



REPORT TO

REGULAR BOARD

2022 REPORT ON ELEMENTARY PROGRAMMING AND ENROLMENT

“and I have filled him with divine spirit,[a] with ability, intelligence, and knowledge in every kind of craft”
Exodus 31:3

Drafted

May 30, 2022

Meeting Date

June 9, 2022

Lori DiMarco, Superintendent of Curriculum Leadership & Innovation; Academic ICT

Michael Loberto, Superintendent of Planning and Development

Barbara Leporati, Senior Coordinator of Planning Services

INFORMATION REPORT

Vision: *IN GOD'S IMAGE: Growing in Knowledge, with Justice and Hope.*

Mission: *Nurturing the faith development and academic excellence of our Catholic learning community through the love of God, neighbour, and self.*



MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN
2022 - 2025

IN GOD'S IMAGE: Growing in Knowledge, with Justice and Hope



Brendan Browne
Director of Education

Adrian Della Mora
Associate Director of Academic
Affairs & Chief Operating Officer

Derek Boyce
Associate Director of Facilities,
Business & Community
Development

Ryan Putnam
Chief Financial Officer & Treasurer

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides a summary of programming and initiatives that have been implemented in TCDSB elementary schools over the past 10 years. Our programming reflects our intentional approach to strengthen all local school programs linked to their parishes and connected to their communities. The report also provides observations about enrolment trends in our elementary schools over this period, explanations for enrolment variability and next steps to strategically grow enrolment.

The cumulative staff time required to prepare this report was 50 hours

B. PURPOSE

This report responds to the following motion that was passed at the April 30, 2022, meeting of the Corporate Services Committee. The motion relates to the 2022-23 to 2024-25 Consensus Enrolment Projections report:

“that Staff come back with a report documenting the initiatives introduced at the elementary panel over the last 10 years to increase enrolment.”

C. BACKGROUND

1. As part of the Long-Term Accommodation and Program Plan (LTAPP) for the TCDSB, various initiatives / programs have been implemented in the TCDSB since 2012.
2. In 2012, the TCDSB launched a department for 21st Century Learning to focus on raising awareness about various related topics in education and to focus professional learning and student learning on the future. Initiatives in this department included a focus on:
 - The 4 C’s of creativity, communication, collaboration and critical thinking. (the global view (‘why’) of 21C learning)
 - The NeXt Lesson developed instruction efficacy focused on the 6 competencies: collaboration, skilled communication, real world problem solving, knowledge construction, self-regulation and the use of ICT for learning. (the road map (‘how’) of 21C Learning)

- The Third Teacher (the learning environment as the 3rd teacher, with the 1st teacher being the adults in a child's life, the 2nd teacher being the student's peers) and Reggio Emilia inspired Early Learning which incorporates the Third Teacher emphasis on the learning environment.
 - Inquiry-based learning / design thinking
 - 21C Innovators
 - Makerspaces and Learning Commons
 - Introduction of iPads and Chromebooks in the classroom to facilitate learning
 - Curriculum related ties to: coding, robotics, 3-D Printing, STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math)
 - Using G-Suite in the classroom and for blended and virtual learning
 - Implementation of Brightspace (by D2L) Learning Management System
3. All Grade 1 to 4 students studying in English in the TCDSB take Core French for 30 minutes per day for four days per week. All Grade 5 to 8 students studying in English in the TCDSB take French for 30 minutes per day for five days per week.

The TCDSB has a history of offering Core French beginning in Grade 1, while many other boards do not begin offering it until Grade 4.

4. The TCDSB offers Extended French in 19 elementary schools. Extended French enables students to not only study French as a subject but also to study other subjects with French being the language of instruction. Extended French is sometimes referred to as Middle French Immersion.

Extended French in the TCDSB is offered beginning in Grade 5.

5. The TCDSB offers French Immersion, which is sometimes referred to as Early French Immersion. TCDSB has 19 elementary schools that offer French Immersion. Programs were introduced as follows:
- Pre-2012 – five schools (K-8)
 - 2012 – one school (K-8)
 - 2013 – one school (K-8, Gr 8 was added this year)
 - 2015 – two schools (K-7, Gr 8 to be added in 2022-2023)
 - 2017 – five schools (K-4, Gr 5 to be added in 2022-2023)
 - 2018 – five schools (K-3, Gr 4 to be added in 2022-2023)

Prior to full day kindergarten, French Immersion in the TCDSB was offered beginning in senior kindergarten. Schools with French Immersion began offering the program in year 1 of kindergarten (formerly junior kindergarten) either when they implemented full day kindergarten (if they were already a French Immersion school) or when French Immersion began (if it was started after the implementation of full day kindergarten.) This program has increased by 280% since 2012 with noted staffing concerns outlined by staff in several Board reports.

6. All elementary schools in the TCDSB offer vocal music and either instrumental music band or instrument music strings.

TCDSB continues to explore the possibility of having an Arts Focused school at the new St. Raymond site.

In the TCDSB a small percentage of elementary schools have indicated a local focus on music that goes beyond the classroom and curriculum expectations. Staff continues to nurture these programs and share promising practices with neighbouring school communities.

7. Promoting coding and robotics in the TCDSB has been a focus as part of the TCDSB21C initiatives since 2012. The Ministry of Education introduced coding into the elementary mathematics curriculum in 2020. TCDSB has promoted coding through many initiatives over the years, including, but not limited to:

- Hour of Code, Scratch Coding
- External supports: The Learning Partnership Coding Quest Program, Girls Who Game, CS First, Girls Who Code, Canada Learning Code
- Robotics focused workshops: Arduino, Micro:bits, Lego Robotics
- Focus on introductory coding devices such as: Code & Go Robot Mouse, Dash & Dot, Think & Learn Code-a-pillar

As part of the Curriculum Leadership & Innovation Department the TCDSB21C team works with the Student Success, Equity, NCC and Special Services Departments to support the integration and expansion of these programs through professional development opportunities and strategic networking. The importance of these programs is reinforced at monthly Principal meetings.

8. Reggio Emilia Early Learning is an educational philosophy with a unique pedagogical approach to preschool and primary education. It is student-centred and uses self-directed and experiential learning practices. It is an exploration, discovery and play-based approach in which students learn from other students and their environment. It incorporates the philosophy of the Third Teacher.

Bishop Macdonell was founded as a Reggio Emilia inspired STEAM-focused school and it opened its doors in September 2019. Three other schools have made local decisions to focus on Reggio Emilia Inspired Early Learning. While other schools have not implemented specific Reggio Emilia programs, many teachers have incorporated Reggio Emilia practices into their daily instruction and networked with Reggio schools to stay current.

9. STEAM is an integrated approach to curriculum through science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics. In addition to Bishop Macdonell which was founded in 2019 as a Reggio Emilia inspired STEAM-focused school, many of our schools have integrated STEAM inspired instructional practices into their academic programs.
10. Local school improvement teams, in consultation with their Principal, can determine local needs for initiatives based on articulated student interest and expertise of the staff. In addition to the programs listed above, schools have indicated that the following initiatives have been implemented, that do not include student fees for participation:
 - Communications Technology / Media Arts
 - Mental Health and Well-Being Programs (ie Stop the Stigma, Roots of Empathy, Christian Meditation, etc)
 - Outdoor Education
 - Dance
 - Drama
 - Student Leadership
 - ECO School
 - Experiential Learning
 - Lego
 - Chess
 - Peer Tutoring

D. EVIDENCE/RESEARCH/ANALYSIS

1. An enrolment trend analysis conducted by staff comparing enrolment patterns over the period 2018 – 2022 in 8 schools boards (DCDSB, DDSB, DPCDSB, PDSB, **TCDSB**, TDSB, YCDSB and YRDSB) revealed the following:

- All 8 boards experienced similar enrolment trends over this period;
- In 2018 the TCDSB experienced the greatest percentage increase in enrolment among the 8 boards;
- In 2019 the TCDSB was among 6 of the 8 boards that experienced a percentage increase in enrolment;
- In 2020 (onset of COVID), with the exception of the DCDSB, all other 7 school boards experienced a percentage decrease in enrolment;
- In 2021, with the exception of the DDSB, all other 7 school boards experienced a percentage decrease in enrolment. The DDSB's significant percentage increase in enrolment is referenced in a previous report by planning staff that highlights families' propensity to move out of the city for affordability reasons.
- All eight boards are projecting a percentage decrease in enrolment for the 2022 academic year with the TCDSB experiencing the second lowest decrease out of the 8 boards.

2. Impact of various program initiatives on enrolment:

- It is difficult to relate enrolment fluctuations to implementation of programming such as STEAM, Experiential Learning and Drama. Many factors contribute to enrolment increases/decreases including capital improvements, construction, relocation of students and boundary adjustments. As many of these happen simultaneously, fluctuations may be caused by competing factors.
- Over the period 2012-2020 (pre-COVID) 49% of our elementary schools experienced an increase in enrolment while 51% experienced a decline in enrolment.
- As identified in the Consensus Enrolment Projections Report, COVID-19 had a negative impact on overall elementary student enrolment.
- Of the 38 TCDSB elementary schools that had either an Extended French or French Immersion program, 45% experienced sustained enrolment growth post implementation of the French specialty program while 55% experienced a decline in enrolment post implementation of their French specialty program. Where French Immersion was

introduced, there was typically an enrolment decline in surrounding schools as the new program was phased in.

- Over this period, the TCDSB has implemented hundreds of child care, recreation and early years programs in our schools offering parents choices for quality child care and support within their child's school community. Before and After School programs are offered in 130 TCDSB schools (only schools exempted are linked to a lack of interest). This has enhanced the TCDSB's service excellence and favourably impacted student enrolment/retention.
- Music / Arts – there is no known link between increased enrolment and the TCDSB's K-8 approach to vocal and instrumental music. Qualitative feedback (parent/guardian/student and staff) validates the importance of these programs to student engagement. The St. Raymond site has not yet been built thus no new program has been implemented.
- Coding and Robotics – the introduction of these programs increases our schools' competitive advantage. Feedback from our Principals indicates increased interest in school consideration/adoption of these programs.

E. METRICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

1. TCDSB schools continue to implement local initiatives based on student and parent/guardian interest and staff expertise. To sustain/grow our elementary enrolment, we continue to encourage our teachers to complete additional qualifications and participate in Board in-services so that they can help expand student access to these high value-added programs in all of our schools (every school a great school mindset). The fact that teachers can transfer from one school to another poses both opportunities and challenges to these strategic programs.
2. TCDSB will be developing a new Long Term Accommodation and Program Plan (LTAPP) which will provide a strategic and equitable programming approach.
3. Staff will conduct an environmental scan of co-terminus board middle schools and local private elementary schools to identify programs that we should offer to retain our competitive advantage (to inform our LTAPP planning).

F. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

This report is for the information of the Board of Trustees.