



Lester B. Pearson School Board
Commission scolaire Lester-B.-Pearson
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PRESS RELEASE

Lester B. Pearson School Board Adopts Budget With \$578,267 Deficit

September 20th 2022

At their regular meeting last night, the Lester B. Pearson School Board's Council of Commissioners adopted the board's 2022-2023 budget, which included a deficit of \$578,267. The Chairperson of the LBPSB Council of Commissioners, Judy Kelley, said the reason for the deficit was the renewal of transportation contracts that came to an end on June 30th 2022. As a result, the LBPSB is requesting that the Ministry of Education compensate the school board for the total shortfall in transportation funding.

"Posting a budget deficit was not our first choice and was not a decision that was taken lightly. However, given the situation our school board found itself in regarding unresolved issues involving our transportation contracts we feel it was the best choice in order to avoid having to cut services to our students," said Judy Kelley.

It is the school board's responsibility to negotiate service contracts with individual transportation companies with the financing provided by the Ministry of Education. The school board spends the full amount of the grants on transportation. The anticipated deficit in this year's transportation envelope is the result of the new agreements negotiated by the government and the reality of the Lester B. Pearson's school board territory. The Ministry of Education is aware of the school board's challenges with finalizing transportation contracts in the current context.

"We will continue working with Ministry officials to address this shortfall. However, it is important to note that the government's financing model for transportation contracts does not take fully into consideration the large distances that students must travel, particularly those who live a considerable distance from the school they attend. As we see transportation needs in the off-island portion of our territory increase, we must adjust our services accordingly. This is something that must be addressed with the bus carriers and the Ministry in order to prevent such a situation from recurring in the future," said Cindy Finn, Director General of the LBPSB.

The LBPSB's 2022-2023 budget also includes several new initiatives designed to benefit students and employees including:

- An additional \$800,000 in funding from the ministry for teacher mentoring. Eight teacher posts have been allocated throughout elementary, secondary and continuing education to provide support to new teachers to improve teacher retention and teacher efficacy;
- The opening of a third point of services for students attending the REACH program. REACH is a specialized program providing children aged 5-7 with a nurturing, highly structured classroom. The newest point of service will enable us to benefit more students in need of these services;
- Improved internet connectivity;
- New boilers at Lasalle Senior to improve energy efficiency.

Source, Information:

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