

WATERLOO REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

NOTICE OF MEETING

The regular monthly **Board Meeting** of the Waterloo Region District School Board will be held in the Boardroom, Building 2, 1st Floor, 51 Ardelt Avenue, Kitchener, Ontario, on **Wednesday, September 27, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.**

AGENDA

Call to Order

Territorial Acknowledgement and O Canada

Approval of Agenda

Consent Agenda**

Receipt/Approval of Minutes:

Approve Minutes - Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of June 14, 2023

Receive Minutes - Board Meeting of June 26, 2023

Receive Minutes - Special Board Meeting of June 28, 2023

Approve Minutes - Committee of the Whole Meeting of September 18, 2023

Receipt/Approval of Monthly Reports:

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| 26 | Staffing Information – Appointments | G. Shantz |
| 33 | Reported Student Behaviour Incidents | G. Shantz |

Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

Announcements/Celebrating Board Activities

Communications Good News Update

Groh Global Gala

H. Hughes
S. Miller

Delegations

Staff Follow Up

Considerations for Guest Speakers

S. Miller

Reports

Student Achievement Through Summer Learning Opportunities

S. Miller / J. Albrecht

Board Reports

Board Communications

39 Simcoe County District School Board to Minister of Education

42 Waterloo Region District School Board to Minister of Education - School Board Funding

45 Avon Maitland District School Board to Minister of Education

**All matters listed under the Consent Agenda are considered not to require debate by the Board of Trustees and should be approved in one motion in accordance with the recommendation contained in each report.

- 47 Upper Grand District School Board to Minister of Education
- 49 Thames Valley District School Board to Minister of Education - GSN Insufficiencies
- 52 Thames Valley District School Board to Minister of Education - Special Education Shortfalls
- 54 Thames Valley District School Board SEAC to Minister of Education
- 56 Ministry of Education to Waterloo District School Board - School Board Funding Response

Other Business

Question Period (10 minutes)

Future Agenda Items (Notices of motion to be referred to Agenda Development Committee)

Adjournment



Report to Board of Trustees

September 27, 2023

**Subject: Staffing Information –
 Retirements and Resignations**

Recommendation

This report is provided for information of the Board.

Status

The employees listed in Appendix A of this report have received acknowledgement of their retirement or resignation.

Background

The board's practice is to receive information regarding staff retirements and resignations at regular monthly board meetings.

Financial implications

Expenses are within the existing approved budget.

Communications

Employees listed in this report have communicated through Human Resource Services.

Prepared by: Graham Shantz, Associate Director, in consultation with Leadership Council.

Staffing Statistics – Retirements
Current at September 27, 2023

Retirements: Elementary Teaching Staff				
First	Last	Position/Location	Retirement Date	Years of Service
Carrie	Claus	Teacher, Brigadoon PS	August 14, 2023	12
Rebecca	Fleisig	Teacher, St. Jacobs PS	September 25, 2023	22
Andrew	Gingerich	Teacher, Sunnyside PS	September 29, 2023	23
Kay	Hewitt	Teacher, Breslau PS	June 30, 2023	31
Anita	Redwood	Teacher, Williamsburg PS	December 31, 2023	24
Jennifer	Reid	Teacher, Silverheights PS	August 31, 2023	23
Christine	Ridge	Teacher, Empire PS	August 31, 2023	17
Brenda	Spennato	Teacher, Saginaw PS	August 31, 2023	23
Mario	Stocco	Teacher, Forest Hill PS	November 30, 2023	24
Jen-Yi	Wu	ESL Teacher, Sandhills PS	August 31, 2023	18

Retirements: Secondary Teaching Staff				
First	Last	Position/Location	Retirement Date	Years of Service
Chris	Bonza	Visual Arts Department Head, Jacob Hespeler SS	September 30, 2023	29
Jim	Fare	Teacher, Cameron Heights CI	August 31, 2023	14
Elvis	Husic	Math Department Head, Cameron Heights CI	October 31, 2023	31
Kim	Kennedy	Guidance Department Head, Huron Heights SS	July 31, 2023	41

Retirements: Administrative & Support Staff				
First	Last	Position/Location	Retirement Date	Years of Service
Corrie	Albrecht	Educational Assistant, Abraham Erb PS	July 4, 2023	19
Allan	Anderson	Educational Assistant, Forest Hill PS	September 18, 2023	21
Sherry	Dimitroff	Secretary, Grand River CI	August 27, 2023	7
Karen	Farquhar	Library Clerk, Bridgeport PS	August 28, 2023	21
Paula	Ferreira	Social Worker, Special Education	September 29, 2023	29
Susan	Gawley	Library Clerk, Forest Hill PS	October 6, 2023	22
Nancy	Hebert	Educational Assistant, Hespeler PS	June 29, 2023	34
Jovanka	Kuckovic	Educational Assistant, Stanley Park PS	October 31, 2023	25
Diane	Kullman	Educational Assistant, Lincoln Heights PS	August 31, 2023	25
Suzanne	Lowden	Library Clerk, Hespeler PS	December 31, 2023	22
Kim	Ludolph	Educational Assistant, Sandhills PS	August 18, 2023	15
Helen	McDonald	Line Support Specialist, ITS	August 31, 2023	22
Karen	Roth	Educational Assistant, Northlake Woods PS	July 31, 2023	20
Wendy	Schmidt	Custodian, Westvale PS	September 29, 2023	7
Sylvia	Van der Heide	Supervision Monitor, Forest Heights CI	August 21, 2023	22
Betty-Ann	Wight	Early Childhood Educator, Alpine PS	September 4, 2023	6
Edwina	Yandt	Educational Assistant, JW Gerth PS	June 29, 2023	23

Staffing Statistics – Resignations

Current at September 27, 2023

Permanent Staff Resignations			
First	Last	Position/Location	Resignation Date
Muharrem	Ahmeti	Custodian, Chicopee Hills PS	July 7, 2023
Joe	Bell	System Administrator, Learning Services	July 31, 2023
Sheri	Bond	Educational Assistant, Groh PS	September 1, 2023
Helen	Byers	Early Childhood Educator, Sandhills PS	August 28, 2023
Susan	Calligaris	Head Secretary, Ayr PS	September 1, 2023
Debbie	Censner	Early Childhood Educator, Baden PS	August 4, 2023
Sarah	Clayton	Elementary Teacher, Vista Hills PS	August 31, 2023
Angela	Coffin	Budget Analyst, Finance	August 10, 2023
Rebecca	Connell	Early Childhood Educator, St. Jacobs PS	September 7, 2023
Sharron	Cook	Library Clerk, John Mahood PS	July 19, 2023
Brandon	Coveney	Senior Planner, Planning	August 18, 2023
Lorie	Cressman	Early Childhood Educator, Oak Creek PS	August 23, 2023
Connie	Davidson	Elementary Teacher, Wilson Avenue PS	June 29, 2023
Kimberley	Droumtsekas	Library Clerk, Linwood PS	August 25, 2023
Taylor	Fitton	Educational Assistant, Westmount PS	September 4, 2023
Catherine	Friedel	Educational Assistant, Northlake Woods PS	July 31, 2023
Karin	Galvao	Secretary, Sunnyside PS	June 30, 2023
Cora	Hammond	Elementary Teacher, Clemens Mill PS	August 31, 2023
Elizabeth	Harris	Educational Assistant, Vista Hills PS	September 1, 2023
Michelle	Hewitt	Educational Assistant, Stewart Avenue PS	September 1, 2023
Cecilia	Hibbs	Library Clerk, Moffat Creek PS	July 11, 2023
Lee-Anne	Hoch	Educational Assistant, Eastwood CI	August 29, 2023
Mike	Kaytar	Child Youth Worker, U-Turn (W)	September 3, 2023
Mara	Lang	Educational Assistant, Abraham Erb PS	September 1, 2023
Deb	Langelaan	Educational Assistant, Mackenzie King PS	August 10, 2023
Kerri	Lee	Elementary Teacher, Lester B Pearson PS	September 1, 2023
Matthew	Legault	Custodian, Elmira District SS	October 3, 2023
Hilary	Lehman	Secretary, Smithson PS	August 25, 2023
Prashant	Madan	Secretary, Finance	July 17, 2023
Karrie	Milmine	Educational Assistant, Hillcrest PS	August 30, 2023
Kerry	Moco	Early Childhood Educator, Coronation PS	August 10, 2023
Victoria	Mule	Educational Assistant, WT Townshend PS	August 14, 2023
Tracy	Lennon	Secretary, King Edward PS	September 15, 2023

Permanent Staff Resignations			
First	Last	Position/Location	Resignation Date
Kirsten	Orchard	Elementary Teacher, JF Carmichael PS	August 31, 2023
Adrienne	Ozolins	Educational Assistant, Forest Hill PS	September 3, 2023
Ratsamy	Phaboriboun	Elementary Teacher, Country Hills PS	August 31, 2023
Shannon	Pollard	Educational Assistant, Laurel Heights SS	September 22, 2023
Suman	Rai	Secretary, Janet Metcalfe PS	August 15, 2023
Ionela	Raicu	Head Custodian, Mary Johnston PS	August 21, 2023
Michael	Rintoul	Child Youth Worker, U-Turn (C)	August 29, 2023
Sharon	Schmidt	Early Childhood Educator, Keatsway PS	September 1, 2023
Chris	Schwint	Library Clerk, Chalmers Street PS	August 29, 2023
Evelyn	Schnarr-Melse	Custodian, Crestview / Stanley Park PS	September 1, 2023
Lucy	Sousa	Custodian, Jacob Hespeler SS	August 18, 2023
Erin	St Denis	Elementary Teacher, NA MacEachern PS	August 4, 2023
Michelle	Symons	Secretary, Jacob Hespeler SS	September 1, 2023
Janine	Taylor	Speech Pathologist, Special Education	August 14, 2023
Ashley	Teeter	Elementary Teacher, Lester B Pearson PS	August 31, 2023
Sherry	Ulmer	Secretary, Huron Heights SS	August 25, 2023
Alaynna	Vanderwip	Early Childhood Educator, Ayr PS	September 1, 2023
Barb	Ward	Mental Health Lead, Special Education	August 31, 2023
Ana	Weiler	Elementary Teacher, Margaret Avenue PS	August 17, 2023
Lindsey	Werner	Secretary, Kitchener CI	September 15, 2023



Report to Board of Trustees

September 27, 2023

Subject: Staffing Information – Appointments

Recommendation

This report is provided for information of the Board.

Status

The staff appointments as noted on Appendix A of this report are effective the dates indicated.

Background

The board's practice has been to have appointments presented for information at regular monthly board meetings.

Financial implications

Expenses are within the existing approved budget.

Communications

Employees listed in this report have been advised of the appointments.

Prepared by: Graham Shantz, Associate Director, in consultation with Leadership Council.

Staffing Information – New Appointments
Current at September 27, 2023

New Appointments: Elementary Teaching Staff			
First	Last	Location	Effective Date
Hiba	Alexander	Avenue Road PS	September 1, 2023
Olivia	Amorim	Laurentian PS	September 1, 2023
Crystal	Archambault	Saginaw PS	September 1, 2023
Maria	Armstrong	Vista Hills PS	September 1, 2023
Jessica	Bast	Centennial (C) PS	September 1, 2023
Kaitlyn	Bentz	Westheights PS	September 1, 2023
Abbygale	Breckles	Clemens Mill PS	September 1, 2023
Abigail	Broad	King Edward PS	September 1, 2023
April	Brown	Sir Adam Beck PS	September 1, 2023
Stephanie	Carlisle	Chalmers Street PS	September 1, 2023
Claire	Chambers	Hillcrest PS	September 1, 2023
Dina	Chaves	Moffatt Creek PS	September 1, 2023
Kim	Christensen	Clemens Mill PS	September 1, 2023
Faye	Cornfield	Lester B Pearson PS	September 1, 2023
Stephanie	Costa	Forest Hill PS	September 1, 2023
Danielle	Coulas	William G Davis PS	September 1, 2023
Lindsay	Crone	St. Jacobs PS	September 1, 2023
Lisa	DeMelo	Ayr PS	September 1, 2023
Andrew	Dempster	Lincoln Heights PS	September 1, 2023
Elissa	Dent	JF Carmichael PS	September 11, 2023
Anahit	Dhanoa	Centennial (C) PS	September 18, 2023
Daniel	Diefenbaker	Laurelwood PS	September 13, 2023
Rachel	Dobbs	King Edward PS	September 1, 2023
Susie	Elkadri	Laurelwood PS	September 1, 2023
Trevor	Fedyck	St. Andrews PS	September 1, 2023
Shelby	Filiatrault	Janet Metcalfe PS	September 1, 2023
Abigail	Friedel	JW Gerth PS	September 1, 2023
Alicia	Geier	Lester B Pearson PS	September 1, 2023
Michelle	Graham	Southridge PS	September 1, 2023
Christine	Gurzanski	Country Hills PS	September 1, 2023
Rachel	Halter	Preston PS	September 1, 2023
Amanda	Hildebrandt	Tait Street PS	September 1, 2023

New Appointments: Elementary Teaching Staff (cont'd)			
First	Last	Location	Effective Date
Caitlin	Howald	St. Jacobs PS	September 1, 2023
Tye	Juniper	Keatsway PS	September 1, 2023
Lukas	Kalbfleisch	Lincoln Heights PS	September 1, 2023
Brittney	Karn	Groh PS	September 1, 2023
Ryan	Kravalis	Blair Road PS	September 1, 2023
Laura	Lawry	Wellesley PS	September 1, 2023
Kathleen	Letourneau	Tait Street PS	September 1, 2023
Diana	Maloney	Moffatt Creek PS	September 1, 2023
Ines	Marjanovic	Brigadoon PS	September 1, 2023
Taryn	Martin	N.A. MacEachern PS	September 1, 2023
Brock	Mason	Hespeler PS	September 1, 2023
Letitia	McDonald	Brigadoon PS	September 1, 2023
Emma	Mcllwraith	King Edward PS	September 1, 2023
Krista	Merrill	Franklin PS	September 1, 2023
Claire	Metcalfe	Queensmount PS	September 1, 2023
Luke	Michelsen	Riverside PS	September 1, 2023
Catherine	Muir	Stewart Avenue PS	September 1, 2023
Samantha	Mulcahy	Lincoln Heights PS	September 1, 2023
Kathy	Murphy	Silverheights PS	September 11, 2023
Ashley	Nickels	J.F. Carmichael PS	September 1, 2023
Kristen	Nispel	Keatsway PS	September 1, 2023
Panayiota	Paleshi	Empire PS	September 1, 2023
Usha	Patil	Elizabeth Ziegler PS	September 1, 2023
Sara	Perkins	Country Hills PS	September 1, 2023
Natalie	Pfaff	Sandhills PS	September 1, 2023
Lindsay	Pollari	Coronation PS	September 1, 2023
Miranda	Powell	Sheppard PS	September 1, 2023
Monisha	Randhawa	Cedar Creek PS	September 1, 2023
Mikaila	Rebellato	Alpine PS	September 1, 2023
McKenzie	Reid	Blue Heron PS	September 1, 2023
Ashley	Ritchie	Chalmers Street PS	September 1, 2023
Eric	Robson	Saginaw PS	September 1, 2023
Madison	Rosati	Westvale PS	September 1, 2023
Jena	Schiemann	Wilson Avenue PS	September 1, 2023
Kayla	Schnarr	Coronation PS	September 1, 2023
Kathryn (Katie)	Schulz	Smithson PS	September 1, 2023
Jennifer	Sinker	Grand View (C) PS	September 1, 2023
Angela	Snider	John Mahood PS	September 1, 2023

New Appointments: Elementary Teaching Staff (cont'd)			
First	Last	Position / Location	Effective Date
McKenzie	Soosaar	Breslau PS	September 1, 2023
Trevor	Stehower	Chalmers Street PS	September 1, 2023
Bailey	Stevenson	Suddaby PS	September 1, 2023
Natasha	Swabey	Country Hills PS	September 1, 2023
Claire	Swarbrick	Margaret Avenue PS	September 1, 2023
Ida	Thibeh-Wiese	Lincoln Heights PS	September 1, 2023
Alyssa	Tomlin-White	John Darling PS	September 1, 2023
Kimberly	Truong	Cedar Creek PS	September 1, 2023
Stephanie	Venton	Conestogo PS	September 1, 2023
Karin	Vollman	Pioneer Park PS	September 1, 2023
Anna	Vu	Empire PS	September 1, 2023
Brittany	Walser	Rosemount PS	September 1, 2023
Janelle	Wenger	Winston Churchill PS	September 1, 2023
Jenna	Westaway	MacGregor PS	September 1, 2023
Amanda	Woodcroft	Courtland Avenue PS	September 1, 2023
Andrea	Zehr	Parkway PS	September 1, 2023

New Appointments: Secondary Teaching Staff			
First	Last	Location	Effective Date
Alicia	Arnds	Waterloo CI	September 1, 2023
Madison	Baker	Southwood SS	September 1, 2023
Rachelle	Baumann	Galt CI	September 1, 2023
Stephanie	Browning	Jacob Hespeler SS	September 1, 2023
Andrew	Calleya	Huron Heights SS	September 1, 2023
Jessica	Crawford-Brown	Forest Heights CI	September 1, 2023
Patricia	Cronin	Forest Heights CI	September 1, 2023
Ethan	Daniel	Kitchener CI	September 1, 2023
Jennifer	Daniells	Forest Heights CI	September 1, 2023
Lucy	Donkers	Elmira District SS	September 1, 2023
Meghan	Drummond	Cameron Heights CI	September 1, 2023
Melissa	El Sombati	Forest Heights CI	September 1, 2023
Ryan	Embury	Forest Heights CI	September 1, 2023
Arissa	Fogolin	Waterloo CI	September 1, 2023
Jessica	Fry	Bluevale CI	September 1, 2023
Jill	Gerber	Waterloo CI	September 1, 2023
Alex	Graham	Eastwood CI	September 1, 2023
Kim	Henderson	Laurel Heights SS	September 1, 2023
Cody	Hoes	Glenview Park SS	September 1, 2023
Hunter	Jacklin	Eastwood CI	September 1, 2023

New Appointments: Secondary Teaching Staff (cont'd)			
First	Last	Location	Effective Date
Kate	Jamieson	Huron Heights SS	September 1, 2023
Mark	Janicas	Kitchener CI	September 1, 2023
Emma	Jewitt	Cameron Heights CI	September 1, 2023
Phoenicia	Kempel	Bluevale CI	September 1, 2023
Kate	Kim	Waterloo CI	September 1, 2023
Tonya	Leduc	Cameron Heights CI	September 1, 2023
Pei	Li	Waterloo CI	September 1, 2023
Mackenzie	Martin	Galt CI	September 1, 2023
Diana	McKenzie	Eastwood CI	September 1, 2023
Peter	Mics	Forest Heights CI	September 1, 2023
Sarah	Mooney	Huron Heights SS	September 1, 2023
Heather	Muir	Waterloo Oxford DSS	September 1, 2023
Eric	Oberholzer	Forest Heights CI	September 1, 2023
Jason	Perry	Waterloo CI	September 1, 2023
Chris	Pinney	Grand River CI	September 1, 2023
Tyler	Postma	Galt CI	September 1, 2023
Jillian	Raymond	Forest Heights CI	September 1, 2023
Biljana	Ruvinov	Galt CI	September 1, 2023
Logan	Shewfelt	Forest Heights CI	September 1, 2023
Keagan	Stoyles	Galt CI	September 1, 2023
Alexander	Su	Forest Heights CI	September 1, 2023
Alex	Thomson	Eastwood CI	September 1, 2023
Melanie	Tibbo	Southwood SS	September 1, 2023
Jared	Warren	Bluevale CI	September 1, 2023
Keaton	Weiss	Galt CI	September 1, 2023
Travis	Wiat	Huron Heights SS	September 1, 2023

New Appointments: Administrative and Support Staff			
First	Last	Position / Location	Effective Date
Miruna	Armellini	Controller, Financial Services	September 11, 2023
Lesley	Barber	Speech Language Pathologist, Special Education	September 5, 2023
Thais	Bazzarella	Library Clerk, Stewart Avenue PS	August 28, 2023
Anthony	Beg	Custodian, WT Townshend PS	August 8, 2023
Amanda	Bourassa	Guidance Secretary, Waterloo Oxford DSS	September 14, 2023
Jessica	Bruder	Secretary, Rockway PS	September 5, 2023

New Appointments: Administrative and Support Staff (cont'd)			
First	Last	Position / Location	Effective Date
Katie	Brumley	Secretary/Library Clerk, Highland PS	August 28, 2023
Anabel	Cabrero	Custodian, Manchester/Chalmers St. PS	August 14, 2023
Carlos	Alfonzo	Front Line Support Specialist, ITS	August 28, 2023
Khalil	Cheekhoory	Accounting Analyst, Finance	August 28, 2023
Kelsey	Christie	Secretary, JF Carmichael PS	September 1, 2023
Lisa	Closs	Custodian, Manchester/Chalmers St. PS	August 28, 2023
Alex	Collins	Custodian, Linwood/John Mahood PS	August 28, 2023
Amanda	Coulter	Secretary, Courtland PS	September 8, 2023
Marco	Del Carpio	Custodian, Hespeler PS/Jacob Hesperler SS	August 10, 2023
Laura	Errey	Communication Disorder Assistant, Special Education	September 5, 2023
Laura	Fietje	Research Officer, Research Department	July 27, 2023
Laura	Groulx	HR Assistant, Human Resources	July 4, 2023
Stephanie	Heimpel	Secretary, Driftwood Park PS	August 28, 2023
Paul	Hickling	Custodian, Conestogo PS	August 14, 2023
Ross	Howey	Associate Manager, Communications	August 1, 2023
Heather	Hughes	Senior Manager, Communications	September 1, 2023
Kaley	Hughes	Educational Assistant, Elizabeth Ziegler PS	September 1, 2023
Heather	Lefler-Brownlie	Custodian, Huron Heights SS	July 27, 2023
Gwenyth	Le-Phuong	Psychology and Social Work Lead, Learning Services	August 1, 2023
Pamela	Martinez	Library Clerk, Laurelwood PS	August 28, 2023
Veesta	Mavandadi	Psychological Consultant, Special Education	September 5, 2023
Sherri	Maznyk	Educational Assistant, Rosemount PS	September 1, 2023
Laura	McCarthy	Psychological Consultant, Special Education	September 5, 2023
Syeda	Naqvi	Accounting Clerk, Finance	July 4, 2023
Erin	Orr	Psychological Consultant, Special Education	September 5, 2023
Uzma	Parvez	Line Support Specialist, ITS	September 18, 2023

New Appointments: Administrative and Support Staff (cont'd)			
First	Last	Position / Location	Effective Date
Amrita	Rana	Secretary, Howard Robertson PS	August 28, 2023
Rachel	Riske	Speech Language Pathologist, Special Education	September 5, 2023
Robert	Roszell	HVAC, Certified Tradesperson, Maintenance	July 24, 2023
Evan	Ryczko	Library Clerk, Westvale PS	August 28, 2023
Evan	Schnarr-Melse	Custodian, Stanley Park/Crestview PS	August 10, 2023
Julie	Shantz	Procurement and Distribution Supervisor, Finance	August 28, 2023
Natasha	Sloat	Secretary, Cameron Heights CI	August 28, 2023
Carrie	Snyder	Secretary, Suddaby PS	August 28, 2023
Kyle	Soulliere	Library Clerk, Oak Creek PS	September 5, 2023
Adam	Spengen	Custodian, Groh PS	July 12, 2023
Jennifer	Spring	Educational Assistant, Westheights PS	September 1, 2023
Mirela	Toholj	Accounting Analyst, Finance	September 20, 2023
Courtnee	Van De Graaf	Secretary, Grand River CI	September 5, 2023
Ken	Vivian	Custodian, Edna Staebler PS	July 10, 2023
Dipal	Vyas	Custodian, Lincoln Heights PS/Bluevale CI	August 14, 2023
Chelsea	Wyatt	Secretary, Janet Metcalfe PS	August 28, 2023
Kim	Zasada	Secretary, Lincoln Heights PS	September 18, 2023

New Hires - due to retirements, resignations or leaves and are to replace full or part time vacancies.

Human Resources & Equity Services



Report to Board of Trustees

September 27, 2023

**Subject: Reported Student Behaviour Incidents Quarterly
Data
Q4 – 2022-2023**

Recommendation:

This report is provided for information purposes only.

Status:

- The Board continues to experience significant staffing challenges. The Board continues to endeavour to staff schools given high issues of absenteeism within the system and is actively pursuing alternative approaches for emergency staffing. Unforeseen and unplanned disruption continues to impact the delivery of education for students within our system.
- Employee absenteeism and attrition can introduce new complexities with supporting complex students when new and/or different staff interact with them.
- We continue to be proactive in utilizing our BMS team to support staff and administration in the following ways:
- Responding to student specific referrals addressing supports for safety plans, review of critical incidents, and classroom observations and audits;
- Temporarily increasing support resources to respond to student behaviour incidents for the remainder of the 2022-2023 school year;
- Providing site specific BMS support (i.e., practice a containment, student specific interventions etc.);
- Supporting growing system needs in BMS by continuing to train new trainers;
- Assisting in facilitating the transition of students returning to in-school learning;
- Directly supporting transition planning to ensure staff feel supported and that we are setting both students and staff up for success;
- Proactively identifying schools and students that may require direct support from BMS;
- Analyzing and actively investigating special education paraprofessional resources to better support schools;
- Providing on-going training for multiple employee groups within the Board

Student Behaviour incidents are recorded under four (4) categories in order of severity from least severe to most severe:

Hazard: The worker is reporting a hazard, the worker sustained no injury during the incident or it was a near miss. The Board and Unions actively encourage employees to report workplace hazards in order to act proactively to prevent more serious incidents.

First aid: Applying minor first aid measures like cleaning minor cuts, scrapes or scratches; applying a band aid, cold compress or ice pack. First Aid is provided at the workplace.

Health care (or medical aid): Worker sustained an injury requiring medical aid from an external health care practitioner (i.e., a doctor, nurse, chiropractor or physiotherapist); services provided at a hospital and/or health facility and/or require prescription drugs. This is required to be reported to the Workers Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB).

Lost Time: The worker sustains injury that requires time away from work after the day of incident and was unable to work. This is required to be reported to the Workers Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB).

Previous Year Quarterly Report Comparison:

Quarterly student behaviour incident data as reported by WRDSB staff for the period April 16, 2023 – June 30, 2023 compared to the data from the same period April 16, 2022 – June 30, 2022 last school year:

- Total Elementary incidents have increased by 279 incidents from the same period last year.
- Total Secondary incidents have increased by 14 incidents from the same period last year.

2023 Reporting Information:

Reported Student Behaviour Incidents for the Previous School Year (April 16, 2023 – June 30, 2023):

- Total Elementary incidents from **April 16, 2023 – June 30, 2023 – 610 incidents**
 - Hazard – 400 incidents
 - 65.57% of all elementary incidents
 - First Aid – 192 incidents
 - 31.48% of all elementary incidents
 - Health Care – 4 incidents
 - 0.66% of all elementary events
 - Lost Time – 14 incidents
 - 2.30% of all elementary events
- Total Secondary incidents from **(April 16, 2023 – June 30, 2023): 25 incidents**
 - Hazard –15 incidents

- 60.00% of all Secondary incidents
 - First Aid – 8 incidents
 - 32.00% of all Secondary incidents
 - Health Care – 0 incidents
 - 0.00% of all Secondary incidents
 - Lost Time – 2 incidents
 - 8.00% of all Secondary incidents
- Total incidents for hazards, first aid, health care, and lost time per employee group from **April 16, 2023 – June 30, 2023- 635 Incidents**
 - Educational Assistant (EA) / Child and Youth Worker (CYW) – 384
 - 60.47% of total incidents
 - Elementary Teacher – 174
 - 27.40% of total incidents
 - Designated Early Childhood Educator (DECE) – 41
 - 6.56% of total incidents
 - Elementary Occasional Teachers – 22
 - 3.46% of total incidents
 - Secondary Teacher – 6
 - 0.94% of total incidents
 - Administrators – 8
 - 1.26% of total incidents

2022 Reporting Information:

Reported Student Behaviour Incidents for the Current School Year (April 16, 2022 – June 30, 2022):

- Total Elementary incidents from **April 16, 2022 – June 30, 2022 – 331 incidents**
 - Hazard – 199 incidents
 - 60.12% of all elementary incidents
 - First Aid – 122 incidents
 - 36.86% of all elementary incidents
 - Health Care – 3 incidents
 - 0.91% of all elementary events
 - Lost Time – 7 incidents
 - 2.11% of all elementary events
- Total Secondary incidents from **(April 16, 2022 – June 30, 2022): 11 incidents**
 - Hazard – 2 incidents
 - 18.18% of all Secondary incidents
 - First Aid – 9 incidents
 - 81.82% of all Secondary incidents
 - Health Care – 0 incidents

- 0.00% of all Secondary incidents
 - Lost Time – 0 incidents
 - 0.0% of all Secondary incidents
- Total incidents for hazards, first aid, health care, and lost time per employee group from **April 16, 2022 – June 30, 2022- 342 Incidents**
 - Educational Assistant (EA) / Child and Youth Worker (CYW) – 218
 - 63.74% of total incidents
 - Designated Early Childhood Educators (DECE) - 38
 - 11.11%
 - Elementary Teacher – 61
 - 17.84% of total incidents
 - Elementary Occasional Teachers – 13
 - 3.8% of total incidents
 - Secondary Teacher – 4
 - 1.17% of total incidents
 - Elementary Administrators – 5
 - 1.46% of total incidents
 - Secondary Administrators – 1
 - 0.29% of total incidents
 - Management - 2
 - 0.58% of total incidents

Background:

As requested by the Board, student incident data is to be provided on a quarterly basis.

Financial implications:

The financial impacts are covered within existing Board approved budget lines.

Communications:

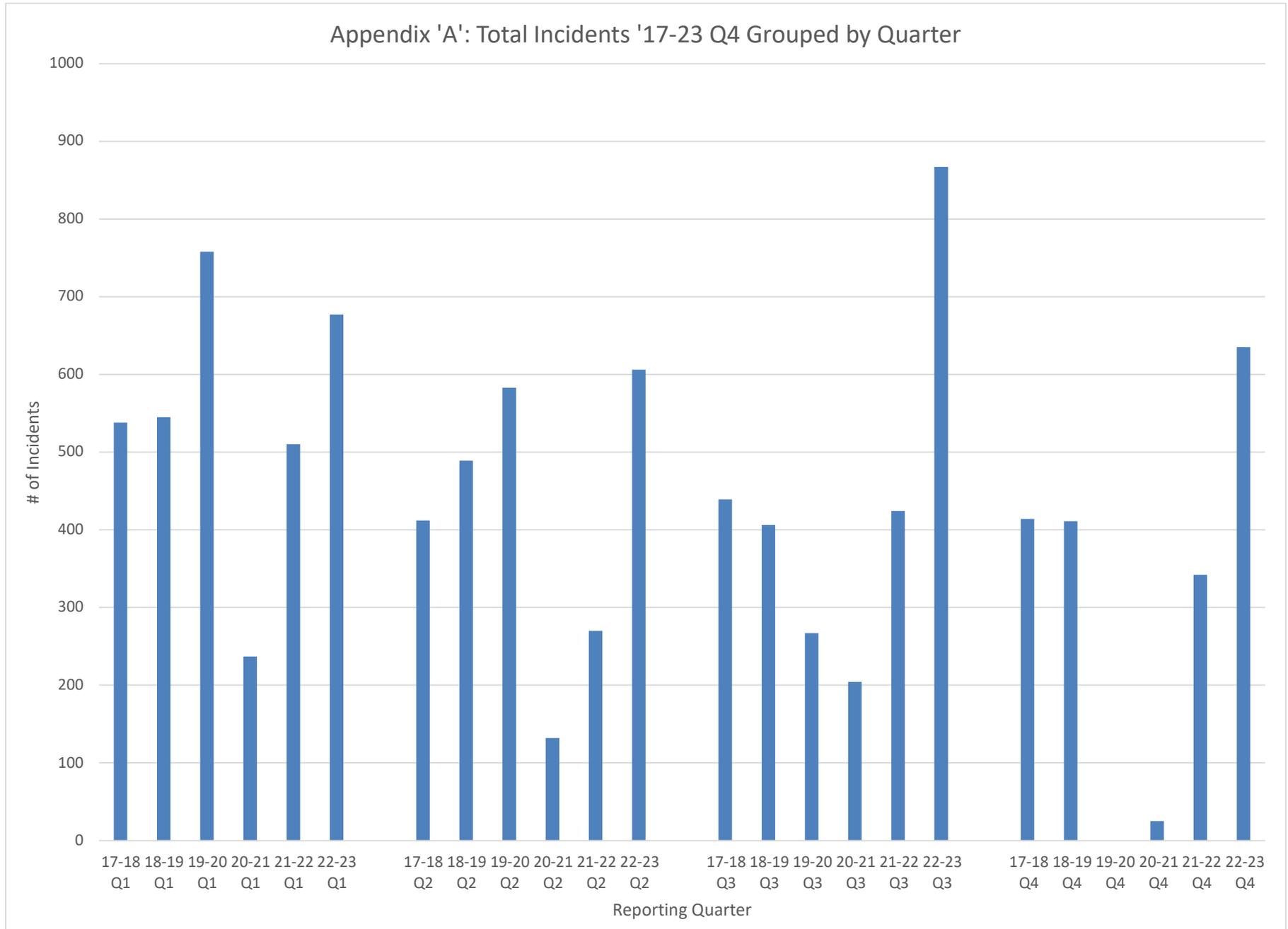
A report of all workplace incidences, including student behaviour incidents is provided every two weeks to the Board's Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC).

Appendices:

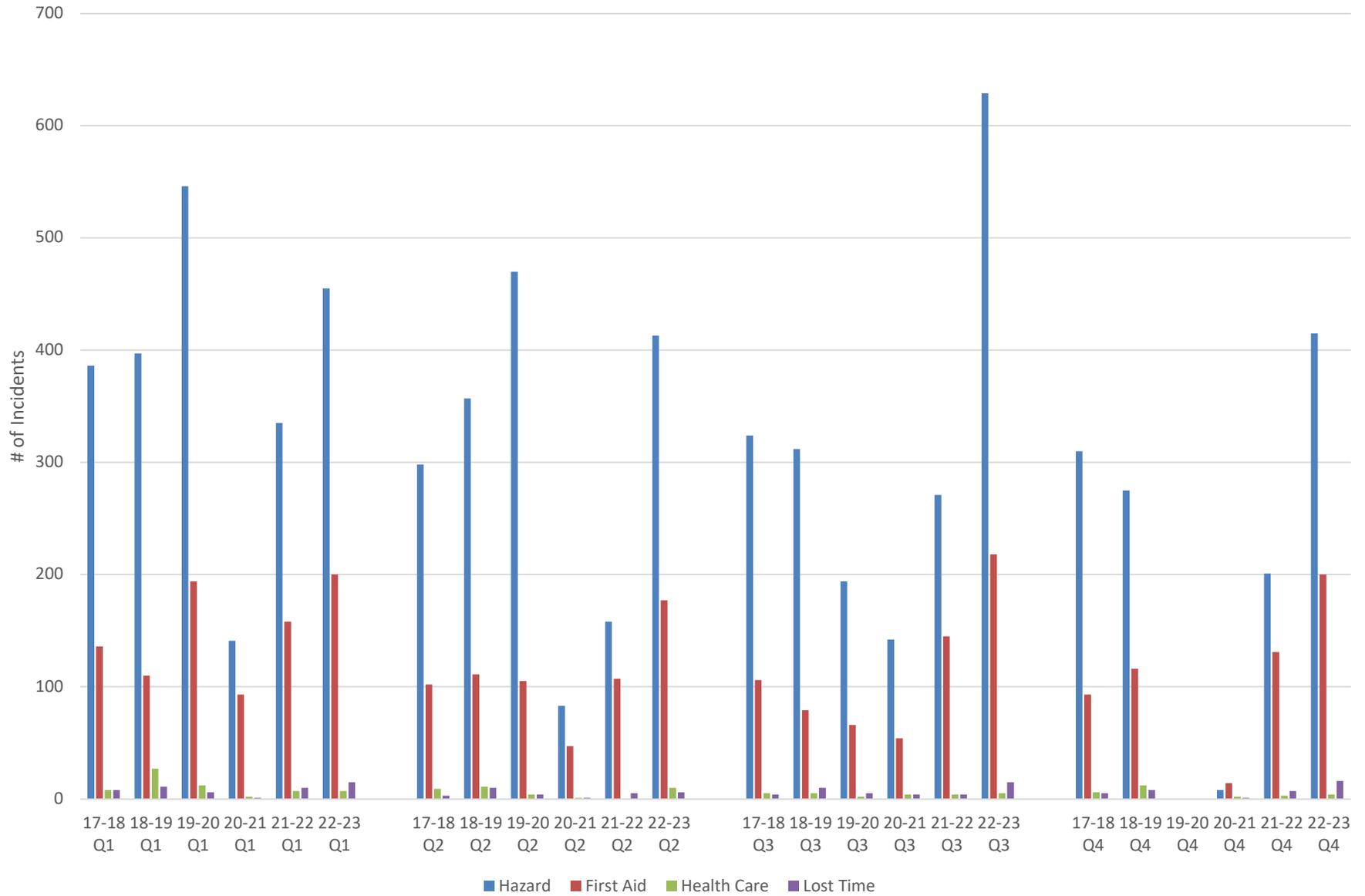
2023 Q4 Quarterly Report Data Appendix A

2023 Q4 Quarterly Report Data Appendix B

Prepared by: Graham Shantz, Associate Director
 Justin Brown, Senior Manager, Human Resources Services
 Shannon-Melissa Dunlop, Manager, Health, Safety & Security



Appendix 'B': Types of Incidents by Quarter
'17-23 Q4 Grouped by Quarter



June 26, 2023

Honourable Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education
Mowat Block, 22nd Floor
900 Bay Street
Toronto, ON M7A 1L2

Dear Minister Stephen Lecce,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Simcoe County District School Board's (SCDSB) Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC). We would like to start off by thanking you for the funding announcements for the 2023-24 school year. As one of Ontario's top growth boards, being provided with this information in a timely manner, is essential in maximizing the efficient and effective use of funding, as well as being able to bring forward a balanced budget in accordance with Ministry requirements. Recognizing that the hard work of preparing for next year's funding allocation has already begun, we are contacting you now with concerns and suggestions for consideration in your decision-making process for the province's future special education funding models.

A key aspect of the special education funding is ensuring allocated funding aligns with the current needs of the board in 2023. To maximize the allocated special education funding, it should be based on the most recent and relevant educational and community needs data, rather than drawing on previous community-data (legacy census data) that may not adequately reflect ongoing changes in population demographics, diversity, or the current and future needs. Simcoe County has changed significantly in recent decades, and these changes need to be taken into account when making financial decisions to support our students effectively. While we appreciate that special education funding has generally increased in recent years in the SCDSB, increases have largely been proportional to changes in enrolment and/or reflected increases in wages, rather than actual increased supports and services for students.

In the SCDSB, approximately 1 in every 5 students (approx. 11,500) has a special education related strength and need. Since the pandemic (COVID-19), the complexity of the needs of students has increased dramatically. Our most vulnerable students, especially those with special education and/or mental health needs, have been disproportionately impacted by the prolonged pandemic, caused by extended periods of school closures, restricted access to community-based services and supports (speech and language and occupational therapy), limited access to other children needed to develop pro-social skills, self-regulation, and strong oral language skills, which are all essential elements to maximizing success at school and in life after school. To minimize the impact of the pandemic on students with disabilities, significant and sustained investment will be required to alleviate long-term negative effects.

The success of students with special education and/or mental health needs at school is also greatly impacted by other aspects of educational funding, including access to appropriate physical space at school (opportunities for therapy at school to reduce unnecessary transition or time away from school), transportation funding (modified start and end times, travel distances to access specialized programming), etc. The SCDSB's Board of Trustees has recently written to the Ministry of Education to express concerns related to the need for capital funding, as well as

Page 1 of 3

changes in transportation funding. We would like to add our support to those previously identified concerns, and to reiterate the impact that these other types of education funding have on students with special education needs, and the corresponding appropriate supports that the board is then able to offer.

As you know, Ontario was the first province in Canada (2005) to pass legislation (*The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* [AODA]), with the goal and timeline of removing barriers to accessibility, including in schools by 2025. As we approach 2025 (date identified in AODA), many schools in the SCDSB continue to require significant investments in their facility infrastructure to reduce physical barriers, such as elevators, ramps, accessible washrooms, as well as accessible forms of transportation. We urge the Ministry to communicate with boards as to how these needed changes will be financially supported as the deadline quickly approaches.

Student success at school doesn't begin or end at the school's front door. To appropriately support students with special education needs in schools, a whole community wrap-around approach is required. Funding of services and supports provided through other ministries, such as timely access to community-based mental health supports, medical doctors, speech, physical and occupational therapy, nursing to support students with diabetes, and the Ontario Autism Program (OAP) also impact students' success while at school. Legislated wage restrictions in various public education or health-care sectors have negatively impacted the ability to hire and retain sufficient and high-quality clinical staff, educational assistants, child and youth workers, special education resource teachers, etc., to meet the increasingly complex needs of students emerging from the pandemic.

As the complexity of the needs of our communities continue to grow and change over time, comprehensive funding for Education and Community Partnership Programs (ECCP) (Section 23) needs to recognize the true costs for boards to partner with community agencies to offer successful care and treatment programs for students (transportation, staffing, facility costs, etc.).

The SCDSB's SEAC is supportive of the recommendations outlined in the Ontario Human Rights Commission's Right to Read Inquiry, as well as the recent funding announcements by the Ministry of Education to support improvements in reading instruction. Sustained funding, as well as a long-term commitment will be required to match the increasing complex needs of our students. Professional learning will improve not only the quality of instruction, it will help reduce attitudinal barriers faced by students with disabilities related to stereotypes, lack of knowledge, and sensitivity to their needs.

We also wish to express our support in the concerns recently communicated by many SEAC's regarding the funding of the Special Incidence Portion (SIP). While we appreciate the Ministry's recent updates to this funding model, we are concerned that recent changes may not adequately reflect SCDSB's growth and/or increasing complexity of students. We look forward to an update on these changes, including plans to address the needs of the growth boards within the province.

On behalf of the SCDSB's SEAC we would like to thank you for your time and dedication to all Ontario students, especially the most vulnerable with special education strengths and needs, who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. We wish to urge the Minister to take our concerns and suggestions into consideration when planning for future funding allocations and decisions. We appreciate the Minister's respect for our committee's understanding of our local needs and the importance of our advocacy on behalf of the needs of our students and families. We would be happy for the opportunity to discuss any of the above issues further, and we look forward to your response. We thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Brandy Rafeek
Chairperson, SEAC



Kevin Berry
Vice-chairperson, SEAC

- c: Jodi Lloyd, Chairperson, SCDSB
 John Dance, Director of Education, SCDSB
 Dawn Stephens, Associate Director of Education, SCDSB
 Chris Samis, Superintendent of Student Achievement and Special Education, SCDSB
 Hon. Doug Downey, MPP, Barrie–Springwater–Oro-Medonte
 Hon. Jill Dunlop, MPP, Simcoe North
 Hon. Caroline Mulroney, MPP, York-Simcoe
 Andrea Khanjin, MPP, Barrie–Innisfil
 Brian Saunderson, MPP, Simcoe-Grey
 Ontario Public School Boards Association (OPSBA)
 Chairs of all Ontario Special Education Advisory Committees

**Waterloo Region District School Board**

51 Ardelt Avenue
Kitchener, ON N2C 2R5
T: 519-570-0003
F: 519-742-1364
wrdsb.ca

June 27, 2023

Hon. Stephen Lecce,
Minister of Education
315 Front Street,
14th Floor Toronto,
ON M7A 0B8

Re: School Board Funding

Dear Minister Lecce,

Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) Trustees have approved the 2023-24 school year budget. In doing so, the Board was forced to make some very difficult decisions regarding staffing and resources for next school year, and we would ask that the Ministry examine its funding approach and address some of the critical gaps we have identified, which are putting pressure on our staff and students to achieve better outcomes.

Trustees acknowledge the critical importance of fiscal responsibility and assure you that staff have undertaken a thorough review of expenditures in order to present a budget that aligns with the shared goals of the Ministry and our board, and complies with Ministry budget regulations. That being said, the following areas represent significant financial pressures for the board, and we believe the Ministry has a shared responsibility in terms of addressing these as we move forward.

To begin, we wanted to draw your attention to some of the challenges created by the new student transportation funding model. While the new funding model represents a positive step forward in terms of allocating funding based on a common set of standards and benchmarks, the model as presented in 2023-24 is creating some additional pressures for the WRDSB and other school boards across the province. Our existing contracts with operators, which were competitively procured, have increases built-in that are tied directly to the consumer price index (5.8%); the new funding model does not address the specific escalation clauses transportation consortia have built into their agreements. The new funding model also does not recognize passenger vehicles (minivans and taxis specifically) as a funded mode of transportation. In our area, Student Transportation Services of Waterloo Region (STSWR) primarily uses these passenger vehicles to transport students with exceptional needs, because we recognize that depending on the student's exceptionalities, a small passenger vehicle may contribute to a better educational experience overall (shorter route times, quieter environment). Like many boards, the WRDSB continues to regularly overspend our transportation budget to meet the



needs of the students in our district, but with the introduction of the new funding model in 2023-24, our deficit in transportation has increased from approximately \$1.49M (2022-23) to \$2.92M (2023-24).

To help maintain the cleanliness, maintenance and day-to-day operation of our schools, we ask that the Ministry examine its benchmark funding for school operations within the Grants for Student Needs (GSN), which have not kept up with inflation. As you are aware, some contractual obligations, such as school bus operator contracts, are tied to the rate of inflation through the consumer price index (CPI). Others, such as construction tenders or contracts that come up for renewal on an annual basis (technology licenses, maintenance services and supplies), reflect the anticipation of sustained price increases (inflation). In our facility services area, several contracts are renewing this summer for consumable supplies such as paper towels and cleaning supplies, and the anticipated increase in costs for 2023-24 is approximately 15% (commodity and contract specific). Similarly, renewals for various software licenses are also impacted by price inflation, with year-over-year increases ranging from 5-7%. Our utility costs are also expected to rise significantly as global demand for various energy sources (natural gas) exceed current supply and the federal carbon tax increases. While we appreciate the 2% non-salary benchmark increase that has been provided for 2023-24, it is insufficient given the price escalations we are experiencing on a day-to-day basis.

The [Canada Pension Plan \(CPP\) enhancement](#), introduced in January 2019, is designed to help increase retirement income for working Canadians and their families. As you are aware, school boards and employees contribute equally to the CPP, and these costs are funded through the salary and benefits benchmarks provided by the Ministry of Education. As the CPP enhancement has been phased-in over the past number of years, there is no evidence that Ministry funding benchmarks have increased to reflect the higher employer contributions that are required. For the 2023-24 school year, we are estimating the incremental cost to the WRDSB is approximately \$1.26M. As CPP remittances are a statutory requirement, we are asking the Ministry to examine its benefits benchmarks to ensure that they provide sufficient funding to cover the obligations boards have under this program.

Lastly, we want to draw your attention to the ongoing operational and financial impacts of employee short-term sick leave plans. Prior to the onset of the pandemic in March 2020, there had been a consistent upward trend in short-term supply staff costs across the province. The onset of the pandemic disrupted this trend and staff at the WRDSB noted a significant decline in utilization of short-term sick leave across all employee groups in the latter part of the 2019-20 school year and the entire 2020-21 school year. This disruption continued in the early part of 2021-22, but since then, we have witnessed a return to pre-pandemic utilization and the financial and operational pressures associated with short-term sick leave. Through the GSN, the WRDSB is projected to receive \$11.11M in funding to cover short-term supply costs (teachers



and DECEs); for 2023-24, our forecasted expenditures in this area are \$21.99M, creating a pressure of approximately \$10.88M for these two employee groups alone. While we appreciate that you have acknowledged the pressures associated with short-term sick leave, school boards have limited options to address this challenge since sick-time provisions are centrally negotiated. We are asking the Ministry to review the benchmarks included in the Pupil Foundation Grant to ensure they adequately support the sick-time provisions that have been centrally negotiated.

Minister Lecce, we respectfully request the Ministry of Education consider these requests to support the WRDSB and other Ontario public school boards with similar budget pressures.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joanne Weston".

Joanne Weston
Chairperson of the Board of Trustees
Waterloo Region District School Board

cc: WRDSB Trustees
Ontario Public School Boards' Association Member Board Chairs
Local Members of Provincial Parliament
Deputy Minister of Education
Regional Manager - West, Ministry of Education
Assistant Deputy Minister, Capital and Business Support Division, Ministry of Education
Region of Waterloo Regional Chair
Local Mayors

June 30, 2023

The Honourable Stephen Lecce
Ministry of Education
438 University Ave., 5th Floor
Toronto, ON M5G 2K8

Dear Minister Lecce:

The Trustees representing the Avon Maitland District School Board (AMDSB) have recently approved the 2023/2024 Budget, with an in-year deficit of \$1.9 M. After a detailed review of the cost pressures we are facing at AMDSB, Trustees felt it important to share our concerns with you. While our total funding for the upcoming school year has increased, the rate of increased funding *inadequately* covers the increases we are seeing due to the rising costs of inflation and supports needed for our system. More specifically, our funding challenges include:

1. **Special Education funding shortfall:** The increase in Special Education funding for 2023/24 is not adequate to cover the Collective Agreement (Labour Provision) related cost increases as well as the cost increases due to Statutory Benefits. The funding gap in Special Education has grown from \$1.2M in 2022/2023 to over \$1.8M in 2023/2024.
2. **Transportation Funding Reform challenges:** Like many boards in the province, the impact of this has resulted in a loss for AMDSB. The increased funding is misleading, given it now includes the driver retention bonuses to be passed on to Bus Companies, formerly managed directly by the Ministry. The funding reform does not appear to include funding for vans and there appears to be a nil increase to cover inflationary cost pressures of bus contracts. While we applaud the transparency in setting a provincial walk-distance via the funding formula reform, the reality is that funding provided does not allow us to implement these changes fully, thereby setting us up for community expectations which we can not fulfill. Without changes to the funding formula, AMDSB will continue to operate a structural deficit as it relates to student transportation.
3. **Significant cost of Canada Pension Plan (CPP) benefit costs, without funding increases:** The estimated cost of the new CPP benefit cost structure is approximately \$1.9M. Without an increase in future benefits benchmark funding, this cost pressure will continue to contribute significantly to our annual operating deficit.
4. **Lack of inflationary increases throughout the Grants for Student Needs (GSNs):** While the 2023/2024 GSNs did include some nominal increases in facilities related non-salary benchmarks, the lack of funding to address inflation-related costs is a significant worry. Examples of these non-funding cost pressures include increases in school supplies and resources, software services, bus contract costs (noted above) and costs associated with facilities operations.
5. **Loss of Indigenous funding and subsequent impact on programming:** At AMDSB, 100% of the prior years' Indigenous funds were used to support school level Indigenous programming. This loss of funding (\$320 K in 2023/2024 and projected to be \$620 K in 2024/2025) has required a reduction in program offerings impacting students directly.

6. Nil Equity funding provided: The lack of funding to support equity-related work has been a significant worry for AMDSB for a number of years. At AMDSB, battling oppression and racism is a key priority for us, which is difficult work in itself, especially with no funding to support the work or staff to lead in this important area stated as a priority by our Ministry.
7. Mental Health Support funding: We would like to acknowledge the increased funding AMDSB has received in the last 3-4 years but please know the need for Mental Health Supports in our communities is significantly greater than what we are able to provide, and this need is growing every day.
8. Lack of adequate funding to support Cyber Risk prevention: As you are aware, cyber incidents abound in the education system. Much of the Information Technology related funding is directed into mitigating this risk, which means a refocusing of funds away from purchases of student technology. This is not sustainable for the long-term.

These funding challenges have resulted in the filing of a deficit budget for the 2023/2024 year. While our budget is compliant, our concern about future years, if funding is not corrected, is even greater.

We understand that there are financial pressures across all sectors but we would be remiss if we did not advocate on behalf of our students. While we have made adjustments to our expenses for 2023/2024 to ensure a compliant budget is submitted, we have significant concerns for future years, and our ability to continue to file a budget that is compliant, while also meeting the needs of our school community. We ask that you consider ensuring that we are financially able to meet our ongoing requirements while we strive to offer the education and supports our school community expects.

Sincerely,



Nancy Rothwell
Chair of the
Avon Maitland District School Board

cc: Lisa Thompson MPP
Matthew Rae MPP
Cathy Abraham, President, Ontario Public School Boards' Association
OPSBA Member Board Chairs



Ralf Mesenbrink

Chair of the Board

Board Office: 500 Victoria Road N. Guelph, ON N1E 6K2

Email: ralf.mesenbrink@ugdsb.on.ca

Tel: 519-822-4420 ext. 575 or **Toll Free:** 1-800-321-4025

September 8, 2023

Honourable Stephen Lecce
 Minister of Education
 5th Floor, 438 University Ave.
 Toronto, ON M5G 2K8

Sent via email: minister.edu@ontario.ca

Dear Minister Lecce:

On behalf of the Upper Grand District Board of Trustees I am requesting an amendment to the Education Act that would allow Student Trustees to independently move and second motions during board meetings.

Under Section 55(4) of the Education Act, Student Trustees are not entitled to move a motion but may suggest a motion which would need to be moved and seconded by members of the Board of Trustees.

Student representation and participation are essential to the good governance of a school board. We believe student voice at the board table must be expressed freely and fairly. Student voice strengthens student engagement and is an essential part of board discussion and decision making. Furthermore, this request to amend the Education Act is encouraged by the Ontario Student Trustees' Association whose priorities include Student Trustee governance.

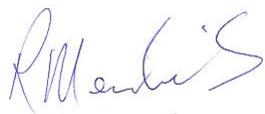
Section 55(6) of the Education Act states that Student Trustees shall have the same opportunities for participation at meetings of the board and its committees as does a member. The requested amendment to the Education Act supports Section 55(6) by providing Student Trustees with an authentic means to participate fully in board meetings, expressing student voice and advocating for the students they were elected to represent.

I trust that you will seriously consider our request.

Upper Grand District School Board

• Ralf Mesenbrink; Chair	• Jen Edwards	• Irene Hanenberg	• Martha MacNeil	• Kenn Manzerolle
• Katherine Hauser; Vice Chair	• Robin Ross	• Luke Weiler	• Laurie Whyte	• Lynn Topping

Sincerely,



Ralf Mesenbrink,
Chair of the Board

cc: Honourable Sylvia Jones, MPP, Dufferin-Caledon
Honourable Matthew Rae, MPP, Perth-Wellington
Honourable Ted Arnott, MPP, Wellington-Halton Hills
Honourable Mike Schreiner, MPP, Guelph
Honourable Chandra Pasma, MPP, Education Critic
Ontario School Board Chairs

Upper Grand District School Board

• Ralf Mesenbrink; Chair	• Jen Edwards	• Irene Hanenberg	• Martha MacNeil	• Kenn Manzerolle
• Katherine Hauser; Vice Chair	• Robin Ross	• Luke Weiler	• Laurie Whyte	• Lynn Topping



September 8, 2023

Hon. Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education
5th Flr, 438 University Ave.
Toronto, ON M5G 2K8

Via email: minister.edu@ontario.ca

RE: GNS Insufficiencies

Dear Minister Lecce,

At the June 20, 2023, meeting of the Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB), Trustees passed a motion directing the Chair to write to the Minister of Education to express the Board's concern that provincial allocations through the Grant for Student Needs (GSN) are insufficient to meet operational needs.

This decision came following Trustee review and approval of TVDSB's Preliminary 2023-2024 Budget.

Specific areas of concern include replacement staff for absences, temporary student accommodations, Educational Assistant wages, Special Education funding, statutory benefits, IT infrastructure and devices, and transportation.

Replacement Staff for Absences

Absences continue to be high in all staffing groups and have not returned to pre-pandemic levels. Replacement costs for absences therefore continue to be a challenge, given the centrally bargained language in Collective Agreements as it relates to the sick leave/short term disability language. The lack of funding in this area is a significant and sustained budget pressure.

Temporary Student Accommodations

With notable increases in enrolment over the past few years, TVDSB is incurring substantial expenses for temporary accommodations (portables). Temporary accommodations costs for the board over the past four years, including the current year's projections, total \$20.1 million, whereas Ministry funding for this expense totals only \$6.4 million. The 2023-2024 temporary accommodation funding provided is only \$1.4 million.

Educational Assistant Wages

Salary amounts for Educational Assistants are significantly lower at TVDSB than surrounding areas. With the recently centrally negotiated and ratified CUPE Collective Agreements, the opportunity to conduct local market value job evaluations and wage adjustments has been eliminated for this group of staff. In addition, the Ministry has not provided any additional funding to address this issue.

Special Education Funding

Special Education expenses are budgeted to exceed the special education funding by \$3.4 million in 2023-2024 (consistent with the prior year). Recognizing that the need here is significant, Trustees passed a motion at the Board meeting on June 27, 2023 to write a separate letter requesting that the government address chronic shortfalls in provincial funding for Special Education. This letter will be forwarded separately.

Statutory Benefits

On June 6, 2023, TVDSB wrote a letter urging the Ministry to address the substantial impact on our budget of longstanding increases in Employment Insurance (EI) and Canada Pension Plan (CPP) benefit expenses. Since 2019, TVDSB has estimated approximately \$12.2 million in additional EI and CPP statutory benefit expenses in excess of funding because of increases in maximum earnings amounts and rate changes. Additional increases are projected in the coming years.

IT Infrastructure and Devices

Additional funding for computing devices was received during the pandemic. This funding supplemented some of the board's immediate short-term needs during remote learning to support students and staff. There is a continued need to sustain additional funding for student and staff computing devices in response to ongoing replacement and curriculum needs.

Cyber threats and security and privacy requirements to protect and support in-person and remote learning have resulted in increased costs in software and hardware needed to maintain these complex networking systems and infrastructure. There is an immediate need for sustained additional funding for this critical technology infrastructure.

Transportation

The Ministry of Education's new Transportation Funding formula announced for the 2023-2024 school year is deficient as it does not provide funding for minivans. Nineteen percent of the TVDSB's Transportation Consortium routes are contracted with bus operators for minivans, the majority of which are for special education students. This has resulted in a decrease in funding of \$13.5 million that is being provided

temporarily as transition funding. We ask that the Ministry address this issue in the 2024-2025 GSNs in order to support the needs of TVDSB's most vulnerable students. As one of the fastest growing school boards in Ontario, TVDSB faces unique and unprecedented pressures. If the GSN is not adjusted, our school board will continue to be met with serious challenges serving the needs of Thames Valley schools, staff, and communities. Moreover, permanent staffing and program reductions will be necessary. As I have done through past letters and Ministry calls, I will continue to advocate on behalf of my fellow Trustees and the entire school board for immediate action to address these critical and time sensitive issues.

I would like to extend an invitation for you to visit Thames Valley so that we can further collaborate on addressing this unprecedented growth.

The Executive Assistant to the Chair's Office, Danielle Hancock, would be happy to arrange a meeting, and can be reached at d.hancock@tvdsb.ca or (519) 452-2000 Ext. 20219.

Sincerely,



Lori-Ann Pizzolato
Chair of the Board
Thames Valley District School Board

cc: Trustees



September 8, 2023

Hon. Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education
5th Flr, 438 University Ave.
Toronto, ON M5G 2K8

Via email: minister.edu@ontario.ca

RE: Special Education Shortfalls

Dear Minister Lecce,

On June 27, 2023, Thames Valley District School Board Trustees unanimously supported the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) recommendation that we write you letter about chronic shortfalls in provincial funding for special education.

SEAC's recommendation came as a response to their review of the TVDSB's 2023-24 Special Education Budget and Special Education Plan.

Thames Valley's Special Education Plan, which was developed in collaboration with SEAC, is a comprehensive document that is well-positioned to meet the complex needs of Thames Valley students. The Board of Trustees strongly agrees with SEAC's concern that the availability of financial resources may impact the board's ability to fully implement the Plan. We also stand with the committee in their request for Special Education program expansion, staffing improvements and reduced wait times for services.

Meeting Special Education needs has become more challenging as Thames Valley experiences rapid growth due to residential development and new families moving to the district.

An example of one of the many areas where we have seen an increase is programming for students formally identified through the IPRC (Identification, Placement, and Review Committee) process with a developmental disability. Thames Valley has approximately 11% of its exceptional students identified with a developmental disability, compared to the provincial average of 5.1%. Our data shows that we have an unprecedented

number of 1200 students choosing to stay in school until the age of 21. As a direct result, Thames Valley has needed to increase the number of Developmental Disability classes from 79 during the 2019-20 academic year to 89 for the 2023-24 school year. This adjustment has resulted in an additional cost of \$2.5 million.

Overall, TVDSB's Special Education expenses are budgeted to exceed the Grant for Student Needs by \$3.4 million in 2023-24 (consistent with the prior year). Additional resources are required if we are to successfully meet the needs of special education students and reduce barriers to accessing assessments and resources.

On behalf Thames Valley District School Board Trustees, thank you for your time and consideration of this matter. The Board looks forward to continuing this important conversation and working with the Ministry to provide critical supports to all Thames Valley students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "L. Pizzolato".

Lori-Ann Pizzolato
Chair of the Board
Thames Valley District School Board

cc: Trustees

June 12, 2023

Via email: minister.edu@ontario.ca

The Honorable Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education
315 Front Street, 14th Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 0B8

Dear Minister Lecce,

The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) of the Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB) is writing to bring to your attention our ongoing concerns regarding funding for public school boards across the province. These funding concerns impact students with special education needs and thereby impact all students of the board.

We recognize the Ministry of Education's efforts to improve the delivery of funding to students with complex special education needs in public schools across Ontario through the change in model from Intensive Support Amount (ISA) funding to SIP (Special Incidence Portion) funding in 2005. The Minister, as well as Ministers before him, have heard from TVDSB's SEAC, other public school boards' SEACs, and special education advocates regarding concerns about Special Incidence Portion (SIP) over the years, and we regret to inform you that our concern that SIP funding remains inadequate to fund the actual cost of supporting some of our most vulnerable students has not been addressed.

The SIP funding benchmark for an eligible full-time student has increased only marginally over the years, while the costs of hiring and retaining qualified staff have risen significantly. For example, SIP funding for the 2022-2023 school year provides up to a **maximum** of \$28,803 per full time (1.0 Average Daily Enrolment) eligible student per year. The cost of one educational assistant in TVDSB is \$54,400. Where two educational assistants are required for the many students with complex needs, **SIP funding therefore provides only 26% of the funding** required to provide the additional support necessary for the health and safety of the eligible student and their fellow learners. Appropriate funding allows these students to be present and access the Ontario curriculum in meaningful ways in our schools.

Streamlining and simplifying the SIP funding application process to make it more efficient and transparent for school boards and parents/guardians is a key step in remedying concerns with SIP funding and we thank the Minister for taking steps this year to begin to address this. We encourage the Minister to continue working to further streamline the process for school boards to apply for SIP funding. In addition to this, TVDSB SEAC urges the Minister to take immediate

action to ensure that SIP funding is sufficient, equitable, and responsive to the diverse and complex needs of special education students.

Specifically, we request that the Minister:

- Increases the SIP funding benchmark to reflect the current costs of hiring and retaining qualified staff for special education programs and services;
- Reviews and revises the SIP funding eligibility criteria to make them more inclusive and flexible, considering the individual needs and circumstances of each student

These changes are overdue and necessary for the Minister to fulfill his responsibilities as the Minister of Education for the province of Ontario. We appreciate your leadership and commitment to this matter and ask that you act swiftly to improve SIP funding for special education students in TVDSB and all public schools in Ontario.

We hope to receive your acknowledgement of this letter and a commitment to resolving this concern.

Kind regards,

Beth Mai
Chair, TVDSB Special Education Advisory Committee
TVDSB Trustee

Craig Read
Vice-Chair, TVDSB Special Education Advisory Committee
Community Member

CC: Sylvia Jones, Minister of Health
Michael Parsa, Minister of Children, Community, and Social Services
Ernie Hardeman, MPP Oxford County
Monte McNaughton, MPP Lambton-Kent-Middlesex
Rob Flack, MPP Elgin-Middlesex-London
Teresa Armstrong, MPP London Fanshawe
Peggy Sattler, MPP London West
Terence Kernaghan, MPP London North Centre
Ontario Public School Boards' Association
Special Education Advisory Committee Chairs

Response from the Ministry of Education

1 message

EDUCATION LABOUR AND FINANCE <EDULABFINANCE@ontario.ca>

Wed, Sep 20, 2023 at 9:52 AM

To: "joanne_weston@wrdsb.ca" <joanne_weston@wrdsb.ca>

Cc: "stephanie_reidel@wrdsb.ca" <stephanie_reidel@wrdsb.ca>

Please see the response below from the Ministry of Education, sent on behalf of Doreen Lamarche.

Joanne Weston

Chairperson of the Board of Trustees

Waterloo Region District School Board

joanne_weston@wrdsb.ca

Dear Joanne Weston,

Thank you for your letter to Minister Lecce regarding education funding and the Waterloo Region District School Board's (WRDSB) financial pressures. On behalf of the Ministry of Education, I am pleased to respond.

The Ministry of Education's investments for the 2023-24 school year will continue to help ensure every student has the opportunity for success. Our strategy continues to be informed by data including Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) assessment achievement data, credit accumulation, and graduation rates that help to inform our actions to ensure every student has the opportunity to succeed.

For the 2023-24 school year, total funding for the Grants for Student Needs (GSN) is projected to be \$27.1 billion, representing the highest level of investment in education in the province's history. GSN base funding is increasing by \$693.0 million or 2.7 per cent compared to 2022-23.

The 2023-24 GSN includes new investments for the administration of remote learning and to support safe and clean schools. We have also invested funding outside of the GSN in areas to support new priorities of reading interventions, math and de-streaming supports that will continue to help students catch up.

For this school year, the WRDSB is projected to receive \$786.6 million in total GSN funding. This includes an increase of \$21.1 million or 2.8 per cent in base funding compared to the 2022-23 school year.

The ministry recognizes the importance of student transportation services for students and families and is committed to helping school boards deliver safe, effective, and efficient transportation services.

Starting with the 2023-24 school year, we are implementing a new funding framework for the Student Transportation Grant that is transparent, equitable, and focused on reliability. This framework:

- establishes **needs-based Common Reference Standards** (home-to-school distance criteria) for funding to encourage consistency and improve equitable access to student transportation services across the province
- establishes **evidence-based funding benchmarks** that reflect cost of providing services – such as the annual cost of purchasing and operating school buses, changes in the market prices of fuel (These rates have been adjusted to reflect CPI increases from 2018 to 2023)
- provides support through Local Priorities and Operations for school boards to **address unique circumstances, needs and operations** of their transportation services; and
- **provides transition support so that no school board receives less funding** as a result of the new model, to allow school boards and their transportation consortia and service providers to align policies and costs with the funding framework.

The 2023-24 Student Transportation Grant is projected to be \$1,233.2 million - which includes over \$160 million in Local Priorities and Operations Amount and about \$90 million in Transition Amount.

This new funding framework has been informed by several engagements with the sector including Student Transportation Advisory Group launched in 2020, Technical Committee on Reference Standards established in 2021, and Consultation sessions conducted in Fall of 2022. Consultations included representatives from trustee associations, Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE), Council of Senior Business Officials (COSBO), Ontario Association of School Business Officials – Transportation Committee (OASBO), and School Bus Ontario.

The WRDSB is projected to receive \$20.1 million in Student Transportation Grant for the 2023-24 school year, including about \$1.5 million in Transition Amount and about \$3.0 million in Local Priorities and Operations Amount.

School boards can use their overall transportation grant, and specifically the Transition Amount and Local Priorities and Operations Amount to address operational decisions based on unique circumstances and needs, including costs for other vehicles such as mini-vans, passenger vehicles, and taxis.

While a new formula for Student Transportation is in place for the 2023-24 school year, we will continue to work with school boards, consortia, and school bus operators to refine the new funding framework on an annual basis to ensure the allocation is transparent, equitable, reflects unique needs, and focuses on improving reliability.

With respect to your concerns about school operations costs, when comparing funding investments against inflation in previous years, the longer the period of time used the better the analysis, as there were particular periods of time that were above or below the annual inflation rate. Total average GSN funding per pupil in 2023-24 is projected to be about 85 per cent higher than in 2002-03, while the consumer price index (CPI) is projected to only have increased by about 58 per cent over this period.

As you are aware, the ministry provides ongoing funding to school boards to address school renewal needs and to conduct the necessary long-term planning to keep schools in a state of good repair. Each year, school boards are allocated approximately \$1.4 billion to repair and renew

school buildings and sites. For the 2023-24 school year, WRDSB is expected to receive approximately \$10.5 million in renewal funding.

In terms of cost pressures related to increasing Canada Pension Plan contributions experienced by your board, the ministry has heard similar concerns from other school boards. This issue impacts the entire broader public sector and the Ontario public service and will need to be considered in that context. Thank you for quantifying the impact to your school board, which is helpful in contributing to our common understanding of the extent of the challenge.

The ministry is also aware there has been a steady increase in school board employee absenteeism over the last several years. Although the design of the sick leave and short-term disability leave plans is a central bargaining issue, school boards have the ability to manage sick leave within the framework of the existing collective agreement or terms of employment. I would suggest implementing an attendance support program (ASP) and disability management plan or reviewing the current programs and policies already in place.

Thank you for taking the time to share your concerns and recommendations about education funding. The ministry appreciates the difficult decisions that your board has faced and your continued commitment to your students' success and well-being.

Sincerely,

Doreen Lamarche

Executive Director

Education Finance Office

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