



## REPORT TO

## REGULAR BOARD

# UPDATE ON PREMIER'S COMMUNITY HUBS ADVISORY GROUP REPORT

*Wealth gained hastily will dwindle, but whoever gathers little by little will increase it...Proverbs 13:11*

Created, Draft	First Tabling	Review
August 18, 2015	August 27, 2015	Click here to enter a date.
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<b>INFORMATION REPORT</b>		

### 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 rooted in the love of Christ. We educate students to grow in grace and knowledge and to lead lives of faith, hope and charity*



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## **A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Toronto Catholic District School Board is committed to ensuring the most efficient use of space in all schools, and is exploring the potential of integrating important community programs and services in Board facilities.

In response to the Premier's Community Hub Framework Advisory Group's report entitled: *Community Hubs in Ontario: A Strategic Framework and Action Plan*, staff will review the recommendations set out by the Advisory Group to the Ministry of Education, and advise on how the Board can improve program and service delivery through community hubs in key schools throughout the system.

## **B. BACKGROUND**

1. On March 20, 2015, Premier Kathleen Wynne appointed Karen Pitre as Special Advisor on Community Hubs and Chair of the Advisory Group. On April 8, 2015, the Premier appointed nine members to the Community Hub Framework Advisory Group to work with the Special Advisor in order to review current provincial policies and develop a framework for adapting existing public assets to become community hubs.
2. On August 10, 2015, The Ministry of Education issued a report on the findings of the Premier's Community Hub Framework Advisory Group entitled: *Community Hubs in Ontario: A Strategic Framework and Action Plan*. The report can be downloaded by following the link below: <http://www.ontario.ca/page/community-hubs>

Copies of the report will be provided to Trustees at the August 27, 2015 meeting of the Board.

3. The Advisory Group's report provides specific recommendations to help the Province review current policies and develop a comprehensive framework to adapt existing public assets into community hubs.
4. The Community Hubs in Ontario report identified three categories of policy and regulatory barriers that the Government of Ontario should address in

order to become an "enabler" of community hub development and sustainability:

- Barriers to coordinated planning;
- Barriers to integrated service delivery; and
- Barriers to community use of community infrastructure and publicly owned facilities, such as schools.

5. The report also outlines broad recommendations for overcoming the aforementioned barriers.

- Establish a provincial secretariat for community hubs
- Support integrated and longer-term local planning
- Remove barriers and create incentives for integrated service delivery
- Ensure financially sustainable community hubs
- Increase local capacity
- Evaluate and monitor outcomes; and
- Develop a provincial strategy for public properties

6. Furthermore, the report also recommended that the Province, "on an expedited basis," amend *Ontario Regulation 444/98* of the *Education Act*, which governs the disposition of surplus schools. Two amendments were proposed, under the title "short term strategy for school property":

- Extending the 90 day circulation period of surplus property to 180 days and
- Creating an exemption to the requirement that properties be sold at Fair Market Value.

The proposed amendments are intended to reduce barriers to the formation of community hubs while school boards are right-sizing their portfolios of school properties.

7. The Provincial Government is committed to the efficient use of public assets, and is promoting collaboration between school boards, municipalities, and other community partners.

8. With respect to school boards, the Advisory Group report highlights the Ministry of Education initiative encouraging boards to right-size school facilities given changing demographic trends in order to ensure effective program delivery.

9. In addition, the report states that school boards should continue to diligently review their short and long-term accommodation needs in consultation with communities, which may still result in school consolidations or closures.
10. As outlined in *Appendix 'A'*, the Ministry of Education is supportive of the Advisory Group recommendations, and will work collaboratively with other ministries, school boards, municipalities, and community partners to implement them.
11. Staff will review the action plan, and prepare a further report outlining the impact of, and how the TCDSB can implement the Advisory Groups recommendations regarding community hubs and improved service delivery in key under-utilized educational facilities throughout the City of Toronto.

## **C. CONCLUDING STATEMENT**

This report is for the consideration of the Board.