2021-22 Strategic Budget Drivers (Draft)

The Strategic Budget Drivers help inform the development of the TDSB's operating budget by ensuring alignment of resource allocation with the Board's system priorities, including those reflected in the [Multi-Year Strategic Plan](). The TDSB's budget drivers are updated and approved by the Board of Trustees on an annual basis to ensure that they reflect the most current and up-to-date priorities.

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way the TDSB operates in many ways, and the 2021-22 Budget Drivers will need to reflect this new reality. In particular, areas such as mental health and well-being supports for students, access to technology, and Early Years supports will continue to adapt as the situation evolves.

Despite all the unknowns facing the TDSB next year, we remain committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. This includes our ongoing commitment to human rights, equity, anti-racism, and our commitment to combatting anti-Indigeneity, anti-Black racism, and all other forms of racism and discrimination. This is the foundation of everything we do and every decision we make, underpins all programming at every grade level, and is incorporated into all of the Budget Drivers listed below.

Please note that the Strategic Budget Drivers listed below are currently in draft form and will be edited and changed based on consultation with key stakeholders. The Budget Drivers are scheduled to be finalized in February 2021.

Early Years

- Ensure early intervention supports, including early reading for students, child and family centres and early years programming.
- Support reading by the end of Grade 1 and the development of foundational math skills by the end of Grade 2.
- Provide early literacy interventions and math programs aimed at improving student achievement in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Support Pre-Kindergarten Summer Learning and transition-to-school programs.
- Provide professional development for teachers and early childhood educators.

Differentiated Approaches to Serve Our Students including Indigenous Education

- Recognize the importance of teaching Indigenous history and honouring the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations.
- Continue to effectively use all resources provided by the Federal and Provincial governments to support Indigenous education.
- Work to reduce the impact of poverty by using an equity lens
- 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 improve well-being among all students and eliminate historically disproportionate low outcomes among specific groups.
- Understand that achievement gaps can be connected to demographic factors such as family income, race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and disability, among others and respond effectively.

- Improve access, opportunities and outcomes for Black students across TDSB through initiatives and programs such as the new Centre for Black Student Excellence.
- Ensure equitable access to interventions, initiatives and programs that promote student well-being and student success.
- Continue to support Newcomers and English Language Learners (ELL) through specialized programming to accelerate the development of their literacy skills in English, if it is not their primary language.
- Ensure Student Nutrition Programs have the resources to support students in school and at home.
- Support 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.
- Ensure schools, both in-person and virtual, 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.
- Prioritize student mental health and well-being by ensuring the appropriate supports are in place to support all students, with a particular focus on supporting students through the pandemic.
- Ensure the health and safety of students and staff by ensuring the necessary resources, learning and training are in place.

Student Success

- Support Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM) initiatives, which promote global competencies.
- Create the conditions and programs in schools for students to personalize their programming choices to best meet their interests, strengths, and long term goals.
- Support teachers to meet the needs of their students experiencing challenges.
- Increase access to programs such as Cooperative Education that provide students with relevant opportunities to apply learning in real-life employment placements.
- Ensure a variety of learning opportunities and specialized programs, such as co-op placements, experiential learning opportunities, and apprenticeship placements are available.
- Advocate for smaller class sizes due to the concerns with larger class sizes and the demands that they place on teachers.

Staff Allocation to Support All Students

- Align staffing resources to support student and staff mental health and well-being.
- Hire qualified staff who represent and identify with the school communities they serve.
- Align staffing resources to support the Multi-Year Strategic Plan and needs arising from the pandemic.
- Support the inclusion of students with Special Education needs.
- Support academic pathways that lead to improved post-secondary opportunities.

Modernization and Accessibility

- Use technology to diversify instruction, assessment, and improve accessibility.

- Focus on the accessibility and affordability of tools, devices, and infrastructure.
- Enhance quality of teaching through technology with professional development.
- 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.
- Continue 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.
- Work towards a 1:1 ratio of student to device.
- Continue to enhance the virtual learning environment with access to digital resources.

Professional Development

- Ensure professional development is accessible for all staff members.
- Support system-wide staff professional development, especially in the areas of Equity, human rights, anti-oppression and anti-racism.
- Create opportunities for 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.
- Continue to develop professional development opportunities and resources to support staff in working in a remote environment.
- Facilitate parent and community engagement and leadership opportunities (e.g. Parent Conferences, workshops, training sessions, interpretation and translation services, etc.)
- Support Community Advisory Committees, school councils and community partnerships.
- Support parents of students with Special Education needs to ensure they are valued partners.
- Support 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.
- Ensure that staff have access to the appropriate Health & Safety training, supports and resources.

Parent Engagement and Student Voice

- Continue to promote parent involvement in the School Improvement Process.
- Support the work underway in the area of parent and community engagement.
- Engage newcomers and parents from marginalized or racialized groups.
- Acknowledge the needs of the surrounding communities to authentically engage parents.
- Recognize that different cultural groups may require different engagement strategies, and families may have different levels of engagement possibilities.

- Improve support and relationships with parents with students with Special Education Needs.
- Improve school-to-parent communications.