

This document addresses some of the common questions asked regarding the Budget Development process and Grants for Student Needs (GSN) funding.

### *1. What is a balanced budget?*

A balanced budget is one where all the revenues available to a school board for a particular year match all the planned expenditures for the same year. Under Section 231 of the *Education Act*, school boards are required to submit a compliant budget, which means estimated expenditures should not exceed estimated revenues unless any in-year deficit can be covered by accumulated surplus equivalent to 1% of operating revenues.

### *2. Is DPCDSB in a deficit position and how is it being addressed?*

DPCDSB reported a deficit position for the year ended August 31, 2021 and is projecting a deficit position for the year that will end August 31, 2022. As a result, DPCDSB is operating under a Financial Recovery Plan (FRP) approved by the Ministry of Education. The main contributing factor to the deficit position is the fully funded Long Term Disability plan benefit that exists at DPCDSB for all employee groups.

A portion of the DPCDSB proposed deficit position for this current year, 2021-2022, is operating related. To ensure this deficit component is not carried into 2022-2023 as structural, a plan was established to reduce expenditures and ensure DPCDSB maintained a balanced position, except for the LTD overage issue. The planned reductions were approved by the Board of Trustees under the FRP process. These reductions include 34 FTE secondary teacher positions, 4 FTE vice-principal positions, 1 FTE central staff position and a boardwide reduction to professional development allocations.

Secondary teacher positions have exceeded funding since the secondary programming funding was eliminated in 2019-2020. The DPCDSB is no longer in a position to be able to financially support the overstaffed position. As well, the pupil foundation grant funding was changed to reflect a higher class size average for e-learning course requirements of secondary students. This was factored into the reduction of secondary teacher positions. Vice-principal position reductions were also proposed in relation to enrolment declines across the system. The lived experience of remote work and learning and virtual meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic have also re-defined opportunities for offering professional development and cost savings overall.

### *3. Will local school fundraising be utilized to manage the deficit position?*

No. Funds raised by Catholic School Council and/or parents/guardians are intended to be spent to meet the needs of the local school. The fundraising is not centralized to support DPCDSB needs. Fundraising activities are intended to enhance the school experience for students and build community.

#### *4. What is Education Workers Protection Fund (EWPF) and why is it being discontinued in 2022-2023?*

The EWPF was negotiated in the last round of central negotiations with the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE). The EWPF was intended to recover positions across the province that had been reduced. At the time, the EWPF funds were set to expire with the expiration of the collective agreement (August 31, 2022). The DPCDSB utilized all funding provided and added FTE across both CUPE bargaining units in a relatively equitable manner. The Ministry of Education released the GSNs for the 2022-2023 year in February 2022 and it specifically did not include funding for the EWPF positions.

#### *5. How does enrolment impact GSN funding?*

Enrolment changes have a direct impact on GSN funding. Over 70% of the grant calculations include reference to enrolment. Therefore, when enrolment declines, the GSN funding declines as well. In some grant categories, the expenditure offset for the reduction is evident. For example, for class size purposes, the total number of teaching staff positions is reduced because the students are not there. However, in other categories of expense, such as staffing, it is not as easy to make the reductions to offset the revenue cut.

#### *6. Will DPCDSB receive specific COVID-19 funding from the Ministry for the 2022-2023 year?*

The GSN includes targeted investments to support student learning needs. The temporary COVID-19 funding that was provided in this current 2021-2022 year for additional staffing will be continued for another year: referred to as COVID-19 Learning Recovery Fund. The funding is time-limited and intended to support temporary additional staffing to address learning recovery, the implementation of the first year of de-streamed grade 9 curriculum, the delivery of remote learning, supports for special education and maintaining enhanced cleaning standards. This funding can be used to support staff previously funded under the EWPF.

#### *7. If a school is closed and sold, can the funds be used to support the deficit position?*

The Ministry of Education has placed a moratorium on school closures. However, if an existing facility is not being used and can be sold, there is a process to follow under Ontario Regulation 444/98: Disposition of Surplus Real Property and Acquisition of Real Property. Funds from a sale of property are restricted to school building maintenance and capital renovations only.

#### *8. What revenues are enveloped and what does that restriction mean?*

The Ministry of Education has many restrictions and regulations in place for use of GSN grants. An enveloped source of funding means that it can only be spent in a specific area. Any unspent funds must be carried forward to the next year and spent only on that area. Example restrictions include special education grants, class size regulations and a requirement not to overspend School Board Administration and Governance Grant.