



Staff Report to the Board of Education

February 21, 2024

BUDGET UPDATE

Adrian Johnson, Secretary Treasurer

INPUT RECEIVED TO DATE

DELEGATIONS

Three budget related delegations are scheduled to present at the February 21, 2024 Board Meeting, being two staff unions and Student Voice. Their budget priorities are included in the board agenda package.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

A public budget presentation was held on January 31. Limited feedback was received at that presentation. The feedback received was captured through the online form. This online form has been available from January 31 to February 14. A copy of this form is included with this report (Attachment 'A').

Six submissions were received by February 14. The submissions are reproduced below, unedited.

Group table at Jan 31 meeting

Community members

Continue AIAO

Update student change rooms and more single-stall inclusive washrooms

More chromebooks

Increased counselling time

Clara Burdett

Parent or caregiver of a student

The first priority is student success, I think an emphasis on student wellness, voice and choice is particularly important as it is the foundation of all the other facets of student success listed. Students need to be physically and mentally well for any of those other things to happen and they are most engaged and motivated when they have genuine voice and choice in their education.

I see the second priority as meaningful inclusivity through the creation of safe and welcoming spaces. I see this as involving some physical spaces but more of training for all staff towards inclusion and what that looks like from a professional standpoint, as well as programming for students in a way that promotes inclusion and safety. This goes beyond individual programs to the systems in place throughout the district that can impact the creation and sustainability of the programs available.

Community connections in general and specifically truth and reconciliation calls to action along with serving our Indigenous communities. I have seen some really great examples of this already and look forward to seeing more.

Thank you for the great work that you do!

Jonathan Jones

Parent or caregiver of a student

Support student wellness and improve student voice and choice. It is important to continue to ensure that all students have a voice and choices (Like the Program of Choice, specifically AIAO). This program is on the chopping block this year because the SD22 leadership has failed the students, parents and staff by systematically under promoting all of the programs of choice. Leaving it to students and parents to save the program

Empower students to support climate action and have a positive impact on the environment. Nature based programs like AIAO needs to continue as it is a direct connection and education about how we all need to be stewards of the land. They will be our advocates and entrepreneurs focused on climate conscience businesses and products

Commit to the BC Human Rights Code – an environment free of racism, biases, and all forms of discrimination. This is an area that the district needs to also focus on, as the feedback from students is that they are still being targeted and bullied in SD22 schools at all levels and have no support from principals or SD22 leadership. Impacting mental health and learning. A student recently spoke in person to the board of trustees of there experience in the halls of Fulton Secondary, as they were attacked for how they looked and their sexual orientation. This isn't an isolated incident, but rather a systemic one that is being swept under the covers instead of addressed head on. The victims are told by leaders to ignore and turn the other cheek, instead of standing together to stop this behavior at a young age.

That Programs of Choice like AIAO (Awaken Inquire and Adventure Okanagan) need to be properly promoted by the district, correctly prioritized and funded to ensure it continues to grow in a stable manner as it has for the last 10 years

Nancy Craig

Parent or caregiver of a student

Keeping community connections strong while encouraging outdoor education.

Providing opportunities for students to learn in different ways, whether it be in a lecture classroom or hands on learning, visual or textbook.

Inclusivity

Allocate fundung for AIAO to continue.

Gray Boisvert

Staff

Using the three pillars of the "Strategic Plan", I would like to identify where financial support is needed to be redirected to the Inclusive Education Department (specifically EA'S) for student success.

Last year the #1 priority request was for support for Education Assistants recognizing their role in supporting students. In reviewing data provided by the Secretary Treasurer, it appears that support was only given for additional EA'S where additional grant money was provided for students identified. An additional amount of 1 million dollars is stated provided to support this department yearly, but this sum has not been said to have been increased in the many years. While staffing EA'S is complex the basic ratio of EA'S to students has not changed. Based on these assumptions, I do not recognize any increased additional support being provided.

We continue to see staff turnover, burnout and resignations for EA'S under this present model. This impacts the direct students and other students in the classroom significantly. Most days in the school year there are not enough casual EA'S to support those absent.

CUPE requests that funding is redirected within or to the Inclusive Education Department to support an increase to the discretionary budget and a posted District position for the purpose of mentorship for EA'S and additional support with challenging students.

Reflecting again on student success, CUPE is requesting redirection or additional funding to the Indigenous Program specifically to support Indigenous Support Workers.

Unbalanced workloads and absenteeism of ISW'S creates reduced support and success for Indigenous students.

CUPE's request is to create a District position to temporarily support ISW'S in positions with significant workloads, fill vacant positions while posting process is completed or be used for mentorship of new ISW'S.

Funds directed to support ISW'S for this purpose would provide support missing for students when ISW'S are on lengthy absenteeism, support ISW'S with significant workloads, prevent burnout and retain employees.

Retaining and increasing present level of support staff.

Support staff provide a variety of services that support the education of students directly or the operation of schools and the district. Everyday we are without the educational support for students at many schools and there for failing our students in providing the education they are entitled too. Daily school sites may be without Education Assistants, Indigenous Support Worker's, Library Assistants, Clerical Staff, or Custodians. This has a significant impact on the learning at the schools and staff returning to work. Workload or lack of replacement of staff impacts many staff throughout the year triggering absenteeism from burnout

Our District needs to provide an equivalent or higher standard than adjoining districts to retain our staff and prevent exiting and resignations.

Recognizing the fact that we have been told for the last two years that the operations budget was not sustainable, the District reevaluate the positions of "Exempt Staff", that do not directly impact student learning in the classroom. This District has spent a large sum of money increasing "Exempt Staff" over the last couple of years.

Request this District to create a Financial Committee with "Stakeholders" participating. This District has moved forward in the last couple of years preventing "Stakeholders" from participating in open discussions.

Dave Mackenzie

Community member

The Vernon Teachers Association would like to thank the Board of Education for the opportunity to present a set of budget recommendations for your consideration. We believe our recommendations are aligned with the broader mandate of success of all students and ensuring equity of access and outcomes for all students, while also being aligned with the SD22 Strategic plan. Our recommendations focus on specifics related to the work of the VTA members. We believe these recommendations will have a net positive benefit for all those connected to our school district, especially our students.

BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS & STRATEGIC ALIGNMENTS**School-Based Resource Teachers (SBRT)**

School-based resource teachers play a crucial role in managing, coordinating, and supporting students facing challenges that impact their learning. However, the current staffing levels for SBRTs are insufficient to meet the demonstrated needs of students. Caseloads have risen significantly, exceeding 40 students across various classrooms, subjects, and grade levels, making the workload in recent years unsustainable. The existing staffing formula needs revision to recognize the heightened complexity of student needs, particularly in Category K and Q and students not yet designated.

The Vernon Teachers' Association (VTA) recommendations:

1. Increase SBRT staffing by 4.0 full-time equivalents (FTE), exclusively assigned to schools with demonstrated need.
2. Conduct a comprehensive review and revision of the SBRT staffing model, prioritizing school-based services and seeking feedback from SD 22 partner groups and relevant experts. Present a report to the Board in December 2024.

Speech and Language Pathologists (SLPs):

SLPs, recognized as among the best in the province, face challenges due to sheer number of students in need of their service. Current service levels for SLPs are insufficient to address the needs of students with speech and language concerns. Collaborative support for classroom teachers has significantly decreased.

The Vernon Teachers' Association (VTA) recommendations:

1. Increase SLP staffing by 1.5 FTE.
2. Create a needs-based staffing model for SLPs, gathering feedback from SD 22 partner groups and relevant experts. Present a report to the Board in December 2024.

School Counsellors:

While acknowledging the unquestionable need for accessible and barrier-free services, the current school counsellor staffing levels are unable to meet student demands.

The Vernon Teachers' Association (VTA) recommendations:

1. Increase school counselling staffing by 1.5 FTE, exclusively assigned at the school-based level.
2. Establish a needs-based staffing model for school counsellors, seeking feedback from SD 22 partner groups and relevant experts. Present a report to the Board in December 2024.

Online Learning Staff:

Vlearn staffing has remained stagnant despite a significant increase in demand for online courses. This disparity results in reduced student-teacher contact time.

The Vernon Teachers' Association (VTA) recommendations:

1. Increase staffing at Vlearn by 1.0 FTE to enhance student-teacher contact time.
2. Develop a needs-based staff model for online learning, prioritizing increased contact time. Gather feedback from SD 22 partner groups and relevant experts, presenting a report to the Board in December 2024.

NEXT STEPS

The District Parent's Association have requested to make a budget presentation to the Board at the March 13 Regular Board Meeting. They were unable to present at this February 21 Board meeting.

The Superintendent is gathering input from School and District Leadership.

The Secretary Treasurer will present the Board with an update on year-to-date spending against budget, and a forecast reserves balance, at the March 13, 2024, Regular Board Meeting.

Also at the March 13 Board meeting, the Superintendent will discuss with the Board the feedback received to date, to gain an understanding of the Board's priorities. That will be an opportunity for the Board to discuss the anticipated financial situation and feedback received.

The Superintendent will present her preliminary recommendations to the Board at a Special Board Meeting on April 10, with the goal of final approval at the Regular Board Meeting on April 24.

CURRENT YEAR BUDGET UPDATE - FEBRUARY 1701 ENROLMENT AND ASSOCIATED FUNDING

The January 24, 2024, Report to the Board on the 2023/24 amended budget included the following points regarding current year expenditure and revenue:

This amended budget allows for \$468,343 (25%) of the Board's \$1,785,888 available unrestricted reserves to balance the budget.

This rate of utilization is not sustainable in the long term. There are, however, considerations which may reduce this dependence on reserves to balance the budget. These considerations include:

- *The budget assumes no additional funding from the February enrolment count. It is possible that additional funding will be received as the number of students with funded designations increases.*

Preliminary figures for the February enrolment indicate sixty-three additional students with funded designations, generating a further \$530,000 of revenue this school year. That offsets the \$468,343 budgeted shortfall.



School District 22 budget consultation - 2024/25 school year

Please use this form to provide your input into the School District's \$139 million budget for the 2024 / 25 school year. The information you provide may be made public, so please do not include any personal information about yourself or others, other than your name.

Background information on the School District's finances can be found here: <https://sd22.bc.ca/financial-information/>

The School District's Mission is '*We inspire and nurture students to thrive in their learning, relationships and community*'.

The School District's Vision is '*To become a community where all are respected, and each person is encouraged to develop their potential.*'

The Board's strategic plan sets out the specific goals to accomplish to work towards this Mission and Vision. It's three pillars are:

- Student Success
- Leadership Excellence
- Community Connections

The budget should be consistent with the strategic plan, which can be found here: <https://sd22.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/SD22-Strategic-Plan-PRINT.pdf>

1. Your name:

2. Please provide your email address if you would like to stay informed during the development of the 2024/25 budget.

3. Your primary role:

- ☐ Student
- ☐ Staff
- ☐ Parent or caregiver of a student
- ☐ Community member

4. Please review the Board's strategic plan by using the link above. With that plan in mind, what do you see as the Board's first priority in allocating resources?

5. What do you see as the Board's second priority in allocating resources?

6. What do you see as the Board's third priority in allocating resources?

7. Is there anything else you would like to communicate to the Board of Education about the School District's budget?

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Microsoft. The data you submit will be sent to the form owner.