If we can scale back the music program rather than getting ride of it entirely should that be possible.

I am concerned about transparency of board operations given what is happening with a couple of board members and the lack of information in respect to the situation. I appreciate that there are matters about which the public cannot be informed, but it would be worth at least clarifying that point. Current events and a lack of communication serve to reduce confidence in the board while reducing trust.

Thank you for the efforts you make on behalf of the children in this community.

Kaye Low

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Saturday, March 19, 2022 7:06 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Fwd: no cuts to music

Categories: Green category

Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250 475 4117
[REDACTED]

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.

From: Marita Dachsel [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 18, 2022 12:48:00 PM
To: Ryan Painter <rpainter@sd61.bc.ca>; Nicole Duncan <nduncan@sd61.bc.ca>; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>; Angie Hentze <ahentze@sd61.bc.ca>; Elaine Leonard <eleonard@sd61.bc.ca>; Jordan Watters <jwatters@sd61.bc.ca>; Ann Whiteaker <awhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca>; trustees@sd61.bc.ca <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>; Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>; Kim Morris <kmorris@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: no cuts to music

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Please include in the April 4 meeting package

Dear Deb Whitten, Kim Morris, and the Board of Trustees,

I cannot believe I have to advocate against music cuts for the second year running, but I must as the programs are too important to lose.

I am the parent of three students in School District 61, one at [REDACTED], one at [REDACTED] School, and one at [REDACTED] School, and I would like to tell you about how important the music programs you are proposing to cut are to the lives of my children.

Both my boys participated in the strings program in grade five at [REDACTED]. My daughter, currently in grade [REDACTED], is currently learning viola like her brothers did in this program. Without the strings program, none of my children would have this amazing opportunity; we could not afford to give our children private strings lessons. My eldest continued to play strings for his three years in middle school and my middle son plans to continue playing in high school as well. It has been amazing watching my kids be handed an instrument that is completely foreign to them (neither my husband nor I play) and grow tangibly as musicians. This alone gives them confidence, teaches determination and perseverance. We can all literally hear what practice—time, attention, and focus—can do in a way that studying for a test is unable to illustrate. What an incredible life lesson!

When our children were little, we often heard about how difficult middle school is. That it's a difficult age and time, and that we should expect a few hard years. We braced ourselves when our eldest entered [REDACTED] School, but instead of witnessing heartache, we saw our son blossom. He found his people and his passion, all thanks to the music program. His confidence and creativity grew. I knew how lucky we were, having a public catchment school with such a dedicated and talented music program.

I asked my son what he would have done if he'd gone to a middle school in a district that didn't have band. He said simply, "I would have died." It may read as hyperbole, but I can assure you it isn't. With the music program, he found community and purpose. He was encouraged to be creative, to be a leader, to take risks, to have fun, and to work hard.

At the end of grade seven, inspired by his fellow bandmates, he decided to write a piece for the band to play in grade eight. He worked on it for over six months, often receiving encouragement and advice from his music teachers. In March 2019, just before Spring Break and the pandemic lock down, Band 8 premiered his song, *March of the Spartans*. Can you imagine? The generosity of the music teachers, specifically the brilliant Ross Ingstrup here, to nurture this young, eager student, allowing one of the two spots for the Band 8 recital to go to a student composer? The audience leapt to their feet, knowing what a gift this was and being fully supportive. My son has gone on to composing opportunities with the Victoria Symphony Orchestra through their vsNEW program. There is absolutely no way he would be where he is today if he had started his band and strings opportunities in grade 8.

My second son is currently in grade [REDACTED], and while his opportunities have been diminished because of the pandemic, he still is involved with four school ensembles (Advanced Strings, Band 8, Junior Jazz, and [REDACTED] Wood Ensemble). Being part of these ensembles gives him a sense of community and belonging in a time where these have almost disappeared. For his birthday, we went to Hermann's Jazz Club. His love of jazz is directly and solely linked to the education he received in middle school.

My daughter has been fantasizing about the music opportunities in middle school for years. Next year, she hopes to play in the strings ensemble, grade 6 band, and choir. It's what she is most looking forward to in middle school.

Middle school is such an exciting time for these young scholars. They come from elementary schools and are flush with choice. This is when they get to try things out. They try band, try sports, try clubs. They're figuring out who they are, what they like. Children thrive when they find their thing. It's what gets them through the hard times of everything adolescence throws at them. To knowingly take that away from students is cruel. Take away middle school bands and they will effectively wipe out high school bands, too (which I'm guessing is part of your long-term plan). Most students won't try band once they're in grade 9 because they will have already found something else that fits them. What a loss.

Many trustees have claimed that mental health is a priority and the school district has made similar claims recently, but your actions and choices belie otherwise. To cut counselling and middle school bands clearly demonstrates that you only care about mental health on a superficial level. If you truly cared about the mental health of the students of SD61, not to mention their teachers, you would not even consider this. It's truly appalling.

[REDACTED] School is where my kids went/go/will go to, and is one of the largest in the district. Every student takes music. Pre-pandemic, over 50% of the 600+ students were involved in at least one ensemble or choir, of which they had 10. My eldest participated in 9 of them, and my middle is on his way to the same. This is just one of the ten middle schools. My heart is heavy thinking of all those students across the district potentially missing out.

I know you'll be receiving many impassioned letters and I am grateful that you took the time to read mine. I hope you will reconsider slashing music from the education of the children of Victoria. The ramifications of this cut will reverberate for generations.

Warmly,
Marita Dachsel

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Saturday, March 19, 2022 7:03 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Fwd: please keep the music programs

Categories: Green category

Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250 475 4117
[REDACTED]

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.

From: Rika W [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 18, 2022 2:33:06 PM
To: Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: please keep the music programs

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

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Hello,

It is important (for youth mental health) to keep music programs open at schools.
Please do not cut the music programs.

Regards,

Rika and Brent Weich

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Saturday, March 19, 2022 7:02 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Fwd: Budget cuts

Categories: Green category

Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250 475 4117
[REDACTED]

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.

From: Murray Goode [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 18, 2022 3:35:42 PM
To: Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: Budget cuts

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CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Hello,

Please think very carefully about the cuts to music, counselling and daytime custodians that are being considered in District #61. Music is essential to many students success in school. The data shows that music often supports student learning in other areas of study.

Cuts to counselling at this time are very misguided. It has been shown that many young people are suffering from anxiety and depressions during this pandemic and counsellors are needed more than ever in these trying times.

Daytime custodians are essential to do the extra cleaning that has been recommended for public places during the covid 19 pandemic.

Look to the board office to make cuts. There are 11 District Vice Principals who receive high salaries, think of cutting back here before cutting student programs.

Thank you,
Marilyn Goode
Victoria, BC

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Saturday, March 19, 2022 7:02 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Fwd: Funding music programs in SD 61

Categories: Green category

Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250 475 4117
[REDACTED]

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From: cameron esler [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 18, 2022 4:04:14 PM
To: Jordan Watters <jwatters@sd61.bc.ca>; Nicole Duncan <nduncan@sd61.bc.ca>; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>; Angie Hentze <ahentze@sd61.bc.ca>; Elaine Leonard <eleonard@sd61.bc.ca>; Ryan Painter <rpainter@sd61.bc.ca>; Ann Whiteaker <awhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca>; Harold Caldwell <hcaldwell@sd61.bc.ca>; Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>; Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>; rob.fleming.mla@leg.bc.ca <rob.fleming.mla@leg.bc.ca>; educ.minister@gov.bc.ca <educ.minister@gov.bc.ca>; grace.lore.MLA@leg.bc.ca <grace.lore.MLA@leg.bc.ca>
Subject: Funding music programs in SD 61

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CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Dear Victoria MLA's, SD 61 Trustees and Minister of Education,

I am extremely concerned that the School Board 61 is considering making cuts to its music program -- again. The benefits to music education are well known (socialization, mental health and learning). For children like mine, the only opportunity to access music education is via public education. I urge to you strongly consider not making cuts to Middle School music programs.

I find it distasteful that the school board and the Ministry of Education are threatening these cuts when the board and the Ministry decided to spend an extra 5 million to preserve the Victoria High School building instead of building a new school and saving money -- money that could go towards educational programs. That is not your job --playing NIMBY politics preserving buildings. Your responsibility is to provide quality education. Please show that you take your job seriously by ensuring our education system is funded, in particular music programs.

Thank you, Cameron Esler

Sent from a tYp0 causing device.

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Saturday, March 19, 2022 7:01 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Fwd: Funding cuts for music

Categories: Green category

Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250 475 4117
[REDACTED]

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.

From: Skez [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 18, 2022 5:32:00 PM
To: Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: Funding cuts for music

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Hello,

As a parent of a [REDACTED] year old girl at [REDACTED] I'm shocked to hear this news.
We are a musical family and find music essential to culture, life and happiness.

Music lessons provide invaluable lessons in creativity and that creativity reverberates through one's life with positive effects at every turn.

Music helps with well being and so much more.

Please do not defund this vital part of our children's education.

Thanks
Ian Skerrett

Lisa McPhail

From: Sabrina Lundquist <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, March 18, 2022 1:18 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Cuts to the budget

Categories: Green category

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Cutting mental health for children in a pandemic and environmental crisis is the worst kind of short term thinking. Save money now, drive up students needing to take years over, bullying, violence and substance abuse.

If you have funds in the budget and can't find qualified staff maybe some more group programs can be created with contractors.

Sabrina Lundquist
Concerned Community Member

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

Lisa McPhail

From: Audrey Wang [REDACTED] >
Sent: Friday, March 18, 2022 1:08 PM
To: Ryan Painter; Nicole Duncan; Tom Ferris; Angie Hentze; Elaine Leonard; Jordan Watters; Ann Whiteaker; Trustees
Subject: SD61 budget cuts

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CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Dear Trustees

It is disappointing that we are back here again, that SD61 is blind and deaf to the outrage parents and community members expressed just a few months ago with regards to budget cuts that directly impact students and students' well-being. I don't think I need to list out the whys and wherefores music is important, counsellors are important, janitorial staff are important. We all know the reasons why.

I'm writing to ask that you vote against these cuts. I'm asking that you demand, on our behalf as elected representatives, that SD61 start paying attention to what's going on, stop being so short-sighted and lobby the provincial government to find the capital to properly invest in education for the long term. It goes without saying that what may seem like small inconveniences now will most definitely snowball into the future and become a bigger problem, where kids who need counselling can't get the resources and become lost in the system, where talent is not nurtured and opportunities are lost. This is not first-world public education. It needs to be fixed now.

I also attach here a news article about Monterey Middle School's Spring Concert. Our students played their hearts out, our music teacher chose thought-provoking music by female composers (in observance of International Women's Day) and the Monterey Music Parents Association ran a successful donation drive for Ukraine humanitarian relief. The irony of all the good feels last week at the concert, contrasted with the angst we feel about cuts to our music program... Heartbreaking!

Sincerely,
Audrey Wang (parent of 2 children in [REDACTED] School and [REDACTED] [REDACTED])



The recent spring concert at Monterey Middle School in Oak Bay raised more than \$1,000 for Ukraine Humanitarian Relief. (Monterey Storm/Twitter)

Student concert raises cash for aid in Ukraine

Parents plan

concert. The event raised more than \$1,000.

"The donations were gen-

Changes to counselling would see up to 19 positions

cut – 10 school counsellors and

Hap Bir

World War
Hillman, w
March 18th

John joined
served in
Burma.

He is the p
Star, Africa
Medal, and

John made

Lisa McPhail

From: Torben Schau [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 18, 2022 1:03 PM
To: Trustees
Subject: Music, again

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CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Trustees --

It's with profound disappointment that I find myself writing an almost identical letter to the one I wrote last year for the budget process.

I'll keep it shorter, since I imagine you'll get many of these:

What the hell are you and your staff doing? Why are we here again?

This is so incredibly disappointing and speaks so poorly of both your governance and your organization and organizational culture.

At a time when young people's mental health is at a low-ebb from the pandemic and pandemic response (overview: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/data-reports/societal-consequences-covid-19>, and the COVID Speak-2 survey summary: http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Info-Site/Documents/SPEAK/SPEAK_Round2_Summary.pdf), why are you entertaining proposals to take away programs that directly support children's mental health?

I've also linked another BCCDC report (http://www.bccdc.ca/Health-Professionals-Site/Documents/COVID-Impacts/BCCDC_COVID-19_Young_Adult_Health_Well-being_Report.pdf) about the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on the young.

For the rest, please refer to the evidence provided a year ago.

Please ensure that you are not further hurting the people you are supposed to be serving,

Torben Schau

Parent of two elementary-aged students

Lisa McPhail

From: Shannon Giesbrecht [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 18, 2022 12:28 PM
To: Community Engagement; Trustees
Subject: Career Centre Coordinator Positions
Attachments: Career Centre Coordinator Roles & Responsibilities.pdf; School District 61 Trustees Letter for CCC.pdf
Categories: Green category

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Dear Trustee,

Please find attached a letter of concern for the proposed cuts to the Career Centre Coordinator positions and a CCC Roles and Responsibilities.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Shannon Giesbrecht
Career Centre Coordinator
Oak Bay Secondary School

CAREER CENTER COORDINATOR

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

STUDENT SUPPORTS

What's the Goal: Make meaningful connections with students with the hope of discovering their gifts and abilities as well as developing essential life skills.

- *Job Opportunities*
- *Volunteer Finder*
- *Resume /Cover Letters/Reference Letters*
- *Post-Secondary Application*
- *Interview Prep*
- *Timetable Help*
- *Career Counseling advice on Course Selection*
- *Attending Career Springboards, CUE events, PARTY program with students*

COMMUNICATION

What's the Goal: Providing Students/Parents/Staff/Community with relevant and meaningful information in a clear, simple and informative manner.

- *Weekly Newsletter*
- *Daily Announcements*
- *Daily TV Monitor*
- *PAC Presentations*
- *Career Center Website*
- *Classroom Visits*
- *Community Connections*
- *Field Trip Events*
- *One on one parent meetings*

District/Partnership Courses & Programs

What's the Goal: Seek out Students with the help of Staff and the District to promote opportunities that would compliment a student's personal/career interests.

Student Registration Process:

1. **Post Recruitment & Pre-Program:** walk students (and families) through the paperwork process (several meetings), liaise with Lindsay Johnson & Camosun/UVic, work with counselors on student timetable, arrange work experience, student follow-ups re: Student Transcript Services & Education Planner, assist with interview preparation & preparations around expectations for program.
2. **During Program:** check-ins, communication, and trouble-shooting with student, family, and post-secondary

3. Post-Program: liaise with Lindsay Johnson & SIS Operator regarding transcript updates

- *Springboards*
- *Dual Credit Cohorts (Camosun)*
- *Dual Credit One-Offs (Camosun)*
- *uStart*
- *AutoTech*
- *TASK*
- *Aviation*
- *TEAC 105*
- *TALE*
- *Graphic Design*
- *Seed the City*

EVENTS

What's the Goal: Organize and implement events with the goal of serving students post-secondary, personal & Career interests. To expose students to people and opportunities in the community and outside to help build Knowledge/Opportunities /Relationships

- *Post-Secondary School information sessions during lunch and evening as co-facilitators*
- *Events (PSI & Job Fairs & Springboards)*
- *Canadian University Event (CUE)*
- *Mock Interviews with 120 students and 24 businesses from the community (Mt Doug)*
- *Bringing in Career experiences: Camosun Food Truck, The Camosun Pipes Trailer*
- *Coordinating students to attend Indigenous Career Fair*

MOVING GOALS OF SD61'S STRATEGIC PLAN FORWARDS

What's the Goal: To help students to find their personal version of success, and to support learners' mental well-being through the accessible, flexible, meaningful, engaging, and individualized services.

- GOAL 1: Create an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support and improve all learners' personal and academic success.
 - Collaboration with Inclusive Education teams to create personalized program for students with disabilities and diverse needs.
 - Connect students with inclusive work experience and volunteer opportunities in community

- Connect students with post-secondary employment training programs such as Pathways for Life
- GOAL 2: Create a culturally responsive learning environment that will support Indigenous learners' personal and academic success.
 - Collaboration with Indigenous Education teams to create personalized programming for Indigenous students.
 - "What's in Your Wallet?" initiative to support Indigenous student with obtaining necessary identification and status cards
- GOAL 3: Create an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support all learners' physical and mental well-being.
 - Collaboration with Counseling and Administration teams to create personalized programming for students with anxiety in order to provide them the tools, strategies, and community connections for their confidence to grow.

Misc. Duties

- Display Boards/Office Organization
- Liaise with teachers to set up the physical space for PE curriculum (Sex Education, Mental Health Sessions) and for Peer Tutoring, Math Challenges. Setting up tech and troubleshooting tech problems. (Mt. Doug)

March 15,

Greater Victoria School District No. 61
556 Boleskine Rd.
Victoria, BC V8Z 1E8

Dear School District 61 Trustees,

I have served as the Career Centre Coordinator at Oak Bay Secondary for the past fifteen years. It is a position that has allowed me to assist thousands of students during a most important period of their lives. I implore you to reconsider the proposed cuts throughout the district to the Career Centre Coordinator positions. This position has existed for decades and provided generations of students with support and direction, helping them to feel secure in transitioning out of high school.

It gives me great satisfaction to support all students transitioning out of high school through the vast opportunities that come across my desk that I share with them. Not holding a teacher position allows me to be available throughout the day for one on one sessions with students, to meet their varied needs. I'm an integral member of our school community. Students feel comfortable coming to me for information on post-secondary education, trades training and positions, employment, volunteering and ideas or plans they would like to pursue after high school. Many times, I may be the only adult at school that they share their concerns, fears, and plans with.

I do not just support students though. I support CLE and CLC teachers, counsellors and the International Student Program Coordinator. My role consists of arranging guest speakers for many teachers, but mostly for the Career Life Education and Career Life Connections teachers. I connect with these classes regularly to ensure they have all the information needed to proceed with their futures and provide updates on new opportunities available. I support counsellors by providing academic counselling and post-secondary research for all grades. This includes ensuring students are in the right courses at high school for the program and university they plan to attend. This is a vital part of their transition out of high school and can have extreme consequences to a student if not monitored carefully.

A very large event I coordinate each year at Oak Bay is the Canadian University Event. This brings fifty universities to our gym for a morning, enabling all SD61 high school students to attend. It has always been a great success with students learning so much in one day. I also arrange many individual university visits each year for students to learn what programs are available to them, as well as organize guest speakers and field trips for trades class. I've attached a list of our job description for you to see the wide variety of tasks we perform throughout the year. Each CCC can have slightly different tasks that best suit their high school culture.

By now you will have received many letters from students, parents and teachers advocating on our behalf with regards to the effects of cutting this position. I would ask you to please keep in mind that the letters you have received from our students show how our positions affect students, however the number of letters are a fraction of the overall students we truly add value for. We are providing invaluable services to each and every one of our students throughout their high school experience in helping them prepare for their futures.

I would like to thank you for allowing the Career Centre Coordinators to attend the round table meeting last week. All seven of us were in attendance and had the opportunity to help you understand what we do for students and the impact it has on them. I left with a sense that you did hear us and am hopeful that you will do the right thing by securing our positions for the added value we provide to our students and faculty. Please take the time to understand how the cut of the CCC's will affect all the students and teachers that are supported by our position throughout the district. By ending these positions the passing of the torch of the vast valuable knowledge, networking and connections gained by the many dedicated Career Centre specialists will be lost. The consequences of this decision will have drastic effects on our students to achieve their full potential for years to come.

Regards,

Shannon Giesbrecht

Lisa McPhail

From: Cindy Croucher
Sent: Friday, March 18, 2022 11:48 AM
To: Community Engagement; Trustees
Subject: Pathways for Life - Camosun
Attachments: Evan's Pathway Writeup.docx

Hello,

I am wanting to share this student profile with all of you. Lindsay Johnson asked us to showcase a couple students last month and I just heard back from this student Evan and his Mom. Please see their writeup attached.

Kind Regards,

Cindy

Cindy Croucher
Career Coordinator
Lambrick Park Secondary School
Office: [REDACTED]

[a](#)

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Write up on Evan's Experience in the Pathway to Life program

Hello. My name is Evan Sturdy, a graduate from Lambrick Park Secondary School. I really enjoyed my time at Lambrick Park. Baseball Academy was my favorite course at Lambrick Park. I liked working out with the guys in the weight room and doing drills at the Oak Bay indoor turf. I also liked woodworking and metalwork class. Making my "buck" woodworking project was amazing. With help from the EA's, I worked at the snack shacks at lunch. My Career Coordinator at Lambrick Park also arranged for me to volunteer at HCP and Canadian Tire.

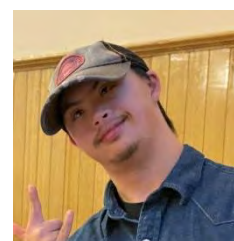


With the encouragement and help of my Career Coordinator, I applied and was accepted to the Pathway to Life Learning Program at Camosun College. I received support from the BC Transit bus training program and learned to take the bus from Lambrick Park to Camosun College by myself. During my last term at Lambrick Park, I went to Camosun College 4 mornings a week for 6 weeks and attended the Pathway to Life program. I met new friends and the instructors were really friendly and nice. We had tours of the campus and heard about different classes being offered at the college. We also worked in the greenhouse, cooked, played games, and went on field trips to different workplaces in the community. Even though the campus was empty during this time because of the COVID restrictions, it was still exciting to be going to class at the college.



I applied to the Camosun College Employment Training Program for after graduating from Lambrick Park. I attended the Farm to Table program during the first term. We grew herbs and vegetables in the greenhouse. We learned to cook and make things with what we grew and sold the products on campus. I also got certificates in Super Host, Food Safe and WHIMIS and learned job skills. I am in the Earth Gardening program this current spring term. We spend the mornings learning about plants and gardening, and we work in the garden in the afternoons. We also volunteer at the Colwood Community Garden.

I would like to find a part time job in gardening when I finish at Camosun College. I would like to learn to drive a tractor and save enough money to buy a small hobby farm by a lake.



Lisa McPhail

From: Nicola Priestley [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 18, 2022 11:20 AM
Subject: Letter of Support - SD61 Career Centre Coordinators
Attachments: SIP Letter of Support for CCCs - March 12 2022.pdf

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Hello,

In response to the proposed 2022/23 budget, please find a letter of support attached for SD61's Career Centre Coordinators.

Thank you for your time and don't hesitate to reach out if needed,
Nicola



Nicola Priestley
South Island Partnership
Director - [REDACTED]
camosun.ca/dual-credit



March 12, 2022

To: SD61 Board of Trustees & Budget Advisory Committee

Re: SD61 Career Centre Coordinators

Dear Trustees,

As Director of the South Island Partnership, I am writing to you today to advocate for the continued employment of your secondary school-based Career Centre Coordinators. As an educator and past SD61 District Career Coordinator, I have been witness to the diverse and indispensable work this group of educators does on a daily basis, and the monumental impact their time and support has on students and staff each year.

The Greater Victoria School District has been an integral member of the South Island Partnership since 2003, working collaboratively with Camosun College and four other South Island school districts to ensure students have the knowledge and opportunity to explore career pathways and post-secondary transition opportunities within a safe and supportive environment. The Career Centre within each of our high schools is *the* environment in which thousands of students have received these supports. Working side by side with our Career Centre Coordinators, students:

- explore their abilities and passions,
- develop invaluable connections and relationships with students,
- arrange work experience and apprenticeship placements,
- complete district, dual credit and post-secondary application packages,
- explore a variety of post-secondary and career-related exploration opportunities,
- and the list goes on!

These opportunities are life-changing for our students! And for many of our diverse and disengaged learners, these opportunities provide the flexible and relevant experiences needed to spark a positive connection with learning, ensure their graduation, and create a successful transition into the world beyond high school.

Removing Career Centre Coordinators from our secondary schools would not only result in our students losing the above supports, but our staff would **lose the collaborative 'glue' that is needed** to create personalized programming for our students. Our Career Centre Coordinators are key collaborators with our inclusive education and Indigenous education teams, our counsellors, and our administrators. They connect with community, industry and partner organizations to deliver unique opportunities to our students, parents and staff. They plan and execute annual events that help students explore future possibilities, build relationships with community members, and develop essential life skills. And they connect with our students on a personal level, helping set goals and individualized experiences that support their physical and mental well-being.

In short, our Career Centre Coordinators change lives! They enable our students to fulfil their potential and pursue their aspirations! Their existence is fundamental to the heart beat of each of our schools, and the individualized success of each of our students. I have continued hope that our Career Centre Coordinators remain in our schools for many years to come, and are able to support the next generation of learners.

I am extremely appreciative of your time today, and please don't hesitate to reach out if needed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "NPriestley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Nicola Priestley

South Island Partnership, Director



Lisa McPhail

From: Lindsay Kliska [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 18, 2022 10:51 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Mental Health Support for Victoria School District

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Hello,

I would like to add my voice to the number of people very concerned about the potential for reduced or eliminated funding for school counsellors in the Victoria School District.

While my two daughters attend an elementary school in [REDACTED] I would like to note that our oldest daughter was diagnosed with [REDACTED] two years ago and we were absolutely unable to get her to attend school. We were blindsided by her behaviour and diagnosis and had absolutely no idea where to turn to or where to go to get help.

To this day we credit the school counsellor for genuinely changing our lives. She worked very hard to support our daughter and was in contact with us outside of her working hours checking in our daughter. She used her expertise and contacts at Child and Youth Mental Health to get our daughter into a program there and we received one on one support with professionals that were experts in their field. I can say without a doubt we would have been brushed off by CYMH if it had not been for her making calls and providing us with names and phone numbers to call for help.

Our daughter suffered for a significantly shorter time period thanks to the determination and assistance from this one school counsellor. I cannot imagine where we might be today if it weren't for her. Our story is only one of many and had she not been there to assist us we would be lost.

PLEASE I beg of you do not do this to our children that so badly need mental health support in these uncertain and scary times for children.

Lindsay Kliska

Lisa McPhail

From: Tegan Soros
Sent: Friday, March 18, 2022 6:54 AM
To: Community Engagement; Trustees
Subject: Attn Please - Career Coordinator Loss Appeal
Attachments: Attn Please - Career Coordinator Appeal.pdf

To whom it may concern,

Please find attached a letter of formal appeal to the loss of Oak Bay High's Career Coordinator, Shannon Giesbrecht - on pages 2 and 3 you will find signatures of other staff who do not support this loss.

Thank you for time your sincere consideration in this matter,

Tegan Soros

Secondary Teacher, Science and PHE
École Secondaire Oak Bay High School
Greater Victoria School District No. 61



 www.sd61.bc.ca |   @sd61schools



To whom it may concern,

Please accept the following letter of recommendation as a formal appeal to the loss of Oak Bay High School's Career Coordinator, Shannon Giesbrecht. Shannon is an incredibly valuable member of the Oak Bay High School team. She brings irreplaceable knowledge, skill and experience to our student body as the number one career and post-secondary school contact. As a large percentage of Oak Bay graduates have post secondary aspirations, Shannon works tirelessly to provide this significant number of students with the resources and support necessary to achieve their goals.

Shannon is truly irreplaceable; no other member of our staff is as well-versed and familiar with the variety of opportunities available to our students, and the processes necessary for them to access them. She has very strong connections with the local and national community and serves as an important liaison, sharing information with the families in our school community.

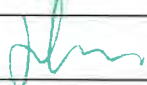


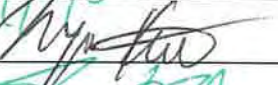












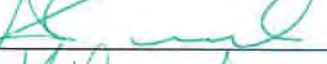








Here are a few ways in which Shannon supports students on a daily basis. Shannon:

- Connects students with volunteer experience
- Assists students with resume building
- Supports students through post-secondary application processes
- Introduces job opportunities
- Supports students with course selection based on their career and post-secondary interests
- Schedules and hosts post-secondary information sessions and events (such as the Canadian University Event)
- Liaises with Dual Credit courses
- Liaises with District Partnership programs
- Organizes Career field trip events
- Coordinates PSATs for students (thanks to Shannon, Oak Bay was the only high school in Canada to offer the PSAT in 2021)
- Coordinates the Party Program
- Liaises with Teachers to share opportunities for students

When students have post-secondary and career questions, Shannon is unfailingly the point person. It would truly be an immense loss to take such a resource away from the students and staff of Oak Bay High.

Sincerely,

Oak Bay Staff Members
(Please see the following pages for names and signatures)

Name	Signature	Date
TEGAN SOROS		MARCH 16 2022
Alexis McInty		March 16, 2022
Neagham Holahan		March 16, 2022
Mya Kinnear		March 16, 2022
Tessa Kubicek		March 16, 2022.
Gabriel Black		March 16, 2022
Caroline Erickson		Mar 16, 2022
Julianne Cameron		17
TIM Sprang		MAY 16, 2022
Jaqueline Gillespie		Mar. 16, 2022
Steve Spran		March 16 / 2022
Dave Askerst		March 16 / 2022
Joyce Preston		Mar 16 / 2022
PETER ATKINSON		mar 16 / 2022
Derek Shrubsole		Mar 16 / 2022
ERIC SIMONSON		MAR 16 / 2022.
AZ CARMICHAEL		Mar 16 / 2022
KRISTINA PRESTON		MAR 16 / 22
Todd Evanchiew		Mar 16 / 22
Andrea McMorran		MAR 16 / 22
Jill Cooper		Mar 16 / 22
JMP Canthley		Mar. 16 / 22.
Dani Guy		March 16, 2022
Cedric Pippus		March 16, 2022
Marie-France Bérubé		March 17 / 22.

Lisa McPhail

From: Ashley Howard [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 17, 2022 7:49 PM
To: Trustees
Subject: Please do not cut the strings program at schools

Categories: Web

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Dear Trustees,

Truly, for such a small sum of funding in the grand scheme of things, it seems so short sighted to cut the strings program in our schools. Please go back to the table and secure additional budget, or cut elsewhere.

Investing in music -and these seemingly non essential wider experiences - are proven to be in fact critical for healthy, strong voting citizens down the road.

Even though 2 of our children did not continue with strings, one has, and the others found a love of music in piano and singing through their strings school connection. I know it helps them understand bigger challenges, math in a new light (beats, note reading, patterns), and helps them connect with themselves in a way no other medium can provide.

Sincerely

Ashley Howard and Glen Dobson
[REDACTED]

Lisa McPhail

From: Linda Tate
Sent: Thursday, March 17, 2022 3:18 PM
To: Trustees
Cc: Community Engagement
Subject: Proposed Cuts
Attachments: Reconsider Closure -CCC.docx

Categories: Web

Dear Trustees,
Please find attached my letter appealing you to reconsider cuts to the Career Centre Co-ordinators.
Kindly,
Linda Tate
Oak Bay Sec
Teacher/Counsellor

March 14, 2022

Dear Trustees,

Once again the District and the Board are being asked to do the impossible. You are being challenged to balance the Budget. I have been a TTOC, a teacher at all grade levels, and a high school counsellor. I mention this as a reference for you so that my comments come with some historical context. My career began in 1984 with talk of the "golden years ahead, teachers retiring, lots of job postings, money to be poured into Education as 'the children are our future' etc..." Here we are again. No funds. More cuts. I must say I am disheartened and discouraged as must you be as stewards of education.

I am not writing about the increased ratio of students to counsellors as it is obvious the fall out of that - more dropouts, more overdoses, more debilitating depression and anxiety, more involvement in high risk behaviours, more disordered eating, more students falling through the cracks. I know you are informed people and understand that high school counsellors have been picking up the load from the Community for years as services "out there" are completely overtaxed and families become more overwhelmed. I have parents calling asking if "the school counsellor" can work with their child as there is a one year wait for EAP services. Some community resources have a 3 year wait if you are lucky to get in. You are also keenly aware of the mental health crisis in the City and the Province. The demand continues to increase given all that is happening in our Communities, our Province and our World. To say that counsellors are maxed-out is an understatement. The load is too great as it is, but this is not why I am writing to you. This provides context for to the need to keep the Career Centre Co-ordinator positions.

When the Career Centres were conceived it was to support the Career and Personal Planning course. Overtime the Center Co-ordinators have taken on more and more as Counsellors' caseloads increased with complex cases. I can only speak to what I have seen most recently at Oak Bay Secondary. Our Career Centre Co-ordinator, Shannon Giesbrecht, is outstanding. You will have her job description to refer to but it will not include all that she does for students and parents. The Career Centre at Oak Bay is a hub, a bustle of activity. Students have their lunch in there, they do homework during study blocks/Focus as well as before/after school, they get support with university applications, academic and job resumes, they receive help with "searches" (job, universities, scholarships, study abroad, etc...) She co-ordinates District Career Days, University Fairs, evening Scholarship presentations, lunch time guest speakers, Career & Personal planning guest speakers, dual credit courses, trades opportunities, and much, much more. The point here being that she has a "full-time-plus" job that likely needs two people to do all that is demanded of her. Who will take on this massive role? The Counsellors cannot. The Administrators are too busy, they cannot. The Career Centre is a key cog in the Oak Bay machine. The Career Centre, Shannon Geisbrecht in particular, offers another set of eyes and

ears to support students' well-being. She is another adult in the building who makes a connection with students, parents and staff. As you know, the research is clear that the more positive adults students have in their lives the better off they will be. Again, I point out that Shannon provides another safe space in the building for students to "land". Shannon has been at Oak Bay for many years which brings the added bonus of her knowing siblings and often whole families. She is considered a familiar, kind, "go to" person. She has been instrumental in assisting students, but from my perspective she is instrumental in linking students in need with counsellors in the building when necessary, when urgent.

I appreciate that on paper the Career Center may appear to be an extension to education, but it is much more than that. The support it offers to students and families during often very stressful times due to deadlines or unclear requirements is immeasurable. The support it offers to students who are struggling with mental health and/or family issues is immeasurable. I hope you will reconsider keeping this valuable resource in all the secondary schools. I wish I could offer some suggestions as to what to "cut" in order to balance the budget. I think the District has been doing its very best over the many lean years we have experienced. This proposed cut will save money in the present and cost the District greatly in the future.

With respect,

Linda Tate

Linda Tate, BEd (5th year), MEd (Curriculum), MEd (Counselling)

Teacher/Counsellor

Lisa McPhail

From: Koji Zolbrod
Sent: Thursday, March 17, 2022 2:34 PM
To: Community Engagement; Trustees
Subject: Career Center Position- letter of objection
Attachments: Career Center Position Letter-Zolbrod.pdf

Categories: Green category

To Whom It May Concern,

Please see attached.

Regards,

Koji Zolbrod



March 17, 2022

Dear School District 61 Board of Trustees,

I am the International Student Program Coordinator and a senior science teacher at Oak Bay High School. I have learned that you are looking into the possibility of terminating our school's Career Center Coordinator position, along with the same positions across the district. As a teacher who looks after a very large international student population with over 150 FTE students under my care, I implore you to reconsider your decision for the following reasons.

I have over 80 students who are on the grad track and every year, over 40 of those students graduate and need assistance with their post secondary education options. Without the valuable contributions of Shannon Giesbrecht, you would be eliminating an amazing resource who has all the answers my students and I need. Not only does she coordinate the Canadian University Event at the school, but also organizes all of the post-secondary informational sessions that all of my students take part in. Whenever there are any questions, Shannon Giesbrecht is able to answer the question, or at the very least, knows who to contact, and can assist in guiding the students toward their future goals. Furthermore, all graduating students need their 30 volunteer hours, and the Career Center coordinates all of those activities. Without it, many of my students would have difficulty finding their hours needed for graduation. Every year, many of my students also take advantage of the Dual Credit and UStart programs, and without Shannon Giesbrecht guiding the students through the application process, along with chasing and ensuring students have completed the application, the work would fall on my already busy shoulders. The Career Center also organizes sittings at our school for PSAT, and the AP exams, and without Shannon Giesbrecht coordinating these exams, students would be forced to go elsewhere and would not always have the opportunities that the Career Center affords them. Lastly, in my role as a senior science teacher, there are many scholarship opportunities that many of my domestic students have the opportunity to apply for, and without Shannon Giesbrecht, there would likely be no avenue for the students to find out about the scholarships, nor the ability to navigate the application process which involves the Career Center organizing mock interviews with the teachers and candidate students to help them achieve their goals.

I would like the Board of Trustees to consider all of the above points and reconsider the possible decision to terminate these positions at each of the schools in the district. You are not only impacting future student success, but you are impacting many of the teachers who work alongside Shannon Giesbrecht. Without this key support, many opportunities and career counseling for our students will fall to the wayside.

I am happy to have this letter read in public and offer my full support behind keeping the position at the school. If you have any further questions, feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Koji Zolbrod

International Student Program Coordinator / Senior Science Teacher
Oak Bay High School

Lisa McPhail

From: Callum Rudyk [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 17, 2022 11:41 AM
To: Nicole Duncan; Ann Whiteaker; Ryan Painter; Jordan Watters; Tom Ferris; Elaine Leonard; Angie Hentze; Trustees
Subject: Don't betray our students
Categories: Web

To whom it may concern,

My name is Callum Rudyk and I am a grade [REDACTED] student at [REDACTED] School. Over the course of my [REDACTED] years as a student in district 61, I have known hundreds of students of every kind of background. If I were to think back to all those people across all those years, I would be hard pressed to find more than a handful that were not touched by our music programs or counselling services.

These parts of my student life, especially in middle school, were not merely a service but a need. Without the opportunity to meet friends and develop skills in my middle school strings orchestra, I would not be going to university next year to pursue Music Education at UBC. Without school counselling services, I may not be here at all.

Please do not cut these programs, you do not realize how many children would suffer.

Lastly, I ask that this letter be read at the April 4th meeting pack-up.

Thank you,
Callum

Lisa McPhail

From: Jeremy Quast
Sent: Thursday, March 17, 2022 11:24 AM
To: Trustees; Community Engagement; Kim Morris; president@gvta.net; firstvp@gvta.net; Mount Douglas Staff; cupe947@telus.net; cupelocal382@gmail.com
Subject: Mt. Douglas Staff Committee Submission
Attachments: Mt. Doug Staff Committee.docx
Categories: Green category

To Whom it may Concern;

I am writing on behalf of the Mt. Douglas Staff Committee.

Please see attached.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jeremy Quast
-Mt. Douglas Staff Committee Chair

March 17, 2022

To Whom it may Concern;

With respect to the proposed cuts to positions/services within School District 61, the Mt. Douglas Staff Committee would like to present three testimonials (below) that detail how these proposed cuts would affect Mt. Douglas. If cuts are necessary, we would like to advocate for said cuts to not affect positions/services that are in direct contact with students/schools.

Mt. Doug Counsellors

Here we are on Thursday morning and I have not had the time or energy to put anything together in terms of a 'testimonial.' Perhaps that speaks to why counselling time should not be cut.

Here's what I was doing this week instead:

- 1) Graduation checks for next year's grade 12 students – making sure they have chosen appropriate courses to ensure graduation and entry into their program of choice. I had to make adjustments to 49 of these after consulting with the individual students regarding my concerns about their choices.
- 2) Consultation with a number of teachers and 2 EA's regarding individual students and their attendance/progress.
- 3) IEP follow-up meeting with struggling student and parent.
- 4) Numerous consultations with administration regarding individual students.
- 5) Meeting and follow-up emails with Homestay Coordinator regarding concerns about nutrition in a homestay situation for 4 students.
- 6) Programming for incoming (Sept 2022) international students.
- 7) Meeting with English department to discuss new graduation requirement.
- 8) Emails and telephone conversation with a family regarding a student who won't leave their bedroom. Call made to IMCRT followed by more consultation with those team members.
- 9) Consultation with Career Centre Coordinator regarding U-Start applications.
- 10) Consultation with Youth and Family Counsellor regarding how best to support several students.
- 11) Consultation with ISP student advisor and ISP Director regarding student with mental health concerns.
- 12) Mediation between a student and a teacher.
- 13) Met with student allegedly being bullied.
- 14) Follow up meetings with 2 students and administrator regarding bullying behaviour.
- 15) Responses to numerous emails from students regarding summer school, online courses and course selection.
- 16) Many conversations with MyEd operator regarding data entry for course selections.

This is not a comprehensive list. It is just what I can come up with from memory in 15 minutes. Needless to say, without support from our Career Centre Coordinator and Youth & Family Counsellor, I wouldn't have been able to manage. Take note: this is only 3 days' worth.

Mt. Doug Career Coordinator Position Benefits

- Daily one on one career support for Grades 9 – 12:
 1. Working and volunteering in the community (grad requirement)
 2. Post Secondary – University/college – research, troubleshooting
 3. SD#61 programs: promoting, recruiting, registering students for Auto, Aviation, Ustart, Graphic Design, TALE, Seed the City, and Camosun dual credit courses
- I support counsellors with academic career counselling and post-secondary research for all grades which then frees up counselling time to focus on mental health issues
- Pathways and Partnerships is a revenue generating program. Funding generated through trades, courses, programs and apprenticeships--a portion of these funds go back to shop spaces at Mt. Doug every year
- Plan, host, and co-host events like: BC Post-Secondary Fair, the Indigenous Career Fair, Dream It Be It Career Support for Girls and troubleshooting tech issues
- Accompany students to full day career exploration—e.g. Women in the Trades and the SD61 Career Fair. Also, I accompany students to Model UN, the Canadian Universities Event, and the P.A.R.T.Y. program
- Co-facilitate lunch and evening speakers: “What does a Career in Tech Look Like” “Making the Transition to Post Secondary” “How to Succeed and Thrive in First-Year University” “Creative Arts Presentation: Vancouver Film School, the UBC faculty of Medicine Ambassador Program, Nimbus Recording Music careers, as well as university visits tailored specifically for Mt Doug: UVic Self Reporting 101 and Registration 101.
- Books speakers for Career Life Education and CLC (16-18 per semester)
- Community Connections – Coordinating the Mock Interview Days for 120 Career Life Education students and approx. 20 community businesses each semester
- Create and host presentations: Volunteering for International Students, and Ustart Info Meetings, speaking to students in CLE classrooms
- Daily phone calls and emails from parents. During Covid: Zoom calls
- Connect with teachers (scholarship, math, science, CLE, trades, tech, inclusive ed) about targeted opportunities for their students.
- Booking Career Centre for teachers: For e.g. PE presentations
- Attendance at all UVic, U of T, UBC, McGill, and Camosun counsellor meetings for yearly updates
- Design and provide content for the Mt. Doug careers website and parent newsletter

LOSSES

- One to one student career supports
- Career Program Supports
- Parent connections
- Career Centre doors will be closed **80%** of the day

Youth and Family Counsellors

With employing YFC's in schools to focus on the social, mental and emotional well-being of students while they get an education does make a difference to the outcome. Students are in a better position to graduate when they feel supported, connected, have a sense of belonging, are cared for and looked after by a diverse school community. YFC's in schools help stabilize, monitor and wrap around supports

to those students who are in need (vulnerable) as they get an education. YFC's provide crucial support in making the best of complex and multi-layered situations that arise every day in our schools relating to the precarious mental health and well-being of our students.

YFC's are trained, educated, experienced and committed to providing the best possible care and practice. The YFC's roles and responsibilities include: counselling services, crisis management, risk assessment, support with school transitions, community referrals, support for students & their families, community outreach, education, prevention/intervention and consultation with school teams and professional agencies (CYMH, The Foundry, the Police, and IMCRT to name a few).

The students I work with are relieved to have a safe adult and a safe place to go. Having someone who is not their parent, teacher or friend, namely the YFC, is in a good position to reach out, support, and meet young people where they are at in a very real and meaningful way. Students connect with the YFC for a variety of reasons: connection, support, food, problem-solve, inform, educate, refer to services, have a more in-depth conversation, refer a friend they are concerned about, or words of encouragement. To best support all students, ongoing collaboration with administration/counselling teams, Inclusive Ed, support staff, Teachers, outside agencies and parents/guardians is essential.

Being a member of this multi-disciplinary/diverse school communities/teams supports the great work YFC's hope to accomplish in their role. YFC's are one among many in our schools that get to support young people in becoming contributing, healthier and hopefully successful (graduated) young adults.

This year the YFC service has been provided to 150 students thus far.

The impact of not having a YFC in our schools would mean that our most vulnerable at-risk students could fall further through the cracks. Some may die or drop out of school. Having trained and skilled counsellors often catch situations before they become a crisis. With huge waitlists in the community to access mental health services, more times than not YFC's and School Counsellors are providing primary care in the interim until these services can be provided. Without Counsellors in schools the responsibility of our most vulnerable falls on Teachers, Admin. and support staff who may not be equipped. Burn out and compassion fatigue for being

stretched even further as an educator could lead to many taking sick time or sick leave. Counsellors are necessary, important and essential in the school community.

Respectfully submitted by:

The Mt. Douglas Staff Committee

Lisa McPhail

From: micha pesta [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 17, 2022 8:00 AM
To: Ryan Painter; Nicole Duncan; Tom Ferris; Angie Hentze; Elaine Leonard; Jordan Watters; Ann Whiteaker; Trustees
Cc: Heather Pesta
Subject: Letter from a student

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Dear sd61 school board,

My name is Harmony Pesta, I attend [REDACTED] and have recently been informed of the potential music cuts. I just did a presentation on music and have learned about the many positive effects it has on not just children but everybody. I am in band and choir I am also only in grade six so these are two out of three things musically related I can do in school so far. Band is amazing - we get to learn new instruments and we get the incredible experience of playing in front of family and friends. We also get to learn new pieces and skills that can only be found in music. Choir is the most incredible experience, the other day in choir I started crying at the thought of losing this astonishing experience.

There are also many feelings that come with singing in choir, when we sing, I get transported to another place and all my worries and fears disappear. Without that, I don't know what I would do. I'm sure there are many people who know of the place and feeling I'm talking about; this feeling is everything you love and all the good feelings that come with those things in one big imaginary hug. There are no words to properly describe but if there were you would understand why music is so very important.

Wednesday is my favorite day of the week because we have an hour of choir before school. I do have to get up between six and six thirty, but it is one hundred percent worth it to start of my day with a smile and that feeling that I can do anything, that feeling I was talking about before where it feels like everything is going to be okay. Music is so very important to me. I listen to music almost from the moment I wake up just until I go to sleep. Without music I wouldn't be myself, I wouldn't be the person I am, the person who tries to make other people's day better, the person who is writing this letter to try and save the only thing that keeps her dancing and humming everywhere she goes.

Sincerely, Harmony Pesta

From:



Subject:

Support for Career Centre Coordinators in SD61

Categories:

Green category

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Dear School District 61 Trustees,

I live in Oak Bay and currently have a child in Grade [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] School. It has come to my attention that you, the Board, are proposing to eliminate the position of Career Centre Coordinator at all SD61 high schools. I am writing in strong support of our Career Center Coordinator, Ms. Shannon Giesbrecht, as well as the coordinator positions at other SD61 high schools.

Ms. Giesbrecht has been tireless in her efforts to connect with students and ensure that they are as informed and prepared as possible to identify and pursue career options that are best suited for them. The work of the Career Coordinator covers a wide spectrum of critical activities, including:

- *helping student prepare resumes and cover letters;*
- *connecting students with job and volunteer opportunities;*
- *preparing students for interviews;*
- *assisting with post-secondary applications; and*
- *providing career counseling and advice on course selection.*

Career coordinators don't just operate at the student level, they create connections and develop important relationships with communities and with post-secondary educational institutions. They connect students with dual credit programs at the University of Victoria and Camosun College. They create student awareness of trade and specialty programs; and expose students to career options through career nights, classroom visits and fun events, such as visits by the Camosun Food Truck.

Career coordinators are a vital hub for information and communication. They keep everyone (students, staff, parents, PACs, and the community) informed and on track. The work of the career coordinator is typically not duplicated by other staff. Without these dedicated individuals our students will be less prepared to enter post-secondary education, less likely to widely explore career options, and less likely to connect their true passion to meaningful and rewarding vocations.

The COVID pandemic has no doubt put considerable financial pressure on the operation of our schools. Nevertheless, given the current state of our economy and demographic trends, it is more important now, than at any recent time, that our young people entering the workforce do so with the skills and knowledge required to both contribute productively to society and earn wages that support a good standard of living. Having access to early career guidance is critical, and career coordinators play an essential role in that process. If the Board needs help in finding cost-saving efficiencies, then I suggest you reach out to the expertise within our school communities for support in achieving your fiscal goals.

Respectfully,
Jim Ciccateri
Parent of [REDACTED] School Student

Lisa McPhail

From: Jillian Watkins [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 16, 2022 11:05 PM
To: Premier@gov.bc.ca; Trustees; Angie Hentze; Ann Whiteaker; Diane McNally; Deb Whitten; educ.minister@gov.bc.ca; Elaine Leonard; Jordan Watters; Lisa McPhail; Nicole Duncan; Ryan Painter; Rob Paynter; Shelley Green; Tom Ferris
Cc: sonia.furstenau.MLA@leg.bc.ca
Subject: Funding Cuts in SD61

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Hi All:

Here we are again. Should I start doing a cut and paste every year? Or are we going to finally allow the total decimation of our public education system so that there will be nothing left to protest next year?

Those questions are rhetorical. No need to reply as I am not currently feeling a lot of faith in any of what feels like a protracted game of hot potato between the board and the province, and I'm sure the office workload is heavy. It is unlikely that anything you say could make me feel better or heard or important at all, though I welcome you to try if you think there is some way to show me hope for our school system and its political components or that there is anything I can do to make things better.

Just please register my complaint and displeasure with the impending cuts to education in SD61, particularly those to music education which I have said many times before and you very well know, is essential. I will reiterate that cutting music education makes the multiple benefits of studying music elite, available only to those of us who have money for lessons and private school, where children continue to receive excellent music education and other supports, leaving children who rely on the public system further and further behind their wealthier counterparts. I will reiterate that I know and I know that you know that this is also bad for our community as a whole. I will reiterate that you have all made statements about mental health and community and the value of youth and your commitment to equality, and we know that you all know well the value of music education to all of those things.

Please also be mindful that for every person who actually takes the time to write, there are several who are too busy or overwhelmed or too disillusioned by the cynical antics on display by the SD61 leadership or the refusal of provincial leadership to acknowledge the underfunding while continuing to call our education system "world class," something that anyone who actually relies on the system for anything knows to be categorically untrue.

Take care and please take care to care for our kids, who are seeing the behaviors that do not match the words and are also looking for explanations.

Sincerely,

Jillian Watkins
[REDACTED]

On Tue, Apr 13, 2021 at 12:24 PM Jillian Watkins [REDACTED] wrote:

Dear trustees:

I am writing to add my voice to the multitude regarding the proposed music cuts in SD61.

I have been a parent in the public school system for 9 years, times 3 children, for a combined 16 years, so far. I have one child who finished at Lansdowne Middle School last year, one who plans to start there next year, and another who plans to be there starting in 2024. In all of my years as a school parent, I have watched educational resources dwindle and have seen that cutting music and arts programming for public school students is a perennial threat. I have not, however, made peace with this. I am frustrated and angry to be facing this issue once again. I strongly oppose the cuts you have already made and strongly oppose those you are now proposing.

My oldest son is a brilliant person who struggled through elementary and middle school to find his academic identity and to feel a sense of belonging, as his strengths are not those immediately obvious within what is left of the elementary and middle school curriculum. He is not an elite athlete, but found that there were very few resources dedicated to recreational athletics. The resources that were sent that way felt very much an afterthought and he felt no need to reach or achieve because the rec programs didn't seem to be important to anyone. He is not in a gifted program, but found that there were no resources at all directed toward 'recreational academics', aside from an occasional and very much cut back seat in the school library. He is also not an elite musician, in fact, I never would have identified him as a musician at all before he joined grade 6 band at Lansdowne, though I would call him one now. In the band programs at Lansdowne, however, there was a valued place for him, a recreational musician, where he was expected to commit to his place in the community and to work hard to find and achieve his own best, because that is a valuable thing to do, in and of itself—his contributions mattered because he was a part of a community that was both inclusive and also held him accountable for those contributions, but also because in an environment that expected him to find and do his best, he did, and then his contributions actually did matter. He felt capable, he felt valued, he felt that he was a part of something bigger than himself. He was not cut from the program in favour of more gifted musicians or special musicians who qualified for funding, but was included as a part of what made the entire group something to be celebrated. There is a culture of excellence in Lansdowne music that is also inclusive, like nothing I have ever seen before. It blew my socks off. It reminded me that this ideal is possible.

Academically, we spent his elementary and middle school years watching and waiting, knowing that he would find his place when he finally reached high school, but without music there is a good chance that he would have lost interest in the idea of school as a productive way to spend his time

during those waiting years (he was once told that his interests were “too much work” to pursue). The most important lessons to learn, over and over again in elementary and middle school are how to learn, how you specifically learn as an individual, and to understand that hard work, practice, and dedication make a positive difference to personal outcomes and achievements. My son learned these lessons through his participation in Lansdowne bands. Those experiences, fostered by the music teachers and programs at Lansdowne were the single most important part of his middle school experience, integral to his academic success during middle school, and his experiences in the Lansdowne music programs continue to form the backbone of his academic achievements and successes so far during his first year of high school. I expect they will remain a strong foundation to build upon throughout the rest of his academic and non academic life.

In another letter that I wrote to you all in the recent past, advocating on behalf of music education (perennial), I ended by telling you that my younger children are already planning to join bands and programs at Lansdowne, regularly discuss their instruments and are excited to be a part of it all. We talk about how much one of the kids is going to love choir, which we now understand is gone—a huge loss as choir has so little barrier to entry for kids who have already become self-conscious by grade 6 and may already lack the confidence to take risks and try new things and hesitate to commit to taking up an instrument, but can experience the joy of music through singing and being in their bodies within the safety of a large group. We talk about the absolutely amazing transformation that happens between grade 6 and grade 8 band, which we understand is proposed to become a thing of the past. We talk about how important it is to have something to ground yourself as you navigate those most tumultuous of years. I am disappointed and feel very sad that this likely won’t be their experience if they attend Lansdowne, but I will continue to fill in the gaps for my kids, as I have done all the way along. We have the resources for lessons and groups and activities that will teach my children music, art, computer programming, and the learning of lessons we believe are so important to come from participating in programs like these and experimenting with using their brains and bodies in a variety of ways to stretch their experience and beliefs about themselves, to find out who they are and what is inside them, what they will choose to nurture and offer to the world. Supplementing for the public school system saps mental, physical and emotional energy from the family and from other ways in which we could be contributing to the greater community if our needs are being even partially met by the system at scale, and privately sourced activities can be great, but there is something much more valuable to everyone in participating together with the whole, diverse community. As people who serve your community, I know that you must believe this yourselves. My kids will continue to receive a rich education, though they will lose the experience of diversity that is a foundation of my belief in the value of public education as an ideal. It is a loss for us, but we will find a way to still have many gains. It is a tragedy, however, that with these cuts you will remove these opportunities completely from the lives of many children and families who do not have the family and/or financial resources to participate. It is a tragedy to remove this kind of unifying program from the community at large, widening the gap between those with much privilege and those with less. It is terribly unjust and a very large, irreversible step in the wrong direction.

Please, please don’t do this.

Sincerely,

Lisa McPhail

From: Barbara Lelj [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 16, 2022 9:04 PM
To: Trustees
Subject: Music and mental health cuts.

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Trustees,

I cannot believe we find ourselves in this position again only a year after the massive outcry from students, educators and parents that clearly told you to NOT cut music programs from middle schools.

In addition, you are planning cuts to mental health? I don't think you are at all working in the best interest of our children.

As a voter, a mother and a pediatrician I am begging you to do what's best for our children. Your proposal is 100% NOT with that lens in mind. Your proposal will not win my vote again or my respect. This proposal is a shameful reminder that politics is way too far removed from the real life of the people that you are supposed to serve.

I really hope you will do the right thing again and NOT APPROVED THOSE CUTS.

Regards,
Dr. Lelj Garolla Di Bard, MD, PhD.

Lisa McPhail

From: Emily McInnis [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 16, 2022 8:51 PM
To: Trustees; EDUC.Minister@gov.bc.ca; Harold Caldwell; Deb Whitten; Colin Roberts
Subject: Proposed budget cuts SD 61

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>
> hello,
>
> I am writing to express my concern about potential budget cuts in school district 61 to both the school music programs and counselling/support programs this coming year. I can hardly believe these items are even on the table. The amount of literature available supporting both music and mental health support in schools is vast. So vast I can't believe SD61 would even consider these as dispensable.
>
> I believe music in schools is an important aspect of a well rounded education. It is certainly an issue of access for all students. It is imperative that school work to provide all students with a rich learning experience, regardless of socioeconomic status. Many students and their families cannot afford or find time for these activities in their own time. Additionally, many student look forward to music lessons and find it's their only reprieve from the intensity of classroom learning. Allowing children to engage musically at school unlocks their creative mind and can calm an anxious soul.
>
> Additionally I firmly believe mental health supports in school should be INCREASED if anything. In the last two years alone students have lived through a pandemic, watch parts of their province be ravaged by natural forces and flooding, and are watching war unfold in Europe. This on top of the major physical and emotional changes that come with teenage/preteen years. To suggest counselling services and mental health support in schools are dispensable is deplorable.
>
> I urge you to find alternative. For me, these cuts should be out of the question.
>
> Thank you for your time,
> Emily McInnis

Lisa McPhail

From: Ayala MJ [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 16, 2022 7:51 PM
To: Trustees
Subject: Do not cut middle school music

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Dear Honourable Trustees,

As a parent of two students in the Victoria School District, I implore of you to keep our middle school music programmes in their full entirety, for now and for future school years. The music programmes at our schools are an incredibly important part of our children's education. They are important for many reasons including mental health and well roundedness in the arts. Please do not cut these programmes.

Thank you very much for your attention, thoughtfulness, and support.

Yours truly,
Ayala Johnson
[REDACTED]

Lisa McPhail

From: Lisa Gelling [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 16, 2022 12:56 PM
To: Community Engagement; Trustees
Subject: sd61 budget

Categories: Green category

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Hello,

I am writing to let you know that cuts for this year's budget **SHOULD NOT** come from **Music (in all its forms), day time custodians, or counselling services.**

As a mother of 5 I have been personally touched by music in both my education in SD61 and my childrens. Music has helped each of my children through school. I couldn't imagine education without it.

School has been touted as "essential" throughout this pandemic and a great emphasis has been put on everyone's mental health. How you can think of cutting these services now is just beyond me. My oldest child has greatly benefited from counselling through school and would not be in the building if it were not for the help of the school counsellor!! I can not tell you how many times my child has called me having a panic attack outside school, unable to go into the building. I then called the counselor who went outside and talked to her and got her to go to school. If not for them so many children would be much worse off!

Kind regards,
Lisa

Lisa McPhail

From: Elisha Buckingham
Sent: Wednesday, March 16, 2022 12:48 PM
To: Community Engagement; Trustees
Subject: Letter of Concern
Attachments: Letter of concern.pdf

Categories: Green category

To whom it may concern:

Please see the attached letter regarding cuts to the Career Centre Coordinator position at Oak Bay High.

Sincerely,

Elisha Buckingham

Elisha Buckingham
Teacher [REDACTED]

English 9, Career Life Education 11, Capstone 12

"Education is teaching our children to desire the right things."

-Plato

March 15, 2022

To: The School Board 61 Trustees

Re: Possible cuts to Career Coordinator Position at Oak Bay High School

I teach English and CLE11 and CLC 12 at Oak Bay High School and have known and worked with Shanon Geisbrecht since 2014. I hope to impart through this letter the integral role she plays in our school community as well as the specific skill sets she brings to support both the staff and the students.

Over the years, she has made meaningful connections with our students and has helped them navigate the often confusing, frustrating, and anxiety-inducing world of post-secondary and job/career planning. She has specialized knowledge about post-secondary options/pathways and advises students during course planning in order to make sure they choose the appropriate high school courses necessary to cover the requirements for their future educational goals.

She has assisted the Career Education Department many times to enrich the learning experiences of our students. She has set up many guest speakers, university recruiters, and people from our community to share their wisdom for the classes we teach, and for our school's Career and Volunteer Fairs. For my Career Life Education course, she makes classroom visits to go over each student's plans for post secondary (deadlines, costs, requirements). She has a wealth of knowledge that she has gained over the years and she brings to light all the educational options students may have, especially when they and their parents are struggling to find the right path.

She has aided students in finding appropriate job, leadership, and volunteer opportunities for the 30 hours of work Graduation requirement and for their future goals (resume building, entry to post-secondary programs, and scholarships).

When it comes to the post-secondary application process, Shannon guides many students through this every year. If students are planning a future in the States or overseas she is able to help them navigate the different educational systems and exams they may need to take (SAT prep).

Shannon has created and maintains the Career Education part of the Oak Bay High website and wall displays where students and parents can be connected to upcoming events and important opportunities.

The well-being of our student body is in part because of her role and participation in our school. Over the years, she has been an invaluable resource helping me to better perform my duties as a Career Education and Capstone 12 teacher. Oak Bay parents have very high expectations for what the school can provide for their children. They expect that their children will have all the opportunities afforded to them to be successful once they leave high school. Shannon ensures

our students and parents have the information to make this transition that much less stressful. I consider her job to be more than a full-time position as I know many hours go into it to allow our school to be as successful as it is. If Shannon's and the other Career Centre Coordinator's hours or jobs are cut, I'm not sure how all the important roles they play for our schools in SD 61 will be replaced and it will be at the detriment of our students and their families.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter,

Elisha Buckingham

Lisa McPhail

From: Magdalena Stoklosa [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 16, 2022 8:45 AM
To: Kim Morris; Deb Whitten; exec@gvta.net; Trustees
Subject: Proposed budget cuts

Categories: Web

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Dear Trustees,

We oppose the proposed savings which would reduce 8.0 FTE School Counsellors from our district, restoring student-counsellor ratios to 693:1.

The proposed budget changes would:

- reduce accessibility of qualified mental healthcare for children and families in the middle of a mental health crisis,
- have the greatest negative impact on children and families who cannot access mental healthcare (due to lack of finances/transportation, social injustice, etc.),
- shift the responsibility for child mental health crises in the school (e.g. imminent suicide, self-harm risk) to other school staff (e.g. EAs, Teachers, Administrators) School Counsellors have a unique role and scope of practice in the schools. They are both BC Certified Teachers and mental health professionals with a master's degree in counselling psychology or a related subject.

School Counsellors weave between many complex situations from classroom-based work to individual counselling, to collaboration with teams of educators, to crisis intervention, to sitting with families to find appropriate referrals to mental health services.

Because School Counsellors are Teachers as well as mental health professionals, they are uniquely well-suited to the coordination and delivery of mental health literacy, mental health promotion, trauma-informed practice, and social and emotional learning (SEL) programs within the schools. This aligns with the Ministry of Education's Mental Health in Schools Strategy and the increased focus on these areas in the BC Curriculum.

School Counsellors also serve the school staff and the family community through collaboration and education on topics such as anxiety, grief and loss, and trauma.

The proposed budget changes would see a reduction in all services provided by School Counsellors. These impacts may include:

- reduced individual and group counselling for students
- reduced risk assessment for self-harm, suicide, abuse, and neglect for students

- reduced case detection and early intervention for students showing signs of pediatric mental illness
- reduced classroom-based mental health literacy, mental health promotion, and social and emotional learning lessons for students and school staff
- reduced referrals for families to mental health supports · reduced collaboration with, and support for, school staff
- reduced mental health promotion activities for school staff and families (e.g. trauma-informed practice, grief and loss workshops)
- reduced availability of the School Counsellor for crisis intervention (e.g. death of student or staff, suicide, traumatic incidents, violence)
- reduced co-ordination of school-based services with community-based services such as Child & Youth Mental Health

We are in the middle of a mental health crisis. Right now, our children need more access to mental health services, not less. Before the COVID-19 pandemic began, research in the BC school system had already identified anxiety, depression, self-harm, suicidal ideation, and trauma as main areas of concern (source). Now, two years into the pandemic, two-thirds of children are struggling with their mental health, with significant increases in anxiety and depression and serious consideration of suicide.

Access to qualified mental healthcare is low, with roughly three quarters of Canadian children with a mental illness not receiving adequate treatment. School Counsellors are the most accessible and most equitable mental health service for children. All children can access a School Counsellor, regardless of their background, socioeconomic status, or any other characteristic. Therefore, the very presence of School Counsellors is a social justice issue.

The proposed budget changes would increase student-school counsellor ratios and thereby significantly reduce the accessibility of qualified mental healthcare to our students. These proposed changes come in the middle of a mental health crisis, two years into a pandemic, and two years after the beginning of war in Ukraine. Families are stressed, children are suffering, and access to mental healthcare is at risk.

The Swahili proverb “it takes a whole village to raise one child,” is truer now than ever. It is the responsibility of all school staff to work together to protect the wellbeing of our students, and to help them learn and grow. School Counsellors are an essential member of the village, who balance both teaching and mental health services. The services that School Counsellors provide are essential to the mental health and wellbeing of students, families, school staff, and communities. Reductions will reduce their ability to provide these services.

We request that the current FTE for School Counsellors be retained in the 2022-2023 school year.

--

Maggie Stoklosa

Lisa McPhail

From: Diego Frank [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 16, 2022 8:11 AM
To: Ryan Painter; Nicole Duncan; Tom Ferris; Angie Hentze; Elaine Leonard; Jordan Watters; Ann Whiteaker; Trustees
Subject: SD61 Music Program Funding. Again?
Categories: Web

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To the Elected School Board Trustees of SD 61,

It is with sadness and disappointment that I am writing to you again, in order to express my unchanging support for and unwavering opinion of the importance of music in our schools.

Since last year when the threats were made to 'balance the budget' by cutting integral programs that allow our children to thrive, I have not changed my mind. My children, who feel that music is one of the best aspects of school have not changed their minds.

I have two kids in middle school who participate fully in all music programs open to them that will fit into their schedule. Our family does not believe that music is an area that should be cut from your budget because 'balancing your budget is your main priority'.

My children sure were disappointed to find out that they and their fellow students (our future care takers), are not of top importance by the board elected to represent them.

The ugly fact that you just didn't listen when thousands of parents, students, community members, industry leaders and former students came together and shouted loudly to express their belief in the importance of these programs last spring, but instead just placated us and held us all off for one year until you could 'suspend' the members of your board who garnered support for the music programs, does not sit well at all.

There are a lot of angry people who are tired of having things taken away from them, withheld from them and with being MISREPRESENTED.

My 11 year old son said over dinner "Wait, so you voted for these people and your TAX money pays them and they can threaten to take away music and make us feel so bad?"

I just about cried.

How can you be doing this, AGAIN?

I should just pull my letter from last year out from my 'sent' folder and resend it because the importance of these programs has not in any way diminished for us over the last year. Everything I formerly stated regarding the positive benefits of music in schools from offering all kids a sense of belonging, teaching them commitment, giving them a sense

of accomplishment and pride not to mention the scientific research regarding the benefits that learning music has on the developing brain and helping kids succeed in other subjects HAS NOT CHANGED and neither has your ability to properly serve the children of SD 61 whose parents and community members voted you in to represent and protect what is vitally important to them.

Why isn't anything EVER about the students? Why do their needs and what is best for them EVER come first?

I am furious and hope that you are inundated with messages just like this one and find a way to leave these programs alone once and for all.

What you are threatening to do is wrong and you would be making a terrible mistake.

We are tired but we are not done standing up for what's best for our children.

Sincerely,

Diego Frank

Ecole [REDACTED] School parent of two (currently), happy students of music

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Wednesday, March 16, 2022 8:06 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: FW: Please don't cut what helps us, please.

Categories: Green category

Deb Whitten

Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250.475.4117
Cell: [REDACTED]

 www.sd61.bc.ca |   @sd61schools



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.

From: Samantha Middleton [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 2:27 PM
Subject: Please don't cut what helps us, please.

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Dear Trustees,

I ask, coming to you as a grade [REDACTED] student at [REDACTED] high school, that you don't cut the music programs in middle school and the careers counselors, I understand that you feel pressured and scared right now because you have to do an impossible job, but please, just don't cut them.

Music has played a huge role in my life, starting with singing with my grandmother at jam sessions in a little town, to building up my confidence, to eventually being able to join choir and singing in front of a bigger crowd in middle school. My love for music has always been strong but my confidence hasn't, I know for sure I would not be where I am now if it wasn't for the music program. I moved to Victoria, BC in 2017 and of course everyone knows it's hard starting out in middle school, especially in the middle of the year and having no friends. It was hard. feeling like I didn't belong, not knowing where to go and not having friends. I was going through friend groups faster than I could count. It really took a toll on my mental health, not knowing where to go and feeling lost. For the first year and a bit I was lost and It took me a while, but I eventually turned back to music, and that was where I really thrived.

Now I wasn't very good, and I'm still not the greatest but I have never been happier than I have ever been in the music room. It is a place where I could forget about my worries and just feel like myself. It is such a supportive and welcoming community of people, just sharing their love for music and having fun while doing it. In middle school when I finally came back to music it was when I finally met the right people and we became friends, I am still best friends with them today and I am so thankful. I am still involved in the music program today at [REDACTED] school and I am in the Choir, Rhythm and Blues and musical theatre program, and I am still in love with it. As a matter of fact, right now, I am in the aviation program at [REDACTED] and because of how I fell in love with the program and the music community, I travel to Esquimalt (which is a 45 minute bus ride) on Tuesday's and Thursday's to continue to do the musical theatre program. If you thought transitioning to middle school from elementary school was a big jump, middle school to high school was even bigger and I know for sure I would not have joined the music program in high school if I hadn't started in middle school.

Now for the career counselors, as mentioned before, I am in the aviation program right now, I'm also taking the TEAC course at camosun. Now you may be wondering, what are these courses? What do you do within the programs? How can I apply? That's a great question, ask the career counselors. I'm serious, I could explain what it is, but how to apply? I would bring up the aviation program to my teachers and they'd say, "oh how exciting!" but not one of them knew what the program fully entailed, just "Oh right! I thought we had that program."

At this point grade 11's are deciding on their final courses for their grade 12 year, at this point they're all freaking out realizing how soon their grade 12 year is. It's finally setting in that they have to decide soon and they have no clue what they're going to do. That was me, I had no clue what I was going to do, and I'm still figuring it out. My careers counselor emailed me and talked me through every course and helped me decide what classes I'm going to take next year. It was hard considering I'm at [REDACTED] right now and communication is difficult, but they were with me every step of the way.

Now that you finally made it to the end of my long email going on and on about me and my experience, I strongly urge you to reconsider cutting the music program and the careers counselors. I don't even want to think about where I would've been now if I didn't have a music program in middle school, and I can't imagine my future without the guidance of my careers counselor.

There has to be another way.

Please include this letter in the April 4th meeting pack up.

Thank you, and please, don't give up on us yet,

Samantha Middleton,
Grade [REDACTED] student at [REDACTED] High School.

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Wednesday, March 16, 2022 8:03 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: FW: School Counsellors - opposition to budget cuts

Categories: Green category

Deb Whitten

Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250.475.4117
Cell: [REDACTED]



| f t @sd61schools



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.

From: Caitlin Mooney [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 3:26 PM
To: Kim Morris <kmorris@sd61.bc.ca>; Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>; exec@gvta.net; Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: School Counsellors - opposition to budget cuts

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Dear Trustees,

I am writing to let you know that I oppose the proposed savings which would reduce 8.0 FTE School Counsellors from our district, restoring student-counsellor ratios to 693:1.

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mental health services. Because School Counsellors are Teachers as well as mental health professionals, they are uniquely well-suited to the co-ordination and delivery of mental health literacy, mental health promotion, trauma-informed practice, and social and emotional learning (SEL) programs within the schools. This aligns with the Ministry of Education's Mental Health in Schools Strategy and the increased focus on these areas in the BC Curriculum. School Counsellors also serve the school staff and the family community through collaboration and education on topics such as anxiety, grief and loss, and trauma.

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The Swahili proverb "it takes a whole village to raise one child," is truer now than ever. It is the responsibility of all school staff to work together to protect the wellbeing of our students, and to help them learn and grow. School Counsellors are an essential member of the village, who balance both teaching and mental health services. The services that School Counsellors provide are essential to the mental health and wellbeing of students, families, school staff, and communities. Reductions will reduce their ability to provide these services.

I request that the current FTE for School Counsellors be retained in the 2022-2023 school year.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kind regards,
Caitlin Mooney

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Wednesday, March 16, 2022 8:02 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: FW: Backgrounder on roles of Career Centre Coordinators
Attachments: A Snapshot of what Career Centre Coordinators bring to SD 61 High Schools (1).pdf

Categories: Green category

Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250.475.4117
Cell: [REDACTED]
www.sd61.bc.ca | @sd61schools

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.

-----Original Message-----

From: Ken Henderson
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 5:51 PM
To: Kim Morris <kmorris@sd61.bc.ca>; Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>
Cc: Colin Roberts <croberts@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: Backgrounder on roles of Career Centre Coordinators

Hello Kim and Deb,

Ken Henderson here from Esquimalt High. I attended the meeting last Thursday night, and all the information I gleaned regarding the School District's priorities moving forward, I put together a letter for the Trustees and yourselves that gives context to the role our Career Centre Coordinators play in our Career Education Programs at the secondary level.

I'm hoping you can set aside a few minutes to read the attached document prior to the next budget committee meeting.

I hope to hear back from you.

Best,
Ken

Ken Henderson
Dept Head-- Career Life Education
Esquimalt High School
cell: 250 893 7015

Mar 13, 2022

Greetings Trustees,

My name is Ken Henderson; I am the Careers Dept Head for Esquimalt High School. I have been a proud member of this school community since 2004. I want to bring you up to speed on the work that myself and my colleague, Tarra Clarke (Career Centre Coordinator) do here at ESQ. As you consider the vital role that Tarra plays at our school, also bear in mind that each high school in Victoria has a Career Centre Coordinator (CCC), all of whom do similar, remarkable work in connecting students to opportunities.

I understand the importance of having a budget that is in alignment with District Goals, and to that effect I would like to show how the work of CCC's helps the District reach its goals.

Goal 1, Strategy 1: Develop and support high quality learning opportunities for students.

The partnership between a half-time Pathways & Partnerships teacher and a full-time career center coordinator can lead to amazing results. In short, we connect students to amazing learning opportunities in the community. Since students always choose to participate, the success rate of such ventures is high. Most students return to school with a heightened sense of confidence and purpose. We are currently in the month of March, which happens to include Spring Break. Here are the learning opportunities we are providing to students this month:

- step: Apply for full time work at DND for summer 2022; some students will also apply to SD61 AVIATION Program)
- **Farmer Construction:** 6 students , each completing 40 hours of work experience. (next step: summer employment / register students as apprentices)
- **Belltech Electric:** 3 students, each completing 40 hours of work exp. (next step: complete Camosun Electrical Foundation in Gr 12 (dual credit) OR apply to WATT program if graduating in June)
- **Parker Johnston:** 6 students , each completing 40 hours of work experience. (next step: summer employment / register students as apprentices; some students will also apply to the SD 61 TASK Program)
- **Crease Harman Law: onSeaspan Shipyards:** 5 students , each completing 40 hours of work experience. (next e student, 40 hrs of work exp. (next step: complete Legal Office Assistant Program at Camosun in Gr 12 (dual credit)

- **Coastal Roots Health Clinic:** one student, 40 hrs of work exp. (next step: complete Medical Office Assistant Program at Camosun in Gr 12 (dual credit)
- **Lyall St Auto; Searles Auto:** two students, each completing 40 hrs of work exp. (next step: apply for SD 61 Autotech Program for 22/23 school year; complete Level 1 certification at Camosun in July of 2023
- **CBS Electric:** 3 students, each completing 40 hours of work exp. (next step: complete Camosun Electrical Foundation in Gr 12 (dual credit) OR apply to WATT program if graduating in June.

As you can imagine, these placements provide students with remarkable learning opportunities. For these partnerships to be viable (consider student safety, logistics, outreach, site visits, training plans, agreement forms, student orientations, ensuring students have PPE, etc) we truly need a team approach -- that is a half-time Pathways teacher and a full time CCC. At the risk of stating the obvious, these experiences lead to increased student engagement, purpose and success in the classroom.

Goal 3, Strategy 4: Address the inequity of opportunity for all learners

One of the wonderful things about our role in the school is that we are truly able to assist ALL learners. We are able to support at-risk students in overcoming obstacles that stand in their way. Each situation is unique; here is the story of one individual:

Since the fall, we have been supporting a student who has extensive experience looking after her younger siblings and cousins. This person expressed an interest in becoming an early childhood educator after learning of a dual credit opportunity open to Gr 12 students. With her compelling life story and history of looking after many young children, it was obvious that this was a great pathway for her to pursue. But many hurdles presented themselves. A criminal record check was required, which in turn meant the student needed Government-issued photo ID. With our help, the student was able to navigate getting the required documents in a timely manner. While she did not meet the set deadlines, we advocated on her behalf and exemptions were granted.

I need to point out the amazing resiliency of this student -- she is on the Adult Grad program, and yet she is getting an Early Childhood Educator certification at Camosun College in her grade 12 year. We have collaborated with the college to secure a tutor that works with our student 4 hours a week. We check in on a weekly basis. This individual is doing all the hard work, but she needs our support to overcome barriers that stand in her way. Without a CCC in

the school, we simply would not be able to provide comprehensive support to this student or the countless others like her who seek out our help.

I believe the examples listed above demonstrate the pivotal role career centre coordinators play in our high schools. Fulsome statistics related to the impact CCC's are having on SD 61 students are available -- I encourage you to seek them out.

In closing, I would like to bring up graduation requirements. In BC, every student needs to receive 8 credits in Career Education in their final three years of school. Not only is the work of Pathways teams incredibly impactful, it also gives high school students a chance to develop the very competencies that are mandated by the Ministry of Education.

Pathways Teams were created in each SD 61 high school six years ago, and since then we have had a tremendous positive impact on students. While every team is unique, one commonality is that efficient systems are in place. If the Career Center Coordinators are suddenly no longer doing their excellent work, our systems will disintegrate.

I urge you to not allow this to happen. We have something special going on with Career Education in SD 61. Let's keep it that way.

Sincerely,

Ken Henderson

Careers Dept Head, Esquimalt High

I wholeheartedly support preserving the jobs of our Career Centre Coordinators in SD 61

Name	Connection to SD61	Comment (optional)
Andrea Hermanson	Inclusive Ed teacher and Department Head	I have worked closely with Tarra for many years. Her vast knowledge, organizational skills and inclusiveness about all things careers has been invaluable to our students with disabilities. Tarra goes above and beyond- she helped create Tier 2/3 Capstone assignments for students on an Evergreen track! She supports ALL students. She gives hope to ALL students. She gives opportunities to ALL students. This position is the backbone of

		our Careers department and cutting the SD61 Career Centre Coordinator position would be devastating for our entire school, and especially devastating for our students with disabilities.
Rachel Trebilco	Indigenous Counsellor and Support teacher	The careers team have been CRITICAL in the support and connection of many of our Indigenous youth for work, work experience, connection into colleges, resume building, interview support, connection into summer programs and SO MUCH MORE! They have the skills needed to build relationships with some of our most shy, tentative, and at-risk students and have been so helpful in supporting them in accessing important documents like IDs and SINs. We absolutely would not be able to support our IED students this much if it weren't for folks like Tarra. Bottom line is we need Tarra!
Heath Avery	Farmer Construction Senior Superintendent	For many years Farmer Construction has benefited from the Careers Center program. It offers the students a direct connection to enter the trades program. We have successfully hired countless students to join our team. Without the coordinators I don't believe we would have as many new young people joining the industry.
Scott Karpes	Parent	Our son has benefited greatly from the help of Ken Henderson and the Careers Program at Esquimalt High. Through careful guidance, our son was able to choose the proper courses and prepare himself for the TASK program (which he entered successfully.) Through all of this, he has had so many great experiences, training and real life work experience too. This program gives kids opportunities to learn on the job, meet contractors

		and have a chance for summer employment. This is the kind of program that kids and families need!
Tekahra Tarnowski	Esquimalt High Alumni	Without the assistance and guidance of my career centre coordinator, I can confidently say that I would not be in the position I am today. Career coordinators form the foundation for students during the most important transitional time between/prior to graduation and into post secondary. I partook in the dual credit/partnership program in 2018-2019 at Camosun. Mr. Henderson brought my attention to this program and the other resources available. This program and the work of careers coordinators (including, but not limited to: placing students in safe workplace environments, bringing programs to light that may not have been previously considered, and answering questions and accommodating and advocating for students) is invaluable and vital to success.
Meagan Brame	Early Childhood Educator/Child Care Operator/Municipal Councillor Township of Esquimalt	I have worked with the school on several occasions offering the ability for EHS students to volunteer at the centre to fulfill the 40 hours of work experience required to apply for the ECE program. The school helps the students know the resources within their community so that they can achieve their goals. They help them find the time in their schedules to make it work. Without the support of the CCC at schools, many youth would not get these important opportunities for success.
Jonathan Schneider	Metal shop teacher, Esquimalt High	The work experience and career opportunities generated by Ken and Tarra are a critical piece of our shop programs here, bringing students in contact with trades professionals and allowing them to learn first hand if a path is the right one for them. These opportunities make our programs

		relevant in a way that was not the case when I went to school. Let's keep this excellent model.
Cole Latiff	Former student at Esquimalt high school	I can confidently say that without the help of the career coordinators and work experience opportunities I was given as a student I would not be in the same position as I am right now. The importance of Ken and Tarra and all other career coordinators in the district is very significant and necessary for the future success of all students.
Bruce Ferguson	Teacher at Esquimalt	Profoundly important position to support. Makes an incredible difference in the lives of a significant number of our students.
Landon MacLean	Parker Johnston Ind. General Manager	There is a real need for youth to be exposed to, and experience, different career paths which are available to them. Without programs such as this, and dedicated staff such as Ken, students would not be as likely to witness or experience the many options available to them.
Rich Gill	Victoria Shipyards	There is a shortage of skilled trades and this program is very beneficial to showing young people these types of opportunities exist. VSL has developed a great working relationship with Esquimalt High and has been able to provide work experience for students to do while on spring break. I believe Ken and his team are vital to ensuring trade development takes place at a High School level.
Evan Eddy	Student at Esquimalt	As someone who's taking part of the dual credit program it's entirely dependent on the Career center coordinator to help place both myself and every other student that goes into the program in a good, safe work environment.
Ange Coutts	Careers Teacher at	I work within the Careers Team at Esquimalt High

	Esquimalt High School	School and work directly on a daily basis with our Career Center Coordinator. We would not accomplish what we do within our building without her. This program and position need to continue in order to facilitate student growth and opportunity.
Mike Thompson	Athletic Director, Esquimalt High School	The work Mr. Henderson and the Careers team have done here in the Esquimalt community has led to a new partnership between Esquimalt High and Esquimalt Recreation center. Through the addition of a new "Aquatics" course, students are now being given the opportunity to complete a Physical and Health Education course that includes training to become a National Lifeguard. We currently have 7 current and former Esquimalt students that have started positions as Lifeguards here in Victoria. Mr. Henderson's team have not only supported students' career aspirations, they have also helped to address a city-wide problem of lifeguard shortage.
Matt Grinder	Physics/Math Teacher	The careers program is excellent, it needs to continue.
Emma Abrioux	Teacher at Esquimalt	We see first-hand everyday the student successes of this program - it needs to continue!
Magen Winterburn	Teacher at Esquimalt	
Jenn Treble	Music Teacher at Esquimalt High	This is an important program to our small and diverse school community. Please stop cutting our programs that keep our kids on a strong path to success.
Susan Gage	Esquimalt citizen, grandparent of secondary school students	Of all the programs that could be cut, it seems to me that this one – linking students to the world of work in a way that will encourage them to take up trades (a real need in our society) and will help

		orient them to the realities of working – should be the last on the cutting block.
Rod McGregor	Parent, Department National Defence participant in EHS Careers initiatives.	<p>I was not approached by the EHS Careers Team to support this; I learned about the budget issues when attending last weeks PAC meeting and reached out (while in the meeting!) to see if some way I can help to inform the board of my very strong admiration of the EHS Careers (and Post Secondary Guidance) programs. Before my son attended EHS, I was introduced to the Career programs when I approached the school with a shop equipment donation from DND which I coordinated, and was invited to be a “mock” job interviewer for one of their training initiatives. That initiative and the full extent of their programs that I learned through their presentation at the PAC is highly impressive, and the work of obviously very dedicated professional educators. My impression based on my kids’ previous school experience, my own where I suffered from bad guidance, my professional engineering career and hiring experience is that this is the “superpower” of EHS in my opinion, and when my son wanted to change from the local French School, I had no hesitation for EHS because of these programs specifically and the staffs’ dedication and recognition of its importance. It should be a model for other schools/boards (I wish I had such guidance when I was in high school!). Other programs have their nobility as well, these are tough choices, but in your deliberations, please recognize what these educators have created here.</p>
Heidi Hackman	ESQ parent, Career teacher in SD #63	<p>These incredible programs not only jumpstart students on a chosen career path but also help many earn valuable credit towards graduation. No other program makes learning as relevant or</p>

		prepares students for life after high school as these career programs. Cuts to this department will have a direct impact on graduation rates and engagement of learners. As this area is growing with more partnerships and opportunities it makes no sense to cut these positions.
Clark Schwab	Esq. Science and Mathematics teacher	The Careers program presents opportunities that make learning relevant (a core competency goal) and have empowered countless students over the years to become successful both inside and outside high school. This program and the CCC position are an integral part of our school and promote the success of our students
Dianne Mallory	Counsellor	With the amount of personal counselling that I am doing, the course selections, course changes, collaboration with families, outside community agencies, referrals, and family work, I would be hard pressed to also support students with all that our careers teachers do. Our Career Coordinators/Teachers are essential at providing a service to our students that no one else can do. They provide students with opportunities, expertise and knowledge that propels them towards their future goals. Many many students benefit from this program and it is essential that it continue. Cutting it would be a disservice to students and the school as a whole.
Jessica Robertson	Teacher, Esquimalt high school	
Bob Hendle	Executive Chef, Swans Brewery, Pub, & Hotel	Working together with the Esquimalt High Careers Centre, teachers, and counselors we have built a progressive and positive relationship wherein we work with them to teach and train the next generation of food service hospitality professionals. This program between school and workplace that we have built together would not be

		possible without the help of Mr. Henderson and his colleagues, and quite frankly has been one of the highlights of my career to date. Together we have helped coach and build the careers of many students looking for what comes next after high school, and hopefully moving forward we can continue this positive work. I find it concerning that the careers centre and work experience programs are at jeopardy, the students this program benefits need this sort of outlet to be successful, and continue to be successful in a post academic world.
Samuel Ross	Esquimalt High School alumnus	I graduated from Esquimalt high school in 2017 and to this day I am incredibly grateful for the support and guidance provided through the Career Centre. The CCC offers invaluable advice, resources and opportunities that many students would not otherwise have knowledge of or be able to access. Personally, the CCC not only taught me useful skills for interviews, resume and cover letter writing, but also opened the door to my first job by organizing an interview at a local business. I firmly believe that many other students have deeply benefited from the Career Centre, gaining incredible work experience and learning practical skills that will serve them well after graduation.
Brianne Mendes	Youth and Family Counsellor	The CCCs in our school and our district play an important role in helping our students set themselves up for success in their futures. To lose our CCCs would be a detriment to our students.
Michael Wood	Parent	This is precisely the type of program and position that the school district should be supporting and expanding. This program supports the provincial and local economy by exposing students to industries that face labour shortages and by providing opportunities to students that are not

		addressed by traditional academic programming.
Stéphane Patenaude	Teacher at Esquimalt High	
Wren Chester	Teacher at Esquimalt	I have taught many students who have benefitted from the careers centre at Esquimalt High, and our Careers Centre Coordinator is absolutely invaluable to the program. Without Tarra, I can't imagine how our students would be supported. This program is life changing and we can't do it without the coordinator position.
Laurel MacKay	YFC at Esquimalt and parent	Tarra our CCC, and the entire careers team is essential to our student success here at Esquimalt. I work closely with Tarra and she provides support around resumes, job placement, connection to community and careers programs and countless other things. Students feel supported and leave with a sense of hopefulness after meeting with Tarra. Our students and our school would suffer if this position did not exist and many students would not have access to life changing opportunities.
Tanya Ross	SD61 Teacher, parent of 4 EHS alumni, EHS alumna	First and foremost, some of my own children accessed their first work experience and job opportunities as a result of the Careers Centre. Secondly, as a District Learning Support Teacher, I have worked in partnership with Learning Support Teachers who work collaboratively with their Career Centre Coordinator to provide invaluable work experience preparation and skill development opportunities, as well as some unique work and volunteer placements, for many of our district's students with the most complex needs. These work experience opportunities (not just the "jobs"

		<p>found/arranged, but all of the interactions and planning that goes into preparing a student for an experience), provide a sense of belonging and purpose for many vulnerable students, who may otherwise be feeling completely disconnected from school and learning. Losing our career centre coordinators would be devastating to our most vulnerable students, and many others as well.</p>
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Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Wednesday, March 16, 2022 8:02 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: FW: Again?

Categories: Green category

Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250.475.4117
Cell: [REDACTED]
www.sd61.bc.ca | @sd61schools

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.

-----Original Message-----

From: Jennifer [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 7:19 PM
To: Ryan Painter <rpainter@sd61.bc.ca>; Nicole Duncan <nduncan@sd61.bc.ca>; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>; Angie Hentze <ahentze@sd61.bc.ca>; Elaine Leonard <eleonard@sd61.bc.ca>; Jordan Watters <jwatters@sd61.bc.ca>; Ann Whiteaker <awhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca>; Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: Again?

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Dear Elected School Board Trustees of SD 61,

It is with sadness and disappointment that I am writing to you again, in order to express my unchanging support for and unwavering opinion of the importance of music in our schools.

Since last year when the threats were made to 'balance the budget' by cutting integral programs that allow our children to thrive, I have not changed my mind. My children, who feel that music is one of the best aspects of school have not changed their minds.

I have two kids in middle school who participate fully in all music programs open to them that will fit into their schedule. Our family does not believe that music is an area that should be cut from your budget because 'balancing your budget is your main priority'.

My children sure were disappointed to find out that they and their fellow students (our future care takers), are not of top importance by the board elected to represent them.

The ugly fact that you just didn't listen when thousands of parents, students, community members, industry leaders and former students came together and shouted loudly to express their belief in the importance of these programs last spring, but instead just placated us and held us all off for one year until you could 'suspend' the members of your board who garnered support for the music programs, does not sit well at all.

There are a lot of angry people who are tired of having things taken away from them, withheld from them and with being MISREPRESENTED.

My 11 year old son said over dinner "Wait, so you voted for these people and your TAX money pays them and they can threaten to take away music and make us feel so bad?"

I just about cried.

How can you be doing this, AGAIN?

I should just pull my letter from last year out from my 'sent' folder and resend it because the importance of these programs has not in any way diminished for us over the last year. Everything I formerly stated regarding the positive benefits of music in schools from offering all kids a sense of belonging, teaching them commitment, giving them a sense of accomplishment and pride not to mention the scientific research regarding the benefits that learning music has on the developing brain and helping kids succeed in other subjects HAS NOT CHANGED and neither has your ability to properly serve the children of SD 61 whose parents and community members voted you in to represent and protect what is vitally important to them.

Why isn't anything EVER about the students? Why do their needs and what is best for them EVER come first?

I am furious and hope that you are inundated with messages just like this one and find a way to leave these programs alone once and for all.

What you are threatening to do is wrong and you would be making a terrible mistake.

We are tired but we are not done standing up for what's best for our children.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Orrange

Ecole [REDACTED] School parent of two (currently), happy students of music

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Wednesday, March 16, 2022 8:02 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: FW: the sadness of continued budget cuts

Categories: Green category

Deb Whitten

Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250.475.4117
Cell: [REDACTED]

 www.sd61.bc.ca |   @sd61schools



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.

From: Mercedes Calvert [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 8:14 PM
To: Ryan Painter <rpainter@sd61.bc.ca>; Nicole Duncan <nduncan@sd61.bc.ca>; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>; Angie Hentze <ahentze@sd61.bc.ca>; Elaine Leonard <eleonard@sd61.bc.ca>; Jordan Watters <jwatters@sd61.bc.ca>; Ann Whiteaker <awhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca>; Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: the sadness of continued budget cuts

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Trustees,

It is with such a heavy heart that I am once again having to write to the School Board, to express my great sadness and disappointment and anger at the cuts that are being proposed. I know that many of you are parents, and that you know what each of these cuts could mean to the children you are indirectly "responsible" for and for the children in your lives, whom you love and protect.

COUNSELLING: At a time like this, it is unfathomable to me that counselling could even be considered for reduced funding. Mental wellness is #1 for our children, after what they have been through these past few years. A few months back, I tried to connect with my high school aged son's counsellor to get him support and when I got no response other

than "maybe talk to his teachers", I heard from so many parents "they are so busy, they are so understaffed (only two counsellors for a school of over 1300), they just can't get to everyone"... he didn't get to us.

JANITORIAL SUPPORT: While we are still in the midst of pandemic, the idea is to reduce cleaning/sanitizing? This is shocking.

MUSIC: And then of course, there is music. It is always the arts that gets kicked to the curb when things get tight. But have we learned nothing from what we all needed most when this pandemic hit? Comedies to laugh to, dramas to help us release tension, music to bring us joy, streaming of plays/ live performances etc. Without the support of arts in early education, we don't GET the arts later in life.

I heard Chair Painter speaking on the CBC today, and when asked if the Board would be putting in a special request (given the circumstances) for extra funding, he seemed unsure as to whether the Board would choose to do that. Why not? Why not try?

We have so much heaviness in our hearts right now, with the continued stress of covid, the current heartbreaking devastation of the war in Ukraine, the ongoing opioid crisis, please, stop making us protest, and stop making us send letters and feel the need to fight and fight and fight for what we know our children need and deserve.

Sincerely,
Mercedes Calvert
Mom of two boys in middle school and high school

Lisa McPhail

From: Kim Morris
Sent: Wednesday, March 16, 2022 7:26 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: FW: Allocation of funding

Categories: Green category

Kim Morris
Secretary-Treasurer/CFO
School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)
556 Boleskine Road
Victoria BC V8Z 1E8
Phone: 250-475-4108
Cell: [REDACTED]
www.sd61.bc.ca
Email: kmorris@sd61.bc.ca
Twitter: @KimKMorris

-----Original Message-----

From: Starship [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] March 15, 2022 10:37 PM
Subject: Allocation of funding

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Dear esteemed Trustees,

It has recently come to my attention that the position of career counsellor may soon be abolished within SD61. I would like to appeal this decision on the grounds that removing academic counsellors would severely hinder the potential of students in developing their vocational abilities by preventing them from learning of opportunities to participate in skilled trades programs. I beg of you to please consider this application and consider allowing students in this district to further develop their skills.

Please include this letter in the April 4th meeting pack up. Thank you.

Lisa McPhail

From: Caitlin Mooney [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 3:26 PM
To: Kim Morris; Deb Whitten; exec@gvta.net; Trustees
Subject: School Counsellors - opposition to budget cuts

Categories: Web

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Dear Trustees,

I am writing to let you know that I oppose the proposed savings which would reduce 8.0 FTE School Counsellors from our district, restoring student-counsellor ratios to 693:1.

The proposed budget changes would:

- reduce accessibility of qualified mental healthcare for children and families in the middle of a mental health crisis,
- have the greatest negative impact on children and families who cannot access mental healthcare (due to lack of finances/transportation, social injustice, etc.),
- shift the responsibility for child mental health crises in the school (e.g. imminent suicide, self-harm risk) to other school staff (e.g. EAs, Teachers, Administrators) School Counsellors have a unique role and scope of practice in the schools. They are both BC Certified Teachers and mental health professionals with a master's degree in counselling psychology or a related subject.

School Counsellors weave between many complex situations from classroom-based work to individual counselling, to collaboration with teams of educators, to crisis intervention, to sitting with families to find appropriate referrals to mental health services. Because School Counsellors are Teachers as well as mental health professionals, they are uniquely well-suited to the co-ordination and delivery of mental health literacy, mental health promotion, trauma-informed practice, and social and emotional learning (SEL) programs within the schools. This aligns with the Ministry of Education's Mental Health in Schools Strategy and the increased focus on these areas in the BC Curriculum. School Counsellors also serve the school staff and the family community through collaboration and education on topics such as anxiety, grief and loss, and trauma.

The proposed budget changes would see a reduction in all services provided by School Counsellors. These impacts may include:

- reduced individual and group counselling for students
- reduced risk assessment for self-harm, suicide, abuse, and neglect for students
- reduced case detection and early intervention for students showing signs of pediatric mental illness
- reduced classroom-based mental health literacy, mental health promotion, and social and emotional learning lessons for students and school staff
- reduced referrals for families to mental health supports
- reduced collaboration with, and support for, school staff
- reduced mental health promotion activities for school staff and families (e.g. trauma-informed practice, grief and loss workshops)
- reduced availability of the School Counsellor for crisis intervention (e.g. death of student or staff, suicide, traumatic incidents, violence)

· reduced co-ordination of school-based services with community-based services such as Child & Youth Mental Health

We are in the middle of a mental health crisis. Right now, our children need more access to mental health services, not less. Before the COVID-19 pandemic began, research in the BC school system had already identified anxiety, depression, self-harm, suicidal ideation, and trauma as main areas of concern. Now, two years into the pandemic, two-thirds of children are struggling with their mental health, with significant increases in anxiety and depression and serious consideration of suicide.

Access to qualified mental healthcare is low, with roughly three quarters of Canadian children with a mental illness not receiving adequate treatment. School Counsellors are the most accessible and most equitable mental health service for children. All children can access a School Counsellor, regardless of their background, socioeconomic status, or any other characteristic. Therefore, the very presence of School Counsellors is a social justice issue.

The proposed budget changes would increase student-school counsellor ratios and thereby significantly reduce the accessibility of qualified mental healthcare to our students. These proposed changes come in the middle of a mental health crisis, two years into a pandemic, and two years after the beginning of war in Ukraine. Families are stressed, children are suffering, and access to mental healthcare is at risk.

The Swahili proverb “it takes a whole village to raise one child,” is truer now than ever. It is the responsibility of all school staff to work together to protect the wellbeing of our students, and to help them learn and grow. School Counsellors are an essential member of the village, who balance both teaching and mental health services. The services that School Counsellors provide are essential to the mental health and wellbeing of students, families, school staff, and communities. Reductions will reduce their ability to provide these services.

I request that the current FTE for School Counsellors be retained in the 2022-2023 school year.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kind regards,
Caitlin Mooney

Lisa McPhail

From: Mark Schippers
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 2:49 PM
To: Trustees
Subject: Support letter for Career center workers
Attachments: Letter to the board.pdf

Categories: Web

Please find attached letter of support for our worthy Career center CUPE staff

Sincerely,
Mark

Mark Schippers

Oak Bay High School
2121 Cadboro Bay Rd
Victoria BC, V8R 5G4
[REDACTED]

15th March 2022

Board

Greater Victoria School District 61
556 Boleskine rd,
Victoria BC, ST V8Z 1E8

Dear Board members ,

I am writing this letter to express my concern over the proposed cuts to our career center CUPE staff. I have had the great pleasure of working for this district since 1996, during this time the career center support staff has been instrumental in supporting student exploration for careers and post secondary schooling.

Here at Oak Bay our coordinator is the organizational force behind our Dual credit programs as well as enhanced learning opportunities as she is constantly in contact with diverse groups across our city, province and even country. This contact has enriched us with numerous guest presentations and career presentations that link to the content area of my programs (Law, Social Justice and Psychology). Students have the ability to attend university and career events in our school and district due to her hard work.

To lose our career room coordinator would be a loss for both the district and students that she works with, I truly trust that you will be able to find another solution

Sincerely,



Mark Schippers, MEd.

Lisa McPhail

From: Mark Schippers
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 2:47 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Support letter for Career center staffing
Attachments: Letter to the board.pdf

Categories: Green category

Please find attached letter of support for our worthy Career center CUPE staff

Sincerely,
Mark

Mark Schippers

Oak Bay High School
2121 Cadboro Bay Rd
Victoria BC, V8R 5G4
[REDACTED]

15th March 2022

Board

Greater Victoria School District 61
556 Boleskine rd,
Victoria BC, ST V8Z 1E8

Dear Board members ,

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To lose our career room coordinator would be a loss for both the district and students that she works with, I truly trust that you will be able to find another solution

Sincerely,



Mark Schippers, MEd.

Lisa McPhail

From: Samantha Middleton [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 2:27 PM
Subject: Please don't cut what helps us, please.

Categories: Web

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Dear Trustees,

I ask, coming to you as a grade [REDACTED] student at [REDACTED] school, that you don't cut the music programs in middle school and the careers counselors, I understand that you feel pressured and scared right now because you have to do an impossible job, but please, just don't cut them.

Music has played a huge role in my life, starting with singing with my grandmother at jam sessions in a little town, to building up my confidence, to eventually being able to join choir and singing in front of a bigger crowd in middle school. My love for music has always been strong but my confidence hasn't, I know for sure I would not be where I am now if it wasn't for the music program. I moved to Victoria, BC in 2017 and of course everyone knows it's hard starting out in middle school, especially in the middle of the year and having no friends. It was hard. feeling like I didn't belong, not knowing where to go and not having friends. I was going through friend groups faster than I could count. It really took a toll on my mental health, not knowing where to go and feeling lost. For the first year and a bit I was lost and It took me a while, but I eventually turned back to music, and that was where I really thrived.

Now I wasn't very good, and I'm still not the greatest but I have never been happier than I have ever been in the music room. It is a place where I could forget about my worries and just feel like myself. It is such a supportive and welcoming community of people, just sharing their love for music and having fun while doing it. In middle school when I finally came back to music it was when I finally met the right people and we became friends, I am still best friends with them today and I am so thankful. I am still involved in the music program today at [REDACTED] school and I am in the Choir, Rhythm and Blues and musical theatre program, and I am still in love with it. As a matter of fact, right now, I am in the aviation program at [REDACTED] and because of how I fell in love with the program and the music community, I travel to Esquimalt (which is a 45 minute bus ride) on Tuesday's and Thursday's to continue to do the musical theatre program. If you thought transitioning to middle school from elementary school was a big jump, middle school to high school was even bigger and I know for sure I would not have joined the music program in high school if I hadn't started in middle school.

Now for the career counselors, as mentioned before, I am in the aviation program right now, I'm also taking the TEAC course at camosun. Now you may be wondering, what are these courses? What do you do within the programs? How can I apply? That's a great question, ask the career counselors. I'm serious, I could explain what it is, but how to apply? I would bring up the aviation program to my teachers and they'd say, "oh how exciting!" but not one of them knew what the program fully entailed, just "Oh right! I thought we had that program."

At this point grade 11's are deciding on their final courses for their grade 12 year, at this point they're all freaking out realizing how soon their grade 12 year is. It's finally setting in that they have to decide soon and they have no clue what they're going to do. That was me, I had no clue what I was going to do, and I'm still figuring it out. My careers counselor emailed me and talked me through every course and helped me decide

what classes I'm going to take next year. It was hard considering I'm at [REDACTED] right now and communication is difficult, but they were with me every step of the way.

Now that you finally made it to the end of my long email going on and on about me and my experience, I strongly urge you to reconsider cutting the music program and the careers counselors. I don't even want to think about where I would've been now if I didn't have a music program in middle school, and I can't imagine my future without the guidance of my careers counselor.

There has to be another way.

Please include this letter in the April 4th meeting pack up.

Thank you, and please, don't give up on us yet,

Samantha Middleton,
Grade [REDACTED] student at [REDACTED] High School.

Lisa McPhail

From: Kim Morris
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 12:31 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: FW: Letter of support for day custodians
Attachments: Letter of support for our custodian.docx

Categories: Green category

Kim Morris
Secretary-Treasurer/CFO
School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)
556 Boleskine Road
Victoria BC V8Z 1E8
Phone: 250-475-4108
Cell: [REDACTED]
www.sd61.bc.ca
Email: kmorris@sd61.bc.ca
Twitter: @KimKMorris

From: Alison West
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 12:25 PM
To: Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>; Kim Morris <kmorris@sd61.bc.ca>; Chuck Morris <cmorris@sd61.bc.ca>; Paul Knapik <pgknapik@sd61.bc.ca>; Ryan Painter <rpainter@sd61.bc.ca>; Nicole Duncan <nduncan@sd61.bc.ca>; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>; Angie Hentze <ahentze@sd61.bc.ca>; Elaine Leonard <eleonard@sd61.bc.ca>; Ann Whiteaker <awwhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca>; Jordan Watters <jwatters@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: Letter of support for day custodians

Please see the attached letter from our staff at Hillcrest in support of day custodians.

Kind regards,
The Hillcrest Staff

March 15, 2022

Dear Board Members of the Greater Victoria School District,

We, the Hillcrest Staff, are very concerned and upset with the recent proposal to cut our daytime custodian position to address shortfalls in the district budget. Our custodian Mike Campbell is an integral part of our school team. His role, and that of other daytime custodians, is essential to the daily operations of a school that is safe and running smoothly and efficiently. Furthermore, the health and safety of students and staff is directly linked to a clean and well maintained school. Over the past two years our custodian also ensured new health and safety protocols were in place. This pandemic is not done, and we will all continue to rely on our custodians next year and the coming years to keep our school safe from germs and illness.

The workload and responsibilities of the custodian's job is immense. A typical day for Mike includes the following:

- Daily maintenance and upkeep of the school facilities. This includes cleaning all contact surfaces and floors and dealing with spills, vomit and hazardous waste. Mike is often unplugging toilets and keeping the washroom sanitary for children to use while replenishing supplies such as toilet paper, hand towels, soap and sanitizer.
- Collecting garbage and recycling from the classrooms and main areas of the school and removing them from the building
- Maintenance of the outdoor walkways and parking lots in the early morning such as clearing debris, ice, and snow so it is accessible and safe for all.
- Checking the playground and blacktop to ensure there are no safety hazards from the night before.
- Regularly ensuring classroom furniture is in good working order (ie. desk legs are tightened and are not about to collapse on a child), and that furniture needs are being met within the classroom (ie. new desks moved in for new students, appropriate sized chairs brought in, extra furniture moved and stored). As an example today Mike is busy clearing the stage of all the extra stored furniture so that a school performance can take place next week.
- Monitoring and checking school sites as a part of the Health and Safety Committee

Above all else, we feel that the student and staff health and safety will be jeopardized if we do not have a custodian at our school. Who will be responsible for cleaning the desks and surfaces? Who will deal with the messes that can occur at any given time? Who will be replenishing our supplies in the classroom and school on a daily basis? Will teachers be expected to leave their students to get paper towel if it runs out? Clean up vomit? Who will salt the walkway during the winter season? Who will clean up the mud and dirt that is tracked in after lunchtime play? These are questions we have because as educators we feel our instructional time is already stretched, and we believe it is our job to teach. Do not assume that we will take on the many responsibilities of our daytime custodial staff. Furthermore is

it implied that administration will be attending to these duties, while waiting for the arrival of a “fly crew”?

We, as a staff, support our custodian, Mike Campbell, and want to see him back in the Fall as a part of our school team. He is an essential part of the day to day school operations. We strongly oppose the proposal to remove daytime custodians. We don’t see how we can have safe schools without them.

Kind regards,

The Hillcrest Team

Lisa McPhail

From: Ethical Host - John MacKenzie [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 11:49 AM
To: Community Engagement; Ryan Painter; Nicole Duncan; Tom Ferris; Angie Hentze; Elaine Leonard; Jordan Watters; Ann Whiteaker; Trustees; EDUC.Minister@gov.bc.ca
Subject: school funding
Categories: Green category

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Hi There

While I recognize that balancing budgets is hard work, there are some things which are absolutely essential to the growth and leaning of our kids. These are

- the **elementary and middle school strings/band programs**
- **counsellors**
- **daytime custodians**
- **k-5 literacy cuts** (literacy is already getting worse so we cant cut this)

These things are extremely essential for our kids, do not cut them!

I fully support the cuts to board managers directors and advisors, as well as the “district principles and vice principles” and know there is likely more you could cut from up there as well from what ive heard, its pretty top heavy!

Thanks
John

Lisa McPhail

From: KHR [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 9:32 AM
To: Ryan Painter; Nicole Duncan; Tom Ferris; Angie Hentze; Elaine Leonard; Jordan Watters; Ann Whiteaker; Trustees
Subject: Budget Cuts
Categories: Web

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CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Dear School Board Trustees,

Once again our family is writing to implore you to make any necessary budget cuts as far from student needs and programs as possible. Kids have given up so much these past two years, as learners and young humans, that would normally help shape them into well rounded adults. They've missed school, sports, normal social growth, milestone life events, community engagement, field trips, babysitting, live cultural events, general peace of mind, and so much more. They've watched their parents struggle, their society divide, family finances crumble, kin get ill, and watched some families fall apart due to a crazy period in our world. It is never a good time to take away resources from young minds, growing bodies, and souls of children - but especially not when they've seen so much change in such a condensed period of time. Music, EAs, and counseling will bring students together, bring meaning to their days, improve mental health, and provide skills that will last a lifetime.

We know so many children struggling with mental health right now in our community. There are so many families with parents who have lost their jobs, stability, and even homes these past years all under the guise that "we are all in this together"...that means children have been in this with us. Please don't make cuts that will further damage their fragile systems at a time when they most need stability and joy.

Please consider this letter, and all others sent by stakeholders, at your upcoming meeting. Our children, our community, our collective voice reaching out to OUR elected representatives about our budget.

Kind regards, the Riecken family

Lisa McPhail

From: Kate Lackey [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 9:31 AM
To: Trustees
Cc: Ryan Painter; Nicole Duncan; Tom Ferris; Angie Hentze; Elaine Leonard; Jordan Watters; awhitaeker@sd61.bc.ca
Subject: Budget & Cuts
Categories: Web

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Dear Trustees,

I cannot believe that once again parents need to fight to maintain music, counselling and custodial work in the schools. These should not be variable costs but absolutely should be fixed. Is there no way we can have the budget increased to allow for these programs to continue. I am so disappointed that there is not more being done to maintain these essential services. Please push to maintain these programs as they are essential to the wellbeing of our community.

Kate Lackey

Lisa McPhail

From: Zoe Fyfe [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 9:23 AM
To: Ryan Painter; Nicole Duncan; Tom Ferris; Angie Hentze; Elaine Leonard; Jordan Watters; Ann Whiteaker; Trustees
Subject: SD61 and music
Categories: Web

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Dear Trustees,

It saddens me that I am having to write you again with appeals to keep music in the lives of our children. Just a year ago, we were taking time off work to create signs and stand on streets, write emails, and attending every meeting showing our support for music, and you are requiring that we do it again.

I am not going to drag this email out with stories of the joy music brings to my children and our family because you will hear this from thousands of other parents. Instead, I am going to remind you that your role, as copied from the BCSTA.org website, is to " ... maintain a focus on student achievement and well-being, and to participate in decision making that benefits the entire district while representing the interests of the entire electorate." We demonstrated last year and in many ways before and since that music does exactly that.

Please hear us and believe us when we say that music is a major requirement in the learning environment of our children. This hasn't changed and won't change and when you look at reducing it, it implies that you do not have the best interests of our children at heart.

Feel free to contact me if you have questions.

Thank you,

Zoë Fyfe
[REDACTED]

Lisa McPhail

From: Dan Mckean
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 9:07 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Letter of support: Career Centre Coordinator

Categories: Green category

Dear School District 61 Trustees,

This letter is to outline the immense value of the work that Lynne Turnbull, along with the other career centre coordinators bring to their respective secondary schools.

Determining a preferred career pathway, finding the right post secondary program and applying to that program is a challenge that students need support with. To start with, most students do not know what they want to do after high school. Helping solve that initial problem, the career centre coordinator, promotes and shares with students hundreds of events that happen each year in our country, community, and SD61 schools. Through the use of the school app, social media feeds, parent emails, career centre website and class visits, the Reynolds community becomes informed. Without consistent promotion, opportunities go unfilled and students miss out.

Missing out on opportunities is unfortunate and the effects are considerable when it involves post secondary. Students entering grade 12 often feel enormous pressure and stress from their families and from themselves with regards to having the right plan following graduation. With the enormity of options available to students, post secondary applications become stressful. To begin the process students first need to create an account with the BC Transcript Service, which requires a BCeID, then they can work through the BC Education Planner to select schools they would like to apply to. But not all schools are listed in the Education Planner. Furthermore, if a student would like to apply to another province then there is a whole other set of steps that needs to be carried out. To add to this application challenge, when researching post-secondary programs, internet searches can show outdated information.

With SD61 schools having grad classes of 150-300 students, the amount of students seeking assistance is considerable. A well outlined pdf or video certainly helps (which career centre coordinators have created and updated as changes occur) but many students need direct support with these processes, especially when they are unsure of what direction they want to take.

If not for Lynne Turnbull in the Reynolds Career Centre, many students simply would not know about all their available options or would get thwarted by the application process and miss out on starting down their career pathway that they have spent 13 years working towards. If we truly want each School District 61 student in our world-class learning community to fulfill their potential and pursue their aspirations, then it is paramount that students continue to have a career centre coordinator in their building who can provide the assistance that they currently are seeking and utilizing.

Sincerely,

Dan McKean

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1sNndfm0K8bwknsIFwVY3-Wwv7NAvcaqksgyny4PHhbM/edit?usp=sharing>

Understanding a preferred career pathway, finding the right post secondary program and applying to that program is a challenge that students need support with. To start with, most students do not know what they want to do after high school. Helping solve that initial problem, the career centre coordinator, promotes and shares with students hundreds of events that happen each year in our country, community, and SD61 schools. Through the use of the school app, social media feeds, parent emails, career centre website and class visits, the Reynolds community becomes informed. Without consistent promotion, opportunities go unfilled and students miss out.

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Career Centre Coordinator Support

Dear School District 61 Trustees, This letter is to outline the immense value of the work that Lynne Turnbull, along with the other career centre coordinators bring to their respective secondary schools. \u000B Determining a preferred career pathway, finding the right post secondary program and appl...

docs.google.com

Daniel McKean (he/him)

Careers, PE and Science Teacher
Careers & Computers Department Head
Reynolds Secondary
Greater Victoria School District No. 61

 www.sd61.bc.ca |   @sd61schools



Monday, March 14, 2022

Dear School District 61 Trustees,

This letter is to outline the immense value of the work that Lynne Turnbull, along with the other career centre coordinators bring to their respective secondary schools.

Determining a preferred career pathway, finding the right post secondary program and applying to that program is a challenge that students need support with. To start with, most students do not know what they want to do after high school. Helping solve that initial problem, the career centre coordinator, promotes and shares with students hundreds of events that happen each year in our country, community, and SD61 schools. Through the use of the school app, social media feeds, parent emails, career centre website and class visits, the Reynolds community becomes informed. Without consistent promotion, opportunities go unfilled and students miss out.

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If not for Lynne Turnbull in the Reynolds Career Centre, many students simply would not know about all their available options or would get thwarted by the application process and miss out on starting down their career pathway that they have spent 13 years working towards. If we truly want each School District 61 student in our world-class learning community to fulfill their potential and pursue their aspirations, then it is paramount that students continue to have a career centre coordinator in their building who can provide the assistance that they currently are seeking and utilizing.

Sincerely,

Dan McKean

Lisa McPhail

From: Ken Henderson
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2022 5:37 PM
To: Elaine Leonard
Cc: Community Engagement
Subject: re: Proposal to cut Career Centre Coordinator positions in SD61
Attachments: A Snapshot of what Career Centre Coordinators bring to SD 61 High Schools.pdf

Categories: Green category

Hello Elaine,

Ken Henderson here -- we sat together at last Thursday's budget meeting.

As promised, I put together a letter describing how key our Career Centre Coordinator is to everything we do here at Esquimalt High that relates to connecting students to opportunity.

Please see attached letter and subsequent comments. There are a number of testimonials from community members, past students and teachers that are also worth a close read. I should say that all these comments have come in over the past 24 hours -- there be more testimonials added in the days to come, I am sure. But I know you are meeting soon, so I wanted to get this to you.

I will leave it to you to share this document with your fellow trustees; I have also sent it to the community engagement email that was provided.

Thanks for your support. Ken

Ken Henderson
Dept Head-- Career Life Education
Esquimalt High School
[REDACTED]

Mar 13, 2022

Greetings Trustees,

My name is Ken Henderson; I am the Careers Dept Head for Esquimalt High School. I have been a proud member of this school community since 2004. I want to bring you up to speed on the work that myself and my colleague, Tarra Clarke (Career Centre Coordinator) do here at ESQ. As you consider the vital role that Tarra plays at our school, also bear in mind that each high school in Victoria has a Career Centre Coordinator (CCC), all of whom do similar, remarkable work in connecting students to opportunities.

I understand the importance of having a budget that is in alignment with District Goals, and to that effect I would like to show how the work of CCC's helps the District reach its goals.

Goal 1, Strategy 1: Develop and support high quality learning opportunities for students.

The partnership between a half-time Pathways & Partnerships teacher and a full-time career center coordinator can lead to amazing results. In short, we connect students to amazing learning opportunities in the community. Since students always choose to participate, the success rate of such ventures is high. Most students return to school with a heightened sense of confidence and purpose. We are currently in the month of March, which happens to include Spring Break. Here are the learning opportunities we are providing to students this month:

- **Seaspan Shipyards:** 5 students , each completing 40 hours of work experience. (next step: Apply for full time work at DND for summer 2022; some students will also apply to SD61 AVIATION Program)
- **Farmer Construction:** 6 students , each completing 40 hours of work experience. (next step: summer employment / register students as apprentices)
- **Belltech Electric:** 3 students, each completing 40 hours of work exp. (next step: complete Camosun Electrical Foundation in Gr 12 (dual credit) OR apply to WATT program if graduating in June)
- **Parker Johnston:** 6 students , each completing 40 hours of work experience. (next step: summer employment / register students as apprentices; some students will also apply to the SD 61 TASK Program)
- **Crease Harman Law:** one student, 40 hrs of work exp. (next step: complete Legal Office Assistant Program at Camosun in Gr 12 (dual credit))

- **Coastal Roots Health Clinic:** one student, 40 hrs of work exp. (next step: complete Medical Office Assistant Program at Camosun in Gr 12 (dual credit)
- **Lyall St Auto; Searles Auto:** two students, each completing 40 hrs of work exp. (next step: apply for SD 61 Autotech Program for 22/23 school year; complete Level 1 certification at Camosun in July of 2023
- **CBS Electric:** 3 students, each completing 40 hours of work exp. (next step: complete Camosun Electrical Foundation in Gr 12 (dual credit) OR apply to WATT program if graduating in June.

As you can imagine, these placements provide students with remarkable learning opportunities. For these partnerships to be viable (consider student safety, logistics, outreach, site visits, training plans, agreement forms, student orientations, ensuring students have PPE, etc) we truly need a team approach -- that is a .5 Pathways teacher and a full time CCC. At the risk of stating the obvious, these experiences lead to increased student engagement, purpose and success in the classroom.

Goal 3, Strategy 4: Address the inequity of opportunity for all learners

One of the wonderful things about our role in the school is that we are truly able to assist ALL learners. We are able to support at-risk students in overcoming obstacles that stand in their way. Each situation is unique; here is the story of one individual:

Since the fall, we have been supporting a student who has extensive experience looking after her younger siblings and cousins. This person expressed an interest in becoming an early childhood educator after learning of a dual credit opportunity open to Gr 12 students. With her compelling life story and history of looking after many young children, it was obvious that this was a great pathway for her to pursue. But many hurdles presented themselves. A criminal record check was required, which in turn meant the student needed Government-issued photo ID. With our help, the student was able to navigate getting the required documents in a timely manner. While she did not meet the set deadlines, we advocated on her behalf and exemptions were granted.

I need to point out the amazing resiliency of this student -- she is on the Adult Grad program, and yet she is getting an Early Childhood Educator certification at Camosun College in her grade 12 year. We have collaborated with the college to secure a tutor that works with our student 4 hours a week. We check in on a weekly basis. This individual is doing all the hard work, but she needs our support to overcome barriers that stand in her way. Without a CCC in

the school, we simply would not be able to provide comprehensive support to this student or the countless others like her who seek out our help.

I believe the examples listed above demonstrate the pivotal role career centre coordinators play in our high schools. Fulsome statistics related to the impact CCC's are having on SD 61 students are available -- I encourage you to seek them out.

In closing, I would like to bring up graduation requirements. In BC, every student needs to receive 8 credits in Career Education in their final three years of school. Not only is the work of Pathways teams incredibly impactful, it also gives high school students a chance to develop the very competencies that are mandated by the Ministry of Education.

Pathways Teams were created in each SD 61 high school six years ago, and since then we have had a tremendous positive impact on students. While every team is unique, one commonality is that efficient systems are in place. If the Career Center Coordinators are suddenly no longer doing their excellent work, our systems will disintegrate. I urge you to not allow this to happen. We have something special going on with Career Education in SD 61. Let's keep it that way.

Sincerely,

Ken Henderson

Careers Dept Head, Esquimalt High

I wholeheartedly support preserving the jobs of our Career Centre Coordinators in SD 61

Name	Connection to SD61	Comment (optional)
Wren Chester	Teacher at Esquimalt	I have taught many students who have benefitted from the careers centre at Esquimalt High, and our Careers Centre Coordinator is absolutely invaluable to the program. Without Tarra, I can't imagine how our students would be supported. This program is life changing and we can't do it without the coordinator position.
Julia Flagg	Teacher at Esquimalt	Our Career Centres are essential in guiding

	High	students into work opportunities, and Career Centre Coordinators are essential to the district's Careers Programs.
Dana Bjorn...	Teacher and parent at Esquimalt High	We know that once a student graduates, their support system dwindles to that of their immediate family. This position is absolutely essential in getting more high school students into career pathways while they still have access to supports that may or may not be provided by family. Esquimalt families depend on these supports!
Joellen Kirk	Teacher at Esquimalt	
Bruce Ferguson	Teacher at Esquimalt	Profoundly important position to support. Makes an incredible difference in the lives of a significant number of our students.
Luz Cabrera	Teacher at Esquimalt	
Evan Eddy	Student at Esquimalt	As someone who's taking part of the dual credit program it's entirely dependent on the Career center coordinator to help place both myself and every other student that goes into the program in a good, safe work environment.
Tekahra Tarnowski	Former student of Esquimalt High	Without the assistance and guidance of my career centre coordinator, I can confidently say that I would not be in the position I am today. Career coordinators form the foundation for students during the most important transitional time between/prior to graduation and into post secondary. I partook in the dual credit/partnership program in 2018-2019 at Camosun. Mr. Henderson brought my attention to this program and the other resources available. This program and the work of careers coordinators (including, but not limited to: placing students in safe workplace environments, bringing programs to light that may

		not have been previously considered, and answering questions and accommodating and advocating for students) is invaluable and vital to success.
Meagan Brame	Early Childhood Educator/Child Care Operator/Municipal Councillor Township of Esquimalt	I have worked with the school on several occasions offering the ability for EHS students to volunteer at the centre to fulfill the 40 hours of work experience required to apply for the ECE program. The school helps the students know the resources within their community so that they can achieve their goals. They help them find the time in their schedules to make it work. Without the support of the CCC at schools, many youth would not get these important opportunities for success.
Jonathan Schneider	Metal shop teacher, Esquimalt High	The work experience and career opportunities generated by Ken and Tarra are a critical piece of our shop programs here, bringing students in contact with trades professionals and allowing them to learn first hand if a path is the right one for them. These opportunities make our programs relevant in a way that was not the case when I went to school. Let's keep this excellent model.
Cole Latiff	Former student at Esquimalt high school	I can confidently say that without the help of the career coordinators and work experience opportunities I was given as a student I would not be in the same position as I am right now. The importance of Ken and Tarra and all other career coordinators in the district is very significant and necessary for the future success of all students.
Megan Thom	LEAP Middle School Careers Program Teacher	This year the district has invested in LEAP, a new pilot program of Pathways and Partnerships and Sean Powell, Middle School District Principal. The Esquimalt careers team made time over their lunch break to come meet my at-risk students from Shoreline and Rockheights to answer their

		<p>questions about high school transition and career options at Esquimalt. My students have been identified as at risk of unsuccessful transition to high school, but the careers department and Tarra in particular provided one on one connection that will be vital for them when they arrive at Esquimalt in September. If the careers team is not there to provide the support we promised, these students are at real risk of disengaging completely from school.</p>
Heath Avery	Farmer Construction Senior Superintendent	<p>For many years Farmer Construction has benefited from the Careers Center program. It offers the students a direct connection to enter the trades program. We have successfully hired countless students to join our team. Without the coordinators I don't believe we would have as many new young people joining the industry.</p>
Aaron Witzke	Teacher (Esquimalt High Sc...	<p>If there is not an opportunity for a careers team to support our students, those same students are at a risk of disengaging from school; therefore, it should be absolutely required to keep this position in all secondary schools across the district.</p>
Daniel Mari	English Department Head	<p>We often speak of the value of 'real-world' training and experience for students. This is it!</p>
Matt Grinder	Physics/Math Teacher	<p>The careers program is excellent, it needs to continue.</p>
Emma Abrioux	Teacher at Esquimalt	<p>We see first-hand everyday the student successes of this program - it needs to continue!</p>
Ange Coutts	Careers Teacher at Esquimalt High School	<p>I work within the Careers Team at Esquimalt High School and work directly on a daily basis with our Career Center Coordinator. We would not accomplish what we do within our building without her. This program and position need to continue in order to facilitate student growth and</p>

		opportunity.
Mike Thompson	Athletic Director, Esquimalt High School	The work Mr. Henderson and the Careers team have done here in the Esquimalt community has led to a new partnership between Esquimalt High and Esquimalt Recreation center. Through the addition of a new “Aquatics” course, students are now being given the opportunity to complete a Physical and Health Education course that includes training to become a National Lifeguard. We currently have 7 current and former Esquimalt students that have started positions as Lifeguards here in Victoria. Mr. Henderson’s team have not only supported students’ career aspirations, they have also helped to address a city-wide problem of lifeguard shortage.
Landon MacLean	Parker Johnston Ind. General Manager	There is a real need for youth to be exposed to, and experience, different career paths which are available to them. Without programs such as this, and dedicated staff such as Ken, students would not be as likely to witness or experience the many options available to them.
Rich Gill	Victoria Shipyards	There is a shortage of skilled trades and this program is very beneficial to showing young people these types of opportunities exist. VSL has developed a great working relationship with Esquimalt High and has been able to provide work experience for students to do while on spring break. I believe Ken and his team are vital to ensuring trade development takes place at a High School level.
Magen Winterburn	Teacher at Esquimalt	
Jenn Treble	Music Teacher at Esquimalt High	This is an important program to our small and diverse school community. Please stop cutting our programs that keep our kids on a strong path to

		success.
Susan Gage	Esquimalt citizen, grandparent of secondary school students	Of all the programs that could be cut, it seems to me that this one – linking students to the world of work in a way that will encourage them to take up trades (a real need in our society) and will help orient them to the realities of working – should be the last on the cutting block.
Rod McGregor	Parent, Department National Defence participant in EHS Careers initiatives.	<p>I was not approached by the EHS Careers Team to support this; I learned about the budget issues when attending last weeks PAC meeting and reached out (while in the meeting!) to see if some way I can help to inform the board of my very strong admiration of the EHS Careers (and Post Secondary Guidance) programs. Before my son attended EHS, I was introduced to the Career programs when I approached the school with a shop equipment donation from DND which I coordinated, and was invited to be a “mock” job interviewer for one of their training initiatives.</p> <p>That initiative and the full extent of their programs that I learned though their presentation at the PAC is highly impressive, and the work of obviously very dedicated professional educators. My impression based on my kids’ previous school experience, my own where I suffered from bad guidance, my professional engineering career and hiring experience is that this is the “superpower” of EHS in my opinion, and when my son wanted to change from the local French School, I had no hesitation for EHS because of these programs specifically and the staffs’ dedication and recognition of its importance. It should be a model for other schools/boards (I wish I had such guidance when I was in high school!). Other programs have their nobility as well, these are tough choices, but in your deliberations, please recognize what these</p>

		educators have created here.
Heidi Hackman	ESQ parent, Career teacher in SD #63	These incredible programs not only jumpstart students on a chosen career path but also help many earn valuable credit towards graduation. No other program makes learning as relevant or prepares students for life after high school as these career programs. Cuts to this department will have a direct impact on graduation rates and engagement of learners. As this area is growing with more partnerships and opportunities it makes no sense to cut these positions.
Clark Schwab	Esq. Science and Mathematics teacher	The Careers program presents opportunities that make learning relevant (a core competency goal) and have empowered countless students over the years to become successful both inside and outside high school. This program and the CCC position are an integral part of our school and promote the success of our students
Dianne Mallory	Counsellor	With the amount of personal counselling that I am doing, the course selections, course changes, collaboration with families, outside community agencies, referrals, and family work, I would be hard pressed to also support students with all that our careers teachers do. Our Career Coordinators/Teachers are essential at providing a service to our students that no one else can do. They provide students with opportunities, expertise and knowledge that propels them towards their future goals. Many many students benefit from this program and it is essential that it continue. Cutting it would be a disservice to students and the school as a whole.
Jessica Robertson	Teacher, Esquimalt high school	

Bob Hendle	Executive Chef, Swans Brewery, Pub, & Hotel	Working together with the Esquimalt High Careers Centre, teachers, and counselors we have built a progressive and positive relationship wherein we work with them to teach and train the next generation of food service hospitality professionals. This program between school and workplace that we have built together would not be possible without the help of Mr. Henderson and his colleagues, and quite frankly has been one of the highlights of my career to date. Together we have helped coach and build the careers of many students looking for what comes next after high school, and hopefully moving forward we can continue this positive work. I find it concerning that the careers centre and work experience programs are at jeopardy, the students this program benefits need this sort of outlet to be successful, and continue to be successful in a post academic world.
Samuel Ross	Esquimalt High School alumnus	I graduated from Esquimalt high school in 2017 and to this day I am incredibly grateful for the support and guidance provided through the Career Centre. The CCC offers invaluable advice, resources and opportunities that many students would not otherwise have knowledge of or be able to access. Personally, the CCC not only taught me useful skills for interviews, resume and cover letter writing, but also opened the door to my first job by organizing an interview at a local business. I firmly believe that many other students have deeply benefited from the Career Centre, gaining incredible work experience and learning practical skills that will serve them well after graduation.

Lisa McPhail

From: Isabel Yu [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2022 5:35 PM
To: Community Engagement; Trustees
Subject: SD61 Career Coordinator--Possible Budget Cut

Categories: Green category

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Hello,

Good afternoon.

I thought it important to send this email to you before you make the decision to cut 7 career coordinator positions from our local high schools.

My name is Isabel Yu and I am from Pacific Design Academy, one of the career colleges in Victoria. From my experience, most students we come into contact with from local high schools don't have a career plan. Even if they know they want to attend a career college after high school, they have no idea which program is suitable for them. The career coordinators are the bridges that help students better understand their career, program, and career college options. They show students possibilities and help them to make crucial decisions about their futures.

It would be so sad for the schools to lose these positions. Many students, especially those from less privileged backgrounds, will not have access to professional consultants to help them with their future plan. As teenager's mum, I know how important this position is. Without interventions from knowledgeable school staff, students are more likely to improvise solutions by themselves rather than going to their parents.

I understand that it is hard decision, but please do consider the students' real needs.

Thanks

Isabel Yu
School Manager
[REDACTED]



Lisa McPhail

From: Emily McInnis [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 13, 2022 2:33 PM
To: Victoria Hanley; Community Engagement
Subject: Proposed budget cuts

Categories: Green category

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

hello,

I am writing to express my concern about potential budget cuts to both the school music programs and counselling/support programs this coming year. I can hardly believe these items are even on the table. The amount of literature available supporting both music and mental health support in schools is vast. So vast I can't believe SD61 would even consider these as dispensable.

I believe music in schools is an important aspect of a well rounded education. It is certainly an issue of access for all students. It is imperative that school work to provide all students with a rich learning experience, regardless of socioeconomic status. Many students and their families cannot afford or find time for these activities in their own time. Additionally, many student look forward to music lessons and find it's their only reprieve from the intensity of classroom learning. Allowing children to engage musically at school unlocks their creative mind and can calm an anxious soul.

Additionally I firmly believe mental health supports in school should be INCREASED if anything. In the last two years alone students have lived through a pandemic, watch parts of their province be ravaged by natural forces and flooding, and are watching war unfold in Europe. This on top of the major physical and emotional changes that come with teenage/preteen years. To suggest counselling services and mental health support in schools are dispensable is deplorable.

I urge you to find alternative. For me, these cuts should be out of the question.

Thank you for your time,
Emily McInnis

Lisa McPhail

From: Tanya Binette [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 12, 2022 3:22 PM
To: Community Engagement; Ryan Painter; Nicole Duncan; Tom Ferris; Angie Hentze; Elaine Leonard; Jordan Watters; Ann Whiteaker; Rob Paynter
Subject: Please support music programs in SD61
Categories: Green category

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to express my support for continuation of band and strings programs in SD61. I understand that the Board is once again contemplating cuts to bands and string programs in Victoria area schools. As a parent of two school age kids both attending school in SD61 I have seen and continue to see the enormous value that these programs have. I don't understand the argument of eliminating these programs to somehow make education more equitable, I think that absolutely the opposite is true: if you support eliminating these programs, you support the inequity so prevalent in the Greater Victoria area already obvious between private school versus public school education. While a small percentage of parents can afford to send their kids to private music lessons, most cannot. Thus the band and strings program provide an invaluable and equitable learning opportunity for a wide group of children.

Learning music is important in its own right and also has measurable and documented benefits for other learning and mental health. Learning to read music is equivalent to learning a new language. The band and strings programs are incredibly popular with very wide participation in many schools. Not only do kids get a real sense of pride from mastering new skills, music is a great way for kids to learn about teamwork, especially for those kids who don't have aptitude or interest in team sports.

Thank you for considering my opinion and I hope to hear of continued support of music education in our schools.

Sincerely,
Tanya Binette

Lisa McPhail

From: Jenny Rosenthal [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 12, 2022 8:18 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Music Education

Categories: Green category

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Hello,

I am a parent of children in SD61, and I also attended school as a student myself in this area. Music is and has always been an important part of the learning of students in this district, and I ask you to continue the funding for a robust music education now and for the future. Our children benefit incalculably from it, and our children are our future leaders. Please show how you make their best your top priority by continuing to support music education across SD61.

Thank you,
J Rosenthal

Lisa McPhail

From: Lisa Mann [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 11, 2022 1:23 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Proposed budget cuts

Categories: Green category

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my deep concern and overall astonishment at the proposed cuts to counselling, music and daytime custodial services in the upcoming budget. If the mental and physical well-being of our children are being prioritized - during a pandemic and in our collective recovery from it - these must remain in place. Custodians ensure a safe, clean learning space for our kids and teachers, full stop. Without this essential service teaching and admin staff will be distracted from their primary roles to provide or compensate for it, with all members of the school community suffering. Music programming (middle band/strings) offers a pro-active mental health support as a positive outlet and balance for students' emotions - coincidentally, this is Music Therapy Awareness month in Canada. The science behind the benefits of musical education/engagement is well-established and profoundly important. Counselling similarly provides pro-active and reactive therapeutic supports for students per their varied needs and situations - many of which have been compounded during this pandemic. There are no 'substitutes' for these services and supports. They are critical to the educational ecosystem that we entrust our children to every day we send them to school.

In consideration of the concerns stated (briefly) above, I respectfully refer you to SD61's mission statement and vision:
<https://www.sd61.bc.ca/our-district/about-us/mission-statement/>

Does a world-class education not include daytime custodial staff? Does nurturing the learning and well-being of our kids not include access to direct, responsive mental health support like counselling, and pro-active, inclusive programming like middle band/strings? If we cut those services we are pushing potential mental health issues downstream. Consistent, inclusive supports are essential to the health of our kids and the well-being of our communities within and beyond the walls of our schools.

Respectfully,
Lisa Mann

Lisa McPhail

From: Stephanie Dawson [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 11, 2022 12:36 PM
To: Community Engagement
Cc: Trustees
Subject: Career Coordinator responsibilities-Mt Doug
Attachments: The Mount Doug CAREER CENTER COORDINATOR responsibilities.docx
Categories: Green category

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

As one of the Career Coordinators at last night's meeting, thank you for your presence at the round table discussions on the budget. I met and conversed with many of you. I appreciate that my voice was heard.

I've attached my responsibilities at Mt Douglas Secondary. I will continue to advocate for our jobs as this will have a great impact on the students we serve.

Thanks for your time.

Stephanie

Stephanie Dawson, MA (she/her)

Career Coordinator, Mount Douglas Secondary
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
[REDACTED]



www.sd61.bc.ca |



@sd61schools



CAREER CENTER COORDINATOR

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

STUDENT SUPPORTS

What's the Goal: Make meaningful connections with students with the hope of discovering their gifts and abilities as well as developing essential life skills.

- Job Opportunities/Search
- Volunteer Finder
- Resume /Cover Letters for students who took CLE on line
- Post-Secondary Application assistance and STS support
- Interview Prep and Coaching
- Timetable Help
- Career Counseling advice on Course Selection
- One on one mental health support
- Attending Career springboards, CUE events, P.A.R.T.Y. program at VGH with students
- Supervision in the Career Centre
- Post-Secondary research for all Grades
- Assisting students with district career applications: UVic ustart, South Island Partnership Dual Credit Courses/Programs, Graphic Design, Aviation, T.A.S.K., T.A.L.E

CLE/CLC Support

- Schedule Guest Speakers (10-12/semester)
- Coordinate P.A.R.T.Y. program with V.I.H.A. (bus transportation, payments)
- Speak to classes about upcoming/ongoing opportunities
- Support the Grad Gallery
- Answer CLC assignment questions

Counsellor Support

- Counsellors send students for academic counselling, post secondary research, and problems with transcripts and application errors

COMMUNICATION

What's the Goal: Providing Students/Parents/Staff/Community with relevant and meaningful information in a clear, simple and informative manner.

- Bi monthly parent newsletter
- Organize, display, update – bulletin boards, posters,
- Connect with teachers (scholarship, math, science, CLE, trades, inclusive ed) about targeted opportunities for their students
- Daily Announcements

- Daily TV Monitor
- Career Center Website—design and content
- Classroom visits to CLE to promote Career initiatives
- One on one parent meetings
- Hosting and creating presentations: Volunteering for International students, Ustart Info meeting, and Aviation
- Cohosting evening sessions with parents/students with UVic: “How to Succeed and Thrive in First-Year University,” “Self Reporting 101” and “Making the Transition to Post-Secondary”
- Updated all Career course selection slides for the Mt. Doug website
- Attendance at all Career Centre Coordinator monthly meeting with Career teachers and Careers District VP. Updates to Career Teachers
- Attendance at all UVic, U of T, UBC, McGill and Camosun counsellor conferences/meetings sessions: taking notes and giving them to Career teachers and counsellors
- Booking the Career Centre for all teachers/admin
- Answer enquiries from Mt Doug info email

District/Partnership Courses & Programs

What’s the Goal: Seek out Students with the help of Staff and the District to promote opportunities that would compliment a student’s personal/career interests.

Student Registration Process:

1. Post Recruitment & Pre-Program: walk students (and families) through the paperwork process (several meetings), liaise with Lindsay Johnson & Camosun/UVic, work with counselors on student timetable, arrange work experience, student follow-ups re: Student Transcript Services & Education Planner, assist with interview preparation & preparations around expectations for program.
2. During Program: check-ins, communication, and trouble-shooting with student, family, and post-secondary
3. Post-Program: liaise with Lindsay Johnson & SIS Operator regarding transcript updates

- Springboards
- Dual Credit One-Offs (Camosun)
- uStart
- AutoTech
- TASK
- Aviation
- TEAC 105
- TALE
- Graphic Design
- Seed the City
- Firefighting Camp

EVENTS

What's the Goal: Organize and implement events with the goal of serving students post-secondary, personal & Career interests. To expose students to people and opportunities in the community and outside to help build Knowledge/Opportunities /Relationships

- Post-Secondary School information sessions during lunch and evening as co-facilitators
- Events (PSI & Job Fairs & Springboards)
- Canadian University Event (CUE)
- Co-ordinated Mock Interviews with 120 students and 24 businesses from the community two times a year
- Bringing in Career experiences: Camosun Food Truck, The Camosun Pipes Trailer
- Co-hosting SD61 Career Fair
- Recruiting and coordinating lunch speakers: UVic, Camosun, Indigenous Education Fair, University of Calgary, University of Alberta, Western University, Simon Fraser, McGill, Gustavson School of Business, UBC, High Tech U, Dalhousie, Volunteer Victoria, Latitude Global volunteering
- Assisting with photography for the Grad Gallery (CLC)
- Organized the The Empress Career Fair
- Co-facilitated Dream It Be It Conference: Designed to give girls the tools they need to achieve their education and career goals

MOVING GOALS OF SD61'S STRATEGIC PLAN FORWARDS

What's the Goal: To help students to find their personal version of success, and to support learners' mental well-being through the accessible, flexible, meaningful, engaging, and individualized services.

- GOAL 1: Create an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support and improve all learners' personal and academic success.
 - Collaboration with Inclusive Education teams to create personalized program for students with disabilities and diverse needs.
 - Connect students with inclusive work experience and volunteer opportunities in community
 - Connect students with post-secondary employment training programs such as Pathways for Life
- GOAL 2: Create a culturally responsive learning environment that will support Indigenous learners' personal and academic success.
 - Collaboration with Indigenous Education teams to create personalized programming for Indigenous students.

- GOAL 3: Create an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support all learners' physical and mental well-being.
 - Collaboration with Counseling and Administration teams to create personalized programming for students with anxiety in order to provide them the tools, strategies, and community connections for their confidence to grow.

Misc. Duties

- Display Boards/Office Organization
- Liaise with teachers to set up the physical space for PE curriculum (Sex Education, Mental Health Sessions) and for Peer Tutoring, Math Challenges. Setting up tech and troubleshooting tech problems.
- Transportation arrangements for out of school events
- Secure leadership student helpers
- Scheduling all speakers for CLE classes
- Attending Graduations and handing out awards
- Filing applications. Updating applications quarterly
- Attendance at Career Centre Coordinators monthly meetings

Lisa McPhail

From: Zoë Dawson [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 11, 2022 12:10 PM
To: Trustees; Community Engagement
Subject: Letter in support of Career Coordinator Position remaining at SD61
Attachments: Letter to School Board Regarding Cutting Career Coordinator Position in SD61.pdf

Categories: Green category

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Hello,

Please find attached my letter of support for the position of Career Coordinator to remain within SD61.

Thank you for reading this.

All the best,

Zoe

My name is Zoë, and I am a former student that went to school within School District 61 since Grade 4. In Grade 12 I was a straight-A student with the expectation that I would go to university right after I graduated, but even with good grades, I was lost when it came to applying for universities and scholarships, creating resumes and cover letters, navigating university websites, and preparing for my transition from high school to university.

I spent hours each week in the career center at my school, asking questions regarding all of my concerns, and I was lucky enough to have someone designated in that position to help me with this transition that was causing me severe anxiety. I managed to learn how to navigate all of the obstacles that scared me and I was ecstatic when I received my acceptance letter from the university I wanted so desperately to study at. My application would not have been anywhere near as good if I did not have the support I did from the career coordinator at my school.

The choice of the school board to cut the position of career coordinator across the district illustrates a general lack of investment in the school district's students, and in return, a lack of investment in this society's future. Applying to universities and getting information about possible volunteer and job opportunities was hard enough for those of us who have graduated some years ago, but with the current state of the world, I know many students and postgraduates are feeling lost and overwhelmed with these kinds of decisions and tasks they are now at risk of facing completely alone.

Having a designated job position is what allows the career coordinators to focus solely on the transitory needs of the students they support every day. Students deserve to have someone in this position that can guarantee to give them their full attention regarding matters of the student's future and the cutting of these positions demonstrates that the school board does not value students enough to provide them with this personalized resource.

Cutting the career coordinator position is not only a disservice to all of the current and future students of SD61, but also a dishonour to those who have worked so hard to support these students and help them find a place in this society. I truly hope the school district changes their mind regarding this plan of action and rethinks how their choices are going to cause negative long-lasting impacts on people at various levels within Greater Victoria. Thank you for listening.

Kindly,

Zoë

Lisa McPhail

From: community@sd61.bc.ca
Sent: Friday, March 11, 2022 11:55 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: New submission from Online Contact Form

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: Green category

Full Name

Elisabeth Jadzia Thust

Email Address

[REDACTED]

Feedback Comments

Dear school district,
I am an international student from [REDACTED]. I heard from a lot of people that the school district wants to cut off the position of Mr. Buckingham. Mr. Buckingham was by our side since day one and I could have not wished for a better person to introduce me to the school and the new environment. Still he is the person I would go here first when I have a problem, because I know he will take care of my problem immediately. He is the only person who really takes care of the international students in my school and it would not work for us without him.
In the name of many international students: Please don't cut off his position. We need him.

Elisabeth Thust

Lisa McPhail

From: Julie Bernhardt [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 11, 2022 10:11 AM
To: Community Engagement
Cc: Victoria Hanley
Subject: Proposed Music Cuts

Categories: Green category

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to ask that you reconsider cutting the Middle School Band program.

I have two boys involved in the music program, one who is in [REDACTED] school right now, in Grade [REDACTED], and the other who is now at [REDACTED] School (Grade [REDACTED]) but who greatly benefited from the middle school music program in Grades 6-8, and I can say unequivocally that music was the highlight of his middle school years. Especially with the pandemic, when there was so little to look forward to and participate in, my boys were always happy to have a band day, or get a new song, or start marching band. Without any of that, there would have had very little to look forward to each week.

Looking outside the pandemic, the middle school years are the most important age to involve and encourage extracurricular activities in youth. This is the age they tend to want to drop out of programs, to hang out with friends, or just play video games. Having a strong band program makes playing an instrument "the norm", and friends are more likely to join together. They will be more likely to do Band in high school if they have already been exposed to it, encouraging a lifelong love of music.

I'm sure you already know the connection between learning an instrument and improved academics, but I can't emphasize it enough. I also wonder what would replace this program in the timetable. Right now, the students who aren't in band have a free work period so they won't have homework, instead of learning something new. Sometimes they just play on the Chrome books, and it seems like an enormous waste of time. There would have to be something worthwhile filling in that gap.

I also can't emphasize enough how amazing our band teachers are at [REDACTED]. They are/were both of my sons' favourite teachers, and their enthusiasm and encouragement of our students light up the school.

Please reconsider your decision. Don't punish our students, especially after this difficult year they have been through. Let's not take away what makes school fun.

Sincerely,
Julie Bernhardt
[REDACTED] School Parent

Lisa McPhail

From: Kim Morris
Sent: Friday, March 11, 2022 8:17 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: FW: Budget cuts - message from concerned parents

Categories: Green category

Kim Morris
Secretary-Treasurer/CFO
School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)
556 Boleskine Road
Victoria BC V8Z 1E8
Phone: 250-475-4108
Cell: [REDACTED]
www.sd61.bc.ca
Email: kmorris@sd61.bc.ca
Twitter: @KimKMorris

From: Ryan Painter
Sent: Friday, March 11, 2022 7:55 AM
To: Laurel Jorginson [REDACTED]; Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: Re: Budget cuts - message from concerned parents

Good morning Laurel,

Confirming that Trustees have received your email, with thanks for providing your input.

Sincerely,

Ryan Painter (he/him)
Board Chair
Greater Victoria Board of Education
Sent via cell

From: Laurel Jorginson [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 10, 2022, 6:36 p.m.
To: Trustees
Subject: Fwd: Budget cuts - message from concerned parents

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Good evening,

Thank you for advising that I accidentally forwarded the automated email reply. Below is a copy of the communication I sent to the SD communications group as well as am providing to the trustees. Forgive me, I don't quite know the details of the organizational structure so sending along directly to trustees for consideration. If this isn't the place please disregard. I simply wanted to bring to light the concerns I have as a parent of children in SD61. This is not the time to be cutting daytime custodians. I understand covid is moving into an endemic phase; however, having custodial staff available to clean is imperative. We still have flus and other viruses.

Cuts to councillors during times when our children are suffering much more with mental health issues. It just isn't the time.

I understand there is a need to balance the budget but the costs of doing so will have a downstream long term impact.

With thanks
Laurel

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Laurel Jorginson [REDACTED]
Date: March 10, 2022 at 4:42:15 PM PST
To: community@sd61.bc.ca
Subject: Budget cuts - message from concerned parents

I am writing to express my deep concern and overall astonishment at the proposed cuts to counselling, music and daytime custodial services in the upcoming budget. If the mental and physical well-being of our children are being prioritized - during a pandemic and in our collective recovery from it - these must remain in place. Custodians ensure a safe, clean learning space for our kids and teachers, full stop.

Without this essential service teaching and admin staff will be distracted from their primary roles to provide or compensate for it, with all members of the school community suffering. Music programming (middle band/strings) offers a pro-active mental health support as a positive outlet and balance for students' emotions - coincidentally, this is Music Therapy Awareness month in Canada. The science behind the benefits of musical education/engagement is well-established and profoundly important. Counselling similarly provides pro-active and reactive therapeutic supports for students per their varied needs and situations - many of which have been compounded during this pandemic. There are no 'substitutes' for these services and supports. They are critical to the educational ecosystem that we entrust our children to every day we send them to school.

In consideration of the concerns stated (briefly) above, I respectfully refer you to SD61's mission statement and vision: <https://www.sd61.bc.ca/our-district/about-us/mission-statement/>

Does a world-class education not include daytime custodial staff? Does nurturing the learning and well-being of our kids not include access to direct, responsive mental health support like counselling, and pro-active, inclusive programming like middle band/strings? If we cut those services we are pushing potential mental health issues downstream. Consistent, inclusive supports are essential to the health of our kids and the well-being of our communities within and beyond the walls of our schools.

Sent from my iPhone

Lisa McPhail

From: Vienna Kappell [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 10, 2022 10:43 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: sd61 proposed cuts

Categories: Green category

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

You are getting a second email from me now about the other things besides music being cut.

Reading recovery and Counselor positions. It is pretty terrible and disturbing to remove support that was put in place to help the most vulnerable students. My [REDACTED] year old [REDACTED] sees the counselor regularly.

Custodian positions. I have noticed the bathrooms at [REDACTED] never get cleaned thoroughly. I have noticed the same poop streaks on the walls and doors month after month after month after month. No joke. True story. I took pictures once and then didn't have the energy to do anything except report to the school principal, who didn't have the energy either to see that it was taken care of. I don't blame the custodian when he has such limited time to clean the whole school. He has to concentrate on covering the basics. I know kids who don't like the bathrooms and hold it in all day to avoid using them.

The schools are dirty and the buildings unfit. I have never seen a government building in such poor shape and repair as our schools. I don't think any other division of government would operate in such an environment.

How about the school Trustees just refuse to balance the budget and demand that the province fund the education system adequately? If you get fired, it's worth it. The public will support you for taking a stand.

Vienna Kappell

[REDACTED] parent

In addition to elementary and middle strings, band and choir, many other cuts are being considered including:

- Reading Recovery

- Counsellor positions

- Custodian positions

Lisa McPhail

From: Vienna Kappell [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 10, 2022 10:24 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: cuts to music in sd61 - 2nd round?

Categories: Green category

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Hello, please do not make any cuts to strings, band, or other music programs or other enrichment and learning support programs. I know you got the message loud and clear last year because the cuts were shelved. Now that the cuts are back on the table it seems like such an underhanded move. I think you are trying again because you think people won't get out there and protest as much this time. You got your feedback last year. People haven't changed their minds about any of it. People don't want these cuts. People are tired of fighting with the school district that isn't listening to our feedback. It's wrong!

Vienna Kappell

Lisa McPhail

From: Olivia Terrien Gillis [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 10, 2022 9:24 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Career Exploration Support

Categories: Green category

Hello,

I'm emailing regarding the cuts being made to the career exploration support staff. I am a grade [REDACTED] student at [REDACTED] School. The Career Exploration staff have been by my side all throughout high school, specially Allison Bott (Ms.Bott). Ms.Bott helped me with all of my university applications, and I can proudly say that she is the reason I got into the Nursing program at the University of Alberta. She's one of the best staff members at my school, she supports every student, and truly cares for her students lives and futures. She makes [REDACTED] better every single day and I say that without a single hesitation. Ms. Bott is one of the few staff members I feel comfortable being myself around, sharing my struggles and concerns with, and she is always the first person I tell personal good news to. She has made such a positive impact on mine, and many of [REDACTED] students.

Thank you,
Olivia Terrien Gillis

Lisa McPhail

From: Markus Kellerhals [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 10, 2022 6:47 PM
To: Community Engagement; Ryan Painter; Nicole Duncan; Tom Ferris; Angie Hentze; Elaine Leonard; Jordan Watters; Ann Whiteaker; Rob Paynter
Subject: keep supporting SD61 music programs
Categories: Green category

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Dear Trustees,

I am writing to express my support for continuation of band and strings programs in SD61. I understand that the Board is once again contemplating cuts to bands and string programs in Victoria area schools. As a parent of two school age kids both attending school in SD61 I see the huge value of these school programs. While a small percentage of parents can afford to send their kids to private music lessons, most cannot. Thus the band and strings program provide an invaluable learning opportunity for a wide group of children.

Learning music is important in its own right and also has measurable and documented benefits for other learning. The band and strings programs are incredibly popular with very wide participation in many schools. The kids get a real sense of pride from mastering new skills. In addition, it is a great way for kids to learn about being part of a team, especially for those kids who don't have aptitude or interest in team sports.

Thank you for consideration of my views,

Markus Kellerhals [REDACTED]

Lisa McPhail

From: Connor Turnbull [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 10, 2022 5:56 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Career Centres in SD61

Categories: Green category

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Dear: SD61 Community

I am a former student of Lambrick Park Secondary. I am writing in hope you will hear my case on why I think you shouldn't cut the career centers placed in the high schools throughout the district. During my last year of school I had absolutely no clue what I wanted to pursue career wise. I decided to take a year off of school and work a minimum wage retail job to start earning some sort of work experience and income. After about a year of working retail, I finally had enough and felt I wasn't progressing in life as much as I had hoped for. Not really knowing what options I had being a year out of high school and living through a pandemic I was able to contact the people working at the career center, who were extremely helpful and determined to give me all options on some sort of career path. They were able to connect me to the BC Regional Carpenters Union who got me working on site with a residential construction company pretty quickly after being in contact with the union. Now, 2 years later I am still working with the same company and have completed my first year of schooling through Camosun College's carpentry program and have the intention of completing the rest of my apprenticeship within the next few years. Ultimately, I have learned so much and gained so many new skills from this opportunity. I know many people who have benefited from the help of the kind, supportive and knowledgeable people who work at the career center. It would be a huge mistake to cut this support system for kids. Thank you for taking the time to read my letter.

Former SD61 student;
Connor

Lisa McPhail

From: Laurel Jorginson [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 10, 2022 4:42 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Budget cuts - message from concerned parents

Categories: Green category

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

I am writing to express my deep concern and overall astonishment at the proposed cuts to counselling, music and daytime custodial services in the upcoming budget. If the mental and physical well-being of our children are being prioritized - during a pandemic and in our collective recovery from it - these must remain in place. Custodians ensure a safe, clean learning space for our kids and teachers, full stop. Without this essential service teaching and admin staff will be distracted from their primary roles to provide or compensate for it, with all members of the school community suffering. Music programming (middle band/strings) offers a pro-active mental health support as a positive outlet and balance for students' emotions - coincidentally, this is Music Therapy Awareness month in Canada. The science behind the benefits of musical education/engagement is well-established and profoundly important. Counselling similarly provides pro-active and reactive therapeutic supports for students per their varied needs and situations - many of which have been compounded during this pandemic. There are no 'substitutes' for these services and supports. They are critical to the educational ecosystem that we entrust our children to every day we send them to school.

In consideration of the concerns stated (briefly) above, I respectfully refer you to SD61's mission statement and vision: <https://www.sd61.bc.ca/our-district/about-us/mission-statement/>

Does a world-class education not include daytime custodial staff? Does nurturing the learning and well-being of our kids not include access to direct, responsive mental health support like counselling, and pro-active, inclusive programming like middle band/strings? If we cut those services we are pushing potential mental health issues downstream.

Consistent, inclusive supports are essential to the health of our kids and the well-being of our communities within and beyond the walls of our schools.

Sent from my iPhone

Lisa McPhail

From: Syreeta Wootton [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 10, 2022 4:30 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Budget cuts proposed for SD61

Categories: Green category

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

I am writing to express my deep concern and overall astonishment at the proposed cuts to counselling, music and daytime custodial services in the upcoming budget. If the mental and physical well-being of our children are being prioritized - during a pandemic and in our collective recovery from it - these must remain in place. Custodians ensure a safe, clean learning space for our kids and teachers, full stop. Without this essential service teaching and admin staff will be distracted from their primary roles to provide or compensate for it, with all members of the school community suffering. Music programming (middle band/strings) offers a pro-active mental health support as a positive outlet and balance for students' emotions - coincidentally, this is Music Therapy Awareness month in Canada. The science behind the benefits of musical education/engagement is well-established and profoundly important. Counselling similarly provides pro-active and reactive therapeutic supports for students per their varied needs and situations - many of which have been compounded during this pandemic. There are no 'substitutes' for these services and supports. They are critical to the educational ecosystem that we entrust our children to every day we send them to school.

In consideration of the concerns stated (briefly) above, I respectfully refer you to SD61's mission statement and vision: <https://www.sd61.bc.ca/our-district/about-us/mission-statement/>

Does a world-class education not include daytime custodial staff? Does nurturing the learning and well-being of our kids not include access to direct, responsive mental health support like counselling, and pro-active, inclusive programming like middle band/strings? If we cut those services we are pushing potential mental health issues downstream.

Consistent, inclusive supports are essential to the health of our kids and the well-being of our communities within and beyond the walls of our schools.

Syreeta Elise Wootton
[REDACTED]

Lisa McPhail

From: Maggie Black [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 10, 2022 11:29 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: In regards to proposed budget cuts

Categories: Green category

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Hello,

My daughter attends [REDACTED] Schools and my son will start Kindergarten there in the fall. I am emailing you to voice my concerns in regards to the proposed budget cuts outlined in

While we were prepping Hot Lunch yesterday, I watched the custodian sanitize the drinking fountain outside the gym and and mopping the hallway. I was immensely grateful.
I am deeply concerned that any further cuts to CUPE 382 will have an immediate effect on the health and safety of our school community and our children.
I implore you to reconsider cutting daytime custodians.

Respectfully,

Martina Black

Lisa McPhail

From: Maddison Logue [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 10, 2022 8:35 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Save School Counselling

Categories: Green category

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

I'm writing to advocate for the kids of SD61. Now, more than ever, kids need relatable and accessible support for mental health. I don't need to type a compelling essay on why adolescents need this critical support. If you cut funding to counselling, you are massively failing these kids and further solidifying the idea that productivity in schools is more important than your overall well-being. This is black and white. Kids need counselling, and teachers carry enough burden without having to additionally counsel their students once counselling becomes unavailable. Shame for this even being proposed as a budget cut. The Kids deserve to have their mental and overall well-being valued. They deserve better.

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Thursday, March 10, 2022 7:36 AM
To: Lisa McPhail
Subject: FW: Proposed Funding Cuts to Counseling

Categories: Web

Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250.475.4117
Cell: [REDACTED]
www.sd61.bc.ca | @sd61schools

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.

-----Original Message-----

From: Terri Healy [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 4:15 PM
To: Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: Proposed Funding Cuts to Counseling

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Good Afternoon,

I hear that SD 61 will be considering funding cuts to counseling for kids in this school district. I accept that funding is strained right now but this would be a grave mistake. Counseling resources are already inadequate. My [REDACTED] was referring to counseling services and while we were grateful for the counselor it was once every 2 weeks as the school counselor was rotating between 3 schools. My [REDACTED] suggested private counseling which we did but at \$165/hr this is out of reach for many families.

Our kids mental health is paramount. Not all kids have access to these much needed services outside of schools.

Thank you,

Terri Healy

Sent from my iPhone

Lisa McPhail

From: no-reply@sd61.bc.ca
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 7:59 PM
To: Trustees
Subject: New submission from Contact The Board

Categories: Web

Full Name

Brian Tucker

Email Address

[REDACTED]

Feedback Comments

I am a parent of a student in an SD61 school. I've heard there are proposed cuts to mental health support in schools, including to the number of counsellors working in the schools. I am appalled and horrified by this notion. Considering we are in the midst of a mental health epidemic in which literally every youth I know is struggling, this seems like a huge mistake.

I look forward to hearing back from you with an explanation as to how you plan on increasing the mental health resources in our schools.

Sincerely,
Brian Tucker

Lisa McPhail

From: no-reply@sd61.bc.ca
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 3:16 PM
To: Trustees
Subject: New submission from Contact The Board

Categories: Web

Full Name

Pierre Iachetti

Email Address

[REDACTED]

Feedback Comments

Hello,
I am contacting you to strongly voice my opposition to SD 61 cutting school counselling. My daughter who is now 21, needed school counselling from grades 6-12 and it was a huge support. My 15 year old son is still in the SD. Now more than ever our kids need access to school counselling.
Do not cut funding for school counselling - you should be increasing it.

Lisa McPhail

From: Winona Waldron <president@gvta.net>
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 8:17 PM
To: Kim Morris
Cc: Deb Whitten; Executive Committee; Trustees; Sarah Bourdon
Subject: Teacher Counsellors
Attachments: 2022-03-09 counsellor cuts.pdf

Categories: Web

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Dear Ms. Morris,
Please see the attached letter.
Winona Waldron

President

Greater Victoria Teachers' Association

#5-515 Dupplin Rd, Victoria, BC V8Z 1C2

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

www.gvta.net

<https://twitter.com/gvta>

<https://www.facebook.com/victoriateachers>



Greater Victoria Teachers' Association

#5-515 Dupplin Road Victoria BC V8Z 1C2
t. 250.595.0181 f. 250.595.0189 info@gvta.net gvta.net

March 9, 2022

Kim Morris
Secretary Treasurer
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
556 Boleskine Road
Victoria BC V8Z 1E8

Dear Ms. Morris

RE: Proposed Cuts to Teacher Counsellors

On Friday, March 4th, the Greater Victoria School District announced proposed budget changes for the next school year (2022-2023). Currently, the GVSD has a \$7.239 million deficit, and the school board must make difficult decisions about how to save money and reduce the deficit.

Three of the proposed savings relate to teacher counsellors. The most significant of which would reduce counsellors to the minimum set by the Collective Agreement, a district ratio of one to every 693 students. This consideration would eliminate 8.0 FTE of counsellors for an estimated savings of \$924,480.

The proposed change would:

- reduce the number of full-time counsellors in SD61 at a time when it is already difficult to recruit and retain qualified counsellors;
- reduce the accessibility of qualified mental healthcare for children in what is arguable one of the most significant mental health crises of our lives;
- shift the responsibility for child mental health crises (imminent suicide, self-harm) to other untrained school staff (educational assistants, other teachers, administrators); and
- create further inequality by imposing the greatest negative impact on children and families who cannot access mental healthcare (due to finances, lack of transportation, social injustice, etc.).

In 2017, the Board voted to increase counselling FTE so that there was a minimum of 0.5 FTE at every school. The district saw then the value in supporting student mental health, increasing the presence of counsellors in the school, and increasing the ratio of counsellors to students above the minimum negotiated in the Collective Agreement. The result of this change was an increase in all the services counsellors provide, increased accessibility to qualified mental healthcare for children, and greater support for all school staff.

The proposed savings would reverse the previous increase and have a significant impact on the children, families, and school communities of Greater Victoria at a time when we know the pandemic has exacerbated all the issues that led to this increase in 2017.

In order to understand the gravity of the proposed budget changes, it is important to understand what a counsellor is, what services they provide, and how their unique role fits within the school community.

A counsellor is both a teacher and a mental healthcare professional with a **master's level education and supervised practice.**

The requirements to become a BC Certified Teacher include completing a Bachelor of Education degree, which takes four to five years. This program also **includes a “teaching practicum,” which involves student-teaching** experience under the supervision of a mentor teacher.

A master's degree in counselling takes an additional two to four years. This program includes education in a wide range of specialized subjects relevant to mental health. These include, but are not limited to, abnormal psychology (the study of mental illness), addictions, counselling and psychotherapy theory and practice, ethics and legal standards, trauma theory and intervention, and risk **assessment of suicide and violence. This program also includes a “clinical practicum,” which involves counselling experience under the supervision of a** qualified mental health professional. Some programs also include writing a research-based thesis.

As members of the BC School Counsellors' Association, counsellors also abide by a code of ethics and standards of professional practice.

School counsellors have a unique role and scope of practice in schools. Since they are both teachers and mental health professionals, they weave between many complex situations in the school. On a given day, a counsellor may teach classes, counsel students, collaborate with educational assistants and teachers, write referrals for families, and act as **an advocate for students' needs.**

Counsellors provide educational services to students in the school, including lessons in mental health literacy, mental health promotion, and social and emotional learning. In recent years, the Ministry of Education has emphasized mental health promotion in schools and the BC Curriculum has put an increasing focus on social and emotional learning.

Counsellors also provide educational services to adults in the school community. They can teach school staff about topics such as trauma-informed practice, which aligns with the Provincial Government's BC Mental Health in Schools Strategy. They can also lead workshops for families on topics such as anxiety or grief and loss.

As a mental health professional, counsellors deliver mental health services in the school, including:

- individual and group counselling;
- risk assessment for self-harm and suicide;
- case detection and early intervention with children showing signs of mental illness;
- collaboration with school staff to support student mental health;
- collaboration with services outside school (Child & Youth Mental Health);
- connecting families to services for housing and food security;
- crisis intervention (death of a student or school staff, suicides, traumatic incidents, violent incidents);
- referring children and families to mental health services which fit their needs.

Every child who goes to school can access a counsellor, regardless of their background. School counsellors are highly accessible even to families without means of transportation or for those who cannot afford the steep price of private mental healthcare, since the services of a school counsellor are free. Although other free mental healthcare services do exist, not all children qualify for those services, and even for those who do qualify, the waitlists are long. School counsellors are the most accessible and equitable mental health service for children.

Research evidence shows that lower student to counsellor ratios support academic performance, attendance, and graduation rates, while also reducing disciplinary violations. Research also shows that lower ratios have an even greater impact in high-poverty areas and that students benefit most when counsellors are able to dedicate more of their time to providing counselling services. For these reasons, the American School Counsellor Association recommends a ratio of 250:1.

Although negotiating the ratios in the Collective Agreement rests with the provincial parties, the District can decide to continue to staff above them. Should the proposed reductions be made, student to counsellor ratios would increase, thereby reducing access to the counsellor for the students.

Reduced access matters now more than ever — roughly three quarters of children with a mental illness do not receive treatment, largely due to lack of access. In the last two years, we have all endured the stress and collective trauma of the COVID-19 pandemic. Canadians of all ages have experienced significant impacts to their mental health, while access to mental healthcare has not kept up with increasing need.

Before the pandemic had even begun research with students in the BC School System showed they were experiencing concerning levels of anxiety and depression, post-traumatic stress, self-harm, and suicidal ideation.

Research conducted in BC during the pandemic shows that two-thirds of children ages 6-17 are struggling with their mental health. The Mental Health Commission of Canada has also published statistics showing that people under the age of 18 all across Canada are experiencing increased anxiety, depression, and serious contemplation of suicide compared to the start of the pandemic. Moreover, many children have lost a caregiver in the last two years as a result of the pandemic, which can have serious impacts on mental health.

We are in the middle of a mental health crisis. Right now, our children need care and support more than ever, and access to mental healthcare is scarce. The students in the Greater Victoria School District need more access to mental healthcare, not less. Now is not the time to reduce access to school counselling. Access to a qualified mental healthcare professional inside every school is the **simplest way to meet our children's mental health needs. It is** their right and our duty as educators.

It is the responsibility of all school staff to work together to protect the wellbeing of our students, and to help them learn and grow. Teacher counsellors are an essential part of our One Learning Community, who balance both teaching and mental health services. The services that counsellors provide are essential to the mental health and wellbeing of students, families, school staff, and communities. These "savings" will reduce their ability to provide these services and cost us much for more than dollars.

Please protect our children's mental health by removing the 8 FTE worth of counselling positions from the list of possible savings.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Winona Waldron

President
Greater Victoria Teachers' Association

cc: Deb Whitten, GVSD
GVSD Board
GVTA Executive Committee
Sarah Bourdon, Counsellor LSA

Lisa McPhail

From: Mindy Myttenar [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 4:16 PM
To: Ryan Painter; Nicole Duncan; Tom Ferris; Angie Hentze; Elaine Leonard; Jordan Watters; Ann Whiteaker; Deb Whitten
Cc: GVTA President; educ.minister@gov.bc.ca; Lisa McPhail; andreach@uvic.ca
Subject: Proposed Budget Cuts to Counselling Time
Attachments: Regarding cuts to Counselling Time.pdf

Categories: Web

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Dear School Board Trustees,
Please find the attached letter, sent on behalf of members of the teaching staff at Lake Hill School. Thank you for your consideration of our comments.
Sincerely,
Mindy Myttenar

March 8, 2022

Dear Greater Victoria School Trustees,

We write to you as members of the teaching staff of Lake Hill Elementary School. Lake Hill is one of the smaller schools in our district, and we currently have a counsellor assigned for our students at 0.5 FTE. We are deeply concerned about the proposed budget cuts to counselling time in the district.

In the classroom, with the pandemic, there has been a noticeable increase in mental health issues for our students, including prevalent examples where anxiety impacts a student's ability to learn, play, and feel safe. As an elementary school, we have the unique opportunity for early intervention and skill building to help students manage their stress and anxiety as they move up through the grades.

The *2021 Greater Victoria School District Enhancing Student Learning Framework* notes that one of the three district goals is "Creating an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support all learners' physical and mental well-being." The 2018 Adolescent Health Survey, referenced in the Framework document notes that in 2017, 31% of adolescent students had asked a school counsellor for help regarding physical or mental wellness, with 55% asking for help from a teacher and 23% asking other school staff. If roughly 1/3 of students in high schools are seeking help from a counsellor at school, does this not indicate a need for a strong foundation throughout the system (Page 13)?

This document also notes the need to "action engagement with families who do not have access to mental health supports (Page 15)." In our city, for children and families to access supports from Child and Youth Mental Health, there is often a waitlist exceeding six months. A private counsellor costs \$140.00-\$170.00, per hour, and often their availability is limited due to significant demand. Not only is this cost prohibitive for our most vulnerable families, but for many middle class families dealing with rising housing and food costs. Reducing the supports in our school system at this time is an upsetting prospect.

As teachers, we are witness to the positive and life altering impacts that a school counsellor can have on the lives of students and their families. By reducing counselling time, we are not reducing number of students who have mental health concerns or families who need help. This will result in a much higher percentage of time being spent on case management and paperwork, and less time working with vulnerable children. By limiting counselling time, the responsibility of addressing mental health concerns will shift to other school staff (teachers, EA's, supervisors, administrators), who for the most part do not have formal training in this area. This is a dangerous precedence, and does not reflect the needs of our community.

Respectfully,

M. Vinge
M. Mylton *L. Creighton* *A. Weber*
L. Cristofari *R. Walker* *Patricia*

CC: Deb Whitten, Interim Superintendent, SD61

CC: Winona Waldron, President, GVTA

CC: Honourable Jennifer Whiteside, Minister of Education

CC: Lisa McPhail, Communications and Community Engagement, SD61

CC: Andrea Chan, Lake Hill PAC President

Lisa McPhail

From: Web Editor [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 2:13 PM
To:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]; Trustees; Colin Roberts; Harold Caldwell; Kim Morris; Deb Whitten; Connor Mccoy; ron.sam@songheesnation.com; rob@esquimaltnation.ca; angelac@vcpc.ca; president@gvta.net; cupe947@telus.net; Jeanette Alexander; Chuck Morris; Mark Baggott; David

To: Emerson; Justin Taylor; Phillip Wade; Aaron Foster; Mark Peaty; Marni Vistisen-Harwood; Brian Olohan; Brian Leslie; Arch Fraser; Eric Fischer
Subject: Need for Daytime Custodians
Attachments: daytimecustodians.docx
Categories: Web

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CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Hello.

Please read the attached letter regarding the proposed cuts to daytime custodians.

Thank you;
Web Editor CUPE 382



Paul Knapik
President
CUPE 382
March 07, 2022

Re: Daytime Custodial Positions

We have been informed that the employer is considering removing daytime custodial positions and laying off some number of CUPE 382 employees. Over the last 25 years, CUPE 382 has seen more than its fair share of cuts. We were once 350 members strong, now we are down to roughly 240 members. I recall sitting in on budget talks and hearing trustees say “we have to cut furthest away from the classroom.” The proposed cuts to daytime custodians would be directly felt in the classroom.

Daytime custodians are essential to the Greater Victoria School District. They are critical to the maintenance, cleanliness, and safety of our facilities. Any cuts to CUPE 382 and daytime custodians would exacerbate current maintenance deficits in our aging buildings and reduce the safety and cleanliness of all buildings throughout the school district.

Cleaning duties

On top of their regular cleaning duties, daytime custodians also respond to emergent cleaning need. They are regularly called to clean up spills, replenish toiletries and soap dispensers, clean up after pizza days, and sweep the floors and wipe the tables down after lunch. Daytime custodians are also a key figure in green initiatives such as the Recycling Program. They empty the outside garbage bins several times a week. They also handle daily biohazards like, vomit, blood, feces and urine. We are worried that without daytime custodians, Principals would have to do this work, or worse, the work would not get done. I would not be proud to see vomit in a hallway, roped off with caution tape, waiting for the afternoon shift. The cleaning that daytime custodians do is paramount for keeping down the spread of Covid and other communicable diseases.

Safety duties

Daytime custodians are the school districts frontline defense for daily safety concerns. At 5 AM they arrive at the school and walk around the building looking for safety issues that may have occurred overnight. This could be needles, broken glass, feces, transient people camping in doorways. They also address any graffiti that was put on the building overnight. This graffiti is often violent or threatening, rude, or offensive. These concerns need to be resolved before students arrive.

Preventing slips, trips, and spills is crucial to the daytime custodian's workload. Slip and trip related injuries can have a tremendous impact on the school district community. During the rainy season, water is tracked into the building on peoples boots and clothing. When left unattended, the water becomes a slipping hazards. Daytime custodians are constantly cleaning up the water in the hallways. They are also integral to the emergency snow removal plan. During extreme weather events, the school district must keep the sidewalks snow and ice free. Daytime custodians are outside, shoveling snow and applying ice melt to the sidewalks and parking lots. Removing daytime custodians would make our grounds and buildings unsafe in poor weather.

They also play critical roles in safety and emergency response plans. Daytime custodians are members of all site-based health and safety committees. Their firsthand knowledge of the facility is indispensable for the success of these committees. Daytime custodians are also critical members of all fire drills, earthquake drills, and lockdown drills. They are one of a few people with keys to the emergency earthquake supplies. They monitor the halls and the grounds to identify people they do not recognize and ask, "hello can I help you?"

Maintenance duties

The school district has some of the oldest buildings in the province. Resolving maintenance concerns in a timely way is critical to preventing larger expenses down the road. Daytime custodians are the keystone of all maintenance work. They are often the first to identify a maintenance need. They are always looking for vandalism and safety issues. When they find a concern, they rope it off and call for an immediate response. They then make work orders and phone calls to the relevant departments. They often communicate with the technician to provide vital information about the job. When the technician arrives, they will consult with the custodian, to help find the specific work area. The custodian will follow up on jobs, to see what the status is on work that has not been done yet.

Covid duties

A science-based decision was made to increase the cleaning and disinfecting of public spaces to avoided COVID related hospitalizations and deaths. All schools in the province reinstated day time custodians. At that time, School District 61 was a leader. They have always had daytime custodians.

Tragically, the virus has killed millions of people worldwide. Since the beginning of the pandemic, daytime custodians have been the school districts first, front-line defense against COVID. They have worked as essential service workers, every day, to keep the schools safe. Unlike other essential service workers, they did not receive the bump in pay.

We are not through this pandemic yet. Vaccine uptake, especially among children, is not where experts would like it to be. Another variant could rise at any time. Even when we move to the endemic phase of this virus, we will still need daytime custodians to keep the community safe. We should be showing our thanks and appreciation to the daytime custodians, not talking about cutting their jobs. We believe it is disrespectful and reckless to consider this as a viable area to cut.

Conclusion

Over the years, there has been significant cuts to our workforce. Every cut has had real impacts on our ability to deliver on the goal of a safe and healthy school environment for students, staff, and visitors.

The worker ratio of 350 workers to 2 managers roughly 25 years ago has shifted to today's reality of 240 workers to 7 managers. That is just for our department. We do not know how many managers have been added to the district as a whole. The delivery of health and safety, and maintenance goals has not changed, only the ratio of workers able to address the problems has changed.

This additional management has put an undue administrative burden on our labour. Many of our workers feel frustrated by the layers of bureaucracy now involved in their work. The cost of these administrative demands is clearly proportional to our ability to deliver on our goals. Our workers take time away from their work to deal with the demands of the additional administration. These demands take workers away from their primary tasks. This cost is measurable.

It is apparent to our local, that without good faith consultation, the current management structure will result in the erosion of the work goal delivery that is in the best interests of all. We have aging infrastructure that other districts don't have. As a result, we have maintenance, safety and cleaning needs that other districts do not have.

Only workers can fix these problems. The best way to address the needs of the community is to keep our workforce strong. Any cuts to CUPE 382 will be directly felt in the classroom. Any cut to CUPE 382 will have an immediate effect on the health and safety of our communities.

We implore you to reconsider cutting daytime custodians.

With respect;
Paul Knapik
President CUPE 382

Lisa McPhail

From: community@sd61.bc.ca
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 2:25 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: New submission from Online Contact Form

Categories: Green category

Full Name

Andrew Godon

Email Address

[REDACTED]

Feedback Comments

I am greatly disturbed to read about the proposed budget cuts for schools. Schools are not a business. They are an investment. We have only to look to our neighbours to the south to see how underfunding education plays out. As funding is reduced, education suffers and anyone who can afford it sends their children to private schools thus further eroding the public system. I urge you to seek alternatives to the cuts that are proposed. Democracy depends on a healthy educational system.

From: The Zolbrods [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 1:06 PM
To: Community Engagement; Trustees
Subject: Proposal to eliminate Career Centre Coordinator positions
Attachments: SD61-Letter-Career-Center-Coordinator.pdf

Categories: Green category

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Dear Trustees,

RE: Career Center Coordinator Positions at SD61 High Schools

It has come to my attention that Greater Victoria School District No. 61 is considering the elimination of the Career Center Coordinator position across all SD61 high schools. I am strongly opposed to this proposal as this position is vital to providing critical support to high school students across all grades and maximizing their opportunities for diverse career and educational paths.

I currently have two students at [REDACTED]—one in grade [REDACTED] and one in grade [REDACTED]. Ms. Giesbrecht, who serves as the Career Center Coordinator at Oak Bay High, has provided critical information and support to my older child as he explores various post-secondary educational options. Specifically, Ms. Giesbrecht has provided essential support in the following areas:

- **Post-Secondary School Information:** Thanks to the insights that Ms. Giesbrecht has provided, my son became aware of a unique international post-secondary program that aligns perfectly with his interests and educational needs. He never would have found information about this opportunity if the Career Center Coordinator position did not exist. My son's awareness of this opportunity has motivated him to work even harder than before and has prompted him to start dreaming much bigger than he (or we!) could have ever imagined.
- **PSAT:** My son was previously unaware that he could take the PSAT in preparation for taking the SAT. The PSAT turned out to be an excellent way for him to become comfortable taking a standardized test. Again, it was Ms. Giesbrecht that made him aware of this opportunity.
- **SAT:** Ms. Giesbrecht shared valuable information about locally available SAT preparation courses. Such courses are a key part of a student's study plan, especially since the content of the SAT is skewed towards the American educational system.

Moving forward, my son plans to leverage Ms. Giesbrecht's assistance in the following areas:

- **Post-Secondary Applications:** The application process for my son's target universities is complex and involved. He plans to tap into Ms. Giesbrecht's in-depth knowledge in this area in an effort to maximize his chance for admission to his four target schools, including one that only accepts 45 students per year. Without Ms. Giesbrecht's support, the likelihood of admission for my son would drop dramatically as he would not have the guidance or expertise needed to find unique ways to differentiate himself from thousands of other applicants. The one-on-one support that Ms. Giesbrecht will provide will be essential to my son's success, as a 'one-size fits all' approach to applications is ineffective.

- **Mock interviews:** Part of the admissions process for my son’s target schools will involve interviews with the Admissions Committee. This high-pressure situation requires intensive preparation and training, both of which will be provided by Ms. Giesbrecht through her one-on-one support.

Looking ahead, my hope is that my daughter, now in grade nine, will be afforded the same opportunities as her brother when it comes to benefiting from the assistance of Oak Bay High’s Career Center Coordinator, Ms. Giesbrecht.

Although one could argue that school counselors might be able to disseminate high-level information about post-secondary options, they lack the critical in-depth knowledge as well as the time required for one-on-one advice. Moreover, school counselors time should be focused on the mental well-being of the students, especially as the students struggle to navigate not only the challenges of high school, but also the stress of COVID and global unrest.

One could also argue that this position is less important in schools where the percentage of students pursuing post-secondary education is low. However, I would counter that argument as it is quite possible that these are the students who need the support the most. These students are less likely to have people at home who have pursued post-secondary education. Moreover, these teens are the ones could benefit greatly from information about different educational options, as well as career options. By eliminating this position, the district is potentially limiting the opportunities that these students to explore, and this could have a lifelong impact on both their professional and personal growth.

From my perspective, the goal of educators is to prepare students for life after high school, and this life can take different forms for different people. By eliminating the Career Center Coordinator position, the District will be making a conscious decision to reduce students’ exposure to the opportunities that exist beyond the walls of their high school, home, and city. Leaving these students to their own devices—or to individuals who do not have the appropriate level of training and knowledge—is not only short-sighted, but also completely unacceptable.

I implore you, the Trustees, to make the right decision and maintain the Career Center Coordinator position across all SD61 high schools, so that students across the district can maximize their potential.

Regards,

Emma Zolbrod



March 9, 2022

Emma Zolbrod
[REDACTED]

Greater Victoria School District No. 61
556 Boleskine Rd
Victoria, BC V8Z 1E8

Dear Trustees,

RE: Career Center Coordinator Positions at SD61 High Schools

It has come to my attention that Greater Victoria School District No. 61 is considering the elimination of the Career Center Coordinator position across all SD61 high schools. I am strongly opposed to this proposal as this position is vital to providing critical support to high school students across all grades and maximizing their opportunities for diverse career and educational paths.

I currently have two students at [REDACTED]—one in grade [REDACTED] and one in grade [REDACTED] Ms. Giesbrecht, who serves as the Career Center Coordinator at Oak Bay High, has provided critical information and support to my older child as he explores various post-secondary educational options. Specifically, Ms. Giesbrecht has provided essential support in the following areas:

- **Post-Secondary School Information:** Thanks to the insights that Ms. Giesbrecht has provided, my son became aware of a unique international post-secondary program that aligns perfectly with his interests and educational needs. He never would have found information about this opportunity if the Career Center Coordinator position did not exist. My son's awareness of this opportunity has motivated him to work even harder than before and has prompted him to start dreaming much bigger than he (or we!) could have ever imagined.
- **PSAT:** My son was previously unaware that he could take the PSAT in preparation for taking the SAT. The PSAT turned out to be an excellent way for him to become comfortable taking a standardized test. Again, it was Ms. Giesbrecht that made him aware of this opportunity.
- **SAT:** Ms. Giesbrecht shared valuable information about locally available SAT preparation courses. Such courses are a key part of a student's study plan, especially since the content of the SAT is skewed towards the American educational system.

Moving forward, my son plans to leverage Ms. Giesbrecht's assistance in the following areas:

- **Post-Secondary Applications:** The application process for my son's target universities is complex and involved. He plans to tap into Ms. Giesbrecht's in-depth knowledge in this area in an effort to maximize his chance for admission to his four target schools, including one that only accepts 45 students per year. Without Ms. Giesbrecht's support, the likelihood of admission for my son would drop dramatically as he would not have the guidance or

expertise needed to find unique ways to differentiate himself from thousands of other applicants. The one-on-one support that Ms. Giesbrecht will provide will be essential to my son's success, as a 'one-size fits all' approach to applications is ineffective.

- **Mock interviews:** Part of the admissions process for my son's target schools will involve interviews with the Admissions Committee. This high-pressure situation requires intensive preparation and training, both of which will be provided by Ms. Giesbrecht through her one-on-one support.

Looking ahead, my hope is that my daughter, now in grade nine, will be afforded the same opportunities as her brother when it comes to benefiting from the assistance of Oak Bay High's Career Center Coordinator, Ms. Giesbrecht.

Although one could argue that school counselors might be able to disseminate high-level information about post-secondary options, they lack the critical in-depth knowledge as well as the time required for one-on-one advice. Moreover, school counselors time should be focused on the mental well-being of the students, especially as the students struggle to navigate not only the challenges of high school, but also the stress of COVID and global unrest.

One could also argue that this position is less important in schools where the percentage of students pursuing post-secondary education is low. However, I would counter that argument as it is quite possible that these are the students who need the support the most. These students are less likely to have people at home who have pursued post-secondary education. Moreover, these teens are the ones could benefit greatly from information about different educational options, as well as career options. By eliminating this position, the district is potentially limiting the opportunities that these students to explore, and this could have a lifelong impact on both their professional and personal growth.

From my perspective, the goal of educators is to prepare students for life after high school, and this life can take different forms for different people. By eliminating the Career Center Coordinator position, the District will be making a conscious decision to reduce students' exposure to the opportunities that exist beyond the walls of their high school, home, and city. Leaving these students to their own devices—or to individuals who do not have the appropriate level of training and knowledge—is not only short-sighted, but also completely unacceptable.

I implore you, the Trustees, to make the right decision and maintain the Career Center Coordinator position across all SD61 high schools, so that students across the district can maximize their potential.

Regards,

Emma Zolbrod

Lisa McPhail

From: Kristi Rielly
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 12:53 PM
To: Ann Whiteaker
Cc: Community Engagement; Victoria Hanley
Subject: Proposed budget

Categories: Green category

Dear Ann,

I am writing in response to the proposed school budget for the 2022/23 school year.

In particular, I am writing as a Youth and Family Counsellor, at the elementary level, to share my insider knowledge of the mental health needs within our district and the necessity for retaining the school counsellor and YFC FTEs currently in place.

As a school district, our teachers, EAs, administrators and counsellors are front-line supports for students and families at a time when accessing community mental health supports – from counselling to acute crisis needs – are increasingly limited and difficult. From the Representative for Children and Youth's 2020 report: A Way to Cope: Exploring non-suicidal self injury in BC youth (p. 28):

Experts described that currently clinicians are working in inflexible systems, overburdened by too many clients and too few personnel. As a result, they often respond to difficulties engaging clients by closing files, consequentially leaving vulnerable youth without support.

The proposed budget cuts for school counsellors and YFCs would result in less staff who are trained to support the very complex and diverse mental health concerns presenting in students, families and staff. These cuts would contribute to an ever-widening gap in our communities – between the need for mental health supports and the lack of available services. These gaps create an even bigger burden on teachers and administrators as they are then left to witness the mental health needs, have those needs spill into their classrooms, and have nowhere to turn for support, resulting in teacher burn-out and increasing mental health concerns in students and families, which may have been turned-around had proper supports been in place.

When we ask teachers and administrators, who are not specialists in mental health, to do the work of counsellors, we are not only asking too much of them, we are doing a disservice to the students and families and possibly increasing the risk if inadequate supports are given.


As a youth and family counsellor, the mental health needs at my school are greater than my .8 FTE hours have time for. I provide 1:1 counselling, group counselling, crisis support, facilitate two food programs and Christmas hampers, provide consultation time for teachers and administrators, provide families with referrals for (limited) community resources, provide parent coaching for children with anxiety and depression and grief and loss, parent separation, and food and housing insecurity. I bridge vulnerable students with middle school transitions and moves to and from our school. I do my best not to let students and families fall through the cracks, to meet the needs, refer out when possible, and counsel as many as I can.

Really, how much are we willing to ask teachers and students to bare without adequate support? In addition to the Education Assistant shortage that regularly leaves teachers and classrooms without the support needed for students with special needs, you want to reduce counsellor and YFC time as well? No thank you. That would only cause the cracks in this fragile system to start bursting. I strongly advise you to think again, to maintain, if not increase school counsellor and YFC FTEs.

Respectfully,

Kristi Rielly

Kristi Rielly
Youth and Family Counsellor (M-Th)
École Macaulay Elementary School



Lisa McPhail

From: Kristi Rielly
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 12:52 PM
To: Jordan Watters
Cc: Community Engagement; Victoria Hanley
Subject: Proposed Budget

Categories: Green category

Dear Jordan,

I am writing in response to the proposed school budget for the 2022/23 school year.

In particular, I am writing as a Youth and Family Counsellor, at the elementary level, to share my insider knowledge of the mental health needs within our district and the necessity for retaining the school counsellor and YFC FTEs currently in place.

As a school district, our teachers, EAs, administrators and counsellors are front-line supports for students and families at a time when accessing community mental health supports – from counselling to acute crisis needs – are increasingly limited and difficult. From the Representative for Children and Youth's 2020 report: A Way to Cope: Exploring non-suicidal self injury in BC youth (p. 28):

Experts described that currently clinicians are working in inflexible systems, overburdened by too many clients and too few personnel. As a result, they often respond to difficulties engaging clients by closing files, consequentially leaving vulnerable youth without support.

The proposed budget cuts for school counsellors and YFCs would result in less staff who are trained to support the very complex and diverse mental health concerns presenting in students, families and staff. These cuts would contribute to an ever-widening gap in our communities – between the need for mental health supports and the lack of available services. These gaps create an even bigger burden on teachers and administrators as they are then left to witness the mental health needs, have those needs spill into their classrooms, and have nowhere to turn for support, resulting in teacher burn-out and increasing mental health concerns in students and families, which may have been turned-around had proper supports been in place.

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Really, how much are we willing to ask teachers and students to bare without adequate support? In addition to the Education Assistant shortage that regularly leaves teachers and classrooms without the support needed for students with special needs, you want to reduce counsellor and YFC time as well? No thank you. That would only cause the cracks in this fragile system to start bursting. I strongly advise you to think again, to maintain, if not increase school counsellor and YFC FTEs.

Respectfully,

Kristi Rielly

Kristi Rielly
Youth and Family Counsellor (M-Th)
École Macaulay Elementary School



Lisa McPhail

From: Kristi Rielly
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 12:51 PM
To: Elaine Leonard
Cc: Community Engagement; Victoria Hanley
Subject: Re: proposed budget cuts

Categories: Green category

Dear Elaine,

I am writing in response to the proposed school budget for the 2022/23 school year.

In particular, I am writing as a Youth and Family Counsellor, at the elementary level, to share my insider knowledge of the mental health needs within our district and the necessity for retaining the school counsellor and YFC FTEs currently in place.

As a school district, our teachers, EAs, administrators and counsellors are front-line supports for students and families at a time when accessing community mental health supports – from counselling to acute crisis needs – are increasingly limited and difficult. From the Representative for Children and Youth's 2020 report: A Way to Cope: Exploring non-suicidal self injury in BC youth (p. 28):

Experts described that currently clinicians are working in inflexible systems, overburdened by too many clients and too few personnel. As a result, they often respond to difficulties engaging clients by closing files, consequentially leaving vulnerable youth without support.

The proposed budget cuts for school counsellors and YFCs would result in less staff who are trained to support the very complex and diverse mental health concerns presenting in students, families and staff. These cuts would contribute to an ever-widening gap in our communities – between the need for mental health supports and the lack of available services. These gaps create an even bigger burden on teachers and administrators as they are then left to witness the mental health needs, have those needs spill into their classrooms, and have nowhere to turn for support, resulting in teacher burn-out and increasing mental health concerns in students and families, which may have been turned-around had proper supports been in place.

When we ask teachers and administrators, who are not specialists in mental health, to do the work of counsellors, we are not only asking too much of them, we are doing a disservice to the students and families and possibly increasing the risk if inadequate supports are given.


As a youth and family counsellor, the mental health needs at my school are greater than my .8 FTE hours have time for. I provide 1:1 counselling, group counselling, crisis support, facilitate two food programs and Christmas hampers, provide consultation time for teachers and administrators, provide families with referrals for (limited) community resources, provide parent coaching for children with anxiety and depression and grief and loss, parent separation, and food and housing insecurity. I bridge vulnerable students with middle school transitions and moves to and from our school. I do my best not to let students and families fall through the cracks, to meet the needs, refer out when possible, and counsel as many as I can.

Really, how much are we willing to ask teachers and students to bare without adequate support? In addition to the Education Assistant shortage that regularly leaves teachers and classrooms without the support needed for students with special needs, you want to reduce counsellor and YFC time as well? No thank you. That would only cause the cracks in this fragile system to start bursting. I strongly advise you to think again, to maintain, if not increase school counsellor and YFC FTEs.

Respectfully,

Kristi Rielly

Kristi Rielly
Youth and Family Counsellor (M-Th)
École Macaulay Elementary School



Lisa McPhail

From: Kristi Rielly
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 12:48 PM
To: Nicole Duncan
Cc: Community Engagement; Victoria Hanley
Subject: Re: Proposed Budget

Categories: Green category

Dear Nicole,

I am writing in response to the proposed school budget for the 2022/23 school year.

In particular, I am writing as a Youth and Family Counsellor, at the elementary level, to share my insider knowledge of the mental health needs within our district and the necessity for retaining the school counsellor and YFC FTEs currently in place.

As a school district, our teachers, EAs, administrators and counsellors are front-line supports for students and families at a time when accessing community mental health supports – from counselling to acute crisis needs – are increasingly limited and difficult. From the Representative for Children and Youth's 2020 report: A Way to Cope: Exploring non-suicidal self injury in BC youth (p. 28):

Experts described that currently clinicians are working in inflexible systems, overburdened by too many clients and too few personnel. As a result, they often respond to difficulties engaging clients by closing files, consequentially leaving vulnerable youth without support.

The proposed budget cuts for school counsellors and YFCs would result in less staff who are trained to support the very complex and diverse mental health concerns presenting in students, families and staff. These cuts would contribute to an ever-widening gap in our communities – between the need for mental health supports and the lack of available services. These gaps create an even bigger burden on teachers and administrators as they are then left to witness the mental health needs, have those needs spill into their classrooms, and have nowhere to turn for support, resulting in teacher burn-out and increasing mental health concerns in students and families, which may have been turned-around had proper supports been in place.

When we ask teachers and administrators, who are not specialists in mental health, to do the work of counsellors, we are not only asking too much of them, we are doing a disservice to the students and families and possibly increasing the risk if inadequate supports are given.


As a youth and family counsellor, the mental health needs at my school are greater than my .8 FTE hours have time for. I provide 1:1 counselling, group counselling, crisis support, facilitate two food programs and Christmas hampers, provide consultation time for teachers and administrators, provide families with referrals for (limited) community resources, provide parent coaching for children with anxiety and depression and grief and loss, parent separation, and food and housing insecurity. I bridge vulnerable students with middle school transitions and moves to and from our school. I do my best not to let students and families fall through the cracks, to meet the needs, refer out when possible, and counsel as many as I can.

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Respectfully,

Kristi Rielly

Kristi Rielly
Youth and Family Counsellor (M-Th)
École Macaulay Elementary School



Lisa McPhail

From: Kristi Rielly
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 12:33 PM
To: Tom Ferris
Cc: Community Engagement; Victoria Hanley
Subject: Re: proposed budget

Categories: Green category

Dear Tom,

I am writing in response to the proposed school budget for the 2022/23 school year.

In particular, I am writing as a Youth and Family Counsellor, at the elementary level, to share my insider knowledge of the mental health needs within our district and the necessity for retaining the school counsellor and YFC FTEs currently in place.

As a school district, our teachers, EAs, administrators and counsellors are front-line supports for students and families at a time when accessing community mental health supports – from counselling to acute crisis needs – are increasingly limited and difficult. From the Representative for Children and Youth's 2020 report: A Way to Cope: Exploring non-suicidal self injury in BC youth (p. 28):

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The proposed budget cuts for school counsellors and YFCs would result in less staff who are trained to support the very complex and diverse mental health concerns presenting in students, families and staff. These cuts would contribute to an ever-widening gap in our communities – between the need for mental health supports and the lack of available services. These gaps create an even bigger burden on teachers and administrators as they are then left to witness the mental health needs, have those needs spill into their classrooms, and have nowhere to turn for support, resulting in teacher burn-out and increasing mental health concerns in students and families, which may have been turned-around had proper supports been in place.


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Respectfully,
Kristi Rielly

Kristi Rielly
Youth and Family Counsellor (M-Th)
École Macaulay Elementary School



Lisa McPhail

From: Kristi Rielly
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 12:29 PM
To: Ryan Painter
Cc: Community Engagement; Victoria Hanley
Subject: Re: proposed budget

Categories: Green category

Dear Ryan,

I am writing in response to the proposed school budget for the 2022/23 school year.

In particular, I am writing as a Youth and Family Counsellor, at the elementary level, to share my insider knowledge of the mental health needs within our district and the necessity for retaining the school counsellor and YFC FTEs currently in place.

As a school district, our teachers, EAs, administrators and counsellors are front-line supports for students and families at a time when accessing community mental health supports – from counselling to acute crisis needs – are increasingly limited and difficult. From the Representative for Children and Youth's 2020 report: *A Way to Cope: Exploring non-suicidal self injury in BC youth* (p. 28):

Experts described that currently clinicians are working in inflexible systems, overburdened by too many clients and too few personnel. As a result, they often respond to difficulties engaging clients by closing files, consequentially leaving vulnerable youth without support.

The proposed budget cuts for school counsellors and YFCs would result in less staff who are trained to support the very complex and diverse mental health concerns presenting in students, families and staff. These cuts would contribute to an ever-widening gap in our communities – between the need for mental health supports and the lack of available services. These gaps create an even bigger burden on teachers and administrators as they are then left to witness the mental health needs, have those needs spill into their classrooms, and have nowhere to turn for support, resulting in teacher burn-out and increasing mental health concerns in students and families, which may have been turned-around had proper supports been in place.

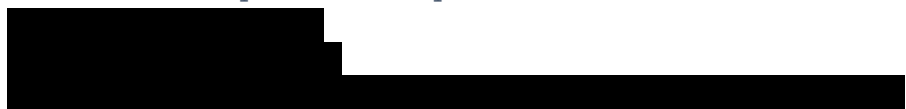
When we ask teachers and administrators, who are not specialists in mental health, to do the work of counsellors, we are not only asking too much of them, we are doing a disservice to the students and families and possibly increasing the risk if inadequate supports are given.

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Respectfully,
Kristi Rielly

Kristi Rielly
Youth and Family Counsellor (M-Th)
École Macaulay Elementary School



Lisa McPhail

From: Pete McKay
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 9:23 AM
To: Community Engagement
Cc: Ann Whiteaker; Jordan Watters; Elaine Leonard; Angie Hentze; Tom Ferris; Nicole Duncan; Ryan Painter
Subject: Counsellor cuts
Categories: Green category

Hello,

I am a school psychologist in the GVSD. It was very concerning to read about the proposed cuts to counselling time. Mental health supports in our schools are already not even close to enough to meet the needs of students and further cuts would be very detrimental to some of our most struggling students.

Many families are not comfortable or able to access mental health services in the community and consequently, counselling supports at school is all that some students are able to access. Reducing counselling time would mean no mental health supports for some of our most struggling students and their families. As most of you probably know, a student's brain must be ready for learning before learning can take place. Counsellors play a crucial role in getting a student's brain ready to learn.

Also, these kinds of cuts put further pressure on school psychologists to provide mental health supports. This is an area that we have likely not had much training and we will be asked to do things that we are not qualified to do.

With Covid, students' mental health has suffered even more than usual. Please reconsider these cuts to counsellor time.

Thanks,
Pete McKay

Lisa McPhail

From: community@sd61.bc.ca
Sent: Tuesday, March 8, 2022 8:55 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: New submission from Online Contact Form

Categories: Green category

Full Name

Grace Pearson

Email Address

[REDACTED]

Feedback Comments

To whom it may concern,

I recently heard about the possible major cuts being made to mental health services within the school district. As a former SD61 student, I am heartbroken to hear that this is even being considered. Without school-provided mental health services, I am certain that I would not have graduated high school, and may have possibly not even made it out alive. School years (especially high school) are incredibly difficult to navigate, as you should know. There is so much pressure coming from so many different areas, and this takes an extreme toll on students' mental health. Not to mention the fact that the current students have just lived through a global pandemic. So on top of the pressure they already experience, they've dealt with isolation, uncertainty, and some of them are missing big milestones like graduation. All of this is extremely unfortunate and should be taken into consideration in conversations about students' mental health.

As I mentioned before, I would not have graduated without the provided mental health services. Hearing about these possible cuts hit me very close to home, as I struggled deeply with my mental health in high school. Without amazing councilors such as Ms. Hebb and Tammy Reid, I would not be where I am today. Both of them fought to get me the support I needed and helped me choose my future career path. At the time, my mental health was so bad that I never imagined myself succeeding. But they helped me decide to go into social work, and I am now a straight-A college student. This is just one example of how critical mental health services are, I am certain that many other students have stories similar to mine (many of my friends, for instance).

Please take my input into consideration. And please, please, do not fail these students by reducing their mental health services. They are trying their best and their ability to access such services is extremely important at this time in their lives. Thank you for listening.

Kindly,
Grace Pearson

Lisa McPhail

From: Connor [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 8, 2022 7:26 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: School Career Centres
Attachments: CT - SD61 Budgeting Committee.docx

Categories: Green category

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Here is my plea to keep career centres in sd61 schools.

Thanks Connor.
Sent from my iPhone

Dear: SD61 Budgeting Committee

My name is Connor, I am a former student of Lambrick Park Secondary. I am writing in hope you will hear my case on why I think you shouldn't cut the career centers placed in the high schools throughout the district. During my last year of school I had absolutely no clue what I wanted to pursue career wise. I decided to take a year off of school and work a minimum wage retail job to start earning some sort of work experience and income. After about a year of working retail, I finally had enough and felt I wasn't progressing in life as much as I had hoped for. Not really knowing what options I had being a year out of highschool and living through a pandemic I was able to contact the people working at the career center, who were extremely helpful and determined to give me all options on some sort of career path. They were able to connect me to the BC Regional Carpenters Union who got me working on site with a residential construction company pretty quickly after being in contact with the union. Now, 2 years later I am still working with the same company and have completed my first year of schooling through Camosun College's carpentry program and have the intention of completing the rest of my apprenticeship within the next few years. Ultimately, I have learned so much and gained so many new skills from this opportunity. I know many people who have benefited from the help of the kind, supportive and knowledgeable people who work at the career center. It would be a huge mistake to cut this support system for kids. Thank you for taking the time to read my letter.

Former SD61 student;

Connor

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Tuesday, March 8, 2022 6:15 PM
To: Lisa McPhail
Subject: Fwd: School Councillor Cut

Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250 475 4117
Cell: [REDACTED]

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.

From: kvzu [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 6, 2022 7:38:24 PM
To: Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: School Councillor Cut

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Hello,

I am reaching out about the current cuts in school counselling, as I believe this is a large mistake. I know other kids who wouldn't have anywhere to go if it weren't for school councillors, because it was the only place they could go. Councillors in schools are incredibly important to the mental health of students and also provide easy accessibility to help. Help from councillors at a young age can prevent otherwise life altering or ending mental health disorders. Keeping councillors in schools could genuinely save lives. As a student who has found help thanks to school councillors, I beg you to reconsider, and keep councillors in schools, for the sake of the students.

-Aidan Inglis

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Tuesday, March 8, 2022 6:14 PM
To: Lisa McPhail
Subject: Fwd: SD61 Proposed Budget Cut to Counselors

Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250 475 4117
Cell: [REDACTED]

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.

From: Noah Alex [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 7, 2022 10:32:15 AM
To: Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: SD61 Proposed Budget Cut to Counselors

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Good morning Deb,

I am a resident of the Fernwood neighbourhood in Victoria and I recently learned about the proposed budget for SD61. I understand that there is a plan to cut funding to school counselors and reduce the amount of time counselors are available in schools in the district.

I'm writing to express my concern for this budget cut. Now more than ever students are in need of school counselor support. COVID-19 has severely impacted the mental health of many students, especially students from low-income families, and for many the in-school counselor is the only mental health support students have. The potential long-term impacts of this budget cut, especially to students' learning outcomes, are worth considering.

I hope you will use your voice to help stop this budget cut from happening. School counselors need more funding right now, not less.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Alex Noah Gilroy
[REDACTED]
Fibre Artist, Qualified TypeWell Transcriber
www.mossandarrow.com

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Tuesday, March 8, 2022 6:14 PM
To: Lisa McPhail
Subject: Fwd: Concerns around proposed budget

Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250 475 4117
Cell: [REDACTED]

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.

From: Jeanette Fallis [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 7, 2022 6:38:21 PM
To: Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>; Colin Roberts <croberts@sd61.bc.ca>; Harold Caldwell <hcaldwell@sd61.bc.ca>; Ryan Painter <rpainter@sd61.bc.ca>; Nicole Duncan <nduncan@sd61.bc.ca>; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>; Angie Hentze <ahentze@sd61.bc.ca>; Elaine Leonard <eleonard@sd61.bc.ca>; Jordan Watters <jwatters@sd61.bc.ca>; Ann Whiteaker <awhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca>; Rob Paynter <rpaynter@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: Concerns around proposed budget

Dear SD61 Leadership and School Trustees,

I am writing to express my extreme concern around the proposed budget cuts to school counselling in SD61.

I am an elementary school teacher in SD61. Before the pandemic I was already shocked at the number of students in my class each year battling mental health challenges. Now, more than ever, in a world where children are absorbing the stress of their caregivers as they navigate multiple years of living in a pandemic, we need our school counsellors.

This school year, [REDACTED] of my 20 students see the school counsellor regularly for anxiety, trauma, low self-esteem, or suicide ideation. I have had [REDACTED] separate students, on three separate occasions, express the wish to die or to kill themselves this school year. These children are only [REDACTED] old. My single class only represents a small fraction of the students struggling with mental health in my school and SD61. As you can imagine, our school counsellor and YFC are already spread distressingly thin.

We are in the midst of a mental health crisis. Cuts to school counselling are simply unconscionable. As an educator who cares deeply about my students, I beg you to consider taking the necessary cuts from top-heavy positions who do not work directly with children in schools, such as district principals.

Sincerely,

Jeanette Fallis
SD61 Teacher

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Tuesday, March 8, 2022 6:00 PM
To: Lisa McPhail
Subject: Fwd: New submission from Contact The Board

Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250 475 4117
Cell: [REDACTED]

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.

From: no-reply@sd61.bc.ca <no-reply@sd61.bc.ca>
Sent: Sunday, March 6, 2022 7:36:30 PM
To: Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: New submission from Contact The Board

Full Name

Aidan Inglis

Email Address

[REDACTED]

Feedback Comments

I am reaching out about the current cuts in school counselling, as I believe this is a large mistake. I know other kids who wouldn't have anywhere to go if it weren't for school councillors, because it was the only place they could go. Councillors in schools are incredibly important to the mental health of students and also provide easy accessibility to help. Help from councillors at a young age can prevent otherwise life altering or ending mental health disorders. Keeping councillors in schools could genuinely save lives. As a student who has found help thanks to school councillors, I beg you to reconsider, and keep councillors in schools, for the sake of the students.

-Aidan Inglis

Lisa McPhail

From: Jessica Zaza [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 8, 2022 4:21 PM
To: Lisa McPhail
Subject: SD61 Counselling Budget Cuts

Categories: Web

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Dear Lisa McPhail,

It has recently come to my attention that SD61 intends to make major cuts to the school counseling systems. This rumour first appeared incomprehensible to me providing the several global crises afflicting mental well-being on a global scale, and it is in this indignation and disappointment that I implore the school district to reassess their responsibilities to their students. Such a budget cut grossly fails to account for the mental distress prominent in this time, thus I implore you and your associates in SD61 to oppose any budget cuts to our already struggling mental health support services and prioritize the needs of students rather than discounting their importance.

As a former student of SD61, the counseling services available were indispensable to the perserval of both my sanity and future hopes. Though many obstacles seemed insurmountable to my young mind, the ability to quickly receive support alleviated the magnitude of my mental anguish and certainly prevented my recourse to more drastic responses. It goes without saying that early intervention with mental health disorders and access to counseling and support services save lives. With the rising rate of mental disorders, accessibility to such services is the best way to lower adolescent suicide rates and provide the encouragement necessary to protect our friends, relations, and fellow citizens. This budget cut has attributed a monetary value to the lives and success of SD61's students ; it jeopardizes their safety and trivializes their struggles, and the adverse effects of such a callous sacrifice would prove heartbreaking for our community.

It is paramount that our school district provides for the mental health needs of its students and, by extension, our community. A student can only succeed so far as their mental wellbeing permits, so in order to facilitate the success of hundreds of our next generation, I sincerely hope you and your associates will acknowledge the consequences of this budget cut and instead foster secure resources that develop a support system for this generation.

Sincerely,
Jessica Zaza

Lisa McPhail

From: no-reply@sd61.bc.ca
Sent: Sunday, March 6, 2022 7:37 PM
To: Trustees
Subject: New submission from Contact The Board

Categories: Green category

Full Name

Aidan Inglis

Email Address

[REDACTED]

Feedback Comments

I am reaching out about the current cuts in school counselling, as I believe this is a large mistake. I know other kids who wouldn't have anywhere to go if it weren't for school councillors, because it was the only place they could go. Councillors in schools are incredibly important to the mental health of students and also provide easy accessibility to help. Help from councillors at a young age can prevent otherwise life altering or ending mental health disorders. Keeping councillors in schools could genuinely save lives. As a student who has found help thanks to school councillors, I beg you to reconsider, and keep councillors in schools, for the sake of the students.

-Aidan Inglis

Lisa McPhail

From: Scott Alexander
Sent: Tuesday, March 8, 2022 12:40 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Letter in support of Career Center Coordinators
Attachments: CCC budget support 2022.pdf

Categories: Green category

Please find attached my letter of support for the Career Center Coordinators as part of the budget feedback process.

Regards,

Scott

Scott Alexander

Social Studies Chair | Scholarship Advisor

[Oak Bay Secondary](#) | 



École Secondaire
OAK BAY
High School

Greater Victoria School District #61
<https://oakbay.sd61.bc.ca>

March 8, 2022

Dear School District 61 Trustees,

Re: Proposed Budget Cuts to Career Centers

Please accept this letter as a strong endorsement of the exceptional role that Career Center Coordinators fulfill as part of the Pathways and Partnership team in the District. I have worked alongside Shannon Giesbrecht, at Oak Bay, for 15 years, and unequivocally support the critical role she has in supporting our student body. Our Career Center is positioned as a central student hub for engagement, where countless opportunities for post-secondary, trades training, volunteering, and employment are offered to our students. Shannon, like all Coordinators, are experts in their craft, having spent years creating professional contacts, from a national to community level. Students trust the advice and support they receive from Shannon, knowing that she is one of the key adults in our school that they can approach and seek help from. That must be made clear to our broader learning community, that the role of the Career Center is one of the central relationships students have access to at Oak Bay.

To consider cutting the role of the Career Center Coordinator during this round of budget deliberations is short sighted and will create significant damage to the central structure of student support at the high school level. Our mandate in the Pathways and Partnership team is to support “students to make connections and transitions between classroom learning, post-secondary training, and the world of work.” The role of the Coordinator is absolutely central to accomplishing this very challenging and continually changing task at the school level. The cost of running this district program compared to the incredible returns that have been achieved in supporting thousands of students should be examined carefully. I would urge the Trustees to shelter this program and seek to cut areas of the budget that do not affect our students (and families) so directly. Shannon Giesbrecht’s job is not a task that can be automated, added to an administrator’s assignment, nor to teacher’s to-do list. She serves a unique role at Oak Bay and has developed a special role to serve our students in helping them prepare for their future. We take that role in serving our students and their families in the Pathways and Partnership team very seriously.

As a Careers Teacher at Oak Bay, I have worked in partnership with Shannon for many years. Please hear this very clearly, that her role as a Career Center Coordinator (and that of each CCC at our high schools) is central to running a successful program at Oak Bay. It is her in-person contact with students, the support for families, and her strong connections with our National and community partners that is key to the success of our program. Cutting this position would be very regrettable and cause negative impacts for years to come. I urge the Trustees to reconsider removing support for this program and find budget cuts that will not drastically affect the future of our students.

Respectfully,

Scott Alexander

Social Studies Chair | Scholarship Counselor

Oak Bay Secondary

Lisa McPhail

From: Deborah MB [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 7, 2022 3:51 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Keep counselling in schools

Categories: Green category

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

I am a school counsellor in SD 62 and I want to email about the proposed budget cuts in counselling in SD 61. My children go to school in SD 61 and I'm disheartened to hear that there may be cuts to counselling FTE. My [REDACTED] both have needed support from counsellors but with irregular hours of the school counsellors their needs cannot be met as other needs have been rightfully prioritized.

We take [REDACTED] to outside counsellors but I know that many families don't have this option! Please don't cut any counselling. Kids need support more than ever after the past two years. The fallout from the pandemic is ongoing and with war and suffering we need to help our kids with their mental health.

Sincerely

Deborah Meir
Parent of [REDACTED] students.

Lisa McPhail

From: Kyla Benetti [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, March 6, 2022 10:20 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Budgeting

Categories: Green category

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

I am a concerned student of SD62. I have just found out about the funding for counselling being shortened and am in distraught over it. Counselling is something needed. It's a accessibility that schools need to have. Knowing a family can't afford counselling outside of school but still having that accessibility in their school is a relief. It is important. It is crucial. These students, us kids, are growing up in a society where everything is rising, bullying is endless, kids struggling with their own trauma, getting harassed and mental, physical, sexual, emotional abuse, there needs to be a safe resource. I can't begin to count the number of times I've been so thankful to have that support in my school. When I made a wellness appointment with a doctor about my mental health because I was struggling immensely. She sat with me, listened to me and made me feel comfortable. She didn't dismiss anything I was feeling nor thought and I appreciated that deeply. I want that for our peers, the kids. I would like to believe we could build to our community and schools to bettering our mental health and creating these relationships built of trust and respect. Counselling needs to be accessible to these kids. It's something that has helped so much. I believe in the power of love and getting help and I hope you do too.

Sincerely,
Kyla Benetti Grade [REDACTED] student

Lisa McPhail

From: Susannah McKee
Sent: Wednesday, October 27, 2021 10:09 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Re: Greater Victoria School Board Approves Plan for 2022-2023 Budget, Media Release

Categories: Green category

One day it is my hope that support for Indigenous kids and their families will be IN our school.
We have 53 un-supported Indigenous children and their families.
Many of them struggling and/ or not attending school.
Hugely impacted by Covid.
I have advocated for an Indigenous Counsellor for years to no avail.
Shameful and shocking.

Susannah

Susannah McKee
Youth & Family Counsellor
Quadra School


From: Community Engagement <Community@sd61.bc.ca>
Sent: Wednesday, October 27, 2021 9:10 AM
To: Community Engagement <Community@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: Greater Victoria School Board Approves Plan for 2022-2023 Budget, Media Release



Wednesday, October 27, 2021

Greater Victoria School Board Approves Plan for 2022-2023 Budget

VICTORIA, BC – At Monday night's Board Meeting, the Board of Education approved the budget process for the 2022/2023 school year. The approved plan represents the Board's commitment to working collaboratively and early in the process to gather information and input for the Board's budget decision making.

Core to the Board this upcoming year was articulating its values at the outset of the process to guide its decision making and to provide a touchstone as the Board moves toward its approved budget in April 2022. Also new this year, a budget advisory committee will be formed. Membership will include all trustees, senior staff along with representatives from the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), Greater Victoria Teachers' Association (GVTA), Victoria Principals and Vice Principals Association (VPVPA), Allied Specialist Association (ASA) and Victoria Parent Advisory Council (VCPAC).

The budget will be culturally respectful and responsive to the needs of Indigenous peoples and will include the Four Houses and the Indigenous Education Department within the Budget process. The Board and staff will utilize the Indigenous Education Department's regularly scheduled meetings with the Songhees Nation, Esquimalt Nation, Urban Indigenous Peoples' House Advisory (UPHIA) and the Métis Nation of Greater Victoria as the conduits to share information, consult, and seek input and direction.

Between November 2021 and April 2022, the District will be providing opportunities to connect students, staff, administrators, Indigenous Nations, parents and guardians, along with members of the public, to provide input and learn more about resource allocation. The District will host facilitated discussions, public meetings and a student symposium.

"Students are at the center of everything we do in the Greater Victoria School District. As we develop the budget for the upcoming school year, it is important that we align resources to set all students up for success and to support each student in reaching their greatest potential and future opportunities. We must recognize that all learners are unique and have varying needs," said Board Chair, Ann Whiteaker. "At the same time, the Board is committed to the goals and strategies of the Strategic Plan, as well as the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning, when building its budget."

The Board intends to approve its 2022-2023 budget in April 2022.

2022-2023 Budget Process Timeline:

- November 15 Budget Advisory Committee Meeting #1
- November 18 Talking Tables – Rightsholders and Stakeholders
- November 25 Student Symposium or Student Led Forum
- December 7 Budget Advisory Committee Meeting #2
- January 13 Budget Advisory Committee Meeting #3
- February 8 Budget Advisory Committee Meeting #4
- February 22 Budget Advisory Committee Meeting #5

- March 8 Budget Advisory Committee Meeting #6
- March 10 Public Town Hall
- March 10-18 Public Feedback Period
- April 4 Special Budget Board Meeting
- April 7 Special Budget Board Meeting – Approval

To learn more about the budget's guiding principles, process and timelines visit: <https://www.sd61.bc.ca/our-district/financial/>

The Greater Victoria School District No. 61 is comprised of 48 schools that serve the communities of Esquimalt, Oak Bay, Victoria, View Royal, portions of Saanich and the Highlands, along with the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations, and the Urban Indigenous Peoples' House Advisory (UPHIA) and the Métis Nations of Greater Victoria. School District No. 61 is proud to provide quality education for more than 20,000 students—including 1,000 international students from across the globe and over 650 adult learners.

Lisa McPhail

From: Lisa McPhail
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2022 2:39 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: FW: April 4th meeting
Attachments: lettermarch31.rtf

Categories: Green category

Lisa McPhail
Manager, Communications & Community Engagement Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250.475.4103
www.sd61.bc.ca | @sd61schools

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.

-----Original Message-----

From: angelac@vcpac.ca <angelac@vcpac.ca>
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2022 2:34 PM
To: Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: April 4th meeting

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Dear Trustees,

Please find attached a letter from the Victoria Confederation Of Parent Advisory Councils for immediate consideration.

Angela Carmichael
VCPAC President



VICTORIA
CONFEDERATION
OF
PARENT ADVISORY COUNCILS
556 BOLESKINE ROAD, VICTORIA, BC V8Z 1E8
TELEPHONE (250) 475 4193
WWW.VCPAC.CA

March 31st, 2022

Dear Chair Ryan Painter and Trustees:

Re: Required Consultation Prior to Setting the Annual Operating Budget

Through communication from the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (the "School District"), we are aware that the first reading of a bylaw intended to pass the Annual Operating Budget is to occur on April 4, 2022.

It is our understanding that the School District may only act in accordance with the authority that it has been given under its enabling legislation and the various legislative authorizations that specifically confer powers. This statutory authority must only be exercised in a manner that is consistent with the Policies and Regulations that are set by the School District. Bylaw 9220 of the School District explicitly states that the School District must comply with the adopted Administrative Regulations to ensure that it is in

compliance with the _School Act_.

The Board of School Trustees recognizes the importance of having specific and detailed instructions in writing for the guidance and decision-making of its personnel. To ensure that the administration of day-to-day matters throughout the School District are in accordance with the School Act, the Board of Trustees requires that Administrative Regulations be formulated and compiled. All regulations will be based on policy statements adopted by resolution at official Board meetings. It shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent of Schools as the Chief Executive Officer to ensure that these resolutions are carried out.

Bylaw 9220 can be found here:

<https://www.sd61.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/91/2014/12/bylaw9220.pdf>

As such, any Administrative Regulation must be complied with prior to, and during, any exercise of statutory power by the School District.

The Annual Operating Budget Policy (the "Policy") and the Annual Operating Budget Regulation (the "Regulation") are the two

Administrative Regulations that govern the exercise of authority by the School District pertaining to setting an Annual Operating Budget.

The Policy can be found here:

<https://www.sd61.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/91/2014/08/pol3501.pdf>;

and the Regulation can be found here:

<https://www.sd61.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/91/2014/08/reg3501.pdf>.

The Policy and Regulation stipulate that certain actions must occur prior to setting an Annual Operating Budget. Included in the Regulation, under sections 1.2 and 1.4, are specific directions as to how the Annual Operating Budget must be developed. For your convenience, we have reproduced sections 1.2 and 1.4 here:

1.2 The Secretary-Treasurer will develop a budget process timeline annually that will ensure that there is time for consultation with parent advisory councils, educational partner groups and the public, and that information will be provided to the Board of Education to meet a timeline that allows the Board of Education to meet the requirements of collective agreements and the Ministry of Education.

1.4 The Board of Education will invite parent advisory councils, educational partner groups as well as the general public to provide input on the budget and the proposed budget recommendations during its deliberations, and will approve the annual budget. Unless otherwise stated, the approved budget will come into effect July 1.

At this time, we are not aware of any steps that have been taken to ensure that the requirements of the Regulation have been satisfied. We therefore respectfully request that you provide us with detailed information as to how the School District has satisfied these legal requirements.

As these are legal requirements that govern the School District's use of its statutory authority, we note that any failure to comply with the Policy and Regulation would render passage of an Annual Operating Budget unlawful.

Respectfully yours,

Angela Carmichael

VCPAC President

[REDACTED]

Lisa McPhail

From: Lisa McPhail
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2022 2:24 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: FW: New submission from Contact The Board

Categories: Green category

Lisa McPhail

Manager, Communications & Community Engagement
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250.475.4103
Cell: 778.679.5049

 www.sd61.bc.ca |   @sd61schools



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.

From: no-reply@sd61.bc.ca <no-reply@sd61.bc.ca>
Sent: Thursday, March 10, 2022 4:26 PM
To: Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: New submission from Contact The Board

Full Name

Lindsay Halldorson

Email Address

[REDACTED]

Feedback Comments

Dear Trustees,

We oppose the proposed savings which would reduce 8.0 FTE School Counsellors from our district, restoring student-counsellor ratios to 693:1.

The proposed budget changes would:

- reduce accessibility of qualified mental healthcare for children and families in the middle of a mental health crisis,
- have the greatest negative impact on children and families who cannot access mental healthcare (due to lack of finances/transportation, social injustice, etc.),
- shift the responsibility for child mental health crises in the school (e.g. imminent suicide, self-harm risk) to other school staff (e.g. EAs, Teachers, Administrators)

School Counsellors have a unique role and scope of practice in the schools. They are both BC Certified Teachers and mental health professionals with a master's degree in counselling psychology or a related subject. School Counsellors weave between many complex situations from classroom-based work to individual counselling, to collaboration with teams of educators, to crisis

intervention, to sitting with families to find appropriate referrals to mental health services.

Because School Counsellors are Teachers as well as mental health professionals, they are uniquely well-suited to the co-ordination and delivery of mental health literacy, mental health promotion, trauma-informed practice, and social and emotional learning (SEL) programs within the schools. This aligns with the Ministry of Education's Mental Health in Schools Strategy and the increased focus on these areas in the BC Curriculum.

School Counsellors also serve the school staff and the family community through collaboration and education on topics such as anxiety, grief and loss, and trauma.

The proposed budget changes would see a reduction in all services provided by School Counsellors. These impacts may include:

- reduced individual and group counselling for students
- reduced risk assessment for self-harm, suicide, abuse, and neglect for students
- reduced case detection and early intervention for students showing signs of pediatric mental illness
- reduced classroom-based mental health literacy, mental health promotion, and social and emotional learning lessons for students and school staff
- reduced referrals for families to mental health supports
- reduced collaboration with, and support for, school staff
- reduced mental health promotion activities for school staff and families (e.g. trauma-informed practice, grief and loss workshops)
- reduced availability of the School Counsellor for crisis intervention (e.g. death of student or staff, suicide, traumatic incidents, violence)
- reduced co-ordination of school-based services with community-based services such as Child & Youth Mental Health

We are in the middle of a mental health crisis. Right now, our children need more access to mental health services, not less.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic began, research in the BC school system had already identified anxiety, depression, self-harm, suicidal ideation, and trauma as main areas of concern (source). Now, two years into the pandemic, two-thirds of children are struggling with their mental health (source), with significant increases in anxiety and depression and serious consideration of suicide (source).

Access to qualified mental healthcare is low, with roughly three quarters of Canadian children with a mental illness not receiving adequate treatment (source, source). School Counsellors are the most accessible and most equitable mental health service for children. All children can access a School Counsellor, regardless of their background, socioeconomic status, or any other characteristic. Therefore, the very presence of School Counsellors is a social justice issue.

The proposed budget changes would increase student-school counsellor ratios and thereby significantly reduce the accessibility of qualified mental healthcare to our students. These proposed changes come in the middle of a mental health crisis, two years into a pandemic, and two years after the beginning of war in Ukraine. Families are stressed, children are suffering, and access to mental healthcare is at risk.

The Swahili proverb "it takes a whole village to raise one child," is truer now than ever. It is the responsibility of all school staff to work together to protect the wellbeing of our students, and to help them learn and grow. School Counsellors are an essential member of the village, who balance both teaching and mental health services. The services that School Counsellors provide are essential to the mental health and wellbeing of students, families, school staff, and communities. Reductions will reduce their ability to provide these services.

We request that the current FTE for School Counsellors be retained in the 2022-2023 school year.

Thank you
Lindsay and Chris Halldorson

Lisa McPhail

From: Lisa McPhail
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2022 2:24 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: FW: New submission from Contact The Board

Categories: Green category

Lisa McPhail

Manager, Communications & Community Engagement
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250.475.4103
Cell: 778.679.5049

 www.sd61.bc.ca |   @sd61schools



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.

From: no-reply@sd61.bc.ca <no-reply@sd61.bc.ca>
Sent: Thursday, March 10, 2022 7:01 PM
To: Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: New submission from Contact The Board

Full Name
L. Lyons
Email Address
[REDACTED]
Feedback Comments
I am so disturbed at the cuts you are making to school counsellors at this time in the pandemic. Our kids need this support unquestionably. It is unconscionable to decrease this support in any way at this time. It is essential for the kids as they have suffered greatly and need this support. I am against these cuts.

Lisa McPhail

From: Lisa McPhail
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2022 2:24 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: FW: Teacher Counsellors
Attachments: Teacher Counsellors.pdf

Categories: Green category

Lisa McPhail

Manager, Communications & Community Engagement
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250.475.4103
Cell: 778.679.5049

 www.sd61.bc.ca |   @sd61schools



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.

From: Merryl Scott
Sent: Friday, March 11, 2022 11:51 AM
To: Kim Morris <kmorris@sd61.bc.ca>
Cc: Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>; exec@gvta.net; Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: Teacher Counsellors

Dear Ms. Morris,
Please find the letter attached.

Merryl Scott

Learning Support Teacher, Oaklands Elementary
TTOC, SD61
Greater Victoria School District No. 61


 www.sd61.bc.ca |   @sd61schools



Dear Trustees,

We oppose the proposed savings which would reduce 8.0 FTE School Counsellors from our district, restoring student-counsellor ratios to 693:1.

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Because School Counsellors are Teachers as well as mental health professionals, they are uniquely well-suited to the co-ordination and delivery of mental health literacy, mental health promotion, trauma-informed practice, and social and emotional learning (SEL) programs within the schools. This aligns with the Ministry of Education's Mental Health in Schools Strategy and the increased focus on these areas in the BC Curriculum.

School Counsellors also serve the school staff and the family community through collaboration and education on topics such as anxiety, grief and loss, and trauma.

The proposed budget changes would see a reduction in all services provided by School Counsellors. These impacts may include:

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of our students, and to help them learn and grow. School Counsellors are an essential member of the village, who balance both teaching and mental health services. The services that School Counsellors provide are essential to the mental health and wellbeing of students, families, school staff, and communities. Reductions will reduce their ability to provide these services.

We request that the current FTE for School Counsellors be retained in the 2022-2023 school year.

Lisa McPhail

From: Lisa McPhail
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2022 2:20 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: FW: proposed cuts to school music

Categories: Green category

Lisa McPhail

Manager, Communications & Community Engagement
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250.475.4103

 www.sd61.bc.ca |   @sd61schools



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.

From: Susan Adamson [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, March 19, 2022 9:04 AM
To: Nicole Duncan <nduncan@sd61.bc.ca>; Ann Whiteaker <awhiteaker@sd61.bc.ca>; Ryan Painter <rpainter@sd61.bc.ca>; Angie Hentze <ahentze@sd61.bc.ca>; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>; Elaine Leonard <eleonard@sd61.bc.ca>; Jordan Watters <jwatters@sd61.bc.ca>; Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>; Kim Morris <kmorris@sd61.bc.ca>; Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: proposed cuts to school music

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Hello,

Please include this email in your Apr 4th board meeting pack up.

My daughter started music in grade 6 at Shoreline Middle School and continues to this day in grade [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] School. She has been able to experience concert band, jazz band, musical theatre and choir. Had Shoreline not had the breadth of music options on offer, her school experience would have been very different. In addition to an education in music, it provided her with a community within the school and across the grades. That continues today in high school.

If music were not taught in middle schools, I feel strongly that the music programmes in high schools would be weaker by fewer participants and less experienced musicians. Or, high school music programmes would predominantly be filled with students you had private lessons through their families which is not an option for every interested family. The middle school programmes offer an affordable way – be it the family or subsidised by the school – for any interested child to try music, to try something different. It would also have an impact on post-secondary interest in pursuing music.

There are any number of studies that speak to the value of music in all of our lives. For my daughter, music gave her confidence to try, to work hard even when a piece was difficult, to accept responsibility for her role in a larger group and the commitments that come from same. In particular over these past two years, music has played a pivotal role in her well-being as a welcome constant in an increasingly uncertain world. It's a very hard time to be a teenager. I just asked my daughter what music has been for her over these last two years. Her word: stability.

I would ask that you reconsider cutting music from our school programmes. The impact of doing so is too far reaching, all to the detriment of our kids.

With thanks,

Susan Adamson
parent, [REDACTED] School

Lisa McPhail

From: Lisa McPhail
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2022 2:17 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: FW: Keep Music Programs

Categories: Green category

Lisa McPhail

Manager, Communications & Community Engagement
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250.475.4103
Cell: 778.679.5049

 www.sd61.bc.ca |   @sd61schools



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.

From: Suzanne Moss [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 22, 2022 12:07 PM
To: Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>; premier@gov.bc.ca; EDUC.minister@gov.bc.ca; Tom Ferris <tferris@sd61.bc.ca>; Victoria Hanley <vhanley@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: Keep Music Programs

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CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Two years of pandemic, a bloody war raging, angry protesters everywhere and the school board feels this is a good time to cut music programs to our kids?

Give your heads a shake.

Students, parents, families, teachers, community members have already spoken loud and clear about this last year. That you would be putting everyone through this again is unconscionable.

Lisa McPhail

From: Lisa McPhail
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2022 2:11 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: FW: Truthfulness

Categories: Green category

Lisa McPhail

Manager, Communications & Community Engagement
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
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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.

From: Michelle Wiboltt [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 10, 2022 12:18 PM
To: Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: Truthfulness

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I really do want to attend tonight's budget meeting but my view's seem to be at odds with so many and, believe it or not, I despise CONflict. It makes me sad, scared, depressed so, again, I will not be attending tonight's meeting's but I do hope you'll share my view's?

Re: marketing.

Unfortunately, it's a must. See, the private schools market their be Jesus out of their offerings and, currently, they're "lucky" enough to receive 7% of OUR tax monies in supporting of their solitary pursuits. Sew. To not advertise would, perhaps, hold swaying with "their" new "converts" and as it is, they already charge a premium at OUR all's expenses, eh private buses, computers, smaller classrooms, "better" teacher's understanding, eh lasting legacies, and pay (value) and ...

Strong lobbyist are they so, yeah's, we need to do bettering. Marketing must remain.

Re: counsel.

No pointers.

Cause see, hypocrisy is the all's of us, eh no to bully's yet 41 different churches in Saanich, aloneness's. Cause see, ever child matters yet the Catholic School in Cook Street village's just reopened and is advertising for new converts and again, we all pay 7% for them do due and yet, it was just last summer when we were condemning Christian Churches, the summer previously condemning that Eastern school for "stick's" for the treatment of children towards children and, through a child's eyesight, how do they /could they possibly know the difference and, truly, how can we "promises" a difference, eh never has ended sexualized abuse in these private spaceships schools? I could go online...

And.

When, only, those 7 deadly plot lines are
Ever the only ones on offering? Conflicts crescendo's of judgement and sacrifices and suffering always our never ending teaching's taught by teachers children are supposed to trustees, again, I could go online...however, why bother cause this should be telling enlightened.

Sew, Trustee's,

I thank you for your attention to my thoughts and I hope they'll mattered? But, again, 41 churches, [REDACTED] community centres, [REDACTED] community centre's, [REDACTED] community centre's, [REDACTED] community centre's, congress of [REDACTED], etc. and all here in Victoria "property's" what's a child to think and certainly, who's a child to trustworthy, eh counselling, eh "not for PROFIT" but never for children, eh missing tax money 🇺🇸 \$20 billion annually and counting

(Please do notes: conscious choice NOT to write in current language cause, yeah's, same oldies, eh 600bc)

Michelle

Michelle Wiboltt



Elb1b/Elb1b69

Sum/ Pinkie Swear/ Beavers Baffle/ One

Lisa McPhail

From: Lisa McPhail
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2022 2:08 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: FW: Mental Health Matters

Categories: Green category

Lisa McPhail

Manager, Communications & Community Engagement
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250.475.4103
Cell: 778.679.5049

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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.

From: chelseak [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 11, 2022 1:23 PM
To: Kim Morris <kmorris@sd61.bc.ca>; Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>; exec@gvta.net; Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: Mental Health Matters

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Trustees,

I urge you not to cut ANY mental health services in SD61. Mental health matters, councillors are a vital part of the school system and shouldn't be discarded. If you have a deficit why not cut things that are elitist and only benefit a small portion of the school population.....FRENCH IMMERSION!

This program is disposable because:

- entry is based on a supposedly "fair" lottery system
- discriminates children based on ethnicity
- not open to everyone
- doesn't benefit all children equally
- why teach French immersion and not indigenous languages?

- we are not in Quebec
- how about we honour our indigenous people rather than French colonialists?

I will not vote for any of the current trustees involved in the proposed budget cuts to councillors. Our children deserve mental health supports. Please read the letter below.

Sincerely,

Chelsea

Dear Trustees,

We oppose the proposed savings which would reduce 8.0 FTE School Counsellors from our district, restoring student-counsellor ratios to 693:1.

The proposed budget changes would:

- reduce accessibility of qualified mental healthcare for children and families in the middle of a mental health crisis,
- have the greatest negative impact on children and families who cannot access mental healthcare (due to lack of finances/transportation, social injustice, etc.),
- shift the responsibility for child mental health crises in the school (e.g. imminent suicide, self-harm risk) to other school staff (e.g. EAs, Teachers, Administrators) School Counsellors have a unique role and scope of practice in the schools. They are both BC Certified Teachers and mental health professionals with a master's degree in counselling psychology or a related subject.

School Counsellors weave between many complex situations from classroom-based work to individual counselling, to collaboration with teams of educators, to crisis intervention, to sitting with families to find appropriate referrals to mental health services.

Because School Counsellors are Teachers as well as mental health professionals, they are uniquely well-suited to the coordination and delivery of mental health literacy, mental health promotion, trauma-informed practice, and social and emotional learning (SEL) programs within the schools. This aligns with the Ministry of Education's Mental Health in Schools Strategy and the increased focus on these areas in the BC Curriculum.

School Counsellors also serve the school staff and the family community through collaboration and education on topics such as anxiety, grief and loss, and trauma.

The proposed budget changes would see a reduction in all services provided by School Counsellors. These impacts may include:

- reduced individual and group counselling for students
- reduced risk assessment for self-harm, suicide, abuse, and neglect for students

- reduced case detection and early intervention for students showing signs of pediatric mental illness
- reduced classroom-based mental health literacy, mental health promotion, and social and emotional learning lessons for students and school staff
- reduced referrals for families to mental health supports · reduced collaboration with, and support for, school staff
- reduced mental health promotion activities for school staff and families (e.g. trauma-informed practice, grief and loss workshops)
- reduced availability of the School Counsellor for crisis intervention (e.g. death of student or staff, suicide, traumatic incidents, violence)
- reduced co-ordination of school-based services with community-based services such as Child & Youth Mental Health

We are in the middle of a mental health crisis. Right now, our children need more access to mental health services, not less. Before the COVID-19 pandemic began, research in the BC school system had already identified anxiety, depression, self-harm, suicidal ideation, and trauma as main areas of concern (source). Now, two years into the pandemic, two-thirds of children are struggling with their mental health (source), with significant increases in anxiety and depression and serious consideration of suicide (source).

Access to qualified mental healthcare is low, with roughly three quarters of Canadian children with a mental illness not receiving adequate treatment (source, source). School Counsellors are the most accessible and most equitable mental health service for children. All children can access a School Counsellor, regardless of their background, socioeconomic status, or any other characteristic. Therefore, the very presence of School Counsellors is a social justice issue.

The proposed budget changes would increase student-school counsellor ratios and thereby significantly reduce the accessibility of qualified mental healthcare to our students. These proposed changes come in the middle of a mental health crisis, two years into a pandemic, and two years after the beginning of war in Ukraine. Families are stressed, children are suffering, and access to mental healthcare is at risk.

The Swahili proverb “it takes a whole village to raise one child,” is truer now than ever. It is the responsibility of all school staff to work together to protect the wellbeing of our students, and to help them learn and grow. School Counsellors are an essential member of the village, who balance both teaching and mental health services. The services that School Counsellors provide are essential to the mental health and wellbeing of students, families, school staff, and communities. Reductions will reduce their ability to provide these services.

We request that the current FTE for School Counsellors be retained in the 2022-2023 school year.

Lisa McPhail

From: Lisa McPhail
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2022 2:08 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: FW: Career Center Coordinator Proposed Cut
Attachments: Pathways & Partnerships Career Center Coordinators.pptx; Roles and Responsibilities - Career Center Coordinators - 2022.pdf; Secondary School Principal - Career Center Coordinator Advocacy.pdf
Categories: Green category

Lisa McPhail

Manager, Communications & Community Engagement
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
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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.

From: Lindsay Johnson
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2022 10:10 AM
To: Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: Career Center Coordinator Proposed Cut

Hello Trustees,

It was really nice seeing you all at the public budget meeting last week. How refreshing to be in-person!

I hope that you can take a moment to read this email and its attachments regarding the proposed cut to our High School Career Center Coordinators, in order to see the crucial importance of their role for our district's students and for the goals of our Strategic Plan and FESL.

Career Center Coordinators are CUPE 947 employees who staff high school Career Centers on a full-time basis. Without these educators, Career Centers in our high schools will be closed at least 50% of the day. Career Centers are crucial hubs, as Career Center Coordinators provide accessible, flexible, meaningful, engaging, and individualized services.

To give you an idea of the scope of their work, **please see the PDF attached that outlines daily roles and responsibilities of Career Center Coordinators.**

While the important work of Career Center Coordinators is in their daily connections with students that provide them with opportunities and experiences that will guide their future orientation, I realize the current decisions are centered on financials.

Please also see the attached PowerPoint slides that outline the potential financial impact of cutting the Career Center Coordinator position.

You will see that these positions generate a large amount of funding for our District through registrations of students into courses and programs. While money would be saved immediately with cutting these positions, ultimately, our District stands to lose much more revenue than they will save. The savings from cutting the 7 Career Center Coordinators is approximately \$335,000, but \$715,000 in revenue stands to be lost.

Finally, please see the attachment for one of our secondary school Principal's feedback on the role and impact of their school's Career Center Coordinator. Administrators have reached out to me with their concerns about this proposed cut.

I appreciate you taking the time to read this information. If you have any questions, or would like to discuss further, please let me know, as I am always happy to discuss the crucial role of our District's Career Center Coordinators.

Həyşx^wqə/ Thank you,

Lindsay

Lindsay Johnson

VP-Pathways & Partnerships, Career Education

Greater Victoria School District No. 61

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

 <https://careers.sd61.bc.ca/>  @sd61careers



"It's not what you want to do, but who you want to be"

CAREER CENTER COORDINATOR

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

STUDENT SUPPORTS

What's the Goal: Make meaningful connections with students with the hope of discovering their gifts and abilities as well as developing essential life skills.

- *Collaboration with school-based counselors, administration teams, inclusive education teams, and Indigenous education teams to create personalized programming for students*
- *Career Counseling advice on Course Selection and timetabling*
- *Job and education research assistance*
- *Search and connect students to job and volunteer opportunities*
- *Assistance with post-secondary self-reporting online and student transcript preparation*
- *Post-Secondary Application*
- *Attending Career Springboards, CUE events, PARTY program with students*
- *Communication with post-secondary recruiters*
- *Resume /Cover Letters/Reference Letters*
- *Interview Prep and coaching*

COMMUNICATION

What's the Goal: Providing students/parents/staff/community with relevant and meaningful information in a clear, simple and informative manner.

- *Course selection presentations at grade-wide assemblies & in classrooms*
- *Weekly Newsletter*
- *Daily Announcements*
- *Daily TV Monitor*
- *PAC Presentations*
- *Career Center Website*
- *Classroom Visits*
- *Community Connections*
- *Field Trip Events*
- *One on one parent meetings*



DISTRICT/PARTNERSHIP COURSES & PROGRAMS

What's the Goal: Seek out students with the help of staff and the district to promote opportunities that would compliment a student's personal/career interests.

Student Registration Process:

1. Post Recruitment & Pre-Program: walk students (and families) through the paperwork process (several meetings), liaise with Lindsay Johnson & Camosun/UVic, work with counselors on student timetables, arrange work experience, student follow-ups re: Student Transcript Services & Education Planner, assist with interview preparation & preparations around expectations for program.
2. During Program: check-ins, communication, and trouble-shooting with student, family, and post-secondary
3. Post-Program: liaise with Lindsay Johnson & SIS Operator regarding transcript updates

Courses & Programs

- *Springboards*
- *Dual Credit Cohorts (Camosun)*
- *Dual Credit One-Offs (Camosun)*
- *uStart*
- *AutoTech*
- *TASK*
- *Aviation*
- *TEAC 105*
- *TALE*
- *Graphic Design*
- *Seed the City*
- *Rotary Youth Leadership Conference*
- *DND – FMF CB*
- *DND – Summer Food Service Assistants*
- *Spring Break Fire Camp*

EVENTS

What's the Goal: Organize and implement events with the goal of serving students post-secondary, personal & career interests. To expose students to people and opportunities in the community and outside to help build knowledge, opportunities, and relationships.

Event Coordination Duties

Scheduling



Advertising
Student sign-up
Signage
Secure Classrooms (PSIBC) (CUE)
Transportation Arrangements
Coordinate teacher chaperones and TOC requirements with Principal
Student Attendees List Maintenance
Excuse Student Attendees
Secure Leadership student helpers
Accompany students to events

Events

- *Post-Secondary School information sessions during lunch and evening as co-facilitators*
 - *Kwantlen, Ryerson, UBC, SFU, UVic, Camosun, McGill, Queens, Western, U of T*
- *Information Sessions*
 - *HMCS Malahat, City of Victoria Fire Department, Victoria Harbourside Rotary, VIPAC group, Volunteer Victoria*
- *Post-secondary Institution & Job Fairs*
- *Springboards*
- *Canadian University Event (CUE)*
- *Mock Interviews for students with businesses from the community*
- *Bringing in career experiences: Camosun Food Truck, The Camosun Pipes Trailer*
- *Dream It Be It Conference: Designed to give girls the tools they need to achieve their education and career goals*
- *Fresh Minds Symposium -- University of Victoria*
- *Take Our Kids to Work Day*
- *P.A.R.T.Y. Program at VGH*
- *DND Marine Career Fair*
- *SD61 Career Fair*
- *Camosun College Open House*

MOVING GOALS OF SD61'S STRATEGIC PLAN FORWARDS

What's the Goal: *To help students to find their personal version of success, and to support learners' mental well-being through the accessible, flexible, meaningful, engaging, and individualized services.*

- **GOAL 1:** *Create an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support and improve all learners' personal and academic success.*
 - *Collaboration with Inclusive Education teams to create personalized programming for students with disabilities and diverse needs.*



- Connect students with inclusive work experience and volunteer opportunities in community
- Connect students with post-secondary employment training programs such as Pathways for Life
- **GOAL 2:** Create a culturally responsive learning environment that will support Indigenous learners' personal and academic success.
 - Collaboration with Indigenous Education teams to create personalized programming for Indigenous students.
 - "What's in Your Wallet?" initiative to support Indigenous student with obtaining necessary identification and status cards
- **GOAL 3:** Create an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support all learners' physical and mental well-being.
 - Collaboration with counseling and administration teams to create personalized programming for students with anxiety in order to provide them the tools, strategies, and community connections for their confidence to grow.

MISCELLANEOUS DUTIES

- *Pathways and Partnerships Career Center Coordinators monthly meetings*
- *Post-Secondary Career Center Coordinator Meetings*
 - *University of Victoria*
 - *Camosun College*
 - *U.B.C.*
- Display boards/office organization
- Guest speaker coordination and booking for CLE and CLC Classes
- Career Center space booking and tech support for various classes, peer tutoring, etc.

COMMITTEE WORK (SCHOOL SITE SPECIFIC)

- Grad Committee
- Scholarship Committee



SD61 Secondary School Principal

Notes on Impact of Career Center Coordinators

Career Centre Coordinators In general:

- Make connections between the school and community
- Assist the career teachers and other staff to help the career curriculum
- Organize and support events that encourage students to explore their passion
- Connection with post-secondary institutes
- Etc....

Admin Team:

- The CCC position allows for continuous student access throughout the day to explore various school, District and community career options.
- The CCC position supports the need to diversify the educational and career paths of our learners.
- The position aligns with Ministry mandates that include dual credit offerings and without this position finding and advocating for our students with so many offerings may not be possible.
- As we make our way through COVID finding employment for our students and making those connections to future employers has never been so important as now.
- Our Career Center Coordinator has been such a driven individual that not only has a connection to the students but to the school and community. Our numbers in all facets of careers are at their highest participation rates in years.

Our School's Career Center Coordinator:

- Due to CCC's master's degree education, has knowledge and expertise with post-secondary
- Has worked in the community as a Scout Canada and Girls Guide Commissioner and Leader and has many contacts. We rely on the contacts we have developed for the networking for our students
- Previously worked in the Inclusive Ed department, coached basketball with the school
- Has developed a connection with the student population before becoming CCC and uses this as an advantage to understand the needs of the student
- Advocates for all students but takes a special interest in those that require additional support, takes in to account various learning needs, underprivileged students, first nations.
- Has only been in the position for 4 months but has already made an impact
- Recognizes that Pathways and Partnerships is exactly what it means. Students are not expected to work alone in this world and the CCC works as a team member with the Career Teacher, support staff, parents and administration to find student success.
- Examples include:
 1. Transforming a new Career Centre into a place that is welcoming and resembles a professional atmosphere conducive to future careers.
 2. Eager to learn all the new opportunities that are available to students and finds multiple avenues to let students and parent know how to access them, such as newsletters, website, announcements, giving presentations to various classes, "tapping" kids on the shoulder, discussions with teachers, counsellors, administration.
 3. Spends quality time with students that are having emotional difficulties when applying for post-secondary.

4. Has implemented virtual mentoring sessions for students with career prospects and post-secondary institutions
5. Thoughtful consideration of location of work experience placements on how convenient it is to the student's home.
6. Has increased the number of trades students going out on work experience knowing that if they move forward with this as a career pathway, funds will be generated to go back into the programs at Spectrum.
7. Helping a refugee young lady achieve her goal of working with children and applying for a program at Camosun College that could be sponsored to become an Early Learning Care worker. Once the student was accepted we were informed that the birthdate on her Permanent Resident Card was incorrect. Our Career Center Coordinator spent many hours and days with Immigration Canada trying to sort this out. The process was long but our Career Center Coordinator devoted 100% to the cause.
8. Attempting to find a job shadow for a high achieving student that is bored with school. She has called around the city to find an engineer willing to mentor this student for a day (only one example of job shadow opportunity).

Lisa McPhail

From: Heather Macdonald [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2022 3:26 PM
To: Jordan Watters; Nicole Duncan; Tom Ferris; Angie Hentze; Elaine Leonard; Ryan Painter; Ann Whiteaker; Harold Caldwell; Deb Whitten; Trustees; Community Engagement
Cc: educ.minister@gov.bc.ca
Subject: Feedback on 2022/23 budget considerations

Categories: Green category

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Dear SD61 Trustees,

As I sat in the [REDACTED] School gym on March 16th for my daughter's spring concert (she is the grade [REDACTED] band, intermediate strings group and choir), I was struck by two things (besides how great they sounded!). First, the number of students participating was impressive as was the diversity of students represented. My daughter is in the fortunate situation that we can afford out of school music lessons should band/strings/choir be cancelled/cut back next year, but I expect she is in the minority of the music students at [REDACTED], and possibly other [REDACTED] schools in SD61. Second, the music teachers at [REDACTED] are AMAZING, and it is clear that they are devoted to the program and to building a love for music and performance in their students. It boggles my mind how we can be such a dire situation to even think about taking these opportunities away from our students.

I am also writing as the PAC Chair of [REDACTED] to voice our community's collective concerns about the proposed cuts. I won't write about the many known benefits of counsellors, custodians and music teachers for our students, as I don't think the benefits are in question at this point and I expect many other parents and teachers have shared those with you. What I'm hearing from our families are questions such as why the District has to continue paying Board office administrators such high salaries in the face of these difficult financial times for the District, what the role of District principals is, why the District can't explore alternative funding models to ensure these teachers, custodians and counsellors can keep their positions, and how, after 2 years of this crazy pandemic, that the Board can even contemplate reducing the number of certified counsellors in the District. One of [REDACTED] had the opportunity to work with the [REDACTED], when [REDACTED], and these sessions were instrumental in helping [REDACTED] work through her struggles. I know that school counsellors do not have sufficient time to see all of the students who need their help, and given the long wait times to see a counsellor in the community (and the high cost of these sessions), the District should ideally be looking at ways they can **increase** rather than reduce the number of counsellors.

Lastly, it is also very concerning that this budget vote is going ahead without two elected Board members at the table, and with such a small window between the reading of the budget and the final vote. I appreciate the challenges facing the Board at this time, but I hope that when considering the 2022/23 budget, the SD61 vision is front and centre and all students will have the "opportunity to fulfill their potential and pursue their aspirations".

Sincerely,
Heather Macdonald
[REDACTED] PAC Chair
[REDACTED]

Lisa McPhail

From: ALAINA READ [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2022 3:08 PM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Feedback on proposed budget cuts

Categories: Green category

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

School Counsellors provide an essential service to students in SD61. They offer many specialized supports within a school including: individual and group counselling; classroom-based lessons on social-emotional learning; crisis intervention and risk assessment; collaboration with parents and school staff; as well as case management and consultation with other health and mental health professionals.

The proposed budget changes would increase student-school counsellor ratios and thereby, significantly reduce the accessibility of qualified mental health care to our students. These cuts would have the greatest negative impact on children and families, especially those most vulnerable who may not be able to access counselling support by other means due to cost and long wait lists.

New research by BC Children's Hospital says two-thirds of BC youth are struggling with their mental health. Right now, our children need more access to mental health services within our schools, not less.

Thank you for hearing my concerns.

Sincerely,
Alaina Read

Sent from my iPhone

Lisa McPhail

From: Deb Whitten
Sent: Friday, April 1, 2022 7:47 AM
To: Community Engagement
Subject: Fwd: Budget cuts

Categories: Green category

Deb Whitten
Interim Superintendent
Greater Victoria School District No. 61
Office: 250 475 4117
Cell: [REDACTED]

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.

From: Colleen Kelly [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2022 11:11:55 PM
To: Deb Whitten <dwhitten@sd61.bc.ca>; Trustees <trustees@sd61.bc.ca>
Subject: Budget cuts

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CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Hello all,

I am writing to express my concern regarding the deep cuts proposed to middle school music programs... Again. I spent quite a lot of energy doing the exact same thing a year ago. As did hundreds, (maybe thousands?) of other concerned people. Apparently no one remaining on the board is able to listen to anyone who disagrees with their reckless agenda to sabotage our children's music programs. I would like this letter to be included in the Board Meeting package for April 4th 2022.

Middle school is the time to expose children to band. By high school some kids are already unwilling to try new things for fear of embarrassing themselves. If middle school music is cut, it follows that high school band will suffer significantly as well (fewer musicians, less experience, interest and skill). Our kids' overall musical education will quickly be decimated in a few short years.

I have 3 kids, one in band at [REDACTED], one in band at [REDACTED] school and one at [REDACTED] school, also in band.

Music teaches kids so much more than reading notes or learning fingering. It teaches them how to be part of team where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. It gives kids a place to fit in. It teaches responsibility, getting to practices on time. And even if music is not your thing... guess what! Learning music helps you perform better at other academics. It is a mental health benefit for kids. Do I seriously need to go on? Has it not already been said hundred times, and by people more eloquent than me? If kids' well being and education is our goal... then Music should be as mandatory as math and English. Anything less is leaving some kids behind.

At a time when mental health issues should be on everyone's mind, taking musical outlets away from middle school children is short sighted and counterproductive. In fact, I would go so far as to say it is cruel. Reconsider these cuts, or maybe this is more to the point - perhaps reconsider why you are school trustees. Because you are not acting in the best interests of my children, my family and my school system - to force us to protest, beg write letters to advocate for our children again. This is completely unacceptable. I have lost trust in my trustees. This system is broken.

Colleen Kelly

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Lisa McPhail

From: Abi Omotoso [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2022 4:35 PM
To: Community Engagement
Cc: Ian Rye; trustees@sd61.bc
Subject: Proposed cuts to SD61 school music programs
Attachments: POV_Letter_to_School_District_61_Budget_Advisory_Committee_31Mar2022.pdf

Categories: Green category

CAUTION: External email. DO NOT click links or open attachments unless you are confident about the source.

Dear SD61 Budget Advisory Committee

Please find attached a letter from Ian Rye, Chief Executive of Pacific Opera Victoria.

Thanks
Abi

ABI OMOTOSO | *Executive Associate*

Pacific Opera Victoria

Phone [REDACTED] | 925 Balmoral Road, Victoria BC V8T 1A7
pacificopera.ca

The stage is set – aria ready? | Visit PACIFICOPERA.CA to [book your subscription](#) or [make a donation](#) towards the return of opera to the Royal Theatre in 2022.



On the traditional lands of the Lekwungen speaking people, now known as the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations

31 March 2022

School District 61 Budget Advisory Committee

Via email: community@sd61.bc.ca

Dear Budget Advisory Committee

RE: Proposed cuts to school music programs

I am writing on behalf of Pacific Opera Victoria to express our concern about the proposed cuts to School District 61's music programs. We urge you to reconsider.

Music education is an extremely valuable resource to children and young people of all socioeconomic backgrounds. Music education should not be elitist and only available to children in families who are fortunate enough to afford private tuition.

We believe that the short-term financial gain that the proposed cuts will bring to the School District will be at the expense of the longer-term benefits that a music education will provide to Greater Victoria's youth. Music not only helps children to grow in self esteem, but it also builds essential skills such as co-operation, teamwork and patience.

The proposed cuts, which will affect a variety of music programs and other important musical initiatives, such as Pacific Opera Victoria's *Living Opera* music-based workshop program for elementary schools, will have a detrimental and lasting effect on music and culture in Victoria. Making music together is a way for children and young people to find connection, community, a sense of safety and belonging, and the joy of creating something that is larger than themselves. This is the worst time to be cutting these important programs.

By recommending not to approve these proposed cuts, which will restrict these school music programs, you will help to maintain accessibility for all young people.

Yours faithfully


Ian Rye, Chief Executive Officer

CC: School District 61 Trustees trustees@sd61.bc

Budget 2022-2023

Date: April 4, 2022

Presented to: Special Budget Public Board Meeting

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.

Aligning our work

Goal 1

Create an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support and improve all learners' personal and academic success.

Strategy 1:

Develop and support high quality learning opportunities through the implementation of curriculum in order to improve student achievement.

Strategy 2:

Engage and collaborate with students, families and staff to provide an inclusive learning environment that will enhance and support student learning, identities and well-being.

Strategy 3:

Address the inequity of outcomes for diverse learners in literacy, numeracy, engagement and completion rates.

Goal 2

Create a culturally responsive learning environment that will support Indigenous learners' personal and academic success.

Strategy 1:

Critically examine personal and systemic biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices to increase student and staff understanding and appreciation of Indigenous worldviews, histories and perspectives.

Strategy 2:

Engage and collaborate with local Nations, Indigenous educators, Indigenous community leaders, Elders and families to enhance Indigenous student learning and well-being and identity.

Strategy 3:

Address the inequity of outcomes for Indigenous learners in literacy, numeracy, attendance and graduation rates.

Goal 3

Create an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support all learners' physical and mental well-being.

Strategy 1:

Continue to provide professional learning opportunities to all staff in K-12 to further support implementation of social emotional learning, physical literacy and mental health literacy that improves outcomes for students and classrooms.

Strategy 2:

Work in collaboration with Ministry of Children & Family Development to provide joint educational planning and support for children and youth in care that helps develop the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to the fullest for current and future success.

Strategy 3:

Engage and collaborate with families to encourage awareness of and engagement in physical literacy and mental health literacy that improves outcomes for students in classrooms and at home.

Strategy 4:

Address the inequity of opportunity for all learners to maximize physical health and mental well-being.

Core Values

Core Values

Engagement

We work to actively engage students in their education and make them feel connected to their learning

Equity

We give each student the opportunity to fulfill their potential

Innovation

We are innovative and consistently seek ways to make positive change

Integrity

We are ethical and fair

Transparency

We are accountable for the decisions we make and how we make them

Partnerships

We create open and respectful partnerships with each member of our learning community

Respect

We respect ourselves, others and the environment

Social Responsibility

We share responsibility to work with and inspire students to create a better world

Sustainability

We are proactive in the stewardship of the resources of our organization, our community and our planet

Goals

Goal 1

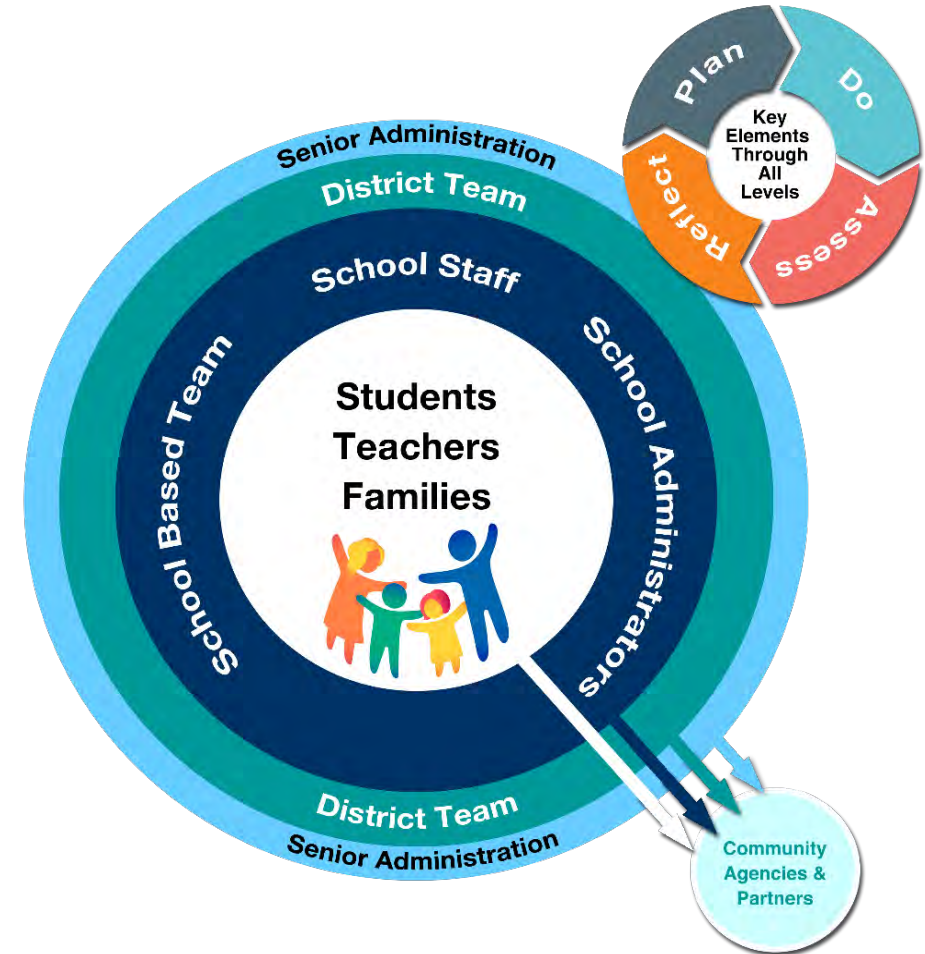
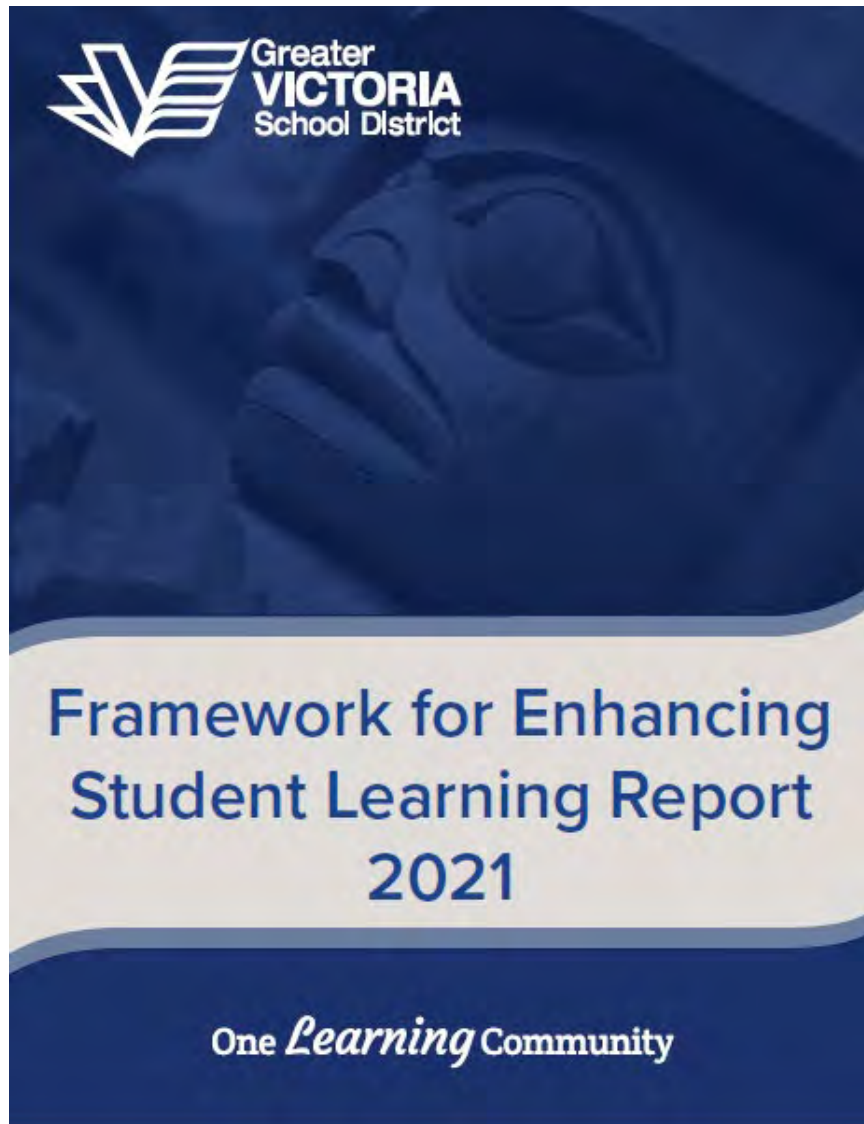
Create an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support and improve all learners' personal and academic success.

Goal 2

Create a culturally responsive learning environment that will support Indigenous learners' personal and academic success.

Goal 3

Create an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support all learners' physical and mental well-being.



Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (FESL)

Strategic Plan

Goal 1

Create an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support and improve all learners' personal and academic success.

Goal 2

Create a culturally responsive learning environment that will support Indigenous learners' personal and academic success.

Goal 3

Create an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support all learners' physical and mental well-being.

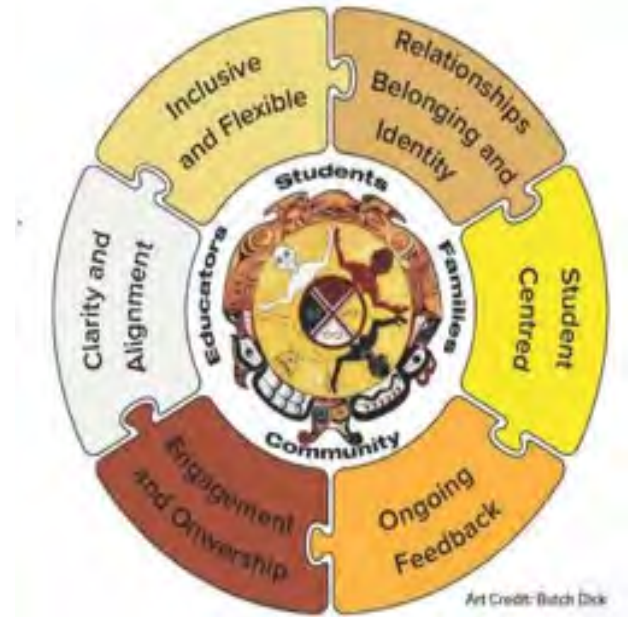
Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (FESL)

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 One

Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (FESL)

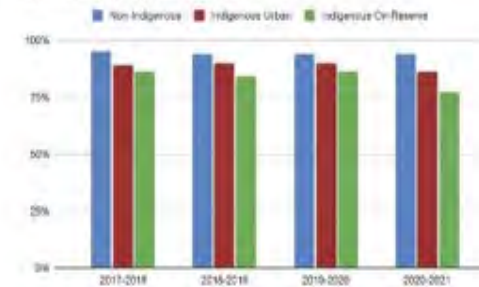
Goal Two of the Greater Victoria School District's Strategic Plan is to create a culturally responsive learning environment that will support Indigenous learners' personal and academic success.

To realize this goal, three strategies were developed:

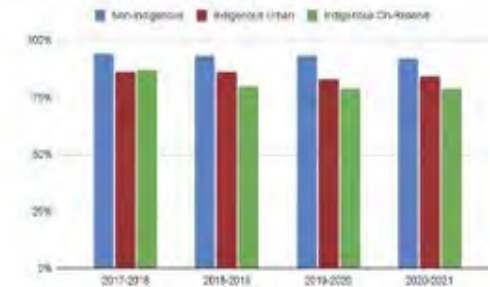
1. Critically examine personal and systemic biases
2. Support Indigenous student identity through collaboration with Indigenous community
3. Address the academic inequity of outcomes for Indigenous learners

GVSD, located on the traditional lands of the Lekwungen peoples of the Songhees Nation and Esquimalt Nation, is committed to equity of opportunity and outcomes for Indigenous learners. The Indigenous Education Department, in collaboration with schools, provides programs and services throughout the school-year to K-12 students who have self-identified as having Indigenous ancestry. Each educational services department (Learning Team, Pathways and Partnerships, Indigenous Education) as well as Information Technology for Learning, Facilities, and Human Resource Services are participating in various learning activities and actions related to Goal Two of the Strategic Plan 2020-2025. The shared work of achieving Goal Two is guided by Indigenous community, families and partners, including the Songhees Nation, Esquimalt Nation, Métis Nation Greater Victoria, and Urban Indigenous Council representatives (the Four Houses).

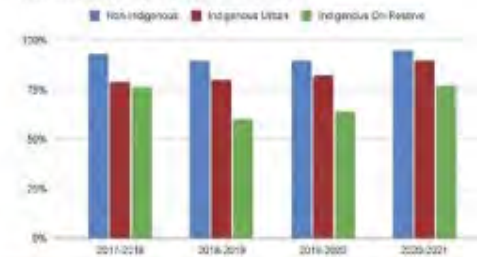
Elementary (1-5) Attendance Rate %



Middle (6-8) Attendance Rate %



Secondary (9-12) Attendance Rate %



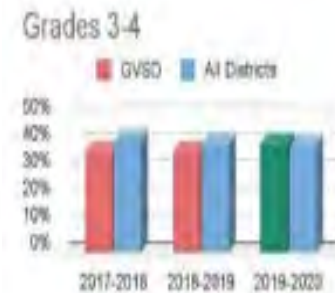
Goal Two

Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (FESL)

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



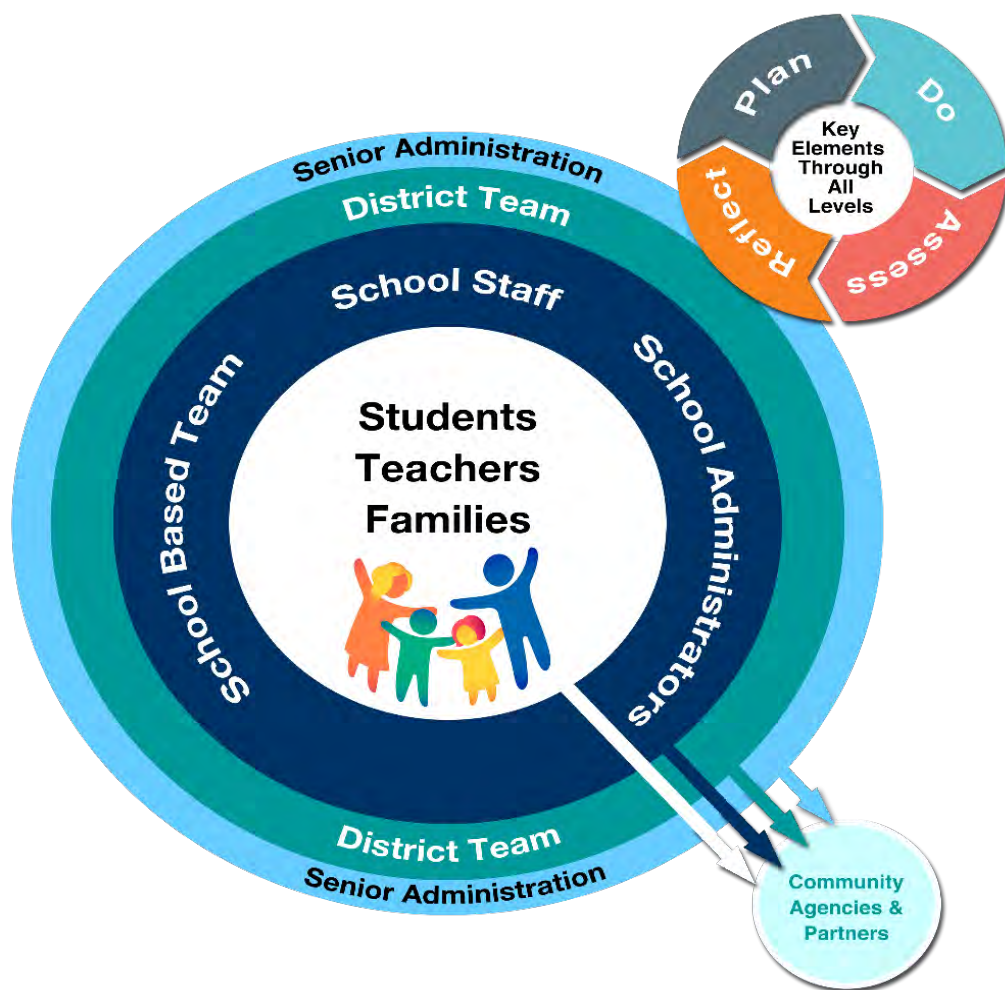
Goal Three

Aging Infrastructure



Climate Action Initiatives





Goal 1

Create an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support and improve all learners' personal and academic success.

Strategy 1:

Develop and support high quality learning opportunities through the implementation of curriculum in order to improve student achievement.

Strategy 2:

Engage and collaborate with students, families and staff to provide an inclusive learning environment that will enhance and support student learning, identities and well-being.

Strategy 3:

Address the inequity of outcomes for diverse learners in literacy, numeracy, engagement and completion rates.

Goal 2

Create a culturally responsive learning environment that will support Indigenous learners' personal and academic success.

Strategy 1:

Critically examine personal and systemic biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices to increase student and staff understanding and appreciation of Indigenous worldviews, histories and perspectives.

Strategy 2:

Engage and collaborate with local Nations, Indigenous educators, Indigenous community leaders, Elders and families to enhance Indigenous student learning and well-being and identity.

Strategy 3:

Address the inequity of outcomes for Indigenous learners in literacy, numeracy, attendance and graduation rates.

Goal 3

Create an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support all learners' physical and mental well-being.

Strategy 1:

Continue to provide professional learning opportunities to all staff in K-12 to further support implementation of social emotional learning, physical literacy and mental health literacy that improves outcomes for students and classrooms.

Strategy 2:

Work in collaboration with Ministry of Children & Family Development to provide joint educational planning and support for children and youth in care that helps develop the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to the fullest for current and future success.

Strategy 3:

Engage and collaborate with families to encourage awareness of and engagement in physical literacy and mental health literacy that improves outcomes for students in classrooms and at home.

Strategy 4:

Address the inequity of opportunity for all learners to maximize physical health and mental well-being.

Board Responsibility

- Per legislation, must approve a budget where revenues and expenses are equal (balanced budget)
- Board of Education is a corporate board
- **Respectful of the governance role: Board's sole responsibility to determine the options to balance the 2022/23 budget**

Values/Guiding Principles

- Drafted in Board working sessions
- Approved by the Board
- Trustee preparation and Board deliberations should reference Values/Guiding Principles throughout
- Students at Centre
- Relationships
- Indigenous
- Alignment
- Timelines
- Collaboration
- Sustainability

Values/Guiding Principles

- Students at Centre
 - Primary stakeholder
 - Voice and agency
 - Every student
 - Unique
 - Differing needs
 - Data & stories
- Relationships
 - Respect
 - Recognition of expertise and diverse opinion
 - Ability to have civil discourse
 - Transparency
 - Understanding over time
 - Communicate clearly & regularly

Values/Guiding Principles

- Indigenous
 - Culturally respectful and responsive
 - Needs of Indigenous people
 - Regularly set tables with Nations, Metis and UPHIA
 - Staff attend when invited
 - Indigenous Education Department = conduit
- Alignment
 - Strategic Plan
 - Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (FESL)
 - Recognize constraint
 - Ability to do *some* things, but not *all*

Values/Guiding Principles

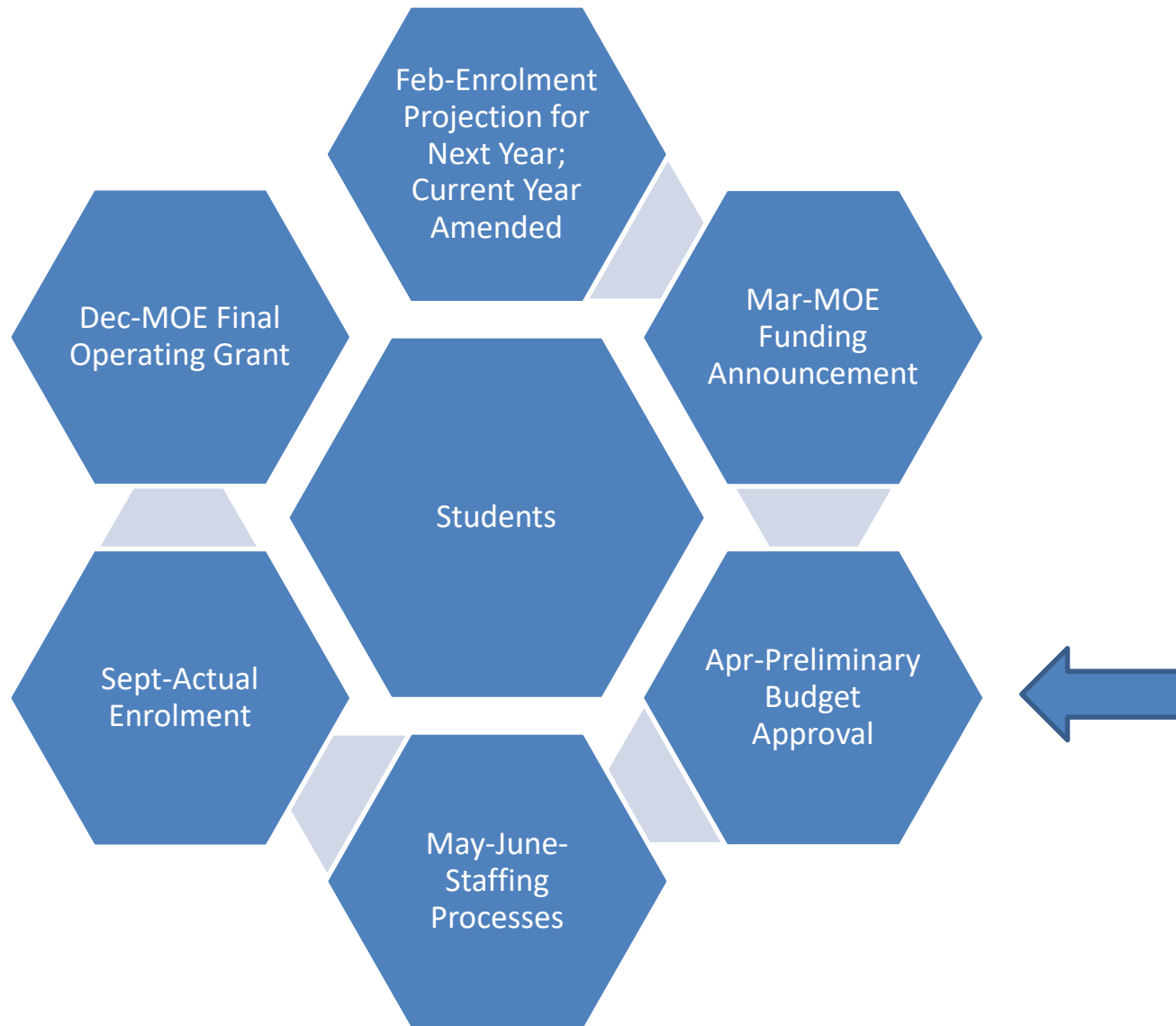
- Timelines
 - Meet system, staffing and contractual obligations
 - Stability
 - No later than April 11th
- Collaboration
 - Rights Holders and Stakeholders understanding of budget
 - Input and impact of options
 - Co-creation
 - People should feel heard
 - Quiet voices require special attention

Values/Guiding Principles

- Sustainability
 - Efficiencies
 - Risk management
 - Health & safety
 - Environmental practices
 - Less reliance on surplus
 - Priorities and budgets change from year to year
 - Protect reserves
 - 3-year forecasts

What is New?

- Budget Advisory Committee
- Ministry order/policy re surplus holdings
- Ministry order/policy re 3 year budget estimates
- 3rd Reading April 7, 2022 (last year June 3)
- Framework for Enhancing Student Learning



Budget Cycle

Budget Cycles

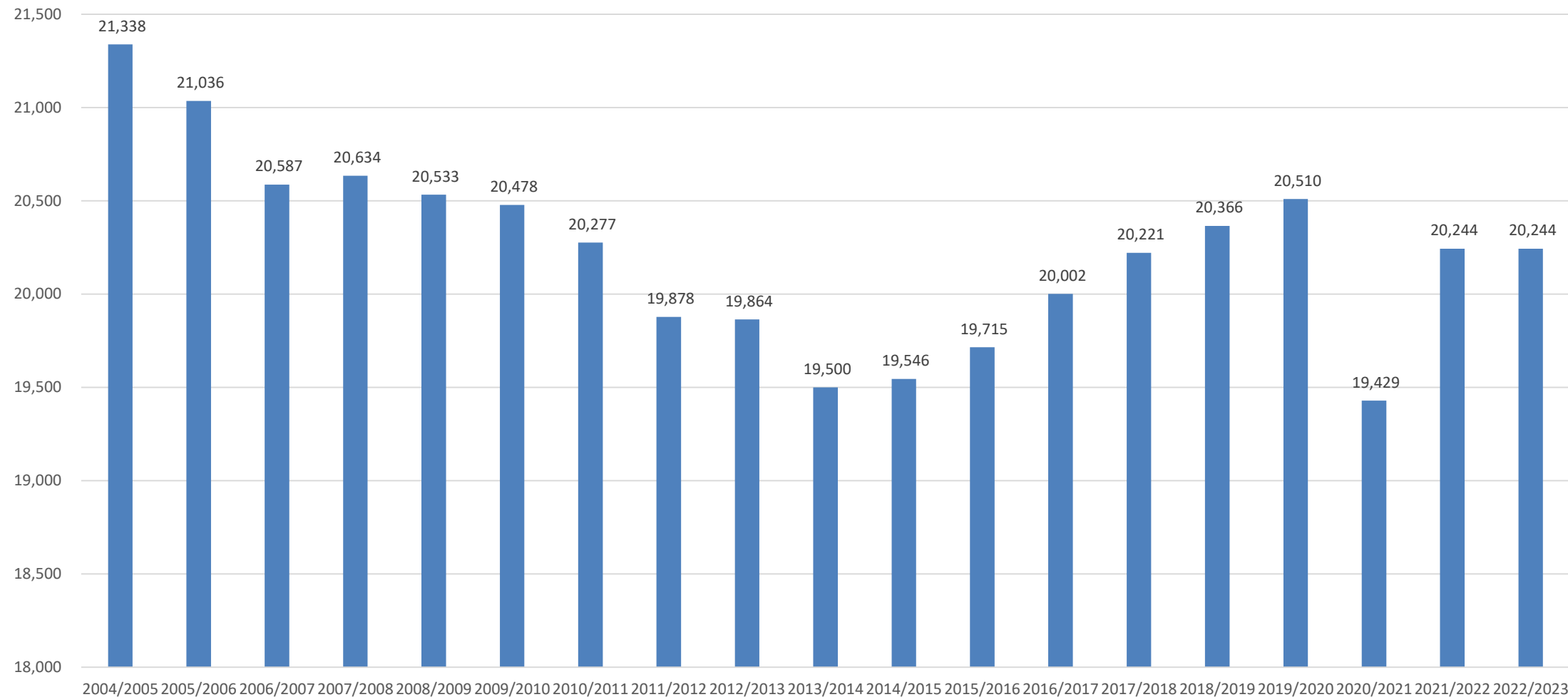
In public education there are two official budget plans

- “Annual” approved by June 30 – Based on projected enrolment and forecasted revenues
- “Amended” approved by February 28 – based on actual enrolments and further knowledge of revenues such as international tuition fees
- Revenues are adjusted throughout the year with February and May enrolment counts, holdback funds, special grants
- Students and their program needs change throughout the school year

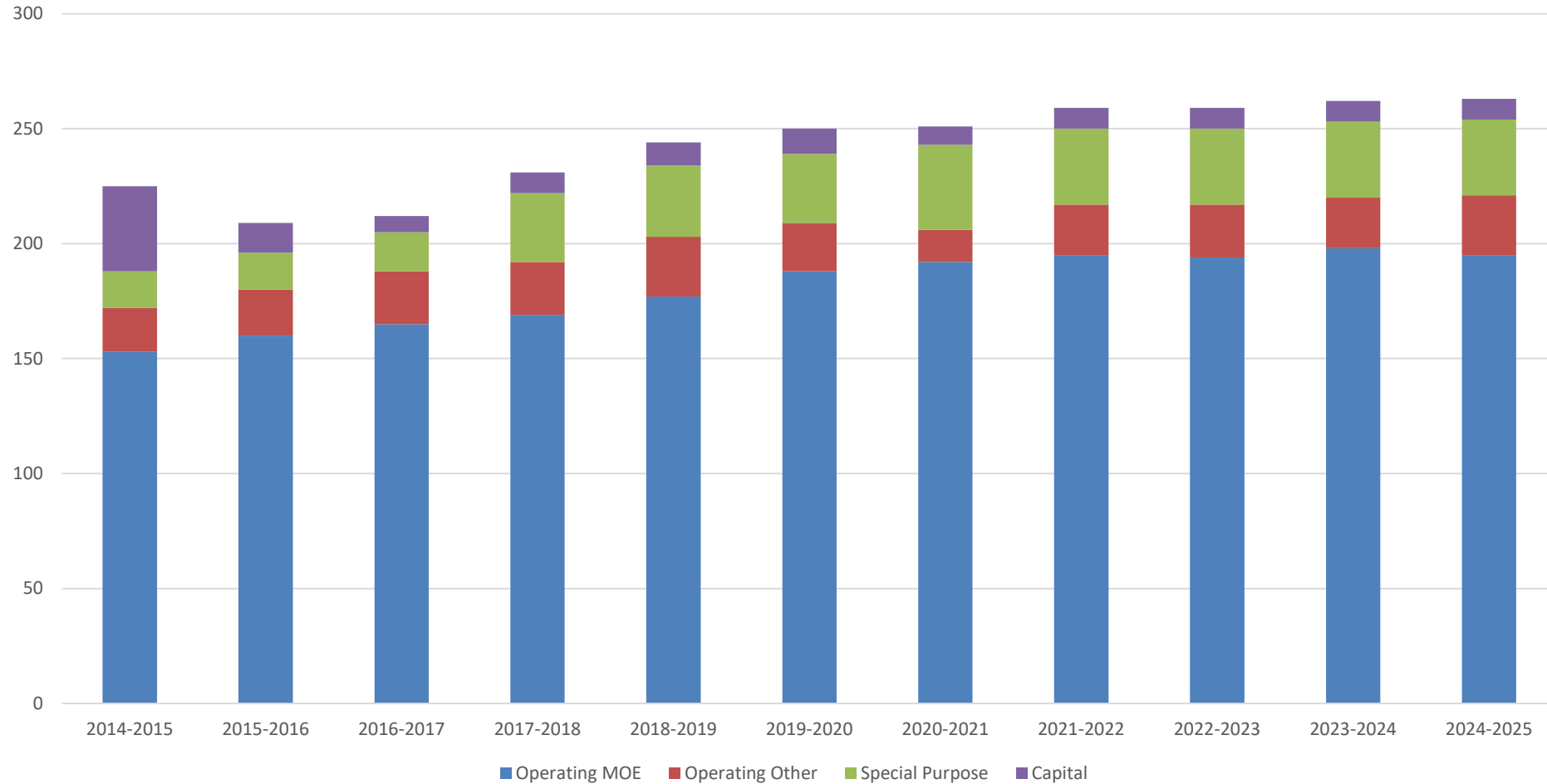
Enrolment & Provincial Grants

Year	Budget	Actual	% Change (Actual vs. Budget)	Preliminary Provincial Grants	Amended Budget Provincial Grants	Financial Statement Projected for 2021/2022	% Change (Financial Statement vs. Preliminary Provincial Grants)
2018/2019	19,451	19,668	1.12%	175,523,987	179,170,950	180,271,746	2.70%
2019/2020	19,664	19,807	0.73%	183,560,933	184,910,855	188,521,379	2.70%
2020/2021	19,783	19,465	-1.61%	191,640,691	190,792,445	191,739,593	0.05%
2021/2022	19,416	19,866	2.32%	191,094,326	197,021,609	197,021,609	3.10%
2022/2023	19,866			196,751,674			
2023/2024	20,042			197,977,753			
2024/2025	19,962			197,349,141			
* Italics = Projections							

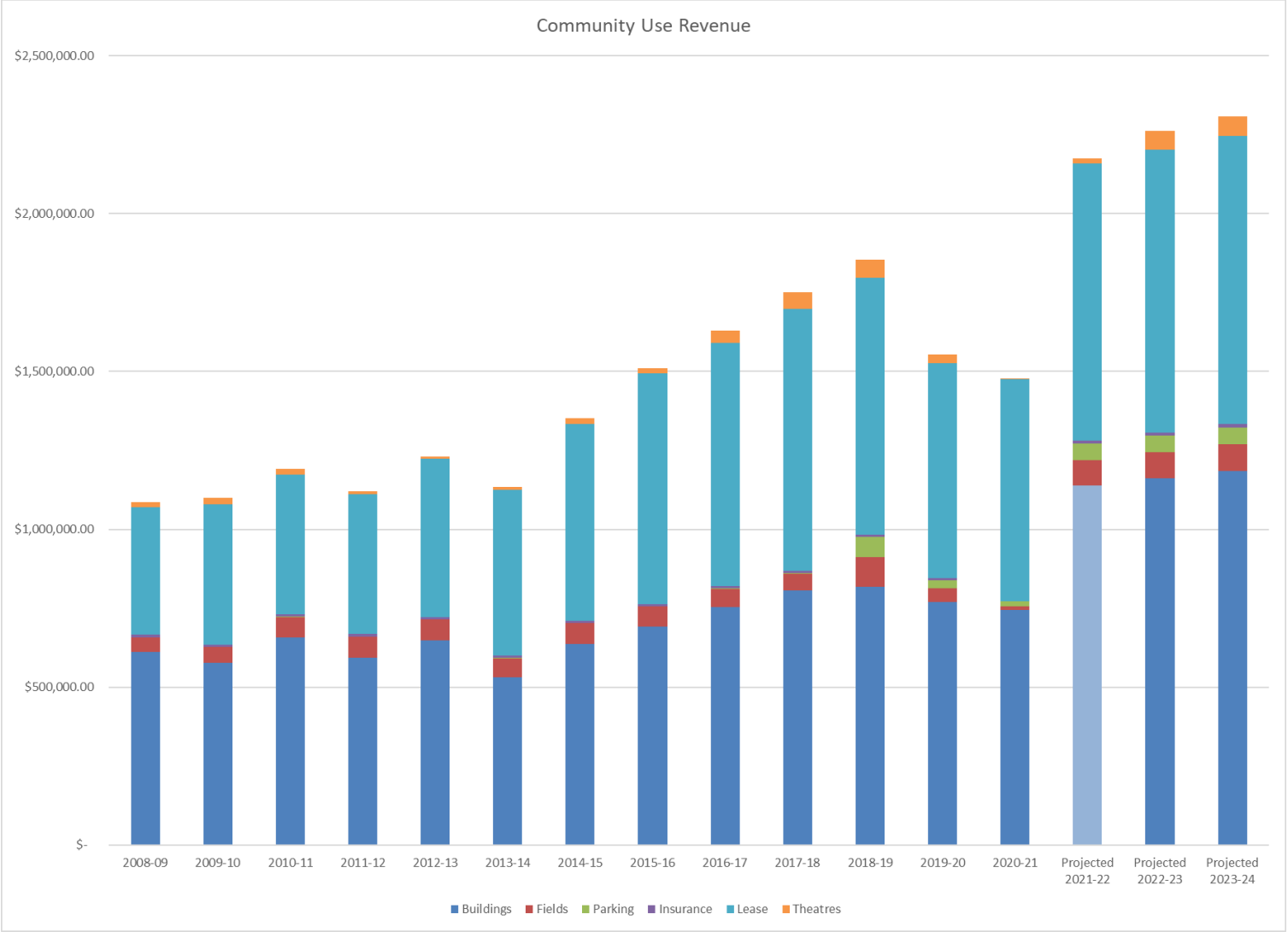
Enrolment



Revenue

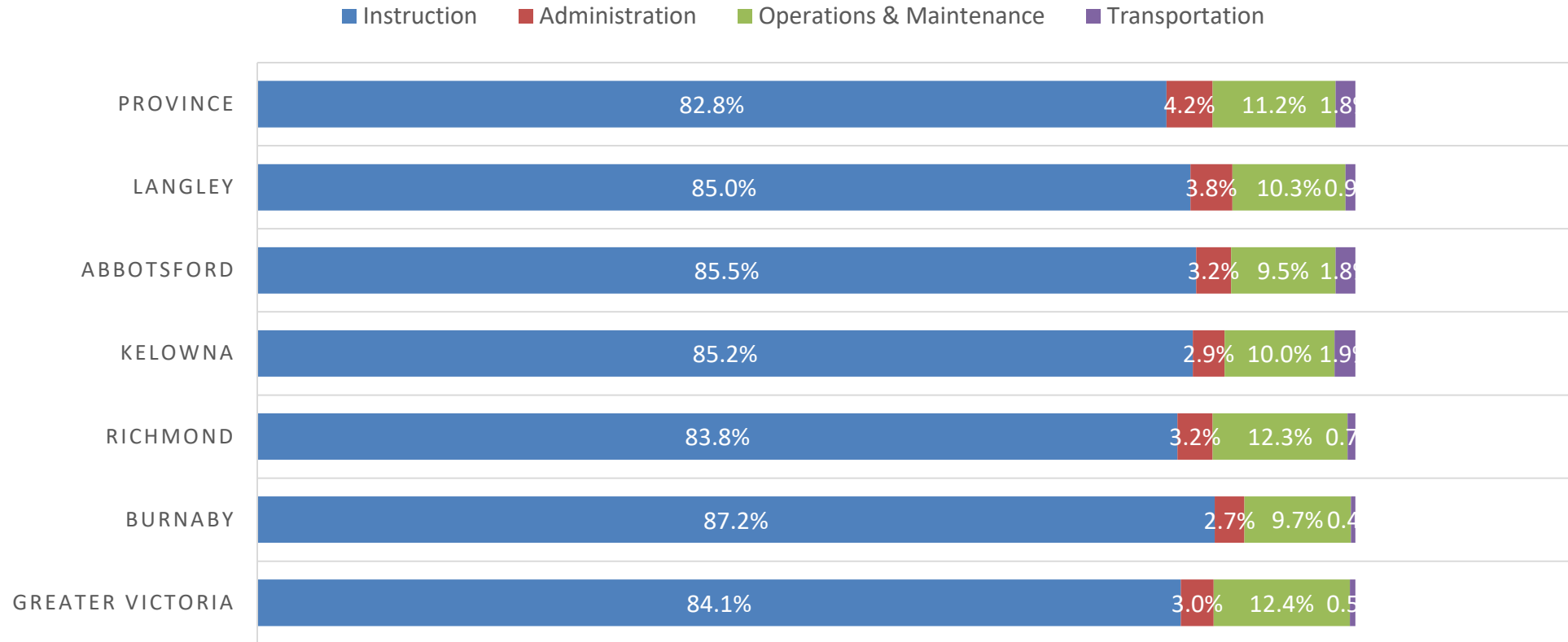


Community Use – Revenue



How Does SD61 Compare?

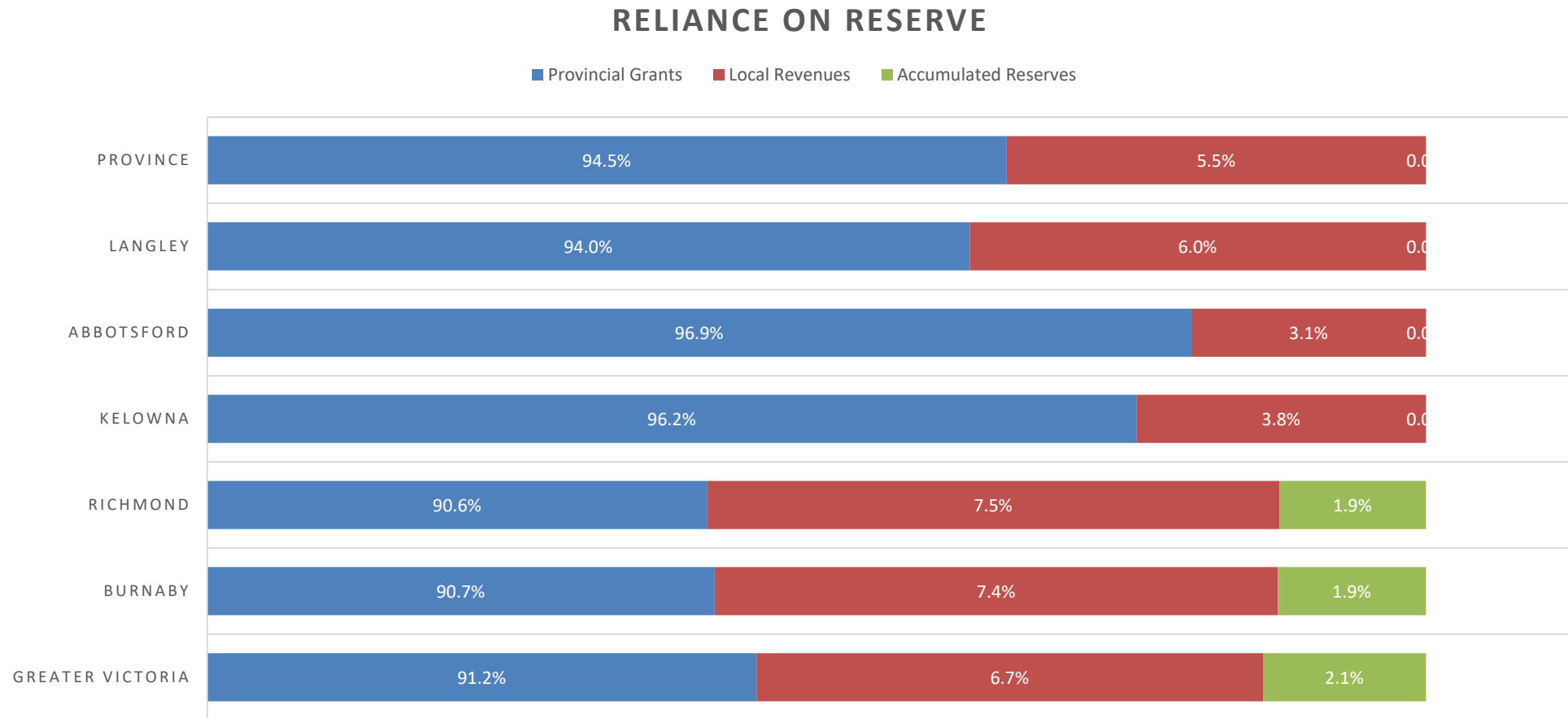
SD61 AND OTHER DISTRICTS



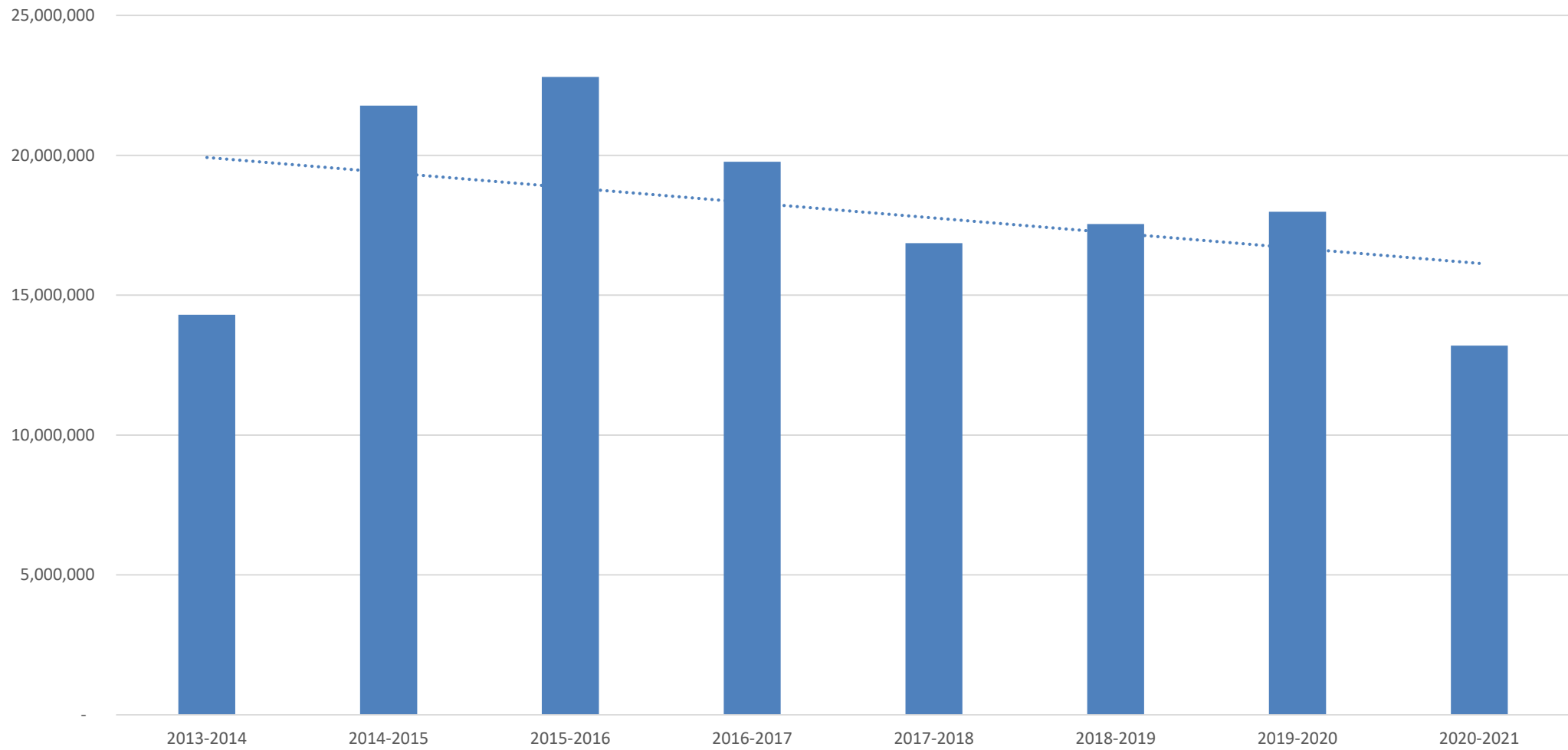
Accumulated Operating Reserves (Surplus)

- **Accumulated operating reserves/surpluses provide a source of funds for:**
 - Unexpected decline in revenue or unavoidable expenditures that were not planned for in the budget contingency
 - One-time expenditures such as equipment, or portable classrooms etc.
 - This funding is finite so there is a risk of using these funds to pay for on-going expenditures

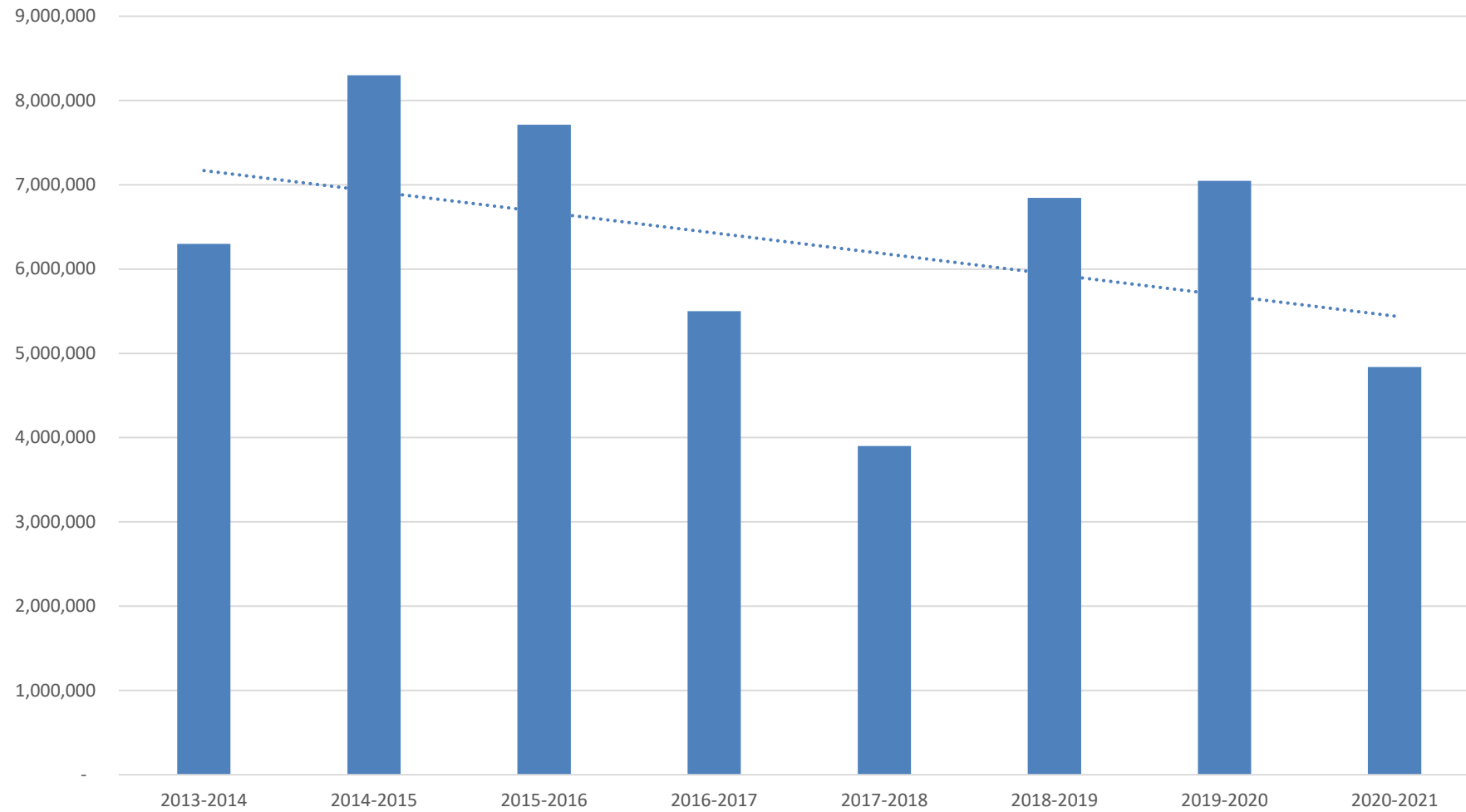
More Reliance on Accumulated Reserves?



Surplus History - Overall



Surplus Budgeted to Balance Next Year



History of Accumulated Operating Reserves

	Actual Financials (Opening)	Surplus/(Use of Reserve to Balance Budget)	Equipment	Balance	Contractually Committed and Carry Forwards		Balance Contingency	% of Operating Expenses
2015/16	21,775,666	2,320,877	(1,296,116)	22,800,427	(10,448,070)		12,352,357	6.87%
2016/17	22,800,427	2,955,704	(5,986,567)	19,769,564	(10,494,970)	▲	9,274,594	5.02%
2017/18	19,769,564	(44,437)	(2,865,770)	16,859,357	(10,572,661)	▲	6,286,696	3.32%
2018/19	16,859,357	1,204,571	(3,236,043)	14,827,885	(8,664,131)	▲	6,163,754	3.07%
2019/20	14,827,885	5,221,324	(2,069,882)	17,979,327	(8,141,693)	▲	9,837,634	4.83%
2020/21	17,979,327	(9,822,003)	(1,000,000)	7,157,324	(4,377,294)	▲	2,780,030	1.30%
2021/22	13,192,739	(6,126,523)	-	7,066,216	(5,098,575)		1,967,641	0.73%

Unallocated Reserve – 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

Forecasted Accumulated Operating Reserve Balance at June 30, 2022?

Accumulated Operating Reserve at June 30, 2021	13,192,739
Changes for the year:	
Net Revenue (Expense) for the year	-6,126,523
Tangible Capital Assets Purchased	Incl. above
Accumulated Operating Reserve at June 30, 2022	7,066,216

2022-2023 Projected Structural Deficit	
2021-2022 Beginning Structural Deficit - Presented to Board June 2021	\$ (5,658)
2021-2022 Enrolment growth 25% overhead contribution	931
ISP Growth Profit Margin	919
Rentals increase (net of cost increases)	861
2021-2022 Budgeted Reserve	821
2021-2022 Salary Differential Increase	523
MyEd BC Budget Reduction (rolled into Digital Services Recovery)	217
2021-2022 Unique Geographic Factors Increase	159
Bussing & Fleet savings	90
Elections Revenue	56
2022-2023 Enrolment growth 25% overhead contribution	55
Anti-Racism (one-time expense)	50
Changes that Reduced the Deficit:	4,682
Average teacher salary increase	(1,981)
Move capital assets back to Operating (2021-2022 paid for from Local Capital)	(1,000)
Add back teacher hiring lag built into 2021/22	(635)
Benefit increases (teacher & TTOC)	(501)
Average TTOC Increase (average rate and absences)	(454)
Utilities	(330)
Elections Expense (based on 2018/19 actual costs)	(323)
2021-2022 Benefit Premium Holiday	(297)
Sundance Costs	(173)
Labour Relations Cost	(128)
Custodial increases (new spaces)	(103)
Other costs (salary increments, contract increases, software maintenance etc.)	(56)
JJEC approved CUPE 947 Salary adjustments	(56)
Legal Costs	(50)
2021-2022 ISP Travel Reduction	(19)
Changes that Increased the Deficit:	(6,106)
2022-2023 Beginning Structural Deficit (estimate)	\$ (7,082)

Risks

- The budget is prepared based on the known information at the time of preparation
- When the budget is prepared, an assessment takes place to determine whether the risks should be costed
- Historical factors that have caused variances include:
 - Ministry grants received later in the year (i.e. holdbacks) unexpected
 - Benefit changes (egg pension rates)
 - Lack of available workforce (egg no EA's or TTOC's to fill absent/vacant positions)
 - Changes in projected ministry grants
 - Colder or milder winters result in changes in utilities spending
 - Changes in salaries/enrolment
 - Changes unusual legal costs
 - Increased absenteeism and replacement costs due to COVID

What is available to the Board to balance the 2022/2023 Shortfall?

- Reduction Options Proposed (Savings)
- New Reduction Options
- Use of Carry Forward (unappropriated surplus)
- Calculated risk – Additional Carry Forward/Enrolment/Revenue
- Use Local Capital for Equipment without transfer from operating
- Use of Reserves (not recommended) \$1.9m max

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

Balancing the Budget

What is a Balanced Budget?

Revenues + Surplus Used = Expenses

Information Needed to Balance

1. 3-year deficit projection
2. Projected carry forward from 2021/2022 year
3. Reserve target
4. Savings/Reductions
5. Asks
6. Options

Structural Deficit

- 2022-2023 (\$7M)
- 2023-2024 (\$5M)
- 2024-2025 (\$3M)

	Actual			Projected			
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Total Revenue	202,051,047	208,934,017	205,717,787	216,940,056	216,996,482	220,270,327	220,858,436
Total Expenses	200,846,476	203,712,693	207,965,873	223,066,579	223,078,830	224,458,246	223,290,129
Operating Surplus (Deficit) for the year	1,204,571	5,221,324	(2,248,086)	(6,126,523)	(6,082,348)	(4,187,919)	(2,431,693)
Total Net Transfers	(3,236,043)	(2,069,881)	(2,538,503)	-	(1,000,000)	(1,000,000)	(1,000,000)
Total Operating Surplus (Deficit), for the year	(2,031,472)	3,151,443	(4,786,589)	(6,126,523)	(7,082,348)	(5,187,919)	(3,431,693)
Surplus Used	2,031,472	-	4,786,589	6,126,523			
Surplus/Deficit	-	3,151,443	-	-	(7,082,348)	(5,187,919)	(3,431,693)

Projected Carry Forward

- \$800,000 projected to be available at June 30, 2022
- Can be used as revenue for 2022/23
- Risk:
- If the Board wants to take on some risk it could project more than \$800,000

Reserve Target

- Target in draft revised policy = 2%-4% or \$4m to \$8m
- Current reserve = 1% or \$2m
- Need save \$2m operating \$\$ over the next 3 years to reach minimum reserve target by 2024/2025

Reserve – Ministry Policy

- Must hold some reserve funds
- Criteria:
 - Specific purpose
 - Limited timeframe
 - Alignment to Strategic Plan and Framework for Enhancing Student Learning
- Ministry Order/Policy
- COVID showed the system rainy days are a reality
- Hold reserves to smooth impacts to services in bad years
- Draft revised policy

Savings/Reductions

- Considerations
- One-Time vs On-Going

Savings/Reductions: Counsellor Options

2 Counsellors OR	Counsellor Reduction to minimum Collective Agreement Ratio	The Teacher collective agreement restored language sets the student counsellor ratio at 693:1. This consideration reduces 8.0 FTE counsellors.	Savings:	\$ 924,480
4 Counsellors OR	Youth & Family Counselor Reduction in Community LINK	Reduction of 7 of 26 contracted Youth & Family Workers (YFC's) and 2 Outreach Workers to move 5.5 school-based teacher counselors into the CL funding allocation.	Savings:	\$ 623,110
12 Counsellors AND	Counsellors to Community LINK	Moves funding of some school-based teacher counsellors from the operating grant to the Community LINK special purpose grant. Maintains number of school-based teacher counsellors in the District.	Savings:	\$ 201,537
9 Counsellors	Counsellor Reduction Based on Historical Vacancy Trends	The District consistently has 0.8 FTE Counsellors that are budgeted but are not filled due to the lack of qualified applicants.	Savings:	\$ 92,448

Savings/Reductions: Music Options

1 OR NEW OR NEW OR NEW OR NEW AND	Music	Middle Band and Strings	Reduces 11.03 Teacher FTE. Eliminates middle school music because not funded by block funding.	Savings:	\$ 952,908
	Music	Middle Band and Strings Partial Reduction	Reduces 5.52 Teacher FTE (50%)	Savings:	\$ 476,454
	Music	Middle Band and Strings Partial Reduction	Reduces 4.41 Teacher FTE (40%)	Savings:	\$ 381,163
	Musc	Middle Band and Strings Option 2	Reduces 3.31 Teacher FTE in 2022-2023 (30%); reduces further 2.719 Teacher FTE in 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 (no additional reduction in 2024-2025). Total reduction in 3 years: 6.027 Teacher FTE (55%)	Savings	\$ 285,864
	Music	Middle Band and Strings Partial Reduction	Reduces 3.31 Teacher FTE (30%)	Savings:	\$ 285,864
AND	Music	Middle Band and Strings Option 1	Reduces 2.207 Teacher FTE in 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 (no additional reduction in 2023-2024); reduces further 1.822 Teacher FTE in 2024-2025. Total reduction in 3 years: 4.029 Teacher FTE (37%)	Savings	\$ 190,478
11 AND	Music	Elementary Strings	Reduces 1.81 FTE Teachers.	Savings:	\$ 208,817
26	Music	District Ukulele	Reduces 0.14 FTE Teacher FTE	Savings:	\$ 16,525

Savings/Reductions: Custodian Options

8	Custodial	Daytime Custodians - Elementary	Reduces 28 FTE CUPE 382 daytime custodians; adds 14.13 FTE CUPE 382 evening custodians; adds 0.69 FTE CUPE 382 Sub-Foreman; adds a 4.0 FTE CUPE 382 fly crew; adds vehicle lease and operating costs for fly crew to attend to emergent cleanups and minor repairs through operations	Savings:	\$ 414,750
14	Custodial	Daytime Custodians - Secondary	Reduces 7 FTE CUPE 382 daytime custodians; adds 3.5 FTE CUPE 382 evening custodians; adds 0.13 CUPE 382 Sub-Foreman; fly crew included in elementary and middle costs.	Savings:	\$ 210,883
13	Custodial	Daytime Custodians - Middle	Reduces 11 FTE CUPE 382 daytime custodians; adds 5.5 FTE CUPE 382 evening custodians; adds 0.2 CUPE 382 Sub-Foreman; adds a 2.0 FTE CUPE 382 fly crew; adds vehicle lease and operating costs for fly crew to attend to emergent cleanups and minor repairs through operations	Savings:	\$ 166,939
NEW	Custodial	Daytime Custodians - Elementary and Middle Shared	Reduces 19 FTE CUPE 382 daytime custodians; adds 8.31 FTE evening custodians; no CUPE 382 fly crew	Savings	\$ 654,902
NEW	Custodial	Daytime Custodians - Reduce 8 Small Elementary by 2 Hours/Day; Remainder Elementary and Middle Shared	Reduces 17 FTE CUPE 382 daytime custodians, adds 6.56 FTE evening custodians, no CUPE 382 fly crew	Savings	\$ 634,016
NEW	Custodial	Daytime Custodians - 8 Small Elementary Shifts reduced by 2 Hrs/Day	Reduces 2.00 FTE CUPE 382 daytime custodians; no CUPE 382 fly crew	Savings	\$ 123,302

Savings/Reductions: Career Centers

7 OR NEW	Career Centre	Career Centre Coordinators at Secondary	Reduces 8.1 FTE CUPE 947 Career Centre Coordinators at Secondary Schools who serve as a link between students and post secondary institutions and businesses.	Savings:	\$ 342,490
	Career Centre	Career Centre Teachers at Secondary	Reduces 1.0 FTE teacher time. 1 block (0.143 FTE) of teacher time from each of 7 Secondary Schools	Savings:	\$ 115,560

Asks/Re-Allocation/Re-Alignment

Alignment

- Strategic Plan
- Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (FESL)
- Recognize constraint
- Ability to do *some* things, but not *all*

The Board must balance:

- Student voice and agency
- Every student's success
- Unique and differing needs

With:

- Health & safety
- Liability
- Climate

Options for the Board's Consideration

- **Characteristics**
- **3-Year Forecasts**
- **Guiding Principles**
- **Discussion Points**
- **Result**

Option 1

- Maintains Status Quo Staffing
- No re-investment
- **High risk**
- Out of compliance
- Least reduction in services

Discussion Points:

Does not balance			
Provides \$0 reserve until 3rd year; could contribute \$203,704			
Does not meet Ministry nor SD61 Surplus/Reserve policy			
Does not advance Strategic Plan or FESL			
Does not slow or halt deferred maintenance nor info tech liability			
Utilizes 100% of the available surplus and reserve			
Maintains Community LINK			
Least impact on employees			
Depletes Local Capital Reserve			

Option 1

3-Year Projection		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Surplus/(Deficit)		(7,082,348)	(5,187,919)	(3,431,693)
Savings (Years 2/3 = Yr 1 less one-time)		2,032,348	1,082,348	1,082,348
Asks		-	-	-
Use of Local Capital for >\$5,000 F&E		1,000,000	1,000,000	403,049
Surplus: Use of Projected 21-22		800,000	800,000	800,000
Risk		1,350,000	1,350,000	1,350,000
Reserve: Use of Current		1,900,000	-	-
Reserve: Addition to meet 4% target		-	-	(203,704)
Result (Balanced = \$0)		-	(955,571)	0

Option 2

- **Balances Majority with Reductions**
- **No re-investment**
- **Low risk**
- **Out of compliance**
- **Most reduction in services**

Discussion Points:

Balances all three years		
Maintains and adds to accumulated reserve: \$3.6m by year 3		
Does not meet Ministry nor SD61 Surplus/Reserve policy (\$4m)		
Does not advance Strategic Plan or FESL		
Does not slow or halt deferred maintenance nor info tech liability		
Utilizes 100% of the available surplus		
Reduces Community LINK Youth Family Counsellor Contractors		
Most impact on employees & services		

Option 2

3-Year Projection		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Surplus/(Deficit)		(7,082,348)	(5,187,919)	(3,431,693)
Savings (Years 2/3 = Yr 1 less one-time)		5,428,440	4,362,880	4,362,880
Asks		-	-	-
Use of Local Capital for >\$5,000 F&E		853,908	25,039	-
Surplus: Use of Projected 21-22		800,000	800,000	800,000
Risk		-		
Reserve: Use of Current		-		
Reserve: Addition to meet 4% target		-		(1,731,187)
Result (Balanced = \$0)		-	(0)	0

Option 3

- Balances Majority with Reductions
- Re-Investment
- High Risk
- Out of compliance

Discussion Points:

Balances all three years			
Reduces and then adds to accumulated reserve: \$2.5m by year 3			
Does not meet Ministry nor SD61 Surplus/Reserve policy (\$4m)			
Advances Strategic Plan, FESL and Infrastructure goals			
Slows deferred maintenance and addresses maintenance and info tech liability			
Utilizes 100% of the available surplus			
Reduces Community LINK Youth Family Counsellor Contractors			
High impact on employees and services			

Option 3

3-Year Projection		2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Surplus/(Deficit)		(7,082,348)	(5,187,919)	(3,431,693)
Savings (Years 2/3 = Yr 1 less one-time)		5,256,227	4,190,667	4,190,667
Asks		(1,809,821)	(1,809,821)	(1,809,821)
Use of Local Capital for >\$5,000 F&E		1,000,000	657,073	0
Surplus: Use of Projected 21-22		800,000	800,000	800,000
Risk		1,350,000	1,350,000	1,350,000
Reserve: Use of Current		485,942	0	0
Reserve: Addition to meet 4% target		0	0	(1,099,153)
Result (Balanced = \$0)		0	(0)	0

Option 4

- **Balances Majority with Reductions**
- **Re-Investment**
- **Medium Risk**
- **Out of compliance**

Discussion Points:

Balances all three years				
Maintains current and then adds to accumulated reserve: \$2.9m by year 3				
Does not meet Ministry nor SD61 Surplus/Reserve policy (\$4m)				
Advances some Strategic Plan, FESL and Infrastructure goals				
Slows some deferred maintenance and addresses some maintenance and info tech liability				
Utilizes 100% of the available surplus				
Reduces Community LINK Youth Family Counsellor Contractors				
Depletes Local Capital reserve				
High impact on employees and services				
Additional Music savings Year 3 under Option 2				
Adds back some EA relief and Collab time budgets in Year 2/3				
Network infrastructure paid from local capital in Year 1/2				

Option 4

3-Year Projection			2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Surplus/(Deficit)			(7,082,348)	(5,187,919)	(3,431,693)
Savings			4,722,674	3,314,250	3,371,656
Asks			(1,153,472)	(1,153,472)	(1,153,472)
Use of Local Capital for >\$5,000 F&E			1,388,855	902,850	111,344
Surplus: Use of Projected 21-22			800,000	800,000	800,000
Risk			1,324,291	1,324,291	1,324,291
Reserve: Use of Current			0	0	0
Reserve: Addition to meet 4% target			0	0	(1,022,126)
Result (Balanced = \$0)			0	(0)	0

Option 5

- **Balances Majority with Reductions**
- **Re-Investment**
- **Lower Risk**
- **Meets Compliance**
- **Significant Yr 3 Investment**

Discussion Points:

Balances all three years				
Maintains current and then adds to accumulated reserve: \$4m by year 3				
Meets Ministry and SD61 Surplus/Reserve policy (\$4m)				
Advances some Strategic Plan, FESL and Infrastructure goals				
Slows some deferred maintenance and addresses some maintenance and info tech liability				
Utilizes 100% of the available surplus				
Reduces Community LINK Youth Family Counsellor Contractors				
High impact on employees and services				
Ability to invest in Year 3: SP, FESL, Add backs from Yr 1/2, Infrastructure				

Option 5

3-Year Projection			2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Surplus/(Deficit)			(7,082,348)	(5,187,919)	(3,431,693)
Savings			5,225,820	5,225,820	5,225,820
Asks			(1,043,472)	(1,043,472)	(2,144,127)
Use of Local Capital for >\$5,000 F&E			1,000,000	155,571	0
Surplus: Use of Projected 21-22			800,000	800,000	800,000
Risk			1,100,000	1,100,000	600,000
Reserve: Use of Current			0	0	0
Reserve: Addition to meet 4% target			0	(1,050,000)	(1,050,000)
Result (Balanced = \$0)			0	(0)	0

Options Summary

2022-2023 by Category	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
Surplus/Deficit	(7,082,348)	(7,082,348)	(7,082,348)	(7,082,348)	(7,082,348)
Reserve Additions	-	-	-	-	-
Use of Existing Reserve	1,900,000	-	485,942	-	-
Use of 21-22 Surplus	800,000	800,000	800,000	800,000	800,000
Use of Local Capital	1,000,000	853,908	1,000,000	1,388,855	1,000,000
Risk	1,350,000	-	1,350,000	1,324,291	1,100,000
New Spending	-	-	1,809,821	1,153,472	1,043,472
Reductions	2,032,348	5,428,440	5,256,227	4,722,674	5,225,820
Proposed Savings	7,082,348	7,082,348	7,082,348	7,082,348	7,082,348
Balanced Year 1 22-23	-	-	-	-	-

Options Summary

Fiscal Year Reserve/Risk/Investment Summary					
2022-2023	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
Operating Reserve Balance	-	1,900,000	1,414,058	1,900,000	1,900,000
Local Capital Reserve Balance	1,403,049	1,549,141	1,403,049	1,014,194	1,403,049
Risk	1,350,000	-	1,350,000	1,324,291	1,100,000
Strategic Plan/FESL Investment	-	-	855,962	372,613	372,613
Infrastructure/Liability Investment	-	-	953,859	780,859	670,859
2023-2024					
Operating Reserve Balance	-	1,900,000	1,414,058	1,900,000	2,950,000
Local Capital Reserve Balance	403,049	1,524,102	745,976	111,344	1,247,478
Risk	1,350,000	-	1,350,000	1,324,291	1,100,000
Strategic Plan/FESL Investment	-	-	855,962	372,613	372,613
Infrastructure/Liability Investment	-	-	953,859	780,859	670,859
2024-2025					
Operating Reserve Balance	203,704	3,631,187	2,513,211	2,922,126	4,000,000
Local Capital Reserve Balance	-	1,524,102	745,976	-	1,247,478
Risk	1,350,000	-	1,350,000	1,324,291	600,000
Strategic Plan/FESL Investment	-	-	855,962	372,613	922,941
Infrastructure/Liability Investment	-	-	953,859	780,859	1,221,186

Decision

- **Feedback period March 11 to April 4**
- **Board decision/budget bylaw readings**
 - April 4
 - April 7
- **Staffing complete May-June**

Thank You



Office of the Secretary-Treasurer

Kim Morris - Secretary Treasurer

TO: Board of Education
FROM: Kim Morris
RE: Budget Options
DATE: April 4, 2022

The purpose of this memo is to provide the Board of Education options to consider as it moves into the 2022-2023 Annual Budget debate.

Each option is laid out in the following format:

- Key characteristics of the Option
- List of proposed cuts or savings
- List of asks
- Uses of surplus, reserve and local capital
- Risks
- 3-Year Forecast

The various options are not exhaustive, rather the options are meant to:

- Promote discussion on what various levels of service cuts/savings, new spending and use of surplus could look like.
- Provide a template for trustees to begin to form their own options, if no options provided are adequate.
- Provide ideas for a healthy balance of use of surplus, savings, investment and reserve.
- Provide ideas for spreading savings/cuts over more than one fiscal year.
- Help the Board move to debate of the three readings of the budget.

The Board may wish to consider moving supplementary motions along with its debate and passing of readings of the budget bylaw. These may include but are not limited to:

- Approving a budget process in early Fall 2022 for the 2023-2024 budget.
- Letter(s) of advocacy to ask the Ministry for increased funding related to the pandemic, contracts, and/or fulfilling the Minister's mandate.
- Making determinations around use of surplus, revenues and expenses should they be higher or lower than projected.

Recommendation:

None. Information only.

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.

Options Summary

2022-2023 by Category

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
Surplus/Deficit	(7,082,348)	(7,082,348)	(7,082,348)	(7,082,348)	(7,082,348)
Reserve Additions	-	-	-	-	-
Use of Existing Reserve	1,900,000	-	485,942	-	-
Use of 21-22 Surplus	800,000	800,000	800,000	800,000	800,000
Use of Local Capital	1,000,000	853,908	1,000,000	1,388,855	1,000,000
Risk	1,350,000	-	1,350,000	1,324,291	1,100,000
New Spending	-	-	(1,809,821)	(1,153,472)	(1,043,472)
Reductions	2,032,348	5,428,440	5,256,227	4,722,674	5,225,820
Proposed Savings	7,082,348	7,082,348	7,082,348	7,082,348	7,082,348
Balanced Year 1 22-23	-	-	-	-	-

Fiscal Year Reserve/Risk/Investment Summary

2022-2023	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
Operating Reserve Balance	-	1,900,000	1,414,058	1,900,000	1,900,000
Local Capital Reserve Balance	1,403,049	1,549,141	1,403,049	1,014,194	1,403,049
Risk	1,350,000	-	1,350,000	1,324,291	1,100,000
Strategic Plan/FESL Investment	-	-	855,962	372,613	372,613
Infrastructure/Liability Investment	-	-	953,859	780,859	670,859

2023-2024

Operating Reserve Balance	-	1,900,000	1,414,058	1,900,000	2,950,000
Local Capital Reserve Balance	403,049	1,524,102	745,976	111,344	1,247,478
Risk	1,350,000	-	1,350,000	1,324,291	1,100,000
Strategic Plan/FESL Investment	-	-	855,962	372,613	372,613
Infrastructure/Liability Investment	-	-	953,859	780,859	670,859

2024-2025

Operating Reserve Balance	203,704	3,631,187	2,513,211	2,922,126	4,000,000
Local Capital Reserve Balance	-	1,524,102	745,976	-	1,247,478
Risk	1,350,000	-	1,350,000	1,324,291	600,000
Strategic Plan/FESL Investment	-	-	855,962	372,613	922,941
Infrastructure/Liability Investment	-	-	953,859	780,859	1,221,186

Option 1 Summary

Characteristics	3-Year Projection	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Maintains Status Quo Staffing	Surplus/(Deficit)	(7,082,348)	(5,187,919)	(3,431,693)
No re-investment	Savings (Years 2/3 = Yr 1 less one-time)	2,032,348	1,082,348	1,082,348
High risk	Asks	-	-	-
Out of compliance	Use of Local Capital for >\$5,000 F&E	1,000,000	1,000,000	403,049
Least reduction in services	Surplus: Use of Projected 21-22	800,000	800,000	800,000
	Risk	1,350,000	1,350,000	1,350,000
	Reserve: Use of Current	1,900,000	-	-
	Reserve: Addition to meet 4% target	-	-	(203,704)
	Result (Balanced = \$0)	-	(955,571)	0

Guiding Principles:

Students at Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relationships	<input type="checkbox"/>
Indigenous	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alignment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Timelines	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collaboration	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sustainability	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion Points:

Does not balance
Provides \$0 reserve until 3rd year; could contribute \$203,704
Does not meet Ministry nor SD61 Surplus/Reserve policy
Does not advance Strategic Plan or FESL
Does not slow or halt deferred maintenance nor info tech liability
Utilizes 100% of the available surplus and reserve
Maintains Community LINK
Least impact on employees
Depletes Local Capital Reserve

Result:	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Operating Reserve Balance	-	-	203,704
Local Capital Reserve Balance	1,403,049	403,049	-
Risk	1,350,000	1,350,000	1,350,000
Strategic Plan/FESL Investment	-	-	-
Infrastructure/Liability Investment	-	-	-

Option 2 Summary

Characteristics	3-Year Projection	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Balances Majority with Reductions	Surplus/(Deficit)	(7,082,348)	(5,187,919)	(3,431,693)
No re-investment	Savings (Years 2/3 = Yr 1 less one-time)	5,428,440	4,362,880	4,362,880
Low risk	Asks	-	-	-
Out of compliance	Use of Local Capital for >\$5,000 F&E	853,908	25,039	-
Most reduction in services	Surplus: Use of Projected 21-22	800,000	800,000	800,000
	Risk	-	-	-
	Reserve: Use of Current	-	-	-
	Reserve: Addition to meet 4% target	-	-	(1,731,187)
	Result (Balanced = \$0)	-	(0)	0

Guiding Principles:

Students at Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relationships	<input type="checkbox"/>
Indigenous	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alignment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Timelines	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collaboration	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sustainability	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion Points:

Balances all three years
 Maintains and adds to accumulated reserve: \$3.6m by year 3
 Does not meet Ministry nor SD61 Surplus/Reserve policy (\$4m)
 Does not advance Strategic Plan or FESL
 Does not slow or halt deferred maintenance nor info tech liability
 Utilizes 100% of the available surplus
 Reduces Community LINK Youth Family Counsellor Contractors
 Most impact on employees & services

Result:	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Operating Reserve Balance	1,900,000	1,900,000	3,631,187
Local Capital Reserve Balance	1,549,141	1,524,102	1,524,102
Risk	-	-	-
Strategic Plan/FESL Investment	-	-	-
Infrastructure/Liability Investment	-	-	-

Option 3 Summary

Characteristics	3-Year Projection	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Balances Majority with Reductions	Surplus/(Deficit)	(7,082,348)	(5,187,919)	(3,431,693)
Re-Investment	Savings (Years 2/3 = Yr 1 less one-time)	5,256,227	4,190,667	4,190,667
High Risk	Asks	(1,809,821)	(1,809,821)	(1,809,821)
Out of compliance	Use of Local Capital for >\$5,000 F&E	1,000,000	657,073	0
	Surplus: Use of Projected 21-22	800,000	800,000	800,000
	Risk	1,350,000	1,350,000	1,350,000
	Reserve: Use of Current	485,942	0	0
	Reserve: Addition to meet 4% target	0	0	(1,099,153)
	Result (Balanced = \$0)	0	(0)	0

Guiding Principles:

Students at Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relationships	<input type="checkbox"/>
Indigenous	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alignment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Timelines	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collaboration	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sustainability	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion Points:

Balances all three years
 Reduces and then adds to accumulated reserve: \$2.5m by year 3
 Does not meet Ministry nor SD61 Surplus/Reserve policy (\$4m)
 Advances some Strategic Plan, FESL and Infrastructure goals
 Slows some deferred maintenance and addresses some maintenance and info tech liability
 Utilizes 100% of the available surplus
 Reduces Community LINK Youth Family Counsellor Contractors
 High impact on employees and services

Result:	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Operating Reserve Balance	1,414,058	1,414,058	2,513,211
Local Capital Reserve Balance	1,403,049	745,976	745,976
Risk	1,350,000	1,350,000	1,350,000
Strategic Plan/FESL Investment	855,962	855,962	855,962
Infrastructure/Liability Investment	953,859	953,859	953,859

Option 3 Detail

Draft Budget Bylaw (March 30)	Operating	Special Purpose	Capital	Consolidated
Revenue	216,996,482	32,238,932	16,829,917	266,065,331
A. Expense	224,078,830	32,238,932	13,889,429	270,207,191
B. (Shortfall)/Surplus	(7,082,348)	-	2,940,488	(4,141,860)
Ca. How much would you like to increase the reserve if any?	-			
Cb. How much of other existing reserve would you like to use if any?	485,942			
D. How much of the current year projected surplus (max \$800k)	800,000			
E. How much local capital would you like to use for Operating expenses?	1,000,000			
F. How much risk do you want to take?	1,350,000			
Fa. Increased Revenue/Enrolment	350,000			
Fb. Increased Surplus Projection	1,000,000			
G. Updated Shortfall (B+C+D+E+F)	(3,446,406)			
H. What New Spending would you like to add?	1,809,821			
ITL Yr 2/5 Network Infrastructure	502,850			
VP Admin Time to Elementary	326,340			
Early Childhood Educators	178,000			
Maintenance - 2 Carpenters	168,009			
INED Teacher and CUPE Staffing	136,349			
ITL Security Analyst (Excluded)	110,000			
Financial Svc Business Process Advisor	75,000			
Communications Assistant	68,000			
District Team Reporting Tool Support	64,000			
District Team Assessment & Proficiency	55,000			
Learning Support Accessibility	50,000			
INED LEA Support	46,273			
HR EA Professional Lrning Support	30,000			
I. Updated Shortfall (G-H)	(5,256,227)			
J. What Reductions Are You Proposing?	5,256,227			
School Supply Allocation - Reduce one time	800,000			
Daytime Cust - Reduce Elem & Middle (50%)	654,902			
Counsellors - Reduce 7 YFC's & 2 Outreach	623,110			
Education Assistant Relief Budget	620,000			
Collaboration Time	559,418			
Middle Music - Reduce 5.52 FTE (50%)	476,454			
Associate Superintendent - Reduce 1 FTE	209,794			
Elementary Strings - Reduce 1.81 FTE (100%)	208,817			
Clerical Staff from 12 months to 10.5 months/year	180,139			
PVP at Tolmie - Reduces 1.0 FTE	150,174			
International Student Program Savings one-time	150,000			
Career Centre Teachers - Reduce 1.0 FTE + \$35k S&S	150,000			
Late French Immersion - Reduces 1.0 FTE / 1 Class	115,560			
Counsellors - Reduces 0.8 FTE Historical Trend	92,448			
Reading Recovery - Reduces Contract (100%)	73,525			
School Admin - Small School or Low Enrolment	61,494			
District Team - Literacy Savings	37,000			
ThoughtExchange On-line Engagement Tool	26,064			
School Techs from 11 month to 10.5 months	24,760			
District Ukulele	16,525			
Enrolment Projection Contractor	15,043			
Student and Parent Education Funds	11,000			
K. Updated Shortfall (if \$0 then balanced) (I+J)	-			
New bylaw amount	219,632,424	32,238,932	13,889,429	265,760,785
Must match to (max revenue & surplus):				268,701,273
				(2,940,488)
Summary				
Reserve Additions	-			
New Spending	(1,809,821)			
Reductions	5,256,227			
Use of 21-22 Surplus to Balance	800,000			
Use of Local Capital for 22-23 Operating Expenses	1,000,000			
Risk	1,350,000			
Use of Existing Reserve	485,942			

Target Reserves per Draft Policy:	4,000,000	2%
Current Reserves:	1,900,000	1%

Estimated Available for 2022-20232,403,049

Risk: Estimated 21-22 Surplus>\$800k or Increased Revenue/Enrolment

Spending		
EA's to 30 hours/week	1,367,723	On-Going
		On-Going
ITL Decommission Classroom PC's	385,000	One-Time
ITL Reinstate Student Device Budget	339,230	On-Going
		On-Going
Transportation Snow Plow	250,000	One-Time
ITL Yr 1/2 Staff Device Replacement	250,000	On-Going
Grounds - Match Historical Spend	231,239	On-Going
Strings at all Elementary	181,429	On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going
Maintenance - Match Hist Spend Mech	150,836	On-Going
		On-Going
VP Admin Time to Middle	116,550	On-Going
Mental Health to Replace Grants	110,000	On-Going
		On-Going
Transportation Dump Truck	100,000	One-Time
VP Admin Time to Secondary	81,585	On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going
Transportation Bobcat	65,000	One-Time
		On-Going
Maintenance Match Hist Spend Elec	55,012	On-Going
		On-Going
Maintenance - Match Hist Spend Carp	50,368	On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going
ITL School Tech Top-up fr Schools to Dist.	40,000	On-Going
HR EA Bridging	36,000	On-Going
Maintenance Match Hist Spend Paint	35,791	On-Going
		On-Going
District Team Indigenous Collaboration	25,000	On-Going
HR EA Advertising	20,000	On-Going
HR Recruitment Travel FRIMM Teachers	20,000	On-Going
Maintenance Temp Labourers Painting	18,358	On-Going
Transportation Flush Machines In-House	12,500	One-Time
Transpiration Salter for Snow Plow	11,500	One-Time
HR Increase Hours for System Specialist	9,337	On-Going
Transportation 2-Post Hoist	8,500	On-Going
ITL eLibrary Websites Maintenance	3,320	One-Time
ITL Destiny Library Release Time	2,490	On-Going

Reductions		
Middle Music - Reduce 11.03 FTE (100%)	952,908	On-Going
Counsellors - Reduce 8.00 FTE to min ratio	924,480	On-Going
		One-Time
		On-Going
Daytime Cust - Reduce Sm Elem(25%) & E & M (50%)	634,016	On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going
Daytime Cust - Reduce Elementary (100%)	414,750	On-Going
Middle Music - Reduce 4.41 FTE (40%)	381,163	On-Going
Career Centre Coordinators - Reduce 7 FTE (100%)	342,490	On-Going
Middle Music - Reduce 3.31 FTE (30%)	285,864	On-Going
Middle Band and Strings Option 2	285,864	On-Going
Daytime Cust - Reduce Secondary (100%)	210,883	On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going
Counsellors - to Community LINK	201,537	On-Going
Middle Band and Strings Option 1	190,478	On-Going
		On-Going
Daytime Cust - Reduce Middle (100%)	166,939	On-Going
		On-Going
		One-Time
		On-Going
Daytime Cust Small Elem - Reduces 2.0 FTE	123,302	On-Going
		One-Time
Facilities - Reduces 1.0 FTE Asst Mgr (Year 2/3 only)	105,268	On-Going
Clerical Staff from 12/11 month to 11/10.5 month	94,496	On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going
HR - Reduces 1.0 FTE (Year 2/3 only)	66,945	On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going

Option 4 Summary

Characteristics	3-Year Projection	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Balances Majority with Reductions	Surplus/(Deficit)	(7,082,348)	(5,187,919)	(3,431,693)
Re-Investment	Savings	4,722,674	3,314,250	3,371,656
Medium Risk	Asks	(1,153,472)	(1,153,472)	(1,153,472)
Out of compliance	Use of Local Capital for >\$5,000 F&E	1,388,855	902,850	111,344
	Surplus: Use of Projected 21-22	800,000	800,000	800,000
	Risk	1,324,291	1,324,291	1,324,291
	Reserve: Use of Current	0	0	0
	Reserve: Addition to meet 4% target	0	0	(1,022,126)
	Result (Balanced = \$0)	0	(0)	0

Guiding Principles:

Students at Centre
Relationships
Indigenous
Alignment
Timelines
Collaboration
Sustainability

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Discussion Points:

Balances all three years
Maintains current and then adds to accumulated reserve: \$2.9m by year 3
Does not meet Ministry nor SD61 Surplus/Reserve policy (\$4m)
Advances some Strategic Plan, FESL and Infrastructure goals
Slows some deferred maintenance and addresses some maintenance and info tech liability
Utilizes 100% of the available surplus
Reduces Community LINK Youth Family Counsellor Contractors
Depletes Local Capital reserve
High impact on employees and services
Additional Music savings Year 3 under Option 2
Adds back some EA relief and Collab time budgets in Year 2/3
Network infrastructure paid from local capital in Year 1/2

Result 2022-2023:	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Operating Reserve	1,900,000	1,900,000	2,922,126
Local Capital Reserve	1,014,194	111,344	-
Risk	1,324,291	1,324,291	1,324,291
Strategic Plan/FESL Investment	372,613	372,613	372,613
Infrastructure/Liability Investment	780,859	780,859	780,859

Option 4 Detail

Draft Budget Bylaw (March 30)		Operating	Special Purpose	Capital	Consolidated
Revenue		216,996,482	32,238,932	16,829,917	266,065,331
A. Expense		224,078,830	32,238,932	13,889,429	270,207,191
B. (Shortfall)/Surplus		(7,082,348)	-	2,940,488	(4,141,860)
Ca. How much would you like to increase the reserve if any?		-			
Cb. How much of other existing reserve would you like to use if any?		-			
D. How much of the current year projected surplus (max \$800k)		800,000			
E. How much local capital would you like to use for Operating expenses?		1,388,855			
F. How much risk do you want to take?		1,324,291			
Fa. Increased Revenue/Enrolment		324,291			
Fb. Increased Surplus Projection		1,000,000			
G. Updated Shortfall (B+C+D+E+F)		(3,569,202)			
H. What New Spending would you like to add?		1,153,472	+		
ITL Yr 2/5 Network Infrastructure (from Local Capital above)		502,850			
VP Admin Time to Elementary		326,340			
Maintenance - 2 Carpenters		168,009			
ITL Security Analyst (Excluded)		110,000			
INED LEA Support		46,273			
I. Updated Shortfall (G-H)		(4,722,674)			
J. What Reductions Are You Proposing?		4,722,674			
School Supply Allocation - Reduce one time		800,000			
Daytime Cust - Reduce Elem & Middle (50%)		654,902			
Counsellors - Reduce 7 YFC's & 2 Outreach		623,110			
Education Assistant Relief Budget		620,000			
Collaboration Time		559,418			
Associate Superintendent - Reduce 1 FTE		209,794			
Elementary Strings - Reduce 1.81 FTE (100%)		208,817			
Middle Band and Strings Option 1		190,478			
International Student Program Savings one-time		150,000			
Career Centre Teachers - Reduce 1.0 FTE + \$35k S&S		150,000			
Late French Immersion - Reduces 1.0 FTE / 1 Class		115,560			
Clerical Staff from 12/11 month to 11/10.5 month		94,496			
Counsellors - Reduces 0.8 FTE Historical Trend		92,448			
Reading Recovery - Reduces Contract (100%)		73,525			
School Admin - Small School or Low Enrolment		61,494			
ThoughtExchange On-line Engagement Tool		26,064			
District Ukulele		16,525			
Enrolment Projection Contractor		15,043			
Student and Parent Education Funds		11,000			
ADDITION: 5% Services & Supplies Reduction (not schools)		50,000			
K. Updated Shortfall (if \$0 then balanced) (I+J)		-			
New bylaw amount		219,120,773	32,238,932	13,889,429	265,249,134
		Must match to (max revenue & surplus):			268,189,622
					(2,940,488)
Summary					
Reserve Additions		-			
New Spending		(1,153,472)			
Reductions		4,722,674			
Use of 21-22 Surplus to Balance		800,000			
Use of Local Capital for 22-23 Operating Expenses		1,388,855			
Risk		1,324,291			
Use of Existing Reserve		-			

Target Reserves per Draft Policy:	4,000,000	2%
Current Reserves:	1,900,000	1%

Estimated Available for 2022-20232,403,049

Risk: Estimated 21-22 Surplus>\$800k or Increased Revenue/Enrolment

Spending		
EA's to 30 hours/week	1,367,723	On-Going
		On-Going
ITL Decommission Classroom PC's	385,000	One-Time
ITL Reinstate Student Device Budget	339,230	On-Going
		On-Going
Transportation Snow Plow	250,000	One-Time
ITL Yr 1/2 Staff Device Replacement	250,000	On-Going
Grounds - Match Historical Spend	231,239	On-Going
Strings at all Elementary	181,429	On-Going
Early Childhood Educators	178,000	On-Going
		On-Going
Maintenance - Match Hist Spend Mech	150,836	On-Going
INED Teacher and CUPE Staffing	136,349	On-Going
VP Admin Time to Middle	116,550	On-Going
Mental Health to Replace Grants	110,000	On-Going
		On-Going
Transportation Dump Truck	100,000	One-Time
VP Admin Time to Secondary	81,585	On-Going
Financial Svc Business Process Advisor	75,000	On-Going
Communications Assistant	68,000	On-Going
Transportation Bobcat	65,000	One-Time
District Team Reporting Tool Support	64,000	On-Going
Maintenance Match Hist Spend Elec	55,012	On-Going
District Team Assessment & Proficiency	55,000	On-Going
Maintenance - Match Hist Spend Carp	50,368	On-Going
Learning Support Accessibility	50,000	On-Going
		On-Going
ITL School Tech Top-up fr Schools to Dist.	40,000	On-Going
HR EA Bridging	36,000	On-Going
Maintenance Match Hist Spend Paint	35,791	On-Going
HR EA Professional Lrning Support	30,000	On-Going
District Team Indigenous Collaboration	25,000	On-Going
HR EA Advertising	20,000	On-Going
HR Recruitment Travel FRIMM Teachers	20,000	On-Going
Maintenance Temp Labourers Painting	18,358	On-Going
Transportation Flush Machines In-House	12,500	One-Time
Transpiration Salter for Snow Plow	11,500	One-Time
HR Increase Hours for System Specialist	9,337	On-Going
Transportation 2-Post Hoist	8,500	On-Going
ITL eLibrary Websites Maintenance	3,320	One-Time
ITL Destiny Library Release Time	2,490	On-Going
Reductions		
Middle Music - Reduce 11.03 FTE (100%)	952,908	On-Going
Counsellors - Reduce 8.00 FTE to min ratio	924,480	On-Going
		One-Time
		On-Going
Daytime Cust - Reduce Sm Elem(25%) & E & M (50%)	634,016	On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going
Middle Music - Reduce 5.52 FTE (50%)	476,454	On-Going
Daytime Cust - Reduce Elementary (100%)	414,750	On-Going
Middle Music - Reduce 4.41 FTE (40%)	381,163	On-Going
Career Centre Coordinators - Reduce 7 FTE (100%)	342,490	On-Going
Middle Music - Reduce 3.31 FTE (30%)	285,864	On-Going
Middle Band and Strings Option 2	285,864	On-Going
Daytime Cust - Reduce Secondary (100%)	210,883	On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going
Counsellors - to Community LINK	201,537	On-Going
		On-Going
Clerical Staff from 12 months to 10.5 months/year	180,139	On-Going
Daytime Cust - Reduce Middle (100%)	166,939	On-Going
PVP at Tolmie - Reduces 1.0 FTE	150,174	On-Going
		One-Time
		On-Going
Daytime Cust Small Elem - Reduces 2.0 FTE	123,302	On-Going
		One-Time
Facilities - Reduces 1.0 FTE Asst Mgr (Year 2/3 only)	105,268	On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going
HR - Reduces 1.0 FTE (Year 2/3 only)	66,945	On-Going
		On-Going
District Team - Literacy Savings	37,000	On-Going
		On-Going
School Techs from 11 month to 10.5 months	24,760	On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going

Option 5 Summary

Characteristics	3-Year Projection	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Balances Majority with Reductions	Surplus/(Deficit)	(7,082,348)	(5,187,919)	(3,431,693)
Re-Investment	Savings	5,225,820	5,225,820	5,225,820
Lower Risk	Asks	(1,043,472)	(1,043,472)	(2,144,127)
Meets Compliance	Use of Local Capital for >\$5,000 F&E	1,000,000	155,571	0
Significant Yr 3 Investment	Surplus: Use of Projected 21-22	800,000	800,000	800,000
	Risk	1,100,000	1,100,000	600,000
	Reserve: Use of Current	0	0	0
	Reserve: Addition to meet 4% target	0	(1,050,000)	(1,050,000)
	Result (Balanced = \$0)	0	(0)	0

Guiding Principles:

Students at Centre
Relationships
Indigenous
Alignment
Timelines
Collaboration
Sustainability

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Discussion Points:

Balances all three years
Maintains current and then adds to accumulated reserve: \$4m by year 3
Meets Ministry and SD61 Surplus/Reserve policy (\$4m)
Advances some Strategic Plan, FESL and Infrastructure goals
Slows some deferred maintenance and addresses some maintenance and info tech liability
Utilizes 100% of the available surplus
Reduces Community LINK Youth Family Counsellor Contractors
High impact on employees and services
Ability to invest in Year 3: SP, FESL, Add backs from Yr 1/2, Infrastructure

Result 2022-2023:	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Operating Reserve	1,900,000	2,950,000	4,000,000
Local Capital Reserve	1,403,049	1,247,478	1,247,478
Risk	1,100,000	1,100,000	600,000
Strategic Plan/FESL Investment	372,613	372,613	922,941
Infrastructure/Liability Investment	670,859	670,859	1,221,186

Option 5 Detail

Draft Budget Bylaw (March 30)	Operating	Special Purpose	Capital	Consolidated
Revenue	216,996,482	32,238,932	16,829,917	266,065,331
A. Expense	224,078,830	32,238,932	13,889,429	270,207,191
B. (Shortfall)/Surplus	(7,082,348)	-	2,940,488	(4,141,860)
Ca. How much would you like to increase the reserve if any?	-			
Cb. How much of other existing reserve would you like to use if any?	-			
D. How much of the current year projected surplus (max \$800k)	800,000			
E. How much local capital would you like to use for Operating expenses?	1,000,000			
F. How much risk do you want to take?	1,100,000			
Fa. Increased Revenue/Enrolment	100,000			
Fb. Increased Surplus Projection	1,000,000			
G. Updated Shortfall (B+C+D+E+F)	(4,182,348)			
H. What New Spending would you like to add?	1,043,472			
ITL Yr 2/5 Network Infrastructure	502,850			
VP Admin Time to Elementary	326,340			
Maintenance - 2 Carpenters	168,009			
INED LEA Support	46,273			
I. Updated Shortfall (G-H)	(5,225,820)			
J. What Reductions Are You Proposing?	5,225,820			
School Supply Allocation - Reduce one time	800,000			
Daytime Cust - Reduce Sm Elem(25%) & E & M (50%)	634,016			
Counsellors - Reduce 7 YFC's & 2 Outreach	623,110			
Education Assistant Relief Budget	620,000			
Collaboration Time	559,418			
Middle Music - Reduce 5.52 FTE (50%)	476,454			
Daytime Cust - Reduce Secondary Partial	65,060			
Elementary Strings - Reduce 1.81 FTE (100%)	208,817			
Clerical Staff from 12 months to 10.5 months/year	180,139			
PVP at Tolmie - Reduces 1.0 FTE	150,174			
International Student Program Savings one-time	150,000			
Career Centre Teachers - Reduce 1.0 FTE + \$35k S&S	150,000			
Late French Immersion - Reduces 1.0 FTE / 1 Class	115,560			
Facilities - Reduces 1.0 FTE Asst Mgr (Year 2/3 only)	105,268			
Counsellors - Reduces 0.8 FTE Historical Trend	92,448			
Reading Recovery - Reduces Contract (100%)	73,525			
HR - Reduces 1.0 FTE (Year 2/3 only)	66,945			
School Admin - Small School or Low Enrolment	61,494			
ThoughtExchange On-line Engagement Tool	26,064			
School Techs from 11 month to 10.5 months	24,760			
District Ukulele	16,525			
Enrolment Projection Contractor	15,043			
Student and Parent Education Funds	11,000			
K. Updated Shortfall (if \$0 then balanced) (I+J)	-			
New bylaw amount	218,896,482	32,238,932	13,889,429	265,024,843
Must match to (max revenue & surplus):				267,965,331
				(2,940,488)
Summary				
Reserve Additions	-			
New Spending	(1,043,472)			
Reductions	5,225,820			
Use of 21-22 Surplus to Balance	800,000			
Use of Local Capital for 22-23 Operating Expenses	1,000,000			
Risk	1,100,000			
Use of Existing Reserve	-			

Target Reserves per Draft Policy:	4,000,000	2%
Current Reserves:	1,900,000	1%

Estimated Available for 2022-20232,403,049

Risk: Estimated 21-22 Surplus>\$800k or Increased Revenue/Enrolment

Spending		
EA's to 30 hours/week	1,367,723	On-Going
		On-Going
ITL Decommission Classroom PC's	385,000	One-Time
ITL Reinstate Student Device Budget	339,230	On-Going
		On-Going
Transportation Snow Plow	250,000	One-Time
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Grounds - Match Historical Spend	231,239	On-Going
Strings at all Elementary	181,429	On-Going
Early Childhood Educators	178,000	On-Going
		On-Going
Maintenance - Match Hist Spend Mech	150,836	On-Going
INED Teacher and CUPE Staffing	136,349	On-Going
VP Admin Time to Middle	116,550	On-Going
Mental Health to Replace Grants	110,000	On-Going
ITL Security Analyst (Excluded)	110,000	On-Going
Transportation Dump Truck	100,000	One-Time
VP Admin Time to Secondary	81,585	On-Going
Financial Svc Business Process Advisor	75,000	On-Going
Communications Assistant	68,000	On-Going
Transportation Bobcat	65,000	One-Time
District Team Reporting Tool Support	64,000	On-Going
Maintenance Match Hist Spend Elec	55,012	On-Going
District Team Assessment & Proficiency	55,000	On-Going
Maintenance - Match Hist Spend Carp	50,368	On-Going
Learning Support Accessibility	50,000	On-Going
		On-Going
ITL School Tech Top-up fr Schools to Dist.	40,000	On-Going
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HR EA Professional Lrning Support	30,000	On-Going
District Team Indigenous Collaboration	25,000	On-Going
HR EA Advertising	20,000	On-Going
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Maintenance Temp Labourers Painting	18,358	On-Going
Transportation Flush Machines In-House	12,500	One-Time
Transpiration Salter for Snow Plow	11,500	One-Time
HR Increase Hours for System Specialist	9,337	On-Going
Transportation 2-Post Hoist	8,500	On-Going
ITL eLibrary Websites Maintenance	3,320	One-Time
ITL Destiny Library Release Time	2,490	On-Going

Reductions		
Middle Music - Reduce 11.03 FTE (100%)	952,908	On-Going
Counsellors - Reduce 8.00 FTE to min ratio	924,480	On-Going
		One-Time
Daytime Cust - Reduce Elem & Middle (50%)	654,902	On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going
Daytime Cust - Reduce Elementary (100%)	414,750	On-Going
Middle Music - Reduce 4.41 FTE (40%)	381,163	On-Going
Career Centre Coordinators - Reduce 7 FTE (100%)	342,490	On-Going
Middle Music - Reduce 3.31 FTE (30%)	285,864	On-Going
Middle Band and Strings Option 2	285,864	On-Going
Daytime Cust - Reduce Secondary (100%)	145,823	On-Going
Associate Superintendent - Reduce 1 FTE	209,794	On-Going
		On-Going
Counsellors - to Community LINK	201,537	On-Going
Middle Band and Strings Option 1	190,478	On-Going
		On-Going
Daytime Cust - Reduce Middle (100%)	166,939	On-Going
		On-Going
		One-Time
		On-Going
Daytime Cust Small Elem - Reduces 2.0 FTE	123,302	On-Going
		One-Time
		On-Going
Clerical Staff from 12/11 month to 11/10.5 month	94,496	On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going
District Team - Literacy Savings	37,000	On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going
		On-Going

Annual Budget

School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)

June 30, 2023

School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)

June 30, 2023

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*NOTE - Statement 1, Statement 3, Statement 5, Schedule 1 and Schedules 4A - 4D are used for Financial Statement reporting only.

ANNUAL BUDGET BYLAW

A Bylaw of THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 61 (GREATER VICTORIA) (called the "Board") to adopt the Annual Budget of the Board for the fiscal year 2022/2023 pursuant to section 113 of the *School Act*, R.S.B.C., 1996, c. 412 as amended from time to time (called the "Act").

1. The Board has complied with the provisions of the *Act*, Ministerial Orders, and Ministry of Education Policies respecting the Annual Budget adopted by this bylaw.
2. This bylaw may be cited as School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) Annual Budget Bylaw for fiscal year 2022/2023.
3. The attached Statement 2 showing the estimated revenue and expense for the 2022/2023 fiscal year and the total budget bylaw amount of \$271,526,191 for the 2022/2023 fiscal year was prepared in accordance with the *Act*.
4. Statement 2, 4 and Schedules 2 to 4 are adopted as the Annual Budget of the Board for the fiscal year 2022/2023.

READ A FIRST TIME THE _____ DAY OF APRIL, 2022;

READ A SECOND TIME THE _____ DAY OF APRIL, 2022;

READ A THIRD TIME, PASSED AND ADOPTED THE _____ DAY OF APRIL, 2022;

(Corporate Seal)

Chairperson of the Board

Secretary Treasurer

I HEREBY CERTIFY this to be a true original of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) Annual Budget Bylaw 2022/2023, adopted by the Board the _____ DAY OF APRIL, 2022.

Secretary Treasurer

School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)

Statement 2

Annual Budget - Revenue and Expense

Year Ended June 30, 2023

	2023 Annual Budget	2022 Annual Budget
Ministry Operating Grant Funded FTE's		
School-Age	19,861,887	19,373,995
Adult	24,729	31,344
Other	-	10,500
Total Ministry Operating Grant Funded FTE's	19,886,616	19,415,839
Revenues	\$	\$
Provincial Grants		
Ministry of Education	225,468,923	216,081,028
Other	112,750	112,750
Tuition	15,107,619	12,242,537
Other Revenue	13,215,170	5,529,152
Rentals and Leases	2,696,572	1,779,874
Investment Income	442,760	415,552
Amortization of Deferred Capital Revenue	8,021,537	7,969,213
Total Revenue	265,065,331	244,130,106
Expenses		
Instruction	221,628,255	207,618,206
District Administration	6,597,917	6,329,294
Operations and Maintenance	39,764,994	38,027,511
Transportation and Housing	1,216,025	1,291,815
Total Expense	269,207,191	253,266,826
Net Revenue (Expense)	(4,141,860)	(9,136,720)
Budgeted Allocation (Retirement) of Surplus (Deficit)		5,658,406
Budgeted Surplus (Deficit), for the year	(4,141,860)	(3,478,314)
Budgeted Surplus (Deficit), for the year comprised of:		
Operating Fund Surplus (Deficit)	(7,082,348)	
Special Purpose Fund Surplus (Deficit)		
Capital Fund Surplus (Deficit)	2,940,488	(3,478,314)
Budgeted Surplus (Deficit), for the year	(4,141,860)	(3,478,314)

School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)

Statement 2

Annual Budget - Revenue and Expense

Year Ended June 30, 2023

	2023 Annual Budget	2022 Annual Budget
Budget Bylaw Amount		
Operating - Total Expense	223,078,830	213,156,947
Operating - Tangible Capital Assets Purchased	1,000,000	
Special Purpose Funds - Total Expense	32,238,932	27,658,352
Capital Fund - Total Expense	13,889,429	12,451,527
Capital Fund - Tangible Capital Assets Purchased from Local Capital	1,319,000	1,000,000
Total Budget Bylaw Amount	271,526,191	254,266,826

Approved by the Board

Signature of the Chairperson of the Board of Education

Date Signed

Signature of the Superintendent

Date Signed

Signature of the Secretary/Treasurer

Date Signed

DRAFT

School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)

Statement 4

Annual Budget - Changes in Net Financial Assets (Debt)

Year Ended June 30, 2023

	2023 Annual Budget \$	2022 Annual Budget \$
Surplus (Deficit) for the year	(4,141,860)	(9,136,720)
Effect of change in Tangible Capital Assets		
Acquisition of Tangible Capital Assets		
From Operating and Special Purpose Funds	(1,000,000)	
From Local Capital	(1,319,000)	(1,000,000)
From Deferred Capital Revenue	(34,492,121)	(49,712,864)
Total Acquisition of Tangible Capital Assets	(36,811,121)	(50,712,864)
Amortization of Tangible Capital Assets	11,389,429	11,451,527
Total Effect of change in Tangible Capital Assets	(25,421,692)	(39,261,337)
	-	-
(Increase) Decrease in Net Financial Assets (Debt)	(29,563,552)	(48,398,057)

School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)

Schedule 2

Annual Budget - Operating Revenue and Expense

Year Ended June 30, 2023

	2023 Annual Budget \$	2022 Annual Budget \$
Revenues		
Provincial Grants		
Ministry of Education	196,795,611	190,981,576
Other	112,750	112,750
Tuition	15,107,619	12,242,537
Other Revenue	1,915,170	2,029,152
Rentals and Leases	2,696,572	1,779,874
Investment Income	368,760	352,652
Total Revenue	216,996,482	207,498,541
Expenses		
Instruction	190,203,374	180,770,133
District Administration	6,597,917	6,329,294
Operations and Maintenance	25,061,514	24,765,705
Transportation and Housing	1,216,025	1,291,815
Total Expense	223,078,830	213,156,947
Net Revenue (Expense)	(6,082,348)	(5,658,406)
Budgeted Prior Year Surplus Appropriation		5,658,406
Net Transfers (to) from other funds		
Tangible Capital Assets Purchased	(1,000,000)	-
Total Net Transfers	(1,000,000)	-
Budgeted Surplus (Deficit), for the year	(7,082,348)	-

School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)

Schedule 2A

Annual Budget - Schedule of Operating Revenue by Source

Year Ended June 30, 2023

	2023 Annual Budget \$	2022 Annual Budget \$
Provincial Grants - Ministry of Education		
Operating Grant, Ministry of Education	194,583,765	188,753,064
ISC/LEA Recovery	(989,902)	(966,444)
Other Ministry of Education Grants		
Pay Equity	2,896,617	2,896,617
Funding for Graduated Adults	68,850	100,287
Student Transportation Fund	20,027	20,027
Support Staff Benefits Grant	198,514	193,437
FSA Scorer Grant	17,740	17,740
Summer School Operating Grant Reduction	-	(33,152)
Total Provincial Grants - Ministry of Education	196,795,611	190,981,576
Provincial Grants - Other	112,750	112,750
Tuition		
Continuing Education	-	7,000
International and Out of Province Students	15,104,719	12,217,537
Distributed Learning	2,900	18,000
Total Tuition	15,107,619	12,242,537
Other Revenues		
Other School District/Education Authorities	2,700	-
Funding from First Nations	989,902	966,444
Miscellaneous		
Odyssey French Language Assistant Funding	-	27,100
Industry Training Authority	175,000	175,000
Cafeteria Revenue	100,000	55,000
International Education Revenues	562,399	639,527
ArtsStarts Grant	17,600	17,600
BC Hydro Commercial Energy Manager Program Funding	-	37,500
Miscellaneous	67,569	110,981
Total Other Revenue	1,915,170	2,029,152
Rentals and Leases	2,696,572	1,779,874
Investment Income	368,760	352,652
Total Operating Revenue	216,996,482	207,498,541

School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)

Schedule 2B

Annual Budget - Schedule of Operating Expense by Object

Year Ended June 30, 2023

	2023	2022
	Annual Budget	Annual Budget
	\$	\$
Salaries		
Teachers	96,945,843	92,198,153
Principals and Vice Principals	14,404,160	14,385,816
Educational Assistants	19,844,072	18,641,764
Support Staff	19,351,110	19,273,071
Other Professionals	4,913,818	4,957,013
Substitutes	9,660,173	8,570,336
Total Salaries	165,119,176	158,026,153
Employee Benefits	38,347,292	36,054,086
Total Salaries and Benefits	203,466,468	194,080,239
Services and Supplies		
Services	7,292,945	6,314,984
Student Transportation	901,500	1,076,545
Professional Development and Travel	898,191	727,897
Rentals and Leases	109,851	109,851
Dues and Fees	109,831	105,199
Insurance	427,403	420,003
Supplies	5,863,280	6,493,917
Utilities	4,009,361	3,828,312
Total Services and Supplies	19,612,362	19,076,708
Total Operating Expense	223,078,830	213,156,947

School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)

Schedule 2C

Annual Budget - Operating Expense by Function, Program and Object

Year Ended June 30, 2023

	Teachers Salaries	Principals and Vice Principals Salaries	Educational Assistants Salaries	Support Staff Salaries	Other Professionals Salaries	Substitutes Salaries	Total Salaries
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
1 Instruction							
1.02 Regular Instruction	72,995,090	5,426,284	2,332,706	229,700	310,077	7,119,185	88,413,042
1.03 Career Programs	820,697	123,124	335,379			34,486	1,313,686
1.07 Library Services	2,185,563			364,810		86,539	2,636,912
1.08 Counselling	3,037,684					116,725	3,154,409
1.10 Special Education	10,133,041	529,040	16,253,375	220,609		1,195,910	28,331,975
1.30 English Language Learning	2,071,678	84,217		13,497		92,032	2,261,424
1.31 Indigenous Education	460,998		867,459	46,431	155,354	31,357	1,561,599
1.41 School Administration		7,942,331		4,118,875		45,000	12,106,206
1.60 Summer School							-
1.61 Continuing Education	121,425	28,805		58,838		4,575	213,643
1.62 International and Out of Province Students	5,068,822			859,631	751,025	285,705	6,965,183
1.64 Other							-
Total Function 1	96,894,998	14,133,801	19,788,919	5,912,391	1,216,456	9,011,514	146,958,079
4 District Administration							
4.11 Educational Administration		169,542		312,495	829,735	13,898	1,325,670
4.40 School District Governance					334,387		334,387
4.41 Business Administration		100,817		1,280,720	1,376,738	88,528	2,846,803
Total Function 4	-	270,359	-	1,593,215	2,540,860	102,426	4,506,860
5 Operations and Maintenance							
5.41 Operations and Maintenance Administration	50,845		55,153	330,617	901,325	19,996	1,357,936
5.50 Maintenance Operations				10,322,470	143,952	526,237	10,992,659
5.52 Maintenance of Grounds				1,072,188			1,072,188
5.56 Utilities							-
Total Function 5	50,845	-	55,153	11,725,275	1,045,277	546,233	13,422,783
7 Transportation and Housing							
7.41 Transportation and Housing Administration				25,549	111,225		136,774
7.70 Student Transportation				94,680			94,680
Total Function 7	-	-	-	120,229	111,225	-	231,454
9 Debt Services							
Total Function 9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Functions 1 - 9	96,945,843	14,404,160	19,844,072	19,351,110	4,913,818	9,660,173	165,119,176

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School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)

Schedule 2C

Annual Budget - Operating Expense by Function, Program and Object

Year Ended June 30, 2023

	Total Salaries	Employee Benefits	Total Salaries and Benefits	Services and Supplies	2023 Annual Budget	2022 Annual Budget
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
1 Instruction						
1.02 Regular Instruction	88,413,042	21,080,749	109,493,791	3,990,249	113,484,040	107,955,458
1.03 Career Programs	1,313,686	309,127	1,622,813	775,350	2,398,163	2,403,947
1.07 Library Services	2,636,912	628,531	3,265,443		3,265,443	3,222,845
1.08 Counselling	3,154,409	751,222	3,905,631		3,905,631	3,551,244
1.10 Special Education	28,331,975	6,657,269	34,989,244	940,051	35,929,295	34,740,474
1.30 English Language Learning	2,261,424	535,108	2,796,532	156,323	2,952,855	2,922,740
1.31 Indigenous Education	1,561,599	360,240	1,921,839	642,190	2,564,029	2,394,091
1.41 School Administration	12,106,206	2,620,067	14,726,273		14,726,273	14,419,920
1.60 Summer School	-		-		-	-
1.61 Continuing Education	213,643	50,008	263,651	3,150	266,801	319,607
1.62 International and Out of Province Students	6,965,183	1,617,327	8,582,510	2,015,584	10,598,094	8,727,057
1.64 Other	-		-	112,750	112,750	112,750
Total Function 1	146,958,079	34,609,648	181,567,727	8,635,647	190,203,374	180,770,133
4 District Administration						
4.11 Educational Administration	1,325,670	267,776	1,593,446	65,517	1,658,963	1,971,900
4.40 School District Governance	334,387	32,994	367,381	491,047	858,428	535,229
4.41 Business Administration	2,846,803	612,375	3,459,178	621,348	4,080,526	3,822,165
Total Function 4	4,506,860	913,145	5,420,005	1,177,912	6,597,917	6,329,294
5 Operations and Maintenance						
5.41 Operations and Maintenance Administration	1,357,936	279,582	1,637,518	706,582	2,344,100	2,316,392
5.50 Maintenance Operations	10,992,659	2,270,731	13,263,390	2,840,012	16,103,402	16,153,834
5.52 Maintenance of Grounds	1,072,188	224,087	1,296,275	342,703	1,638,978	1,650,915
5.56 Utilities	-		-	4,975,034	4,975,034	4,644,564
Total Function 5	13,422,783	2,774,400	16,197,183	8,864,331	25,061,514	24,765,705
7 Transportation and Housing						
7.41 Transportation and Housing Administration	136,774	27,376	164,150	6,000	170,150	165,480
7.70 Student Transportation	94,680	22,723	117,403	928,472	1,045,875	1,126,335
Total Function 7	231,454	50,099	281,553	934,472	1,216,025	1,291,815
9 Debt Services						
Total Function 9	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Functions 1 - 9	165,119,176	38,347,292	203,466,468	19,612,362	223,078,830	213,156,947

DRAFT - Not Finalized

March 30, 2022 13:30

School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)

Schedule 3

Annual Budget - Special Purpose Revenue and Expense

Year Ended June 30, 2023

	2023 Annual Budget \$	2022 Annual Budget \$
Revenues		
Provincial Grants		
Ministry of Education	26,173,312	24,099,452
Other Revenue	6,000,000	3,500,000
Investment Income	65,620	58,900
Total Revenue	32,238,932	27,658,352
Expenses		
Instruction	31,424,881	26,848,073
Operations and Maintenance	814,051	810,279
Total Expense	32,238,932	27,658,352
Budgeted Surplus (Deficit), for the year	-	-

School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)

Schedule 3A

Annual Budget - Changes in Special Purpose Funds

Year Ended June 30, 2023

	Annual Facility Grant	Learning Improvement Fund	Scholarships and Bursaries	Special Education Technology	School Generated Funds	Strong Start	Ready, Set, Learn	OLEP	CommunityLINK
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$		\$	\$
Deferred Revenue, beginning of year			695,708		3,711,279				200,000
Add: Restricted Grants									
Provincial Grants - Ministry of Education	810,431	662,315		126,310		192,000	68,600	468,090	3,998,998
Other			15,000		6,000,000				
Investment Income	3,620		54,500		15,500				
	814,051	662,315	69,500	126,310	6,015,500	192,000	68,600	468,090	3,998,998
Less: Allocated to Revenue	814,051	662,315	40,000	126,310	6,015,500	192,000	68,600	468,090	4,198,998
Deferred Revenue, end of year	-	-	725,208	-	3,711,279	-	-	-	-
Revenues									
Provincial Grants - Ministry of Education	810,431	662,315		126,310		192,000	68,600	468,090	4,198,998
Other Revenue					6,000,000				
Investment Income	3,620		40,000		15,500				
	814,051	662,315	40,000	126,310	6,015,500	192,000	68,600	468,090	4,198,998
Expenses									
Salaries									
Teachers								68,499	1,249,601
Principals and Vice Principals				2,590				56,144	299,175
Educational Assistants		537,945		95,007		131,710			270,121
Support Staff									110,947
Substitutes		21,740			50,000	6,430		60,000	58,532
	-	559,685	-	97,597	50,000	138,140	-	184,643	1,988,376
Employee Benefits		102,630		22,475	9,500	32,260		37,393	462,699
Services and Supplies	814,051		40,000	6,238	5,956,000	21,600	68,600	246,054	1,747,923
	814,051	662,315	40,000	126,310	6,015,500	192,000	68,600	468,090	4,198,998
Net Revenue (Expense)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Additional Expenses funded by, and reported in, the Operating Fund						34,492			

School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)

Annual Budget - Changes in Special Purpose Funds

Year Ended June 30, 2023

Schedule 3A

	Classroom Enhancement Fund - Overhead	Classroom Enhancement Fund - Staffing	Ledger School	Provincial Inclusion Outreach	Estate Trust	TOTAL
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Deferred Revenue, beginning of year					118,284	4,725,271
Add: Restricted Grants						
Provincial Grants - Ministry of Education	702,459	17,728,997	374,544	840,568		25,973,312
Other						6,015,000
Investment Income					9,000	82,620
	702,459	17,728,997	374,544	840,568	9,000	32,070,932
Less: Allocated to Revenue	702,459	17,728,997	374,544	840,568	6,500	32,238,932
Deferred Revenue, end of year	-	-	-	-	120,784	4,557,271
Revenues						
Provincial Grants - Ministry of Education	702,459	17,728,997	374,544	840,568		26,173,312
Other Revenue						6,000,000
Investment Income					6,500	65,620
	702,459	17,728,997	374,544	840,568	6,500	32,238,932
Expenses						
Salaries						
Teachers		14,297,578	194,592	215,953		16,026,223
Principals and Vice Principals			7,681	17,238		382,828
Educational Assistants			69,828	167,804		1,272,415
Support Staff	167,099			27,785		305,831
Substitutes	420,534		9,770			627,006
	587,633	14,297,578	281,871	428,780	-	18,614,303
Employee Benefits	114,826	3,431,419	66,648	100,777		4,380,627
Services and Supplies			26,025	311,011	6,500	9,244,002
	702,459	17,728,997	374,544	840,568	6,500	32,238,932
Net Revenue (Expense)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Additional Expenses funded by, and reported in, the Operating Fund	294,219					328,711

School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)

Schedule 4

Annual Budget - Capital Revenue and Expense

Year Ended June 30, 2023

	2023 Annual Budget			2022 Annual Budget
	Invested in Tangible Capital Assets	Local Capital	Fund Balance	
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Revenues				
Provincial Grants				
Ministry of Education	2,500,000		2,500,000	1,000,000
Other Revenue		5,300,000	5,300,000	
Investment Income		8,380	8,380	4,000
Amortization of Deferred Capital Revenue	8,021,537		8,021,537	7,969,213
Total Revenue	10,521,537	5,308,380	15,829,917	8,973,213
Expenses				
Operations and Maintenance	2,500,000		2,500,000	1,000,000
Amortization of Tangible Capital Assets				
Operations and Maintenance	11,389,429		11,389,429	11,451,527
Total Expense	13,889,429	-	13,889,429	12,451,527
Net Revenue (Expense)	(3,367,892)	5,308,380	1,940,488	(3,478,314)
Net Transfers (to) from other funds				
Tangible Capital Assets Purchased	1,000,000		1,000,000	
Total Net Transfers	1,000,000	-	1,000,000	-
Other Adjustments to Fund Balances				
Tangible Capital Assets Purchased from Local Capital	1,319,000	(1,319,000)	-	
Total Other Adjustments to Fund Balances	1,319,000	(1,319,000)	-	
Budgeted Surplus (Deficit), for the year	(1,048,892)	3,989,380	2,940,488	(3,478,314)