

Minutes of Joint TDSB Wards 2 and 3 Council
Trustee Pamela Gough and Chris Glover
Tuesday, Feb 23, 2016 at Norseman JMS

1. Welcome, Introductions: Ward Council Chair Christy Heath, Trustees Pamela Gough and Chris Glover, Norseman Principal Carolyn Wright and SAC Chair Mary Ferlito-Ryan

Trustee Pamela Gough opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and by acknowledging the traditional land of the Indigenous peoples. Trustee Glover introduced himself. Christy Heath welcomed and introduced all participants at the meeting. Norseman JMS Vice Principal Marian Wall-Ryel briefly sketched Norseman's history. Mary Ferlito-Ryan, Chair of the Norseman Parent Council, welcomed parents.

2. Budget Presentation - Associate Director Carla Kisko

Associate Director Kisko presented the upcoming TDSB Budget for 2016-17. The budget consists of two parts: an Operating Budget and a Capital Plan and Budget. Staff will complete the Operating Budget for the Board of Trustees' approval in March and will present Capital Plan and Budget in May. The Operating Budget represents the annual expenditure plan for the board's operations and the Capital budget is a plan addressing growth and renewal of school facilities.

Staff is conducting a deep review of expenses department by department in order to develop options for balancing the budget. At the same time there are number of Community Budget Sessions going on. The next steps will include:

- Presentation of a Balanced Operating budget to the Board of Trustees on March 22nd
- A series of Community Information Sessions on the Proposed Long Term Program and the Accommodation Plan through April and May
- Multi-year Proposed Capital Budget to the Board of Trustees for the end of May.

The TDSB's biggest pressure is that there is not enough funding from the Ministry of Education for day to day operations and repairs. The TDSB serves 12% of the Ontario population but receives only 5% of the overall provincial funding. Recently, the Ministry of Education has increased that allocation but it is still insufficient to cover expenses. The TDSB is the largest school board in Canada and the 5th largest in North America. Current enrolment is approximately 240,000 regular day school students and 160,000 continuing education students. The board has 588 operating schools.

Q & A Session

Question 1: Which schools are international students allowed to enrolled in?

Staff Response: We have some designated schools but placement depends largely on where students stay as their addresses are used to determine their home school.

Question 2: Is Norseman one of those schools that was equipped with solar panels on the roof?

Staff Response: Yes, Norseman School was equipped with solar panels last spring and got the roof replaced. The TDSB partners with a private company that benefits from the sale of solar energy from the

rooftop solar collectors and in return they repair roofs of TDSB schools. The duration of this agreement is 20 years and so far 312 schools have their roofs repaired.

Question 3: To what extent is the TDSB able to keep expenses manageable by employing private contractors? The daycare my child is attending is located in a TDSB owned facility and the bathroom needs to be replaced. The quote we got from the TDSB facilities was much more than it should have been.

Staff Response: The way that our collective agreement works, we use in in-house unionized labour. We have trades people on staff and they are used for as many projects as possible. The repairs completed by the in-house staff should be competitive in pricing. Push back on pricing that seems too high.

Question 4: How do we as parents get advance notice that something will be repaired and what the pricing is?

Staff Response: If you become aware during the process of repairs that something does not sense, let us know. We want to challenge our staff to be competitive so contact the Facilities Department. This is especially true for projects when the Parent Advisory Council is asked to help with funding to replace things. Work with your principals.

Question 5: If the facilities work is being done at the central board administration level, how would parents know [about costs] especially on the larger projects?

Staff Response: The TDSB's in-house trades do not handle large scale capital construction such as the addition to Norseman School. That is tendered to private contractors and we proceed with the best quote. Norseman is getting a 14 room addition. The addition will be paid for by funds from the Ministry of Education. There is a construction template that covers the size of rooms and other factors in the addition that must be approved by the Ministry and followed. There will not be sufficient funds to build anything further in the school other than the 14 classrooms that were in Ministry's approved funding envelope.

Q 5(a) Where is the contribution from the developers who are causing this community to change and increase enrolment?

A: We are looking at asking the province to change its legislation to allow the public board to collect development charges from developers whose infill buildings contribute to the growth in enrolment in areas such as Norseman. At the present time, developers pay for sewers, water mains, and roads, but not schools. It would make sense that they also pay for renewal projects and additions onto local schools which are a part of that absolutely necessary community infrastructure. The public boards in the pre-amalgamated city were able to access Education Development Charges (EDCs) but this is not the case anymore. The legislation does not allow boards that have extra capacity in their systems to collect EDCs. We have approached the government to change the legislation as the TDSB is so big a board (three times the size of the Catholic system) that inevitably there will be pockets of under-enrolled schools due to local demographic swings. To sell off these schools would be short-sighted as they will be needed in the future

Question 6: I heard about school in a high-rise within the Fort York area where the developer made some lower floors available to accommodate a school for the children living in the development. Can we consider that solution?

Staff Response: Yes, we are utilizing this solution in the very densely populated areas but our biggest problem is repairs to the vast number of TDSB's older stand alone schools. One other approach that we are using is the community hub concept which allows us to share joint use facilities with the Catholic board. We still need access to development charge revenues.

Question 7: Across the city there are schools that are operating that have some extra space. If you want to be able to access EDC's, are you essentially asking for the developers to subsidize those schools?

Staff Response: The developers do not subsidize under-utilized schools. They do need to subsidize schools in growth areas like Norseman. We are indeed amalgamating and closing some schools but we need to do that very carefully and responsibly. Nobody anticipated such a rapid growth in the city thirty years ago.

A good example is the Yonge / Sheppard area in North York. The North York Board of Education closed and sold a number of schools in that area many years ago. Right now we are busing over 1,000 kids out of that area. They cannot go to the local school as they are full and there are no core holdings left to re-open. We know where growth will happen and we need to ensure that we are ready to accommodate it.

In Etobicoke, the former Etobicoke Board of Education designated Castlebar School as surplus and leased it for over 30 years. As the enrolment at Norseman is growing, we have approached the Ministry for clearance to utilize Castlebar as a satellite facility during the construction period at Norseman. The use of Castlebar will save about \$1M that would otherwise be used for temporary portables. The Ministry is considering our proposal and we should get a response within 3 weeks.

Question 8: Since staffing is really the biggest expenditure, how can you balance the budget without cutting staff?

Staff Response: There are a number of measures such as attrition that we can implement to reduce staff without actually laying staff off.

2. Active Safe Sustainable Transportation (ASST) – Trustee Pamela Gough

Walking or biking to school is a very important physical activity that has shown proven benefits for children's health, mental health and self-efficacy. It should be greatly encouraged hence the introduction and implementation of Active Transportation Charter of the TDSB in 2013.

Bike to School Week is scheduled for May 30th to June 3rd. This week is always greatly anticipated and resulted in thousands of students joyfully cycling to school last year. Schools are encouraged to register at www.biketoschoolweek.ca for resources to help with planning as well as incentives to encourage student and staff participation.

Ward 3 has a number of schools that are participating in a ASST pilot project to increase student knowledge about safe pedestrianism and cycling skills, and as well influence the police services and city planning and traffic departments to make streets safer for students. The new projects are summarized in Trustee Gough's website under [the Ecoschools page](#). For example, Second Street JMS is working with a facilitator from Green Communities Canada to map safe routes to school for students who are walking, cycling or

rolling to school and back. David Hornell JS's school council is working with a TDSB staff member from the Ecoschools department to pilot a Guide to Safer Streets project.

For more details, you can contact Kristen.evers@tdsb.on.ca or Trustee Gough at pamela.gough@tdsb.on.ca

3. Norseman Addition Update – Dan Castaldo, TDSB Planner

Norseman JMS has received funding for a 14 room addition due to a rapid increase in enrolment. The planning/permitting/construction period is expected to last three years. During that time the school needs to operate. The staff recommendation is to re-open and utilize Castlebar Junior School, which is only 400 meters to the south of Norseman, as a temporary satellite to house a portion of the students in Norseman during construction. The lease agreement allows for an early termination in June of 2017. Once the building is returned to the TDSB, it needs to be renovated to current standards. The use of Castlebar will save over \$1 M in costs for temporary portable placement, which can be used to upgrade the Castlebar building.

TDSB has proposed to the Ministry of Education that Castlebar be used as a satellite of Norseman during the construction period, and that after the addition is completed, Castlebar be opened as a junior school with its own boundary area, feeding into Norseman for middle school. This would easily and efficiently accommodate future enrolment and provide comfort for students during the construction period.

The TDSB will be trying to shorten the length of the construction period, but experience shows that there are often lengthy waits for Ministry permissions and school construction permits in the City of Toronto. TDSB staff have presented this proposition to the Ministry of Education and they promised to respond within three weeks. Once a response is received from the Ministry, the staff will advise the community immediately by organizing a meeting.

Question 1: Will the board also expand specialty rooms within Norseman (gym, art rooms etc.) when it adds classrooms to the school?

Staff Response: There is not enough funding to add extra specialty spaces at Norseman. The Castlebar facility will allow for the expansion of the campus amenities as it has a gym and it will support projected future growth in the enrolment.

Question 3: Did the TDSB consider using same design over and over to save on architectural fees?

Staff Response: We are already reusing what we call “the box design” to save as much money as possible. We have to remember that almost all new schools are “infill” build so the design is also very much dependant on the site. We are also working on incorporating our schools as a part of developments as we mentioned before. We do need money and hopefully all the lobbying done by the organization Fix Our Schools will spur the Ministry into reconsidering the funding formula for schools.

4. PIAC Update –Christy Heath – Ward 3 Alternate PIAC representative

Christy Heath reported that the Parents as Partners Conference of the TDSB will take place on April 16 at the Enbridge Centre in the CNE grounds and encouraged parents to attend. The TDSB will be shortly releasing a policy on head concussions.

5. Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) – Richard Carter, SEAC member

As the TDSB is in the process of approving a new budget, the funding for Special Education is being allocated. SEAC will lobby strongly for no reduction in special education funding. The service delivery model needs to become more inclusionary. SEAC always welcomes parents who wish to attend their meetings. The dates are listed on the TDSB web site.

6. Trustee Pamela Gough's Report

Trustee Gough reported that she updates parents on the TDSB activities through her electronic newsletter which is published every three weeks or so. Parents can sign-up for the Trustee's newsletter through <http://www.tdsb.on.ca/ward3/Ward3.aspx>. Check the website for other information of importance about local education matters as well.

Pamela recently attended the Legislative Assembly's Question Period at Queens Park with Fix Our Schools, a group of parents who have devoted themselves full time to lobbying for changes in the Ministry funding formula for capital funding for school building maintenance and renewal. The TDSB capital backlog is now over \$3.4 B.

Adjournment – Christie Heath and Pamela Gough

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm. The next meeting will take place on March 29, 2016 at Lanor Junior Middle School at 7 pm. The focus will be on STEM (Science, Technology, Math and Science).