

TO: The Board of Education
FROM: Katrina Stride, Secretary-Treasurer
DATE: January 29, 2024
RE: **Budget Working Groups**

Budget Working Group Meetings

There have been three Budget Working Group meetings held:

Budget Working Group Meeting #1 – December 13, 2023

- Held in-person at Tolmie
- Information packages provided on December 7, 2023
- Large group presentation included the following topics:
 - Budget Scope
 - Budget Responsibility
 - Operating Surplus
 - Structural Deficit
- Small group discussion specific to working groups

Budget Working Group Meeting #2 – January 18, 2024

- Held via Zoom
- Additional information packages provided on January 16, 2024
- Large group presentation included the following topic:
 - Historical Spending Outside Funding and Contracts/Ratios
- Small group discussion specific to working groups
 - Department: International Education with Dr. Jeff Davis

Budget Working Group Meeting #3 – January 25, 2024

- Held in-person at Tolmie
- Additional information package provided on January 23, 2024
- Small group discussion specific to working groups
 - Department: Indigenous Education with Dr. Shelly Niemi

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.

Progress Updates

Some of the Budget Working Groups have provided a brief written progress update on the work that has been completed to date. Budget Working Groups are also welcome to provide a brief verbal update during the meeting.

School-Based Budget Working Group

Our working group has had great conversations about the budget at a school-based level. Topics of discussion have included equity, allocation, carry forwards, staffing, and facilities/maintenance.

Meeting #1: We reviewed the budget package and requested further information where necessary.

Meeting #2: Discussed work of DAWG (District Administration Working Group) with a focus on equity.

Meeting #3: Had special guests Ken Andrews, Gord Mitchell, along with James Hansen. We discussed logistics of administering a budget at each school level.

Special Purpose Fund Budget Working Group

Our working group has focused on the Special Purpose Funds, many of which are very restricted or do not have allocations to schools. Topics of discussion have included priority school funding, how funds are allocated to schools, equity between schools as it relates to school generated funds, understanding the context of decisions tied to surplus funds, and if it is even possible to understand the historical impacts of the allocation of Special Purpose Funds. Group members have expressed an appreciation for the deeper understanding of the various Special Purpose Funds that has been gained through the sharing of information and thoughts within the group.

Meeting #1: Reviewed the full information package provided but focused on the list of Special Purpose Funds to determine which funds may have some flexibility. Further information was requested on the Learning Improvement Fund (LIF), Classroom Enhancement Fund (CEF), and Community Link (CL).

Meeting #2: Reviewed the additional information provided with a focus on Community Link (CL).

Meeting #3: Reviewed the terms of reference for the group and the allocation of Special Purpose Funds to schools in staffing and supplies. Discussed some potential options to realign funding within Community Link. Further information was requested on Community Schools.

Next Meetings

The next Budget Working Group meetings will be held on February 8, 2024 and February 13, 2024.

Recommendations from each of the Budget Working Groups will be presented to the Board at a Special Public Budget Meeting on February 29, 2024.