



REPORT TO

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND WELL BEING, CATHOLIC EDUCATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

COVID RESPONSE STRATEGY FOR LEARNING

“Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it for me.” Matthew 25:40

| Created, Draft | First Tabling | Review |
|----------------|---------------|---|
| April 26, 2021 | May 6, 2021 | Click here to enter a date. |

Kimberly Dixon, Superintendent of Education
Lori DiMarco, Superintendent of Education
Maria Meehan, Superintendent of Education
Michael Caccamo, Superintendent of Education
Michael Loberto, Superintendent of Planning and Development

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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A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The TCDSB COVID Response Strategy for Learning was developed to provide opportunities for students to ensure continuity of learning as we prepare for a safe return to school in September. Through summer learning opportunities, in multiple delivery options, students in grades K – 12 will have an opportunity to access quality learning opportunities in literacy, numeracy and wellness strategies.

The cumulative staff time required to prepare this report was 30 hours

B. PURPOSE

1. The government has provided funding and asked school boards to develop a COVID Gap Closing Strategy that would focus on priorities to support the learning and health and safety of students. This report outlines the TCDSB strategy.
2. Staff are focussed on an asset-based approach and have developed the TCDSB COVID Response Strategy for Learning (CRS) that is designed to address the opportunity gaps that some students may have experienced. The summer learning opportunities will help retrieve and build critical literacy and numeracy skills that may need more attention after learning during the COVID pandemic. Resources from School Mental Health Ontario will be integrated into programs to support student mental health and well-being.

C. BACKGROUND

1. To fulfil the learning goals of the COVID Response Strategy for Learning for this summer 2021, the following will be offered. TCSDB will follow the direction of Toronto Public Health to determine the delivery model, that include in person and/or remote teaching and learning. Registration in elementary programs will prioritize schools from the Equity Poverty Action Network (EPAN). Registration will occur in phases, based on available spaces. Secondary programs are open to all eligible TCDSB students.
 - Grade 1-3 Summer Learning Program – an evidence- based reading intervention program, that also includes numeracy, to meet the needs of students from identified elementary schools.

- Grade 4 – 5 Summer Learning Program – an inquiry- based program based on the UN Sustainable Development Goals that includes STEAM and experiential learning. This program is offered through funding from the Council of Ontario Directors of Education.
 - Grade 6 – 8 Literacy/Numeracy Summer School – programming will include connections to support well-being and meaningfully connect these elements to the literacy and numeracy expectations.
 - Grade 9 Transition Program – offered for students transitioning from grade 8 to grade 9 at their local secondary school. Students receive one credit for participating in this literacy/numeracy focused program.
 - Grade 9 – 12 Summer School – upgrade and full credit courses.
 - Grade 11 – 12 Focus on Youth (FOY) – an opportunity to provide secondary students with employment and leadership skills while earning two secondary co-op credits in an experiential learning placement. Mental wellness and self-care training will be a component this year for FOY.
 - Multiple Exceptionalities/Developmental Disability (MEDD) Summer School; and
 - K – 12 Summer Playground, optional learning activities for parents and students, offered on the TCDSB website for access throughout the summer, when desired.
2. In partnership with the Special Services department, CRS will support the mental health of students and staff. The aim will be to build capacity through the integration of well-being strategies into revised curriculums and teaching practises during the summer. This will benefit students as they return to school after this challenging year.
3. The Angel Foundation for Learning (AFL) will provide grocery gift cards as part of the Food for Kids student Home Nutrition Program. The program is intended to support online learners with nutritious snacks for the duration of each of these programs:
- Grade 1 -5 Summer Learning
 - Grade 6 – 8 Literacy/Numeracy Summer School
 - Grade 9 Transition Program
 - MEDD Summer School.

D. EVIDENCE/RESEARCH/ANALYSIS

1. “This year has exposed the inequities of society and education.” (Quinn, Gardner, Drummy & Fullan). Health and safety of our students continues to remain a priority, as well as access to quality learning opportunities. Disengagement and opportunity gaps will be addressed through summer learning opportunities. Disengagement and opportunity gaps will be addressed through summer learning opportunities offered through our CRS.

E. METRICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

1. The TCDSB Research Department will work closely with the various departments offering programs through the COVID Response Strategy for Learning, to create and administer the following surveys to monitor success of the programs:
 - Grade 6 – 12 student end of program survey
 - Parent survey for parents of students participating in the Grade 1 – 5 Summer Learning Programs to provide feedback on the programs
 - Staff surveys for staff participating in or leading summer programs
2. The survey results will be used to:
 - Document and track student experiences
 - Monitor progress of the programs: and
 - Make recommendations for improvement for future offerings

F. IMPLEMENTATION, STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Students in EPAN schools will be prioritized for elementary programs. Grades 1 - 8. Principals in EPAN schools will communicate with staff the applicable parameters, in order to identify students that will benefit from the program.

Families will learn of the elementary program opportunities directly through their child’s school in late June for a program start date early July.

Secondary registration will open the week of May 3rd and be communicated through local schools, the TCDSB website, and social media channels.

G. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

This report is for the consideration of the Board.