



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

Memorandum

To: Board of Trustees
From: April 22, 2024
Subject: **Minutes of the April 15, 2024 Finance Committee Meeting**
Origin: Marie Hammond, Chief Financial Officer

Please find attached a copy of the Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on April 15, 2024.

TB/MH/II

Attachment: Minutes of the April 15, 2024 Finance Committee Meeting



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

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Durham Catholic District School Board
April 15, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Committee Members Present:

R. Damianopoulos (Chair), K. Beatty (Vice Chair), M. Forster, M. Hall (remote)

Trustees Present

M. Ste. Marie (remote), R. De Souza (remote)

Director of Education Present

T. Barill

Senior Administration Present

S. Grieve, M. Hammond

1. Opening

1.1. Call to Order

Trustee Damianopoulos called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

1.2. Memorials and Prayer

Trustee Damianopoulos offered the opening prayer.

1.3. Land Acknowledgement

Trustee Damianopoulos acknowledged the traditional lands.

1.4. Roll Call and Apologies

All members of the Finance Committee were present.

1.5. Approval of Agenda

Motion FC20240415-01

"THAT the Finance Committee approve the Agenda for the April 15, 2024 Finance Committee meeting."

Moved by M. Forster, Seconded by K. Beatty

CARRIED

1.6. Declarations of Interest

None

2. Items for Information

2.1. Delegations

2.1.1. Association of Professional Student Services (APSSP)

Gail Wilson-Beier spoke on behalf of the APSSP union which consists of 56 members who provide specialized services to students and families. Her presentation focused on helping the committee understand the complexity of needs in the classroom and its connection to the budget.

Ms. Wilson-Beier answered questions from the Committee Members and Chair Damianopoulos thanked Ms. Wilson-Beier for the presentation.

3. Items for Decision

3.1. Approval and Signing of Minutes of Previous Meeting (February 12, 2024)

Motion FC20240415-02

"THAT the Finance Committee approve the Minutes of the February 12, 2024 Finance Committee Meeting"

Moved by M. Forster, Seconded by K. Beatty

CARRIED

3.2. Business Arising from February 12, 2024 Meeting

None

4. Items for Discussion

4.1. Staff Reports

4.1.1.2023/2024 Second Quarter Budget Status Report

M. Hammond presented the 2023/2024 Second Quarter Budget Status Report and Mid-Year Forecast to the Finance Committee. Ms. Hammond reviewed the variances from the actual to anticipated results as at February 29, 2024. As at the mid-year point in the year, there are positive variances in revenue, support wages and benefits due to vacant positions and student transportation. These savings and additional revenue will be utilized to cover cost pressures identified within the wages and benefits category. The Board is anticipating a shortfall between the funding received and actual payments to employees related to the

Memoranda of Settlement (MOS) between the Crown and various sector unions relating to the repeal of Bill 124 (Protecting a Sustainable Public Sector for Future Generations Act, 2019). The amount of the shortfall is unknown at this time. In addition, through discussions and correspondence with School Boards' Co-operative Inc. (SBCI), the Board has been experiencing a higher number of WSIB claim submissions and approvals than originally forecasted. It is anticipated that there will be an increase in WSIB costs relative to the budget incurred by the year-end. Staff are currently investigating the impact of these claims. In the event current year savings or additional revenue cannot offset these cost pressures, the Board will need to utilize the operating reserve fund.

Trustee Beatty inquired about the special funding received in 23/24 to assist in retaining bus drivers and asked if the lack of drivers could create potential clawbacks in funding. M. Hammond confirmed that boards were given funding for recruitment and retention bonuses for school bus drivers but there has been no communication received from the Ministry regarding repayments of unspent funds.

Trustee Ste. Marie asked about the unknown amounts relating to WSIB and Bill 124. Ms. Hammond noted that she has met with School Boards' Cooperative Inc. (SBCI) and they have indicated improvement in the Board's claims since their mid-year assessment; however, the liability may still be significant and upwards of \$1M for the current year. M. Hammond also noted that she has not had an opportunity to review the reports and communications with Board staff. The funding shortfall related to Bill 124 is expected to be significant but to what extent is unknown at this time.

Director Barill also noted that the Ministry is not providing funding to support administration costs of calculating and paying out the retroactive payments to all staff, which includes retired and terminated staff. This is a lot of additional work above their regular daily tasks.

Trustee Forster asked if there was any way to request extra funds for this project and Ms. Hammond indicated that the ministry has been asked many times from all boards across the province and any request for extra funding had been denied.

Director Barill added that while Directors and Business officials across the province have been expressing their concerns over the funding shortfall and lack of support for administrative assistance, communication from Trustees would be beneficial as well.

4.2. Presentation

4.2.1. Budget Process and Consultation Update

Ms. Hammond reviewed where we are in the budget process and noted that the Grants for Student Needs (GSN) announcement has been delayed. A request to move the next Finance Committee from May 13, 2024 to May 28, 2024 will be taken to the next regular board meeting on April 22, 2024 to allow staff time to prepare the first draft of the 2024/2025 budget.

M. Hammond walked the committee through the results of the budget consultation done through Thoughtexchange noting an increase in participation year over year with 830 respondents to the current exchange. Ms. Hammond highlighted the survey results, key thoughts, and themes as well as noting the system-generated overall summary and key differences and common ground among participants.

Trustee Forster noted that the word cloud for 2024/2025 did not include bullying which had been highlighted last year and wondered if this meant it was less of an issue now. Director Barill confirmed this as being consistent with the results of the school climate survey.

Questions arose regarding incident reporting and student safety. Discussion ensued regarding the board's Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC). S. Grieve stated that staff are encouraged to report any incidents involving safety and JHSC reviews and comments on possible recommendations.

Trustee Ste. Marie commented that board staff had found insightful ways of using Thoughtexchange to analyze the data collected. In addition, Trustee Ste. Marie indicated that it would be helpful to have comparative information from the previous year included in the mid-year report in the future if possible.

Trustee Damianopoulos thanked Ms. Hammond and her team for her presentation and reports.

5. Other Business

5.1. Board Communications

5.2. Motion to Adjourn

Motion FC20240415-03

"THAT the April 15, 2024 Finance Committee Meeting adjourn."

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

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

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5.3. Closing Prayer

Trustee Beatty offered the closing prayer.

Recording Secretary: L. Lane

Approved by:

R. Damianopoulos
Chair, Finance Committee

M. Hammond
Resource, Finance Committee