



## **2021-22 Grants for Student Needs Update**

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

**Date:** 12 May, 2021

**Report No.:** 04-21-4085

### **Strategic Directions**

- Provide Equity of Access to Learning Opportunities for All Students
- Allocate Human and Financial Resources Strategically to Support Student Needs

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the 2021-22 Grants for Student Needs Update be received.

### **Context**

On May 4, 2021, the Ministry of Education released the Grants for Student Needs (GSN) memorandum 2021: B08 (Appendix A) for 2021-22. Also included in the release were the following documents:

- Technical Paper for 2021-22 which provides a detailed explanation of the grant allocations within the GSN.
- EFIS template forms used to determine school boards' detailed grant allocations.
- Priorities and Partnership Funds (PPF) memorandum 2021: B10, which outlines the focused grants for specific initiatives. The memorandum is enclosed in Appendix B of this report. Appendix C contains chart summaries of the provincial PPF allocation and TDSB's funding allocation, where available.
- Capital Funding for the 2021-22 School Year (Appendix D) provides funding amounts for School Condition Improvements and Renewal funding. The memorandum 2021: B09 also provides guidance on uses of funding and the reporting requirements.
- The Planning for the 2021-22 School Year (Appendix E) memorandum 2021: B07 outlines the COVID-19 funding supports, remote learning offerings and virtual learning resources and other updates and guidance around school opening in 2021-22.

- Learning Recovery and Renewal memorandum 2021: B11 outlines the Ministry's investments in response to post-pandemic learning, health & safety, and mental health needs.

Staff have prepared a high-level overview of the memorandums and are working on completing a high-level update on the projected financial position of the Board based on preliminary analysis. This high-level update on the projected financial position of the Board will be added to this report in Appendix G prior to the May 12 meeting. Staff will continue to work on developing a detailed budget projection for the June 1, Finance, Budget & Enrolment Committee (FBEC) meeting.

### **Operational Funding**

The GSN funding for 2021-22 is projected to be \$25.6 billion across Ontario school boards, representing an increase of 2.2% from the prior year. The Ministry will continue to provide COVID-19 resources to school boards during the upcoming year.

Amounts identified in this report are estimates and are based on current enrolment projections and information provided in the memorandum. Final amounts will be confirmed after the detailed data has been entered into the Ministry template.

### **COVID-19 Supports in GSN and PPFs:**

**Technology Resources** – The Ministry will provide \$14.9M across the province to support device replacements and procurement of additional student devices. This funding is provided through the Student Technology Devices per pupil amount for students from Kindergarten to Grade 12. The TDSB's allocation is estimated to be approximately \$1.7M, which is in line with 2020-21 additional funding. School boards have been informed that this funding will continue after the pandemic is resolved.

**Mental Health and Special Education Supports (see note on chart A)** – The Ministry will provide \$10.1M across the province to support student mental health through the GSN. The TDSB is estimated to receive \$414K of this provincial allocation, which is in line with 2020-21 additional funding. This funding can be used to provide staff professional learning and training, hiring of community mental health providers, student engagement, and data collection and analysis. In addition, the Ministry announced PPFs of \$49.0M for special education, mental health, well-being and equity initiatives. The TDSB's allocation is estimated at \$2.32M.

**Newcomers Supplement** - \$79.6M in funding will be provided across the province to supplement the recent Immigrant component of the English as a Second Language/ English Literacy Development (ESL/ELD) allocation. This amount has been allocated to

help school boards continue to offer the same level of support to students in these ESL/ELD programs. The allocation will be based on actual versus 2019-20 weighted average enrolment. The TDSB's allocation is forecasted at approximately \$25.0M.

**Staffing Supports (see note in chart A)** – There will be \$304.0M allocated from the PPF investments across the province to support school-based staffing costs. The TDSB has been allocated \$31.5M of this funding. These funds will be utilized to support school based staffing in the areas of teaching and classroom support staff, caretaking and school administration.

**Student Transportation Health & Safety (see note in chart A)** – There will be \$65.5M allocated from PPF investments across the province for costs related to additional drivers, overtime, enhanced cleaning and health and safety measures for student transportation. The TDSB's allocation is \$3.95M.

**School Operations and Ventilation (see note in chart A)** – There will be \$29.4M allocated from PPF investments across the province to provide a 2% increase to the non-staff school operations benchmark, and another 1.25% additional amount provided to support costs related to operating ventilation systems longer and filter replacements. The TDSB allocation is \$3.72M

**Re-Engaging Students and Reading Assessment Supports** – There will be \$20.0M allocated from PPFs across the province for school boards to re-engage students in learning and for reading assessment supports. Boards will develop customized plans to identify unique needs of students, including Black students, Indigenous students, Special Education students, and students in low income households who may have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. The TDSB's allocation is \$2.21M.

### **Changes in GSN:**

**Indigenous Education Grant and Program Leadership Grant (PLG)** – The Indigenous Languages Allocation and First Nations, Metis, and Intuit Studies Allocation will be enveloped. The Indigenous Education lead position will be fully funded through the PLG.

**Online Learning** - The Ministry is updating the funding methodology for online courses by adjusting benchmark funding for classroom teacher staffing. Beginning in 2021-22, the secondary benchmark will use a funded average credit load of 7.5 credits per pupil split between online learning (approximately 0.081) and in-person learning (approximately 7.419) which assumes 8% of secondary students will take one online course in the school year. This change in funding represents a reduction in teacher funding of approximately \$2.9M

**Labour Funding** – Will adjust salary benchmarks by 1% and benefit plan funding up to 1% in increases, which represents labour agreement settlements.

**Facilities Cost Benchmark Adjustments:**

The Ministry will provide a 2% cost benchmark update to the non-staff portion of the School Operations Allocation benchmark to account for increases to commodity prices of utilities, insurance and other costs. There will also be continued phase-in adjustments to the Supplementary Area Factor for base school facility operations.

**Transportation Grant** – Maintained at prior year’s funding level, with adjustments for enrolment growth as the Ministry is still conducting a review of transportation funding.

**Library Staffing** – Enhanced reporting requirements for library staffing funding.

**Adult Learners** – New prior learning assessment and recognition process for adult learners.

**School Board Administration and Governance and Secondary Class Size Requirements** – Ministry aims to complete the review in the 2022-23 school year.

**Retirement Gratuities** – Consistent with prior year, a 0.167% reduction will be applied to the benefit benchmarks in the foundation grant.

**Educational Software Licensing** – Funds to help support purchase of licenses as the ministry’s term limited licenses for digital learning expire. The TDSB’s allocation is approximately \$200K.

**Asset Management Software Allocation** – New allocation to offset cost of licensing and fees for software to track school condition. Board-by-board allocation amounts not yet released.

**Priorities and Partnership Funds (PPF)**

As stated above, a copy of the PPF memorandum and associated charts are included in Appendix B. Appendix C contains a summary of grants as follows:

- Table 1 provides information on confirmed allocations to TDSB of PPFs announced in the memorandum.
- Table 2 provides information on PPFs announced with no specific board allocations known at this time.
- Table 3 provides information on PPFs to which the board does not qualify.
- Table 4 provides information on PPFs that are moved into the GSN.

## **Capital**

Appendix D provides the Ministry memorandum on capital funding for the 2021-22 school year. The memorandum also includes information about uses, approvals and reporting of capital expenditures.

A detailed Capital budget will be presented to Trustees at the June 1, 2021 FBEC meeting.

- Renewal funding for TDSB increased by \$0.24M from \$47.61M to \$47.85M.
- School Condition Improvement funding decreased by \$37.2M from \$264.0M to \$226.8M.
- Temporary Accommodation Grant funding increased by \$75.4K from \$434.7K to \$510K.

## **Summary of COVID-19 Funding and Learning Recovery Supports**

Below is a list of the other COVID-19 funding and learning recovery supports outlined in the “Planning for 2021-22 School Year” B07 Memo. It should be noted that the Ministry of Education has instructed school board to only budget half of these allocations in chart A, except for Re-engaging Students and Reading Assessment Supports which can be budgeted for the full year. The Ministry will inform school boards in the fall of 2021 regarding the second half of funding depend on status of pandemic and vaccine distribution.

### **CHART A**

<b>Funding Category</b>	<b>Funding Description</b>	<b>Provincial Allocation (\$ million)</b>	<b>TDSB Allocation (\$ million)</b>
Additional Staffing Support	For teachers, ECEs, EAs, caretakers, school-based admin support, P/VP for smaller cohorts, physical distancing, enhanced cleaning, and remote learning.	304.00	31.50
Additional School Operations Support	2% increase to non-staff school operations benchmark and 1.25% provided to support enhanced ventilation filtration costs.	29.40	3.72
Transportation Health & Safety	Enhanced cleaning protocols and other health & safety measures in	65.50	3.95

	transportation.		
Special Education Supports	Additional staffing resources, learning resources such as assistive technology, interventions to address learning gaps and professional assessments.	16.25	1.09
Mental Health Supports	To employ mental health professionals, training for educators, collaboration with mental health providers, student engagement and student mental health information collection and analysis.	25.25	1.23
Re-engaging Students and Reading Assessment Supports	Reading assessment supports, re-engaging students, licenses, and programs for early readers. (per Ministry memo: 2021: B11)	20.00	2.21
<b>Total</b>		<b>460.40</b>	<b>43.70</b>

### Chart B

<b>Category</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Provincial Allocation (\$ million)</b>	<b>TDSB Allocation (\$ million)</b>
Connectivity Support for Remote Learning Technology	2-year remote learning technology investment for school buildings (application-based funding)	20.00	Based on application
Personal Protective Equipment	Cleaning supplies, equipment to be sourced through Ministry of Government & Consumer Services	450.00	Provided at no costs to school boards
School-focused Nurses	For public health units and testing in schools	86.00	Provided to local health authorities

## **Guidance around 2021-22 Budget, In-Year Deficit and Use of Reserves**

- School boards are permitted to incur a deficit up to 1% of the operating budget without Ministry approval. Boards with deficits over 1% must seek Ministerial approval prior to submitting their budget.
- The Ministry has announced that should school boards utilize reserves over 2% of operating budgets across the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years, funding would be available to support the difference up to 2% of the operating budget in 2021-22. The projected reserves TDSB would need to utilize over the two years would be approximately \$60.74M before any funding from the Ministry is provided.

## **Update Regarding Advocacy Letter to the Minister**

On January 26, 2021, the Chair of the Board sent a letter to the Minister of Education regarding the reimbursement of reserve funds and pandemic related costs, as discussed at the December 9, 2020 Board meeting.

The Minister provided a response to the Chair on March 23, 2021. A copy of the letter is provided in Appendix F.

## **Action Plan and Associated Timeline**

Over the coming weeks, staff will work to prepare a detailed financial projection for the 2021-22 school year, outlining changes in revenues and expenses. The report will also outline the impact of COVID-19 on TDSB operations in 2021-22. These reports will track to the Special FBEC meeting on June 1, 2021.

## **Resource Implications**

Boards are required to submit a balanced budget to the Ministry of Education by June 30, 2021. This year, an extension will be requested to allow staff time to complete Ministry documentation after the June 30<sup>th</sup> Board meeting to be submitted on July 9<sup>th</sup>.

The TDSB would require Ministry approval to incur deficit beyond 1% of the 2021-22 operating allocation and provide a deficit recovery plan.

## **Communications Considerations**

The TDSB Budget webpage will be updated with all budget-related information and committee reports.

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

Not Applicable.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix A: 2021: B07 2021-22 GSN Funding Memorandum
- Appendix B1: 2021: B10 2021-22 PPF Memorandum
- Appendix B2: 2021-22 PPF Funding Allocation Summary
- Appendix C: TDSB PPF Summary
- Appendix D: 2021: B09 Capital Funding Memorandum
- Appendix E: 2021: B07 Planning for the 2021-22 School Year Memorandum
- Appendix F: Letter from the Minister regarding reimbursement of reserves
- Appendix G: 2021-22 Preliminary Forecast (To follow)

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