

From: ECC DM ECC:EX (DM.Education@gov.bc.ca)
To: Hong, Daryl ECC:EX (Daryl.Hong@gov.bc.ca)
Subject: 289266 - FW: BC School Districts must be accountable for use of Supplemental Funding
Sent: 04/11/2023 15:53:35
Attachments: 230330 Communication with SDs 35 39 53 57 68 73 .pdf
Message Body:

Hey Daryl

This was received in the DM inbox. Not sure if this was received in the Minister inbox though.

Thx.
Carrie

From: Secretary <secretary@downsyndromebc.ca>
Sent: Friday, March 31, 2023 11:51 AM
To: EDU.Minister@gov.bc.ca
Cc: ECC DM ECC:EX <DM.Education@gov.bc.ca>; Patricia.Kovacs@gov.bc.ca; Falcon.MLA, Kevin LASS:EX <Kevin.Falcon.MLA@leg.bc.ca>; Sturko.MLA, Elenore LASS:EX <Elenore.Sturko.MLA@leg.bc.ca>
Subject: BC School Districts must be accountable for use of Supplemental Funding

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

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March 31, 2022

The Honourable Rachna Singh,
Minister of Education,
Via email: Edu.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Dear Minister Singh,

We are a non-profit charitable organization working to share information that supports the health and well being of individuals with Down syndrome. We are a collective of over 250 parents, guardians, self advocates and caregivers throughout BC and we all love someone with Down syndrome.

Virtual community meetings with members of our Society have highlighted the fact that many children with Down syndrome are not being included and are not receiving adequate, or in some cases, any crucial supports such as speech language therapy (SLP), physical therapy (PT), occupational therapy (OT) in the school system despite the many millions of dollars which are allocated for these purposes (\$664.4M in 2021/22).

BCEdAccess Society collects information on the exclusion of children with disabilities from schools in BC. The report for 2021-2022 is very disturbing and supports the information our members have brought forward.

On March 31, 2022 we had a virtual meeting with the then Minister of Education, Jennifer Whiteside, Deputy Minister of Education, Christina Zacharuk and the Executive Director, Equity, Wellness and Inclusion, Patricia Kovacs. On April 14 2022 we wrote to confirm our understanding of what was said at that meeting. The information in Ms. Kovacs's response of May 30, 2022 was markedly different in many ways from what we were told at the meeting. This was very disappointing.

There was no revision to one piece of advice received at the March 31, 2022 meeting: that parents or other concerned citizens could obtain an accounting, including budgeting and a report on outcomes from school districts and we confirmed this in our letter of June 30, 2022.

We wrote to six school districts to obtain an accounting for the supplemental funding they receive in connection with students with disabilities. Our letters to and responses from SD53-Okanagan Similkameen, SD57-Prince George, SD39-Vancouver, SD35-Langley, SD73-Kamloops Thompson and SD68-Nanaimo Ladysmith are attached. All school districts were able to tell us how much they received to support inclusion and provide supports for children with disabilities, high level budget allocations to staff categories and provide statements about their good intentions, but very little else.

We then wrote a detailed follow up letter to all six school districts, as we wanted to give them every opportunity to provide answers. We received a range of responses, as you can see some districts made more effort than others, but none were able to provide answers to our core questions. SD 73, Kamloops, has not yet responded to the follow up questions nor have they given us permission to share information they provided in their initial response.

Whether the school districts did not understand the questions we were asking or simply cannot answer those questions is unclear. What is clear is that it is unrealistic for individual parents or other concerned citizens to expect to receive an accounting from school districts.

The fact that children are not receiving an inclusive education nor are they receiving the necessary supports (SLP, OT, PT) coupled with the failure or inability of school districts to provide answers raises questions as to whether this money is being properly allocated and spent for its intended purpose.

Given all of the above, we believe that it is the Ministry of Education's responsibility to answer these questions and provide an accounting in respect of the supplemental funds received by school districts, including:

1. how decisions to spend that funding are made,
2. what do schools actually do,
3. the mechanisms by which funding is tracked,
4. what performance indicators schools and school districts are using to measure the success of their decisions,
5. a report on outcomes.

Additional questions arise out of the responses of the school districts. How does the allocation of supplemental funding to pay salaries of teachers, Principals, Vice Principals, substitutes, clerical and other staff foster inclusion and provide support? It was our understanding that these salaries were covered by the base rate provided in respect of all students, including students with disabilities. Is this correct?

Are additional teachers, Principals, Vice Principals and other staff being hired to foster inclusion or provide support? Or are teachers, Principals or Vice Principals and other staff being paid higher salaries if they have disabled students in their class or school? Or are monies being taken from supplemental funding to simply help cover salaries?

We understand how the allocation of funds to Education Assistants may support inclusion, although if children are being sent to special purpose rooms with EAs that would not support inclusion.

Why can't school districts tell us the details of SLP, OT, PT services they are supposed to be providing?

Please note that the question posed in our June 30, 2022 letter remains unanswered, Are the results of your audits and compliance procedures available to the public?

We want meaningful answers to these questions and would like to have a virtual meeting to discuss these matters with you as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Tamara Taggart

President, Down Syndrome BC

Mary Ann Cummings

Secretary, Down Syndrome BC

CC:

Christina Zacharuk
Deputy Minister of Education
Via email: DM.Education@gov.bc.ca

Patricia Kovacs
Executive Director, Equity, Wellness and Inclusion
Via email: Patricia Kovacs@gov.bc.ca

Kevin Falcon
Leader of the Opposition
Via email: Kevin.Falcon.MLA@leg.bc.ca

Elenore Sturko
Shadow Minister for Education
Via email: Elenore.Sturko.MLA@leg.bc.ca



DOWN SYNDROME BC

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Communication with SD 35



DOWN SYNDROME BC

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July 4, 2022

School District No. 35, Langley

Mal Gill
Superintendent of Schools
Via Email: mgill@sd35.bc.ca

Brian Iseli
Secretary Treasurer
Via Email: biseli@sd35.bc.ca

Rod Ross
Board of Trustees, Chairperson
Via Email: rross@sd35.bc.ca

Michael Morgan
Director, Learning Support Services
Via Email: mmorgan@sd35.bc.ca

Dear Mr. Gill, Mr. Iseli, Mr. Ross and Mr. Morgan,

Down syndrome BC is a non-profit organization working to share information that supports the health and well-being of individuals with Down syndrome. We wrote to the Ministry of Education, as well as all BC school boards, in October 2021 to share information and recommendations for the effective and inclusive education of learners with Down syndrome.

We are concerned that learners with Down syndrome are not receiving an effective education, are not being included in mainstream classes appropriate to their age and are not receiving the supports they need.

Approximately \$664.4 million was received by school districts for the 2021/22 school year for supplemental funding to support students with disabilities with the expectation that school districts are using the additional funding to provide the supports and services students with disabilities need.



The Ministry of Education has told us that accountability lies with the school districts and if parents or others wish to see how the money sent to the school district to promote inclusion and provide services for children with disabilities is spent, they can ask for an accounting, including budgeting and a report on outcomes from the school district.

Please provide an accounting for the supplemental funding you received, including answers to the following questions:

1. How much funding have you received to support inclusion and students with disabilities?
2. What decisions have you made to allocate money to foster inclusion and to support students with disabilities? Please include names and/or descriptions of specific programs, initiatives or practices and the approximate annual budget for each.
3. How do you track the money to ensure it is spent to support your decisions?
4. How do you measure the success of your decisions and how often do you review your allocation decisions?

We look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards,

Tamara Taggart
President, Down Syndrome BC

Mary Ann Cummings
Secretary, Down Syndrome BC

Danielle Gibbons
Director, Down Syndrome BC



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August 18, 2022

School District No. 35, Langley

Mal Gill
Superintendent of Schools
Via Email: mgill@sd35.bc.ca

Brian Iseli
Secretary Treasurer
Via Email: biseli@sd35.bc.ca

Rod Ross
Board of Trustees, Chairperson
Via Email: rross@sd35.bc.ca

Michael Morgan
Director, Learning Support Services
Via Email: mmorgan@sd35.bc.ca

Dear Mr. Gill, Mr. Iseli, Mr. Ross and Mr. Morgan,

May we please have a substantive response to our letter of July 4, 2022.
We look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards,

Tamara Taggart
President, Down Syndrome BC

Mary Ann Cummings
Secretary, Down Syndrome BC

Danielle Gibbons
Director, Down Syndrome BC

From: **Mal Gill** <mgill@sd35.bc.ca>
Date: Mon, Aug 29, 2022 at 3:47 PM
Subject: Re: Inquiry about use of Supplemental Funding
To: Secretary <secretary@downsyndromebc.ca>
Cc: Brian Iseli <BIseli@sd35.bc.ca>, Rod Ross <RRoss@sd35.bc.ca>, Michael Morgan <MMorgan@sd35.bc.ca>

Good Afternoon

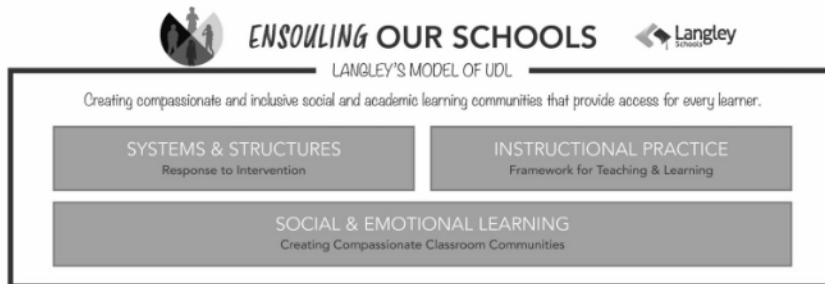
Sorry for the delay in responding to your July 4th email but we needed to finalize the yearend results to be able to respond. Below is the financial information that you requested and the spending portion will be part of the Financial Statements that the Board will approve on September 20th.

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Operating Grant 21/22 Special Needs Supplement | 28,486,390 |
| Special Education Spending (per Financial Statements) | |
| Teachers' Salaries | 11,766,437 |
| Principals and Vice Principals Salaries | 528,694 |
| Educational Assistants Salaries | 16,553,394 |
| Support Staff Salaries | 45,442 |
| Other Professionals Salaries | 217,153 |
| Substitutes Salaries | 2,176,852 |
| Employee Benefits | 7,648,808 |
| Services and Supplies | 780,296 |
| Total Special Education Spending | 39,717,076 |

As per our Inclusive Education Administrative Procedure the District celebrates the diverse abilities of each student and is committed to nurturing those abilities through quality education. The District believes in the inclusive delivery of education services that provide opportunities for all students to develop personal and District goals in all aspects of their education. Programs and services are monitored regularly by District staff, with adjustments being made as appropriate.

From the Framework For Enhancing Student Learning

District Goal: To create compassionate learning communities with inclusive instructional practice allowing access to grade level curriculum for all students through our Ensouling our Schools Initiative.



The Langley School District's overarching actions are intended to improve access to learning for every student, with particular emphasis on our students of Aboriginal descent, students with diverse abilities and our Children and Youth in Care. Ensouling our Schools is a 3-block model of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) that focuses on inclusivity, sense of belonging, Social Emotional Learning, Response to Intervention, First Peoples Principles of Learning, Trauma Informed Practice, evidence-based instruction and sound assessment practices. (Framework for Enhancing Student Learning)

Please find attached a visual diagram of how supports are assigned within this model.

If you have any questions, please get back to me.

Sincerely,

Mal Gill
Superintendent of Schools
School District No. 35 (Langley)
4875-222nd Street
Langley, BC V3A 3Z7

Phone: 604-534-7891
Fax: 604-532-1449

www.sd35.bc.ca





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November 15, 2022

School District 35,
Langley School Board,
Mal Gill
Superintendent of Schools
Via email: mgill@sd35.bc.ca

Dear Mr. Gill,

Thank you for your response dated August 29, 2022. We appreciate your efforts to assist us. However the information you provided is not responsive to our requests two through four. We asked for particulars of the programs and personnel on which you have spent the supplemental funding given to you specifically to foster inclusion for and support of students with disabilities.

We see from your Financial Statements as of June 30, 2022 and from your email of August 29, 2022 that \$16.5 M of the supplemental funding was allocated for Education Assistants for special education.

We note that an additional \$11.7 M was allocated from the supplemental funding to pay salaries for teachers and \$528K to pay salaries for Principals and Vice Principals. It was our understanding that salaries for teachers, Principles and Vice-Principals are covered by other funding you received, namely, the base amount allocated for each student (including students with disabilities). If this is so, could you please explain the \$11.7 M and \$528 K amounts taken from the supplemental funding? Are additional teachers or Principals and Vice-Principals being



hired to foster inclusion or provide special services to students with disabilities? If so please provide specific details of these people and services. If not, then please explain the reasoning behind this allocation of the supplemental funds to these salaries.

We make the same comments and ask the same questions with respect to support staff salaries and substitute salaries paid from the supplemental funds.

Many children with disabilities require SLP (speech language pathologist) support on a regular basis. Experts advise that children with Down syndrome require SLP support on a weekly basis. Can you tell us whether any of the money for SLP services comes from supplemental funding, and if so how much is spent on those services. Please also give us details of the SLP services provided at elementary and high school levels, for example, how often are elementary school children who need SLP support receiving that support and how is this support provided, one on one, group classes or by some other method? We ask the same questions regarding SLP support for students at the high school level.

We have the same questions with respect to OT (occupational therapy) PT (physical therapy) expenditures from the supplemental funding.

Your statement that the District is committed to the inclusive delivery of education services is encouraging but it does not tell us the mechanism by which you track money you receive nor does it address what performance indicators you use to measure the success of your decisions.

If you are not able to answer these questions, please let us know, and we will take this back to the Ministry of Education.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Tamara Taggart
President, Down Syndrome BC

Mary Ann Cummings
Secretary, Down Syndrome BC



CC:

Candy Ashdown, Board Chair

Via email: cashdown@sd35.bc.ca

From: **Clare Pereira** <CPereira@sd35.bc.ca>
Date: Fri, Mar 3, 2023 at 11:22 AM
Subject: RE: Follow questions regarding Supplemental Funding
To: Secretary <secretary@downsyndromebc.ca>

Good morning Mary Ann,

Below please find responses to the queries in your November 15, 2022 email to Superintendent Mal Gill:

1. *How much funding have you received to support inclusion and students with disabilities?*

This was already answered in a previous email.

2. *What decisions have you made to allocate money to foster inclusion and to support students with disabilities? Please include names and/or descriptions of specific programs, initiatives or practices and the approximate annual budget for each.*

It is important to note the District takes a holistic approach to help foster inclusion and support students with disabilities. Fostering inclusion and supporting students is embedded in the work we do every day. As a system, the District has many structures in place to ensure staff at all levels, from District staff, administrators, to teachers and support staff are educated, trained, and able to implement these strategies to support their work in schools. There is not a single strategy or budget line that can outline this work.

As is the case in all school districts, the majority of the Langley School District's budget is allocated to staffing costs and salaries. We value our staff and view human resources as the largest asset in our District to help further our work in inclusion. The District has put in a significant amount of time, capacity, and financial resources into professional development and training for our educational leaders on these structures and systems, with the intention and expectation that these best practices are shared with teachers, support staff, and other professionals.

As referenced in our District's Strategic Plan Year 4 Update published in September 2022, as a system the District will continue to conduct the following:

- Implement Universal Design for Learning strategies (UDL) in all schools
- Support District-wide professional development on UDL strategies to support teachers in ensuring UDL practices and strategies are being used in all classrooms across the District
- Support Response to Intervention systems and structures in all schools
- Develop Professional Learning Communities (PLC) across the District

- Support schools in using data from performance indicators to inform school action plans and classroom instruction
- Implement Trauma Informed strategies in schools
- Implement rational and strategies from Ensouling our Schools learning sessions in all schools
- Ensure School Action Plans contain specific goals in relation to our commitment to Truth and Reconciliation, Anti-Racism and Inclusion with a focus on the success of Aboriginal learners, Children and Youth in Care, and learners with diverse abilities

Other District initiatives include the following:

Ukeru Training for staff

PEACEFUL Schools strategies

3. How do you track money to ensure it is spent to support your decisions?

Every year the District sets goals as part of its Strategic Plan. The goals and actions fall under three main pillars: educational opportunities, community partnerships, and operational priorities. In alignment with the Strategic Plan, the District creates its annual budget. The annual update of the Strategic Plan in tandem with the Annual Budget guides the District in tracking and ensuring funds are allocated and spent effectively and appropriately. As per administrative procedures and policies, the District presents the Strategic Plan Update and the Budget to the Board of Education annually to uphold transparency and accountability.

4. How do you measure the success of your decisions and how often do you review your allocation decisions?

The District measures success in a variety of ways.

As part of the process to create the budget, the revenues and expenses are reviewed annually. In Spring 2021, the District embarked on a budget consultation survey to seek input from the public. The public engagement process proved to be successful with more than 2,100 individuals responding to the survey, and with many respondents sharing insights that reaffirm that the District's spending is on track with what the public believe are priorities. You can see the outcome of the Budget Consultation [here](#). The District will continue this work in consulting with the public about the Annual Budget.

As part of the process to update the Strategic Plan, the District reviews its goals and actions annually including the pillar of educational opportunities. From an educational opportunities perspective, the District reviews transition rates for students. In the most recent years of data collection, the District is pleased to report an increasing trend in transition rates for all students

including students with diverse abilities. The most recent transition rate reported for all students is 95.1 per cent (compared to the provincial average of 91.6 per cent). The most recent transition rate reported for students with diverse abilities is 84.8 per cent (compared to the provincial average of 72.5 per cent). These rates are above the provincial average and are also historical highs for the Langley School District. Although this positive trend is encouraging, the District recognizes that more work needs to be done in helping support our diverse learners and improving student success. The District is proud of these recent measurements of success. These outcomes reaffirm that the structures and systems in place that support students and make them feel a sense of belonging in our schools are contributing factors to overall student success.

Thanks,

Clare

Clare Pereira, Executive Assistant (she/her)
Mal Gill, Superintendent of Schools
Woody Bradford, Deputy Superintendent
School District No. 35 (Langley)
Direct: 778-726-3546 | cpereira@sd35.bc.ca



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Communication with SD 39



DOWN SYNDROME BC

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July 4, 2022

School District No. 39, Vancouver

Helen McGregor
Superintendent of Schools
Via Email: hmcgregor@vsb.bc.ca

J. David Green
Secretary Treasurer
Via Email: dgreen@vsb.bc.ca

Janet Fraser
Board of Trustees, Chair
Via Email: janet.fraser@vsb.bc.ca

David Platt
District Principal Inclusion
Via Email: dplatt@vsb.bc.ca

Dear Ms. McGregor, Ms. Fraser, Mr. Green, and Mr. Platt:

Down syndrome BC is a non-profit organization working to share information that supports the health and well-being of individuals with Down syndrome. We wrote to the Ministry of Education, as well as all BC school boards, in October 2021 to share information and recommendations for the effective and inclusive education of learners with Down syndrome.

We are concerned that learners with Down syndrome are not receiving an effective education, are not being included in mainstream classes appropriate to their age and are not receiving the supports they need.

Approximately \$664.4 million was received by school districts for the 2021/22 school year for supplemental funding to support students with disabilities with the expectation that school districts are using the additional funding to provide the supports and services students with disabilities need.



The Ministry of Education has told us that accountability lies with the school districts and if parents or others wish to see how the money sent to the school district to promote inclusion and provide services for children with disabilities is spent, they can ask for an accounting, including budgeting and a report on outcomes from the school district.

Please provide an accounting for the supplemental funding you received, including answers to the following questions:

1. How much funding have you received to support inclusion and students with disabilities?
2. What decisions have you made to allocate money to foster inclusion and to support students with disabilities? Please include names and/or descriptions of specific programs, initiatives or practices and the approximate annual budget for each.
3. How do you track the money to ensure it is spent to support your decisions?
4. How do you measure the success of your decisions and how often do you review your allocation decisions?

We look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards,

Tamara Taggart
President, Down Syndrome BC

Mary Ann Cummings
Secretary, Down Syndrome BC

Danielle Gibbons
Director, Down Syndrome BC



DOWN SYNDROME BC

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August 18, 2022

School District No. 39, Vancouver

Helen McGregor
Superintendent of Schools
Via Email: hmcgregor@vsb.bc.ca

J. David Green
Secretary Treasurer
Via Email: dgreen@vsb.bc.ca

Janet Fraser
Board of Trustees, Chair
Via Email: janet.fraser@vsb.bc.ca

David Platt
District Principal Inclusion
Via Email: dplatt@vsb.bc.ca

Dear Ms. McGregor, Ms. Fraser, Mr. Green, and Mr. Platt:

May we please have a substantive response to our letter of July 4, 2022.
We look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards,

Tamara Taggart
President, Down Syndrome BC

Mary Ann Cummings
Secretary, Down Syndrome BC

Danielle Gibbons
Director, Down Syndrome BC

From: **David Green** <dgreen@vsb.bc.ca>

Date: Tue, Aug 23, 2022 at 7:25 AM

Subject: RE: {EXT} Re: Inquiry about use of Supplemental Funding

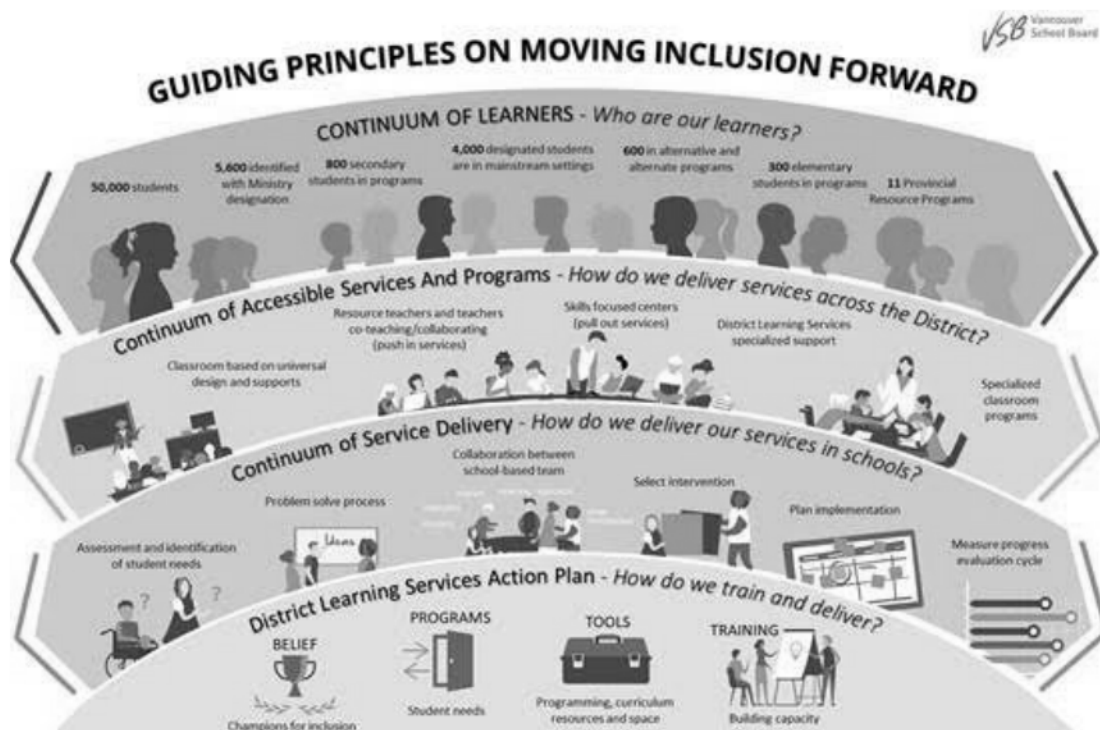
To: Secretary <secretary@downsyndromebc.ca>

Cc: Helen McGregor <hmcgregor@vsb.bc.ca>, David Platt <dplatt@vsb.bc.ca>, Janet Fraser <Janet.Fraser@vsb.bc.ca>

Good morning,

I am responding to your letter of July 4, 2022 and apologize for the delay in getting this information to you.

The District offers a continuum of services to support Special Education (SPED) students, both in mainstream and in 73 district SPED programs at Secondary and Elementary schools.



The spending of the monies received for 2021/2022 is outlined below:

| | | |
|---|---------------|----------------------|
| <i>Operating Grant 21/22 Special Needs Supplement</i> | \$ 57,975,610 | |
| <i>21/22 Basic Block Funding</i> | 23,103,050 | \$ 81,078,660 |

Special Education Spending (per Financial Statements)

| | | |
|--|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Teachers' Salaries</i> | 26,125,587 | |
| <i>Principals and Vice Principals Salaries</i> | 2,422,277 | |
| <i>Educational Assistants Salaries</i> | 39,651,075 | |
| <i>Support Staff Salaries</i> | 215,351 | |
| <i>Other Professionals Salaries</i> | 2,031 | |
| <i>Substitutes Salaries</i> | 930,183 | |
| <i>Employee Benefits</i> | 18,853,823 | |
| <i>Services and Supplies</i> | 1,586,203 | 89,786,530 |
| | | |
| | Spending Over Funded Amount | \$ (8,707,870) |

As is outlined above, the District provides additional funding to support students with special needs, and for the 2021/2022 school year that amount was \$8,707,870 over and above the money received from the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

Programs and services are monitored regularly by District staff, with adjustments being made as appropriate.

If you have any questions, please get back to me.

Best regards,
David

J. David Green CPA CA
Secretary Treasurer/CFO
Vancouver School Board
1580 West Broadway, Vancouver BC V6J 5K8
e: dgreen@vsb.bc.ca | p: 604-713-5080



www.vsb.bc.ca

*Honoured to be working together on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the
xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) & səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nations)*



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November 15, 2022

School District 39, Vancouver School Board,
J. David Green CPA, VA, Secretary Treasurer/CFO
Via email: dgreen@vsb.bc.ca

Dear Mr. Green

Thank you for your response dated August 23, 2022. We appreciate your efforts to assist us. However the information you provided is not responsive to our requests two through four. We asked for particulars of the programs and personnel on which you have spent the supplemental funding given to you specifically to foster inclusion for and support of students with disabilities.

We see from your Financial Statements as of June 30, 2022 and from your email of August 23, 2022 that \$39.6M of the supplemental funding was allocated for Education Assistants for special education.

We note that an additional \$26M was allocated from the supplemental funding to pay salaries for teachers and \$2.4M to pay salaries for Principals and Vice Principals. It was our understanding that salaries for teachers, Principals and Vice-Principals are covered by other funding you received, namely, the base amount allocated for each student (including students with disabilities). If this is so, could you please explain the \$26M and \$2.4M amounts taken from the supplemental funding? Are additional teachers or Principals and Vice-Principals being hired to foster inclusion or provide special services to students with disabilities? If so please

provide specific details of these people and services. If not, then please explain the reasoning behind this allocation of the supplemental funds to these salaries.

We make the same comments and ask the same questions with respect to support staff salaries and substitute salaries paid from the supplemental funds.

Many children with disabilities require SLP (speech language pathologist) support on a regular basis. Experts advise that children with Down syndrome require SLP support on a weekly basis. Can you tell us whether any of the money for SLP services comes from supplemental funding, and if so how much is spent on those services. Please also give us details of the SLP services provided at elementary and high school levels, for example, how often are elementary school children who need SLP support receiving that support and how is this support provided, one on one, group classes or by some other method? We ask the same questions regarding SLP support for students at the high school level.

We have the same questions with respect to OT (occupational therapy) PT (physical therapy) expenditures from the supplemental funding and detail of services provided.

Your statement that programs and services are monitored regularly by District staff, with adjustments being made as appropriate is encouraging but it does not tell us the mechanism by which you track the money you receive nor does it address what performance indicators you use to measure the success of your decisions.

If you are not able to answer these questions, please let us know, and we will take this back to the Ministry of Education.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Tamara Taggart
President, Down Syndrome BC

Mary Ann Cummings
Secretary, Down Syndrome BC



CC:

Victoria Jung, Board Chair

Via email: Victoria.Jung@vsb.bc.ca

From: **David Green** <dgreen@vsb.bc.ca>
Date: Tue, Feb 14, 2023 at 12:50 PM
Subject: RE: {EXT} Re: Follow up questions regarding Supplemental Funding
To: Secretary <secretary@downsyndromebc.ca>
Cc: Helen McGregor <hmcgregor@vsb.bc.ca>, Rosie Poetschke <rpoetschke@vsb.bc.ca>, Jody Langlois <janglois@vsb.bc.ca>

Good afternoon, Definitely an oversight for which we apologize. As we provided in our August 2022 response to your first letter, even when we combine the basic allocation we receive for students who are identified as having special needs with the supplemental funding we receive for those students there is a shortfall. The numbers you refer to in your original email of \$39.6 million for educational assistants, \$26.1 million for teachers and \$2.4 million for principals are not components of the supplemental funding we received in that year to support students with diverse needs. Those figures are the expenses related to the staffing we have in place to support those students. The supplemental funding we received in 2021-2022, as explained in our August response was \$60.0 million and the basic allocation we received for student with special needs was \$23.1 million.

We do have teachers and principals as well as educational assistants supporting students. More information is provided below about those supports.

Students with language disorders receive support from a wide variety of supports of which direct SLP service can be one support. SLPs provide support through direct and indirect consultation to students and schools. The SLP support that a student receives is based on the students Individual Education Plan goals. For the most part, SLP support at both elementary and secondary schools is provided on an individual student basis, due to the unique nature of each students communication needs. A student may receive direct individual support from an SLP, they may receive support from either an SSA/EA or Resource teacher, or they may receive support from their classroom teacher. Prior to a student receiving language supports from their SSA/EA, Resource or Classroom teacher, the SLP is involved in providing direct consultation. An example of group support for students requiring SLP support might be in elementary schools where a Resource Teacher might support a group of students with literacy comprehension challenges, based on input from the SLP. For secondary

school students, we have a dedicated AAC SLP who supports our secondary school programs with a particular focus on supporting students with significant communication learning profiles. Secondary students in mainstream classes are referred on an individual basis for assessment by School Based Teams.

Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy supports are provided to the VSB by the Vancouver Pediatric Team through Vancouver Coastal Health. As such, there are no expenditures from supplemental funding for these services. A direct link to the support services provided by the Vancouver Pediatric Team can be found here: <http://www.vch.ca/public-health/children-youth-schools/school-health/vancouver-school-health-manual/children-with-special-needs-in-vancouver-schools>

Best regards,
David

J. David Green CPA,CA
Secretary Treasurer and CFO
Vancouver School District
1580 West Broadway, Vancouver BC V6J 5K8
e: dgreen@vsb.bc.ca | p: 604-713-5080

vsb.bc.ca | [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [TikTok](#) | [YouTube](#)

Honoured to be working and learning together on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) & səlilwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations



DOWN SYNDROME BC

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Communication with SD 53



DOWN SYNDROME BC

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July 4, 2022

School District No. 53, Okanagan Similkameen

Bev Young
Superintendent of Schools
Via Email: byoung@sd53.bc.ca

Subra Paliappa
Secretary Treasurer
Via Email: spaliapp@sd53.bc.ca

Rob Zandee
Board of Trustees, Chair
Via Email: rzandee@sd53.bc.ca

Heather Rose
Inclusive Education
Via Email: hrose@sd53.bc.ca

Dear Ms. Young, Mr. Zandee, Mr. Paliappa and Ms. Rose:

Down syndrome BC is a non-profit organization working to share information that supports the health and well-being of individuals with Down syndrome. We wrote to the Ministry of Education, as well as all BC school boards, in October 2021 to share information and recommendations for the effective and inclusive education of learners with Down syndrome.

We are concerned that learners with Down syndrome are not receiving an effective education, are not being included in mainstream classes appropriate to their age and are not receiving the supports they need.

Approximately \$664.4 million was received by school districts for the 2021/22 school year for supplemental funding to support students with disabilities with the expectation that school districts are using the additional funding to provide the supports and services students with disabilities need.



The Ministry of Education has told us that accountability lies with the school districts and if parents or others wish to see how the money sent to the school district to promote inclusion and provide services for children with disabilities is spent, they can ask for an accounting, including budgeting and a report on outcomes from the school district.

Please provide an accounting for the supplemental funding you received, including answers to the following questions:

1. How much funding have you received to support inclusion and students with disabilities?
2. What decisions have you made to allocate money to foster inclusion and to support students with disabilities? Please include names and/or descriptions of specific programs, initiatives or practices and the approximate annual budget for each.
3. How do you track the money to ensure it is spent to support your decisions?
4. How do you measure the success of your decisions and how often do you review your allocation decisions?

We look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards,

Tamara Taggart
President, Down Syndrome BC

Mary Ann Cummings
Secretary, Down Syndrome BC

Danielle Gibbons
Director, Down Syndrome BC



DOWN SYNDROME BC

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August 18, 2022

School District No. 53, Okanagan Similkameen

Bev Young
Superintendent of Schools
Via Email: byoung@sd53.bc.ca

Subra Paliappa
Secretary Treasurer
Via Email: spaliapp@sd53.bc.ca

Rob Zandee
Board of Trustees, Chair
Via Email: rzandee@sd53.bc.ca

Heather Rose
Inclusive Education
Via Email: hrose@sd53.bc.ca

Dear Ms. Young, Mr. Zandee, Mr. Paliappa and Ms. Rose:

May we please have a substantive response to our letter of July 4, 2022.
We look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards,

Tamara Taggart
President, Down Syndrome BC

Mary Ann Cummings
Secretary, Down Syndrome BC

Danielle Gibbons
Director, Down Syndrome BC

From: **Heather Rose** <hrose@sd53.bc.ca>

Date: Tue, Sep 6, 2022 at 1:26 PM

Subject: Re: Inquiry about use of Supplemental Funding

To: Secretary <secretary@downsyndromebc.ca>, Bev Young <byoung@sd53.bc.ca>, Subra Paliappa <spaliapp@sd53.bc.ca>, Robert Zandee <rzandee@sd53.bc.ca>

Dear Down Syndrome BC,

On behalf of SD No. 53 Okanagan Similkameen, here are our responses to the questions you have asked:

1. How much funding have you received to support inclusion and students with disabilities?

2021/2022: We received 4.45 M to be allocated for students with unique needs.

Accounting for supplemental funding will be found in school district's audited financial statements on district websites in early October.

2. What decisions have you made to allocate money to foster inclusion and to support students with disabilities? Please include names and/or descriptions of specific programs, initiatives or practices and the approximate annual budget for each.

Funds are allocated to schools based on their individual population of students with Levels 1, 2 & 3 category of coding designations as per Ministry requirements. Schools use these funds to support students through human resources supports, programming of educational content, contracted services, student experiences, and educational resources. All of these are geared toward supporting students within their educational context and supporting them in achieving their Individual Educational Plan outcomes. At the school district level, we employ a wide range of therapy professionals to support students in our schools.

3. How do you track the money to ensure it is spent to support your decisions?

Money is tracked at both the school and district level. This includes the costs of staffing, supplies and services.

4. How do you measure the success of your decisions and how often do you review your allocation decisions?

Supplemental funding allocations are projected each spring based on our yearly Feb. 1701 report to the Ministry. We review these projections in the spring and plan for next school year supports accordingly.

Sincerely,

Heather Rose on behalf of SD No. 53

Heather Rose

District Principal, Student Services

Okanagan Similkameen School District No.53

I am honoured to live, work and learn on the territory of the Syilx Okanagan Nation and their peoples.

"Kids Do Well If They Can" - Ross Greene



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November 15, 2022

School District 53, Okanagan Similameen,
Heather Rose, District Principal, Student Services,
Via email: hrose@sd53.bc.ca

Dear Ms. Rose,

Thank you for your response dated September 6, 2022. We appreciate your efforts to assist us. However the information you provided is not responsive to our requests. We asked for particulars of the programs and personnel on which you have spent the supplemental funding given to you specifically to foster inclusion for and support of students with disabilities.

We see from your Financial Statements as of June 30, 2022 that \$2M of the supplemental funding was allocated for Education Assistants for special education.

We note, however, that an additional \$1.96M was allocated from the supplemental funding to pay salaries for teachers and \$266K to pay salaries for Principals and Vice Principals. It was our understanding that salaries for teachers, Principles and Vice-Principals are covered by other funding you received, namely, the base amount allocated for each student (including students with disabilities). If this is so, could you please explain the \$1.96M and \$266K amounts taken from the supplemental funding? Are additional teachers or Principals and Vice-Principals being hired to foster inclusion or provide special services to students with disabilities? If so please provide specific details of these people and services. If not, then please explain the reasoning behind this allocation of the supplemental funds to these salaries.

We make the same comments and ask the same questions with respect to support staff salaries and substitute salaries paid from the supplemental funds.

Many children with disabilities require SLP (speech language pathologist) support on a regular basis. Experts advise that children with Down syndrome require SLP support on a weekly basis. Can you tell us whether any of the money for SLP services comes from supplemental funding, and give us details of the SLP services provided, for example, how often children who need SLP support are receiving that support and how is this support provided, one on one, group classes or by some other method? We ask the same questions regarding SLP support for students at the high school level.

We have the same questions with respect to OT (occupational therapy) PT (physical therapy) expenditures from the supplemental funding.

Your statement that supplemental funding is tracked at both the school and district level is encouraging but it does not tell us the mechanism by which you track the money you receive nor does it address what performance indicators you use to measure the success of your decisions.

If you are not able to answer these questions, please let us know, and we will take this back to the Ministry of Education.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Tamara Taggart
President, Down Syndrome BC

Mary Ann Cummings
Secretary, Down Syndrome BC

CC:

Rob Zandee, Board Chair
Via email: rzandee@sd53.bc.ca

From: **Heather Rose** <hrose@sd53.bc.ca>

Date: Mon, Nov 28, 2022 at 9:12 AM

Subject: Re: Follow up questions regarding Supplemental Funding

To: Secretary <secretary@downsyndromebc.ca>

Cc: Robert Zandee <rzandee@sd53.bc.ca>, Subra Paliappa <spaliapp@sd53.bc.ca>

Good morning,

Please find the attached document with answers to the questions you've requested.

Sincerely,

Heather

Heather Rose

District Principal, Student Services

Okanagan Similkameen School District No.53

250-498-3481 ext. 80106

I am honoured to live, work and learn on the territory of the Syilx Okanagan Nation and their peoples.

"Kids Do Well If They Can" - Ross Greene

If this is so, could you please explain the \$1.96M and \$266K amounts taken from the supplemental funding? Are additional teachers or Principals and Vice-Principals being hired to foster inclusion or provide special services to students with disabilities?

The 1.9M and 266K amounts are costs associated with the salaries of all professionals (including teachers, PVPs) who work with and support students with ministry special education category designations.

Can you tell us whether any of the money for SLP services comes from supplemental funding, and give us details of the SLP services provided, for example, how often children who need SLP support are receiving that support and how is this support provided, one on one, group classes or by some other method? We ask the same questions regarding SLP support for students at the high school level.

We pay for our SLP salaries from supplemental funding.

How often: Weekly check in with student and/or student's inclusion teacher to see if further programming support is needed. 1-hour total direct support per month.

Approach: Direct therapy support for student from SLP. In addition, guiding of Inclusion Teacher and Education Assistants to assist with individual student programming.

High School Students: Same as elementary

We have the same questions with respect to OT (occupational therapy) PT (physical therapy) expenditures from the supplemental funding.

We pay for our OT/PT salaries from supplemental funding.

How often: 2-3 hours per year. Broken into a monthly visit of approximately 15-20 min.

Approach Direct therapy support for student by OT/PT. In addition, guiding of Inclusion Teacher and Education Assistants to assist with individual student support programming.

Your statement that supplemental funding is tracked at both the school and district level is encouraging but it does not tell us the mechanism by which you track the money you receive nor does it address what performance indicators you use to measure the success of your decisions.

We use budgeting and accounting software to assign and track spending of supplemental funds.

Each spring we engage in a qualitative consultation process at the district level with school administrators to determine if our current student supports are meeting the needs of our students. If they are not, we look at ways to address the needs through an increase in staffing levels and/or other means.



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Communication with SD 57



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July 4, 2022

School District No. 57, Prince George

Cindy Heitman
Superintendent of Schools
Via Email: cheitman@sd57.bc.ca

Darlene Patterson
Secretary Treasurer
Via Email: dpatterson@sd57.bc.ca

Sharel Warrington
Board of Trustees, Chair
Via Email: swarrington@sd57.bc.ca

Lisa Horswell
Director of Instruction, Inclusive Education
Via Email: lhorswell@sd57.bc.ca

Dear Ms. Heitman, Ms. Warrington, Ms. Patterson and Ms. Horswell:

Down syndrome BC is a non-profit organization working to share information that supports the health and well-being of individuals with Down syndrome. We wrote to the Ministry of Education, as well as all BC school boards, in October 2021 to share information and recommendations for the effective and inclusive education of learners with Down syndrome.

We are concerned that learners with Down syndrome are not receiving an effective education, are not being included in mainstream classes appropriate to their age and are not receiving the supports they need.

Approximately \$664.4 million was received by school districts for the 2021/22 school year for supplemental funding to support students with disabilities with the expectation that school districts are using the additional funding to provide the supports and services students with disabilities need.



The Ministry of Education has told us that accountability lies with the school districts and if parents or others wish to see how the money sent to the school district to promote inclusion and provide services for children with disabilities is spent, they can ask for an accounting, including budgeting and a report on outcomes from the school district.

Please provide an accounting for the supplemental funding you received, including answers to the following questions:

1. How much funding have you received to support inclusion and students with disabilities?
2. What decisions have you made to allocate money to foster inclusion and to support students with disabilities? Please include names and/or descriptions of specific programs, initiatives or practices and the approximate annual budget for each.
3. How do you track the money to ensure it is spent to support your decisions?
4. How do you measure the success of your decisions and how often do you review your allocation decisions?

We look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards,

Tamara Taggart
President, Down Syndrome BC

Mary Ann Cummings
Secretary, Down Syndrome BC

Danielle Gibbons
Director, Down Syndrome BC



DOWN SYNDROME BC

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August 18, 2022

School District No. 57, Prince George

Cindy Heitman
Superintendent of Schools
Via Email: cheitman@sd57.bc.ca

Darlene Patterson
Secretary Treasurer
Via Email: dpatterson@sd57.bc.ca

Sharel Warrington
Board of Trustees, Chair
Via Email: swarrington@sd57.bc.ca

Lisa Horswell
Director of Instruction, Inclusive Education
Via Email: lhorswell@sd57.bc.ca

Dear Ms. Heitman, Ms. Warrington, Ms. Patterson and Ms. Horswell:

May we please have a substantive response to our letter of July 4, 2022.
We look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards,

Tamara Taggart
President, Down Syndrome BC

Mary Ann Cummings
Secretary, Down Syndrome BC

Danielle Gibbons
Director, Down Syndrome BC

From: **Darleen Patterson** <DPatterson@sd57.bc.ca>
Date: Thu, Aug 18, 2022 at 10:42 PM
Subject: Re: Inquiry about use of Supplemental Funding
To: secretary@downsyndromebc.ca <secretary@downsyndromebc.ca>
Cc: Ellen Bryden <ebryden@sd57.bc.ca>

Good morning

Please see my responses below in blue.

Darleen

From: Secretary <secretary@downsyndromebc.ca>

Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 4:20 PM

To: Cindy Heitman <CHeitman@sd57.bc.ca>; Darleen Patterson <DPatterson@sd57.bc.ca>; Sharel Warrington <swarrington@sd57.bc.ca>; lhorsewell@sd57.bc.ca <lhorsewell@sd57.bc.ca>

Subject: Inquiry about use of Supplemental Funding



downsyndromebc.ca | hello@downsyndromebc.ca | @downsyndromebc

July 4, 2022

School District No. 57, Prince George

Cindy Heitman
Superintendent of Schools
Via Email:
cheitman@sd57.bc.ca

Darlene Patterson
Secretary Treasurer
Via Email:
dpatterson@sd57.bc.ca

Sharel Warrington
Board of Trustees, Chair
Via Email:
swarrington@sd57.bc.ca

Lisa Horswell
Director of Instruction, Inclusive Education
Via Email:
lhorswell@sd57.bc.ca

Dear Ms. Heitman, Ms. Warrington, Ms. Patterson and Ms. Horswell:

Down syndrome BC is a non-profit organization working to share information that supports the health and well-being of individuals with Down syndrome. We [wrote to the Ministry of Education](#), as well as all BC school boards, in October 2021 to share information and recommendations for the effective and inclusive education of learners with Down syndrome.

We are concerned that learners with Down syndrome are not receiving an effective education, are not being included in mainstream classes appropriate to their age and are not receiving the supports they need.

Approximately \$664.4 million was received by school districts for the 2021/22 school year for supplemental funding to support students with disabilities with the expectation that school districts are using the additional funding to provide the supports and services students with disabilities need.

The Ministry of Education has told us that accountability lies with the school districts and if parents or others wish to see how the money sent to the school district to promote inclusion and provide services for children with disabilities is spent, they can ask for an accounting, including budgeting and a report on outcomes from the school district. Many of these documents can be found on our public website. I have attached a list of documents available for your information.

Please provide an accounting for the supplemental funding you received, including answers to the following questions:

How much funding have you received to support inclusion and students with disabilities? Funding received by each school district can be found on the Ministry of Education and Childcare website:

[2022/23 Estimated Operating Grants - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)

you can select the specific school district you are looking for from the drop down list for each year

What decisions have you made to allocate money to foster inclusion and to support students with disabilities? Please include names and/or descriptions of specific programs, initiatives or practices and the approximate annual budget for each.

the information regarding the SD57 Inclusive Education Department programs is located on the SD57 public website:

[Programs & Services - School District No. 57 \(sd57.bc.ca\)](http://sd57.bc.ca/Programs%20and%20Services-School%20District%20No.%2057)

How do you track the money to ensure it is spent to support your decisions?

SD57 has an accountability framework in place that ensure that funding provided to schools from the department for inclusive education supports is utilized in the manner planned. The district uses a function/program general ledger coding model consistent with the model the Ministry has for financial statement reporting in order to ensure that all funds spent on inclusive education supports are tracked.

How do you measure the success of your decisions and how often do you review your allocation decisions?

The Inclusive Education department conducts mini audits to ensure that supports are being provided to achieve results, adjustments are made to allocation plans based on feedback received. School based allocation decisions are reviewed several times per year in order to ensure that supports are in place. System based support decision are reviewed at least annually to ensure that the support design is appropriate to meet the needs of students.



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November 15, 2022

School District No. 57, Prince George
Darlene Patterson
Secretary Treasurer
Via Email: dpatterson@sd57.bc.ca

Dear Ms. Patterson,

Thank you for your response dated August 18, 2022. We appreciate your efforts to assist us. However the information you provided is not responsive to our requests. We asked for particulars of the programs and personnel on which you have spent the special education or supplemental funding given to you specifically to foster inclusion for and support of students with disabilities.

We see from your Financial Statements Year Ended June 30, 2022 that \$12M of the special education funding was allocated for Education Assistants for special education.

We note, however, that an additional \$5M was allocated from the special education funding to pay salaries for teachers and \$299K to pay salaries for Principals and Vice Principals. It was our understanding that salaries for teachers, Principles and Vice-Principals are covered by other funding you received, namely, the base amount allocated for each student (including students with disabilities). If this is so, could you please explain the \$5M and \$299K amounts taken from the special education funding? Are additional teachers or Principals and Vice-Principals being hired to foster inclusion or provide special services to students with disabilities? If so please provide specific details of these people and services. If not, then please explain the reasoning behind this allocation of the special education funds to these salaries.

We make the same comments and ask the same questions with respect to support staff salaries and substitute salaries paid from the supplemental funds. We note the \$2M for “other Professionals salaries”; who exactly are these other professionals and how do they assist students with disabilities?

Many children with disabilities require SLP (speech language pathologist) support on a regular basis. Experts advise that children with Down syndrome require SLP support on a weekly basis. Can you tell us whether any of the money for SLP services comes from special education funding, and how much is spent on those services. Please also give us details of the SLP services provided at the elementary and high school levels, for example, how often are elementary school children who need SLP support receiving that support and how is this support provided, one on one, group classes or by some other method? We ask the same questions regarding SLP support for students at the high school level.

We have the same questions with respect to OT (occupational therapy) PT (physical therapy) expenditures from special education funding.

Your statement that supplemental funding has an accountability framework in place is encouraging but it does not tell us the mechanism by which you track the money you receive. Likewise your advice that mini audits are conducted by the Inclusive Education department and reviewed several times a year does not address what performance indicators you use to measure the success of your decisions.

If you are not able to answer these questions, please let us know, and we will take this back to the Ministry of Education.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Tamara Taggart
President, Down Syndrome BC

Mary Ann Cummings
Secretary, Down Syndrome BC

CC:
Rachael Weber, Board Chair

From: **Darleen Patterson** <DPatterson@sd57.bc.ca>

Date: Wed, Nov 16, 2022 at 8:00 PM

Subject: Re: Follow up questions regarding Supplemental Funding

To: Secretary <secretary@downsyndromebc.ca>

Cc: Cindy Heitman <CHeitman@sd57.bc.ca>, Rachael Weber <rweber@sd57.bc.ca>

Good Evening

Thank you for your follow-up questions.

With respect to the information you have included in your email, I would like to provide some context around your observations.

For the 2021/22 school year, the district received \$19,026,360 in Special Needs Funding. \$897,000 was Level 1, \$14,087,360 was level 2 and \$4,042,000 was level 3. The district was funded for and provided support to 1,067 students through the above noted supplement for unique student needs as well as provided supports to an additional 676 students with identified support needs through funding received in the per pupil allocation.

There is not a one to one correlation between the special needs funding received by the district and the related spending in support of special needs students.

For the 2021/22 school year, the district spent \$25,015,967.92. Of that \$24,654,681.44 was spent on salaries and benefits while \$361,276.48 was spent on services and supplies.

In addition to the \$12,169,104.22 in salaries that you noted were paid to Educational Assistants there were corresponding benefits cost of \$3,079,646.57 so that the total amount paid to Educational Assistants in support of students was \$15,248,750.79.

The \$5,088,829.47 in salaries paid to Teachers along with the corresponding benefits of \$1,159,910.04 totaling \$6,248,739.51 was paid to Special Education Resource Teachers and Learning Assistance Teachers who support both the unique student funded and block funded special needs students to succeed in their pursuit of academics, through development, implementation and monitoring of each students Individual Education Plan (IEP).

The \$2,009,506.66 in salaries paid to Other Professionals along with the corresponding benefits of \$2,459,322.48 totaling \$2,459,322.48 was paid to Psychologists,

Occupational Therapists, Speech Pathologists and the Director of Instruction for Inclusive Education who is tasked with oversight of the Inclusive Education Department and supports to students.

The \$299,089.51 in salaries paid to Principals and Vice Principals along with the corresponding benefits of \$61,112.23 totaling \$360,201.74 was paid to Principals and Vice Principals who supported students, worked with staff on IEP's, and worked in schools to build staff capacity in our district around specific supports for students, trauma informed practice and mental health literacy in schools.

The \$140,568.56 in salaries paid in Support Staff along with the corresponding benefits of \$33,094.10 totaling \$173,662.66 was paid to staff working in Inclusive Education Departments to provide clerical and administrative support to department staff in support of the students in the district.

The \$125,775.04 in salaries paid to Substitutes along with the corresponding benefits of \$38,239.22 totaling \$164,014.26 was paid to both Educational Assistants and Teachers Teaching On Call who provided coverage for those staff working with students who were absent from work.

The \$361,276.48 paid for services and supplies covered consulting fees paid, travel and professional development, dues and fees and supplies.

The total costs for Speech Language Pathologists of \$908,871.74 have been accounted for in the other professional staff costs reported above. The district employs 7.82 full time equivalent Speech Language Pathologists.

The total costs for Occupational Therapists of \$239,008.81 have been accounted for in the other professional staff costs reported above. The district employs 2 full time equivalent Occupational Therapists.

The district has a decentralized funding allocation model which has a number of checks and balances in place to ensure that funding is allocated to schools to support students with special needs. In the Spring the district budgeting process is very robust, however I will focus specifically on the pieces related to special needs. Prior to the districts school organization process a meeting is held with the leadership team of the inclusive education departments to evaluate what worked in terms of supports in the prior year and what the department would be changing in the coming year. A school organization meeting is held with each school in the district to ensure that staffing is in place to support the needs of learners including those with special needs. During this process

the Director discusses with the school Principal the specific needs of special needs students in the school. The Director allocates funding from the special needs budget to the schools based on the identified needs of the students. This is rolled up into the Districts Annual Budget. Again in the fall a school organization meeting is held with each school to ensure that those students actually attending the school in the fall have the supports in place that they need. In addition to the allocation of funds by the Director of Inclusive Education to each school at these meetings the Director of Finance ensures that the funding provided for special needs support to the school is actually planned to be used for those supports.

I have attached copies of the Districts Strategic Plan and Implementation Plan which outline specific goals around equity for access and the measures that the district will be using for monitoring the plan. Additionally, each student in the District who has been identified with special needs will have an individual education plan which contains goals specific to that students' diverse abilities and disabilities. The plan goals will be evaluated a number of times each year to evaluate performance against goals. The Inclusive Education department selects IEP's to review to ensure that the IEP contains sufficient information and is compliant with standards outlined by the Ministry of Education and Child Care. Additionally the Ministry also performs audits of the District which include the review of District documentation around special needs students.

I hope I answered your questions, but if I missed any let me know and I will try to provide additional information.

Have a nice evening.
Darleen

Darleen Patterson, CPA CA

Secretary Treasurer / CFO
School District No.57 (Prince George)
2100 Ferry Avenue
Prince George, BC V2L4R5
Phone: 250-561-6800 ext 247
Email: dpatterson@sd57.bc.ca

***Respecting the beautiful ancestral lands, culture and people of the Lheidli T'enneh Nation,
McLeod Lake Indian Band and Simpcw First Nation.***

School District No. 57

Strategic Plan 2021-2026

***“The Pathway to a Diverse Learning Community
with Purpose, Options and Choices for all”
Skeh Huhoont’i hodul’eh ti.***



We respectfully acknowledge School District 57, resides on the unceded ancestral lands of the Lheidli T'enneh First Nations, McLeod Lake Indian Band and the Simpcw First Nation.

It is our honour to walk alongside our indigenous communities in educating our students.

Dakelh Hodulh'eh-a: A Dakelh Lifelong Learning Model.

This poster and framework for education was developed in collaboration with our local Lheidli T'enneh and local Dakelh Elders. Dakelh people who travel by water/boat, and the environment which we are all a part of is represented by the all life giving power of TOO (water). Students are centered and supported by our community, families and elders. Values based year round learning occurs through language, with the land and protocols.

Our Vision:

All students are prepared for each step of their life's journey with the skills, knowledge, options, and choices to be successful.





Our Mission

Through innovation, high standards and culturally responsive care, we nurture and empower all students where they are to be proud, confident, and engaged lifelong learners.

Our Values

Transparency

We are open, honest and accountable for the decisions we make.

Community

We engage all members of our learning community through open and respectful relationships.

Integrity

We are ethical, fair and follow through on our commitments.



Respect

We demonstrate kindness and care for ourselves, others and the environment.

Inclusion

We ensure all students contribute and participate in all aspects of school life.

Equity

We create systems where every student has opportunities and supports to be successful.

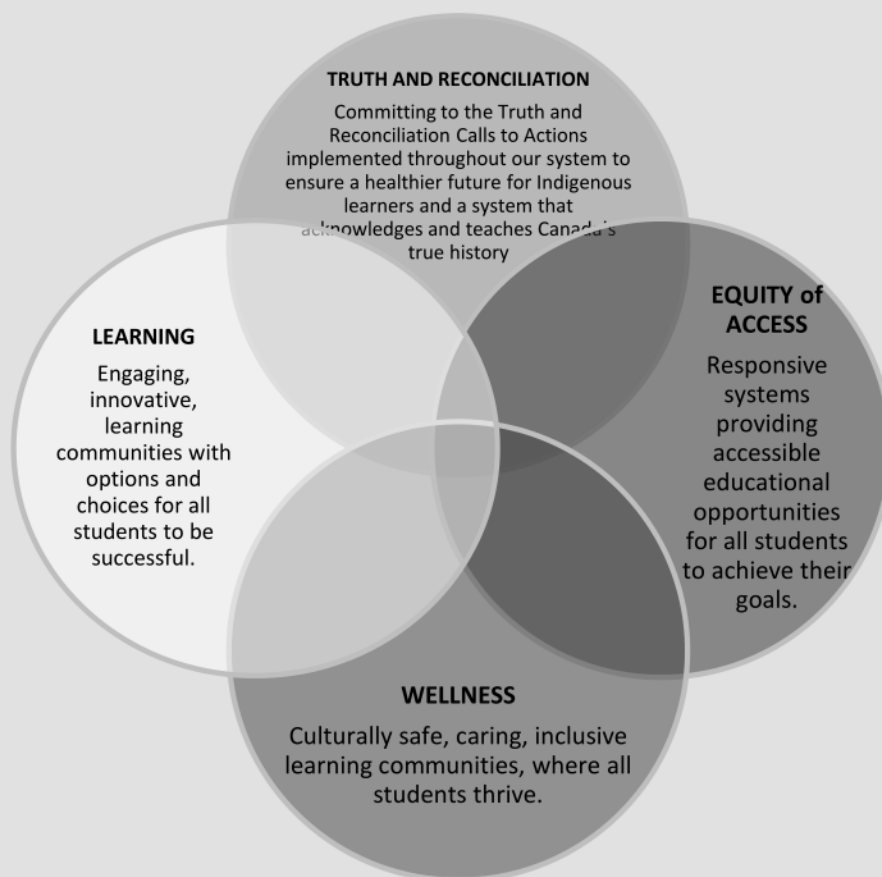
First Peoples Principles of Learning are integral in all we do.



- ✓ Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits and the ancestors.
- ✓ Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.
- ✓ Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships and a sense of place)
- ✓ Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities.
- ✓ Learning recognizes the role of indigenous knowledge.
- ✓ Learning is embedded in memory, history and story.
- ✓ Learning involves patience and time.
- ✓ Learning requires exploration of one's identity.
- ✓ Learning involves recognizing that some knowledge is sacred and only shared with permission and/or in certain situations.

Our District Directions

For the next five years, our priorities will be:



✓ **Truth and Reconciliation**

Committing to the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Actions implemented throughout our system to ensure a healthier future for Indigenous learners and a system that acknowledges and teaches Canada's true history.

✓ **Equity of Access**

Responsive systems providing accessible educational opportunities for all students to achieve their goals with specific focus for Indigenous learners, children and youth in care and students with diverse abilities/disabilities.

✓ **Wellness**

Culturally safe, caring, inclusive learning communities, where all students thrive with an emphasis on mental health, physical health and overall well-being for students, staff and families.

✓ **Learning**

Engaging, innovative, learning communities with options and choice for all students to be successful. The focus of increasing literacy, numeracy and graduation rates will be prioritized. Specific strategies will be implemented to support Indigenous learners, children and youth in care and students with diverse abilities/disabilities.

School District 57 Strategic Plan 2021-2026

Implementation Year 1 and 2

"The Pathway to a Diverse Learning Community with Purpose, Options and Choices for all"

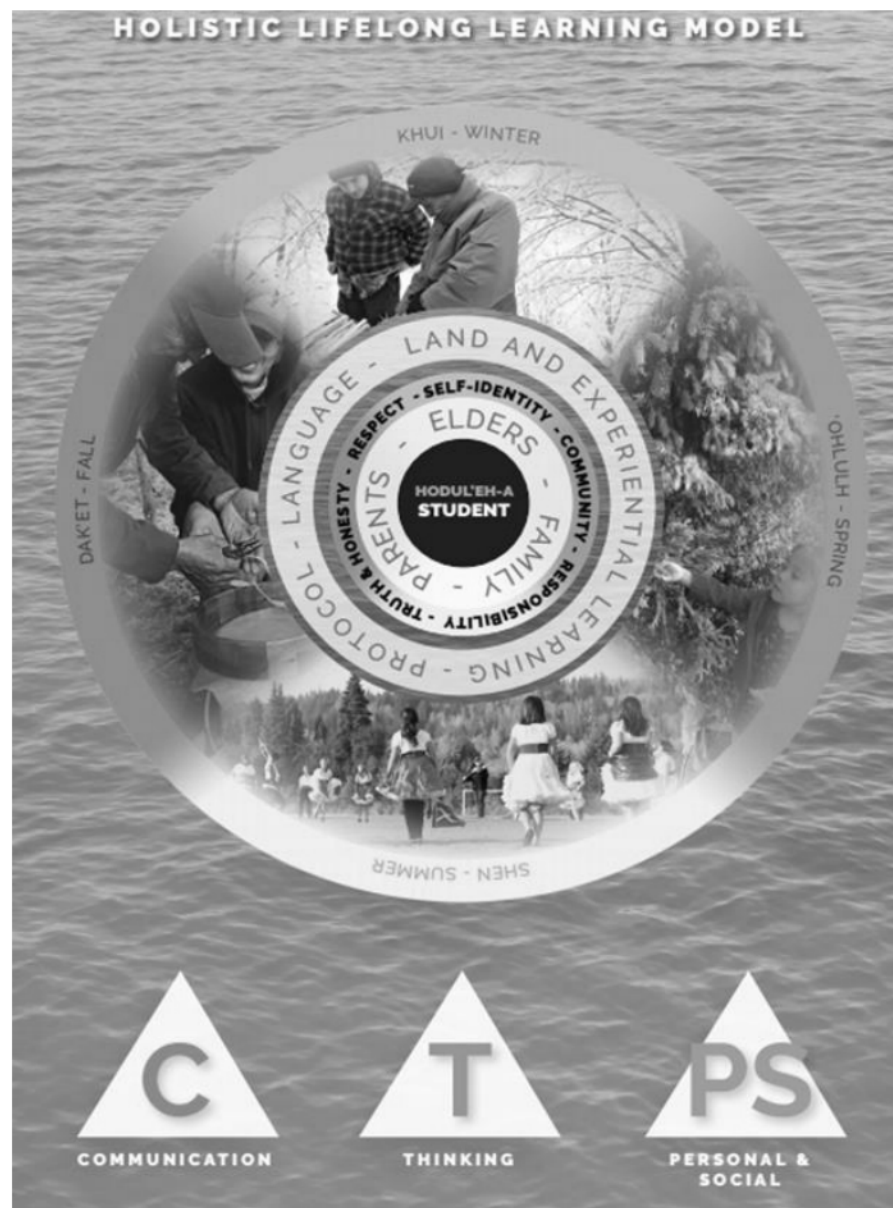
Skeh Huhoont'i hodul'eh ti.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2026

YEAR 1 AND 2 GOALS, STRATEGIES AND OBJECTIVES:

ACTIONS TOWARD OUR DISTRICT DIRECTIONS



This framework for education was developed in collaboration with our local Lheidli T'enneh and local Dakelh Elders, visually presented by Pam Spooner and created by Becky Dochstader.

School District 57 Strategic Plan 2021-2026

Implementation Year 1 and 2

"The Pathway to a Diverse Learning Community with Purpose, Options and Choices for all"

Skeh Huhoont'i hodul'eh ti.

We respectfully acknowledge School District 57, resides on the unceded ancestral lands of the Lheidli T'enneh First Nations, McLeod Lake Indian Band and the Simpcw First Nation. It is our honour to walk alongside the Indigenous communities in educating the students.

Our Vision:

All students are prepared for each step of their life's journey with the skills, knowledge, options, and choices to be successful.

Our Mission

Through innovation, high standards and culturally responsive care, we nurture and empower all students where they are to be proud, confident, and engaged lifelong learners.

Our Values

Community

We engage all members of our learning community through open and respectful relationships.

Integrity

We are ethical, fair and follow through on our commitments.

Inclusion

We ensure all students contribute and participate in all aspects of school life.

Transparency

We are open, honest and accountable for the decisions we make.

Respect

We demonstrate kindness and care for ourselves, others and the environment.

Equity

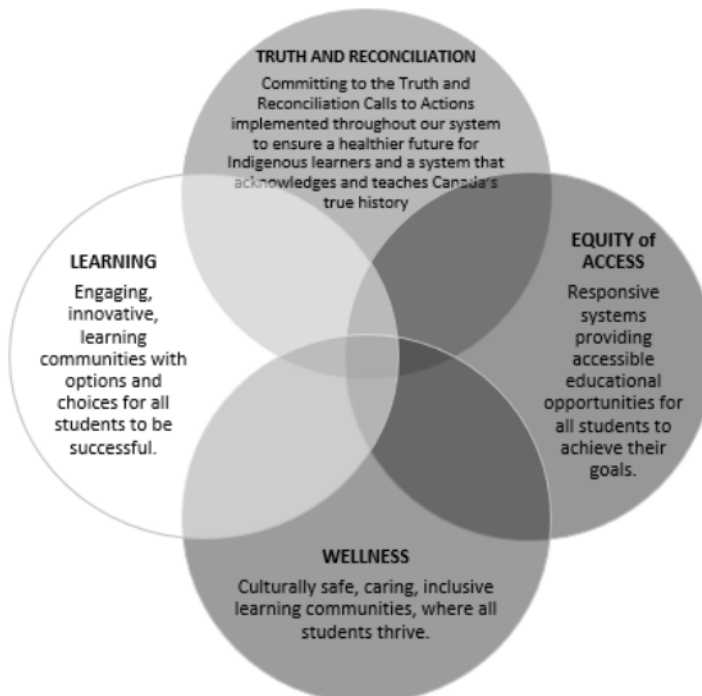
We create systems where every student has opportunities and supports to be successful.

First Peoples Principles of Learning are integral in all we do.

- Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits and the ancestors.
- Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.
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- Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities.
- Learning recognizes the role of indigenous knowledge.
- Learning is embedded in memory, history and story.
- Learning involves patience and time.
- Learning requires exploration of one's identity.
- Learning involves recognizing that some knowledge is sacred

Our District Directions

For the next five years, our priorities will be:



School District 57 Strategic Plan 2021-2026

Implementation Year 1 and 2

*“The Pathway to a Diverse Learning Community with Purpose, Options and Choices for all”
Skeh Huhoont’i hodul’eh ti.*

About our District

School District No.57 resides on the unceded ancestral lands of the Lheidli T’enneh First Nations, McLeod Lake Indian Band and the Simpcw First Nations. Geographically we expand from Mackenzie BC, through Prince George BC to McBride and Valemount BC. We serve 41 schools: 32 Elementary schools, 8 Secondary schools and 1 District Learning Support center for alternative and alternate learning opportunities. We provide educational programs for approximately 13000 students inclusive of early learning, after school art and sports programming, trades programs, and dual credit programs with our local post-secondary schools. We support Lheidli T’enneh students, McLeod Lake students and Takla students living on reserve through our Local Education Agreements. With each Nation we co-construct the educational services provided to the students while attending a school within our school district.

Strategic Planning Engagement Process

Our engagement process was designed to gather feedback from our community on a continuous basis to review what was important for the students to learn, what is valued in education and what our priorities should be based on the student outcomes. The engagement process provided us with input from over 500 people and we recorded specific ideas from our staff, students, parents, rightsholders, stakeholders and community at large. Our process included 4 online exchanges of ideas and thoughts, 2 parent focus group conversations, 3 community focus groups, fall and spring, 1 review and input session with the IELT (Indigenous Education Leadership Table) and 1 comprehensive working session with senior staff.

All engagement sessions were open to those who could attend and results were shared on the Website and at the Public Board meetings. This information was used to make changes to the Implementation plan for the upcoming school year.

District Directions

School District No. 57 has identified 4 district directions that set our priorities for the next 5 years. These directions will guide our work.

- ♦ **Truth and Reconciliation**

Committing to the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Actions implemented throughout our system to ensure a healthier future for Indigenous learners and a system that acknowledges and teaches Canada’s true history.

- ♦ **Equity of Access**

Responsive systems providing accessible educational opportunities for all students to achieve their goals with specific focus for the Indigenous learners, children and youth in care and the students with diverse abilities/disabilities.

- ♦ **Wellness**

Culturally safe, caring, inclusive learning communities, where all students thrive with an emphasis on mental health, physical health and overall well-being for students, staff and families.

- ♦ **Learning**

Engaging, innovative, learning communities with options and choice for all students to be successful. The focus of increasing literacy, numeracy and graduation rates will be prioritized. Specific strategies will be implemented to support the Indigenous learners, children and youth in care and the students with diverse abilities/disabilities

The goals and strategies in this implementation plan are a compliment to the School District 57 Work Plan to address the recommendations in the Special Advisors Report, June 24, 2021.

School District 57 Strategic Plan 2021-2026

Implementation Year 1 and 2

"The Pathway to a Diverse Learning Community with Purpose, Options and Choices for all"
Skeh Huhoont'i hodul'eh ti.

Truth and Reconciliation

Over the next 5 years we will work towards seeing the 94 Calls to Action outlined in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) Report realized in our school district. We acknowledge the land we are on and respect the local language and culture of the area.

We will work with the Indigenous communities to help guide us in this work prioritizing the Calls to Action for Education #6-12, and Education for Reconciliation #62 and #63. Implementation will include consideration of The United Nation Declaration of Indigenous People (UNDRIP) which safeguards the individual rights of Indigenous People.

Year 1 and 2 Goals

1. Create a systems approach to ensure staff and students know and understand the TRC Calls to Action as they are implemented in our system
2. Enhance trauma informed and resilience approaches in our schools

Strategies for Student Learning

- ♦ Increase Elders and Knowledge Holders in our schools to support and mentor staff in the education of Residential Schools, Indigenous culture and Indigenous languages
- ♦ Review curriculum to Indigenize with local content and decolonize to allow academics to be learned through a cultural and inclusive lens

Strategies for Adult Learning

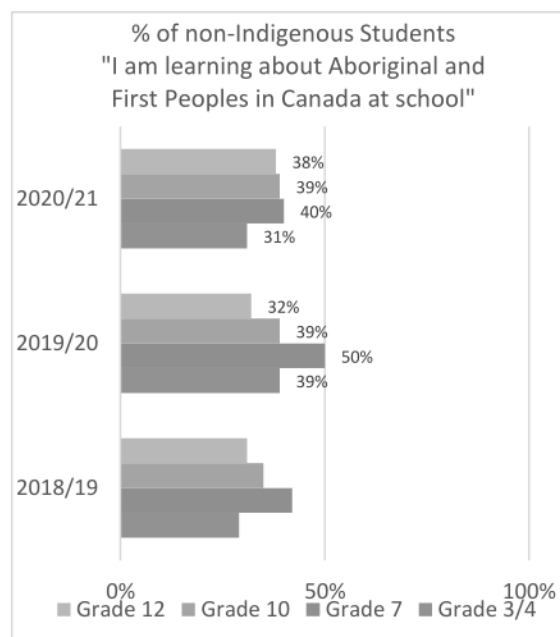
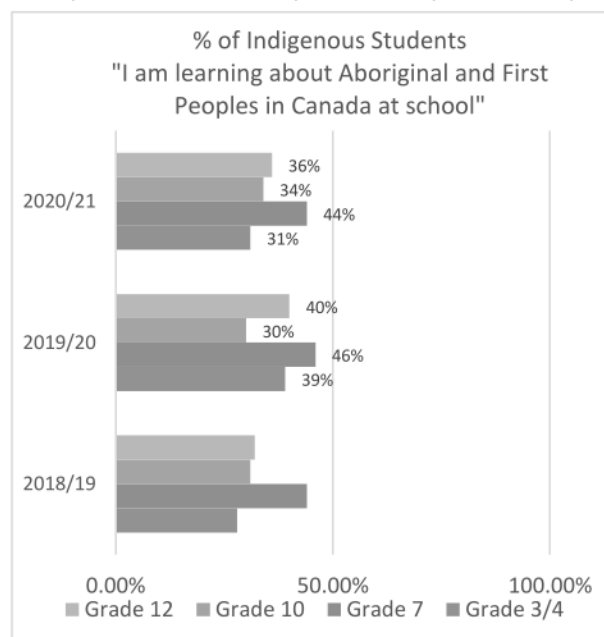
- ♦ Provide professional learning to staff about Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action and Trauma Informed approaches
- ♦ Wednesdays are targeted as Indigenous days of learning throughout the year- Deconstructing Otherness
- ♦ Ensure all staff know the local First Nation histories through required learning events/opportunities
- ♦ Professional growth plans for educators based on Standard 9 of the BC Teacher Regulation Standards

Strategies for System and Structure Change

- ♦ Continue to work with the IELT, First Nations, Meits and Inuit leaders, Elders and our K- 12 system leaders to discuss and inform education within our learning communities. – "nothing about us without us"
- ♦ Systematically on-board new staff to the district to ensure local indigenous context is reviewed
- ♦ Work with local First Nations to review TRC Calls to Action and DRIPA priorities in our district

Success Measures

We will look to our Student Learning Survey administered at grades 4, 7, 10 and 12 to measure the % of students identifying that they are learning about Indigenous content in schools. We expect to see an increase of 10% or higher of students reporting they are learning about Indigenous and First Peoples in Canada in each year of this implementation plan.



School District 57 Strategic Plan 2021-2026

Implementation Year 1 and 2

"The Pathway to a Diverse Learning Community with Purpose, Options and Choices for all"

Skeh Huhoont'i hodul'eh ti.

Equity for Access

School District No. 57 will be responsive in providing accessible educational opportunities for all students to achieve their goals. The needs of the Indigenous learners, children and youth in care, students with diverse abilities/disabilities and students learning in rural and remote communities will be prioritized.

We acknowledge that not all children learn the same way, and require diverse supports. It falls upon us to ensure all students have access to quality educational opportunities needed to be successful on their learning path.

Year 1 and 2 Goals

1. **Create a continuum of support throughout the district to ensure all students have access to personalized learning.**
2. **Enhance our learning environments to build diverse supports for students to feel connected, engaged and safe to take learning risks.**

Strategies for Student Learning

- ♦ In collaboration with local First Nations, review curriculum to Indigenize with local content and decolonize to allow academics to be learned through a cultural and inclusive lens
- ♦ Work with First Nations to identify External Credit opportunities in the district using the Ministry of Education and Childcare First Nations Language and Culture Programs
- ♦ Provide access to Office 365 for students to utilize learning through technology and supports

Strategies for Adult Learning

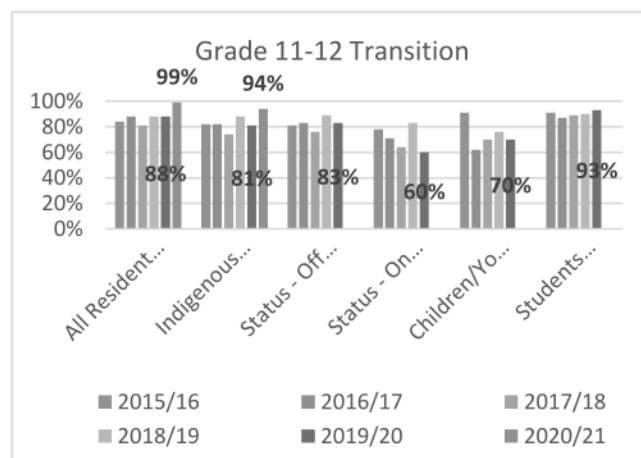
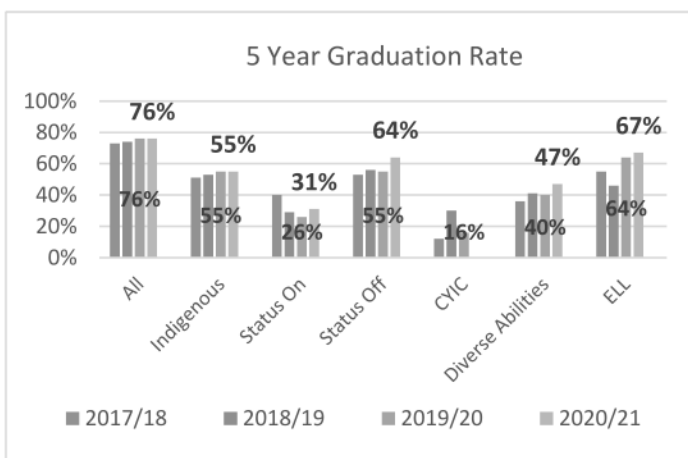
- ♦ Provide professional learning to staff about Continuums of Support at the school and district level
- ♦ Provide professional development and in-service for school based staff on supporting students with diverse abilities/disabilities
- ♦ Wednesdays are targeted as Indigenous days of learning throughout the year- Deconstructing Otherness.

Strategies for System and Structure Change

- ♦ Effectively communicate with students and families while developing personalized learning supports to remove barriers for their success, to ensure an understanding
- ♦ Clarify and communicate our process for addressing racism and discrimination within our system
- ♦ Implement new Anti-Racism, Anti-Discrimination and Cultural Safety Policy and Administrative Procedures
- ♦ Continue to identify systems and structures that are not equitable; adjust and/or create systems and structures of equity
- ♦ Continue to develop District Learners Supports to provide alternative learning opportunities for students to personalize their learning paths
- ♦ Expand our partnership with the YMCA- Alternate to Suspension program for students

Success Measures

We will closely monitor the success of our goals by reviewing our 5-year graduation rates and our grade to grade transitions. We will pay attention to the result of the students living in care, the students with diverse abilities/disabilities and the Indigenous learners. By the end of year 2, we expect to see a 10% increase in the students who graduate with a Dogwood Certificate after 5 years of starting grade 8 and we expect to see a 10% increase of students transitioning from Grade 11 to 12. We are monitoring students who graduate with a Regular Dogwood as opposed to an Adult Dogwood or Evergreen Certificate. The six-year rate is maintained at 63% for Indigenous Learners and 90% for Non Indigenous Learners.



School District 57 Strategic Plan 2021-2026

Implementation Year 1 and 2

"The Pathway to a Diverse Learning Community with Purpose, Options and Choices for all"

Skeh Huhoont'i hodul'eh ti.

Wellness

We believe that in order for student to learn, they need culturally safe, caring, inclusive learning communities. As our world moves out of a pandemic, now more than ever we need to emphasis the support for mental health, physical health and overall well-being of the students, staff and families.

Year 1 and 2 Goals

1. Create a systems approach to support equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging
2. Enhance Mental Health Literacy understanding and its implementation

Strategies for Student Learning

- ♦ Continue work towards schools that provide a sense of belonging for all students through various strategies.
 - Diversity audit of resources, Afterschool Art and Sport Programming, Spring and Summer camps, etc.
- ♦ Continue work with educational researchers and curriculum developers towards implementation of a new course on Identity at the grade 8 level
- ♦ Provide instruction for Mental Health Literacies to students and support student agency with proactive work in this area
- ♦ Every 2 years, administer the MDI (Middle Years Development Instrument), at grades 5 and 8 levels

Strategies for Adult Learning

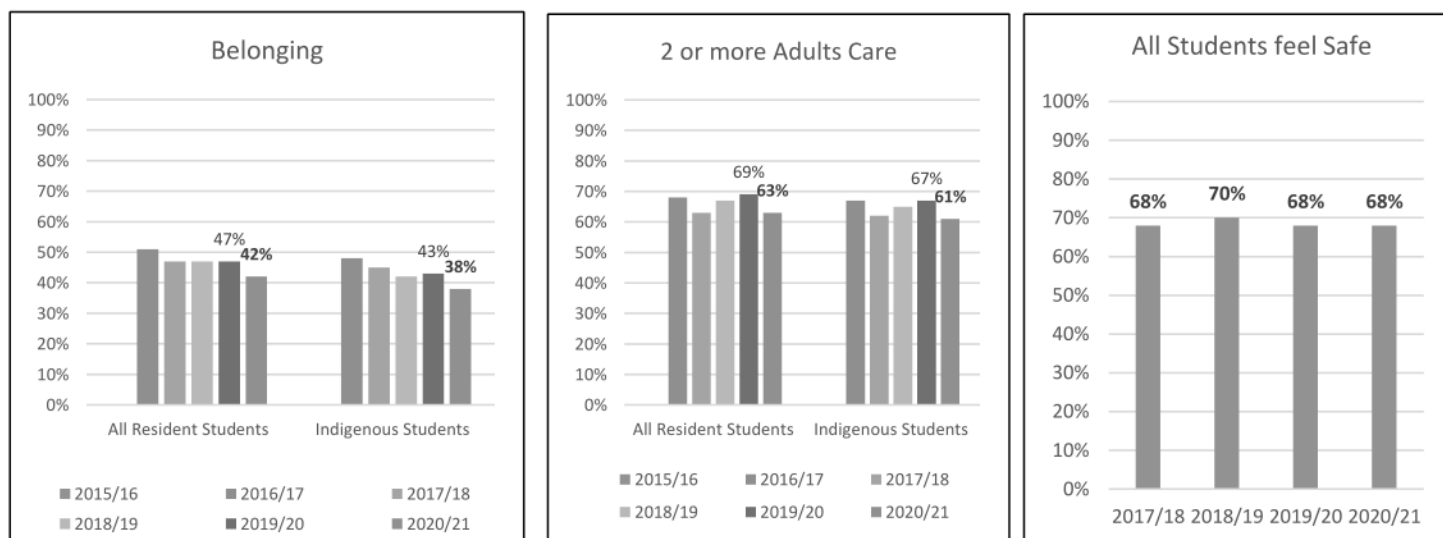
- ♦ Provide professional learning to staff about Compassionate Systems Leadership at the school and district levels
- ♦ Provide instruction for Mental Health Literacies to staff

Strategies for System and Structure Change

- ♦ Develop an EDIB (equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging) team in each school to address racism and support anti-racism initiatives
- ♦ Focus on transitions into our schools, from grade to grade, between elementary and secondary school and from secondary to post-secondary
 - Work with early learning and early care providers on seamless transitions into the k-12 system
 - Work with Post-Secondary institutions on seamless transitions out of our system
- ♦ Continue to partner with Northern Health and begin to partner with First Nations Health Authority to develop stronger supports for students struggling with mental health and/or addictions

Success Measures

Our Student Learning Surveys for our Grades 4,7,10 and 12 students help us identify a sense of belonging for the students. When students are connected and feel like they belong, they are successful. For this implementation cycle ending in 2023, we expect to see a 10% increase in students feeling like they belong for each year. We will also be looking for in increase in students knowing that at least 2 adults care about them and they have systems for support. Our overall measure of success will be students feeling safe at school. We expect a 10% increase in all students feeling safe at the end of this implementation plan in 2023.



School District 57 Strategic Plan 2021-2026

Implementation Year 1 and 2

"The Pathway to a Diverse Learning Community with Purpose, Options and Choices for all"

Skeh Huhoont'i hodul'eh ti.

Learning

We will work to achieve engaging, innovative, learning communities with options and choice for all students to be successful. The focus of increasing literacy, numeracy and graduation rates will be prioritized. Specific strategies will be implemented to support the Indigenous learners, our children and youth in care and the students with diverse abilities/disabilities

Year 1 and 2 Goals

1. Increase literacy, numeracy and graduation rates for all students and close the gap for Indigenous learners, children and youth in care and students with diverse abilities/disabilities.
2. Create a system where all students develop a graduation success plan before transitioning to secondary school to help guide them towards their goals.
3. Enhance the district's academic learning opportunities connected to people, place and land (Land based, Experiential, Passion based, Connected to Identity)

Strategies for Student Learning

- Focus on data dialogue to move from data as information to data that informs actions.
- Support continued work on looking for evidence of learning in multiple ways
- English First Peoples 10 is a required 2 credit course for grade 10 students, more options will be available as we implement the new grad requirement
- Increase the utilization of the [MyBluePrint Education Planner](#) to support students developing their graduation pathway before entering secondary.
- Review resources for both literacy and numeracy in all schools to ensure current and culturally responsive resources are being used to Indigenize with local content and decolonize to allow academics to be learned through a cultural and inclusive lens.

Strategies for Adult Learning

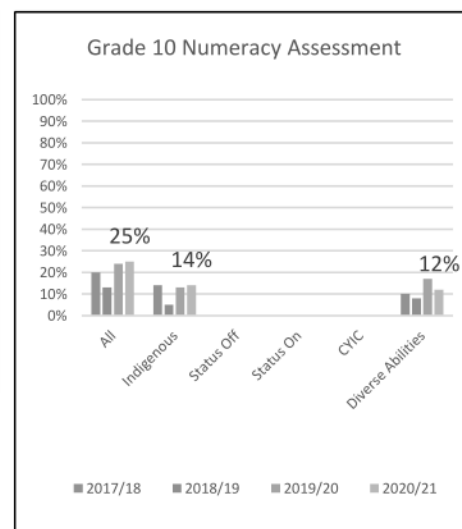
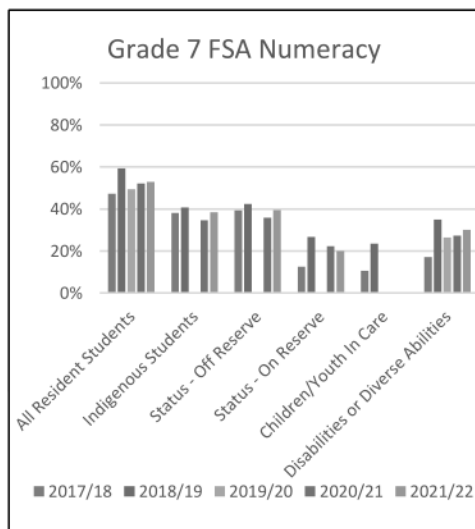
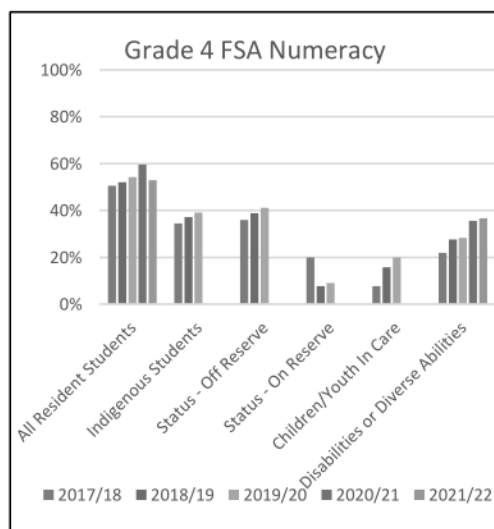
- Provide professional learning to staff for Numeracy and Literacy Instruction for K- 12. All teachers are teachers of Literacy and Numeracy, and training of support for Education Assistants and Indigenous Education Workers
- Continue to support equity in our schools with professional development and supports for teachers to provide intervention in both literacy and numeracy
- Provide training and learning opportunities for the New Graduation requirements for staff

Strategies for System and Structure Change

- Administer a district numeracy assessment at each grade level in elementary school to monitor students' progress
- Continue to support District Numeracy Advisory Committee to inform district directions in the area of Numeracy
- Continue Rural Schools Network Project to build on educators' Literacy capacity and understanding within, across, and beyond the curriculum.

Success Measures

We will look to our Foundation Skills Assessment and Graduation Assessments to monitor our progress towards our goals. Our numeracy results continue to be of concern. We will provide more focus on numeracy instruction at the K- 12 levels and a new assessment will be administered annually at all grades to monitor our progress in a timelier manner. With enhanced focus on instruction, and ongoing assessment we expect to see a 10% increase on our Grade 4 and 7 FSA and our Grade 10 Numeracy Assessment of student meeting or exceeding expectations.



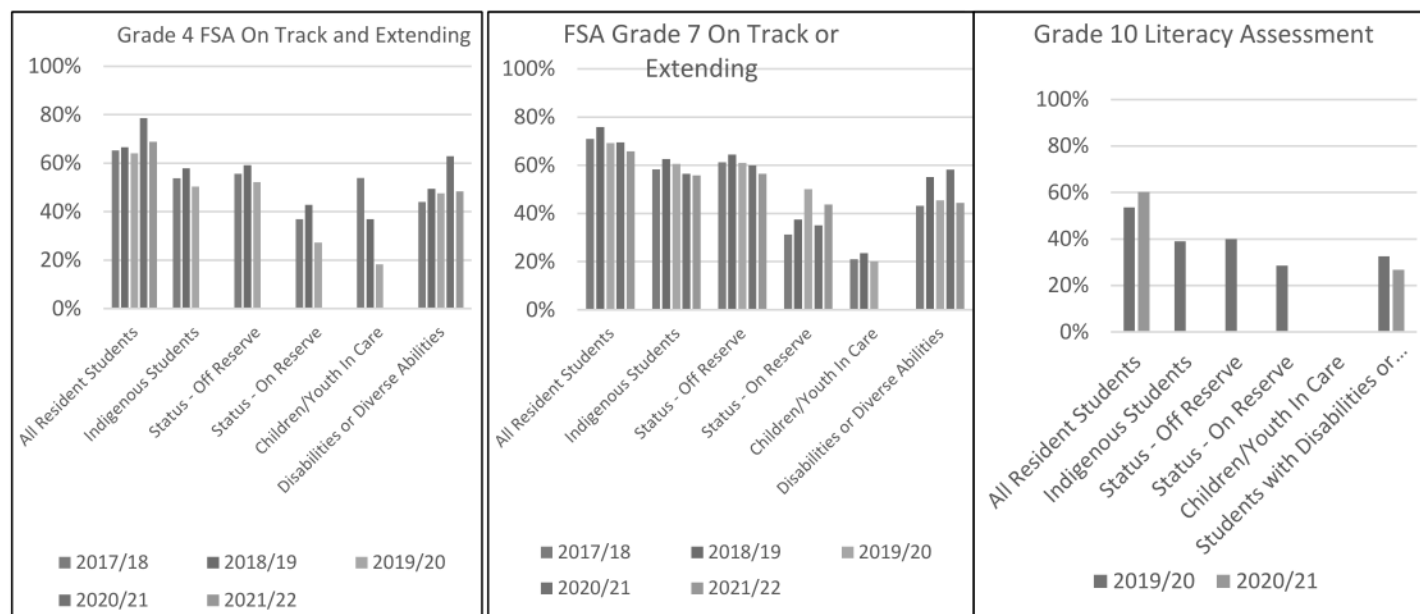
School District 57 Strategic Plan 2021-2026

Implementation Year 1 and 2

"The Pathway to a Diverse Learning Community with Purpose, Options and Choices for all"
Skeh Huhoont'i hodul'eh ti.

Success Measures- Learning Cont.

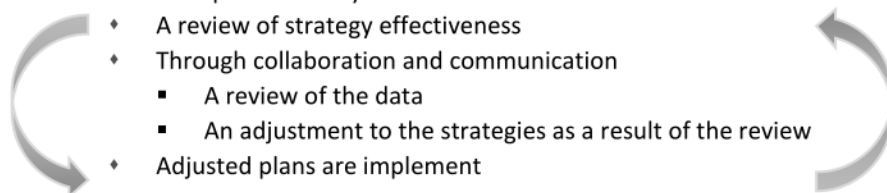
Our district has been on a literacy journey for several years. We have implemented many different instructional strategies to provide intervention. Over the duration of this implementation plan, we will continue to build teacher capacity in reading intervention to support our struggling readers at all grade levels; we want all students to be literate. We will look to classroom based reading assessments collected at the district level to help inform interventions. With our continued focus on literacy by 2023 we expect a 10% increase in the number of students who are meeting or exceeding reading expectations.



Summary

We will review our strategic plan and our implementation plan on an annual basis. This review will include a comprehensive engagement process with our community. Upon completion of our review we will make adjustments to our strategies to support our goals toward the District Directions.

The continuous improvement cycle will ensure:



In addition, our work in the 2022-2023 year will include:

- Schools and learning departments plans in alignment with our strategic plan will be posted and outcomes progress reported out to the public by September 30th of each year.

For additional data and information please visit:

School District 57 Framework for Enhancing Student Learning Annual Report
 School District 57 Annual Budget
 School District 57 Special Advisors Recommendations Work-plan
 School District 57 Local Education Agreements
 School District 57 Department Operational Plans and Outcomes Reports



DOWN SYNDROME BC

downsyndromebc.ca | hello@downsyndromebc.ca | [@downsyndromebc](https://www.instagram.com/downsyndromebc)

Communication with SD 68



DOWN SYNDROME BC

downsyndromebc.ca | hello@downsyndromebc.ca | [@downsyndromebc](https://www.instagram.com/downsyndromebc)

July 4, 2022

School District No. 68, Nanaimo-Ladysmith

Scott Saywell

Superintendent of Schools

Via Email: Superintendent@sd68.bc.ca

Mark Walsh

Secretary Treasurer

Via Email: SecretaryTreasurer@sd68.bc.ca

Charlene McKay

Board of Trustees, Board Chair

Via Email: charlene.mckay@sd68.bc.ca

Kerri Steel

Director of Instruction, Inclusive Education

(Elementary), Via Email:

DirectorofInstructionElementary@sd.68.bc.ca

Dear Mr. Saywell, Ms. McKay, Mr. Walsh and Ms. Steel:

Down syndrome BC is a non-profit organization working to share information that supports the health and well-being of individuals with Down syndrome. We wrote to the Ministry of Education, as well as all BC school boards, in October 2021 to share information and recommendations for the effective and inclusive education of learners with Down syndrome.

We are concerned that learners with Down syndrome are not receiving an effective education, are not being included in mainstream classes appropriate to their age and are not receiving the supports they need.

Approximately \$664.4 million was received by school districts for the 2021/22 school year for supplemental funding to support students with disabilities with the expectation that school districts are using the additional funding to provide the supports and services students with disabilities need.

The Ministry of Education has told us that accountability lies with the school districts and if parents or others wish to see how the money sent to the school district to promote inclusion and provide services for children with disabilities is spent, they can ask for an accounting, including budgeting and a report on outcomes from the school district.

Please provide an accounting for the supplemental funding you received, including answers to the following questions:

1. How much funding have you received to support inclusion and students with disabilities?
2. What decisions have you made to allocate money to foster inclusion and to support students with disabilities? Please include names and/or descriptions of specific programs, initiatives or practices and the approximate annual budget for each.
3. How do you track the money to ensure it is spent to support your decisions?
4. How do you measure the success of your decisions and how often do you review your allocation decisions?

We look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards,

Tamara Taggart
President, Down Syndrome BC

Mary Ann Cummings
Secretary, Down Syndrome BC

Danielle Gibbons
Director, Down Syndrome BC



DOWN SYNDROME BC

downsyndromebc.ca | hello@downsyndromebc.ca | [@downsyndromebc](https://www.instagram.com/downsyndromebc)

August 18, 2022

School District No. 68, Nanaimo-Ladysmith

Scott Saywell

Superintendent of Schools

Via Email: Superintendent@sd68.bc.ca

Mark Walsh

Secretary Treasurer

Via Email: SecretaryTreasurer@sd68.bc.ca

Charlene McKay

Board of Trustees, Board Chair

Via Email: charlene.mckay@sd68.bc.ca

Kerri Steel

Director of Instruction, Inclusive Education

(Elementary), Via Email:

DirectorofInstructionElementary@sd.68.bc.ca

Dear Mr. Saywell, Ms. McKay, Mr. Walsh and Ms. Steel:

May we please have a substantive response to our letter of July 4, 2022.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards,

Tamara Taggart

President, Down Syndrome BC

Mary Ann Cummings

Secretary, Down Syndrome BC

Danielle Gibbons

Director, Down Syndrome BC

September 2, 2022

Down Syndrome BC

Via Email: secretary@downsyndromebc.ca

Dear Ms. Taggart and Ms. Cummings,

Thank you for the letter of July 4, 2022, and the follow-up of August 18, 2022. We appreciate your patience in receiving a substantive response. I note that your letter was presented at the Board of Education meeting of August 31, 2022, and the Board directed staff to respond. This response will be shared with our Board.

In your correspondence you asked the following questions:

1. How much funding have you received to support inclusion and students with disabilities? Please note the attached document that schools provide to parents and other interested parties with respect to how support for inclusion and student diverse abilities are supported. It states the following with respect to the sources of funding:

Funds used to support students with additional needs come from a number of sources. The Ministry of Education provides per-student funding for the school district. This is supplemented by the Special Needs Grant, which is generated through the designation of students in special needs categories, as well as portions of special purpose Community Link dollars, the Ministry's recent equity of opportunity grant as well as locally sourced revenue (e.g. International Student Revenue).

With respect to the specific allocations it is important to note as stated in the attached document:

School administrators work hard to balance the needs of individual students with the needs of the school overall, and assistance may be provided for students with and without a formal minis-try designation. The amount of support an individual student receives is based on their individual needs. Designation in a particular category does not result in a specific number of support hours being assigned to that student.

I am attaching financial information with respect to our inclusive education budgets and supports. We note that these are estimates given how much of the per student grant that directly supports inclusion.

NLPS - Operating Grant per Ministry of Education and Child Care

| | Funded FTE | RATES | Funding |
|---|---------------------|--------|---------------------|
| | 22/23 Annual Budget | | 22/23 Annual Budget |
| September Enrolment | | | |
| Standard (Regular) Schools | 14,393.615 | 7,885 | 113,493,654 |
| Alternate Schools | 295.000 | 7,885 | 2,326,075 |
| Distributed Learning | 355.225 | 6,360 | 2,259,231 |
| Adult Education (Non-Graduates) | 2.500 | 5,030 | 12,575 |
| Total September Enrolment | 15,046.340 | | 118,091,535 |
| Unique Student Supplements | | | |
| Home Schooling | 83.00 | 250 | 20,750 |
| Course Challenges | 4.00 | 246 | 984 |
| Level 1 Special Needs | 16.000 | 44,850 | 717,600 |
| Level 2 Special Needs | 510.000 | 21,280 | 10,852,800 |
| Level 3 Special Needs | 225.000 | 10,750 | 2,418,750 |
| English Language Learning | 885.000 | 1,585 | 1,402,725 |
| Indigenous Education | 2,400.000 | 1,565 | 3,756,000 |
| Total Unique Student Supplements | - | | 19,169,609 |
| Other Funding Categories | | | |
| Equity of Opportunity Supplement | | | 853,479 |
| Salary Differential Supplement | | | 3,278,380 |
| Unique Geographic Factor Supplement | | | 3,493,625 |
| Education Plan Supplement | | | 132,911 |
| February Data Count (New SPED/DL/ELL) | 154.000 | | 1,006,675 |
| May Data Count (New DL Only) | 93.000 | | 522,560 |
| Total Other Funding Supplements | 247.000 | | 9,287,630 |
| Total September Enrolment | 15,046.340 | | 118,091,535 |
| Total Unique Student Supplements | | | 19,169,609 |
| Total Other Funding Categories | 247.000 | | 9,287,630 |
| Grand Total - FTE and Revenue | 15,293.340 | | 146,548,774 |

Summary of Revenues and Expenses for Students with Unique Needs

Revenue - Direct Funding for Students with Unique Needs

| | | |
|--|-----------|-------------------|
| Level 1 Special Needs | 16.000 | 10,852,800 |
| Level 2 Special Needs | 510.000 | 2,418,750 |
| Level 3 Special Needs | 225.000 | 1,402,725 |
| English Language Learning | 885.000 | 3,756,000 |
| Basic Student Funding for above (\$7,885ea) | 1,636.000 | 12,899,860 |
| Equity of Opportunity Supplement | | 853,479 |
| Total Revenue - Direct Funding for Students with Unique Needs | | 32,183,614 |
| Total Headcount of Students with Unique Needs | | 1,636.000 |
| Total Revenue per Student with Unique Needs | | 19,672 |

Expense - Direct Supports for Students with Unique Needs

| | | | |
|----------------------------|---------|------------|--|
| District EA's | 312.760 | 17,130,454 | |
| Special Education Teachers | 98.000 | 11,092,522 | |
| Speech Pathologists | 10.100 | 1,143,211 | |
| Specialist Teachers | 1.800 | 203,741 | |
| Psychologists | 6.000 | 679,135 | |
| Counselling Supports | 21.400 | 363,337 | 15% of Total Counselling Budget (2.422M) |
| Library Teacher Support | 21.700 | 368,430 | 15% of Total Counselling Budget (2.456M) |
| Coordinators | 23.200 | 393,898 | 15% of Total Coordinator Budget (2.654) |

Expense - Indirect or Prorated Support for Students with Unique Needs

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------|------------|--|
| Clerical | 72.000 | 629,747.10 | 15% of Total Clerical Budget (4.198M) |
| District Learning Services Team | 3.200 | 550,000 | 2 Full time Senior Exec/.2 of 5 Senior Exec/.2 Excluded EA |
| Special Education Operating Budget | | 325,000 | |
| School Operating Budgets | | 431,441 | 15% of Total School Operating Budgets (2.876M) |

Total Expense - Direct, Indirect or Prorated Supports

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Total Expense - Direct, Indirect or Prorated Supports | 33,310,915 |
| Total Headcount of Students with Unique Needs | 1,636.000 |
| Total Expense per Student with Unique Needs | 20,361 |

2. What decisions have you made to allocate money to foster inclusion and to support students with disabilities? Please include names and/or descriptions of specific programs, initiatives or practices and the approximate annual budget for each.

The financial breakdown includes funding for various positions and supports is attached under the response to question number one. In addition, a variety of the supports available is outlined in the attached document.

3. How do you track the money to ensure it is spent to support your decisions?

The District is audited on a yearly basis to ensure compliance with Ministry requirements. Further, the Board receives a quarterly report that outlines the amount of spending to budget in a number of areas (e.g. Education Assistants etc.). Internally, we monitor our department budgets on an ongoing basis to ensure that we are spending as much of our current year's allocation as is possible.

I do note, however, that the vast majority of our expenses are associated with staffing. This means that assuming we are able to fill a position then the budget will be fully expended. Notably, the District has ended up in surpluses in our Education Assistant replacement budget on a regular basis due to the difficulty in having a full contingent of casual Education Assistants and a very large contingent of continuing positions. With respect to reallocation of resources, question four is intended to provide further information on this question.

4. How do you measure the success of your decisions and how often do you review your allocation decisions?

At the district level, we monitor grad rates and use data from reports such as the How are We Doing? (HAWD) report from the ministry to get a sense of how we are doing as a system overall. This data is reflected upon as we plan budgets in terms of resource and staffing allocations and is combined with observational data and feedback from staff, families, students and the community agencies we work with to allow for adjustments and the implementation of new initiatives over time. Allocations are reviewed on an ongoing basis, as changes are often required during the school year, as needs arise or change.

At the school level, school teams utilize report card data and IEP progress data to see how interventions and supports are working for individual students. Our Inclusion Outreach team works closely with school-based staff and uses data gathered with regards to these individual learners to guide capacity building and support opportunities, to ensure they are as timely and targeted as possible. Schools utilize a Response-to-Intervention model, which is cyclical in nature. Student progress data, and other support needs are reviewed 3-4 times during the school year, with adjustments being made as appropriate.

We are hopeful that this information is responsive to your request and if you have a specific follow up, please do not hesitate to get back to me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Walsh". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mark Walsh
Secretary-Treasurer

Direct: 250-741-5211
Mark.Walsh@sd68.bc.ca

Attached: NLPS – Inclusive Education Services Document

What are Inclusive Education Services?

Inclusive Education Services are the supports provided to students who require academic or social-emotional learning support, or who have medical or mobility difficulties. There are two aspects to this service.

Inclusive Support: Students may receive support for either academic or social-emotional challenges. It takes place both in and outside the classroom, sometimes in small groups, or sometimes individually. This support is provided by a variety of individuals at your child's school.

Assessment: In addition to classroom-based assessments, the school team may complete standardized testing, to get a clearer picture of a student's learning or behavioural needs.

A great deal can be learned about a student through thoughtful observation and classroom assessment. Successful supports and interventions for students are implemented without the need for a more formal assessment to occur.

Where a deeper understanding of a student's needs is required to fully understand your child's needs, they are referred to the school based-team, and a more formal achievement or cognitive assessment may be recommended. This would be completed by either the student support teacher or a district psychologist.

School teams regularly collaborate with outside supports, such as medical doctors or counsellors. Your child's classroom teacher can help facilitate consent agreements to allow this information sharing to occur.

Funding for Services

Funds used to support students with additional needs come from a number of sources. The Ministry of Education provides per-student funding for the school district. This is supplemented by the Special Needs Grant, which is generated through the designation of students in special needs categories, as well as portions of special purpose Community Link dollars, the Ministry's recent equity of opportunity grant as well as locally sourced revenue (e.g. International Student Revenue).

These monies allow the district to support a variety of supports and services for students, including: Specialist Teachers, Counsellors, Education Assistants, Speech and Language Services, School Psychologists, Inclusion Support Coordinators, as well as assessments and other educational resources.

The school district works with school teams to identify students with unique and additional needs. The support and intervention a student receives is determined by the school team, in collaboration with their family.

School administrators work hard to balance the needs of individual students with the needs of the school overall, and assistance may be provided for students with and without a formal ministry designation. The amount of support an individual student receives is based on their individual needs. Designation in a particular category does not result in a specific number of support hours being assigned to that student.

We are always working to balance support with fostering independence, to ensure that all of our students are safe, happy and learning.



WHAT ARE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION SERVICES?



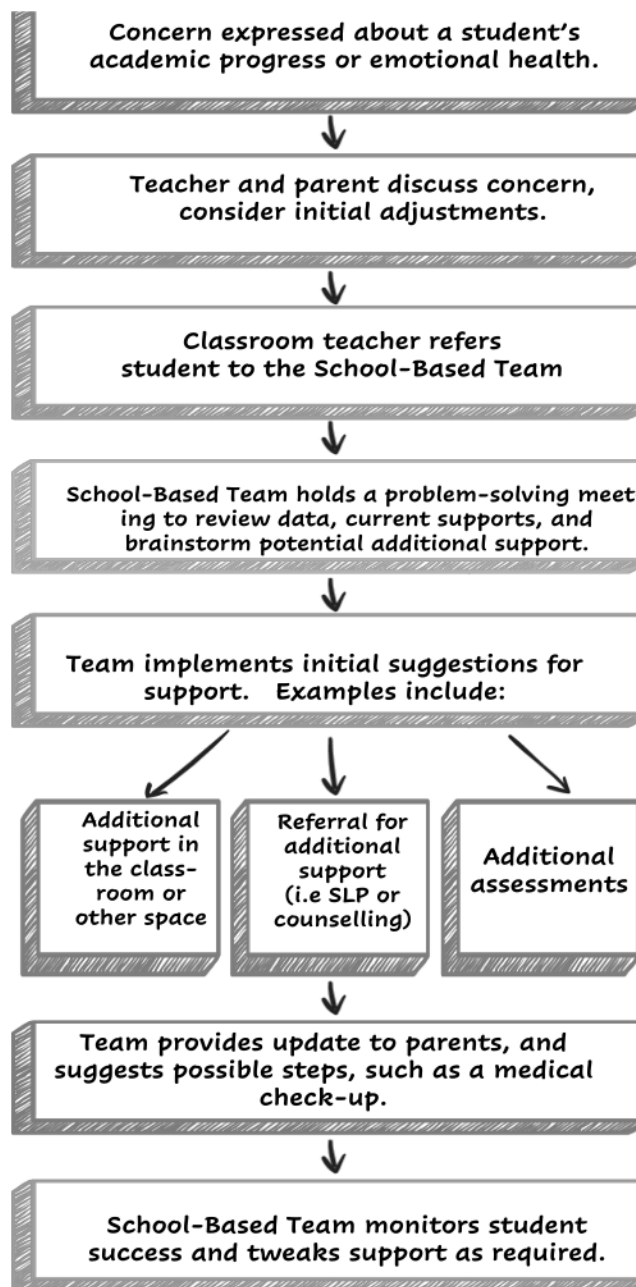
Inclusive Education Supports

The Inclusive Education Team is the group of specialists who collaborate with classroom teachers and families to establish and monitor the interventions, goals and strategies being put in place to help your child be safe and successful at school. For some learners, this also involves the creation of an Individualized Education Plan or Learning Plan.

- **An Inclusion Support Teacher** works with your child's classroom teacher to provide support to your child and co-ordinate your child's support plan.
- **Education Assistants** are assigned to learning environments and provide additional support to a variety of students.
- **Additional support** from a Speech Language Pathologist, English Language Learning Teacher, School Psychologist, or Child, Youth & Family Support Worker, may also be recommended.
- **District support** is also available for students with hearing and visual impairments.

Referrals for these services are made through your child's classroom teacher to the School-Based Team. **Your child's teacher is the best place to begin when you have a question or concern.**

The **School Based Team** is the school committee that works to determine the supports and interventions for individual students. **If you have a concern, begin with a conversation with your child's teacher.**



Counselling Support:

School counsellors facilitate social-emotional and behavioural support for learners at school (i.e. self-regulation, friendships, anxiety in the school setting).

Where a student is experiencing difficulties across a variety of settings, or is presenting with a need requiring more intensive, individualized support, the school's counsellor will work with the student and family, to refer the student to an outside service provider.

Support with Supervision and Personal Care:

Additional support may be provided for students who require support to be safe when playing outside, or for those with personal care needs.

Please ask your child's teacher if you have questions or concerns.

Learning Environments at School:

Your child's **key learning space** is his or her classroom.

Other learning spaces are provided when an alternative environment is needed for small group or individual support with specific, targeted skills. We are always working to provide students with the best learning environment to meet their individual needs.





downsyndromebc.ca | hello@downsyndromebc.ca | [@downsyndromebc](https://www.instagram.com/downsyndromebc)

December 16, 2022

To SD68 / Nanaimo Ladysmith

Mark Walsh
Secretary-Treasurer
Via email: Mark.Walsh@sd68.bc.ca

Dear Mark Walsh,

Thank you for your response dated September 2, 2022. We appreciate your efforts to assist us. We do have some follow up questions.

In your answer to question #2, you have not explained how your allocation of funds fosters inclusion. Does your hiring of EAs and Special Education teachers mean that students with disabilities are included in your mainstream classroom environments and actively involved in the lesson most of the time which would be inclusive, or are they working one on one with students in a separate space at the back of the main classroom, or in a separate classroom, neither of which achieves inclusion. Can you comment on this please?

With respect to question #3, we understand that most of your expenses are associated with hiring staff, but you have not addressed how that staff fulfills the goal of inclusion. Can you clarify that for us? What metrics do you use to assess if your decision to spend special education funding on these staff is meeting your goals? What does it mean to you to achieve inclusion? In addition we would appreciate knowing what "compliance with Ministry requirements" means specifically.

We note that the district has 10 speech language pathologists (SLPs). Many children with disabilities require SLP support on a regular basis. Experts advise that children with Down syndrome require SLP support on a weekly basis. Can you give us details of the SLP services provided at the elementary level, for example, how often are elementary school children who need SLP support receiving that support and how is this support provided, one on one, group classes or by some other method? We ask the same questions regarding SLP support for students at the high school level.

We have the same questions with respect to OT (occupational therapy) and PT (physical therapy) expenditures from the supplemental funding, although we do not see them specified on page 2 of your letter. Does this mean that these supports are not provided or are they under some other heading?

Sincerely,

Tamara Taggart
President, Down Syndrome BC

Mary Ann Cummings
Secretary, Down Syndrome BC

CC:

Chair of the Board of Education, Greg Kellar

From: **Mark Walsh** <Mark.Walsh@sd68.bc.ca>
Date: Mon, Jan 16, 2023 at 9:14 AM
Subject: RE: Follow Up Questions - Supplemental Funding

Good morning,

I will attempt to respond to your follow-ups sequentially. Please note that I have copied Kerri Steel, our Director of Instruction Inclusive Education as she assisted me in compiling the responses.

With respect to your first question, our Inclusion Policy states as follows:

“Inclusion in Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools is based on the principles of respect, acceptance, safety, and equity. It is the recognition and honouring of diversity, and valuing the contributions of all members of our school communities. The Board of Education of School District No. 68 recognizes that visible and invisible diversities exist and therefore is committed to creating an inclusive environment for all who learn and work in Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools. The Board affirms that a learning environment that reflects diversity, inclusivity, and equity is essential in supporting the highest levels of individual growth and achievement.”

As such the monies allocated toward additional services are used to provide a variety of services for children, on the basis of their individual needs. For some children, this means they spend the majority of their time in the classroom actively participating alongside peers. Other students have personalized schedules which provide for their needs in a variety of settings. These supports are provided by a classroom and specialist teachers, education assistants, and other itinerant specialists.

Where we described “compliance with Ministry requirements,” we were referring to the specific Special Needs Designation categories through the Ministry of Education. Students who meet specific criteria for one of these categories will be designated and receive an Inclusive Education Plan under that category. If a student requires ongoing support and does not specifically meet this criteria, they are provided with a Student Learning Plan as an alternative. This allows the team at the school to create and monitor individualized goals in a similar way to the IEP.

For individual students, metrics are developed for each of these individual goals. This is sometimes observational data based on specific criteria established for the goals, other times it is a specific academic target, or a functional goal which is evaluated through a more standardized measure, such as the Assessment of Functional Living Skills (AFLS). At the District level, the How Are We Doing report published by the Ministry of Education allows us to monitor success rates in a variety of curricular areas, grade-to-grade transitions and completion

rates. The information is provided for each ministry category, as well as for students with Ministry designations overall.

Speech-Language Pathologist are an integral part of the support we provide for learners. Like other services, this service provided on a needs-basis. Learners with more complex needs are provided more intensive intervention than learners whose needs are less complex. For some, this might be weekly, ongoing individualized or small group support, for others it might be consultation with the classroom teacher or education assistant who work with the child. Our services are provided primarily at the elementary level because research has shown that intervention is most impactful during a child's primary school years. Learners who utilize augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices continue to receive support through their intermediate and secondary years.

The district contracts support for OT and PT services through our Child Development Centre. The services are provided for students with complex mobility and/or feeding needs. There is also consultative support available to assist classroom teachers with specialized equipment and the implementation of universal supports in the classroom environment. All of the services provided are designed to facilitate inclusion in school settings. We are not able to provide ongoing therapeutic support at this time.

Thank you again for your email and for your advocacy.

Regards,
Mark

Mark Walsh
Secretary-Treasurer
Direct: 250-741-5211



DOWN SYNDROME BC

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Communication with SD 73



DOWN SYNDROME BC

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July 4, 2022

School District No. 73, Kamloops-Thompson

Rhonda Nixon

Superintendent of Schools

Via Email: rnixon@exc.sd73.bc.ca

Trina Cassidy

Secretary Treasurer

Via Email: tcassidy@sd73.bc.ca

Heather Grieve

Board of Trustees, Chair

Via Email: hgrieve@sd73.bc.ca

Deanna Brady

District Principal - Inclusive Education

Via Email: dbrady@sd73.bc.ca

Dear Ms. Nixon, Ms. Grieve, Ms. Cassidy and Ms. Brady:,

Down syndrome BC is a non-profit organization working to share information that supports the health and well-being of individuals with Down syndrome. We wrote to the Ministry of Education, as well as all BC school boards, in October 2021 to share information and recommendations for the effective and inclusive education of learners with Down syndrome.

We are concerned that learners with Down syndrome are not receiving an effective education, are not being included in mainstream classes appropriate to their age and are not receiving the supports they need.

Approximately \$664.4 million was received by school districts for the 2021/22 school year for supplemental funding to support students with disabilities with the expectation that school districts are using the additional funding to provide the supports and services students with disabilities need.



The Ministry of Education has told us that accountability lies with the school districts and if parents or others wish to see how the money sent to the school district to promote inclusion and provide services for children with disabilities is spent, they can ask for an accounting, including budgeting and a report on outcomes from the school district.

Please provide an accounting for the supplemental funding you received, including answers to the following questions:

1. How much funding have you received to support inclusion and students with disabilities?
2. What decisions have you made to allocate money to foster inclusion and to support students with disabilities? Please include names and/or descriptions of specific programs, initiatives or practices and the approximate annual budget for each.
3. How do you track the money to ensure it is spent to support your decisions?
4. How do you measure the success of your decisions and how often do you review your allocation decisions?

We look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards,

Tamara Taggart
President, Down Syndrome BC

Mary Ann Cummings
Secretary, Down Syndrome BC

Danielle Gibbons
Director, Down Syndrome BC



DOWN SYNDROME BC

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August 18, 2022

School District No. 73, Kamloops-Thompson

Rhonda Nixon

Superintendent of Schools

Via Email: rnixon@exc.sd73.bc.ca

Trina Cassidy

Secretary Treasurer

Via Email: tcassidy@sd73.bc.ca

Heather Grieve

Board of Trustees, Chair

Via Email: hgrieve@sd73.bc.ca

Deanna Brady

District Principal - Inclusive Education

Via Email: dbrady@sd73.bc.ca

Dear Ms. Nixon, Ms. Grieve, Ms. Cassidy and Ms. Brady:,

May we please have a substantive response to our letter of July 4, 2022.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards,

Tamara Taggart

President, Down Syndrome BC

Mary Ann Cummings

Secretary, Down Syndrome BC

Danielle Gibbons

Director, Down Syndrome BC



DOWN SYNDROME BC

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On October 14, 2022 we received an email response to our letter of July 4, 2022. The email noted that distribution is strictly prohibited, we must assume this applies to the email and the attachments until we receive permission to share. Despite repeated requests, that permission has not yet been received.



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December 16, 2022

To SD73 / Kamloops-Thompson

Vessy Mochikas
Assistant Superintendent-Inclusive Education
Via email: vmochikas@sd73.bc.ca

Dear Vessey Mochikas,

Thank you for your response dated October 14, 2022. We appreciate your efforts to assist us. We do have some follow up questions.

We see from the financial information you sent us for the year ended June 30, 2022 that a share of salaries and benefits for classroom teachers, Principals, Vice-Principals and school clerical staff was paid for from supplemental funding. It was our understanding that salaries for teachers, Principals, Vice Principals and school clerical staff are covered by other funding that you receive, namely the base amount allocated for each student, including students with disabilities. Could you please provide the breakdown between the allocated salaries of classroom teachers and direct salaries of Learning Assistant Teachers and District Resource teachers? Are additional teachers, Principals and Vice Principals and clerical staff being hired to foster inclusion or provide special services to students with disabilities. If so, please provide specific details of these people and services and the specific outcomes that the services generate. If they are hired specifically to foster inclusion, then what metrics show that it is working as intended? For example, are disabled students spending more time included in mainstream classes, are they in school more often, are they graduating at higher rates?



If they are not hired specifically to foster inclusion, then please explain the reasoning behind this allocation of supplemental funds to these salaries.

Many children with disabilities require speech language pathologist (SLP) support on a regular basis. Experts advise that children with Down syndrome require SLP support on a weekly basis. We do not see salaries for SLPs in your materials. Can you give us details of the SLP services provided at the elementary level, for example, how often are elementary school children who need SLP support receiving that support and how is this support provided, one on one, group classes or by some other method? We ask the same questions regarding SLP support for students at the high school level.

We have the same questions with respect to OT (occupational therapy) and PT (physical therapy), again we do not see them referenced in your letter. Does this mean that these supports are not provided or are they under some other heading?

Sincerely,

Tamara Taggart
President, Down Syndrome BC

Mary Ann Cummings
Secretary, Down Syndrome BC

CC:

Chair of Board of Education, Heather Grieve



DOWN SYNDROME BC

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No response received to our letter of December 16, 2022 despite follow up.

From: Constable, Jane ECC:EX (Jane.Constable@gov.bc.ca)
To: Anderson, Dulcy ECC:EX (Dulcy.Anderson@gov.bc.ca)
Cc: Kennedy, Karla 1 ECC:EX (Karla.1.Kennedy@gov.bc.ca)
Subject: RE: last letter from Down's Syndrome BC group
Sent: 05/24/2023 22:22:25
Attachments: 289266 - FW: BC School Districts must be accountable for use of Supplemental Funding.msg, 230330 Communication with SDs 35 39 53 57 68 73 .pdf
Message Body:

Do you mean the last incoming email that ECC received from Down Syndrome BC?

You can always use cliff as a resource, when in a meeting and needing to refer to the original incoming. (in a hurry ?😊?)

Using the cliff number provided in the MinCal entry.

I have attached it here as well.

Hope this helps.

Jane Constable

Administrative Coordinator

The Hon. Rachna Singh

Minister of Education and Child Care.

Email: jane.constable@gov.bc.ca

Room 346 | Parliament Buildings | Victoria, BC

Acknowledging that the land on which we live, work and play is within the traditional territories of the
Lək'wə??ən, Malahat, Pacheedaht, Scia'new, T'Sou-ke and WSÁNEĆ peoples.

From: Anderson, Dulcy ECC:EX <Dulcy.Anderson@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Wednesday, May 24, 2023 3:14 PM
To: Constable, Jane ECC:EX <Jane.Constable@gov.bc.ca>
Cc: Kennedy, Karla 1 ECC:EX <Karla.1.Kennedy@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: last letter from Down's Syndrome BC group

Can you please help us get a copy of the March 24 2023 letter?^{s.13}

Thanks so much.

Best,

Dulcy

Dulcy Anderson *she/her*

Ministerial Advisor to

The Honourable Rachna Singh

Minister of Education and Childcare

Cell: 250-818-3304

Room 346 | Parliament Buildings | Victoria, BC

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Ləkʷəʔən, Malahat, Pacheedaht, Scia'new, T'Sou-ke and WSÁNEĆ peoples.

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Withheld pursuant to/removed as

DUPLICATE

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CHILD CARE
MEETING NOTE**

CLIFF: 289266
MEETING DATE: May 24, 2023
PREVIOUS MTG DATE(S): March 31, 2022

PREPARED FOR: Honourable Rachna Singh, Minister of Education and Child Care

SUBJECT: Meeting with Down Syndrome BC

PURPOSE: Background information to support Minister meeting with representatives from Down Syndrome BC on May 24, 2023, to discuss funding, supports and services for students with Down syndrome.

BACKGROUND:

- Down syndrome is a genetic disorder caused when abnormal cell division results in an extra full or partial copy of chromosome 21.
- Students with Down syndrome are typically designated for supplemental funding in either Physical Disability /Chronic Health (category D, funding level 2: \$23,280/student) or Moderate to Profound Intellectual Disability (category C, funding level 2: \$23,280/student); however, there is no specific category for Down syndrome.
 - The category that students are claimed in for supplemental funding is based on the student's learning needs and their educational planning.
- Down Syndrome BC is a nonprofit organization, incorporated as a society in March 2021.
 - Down Syndrome BC advocates to "see the members of the B.C. Down syndrome community living their best and fullest lives" and its membership is comprised of parents, guardians, self-advocates, and caregivers of people with Down syndrome.
- The former Minister of Education and Child Care, Honourable Jennifer Whiteside, met with Down Syndrome BC on March 31, 2022, and Ministry staff sent a follow up letter to Dyslexia BC in May 2022 to provide additional information regarding governance and accountability within BC's K-12 education system, as well as the appeals process for students and parents related to health and safety issues (Attachment 1).
- Down Syndrome BC is part of the Inclusive Education Partners Group, a network of provincial organizations that meets with Ministry staff monthly to discuss issues and opportunities regarding inclusive education in BC.

KEY ISSUES:

- Tamara Taggart, President of Down Syndrome BC, is a former news anchor, previous Liberal Party of Canada candidate, and a strong parent advocate of a child with Down syndrome in the Vancouver School Board (VSB).
- Down Syndrome BC continues to express concerns that many children with Down syndrome are not being included in the classroom, and that school districts are not effectively using Ministry funding to provide supports and services for students with Down syndrome and other disabilities and diverse abilities.
 - Following their meeting with the Minister in March 2022, Down Syndrome BC had requested detailed information from the Ministry on how school districts allocate

funding for services and supports for students with disabilities and diverse abilities. Ministry staff advised that the organization would need to approach school districts directly for that level of detailed information.

- In response, Down syndrome BC contacted six BC school districts and obtained detailed information regarding their respective funding allocations and service delivery and shared these communications with the Ministry (Attachment 2).
- Key areas of concern for Down syndrome BC include:
 - Non-inclusive educational practices involving students with Down syndrome in BC K–12 schools (e.g. segregated programs).
 - The provision of supports and services for students with Down syndrome, such as speech language therapy, physical therapy, and occupational therapy.
 - How school districts allocate special needs supplemental funding, including budgeting, accounting, reporting processes, and staffing decisions to support students with disabilities and diverse abilities.

KEY MESSAGES:

- The Ministry is committed to ensuring all students have equitable access to quality education and learning opportunities.
 - All students have the right to receive the supports needed to access and benefit from public education.
 - Every child, regardless of their disability, is different and so are their learning needs. School districts assess and determine appropriate programs and services to meet the needs of individual students and their communities.
 - Best practices in inclusive education involve student-centred approaches that respond to a student's educational needs, and not just a medical diagnosis.
- The Ministry continuously collaborates with education partners and stakeholders to identify and address gaps in services and supports for students with disabilities and diverse abilities, and to further build system capacity for inclusive education.
- Locally elected boards of education have the authority to determine the delivery of education programs in their schools, including decisions related to resource allocation, budgeting, human resources and specific student services.
- School and district staff know their student populations and how best to support them.

(See Attachment 3 for additional key messages by topics/questions that Down Syndrome BC may raise during the meeting).

Attachment(s)

1. Ministry Letter to Down Syndrome BC – May 2022
2. Down Syndrome BC communications with SDs 35, 39, 53, 57, 68, 73
3. Additional Key Messages by Topic/Question

Program ADM/Branch: Melanie Stewart, Learning and Education Programs Division

Program Contact (for content): Jennifer Halbert, Inclusive Education

Drafter: Kendall Butchart, Inclusive Education

Date: May 16, 2023

Attachment 1: Ministry Letter to Down Syndrome BC – May 2022

<see PDF>

Attachment 2: Down Syndrome BC communications with SDs 35, 39, 53, 57, 68, 73

<see PDF>

Attachment 3: Additional Key Messages by Topic/Question

s.13

Page 174 of 263 to/à Page 175 of 263

Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.13

From: Anderson, Dulcy ECC:EX (Dulcy.Anderson@gov.bc.ca)
To: Stewart, Melanie ECC:EX (Melanie.J.Stewart@gov.bc.ca)
Subject: FW: Accountability of School Districts for use of Supplemental Funding
Sent: 06/13/2023 19:38:39
Attachments: 30331+Letter+to+M+of+Ed.docx.pdf
Message Body:

FYI.

D

From: Singh, Balkaran ECC:EX <Balkaran.Singh@gov.bc.ca>
Sent: Monday, June 12, 2023 5:10 PM
To: Sather, Kelly ECC:EX <Kelly.Sather@gov.bc.ca>; Anderson, Dulcy ECC:EX <Dulcy.Anderson@gov.bc.ca>; Bernard, Tabitha ECC:EX <Tabitha.Bernard@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: FW: Accountability of School Districts for use of Supplemental Funding

FYI and seeking advice: Letter from Tamara Taggart, Down Syndrome BC president and former News Anchor, about some unanswered questions from their mtg w/ the Minister of Ed last year, with a few people cc'd.

Solidarity,

Balkaran Singh

Executive Staff to

Hon. Rachna Singh, Minister of Education and Child Care

Parliament Buildings, Victoria, BC | V8W 9V1

604-831-8921

Grateful for the privilege to be living on the shared, unceded traditional territory of the Katzie, Semiahmoo, Kwantlen and other Coast Salish Peoples. I pledge to reflect this privilege in deed and word.

From: Tamara Taggart <president@downsyndromebc.ca>
Sent: Monday, June 12, 2023 3:03 PM
To: EDU.Minister@gov.bc.ca
Cc: ECC DM ECC:EX <DM.Education@gov.bc.ca>; Halbert, Jennifer ECC:EX <Jennifer.Halbert@gov.bc.ca>; Minister, ECC ECC:EX <ECC.Minister@gov.bc.ca>; Falcon.MLA, Kevin LASS:EX <Kevin.Falcon.MLA@leg.bc.ca>; Sturko.MLA, Elenore LASS:EX

<Elenore.Sturko.MLA@leg.bc.ca>; Sonia.Fursnentaue.MLA@leg.bc.ca; Rebecca Rubenstein
<vice.president@downsyndromebc.ca>

Subject: Accountability of School Districts for use of Supplemental Funding

[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.

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June 13, 2023

The Honourable Rachna Singh,
Minister of Education,
Via email: Edu.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Dear Minister Singh,

Thank you for meeting with us on May 24, 2023 and thank you for agreeing to meet with us again once you and your staff have had a chance to read our letter of March 31, 2023 which is attached.

We look forward to our next meeting.

Sincerely,

Tamara Taggart

President, Down Syndrome BC

Mary Ann Cummings

Secretary, Down Syndrome BC

CC.

Melanie Stewart

Assistant Deputy Minister of Education

Via email: DM.Education@gov.bc.ca

Jennifer Halbert

Director, Inclusive Education

Via email: Jennifer.Halbert@gov.bc.ca

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March 31, 2023

The Honourable Rachna Singh,
Minister of Education,
Via email: Edu.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Dear Minister Singh,

We are a non-profit charitable organization working to share information that supports the health and well being of individuals with Down syndrome. We are a collective of over 250 parents, guardians, self advocates and caregivers throughout BC and we all love someone with Down syndrome.

Virtual community meetings with members of our Society have highlighted the fact that many children with Down syndrome are not being included and are not receiving adequate, or in some cases, any crucial supports such as speech language therapy (SLP), physical therapy (PT), occupational therapy (OT) in the school system despite the many millions of dollars which are allocated for these purposes (\$664.4M in 2021/22).

BCEdAccess Society collects information on the exclusion of children with disabilities from schools in BC. The report for [2021-2022](#) is very disturbing and supports the information our members have brought forward.

On March 31, 2022 we had a virtual meeting with the then Minister of Education, Jennifer Whiteside, Deputy Minister of Education, Christina Zacharuk and the Executive Director, Equity, Wellness and Inclusion, Patricia Kovacs. On [April 14 2022](#) we wrote to confirm our understanding of what was said at that meeting. The information in [Ms. Kovac's response of May 30, 2022](#) was markedly different in many ways from what we were told at the meeting. This was very disappointing.

There was no revision to one piece of advice received at the March 31, 2022 meeting: that parents or other concerned citizens could obtain an accounting, including budgeting and a report on outcomes from school districts and we confirmed this in [our letter of June 30, 2022.](#)

We wrote to six school districts to obtain an accounting for the supplemental funding they receive in connection with students with disabilities. Our letters to and responses from SD53-Okanagan Similkameen, SD57-Prince George, SD39-Vancouver, SD35-Langley, SD73-Kamloops Thompson and SD68-Nanaimo Ladysmith are attached. All school districts were able to tell us how much they received to support inclusion and provide supports for children with disabilities, high level budget allocations to staff categories and provide statements about their good intentions, but very little else.

We then wrote a detailed follow up letter to all six school districts, as we wanted to give them every opportunity to provide answers. We received a range of responses, as you can see some districts made more effort than others, but none were able to provide answers to our core questions. SD 73, Kamloops, has not yet responded to the follow up questions nor have they given us permission to share information they provided in their initial response.

Whether the school districts did not understand the questions we were asking or simply cannot answer those questions is unclear. What is clear is that it is unrealistic for individual parents or other concerned citizens to expect to receive an accounting from school districts.

The fact that children are not receiving an inclusive education nor are they receiving the necessary supports (SLP, OT, PT) coupled with the failure or inability of school districts to provide answers raises questions as to whether this money is being properly allocated and spent for its intended purpose.

Given all of the above, we believe that it is the Ministry of Education's responsibility to answer these questions and provide an accounting in respect of the supplemental funds received by school districts, including:

1. how decisions to spend that funding are made,
2. what do schools actually do,
3. the mechanisms by which funding is tracked,
4. what performance indicators schools and school districts are using to measure the success of their decisions,
5. a report on outcomes.

Additional questions arise out of the responses of the school districts. How does the allocation of supplemental funding to pay salaries of teachers, Principals, Vice Principals, substitutes, clerical and other staff foster inclusion and provide support? It was our understanding that these salaries were covered by the base rate provided in respect of all students, including students with disabilities. Is this correct?



Are additional teachers, Principals, Vice Principals and other staff being hired to foster inclusion or provide support? Or are teachers, Principals or Vice Principals and other staff being paid higher salaries if they have disabled students in their class or school? Or are monies being taken from supplemental funding to simply help cover salaries?

We understand how the allocation of funds to Education Assistants may support inclusion, although if children are being sent to special purpose rooms with EAs that would not support inclusion.

Why can't school districts tell us the details of SLP, OT, PT services they are supposed to be providing?

Please note that the question posed in our June 30, 2022 letter remains unanswered, *Are the results of your audits and compliance procedures available to the public?*

We want meaningful answers to these questions and would like to have a virtual meeting to discuss these matters with you as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Tamara Taggart
President, Down Syndrome BC

Mary Ann Cummings
Secretary, Down Syndrome BC

CC:

Christina Zacharuk
Deputy Minister of Education
Via email: DM.Education@gov.bc.ca

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