

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, BUDGET REPORT

Wednesday, June 9, 2021

7:00 pm

Zoom Meeting

Trustees Present:	Sandra Schwartz, Justine Bell, Christine Boothby, Rob Campbell, Chris Ellis, Lyra Evans, Mark Fisher, Wendy Hough, Jennifer Jennekens, Keith Penny, Lynn Scott, Charles Chen (Student Trustee), Joy Liu (Student Trustee)
Staff Present:	Camille Williams-Taylor (Director of Education), Brett Reynolds (Associate Director), Mike Carson (Chief Financial Officer), Janice McCoy (Superintendent of Human Resources), Peter Symmonds (Superintendent of Learning Support Services), Dorothy Baker (Superintendent of Instruction), Mary Jane Farrish (Superintendent of Instruction), Michele Giroux (Executive Officer, Corporate Services), Shawn Lehman (Superintendent of Instruction), Eric Hardie (Superintendent of Instruction), Shannon Smith (Superintendent of Instruction), Prince Duah (Superintendent of Instruction), Nadia Towaij (Superintendent of Program and Learning K-12), Carolyn Tanner (Human Rights and Equity Advisor), Kevin Gardner (Manager, Finance), Sandy Owens (Manager, Business & Learning Technologies), Diane Pernari-Hergert (Manager, Communications & Information Services), Julie Cyr (Manager, Early Learning), Stacey Kay (Manager, Learning Support Services), Nicole Guthrie (Manager, Board Services), Charles D'Aoust (Coordinator of Budget Services), Teri Adamthwaite (Coordinator of Financial Reporting), Michael Guilbault (AV Technician), Rebecca Grandis (Senior Board Coordinator)
Non-Voting Representatives Present:	Malaka Hendela (OCASC-Alt), Jennifer Capitani (OCEOC), Jennifer Coleman (OCSSAN), Wulf Heidecker (ETFO-Alt), Stephanie Kirkey (OSSTF-Teachers), Kelly Granum (OSSTF-OT), Pat Dixon (OCEOTA), Troy Cluff (OSSTF-PSSU), Melodie Gondek (OSSTF-ESP), Jean Trant (OSSTF-SSP) Cathy Miedema (SEAC), Bronwyn Funicello (ACE), Nina Stanton (IEAC)

1. Call to Order - Chair of Committee of the Whole, Budget

Chair Schwartz called the Committee of the Whole Budget Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and acknowledged that the meeting is taking place on unceded Algonquin Territories and thanked the Algonquin Nations for hosting the meeting on their land.

Chair Schwartz advised the purpose of the meeting was to hear delegations and to commence debate on the 2021-2022 Staff-Recommended Budget.

2. Approval of Agenda

**Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans,
THAT the agenda be approved.**

Carried

3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

4. Delegations

There were no delegations.

5. Matters for Action

5.1 Report 21-047, 2021-2022 Staff-Recommended Budget

Your Committee had before it Report 21-047, seeking approval of the 2021-2022 Staff-Recommended Budget.

Chair Schwartz advised that this meeting is a continuation of the 1 June 2021, where the 2021-2022 Staff-Recommended Budget was presented.

CFO Carson noted that the agenda package contains Memo 21-073, 2021-2022 Staff-Recommended Budget Questions and Answers (Q&A) (Release 1), advising that a response to the question pertaining to investments in equity was taking longer than anticipated and was not included in the memo.

Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans,

1. THAT the unconsolidated 2021-2022 operating budget of \$1,010.3 million as presented in Report 21-047, 2021-2022 Staff-Recommended Budget and detailed in the 2021-2022 Staff-Recommended Budget Binder be approved, subject to Ministry authorization to use the accumulated surplus in the amount required to balance the budget; and

2. THAT the 2021-2022 capital budget of \$119.8 million as presented in the 2021-2022 Staff-Recommended Budget Binder, be approved.

Trustee Lyra Evans introduced the motion and thanked staff for providing their response to questions before moving the main motion.

An amendment moved by Trustee Campbell,

THAT \$200,000 be allocated from reserves to a central contingency fund for initiatives supporting the District's transition from School Resource Officer and other Ottawa Police Service (OPS) reliance, to be used as needed during the course of the 2021-22 school year, and where:

- The fund shall be utilized for such related purposes as added de-escalation and unconscious bias training development or purchase, release time, procedural development, communications and consultation, funded non-OPS civil society partnerships and service providers, targeted EA or mental health or other resources, counselling services for those impacted by previous OPS engagement, added tracking / analysis / reporting, and/or for other purposes, all to be determined by staff;
- Lapsed funds shall be returned to reserves at the end of the school year, unless otherwise varied by the Board; and
- A report on the use or non-use of this transitional contingency fund, and also of any continuing related unfunded needs, is to be provided to the Board to inform its 2022-23 budget process.

In his introduction, Trustee Campbell advised that during the potential suspension or cancellation of the School Resource Officer Program (SRO) it will be important to transition away from Ottawa Police Services (OPS) and the reliance on school resource officers (SROs). He noted that during the transition year, it will be important to ensure supports are adequately funded. Trustee Campbell noted that \$200,000 could be funded from reserves as a contingency fund in addition to the \$200,000 repurposed from the suspension or cancellation of the dedicated SRO program and OPS engagement funding, for a total of \$400,000. Trustee Campbell advised he was motivated by the amount of work and investment that will be required, citing that the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) experienced increased costs when the SRO program was cancelled.

During discussion on the amendment the following points were noted:

- CFO Carson commented that he had discussed the motion with Trustee Campbell and noted that while he is often uncomfortable with motions that will increase the deficit, senior staff had contemplated a similar investment and in the absence of the Human Rights and Equity Advisors (HREA) report, had deferred a plan to address the matter.

CFO Carson noted that the motion provides funding for the draft of a plan and the wording is broad enough to allow staff to work with community partners to determine the best use of the funding;

- Director Williams-Taylor noted that she appreciated Trustee Campbell's vision for the flexibility to be responsive, but she had concerns that it may be too soon to make any decisions and may be presupposing the emerging needs of the students and what is being addressed in the Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap (the roadmap). There is a requirement to allow the students, who have been negatively impacted, to outline their needs in order to respond appropriately;
- Trustee Hough inquired if \$200,000 was adequate for the purpose described in the motion, noting that she too was concerned that it may be too soon to determine what needs exist and how to respond;
- CFO Carson advised that, as staff gain more understanding of the issue and look to ways to best serve students, there may be a need for additional funding. He cautioned that the deficit being proposed is \$14.3 million, noting that If staff had contemplated this addition, it would have required looking at offsetting savings. CFO Carson suggested that the amendment would provide funding in the fall to address immediate needs and cautioned that it would not be wise to set a large amount of funding aside if it cannot be determined how it would be used as this has the potential to impact discussions, regarding the deficit, with the Ministry. If the funding is not adequate to address needs, in the fall, staff could look to reallocate resources and if necessary, come back to the Board to request additional funds;
- Trustee Lyra Evans noted that while she supports the items outlined in the motion, it addresses two different needs. She advised that there is a requirement to update policies and train staff and a need to support students who have been negatively impacted by the program and may have suffered trauma. She noted concerns about the adequacy of the funding. She suggested it may be prudent to divide the fund to allocate \$100,000 to mental health and cultural competence supports and \$100,000 to transition away from the SRO program;
- Director Williams-Taylor commented that by dividing the funds it suggests that equal resourcing is required. She advised that the division is artificial and not based on a plan. She cautioned that this decision may not be appropriate;
- Trustee Lyra Evans suggested that if \$100,000 for each category is not sufficient, it may be appropriate to add \$200,000 to each category noting that If this initiative is overfunded, the remainder could be returned to reserves at the end of the fiscal year;

- CFO Carson noted that if spending were to increase by \$400,000 that would raise the deficit to 14.7 million and may impact ongoing discussions with the Ministry. He added that he was not certain that \$200,000 allocated to each category would have an early impact. Staff may look at redirecting existing resources, look for additional resources and look at community resources to address the needs that may arise. He noted his comfort with the \$200,000 addition as it provides funding to initiate a plan but is not a future commitment. This would allow staff to determine a response to priorities and review the District's financial position in the fall of 2021;
- In response to a query from Trustee Penny about the District being in a reserve position and that the deficit budget may not allow for accumulated surplus, CFO Carson responded there could be an unappropriated deficit based on the most recent forecast used for the budget. Staff would be looking to the Ministry to refund the accumulated surplus that was used to cover COVID-19 related costs. Trustee Penny noted his concern that the motion speaks to using reserves that the District does not have and may restrict the ability to add additional items;
- CFO Carson advised that staff developed a budget and considered fulsome reductions, noting that there were no additional areas to reduce that would not negatively impact students and the strategic goals. CFO Carson stated that adding \$400,000 to the budget this early will impact any forthcoming additions. He noted his concern in future discussions with the Ministry as it must be demonstrated that the District is operating in a prudent manner. Staff were comfortable with a deficit of \$14.3 million, anticipating that trustees would make additions that would increase that amount. He cautioned that making additions that would increase the deficit to \$14.8 million would be concerning;
- CFO Carson advised that historically, enrolment projections have been within 1/2 of 1% of actual. The enrolment variations experienced in the 2020-2021 school year have not been seen in 25 years. Staff were very conservative in the projections, but it is possible there could be an increase in enrolment over the summer months as seen in past years;
- In response to a query from Trustee Ellis, CFO Carson noted that the \$200,000 proposed in the amendment is in addition to the funds allocated to the dedicated SRO program;
- Trustee Campbell confirmed that the amount in the amendment is an additional \$200,000 added to the savings from suspending or canceling the dedicated SRO program.
- CFO Carson advised that the OCDSB did commit to contribute \$95,000 to the dedicated SRO program. In preparing the budget this

year the decision was made that the District would provide the full amount of \$95,000 in savings from suspending or eliminating the program and adding an additional \$95,000 to provide support for the transition from the program. The amount was then rounded to \$200,000;

- In response to a question from Trustee Bell, regarding providing psychological support for past and present students that have suffered harm and if similar work had been undertaken in the past and the costs associated, CFO Carson advised that the funds to support former students, should the Board make that decision, will require careful discussion about how that would be managed. Staff are available to help current students but there are also many considerations about how that would be managed. He noted that the discussion is too complex for a budget discussion;
- Director Williams-Taylor noted that there are complexities with supporting former students. For students within the OCDSB, there are various supports in place that could be accessed. She advised that the District continues to build a repertoire of supports from within and works with skilled community partners who can provide services. She cautioned that treating trauma is not a "one size fits all" approach and learning how to provide support is ongoing;
- In response to a question from Trustee Scott about supports and services currently available to students and the need to expand the scope of support and match needs, Director Williams-Taylor advised that the budget contains the addition of social workers. She stated that the psychology team has developed a culturally-responsive lens to their work and the team is diverse in experience and identity and has been agile in assessing the needs of the students they serve;
- Regarding training for awareness of difficult situations for those close to students, Director Williams-Taylor advised that the work of department heads, guidance counselors and school leaders is important. It must be noted that these students are the most vulnerable and need the most support to stay engaged, feel important and meet milestones. This is a well-being and achievement goal to see the advancement of the most vulnerable students;
- In response to a question from Trustee Fisher about the significant items in the budget that will substantively address the roadmap, and the programming shifts to address intersectionality and achieve the desired outcomes, Director Williams-Taylor noted that CFO Carson indicated there will be a robust connection to the roadmap forthcoming and how the budget allocation will look without the \$200,000

addition. The equity investment information is complex and staff are working to provide the information;

- Trustee Fisher requested that in addition to that information on intersectionality, it would be beneficial to know how the District is allocating resources and aligning support to address the well-being and achievement of high-risk students and increase the engagement of those students, noting there is a more substantive understanding required of what the resources in this budget are going to achieve;
- In response to a question from Trustee Jennekens about the priority of the short term plan for addressing the needs of the students and the direction the District should be taking, Director Williams-Taylor noted that identifying those priorities is more of a question for trustees to contemplate;
- Director Williams-Taylor reported that the period for the transition away from the SRO program will be a full year as there will be multiple transitions for students at the same time, including returning to school along with the change to the program. Superintendent Farrish noted that in the transition, professional development (PD) was planned for staff for ways to support students and will require local community agencies to collaborate. Staff will identify gaps and build capacity to support the learning and well-being of students;
- Trustee Lyra Evans noted that she had given consideration to what she was hearing from her colleagues about the need to prioritize between the two clauses in the amendment and of the funds that CFO Carson said could be worked into the budget. She suggested that these clauses are not only about mental health because that has been identified as a priority for some time, but this is about the mental health of those that have been harmed and negatively impacted. She stated that the District must prioritize these students' mental health and well-being and repairing the system over other priorities. Trustee Lyra Evans stressed that the harm that has been done to these students cannot be not be ignored and noted she wished to move a sub amendment.

A sub-amendment moved by Trustee Lyra Evans,

THAT a new Part B be added as follows:

- B. THAT \$200,000 be allocated from reserves to a central contingency fund for initiatives rooted in the ending of the SRO program related to targeted EAs, mental health, or other culturally appropriate resources, and/or counselling services for those impacted by previous OPS engagements, and where:

- i. Lapsed funds shall be returned to reserves at the end of the school year, unless, otherwise varied by the Board; and
- ii. A report on the use or non-use of this transitional contingency fund, and also of any continuing related unfunded needs, is to be provided to the Board to inform its 2022-23 budget process.

In her introduction Trustee Lyra Evans noted that the sub-amendment combines two necessary actions in one motion. She noted that the District must prioritize the health and wellbeing of the students that it has directly harmed. The Board received a report that clearly stated many students do not feel safe with the existence of the SRO program and will require mental health, well-being and other culturally appropriate supports in the coming months and years to ensure they feel welcome within the school system. Trustee Lyra Evans reiterated that she heard the Director say that \$200,000 could not be divided in half as the needs may not align with the divide. Trustee Lyra Evans felt that \$200,000 could be increased and any unspent funds could be returned to reserves. She expressed that the well-being of the students that have been wronged should be a priority for the District and the wrong must be undone before the District can move forward.

During discussion on the sub-amendment the following points were noted:

- Trustee Campbell sought clarification on the sub-amendment, noting that originally the amendment was a "THAT" with three qualifying clauses. He noted there are now two "THATs" and requested a confirmation from staff or the mover, that the original bullet points apply to both "THATS";
- Trustee Lyra Evans confirmed that it was her original intention that the bullet points apply to both "THATs";
- Executive Officer Giroux sought clarification on the two smaller clauses that were in the original motion and that they apply to both clauses and noted that the clauses should be labeled as "A" and "B" with the sub-sections listed under each section;
- Several trustees requested clarification on the amount of funding in the motion and asked that the revisions be incorporated, and a clean copy be available prior to a vote.

Following a break at 8:25 pm the meeting was called to order at 8:35 p.m..

Trustee Lyra Evans requested that the vote be recorded and that it includes the student trustees.

A Sub-Amendment Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans,

THAT a new Part B be added as follows:

- B. THAT \$200,000 be allocated from reserves to a central contingency fund for initiatives rooted in the ending of the SRO program related to targeted EAs, mental health, or other culturally appropriate resources, and/or counselling services for those impacted by previous OPS engagements, and where:*
- i. Lapsed funds shall be returned to reserves at the end of the school year, unless, otherwise varied by the Board; and*
 - ii. A report on the use or non-use of this transitional contingency fund, and also of any continuing related unfunded needs, is to be provided to the Board to inform its 2022-23 budget process.*

Carried

A recorded vote was held, and the sub-amendment was carried on the following division:

FOR: Trustees Bell, Boothby, Campbell, Ellis, Lyra Evans, Fisher. Hough, Jennekens, Penny, Schwartz, Scott. Chen, Liu. (13)

AGAINST: Nil (0)

ABSTENTIONS: Nil 0)

In response to a query from Trustee Penny seeking clarification on the revised amount of the sub-amendment, CFO Carson confirmed the amount in the sub-amendment will increase expenditures and the deficit by \$400,000.

Trustee Campbell, in his wrap up, noted his delight that this idea was well received and requested a recorded vote on the amendment.

An Amendment Moved by Trustee Campbell,

- A. THAT \$200,000 be allocated from reserves to a central contingency fund for initiatives supporting the District's transition from School Resource Officer (SRO) and other Ottawa Police Service (OPS) reliance, to be used as needed during the course of the 2021-22 school year, and where:*
- i. The fund shall be utilized for such related purposes as added de-escalation and unconscious bias training development or purchase, release time, procedural development, communications and consultation, funded non-OPS civil society partnerships and service providers, added tracking / analysis / reporting, and/or for other purposes, all to be determined by staff;*

- ii. *Lapsed funds shall be returned to reserves at the end of the school year, unless otherwise varied by the Board; and*
 - iii. *A report on the use or non-use of this transitional contingency fund, and also of any continuing related unfunded needs, is to be provided to the Board to inform its 2022-23 budget process.;and*
- B. *THAT \$200,000 be allocated from reserves to a central contingency fund for initiatives rooted in the ending of the SRO program related to targeted EAs, mental health, or other culturally appropriate resources, and/or counselling services for those impacted by previous OPS engagements, and where:*
- i. *Lapsed funds shall be returned to reserves at the end of the school year, unless , otherwise varied by the Board; and*
 - ii. *A report on the use or non-use of this transitional contingency fund, and also of any continuing related unfunded needs, is to be provided to the Board to inform its 2022-23 budget process.*

Carried

A recorded vote was held, and the amendment was carried on the following division:

FOR: Trustees Bell, Boothby, Campbell, Ellis, Lyra Evans, Fisher, Hough, Jennekens, Penny, Schwartz, Scott, Chen, Liu. (13)

AGAINST: Nil (0)

ABSTENTIONS: Nil (0)

During discussion on the main motion and in response to questions, the following point were noted:

- CFO Carson advised that \$4.9 million was received in additional specific funding for indigenous education and program leadership. A significant portion of the funding is generated by the calculation of enrolment in Indigenous Education classes, which are funded to support smaller class sizes. There is approximately \$1.5 million allocated to specific staffing for indigenous students out of the \$4.9 million in additional funding. This funding is above the funding allocated for every full-time student of \$14-\$15,000 that provides the basic staffing cost and school operation;
- In response to a question from Trustee Hough regarding funding to provide acquisitions to support indigenous students, such as chromebooks and hot spots, outdoor education, additional psychologists and social workers, authentic learning, transportation

from the north etc., CFO Carson responded that these types of initiatives are not funded through the \$4.9 million additional funding and would have to be diverted from other programs;

- CFO Carson indicated that throughout departments in the District there are programs that support all students, including Indigenous students. The Outdoor Education and Continuing Education departments work with the Indigenous Education team to provide the instruction that Trustee Hough referred to in her query. These departments are not a part of the envelope of specific Indigenous funding, but they do provide programming and support;
- Trustee Ellis sought clarification on the \$95,000 allocation to the SRO officer and if it was contained in the 2021-2022 Staff-Recommended Budget and CFO Carson indicated that it was a placeholder in the budget until a plan was developed;

An amendment moved by Trustee Ellis,

THAT the \$95,000 in savings achieved through the discontinuation of the additional SRO resources, be added to the RAISE expenditure budget.

In his introduction, Trustee Ellis noted that the original intent for the funds was to address needs for at-risk students and breakdown barriers. He expressed the view that the program is currently lacking in its intent. Trustee Ellis indicated that he is moving the amendment to add \$95,000 to the Raise expenditure budget for schools that meet a certain criteria and demographic to provide additional support to at-risk students.

During discussion on the amendment, the following points were noted:

- Trustee Scott sought clarification on the proposed amendment to determine if the \$95,000 is additional funding to be allocated to schools with specific needs based on the RAISE index. Trustee Ellis confirmed that was his intent;
- Trustee Scott queried staff to confirm that in previous years, some of the RAISE funds have remained unspent and suggested that it may be preferable to add \$95,000 to other areas of the budget. CFO Carson indicated that he had suggested the wording to indicate the RAISE expenditure budget as it encompasses payments to schools and would support engagement work and staffing enhancements. He did confirm that in the past, there were challenges in finding replacement staff or to identify appropriate projects and effective use of the funds. Superintendent Duah and a broad range of staff have looked for ways to repurpose the funding more effectively. CFO Carson indicated the wording 'RAISE expenditure budget' would allow use beyond a just a cash transfer to schools;

- Trustee Scott indicated that she had concerns that there may be other supports required. She noted her support of the motion and requested that minutes indicate what is being encompassed by the wording RAISE expenditure budget;
- Trustee Fisher sought clarification that the \$95,000 reallocated from the SRO program was included in the \$400,000 previously committed;
- CFO Carson advised that staff had reserved \$200,000, consisting of the savings from suspending or cancelling the SRO program and the OPS contribution, for an amount of \$190,000 rounded to \$200,000. Trustee Campbell's amendment was to add \$200,000 and was sub-amended to add \$400,000 in new funding, leaving the \$200,000 that staff had reserved still available in the budget, increasing expenditures by \$400,000;
- Trustee Lyra Evans noted her recollection that at the 26 May 2021 budget meeting, staff indicated they would allocate the \$95,000 savings from the SRO program and a matching \$95,000 to the Urban Priorities High School Fund;
- CFO Carson advised that staff has reserved the two \$95,000 allocations without a specific plan on where the funds would best be apportioned, to the two Urban Priority High Schools, or various schools across the District. It should be noted that when the discussion occurred at the 26 May 2021 budget meeting, the findings of the HREA report had not yet been released;

Trustee Scott assumed the Chair.

- Trustee Schwartz indicated she and Trustee Ellis discussed his amendment and how effective the Urban Priorities work had been at Gloucester and Ridgemont High Schools. She noted the importance of putting these funds to best use and noted that staff could look at adding some of the funds to support other priority schools in the district;

Trustee Schwartz resumed the Chair

Trustee Ellis noted his amendment does not impact the budget. He indicated his intent for the funds to be allocated to a non-school-based fund. He noted his hope that the District might think about implementing the structure of the Urban Priority High School grants noting that it is good for a group of people to determine the needs and that the funding might allow for a social worker and/or a nurse to be shared between a number of schools. Trustee Ellis expressed his wish that this will be year-over-year funding.

Trustee Fisher clarified his intent to vote in the affirmative.

An amendment moved by Trustee Ellis,

That the \$95,000 in savings achieved through the discontinuation of the additional SRO resources, be added to the RAISE expenditure budget.

Carried

The discussion returned to the main motion and the following information was provided:

- In response to a query from Trustee Scott about how the additional six itinerant EA (IEA) positions would be utilized, Superintendent Symmonds indicated they would be deployed to augment the secondary EA compliment, allowing for two schools to be assigned to each IEA to support tier one mental health and well-being promotion, post pandemic. This allocation of staff will allow for the existing mental health professionals to focus on the work required at tier two and three mental health support. The IEAs are child and youth workers, and are capable of supporting the delivery of the resources from School Mental Health Ontario (SMHO), implementing a relationship-based approach to student achievement and well-being, and targeted intervention in stress-management and coping;
- Superintendent Symmonds clarified that there are teams within the Learning Support Services department that are deployed regularly for dysregulated behavior but there is no emergency team to deploy on short notice. Where schools identify ongoing challenges with a student there are LSS teams that can be deployed to assist in providing mental health or speech and language support. A request for an increase in speech and language pathologists was recommended in the budget to undertake the work of the Ontario Human Rights Commission Right to Read inquiry and to assist students with executive function skills. As well, an occupational therapist is available to assist with sensory profiles;
- Trustee Bell requested that in the next release of budget questions and answers, that staff provide the budget allocation for policy analyst capacity, the expenditure on and number of Communications and Information Services staff, and the expenditure in the 2020-2021 school year on contracting services for communications. In addition, she requested staff provide information on best practices from other school boards on communication on the budget process;
- CFO Carson advised that budget communication strategies include Thoughtexchange, social media, using the District's website, as well as staff attending advisory committee and trustee zone meetings. He noted regular Committee of the Whole and Board meetings provide the best opportunities to gather input on communities priorities;

- Executive Officer Giroux advised that the District website has an active budget page that is updated regularly and there is also a delegations page that outlines the process. Regarding the question of the staff allocation for policy development, there is a 1.0 FTE policy analyst. In the Communications department, there are 7.0 FTE and a manager who undertake media relations, communications, website design, audio-visual support, graphic design, school website support, and reception;
- Trustee Campbell commented on the need for support for the Research, Evaluation and Analytics Division (READ) to address the backlog in the department as a result of a shortage of human resources;
- Executive Officer Giroux noted that not all the projects that have been deferred are tied to the READ team, some are connected to other departments and sometimes it is timing. She noted that the work to be undertaken on the RAISE index is a high priority for the 2021-2022 year. Executive Officer Giroux advised that the work on the identity-based data that was conducted in 2020-2021 was a significant undertaking;
- In response to a question from Trustee Scott about engaging graduate students to conduct research for the District, Executive Officer Giroux advised that the District does partner with the universities in Ottawa. She noted that research staff are looking to contemplate their work to ensure they are focused on strategic priorities with a concentration on information on schools and classroom educators to support student achievement and well-being;
- Director Williams-Taylor emphasized that it is important to utilize staff based on the mandates within the District and the need to focus on how best to serve students, who are the priority. She noted that limited resources must be streamlined to ensure District data speaks to the service and outcomes and impact on students; and
- Trustee Scott commented that while the District must focus on the needs of students and the information needed to continue to improve the system, it would be beneficial to find a mechanism for harnessing outside resources such as graduate students to support the District, based on their own academic interest, in ways that would align with strategic needs and planning for school improvement.

6. New Business - Information and Inquiries

Chair Schwartz noted that the next meeting takes place on 15 June 2021, where delegations and debate on the 2021-2022 Staff-recommended budget will continue. She requested that trustees provide any amendments to staff in advance of the meeting.

7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:48 p.m.

Sandra Schwartz, Chair