

Halton District School Board

Report Number: 22050

Date: March 31, 2022

FOR INFORMATION

TO: The Chair and Members of the Halton District School Board
FROM: R. Negoi, Superintendent of Business and Treasurer
C. Ennis, Director of Education
RE: **2022/2023 Budget Survey Stakeholder Input Results**

Background:

The Ministry has indicated that the funding for next year is expected to remain status quo within the Grants for Student Needs (GSN), with some additional one-time funding being moved into the GSN, including the previous COVID Special Education and Mental Health portions. The Grants for Student Needs (GSN) were announced on February 17, 2022 outlining continued timed investments to support similar areas of COVID priorities, learning recovery, mental health and special education and an extension of the Student Support Funds for one more year. This will provide the Board with flexibility to maintain many of the additional supports added during the past two years, in order to address student achievement, learning recovery and classroom support.

In preparation for the 2022/2023 Budget, the Halton District School Board (HDSB) invited parent(s)/guardian(s), students, staff and community members to provide input into the budget development process.

An online survey, accessible using a computer, tablet or mobile device, was made available to the public from February 18 to March 7, 2022. The survey was promoted via the HDSB website, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and through a media release. An email was also sent to all HDSB parents/guardians and staff to notify them of the opportunity to provide feedback. Student Trustees shared the survey invitation with the Student Senate, who communicated it to their peers. The budget survey link was also shared with the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) and Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) members.

The consultation garnered a total of **1281** responses from the following groups:

Respondent Group	Count	Percentage
Parent/Guardian	831	65
Student	224	23
Staff	292	17
Community Member	71	6
Community Agency/Partner	3	<1
Other	3	<1
Total	1424*	

*The total number of respondents exceeds the total number of responses as individuals could be part of multiple groups (e.g., parent/guardian and staff).

Respondents were asked to provide their top areas of priority the board should focus resources on, as it pertained to the five strategic commitments identified in the 2020-2024 Multi-Year Plan, COVID investments, as well as to identify additional priority areas when considering allocation of Board's reserve funds.

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Refer to the [attached report](#) for details on the budget survey results. In summary, the top 3 priorities identified by the majority of respondents, by strategic commitments, include:

- Equity & Inclusion:
 - Staffing support to address areas of underperformance (e.g., coaches and teaching support staff)
 - Awareness and leadership sessions for students
 - Equity funds to top up school budgets and resources.
- Mental Health & Well-Being:
 - Student mental health staffing supports (social workers, child and youth counsellors, and other professional and paraprofessional resources)
 - Student well-being sessions, counselling and support
 - Professional learning opportunities for staff.
- Learning & Achievement:
 - Early learning and intervention supports for students
 - Special education staff to support students with exceptionalities (teachers, educational assistants, professional and paraprofessional staff)
 - Learning re-engagement supports for students (teachers, guidance counselors and coaches).
- Environmental Leadership:
 - Investment in outdoor learning spaces, shade and tree canopies
 - Investment in school renewal and improvement designed with an environmental sustainability lens
 - Increase awareness of students on resource conservation and climate change.
- Indigenous Perspectives & Awareness Learning & Achievement:
 - Classroom visits with Indigenous leads, Elders, and community members to provide authentic perspective
 - Learning opportunities for students to increase their understanding of Indigenous perspectives and realities
 - Professional learning opportunities for staff to raise awareness of the impacts of colonialism and anti-Indigenous racism.

The top 3 priorities identified by majority of respondents with regard to COVID-19 investments include:

- Ventilation and air filtration in the classroom
- Additional mental health supports
- Investment in outdoor education

Additional priorities identified included the following themes:

- Providing additional resources to address learning loss and smaller class sizes
- Maintaining virtual schools and resources
- Reallocating resources to support:
 - Students with special needs
 - Academic programming including arts, music, athletics and student well-being initiatives
 - Proactive anti-bullying programs
 - Resources and programs for students including technology, text books and outdoor programming
 - Providing clean drinking water in schools
 - Upgrading facilities
 - Enhancing outdoor experiences.

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Conclusion:

The detailed stakeholder input is carefully reviewed by staff in the context of the education funding available and focus areas identified in the 2020-2024 Multi-Year Plan. Topics identified within the budget survey will inform the budget process for 2022/2023. Trustees will be kept informed of any new developments that become available. Budget presentations are scheduled for the Committee of the Whole meeting of April 13th and the Special Education Advisory Committee meeting of May 3, 2022. A draft budget will be presented at the May 11, 2022 Committee of the Whole meeting, with a budget report provided at the June 1, 2022 Board meeting for information and at the June 15, 2022 Board meeting for Trustee approval.

Respectfully submitted,

*Roxana Negoj,
Superintendent of Business Services*

*Curtis Ennis,
Director of Education*