



REPORT TO

REGULAR BOARD

## RETURN TO SCHOOL UPDATE

*"The Lord gives sight to the blind, the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down, the Lord loves the righteous."  
Psalm 146:8*

Created, Draft	First Tabling	Review
January 20, 2021	January 28, 2021	<a href="#">Click here to enter a date.</a>
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<b>INFORMATION REPORT</b>		

### 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**

The last update to the Reopening Action Plan was submitted to the January 21, 2021 Corporate Services, Strategic Property and Planning Committee meeting for information and consideration. This report provides additional information concerning items occurring over the last week. The Reopening Action Plan is updated as necessary and is available on the TCDSB website. Key updates and strategies are provided for consideration.

The Hospital for Sick Children has updated their guidance documents relating to school operation. The Ministry has posted additional safety measures as schools begin to reopen regionally.

Preliminary data obtained from the Hospital for Sick Children with regard to Phase 1 Asymptomatic Test Pilot results is provided.

Staffing and Recruitment continue through the shutdown with a focus on retention and support of school-based programs through the shutdown period.

Toronto Public Health (TPH) has updated their guidance on the Retrieval of Personal Belongings from school buildings. There are no changes in Health and Safety measures already in place at TCDSB.

Technology continues to be distributed to students in need.

TCDSB schools will continue to follow safety measures and guidance from Toronto Public Health when schools return to in person learning.

*The cumulative staff time required to prepare this report was 20 hours*

## **B. PURPOSE**

To provide the Board with updates as they pertain to the TCDSB Reopening Action Plan.

## **C. BACKGROUND**

1. ***The TCDSB Reopening Action Plan, Staff Manual and Transition to Distance Learning Plan continue to reflect the process for operating schools safely.*** Items from Board motions and Ministry updates that are confirmed have been included as required. Schools will continue to follow established protocols for virtual and in person learning.

## **D. EVIDENCE/RESEARCH/ANALYSIS**

### **Additional health and safety measures**

2. ***The Hospital for Sick Children, on January 21, 2021, updated their Guidance for School Operation during a Pandemic.*** The opinion of the Hospital is that a daily in-person school model is best as it allows for consistency, stability and equity regardless of the region in which children live. An important factor to consider in this respect is emerging evidence indicating inequalities in the social and economic burden of COVID-19, which may further disadvantage children/youth living in areas with higher infection burden where educational inequality and barriers to online learning may be more pronounced. The public school system is uniquely positioned to address some of the inequities that disproportionately impact Black, Indigenous, People of Colour (BIPOC) and other disadvantaged groups in Ontario.
3. ***The Province, at the writing of this report, has not yet provided a response to the updated guidance by the Hospital for Sick Children tables.*** However, they have updated the Ontario COVID-19 response page to include additional safety measures to be employed as school regions reopen.
4. ***The following new health and safety measures will be put in place in all Ontario elementary and secondary schools:***
  - students in Grades 1 to 12 must wear masks or face coverings (***In TCDSB Plan***)
    - in schools, including in hallways and during classes
    - on school transportation
    - outdoors during recess, where distance cannot be maintained
  - enhanced screening protocols will be recommended by the Chief Medical Officer of Health — Ontario’s COVID-19 School and Child Care Screening Tool, will be updated to reflect the new screening criteria (***TCDSB plan includes daily entry/exit screening of students through use of a passport***)

- targeted COVID-19 testing will be expanded for asymptomatic students

### **COVID-19 Vaccinations**

5. ***The Hospital for Sick Children has provided TCDSB with preliminary data regarding the Phase 1 Ministry of Education Asymptomatic Testing Pilot.***  
The Hospital is further analyzing the data and will provide their report to the Ministry of Education. The Ministry will then provide a final report with details regarding Phase 2 of the asymptomatic testing, which will be shared with the Trustees and parent communities.

SCHOOL	#STUDENTS TESTED	#STAFF TESTED	#FAMILY TESTED	%POSITIVITY RATE
St. Fidelis	22	3	75	3.0
Chaminade College	44	12	8	0
St. John the Evangelist	182	47	129	0.83
St. Roch	64	0	0	0
Msgr Percy Johnson	185	60	2	0.88

### **Staffing and Recruitment**

6. ***The Human Resources (HR) Department continues to support critical school-based programs during the school lockdown period.*** We are capitalizing on recent rule changes that expand the use of retired teachers and administrators. In particular, we are using retired administrators to bolster school-based administrative and supervision needs in cases involving family status needs. Occasional teachers are also being used temporarily to support in-person Special Education Program instruction.
7. ***HR staff is sustaining our commitment to enhancing each school's allocation of Lunch Time Supervisors as well as each elementary school's ability to utilize their valued Lunch Time Supervisors for an additional 1.5 hours per day to June 2021.***
8. ***Senior HR staff is analyzing enrolment projections to proactively plan for potential staffing scenarios related to September school staffing requirements.*** Timely communication with the Ministry of Education will inform our approach.

9. ***The Sick Leave & Disability Department continues to diligently manage its extensive active sick leave cases. HR staff is closely monitoring absences during the school lockdown period and has implemented a process allowing Principals to advise HR staff of instructional/support gaps. The careful and regular review of sick leave metrics for all employee groups remains a priority.*** Significant caseloads are being reviewed daily and granting employees the ability to work virtually, where feasible, is being considered. Enhancing employee awareness of our employer-sponsored Employee Family Assistance Plan remains a priority.
10. ***Senior TCDSB staff members have maintained regular contact with our union partners (TECT, TSU, and CUPE) to collaboratively address issues.*** Recent discussions have focused on how we can sustain robust instruction and enhanced support staff monitoring/supporting students' learning/social/emotional needs during the school lockdown period.
11. ***The SMASH Education virtual experiential Core French program has been successfully launched.*** This program provides St. Anne students (Grades 1 – 8) with a Ministry of Education aligned core French supplemental resource. Senior staff continues to work with our union partners to provide direct remote core French instruction at St. Anne Catholic Academy where possible.
12. ***HR staff is monitoring all quarantined staff to ensure that proper parameters are maintained.*** We continue to communicate with all employees regarding travel plans, quarantine requirements that may apply, and the need to commit to the employer to ensure continuity of program delivery and service.
13. ***Timely recruitment efforts are being sustained as we endeavor to bolster supply pools for key employee groups.*** All efforts reflect a deliberate focus on equity.

#### **Retrieval of Personal Belongings**

14. ***TPH has updated their reference document on the “Retrieval of Personal Belongings” (Appendix ‘A’) dated Jan 21, 2021.*** There are no changes with respect to the public health measures that were in the previous TPH document on the same subject dated June 2, 2020.

15. *The stay at home order does not apply if students and staff need to go to school to pick up and drop off material.*

### **Technology**

16. *Additional devices were pre-shipped to Elementary Schools to continue to support student needs for remote learning due to the extended school closures.* An additional 1,600 Chromebooks were pre-shipped to Elementary Schools beyond the 2,500 Chromebooks that were pre-shipped during the first week of January. These devices were pre-shipped to Elementary Schools that were running low (i.e. less than 5) or had depleted their pre-shipment inventory and were delivered on an expedited basis.
17. *Regular processing for secondary schools and the St. Anne Academy virtual school continues to flow, and emergency needs are being addressed.* Emergency needs include expeditiously configuring and delivering iPads with internet.
18. *Supply levels are limited however, supplies are currently ahead of demands.* There are approximately 500 Chromebooks and 680 iPads remaining in supply with the vendor to continue to process and fulfill student device needs. The demand rate decreased after the first two weeks of January.

## **E. IMPLEMENTATION, STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN**

1. *FAQs continue to be gathered from parent feedback.* The board continues to provide updates, frequently asked questions and answers on the board website, social media channels, and shared with families via School Messenger.

## **F. CONCLUDING STATEMENT**

This report is for the consideration of the Board.