2022-23 Strategic Budget 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. 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.

COVID-19 continues to impact TDSB operations in many ways, and the 2022-23 Budget Drivers reflect the ongoing nature of the pandemic and the additional resources needed to support students through the Board's pandemic recovery plan. We are hopeful that as vaccination rates continue to climb across the city, particularly among children, we will be able to move beyond the acute needs of the pandemic; however, we will continue to be prepared to adapt, as required, based on the path of the pandemic.

Throughout the pandemic, the TDSB has remained steadfast in our commitment to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. We are committed to promoting and protecting human rights and combating 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. This is the foundation of everything we do and every decision we make. Our commitment to equity underpins all programming at every grade level, and is incorporated into every section of the Budget Drivers listed below.

1. Mental Health and Well-Being

- Prioritize student mental health and well-being by ensuring the appropriate supports are in place for all students.

- 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.

- Build positive school cultures that support the mental health and overall well-being (physical, cognitive, social, emotional and spiritual) of all students.

- 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.

2. Staff Allocation to Support All Students

- Align staffing resources to support student and staff mental health and well-being, both in schools and centrally.

- 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.

- Support the inclusion of students with Special Education needs.

- Support academic pathways that lead to improved post-secondary opportunities.

3. 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).

- 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 for alternative delivery models, such inclusive classrooms, 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.

4. 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.

- Implement equitable practices and pedagogy to improve student success and access for students in underserved communities.

5. 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.

6. 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.

- 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.

- Work towards a 1:1 ratio of student to device, and to ensure equitable access to learning opportunities for all students.

- Continue to enhance the virtual learning environment with access to digital resources.

7. Pandemic Recovery

- Consider the long-term impacts of the pandemic on student learning for all ages and grade levels, as well as the impacts on mental health and well-being, and implement recovery strategies, interventions and supports.

- Focus resources on supporting students who may have been impacted in the most significant ways, such as those from lower socio-economic households, Indigenous, Black, racialized and 2SLGBTQI+ students.

- Ensure that learning environments are healthy and safe for all students and staff during the pandemic and moving forward.

8. 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 newcomer parents, 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 of students with Special Education Needs.

- Implement equity-centered strategies to eliminate communication barriers with parents and caregivers.

9. 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, and student success strategies.

- Create professional development opportunities and resources to support the implementation of the TDSB's new Flexible Work Policy, as well as additional virtual professional development opportunities.

- 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.

- Provide support to parents/guardians of students with Special Education needs as valued partners in public education.

- Support staff training on strengthening relationships and creating environments where diverse identities are valued, and all voices are heard and can make a difference.

- Ensure that staff have access to the appropriate Health & Safety training, supports and resources.

10. 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.

- Maintain inclusive early learning environments to support equitable, accessible and meaningful learning opportunities for students.