

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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BOARD OF EDUCATION PASSES BUDGET FOR 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR

LANGFORD, BC – The Sooke School District Board of Education approved a \$205.967 million budget by-law for the 2023-24 school year at the public board meeting on May 23, 2023.

The annual budget is developed through a transparent process that ensures priorities of the strategic plan are met, partner and public consultation occurs and follows the requirements of the *School Act* and Board policy.

For the 2023-24 school year, the District will see an increase of \$17.481 million to the budget by-law due to enrollment growth, inclusive education services funding, classroom enhancement funding, specialized area funding (Special Needs, English Language Learners, Indigenous Education, etc.) and a special purpose fund increase ([Feeding the Future Program](#)).

Guided by the strategic plan, staff consulted with District partners and the public to develop a list of priorities to focus on for the 2023-24 school year. The four priorities identified during the consultation process were:

- Mental Health and Wellness
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Early Learning
- Growth

Some examples of how additional funding will be prioritized include:

- 2 additional early childhood educators (ECE)
- 2.5 FTE early literacy teachers
- 18 FTE additional teachers for specialized areas (Inclusive Education, ELL)
- Increased support for the Indigenous Education Department
- Additional ELL clerical support
- Funding to action the diversity, equity and inclusion audit recommendations
- 34.6 additional enrolling teachers
- Increases to school clerical and supervision staff
- 2 additional custodians
- Increased digital literacy and support resources
- 1.23 FTE additional school counsellors
- Support for student wellness initiatives
- Significant funding to build on the meal and snack programming across the District



Despite enrollment capacity struggles in the District, the annual budget is poised to deliver comprehensive services to support students and families in their learning journey. “Working with our partners and the public, we are able to deliver a fiscally sound budget to support strategic priorities while managing inflation and rapid growth to deliver an exceptional education to students,” said Harold Cull, Secretary-Treasurer. “While growth remains a challenge in terms of student space, the added enrollment funding allows the District to continue enhancing supports for students and staff.”

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