



REPORT TO

## CORPORATE SERVICES, STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

### STUDENT DEVICE RECOVERY AND REDISTRIBUTION

*Let us go to the Jordan, and let us collect logs there, one for each of us, and build a place there for us to live.” He answered, “Do so.” 2 Kings 6:2*

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#### RECOMMENDATION REPORT

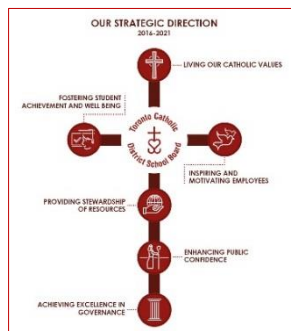
**Vision:**

*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.*



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## **A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to support remote learning, the TCDSB procured and distributed approximately 20,000 devices over the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years. The devices provided were Chromebooks or iPads loaned directly to individual students in need of a device for remote learning. The schools' shared devices already in the schools remained at the school for in-person learning.

When a student no longer requires their loaned device or leaves the TCDSB, the device must be returned to the school. The school then records the recovery and arranges for the device to be picked up and returned to the central supply to be available for other student needs across the system. Students with loaned devices were permitted to keep the device until the end of June 2021. At the end of this school year, the TCDSB will be asking that students to return all loaned devices to their home school.

This report provides information on the device recovery process as well as recommends a Proof-of-Concept for a student device program that combines a formal bring-your-own-device (BYOD) and TCDSB loaner device plan to achieve an equity device strategy for all TCDSB students.

The Proof-of-Concept will demonstrate the feasibility and potential of the student device program concept, and provide information for planning.

*The cumulative staff time required to prepare this report was 25 hours*

## **B. PURPOSE**

This report responds three separate but related items regarding student devices.

1. On September 30, 2020 the Audit Committee recommended the following regarding the student device recovery process:

*The Audit Committee recommend to Board that Staff provide the Board with the process on recovering any devices that were provided on loan for remote learning to students who are no longer students of the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB).*

2. At the Special Board Meeting on June 18, 2020, the Board of Trustees resolved that students keep the loaned devices until the end of June 2021, or when they leave with following motion:

*BE IT RESOLVED: That the TCDSB allow the students who have currently been provided with a Google Chrome Book or iPads to keep these devices until June 2021 or leave the TCDSB;*

3. Also, at the Special Board Meeting on June 18, 2020, within Student Devices Needs report, staff recommended to report back on future device programs as follows:

*That future device programs such as formal bring-your-own-device (BYOD) and low income family device loan program be explored and presented to the Board of Trustees at the end of the COVID-19 pandemic.*

## **C. BACKGROUND**

*In April 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to support a new distance learning model, the TCDSB started distributing computing devices (Chromebooks and iPads) directly to students who requested them and were considered in need.* In general, Chromebooks (simple laptops) were distributed to students in grades 1 to grade 12 who had access to internet at home and LTE-enabled iPads were distributed to students who indicated that they had no internet at home.

1. *The ICT staff developed an application for order fulfilment and asset management including tracking device recovery.* When a device is returned to the school, the Principal updates the record for the student loaner device in the application and then contacts the ICT department to arrange for pickup. The device is then made centrally available for the next order request for any student across the system.
2. *Information and communication were sent to students and families regarding device return.* A letter with initial information was included in the box with the device delivery and further to this an email was sent to families before the end of the 2019-20 school year. Information and instructions for Principals were sent between April and December 2020 regarding device recovery and direction to follow up with their graduating or non-returning students to recover loaned devices.

3. ***Enhancements were made to the application to further assist Principals with device recoveries.*** The application was upgraded to provide a list of students with a demit record that are not returning the following year so that Principals can plan ahead. And a second list is provided of students that are currently are no longer with the TCDSB and have a loaner device that needs to be followed up on and returned.

***TCDSB will be asking all student to return all loaner student devices by the end of June 2021. Schools must use the application and follow up with students that have loaned a device to collect, record and process the device recovery. Students in need of a device for a summer school program will be permitted to hold onto the device until the end of August 2021.***

4. ***The inventory of returned devices presents an opportunity to accelerate objectives in the Information & Technology Strategic Plan while taking equity factors into consideration.*** One of the key results in meeting our objectives for the Information & Technology Strategy to build the foundation for the digitally enabled school is access to devices. This is on track and accelerated by the influx of devices purchased for remote learning. ***There is now an opportunity to shift these returned devices to a student device program*** and implement a new Proof-of-Concept student device program at the TCDSB in the 2021-22 school year.

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

1. ***For the 2021-22 school year the TCDSB has approximately 37,000 school shared and student loaner devices that are four years or newer.*** Out of the 37,000 devices 12,500 are existing school shared devices for in-person learning and 24,500 are devices that were purchased to loan to students for remote learning needs. The school shared devices are made up of desktops, laptops, and tablets, whereas the student loaner devices are laptops (Chromebooks) and tablets (iPads.)
2. ***Schools will be enabled to pivot if there are additional emergency closures in 2021-22 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.*** By keeping the recovered devices at the schools, they will be able to more easily pivot and provide devices to students in need for remote learning should there be emergency school closures in 2021-22.

3. ***Staff are recommending a Proof-of-Concept student device program targeted at Grade 4 student in the 2021-22 school year where all grade 4 students will be asked to have a dedicated device.*** Student in Grade 4 will be expected to have a device through a combination of bring-your-own-device (BYOD) or a TCDSB loaner device. With this new standard for Grade 4 students, teachers will be able to reliably deploy teaching strategies that take advantage of a one-to-one student-to-device learning model. The rationale to start at Grade 4 supports strengthening EQAO scores as students move from Grade 3 to 6.
4. ***The student device program would be supplemented with a formal bring-your-own-device (BYOD) program.*** Families with the means to purchase their own student device would be encouraged to do so and provided with an information, strategies and tips. A BYOD program provides flexibility and eases some financial pressures on the TCDSB.
5. ***Grade 4 students who are unable or unwilling to purchase their own device will be eligible to receive a TCDSB loaner device.*** Families and students will be provided with information, guidance, and tips to receive and use the loaner device. Students with a SEA claim device already have a device and will not be eligible to receive a second device from the student device program.
6. ***A student device program supports the Information & Technology Strategic Plan to build a digitally enabled school, however, more is involved in gaining benefits of student device program for student success.*** A student device program must align with pedagogy and include training and support for staff and students. Digital security awareness and training is a key element for a safe environment. Professional development, in-service programs, guides, and communications will be needed.
7. ***Schools will manage and track their devices inventories as well as students that elect for bring-your-own-device (BYOD.)*** Schools will keep the devices they recover at the end of the 2020-21 school year as their overall school supply and to implement the Proof-of-Concept student device program. They will be responsible for allocating devices and updating asset inventory using systems, processes and procedures provided by the ICT department. This will provide schools with the flexibility to respond to nuances within their schools and support their local needs. They will also track students that elected for BYOD in order to help with research and planning.

8. ***Home internet will not be provided by the TCDSB as part of the student device program.*** The student device program will provide access to devices but not home internet for students and families. The TCDSB Digital Store on the public website provides current information on personal device and home internet options and offers to help guide students and families. Under the ministry Policy/Program Memorandum No. 164, the TCDSB will continue to support remote learning in times of extended interruption with access to devices and internet.
9. ***Research and analysis of the Proof-of-Concept program will help inform implementation of a full program in future years and financial model to grow and sustain the program.*** Information on inventory supply and demand, bring-your-own-device (BYOD) uptake, equity, pedagogy, and training needs will be analysed during the 2021-22 school year to inform future planning and costs to grow and sustain a student device program for the entire system.
10. ***There is no cost for this Grade 4 Proof-of-Concept in 2021-22 because there is a sufficient current inventory of device.*** Devices that will be collected at the end of 2020-21 school will be used for the Proof-of-Concept. However, depending on the percentage of student that bring their own device to school, a fully implemented program is estimated to costs between \$6M to \$12M per year over and above the TCDSB's current budget.

## **E. METRICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

1. Staff will present the Board of Trustees in the Spring of 2022 with the results and additional planning and recommendations for the continuation.

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

1. ***In advance of the end of the year, Principals will be provided with information and direction to collect all devices from students that have loaned them for remote learning needs with the exception of students requiring a device for a summer school program.*** Principals will be directed to collect devices from any summer school students in the fall. Principals will

also be informed to keep the devices for their school supplies in order to implement the Proof-of-Concept for a student device program and be enabled to pivot and support students in need if there are emergency closures in 2021-22.

2. ***In advance of the 2021-22 school year, families will receive communication on the Proof-of-Concept student device program.*** For students in enrolled in the Proof-of-Concept grade, families will receive information and guidance to decide on a TCDSB loaner device or bring-your-own-device (BYOD.)
3. ***Professional development, in-service programs, guides, and communications will be developed and implemented for teachers.*** In addition to this training, TCDSB will also provide training on digital security for staff, students, and families.

## **G. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

That the Board of Trustees support the student device recovery plan and the implementation of a Proof-of-Concept student device program for the 2021-22 school year.