



Enrolment - Historical, Projected to 2030 and Small Schools

Each year, the Ministry of Education provides funding to school boards in Ontario through a series of grants. Based on the Ontario provincial funding model, most education funding is disbursed on the basis of student enrolment. Historically, the Board has seen a steady increase in enrolment at the elementary level over the last five years. In the secondary panel, an increase has begun to trend over the last three years.

Associate Director Bonnie Norton provided a detailed update on enrolment trends, as well as projected numbers for the next decade, to the Board of Trustees. The data for the presentation was compiled with the help of CN Watson Economists, who were hired in the fall of 2019 to update the ten-year enrolment projections to 2030-2031.

"Based on actuals for 2019-2020 and estimates for the 2020-2021 school year, the Board is currently predicting an enrolment increase of approximately 85.84 FTE (or 0.7%) for this school year," began Associate Director Norton.

"With regard to school consolidation and space utilization within CDSBEO schools, the Board is currently seeing a slight surplus of 1,241 spaces (approximately 92 per cent capacity). This is up slightly from the 2017-2018 school year with CDSBEO schools at an overall 88.3 per cent capacity," noted Associate Director Norton.

"This surplus space is minimal, as the Board has done well over the last several years to assess capacity and school consolidation, and to ensure that our schools are utilized well so that we can maximize our funding dollars in ways they are most needed," explained Norton.

As the long-term enrolment numbers are predicted to increase, the trend indicates that by 2025, the Board will only have approximately 272 surplus pupil places, and by 2030, there will be a shortage of pupil places by approximately 592. The Board will be looking closely at growth areas moving forward, to direct capital projects appropriately, and make space for the predicted enrolment growth.

Associate Director Norton also provided an overview of the enrolment summary.

"In elementary, we created our Virtual Learning Elementary School, and in the secondary panel students are participating in remote distance learning synchronously with their home school. Together, we have 2,467 students, or 18.7 per cent who are currently learning through a virtual platform. Respectively, we have 10,734 students attending school in person. We have also had 138 students opt for home schooling, which is approximately 1 per cent. Principals are currently reaching out to these families to let them know about the re-entry dates, should they wish to opt-in to the virtual learning platform and have access to grade-appropriate curriculum which has been vetted by a qualified teacher."



"We are extremely pleased with all of the information that has been presented this evening," noted Chair Lalonde. "The Board is on a positive growth trajectory and we thank you Associate Director, and your team, for your work in compiling this data."

Outdoor Learning and Schools in COVID-19

This year, schools have opened with many new health and safety protocols in place in light of COVID-19. In response, outdoor learning and the many opportunities it presents, have been explored in many schools and classrooms.

Superintendent of School Effectiveness Brent Bovaird introduced a video to the Board of Trustees which was created to highlight outdoor learning and how schools have embraced the recent changes.

"I have the pleasure of introducing a special video that we have produced to highlight how teachers and support staff have been getting students outside and taking advantage of the learning opportunities available to them in the great outdoors. Whether it is in the school yard, in the nearby green spaces, or by utilizing the outdoor classrooms, we are happy to show you these great examples of how students have been creative in their learning, given the constraints and challenges presented by the pandemic."

"In addition, we've included some images of how our schools have adapted to the new health and safety regulations and protocols that have been introduced by public health, and how our schools have creatively welcomed our students back this year."

Chair Lalonde thanked Superintendent Bovaird for the video presentation.

"If a picture is worth 1,000 words, then this video certainly demonstrates how our schools have successfully embraced learning this school year. It is certainly evident that these students are very happy to be in school. Thank you for providing us with these exceptional examples of learning."

To view the video, please visit the CDSBEO News Blog at:

<https://www.cdsbeo.on.ca/news/blog/>