

# 2023 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 \(VIT\)](#)
- the school meets prescribed Minimum Standards for registration as regulated by the Victorian Regulation and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) in accordance with the [Education and Training Reform Act 2006 \(Vic\)](#) (this includes any exemption granted to this school by the VRQA, for the most recent calendar year, in relation to minimum student enrolment numbers and/or the curriculum framework requirement to deliver a languages program)
- the school meets the requirements of the Child Safe Standards as prescribed in [Ministerial Order 1359 – Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the risk of child abuse in schools \(PDF\)](#).

Attested on 25 March 2024 at 04:44 PM by Caroline Sibly (Principal)

- This 2023 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 14 April 2024 at 03:13 PM by Jennifer Hartigan (School Council President)

# How to read the Annual Report

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## 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 and an overview of the school's performance over the previous calendar year.

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 'Progress towards strategic goals, student outcomes, and student engagement' section allows schools to reflect on highlights related to implementation of and progress towards the School Strategic Plan and Annual Implementation Plan, and efforts to improve student learning, wellbeing, and engagement.

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## 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

### Learning

- 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).

Key terms used in the Performance Summary are defined below:

### NDP and NDA

'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').

## Updates to the *'Performance Summary'* in the 2023 Annual Report

Reporting on the following measures has been updated in the 2023 Annual Report to align with changes to departmental and public reporting products.

### **Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey, School Staff Survey and the Attitudes to School Survey**

The calculation of the percentage endorsement for all survey measures has been revised to no longer include skipped responses. This applies to all survey measures reported in the Performance Summary. The change to the calculation reduces the negative impact of skipped responses on school results, particularly where there were a small number of respondents to the survey.

Additionally, the Parent Satisfaction measure has been revised to use the percentage endorsement of the 'General School Satisfaction' factor of the Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey only. Previously, this measure reflected an average of multiple factors in the survey. The change to reporting a single factor is consistent with how Parent Satisfaction is reported to schools and in other public reports.

# About Our School

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## School context

Bass Coast Specialist School is a purpose-built facility located in the educational precinct of Wonthaggi, a regional town approximately 140 kilometres from Melbourne CBD. Our school serves students from across the Bass Coast Shire, with many travelling up to 50 kilometres each day on designated, chaperoned school buses. The majority of our students come from low socio-economic

backgrounds, as reflected in our high SFO and SFOE.

Since its construction in 2009, Bass Coast Specialist School has experienced steady enrollment growth due to the region's population growth. In 2023, we had 67.4 full-time equivalent (FTE) students aged between 5 and 18 years, including five indigenous students.

All students enrolled at Bass Coast Specialist School have an intellectual disability and/or significant learning difficulties, and we aim to provide them with a high-quality education that prepares them for active and independent participation in the broader community after leaving school. Our

School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) and Respectful Relationships (RRRR) programs form the foundations of our communication and interpersonal relationships with students, families, and friends of the school. Our school vision is to educate students to communicate, be kind, be safe, and be lifelong learners, reinforced by our values of belonging, community, success, respect, and relationships.

Juniors, Middles, and Seniors school pods form the foundation of our organisational structure. The student population is divided into nine separate and diverse classes, ranging from six to 13 students per class. Each class is led by one teacher, with one or two allocated education support staff. In addition to our classroom structure, we offer a range of specialist programs, including art, health and sport recreation, music therapy, speech therapy, and an on-site horticulture employability

program (School Based Apprenticeship Training) provided by an outside organisation.

Bass Coast Specialist School has a very high staff-to-student ratio, enabling us to provide individualised and diverse support to each student while maintaining small class sizes. Our staffing profile in 2023 consisted of one principal, one assistant principal, one inclusion outreach coach, nine

teachers, one learning tutor, one student counsellor, one mental health practitioner, one chaplain, three allied health professionals, 18 education support staff, one business manager, and two administration officers.

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## Progress towards strategic goals, student outcomes and student engagement

### Learning

In 2023, our school made significant strides towards enhancing student learning and satisfaction through various initiatives and collaborative efforts. The feedback received from our parent surveys was positive, with an 89% parent satisfaction rate compared to the state average of 84% for specialist schools. Furthermore, the school's overall score on the staff opinion survey for collective efficacy was 86%, which was well above the state average of 71% for specialist schools.

Our primary focus in 2023 was on professional development in differentiation, visible goals, and literacy and numeracy for the entire school. Middle school leaders received PLC (Professional Learning Communities) training to lead staff in improving student outcomes through inquiry cycles that analysed data obtained from modified school-wide assessment tasks.

This approach facilitated significant collaboration among teachers and Education Support staff, thereby enabling staff to set learning targets addressing the next steps in student learning based on the refined data outcomes.

To ensure that students who may have fallen behind in literacy received the attention they deserved, we continued with a Literacy Tutor in 2023. The tutor ran small-group or one-on-one sessions for students to focus on critical phonic learning. In 2023, we implemented additional school-wide assessments to consistently evaluate all student learning, with a common language for staff to discuss student progress and judgments. We

provided support and guidance to ensure all students received the best possible learning experience. PLC and subschool teams collaborated to

plan for student learning and wellbeing, guided by individual education plans (IEPs).

Looking ahead, we will continue to refine our planning and assessment processes to meet the learning needs of our students.

Through our ongoing efforts, we remain committed to providing high-quality education to every student in our care.

## Wellbeing

In 2023, the wellbeing team at Bass Coast Specialist School continued to prioritise communication and support for our vulnerable families who may be experiencing financial hardship or social isolation. Our expanded team includes a school chaplain, a student counsellor, and a mental health practitioner who work collaboratively to provide holistic support for our students and families. We continued to use a variety of communication modes to engage with our school community, including the school's website, our private Facebook page, Seesaw, and Compass. We have maintained our Breakfast Club program to ensure our students have food security whilst at school and have resourced students with school essentials such as shoes and/or uniforms from State School Relief. We have also been fortunate to receive financial relief vouchers for our students from our partnership with the Bass Coast Community Foundation.

In addition, we placed a renewed focus on whole-school programs such as SWPBS and RRRR to promote positive behaviour and relationships among students. We held various whole-school events to encourage community connection and engagement, including our annual Harmony Day celebration, Transitions and Careers Expo and Family BBQ.

As we navigated the ongoing challenges of the pandemic, we recognized the impact on our staff's wellbeing and morale. In response, we continued our cultural audit to ensure a supportive and positive school climate.

Overall, our commitment to student and family well-being remains at the forefront of our priorities at Bass Coast Specialist School, and we will continue to provide comprehensive support and resources to ensure our community thrives.

## Engagement

Bass Coast Specialist School continued to use a range of strategies to engage students and ensure the continuation of learning. Despite these efforts, student absenteeism remains a significant barrier to learning at the school, with student data jumping from

33.8% to 49.1% over the last 12 months. This is a major priority for the school, as engagement is crucial for student success and, so far in 2024, we have seen a sharp decrease in 30+ days student absences from 40% to 11%.

To address this issue, the school is committed to developing and implementing various strategies that will improve student engagement. These include classroom teaching strategies such as HITS to the implementation of "student voice," where students and their families identify learning goals on their individual education plans (IEPs) and Disability Inclusion Profiles. Staff at BCSS are listening to and acting on student preferences, interests, and perspectives.

The school has already seen some success with this approach, with certain students feeling invested in their own learning and decreasing their long-term absenteeism. In addition to this, the school has set a goal of working to strengthen student relationships through peer and group learning activities.

The school has received positive staff buy-in, with many creative ideas being shared throughout the year and exciting plans being put in place. Students were consulted on programs they would like to initiate or participate in, resulting in a variety of activities being implemented, including surfing, gymnastics, yoga, Sailability, Government House Scarecrow program, basketball, Special Olympics, school camp, Reconciliation walk, and The Melbourne Aquarium.

However, there is still more work to be done. The school community is looking forward to once again being able to participate in school activities and events. In 2023, the school anticipates being involved in both inner and inter-school activities. The school would like to build on cross-section connections with families and get more involvement in school activities. By continuing to develop and implement strategies to improve student engagement, the school hopes to create a more supportive and engaging learning environment for all students.

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## Other highlights from the school year

At Bass Coast Specialist School, we are proud to provide an array of outdoor recreational activities which suit all our different age cohorts. We are fortunate to live in an area of natural beauty and provide many hands-on activities to help our students engage in Science, Physical Education and Personal and Social Capability programs. Our students also participate in camps with Blackwood Outdoor Special Education School and annually attend the Alpine 100 Ride in Myrtleford as well as the Super Ride in Blackwood Forest.

In addition to our recreational activities, we engage with the community through varied projects such as the Harmony Day Careers and Transitions Expo, and our school concert which is held at the local Arts Centre. Student engagement is also enhanced through our senior SBAT (School-based Apprenticeship Training) program, and our market garden which is maintained by the students and school horticulturalist.

We have strong connections with local organisations such as Landcare, Yooralla, Wonthaggi Bowling Club, YMCA, and all our neighbouring schools and engage in partnerships that continue to build strong pathways for our students beyond school.

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## Financial performance

Throughout 2023, Bass Coast Specialist School maintained a strong financial position that closely mirrored the previous year. Our surplus funds were carefully allocated with input from the School Council to continue developing our school grounds and enhance our students' learning programs.

Our senior students continued to benefit from the Horticulture Program and an expanding hospitality program, and we placed a strong emphasis on community access to provide our school leavers with the best opportunities possible.

Mental health remained a top priority, and our support services included a school chaplain, a disability inclusion coordinator, and a Mental Health Practitioner. Additionally, we provided programs such as yoga, gymnastics, surfing, and basketball, as well as school camps, to ensure our students' physical wellbeing.

We received a government grant to build additional classrooms and with the support of school council we were able to not only expand the design to include an additional classroom, but we were also able to retain the relocatable building.

Bass Coast Specialist School remained in a strong financial position, and we carried funds forward into 2025.

**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 2.0 (FISO 2.0).

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 61 students were enrolled at this school in 2023, 18 female and 43 male.

NDP percent of students had English as an additional language and 10 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).

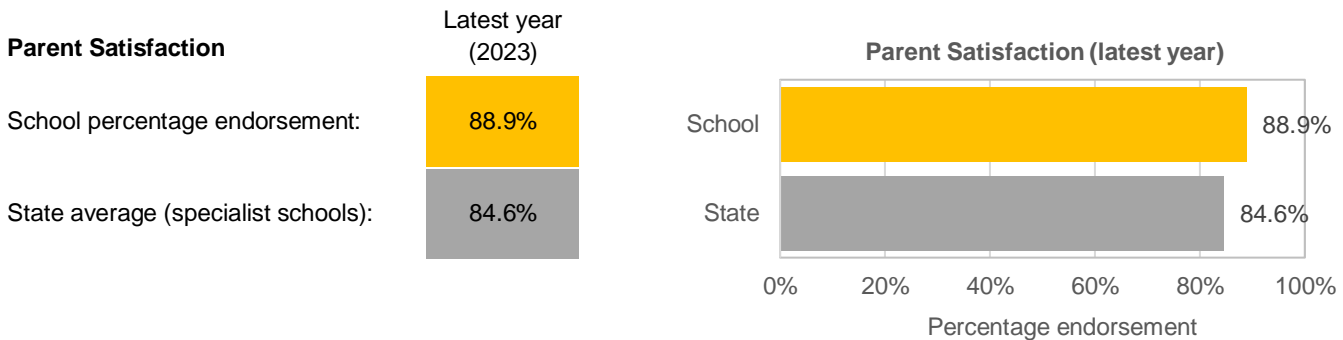
SFOE is a measure of socio-educational disadvantage of a school, based on educational and employment characteristics of the parents/carers of students enrolled at the school. Possible SFOE band values are: Low, Low-Medium, Medium and High. A 'Low' band represents a low level of socio-educational disadvantage,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

This school's SFOE band value is: High

### Parent Satisfaction Summary

The percentage endorsement by parents on their General School Satisfaction, as reported in the annual Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey.

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

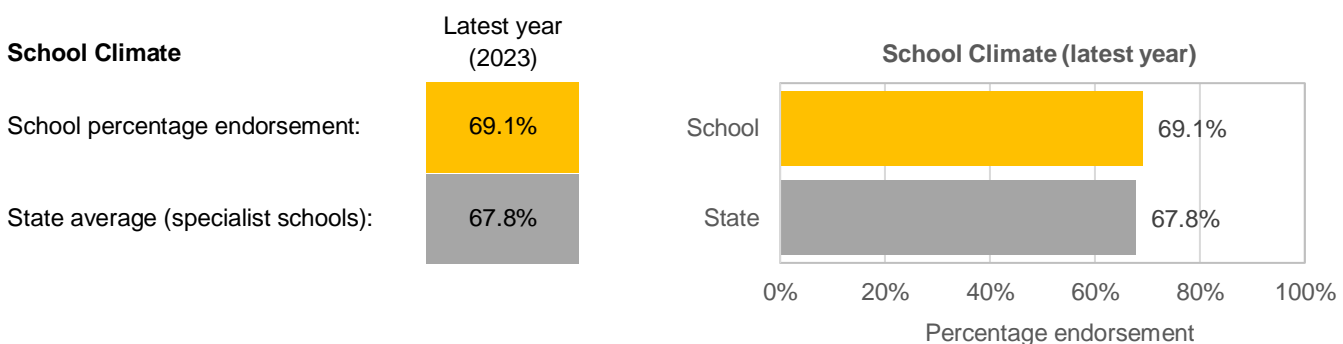


### School Staff Survey

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

Percentage 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.



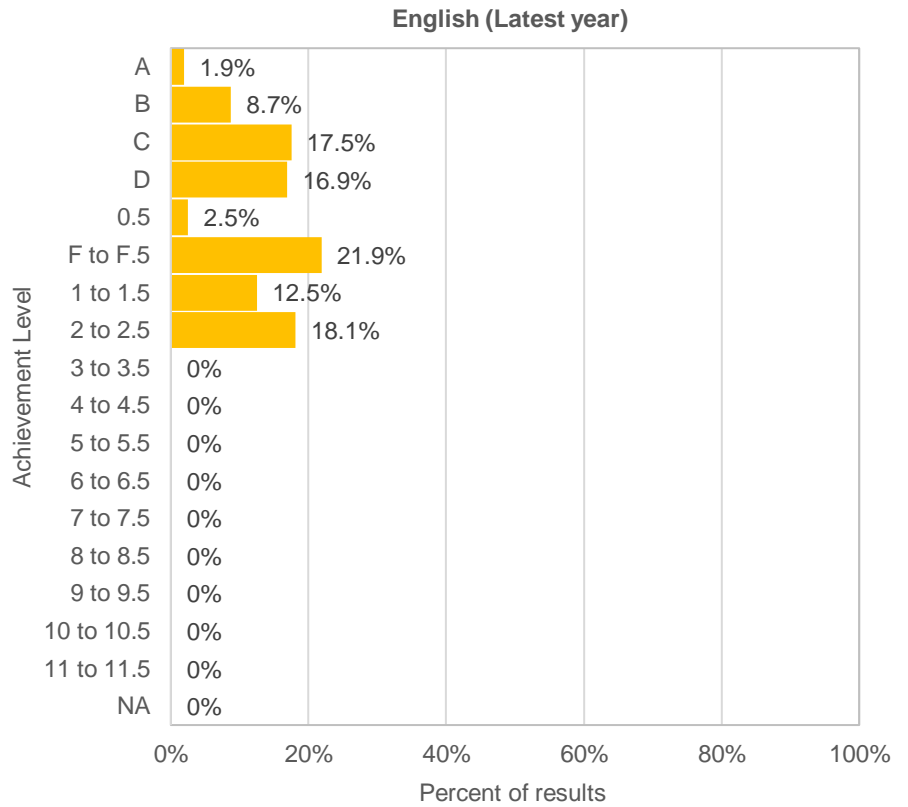
## LEARNING

### Teacher Judgement of student achievement

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

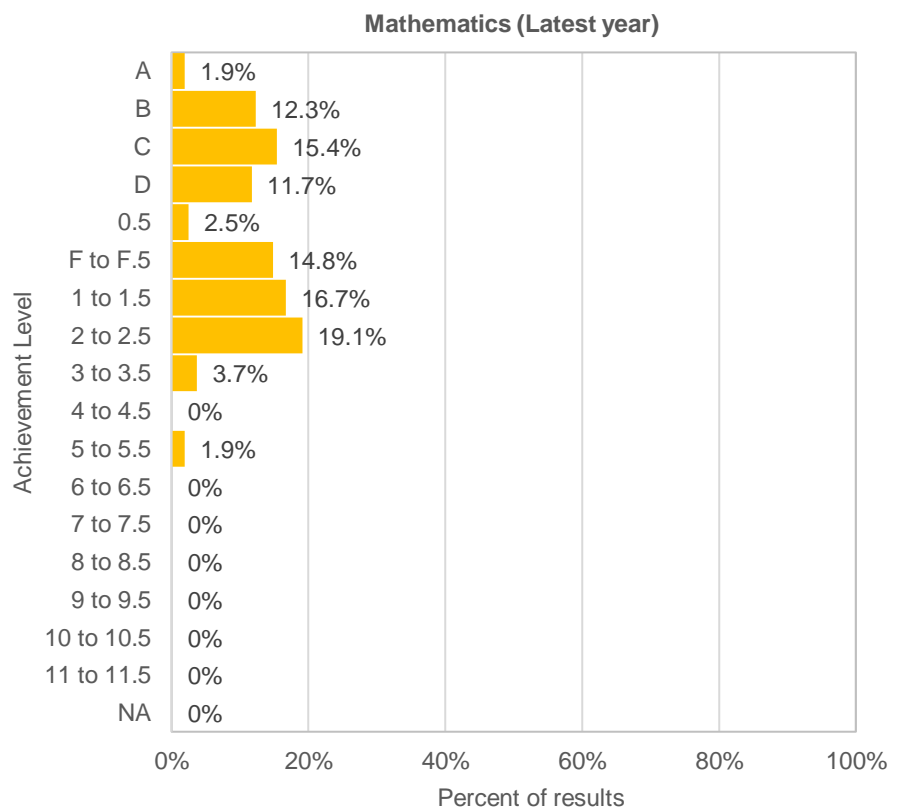
#### English

Achievement Level	Latest year (2023)
A	1.9%
B	8.8%
C	17.5%
D	16.9%
0.5	2.5%
F to F.5	21.9%
1 to 1.5	12.5%
2 to 2.5	18.1%
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 (2023)
A	1.9%
B	12.3%
C	15.4%
D	11.7%
0.5	2.5%
F to F.5	14.8%
1 to 1.5	16.7%
2 to 2.5	19.1%
3 to 3.5	3.7%
4 to 4.5	NDA
5 to 5.5	1.9%
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.

Student Absence	2020	2021	2022	2023	4-year average
School average number of absence days:	44.1	29.1	33.8	49.1	39.0

### 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	2019	2020	2021	2022	4-year average
School percent of students with positive destinations:	NDP	NDP	100.0%	NDP	100.0%

# Financial Performance and Position

## FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE - OPERATING STATEMENT SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER, 2023

Revenue	Actual
Student Resource Package	\$3,161,634
Government Provided DET Grants	\$667,606
Government Grants Commonwealth	\$6,450
Government Grants State	\$22,919
Revenue Other	\$67,464
Locally Raised Funds	\$7,909
Capital Grants	\$0
<b>Total Operating Revenue</b>	<b>\$3,933,982</b>

Equity <sup>1</sup>	Actual
Equity (Social Disadvantage)	\$197,162
Equity (Catch Up)	\$0
Transition Funding	\$0
Equity (Social Disadvantage – Extraordinary Growth)	\$0
<b>Equity Total</b>	<b>\$197,162</b>

Expenditure	Actual
Student Resource Package <sup>2</sup>	\$2,950,118
Adjustments	\$0
Books & Publications	\$0
Camps/Excursions/Activities	\$36,609
Communication Costs	\$3,081
Consumables	\$38,117
Miscellaneous Expense <sup>3</sup>	\$22,766
Professional Development	\$17,055
Equipment/Maintenance/Hire	\$54,891
Property Services	\$99,948
Salaries & Allowances <sup>4</sup>	\$213,688
Support Services	\$14,967
Trading & Fundraising	\$873
Motor Vehicle Expenses	\$15,518
Travel & Subsistence	\$0
Utilities	\$11,671
<b>Total Operating Expenditure</b>	<b>\$3,479,303</b>
<b>Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit</b>	<b>\$454,679</b>
<b>Asset Acquisitions</b>	<b>\$57,885</b>

- (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 16 Feb 2024 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 2023

<b>Funds available</b>	<b>Actual</b>
High Yield Investment Account	\$1,400,023
Official Account	\$51,485
Other Accounts	\$0
<b>Total Funds Available</b>	<b>\$1,451,508</b>

<b>Financial Commitments</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Operating Reserve	\$82,216
Other Recurrent Expenditure	\$0
Provision Accounts	\$0
Funds Received in Advance	\$0
School Based Programs	\$1,356,409
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	\$266,206
Asset/Equipment Replacement > 12 months	\$0
Capital - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
<b>Total Financial Commitments</b>	<b>\$1,704,831</b>

*All funds received from the Department of Education, 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.*