



The Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)

SPECIAL OPEN BOARD MEETING

AGENDA

Broadcasted via YouTube

<https://bit.ly/3czx8bA>

Tuesday, March 14, 2023, 6:30 p.m.

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 March 14, 2023 Special Open Board meeting agenda be approved.

B. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

B.1. Budget Advisory Committee 2023-2024 Annual Budget Recommendations

C. QUESTION PERIOD (15 minutes total)

D. ADJOURNMENT

Recommended Motion:

That the meeting be adjourned.

Office of the Secretary-Treasurer

School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)
556 Boleskine Road, Victoria, BC V8Z 1E8
Phone (250) 475-4117 Fax (250) 475-4112

Katrina Stride – Secretary-Treasurer

TO: Board of Education

FROM: Budget Advisory Committee

DATE: March 14, 2023

RE: 2023-2024 Annual Budget Recommendations

What is the Budget Advisory Committee?

Purpose

The Budget Advisory Committee (the “Committee”) is a committee of the whole of the Board of Education. The purpose of the Budget Committee is to oversee the School District’s budget process, make recommendations and deliver reports to the Board with a focus on provision of service for every student to succeed, recognizing that all learners are unique and have differing needs.

Duties and Responsibilities

The duties and responsibilities of the Committee include:

- Make recommendations for Board approval and/or deliver reports relative to the annual operating, special purpose and capital budgets no later than March 2, 2023.
- Make recommendations that have clear linkages to:
 - the District’s Strategic Plan’s goals and strategies and the District Framework for Enhancing Student Learning for inclusion in the Financial Statement Discussion & Analysis Report; and
 - the Board’s Values and Guiding Principles set out in the fiscal year’s budget process
 - sustainability:
 - commit to administrative and operational efficiencies, and appropriate management of risk including the provision of safe and healthy learning environments and sustainable environmental practices
 - move toward matching revenues to expenses so the organization does not rely on surplus to balance on-going costs from year to year
 - spend surplus on one-time initiatives and priorities, and not on-going expenses
 - recognize that the needs of students change from year to year and so will the budget allocations
 - protect reserves and contingency even when there is pressure to spend in times of constraint
 - consider long term financial planning and three-year budget forecasts
- Oversee the annual budget process
- Receive budget input from education partners and the public
- Make recommendations for Board approval relative to improvements to annual budgeting process

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.

Composition

Committee membership includes:

- All Trustees of the Board
- Superintendent
- Secretary-Treasurer
- Deputy Superintendent
- Associate Superintendent
- Associate Secretary-Treasurer
- Director of Finance
- Director of Facilities Services
- Director of Indigenous Education
- Director of Human Resource Services
- Director of Information Technology for Learning
- Director of International Education
- Two Principals/Vice-Principals
- Two representatives from each of the GVTA, CUPE Local 947, CUPE Local 382, Allied Specialists Association, and VCPAC
- One representative from each of the Songhees Nation, Esquimalt Nation, Urban Peoples' House Indigenous Advisory (UPHIA) and the Métis Nation of Greater Victoria
- Student voice will be heard through the Student Symposium and the Representative Advisory Council of Students

Committee Chair

Trustee Derek Gagnon is the Budget Advisory Committee Chair.

Meetings

The Committee met 7 times between November 10, 2022 and March 9, 2023. There is also a budget process debrief meeting scheduled for May 4, 2023. Meetings alternated between in-person and online via Zoom. The meeting format varied depending on agenda items and topics of discussion, and sometimes included small group discussions or breakout rooms.

Events

The Committee participated in 3 events; Talking Tables, Student Symposium, and Public Meeting. Event reports were shared with the Board at its Regular Board meetings and are located [here](#) on the School District website.

Accountability

The Committee does not make decisions. The Committee makes recommendations by consensus and, failing consensus, communicates committee discussions to the Board, including opposing views. The Committee reports its discussions to the Board through its meeting minutes.

Meeting Agendas, Presentations and Minutes

Committee meeting agendas, presentations, and minutes are posted to the School District website. They can be located [here](#).

Budget Advisory Committee Discussions

Department Profiles

To build a better understanding of the departments within the School District, department profiles were completed by each department and included in the agenda packages of the following Committee meetings:

- January 19, 2023:
 - Indigenous Education
 - District Team
- February 9, 2023:
 - Facilities Services
 - Communications and Community Engagement
 - International Education
- February 23, 2023:
 - Information Technology for Learning
 - Human Resource Services
 - Financial Services

Department profiles included the following sections:

- Department (description of primary work)
- Staff names, positions, FTE and affiliation
- Student FTE as per 1701
- Budget
- Student / Family support (description of work for students and family)
- School support (description of work for staff, P/VP, etc.)
- District support (cross-department, FESL, Ed Policy, Admin meetings, etc.)
- Community and interagency partnerships
- Ministry of Education and Child Care directives
- Alignment with District Strategic Plan
- Data

Departments made brief presentations to the Committee and answered questions of clarification.

Department profiles are included in the meeting agenda packages located [here](#).

Meeting Topics (Budget Information and Committee-Identified Topics)

Meeting 1 – November 10, 2022

- Review of Values and Guiding Principles
- Review of the Committee's Terms of Reference
- Importance of meeting the April 6, 2023 deadline for budget approval
- Overview of budget development process
- Budget orientation including the following highlights:
 - Fund accounting
 - Budget cycle
 - Operating expenses; breakdown by function and object; comparison to Provincial average
 - Special Purpose Funds
 - Capital
 - Surplus; projection versus actual; breakdown by category; history
 - Reserves
 - Ministry Policy
 - Financial Statement Discussion and Analysis Report

- Committee-identified topics:
 - Music
 - Custodial Services
 - Mental Health
 - Indigenous Learners
 - Funding for Indigenous students and allocations to schools
 - Student participation on Committee

Meeting 2 – December 8, 2022

- Continued review of Values and Guiding Principles
- Continued review of the Committee's Terms of Reference
- Budget Change Report – June 2022
- Status Quo Budget – What does it mean?
- Enrolment and Operating Grant Overview
- Structural Deficit
- Surplus Philosophy and Strategy
- Workplan

Meeting 3 – January 19, 2023

- Finalized review of Values and Guiding Principles
- Finalized review of the Committee's Terms of Reference
- Monthly Financial Report – June 2022
- Talking Tables Event January 5, 2023 Report
- Committee-identified topics:
 - Indigenous Education
 - Mental Health and Wellness
- Workplan
- Revised Budget Process/Timeline

Meeting 4 – February 9, 2023

- Committee-identified topics:
 - Student Participation:
 - Representative Advisory Council of Students Meeting January 9, 2023 Report
 - Student Symposium January 13, 2023 Report
 - Music
- Consensus – What is it?
- Workplan

Meeting 5 – February 23, 2023

- Committee-identified topics:
 - Custodial Services Options
- 2022-2023 Operating Surplus Estimate
- 2023-2024 Structural Deficit Estimate
- Operating Capital Reserves
- Building Consensus:
 - Custodial Services Options
- Workplan

Meeting 6 – March 2, 2023

- Committee-identified topics:
 - Music Options
 - Elementary Strings
 - Middle School Music
- Committee Budget Priorities and Savings

- Building Consensus:
 - Operating Surplus and Operating Reserve
 - Operating Capital Reserves
 - Music Options
 - Elementary Strings
 - Middle School Music
- Workplan

Meeting 7 – March 9, 2023

- Public Meeting March 7, 2023 Feedback
- Revisit Committee Budget Priorities and Savings
- District Staff Budget Priorities and Savings
- Reaching Consensus:
 - 2022-2023 Unrestricted Operating Surplus
 - Unrestricted Operating Surplus - Contingency
 - Elementary Strings
 - Middle School Music
 - Student Devices
 - Educator Laptops
 - Year 3 of 5-Year Network Infrastructure
 - EA Top-up Priority Schools
 - Custodial Services
 - Mental Health

Meeting agendas, presentations and minutes can be located [here](#).

Rightsholders and Stakeholder Feedback

In addition to participation on the Committee, feedback from Rightsholders and Stakeholders was received through two events:

- **Talking Tables Event January 5, 2023**
 - The Talking Tables Event was an evening event attended by 65 people made up of Trustees, Rightsholders, parents, teachers, CUPE 382, CUPE 947, Exempt staff, and Principals and Vice Principals
 - Attendees were assigned seating to ensure diverse perspectives
 - The event included a presentation to provide the current context for the 2023-2024 Budget
 - There were three topics of discussion:
 - Cultural Responsive Learning Environments
 - Student Learning: Goals 1, 2 & 3
 - Infrastructure
 - Notetakers at each table captured highlights of the discussions
- **Public Meeting March 7, 2023**
 - The Public Meeting was an evening event attended by 63 people made up of members of the public, parents, community partners, Trustees, teachers, CUPE 947, Principals and Vice Principals, and Exempt staff
 - Attendees selected their own seating
 - The meeting included a presentation on the Strategic Plan, Framework for Enhancing Learning (FESL), and the current context for the 2023-2024 Budget
 - Following the presentation, participants gathered at tables and answered questions on the following topics:
 - Student Learning: Goals 1, 2 & 3
 - Operating Surplus – Contingency
 - Elementary Strings

- Middle School Music
- Technology for Learning
- Educational Assistants
- Custodial Services
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Notetakers at each table captured highlights of the discussions
- Before leaving, participants were asked to note on comment cards the 2-3 most important areas the Board should prioritize in the budget

Detailed reports from both events can be located [here](#).

Student Feedback

The Committee received feedback from students through two events:

- **Representative Advisory Council of Students Meeting January 9, 2023**
 - The Representative Advisory Council of Students meeting was an evening meeting attended by students in Grade 12 and members of the Senior Leadership Team
 - There were three topics of discussion:
 - In your experience as a student, are there areas related to your learning at school that you believe should have received specific resources?
 - Building or Infrastructure
 - Are there any other areas related to the budget you would like the Board to consider?
 - Notes captured the highlights of the discussion
- **Student Symposium January 13, 2023**
 - The Student Symposium was a full-day event, including lunch, attended by 66 students in Grades 8-12 from all Middle and Secondary Schools plus 24 adults made up of Trustees, School Administrators, School Staff, and Board Office Staff
 - The morning was spent on presentations and discussion on the following topics:
 - Climate Action
 - Technology
 - Cultural Responsiveness
 - Mental Health and Wellbeing
 - Following each topic, individual comments from students were captured
 - The afternoon was spent gathered at tables working on a budget simulation
 - Before leaving, students were asked to note the “one thing” they wanted the Board and District Staff to hear

Detailed reports from both events can be found [here](#).

Consensus

As noted in the Terms of Reference, the Committee is advisory in nature and reports to the Board. The Committee does not make decisions; therefore, its goal is to make recommendations by consensus or, failing consensus, to communicate to the Board its discussions, including opposing views.

At the Committee meeting held on March 9, 2023, the Committee used Slido to respond to poll questions on topics that had been discussed in Committee meetings and events to see how close the Committee was to reaching consensus.

The poll questions and results are noted below.

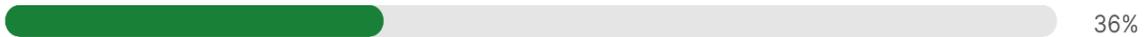
Q1: If there is an unrestricted operating surplus available at the end of 2022-2023, would you support the surplus being used to offset the budget deficit in 2023-2024?

Multiple Choice Poll  22 votes

Use all of it - 13 votes



Use some of it - 8 votes



Don't use it - 1 vote



slido

Q2: How would you plan to use the unrestricted operating surplus – contingency of \$1.2M currently held by the District?

Multiple Choice Poll  22 votes

Don't use it - increase - 1 vote



Don't use it - maintain - 7 votes



Use some of it - 7 votes



Use all of it - 7 votes



slido



Q3: What option would you choose for Elementary Strings?

Multiple Choice Poll 21 votes

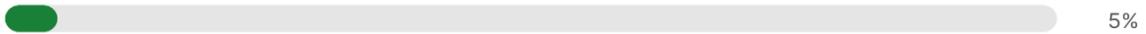
28 Elementary Schools (\$258K increase) - 5 votes



Hub Model - 5 sites (\$92K increase) - 4 votes



Hub Model - 10 sites (\$183K increase) - 1 vote



Strings in prep (\$0 impact) - 8 votes



No strings at Elementary (\$0 impact) - 3 votes



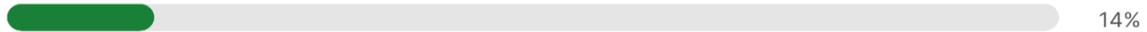
Q4: What option would you choose for Middle School Music?

Multiple Choice Poll 21 votes

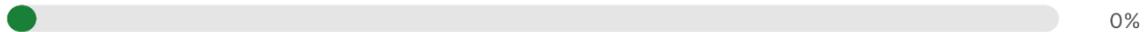
Maintain current FTE 8.822 (\$0 impact) - 8 votes



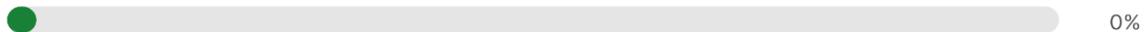
Reduce by 20% to 7.058 FTE (\$226K decrease) - 3 votes



School Population Base FTE: 7.000 FTE (\$234K decrease) - 0 votes



Base FTE + Participation Rate FTE: 10.000 (\$151K increase) - 0 votes



Band as Exploratory/Elective (\$860K decrease) - 10 votes

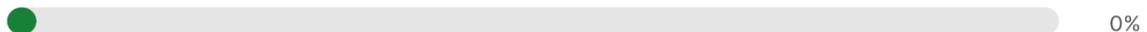


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Q5: What option would you choose for Student Devices?

Multiple Choice Poll 21 votes

Maintain current 2:1 ratio (\$750K increase) - 0 votes



Reduce ratio to 3:1 (\$400K increase) - 14 votes



Defer all costs and risks to next year (\$0 impact) - 7 votes



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Q6: What option would you choose for Educator Laptops?

Multiple Choice Poll 21 votes

Fully fund (\$1M increase) - 2 votes



Partially fund (\$700K increase) - 19 votes



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Q7: What option would you choose for Year 3 of the 5-Year Network Infrastructure Plan?

Multiple Choice Poll 20 votes

Fully fund (\$618K increase) - 16 votes



Do not fund (\$0 impact) - 4 votes



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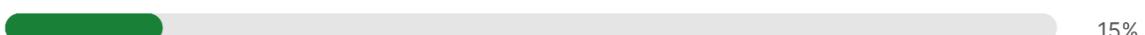
Q8: Would you support spending \$164K to top-up EAs to 30-hours per week at another 5 priority schools?

Multiple Choice Poll 20 votes

Yes (\$164K increase) - 17 votes



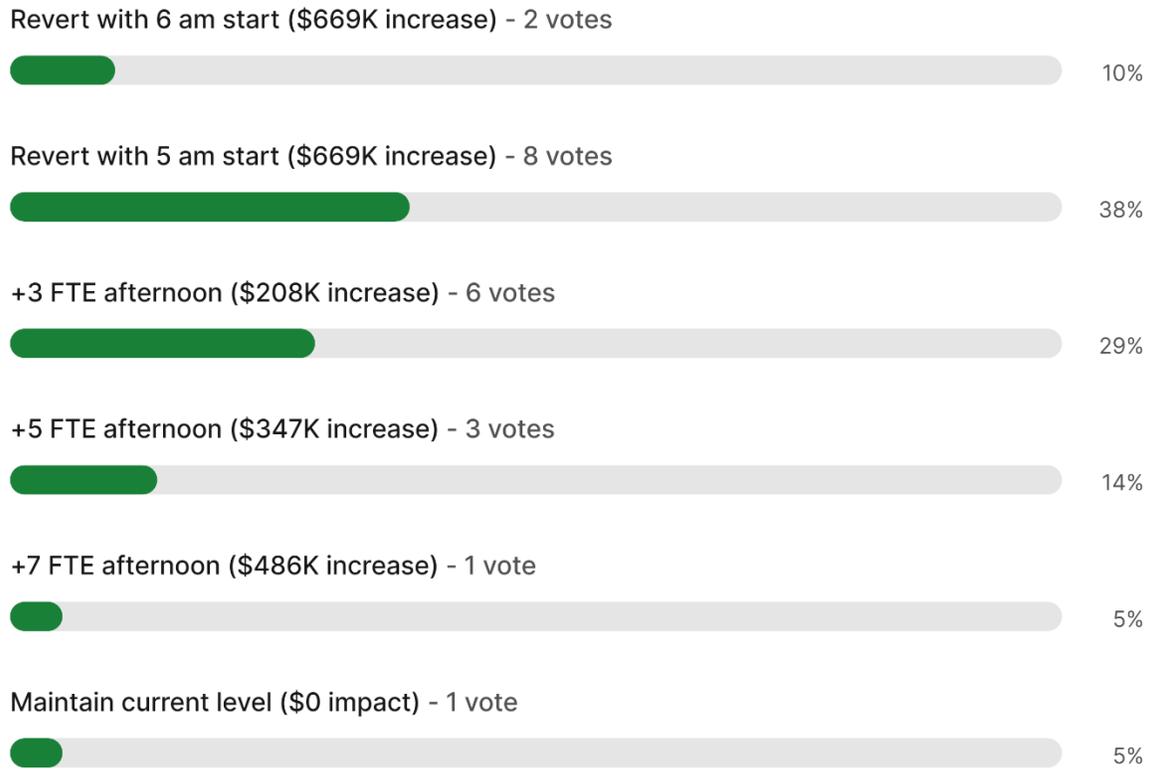
No (\$0 impact) - 3 votes



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Q9: What option would you choose for Custodial Services?

Multiple Choice Poll  21 votes



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Q10: Would you support doubling the \$48K budget for mental health initiatives?

Multiple Choice Poll  20 votes



slido

Of the 10 poll questions asked, there were 6 results that showed a majority (more than 50%) of respondents selecting the same option. Those results include:

- 59% support using all of the unrestricted operating surplus from 22-23 to balance the 23-24 budget
- 67% support reducing the student device ratio down to 3:1 from 2:1 (\$400K budget addition)
- 90% support partially funding educator devices instead of fully funding them (\$700K budget addition)
- 80% support funding Year 3 of the 5-Year Network Infrastructure (Wi-Fi) Plan (\$618K budget addition)
- 85% support topping-up EA hours to 30-hours at another 5 priority schools (\$164K budget addition)
- 85% support doubling the \$48K budget for mental health initiatives (\$48K budget addition)

Recommendation

Given that the Committee did not reach consensus on any topics, it is recommended that the Board consider the results from the poll questions, along with the related discussions captured in Committee meeting minutes and the feedback provided in event reports, as it moves forward in making decisions for the 2023-2024 Annual Budget.