Staff FTE		Budget		
Custodial	0.000000	Salaries	$2,499,989	79.33%
Exempt	18.000000	Supplies, Equipment and Services	$651,229	20.67%
Support	1.000000	**Total**	**$3,151,218**	100.00%
Teacher	0.000000			
Maintenance	0.000000			
Total	**19.000000**			

Vision

Enhancing pathways for student success.

Mission

Our commitment to high-quality public education serves the community and empowers each student to live a life of dignity, fulfilment, empathy and possibility.

Values

Accountability, collaboration, equity and integrity.

Division Priorities 2022-2026

1. Build on outstanding learning opportunities for all students.
2. Advance action towards anti-racism and reconciliation.
3. Promote a comprehensive approach to student and staff well-being and mental health.

Profile

Communications role is to support the Division in its internal and external communications with its stakeholders. This work includes fostering open, honest, two-way communication with crisis communication; media relations; issues management; profile of division programs and key initiatives; management of division special events; and profile for all schools. The department also provides strategic communications counsel and support to the Board of Trustees and Superintendent of Schools.

Division Priorities 2022-2026

1. Build on outstanding learning opportunities for all students.
2. Advance actions towards anti-racism and reconciliation.
3. Promote a comprehensive approach to student and staff well-being and mental health.

Based on the goals that were established for 2023-2024, report on the results you achieved (with evidence, including referencing the school's Assurance Measures results, if applicable) and describe how achievement of the goal supports the above Division's Priorities (reference the priority number in your response).

In our work to be a more inclusive and anti-racist organization, Communications will continue its work to develop inclusive language guidelines. By August 2024, the inclusive language guidelines will be created with input from focus groups.

Partners told us key elements they needed from the guidelines:
- be very clear about the intent of the guidelines
- acknowledge that people make mistakes and provide guidance on how to move forward after making a mistake
- include practical examples of language to avoid, suggestions for rephrasing and background information on why

Results Achieved: Guided by findings from the 2022-23 research engagement, when we re-engage partners in 2024 with a prototype of the guidelines, we want the majority of participants (minimum 70 per cent) to tell us they feel these three elements are adequately present in the guidelines.
In our work to be a more inclusive and anti-racist organization, Communications will continue its work to develop inclusive language guidelines. By August 2024, the inclusive language guidelines will be created with input from focus groups.
Partners told us key elements they needed from the guidelines:
- be very clear about the intent of the guidelines
- acknowledge that people make mistakes and provide guidance on how to move forward after making a mistake
- include practical examples of language to avoid, suggestions for rephrasing and background information on why

Results
In Phase I in the 2022–23 school year, the Communications project team conducted research and sought feedback from a variety of internal partners to answer the question: What guidance do Division staff need around inclusive and accessible language, and how can these guidelines best support staff in their work?
In Phase II in the 2023–24 school year, we developed an inclusive language guidelines prototype using findings from the Phase I research. We collected feedback on the prototype from the same internal partners to determine if it reflects the elements they told us they were looking for. We used this feedback to further refine the prototype to turn it into a resource for Division staff.
We engaged staff across various sites and roles:
- Approximately 13 school-based staff from five schools
- Approximately 37 principals and central leaders in the anti-racism, reconciliation and equity principal advisory committee (though the majority of this group was part of the Phase I engagement, there were some different members in Phase II)
- Participant roles included: principals, central leaders, teachers, department head, library technician

Participants were engaged in a focus group style. They were given a copy of the prototype and met with the Communications project team to answer a common set of questions. Meetings took place online and in person. To respect the schedules of school staff, participants who could not attend were invited to respond to the questions using a digital form. All responses were anonymous.
We asked participants if the prototype included the key elements they told us they needed when we engaged previously:
- 96.8 per cent of participants who responded told us the intent of the guidelines was clear to them
- 100 per cent of participants who responded told us the guidelines provided guidance on what to do if they make a mistake
- 93.3 per cent of participants who responded told us the guidelines provided practical examples of language to avoid, suggestions for rephrasing and context around why

Common feedback we heard included:
- The prototype is very clear, accessible, and easy to scan through the different sections; they like the examples, layout, tone and range of topics.
- They would feel very confident using the guidance in the prototype; they thought the research and sources were trustworthy; and the information is universally relevant to teachers of all grades and staff in all roles.
- They see the guidelines as a "living document" that would need to be updated regularly to remain relevant and trustworthy.
- They view the guidelines as providing guidance, advice, tips and additional learning, as opposed to a directive to staff; however, some noted they feel it should be included in training for staff.
- A variety of suggestions about specific words or phrases.

Division Priority 3
In our work to be a more inclusive and anti-racist organization, Communications will continue its work to make epsb.ca more accessible for all visitors, including individuals who have impairments or limitations. Guided by findings gathered in the 2022-23 school year (environmental scan, research and stakeholder engagement), Communications will:
- begin implementing features that increase accessibility to epsb.ca
- start planning for future user testing
- build a comprehensive communications plan to share improved accessibility features

Communications will work with Technology and Information Management to launch Google Translate on epsb.ca by February 1, 2024

Communications is working in a variety of ways to make sure students, families and staff have timely and barrier-free access to the information they need to make informed decisions about school and work. One of the Division's main tools to do this is our website, epsb.ca.
In 2023-24, we worked with colleagues in Technology and Information Management to add Google Translate to epsb.ca. Our initial goal was to launch the translation tool when enrolment opened on February 1, 2024, to take advantage of a spike in traffic to the website that would help get the word out; however, some technical issues delayed the launch till after the enrolment deadline. We let families and staff know about the new tool in a news story posted April 8, 2024 on epsb.ca, and on social media.
Within two months of the launch, we exceeded two of our Communications targets and came very close to meeting the third, with:
- 1,909 unique visitors viewing the news story 2,447 times (more than double our target)
- 200 total engagements (e.g. likes, shares, comments) on Facebook (doubling our target), and
- 94 total engagements on Instagram (six short of our 100 target)

During the 2022-23 school year, Communications conducted research and spoke with other organizations (e.g. other school divisions, the City of Edmonton) to learn more about how to make epsb.ca more accessible for all users, including those who have disabilities, low literacy levels or who speak English as an additional language.
As Communications began implementing changes to improve the usability and accessibility of the website, it also became clear that the current site—designed a decade ago—needs a comprehensive redevelopment to address current challenges and bring it in line with current accessibility guidelines. We are now moving forward with plans to redesign and build a new Division website that meets the needs of all users.
During the 2023–24 school year, Communications has made some changes on epsb.ca to improve accessibility, including:
- improvements to the way we write alt text, which is the descriptive text that accompanies website visuals (e.g. photos, graphics) to people with vision loss or those who may have images turned off to increase browsing speed and reduce the amount of data or bandwidth used. These changes we're making include:
  - punctuating alt text so assistive technologies (e.g. screen readers) pause in the correct places.
  - adding alt text to images in our content management system that didn't previously have it.
- making sure that headings are properly marked, so assistive technologies can navigate the pages correctly.
- adding Google Translate to epsb.ca

What were the biggest challenges encountered in 2023-2024?
Year-over-year, we continue to see requests for Communications support grow. Whether it's project work that has an internal and/or external component, crises, media relations, or other emergent work, we continue to field an increasing number of requests for support.
Notably in the past year, we have seen a significant increase in the number of emergency alerts that require communications support.

What are the opportunities for improvement from 2023-2024 that will inform your plan for 2024-2025? We continue to build toolkits that will support cyclical work, so that we can refocus our efforts and attention on other, emergent items. We continue to build a suite of template letters that can support schools when they seek support, helping to p

Plans

Division Priorities 2022-2026

1. Build on outstanding learning opportunities for all students.
2. Advance actions towards anti-racism and reconciliation.
3. Promote a comprehensive approach to student and staff well-being and mental health.

In reflecting on our work towards continuous improvement as a Division, reflective questions have been included in the Planning Guide as a resource to help inform goal setting: Goals must align with 2022-2026 Division Priorities. All schools are to set two goals with one being in support of Priority 1. Schools also have the flexibility of setting an optional third goal. All Central DU's are to set two or three goals and indicate the priority area each goal supports.

Division Priority 2

In our work to be a more inclusive and anti-racist organization, Communications has developed inclusive language guidelines, with the input of staff. During the 2024-2025 school year, Communications will publish the guidelines and use a strategic communications plan to share information with staff, with an aim to have:
- 1 in 10 staff access the inclusive language guidelines within the first eight months after launch*
- 500 staff read about the inclusive language guidelines through Connect news stories within the first eight months after launch*
- Majority of anecdotal feedback from select engagement partners after launch is positive or neutral.

What Key Performance Indicators are you using to track continuous improvement?

*we will use the first year metrics as a baseline for future comparison

Division Priority 3

Last year, Communications continued work to make epsb.ca more accessible for all visitors. As part of that work, it was determined the Division needs a new website to serve staff, students and the community better.

For the 2024-2025 school year, Communications is initiating the work to create a new public-facing website. We will work with a vendor to gather additional information and statistics about how users engage with the current website and what information they are looking for. That data along with user testing and screen recordings will help us identify the pain points that people encounter on our current site, so we can incorporate the feedback for the future site.

After gathering and analyzing this information, we will work with a vendor to build a new information architecture that creates a blueprint of a proposed new website, showing where content is, how it is labeled and categorized. We will work with the vendor to engage audiences to test and improve the information architecture. Finally, we will use that information and feedback to build an interactive prototype for a new website, which we will also test with audiences.
.

What Key Performance Indicators are you using to track continuous improvement?

By August 31, 2025, we will: conduct acceptance testing with a representative group of users, and achieve a minimum of 75 per cent approval rating for clarity, navigation and organization of the proposed information architecture. conduct user testing of the website prototypes with a representative group of users and achieve a minimum of 75 per cent overall satisfaction rating for ease of use

Budget Summary Report

	2024-25 Spring Proposed		2024-25 Fall Revised	
Resources		3,151,218		3,151,218
Internal Revenue		0		0
REVENUE TOTAL		**3,151,218**		**3,151,218**
Exempt	18.000000	2,406,109	18.000000	2,406,109
Exempt (Hourly/OT)	.000000	20,000	.000000	20,000
Support	1.000000	72,380	1.000000	72,380
Support (Supply/OT)	.000000	1,500	.000000	1,500
TOTAL NON-TEACHER	**19.000000**	**2,499,989**	**19.000000**	**2,499,989**
(% of Budget)		**79.33%**		**79.33%**
TOTAL STAFF	**19.000000**	**2,499,989**	**19.000000**	**2,499,989**
(% of Budget)		**79.33%**		**79.33%**
SUPPLIES, EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES		638,379		640,009
INTERNAL SERVICES		12,850		11,220
TOTAL SES		**651,229**		**651,229**
(% of Budget)		**20.67%**		**20.67%**
TOTAL AMOUNT BUDGETED		**3,151,218**		**3,151,218**