



REPORT TO

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND WELL BEING, CATHOLIC EDUCATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

**FOCUS ON YOUTH PROGRAM
POTENTIAL TO HIRE ADDITIONAL STUDENTS**

Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else” 1 Thessalonians 5:15

Created, Draft	First Tabling	Review
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INFORMATION REPORT

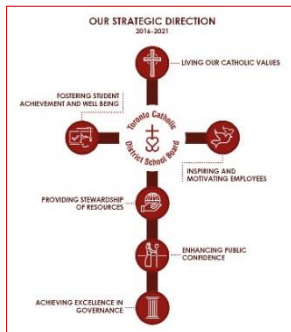
Vision:

At Toronto Catholic we transform the world through witness, faith, innovation and action.

Mission:

The Toronto Catholic District School Board is an inclusive learning community uniting home, parish and school and rooted in the love of Christ.

We educate students to grow in grace and knowledge to lead lives of faith, hope and charity.



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A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is provided in response to a Board motion regarding the possibility of hiring additional students for the Focus on Youth program as part of the TCDSB hiring of summer students.

The funding allocation from the Ministry of Education has not been increased since 2010, and is insufficient to meet the demand for summer employment arising from the program. Furthermore, the increase in the hourly minimum wage has also had a direct impact on the number of students who can be hired for through the program.

Given the funding constraints, it is not possible to hire additional students through the Focus on Youth program.

The cumulative staff time required to prepare this report was 8 hours

B. BACKGROUND

1. Arising from a presentation at the September 21, 2017 Board meeting about the Focus on Youth summer employment program, the Board approved the following motion:

Received and that a letter be sent signed by the Chair to the Ministry of Education advocating on behalf of the Focus on Youth Summer Program for additional funding;

That this be referred back to staff with a report regarding whether it is possible to hire more students in the Focus on Youth Summer Program when hiring students in the summer.

2. On May 30, 2007, the Ministry of Education considered a joint proposal submitted by the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) and the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) to support recreational and learning opportunities for children and youth in several of the Neighbourhood Improvement area of Toronto during July and August 2007. This program was titled the Focus on Youth Toronto (FOYT) Program. The Ministry of Education allocated a total of \$4 million to support this program, of which \$3 million was allocated to the TDSB and \$1 million to the TCDSB.

3. The overall objective of FOYT was to enhance high quality summer program opportunities for children and youth in the City of Toronto Neighbourhood Improvement areas by offering subsidized use of school space for organized community-based programs, and by providing employment and leadership opportunities for the youth within these communities. The TCDSB and TDSB determined that this program would promote learning through play, healthy lifestyle and positive self-image for children and youth of these communities, and that the program would have a positive impact on student achievement and well-being during the school year.
4. In order to be eligible for employment, the applicants must be current TCDSB students between 16 and 18 years of age, with priority given to students who reside in one of the designated Neighbourhood Improvement areas.
5. The Focus on Youth program has been very successful. Not-for-profit organizations and other community groups access more than 70 TCDSB schools during the summer months. Students have been hired to work with community agencies, including the Boys and Girls clubs, YMCA, the ROM and other organizations. Students have also been hired to perform operations-related tasks as determined by the Facilities/Operations Departments at TCDSB. In addition, students are hired to complete administrative tasks within the Catholic Education Centre when permanent staff are on vacation.

C. EVIDENCE/RESEARCH/ANALYSIS

1. The \$1,167,000 funding allocation provided by the Ministry of Education for the Focus on Youth program has not increased since the 2010-2011 academic year. The funding is insufficient to meet the needs of TCDSB students, as evidenced by the overwhelming number of applications received for minimal position. For example, in 2017, 867 applications were received for 320 positions.

Furthermore, the funding does not address the increase in minimum wage to \$14 per hour which came into effect in January 2018.

2. In response to the Board motion, a letter was sent to the Ministry of Education on October 16, 2017 in order to highlight the direct impact of the lack of funding on TCDSB students. (*Appendix A*)

3. In response to this letter, the Minister of Education wrote to the Chair of the Board advising that no additional funds would be available for 2017-2018 Focus on Youth program. (*Appendix B*)
4. Previous funding sources from the Canada Summer Jobs Program allowed the TCDSB to hire additional students for summer employment. In 2017, however, the federal government changed the application process, now requiring school boards to sign an attestation statement in which elements could not be affirmed by Catholic and other denominational organizations. School boards applying to the Canada Summer Job program submitted applications with a modified attestation statement in alignment with our faith.
5. To date, the federal government has refused to accept the TCDSB application, which will result in a loss of approximately 20 summer positions.
6. As a result of the combination of limited funding, the increase in minimum wage, and the lack of funding from the Canada Summer Jobs Program, TCDSB anticipates hiring only 250 students as part of the 2018 Focus on Youth program.
7. Given the funding constraints, it is not possible to hire additional students through the Focus on Youth program.

D. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

This report is for the consideration of the Board.