



OTTAWA-CARLETON
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

BUDGET

2015–2016



Budget Development Timeline

School districts operate on a fiscal year that runs from 1 September to 31 August. The District's budget for the upcoming fiscal year must be approved by the Board before the end of June of the current year. To meet this timeline, a staff-recommended budget will be presented to Committee of the Whole (Budget) on 12 May 2015 and several meetings are scheduled during May and June to obtain comments from the public, to provide the Board with an opportunity to establish the District's priorities and to refine the allocation of resources. It is expected that the 2015-2016 Budget will be approved at the 22 June 2015 Board meeting.

Key Dates

The key dates in the budget development process are:

10 Feb — Committee of the Whole (Budget)	Overview of budget process
March — Community consultation	Community input sought
03 Mar — Committee of the Whole	Academic staffing discussion
31 Mar — Board Meeting	Academic staffing approval
01 Apr — Memo to Committee of the Whole	Update on provincial grants (GSN) announcement
14 Apr — Committee of the Whole (Budget)	Presentation on GSN announcement
12 May — Committee of the Whole (Budget)	Presentation of staff recommended budget
25 May — Committee of the Whole (Budget)	Public delegations
01 Jun — Committee of the Whole (Budget)	Public delegations (if required) / Committee debate
08 Jun — Committee of the Whole (Budget)	Committee debate (if required)
15 Jun — Committee of the Whole (Budget)	Committee debate (if required)
22 Jun — Board Meeting	Approval of 2015–2016 Budget

The discussion and approval of academic staffing is particularly relevant in the budget development process. The majority of the District's costs relate to compensation (salaries and employee benefits) and approximately 59% of the budget will be committed through the academic staffing process.

Community Input

An important step in the process is to obtain community input to the development of the budget. As parents, students, partners, community members and employees, you bring a unique perspective and are invited to share your ideas as they relate to your school, your committee or department, or to the District as a whole. Please think about our strategic priorities and consider the following questions:

1. Can you identify three opportunities or changes that could generate savings?
2. Can you identify three opportunities for investment that would support student achievement and well-being at the OCDSB?
3. The District's four key priority areas as identified in the 2011-2015 strategic plan are well-being, engagement, leadership and learning. In your opinion, does one of these priority areas require more investment at this time?

Information on the key priority areas is available on the District's website at http://www.ocdsb.ca/ab-ocdsb/strategic%20plan%20docs/Directors_Workplan_2014-2015.pdf. Input can be provided individually or collectively as a school council, a committee or a community group/agency. Please send us your thoughts by e-mail to budgetinfo@ocdsb.ca. Your submission will be considered during the development of the staff recommended 2015-2016 Budget and may be included in Board reports. We would like to receive input by 31 March 2015 to allow sufficient time to incorporate your comments into the budget process.

Education Funding

In Ontario, funding of education is a provincial responsibility. Funding is based on a variety of factors including the number of students in a district, the number and condition of school facilities, the number of students whose first language is neither English nor French, and the special education needs of the student population. Funding leverages a formula intended to provide equitable resources to give students equal educational opportunities. Collectively, the various funding allocations are termed Grants for Student Needs (GSNs). For the 2014–2015 year, projected funding from GSNs for operating purposes is \$767.4 million representing 90% of the District's total revenue.

Revenue is also received in the form of provincial allocations used to pay for the construction or retrofitting of school facilities, fees received from international students and users of child care services, fees from facility rentals, interest on cash balances, grants from the federal government and donations.

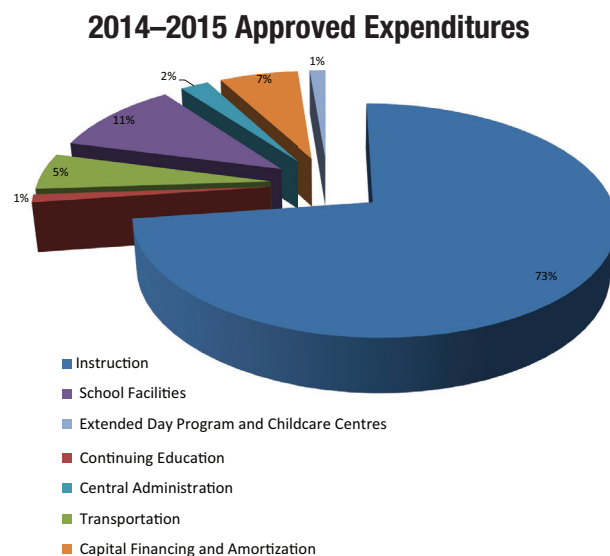
In addition, ad-hoc funding is provided by the province throughout the year to respond to new provincial priorities. These may be one-time funds for the current fiscal year or may be part of a multi-year initiative. A significant multi-year initiative that has now been completed was the implementation of Full-Day Kindergarten (FDK). FDK funding was incorporated into the GSNs commencing 2014–2015.

OCDSB Financial Information

The District posts its financial information on its website. The information includes the budget for the current year and the seven previous years as well as consolidated financial statements for eleven years up to the year ending 31 August 2014. The information can be accessed on the District's website at <http://www.ocdsb.ca/ab-ocdsb/ob/Pages/default.aspx>.

The following table summarizes the use of funds for the current year and presents comparative information from the prior year.

	2014–15		2013–14		
(In \$ Millions)	Original Budget	Revised Estimates	Original Budget	Revised Estimates	Actual Amounts
Revenue from all sources	842.7	848.4	813.6	825.3	821.9
Expenses by category					
Instruction	628.3	632.9	609.2	615.0	613.8
Continuing Education	9.7	9.7	9.8	9.8	10.8
Transportation	45.1	45.4	40.6	40.6	39.4
School Facilities	93.6	93.7	90.9	92.9	90.4
Administration	20.3	20.3	20.2	21.2	19.7
Capital Amortization	35.3	35.6	29.9	32.3	32.3
Other non-operating costs	27.6	27.6	27.3	27.3	27.3
	859.9	865.2	827.9	839.1	833.7
Surplus (Deficit)	(17.2)	(16.8)	(14.3)	(13.8)	(11.8)



Setting Spending Priorities

In June 2011, the Board adopted a strategic plan which established a clear set of priorities for the school district. The strategic plan, which is currently being updated, provides the framework for the allocation of budget resources. The priority for the 2015-2016 year is to maintain current programs and services in alignment with the strategic plan while adhering to legislative requirements and respecting fiscal constraints.

As we consider priorities we must assess what we need to do, the urgency of the need, its relative importance, whether the costs are one-time or ongoing, and the risks associated with each decision. Issues that must be considered for the coming year include:

Curriculum Services — Curriculum Services is evaluating options that would respond to the need for additional support to serve increasing numbers of students in the Co-operative Education and Student Success programs. The need to support schools in their well-being work is also being considered in the assignment of work among the instructional coaches.

Digital Learners — Our continued focus on digital learners and digital citizenship requires a continued investment in people as well as hardware and software. The Ministry shares this focus, but our progress will depend on the ability to devote sufficient time and money to maintain the momentum from this year's grant.

Special Education — The continued work on implementing the revised Special Education policy along with the additional pressures resulting from an overall focus on mental health will require the strategic allocation of resources. In addition, a number of options are being considered to continue to support the Identification Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) process and the geographic model developed for the delivery of special education supports and, in particular, the anticipated need for additional autism classes.

Data and Information Supports — The District continues to move to a more data-driven approach and it is clear that a combination of capacity building and some additional resources will be required. The demand for analysis of student achievement data and for surveys such as "Tell Them From Me" is being examined to ensure that staff can meet expectations in the areas of "Closing the Gap", improving school climate and supporting our student well-being initiatives.

Differentiated Allocation of Resources — Staff is looking at the impact of differentiated allocation of resources to better meet the diverse and evolving demands of our schools. Changes in the resource allocation method would result in adjustments to the resources allocated between schools. Recognizing that additional resources are not available, the challenge is to mitigate the possible negative impacts on those schools where resources are reduced.

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Setting Spending Priorities (Cont'd)

Infrastructure — Significant investment in certain areas is required to meet strategic priorities. For several years the District has identified the continued backlog in deferred maintenance. Like most public sector organizations, there has never been sufficient funding to meet these demands. This situation exists in our buildings, our schools' external environments (e.g. play structures), our specialty classrooms such as labs, and our information technology infrastructure. The continuation of the increased funding through the School Condition Improvement Grant will be used to offset some of the reliance on reserves that was required in the past year.

Business Supports — The implementation of Full-Day Kindergarten, significant changes to health and safety legislation, and the workload resulting from the implementation of the most recent collective agreements has placed large demands on staff in schools and support departments. The Ministry's messages about "efficiencies" and changes to the calculation of the Administration and Governance Grant make it clear that we need to develop new business practices that will allow us to respond to the expectations of stakeholders within an environment of limited staff resources.

Student Transportation — The transportation of the District's students is coordinated by the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority (OSTA). In September 2014, the District commenced busing of secondary students who reside inside the urban transit area. The cost of this initiative is estimated to be \$4.2 million in the first year and is being supported by the use of the District's reserves.

The Ministry of Education is expected to assess the efficiency of OSTA in 2015. A positive review of its operations will result in enhanced provincial funding of transportation costs. The enhanced funding is expected to substantially cover all transportation-related costs incurred by the District. In addition, OSTA has reviewed bell times (the school day start and end time) to identify efficiencies and this is expected to result in future savings.

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