

# 2020 Annual Report to The School Community



**School Name: Northern School For Autism (5219)**



- 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 20 April 2021 at 02:46 PM by Pamela Mathieson (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 22 June 2021 at 02:07 PM by Teresa Pilone (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

Northern School for Autism (NSA) is a Victorian State Government specialist school that exclusively addresses the educational needs of students with ASD. The school was established in 2006 to meet the needs of students with ASD residing in the Northern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne. NSA operates across two campuses located in Reservoir (Early/Middle Years) and Lalor (Later Years). The school also has a satellite program at Norris Bank Primary School (Bundoora). Students range in age from 5 to 18 years. In 2013 the Reservoir Campus opened, providing state of the art facilities for the Early and Middle Years' students. The refurbished Senior Campus at Lalor opened in 2012 and provides programs for the Later Years' students. The Lalor Campus is co-located with Peter Lalor Vocational College, and is located close to transport, community services and shopping precincts. The satellite program at Norris Bank Primary School is designed to support and promote integration programs.

In 2020 the enrolments were 379 students. There were 304 males students and 75 female students. NSA provide small class sizes, balancing learning with life skills, catering for individual need, specialist teaching and multi-disciplinary staff are critical factors to the school's successful practice. At Northern School For Autism structured teaching is implemented in every classroom. All staff are provided with regular professional development in structured teaching. The school aims to ensure effective teaching and learning and the provision of a safe learning environment. Motivated and engaged staff - instruct and assess students along a continuum of learning to achieve their ILP goals.

Individual Learning Plans are developed for each student through discussion with parents, teachers, education support staff and other appropriate professionals at Student Support Group (SSG) meetings. The goals developed for each student are extended or revised at subsequent meetings. Four formal SSG meetings are conducted each year, or as required. Individual student progress is formally recorded and reported upon at the SSG meetings.

In 2020 there were 199 staff members. A full time principal, two assistant principals, 80 teachers, 80 ES staff in the classroom, nine staff in administration and 15 allied health staff.

The school's socioeconomic band value remains in the Low- Medium range.

### Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)

In 2020 the NSA school community continued to implement the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes model. The leadership team decided the focus should be on Building Leadership Teams across the school and Curriculum Planning and Assessment.

To develop leadership skills across the school and to address issues relating to organisational health to support school improvement the following have been implemented:

- Sub Schools operating under leadership of leading teachers supported by assistant sub school leaders
- Staff in positions of responsibility role model school values, act in accordance with the teaching and learning protocols and provide consistent leadership across the school.
- All school leaders make classroom, playground visits a part of their daily routine. Sub-school leaders actively support teachers by coaching and mentoring in the classroom.
- Assistant sub-school leaders participate in professional learning and develop their leadership capacity
- Teachers participate in professional learning and demonstrate improved understanding of their roles and responsibilities as classroom teachers. Teacher develop constructive working relationships with classroom aides

**Achievement**

The school implements a structured teaching approach to maximize student engagement in learning. Structured teaching provides consistent routines, implementation of visual supports and autism friendly physical environments to minimize anxiety and assist students overcome difficulties with executive function. Given the particular learning needs of our students, we prioritize expressive and receptive communication, functional adaptive and social skills development. These goals are addressed through Individual Learning Plans (ILP) for each student, delivered within the framework of the Victorian Curriculum. Our pedagogical practice is informed by continuing engagement with evidence-based research interventions. The school offers a supplementary ASD focused curriculum in addition to The Victorian Curriculum.

There has been an increase in the way the students have engaged in classroom activities. We have seen an increase attendance to class and school. School Leaders have began modelling the collecting of evidence and have set up regular debrief sessions with their teaching teams focussed on the progress towards BSP goals or ILP goals.

English and Maths assessment data was collected using a combination of teacher judgements and assessment tools which were trialled for their suitability and identified in the NSA assessment tracker. These included formal assessments, work sample collections, Continuum Tracker, NSA maths assessment and vocabulary assessment where appropriate. This has led to a 2020 focus on improving consistency of practice and reduced variability across the school through the development and refinement of the NSA Pedagogical Model.

**Engagement**

Student engagement in learning is critical if students are to attain deep and sustained learning. Northern School For Autism strives to provide an educational environment, which is engaging, stimulating, safe and challenging where students are acknowledged and celebrated. In 2020, the school continued to explore diverse contexts for learning based on student strengths and interests.

School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) provides the framework for the staff to engage and connect with students in the school.

The school continues to have a strong focus on increasing the engagement and involvement of our parent community.

There has been a high level of engagement of parents and carers in the Student Support Group (SSG) meetings. These SSGs continue to play an essential role in the school for both teachers and parents in the learning partnership between the school and the home. The school will continue to promote the importance of these meetings to the school community and set high expectations for student learning. Parent endorsement for these expectations.

The leadership team and the classroom teaching teams are committed to ensure all students are attending school regularly. Teaching teams will communicate with families if students are finding the transition to school difficult. Generally teachers will send home behaviour scripts or social stories to encourage students to attend school - students who find the transition difficult will often be given a reinforcer when they arrive at school. Most of time this is successful.

**Wellbeing**

Wellbeing of our students continued to be a major priority for 2020. Breakfast Club was continued. After school care and the holiday program continued to be supported by Northern School For Autism. School Uniforms have continued to be encouraged and State School Relief continued to provide uniforms to students. The Allied Health Team has continued to expand and develop professionally with a further move in the area of the importance of using a variety of AAC's, self regulation strategies and professional learning of classroom staff. The leadership team work together to support students and families with complex behavioural issues. A holistic approach was taken to better support these

students. Students with complex needs were assigned one key staff member responsible for all communication with relevant professionals and the collection of all communication and reports. Round-table discussions allowed for regional level of supports and other professionals becoming involved in supporting better the specific educational needs of the student.

COVID-19 - at the peak of the lockdown NSA had over 70 students attending school. Many of these students were attending to provide respite for families.

The school council will continue to review the Child Safe Standard Policy so that school practices comply with all DET and DHHS Child Safe requirements.

The school continued the whole school focus on School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS). Staff members continue to implement structured teaching and the school rules.

We continued to raise awareness of the Child safe policies and procedures and regular opportunities to highlight areas of concern. Staff are integral to the well-being of our students so we also focused on their well-being. Several planned staff functions were attended.

### Financial performance and position

#### The Annual result

The annual result was a surplus of \$1,680,133 as per the Financial Commitment Summary for the year ending on 31/12/2020 and it resulted in a surplus as the school was closed for almost two terms when the Covid-19 hit Australia. A lot of planned expenditure was suspended during the lockdown.

#### Extraordinary revenue or expenditure items

- CRT expenditure for the year was \$770,278.00 for replacing the staff and the service provider were Tradewind and Anzuk.

- The expenditure for Reservoir Campus Toilet Block Project amounted \$124,905.38

- The School Contribution for the STEAM Building at Reservoir Campus amounted \$311,949.47

#### Sources of funding the school received; for example, equity funding, special grants or fundraising initiatives

- The special grant for \$5,512.00 local School Community Fund for ICT.

- The Bank Interest received in the Hi-Yield account amounted \$9,113.00 for the Year ending 2020.

- The reimbursements were received for \$3,582.00 which included the Hep A and Hep B vaccinations from DET.

- The amount of \$20,732.00 has been received from Targeted Program Reimbursement which includes Advance Program for \$ 9,725.00

- The Fundraising activities like Chocolate fundraising amounted \$2,523.00

#### Additional State or Commonwealth Government funding the school received beyond the SRP, the purpose of the funding and its link to improvements in teaching and learning

- The school received Commonwealth Government Grants for \$10,769.00 which includes Teacher Supervision

Payments for \$ 2,760.00 and sporting school grants for \$ 8,009.00

Details of any Contracts, agreements or arrangements entered into by the School Council

There are 50 notebooks, 5 desktops and a Konica photocopier on a lease agreement with Equigroup paying \$5,716.94 quarterly.

# 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 379 students were enrolled at this school in 2020, 75 female and 304 male.

19 percent of students had English as an additional language and 2 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.

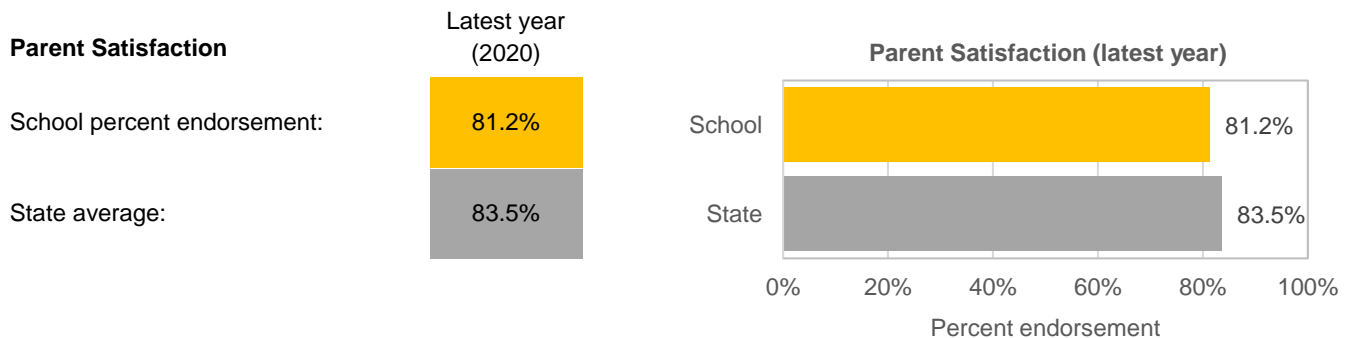
Possible socio-economic band values are: Low, Low-Medium, Medium and High.

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

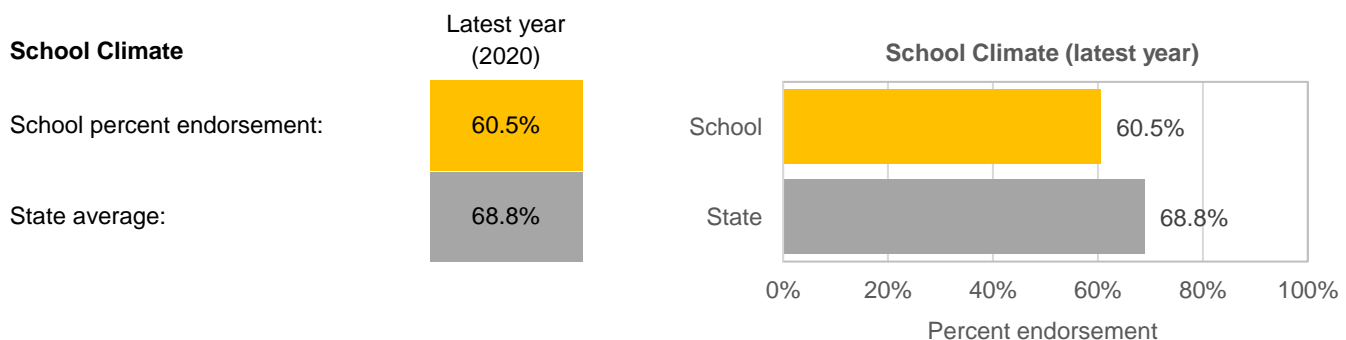


### School Staff Survey

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.





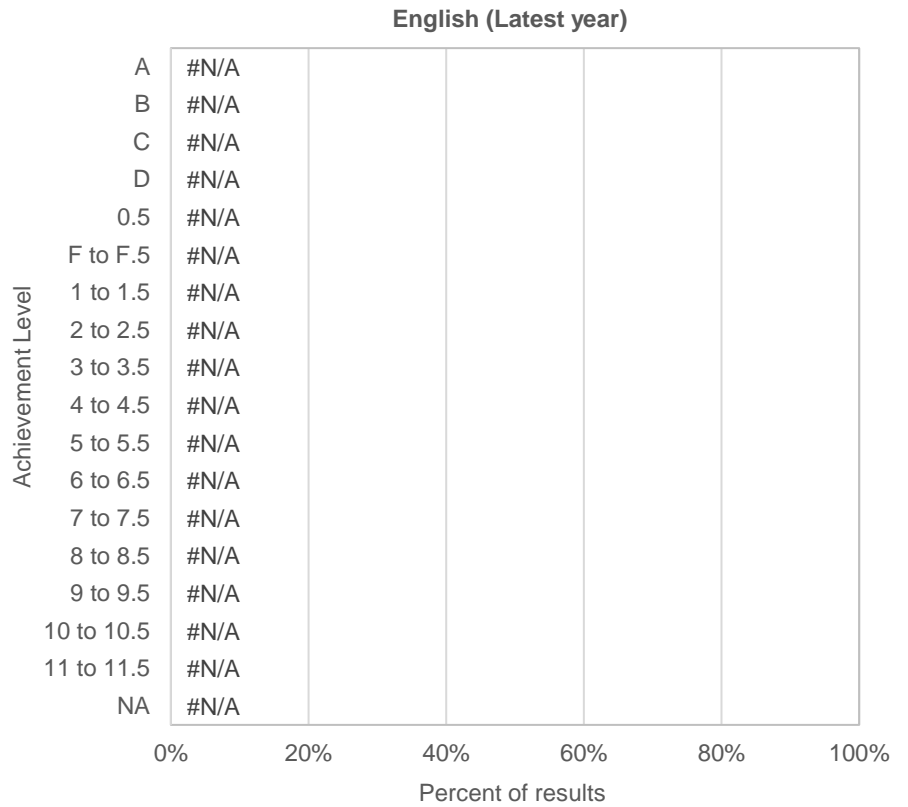
## ACHIEVEMENT

### Teacher Judgement of student achievement

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

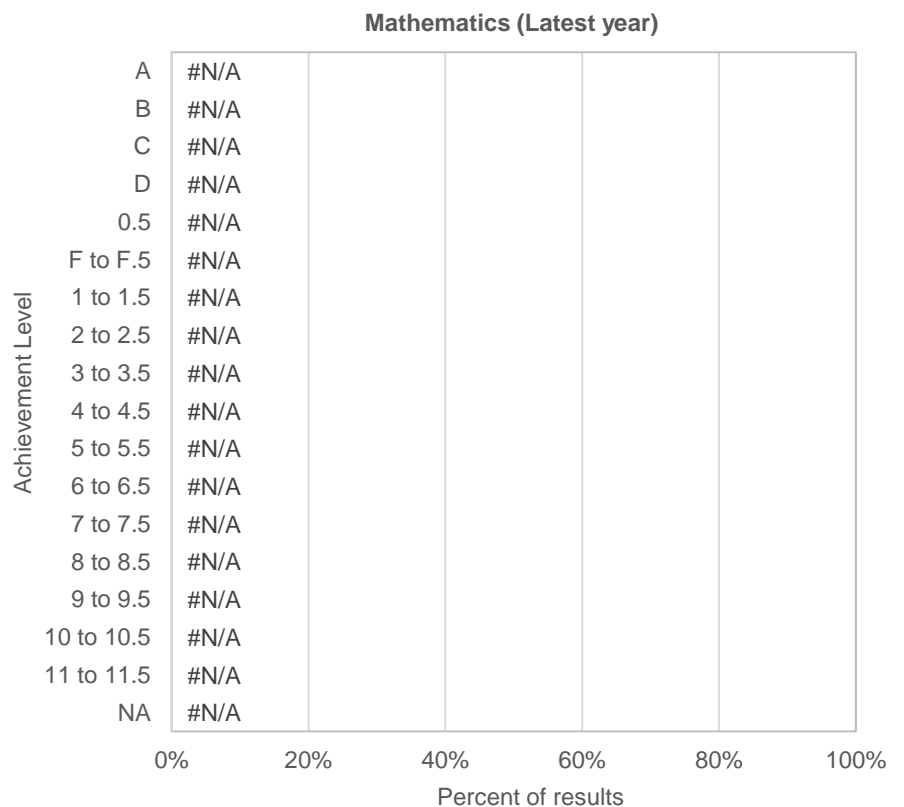
#### English

Achievement Level	Latest year (2020)
A	NDA
B	NDA
C	NDA
D	NDA
0.5	NDA
F to F.5	NDA
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	NDA
C	NDA
D	NDA
0.5	NDA
F to F.5	NDA
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:	21.4	25.5	24.1	19.1	22.5

### 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%	NDP	97.4%	98.3%

# Financial Performance and Position

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE - OPERATING STATEMENT SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER, 2020

Revenue	Actual
Student Resource Package	\$14,222,120
Government Provided DET Grants	\$3,055,996
Government Grants Commonwealth	\$10,769
Government Grants State	NDA
Revenue Other	\$24,577
Locally Raised Funds	\$145,706
Capital Grants	NDA
<b>Total Operating Revenue</b>	<b>\$17,459,167</b>

Equity <sup>1</sup>	Actual
Equity (Social Disadvantage)	\$62,698
Equity (Catch Up)	NDA
Transition Funding	NDA
Equity (Social Disadvantage – Extraordinary Growth)	NDA
<b>Equity Total</b>	<b>\$62,698</b>

Expenditure	Actual
Student Resource Package <sup>2</sup>	\$14,341,925
Adjustments	NDA
Books & Publications	NDA
Camps/Excursions/Activities	\$29,176
Communication Costs	\$30,259
Consumables	\$369,926
Miscellaneous Expense <sup>3</sup>	\$22,118
Professional Development	\$19,937
Equipment/Maintenance/Hire	\$215,198
Property Services	\$374,336
Salaries & Allowances <sup>4</sup>	\$156,922
Support Services	\$770,278
Trading & Fundraising	\$29,080
Motor Vehicle Expenses	\$6,137
Travel & Subsistence	\$0
Utilities	\$92,591
<b>Total Operating Expenditure</b>	<b>\$16,457,883</b>
<b>Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit</b>	<b>\$1,001,284</b>
<b>Asset Acquisitions</b>	<b>\$531,659</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	\$1,633,159
Official Account	\$46,974
Other Accounts	NDA
<b>Total Funds Available</b>	<b>\$1,680,133</b>

<b>Financial Commitments</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Operating Reserve	\$303,896
Other Recurrent Expenditure	NDA
Provision Accounts	NDA
Funds Received in Advance	NDA
School Based Programs	NDA
Beneficiary/Memorial Accounts	NDA
Cooperative Bank Account	NDA
Funds for Committees/Shared Arrangements	NDA
Repayable to the Department	NDA
Asset/Equipment Replacement < 12 months	\$276,238
Capital - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$700,000
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$400,000
Asset/Equipment Replacement > 12 months	NDA
Capital - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	NDA
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	NDA
<b>Total Financial Commitments</b>	<b>\$1,680,133</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.*