



Answering questions about  
funding Toronto's Public Schools

# Investments in Student Education



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## Answering your questions about funding Toronto's public schools

### 1. How is the Toronto District School Board funded?

Like all Ontario public school boards, the TDSB is funded by the provincial government through grants which are based primarily on student enrolment numbers. A large portion of the grants supports provincial initiatives such as full-day kindergarten, provincially bargained salary and benefit increases, and class size caps.

### 2. What is the cost of operating Toronto's public schools?

The TDSB's 2017-18 operating budget is approximately \$3.3 billion. The operating budget is used to pay for the day-to-day operation of our schools and to deliver quality programs and services to students across the district. The operating budget covers staff salaries and benefits, facility operations, utilities, technology and transportation services.

### 3. Did the TDSB make cuts to schools and programs to balance the 2018-19 budget?

This April, trustees approved a balanced budget with no cuts to schools or programs. However, balancing the budget is always challenging as provincial funding represents the vast majority of revenue for the TDSB. Any changes to provincial funding could have a significant impact on the Board budget.

### 4. What can impact TDSB and create a budget challenge for the Board?

We welcome more than 242,000 students and 160,000 life-long learners at 554 buildings across the city. As the largest school board in Ontario, we face a number of unique budget challenges, including an aging infrastructure and changing enrolment, whose impact can be felt in classrooms and schools across our system. In addition, we face the increasingly complex needs of our growing urban communities.

## A few factors that can impact our budget:

### Enrolment

The TDSB represents approximately 12.2% of students in Ontario.

While school staffing is based on the number of students in a school and is adjusted as enrolment changes, many other costs are less flexible. These include facility costs (utilities, maintenance), information technology infrastructure, and transportation services. We do not receive any funding for maintaining extra classroom space that has resulted from declining enrolment in previous years.

### Funding Gaps

The TDSB offers a number of programs and services that make a big difference for students – things like alternative schools, outdoor education, lunchroom supervisors, and student nutrition programs. These programs are not fully funded by the Province.

### Special Education

The cost of providing Special Education support that TDSB students need is \$32.7 million more than the funding we receive and this gap is getting bigger every year. TDSB continues to support its most vulnerable students, but this does create challenges in balancing the budget.



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### Capital and Renewal

The TDSB's priority is to provide students with the best learning spaces we can for their success. Each year we submit a capital plan to the Province that sets out how we will manage our aging infrastructure, a \$4.05 billion capital renewal backlog. Our system has 554 schools, 198 of these are in critical condition and 28 schools need extensive renovations.

Over the last three years, the Ministry has provided significant new funding to support renewal work. This funding needs to continue in order to partially address our renewal needs.

We continue to face significant growth pressures in some neighbourhoods and that has created the need for new schools or expansions to existing schools.

The TDSB continues to advocate for access to Education Development Charges (EDCs) to support growth and renewal. EDCs provide school boards with funds to purchase school sites and cover all related site preparation and development costs that result from growth. The TDSB does not have access to EDCs because the Board has surplus space in some areas of the city. Given that the city is so large and diverse, the TDSB is faced with the challenge of having both growth areas and aging neighbourhoods with declining enrolment.

Toronto is the fastest-growing municipality in all of Ontario; the TDSB must have the same access to all capital funding sources available to support enrolment growth.

### 5. Does TDSB have a long-term strategy to support its capital requirements?

Every year, the Board refreshes its Long-Term Program and Accommodation Strategy (LTPAS) to ensure that the program and pupil accommodation needs of our students are being addressed in the most efficient way possible to improve learning opportunities and student achievement.

### 6. How can TDSB community members help?

When a candidate comes to your door, ask hard questions about education funding. What your child is learning, how your local school operates, and how much of your tax dollars are spent on education is directly affected by the policies and decisions of the Ontario government.

You can also visit each party's website for information about their election platforms and to see where they stand on funding the real cost of educating Toronto's students.

**Green Party of Ontario**

[www.gpo.ca](http://www.gpo.ca)

**New Democratic Party of Ontario**

[www.ontariondp.com](http://www.ontariondp.com)

**Ontario Liberal Party**

[www.ontarioliberal.ca](http://www.ontarioliberal.ca)

**Progressive Conservative Party**

[www.ontariopc.com](http://www.ontariopc.com)

