

CBVRCE	<b>2021-22 Business Plan</b>	
	FINAL Version	Issue Date: October 25, 2021

# Business Plan

## 2021 - 2022

Cape Breton-Victoria Regional Centre for Education

Document Status: FINAL  
*Date Approved: October 25, 2021*

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PLANNING CONTEXT

The Cape Breton-Victoria Regional Center for Education is responsible for the administration of the public school system within the boundaries of Cape Breton and Victoria Counties. The Center oversees the operation of 38 school sites providing services to 11918 students. In addition, the Center oversees support operations in the areas of building maintenance, transportation and central administration incidental to the efficient delivery of program services.

Key challenges the region, like the rest of the province, is facing include operating under the current COVID-19 pandemic, the provision of additional staff and/or additional hours for existing staff required to meet the necessary sanitization requirements, and the extra support needed to maintain student cohorts. This has resulted in recruitment challenges and increased numbers of applicant interviews to expedite the hiring of casual/temporary staff in multiple classifications.

One of the major initiatives underway is the [Regional Improvement Plan](#) which is being adapted to support learning during the pandemic. Even during a pandemic, improving student achievement and well-being is the focus for all professional learning and daily operations at the Cape Breton Victoria Regional Centre for Education. Our staff is committed to supporting schools to provide high quality learning opportunities that foster academic achievement, personal development and citizenship within a culturally responsive setting.

The inability to have on site professional development has changed our delivery method to a virtual model. With this, the provision of technology and internet capability was a priority. Without provincial assessment results, the way in which we gather data and the way in which we support staff has been impacted. Throughout this pandemic, we had to adapt and adjust all aspects of our business based on and in compliance with Public Health guidelines.

Another major initiative currently underway is the implementation of the NS Inclusive Education Policy. Challenges experienced are the scheduling of supports for students while maintaining student cohorts and data gathering to support the policy. We have adapted our best practices to provide this support while maintaining the required physical distancing and Public Health guidelines.

## 2.0 MISSION

We aim to inspire success, confidence and hope in each student to enable them to achieve their full potential.

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### 3.0 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

#### *Operations & Support Functions*

The core business and support functions have been organized into four operational areas under the overall direction and supervision of the Regional Executive Director, who reports directly to the Deputy Minister. This operating structure has been reviewed, endorsed and mandated by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. Supporting the work of the Regional Executive Director is a six-person senior leadership team, comprised of the following:

- Director of Financial Services
- Director of Human Resource Services
- Director of Programs and Student Services
- Director of Operational Services
- Regional Coordinator of African Canadian Education Services
- Regional Coordinator of Mi'kmaq Education Services

#### **Regional Executive Director**

As per the Education Act, the Regional Executive Director is accountable to the Deputy Minister of the Department and, subject to this Act, the regulations and the direction of the Minister, has overall responsibility for:

- the efficient operation of the regional centre office and public schools and services in the school region;
- the supervision of all employees of the regional centre; and
- the educational performance of the students and schools in the school region.

It is the duty of every Regional Executive Director to:

- administer and evaluate the programs offered by the regional centre;
- oversee the carrying out of Provincial policies and the regional centre's policies;
- ensure that schools in the school region adhere to the public school program;
- maintain a safe, orderly and supportive learning environment in all schools in the school region;
- provide leadership in the school region and work closely with principals and staff in promoting quality education, enhanced community involvement and the efficient delivery of the public school program and related services.
- establish performance standards and a process for the supervision and evaluation of staff;
- co-operate with other education entities, the Department and other departments to ensure the effective and efficient carrying out of this Act and the regulations;

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- report annually on the performance of the students and schools in the school region and upon such other matters as the Minister may direct; and
- perform such other duties as are prescribed by this Act or the regulations or assigned by the Minister.

### ***Financial Management Services***

Financial Management is responsible for the management and control of the Centre's financial resources essential to support the overall services and ongoing operations of the Centre. The Finance Department's major responsibilities include:

- Assist the planning process for all departments by preparing the annual budget and forecasts for Centre approval;
- Control all financial activities to ensure adherence to budget and report variances to managers, the Centre and the Department of Education at regular intervals;
- Payroll and corporate accounting services;
- Promote accountability by regular financial reporting to the Centre and other stakeholders including the preparation of annual audited financial statements;
- Ensure all statutory responsibilities and reporting requirements relating to finance are adhered to in accordance with the Education Act and other applicable statutes;
- Provide financial services to individual schools;
- Develop policies and procedures for efficient and effective utilization of financial resources;
- Develop a strategic financial plan;
- Provide for the purchase of goods and services in accordance with Centre policies and the provincial procurement guidelines;
- Protect the assets of the Centre and provide adequate insurance coverage for properties, staff, students and volunteers.

### ***Human Resources Services***

The Human Resources Department, through the office of the Director, is responsible for overall leadership and management of human resources who support the success and achievement of all students within a culturally responsive, safe and inclusive school environment. The Human Resources Department is responsible for providing the staff requirements essential to the delivery of all Center services. The major responsibilities of the Human Resources Department include:

- Recruitment and staff development including the allocation of positions and assignment of staff to schools, departments and worksites; recruitment and selection process for all employee groups; management of the Human Resources information system (SAP) recruitment software system (Success Factors); management and maintenance of the substitute finder system (AESOP); developing and coordinating training and professional

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- development programs for all non-teaching staff.
- Staff evaluation including the development of performance appraisal tools and processes for staff and managing their administration as well as support and coaching through the performance appraisal process; staff discipline and discharge.
- Contract negotiations and administration including managing regional negotiations for the local Nova Scotia Teachers Union (NSTU) and Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) bargaining units; monitoring and revising terms and conditions policy for non-union employees; ensuring compliance to negotiated collective agreements; representing the Regional Centre's interests in grievance mediation and arbitrations
- Human Resources Policies and Procedures including policy development and implementation; administration of the attendance management program; management and monitoring of the employee records
- Labor Relations and Employment Equity including enhancing labor relations through joint committees of Centre staff and union representatives
- Employee Benefits including administering compensation and pension plans, benefits management and liaising with Long Term Disability insurers and Workers Compensation Board; developing and administering return to work plans and providing accommodations as necessary
- Ensure adherence to provisions of the Occupational Health and Safety Act including management and monitoring all matters relating to the Act and its regulations
- Principal Support in the area of Human Resources
- Legal Services

### ***Programs and Student Services***

Improving Student Achievement and well-being is the focus for all professional learning and daily operations at the Cape Breton Victoria Regional Centre for Education. Our staff is committed to supporting schools to provide high quality learning opportunities that foster academic achievement, personal development and citizenship within a culturally responsive setting.

Programs and Student Services undertake the delivery of Public School Programs to meet the diverse needs of all students by:

- Implementing curriculum, programs and related services as outlined in the Public School Programs;
- Developing and implementing programs and support services for students with special Needs;
- Developing policy and procedures for the efficient, effective daily operations of all schools;
- Developing and implementing policies and procedures related to the introduction and support of information technologies into the learning situation.
- Supporting Administration

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In order to promote compliance and success in its program delivery initiatives and provide appropriate guidance to staff, Programs and Student Services has undertaken the following functions:

- To promote Diversity and Equity
- To establish annual objectives to address issues of planning, strategic leadership, strategic decision-making and future relationships with funding agencies;
- To provide for the development, implementation and review of approved policy.

### ***Operational Services***

Operational Services Department is responsible for physical plant, technology infrastructure and transportation services essential to the delivery of education and ancillary services. The main responsibilities of the Operational Services Department include:

- Maintenance and repair of physical plant
- Custodial and security services
- Capital improvements and replacements
- Energy Management
- Ground Maintenance
- Student Transportation
- Bus Maintenance
- Operational Services Policies and Procedures
- Maintenance and repair of IT (Information Technology) infrastructure

## **4.0 PRIORITIES**

As we move forward in the 21-22 school year, we will also need to reflect on the past year and all that we experienced in navigating how to live, learn and work, during a pandemic. In 2021-22, CBVRCE's priorities will continue to be focused on putting into practice the principles and practices of the new inclusive education policy as we work together as a team to support the well-being and achievement of *all* students and staff. And like the Sankofa, we will take the seeds of what we learned in 20/21 forward with us to make 21/22 a successful year. All departments have developed their 2021-22 priorities with this in mind.

### **1. Focus on Equity**

To ensure a high-quality, culturally and linguistically responsive and equitable education to support the well-being of students and staff, CBVRCE will:

- Provide culturally responsive learning opportunities, resources and environments for all students and staff to ensure achievement.

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- Continue to diversify our workforce to more closely reflect the student population we serve.
- Implement accessibility plan for built environment, access to education and employment.

## 2. **Focus on Leadership**

To ensure leaders are well prepared to support a high-quality, culturally and linguistically responsive and equitable education, CBVRCE will:

- Lead and implement training and strategies for positive school and workplace culture and occupational health and safety.
- Reaffirm a commitment to leadership development and succession planning.
- Utilize realigned resources which have reduced non-instructional responsibilities for school-based leaders to enable more of a focus on student success.
- Support the leadership team as we all address the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.

## 3. **Focus on Provincial Alignment**

To ensure coherence and alignment provincially, CBVRCE will:

- Participate in the development and implementation of new provincial policies and initiatives.
- Align our administrative communication software with those used by all other Regional Centres for Education/board and offices.
- Continue to implement recommendations from the Fraud Risk Assessment to better strengthen controls and reduce fraud risk exposure.
- Implement best practices and identify gaps for improvement of business continuity
- Work with Communications Nova Scotia to develop and implement a communication plan.
- Provincially, the RCEs/CSAP are working together to align technology in our schools that will enable parents to pay for their child/children's school fees/other purchases on-line by way of debit/credit cards. This initiative will assist with controlling and reducing potential fraud risk by way of minimizing the amount of cash entering directly in our schools.

## 4. **Focus on Well Being/Success**

In addition to the implementation of the [CBVRCE Regional Improvement Plan](#) CBVRCE will:

- Re-align resources to provide robust service to students and families.
- Explore opportunities to support employee wellness



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## 5.0 ANNUAL REPORT OF ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2020-21

<b>Focus on Equity</b> To ensure a high-quality, culturally and linguistically responsive and equitable education to support the well-being of students and staff	
<b><i>Provide culturally responsive learning opportunities, resources and environments for all students and staff to ensure achievement.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Continue to grow and update the Literacy Site with a focus on responsive resources.</li> <li>● The Heggerty &amp; Sound Start Program was implemented in some Elementary classrooms this school year as a classroom wide instructional program to help students develop phonemic awareness to support early reading development.</li> <li>● Develop and implement a Resource/LD Intervention Plan to track pre-intervention data, intervention goals along with post intervention data in reading, writing and mathematics.</li> <li>● Provide Google Read and Write for all students requiring the tool</li> <li>● Provide new software (and support) for all teachers to increase technology integration and student engagement such as Book Creator and Nearpod.</li> <li>● A revisit of the treaty education professional development for P-2 Teachers was done again this year for our new teachers and those who missed last year.</li> <li>● Treaty Education Professional Development was done with our Grade 3 teachers.</li> <li>● The Weekly PSS messaging to administrators provided a forum to reinforce the Inclusive Education Policy along with reviewing the framework for MTSS. Specific messaging highlighted included: The Roles and Responsibilities guide in the implementation of The Inclusive Education Policy for Teachers, Learning Support Teachers, Administrators, Teacher Support Teams and Student Planning Teams.</li> <li>● Developed and administered a reflection tool survey for schools regarding the Inclusive Education Policy &amp; MTSS which resulted in the creation of professional learning teams of learning support teachers to support MTSS implementation.</li> <li>● Learning Support teachers utilized evidence-based programming including Lips, Visualizing-Verbalizing and Seeing Stars to improve student reading and writing achievement.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speech Language Pathologists completed primary screenings for all grade primary students. It is part of our new SLP framework and aligns with inclusive education policy and MTSS. Results of screenings will help support TIER 1 supports/programming related to student results and classroom profiles.</li> <li>• Mathematics &amp; Student Services regional staff worked in collaboration to develop a pilot intervention program for Grade 2 students. This initiative has been an excellent example of collaboration within different teams to support programming to help all students be successful with mathematics.</li> <li>• Mitigating Covid Impact Grade one and two students (Literacy and Student Services). All elementary schools are involved in a tiered plan to Mitigate the Impact of Covid. The plan was designed around building capacity around the most researched effective practices and providing focused support in all rooms including a communication piece.</li> <li>• Hiring of additional staff to support African NS students in math and science in middle and high school.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Ensure all employees and job applicants receive equitable treatment and equitable hiring, training and promotion opportunities.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Human Resource Department utilized the newly negotiated employment equity clause in the collective agreements to hire 2 CUPE equity candidates and 1 NSTU equity candidate as outlined in the respective agreements. As well, with a focus on diversity, candidates more reflective of the student population we serve were hired in addition to the number provided for in the collective agreements.</li> <li>• Supporting new hires in elementary, and ELA teachers in Middle School and High School with a weekly professional learning session focusing on Culturally Responsive teaching.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Provide equitable access to technology for all.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribution of Chromebooks to all students in P – 12 at 1:1 ratio.</li> <li>• Installation of fibre optic cable to remote rural areas for high-speed internet connection.</li> <li>• Additional IT Infrastructure funding was provided by PNS to enhance internet connectivity in schools to allow for all students and staff to connect simultaneously.</li> <li>• Encouraged the use of technology by providing increased opportunities. This was done through providing software like</li> </ul>

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	BookCreator, Explain Everything, and Nearpod; and devices like Ipads/Pencils for a Highschool Math initiative and C-Pens for assistive technology
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### Focus on Leadership

To ensure leaders are well prepared to support a high-quality, culturally and linguistically responsive and equitable education:

<b><i>Lead and implement strategies for cohesiveness and collaboration amongst our region based and school-based leadership team.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assigned cbvrce.ca emails to all our leadership team and established shared drives and teams for collaboration.</li> <li>Updated and realigned the CBVRCE.ca website for ease of use and access to required information.</li> <li>Included representatives from the Principals Forum and our regional PSAANS representatives to participate in senior staff meetings once per month.</li> <li>While COVID restrictions may have limited our ability to provide in person meetings and professional development, we utilized technology and team meetings to continue to focus on leadership development. Sessions were provided for both Principals and Vice-Principals via Teams (e.g., Legal Q&amp;A). Promoted virtual training sessions to leadership staff (ILA, CPHR, Workplace Investigations, etc.)</li> <li>A revisit of the treaty education professional development for P-2 Teachers was done again this year for our new teachers and those who missed last year.</li> <li>Treaty Education Professional Development was completed with our Grade 3 teachers.</li> <li>Elementary teachers received a number of resources to continue developing their cultural confidence, including the grade P-3 Ankukamkewey resources, the grade 4-6 Ankukamkewey resources, and the Antle Series books for grades P-5</li> <li>Supporting new hires in elementary, and ELA teachers in Middle School and High School with a weekly professional learning session focusing on Culturally Responsive teaching.</li> <li>Focus group held with high school students on anti-racist education</li> <li>Introduction of African Education Kits to schools to promote education on African heritage for grades P-12</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide online PD for grade 7 teachers for Kids in the Know (Implementation will continue).</li> <li>● Promoting outdoor education through Health Promoting Schools funding.</li> <li>● Regional Black Shirt Day held to open the conversation up about racism and to speak out against it. This took place to coincide with the International Day for the Elimination of racial Discrimination.</li> <li>● French, Fine Arts and Skilled Trades focus on enrollment and retention of African NS and Mi'kmaq students in these programs.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Realign resources to reduce non-instructional responsibilities for school-based leaders to enable more of a focus on student success.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Resources were realigned to increase support for student achievement including changes in circuits, changes in assignments, expansion of programs, and additional hires.</li> <li>● Building managers assigned fire safety responsibilities previously completed by administrators</li> <li>● Mathematics and technology collaboration to support Mathematics 10 teachers with formative assessment.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Support the leadership team as we all address the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Included administrators in planning for school return for 2020</li> <li>● Regular meetings with school administrators</li> <li>● Distribution of supporting documents for customization for individual back to school plans.</li> <li>● Utilized the Swift K-12 and centralized email system to send information relating to COVID directly to staff and families.</li> <li>● Held multiple meetings with our administrators as well as union partners to support back to school plans.</li> </ul>

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### Focus on Provincial Alignment

To ensure coherence and alignment provincially

#### ***Participate in the development and implementation of new provincial policies and initiatives.***

- The Human resources team worked provincially with the HR Directors from all regions/board on a Workplace Impairment Policy which is currently in the final stages of Provincial Policy Committee.
- To support system-wide “we-ness”, we collaborated with all other regions and the EECD on the development of the Student Protection Policy and Operational Procedures, as well as a plan for implementation.
- The Human Resource and Finance staff participated in the SAP Modernization Project which is a long-range process to standardize and modernize the provincial payroll system.
- We also worked with five schools to participate in the Teacher Growth and Evaluation Pilot
- Implementing renewed curriculum for Grades 7 and 8. Professional development was done with principals and vice principals as well as with Programs Coordinators.
- Planned in March the implementation of the Mitigating Covid Impact Grade one and two students. Created Smudging Protocol and Guidelines for our Regional Centre.
- Leadership meeting focus on legal presentation by Regional Legal team
- Created Common Assessment for English Language Arts at the Middle School level.
- Mathematics updates and messaging to administrators regarding areas of study and check-ins of teachers
- Data walls were introduced, supported and expected in all 38 sites.
- Leadership Support and Monitoring: PSS team members visited school administrators to engage in conversation about student achievement. Points of discussion were used to formulate a monitoring plan for student achievement for the remainder of the school year.
- Provided funds for Professional Learning Teams for schools who presented focused proposals to enhance student achievement.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quarterly reporting on water testing and ventilation maintenance. Results posted on Operations website.</li> <li>• Implemented new provincial Transportation policy, with keeping local policy intact for elementary school walking distance and program bussing.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Align our administrative software to the Microsoft Office cloud service elements used by all other Regional Centres for Education/board and government departments and offices.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moved our leadership team and data to the Microsoft Office platform and initiated the use of Teams for virtual meetings. Provided on-line training for leaders to troubleshoot the changeover. Also updated all leadership email address including PSAANS, school secretaries and regional office staff to regional email addresses - @cbvrce.ca.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Implement recommendations from the Fraud Risk Assessment that was completed in Fall 2020 to better strengthen controls and reduce fraud risk exposure.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supplied the Fraud Risk policy to employees and reviewed same with administrators, enabling them to provide the information to the staff at their site. Developed and provided sample information to assist staff in determining examples of fraud.</li> </ul>

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### Focus on Success

In addition to the implementation of the [CBVRCE Regional Improvement Plan](#)

<b><i>Establish an Accessibility Advisory Committee in accordance with NS Accessibility Act.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Accessibility Advisory Board for Nova Scotia has extended the timeline for establishing Accessibility Committees for Regional Centre's for Education to April 1, 2023, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes the implementation of Regional Centre's accessibility plan which will be guided by the provincial accessibility committee.</li> <li>• In 2020-21, training was completed in the Operations Department for the Built Environment by the Rick Hansen Foundation to assist with developing accessibility gaps and creating accessibility plan.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Re-align resources to provide robust service to students and families.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed a review of administrative allotments with a cross regional analysis to examine possible future adjustments.</li> <li>• An examination of resources across the region enabled us to provide some change in circuits, change in assignments, expansion of programs, and additional hires to expand our services to students.</li> </ul>

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## 6.0 FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

*Key financial indicators*

Key Financial Indicators			
	2020-21 Budget	2020-21 Actual	2021-22 Budget
<b>Revenue</b>			
Province of Nova Scotia	\$144,275,259	\$153,485,211	\$151,252,193
Government of Canada	1,280,607	1,614,077	1,280,607
Municipal Contributions	17,263,384	17,263,384	17,733,289
Other Revenues	3,036,438	3,087,022	1,405,571
School Generated/Based funds	4,200,000	2,652,756	4,200,000
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$170,055,688</b>	<b>\$178,102,450</b>	<b>\$175,871,660</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>			
Office of the Regional Executive Director	\$546,339	\$566,933	\$654,826
Financial Services	1,843,626	1,829,988	1,940,938
Human Resource Services	1,091,886	1,009,797	1,118,918
School Administration or School Services	4,252,738	4,214,024	4,329,328
Programs	132,225,771	135,167,962	137,145,056
Operational Services	25,895,328	32,012,446	26,482,594
School Generated/ Based Funds	4,200,000	2,160,285	4,200,000
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$170,055,688</b>	<b>\$176,961,435</b>	<b>\$175,871,660</b>
<b>Annual Operating Surplus (Deficit)</b>		<b>\$1,141,015</b>	
Opening Accumulated Surplus (Deficit)		6,689,650	
Closing Accumulated Surplus (Deficit)		\$7,830,665	



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## 7.0 KEY FACTS

Key Fact Category		
<b>Students</b>	<b>September 30, 2019</b>	<b>September 30, 2020</b>
Total Number of Students	12,204	11918
Average Class Size P-2	20	19.8
Average Class Size 3-6	23	22.7
Average Class Size 7-9	19.23	19.58
Average Class Size 10-12	20.38	19.61
Total Number of Classes & Sections	Sr. High 10-12      1138 Jr. High 7-9        1285 Total P-6 classes    290	Sr. High 10-12      1136 Mid School 7-9     1275 Total P-6 Classes   282
<b>Staff (FTEs)</b>	<b>September 30, 2019</b>	<b>September 30, 2020</b>
School based NSTU and PSAANS	982.7	988.2
School Based Non-NSTU	553.4	579.4
Programming Support NSTU	8	8
Programming Support Non-NSTU	8	8
Transportation	114.5	121
Property Services	200	200
Administration	48	51
Technology Support	11	11
Other Programs NSTU	12	12
<b>Technology</b>	<b>September 30, 2019</b>	<b>September 30, 2020</b>
Students/Instructional Computer	1	0.83
Computers & Devices/Technician	937	1643
<b>Property Services</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
Total School Sq. Ft.*	2,323,736	2,343,996
Sq. Ft./Student*	190	197
Private Operator Sq. Ft.*	379704	379704
Operating Costs**	\$18,395,736	\$21,170,722
Operating Cost/Sq. Ft.**	\$7.92	\$9.03
<b>Transportation</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
Total Buses on Regular Routes*	85	85
Total Spare Buses Operated*	24	25
Total Students Transported*	7,291	7,430
Total Student Transportation Cost**	\$6,388,813	\$6,443,854
Total Cost/Student Transported**	\$876	\$867
Total number of bus runs daily*	85 am/85 pm=170	85 am/85 pm=170
Average number of students/bus run*	87	87
Cost/Unit – Contracted**	N/A	N/A
Cost/Unit – RCE**	\$58,613 (incl spares)	\$58,580 (incl spares)
Total number of KM students transported*	957,366	698,340
Total number of KM buses traveled*	1,374,056	977,677

\* As of June 30