



REPORT TO

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

**BOARD LEARNING IMPROVEMENT PLAN  
2020-2021 REPORT BACK**

*So then, each of us will be accountable to God. Romans 14:12*

CREATED, DRAFT	FIRST TABLING	REVIEW
July 6, 2021	October 7, 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.*



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## **A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) Learning Improvement Plan K-12 (2018-2021) embodies a commitment to ensure student success through improved student learning and well-being. This annual report documents the progress made on the Board Learning Improvement Plan (BLIP) for 2020-2021 to support student achievement and well-being. It is the final review of the three-year plan ending June 30, 2021.

*The cumulative staff time required to prepare this report was 40 hours.*

## **B. PURPOSE**

This is an annual report on the Board Learning Improvement Plan 2020-2021 to support student achievement and well-being.

## **C. BACKGROUND**

1. It is a Ministry of Education requirement that all Ontario school boards create a Board Learning Improvement Plan (BLIP) to guide their System Improvement Learning Cycle. The Board Learning Improvement Plan is a living document that supports and focuses our collective work in classrooms, schools, and the board, to promote student achievement and well-being.
2. As an operational plan, the Board Learning Improvement Plan reflects the vision for education in Ontario to reach every student through the following priorities:
  - Achieving Excellence: High Levels of Expectations
  - Ensuring Equity
  - Promoting Well-being
  - Enhancing Public Confidence

3. The Board Learning Improvement Plan, aligned with the TCDSB Multi-Year Strategic Plan (2016-2021), and the Pastoral Plan (2018-2021), was informed by the Ontario Ministry of Education foundational strategies and the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF). The plan has four AREAS OF FOCUS, all of which support our strategic direction to *Foster Student Achievement and Well-Being*:
  - A. Home, School and Parish: Nurturing our Catholic Community
  - B. Curriculum, Teaching and Learning: A Focus On Assessment Practices
  - C. Pathways, Planning and Programming: Student Engagement and Well-being
  - D. School and Classroom Leadership: Professional Learning, Collaboration and Engagement
4. The TCDSB Learning Improvement Planning Cycle is used at the Board and School level to improve student learning and achievement:
  - Data Analysis identifies key areas of strength and need (2017-2018 as the baseline).
  - SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time bound) Goals and Targets are informed by areas of need, building on strengths.
  - Evidence-based strategies include classroom strategies and professional learning opportunities.
  - Monitoring provides a framework for ongoing feedback using measurement tools and identifying responsibility.
5. The Toronto Catholic District School Board Learning Improvement Plan K-12, 2018-2021, spans three years and aims to improve student learning and well-being for each student in our care. It is an operational plan that details targeted evidence-based strategies, professional learning opportunities and resources, as well as indicators of success (measures). The document may be accessed on the TCDSB website:

<https://www.tcdsb.org/Board/BoardLearningImprovementPlan/Pages/default.aspx>

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

1. The TCDSB Board Learning Improvement Plan (2018-2021) includes SMART Goals to be achieved by the end of June, 2021. Throughout the year, using a variety of survey tools and quantifiable data sources, TCDSB staff continue to monitor progress against BLIP goals.
2. Each year the Board Learning Improvement Plan Report Back describes the achievement of SMART Goals and targets by the end of each school year.
3. The 2019-2020 school year was unprecedented. The early part of the school year was marked by labour sanctions across Ontario. On March 12, 2020, the Province of Ontario announced that all provincially-funded schools would be shut down to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. All schools remained closed until the end of the school year and 'Distance Learning' replaced 'in-person' learning for all students, K-12.
4. In the spring of 2020, the TCDSB Academic Emergency Response Team (AERT) was established and coordinated all efforts related to student learning during the unprecedented time of distance learning. The 2020-2021 school year continued to be marked significantly by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and adaptations to the learning environment. There were various learning models to meet the requirements of the Ontario curriculum in support of student achievement and well-being (e.g., online or virtual, adaptive, hybrid, bricks-and-mortar or in-person). In addition, during the school year, there were times when all students were required to learn online (e.g., Ontario government mandated 'stay at home' order in January and between April and June, 2021; as well as two-week isolation periods for individual students or cohorts, as required).
5. Due to these exceptional circumstances, in 2020-2021, the majority of target-specific data identified in the TCDSB BLIP were not available. This required staff to adapt their methods to create an overall assessment for each Area of Focus.
6. Staff reviewed progress over the period 2016-2021 and based on various sources of qualitative and quantitative data available to them at this time they created an overall summative assessment of each Area of Focus. This culminating assessment took place in June 2021. To assess progress in achieving the goals of the BLIP, multiple sources of data were considered. As

in previous years, the following structure was used for the annual Board Learning Improvement Plan Report Back to assess overall progress.

<b>Status</b>	<i>Description</i>
On Target (green)	On track
Monitor (yellow)	On track but requires additional support
Action Required (red)	Not on track

## **I. ANALYSIS: MULTIPLE SOURCES OF DATA**

### **A. Areas of Focus: Actions Planned for 2020-2021**

Staff reviewed all of the actions planned for the 2020-2021 school year (refer to BLIP Report Back) and for each Area of Focus, made an overall determination of the status of achievement of those actions (*On Track; Monitor; Action Required*).

<b>Area of Focus A</b>
<b>Home, School, Parish: Nurturing Our Catholic Community</b>
<b><i>Actions planned for 2020-2021</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Field Superintendents and Administrators will encourage staff and student engagement in faith development with a focus on the Pastoral Plan and the year of “We Become”</li> <li>• Provide in-services for elementary <i>Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ</i> and continue to provide support and resources for secondary</li> <li>• Central staff will review existing connections between parishes and schools and review with the Archdiocese ways to strengthen, including the sharing of resources</li> <li>• Add items to Administrator Voice Survey regarding participation in retreats</li> </ul> <p><i>Strategies for Living our Catholic Values during a Pandemic</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revisioning faith formation/animation through electronic communications, videoconferencing, live-streams, webcasts, social media: Nurturing our Families of Faith Newsletters; Monthly Newsletter and Virtues; Bi-Monthly Digital Resources for Administrators and Teachers; Email communications to Everyone on Exchange and through School Messenger; Twitter account and YouTube Channel specifically for Nurturing Our Catholic Community (NCC)</li> <li>• Focus system initiatives for students and staff that promote Catholic values using the themes of: “Rooted in Christ: we Become”; “Nurturing Hope” in Catholic Education</li> </ul>
<b>Status for 2020-2021: <i>On Track</i></b>

<b>Area of Focus B</b>
<b>Curriculum, Teaching and Learning: A Focus on Assessment</b>
<b><i>Actions planned for 2020-2021</i></b>
<p>School Staff, supported by Central Resource:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will use non-EQAO data to assess student learning in the areas of Literacy and Numeracy (no Primary and Junior EQAO assessments took place in the 2020-2021 school year)</li> <li>• Will use online tools to support student learning</li> <li>• Will begin implementing the new Math Curriculum Grades 1-8 with a focus on culturally responsive pedagogy</li> <li>• Will work in cross panel teams to develop strategies to support students as they transition from elementary to secondary; focus on math, assessment, and mental health</li> </ul>
<b>Status for 2020-2021: <i>Monitor</i></b>

<b>Area of Focus C</b>
<b>Pathways, Planning and Programming: Student Engagement and Well-Being</b>
<b><i>Actions planned for 2020-2021</i></b>
<p><i>Pathways Programming</i></p> <p>Central staff will continue to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer centrally organized virtual opportunities to meet Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) requirements and collaborate with community partners; support SHSM teams and students in home schools and Virtual School to complete SHSM diploma requirements</li> <li>• Promote Dual Credit program, and highlight how it can support Student Success [i.e. SHSM, Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) and School Within a Collage Program (SWAC)]</li> <li>• Support student access (in home schools and Virtual School), to central co-op placements by connecting with community partners</li> <li>• Offer students OYAP opportunities through co-op at all levels (i.e. participant, registered, and/or certified level one apprentice); explore opportunities for new accelerated OYAP partnerships and programming</li> <li>• Focus on an integration of experiential learning opportunities across various curriculum areas</li> <li>• Work with Guidance, Principals and myBlueprint staff to continue to promote All About Me in Primary/ Junior Grades to ensure that all Gr. 8 and 12 students have access and opportunity to complete the Exit Survey; focus on student transition from elementary to secondary</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Secondary Guidance to focus on student transition from Gr. 12 to post-secondary</li> </ul> <p><i>Student Well-Being</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central staff will: support the expansion of Stop the Stigma to additional elementary schools and Virtual School; work with Mental Health team to offer PD of new Well-Being strategy to school based Well-Being teams</li> </ul> <p><i>Equity and Inclusive Education</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In collaboration with Educational Research, implement plans to launch the collection of identity statistics.</li> </ul>
<b>Status for 2020-2021:</b> <i>Monitor</i>

<b>Area of Focus D</b>
<b>School and Classroom Leadership: Professional Learning, Collaboration and Engagement</b>
<b><i>Actions planned for 2020-2021</i></b>
<p>School Staff, supported by Central Resource:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will focus on inquiry-based professional learning at the local level (new math curriculum, culturally responsive teaching)</li> <li>• Will collaborate in cross panel teams to address transition needs (new math curriculum, culturally responsive teaching)</li> <li>• A Revised Dialogue Guide will be used by SOs, Principals, and Teachers to support staff engagement, professional learning and monitoring during the 2020-2021 school year. The guide will address areas of focus that emerged from the results of the <i>Teaching and Learning During the COVID-19 Pandemic</i> surveys (<i>Student Voice, Teacher Voice, Administrator Voice and Parent Voice</i>). These areas include student engagement, equity, and the use and access of technology.</li> </ul> <p><i>Staff Well-Being</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reconvene the Staff Well-Being Committee to review the draft Staff Well-Being Strategy based on earlier discussions in 2019, meeting with senior staff to secure a budget for this portfolio, launch Staff Well-Being survey, Guarding Minds, possibly with the help of a consultant from Canadian Mental Health Association.</li> </ul> <p><i>Equity and Inclusive Education</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In collaboration with Educational Research, an analysis of the Workforce census will take place.</li> </ul>
<b>Status for 2020-2021:</b> <i>Monitor</i>



## **B. Communication, Alignment, and Monitoring**

The Board Learning Improvement Plan (BLIP) includes actions to support communication, alignment, and monitoring. To help achieve the goals of the BLIP all of the planned actions listed below were implemented with success.

<b><i>Actions planned and successfully implemented in 2020-2021</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Central Staff will communicate BLIP connection to professional learning initiatives</li><li>• K-12 Principal Meeting Agendas will explicitly identify connections to all 4 areas of BLIP</li><li>• Field superintendents will implement the BLIP (Dialogue Guide and Summary Template) and present twice per year at Education Council</li><li>• School Administrators, Central Staff, and Teachers will use the Dialogue Guides to support monitoring of the BLIP and to inform the school planning.</li></ul>

## **C. School Learning Improvement Planning: 2020-2021**

The School Learning and Improvement Planning (SLIP) process requires dialogue and coordinated efforts between Principals, Schools Teams, and Area Superintendents. Despite the unprecedented challenges of the 2020-2021 school year, exemplary improvement planning efforts were evident across the system.

Each elementary and secondary school engaged in dialogue and planning in their School Improvement Teams. There was formal reporting using a survey twice during the 2020-2021 school year. The survey was research-informed and supported goal-setting, collection of evidence, and ongoing monitoring at the school level.

Each elementary and secondary school reviewed evidence and assessed their status on all the Areas of Focus of the BLIP and the five areas of focus for learning identified during the pandemic: Student Engagement, Social-Emotional Connections, Equity, Access and use of technology, and Teaching and Learning online (hybrid or virtual).

Following review and assessment, schools identified two areas of focus: (1) student achievement (literacy, numeracy etc.), and (2) other area (e.g., student engagement, well-being, etc.). Each school set SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable,



Results Oriented and Time bound) for each area of focus. Plans including next steps, supports needed and monitoring were submitted and School Reports were generated for use by each Area Superintendent to guide dialogue and improvement planning.

Preliminary analysis indicated that the large majority of elementary schools chose *numeracy* as their student achievement area of focus; the majority of secondary schools chose either *credit accumulation* or *numeracy*. In terms of other goals, both elementary and secondary schools identified *student engagement*, *mental health and well-being* as areas of focus.

Board-level trends were shared with central and senior staff help inform Board-level planning through review, dialogue, and coordinated efforts in preparation of the new TCDSB Board Learning Improvement Plan.

#### **D. Board-wide Achievement Data**

All K-12 EQAO assessments for the 2019-2020 school year were cancelled, as per direction from the Ministry of Education, due to the extraordinary circumstances facing the province. In 2020-2021, the regular, annual EQAO assessments did not take place within the TCDSB. Likewise, within the TCDSB, administration of the Canadian Achievement Test (CAT) was cancelled. For these reasons, board-wide student assessment data that would ordinarily be available in a regular school year, were not available in June 2020 and June 2021. Teachers engaged in ongoing classroom assessment and feedback to inform instruction and report card marks. Indicators of student success continue to be evident in the levels of credit accumulation of TCDSB students and in their high graduation rates (the latest public reports show that 88.8% of TCDSB Grade 9 students graduate in 5-years; this is higher than the 87.2% graduation rate for Ontario).

#### **E. Board-wide Survey Data**

To help inform planning in the area of teaching and learning, in June 2020 and June 2021, a series of new surveys replaced the annual spring surveys. These surveys addressed a wide range of topics including the learning environment, attitudes and engagement, perceptions of safety, and mental health and wellness. Consistent with reports of educators from other jurisdictions, results pointed to several areas that require focus in support of an effective distance-learning environment: student engagement, mental health and wellness (social-emotional connections), inequities that impact learning, methods of delivering quality instruction, and the access to and use of technology. All of these domains, which place the student at the centre of

learning, were considered when planning for improvement and in preparation for the new Board Learning Improvement Plan.

## **II. OVERALL: AREAS OF FOCUS**

The table below shows the status of each of the Areas of Focus. The status for 2020-2021 is based on the analysis from various sources described above and is based on a summary of the three years of the plan.

	<b>Area of Focus</b>	<b>Status: 2020-2021</b>
A	Home, School and Parish	On Track
	Nurturing our Catholic Community	On Track
B	Curriculum, Teaching and Learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literacy</li> <li>• Numeracy</li> </ul>	Monitor Action Required
	A Focus On Assessment Practices	Action Required
C	Pathways, Planning and Programming	Monitor
	Student Engagement and Well-Being	Monitor
D	School and Classroom Leadership	Monitor
	Professional Learning, Collaboration and Engagement	Monitor

## **E. METRICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

1. The TCDSB 2018-2021 Board Learning Improvement Plan has provided a solid foundation upon which to grow and act. Directions and priorities for 2021-2022 have been communicated to all schools in September 2021 as the new School Learning Improvement Planning cycle begins.
2. The direction from the Ministry of Education to Boards has been to ensure that equity is integral to all aspects of learning and improvement planning. There may also be an expectation in future to merge the operational plans that address equity and learning into a single, aligned Board Equity and Learning Plan (BELP).
3. Considerations from research on school effectiveness, feedback from the Ministry of Education and the TCDSB community will inform the new Board

Equity and Learning Plan. This operational plan will be aligned with the Multi-Year Strategic Plan which is to be launched in 2022.

4. Aligned with Ministry of Education goals, a separate report to Board in November 2021 will include the TCDSB Professional Learning Plan.
5. The next report on the Board Learning and Equity Plan will take place in the fall of 2022 and will have a greater emphasis on equity.

## **F. CONCLUDING STATEMENT**

This report is for the information of the Board.