

Office of the Secretary-Treasurer

School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria)
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Katrina Stride – Secretary-Treasurer

TO: The Board of Education
FROM: Katrina Stride, Secretary-Treasurer
DATE: April 9, 2024
RE: **Public Meeting Report – March 14, 2024**

A public meeting was held on March 14, 2024 as part of the 2024-2025 Budget process. The purpose of the meeting was to inform members of the Board by:

- Providing the public with the current context around the 2024-2025 Budget
- Providing an opportunity to discuss important budget topics and obtain feedback from the public
- Providing an opportunity for the public to engage directly with Trustees and District staff

Participation

There were 53 participants including Trustees and District staff. The breakdown of participants is as follows:

Trustees	7	13%
Public	29	55%
Principals and Vice Principals	3	5%
Teachers	4	8%
CUPE 947	2	4%
CUPE 382	1	2%
Exempt	7	13%
Total	53	100%

Upon arrival at the meeting at the Spectrum Community School Gymnasium, participants received name tags and seated themselves at tables.

Opening Remarks

Opening remarks were provided by Katrina Stride, Secretary-Treasurer.

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.

Presentation

Katrina Stride, Secretary-Treasurer, presented information on the 2024-2025 budget, including the source of revenues and expenses, structural deficit, accumulated operating surplus, unrestricted operating surplus – contingency, and capital reserves.

Table Talk

Participants discussed and answered questions on the following topics:

1. Priority Students: Goals 1, 2 & 3
2. Elementary Strings
3. Middle School Music
4. Technology for Learning
5. Educational Assistants

Written notes were taken of the conversation at each table and individual comment cards captured participants top priorities.

Closing Remarks

Closing remarks were provided by Katrina Stride, Secretary-Treasurer.

Appreciation

Thank you to all of the participants who were able to attend the event and add their voices to these important conversations.

Supporting Documentation

The presentation slides are attached as Appendix A.

Table Talk package provided to each table is attached as Appendix B.

Transcribed notes from each table are attached as Appendix C.

Transcribed comment cards are attached as Appendix D.

Report

Following the meeting, this report will be posted on the District website on the Financial page under the heading of 2024-2025 School Year Budget at <https://www.sd61.bc.ca/our-district/financial/>.

Public Meeting: Budget 2024-2025



Date: March 14, 2024

Presented to: Community

Presented by: Katrina Stride, Secretary-Treasurer

Location: Spectrum School Gym

www.sd61.bc.ca



Territorial Acknowledgement

The Greater Victoria School District wishes to recognize and acknowledge the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations on whose traditional territories we live, we learn, and we do our work.



Agenda

Purpose of Public Meeting

Introductions

Budget Presentation

- Katrina Stride,
Secretary-Treasurer

Table Talk

- Everyone



Purpose of Public Meeting

- Provide context for 2024-2025 Annual Budget
- Receive public feedback on budget topics and priorities
- Opportunity for public to communicate directly with Trustees and District Staff



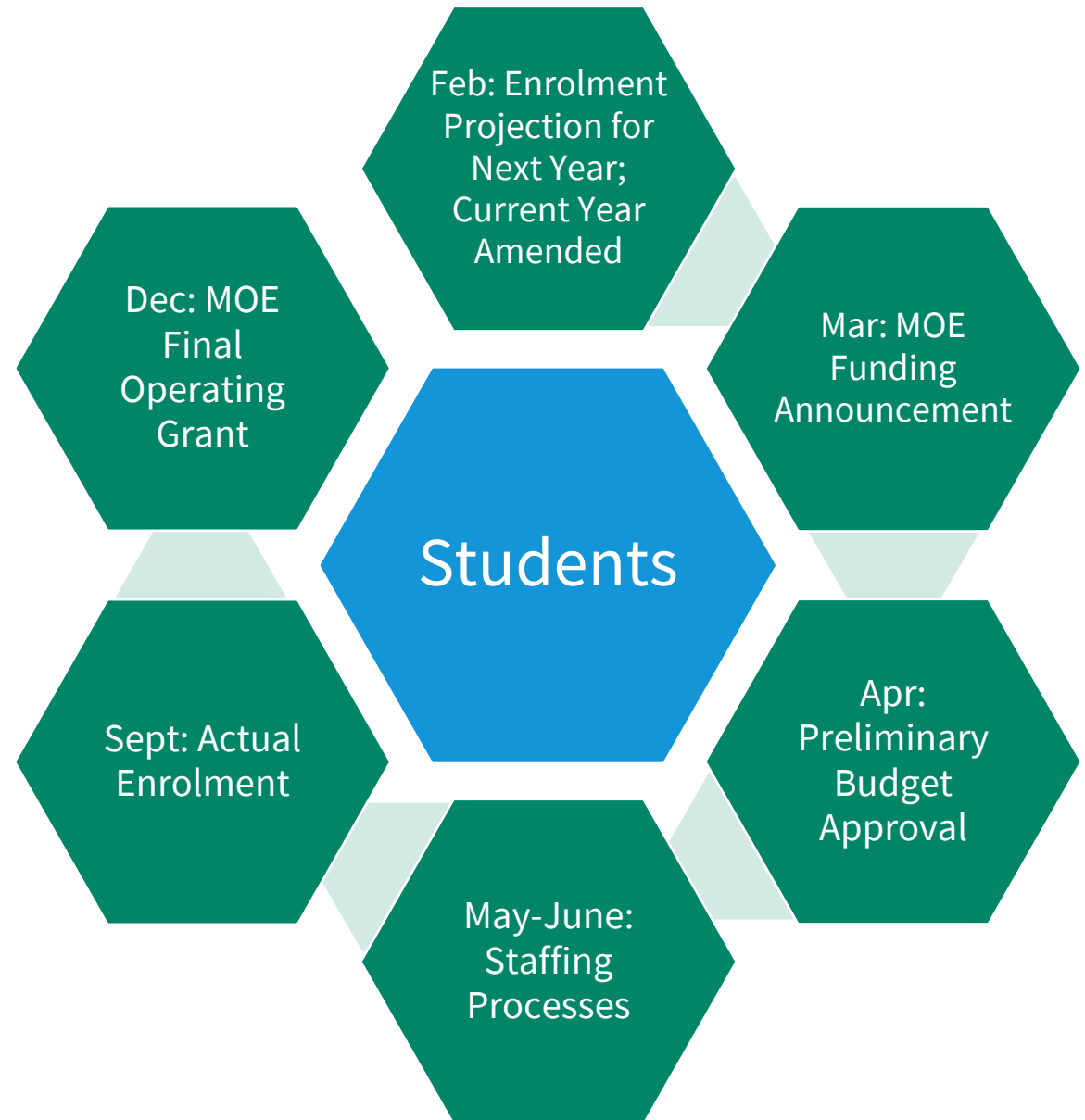
Introductions

- Board Chair, Board Vice Chair, and Trustees
- District Staff

Budget Presentation



Budget Cycle





Budget Process

- Meetings with student representatives at all secondary schools
- Meetings with representatives from partner groups and VPVPA
- Meetings with representatives from the Four Houses
- Budget Working Groups meetings between December and February
- Student Symposium Event – January 11, 2024
- Talking Tables Event – March 7, 2024
- Public Meeting – March 14, 2024
- Board Budget Bylaw Readings – April 9 and April 11, 2024



Budget Scope

- Per Public Sector Accounting Standards, the Board is required to create a budget that encompasses all funds; Operating, Special Purpose, and Capital
- The focus of this meeting will be on the Operating Budget

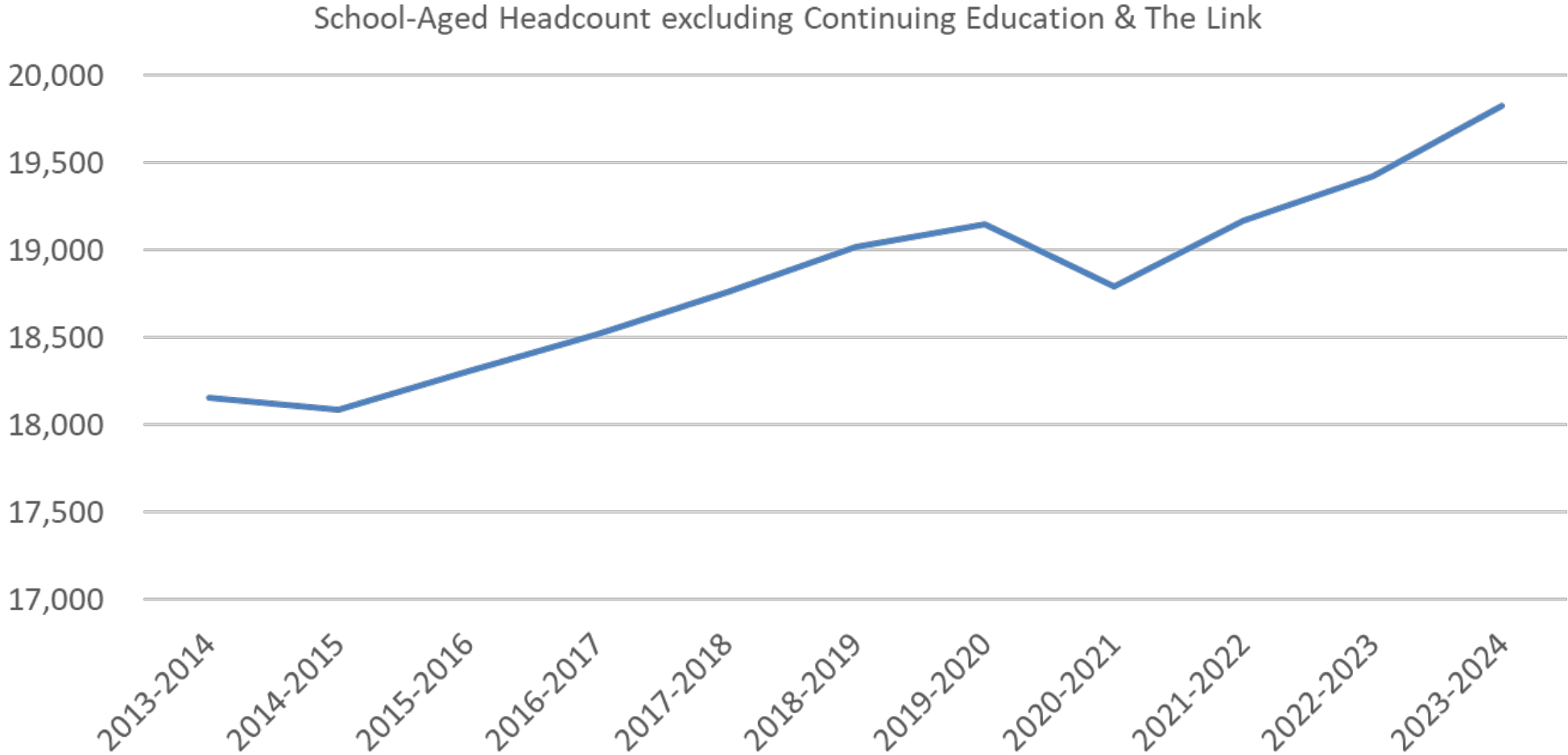
Budget Responsibility

- Per legislation, the Board must approve a balanced budget, where revenues equal expenses
- Permitted to use unspent budget from the prior year to balance

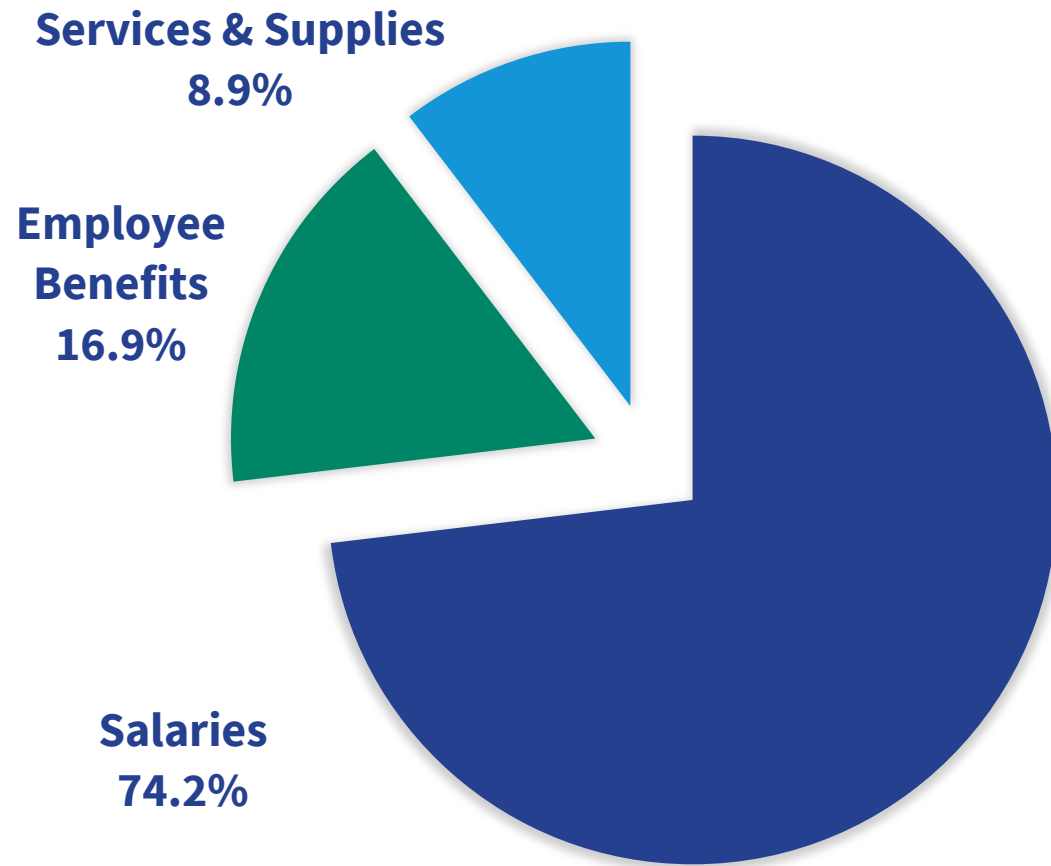
Enrolment Trends (Ministry Funded)

School-Aged Headcount excluding Continuing Education & The Link			
Year	Projected	Actual	% Change
2013-2014	18,124	18,158	0.2%
2014-2015	18,203	18,089	-0.6%
2015-2016	18,042	18,303	1.4%
2016-2017	18,374	18,519	0.8%
2017-2018	18,625	18,760	0.7%
2018-2019	18,696	19,015	1.7%
2019-2020	19,172	19,148	-0.1%
2020-2021	19,172	18,792	-2.0%
2021-2022	18,801	19,167	1.9%
2022-2023	19,278	19,420	0.7%
2023-2024	19,456	19,823	1.9%

Enrolment Trends (Ministry Funded)



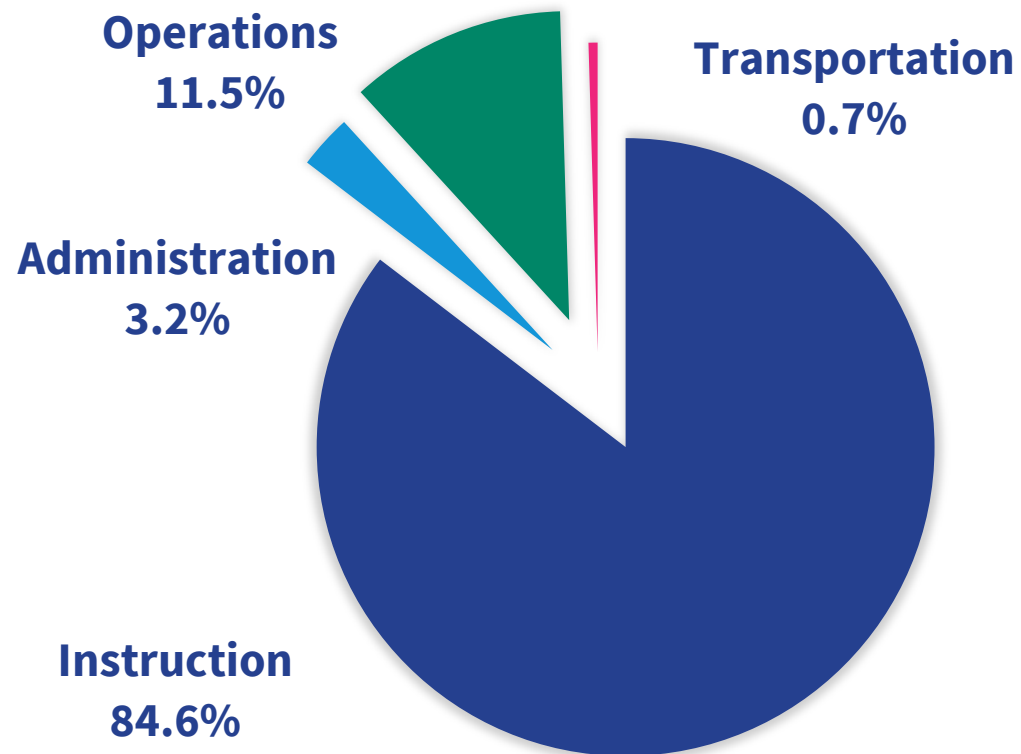
Operating Expenses



Salaries and Benefits make up approximately **91.1%** of the budget

Everything else (services and supplies) such as technology, textbooks, fuel, travel, toilet paper, library books, etc. makes up the remaining **8.9%**

Operating Expenses



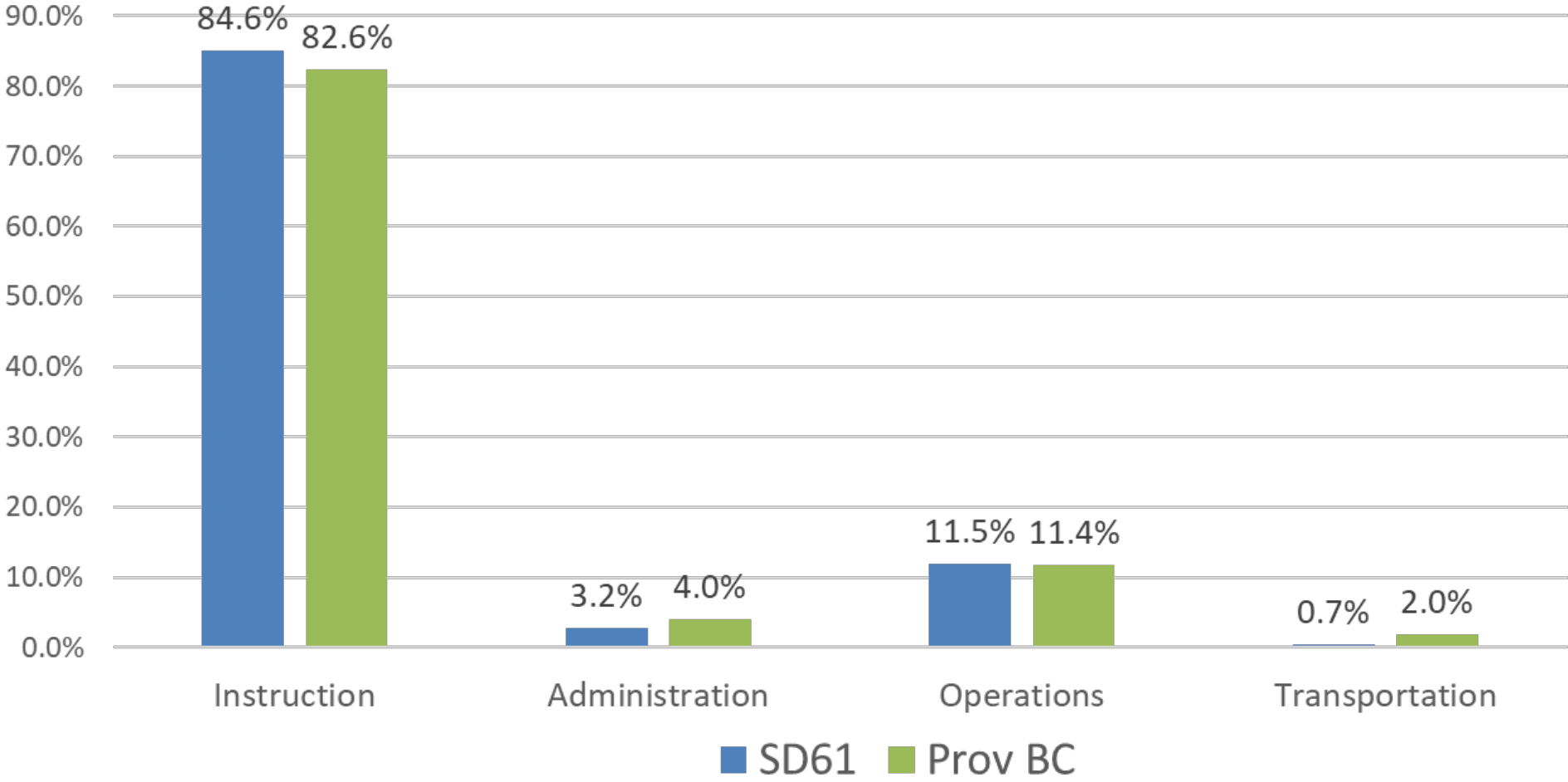
Instruction 84.6% – relates to **delivery of learning experiences:** Teachers, Principals and Vice-Principals, Educational Assistants, technology for the classroom, textbooks, curricular and extra-curricular travel

District Administration 3.2% – relates to **running the District:** Superintendent, learning and inclusion leaders, finance, human resources, payroll, software, legal, audit

Operations and Maintenance 11.5% – relates to the **maintenance and upkeep of buildings, grounds and technology:** plumbers, electricians, carpenters, custodians, groundspeople, computer technicians

Transportation and Housing 0.7% – relates to **getting students to and from school each day:** bussing staff, contractors and trips

How Do We Stack Up?





Structural Deficit

What is a Structural Deficit?

- Budgeted expenditures are greater than budgeted revenues
- Using prior year surplus and one-time savings to balance the budget

Projected 2024-2025 Structural Deficit

We will have a more accurate estimate of the structural deficit as we finalize work on the 2024-2025 Annual Budget.

- Current estimate is \$6.4M
- There are still many variables not yet incorporated
- Ministry funding announcement on or before March 15



Surplus

What is a surplus?

- Amount by which revenues exceed expenses

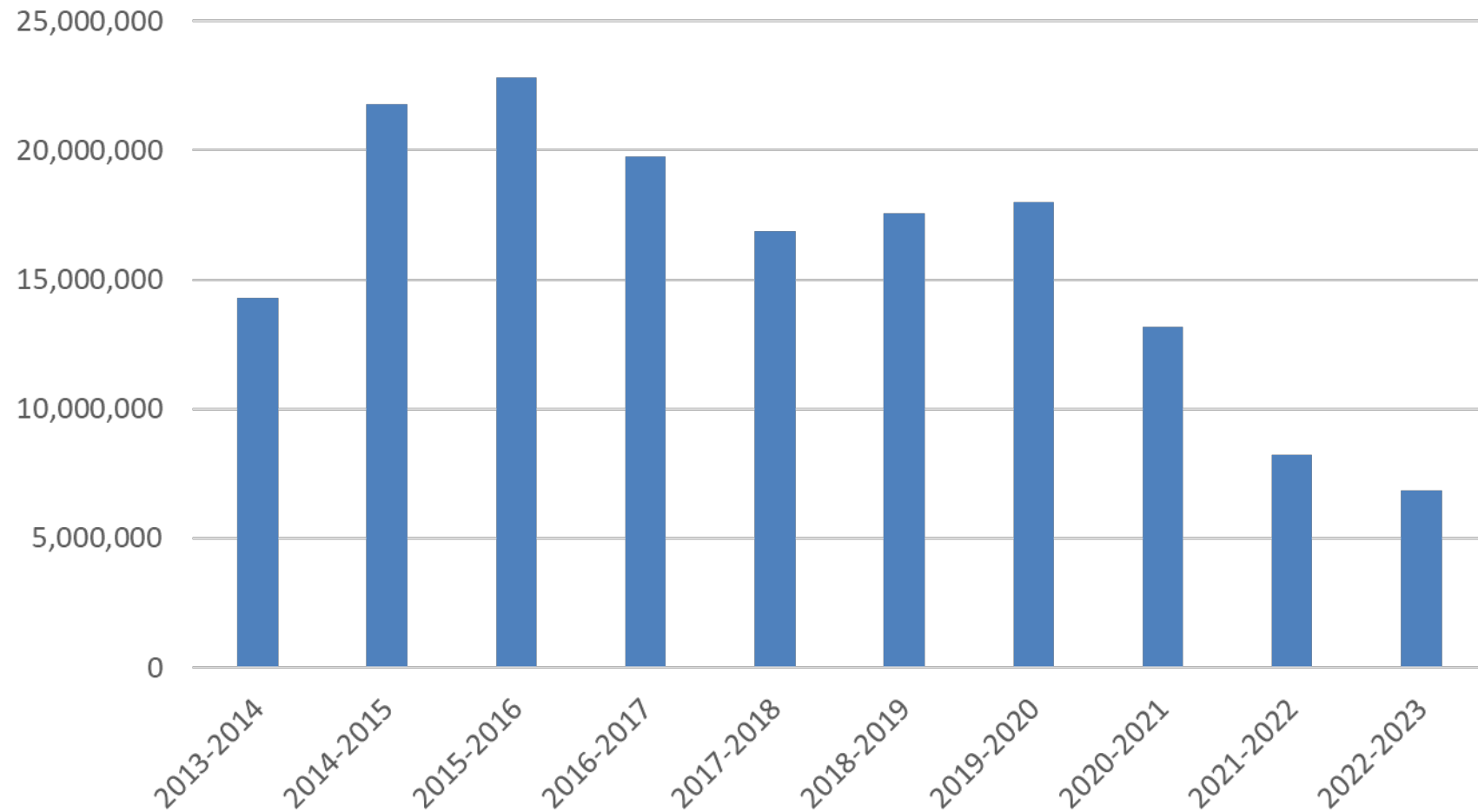
Surplus can be:

- Restricted
 - Contractual obligations and commitments
 - To balance future year budgets
 - One-time expenses
- Unrestricted
 - Contingency/Reserve

History of Accumulated Operating Surplus

	Accumulated Operating Surplus (Opening)	Surplus/(Use to Balance Budget)	Equipment	Balance	Contractually Committed and Carry Forwards	Balance Contingency
2015/16	21,775,666	2,320,877	(1,296,116)	22,800,427	(10,448,070)	12,352,357
2016/17	22,800,427	2,955,704	(5,986,567)	19,769,564	(10,494,970)	9,274,594
2017/18	19,769,564	(44,437)	(2,865,770)	16,859,357	(10,572,661)	6,286,696
2018/19	16,859,357	1,204,571	(3,236,043)	14,827,885	(8,664,131)	6,163,754
2019/20	14,827,885	5,221,324	(2,069,882)	17,979,327	(8,141,693)	9,837,634
2020/21	17,979,327	(9,822,003)	(1,000,000)	7,157,324	(4,377,294)	2,780,030
2021/22	13,192,739	(6,126,523)	-	7,066,216	(5,098,575)	1,967,641
2022/23	8,218,621	(2,300,000)	-	5,918,621	(4,417,367)	1,501,254
2023/24	6,841,658	(2,139,002)	-	4,702,656	(4,085,543)	617,113

History of Accumulated Operating Surplus



2023-2024 Accumulated Operating Surplus

Greater Victoria School District - Appropriated Surplus 2023-2024 Surplus Projection

	June 30, 2024 (Projected)	June 30, 2023 (Actual)
Project Budgets	\$ 1,282,474	\$ 2,261,658
School Level Funds	1,000,000	997,230
Purchase Order Commitments	400,000	826,655
Planned Surplus to Balance Budget	1,847,592	2,139,002
Unrestricted Operating Surplus - Contingency	617,113	617,113
Accumulated Surplus (Deficit), end of year	\$ 5,147,179	\$ 6,841,658
Total Prior Year Operating Expense	\$ 229,605,908	\$ 222,106,412
Unrestricted Surplus as a % of previous year's operating expense	0.27%	0.28%

Unrestricted Operating Surplus - Contingency

- District Policy 3170: Operating Surplus
- Ministry directive to hold a reasonable unrestricted operating surplus (contingency) to mitigate risk
- Ideal level is 2% and 4% of the prior year's operating expense (\$4.59M - \$9.18M)
- Current level is 0.27% (\$.6 million)



Capital Reserve – Local Capital

- Local Capital Reserve can be used to purchase capital assets
- All funds in Local Capital have been allocated



2024-2025 Budget Summary

\$6.4M operating fund deficit for 2024-2025 (estimate)

Other sources of funding available to offset deficit?

- \$1.8M Operating Surplus from 2023-2024 (estimate)
- \$0 Local Capital Reserve
- \$.6M Unrestricted Operating Surplus – Contingency (RISK)



Table Talk

- Copies of a package called Public Meeting at each table
- Contains 5 Table Talk questions to be discussed at your table
- Will also display on screen
- 15 minutes allocated to each set of questions
- Notetaker at each table to capture conversation and consensus on chosen option, if reached
- Opportunity for individual feedback at end of meeting

Public Meeting: Budget 2024-2025



Date: March 14, 2024

Presented to: Community

Presented by: Katrina Stride, Secretary-Treasurer

Location: Spectrum School Gym

Priority Students: Goals 1, 2, and 3

- Priority students include Indigenous students, children and youth in care, and students with diverse needs.
- When you review the goals and strategies in the District's Strategic Plan and the Enhancing Student Learning Report, please identify how the Board could allocate resources to improve outcomes for priority students?

Elementary Strings

- Elementary Strings is included in the 2024-2025 budget at a cost of \$258K. This model provides all elementary schools the option to offer strings to all grade 5 students during school hours. Please provide your thoughts on moving to a 'Hub Model' where Elementary Strings would be available to all grade 5 students through select hub schools outside of school hours. Based on the attached options, which 'Hub Model' is preferred? Provide rationale.
- If a hub model is offered for Elementary Strings, would you recommend it be offered before or after school?

Middle School Music

- Middle School Music is included in the 2024-2025 budget at a cost of \$1.1M. By moving to a base + model for Middle School Music, the 10 schools would receive 190 blocks of music per week for a savings of \$239K. Please provide your thoughts on adjusting the allocation to a base + model.

Technology for Learning

- Outdated staff and student devices need to be replaced to maintain network security and to support student learning. Replacement costs for staff and student devices are not fully included in the 2024-2025 budget and will require an investment of \$1.4M to maintain the current 2:1 student device ratio and staff device allocations. What student device ratio should the Board support from the operating fund in 2024-2025 to address this issue? Provide rationale.

Educational Assistants (EAs)

- Our District continues to face challenges with the recruitment and retention of EAs. One area to explore is the creation of a pool of 30-hour EA positions that can be assigned to schools as needed. What are your thoughts on this creative solution?
- Another creative solution is the possibility of one early closure/late start day each month to provide time for collaboration between Teachers and EAs at the Elementary level. What are your thoughts on this possible future idea?
- Do you have any other ideas for the Board's consideration?

Top Priorities

- As you leave tonight, please write down the top three items that the Board should prioritize in the 2024-2025 budget.

Opportunity to Provide Feedback

In the envelopes at each table put:

- Individual comment cards that include recommendations on budget priorities
- Comments will be transposed (not scanned) into a report to the Board
- Public feedback can also be provided by email at: community@sd61.bc.ca
- Deadline for feedback is April 5



Decision Timeline

- Feedback from Public Meeting provided to Trustees on March 15
- Public Feedback Period
March 15 – April 5
- Spring Break March 18 – April 3
- Feedback from Public Meeting and Public Feedback Period included in agenda package for April 9
- Budget Bylaw Readings on April 9 and April 11

Key Dates

April 9

First, or First and Second, Budget Bylaw reading(s)

April 11

Second and Third, or Third, Budget Bylaw reading(s)

April 15

Staffing packages sent to schools

April 26-29

Staffing packages back from schools

May 7

Staffing process commences

Thank You!



Public Meeting: Budget 2024-2025



Date: March 14, 2024

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Location: Spectrum School Gym

Priority Students: Goals 1, 2, and 3

- Priority students include Indigenous students, children and youth in care, and students with diverse needs.
- When you review the goals and strategies in the District's Strategic Plan and the Enhancing Student Learning Report, please identify how the Board could allocate resources to improve outcomes for priority students?

Strategic Plan 2020-2025



Mission

We nurture each student's learning and well-being in a safe, responsive and inclusive learning community.



Vision

Each student within our world-class learning community has an opportunity to fulfill their potential and pursue their aspirations.

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

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

Current Strategic Plan Priorities

The Greater Victoria School District has three goals identified in its [strategic plan](#). Each of the goals contain strategies to action the goal and are included in the tables below. Also included are the actions to date for the strategies.

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 & 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.
ACTIONS TO DATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted professional learning offered through a variety of ways with a focus on literacy, numeracy and social emotional learning through the lens of culturally responsive teaching and learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through the K-12 Career Education Curriculum, continue to create opportunities focused on personalized future orientation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase initiatives for students with diverse learning needs to connect with meaningful work experience, training, and post-secondary learning opportunities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District professional learning options aligned with the strategic plan that prioritize culturally responsive learning environments and explicitly connect philosophy and pedagogy with a focus on increasing student connections, engagement and achievement will be a priority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further implementation and support of Competency Based Individual Education Plans K-12— focus on engaging students and families (Year 4) Expanding of the Welcome and Learning Centre to support immigrant and refugee students new to Victoria (Sept 2022) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 3 of District multi-disciplinary ‘wrap-around team’ supporting school teams with programming implementation for diverse learners with the most complex support needs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> French oral language pilot with a family of schools to support the acquisition and strengthening of French oral language development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued work to support person centered planning and transitions K-12 and beyond with a focus for diverse learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 3 of early childhood educators working alongside teachers in kindergarten classrooms
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment Principles that focus on culturally responsive assessment and communicating student learning (document and video) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised welcome process for incoming Kindergarten students to prioritize family partnerships and inform program planning for the whole child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activation of the four agreements with Indigenous communities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued support with inclusion of SOGI-themed resources and activities through collaboration with SOGI school leads and targeted professional learning opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted early literacy supports in priority schools

District Successes: Goal 1

Create an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support and improve all learners' personal and academic success

Expansion of early literacy supports in all 29 elementary schools

Engagement with our learning community with a focus on assessment and reporting

The expansion of child care spaces and service on school grounds—birth to five years and before/after school care

On-going, targeted support for proficiency scales K-12 with educators, principals and vice-principals

Development and implementation of a local electronic portfolio tool to support student/teacher/family communication/connection

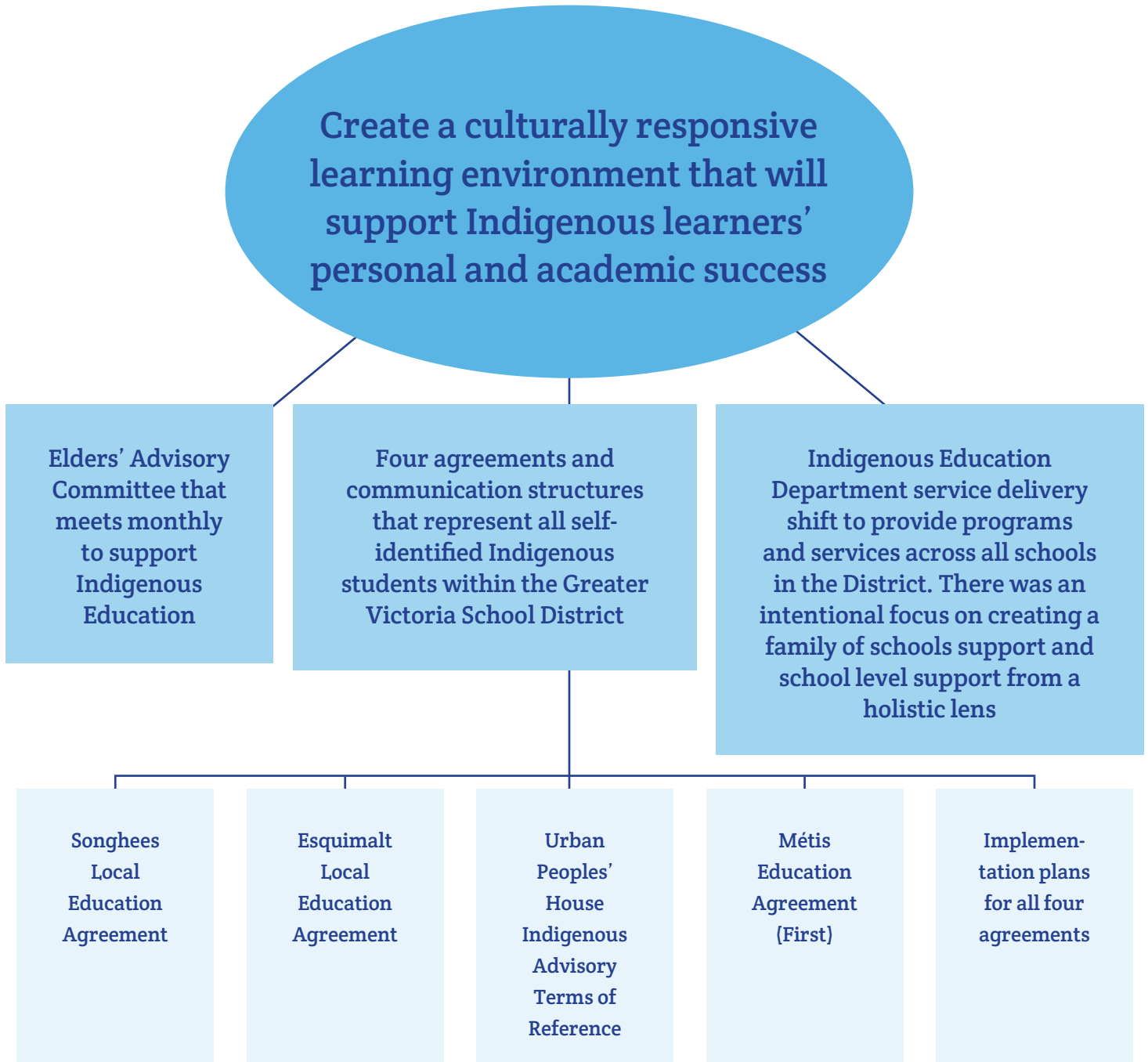
Finalized assessment principles aligned with the First Peoples Principles of Learning ([document](#) and [video](#))

Establishment of a reporting sub-committee



Goal 2: Create a culturally responsive learning environment that will support Indigenous learners' personal and academic success.			
	<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Strategy 3: Address the inequity of outcomes for Indigenous learners in literacy, numeracy, attendance and graduation rates.</p>
ACTIONS TO DATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous Education Learning Series Culturally Response Learning Series 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Songhees Local Education Agreement—Implementation Plan Esquimalt Nation Education Agreement—Implementation Plan Métis Education Agreement—Implementation Plan Urban Peoples' House Indigenous Advisory —Terms of Reference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All departments and schools are working towards an implementation of a distinctions-based data approach as per DRIPA, our Local Education Agreements with Songhees Nation, Esquimalt Nation, our Métis Education Agreement and our UPHIA Terms of Reference in our work with addressing inequities in literacy, numeracy, attendance and graduation rates with Indigenous students in our school district. All of our agreements were co-created with each of the Indigenous communities and we meet regularly to discuss and activate the needs of their students and families as outlined in each of these agreements from a distinctions-based approach
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Rights Tribunal—Special Programs Hiring Exemption Culturally Responsive Leadership Framework Equity Scan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly Meetings with the Four Houses 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous Education Learning Resource Library—with Approved Authentic Resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elders Advisory Monthly Meetings 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous Mental Health Framework (Locally Developed with the Four Houses) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous Education District Elementary, Middle and Secondary School Teams 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Education Agreements Métis Education Agreement Urban People's House Indigenous Advisory—Terms of Reference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous Education Dept and District Team—Collaboration to support the work across the system 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elders Advisory 		

District Successes: Goal 2



Goal 3: Create an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support all learners' physical and mental well-being.				
	<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Strategy 4: Address the inequity of opportunity for all learners to maximize physical health and mental well-being.</p>
ACTIONS TO DATE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide in-school implementation support for district resources including Second Step, Mental Health Literacy, EASE for all grades K to 12 including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted sessions for school counsellors and learning support teachers Counsellor collaboration sessions (several times throughout the year) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement information strategy "one-by-each" with all Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) offices that have SD61 students to ensure accurate and timely information between schools and social workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide quarterly mental health and wellness Snapshots at all levels for families that include community resources and relevant research Share new and relevant community resources and opportunities as they become available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of an attendance and re-engagement strategy to better identify and support priority students (three meetings throughout the year with community partners to connect and share information on disengaged students and share promising practices)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing work with Pacific Institute for Sport Excellence to provide Physical Literacy Teacher Mentorship programming in 10 middle and several elementary schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In collaboration with MCFD host two sessions for staff from schools, MCFD and Indigenous Delegated Agencies to build better connections in support of our Children and Youth in Care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote in-school physical activities including clubs, intramurals and student led initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide membership access to local centres or programs for students and families with limited means
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning sessions focused on social emotional learning and behaviour as communication for educational assistants, teachers and administrators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support implementation of District CYIC Standard of Practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and promote mental health campaigns through interactive posters in middle and secondary schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration with community agencies in the development of trauma-informed practice to support newcomers

District Successes: Goal 3

Create an inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment that will support all learners' physical and mental well-being

Opening of a centralized Welcome and Learning Centre to support immigrant and refugee students new to Victoria. The intention is to support successful transition into local schools through a trauma informed lens

As part of the Mental Health Framework, the establishment of community partnerships, including PISE, to support student and family physical and mental wellness

The continuation of the District Children and Youth in Care Standard of Practice

The establishment of collaboration sessions with MCFD and Indigenous delegated agencies to build better connections in support of Children and Youth in Care



Student Performance Data Analysis & Interpretation

Intellectual Development

Literacy

Our goal in the 2022-23 Enhancing Student Learning Report was to improve the on track/extending literacy outcomes within our district. The Grade 4 Literacy Foundational Skills Assessment (FSA) data indicates student success within the district (all resident students) remains unchanged at 80% for literacy/reading. The provincial data indicates the province decreased from 75% to 73%. The FSA in Literacy 7 indicates a decrease from 73% to 67%, whereas the provincial data indicates a decrease from 73% to 69%. We recognize that provincial data can be an important comparative means for our district. However, our goals will focus on continuous growth over time rather than a comparative measure.

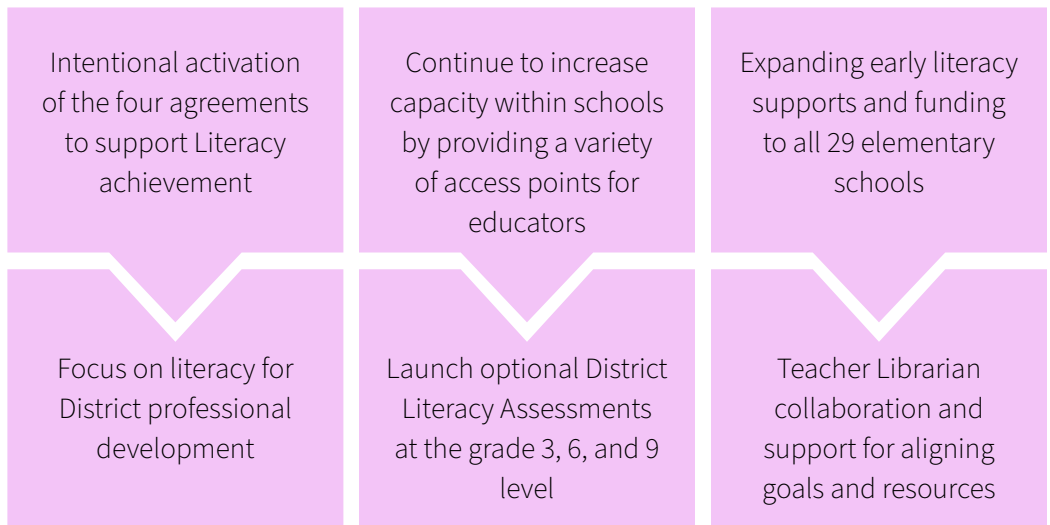
We recognize there is considerable work to do to support the literacy success of Indigenous students, Students with Disabilities or Diverse Abilities, and Children and Youth in Care in the District. Our commitment is to close the achievement gap between all resident students in our District and Indigenous students, Students with Disabilities or Diverse Abilities, and Children and Youth in Care.

Further priority work will be with distinctions-based data for Indigenous students as per the DRIPA Action Plan. As well, we will examine other data sets including street data that may be able to offer other insights into improving the success for all students in our District.

Literacy Focus for 2023-2024

- **Increase Indigenous students', Students with Disabilities or Diverse Abilities, and Children and Youth in Care achievement (on track and extending) on FSA 4,7**
- **Increase Indigenous students', Students with Disabilities or Diverse Abilities, and Children and Youth in Care achievement (proficient and extending) on Literacy 10**
- **Continue to increase student achievement in early literacy through the Early Literacy Collaboration Teachers in priority schools (year three—ten schools)**

STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT LITERACY



Numeracy

In recent years, district professional learning has been focused on decolonizing numeracy instruction and shifting to supporting culturally responsive learning environments.

Numeracy assessment tasks for optional implementation in grades 3, 6, and 9 have been established and will be introduced in the 2023/24 school year. These tasks align with the provincial numeracy assessments and will be adjusted as provincial benchmarks/performance indicators are launched. A marked decline in student success occurs between Grade 4 and Grade 7. Notably, student (all resident students) success rates decrease from FSA 4 (69%) to FSA 7 (55%) to Numeracy 10 (41%). The previous year's data show FSA 4 (76%), FSA 7 (61%) and Numeracy 10 (41%), indicating a general decline in success rate in grades 4 and 7. A similar decrease in success rates for Students with Disabilities or Diverse Abilities and Children and Youth in Care is also noted from FSA 4 to FSA 7 to Numeracy 10.

Numeracy Focus for 2023-2024

- Increase Indigenous students', Students with Disabilities or Diverse Abilities, and Children and Youth in Care achievement (on track and extending) on FSA 4,7
- Increase Indigenous students', Students with Disabilities or Diverse Abilities, and Children and Youth in Care achievement (proficient and extending) on Numeracy 10
- Increase all resident students' achievement (proficient and extending) on Numeracy 10
- Co-create a Greater Victoria School District Numeracy Framework K-12
- Establishment of a Numeracy Lead position

STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT NUMERACY

Intentional activation of the four agreements to support Numeracy achievement

Continue to provide access to resources such as *Educating Now—The Art of Teaching Math*

Support on-going District professional development in numeracy K-12

Launch optional District Numeracy Assessments at the grade 3, 6, 9 level



Grade-to Grade Transitions

Although the data reflects positive success of grade-to-grade transitions for Indigenous students, Indigenous communities, through our Agreements, want to ensure that their students are transitioning with the courses and credits they need from kindergarten to grade 12.

Further examination of transition data is needed with grade level course success being examined.

Grade-To-Grade Transition Summary

District Grade 10-11

- 97% of all resident students transitioned to grade 11—consistent (+/- 2%) over the past 4 years
- 94% of all Indigenous students transitioned to grade 11—consistent (+/- 2%) over the past 3 years
- 93% of On Reserve students transitioned to grade 11—consistent with last school year

District Grade 11-12

- 96% of all resident students transitioned to grade 11—consistent (+/- 1%) over the past 4 years
- 91% of all Indigenous students transitioned to grade 11—consistent (+/- 2%) over the past 3 years
- 87% of On Reserve students transitioned to grade 11—5% decrease from last school year

Grade-to-Grade Transitions Focus for 2023-24

- **Maintain the current rate of grade-to-grade transitions using distinctions-based data to support Indigenous students and priority students**
- **Review success rates pertaining to:**
 - Regular Dogwood completion
 - Adult Dogwood completion
 - Evergreen completion



Human and Social Development

Students Feel Welcome, Safe, and Connected

As a School District, a primary focus pre-K to grade 12, is developing culturally responsive learning environments where all students are connected to their learning and feel seen, heard and valued. We recognize that creating culturally responsive learning environments supports improved outcomes for Indigenous students, families and communities.

We currently utilize data from both the Middle Development Instrument (MDI) grades 4 and 6 and Student Learning Survey data for grades 10 and 12 as well as Attendance Data to examine engagement and belonging. Moving forward, it is important to develop more avenues to collect and share other sources of data, including distinctions-based data, from the communities we serve.

Human and Social Development focus for 2023-2024

- Continue to be explicit with the philosophy and pedagogy required in culturally responsive learning environments that increase student connections, engagement and achievement
- Identify additional strategies and structures to include more voices in the District data set
- Increase staff knowledge and understanding of trauma sensitive approaches through the implementation of social emotional learning and mental health programs & resources
- Maintain the trend of increasing the number of students who indicate that they feel welcome, safe, and connected:
 - feel welcome: grade 10—from 66% in 2022 to 73% in 2023, grade 12—from 67% in 2022 to 73% in 2023
 - feel safe: grade 10—from 81% in 2022 to 82% in 2023, grade 12—from 82% in 2022 to 84% in 2023)
 - feel connected: grade 10—from 49% in 2022 to 57% in 2023, grade 12—from 49% in 2022 to 56% in 2023

STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Intentional activation of the four agreements to support human and social development

Support on-going district professional development in the areas of social emotional learning, mental health literacy and culturally responsive learning environments

Implement the use of person-centered planning in secondary schools and extend the implementation of Competency Based IEPs K-12

Continuation of the Children and Youth in Care District Standard of Practice

Strengthen the relationships with the Ministry of Children and Family Development and delegated agencies

Strengthen the coordination between child care providers and school staff to nurture a seamless transition from early care to learning

Career Development

The District designs opportunities and resources within Career Development in the K-12 environment to support all students through the lenses of equity and cultural responsiveness. The focus on a personalized future orientation leading to student success creates connection, engagement, and achievement.

Career Education in elementary, middle, and secondary focuses on self-discovery, growth in the core competencies, and learning in multiple contexts within the classroom, career centres, community, and the workplace.

We continue to be committed to creating avenues for all learners to succeed and feel a sense of purpose and belonging. The research that guides us proves that this sense of purpose has positive impacts on students' well-being, graduation rates, and transitions to post-secondary.

Career Development focus for 2023-2024

- Design opportunities for students to feel they belong, they have purpose, and they matter
- Improve rates of dual credit participation by Indigenous students, Children and Youth in Care, and Students with Disabilities or Diverse Abilities
- Improve the rates of participation in career education experiential learning activities by Indigenous students, Children and Youth in Care, and Students with Disabilities or Diverse Abilities
- Increase the number of Students with Disabilities or Diverse Abilities with person-centered planning including transition after Grade 12

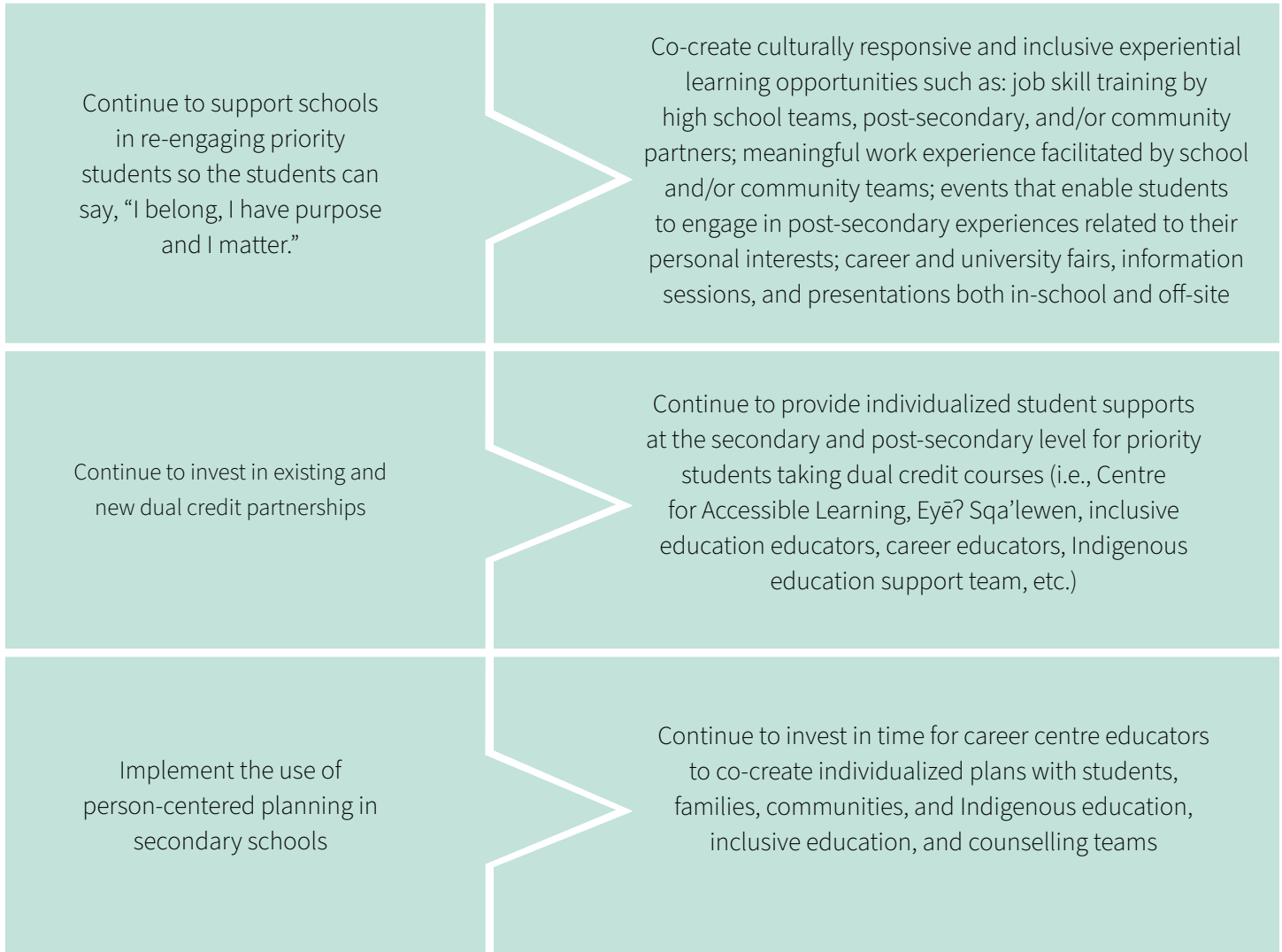
Ministry of Education and Child Care Data (from Dual Credit Policy Review, August 2022):

Dual credit increases student success:

- Participants are 16% more likely than peers to transition to post-secondary
- Participants are 7% more likely than propensity matched peers to complete high school
 - 8% for Indigenous students
 - 9% for students with diverse abilities and disabilities



STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT CAREER DEVELOPMENT



Five-Year Completion Rate Data:

- Most recent data (2021/22) shows a sustained graduation rate for all resident students
- Indigenous student graduation has declined slightly between 2020/21 and 2021/22 for students On Reserve and Not on Reserve, equally
- Students with Disabilities or Diverse Abilities showed a slight uptick in graduation rates from the 2020/21 to 2021/22 school year
- Children/Youth in Care graduation rate decreased substantially from 2020/21 to 2021/22



Existing and/or Emerging Areas of Need

1. Use of distinctions-based data to support Indigenous student achievement in literacy, numeracy, grade-to-grade transitions and graduation with a Dogwood Diploma.
2. The development of a Culturally Responsive Leadership Framework to support culturally responsive learning environments.
3. Increase the structures, strategies and opportunities for engaging student voice.
4. On-going, targeted support for mental health and physical well-being.
5. Incremental growth in all completion rates and parity between Indigenous students and all residents is required.
6. Create a District numeracy sub-committee through JCCI and begin to develop a District Numeracy Framework K-12 in 2023-2024.
7. Establishment of an Accessibility Committee, an Accessibility Plan, and a feedback mechanism as required by the Accessible British Columbia Act.

Addressing Areas of Need



SD61's first-ever Student Forum on Inclusion and Anti-Racism was organized and led by district students of colour (May 2023)



SD61's second annual Indigenous Storytelling & Film Festival professional development event featured Indigenous films, authors, storytellers, land-based learning, and other offerings (May 2023)

Adjustments and Adaptations

District Departments

Our District Departments have worked collaboratively to identify one key goal to guide the work that operationalizes the Strategic Plan: To support schools to feel confident and capable in re-engaging priority students so the students can say, “I belong, I have purpose and I matter.” We recognize that the student learning experience is critical to student success.

- With the support of the Indigenous Education Department, we will lean into Indigenous perspectives and considerations for systemic alignment through the use of the following guiding documents:
 - i. Local Education Agreements, Métis Education Agreement and Urban Peoples’ House Indigenous Advisory Terms of Reference,
 - ii. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Call to Action,
 - iii. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA),
 - iv. British Columbia Tripartite Agreement (BCTEA), and
 - v. Standard 9—Professional Standards for BC Educators.
- We will continue to focus on increasing data literacy across the system.
- We will develop a District Numeracy Framework K-12.
- Implementation of the Accessibility Plan to deliver lasting accessibility improvements that reduce barriers for all members of our learning community.

Our District Departments have one key goal: to support schools to feel confident and capable in re-engaging priority students so the students can say,

“I belong, I have purpose and I matter.”



Indigenous Education Department

- Improving programs and service delivery model
- Implement the Indigenous Mental Health Framework
- Activation of the Four Agreements
- Review and adjust district allocation of funding as required
- Re-engagement of Equity Scan

Elementary Strings

- Elementary Strings is included in the 2024-2025 budget at a cost of \$258K. This model provides all elementary schools the option to offer strings to all grade 5 students during school hours. Please provide your thoughts on moving to a 'Hub Model' where Elementary Strings would be available to all grade 5 students through select hub schools outside of school hours. Based on the attached options, which 'Hub Model' is preferred? Provide rationale.
- If a hub model is offered for Elementary Strings, would you recommend it be offered before or after school?

Possible Elementary Strings HUB Model Options

# of HUB's	# schools per HUB	Classes per week	Total Min Instruction per week	Approximate FTE (including prep and travel)	Cost
14	1-2	2 x 45 min	90	1.0	\$128,087
14	1-2	1 x 60 min	60	0.66	\$84,707
11	2-3	2 x 45 min	90	0.72	\$92,408
11	2-3	1 x 60 min	60	0.48	\$61,605
8	3	2 x 45 min	90	0.52	\$66,739
8	3	1 x 60 min	60	0.35	\$44,920

Middle School Music

- Middle School Music is included in the 2024-2025 budget at a cost of \$1.1M. By moving to a base + model for Middle School Music, the 10 schools would receive 190 blocks of music per week for a savings of \$239K. Please provide your thoughts on adjusting the allocation to a base + model.

Middle School Music Proposal					
	School Block Length (minutes)	New FTE	Music Blocks (per week)	FTE 2023-2024 from Org Spreadsheet	FTE Change
Arbutus	42	0.745	24	0.977	-0.232
Cedar Hill	56	0.860	21	1.220	-0.360
Central	42	0.774	25	1.190	-0.416
Colquitz	42	0.716	23	0.827	-0.111
Glanford	56	0.591	14	0.827	-0.236
Gordon Head	42	0.600	19	0.742	-0.142
Lansdowne	56	0.976	24	1.414	-0.438
Monterey	56	0.668	16	0.676	-0.008
Rockheights	56	0.437	10	0.376	0.061
Shoreline	56	0.591	14	0.573	0.018
TOTALS		6.958	190	8.822	-1.864

EXAMPLE	
School A – .6 FTE - 19, 42 min blocks	
Concert Band 6	3 blocks/wk
Concert Band 7	3 blocks/wk
Concert Band 8	3 blocks/wk
10 blocks remaining which could be used for (not an exhaustive list)	
- choirs	
- smaller ensembles	
- strings	
- marching band	
- musical theatre	

Technology for Learning

- Outdated staff and student devices need to be replaced to maintain network security and to support student learning. Replacement costs for staff and student devices are not fully included in the 2024-2025 budget and will require an investment of \$1.4M to maintain the current 2:1 student device ratio and staff device allocations. What student device ratio should the Board support from the operating fund in 2024-2025 to address this issue? Provide rationale.

Student 2:1 Ratio and Educator Devices 3 Year Projection

Equipment	Year - 2024/2025		Year - 2025/2026		Year - 2026/2027	
	Refresh	Budget	Refresh	Budget	Refresh	Budget
Student Devices						
Chromebooks & iPads	1482	\$ 666,900	1482	\$ 666,900	1482	\$ 666,900
Student Lab PCs		\$ -	300	\$ 371,400	300	\$ 371,400
Repairs and Peripherals	500	\$ 50,000	500	\$ 50,000	500	\$ 50,000
	Refresh Total	\$ 716,900	Refresh Total	\$ 1,088,300	Refresh Total	\$ 1,088,300
Staff Devices						
Educator Laptops	100	\$ 92,300	300	\$ 276,900	300	\$ 276,900
Monitors & Docking Hubs	250	\$ 63,000	250	\$ 63,000	250	\$ 63,000
Admin PCs	350	\$ 323,050		\$ -		\$ -
	Refresh Total	\$ 721,215	Refresh Total	\$ 339,900	Refresh Total	\$ 339,900
Totals	\$	1,438,115	\$	1,428,200	\$	1,428,200

Student 2.5:1 Ratio and Educator Devices 3 Year Projection

Equipment	Year - 2024/2025		Year - 2025/2026		Year - 2026/2027	
	Refresh	Budget	Refresh	Budget	Refresh	Budget
Student Devices						
Chromebooks & iPads	784	\$ 352,800	784	\$ 352,800	784	\$ 352,800
Student Lab PCs		\$ -	300	\$ 371,400	300	\$ 371,400
Repairs and Peripherals	500	\$ 50,000	500	\$ 50,000	500	\$ 50,000
	Refresh Total	\$ 402,800	Refresh Total	\$ 774,200	Refresh Total	\$ 774,200
Staff Devices						
Educator Laptops	100	\$ 92,300	300	\$ 276,900	300	\$ 276,900
Monitors & Docking Hubs	250	\$ 63,000	250	\$ 63,000	250	\$ 63,000
Admin PCs	350	\$ 323,050		\$ -		\$ -
	Refresh Total	\$ 721,215	Refresh Total	\$ 339,900	Refresh Total	\$ 339,900
Totals	\$	1,124,015	\$	1,114,100	\$	1,114,100

Student 3:1 Ratio and Educator Devices 3 Year Projection

Equipment	Year - 2024/2025		Year - 2025/26		Year - 2026/27	
	Refresh	Budget	Refresh	Budget	Refresh	Budget
Student Devices						
Chromebooks & iPads	319	\$ 143,550	319	\$ 143,550	319	\$ 143,550
Student Lab PCs		\$ -	300	\$ 371,400	300	\$ 371,400
Repairs and Peripherals	500	\$ 50,000	500	\$ 50,000	500	\$ 50,000
	Refresh Total	\$ 193,550	Refresh Total	\$ 564,950	Refresh Total	\$ 564,950
Staff Devices						
Educator Laptops	100	\$ 92,300	300	\$ 276,900	300	\$ 276,900
Monitors & Docking Hubs	250	\$ 63,000	250	\$ 63,000	250	\$ 63,000
Admin PCs	350	\$ 323,050		\$ -		\$ -
	Refresh Total	\$ 721,215	Refresh Total	\$ 339,900	Refresh Total	\$ 339,900
Totals	\$	914,765	\$	904,850	\$	904,850

Student 4:1 Ratio and Educator Devices 3 Year Projection

Equipment	Year - 2024/2025		Year - 2025/26		Year - 2026/27	
	Refresh	Budget	Refresh	Budget	Refresh	Budget
Student Devices						
Chromebooks & iPads	0	\$ -	0	\$ -	263	\$ 118,350
Student Lab PCs		\$ -	300	\$ 371,400	300	\$ 371,400
Repairs and Peripherals	500	\$ 50,000	500	\$ 50,000	500	\$ 50,000
	Refresh Total	\$ 50,000	Refresh Total	\$ 421,400	Refresh Total	\$ 539,750
Staff Devices						
Educator Laptops	100	\$ 92,300	300	\$ 276,900	300	\$ 276,900
Monitors & Docking Hubs	250	\$ 63,000	250	\$ 63,000	250	\$ 63,000
Admin PCs	350	\$ 323,050		\$ -		\$ -
	Refresh Total	\$ 721,215	Refresh Total	\$ 339,900	Refresh Total	\$ 339,900
Totals	\$	771,215	\$	761,300	\$	879,650

Educational Assistants (EAs)

- Our District continues to face challenges with the recruitment and retention of EAs. One area to explore is the creation of a pool of 30-hour EA positions that can be assigned to schools as needed. What are your thoughts on this creative solution?
- Another creative solution is the possibility of one early closure/late start day each month to provide time for collaboration between Teachers and EAs at the Elementary level. What are your thoughts on this possible future idea?
- Do you have any other ideas for the Board's consideration?

Top Priorities

- As you leave tonight, please write down the top three items that the Board should prioritize in the 2024-2025 budget.

Appendix C – Public Meeting Notes – March 14, 2024

Questions

1. **Priority Students: Goals 1, 2 & 3:** Priority students include Indigenous students, children and youth in care, and students with diverse needs. When you review the goals and strategies in the District’s Strategic Plan and the Enhancing Student Learning Report, please identify how the Board could allocate resources to improve outcomes for priority students?
2. **Elementary Strings:** Elementary Strings is included in the 2024-2025 budget at a cost of \$258K. This model provides all elementary schools the option to offer strings to all grade 5 students during school hours. Please provide your thoughts on moving to a ‘Hub Model’ where Elementary Strings would be available to all grade 5 students through select hub schools outside of school hours. Based on the attached options, which ‘Hub Model’ is preferred? Provide rationale. If a hub model is offered for Elementary Strings, would you recommend it be offered before or after school?
3. **Middle School Music:** Middle School Music is included in the 2024-2025 budget at a cost of \$1.1M. By moving to a base + model for Middle School Music, the 10 schools would receive 190 blocks of music per week for a savings of \$239K. Please provide your thoughts on adjusting the allocation to a base + model.
4. **Technology for Learning:** Outdated staff and student devices need to be replaced to maintain network security and to support student learning. Replacement costs for staff and student devices are not fully included in the 2024-2025 budget and will require an investment of \$1.4M to maintain the current 2:1 student device ratio and staff device allocations. What student device ratio should the Board support from the operating fund in 2024-2025 to address this issue? Provide rationale.
5. **Educational Assistants:** Our District continues to face challenges with the recruitment and retention of EAs. One area to explore is the creation of a pool of 30-hour EA positions that can be assigned to schools as needed. What are your thoughts on this creative solution? Another creative solution is the possibility of one early closure/late start day each month to provide time for collaboration between Teachers and EAs at the Elementary level. What are your thoughts on this possible future idea? Do you have any other ideas for the Board’s consideration?

All Tables Combined

Question 1

Priority Students

- All teachers required to take Mental Health First Aid (should be mandatory)
- Tough for students, as priority students take more time
 - Allocate resources to assist (more EAs, smaller class sizes)
- Indigenous students’ places in colonial classroom
 - How are they (teachers) meeting student needs?
 - Have we taught teachers cultural norm, “Student not looking me in the eye”?
 - Training for staff needed
 - EA and teachers need training. Different needs for different students.

Appendix C – Public Meeting Notes – March 14, 2024

- Universal training
- Teachers need to know what to do in trauma situation
 - Apply to mental health training
- Bring in more training budget for EAs and teachers
- Equip adults with what they need to support the children
 - More opportunities for professional learning.
 - Collaboration time, especially the beginning of the year.
 - Investment now for long-term benefits.
- Mental health - intersectional priority students need this most of all.
- Air quality
 - Clearly a dramatic uptick in illness.
 - Dramatic rise in forest fires in the hot season.
 - Chronic health conditions affecting everyone.
 - Basic air quality monitoring needed.
 - Aging of buildings contributes to bad air quality.
- Making sure there are enough EAs in the classroom helps everyone in the classroom.
- Alternate/quiet spaces for students with big behavior
- Mental health support for help with needs
- Counselling support for learners
- Community supports – could mental health or other ministries bring funding?
- Are there other places for funding?
- Support for high functioning learners to thrive/anxiety all needs.
- Enough custodians, so bathrooms are open
 - School environment – clean.
- Safety in washrooms – so students feel safe.
 - Students don't feel safe to use washroom (vaping/gangs/drugs)
- Levels of EA, e.g. more education
- Smaller class sizes at vulnerable schools
 - Smaller school capacity; change catchment areas if needed
- Access to EAs and allied health (OT/SLP) and mental health resources/counselling.
- Access to streamlining diagnosis
- Increase sensory spaces and equipment/flexible learning plans.
- Maintenance / Facilities, e.g. running water/drinkable water.
- Schoolyard improvement (accessibility)
- Safety measures (physical & mental health)
- Better communication avenues with parents.
- Equitable access & distribution to all schools for funding.
- Allow transfers of students wanting/needing to change schools.
- Stagger teacher/EA schedules to allow staggered outdoor time at crowded schools.
- Access to supported extra-curricular activities.
- Increase food programming/access to basic needs.

Appendix C – Public Meeting Notes – March 14, 2024

- Allow continuous progression through schools with peers; Elementary to Middle to Secondary; due to catchment areas, this does not happen.
- Increase technology to support adapted learning.
- Eliminate seclusion rooms.
- Smaller ratio of needs vs neurotypical/class.
- English 2nd Language supports for parents.
- Need additional opportunities at Burnside; no music, no shop
- Addressing inclusion
 - Heavy burden on staff in some cases.
 - Wrap around care w/qualified staff.
 - Challenge with inclusion creating unmanageable classrooms – teacher burnout, reduced learning opportunities.
- More counsellors.
- More learning support.
- More behavioral analysts.
- More behavioral therapists.
- Training for teachers and EAs for different behaviors.
- Youth & Family counsellors at every school.
- More EAs with diverse backgrounds.
- More resources that reflect the indigenous community.
- Cultural sensitivity training throughout the district.
- Cultural humility training.
- More fine arts/athletics support.
- Address absenteeism
- EAs (more money and more teamwork)
- Inclusive
 - Designing spaces and programs & choices.
 - School is full - no space & no teacher.
 - They are unable to function.
 - Inclusion isn't just placing them there - providing students and families with choice.
 - There is no in-between – have kids flex in & out of classroom.
 - The silent students who are suffering.
 - Have specialists tied to each school or a group of schools.
 - Behavior satellite programs.
 - There are answers out there, there are a lot of resources out there.
- Indigenous
 - Support families and students.
 - This is in the works now - just beginning.
 - They are limited as to what they can do.
 - Keep building trust & structures.
 - Separation of indigenous and non-indigenous in grade 3.
 - Celebrate the culture.

Appendix C – Public Meeting Notes – March 14, 2024

- Visible celebrations.
- Liaising with struggling families; building trust and connection.
- Commitment to Health Hub in every family of schools.
- More and better support of Indigenous Educators in every school.
- Ensure access to early intervention emotional and mental health
 - Improve school counsellor ratios, aim for lower.
- Is the French Oral Language Pilot Program the best way to support priority students?
- Love the Welcome Centre for recently immigrated.
- More training available for all staff on trauma-informed practice (utilize in-school expertise of school counselors)
- Data on indigenous, queer, gender survey of students
 - Data justifies funding
 - Talk to professionals in child development what age would be appropriate to ask questions
 - Enrolments of newcomers is up, important to capture
 - Data on BIPOC students
 - Could help inform where programs are most needed
- Educational Assistants
 - Number one factor in helping child stay in the class
 - One on one support
- Peer playgroups to encourage socialization
- More flexibility around required courses
- More life skills and mental health focus than academics
- Different learning environments to help those not academically focused
- More trauma information
- Follow the lead of those students
- Talk to those with trauma informed research
- Sensory room could be used more, should be one in every schools
- Gender affirming washrooms
- Indigenous counsellors – more of a presence in schools

Question 2

Elementary Strings

- No hub model
- Not inclusive
- Move \$258K to mental health training
- Music after school? No, something else parents have to manage
- Budget not balanced; this is not a priority.
 - How many priority students take strings?
- This idea seems not as important.
- Take music \$\$ and move to priority students.
- Not inclusive and not needed

Appendix C – Public Meeting Notes – March 14, 2024

- Eliminates priority students
- Kids at elementary don't have fine motor skills.
- Another cost for parents for instruments and necessary repairs.
- We are worried a hub model will further cater to more privileged students
- Families that struggle may not be able to get their kids to strings before or after
- How would kids get back to their elementary schools?
 - Further inequity.
- Strings must remain an option to as many grade 5's as possible
- If you have to cut something specialty programs could go
- Not equal access – some schools.
- Should all go to middle – same access to serve students.
- Prioritize middle school.
- Some kids are ahead of others where access is different.
- Rather see move to middle schools.
- Music is in the curriculum in elementary school.
- Middle school is a time students are exploring.
- Feminine hygiene (period) products in school.
- More important issue to address, e.g. Safety, class size
- Hub model is not accessible to all children, e.g. kids with diverse needs, vulnerable, low income, families, transportation issues
- Which schools would it be offered at? Kids not at that school are disadvantaged.
- Outside of school hours increases challenges for parents re: pick up/drop off if going to another school.
- Question of parents contributing if possible (outside of timetable)
- Not essential but a nice extra.
- Option with 11 hubs; Pros: Save money; cons: Exclusionary.
- There are students that will not have the capacity to attend (fewer kids)
- Transportation/family involvement will determine participation.
- Right now, many run before school.
- Better for teacher - perhaps they could run multiple hubs.
- Still creates a have/have not model
- Possibly start at middle school; start with that identity before middle school.
- Both before and after school.
- 8 Hubs, 3 per. 2X 45 mins, 0.52 is best.
- Hub model is not equitable. Schools chosen as hubs will have decent enrollment, but others will have little to none.
- Before school Hub rehearsals not realistic (travel time)
- Low enrollment because of less desirable times and travel issues will slowly kill programs
- Hub model only works successfully if during the day and transportation is provided.
- Hybrid hub if possible? One rehearsal at school, one rehearsal at hub (1 week)
- Before school hub options is unreasonable and families will not be able to make it work.

Appendix C – Public Meeting Notes – March 14, 2024

- Hub models are the only option?
- Why can't this be achieved inside the timetable?
- It is also an equity problem. The Hub schools will have most students, while others rarely opt in.

Question 3

Middle School Music

- Yes, it's OK.
- Not sure we agree with funding Arbutus, Central, Monterey as affluent communities, doesn't seem equitable.
- Curious to find out if SD is incorporating any four-house music suggestion, in the hub model, e.g. drumming (Inclusivity)
- How reflective is music program for students with needs?
- Only programming & \$\$ for colonial students.
- Not an inclusive program
- Band and Choirs, etc.; all colonial music programs
- Instead of concert band, can it be adaptive music for special needs or indigenous music
- No
- The FTE changes are not equitable
- Good that smaller schools would still be able to run something
- This is certainly a cut.
- Allocated from elementary strings to make up the shortfall.
 - At least what it is at right now.
- Middle school is where music needs to be – no reduction.
- Kids need band.
- Rapport of music teachers in middle school is important.
- Why do different schools have different amount of time/blocks?
- What outcome data (student success/learning/satisfaction) is being considered in this decision vs budget only issues?
- Don't understand the allocation – why these numbers?
- Demand varies between schools, can't easily translate to per capita funding.
- A lot of impact for less than two positions.
- Will lose teachers due to poor working opportunities.
- Approach is equal not equitable.
- People don't understand that music extras are funded by the district above what the Ministry of Education gives.
- Could cut smaller ensembles and marching bands.
- One less person running the program has a huge impact; fewer trips, festivals.
- Music is a place of belonging for many students.
- Does the Base and model mandate a "Base" Of 9 Band blocks? Flexibility to create a music program that suits the school is important.

Appendix C – Public Meeting Notes – March 14, 2024

- These cuts will have a tremendous negative impact on students. Teachers are already stretched so thin and give so much of their time in volunteer hours for performances and trips.
- Music saved my life in middle and high school. After my parent passed, the support of my music teachers, and the empowerment of connections in the experience of music performances and band trips, gave me purpose, confidence, and lifelong friendships.
- Who would the people that would be impacted by the requirement to travel?
- Could transportation be offered?
- After school would be preferred
- Not sure why we fund elementary strings when we don't fund extracurricular activities
- Strings is not a priority
- If it is kept, must center equity of access to programs
- Is there data that shows that strings is beneficial?
- Opportunity to learn the different instruments would be good
- Why can't it be offered on a volunteer basis like sports are?
- What do students think? We hear from parents but we don't hear whether students enjoy it (grade 5 nice doesn't enjoy it)
- Before or after school strings difficult for ADHD students
- Brings groups together
- Most families who are taking music are able to pay for it, so why are we offering it for free?
- Middle school students vulnerable so good to give them an outlet
- If they offer music within exploratories, why extra?
- What are students' priorities for music? What do students think, might have good ideas.
- What do we offer students who don't take music?
- School is a safe haven for some students

Question 4

Technology for Learning

- Less about ratio and more about geographical incomes
 - Some PAC raising \$ to feed kids, other PACs can afford new iPads
- Prefer 2.5:1 Ratio
- 5 years a lot for lap top replacement
- We are inclined towards less devices for students. We understand teachers need the devices.
- Inequity - Some PACs will be able to afford them, some won't.
- EAs should get access to tech
- Network security is important.
- What students are able to access
- Don't know how well they are used
- Carts are good model

Appendix C – Public Meeting Notes – March 14, 2024

- 2 to 1 how much is being done
- Love when students have google classroom
- Training for teachers to use in classrooms
- Media literacy for students
- I don't believe this (current) ratio is consistent across all schools.
 - Certain schools may need higher replacement vs others.
 - Could this be decided school to school vs district level?
- Vulnerable schools may need higher ratio due to decreased access to technology at home and decreased ability to access in community.
- Spent a ton of money over the last 5-10 years, now outdated.
- Kids spending way too much time on screens.
- Get rid of screens in middle school
 - Potential source for behavioral issues.
- Challenge monitoring student activity.
- Favor 3:1 or 4:1.
- Too big 3-1.
- 3:1 – we all agree!
 - but middle school & high school?
- Inclusive ed needs tech
- Are we at 3:1 now?
- Need to have a strong tech committee.
- Perfectly fine with the 4:1 Ratio. Overuse of devices is detrimental to student health (especially at a young age).
- Some staff who currently have laptops may not need them.
- Personally, I wonder if chrome books are really the best option? They are liable to fall apart quickly making cuts high.
- Was the dedicated computer lab model too expensive?
- Often, Chromebooks are used to disconnect and disassociate; often technology addicted kids are using devices for maladaptive purposes or having meltdowns.
- The number of Chromebooks around the district right now is unrequitable, skewing the ratio. Can we re-distribute the existing devices and reduce the ratio to the same?
- Highly utilized, when teachers can put them out they do
- Is the current 2:1 ratio meeting the needs of students and teachers?
- Seen as an effective tool within schools
- Reserve funding on a 3:1 basis but distribute 4:1 to keep a reserve/contingency

Question 5

Educational Assistants

A. 30-Hour EA Float Pool

- No, can't form bonds

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- Make position more attractive, raise wages
- Instead of pool, have EA in K classroom, kids not diagnosed yet.
- Why would we not? Sounds great - People need to make a living.
- 30 hr/week positions are not living wage/sustainable.
- We like pool
- Who determines if an EA is needed and where (day-to-day)?
- Is it a triage-based or long-term?
- Absences being filled in or helping out with kids in crisis.
- How many people are in the pool?
- Both options are unclear. Are EAs in the pool in different places throughout the year?
Most students who need EA's require consistency.

B. Early close or late start for collaboration?

- Disagree, teachers have prep
- Extend EA hours and they can collaborate then
 - Make EA day 7 hours
- Early Wednesdays
- We should survey EAs
- Having collaboration time goes a long way
- Rich professional Pro-D days for EAs.
- Not all parents have day care - concern for those that need to arrange care.
- Only once a month - they could arrange care.
- There are already too many days off/early/late closures
 - Affect all vulnerable students and families.
- We also like late start (parent).
- The early closure/late start solves a different problem, that is key
 - The ability to communicate
 - So much time and energy is wasted planning on breaks and doing things on the fly. Could this be done in another way that doesn't impact families?
- Both options are unclear. Does the 2nd one (Collaboration time) address the problem in any way?
- Don't do early closure – would be hard to manage as a working parent

C. Other ideas?

- Wage low, 6-hour days – not living wage
- Weekly hours and base wage go up.
- Funding to student and diagnosed funding, do not share with others who do not have funding.
- Kids aren't getting the support they need.

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- EAs attend more Pro-D Day education.
 - More skilled EAs, more training needed.
- Groups of schools - to maximize EA time.
- Increase training to have EAs able to address the actual behavioral /learning needs of kids to minimize burnout/turnover/violent incidents
- Increase resources/sensory equipment/adapted classroom equipment to allow EAs to do their job & support students.
- Equitable vs equal division of EAs.
- Change on-call lists; we've heard EAs choose not to go to certain schools with higher issues.
- Treat them better.
- Unfair to pair the EAs with the most challenged students then not pay them.
- Have to have flexible opportunities
 - 30-hour positions are great but need part time positions, too.
- 30 hours for all EAs for those who want it.
- Expand the EA mentorship program
- Expand the levels
- Hire EAs and ECEs for before and after school care rather than contracting the job out.
- Extend EA hours in the day for collaboration.
- Salary & 30-hour job makes it less desirable, plus working conditions.
- Add other perks such as free bus pass, free gym, to make the job more attractive.
- What is the ministry doing to attract and promote EA jobs?
- The existing 25-hour schedule is financially unattainable for the vast majority of people. It's a great job if you don't want 40 hours a week, but for many of the people (many) they simply cannot make ends meet.
- If we cannot offer a living wage to EAs, then we cannot expect anyone to do the work. Eventually we will not have anyone willing to do the job.
- Families who have fewer resources would appreciate having replacements
- As there are more child care facilities, EAs could be a resource in those facilities so that they have full time hours
- Access to training for ECE for EAs
- What do EAs need for these positions to be more appealing?
- Those in post-secondary system, what are they looking for?
- Sponsor an EA's education so that they commit to the district (if they leave they repay)

Appendix D – Public Meeting Comment Cards – March 14, 2024

2024-2025 Budget Comment Cards

Top Three Priorities

We are listening...please share your thoughts and concerns about the Greater Victoria School District's proposed 2024-2025 school year budget, below:

Comment Card 1

- EAs
- Student support services

Comment Card 2

- I would like concerns over air quality to be addressed through various infrastructure (Air purifiers, ventilation, air quality monitoring).
- EAs
- Arts Funding

Comment Card 3

- Vulnerable school need more resources.
 - Smaller class sizes.
 - Increased allied health/EA support.
 - Increased access to sensory items/resources.
- Safety measures in school.
 - Smaller class sizes.
 - SPLOs.
 - Increased mental health resources.

Both one and two will improve safety.

SD61 says safety comes before learning, our kids are not safe and thus unable to learn. Meet their basic needs please.

Comment Card 4

- Smaller class sizes at vulnerable schools.
- Smaller school capacity and catchment areas.
- Access to EAs and allied health services.
- School spaces and equipment, e.g. running water / drinkable water.
- Safety measures for physical and mental health
- Better communication of violent situations at schools to parents.
- Equitable access and distribution to all schools for funding.
- Food programming/access to basic needs.

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Comment Card 5

- We all need to work today (SLT, VPVPA, GVTA, CUPE 947, CUPE 382 & Trustees) to advocate to the provincial government (Through our MLA's) to Ministry of Finance to increase the per student fund.

Comment Card 6

- Consider equity in every decision.
- The province needs to be pressured to fund education.

Comment Card 7

- We cannot keep making it work with less funding and fewer supports during a children's mental health crisis. Please write to the Minister and demand better funding for education.

Comment Card 8

- Why are we funding music if we aren't also funding extra-curricular activities for students?
- Prioritize the quiet voices, those we do not hear from.

Comment Card 9

- Priority students
- EAs

Comment Card 10

- Please prioritize:
 - Middle school music program.
 - Move elementary school strings funding to middle school music programs.
 - Music and art is therapy!!

Comment Card 11

- Move elementary strings budget to boost middle school music budget
- Provide parents with more information about the rationale around SLO discontinuation and what next steps are
- Need more mental health support and learning assessment supports in school

Comment Card 12

- Please do not cut elementary, middle or secondary Vice Principals.
- Please make sure that music and counselling continues to be in your thoughts
- Please consider money generating ideas

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- use of our buildings after hours
- grants
- beneficiaries; public/private partnerships.

Comment Card 13

- Specialized outdoor education
- Mental Health First Aid
- Specialized cultural (Indigenous) training

Comment Card 14

- Top 3 priorities:
 - Math & Reading; support for all kids to learn basic educational needs
 - Mental health training – mandatory
 - No strings; \$ into EAs.

Comment Card 15

- When the SPLO program ended, it was stated that the gaps left by their absence would be filled. That program was at no cost to SD61. When will the replacements be included in the budget?

Comment Card 16

- EAs and collaboration time
- Line item budget for all of the proposed replacements for the SPLO program
- Keep music

Comment Card 17

- How is there not a budget or line item for student safety?
- How are the gaps that the School Liaison officer filled, being filled and funded now?
- EAs - late start model
- 30-hour pool is a good idea
- Priority students need to include rationalized.
- Bring back the School Liaison Officers. FREE PROGRAM.

Comment Card 18

- Student safety priority #1, bring back SPLO
- Teachers shouldn't be faced with losing their jobs or work more hours elsewhere. 91.1% of the budget to salaries is unbelievable. A lot of the fiscal issues can be worked out by freezing salaries.
- Ask PAC for assistance with computer purchasing in bulk to reduce costs.
- Cost saving? Can teachers use their own laptops?

Appendix D – Public Meeting Comment Cards – March 14, 2024

Comment Card 19

- Top 3 priorities:
 - Increased EA support and training for EAs (why require students to provide designations if no support?)
 - Literacy support in schools
 - More training for teachers.
 - Supporting students with special needs.
 - Mental health.

Comment Card 20

- Budget decisions that eliminate entire programs or options for students or have a significant effect on FTE should be avoided.
- A little bit from many areas to avoid creating further rebound issues is preferred. Share the load of the cuts!
- Transparency to the public in a very clear, simple way will help people to understand the board is funding areas beyond what the Ministry provides, i.e. Music in Middle School.
- A document/memo or some form of widespread communication, that shows you are human, heartfelt and care is important. Complicated, jargon-filled long documents are not helpful.
- Schools need choices for different programming, spaces, people, places that will allow students who currently cannot function in a regular classroom (or program adapted at the school level) to still attend, learn and build skills.
- SD#61 needs to clarify their understanding of inclusion and FAST. The ships are sinking and taking kids with them.
- Inclusion is not:
 - Removing choices for families and students!
 - Administrators needing to share offices to create space for ONE child who has no other option!
 - Asking for District-level support and not getting any meaningful help to change how the student is being supported.
 - EAs scrambling to figure out where to work with a child who is violent.
 - Removing behaviour programs or choice for families

Comment Card 21

- Inclusion is not working in its current state. More resources are being spent on putting out fires and sending teachers on mental health leave, rather than on changing the status quo. I appreciate the district seeing a need to change the way inclusion works. There needs to be a change in designing spaces, programs and choices for these

Appendix D – Public Meeting Comment Cards – March 14, 2024

students. Their behavior is communicating that they are not being educated or cared for in a regular classroom.

- Talking at this event has been very helpful. As a teacher and a parent, there is a huge disconnect between us and “The District”. We think that you don’t care, you don’t understand and that you’re out of touch. Being here and talking with Deb and Sean, it is evident that you do care, you do understand, and that many of you are trying to make changes. Could someone come out to the schools and talk to teachers, or PAC’s, or VCPAC, to connect with us face to face, rather than through a politically correct, jargon-filled email? As a VCPAC member as well, I’m concerned about the complete lack of mention of the SPLO situation. Maybe this isn’t the forum for it?

Comment Card 22

- As a parent, we just want our kids to be happy and safe. Education is also nice. I put my child in late French because I know that English classes in dual-track schools are not safe or happy places to be. This is despite the fact that I work as a teacher in those classes, and I strive to make my classes both happy and safe places. Finally- I just want to express my frustration at my own issue, because I filled in SO Form 1’s all at once about a violent and threatening kiddo in my class, I’ve been sent out on medical leave. I don’t want to be on leave. I want to be in my classroom. Thanks for listening.