

Written Notice of Motion for Consideration as Emergency Business (Trustees Chernos Lin and Sriskandarajah)

From: Denise Joseph-Dowers, Manager, Board Services, Governance and Board Services

In accordance with the Board's bylaws, emergency business is defined as:

a situation, or the threat of a situation, adversely affecting health, safety and/or well-being, or resulting in significant legal risk or financial damage or loss, which by its nature and seriousness requires an immediate response...

Further,

5.12.7 A matter not on the agenda or directly related to matters arising from discussion cannot be introduced by a trustee at a Board or Committee meeting, or after the notice of agenda has been circulated to members, unless the item qualifies as emergency business and is confirmed by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present.

Transition Funding Supports

Trustees Chernos Lin and Sriskandarajah have submitted the following as a matter of urgency and for consideration as emergency business.

Therefore, be it resolved:

A. That the following matter be deemed as emergency business;

and, if approved (requires a two-thirds majority vote of the members present to be considered);

B. That the following be considered:

Whereas, the Government of Ontario announced that, due to the continued spread of COVID-19, all publicly-funded schools in Ontario, including those at the Toronto District School Board, remain closed to students as of March 13, 2019; and

Whereas, although emergency remote learning opportunities are being provided, we know many students are not able to fully participate in the learning for a variety of reasons; and

Whereas, we know emergency remote learning does not replace in-class, teacher-led learning; and

Whereas, research shows that over the summer break, students experience summer learning loss or, what is known more colloquially as "the summer slide"; and, that research also indicates that summer learning loss tends to be more pronounced among students from lower socio-economic groups or who have less opportunity for summer learning opportunities; and

Whereas, the closure of schools and emergency remote learning, when combined with the upcoming summer break from school will likely create an even more pronounced summer slide; and

Whereas, a trauma-informed approach would have our educators and system leaders modify approaches to teaching and learning that help students overcome the barriers to learning that arise from the stress created by negative psychological, social, financial and health impacts of COVID-19 and the global pandemic response; and

Whereas, until there is a vaccine Boards and schools will most likely need to create and implement new procedures for hygiene and distancing that interfere with and/or slow down existing school procedures and may also need to continue some degree of remote learning should further waves of COVID-19 occur; and

Whereas, the current Provincial funding structure through the existing Grants for Student Needs (GSNs) does not provide for funds to address the unprecedented crisis surrounding Covid-19 and the effects listed above; and

Whereas, all of these challenges pose significant threats to the delivery of a strong public education system; and

Whereas, an excellent public education system is the backbone of a healthy, flourishing society, and must be able to deliver under any and all circumstances; and

Whereas, in times of challenge, it is paramount that everyone work collaboratively to adapt to new circumstances, rise to new challenges and provide excellence in education for all students;

Therefore, be it resolved:

- (a) The Chair send a letter to the Minister of Education requesting that recovery funding be provided to school boards through the Grants for Student Needs to ensure students' successful return to the classroom as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, including funding for:
 - (i) mental health and well-being supports;
 - (ii) additional staffing and resources to address literacy and numeracy gaps;
 - (iii) transitional staffing resources including additional special education funding;
 - (iv) transitional staffing resources for children with special needs, many of whom will have been without therapy or respite care for an extended period;
 - (v) additional student success teachers to aid students in the transition from elementary to secondary schools;
 - (vi) addressing the substantial information technology gaps in the system, including replacing budgets that boards used to purchase IT and Internet service during the course of this pandemic; provide on-going support to continue supports for IT and Internet; and begin funding IT devices for students at a 1:1 ratio without requiring boards to reallocate funds to purchase IT;

- (b) That the Ontario Public School Boards' Association be encouraged to advocate for the six points at Part (a) above;
- (c) That the member boards of OPSBA be copied on the letter from the Chair.