



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, BUDGET REPORT

Board Room

Monday, June 10, 2019

7:00 pm

Board Room

Administration Building

133 Greenbank Road

Ottawa, Ontario

Trustees Present:	Lynn Scott , Donna Blackburn, Christine Boothby, Erica Braunovan, Rob Campbell, Chris Ellis, Lyra Evans, Mark Fisher, Wendy Hough, Jennifer Jennekens, Keith Penny, Sandra Schwartz
Staff Present:	Camille Williams-Taylor (Director of Education), Brett Reynolds (Associate Director), Dorothy Baker (Superintendent of Curriculum), Mike Carson (Chief Financial Officer), Mary Jane Farrish (Superintendent of Instruction), Michele Giroux (Executive Officer, Corporate Services), Olga Grigoriev (Superintendent of Instruction), Shawn Lehman (Superintendent of Instruction), Janice McCoy (Superintendent of Human Resources), Peter Symmonds (Superintendent of Learning Support Services), Frank Wiley (Superintendent of Instruction), Kevin Gardner (Manager of Finance), Charles D'Aoust (Coordinator of Budget Services), Teri Adamthwaite (Coordinator of Financial Reporting), Pamela LeMaistre (Manager of Human Resources), Katrine Mallan (Manager of Board Services), Diane Pernari-Hergert (Manager of Communications & Information Services), Miro Vala (Manager of Facilities), Karyn Carty Ostafichuk (Manager of Planning), Sharlene Hunter (Communications Coordinator), John MacKinnon (Audio-Visual Technician), Nicole Guthrie (Committee Coordinator)
Non-Voting Representatives Present:	Nancy Akehurst (Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation - ESP, PSSU, PSSP, EA, PECCS), Jennifer Capitani (Ottawa-Carleton Elementary Operations Committee), Jennifer Tremblay (Ottawa-Carleton Secondary School Administrators Network), Jean Trant (Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation -SSP), Stacey Kay (Non-affiliated Staff), Donna Owen (Special Education Advisory Committee)

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

Chair Penny called the public meeting to order at 7:14 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Approval of Agenda

Moved by Trustee Boothby,

THAT the agenda be approved.

Carried

3. Delegations

There were no delegations.

4. Matters for Action:

4.1 Report 19-066, 2019-2020 Staff-Recommended Budget

Moved by Trustee Blackburn,

A. THAT the unconsolidated 2019-2020 operating budget of \$980.1 million as presented in Report 19-066, 2019-2020 Staff-Recommended Budget and detailed in the 2019-2020 Staff-Recommended Budget Binder be approved; and

B. THAT the 2019-2020 capital budget of \$82.8 million as presented in the 2019-2020 Staff-Recommended Budget Binder, be approved.

An amendment moved by Trustee Lyra Evans,

A. THAT \$88,000 from the School Programs and Support Budget, which currently supports the Ottawa Police Service provision of two additional School Resource Officers (SROs) dedicated to priority schools, be reallocated to support the creation of 1.0 FTE restorative justice worker and 1.0 FTE conflict mediator; and

B. THAT no other funding be allocated or reallocated to pay, directly or indirectly, for any on-duty police officers.

In introducing the amendment, Trustee Lyra Evans, expressed the view that many of her constituents have indicated that they do not feel comfortable with police officers in schools and that many communities do not trust police officers. She noted that her proposal for alternative methods for dealing with issues that arise in schools may prevent the need for police intervention.

Trustees Blackburn, Ellis, Campbell, Hough, Jennekens, Fisher and Schwartz were not in favour of the amendment.

In response to a query from Trustee Campbell, Associate Director Reynolds responded that the SRO program has been used successfully in

boards across the province for several years. The role of the SRO is to provide support to the school community as a whole, which includes students, parents, school staff, and administrators. The SROs are experienced officers who work on building healthy and trusting relationships with students by becoming a familiar presence within the school. SROs also support the school administration's use of the Safe Schools Act.

Associate Director Reynolds advised that the District has implemented many conflict resolution, restorative practice and mediation models over the years and they are a key element in school staff and administrative training.

Principal Tremblay noted that many students have a fear of police officers, but the SROs help restore relationships and reverse trauma. She indicated the SROs are regarded as additional staff members in the school and help staff and students manage issues of violence and crime. The SROs also have numerous positive interactions with the students. She highlighted the dramatic reduction in violent incidents in her school's catchment area as a testament to the importance of SROs. She stated that the removal of an SRO would be very harmful to the schools.

Trustee Fisher suggested that a combination of both restorative justice and SROs are required within schools. He highlighted the importance of working with professionals to address the needs in schools. He noted that he was not in support of the amendment but would appreciate the opportunity to discuss the restorative justice model in the future.

In response to a query from Trustee Scott, staff noted that the two SROs are associated with Urban Priorities schools but are not funded through Urban Priorities. Principals from these schools would miss the support of the dedicated SROs.

Trustee Lyra Evans noted that the Toronto District School Board decided to remove all SROs from their schools. The amendment seeks to remove one.

Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans,

THAT \$88,000 from the School Programs and Support Budget, which currently supports the Ottawa Police Service provision of two additional School Resource Officers (SROs) dedicated to priority schools, be reallocated to support the creation of 1.0 FTE restorative justice worker and 1.0 FTE conflict mediator; and

THAT no other funding be allocated or reallocated to pay, directly or indirectly, for any on-duty police officers.

Defeated

An amendment moved by Trustee Lyra Evans,

THAT an Environmental Climate Fund be created for 2019-2020 in the amount of \$300,000 sourced from budget reserves: and

- i. The funds be equally allocated among the Superintendencies of Instruction;
- ii. The funds be made available to schools to support environmental projects or initiatives following applications by school communities and/or principals; and
- iii. The application process and criteria be approved by the Director of Education.

In introducing the amendment, Trustee Lyra Evans suggested that the new strategic plan focus on a culture of social responsibility should feature an element of environmental care which will require resources.

Director Williams-Taylor commented that the strategic plan would come to life in the classroom. She noted that through the educator's use of innovative practice, the District would be able to influence and change behaviours in schools and classrooms. In her opinion, daily practice in schools and communities will have the most significant impact on the environment. She noted that items i, ii, and iii will affect operations, particularly the decision making required for the application and disposition of the funds.

Trustee Hough agreed with the initiative in principle but had concerns about program implementation and fund allocation.

Trustee Campbell expressed concern about the additional use of reserves. He noted that staff had taken care to lower the system cost and reduce and eliminate excesses. He questioned the priority of need for this particular investment versus other potential investments in the system. He suggested the matter be further discussed when the Board sets its work plan and begins to implement the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan.

Trustee Scott expressed the view that the amendment presents logistical challenges, and the amount that would be allocated to each school would be small. She noted that environmental awareness is already a part of the curriculum, and teachers are doing an excellent job of conveying the message. She added that many school councils are already engaging in activities that confirm the need to be conscious of environmental change. She expressed her support for the funds to remain uncommitted.

A sub-amendment moved by Trustee Braunovan,

THAT parts i, ii, and iii be removed and "and fund a variety of projects in schools around the District" be added to the main amendment.

In introducing the sub-amendment, Trustee Braunovan submitted the amendment does not need to be overly prescriptive. She hoped fellow trustees would support the sub-amendment noting that it sends a clear message about the Board's commitment to the environment and climate change.

Trustees Lyra Evans and Hough speaking in support of the sub-amendment expressed concern about the removal of part ii which encourages project-based initiatives and community participation.

A sub-amendment moved by Trustee Braunovan,

THAT parts i, ii, and iii be removed and "and fund a variety of projects in schools around the District" be added to the main amendment.

Defeated

Trustee Fisher expressed concern that the environment is often forgotten during difficult financial periods. He noted that the District is proactive in its environmental stewardship but that it could be aiming higher. He emphasized the importance of seeking additional funding and partnerships to provide the necessary resources.

Trustees Fisher and Jennekens commented that they would rather the funds be used to support additional educational assistants (EAs).

Trustee Schwartz expressed the view that the District and the Board could do more to support environmental issues, particularly climate change, but had concerns about the 2020-2021 Budget and her preference to keep the funds in reserves to enable a response to emergencies that may arise. She indicated that she would support this amendment.

Trustee Lyra Evans noted that \$300,000 amounts to less than \$2,000 per school. The money could be used to support in-school greening initiatives. While a small investment, the Board has an opportunity to model the kind of strong environmental leadership it seeks to cultivate in students and urged her fellow trustees to support the amendment.

Moved by Trustee Lyra Evans,

THAT an Environmental Climate Fund be created for 2019-2020 in the amount of \$300,000 sourced from budget reserves: and

- i. The funds be equally allocated among the Superintendencies of Instruction;*
- ii. The funds be made available to schools to support environmental projects or initiatives following applications by school communities and/or principals; and*
- iii. The application process and criteria be approved by the Director of Education.*

Defeated

In response to a query from Trustee Boothby regarding enriched learning opportunities provided through the RAISE index funding allocation, staff noted that there are a range of options the schools can elect for enrichment opportunities to support the curriculum. These may include guest speakers, additional learning activities provided within the classroom, and field trips. The RAISE funds help offset the costs. Staff considers where each school falls on the RAISE index along with several other variables when allocating discretionary staffing to these schools. Staff noted that over the past several years, some of the additional RAISE index funding had been utilized to allow technology upgrades in schools where students typically would have less access to mobile technology.

Staff advised that they have not undertaken any specific measurement of the impact of the investment, noting that the idea behind it has primarily been to attempt to level the field in terms of accessing opportunities.

Staff noted that within every school in the District, there are students who would benefit from the additional resources provided with RAISE index support. Administrators, social workers and guidance counsellors aim to identify those students and ensure they are not denied opportunities by making them aware of available supports. The Education Foundation is another resource that helps support students who require additional financial support.

Trustee Blackburn thanked the staff for their efforts during the budget process.

Moved by Trustee Blackburn,

- A. THAT the unconsolidated 2019-2020 operating budget of \$980.1 million as presented in Report 19-066, 2019-2020 Staff-Recommended Budget and detailed in the 2019-2020 Staff-Recommended Budget Binder be approved; and**
- B. THAT the 2019-2020 capital budget of \$82.8 million as presented in the 2019-2020 Staff-Recommended Budget Binder, be approved.**

Carried

5. New Business - Information and Inquiries

Director Williams-Taylor thanked trustees for their thoughtful deliberation and considerate engagement with staff.

Director Williams-Taylor highlighted the exceptional work of Chief Financial Officer Carson and the Financial Services team of Kevin Gardner, Charles D'Aoust and Teri Adamthwaite for the production of the staff-recommended budget for 2019-2020. She also thanked the members of the Director's Executive Council for their collaborative work during the budget process.

6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Keith Penny, Chair