



REPORT TO

REGULAR BOARD

RETURN TO SCHOOL UPDATE

*"I can do all things through him who strengthens me."
Philippians 4:13*

Created, Draft	First Tabling	Review
February 11, 2021	February 18, 2021	Click here to enter a date.

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INFORMATION REPORT

Vision:

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

Mission:

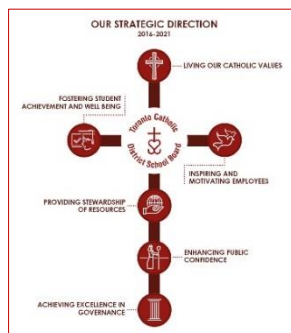
The Toronto Catholic District School Board is an inclusive learning community uniting home, parish and school and rooted in the love of Christ.

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

Brendan Browne, PhD
 Director of Education

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 Facilities, Business and
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A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The last update to the Reopening Action Plan was submitted to the February 11, 2021 Corporate Services 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 province recently announced that March Break is post-poned until mid-April for this school year on the advice of Ontario's Chief Medical Officer and local public health agencies.

Access to Rapid Testing in local pharmacies has recently been made available and communicated to school-based staff. Michael Garron Hospital has also introduced take home COVID-19 oral-nasal testing kits for the East York and Scarborough area.

The consultant report on the results of the Indoor Air Quality study will be presented by Pinchin Ltd. and is included as an appendix to this report for the information of the Board.

TCDSB schools will continue to follow safety measures and guidance from Toronto Public Health as 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

“March” Break

1. *The Ministry announced (on February 11, 2021) that the March Break is postponed until April 12-16, 2021.* The province indicated that this decision was made with the best advice of Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health and public health officials, including consultations with many local Medical Officers of Health.
2. Students and staff are encourage to continue to *access mental health resources available, specifically for managing ongoing stress and anxiety associated with the highly fluid landscape of this school year.* Staff have access to the *Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP)* for assistance with various mental health and other family issues. Many resources *for students seeking assistance with [mental health](#)* concerns can be found on the board’s website.

Access to Rapid Testing

3. The province has confirmed access to *rapid testing in pharmacies for school-based staff.* Testing is voluntary for staff. Information and key messages (Appendix ‘A’), along with the participating pharmacies located throughout the city, has been distributed to staff.
4. *Michael Garron Hospital (MGH) has introduced a new initiative for families of 16 TCDSB schools located in East York and Scarborough . Beginning the week of February 16, MGH will drop off take home COVID-19 oral-nasal testing kits to the 16 schools listed below. These take home test kits are less invasive than the nasopharyngeal COVID test. Families will have access to take-home testing kits to make it easier for students to get tested for COVID-19.*
 - Canadian Martyrs Catholic School
 - Holy Cross Catholic School
 - Holy Name Catholic School
 - Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic School
 - Neil McNeil Catholic Secondary School

- Notre Dame Catholic Secondary School
 - Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School
 - St Anselm Catholic School
 - St Brigid Catholic School
 - St Denis Catholic School
 - St Dunstan Catholic School
 - St Joachim Catholic School
 - St John Catholic School
 - St John XXIII Catholic School
 - St Joseph Catholic School
 - St Patrick Catholic Secondary School
5. ***These take-home testing kits can be used if a student has symptoms of COVID-19 or if the student is sent home because another student or staff member in their class has tested positive for COVID-19.*** Parents will be able to drop off the child's swab to one of 10 nearby designated testing sites for analysis.

Staffing and Recruitment

6. ***HR staff is capitalizing on the College of Teachers' announcement that they will be issuing Temporary Teaching Certificates*** (effective until December 2021) for students who are nearing the completion of their formal Bachelor of Education program. The TCDSB is recruiting these teachers and providing direction to system Principals regarding deployment to address daily absentee challenges not being addressed through normal channels.
7. ***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.
8. ***The Sick Leave & Disability and Academic Services Departments continue to closely monitor leave requests and sporadic employee absences. Principals have been provided a list of contingency plans to ensure continuity of program delivery and student safety.*** Enhancing employee awareness of our employer-sponsored Employee Family Assistance Plan remains a priority.

9. ***Senior TCDSB staff members have maintained regular contact with our union partners (TECT, TSU, and CUPE) to collaboratively address issues.*** Recent discussions are focusing on staffing timelines and proactive planning for September 2021.
10. ***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 has reallocated staff to allow direct core French instruction to begin for all grade 8 students at St. Anne Catholic Academy effective February 16, 2021, while not adversely impacting French program delivery within brick and mortar schools.***
11. ***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.
12. ***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.

Indoor Air Quality

13. ***The report on the results of the Indoor Air Quality study is attached as Appendix 'B'.*** The consultant, Pinchin Ltd., will make a presentation of the results and recommendations. The report indicates that CO2 levels were well controlled in the schools with mechanical ventilation systems, regardless of whether windows were open or not. CO2 level is a good indicator of whether adequate air changes are occurring to help mitigate virus transmission. The report also confirms that portable HEPA filtration units are beneficial in improving the air quality in schools without mechanical ventilation.

Technology

14. ***Orders continue to flow, supply levels are running low, however measures are being taken to increase supply levels.*** There are more than 600 iPads and 600 Chromebooks in our supply. Additional ministry funding was announced which will be used to increase device supplies and fund internet for student remote learning needs.

E. IMPLEMENTATION, STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

1. *Staff and families received communications about the return to in-person learning on February 16, 2021, including expectations, updated screening tool and student passport and secondary timetables.*
2. *A staff and family one-pager* has been developed and is being disseminated to assist with the transition to back to in-person learning.

F. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

This report is for the consideration of the Board.