



**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (PUBLIC)
Report No. 21-029**

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Academic Staffing Plan for 2021-2022

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PURPOSE:

1. To submit to the Committee of the Whole (COW) for discussion and approval, the academic staffing plan for the 2021-2022 school year.

CONTEXT:

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

Academic staffing represents a significant portion (almost 60%) of the total operating budget. The academic staffing plan covers all of the District's school-based (both in person and virtual) 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; and 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), each set out specific timelines related to the staffing process. For example, Article L25.02 of the collective agreement with OSSTF requires that principals be notified of their schools' initial staff allocation by the second Monday in April (April 12), and principals are required to present a tentative organizational structure to the in-school staffing committee by the third Monday in April (April 19). (Article L25.07). The collective agreement with ETFO requires that the Elementary Staffing Committee be provided with the number of approved teaching positions for the upcoming school year by no later than the first Wednesday in April (April 7). In order to meet these

timeline obligations, academic staffing levels need to be approved by the end of March, in advance of the regular budget cycle. Once approved, Human Resources staff works closely with senior staff, 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 recommendation will also include the recommended complement of principals and vice-principals for next year. Although there is no requirement to bring these positions forward for approval at this time, vice-principal allocations are provided to schools as part of their staffing allocation in April. Principals need to accommodate the teaching portion, if any, of the vice-principal position when they are creating staff assignments and school timetables.

This report includes a description of proposed changes to academic staffing for next year, as compared to the staffing that was approved in March 2020 for the current school year. This includes changes driven by projected enrolment, changes resulting from anticipated increased or decreased funding, and changes being considered to accommodate changing program needs, to meet strategic plan priorities and objectives or in anticipation of budget adjustments.

Once the academic staffing plan is approved by the Board, it is senior staff's responsibility to ensure the positions are allocated to schools and central department portfolios consistent with the Board's direction and aligned with District priorities. This may include reallocating existing resources or shifting priorities, rather than adding new resources. At the school level, 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, both in person and in the virtual environment.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

3. Principles that Inform the Academic Staffing Plan

There are a number of considerations that impact the academic staffing plan for the District. 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, but not be unduly constrained by potential funding and funding parameters.

Planning in the current context, including the academic staffing plan, must also consider the on-going implications of the current pandemic, which are discussed in more detail below:

a) COVID 19 Considerations

This year, both the number and allocation of staffing were considerations as part of the District's response to the pandemic. Specifically, a number of additional teaching positions were added and existing resources re-allocated, as part of the measures put in place in response to the pandemic. This included additional elementary classroom positions (plus preparation time) to support smaller class sizes; additional positions to support English language learners and the delivery of special education in both in person and virtual schools. In many cases additional supports were added, rather than re-allocated from in person schools, as needs emerged in the newly created virtual campuses or to support the delivery of hybrid programs. Additional resources were funded from the specific funding provided leading up to and following the start of the school year. The Ministry has so far indicated that school board plans for next year should not assume that the same level of additional funding will be continuing next year. As a result, the academic staffing plan being proposed will reflect a return to pre-COVID staffing levels, that is, the staffing approved in March 2020, and planning for the delivery of remote learning will proceed with resources being allocated accordingly. It is difficult to predict with certainty what the fall will look like but staff will be continuing to work closely with public health to ensure that available resources are allocated to support their advice and recommendations. While still early, it is likely that mass vaccination efforts currently underway will have an impact as we move into the fall. In the event that additional funding becomes available later, additional teaching positions can be added based on a careful assessment of how and where they can achieve the most impact, in terms of both well-being and achievement.

b) Compliance Considerations

There are several compliance considerations related to academic staffing levels, including regulatory, collective agreement and Ministry directives as follows:

- i) Ontario Regulation 132/12, Class Size, sets out system average and individual class size maxima for school boards, including for kindergarten, primary (grades 1 to 3), junior-intermediate (grades 4 to 8), and secondary (grades 9 to 12) classes. Based on projected enrolments, the regulatory provisions determine the minimum number of teaching positions required. By way of illustration, a theoretical projected enrolment for junior-intermediate of 25,000 students, would generate 1021 classrooms requiring 1021 classroom teachers (not including preparation time).
- ii) Each of the collective agreements with ETFO and OSSTF (Teachers) also includes provisions which affect staffing levels. The collective agreement with OSSTF (Teachers) includes a requirement to generate

staff to meet a maximum average class size of 23:1. The collective agreement also includes staffing generators for a minimum number of guidance teachers, and learning support teachers and requires that all secondary schools be assigned a 1.0 FTE teacher librarian.

The collective agreement with ETFO provides that each teacher is entitled to a minimum of 240 minutes of preparation time per week. From a staffing perspective, this means ensuring that additional teachers (0.19 FTE per 1.0 FTE classroom teacher) are assigned to provide instruction during their classroom teacher's preparation time. Using the example provided above, an additional 203.87 FTE teachers would be required to provide coverage for preparation time for the 1073 junior intermediate classroom teachers.

Each of the collective agreements also provides for a staffing resource position (0.67 FTE secondary teacher and 1.0 FTE elementary teacher) to support the work of the joint staffing committees. An additional 0.5 FTE elementary health and safety position is also established through the elementary collective agreement.

- iii) In addition to the regulatory and collective agreement obligations that impact staffing, there are also instances where staffing levels may be impacted by specific Ministry funding restrictions or parameters. For example, special education funding provided by the Ministry must be spent on special education supports for students. The majority of the funding is spent on human resources including special education teachers. In other cases, the Ministry provides specific special purpose funding normally aligned with a particular Ministry priority or initiative.

c) Provincial Funding

As indicated above, the proposed academic staffing plan assumes that the additional pandemic funding cannot be counted on to continue, and will mean a return to staffing levels that were previously in place. The plan does account for the additional Support for Students Fund that was provided as part of the central agreements with each of ETFO and OSSTF (Teachers) and is the equivalent to approximately 21 FTE elementary positions and 11.0 FTE secondary teachers. In some cases, this funding will be used to maintain the positions that were added using the previous funding (Local Priorities Funding), primarily to support ESL/ELD and special education.

Enrolment in the OCDSB is projected to remain lower than pre-pandemic levels at both the elementary and secondary panels, but is projected to increase slightly relative to the lower than projected actual enrolments this year. Although the Ministry agreed to maintain funding this year based on projected enrolment, Ministry staff have encouraged boards to make appropriate adjustments to their projections and, therefore, funding projections for next year.

Funding for the 2020-2021 school year will not be confirmed until the release of the Grants for Students' Needs (GSNs), which are not expected to be announced until April. Following the GSN announcement, it typically takes Finance a couple of weeks to work through the technical papers to confirm available funding and/or changes from current funding levels. The academic staffing plan for next year has been developed in consideration of some ongoing uncertainty with regard to funding for next year. As indicated above, staff will need to be prepared to adjust to

d) The Strategic Plan

The approval of academic staffing provides an opportunity for the Board to ensure that resources are allocated in such a way as to support the priorities outlined in the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan.

Over the last year, there is no question that managing the implications of the pandemic has been the highest priority, including with regard to the deployment of resources. Although work continued with respect to the District priorities, the pace of progress was unavoidably impacted. However, moving into next year, there is optimism that focus can return to our strategic priorities which also means ensuring resources are directed or redirected accordingly, including through the allocation of human resources. Where additional net funding is not available, this needs to be accomplished through the reallocation of resources and the reprioritization of the work of staff. The allocation of academic staffing is a first step in this process, and can be further supported by investments from targeted transfer payment agreements with the Ministry, and through the annual budget process.

Part of the planning for next year will include providing resources to support the Student Achievement Through Equity (SATE) initiative. This is a pilot project involving 11 OCDSB elementary schools and three secondary schools to reduce barriers, overcome emotional and psychological hurdles, and create the right learning conditions for students. S.A.T.E uses recent studies of outstanding schools and highlights factors known to contribute to successful schools to bring children, families and communities together into the educational environment as participants and partners in the learning process, with the school becoming the "Heart of the Community." These factors include achievement and standards; leadership and management; teaching and learning; innovative curriculum; targeted intervention and support; inclusion; parental engagement; use of data; effective use of students' voice; and the celebration of cultural diversity. Work has already begun this year and will be advanced next year through the reallocation of central coach support to provide more intentional and intensive support, as well as consideration for differentiated staffing within existing resources.

For 2021-2022, the changes being proposed are most notably aligned with the District's strategic priorities in the area of equity, specifically improving outcomes for students with highest needs, including English language learners, student with special education needs. Each of the additions or reallocations

are designed to support desired outcomes set out in the strategic plan, and further detailed in the addendum.

Some areas identified through the strategic plan have received investments in recent years, which will continue to have an impact. For example, the investments approved last year to support innovation and learning, and to increase instructional coach support in the area of mathematics are very much aligned with the District's strategic priorities and will remain in place to continue that work next year. Also, some areas may benefit from additional enhancements or investments outside of academic staffing, and will come forward as part of the recommended budget later in the spring.

A detailed overview of the academic staffing being proposed for 2021-2022 is outlined in the addendum to this report.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

4. A summary of the costs associated with adjustments in academic staffing relative to the academic staffing approved in this year's budget, will be provided prior to the Committee of the Whole meeting.

COMMUNICATION/CONSULTATION ISSUES:

5. The recommended changes to academic staffing positions are the result of discussions among senior staff and based on feedback and input received from principals, central managers and others. In addition, staff has considered the priorities articulated by Board members during COW and Board meetings.

STRATEGIC LINKS:

6. Decisions related to the 2021-2022 Budget, including those related to academic staffing, should be guided by the priorities articulated through the strategic plan. This means ensuring, to the extent reasonably possible, 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..

This report provides staff's professional opinion as to where academic staffing resources should be directed in order to have the greatest impact and benefit across the District.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Committee of the Whole approve the academic staffing plan for 2021-2022, as set out in Appendices A, B and C to Report 21-029, subject to changes that are subject to fluctuations in enrolment and emerging Ministry or regulatory requirements.

Janice McCoy
Superintendent of Human Resources

Camille Williams-Taylor
Director of Education and Secretary of
the Board

Attach.

Addendum - Academic Staffing Report 2020-2021

Appendix A - Proposed Elementary Staff Chart

Appendix B - Secondary Staff Chart

Appendix C - Proposed School Administrators Chart