
To: Board of Education

Prepared By: Jason Reid

Subject: Federal Safe Return to Class Fund

Date: Sept. 14, 2020

Purpose

The purpose of this briefing note is to present the planned allocation of the Federal Safe Return to Class Fund for the Board's review and approval.

Background

On August 11, 2020, the Ministry of Education announced the Safe Return to School Grant (SRSG), a one-time investment of \$45.6 million to help support a safe restart for BC schools. The allocation to the Saanich School District was \$562,652 and was targeted as follows:

- Reusable masks/face shields – \$28,301
- Improved hand hygiene (new or upgraded sinks/sanitization stations) - \$120,714
- Computers and assistive technology – \$43,729
- Cleaning Supplies - \$67,136
- Cleaning Frequency (staff cost only) - \$302,772

As with other narrowly targeted special purpose fund grants, allocation of this grant was effectively directed by the ministry.

On August 26, 2020, the Federal government announced \$2 billion in funding to allow provinces and territories to work with local school boards to implement measures to protect students and staff from COVID-19. On September 3, 2020, the ministry announced allocation of the funding to school districts as the Federal Safe Return to Class Fund (FSRF). BC is receiving \$121.1 million for the fall and "up to" a further \$121.1 million in funding for the second half of the school year in January. The amount of the second installment is dependent on reporting from districts to BC and then from BC to the Federal government on how the first installment was used.

The Saanich School District's share of the first installment is \$1,433,835. Allocations to districts is also net of a 10% holdback by the ministry (for unforeseen circumstances), and so there may be additional allocation mid-fall. While the second installment is tentative, the spending plan reflects receiving up to \$2,867,669 during the year. Unlike the Provincial SRSG, the Federal FSRF is not narrowly targeted and districts have been provided more flexibility in allocating the funding. The Ministry also communicated districts were expected to provide remote learning options for families not yet

comfortable returning to school. The September 3, 2020 press release (included as attachment 1 for reference) outlines the areas where funding can be allocated based on the local needs of the school district.

Federal Safe Return to Class Fund (FSRF) Allocation Plan

The plan for allocation of the FSRF is outlined in attachment 2. This schedule also includes the allocation of the targeted Provincial funding (SRSG) for information.

In general, allocation of the FSRF flows from the district's Stage 2 Operational Plan, and the district's Health and Safety Plan. These plans reflect direction from the Ministry of Education and the Provincial Health Officer. The funding allocations also reflect direction from the Ministry regarding remote learning.

The estimated remote learning cost reflects present registration of just over 600 students. While this program is intended to be transitional (i.e. a temporary program), there is significant uncertainty regarding how the year may progress, and it is possible enrolment in remote learning could continue and possibly even increase. There is also risk that the second federal installment will vary from the first installment, or that other costs increase. To be able to accommodate fluctuations in either funding or cost, 15% of the FSRF is allocated to contingency. Actual spending will vary from this plan as circumstances evolve.

Staff Recommendation:

That the Board approve the Federal Safe Return to Class Fund Allocation Plan as presented.

Respectfully submitted,



Jason Reid
Secretary-Treasurer

JR

Attachments: Attachment 1: Ministry Media Release – Federal Funding
Attachment 2: Federal Safe Return to Class Fund Allocation Plan

✕ B.C. has declared a state of emergency. Learn about [COVID-19 health issues](#). | [B.C.'s Response to COVID-19](#).

British Columbia News

New federal funding builds on plans for a safe back to school

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/23001>

Thursday, September 3, 2020 1:15 PM

Victoria - Building on the Province's \$45.6-million investment to support a safe restart for B.C.'s schools, additional funding from the federal government will allow schools to expand health and safety measures, purchase more personal protective equipment (PPE) and increase capacity for remote learning.

"Our province is taking the best, science-based public health advice and planning to have as many children as possible back in classrooms this fall, which is why we have been talking with the federal government about the need for more resources for our schools," said Rob Fleming, Minister of Education. "We are appreciative of this additional support to provide more resources to districts and independent school authorities, so they can continue providing ongoing learning opportunities in a safe way."

To support B.C.'s COVID-19 response for K-12 education, the federal government is providing \$242.4 million in one-time funding for the 2020-21 school year, with the first half of the payment expected to be received in September. Funding will be allocated to public school districts based primarily on student enrolment. B.C.'s Ministry of Education is initially allocating \$101.1 million to school districts, \$8.0 million to independent schools and reserving \$12.1 million for emerging COVID-19 related issues between September and December 2020. The ministry is expected to receive up to an additional \$121.2 million in January, which will be allocated out at that time.

On Aug. 26, Fleming directed school districts and independent schools to contact all families in their school communities to confirm if they planned for their child to attend school classes in September or if they would need remote learning options. Over the past week, schools have reported that the majority of students are returning to full-time, in-class instruction. However, some families are looking for remote options and transition programs.

The funding will support school districts to hire and train more teachers and support staff for remote learning; purchase additional software licences, electronic course materials and textbooks; purchase computers or tablets; and create Wi-Fi hubs and internet access in remote and Indigenous communities.

School districts and independent schools will be able to spend the funding in the following areas, based on local needs:

Learning resources and supports

- Implementation of online and remote learning options
- Hiring additional teachers and staff
- Training for staff
- On-call teachers costs and other on-call staff
- Mental health support for students and staff

Health and safety

- Increasing staff and covering salary costs for additional hours needed to meet health and safety guidelines in schools
- Improving air systems in schools, such as heating, ventilation and air conditioning improvements, portable air scrubbers and increased utility costs
- Increasing hand hygiene, including additional handwashing and hand sanitizing stations, installing touchless faucets or additional supplies

touchless faucets or additional supplies

- Installing plexiglass and other barriers, providing outdoor learning spaces, and adapting classrooms and school buses to minimize physical contact
- Purchasing additional cleaning supplies such as sprayers or fogger machines for frequent cleaning and disinfecting high-touch surfaces
- Purchasing additional masks, face shields or other PPE as needed

Transportation

- Cover additional transportation costs to have fewer students on buses and/or to accommodate new school schedules and additional routes
- Supporting alternative transportation strategies, such as assisting with gas costs for parents who transport their children to school

Before- and after-school child care

- Opening up more space and covering the cleaning costs for before- and after-school care so that groups can be smaller and to ensure students can remain within their learning groups
- Additional staff to support before- and after-school care during the pandemic

These one-time provincial and federal COVID-19 funding investments build on the record levels of funding schools are already receiving, with \$546 million of new money in B.C.'s Budget 2020 for K-12 education.

Quick Facts:

- The federal government has committed to provide provinces and territories \$2 billion in new federal funding to support the adaptation of the education sector to ensure a safe return to class in the fall.
- B.C.'s Ministry of Education has developed a five-stage approach to operate schools, depending on risk of transmission and guidance from the provincial health officer. This helps school districts know what to expect if there is a significant change to school operations required as part of B.C.'s response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Learn More:

For more info on back-to-school plans, learning groups and health and safety guidelines, visit:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/covid-19-return-to-school>

Media Contacts

Ministry of Education

Government Communications and Public Engagement

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Translations

Translation files are incoming and will be available shortly.

Attachment 2: Federal Safe Return to Class Fund (FSRF) Allocation Plan

Category	SRSG Provincial Funding	FSRCF - 1st instalment	FSRCF - 2nd instalment (tentative only)	Annualized Allocation
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and plexiglass barriers	28,301	85,500	16,500	130,301
Improved Hand Hygiene (upgraded and new sinks/sanitization stations)	120,714	11,500	3,000	135,214
Cleaning Supplies	67,136	18,000	12,000	97,136
Cleaning Frequency (custodial staffing)	302,772	150,000	150,000	602,772
Cleaning Equipment (electrostatic sprayers)		41,630		41,630
Teacher Staffing (remote learning)		510,000	510,000	1,020,000
Instructional Support (remote learning)		50,000	50,000	100,000
Computers (remote learning)	43,729	40,000	40,000	123,729
Mid-Day Transportation at Secondary		90,200	90,200	180,400
Elementary/Middle Supervision (staffing)		102,000	102,000	204,000
Health and Safety Training (wages to attend)		65,000		65,000
Upgraded HVAC filters		35,000	35,000	70,000
Utility Cost Increase (reduced air re-circulation)		60,000	60,000	120,000
Secondary Timetabling (staffing)		55,000	55,000	110,000
CONTINGENCY		120,005	310,135	430,140
Total	562,652	1,433,835	1,433,835	3,430,322