

## APPENDIX E

This document has been updated to reflect staff changes to the proposed budget presented at the May 15 Finance, Budget and Enrollment Committee. Changes are marked in red.

TDSB Proposed Balanced Budget

### Backgrounder:

- Proposed Changes to French Immersion (FI), Extended French (EF) and Gifted Transportation Services
- Outdoor Education Program
- Secondary School Review

Facing a \$67.8 million revenue shortfall, staff have proposed to the TDSB's Finance, Budget and Enrolment Committee a balanced budget plan for the 2019-20 school year. The revenue shortfall is due to a TDSB structural deficit of approximately \$25 million combined with a Ministry of Education funding reduction of a projected \$42.1 million.

The proposed balanced budget plan is guided by the TDSB's [Multi Year Strategic Plan](#) and the [strategic budget drivers](#) approved by the Board. In the past, the Board has made up shortfalls by finding savings and efficiencies during the course of the year in other areas of the budget – cuts that have for the most part not affected classrooms and students. But the Board is running out of options.

For years, we have provided programs and services that responded to special or unique needs of urban education that exceeded the Ministry of Education's funding allocation. Staff's proposed balanced budget plan will bring the TDSB more in line with the provincial funding allocation.

Staff acknowledge that there are strategies deployed by other school boards to reduce the overall costs associated with the delivery of the French Immersion and Extended French programs. Reducing entry points, minimum and maximum class sizes are

among several changes, however they cannot be in place to affect the coming academic or budget year. (See below: French Immersion, Gifted, Alternative and Secondary School Reviews and Changes for 2020-2021.)

Moreover, the timing of the Ministry grant reduction announcements to school boards – Mid- March and Mid- April have not left sufficient time to consider program changes by June 30<sup>th</sup> when the budget is due to be balanced.

Under these circumstances and taking into consideration the twin effect of Board's structural budget shortfall and the Ministry's funding reductions, there are few other options beyond changes to transportation services. The funding situation is so serious that without transportation services reductions, delivering the program would be a challenge, or budgets that affect other programs or supports for students would need to be reduced.

In short, to ensure we can continue to offer these valued programs, staff is proposing transportation service reductions to French Immersion/Extended French and the Gifted program. For Outdoor Education staff is proposing program delivery changes. There are no proposed transportation changes.

### **Proposed Changes to French Immersion, Extended French and Gifted Transportation Services**

Staff are proposing that the Board no longer exceed its transportation budget. Changes to transportation services need to meet this objective but there are very few choices.

The Board's general transportation policy stipulates that students in SK to Grade 5 may be eligible for school bus transportation if they live 1.6 km or more away from their home school. Students in Grades 6, 7 and 8 may be eligible to receive TTC tokens if they live 3.2 km or more away from their home school.

Students attending a high school that is not their home high school do not receive a public transportation subsidy (TTC tokens). Day school regular elementary students

attending a school other than their home school under optional attendance do not receive busing services.

Under changes proposed balanced budget plan relating to French Immersion, Extended French and Gifted transportation services:

- ~~SK to Grade 5 French Immersion and Extended French students attending a program that is not at their home school will not be provided with busing transportation services.~~
- ~~French Immersion and Extended French students in Grade 6 and above attending a program that is not at their home school will no longer be provided with a public transportation subsidy (TTC tokens).~~
- ~~The proposed change will bring the TDSB's French Immersion and Extended French transportation services in line with the Toronto's Catholic District School Board.~~
- ~~Gifted students in Grades 4 and 5 that attend a program that is not at their home school will continue to receive busing transportation services.~~
- ~~Gifted students in Grade 6 and above attending a program that is not at their home school will not be provided with a public transportation subsidy (TTC tokens).~~

Staff's proposed change to the above recommendation presented to the May 15 Finance, Budget and Enrollment Committee is as follows:

- Continue French Immersion and Extended French transportation for Grades SK-8 for the 2019-20 school year.
- Eliminate transportation for French Immersion/Extended French for all grades SK-12 in September 2020.
- In the meantime, through the French Review Report due to be before Board in June 2019 and the work that will follow in the summer of 2019, staff will examine program placement and review the transportation policy to ensure greater access to programs.
- Staff recommends the 2019-20 budget be approved with the elimination of TTC tokens for grades 9-12 for French Immersion/Extended French.
- With respect the Gifted program, staff will also be reviewing placement and access to Gifted programs. For September 2019, busing will continue for Gifted students in Grades 4- 8.

- For the Gifted program, staff propose that that 2019 budget be approved with the elimination of the TTC tokens for students in the Gifted program Grades 9-12.
- Staff recommends that for September 2020, transportation services be eliminated for Gifted students Grade 4-12.

Staff's rationale for the proposed delay include additional time needed to examine program placement and review the transportation policy to ensure greater access to these programs throughout the city, and additional time for affected students and their families to prepare for the busing reduction in 2020-21 school year.

Staff are mindful of the impact of this service reduction on families, especially those who will be challenged from a financial perspective. Under the Board's equity commitment and equity fund, schools will continue to provide TTC tickets to students whose families are challenged to meet transportation costs as a result of the proposed change of service.

The financial impact to the Board of providing additional transportation subsidies for elementary French Immersion and extended French cannot at this time be accurately determined. However, according to the Board's demographic data on the French Immersion and Extended French program, approximately 66 percent of families whose children attend the elementary program earn a household income greater than \$100,000.

As noted above, Toronto's Catholic school board currently does not provide busing at any grade for French Immersion. It is difficult to compare Toronto's school board transportation policies related to French Immersion, Extended French and Gifted students with Greater Toronto Area (GTA) school board transportation practices. GTA school boards face very different geographic and distance challenges by serving both urban and rural communities with more limited public transit options.

### **Proposed Changes to Outdoor Education**

With a revenue shortfall of \$67.8 million, the choices we face mean that we need to change the delivery of some programs to ensure there are sufficient funds to offer the

program. While the Ministry does provide grants that can be used for Outdoor Education, the Board has consistently spent well above the allocation on its 10 Outdoor Education sites.

As stated earlier, over the years the Board has managed to make up the shortfall by savings in other areas. This is no longer possible.

Staff's proposed changes to Outdoor Education are based on a revised delivery model that while different, still ensures there is a viable, affordable and accessible Outdoor Education program for all students.

By consolidating and reducing sites from 10 to six, staff estimates that the Board can still offer most students trips. The TDSB's per student fee to participate in this programming has not changed since 1998 so a modest increase in fees will help provide additional revenue to ensure a quality outdoor education experience. As we have always done, students and/or their parents that find the fee a challenge will be eligible for financial assistance from the Board Equity Fund.

For the TDSB, the largest urban school board in Canada, Outdoor Education is a valued program and it has provided memorable experience for TDSB students. If the proposed changes proceed, the TDSB will still be operating more Outdoor Education Centres than most school boards in Toronto, the GTA and across Ontario.

### **French Immersion/Extended French, Gifted, Alternative and Secondary School Reviews and Changes for 2020-2021**

The TDSB's delivery model for the French Immersion is unique. Unlike other boards which typically provide one or two entry points into French Immersion, the TDSB offers several entry points. The two system entry points are: Senior Kindergarten for French Immersion and Grade 4 for Junior Extended French. Other locally managed French as a Second Language entry points include Core French in Grade 4, Middle Immersion in Grade 4, Extended French in Grade 7, Intensive Extended French in Grade 6 at one school and Hawthorne Bilingual French starting in SK.

A staff report on Core French and French Immersion/Extended French will be discussed by the Board in June 2019 and will propose changes to existing entry points to FI, transportation, teacher recruitment, staffing, minimum class size for French Immersion, immersion centres, and triple track schools. The changes recommended will provide a better experience for all students by bringing a greater focus to a few selected programs, and concentration of resources.

Our current staffing allocation for FI/EF is putting added pressure on the system by supplementing FI/EF classes with significantly higher number of teachers than necessary based on enrolment. This is due to the fact that we staff classes lower than Ministry caps in many instances.

Minimizing the entry points, combined with capping programs as per Ministry directives will alleviate the overstaffing for French Immersion and will result in significant savings while not impacting on student learning.

Current teacher staffing allocation for French Immersion, Gifted and alternative and secondary schools is being reviewed by staff and changes are also expected. Teacher allocations will need to reflect actual enrolment. When teacher allocation is tied to enrolment, secondary schools with lower enrolment cannot offer a full range of programs for students compared to higher enrolment schools. For this reason, staff will be reviewing lower enrolment secondary schools with an eye to consolidate in an effort to boost programming options for students.

### **Secondary Review**

Staff will present a report on secondary review in June. The government's class size announcement requires us to use more limited staff in very effective ways. The report to Board will be supported by the Board's Multi Year Strategic Plan, Student Voice, and Access to programs. The report will present concepts and guiding principles to staffing allocation, distribution & locations of programs, specialized schools, facilities as well as capital plan to support our enrolment projections in secondary for the next 10 years.

In the shorter term, we know that students in high schools with excess capacity and therefore smaller number of teachers are not receiving the range of programs that are offered in low capacity, higher enrolled and higher staffed schools. School consolidation aimed at improving program offerings for students also carries with it financial savings that can be reinvested to improve student learning. The consolidation of 10-15 high schools would create approximately \$10.3 million to \$15 million in savings. The report in June will focus on both the short-and-longer term strategic considerations and benefits of high school consolidation.