

Maple Ridge – Pitt Meadows School District Budge Meeting Presentation
April 15, 2015

Good evening,

My name is Marianne Ulriksen and I am the Head Secretary of Yennadon Elementary School.

Yennadon is one of the six large elementary schools that had their clerical time cut by approximately 25% last year, in spite of the fact that our enrollment and job description has remained the same.

I am here tonight to appeal to you on behalf of all 6 large elementary schools to increase the current Clerk allocation of 17.5 hours per week, to 20 hours per week to allow for two clerical personnel in the office every morning.

The current model for the six large elementary schools is to have one full time secretary every day, and a clerk shared between two large schools on alternating days.

**This means that 50% of the time there is only one person
in the office, which directly impacts student safety.**

Completing the attendance and confirming the safety of our students on days when there is only one secretary in the office is often delayed by more than an hour. At times the attendance is not finished until recess is over.

In addition, updating our Student Verification Forms this year was not completed until January. These forms contain the vital emergency information that is printed out for teachers when students participate on fieldtrips. This means that until January, although we continued to run the fieldtrip emergency forms for teachers the data contained in them was not always accurate or up to date.

On days when there is only one secretary in the office, numerous phone calls go to voice mail as one person cannot handle the volume of calls especially first thing in the morning. There have been occasions where important information has been delayed due to the fact that there is only one person in the office.

ALL large elementary schools need to have two people in the office every morning to ensure that all students are accounted for and to allow for the attendance to be completed in a timely manner.

Can you imagine the number of interruptions:

- attending to the needs of staff
- attending to the needs of PAC
- assisting TOC's and Floats as they arrive
- answering a phone that rings non stop
- assisting parents at the counter
- attending to late students as they arrive
- assisting students who need to phone home because they have realized they have forgotten something ... etc.

first thing in the morning in a school with almost 600 students and 24 divisions?

There have been times this year when I am alone in the office with deadlines looming and chaos surrounding me and the pressure is so overwhelming that I'm not sure if I will burst into tears or collapse on the floor. There is too much going on in a large school office to expect one person to handle it alone. It's not reasonable.

Amid these interruptions, attempting to make contact with a parent to confirm a student is safe, often involves 3 or 4 phone calls.

Upon review of the 2015-2016 proposed budget, it was puzzling to see that only 2 of the 6 large schools are being considered for a 20 hour clerk position which would provide 2 secretaries in the office every morning. Yennadon, Albion, Alexander Robinson and Pitt Meadows Elementary were not even considered.

Surely you can't be implying that the safety of the students who attend Laity View and Kanaka Creek Elementary are more important than the safety of those at the other four large schools?

When considering school populations, it appears that there are
FOUR clear groups with large gaps in between groups:

650

to

500

Note: there is
a gap here of
more than 100
students
between these
two groups

499

to

350

349

to

250

less

than

250

School Name	Student Population
Laity View	636
Kanaka	597
Yennadon	565
Albion	565
Pitt Meadows Elementary	563
Alexander Robinson	551
Golden Ears	447
Hammond	447
Alouette	416
Eric Langton	412
Harry Hooge	393
Maple Ridge Elementary	386
Davie Jones	360
Highland Park	316
Glenwood	311
Edith McDermott	309
Whonnock	294
Fairview	286
Blue Mountain	211
Webster's Corners	187
Environmental	87

We are asking that 2 ½ more hours of clerical time per week be allocated to ALL SIX large elementary schools. Please increase the clerk time from 17.5 hours per week to 20 hours per week to provide 2 clerical personnel in the office every morning during the busiest and most crucial time of day. Please amend the allocation of clerical time in all Large Elementary Schools to one full time secretary and one twenty hour clerk position every week in all schools over 500 students.

What is more important than student safety?

Thank you for your consideration,

Suggestions

Increasing the Large Elementary School Clerk position from 17.5 hours to 20 hours to facilitate a morning clerk every day, requires fifteen hours per week for all six schools. As the current budget proposal has already accounted for 5 of these hours there are only 10 hours needed per week.

- 1) The ideal solution is to fund these 10 hours the same way you are funding the other five by increasing the clerical staffing allocations. The cost of 10 clerk hours per week is about ten thousand dollars per year.
- 2) In **Section 1.9 MyEDBC Project Manager Extensions** (P. 29) the proposal is to take FORTY THOUSAND DOLLARS from the contingency reserve fund to pay the project manager's wage for FIVE MONTHS, from Feb 1 until June 30, 2016. **Forty Thousand dollars is about the amount it would cost to pay a clerk 10 hours per week for FOUR YEARS.** Perhaps you could invest the same amount of money from the contingency reserve fund.
- 3) There is a proposal in **Section 1.5 Peer to Peer Mentoring** (P.27) to allocate 60 thousand dollars from the contingency reserve to fund the development of common business practices and implementation through peer to peer support for clerical. Perhaps this amount could be reduced to 50 thousand dollars and the other 10 thousand dollars could go directly into HELPING the large school secretaries manage their overload.
- 4) In the proposed budget, **Section 2.7 Elementary Clerical Model Change** (P.39) there is a proposal to assign 1 clerk to be shared amongst 2 mid-sized elementary schools as a 24 hour position. There are 7 schools, which means 1 clerk will only have 12 hours so this position will require additional top up to 20.

Pair the lowest enrollment mid-sized elementary school with the smallest large elementary school and create a 32 hour position. The clerk works 5 mornings at the large school and 5 afternoons at the smallest mid-sized school. This alleviates the problem of having an odd number of schools and includes the 2 ½ hour increase to one of the large schools. Although the smallest mid sized school will not have the benefit of help in the morning, it should be noted that the smallest mid-sized school has almost 200 students less than the smallest large school!

- 5) **1.6 Move to Bring Your Own Devices for Students by 2018 (P.28)**
The proposal is to allocate Four Hundred and Twenty thousand dollars from the contingency reserve to fund the early termination and payout of all student hardware leases.

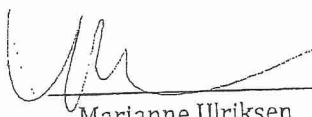
1.7 Staff Computer Refresh (P.28)
The proposal is to allocate six hundred and sixty thousand dollars from the contingency reserve to fund the purchase of replacement devices for staff this year, and another two hundred thousand dollars for 2016-2017.

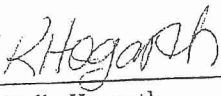
It seems odd that the School District would pay such an exorbitant penalty to return electronic devices early from a lease agreement and then spend even more to purchase similar items. These two proposals total more than 1.2 million dollars.

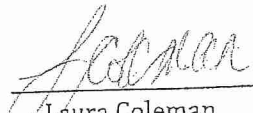
Is it possible to reallocate the student leased equipment to the staff, avoid both the early termination penalty and the purchasing cost? (Note: that the lease pay out alone could fund 10 hours of clerk time for 42 years.)

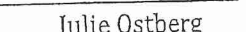
When you are reviewing the budget expenses and cuts, please consider the small amount of money it will take to make a huge impact on the functionality of the office and the safety of staff and students in large elementary schools. Please adjust the clerical allocation in each of the six large elementary schools by 2.5 hours per week to allow for one full time (35 hour) secretary and one twenty hour clerk position.

Thank you,


Marianne Ulriksen
Yennadon Elementary


Kelly Hogarth
Alexander Robinson Elem.


Laura Coleman
Albion Elementary


Julie Ostberg
Pitt Meadows Elem.

The other required investment relates to the purchase and implementation of a new student information system for International Education. The current Microsoft Access-based system used by the department does not meet the department's operational needs, and information from the system cannot be interfaced with our main financial system. This inability to interface results in duplicate entry of all financial transactions related to international students. The estimated cost associated with the purchase and implementation of a new system is \$0.02 million. If the funding is approved, the system would be deployed in June/July 2015.

2015/16

It is proposed that \$0.10 million be allocated from the contingency reserve to fund the development of an International Education Dashboard within the Parent Portal and the purchase and implementation of a new student information system for the International Education Department.

1.9 MyEdBC Project Manager Extension

The Maple Ridge - Pitt Meadows School District is currently involved in a student information system conversion from BCeSiS to the MyEdBC. The board-approved budget for this project only funded the MyEdBC Project Manager position to January 31, 2016. Based on additional information received from the province, the detailed project plan estimates that the MyEdBC project will be finalized by June 30, 2016. It is imperative for the project manager to be maintained until the project's end.

Ongoing training will be undertaken with all employee groups throughout 2015/16, and includes secondary timetabling training that will occur in spring 2016.

2015/16

It is proposed that \$0.04 million be allocated from the contingency reserve to fund the MyEdBC project manager position until June 30, 2016.

1.10 Emergency Preparedness - Communication

Reliable communication has long been identified as a key element in any disaster planning. In the event of a disaster (i.e. flood or earthquake), normal communications may not be available. Cellphones may not be a reliable method of communication, as the system may be crippled by what is certain to be a high volume of activity.

In order to ensure reliable communication in the event of a disaster, it is proposed the district purchase and deploy a radio communications system for all its facilities. Each site would be provided with one two-way radio, allowing for cross-site communication across the district. The estimated cost for such a radio communication system is \$0.06 million.

The radio system will operate through a radio repeater site. The City of Maple Ridge just installed a new digital 800 Mhz wide-area radio system in December 2013, and has agreed in principle to allow the school district to be part of this system. Associated ongoing cost with the implementation of the proposed radio communications system would be on a license cost recovery basis, and is estimated at \$3K.

2015/16

It is proposed that \$0.06 million from the contingency reserve be allocated for the purchase of a radio communication system for the entire school district.

Beginning April 2015, a district committee of elementary and secondary principals and vice principals, along with the safe and caring district counselors, will meet to provide input into the development of this framework. The Design Team will eventually expand to include teachers and CUPE staff.

This team will examine best practice, what is occurring in other districts, and what is already occurring in our own district to establish a draft framework. A major component of this proposed framework is to develop expertise in all teachers in embedding SEL in to their daily routines and lessons. We will begin with an examination of the core competencies: self-management, self-awareness, responsible decision making, relationship skills, and social awareness.

The estimated one-time funding required to support Social Emotional Learning includes release time for continued meeting of the committee to oversee the implementation of the framework (\$0.01 million), planned training sessions during the year for team members (\$0.03 million), district-wide professional development that will include speakers and a facilitator to support effective practice in SEL development and building communities of care (\$0.04 million), and various supplies (\$0.01 million). An additional budget allocation will be required in the 2016/17 budget for school staff training staff.

2015/16

It is proposed that \$0.08 million be allocated from the contingency reserve to fund district-wide professional development opportunities and services and supplies to support the development and implementation of a Social and Emotional Learning Framework for the school district.

1.5 Peer to Peer Mentoring

Clerical staff at elementary underwent significant reductions and changes last school year. As a result, this school year, school administrators, parents, teachers and clerical staff have expressed concerns about the level of staffing and whether it is sufficient to complete the required work in a timely manner. This work includes ensuring the safe and efficient management of the tasks related to student attendance, addressing questions of parents, students and the public, and attending to the needs of staff and the district office. As the school district is still facing a significant funding shortfall, there is no opportunity to increase clerical staffing to the levels enjoyed in previous years. Given this circumstance, district and clerical staff along with union leadership have worked together in an attempt to streamline and standardize the work of our elementary school clerical staff. There has also been a concerted effort to plan professional development/training sessions to help assist with this process of standardization.

For the upcoming year, it is expected that we will complete the standardization of how the work is done in our elementary school offices. In order to assist with the implementation of the standards, there is a need for peer-to-peer support at the elementary school level to assist our elementary clerical staff with the implementation process. We anticipate hiring a district-level elementary clerical specialist who will work side-by-side to assist colleagues, organize and plan the professional development and training for elementary clerical staff, and work with district staff to ensure that the agreed upon standards are understood and supported at each school.

Education assistants in the school district would also benefit from peer-to-peer support in order to address the various challenges of working with students with special needs. Education assistants (EAs) work under the supervision of teacher colleagues and administration, but the ability to problem-solve with a peer assigned to assist with difficult circumstances would be an advantage. It has been the request of our support staff union to have an EA position that provides a mentorship role for EAs. Management is supportive of creating a peer-to-peer EA position within the Learning Improvement Fund.

The proposed budget allocation includes funding for the professional development and training opportunities that will be available to elementary clerical staff, along with books, supplies and meeting funding.

2015/16

It is proposed to allocate \$0.06 million from the contingency reserve to fund the development of common business practices and implementation through peer to peer support for clerical staff.

It is proposed that additional teacher staffing of 0.2 FTE at a cost of \$0.02 million be allocated to provide for enhanced counselling services for our students attending secondary alternate programs. This additional FTE, coupled with base counselling service allocations to our district alternate programs and with staffing directed to district-wide Safe and Caring School Communities responsibilities will further permit retaining the current District Counsellor: Alternate Programs and Safe and Caring School Communities position at 1.0 FTE.

In 2016/17, at the elementary level a proposed reduction of 2.712 FTE support teacher positions across all 21 elementary schools could be achieved by slightly changing the formula used to allocate the support teacher time to schools. This will result in minimal staffing changes to each school and savings of \$0.27 million. The special education targeted ratio will increase from 1:270 to 1:280 for a staffing reduction of 1.083 FTE and savings of \$0.11 million, and the intensive ratio will increase from 1:15 to 1:16 for a staffing reduction of 1.629 FTE and savings of \$0.16 million.

2015/16

It is proposed that a 0.50 FTE occupational therapist (no net cost) and a 0.20 FTE district counsellor be added for additional \$0.02 million.

2016/17

It is proposed that 2.712 FTE support teacher positions across all elementary schools be reduced for estimated savings of \$0.27 million.

2.7 Elementary Clerical Model Change

In 2014/15, a new clerical allocation model for elementary schools was implemented. The allocations by school size are summarized in the following table.

Student Enrolment	Base Allocation Head Elementary Secretary	Shared Clerical Allocation	Clerical Support Bank
Under 200	30 hours per week		30 hours / year
200-349	35 hours per week		35 hours / year
350-499	35 hours per week	35 hours per week shared by 3 schools	35 hours / year
500-650	35 hours per week	35 hours per week shared by 2 schools	35 hours / year

Clerical staff work 7 days beyond the board approved school calendar, and all clerical staff are replaced on the first day of their absence.

Over the past year, it has become apparent that medium elementary schools are not getting the assistance they need during the crucial morning hours when clerical assistance is shared between 3 schools. Also, the two largest elementary schools require their own part time clerical allocation rather than sharing with another school; as such, a part time allocation would provide more morning coverage and would offer improved continuity for Kanaka Creek Elementary, a school with a unique calendar. In order to better support elementary schools, it is proposed to modify the elementary clerical allocation model as shown in the table below.

Student Enrolment	Number of Schools	Base Allocation Head Elementary Secretary	Shared Clerical Allocation	Clerical Support Bank
Under 200	1	30 hours per week		30 hours / year
200-349	6	35 hours per week		35 hours / year
350-499	7	35 hours per week	24 hours per week shared by 2 schools	35 hours / year
500-599	4	35 hours per week	35 hours per week shared by 2 schools	35 hours / year
600+ and Kanaka Creek Elementary	2	55 hours per week		35 hours / year

2015/16

It is proposed that clerical staffing allocations to elementary schools be increased by 0.14 FTE for an additional cost of \$0.01 million.

2016/17

No further changes are proposed at this time.

1.6 Move to Bring Your Own Device for Students by 2018

The District Reading Fluency Project and the District Inquiry Project supply hardware for student use. Students are allowed to take the technology home in the inquiry program. Younger students involved in the reading project do not take the hardware home and these devices are shared with another class.

It is proposed that the school district stops providing hardware for students within three years. As an interim step, it is proposed to end all student hardware leases early for a payout of \$0.42 million. The implementation of bring your own device for students will result in ongoing cost savings of \$0.15 million, beginning in 2015/16.

The improvements in app deployment technologies in the coming years will allow the district to 'lend' apps to student-owned devices, no matter if they are Android, Apple or Windows based. It is expected that within three years the cost of devices will be significantly lower than it is today, which will allow many more families an opportunity to purchase a device. We do have plans for a hardship hardware pool that will ensure all students receive a device when needed.

2015/16

It is proposed to allocate \$0.42 million from the contingency reserve to fund the early termination and payout of all student hardware leases.

1.7 Staff Computers Refresh

The current fleet of staff laptops contains 522 devices that are over 6 years old and need to be replaced in order to enable staff to access current resources and effectively integrate technology in their work. The existing IT budget is not sufficient to fund the replacement of these devices in the next three years.

The following table summarizes the budget required to replace existing devices over the next three years.

Laptops Fleet Age	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
PC	486	32	157
Mac	36	0	0
Total Number	522	32	157
Total Estimated Cost	\$0.63 M	\$0.03 M	\$0.20 M

2015/16

It is proposed that \$0.66 million be allocated from the contingency reserve to fund the purchase of replacement devices for staff in 2014/15 and 2015/16.

2016/17

A further contingency reserve allocation of \$0.20 million it is proposed for 2016/17.

1.8 International Education

The business planning process for the International Education Department identified required operational investments. One of the required investments relates to the development of an International Education Dashboard within the Parent Portal. The dashboard would allow for International Education to properly manage consent and homestay parent notifications for international students who attend regularly scheduled classes within the school district. The estimated cost for this is \$0.08 million, and the implementation of the module is estimated to result in operational efficiencies in all school offices as a manual process is replaced by electronic notifications.