



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, BUDGET REPORT

Monday, June 10, 2024

7:00 pm

Board Room

Administration Building

133 Greenbank Road

Ottawa, Ontario

Trustees Present: Alysha Aziz (electronic communication), Justine Bell (electronic communication), Donna Blackburn, Donna Dickson, Lyra Evans, Jennifer Jennekens (electronic communication), Nili Kaplan-Myrth (electronic communication), Matthew Lee (electronic communication), Cathryne Milburn (electronic communication), Suzanne Nash, Amanda Presley (electronic communication), Lynn Scott, Emma Hong (Student Trustee)

Staff Present: Pino Buffone (Director of Education), Randy Gerrior (Associate Director of Business Operations), James Proulx (Executive Officer of Information Technology and Digital Transformation), Michèle Giroux (Executive Officer of Corporate Services), Reg Lavergne (Superintendent of Instruction), Peter Symmonds (Superintendent of Learning Support Services), Janice McCoy (Superintendent of People, Culture and Leadership), Richard Sinclair (General Counsel), Teri Adamthwaite (General Manager, Finance), Stacey Kay (General Manager, Learning Support Services), Sandy Owens (General Manager, Business & Learning Technology), Diane Pernari (General Manager, Communications & Public Relations), Nicole Guthrie (General Manager, Board Services), Michael Guilbault (Multimedia Coordinator, Communications), Kathy Mak (Board/Committee Coordinator)

Non-Voting Representatives Present: Jamieson Dyer (OCEOTA), Melodie Gondek (OSSTF - ESP), Tracy Shapiro (OCSSAN), Stephanie Kirkey (OSSTF - TBU), Anthony Wong (SEAC), Nina Stanton (IEC), Susan Rab (OSSTF - OTS)

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

Chair Lyra Evans called the public session to order at 7:01 p.m.

2. **Acknowledgement of Territorial Lands**

Chair Lyra Evans acknowledged that this meeting is taking place on unceded Algonquin Homelands and thanked the Algonquin Nations for their stewardship of these lands since time immemorial.

3. Approval of Agenda

Moved by Trustee Nash,

THAT the agenda be approved.

Carried

4. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were filed.

5. Delegations

There were no delegations.

6. Action Items

6.1 Report 24-080, 2024-2025 Staff-Recommended Budget (R. Gerrior)

Your Committee had before it Report 24-080, 2024-2025 Staff Recommended Budget, seeking approval for the staff recommended operating budget for the 2024-2025 school year.

Moved by Trustee Aziz, seconded by Trustee Lyra Evans,

- A. THAT the unconsolidated 2024-2025 operating budget of \$1,169,323,005 as presented in Report 24-080, 2024-2025 Staff-Recommended Budget and detailed in the 2024-2025 Staff-Recommended Budget Binder be approved; and
- B. THAT the 2024-2025 capital budget of \$127,838,114 as presented in the 2024-2025 Staff-Recommended Budget Binder, be approved

During discussion and in response to queries, the following points were provided:

- Associate Director Gerrior noted that the Responsive Education Program (REP) grant had been lowered as restrictions now require the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) to use the funds for summer school; however, there is difficulty in finding staff that are willing to work during the summer period;
- The summer mental health support provides continuity of mental health services for students who received services during the school year;
- General Manager Adamwaithe noted that the Indigenous education support program was funded differently in 2023. The funding

changed in 2024 from a classroom allocation to actual usage within the Indigenous community in 2024;

- Although the mental health and wellness allocation appears to have decreased, the allocation for student safety and well-being has increased substantially;
- It would be more expensive for the OCDSB to assume responsibility for the recruitment, hiring, and management of school bus drivers which is currently the responsibility of the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority (OSTA);
- The OCDSB works closely with School Mental Health Ontario to focus on prevention, promotion and intervention through the development of resources for Grades 7 and 8 in 2024 and for Grade 10 in 2025;
- A formal assessment is not always required to determine the level of support a student needs as an educator's observations can be a valid data source;
- The District's investments in the infrastructure program include the Facilities Renewal Program (FRP) and the School Condition Improvement (SCI) program. Air quality is regularly monitored and there is a growing need to invest in HVAC systems;
- The OCDSB is one of the largest users of the Ontario Education Collaborative Marketplace (OECM) for sourcing products and services including portables; however local lenders often offer regional discounts;
- By reallocating revenues and expenses for custodians to different budget areas, the District was able to generate slightly more than 6 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions to fill vacancies and make two payroll term positions permanent to stabilize payroll operations;
- The retirement gratuity is a budget requirement to pay out sick leave to staff with more than 10 years of service upon retirement;
- The Student Achievement Through Equity (SATE) initiative is an inquiry with respect to effective practices to support students and families through the Family and Community Engagement (FACE) initiative;
- The OCDSB is conducting a trial for the Green Bin program at six different sites. An estimated cost of \$2 million to expand the program is not included in the budget as there is insufficient data. The City of Ottawa uses a third-party vendor to pick up green bins,

and it has no capacity to provide additional support to the Green Bin program;

- The Advocacy Committee provided valuable insight to the budget process and the cost to address special education, mental health and well-being, capital projects, cyber security, replacement workers and transportation;
- The District plans to reach out to the advisory committees to receive feedback and comments for the next budgetary cycle;
- Trustee Scott urged the District and community to advocate with the province to adequately support the District in meeting its responsibilities;
- Enrolment growth will have a positive impact on the OCDSB budget. It may be necessary to alter bus transportation eligibility or close schools to generate budget savings;
- The Walking School Bus is not included in the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority (OSTA) budget;
- The OCDSB advocacy documents were shared with members of the Eastern Region school boards who belong to the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) so that other school boards may use them to develop their respective versions; and

Trustee Nash assumed the chair.

- Inflationary pressures, Bill 124, collective agreements, and legal requirements have outpaced the funding provided. The OCDSB struggles to provide the same level of services in the classroom.

Trustee Lyra Evans resumed the Chair.

Moved by Trustee Aziz, seconded by Trustee Lyra Evans,

- **THAT the unconsolidated 2024-2025 operating budget of \$1,169,323,005 as presented in Report 24-080, 2024-2025 Staff-Recommended Budget and detailed in the 2024-2025 Staff-Recommended Budget Binder be approved; and**
- **THAT the 2024-2025 capital budget of \$127,838,114 as presented in the 2024-2025 Staff-Recommended Budget Binder, be approved.**

Carried

- a. 2024-2025 Staff Recommended Budget Questions and Answers

The 2024-2025 staff recommended budget Questions and Answers document were provided for information.

b. Advocacy Briefing Notes

The advocacy briefing notes with respect to mental health, replacement workers, special education, transportation, capital funding, and cybersecurity were provided for information.

7. New Business - Information and Inquiries

There was no new business.

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Lyra Evans, Chair