**TDSB Preliminary Analysis of Grants for Student Needs – 2019-20**

After an analysis of the Grants for Student Needs (GSN) – 2019-20, the Toronto District School Board is still projecting a $54.4 million revenue shortfall for the 2019-20 school year. Based on this preliminary analysis, this revenue shortfall is not expected to change significantly.

Increases in some categories of the GSN, such as transportation, languages and special education require more information to determine what the money is for or how it is to be directed. Unfortunately, this information may not be available until the supporting GSN technical paper is released in mid-May.

The Ministry’s website indicates that TDSB’s grant allocation will drop from $2,992,738 billion to $2,971,490 billion — a drop of $21.2 million. Add to this the TDSB’s projected structural deficit of $25.7 million, for the low range $46.9 million revenue shortfall. The variance between the projected $54.4 million and $46.9 million will depend on further clarification with the Ministry and the technical paper which shows how the grants have been calculated. **(See Backgrounder #1 below.)**

Staff updated Trustees at the Finance, Budget and Enrolment Committee meeting on Monday, April 29. [**Watch the staff presentation of GSN details**](https://video.isilive.ca/tdsb/FBEC2019/2019-04-29-FBEC.mp4.html) and Q&A.

Other Top Line GSN Information:

* Ministry still plans to financially penalize the TDSB and other school boards for elementary teacher collective agreements that do not allow larger class sizes -- TDSB to see a $9.6 million funding short fall. **(See Backgrounder #1)**
* Ministry restores funding for Focus on Youth Summer Program **( See Backgrounder #2 )**
* Ministry to levy a provincial surcharge on school boards’ International (VISA) student tuition feesthat will cost the TDSB $2.9 million in lost revenue. **(See Backgrounder # 3)**
* The provincial allocation for school capital renewal will be $1.4 billion – the same level as last year. The TDSB’s 2019-20 allocation is expected to be between $225 and $250 million.

**Backgrounder # 1: Grants for Student Needs: Preliminary Analysis**

The enclosed chart entitled [**Projected Grants Student Needs for the 2019-20 School Year – Toronto DSB**](http://www.tdsb.on.ca/portals/0/aboutus/budget/Projected-Grants-for-Student-Needs-2019-20-School-Year.pdf) has been published on the Ministry of Education’s website. The chart shows the Ministry’s calculations for a number of grants for Operating and Other Purposes. The two columns on the right side of the chart outline the level of funding for 2018-19 (Revised Estimates) and 2019-20 (Projections).

You will see on Line #18 that the Ministry has calculated the total funding for the 17 grants listed has been reduced by approximately $21 million from 2018-19 to 2019-20.

Some grants have been increased including the Language Grant (approx. $7M); Special Education Grant (approx. $3M); and Student Transportation Grant (approx. $9M). We will need more detailed information (Technical Paper) from the Ministry before we can accurately

analyze these numbers and their impact. We know now that the Language Grant is likely to decrease because of the Ministry’s overestimation of our enrolment growth.

With regard to the Student Transportation Grant increase, approximately $4M of that figure accounts for inflation (increased costs), so the remaining approximate $6M increase is being reviewed by staff to determine the impact.

Included in the April 26 GSN announcement was the Attrition Protection Allocation. The Ministry has introduced this funding for up to four years to protect front-line staff impacted by the proposed changes to class sizes and e-learning; allowing school boards to phase in the proposed class sizes.

Through this four-year attrition protection, funding will be provided to top-up school boards where the change in funded classroom teachers exceeds the actual attrition and other voluntary leaves. Therefore, this is no negative fiscal impact to our board.

For elementary schools, we still face a $9.6 million budget shortfall because of the Ministry’s increase to the class size average to 24.5 students. That is because our collective agreement commitment states that our Grades 4 to 8 class size average must be 23.24. To meet that commitment we require 216 more elementary teachers than what the Ministry is funding for the new larger class size average.

To balance our 2019-20 operating budget, we could see some central teaching staff returning to classrooms. That would result in a current teacher at that school becoming surplus and therefore would need to be laid off.

**Backgrounder # 2: Priorities and Partnerships Fund (formally called EPO)**

In addition to the GSNs, the province also released the details of the Priorities and Partnerships Fund (PPF) as part of the April 26 announcement. The PPF funding replaces the previous Education Programs – Other (EPO) funding that supports specific programs and initiatives.

To date, the ministry has only released province-wide PPF funding. Board-specific funding levels have not been announced yet.

Math funding decreased by approximately $15.5 million province-wide.

We were very pleased to see that funding for the Focus on Youth program was reinstated (with a 5% reduction province-wide) for the summer of 2019 as this was a key recommendation made by the Board earlier this year. TDSB staff are currently working to develop a model to ensure that the program will be in place for this summer to support our students and communities.

The April 26 announcement did not include information regarding a number of grants, including Community Use of Schools. Once these details are released by the Ministry, we will provide an analysis of the impact of this funding on the TDSB.

**Backgrounder #3: International Student Provincial Surcharge**

In an unprecedented move,the Ministry will begin collecting a $1,300 fee from school boards for each international student that is enrolled in their schools. Beginning in 2019–20, a school board’s total GSN operating grants shall be reduced by an amount equal to a flat fee of $1,300 multiplied by the international student enrolment, pro-rated where the students are not full-time. This Ministry decision will cost the TDSB $2.9 million in lost revenue that will go into the provincial treasury.

School boards continue to be responsible for setting tuition fee amounts for international students per the tuition fees regulation, which sets the minimum amount that must be charged to non-resident students.

Challenging decisions will need to be made by the Board of Trustees to balance the budget while ensuring student learning and achievement, and providing equitable allocation of resources so that all students, including those with special needs, receive the support they need to be successful.

We will be working hard to ensure our students feel the impact of this projected deficit as little as possible.