

**Questions & Answers
2013-2014 Budget Survey**

Do you have any questions on the budget?

answered question **64**
skipped question **802**

Response Date	1.	Answers
Mar 4, 2013 8:43 PM	It has been suggested that sections be "pulled" from secondary schools to accommodate additional Student Success consultants. How do the higher class-sizes associated with such a move serve to improve student learning?	The removal of sections will not have an impact on the overall class size count. The Secondary Superintendent can provide more details if you wish - david.desantis@wcdsb.ca
Mar 4, 2013 8:51 PM	Why don't we spend more on special education?	We spend more on Spec Ed than we receive. It is tough to spend more when other areas also need to be funded. It is a Provincial problem and the Province is aware of it.
Mar 4, 2013 8:51 PM	Why is my working space always cold?	Please contact Facility Services x5555 to have it checked out.
Mar 4, 2013 8:56 PM	There are so many more pressing matters than "digital books". Will the Board consider broadening the scope of this type of survey?	Yes there are more pressing matters. We consult on what we can influence, and unfortunately there isn't a lot we can influence from year to year.
Mar 4, 2013 8:58 PM	Why does the Community Use of Schools program take priority over evening school use (after 6 pm) by school teams in the gymnasiums?	Schools identify the dates they need in advance of the year starting and the schools are rented out on the other days. Schools get priority. Please see APF002 for our procedure.
Mar 4, 2013 8:58 PM	Why do school teams hosting a tournament on the weekend have to pay for custodians if the team cleans up after themselves?	School teams practicing - up to 30 participants can use the school on a weekend without custodial support. Tournaments which involve other schools and participants require custodial support for safety and cleaning.
Mar 4, 2013 9:09 PM	How much is the board allocating towards the significant investment required for Blended Learning and flipped classrooms?.	There hasn't been a significant investment in blended learning in our board. We are retrenching to build a more solid foundation in eLearning which is low in numbers and demand. The flipped classroom is being considered as a pilot in one of our schools. The Secondary Superintendent can provide more information if required - david.desantis@wcdsb.ca
Mar 4, 2013 9:16 PM	Do we ever consider more congregated classrooms? I think it is a good idea for educational and financial reasons.	The school board is committed to inclusive education as an operating principle and congregated classrooms goes against this.
Mar 4, 2013 9:34 PM	How is the budget determined?	Primarily based on the number of students we have and almost all of the money comes from the Provincial government. There are some other sources of revenue such as VISA students, Con Ed revenues, interest and rental fees, but all of these sources are minor in comparison to the Provincial grants.
Mar 4, 2013 9:34 PM	How is the budget allocated once it is determined?	We allocate it based on Planning Areas (Learning Services, Capital, Admin, Transportation, and Operations), and these areas provide budgets based on their allocation. In preparing these budgets, budget holders need to consider legislation such as class size ratios, restrictions on use of funds such as Spec Ed, and system needs and priorities.
Mar 4, 2013 10:05 PM	Why are so many front line staff reduced?	When we do have to reduce, we try to minimize the impact on classrooms as much as possible, taking into account class size ratios and programming needs.
Mar 4, 2013 10:36 PM	where is the leadership training money for principals and vice principals?	Are you referring to a specific pot of money that how it was used? We are unaware of such an allocation. Please send more details to budget@wcdsb.ca
Mar 4, 2013 10:36 PM	Can the budget actively demonstrate leadership development for VPs by taking away their current teaching duties?	Thanks for the feedback. As with all requests for budget, we will take it into consideration along with our other priorities.
Mar 4, 2013 10:42 PM	If you only knew how much money comes out of a teacher's pocket to stock a classroom!!!!	Thanks, we do know that some teachers spend money on their classrooms. It is appreciated. If you are being asked to do it, please let us know! budget@wcdsb.ca
Mar 4, 2013 11:18 PM	Why do some schools appear to have more resources than others?	Schools are funded based on the number of students they have. Smaller schools receive a supplement so their budgets are workable. If you have specific concerns, please let us know: budget@wcdsb.ca
Mar 5, 2013 1:18 AM	Who approves the budget? (senior management or government?)	Senior Management prepares the budget and the Trustees approve it. The budget is prepared based on rules set out by the government. So it seems everyone has a say!
Mar 5, 2013 2:21 AM	Some of the budget can be redirected to advertise to the community in order to draw more children (or their parents to bring their students) to be WCDSB students.	Yes it can, thanks for the feedback.
Mar 5, 2013 2:34 AM	I would like to see the budget breakdown for the board in percentages - payroll, maintenance, spec ed., resources, paper, etc.	We have a categorical breakdown in last year's budget presentation - and since our spending is fairly static, it should be almost the same for the upcoming year. http://www.wcdsb.ca/about/financial/pdf/2012-2013/2012-2013%20Budget%20Presentation.pptx

Mar 5, 2013 3:19 AM	Why are there limited field trips at st Mathews, no trip for grade 7/8 to Ottawa or Montreal	That is a school-based decision.
Mar 5, 2013 3:19 AM	Other schools have skating, skiing activities but not st mathews	Schools can engage in any sport activity that is supported by the OPHEA guidelines and not prohibited by the AP procedure on this subject.
Mar 5, 2013 3:26 AM	How is the allocation of Special Education funds determined, and what sources are available to the Board for these funds?	All of our Special Education funds are provided by the Ministry, based on a fixed amount, a per student amount, special grants for programs, and for equipment. There are currently no other material sources of funds for Spec Ed.
Mar 5, 2013 3:26 AM	How much is available to each school site for capital improvements, eg. painting projects, or is the allocation of funds to this type of project within a school's budget solely at the discretion of the principal?	Capital improvements are funded by Facility Services in consultation with the Principal. In addition, each school receives an allocation every three years to address local priorities (also in consultation with Facility Services).
Mar 5, 2013 3:36 AM	Why has so much money been spent on technology while cutting back the human element that is so important to the success of our Special Needs students? EA staff provide essential assistance to struggling students while enabling teachers to facilitate the success of all students.	We agree that EA staff and all staff in fact provide value and support our students. The investment in technology about 2 years ago is not impacting our budget in a material way today and does not factor into the number of EA staff we have.
Mar 5, 2013 3:36 AM	Why don't teachers or other school staff have input into what they feel is essential on the front lines of teaching during the budget deliberation process?	Last year we consulted with all staff and stakeholders on how best to gather their feedback and this was the mechanism they chose. If you have more ideas, please send them to budget@wcdsb.ca
Mar 5, 2013 12:12 PM	Is the energy management officer wages covered by his savings.	Yes, but we do not quantify his savings in that manner. We are required to have an Energy Management Officer by the Province.
Mar 5, 2013 1:20 PM	Looking for clarification about monies for the before and after school programs. Is it a separate budget than the budget set out for the core day?	Yes, the before and after programs run independently of day school, and are mandated to break even so they don't cost us anything.
Mar 5, 2013 2:05 PM	Can we see the budget and drill down into items?	Yes, but the budget is HUGE - with thousands of line items, each of which is a summary of other items. If there is a specific area you need information on, we will provide it - budget@wcdsb.ca
Mar 5, 2013 2:28 PM	Why are support staff first to get cut?	When we do have to reduce, we try to minimize the impact on classrooms as much as possible, taking into account class size ratios and programming needs.
Mar 5, 2013 2:28 PM	Will upper management have a wage freeze?	Everyone that works for the school board is frozen.
Mar 5, 2013 2:32 PM	Why not move to a year round school year with two week breaks scattered equally throughout the year?	That is not something we can control - that is a Provincial responsibility.
Mar 5, 2013 2:32 PM	Why are students not accountable to be in class? Staff are paid to deliver the program; why are there so many duplicate attempts? Could there not be a financial penalty for missing classes?	That's an interesting approach. It might be tough to charge students for not coming to class. Thanks for the feedback.
Mar 5, 2013 2:35 PM	Special Education dollars are not being spent wisely. More E.A. support. Less equipment that is over priced equipment	We analyze each student's needs and staff according to how they will be best served, whether it be an EA or a CYCW. The equipment is expensive, and is funded through special grants from the Province.
Mar 5, 2013 2:35 PM	Too many chiefs not enough P.D.	Thanks for the feedback.
Mar 5, 2013 3:02 PM	Why do we still support a principal's retreat? -We are in a financial crisis. This doesn't promote being frugal through out the board - looks bad	Thanks, we have passed this on to the decision-makers.
Mar 5, 2013 3:52 PM	Why not have a competition for the best cost saving idea for staff and have a gift card for Staples to be used for the best idea?	That might be the best idea right there! This idea will be passed on to our budget staff.
Mar 5, 2013 3:52 PM	At a recent workshop a teacher/parent from another board mentioned donating \$2400 gym mats to his school for a tax receipt...why don't we encourage this in our schools?	We do have a receipting program for donations of goods to schools. Please contact budget@wcdsb.ca for more details.
Mar 5, 2013 4:02 PM	how can we most effectively lobby the government for more special education funding?	Great question. You can lobby by sending your concerns to your Trustees and to your MPPs. They are interested in your comments and help to get it to the decision-makers.
Mar 5, 2013 4:15 PM	The Center is always needing staff but your business is education...to me that means teaching jobs. You stress the need for us to draw in new families...allow the proper class size so teachers and students interact. It is NOT about how many correct answers we have compared to WDSB...it is however about the quality of ALL answers	We follow the class sizes prescribed and funded by the Ministry. Many of the staff at the Education Centre are teachers and support staff that work with schools and students as their full time job. In all areas we staff based on regulation and needs. If there are areas you believe we need to re-examine, please let us know: budget@wcdsb.ca
Mar 5, 2013 4:31 PM	reduce earnings of people in the highest paid positions, teachers and support staff agreed to frozen wages, did others that are higher up do the same?	Everyone that works for the school board has contracts and we are obliged to follow them. The people in the highest paid positions are paid salaries in line with what other boards are paying for similar positions, and are in line with what the Ministry is funding. All employees are frozen, including those that are higher up.
Mar 5, 2013 4:36 PM	If enrollment is decreasing, why are the teacher positions not decreasing?	Teachers are receiving redundancy notices as required. Some Ministry programs have required us to increase the number of teachers so the numbers may not seem to decrease in tandem with enrolment.
Mar 5, 2013 5:00 PM	Computers in High schools need replacement, that should be priority if we want students to access any of those great resources we are providing for them.	The high school upgrade will be done subject to budget availability (answer updated May 24, 2013)

Mar 5, 2013 5:07 PM	Why don't elementary schools have more readily available resources available resources and support for students in grade 7 and 8, other than the classroom teacher?	What type of resources are you referring to? Please send your suggestions to budget@wcdsb.ca
Mar 5, 2013 5:17 PM	cutting custodain hours is not the way to go if you want the schools clean and healthy environment.	Staffing levels are set based on the needs of schools, system priorities, health and safety and available resources.
Mar 5, 2013 5:17 PM	hydro waste needs to be better addressed	We'd love to have examples, hydro costs are extremely difficult to manage. Please send them to budget@wcdsb.ca
Mar 5, 2013 5:23 PM	E.A.'s are desaratly needed	We agree. We place as many staff as we can within the funding we receive. Needs assessments are completed for all students and we staff as best we can, and where there is a need, we manage it.
Mar 5, 2013 5:23 PM	money for portable furniture is needed	No money is provided by the Ministry for new furniture so we recycle furniture where we can. If you have specific needs, please contact purchasing@wcdsb.ca and we will get you what you need.
Mar 5, 2013 6:01 PM	Highschools need upgraded computers.	The high school upgrade will be done subject to budget availability (answer updated May 24, 2013)
Mar 5, 2013 6:01 PM	A support person in administrating ATech programs in high school would benefit the students, teachers and be more cost effective???	Thanks for the feedback.
Mar 5, 2013 6:46 PM	How does our schoolboard compare in both number and percentage cost of schoolboard budget to other schoolboards in Ontario, for personnel who do not work with students on a daily basis?	We have that information, and regularly compare ourselves to these benchmarks. In fact, if you visit the Corporate Services website, you will see a section entitled KPIs, which has this very information for Corporate Services departments.
Mar 5, 2013 7:35 PM	Why do some schools seem to have no issues with photocopying and others require teachers to use a code?	That is a school-based decision.
Mar 5, 2013 7:48 PM	What are we doing to promote student retention?	We have recommendations from a student retention task force that we are putting into place which includes such things as marketing and student transition strategies.
Mar 5, 2013 9:51 PM	Why is it always special education that gets slashed?	We spend more on Spec Ed than we get funded for, and balancing what we can afford versus the needs in our system is always a daunting task. We could easily spend twice what we receive and still have needs in the system. It is a Provincial problem, and one which the Province is tackling as best it can.
Mar 5, 2013 9:51 PM	How are the executives at the board office becoming more efficient?	Are there specific executives you need information on, and are you referring to technology, or decreasing spending or ? We have some specific examples, but please send us your questions and we'll send you the answers: budget@wcdsb.ca
Mar 6, 2013 1:40 AM	Why is the bidget alloted for sports such a alrge amount? This is extra-curricular. Why is more money not pushed into the class rooms/staff training/technology?	We try to provide a balanced school experience for our students and that includes athletics. The budget that we have which includes one staff member is not significant and is seen as valuable to students and staff at schools in planning and carrying out events. If we have missed your question, please e-mail budget@wcdsb.ca
Mar 6, 2013 3:37 AM	When will Con Ed teachers move onto the salary grid?	Several scenarios for putting Con Ed teachers on grid have been brought forward. None have been feasible to date, but we will continue to look at models to see if anything may work.
Mar 6, 2013 1:51 PM	How can we Increase money allocated to school PD for teachers to build their learning capacity.	School based budgets are set by the Principal and endorsed by the school community through school councils. Aside from school budgets, there is some money for specific PD provided by the Ministry. This PD is carried out as prescribed, but does not form part of school PD.
Mar 6, 2013 1:51 PM	To increase VP capacity, how can budget be reallocated to removing teaching duties from VP's while keeping elementary allotment of VP's same?	Funds can be taken from other areas of the budget to support this change. Your feedback has been received.
Mar 6, 2013 4:38 PM	Is money given by the Ministry for VP's being used in that capacity? If not, why?	We do not spend all of the money allocated for VPs on VPs. We make decisions on where to spend our money based on the school board's biggest priorities and needs. If we were to spend our money strictly based on how it was given to us, we would spend less on classroom computers, and significantly less on special education. Based on feedback from our stakeholders, this would not be something they could support. We have received feedback from the subject employee group on how they would like the money spent, and will take that feedback and all other feedback on the budget into consideration.
Mar 6, 2013 4:43 PM	How was so much money spent on bright link technology when basic student needs (textbooks) have not been provided?	The decision to spend on Brightlink Technology was intended to move the school board into the 21st Century in terms of the use of technology by staff and students. It replaced certain older modes of curriculum delivery and was something that was supported both by our IT Policy Council, Senior Admin and Trustees. Superintendents can work with Principals who are having trouble allocating dollars to textbook purchases.

Mar 6, 2013 5:00 PM	Why aren't there more support staff to help students?	We are limited by the funding we receive. We'd love to provide more support, particularly to students who have higher needs, but we do what we can within our means.
Mar 6, 2013 5:00 PM	Why are students not receiving the help that they need?	We'll need more information to answer this question. Please send us more details: budget@wcdsb.ca
Mar 6, 2013 6:47 PM	Yes, I would like to know how much money was spent on parking at the board office last year. (parking vouchers, etc).	\$55,000 including parking vouchers
Mar 6, 2013 6:51 PM	We need more computers so an entire class can use computers	We agree. We are limited by the funding we receive, and funding for classroom computers has been cut in recent years to help balance the Provincial budget.
Mar 6, 2013 7:37 PM	Who keeps an eye on our principals? Who are they accountable to?	Principals are accountable to their school community and report administratively to Academic Superintendents. They also have duties they carry out in the Education Act.
Mar 6, 2013 8:18 PM	have we ever looked into third party building of schools with a lease arrangement.also we should look at teaming up with other boards to look at building one school building instead of two seperate schools, their has to be a cost saving here	When we build schools, we always look for partners to share the cost. In terms of having a third party build schools for us, we prefer to have control over the construction so we can control quality, suitability, and most importantly, safety of the building. Historically we have partnered with daycare providers, but we are looking at different options for the schools we are planning in the future. In terms of a joint building where two school boards share a site, we are open to the idea, and have had discussions with other boards on this matter. We are not ruling out such arrangements in the future.
Mar 6, 2013 9:59 PM	PD opportunities for teachers and leaders should be a priority especially facing the loss of pd opportunities for next year- where will it happen	PD is definitely planned to be in the budget. Almost all of the PD we offer for teachers and leaders comes to us in the form of Ministry grants - they tell us what to focus on and provide the funds, and we carry it out. Unfortunately, there isn't a lot of money for PD where we have control over the content.
Mar 6, 2013 10:00 PM	Where does all of the budget money go?	We spend all of the budget money on programs to support our students, operations, and buildings. Because our spending is fairly static from year to year, please take a look at last year's budget presentation, and in particular, look for the charts that show our specific spending and planning areas. Last year's presentation can be found here: http://www.wcdsb.ca/about/financial/pdf/2012-2013/2012-2013%20Budget%20Presentation.pptx
Mar 6, 2013 10:00 PM	Who decides where the money goes?	Senior Management prepares the budget and the Trustees approve it. The budget is prepared based on rules set out by the government. So it seems everyone has a say!
Mar 7, 2013 12:49 AM	can you let parents know where you spend all the money eg pie shape	Yes. The expenditures from year to year are fairly consistent. We have some great charts in last year's presentation located here: http://www.wcdsb.ca/about/financial/pdf/2012-2013/2012-2013%20Budget%20Presentation.pptx
Mar 8, 2013 12:59 AM	What is the education program you mention in high school st don bosco?	St. Don Bosco is the name of a program we run for high school students who struggle in the regular classroom environment. We run the program to help these students finish their credits to allow them to graduate.
Mar 8, 2013 2:12 AM	Why is there talk of the Intensive French program being cut, when the classrooms are fully furnished and it would cost no more to keep this excellent and inclusive program running? It seems like a waste of taxpayer \$ to cut it when it is evident that the pilot was successful	We look at everything each year to ensure the funds we spend are meeting our objectives. The Intensive French program is a great program, but there are incremental costs to running it. So, just like everything else, we need to look at the expense and where it fits into the school board's priorities. No decisions have been made at this point.
Mar 8, 2013 12:00 PM	when will you stop paying wage increases as a percentage? It greatly disadvantages the lower-pay teachers, while the 'privileged' receive unnecessary bonuses.	We pay increases based on collective agreements, regulations, and Provincial agreements. Historically these agreements have always expressed increases through percentages. This is a common practice in other sectors as well.
Mar 8, 2013 12:00 PM	Why would the board even question french immersion? It's a well-proven program to teach students life-skills	We ran the numbers and determined there was too much risk for us to take on at this time given our lack of reserves. Please send us your e-mail address and we can share the business case with you. budget@wcdsb.ca
Mar 8, 2013 5:19 PM	Staff already spend money on their classrooms, they would probably spend more if given tax receipts...why not issue tax receipts to staff who can provide receipts for classroom expenses of more than \$100.00?	We do have a receipting program for donations of goods to schools. Please contact budget@wcdsb.ca for more details.
Mar 8, 2013 5:19 PM	Why not have a committee that allows teachers who use materials to be part of the tendering process? What classroom materials do teachers need/most want at a better price?	We have passed on your suggestion to our Purchasing department. We do purchase goods from government contracts and through local cooperatives, so we should be getting the best value for our dollar. If you have specific questions, please send them to purchasing@wcdsb.ca
Mar 8, 2013 8:22 PM	What can be done to give young new teachers with fresh perspectives an opportunity to thrive and achieve some form of stability rather than waiting for positions to "open up"	If we understand your question correctly, you want to know how newer teachers can get jobs sooner. The school board follows the collective agreement, Provincially negotiated agreements and regulations for teacher hires.

Mar 9, 2013 9:56 AM	How much of the budget goes to French learning programs	Last year we spent \$5.8M on staff, \$10K on central resources and schools also spent from their annual allocations to support French learning programs.
Mar 10, 2013 1:14 PM	Money for inclusion projects	Thanks for your feedback.
Mar 10, 2013 1:14 PM	More support staff	Thanks for the feedback.
Mar 13, 2013 10:30 PM	Why don't you have a committee to discuss frequently used classroom supplies and how to negotiate a cheaper price? If the supplies we are given are poor quality more waste/breakage results...let staff who use the supplies have some input	Thanks. We have given your feedback to our Purchasing department. We purchase our supplies through Provincial contracts and those negotiated through local cooperatives. By doing this, we ensure we are paying the lowest price possible for the things we need. If you have any concerns about quality, please let us know: purchasing@wcdsb.ca
Mar 13, 2013 10:30 PM	Why are we paying more for some classroom supplies than the cost would be if we walked into Staples? Given our bulk buying power this seems outrageous and should be addressed for frequently used supplies like glue sticks	We have a contract with Staples that offers us a significant discount to retail prices. There are occasionally some exceptions, but the vast majority of our items should be well below retail. If you have specific concerns, please e-mail purchasing@wcdsb.ca
Mar 15, 2013 3:35 PM	are we being transparent to our employees? If we are, they would be more able to provide suggestions.	We always welcome suggestions! Please send them to budget@wcdsb.ca
Mar 15, 2013 3:35 PM	how can we use the amount meant for admin. in admin?	We are assuming admin means Administrators (Principals/VPs). We make decisions on where to spend our money based on the school board's biggest priorities and needs. If we were to spend our money strictly based on how it was given to us, we would spend less on classroom computers, and significantly less on special education. Based on feedback from our stakeholders, this would not be something they could support. We have received feedback from the subject employee group on how they would like the money spent, and will take that feedback and all other feedback on the budget into consideration.