

VS

VANCOUVER BOARD OF EDUCATION

SPECIAL BOARD / COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING

Tuesday, April 23, 2019
at 7:00 pm in the gymnasium at
Mount Pleasant Elementary

REVISED AGENDA

1. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER**
 - 1.1 **INDIGENOUS LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The meeting is being held on the traditional unceded territory of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Coast Salish peoples.
 - 1.2 **OPENING REMARKS**

The meeting is being live-streamed and the audio and visual recording will also be available to the public for viewing after the meeting. The footage of the meeting may be viewed inside and outside of Canada.
2. **MOTION TO DISSOLVE THE BOARD MEETING INTO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**
3. **DELEGATIONS RE: 2019/2020 PRELIMINARY DRAFT BUDGET OPERATING FUND**

Delegations will commence at 7:00 pm and will present at 5-minute intervals.

 - 3.1 **Stakeholder Delegations**
 - 3.1.1 Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association (VESTA)
 - 3.1.2 Vancouver Elementary Principals' and Vice Principals' Association (VEPVPA) – Darren Mitzel
 - 3.1.3 Vancouver Secondary Teachers' Association (VSTA)
 - 3.2 **Other Delegations**
 - 3.2.1 Prince of Wales Mini School – Colin Taylor and Paige Ingram
 - 3.2.2 Robert Ford
 - 3.2.3 The OneCity Education Caucus – Rory Brown and Marcy Toms
 - 3.2.4 Sadie Kuehn and students
 - 3.2.5 Friends of School Libraries – Sandra Boutilier
 - 3.2.6 Pearl Chow, parent from Norquay Elementary
4. **MOTION TO RISE AND REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**
5. **MOTION TO RECONVENE THE BOARD MEETING**
6. **ADJOURNMENT**



Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association

April 23, 2019

2019 VESTA Budget Submission

The proposed budget for this year is not recommending cuts to supports for students, which we are happy to see. However, the status quo nature of the budget does carry forward concerns that have come up in years past related to non-enrolling staffing and supports for some of our most vulnerable learners.

In regards to the budget process itself, we would like to see a greater level of transparency with respect to budgets for particular departments, as well as having the opportunity to both provide and hear feedback and questions on the budget from both stakeholders and the community. We value the opportunity to hear trustee input especially and are happy to offer the perspective of teachers, and we want to see a process where sufficient time is given to allow for that prior to any decisions being made.

Many of our questions or concerns revolve around staffing numbers and the amount of support that is provided to students. Since the restoration of our collective agreement language this process has fallen under the umbrella of the Classroom Enhancement Fund. At present, there is no process by which we can provide feedback on the CEF requests to the Ministry, and we would appreciate the ability to participate in this process as a stakeholder as teachers understand the realities of supports that are needed in schools. In relation to staffing for next year, we will see an increase in our prep time to 110 minutes, and as this increase is a result of our collective agreement, we would expect it to be fully funded by the provincial government. We hope to see this additional staffing in the allocations to schools, as opposed to being reassigned from existing non-enrolling staff.

While the teacher teaching on call numbers have improved since last year, and for the most part we are seeing regular absences covered, we still do not have a sufficient number on the list to provide for the large amount of remedy that has been generated nor to reinstate





Vancouver Elementary School Teachers' Association

absences. We would like to see a review of the VSB's current strategy to promote adult ed courses to ensure that we are reaching more adult learners within our district who need Adult Ed courses to complete prerequisites for post secondary programs. We know that many adult education students are school aged and have come to this system as the flexibility best meets their needs. The self paced program offers greater flexibility for learners who often have child care or work- related challenges. An increase to the number of teachers in the self-paced program and opening self paced centres five days a week would ensure that services to self paced students are improved. We would also advocate that the school board review the class size minimum for adult education structured classes (26 students), as the tiny margin allowed between minimum and maximum class sizes often results in courses being cancelled, denying opportunities to vulnerable learners.





VSTA Response to the 2019-20 Proposed VSB Budget April 23, 2019

I. Introduction:

The VSTA would like to thank Trustees and staff for this opportunity to respond to the proposals contained in the 2019-2020 Operating Fund Budget: Preliminary Draft Document.

We want to acknowledge the behemoth task that is before VSB staff and Trustees in creating a balanced budget. We also want to acknowledge that the deep cuts of the last 19 years have yet to be reversed, but we know that staff and Trustees are looking for ways to improve the learning conditions of our students and the working conditions of our teachers.

To situate this budget development process in the broader context of school funding in Vancouver, we note that as presented, we are attempting to find approximately \$4M to fund a range of one-time and ongoing proposals brought forward by staff through their consultations with managers and stakeholders. We remind Trustees of the motion brought forward by former trustee Bercic and passed by the Board last spring calling on the government to stop funding elite private schools. These level II schools in Vancouver alone continue to receive more than \$16M from public funds annually and give out charitable receipts in excess of \$27M. Meanwhile, 90% of our members who responded to our budget survey said that they spend their own money at least once a year in order to enhance the classroom experience for their students.

In terms of operating funds at the school level, including both flex funds and school generated funds, our members report of a wide range of practice and transparency. We would like to work with the Board to create a standard set of expectations for staff oversight on school-based finances. There remain questions about film generated revenue and systemic equity.

We will respond to some of the specific proposals and offer some additional considerations.

II. Response to Budget Proposals for Consideration

i. One-time proposals

- **Development of Capital Asset Management Plan** – we support staff and Trustees having access to expert advice regarding how best to manage the VSB's Capital Assets. Please see our comment below regarding proposals that are designated as contingent upon capital asset revenue generation projects.
- **Data Validation Review** – we are supportive of this as many of our members are skeptical of the projected enrolment data. With community trust, it is easier to make decisions.
- **Essential Furniture Replacement Plan** – we are supportive of this. Our budget survey indicated that aging equipment/furniture is of concern to many of our members.

- **Free & Accessible Menstrual Products in Schools** – we hope that the Province will fund this as opposed to downloading the cost onto School boards. Our Association is supportive of this and in fact brought a motion to the BCTF Representative Assembly asking the BCTF to lobby for this.

We note that some of these proposals are to be funded from the proceeds of a capital asset revenue generation project. We are curious to know if there is a specific project in mind? If so, what is it? If this project does not materialize, what will happen to these proposals?

ii. Ongoing proposals

- **Peoplesoft payroll consolidation** – Peoplesoft has been an expensive undertaking for the District. Has there been a cost/benefit analysis of keeping it or replacing it?
- **Digital communications Coordinator** – we would like to understand more what the goal of this position is – is the Board hoping to attract private school students to the public system? Who are we telling these stories for/to? Is this connected to the discussion from the last Advocacy Committee meeting where we discussed general advocacy for public education?
- **District Resource Teacher: Mentoring Support** – the VSTA supports the Teacher Mentor program. We would like to see it go beyond just Early Career Teachers however. We would like to see it expanded to “new to role” teachers as well.
- **Diversity/Anti-Racism District Resource Teacher Position** – the VSTA supports additional staffing to the Diversity teacher complement. We continue to be concerned about the process by which this position was created, but are in full support of the position itself.
- **Increase School Flex Budget Allocation by 5%** - we are supportive of any increase to Flex budgets. Many of our members spend their own money on classroom supplies.
 To wit (from our budget survey): *I am provided \$1.51 /student/month to teacher Food Studies. In a class of 28, I have \$42.28/month to buy sufficient groceries to teach a cooking course. Food costs have increased drastically and instead of increasing our funding, we have experienced a claw back. [...] Student pay between \$30-\$45, depending on the course level. **The students at the senior level fund their program at three times the amount the Board funds it.***

In addition, we note that while Flex funding as a whole last year was increased by 5%, program support funding to schools was increased by only 1%. We would welcome the opportunity to provide input regarding how any increase in Flex funds is distributed to schools and departments.

- **Increase Teacher Staffing International Education** – we are supportive of staffing ELL/International Students at 20:1, as per the restored language. These are often vulnerable students who will benefit from more support.
- **International Education Program Coordinator** – see above.
- **Mental Health, Wellbeing and Engagement Strategy** – the VSTA recognizes that mental health wellbeing is integral to a stable system. Our members are experiencing more severe violence on the job and other mental health challenges in the workplace with which they need support.

- **Replace Obsolete Student Technology** – we are supportive. We would like teacher voice and input into the decision making. For example, not all of our members want laptops, many secondary sites prefer a stable computer lab as opposed to carts etc.

Regarding the proposed Potential Budget Sources of Funding:

- **Business Development Manager** – we support ‘good fit’ opportunities to raise operating capital for the District. If this position is implemented, we would hope that a reasonable time frame is provided before an assessment is made regarding its effectiveness. We note that budgeting for district generated revenue is challenging if the funds are budgeted to cover expenses in the year in which they are raised. We also note that the allocation of district generated revenue can raise equity issues. In light of these observations, we would welcome the opportunity to participate in any policy or procedure development that might occur to support this position.
- **Increase in School Supplies Fees** – while we recognize that the school district is not funded adequately enough to supply students with what they need in the classroom, we are concerned about equity (see comment above in the Flex Budget section).

III. Additional Considerations

Despite the Classroom Enhancement Fund (CEF), it appears that we have over 40 courses at the secondary level that should have had a section added, which in turn, would have reduced teacher workload and generated less Remedy. We are hoping that fewer classes will be generating Remedy next year in the goal of driving down class size and supporting more students. We would rather have Ministry money spent on direct student support then generate Remedy.

We would ask that the Board ensure that there are adequate funds to support psycho-ed testing – given the proposed “Prevalence” funding model in the Funding Model Review paper, we are concerned about the total delinking of funds to support for students with additional needs. We would not ask a GP to treat a complex medical issue on their own without specialist support – why would we ask a generalist classroom teacher to support a student with complex learning needs without specialist support?

IV. And finally, in Secondary Teachers’ own words (from our Budget survey)

On deferred maintenance:

- *Deferred maintenance...mice in the school*
- *Ageing computer technology, carpets that are 40-50 years old, leaking and moldy infrastructure puddles every time it rains!*
- *I have watched a pane of broken glass held by tape for over a year. This pane of glass is on top of the cafeteria. How is this acceptable any other workplace or school in Canada?*
- *Upkeep of theatres - they are often booked for filming and other outside of the school performances and that won't be true if they are no longer usable.*
- *My equipment has been maintained in a timely manner when repairs have been needed.*

What they would like to see considered in the Budget:

- *ADST TOC's and funding to upgrading and maintaining the shops in the district.*
- *Review fee schedule for Ceramics courses. Consumables are expensive and kilns are expensive to repair and maintain. The fees should be increased.*
- *Upgrading to support climate change issues -lighting, gardening, waste management, water, student involvement.*
- *More money for resources especially in Libraries. Inquiry based curriculums need RESOURCES!*
- *VSB directive to require all school ELL funds to be used exclusively for ELL teaching staff hiring, classroom resources and teacher expenses including field trips for newcomers.*
- *Increase in non-enrolling blocks to sufficiently support staff, admin, students and parents*
- *PLEASE hire more indigenous enhancement teachers. There aren't enough for us to be able to reliably plan lessons with their involvement, and some schools do not have enough access time for students. Also, essential to review/revise how funding for SpEd programs is allocated in terms of more realistic time (6 out of 8 blocks, enrolling/2 non-enrolling blocks) for teachers who have a caseload of up to 15 (or more) students with IEPs to manage in addition to their teaching duties. TOO much to try and balance all the duties without extra time during the day --- and with an increasing array of students with truly exceptional needs and behaviours.*

Speech for VSB Meeting on April 23

Good evening everyone, my name is Paige Ingram. Thank you for for this opportunity to speak on my positive experience at Prince of Wales Mini School. The Mini is a collaborative environment filled with many unique opportunities which continuously challenge my classmates and I. Recently, myself and a few other students created a documentary through Cinematheque, a program the school has worked with for a number of years. Our documentary focused on underlying racism in Vancouver and we interviewed two Muslim women on their personal experiences. Our film recently won Best Director in the Vancouver Reel2Reel Film Festival and an Honourable Mention in the Portland Film Festival. This was such a valuable and rewarding experience for me. The purpose of the film was to educate our community about racism in Vancouver with the goal of discovering ways to address its root causes.

As much as this program has enriched my personal high-school experience, it has also inspired me to give back to the community. It has provided me with the leadership skills and resources I needed to start the “Be the Change” club this year at PW, sponsored by WE Charity. The club has over 100 members and together we have run multiple fundraisers throughout the year to raise money for Education in Ethiopia. We are also holding a school-wide WE Walk for Water event to raise awareness for access to clean water. Through my time in this program, it has taught me the importance of giving back and standing up for what I believe in. It has helped me step back and recognize my privilege and then take action to help those who are less fortunate. I am beyond grateful for the skills this program has provided me with and I plan to continue to use them to help others.

VSB Speech

Good evening, my name is Colin Taylor and it is my pleasure to speak with you about my school, Prince of Wales Mini. Tonight, I would like to talk to you about why I think PW Mini, and other programs like it, are so important to the VSB. Prince of Wales Secondary is home to multiple programs that go beyond a standard VSB education such as the GOLD (Gifted Learning Disabled) program and the Trek (outdoor ed.) program. I've seen, not only in my program but in classes with students from other programs, the difference that these programs can make. They offer specific and specialized education to students who desire it, who need it, and who enjoy it. All of these programs enrich the public education system and enable students to learn more and learn better, based on their abilities. When I was in elementary school I was rarely challenged in class, although I liked to learn. When researching secondary school programs PW Mini stood out to me because it appealed to my desire to engage in learning with a small group of peers and be challenged with an enriched curriculum. I have thrived in the program because it has enabled me to develop academically and socially, and to learn and grow more than I would have in a larger high school. I feel well prepared and enthusiastic about post-secondary education because I've engaged in all of the opportunities for a challenge that PW Mini has offered me. I doubt that I would be as prepared, or motivated, for post-secondary had I attended a regular high school as I would have continued to cruise through my classes and put little effort into my learning. Because of the VSB mini program at PW, I am a more active member of the community, a more engaged citizen, and I believe I am more likely to succeed in university and my career.

The enrichment programs at the VSB enrich the public education system as a whole and offer specialized learning environments that support students' diverse learning needs. PW Mini, in particular, provides opportunities for students to engage in leadership roles. For example, I've taken the opportunity to form a street outreach program where we make care packages and deliver them by hand on the downtown eastside, connecting our communities. PW Mini has allowed me to take social action and leadership on an issue I'm passionate about.

A few years ago, as I completed Grade 9, we lost our administrative support, and our head teachers' administration hours were cut from four to two blocks per week. Parents had to step up and take a much larger role, and with that help, we are still operating. But we could be much more. We would like to establish stronger friendships and build better bridges with inner city schools. We would like to serve as an incubator for programs that could then be rolled out for other highly motivated students in the district. We would like to take our science fair winners and award recipients on the road to local elementary schools as part of a "mobile mini" and to support and encourage students in creating their own projects. These are all examples of how PW Mini could serve the broader community if we were operating beyond the bare-bones level. If you ever see fit to make extra resources available to us, we will use them well.

Ultimately, public education should be viewed as an investment in future generations. PW Mini and other enrichment and specialization programs diversify, enrich and support all types of students to thrive in the public education system. PW Mini, like other specialized programs, is a great investment in our future citizens.

Most importantly, on behalf of PW Mini students and parents, thank you for your continued support and consideration. We feel fortunate to be a part of this program.

Restoration of the Vancouver School Board Elementary Band and Strings Program Extra Curricular Elementary Choral



BC Music Curriculum Grade 6

Arts Education 6

Arts Education K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Big Ideas

Engaging in creative expression and experiences expands people's sense of identity and community.

Artistic expressions differ across time and place.

Dance, drama, music, and visual arts are each unique languages for creating and **communicating**.

We are not here.

Experiencing **art** is a means to develop empathy for others' perspectives and experiences.

The Petition



I immediately ask that the Vancouver School Board Trustees restore Elementary Band and Strings to its pre 2016 cut level. In addition, the VSB should put in a five-year plan to provide equitable access to Band, Strings and a Choral program across all Vancouver elementary schools.

475 signatures as of Jan 17, 2019

1581 signatures as of April 21, 2019

Band and Strings Budget from 2016

Revised Preliminary Budget Proposal | 2016/2017

E12.15 – Optional Elementary Band and Strings Program

Background & Analysis

The optional band and strings program provides opportunities for elementary students to learn to play a band (gr. 6-7) or string instrument (gr. 5-7). Currently 44 elementary schools have an optional strings or band program.

Curriculum requirements are met through general music programming in the school setting. The band and strings program is an additional service which is currently not provided within all elementary schools. The program is delivered by teachers in itinerant positions, and requires funding beyond the regular staffing allotment provided to a school. Currently, more than 50 % of elementary schools in the district have Music as prep to some or all of the grades in the school, approximately 40 % have classroom teachers providing all of the Music instruction, and many schools have a combination of Music specialists and regular classroom teachers providing Music instruction.

For the 2015-2016 school year, the annual fee was raised from \$25 to \$50 a year in order to offset some of the staffing and program costs.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the teaching staffing associated with the optional band and strings program be eliminated.

Budget Implications

Staffing Impact (FTE)			Budget Impact (\$)			
Base	Reduction	Employee Group	Salaries & Benefits	Supplies	Revenue	Total
5.86	5.86	VTF	530,603		(135,000)	395,603

District-Wide Extra-Curricular Elementary Choral Program

- Do not disrupt current choral programs; Support and network them
- Build a standard set of songs and performance goals each term and year (in advance) from which an incoming choral director can build
- Add choral programs as quickly as possible, focusing where there is need and community support/interest
- Engage PACs and Principals in the process
- Cross connect schools; each should have a sister school
- Parent Pay with Bursaries
- Self Funding with 10 new schools participating

Why? There's so much other need!

- Please Don't ask me ...

“What would you pull from the budget?”

“Why is music more important than special needs children?”

- And don't blame the Ministry of Education – they aren't telling you to ignore the music curriculum.

Budget is a Problem, but Health is the Issue

- Do you like mental health in children?
- A typical hospital stay in Canada is \$7000. Source https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2008/03/18/average_hospital_stay_costs_nearly_7000_study.html
- It is estimated that 10-20% of Canadian youth are affected by a mental illness or disorder – the single most disabling group of disorders worldwide. Source: <https://cmha.ca/about-cmha/fast-facts-about-mental-illness>

Kids Heal Themselves with Music

- The examples of kids using music to express pain and deal with it are well documented.
- Learning a musical instrument is shown to help brain development
- There is no vaccine for depression and anxiety, but artistic expression is shown to help heal.

- This is cheaper than drugs and a hospital.

OneCity Education Caucus

Presentation to The Vancouver School Board – Ctte of the Whole

April 23, 2019 – Presenters: Marcy Toms and Rory Brown

The OneCity Education Caucus thanks the Vancouver School Board for the opportunity to offer our thoughts on both the base budget and the proposals put forward by VSB staff for additions to this base.

OneCity's focus during the 2019-2020 VSB budget process will be to forward the cause of sustained equity for students and families, both financial and social/emotional in the business of the school board. Vancouver has the dubious distinction of having both some of the wealthiest and some of the most impoverished postal codes in Canada and with this in mind, OneCity seeks to promote structures and policies within the school board that mitigate the social inequities foundational in these differences.

Given that school district budgeting is a predictive process and given the change in budgeting practice from explicitly delineating where the funding for the proposed additions to the base budget come from, we see it as important to make comments on the process as well as the proposals. We consider a process where proposals are contemplated without a specific reference to the antecedent budget cut that would be necessary to balance the budget (as required by the School Act), a general reduction in overall transparency. Simply put, we remain unsure as to where the money would come from for the staff proposals as detailed in the April 9 presentation document. Further simply put, the public perception is or should be: where are the cuts that will pay for the proposals if the budget is truly balanced and why are these cuts not contemplated in this public process.

We encourage the Vancouver School Board to renew and redouble its historically prominent role in advocating for funding and policies from the provincial government that promote and support a truly equitable education system for our city's children and families. We see advocacy as at least half of the important work that is done in budget season where funding sources necessarily make up half of a budget structure. We encourage the board to direct a greater portion of its staff and Trustee resources to advocacy structures.

Despite the confusion over the source of funds for the proposals outlined in the April 9 document, we feel it prudent to make comment on some of the proposals as follows and as well outline some opinions for budget contemplations that are not part of the published proposals.

PeopleSoft Payroll Consolidation:

We understand that since its implementation, PeopleSoft has been a source of great difficulty for the Vancouver School Board. Three years ago, in a process that occurred outside the normal budget timeline to add staff, a total of ten FTE of staff were added to the Employee Services ranks that administer the Peoplesoft payroll system. Although we understand the technical reasoning behind the proposal to add a further \$300,000.00 in costs to fix this system, perhaps it is time to revisit the role of this system and to provide the Board with a cost/benefit analysis of the system as a whole. OneCity does not support this proposal.

Anti-Racism Mentor

OneCity supports the addition of staff and additionally the resources that this staff member would require to do their work. This is an essential proposal.

Digital Communications Coordinator:

The OneCity education Caucus sees the proposal for the addition of further communication staff as having dubious merit. In an environment where school boards are dealing with 30% less funding as a percentage of GDP in real dollars than in 2001, supplementing the current communications staff puts resources too far away from the classroom. We are unsure what stories and narratives need telling and to whom.

Increase in School Supplies Fees:

Increasing School Supplies Fees is not supported by the OneCity Education Caucus. Increasing a fee that effectively taxes families in a regressive fashion is not in keeping with the VSB's mandate of equity for all students and families. Turning a profit on pencils, glue and paper is not what the people of Vancouver see as the work of their elected trustees and School Board staff.

SSA Work Experience:

For true and sustained inclusion and a system that offers a well rounded education to the most vulnerable students in the system, the addition of 5 SSA's for accompanied Work Experience is a much-needed budget item and is supported by OneCity.

International Program proposals:

It should be noted that the Vancouver School Board now operates the largest for-profit private school system in Vancouver with its International Education system. The phenomenon of International education has become a cash cow for many school districts and although it is true that International Education students must receive the education that they pay for, it must not come, either in perception or reality, at the cost of the quality or equitable access for non fee-paying Vancouver students. We encourage the School Board to look closely at the numbers of students in the system and the schools that these students attend in relation to access and program equity for all students.

Data Validation Review:

It is certain that there is a current mistrust of Vancouver School Board data as it relates to Enrollment figures. OneCity strongly encourages the Board to include robust qualitative data as part of any contemplation of enrollment figures. We are confused by the reference in the April 9 document that states this proposal is one-time but also sets out that an annual validation occur. We perceive that a shift in current communication and consultation strategies would do more to alleviate mistrust in data rather than a comprehensive data review.

Capital Asset Management Plan

The OneCity education caucus conceives that the expenditure of a further \$150,000 for a Capital Asset Management Plan is a repetition of the work conducted over a number of years within the Long Range

Facilities Plan. Without further details on the scope of this expenditure, it is difficult to comment as to whether this diversion of resources away from the classroom would be of merit.

Budget Statement to the VSB
by former VSB School Trustee Sadie Kuehn
on behalf of the Black Community
Tuesday, April 23, 2019
Mount Pleasant Elementary

While the Black community in Vancouver agrees and understands the many demands of a district as large and diverse as VSB, we expect that our district would be committed to ensuring all students are able to participate and learn in a welcoming, safe, caring and supportive environment. To that end, the Black community asks that the VSB:

- re-establish and add the position of a race relations consultant to the district staffing
- ensures that financial resources are added to its budget projection for the development of culturally aware and inclusive anti-racist resources
- hiring a more diverse pool of teachers, including Black teachers, during the hiring process is a must.

The Black community in Vancouver supports the Indigenous community in their request for more targeted educational resources to improve the overall outcomes of Indigenous students in district schools.

The hiring of Indigenous teachers and other professionals, must be seen and be a district priority.

We believe that the VSB, in consultation with Indigenous communities, educators and parents, should be committed to the use of science, math and linguistic Indigenous educational resources in our district.

Friends of the School Library April 23, 2019

Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak on behalf of FOSL. My name is Brittany Downey-MacDonald and I am a parent of children at Kitsilano Secondary and General Gordon schools. With me are Sandra Boutilier, a parent at Van Horne Elementary, and Sarah Macaulay, a parent from Tupper Secondary and formerly Dickens Elementary.

FOSL parents are concerned about equity in library staffing in schools in Vancouver, especially in light of the new provincial curriculum, which emphasizes personalized learning. Here is a quote from the VSB's website:

“The new curriculum reinforces strong foundations in **reading and writing, number and financial literacy**, as well as **visual and digital literacy**. Core competencies, including collaboration, critical and creative thinking, and personal and social responsibility also play a big part in the redesigned learning, as does a greater emphasis on Indigenous world views, culture and perspectives.”

It is apparent that every highlighted element, and the highlights are the VSB's, is either a fundamental specialty of Teacher Librarians or an area where they can provide quality resources and support for learning. Library services play a major roll in developing research skills that lead to constructive collaborations, critical thinking, and exposure to multiple world views. Building an entire educational philosophy around these skill sets and then cutting funding to the educators who specialize in this learning is extraordinarily counterproductive.

When FOSL submitted a brief to you in last year's budget process, we included a small chart of staffing as it was in the 1980s and 90s when Vancouver was a lighthouse school district for library services. We include it again as an attachment for your convenience.

Please note – this staffing was centrally determined at the school board office and based on student population. This type of formula is equitable and easy for a parent to understand.

Now school library staffing is all over the map. The school my children attend has nearly 400 students, and flexible time of .6 FTE. FOSL knows of other schools that are larger, yet have much less time for a full library program. FOSL wonders why all children in similar size schools do not have the same level of access?

Flexible time means time that is available for research units that a classroom teacher and teacher-librarian plan and teach together, combining the expertise of both teachers, and giving the class of 30 students 2 teachers to enable each child to receive individualized help. Library prep time is regularly scheduled periods where the teacher-librarian has the whole class without the classroom teacher involved. Library prep time comes out of the prep budget, not the incremental staffing budget, as flexible library time does.

Some school libraries are fully open 5 days a week during the day and before and after school. Some are only open for 1 or 2 days. Some schools have 100% prep time (as their “library allotment”) and no or virtually no flexible time. And the problem is that the flexible staffing does not seem to correlate with the school enrolment. We include a few examples in the attachments.

Why does this matter?

The research is very clear that students in schools with rich, flexibly scheduled library programs have increased achievement. This is especially true for disadvantaged students. We have attached some research findings, and a link to many more research studies that show this.

All students should have the same opportunities for deep, PERSONALIZED learning. The new curriculum is all about the personalization of learning. The personalization of learning has always been and continues to be the essence of school library/teacher-librarian work. I remember this from my days as a student at Carnarvon Elementary and Kitsilano Secondary, where I always had extensive help from the TL for my projects. But this type of interaction with the TL can only occur during cooperative/flexible time where the classroom teacher is partnering with the teacher librarian and using his/her expertise and assistance. This is the way that students receive individual help.

Teacher-librarians find and use books and electronic resources at the appropriate reading level. This means that they teach students how to find a website they can actually read, understand, and use, as well as trust. This facilitates personalized learning. Then students receive extra help using what they have found to extract information (without copying). All of this individual help can't be done in library prep time and it can't be done by a classroom teacher alone. It takes the combination of the classroom teacher and the TL and the increased teacher/student ratio.

Parents are concerned that the provincial ratio of 1-702 students district wide is not being applied fairly from school to school in Vancouver. We also wonder if prep time done in the library is being counted as flexible library time. We are wondering if the board could please explain their counting methods to us? We believe that the School Board management must have a record of the library allotment of both flexible library time and library prep time in every school. We request that the trustees investigate this information, finding out flexible library FTE as well as the school enrolment. All students need good access to a school library with personalized instruction.

Teacher-librarians are responsible for the complete library program. They are responsible for:

- Cooperative planning and teaching – partnering with the classroom teacher to teach units of study in the curriculum, embedding essential research skills into the content study.
- The culture of reading in the school – the promotion of reading in the school through displays, book talks, book contests and school-wide events such as “Poem in your Pocket Day”.
- Arranging author visits – promoting Canadian culture, and Canadian children's vision of themselves as consumers of Canadian books and culture

As well, teacher-librarians maintain the library and its proper functioning – a large task in itself. I know since I am a volunteer in my school's library.

Being a teacher-librarian, doing all of the above, is a huge job and needs a proper amount of time to do it in. Many teacher-librarians have very complicated teaching assignments. It is not uncommon to have 3 types of jobs: perhaps a day or two of being a classroom teacher, a day or two of Learning

Assistance and/or ELL, a day or two of library, split between flexible and library prep time. Students in a school like this do not have the same access to a library program. In a school like this, it is very unlikely that the teacher-librarian would be able to volunteer his/her time to keep the library open before and after school five days a week. The teaching, the deep learning, and the reading culture, therefore, suffer generally-

Keith Curry Lance and Debra E. Kachel, in their meta-analysis of studies published in the Phi Delta Kappa, note:

“Data from more than 34 statewide studies suggest that students tend to earn better standardized test scores in schools that have strong library programs. Further, when administrators, teachers, and librarians themselves rated the importance and frequency of various library practices associated with student learning, their ratings correlated with student test scores, further substantiating claims of libraries’ benefits. In addition, newer studies, conducted over the last several years, show that strong school libraries are also linked to other important indicators of student success, including graduation rates and mastery of academic standards.”

They continue by noting these studies were controlled for important factors including student-teacher ratio, student demographics, school funding levels, and more, noting that “the benefits associated with good library programs are strongest for the most vulnerable and at-risk learners, including students of color, low-income students, and students with disabilities.”

In Conclusion

- Please ensure that flexible school library staffing meets the district ratio, yes, but that it also be equitably distributed amongst schools according to population.
- Please take leadership and ensure that each school is given a minimum decent amount of flexible time (distinct from prep time) based on the population of the school.
- We continue to ask that the very necessary position of teacher-librarian mentor be restored.
- We continue to ask that the materials budget for libraries be restored. Current levels of funding can buy about half a hardcover book per student. You can see how inequities grow, when some schools are able to supplement this meager budget with PAC and Bookfair funds.

Parents know that Vancouver was once renowned for its library programs of co-operative planning and teaching. For decades tests have shown that student achievement rises when school libraries are well-staffed in flexible time. Parents care about school libraries and hate to think of library programs backsliding. Parents would like to think that their children have good access to strong library programs at any school in the city, and that this board will act to ensure equal access to library programming and materials for all VSB students.

School Library Staffing at the VSB - 1980s and 19990s

Elementary Schools

Enrolment	Staffing
500 and over	1.5 FTE
400 and over	1.0 FTE
300 and over	.8 FTE
200 and over	.6 FTE
All other schools	.5 FTE

Secondary schools

Enrolment	Staffing
2000 and over	2.0 FTE
1500 and over	1.5 FTE
All other schools	1.0 FTE

Sample Staffing Inequities 2019

These are all east side schools.

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| 1. 185 students | .2 FTE flexible time |
| 2. 200 students | .59 FTE flexible time |
| 3. 340 students | .7 FTE flexible time |
| 4. 340 students | .3 FTE flexible time |
| 3. 400 students | .6 FTE flexible time |
| 4. 480 students | 1.0 FTE flexible time |
| 5. 650 students | .6 FTE flexible time |

This is a sample of the inequities between schools.

Research showing increased achievement in schools with strong library programs:

<https://www.kaplanonline.org/lance-kachel-school-librarians-matter-years-research/>

Excerpts:

- The benefits associated with good library programs are strongest for the most vulnerable and at-risk learners, including students of color, low-income students, and students with disabilities.

- Multiple studies have found that test scores tend to be higher in schools where librarians spend more time:

- Instructing students, both with classroom teachers and independently;
- Planning collaboratively with classroom teachers;
- Providing professional development to teachers;
- Meeting regularly with the principal;
- Serving on key school leadership committees;
- Facilitating the use of technology by students and teachers;
- Providing technology support to teachers, and
- Providing reading incentive programs.

This is a link to a collection of research studies and reports highlighting the value of teacher-librarians. It cites research from around the world.

<https://elink.io/p/school-libraries-teacher-librarians-and-acceleration-of-literacy>

2019 Early Mandarin Bilingual “Future Hopes & Dreams” Parent Survey Presentation

PART I: Positive Parent Feedback

Summary/Takeaway from Parent/Child Survey Comments:

EMB Parents feel incredibly fortunate that the VSB has had the foresight to offer our children the opportunity to learn an additional language that will equip them for a global community. The students enjoy learning Mandarin with their peers in a tight knit community that feels like a family. The Norquay program has met and exceeded many parents' expectations. Our hope for the future of the EMB program from a parent's perspective, is to have periodic reviews that will allow for refinements of the program as we identify what works and what can be done to make it work even better. We are also finding that parents are showing an appetite for more Mandarin offerings and options at the secondary level to build on the foundation provided at Norquay.

Excerpts from Primary Parent Feedback:

- It's fantastic to give kids the opportunity to learn another language.
- The EMB program is definitely worth expanding and investing in to allow more intake of students. The teachers are dedicated to the children's learning and it is evident that they are deeply invested in each student's development and long-term learning objective on all subjects.
- My child is proud to recognize Chinese characters on TV, books, store fronts, etc. She also enjoys sharing her songs and vocabulary with her friends and family.
- The program is providing a relevant cross-cultural skill for our kids who live in this wonderful global multicultural city...and our family is really thankful for it.
- We think this program has amazing potential to grow, thrive, and flourish if given the resources, staffing, space, and attention to keep expanding.
- My child likes learning to write characters. He also likes being able to count in Mandarin and learning tones. He likes having opportunities to practice speaking Mandarin at school. He likes having something special to do at school beyond the regular subjects.
- We are extremely grateful that our children are being exposed to Mandarin on a daily basis. They love being able to speak a language their mother doesn't speak!

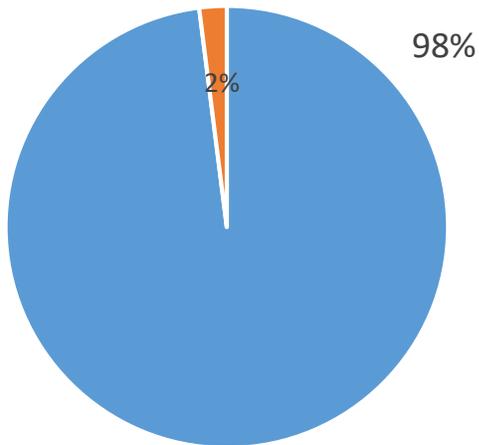
Excerpts from Intermediate Parent Feedback:

- It is a unique program that makes our children feel really special.
- I thank you for the chance to have both my kids in the EMB program. It has given them an exposure to the Chinese language and culture they would never get elsewhere. It is so important to understand people from different parts of the world, especially since we can see that telecommunication and building relationships will be at the tips of their fingers.
- The EMB teachers pour out their heart into teaching the kids and developing the curriculum but they need more support, funding, and resources. It's a wonderful program and we fully support it!
- The children like learning Mandarin and being able to speak it to their Grandma.
- I'm glad my kids have this opportunity to learn another language within the public school system.
- Learning Mandarin has been a great opportunity - the teaching staff have been fantastic and are obviously passionate and caring about what they do. The close bonds and friendships formed through EMB have been very special for my daughter. Since there's a small community within the larger school, these group continue through each year and the continuity has been great.
- My family has been a part of this program since year one. It's been a rocky road but I feel like the program is finally settling in and moving in the right direction. It has been a positive experience and my child in grade 6 can speak fluently outside the classroom. All the teachers were great but he especially had a great experience learning with Ms. Chang for 2 years (K/1), with a lot of hands-on learning in science and nature. Thank you all who have been part of our experience. My son is now in grade 6 already!
- VSB should do all that it can to expand EMB to 2 classes at K intake even if it means opening EMB in another school....There were 91 first choice K-EMB students for 12 spots at Norquay. Parents want this program.

Key 2019 EMB “Future Hopes & Dreams” Parent Survey Results

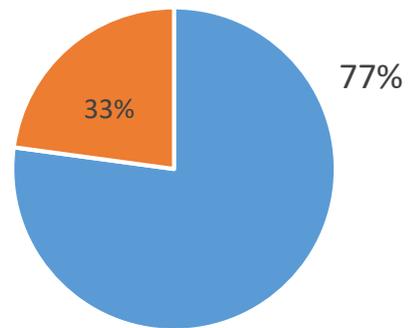
PART II: Our hopes for the future of EMB

Parent support for increasing intake at K level to 2 classes or increasing intake to 1.5 classes in G1



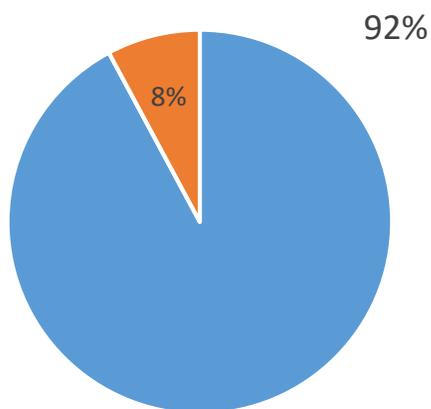
■ Agree (98%) ■ Disagree (2%)

Preference as to the number of blocks taught in Mandarin in G9 - two blocks (one Mandarin language arts block and one elective taught in Mandarin) vs. one block (Mandarin language arts) only.



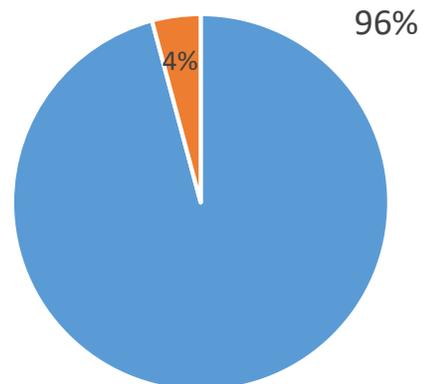
■ 2 blocks ■ 1 block

Parent preference as to high school electives offered in Mandarin



■ Support for electives that would provide the maximum opportunity for oral practice (Survey example given: Drama)
■ Other

Families who would like to see curriculum planning for course work beyond the equivalent of Mandarin 12 (for EMB Mandarin Language Arts classes beyond G9)



■ Yes ■ No