

# 2020 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](http://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 2020 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 19 March 2021 at 11:46 AM by Vicki Main (Principal)

The 2020 Annual Report to the school community:

- has been tabled and endorsed at a meeting of the school council
- will be publicly shared with the school community.

Attested on 23 April 2021 at 11:38 AM by Jayne Stedman (School Council President)

# How to read the Annual Report

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## What has changed for the 2020 Annual Report?

### Improved appearance

The appearance of the Performance Summary has been updated to more clearly represent information and to assist interpretation and comparison of individual school's data with state averages.

### School performance data

The Victorian community's experience of COVID-19, including remote and flexible learning, had a significant impact on normal school operations. This impacted the conduct of assessments and surveys. Readers should be aware of this when interpreting the Performance Summary.

For example, in 2020 school-based surveys ran under changed circumstances. Absence data may have been influenced by local processes and procedures adopted in response to remote and flexible learning.

Schools should keep this in mind when using this data for planning and evaluation purposes.

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## What does the 'About Our School' section refer to?

The About Our School section provides a brief background on the school, an outline of the school's performance over the year and future directions.

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 'Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)' section includes the improvement initiatives the school has selected and the progress they have made towards achieving them.

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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

### Achievement

- 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).

## How to read the Annual Report (continued)

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### 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. For the 2020 Student Attitudes to School survey, specifically, the similar school group averages are replaced by 'NDP' where less than 50% of schools in a given similar school group did not participate in the 2020 survey.

'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.

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### 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 a disability 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 is a vital educational organization that provides optimal learning environments for young Deaf and Deafblind children and their families across the State of Victoria.

We deliver quality educational programs aimed to maximize the achievement of deaf and deafblind children and to support parents and families.

Communication, Language and Literacy, through a bilingual English/Auslan approach, form the foundation of programs that support each child's development. Our programs are informed by the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF), the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia - Belonging Being and Becoming (EYLF), and The Victorian Curriculum. For children with additional disabilities programs are based on learning pathways using the Victorian Abilities Based Learning and Education Support (ABLES) materials. In addition, our Early Intervention team, work within the Family Partnership Framework Model and use the Best Practices in Family Centered Early Intervention for Children Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing - An international consensus statement as their quality improvement tool.

Aurora has 61 staff (equivalent to 48.7 full-time); 3.0 Principal Class; 26.0 teachers, 32.0 Education Support Staff. By December 2020 Aurora School had 49 children enrolled in the onsite program at Blackburn South and 252 families enrolled in Early Intervention across the State. Aurora has continued to increase in numbers both the Early Intervention and Early Education programs. Aurora provides onsite and home based programs for children living in metropolitan and regional Victoria.

Early Intervention programs are available for families of children, living anywhere in Victoria, who have a confirmed bilateral hearing loss and who are eligible for the provision of hearing aids or an assistive hearing device. Aurora School Early Intervention offers home based support to deaf children and their families prior to school entry. The overall aim is to assist parents to identify their child's strengths and needs and to help their child develop the language skills necessary to participate in family and community life. We share knowledge and skills with families, provide support and help parents to communicate with their child and encourage their development. Early Intervention staff are based at Blackburn South and at our Sunshine office.

Early Education programs are available for Deaf children from three years of age who have a confirmed moderate to profound bilateral hearing loss, Deaf children with additional needs and Deafblind children with both vision and hearing impairments. The Early Education school based program focuses on a play based developmental pathway, with strong emphasis on the effective use of expressive and receptive language in a Bilingual environment. Departmental transport is provided for children from southern, northern and eastern regions.

The Aurora School Community Kindergarten (ASCK) is thriving as a bilingual kindergarten which combines Aurora children and community children in a vibrant and supportive learning environment. Orchard Grove P.S Foundation children, in partnership with Aurora Foundation children, share aspects of their foundation programs during Terms 2 and 3. A caring and encouraging environment fosters the development of all children according to their individual needs and abilities.

Accommodation is available for country children and their families who access the onsite Early Education programs, Prior to COVID-19 – accommodation had been fully booked during the previous two years, with country parents accessing the accommodation either for part of the week or from Monday to Friday.

Particularly during COVID-19, videoconferencing facilities increased the scope of the school's outreach services. During the 2020 lockdowns Aurora used a range of conferencing strategies to communicate bilingually with families across the state. This included daily live group and individual sessions developed by teachers, education support staff and the therapy team. Our psychologists and social workers also provided essential wellbeing support across many sectors. In 2021 we will re-establish the provision of weekly Auslan classes (LOTE) to two country Primary schools, a program that has been operating now for three years.

**Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)**

2020 at Aurora School has been a year of adaption to change and the development of new ways of working through online platforms and closer relationships with families. We have made considerable growth in implementing the 'Essential Elements' necessary to form the foundation upon which improvement is built:

1. Documented curriculum plans, assessment and shared pedagogical approaches are evident in both written and conversational forms and have been adapted to an online format.
2. The professional learning program planned for 2020 has been rolled over to 2021 and is more closely aligned with Aurora Schools identified improvement strategies.
3. The Aurora School Leadership Team is the school improvement team that oversees and evaluates the effectiveness and impact of the AIP and has continued to meet throughout 2020.
4. The age of our children means that we need to work together in partnership with families to ensure that both children's and families voices are encouraged so that they can positively contribute to their own learning and school improvement. This has been especially important during 2020 and close partnerships are more evident.
5. Aurora School ensures there is a whole school approach to supporting the health, wellbeing, inclusion and engagement of all our children, families and staff. Children, family and staff wellbeing has been a priority in 2020.
6. There is an increased awareness of and discussion about what moderation of assessment for young children means and looks like and how we go about doing this.
7. Data collection, analysis and evaluation of children's learning is a focus for 2021.
8. As a unique Designated Bilingual School (English and Auslan) for young deaf children and their families, we consistently base our practices and maintain our professional knowledge on well-founded evidence-informed research.

**Achievement**

During this most unique year, with COVID-19 impacting on all aspects of the schools operations, the staff at Aurora School have continued to develop their teaching practices and improve and strengthen their knowledge and skills. There has been an increased culture of collaboration and collective responsibility. All staff have worked together to support each other and develop resources in both English and Auslan that are able to be used in both online and face-to-face environments. Staff have considered and effectively used high-impact teaching strategies in response to children's and families learning needs.

Children, families, and their individual and specific needs continue to be at the centre of curriculum planning and educational service delivery. The Leading Teachers and Learning Specialist met weekly with teams, and were available for regular catch-ups with individuals or groups as needed. This support ensured that online sessions continued to focus on VEYLDF, EYLDF, (and where appropriate AusVELS/The Victorian Curriculum, ABLES, and to support communication and language acquisition for young deaf children in line with CASLLS, the Communication Matrix and the Auslan Checklist.

Aurora School has maintained Communities of Practice beyond our individual school through remote attendance at a range of statewide networks, Auslan Teaching via Polycom to Mooroopna North Primary School and Metung Primary School, and through our Early Intervention Statewide support to families, childcare centres and kindergartens.

During 2020, due to COVID-19, much of our support has been through online formats. Our skill level in this area has increased dramatically and all staff have developed new learning and expertise in relation to working with digital media. These experiences have extended our current practices and continue to provide professional challenge and opportunities for reflection for staff and leadership of Aurora School.

## 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 staff are being encouraged by the leadership teams to have high expectations of young children's learning, and to develop strategies that challenge children at their point of learning need. Aurora staff are also being encouraged to collect robust evidence of learning and use it to target their teaching/family support.

Aurora staff also provide support to families who are at different stages of the grief/acceptance cycle. This means that the support and guidance provided is differentiated to meet individual family needs.

Aurora staff working directly with young children and their families are being supported by the leadership teams to continue to develop effective partnerships with families to further enhance the learning potential of their child. In 2019 the Family Partnership Model of practice was rolled out to all Early Intervention Regular Workers. This model provides an evidence informed framework for working effectively in partnership with families. Supporting fidelity of this model across the Early Intervention program through mentoring will be a major focus for the remainder of this strategic plan cycle.

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.

## Wellbeing

Creating a positive and engaging school environment and culture to support optimal learning, is Aurora School's focus for children, families and staff. The unprecedented demands and stress of COVID-19 during 2020 made wellbeing an even greater priority.

The Management and Leadership Teams worked thoughtfully and collaboratively to meet the wellbeing needs of the school community during this time. A plan to maintain regular contact with all children and their families was developed and implemented. Families identified as requiring additional support were referred on to the leadership team and subsequently the wellbeing (psychologists and social workers) team. Children in out of home care, known to child protection or identified as particularly vulnerable were able to attend onsite.

A program to support staff wellbeing was also developed. Weekly small and large team meetings were held. The leadership teams were available every day to provide any additional support identified. Staff were able to access specific wellbeing professional development through the BeYou program that had been introduced the previous year. Leadership provided a wellbeing pack to all staff half way through the first lockdown. Returning to work onsite was also quite challenging so leadership teams needed to be empathic and conscious of each individual's potential anxiety and stress. A compassionate and considered approach was adopted, ensuring all staff concerns were listened to and acted upon.

2020 did enable staff to get to know families more intimately as they were privileged to be invited into their homes. The use of digital platforms has enabled families, especially those that live some distance from the school, to engage

### **Financial performance and position**

Aurora School maintained a very sound financial position throughout 2020. 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 student outcomes by ensuring our children and staff are well resourced and supported.

With our building now being 15 years old, spending on improving and maintaining the building and equipment was our priority in 2020, and will continue to be for the next few years. We were also fortunate to receive an Inclusive Schools Grant (Round 5) at the end of 2019 to develop the Western Playground. This was due to commence in 2020, but due to COVID-19, the project has been postponed until mid-2021.

**For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at**  
[www.auroraschool.vic.edu.au](http://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.

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 266 students were enrolled at this school in 2020, 120 female and 146 male.

4 percent of students had English as an additional language and 3 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) which takes into account parents' occupations and education.

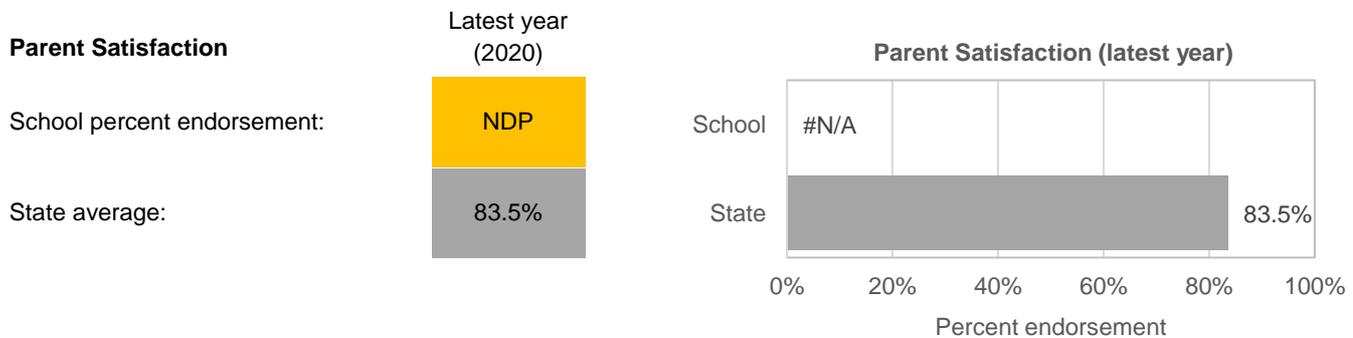
Possible socio-economic band values are: Low, Low-Medium, Medium and High.

This school's socio-economic band value is: Low

### 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.

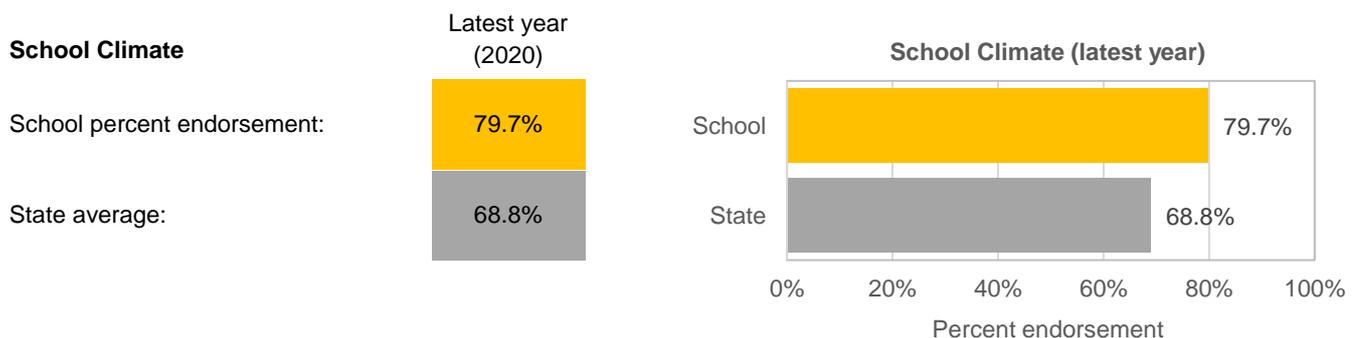


### School Staff Survey

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.



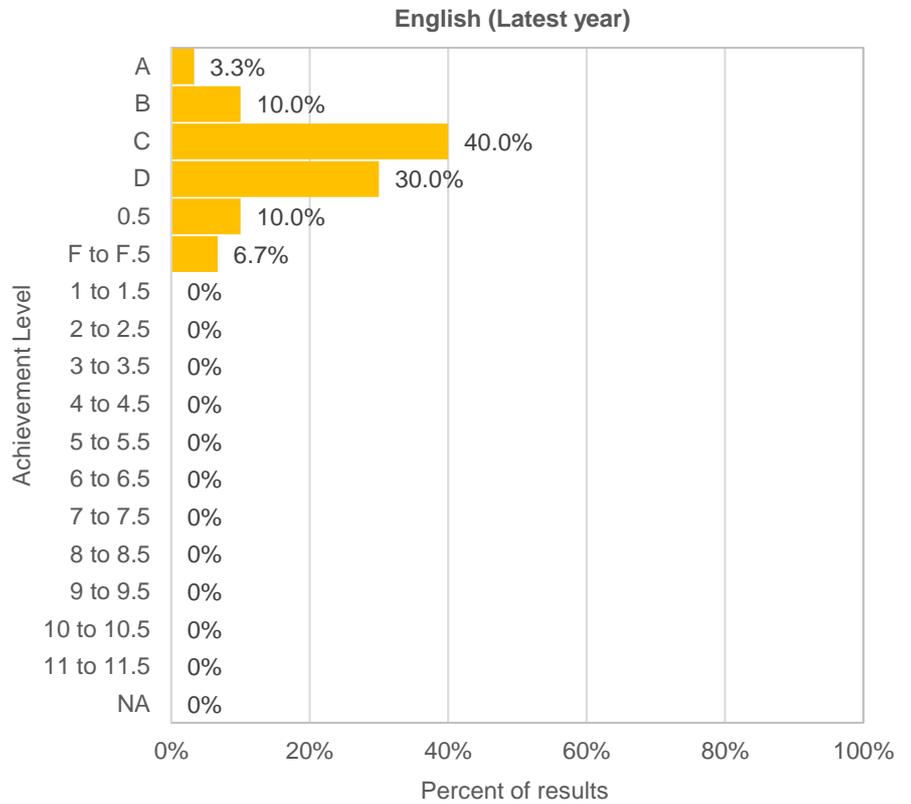
## ACHIEVEMENT

### Teacher Judgement of student achievement

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

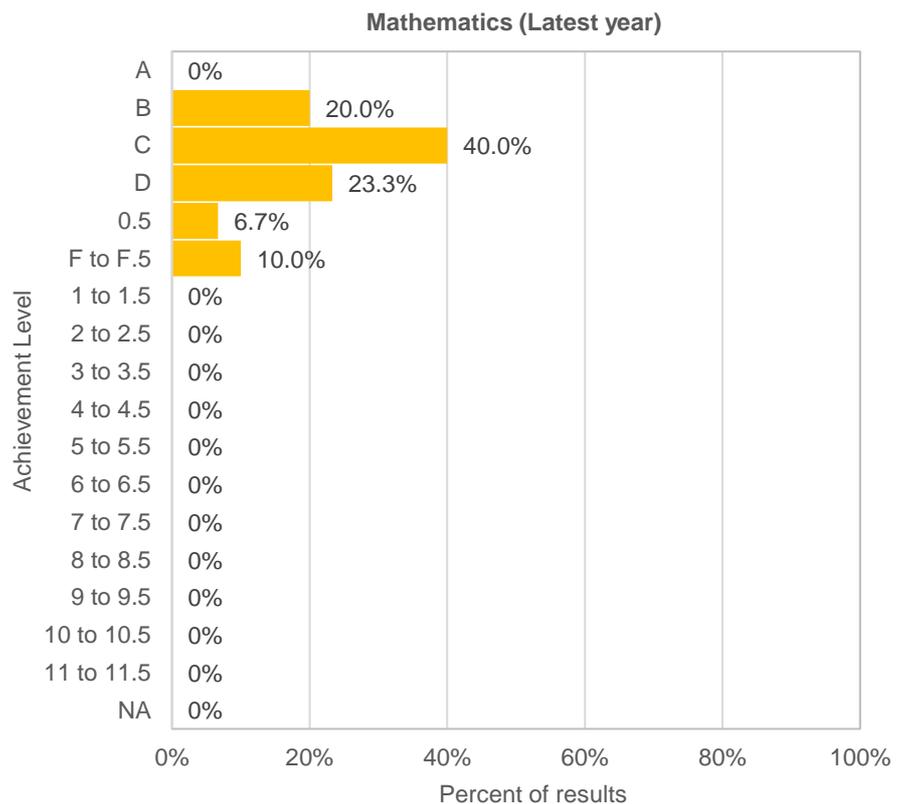
#### English

| Achievement Level | Latest year (2020) |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| A                 | 3.3%               |
| B                 | 10.0%              |
| C                 | 40.0%              |
| D                 | 30.0%              |
| 0.5               | 10.0%              |
| F to F.5          | 6.7%               |
| 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 (2020) |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| A                 | NDA                |
| B                 | 20.0%              |
| C                 | 40.0%              |
| D                 | 23.3%              |
| 0.5               | 6.7%               |
| F to F.5          | 10.0%              |
| 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. Absence data in 2020 may have been influenced by local processes and procedures adopted in response to remote and flexible learning.

| Student Absence                        | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 4-year average |
|--|------|------|------|------|----------------|
| School average number of absence days: | 4.9  | 5.1  | 3.9  | 2.3  | 3.9            |

### 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  | 2017   | 2018   | 2019   | 2020   | 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, 2020

| Revenue                        | Actual             |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Student Resource Package       | \$5,059,052        |
| Government Provided DET Grants | \$724,132          |
| Government Grants Commonwealth | \$1,500            |
| Government Grants State        | \$20,355           |
| Revenue Other                  | \$90,438           |
| Locally Raised Funds           | \$36,864           |
| Capital Grants                 | NDA                |
| <b>Total Operating Revenue</b> | <b>\$5,932,341</b> |

| Equity <sup>1</sup>                                 | Actual         |
|---|----------------|
| Equity (Social Disadvantage)                        | \$5,802        |
| Equity (Catch Up)                                   | NDA            |
| Transition Funding                                  | NDA            |
| Equity (Social Disadvantage – Extraordinary Growth) | NDA            |
| <b>Equity Total</b>                                 | <b>\$5,802</b> |

| Expenditure                           | Actual             |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Student Resource Package <sup>2</sup> | \$5,072,325        |
| Adjustments                           | NDA                |
| Books & Publications                  | \$222              |
| Camps/Excursions/Activities           | \$777              |
| Communication Costs                   | \$24,058           |
| Consumables                           | \$78,709           |
| Miscellaneous Expense <sup>3</sup>    | \$18,728           |
| Professional Development              | \$4,267            |
| Equipment/Maintenance/Hire            | \$92,573           |
| Property Services                     | \$128,002          |
| Salaries & Allowances <sup>4</sup>    | \$104,461          |
| Support Services                      | \$51,077           |
| Trading & Fundraising                 | \$6,590            |
| Motor Vehicle Expenses                | \$28,972           |
| Travel & Subsistence                  | \$7,613            |
| Utilities                             | \$57,395           |
| <b>Total Operating Expenditure</b>    | <b>\$5,675,770</b> |
| <b>Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit</b> | <b>\$256,571</b>   |
| <b>Asset Acquisitions</b>             | <b>\$147,033</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 02 Mar 2021 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 2020

| <b>Funds available</b>        | <b>Actual</b>      |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| High Yield Investment Account | \$1,980,240        |
| Official Account              | \$62,324           |
| Other Accounts                | NDA                |
| <b>Total Funds Available</b>  | <b>\$2,042,563</b> |

| <b>Financial Commitments</b>                | <b>Actual</b>      |
|---|--------------------|
| Operating Reserve                           | \$87,982           |
| Other Recurrent Expenditure                 | \$22               |
| Provision Accounts                          | NDA                |
| Funds Received in Advance                   | \$26,263           |
| School Based Programs                       | \$233,596          |
| Beneficiary/Memorial Accounts               | NDA                |
| Cooperative Bank Account                    | NDA                |
| Funds for Committees/Shared Arrangements    | NDA                |
| Repayable to the Department                 | NDA                |
| Asset/Equipment Replacement < 12 months     | \$125,000          |
| Capital - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months     | \$390,000          |
| Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months | \$63,000           |
| Asset/Equipment Replacement > 12 months     | \$10,000           |
| Capital - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months     | \$495,000          |
| Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months | NDA                |
| <b>Total Financial Commitments</b>          | <b>\$1,430,863</b> |

*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.*