

# ONE TEAM

Strategically Aligning Resources  
to Support Student Success

BCASBO Leadership Series | Module 6: Finance & Resource Management

**Chris Kennedy | Julia Leiterman | Sandra-Lynn Shortall**

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# WHO WE ARE

*Three perspectives, one shared commitment to students*



**Chris Kennedy**

**Superintendent & CEO**

29 years in education

16 years in current role

Educational vision & strategy



**Julia Leiterman**

**Secretary Treasurer & CFO**

15 years in current role

Financial strategy & stewardship

Bridge between education &

business



**Sandra-Lynn Shortall**

**Assistant Superintendent**

29 years in education, 22 years in

West Vancouver Schools

Elementary/Inclusive education

Extending All Means All to 0 to 5

**"One team.  
No surprises.  
United front."**

## THE PARTNERSHIP

- **Trust built over 15+ years**

Long tenure creates deep understanding of each other's strengths, roles, and boundaries

- **Know it, don't own it**

Julia is immersed in the education work but doesn't try to be the expert. She focuses on how to support it through the budget

- **Shared accountability**

Different expertise, shared commitment. None of us need to be experts in each other's work, but we work as one

**Before the  
budget,  
there is the  
conversation.**

## **WHAT THE SUPERINTENDENT BRINGS**

- **Name the non-negotiables early**

Set the strategic commitments that the budget must honour. The ST cannot align resources to priorities that haven't been clearly stated.

- **Show up for the hard conversations**

Be available before positions are locked. The superintendent who only reviews the finished budget is too late to shape it.

- **Carry the story publicly**

Defend the budget to the board and community. The ST should never be the only voice explaining why resources are allocated the way they are.

# ONE TEAM: TRUST MEANS EVERYTHING

*A case study in staffing & resource alignment*

## **The Commitment**

Ensuring every student becomes self-sufficient is critical to our community and our FESL goal of Successful Transitions

## **The Discipline**

Provide our students and teachers with adequate staffing support to success in the classroom and graduate successfully.

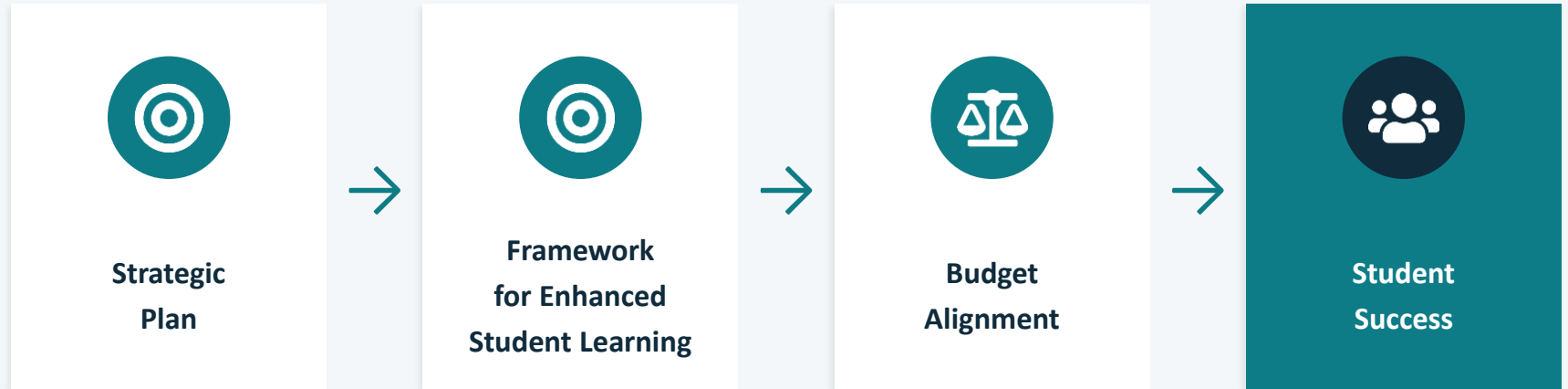
## **The Process**

A new way of thinking about support, coupled with consistent ratios and thoughtful staffing decisions to ensure our students can navigate the world beyond K-12.

*Trust means shared commitment to the vision AND shared accountability for the math.*

# LED BY THE PLAN

*Strategic Plan and Framework for Enhanced Student Learning drive every resource decision*



*"All Means All" is not just our philosophy. It is the lens through which every dollar is examined.*

# THE BUDGET REALITY

## What We Can't Control

- Legislation and regulations
- Collective agreements
- Enrollment funding formulas
- Fixed operational costs

## Where Alignment Matters Most

- Strategic priorities within discretionary space
- Program investments tied to FESL goals
- New initiatives (childcare, innovation)
- How we tell the story to our community

**When the margin is tight, misalignment between educational and financial leadership is a risk you cannot afford.**

# WHEN VISION EXCEEDS BUDGET

*Navigating the tension between educational ambition and financial reality*

## **The Idea**

The superintendent brings a new priority, program, or initiative. It matters for students. The math isn't there yet.

## **The Conversation**

We sit with it together. The ST models the scenarios. No position is taken until we understand what we would have to give up. No surprises. No ambushes.

## **The Decision**

We land somewhere together and commit to it as one. What we approve, we both defend. What we decline, we both explain. There is no daylight between us.

*The tension between vision and budget is not a problem to solve. It is a conversation to keep having.*

# ALL MEANS ALL: EXTENDING TO AGES 0 TO 5

*A case study in partnership and discipline*

## **The Commitment**

Early childhood education is central to our community's needs and our mandate that All Means All

## **The Discipline**

We would not take K to 12 monies to support 0 to 5 programming. Early childhood must fund itself

## **The Process**

Hundreds of financial scenarios modeled together to ensure we were doing right by our board and community

*Partnership means shared commitment to the vision AND shared accountability for the math.*

# MODELING THE MATH

*Ensuring 0 to 5 programming funds itself without drawing from K to 12 resources*

## Hundreds

of financial scenarios  
modeled collaboratively

- Revenue projections across enrollment scenarios
- Staffing and operational cost modeling
- Capital and facility requirements
- Break even analysis and sustainability testing
- Impact scenarios on existing K to 12 programming

This work could only happen because the Superintendent, ST, and Assistant Superintendent were aligned on both the vision and the financial boundaries.

# LESSONS FROM THE PARTNERSHIP

1

## **Be immersed, not the expert**

Understand each other's world deeply enough to support it. You don't need to own it.

2

## **No surprises**

Trust is built through transparency. Communicate early and often, especially on difficult decisions.

3

## **Let the plan lead**

When the Strategic Plan and FESL drive decisions, the alignment between education and finance becomes natural.

4

## **Protect the boundary**

Discipline matters. Saying 'we will not use K to 12 funds for 0 to 5' required hundreds of scenarios to prove we could keep that promise.

5

## **Time matters**

Longevity in roles builds institutional knowledge and relational trust that cannot be fast tracked.

# ONE TEAM. NO SURPRISES. UNITED FRONT.

None of us need to be experts in each other's work.  
But we need to work together.

**Chris Kennedy | Julia Leiterman | Sandra-Lynn Shortall**

West Vancouver Schools | School District No. 45



Q&A