

September 2, 2022

Down Syndrome BC

Via Email: secretary@downsyndromebc.ca

Dear Ms. Taggart and Ms. Cummings,

Thank you for the letter of July 4, 2022, and the follow-up of August 18, 2022. We appreciate your patience in receiving a substantive response. I note that your letter was presented at the Board of Education meeting of August 31, 2022, and the Board directed staff to respond. This response will be shared with our Board.

In your correspondence you asked the following questions:

1. How much funding have you received to support inclusion and students with disabilities? Please note the attached document that schools provide to parents and other interested parties with respect to how support for inclusion and student diverse abilities are supported. It states the following with respect to the sources of funding:

Funds used to support students with additional needs come from a number of sources. The Ministry of Education provides per-student funding for the school district. This is supplemented by the Special Needs Grant, which is generated through the designation of students in special needs categories, as well as portions of special purpose Community Link dollars, the Ministry's recent equity of opportunity grant as well as locally sourced revenue (e.g. International Student Revenue).

With respect to the specific allocations it is important to note as stated in the attached document:

School administrators work hard to balance the needs of individual students with the needs of the school overall, and assistance may be provided for students with and without a formal ministry designation. The amount of support an individual student receives is based on their individual needs. Designation in a particular category does not result in a specific number of support hours being assigned to that student.

I am attaching financial information with respect to our inclusive education budgets and supports. We note that these are estimates given how much of the per student grant that directly supports inclusion.

NLPS - Operating Grant per Ministry of Education and Child Care

	Funded FTE		RATES	Funding	
	22/23 Annual Budget			22/23 Annual Budget	
September Enrolment					
Standard (Regular) Schools	14,393.615		7,885		113,493,654
Alternate Schools	295.000		7,885		2,326,075
Distributed Learning	355.225		6,360		2,259,231
Adult Education (Non-Graduates)	2.500		5,030		12,575
Total September Enrolment	15,046.340				118,091,535
Unique Student Supplements					
Home Schooling	83.00		250		20,750
Course Challenges	4.00		246		984
Level 1 Special Needs	16.000		44,850		717,600
Level 2 Special Needs	510.000		21,280		10,852,800
Level 3 Special Needs	225.000		10,750		2,418,750
English Language Learning	885.000		1,585		1,402,725
Indigenous Education	2,400.000		1,565		3,756,000
Total Unique Student Supplements	-				19,169,609
Other Funding Categories					
Equity of Opportunity Supplement					853,479
Salary Differential Supplement					3,278,380
Unique Geographic Factor Supplement					3,493,625
Education Plan Supplement					132,911
February Data Count (New SPED/DL/ELL)	154.000				1,006,675
May Data Count (New DL Only)	93.000				522,560
Total Other Funding Supplements	247.000				9,287,630
Total September Enrolment	15,046.340				118,091,535
Total Unique Student Supplements					19,169,609
Total Other Funding Categories	247.000				9,287,630
Grand Total - FTE and Revenue	15,293.340				146,548,774

Summary of Revenues and Expenses for Students with Unique Needs

Revenue - Direct Funding for Students with Unique Needs

Level 1 Special Needs	16.000	10,852,800
Level 2 Special Needs	510.000	2,418,750
Level 3 Special Needs	225.000	1,402,725
English Language Learning	885.000	3,756,000
Basic Student Funding for above (\$7,885ea)	1,636.000	12,899,860
Equity of Opportunity Supplement		853,479
Total Revenue - Direct Funding for Students with Unique Needs		32,183,614
Total Headcount of Students with Unique Needs		1,636.000
<i>Total Revenue per Student with Unique Needs</i>		<i>19,672</i>

Expense - Direct Supports for Students with Unique Needs

District EA's	312.760	17,130,454	
Special Education Teachers	98.000	11,092,522	
Speech Pathologists	10.100	1,143,211	
Specialist Teachers	1.800	203,741	
Psychologists	6.000	679,135	
Counselling Supports	21.400	363,337	15% of Total Counselling Budget (2.422M)
Library Teacher Support	21.700	368,430	15% of Total Counselling Budget (2.456M)
Coordinators	23.200	393,898	15% of Total Coordinator Budget (2.654)

Expense - Indirect or Prorated Support for Students with Unique Needs

Clerical	72.000	629,747.10	15% of Total Clerical Budget (4.198M)
District Learning Services Team	3.200	550,000	2 Full time Senior Exec/.2 of 5 Senior Exec/.2 Excluded EA
Special Education Operating Budget		325,000	
School Operating Budgets		431,441	15% of Total School Operating Budgets (2.876M)

Total Expense - Direct, Indirect or Prorated Supports

		33,310,915
Total Headcount of Students with Unique Needs		1,636.000
Total Expense per Student with Unique Needs		20,361

2. What decisions have you made to allocate money to foster inclusion and to support students with disabilities? Please include names and/or descriptions of specific programs, initiatives or practices and the approximate annual budget for each.

The financial breakdown includes funding for various positions and supports is attached under the response to question number one. In addition, a variety of the supports available is outlined in the attached document.

3. How do you track the money to ensure it is spent to support your decisions?

The District is audited on a yearly basis to ensure compliance with Ministry requirements. Further, the Board receives a quarterly report that outlines the amount of spending to budget in a number of areas (e.g. Education Assistants etc.). Internally, we monitor our department budgets on an ongoing basis to ensure that we are spending as much of our current year's allocation as is possible.

I do note, however, that the vast majority of our expenses are associated with staffing. This means that assuming we are able to fill a position then the budget will be fully expended. Notably, the District has ended up in surpluses in our Education Assistant replacement budget on a regular basis due to the difficulty in having a full contingent of casual Education Assistants and a very large contingent of continuing positions. With respect to reallocation of resources, question four is intended to provide further information on this question.

4. How do you measure the success of your decisions and how often do you review your allocation decisions?

At the district level, we monitor grad rates and use data from reports such as the How are We Doing? (HAWD) report from the ministry to get a sense of how we are doing as a system overall. This data is reflected upon as we plan budgets in terms of resource and staffing allocations and is combined with observational data and feedback from staff, families, students and the community agencies we work with to allow for adjustments and the implementation of new initiatives over time. Allocations are reviewed on an ongoing basis, as changes are often required during the school year, as needs arise or change.

At the school level, school teams utilize report card data and IEP progress data to see how interventions and supports are working for individual students. Our Inclusion Outreach team works closely with school-based staff and uses data gathered with regards to these individual learners to guide capacity building and support opportunities, to ensure they are as timely and targeted as possible. Schools utilize a Response-to-Intervention model, which is cyclical in nature. Student progress data, and other support needs are reviewed 3-4 times during the school year, with adjustments being made as appropriate.

We are hopeful that this information is responsive to your request and if you have a specific follow up, please do not hesitate to get back to me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Walsh". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Mark Walsh
Secretary-Treasurer

Direct: 250-741-5211
Mark.Walsh@sd68.bc.ca

Attached: NLPS – Inclusive Education Services Document

What are Inclusive Education Services?

Inclusive Education Services are the supports provided to students who require academic or social-emotional learning support, or who have medical or mobility difficulties. There are two aspects to this service.

Inclusive Support: Students may receive support for either academic or social-emotional challenges. It takes place both in and outside the classroom, sometimes in small groups, or sometimes individually. This support is provided by a variety of individuals at your child's school.

Assessment: In addition to classroom-based assessments, the school team may complete standardized testing, to get a clearer picture of a student's learning or behavioural needs.

A great deal can be learned about a student through thoughtful observation and classroom assessment. Successful supports and interventions for students are implemented without the need for a more formal assessment to occur.

Where a deeper understanding of a student's needs is required to fully understand your child's needs, they are referred to the school based team, and a more formal achievement or cognitive assessment may be recommended. This would be completed by either the student support teacher or a district psychologist.

School teams regularly collaborate with outside supports, such as medical doctors or counsellors. Your child's classroom teacher can help facilitate consent agreements to allow this information sharing to occur.

Funding for Services

Funds used to support students with additional needs come from a number of sources. The Ministry of Education provides per-student funding for the school district. This is supplemented by the Special Needs Grant, which is generated through the designation of students in special needs categories, as well as portions of special purpose Community Link dollars, the Ministry's recent equity of opportunity grant as well as locally sourced revenue (e.g. International Student Revenue).

These monies allow the district to support a variety of supports and services for students, including: Specialist Teachers, Counsellors, Education Assistants, Speech and Language Services, School Psychologists, Inclusion Support Coordinators, as well as assessments and other educational resources.

The school district works with school teams to identify students with unique and additional needs. The support and intervention a student receives is determined by the school team, in collaboration with their family.

School administrators work hard to balance the needs of individual students with the needs of the school overall, and assistance may be provided for students with and without a formal ministry designation. The amount of support an individual student receives is based on their individual needs. Designation in a particular category does not result in a specific number of support hours being assigned to that student.

We are always working to balance support with fostering independence, to ensure that all of our students are safe, happy and learning.



WHAT ARE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION SERVICES?



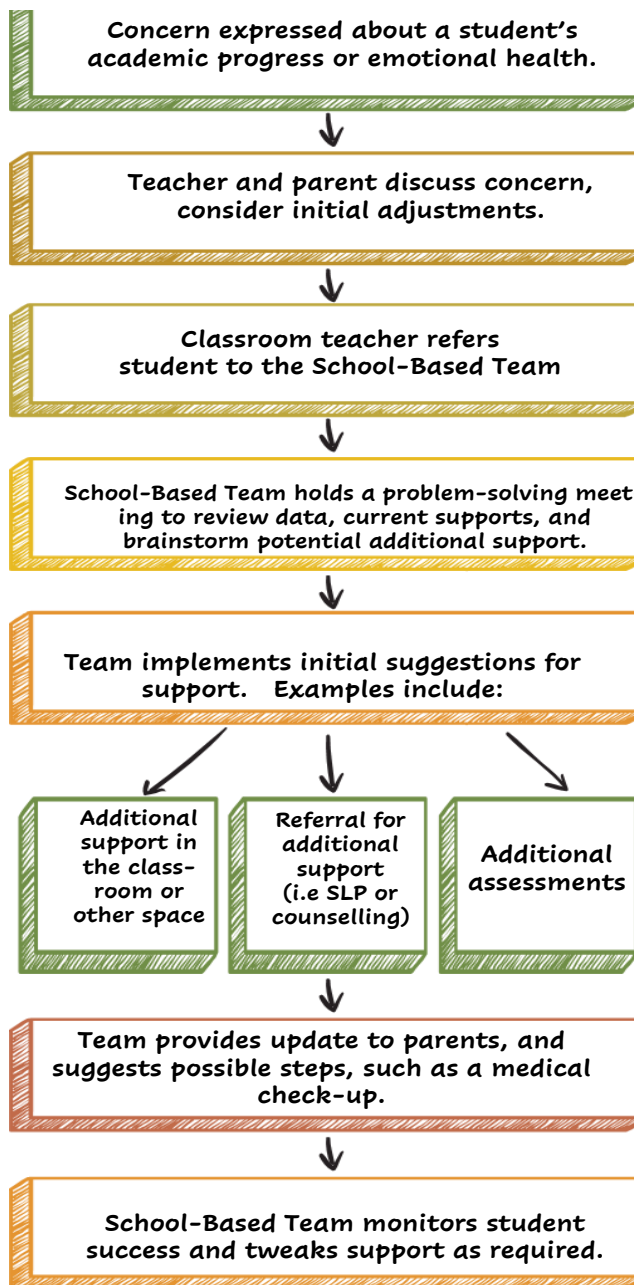
Inclusive Education Supports

The Inclusive Education Team is the group of specialists who collaborate with classroom teachers and families to establish and monitor the interventions, goals and strategies being put in place to help your child be safe and successful at school. For some learners, this also involves the creation of an Individualized Education Plan or Learning Plan.

- **An Inclusion Support Teacher** works with your child's classroom teacher to provide support to your child and co-ordinate your child's support plan.
- **Education Assistants** are assigned to learning environments and provide additional support to a variety of students.
- **Additional support** from a Speech Language Pathologist, English Language Learning Teacher, School Psychologist, or Child, Youth & Family Support Worker, may also be recommended.
- **District support** is also available for students with hearing and visual impairments.

Referrals for these services are made through your child's classroom teacher to the School-Based Team. **Your child's teacher is the best place to begin when you have a question or concern.**

The **School Based Team** is the school committee that works to determine the supports and interventions for individual students. **If you have a concern, begin with a conversation with your child's teacher.**



Counselling Support:

School counsellors facilitate social-emotional and behavioural support for learners at school (i.e. self-regulation, friendships, anxiety in the school setting).

Where a student is experiencing difficulties across a variety of settings, or is presenting with a need requiring more intensive, individualized support, the school's counsellor will work with the student and family, to refer the student to an outside service provider.

Support with Supervision and Personal Care:

Additional support may be provided for students who require support to be safe when playing outside, or for those with personal care needs.

Please ask your child's teacher if you have questions or concerns.

Learning Environments at School:

Your child's **key learning space** is his or her classroom.

Other learning spaces are provided when an alternative environment is needed for small group or individual support with specific, targeted skills. We are always working to provide students with the best learning environment to meet their individual needs.



From: [Karen Matthews](#)
To: [Karen Matthews](#)
Subject: Inquiry about use of Supplemental Funding
Date: July 8, 2022 8:52:11 AM

From: Secretary <secretary@downsyndromebc.ca>
Sent: July 4, 2022 4:22 PM
To: Superintendent <Superintendent@sd68.bc.ca>; Secretary-Treasurer <SecretaryTreasurer@sd68.bc.ca>; Charlene Mckay <Charlene.Mckay@sd68.bc.ca>; DirectorofInstructionElementary@sd68.ca.ca
Subject: Inquiry about use of Supplemental Funding

CAUTION: External Message

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downsyndromebc.ca | hello@downsyndromebc.ca | [@downsyndromebc](https://www.instagram.com/downsyndromebc)

July 4, 2022

School District No. 68, Nanaimo-Ladysmith

Scott Saywell
Superintendent of Schools
Via
Email: Superintendent@sd68.bc.ca

Mark Walsh
Secretary Treasurer
Via Email: SecretaryTreasurer@sd68.bc.ca

Charlene McKay
Board of Trustees, Board Chair
Via Email:
charlene.mckay@sd68.bc.ca

Kerri Steel
Director of Instruction, Inclusive Education
(Elementary), Via Email:
DirectorofInstructionElementary@sd.68.bc.ca

Dear Mr. Saywell, Ms. McKay, Mr. Walsh and Ms. Steel:

Down syndrome BC is a non-profit organization working to share information that supports the health and well-being of individuals with Down syndrome. We [wrote to the Ministry of Education](#), as well as all BC school boards, in October 2021 to share

information and recommendations for the effective and inclusive education of learners with Down syndrome.

We are concerned that learners with Down syndrome are not receiving an effective education, are not being included in mainstream classes appropriate to their age and are not receiving the supports they need.

Approximately \$664.4 million was received by school districts for the 2021/22 school year for supplemental funding to support students with disabilities with the expectation that school districts are using the additional funding to provide the supports and services students with disabilities need.

The Ministry of Education has told us that accountability lies with the school districts and if parents or others wish to see how the money sent to the school district to promote inclusion and provide services for children with disabilities is spent, they can ask for an accounting, including budgeting and a report on outcomes from the school district.

Please provide an accounting for the supplemental funding you received, including answers to the following questions:

1. How much funding have you received to support inclusion and students with disabilities?
2. What decisions have you made to allocate money to foster inclusion and to support students with disabilities? Please include names and/or descriptions of specific programs, initiatives or practices and the approximate annual budget for each.
3. How do you track the money to ensure it is spent to support your decisions?
4. How do you measure the success of your decisions and how often do you review your allocation decisions?

We look forward to hearing from you.

Best Regards,



Tamara Taggart
President, Down Syndrome BC



Mary Ann Cummings
Secretary, Down Syndrome BC



Danielle Gibbons
Director, Down Syndrome BC

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