

2022 Annual Report to the School Community

School Name: Aurora School (5511)



- All teachers at the school meet the registration requirements of the Victorian Institute of Teaching (www.vit.vic.edu.au).
- The school meets prescribed minimum standards for registration as regulated by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) in accordance with the Education and Training Reform (ETR) Act 2006. This includes schools granted an exemption by the VRQA until 31 December of the previous calendar year from the minimum standards for student enrolment numbers and/or curriculum framework for school language program.
- The school is compliant with the Child Safe Standards prescribed in Ministerial Order No. 870 – Child Safe Standards, Managing Risk of Child Abuse in School.

Attested on 20 March 2023 at 01:23 PM by Vicki Main (Principal)

- This 2022 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 02 May 2023 at 12:25 PM by Lisa Moxon (School Council President)

How to read the Annual Report

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.

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).

Considering COVID-19 when interpreting the Performance Summary

The Victorian community's experience of COVID-19 had a significant impact on normal school operations over the past three years. This impacted the conduct of assessments and surveys. Readers should be aware of this when interpreting the Performance Summary, particularly when interpreting trend data.

For example, in 2020 and 2021 school-based surveys ran under changed circumstances, and NAPLAN was not conducted in 2020. Further, absence and attendance data during this period may have been affected by the level of COVID-19 in the community and may be influenced by local processes and procedures adopted in response to remote and flexible learning.

Readers should keep this in mind when viewing and interpreting the data presented in the Annual Report.

What does 'NDP' or 'NDA' mean?

'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

Aurora School aspires for excellence in early childhood for children who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing or Deafblind and their families and supports communication for lifelong learning.

Our aim is to immerse children in a language-rich, warm and encouraging environment where they have the opportunity to develop language, speech, listening and communication.

We are a bilingual setting that uses both English and Auslan, the language of the Deaf community. We value both Auslan and English equally, and acknowledge and value the language that parents use with their children at home.

The school's core values of Community, Curiosity, Perseverance and Respect underpin all that we do. Aurora School offers optimal learning environments to children who are deaf and deafblind, from diagnosis to 7 years old across Victoria.

We work in partnership with families, building on children's individual needs, strengths, and competencies to support them to reach their full potential.

We offer Early Intervention, Early Education and an inclusive Community Kindergarten.

Our highly trained team of professionals (65 staff equivalent to 49.2 full-time) includes Teachers of the Deaf, Early Childhood Educators, Deaf Educators, Teacher Assistants, Speech Pathologists, Social Workers, Psychologists, Occupational Therapists, an Audiologist, Physiotherapist and a highly supportive administrative team.

In December 2022 Aurora School had 42 children enrolled in the onsite program at Blackburn South, 268 families in Early Intervention across the State, and 20 children, who are hearing, in the Community Kindergarten.

Aurora's main campus is located at 96 Holland Road, Blackburn South. Early Education, Early Intervention East and the Community Kindergarten are located at this address. Early Intervention West is located on the grounds of Furlong Park School for the Deaf.

Children who are Deaf and Deafblind, and their families, across the State of Victoria, can access Aurora programs.

Departmental transport is available for children from southern, northern and eastern regions attending the Early Education program.

Limited onsite accommodation is available for country children and their families who access the onsite Early Education programs.

All children who attend Aurora School Early Intervention and Early Education programs are Deaf or Hard of Hearing. The children who attend Aurora school do not receive PSD funding.

Progress towards strategic goals, student outcomes and student engagement

Learning

During another very unique year, the staff at Aurora School have continued to develop their teaching practices and improve and strengthen their knowledge and skills. This has enabled us to meet the goal set by the Department of Education and Training (DET) that "We will teach and support each student at their point of need and in line with FISO."

The Key Improvement Strategy (KIS) related to learning states: "KIS 1a Learning - Support both those who need extra support and those who have thrived to continue to extend their learning ... "

Meeting this KIS has taken place through a culture of collaboration and collective responsibility. All staff work together to support each other, improve the fidelity of programs and develop resources in both English and Auslan, to ensure they extend the learning for each child. Staff continue to consider and effectively use high-impact teaching strategies in response to children's and families learning needs.

All staff members investigate and understand the learning and wellbeing needs of the children by analysing data to design stimulating teaching and learning programs. The inaugural 'in-house' staff opinion survey demonstrated very positive responses in relation to curriculum development especially in the areas of: collaborative work in planning and documentation of the curriculum; monitoring of children's learning growth; and the use of reflective practice to monitor the effectiveness of teaching practice. This survey also indicated the need for further 'peer observation' opportunities to continue to improve performance.

Examples of specific programs that have supported this KIS include:

- Continuation of Learning Specialist roles to support fidelity of the bilingual program in Auslan and English
- Monitoring of all children through the Cottage Acquisition Scales for Listening, Language and Speech (CASLLS)
- Further development of the Fingerspelling Our Way to Reading Program (FOWTR)
- The continuation of the Early Years Auslan Language Program in our Community Kindergarten

Wellbeing

Creating a positive and engaging school environment and culture to support optimal learning, is Aurora School's focus for children, families and staff. This links directly with DET's 2022 Priorities Goal and the specific Key Improvement Strategy (KIS) 1b: Wellbeing - Effectively mobilise available resources to support students' wellbeing and mental health, especially the most vulnerable. Children's and families' wellbeing has been prioritized during 2022 at Aurora. Individual Learning Plans (ILP's) clearly demonstrate that teachers are alert to the wellbeing needs of individual children.

We were hoping that in 2022 the impact of COVID-19 would no longer be present, but unfortunately COVID related demands and stressors continued to impact the wellbeing and health of children, families and staff. Therefore, it was important that we ensured the children's diverse needs were evaluated in a timely, proactive and strategic manner to enable us to support and respond to their individual learning and wellbeing needs.

Our tiered supports include the classroom teachers and education support staff, the admin and leadership teams and the wider allied health teams. More specific and targeted supports are available through our psychologists & social workers. In addition, play therapy for children experiencing short or long-term trauma is also available.

As per our Strategic Plan, we plan to continue to strengthen the engagement and wellbeing of every child through:

- improved parent/carers participation as active partners in their child's learning and development
- building a whole school approach to the development of the well-being of children and
- exploring and developing wider community partnerships to optimise the support and pathways for every child

Engagement

Aurora School staff work together in collaboration with young children and their families to develop programs and experiences that are interesting, personally relevant, and appropriately challenging. Aurora School, as a supportive and inclusive school, has plans in place to deliberately foster connectedness and engagement, especially for those children and families who are at risk of falling behind, or disengaging with our support programs. This links directly with DET's 2022 Priorities Goal and the specific Key Improvement Strategy (KIS) 1b: Wellbeing - Effectively mobilise available resources to support students' wellbeing and mental health, especially the most vulnerable. Children's and families' engagement and wellbeing has been prioritized during 2022 at Aurora. As stated above, ILP's clearly demonstrate that teachers are alert to the engagement and wellbeing needs of individual children.

We ensure we are aware of children's absences and our leading teachers, learning specialists, social workers and psychologists are responsible for checking in with families and providing additional support needs as required. Staff also establish and sustain culturally respectful partnerships with all children, families/carers and communities by ensuring a shared understanding of cultural norms and protocols.

The Family Partnership Model of practice is used by the Early Intervention Team. This model provides an evidence-informed framework for working effectively in partnership with families. The EI Leadership Team supports fidelity of this model across the Early Intervention program through supervision and mentoring.

Other highlights from the school year

A major body of work in 2022 was the redevelopment of the school's Vision, Mission and Philosophy. This was developed through the School Improvement Team (SIT) and shared with the School Council and all staff members for comment and feedback. The final draft was presented and accepted at School Council on December 5th. The document was condensed to two pages and expresses our Vision, Mission and Philosophy in a more visual and succinct manner. In addition, illustrative Auslan signs to depict each of the school's four values were developed to support this project.

Professional Learning continued to be a priority. The focus for EI staff was on developing an understanding of Trauma Informed practice and supported embedding of this into the way staff work with families. The Alannah and Madeline Foundation provided this training.

In EE the three-year Deakin University Research Project "Teachers Deliberating Practice" continued into its second-year culminating in a Showcase on the 7th September. The presentations from individuals and groups were impressive highlighting the learning of both the staff and the children they had worked with. The engagement of all staff who attended the showcase was evident on the day and through the follow-up feedback. We look forward to continuing this work in 2023.

The inaugural 'in-house' staff opinion survey was also launched this year. The staff who completed the survey provided positive and thoughtful responses. In 2023 the plan is to set aside a meeting time each year to enable greater staff participation.

Financial performance

Aurora School maintained a very sound financial position throughout 2022. The Financial processes and Internal Controls at Aurora School are exemplary. Expenditure is constantly monitored and best value and prices are sourced. Aurora School continually aims to improve children's outcomes by ensuring our children and staff are well resourced and supported. Improving, upgrading and maintaining the building and equipment was our priority in 2022. This included having the whole school painted internally, the establishment of a children's kitchen and the erection of hallway doors to improve soundproofing.

We were very fortunate to have received an allocation of \$1.8M from the State Government in 2022. This has enabled us to work with the Victorian State Building Authority (VSBA) and their appointed architects WHDA to develop a 10 year Master Plan and upgrade our Central Playground and the outdoor space in the Community Learning Centre.

Following an audit in 2021, the VSBA are ensuring access compliance with all ramps and stairs at the school. They are managing the replacement of the ramp between the main building and the community kindergarten by replacing the non-compliant ramp with steps and an external lift, and providing hand rails where appropriate. The total cost of this work, paid for by the VSBA, is \$500,000.

The school also received the following additional funding from Local, State, or Commonwealth Grants:

- Sporting Schools Grants (\$1500) in terms 1 and 4 to enable classes to attend Gymnastics Programs;
- Job Access Employee Assistance Funding provided \$6000 per deaf staff member for interpreting services;
- Equity funding enabled professional learning through the Alannah and Madeline Foundation (\$3000) in relation to Trauma Informed Practice for EI and the continued rollout of Zones of Regulation (\$3691) behaviour support program in EE.
- Funding of \$24,950 was received from the State for a shade sail over the Art Room outdoor learning area. This was provided through the Schools Shade Sail Fund that we applied for in 2021.
- Final payment of a total grant of \$42,7000 was received in relation to the Inclusive Outdoor Shaded Spaces Building Blocks Grant (originally applied for at the beginning of 2021) with the completion of two shade structures and verandah blinds.

For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at
<https://www.auroraschool.vic.edu.au/>

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 246 students were enrolled at this school in 2022, 119 female and 127 male.

3 percent of students had English as an additional language and 4 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).

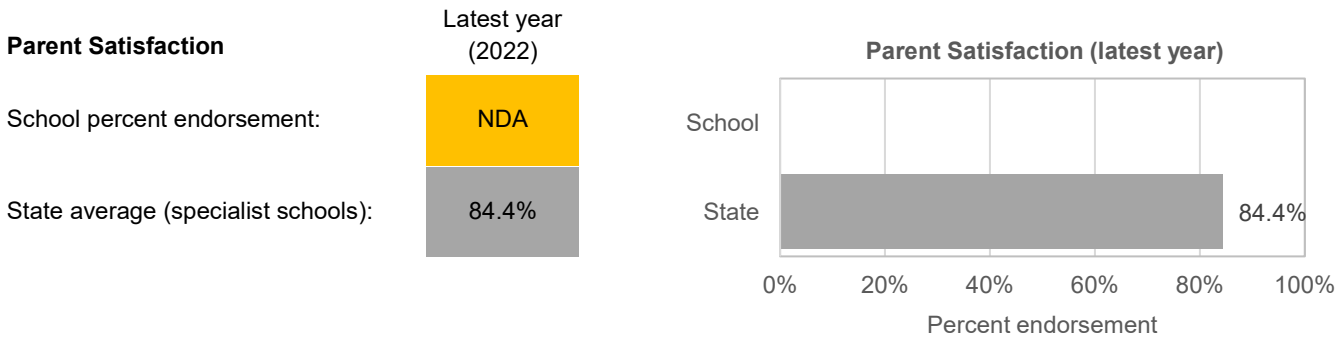
SFOE is a measure of socio-educational disadvantage of a school, based on educational and employment characteristics of the parents/carers of students enrolled at the school. Possible SFOE band values are: Low, Low-Medium, Medium and High. A 'Low' band represents a low level of socio-educational disadvantage,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

This school's SFOE band value is: Low - Medium

Parent Satisfaction Summary

The percent endorsement by parents on their school satisfaction level, as reported in the annual Parent Opinion Survey.

Percent endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree) from parents who responded to the survey.

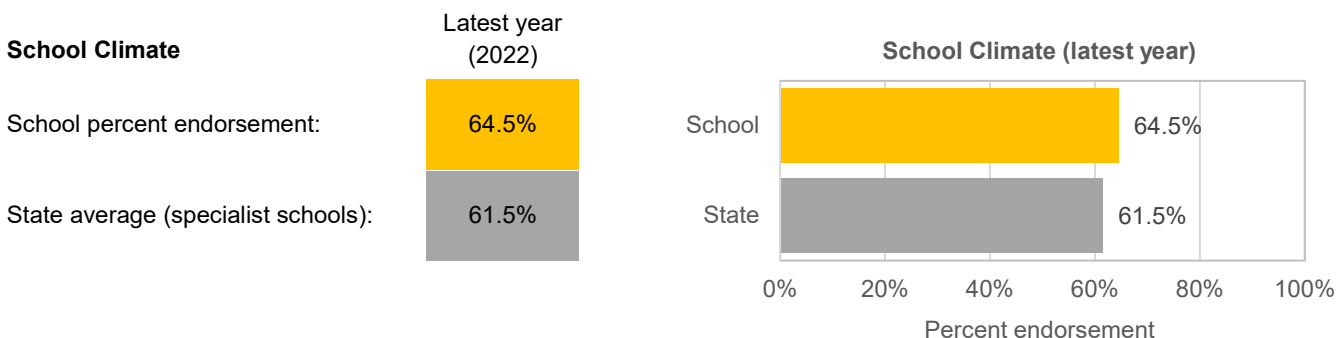


School Staff Survey

The percent endorsement by staff on School Climate, as reported in the annual School Staff Survey.

Percent 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.



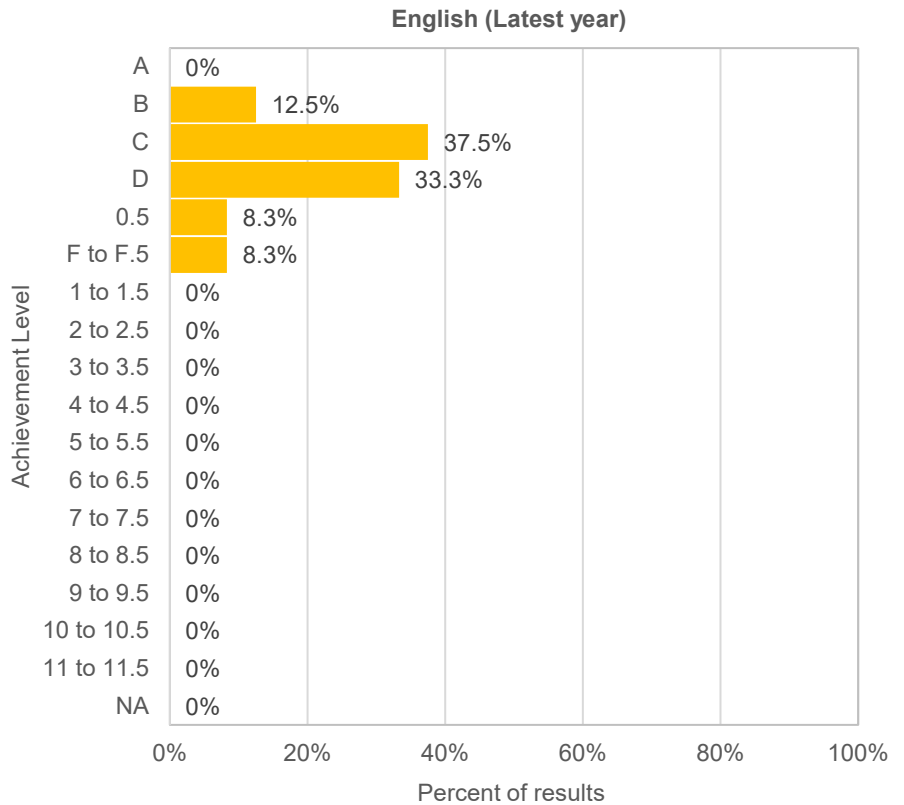
LEARNING

Teacher Judgement of student achievement

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

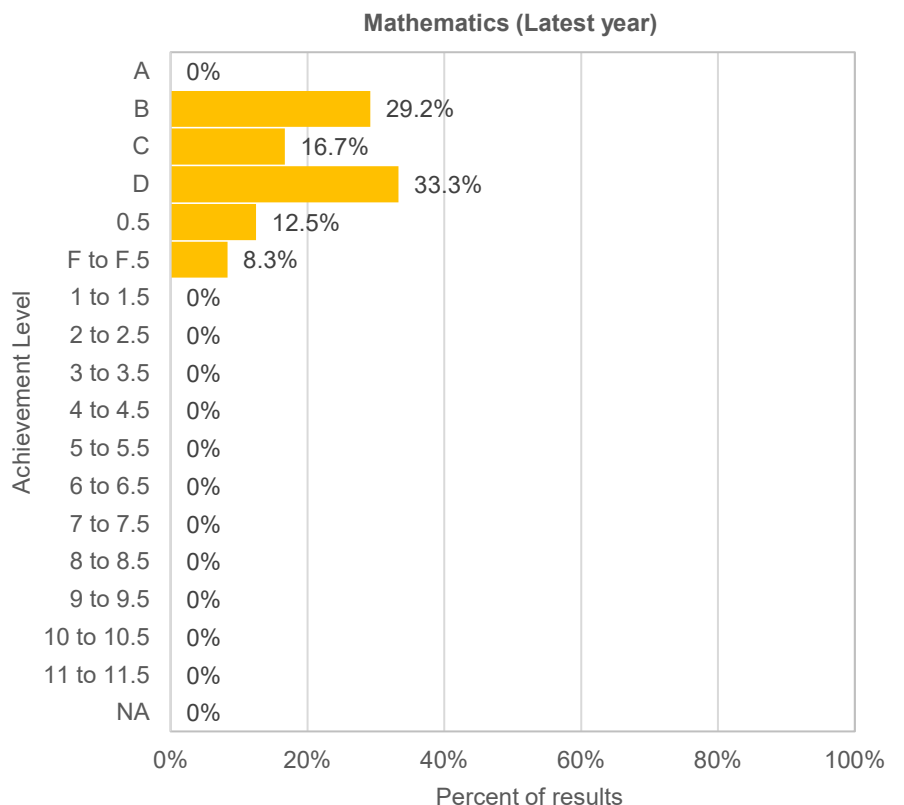
English

Achievement Level	Latest year (2022)
A	NDA
B	12.5%
C	37.5%
D	33.3%
0.5	8.3%
F to F.5	8.3%
1 to 1.5	NDA
2 to 2.5	NDA
3 to 3.5	NDA
4 to 4.5	NDA
5 to 5.5	NDA
6 to 6.5	NDA
7 to 7.5	NDA
8 to 8.5	NDA
9 to 9.5	NDA
10 to 10.5	NDA
11 to 11.5	NDA
NA	NDA



Mathematics

Achievement Level	Latest year (2022)
A	NDA
B	29.2%
C	16.7%
D	33.3%
0.5	12.5%
F to F.5	8.3%
1 to 1.5	NDA
2 to 2.5	NDA
3 to 3.5	NDA
4 to 4.5	NDA
5 to 5.5	NDA
6 to 6.5	NDA
7 to 7.5	NDA
8 to 8.5	NDA
9 to 9.5	NDA
10 to 10.5	NDA
11 to 11.5	NDA
NA	NDA



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	2019	2020	2021	2022	4-year average
School average number of absence days:	3.8	2.2	2.6	4.4	3.3

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	2018	2019	2020	2021	4-year average
School percent of students with positive destinations:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Financial Performance and Position

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE - OPERATING STATEMENT SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER, 2022

Revenue	Actual
Student Resource Package	\$5,339,891
Government Provided DET Grants	\$365,216
Government Grants Commonwealth	\$0
Government Grants State	\$0
Revenue Other	\$55,931
Locally Raised Funds	\$29,410
Capital Grants	\$68,785
Total Operating Revenue	\$5,859,233

Equity ¹	Actual
Equity (Social Disadvantage)	\$9,983
Equity (Catch Up)	\$0
Transition Funding	\$0
Equity (Social Disadvantage – Extraordinary Growth)	\$0
Equity Total	\$9,983

Expenditure	Actual
Student Resource Package ²	\$5,342,093
Adjustments	\$0
Books & Publications	\$764
Camps/Excursions/Activities	\$1,918
Communication Costs	\$17,222
Consumables	\$87,294
Miscellaneous Expense ³	\$24,600
Professional Development	\$116,968
Equipment/Maintenance/Hire	\$151,448
Property Services	\$177,240
Salaries & Allowances ⁴	\$67,677
Support Services	\$162,778
Trading & Fundraising	\$5,819
Motor Vehicle Expenses	\$56,883
Travel & Subsistence	\$19,602
Utilities	\$40,876
Total Operating Expenditure	\$6,273,181
Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit	(\$482,733)
Asset Acquisitions	\$779,708

- (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 24 Feb 2023 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 2022

Funds available	Actual
High Yield Investment Account	\$598,537
Official Account	\$40,016
Other Accounts	\$0
Total Funds Available	\$638,553

Financial Commitments	Actual
Operating Reserve	\$129,644
Other Recurrent Expenditure	\$0
Provision Accounts	\$0
Funds Received in Advance	\$9,195
School Based Programs	\$349,432
Beneficiary/Memorial Accounts	\$0
Cooperative Bank Account	\$0
Funds for Committees/Shared Arrangements	\$0
Repayable to the Department	\$0
Asset/Equipment Replacement < 12 months	\$40,000
Capital - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$9,000
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$50,000
Asset/Equipment Replacement > 12 months	\$0
Capital - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$70,000
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
Total Financial Commitments	\$657,271

All funds received from the Department, 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.