

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES – MAY 24, 2023

PUBLIC MEETING

Roll call:

Trustees:	Staff:
R. Hutcheon (Chair) B. Godkin (Vice-Chair) G. Elliott J. Morning J. Brown - regrets K. Maracle K. McGregor S. Ruttan T. Lloyd J. Neill E. Jackson (Student Trustee)-regrets J. Kolosov (Student Trustee)-regrets A. Wang (Student Trustee)-regrets	K. Burra, Director of Education C. Young, Superintendent of Business Services P. Carson, Manager of Financial Services L. Benjamin, Assistant Manager of Financial Services
	Recorder: A. Galt, Administrative Assistant Producer: K. Pacheco, Senior Clerk

1. CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Godkin called the meeting to order.

Trustee Godkin read the Acknowledgement of Territory: “The Limestone District School Board is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee. We acknowledge their enduring presence on this land, as well as the presence of Métis, Inuit and other First Nations from across Turtle Island. We honour their cultures and celebrate their commitment to this land.”

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Chair Godkin asked for any additions or objections to the agenda. There were no additions or objections.

MOVED BY: Trustee McGregor, and seconded by Trustee Lloyd that the agenda, as presented, be approved. Carried.

3. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

4. ACTION ITEMS

4.1 Budget Committee Minutes, April 19, 2023

MOVED BY: Trustee Lloyd and seconded by Trustee Morning, that the minutes as presented be approved. Carried.

5. REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

5.1 2023-2024 GSN Overview Presentation, C. Young, Superintendent of Business Services

Superintendent Young presented the 2023-2024 GSN Overview Presentation. On April 17, 2023, the Ministry released: B03 memorandum regarding Better Outcomes for Students; B04 memorandum 2023-24 regarding Grants for Student Needs Funding; B05 Memorandum regarding 2023-24 Priorities and Partnership Funding (PPF); B06 memorandum regarding the Student Transportation Grant – GSN 2023-24, and the B07 memorandum regarding Capital Funding for the 2023-24 School Year.

Superintendent Young highlighted the three components to the new funding formula for student transportation, implemented by the Ministry. For the 2023-24 school year, the three allocations of the formula are: Transportation Services Allocation, School Bus Rider Safety Training Allocation, and Transportation to Provincial or Demonstration Schools.

Also included in student transportation funding is a transition amount that will be phased out after 2026-27. The intent of the transition amount is to bridge the gap. For the Limestone District School Board (LDSB), it will not be enough, and this will create cost pressures in the future. Superintendent Young noted LDSB is already dealing with cost pressures at present. The Ministry will introduce enhanced reporting requirements for transportation. On an annual basis, LDSB will need to provide information about students and where they live. This information is to be rolled out on a Ministry wide bus planning database.

The Ministry is providing \$30 Million in the School Foundation Grant and Learning Opportunities Grant to support remote learning administration and safe and clean schools. This funding is to support administration for remote schools, paraprofessionals, educational assistants and custodial maintenance staffing. Superintendent Young added the funding does not cover a full person in any of those categories.

For 2023-2024 Summer Learning Supports, the Ministry will provide for \$5 million that was previously provided through the Council of Directors of Ontario. This funding will be moved into the Learning Opportunities Grant to support literacy and numeracy programs for elementary students in the summer months. The Ministry will continue to allow for the 55 hour credit upgrading summer course option that has been available since 2020. The Ministry is providing continued access to summer learning programming for the First Nation students living on reserves.

Superintendent Young discussed labour related changes. The Ministry will provide the \$1.00 per hour for CUPE staff in 2023–24, to reflect the central labour agreements. This is showing on the revenue side. Also on the revenue side, the Ministry is providing for a 1.25% increase to the teacher salary benchmarks in 2023-24, which will be offset on the expense side. The Ministry will continue to provide the Support for Student funding, previously known as Investment in Systems Priorities in some agreements for 2023-24. The portion of the Support for Student funding that covers the CUPE workers wages will see a 3.17% increase in 2023-24. The CPP increase, CPP enhanced payment for individuals making more than \$67,000, and the employer portion of the CPP payment will not be covered by the Ministry so there will be a shortfall. The Ministry has also not funded the increases to employment insurance over the past few years.

The realignment of Indigenous Education Funding will have a significant impact on the LDSB. In the past, LDSB would use this funding to support Indigenous courses within the secondary level. As of 2023-24, those courses will be supported by the existing Pupil Foundation Funding. If the minimum number of 23 students per class is not reached, the Indigenous Funding will top up. The Ministry will be providing a one-time Realignment Mitigation Fund to school boards in recognition that it takes time to adjust cost structures.

The Ministry is moving some funding from the Priority Partnership funding to the Grant for Student Needs funding. Specialist High Skills Major Expansion, Early Math Intervention for Students with Special Needs and Demographic Data Gathering have been rolled into the GSN.

In regard to school operations, there is a 2% increase to the cost benchmark update to the non-staff portion of the School Operations Allocation benchmark to assist boards in managing the increases in commodity prices (electricity, natural gas, facility insurance, and other costs).

As to Ventilation Supports, the Ministry is continuing to provide a school operation allocation that can be used for ventilation.

Regarding the Interim Special Incidence Portion (SIP) Funding Approach, the Ministry is undertaking a review to modernize the SIP allocation in 2023-24. SIP funding will be allocated on the school board's historical funding amount plus a growth rate.

In regard to Accommodation Costs in School-based Child Care Spaces; The Ministry is investigating options that will standardize the lease rates that a school board can charge school based child care centres.

Superintendent Young offered to answer questions and discussion ensued.

5.2 2023-2024 Preliminary Operating Revenues, P. Carson, Manager of Financial Services and C. Young, Superintendent of Business Services

P. Carson presented the 2023-2024 Preliminary Operating Revenues. The preliminary operating revenue is not yet presented on a full Public Sector Accounting Board (PSAB) basis. It excludes School Generated Funds at an estimated amount of \$3.7 million and Charitable Trust donations at an estimated amount of \$141,000. These components as well as the capital revenue estimates will be incorporated later. They will be presented at the June 7th meeting.

The 23-24 preliminary operating revenue is presented along with the 22-23 revised estimates and 22-23 estimates for comparison purposes.

The projected enrolment of 20,032 ADE that the 23-24 preliminary operating revenue estimates is calculated on is summarized as follows, which reflects an overall increase of 160 ADE from the 22-23 Revised Estimates. Elementary enrolment is projected at 13,668 ADE, Secondary enrolment is projected at 6,343 ADE, Secondary-high credit enrolment is projected at 21.0 ADE.

Adult education, continuing education, literacy and numeracy, and summer school enrolment is projected at 333 ADE.

In the analysis, the 23-24 preliminary operating revenue estimates are compared to the 22-23 revised estimates operating revenue.

Operating Grants for Student Needs (GSN) allocations have increased \$3.1 million or 1.2%.

Pupil Foundation allocation has increased \$2.2 million or 2.0%. This allocation is intended to cover classroom related costs including teachers, ECE's, supply teachers, library and guidance, coordinators and professional supports, textbooks, supplies, and computers. The Ministry of Education sets funding consistent with the current labour framework, which for 23-24 is a \$1 per hour increase for CUPE education workers and a 1.25% salary increase for teachers and other Board staff. The allocation has increased as a result of the labour framework salary increase and increased enrolment, which is offset by the reduction in the benefit benchmark.

School Foundation allocation has increased \$255,000 or 1.5%. This allocation is intended to cover the costs of in-school administration and leadership including principals, VP's, and secretaries as well as supplies for school administration purposes. The allocation has increased as a result of the labour framework salary increase and increased enrolment, which is offset by the reduction in the benefit benchmark.

Special Education allocation has increased \$1.3 million or 4.1%. The Early Intervention in Math for Students with Special Education Needs amount moved from Priorities and Partnership Funding (PPF) to this allocation and is now called the Early Math Intervention Amount. The allocation has increased as a result of the labour framework salary increase, increased enrolment, the movement of the Early Math Intervention amount, an increase in the Special Education Amount amount, an increase in the Differentiated Special Education Needs amount. This is offset by the reduction in the benefit benchmark.

Language allocation has increased \$277,000 or 5.1%. This allocation is for the FSL & ESL programs. FSL funding supports additional costs of providing core French, Extended French, and French Immersion programs. Whereas ESL funding is provided to assist new students to Canada to develop proficiency in their language of instruction over a period of four years. The allocation has increased as a result of the labour framework salary increase and an increase in projected ESL students, which is offset by the reduction in the benefit benchmark.

Supported School allocation has increased \$24,000 or 1.0%. The allocation has increased as a result of the supported school amount for ECE staff, the labour framework salary increase and increased enrolment, which is offset by the reduction in the benefit benchmark.

Remote and Rural allocation has increased \$4,100 or 1.6%. The allocation has increased as a result of the labour framework salary increase and increased enrolment, which is offset by the reduction in the benefit benchmark.

Rural and Northern Education Fund allocation has increased \$31,000 or 5.9%. The allocation has increased as a result of an increase in the Rural and Northern Education Benchmark and the labour framework salary increase, which is offset by the reduction in the benefit benchmark.

Learning Opportunities allocation has increased \$310,000 or 6.3%. New for 23-24, the Safe and Clean Schools Supplement has been added to this allocation. This funding supports costs associated with employing professional/paraprofessional staff, educational assistants and custodians. The Specialist High Skills Major Expansion moved from PPF to this allocation and is now included in the Specialist High Skills Major Program Table Amount. The allocation has increased as a result of the labour framework salary increase, the addition of the Safe and Clean Schools Supplement and the movement of the Specialist High Skills Major Expansion. These increases are offset by decreased enrolment in the Literacy and Numeracy program and the reduction in the benefit benchmark.

Continuing Education allocation and Other Programs has increased \$5,800 or 0.3%. The allocation has increased due to the labour framework salary increase, which is offset by the reduction in the benefit benchmark.

Cost Adjustment and Teacher Qualification allocation has increased \$1.2 million or 5.5%. The allocation has increased as a result of the labour framework salary increase, increased enrolment, and qualification and experience changes. This is offset by the reduction in the benefit benchmark.

New Teacher Induction Program allocation has decreased \$13,400 or 7.5%.

ECE Qualification and Experience allocation has increased \$22,000 or 1.7%.

Transportation allocation has increased \$484,000 or 3.0%. There is a new funding formula for Student Transportation. The new funding formula includes vehicle, fuel and driver components. The allocation has increased due to the change in the funding framework.

Transportation Fuel Escalator Estimate and Transition Funding decreased \$492,000 or 43.0%. The fuel costs escalator / de-escalator estimate is determined using a benchmark pump price of \$1.70 per litre including HST for 23-24. This is an increase over the prior year's amounts of \$1.06 per litre including HST. The transition funding is only available until 27-28. The allocation

has decreased because the fuel cost escalator estimate has been rolled into the transportation allocation, which is offset by the transition funding.

Administration and Governance allocation has increased \$248,000 or 3.7%. The Board Administration Costs allocation have increased based on the increase of the number of T4 slips issued by the Board, an increase of 95 slips. The allocation has increased as a result of the increase in the Board administration costs allocation, the labour framework salary increase, which is offset by the reduction in the benefit benchmark.

School Operations allocation has increased \$668,000 or 2.7%. The Ministry is providing a 2.0% cost benchmark update to assist boards in managing the increase in commodity prices. The allocation has increased as a result of the labour framework salary increase, increased enrolment and cost benchmark increases, which is offset by the reduction in the benefit benchmark.

Community Use of Schools allocation has increased \$1,100 or 0.4%.

Indigenous Education allocation has decreased \$492,000 or 20.6%. Starting in 23-24, the funding methodology for the First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Studies allocation is being revised as part of a realignment within the Indigenous Education Grant. The First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Studies allocation is only available if the student enrolment per course is less than 23 students. The allocation has decreased due to the change in the funding methodology for First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Studies allocation, and the reduction in the benefit benchmark which is offset by the labour framework salary increase.

One-Time Realignment Mitigation Fund increased by \$406,000. the one-time allocation provides funding to partially mitigate the impacts of the realignment within the Indigenous Education Grant for school boards that have had a funding reduction.

Mental Health and Well-Being allocation has increased \$44,000 or 3.3%.

Program Leadership allocation has increased \$7,700 or 0.8%.

Supports for Students Fund allocation has increased \$21,600 or 1.0%. All funds are to be used consistent with the central agreement obligations.

The Ministry Funded In-kind PPE has decreased by \$349,000 or 100%.

COVID-19 Learning Recovery Fund decreased by \$3.1 million or 100%. This funding is now gone.

Other Government Grants have decreased \$990,000 or 18.8%. The Ministry released information on PPF, which is on Appendix A on page 28, with a few previous year one-time initiatives being transferred to the GSN. The total amount transferred is \$467,000. The new PPF initiatives include Staffing to Support De-Streaming and Transition to High School of \$982,000, and Education Staff to Support Reading Interventions of \$664,000. The net increase for PPF Math funding is \$434,000.

Tuition Fees have increased \$433,000 or 21.0%. Community education and outreach fees increase reflects the projection of program enrolment increases.

Other Revenues have increased \$353,000 or 6.0%. Interest reflects a projected decrease in interest rates throughout 23-24. International students' other fees increase reflects an increase in the projection of homestay and other fees.

P. Carson offered to answer any questions.

Chair Godkin thanked Manager Carson and the Finance Team for the Report. Chair Godkin asked for any questions on the report and discussion ensued.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

None at this time.

5. NEXT MEETINGS

Trustee Godkin noted the upcoming Budget Committee meetings on June 7th and a tentative meeting on June 14, 2023.

6. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED BY: Trustee McGregor that the meeting be adjourned. Carried.

Meeting adjourned at 6:43 pm.