



REVISED

Approval of Final Budget Strategic Drivers for 2019- 2020

To: Finance, Budget and Enrolment Committee

Date: 15 April, 2019

Report No.: 04-19-3627

Strategic Directions

- Allocate Human and Financial Resources Strategically to Support Student Needs
- Provide Equity of Access to Learning Opportunities for All Students

Recommendation

It is recommended that the revised 2019-2020 Budget Strategic Drivers be approved and the Community Budget Survey: Summary of themes and stakeholders be received.

Context

This report is to provide the revised 2019-2020 Budget Strategic Drivers to be approved by the Finance, Budget and Enrolment Committee on 15 April 2019 and by Board on 17 April 2019.

The proposed 2019-20 Budget Strategic Drivers were first presented to FBEC on 12 February 2019. The drivers were considered as the 2019-2020 budget was being developed. Based on the feedback received from Trustees at the meeting, staff updated and revised the proposed strategic drivers for the 2019-20 budget. Those revised drivers were presented to FBEC 20 February 2019 for approval and then to the Board for approval on 4 March 2019 (Appendix A). The proposed drivers were then used as part of our public consultations on the 2019-20 budget.

During the public consultation process, on 15 March 2019, the Board was advised by the Ministry of Education of changes to class size averages and other funding changes for 2019-2020. Staff presented a report on the fiscal impact of the Ministry changes to FBEC 10 April 2019. That report confirmed staff's forecast of a structural deficit in 2019-20 of \$25.7M. More importantly however, staff also reported that the Ministry changes of

15 March 2019 have added an additional \$28.7M to the Board's projected budget shortfall. Added together, we are now facing a budget shortfall of \$54.4M – almost \$28.7M more than previously forecast. Moreover, the Board was unaware of the Ministry's funding reduction when it developed its budget drivers and commenced with public input on the drivers.

Staff also notes that the FBEC 10 April 2019 Report also outlines the service level impact from the Ministry changes, particularly with respect to the increase to the secondary class size average and the expiration of one-time Local Priorities funding. To review those service level reductions, please see Appendix B, the FBEC 10 April 2019 Report.

Table 1 below itemizes the negative fiscal impact of the Ministry's 15 March 2019 funding reductions.

TABLE 1

| 15 March 2019 Ministry Funding/Class Size Changes – Impact on TDSB Budget | Reduction in Funding |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Funding reduction for Designated Early Childhood Educators (DECE). This change in the calculation of funding for DECE does not impact the allocation of DECEs to the classroom; it only impacts the funding allocation for these staff. Currently, the funding allocation is 1.14 FTE per class and it is now being reduced to 1.0 FTE per class. | \$7.9M |
| Cost Adjustment Allocation. The base amount to offset non-teacher salary benchmark increases in 2005-2006 is ending 31 August 2019. Historically, the base amount of the Cost Adjustment Allocation was providing supplemental funding for education worker benchmarks. As the Ministry believes school boards have the flexibility through other grants in the Grants for Student Needs to address their staffing needs, it has discontinued this amount for the 2019-2020 school year. This is disputed by school boards. | \$9.9M |
| Human Resource Transition Supplement to temporarily provide support for the negotiated 2017-2019 agreements ends 31 August 2019. | \$1.3M |
| Classroom Loading Factor in School Facilities Operating and Renewal grant is being adjusted to increased class size in Secondary schools. | TBD |
| Grades 4 to 8 class size funding reduction due to new class size funded average of 24.5. TDSB collective agreement does not allow for class sizes to be higher than a system average of 23.24. | \$9.6M |

| 15 March 2019 Ministry Funding/Class Size Changes – Impact on TDSB Budget | Reduction in Funding |
|---|----------------------|
| (See explanatory note below.) | |
| Total | \$28.7M |

Explanatory Note: Elementary Class Size Average Funding Reduction

The EDU is increasing class size averages for Grades 4 to 8 to 24.5 students. Based on an average class size of 24.5, and based on the information we have available at this time, the TDSB projects that the EDU would have the TDSB reduce its elementary teachers by approximately 216. However, the TDSB's Collective Agreement (other school boards also have this kind of stipulation) commitment states that our Grades 4 to 8 class average must be 23.24. It is because we must honour our collective agreements; we would not be able to have 216 fewer teachers, which means that we would have a significant budget shortfall in the coming budget year. We continue to work with EDU to help them understand this situation and to advocate for funding to deal with the shortfall, since the government also expects us to follow our collective agreements. As noted in Table 1, we project the cost of the elementary class size increase to be \$9.6M for the coming budget year.

Going forward we need to take into account public input on the drivers as well as take into account the additional \$28.7 million budget shortfall. It must be emphasized that given the additional budget shortfall, we will need to prioritize the drivers to reflect the \$28.7 million additional budget shortfall.

Appendix C provides an overview of public consultation prepared by the TDSB's Research Department. A total of 15,250 respondents accessed the survey. While response numbers fluctuated, forty-eight to sixty-one percent of respondents answered at least one question. The majority of respondents (53%) identified themselves as parent/caregiver. Twenty-one percent were TDSB employees, four percent were community members, and three percent were current TDSB students. A high level summary of the TDSB stakeholders' responses was compiled. Qualitative information was drawn from stakeholder comments on each driver, while quantitative information was drawn from respondents indicating their perceived level of importance on a 10-point scale (low importance to high importance). The research findings note, although there were disagreements on the nuances within the strategic drivers, respondents generally believed all areas were important and merited both attention and funding.

The survey sought consultation on eight drivers. **(Note these were not ranked in order of priority.)**

- Differentiated Approaches to Serve Our Students
- Early Years
- Staff Allocation to Support All Students
- Indigenous Education
- Modernization and Accessibility
- Parent Engagement and Student Voice
- Professional Development
- Student Success

Generally speaking, the research report outlines that respondents questioned how all these strategic areas were going to be prioritized and funded on top of the regular daily needs of all schools. There was a desire noted by many for the board to be transparent about future funding-related decisions. A concern among some was the ability of schools in low-income neighbourhoods to fundraise for programs and resources noting that the fundraising demands and capacities are experienced quite differently across the system.

The research report summarizes the qualitative input under three themes which are listed below. Within each theme, there is an analysis of input that touches on the original eight drivers.

- **Theme One: Equity and Inclusion for Student Success and Wellbeing**
 - Differentiated Approaches to Serve our Students – includes Special Education
 - Indigenous Education
- **Theme Two: Transforming Student Learning**
 - Early Years
 - Student Success
 - Modernization and Accessibility
 - Professional Development
- **Theme Three: Engagement and Allocation of Resources**
 - Parent Engagement and Student Voice
 - Staff Allocation to Support all Students

Table Two below analyzes the quantitative input by reporting on the results of the respondents’ rating each driver on a sliding scale of low to high importance.

TABLE 2

| Strategic Driver | Percentage (%) of Respondents Indicating High Importance |
|---|--|
| Early Years (n=8,780) | 75% (n=6,619) |
| Differentiated approaches to serve our students (n=9,370) | 74% (n=6,952) |
| Student success (n=7,738) | 75% (n=5,899) |
| Staff allocation to support all students (n=8,239) | 74% (n=6,053) |
| Modernization and accessibility (n=7,765) | 65% (n=5,043) |

| Strategic Driver | Percentage (%) of Respondents Indicating High Importance |
|---|--|
| Professional development (n=7,425) | 62% (n=4,704) |
| Parent engagement and student voice (n=7,177) | 55% (n=4,031) |
| Indigenous education (n=7,470) | 54% (n=4,124) |

* "high importance" refers to respondents selecting 8, 9, or 10 on a 10 point scale.

Taking into consideration the budget consultation qualitative and quantitative analysis, and taking into consideration the change (increase) in the Board's budget shortfall, the operating budget should focus on the following drivers **in priority sequence**. Subsections within each priority blend together key objectives and outcomes of the driver and relevant pertinent aspects of the public consultation.

- Early Years
 - Early intervention supports, including early reading for students and child and family centres and early years programming.
 - Reading by the end of Grade 1 and the development of foundational math skills by the end of Grade 2.
 - Providing early literacy interventions and math programs aimed at improving student achievement in reading, writing and mathematics.
 - Pre-Kindergarten Summer Learning and transition-to-school programs.
 - Professional development for teachers and early childhood educators.
- Differentiated Approaches to Serve Our Students including Indigenous Education
 - Reduce the impact of poverty.
 - Understand the impact of low income/poverty on education and respond effectively to our students' well-being and academic needs so all students have the opportunity to succeed.
 - Raise achievement and well-being among all students and eliminate historically disproportionate low outcomes among specific groups. Achievement gaps can be connected to demographic factors such as family income, race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and disability, among others.
 - Equitable access to interventions that promote student wellbeing and student success.
 - Newcomers and English Language Learners (ELL) should continue to be supported.
 - Nutrition programs are an important component within schools.
 - Equitable distribution of these opportunities to all students in all TDSB schools.
 - Providing additional resources to specific schools through programs that fund interventions for students experiencing personal and academic challenges.
 - Programs that provide equitable access to interventions that promote the well-being of students to ensure they have access to the opportunities that will contribute to their success.
 - Importance of teaching Indigenous history and honouring the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations.

- Providing support to Toronto newcomers such as specialized programming to accelerate the development of their literacy skills in English, if it is not their primary language.
 - Ensuring schools can access appropriate programs and resources based on the specialized local needs of their students, including students with Special Education needs.
 - Support for the inclusion model provided alternate delivery models continue where they best suit student needs.
- Student Success
 - Supporting Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM) initiatives, which promote global competencies.
 - Creating the conditions and programs in schools for students to personalize their programming choices to best meet their interests, strengths, and long term goals.
 - Supporting teachers to meet the needs of their students experiencing challenges.
 - Increasing access to programs such as Cooperative Education that provide students with relevant opportunities to apply learning in real-life employment placements.
 - Variety of learning opportunities and specialized programs are critical components of students' learning. Including co-op placements, experiential learning opportunities, and apprenticeship placements.
 - Concerns with larger class sizes and the demands that places on teachers.
- Staff Allocation to Support All Students
 - School based vs central supports for student and staff mental health and wellbeing supports.
 - Hiring qualified staff, but also staff who represent and identify with the school communities they serve.
 - Where flexibility exists, align resources with Multi-Year Strategic Plan.
 - Student mental health and well-being.
 - Inclusion of students with Special Education needs.
 - Academic pathways leading to improved post-secondary opportunities.
 - Staff who support professional development.
 - Equity, human rights, anti-oppression and anti-racism.
- Modernization and Accessibility
 - Use technology to diversify instruction, assessment, and improve accessibility.
 - Accessibility and affordability of tools, devices, and infrastructure.
 - Technology is used as a tool to enhance quality teaching.
 - Develop modern learning spaces leading to more inclusive environments where educators and students have access to a wide range of digital learning tools, resources and mobile devices.
 - Improve access for all by working to remove physical and attitudinal barriers that prevent students and staff with disabilities from accessing services by ensuring all new applications are accessibility compliant.
 - Focus on improving operational efficiencies by minimizing the usage of printed material and textbooks and identifying opportunities for automation and digitization in schools and departments.
 - Increase access to data to improve organizational decision-making, reduce administrative costs, and provide better access to information and services.
 - Continuing to modernize and improve TDSB's IT infrastructure by expanding wireless access in our schools, increasing network capacity, and providing a robust, stable, secure, and highly available computing environment.

- Professional Development
 - PD needs to be more accessible for all members of staff.
 - Importance of system-wide training related to equity, anti-racism, anti-oppression.
 - More in-depth training in specific areas including Special Education Needs, behaviour management, early years, technology integration, STEAM integration, new educational insights, practical classroom applications, student success strategies.
 - Facilitate parent and community engagement and leadership opportunities, i.e., Parent Conferences, workshops, training sessions, and interpretation and translation services.
 - Support Community Advisory Committees, school councils and community partnerships.
 - Support parents of students with Special Education needs to ensure they are valued partners.
 - Staff training on strengthening relationships and creating environments where diverse identities are valued and all voices are heard and can influence education in the TDSB.

- Parent Engagement and Student Voice
 - Improving parent involvement in school improvement process.
 - Significant work underway now at TDSB in the area of parent and community engagement.
 - Important work is needed to engage newcomers and parents from marginalized or racialized groups.
 - Acknowledge the needs of the surrounding communities to authentically engage parents; different cultural groups may require different engagement strategies; and, understand that there are different levels of engagement possibilities for different families.
 - Improve supports and relationships with parents with students with Special Education Needs.
 - Improve school to parent communications.

Action Plan and Associated Timeline

Not applicable.

Resource Implications

The Board is required under the *Education Act* to submit a balanced budget by 30 June 2019 to the EDU.

Communications Considerations

Not applicable.

Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)

Not applicable.

Appendices

Appendix A: Approval of Final Budget Strategic Drivers for 2019-2020

Appendix B: 2019-2020 Projected Financial Position

Appendix C: Community Budget Survey: Summary of themes from stakeholders

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