



REPORT TO

## CORPORATE SERVICES, STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

### ADMISSIONS INQUIRY RELATED TO SOUTH ETOBICOKE SECONDARY SCHOOLS

*God gave Solomon very great wisdom, discernment, and breadth of understanding as vast  
as the sand on the seashore, 1 Kings 4:29*

| Created, Draft  | First Tabling    | Review                                      |
|-----------------|------------------|---|
| October 7, 2019 | October 10, 2019 | <a href="#">Click here to enter a date.</a> |

Gina Iuliano Marrello, Superintendent of Student Success  
Michael Loberto, Superintendent, Planning & Development Services  
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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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Development, and  
Chief Financial Officer

## **A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report provides clarifying information regarding the TCDSB secondary admission policy S.A. 02 Placement of Pupils specifically related to the sibling rule as well as criteria used to admit students.

*The cumulative staff time required to prepare this report was 15 hours*

## **B. PURPOSE**

This report responds to a Trustee motion following a delegation related to the TCDSB secondary admission policy, at the October 2, 2019 Student Achievement and Well-Being Committee, Catholic Education and Human Resources Committee meeting.

Trustees requested that staff come back with a report responding to the queries at the October 10, 2019 Corporate Services, Strategic Planning and Property Committee meeting.

## **C. BACKGROUND**

1. October 2, 2019 – At the Student Achievement and Well-Being Catholic Education and Human Resources Committee, a delegate presented on the implementation of the secondary school admission policy using the Student Online Application for Registration (SOAR) specifically for Fr. John Redmond Catholic Secondary School and Regional Arts Centre.
2. Concerns were expressed that this new online application system is promoting new processes that are not consistent with the Board's admission policy. Rather, the delegate believed that the process reflects some of the proposed changes to the policy that were consulted in 2017, but never approved by the Board.
3. Referring to the SOAR Parent Guide, two areas were identified where the delegate felt there were deviations from the TCDSB policy:

### **a) The sibling rule:**

The parent referred to page 15 of the SOAR Parent Guide which states that the sibling rule does not apply to specialty programs.

**b) Admission criteria related to home school location.**

The delegate noted that the SOAR Parent Guide indicates that “Chances for acceptance will increase by applying to the Catholic secondary school nearest to your elementary school”. It was further noted that the board policy “takes into account a number of considerations including distance, public transit and other items to determine appropriate placement”, while the new system only considers distance.

**D. EVIDENCE/RESEARCH/ANALYSIS**

1. Pupils, who have siblings already enrolled in the requested school and are returning for the next school year, shall be considered as first priority for registration. The policy states that the Board recognizes the importance of the family unit and will undertake its best efforts, within the context of this Policy, to place siblings at the same school.
2. The sibling rule applies where a student applying to a secondary school has a sibling enrolled in the school, regardless of whether the sibling is enrolled in the regular stream or in a specialty program within the school.
3. The comment in the SOAR Parent Guide, “Sibling rule does not apply to specialty programs” refers to the fact that having a sibling in a specialty program does not guarantee automatic acceptance into that specialty program. The registering student will need to apply to/audition for the specialty program and gain admission based on the merit of his/her application relative to all other applicants who are applying for a limited number of spots.
4. Staff will reinforce with all TCDSB elementary principals and guidance teachers the following:
  - a. that students with a sibling enrolled in a specialty program in a school will be given first priority in terms of admission to the school for the regular secondary program; and
  - b. having a sibling program does not automatically guarantee acceptance into that speciality program. The student will need to go through the admission process for the specialty program.

5. ***There are no attendance boundaries for TCDSB secondary schools; students have the option of applying to any TCDSB secondary school under the policy.*** If the home address is located within the fixed attendance boundary of the elementary school the child attends, that school is considered the home school. If a child attends a TCDSB elementary school located outside the fixed attendance boundary of his/her home school, he/she may select the school the child currently attends or the home school based on his/her home address as the basis for his/her secondary school application.
6. ***The regular placement process is based upon proximity, program and space.*** The proximity or distance factor is measured using most direct route between schools.
7. ***The SOAR secondary online program has been implemented to automate the existing admissions process.*** The policy has not changed; only the application platform to enter applications and manage the application process has changed. Secondary schools will accept applicants in the same manner as with the traditional paper-based application form.
8. ***The SOAR secondary program was designed with the guiding principle of improving organization, communication and efficiency.*** The automated process to manage student applications is a user-friendly practice that saves effort, manpower, reduces error. It is a consistent business practice and environmentally friendly option that will reduce TCDSB's carbon footprint as it follows the applicant throughout the application process.

## **E. METRICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

Senior staff will continue to review all procedures to ensure compliance with TCDSB admission policy

## **F. CONCLUDING STATEMENT**

This report is for the consideration of the Board.