

Connections



A message from the Superintendent of Schools

March 27, 2009

"Please Post"

2009/2010 BUDGET BRIEFING

Colleagues,

As you all know, provincial, national and global economic conditions have worsened dramatically over the past several months.

Like most other organizations, our district is affected and it is certain that Surrey's recent experience of rapid growth and substantially increased operating funds will not be repeated in the foreseeable future.

The attached budget briefing provides more information about the budget challenges our district faces. It is clear we need to strive for new levels of efficiency district-wide; this work is already underway.

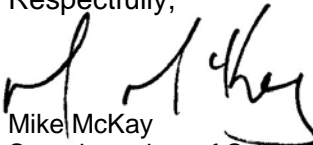
While we look internally for potential efficiencies, we also know our budget will be enhanced over the longer term if we achieve student enrolment increases above forecast levels. Growth in student FTE will bring additional revenue to support operations, so attracting students and families to the school district is a highly effective strategic direction.

Currently, 11% of school-age students in B.C. attend independent and private schools. In Surrey and in most other urban districts, that number is even higher. The quality of our work and the success of our schools should play a key role in attracting families to positive, highly engaging and vibrant public education in Surrey.

Increasing public school enrolment will help to build our community and our financial bottom line. I appreciate the role each one of us plays in encouraging families to attend their neighbourhood schools.

As we work with you to manage our current budget challenges, your efforts as ambassadors for Surrey schools is vitally important. Thank you for all you do.

Respectfully,



Mike McKay
Superintendent of Schools / CEO

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budget brief

The challenge

In the wake of the Ministry of Education’s announcement of 2009-2010 operating grant funding and in light of current provincial, national and global economic conditions, the Surrey School District faces challenges in developing its 2009/2010 preliminary operating budget.

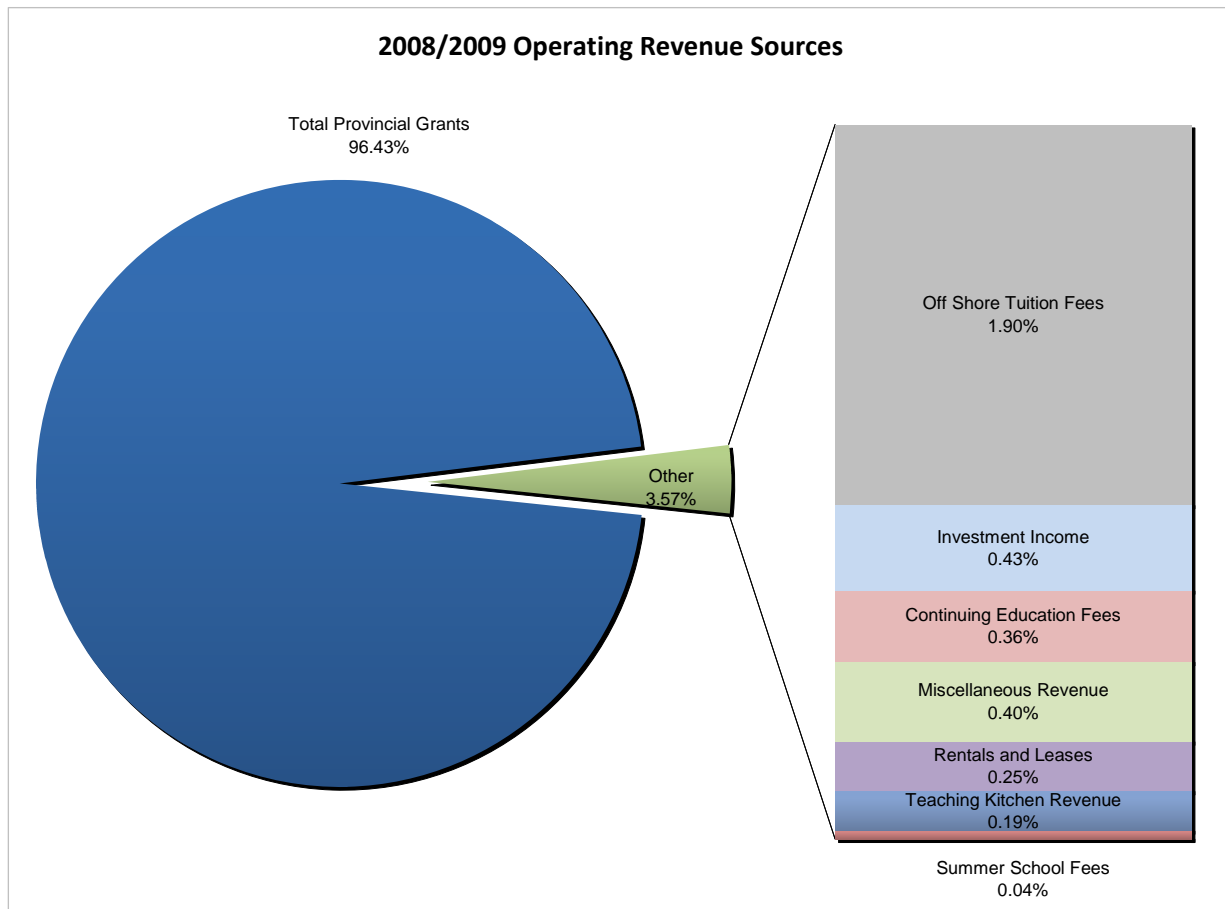
The Ministry of Education has increased its funding to the district to cover a projected growth in student enrolment. However, there are other cost pressures related to sustaining the board’s commitment to levels of service which, along with the impact of inflation, amount to almost \$5 million of the overall anticipated shortfall.

In addition, the Surrey School District has been affected by the economic climate, as other enterprises across Canada have been.

A key impact on the district is the substantial reduction in district-generated revenues, particularly from International Education (fewer off-shore students) and district investment income. These lost revenues amount to approximately \$3.6 million.

Further budget demands include increased costs to support a number of district programs, adding close to one million dollars to the 2009-2010 fiscal challenge.

The cumulative result is that the Surrey Board of Education faces difficult decisions to cover a \$9.53 million shortfall in developing its preliminary 2009-2010 operating budget.





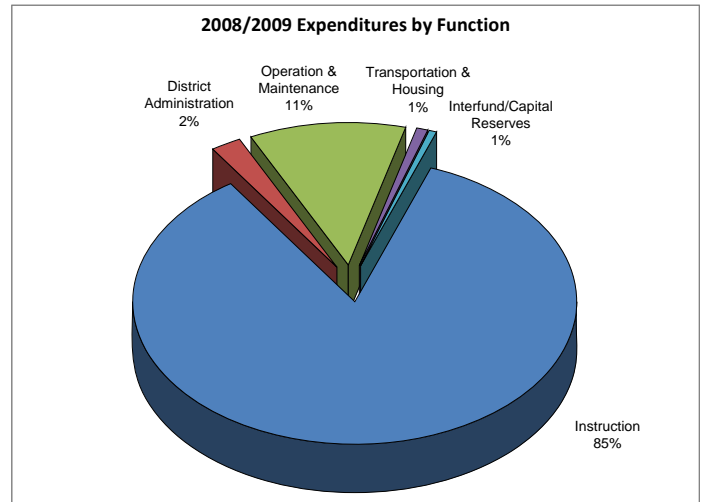
budget brief

Surrey Board of Education
2009/2010 Preliminary
Operating Budget

Administration budget

As part of the education funding announcement, the Minister of Education has advised she is expecting all school districts in the province to cut spending on administration by three per cent and redirect those funds to the classroom.

The Surrey School District spends 2.3 per cent of its operating budget on administration, the smallest proportion in the province. As we work to meet the minister's requirement, it is also important to note the Surrey School District is one of the top three school districts province-wide for the percentage of its operating budget spent on instruction in the classroom.

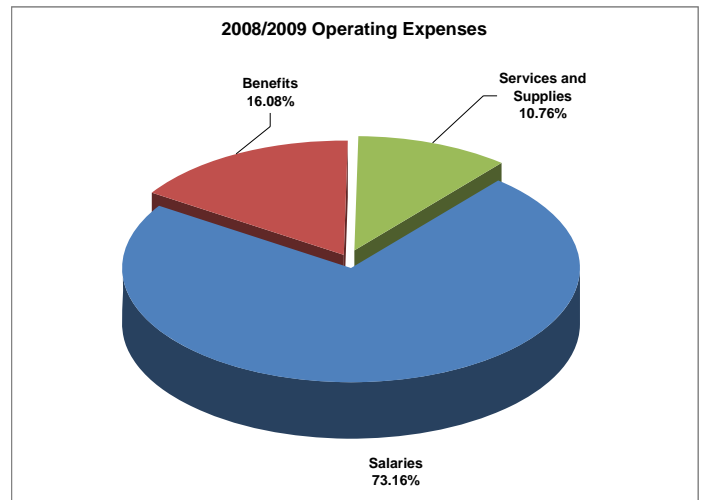


Addressing the challenge

To address budget challenges, some steps have already been taken for the balance of the current school year, including:

- ♦ Any hiring to fill vacant positions is subject to review by executive committee;
- ♦ A review of current staffing levels to identify possible efficiencies that could be considered; and,
- ♦ An updated cost-benefit analysis of programs and services.

In the meantime, staff managers, school administrators and others are being asked to review department or school budgets to identify potential savings. Meetings are also being held to explore other possible district budget reduction initiatives.



Surrey School District Facts – 2008/2009

- ♦ 100 elementary and 19 secondary schools
- ♦ 5 student learning centres, 4 adult education centres and 1 distributed learning program
- ♦ 66,200 students in K-12 and 1,100 students in adult education high school completion programs
- ♦ 8,000 employees
- ♦ Operating budget of \$523,870,121

Surrey School District Budget – 2008/2009

The Surrey School District devotes more of its 2008/2009 operating budget to instruction and less on district administration than the provincial average.

	British Columbia	Surrey
Instruction	83.0 %	85.0 %
District Administration	3.2 %	2.3 %

The Surrey School District also spends proportionately more than the provincial average on teachers in the classroom.

	British Columbia	Surrey
Teachers	44.8%	48.9%