

SPECIAL BOARD / COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE AGENDA

**Tuesday, April 22, 2025, 5:00 to 7:00 pm
In the Boardroom**

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

1.1 LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

With deep gratitude and respect, we are honoured to be learning and unlearning on the ancestral and unceded lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation).

1.2 OPENING REMARKS

The meeting is currently being broadcasted live, and both the audio and video recordings will be accessible to the public for viewing even after the meeting ends. Footage from this meeting may be viewed from Canada or anywhere else in the world.

2. MOTION TO DISSOLVE THE BOARD MEETING INTO THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

That the Board dissolve itself into the Committee-of-the-Whole



3. PRESENTATIONS ON THE DRAFT 2025-2026 FINANCIAL PLAN

- 3.1 Arabella Mew and Mackenzie Chung, Vancouver District Students' Council
- 3.2 Warren Williams and Kathie Currie, Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 15
- 3.3 Melanie Cheng and Dr. Sherry Breshears, District Parent Advisory Council
- 3.4 Angie Haveman and Benita Kwon, Vancouver Association of Secondary School Administrators
- 3.5 Dana Aweida and Stephen Leung, Vancouver Elementary Principal and Vice-Principal Association
- 3.6 Marjorie Dumont and Vanessa Lefebvre, Vancouver Elementary and Adult Educators' Society
- 3.7 Carmen Schaedeli and Carl Janze, Vancouver Secondary Teachers' Association

4. MOTION TO RISE FROM THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE AND RECONVENE THE BOARD MEETING

That the Board rise from the Committee-of-the-Whole and reconvene the Board meeting.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Funding the Future

Vancouver District Parent Advisory Council
Budget Requests for 2025–2026

By: Melanie Cheng, Chair
Dr. Sherry Breshears, Secretary
Inclusive Education Working Group

vancouverdpac.org

This presentation contains Vancouver DPAC's 2025–2026 Budget Report and our recommendations.

We've spoken with families across the city, reviewed budget and staffing data for the last 8 years (2017 to 2024), and this report reflects what we've learned.

Our focus is on how the budget can better serve students—especially those who need the most support.

Request #1: Invest in Inclusive Education Supports

- Increase the budget for students with disabilities and diverse needs
- Allocate more funds to education assistants
- Reverse underspending — \$2.8M was left unspent in 2023–24
- Provide transparency and accountability on how supports are allocated

Report: *“Advocating for Equity: A Caregiver-led Examination of Inclusive Education in Vancouver Public Schools”* -

Challenges for learners with disabilities

- Coping alone
- Falling behind in learning
- Stress, anxiety, loss of confidence, low self-esteem
- Structurally excluded

"He comes home thinking everyone believes he's a bad kid, instead of a kid that just needs an extra bit of support and help."

- Caregiver of a child with autism and ADHD

The Inclusive Education Working Group (IEWG) report, titled “Advocating for Equity: A Caregiver-led Examination of Inclusive Education in Vancouver Public Schools,” (link: <https://www.vancouverdpac.org/inclusive-education-report/>) highlights the systemic barriers that students with disabilities and diverse abilities (SWDD) face.

The qualitative data shows there has been a notable decrease in in-class and specialized support, including reductions in educational assistants (EAs) and resource teachers.

This shortage has led to students falling behind academically, experiencing increased anxiety, and struggling with low self-esteem.

Burden on families

- Families are left to carry the burden of waning support
- Academic
- Emotional
- Financial

"We are forced to pay out of pocket for tutoring to address basic, foundational numeracy skills for our daughter."

- Caregiver of an elementary student with an intellectual disability and FASD



Due to reduced in-school support, many families are left with no choice but to hire private tutors, therapists, or educational consultants to meet their children's learning and developmental needs.

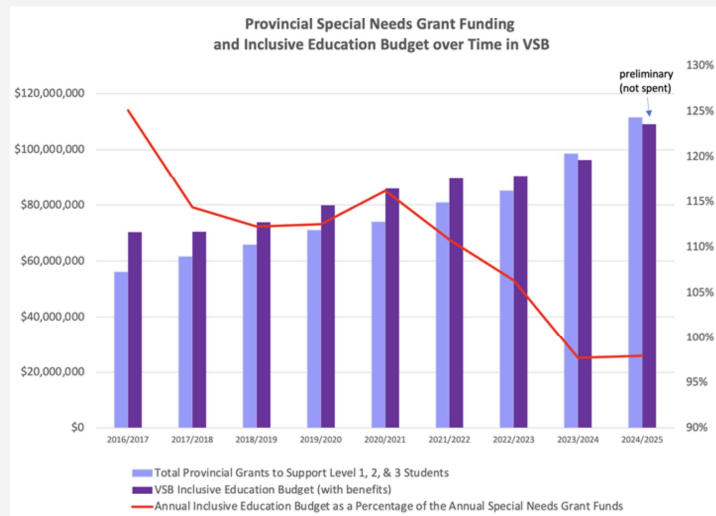
These costs are often not affordable and place a disproportionate burden on low- and middle-income families, widening the equity gap.

One parent shared:

"We are forced to pay out of pocket for tutoring to address basic, foundational numeracy skills for our daughter."

What we learned about spending

- Declining spending per student (Level 1, 2 & 3)
- 23/24 amended budget underspent by \$2.8 Million



The **light purple bar** shows **total provincial grants** (basic + supplemental) for Level 1–3 students.

The **dark purple bar** shows **VSB's inclusive education spending**.

Key Points:

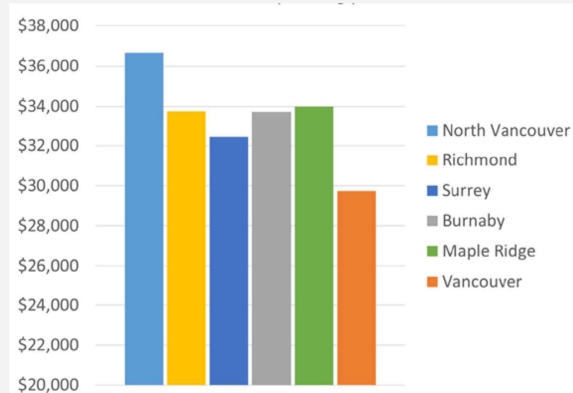
- Both funding and spending have increased, but take a look at the red line:
 - In 2016, VSB spent **125%** of the provincial grant—investing additional general funds into inclusive education.
 - In 2023/24, for the first time, **spending fell below grant levels**—underspent by **\$2.8M**, despite parent calls for more support.
 - That \$2.8M was returned to VSB's **\$3.3M surplus**.

This is critical because inclusive education supports not only the 3,000 Level 1–3 students, but also 3,000 other diverse and undesignated learners.

Even though total spending rose, **growth in student need outpaced funding**. On a **per-student basis**, spending has declined since 2016—worsened by inflation and rising wages—meaning less actual support for students.

What we learned about spending

- Lower spending compared to neighbouring districts



We compared **per student spending** across nearby districts.

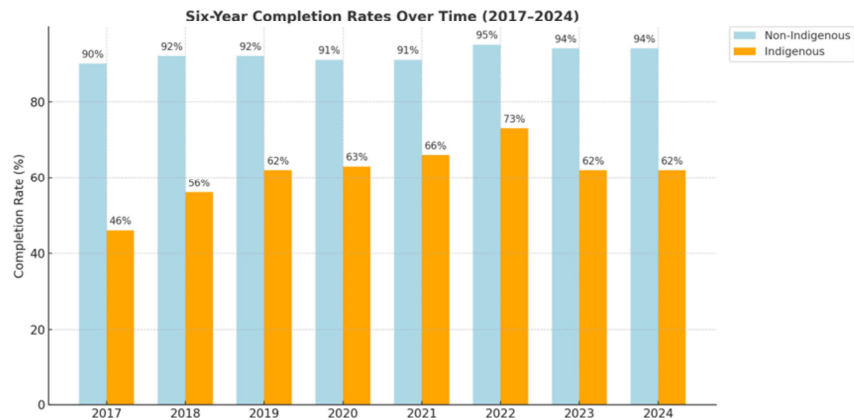
VSB spends significantly less per student than others in the region.
To match North Vancouver, VSB would need to invest:

- **\$19 million more per year**
- Equivalent to nearly **200 additional teachers**
- Or over **300 additional Education Assistants (EAs)**

Request #2: Close the Indigenous Graduation Gap

- Strengthen culturally relevant and community-led supports
- Increase targeted interventions to move beyond the 62% plateau in completion rates

Completion Rates for Indigenous Students



Completion rates for non-Indigenous students have remained consistently high — above 90% every year.

Indigenous student completion rates have improved, increasing from 46% in 2017 to 62% in 2024. But the gap remains wide — 32 percentage points lower than non-indigenous students.

Since 2022, progress has stalled. This plateau signals that the **current level of support for Indigenous learners is not enough**.

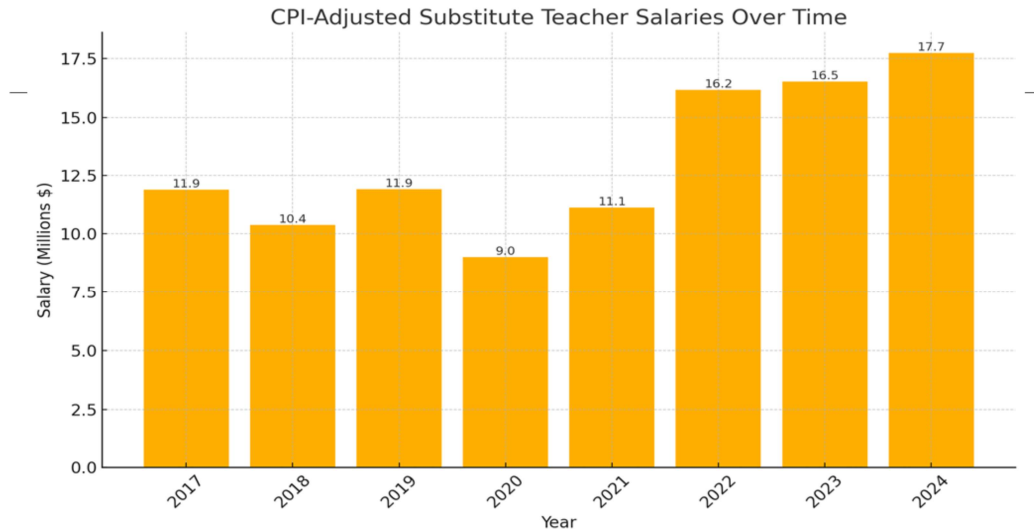
This ongoing disparity reflects **systemic barriers that require attention**. To truly close the gap, we need **stronger, targeted investments and sustained, culturally appropriate supports** — not just recognition of incremental change.

Source: Ministry of Education and Child Care (Source: <https://studentsuccess.gov.bc.ca/school-district/039/report/completion-rates>)

Request #3: Retain and Respect Teachers

- Address working conditions and well-being to reduce reliance on substitute teachers
- Act on feedback from frontline staff — they know what students need
- Building workforce housing on school sites will not solve the staffing problems

Substitute Teachers Costs are Increasing



From 2022 to 2024, substitute teacher salary costs in the Vancouver School District rose sharply — from **\$16.2 million in 2022** to **\$17.7 million in 2024**, based on CPI-adjusted figures.

This represents a **9% increase over just two years**, and a **nearly doubling compared to 2020**, when substitute salaries were only \$9.0 million.

The steep and sustained rise signals a deeper issue: schools are increasingly unable to retain regular teaching staff, leading to more frequent teacher absences and a heavier reliance on substitutes.

This trend not only places strain on budgets but disrupts continuity of learning for students — particularly those who rely on stable classroom relationships and consistent instruction.

Teacher survey shows...

- Nearly one-third of VSB teachers are considering leaving within five years.
- Many report feeling undervalued and overwhelmed by growing classroom complexity.
- Rising substitute teacher use signals deeper staffing instability.
- “Failures to fill” are pulling resource staff away from students who need support.
- Retaining experienced teachers is essential — students pay the price when we don’t.

A recent survey shows that nearly one-third of VSB teachers are considering leaving within five years.

Many say they feel undervalued, overwhelmed by complex classroom needs, and unsupported — all of which impact their well-being.

As more teachers leave or take time off, the district is increasingly relying on substitute teachers.

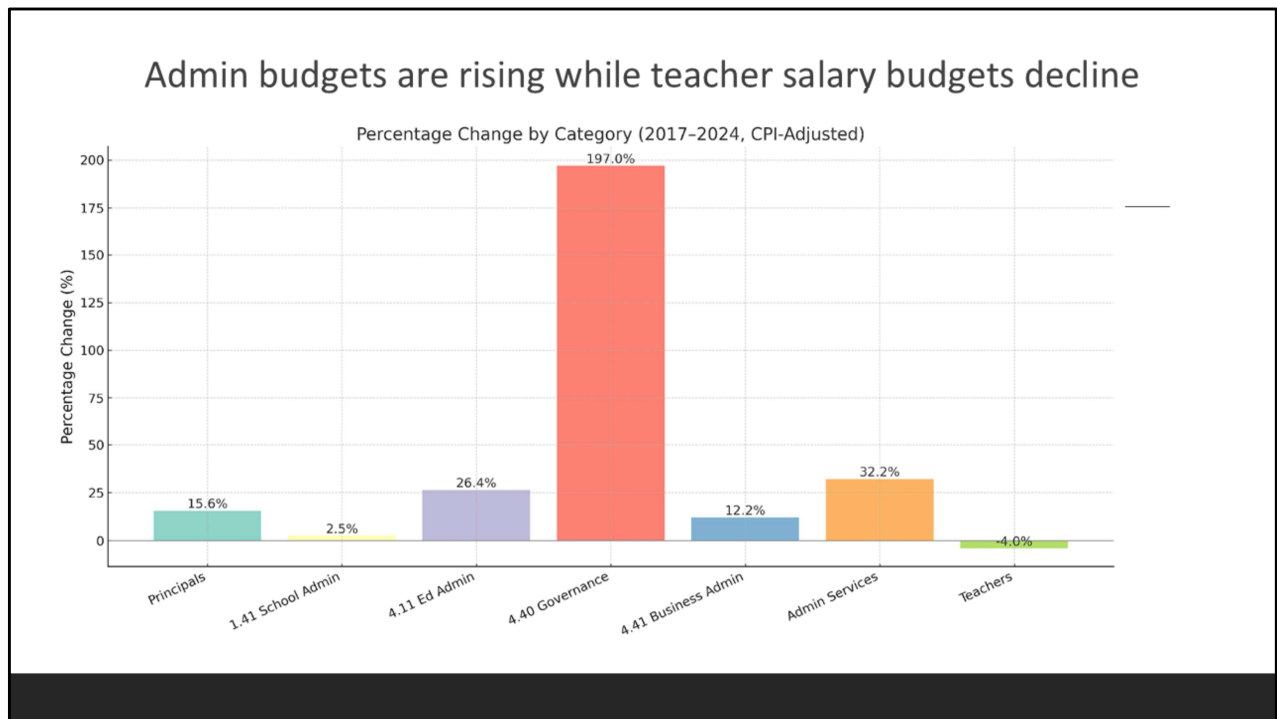
This has led to more “failures to fill,” where there’s no teacher available — forcing resource staff to step in, and pulling support away from students who need it most.

The growing use of substitutes reflects a deeper problem: the need to retain experienced teachers and invest in the conditions that help them stay.

Request #4:

Reduce Administration and Governance Costs

- Audit the 197% increase in District Governance spending.
- Reallocate funds from admin growth to classrooms and direct student supports.
- Ensure all public dollars are used where they have the greatest impact.



This chart compares the percentage change in spending from 2017 to 2024, adjusted for inflation.

While teacher salary budgets declined by 4%, governance spending at the Vancouver School Board rose by an astounding 197%.

Over the same period, the Province only increased overall operating grants by minimally each year.

These disproportionate increases in administrative costs are not sustainable — and they divert critical resources away from classrooms, teachers, and students, especially those who need the most support.

It's time to realign spending priorities with the core mission of public education.

Operational costs

Breakdown-Table: Administrative Spending (2017-vs-2024, CPI-Adjusted)¶

Category¶	2017-(\$M)¶ *Adjusted-for-CPI- 2024¶	2024-(\$M)¶	%-Change¶
Principal-Salaries¶	\$26,978,835¶	\$31,184,491¶	14.46%¶
School-Admin-(Salaries-&-Benefits)¶	\$39,368,633¶	\$40,364,322¶	2.53%¶
School-Admin-(Services-&-Supplies)¶	\$162,464¶	\$1,296,787¶	155%¶
Educational-Admin-(Salaries-&-Benefits)¶	\$5,212,473¶	\$6,590,156¶	23.34%¶
District-Governance-(Salaries-&-Benefits)¶	\$359,961¶	\$1,069,125¶	99.24%¶
Business-Admin-(Salaries-&-Benefits)¶	\$10,052,649¶	\$11,279,696¶	11.50%¶
District-Administration-Services-and-Supplies-(ADJ-2024-\$)¶	\$6,843,878¶	\$9,047,300¶	27.73%¶
Totals¶	\$88,978,893.00¶	\$100,831,877.00¶	¶

This is a table compares the 2017 budget to the 2024 budget adjusted for inflation by the Consumer Price Index.

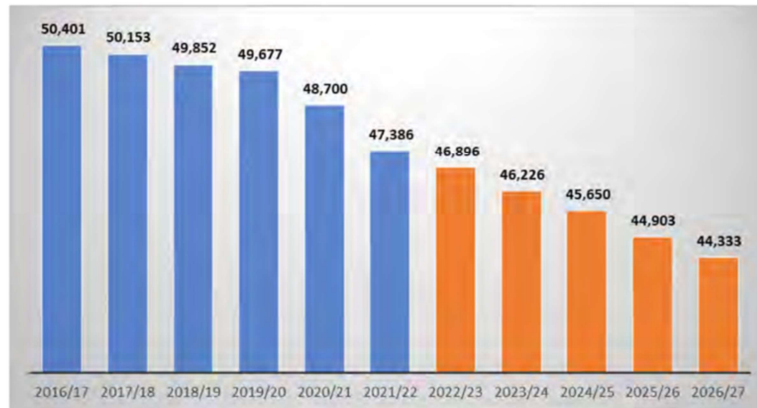
Even with inflation adjusted for, there is about a \$12 million dollar discrepancy.

The administrative costs have increased greatly – this is despite the implementation of new software programs such as: my education portal, schools cash online and the My Forms initiatives which have streamlined administration.

Request # 5:
Fix Facilities Planning and Stop Waste

- Make “common sense” planning decisions based on transparent, fact-based data
- Audit the increased spending in administration
- Recognize that utilities and grounds maintenance costs have remained stable

Enrollment forecasting



VSB's April 2022 student enrolment projections, as per 2022-2023 Operating fund draft budget
(Source: [link](#))

In April 2022, the VSB projected a steady decline in enrolment, estimating a loss of 250 students per year. But that forecast didn't hold. Instead, enrolment increased — by over 3,400 students between 2022 and 2024.

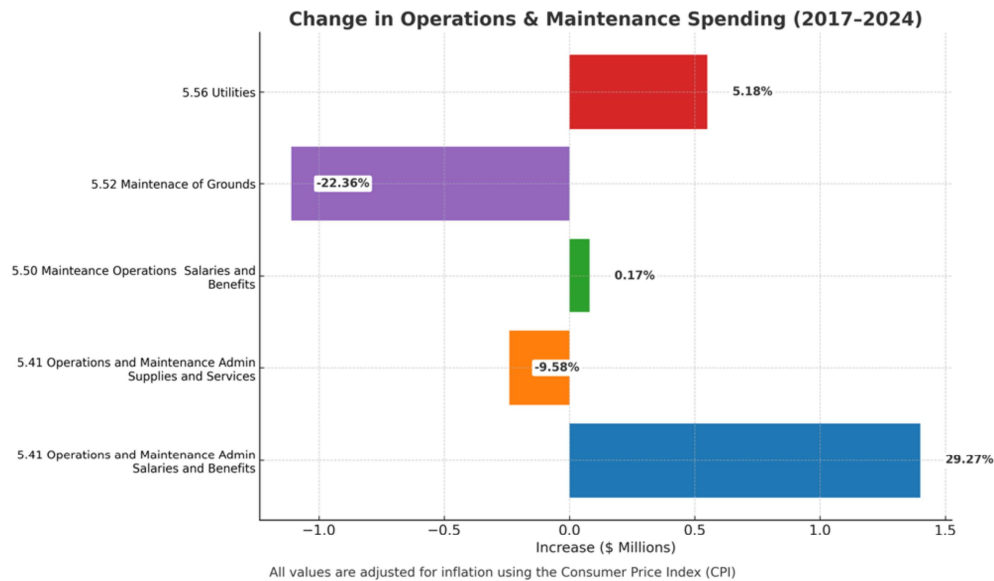
Despite this growth, funding and staffing didn't keep pace. Schools scrambled to add support staff, while classroom budgets remained flat.

And yet, land was disposed of based on outdated projections. At Fleming Elementary, a parcel equivalent to seven single-family lots was leased for only \$8.5 million— a long-term loss for short-term gain.

We know Vancouver's population is growing. Selling or leasing school land isn't just short-sighted — it's costly. These sites are needed for portables, childcare, and green space.

The lesson here is clear: **education planning must be flexible, data-informed, and grounded in the long-term needs of students and communities.**

Operations and Maintenance Administration



This chart shows how the Vancouver School Board's Operations & Maintenance spending has changed over time, with all values adjusted for inflation using the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

The most significant increase—**29.3%**—was in **Administrative Salaries and Benefits (Code 5.41)**. In contrast, spending on building maintenance, grounds, and utilities either remained flat or declined in real terms.

These figures are important context for recent decisions to close school fields and restrict access to outdoor space—decisions that were justified based on the need to reduce maintenance costs. They also challenge the narrative that “old schools cost too much to maintain.” If that were the main issue, we would expect to see a sharp rise in maintenance-related spending. Instead, that's not where the money went.

This raises questions about how budget decisions are being made, and whether they reflect the day-to-day needs of schools and students—especially when we see growing pressure on parents to fundraise for basic infrastructure, and communities losing access to public spaces like fields and playgrounds.

We're asking for a more transparent conversation about where public education dollars are going—and how to ensure those dollars support inclusive, safe, and well-maintained schools for all students.

Conclusion

- 💡 **Students needs must be prioritized** — their success benefits everyone.
- 👤 🏫 **Teachers are the backbone of our schools** — retaining them is smart and cost-effective.
- 📈 **Administration growth must be examined** — every dollar counts.
- 🏫 **Facilities decisions must be rooted in facts** — not faulty projections or unsupported narratives.
- 👨 👩 👧 **Families are watching** — and ready to work with the district for better outcomes.

Connect with us at vancouverdpac.org

In conclusion, we urge the district to focus investments where they will have the greatest impact — in classrooms, with students and teachers.

Special education supports are not optional — they are foundational to equity.

Teachers need to be heard, supported, and retained — it's both fiscally wise and educationally necessary.

Administrative growth should not outpace what's going into schools. And finally, decisions about school facilities must be based on accurate data and transparent reasoning. These decisions are permanent in nature and must be made with care.

Parents and caregivers across the district are engaged and ready to support good, evidence-based planning. Let's work together to build a stronger future for every child.



ADVOCATING FOR EQUITY

A CAREGIVER-LED EXAMINATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN VANCOUVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION WORKING GROUP



ENDORSED BY VANCOUVER DPAC THROUGH A DISTRICT-WIDE
PAC VOTE ON JANUARY 23, 2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report examines the current state of support for students with disabilities and diverse abilities (SWD) in the Vancouver School District (VSB). The findings are based on an analysis of caregiver surveys and funding and staffing data from publicly available information and Freedom of Information (FOI) requests. From the survey responses, we found that SWD face significant barriers to inclusion at the VSB, many of which seem to be linked to declining staffing levels. These barriers leave significant gaps in meeting the social, emotional, and educational needs of these students.

What we found

SWD and their families are struggling

Families of SWD report that current levels of in-class and specialized support have serious impacts on their children's well-being and learning. Students are falling behind academically, feeling anxious about attending school, and struggling with low self-esteem. Respondents note that resource teachers and EAs are stretched thin. They describe a lack of continuity when support staff are reassigned or reduced, undermining the trust students rely on to participate in the classroom. In some cases, families have withdrawn their children from school or have paid privately for essential supports such as tutoring and counseling. Caregivers feel that their children are excluded—socially and academically—when additional help is withdrawn or does not meet their needs.

Lack of transparency and communication

Caregivers struggle to access clear information about EA allocations and sometimes feel excluded from decisions about support. Some feel disrespected when advocating for their children's needs.

Reduced spending on SWD

While the inclusive education budget at the Vancouver School District (VSB) has grown, it has not kept pace with rising costs and the increasing number of students with disabilities (SWD).

Spending less compared to nearby districts

The VSB spends less per SWD compared to neighbouring districts like Burnaby and Surrey, and part of the inclusive education budget is allocated to principal and vice-principal salaries, reducing direct support in schools.

Understaffing

EA numbers are below planned ratios and lower than in nearby districts. Resource teacher numbers have not grown despite increased needs, and they are often diverted to cover teacher absences.

Worsening outcomes

Graduation rates for SWD in the VSB have declined in recent years, indicating worsening educational outcomes for these students.

Our recommendations

Recommendation 1: Increase inclusive education staffing in schools

- a. Align EA and resource teacher service levels to match the actual needs of students, including those who primarily need instructional support, executive function support, and social/emotional support.
- b. Hire more substitute teachers so resource teachers can remain in their specialized roles and provide consistent support.
- c. Update the fixed ratio of resource teachers to be tied to the population of SWD, rather than the total student population. This could be a topic for the collective agreement bargaining process.
- d. Maintain adequate levels of EA support in secondary schools to improve graduation rates for SWD.

Recommendation 2: Improve transparency and reporting

- a. Publish data on actual staffing levels compared to planned staffing levels, and report on hiring timelines.
- b. Report on how funding from the Ministry is used to support SWD.

- c. Survey students with disabilities and their caregivers about their inclusion experiences. Make the data available to the VSB community.

Recommendation 3: Recognize the importance of building relationships

- a. Increase consistency of EAs within individual schools and classrooms to allow SWD to form a trusted relationships with the EAs who are provided to support them.
- b. If and when EAs are required to be moved, communicate the change with SWD and caregivers.
- c. Build positive relationships and open communication with caregivers and parents of SWD.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report was made possible through the collective efforts and contributions of members of the Inclusive Education Working Group (IEWG) and the caregivers who took the time to share their experiences and perspectives. Your input provided critical context and enriched the findings presented here.

Citation: IEWG. 2025. “Advocating for Equity A Caregiver-Led Examination of Inclusive Education in Vancouver Public Schools”. Report prepared by parents for VSB District Parent Advisory Council Inclusive Education Working Group (IEWG).

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Cover photo: Amanda Goodison (used with permission)

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INTRODUCTION

This report was created by the Inclusive Education Working Group (IEWG). We are a group of caregivers organized through the Vancouver District Parent Advisory Council (Vancouver DPAC). The IEWG advocates for meaningful inclusion of students with disabilities and diverse abilities (hereafter referred to as SWD) in the Vancouver School District (referred to as the VSB).

The [BC Human Rights Code](#) forbids discrimination based on disability in services customarily available to the public, including education. School districts are required to provide meaningful access to education through accommodation to the point of undue hardship, and school boards must ensure that policies and resource allocation support the inclusion of SWD.

During the 2023-2024 school year, members of the IEWG observed that SWD at the VSB were experiencing diminishing support resulting in children being excluded from learning and from social spaces and activities. We were concerned that, with increasing regularity, resource teachers were being pulled from their duties to fill in for absent classroom teachers. We also noticed a dramatic reduction in the number of educational assistants and other support workers (called “EAs” or “SSAs”) for students needing extra help. Resource teachers and support workers are vital to the inclusion of children with disabilities in education, and we were witnessing the negative effects of these educational gaps on our children.

We wanted to better understand how SWD were experiencing current levels of support at VSB schools. We also want to find out whether, and in what ways, funding data and staffing records demonstrated what we were observing on an everyday basis. To address our questions, we surveyed caregivers of SWD to find out how their children were experiencing current levels of support in the district. We also pulled data from BC Ministry of Education and VSB reports. Where information was not publicly available, we issued Freedom of Information (FOI) requests.

In this report, we present the results of our research. Our intention is to draw connections between funding patterns, staff and teacher ratio levels, and the lived experiences of children and their caregivers. We hope that the information in this report will be a helpful tool for families in their advocacy for inclusion of their children in VSB schools.

We also hope that decision-makers take seriously the profoundly negative effects of funding gaps on SWD. In British Columbia, the [School Act](#) requires school boards to hear advice and concerns brought forward by district parents’ advisory councils (DPACs). Specifically, Section 8.5 allows DPACs to advise their board on any matter related to education in the district, while section 67 (5.1) enables the board to set procedures for receiving that advice. In addition, [Order in Council 1280/89](#)—often called the “Mandate for the School System”—outlines that public schools must be accessible, relevant, equitable, high-quality, and accountable. These legal requirements mean the VSB has a duty to consider any formal input from parent groups on whether it is providing adequate support for SWD. This report aims to provide such input.

Despite having a history of eloping, running and needing continuity in relationships, my child had their SSA support pulled early in the year, and while the IEP meeting happened early, very few of the supports are in place - universal or individual. We have been told that SSAs don't provide academic support and while academic success has been my child's main barrier, since this support dropped away, his behaviours, mental health, and social integration have all been profoundly impacted. My child has become increasingly disengaged, lost confidence in his ability to learn, produces very little work, and elopes on regular basis. He is depressed and highly anxious, and we are now planning on missing work one day a week so he can be at home. [...] This did not have to happen and is a systemic failure of the district, not the people who are trying to care for our child in the school.

(Caregiver of elementary student with autism, dysgraphia, & ADHD)

BACKGROUND

FUNDING MODEL FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND DIVERSE ABILITIES

To understand how staffing levels have shifted at the VSB, it is important to identify the main funding sources intended to support the inclusion of SWD. BC’s Ministry of Education provides annual operating grants to school districts for every enrolled student, referred to as the “basic allocation.” As shown in Table 1, the basic allocation for the 2023/24 year was \$8,625 per pupil in VSB.

In addition to the basic allocation, districts receive supplemental grants for students with certain low-incidence disabilities or designations. An additional allocation of \$49,070 is provided for physically dependent students (Designation A) and deafblind students (Designation B). For students with moderate to profound intellectual disabilities (Designation C), a physical disability or chronic health impairment (Designation D), visual impairment (Designation E), who are deaf or hard of hearing (Designation F), or with autism (Designation G), there is an additional \$23,280 per year. Students labelled as requiring “Intensive Behaviour Interventions” or with “Serious Mental Illness” (Designation H) bring in an added \$11,760.

These grants are provided to the district as a block of funding with no conditions on their use. In

Table 1. BC Ministry of Education funding categories for all students and designated students.

FUNDING CATEGORY	AMOUNT PER STUDENT 2023/2024
Basic allocation	\$8,625
Supplemental grant funding	
Level 1 (Designations A & B)	\$49,070
Level 2 (Designations C, D, E, F, G)	\$23,280
Level 3 (Designation H)	\$11,760

2023/24, VSB enrolled about 3,200 students with low incidence (A-H) designations and received roughly \$70 million in supplemental funding, in addition to the \$30 million for the basic allocation for these students.

Not all designations receive supplemental grants. Students with a mild intellectual disability (Designation K), giftedness (Designation P), learning disabilities (Designation Q), or moderate behavior challenges (Designation R) do not receive supplemental funding and rely on supportive funding that is built into the basic allocation:

“The Basic Allocation provided for all students includes funds to support students with other special needs, including students with mild intellectual disabilities, learning disabilities, moderate behaviour support or mental illness, and students who are gifted. The Basic Allocation also includes funds to support boards of education in providing learning assistance, speech-language pathology services and physiotherapy services, hospital homebound services, and assessment services.”¹

Thus, inclusive education budgets should be sufficient to support not only low-incidence students (A-H) but also more than 3,000 students with other designations, as well as students without any designation who need additional support prior to being diagnosed with a disability; many students in VSB have “invisible disabilities” that many not be identified and diagnosed until later grades (e.g. autism, dyslexia, ADHD, mental health disorders, etc.). In total, more than 6,000 students required some form of assistance, including Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), resource time, or education assistant support in 2023/24.

1 <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/legislation-policy/pub-lic-schools/k-12-funding-inclusive-education>

TYPES OF SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND DIVERSE ABILITIES

Several types of educational staff and resources deliver inclusive education supports:

Classroom teachers: Deliver the general curriculum and manage diverse learning, environmental, and behavior needs. Predominantly funded by the basic operating grant. Numbers are determined by enrolment and class size/composition rules outlined in the collective agreement.

Resource teachers: Provide specialized education to students who need additional help. They often create IEPs, work with students one-on-one or in small groups, and collaborate with classroom teachers. They are funded through the inclusive education budget. However, resource teachers are frequently reassigned to cover classrooms due to substitute teacher shortages, reducing their availability for targeted support.

Case managers: Responsible for maintaining a student's file, administering assessment, coordinating the development of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and presenting information about the student to school based team or district staff if required. Case managers are typically resource teachers but may be other teachers or administrators.

District resource teachers: Provide expertise and support teachers in schools. They are typically funded through the inclusive education budget.

Education assistants (EA): Also referred to as teacher assistants, SSAs, SSBs and SSWs, they provide direct support to students, prioritizing medical, personal care, accessibility, safety, and

then instructional needs. Most EAs are funded through the inclusive education budget and staffing is based on student designations. Many parents view EAs as vital for their children's ability to attend and engage in school.

School based team (SBT): a problem-solving group that works with classroom teachers to develop educational programs for students who require additional support. It typically includes the principal or vice principal, resource teachers, classroom teachers and sometimes district staff. SBTs make decisions regarding case managers, referrals and the allocation of resources.

Individualized education plan (IEP): a written educational plan for inclusive education students designed to describe programming modifications and/or adaptations and to indicate specific services and tiered supports provided.

Tiered supports: escalating levels of support based on student needs. **Tier 1** includes high-quality, differentiated instruction and ongoing assessment for all students. **Tier 2** offers targeted interventions, such as small group instruction and individualized classroom strategies, often involving the school-based team and assessments. **Tier 3** delivers intensive, specialized support for students with significant challenges, often with low incidence designations, with interventions guided by district staff, assessments, and collaboration with specialized programs and services.

Did you know?

While VSB offers some alternative programs and specialised district programs, the majority of VSB students with inclusive education designations attend school in general education classes. This is one of many reasons that having adequate levels of staffing and teaching support in both Elementary and Secondary general education programs is critical to the success of these students.

WHAT WE DID

To learn about how funding and staffing levels have shifted over time and their effects on SWD and their families, we used a two-pronged approach.

CAREGIVER SURVEY

In April 2024, through Vancouver DPAC, we circulated a survey among caregivers of SWD attending VSB programs, with 43 responses. The survey aimed to find out what these caregivers were seeing in terms of support for their children. The survey was anonymous, asking only if their child was in elementary or secondary school and about the designation or disability of their child. This was followed by open-ended and close-ended questions about the child's support levels at the VSB. The students represented had a range of disabilities and diverse abilities including autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), learning disabilities (LDs), Down syndrome, and others, with some learners having multiple diagnoses. The survey questions can be found in "Appendix A - Survey".

As we read through the caregiver comments, we looked for themes that reflected common experiences among the respondents. No two responses were the same, as student needs and the barriers they face vary widely. Yet, commonalities were found across the responses, which helped us to understand some of the diverse ways that VSB students face barriers to inclusion on a daily and systemic basis. We present common themes from the survey responses below. Please note that details from some responses have been changed to protect student identities.

FUNDING AND STAFFING DATA

To access information about resourcing and staffing levels, we searched for publicly available data related to inclusive education including financial plans, annual budgets, audited financial statements, and the Ministry's district revenue and expenditure tables. Some information regarding staffing levels were not available in open data, so we issued FOI requests for detailed staffing records (Form 1530). We also issued FOI requests to access EA allocation data from VSB, Burnaby School District, and Surrey School District to compare staffing ratios and funding.

We correlated funding and staffing data, looking for patterns and trends. For example, headcounts of SWD were combined with financial data to show VSB's inclusive education funding levels per student between 2016 and 2024. Staffing data were combined with student headcounts to

present staffing rates per student over the same period. Inclusive education spending by VSB and neighbouring districts were compared to analyze how various districts allocate their spending. In this way, we were able to develop a picture of how funding at the district level for SWD has changed over time and ways that these funding patterns correspond with staffing levels.

In the next sections, we present themes from caregiver comments in the survey followed by financial and staffing data. Together, these enable us to draw connections between the everyday experiences of SWD and patterns of funding and support levels.

WHAT WE LEARNED

KEY FINDINGS ABOUT STUDENT EXPERIENCES WITH SUPPORT LEVELS AT VSB

What Does Support Mean for Students with Disabilities?

In the survey, many caregivers expressed that EAs played an important supporting role in the lives of their children. For many learners, having a trusted adult such as an EA makes the difference between being able to attend school or not. A parent of a young child with autism² described the importance of this personal support for their child:

In kindergarten and before the support was available in grade 1, he had extreme anxiety around school. Often would throw fits upon arrival or before school and was unable to attend. This was very challenging. Since receiving support, my child does not face this anxiety. He is happy to go to school most of the time. Still has many struggles but we are both less stressed.

In another example, an EA helped a high school student with a range of diagnoses, including Down syndrome, ADHD and autism “put together any adapted work for class presentation or integration”. According to the child’s caregiver, the EA played an essential role in supporting the student’s intellectual development. Without this extra support, the student was not able to participate fully in class activities.

For students with specific learning challenges, support may also mean instructional intervention from a resource teacher, either one-on-one or in small groups. One respondent whose child has autism and ADHD described how, in the previous

year, their child “had regular meetings outside of class with her resource teacher and the energy was so very different. Knowing she had that space where she felt supported, away from the eyes and ears of the other students was invaluable”. Unfortunately for this student and others, time with resource teachers has become increasingly rare, such as for this student with autism:

My child went from receiving support full time last year to less than 30 minutes per day. My child has fallen back socially and academically. The impact is great on our family. My child elopes from school most days as the teacher has no connection to them. [...] We do not get any help from the resource teacher as the resource teacher is mostly pulled into teaching classes because of a shortage of teachers. The classroom teacher is overwhelmed with 30 students 3 of whom also need support. There is nothing about our experience that is inclusive or adaptive. It’s the opposite.

As one caregiver explained, even when students are scheduled to receive targeted learning assistance, “resource teachers are often asked to be substitute teachers and have to cancel support”. This caregiver decided to remove their dyslexic child from the VSB because appropriate and consistent learning support was not available.

² Some people prefer person-first language when referring to a diagnosis (e.g., person with autism) to emphasize the individual, rather than the diagnosis. Other people prefer identity-first language (e.g., I am autistic) when referring to themselves. In this situation we do not know people’s preference, so have used person-first language.

A Pattern of Reduced Support Results in Exclusion from Schools and Learning

Survey responses showed a pattern of reduced support in the 2023/24 year:

There was a drastic cut to the staffing level at my child's high school this year. It wasn't until October of this school year until we realized (through PAC meeting notes) that the EA support my child had been receiving in previous years was no longer being provided to her and that the specific staff members she had built trusted relationships with were no longer even at the school [...] The reduction of this support has led to significant challenges for both my child and for many other students in her classes who previously shared this EAs support.

For some learners, the sudden reduction in support meant a reversal in progress that had been gained in earlier years. This caregiver's high schooler experienced severe anxiety and relied on outreach support to stay connected to their school:

We were just starting to make some progress with this when we learned that outreach support will no longer be an option going forward. Outreach has been a critical resource for my child (and many others!) who has become disconnected from their school community due to chronic absenteeism.

In another example, an elementary school student with autism and ADHD no longer wanted to go to school because of lack of support:

All of the ground we made up in past years has been lost without support, no more support in being able to forge friendships, unable to complete work because there is no EA support and no resource teacher support.

Other caregivers stated that they hadn't noticed a reduction in the amount of support in 2023/24, but that support had been insufficient in the years leading up to and including 2023/24. The situation at the VSB was summed up by one respondent this way: "Overall the teachers and RT have been amazing but there are not enough supporting services in VSB to equalize the playing field. It's deeply unfair."

Supports for our child have been steadily reduced. She is left alone with "math that is too hard for me" because the classroom and resource teachers do not have the time to prepare and provide appropriately modified materials. There is only one SSA for the entire school, stretched too thin. We are forced to pay out of pocket for tutoring to address basic, foundational numeracy skills for our daughter.

(Caregiver of an elementary student with an intellectual disability and FASD)

Lack of continuity in support

A central concern for caregivers was the lack of continuity in the individuals assigned to help a particular learner. Regarding their child with autism, this caregiver stated: “He has had periods when support has been great and then without warning his support person gets reassigned to another classroom”. One respondent described how discontinuity had been built into the support model at their child’s school:

Because there is such a shortage, our school has decided to rotate EAs as much as possible so that kids don’t get attached. But anyone who’s worked with kids who have a designation understands that consistency is key to their success. Constant change can be difficult.

As respondents pointed out, this model ignores the importance of building relationships of care with trusted adults at school, which is essential for positive development and learning to take place.

The impact of inconsistent support is profound. This child’s caregiver described the significant role their child’s EA plays in not only supporting but also advocating for their child, who was non-speaking with autism and an intellectual disability and required one-on-one support:

For the first three weeks of school that support position changed three times, including the classroom teacher, which made a very difficult and confusing start to the year. Because there was no specific assigned support for those first weeks (which meant no specific advocate for his needs), my son was left without a chair and desk for one week (sitting on the floor while peers sat in desks) and given a closet to regulate in. He did not have access to his specific toileting equipment for the first two weeks. In the first three weeks of school my son was left without autonomy, dignity and equity.

When supports are in place and working well, they are often invisible. Unfortunately, this may lead to the assumption that the supports are not necessary. This teen had been provided with daily targeted reading instruction for 10 weeks, and “she improved her reading significantly (half a grade in 10 weeks). It then was withdrawn and SSWs [EAs] were supposed to be trained to continue. They weren’t able to, so it got dropped”.

Coping alone

Many students with disabilities are left to cope on their own. Their struggles may be largely invisible and therefore not prioritized for additional support. Several caregivers made comments such as this one: “Our child is not disruptive in class and therefore does not receive support for his learning challenges”. One respondent commented that their child:

is grade 6 now, and things become even worse. [...] Whether my son can get support or not, depending on that day [if] any of EA can squeeze time out to help him, maybe couple hours, maybe half hour, maybe not. I can’t blame school for doing that, safety is very important, but it is really hurting my feelings a lot. It feels like my son got punished for being a well behaved boy which is what we asked him to be.

Caregivers were commonly told by school staff and administrators that “children with the most need would get help and because my child wasn’t violent or a safety risk, he wouldn’t get help”.

Effects of Low Support Levels on Learners and their Families

Falling behind in learning

Through the survey comments, a picture emerges of how diminishing levels of support create a system that is “stretched too thin”, which negatively affects learners with disabilities and their families. One overall impact of insufficient support is that learners fall behind in their learning. Caregivers worry about whether their children will be able to graduate and what this will mean for their future:

My worry is that as my child progresses up in grades, they will fall further and further behind their peers and education will be much more difficult and anxiety inducing for them, leading to unfavorable results or experiences for the future.

This is a legitimate concern. As shown in Table 4 on page 18, the graduation rate for students with disabilities is far below that for other students.

Many respondents commented that their children were not able to access learning in the same way as their peers for several reasons. For example, some students with disabilities need to use technology in the classroom for learning. A number of comments highlighted that students were not encouraged to use devices or not supported in learning how to use the technology, as the following comments show:

IEP recommends access to type, but he has not learned to type, and he is not encouraged to use a device for his work.

The IEP didn't get started until December, the contents are vague, and are rarely implemented. For example, one key element is for technology to be used in place of written work, but he still is presented daily with worksheets requiring written answers for which he receives no support (such as a scribe).

He receives little to no support to use assistive technology, though we have provided an iPad and appropriate software. He is falling further and further behind in his ability to spell and express himself in writing.

Stress, anxiety, and loss of confidence

A lack of support for learners with disabilities leads to stress, anxiety, loss of confidence, and low self-esteem, as seen with this student with autism and ADHD:

Our child has no extra support at school. He is not able to participate in many activities and is being punished instead for his behaviours (i.e., at recess social issues escalate and he spends his time in the office). He comes home thinking everyone believes he's a bad kid, instead of a kid that just needs an extra bit of support and help. His teacher has been amazing, but it's too much on her.

Stress and anxiety affect the whole family:

Failures to understand the learning needs of a twice exceptional student with dyslexia have resulted in lower grades, late nights trying to get work completed, physical health concerns and signs of burnout and mental health concerns... Oversights in education planning have resulted in a significant amount of stress and anxiety for everyone in the family.

As a result of these stresses, some children refuse to attend school and/or caregivers decide to keep children at home to protect them from further harm, which can result in impacts to parents' work and income.

Structural exclusion from school spaces and learning

These are just some of the ways that learners with disabilities are structurally excluded from education environments at the VSB. Caregivers reported a number of ways that schools failed to provide their children with the same learning opportunities as others. For example, one respondent described how their high school child with an intellectual disability was placed in a segregated Life Skills program. It was only through the caregiver's advocacy that the child was able to join one general education class and learn alongside students outside their program. In another case, a caregiver of a child with autism

pointed out that, although their child has support in school, the child:

is not learning alongside peers. They spend most of the day alone, with their SSA [EA], not in the classroom. There needs to be much more support for teachers and support staff to help integrate kids with special needs in the classroom and make curriculum accessible to all.

Respondents pointed out that what is needed is “not just compliance support in the classroom”, but support for socializing, on the playground, and during other unstructured times. Without support during these activities, many students are left out. For example, a learner with autism, ADHD, anxiety and learning disabilities, “receives zero SSA support [...] and has not played outside at lunch for years due to lack of support”.

Financial burden for families of SWD

Families described the financial strain caused by insufficient support. Some families end up paying for the required support and educational interventions their children do not receive through the VSB. “We are forced to pay out of pocket for tutoring to address basic, foundational numeracy skills,” said one caregiver. Another said, “we are paying currently for very expensive tutoring to meet her needs e.g. to teach her to read”. One respondent with a child with learning disabilities said they had spent “thousands of dollars on private tutoring”.

Some respondents stated that VSB staff, including administrative staff responsible for inclusion, recommended they pay privately for assistance from professionals, such as counsellors and tutors. Some paid or intended to pay for private psychoeducational assessments, as the wait time for an assessment through the VSB was long.

One respondent said they had removed their child from the VSB as their child’s learning needs were not being met, presumably to send the child to a school in another district or a private school. However, not all families can afford private professional support. One respondent explained:

My kid doesn’t get support. He did last year. He needs a psych ed assessment but apparently the waitlist is so long that he will be in high school first. We are low income so he’s just not going to get one, which means high school will be all kinds of drama.

Other families may sacrifice work opportunities or take full leave of absences from jobs to stay home with their children: “We have no choice but to keep our child home one day a week because they feel so unsupported and anxious at school.”

My son was enrolled at a high school where he was receiving little to no support in the current school year. It was affecting his self-esteem, and he was skipping class as a result of feeling that he was unable to succeed. We transferred him to an alternate program where he is able to feel included in the work and is not made to feel “weak” or “lazy.” At the alternative program he gets no specialized support or specific care for his learning disability, but he is able to participate which is good for his mental health. We basically just had to choose mental health over learning because there were no supports for him at the high school.

(Caregiver of a high school student with dyslexia & dysgraphia)

Communication with and Treatment of Caregivers

It is clear that caregivers who responded to the survey want what is best for their children and are there to advocate for their needs. However, some expressed that they felt left out of the circle of communication around their child's support needs, as with this child with dyslexia: "Last year he was getting help with reading/writing/math. This year there has been nothing. ... Any support is gone, and we as parents were not notified this was going to happen". Some said there is a lack of transparency at both the school and administrative level: "I don't understand why VSB has reduced these positions or why I can't get a proper explanation from VSB on why and how these critical supporting roles were cut back".

One respondent expressed a concern that their child's school leaves it up to the child to advocate for what they need:

What they are doing to support our child is a bit of mystery. I feel all support is relying on my child's ability to self-advocate, but my child is not always recognizing the need to do so (she doesn't recognize her rights and if they were not met) and has no skill to self-advocate.

Equally concerning is the fact that many caregivers seem to feel powerless to help their children in the face of these barriers. Some are even treated disrespectfully by district staff. A caregiver of an Indigenous learner with autism, chronic health impairment and anxiety, said they "wrote many letters to the [name of administrator]. He was very condescending and unwilling to help". One respondent simply asked: "What is a parent to do?".

Where Does all the Funding Go?

A question that was repeatedly posed by caregivers was "Where does all the funding go?" Many families are aware that the district receives supplemental grant funding based on their children's designation. However, they wondered why the funding did not result in higher levels of support for their children. One person reported that their child, who had a number of diagnoses, was deemed not to have "significant enough" deficits to warrant support, "even though the district gets 23K for my child's diagnosis". This respondent expressed frustration with a situation in which a district level principal told them that:

my child could seek out counselling outside of school. I said that the district has all the funding and I cannot afford the cost of counselling. Then he told me to seek out child and youth mental health. So my child gets 23K, sees none of it, and now I am supposed to use free services outside of school?! None of this makes sense.

Another frustrated respondent, whose child with autism and ADHD was receiving only minimal support, asked:

Where is our funding going? Why is the VSB not trying to solve the problem by hiring more people in a timely manner instead of taking weeks to hire when other districts hire within days? The VSB is stealing money from our designated children and pretending like there are no problems.

Like these caregivers, we also wondered how the funding for SWD is allocated and how the district's budget decisions align with student needs. In light of these questions, we examined recent funding and staffing data. We attempted to address the question posed by families of why the district's resources do not seem to be reaching so many students in need of support.

KEY FINDINGS FROM FUNDING AND STAFFING DATA

The following sections present key findings identified through the course of the information review. We note that a large portion of the data presented in this report relates to SWD whose designations bring in Level 1, 2, and 3 funding to the district (based on A-H designations). An increased focus on this information is solely due to the higher amount of data that was available (both provincially and at the district level) for our review, rather than any specific interest only in these categories. IEWG team members (and the authors of this report) are represented by parents of SWD with a broad range of disabilities (designations A through R).

Declining Spending on Students with Disabilities

VSB's spending declined, per level 1, 2 & 3 category student, between the 2016/17 and 2023/24 school years (see "Appendix B - Financial Data Tables" - Table 5). While the total inclusive education budget increased year on year, the rate of increase was outpaced by rising wage costs and growth in the population of SWD.

The decline in per-student spending by the VSB stems from the district's own funding allocation, rather than changes in Ministry funding. From 2016/17 to 2023/24, the Ministry's supplemental grants increased by 82%, while the VSB increased the inclusive education budget by only 37% (see "Appendix B - Financial Data Tables" - Table 5). In other words, the VSB is contributing a smaller portion of its other funds to inclusive education compared to the past.

Figure 1 shows that in 2016, the VSB's inclusive education budget was 125% of the funding it received through Provincial grants for Level 1, 2, and 3 designations, meaning the district contributed additional money from its general funds. The inclusive education budget should be greater than the grants for students with low incidence (A-H) designations because it also supports thousands of students with other designations (I to R) or without any formal designation who need additional support for disabilities not yet formally diagnosed.

By the end of the 2023/24 school year, the budget expended had dropped to 98% of the Provincial grants for low-incidence students — less than the amount provided by those grants and no longer supplemented at all by the VSB's general funds (Figure 1). This decline in per student funding affects not only the 3,000 low-incidence students with Level 1, 2, or 3 designations, but also the more than 3,000 students with diverse abilities who rely on the inclusive education budget to cover their support needs. The data underscores a growing strain on resources, as fewer dollars are spread across growing numbers of learners requiring support.

Over the course of the 2023/24 school year, IEWG members further observed that, while the VSB's planned budget for inclusive education was to be slightly higher than the total grant amounts for Level 1, 2, and 3 students, the actual spent budget at the end of the school year (as detailed in VSBs 2023/24 audited financial statement³) came in \$2.8 Million below the planned inclusive education budget.

3 <https://media.vsb.bc.ca/media/Default/medialib/2023-2024-audited-financial-statements.6c51f476335.pdf>

Provincial Special Needs Grant Funding and Inclusive Education Budget over Time in VSB

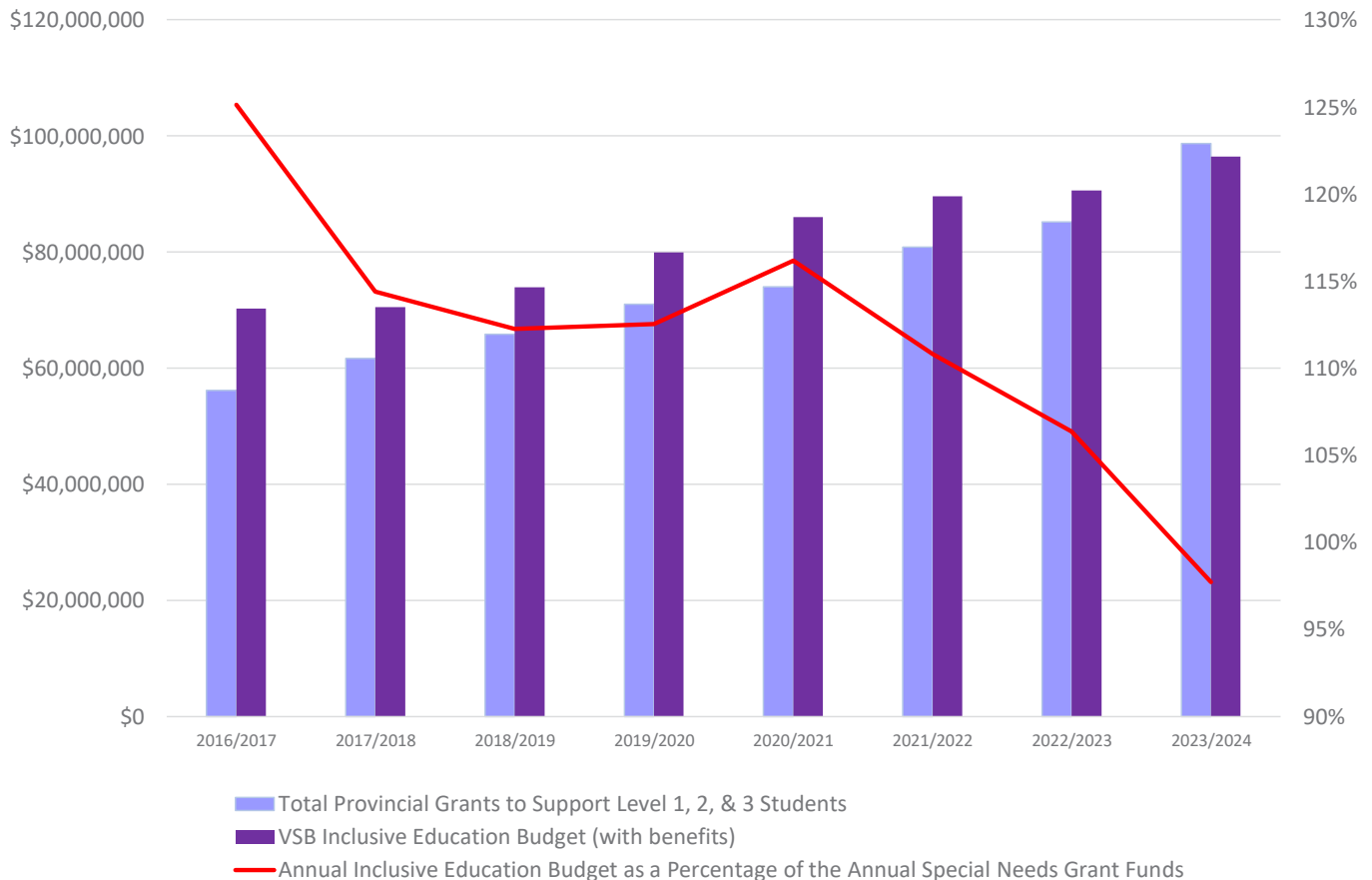


Figure 1. Graph showing the VSB budget for inclusive education compared to the Provincial grants to support Level 1, 2 & 3 funded students since 2016/17. The diminishing gap between the grant funding and the budget mean VSB is spending less than it used to over and above the grants specific to Level 1, 2, and 3 funded students. Source: [BC Ed Provincial Operating Grants](#); [VSB Financial Information](#)

Lower Spending per Student Compared to Neighbouring Districts

Compared to several neighbouring school districts, the VSB spends less per student on inclusive education (Figure 2). In addition, VSB includes approximately \$2.5 Million of principal and vice-principal salaries in its inclusive education budget, leaving less money for direct student support from EAs and teachers. Compared to almost all school districts, VSB also spends less on substitute teachers (Figure 3), which may explain why resource teachers are often being pulled from their regular duties to cover classroom teacher absences.

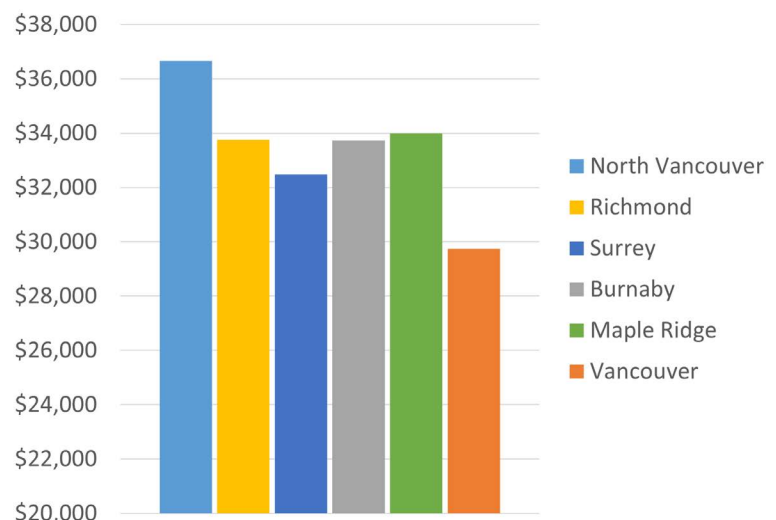


Figure 2. Graph showing spending per Level 1, 2 & 3 designated student in Vancouver compared to some neighbouring districts. The graph shows VSB spends less on special education: in total, on instructional salaries, on EAs, and on substitutes per child. Source: [BC School District Revenue and Expenditure Tables](#) and [Student Headcount by Disabilities or Diverse Abilities Category](#)

To understand whether VSB’s EA staffing was comparable to other districts, we also obtained elementary school EA staffing data from Surrey and Burnaby through freedom of information requests (Table 2). Both Surrey and Burnaby have higher EA staffing levels in their elementary schools compared to Vancouver.

Table 2. Comparison of students per EA and per unit of funding between Burnaby, Surrey and Vancouver elementary schools for the 2023/24 school year. Source: FOI.

DISTRICT	EAS	LEVEL 1, 2 & 3 STUDENTS	LEVEL 1, 2 & 3 SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING	LEVEL 1,2 & 3 STUDENTS PER EA	EAS PER \$100K OF FUNDING
Burnaby	528	899	\$20,578,530	1.7	2.6
Surrey	1,754	3,088	\$68,797,790	1.8	2.5
Vancouver	744	1,737	\$39,738,730	2.3	1.9

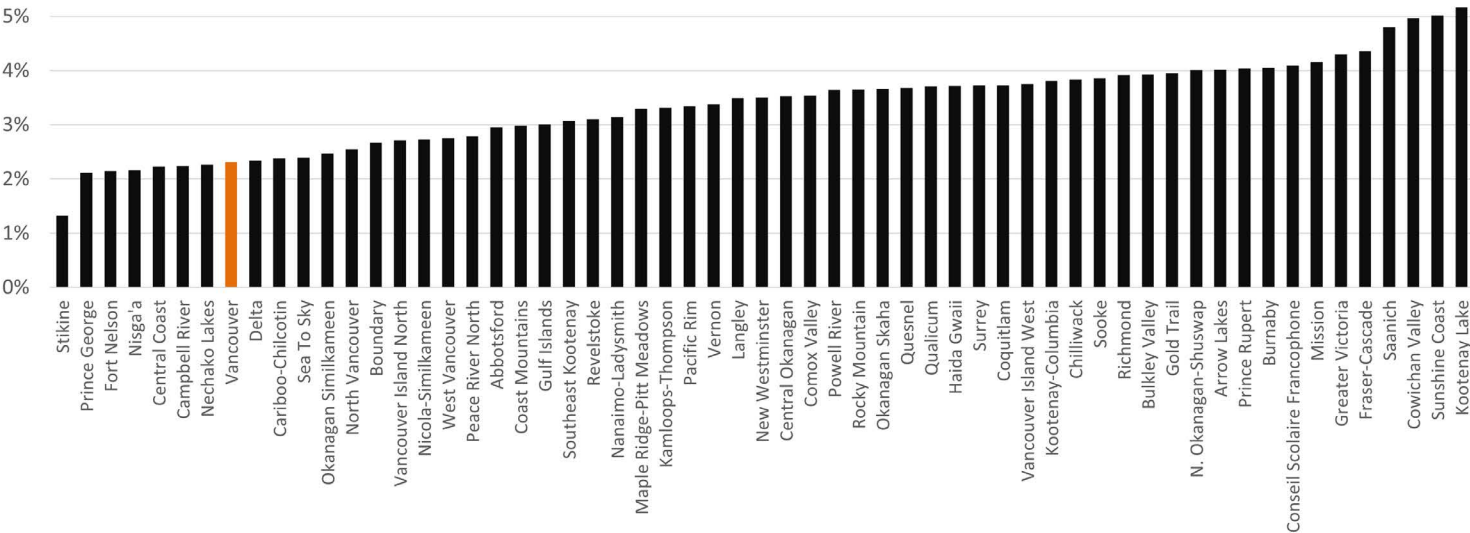


Figure 3. Graph showing that VSB spends a smaller proportion of its total expenditure on substitutes compared to most other districts. Source: [BC School District Revenue and Expenditure Tables](#).

Support Needs Outstripping Staffing Capacity

Resource teacher shortages

The number of EAs and resource teachers in VSB schools has not increased at the same rate as Level 1, 2 & 3 student enrolment (Figure 4), or SWD overall. Since 2016, VSB has gained 43% more low-incidence students, but only 18% more EAs and few resource teachers. This means that VSB staff are being stretched to support a growing number of designated and other students requiring their services.

The number of inclusive education resource teachers has been flat because of a fixed ratio set in the collective agreement (one resource teacher for every 232 students)⁴. Since the district’s student population has remained almost the

same for the past seven years, the number of resource teachers has remained stable. However, resource teacher caseloads have grown with the rising population of Level 1, 2 & 3 funded students (Figure 4) and students with other designations.

The VSB is projecting that Level 2 designated student enrolment will continue to grow significantly⁵, therefore, we can expect shortages will worsen if the current resource teacher ratio is maintained. Resource teacher shortages are also made worse by those teachers being pulled from their duties to cover classes when substitute teachers are not available.

4 https://media.vsb.bc.ca/media/Default/medialib/24_04apr29_2024-2025-financial-plan.235b4673109.pdf
5 [Ibid](#)

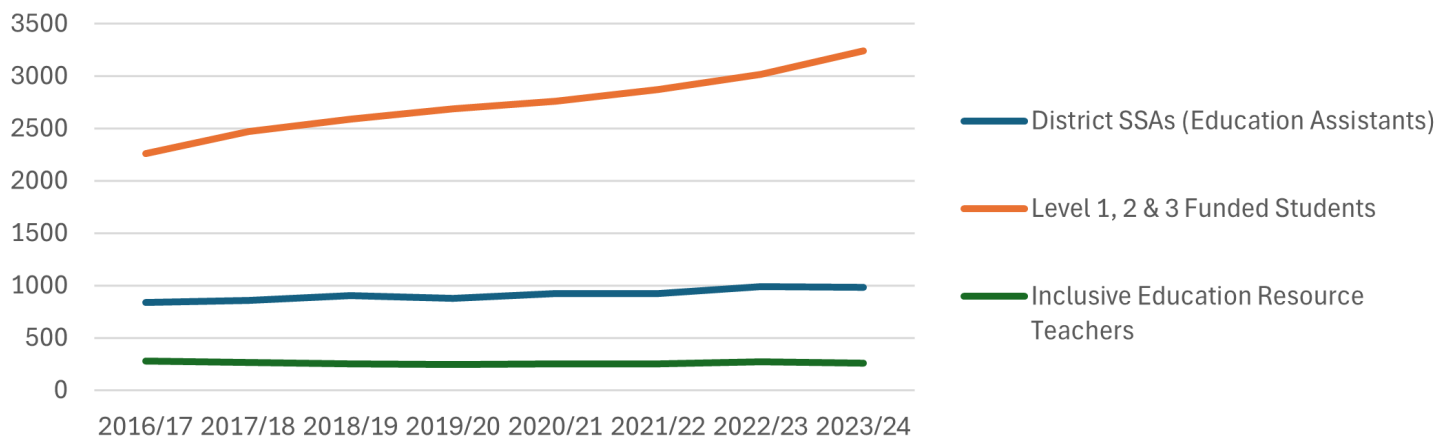


Figure 4. Graph showing that enrolment of Level 1, 2 and 3 funded students has increased at a faster rate than the number of education assistants and resource teachers. Source: [Student Headcount by Disabilities or Diverse Abilities Category](#) and FOI.

Did you know?

The Provincial Collective Agreement sets a Special Education Resource Teacher Ratio at 1:342 students, but districts like Vancouver (1:232) and Surrey (1:218) have lower ratios due to restored collective agreement language. Despite employing the number of resource teachers required in the collective agreements, the growing population of students with disabilities outpaces these ratios, making them insufficient. Changes to ratios would need to be addressed through the collective agreement bargaining process.

Education assistant shortages

Families and the media have reported the shortage of EAs in VSB and other districts in recent years. The VSB determines how many EAs to hire during its annual budgeting process using ratios based on low-incidence students (Table 3). For 2023/24, the ratios in Table 3 would mean VSB should have about 1,140 EAs in the inclusive education program but “Appendix B - Financial Data Tables” - Table 6 indicates that staffing was approximately 1,000 across all programs (total includes EAs in inclusive education and other programs in elementary and secondary). In addition, EAs do not exclusively support the students listed in Table 3, or in accordance with those ratios. Instead, EA support is prioritized according to a hierarchy of medical concerns, personal care and accessibility, safety, and then instructional support regardless of a student’s designation (Figure 5). The shortage of EAs means that SWD who need instructional support to access learning may not receive any EA support, because other needs take priority.

Consequently, the shortage of both resource teachers and EAs has a significant impact on SWD who require instructional support. We anticipate that ongoing growth in the population of SWD will continue to strain existing staff, reduce supports for students, and lead to deeper shortages unless the staffing ratios and funding are adjusted to meet increasing needs.

Table 3. Staffing ratios VSB uses in its budget development process for educational assistants¹

STUDENT DESIGNATION	EDUCATION ASSISTANTS PER STUDENT
A/B	1:1
C	1:2
D	1:4
E	1:5
G	1:2

¹ <https://media.vsb.bc.ca/media/Default/medialib/draft-2023-24-annual-budget-v3.5efcfb63964.pdf>

SSA support is allocated based on a hierarchy of student need:

Priority 1 – Medical Concerns

This is the highest priority. It includes basic and essential health care needs outlined on a Vancouver Pediatric Team’s health care plan. Some examples include lifting, positioning, G tube feeding, respiration issues, glucose monitoring and seizure management. Please refer to the CUPE 15 collective agreement for further information regarding health care premiums.

Note that SSA support for the most complex medically challenged students should be planned so that at least 2 SSAs are trained by the Vancouver Pediatric Team (VPT). These SSAs will need to have the experience and training to implement the student’s program and support the student’s medical needs. One of the SSAs will be the primary trained support and the other will be the back-up support. Both SSAs must practice the tasks for taking care of the student and make sure their skills and training are maintained.

Priority 2 – Personal Care Accessibility Needs

This area of priority includes behavior, sensory and augmentative communication needs the management of which is essential for facilitating student access to the learning environment or to the instructional opportunity. Access needs include feeding, sensory regulation, hygiene and dressing supports, learning classroom routines, managing disruptive behaviors and access to instructional supports.

Priority 3 - Safety Needs

Students with behavioural concerns, such as disruption of the learning of self and others, destruction of property or injuring self or others, may be considered for SSA support.

Priority 4 - Instructional Support Needs

This level of needs refers to specific instructional interventions for individuals or small groups of students that are under the direction of the classroom and/or support teacher. Note that some instructional interventions are prioritized as they are related to access and/or health needs e.g. self-management or behavior monitoring.

Figure 5. Excerpt from the VSB’s 2018 School and Student Support Handbook

Lack of Transparency in how VSB Allocates Education Assistants

It is unclear how the VSB makes decisions around the distribution of EAs in VSB schools. Plotting the number of education assistants against the number of Level 1, 2 & 3 funded students at each VSB elementary school reveals large differences across schools (Figure 6, Appendix B - Detailed Financial Data Tables” - Table 7). Some schools appear to have many more EAs than others. For example, among the schools that have approximately 40 Level 1, 2 & 3 students,

one school has just 10 EAs (a 1:4 ratio), while another has 20 (a 1:2 ratio) despite having similar compositions of student designations (Figure 6). The VSB School and Student Support Handbook (2018) states the VSB determines education assistant allocations after all schools complete Needs Assessments for their low incidence students and submit a current IEP. The allocations are then determined by district staff using a formula that is not made available to caregivers.

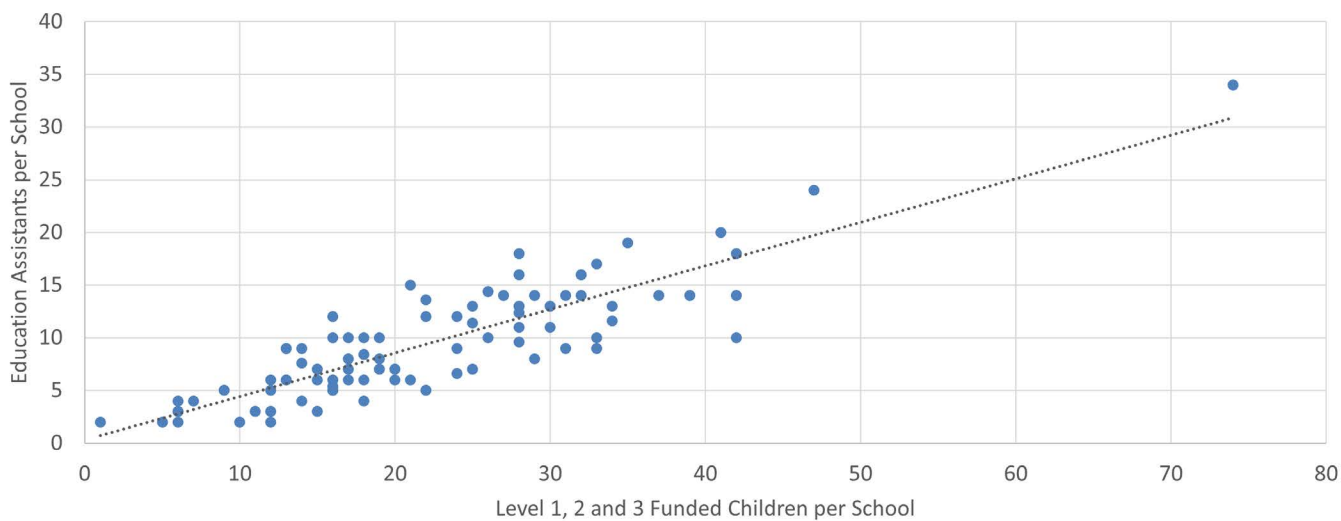


Figure 6. Graph showing the number of education assistants at each elementary school in VSB relative to the number of Level 1, 2 & 3 funded students in each school for 2024/25. The points show that some schools have more EAs than others for the same number of Level 1, 2 & 3 funded students.

Declining Graduation Rates for SWD

Graduation rates for SWD are far below that for other students⁶. Table 4 shows the changes over time in graduation rates (Dogwood Diploma) for the Province as a whole, and for VSB. In general, many SWD in BC (roughly 20%) are simply not graduating from our public secondary schools.

With respect to VSB specifically, graduation rates were typically higher than provincial rates, and increased over time from the 2014/15 through 2021/22 school year. However, from 2021/22 to 2023/24, while provincial rates continued to improve, VSB graduation rates for SWD declined by 3%, such that VSB graduation rates are no longer notably higher than the provincial rates, validating concerns raised by caregivers in the survey that lack of support may result in lower levels of academic achievement.

Table 4. Six Year Graduation Rates (%) (obtained from [BC Open Data](#))

YEAR_6_OF_COHORT	PROVINCE TOTAL		VSB (SD39)	
	NON-DIVERSE	DIVERSE ABILITIES	NON-DIVERSE	DIVERSE ABILITIES
2013/2014	92	66	94	70
2014/2015	92	68	94	67
2015/2016	92	68	94	72
2016/2017	92	69	94	72
2017/2018	93	71	95	71
2018/2019	93	72	95	73
2019/2020	94	74	94	77
2020/2021	94	74	94	78
2021/2022	95	78	97	83
2022/2023	96	78	98	80
2023/2024	95	79	97	80

⁶ For additional reading on this important topic, we recommend readers review the research of UBC's Supporting Progressive Inclusive Child-centred Education (SPICE) Research Lab and their 2019 study entitled, Special Education in British Columbia: A Population-Based Investigation ([Lloyd & Baumbusch, 2019](#)), which breaks down graduation and completion rates (completion with Evergreen Certificate) by specific designation.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We began this investigation because, as caregivers of SWD in the Vancouver School District, we wanted to understand the relationship between how these children experience inclusion at the VSB and the funding structures that are intended to support them. Based on survey responses from families, we found that SWD face significant barriers to inclusion at the VSB due to declining staffing levels, leaving significant gaps in meeting the social, emotional, and educational needs of these students. Our questions around student support led us to examine VSB's financial data and ask how these relate to support levels. From this we observed a pattern of declining resource allocation for SWD over time in recent years. In this final section, we share our conclusions and recommendations.

Support from teachers and educational workers matters for students with disabilities

The VSB has stated it aims to move away from segregated learning for SWD, and many families support this, particularly those whose children attend segregated programs with no real option to attend general education programs. However, as stated by one survey respondent with a child in a segregated program, "it makes me wonder how the district can make progress with inclusion at the secondary level with such dismal support staff numbers." From the caregiver responses to the survey, we learned that segregated classes are only one form of exclusion that SWD experience at the VSB. Survey comments indicate that even in general education programs, without proper support, learners may be physically separated from their classmates, experience social isolation due to insufficient support with socializing, need to stay at home due to lack of help regulating at school, be left to struggle with academic work alone, and experience school-related anxiety, along with other barriers to inclusion.

Families are often told by administrative staff that classroom-based strategies based on universal design for learning (UDL) are sufficient for enabling learners to fully participate in learning. While we

appreciate its benefits, UDL cannot teach a child to read, provide emotional support to a child with anxiety, or help a learner with executive functioning or processing challenges to write an essay. Our teachers simply cannot support these students on their own using only UDL concepts. The lack of EAs and other support workers affects every child in a class. Learners who are unregulated can be distracting. Teachers having to focus their energy on safety or offering direct support for SWD reduces the time and energy needed for teaching the whole class.

Without targeted interventions and specialized supports implemented by adequate numbers of resource teachers, and adequate and consistent placements of EAs, we are putting students, teachers, and EAs at risk for not being successful in their roles.

Adequate funding matters for SWD

The survey showed that families want to see meaningful, sustained improvements in support for SWD. There is a direct relationship between student support and funding levels. We were concerned, though not surprised, to learn that the VSB's inclusion budget has been shrinking relative to the number of students requiring support. However, we did not expect to find that the inclusion budget had fallen below the level of ministry grant funding provided for Level 1, 2, and 3 designated students. Nor did we expect the VSB to underspend their inclusive education budget by \$2.8 Million in the 2023/24 school year. These are alarming facts.

We recognize that inclusion funding from the provincial government needs to be improved, and we support efforts to make this happen. However, the VSB also needs to do more to make sure that the funding that is intended for SWD reaches the students who need it. Financial decisions at the VSB seem to involve tinkering with a status quo budget and inflation-based increases. If the current state of inclusion/exclusion of SWD in VSB programs is to be improved, budget decisions

need to be based on the growing number of SWD. One survey respondent summed up it up this way: “These years are the most formative years for success in school. Please allocate more funding and help.”

We need transparency in information about the learning conditions for students with disabilities

This report provides a window into understanding the status of inclusion of SWD at VSB during the 2023/24 year. While it is not an exhaustive study, it does offer new insights that have not been provided by the VSB.

The main protocol for reporting on the well-being and educational progress of SWD is the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (FESL), mandated by Ministry of Education. However, the data shared in the FESL reports give little indication of how SWD, along with Indigenous students and English language learners, experience being in VSB programs. Each year, the VSB reports “significant performance gaps” in literacy, numeracy, wellbeing and school connectedness for these students⁷ and outlines strategies to improve outcomes. Yet this approach has not resulted in improved outcomes. For example, as seen in “Table 4. Six Year Graduation Rates (obtained from BC Open Data)” on page 18, graduation rates for SWD remain low and are trending downward. Stronger

and more meaningful measures are required to ensure that SWD receive the support they need to thrive in schools, including raising the number of resource teachers and educational assistants.

Members of the IEWG put in many volunteer hours to create this report. We faced significant challenges trying to access financial and staffing information. In some cases, we paid out of pocket to obtain information through FOI requests. We even created our own survey and analyzed its results. We used the tools, networks, and skills available to us, taking personal time out of our already stretched schedules. This was no small accomplishment. We (parents and caregivers) should not have to do this research – the VSB should be making this information available as part of their accountability to learners who face barriers and their families.

Finally, we urge the VSB to take these findings and the advocacy of parents and caregivers to heart. Caregivers should not be treated as a problem or made to feel as though requests for their children’s needs to be met are unreasonable or invalid. Information reported by families about how their children are doing should be valued and acted upon. Families know their children best and are their strongest advocates.

7 <https://media.vsb.bc.ca/media/Default/medialib/2024fesl11.cbb74e75535.pdf>

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following changes would help create a more inclusive environment in which all learners can succeed at the VSB. This is not an exhaustive list. Rather, we intend these ideas to be a starting point for improving the current practice and as discussion points for developing better methods for determining annual inclusive education budgets and staffing levels.

Recommendation 1: Increase inclusive education staffing in schools

- a. Align EA and resource teacher service levels to match the actual needs of students, including those who primarily need instructional support, executive function support, and social/emotional support.
- b. Hire more substitute teachers so resource teachers can remain in their specialized roles and provide consistent support.
- c. Update the fixed ratio of resource teachers to be tied to the population of SWD, rather than the total student population. This could be a topic for the collective agreement bargaining process.
- d. Maintain adequate levels of EA support in secondary schools to improve graduation rates for SWD.

Recommendation 2: Improve transparency and reporting

- a. Publish data on actual staffing levels compared to planned staffing levels, and report on hiring timelines.
- b. Report on how funding from the Ministry is used to support SWD.
- c. Survey students with disabilities and their caregivers about their inclusion experiences. Make the data available to the VSB community.

Recommendation 3: Recognize the importance of building relationships

- a. Increase consistency of EAs within individual schools and classrooms to allow SWD to form a trusted relationships with the EAs who are provided to support them.
- b. If and when EAs are required to be moved, communicate the change with SWD and caregivers.
- c. Build positive relationships and open communication with caregivers and parents of SWD.

CONCLUSION

It is our aim that this report will go some way in advancing discussions around inclusion of SWD in VSB educational programs. We hope that elected school board trustees will give the report's findings careful consideration and find the courage to work together across party lines to reverse the trend of falling support. This is their duty under guiding legislation including the School Act, Orders in Council, and the BC Human Rights Code.

We urge others in the VSB community, including teachers, EAs, and staff members, along with their unions, to work with parents and caregivers to advance the best interests of SWD and all students. A common voice grounded in the real lived experiences of learners, teachers and education workers may be the only way to convince the VSB that there is no other option than to increase support levels for these marginalized students.

Finally, we acknowledge that advocacy is no easy task, and this is especially true when it comes to advocating for your own child. We encourage caregivers to continue to advocate for learners, to collaborate with allies within the education community, and share their stories collectively and publicly. Your advocacy matters—not only for your own children, but for all current and future learners in Vancouver's public schools.

APPENDIX A - SURVEY

DPAC Parent Feedback on Conditions for Learners with Disabilities

Please tell us your child's story of accessibility at Vancouver School District schools.

Background: The Vancouver DPAC Inclusive Education Working Group (IEWG) is a group of parents of children with disabilities who have come together to advocate for our children, many of whom are being left behind by the VSB. You may reach us at iewg@vancouverdpac.org.

As the Vancouver School Board (VSB) develops its budget for next year, we are preparing a submission and presentation to convey to staff and trustees how learners with disabilities are underresourced. We have collected numerical data from the district and the Ministry of Education and Child Care showing that the VSB is underspending on students with disabilities. We would like to support this data with stories from parents about how their children are experiencing accessibility in district schools this year.

Purpose: This questionnaire is intended to gather stories from parents about the experiences of their children with disabilities accessing education in the Vancouver School District. Information collected by the questionnaire will be shared with District staff, VSB trustees, and the public.

Confidentiality: It is important to protect your child's privacy. Please do not disclose your child's name, school or any other identifying factors. Please do not use the names of any teachers or staff members. We will not collect parents' names or email addresses. If we use your child's story in our report and presentation, we may edit for brevity and anonymity.

Option to skip questions: You may choose to skip any questions.

Question 1:

Please specify the student's disabilities or designation(s) or challenges. (open comment)

Question 2:

Does student identify as Indigenous? (yes, no)

Question 3:

What is your child's school level? (highschool, elementary)

Question 4:

Have you noticed a difference in services or supports at school between 2022-23 and 2023-24 specific to your child? (My child is receiving more services and supports; My child is receiving fewer services and supports; I have not noticed a difference; I do not know)

Question 5:

Please **briefly** tell us about your child's experiences accessing education this school year (September 2023 to the present).

- How have current levels of support and services affected your child?
- What changes have you noticed from previous years?
- Is your child receiving adequate services and supports that they need to succeed academically and socially? For example, EA/SSA supports, IEP, assistive tech, learning assistance, speech language therapy, OT, counselling, assessments, enrichment programs, accessible playgrounds, etc.

If you can, please share a specific story that illustrates your child's experiences, but do not share any identifiable details. Try to keep the story short so we can include it in the budget submission.

We want to thank you for sharing your story! Some other ways to participate in the budget process are:

- To participate in the VSB budget process, find more information [here](#).
- You can email your feedback about the budget to the VSB here: budget@vsb.bc.ca
- You can also contact your liaison trustee to share your opinion with them.
- Find your liaison trustee [here](#) (click on each trustee's name to see which schools they are connected with).
- To contact the IEWG: iewg@vancouverdpac.org

APPENDIX B - FINANCIAL DATA TABLES

Table 5. Annual headcounts of students with diverse abilities combined with funding data from audited financial statements.

Vancouver	Students with Diverse Abilities	Level 1 Students	Level 2 Students	Level 3 Students	Total Level 1,2,3	Annual Special Needs Grant Funding	Special Needs Budget (Total Salaries)	Special Needs Budget total (with benefits, services and supplies)	Average special education grant per student	Special education spending per student with benefits	EA Spending per student	% Change in Level 1,2,3 Students Since 2016	% Change in Inclusive Education Spending Since 2016/17	% Change in Inclusive Education Spending per Student Since 2016/17	% Change in MOE Supplemental Grant Funding per Student Since 2016/17	% Change in MOE Supplemental Grant Total Since 2016/17
2016/2017	5143	66	1706	491	2263	\$39,706,650	\$54,146,648	\$70,266,215	\$17,546	\$31,050	\$12,975					
2017/2018	5379	63	1861	545	2469	\$43,501,405	\$54,347,794	\$70,508,028	\$17,619	\$28,557	\$12,247	9%	0%	-8%	0%	10%
2018/2019	5573	62	1974	555	2591	\$46,451,700	\$56,783,600	\$73,880,053	\$17,928	\$28,514	\$12,627	14%	5%	0%	2%	17%
2019/2020	5714	59	2080	547	2686	\$50,722,625	\$61,562,036	\$79,898,384	\$18,884	\$29,746	\$13,507	19%	14%	4%	8%	28%
2020/2021	5838	60	2173	530	2763	\$52,928,100	\$66,152,332	\$85,965,940	\$19,156	\$31,113	\$13,267	22%	22%	5%	9%	33%
2021/2022	6056	63	2316	490	2869	\$57,975,610	\$69,346,504	\$89,558,132	\$20,208	\$31,216	\$13,821	27%	27%	0%	15%	46%
2022/2023	6148	59	2466	490	3015	\$61,114,880	\$68,701,629	\$90,574,164	\$20,270	\$30,041	\$13,417	33%	29%	-4%	16%	54%
2023/2024	6288	61	2709	472	3242	\$69,788,170	\$73,060,056	\$96,426,272	\$21,526	\$29,743	\$13,229	43%	37%	-1%	23%	82%

Table 6. Total Education Assistant staffing counts for all VSB programs including inclusive education (on average, 93% of Education Assistants were employed in the inclusive education program based on Form 1530's four year average). EA staffing counts were compiled from these multiple sources because VSB was not responsive to a request for inclusive education staffing counts made through FOI (File # 2024-36, and subsequent email clarifications).

	Consolidated from sources to right	TOTAL SD BC MOE FOI		VSB Reporting		
Row Labels	District SSAs (Education Assistants)	Education Assistants (Form 1530 Source 1)	Difference Annually (Form 1530) Source 1	Difference Annually (VSB Budget Development 22/23) Source 2	Amended 22/23 budget source 3	Amended 23/24 budget source4
2016/17	837	837				
2017/18	855	855	18	18		
2018/19	903	903	48	48		
2019/20	875	875	-28	-28		
2020/21	920			45		
2021/22	920			-1		
2022/23	990				990	
2023/24	984 to 1016					984 to 1016*

Authoritative source

*This includes restricted grants therefore it may be higher than previously reported staffing. Also, budget was underspent so lower figure is likely more accurate.

Sources: 1: Form 1530 MOE FOI File: 292-30/ECC-2024-40561
2: <https://media.vsb.bc.ca/media/Default/medialib/budget-development-process-2022-2023.2819f227140.pdf>
3: <https://media.vsb.bc.ca/media/Default/medialib/open-finance-committee-agenda-2023-feb-22.a5840163278.pdf>
4: <https://media.vsb.bc.ca/media/Default/medialib/open-finance-and-personnel-agenda-2024-feb-14.46fa3370850.pdf>

Table 7. 2024/25 enrollment, SSA allocations and total funding by elementary school from FOI requests to VSB (File # 2024-36). School names have been anonymized to reduce focus on comparing individual schools; however, data can be requested from the VSB.

Elementary School	# of Students Enrolled	Total SSA FTE by school as of September 30, 2024	Total Level 1, 2 & 3 Funding
School 1	446	34	\$ 1,700,650
School 2	465	24	\$ 1,157,950
School 3	477	20	\$ 1,001,620
School 4	496	19	\$ 806,720
School 5	648	18	\$ 1,034,210
School 6	420	18	\$ 727,280
School 7	411	17	\$ 835,720
School 8	462	16	\$ 799,740
School 9	375	16	\$ 662,050
School 10	323	15	\$ 532,130
School 11	443	14.4	\$ 616,750
School 12	298	14	\$ 649,890
School 13	244	14	\$ 700,870
School 14	426	14	\$ 917,750
School 15	549	14	\$ 866,770
School 16	669	14	\$ 963,300
School 17	380	14	\$ 790,420
School 18	426	14	\$ 796,900
School 19	441	13.6	\$ 493,810
School 20	144	13	\$ 590,590
School 21	379	13	\$ 722,100
School 22	323	13	\$ 589,840
School 23	641	13	\$ 809,310
School 24	338	13	\$ 701,120
School 25	406	13	\$ 673,960
School 26	416	12.4	\$ 688,710
School 27	131	12	\$ 517,630
School 28	644	12	\$ 565,770
School 29	235	12	\$ 373,210
School 30	426	11.6	\$ 833,130
School 31	305	11.4	\$ 601,750
School 32	571	11	\$ 686,370
School 33	482	11	\$ 673,960
School 34	468	10	\$ 655,320
School 35	242	10	\$ 409,440
School 36	763	10	\$ 1,001,870
School 37	142	10	\$ 445,420
School 38	439	10	\$ 746,670
School 39	187	10	\$ 409,190
School 40	84	10	\$ 361,300
School 41	306	9.6	\$ 664,890
School 42	307	9	\$ 336,980
School 43	142	9	\$ 327,660
School 44	280	9	\$ 366,230
School 45	420	9	\$ 592,430
School 46	431	9	\$ 734,260
School 47	522	9	\$ 809,060
School 48	291	8.4	\$ 421,350
School 49	395	8	\$ 638,480
School 50	283	8	\$ 409,190
School 51	227	8	\$ 421,600
School 52	190	7.6	\$ 336,980

Elementary School	# of Students Enrolled	Total SSA FTE by school as of September 30, 2024	Total Level 1, 2 & 3 Funding
School 53	251	7	\$ 373,460
School 54	331	7	\$ 472,330
School 55	147	7	\$ 337,230
School 56	341	7	\$ 472,080
School 57	205	7	\$ 518,380
School 58	519	6.6	\$ 565,770
School 59	93	6	\$ 312,910
School 60	221	6	\$ 349,390
School 61	294	6	\$ 436,100
School 62	334	6	\$ 457,580
School 63	309	6	\$ 445,920
School 64	400	6	\$ 385,370
School 65	102	6	\$ 276,930
School 66	299	6	\$ 337,230
School 67	369	6	\$ 312,910
School 68	288	5.4	\$ 385,120
School 69	243	5	\$ 373,210
School 70	114	5	\$ 276,930
School 71	273	5	\$ 216,630
School 72	99	5	\$ 325,570
School 73	330	5	\$ 532,380
School 74	193	4	\$ 325,070
School 75	276	4	\$ 120,600
School 76	67	4	\$ 168,490
School 77	459	4	\$ 424,190
School 78	64	3	\$ 144,420
School 79	379	3	\$ 252,860
School 80	443	3	\$ 349,140
School 81	288	3	\$ 276,930
School 82	81	3	\$ 144,420
School 83	338	2	\$ 144,420
School 84	84	2	\$ 24,070
School 85	409	2	\$ 217,380
School 86	397	2	\$ 204,970
School 87	163	2	\$ 108,440

Vancouver School District Special Board Meeting / Committee of the Whole

April 22, 2025



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

With deep gratitude and respect, we are honoured to be learning and unlearning on the ancestral and unceded lands of the x^wməθk^wəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sk̓wxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) & səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation).



x^wməθk^wəy̓əm
(Musqueam)



Sk̓wxwú7mesh Úxwumixw
(Squamish Nation)



səlilwətał
(Tsleil-Waututh Nation)

Opening Remarks

Live-streamed

The meeting is currently being broadcasted live, and both the audio and video recordings will be accessible to the public for viewing even after the meeting ends.

Footage from this meeting may be viewed from Canada or anywhere else in the world.

Introductions and Meeting Decorum

The Board has a strong commitment to ethical conduct. This includes the responsibility of all participants to conduct themselves with appropriate decorum and professionalism. As Chair of the Board, it is my responsibility to see that decorum is maintained.

ITEM 2.0

Motion to Dissolve the Board into the Committee of the Whole

Motion to Dissolve the Board into the Committee of the Whole

That the Board dissolve itself into the Committee-of-the-Whole

PRESENTATION PROCEDURES

- The time allotted for each presentation is five minutes, and every effort should be made not to exceed this time limit.
- Presenters are expected to comply with Board norms of conduct and decorum at meetings. Personal, inflammatory, or accusatory language will not be tolerated.
- Presenters must avoid disclosing personal information that would unreasonably infringe on another individual's privacy.
- No Board business other than the receipt of presentations will be conducted. Board members may direct questions for clarification through the spokesperson for each group; however, the matter will not be debated, and no decisions will be made at this meeting.
- All attendees are expected to behave respectfully and professionally. Disruptions, personal attacks, or derogatory language are prohibited, and those who do not comply may be asked to leave.
- It is prohibited to make video or audio recordings of the meeting.

ITEM 3.0

Presentations on the Draft 2025-26 Financial Plan

3.1 Vancouver District Students' Council

- Arabella Mew and Mackenzie Chung

Vancouver District Students' Council

BUDGET PRIORITIES

APRIL 22nd, 2025

1. FACILITIES

- Bathroom resources
- Maintenance of school facilities (district wide)

2.) COUNSELLOR SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

- Support for post secondary transition
- Support when grade specific counselors aren't available

3.) ACADEMIC ACCELERATION

- Increased and equitable access to accelerated courses such as Advanced Placement (AP)

3.2 Canadian Union of Public Employees (Local 15)

- Warren Williams and Kathie Currie

3.3 District Parent Advisory Council

- Melanie Cheng and Dr. Sherry Breshears

Presentation from DPAC: https://youtu.be/-dIDEq_nOuQ:

3.4 Vancouver Association of Secondary School Administrators

- Angie Haveman and Benita Kwon

3.5 Vancouver Elementary Principal and Vice-Principal Association

- Dana Aweida and Stephen Leung

3.6 Vancouver Elementary and Adult Educators' Society

- Marjorie Dumont and Vanessa Lefebvre

3.7 Vancouver Secondary Teachers' Association

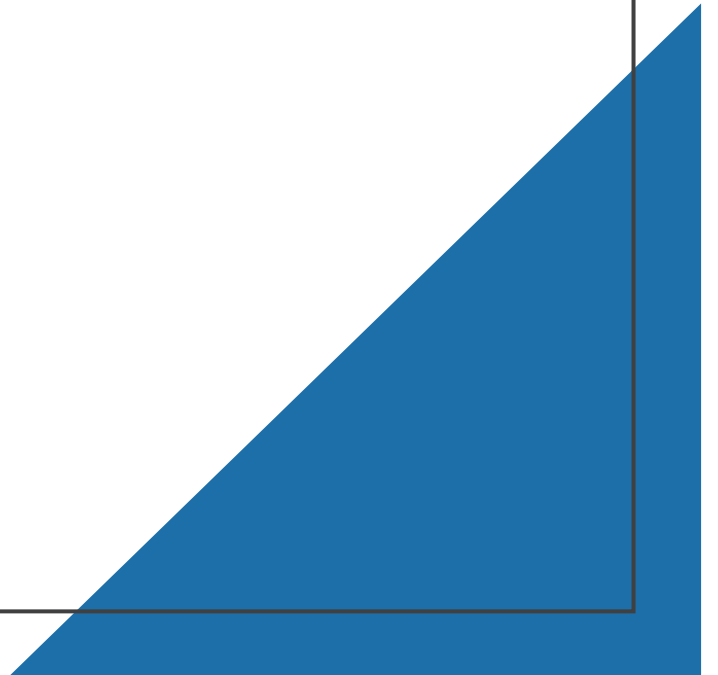
- Carmen Schaedeli and Carl Janze



**Vancouver Secondary Teachers' Association
submission to the 2025-2026 VSB
Operating Budget Development Process**

Overview

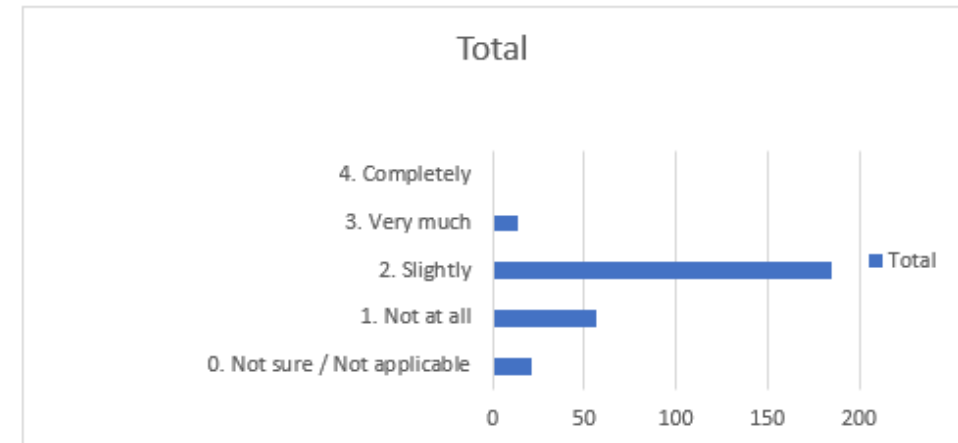
- Inclusive Education
 - Resource Teachers
 - School Psychologists
- Program Support ('Flex' Funds)



Morale Survey

- 293 respondents or 21% of Secondary Teachers
- One of the question asked was “To what extent do you feel that the needs of students with disabilities or diverse learning needs have been met during this school year?”
- An overwhelming majority (87%) of responding teachers reported feeling that the needs of students with disabilities or diverse learning needs were not met this school year, of which 20% reported feeling that student needs were not met at all this year.

To what extent do you feel that the needs of students with disabilities or diverse learning needs have been met during this school year?



Row Labels	Count
0. Not sure / Not applicable	21
1. Not at all	57
2. Slightly	185
3. Very much	14
4. Completely	1
Grand Total	278

Inclusive Education

-P.3 "This budget achieves these goals by reallocating positions from the district to schools and classrooms"

-P.25 Learning and Instruction: "a key priority will be the implementation of literacy screeners for K-12"

-There is no re-allocation of resources to secondary classrooms



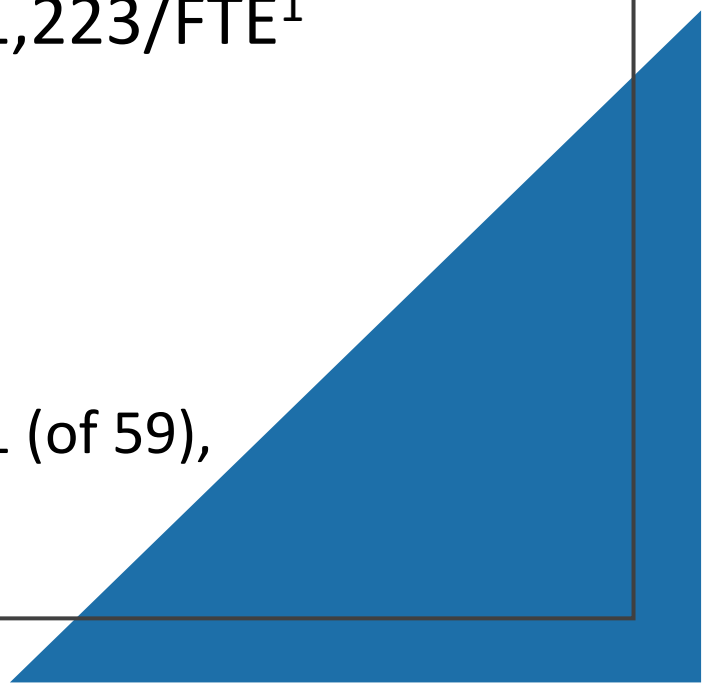
Resource Blocks / Teachers:

8 Blocks of Resource Support at each of the 18 Secondary Schools

$$18 \text{ schools} * 1.1429 \text{ FTE} = 20.57 \text{ FTE @ } \$131,223/\text{FTE}^1$$

\$2,700,000

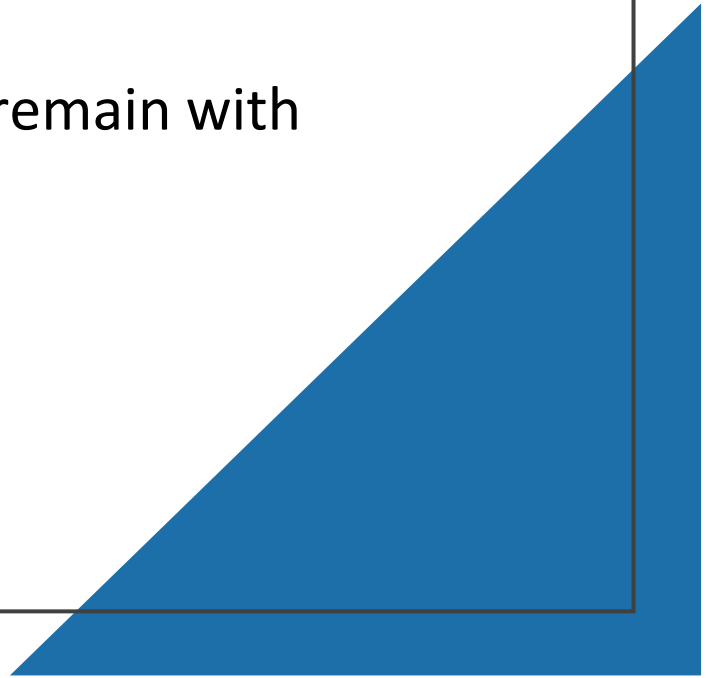
¹average cost of a teacher (~\$100,00 + 25% benefits), pg. 21 (of 59),
Draft 2025-2026 Financial Plan

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School Psychologists

- Provide vital services which are crucial to the inclusive education model
- Long waitlists delay services - resulting in lifelong consequences for students
- Requesting increase of 2 FTE so the current interns can remain with the district

\$270,000

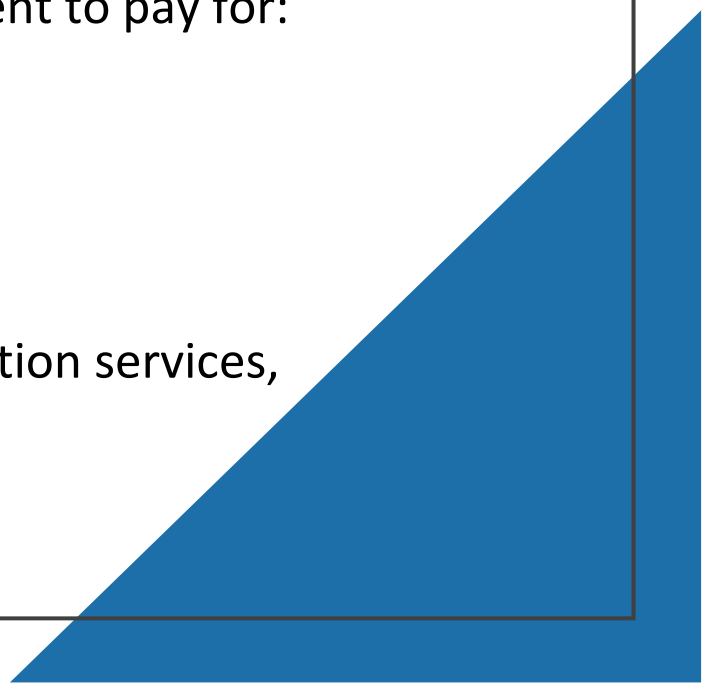


School Budgets

Outlined in the School Budget Reference Manual

General Allocation: Calculated based on actual student headcount registered as of September 30

General allocation for Secondary schools for 2024-25 is \$45.27 /student to pay for:

- general school supplies
 - photocopy supplies
 - minor furniture and equipment (repairs < \$500)
 - funding to offset course fees
 - educational resources (print materials, manipulatives, information services, audio-video material and software)
- 

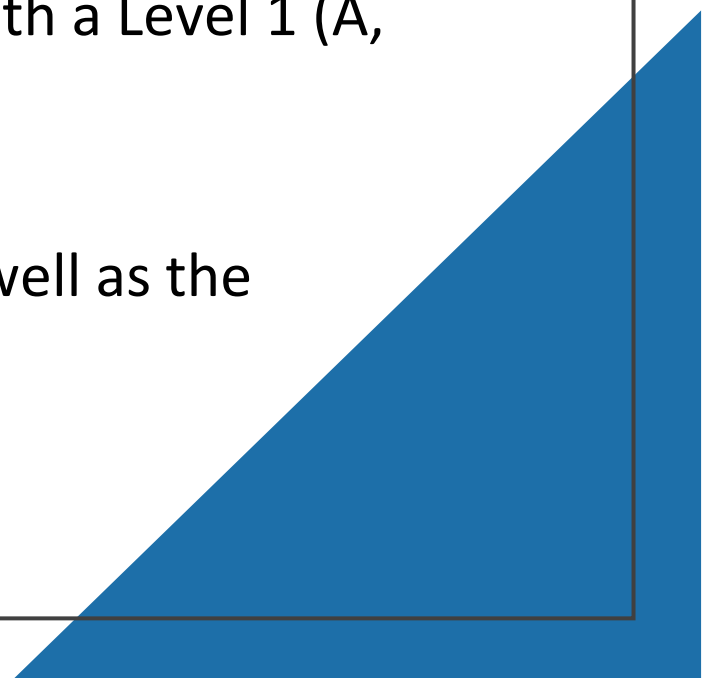
School Budgets: Other Allocations 2024-25

Replacement Furniture and Equipment for Secondary: \$12.80 /student.

Library Resources for Secondary: \$4.54 /student + \$4,000 /school.

Resource Teacher Support for Secondary: \$25 /student with a Level 1 (A, B), Level 2 (C, D & G) or Level 3 (H) designation.

Total general allocations for all 18 Secondary Schools, as well as the above categories for 2024-25 is \$900,835.



Program Support (‘Flex’ Funds)

Actual student headcount in each type of course as of Sep. 30.

- Textbooks, workbooks, software, hardware and equipment are funded from other sources (see above).

Total Program Support
(‘Flex’ Funds) for all 18
Secondary Schools for
2024-25 is \$900,835.

Each School receives a base of \$18, 000 plus:

- Level 1 funding (\$16.31/ student)
 - Home Ec. (Foods, Textiles, but not Tourism or Family Studies; Tech Ed. (Wood, Metal, Auto, Robotics, but not Drafting); Photo (Film-based, but not computer-based)
- Level 2 funding (\$8.70/ student)
 - Art (Drawing & Painting, Ceramics); Graphics (Paper-based, but not computer-based); Music; Phys. Ed.
- Level 3 funding (\$4.35/ student)
 - Science (but not ESL Science); Film Studies, File & TV; Dance; Drama; Music Composition; Animation, Digital Photo, Digital Media, Desktop Publishing; Bus. Ed., Info. Tech., Programming; Drafting & Design, Tourism
- *No dedicated funding
 - English; ELL; Math; Modern Languages; Social Studies

Program Support ('Flex' Funds)

- 2013-14 Budget Manual
 - Schools receive base of \$22,500
 - Level 1 funding (\$19.36/ student)
 - Level 2 funding (\$10.00/ student)
 - Level 3 funding (\$5.00/ student)
- 2024-25 Budget Manual
 - Schools receive base of \$18,000
 - Level 1 funding (\$16.31/ student)
 - Level 2 funding (\$8.70/ student)
 - Level 3 funding (\$4.35/ student)

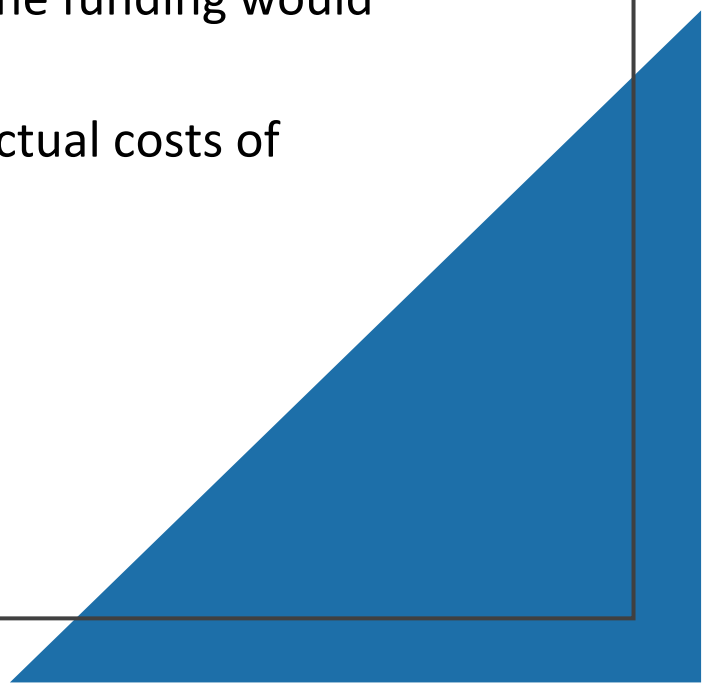
base funding ↓ 20%
per student funding ↓ 16%

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Program Support ('Flex' Funds)

- If the funding had stayed at 2013-14 levels, today would be \$1,126,043 (a difference of \$225,208)
- If that funding had kept pace with inflation over the last 12 years, the funding would be \$1,498,031.17 today; a difference of \$597,196.17
- Restore funding to the 2013-14 levels and bring it up to meet the actual costs of materials due to inflation

\$600,000



In Summary:

\$2,700,000

- for 20.57 FTE Resource Blocks / Teachers

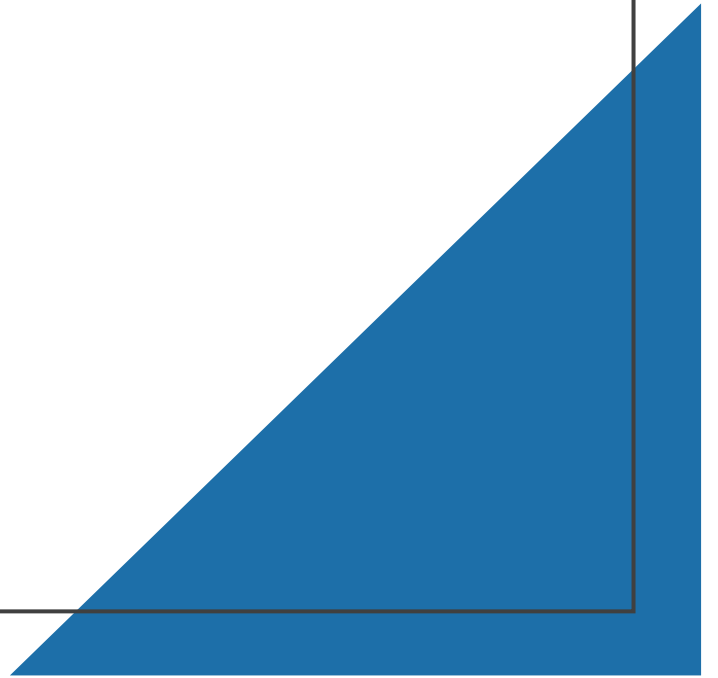
\$270,000

- 2 FTE School Psychologists

\$600,000

- Program Support ('Flex') Funds

\$3,570,000



ITEM 4.0

Motion to Rise from the Committee of the Whole and Reconvene the Board meeting

Motion to Rise from the Committee of the Whole and Reconvene the Board Meeting

That the Board rise from the Committee-of-the-Whole and reconvene the Board meeting.

ADJOURNMENT
