



REVISED

## Proposed Strategic Drivers for 2019-2020 Budget

**To:** Special Finance, Budget and Enrolment Committee

**Date:** 5 February, 2019

**Report No.:** 02-19-3579

### Strategic Directions

- Allocate Human and Financial Resources Strategically to Support Student Needs

### Recommendation

It is recommended that the report regarding the proposed strategic drivers for the 2019-2020 budget be received.

### Context

At the Special Finance, Budget and Enrolment Committee (FBEC) meeting on 23 January 2019, staff presented to Trustees a budget development timeline and Trustee orientation on:

- Mandate of FBEC;
- Role of Trustees in the budget process;
- Information on the Grants for Student Needs (GSNs);
- Historical funding gaps;
- Accountability requirements;
- Capital budget discussion; and
- Operating budget discussion.

Building on this foundational knowledge, at the 30 January 2019 FBEC meeting, Trustees were presented an overview of the 2018-19 budget. This overview also covered the differences between Fixed and Flexible Allocations.

In the Toronto District School Board, student success drives everything we do. Every student deserves a great education and student learning and well-being must be at the centre of every decision we make. Our focus is ensuring that all students can succeed by having equitable access to programs and resources and increased opportunities that lead to enhanced learning outcomes.

To put that focus into action, our Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP), approved by the Board of Trustees in May 2018, sets direction and identifies five system goals that drive our work:

- Transform student learning;
- Create a culture for student and staff well-being;
- Provide equity of access to learning opportunities for all students;
- Allocate human and financial resources strategically to support student needs; and
- Build strong relationships and partnerships within school communities to support student learning and well-being.

Based on the MYSP's goals and related action plans, staff has identified eight key areas as proposed strategic drivers for the 2019-2020 budget (Appendix A). It is important to note that these areas are not detailed operational parameters. They are broad areas of focus that, once finalized and approved, will be used by staff as the strategic driving factors that guide and inform the development of the operational budget.

The next two FBEC meetings – February 12 and 20 – will provide Trustees an opportunity to discuss, consider and ultimately approve the proposed strategic drivers. Once approved, the proposed strategic drivers will go to Board on February 27 for approval and then be used as part of the public consultations.

Following the public consultations, the final strategic drivers will be presented to Board for approval on April.

The following report provides further detail on the eight proposed strategic drivers, including a brief description of the area and its importance to student achievement and well-being. It also includes examples of investment areas within the strategic driver. The proposed strategic drivers are:

- Professional Learning;
- Staff Allocation;
- Early Years;
- Student Success;
- Differentiated Support;
- Parent Engagement and Student Voice;
- Modernization and Accessibility; and
- Indigenous Education.

In balancing the Board's budget, some difficult decisions will have to be made by Trustees. Aligning a finite amount of resources – regardless of the funding announcement by the Ministry of Education – to our strategic plan will inevitably require changes in the system to ensure a more equitable distribution of resources and opportunities that support student success.

As discussions around budget continue, these proposed strategic drivers are a first step in guiding these important conversations that will determine the Board's funding priorities for the 2019-2020 school year.

## Action Plan and Associated Timeline

- February 12 – FBEC meeting; discuss and consider proposed drivers
- February 23 – FBEC meeting; discuss, consider and approve proposed drivers
- February 27 – Board meeting; proposed drivers approved
- March – public consultations
- April 17 – Board approves final proposed drivers

## Resource Implications

Not applicable.

## Communications Considerations

Once approved, the strategic drivers will inform budget-related communications and consultations strategy. Communications will be developed to support discussions and meetings related to the budget.

## Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)

Not applicable.

## Appendices

- Appendix A: Proposed Strategic Drivers for 2019-2020 Budget

## From

John Malloy, Director of Education at [john.malloy@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:john.malloy@tdsb.on.ca) or at 416-397-3190.

Craig Snider, Acting Associate Director, Business Operations and Service Excellence at [craig.snider@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:craig.snider@tdsb.on.ca) or at 416-395-8469.

Manon Gardner, Associate Director, School Operations and Service Excellence at [manon.gardner@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:manon.gardner@tdsb.on.ca) or at 416-394-2041.

Colleen Russell-Rawlins, Associate Director, Equity, Well-being and School Improvement at [colleen.russell-rawlins@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:colleen.russell-rawlins@tdsb.on.ca) or at 416-397-3187.

Kathy Witherow, Associate Director, Leadership, Learning and School Improvement at [kathy.witherow@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:kathy.witherow@tdsb.on.ca) or at 416-397-3069.

## **Proposed Strategic Drivers for 2019-2020 Budget**

### **Professional Learning**

Research indicates that professional learning for staff can lead to significant improvements in student achievement and well-being. Focussed professional learning builds capacity and equips staff with the essential strategies, tools, and resources to improve access to opportunities, eliminate disproportionate outcomes among groups of students and raise achievement and success for all schools. Such learning is also a critical part of building a culture of shared leadership.

An investment in professional learning in the 2019-2020 school year will focus on:

- Promoting a deep understanding of human rights, equity, anti-racism and anti-oppression, anti-Black racism, anti-Indigenous racism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, anti-Asian racism, and other forms of racism and discrimination against racialized groups; evidence-informed instruction; Special Education and inclusion; student and parent engagement; conditions to support well-being; academic pathways, math; and global competencies, supported by technology.
- In relation to board operations, a focus on operational effectiveness, service excellence, equity, human rights, anti-racism, and anti-oppression.

### **Staff Allocation**

The allocation of human resources must support the needs of all students, however such decisions are largely determined by factors that are outside the control of the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) or cannot be changed unilaterally by the TDSB - e.g., provincial regulations such as class size caps.

For those human resources where there is flexibility, emphasis should be placed on those resources most aligned with our MYSP and related action plans.

An investment in staff allocation in the 2019-2020 school year will focus on:

- Staff who support professional learning;
- Student mental health and well-being;
- Inclusion of students with Special Education needs;
- Academic pathways; and
- Equity, human rights, anti-oppression and anti-racism.

## **Early Years**

The early years, birth through age eight, are recognized as being critically important in supporting children's holistic development, which are the focus of the mission and values of the Board. When educators and parents work together to create optimal, inclusive, learning conditions, young children are capable of developing to their full potential and form a strong foundation for future success.

As children get older, achievement gaps are harder to close. The Board's MYSP makes specific commitments to reading by the end of Grade 1 and the development of foundational math skills by the end of Grade 2.

An investment in early years in the 2019-2020 school year will focus on:

- 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;
- Child and Family programs; and
- Professional learning for teachers and early childhood educators.

## **Student Success**

Student Success Initiatives (SSI) focus on learning experiences for students in Grades 7-12 that includes both school-based interventions and system-wide student program opportunities. Programs include Dual Credits, Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM), Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP), Special Education Experiential Learning (SPEEL), Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP), and experiential learning, which offer students a chance to apply knowledge and skills through hands-on experiences in authentic workplace and learning locations. School-based student success teams work with students, parents and community to create these learning experiences that TDSB data shows greater levels of engagement, increased credit accumulation, increased graduation rates and increased post-secondary opportunities.

An investment in student success in the 2019-2020 school year will focus on:

- Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM), 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; and

- Increasing access to programs such as ~~Business Studies~~, Financial Literacy and Co-op that provide students with relevant opportunities to apply learning in real-life employment placements.

### **Differentiated Support**

Students have different learning needs and may require different instruction or a variety of programs to be successful. Our goal is to raise achievement and well-being among all students and to eliminate historically disproportionate low outcomes among specific groups. These gaps can be connected to demographic factors such as family income, race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and disability, among others.

Toronto has the highest rate of children and families living with low-incomes in Canada. It is critically important that we 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.

An investment in differentiated support in the 2019-2020 school year will focus on:

- Reducing the impacts of poverty;
- Providing additional resources to specific schools through programs that fund interventions for in-risk students experiencing personal and academic challenges; programs that provide equitable access to interventions that promote well-being of students, to ensure students have access to the opportunities that will contribute to their success;
- 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; and
- Supporting nutrition programs in schools where need is high.

### **Parent Engagement and Student Voice**

Parent/caregiver engagement is a key factor in the enhancement of student achievement and well-being. When schools, families, and communities are actively engaged students are more likely to be motivated, earn higher grades, have better behavioural and social skills, and continue their education to a higher level.

An investment in parent engagement and student voice in the 2019-2020 school year will focus on:

- Facilitating parent and community engagement and leadership opportunities, i.e., Parent Conferences, workshops and training sessions;
- Support for Community Advisory Committees, school councils and community partnerships;
- Supporting parents with students with Special Education needs to ensure they are valued partners; and
- 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.

### **Modernization and Accessibility**

Today's modern learners require the knowledge and tools that help them compete effectively in a globalized, interconnected and technology-infused world.

The TDSB is focused on developing a technology modernization and accessibility strategy to develop innovative new ways to digitize, automate and streamline our administrative and classroom systems to increase access to technology services that will better support student achievement, well-being and equity and improve administrative and operational efficiencies.

An investment in modernization and accessibility in the 2019-2020 school year will focus on:

- Developing modern learning spaces leading to more inclusive environments where educators and students have access to a wide range of digital learning tools and resources and mobile devices that support modern teaching practices by identifying the minimum technology expectations for schools to transform student learning;
- Improving 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;
- Improving operational efficiencies by minimizing the usage of printed material and textbooks and identifying opportunities for automation and digitization in both schools and central departments by improving the delivery of IT Services by consolidating fragmented management tools into a single application with greater automation, self-service;
- Increasing access to data to improve organizational decision-making, help reduce administrative costs, and to provide better access to information and services by continuing to provide additional features and functionality to meet the needs of the school leadership; and
- Continuing to modernize and improve TDSB's IT infrastructure and network to expand wireless access in our schools, increase network capacity, and provide a

robust, stable, secure, and highly available computing environment by migrating the legacy telephony systems to current IP based communications.

### **Indigenous Education**

The impact of colonization and public schooling on Indigenous communities is ongoing, and there remain knowledge gaps among staff and students about the history, culture and contemporary reality of Indigenous peoples in Canada. This work will be guided by “Education for Reconciliation” as outlined in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s, Calls to Action, #62 and #63.

An investment in Indigenous Education in the 2019-2020 school year will focus on:

- Building relationships with Indigenous communities to address the knowledge gap that exists among staff about Indigenous peoples;
- Working with Indigenous communities to close those gaps through professional learning for trustees and staff; and
- Creating culturally-safe and trauma-informed schools so that staff is better able to support the achievement and well-being of all students through changes in professional practice. Trauma-informed schools support Indigenous students and their families impacted by colonization and the legacy of residential schools by focusing on Indigenous wellness through the mind, body, spirit and heart.