

2021 Annual Report to The School Community



School Name: Bass Coast Specialist School (8859)



- All teachers at the school meet the registration requirements of the Victorian Institute of Teaching (www.vit.vic.edu.au).
- The school meets prescribed minimum standards for registration as regulated by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) in accordance with the Education and Training Reform (ETR) Act 2006. This includes schools granted an exemption by the VRQA until 31 December 2021 from the minimum standards for student enrolment numbers and/or curriculum framework for school language program.
- The school is compliant with the Child Safe Standards prescribed in Ministerial Order No. 870 – Child Safe Standards, Managing Risk of Child Abuse in School.

Attested on 26 April 2022 at 05:16 PM by Robert Sands (Principal)

- This 2021 Annual Report to the School Community has been tabled and endorsed at a meeting of the school council and will be publicly shared with the school community

Attested on 29 April 2022 at 10:14 AM by Jennifer Hartigan (School Council President)

How to read the Annual Report

What does the *'About Our School'* commentary section of this report refer to?

The 'About our school' commentary provides a brief background on the school, an outline of the school's performance over the year and future directions.

The 'School Context' describes the school's vision, values and purpose. Details include the school's geographic location, size and structure, social characteristics, enrolment characteristics and special programs.

The 'Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)' section includes the improvement initiatives the school has selected and the progress they have made towards achieving them through the implementation of their School Strategic Plan and Annual Implementation Plan.

What does the *'Performance Summary'* section of this report refer to?

The Performance Summary includes the following:

School Profile

- student enrolment information
- the school's 'Student Family Occupation and Education' category
- a summary of parent responses in the Parent Opinion Survey, shown against the statewide average for Specialist schools
- school staff responses in the area of School Climate in the School Staff Survey, shown against the statewide average for Specialist schools

Achievement

- English and Mathematics for Teacher Judgements against the curriculum

Engagement

Student attendance and engagement at school, including:

- how many exiting students go on to further studies or full-time work

Results are displayed for the latest year and the average of the last four years (where available).

Considering COVID-19 when interpreting the Performance Summary

The Victorian community's experience of COVID-19, including remote and flexible learning, had a significant impact on normal school operations in 2020 and 2021. This impacted the conduct of assessments and surveys. Readers should be aware of this when interpreting the Performance Summary.

For example, in 2020 and 2021 school-based surveys ran under changed circumstances. Absence data may have been influenced by local processes and procedures adopted in response to remote and flexible learning.

Schools should keep this in mind when using this data for planning and evaluation purposes.

How to read the Annual Report (continued)

What does 'NDP' or 'NDA' mean?

'NDP' refers to no data being published for privacy reasons or where there are insufficient underlying data. For example, very low numbers of participants or characteristics that may lead to identification will result in an 'NDP' label.

'NDA' refers to no data being available. Some schools have no data for particular measures due to low enrolments. There may be no students enrolled in some year levels, so school comparisons are not possible.

Note that new schools only have the latest year of data and no comparative data from previous years. The Department also recognises unique circumstances in Specialist, Select Entry, English Language, Community Schools and schools that changed school type recently, where school-to-school comparisons are not appropriate.

What is the 'Towards Foundation Level Victorian Curriculum'?

The Victorian Curriculum is assessed through teacher judgements of student achievement based on classroom learning.

The 'Towards Foundation Level Victorian Curriculum' is integrated directly into the curriculum and is referred to as 'Levels A to D'.

'Levels A to D' may be used for students with disabilities or students who may have additional learning needs

'Levels A to D' are not associated with any set age or year level that links chronological age to cognitive progress (i.e., there is no age expected standard of achievement for 'Levels A to D').

About Our School

School context

Bass Coast Specialist School is a purpose-built facility that is situated in the designated Educational precinct of the regional town of Wonthaggi, approximately 140 kilometres from the Melbourne CBD. Most students travel to our school on designated school buses from across the Bass Coast Shire with some of our students travelling up to 50 kilometres to and from school each day. Our high SFO and SFOE indicate that many of our students come from a low socio-economic background.

The Bass Coast Shire is considered to be a regional population growth corridor and this is reflected in our steady increase of enrolments since our construction in 2009. In 2021 Bass Coast Specialist School had an FTE enrollment of 68 students aged between 5 and 18 years with 5 of these students being indigenous. In 2021 we had a slightly higher than expected increase in enrollments from 62 FTE students in 2020 to 68 FTE students in 2021. This increase is partly due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic where some of our senior students remained enrolled at the school for an extra year because of a lack of opportunities for them to access post-school organisations.

All students enrolled at Bass Coast Specialist School are deemed to have an intellectual disability.

Bass Coast Specialist School is proudly a School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) and a Respectful Relationships (RR) School. These two disciplines are foundations for our communication and interpersonal relationships with the students, families, and friends of Bass Coast Specialist School.

Our School Vision is to educate our students to Communicate, Be Kind, Be Safe and be Life-Long Learners. This vision is reinforced by our values of Belonging, Community, Success, Respect and Relationships. These are the keystones of life and experience at Bass Coast Specialist School. Our aim is for our students to become independent and active members of the broader community upon entering adult life post-school.

Three separate Pods, Juniors, Middles and Seniors, form the foundation of the organisational structure of our school.

At Bass Coast Specialist School our student population is divided into eight separate and diverse classes; two in Juniors, three in Middles and three in Seniors. Class sizes range from 4 students to 8 with 1 teacher and 1 or 2 support staff allocated to each class. Alongside the classroom structure, there was a specialist Art, Music Therapy, Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy and an onsite horticulture employability program provided by an outside organisation. At Bass Coast Specialist School we have a very high ratio of staff to students. This enables us to provide high-quality educational programs that support every child and cater to their individual and diverse needs while maintaining small class sizes.

In 2021 the staffing profile consisted of 1 Principal, 1 Assistant Principal, 9 teachers, 1 Learning tutor, 1 Student Counselor, 1 Mental Health Practitioner, 1 Chaplain, 3 Allied Health, 12 Education Support, 1 Business Manager, and 1 Administration Officer.

Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)

In 2021, Bass Coast Specialist School had three Key Improvement Strategies. Our focus in the curriculum planning and assessment dimension was to complete the development, assessment, and documentation of a School-wide viable Numeracy Curriculum. The AIP actions linked to this were severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic again in 2021 and we had to maintain our focus on the welfare of the students and their connection to the school as the main priority due to the disruptions and inconsistencies that continued throughout the year. While we were able to keep our school open throughout the year student attendance continued to be severely impacted with us averaging 29.1 average number of absence days. This is significantly less than the previous year which was as high as 44.1 average absence days for the year. While for us 29.1 absence days is still too high, when compared to the pre-pandemic data it is a significant improvement.

We were able to partially meet these targets but our progress was greatly affected by the COVID10 Pandemic, the introduction of remote and flexible learning and our strategic focus had to be changed to cater to the higher levels of anxiety and uncertainty surrounding student welfare in our community.

Achievement

In 2021, some of our students managed through flexible learning reasonably well, however overall most of the students and families found this period to be quite challenging.

Due to the individual and diverse needs of the students, many of them were unable to maintain concentration and were easily distracted while working in their home environment. Many families found it quite difficult to engage the students in the various tasks without direct personal connection and guidance from the educational staff.

We were able to take many of the lessons learnt in 2020 and apply them to 2021. In particular, this meant that during times of remote and flexible learning the main emphasis was on student and family welfare and connection to the school through various remote formats. This enabled the students and families to have a positive and supportive connection to the school whilst working from home, with the families feeling less pressure to supervise the students' education while at home. Our approach enabled and facilitated a positive connection to our school for the students and families as school became an exciting place to be where they were looking forward to what was on offer rather than worrying about what they had missed out on.

At the beginning of the year, we employed a teacher in the role of tutor through the department's TLI program. We expanded the program beyond the funding provided by the department and through this, we saw significant improvement in student achievement especially literacy.

Through these experiences, we have continued to develop our communication with our school community. These changes have provided more opportunities for the parents and carers to become connected and involved with the school and their child's educational journey.

Engagement

Bass Coast Specialist School has traditionally had a fair proportion of students who struggle to connect to the school community or are disengaged from school for long periods. The individual learning needs and difficulties our students experience keep student engagement at the forefront of what we do. We continue to develop and enhance the structures and programs we have in place and continuously explore ways to increase student motivation and connection to the school. We have continued to develop a more experiential applied learning curriculum with a closer link to employability and community connections. This is a gradual and ongoing process with the goal for us to be ready to have our senior students participate in the Victorian Pathways Certificate from 2023. This pedagogical change had a positive effect on student engagement, especially in the senior section which is quite vulnerable to the risk of students disengaging from school and chronic long-term absenteeism.

With many of the community organisations opening up throughout 2021 we were able to restart the community access and post-school transition programs. In 2021 we enhanced these programs by having a teacher and educational support worker trained in the area of careers and pathways education and given a time allocation of one day a week to work with the senior students finishing their formal education in 2021. This program will be continued and expanded in 2022 and beyond.

The positive response to the key area of student voice and agency went from 63% in 2020 to 68% in 2021. This is a significant increase on our low of 2020 but not as positive as 2019 which was 86%. This can be explained by the continued impact of the pandemic on the students' ability to fully participate in school consistently throughout the year. However, on the other hand, the students' sense of self-confidence has seen a significant increase with 86% having a positive response which is a significant increase from last year (71%) and even greater than in 2019 (83%). We believe our focus on the well-being of students and their families has had a major effect on these positive outcomes.

Wellbeing

A newly developed and expanded Wellbeing Team including a school chaplain, student counsellor and mental health practitioner were all employed in 2021.

This new team prioritised communication with our vulnerable families who faced financial difficulty and social isolation during the pandemic. The school used a variety of communication modes with the school community. We used a

private social media page so families could post stories and photos as well as more formal platforms such as Seesaw and Compass. The delivery of food parcels was also organised through Breakfast Club which enabled the well-being staff to connect face to face with families during deliveries.

With the return to onsite instruction during 2021, we decided it was a good time to relaunch and re-energise specific whole school programs such as RRRR and SWPBS. Through these groups, we held some whole school events such as Harmony Day, Clean-Up Day and our end of year Celebration Day.

Many students expressed and experienced anxiety and this resulted in high student absenteeism. We prioritised communication with parents and students through weekly visits and regular video meets. Student data reflected a similar level of connection to the school despite the high absenteeism however the parent's satisfaction decreased significantly over previous years which highlighted the difficulty of remote learning for special education. Importantly, the data also reflected the challenges of raising children with special needs without adequate support.

As a result of the challenges of remote learning, our school has prioritised different platforms with parents such as social media, Compass management system, and SeeSaw to improve communication. The uncertainty and anxiety surrounding the pandemic impacted negatively on our staff as revealed from the data which describes a 4% decrease in staff feeling positive about the school than in previous years. As a result, in 2021, we embarked on a cultural audit to ultimately improve the school climate and culture. Overall, the pandemic had a strong influence on our well-being focus, with community connections taking a large part of our efforts. This is a significant commitment that will continue into the foreseeable future.

Finance performance and position

In 2021, Bass Coast Specialist School was able to offer a year 13 to a few students which meant our enrolment numbers were our highest to date. We have been fortunate to maintain a surplus which continues to be utilised, with recommendations by School Council, to further develop our school grounds and enhance student learning programs. Our senior students continue to develop their skills in the Horticulture Program and community access remains a priority for our students, connecting with external stakeholders, to enable them the best opportunities for when they are school leavers.

Mental Health has been a priority this year and we have seen the employment of a school chaplain, a student welfare officer and a Mental Health Practitioner. The Active Schools Grant has enabled us to build a small basketball court and we will further develop this play space in the future. The school is in a healthy financial position with funds carried forward into 2022.

For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at

<http://www.basscoastss.vic.edu.au/>

Performance Summary

The Performance Summary for government schools provides an overview of how this school is contributing to the objectives of the Education State and how it compares to other Victorian government schools.

All schools work in partnership with their school community to improve outcomes for children and young people. Sharing this information with parents and the wider school community helps to support community engagement in student learning, a key priority of the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes.

Refer to the 'How to read the Annual Report' section for help on how to interpret this report.

SCHOOL PROFILE

Enrolment Profile

A total of 68 students were enrolled at this school in 2021, 18 female and 50 male.

NDP percent of students had English as an additional language and 7 percent were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Overall Socio-Economic Profile

The overall school's socio-economic profile is based on the school's Student Family Occupation and Education index (SFOE).

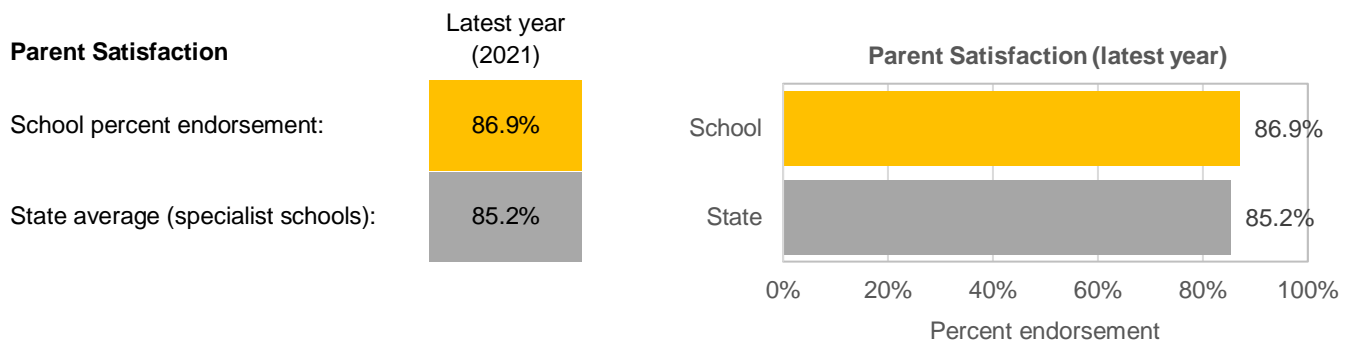
SFOE is a measure of socio-educational disadvantage of a school, based on educational and employment characteristics of the parents/carers of students enrolled at the school. Possible SFOE band values are: Low, Low-Medium, Medium and High. A 'Low' band represents a low level of socio-educational disadvantage, a 'High' band represents a high level of socio-educational disadvantage.

This school's SFOE band value is: High

Parent Satisfaction Summary

The percent endorsement by parents on their school satisfaction level, as reported in the annual Parent Opinion Survey.

Percent endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree) from parents who responded to the survey.

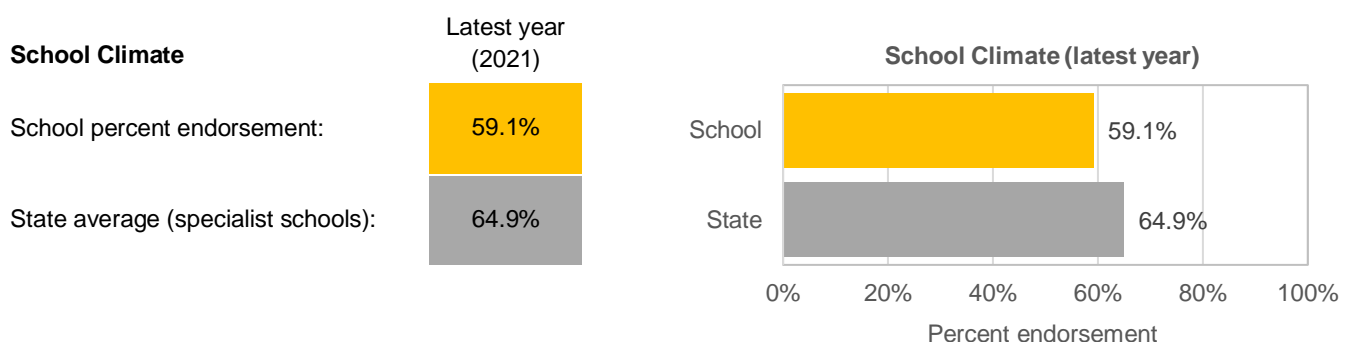


School Staff Survey

The percent endorsement by staff on School Climate, as reported in the annual School Staff Survey.

Percent endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree) from staff who responded to the survey.

Data is suppressed for schools with three or less respondents to the survey for confidentiality reasons.



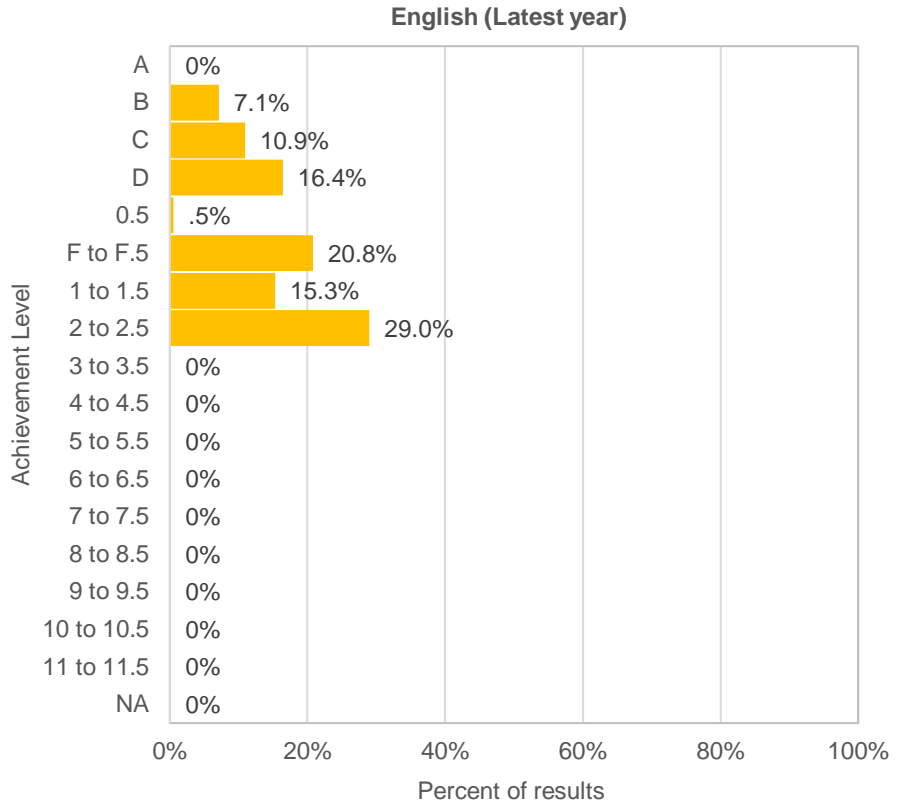
ACHIEVEMENT

Teacher Judgement of student achievement

Percent of results at each achievement level in English and Mathematics.

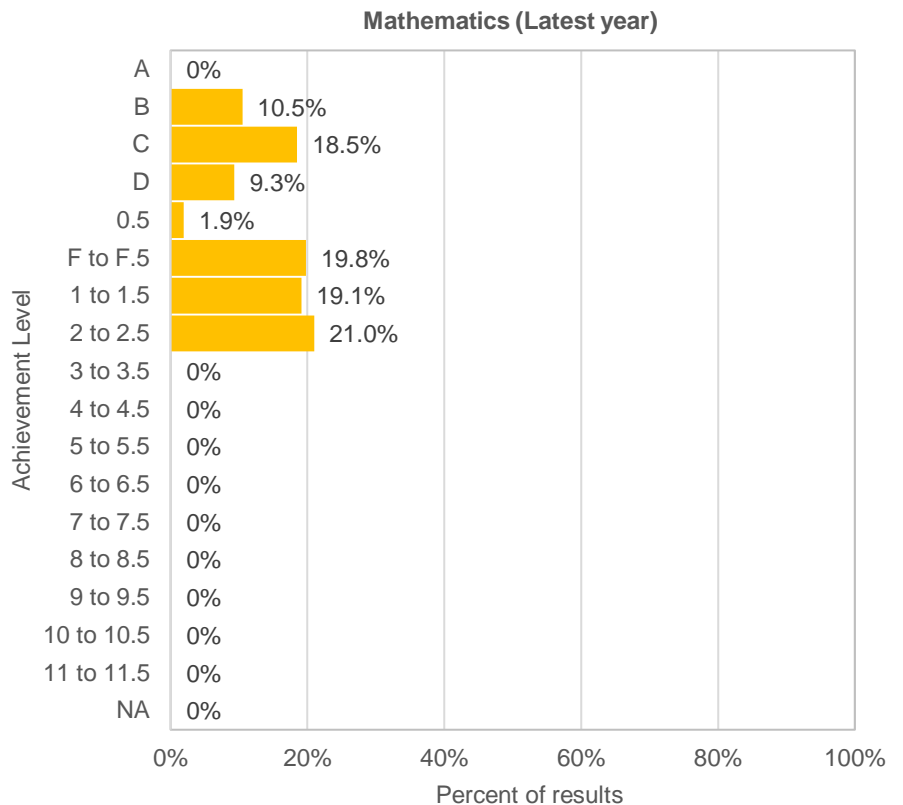
English

Achievement Level	Latest year (2021)
A	NDA
B	7.1%
C	10.9%
D	16.4%
0.5	0.5%
F to F.5	20.8%
1 to 1.5	15.3%
2 to 2.5	29.0%
3 to 3.5	NDA
4 to 4.5	NDA
5 to 5.5	NDA
6 to 6.5	NDA
7 to 7.5	NDA
8 to 8.5	NDA
9 to 9.5	NDA
10 to 10.5	NDA
11 to 11.5	NDA
NA	NDA



Mathematics

Achievement Level	Latest year (2021)
A	NDA
B	10.5%
C	18.5%
D	9.3%
0.5	1.9%
F to F.5	19.8%
1 to 1.5	19.1%
2 to 2.5	21.0%
3 to 3.5	NDA
4 to 4.5	NDA
5 to 5.5	NDA
6 to 6.5	NDA
7 to 7.5	NDA
8 to 8.5	NDA
9 to 9.5	NDA
10 to 10.5	NDA
11 to 11.5	NDA
NA	NDA



ENGAGEMENT

Average Number of Student Absence Days

Absence from school can impact on students' learning. Common reasons for non-attendance include illness and extended family holidays. Absence data in 2020 and 2021 may have been influenced by COVID-19.

Student Absence	2018	2019	2020	2021	4-year average
School average number of absence days:	31.8	33.8	44.1	29.1	34.5

Students exiting to further studies or full-time employment

Percentage of students going on to further studies or full-time employment.

Note: This measure refers to data from the previous calendar year. Data excludes destinations recorded as 'Unknown'.

Student Exits	2018	2019	2020	2021	4-year average
School percent of students with positive destinations:	100.0%	NDP	NDP	NDP	100.0%

Financial Performance and Position

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE - OPERATING STATEMENT SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER, 2021

Revenue	Actual
Student Resource Package	\$2,745,985
Government Provided DET Grants	\$519,355
Government Grants Commonwealth	\$9,000
Government Grants State	\$14,800
Revenue Other	\$28,619
Locally Raised Funds	\$17,308
Capital Grants	\$0
Total Operating Revenue	\$3,335,067

Equity ¹	Actual
Equity (Social Disadvantage)	\$220,897
Equity (Catch Up)	\$0
Transition Funding	\$0
Equity (Social Disadvantage – Extraordinary Growth)	\$0
Equity Total	\$220,897

Expenditure	Actual
Student Resource Package ²	\$2,436,161
Adjustments	\$0
Books & Publications	\$0
Camps/Excursions/Activities	\$21,223
Communication Costs	\$2,988
Consumables	\$29,363
Miscellaneous Expense ³	\$10,067
Professional Development	\$32,272
Equipment/Maintenance/Hire	\$54,698
Property Services	\$168,320
Salaries & Allowances ⁴	\$151,521
Support Services	\$4,320
Trading & Fundraising	\$491
Motor Vehicle Expenses	\$17,650
Travel & Subsistence	\$0
Utilities	\$10,483
Total Operating Expenditure	\$2,939,559
Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit	\$395,508
Asset Acquisitions	\$7,500

- (1) The equity funding reported above is a subset of the overall revenue reported by the school.
- (2) Student Resource Package Expenditure figures are as of 25 Feb 2022 and are subject to change during the reconciliation process.
- (3) Miscellaneous Expenses include bank charges, administration expenses, insurance and taxation charges.
- (4) Salaries and Allowances refers to school-level payroll.

FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021

Funds available	Actual
High Yield Investment Account	\$909,831
Official Account	\$25,273
Other Accounts	\$0
Total Funds Available	\$935,104

Financial Commitments	Actual
Operating Reserve	\$64,830
Other Recurrent Expenditure	\$0
Provision Accounts	\$0
Funds Received in Advance	\$0
School Based Programs	\$1,019,373
Beneficiary/Memorial Accounts	\$0
Cooperative Bank Account	\$0
Funds for Committees/Shared Arrangements	\$0
Repayable to the Department	\$0
Asset/Equipment Replacement < 12 months	\$0
Capital - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$0
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$265,063
Asset/Equipment Replacement > 12 months	\$0
Capital - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
Total Financial Commitments	\$1,349,266

All funds received from the Department, or raised by the school, have been expended, or committed to subsequent years, to support the achievement of educational outcomes and other operational needs of the school, consistent with Department policies, School Council approvals and the intent/purposes for which funding was provided or raised.