

News Release

June 30, 2006

For Immediate Release

Board responds to MOE Special Advisor Terms of Reference *Trustees cautiously accept appointment of Special Advisor*

At its Special Meeting of June 29, 2006, the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board approved the *Terms of Reference for the Special Advisor* received from Nancy Naylor, Assistant Deputy Minister, Business and Finance Division of the Ministry of Education, on behalf of the Minister of Education. In this regard, the motion approved by the board is as follows:

THAT THE DUFFERIN-PEEL CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD ACCEPT THE TERMS OF REFERENCE WITH THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENTS:

1. THE SPECIAL ADVISOR WILL REPORT DIRECTLY TO THE ASSISTANT DEPUTY MINISTER, BUSINESS AND FINANCE DIVISION OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION;
2. THE SPECIAL ADVISOR WILL MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE BOARD THAT WILL INCLUDE IMPACT STATEMENTS; AND
3. THAT THE SPECIAL ADVISOR ASSIST THE DUFFERIN-PEEL CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD IN DEVELOPING A FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT PLAN TO RETURN TO A BALANCED FINANCIAL POSITION BY 2008-2009.

“While we accept the appointment of a Special Advisor, the board has made it clear that this advisor will not only make recommendations, but have to declare publicly their effect on the system,” said Peter Ferreira, DPCDSB chair. “The board will have the final say on any cuts and efficiencies that need to be made to produce a balanced budget by 2008-09.”

The board started the 2005-06 school year with an estimated \$17 million deficit. By December, the deficit had been reduced to \$15.1 million on a total operating budget of approximately \$670 million. Through various measures, including a hiring freeze, a freeze on expenditures, strategic redeployment of staff and the receipt of some additional grants from the province, we have managed to further reduce the deficit to approximately \$7.5 million for the 2005-2006 school year. “These measures, which were intended to keep as many cuts away from the classroom as possible, are not sustainable over the long term,” said Ferreira.

“Trustees will continue to act as advocates for our community,” added Ferreira. “We will not give up or hide from this responsibility.”

The board sent the Minister of Education a letter today outlining the motion approved at the Special Meeting and will wait further communication from her office.

“Our board has engaged in a public information campaign illustrating the impact of underfunding - transportation, special education, salaries and benefits. While the Ministry has acknowledged this, we await for them to fix this problem for our students,” said Ferreira.

Ferreira noted, “though the recent *Grants for Student Needs* acknowledged underfunding, they did not address this chronic problem to the extent that next year the board will be faced with a deficit of \$20 million.”

The *Terms of Reference for the Special Advisor* is available online at www.dpcdsb.org.

The Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board is one of the largest school boards in Ontario with 88,000 students in 139 schools located throughout Mississauga, Brampton, Caledon and Orangeville. With over 8,000 employees, the board is also one of the largest employers in the region.

- 30 -

For information contact: Nancy Marshall, Communications Officer
(905) 890-0708 ext. 24278