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2009: SB 42

MEMORANDUM TO: Directors of Education

FROM: Cheri Hayward
Director
School Business Support Branch

DATE: November 19, 2009

SUBJECT: **2009-10 Operational Review Update**

Four months ago in SB Memo 26, I shared our plans related to the 2009-10 Operational Reviews and the direction the Ministry will take over the coming year. I am pleased to provide you with an update.

Progress

In September, we began Wave IV of the Operational Reviews. By the end of June 2010, we will have conducted 31 operational reviews and 16 follow-up reviews bringing the total number of school boards reviewed to 61 over the three-year period.

The Operational Reviews are providing the Ministry and school boards with opportunities to work together to build management capacity, ensure efficient stewardship of resources, share best practices and identify ways for continuous improvement. As you are aware, the reviews are focused on board operations in four functional areas: governance and school board administration; human resource management and school staffing/allocation; financial management; school operations and facilities management.

As per my communication to the sector on May 27, 2009, the Ministry has begun the process of conducting follow-up reviews of boards. Over the course of the summer, the Operational Review Team completed follow-up reviews of 14 school boards, and the details and findings of these reviews are summarized in the 2008-09 Sector Summary Report (see comments below).

School boards can expect to be contacted regarding their follow-up review approximately one year after their Operational Review debrief. As with the Operational Reviews, reports from the follow-up reviews will be posted to the School Business Support Branch website once they are complete.

Operational Review Guide and Supporting Documentation Request

Over the summer, the Operational Review team examined the existing tools and processes of the Operational Reviews and made enhancements for Wave IV.

Although the overall design has remained unchanged, the *Operational Review Guide for District School Boards* (enclosed) has been revised to include nine new leading practices as follows:

1. Human Resource Management – The school board maintains appropriate process and systems to monitor staff attendance on a timely basis.
2. Non-Grant Revenue - Management ensures adequate controls are in place to safeguard non-grant revenue and coordinate the annual reporting of revenues and expenditures from all sources.
3. Procurement - Approved procurement policies clearly outline circumstances under which the board will use competitive versus non-competitive procurement methods.
4. Custodial and Maintenance Operations - The school board has implemented a formal green clean program as part of its overarching Education Environmental Policy.
5. Health, Safety and Security - Develop, implement and monitor an occupational health and safety strategy and/or plan that reflects the board's occupational health and safety policies and administrative procedures and ensures the school board is in compliance with associated occupational health and safety statutory requirements.
6. Health, Safety and Security - 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.
7. Health, Safety and Security - Develop, implement and monitor a health strategy and/or plan that reflects the board's health policies and procedures and ensures the school board is in compliance with statutory health requirements.
8. Construction Management - In constructing, acquiring, operating and managing school facilities, the school board is guided by the principles outlined in the *Ontario Green Energy Act, 2009*.
9. Construction Management - Management gives full consideration to the use of all available school space in their local communities before proceeding to build, purchase or lease other spaces.

Sector Summary Reports

At the end of Wave III the Operational Review Team examined the findings and recommendations of the 26 operational reviews conducted throughout 2008-09. They determined there were areas of opportunity that consistently surfaced as themes across the sector. In addition they used the information gathered during the follow-up reviews to assess the school boards' response to the 2007-08 Sector Summary Report.

Based on the teams' work, I am pleased to enclose a copy of the *2008-09 Summary Report of Operational Reviews*, which outlines five new areas for opportunities for improvement, three emerging best practices that school boards will need to consider in the future, and the previously reported seven areas of opportunities for improvement with an update on the actions taken by school boards.

Five new areas for opportunities for improvement

- #1 – Clear delineation between the roles and responsibilities of the school board's Trustees and Director of Education
- # 2 – Formal succession plans for senior management and implementation of supporting initiatives
- # 3 – Performance Management for all Employee Groups
- # 4 – Compliance Audit of Benefit Carriers
- # 5 – Procurement Policies and Procedures

Three emerging best practices

- #1 – Shared Services
- #2 – Supply Chain Guideline 1.0 Alignment
- #3 – Energy Management (Revisited)

The *Operational Review Guide for District School Boards* and the 2008-09 Summary Report were reviewed by the Operational Review Advisory Committee composed of members from the Council of Directors of Education, Council of School Business Officials, and Ministry Internal Audit. The Committee supported the changes and recommended that they be adopted in Wave IV.

Both documents are available on the SBSB website.

SBSB Website

The School Business Support Branch is currently updating its website to include the school board reports (i.e., operational review and follow-up reports), tools (i.e., operational review guide and supporting documentation request) and summary reports. Detailed information will be available online at <https://sbsb.edu.gov.on.ca/>.

Should you have any questions regarding the Operational Review process or its supporting tools and documentation, please contact either Bill Coleman at 416-212-3180 (Bill.Coleman@ontario.ca) or Lorraine Smith at 416-325-2719 (Lorraine.Smith@ontario.ca).

Thank you and I look forward to continuing to work with you on this important initiative.



Cheri Hayward
Director
School Business Support Branch

cc: Senior Business Officials
Review Teams