

June 22, 2010

“We need fairer funding for Peel students now,” says chair
Board balances budget, but remains concerned about funding shortfall

Trustees of the Peel District School Board approved a budget of \$1.35 billion for the 2010-11 school year. This balanced budget is a \$22 million increase in provincial grants from last year.

"Our budget is balanced, but there remains one key problem—there isn't enough budget to balance," says Janet McDougald, chair of the board. "Of course, our budget is balanced, as required. But Peel students continue to be short-changed by a funding formula that rewards boards with declining enrolment and punishes growth boards like Peel."

The Peel board receives \$838 per pupil less than the provincial average, a gap that has nearly doubled since 2002. This works out to an erosion in funding of \$379 per student and the value of change in the gap a whopping \$52 million. The value of the gap itself is \$117 million. Notes McDougald, "For the last several years, we've had a simple and fair request of the ministry—stop the erosion. Do what is needed to make sure that our per pupil funding position does not get worse. But it has gotten worse and we have lost ground—and our students have lost opportunities because of the funding reductions."

Last fall, the board began working with school councils and community partners to help make clear to the province that Peel students need fairer funding. The response was very positive and we saw some results, explains McDougald. "The province has begun to use more recent census data, resulting in additional funding. However, they have chosen to phase in the new funding over four years and the board will not receive \$18 million that our students deserve. The bottom line—it is unacceptable that our per pupil funding position in the province has not improved."

McDougald says the Peel board will continue to raise this issue now and in the school year to come. "We will increase our work with our communities, school councils and MPPs. We need fairer funding for Peel students now. We need the erosion to stop now. We need the province to work with us on finding funding solutions now. "

For more information about the Peel board budget, go to www.peelschools.org/studentworth.htm. For a complete copy of the budget, call 905-890-1010 (or 1-800-668-1146) ext. 2012.

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[Download the full text of Janet McDougald's budget remarks](#)