

# 2023 Annual Report to the School Community

School Name: Warragul & District Specialist School (5289)



- all teachers at the school meet the registration requirements of the [Victorian Institute of Teaching \(VIT\)](#)
- the school meets prescribed Minimum Standards for registration as regulated by the Victorian Regulation and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) in accordance with the [Education and Training Reform Act 2006 \(Vic\)](#) (this includes any exemption granted to this school by the VRQA, for the most recent calendar year, in relation to minimum student enrolment numbers and/or the curriculum framework requirement to deliver a languages program)
- the school meets the requirements of the Child Safe Standards as prescribed in [Ministerial Order 1359 – Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the risk of child abuse in schools \(PDF\)](#).

Attested on 26 April 2024 at 09:52 AM by Matt Hyde (Principal)

- This 2023 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 26 April 2024 at 02:29 PM by Andrew Ronalds (School Council President)

# How to read the Annual Report

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## 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.

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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

### 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).

Key terms used in the Performance Summary are defined below:

### NDP and NDA

'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').

## Updates to the *'Performance Summary'* in the 2023 Annual Report

Reporting on the following measures has been updated in the 2023 Annual Report to align with changes to departmental and public reporting products.

### **Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey, School Staff Survey and the Attitudes to School Survey**

The calculation of the percentage endorsement for all survey measures has been revised to no longer include skipped responses. This applies to all survey measures reported in the Performance Summary. The change to the calculation reduces the negative impact of skipped responses on school results, particularly where there were a small number of respondents to the survey.

Additionally, the Parent Satisfaction measure has been revised to use the percentage endorsement of the 'General School Satisfaction' factor of the Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey only. Previously, this measure reflected an average of multiple factors in the survey. The change to reporting a single factor is consistent with how Parent Satisfaction is reported to schools and in other public reports.

# About Our School

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## School context

Warragul and District Specialist School is situated in West Gippsland an hour and a quarter drive east of Melbourne.

Our school is an educational option for students who reside in the local Baw Baw area and are assessed as having an intellectual disability. A large percentage of our students have additional diagnosis's including Autism, sensory and physical impairments and associated conditions.

Our Vision

Goal: Students feel connected to their peers, the staff and the wider school community

Warragul & District Specialist School is situated on the one site. The school is structured into Junior, Middle and Senior Units. Each of the units is supported by a unit team leader and has around 5 classes. This model was adopted to promote a strong sense of community which encourages the development of strong relationships between students and their peers and staff. Classes are developed to promote positive relationships between similarly aged peers with shared interests, goals, and learning needs. Students access programs that enhance their social competencies including their communication needs, A strong therapy team supports students at a whole school, unit, class and individual level.

Safe and stimulating learning environment.

The school recognizes that for a student to learn they need to feel safe and secure in their learning environment. Under the umbrella of Schoolwide Positive Behavior Supports (PBS), students and staff employ the zones of regulation to help students remain calm and in the "green" zone. Easy access to sensory inputs, spaces and calming activities are essential in achieving this goal. Student voice and agency is strongly encouraged with staff facilitating student input and agency in their own education.

Students have access to an appropriate targeted curriculum suited to their age, stage and interests,

Students at the school are working at Victorian Curriculum levels A through to 4 with approximately 50% of students learning at a pre-foundation level. All students have an Individual Education Plan (ILP) developed in conjunction with the student (as appropriate), the student's school based team and the family (Student Support Group). Students are encouraged to develop their own yearly learning goal and their Support Group also develops a priority goal that will enhance the student's access the curriculum and/or their community.

When implementing the school curriculum staff utilize the gradual release model, building student independence. Lessons are delivered using the workshop model adapted to accommodate student individual rates of learning and learning competencies.

Students' graduation pathways are designed employing the transition continuum with a focus on students developing skills in Work/further education, living independently, and being socially connected to their community, The transition continuum incorporates the level of support and reasonable adjustments required by individual students to access the curriculum and transition programs

Students graduate with the skills and competencies required to participate in their local community

The school has a strong focus on developing a student's skills for life. Each student has individualized program and goals that enhance a student's long term participation in whole of life activities in the areas of Work/further education, living independently, and being socially connected to their community. Numeracy and Literacy skills often underpin these life skills and are an essential component of a student's program.

The school believes that all students can and will learn, and grow in self-esteem, through fostering a climate of care, dignity and respect, using consistent SW-PBS strategies, deliberate positive reinforcement, and recognition of achievement. The school believes that high quality education is best achieved when there is collaboration between families, students and staff. Families are actively encouraged to participate in the development of their child's educational program through Student Support Group meetings and in their child's social development through access to school based family activities.

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## Progress towards strategic goals, student outcomes and student engagement

### Learning

Following our school review in 2022, in first semester of 2023 a school team undertook professional learning in the Professional Learning Community (PLC) initiative provided by the Academy and accessed the regional Professional Learning Community (PLC) coach. Running concurrent to this has been the introduction of renewed PLC processes within the school. This includes a time allotment to run a weekly PLCs during class time in addition to the after school fortnightly time allotment. Professional learning has been delivered to teaching and therapy staff in the implementation of the PLC model. This has resulted in PLCs effectively using their allotted time to analysis student data to identify an enquiry cycle that supports student learning, our School Strategic Plan

(SSP), and Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) goals. As a school we have become more sophisticated at this process as the year has progressed and expect to grow further into 2024.

Following our school review in 2022, in 2023 the school underwent an evaluation of available Literacy programs that catered for the needs of students with an intellectual disability. The school was seeking a literacy program that delivered a school wide consistency of practise and catered for the diversity of students within the school. Little learners Love Literacy (LLLL) was selected and in term 3 a school team accessed Professional Learning. A selection of teachers from across the school successfully trialled the program during term 4 seeing the desired initial engagement of students in the program and desired gains. The school believes that the Little Learners Love literacy program can be made accessible to a wider range of students than the target range of Victoria Curriculum level F to 2 to included student in levels C and D. The school will roll out Little learners love literacy (LLLL) across the whole school in 2024

## Wellbeing

During 2023 the school had a focus on identifying, documenting and developing individual reasonable adjustments that enhance student access to the curriculum. This has involved reviewing and updating the school's SSG and IEP processes and documentation. The school has also replaced our student snapshot with a more extensive student profile aligned with the Disability Inclusion Profile domains. Anecdotally we have noted an increase in teacher, therapist and ES capacity to articulate and implement targeted reasonable adjustments at a multi tiered level. The Disability Inclusion Profile meetings have highlighted when reasonable adjustments are required and in place and on occasion when they are not in place or need strengthening.

Late in 2022 the school was able to source and employ a MHP for 2 days per week. Having completed the required training and been inducted into the school, in term 1 of 2023 the MHP was able to implement a range of tier 1 -3 strategies that supported the wellbeing of secondary students at the school, this included the implementation of the Live4Life program, targeted small group instruction and individual interventions. In term 4 of 2023 we were able to increase the MHP time fraction by 1 day, employing her as a social worker which has allowed her to work across the whole school in this capacity.

The school's mental health fund has been targeted in part towards identified initiatives. These have included:

- The training of a school therapy dog. Bessie was purchased early in the year and formal training commenced soon after. Bessie has responded extremely well to both the training and to the school environment. We are very fortunate that Bessie's personality is perfect for a therapy dog within a specialist school.
- During semester 2 of 2023, the school employed an ES-2 staff member to work collaboratively with school based leadership team to support student regulation and mental health. This person has had a initial impact on student regulation and mental health. The role will continue into 2024

## Engagement

The school team continues to monitor student absences, with unit coordinators tasked with supporting families to return students to school. We have been fortunate to receive support in this area from a range of Department of Education and external agencies, as well as in-school resources. Unfortunately during 2023 we saw an increase in student absenteeism with student medical condition and school reluctance being identified as major factors. Student reluctance to attend school was identified as an issue for enrolling students with a history of school refusal.

During 2023 the Student Representative Council (SRC) continued to meet expanding their role within the school. The SRC members are representative of the student population with representatives from Junior, Middle and Senior school. The SRC is ably lead by the school captains proactively organising and running school events and bringing well thought out ideas to the school leadership team. The SRC has has a positive impact on our school community through the organisation of whole school and unit led events, developing our school's acknowledgement system, school uniform, playground equipment decisions and senior school program decisions.

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## Financial performance

In 2023, Warragul & District Specialist School had a Net Operating Surplus of \$253,157. As of 31 of December 2023 the school had \$389,581 local funds available to be expended. The introduction of the new Disability Inclusion Funding model (DIP) has resulted in a lag in funding being allocated to the school which may have impacted these figures. Our strong financial position was due, in part, to sound financial planning and the careful management of student and staff movement. During 2023 it was necessary to employ additional casual staff to cover unfilled staffing vacancies and student support needs. In 2023 the school undertook a number of school facilities projects including the continued installation and upgrading of playground fencing. As per school practice,

our 2023 surplus will be utilized as an operating reserve to support the implementation of 2024 programs and adjustments specific to the needs of students with disabilities. The remaining funds are targeted towards cyclic asset replacement including technology and bus replacement.

**For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at**  
<https://www.wqldss.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 112 students were enrolled at this school in 2023, 32 female and 80 male.

5 percent of students had English as an additional language and 7 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).

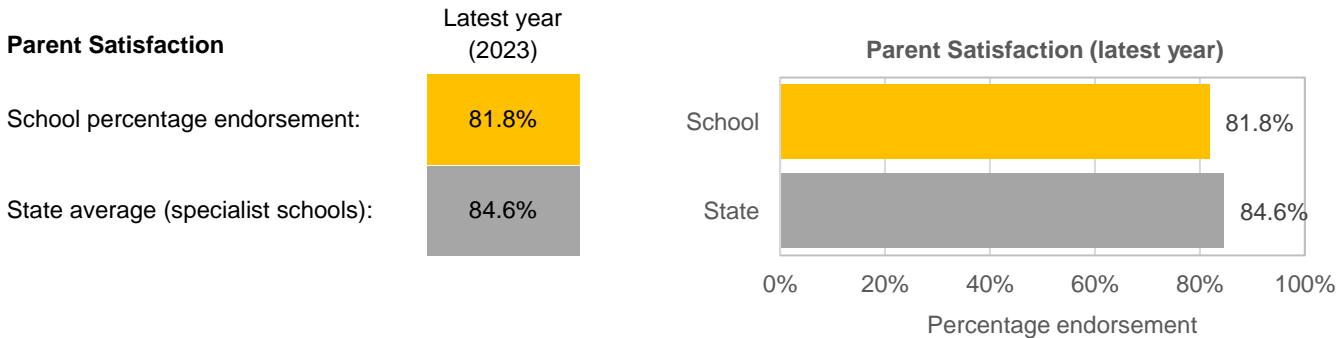
SFOE is a measure of socio-educational disadvantage of a school, based on educational and employment characteristics of the parents/carers of students enrolled at the school. Possible SFOE band values are: Low, Low-Medium, Medium and High. A 'Low' band represents a low level of socio-educational disadvantage,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

This school's SFOE band value is: High

### Parent Satisfaction Summary

The percentage endorsement by parents on their General School Satisfaction, as reported in the annual Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey.

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

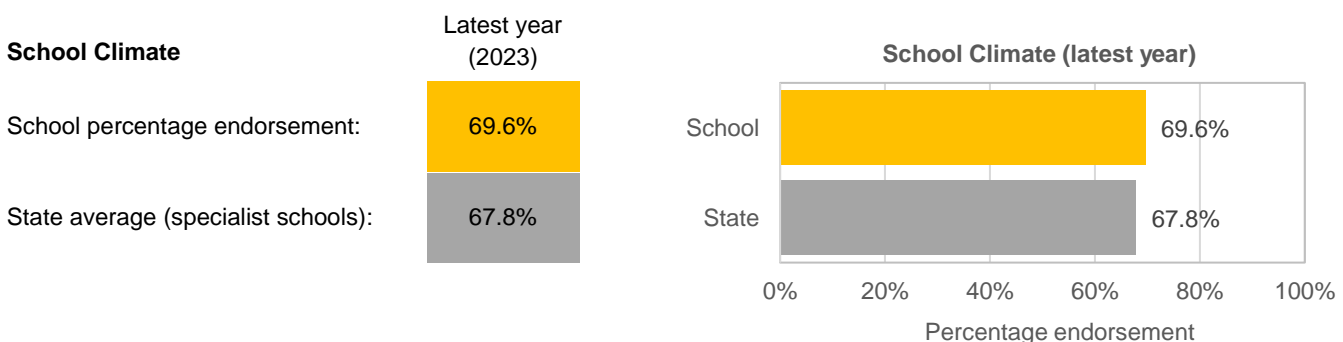


### School Staff Survey

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

Percentage 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.



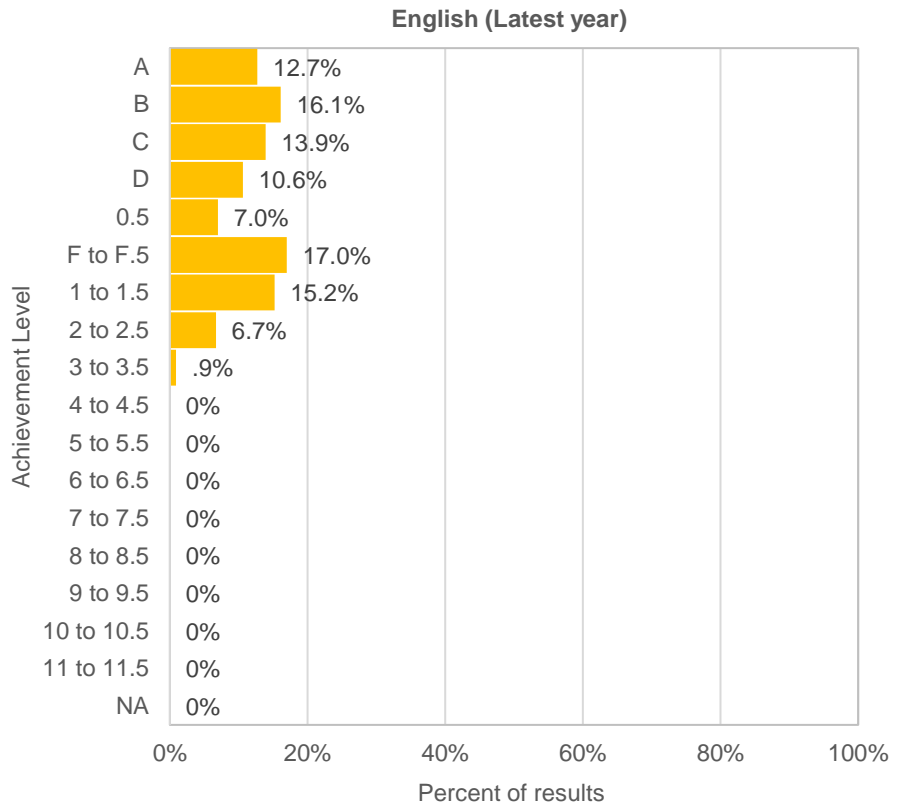
**LEARNING**

**Teacher Judgement of student achievement**

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

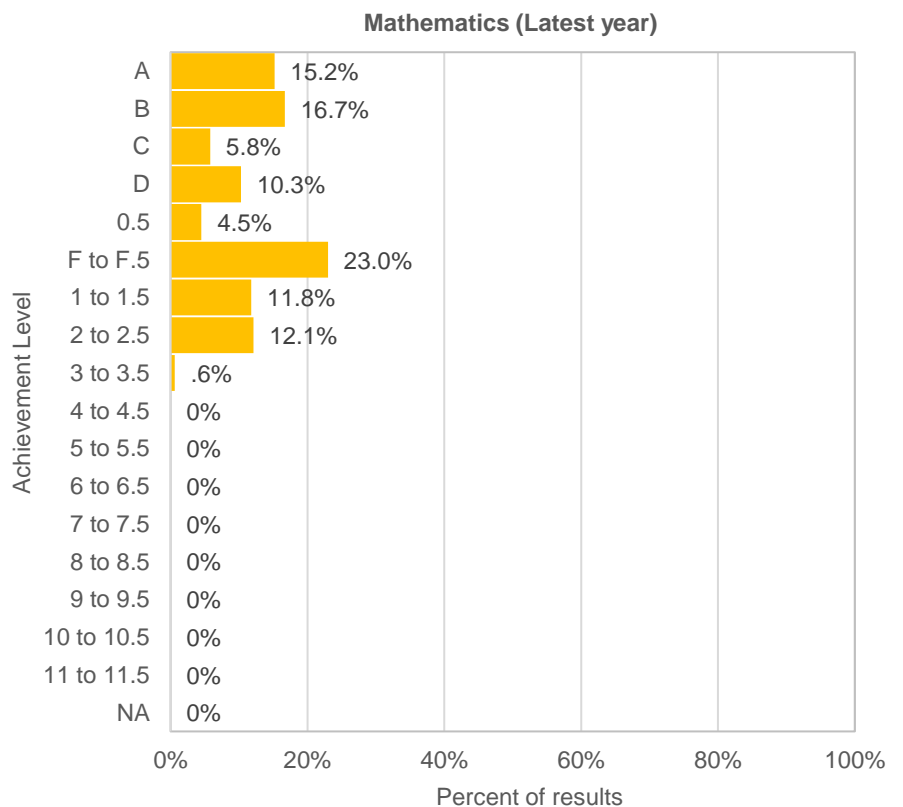
**English**

Achievement Level	Latest year (2023)
A	12.7%
B	16.1%
C	13.9%
D	10.6%
0.5	7.0%
F to F.5	17.0%
1 to 1.5	15.2%
2 to 2.5	6.7%
3 to 3.5	0.9%
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 (2023)
A	15.2%
B	16.7%
C	5.8%
D	10.3%
0.5	4.5%
F to F.5	23.0%
1 to 1.5	11.8%
2 to 2.5	12.1%
3 to 3.5	0.6%
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	2020	2021	2022	2023	4-year average
School average number of absence days:	24.4	28.1	31.6	34.5	29.6

### 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	2019	2020	2021	2022	4-year average
School percent of students with positive destinations:	88.9%	NDP	NDP	NDP	92.9%

# Financial Performance and Position

## FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE - OPERATING STATEMENT SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER, 2023

Revenue	Actual
Student Resource Package	\$5,427,031
Government Provided DET Grants	\$850,639
Government Grants Commonwealth	\$0
Government Grants State	\$9,800
Revenue Other	\$33,780
Locally Raised Funds	\$40,401
Capital Grants	\$0
<b>Total Operating Revenue</b>	<b>\$6,361,651</b>

Equity <sup>1</sup>	Actual
Equity (Social Disadvantage)	\$111,059
Equity (Catch Up)	\$0
Transition Funding	\$0
Equity (Social Disadvantage – Extraordinary Growth)	\$0
<b>Equity Total</b>	<b>\$111,059</b>

Expenditure	Actual
Student Resource Package <sup>2</sup>	\$5,196,708
Adjustments	\$0
Books & Publications	\$469
Camps/Excursions/Activities	\$33,614
Communication Costs	\$12,162
Consumables	\$58,008
Miscellaneous Expense <sup>3</sup>	\$42,487
Professional Development	\$20,187
Equipment/Maintenance/Hire	\$56,348
Property Services	\$214,062
Salaries & Allowances <sup>4</sup>	\$377,588
Support Services	\$29,688
Trading & Fundraising	\$4,683
Motor Vehicle Expenses	\$15,798
Travel & Subsistence	\$0
Utilities	\$40,773
<b>Total Operating Expenditure</b>	<b>\$6,102,573</b>
<b>Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit</b>	<b>\$259,078</b>
<b>Asset Acquisitions</b>	<b>\$0</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 16 Feb 2024 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 2023**

<b>Funds available</b>	<b>Actual</b>
High Yield Investment Account	\$400,064
Official Account	\$22,349
Other Accounts	\$0
<b>Total Funds Available</b>	<b>\$422,414</b>

<b>Financial Commitments</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Operating Reserve	\$136,321
Other Recurrent Expenditure	\$32,832
Provision Accounts	\$0
Funds Received in Advance	\$72,144
School Based Programs	\$0
Beneficiary/Memorial Accounts	\$0
Cooperative Bank Account	\$0
Funds for Committees/Shared Arrangements	\$10,800
Repayable to the Department	\$0
Asset/Equipment Replacement < 12 months	\$137,483
Capital - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$0
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$0
Asset/Equipment Replacement > 12 months	\$0
Capital - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
<b>Total Financial Commitments</b>	<b>\$389,581</b>

*All funds received from the Department of Education, 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.*