



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE BUDGET (PUBLIC)

Report No. 25-013

18 March 2025

Staffing Plan for 2025-2026

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PURPOSE:

1. To provide the Board of Trustees with the recommended plan in regards to staffing for the 2025-2026 school year.

STRATEGIC LINKS:

2. Decisions related to the 2025-2026 budget, including those related to staffing, are guided by the priorities articulated through the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan. This means ensuring that appropriate resources are in place to support the District priorities of Learning, Well-being, and Social Responsibility. Staff provide their best professional advice on the distribution of academic and non-academic staffing resources in order to have the greatest impact and benefit across the District in alignment with strategic priorities.

CONTEXT:

3. In recent years, we have separated non-academic and academic staffing, due to timelines that have been driven by collective agreements. This school year, we have attempted to integrate both staffing elements in a holistic manner. This approach is challenging due to the lack of Core Education funding information received from the province at this point. Nevertheless, this year, we have integrated non academic staffing into the staffing report, with less specificity than what is seen in the academic section of this report.

Each year, our Planning Department provides projected enrolment numbers that employee services use to allocate staff to schools. Our projected enrolment for September 1, 2025 in elementary is 50,762 and is 26,196 for secondary, for a total projected enrolment of 76,958.

Enrolment for 2025-26 is anticipated to be relatively stable to last year's actual enrolment but lower than the projections for 2024-25 due to lower than normal

Kindergarten birth rates and fewer international students in our schools.

The chart below outlines the difference in projected enrolment for 2024 - 2025, the actual number of students in each panel as of November 1, 2024 and the projected number of students as of March 2025.

Elementary Enrolment			Secondary Enrolment		
2024 - 2025 (Projected)	2024 - 2025 (Actual)	2025-2026 (Projected)	2024 - 2025 (Projected)	2024 - 2025 (Actual)	2025 - 2026 (Projected)
51,550	50,949 (-601)	50,762 (-788)	26,009	26,348 (+339)	26,196 (+187)

Enrolment compared to 2024 - 2025 Projected

The number of classroom teaching positions required each year is tied directly to student enrolment. The academic staffing plan is developed based on preliminary enrolment projections, which means that classroom positions are subject to change as enrolment figures are adjusted. Projections are monitored and updated throughout the early spring and actual enrolments are confirmed in September. Formal enrolment count dates for funding purposes are submitted as of October 31 and March 31 each year.

Academic Staffing Context

Academic staffing is divided into required and discretionary. Required staffing is determined by collective agreements, regulations and central agreements.

Academic staffing includes the following positions:

Required Academic Positions:

- Classroom teachers and other school-based positions
- Other teachers, including student success teachers, guidance teachers, learning support teachers and teacher-librarians (secondary)
- Supports for student fund (SSF) teachers for elementary and secondary
- Reading intervention teachers (elementary)

Discretionary Academic Positions:

- Principals and vice principals
- Special education teachers
- English as a Second Language teachers
- Instructional coaches and consultant

Academic staffing represents approximately 55% of the total operating budget and includes school-based and centrally-assigned positions.

Academic staffing levels are shared with the board by the end of March, in advance of the regular budgetary cycle, in order to meet the staffing timelines established in the collective agreements with the Ottawa-Carleton Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (OC-ETFO), and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF) Teachers' Bargaining Unit .

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

The following chart outlines the required and discretionary academic staffing for elementary and secondary beginning with the approved staffing in June 2024.

Panel Required/ Discretionary	Approved June 2024	Actual October 2024	Projected March 2025	Changes +/- Approved to Projected
Elementary Required	2708.92	2660.00	2670.81	-38.11
Elementary Discretionary	590.80	590.80	563.23	-27.57
Elementary Total	3299.72	3250.80	3234.04	-65.68
Secondary Required	1505.50	1523.83	1496.83	-8.67
Secondary Discretionary	243.83	226.67	222.16	-21.67
Secondary Total	1749.33	1750.50	1718.99	-30.34
Elementary and Secondary	5049.05	5001.30	4953.54	-96.02

Non-Academic Staffing Context

Non-academic staffing allocations for 2025-2026 are still being determined and will be finalized once we have received confirmation of our Core Education Funding (Core Ed) from the Province.

Non-academic staffing represents approximately 26% of the total operating budget and includes positions in Executive Administration, Business and Corporate Services and Employee and School Support Services. Non-academic staffing also includes school support positions (e.g., educational assistants, early childhood educators, office staff, social workers, psychologists).

Some non-academic staffing follows the school year cycle (e.g., educational assistants and early childhood educators), while other positions that support in the operations of schools do not (e.g., Business & Learning Technologies, Financial Services, Employee Services staff).

We anticipate that the number of educational assistants will be slightly lower than during the 2024 - 2025 school year due to budget restraints. Early childhood educator numbers will be based on the number of kindergarten students and kindergarten classrooms, as well as enrolment in extended day programs throughout the District. We expect there to be fewer ECE's due to lower birth rates for Kindergarten aged students. The estimated EA and ECE staffing numbers are shown below:

Office staff and library technicians are formula driven and based on projected enrolment. Staff anticipates that these positions will remain relatively stable for the 2025 - 2026 school year.

Budget Context

The District is projecting a \$20 million dollar budget shortfall for the 2025-2026 school year. This is not a one time shortfall and thus, permanent staffing reductions must be made in order to be compliant with Provincial legislation and balance the budget.

The budgetary pressures facing the District are due to a number of factors, including but not limited to:

- revenues not yet known for the 2025-2026 school year;
- depletion of accumulated surplus funds (reserve funding) to offset operating costs during the pandemic period in order to ensure stability for the learning environment;
- significant increases in replacement costs for absent staff that remains underfunded through provincial grants;
- discontinuation of additional funding provided, in the short-term, for services such as transportation and Indigenous Education that will end in 2025; and
- Inflation that continues to outpace Ministry grants.

The total proposed budget for academic staffing is \$659 million. The proposed allocation for non academic staffing is approximately \$315 million dollars. Staffing consumes approximately 81% of our Board's budget allocation.

The District does not have the accumulated financial reserves to run a deficit budget. At the time of this report, the provincial budget has not been released and we have no indication of any substantive funding for increased cost pressures or new initiatives. Staff remain hopeful that the Core Ed will address some of these cost pressures.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

4. Principles to Inform the Staffing Plan

There are a number of considerations that impact the staffing plan. In general, the District's staffing plan should be based upon the following principles:

- alignment with strategic priorities identified to improve student learning and well-being;
- focus on equity of access and outcomes for all of our students, with a particular focus on supporting students from lower socio-economic households;
- implementation of legislative, regulatory and collective agreement obligations;
- maintenance of existing core services and supports provided by educators, to the extent possible;
- prioritization of 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; and
- consideration of the impact on the overall budget, including other staff supports that may be required to meet student needs and District priorities, as well as any other potential funding and funding parameters.

Staffing reductions across the District will have an impact on schools and students. Senior Staff will work diligently to limit the impact of reductions on schools and students. Both the non academic arm of the organization and the academic side of the District have experienced reductions. Most areas of the organization will see a reduction in staffing and/or their operational budgets in order to balance our budget for 2025-2026.

In looking at staffing reductions across the District, staff will be cognizant to work within the confines of the Job Security language in the OSSTF Education Workers collective agreements which stipulates that staffing levels (protected compliments) need to be maintained as of 30 November 2023. It should be noted that there are conditions whereby the District can reduce its protected complement. The Elementary and Secondary Teacher collective agreements do not have this job security language, nor do union-exempt employees.

5. Non Academic Staffing Plan for 2025 - 2026:

In the non academic staffing area, the District has approximately 1828.88 FTE

employees. Staff is recommending a reduction of approximately 80 positions or 4% of non academic staff spread out across most central departments. Senior Staff overseeing central departments have engaged in reenvisioning how the work of these employees and departments can be done differently. This number of staff reductions will have an impact on the service levels that central departments can provide to schools.

6. Academic Staffing Plan for 2025-2026

Staff is recommending an academic staffing plan for 2025-2026 that includes a decrease of 46.78 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions in the required staffing allocation due to a modest decrease in projected enrolment due to declining birth rates and Kindergarten aged students and fewer international students in the Ottawa area. The above reductions do not result in any cost savings to the District.

Included in the reduction noted above is 18.00 FTE elearning teachers beginning in the 2025 - 2026 school year, as a result of increasing the student to teacher ratio to 35:1, as per the central negotiated agreement. These are considered required staff as elearning falls under the basic staffing allocation.

Additions to the staff complement have been made in relation to new school openings and support for students with special education needs through specialized placement classes.

Staff are recommending a decrease of approximately 52.16 FTE discretionary staff. The majority of these positions are not school based. These reductions will impact the support that central departments are able to provide to schools.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

7. The annual operating budget is estimated to be \$1.2 billion for 2025-2026. The cost of academic staffing is approximately \$659 million and is distributed between required and discretionary staffing. Required classroom teacher staffing is based on student enrolment projections for September 2025. The cost of non-academic staffing is approximately \$315 million dollars.

The following chart summarizes the proposed savings from academic and

non-academic staffing, as outlined above.

Academic or Non Academic	Anticipated FTE Reduction	Anticipated Saving (Including Salary and Benefits)
Non Academic	79.50	\$7,080,000
Academic (Discretionary, including elearning)	70.15	\$8,823,500
Total	149.65	\$15,903,500

Staffing reductions will be completed through attrition (i.e. retirement/resignation), not filling vacant positions and the elimination of positions. There are job security restrictions in OSSTF Education Worker collective agreements that may delay when positions can be eliminated or reduced. Those restrictions expire as of August 30, 2026. As a result, the anticipated full savings may take place over a period of 12 - 18 months.

COMMUNICATION/CONSULTATION ISSUES:

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

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the (Academic) Staffing Plan for 2025-2026, be approved, subject to adjustments related to fluctuations in projected and actual enrolment.

Shawn Lehman
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Director of Education and
Secretary of the Board