

## QUARTERLY BOARD REPORT – FEBRUARY 28, 2021

With the 2020/2021 school year 50% complete, the months of October through to the end of December saw most of the programs and schools operating at full capacity. We do note the pandemic had affected schools by December, with COVID exposure notices being provided at a few schools.

### SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

The theme of this quarter has been student safety. With the view that a student cannot learn who does not feel safe, we have been working on improving practices with regards to issues like bullying, violence, mental wellness, and overall safety for students and staff. Middle schools have reported a 50% increase in bullying and violent incidents compared to previous years. This reflects province wide concerns around the long-term mental health impacts of Covid-19 on students. Indeed, during the recent successful Capstone Projects at MSS, mental health was even a theme of several presentations; students are aware of the impacts of Covid and have a desire to help.

Putting the spotlight on bullying affords a good opportunity to revisit this complex area. Renewed training for admin on Violent Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA), further support for SOGI initiatives, and a continuing emphasis on supporting student and staff mental health have all been featured in recent work. We were pleased by the response to joint work with the Mission DPAC to support a Family Mental Health & Wellness Forum at the end of January, with over 80 participants. Further community partnerships and mental health programming is an important part of ensuring the success of Mission students.



Overall Covid exposure notices are a relative constant but at a manageable level in Mission. This is a reflection of the community and its commitment to staying safe during the pandemic. We have noted a few new situations since the first report: a cluster, a bus exposure, and a few linked to specific community events. Overall, the response has been excellent. MSS has increased its in-school time for students, with all students in person at least two days a week, and we still have several schools to not report an exposure at this time.

### SECRETARY TREASURER'S REPORT

The following table, updated with actuals to December 31, 2020, is tracking as expected, although a few of the budget lines exceed the preliminary budget. While tuition and other revenue is currently below the preliminary budget, additional funding was provided to respond to the pandemic, which is not in the preliminary budget. The amended budget will include the additional revenue and will be in the comparisons for January to March 2021. Overall, staff have not identified any significant concerns regarding the year end financial position of the School District.

<b>2020 / 2021 Financial Summary - Dec 31, 2020 Year To Date</b>			
4 of 10 months = 40.00%			
6 of 12 months = 50.00%			
	Preliminary Budget	Actuals - YTD	% of Budget Expensed
<b>OPERATING REVENUE</b>			
Total Grants	71,280,725	30,149,910	42.30%
Tuition	1,613,000	1,288,400	79.88%
Other Revenue, Leases, Investments	2,401,167	708,118	29.49%
<b>TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE</b>	<b>75,294,892</b>	<b>32,146,428</b>	<b>42.69%</b>
Amortization of Deferred Capital	3,002,730	1,464,071	48.76%
<b>STATEMENT 2 REVENUE</b>	<b>78,297,622</b>	<b>33,610,499</b>	<b>42.93%</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSE</b>			
Total Salaries and Benefits	66,967,085	27,457,803	41.00%
Total Services and Supplies	8,471,805	3,894,307	45.97%
Total Amortization	4,005,359	1,931,364	
<b>TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSE</b>	<b>79,444,250</b>	<b>33,283,474</b>	<b>41.90%</b>
<b>Net Operating Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>(1,146,628)</b>	<b>327,025</b>	
Budgeted allocation of Surplus	143,999	408,159	
<b>Operating Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>(1,002,629)</b>	<b>735,184</b>	

The following table provides a summary of the budget without capital amortization and the net affect on surplus accounts. This summary includes additional transfers from reserve funds for targeted programs, and school carry forward from the prior year. This summary further supports the view of being in a positive financial position at the end of the school year.

<b>2020 / 2021 Financial Summary - Dec 31, 2020 Year To Date</b>			
<i>Summary without amortization</i>			
4 of 10 months = 40.00%			
6 of 12 months = 50.00%			
	Preliminary Budget	Actuals - YTD	% of Budget Expensed
<b>TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE</b>	<b>75,294,892</b>	<b>32,146,428</b>	<b>42.69%</b>
<b>TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSE</b>	<b>75,438,891</b>	<b>31,352,110</b>	<b>41.56%</b>
<b>Net Operating Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>(143,999)</b>	<b>794,318</b>	
Budgeted allocation of Surplus	143,999	408,159	
<b>Operating Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>1,202,477</b>	

See the **Appendix – Financial Summary Report** for more detail.

## EDUCATION

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY – FUTURE ORIENTATION & STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING

The need to prepare learners to be flexible, adaptable, and resilient in an ever-changing world begins with the development of self-awareness, as learners. The assessment pilot initiated in October, is designed to increase student self-awareness and ownership of learning through formative teaching and learning practices (clear learning intentions, success criteria, ongoing feedback, peer and self-assessment, questioning for thinking). Students and teachers become true collaborators in the learning environment when they talk about learning with parents, set collaborative learning goals, and discuss steps forward.

#### HIGHLIGHTS

In October, staff from five elementary schools worked to explore student ownership of learning through assessment and communicating student learning practices. Twenty-five teachers participated in a pilot to use portfolios with the provincial proficiency scale instead of letter grades. Two presenters shared strategies for formative teaching and learning. The same workshop was given to mentor teachers, elementary principals, and all vice principals.

The *Novel Approach* sessions continued, with particular interest from one of the middle schools. *Joyful Literacy* support also continued with a small group of MPSD teachers leading the planning team. The school district is participating in a Ministry project called *Changing Results for Young Learners* to support social emotional learning of pre-K and K students. Math instruction continues to be supported through book clubs, in-class coaching, and inquiry groups.

#### CHALLENGES:

We are adapting to professional learning on Zoom or Teams instead of in-person. Sessions need to be shorter so the depth of conversation and ability for hands-on demonstrations is less. For the pilot assessment project, we were able to provide one iPad to each classroom, but more are needed.

We continue to work on barriers with the platforms and will look at recommending one for next year.



Photo by: Zoom Media Kit

## FINANCE

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY – FUTURE ORIENTATION & STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING

Finance strives to be future oriented primarily through the integration of system improvements, and planning for potential risks and challenges. Currently, the focus is on the time sheet

removal project and, increasing the capabilities of the school cash system through the addition of online school forms.

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## HIGHLIGHTS

Payroll & Benefits personnel were busy preparing for calendar year-end reporting, while continuing to work closely with HR to navigate the ongoing personnel changes resulting from the pandemic.

With respect to financial reporting, the following reports were completed during Q2:

- 2019/20 Registered Charity Information Return – annual
- 2019/20 SOFI (Statement of Financial Information) Report - annual
- 2020/21 Q1 Employee Data & Analysis System Report – quarterly
- 2020/21 Q1 COVID Pandemic Cost Tracking – quarterly
- 2020/21 Q1 and Q2 Ministry GRE (government related entity) Reports – quarterly
- 2020/21 Q1 Federal Safe Return to Class Report – quarterly
- 2020/21 Q1 Provincial Safe Return to School Report – quarterly
- Statistics Canada Business Payrolls Report – monthly

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## CHALLENGES:



The pandemic has continued to impact the team with respect to the significant number of personnel changes for the payroll team to manage. In addition, the pilot program for the removal of manual timesheets continues to progress slowly due to other demands. The inability to fill one of the payroll clerk positions full-time continues to restrict the ability to structure the department as efficiently as expected.

Reporting and budgeting has been a challenge during the pandemic, due to the planning and tracking related to the one-time funding support.

At the school level, support and training demands continued in Q2, particularly at the secondary school, due to personnel changes.

## INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY – FUTURE ORIENTATION & STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING

Siwal Si'wes continues to support Indigenous student and families by providing cultural, social-emotional, healthy living, attendance and classroom (academic) supports. These supports are provided through an Indigenous lens and can happen in the classroom, in small groups or individually (one-on-one) in the Indigenous room and/or virtually depending on the needs of the child and vision of the school. The department is working to keep the 'itqel, or honesty at the front and centre of hearts and minds, considering the challenges of the pandemic.



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## HIGHLIGHTS:

Earlier this year, Siwal Si'wes received, by private donation, a large collection of Coast Salish art prints. The *Salish Weave* collection of contemporary Coast Salish Art weaves together the distinctive art form, designs, and style of established and emerging Coast Salish artists. The collection stems from and mostly resides on traditional Coast Salish territories of British Columbia. Siwal Si'wes extended to interested schools, a Coast Salish Weave Invitation to explore. The goal is to engage in dialogue about this collection, through a collaborative approach. The prints will be made available to interested school teams from February 2021 to June 2021.

Educators of École Christine Morrison Elementary (ECME) in partnership with Stó:lō Elders and Singers have embarked on a song project called *Sing Out for the Earth: Good Medicine Songs and Stories*. Four bilingual songs in Halq'eméylem and English incorporate drumming and eco-rock musical elements. The stories and songs cultivate a shared responsibility to care for this part of the world. This fosters positive relationships amongst their families and creatively advances cross cultural understanding, respect and reconciliation. This project showcases the power of song and storytelling in bringing the Halq'eméylem language and culture alive. The traditional Stó:lō stories and teachings are directly connected to ecological values of stewardship taught in schools today.



Siwal Si'wes has traditionally shared a Siwal Si'wes Quarterly Newsletter with Indigenous families, which focuses on Indigenous activities held at individual school sites. Siwal Si'wes staff members combined their efforts to create an informational newsletter for all SD75 staff, called *Éy St'elmexw Sqwelqwel Good Medicine Stories*, focusing on bringing upcoming school district, local and national Indigenous-based events to the forefront and highlighting resources available at the Siwal Si'wes library. Additionally, the newsletter includes teachings from local Indigenous Elders and showcases Indigenous Student Role Models, shining light on their cultural knowledge and strengths.

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## CHALLENGES

The pandemic has impacted the school attendance of Indigenous students. At the elementary schools, Indigenous Liaison Workers collaborate with School-Based Team members to support families. At the middle and high schools, the Indigenous Student Success Coaches and the Indigenous School Team track students who are chronically absent and collaborate to create Intentional Student Success Plans. Some Indigenous families have chosen to attend Summit Learning Centre instead of returning to a physical learning space. While this program benefits some students, it is not ideal for all Indigenous families for various reasons, including barriers to accessing technology, available home resources to support student engagement, increased screen time and decreased face-to-face interactions.



The pandemic continues to impact the momentum of the activities in the Indigenous rooms, which were often the “hub” during breaks and lunch, providing a calm gathering place. This is mainly due to decreased capacities of the rooms. This reduced use continues to affect the type and caliber of opportunities these rooms offer to Indigenous students.

Additionally, Cultural Days activities are reduced. Cultural presentations normally provide a hands-on learning experience for elementary school-

aged learners. Cultural Days will be virtual this year, adding complexity to an already challenging process. Challenges include the packaging cultural kits, a revised schedule, IT support for presenters before and during the presentations, the comfort levels of presenters and classroom teachers, and the preparation of bannock, all while considering the parameters of Health & Safety protocols.

## HUMAN RESOURCES

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY – FUTURE ORIENTATION & STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING

The Human Resources department continues to encourage electronic communications versus paper-based communication from/to employees for environmental, efficiency and the pandemic health and safety protocols. Applicants across all job classifications have been receptive to virtual interviews / document exchange / onboarding / new employee orientation and district pandemic protocol training.

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#### HIGHLIGHTS:

The department attended several virtual education fairs with SFU, UBC, U of Alberta, and the University of Ottawa. New Grad, rural school district, UFV, and French teacher fairs are upcoming.

The school district continues to support practicum students, with over seventy education assistants' practicums completed, or in progress, from partnerships with ten institutions and support from school principals. Twenty-four of the practicum students were from Riverside College. In addition, the school district supported an Applied Business Technology practicum student from UFV and several student teacher practicums.

There are fewer class size and composition violations this year, in part due to increased enrolment in distance learning, although the increase in DL resulted in more staffing at DL.

MPSD was selected to participate in a CUPE / BCPSEA job evaluation project. The project aims to create provincial benchmarks for support staff positions that can be used by district committees to position its jobs. Ultimately, the goal is to create equity among job classifications that will help districts in their recruiting efforts.

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#### CHALLENGES:

The department is receiving significantly more employee requests for assistance, such as collective agreement interpretation, accommodation requests, and support due to the pandemic.

The department is looking to add modules to the Atrieve HR system to improve efficiency and data extraction via increased use of technology. These include: Job postings, "Edocs" (a digital employee file), and Workflow for forms online. The additional modules come with significant cost, which will be reviewed during budget deliberations.

There are still challenges in hiring Student Services specialist positions, and supervision assistants. Building service worker positions are reasonably stable, however, there is some turnover in part due to competitive wages with other employers. The department also spent a significant amount of time with grievances and investigations in Q2.

A new remedy formula for the middle school quarter system presented a challenge. However, the finance department collaborated with HR and provided the time and solution to address it.

## OPERATIONS

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY – FUTURE ORIENTATION& STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING

Operations has been working diligently to provide support for the district's strategic priorities. From an operations standpoint this includes providing a safe space for students and teachers through extensive cleaning and disinfecting protocols, improving schools access to on-line and remote learning with additional technology and improvements to the district network. Health and Safety has been working closely with all sites to provide improved training and tools, focusing on how to best support the health and wellness of staff and students. Facilities have been actively engaged in the continuous upkeep and improvement to sites, understanding that the environment is a critical factor in successful learning.

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#### HIGHLIGHTS:

Some highlights for this quarter include an extensive upgrade to the districts network security including a substantial upgrade to the server fire walls. The IT department has supplied the district with over 40 new devices this quarter to help get technology into the hands of students and support the education side with their Assessment Pilot. Health and Safety has made strides in providing training and tools to staff, seeing a significant upswing in the use of on-line health and safety resources and a downward trend in injury claims.

Facilities has been busy with standard maintenance. Highlights include awarding the tender of the Nicomen Island demolition project, assisting in the construction of several outdoor learning spaces, increasing the number of inclusive playgrounds in the district and the on-going upgrades to three school HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) systems. The transportation team has been a highlight this school year. They have provided safe transportation for over 1300 students despite the changes to school schedules and the increased community health concerns.

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#### CHALLENGES:

There are several challenges facing operations. BSW staffing challenges have been an on-going concern. The number of BSWs has increased to assist with the demand on cleaning to be compliant with public health orders. Unfortunately finding and keeping qualified staff is difficult and has put additional stress on those currently employed in the district. The pandemic has proven challenging in many aspects and the Facilities Department is no different with concerns about access to sites/rooms, additional people in buildings, and the protection of employees.

MPSD has aging building infrastructure, requiring an increasing amount of standard maintenance. This increase causes stress on both the labour force and the financial sides of operations.

## STUDENT SERVICES

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY – FUTURE ORIENTATION & STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING

The student services department is transitioning to a competency-based Individual Education Plan (IEP) over the next couple of years. This change of practice and program planning focuses on improving IEPs for student success. This aligns with the intention of the redesigned curriculum and will better prepare students to develop the self-determination and self-advocacy skills necessary for lifelong success and learning. The department has also coordinated and completed the planning for the third year of the *Pathways to Employment* program, a partnership with Douglas College that will begin in February at Fraser View Learning Center, in a learning space provided by Siwal Si'wes. In addition, the department continues to expand the work in schools with the expectation of inclusion for all students to belong in an enriching program that is full of purpose and meaning.

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#### HIGHLIGHTS:

POPFASD (Provincial Outreach Partner for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder) has provided two parts of an FASD-informed, four-part series designed primarily for Education Assistants who are interested in developing knowledge and skills, while also having an opportunity to explore practical resource creation. Collaboration is an important part of this series and Mission Educators are participating in this practical series pilot project.

A Mental Health Grant submission was made to the BC Ministry of Education including funding support to pursue programs and training for mental health literacy, social emotional learning, Mental Health First Aid, Ensouling our Schools, Mindfulness Training and an expansion of Trauma Informed Practice model in schools. Psychological Assessments have resumed with psychologists following the COVID pandemic safety protocols and using offices at the District Education Office to meet with students and families. Learning Specialist Teachers (LST) continue to develop proficiencies using the IPADs for school level assessments. All MPSD LST teachers are certified in level B testing making them highly knowledgeable in supporting students with appropriate interventions and learning supports. The department continues to provide flexible programming to students with diverse learning needs at school as well as virtually. The department added Educational Assistants and three student services teaching positions after reviewing the increase in 1701 student enrollment data, partly supported with the Federal COVID funding.

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#### CHALLENGES:

Although services to students have resumed this school year, pandemic safety protocols have meant that there is some impact on efficiencies due to increased space requirements, and limited cohort interaction. Some consultative services are provided virtually, where previously they may have occurred in person. There are still unfilled vacancies in Speech and Language Therapy, Psychology, Inclusion Support Teachers, and Counselling. In addition to staffing challenges and restrictions to the provision of therapy, there is an increase in the need for support services for students with both academic and social emotional needs.