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**TO:** The Board of Education  
**FROM:** Katrina Stride, Secretary-Treasurer  
**DATE:** October 28, 2024  
**RE:** **2025-2026 Budget Development Process**

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## **2025-2026 Annual Budget**

In preparation for discussion of the development of the 2025-2026 Annual Budget, the following document has been provided for your review:

2025-2026 Budget Development Process – Draft for Discussion

## **2025-2026 Budget Development Process**

### **Connections Meetings**

#### Student Connections Meetings

Trustee representatives and members of the Senior Leadership Team meet with school administration/staff and/or students at each of the high schools, including SJ Burnside Education Centre. The purpose of the meetings is to connect with students on site at their school and engage in conversation around priorities.

Notes taken during these meetings will be provided to Trustees. A summary of the themes emerging from these meetings will be provided at a Regular Board meeting.

Proposed changes for the 2025-2026 Budget Development Process:

- Expand the Student Connections meetings to all Middle Schools
- Share the purpose of meeting and a standard set of questions to a school-based facilitator in preparation for the meeting

#### Partner and VPVPA Connections Meetings

Trustees and members of Financial Services and the Senior Leadership Team meet with representatives from each of the partner groups (CUPE 382, CUPE 947, GVTA, VCPAC) and Victoria Principals and Vice Principals

*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.*

Association (VPVPA). The purpose of the meetings is to connect in-person with partner groups and VPVPA and engage in conversation around priorities.

Notes taken during these meetings will be provided to Trustees. A summary of the themes emerging from these meetings will be provided at a Regular Board meeting.

Proposed changes for the 2025-2026 Budget Development Process:

- None

## Events

### Student Symposium

During the 2024-2025 Budget Development Process, the Student Symposium was an opportunity to hear directly from students attending our middle and secondary schools. Topics presented and discussed included SOGI, Technology, Cultural Responsiveness, and Mental Health and Wellbeing. In addition, students participated in a budget simulation to determine spending prioritization under financial constraint. A report on the Student Symposium Event was provided at the Regular Board meeting.

Proposed changes for the 2025-2026 Budget Development Process:

- Eliminate the Student Symposium Event
- Engage in discussions on important topics through alternative student forums
- Gather budget-related feedback through Student Connections meetings by expanding meetings to all Middle and Secondary Schools
- Gather budget-related feedback from students at monthly Representative Advisory Council of Students meetings

### Talking Tables

During the 2024-2025 Budget Development Process, Talking Tables was a dinner event held for Rightsholders, partner groups, staff, and Trustees to engage in discussion on the topics of Culturally Responsive Learning Environments; Priority Students: Goals 1, 2 and 3; and Infrastructure (Facilities and Technology). The purpose of the event was to inform the Board by providing an opportunity to discuss important topics and obtain feedback directly from the Four Houses, partner groups, and leadership; facilitating communication within a large, diverse group; encouraging open, honest conversation and respectful dialogue; and building relationships, understanding and trust. A report on the Talking Tables Event, including notes from table facilitators, was provided at a Special Open Budget meeting.

Proposed changes for the 2025-2026 Budget Development Process:

- Eliminate the Talking Tables event
- Capture budget-related feedback through Partner Connections meetings and Budget Updates at Board or Standing Committee meetings
- Engage with representatives of the Four Houses, partner groups, staff, students, Trustees, and the public at an in-person budget consultation meeting

### Public Budget Consultation Meeting

During the 2024-2025 Budget Development Process, a public meeting was held to engage with the public on budget priorities. The purpose of the public meeting was to inform 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; and providing an opportunity for the public to engage directly with Trustees and District staff. A report on the Public Meeting, including transcribed notes and comment cards, was provided at a Special Open Budget meeting.

Proposed changes for the 2025-2026 Budget Development Process:

- Expand the purpose of the budget consultation meeting to engage with representatives of the Four Houses, partner groups, staff, students, Trustees, and the public
- Schedule in early March to allow time for more feedback and advocacy prior to first Budget Bylaw readings in early April
- Schedule fewer events to encourage higher participation at one event

## **Communication**

One of the recommendations following the 2024-2025 Budget Development Process was to enhance communication on the budget development process and provide accessible ways to participate and provide meaningful feedback.

### Budget Priorities Survey

Proposed changes for the 2025-2026 Budget Development Process:

- Launch a Budget Priorities Survey at the start of the budget development process
  - Engage with the Four Houses, partner groups, staff, students, Trustees, and the public
  - Identify areas of priority for the 2025-2026 Annual Budget
  - Identify areas of exploration within the budget development process
  - Create opportunity for honest and anonymous feedback
  - Receive feedback and initiate discussion earlier in the process

### Budget Development Process Feedback Survey

The Budget Development Process Feedback survey is launched following the approval of the budget in April in order to receive feedback on the various elements of the budget development process.

Proposed changes for the 2025-2026 Budget Development Process:

- Evaluate responses received in 2024-2025 to improve questions asked in 2025-2026
- Improve accessibility of the survey

### Media Releases

Communication of Board Budget Highlights has been included in the 2025-2026 Budget Development Process following each public Board meeting in order for important information to be shared throughout the process.

## **Advisory to the Board**

### Budget Working Groups

The 2024-2025 Budget Development Process included the creation of three Budget Working Groups. Each of the Budget Working Groups were allocated one of the following areas of focus: Department Budgets, School-Based Budgets, and Special Purpose Fund Budgets. A summary of the meetings and recommendations of the Budget Working Groups was provided at a Regular Board meeting.

## Proposed changes for the 2025-2026 Budget Development Process:

- Eliminate the Budget Working Groups
- District staff will provide both qualitative and quantitative information on areas of exploration identified in the survey and as requested by the Board
- Information will be presented at Board meetings between November and April and may expand out to include Operations Policy and Planning Committee meetings or relevant Ad Hoc Committee meetings for broader discussion
- Increases the transparency of budget discussions and considerations.

### Indigenous Education Council

The 2025-2026 Budget Development Process has incorporated the monthly Indigenous Education Council (IEC) meetings to advise on grants provided under the School Act in relation to Indigenous students, and to approve plans, spending and reporting of targeted grants related to Indigenous students.

### **Other**

#### Timing Considerations

- Staffing packages must be sent out to schools by Friday, April 11
- Human Resource Services and Financial Services need at least two (2) days to prepare the staffing packages prior to sending them out in order to reflect any approved budget changes, which means the latest date that the 2025-2026 Annual Budget can be approved is Wednesday, April 9
- All potential budget options should be discussed and the impacts on schools considered well in advance of budget deliberations starting on Tuesday, April 8

### **Recommended Motion**

The following motion is recommended:

That the Board of Education of School District No. 61 (Greater Victoria) approve the 2025-2026 Budget Development Process.

GREATER VICTORIA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
2025-2026 BUDGET DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Date	Day of Week	Time of Day	Event Description	Attendees	Meeting Type	Location	Agenda Deadline
September 23	Monday	Evening	Budget Development Process Feedback	Open Invite	Regular Open	Zoom	September 18
October 21	Monday	Evening	Proposed Budget Development Process	Open Invite	OPPs	Zoom	October 16
October 28	Monday	Evening	Approval of Budget Development Process	Open Invite	Regular Open	Zoom	October 23
October 29	Tuesday	Daytime	Communication - Board Budget Highlights				
November 1 - 15			2025-2026 Budget Priorities	Open Invite	Survey		
November 13	Wednesday	Daytime	Indigenous Education Council (IEC)	Four Houses, Director of IED, Superintendent	Regular Monthly	In-person	
November 18	Monday	Evening	Representative Advisory Council of Student	Student Reps (Sec), Senior Leadership Team (SLT)	Regular Monthly	In-person	
November 25	Monday	Evening	2025-2026 Budget Update	Open Invite	Regular Open	Zoom	November 20
November 26	Tuesday	Daytime	Communication - Board Budget Highlights				
November-December		Daytime	Student Connections - Esquimalt High	Students, Board Chair, Trustee, PVP, SLT	Small Group	In-person	
November-December		Daytime	Student Connections - Lambrick Park Secondary	Students, Board Chair, Trustee, PVP, SLT	Small Group	In-person	
November-December		Daytime	Student Connections - Mt. Doug Secondary	Students, Board Chair, Trustee, PVP, SLT	Small Group	In-person	
November-December		Daytime	Student Connections - Oak Bay High	Students, Board Chair, Trustee, PVP, SLT	Small Group	In-person	
November-December		Daytime	Student Connections - Reynolds Secondary	Students, Board Chair, Trustee, PVP, SLT	Small Group	In-person	
November-December		Daytime	Student Connections - SJ Burnside Alternative	Students, Board Chair, Trustee, PVP, SLT	Small Group	In-person	
November-December		Daytime	Student Connections - Spectrum Community	Students, Board Chair, Trustee, PVP, SLT	Small Group	In-person	
November-December		Daytime	Student Connections - Victoria High	Students, Board Chair, Trustee, PVP, SLT	Small Group	In-person	
November-December		Daytime	Student Connections - Arbutus Middle	Students, Board Chair, Trustee, PVP, SLT	Small Group	In-person	
November-December		Daytime	Student Connections - Cedar Hill Middle	Students, Board Chair, Trustee, PVP, SLT	Small Group	In-person	
November-December		Daytime	Student Connections - Central Middle	Students, Board Chair, Trustee, PVP, SLT	Small Group	In-person	
November-December		Daytime	Student Connections - Colquitz Middle	Students, Board Chair, Trustee, PVP, SLT	Small Group	In-person	
November-December		Daytime	Student Connections - Glanford Middle	Students, Board Chair, Trustee, PVP, SLT	Small Group	In-person	
November-December		Daytime	Student Connections - Gordon Head Middle	Students, Board Chair, Trustee, PVP, SLT	Small Group	In-person	
November-December		Daytime	Student Connections - Lansdowne Middle	Students, Board Chair, Trustee, PVP, SLT	Small Group	In-person	
November-December		Daytime	Student Connections - Monterey Middle	Students, Board Chair, Trustee, PVP, SLT	Small Group	In-person	
November-December		Daytime	Student Connections - Rockheights Middle	Students, Board Chair, Trustee, PVP, SLT	Small Group	In-person	
November-December		Daytime	Student Connections - Shoreline Middle	Students, Board Chair, Trustee, PVP, SLT	Small Group	In-person	
November-December			Partner Connections - CUPE 382	CUPE 382 Reps, Trustees, SLT, F/S	Small Group	In-person	
November-December			Partner Connections - CUPE 947	CUPE 947 Reps, Trustees, SLT, F/S	Small Group	In-person	
November-December			Partner Connections - GVTA	GVTA Reps, Trustees, SLT, F/S	Small Group	In-person	
November-December			Partner Connections - VCPAC	VCPAC Reps, Trustees, SLT, F/S	Small Group	In-person	
November-December			VPVPA Connections	VPVPA Reps, Trustees, SLT, F/S	Small Group	In-person	
December 2	Monday	Evening	Representative Advisory Council of Students	Student Reps (Sec), SLT	Regular Monthly	In-person	
December 9	Monday	Evening	2025-2026 Budget Update	Open Invite	Regular Open	Zoom	December 4
December 10	Tuesday	Daytime	Communication - Board Budget Highlights				
December 18	Wednesday	Daytime	Indigenous Education Council (IEC)	Four Houses, Director of IED, Superintendent	Regular Monthly	In-person	
December 23 - January 3			Winter Break				
January 15	Wednesday	Daytime	Indigenous Education Council (IEC)	Four Houses, Director of IED, Superintendent	Regular Monthly	In-person	
January 20	Monday	Evening	Representative Advisory Council of Students	Student Reps (Sec), SLT	Regular Monthly	In-person	
January 27	Monday	Evening	2025-2026 Budget Update	Open Invite	Regular Open	Zoom	January 22
January 28	Tuesday	Daytime	Communication - Board Budget Highlights				
February 10	Monday	Evening	Representative Advisory Council of Students	Student Reps (Sec), SLT	Regular Monthly	In-person	
February 15			2025-2026 Enrolment Estimates to Ministry				
February 19	Wednesday	Daytime	Indigenous Education Council (IEC)	Four Houses, Director of IED, Superintendent	Regular Monthly	In-person	
February 24	Monday	Evening	2024-2025 Amended Annual Budget Approval	Open Invite	Regular Open	Zoom	February 19
February 24	Monday	Evening	2025-2026 Budget Update	Open Invite	Regular Open	Zoom	February 19
February 25	Tuesday	Daytime	Communication - Board Budget Highlights				
March 3	Monday	Evening	Representative Advisory Council of Students	Student Reps (Sec), SLT	Regular Monthly	In-person	
March 4	Tuesday	Evening	Public Budget Consultation Meeting	Open Invite - Four Houses, Partners, Staff, Trustees, Public		In-person	February 28
March 10	Monday	Evening	2025-2026 Budget Update	Open Invite	Regular Open	Zoom	March 5
March 11	Tuesday	Daytime	Communication - Board Budget Highlights				
March 12	Wednesday	Daytime	Indigenous Education Council (IEC)	Four Houses, Director of IED, Superintendent	Regular Monthly	In-person	
March 14	Friday		2025-2026 Ministry Funding Announcement				
March 17 - 28			Spring Break				
April 8	Tuesday	Evening	1st or 1st and 2nd Bylaw Reading	Open Invite	Special Open	Zoom	April 4
April 9	Wednesday	Daytime	Communication - Board Budget Highlights				
April 9	Wednesday	Evening	3rd or 2nd and 3rd Bylaw Reading/BUDGET PASSED	Open Invite	Special Open	Zoom	April 8
April 10	Thursday	Daytime	Communication - Board Budget Highlights				
April 11	Friday	Daytime	Staffing Packages to Schools				
April 11 - 23	Friday	Daytime	Budget Development Process Feedback Request		Survey		
April 18 - 21			Easter Weekend				
April 28	Monday	Evening	Summary of Budget Development Process Feedback	Open Invite	Regular Open	Zoom	April 23