

SUPERIOR-GREENSTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Report No: 21
Date: April 18, 2016

TO: Chair and Members of the
Superior-Greenstone District School Board

FROM: Cathy Tsubouchi, Superintendent of Business

SUBJECT: Grants for Student Needs – 2016/2017

**STRATEGIC
PRIORITY:** Responsible Stewardship of Resources
Student Achievement and Well-Being

Background

On March 24, 2016, the Ministry of Education released information regarding the Grants for Student Needs (GSN) for the 2016/2017 school year. The funding model includes:

Labour Framework Implementation

- With the completion of central labour agreements, grant salary benchmarks have been increased to reflect the 1.25% increase for 2016/17.
- Under the central labour agreements, benefits will migrate to Benefit Trusts during 2016/17 and any changes to the GSN for the funding of benefits will be made after data collection of 2014/15 benefit costs is completed.

Equity in Education

- The Ministry is providing funding for boards to have a dedicated First Nation, Metis and Inuit (FNMI) Lead. At least half of the funding must be spent on the dedicated position with the balance of the funding being used to support FNMI initiatives within the Board.
- Funding to support Board Action Plans for FNMI is being transferred to the GSN and will be allocated by a method that gives more weight to student self-identification data.
- The Ministry will begin phasing in the use of National Household Survey and Census updates to various grants.

On-going Implementation of Funding Reforms

- The Ministry continues in its second year of phase in to promoting a more efficient use of school space. Measures were put in place to encourage boards to manage underutilized school space, while maintaining support for schools that need it most. The School Board Efficiencies and Modernization changes continue to impact our School Facility Operations & Renewal, School Foundation, Geographic Circumstances and Declining Enrolment grants.
- The Ministry continues the phase in of changes to the High Needs Amount (now renamed Differentiated Special Education Amount). This is the final year of phase in and these changes will be fully implemented in 2017/18. This grant was revised in order to better reflect the variation among boards with respect to students with high special education needs and boards' abilities to meet those needs.

- Ongoing changes to board administration funding will better reflect the core business functions of school boards. These changes were being phased in over 4 years. We are in the third year.

Other Capital Investments

The Ministry continues to support the school condition improvement funding program to address renewal needs of boards. The Ministry requires that board use 80% of the funding through this program in order to deal with large projects such as foundations, roofs, windows and HVAC systems.

Enhancements to Keep Up with Costs

- The Student Transportation Grant will be increased by 2% in order to recognize higher operating costs.
- There will be a 2% increase to cost benchmarks for non-staff portions of the school operations allocation such as natural gas, electricity, insurance etc.
- There will be a further increase to the electricity benchmarks (3.5%).

Transferring Existing Ministry Programs into the GSN

Over the past number of years, we have received funding outside of the GSN to support a number of Ministry priorities. The following funding priorities are now being incorporated into the GSN:

- Library funding to support hiring/maintain staff at elementary schools.
- Funding for Managing Information for Student Achievement (MISA) which is used to build capacity to better manage information to inform board decision, school administration and classroom practice.
- Outdoor education funding which provides students with learning experiences in the outdoors.
- Funding for Technology Enabled Learning and Teaching Contacts to support the transformation of learning and teaching in the physical and virtual environment.

Funding for the Renewed Mathematics Strategy

Earlier this month, the Ministry announced funding for their Renewed Mathematics Strategy which is an Early Years to Grade 12 strategy that leverages the collective knowledge and skills of district school boards to focus on continuing to improve student achievement in mathematics. As the strategy will provide new forms of support to all schools and increased support to some schools, Superior-Greenstone DSB's previous mathematics focused work will be enhanced and will consequently become the focus of the majority of the improvement work in the district. With this focus, there are increased accountability measures, coordination and implementation, from the student level to the senior district level. As such, both the Ministry of Education and our district have recognized the need to have a dedicated and knowledgeable individual leading this work. In addition to the continued building of capacity in mathematics, the focus of this individual will include the building of leadership capacity in mathematics at both the formal and informal leadership levels.

As a result, administration is recommending the creation of a new 1.0 FTE position – System Principal of Numeracy K-12.

Current Situation

The Ministry's deadline for submission of the 2016/17 budget is June 30, 2016. Declining enrolment and excess capacity continue to create budget pressures.

Administrative Recommendations

That, the Superior-Greenstone DSB having received Report No. 21: Grants for Student Needs – 2016/2017 approves the addition of 1.0 FTE System Principal of Numeracy K-12 effective the 2016/2017 school year.

Respectfully submitted by:

Cathy Tsubouchi
Superintendent of Business