

# 2024 Annual Report to the School Community

School Name: East Gippsland Specialist School (5490)



- 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 26 March 2025 at 11:19 AM by Daniel Clark (Principal)

- As executive officer of the school council, I attest that this 2024 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 26 March 2025 at 11:19 AM by Daniel Clark (Principal)

# 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').

## About Our School

### School context

East Gippsland Specialist School (EGSS) is located approximately 280 kilometres East of Melbourne, in the regional town of Bairnsdale. The EGSS vision encompasses a commitment to achieving excellence in education for students with additional learning needs through curriculum which integrates learning technologies with best practice in teaching and learning. The student population is in the 5 – 18 year age group, has mild to profound intellectual disabilities and/or multiple disabilities. The school recognises that every child is unique and that our students require additional supports and resources to enable them to succeed.

In 2024, we had 88.7 students enrolled and our staffing profile consisted of 39.2 FTE staff members inclusive of 1 identified Aboriginal staff member. The school has a large catchment area with some students travelling from as far as Orbost and surrounding areas to attend school daily; this is approximately a 200 kilometre round trip. Approximately 25% of our student population identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and approximately 20% of our student population are in statutory Out of Home Care, with a further 5% in non-statutory out of home care living arrangements. Our overall socio-economic profile is low with an SFOE of 0.4380.

We promote the school values of Be Safe, Be Respectful and Be a Learner. Students are taught in small groups that are supported by teachers, education support (ES) staff, Allied Health staff and other specialist programs such as, PE, Performing Arts and Visual Arts. The school remains committed to providing a progressive, stimulating and safe school environment that utilizes sound management practice, communication between all members of the school community, improved delivery of appropriate curriculum and increased community awareness of students with a disability. The curriculum is based on the Victorian Curriculum.

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

#### Learning

2024 was the final year of our strategic plan where the school continued to build upon previous years' work. The focus of this work was concentrated around our core pillars of Communication, School-wide Positive Behaviour Support, The Zones of Regulation and Evidence Base Practice. We continued to expand our knowledge and expertise regarding cognitive load theory and a phonics-based approach to reading instruction in line with the Victorian Government's approach to

reading instruction and the Victorian Teaching and Learning Model 2.0. This work will be further built upon in 2025, post our school review.

All students have an Individual Education Plans (IEPs) that is updated termly. These IEPs continued to be refined to improve outcomes for students across both learning and wellbeing domains.

The school appointed a second Assistant Principal to serve a variety of whole school priorities and functions across the school. Our two Assistant Principals work across both whole school learning and wellbeing domains, with one leading the Primary PLC and planning meetings and the other in the Secondary department. Further collaborative work was implemented on the Victorian Curriculum as common unit overviews as well as termly and weekly planning documents were implemented to supportive teachers with planning and collecting student data to inform teaching and learning sequences. These documents assisted with providing strong links between student achievement as well as academic, social/emotional progress and functional independent skills. In 2024 our Relationships and Sexuality Education curriculum was further developed with staff engaging in professional learning and extensive planning meetings to plan lesson sequences that are both age and developmentally appropriate and created with regard to the cognitive capabilities of students.

## Wellbeing

Numerous Wellbeing initiatives were continued in 2024 school staff used various resources to adapt teaching and learning sequences to suit the needs of students within the school and individual cohorts. School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support and The Zones of Regulation curriculum anchored our wellbeing support and frameworks. Our school became involved in the Mental Health in Primary Schools initiative for the first time which will continue in 2025 and beyond. This initiative included Assistant Principal, Donna Prince who is our Mental Health in Primary Schools Leader delivering professional learning to all staff regarding the initiative and wellbeing supports that classrooms are able to access. Donna Prince continues to work closely alongside our Mental Health Practitioner, Molly Cunningham to deliver professional learning and mental health and wellbeing supports to classrooms and individual students across the school.

The school continued to work extensively with renowned behaviour specialist, Dan Petro to refine our response to student behaviours, understanding functions of behaviour and developing functional behaviour plans to support students. This also included all staff engaging in professional learning on developing Functional Based Interventions (FBIs) for students who need additional support. The FBIs are individualised to students individual circumstances and needs to support wellbeing, learning and engagement outcomes.

Various data sources validated the great work that the school has been conducting in the wellbeing space. In the Attitudes to School Survey, Life Satisfaction received an 78% positive endorsement, Sense of Connectedness received a 76% positive endorsement and Sense of Inclusion received a 86% positive endorsement. Emotional awareness and regulation received a 73% positive endorsement and peer relationships received a 91% positive endorsement. These data sets continue to indicate that we are making positive steps forward as a school in supporting and strengthening student wellbeing. The School Staff Survey also demonstrated positive endorsements for School Climate (70%), School Leadership (87%) and School Staff Safety and Wellbeing (73%), all of which were increases on the previous year.

## Engagement

Attendance continues to be of concern for a number of students at our school. Student and parent health, family holidays and general disengagement continue to have significant impact on student attendance. Therapy days and parent-chosen rest days also impact upon the data. The school has developed a staff attendance/process strategy to greater support data tracking of student attendance with scheduled attendance monitoring processes involving administration staff, classroom staff and the leadership team.

As a school we regularly engage with the Area Student Wellbeing and Engagement Officer (SWEO), local agencies such as GEGAC, The Orange Door, Koorie Engagement Support Officers (KESOs), and in some cases DFFH, to support families to have their children attend school more regularly.

The school leadership team established a case management system to greater support involvement in care team meetings and for monitoring wellbeing, attendance and engagement of students at risk of disengagement or for those whom have particularly complex circumstances regarding their disability, needs or home-life circumstances. From an administrative point of view, this case management system has streamlined processes for the leadership team and contributed to positive outcomes for students.

In 2024 the school worked closely alongside Yoowinna Wurnalung Aboriginal Healing Service (YWAHS) to establish a Cultural Connection program targetted at our Secondary-aged indigenous students. The program involved participating in weekly lessons that focused on developing an enhanced cultural identify with particular reference to Gunaikurnai cultural customs and local history.

In 2024, the school employed various strategies to engage families in the Parent Opinion Survey and managed to encourage approximately engage one third of families in the school. Overall, there was a 91% positive endorsement for Student Cognitive Engagement, a 84% positive endorsement for Parent Community Engagement and a 89% positive endorsement for Student Development. There were further pleasing results obtained with the Attitudes to School Survey with a 69% positive endorsement for Student Voice and Agency, a 88% positive endorsement for Stimulated Learning and 84% positive endorsement for Differentiated Learning Challenge.

## Financial performance

### 2024 Financial Summary

#### **Salaries & Allowances: \$440,563**

This includes expenses for casual teachers, teacher assistants, superannuation, and WorkCover. The higher-than-expected expenditure was due to increased staff absences and leave taken throughout the year. However, we successfully claimed over \$40,000 back from the Department of Education.

### Building Works & Upgrades

Throughout 2024, we completed several building projects and facility upgrades across the school. Many more projects are planned, with completion expected in 2025 or early 2026.

### Utilities Expenditure

Overall, utility costs remained consistent with previous years. However, electricity expenses were significantly lower due to the successful installation of solar panels.

### Financial Commitments & Year-End Position

As of the end of 2024, our bank balance stood at **\$1,599,891.13**, with outstanding commitments carried forward into 2025, including:

- o **School-Based Programs:** \$423,635 for initiatives such as Swimming, Active Schools Grants, Sporting Schools, Road Safety Grant, Koorie Education, Professional Development, Student Programs, and staff replacements.
- o **Equipment Replacement:** \$130,000
- o **Building & Grounds Projects:** \$526,857
- o **Maintenance (Buildings & Grounds):** \$195,795

### Looking Ahead to 2025

We begin the new school year in a stable financial position with numerous building and grounds projects scheduled and many school-based programs in operation, the year ahead promises to be both productive and exciting.

# 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 89 students were enrolled at this school in 2024, 27 female and 61 male.

NDP percent of students had English as an additional language and 31 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).

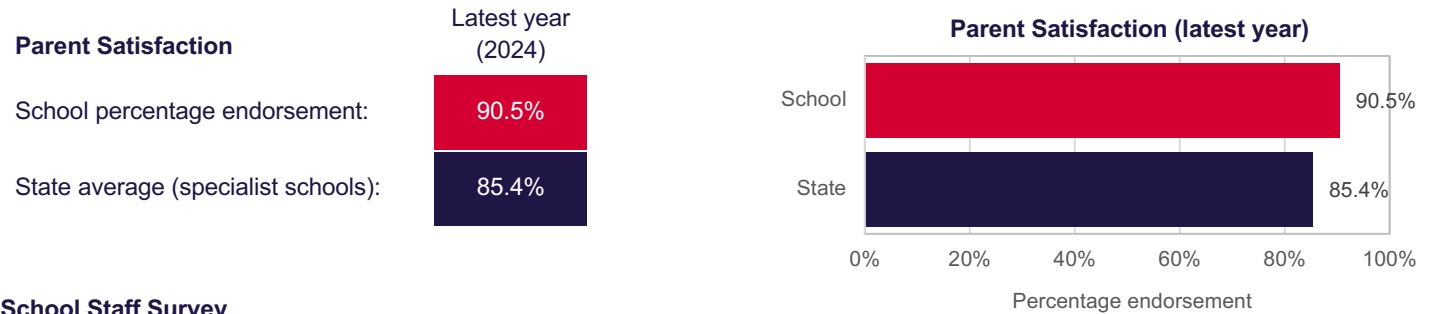
SFOE is a measure of socio-educational disadvantage of a school, based on educational and employment characteristics of the parents/carers of students enrolled at the school. Possible SFOE band values are: Low, Low-Medium, Medium and High. A 'Low' band represents a low level of socio-educational disadvantage,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

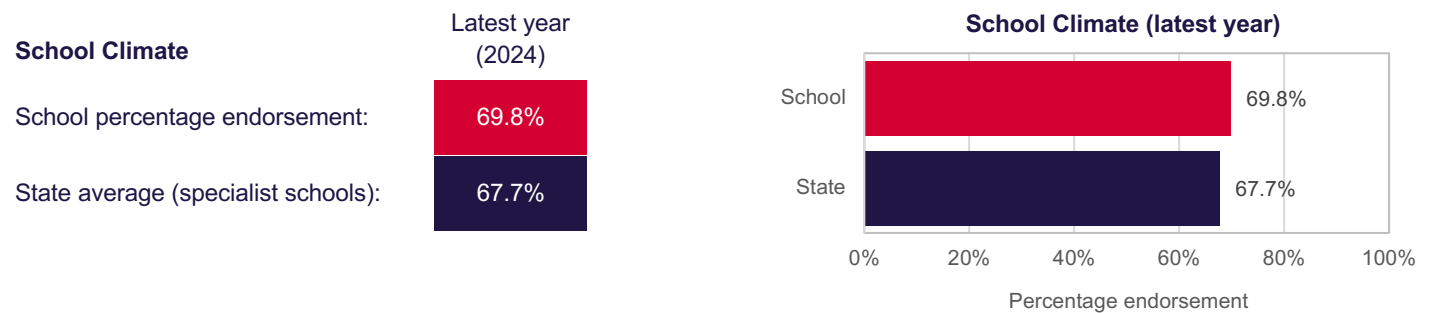


### School Staff Survey

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.

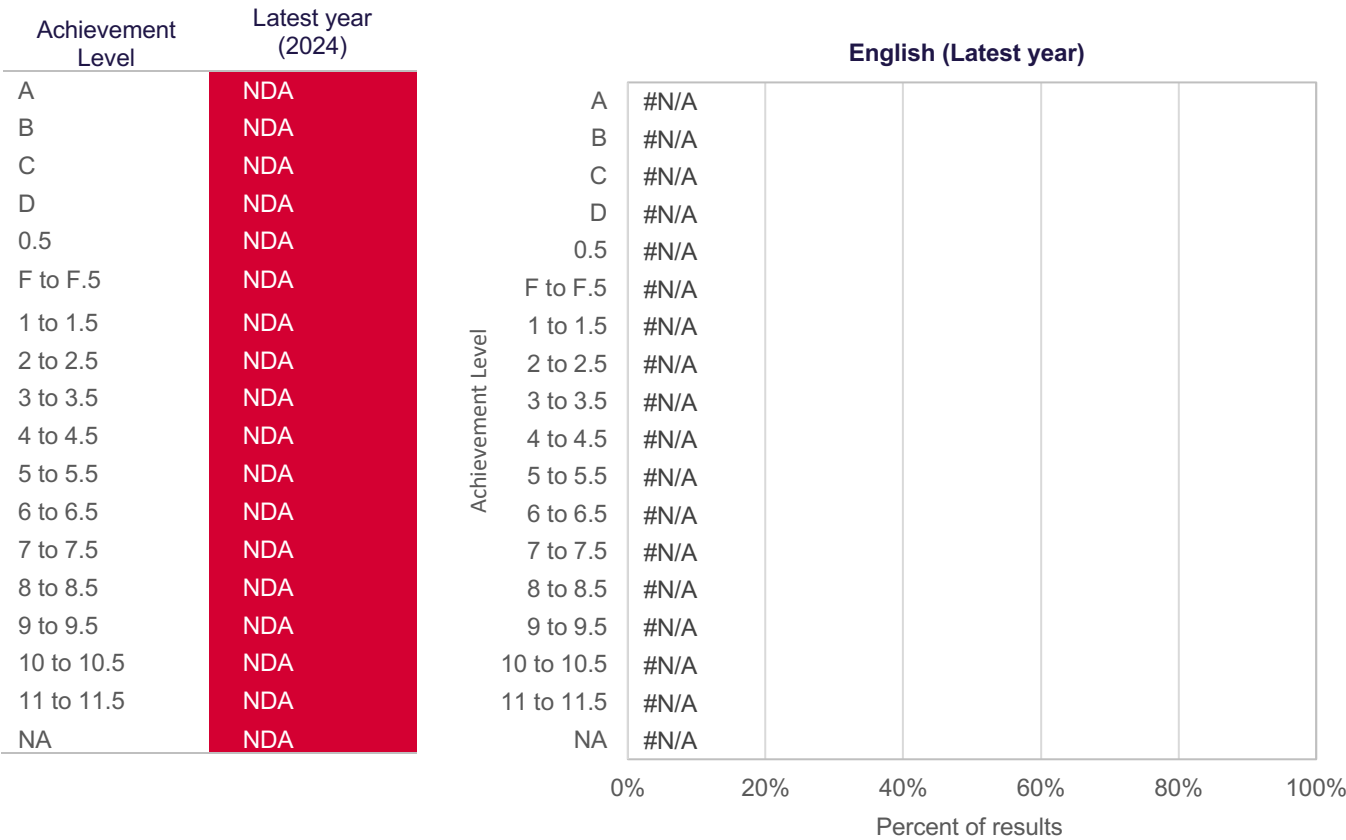


LEARNING

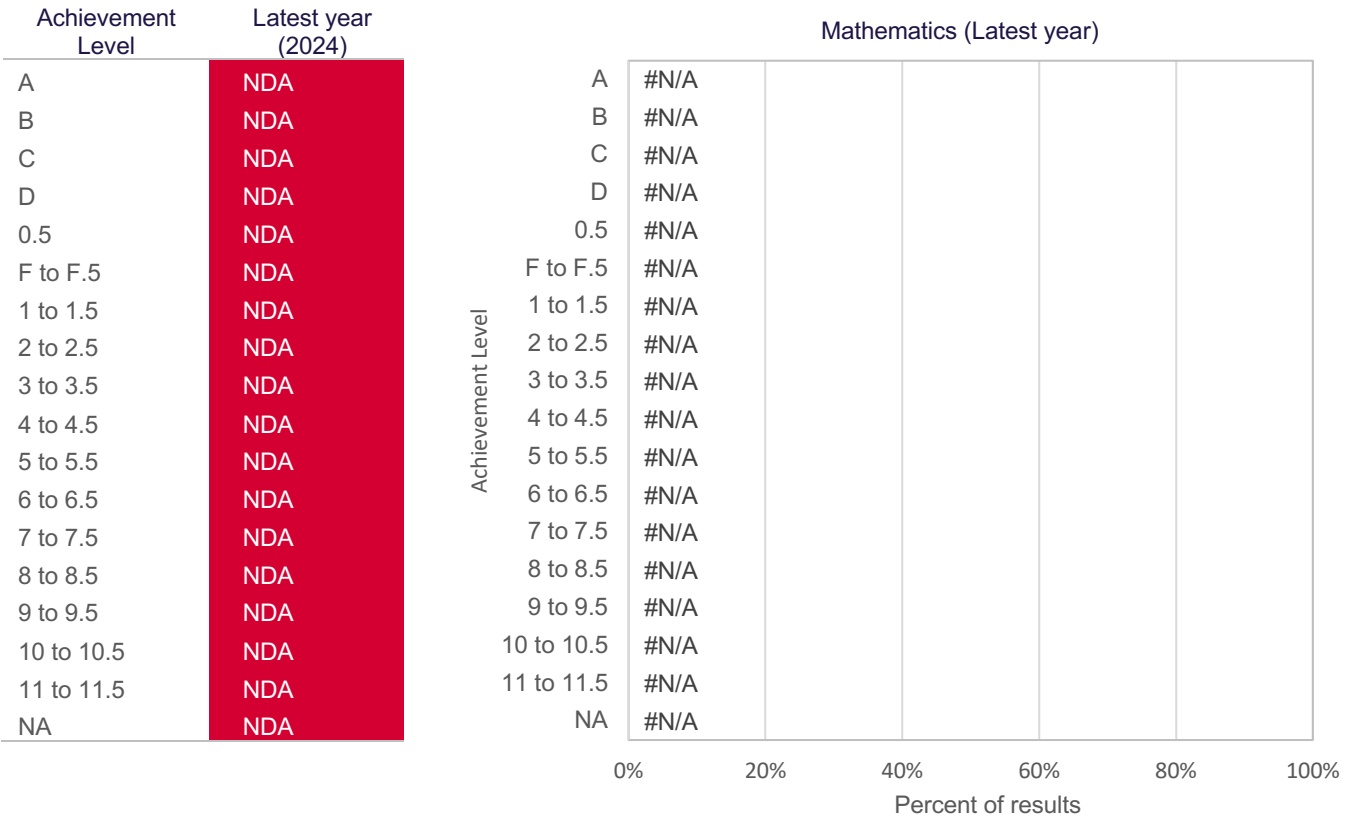
Teacher Judgement of student achievement

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

English



Mathematics





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	2021	2022	2023	2024	4-year average
School average number of absence days:	20.8	17.9	27.3	29.1	23.8

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	2021	2022	2023	2024	4-year average
School percent of students with positive destinations:	100.0%	NDP	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%



# Financial Performance and Position

## FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE - OPERATING STATEMENT SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2024

Revenue	Actual
Student Resource Package	\$4,638,251
Government Provided DET Grants	\$1,308,039
Government Grants Commonwealth	\$1,750
Government Grants State	\$15,219
Revenue Other	\$69,015
Locally Raised Funds	\$8,331
Capital Grants	\$0
<b>Total Operating Revenue</b>	<b>\$6,040,604</b>

Equity <sup>1</sup>	Actual
Equity (Social Disadvantage)	\$192,963
Equity (Catch Up)	\$0
Equity (Social Disadvantage – Extraordinary Growth)	\$0
<b>Equity Total</b>	<b>\$192,963</b>

Expenditure	Actual
Student Resource Package <sup>2</sup>	\$4,285,628
Adjustments	\$0
Books & Publications	\$0
Camps/Excursions/Activities	\$26,186
Communication Costs	\$14,317
Consumables	\$75,845
Miscellaneous Expense <sup>3</sup>	\$43,251
Professional Development	\$22,792
Equipment/Maintenance/Hire	\$44,547
Property Services	\$178,811
Salaries & Allowances <sup>4</sup>	\$440,563
Support Services	\$6,760
Trading & Fundraising	\$1,991
Motor Vehicle Expenses	\$13,551
Travel & Subsistence	\$0
Utilities	\$26,933
<b>Total Operating Expenditure</b>	<b>\$5,181,175</b>
<b>Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit</b>	<b>\$859,429</b>
<b>Asset Acquisitions</b>	<b>\$317,365</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 2025 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 2024

<b>Funds available</b>	<b>Actual</b>
High Yield Investment Account	\$1,592,507
Official Account	\$7,384
Other Accounts	\$0
<b>Total Funds Available</b>	<b>\$1,599,891</b>

<b>Financial Commitments</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Operating Reserve	\$132,152
Other Recurrent Expenditure	\$4,819
Provision Accounts	\$0
Funds Received in Advance	\$93,520
School Based Programs	\$423,635
Beneficiary/Memorial Accounts	\$0
Cooperative Bank Account	\$0
Funds for Committees/Shared Arrangements	\$0
Repayable to the Department	\$0
Asset/Equipment Replacement < 12 months	\$130,000
Capital - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$526,857
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$195,795
Asset/Equipment Replacement > 12 months	\$100,000
Capital - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
<b>Total Financial Commitments</b>	<b>\$1,606,778</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.*