

Upper Grand District School Board

Board As Budget Committee, Tuesday August 4, 2020

Minutes

The Upper Grand District School Board met as the Budget Committee on Tuesday August 4, 2020. Quorum was met and the virtual meeting commenced at 7:45 pm.

The Chairperson, Trustee Lustgarten-Evoy presided and the following Trustees were present: Bailey, Bedi, Busuttil, Campbell, Edwards, Foley, MacNeil, Ross, and Topping.

Present from the Administration were: Director of Education Rogers, together with, Superintendents Lindsay, McDonald, Regier, Slater, Morrell, Heaslip and Van Ooteghem, Communications Officer Loney, Manager of Budget and Financial Reporting Molnar, Executive Officer of Human Resources Rose, Manager of Secondary Staffing and Recruitment Prendergast, Manager of Elementary Staffing and Recruitment Crandall, Assistant to the Superintendent of Program Donaldson, Student Success Lead Zen, Operations Officer Scinocca and Plant Operations Manager Veit.

Rules and protocols for virtual meetings were reviewed by the Chair for those present.

Confirmation of the Agenda

Trustee Topping moved, that the agenda be confirmed as printed.

The motion carried.

Declarations of Conflict of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest.

Opening Remarks

Trustee Lustgarten-Evoy, Board As Budget Committee Chair, and Director of Education and Secretary Treasurer of the Board Rogers, provided opening remarks and presented an overview of the budget process to date. Thanks were offered to staff for preparing a compliant 2020-21 budget in accordance with our Boards guiding principles.

Review of Budget 2020-21

Superintendent of Finance Regier thanked Director Rogers and staff for a collaborative and successful budget process. He then reviewed the 2020-21 Budget Report in detail, noting that a compliant budget is projected. The Draft Budget presented includes

a \$2,014,455 million transfer from Accumulated Surplus to balance the Operating Budget. The transfer is equal to 0.5% of Grants for Student Needs (GSN) Operating Allocations and is within Ministry guidelines.

It was noted that Ministry of Education Memorandum 2020: B11 - *Investments to Support School Reopening in Response to the COVID-19 Outbreak*, arrived after the Draft Budget 2020-2021 document was released. As a result, the budget document will be updated and the newest information will be incorporated in advance of the August 18, 2020 Board As Budget Approval meeting.

Trustees expressed thanks for the work completed by Board staff and asked questions of clarification as follows:

Trustee Busuttil referenced page 7 in the budget document with respect to the section on 'Class Size', highlighting the requirement that secondary students must complete 2 credits online as per the Ministry of Education. Trustee Busuttil requested that the budget report reflect that there are exemptions to this requirement.

Trustee Busuttil asked if we are aware if the Board is losing students to private tutors, home schooling, other boards, etc. and also if contingencies are built into the Enrolment Summary data found on page 12 of the budget document.

Superintendent Regier stated that enrolment data used for elementary and secondary panels are typically conservative assumptions, however with the coming year, we will be facing unique circumstance. Staff can begin to analyze at the start of the school year differences that are occurring between budget assumptions and actual enrolment at the start of the school year. From this review, staff can review the impact on the budget as part of the Revised Estimates reporting cycle.

Trustee Busuttil asked for clarification on the ESL funding component, specifically if a portion of the funding is based on 2016 census data. Superintendent Regier noted that he would confirm if it was based on 2011 or 2016 census year data; however, a smaller portion of the funding is based on census information. Trustee Busuttil asked if ESL funding is enveloped and restricted. Superintendent Regier noted that ESL funding is not enveloped in the same manner as areas like Special Education funding.

Trustee Busuttil asked for clarification on whether there is different accountability surrounding revenue and expenditures for the French Language Funding for core French versus French Immersion. Superintendent Regier noted that there is not different accountabilities.

Trustee Busuttil noted that employee health and trust negotiations are still underway and asked for clarification that if negotiated and altered would funding amounts be adjusted. Superintendent Regier noted that funding is typically adjusted to reflect adjustments in negotiations.

Trustee Busuttil asked if an increase in provincial funding is expected for Transportation and does it include adjustments for fuel costs in 2020-2021. Superintendent Regier noted that pending an overall review of provincial transportation funding, there will not be additional funding to cover overall cost increases, however the fuel escalator/de-

escalator funding adjustments will be in place. Additional funding to enhanced cleaning protocols for transportation, was provided in the 2020: B11 Ministry of Education funding memo.

Trustee Lustgarten-Evoy asked if unspent 2019-2020 funds for Trustee PD, travel, etc. can be returned to the Board for other areas of support. Superintendent Regier clarified that these funds will be redirected to the Board and utilized in other areas.

Trustee Busuttil asked if there were any 2019-2020 in-year funding reductions from the provincial government. Superintendent Regier noted that the only change with funding was with regards to transportation. A reduction occurred based on assumptions that fuel costs paid out to operators would be reduced in 2019-2020 due to school closures from March through June 2020.

Trustee Busuttil asked if the 2020-2021 transportation budget amount is based on the original budget amount or on the reduced 2019-20 Transportation Allocation. Superintendent Regier clarified that it is based on the original budget amount and adjusted for enrolment changes. As such 2019-2020 reductions is not expected to impact the base funding amount moving into the 2020-2021 school year.

Trustee Busuttil noted that the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) created a document that summarized COVID-19 impact on funding to date for their Board and costs incurred. Trustee Busuttil asked if senior management perceive any benefit to tracking expenses/funding in this way for our Board. Superintendent Regier noted that there were a number of cost impacts as a result of COVID-19 in 2019-20 and that this data will be presented when we complete the 2019-2020 statements. 2020-2021 reporting will also include tracking of additional funds received and expenditures spent related to the impact of COVID-19.

Trustee Lustgarten-Evoy asked about possible transportation adjustments due to COVID-19 when school resumes, and if any options/scenarios have been built into the 2020-2021 budget assumptions. Superintendent Regier clarified that these are base budget assumptions at this time.

Trustee Lustgarten-Evoy asked if ventilation at sites will be upgraded in response to COVID-19 and if these costs have been reflected in the 2020-2021 draft budget document. Operations Officer Scinocca commented that ventilation is being reviewed and stated that there will be a trade off in energy costs for such an initiative. Plant Operations Manager Veit is also involved in discussions at provincial committee levels in regards to school reopening plans.

Trustee Topping voted to move receipt of the draft budget document.

The motion carried.

Dates of Future Meetings

The following dates of future meetings were reviewed:

- Tuesday August 11, 2020 Delegations to the Budget, 7:00 p.m., Virtual

- Tuesday, August 18, 2020 Budget approval, 7:00 p.m., Virtual

Adjournment

Trustee Busutil moved that the Board as Budget Committee be adjourned at 9:32 p.m.

The motion carried.