



**DURHAM CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**
Learning and Living in Faith

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Durham Catholic District School Board
February 12, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Committee Members Present

K. Beatty, R. Damianopoulos, M. Forster

Trustees Present

M. Ste. Marie (remote)

Director of Education Present

T. Barill

Senior Administration Present

S. Grieve, M. Hammond

1. Opening

1.1. Memorials and Prayer

M. Hammond offered the opening prayer.

1.2. Land Acknowledgement

M. Hammond acknowledged the traditional lands.

1.3. Roll Call and Apologies

All committee members were present.

1.4. Call to Order

M. Hammond called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

1.5. Approval of Agenda

Motion FC20240212-01

“THAT the Finance Committee approve the Agenda of the February 12, 2024 Finance Committee meeting.”

Moved by R. Damianopoulos, Seconded by M. Forster.

CARRIED

- 1.6. Declarations of Interest
None

2. Items for Decision

2.1. Election of Chair

M. Hammond opened the floor for nominations for the position of Chair of the Finance Committee.

M. Forster nominated R. Damianopoulos as Chair of the Finance Committee. K. Beatty seconded the nomination.

R. Damianopoulos accepted the nomination.

Motion FC20240212-02

"THAT the Finance Committee of the Durham Catholic District School Board appoint R. Damianopoulos as Chair of the Finance Committee"

Moved by M. Forster, Seconded by K. Beatty.

CARRIED

2.1.1. Election of Vice Chair

R. Damianopoulos opened the floor for nominations for the position of Vice Chair of the Finance Committee.

M. Forster nominated K. Beatty as Vice Chair of the Finance Committee. R. Damianopoulos seconded the nomination.

K. Beatty accepted the nomination.

Motion FC20240212-03

"THAT the Finance Committee of the Durham Catholic District School Board appoint K. Beatty as Vice Chair of the Finance Committee"

Moved by M. Forster, Seconded by R. Damianopoulos.

CARRIED

- 2.2. Business Arising from June 12, 2023 Meeting
None

2.3. Approval and Signing of June 12, 2023 Minutes

Motion FC20240212-04

“THAT the Finance Committee approve the minutes of the June 12, 2023 Finance Committee Meeting.”

Moved by K. Beatty, Seconded by M. Forster.

CARRIED

3. Items for Discussion

3.1. Staff Reports

3.1.1. Committee Mandate and Terms of Reference

The mandate and terms of reference were reviewed.

3.1.2. Budget Process Report 2024-2025

3.2. Presentation

3.2.1. 2024-2025 Budget Process

The budget process for 2024/2025 was reviewed highlighting the objective of developing a balanced budget to submit to the Ministry of Education following Trustee review and approval by the end of June 2024.

M. Hammond summarized the board’s current financial status and reviewed some of the key statistics from the 2023/2024 Revised Estimates submission. Meetings with each member of Senior Administration have been scheduled to review what is currently included in the individual budget areas and to identify pressures and/or opportunities for savings.

Trustee Beatty asked how efficiencies could be indentified by going line by line through the budget if we are doing this on an annual basis. Ms. Hammond acknowledged that there is little savings to be had; however, it does provide an opportunity to reallocate funds to priority areas if possible.

Maintaining a balanced budget has become very difficult under the current funding formulas and M. Hammond explained that Boards across the province are experiencing year over year deficits as the Ministry of Education continues to underfund key areas. The Grants for Student Needs (GSN) does not adequately address centrally bargained employee sick leave plans, inflation and benefit cost increases, special education needs and transportation costs.

M. Hammond pointed out that there is a \$3.7M shortfall in sick leave replacement costs for the board and reviewed the erosion of the GSN benchmarks created by the Ministry failing to keep up with inflation and benefit

costs, specifically not funding Canada Pension Plan (CPP) increases over the past several years.

Another particular concern for the Durham Catholic District School Board (DCDSB) is the Ministry's review of the Special Incidence Portion (SIP) funding. Currently, DCDSB's annual allocation of the \$159.1M provincial SIP allocation is disproportionate to the size of the board. This review may result in a loss of revenue to the board in the area of special education.

Chair Forster asked for further explanation of the potential loss of SIP funds. T. Barill explained that the process for SIP funding has historically been claims based and that our Student Services staff has worked extremely hard at gathering the information and completing these forms to maximize funding. Other boards had found the process too cumbersome and had not applied for the funding. This has provided DCDSB with a larger share of the provincial allotment. Moving forward it has not been made clear how the funds will be distributed, but it may result in a reduction to DCDSB if there is a redistribution of funds.

Trustee Ste. Marie inquired about Academic Services and what envelopes it covered. M. Hammond explained that it included all Academic departments such as Student Success, Math, Literacy, Faith and Student Services but did not include staffing.

M. Ste. Marie also asked about the success rate of the board's attendance management program. Director Barill explained that the program has not historically made a significant difference. The program had not been largely accepted by employee groups, was non-existent during COVID but is now being re-introduced and practices re-established. It involves creating a supportive environment with interventions and goal setting for those with high absences. With the board being under funded by over \$3M, sick leave programs need to be reexamined by the province.

M. Hammond reviewed the budget consultation process through Thoughtexchange. It was noted that school based exchanges had resulted in a much larger participation rate in the previous year and the board planned to do both a school based exchange as well as a staff and community based exchange.

M. Forster emphasized the importance of reaching out to the parishes within our communities. M. Hammond noted that the board's communications department does an excellent job of reaching out to all the board's stakeholders during the consultation process.

R. Damianopoulos thanked Ms. Hammond for her presentation and for senior administration's endeavours to balance the budget.

4. Other Business

4.1. Board Communications

None

4.2. Motion to Adjourn

Motion FC20240212-05

“THAT the Finance Committee Meeting of February 12, 2024 adjourn”

Moved by: M. Forster, Seconded by K. Beatty.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

4.3. Closing Prayer

M. Forster offered the closing prayer.

Recording Secretary: L. Lane

Approved by:

R. Damianopoulos
Chair, Finance Committee

Marie Hammond
Resource, Finance Committee