

School District No. 5

[Southeast Kootenay]



SCHOOL DISTRICT 5
SOUTHEAST KOOTENAY

Finance, Operations and Transportation

September 2023



Finance Operations and Transportation

Finance:

The school district operates on a budget of approximately \$86 million dollars annually. The budget breaks down into three main areas: staffing, services and supplies, and capital as shown in Figure 1.

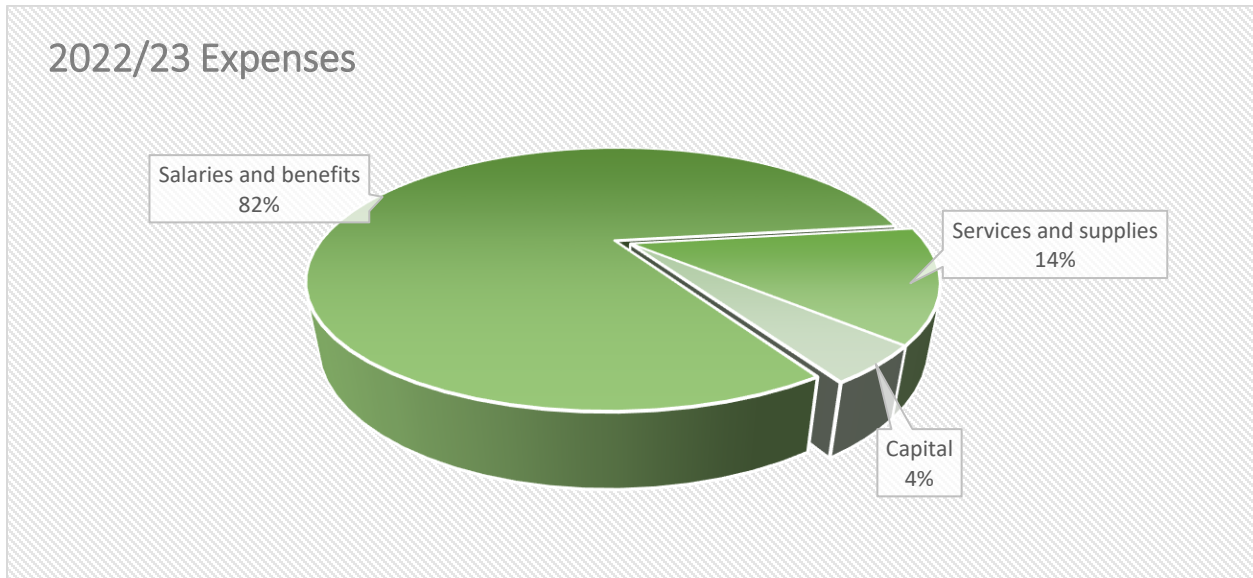


Figure 1

Staffing costs are determined based on student configuration within the schools. Instructional expenses make up the majority of the budget expenditures as shown in Figure 2.

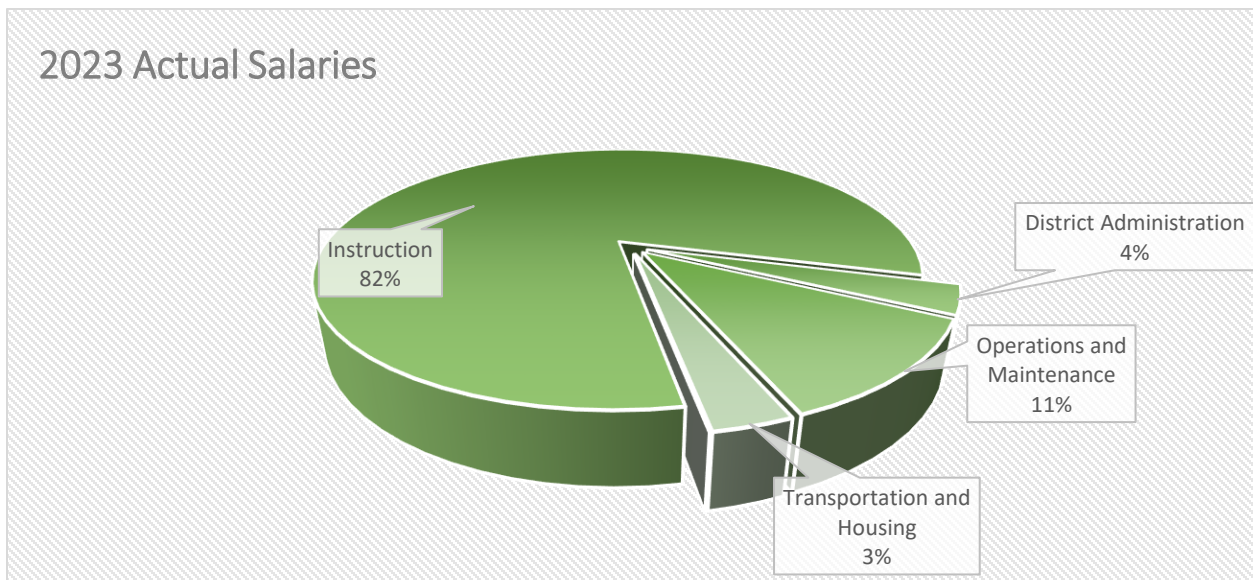


Figure 2

Instructional salaries are broken down further by role in Figure 3:

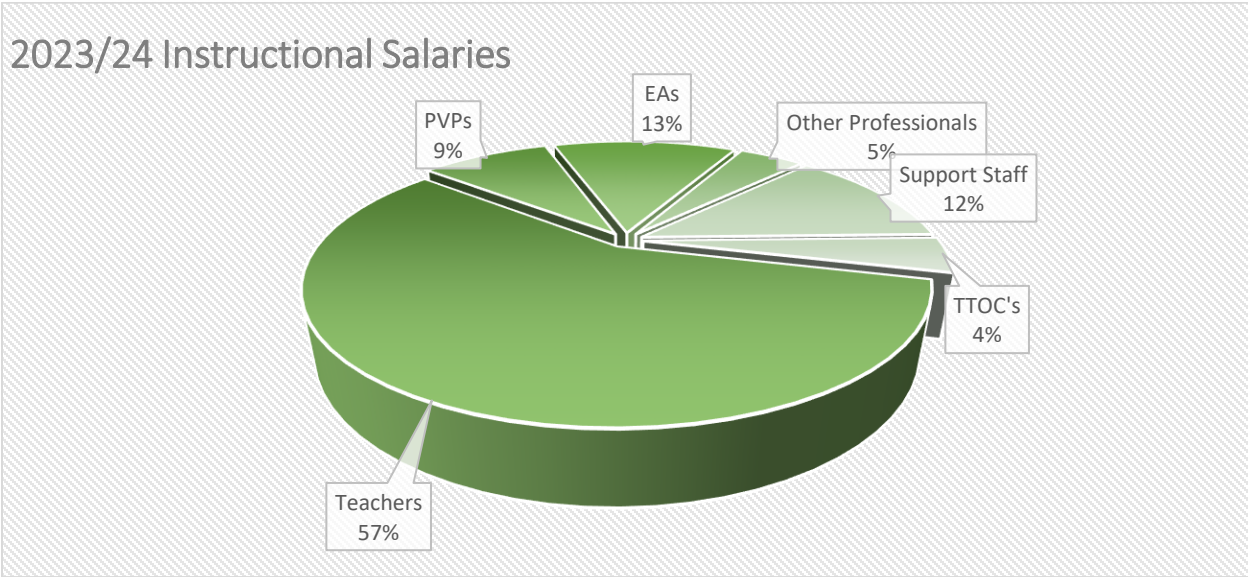


Figure 3

Services and Supplies make up the other components of the Budget and are further broken down in Figure 4.

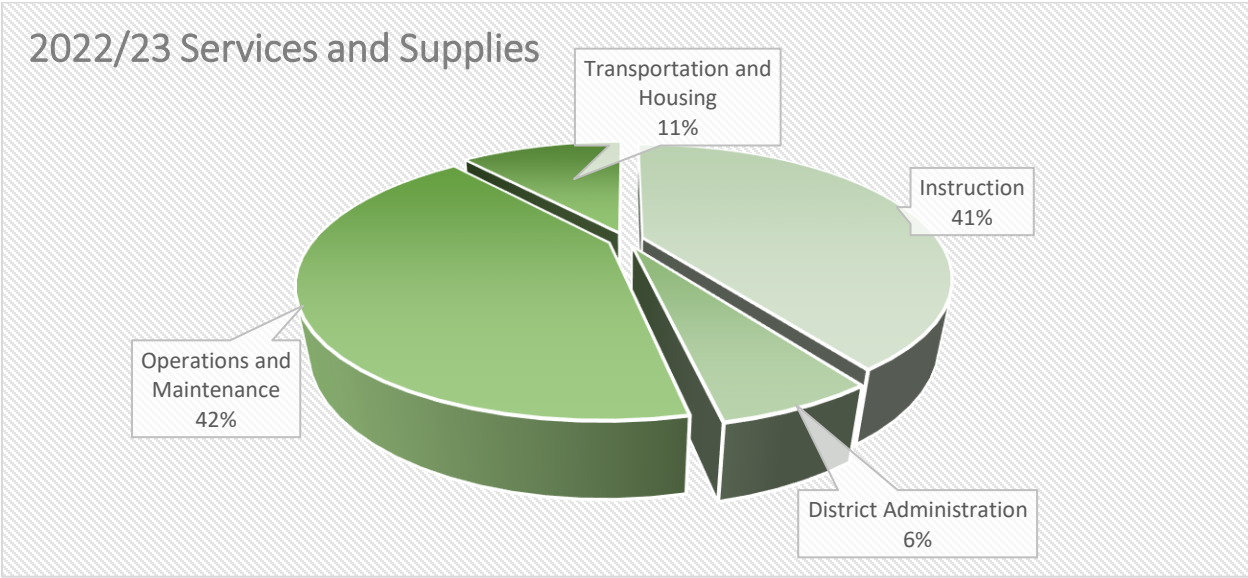


Figure 4

Instruction services and supplies are funds allocated to support student success. District administration, operations, maintenance and transportation allocations are required to support the overall operations of the school district. Special purpose funds are grants provided by the Ministry which are outside of the normal operating grant and are targeted funds that support Ministry identified priorities or projects. Special purpose funds and targeted funds add supports for Indigenous learners, English language learners, and

learners with diverse abilities/disabilities, capacity building, early learning and French programming and have been allocated to support the Board of Education priorities.







This allocation aligns with Learning Priority Three – Students will transition successfully from secondary school with the core competencies to achieve their life and career goals by removing barriers to equity, providing learning environments and inclusive opportunities while engaging all learners.



The majority of the special purpose funds relate to Classroom Enhancement Funds which are provided to appropriately staff the schools for restored language to the Collective Agreements. These directly benefit instruction by providing more than 26 additional classroom teachers, developing new administrative processes and the creation of additional classroom space. During 2022/23, the district received \$3.5 million in funding through the Classroom Enhancement Fund (CEF) for teaching positions and for other overhead costs related to the contract restoration.

This funding aligns with the Learning Priorities in the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning.

The District's goal is to effectively support the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning by providing a safe, healthy and financially sustainable learning environment for our students and staff. The Framework for Enhancing Student Learning is reflective of the commitment of the District to ensure student success by ensuring our learners are literate, numerate, feel connected to our schools and communities and, ultimately, graduate with purpose and options.

We will continue to:

-  ensure, through multi-year financial planning, budget reviews and the annual budget process, the allocation of resources (people, time, and budget) is completed in a fiscally responsible manner and supports the achievement of the Board's strategic plan;
-  review and improve business processes and business systems to create value;
-  support our community of learners through effective communication which enables efficient decision making;
-  ensure business continuity through effective risk management, succession planning, strategic recruitment, retention, and professional development;
-  effectively support the governance function of the Board of Education;
-  continue to effectively represent the district perspective to provincial government on business related initiatives (i.e. Select Standing Committee);

-  ensure district assets are safeguarded and that the school district's financial position is stable through the design and implementation of adequate internal controls and financial processes; and
-  ensure departments have the organizational capacity (people and expertise) to manage all current and planned initiatives and projects, while delivering regular operations.

Facilities:

The District is located in the Southeastern corner of British Columbia. The footprint of the District is fully contained within the Ktunaxa Nation, including the communities of ʔaq'am and Yaqit ʔa·knuq̓i'it.

The District is comprised of the communities of Elkford, Sparwood, Fernie, Jaffray/South Country and Cranbrook. The District serves approximately 6,000 students in: 17 neighborhoods schools (11 elementary schools, 2 middle schools, and 4 secondary schools); Kootenay Discovery School (KDS); Kootenay Education Services (KES); and the Kootenay Learning Campus (KLC), the Continuing Education program.

The District facilities provide student-centred learning opportunities that are welcoming and safe and that prepare learners to achieve their career and life goals. These provisions align with the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning Educational Priorities.

The Operations Department enhances the learning environment and intellectual development of the District learners by maintaining the condition, safety and cleanliness of our buildings, grounds and equipment. This results in healthy school facilities for our students and staff. The maintenance teams provide service for our schools while maintaining building systems with a robust maintenance program.

Facility renewal project plans are completed annually to ensure our facilities remain safe and in good condition. Each year, the Board of Education submits a five-year capital plan to the Ministry of Education that outlines the major capital projects the District has identified.

Significant growth in student population has occurred in the Elk Valley. Isabella Dicken Elementary School (Fernie) is well above capacity. Over the past five years, growth has been largely accommodated by installing portable classrooms on the school site. The District has completed a four-classroom expansion at Isabella Dicken Elementary School. This expansion was officially opened in September 2023. Ten portable classrooms remain on the school site that are being utilized for educational programming, including standard elementary classrooms and alternative programs. Additionally, the District has acquired land for a future school and is pursuing options for building a new middle school to meet the long term needs of the community, which have cost implications for both the capital and operating funds.

The District has continued to work towards reducing emissions and has been working towards the goal of carbon neutrality. All the departments continue to be in the mindset of reducing unnecessary emissions through the removal of inefficient printers and purchasing energy saving appliances. The District believes the goal of collaborating with staff and students to become more energy wise has paid off and will continue to pay off in the years to come.

The District has replaced older light fixtures with LED lights and kits and dimming switches have been installed in all the classrooms allowing teachers to lower the light levels to foster the development of our classroom communities into comfortable learning environments.

The District will also continue with best practices for HVAC maintenance that was learned during Covid 19 pandemic to ensure a healthy environment for our students and staff is maintained.

The above operational strategies ensure that the District will continue to provide all students with the best opportunities to succeed in life.

Transportation:

Approximately 2,100 students are transported on 25 bus routes in and around Cranbrook and the Elk Valley.

Supporting Educational Priority Two, students will have a place to belong in our schools and in our society, the Transportation Department provides financial transportation assistance to parents, whose children are eligible to receive transportation, where bussing is not available. This enhances the connection to the school and to the District. The District also strives to create a welcoming and safe inclusive environment and has purchased a wheelchair accessible bus to ensure that each student has access to school.

A transportation agreement has been developed in collaboration with both of our Indigenous communities to adjust our school bus routes to enhance the service level for our Indigenous students. The Transportation Department is active in the creation and implementation of the transportation plan with respect to the BC Tripartite Education Agreement (BCTEA), providing extracurricular access to our on-reserve Indigenous students. As part of the District's commitment to reducing our carbon footprint, the District operates two electric buses. The District received the CE Electric School Bus grant as part of British Columbia's mandate of a 40% greenhouse reduction for public fleets by 2030.

Barriers and Other Factors:

The average age of the District's facilities is 50 years, which is beyond their economic useful life. Replacing aging facilities will help reduce carbon emissions and reduce repairs and maintenance costs. At this time, immediate attention is required to replace multiple schools with significant building management systems at the end of their economic life.

There are necessary upgrades needed to properly serve our students and staff at Mount Baker Secondary School. These upgrades include a new elevator (\$400,000), a dust collection system (\$500,000), and a fire safety system (\$2,000,000). The District has been advocating for a replacement school for over 20 years.

The District has submitted a Project Definition Report (PDR) to the Ministry for a new middle school in Fernie. This will significantly help our fastest growing community. There are still, however, other communities in dire need of replacement buildings.

Summary:

The Finance, Facilities and Transportation departments of the District continue to support the Priorities identified in the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning through the transparent allocation of resources for instruction, efficient and effective communication, and understanding that all employees of the District are responsible for the success of students.