



COW BUDGET (PUBLIC)
Report No. 23-026

27 March 2023

Academic Staffing Plan for 2023-2024

Key Contact: Paula Hall, Superintendent of People, Culture and Leadership
Pamela LeMaistre, General Manager of People, Culture and Leadership

PURPOSE:

1. To provide an academic staffing plan for the 2023-2024 school year.

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 and in alignment to strategic priorities.

CONTEXT:

3. 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 Grants for Student Needs (GSN) are released based on the Ministry of Education timelines which do not necessarily align 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.

In March, staff brought forward a preliminary report outlining the process, timelines for academic staffing and a staffing model based on the status quo, subject to projected changes in enrollment. That report also provided preliminary financial

projections which indicated that for the 2023-2024 school year, the OCDSB could face an operating budget shortfall estimated between \$9M and \$39M, with the most likely range between \$15 to \$20M. Finally, the report also outlined the principles and approach staff would take to developing an academic staffing plan.

Over the past month, staff has been reviewing budgets, expenditures, and forecasts; implementing cost control measures for the current year to offset future shortfalls; and reviewing staffing allocations with a view to identifying opportunities which could generate savings and wherever possible, lay a foundation for reimagining service delivery based on best practices. At the same time, there has been ongoing contact with the Ministry and other school board partners in an effort to learn more about provincial transfer payments for the upcoming school year.

Based on the information currently available, the 2023-24 academic staffing plan has been developed with a view to finding a portion of the budget savings necessary to address the expected deficit. The total proposed budget for academic staffing is \$528M which provides for 4,984.67 full-time equivalent (FTE) teacher positions. This includes increases in staffing related to enrolment growth, as well as a reduction of 21.23 discretionary academic staff positions (which includes a 0.50 FTE system principal position). The savings generated through the academic staffing plan are estimated at \$2,332,312, meaning that it will be necessary to find between \$13M and \$18M in savings in the non-academic staffing parts of the budget.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

4. Budget Context

Based on information currently available, the District is projecting an operating budget shortfall between \$15 to \$20M, which is down considerably from initial projections of between \$9M and \$39M.

The change in the fiscal landscape is due to a number of factors, including:

- Revenues for the 2023-2024 school year are not yet known;
- the OCDSB used reserve funds to offset operating costs during the pandemic to ensure stability for the learning environment, and those reserves have now been depleted;
- the District has experienced a significant and continued rise in the cost of replacement of absent staff;
- the discontinuation of Covid funding;
- a rise in operating costs.

The OCDSB does not currently have the accumulated financial reserves to continue running a deficit budget. At the time of this report, the provincial budget released on March 27, 2023 does not indicate any substantive funding for increased cost pressures or new initiatives in education. We remain hopeful that the Grants for Student Needs will address some of these cost pressures.

5. **Principles Used to 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.

6. **Academic Staffing Overview**

Academic staffing represents approximately 60-65% of the total operating budget and includes school based and central teaching positions. The academic staffing plan also includes the recommended complement of principals and vice-principals for next year. This allows necessary time for planning of the teaching portion of vice-principal positions when creating staff assignments and school timetables.

Academic staffing levels must be approved by the end of March, in advance of the regular budget cycle. There are specific timelines established in 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).

Once the academic staffing is approved, central staff work closely with principals and the joint staffing committees from April through June, and continue over the summer months, to ensure schools are staffed for the following September.

7. **Academic Staffing Plan for 2023- 2024**

Attached is a comprehensive Addendum which includes a description of academic staffing needs. Staff is recommending an academic staffing plan for 2023-2024 that includes a savings of 21.23 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions in our discretionary staffing allocation. It is expected that this would not involve staff layoffs and will be addressed through attrition.

Positon	FTE	Cost Impact
Central Coaches - Elementary	-8.00	-\$860,200
Central Coaches - Secondary	-6.00	-\$658,779
Principals and Vice-Principals Secondary Principal, Operations	-0.50	-\$75,317
Special Education - Elementary Learning Support Consultants (LSC) Primary Specials Needs (PSN) Classes	 -2.00 -3.57	 -\$218,394 -\$389,833
Special Education - Secondary Learning Support Teachers (LST) ASD Specialized Program Classes Sections to Support Partially Integrated GLP	 -5.83 +2.67 +2.00	 -\$652,301 +\$298,738 +\$223,774
Total	-21.23	-\$2,332,312

Recognizing the volume of work and range of needs across the District, there are no easy decisions when looking for savings in academic staffing. In developing this plan, every effort was made to make recommendations that could allow for a redistribution of resources to continue to meet needs while finding new ways to

deliver services. In most cases this meant a focused approach in one area, rather than pulling small numbers of resources in all areas. For example, the largest single area of reduction is with instructional coaches. The instructional coach model will continue, but this is an opportunity to redefine the model based on current needs, best practices and available resources.

More detailed information about the proposed reductions is included in the Addendum Booklet.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

8. The annual operating budget is estimated at slightly more than \$1B. The cost of academic staffing is \$528M. This is distributed between Required and Discretionary staffing. Required classroom teacher staffing is based on student enrolment projections for September. The estimated teacher staffing numbers, shown as full-time equivalent (FTE), are as follows:

	Elementary (FTE)	Secondary (FTE)
Required Academic Staffing (includes basic classroom, prep time & collective agreement requirements)	2669.34	1456.00
Discretionary Academic Staffing	636.56	243.50
Recommended Reductions	-13.57	-7.16*
Total Academic Staffing	3292.33	1692.34

** This does not include the 0.50 reduction to central principal as it is only reflecting teaching positions. More detailed information about the costs and allocations for academic staffing is included in the addendum to this report.*

COMMUNICATION/CONSULTATION ISSUES:

9. In advance of this meeting, information about academic staffing and proposed savings was shared with the federations, principal representatives, and affected employee groups. The report was posted to the District website and information about the academic staffing plan was shared in the weekly communications to staff and to parents on March 24, 2023. The District continues to post information and invite input into the budget process through the website and regular communication channels.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Academic Staffing Plan for 2023-2024, as set out in the Addendum and Appendices A, B and C to Report 23-026, be approved, subject to adjustments related to fluctuations in projected and actual enrolment.

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