



REPORT TO

**CORPORATE SERVICES, STRATEGIC
PLANNING AND PROPERTY
COMMITTEE**

**REMOVING BARRIERS TO THE USE OF SCHOOL
CASH SUITE**

“Be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead!”

I Peter 1:6

| Created, Draft | First Tabling | Review |
|--------------------|------------------|--------|
| September 20, 2019 | October 10, 2019 | |

L. LePera, Senior Financial Analyst
 D. Bilenduke, Senior Coordinator of Finance
 P. De Cock, Comptroller of Business Services & Finance

RECOMMENDATION REPORT

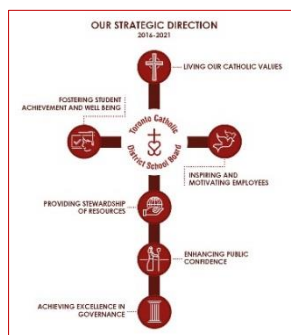
Vision:

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.



Rory McGuckin
 Director of Education

D. Koenig
 Associate Director
 of Academic Affairs

L. Noronha
 Associate Director of Facilities,
 Business and Community
 Development, and
 Chief Financial Officer

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

School Cash Suite provides Schools and Catholic School Parent Councils (CSPCs) with an integrated portal for processing school activity fees online and seamlessly interfaces with both TCDSB and School level banking and accounting systems. The primary objectives with this system include the generation of administrative efficiencies and mitigation of risks associated with cash handling tasks.

The Board of Trustees has asked Business Services to report on how priority neighbourhoods may be further assisted with administrative fees and implementation.

This report recommends the removal of the 1% administrative fee across the entire system to help remove a small financial barrier to its use. Staff expect that increased HST recoveries will fully offset this loss.

The cumulative staff time required to prepare this report was 12 hours.

B. PURPOSE

1. To report on removal of barriers to the use of School Cash Suite online in priority neighbourhoods.

C. BACKGROUND

1. *With a growing movement towards reducing cash handling* from schools across Ontario, the TCDSB made a strategic decision to move toward “cashless” schools using the School Cash Suite also known as “KEV Software”.
2. *Training, consultation and education are ongoing.* Full day training for new Principals, Vice-Principals and School Secretaries and refresher courses are scheduled frequently over the entire school year. Regular announcements are shared via the Weekly Wrap Up and direct emails to Principals and Secretaries about ongoing support, upcoming training, user tips and tricks, and promotional opportunities to increase registration.

3. ***Trustees requested further investigation in to the barriers of using School Cash Suite in priority neighbourhoods.*** There is a concern from Trustees that priority neighbourhoods are at a disadvantage implementing the system and absorbing fees and service charges.

D. EVIDENCE/RESEARCH/ANALYSIS

1. ***School Cash Online Action Plan 2019/20 questionnaire completed by schools prior to the school year.*** A questionnaire was sent to all principals asking for their thoughts on identifying and reducing barriers to adoption. Business Services staff received a 70% response rate. The information received in these surveys provided broad themes and will help shape future strategies. These results will be used to address implementation concerns and issues around high priority neighbourhoods.
2. ***Removal of the 1% Administrative Fee would be fiscally neutral.*** When the system was first implemented a 1% cost was built-in to each online purchase to cover the cost of the system. Staff are confident that this charge is no longer required. For the 2018-19 year the 1% fee amounted to \$38,248 which was returned to the schools along with the HST rebates. With increased adoption this revenue would have increased proportionately. Staff estimate that the increased HST rebates are more than adequate to cover these costs and are recommending the 1% upfront charge be removed from the system for all schools.
3. ***54 schools (46 elementary and 8 secondary) were identified as being in Priority Neighbourhoods.*** 5 schools in this grouping have an adoption rate of over 50% demonstrating that some priority neighbourhoods have in fact adopted the system despite barriers. There still remain many schools, however, in these areas where adoption is low. The challenges, as identified by these schools, are rooted around a lack of interest by the community largely due to language barriers, a preference to using cash and a concern with the 1% recovery fee built into each event. The schools may continue to communicate the benefits of cash online to the community and the 104 language translation options available on the parent portal to address some of those challenges. With respect to the 1% recovery fee, there is an option to remove this from purchases. With the current and future HST rebates projected, staff believe it is appropriate to remove the fee.

E. METRICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- 1. *Trustees and Trustee Services staff now have access to a dashboard and ward reports.*** TCDSB's IT department has developed an easy to use dashboard so Superintendents may monitor adoption rates. Access and training will now be given to Trustees and their assistants.
- 2. *Staff will monitor the Priority Neighbourhood schools for adoption issues.*** Business Services staff will work closely with Superintendents and Principals of Priority Neighbourhood schools to ensure barriers are removed to the greatest extent possible to ensure adoption can be achieved.

F. IMPLEMENTATION, STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

- 4. *On-going Training will be provided.*** Training and refresher courses are available through the PAL Portal for school banking, throughout the school year and summer months. User guides and tip sheets are also available on KEV's online Resource Centre. Business Services staff will travel to schools over the next year to audit for missed HST rebates in both the schools and CSPC's bank accounts and assist with strategies to increase parent adoption and usage rates.
- 5. *The School Cash Online adoption rate will be a standing agenda item at Education Council.*** Adoption rates will be discussed to strategize on ways to remove barriers to wider adoption in both priority neighbourhoods as well as the remainder of the system.

G. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the 1% recovery fee, built in to the School Cash Suite software, be removed.