

**Ministry of Education**

Conseil scolaire de district catholique  
Centre-Sud  
Follow-up Report to the Operational  
Review

**October 2011**

**Table of Contents**

- 1. Introduction ..... 1**
- 2. Status and Implementation Update ..... 3**
  - Introduction ..... 3
  - Summary of Recommendation Status ..... 3
- 3. Governance and School Board Administration..... 4**
  - #1 Development of the School Board’s Policy Review Cycle ..... 4
  - #2 Development of a Formal Succession Plan ..... 4
- 4. Human Resource Management and School Staffing/Allocations ..... 5**
  - #1 Development of an employee evaluation/performance system for all staff ..... 5
  - #2 Attendance Support ..... 6
  - #3 Management of Board’s Benefit Plans..... 6
- 5. Financial Management..... 7**
  - #1 Internal Audit Function ..... 7
  - #2 Electronic Payment Systems ..... 8
  - #3 Electronic Supplier Interface ..... 8
- 6. School Operations and Facilities Management..... 9**
  - #1 Tracking and Reporting Energy Conservation ..... 9
  - #2 Consolidated Billing ..... 9
- 7. School Board Adoption of New Leading Practices ..... 10**
  - Governance and School Board Administration ..... 10
  - HR Management and School Staffing/Allocation ..... 10
  - Financial Management ..... 11
  - Operations and Facilities Management ..... 12
- Appendix A – Selection of Recommendations ..... 15**

## 1. Introduction

The Ministry is in the process of conducting Operational Reviews of the 72 district school boards across the province. The Ministry's goal is to enhance management capacity within school boards by encouraging good stewardship of public resources and by the leveraging and sharing of best practices. By identifying opportunities for continual improvement, school board administration and operations will be aligned to support the government's highest priority: student achievement.

In accordance with the stated objectives of the Operational Reviews, the Ministry has also engaged school boards to participate in a status and implementation update as part of the Operational Review cycle. Occurring approximately 12 to 18 months after the issuance of the final operational review report, the purpose of the update is to discuss with each school board the progress made in implementing the recommendations contained in the final report. It will also provide school boards with an opportunity to communicate to the Ministry their thoughts on the process, benefits that have been derived, and areas where some adjustments to the process would be beneficial.

As the recommendations vary between school boards, both in terms of quantity and scope, the following criteria were developed to help focus the review team, and the school board, on specific recommendations:

- Is the recommendation linked to the 12 Areas of Opportunity identified in the 2008 Sector Summary Report (seven) and the 2009 Sector Summary Report (five)?
- Does the recommendation represent a move toward more Strategic Planning on the part of Boards?
  - The departments that are responsible for the business functions perform significant activities in support of Student Success. The update should profile whether or not the school board is establishing links between the academic and non-academic functions through its strategic goals and priorities.
- Does the recommendation represent an area of potential risk to the board?
  - As an example, financial systems that are antiquated and require staff with very specialized knowledge could potentially disrupt the operations of the school board should those business skills be lost.
- Is the recommendation deemed to have positive Return on Investment?

- For example, implementation of an attendance management system may have greater potential for savings to the school board than introducing an electronic funds transfer system.
- Does the recommendation reflect updates to the Leading Practices?

For each of the selected recommendations, the school board was asked to provide the following information to the Operational Review team:

- Description of action(s) taken/not taken by the board to address recommendation(s).
- Supporting documentation
- If implemented, describe benefits derived, if possible, and date of implementation.

Details of the prioritization of the recommendations can be found in Appendix A of this report.

The scope of the follow up review also includes high-level consideration of whether the school board demonstrates adoption of those leading practices that were added to the third and fourth editions of the Operational Review Guide. These were not part of the original review process.

## **2. Status and Implementation Update**

### **Introduction**

The Conseil scolaire de district catholique Centre-Sud Operational Review follow-up took place on May 30, 2011, which was approximately 13 months after the release of the initial Operational Review report. The Deloitte Operational Review team conducted a teleconference with the Director of Education and Superintendent of Business.

### **Summary of Recommendation Status**

The school board has made some progress in implementing the recommendations since the completion of its original Operational Review in April 2010. Of particular note are the steps taken to develop an employee evaluation program for all staff groups. The program is for all staff, both academic and non-academic, and uses an automated system to track the performance evaluations. To complement the online system the school board has also developed a training manual that describes the process in a step by step fashion

The original report had 15 recommendations. The Operational Review team focused on 10 of the recommendations in the follow-up review. Eight of the recommendations were from the 12 areas of opportunity identified across the sector in the 2008 and 2009 sector reports; three related to strategic planning; four were identified with having a positive return on investment; and two concerned specific areas of risks. The selected recommendations and the corresponding criteria are listed in Appendix A.

Overall, the school board's senior administration has implemented or made some progress on the majority of the recommendations chosen for follow-up.

The school board reported that the Operational Review process was a positive experience.

### 3. Governance and School Board Administration

#### #1 Development of the School Board's Policy Review Cycle

Operational Review Recommendation	Implementation Update
The board should consider establishing a timetable for policy review to ensure the periodic review of policy in all functional areas. This could include the establishment of a committee responsible for policy to determine which policies require review or which should be developed.	Implemented

#### #2 Development of a Formal Succession Plan

Operational Review Recommendation	Implementation Update
The board should work towards establishing a formal succession plan for its senior management, in order to ensure that initiatives previously undertaken by the board are continued.	In Progress

#### #1 Development of the School Board's Policy Review Cycle

Management recognized the importance of developing a policy review cycle and has developed a calendar that includes a list of policies to be reviewed by the Board and date and timelines for their review. All policies will be reviewed on a 3 year cycle. This calendar was implemented in the 2010-2011 school year.

#### #2 Development of a Formal Succession Plan

Management recognized the importance of succession planning and created a formal succession plan for academic staff, specifically for school counselors, vice-principals, principals and superintendents as a first step towards developing a plan for all senior management positions. The succession plan includes aspects such as data collection, the profile of leadership, recruitment strategies, the program leader and the mentorship program for new vice-principals and principals.

This plan has been deemed to be beneficial because it will allow the school board to train and develop candidates and to ensure that those candidates who move into key senior management roles are well prepared to be successful.

The school board is encouraged to work on creating a formal succession plan that includes both academic and non-academic staff in key leadership positions.

## 4. Human Resource Management and School Staffing/Allocations

### #1 Development of an employee evaluation/performance system for all staff

Operational Review Recommendation	Implementation Update
HR management should develop policies and procedures for an employee evaluation/performance system for all staff.	Implemented

### #2 Attendance Management Processes/Programs

Operational Review Recommendation	Implementation Update
The board should develop a complete attendance management program to correct problems with certain kinds of absenteeism. This important initiative will provide the HR manager with a consistent and structured approach to improve attendance, by engaging in positive reinforcement with employees and adopting standardized practices across all employee groups.	In Progress

### #3 Management of Board's Benefit Plans

Operational Review Recommendation	Implementation Update
HR management should periodically conduct independent compliance audits of the board's insurance carrier (management services only), which manages the processing of medical and dental claims, to ensure adherence to the benefit plan's terms and conditions.	Implemented

### #1 Development of an employee evaluation/performance system for all staff

The school board has a formal employee evaluation system in place which was developed in November 2009. The program uses an automated system to track the performance evaluations of all staff groups including support staff. To complement this new online system, the school board has also developed a training manual that describes the purpose and outlines the evaluation process and the steps and procedures involved in using the system for employee evaluation. For teachers (both experienced and new teachers), the school board uses the guidelines set by the Ministry of Education. The school board reported that the benefits of the formal evaluation process will result in a more effective evaluation and compliance assessments from managers and the human resources department. The formal evaluation process and system will also support a consistent performance evaluation practices for all staff groups. The school board should develop policies to support the new system, if they are not already in place.

## **#2 Attendance Support**

Management is working towards developing an attendance support program to help track attendance and disability management. The school board has formed an advisory committee composed of school board staff and union representatives. The school board is currently revising its administrative guidelines to include changes raised during the meetings. The guidelines of the program are approved by the Board.

The new attendance support program is envisioned to be in place by January 1, 2012. Prior to its launch, there will be training sessions delivered in November 2011. The school board anticipates that the benefits of this program will be reduce absenteeism, better communication between stakeholders and staff groups, and a fair and consistent approach to absenteeism and the management of attendance issues.

The department should be encouraged to continue in its efforts to develop a comprehensive attendance support program, including policies and procedures to address specific categories of absenteeism.

## **#3 Management of Board's Benefit Plans**

Following the Operational Review, the school board conducted an audit claims processed by Cowan, the school board's supplier and manager of medical and dental claims). The audit was completed on December 14, 2009. The school board reported that the benefits of the audit resulted in better control of insurance costs by ensuring that contract terms were being met, which ultimately avoided rate increases for dental and medical insurance at the time.

## 5. Financial Management

### #1 Internal Audit Function

Operational Review Recommendation	Implementation Update
The school board should consider formalizing an internal audit function. This would include a broader audit of financial and management controls. Management could start by identifying options for the mandate and scope of this function and the estimated cost for each option.	Implemented

### #2 Electronic Payment Systems

Operational Review Recommendation	Implementation Update
The finance department should consider using electronic payment systems for its non-grant revenues to gain greater efficiency and minimize the risk of payments being altered prior to clearing the bank.	Not Implemented

### #3 Electronic Supplier Interface

Operational Review Recommendation	Implementation Update
Management should consider implementing an electronic supplier interface for ordering, processing and payment, including the use of supplier portals.	Implemented

### #1 Internal Audit Function

With the release of the 2009-10 Grants for Student Needs (GSN), the Ministry announced funding to establish audit committees and internal audit functions. Since the initial announcement of this funding, the Ministry has developed a number of audit function supports including a regional audit initiative. The school board is participating in this initiative, which provides funding for some dedicated internal audit staff for the eight regions in the province, in line with the new Audit Committee Regulation. All of the 12 French-language school boards are a part of the same region.

The Audit Committee Regulation came into effect in September 2010 and required the establishment of audit committees in school boards by January 31, 2011. The regulation sets out the following major aspects:

- appointment process for members
- requirement for external member participation

- term of appointment
- duties and powers of the committee
- reporting requirements
- deadline for the first audit committee meeting (March 31, 2011)

As part of this initiative, a regional internal audit manager is selected and will submit a summary of the audit plan (current year work schedule and multi-year plan), staffing plan and budget for the following fiscal year to the Director of Education, the Senior Business Official and audit committee of the Board.

The school board reported that they have had an internal audit committee in place for a number of years. The committee currently meets three times a year.

The school board is currently participating and closely monitoring the Ministry's future direction regarding internal audit services and the regional shared services model, in conjunction with several other French-language school boards.

## **#2 Electronic Payment Systems**

The school board reported that they have put in a number of controls to minimize risk associated with non-grant revenues including internal audits, reconciliation of revenues and expense, and distribution and segregation of duties. However, an electronic system was not put in place at the time of the follow-up review due to the lack of funds to support such a project.

The finance department should further consider using an electronic payment system for its non-grant revenues to gain greater efficiency and minimize the risk of payments being altered prior to clearing the bank.

## **#3 Electronic Supplier Interface**

The school board currently uses electronic supplier interfaces for ordering, processing and payments. However, the school board does not use any supplier portals. The school board reported that they piloted the use of supplier portals in the past and found that the portal controls did not work with their current system.

As an alternative, the list of approved suppliers and catalogs are available on-line for schools to make purchases from qualified suppliers and are managed and updated by the school board. In addition, the school board reported that a 3-way matching system (order, receipt, payment) and access to vendors in SAP has been in place for several years.

## 6. School Operations and Facilities Management

### #1 Tracking and Reporting Energy Conservation

Operational Review Recommendation	Implementation Update
The school board should also prepare an annual report on the overall conservation savings achieved relative to those envisioned by the school board's energy management plan.	In Progress

### #2 Consolidated Billing

Operational Review Recommendation	Implementation Update
Management should ask utility companies to provide consolidated billing in an electronic format. This would support more efficient monitoring and forecasting of energy consumption and reduce the workload of the accounts payable department.	Not Implemented

### #1 Tracking and Reporting Energy Conservation

The school board reported that they have moved forward with this recommendation incrementally. Last year the school board began tracking consumption, however, because they do not have any comparables as yet, a full saving analysis has not been conducted. However, management plans on conducting a comparative cost benefit analysis as of the 2011-12 school year.

The school board is encouraged to move forward with this initiative and report annually on the overall conservation savings achieved relative to those written in the school board's energy management plan. This information should be shared with trustees, individual schools and the executive committee or senior management to show progress on specific energy saving initiatives and any consumption reductions.

### #2 Consolidated Billing

The school board currently receives the majority of its utility bills by mail. The school board reported that there are challenges in moving forward with this recommendation given the school board's geographical footprint.

The school board is encouraged to investigate the benefits of consolidated billing in an electronic format for all its sites and facilities from its utility providers, where feasible. This would support more efficient monitoring and forecasting of energy consumption and reduce the workload of the accounts payable staff.

## 7. School Board Adoption of New Leading Practices

The following leading practices were added or amended for the third and fourth editions of the Operational Review Guide that were released to the sector. Some of these leading practices are a result of the observations and learning from earlier waves of reviews.

School boards that were reviewed prior to September 2009 were not assessed against the new leading practices identified below. During this follow-up review process, the Operational Review team asked those school boards to comment on the extent to which school boards demonstrate adoption of these practices.

### Governance and School Board Administration

New Leading Practice	Adopted?
The governance model reflects the roles and responsibilities mandated by the <i>Student Achievement and School Board Governance Act, Bill 177</i> .	Yes

The school board has implemented this leading practice and has developed 4 new policies to reflect the new changes and requirements in Bill 177, which are listed on the school board's public website. The school board has also conducted training sessions with trustees on the new requirements of Bill 177.

### HR Management and School Staffing/Allocation

New Leading Practice	Adopted?
The school board maintains appropriate process and systems to monitor staff attendance on a timely basis.	In progress
Trustees do not sit on hiring panels (exception hiring the director of education) but provide policies to govern staffing and recruitment.	Yes
Processes are in place to identify and remove discriminatory biases and systemic barriers in staff recruitment, selection, hiring, mentoring, promotion and succession planning processes. The school board conducts employment system reviews and works towards broadening the diversity of recruitment pools.	In Progress
Trustees provide the school board's policy and priority framework within which bargaining takes place.	Yes

Management is working toward developing an attendance support program to help track attendance and disability management. The new program is envisioned to be in place by January 1, 2012. Prior to the launch, there will be training sessions delivered in November 2011.

The school board reported that trustees currently do not sit on hiring panels, with the exception of the hiring of the Director of Education. Policies and procedures for staffing and recruitment are developed by the HR department and approved by the Administrative Council.

The school board closely abides by the Administrative Directive against harassment and discrimination. The school board has also begun a revision of their hiring practices, but an evaluation of potential barriers has not been conducted. The school board continues to hire qualified candidates based on merit. Catholicism is only required for positions in direct contact with students and French is required for all candidates.

The school board reported that trustees provide the school board’s policy and priority framework within which bargaining takes place. No trustees participate in the negotiation of collective agreements.

Provincial priorities are also identified by the 12 French-language boards through various groups and associations and local school board priorities are identified by senior management and subsequently validated and approved by the Board. An example of this is distance and e-learning.

## Financial Management

New Leading Practice	Adopted?
Management ensures adequate controls are in place to safeguard non-grant revenue and coordinate the annual reporting of revenues and expenditures from all sources.	Yes
Approved procurement policies clearly outline circumstances under which the board will use competitive versus non- competitive procurement methods.	Yes
The established policies and procedures that govern all aspects of supply chain management, including both planned (recurring) and unplanned (non-recurring/emergency purchases), comply with the Supply Chain Guideline (SCG) v.1.0.	Yes
In line with the SCG, purchasing authorization levels are commensurate to job roles and responsibilities, and are monitored for compliance by a supervisor or department head.	Yes

The school board has ensured that adequate measures are in place by senior administration to safeguard non-grant revenues. The school board reported that this has been in place for a number of years.

The school board has reported that they are in compliance with all aspects of the Supply Chain Guideline (SCG) recommendations and have established policies and procedures that govern all aspects of supply chain management.

The school board has also established approved procurement policies that clearly outline circumstances under which the school board should use competitive versus non-competitive procurement methods.

In addition, purchasing authorization levels are commensurate to job roles and responsibilities, and are monitored for compliance by a supervisor or department head. The new policy can be found on the school board’s public website.

## Operations and Facilities Management

New Leading Practice	Adopted?
The school board has implemented a formal green clean program as part of its overarching Environmental Education Policy.	No
Develop, implement and monitor an occupational health and safety strategy and/or plan that reflect the school board’s occupational health and safety policies and administrative procedures and ensure the school board is in compliance with associated occupational health and safety statutory requirements.	No
Develop, implement and monitor a security strategy and/or plan that reflects the board’s security and student safety policies and administrative procedures and ensures the board is in compliance with statutory/policy security requirements.	Yes
Develop, implement and monitor a health strategy and/or plan that reflect the board’s health policies and procedures and ensures the school board is in compliance with statutory health requirements.	No
In constructing, acquiring, operating and managing school facilities, the school board is guided by the principles outlined in the <i>Ontario Green Energy Act, 2009</i>	Yes
The school board has an approved facility partnership policy.	Yes
A Project Manager is appointed to oversee all aspects of the project including monitoring the budget and project timelines and ensuring management processes are in place for issues such as change orders and other internal approvals. This includes periodic project status updates and post-construction project evaluation.	Yes
An independent Cost Consultant is retained by the school board to review the design, provide objective costing analysis and advice, and report to the school board on options to ensure that the proposed capital expenditure is within the approved budget, prior to tendering a project.	Yes
Management gives full consideration to the use of available school space in their local communities before proceeding to build, purchase or lease other spaces.	Yes

The school board reported that it is making progress on the leading practices under operations and facilities management. For example, the school board approved an environmental policy on June 23, 2010, and a corresponding Administrative Directive on

September 30, 2011. However, management should enhance the use of green cleaning products and also develop a Green Clean policy and formal green clean program in line with the Ministry guidance. The school board should review and use the Ministry's Green Clean Program Resource Guide to help develop a formal green clean program. The guide can be found on the School Business Support Branch website or accessed through the following link:

[http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/GreenClean\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/GreenClean_Guide.pdf)

The school board has an Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) program which has been in effect for several years. The school board has also developed a number of policies to support the program and ensure the school board is in compliance with associated occupational health and safety statutory requirements. However the school board has not developed an overarching strategy or plan that reflects all procedures and policies related to OHS. The school board should continue to develop, implement and monitor an occupational health and safety strategy and/or plan that would reflect all the school board's occupational health and safety policies and administrative procedures in one strategy/plan which would help ensure that the school board is in compliance with all associated occupational health and safety statutory requirements.

The school board has developed a security strategy to ensure it is in line with Bill 168 and 157. The school board also reported that each of their buildings has been inspected for hazardous materials, and a binder for the management of hazardous materials has been developed. There are also security teams in place at each school.

The school board has created a health and security policy, however, the school board does not have a health strategy and/or plan that would reflect all the board's health policies and procedures and would help ensure that the school board is in compliance with statutory health requirements. Such a strategy and/or plan which would address the promotion of overall health and wellness of both students and all employee groups. A health strategy document could contain the following elements:

- Scope - The scope of the document should include wellness and health enhancing strategies that focus on living a healthy life-style and maintaining a work-life balance.
- Vision, Mission and Values - a description of what the school board intends to achieve in the long-term and how it intends to achieve that long-term vision through a clearly worded mission statement.
- Goals and Objectives - A time-based series of activities that contain clear goals and objectives, assigned to appropriate individuals, and have the ability to be tracked for performance and results.

- Annual Implementation Roadmap - a detailed inventory of all events, tasks and activities that will be conducted for the upcoming school year that will help achieve the health strategy vision.

Management closely monitors the *Ontario Green Energy Act* and ensures its principles are used in the school board's construction, acquisition, operation and management of school facilities. The school board has also undertaken a number of measures in relation to the Act including the installation of energy efficient lighting and a plan to install solar panels in the construction of new schools. In addition, the school board encourages individual schools to recycle and turn off lights when classrooms are not in use and also through the use of motion detectors.

Management has a facility partnership policy in place in addition to an administrative directive on permit applications. The school board also reported that they have a pilot project in two selected priority schools to facilitate usage by the community. In addition they also have agreements in place with community partners, churches, and community centers. The school board reported that they are planning to open between 8 to 10 schools in the coming years, some of which will come from neighboring school boards.

The school board reported that they hire a project manager to oversee all aspects of the project including monitoring the budget and project timelines and ensuring project management processes are in place. As part of the project management for school board construction projects, the school board also hires an independent Cost Consultant when required to review the design, provide objective costing analysis and advice, and report to the school board on options to ensure that the proposed capital expenditure is within the approved budget, prior to tendering a project.

Management reported they also give full consideration to the use of available school space in their local communities before proceeding to build, purchase or lease other spaces. Both of these are elaborated in the school board's policy on new school construction.

## Appendix A – Selection of Recommendations

- **SP** - Strategic Planning (SP)
- **AR** - Areas of Risk Categories
  - AR 1 - Undue reliance on specific human and / or non-human resources
  - AR 2 - Reputational risk in the community from not acting on the recommendation
  - AR 3 - Financial risk impacting school board’s financial position
- **ROI** - Potential for material Return on Investment
- **TAO** - Twelve Areas of Opportunity from 2008 sector report (seven) and the 2009 sector report (five)
- **NLP** – New leading practices introduced in Wave 4 through the Third Edition of the Operational Review Guide.

### Governance and School Board Administration

Ref.	Recommendation	Follow- up Yes/No	Criteria
1.	The board should consider establishing a timetable for policy review to ensure the periodic review of policy in all functional areas. This could include the establishment of a committee responsible for policy to determine which policies require review or which should be developed.	Yes	SP / TAO
2.	The board should work towards establishing a formal succession plan for its senior management, in order to ensure that initiatives previously undertaken by the board are continued.	Yes	SP/TAO

### HR Management and School Staffing/Allocation

Ref.	Recommendation	Follow- up Yes/No	Criteria
3.	Management should established policies and procedures to minimize the incidence of grievances.	No	
4.	HR management should develop policies and procedures for an employee evaluation/performance system for all staff, including executives.	Yes	TAO

Ref.	Recommendation	Follow-up Yes/No	Criteria
5.	The board should develop a complete attendance management program to correct problems with certain kinds of absenteeism. This important initiative will provide the HR manager with a consistent and structured approach to improve attendance, by engaging in positive reinforcement with employees and adopting standardized practices across all employee groups.	Yes	TAO/ROI
6.	The school board should consider comparing rates of absenteeism with neighbouring school boards other French-language school boards across the province.	No	TAO/ROI
7.	HR Management should implement an approved pay equity plan, to be reviewed periodically and amended as necessary.	No	
8.	HR management should periodically conduct independent compliance audits of the board's insurance carrier (management services only), which manages the processing of medical and dental claims, to ensure adherence to the benefit plan's terms and conditions.	Yes	TAO/ROI

## Financial Management

Ref.	Recommendation	Follow-up Yes/No	Criteria
9.	The school board should consider formalizing an internal audit function. This would include a broader audit of financial and management controls. Management could start by identifying options for the mandate and scope of this function and the estimated cost for each option.	Yes	TAO/AR3
10.	Management should develop an investment policy in order to manage risks, as required by the Education Act.	No	
11.	The finance department should consider using electronic payment systems for its non-grant revenues to gain greater efficiency and minimize the risk of payments being altered prior to clearing the bank.	Yes	
12.	Management should consider implementing an electronic supplier interface for ordering, processing and payment, including the use of supplier portals.	Yes	AR3

## School Operations and Facilities Management

Ref.	Recommendation	Follow-up Yes/No	Criteria
13.	The school board should also prepare an annual report on the overall conservation savings achieved relative to those envisioned by the plan.	Yes	TAO/ SP

Ref.	Recommendation	Follow- up Yes/No	Criteria
14.	Management should ask utility companies to provide consolidated billing in an electronic format. This would support more efficient monitoring and forecasting of energy consumption and reduce the workload of the accounts payable department.	Yes	ROI
15.	The board should establish a basic template for future schools in order to minimize construction costs.	No	