

Former Wrigglesworth school to be reopened in board's bid to get Provincial grant money

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education positions total \$1.7 million in the upcoming budget, of which 19.5 positions, or \$1.1 million, is funded due to growth, with the rest coming from the board's existing funding. This, however, is below the 30 positions that SEAC had requested. To help offset the costs of the new positions, the board is dipping into the reserve funds.

Despite the allocation of funding for the new positions, not all trustees were satisfied that it was enough.

SEAC had asked for two speech and language pathologists and received one in the budget. The board currently had 10.5 pathologist positions.

"Speech and language is important for every child," said Burlington trustee Peggy Russell. "If they don't get it, it will be difficult for them to receive the curriculum and get an education."

Later on she added, "I'm not comfortable that all the kids who need help are getting the help they need."

The director of education, Wayne Joudrie, said, "You can never have enough (positions). However, we have made significant strides this year."

The board recently approved the one-year contract to hire an environmental sustainability officer at a cost of \$100,000. Some trustees argued this money would be better spent hiring a speech pathologist.

However, after a vote by trustees the budget was approved including the environmental sustainability position.

In another note in the budget, the board approved to reopen Howard Wrigglesworth School in Halton Hills as a site to be used to support Gary Allan High School programs.

Gary Allan offers adult high school credit and night school programs on New Street in Burlington.

The Wrigglesworth building has already been in use for Gary Allan programs, but by designating it as a school again, the board will receive an additional \$247,000 per year in grants from the province, according to staff.

According to superintendent of facility services Gerry Cullen, the structure is drafty and leaky and it has capital needs. However, he added, "The grant is more than adequate for the costs."

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