



2022-23 Ministry of Education Budget Consultation

To: Finance, Budget and Enrolment Committee

Date: 2 November, 2021

Report No.: 11-21-4194

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 2022-23 Ministry of Education Budget Consultation report be received.

Context

On October 22, 2021 the Ministry of Education provided the 2022-23 Education Funding Guide (Appendix A) to school boards for feedback from the sector. They identified that feedback must be submitted by November 26, 2021 to the Ministry. Staff contacted Ministry staff and requested an extension of the deadline to December 17, 2021 to allow the Finance, Budget and Enrolment Committee (FBEC) to review and approve the submission to the Ministry. The Ministry approved staff's extension request.

The Ministry consultation document asks for feedback in the following areas through targeted questions in each area:

- Mental health supports
- Reducing administrative burden and red tape

- The Learning Opportunities Grant (LOG)
- Urban and Priority High Schools (UPHS)
- The New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP)

In each area, many of the questions are operational in nature. Staff are working to prepare responses to these operational questions and will amend these responses based on feedback provided by Trustees and stakeholders.

The Ministry of Education will also be accepting feedback on education funding topics outside the areas identified in this guide.

Included for your reference is a copy of the 2021-22 Ministry Consultation Guide submission. Please refer to Appendix B.

In Appendix C of this report, is a draft document outlining key discussion points that will be captured in the final response to the Ministry.

Action Plan and Associated Timeline

Due to the tight timelines provided by the Ministry, staff are recommending that Trustee and stakeholder feedback be provided by November 19, 2021, so that staff can use this feedback to prepare a draft submission and report to FBEC on December 15, 2021. To assist in collecting feedback, staff have prepared the Budget Feedback Survey Tool attached in Appendix D of this report.

The planned consultation schedule will be:

Target Group	Action Plan
SEAC	To be presented at upcoming SEAC meeting on November 8, 2021
PIAC	To be presented at upcoming PIAC meeting on November 16, 2021
Community Advisory Committees	Contacted the Staff Lead of each Community Advisory Committee to request that the link to the survey tool be shared for feedback, by November 19, 2021
Stakeholder Input	Posted to the Board website with link to the survey tool for feedback. The survey will be open until November 19, 2021
Trustee Feedback	E-mail comments to staff by November 19, 2021

Feedback received during this process will be considered when drafting the response to the Ministry.

In the report back to FBEC, staff will include copies of the actual feedback received from Trustees and stakeholders that informed the final submission draft. The response to the Ministry will be provided to FBEC for review and approval.

Public consultation timelines and process around the development of the 2022-23 operating budget and strategic budget drivers will be provided at the upcoming December 2021 FBEC meeting.

Resource Implications

School boards are required to submit a balanced operating budget to the Ministry of Education as outlined in Ministry funding parameters and timelines.

Communications Considerations

The Ministry of Education Budget Consultation Guide and a feedback survey tool will be posted to the Board website to allow stakeholders to provide feedback for consideration in developing the final submission. The survey will be open until 19 November 2021 for stakeholders to provide feedback.

This report and the final submission to the Ministry of Education on the feedback to the 2022-23 Ministry of Education Budget Consultation Guide will be posted on the TDSB Budget website.

Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)

Not applicable.

Appendices

- Appendix A: 2022-23 Ministry Education Funding Guide
- Appendix B: 2021-22 Ministry Budget Consultation Submission
- Appendix C: 2022-23 Draft response notes to Ministry Budget Consultation Guide
- Appendix D: Copy of Budget Feedback Survey Tool

From

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2022-23 Education Funding Guide

INTRODUCTION

All students deserve to have every opportunity to reach their full potential and succeed personally and academically, with access to rich learning experiences that provide a strong foundation of confidence that continues throughout their lives. Schools should be safe and welcoming places where all students are provided the opportunity to gain the knowledge and skills they need to achieve success and follow their chosen pathways after graduation including work, college, apprenticeship or university. Educators and school/system leaders need to have the knowledge and skills to create conditions that better support and serve all students. Together with our renewed focus on achievement, equity and mental health and well-being, Ontario's publicly funded education system commits to addressing systemic barriers and combating racism and all forms of discrimination to foster an inclusive learning environment for all students and staff.

Since COVID-19 has emerged as an unprecedented public health issue, the government has been diligently monitoring the situation, including ongoing risks related to variants of concern and alignment with broader provincial guidance and direction. The ministry will continue to work with the Chief Medical Officer of Health and local public health units (PHUs) to assess key measures to inform and update provincial guidance and direction, as necessary.

While there is important progress being made in the delivery of vaccines, the health and safety of students and staff remains a top priority. In advance of the 2021-22 school year, the Ontario government announced more than \$1.6 billion in resources to protect schools against COVID-19 with a continued focus this school year on supporting the health, safety and well-being of students, families and staff.

As you are aware, this year's Grants for Student Needs (GSN) is projected to be \$25.6 billion – representing an increase in funding of \$561 million over the 2020-21 school year. This historic level of support reflects the third straight year it has increased under the current government. In addition, funding through the Priorities and Partnerships Fund (PPF) will include over \$288 million to fund approximately 150 initiatives that include a focus on strengthening math skills, access to mental health supports, anti-racism and support for children with disabilities.

For more information about the current education funding model, please see the [2021-22 Education Funding](#) page of the Ministry of Education's website.

ABOUT THIS CONSULTATION

As in previous years, the government remains committed to discussing education funding reform in Ontario, with education stakeholders through a consultation process that allows stakeholders to provide the benefit of their expertise, experience, and ideas. This year's guide focuses on:

- Mental Health Supports
- Reducing Administrative Burden and Red Tape
- The Learning Opportunities Grant (LOG)
- Urban and Priority High Schools
- The New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP)

You may also submit feedback on education funding topics not outlined in this guide.

To ensure your feedback is considered, please forward your electronic submission by **Friday November 26, 2021** to: EDULABFINANCE@ontario.ca. If your organization would benefit from a virtual meeting to provide feedback on this year's consultation, please submit a request to the ministry at this same email address, and the ministry would be pleased to arrange one. If you have questions about this consultation, please send them to the email address noted above.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS

The mental health and well-being of students continues to be an important priority for the Ministry of Education. The ministry has been working with school boards, community organizations, and across government to put in place a range of resources to support the mental health of all students, including access to service at all tiers of intervention across the system of care.

In addition, the ministry has made unprecedented investments to support student mental health and well-being since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. To support student mental health priorities, including learning recovery and renewal, for the 2021-22 school year the ministry will be investing over \$80M in student mental health funding directly to school boards. This includes more than \$45M directed to student mental health in the GSN.

As the government continues to transform the way in which mental health services and supports are delivered provincially, schools are an important part of this comprehensive provincial integrated mental health and addictions system. Schools provide mental health promotion and prevention programming to help equip students with the knowledge and skills to care for their own mental health and make available early intervention high quality mental health and addiction services when students need them.

Considerations:

1. How are ministry supports helping school boards meet the mental health needs of their students?
2. What can the Ministry of Education, other ministries, school boards and other partner agencies do to better support the mental health needs of students?

REDUCING ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN AND RED TAPE

The government continues on its path to eliminating burdensome, outdated and unnecessary regulation to help restore Ontario's competitiveness, retain high-quality jobs and attract investment.

To further support the ministry's efforts to streamline reporting while also reducing administrative burden for transfer payment recipients, for 2021-22 the ministry has transferred three PPF allocations into the GSN.

The ministry continues to look for ways of reducing administrative burden and aligning program implementation with ministry priorities, while ensuring strong accountability and value for money.

Considerations:

1. What initiatives could support the reduction of red tape and administrative burden for the education sector?
2. Are there areas of overlap or duplication within the GSN (e.g., funding or reporting)? If so, what are they?

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES GRANT

The LOG provides funding for a range of programs to help students who are at greater risk of poor academic achievement, including providing supports for de-streaming as well as learning recovery programming and supports that are responsive to the challenges that students are experiencing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The largest portion of LOG funding is flowed through the Demographic Allocation, which provides funding based on social and economic indicators derived from 2006 Statistics Canada's census data that are associated with students having a higher risk of academic difficulty. Indicators include low household income, low parental education, a one-parent household and recent arrival in Canada. This allocation supports school boards in offering a wide range of programs tailored to the local needs of their students.

While the LOG and several other allocations within the GSN still rely on 2006 Census data and socio-economic indicators, the ministry continues to review the impacts of updating the census information for the upcoming school year and beyond. Any updates to the census data would require a redistribution of funding between school boards in recognition of increasing needs.

Considerations:

1. Given that the 2021 census is nearing completion, what is the best way to integrate updated census information into the GSN?
2. Should the Demographic Component of the LOG be focused on a specific outcome(s)? If so, what are they?

URBAN AND PRIORITY HIGH SCHOOLS

The ministry recognizes the personal and academic challenges that hinder students learning, achievement and full participation in school. The Urban and Priority High Schools Allocation within the GSN provides funding to 12 school boards with schools in urban areas that face challenges such as students experiencing poverty, conflict with the law, academic achievement

issues, and lack of access to community resources. School boards are required to spend these funds on programs and initiatives that support at-risk students in ministry-approved secondary schools.

Schools work with community partners to develop annual action plans to create supportive conditions necessary for learning, including socio-emotional and academic supports, a safe environment, and opportunities aimed at increasing engagement, student well-being and academic achievement.

Considerations:

1. **Should the school board list be updated to respond to changing demographics and growth within school boards? If so, what factors should be considered in updating the school board list?**
2. **How can the ministry ensure that the funding allocation is spent on supports for the most academically challenged at-risk students?**

NEW TEACHER INDUCTION PROGRAM

The NTIP Allocation is designed to support the growth and professional development of new teachers in the publicly funded education system. The NTIP provides professional support to help new teachers develop the requisite skills and knowledge to be effective as teachers in Ontario.

In addition to the NTIP induction elements, new permanent hires are evaluated twice within their first 12 months of employment through the Teacher Performance Appraisal process.

School boards will receive funding for the NTIP Allocation that is the lesser of the following:

- \$50,000 per school board plus \$1,058.52 multiplied by the number of teachers on Rows 0, 1, and 2 of a school board's previous year's Teacher Qualifications and Experience Grid

OR

- a school board's eligible current year's expenditure for NTIP

Considerations:

1. Given that there is no fixed benchmark for the NTIP, are school boards facing challenges due to funding varying every year with the fluctuation in the number of teachers?
2. What would be the benefits and/or challenges to having a fixed benchmark?

Conclusion

The ministry would like to acknowledge the ongoing efforts of school board teams to support students, staff, families, and the broader community. We recognize that the past two school years have been challenging and we are grateful for the continued hard work of our partners to ensure a high-quality education for all students across the province. We continue to see our education system rise to the challenge and provide innovative, flexible solutions in the best interest of students.

Thank you for taking the time to read this guide, and we look forward to your feedback.



TDSB's 2021-22 Education Funding Guide Response to the Ministry

Introduction

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) is Canada's largest and most diverse school board, with approximately 245,000 students at 582 schools, including nearly 80,000 students attending the TDSB Virtual School, which opened in September 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We also serve more than 140,000 life-long learners in our Adult and Continuing Education programs.

As the largest and most diverse school board in the country, we have unique needs when it comes to what is required to best support our students and communities. Our students need safe and modern learning environments, appropriate special education supports, targeted supports for mental health and well-being and access to reliable and up-to-date technology. And, especially during these unprecedented times, it is even more critical for school boards to receive adequate financial support to help address the widening gaps in student achievement and learning loss resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition to answering the Ministry's questions, we would also like to further highlight the following priority areas for the TDSB:

1. Special Education and Mental Health Support
2. Technology
3. Pandemic Impacts
4. Capital Needs
5. Education Development Charges

1) Special Education and Mental Health Support

The TDSB has consistently spent more than the government funding provided for Special Education. Last year, the TDSB spent \$47.4M more on Special Education than we were funded for by the province. Additionally, the number of students requiring Special Education support increases each year, putting even more financial pressure on school boards to support students' unique and complex needs.

To ensure that all TDSB students receive the support they need, we urge the province to modify the Special Education funding model while providing the appropriate enhancements to meet the financial needs of school boards and the educational needs of the students of Ontario. This is becoming even more essential as the demand for special education continues to grow.

Additional financial resources to support students' mental health and well-being, and help students cope with issues such as stress, anxiety and depression, are also critical and needed. Mental health and well-being is essential to student success. We know that one in five Ontario students has a mental health problem and we also know that schools can promote positive mental health, identify and intervene early to prevent the onset of problems and respond to children and youth in distress.

Additional resources will be needed next year to support all students as they cope with the unprecedented physical, social and emotional impact of the pandemic and return to the post-pandemic school environment.

2) Technology

The continuation of funding for technology is vital to allow school boards to provide collaborative and communication platforms as well as digital devices, tools and resources for students and staff. Investments in hardware and services are also required to close the digital divide between students who have access to devices, internet connectivity, digital resources and tools and those who do not.

This need for technology -- hardware, software and digital resources -- within the TDSB has been accentuated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our Board's goal is to achieve a one device per student (1:1) ratio and to continue to develop our library of digital content resources and program materials to support our 21st century learners in all environments.

To build a sustainable digital and virtual learning ecosystem, additional investments in technology are needed to ensure an equitable learning environment for students.

3) Pandemic Impacts

The health and safety of staff and students has been a priority to the Toronto District School Board throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the past 10 months, the TDSB provided students with regular and meaningful learning opportunities while maintaining a safe environment for our entire school community.

Responding to the pandemic included a significant and urgent shift to remote learning in the spring, including ensuring access to technology for approximately 245,000 learners as well as opening two Virtual Schools for nearly 80,000 of these learners in September 2020. We know there is a disproportionate number of students of families with lower socio-economic status enrolled in the Virtual Schools and many families do not have adequate financial means to provide technology devices or broadband internet access to support their children's participation in remote learning. The TDSB has already supported students with more than 70,000 devices and helped families with internet connectivity and purchasing digital resources to accommodate these growing demands.

In addition, we recognize the tremendous emotional, social and physical strains of the pandemic on students and must continue to provide additional resources and supports to help students during this time.

The Board is concerned about the learning gaps created by the pandemic on students. To minimize this impact, additional resources will be needed, including additional teachers, professional support services and professional development.

At this point, it is unclear what impact the pandemic will continue to have, however, we can anticipate the following needs:

- Additional support learners to help address achievement gaps and learning loss as a result of the pandemic.
- Mental health supports to help students' address the physical, social and emotional impact of the pandemic.

- Additional staffing to help ease the transition for students returning to in-person learning, in some cases, after more than a year out of school.
- Continued financial support of IT infrastructure to support students during the pandemic and beyond, to support learning in the 21st century.
- Funding support to acquire virtual curriculum materials to support student learning in both the classroom and library.
- Funding to invest in research to help gather and analyze data to further identify those gaps and develop related action plans to provide targeted support for students.

4) Capital Needs

The TDSB is the largest school board in the province with hundreds of aging building infrastructures, with an average age of 64 years. However, over the past two years, the TDSB has only been approved for three out of the 10 Capital Priorities projects submitted for approval consideration. TDSB would like to request that the Ministry consider the size of the school board when determining the number of submissions to be considered.

We also request that the Ministry expedite the capital construction's Approval to Proceed (ATP) process. Faster timelines will avoid significant cost increases due to timing between submission and approval and minimize accommodation pressures due to project delays.

The province has provided multiple years of additional School Condition Index (SCI) funding for school repairs which has allowed the TDSB to address the growing facilities renewal needs in our schools. The additional funding, however, has not been enough to decrease the significant \$3.5 billion backlog in TDSB's repairs. One solution that would assist the TDSB in managing the renewal backlog would be the elimination of the school closure moratorium, which would allow the TDSB to address over capacity and program issues, reduce renewal needs and lower operating costs. It is also imperative that the province commit to providing predictable and sustainable funding for school repairs to a level that will allow for the TDSB to continue to implement its long-term plan for renewal, reduce the repair backlog, and modernize our schools as 21st century learning environments.

As an urban board, the TDSB continues to face unique challenges relating to the capital program, including higher construction costs in Toronto compared to other rural school

board jurisdictions. This is a result of constricted site access, building code requirements and price inflations in the high-density urban construction market. TDSB would ask that the Ministry update construction benchmarks to take into account urban building costs.

5) Education Development Charges

In Ontario, school boards, with the exception of the TDSB, are eligible for Education Development Charges (EDCs), a significant source of revenue. The TDSB does not qualify because it has excess capacity when assessed on a district-wide basis, regardless of significant capacity pressures and challenges faced in many neighborhood schools. This puts the TDSB at a disadvantage.

Education Development Charges (EDCs) are a critical funding tool that would help the TDSB meet growth-related infrastructure needs. While there are pockets of space within our system, many of our schools are over capacity as a result of significant residential intensification in certain areas. Lack of sufficient space in local schools in some areas of the City has forced the TDSB to adopt different accommodation strategies for managing enrollment growth including redirecting students from new residential developments to other TDSB schools located outside the area, using portables and changing program and school boundaries. In our view, the same way that developers pay for services such as roads, transit, water, sewer infrastructure and community centres, they should also contribute to education. TDSB continues to be at a disadvantage due to its inability to collect EDCs from developers which could generate approximately \$500M in additional revenue for the Board over the next 15 years.

We continue to advocate that the government modify or remove the restrictions in Section 10 of Ontario Regulation 20/98 to allow all school boards to qualify for EDCs and be able to use those funds for expansion of existing schools or building new schools.

TDSB's Response to the Education Funding Guide Questions

COVID-19 OUTBREAK RESPONSE

1. How do we ensure that the GSN remains agile to continue to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak?

It is recommended that the government provides full funding of pandemic-related costs to ensure a safe return to classrooms and to support the well-being of both staff and students. School boards could benefit from additional in-year funding in 2021-22, as well as increased flexibility in the use of the funding to help address evolving operational needs.

We are also seeking the Ministry's direction on recommended program delivery options corresponding to the next GSN announcement so that school boards can adequately plan and forecast costs.

Ongoing communication between the Ministry and school board officials, educators and support staff will ensure effective understanding and awareness of program needs and to address any gaps in funding.

2. What is required to successfully help students post COVID-19?

It is recommended that the government provides additional resources to school boards to address the widening gaps in student achievement and learning loss as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic. We would also like to advocate for funding to invest in research to help gather and analyze data to further identify those gaps and develop related action plans to provide targeted support for students.

There is also an increased need for additional mental health supports for both students and staff to help address the physical and emotional impact of the pandemic.

It is anticipated that remote learning will continue in some form post COVID-19, and therefore it is important that all students have equitable and continued access to technology and learning resources.

ONLINE LEARNING ADJUSTMENT

1. As future adjustments to the funding methodology for online learning courses are to be confirmed through the 2021-22 FSB, do changes and/or adjustments need to be made to the Online Learning Adjustment in order to be more responsive?

Below are some general considerations relating to online learning:

- Students in online learning may be at a disadvantage compared to in-person learning, due to higher class sizes.
- Adjustments should be considered for the number of students who are formally identified by IPRC or have IEPs so that teachers can best address the needs of students effectively.
- Ongoing technology training for teachers and students is necessary.
- There should be equity of access to technological devices for students.
- Technology Enabled Learning Teacher (TELT) funding needs to reflect the needs of TDSB's student enrolment. Currently, every Board receives the same funding regardless of Board enrollment.
- There needs to be adequate staff training to meet the needs of English Language Learners (ELL) and French students.
- Clarification is required on whether the two "online courses" will be selected from a menu of courses, or mandated by the school, school board or Ministry.
- The Online Learning Adjustment should consider future changes relating to the Continuing Education credit courses.

With all of these considerations in mind, the TDSB is concerned about the impact this change will have on our delivery model and would like to seek further consultation with the Ministry to ensure that students' programs are not adversely affected as a result of funding changes.

PRIORITIES AND PARTNERSHIP FUND

1. Are there further opportunities to improve the administration of transfer payment agreements to continue supporting a reduction in administrative burden?

The consolidation of the transfer payment agreement would not save the Board a lot of administrative time. Some additional rationale and recommendations are provided below:

The most time-consuming part of the PPF process is the financial reporting review and approval processes and not the administration of the transfer payment agreements.

The transfer payment agreements (TPA) would contain multiple different grants with different expiry dates and reporting deadlines, which may create confusion when sent to separate departments with oversight of individual grants.

One suggestion to reduce the reporting requirement for some of the grants and to help reduce the administrative time, would be for the Ministry to develop a central electronic reporting portal (similar to the PRISA platform) for tracking of all or the majority of PPFs to be used by both the Ministry and the Board. This change would help reduce administrative time for both organizations. Notifications could be communicated through the portal as well to allow for the use of a central repository of all information. TPA and reports could be uploaded, stored and downloaded from the portal and accessible to individuals with authorization of access to the grants.

The Ministry may also consider aligning the PPF reporting deadlines to the Board's Ministry financial reporting timeframes to streamline the financial reporting involved.

2. Are there other PPF initiatives that should be transferred to the GSN?

We suggest the following Program Priorities Funding (PPF) initiatives to be reconsidered to the GSN:

- SHSM (Specialist High Skills Major) – currently, half of the grant is part of GSN. It would be more efficient to have both parts of the grant in GSN for planning and reporting purposes.
- FSL (French as secondary language initiatives) to be part of the FSL grant as a table amount.
- The Parents Reaching Out grant and another grant in the GSN called the Parent Engagement grant are similar in nature. There could be consideration to consolidate these grants.
- Human Rights and Equity Advisor grant – this grant could be consolidated with the Administrative grant in the GSN.

3. What potential areas of overlap exist within currently funded programs? What opportunities might there be to streamline funding, and to streamline reporting?

Boards require more flexibility to address evolving needs. Combining some of the PPFs or consolidating with the GSN would allow for greater ease of tracking and create operational efficiencies.

The Specialist High Skills Major, French as a Second Language and Parent Reaching Out grants could be combined.

With regards to CODE summer learning, if CODE is receiving funds from the Ministry and then passing the funding through to TDSB, the Ministry could consider funding the school boards directly to streamline the process.

REDUCING ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN AND RED TAPE

1. Are there opportunities to reduce the number of non-financial reports and PPF reports school boards currently submit to the Ministry?

There are significant, non-financial reporting requirements for certain PPFs, such as Human Rights and Equity Advisor (HREA), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), Focus on Youth, Graduation Coach program for Black students and French as a Second Language (FSL). The Ministry could consider reducing the reporting requirements for these PPFs by, for example, requesting only one consolidated year-end report instead of multiple reports with different reporting timelines.

2. Are there areas of overlap or duplication in the current reports school boards submit to the ministry?

There are currently no areas of overlap or duplication in the current reports school boards submit to the Ministry.

SCHOOL BOARD ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE GRANT

1. Are there areas of overlap between this grant and other grants within the current funding formula to support school board administration and governance? Are there opportunities to streamline funding to eliminate duplication and find savings?

There is no overlap with additional funding provided by the Ministry. While compliance and other requirements for school board administration continues to increase, there is no incremental funding to offset the additional resources required.

2. How can compliance with the enveloping provisions of this grant be consistently measured across school boards?

Data Form D in the Ministry reporting packages provides provisions which can be used to measure compliance.

MANAGING INFORMATION FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (MISA)

1. How can the ministry better support boards in the annual MISA plan and final reporting template submissions?

The current process ties with the MISA Local Capacity Building (LCB) plan for building system capacity and status reporting. It would be preferred if this can be made available online.

2. Boards currently have discretion to utilize MISA funding in alignment with the 4 priority funding areas (per below) - how relevant are these priority areas for boards moving forward?

As stated in the Education Funding Guide,

MISA funds are used to sustain and advance local capacity to use quality evidence, by targeting funds in at least two of the following four priority funding areas:

- 1. Build and sustain capacity by continuing work on high priority common core activities to achieve/maintain level(s), as set out in the MISA Common Core Capacities Continuum.*
- 2. Create more collaboration at the classroom, school, board, and/or professional network level(s) in activities related to identifying, analysing, implementing, monitoring, and/or evaluating improvement strategies/initiatives.*

3. *Promote prioritized availability and usability of information for end-users (e.g. teacher, principal, superintendent), while having regard for privacy protection.*
4. *Data quality management projects that will improve the timeliness, accuracy and completeness of school board data/information submitted through the Ontario School Information System (OnSIS).*

All of these four priorities are relevant to the TDSB. In addition to these four priority funding areas, TDSB would also like to advocate for priority funding relating to data analytic solutions and systems.

3. Are there other funding priority areas where MISA funds could be directed to maximize impact?

The module “Implementing a Student Management System (SMS),” was included in the Technology section under the old MISA Core Capacities Continuum (March 2015) but was later removed. Most school boards are migrating to a new SIS system, making the module more relevant. As a result of changes, new configuration work and data analytic needs must be done to adapt MISA reporting to the new SIS systems. TDSB is advocating that the module be added back into the MISA Common Capacities Continuum (2018).

CENSUS DATA

1. How should allocations within the GSN be adjusted to reflect updated census data based on the re-distributed impacts to school boards? Should any updates be phased-in? If yes, what is an appropriate phase in period and why?

The allocations should be based on the most recently available census data, as opposed to the 2006 Census, to better reflect the actual demographics of communities and the needs of current students. The redistribution of funds among school boards resulting from using more recent census data should be phased in over two years to allow school boards time to make the necessary adjustments to contract or expand services as required based on the changes in funding levels.

SECONDARY CLASS SIZE COMPLIANCE

1. What are the benefits and/or challenges of implementing a compliance framework for secondary class size?

A compliance framework needs to consider the reasons why a school board may exceed the class size parameters. Financial consequences may adversely impact school boards' ability to access human resources to support historically underserved students and result in further violations of size caps in subsequent years. There are also questions around whether there is any pedagogical rationale for the Ministry's class size caps or if they are based solely on financial considerations.

APPENDIX C:
Draft Discussion Points for TDSB's
2022-23 Education Funding Guide Response to the Ministry

Staff are in the process of developing the response to the 2022-23 Education Funding Guide to the Ministry. Below are key points that will be captured in the final response. This document is intended to facilitate discussion at the November 2, 2021 FBEC meeting. The content contained in this document will be revised, after reviewing feedback received from TDSB staff, trustees and advisory committees, prior to the presentation of the draft response to FBEC in December 2021 and final submission to the Ministry on December 17, 2021.

Introduction

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) is Canada's largest and most diverse school board, with approximately 233,000 students at 582 schools. We also serve more than 140,000 life-long learners in our Adult and Continuing Education programs.

As the largest and most diverse school board in the country, we have unique needs when it comes to what is required to best support our students and communities. Our students need safe and modern learning environments, appropriate special education supports, targeted supports for mental health and well-being and access to reliable and up-to-date technology. And, especially during these unprecedented times, it is even more critical for school boards to receive adequate financial support to help address the widening gaps in student achievement and learning loss resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

TDSB's Draft Response to the Education Funding Guide Questions

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS

1. How are ministry supports helping school boards meet the mental health needs of their students?

Staff have been able to utilize all of the culturally responsive daily wellbeing activities through School Mental Health Ontario, which we have put into a daily, easy-to-use calendar for staff. Staff are in the process of expanding these resources for the full school year.

Additionally, staff have developed Mental Health Tool Kits for students using the resources provided by SMHO (Ministry), which has been very useful for in-person and virtual school students to support mental wellness. The culturally responsive resources from the Ministry have been helpful.

2. What can the Ministry of Education, other ministries, school boards and other partner agencies do to better support the mental health needs of students?

- a) TDSB would like more collaborations and shared leadership between the Ministry, Boards and community partners. We recommend having one central intake process for the referral of families and to have culturally responsive agencies and resources provided to the families and students in a timely manner.
- b) Providing community case managers who can bridge with the school boards and support families in ongoing connections to community agencies, supports and culturally relevant resources.
- c) More funding for support staff in school boards. For example, at TDSB we have some Social Workers who are supporting 5 to 7 schools, which impacts supporting mental health capacity building.

REDUCING ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN AND RED TAPE

1. What initiatives could support the reduction of red tape and administrative burden for the education sector?

Streamline reporting requirements between EFIS and other ad hoc reporting requirements throughout the year. For example, condense or simplify EFIS schedules as there are numerous ad hoc detailed reporting requirements; redundancy reporting on MCP template and EFIS capital schedules (EFIS schedule 3.2 and 3C to simplify or condensed at a capital program or asset class level). The Ministry may also consider aligning ad hoc PPF reporting deadlines to the Board's Ministry financial reporting timeframes to streamline the financial reporting involved

Enhance TPON functionality and capabilities to allow notifications, workflow management and delegation. Example: For the Multi-Project TPA, ability to assign or tag program owners to review and acknowledge TPA prior to final sign off by the Director of Education.

Review the Trust ELHT process to streamline and reduce the amount of reporting and reconciliation work (e.g. Complexity of EFIS Appendix H, weekly Trust reporting, etc.). Since the transition to the Trust plans for ELHT, it has added significant administrative burden in management and reconciliation of the plan. Prior to transition, it was managed as one plan for the whole Board, which has now transitioned to multiple Trust plans, each with their own set of rules and exceptions. It has become very difficult to track and accommodate the different rules for different Trusts. As well, to reduce the amount of retroactive adjustments, school boards should be informed of updated rates well in advance of the effective date.

For TPA funding announced after quarter 1 of the school year, provide sufficient time to allow the use of the funds or flexibility to defer revenue. It has been a challenge to achieve full fund utilization, especially when funding will be used to hire additional staffing as recruitment efforts/finding the right talent can take quite a bit of time.

There are significant, non-financial reporting requirements for certain PPFs, such as Human Rights and Equity Advisor (HREA), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), Focus on Youth, Graduation Coach program for Black students and French as a Second Language (FSL). The Ministry could consider reducing the reporting requirements for these PPFs by, for example, requesting only one consolidated year-end report instead of multiple reports with different reporting timelines.

2. Are there areas of overlap or duplication within the GSN (e.g., funding or reporting)? If so, what are they?

There are currently no areas of overlap or duplication in the current reports school boards submit to the Ministry.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES GRANT

1. Given that the 2021 census is nearing completion, what is the best way to integrate updated census information into the GSN?

The allocations should be based on the most recently available census data, as opposed to the 2006 Census, to better reflect the actual demographics of communities and the needs of current students. The redistribution of funds among school boards resulting from using more recent census data should be phased in over two years to allow school boards time to make the necessary adjustments to contract or expand services as required based on the changes in funding levels.

The LOG should be using the most current Census information to inform distribution. 2006 information is 15 years old which is way too long given the purpose of the LOG.

2. Should the Demographic Component of the LOG be focused on a specific outcome(s)? If so, what are they?

No, the LOG should not be focused on specific outcomes unless these outcomes are opportunities to learn. For example, specialist programs in regions of the city that have lower SES populations or families.

The LOG has been using student performance indicators as a means to fund programs like Student Success and the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat. However the original intention of the LOG was to support learning opportunities. This is a critical potential funding source for the TDSB that the LOG could support as we work on notions of optional attendance, alternative programs in elementary, French Immersion, and Gifted programs that all are disproportionately benefiting higher SES populations in the TDSB.

As such, the LOG should not be attached to performance indicators. The LOG should be attached to learning opportunity indicators like breadth of learning opportunities within regions of the TDSB that have low SES or serve marginalized populations of students.

URBAN AND PRIORITY HIGH SCHOOLS

1. Should the school board list be updated to respond to changing demographics and growth within school boards? If so, what factors should be considered in updating the school board list?

Yes, the school board list should be updated to respond to the changing demographic and growth within school boards. Currently the ministry is using the Learning Opportunity Index (LOI) data to allocate funding. The LOI numbers for schools have changed however, the allocation has not changed. Presently we have schools with low LOI scores with no funding while other schools considerably higher on the LOI have a large portion of the funding.

2. How can the ministry ensure that the funding allocation is spent on supports for the most academically challenged at-risk students?

The Ministry should review the data that they have collected on an interim basis (3 years) to see if the same schools require the financial support to reach in-risk students. This review would allow for restructuring internally. This would allow for changes to occur without school boards having to propose funding changes. With the system in place now funding changes can take many months to years when the proposed changes come from outside the Ministry.

NEW TEACHER INDUCTION PROGRAM

1. Given that there is no fixed benchmark for the NTIP, are school boards facing challenges due to funding varying every year with the fluctuation in the number of teachers?

We ask that the Ministry consider changing the \$50,000 set rate per school board to a proportion of a board's NTIP funding (e.g. at 10%). That would allow for a large board to fund a central position to coordinate NTIP support.

2. What would be the benefits and/or challenges to having a fixed benchmark?

There are benefits from a budgeting perspective, as the funding allows for a permanent central position to coordinate NTIP support.

Other Priority Areas that TDSB wishes to address:

In addition to answering the Ministry's questions, we would also like to further highlight the following priority areas for the TDSB:

1. Mental Health Support
2. Student Re-engagement
3. Technology
4. Lifting the moratorium on school closures
5. Education Development Charges
6. Expanding the uses of Proceeds of Disposition (POD)
7. Capital funding and approval timelines

1) Mental Health Support

- Additional financial resources to support students' mental health and well-being, and help students cope with issues such as stress, anxiety and depression, are also critical and needed. Mental health and well-being is essential to student success.

2) Student Re-engagement

- Additional guidance and attendance counsellor support, and credit recovery support.
- Providing schools with necessary resources for the re-engagement of students and families as a result of the transition from remote learning back to in-person learning.

3) Technology

- Ongoing investments in IT hardware devices and digital resources are needed to support 21st century student learning.
- Additional resources to maintain the Board's one to one device strategy, in order to ensure an equitable learning environment for students.

4) Lifting the Moratorium on School Closures

- The moratorium on school closures was put in place in 2017. TDSB recommends that the school closure moratorium be lifted, so that school boards can review schools with low student enrolment.
- The lifting of the moratorium will help facilitate long-term planning and prudent utilization of Board resources.
- Recommend revisions to the Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines (PARG).

5) Education Development Charges

- In Ontario, school boards, with the exception of the TDSB, are eligible for Education

Development Charges (EDCs), a significant source of revenue. The TDSB does not qualify because it has excess capacity when assessed on a district-wide basis, regardless of significant capacity pressures and challenges faced in many neighborhood schools. This puts the TDSB at a disadvantage.

- Education Development Charges (EDCs) are a critical funding tool that would help the TDSB meet growth-related infrastructure needs. While there are pockets of space within our system, many of our schools are over capacity because of significant residential intensification in certain areas.
- Lack of sufficient space in local schools in some areas of the City has forced the TDSB to adopt different accommodation strategies for managing enrollment growth including redirecting students from new residential developments to other TDSB schools located outside the area, using portables and changing program and school boundaries.

6) Expanding the uses of Proceeds of Disposition (POD)

- To allow the use of POD to support modernization and redevelopment of schools.
- There are opportunities with the City of Toronto to work with other public sector organizations and developers to create new schools funded by POD.
- To allow the use of POD to support the administrative and furniture and fixture costs associated with new school developments.

7) Capital funding and approval timelines

- The cost of construction in an urban environment (i.e. not green field spaces) is significantly higher than other areas of the province.
- Current benchmarks funding does not cover the actual costs to build additions or to develop new buildings.
- The multiple approvals needed from the province to complete a construction project add additional costs and time to the projects, thereby impacting student accommodation.

2022-23 TDSB Education Funding Consultation Feedback Form

On October 22, 2021, the Ministry of Education released the 2022-23 Education Funding Guide to school boards with the deadline of November 26, 2021 for submission to be completed. TDSB has requested an extension to the submission deadline to December 17, 2021 to facilitate our Finance, Budget & Enrolment Committee (FBEC) schedule.

We would ask that feedback be submitted through this survey form by November 19, 2021, so that staff can incorporate any feedback into the draft submission for review and approval at the upcoming December 2021 FBEC meeting prior to the deadline submission. Thank you.

marisa.chiu@tdsb.on.ca [Switch account](#)



* Required

Email *

Your email

1) Your First Name and Last Name

This is an optional field. If you want to remain anonymous, please leave this field blank.

Your answer

2) If this is a response on behalf of a TDSB Advisory Committee, please provide the name of the Committee. If you are not part of an Advisory Committee, please put N/A.

Your answer



3) Based on the questions asked in the consultation documents, please provide your feedback, if any, on the education funding topics outlined in the document.

Your answer

4) Please provide any other initiatives not outlined in the Education funding consultation guide, or any other comments, for consideration in the board's budget consultation submission to the Ministry.

Your answer

Submit

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