



## **2023-24 Strategic Budget Drivers**

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

**Date:** 15 February, 2023

**Report No.:** 02-23-4480

### **Strategic Directions**

- 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
- Build Strong Relationships and Partnerships Within School Communities to Support Student Learning and Well-Being

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the proposed strategic budget drivers for the 2023-24 budget be approved.

### **Context**

The 2023-24 strategic budget drivers and consultation plan report was presented to Trustees at the 23 November 2022 Finance, Budget and Enrolment Committee (FBEC) meeting.

Staff have since consulted with the TDSB Community Advisory Committees, SEAC and PIAC and solicited their input on these drivers. An online survey was also made available on the TDSB external website from 11 January 2023 to 14 February 2023, to gather feedback from the community.

Based on 128 survey responses received, and feedback gathered from meetings with SEAC, PIAC and some of the Community Advisory Committees, the 2023-24 proposed strategic budget drivers were updated and **are** presented in Appendix A for consideration and input. For reference, the 2022-23 strategic budget drivers are provided in Appendix B. A copy of the 2023-24 survey responses is also provided in Appendix C for reference, along with the survey questions in Appendix D.

While all of the listed budget drivers are of significant importance, the top six strategic budget drivers are presented below and in Appendix A, based on the budget priority ranking gathered from the public consultation survey:

- Staff allocation to support students
- Student and staff safety, mental health and well-being
- Student success and engagement
- Equitable access to learning opportunities, including Indigenous Education
- Human rights
- Modernization and accessibility

Student and staff safety, mental health and well-being represent TDSB's main focus area for 2023-24. Many of the survey responses also highlighted the need for additional resources around literacy and reading assessment support, teaching resources, increasing staff allocation, reducing class sizes, and investments in Special Education. **These areas have been incorporated into the six 2023-24 key strategic budget drivers.**

**This year, a key update is the inclusion of climate action commitments as part of the following budget drivers: Student and Staff Safety, Mental Health and Well-being; Student Success and Engagement; Equitable Access to Learning Opportunities to Serve Our Students; and, Modernization and Accessibility. Including climate action in a number of areas reflects the TDSB's commitment to urgently addressing the issue of climate change in our schools. These additions were made following important feedback received in the survey and from the Environmental Sustainability Community Advisory Committee.**

Other budget drivers discussed in the survey include early years support, parent and community engagement, student nutrition, staff professional development, English Language Learners (ELL) support, school cleanliness and ventilation.

As discussions around the 2023-24 budget continue, these proposed strategic drivers are a first step in guiding these important discussions that will determine the Board's funding priorities for the upcoming school year.

## **Action Plan and Associated Timeline**

Staff will update the proposed strategic budget drivers based on trustee feedback received.

## **Resource Implications**

Not applicable.

## **Communications Considerations**

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

The final strategic drivers will be posted on the TDSB budget website.

## **Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)**

Not applicable.

## **Appendices**

Appendix A: Proposed 2023-24 Strategic Budget Drivers

Appendix B: 2022-23 Prior year Strategic Budget Drivers

Appendix C: Survey Feedback Received on 2023-24 Strategic Budget Drivers

Appendix D: 2023-24 Strategy Budget Drivers Survey Questions

## **From**

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## **2023-24 Proposed Strategic Drivers**

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](#). Since the implementation of the plan in 2018, there have been many changes impacting the Board's budget resource allocation, primarily as a result of the pandemic and the need for digital transformation. The Board is currently engaging with internal and external stakeholders to refresh its Multi-Year Strategic Plan, while ensuring continuous commitment and dedication to academic achievement, well-being and equity of students.

As the Board commences its 2023-24 budget development process and Year 2 review of the three-year Deficit Recovery Plan, staff are recommending these proposed strategic budget drivers to help guide upcoming budget decisions.

### **Student and Staff Safety, Mental Health and Well-being**

- Prioritize student safety, security and well-being of students and staff by ensuring the appropriate supports are in place.
- Consider the long-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on student mental health and well-being and ensure that effective interventions and supports are in place.
- Review the current service model to prevent and address community and school violence.
- Ensure that supports are in place to address the growing concern around climate change and its impact on the current and long-term mental health and well-being of students and staff.
- Provide students with meaningful opportunities to address climate change and participate in climate action to ensure they are supported in making positive changes that will have an impact on their communities and the world in the years ahead.
- Equip educators with the tools necessary to teach, assess, support, and relate to students to ensure that student mental health and well-being is at the centre of teaching and learning.

- Maintain ventilation improvements and caretaking measures in schools and administrative sites to keep students and staff healthy.

### **Staff Allocation to Support All Students**

- Align staffing resources to support student and staff safety, mental health and well-being, both in schools and across TDSB workspaces.
- Hire qualified staff who represent and identify with the school communities they serve.
- Align staffing resources to support the Multi-Year Strategic Plan, and to promote equity and service excellence across the system.
- Focus on staff re-engagement strategies to minimize the impact of absenteeism on student learning.
- **Where appropriate, support the inclusion of students with Special Education needs in regular day school.**
- **Ensure that staffing reflects the needs of all students, including those with Special Education needs.**
- Support academic pathways that lead to improved post-secondary opportunities.

### **Equitable Access to Learning Opportunities to Serve Our Students, including Indigenous Education**

- Actively centre Indigenous perspectives, histories and contemporary contexts into every school and every classroom and honour the Truth and Reconciliation of Canada's Call to Action.
- Continue to effectively use all resources provided by the Federal and Provincial governments to support Indigenous education.
- Using an equity lens, work to reduce the impact of poverty by understanding its impact on education and responding effectively.

- Raise achievement and improve well-being among all students and eliminate historically disproportionate low outcomes among specific groups (connected to demographic factors such as family income, race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and disability).
- Understand how climate change disproportionately impacts certain groups and the role that schools play in addressing this inequity.
- Improve access, opportunities and outcomes for Black students across the TDSB through initiatives and programs such as the Centre for Black Student Excellence.
- 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.
- Ensure schools can access appropriate programs and resources based on the specialized local needs of their students, including students with Special Education needs.
- Support alternative delivery models to best support all students.
- The TDSB is committed to ensuring that all students learn in a supportive and inclusive environment where all voices are valued and heard.

### **Student Success and Engagement**

- Allocate resources to support literacy and reading assessments, and Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM) initiatives to 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 who are 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.
- Prioritize student learning as it relates to climate change and environmental sustainability to build awareness and promote change, **and ensure that staff are supported through professional development**
- Advocate for smaller class sizes due to the concerns with larger class sizes and the demands that they place on teachers.
- Implement equitable practices and pedagogy to improve student success and access for students in underserved communities.

## **Human Rights**

- Identify and address all forms of racism, including anti-Black racism, anti-Indigenous racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia, anti-Asian racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and discrimination faced by those with disabilities.
- Enable, support and inspire the creation and preservation of a culture of human rights where schools and workplaces are safe, welcoming, equitable, inclusive and free of discrimination and harassment.
- Ensure accountability across the TDSB to uphold the human rights of all students, staff and communities.
- Identify and amplify the human rights concerns of historically marginalized and disadvantaged groups and ensure that these concerns are at the centre of every decision made within the Board.
- Create a culture where the work of the Human Rights Office moves beyond conflict management and towards a greater focus on system transformation, education and capacity building.
- Improve outreach and engagement to all staff, students and parents/guardians so that everyone is aware of their rights and responsibilities.

- Support the Human Rights action plan to identify, address, remedy and prevent racism and discrimination, especially systemic barriers, so each and every student can reach their full potential.

### **Modernization and Accessibility**

- Use technology to diversify instruction, assessment and improve accessibility.
- Ensure equity of access, 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 barriers that prevent students and staff with disabilities from accessing services and ensure all new applications are accessibility compliant.
- **Ensure that environmental sustainability is at the forefront of all decision making relating to the modernization of our buildings and transportation services.**
- Focus on improving operational efficiencies by minimizing the use of printed material and textbooks and identifying opportunities for digitization and automation 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 the 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.
- Continue to support the 1:1 Student Device Strategy, to ensure equitable access to learning opportunities for all students.
- Continue to enhance the virtual learning environment with access to digital resources.