

Vancouver District Parent Advisory Council (DPAC) wishes to acknowledge the ancestral, traditional & unceded Indigenous territories of the Coast Salish Peoples, in particular, the Squamish, Musqueam, & Tsleil-Waututh First Nations on whose territory we work, live & play.



Budget Town Hall

with David Green, VSB Secretary Treasurer
and members of VSB district staff

Thursday, October 29th, 7-9PM

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A Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Agenda

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1. DPAC Welcome
2. Introduction
3. COVID
4. VSB Capital related
5. Resource and teachers on call
6. Budget process
7. Income and expenditures
8. Odds & Ends
9. Upcoming Events & Important Dates



DPAC Welcome

- Welcome
 - Acknowledgement
 - Meeting Format and Protocol
-

Land Acknowledgment

- The meeting is being held on the traditional unceded territory of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations. We are grateful to be able to work on their lands.



Meeting Format and Protocols

- The meeting is being live-streamed and the audio and visual recording will also be available to the public for viewing.
- 20 to 30 questions
- We have grouped and summarized questions.
- Attendees will be muted
- We will keep the chat open to hear concerns and feedback. We will not be able to answer questions via the chat. We have reopened our questions form to continue gather questions for the future (???)
- Be respectful.



David Green

VSB Secretary-Treasurer

Shehzad Somji

VSB Assistant Secretary-Treasurer

COVID Questions

COVID Questions

- Where has the provincial and federal funding gone?

The District's allocation of the \$45.6 million Provincial Safe Return to School Grant is \$3,556,154 and is to be used in the following categories:

- a. Staff and staff time for cleaning - \$1.9 million
- b. Hand hygiene - \$0.8 million
- c. Cleaning supplies - \$0.4 million
- d. Face masks and shields - \$0.2 million
- e. Remote learning - \$0.2 million

The Federal Safe Return to Class Grant provided \$121.2 million to the Province for Phase One of which the District received \$9,177,259. The grant is to support the District's K-12 Restart Plan and should be spent in the following categories:

- Learning resources and supports
- Health and safety
- Transportation
- Before and after school childcare

An update will be provided to the Finance Committee at the November 25, 2020 meeting.



COVID Questions

- Have federal, provincial and already budgeted VSB monies covered all COVID adaptations (sanitizer, washroom upgrades, windows/ventilation) or will additional monies be required from the regular operating budget as well?

The District set aside \$1M in the Operating budget, established before the Provincial and Federal grants were announced. With the announcement of the Provincial Safe Return to School Grant and the Federal Safe Return to Class Grant, the District received \$3,556,154 and \$9,177,259 respectively. The \$9,177,259 Federal Grant is just for the first half of the school year and a similar amount will be received in early in 2021 for the second half of the year. All three funding sources are being utilized this year to maintain safe sites and provide support for students and staff.



COVID Questions

- With all the spending on technology with COVID funds, has this replaced the need to spend operational funds on tech for this year?

In addition to the budgeted spending for technology in the 2020-2021 budget the District has provided technology to students to use for remote learning that was purchased from the Operating Fund. If this technology is lost or damaged, then Operating Funds will be impacted. The District is also purchasing additional technology using the Provincial and Federal grants.



COVID Questions

- Has there been any assurances from the federal or provincial government that the 2nd portion of federal COVID funds will be the same as the first? If it is less, will the impact to the current spending plan be proportional or re-evaluated?

There has been no assurance that the Phase 2 funding for the Federal Safe Return to Class Grant will be the same as the first half. School districts will be providing a budget spending plan to the Ministry on November 13th which will be used to determine Phase 2 funding from the Federal Government.



COVID Questions

- \$1M of the \$18M in Fed Fund Grants seems to be going to Quarantine expenses. Can you shed some light on this?

There are some support staff Collective Agreement provisions which fully pay employees for when they are required to quarantine under the direction of a Medical Health Officer. These Collective Agreement provisions prohibit the employer from depleting any other banks for their quarantine period (e.g. vacation/sick/personal/gratuity). These costs are not normally budgeted in the annual operating fund budget, as the clause is rarely used. Under the current Public Health Office orders, an employee in these bargaining units would be required to quarantine for two weeks and still be paid, which could be a significant cost to the District.



VSB Capital related Questions

VSB Capital related Questions

- Please explain the difference between funding for seismic mitigation and expansion

The Seismic Mitigation Program funds priority seismic projects that seismically upgrade schools or replace them at their current capacity.

The Expansion Program funds additional school space to manage enrolment growth. This includes additions, new schools and the expansion portion of replacing schools at a higher capacity as might happen with a seismic replacement. Expansion project requests from all school districts compete for funding in this “pot” based on actual school district enrolment forecast data. This is where SD39, which is forecasting continued declining enrolment for the next ten years, is challenged to compete with school districts that are growing rapidly and require new space.



VSB Capital related Questions

- Is the VSB able to consider growth of communities when making seismic upgrades?

VSB has reliable enrolment forecasting methodology with good predictive value. VSB enrolment forecasts have reliably predicted the impact of development on areas of growth in the District. Please refer to FPC report from Oct 2019 for more details.

The recent commitment by the government to build a school at Olympic village will relieve enrolment pressure in the South Cambie/False Creek area. Both Livingstone and Nightingale have sufficient capacity to accommodate enrolment growth in their catchments.

The operating capacity of the existing school is 1700, the current enrolment at Hamber is 1442. Enrolment forecasts, using the forecasting methodology mentioned about, do not indicate that Hamber will be at full capacity when it opens or any time in the foreseeable future thereafter. If, in future years, the enrolment begins to trend above current forecasts this will be apparent years in advance of the school will be becoming overcrowded. The District acknowledges there is development activity in the Cambie Corridor but also understands that it takes time for build out of these developments to happen.



Resource and teachers on call

Other teaching staff Questions

- Has the VSB faced any teacher hiring challenges?

It is critical that our enrolling classes have teachers. When there is an unfilled absence, the school-based administrators have a contingency plan in terms of coverage. Our non-enrolling staff, vice principals and principals will share the responsibilities so that the same staff/students are not always impacted.

We continue to hire excellent qualified teachers for our district. At times, we hire individuals and for personal reasons they choose not to work in our district. With respect to individuals, we do not share personal information as to the status of their applications.



Other teaching staff Questions

- Has the VSB faced more difficulty in filling absences compared to last year?

The replacement budget is available to cover all on call staff. The district looks at annual trends and adjusts this budget. At times some on call staff groups are used more than other groups. Any savings in this budget would go into the amended budget/surplus.



Other teaching staff Questions

- Compared to last year, are we seeing more or less unfilled teacher absences since the start of school? What is the difference in expenditures for covering absences since the start of school?

Still working on calculating the difference in expenditure due to analyzing the different types of absences we've had this year compared to last year.



Other teaching staff Questions

- If there are more unfilled absences, how does the VSB budget prioritize vulnerable students including those with special needs?

It is critical that our enrolling classes have teachers. When there is an unfilled absence, the school-based administrators have a contingency plan in terms of coverage. Our non-enrolling staff, vice principals and principals will share the responsibilities so that the same staff/students are not always impacted.



Other teaching staff Questions

- Lots of parents have complained about the lack of resourcing for Option 4; what budget has been devoted to furthering education for the students in Option 4?

The District continues to work with school-based administrators to support and redeploy as needed – each site is case by case. The District provided additional staffing to all worksites for Option 4 students, so this work is additional paid work for anyone who added a day to their work week.

The District has assigned 27 teacher FTE's to support Option 4. This staffing is coming from the Federal Return to Class Grant and will be in effect until Option 4 ends.



Budget process Questions

Budget process Questions

- For some years District finance staff prepared a restoration budget, and more recently a needs budget, alongside the formal budget. Does this remain a regular part of the process, and what is the process for preparing a needs budget? How are the needs identified?

The District ceased preparing a restoration budget effective with the 2017-2018 budget. The District did prepare a Needs Budget for the 2018-2019 budget after the regular budget was approved. A working group of all stakeholders was formed to identify the needs and the additional funding required to meet those needs. The Needs Budget had two main themes: (1) addressing equity in District schools; and (2) advocacy for additional funding. The information in the Needs Budget was used to inform the District's submission to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services in the fall of 2019. It was also meant to be used to inform the development of the District's budget for 2020-2021 and the development of a three-year financial plan. These plans obviously changed with the onset of the pandemic.



Budget process Questions

- How will the implementation of phase 1 of the funding formula review recommendations change how VSB creates, consults, and communicates its financial information?

The Phase I funding formula review recommendations were only partially introduced by the Ministry in the March 2020 funding allocations to districts. The District will continue to consult with all stakeholders in the development of budgets and the communication of financial information as it has in the past but with more of an emphasis on the review's recommendations. For example, part of Recommendation 13 of the review, in the Accountability section, calls for management to issue a year-end report alongside the financial statements describing results achieved and how resources were utilized. The District has produced this Financial Statement Discussion and Analysis document for the last two years and it is available on the District website.



Budget process Questions

- In the past, VSB SMT was able to publish a detailed budget early and bring substantive items to a DPAC meeting in April to receive input on. That doesn't seem to be happening any more. Why has the process changed?

The change in timeline for the budget process allows for stakeholder input at the beginning of the budget development process rather than having to review detailed budgets. 92% of the District's expenses are for salaries and benefits and receiving stakeholder input early in the budget process allows the Board to prioritize spending for that and the remaining 8%. One of the purposes of this Townhall meeting is to get input from DPAC on budget priorities as we prepare for the development of the 2021-2022 annual budget.



Income and expenses Questions

Income and Expenses questions

- How has VSB funding been impacted by change in international students?

	Enrolment	\$/student	Tuition Revenue
19/20 Actuals	1,804	\$ 14,500	\$ 26,158,000
20/21 Budget	1,450	\$ 15,000	\$ 21,750,000
20/21 Actuals	1,378	\$ 15,000	\$ 20,670,000

With the reduction in enrolment, the District will realize a staffing savings of \$2.35 million (22 FTE).



Income and Expenses questions

- How has VSB funding been impacted by move to online learning?

The chart below illustrates the \$3.4 million funding increase in regular and online enrolment from the 2019-2020 year to the 2020-2021 budget, despite having budgeting for fewer regular students. This was due to the Ministry funding for each regular student increasing by \$92 to \$7,560 from \$7,468. The chart also illustrates that the actual results for 2020-2021 are now projected to be almost \$1.0 million less than budget, reflecting the shift from regular enrolment (down 374 students) to online enrolment (up 293 students), with no change in Ministry funding for each student.

		Enrolment	\$/student	Funding Revenue	
19/20 Actuals	Regular	48,281	\$ 7,468	\$ 360,563,908	
	Online	363	\$ 6,100	\$ 2,214,300	
				\$ 362,778,208	
20/21 Budget	Regular	48,160	\$ 7,560	\$ 364,085,820	\$ 3,473,112
	Online	355	\$ 6,100	\$ 2,165,500	
				\$ 366,251,320	
20/21 Actuals	Regular	47,786	\$ 7,560	\$ 361,263,578	\$ (984,999)
	Online	656	\$ 6,100	\$ 4,002,744	
				\$ 365,266,321	
				\$ 2,488,113	Total Impact



Income and Expenses questions

- How much has VSB funding been impacted by not allowing facility rentals?

The loss in revenue for not having facility rentals in the last four months of the 2019-2020 school year was approximately \$512,000. The loss for the first quarter of the 2020-2021 school year is approximately \$332,000.



Income and Expenses questions

- Have any new resources been put towards mental health supports?

The District allocated \$80,000 in the 2019-20 Amended Budget for mental health training which has been carried forward to 2020-21 as the training could not be completed due to the pandemic. Another \$500,000 is being used from the Federal Grant to support the Mental Health and Well-being of students and staff in 2020-21. The Province recently announced an additional \$3.75 million to support school-based wellness programs and the District's share is \$47,000.



Income and Expenses questions

- Have any new resources been put towards special need learner supports?

The District increased the budget for SEA's by 47 FTE and there was \$20,000 allocated for Multi-Sensory Training for staff.



Odds and ends Questions

Income and Expenses questions

- The draft LRFP shows that VSB owns " 3 properties on which businesses operate." What properties are those and what revenue do these properties bring in?

The District owns the land on which the Kingsgate Mall operates and charges the operator an annual rent under a ground lease that is currently \$760,000 per year. This is the former Mount Pleasant school site. The other two are the Triton Building on 10th Avenue and the Bentall Commercial building, which houses businesses along Granville Street and West Broadway. The land on which these businesses operate is owned by the District and was leased to Bentall Corporation in the late 1990's. Bentall prepaid the lease and the funds were used to construct the Education Centre. There is no annual lease revenue.



Odds and ends questions

- Is budget the main limiting factor with the number of psychoeducational assessments VSB funds every year? If not, what is and what steps is VSB doing to reduce the waitlist?

A Province wide shortage in psychologists limits the professionals available to Vancouver to conduct the assessments.



Odds and ends questions

- What does the Official languages federal grant go towards? Who prioritizes the spending? Is there an opportunity for parents/PACs to be consulted?

Official Language in Education Protocol (OLEP) funding is provided to support language learning and cultural experience in District French programs. At the school level, the broad funding is specifically allocated within French programs for expenditures such as: technology hardware/software, print and digital learning resources, online subscriptions, presentations, cultural performances, transportation and supplies for events, fieldtrips or projects within or for students in French classrooms. Funding may also be used to support teacher professional learning opportunities.

Each principal is responsible for managing funds allocated to the school. As such, with French funds, principals work collaboratively with staff (classroom teachers, librarians, resource teachers, etc.) to determine resource, materials and cultural experience purchase priorities for the school year and beyond.

Parent input is always welcome. To that end, ongoing dialogue between principals, staff and PACs is valuable. PACs can be aware of the principal and staff's priorities regarding OLEP funds, which can inform how PAC might direct their support efforts through PAC funds and vice versa.



Upcoming Events & Important Dates

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