

NANAIMO LADYSMITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Board of Education Action Sheet

DATE: September 29, 2021
TO: Board of Education
FROM: Mark Walsh, Secretary-Treasurer
SUBJECT: 2020/2021 Surplus

Recommendations

That the Board of Education of School District No. 68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith) approve the recommendations contained in this Action Sheet to allocate the unrestricted surplus and benefit premium balance to support the Board's goals.

Background

At the September 15, 2021 Business Committee meeting, staff brought forward the following recommendations:

1. \$500,000 – Equitable Access to Technology Program. These funds would be moved to local capital and would be in addition to the funds noted in the memo of September 1, 2021. As the Board is aware, many of our schools currently lack the infrastructure to support fulsome technology access. For instance, even where students bring their own device a school may have insufficient access to an internet signal to allow their device to be used as a tool. As the pandemic has made clear, technology is an important part of our education system. This investment will allow the infrastructure program to continue. We note that we have brought the program entirely in-house. (Goal 1) (LRFP Recommendation 31)
2. \$500,000 – Syeyutsus Support. These funds would support the deeper knowledge in our schools of the Syeyutsus Policy Framework. Specifically, we would allocate the funds directly to schools be used for professional development, land-based infrastructure, the inclusion of elders in schools, other resources and to support **healing and honouring the land**. Please note that the mechanism for flowing the funds (e.g. FTE or per school grant) would be determined after approval. (Goals 3 & 4)
3. \$700,000 – Environmental Upgrades – These funds would be used to lower the District's GHG emissions through facilities upgrades. Facilities would target high impact sites and look to use the funds to create synergies with other capital projects. (Goal 3) (LRFP Recommendations 10 & 18)

4. \$300,000 – ICE Solar Panel Installation – These funds would allow the District to install solar panels at ICE. Preliminary estimates indicate that the project would completely serve ICE's electricity needs as well as feed electricity back to the grid and provide ongoing operational savings that can be reinvested in learning in future years. (Goal 3) (LRFP Recommendation 18)
5. \$80,000 – School Theatre Upgrades- These funds would allow for the completion of the higher priority replacement of school theatre curtains. Last year facilities completed five of the six secondary schools by reallocating internal funds. This year Cedar Elementary, Departure Bay, Ladysmith Intermediate, Seaview and Cedar Secondary would be upgraded. Currently, there are concerns about the age and condition of the remaining curtains. (Goal 2)
6. \$50,000 – COVID HR supports – These funds would allow HR to hire short term help as required to address potential issues related to COVID HR issues. (Goal 2)
7. \$40,000 – External Landscape Sustainability Project – These funds would be used to upgrade school sites that currently have maintenance issues due to a lack of ongoing resources (e.g. fringe areas, areas near parking lots etc.) The fund would allow facilities to transform the areas to lower maintenance landscapes. Further, the upgrades would be completed with the lens of the Syeyutsus Framework and focus on healing the land. (Goals 3 & 4)
8. \$50,000 – Recruitment Enhancement Fund – These funds would be used to enhance the District's recruitment program and attract candidates to Nanaimo-Ladysmith. (Goal 1)
9. \$100,000 – WorkSafe Program – These funds would be used to support employees unable to fulfill their regular duties due to a workplace injury. We would use these funds to accommodate applicable employees in work within the District. The purpose would be to continue an employee's connection to the District supporting their return to their regular position and lessen our WorkSafe BC costs through the reduction of our experience rating. The Board supported the program in 2020-21 and despite COVID the District is already anticipating a payback from decreased Worksafe premiums. (Goal 2)
10. \$56,000 – Elementary Resource Allocation – These funds (representing \$2,000 per school) are in response to our survey of administrators about resource needs at the school level. Our intention would be to place these funds in schools, allow them to carryforward unused amounts for one year and determine the level of usage of the funds to see if additional funds are required or a potential increase in the general allocation to school may serve the same purpose as this resource allocation. We also note that it is important that the resources should be purchased with the Board's sustainability goals in mind. (Goal 1) (Board motion R21/05/26-12)
11. \$250,000 – Vehicle Replacement Reserve – These funds would be transferred to local capital and support Facilities in purchasing vehicles and/or equipment including electric vehicles. Further, Facilities continues to modernize its fleet with respect to grounds equipment (mowers, snow removal etc.) Specifically, the Facilities department requires a new backhoe to support various capital projects and a Bobcat for snow removal. (Goals 2 & 3) (LRFP Recommendation 17)

12. \$110,000 – SST for ICE for the year – These funds will support an SST teacher at ICE for the year to support students with diverse learning needs. (Goal 2)
13. \$200,000 – Cilaire Portable Upgrade – These funds would allow the Facilities department to complete another learning studio project at the Woodlands site in collaboration with Learning Alternatives and bring the unit to modern standards (including environmental) to be returned to Cilaire or reallocated to another site if Cilaire's population does not support the need for the unit. (Goals 2 and 3)
14. \$500,000 – John Barsby Contribution – These funds would be added to any funds of the City of Nanaimo (CON) for the creation of a joint use all weather sports facility on CON land at John Barsby. The agreement would be based on the NDSS template which has been a positive addition to the school and broader community. Further, the athletics program at John Barsby is limited by weather conditions to ensure the maintenance of the grass field. This upgrade would create increased opportunities to athletics and practice time. As our enrollment continues to grow this will serve the District well. (Goal 1) (LRFP Recommendation 22)
15. \$400,000 – Outdoor Learning – These funds would support schools in the creation of outdoor learning opportunities. These funds can be used for the creation of outdoor learning spaces or for professional development and time for staff to gain expertise and/or equipment for such a program. (Goal 1, 2, 3 and 4) (LRFP Recommendation 20)
16. \$125,000 – Traffic Safety Enhancements – These funds would be used to augment support from the annual facilities grant to address significant traffic safety issues at Ecole North Oyster. This would include the funding for a crossing guard for the 2021-22 school year. (Goal 2)
17. \$700,000 – School Site Acquisition Fund - These funds will allow the Board to acquire land as it becomes available in appropriate areas of growth, and plan for the future. Further, if we purchase land with homes, they can be used in the interim to provide reasonable rent accommodation for our staff (if approved by the Ministry). Alternatively, if NDSS is approved this year, these funds (if not expended) can support a District contribution to the project. (Goal 2) (LRFP Recommendation 6)

Note the amount under the School Site Acquisition Fund (Item 17) has been adjusted from \$1,200,000 as stated in the Information Sheet presented to the Business Committee on September 15, 2021, to \$700,000. This change is due to the amount of benefit premium surplus the Board is able to withdraw in cash at this time, per our benefit consultants. Of the \$5.66 million presented under the Targeted Constraints Reserve, only \$3.85 million is able to be taken in cash. Further, the District must leave surplus in place to fund IBNR expenses (Incurred but Not Reported), as well as maintain enough surplus to cover three months' worth of premiums, which is an externally recommended best practice in order to protect the district from unforeseen cost pressures.

As such, the Board has access to \$2.86 million to contribute towards the recommended allocations which total \$4.66 million, the difference covered by the Unrestricted Surplus Balance of \$1.8 million, as reflected in the following summary:

Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools

Summary of Unrestricted Allocation Recommendations

500,000	Equitable Access to Technology
500,000	Syeyutsus Support
700,000	Environmental Upgrades
300,000	Ice Solar Panel Installation
80,000	School Theatre Upgrade
50,000	COVID HR Support
40,000	External Landscape Sustainability Project
50,000	Recruitment Enhancement Fund
100,000	WorkSafe Program
56,000	Elementary Classroom Resource Allocation
250,000	Vehicle Replacement Program
110,000	ICE SST Support for 2021/22
200,000	Cilaire Portable Upgrade
500,000	John Barsby Contribution
400,000	Outdoor Learning
125,000	Traffic Safety Enhancement
700,000	School Site Acquisition Fund
4,661,000	Total Recommended Allocations
1,798,019	Unrestricted Surplus Balance
(2,862,981)	Variance to fund
2,862,981	Add, Benefit Premium Surplus Contribution
-	Balance

In accordance with the Board's policy on surplus, School District reserves shall be created out of any District accumulated operating surplus to protect the District from unforeseen circumstances. Any restrictions or allocation of surplus monies is to be recommended and presented to the Board.