

Ministry of Education

**York Catholic District School Board
Follow-up Report to the Operational
Review**

August 2012

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1. Introduction

The Ministry has conducted 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 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.

2. Status and Implementation Update

Introduction

The York Catholic District School Board Operational Review follow-up review took place on June 14, 2012, approximately six months after the release of the initial Operational Review report. The Deloitte Operational Review team conducted a teleconference with the Superintendent of Business. In advance of the teleconference, the Deloitte team selected recommendations from the Operational Review Report and asked the school board to provide an implementation status along with any related supporting material.

Summary of Recommendation Status

The school board has made some progress in implementing recommendations since the completion of its Operational Review back in October 2011. Of particular note are the implementation of a comprehensive Attendance Support Program and the initial steps put in place to help mitigate budget risks. However, the recommendation to implement a multi-year strategic plan is still in progress and the development of a system-wide annual operating plan and departmental plans also remain incomplete.

There were 30 recommendations made in the original report. The Operational Review Team focused on 11 of the recommendations in the follow-up review. The selected recommendations and the corresponding criteria are listed in Appendix A.

3. Governance and School Board Administration

#1 Governance and School Board Administration

Operational Review Recommendation	Implementation Update
The school board should develop a formal governance policy that clearly delineates the division of duties and responsibilities between the Board of Trustees and the Director of Education. The school board's governance model should reflect the roles and responsibilities mandated by the Student Achievement and School Board Governance Act, Bill 177.	Incomplete

#2 Develop a Multi-Year Strategic Plan

Operational Review Recommendation	Implementation Update
The school board, using a consultative process, should develop and communicate a multi-year strategic plan that provides a framework for annual planning.	In Progress

#3 Develop a Formal Annual Operational Plan

Operational Review Recommendation	Implementation Update
The school board should develop a formal annual operational plan aligned with the Board's multi-year strategic goals. This annual operating plan should cover all aspects of its non- academic operations, including human resources, financial management, and facilities management. This will also enable all departments to track and report progress on their defined priorities and goals throughout the year.	Incomplete

#4 Develop a Formal Succession Plan

Operational Review Recommendation	Implementation Update
The school board should establish a formal succession plan which includes plans for senior staff in both academic and non- academic functions to help build and sustain leadership capacity.	In Progress

#1 Governance and School Board Administration

A formal governance policy that clearly delineates the division of duties and responsibilities between the Board of Trustees and the Director of Education has not

been established. However, in December of last year the Board of Trustees sent a newsletter to parents introducing trustees and outlining their roles and responsibilities. This information was also posted on the school board's website and identifies who should be the first point of contact for parents depending on the topic of concern.

#2 Develop a Multi-Year Strategic Plan

The school board is still in the process of finalizing its multi-year strategic plan, which is scheduled for completion over the summer of 2012. At that time, the plan will be posted on the school board's website to allow the general public access and the opportunity for comment.

At the time of the follow-up review, the school board had outlined broad themes and outcomes for the strategic plan that align with the academic strategies found in the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement and the board's mission and vision regarding Catholicity. The board reports that it is planning to develop operational benchmarks for Human Resources, Finance and Plant functions over the summer of 2012.

To date, the process for establishing the themes for both academic and non-academic functions has been led by the Director of Education with support from a third party consultant. However, at the time of the follow-up review, there was no evidence available that would indicate that the strategic planning process included consultation with relevant stakeholders.

In this regard the school board is encouraged to complete its strategic planning cycle by validating the long-term strategic themes and expected outcomes through a consultation process with relevant stakeholders. This would include consultation with senior staff across academic and non-academic functions. The school board should also engage staff in order to identify annual operational initiatives and performance indicators that would best support the school board's strategic goals.

#3 Develop a Formal Annual Operational Plan

School board staff are waiting for the completion of the multi-year strategic plan before developing a single annual operating plan for the entire system and formal annual departmental plans. As noted above, operational staff should be involved and consulted during the strategic planning process in order to help ensure alignment between strategic objectives, operational initiatives and budget.

#4 Develop a Formal Succession Plan

The school board has implemented the Ministry's Board Leadership Development Strategy, whereby a program has been put in place to support the attraction of and

discernment by aspiring academic leaders as well as mentoring for newly appointed leaders (i.e. Principals and Vice-principals).

However, aspiring non-academic leaders are currently provided only informal mentorship by their direct supervisor. The school board currently does not provide a formal training or mentoring program for non-academic staff, nor does the board formally track potential vacancies or replacement candidates in key non-academic positions.

4. Human Resource Management and School Staffing/Allocations

#1 Develop a Formal Annual Departmental Plan

Operational Review Recommendation	Implementation Update
The HR department should consider developing an annual department plan aligned with the school board's operating plan and overall strategic direction. This will enable the department to track and report on the progress of its defined priorities and goals throughout the year.	Incomplete

#2 Develop Formal Hiring Policies and Procedures

Operational Review Recommendation	Implementation Update
The Director of Education should review the composition of the school board's interview panels, and develop formal hiring policies and procedures to clarify the role of trustees and school board staff. Trustees should provide strategic policies to govern staffing and recruitment, but should not sit on interview or hiring panels with the exception of hiring the Director of Education.	In Progress

#3 Develop Attendance Management Program

Operational Review Recommendation	Implementation Update
Management should continue to develop a comprehensive attendance management program, including policies and procedures to address specific categories of absenteeism. This will provide management with a consistent and structured approach to improve attendance across all employee groups.	Complete

#4 Implement Pay Equity Plan

Operational Review Recommendation	Implementation Update
Management should implement an approved pay equity plan for non-unionized staff, which is reviewed periodically and amended as necessary.	In Progress

#5 Conduct Compliance Audit

Operational Review Recommendation	Implementation Update
Management should conduct a compliance audit of the school board's insurance carrier to ensure adherence to the benefit plans terms and conditions. This will ensure accuracy and validity of claims paid.	In Progress

#6 Procedures for Staff Allocation

Operational Review Recommendation	Implementation Update
Formalized procedures should be put in place to enable adjustment of staff allocations for school based staff if estimates for enrolment and funding change after budget approval.	In Progress

#1 Develop a Formal Annual Departmental Plan

The Human Resources department has not yet developed a formal annual departmental plan but is encouraged to do so once the multi-year strategic plan is complete and the annual operating planning process begins.

#2 Develop Formal Hiring Policies and Procedures

At the time of the follow-up review, the school board had partially acted on this recommendation by reviewing and revising former Board Policy 418 on Appointments to Positions of Academic Responsibility (Supervisory Officers, Principals and Vice-Principals). The revised policy was to be presented to the Board's Policy Review Committee, for approval, on May 30, 2012. The Board expects that potential applicants to Board Academic Positions of Responsibility will now have a clearer understanding of the hiring process. Once approved, the revised policy will be in effect for the 2012-2013 school year.

Although the proposed policy now includes language to support an equitable and bias free hiring process, the Board of Trustees is still involved in the process of hiring and approval of hires as noted in section 4.2 of what is now Board Policy 405.

#3 Develop Attendance Management Program

The school board's response to this recommendation was to establish a HR sub-committee in October 2011 followed by the establishment of the Attendance Support Advisory Committee (ASAC) in March 2012. The committee has engaged School Boards' Co-operative Inc. (SBCI) to provide a needs assessment of Attendance Support and assist with the development of a program. The committee has developed formal

Terms of Reference and has identified that membership should represent the following key stakeholders:

- Elementary / Secondary Teachers (OECTA York Unit);
- Secretarial / Educational Assistants (CUPE 2331);
- Custodial / Maintenance (CUPE 1571);
- Principals / Vice-Principals (Elementary / Secondary);
- HR Department; and
- Senior Administration

ASAC has since drafted the 'Attendance Support Program' policy and procedures. The draft of the policy and supporting procedures will be provided to the Board's Policy Review Committee on August 27, 2012 with the intent of being fully implemented by September 2012.

Both the Board policy and the documented HR procedures identify the responsibilities of key roles such as the employee, supervisor superintendent and the Healthy Workplace Coordinator as well as the steps to be taken for reporting absences. In conjunction with attendance support policies and procedures, the school board has also developed formal disability management procedures and medical record confidentiality processes that will further support the promotion and maintenance of a healthy workplace. Finally, the school board has also developed tools and templates such as the Medical Certificate Form that will help support the program.

#4 Implement Pay Equity Plan

The school board has moved forward on this recommendation by undertaking job evaluations required to complete a revised Pay Equity Plan for non-unionized employee groups. A new job evaluation tool and a compensation specialist were engaged to aid the school board with this recommendation and to help with future pay equity maintenance. The original plan was posted for comments on November 1, 2011. After receiving and reviewing comments, the school board posted the revised plan on February 6, 2012.

The Board is currently awaiting the outcome of employee comments and plan approval by the Pay Equity Commission. When approved and implemented, the new Pay Equity Plan will provide the foundation for future maintenance of pay equity for all non-unionized employee groups.

#5 Conduct Compliance Audit

The Business Services department has delayed the adoption of this recommendation to allow for the completion of an audit of specific claim types. This focused audit resulted in significant issues being identified and as a result potential actions are currently being considered by the school board. Once a final decision on next steps has been made, the school board will decide on a time to complete the compliance audit of the school board's insurance carrier.

#6 Procedures for Staff Allocation

To date no formal procedures have been put in place by the school board to ensure that school-based staff adjustments, post budget approval, are transparent and fully understood in terms of budget implications. In this regard, the school board has reported that the Director of Education will collaborate directly with teaching personnel to address this recommendation.

5. Financial Management

#1 Budget Risk Management

Operational Review Recommendation	Implementation Update
Management should consider enhancing the process of reporting on the school board's budget risks. A formal risk management plan/report, which is reviewed and updated periodically, would include strategies to mitigate the risks of spending beyond budgeted levels.	In Progress

#1 Budget Risk Management

At the time of the follow-up review, the school board's Finance department had drafted the 2012-13 Budget and was in the process of identifying operational risks and issues for the Board's consideration. However, the Finance department had not yet developed a formal budget risk plan. As an initial step, the department had created a 68-page presentation that provided the framework for developing a budget that incorporates risk and provides a precursor to developing a final budget and a formal risk plan.

The presentation, while not focused on specific risk drivers, provides basic themes such as a zero-based budget approach; minimizing deferrals of expenditures; maintaining spending within Ministry envelopes and in some cases below benchmarks; accounting for revenue only upon receipt as well as regular audits and reporting on spending against budget.

The finance department has also conducted an enrolment sensitivity analysis, as it feels that the shifting enrolment base is becoming an emerging budget risk factor. Both year-to-year and the current school year are presented at Board and the Business and Finance Committee meetings.

In addition to the framework for budgeting and sensitivity testing, the department works through in-camera sessions to explain the details of current and future fiscal constraints as well as strategies and tactics that could be implemented in order to balance the 2012-2013 budget.

Interim reports are presented quarterly by the Senior Leadership Team at the Business and Finance Committee meetings. By having this information provided on a regular basis, it strengthens the Board's ability to strategize and mitigate in-year risks. In this regard, the school board feels that keeping Board of Trustees fully informed allows for better financial decision making in the short and long term.

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)

Governance and School Board Administration

Ref.	Recommendation	Follow-up Yes/No	Criteria
1.	The school board should develop a formal governance policy that clearly delineates the division of duties and responsibilities between the Board of Trustees and the Director of Education. The school board’s governance model should reflect the roles and responsibilities mandated by the Student Achievement and School Board Governance Act, Bill 177.	Yes	AR2
2.	The school board using a consultative process should develop and communicate a multi-year strategic plan that provides a framework for annual planning.	Yes	SP/ TAO
3.	The school board should develop a formal annual operational plan aligned with the Board’s multi-year strategic goals. This annual operating plan should cover all aspects of its non-academic operations, including human resources, financial management, and facilities management. This will also enable all departments to track and report progress on their defined priorities and goals throughout the year.	Yes	TAO/ SP
4.	Senior administration should report to the Board of Trustees annually on the status and outcomes of the school board’s strategic plan and the annual operation plan, once it is developed.	No	
5.	The school board should establish a formal succession plan which includes plans for senior staff in both academic and non-academic functions to help build and sustain leadership capacity.	Yes	TAO

HR Management and School Staffing/Allocation

Ref.	Recommendation	Follow-up Yes/No	Criteria
6.	The HR department should consider developing an annual department plan aligned with the school board's operating plan and overall strategic direction. This will enable the department to track and report on the progress of its defined priorities and goals throughout the year.	Yes	TAO/ SP
7.	Management should communicate a detailed organization chart internally as well as post it to the school board website. The organization chart should clearly indicate the reporting structure of the HR department.	No	
8.	The HR department should consider providing regularly scheduled HR policy awareness training, and education sessions to build staff capacity in understanding HR policies and administrative procedures.	No	
9.	The Director of Education should review the composition of the school board's interview panels, and develop formal hiring policies and procedures to clarify the role of trustees and school board staff. Trustees should provide strategic policies to govern staffing and recruitment, but should not sit on interview or hiring panels with the exception of hiring the Director of Education.	Yes	AR2
10.	Trustees should continue to provide the school board with a policy and priority framework for bargaining. They should not directly participate in labour negotiations.	No	
11.	Management should consider developing and communicating a formal policy or procedure for the formal discipline and dismissal of all staff, to ensure consistency and transparency.	No	
12.	Management should continue to develop a comprehensive attendance management program, including policies and procedures to address specific categories of absenteeism. This will provide management with a consistent and structured approach to improve attendance across all employee groups.	Yes	TAO
13.	Management should periodically report to the Board and senior management on the effectiveness of its attendance management program, once it is in place.	No	
14.	Management should implement an approved pay equity plan for non-unionized staff, which is reviewed periodically and amended as necessary.	Yes	AR3
15.	Management should conduct a compliance audit of the school board's insurance carrier to ensure adherence to the benefit plans terms and conditions. This will ensure accuracy and validity of claims paid.	Yes	TAO/ AR3

Ref.	Recommendation	Follow-up Yes/No	Criteria
16.	Management should conduct periodic and confidential staff surveys to improve communication with staff and provide input for professional development plans and HR policy.	No	
17.	Management should consider conducting exit interviews with all staff leaving the school board to obtain input on HR policy, as well as process and program improvement.	No	
18.	The school board should implement policies and procedures that outline the annual staffing plan and allocation process and reflect the priorities of the Board and Ministry initiatives.	No	
19.	Management should periodically report to the Board on the actual allocation of staff, compared to the original approved allocation plan and budget.	No	
20.	Formalized procedures should be put in place to enable adjustment of staff allocations for school based staff if estimates for enrolment and funding change after budget approval.	Yes	AR3

Financial Management

Ref.	Recommendation	Follow-up Yes/No	Criteria
21.	Management should consider enhancing the process of reporting on the School Board's budget risks. A formal risk management plan/report, which is reviewed and updated periodically, would include strategies to mitigate the risks of spending beyond budgeted levels.	Yes	ROI/ AR3
22.	The school board should ensure interim financial statements are formally signed off by senior management to ensure the integrity of financial reporting.	No	
23.	Cash management activities should be consolidated with a single institution.	No	
24.	Management should continue to explore additional Electronic Fund Transfers (EFT) opportunities to maximize efficiencies.	No	

School Operations and Facilities Management

Ref.	Recommendation	Follow-up Yes/No	Criteria
25.	Management should work to build staff capacity in understanding school operations and facilities policies and administrative procedures through training and professional development.	No	

Ref.	Recommendation	Follow-up Yes/No	Criteria
26.	The school board should expand the use of standard processes for inspecting and reporting on facility cleaning.	No	
27.	The school board should continue to work with electricity providers to set up consolidated billing.	No	
28.	The school board should develop an occupational health and safety plan, to ensure compliance with associated health and safety statutory requirements for both students and all employee groups.	No	
29.	The school board should develop a security strategy reflecting the security and student safety policies and ensuring compliance with associated statutory security requirements for both students and all employee groups.	No	
30.	The school board should consider establishing an integrated health plan/strategy that would reflect the existing policies and procedures, and promote health and wellness across the school board. Management should also consider coordinating the development, implementation and monitoring of the plan centrally.	No	