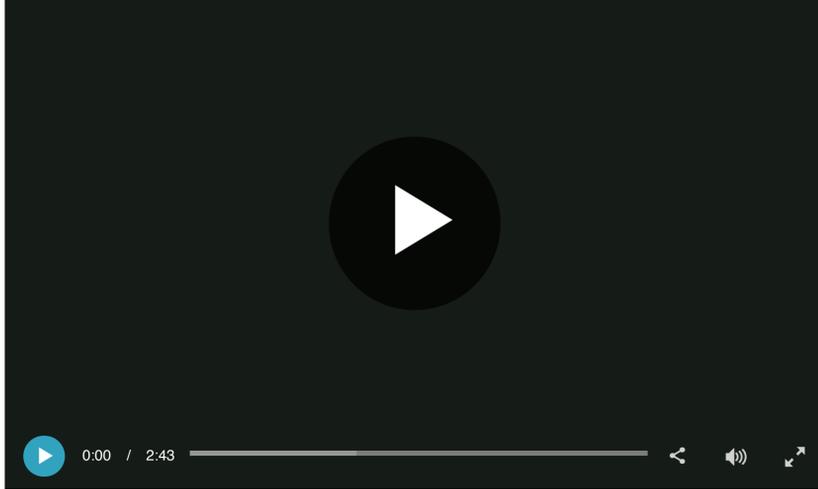


Almost half of money earmarked for low income students being diverted by TDSB: report

BY NEWS STAFF

POSTED JAN 12, 2017 11:30 AM EST LAST UPDATED JAN 12, 2017 AT 7:58 PM EST

EDUCATION LIFE LOCAL



A cash-strapped Toronto District School Board (TDSB) is failing low income students, diverting almost half of the money earmarked to help them, [a new report by Social Planning Toronto finds](#).

The report finds the TDSB is chronically underfunded and students most in need are suffering as a result.

"This report finds that 48 per cent of the funding that should be going to help students in lower-income communities is being used for general revenues," said Sean Meagher, executive director of Social Planning Toronto.

"This means that successful programs focused on aiding students in low-income schools are not getting enough funding, resulting in fewer opportunities and greater barriers to learning."

The money, from the province's Demographic Portion of the Learning Opportunity Grant, is intended for "after-school programs, extra staff support, homework clubs and other programs focused on supporting students in need," the report states. But only 52 per cent of the money is going towards those sorely needed initiatives.

"In the end, when these funds are used for their intended purpose, they make an enormous difference in the daily lives of children and families in low-income communities," said Meagher.

"The question remains how the provincial government and TDSB will respond to ensure these funds are used properly, so all students in Toronto have a fair chance to succeed."

The school board said it has struck up a task force to study the way the grant is being spent, but insists all the money is currently being spent to help all students -- including those at-risk.

"The learning opportunity grant dollars go towards enhanced programming, staffing and services. That's where that grant goes," TDSB director of education John Malloy explained.

"It's directly connected to our students' achievement. It does support our students at risk, but it also supports their classmates as well."

Malloy stated "emphatically" that the grant was "not used inappropriately based on what the regulation expects."

"The \$61 million dollars goes to programming services and staffing to support our students. The Social Planning Report speaks specifically about poverty, and poverty, as I mentioned, is key. However, the grant itself speaks about at-risk, and I would suggest the programming and I've given you some examples, does serve our students at risk."

Minister of Education Mitzie Hunter said that she expects school board to remain committed to using the grant in a way that prioritizes the success and well-being of students

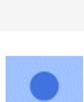
"This grant is focused on addressing the needs of students and cannot be used towards central board administration costs," she said in a statement.

In a release, TDSB teacher Nigel Barriffe said programs for low income students are crucial to their development.

"As a teacher, I see how the programs funded by these grants make a difference for students with enriched courses, student nutrition programs and greater supports for parents who want to get more involved in their child's learning."

[SOCIAL PLANNING TORONTO report on low-income students](#) by [CityNewsToronto](#) on Scribd

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JEAN DOH

wow thats sad....someone needs to be held accountable if any laws are broken...

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CRAZY CANUCK

@Jean Doh: But that will never happen because the unions will not allow it. The amount of waste and corruption in that board is a crime.

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