

2021 Annual Report to The School Community



School Name: Emerson School (4918)



- All teachers at the school meet the registration requirements of the Victorian Institute of Teaching (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 2021 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 16 March 2022 at 11:29 AM by Samuel Silverwood (Principal)

- All teachers employed or engaged by the school council meet the registration requirements of the Victorian Institute of Teaching.
- To the extent that the school council is responsible, 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 2021 from the minimum standards for student enrolment numbers and/or curriculum framework for school language program.
- To the extent that the school council is responsible, 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 16 March 2022 at 12:02 PM by Heather Norman (School Council President)

How to read the Annual Report

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, 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 through the implementation of their School Strategic Plan and Annual Implementation Plan.

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).

Considering COVID-19 when interpreting the Performance Summary

The Victorian community's experience of COVID-19, including remote and flexible learning, had a significant impact on normal school operations in 2020 and 2021. This impacted the conduct of assessments and surveys. Readers should be aware of this when interpreting the Performance Summary.

For example, in 2020 and 2021 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.

How to read the Annual Report (continued)

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.

'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').

About Our School

School context

Emerson School is a Specialist school serving the individual learning needs of students (aged 5-18) with mild intellectual disabilities. It is based in Dandenong and covers Noble Park North/Lysterfield in the north, Hampton Park in the south, Mulgrave/Springvale in the west and Narre Warren North in the east.

Approximately 60% of students travel to and from school by school buses, provided by the Department of Education and Training (DET) within the school's designated transport zone. The remaining 40% of students travel to school by public transport or independent means.

The teaching community across two campuses consists of 5 Principal class officers, 3 Leading teachers, 4 Learning Specialists, 54 Classroom teachers, 51 Education support staff and 7 Admin staff. We currently have no Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander staff. All of whom are dedicated to the development of each student with a focus on what the student can do rather than what they cannot do. Students, staff, parents/carers, families and friends work together to create a positive atmosphere where praise, feedback and encouragement are the backbone of our school's environment. We currently have a staff cohort of 124 and a student cohort of 397. 14% of whom are classified as English as an Additional Language (EAL) and 3% are classified as either Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)

Excellence in teaching and learning: Emerson School teaches the Victorian Curriculum in the Junior & Middle schools and the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) in the Senior school. These programs continued during 2021, albeit in a different way, particularly during the remote learning periods. All staff were assigned to Remote Learning Groups to ensure that no student missed out on their learning.

Positive climate for learning: Emerson School provides a positive climate for learning through a range of passionate and dedicated staff across all sections of the school. Student Services staff work with classroom teachers where necessary to ensure that students/families are getting the support they need. Student voice is also a powerful tool for creating a positive climate for learning and we strive to do that at Emerson School. During 2021, our number one focus during the remote learning periods was the wellbeing of our students, staff and families. Daily connections made by members of the remote learning teams were a critical part of this. It also helped with the transition back to school after remote learning.

Professional leadership: Emerson School's vision and values are very clear and well known to all staff. We strive to uphold them to achieve the best outcomes for our students. The section leaders are responsible for the roll out of the curriculum in each section, with the support of our new Literacy and Numeracy Learning Specialists, in order to improve student learning outcomes. Leaders are approachable and contactable at all times. During 2021, this was more vital as not all staff were on site and it could have been more difficult to communicate. We had regular WebEx's to check in with each other and to go over any issues that may have arisen in both sections and across the whole school.

Community engagement in learning: Parents and carers work as partners at Emerson School. Parent Information nights, Program and Student Reviews, VCAL Information nights and Parent and Child Forums are run throughout the year in order to connect and share information. During 2021, the relationships formed between home and school were more regular than ever before out of necessity. However, this was seen as a positive as parents and carers gained a greater insight into their child's learning needs and staff gained a greater insight into their student's family background.

In relation to the 2021 key improvement strategies, our school has performed well, particularly given the ongoing challenges of going in and out of remote learning. Our tutoring program worked effectively to give students the

opportunity to achieve their learning goals in areas that they had missed out on in 2020. Student feedback showed that the transitions made across the school, from junior to middle and from middle to senior, went smoothly. Students reported that they knew where to go and who to talk to when they had an issue, which is important, particularly early in the new year.

After the return to school in term 4, there was a reluctance among many students to join in active games, possibly due to the lengthy break from school. After a number of weeks there was a noticeable increase in the number of students being active at break times. Staff were encouraged to join in active games with students in the yard, where possible. Our Health program continued to be explicitly taught to the upper Middle graduates and Senior school by our Health teacher. The key focus was on healthy eating and living, and healthy and respectful relationships.

Every graduating student now has a career plan included as part of their IEP, which takes into account their post school goals. Teacher communication continues to be rated at above 80% (88%) on the Parent Opinion Survey. Teachers and parents have never communicated more regularly than the last two years. As we move out of remote learning, we need to maintain the relationships that have been established.

Achievement

Emerson School provides a broad curriculum that focuses on the development of the specific needs of each student. We promote the success of students through their immersion in the curriculum which enables achievement of the student's goals as identified in their Individual Learning Plans (ILPs). The ILP provides a snapshot of the educational experience offered at Emerson School. Students consistently exceed their learning goals as set out in their Individual Learning Plans. We are using the tutoring program at Emerson School in 2022 to identify those students who did not achieve their learning goals in 2021. Around 14% of students did not achieve one or more of their learning goals in 2021, this was an improvement from 2020 of nearly a quarter of students not achieving one or more of their learning goals. A large number of these were due to lack of opportunity as opposed to achievement. Very few students did not achieve their literacy or numeracy goals in 2021.

As stated in the school's curriculum policy, the Victorian Curriculum is taught in the Junior and Middle schools and the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) is taught in the Senior school.

Parent satisfaction was recorded at 83.7% in the 2021 Parent Opinion Survey, coming in just below the state average of 85.2%.

School staff recorded a 74.8% endorsement of the school climate in which they work in the 2021 Staff Opinion Survey, comparing favourably with the state average of 64.9%.

Engagement

Emerson School provides a positive learning environment where praise, feedback and encouragement are used to promote an atmosphere in which students are engaged in developing key life skills for success. An environment in which each student and their families are supported, encouraged, nurtured, and celebrated.

Monitoring of student absences continues daily with follow up contact for unexplained absences. With a Wellbeing and Engagement Officer or member of the leadership team we are able to maintain contact with those that are regularly absent. These absences occur for a variety of reasons and require care, persistence and patience in order to see an improvement in attendance. Prolonged absences result in a Care Team meeting with relevant parties to identify and address any issues. Student absences are an ongoing issue that requires constant follow up and support by our

Wellbeing and Engagement officers in conjunction with the relevant classroom teachers and leadership team.

The average number of absence days has remained fairly steady over the 2018-2021 period. Ranging from 32.4 days to 29.6 days last year, indicating an average across the four years of 32.6 absence days per year. During 2021, we as a school were very pleased with the engagement of our students during remote learning (attendance during remote learning was above that of on site learning at that time) as well as the transition back to on site learning during term 4.

Wellbeing

Emerson School provides for student wellbeing through effective transition procedures for all students at key points in their schooling. There is a focus on the students' initial introduction to the school community through to the provision of positive pathways within the school and on to post-school options. In 2021 our Senior School continued to complete the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL). This option provides our students with additional skills and qualifications when seeking post-secondary pathways.

89.5% of the 2018-2021 Graduating students have been successfully placed in Vocational Education Training programs and/or part time/full time/supported employment options. Our goal in this area is to reach 100% success in placing our graduating students in further study or work at the end of each year.

Finance performance and position

The Actual Budget for 2021 at reconciliation was \$13,008,775 as at 31st December, 2021. Additional funds mainly came from an accumulation of surpluses from previous years that amount to \$5,652,301 as at 31st December, 2021. Emerson School's Heatherton Road Campus has long been subjected to cramped conditions, a high proportion of aged portable accommodation with an urgent need for additional permanent and temporary facility resources. Stage One of a much need modernization program is about to commence in late March 2022. As Victoria's largest provider of VCAL studies in the disability sector, Emerson School needs enhanced facilities above the current facility schedule. Consequently, our School Council is contributing \$1,804,201 to Stage One of the modernization program. A further \$2.8 million will be contributed to Stage Two of the program. The school is hoping that Stage Two will be funded in the 2022 State Budget. It is noted that \$91,720 was locally funded in the 2021 Financial Performance statement. This is mainly made of payments made by parents towards approved levies and donations. This will be drastically affected by the new Time in Lieu provision that is incorporation in the 2022 Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA).

For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at
<https://www.emersonsc.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 394 students were enrolled at this school in 2021, 130 female and 264 male.

33 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).

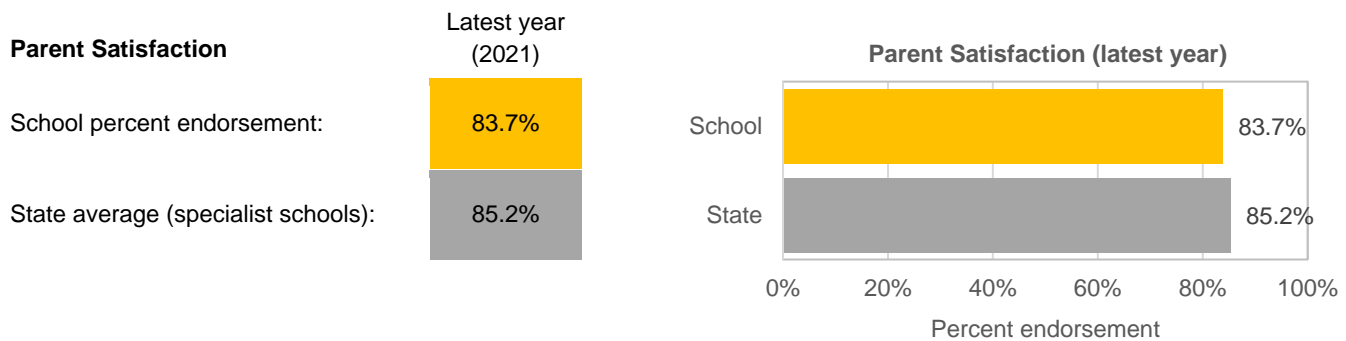
SFOE is a measure of socio-educational disadvantage of a school, based on educational and employment characteristics of the parents/carers of students enrolled at the school. Possible SFOE band values are: Low, Low-Medium, Medium and High. A 'Low' band represents a low level of socio-educational disadvantage,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

This school's SFOE band value is: High

Parent Satisfaction Summary

The 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.

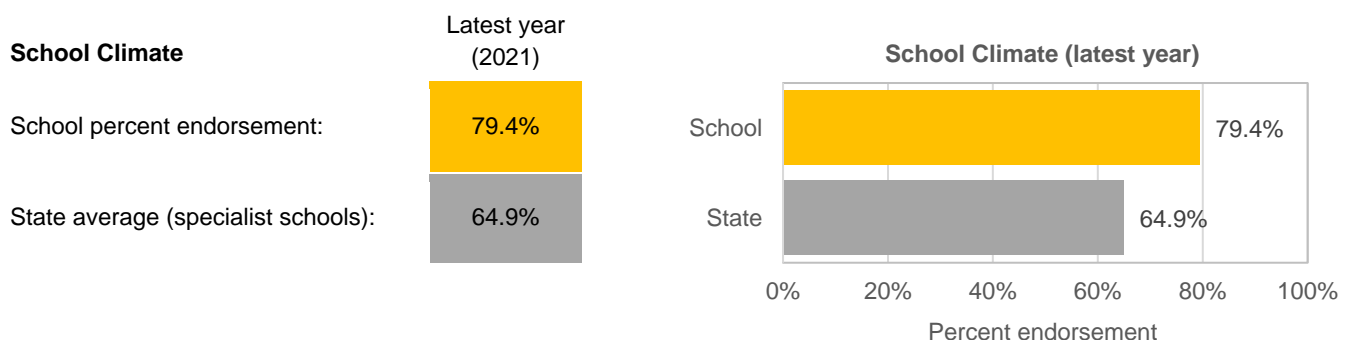


School Staff Survey

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.



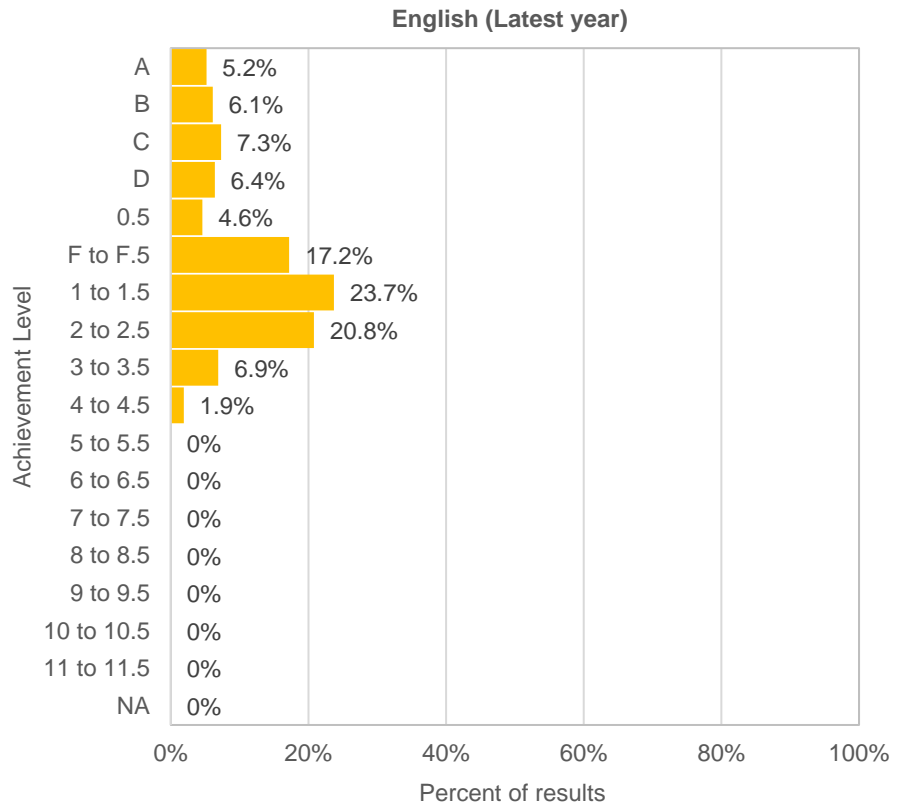
ACHIEVEMENT

Teacher Judgement of student achievement

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

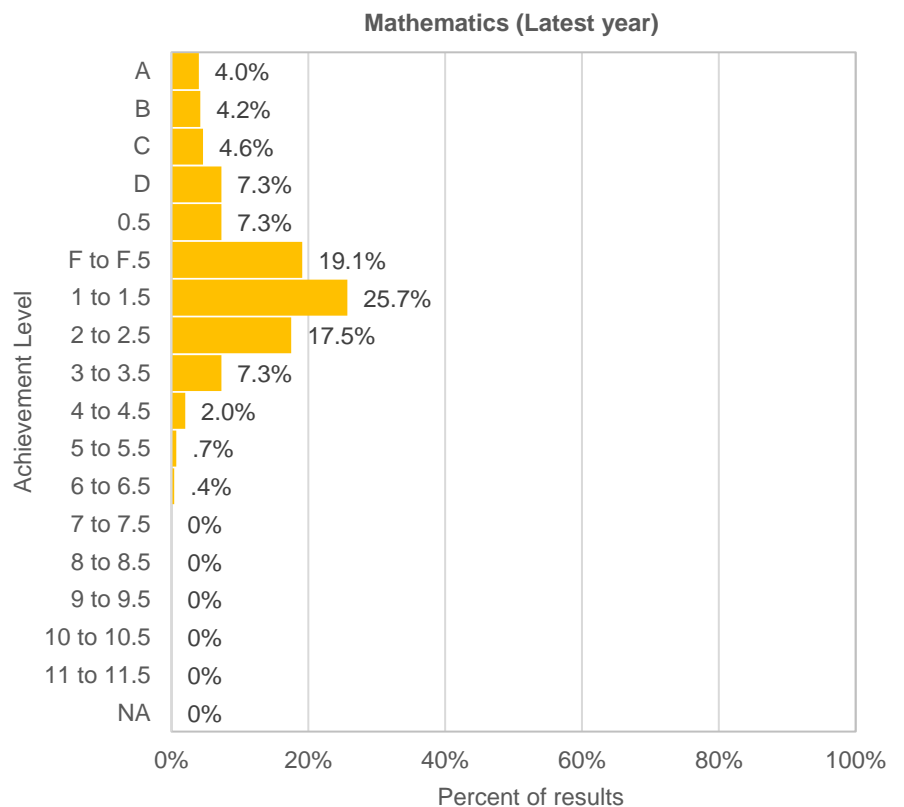
English

Achievement Level	Latest year (2021)
A	5.2%
B	6.1%
C	7.3%
D	6.4%
0.5	4.6%
F to F.5	17.2%
1 to 1.5	23.7%
2 to 2.5	20.8%
3 to 3.5	6.9%
4 to 4.5	1.9%
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 (2021)
A	4.0%
B	4.2%
C	4.6%
D	7.3%
0.5	7.3%
F to F.5	19.1%
1 to 1.5	25.7%
2 to 2.5	17.5%
3 to 3.5	7.3%
4 to 4.5	2.0%
5 to 5.5	0.7%
6 to 6.5	0.4%
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 and 2021 may have been influenced by COVID-19.

Student Absence	2018	2019	2020	2021	4-year average
School average number of absence days:	32.4	33.1	35.1	29.6	32.6

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	2018	2019	2020	2021	4-year average
School percent of students with positive destinations:	86.5%	NDP	90.5%	91.7%	89.5%

Financial Performance and Position

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE - OPERATING STATEMENT SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER, 2021

Revenue	Actual
Student Resource Package	\$15,900,284
Government Provided DET Grants	\$2,797,113
Government Grants Commonwealth	\$15,354
Government Grants State	\$15,335
Revenue Other	\$29,165
Locally Raised Funds	\$91,720
Capital Grants	\$0
Total Operating Revenue	\$18,848,971

Equity ¹	Actual
Equity (Social Disadvantage)	\$409,551
Equity (Catch Up)	\$0
Transition Funding	\$0
Equity (Social Disadvantage – Extraordinary Growth)	\$0
Equity Total	\$409,551

Expenditure	Actual
Student Resource Package ²	\$10,955,097
Adjustments	\$0
Books & Publications	\$1,152
Camps/Excursions/Activities	\$57,542
Communication Costs	\$18,959
Consumables	\$215,999
Miscellaneous Expense ³	\$109,036
Professional Development	\$50,263
Equipment/Maintenance/Hire	\$205,389
Property Services	\$200,761
Salaries & Allowances ⁴	\$0
Support Services	\$262,556
Trading & Fundraising	\$11,897
Motor Vehicle Expenses	\$27,786
Travel & Subsistence	\$9,535
Utilities	\$85,114
Total Operating Expenditure	\$12,211,086
Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit	\$6,637,884
Asset Acquisitions	\$13,290

- (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 25 Feb 2022 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 2021

Funds available	Actual
High Yield Investment Account	\$2,570,422
Official Account	\$54,205
Other Accounts	\$0
Total Funds Available	\$2,624,627

Financial Commitments	Actual
Operating Reserve	\$179,573
Other Recurrent Expenditure	\$0
Provision Accounts	\$0
Funds Received in Advance	\$63,762
School Based Programs	\$0
Beneficiary/Memorial Accounts	\$0
Cooperative Bank Account	\$0
Funds for Committees/Shared Arrangements	\$0
Repayable to the Department	\$0
Asset/Equipment Replacement < 12 months	\$0
Capital - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$0
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$0
Asset/Equipment Replacement > 12 months	\$0
Capital - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$2,400,000
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
Total Financial Commitments	\$2,643,335

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.