



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE BUDGET (PUBLIC) 21 February 2023 Report No. 23-017

Academic Staffing Plan for 2023-2024

Key Contact: Paula Hall, Superintendent of People, Culture and Leadership
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PURPOSE:

1. To provide to the Committee of the Whole (COW) for discussion, information with respect to the academic staffing process, the status quo approach recommended for the 2023-2024 school year and information about how potential changes might be considered when final academic staffing recommendations come forward next month.

STRATEGIC LINKS:

2. Decisions related to the 2023-2024 Budget, including those related to academic staffing, should be guided by the priorities articulated through the strategic plan. This means ensuring that appropriate resources are in place to support the specific objectives identified to support a Culture of Innovation, Culture of Caring, and a Culture of Social Responsibility. Staff provide their best professional advice on the distribution of academic staffing resources in order to have the greatest impact and benefit across the District.

CONTEXT:

3. The approval of the annual budget is one of the most significant decisions made by the Board of Trustees. Through that process, the Board can ensure that financial resources are aligned with the Board's priorities for improving student achievement and well-being, and for meeting legislated and contractual obligations.

The academic staffing plan is the first step of the annual budget process. The staffing timelines are established in collective agreements and are based on timelines necessary to plan timetables and assign staff for the upcoming school year. Unfortunately, the Ministry often does not release the Grants for Student Needs (GSN) in alignment with academic staffing timelines. This means that the

Board is often required to make academic staffing decisions before there is a full understanding of the budget reality for the upcoming school year. This is not a significant issue for formulae driven staff positions, but it can be problematic for forecasting discretionary academic staffing positions.

Academic staffing represents approximately 65% of the total operating budget. The academic staffing plan covers all of the District's school based and central teaching positions, including elementary and secondary classroom teachers, guidance teachers, teacher-librarians, student success teachers, school-based special education and English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers, as well as central instructional coaches and consultants.

The collective agreements with the Ottawa-Carleton Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (OCETFO), and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation - Teachers Bargaining Unit (OSSTF-TBU) set out specific timelines related to the academic staffing process.

In order to meet these timeline obligations and ensure that teaching positions are filled prior to September, academic staffing levels must be approved by the end of March, in advance of the regular budget cycle. Once approved, People, Culture and Leadership staff work closely with principals and the joint staffing committees from April through June, and continuing over the summer, to ensure schools are staffed for the following year.

The academic staffing plan also includes the recommended complement of principals and vice-principals for next year. There is not the same requirement to bring these positions forward for approval with academic staffing timelines, however vice-principal allocations are provided to schools as part of their staffing allocation in April. This allows principals to accommodate the teaching portion, where applicable, of vice-principal positions when they are creating staff assignments and school timetables.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

4. Principles that Inform the Academic Staffing Plan

There are a number of considerations that impact the academic staffing plan. In general, the academic staffing plan should:

- align with the strategic priorities identified by the Board for improving student achievement and well-being;
- meet Ministry, regulatory and collective agreement obligations;
- maintain, to the extent possible, existing core services and supports provided by teachers;
- prioritize services and supports for students who may be at risk, students who have traditionally been underserved by typical structures, and students with the highest needs;
- consider the impact on the overall budget, including other staff supports that may be required to meet student needs and District priorities; and

- consider potential funding and funding parameters.

Status Quo Approach

Attached is a comprehensive Addendum which includes a description of academic staffing needs. At this time, staff is providing a status quo academic staffing plan for 2023-2024, based on the model in place for the current school year. This plan does not include any new discretionary positions. It is anticipated that there will be changes in the report that comes forward in March. Those changes will be driven by projected changes in enrolment, changes resulting from anticipated increased or decreased funding, and changes being considered to accommodate changing program needs, or meet strategic plan priorities and objectives or in anticipation of budget adjustments. At this time, it is anticipated that that report would include reductions and/or redistribution of positions, but will not include any new positions.

Implementation of Board Decisions

Next month, an updated academic staffing plan will be presented to the Board for approval. Upon approval, senior staff will ensure the positions are allocated to schools and central department portfolios in accordance with the Board's direction, collective agreement requirements, and District priorities. Principals are responsible for creating assignments and school organization structures that are compliant with regulatory and collective agreement obligations and which are consistent with creating the best learning conditions for students.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

5. Required classroom teacher staffing is based on student enrolment projections for September. Using a status quo approach to discretionary academic staffing, the estimated staffing numbers, shown as full-time equivalent (FTE), and costs are as follows:

	Elementary (FTE)	Secondary (FTE)
Required (basic classroom, prep time & collective agreement requirements)	2669.34	1456.00
Discretionary (less SSF funding)	635.56 (-21.00)	243.50 (-11.00)
Total Academic Staffing	3283.90	1688.50
Total Staffing Costs	\$352M	\$177M

More detailed information about the costs and allocations for academic staffing is included in the addendum to this report.

At the time of this report, 2023-2024 academic staffing allocations are under review relative to budget resources. It is anticipated that some reductions will be necessary in order to re-align total spending with revenues. Key factors affecting revenues are the elimination of the surplus which was being used to offset past deficit budgets; the possible elimination of provincial funding, including the Supports for Students Fund (SSF) that were negotiated as part of the previous collective agreement; the possible loss of Covid funding; increased operating costs; and any changes to provincial Grants for Student Needs (GSN). Over the next month, staff will be working closely with the Finance Department and the Ministry of Education to better understand the financial implications of these items and the impact on academic staffing.

Should it be necessary to make adjustments to academic staffing, staff will make recommendations in support of achieving strategic priorities.

COMMUNICATION/CONSULTATION ISSUES:

6. This report provides a foundation for academic staffing decisions and will inform the final staff recommendations. The Committee of the Whole Budget (COW Budget) discussions will help to inform any future recommendations.

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

7. The following guiding questions are provided to support the discussion at Committee of the Whole:
 1. Is the academic staffing process clearly understood as a component of the Board's priority setting for student achievement and well-being?
 2. Does the report and addendum provide information about required and discretionary areas of academic staffing in a manner that supports decision-making in alignment with current and future priorities, in particular, a commitment to high expectations for all students in all programs and achieving equitable outcomes for all students?
 3. Does the proposed plan for academic staffing align with the District's commitment to maintain a fiscally responsible and sustainable budget?

SUBMITTED FOR DISCUSSION

Paula Hall
Superintendent of People, Culture
and Leadership

Michele Giroux
Director of Education and Secretary of the
Board

Attach.

Addendum - Academic Staffing Report, 2023-2024

Appendix A - Proposed Elementary Teacher Allocations, 2023-2024

Appendix B - Proposed Secondary Teacher Allocations, 2023-2024

Appendix C - Proposed Principal and Vice-Principal Allocations, 2023-2024