

Friday, April 8, 2022

Greater Victoria School Board Approves 2022-23 School Year Budget

VICTORIA, BC – The Greater Victoria School Board gave the third and final reading of the Board’s budget bylaw last night, approving the \$268 million budget for the upcoming school year.

The Board is utilizing a projected \$2.3 million surplus and an additional \$320,000 in discretionary funding from anticipated increased student enrolment to balance the budget. The Board is relying on historical trends that see an increase in surplus at the end of each school year and an increase in student enrolment compared to Spring projections. Currently, the allotment is \$1.5 million more than what is projected.

“The Board is taking a calculated risk to maintain and invest in as many programs and services while addressing a \$7 million deficit,” said Board Chair Ryan Painter. “These are very difficult decisions that we do not take lightly. We have had many discussions and debates on ways to save and recover from the global pandemic, inflationary pressures and static enrolment. In addition, we have had many meaningful conversations about equity and how we invest in a future that sets all students up for success. It has been incredibly challenging knowing that all decisions will directly impact services to students and will have a ripple effect in schools. The Board has put every effort forward to balance the budget while supporting all of our learners.”

“The Board faced tough decisions knowing that each member of our learning community makes a difference in the lives of our students daily,” said Interim Superintendent Deb Whitten. “We strongly believe that all of our staff make significant contributions and bring value to our students and schools. It is never easy to reduce staffing or services to students. As we start to recover from the pandemic, we look forward to having future conversations about investment in the organization that both align and support our Strategic Plan and the Framework for Enhanced Student Learning.”

“Over the past two years, the Board has had very challenging conversations as it moves away from a rollover budget and works to balance revenues and expenditures on an annual basis,” said Secretary-Treasurer Kim Morris. “We know we have areas of improvement as we address a structural deficit, and we also know that we must target our funding to work towards equity and parity for all of our learners. The Board is holding the line as it makes some difficult decisions that work to meet the needs of all students while balancing its fiscal responsibility and commitment to address aging infrastructure.”

A summary document outlining the details of the approved budget is attached. Key budget decisions include the following:

Budget Savings

- The Board is allocating \$2.3 million surplus from the current school year which is \$1.5m more than projected.
- The Board plans to use \$1.4 million in local capital from land disposals to purchase assets that otherwise would have been purchased out of its operating fund.

- Administration at the Board Office is being downsized by \$427,000. This includes the reduction of an Associate Superintendent, a Principal or Vice-Principal and a Human Resources position at the Tolmie Board Office.
- The Board is maintaining the seven contracted YFC counsellors. It was originally proposed to let the contracts for these positions lapse. Rather, two contracted outreach workers funded through community LINK will be reduced.
- 50% reduction in daytime custodians at the elementary and middle school levels.
- Career Centre Coordinators are not being reduced. Instead, one instruction block from Career Centre Teachers at each secondary school will be reduced.
- There is a one-time reduction in the school supply allocation of \$800,000, calling on schools to instead utilize school carry forwards to bolster their budgets.
- Based on historical trending, there are educational assistant positions that are not replaced. The Board is reducing the EA relief budget resulting in \$620,000 savings based on these trends.
- Collaboration time used by schools for teachers and other staff to collaborate on initiatives, schools goals and other projections, is being discontinued. This will save nearly \$560,000.
- Elementary School strings were not supported in the budget, reflecting a savings of \$209,000. Middle School music was reduced by 20% for a savings of \$190,478 while maintaining an investment of 80% or \$762,000 at middle schools.
- The District will downsize from five Late French Immersion classrooms district-wide to four classes for a savings of \$115,560.

Budget Spending

- An investment in Information Technology Learning (ITL) network Infrastructure. This is year two of a five year plan, which will see approximately \$500,000 invested in network infrastructure. ITL will also see the addition of a new Security Analyst position.
- Additional funding for the Indigenous Nation Education Department (INED) to support Local Education Agreements as well additional INED teaching and support staffing in schools.
- Additional funding for collaboration between the District Team and INED to incorporate Indigenous Ways of Knowing into learning practices.
- Increasing hours for existing Educational Assistants garnered an investment of \$275,000. The increase in hours represents 20% of the cost of bringing all Educational Assistants in the District to 30 hours/week.
- The addition of two carpenters at Facilities to support aging infrastructure, slow the progression of increasing deferred maintenance and support safe and engaging learning environments.
- A Communications Assistant.

In addition to these changes in the budget, the District maintains 2022-2023 investments in Middle School music of \$762,000 and a focus on the Strategic Plan through supplemental funding for Strong

Start Centres. This is coupled with a \$500,000 commitment to year two of the literacy plan, the continuation of the mental health framework, and on-going District initiatives for professional learning opportunities for staff that will continue to support the work of the Strategic Plan and Framework for Enhanced Student Learning.

For more background information, visit: <https://www.sd61.bc.ca/our-district/financial/>

The Greater Victoria School District is comprised of 48 schools that serve the communities of Esquimalt, Oak Bay, Victoria, View Royal, portions of Saanich and the Highlands. In addition, it serves Four Houses: Esquimalt Nations, Songhees Nations, the Urban Indigenous Peoples' House Advisory (UPHIA) and the Métis Nations of Greater Victoria. It 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.

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One *Learning* Community



THIRD & FINAL READING - 2022-2023 BUDGET BYLAW - APRIL 7, 2022

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	15,208,429	271,526,191
B. (Shortfall)/Surplus	(7,082,348)	-	1,621,488	(5,460,860)

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 1,388,855

F. How much risk do you want to take? 1,824,291

Fa. Increased Revenue/Enrolment 324,291

Fb. Increased Surplus Projection 1,500,000

G. Updated Shortfall (B+C+D+E+F) (3,069,202)

H. What New Spending would you like to add? 1,353,460 +

EA's 20% to 30 hrs/week 273,545

ITL Yr 2/5 Network Infrastructure (from Local Capital above) 502,850

VP Admin Time to Elementary 23,434

Maintenance - 2 Carpenters 168,009

INED Teacher and CUPE Staffing 136,349

ITL Security Analyst (Excluded) 110,000

Communications Assistant 68,000

INED LEA Support 46,273

District Team Indigenous Collaboration 25,000

I. Updated Shortfall (G-H) (4,422,662)

J. What Reductions Are You Proposing? 4,422,662

School Supply Allocation - Reduce one time 800,000

Daytime Cust - Reduce Elem & Middle (50%) 654,902

CommunityLINKContracted Outreach Workers - Reduce 2 FTE 180,000

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 (20%) 190,478

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 Services & Supplies 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

Human Resources Department - Reduce 1.0 FTE 66,945

School Admin - Small School or Low Enrolment 61,494

District Team - Literacy Savings 37,000

ThoughtExchange On-line Engagement Tool 26,064

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	219,620,773	32,238,932	16,597,284	268,456,989
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