



EXECUTIVE REPORT TO FINANCE AND FACILITIES COMMITTEE

TO: Finance and Facilities Committee

FROM: Pam Reinholdt, Interim Director of Education

DATE: May 27, 2015

PREPARED BY: Stacey Zucker, Superintendent of Business and Treasurer
Denise Dawson, Manager of Budget Services

RE: **2015-16 Budget Estimates**

Action ✓

Monitoring ☐

Recommended Actions:

1. That the Board approve the 2015-16 Salary and Benefit expenditures in the amount of \$457,241,255 and that the Superintendent of Business and Treasurer be authorized to proceed with the expenditure of funds as outlined in Appendix C dated May 27, 2015
2. That the Board approve the 2015-16 Non-Salary expenditures in the amount of \$68,384,893 and that the Superintendent of Business and Treasurer be authorized to proceed with the expenditure of funds as outlined in Appendix C dated May 27, 2015
3. That the Board approve the 2015-16 Capital Budget expenditures in the amount of \$77,490,732 and that the Superintendent of Business and Treasurer be authorized to proceed with the expenditure of funds as outlined in Appendix D dated May 27, 2015. The Superintendent of Business and Treasurer is further authorized to secure short-term financing of project expenditures until such time as permanent funding is secured, if required.

The following appendices provide information regarding the 2015-16 Budgets:

Appendix A	2015-16 Summary of Enrolment Projections
Appendix B	2015-16 Operating Budget: Summary of Revenues and Expenditures
Appendix C	2015-16 Summary of Expenditures by Economic Classification
Appendix D	2015-16 Capital Budget
Appendix E	2015-16 Staffing Summary
Appendix F	Consultation on the 2015-16 Budget Priorities – Summary of Findings

Rationale/Benefits:

The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) is financially responsible with a clear focus on providing the system with the resources and supports necessary to support our *Strategic Directions 2009-2014* and the *Annual Operating Plan*. The budget presented for the 2015-16 school year reflects this approach.

Our Strategic Directions focus on Achievement Matters, Engagement Matters and Equity Matters. Our commitment is that all of our students will achieve their full potential. Our budget aligns our resources to fulfill this commitment. Our focus remains to ensure that all students are reading effectively by the end of grade 1. We will continue to provide supports to our schools which help all staff understand how to provide the instruction that will allow each student to succeed. We will continue to expand program opportunities through our program strategy so that students may be engaged in their learning and we will provide learning opportunities for each student based upon their interests and abilities. By aligning our resources through this budget in support of our strategic directions and our annual operating plan, we do believe that all students will achieve their full potential.

Highlights:

The following are the key highlights of the 2015-16 Budget:

- Alignment of resources with the Board's approved Strategic Directions has been achieved
- The Board approved listing of Board Priorities has influenced the development of the 2015-16 budget.
- Compliance with all Ministry class size and other regulatory requirements have been achieved (i.e. the 2015-16 Preliminary Operating Budget is balanced.)
- The Board incorporated budget reductions related to:
 - Declining enrolment
 - School closures
 - Attrition

Background:***Overall***

The fiscal year for all School Boards in Ontario runs from September 1 to August 31. The basic legislated financial requirements of a School Board are to develop and maintain a balanced budget and be in compliance with the Ministry of Education basic enveloping requirements. The 2015-16 Budget Estimates meets these requirements.

Process

HWDSB's Finance Committee has been working towards bringing forward a balanced budget which meets the requirements of the Ministry as well as aligns with the strategic directions of the Board. The Finance Committee usually meets on a monthly basis but began meeting on a weekly basis on March 25, 2015 to review all aspects of the 2015-16 Budget Estimates. At the same time, the following reports were brought forward to the Board for approval:

- January 26, 2015- Approval of Key Parameters/Assumptions to Guide 2014-15 Budget Development
- March 30, 2015 - Approval of Consultation results for the Identification of Board Priorities to Guide 2015-16 Budget Development
- April 20, 2015 - Approval of 2015-16 School Based Staffing

In addition, the preliminary special education budget for 2015-16 will be shared with the Special Education Advisory Committee on May 27, 2015.

The key objective of the Budget Development Process is to align the allocation of resources with the Strategic Directions of the Board and the Annual Operating Plan, identify school based staffing requirements; identify budget challenges and opportunities, and the development of key messages to be included in the communication plan. In addition, throughout the process, the development of the budget has been influenced and informed by the Board approved listing of Board Budget Priorities.

Budget Priorities and Public Consultation

As part of HWDSB's commitment to be accountable to its community stakeholders, the Board informs its stakeholders of its budget for the upcoming school year to show how it uses its resources wisely, efficiently, effectively and equitably. As discussed at the March 30, 2015 Board meeting, the Board consulted with the public for a period from January 28 to February 27, 2015 regarding the six agreed-upon budget priorities:

- Improving Mathematics
- Program Strategy
- School Revitalization
- Special Education
- Student Supports
- 21st Century Learning (Transforming Learning Everywhere)

A summary of the results of the consultation are attached as Appendix F. The Board used the results to assist in the preparation of the 2015-16 Budget Estimates.

Enrolment (Appendix A)

The Ministry of Education allocates funding to School Boards using a model that is based on enrolment and the needs of students in each board. Enrolment is based on Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) enrolment for October 31st and March 31st. These two fixed-in-time FTE enrolment values are combined to produce the annualized Average Daily Enrolment (ADE). HWDSB enrolment projections are based on historical enrolment trends and student retention rates on a school by school basis. These enrolments are reviewed by the school administration and adjustments are made if required.

An estimated ADE of 34,298 elementary students has been used to develop the 2015-16 Budget Estimates which is a decrease of 108.00 ADE or .31% from the 2014-15 Revised Estimates. This decrease is a result of the fewer Full-Day Kindergarten (FDK) students projected for 2015-16 now that FDK is fully implemented. An ADE of 14,947.25 has been estimated for secondary students, a decrease of 220.00 or 1.45% from the 2014-15 Revised Estimates. This is consistent with the decline in enrolment that the Board, and the Province, has been experiencing over the past 12 years. The overall projected ADE is 49,245.25 which represent a 0.66% decrease from the 2014-15 Revised Estimates.

Operating Revenue Projections (Appendix B)

The Ministry of Education's Electronic Financial Information System (EFIS) forms have been used to calculate the Grant for Student Needs (GSN). 98% of total operating revenue comes from the Province through the GSN. The 2015-16 GSN is estimated to be \$516.1 million which is a decrease of approximately \$1 million or .2% over the 2014-15 Revised Budget Estimates. The decrease in GSN funding for HWDSB is due to declining enrolment, school closure and changes to funding announced by the Ministry on March 26, 2015 as part of their School Board Efficiencies & Modernization initiative to encourage the management of underutilized school space.

The remaining \$9.5 million in operating revenue comes from other Ministry grants and miscellaneous revenue. This amount is consistent with prior years.

Operating Expenditure Projections (Appendix B and C)

The operating expenditures are projected to be \$525.6 million, a decrease of approximately \$1.5 million or .28 % from the 2014-15 Revised Budget Estimates.

Operating expenditures include a salary component (approximately 87%) and a non-salary component (approximately 13%).

The operating expenditures budget has been increased for a number of reasons including:

- Required increases for transportation, leases and other known fixed increases.
- Increases to salaries in accordance with the MOU (funded by the Ministry).
- Additional staffing to meet class size compliance and student need

The operating expenditures budget has also been decreased for a number of reasons including:

- To reflect decreases in expenditures as a result of declining enrolment.
- To reflect the operating savings as a result of school closures.
- To reflect the savings as a result of a 2% reduction in school and department budgets and other efficiencies achieved.

Capital Budget (Appendix D)

Each year, the Board prepares a capital budget based on the capital projects expected to be completed during the year. These projects are either funded by the Ministry of Education through various capital grants or by the Board through proceeds of disposition of surplus properties. In 2015-16, the Board is projected to spend approximately \$69.3 million on capital related projects.

In addition, the Board will pay interest on debentures for previous capital projects in the amount of \$7.9 million. This amount is fully supported by the Ministry through the GSN.

Conclusion

The Budget Estimates reflect the projected funding and proposed expenditure needs for 2015-16.

Once information on actual enrolments becomes available, it is likely that budget revisions will be required. The Ministry requires the submission of Revised Estimates, in December 2015, based on actual October enrolment and funding from the Province will be adjusted to reflect any changes. In addition, the Ministry continues to announce other Provincial operating grants and these will be included along with the corresponding expenditures.

It is also important to note that this budget is based on staff's interpretation of the best known information regarding labour matters at this time and will likely change once all labour issues are resolved. Any revenue and expenditure effects will be included in the Revised Estimates in December 2015.

Attach.

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board

2015/2016 Budget Estimates

Enrolment Projections

	2014/2015 Revised Budget	2015/2016 Budget Estimate	Increase (Decrease) ADE	Increase (Decrease) %
Elementary				
Full Day Kindergarten	6,651.00	6,298.00	(353.00)	(5.31%)
Primary	10,357.00	10,597.00	240.00	2.32%
Grades 4 -8	16,750.00	16,795.00	45.00	0.27%
Special Education	648.00	608.00	(40.00)	(6.17%)
Total Elementary Enrolment	34,406.00	34,298.00	(108.00)	(0.31%)
Total Secondary Enrolment	15,167.25	14,947.25	(220.00)	(1.45%)
Total Enrolment	49,573.25	49,245.25	(328.00)	(0.66%)

Average Daily Enrolment (ADE)

Average Daily Enrolment is calculated based on the existing two count dates (October 31 and March 31) within the board's fiscal year. The full-time equivalent of pupils enrolled will be weighted at 0.5 for each of the count dates,.

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board

2015/2016 Budget Estimates

Summary of Revenues and Expenditures

	2015/2016	2014/2015	Increase (Decrease)		2013/2014
	Budget Estimates	Revised Budget	Over 2014/2015 Revised Budget		Actuals
	\$	\$	\$	%	\$
Revenues:					
Grants for Student Needs	516,088,011	517,069,290	(981,279)		504,860,767
Other Ministry Grants	5,080,112	5,130,281	(50,169)		8,203,221
Miscellaneous	4,458,025	4,888,440	(430,415)		5,297,028
Total Revenues:	<u>525,626,148</u>	<u>527,088,011</u>	<u>(1,461,863)</u>	<u>(0.28%)</u>	<u>518,361,016</u>
Expenditures:					
Program Instruction:					
Classroom Teachers	309,425,688	309,889,685	(463,997)		300,111,199
System Principals, Consultants & Support	5,008,103	4,856,208	151,895		5,478,400
Occasional Teachers	9,300,000	9,300,000	-		9,960,911
Educational Assistants	29,772,191	29,767,074	5,117		29,831,756
Early Childhood Educators	11,904,564	11,487,394	417,170		8,751,623
Professional & Para-Professionals	15,253,901	14,963,939	289,962		15,086,554
Class Texts, Instructional Supplies	17,110,190	17,820,867	(710,677)		16,278,246
Instructional Computers	5,774,800	5,735,000	39,800		8,379,923
Instructional Staff Development	2,985,425	3,435,104	(449,679)		3,319,037
School Administration	33,155,919	33,523,483	(367,564)		34,049,114
Continuing Education	4,262,697	4,168,080	94,617		4,306,747
	<u>443,953,477</u>	<u>444,946,834</u>	<u>(993,357)</u>	<u>(0.22%)</u>	<u>435,553,510</u>
Program Support:					
Board Administration & Governance	13,309,677	13,422,099	(112,422)		13,381,074
School Operations	50,162,994	51,501,311	(1,338,317)		54,064,328
Transportation	16,200,000	15,217,767	982,233		14,029,576
	<u>79,672,671</u>	<u>80,141,177</u>	<u>(468,506)</u>	<u>(0.58%)</u>	<u>81,474,978</u>
Non-Operating:	-	-	-		360,216
Contingency:	2,000,000	2,000,000	-		-
Accumulated Surplus:	-	-	-		972,312
Total Expenditures:	<u>525,626,148</u>	<u>527,088,011</u>	<u>(1,461,863)</u>	<u>(0.28%)</u>	<u>518,361,016</u>

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board

2015/2016 Budget Estimates

Summary of Expenditures by Economic Classification

	2015/2016	2014/2015	Increase (Decrease)		2013/2014
	Budget	Revised	Over 2014/2015		Actuals
	Estimates	Budget	Revised Budget		
	\$	\$	\$	%	\$
Remuneration					
Salaries & Wages	377,152,270	377,650,083	(497,813)		372,453,565
Employee Benefits	64,370,450	64,737,662	(367,212)		60,055,473
Temporary Assistance	15,718,547	15,930,061	(211,514)		16,324,359
	<u>457,241,266</u>	<u>458,317,806</u>	<u>(1,076,540)</u>	<u>(0.23%)</u>	<u>448,833,397</u>
Consumables					
Professional Development	3,138,925	3,588,394	(449,469)		3,377,199
Textbooks & Supplies	24,907,232	26,132,324	(1,225,092)		25,162,619
Energy	9,877,900	10,072,055	(194,155)		10,585,787
Repairs & Minor Renovations	3,202,840	3,292,881	(90,041)		3,690,456
Computing Equipment	2,162,000	2,092,000	70,000		3,663,785
Rentals	1,178,135	1,123,405	54,730		2,092,207
Fees & Contractual Services	6,061,754	5,706,694	355,060		6,080,876
Other Expense	433,248	314,525	118,723		596,820
	<u>50,962,034</u>	<u>52,322,278</u>	<u>(1,360,244)</u>	<u>(2.60%)</u>	<u>55,249,749</u>
Transportation	15,422,848	14,447,927	974,921	6.75%	13,305,558
Contingency	2,000,000	2,000,000	-		
Accumulated Surplus	-	-	-		972,312
Total Expenditures	<u>525,626,148</u>	<u>527,088,011</u>	<u>(1,461,863)</u>	<u>(0.28%)</u>	<u>518,361,016</u>

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board

2015-16 Capital Budget

Summary of Funding Sources and Expenditures

	<u>2015/2016 Budget Estimates</u> \$	<u>2014/2015 Revised Budget</u> \$	<u>Increase (Decrease) Over 2014/2015 Budget Estimates</u> \$ %	
Funding Sources:				
Ministry Capital Allocation	64,607,923	53,184,713	11,423,210	21.5%
Estimated Proceeds of Disposition	5,000,000	10,568,711	(5,568,711)	(52.69%)
Ministry Capital Debt (Interest) Support Payment	7,882,809 *	8,142,513	(259,704)	(3.19%)
Accumulated Surplus (Working Reserves)		905,000	(905,000)	(100.00%)
Total Funding Sources	\$ <u>77,490,732</u>	\$ <u>72,800,937</u>	\$ <u>4,689,795</u>	<u>6.1%</u>
Expenditures:				
Major Capital Projects	37,188,571	41,544,873	(4,356,302)	(10.49%)
School Renewal Projects	25,347,788	13,902,120	11,445,668	82.3%
Full Day Kindergarten Projects	1,985,969	7,098,910	(5,112,941)	(72.02%)
Consolidated School Capital	4,271,769	-	4,271,769	100.0%
Temporary Accommodation	302,500	120,000	182,500	152.1%
Schools-First Child Care Capital Retrofit Projects	511,326	1,992,521	(1,481,195)	(74.34%)
Capital Debt Interest	7,882,809 *	8,142,513	(259,704)	(3.19%)
Total Expenditures	\$ <u>77,490,732</u> ^	\$ <u>72,800,937</u>	\$ <u>4,689,795</u>	<u>6.1%</u>

NOTES

* The Ministry fully funds the payment of debentures related to previously approved capital projects. These are corresponding revenues and expenses related to the interest payments for these amounts.

^ Each year, the Board prepares its capital budget based on the expected projects to be completed during the year. Sometimes, due to unforeseen circumstances, not all of the work gets completed. Included in the 2015-16 capital budget is \$27.7 million that has been budgeted in previous years.

Page 2 shows a break down of all the 2015-16 capital projects. It includes everything on this schedule except the debenture interest which as noted above relates to previously completed and debentured capital projects and temporary accommodations.

Total Expenditures	77,490,732
Capital Debt Interest	-7,882,809
Temporary Accommodations	-302,500
	<u>69,305,423</u>

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board
2015-16 Budget Estimates
Capital Budget

Capital Expenditures**Construction in Progress**

	Approved Eligible Grant	Total Estimated Capital Budget	Funding Sources						Total Funding
			Capital Priorities	Consolidated School Capital	Full Day Kindergarten	Other Ministry	School Renewal	Proceeds of Disposition	
New North Secondary School	31,839,111	15,000,000	15,000,000						15,000,000
Nora Henderson Secondary School	33,060,967	10,000,000	10,000,000						10,000,000
Saltfleet Addition	5,405,136	500,000	500,000						500,000
New Ancaster Elementary School	11,136,573	7,700,000	6,700,000		1,000,000				7,700,000
Dundas Valley Secondary School Addition		6,400,000					1,400,000	5,000,000	6,400,000
Dalewood Renovation		4,000,000					4,000,000		4,000,000
Child-Care Retrofit Projects	2,409,300	500,000				500,000			500,000
Consolidated School Capital	19,061,725	5,300,000		4,300,000	1,000,000				5,300,000
Secondary School Revitalization		8,200,000					8,200,000		8,200,000
Other School Renewal and School Condition Improvement Projects		11,700,000					11,700,000		11,700,000
Total	\$ 102,912,812	\$ 69,300,000	\$ 32,200,000	\$ 4,300,000	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 25,300,000	\$ 5,000,000	\$ 69,300,000

Consolidated School Capital:

Pauline Johnson Renovation	2,916,325	775,000		725,000	50,000
Ridgemount Renovation	2,878,303	760,000		710,000	50,000
Franklin Road Renovation	944,285	200,000		130,000	70,000
GL Armstrong FDK Renovation	494,285	80,000			80,000
Queensdale FDK Renovation	494,285	70,000			70,000
East Hamilton ARC FDK Renovations	1,235,710	380,000			380,000
Greensville/Spencer Valley Renovation	2,556,427	770,000		620,000	150,000
Beverly Central New Build	7,542,105	2,265,000		2,115,000	150,000
	19,061,725	5,300,000	-	4,300,000	1,000,000

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board

2015/2016 Budget Estimates

Staffing Summary (Permanent FTE)

	2015/2016 Budget Estimates	2014/2015 Revised Budget	Inc (Dec) Over 14/15 Rev. Budget	Notes	2013/2014 Actual
Program Instruction					
Classroom Teachers					
Elementary	2,114.70	2112.70	2.00	2	2,096.70
Secondary	1,060.50	1079.00	(18.50)	2	1,117.00
Total Classroom Teachers	3,175.20	3191.70	(16.50)		3,213.70
Educational Assistants	582.00	579.00	3.00	3	579.00
Early Childhood Educators	226.00	220.00	6.00	4	180.00
Professionals & Para-Professionals	166.60	168.60	(2.00)	5	179.10
School Administration					
Principals & Vice Principals	161.00	165.00	(4.00)	6	170.00
Clerical/Secretarial Support	198.50	198.50	0.00		211.00
Total School Administration	359.50	363.50	(4.00)		381.00
System Principals, Consultants & Support					
System Principals, Consultants	39.67	38.67	1.00	7	44.67
Administrative Support Staff	4.00	4.00	0.00		6.00
Total System Principals, Consultants & Support	43.67	42.67	1.00		50.67
Continuing Education	10.50	10.50	0.00		10.50
Total Program Instruction	4,563.47	4575.97	(12.50)		4,593.97
Program Support					
Board Administration & Governance	114.00	115.00	(1.00)	8	119.00
School Operations	432.50	441.50	(9.00)	6,8	467.50
Transportation	5.50	5.50	0.00		5.50
Total Program Support	552.00	562.00	(10.00)		592.00
Capital					
School Renewal	8.50	8.50	0.00		13.00
Total Staff	5,123.97	5,146.47	(22.50)		5,198.97

Notes:

- 1 2015/16 Budget staffing represents impact of enrolment projections, legislative and collective agreements, class size compl
- 2 Reflects impact of change in enrolment
- 3 Staffing enhancement to support student need
- 4 Staffing enhancement to support the Full Day Kindergarten Program
- 5 Staffing changes to reflect restructuring of Urban Priorities funding
- 6 Staffing changes due to school closure
- 7 Staffing changes to reflect restructuring of System Principals, Consultants & Support
- 8 Staffing changes to reflect restructuring of Board Admin & Governance, School Operations

FTE = Full Time Equivalent

*Summary of Findings***A. Purpose of Consultation**

As part of Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board's (HWDSB) commitment to be accountable to its community stakeholders, the Board informs its stakeholders of its budget for the upcoming school year to show how it uses its resources wisely, efficiently, effectively and equitably. Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board's Strategic Directions focus on Achievement Matters, Engagement Matters and Equity Matters. We have created many strategies to meet these directions. Six of these strategies are the priorities for the 2015/2016 Budget. Through our budget we will supply additional resources, if available to support our budget priorities above the level of funding that is provided by the province. Members of the public were invited to provide feedback on the budget priorities with regard to the following four areas:

(1) To indicate whether HWDSB should remain committed to each of the six priorities listed: (a) Program Strategy, (b) School Revitalization, (c) Special Education, (d) Student Supports, (e) 21st Century Learning: Transforming Learning Everywhere (TLE), (f) Improving Mathematics

(2) To indicate which of three directions HWDSB should take with regard to each priority (directions: 1. *Post more information about the priority on the HWDSB website*, 2. *Allocate additional resources to students, schools and clusters on a per-need basis*, and/or 3. *Engage in consultation with expert groups and committees*),

(3) To comment on additional directions that the board should take with regard to each priority, and

(4) To list additional priorities that HWDSB should consider for its 2015/2016 budget. The following sections of this report summarize stakeholders' responses.

B. Limitations of the Consultation

Several limitations of the consultation are noteworthy. First, it is unknown whether the consultation respondents are representative of the HWDSB and Hamilton community. Therefore it is unclear whether the responses summarized in this report accurately reflect the opinions of members of the Hamilton and HWDSB community. Second, the total number of responses should not be equated with total number of unique respondents as it is possible that the same person may have submitted the survey multiple times. It is therefore recommended that the results summarized herein are interpreted within the bounds of these limitations.

C. Respondent Characteristics

The online survey ran from January 28th to February 27th 2015 and garnered a total of **217** responses which were all received online. The majority of the responses came from parents/guardians (N=146, 67%), and from HWDSB staff members (N=47, 22%), while 13 (6%) responses were from community members/groups and 11 (5%) from HWDSB students.

Members of the public were asked to indicate whether they had children currently attending an HWDSB school and if yes, to indicate how many children. Overall, 151 (69.5%) of the responses came from individuals who had children attending an HWDSB school and 44 (20%) responses were from individuals who did not have children while the remaining responses came from respondent to whom the question did not apply (e.g., students, community groups). Of the 151 respondents who indicated having children, 139 (93%) indicated having one to two children currently attending an HWDSB school, 11 (7%) responses came from individuals with three or more children while the remaining percentage did not specify the number of children attending an HWDSB school.

D. Executive Summary of Consultation Findings

Topic 1: Members of the public were asked to indicate whether HWDSB should remain committed to the existing priorities. As shown in Table 1, on average, across the six priorities, 82.5% of responses indicated that HWDSB should remain committed to the six priorities, while 17.5% indicated not being in support of the chosen priorities.

Table 1. Feedback on whether HWDSB should remain committed to the six priorities.

Priorities	Yes	No	Total N
Program Strategy	118 (72.8%)	44 (27.2%)	162
School Revitalization	143 (86.1%)	23 (13.9%)	166
Special Education	141 (86.5%)	22 (13.5%)	163
Student Supports	154 (93.3%)	11 (6.7%)	165
21 st Century Learning (TLE)	116 (71.2%)	47 (28.8%)	163
Improving Mathematics	143 (85.1%)	25 (14.9%)	168
Average % across response options	82.5%	17.5%	

Topic 2: Members of the public were asked to comment on three directions that HWDSB should take across each of the existing priorities. As shown in Table 2, on average, across the six priorities, 66.4% of responses indicated that HWDSB should ‘Allocate additional resources to students, schools and clusters on a per-need basis’.

Table 2. Feedback on the directions that HWDSB should take with regard to the six priorities.

Priorities	Post more information about this priority on the HWDSB website	Allocate additional resources to students, schools and clusters on a per-need basis	Engage in consultation with expert groups and committees (e.g., Parent-Involvement Committee)	Total N across response options, within each priority
Program Strategy	59 (52.3%)	66 (50%)	50 (37.9%)	185
School Revitalization	53 (36.8%)	88 (61.1%)	57 (39.6%)	198
Special Education	46 (32.6%)	107 (75.9%)	60 (42.6%)	213
Student Supports	61 (42.1%)	107 (73.8%)	56 (38.6%)	224
21 st Century Learning (TLE)	67 (49.6%)	78 (57.8%)	57 (42.2%)	202
Improving Mathematics	51 (35.9%)	113 (79.6%)	51 (35.9%)	215
Average % across priorities	41.6%	66.4%	39.5%	

Summary of Findings

Topic 3: Members of the public commented on additional directions that they would like for HWDSB to take with regard to the six priorities. Feedback received is summarized below per priority:

- With regard to the Program Strategy majority of responses pertained to prioritizing and expanding the various programming available so that all students have access and to include the Arts as a priority.
- With regard to school revitalization, respondents expressed support for this priority but also urgency for the revitalization to take place. Respondents also expressed the desire to keep smaller schools open and ensure that neighborhood schools are prioritized.
- With respect to special education, majority of comments centered around the themes of providing additional staff support and to ensure that the appropriate programs are in place for all students. Building capacity in educators to ensure students receive the best possible school experience was also an important theme that emerged from the feedback.
- For student supports, majority of comments were similar to those mentioned for special education. A unique theme that emerged for this priority pertained to ensuring that parents and the community are provided with information of the variety of supports that HWDSB offers for students.
- With respect to 21st Century Fluency (Transforming Learning Everywhere – TLE), majority of comments centered on concerns with regard to whether TLE is a sustainable project from a financial perspective. Respondents also indicated the importance of providing the appropriate training for staff so that the technology best support student learning. Comments were mixed with regard to support of technology in the classroom, with some comments being in favour of technology and sharing the desire for TLE to expand across the system, others opposing it stating concerns that the devices can be a distraction from learning and the “basics” may be negatively affected, and other comments indicating a compromise between a one-to-one model and other variations (e.g., bringing own device, sharing with peers).
- For improving mathematics, the majority of comments pertained to suggestions on how mathematics instructions should be improved (e.g., “going back to basics”, using more problem-solving and real applications, lots of repetition of fundamentals). Other comments pertained to providing supports to students and staff by means of specialist teachers and updated math resources.

Topic 4: Members of the public were asked to comment on additional priorities HWDSB should consider for its 2014/2015 budget. Majority of responses indicated that the Board should prioritize the following areas:

Programs

- Arts and music
- Provision and effective use of technology
- French immersion
- Programs for special and gifted education
- Athletics, and extracurricular programs

Support

- Equitable distribution of support staff based on school needs
- Increase number of support staff to reduce wait-list for services
- Prioritizing mental health through increasing awareness and educators’ capacity to respond

School revitalization

- Maintenance of school property (inside and outside)
- Revitalizing schools (elementary as well) promptly

Resources

- Several comments centered around the theme of reducing administrative costs and to relocate those funds to schools through staffing allocation and by means of revitalizing schools.

Professional development

- Respondents indicated that educators’ growth as professionals should be prioritized alongside the needed measures to keep staff accountable for their performance.