



REPORT TO

REGULAR BOARD

RETURN TO SCHOOL UPDATE

*"The Lord gives sight to the blind, the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down, the Lord loves the righteous."
Psalm 146:8*

Created, Draft	First Tabling	Review
January 20, 2021	January 28, 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:

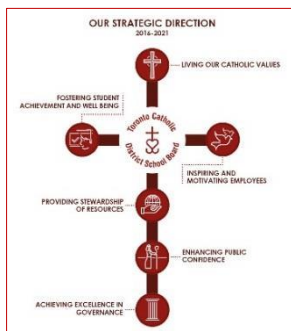
The Toronto Catholic District School Board is an inclusive learning community uniting home, parish and school and rooted in the love of Christ.

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 last update to the Reopening Action Plan was submitted to the January 21, 2021 Corporate Services, Strategic Property and Planning Committee meeting for information and consideration. This report provides additional information concerning items occurring over the last week. The Reopening Action Plan is updated as necessary and is available on the TCDSB website. Key updates and strategies are provided for consideration.

The Hospital for Sick Children has updated their guidance documents relating to school operation. The Ministry has posted additional safety measures as schools begin to reopen regionally.

Preliminary data obtained from the Hospital for Sick Children with regard to Phase 1 Asymptomatic Test Pilot results is provided.

Staffing and Recruitment continue through the shutdown with a focus on retention and support of school-based programs through the shutdown period.

Toronto Public Health (TPH) has updated their guidance on the Retrieval of Personal Belongings from school buildings. There are no changes in Health and Safety measures already in place at TCDSB.

Technology continues to be distributed to students in need.

TCDSB schools will continue to follow safety measures and guidance from Toronto Public Health when schools return to in person learning.

The cumulative staff time required to prepare this report was 20 hours

B. PURPOSE

To provide the Board with updates as they pertain to the TCDSB Reopening Action Plan.

C. BACKGROUND

1. *The TCDSB Reopening Action Plan, Staff Manual and Transition to Distance Learning Plan continue to reflect the process for operating schools safely.* Items from Board motions and Ministry updates that are confirmed have been included as required. Schools will continue to follow established protocols for virtual and in person learning.

D. EVIDENCE/RESEARCH/ANALYSIS

Additional health and safety measures

2. *The Hospital for Sick Children, on January 21, 2021, updated their [Guidance for School Operation during a Pandemic](#).* The opinion of the Hospital is that a daily in-person school model is best as it allows for consistency, stability and equity regardless of the region in which children live. An important factor to consider in this respect is emerging evidence indicating inequalities in the social and economic burden of COVID-19, which may further disadvantage children/youth living in areas with higher infection burden where educational inequality and barriers to online learning may be more pronounced. The public school system is uniquely positioned to address some of the inequities that disproportionately impact Black, Indigenous, People of Colour (BIPOC) and other disadvantaged groups in Ontario.
3. *The Province, at the writing of this report, has not yet provided a response to the updated guidance by the Hospital for Sick Children tables.* However, they have updated the Ontario COVID-19 response page to include additional safety measures to be employed as school regions reopen.
4. *The following new health and safety measures will be put in place in all Ontario elementary and secondary schools:*
 - students in Grades 1 to 12 must wear masks or face coverings (*In TCDSB Plan*)
 - in schools, including in hallways and during classes
 - on school transportation
 - outdoors during recess, where distance cannot be maintained
 - enhanced screening protocols will be recommended by the Chief Medical Officer of Health — Ontario’s COVID-19 School and Child Care Screening Tool, will be updated to reflect the new screening criteria (*TCDSB plan includes daily entry/exit screening of students through use of a passport*)

- targeted COVID-19 testing will be expanded for asymptomatic students

COVID-19 Vaccinations

5. ***The Hospital for Sick Children has provided TCDSB with preliminary data regarding the Phase 1 Ministry of Education Asymptomatic Testing Pilot.***
The Hospital is further analyzing the data and will provide their report to the Ministry of Education. The Ministry will then provide a final report with details regarding Phase 2 of the asymptomatic testing, which will be shared with the Trustees and parent communities.

SCHOOL	#STUDENTS TESTED	#STAFF TESTED	#FAMILY TESTED	%POSITIVITY RATE
St. Fidelis	22	3	75	3.0
Chaminade College	44	12	8	0
St. John the Evangelist	182	47	129	0.83
St. Roch	64	0	0	0
Msgr Percy Johnson	185	60	2	0.88

Staffing and Recruitment

6. ***The Human Resources (HR) Department continues to support critical school-based programs during the school lockdown period.*** We are capitalizing on recent rule changes that expand the use of retired teachers and administrators. In particular, we are using retired administrators to bolster school-based administrative and supervision needs in cases involving family status needs. Occasional teachers are also being used temporarily to support in-person Special Education Program instruction.
7. ***HR staff is sustaining our commitment to enhancing each school's allocation of Lunch Time Supervisors as well as each elementary school's ability to utilize their valued Lunch Time Supervisors for an additional 1.5 hours per day to June 2021.***
8. ***Senior HR staff is analyzing enrolment projections to proactively plan for potential staffing scenarios related to September school staffing requirements.*** Timely communication with the Ministry of Education will inform our approach.

9. ***The Sick Leave & Disability Department continues to diligently manage its extensive active sick leave cases. HR staff is closely monitoring absences during the school lockdown period and has implemented a process allowing Principals to advise HR staff of instructional/support gaps. The careful and regular review of sick leave metrics for all employee groups remains a priority.*** Significant caseloads are being reviewed daily and granting employees the ability to work virtually, where feasible, is being considered. Enhancing employee awareness of our employer-sponsored Employee Family Assistance Plan remains a priority.
10. ***Senior TCDSB staff members have maintained regular contact with our union partners (TECT, TSU, and CUPE) to collaboratively address issues.*** Recent discussions have focused on how we can sustain robust instruction and enhanced support staff monitoring/supporting students' learning/social/emotional needs during the school lockdown period.
11. ***The SMASH Education virtual experiential Core French program has been successfully launched.*** This program provides St. Anne students (Grades 1 – 8) with a Ministry of Education aligned core French supplemental resource. Senior staff continues to work with our union partners to provide direct remote core French instruction at St. Anne Catholic Academy where possible.
12. ***HR staff is monitoring all quarantined staff to ensure that proper parameters are maintained.*** We continue to communicate with all employees regarding travel plans, quarantine requirements that may apply, and the need to commit to the employer to ensure continuity of program delivery and service.
13. ***Timely recruitment efforts are being sustained as we endeavor to bolster supply pools for key employee groups.*** All efforts reflect a deliberate focus on equity.

Retrieval of Personal Belongings

14. ***TPH has updated their reference document on the “Retrieval of Personal Belongings” (Appendix ‘A’) dated Jan 21, 2021.*** There are no changes with respect to the public health measures that were in the previous TPH document on the same subject dated June 2, 2020.

15. *The stay at home order does not apply if students and staff need to go to school to pick up and drop off material.*

Technology

16. *Additional devices were pre-shipped to Elementary Schools to continue to support student needs for remote learning due to the extended school closures.* An additional 1,600 Chromebooks were pre-shipped to Elementary Schools beyond the 2,500 Chromebooks that were pre-shipped during the first week of January. These devices were pre-shipped to Elementary Schools that were running low (i.e. less than 5) or had depleted their pre-shipment inventory and were delivered on an expedited basis.
17. *Regular processing for secondary schools and the St. Anne Academy virtual school continues to flow, and emergency needs are being addressed.* Emergency needs include expeditiously configuring and delivering iPads with internet.
18. *Supply levels are limited however, supplies are currently ahead of demands.* There are approximately 500 Chromebooks and 680 iPads remaining in supply with the vendor to continue to process and fulfill student device needs. The demand rate decreased after the first two weeks of January.

E. IMPLEMENTATION, STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

1. *FAQs continue to be gathered from parent feedback.* The board continues to provide updates, frequently asked questions and answers on the board website, social media channels, and shared with families via School Messenger.

F. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

This report is for the consideration of the Board.

COVID-19 Guidance for Schools on the Retrieval of Personal Property

This document provides guidance for schools for the safe retrieval of personal belongings by parents, students and staff while schools remain closed for in-person learning. Strategies can be adapted to meet the needs of different school environments. It is recommended that schools consider mailing belongings or delaying the retrieval/drop off of items until schools re-open for in-person learning. For further COVID-19 Guidance for Schools, please visit: [COVID-19 Guidance Elementary and Secondary School](#).

Current information about COVID-19 can be found in Toronto Public Health's [COVID-19 Fact Sheet](#).

Maintain a Healthy Environment

Set-up a screening area

- Designate an area outside, near the main entrance, as a screening station.
- Post signs for [staff/visitors](#) and [students](#) at all entrances instructing individuals not to enter the school if they are sick or answer yes to any of the questions.
- Post signage in visible areas which clearly explains the screening process, and the rules and conditions for entry.
- The screening station must allow a minimum of two metres/six feet distance between staff conducting screening and the individual being screened.
- Alternatively, a protective barrier (e.g. plexiglass) can be installed around the screening station.
- Make hand sanitizer available at the screening area.

Screen staff, students, and parents for COVID-19 symptoms before entering the school

- It is strongly recommended that all school staff, students and parents complete a COVID-19 symptoms screening questionnaire for [school staff/visitors](#) and [students](#) before entering the school. The questions can be completed on a paper-based questionnaire (asked directly to employees/visitors and answers recorded), or can be completed electronically.
- Ensure individuals maintain two metres/six feet from others while waiting in line to be screened. There should be a limited number of individuals waiting in line outdoors. Individuals who are unable to maintain a two metre/six foot distance must wear a mask while they are outdoors, and at all times when they are indoors.

Scheduling

- People should be scheduled for access in designated timeslots to minimize the number of people in the building or waiting to access the schools; fifteen minute time slots are recommended.
- Anyone waiting for their designated time slot should be directed to a waiting or line up area with appropriate physical distancing markers (e.g. floor markings, pylons) spaced two meters/six feet apart.
- Consider designating the first appointments to vulnerable populations (e.g. seniors, people with an underlying medical conditions that you are made aware of).
- Keep a list of up-to-date contact information of individuals entering the school, including the date and time. This list will help Toronto Public Health with contact tracing if there is an individual who attends the school that is diagnosed with COVID-19 shortly after attending the school.

Entrances and exits

- Schools should designate and clearly mark specific, separate entrances and exits for each visitor as appropriate, and only permit entry and exit through these doors.
- Individuals should be required to sign in upon entry and sign out upon exit from the school.
- Anyone entering the building should clean their hands prior to entry and upon exit. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer (70-90% alcohol concentration) should be provided.
- Where possible, doors and windows should be kept open to minimize the touching of door handles and increase ventilation, while maintaining the appropriate security.

Measures to ensure physical distancing

- Provide visible queues for parents/students who might be waiting in line outside the school by placing markers such as tape, safety cones/pylons or painted lines every two metres/six feet.
- Consider designing a flow for the school (with prominent signage and/or floor markings).
- Traffic flow and physical distancing markers should be visible throughout the school.
- Limit the number of people permitted in the school at any one time:
 - position a school employee at the entrance to control visitor entry
 - monitor the number of people entering and leaving the school
 - stagger entry into the school
 - once the maximum number of parents/students is reached, allow one person in for every person that leaves.
- People should be directed to stay only within the area(s) of the school they need to access and to refrain from lingering.
- Where possible, encourage the use of stairs. Where required, [elevator](#) use should be limited to one person or members of the same household.
- Use of washrooms and drinking fountains should not be permitted unless necessary.
- It is strongly recommended that a face mask or [non-medical face covering](#) is used when individuals are unable to maintain a two metre/six feet distance from others. School staff are required to wear a medical mask and face shield/goggles when in schools. Visitors and students should wear a face mask or [non-medical face covering](#) when in the school.
- People should not be permitted to gather in groups on the school premises.

Packing and receiving personal property items

- Encourage individuals to bring their own reusable bags or boxes to pick up items.
- Provide clean carry-out bags if schools are packing up belongings for others.
- Returned items should be cleaned and disinfected if they need to be moved or used within three days. Otherwise, returned items should be left in the designated area for a minimum of three days before they are used or moved. After three days, the virus does not survive on paper and plastic surfaces.
- When receiving items that are outside of the school setting, [wash hands](#) regularly prior to and after handling items and avoid touching face, nose and mouth with hands.
- Use an [alcohol-based hand sanitizer](#) when hand washing is not possible. Washing with soap and water is preferred, and if hands are visibly dirty.

- Glove use is not a substitute for proper hand hygiene. If staff use gloves, it is important that:
 - Hands are washed and/or sanitized between changes.
 - Gloves are removed when changing tasks.
- When gloves are removed, new gloves must be used each time.

If individuals become ill at the school

- School staff/visitors who become ill should be sent home immediately, and directed to [this webpage](#) to learn what to do next.
- If a student becomes ill with symptoms while in school, immediately separate them from others in a designated room and supervise the student until they are picked-up. Notify parents/guardians or emergency contacts to pick up the ill student as soon as possible. They should not use public transportation, including the school bus. If it is an emergency, call 911.
- The designated room/space must have a handwashing sink or hand sanitizer (70-90% alcohol concentration) available.
- If there is more than one ill individual who presents with symptoms, ideally they should be placed in separate designated rooms (if more than one room has been assigned for this purpose). If this is not possible, ensure the room is large enough and students are kept more than two metres apart.
- It is recommended that school staff, students and visitors with symptoms of COVID-19 go to an [assessment centre](#) for testing as soon as possible, and to [self-isolate](#) at home until their result is available. (See the School Decision Guide for [students](#) and [staff](#) to determine when students/staff are required to go for testing.)
- For further information, please see the [Toronto Public Health Guidance for Re-opening Schools JK-12: Isolate students and staff that become ill while at school section](#).

Report cases and outbreaks to Toronto Public Health

- Schools must immediately report any laboratory confirmed cases of COVID-19 among staff or students to the TPH intake e-mail address: CovidSchools@toronto.ca (8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday to Friday) (8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Saturday, Sunday and Statutory Holidays). Please include the following information in your e-mail:
 - Name of school, address
 - Name of school contact and phone number and email
 - Name of ill staff/student/visitor
 - Contact information for staff/student/visitor (Parent name if student is under age 14), (phone number, address, and, if possible, date of birth)
 - Onset date of symptoms
 - Last day at school
 - Lab confirmed Y/N
 - Who reported the case to the school
 - Any other ill staff or student reports

Enhance environmental cleaning and disinfection

- Ensure frequent cleaning and disinfecting of high-touch surfaces and common areas such door handles, counters, cabinet doors, elevator buttons, light switches, faucets, toilet handles, hand rails, touch screen surfaces and keypads, and returned school items. Common areas should have soap,

hand sanitizer and/or disinfectant wipes available. If wipes are not available, general disinfectants can be used.

- Review Public Health Ontario's [Cleaning and Disinfection for Public Settings](#) fact sheet.
- Refer to [Health Canada's lists of hard-surface disinfectants for use against coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).

Maintain heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems

- Increase the introduction and circulation of outdoor air by maximizing the outdoor air ratio of the HVAC system settings, or by opening windows and doors, where possible. However, do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety risk to school staff and students.
- Ensure the HVAC system(s) are adequately maintained.
- Where provided, use the highest efficiency filters that are compatible with the HVAC system.
- Increase air-exchanges if possible.
- Rooms where ceiling fans are used should have an upward airflow rotation.
- Schools without HVAC systems should increase ventilation by opening windows (when possible) and classroom doors.
- Keep areas near HVAC inlets and outlets clear.
- Seating should be arranged away from areas with high airflow (i.e. not in front of air vents).
- If portable fans are used, limit the blowing of air across people and surfaces by positioning them to provide an upward movement of air.
- During the winter months when the temperatures are cold, consider opening windows or doors when students are not in the classroom, or for very brief periods every hour
- For more information please see our fact sheet [COVID-19 Transmission, Aerosols and Ventilation](#).

Workplace health and safety

- Employers must have written measures and procedures for staff safety, including for infection prevention and control.
- Ontario has general information on [COVID-19 and workplace health and safety](#). Learn about employer responsibilities and how to protect workers at work.
- Workers can also get information about [health and safety protections](#) at the workplace.
- Go to the [Ministry of Labour, Training, Health and Safety](#).

More information

For more information, visit our website at www.toronto.ca/COVID19 or call us at 416-338-7600.

Reference

Ministry of Education Information (May 27, 2020) *Personal Property Retrieval Guidelines for Schools*.

Toronto Public Health, [COVID-19 Guidance for the Re-opening of Schools JK to 12](#).