



REPORT TO

## CORPORATE SERVICES, STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

### RETURN TO SCHOOL UPDATE

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

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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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## **A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The last update to the Reopening Action Plan was submitted to the April 22, 2021 Board meeting for information and consideration. This report provides additional information concerning items occurring since that time. The Reopening Action Plan is updated as necessary and is available on the TCDSB website. Key updates and strategies are provided for consideration.

This week's report includes updates from the Ministry of Education regarding the 2021-22 school year. Also included are vaccine rollout information, cycling to school, outdoor classrooms, and technology.

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**

*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**

### **Ministry Announcements**

1. *The Ministry of Education has released some relative information related to planning for the 2021-2022 school year.* Staff have included appropriate

information within the return to school report but other memos are expected over the next few months to prepare for a return to learning in September 2021.

2. ***The Ministry of Education will release further details related to health and safety strategies required for the upcoming school year during the summer of 2021.***
3. ***Further details related to the GSN announcement will be provided in a separate Corporate Services report.*** Money has been allocated to support school boards in facilitating a safe school year. School boards received funding within a number of categories such as staffing, operations, transportation, staffing, technology, mental health, special education, and additional student supports.
4. ***The Ministry has allocated funds to support school-focused nurses in public health units and testing in schools.*** More details related to this funding will be provided at a later date.
5. ***For 2021-2022, school boards will continue to be required to offer remote learning options consistent with PPM 164.*** The deadline for parents to respond as to whether their child will attend in-person or remote classes must be delayed until June 1, 2021 at the earliest. Senior staff continue to work on a communication plan for parents that will include details of learning options for the 2021-2022 school year.
6. ***The Ministry will be providing supplementary elementary digital learning resources through TVO and TFO.*** These resources will be aligned with curriculum expectations for each subject in Grades 1-8 and Kindergarten. These resources will be available for our summer learning program and for in-person and remote learning for the next school year. Students could also review content online at home to help with homework or to support learning retention through the summer months. TCDSB will include a link to the resources on our Summer Playground Learning page on the Board website once it is available.
7. ***Starting September 2021, elementary students should continue to be cohorted with their classmates and their homeroom teacher.*** Specialized teachers (French, Music, HPE, Special Education, etc.) are still able to go into classrooms to provide programming to students. Students may be put into smaller groups for supports (e.g. ESL, Special Education, etc.) with students from other cohorts on Toronto Public Health advice.

8. ***Starting September 2021, secondary students should be timetabled to emphasize cohorting of students as much as possible and limit the number of student-to-student contacts.*** School boards will be limited to two in-person classes (such as quadmestering) in order to maintain contact tracing capabilities.
9. ***The Ministry has launched Ontario's Learning Recovery and Renewal initiative.*** This approach will include a focus on student mental health and well-being, early reading and math, re-engaging students, special education, French language supports, and educator readiness including professional learning communities and opportunities to share effective practices. More information will be forthcoming from the Ministry outlining the details associated with this initiative.
10. ***In 2021-2022, the required number of hours for community involvement activities will be reduced from 40 to a minimum of 20 hours for graduating students.*** The requirement will revert back to 40 hours for the 2022-2023 school year. Staff will review the community service information and advise principals of the new procedures related to this graduation requirement.
11. ***Starting with the Grade 9 cohort in 2021-2022, students will be required to earn two credits online as part of the graduation requirements.*** More information will be provided by the Ministry which will include the opt-out process as well as the extent to which credits earned during remote learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic can be counted toward online learning graduation requirement. Secondary schools should continue to keep track of student enrolment in full-time and adapted model remote learning.
12. ***Students graduating in the 2021-2022 school year are exempted from the literacy graduation requirement.*** This requirement will be restored for students graduating in the 2022-2023 school year.
13. ***EQAO will provide a Fall 2021 administration of the OSSLT in addition to a Spring 2022 administration.*** This will allow students two opportunities to complete the literacy graduation requirement for those students that will need to pass the OSSLT or participate in the literacy course.
14. ***In 2021-2022, regular EQAO assessments will resume.*** All students in Grade 3 and 6 attending in-person learning will participate in the online EQAO math, reading, and writing assessments. Grade 9 students attending in-person will write the Grade 9 math assessment. For all EQAO assessments, including the OSSLT, students who are learning remotely and wish to participate in the assessment can, at the discretion of the school board, attend

in-person for the purpose of participating in the assessment so long as all applicable health and safety measures can be met.

15. ***For 2021-2022, school boards will continue to have flexibility to determine the final evaluation for up to 30% of a student's final mark.*** The use of culminating activities, projects, performances and exams can be considered as part of a final evaluation as per the guidelines in Growing Success.

### **Vaccinations**

16. ***Staff and family communications were shared including information from Toronto Public Health about vaccines, the roll-out, access and a Q&A session with Dr. Vinita Dubey.***
17. ***We continue to monitor for information about vaccine clinics/opportunities and share on our social media channels as appropriate.***
18. ***All TCDSB staff received eligibility letters to date for access to vaccines as per the Ministry and TPH eligibility requirements.***
19. ***Health Canada has approved the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for children ages 12 and up.*** TCDSB will continue to monitor this situation and we look forward to continuing to work closely with TPH and health partners to support any actions. We will share any additional information as soon as it becomes available.

### **Cycling to School**

20. ***Installation of 48 bicycle racks at 34 schools has been completed.*** With the further installation of 33 bike racks at 25 schools over the next couple of weeks, every school will have bicycle parking available. Installation of bike racks at all schools is anticipated to be completed by the end of May, 2021.

### **Outdoor Classrooms**

21. ***Delivery of stools from City supplied logs to 48 schools has been completed.*** Refer to *Appendix 'A'* for the list of schools. COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure Stream (CVRIS) funding totalling \$2M has been approved for an additional 58 outdoors classrooms. Design is underway for these projects, as well as for Playground reserve projects, many of which will also support outdoor learning.

### **Technology**

22. ***Orders continue to flow to students and supply levels are good.*** A final purchase for this year of an additional 3,200 Chromebooks has been ordered.

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

1. *Communications will be shared with all staff and families centrally related to cases in school settings and reminders from TPH about remaining vigilant in practicing health and safety measures when in person learning is active.*

**F. CONCLUDING STATEMENT**

This report is for the consideration of the Board.