

News Release

TO ALL ASSIGNMENT EDITORS/EDUCATION EDITORS
For Immediate Release



Toronto, ON, May 18, 2022

TDSB Chair Calls on Parties to Better Support Toronto Schools

With just over two weeks until the provincial election, the Chair of the Toronto District School Board, Alexander Brown, is calling on all provincial parties to commit to supporting Toronto schools with adequate and stable funding that fully supports all pandemic costs and the implementation of the TDSB's [Pandemic Recovery Plan](#).

The TDSB is currently projecting a deficit of \$52.2M for the 2022-23 school year, primarily due to pandemic costs and declining enrolment. Should additional funding not be provided to address the impacts of the pandemic, savings will need to be found and cuts will need to be made. Trustees and staff do not want to make these reductions, especially now when the students of Toronto need stability and support after more than two years of disruption.

To ensure that students and families are fully supported next year, without being impacted by possible cuts to programs and services, the Chair of the TDSB is asking the provincial parties and their candidates to commit to the following funding changes ahead of the 2022-23 school year:

- Reimbursement of all pandemic-related expenses incurred by school boards over the past two years.
- A commitment to fully fund the TDSB's Pandemic Recovery Plan.
- The reinstatement of enrolment stabilisation funding.
- Additional funding to cover cost increases related to employee benefits (LTD, CPP, EI costs), utilities and other inflationary costs increases that are not currently funded by the Ministry.

"The families of Toronto need to know that the party they vote for in the upcoming election will recognize the financial challenges that the TDSB has faced to keep students and staff safe during the pandemic. We need a commitment that adequate and stable funding will be provided so that students can continue to have access to the learning, well-being and mental health supports they need next year and in the years ahead."

- Alexander Brown, Chair, TDSB

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Backgrounder

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2022-2023 Operating Budget

- The TDSB's operating budget is approximately \$3.5B.
- Section 231 of the Education Act requires school boards to pass a balanced operating budget each year.
- Throughout the pandemic, the TDSB has made use of all available resources to keep students and staff safe. One of the key areas of focus, particularly during the 2020-2021 school year, was on maintaining physical distance in classrooms through additional teachers and remote learning supports. The TDSB incurred close to \$41M in additional pandemic related board funded expenses in 2020-21 to keep students and staff safe.
- The TDSB has developed a thorough and actionable [Pandemic Recovery Plan](#) to address concerns that have been raised over the long-term impacts on student learning for all ages and grade levels, as well as the impacts on students' mental health and well-being.
- For many years, the TDSB budget has provided for additional financial support to meet the needs of Toronto students, above what the Ministry funds. These additional costs are typically financed by in-year budget savings, efficiencies and Board reserves. In some years, however, the savings have not been sufficient to cover all funding gaps. This has resulted in the TDSB's annual structural deficit which also contributes to the \$52.2M projected deficit for the 2022-23 school year.
- Over the past two years, TDSB Chair Alexander Brown has sent numerous letters to Minister of Education Stephen Lecce outlining these concerns and requesting sufficient Ministry funding to support the students of Toronto.