



REPORT TO

GOVERNANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

SCHOOLCONNECTS FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

“The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.”

2 Peter 3:9

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INFORMATION REPORT

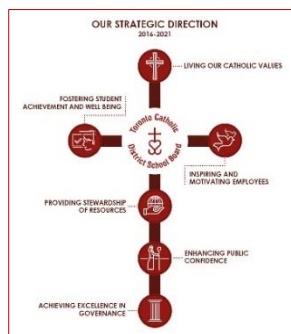
Vision:

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 TCDSB currently uses SchoolConnects in the Secondary Schools. This service will be extended to Elementary Schools during this school year.

This application provides parents of TCDSB students with automated telephone, e-mail, SMS text and social media notifications regarding student absences and lates, as well as general or emergency broadcasts.

SafeArrival is a feature of SchoolConnects that is used by most Ontario school boards. SafeArrival provides a method for parents, guardians, and caregivers to communicate planned pupil absences or lateness to the school.

This report summarizes the plans and costs for the implementation of SchoolConnects, SafeArrival and CASL compliance for all schools in the TCDSB during this school year.

The cumulative staff time required to prepare this report was 4 hours.

B. PURPOSE

1. At the September 21, 2017 regular Board meeting, the Board referred the following CPIC recommendation to the Governance and Policy Committee: *“To provide a report on the costs and benefits of investing in SchoolConnects e-mail at the Elementary Panel so that the parents of Elementary students can be reached by email”*
2. This report outlines the functions, features and benefits of SchoolConnects for Secondary and Elementary Schools.

C. BACKGROUND

1. SchoolConnects is an innovative application that is used at the Board to inform Secondary School parents each morning and evening of student absences, skips and lates through an automated telephone call and/or e-mail. Secondary schools also use this application to send telephone, email and text bulletins or announcements to parents.

2. Since its implementation in 2003, SchoolConnects has provided Secondary School administrators a valuable tool for rapid communications to parents about school activities and serious incidents at the school or community.
3. We are extending the features and functions noted in Appendix A to the Elementary Schools. Some of the features and functions relevant to the needs of Elementary Schools are the following:
 - Quickly deliver daily attendance, special announcements, and school-wide or district-wide messages to parents, staff, and school groups. Including general, emergency, transportation, library and group/team messages.
 - Enables school administrators to very quickly send voice, email and SMS text messages to parents and/or staff, regarding any type of school or district related event.
 - Easy communication about transportation issues, weather delays, parent nights, good news stories, last minute cancellations, emergencies, and daily attendance issues.
 - Access through various devices thus reducing the hours needed to make phone calls to parents.
4. SafeArrival is an included feature that is used by most Ontario School Boards. Parents, guardians and caregivers can report a student's absence or lateness to the school via SafeArrival. This can be done prior to the students expected arrival to school. The current process requires staff at the school to listen to voice messages, or take phone calls and transcribe the information.
5. The SafeArrival option assists schools with enhancing student safety and attendance taking procedures. School boards that have implemented this option have reported being able to repurpose saved time from absence management to other important tasks.
6. Another feature included with SchoolConnects is the management of e-mail subscribers who have either opted out or opted in to receive commercial related messages to ensure compliance with CASL (Canadian Anti-spam Legislation). Compliance with CASL is federally legislated requirement.
7. The Board will be proceeding with a staged implementation:
 - A. Ensuring all Secondary Schools are CASL compliant.

- B. Consultation with the TSU Joint Technology Committee to discuss an implementation plan for SafeArrival.
- C. Implement SafeArrival for Secondary Schools
- D. Since this service is completely new to the Elementary Schools an implementation plan will need to be developed. The implementation plan for Elementary Schools will take into consideration:
 - Timing of the roll-out of these new functions and features with consideration of other initiatives (e.g., School Cash Suite, etc.)
 - Training and documentation for staff and parents
 - Consultation and communication plan
 - Phased-in roll-out plan and schedule

8. The following is a summary of the current commitments and on-going additional costs. Amounts shown are excluding taxes.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Total
Elem School - SchoolConnects	\$1 500 setup	\$122 000	\$122 000	\$122 000	\$367 500
Elem School - SafeArrival		\$91 500	\$91 500	\$91 500	\$274 500
Sec School - SchoolConnects	\$60 000 (*committed)	\$60 000	\$60 000	\$60 000	\$240 000 **
Sec School - Safe Arrival		\$45 000	\$45 000	\$45 000	\$135 000
Total	\$1 500	\$318 500	\$318 500	\$318 500	\$1 015 500 **

*This chart shows costs to be paid in addition to the already committed amount of \$60 000 for Secondary SchoolConnects (17-18).

**Since there is already a commitment of \$60 000 per year for Secondary SchoolConnects going forward, the net new funds required for the SchoolConnects and SafeArrival, over the next three years is \$1 015 500 - \$240 000 = \$775 500 (or \$258 500 per year)

D. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

This report is for the consideration of the Governance and Policy Committee.

