

# 2025 Annual Report to the School Community

School Name: Mornington Special Developmental School (5239)



- all teachers at the school meet the registration requirements of the [Victorian Institute of Teaching \(VIT\)](#)
- the school meets prescribed Minimum Standards for registration as regulated by the Victorian Regulation and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) in accordance with the [Education and Training Reform Act 2006 \(Vic\)](#) (this includes any exemption granted to this school by the VRQA, for the most recent calendar year, in relation to minimum student enrolment numbers and/or the curriculum framework requirement to deliver a languages program)
- the school meets the requirements of the Child Safe Standards as prescribed in [Ministerial Order 1359 – Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the risk of child abuse in schools \(PDF\)](#).

Attested on 20 April 2026 at 02:24 PM by Jo Hillman (Principal)

- As executive officer of the school council, I attest that this 2025 Annual Report to the School Community has been tabled and endorsed at a meeting of the school council and will be publicly shared with the school community.

Attested on 12 May 2026 at 11:32 AM by Jo Hillman (Principal)

## 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 and an overview of the school's performance over the previous calendar year.

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 'Progress towards strategic goals, student outcomes, and student engagement' section allows schools to reflect on highlights related to implementation of and progress towards the School Strategic Plan and Annual Implementation Plan, and efforts to improve student learning, wellbeing, and engagement.

### 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
  - responses to the General Satisfaction area of the Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey
  - school staff responses to the School Climate area of the School Staff Survey
- Learning
  - English for Teacher Judgements against the curriculum
  - Mathematics for Teacher Judgements against the curriculum
- Engagement
  - how many exiting students go on to further studies or full-time work
  - average absence days per student
  - student attendance rate

Key terms used in the Performance Summary are defined below:

#### NDP and NDA

'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')

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## About Our School

### School context

#### School Context

Mornington Special Developmental School has continued to provide high-quality education to students with intellectual, physical, and sensory disabilities, ensuring they receive the best possible foundation for life. Established in 1987 as a temporary solution to meet the needs of students with severe intellectual disabilities, the multi-million dollar reconstruction of the buildings and grounds, commencing in 2024 and completed in 2025, strongly symbolises that the school is here to stay.

The school has developed over the years into a well-respected and valued educational facility that supports a diverse student body. Approximately 75% of the students also have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, with some students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, including those with English as an additional language and Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage.

The school operates with a dedicated and highly skilled team, including a principal, assistant principal, an inclusion outreach coach, full-time equivalent teachers, educational support staff, specialist teachers, a part-time mental health practitioner, and administrative personnel. A speech pathologist was employed one day a week; effective communication is essential for our students (particularly for those who are non-verbal), as it supports their ability to express needs, build relationships, and engage in learning. An occupational therapist was also contracted on a fortnightly basis which encouraged our students to improve essential fine motor, sensory processing, and self-care skills which enhance their independence and participation in learning.

With the arrival of a new acting principal in May 2025, the staff profile was restructured and diversified to include:

- a new occupational therapist with vast experience on a weekly basis
- a second speech therapist one day a week to support the implementation of the whole school use of PODD in classrooms as a universal communication system in 2026, and the creation of PODD books to assist this
- the initial speech therapist focusing on meal plans; supporting staff to implement safer meal time practices and broaden students' food and liquid intakes
- teaching staff to provide additional specialist subjects - Physical Education and Performing Arts
- a music therapist one day a week to support student engagement
- a play therapist to provide weekly small group sessions to promote personal and social interaction between students

#### Vision and Values

The school remained committed to its vision of empowering all students to become confident and curious learners who feel supported in overcoming challenges both at school and beyond. Guided by the core values of respect, kindness, and excellence, all interactions and learning

experiences were structured to foster a positive and inclusive school culture. Respect was encouraged among students, staff, and families, fostering an understanding that actions influence those around them.

Kindness was a fundamental principle, ensuring a nurturing and inclusive atmosphere for all students. Excellence was emphasised by encouraging students to strive for their personal best and celebrating both small and significant achievements. Through strong partnerships between home, school, and the wider community, the school consistently worked towards fostering success for all students.

### **School Size, Structure, and Geographic Location**

Mornington Special Developmental School is located at 40 Robertson Drive, Mornington.

In 2025, the school offered educational provision for children aged from two years and eight months to eighteen years of age. The five classes comprised an early education program (EEP) for children under the age of five, two junior rooms, one middle room and one seniors room and continued to provide individualised educational programs based on student's learning needs.

The new building (commenced in September 2024), which provided four new classrooms, a dedicated art room, a multi-purpose room, a kitchen and laundry for student programs, a library space, and updated administration and counselling areas was ready for occupation at the beginning of June. Staff spent considerable time sorting, packing and discarding resources for the new space prior to moving. To support students in adapting to the new environment, social stories were created by teachers and introduced to help them navigate their new learning spaces and the changes that would continue to occur for the rest of the year. The builders handed over the building in the afternoon of the last Friday in May, enabling staff to take students in to prepare them for the following week. As we were unable to close the school for the duration of the move, staff, families and school councillors worked tirelessly on the Saturday, with support from professional removers for the larger items, to set up the new spaces ready for the students on the Monday morning. Staff and students settled quickly into their new learning environment, despite the restrictions imposed by having no outside play spaces for Term 3, as the builders commenced construction of our new playgrounds. The opening of the junior playground was a cause for great celebration, as classes no longer needed to use the multi-purpose room for recess and lunch play, and was accessed by all students until the senior playground was ready midway through Term 4. The students identified the stand outs of the new play areas as the sand pit and birds nest swing in the junior playground and the basketball court in the seniors' space.

## **Progress towards strategic goals, student outcomes and student engagement**

### **Learning**

Based on feedback from staff at our school review in 2024, namely that they reported a lack of whole school agreed approaches to the teaching of literacy and numeracy and that there were restricted opportunities for collaboration, team teaching and peer observation which could improve the quality of their practice, the panel recommended that the school develop whole school approaches for literacy and numeracy and that it strengthen collaborative structures to support adult learning and streamline processes. These recommendations formed the basis of our new

school strategic plan (SSP) for the next four years, and guide the the actions of the 2025 annual improvement plan (AIP), however, after the arrival of the new acting principal, it was evident that there was little alignment and the SSP and 2025 AIP were revised to address this. As a consequence, the school effectively had one semester to complete the work of the AIP, rather than a full year and as it was important that there was real improvement achieved and cause for celebration by the end of 2025 the decision was made to focus on only two of the key improvement strategies - Establish collaborative teaching partnerships within the school, the network and with other specialist schools and Develop a whole school approach to teaching and learning, and the teaching of literacy and numeracy - to ensure that we 'did them well'.

We were very excited that student achievement data in Speaking and Listening and Reading and Writing indicate that the majority of students, for whom we have comparative data, have maintained or improved their outcomes. The data set however is limited as approximately 50% of students have no comparative data. Students without comparative data are either new to the school, may not have been assessed previously, or may have had a change of teacher which resulted in no assessment being completed. During Term 4, we provided professional learning opportunities for teachers to moderate ABLES data and how to administer the assessments. However, this is an area that we will need to continue focusing on to ensure consistency and reliability of data.

Data from the 2025 Staff Opinion Survey indicate that Instructional leadership moved from 27% in 2024 65%. This was a significant increase and well and truly met the target which was 37% (2025) and has also exceeded the four-year strategic plan target of 50%

Similarly, Professional learning to improve practice moved from 60% in 2024 80%, with the target being 62% (2025). This improvement also exceeded the four-year strategic plan target of 74%.

The one target that we failed to meet this year related to Professional learning targeted to improving literacy and numeracy. In 2024 staff endorsement was 40% and we set a target of 42% for 2025, however staff endorsement dropped to 20%. Discussion with staff regarding this data set indicated that there were a number of possibilities for this unexpected result including:

- \* significant staff changeover, including new staff and staff on leave being replaced by relief personnel
- \* several staff who were unable to complete the survey as they had not been at the school long enough
- \* the possibility that now staff are accessing regular professional learning, they have different understanding about what constitutes quality professional learning in improving literacy and numeracy outcomes e.g. a lack of common collaboration time. Having access to shared collaboration time enabled the staff to design and plan a schoolwide semester long unit of work that centred around our cooking program. Staff integrated all areas of the curriculum into this unit (e.g. the maths of cooking, written scripts and digital technologies used for filming) which proved to be highly engaging for students and provided different opportunities for them to demonstrate achievement.

Given the short timeline available for the 2025 AIP actions, it was important to ensure that the school was ready for the implementation of the whole school approach to literacy from the very beginning of 2026, so significant time was spent in the preparation for implementation phase in Terms 3 and 4. Further work to improve teaching and learning across all classes was achieved through the development of a MSDS teaching and learning model which will ensure consistency of practice throughout the school.

## Wellbeing

The school reviewed its allied health services as the current provision was not sufficiently meeting all students' needs. Initially, we moved to a triage system to ensure that students with the most significant need were being prioritised (e.g. meal plans for students at risk of choking, applications for Disability Inclusion funding, etc.). We employed an additional speech pathologist who focused on speech and language, and who assisted us with preparing to introduce PODD as a schoolwide communication system, from the beginning of 2026. This allowed the original speech pathologist to work primarily on meal plans and communication profiles. We engaged further occupational therapy support with an OT attending weekly rather than fortnightly, who worked to identify and establish sensory needs and programs for individual students. She also assisted with building our OT equipment and resources that would support students' programs. The school introduced a play therapy program in Term 4 as a way to support students to develop effective conflict resolution strategies in a play environment. A music therapist was also engaged for one day per week to support students' regulation. He also worked collaboratively with the speech pathologist and OT in providing supporting documentation for Disability Inclusion applications.

During Semester 2, a small team investigated options for whole school positive behaviour supports and engaged with the regional School Wide Positive Behaviour Support coach to assist with submitting an application for coaching in 2026. The coach supported the team to work through a consultation process with staff to determine the level of commitment prior to submitting the application and was excited when it was given 100% endorsement to proceed.

A significant highlight for students was finally getting access to the outside play areas once they had been redeveloped. The junior students have particularly enjoyed the beach access sandpit and the birds nest swing, whilst for the middle and senior students the main attraction is the basketball court.

## Engagement

A targeted focus on attendance for identified students included building stronger relationships with families, improving communication options (e.g. Compass and using sms messages on the school phone) and individualised (and closely monitored) modified timetables for students contributed to significantly improved attendance overall.

Teaching staff ensured students had alternative experiences to engage with whilst the school construction program was in place, particularly providing access to alternative outdoor spaces when the playground was unavailable for use. Community access opportunities included: swimming, a Riding for the Disabled program, an inter-school basketball competition, volunteering at Foodbank, trips to the local sports grounds and playgrounds, the library, etc.

For the first time in many years, there was a whole school excursion to Moonlit Sanctuary where families were invited to attend with their children which proved to be a big success.

Given the amount of change over a very short space of time (e.g. staffing, new building, play areas, etc.), social stories, both individual and generic ones, proved invaluable in preparing students for these transitions.

2025 saw the reintroduction of regular fortnightly school assemblies in our new multi-purpose room. Assemblies focused on explicit reference to our school values - respect, kindness and excellence - and were initially adult led with the intention to release responsibility to students in 2026.

Students also had access to a greater range of specialist classes in Semester 2, with physical education, visual arts and performing arts being offered. The move to the new building also provided students with the opportunity to engage with weekly cooking classes in the purpose-built kitchen and was at the heart of the integrated curriculum plan that staff developed.

Special events such as ANZAC and Remembrance Days, Children's Book Week, Science Week and Reconciliation Week were opportunities for students to participate in special assemblies, dress ups and event-specific learning activities were also highlights for students.

## Other highlights from the school year

For our whole school community, the absolute highlight was moving into our new purpose-built school. As staff had prepared students so well for the transition from the old classrooms to the new learning spaces the move was very successful, and helped in large measure by the many hands who gave up a Saturday to physically move furniture and resources and set up rooms ready for when the students arrived on Monday morning.

Further highlights occurred when the junior playground was handed over in Term 3, the senior playground was ready for use in mid- Term 4 and approval given to purchase a second school bus with wheelchair access.

The importance of having regular access to highly expert allied health support cannot be underestimated as they have provided an in-depth level of support for classroom staff as well as assisting the leadership to prepare for the whole school implementation of PODD, Comprehensive Literacy and School Wide Positive Behaviour Support.

Priority now being given to staff to build capacity and focus on their professional learning as the most effective way to improve outcomes for students has also been an important change for our school.

## Financial performance

Funds received from the Department of Education and locally raised funds were used to support Mornington SDS's educational and operational priorities. The school operated within its 2025 budget and maintains a sound financial position with a net operating surplus.

Expenditure supported educational programs, facility upgrades, additional fencing, playground improvements and essential maintenance, including unplanned sewerage works. Following completion of the new buildings, further costs were incurred for expanded PA systems, additional phones and upgraded security infrastructure, some of which were not originally anticipated. The

school carefully managed spending in preparation for the major build, recognising additional safety and compliance costs would arise.

Funds were drawn down from the Student Resource Package credit balance to contribute to the purchase of a wheelchair-accessible bus, as our current bus does not provide wheelchair access. Formal justification was required, and this process was challenging given the essential nature of accessible transport within a specialist school setting.

School Council is regularly informed of the school's financial position.

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## 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 2.0 (FISO 2.0).

Refer to the 'How to read the Annual Report' section for help on how to interpret this report.

## SCHOOL PROFILE

### Enrolment Profile

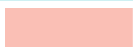
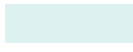

A total of 25 students were enrolled at this school in 2025, 7 female and 18 male. NDP had English as an additional language and NDP were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

### 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**.


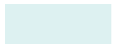

### Parent Satisfaction Summary

The percentage endorsement by parents on their General School Satisfaction, as reported in the annual Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey. Percent endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree) from parents who responded to the survey.

|   |                 | 2025  |   |
|---|-----------------|-------|---|
| % positive endorsement General School Satisfaction (Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey) | School          | 83.3% |  |
|   | Similar schools | 89.1% |  |
|   | State           | 86.9% |  |

### School Staff Survey








The percentage endorsement by staff on School Climate, as reported in the annual School Staff Survey. Percentage endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree) from staff who responded to the survey.

|   |                 | 2025  |   |
|---|-----------------|-------|---|
| % positive endorsement School Climate (School Staff Survey) | School          | 72.5% |  |
|   | Similar schools | 68.5% |  |
|   | State           | 68.0% |  |

## LEARNING






### Teacher Judgement of student achievement English

Percent of results at each achievement level in English

|                  |        |       | 2025  |
|------------------|--------|-------|---|
| <b>A</b>         | School | 29.2% |  |
| <b>B</b>         | School | 20.0% |  |
| <b>C</b>         | School | 18.5% |  |
| <b>D</b>         | School | 13.8% |  |
| <b>0.5</b>       | School | 0.0%  |   |
| <b>F-F.5</b>     | School | 4.6%  |  |
| <b>1.0-1.5</b>   | School | 4.6%  |  |
| <b>2.0-2.5</b>   | School | 0.0%  |   |
| <b>3.0-3.5</b>   | School | 9.2%  |  |
| <b>4.0-4.5</b>   | School | 0.0%  |   |
| <b>5.0-5.5</b>   | School | 0.0%  |   |
| <b>6.0-6.5</b>   | School | 0.0%  |   |
| <b>7.0-7.5</b>   | School | 0.0%  |   |
| <b>8.0-8.5</b>   | School | 0.0%  |   |
| <b>9.0-9.5</b>   | School | 0.0%  |   |
| <b>10.0-10.5</b> | School | 0.0%  |   |
| <b>11.0-11.5</b> | School | 0.0%  |   |
| <b>N/A</b>       | School | 0.0%  |   |

### Teacher Judgement of student achievement Mathematics

Percent of results at each achievement level in Mathematics

|              |        |       | 2025  |
|--------------|--------|-------|---|
| <b>A</b>     | School | 26.1% |  |
| <b>B</b>     | School | 17.4% |  |
| <b>C</b>     | School | 21.7% |  |
| <b>D</b>     | School | 8.7%  |  |
| <b>0.5</b>   | School | 0.0%  |   |
| <b>F-F.5</b> | School | 13.0% |  |

|           |        |  | 2025 |
|-----------|--------|--|------|
| 1.0-1.5   | School |  | 8.7% |
| 2.0-2.5   | School |  | 4.3% |
| 3.0-3.5   | School |  | 0.0% |
| 4.0-4.5   | School |  | 0.0% |
| 5.0-5.5   | School |  | 0.0% |
| 6.0-6.5   | School |  | 0.0% |
| 7.0-7.5   | School |  | 0.0% |
| 8.0-8.5   | School |  | 0.0% |
| 9.0-9.5   | School |  | 0.0% |
| 10.0-10.5 | School |  | 0.0% |
| 11.0-11.5 | School |  | 0.0% |
| N/A       | School |  | 0.0% |

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## ENGAGEMENT

### Students exiting to further studies or full-time employment

Percentage of exiting students going on to further studies or full-time employment.

|  |                 | 2024  | 4-year average |
|--|-----------------|-------|----------------|
| % of students exiting to further studies or full-time employment | School          | NDP   | 16.7%          |
|  | Similar schools | 40.3% | 40.9%          |
|  | State           | 81.5% | 81.2%          |

### Average absence days per student

Absence from school can impact on students' learning. Common reasons for non-attendance include illness and extended family holidays.

|          |                 | 2025 | 4-year average |
|----------|-----------------|------|----------------|
| Ungraded | School          | 57.1 | 49.7           |
|          | Similar schools | 40.9 | 39.8           |
|          | State           | 40.0 | 39.6           |

### Attendance rate

Attendance rate refers to the average proportion of formal school days students in each year level attended.

|          |        | 2025  |
|----------|--------|-------|
| Ungraded | School | 71.2% |

## FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE AND POSITION

### FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE - OPERATING STATEMENT SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2025

Financial figures are as of 19 March 2026.

| <b>Revenue</b>                 | <b>Actual</b>      |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Student Resource Package       | \$1,888,341        |
| Government Provided DET Grants | \$745,745          |
| Government Grants Commonwealth | \$2,578            |
| Government Grants State        | \$0                |
| Revenue Other                  | \$43,126           |
| Locally Raised Funds           | \$15,506           |
| Capital Grants                 | \$0                |
| <b>Total Operating Revenue</b> | <b>\$2,695,295</b> |

| <b>Equity</b>                                       | <b>Actual</b>   |
|---|-----------------|
| Equity (Social Disadvantage)                        | \$28,116        |
| Equity (Catch Up)                                   | \$0             |
| Equity (Social Disadvantage - Extraordinary Growth) | \$0             |
| <b>Equity Total</b>                                 | <b>\$28,116</b> |

The equity funding reported above is a subset of the overall revenue reported by the school.

| <b>Expenditure</b>                    | <b>Actual</b> |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|
| Student Resource Package <sup>1</sup> | \$1,734,468   |
| Adjustments                           | \$0           |
| Books & Publications                  | \$0           |
| Camps/Excursions/Activities           | \$5,252       |
| Communication Costs                   | \$2,648       |
| Consumables                           | \$16,556      |
| Miscellaneous Expenses <sup>2</sup>   | \$14,276      |
| Agency Staff                          | \$206,297     |
| Professional Development              | \$26,337      |
| Equipment/Maintenance/Hire            | \$90,243      |
| Property Services                     | \$53,342      |
| Salaries & Allowances <sup>3</sup>    | \$0           |
| Support Services                      | \$161,028     |

| <b>Expenditure</b>                    | <b>Actual</b>      |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Trading & Fundraising                 | \$2,661            |
| Motor Vehicle Expenses                | \$4,509            |
| Travel & Subsistence                  | \$0                |
| Utilities                             | \$19,562           |
| <b>Total Operating Expenditure</b>    | <b>\$2,337,180</b> |
| <b>Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit</b> | <b>\$358,115</b>   |
| <b>Asset Acquisitions</b>             | <b>\$10,754</b>    |

<sup>1</sup> Student Resource Package Expenditure figures are subject to change during the reconciliation process.

<sup>2</sup> Miscellaneous Expenses include bank charges, administration expenses, insurance and taxation charges.

<sup>3</sup> Salaries and Allowances refers to school-level payroll.

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## FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2025

| <b>Funds Available</b>        | <b>Actual</b>      |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| High Yield Investment Account | \$1,065,049        |
| Official Account              | \$8,897            |
| Other Accounts                | \$0                |
| <b>Total Funds Available</b>  | <b>\$1,073,946</b> |

| <b>Financial Commitments</b>                | <b>Actual</b>    |
|---|------------------|
| Operating Reserve                           | \$100,452        |
| Other Recurrent Expenditure                 | \$3,180          |
| Provision Accounts                          | \$0              |
| Funds Received in Advance                   | \$0              |
| 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     | \$0              |
| Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months | \$0              |
| <b>Total Financial Commitments</b>          | <b>\$103,632</b> |

*All funds received from the Department of Education, 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.*