

BUDGET DEVELOPMENT 2021/2022: Engagement Summary Report

Prepared February 2021



OVERVIEW

The budget development process lays the foundation for looking at resource allocation from a district-wide perspective. The District works to provide equity for schools and create a cost consciousness, which will enhance Vancouver students’ learning opportunities. The process is transparent and provides accountability. In that way, it contains beliefs, values and guiding principles that address the District’s educational focus and includes extensive engagement.

This strategy to develop the budget for 2021-2022 reflects the following budget priorities:

1	Maintaining a focus on student achievement, recognizing the personalized learning needs of students
2	Reflecting on responsible stewardship in implementing the objectives of the District’s educational, financial and facilities-related plans
3	Respecting the District’s decision-making culture, encouraging creativity and innovation in meeting the learning needs of specific communities
4	Being sustainable over the longer-term while providing the flexibility to address changing short- term needs
5	Focusing on equity for all schools and all students of the District
6	Reflecting the specific needs of vulnerable students
7	Including input from the District’s educational leaders, stakeholder groups and the broader community

UPDATES REGARDING COVID-19

In developing the budget for 2021-2022, the overall goal is to provide the same level of programs and services as provided in 2020-2021. However, the impact of declining enrolment and the financial effects of the pandemic have to be recognized. The 2019-2020 budget was impacted by COVID-19, resulting in the need to appropriate \$8.9 million of prior years’ surplus to balance it. District staff will create a preliminary draft budget for the upcoming year using the current amended budget as a base. This adjusted budget will reflect enrolment changes, the removal of costs no longer required and new cost pressures - including those based on assumptions related to pandemic impacts.

TIMELINE

Timing	Action	Notes
Nov. 23, 2020	Finance Committee	Budget process and timeline announced
Nov. 30, 2020	Board Public Meeting	Approve budget process and timeline (partially approved)
Jan. 11, 2021	CUPE 15 Stakeholder Workshop	
Jan. 11, 2021	VEPVPA and VASSA Stakeholder Workshop	
Jan. 11, 2021	IUOE Stakeholder Workshop	
Jan. 11, 2021	Building Trades Stakeholder Workshop	
Jan. 13, 2021	PASA Stakeholder Workshop	
Jan. 13, 2021	CUPE 407 Stakeholder Workshop	
Jan. 13, 2021	VESTA Stakeholder Workshop	
Jan. 13, 2021	VSTA Stakeholder Workshop	
Jan. 14, 2021	VDSC Stakeholder Workshop	
Jan. 15, 2021	DPAC Stakeholder Workshop	
Jan. 15, 2021	Release Budget Process Document	Describe the process and survey assumptions and priorities
Jan. 20, 2021	Finance Committee	Budget Process document

Feb. 2, 2021	Committee of the Whole	Delegations, stakeholder and public input on priorities and stakeholder workshops feedback
Feb. 8, 2021	Budget Engagement Open	Engagement open for input - budget priorities, budget proposals
Feb. 17, 2021	Finance Committee	Amended budget, review Committee of the Whole input
Feb. 19, 2021	Budget Survey Closes	
Feb. 22, 2021	Board Public Meeting	Amended budget approval
Mar. 2, 2021	Committee of the Whole	Delegations, stakeholder and public input on priorities, budget survey results
Mar. 12, 2021		Ministry of Education funding announcement
Mar. 15-26, 2021	Spring Break	Develop Budget 2021-2022 draft
Mar. 29, 2021	Special Board Public Meeting	Present Status Quo Budget 2021-2022 draft
Apr. 6, 2021	Committee of the Whole	Delegations, stakeholder and public input on the draft budget
Apr. 15, 2021	Committee of the Whole	Delegations, stakeholder and public input on the draft budget
Apr. 21, 2021	Finance Committee Meeting	
Apr. 16-22, 2021	Staff	Prepare recommendations based on delegation and stakeholder feedback for trustees to consider at the Apr. 26, 2021 Board meeting
Apr. 26, 2021	Board Public Meeting	Three readings and adoption of Budget 2021-2022

ENGAGEMENT SPECTRUM

The District is committed to open, clear and transparent engagement. The District has summarized input from stakeholders and members of the public in this report.

[The District's Administrative Procedure 106 District Public Engagement](#) guides all engagement activities. Best practices acknowledge that the engagement spectrum can and should be fluid to reflect meaningful engagement opportunities. As such, engagement for the 2021-2022 budget development rested within both the consult and inform levels of the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum. Early and deliberate meetings with formal stakeholder groups and several Committee-of-the-Whole meetings (during which delegation presentations by members of the public can share input) are vital in ensuring early and frequent input.

Following the pandemic's onset, engagement moved to the inform category with timely and frequent communication on multiple owned channels. Our team used website updates, social media updates, news stories, and live-streamed committee and Committee-of-the-Whole meetings with status updates and formal report backs to communicate about the engagement program.

SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER INPUT

Staffing and Staff Development

Stakeholders made requests for funding to provide additional staff, along with training and professional development. Examples include:

- School and student support assistants
- Administrative and clerical support
- Increased funding for mental health support due to the Pandemic
- Retention, recruitment and succession planning support
- Technical support

Supplies, Equipment and Technology

Formal stakeholder groups and members of the public also asked for increased access to supplies, equipment and technology. Examples include:

- Enhanced access to technology (both hardware and training) to continue to accommodate for at-home learning
- Improved technology for schools
- Cafeteria equipment replacements
- Continued distribution of personal protection equipment

Supporting Student Needs with Equity in Mind

Equitably supporting students was a central theme throughout this year's budget engagement. Stakeholders and the public reiterated the need to support VSB's most vulnerable students, noting that the pandemic has increased inequity among students, families and schools. Examples include:

- Enhancing support for vulnerable learners
- Enhancing support for remote learners
- Maintaining all Adult Education Programs
- Amplifying the Indigenous Education Program

Other Considerations

Stakeholders and the public voiced an eagerness to have an increased role in the budget development process. They asked for greater transparency and accessibility of information and more opportunities to provide feedback. Similarly, participants are looking to see how public and stakeholder engagement informs budget development and to view a full divisional budget.

**The full stakeholder input documentation can be found in the report's appendices.*

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

SECTION 1 - Funding Options

We asked participants: if the 2021-2022 draft budget has funding available for use, please indicate your level of support for prioritizing each of the following. For this portion of the online engagement, the District invited people to provide additional comments about each section. We have provided a summary of these open-ended comments within the table below.

	Totally Oppose	Slightly Oppose	Neutral	Slightly Support	Totally Support	Total Participants
School supplies	Participants distinguished "must-haves" (e.g., textbooks) supplies versus "nice-to-haves" (e.g., art supplies). Others called for changes that could produce some cost savings (e.g., stop charging for and distributing paper agendas, or create a borrowing library for supplies).					
	11.34%	13.31%	35.11%	22.68%	17.55%	1014
Replacing aging equipment and furniture	Many participants supported replacing equipment and furniture only when it is no longer functional or safe, but noted that other areas should be prioritized this year if additional budget constraints from COVID-19 exist. Some participants wondered if this category included IT upgrades and computers, indicating this was necessary for some schools with less equitable access to modern equipment.					
	1.48%	7.86%	24.03%	34.01%	32.62%	1082
Teacher staffing	On this topic, many comments fall across a dividing line: those who echo teachers' calls for higher, more competitive compensation (nationally), along with greater protections, supports and IT training for teaching in pandemic conditions; compared to those who say teachers are currently fairly compensated, are no more at-risk in their workplace conditions than other workers, and who expect teachers to have a firmer grasp of modern remote learning tools.					
	Participants expressed concern over hours of instruction time during the adapted COVID-19 schedules and supported additional funding to address these gaps. There was also support for increasing funds for specialized courses and programs, French immersion, special education and substitute teachers.					
	1.4%	2.51%	10.06%	21.79%	64.25%	1074

School and student support assistants	On this matter, participants indicated that counsellors and support staff are critical for neuro-diverse and vulnerable students. Participants supported additional resources for counsellors and support staff, whom they described as overburdened, or in need of better training and compensation.					
	1.68%	3.26%	15.83%	26.26%	52.98%	1074
Teaching mentors	Several participants indicated mentorship could be achieved voluntarily through a collaborative teaching culture. Others suggested investing in mentorship could be most beneficial for specialized topics, such as supporting neurodiverse learners. Overall, there was little awareness of the role of teaching mentors in the district.					
	5.73%	10.15%	36.84%	26.22%	21.05%	1064
Maintenance of school buildings	Similar to the topic of replacing equipment and furniture, participants differentiate between necessary maintenance to address function and safety versus "nice to have" aesthetic improvements (e.g., fresh paint). Participants expressed that adequate maintenance of buildings was a necessary "non-starter." Participants expressed frustration over facilities' cleanliness in some schools and concern that many schools still have not undergone necessary seismic upgrades.					
	1.5%	3.85%	20.26%	34.90%	39.49%	1066
Investing in green technology and upgrades	There was a strong consensus among the comments on this question. Most participants agreed that while green technology and upgrades are worthwhile, this particular year may not be the appropriate time to invest in this area.					
	7.10%	10.09%	27.2%	29.16%	26.45%	1070

SECTION 2 - Funding Sources

VSB is required by law to pass a balanced budget. Participants were asked: If the 2021-2022 draft budget is in a deficit position, please indicate your level of support for considering a reduction in each of these program areas. (Refer to Statement 2 and Schedule 2C of the Jun. 30, 2020, Financial Statements.)

	Totally Oppose	Slightly Oppose	Neutral	Slightly Support	Totally Support	Total Participants
Instruction – Salaries and Benefits or Services and Supplies	39.88%	15.78%	17.23%	13.17%	13.94%	1033
Administration – Salaries and Benefits or Services and Supplies	7.45%	13.46%	29.82%	25.36%	23.91%	1033
Operations and Maintenance – Salaries and Benefits or Services and Supplies	14.57%	23.66%	33.14%	19.84%	8.80%	1023
Transportation – Salaries and Benefits or Services and Supplies	6.6%	13.93%	34.39%	27.17%	17.89%	1012

SECTION 3 – Generating Revenue

Participants were asked to speak to support for various mechanisms for generating revenue. Participants were asked: What areas do you think the District should focus on to generate additional revenue?

	Totally Oppose	Slightly Oppose	Neutral	Slightly Support	Totally Support	Total Participants
Grants and donations	3.46%	5.13%	19.84%	31.98%	39.59%	1013
Rental and Lease rates	2.08%	4.55%	25.78%	33.99%	33.6%	1012
School supplies	11.34%	13.31%	35.11%	22.68%	17.55%	1014
Tuition Fees	25.15%	16.60%	27.34%	17.59%	13.32%	1006
Cafeterias	7.33%	13.35%	33.33%	28.21%	17.77%	996

SECTION 4 – Equity in Education and Prioritization of Spending

The District is committed to providing continuing opportunities to develop equity in education and create an environment free from racism. Discussion of equity in education is present at public meetings, committee meetings, and with our stakeholders and staff. To broaden the public discourse on this topic and receive support applying an equity lens for budgetary decisions, we asked our community to share their views on equity.

Defining Equity in Education

Overall, 306 people provided their views on how they would define equity in education. Several themes emerged through this part of the conversation, two dominant themes and three supplementary themes.

Dominant Themes		No.	%
Access to education for all students	Many people wrote about the importance of meeting students where they're at and ensuring access to quality and safe education for every child. People view public education as an equalizing force.	136	44%
Deliberate distribution to address inequities	Other participants spoke to the importance of redistributing funds toward schools with students who may have greater need. These participants flagged that if the ultimate goal is equal outcomes for all Vancouver students, the level of support required for students will not be equal, especially for those who have faced systemic oppression.	82	27%
Supplementary Themes			
Considerations and comments tied to the pandemic	Some participants flagged that out-of-school instruction is not equitable. They raised concerns about how many students have the same access to parental support and at-home supplies. Some participants were concerned about the long-term impacts of remote learning.	21	7%
Support for diverse learning styles, needs and physical abilities	Some participants flagged that students' needs are not the same across the district. Equity, for these participants, included a focus on supporting students with diverse learning styles, needs and physical abilities.	20	7%
Supporting teachers to improve the quality of education	Some participants noted the importance of ensuring that teachers have adequate resources to provide high-quality, district-wide teaching. Comments included increased access to anti-bullying, anti-racism and diversity training.	13	4%
Other		33	11%

Prioritizing Funding for Equity

The flexible portion of the District’s annual budget is approximately eight per cent. The District asked participants how they would like to prioritize funding for equity purposes. Two hundred eight participants provided feedback on this question. Several themes emerged through this part of the online engagement, two dominant themes and five supplementary themes.

Dominant Themes		No.	%
Equipping teachers to continue improving the quality of education	Many participants flagged the importance of maintaining small class sizes, holding extra-curricular activities and helping students develop skills needed for post-graduation (such as managing finances, being politically engaged, gardening and ‘soft skills.’)	68	30%
Deliberate distribution to address inequities	Many participants noted the importance of redistributing resources to address systemic inequities. Student needs are not synonymous across the district, and participants ask that resource allocation reflect divergent needs. Responses to this question flagged the importance of distributing access to specialized programs. Many participants also spoke to spreading PAC fundraising efforts across the district.	45	20%
Supplementary Themes			
Increasing anti-racism training and access to BIPOC teachers and leaders	Participants asked VSB to direct funding to anti-racism teaching for students, staff and families. They also asked for changes to the curriculum, including access to more Indigenous culture. Further, participants also asked for increased diversity among teachers. Where appropriate, participants requested that the District hire diversity consultants who can assess systemic issues and inequity and make recommendations.	22	10%
Considerations and comments tied to the pandemic	Again, participants flagged concerns about out-of-school instruction. People asked for more support for teachers to enhance remote learning and increased face-to-face instruction.	20	9%
Equipping schools to meet physical needs	Participants called for increased funding to meet students’ physical needs. People called for funding to be directed to food programs, and mental health and wellness support.	19	8%
Support for diverse learning styles, needs and physical abilities	Funding support for diverse students’ needs was also flagged as critical. This was addressed in two ways: first, through increased in-class support, second through stigma-reduction work.	17	7%
Other		37	16%

Participant Analysis

Throughout this engagement, we aimed for input from students, families, staff and community members across Vancouver. The following provides a breakdown of participants.

Relationship to VSB

	VSB Student	Family Member	Staff	Community Member
Total	109	730	81	99
Percent	11%	72%	8%	9%

School Level

	Elementary School (including annexes)	Secondary school	Family member of both elementary and secondary school	Not applicable
Total	583	253	121	61
Percent	57%	25%	12%	6%

Type of VSB student

	VSB student who is homeschooled	VSB student enrolled in a choice program	VSB student who receives special education support	VSB student enrolled in the Vancouver Learning Network	Not applicable
Total	16	310	99	88	581
Percent	1%	28%	9%	8%	53%

APPENDIX A – Formal Stakeholder Summaries

Building Trades

Trustee Fraser attended

- Mileage continues to be the main issue
 - Need to be addressed
 - Suggest a fleet of vehicles to support the VSB's Environmental Sustainability Plan
 - Need support of staff to move forward
 - Status quo is not working
 - 2014 budget decision to make the change

CUPE 15

Trustee Parrott attended

1. Office staff extra clerical:

We would like to see the formulary for extra clerical go back to 250 students at the elementary level and staffed accordingly. Former budget cuts have taken away these positions and have resulted in the Office Support C taking on the extra work that the Office support B would have been responsible for. This has caused workload issues and a backlog of work that is not reasonable for one person to do while also being the designated OFA person at the school. Also, mini-programs, alt programs, extra clerical have also been cut and now downloaded to the main school office staff at the secondary level, also causing workload issues. Extra clericals in schools play a vital role.

2. Attendance support program:

CUPE 15 sees no need for ASP. It is costly with no benefit to the district or employees. Currently, we have the JEIS/LTD program that supports our members. Members are quite stressed out attending these meetings, and it is not helpful or supportive, especially when their supervisors are attending once it gets to the formal level. Those who are on the ASP have legitimate reasons as to why they are away and shouldn't be penalized for using sick days, appointment time, family days etc., that have been bargained in our collective agreement. We are also seeing those members with chronic illnesses who require specialist and doctor appointments on the ASP.

With the suspension of this program due to COVID-19, we have further seen that this program is not necessary. The money in savings would be better spent on Health and Wellness Initiatives for our members who have proven to be quite beneficial with the big rise in mental health, especially during the pandemic.

3. Replacement policy:

- Example: Will only replace 4 hours absences for SSA's, under 4hrs has to work it out at the school level
- This causes a big hardship on schools, and often students don't have support
- There was only a savings of 40,000
- While we recognize the on-call shortage, it is beneficial to the school to have an extra SSA to support
- For example:
 - I have a Dr's appt at 1:45 pm, I would be forced to use 4 hours of my appt time if I wanted a sub. What used to happen is that a sub would be called 11:30-3:30 pm, and I would then leave at 1:45 pm. This would allow the school to use the on-call to support or cover breaks from 11:30-1:45. Currently, students go unsupported a lot of the time.
- SSB's who aren't in an approved specialty area aren't replaced until the 11th day, this position supports vulnerable students and families with things such as food and shelter insecurity
- To have absence not filled with a sub until the 11th day is to the detriment of students and their families who may be in crisis
- These positions are very connected with the school community, students & families depend on this person

4. VSB CUPE Support Person for the EA Programs

- Would like to see two positions be created as a resource to SSA's who are taking on a Practicum student
- Currently, there are no rules of engagement or processes put in place at the VSB. To be transparent, everyone should know the roles and responsibilities of each person involved
- This position would support SSA's and their role with the practicum students to be successful
- Currently, there are two teachers in the district associated with this, but we believe it should be CUPE positions. EA's fall under our Union, and we know what our job entails
- Currently, we have Langara, Douglas College and Burnaby EA practicum students
- The feedback we are still getting from our members is that no one knows what their roles are, and there no point person besides a resource teacher who doesn't do the work of an EA
- Our view is that we should have a role in making this successful

5. Offset for the Learning Improvement Fund

- Currently, any positions created after Jun. 4, 2019, aren't eligible to receive the one additional hour paid per week for the purpose of consultation and collaborative planning meetings.
- This would be a fund for any additional SSA-6.5hr positions created after to receive the extra 1 hour paid per week
- This time is incredibly important for SSA's to have to be able to support the students that they work with

- It is used for collaborative meetings with the educators (teachers, resource teachers, counsellors, YFW, LEEW, etc.) associated with the student that is being supported, create visuals, create different learning resources for the students ex. Social stories.

CUPE 407

Trustee Parrott attended

- Increased staffing to aid in covering seasonal workloads
- Increased training: Equipment Operation
 - Driver Training
 - Technology training (i.e., Teams, and other technology initiatives)
 - Continued Respectful Workplace and Conflict Resolution Workshops.
- Improved Succession Planning
 - Greater emphasis on training of junior staff
 - Consideration of retirements within the next five years
- Equipment replacement and timely rotation budget appreciated
- PPE Safety Equipment
 - Continued distribution of PPE's to EE's
 - Quality over quantity (i.e., gloves, hearing protection, etc.)

DPAC

Trustee Fraser attended

- Equity for all students
 - Support for vulnerable learners
- Pandemic has exposed more vulnerable students, specifically medically vulnerable
- Create a pandemic budget again
 - Support for vulnerable students
 - Enhancement to the current model to support remote learners

IUOE

Trustee Parrott attended

- Incomplete consultation - should be later in the process
- Only using two of the 5 IAP2 guidelines - inform and consult - Jun. 17 Finance Committee report -
 - Should be more upfront as to what areas we are using -
- Cafeteria equipment replacement
- Permanently increase supervision aide hours

PASA

Trustee Parrott attended

- Mental Health support - there have been valuable workshops presented by the District and support through our benefits (EFAP). For some, this may not be enough
 - Supports will be needed beyond the pandemic
 - Support exempt employee in a continued proactive manner to reduce the possibility of long-term disability leaves
 - How can employees be met where they are at?
 - Is there a way to provide additional mental health support through our benefits provider? The coverage for medication is substantial, but the mental health services are limited
- Continued improvement and supports around technology
 - Understanding how to use new applications - training sessions
 - Hardware support at school sites
- Transparency and accessibility of information
 - Use plain language to explain budget/financial implications
 - More time to fully understand the budget and its impacts for departments within the District
 - Less use of acronyms
- Succession Planning and Recruitment and Retention
 - This is important not only for the continuation of services, but also in consideration of the pandemic, the potential for loss of skills and knowledge are at a higher risk than pre-COVID-19
 - Continue to build an environment where employees are valued. The current COVID-19 situation has created anxieties, employment insecurities and disconnection

VDSC

Trustee Parrott attended

- Will be surveying their members and will present at a CoTW

VEPVA/VASSA

Trustee Parrott attended

1. **Adding to the administrative allocation and building educational leadership in the district:**
 - Increase baseline of all VP to 0.4 FTE
 - Ensure that all schools that have enrollment over 375 have a VP
 - Ensure that all secondary schools have two VPs
 - Rationale:
 - 1. Leadership retention, development, and succession – VP’s will benefit from increase administrative time to build on their leadership experience and training.
 - 2. Work intensification – provincial data shows a large increase in numbers of administrators going on LTD as well as returning to the teaching profession
2. **Additional Supports (Elementary focus):**
 - Maintain the increase in Supervision Aide work hours
 - All schools without VP receive the “Small School Grant”
 - Increased support for complex school sites (e.g., Tier 1, those with seismic projects and/or district programs, etc.)
 - Rationale:
 - Due to the health & safety needs presented during the pandemic, there was a need to alter the schedule of the school day. An increase in Supervision Aide work hours supported the much-needed time for teachers to meet during the day (e.g., for School-Based Team meetings, to collaborate, etc.)
 - Current “Small School Grant” is provided for schools <400; however, there are schools slightly >400 that have a single administrator that would benefit from the support that the Small School Grant provides
 - While school size is an initial determining factor for administrator allocation, some other factors that impact school site complexities would be: Tier 1, seismic planning, district programs. Currently, there have been many school sites that have received support from retired administrators and district staff – this highlights the fact that support is very much needed
3. **Additional Supports (Secondary focus):**
 - Additional/Equitable clerical support
 - Rationale:
 - Currently, there are some schools with similar student profiles and enrolment but with quite different, dissimilar clerical/office support. i.e., a school with four office staff, another with two – the same student population and profile.
 - Add clerical coverage if office staff are absent on union business.
4. **Adding district and school-level staffing:**

- Increase staffing to support students impacted by the pandemic (e.g., those not attending regularly or not at all)
- Increase SSA's staffing allocations to schools
- Increase YFW & counsellor allocations to schools
- Increase district YFW support from 1 to 3
- Rationale:
 - SSA and EOC shortages have been a challenge and strain on administrators. When support staff are absent, administrators cover their assignment – thereby leaving the school without administrative leadership during that time.
 - When students' needs are not met – it is common practice for school administrators to advocate throughout the year for more support staffing.
 - Having adequate numbers of trained professionals (e.g., mental health) to provide the support needed for the entire school community (i.e., youth and adult members)
 - School placement or fit for complex students is well served by one-to-one attention from a YFW who knows schools and programs, when a student needs a more appropriate educational setting in the district

5. Funding for Department Heads

- There is currently an inequitable distribution of department heads in and across schools. Resources should be allocated to fund formal leadership positions such as Department Heads, in order to address equity issues as well provide support for the implementation of the new curriculum.

VESTA

Trustee Parrott attended

The following motion that we passed at the VESTA General meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 19: “That VESTA’s preliminary input to the 2021-2022 VSB budget include advocacy for the following:”

Procedural cost-neutral recommendations:

- That any surplus funds generated from the previous year be directed to support direct service to students. This includes restoring support lost during the pandemic, and including the provision of, if necessary, a robust remote learning option
- That any reductions or movement of funding from programs be made as far from the classroom as possible
- That full, public, transparent debate be held on the budget with all stakeholders, and that a full divisional budget be provided to all stakeholder groups
- That the district disaggregates learning resources budget from school flex accounts

Budgetary recommendations:

- Increases to non-enrolling staffing based on student and school needs
- Maintain all current Adult Ed programs and sites and consider growing additional programs
- Provision of TTOC coverage for non-enrolling teachers from first day of absence
- Increased support for early primary classes for fall entry
- Top up school organization funding to allow for increased flexibility in upper intermediate class organizations
- That the Indigenous Education Program be increased

VSTA

Trustee Fraser attended

- Additional support for TTOC's, particularly in respect to technology
 - Technology not available when they arrive in classrooms
- Students have benefitted from smaller class sizes, which is due to the pandemic, is there any opportunity to reduce class size moving forward
- Increased teachers for VLN - new model is putting a strain on teachers (Is there a Program Review upcoming?)
 - Pre-pandemic there is also a need to increase

VSB BUILDING TRADES SUBMISSION FOR 2021-22 BUDGET

Stakeholder Budget Workshop – Jan. 11, 2021

The Bargaining Council of Vancouver School Board Construction and Maintenance Trade Unions is comprised of over one hundred Trades Employees who proudly repair, renovate, service, and maintain over one hundred and ten Vancouver School Board education facilities from the following nine Trade Unions:

- International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers, Local #2 BC
- British Columbia Regional Council of Carpenters, Local 1907
- Cement Masons' Section of Operative Plasterers and Cement Masons International Association, Local 919
- International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 213
- International Association of Heat and Frost Insulators, Local 118,
- International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, Vancouver Lodge 692
- International Union of Painters and Allied Trades, District Council 38
- United Association of Journeyperson and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipefitting Industry of United States and Canada, Local 170
- International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail, and Transportation Workers, Local 280

Proposal – Mileage Issue

In 2014 the mileage policy reimbursement rates were significantly reduced despite several compelling concerns brought up during the consultation process by Trades representatives. The Trustees of the day at a Committee meeting reportedly assured Trades representatives in response that they are not to subsidize the Boards logistics costs. The Boards Senior Management Team also made the same assurance to Trades representatives at a Mileage Committee Meeting that same spring.

In spring of 2018 at two mileage committee meetings with the Senior Management Team, and at the Committee of the Whole meeting as part of the 2018-19 budget year development, Trades representatives produced extensive documentation that clearly quantified the significant subsidization of board logistics that is occurring by Trades Employees on an annual basis as a result of the cuts. Trades representatives also presented an objective and wholistic analysis of the other significant issues with the continued use of employee vehicles for Trades logistics at these meetings which include but are not limited to:

- A significant greenhouse gas emissions issue due to the inability of Trades employees to take sustainable forms of transportation to and from work like their peers and to team up and drive between sites in pairs or groups instead of in individual vehicles. This is incompatible with the Boards strong commitment to become the greenest, most sustainable school district in North America, the

Boards intention to align itself with the City of Vancouver’s climate emergency plan, along with being inconsistent with several other complimentary sustainability plans from other public sector organizations;

- A major personnel issue due to being a hiring and retention disadvantage where the competition including other school districts and public sector organizations, provides fleet vehicles for trades staff; the necessity of personal vehicle ownership amongst younger workers who are replacing the retiring “baby boomers” is waning due to the progression of the city towards densification, the high cost of living and vehicle ownership, and the improving viability of significantly cheaper and more environmentally sustainable alternative transportation options;
- An employee safety issue; the use of employee vehicles does not offer as great of control over employee transportation safety as most other options;
- A school zone safety liability; the board recently made a commitment to enhance the safety of students, parents, and staff in school zones. Due to the use of employee vehicles, using conservative assumptions, we calculate that there are more than 30,000 additional ingress and egress of school zones by trades employees in vehicles annually compared to other options.

Trades Representatives took a solutions-based approach in the Spring of 2018 and after showing the above analysis, presented a fiscally responsible solution that addresses the major issues above as well as many other smaller issues. The 2021-22 budget development represents the fourth consecutive year that this issue has been brought forward as a budget submission due to no resolution having occurred to date.

A mileage committee meeting was recently held in October of 2020 where assurances were made by Senior Management that they were going to seriously explore and cost out alternatives and report back to us a month later at a follow up meeting, which has yet to be held. Trades Representatives remain available to meet again in the near future so we can move forward together with an innovative, fiscally responsible, and sustainable trades logistics model that is compatible with the needs of today and the future.

Yours truly,

Neil Munro

Chair

VSB Maintenance & Construction Trades Unions (Poly-Party)

Business Manager, International Association of Heat & Frost Insulators, Local 118

Mike Logan

Assistant Business Manager, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 213

Scott Kirkpatrick

Trades Representative & Assistant Shop Steward, UA Local 170