Ministry of Education

Operational Review Report
Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board

February, 2010

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Executive Summary

This report details the findings and recommendations of the Operational Review of Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board (the school board) conducted by the Operational Review Team composed of external consultants from PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP and Ministry of Education staff. The Operational Review was conducted over four days beginning December 7, 2009.

Introduction

The Ministry plans to perform Operational Reviews of the 72 district school boards across the province over the next three years. The initiative supports Ministry goals and will increase confidence in public education. 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 leading practices. By identifying opportunities for continual improvement, school board administration and operations will be aligned to support the government's highest priority: student achievement.

The Operational Review Team reviewed the school board's operations in four functional areas: Governance and School Board Administration; Human Resource Management and School Staffing/Allocation; Financial Management; and School Operations and Facilities Management. The purpose of this was to assess the extent to which the school board has implemented the leading practices set out in the "Operational Review Guide for Ontario School Boards". The review also provides, where appropriate, recommendations on opportunities for improvement. Appendix A provides an overview summary of the Operational Review scope and methodology.

From an operations perspective, the review demonstrates that the school board has adopted many of the leading practices. On the academic side, the school board's student achievement results at the secondary and elementary levels have improved in all areas since 2002-03.

A summary of the findings and recommendations identified in each of the functional areas reviewed follows. Details can be found in subsequent sections of the report.

Governance and School Board Administration

The school board uses an advocacy model for governance, with a close working relationship between the board of trustees and senior administration. The school board has not clearly delineated the roles and responsibilities of the board of trustees from those of senior administration. The Board proposes to review these roles and responsibilities within the context of new legislation related to school board governance, and formally document them in the school board's by-laws and policies.

At the beginning of the term, all trustees are provided with training, with specific additional specific training provided as requested by trustees or senior administration. The Board has established the policy and regulations on trustees' code of conduct. There is also a policy and regulations for the code of ethics for senior management, middle management, and school administrators.

The Board intends to revise the existing Directors' performance appraisal process following the review of the Board's governance structure, and in line with the Ministry's leadership initiatives.

In 2008, the Board approved a two-year approach for setting the school board's strategic directions. It is designed to align funding, resources, and staff energies to selected strategic goals. The two-year system plan is reviewed and updated each year. The current plan, *System Goals*, was approved by the Board in May 2008, and includes five measureable goals that address the following areas of Catholicity; community development; financial accountability and transparency; excellence in student achievement and student enrolment impact.

The Board has established a procedural by-law that outlines rules for Board meetings and standing committee meetings. The Chair and Director meet prior to each Board meeting to set the agenda. The executive council also conducts a preboard session to discuss any complex issues, such as transportation or accommodation reviews.

The Board has established a policy for the review and development of all policies,which are available on the school board's website. There is no established policy review cycle. Each year, the policies are reviewed by the senior administration to identify where new policies or revisions are needed. Trustees may also identify areas where a new policy is required. The school board's Policy Officer for Freedom of Information assists respective superintendents with specific responsibilities for various school board policies, as they monitor compliance with new legislation and regulatory requirements.

The school board's administrative leadership is represented by the Executive Council. Supporting the Executive Council are the Administrative Council and the Education Council. Each associate director also holds weekly meetings with their reporting superintendents.

Every two years, the Director prepares an updated Senior Management Team Responsibilities document, which outlines the roles, responsibilities, and accountability for each supervisory officer, including the Director. The current document includes reference to the Ministry's Leadership Strategy and an up to date organizational chart for the senior administration. The organization chart is published on the school board's website.

The school board recognizes the need to plan for pending retirements at the administration level. As a first step in the implementation of the Ministry's Ontario Leadership Strategy, the corporate services department has prepared a succession planning and talent development overview document. This highlights the need for a formal succession plan and leadership development, and summarizes the existing and proposed leadership development initiatives. As management has started establishing a pool for supervisory officers, it is planning to formal and informal leadership training to prepare potential candidates for supervisory roles.

The school board proactively engages system stakeholders, using various means. The Strategic System Review Survey conducted in 2008 solicited stakeholders' input and general satisfaction levels, in relation to various communication and operational issues. The Director and supervisory officers take part in a number of regional and provincial committees.

Recommendations:

- The Board should finalize and document its governance model with clear delineation of the division of duties and responsibilities between the board of trustees and the director of education.

- The school board should finalize the development of a multi-year strategic plan and continue establishing an annual operating plan, incorporating both academic and non-academic departments. The plan should contain goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely. The annual board-wide operating plan should be aligned with the strategic directions, and serve as a framework for annual departmental planning.

- The school board should continue aligning its leadership development programs and activities with the Ministry leadership initiatives. It should continue developing a formal Succession and Talent Development Plan, in line with the Leadership Succession Planning and Talent Development - Ministry Expectations and Implementation Continuum.

Human Resources Management and School Staffing/Allocation

The human resources (HR) and employee relations departments have implemented a number of the leading practices:

- The school board has established formal policy and procedures for staff employment. Management has established hiring procedures for all staff categories.

- The school board has established labour management committees for all eight bargaining units, along with staff allocation committees, management consultation committees, and a presidents' committee. The latter is open to all unions and management associations, and chaired by the Director.

- The school board has established policies and procedures for employee performance appraisals in all staff groups.

- The HR department actively supports the professional development of school board staff.

- The school board conducts reviews medical and dental benefit claims at least once every five years. The most recent claim review resulted in the renegotiation of the claims administration fees.

- The staff allocation process begins with enrolment forecasting, and factors in other elements, such as student needs, class size requirements, and preparation-time. The enrolment forecast is developed using various sources of data, including school-by-school projections, prior years trend analyses, demographic trend analysis, and school board information.

- During the year, management conducts an assessment of actual enrolment, and appropriate adjustments are made in staff allocation. The HR department prepares regular reports on staffing changes for senior administration and the Board.

- Central controls in the hiring process established by the HR department help to ensure that hiring is compliant with the established staffing allocation.

Currently, the school board tracks staff attendance using a computerized attendance tracking system, and identifies employees with more than nine absence days in a year. The school board has formal procedures for early intervention with employees absent for five consecutive days, and workplace accommodation and return to work plans to modify jobs to allow employees to return to work sooner. The HR department is developing an attendance support process for employees. The program has been approved by the executive council and is planned to be implemented in 2010.

The school board is currently revising pay equity plans. The employee relations department has negotiated a letter of understanding with unions for several employee groups, to hire a consultant to establish a pay equity tool.

Management last conducted a confidential staff satisfaction survey seven years ago. Exit interviews are only conducted with non-union mid management staff and professional student services personnel staff.

Annual staffing allocation is largely driven by parameters set in the collective agreements and the Ministry requirements for primary class size. The school board does not have formal policies and procedures for staff planning and allocation. Staff allocation is directed by the elementary and secondary staff allocation committees comprising union and association representatives and a number of school board staff.

Recommendations:

- Management should finalize its attendance support program, and develop a mechanism to assess and report on the effectiveness of the attendance support process/programs to senior administration and the Board.

- Management should continue updating the pay equity plan for all employee groups of the school board.

- Management should continue conducting periodic and confidential staff surveys, to improve communication with staff and provide input for professional development plans and HR policies. Management should also consider conducting exit interviews with all staff groups to obtain feedback on HR policies, as well as process and program improvements.

- Management should document the staff allocation process in formal policies and procedures.

Financial Management

The financial services department has implemented many of the leading practices:

- The financial services department builds staff understanding of finance policies and administrative procedures, with formal and informal training.

- The Board has established a formal policy for the budget development process. The policy sets out an administrative structure that facilitates the preparation and approval of the school board's annual operating and capital budgets. Each year management prepares terms of reference for the budget review staff committee and a budget calendar for approval by the Board.

- As part of the budget development process, management identifies budget challenges and risks, and conducts a trustee workshop to discuss budget alternatives.

- The school board has an integrated financial system that provides adequate, timely and accurate information to management, school staff and the board of trustees.

- The financial services department has established formal cash management processes and templates for annual operating and capital cash flow reporting.

- The school board's cash management activities are consolidated with one financial institution.

- Management has established many controls in cash/investment management activities, such as limited controlled access to the financial system and written authorization of wire transfers.

- The Board has established a policy for school council funds. The financial services department has developed a number of procedures and standard forms and templates related to the accounting of school council funds.

- The financial services department analyzes information on various sources of non-grant revenue as part of the budget development process. Forecasting for non-grant revenues is based on trend and historical data.

- Management has established procedures to record and track the various EPO grants received. Management meets with the grants review committee to monitor and track grants and miscellaneous revenues of the school board.

- The school board has established a policy and procedures on purchasing, and has revised its purchasing policy and procedures consistent with key requirements of the Supply Chain Guideline.

- The school board encourages co-operative purchasing with other school boards or public sector agencies. The school board participates in group buying initiatives and purchasing consortia.

- There are formal policies, procedures, and guidelines on the use of PCards, which are available to staff on the school board's intranet.

Management prepares several types of interim financial reporting, such as monthly reports for superintendents. Administrators at each school, departments and superintendents can generate current budget expenditure reports directly from the financial system. Currently, management is providing financial reporting to trustees through the annual budget development process and financial statements. The financial services department is working to develop a template for interim financial reporting for the Board, using the recommendations of the Interim Financial Reporting Committee (IFRC).

The Board has established an audit committee which is composed of a minimum of three trustees. The committee does not currently have external members. Management

has amended the terms of reference for the audit committee to include two external members in the Board's audit committee.

The school board has an internal auditor who is directly supervised by the Superintendent of Financial Services and Treasurer, and reports to both the superintendent and the Director of Education. The Internal Auditor attends all meetings of the audit committee, and prepares reports and presentations, but does not report directly to the audit committee.

The financial services department prepares an internal annual report on investment activity, showing the amount, maturity, rate of interest, interest earned, and balance for each investment. The school board has not established a formal investment policy. Management delivers oral reports to the Board on investment activity during the presentation of audited financial statements.

The school board uses online ordering with an office stationery vendor. Management noted that while the majority of the school board's vendors have e-marketplaces available, they do not have the technical capacity to upload invoices directly into the school board's system.

The school board is currently finalizing arrangements with its bank to implement EFTs for payments.

Recommendations:

- Management should continue finalizing the format of interim financial reporting based on recommendations provided by the Interim Financial Reporting Committee (IFRC).

- The school board should establish approval procedures for interim financial reports, and implement formal sign-off of these reports by senior management.

- In accordance with the Ministry's internal audit and audit committee strategy, the Board should include two external advisors in its audit committee.

- Management should establish a policy on investment and provide an annual report to the Board using the internal annual report on investment activity.

- Management should continue considering options for implementation of the electronic supplier interface for ordering, processing and payment.

- Management should continue finalizing arrangements for the use of electronic funds transfers (EFT) for payments.

School Operations and Facilities Management

The planning and operations department has implemented many of the leading practices:

- The plant department has established a custodial operating manual, which outlines cleaning standards and procedures. Management conducts regular inspections of school board facilities to ensure compliance with established cleanliness and maintenance standards.

- The approach to custodial staff allocation recognizes the unique needs of each school, which cannot be effectively met with a standard allocation formula.

- The plant department establishes an annual training and development plan for custodial staff.

- There is a current inventory of all equipment assigned to each site, including the date of purchase, cost, and supplier. There is a process to track the use of equipment.

- The plant department works closely with the purchasing department to develop standard processes for procurement of custodial supplies. The plant department has established formal guidelines and process maps for purchasing custodial supplies.

- The school board uses a software application for its work order system. Management is currently considering several options for the implementation of a fully automated work order system.

- To improve its energy management practices, the school board recently implemented utility bill management software. The software records monthly utility bills, automatically audits them to detect billing, metering or consumption problems, and can prepare a variety of management and analysis reports.

- Management and the Board have an integrated view of health and safety for staff and students. The Board's health and safety policy outlines its commitment to provide direction and support to ensure compliance with legislative requirements, and provide a safe, healthy environment.

- The school board has a long-term accommodation plan which spans 15 years, and is usually updated every two or three years. The plan is reviewed annually to determine whether revisions are required to the capital projects for that year.

- The school board has established policy and procedures for accommodation reviews (ARC). Management is currently revising ARC procedures to reflect new Ministry guidelines and prepare for the next round of accommodation reviews.

- The school board has implemented several joint use projects with the City of Mississauga, Town of Caledon and Town of Orangeville.

- The design department has established guidelines and standards to ensure consistency in design. The design department has also established an information manual for architects, which contains all standard project monitoring forms, guidance and design standards.

- The school board conducts prequalification for general contractors and mechanical and electrical sub-contractors.

The school board's current organizational chart shows the structure of the planning and operations department and lines of reporting. Management noted that as result of recent staff changes within the planning and operations department, the roles and responsibilities of some managers will be modified, to improve service delivery.

Over the past several years, the school board has been increasing its use of green custodial supplies. The school board has been using EnviroLogo cleaning chemical products, and is currently considering several green certified products. A superintendent of education was recently assigned responsibility for the environmental management portfolio, which includes EcoSchools programs and all green initiatives.

Management establishes a number of plans for the school board's maintenance activities. Every two years, management identifies projects to be implemented within the facility renewal budget, including principals' requests, accessibility projects, deferred maintenance, and outdoor projects. Management uses the ReCAPP database to identify projects to be funded by the Good Places to Learn (GPL) funding.

The school board has not established a formal energy management plan. The school board has received energy efficiency funding from the Ministry, and has started conducting audits of facilities based on the analysis of data in the utility bill management system.

Recommendations:

- Management should finalize establishing the roles and responsibilities of managers within the planning and operations department.

- The planning and operations department should consolidate its planning activities and establish a multi-year maintenance and renewal plan that includes

the funding available to support it. This would provide the senior administration, the Board and its stakeholders with a clear forecast of the school board's critical needs over the next several years.

- Using the results of the energy audits, the school board should establish a multi-year energy management plan that incorporates quantifiable measures and the tools to monitor and manage the plan. In line with the Green Energy Act, 2009, energy management planning should include the development of policies, guidelines, goals (conservation targets), and priorities for energy management and resource conservation. The plan should include short-term and long-term opportunities with milestones, roles, responsibilities and budgets with a process for ensuring community support.

- Once the formal energy management plan is established, the school board should ensure that its procurement policies and practices support the objectives and targets of the plan. Management should also consider documenting the energy efficiency requirements in purchasing policies and procedures and/or the environmental policy.

- Management should ensure that successful conservation initiatives are communicated across all schools and with other school boards.

- The school board should develop an environmental policy that would provide framework for the school board's activities in the area of environmental management and education and increase the communication opportunities.

1. Background and Overview

1.1 School Board Profile and Structure

Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board provides educational services to approximately 82,046 students in 122 elementary and 32 secondary schools.

The school board's enrolment decreased by about 732 students from 2002-03 to the 2009-10 fiscal year, or about 0.9 per cent overall. This trend of declining enrolment, which is occurring across the province, is expected to affect the school board over the next few years.

The school board's Senior Administration is as follows:
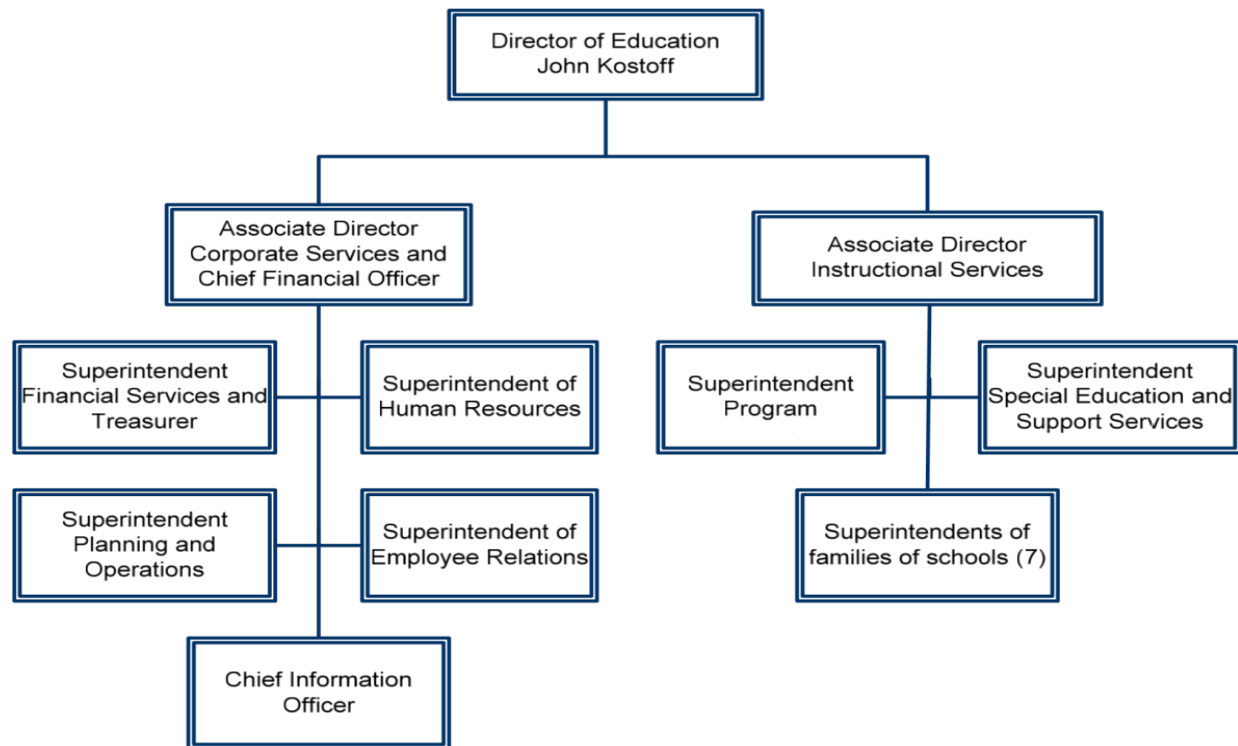
Figure 1

1.2 Key Priorities of the School Board

The school board's mission statement is:

"The Mission of the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board, in partnership with the family and church, is to provide, in a responsible manner, a Catholic education which develops spiritual, intellectual, aesthetic, emotional, social, and physical capabilities of each individual to live fully today and to meet the challenges of the future, thus enriching the community".

In 2008, the Board established system goals for two years:

- Catholicity – enhance faith formation of all community members (staff, students, trustees, parents) by strengthening the partnership of home, school and parish

- Community development – strengthen community relationships in an effort to sustain confidence in the school board's commitment to improving support for student learning

- Financial accountability and transparency – continue to comply with Board policies and best practices in the area of fiscal responsibilities, accountability and transparency

- Excellence in student achievement – within the context of the Catholic graduate outcomes, continue to establish and nurture conditions needed to advance high levels of student achievement, and narrow the gap in student achievement so that students can grow in their journey to know God and ultimately transform the world around them

- Student enrolment impact – develop proactive strategies to address the impact of changes in student enrolment and its impact in staff, students, and our Catholic community through all practices of the Board, including human resources, employee relations, budget planning etc., in a manner that will ensure sustainable balanced budgets in the future.

1.3 Student Achievement

The Grade 3 results in writing and math have shown steady improvements over the last few years, and meet or exceed the provincial average scores. Grade 3 results in reading declined in 2008-09, but continue to meet the provincial average scores.

Grade 6 EQAO results in reading, writing and math improved in 2008-09, meeting or exceeding the provincial average scores.

Grade 9 academic results improved in 2008-09 and meet the provincial average scores. Grade 9 Applied improved in 2008-09 and are close to meeting the provincial results.

The following charts demonstrate the school board's EQAO results over the last seven years.
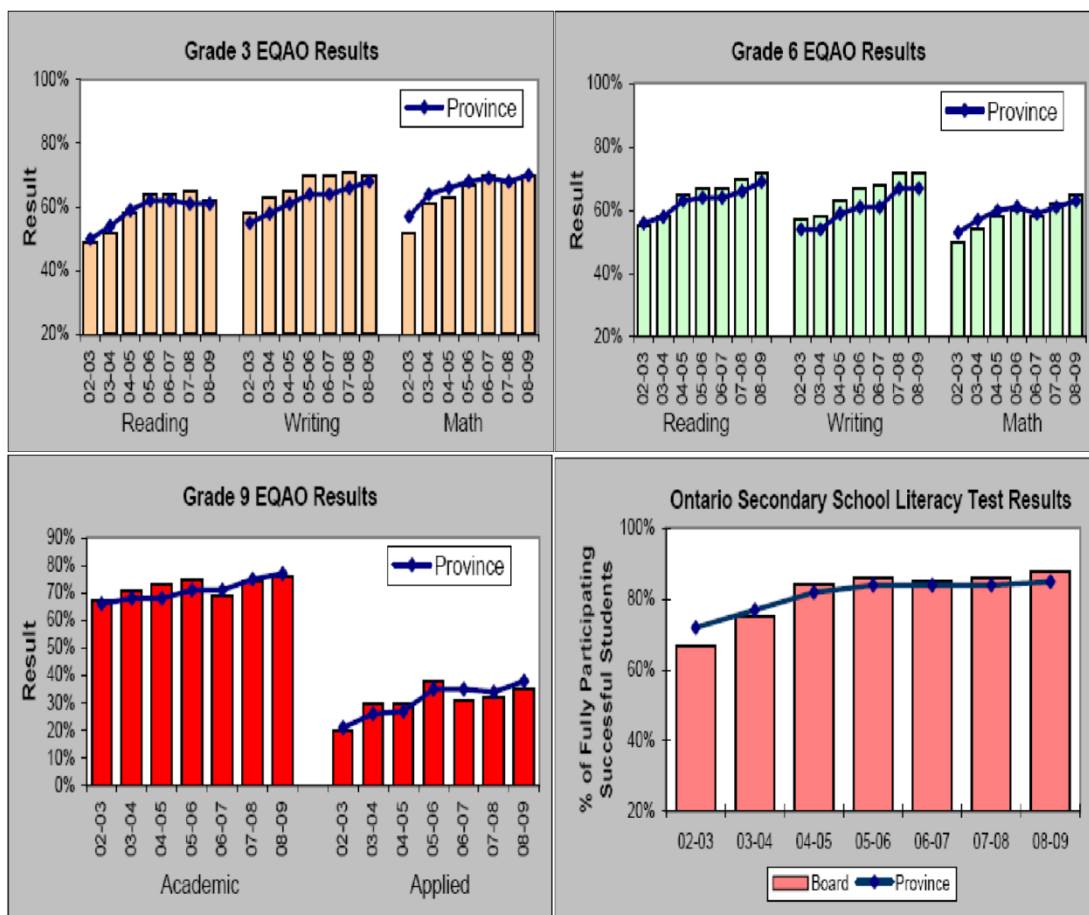
1.4   Fiscal Overview

The following table highlights key financial data for the school board.

Summary Financial Data (Revenues)

Revenues	2007-08 Financial Statements	2008-09 Financial Statements	2009-10 Revised Estimates
Legislative Grants	$515,894,691	$546,012,273	$572,841,107
Local taxation	$240,122,659	$246,157,330	$243,851,014
Board Revenues	$7,414,333	$8,600,925	$5,422,129
Other Operating & capital Grants	$7,330,301	$10,046,784	$9,535,298
Total Revenues (Schedule 9)	**$770,761,984**	**$810,817,311**	**$831,649,548**

Summary Financial Data (Expenditure)

Expenditures:	2007-08 Financial Statements	2008-09 Financial Statements	2009-10 Revised Estimates
Operating expenditures	$694,513,590	$732,560,866	$761,700,278
Capital expenditures - Before transfers from reserves	$64,012,984	$72,073,852	$75,289,638
Transfer to (from) Reserves	$10,768,489	$6,182,593	-$5,038,992
Total Expenditures	**$769,295,063**	**$810,817,311**	**$831,950,924**
In-year Surplus (Deficit)	**$1,466,921**	**$0**	**-$301,376**

School Board Reserves and Deferred Revenues

School Board Reserve and Deferred Revenues:	2006-07 Financial Statements	2007-08 Financial Statements	2008-09 Revised Estimates
Retirement Gratuities	$2,270,267	$2,295,172	$2,295,172
Reserve for Working Funds	$1,980,741	$3,414,179	$948,759
WSIB	$3,834,175	$3,876,235	$3,876,235
Reserve for Technology Infrastructure	$2,037,218	$3,059,566	$3,059,566
Reserve for Contingency	$5,239,819	$6,838,875	$6,838,875
Reserve for Benefits/Attendance Support	$0	$3,400,000	$3,400,000
Reserve for Building Safety	$0	$2,000,000	$2,000,000
Pupil Accomodation Debt Reserve	$127,390,084	$126,756,042	$124,726,405
Total Reserve Funds (Schedule 5)	**$142,752,304**	**$151,640,069**	**$147,145,012**
Energy Efficient Schools - Operating	$0	$527,993	$527,993
Turnaround Team/Library Investment	$26,676	$624,354	$0
Student Success/ Capacity Building/ Support for Learning	$2,639,316	$1,874,462	$805,872
Professional Development/Transportation	$890,744	$800,000	$800,000
Proceeds of Dispositions Reserve- School Buildings	$806,561	$822,724	$826,229
Proceeds of Dispositions Reserve- Other	$0	$193,164	$193,164

School Board Reserve and Deferred Revenues:	2006-07 Financial Statements	2007-08 Financial Statements	2008-09 Revised Estimates
MECR/ BECR Reserve	$0	$0	$0
Education Development Charge Reserve	$4,495,957	$174,341	$174,341
Energy Efficient Schools - Capital	$0	$1,069,250	$0
Total Deferred Revenues (Schedule5.1)	**$8,859,254**	**$6,086,288**	**$3,327,599**
Total Board Reserves and Deferred Revenues	**$151,611,558**	**$157,726,357**	**$150,472,611**

1.5   Key Statistics: Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board

The following table highlights key statistics for the school board.

Day School Enrolment

Day School Enrolment	2002-03 Actual	2007-108 Rev. Estimates
Elementary Day School ADE	53,530	48,322
Secondary Day School ADE	27,703	33,724
Total Day School Enrolment	**81,232**	**82,046**

Primary Class Size

Primary Class Size	2003-04	2007-08
% of Classes Less Than 20	24%	90%
% of Classes Less Than 23	65%	100%
Average Class Size - Jr/Inter	26.06	25
% of 3/4 Classes 23 & Under	32%	100%
% of Combined Classes	13%	28%

Staffing

Staffing	2003-04	2007-08
School Based Teachers	4,613	5224
Teacher Assistants	394	515
Other Student Support	517	477

Staffing	2003-04	2007-08
School Administration	250	259
School Clerical	290	294
School Operations	580	724
Other Non-Classroom	205	203
Total Staffing	**6,849**	**7,697**
Teacher - Pupil Ratio	**1:18**	**1:16**
FTE Staff per 1,000 Pupils (ADE)[1]	**84.3**	**93.8**
Total Salary & Benefits as % of Net Operating Expenditures	**85.7%**	**90.7%**

Special Education

Special Education	2003-04	2007-08
Special Education Incremental Expenditures	$50,532,633	$80,069,625
Special Education Allocation	$56,491,314	$78,599,168
Spending above Allocation (Reserve)	**-$5,958,681**	**$1,470,457**

School Utilization

School Utilization	2003-04	2007-08
Number of schools	129	153
Total Enrolment (ADE)	81,232	82,046
School Capacity (Spaces)	67,306	81,070
School Utilization	**120.7%**	**101.2%**
Board Area (Km2)	**2,736**	**2,736**
Number of Trustees	**11**	**11**

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[1] Note: Impacted by Class Size and Special Education

2.   Governance and School Board Administration – Findings and Recommendations

The school board's governance model and administrative organizational framework make a significant contribution in helping the board of trustees, director, senior administration and community stakeholders support student achievement strategies and effective school board operations.

Governance and school board administration processes are reviewed to:

- Understand how the governance model supports operational effectiveness and delineates the division of duties between the board of trustees and the administration;

- Assess the development of the annual plan (including the goals/priorities) and actions to engage and communicate with key stakeholders and the related reporting against the plan;

- Assess how policies and related procedures are generated and maintained;

- Determine whether staffing levels and organization structures provide for clarity of roles and accountability sufficient to carry out the school board's objectives;

- Identify opportunities to support continual improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of all processes.

This section provides a summary of the findings and recommendations of our assessment of the school board's adoption of the leading practices relating to the governance and school board administration. Our findings are a result of our review of the data provided by the school board and our field work, which included interviews with the Chair, the Director and senior staff of the school board.

The following table summarizes the leading practices defined for governance and board administration, and identifies where evidence showed that the practice was adopted in full. Where the evidence was not present or the practice was not completely adopted at the time of the review, a "No" indicates that an improvement opportunity exists.

Establishment of an Effective Governance Model

Leading Practices – Governance and School Board Administration	Evidence of Adoption?
The school board's governance model clearly delineates the division of duties and responsibilities between the board of trustees and the director of education to support an effective working relationship.	No

Development of the Board's Strategic Direction and the Annual Operating Plan

Leading Practices – Governance and School Board Administration	Evidence of Adoption?
The board of trustees, using a consultative process, develops and communicates a multi-year strategic plan that provides a framework for annual planning.	Yes
The director of education and senior administration develop an annual operating plan of their goals/priorities, incorporating both academic and non-academic departments. The plan is aligned with the Board's multi-year strategic plan and has goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely.	No
The senior administration periodically/annually report to the board of trustees on the status and outcomes of the board strategic plan and annual operating plan.	Yes

Decision Making Processes

Leading Practices – Governance and School Board Administration	Evidence of Adoption?
The board of trustees and senior administration have appropriate processes for decision making to address student achievement targets and operational performance.	Yes
The board of trustees and senior administration have appropriate processes for the establishment and regular maintenance of policies and administrative procedures for the efficient and effective operation of the board.	Yes

Organizational Structure and Accountability

Leading Practices – Governance and School Board Administration	Evidence of Adoption?
The organizational structure has clearly defined organizational units that delineate roles and responsibilities, minimize administrative costs and ensure effective and efficient operation.	Yes
A departmental organization chart (supplemented with a directory of key staff contact information) is publicly available on the board's website.	Yes

Succession and Talent Development

Leading Practices – Governance and School Board Administration	Evidence of Adoption?
As part of the Ministry's *Ontario Leadership Strategy*, the director of education, with support from HR, has established a formal Succession and Talent Development Plan to build and sustain leadership capacity.	No

Stakeholder Engagement

Leading Practices – Governance and School Board Administration	Evidence of Adoption?
The board of trustees and senior administration proactively engage internal and external stakeholders on a regular basis and through a variety of communications vehicles (e.g., websites, email, memos, town halls, etc.).	Yes
Key senior staff from all functional areas are members and participants in sector committees of provincial associations and/or Ministry workgroups.	Yes

Establishment of an Effective Governance Model

The school board uses an advocacy model for governance. Trustees represent the needs of their constituents through a close working relationship with the Director of Education and senior administration. The school board has not clearly delineated the roles and responsibilities of the board of trustees from those of senior administration. The Board proposes to review these roles and responsibilities within the context of new legislation related to school board governance, and formally document them in the Board's by-laws and policies.

The trustees and senior administration have a common understanding that the board of trustees is responsible for setting the school board's direction, priorities, and policies. The Director of Education is responsible for the implementation of Board priorities and polices, and manages the day to day operations of the school board.

The Chair of the Board and the Director meet on a weekly basis. The Director also meets with each trustee periodically to discuss local issues that impact their family of schools.

The Board and senior administration maintain open communication. There is a positive relationship among the senior administration, the Director, and the board of trustees. The senior administration keeps trustees informed of any school board governance or public relations issue, primarily through the Director's office or Associate Director of Superintendents and in *Issues and Events*, a weekly newsletter.

Four of the 11 trustees of the Board were newly elected in the last election. All trustees were provided with training at the beginning of the current four-year term. Additional training is provided as requested by the trustees. The trustees hold two annual retreats, (which are also attended by the Director) to discuss Board functioning and issues. The Board has established the policy and regulations on trustees' code of conduct. The Board has also established the policy and regulations for the code of ethics for senior management, mid-management, and school administrators.

The Board has a formal process for the Director's performance appraisal. For annual performance appraisals, each trustee completes a questionnaire. The Chair summarizes all responses, which are discussed by trustees. Using the survey feedback, the trustees conduct a meeting with the Director. For the mid-year performance evaluation, the trustees have an informal discussion with the Director. The Board intends to revise the existing Directors' performance appraisal process, following the review of the Board's governance structure and in line with the Ministry's leadership initiatives.

Development of the Board's Strategic Directions/Plan

In 2008, the Board approved a two-year approach for setting the school board's strategic directions. It is designed to align funding, resources and staff energies of the school board to selected strategic goals. The two-year system plan is reviewed and updated each year. The two-year plans, which are developed by individual schools, families of schools and departments of the school board, are aligned with the system goals.

System Goals, the current plan approved by the Board in May 2008, includes five measurable goals that address the following areas :

- Catholicity – enhancing faith formation of all community members (staff, students, trustees, parents) by strengthening the partnership of home, school and parish;

- Community development – strengthen community relationships in an effort to sustain confidence in our commitment to improving support for student learning;

- Financial accountability and transparency – continue to comply with board policies and best practices in the areas of fiscal responsibility, accountability and transparency;

- Excellence in student achievement – within the context of the Catholic Graduate Outcomes, continue to establish and nurture the conditions needed to advance high levels of student achievement, and narrow the gap in student achievement so that all students can grow in their journey to know God and ultimately transform the world around them;

- Student enrolment impact – develop proactive strategies to address the impact of changes in student enrolment and its impact on staff, students, and our Catholic community through all practices of the Board including human resources, employee relations, budget, planning, etc., in a manner that will ensure sustainable balanced budgets in the future.

The Director's annual report provides information on the school board's achievements against the system plan, with a focus on student achievement.

In an effort to expand long-term strategic planning the school board conducted consultations in 2008-09 with stakeholders to identify key strengths, challenges, and recommended areas of focus for the next three to five years. A survey, *Shaping our Future*, collected feedback from over 1,000 stakeholders, including school council members, parents, local pastors, and graduating and recently graduated students. The results of this survey were presented to school councils. The Board intends to use the results of the survey to set the budget priorities, and inform the development of the new multi-year strategic system plan in 2010. The Board should continue developing its multi-year strategic plan, which should serve as a framework for annual operating planning activities.

In addition to the two-year system plan, the school board develops an annual board improvement plan, the *Board Learning Plan for Improved Student Achievement and Catholic Community, Culture and Caring*. This plan is aligned with the Ministry of Education direction.

The business superintendents are required to ensure that their departmental priorities support student achievement. Each school principal sets individual improvement targets and plans for their schools. The Director actively monitors student achievement goals and priorities, and reports on progress in the Director's annual report.

Decision Making Process

All matters pertaining to the activities and functions of the school board are presented to the Board for information and/or decision. The Board is supported by five standing committees, including an audit committee, contract negotiations, central Catholic parent council, special education advisory committee, and by-law/policy review committee. There are several sub-committees that provide input in the work of the standing and Board committees. The Board may also strike *ad-hoc* committees.

The Board has established procedural by-laws that outline protocols for Board meetings and standing committee meetings. The by-laws outline the structure and duties of the standing committees, Board meetings, election and appointment of officers, communications, delegations and submissions, committee procedures and general procedures, including agenda setting. The by-laws are reviewed annually by the by-law/policy review committee of the Board.

The Chair and Director meet prior to each Board meeting to set the agenda. Also, prior to the Board meeting, the executive council conducts a pre-board session on any complex issues, such as transportation or accommodation reviews. Board meetings follow a set order, starting with delegations, followed by items and reports from trustees, senior administration, and standing committees, and *in-camera* items.

Two administrative committees (i.e., administration and finance or faith and programs) support the decision making process. Prior to operational items going before the Board, they are discussed at one or the other of these two committees.

The Board has an established policy on the development and review of school board policies .The policy outlines the process for identifying policy issues, initiating policy reviews, and developing and implementing policies.All policies are available on the school board's website. This policy does not address a specific policy review cycle (e.g., every five years) to ensure all policies stay current and relevant.

Each year, the policies are reviewed by the senior administration to identify where new policies or revisions are needed. Trustees may also identify areas where a new policy is required. Draft policies are reviewed first by sub-committees followed by standing committees. The policies published on the school board's website show the date when they were developed or revised. Management should consider establishing a formal review schedule for school board policies, and ensure that all policies are reviewed according to the cycle.

The Freedom of Information Board Policy Officer (working in the employee relations department) assists respective superintendents with specific responsibilities for various school board policies, as they monitor compliance with new legislation and regulatory requirements. The By-law/policy review committee, which consists of all trustees, meets

quarterly to review and update the procedural by-laws and approve draft policies. The general administrative procedures are similarly reviewed by senior administration, to ensure alignment to policies and current practices.

Organizational Structure and Accountability

The school board's administrative team is represented by the Executive Council. It is the decision-making body for all program and operational activities and functions of the school board. The Executive Council, which meets twice weekly, comprises the Director of Education, the Associate Director, Corporate Services/CFO and the Associate Director, Instructional Services.

Supporting the Executive Council are the Administrative Council and the Education Council. The Administrative Council consists of the members of the Executive Council, as well as all superintendents. The Administrative Council meets biweekly. The Educational Council meets twice monthly and is composed of the members of the Executive Council, all superintendents and representatives from the principals' association, as well as representatives of the mid-management association. The Education Council reviews all issues related to either instructional or corporate aspects of school board operations. Associate directors also hold weekly meetings with their reporting superintendents.

The school board's corporate services division is led by the Associate Director, Corporate Services/CFO. Superintendents of financial services and treasury, human resources, employee relations, planning and operations, and the Chief Information Officer report directly to the Associate Director, Corporate Services. Within the instructional services division, there are seven superintendents and two acting assistant superintendents, who are responsible for families of schools, along with the Superintendent of Programs and the Superintendent of Special Education and Support Services.

Every two years, the Director prepares an updated Senior Management Team Responsibilities document, which outlines the roles, responsibilities and accountability for each supervisory officer, including the Director. The current document includes reference to the Ministry of Education's Leadership Strategy, and a current organizational chart for the senior administration.

Names, titles and contact information for every program and business supervisory officer supplemented by a high-level organization chart are posted on the school board's website.

Succession and Talent Development

The school board recognizes the need to plan for impending retirements and changes at the senior administrative level. The Corporate Services division, as a first step in implementing the Ministry's Ontario Leadership Strategy, has prepared a succession planning and talent development overview document. It highlights the need for a formal succession plan that includes leadership development, and summarizes the existing/proposed leadership development initiatives. The school board has a number of leadership development programs for teachers, such as Catholic leadership seminar series, visible and racial minority groups, and training sessions for teachers seeking to become vice-principals.

The school board maintains pools of eligible candidates for elementary and secondary vice-principal and principal positions, and for supervisory officers. To encourage applicants to apply to these pools, the school board conducts leadership information session throughout the year and additional sessions to support potential applicants to the pool. Information sessions are also conducted for corporate services staff. The applicants are selected through an interview process, based on attendance, appraisals, and recommendations and evidence presented by supervisors.

Since management has established a pool for supervisory officers, it is planning to establish formal and informal leadership training to prepare potential candidates. Management is also currently developing a survey of all administrators, supervisory officers, principals and vice-principals to collect information on retirement plans and future leadership preferences.

Stakeholder Engagement

The school board proactively engages system stakeholders, using various mechanisms. The Board has a central committee that includes parent council representatives from across the district. This committee is a venue for discussing any Board policy and procedure or school board-wide issue.

The school board also actively engages community groups, municipalities and parishes. The Strategic System Review Survey conducted in 2008 gauged stakeholders' input and general satisfaction levels in relation to various communication and operational issues. Local issues are usually addressed by school principals, or by the communications and community relations department of the school board. Issues that are related to school board policies are referred to the board of trustees.

The Director and supervisory officers take part in a number of regional and provincial committees. The Director serves on a number of professional committees, such as CODE and ECODE, Educational Regional Councils, as well as OISE Religious Education Course, University of Toronto Erindale Committee, Mississauga Healthy

Stewardship Committee, Share Life, and other diocesan committees. Superintendents serve on professional committees such as OCSOA, Ministry advisory committees and local community committees.

Recommendations:

- The Board should finalize and document its governance model, with clear delineation of the division of duties and responsibilities between the board of trustees and the director of education.

- The school board should finalize the development of a multi-year strategic plan and continue establishing an annual operating plan, incorporating both academic and non-academic departments. The plan should contain goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely. The annual board-wide operating plan should be aligned with the strategic directions, and serve as a framework for annual departmental planning.

- The school board should continue aligning its leadership development programs and activities with the Ministry leadership initiatives. It should continue developing a formal Succession and Talent Development Plan, in line with the Leadership Succession Planning and Talent Development - Ministry Expectations and Implementation Continuum.

3. Human Resource Management and School Staffing/Allocation – Findings and Recommendations
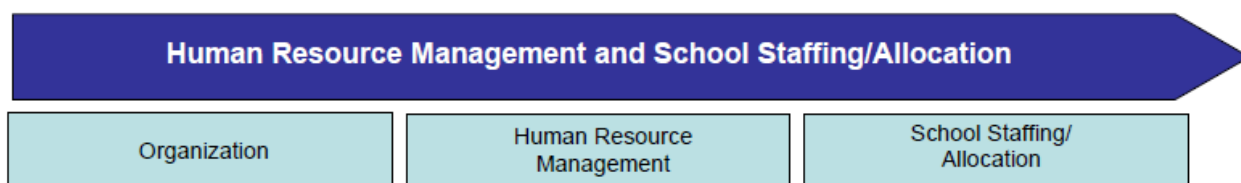
Effective management of human resources ensures an adequate number of qualified staff throughout the organization can perform their prescribed duties. Policies and procedures to develop staff are in place, through performance appraisals, professional development and support services. Staff allocations to schools and classrooms meet the Ministry's class size requirements, and are congruent with the board's collective agreements and allocation models.

The following is a summary of our assessment of the school board's adoption of the leading practices under the processes identified above. All findings are a result of a review of the data provided by the school board and on-site field-work, which included interviews with all key HR staff, as well as follow-up and confirmation of information.

3.1 Human Resource Organization

The review of the organization of the HR department assesses:

- Whether appropriate policies and procedures have been established and maintained to support the HR functions and required priorities, and whether they are aligned with the school board's directions;

- Whether an annual departmental plan setting out the goals and priorities and their alignment to the school board's strategic directions has been established;

- Whether the roles and responsibilities of staff support the key functions, activities and practices of HR;

- Opportunities to support continual improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of all processes.

The following table summarizes the leading practices defined for HR organizations, and identifies where evidence was found to indicate that the practice was adopted in full. Where the evidence was not present or the practice was not completely adopted at the time of the review, a "No" indicates that an improvement opportunity exists.

Development and Reporting of Annual Goals and Priorities

Leading Practices – Human Resource Organization	Evidence of Adoption?
The HR department's goals and priorities are documented in an annual departmental operating plan. They are aligned to the annual board operating plan accessible by key stakeholders. The plan incorporates measurable targets, specific timelines and identified accountability.	Yes

Organizational Structure and Accountability

Leading Practices – Human Resource Organization	Evidence of Adoption?
The HR department has clearly defined organizational units and delineates the respective roles and responsibilities. A current organization chart is available to the public.	Yes
Senior HR staff have appropriate designations (e.g., Certified Human Resource Professional, etc.).	Yes

Monitoring and Communication of Policies

Leading Practices – Human Resource Organization	Evidence of Adoption?
HR management has processes in place to monitor HR policy compliance by all staff and management.	Yes
HR management builds staff capacity in understanding of HR policies and administrative procedures.	Yes

Development and Reporting of Annual Goals and Priorities

The human resources management function is the responsibility of two departments within the school board: employee relations and humans resources. The human resources department and the employee relations department establish two-year department operating plans, which indicate actions for implementation, indicators for success, monitoring, and timelines. The department goals are aligned with the twoyear system goals for the school board. The superintendents provide status updates to the corporate services council twice annually, during strategic planning sessions.

The superintendents for each department set new goals every two years based on input from managers. Management should consider enhancing the annual departmental plan by clearly indicating responsibilities. Management should also consider formulating actions/goals that are specific and measurable. This would enable the departments to

develop indicators of success, and track and report on progress in implementing the goals.

Organizational Structure and Accountability

There are two superintendents responsible for human resources management: the Superintendent of Human Resources, and the Superintendent of Employee Relations. These superintendents report directly to the Associate Director of Corporate Services.

The human resources department's role is to provide ongoing support to personnel, hire new staff, and support professional development. Within the human resources department, the General Manager reports directly to the Superintendent of Human Resources. Various functions of the human resources department include benefits and pay, support services personnel, teacher personnel, HR information system management, staffing, and training and development.

The Superintendent of Employee Relations is supported by three managers who are responsible for the employee relations department, the health and safety department, and the health promotion and wellness department.

The structure and lines of reporting for each department are provided in current organization charts. Management noted that the employee relations department has recently completed job evaluations for all middle management of the school board. The roles and responsibilities of senior administrators are documented. There are formal job descriptions for all staff of the human resources and employee relations departments. Human resources and employee relations staff have appropriate professional designations and experience.

Monitoring and Communication of Policies

The human resources and employee relations departments are responsible for implementing policies pertaining to hiring and staffing, attendance and leaves, freedom of information (FOI) and protection of privacy, and the health and safety of employees and students.

The FOI Officer within the employee relations department also acts as the Board Policy Officer and the secretary to the Bylaw and Policy Committee of the Board. This officer is responsible for managing policies and general administrative procedures for the school board and communicating any changes to all relevant staff. The Policy Officer is also currently coordinating a review of all general operating procedures.

The employee relations department provides new school administrators with a binder of school board policies, along with information on employee rights and discipline issues. During the year, any changes in the existing policies or new policies are emailed to

staff, with a reminder to update binders. All policies are published on the school board's website. The general administrative procedures are published on the school board's intranet. Each family of schools superintendent is responsible for inservicing the administrators of their schools on topics related to human resources and employee relations before the start of each school year.

For the past two years, the employee relations department has provided all school administrators with a CD with current policies at the beginning of the school year. The CD includes a calendar which identifies policies and information that need to be reviewed with staff throughout the year. Management noted that such reminders help ensure that school administrators meet the collective agreement requirements for reviewing specific policies with staff.

3.2   Human Resource Management

The purpose of reviewing the HR management processes is to assess whether:

- Planning and processes are in place for the recruitment and hiring of the appropriate number of qualified staff to support the student achievement targets;

- Appropriate processes are in place to promote the personal and professional growth of all staff;

- Adequate systems and procedures are in place to manage employee compensation plans, labour relations, employee performance and attendance and other support services to foster employee satisfaction;

- Opportunities to support continual improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of all processes can be identified.

The following table summarizes the leading practices defined for HR management, and identifies where evidence was found to indicate that the practice was adopted in full. Where the evidence was not present or the practice was not completely adopted at the time of the review, a "No" indicates that an improvement opportunity exists.

Staff Recruitment/Hiring

Leading Practices – Human Resource Management	Evidence of Adoption?
Recruitment policies and administrative procedures are reviewed annually, and are aligned with staff planning to support student achievement.	Yes
The hiring policies and procedures for the respective staff groups are harmonized and shared with managers throughout the school board.	Yes

Labour Relations

Leading Practices – Human Resource Management	Evidence of Adoption?
HR management and the board of trustees have established labour/management committees.	Yes
HR management has established policies and procedures to minimize grievances.	Yes

Employee Performance Evaluation Processes

Leading Practices – Human Resource Management	Evidence of Adoption?
HR management has policies and procedures for an employee evaluation/performance system for all staff.	Yes
HR management maintains and communicates formal disciplinary policies and procedures for all staff.	Yes
The HR department actively supports the professional development activities of the school board.	Yes

Attendance Management Processes/Programs

Leading Practices – Human Resource Management	Evidence of Adoption?
The school board maintains appropriate processes and systems to monitor staff attendance on a timely basis.	Yes
Attendance management process/programs exist that include employee supportive policies and procedures to minimize the cost of absenteeism.	No
Management periodically reports on the effectiveness of the attendance management process/programs to senior management and the board.	No

Management of HR and Payroll Data

Leading Practices – Human Resource Management	Evidence of Adoption?
Payroll processing is segregated from employee data records, and changes to data are adequately controlled.	Yes
HR records are current, including the formal tracking of teacher qualifications and experience.	Yes

Leading Practices – Human Resource Management	Evidence of Adoption?
HR management has implemented an approved pay equity plan, which is reviewed periodically and amended as necessary.	No

Management of School Board's Benefit Plans

Leading Practices – Human Resource Management	Evidence of Adoption?
HR management periodically conducts independent compliance audits of the school board's insurance carrier to ensure adherence to benefit plan's terms and conditions.	Yes
Employee data is automatically synchronized between the school board and external carriers (i.e. OTPP, OMERS and the board's benefit provider(s)).	Yes
Policies and procedures ensure the board's benefit plans are managed appropriately.	Yes

Monitoring Staff Satisfaction

Leading Practices – Human Resource Management	Evidence of Adoption?
Confidential staff satisfaction surveys are performed periodically.	No
Confidential exit interviews are performed for all staff who resign, take early retirement or transfer.	No

Staff Recruitment/Hiring

The human resources department has prepared a recruitment CD that is used as part of the recruitment strategy. The recruitment CD contains information about the school board and the application process for teaching positions. All vacant academic and support services positions are posted on the website. The school board sends recruitment teams to a number of university job fairs in Ontario, and sends copies of the recruitment CD to other university job fairs across Canada.

The school board also holds a recruitment open house for all student teachers who are currently undertaking a teaching practicum at the school board. Management noted that the school board's recruitment needs have decreased over the past few years due to declining enrollment. The existing recruitment methods generate a sufficient number of qualified candidates for available positions, except in a few specific areas, such as French teachers.

The HR department has established an employee equity policy and hiring guidelines for both teaching and support staff. The guidelines provide a high-level overview of the hiring process, requirements and selection criteria for interviews. The HR department controls the hiring process centrally, receiving applications, coordinating interviews, and performing reference and police checks. Information on candidates is managed electronically through the HR information system, and can be easily transferred to personnel files when candidates are hired.

For elementary teaching positions, selected candidates are interviewed four times a year centrally at the board offices, by a panel that includes administrators and teachers. Interviews for the secondary panel are coordinated by HR and distributed among the secondary school administrators for completion during April and May at their schools. An approved list of candidates is created to fill vacant full-time positions and occasional teaching jobs throughout the year. The list includes candidates who receive an excellent or outstanding rating in the interviews, with criteria that include elementary and secondary panel needs, gender, qualifications, and diversity.

All new hires receive an orientation document describing the information, resources and services available to them through the internal website.

Labour Relations

The school board has open communication and good relationships with the unions. To address collective bargaining issues, the school board has established labour management committees for all eight bargaining units, as well as staff allocation committees, management consultation committees and a presidents' committee chaired by the Director and open to all unions and management associations. The union and management committees generally meet bi-monthly throughout the school year. A formal mechanism is in place to set agendas in advance of these meetings. The superintendent of employee relations, and other superintendents, managers and staff, are members of these committees.

The labour relations committees provide effective mechanisms for dealing with issues. The employee relations department maintains open lines of communication with the unions to address issues before they become formal grievances. The employee relations department works closely with the unions to achieve an informal resolution or a third-party mediated resolution before sending an issue to arbitration.

The Superintendent of Employee Relations participates in labour negotiations as the chief negotiator with support from the Manager of Employee Relations and other employee relations department staff, as well as other board staff such as principal/vice-principal representatives, other superintendents and finance and HR staff. During negotiations the Manager of Employee Relations is the chief spokesperson for the

school board. The trustees, the Director and the Associate Director are also kept informed of progress and issues in negotiations.

Employee Performance Evaluation Processes

The school board has implemented formal performance appraisal processes for all employee groups. Guidelines, timelines and performance appraisal templates have been established for each employee group. The guidelines include a description of the appraisal process, as well as provisions for appealing an evaluation rating, and the remedial processes for employees who receive an unsatisfactory performance rating.

The performance appraisal processes were developed by committees involving the employee relations department, the human resources department, superintendents, and union/association representatives. The school board began conducting annual performance reviews for supervisory officers in 2001. Since then, the school board has also implemented performance appraisal processes based on a three-year cycle for mid-management, Association of Professional Student Services Personnel (APSSP), Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), and Educational Resource Workers (ERW). The performance appraisal process for general managers is in its first year of implementation.

In line with the Ministry's Supporting Teaching Excellence document, the school board evaluates its experienced teachers on a five-year cycle, and conducts the New Teacher Induction Program for new teachers in their first and second years. The school board also requires that principals and vice-principals complete annual growth plans, designed to align with the Ontario Leadership Strategy.

The human resources department notifies supervisors of scheduled evaluations using the HR intranet portal. HR tracks the status of all required appraisals to ensure that they are completed on time. HR has a dedicated teacher appraisal and learning plan assistant to support this process for teaching staff. Currently, the learning plans are manually completed, but the school board is considering options to facilitate the process electronically.

The school board has a procedure for employee workplace conduct to deal with workplace complaints. The employee relations department has also developed the "on review" process to resolve disciplinary issues. This document outlines the progressive disciplinary steps, starting with an informal meeting and progressing up to a recommendation for termination. The guidelines also include templates for conducting meetings and formal communication to employees. The unions are aware of the "on review" process which is consistent with the collective agreements. Board approval is required to terminate a teacher, and a protocol documents the procedure for recommending a teacher's termination.

The Training and Development Administrator within the human resources department coordinates professional development for the school board. The funding for professional development is set in PDT agreements for each employee group. All employee groups generally attend at least one professional development (PD) day during the school year. The Training and Development Administrator works with the unions to identify and develop the content of professional development sessions. Managers and supervisors also help to identify skills training required by staff. HR has an online system for registration for training sessions. The system tracks the number of registrants, and allows HR to send a follow-up questionnaire to participants to gather feedback on training sessions.

The school board received additional funding from the Ontario Education Services Corporation during the 2008-09 school year, to enhance training and development program for support staff. A central committee was struck to conduct a needs assessment for all support staff and to implement training programs. The funding allowed the school board to offer 14 additional training programs for support staff, based on the needs assessment across a broad range of topics such as faith, information technology, facility security procedures, and communication skills.

The program department is responsible for teacher professional development.

Attendance Management Processes/Programs

An effective attendance support system combines policies and procedures, information systems to record and analyze trends in absenteeism, and dedicated resources to develop a cohesive and consistent strategy. These elements, combined with employee wellness programs and return-to-work initiatives, form the basis of a comprehensive attendance support program.

The employee relations and HR departments are developing an attendance support process for employees of the school board. The program has been approved by the executive council, and is planned to be implemented in 2010. The attendance support program provides guidance and tools and templates for a progressive fivestep process that can lead to a disciplinary action for culpable absenteeism. Currently, the school board tracks staff attendance and identifies employees with over nine absence days in a year. Once the attendance support program is implemented, employees who exceed nine absence days will be enrolled in the attendance support process.

The employee relations department is in the process of recruiting an attendance support coordinator to manage the program and provide support and guidance to school principals.

The school board has formal procedures for early intervention for employees who are absent for five consecutive days. Workplace accommodation and return to work plans to modify jobs allow employees to return to work sooner.

The school board uses a computerized attendance tracking system for monitoring absences. Each school is given a budget for occasional teachers. The HR department has implemented about 100 absence codes to ensure that absences are correctly identified and tracked. School administrators can view the attendance summaries for their staff, and each employee is provided with an absence statement annually. The HR department does not provide periodic formal reports to senior management and the Board on employee absences and attendance support processes.

Management of HR and Payroll Data

HR has responsibility for the payroll function, but segregates payroll processing from access to employee data records. Staff within the personnel department are responsible for making changes in the personnel/payroll system, while benefits and pay staff use this information from the system to process required changes and generate paychecks. All staff are paid through direct deposit.

Employee relations department staff are responsible for job evaluation. If a job evaluation results in position reclassifications, the employee relations department staff notify personnel staff who make changes in the system. Data on teachers' qualifications is synchronized with the Ontario College of Teachers several times a year. Updated qualifications from the College are downloaded directly into the school board HR system.

The school board is currently revising pay equity plans. Pay equity is established in collective agreements and through job evaluations. The employee relations department has negotiated a letter of understanding with the unions for several employee groups to hire a consultant to create a pay equity tool. The school board currently has one outstanding pay equity grievance.

Management of the School Board's Benefit Plans

The payroll and benefits department within the HR department is responsible for managing the school board's benefits plan. The school board contracts an external benefits consultant to regularly review the existing benefit plan and conduct comparisons relative to other school boards. A benefits claims review was conducted in 2005, and resulted in the renegotiation of the claims administration fees. Reviews are conducted at least once every five years. In 2005, the school board also hired a consultant to conduct a claims audit specifically for long-term disability claims.

The benefits and pay department periodically updates the benefits handbooks provided to employees. The Benefits and Pay Manager works closely with the dedicated account manager at the insurance carrier, to ensure that all changes in collective agreements are reflected on the carrier's dedicated webpage for the school board, and in individuals' account summaries.

To mitigate costs, the school board monitors and analyzes trends in benefits claims. The school board has a joint benefit committee that uses this trend analysis to make adjustments to use existing funds more effectively.

The school board is currently piloting a new automated process with OMERS to synchronize data. Individual members' data is submitted to OMERS throughout the year, using *e-access.* Each year, the HR department generates a report from the HR system which is transmitted to OMERS. Payroll staff use *e-access,* and there is an authorization process for providing access to new employees of the school board. For OTPP, individual member data is transmitted electronically to the Teacher Information Management System (TIMS) on a bi-weekly basis. The school board's pension specialist is responsible for ensuring data is synchronized between the school board and external carriers.

Monitoring Staff Satisfaction

Management last conducted a confidential staff satisfaction survey seven years ago to obtain staff feedback on general satisfaction and attitudes. This survey was similar to the topics covered in an exit interview. Exit interviews are only conducted with non-union mid management staff and APSSP staff. HR has guidelines and a template for conducting exit interviews with these staff groups.

Recommendations:

- Management should finalize its attendance support program, and develop a mechanism to assess and report on the effectiveness of the attendance support process/programs to senior administration and the Board.

- Management should continue updating the pay equity plan for all employee groups of the school board.

- Management should continue conducting periodic and confidential staff surveys, to improve communication with staff and provide input for professional development plans and HR policies. Management should also consider conducting exit interviews with all staff groups to obtain feedback on HR policies, as well as process and program improvements.

3.3   School Staffing/Allocation

The purpose of reviewing school staffing/allocation processes is to:

- Assess whether accurate and efficient processes are in place to forecast and plan for staffing needs to support student achievement target strategies;

- Ensure that staff optimization allocation processes are in place, supported by an effective attendance management system;

- Identify opportunities to support continual improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of all processes.

The following table summarizes the leading practices defined for School Staffing/Allocation, and identifies where evidence was found to indicate that the practice was adopted in full. Where the evidence was not present or the practice was not completely adopted at the time of the review, a "No" indicates that an improvement opportunity exists.

Processes for Annual Staff Planning and Allocation

Leading Practices – School Staffing/Allocation	Evidence of Adoption?
The school board policies and procedures govern the development of an annual staffing plan and allocation process that reflects the priorities of the Board and Ministry initiatives.	No
The staff allocation process monitors adherence to key Ministry and board policy parameters, such as: class size, prep time, collective agreement requirements and other board directions.	Yes

Monitoring and Reporting on Staff Allocation

Leading Practices – School Staffing/Allocation	Evidence of Adoption?
Systems are in place and accessible by both HR and Finance staff to establish and track an approved level of staff.	Yes
Management periodically reports on the actual allocation of staff, compared to the original approved allocation plan and budget (FTEs by function, department and program, actual versus budget).	Yes
Procedures are in place to enable adjustment of staff allocations for school based staff, if estimates for enrolment and funding change after budget approval.	Yes
Management's plan for providing student support services and staffing is based on student-needs analysis.	Yes

Processes for Annual Staff Planning and Allocation

The school board does not have formal policies and procedures for staff planning and allocation. Management noted that staffing is largely driven by parameters in the collective agreements and the Ministry requirements for primary class size. Staff allocation is directed by the elementary and secondary staff allocation committees, comprising union and association representatives and a number of school board staff, including the associate director of instructional services and the superintendents of human resources and employee relations. The configuration and meeting schedule for these committees is outlined in the collective agreements.

The planning department is responsible for providing student enrolment projections. Preliminary projections in December-January are used by the employee relations department to prepare a preliminary staff allocation model for both elementary and secondary panel in conjunction with the committees. These are adjusted based on revised projections in April.

The Superintendent of Employee Relations and a central principal seconded to the employee relations department are responsible for ensuring that the staff allocation process meets collective agreement requirements. The employee relations department also has two officers, one for the elementary and one for the secondary panel, who assist in this process. The staffing model is set using staff allocation software that has been customized to meet the parameters set by the Ministry, the requirements in the PDT agreements and contractual obligations. Staffing explanatory notations are issued by the employee relation department, along with the staffing model to explain the parameters used.

The allocation of special education staff is determined by the Special Education department, based on historical allocations and contractual obligations. Additional staff allocation for special education requires the approval of the executive council and the budget review committee. The Special Education department is responsible for monitoring the allocation of special education staff.

The staffing model developed and approved by the staffing committee is sent to the financial services department to cost. This is compared to the estimated GSN funding amount, based on the projections prepared by the grants office of the financial services department. This comparison is made again in September, and adjustments are sometimes made if there is a significant difference.

Staff allocations are provided to school administrators to make staffing decisions. Secondary principals identify the specific credit courses that will be offered at their school, and make staffing decisions based on student course option sheets but within their assigned staff allocation.

Monitoring and Reporting on Staff Allocation

The human resources department has established central controls in the hiring process to ensure that staff allocations are being adhered to. The school board has recently implemented new software that allows HR to allocate individual staff to specific schools. Information from this system is compared to the staff allocation model generated by the staff allocation software. The Superintendent of Employee Relations coordinates a reorganization of staff in September, and runs reports to ensure that the actual deployed staff meet the staff allocation model.

For elementary schools, the staff allocation model completed by June is based on the most recent enrolment projections at that time. The allocation is adjusted at the end of September, using the actual enrolment. The staffing model for the secondary panel prepared by June is based on blended enrolment projections, and contains a holdback of teachers that are allocated in September as required once the actual enrolment is known.

The human resources department is responsible for monitoring and reporting on staff FTEs throughout the year. The financial services department uses FTE reports from the human resources department to track budgeted to actual salary expenditures throughout the year. The human resources department also provides quarterly staffing reports to the Board. During the year any changes in staffing are reported to the Board as part of budget updates.

In order to respond to changing needs during the year, the programs department monitors the allocation of education resource workers (ERWs) for special education, redistributing these staff during the year as needed.

Recommendation:

- Management should document the staff allocation process in formal policies and procedures.

4. Financial Management – Findings and Recommendations
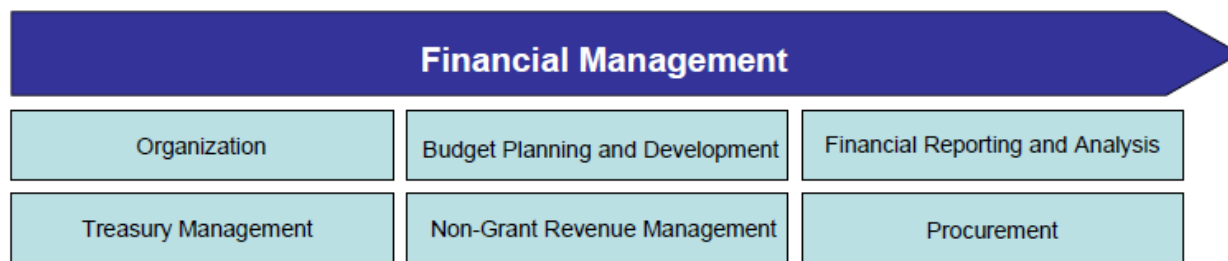
The financial management of the school board ensures the efficient and effective use of fiscal resources. Financial management ensures that the annual budget is developed within the Ministry's allocation and aligned with student achievement targets. It also ensures that appropriate financial policies and procedures are in place to manage resources. Financial and related business processes contribute to an appropriate level of transparency in the allocation and use of the budget to the various departments. They also ensure that the reporting of results to the board of trustees and other school board stakeholders reflects the approved goals and priorities for student achievement.

The following is a summary of our assessment of the school board's adoption of the leading practices under the processes identified above. All findings are a result of a review of the data provided by the school board and on-site field work, which included interviews with all key finance management staff, as well as follow-up and confirmation of information.

4.1 Finance Organization

The purpose of reviewing the organization of the finance department is to assess:

- The establishment of policies and procedures to support the key finance functions, activities and required business priorities and their alignment with student achievement targets;

- Finance department support of the overall goals/priorities and accountability measures established by the school board;

- The efficiency and effectiveness of the departmental structure and support of the roles and responsibilities for the key functions, activities and practices;

- Opportunities to support continual improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of all processes.

The following table summarizes the leading practices defined for the finance organization, and identifies where evidence was found to indicate that the practice was adopted in full. Where the evidence was not present or the practice was not completely adopted at the time of the review, a "No" indicates that an improvement opportunity exists.

Development and Reporting of Annual Goals and Priorities

Leading Practices – Finance Organization	Evidence of Adoption?
The finance department's goals and priorities are documented in an annual departmental operating plan that is aligned to the annual operating plan accessible by key stakeholders. The plan incorporates measurable targets, specific timelines and identified accountability.	Yes

Organization Structure and Accountability

Leading Practices – Finance Organization	Evidence of Adoption?
The finance department has clearly defined organizational units and delineates the respective roles and responsibilities. A current organization chart is available.	Yes
Finance department staff have the appropriate finance/accounting designations and experience.	Yes

Monitoring and Communication of Policies

Leading Practices – Finance Organization	Evidence of Adoption?
Finance management has processes in place to monitor finance policy compliance by all staff and management.	Yes
Management provides scheduled finance policy and procedures awareness, training and skills development educational sessions.	Yes

Development and Reporting of Annual Goals and Priorities

The finance department develops a two-year formal department operating plan, which indicates actions for implementation, indicators for success, and timelines. The key priorities of the finance department identified in the 2008-2010 plan include:

- Support and balance educational goals of Catholic education and budget compliance

- Continue to provide training to school council chairs and treasurers regarding school council funds

- Monitor expenditure relating to EPO and other funding outside of the GSN

- Solicit input form elementary and secondary administrators to identify information that would be useful, assess needs of stakeholders

- Develop and deliver refresher training and introduce final financial tool (to all administrators)

Since the two-year operating plan is developed by managers of the department, each manager is aware of individual responsibilities for specific actions identified in the plan. The template used to identify goals for the department provides specific columns which identify:

- actions for implementation;

- indicators of Success;

- evidence from Monitoring and Review Cycles

- completion date/next steps

The Director's report to the Board highlights major accomplishments of the department within the established plan. The department also identifies and presents the successes and accomplishments to senior management at the strategic sessions.

Management should consider enhancing the annual plan by clearly indicating responsibilities. Management should also consider formulating actions/goals that are specific and measurable. This would enable the financial services department to develop indicators of success, and track and report on progress in implementing the goals.

In addition to the department plan, finance staff prepare a calendar of events for all activities and tasks that regularly occur each year, including budget, revised estimates, audit.

Managers of the financial services department meet periodically to discuss progress on annual goals. The department conducts team meetings twice a year with all department staff to communicate goals and priorities of the department. The General Manager of Finance issues a monthly newsletter with updates on the activities of the financial services department and a schedule of events.

Organizational Structure and Accountability

The Superintendent of Financial Services and Treasurer reports to the Associate Director of Corporate Services and has broad responsibilities and authority in all areas of financial services, including the development of sound financial systems and controls, the monitoring of expenditures and the procuring of revenue within relevant board policies and legislation.

The General Manager, Financial Services manages the day-to-day operations of the finance department and reports directly to the Superintendent. The management of the financial services department is also comprised of the Manager Financial Services, Manager Budget Department, and Manager Purchasing. There is an internal auditor who is supervised by the Superintendent of Financial Services and reports to both the superintendent and the Director of Education.

There is a current organization chart of the financial services department. The chart is not published on the school board's website. However, the website provides contact information for key staff in the department.

The employee relations department has recently completed job evaluations for all middle management of the school board. There are formal job descriptions for all staff of the financial services department. Finance staff have appropriate professional designations and experience.

Monitoring and Communication of Policies

The financial services department is responsible for policies pertaining to fiscal management, including purchasing, staff and trustee expenses, and budget development. These policies are posted on the school board's website. The financial services department has developed general administrative procedures related to financial management, which are available to all staff on the school board's intranet.

The financial services department has developed a manual for school administrators, *Financial Support Tool for Schools*, for the 2009-2010 school year. Management noted that this support tool was initiated for the 2009-2010 school year, and will be updated periodically or at least annually. The manual contains contact information, a summary of operating and capital account code structure, purchasing procedures, month end and year end reporting requirements, and forms and templates to assist school administrators in the financial management of their schools.

The financial services department provides formal training sessions on financial policies and procedures for school administrators. Finance staff also provides informal training, including one-on-one training and advice to school administrators and school secretaries.

Periodic internal audits, which are conducted by the school board's Internal Auditor, provide recommendations to support compliance with policies and procedures. The Internal Auditor conducts full audits of two secondary and four elementary schools each year, and follows up on any concerns that have been identified at other schools. Findings and recommendations from internal audits are shared with all family of schools superintendents, who discuss improvement opportunities with school principals.

There are two dedicated members of finance staff, Finance and Logistics Administrator and Financial Analyst – School Funds, who are responsible for providing support for the accounting system for school-based funds and monitoring of compliance with policies and procedures and reporting. These roles also include training for school-based staff.

4.2   Budget Planning and Development

The purpose of reviewing budget planning and development processes is to:

- Understand the linkages between the board of trustees' goals and priorities and the operational budgeting process;

- Assess whether sufficient transparency and controls exist in the budget planning and development process;

- Identify opportunities to support continual improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of all processes.

The following table summarizes the leading practices defined for budget planning and development, and identifies where evidence was found to indicate that the practice was adopted in full. Where the evidence was not present or the practice was not completely adopted at the time of the review, a "No" indicates that an improvement opportunity exists.

Annual Budget Development Process

Leading Practices – Budget Planning and Development	Evidence of Adoption?
The annual budget development process is transparent, clearly communicated and incorporates input from all key stakeholders including management (with principals), board of trustees and the community.	Yes
Management has adopted an integrated (at school board and school level) approach to enrolment forecasting that drives the budget process	Yes
Budget planning processes account for all required cost and revenue changes.	Yes
Staffing costs are compared with similar school boards and the funding model to ensure efficient use of resources	Yes

Risk Mitigation and Board Approval

Leading Practices – Budget Planning and Development	Evidence of Adoption?
Management identifies and documents all significant risks during the budget planning process and develops strategies to mitigate the risks of spending beyond authorized/budgeted levels.	Yes
The annual budget presented for approval demonstrates that it is linked to the board-approved goals and priorities including student achievement targets. It provides useful and understandable information for all stakeholders.	Yes

Annual Budget Development Process

The Board has established a formal policy for that sets out an administrative structure for the preparation and approval of the school board's annual operating and capital budget. Each year, management prepares terms of reference for the budget review staff committee and budget calendar for approval by the Board.

The budget review staff committee is chaired by the Associate Director of Corporate Services and Chief Financial Officer, and comprises representatives from senior instructional staff as well as senior corporate service staff. The mandate of the committee, which reports to the Executive Council, includes the following key tasks:

- Review and analyze the existing and future budgets of the school board and provide comments, suggestions and recommendations for action

- Identify cost pressures and savings

- Establish realistic goals and objectives based on budget priorities from system partners

- Rigorously review all staffing adjustments and needs

- Be transparent in all communications

- Organize and participate in meetings with various internal and external groups.

The budget calendar and the budget review staff committee are established in October-November. The budget development process starts in January-February, with a workshop with trustees to set budget priorities and strategies, year-end results, budget pressures and risks and budget alternatives. By December, the Planning Department has issued projected enrolment numbers to use in developing the preliminary budget. From January to May, the financial services department and budget review staff committee incorporate feedback from various stakeholders into the preliminary budget. This feedback is collected through the work of the staff budget committee, discussions

with trustees, public budget consultation meeting, and meetings with the SEAC committee.

When GSN is announced, management evaluates the impact on revenues and prepares preliminary estimates. Management develops budget options and finalizes the budget by May. In May, the board of trustees and the budget departmentfacilitate public budget meetings. For public meetings, management prepares presentations which contain information on the previous year budget and the new budget priorities. These presentations provide sufficient detail to help participants of public meetings understand all aspects of the budget. In June, the budget is finalized and presented for approval to the Board.

The planning department of the school board is responsible for enrolment projections. One dedicated planning staff member is responsible for preparing annual enrolment projections and multi-year projections using the specialized software. As part of annual enrolment projections, all planners provide input in preliminary projections, based on their knowledge of specific areas of the school board such as upcoming developments. Several drafts of enrolment projections are provided to principals for review from December to April. Superintendents of families of schools coordinate principals' feedback and provide comments and updates to the planning department. Management noted that over the past several years, conservative enrolment forecasting has proven to be accurate and reliable.

As part of the budget development process, the financial services department estimates grant revenue, *ad hoc* revenues and non-grant revenues. In the past, the school board implemented formal cost reduction targets and zero-based budgeting, which enabled management to conduct an in-depth review of all budget lines.

The financial services department uses a spreadsheet-based template for budget development. In April or May, budget templates are sent to schools. These templates contain estimates based on enrolment projections. A similar budget request template is provided to all departments and contains total budget based on the previous year budget. Any departmental requests for increases in budget lines are brought forward for discussion by the staff budget review committee. The use of the standard budget development template ensures a high degree of transparency in the budget development process.

In 2007, the Board established a policy on funding new programs. The policy established a protocol for new programs and services or modifications of existing programs and services. For each new or modified program, a trustee or staff member is required to prepare a comprehensive report which describes the program, provides projected costs for a three-year period, and clearly states which funding source will be utilized. The potential funding sources include additional new grants from the province,

new revenues raised by the school board, and savings generated through cost reductions in other budget areas. The proposals are reviewed by the financial services staff and the executive council. The recommendations are brought to the Board for discussion and approval.

The school board has established positive working relationships with other school boards and, in particular, with the co-terminus board. Management informally obtains comparative data and information on many aspects of school board operations. The school board also receives high-level comparative information on salaries, organizational structure, banking costs, audit fees and other areas through the Ontario Association of School Business Officials (OASBO).

Risk Mitigation and Board Approval

As part of the budget development process, management conducts a trustee workshop on budget challenges. The financial services department prepares a presentation for the workshop which outlines key budget objectives, priorities, pressures and challenges. During the workshop, management and trustees discuss various budget alternatives to address the identified challenges. This workshop also provides an opportunity for trustees to identify their budget priorities.

The school board maintains a reserve for working funds (contingency) to deal with future budget pressures. Reserve funds are earmarked for specific purposes, and their use requires Board approval. The Board has established a policy on reserve for working funds, which states that during the development of the annual operating budget, the Board will make provisions to maintain balance in the reserve.

Each year the Superintendent of Financial Services prepares a report to the Audit Committee and the Board on audited consolidated financial statements. As part of this report, management provides detailed information to trustees on reserve funds (internally restricted reserves) and recommendations on any transfers to and from the reserve funds, including the reserve for working funds.

4.3   Financial Reporting and Analysis

The purpose of reviewing Financial Reporting and Analysis processes is to:

- Assess whether procedures are in place to ensure that management, the board of trustees and the Ministry receives timely, accurate and complete financial information of all school board activities;

- Identify opportunities to support continual improvement in the effectiveness and efficiencies of all processes;

The following table summarizes the leading practices defined for Financial Reporting and Analysis, and identifies where evidence was found to indicate that the practice was adopted in full. Where the evidence was not present or the practice was not completely adopted at the time of the review, a "No" indicates that an improvement opportunity exists.

Integrated System for Variance Analysis and Financial Reporting

Leading Practices – Financial Reporting and Analysis	Evidence of Adoption?
The school board's integrated financial information system provides useful, timely and accurate information for management and stakeholders.	Yes

Interim and Annual Financial Reporting

Leading Practices – Financial Reporting and Analysis	Evidence of Adoption?
Interim financial reports provide sufficient detail (including a comparison of actual to budget and to appropriate benchmarks and with appropriate variance explanations) for a clear understanding of the status of the current year's budget and the outlook for the year.	No
Senior management is held accountable for the integrity of financial reporting through formal sign-off and approval procedures.	No
Management completes and files all financial reports in accordance with established timelines.	Yes

Audit

Leading Practices – Financial Reporting and Analysis	Evidence of Adoption?
Management maintains an independent internal audit function	No
Internal audit plans are clearly documented. Internal audit report recommendations are followed up and acted upon by management.	Yes
The Board has an audit committee with external members as advisors.	No
The external auditor's planning and annual reports are presented to the Board's audit committee, and any recommendations are acted upon by management.	Yes

Integrated System for Variance Analysis and Financial Reporting

The school board has an integrated financial system that provides adequate, timely and accurate information to management, school staff and the board of trustees. The financial system includes the following modules: general ledger (GL), accounts payable,

and purchasing. The system allows all end users to print out financial reports. The financial services department provides periodic training to administrative assistants and school secretaries on the financial management system. The Manager of Finance authorizes new GL accounts.

Management is considering expanding the use of the financial system to include additional modules, such as a budget module. There is an interface between the general ledger and payroll and HR system and the work order system. Management noted that as part of the ongoing evaluation of the adequacy of the financial system the school board may consider other financial systems for implementation, which could be potentially be shared between several school boards.

Interim and Annual Financial Reporting

Management prepares several types of interim financial reporting. Finance staff prepare monthly reports for each superintendent which indicate budget expenditure to date and budget remaining for each department. The Director of Education, associate directors, and the Internal Auditor receive a consolidated report for all departments.

The financial services department also prepares monthly reports for the superintendents of families of schools which provide expenditure to date and budget remaining. The consolidated reports for all families of schools are also provided to the Director, associate directors, and the Internal Auditor. Administrators at each school can generate a current budget expenditure report directly from the financial system. The report indicates the GL account number, annual budget, actual, committed expenditure and available balance. All end users of the system can generate reports at their locations.

The *Financial Support Tool for Schools* manual provides guidance to school administrators on budget expenditures, including benchmark spending percentage guidelines which are based on historical trends.

Management is providing financial reporting to trustees through the annual budget development process and financial statements. Currently, the financial services department is developing a template for interim financial reporting for the Board. Management has considered and used key recommendations of Interim Financial Reporting Committee (IFRC), including the frequency and format of reports.Management noted that the draft report template will be presented to the executive council for approval in 2010.

Audit

The Board has established an audit committee which has oversight responsibilities for the following activities:

- The financial reporting process

- The system of internal controls

- The internal and external audit processes

- The process for monitoring compliance with federal and provincial laws and regulations

- The process for monitoring of the school board's policies, procedures, regulations and code of conduct

- The establishment and maintenance of lines of communication between the Board and its external auditor, internal auditor and senior management

- The safeguarding of school board assets

The committee is composed of at least three trustees and currently does not have external members. The committee does not currently have external members. Management has amended the terms of reference for the audit committee to include two external members.

The audit committee reviews the external auditor's terms of engagement and proposed audit scope and approach and any non-audit services provided, including the coordination of audit effort with internal audit. The audit committee may conduct *in-camera* meetings with the external auditors following the audit. The Board external auditors prepare a management letter with audit findings and recommendations. Management provides formal response to the management letter.

The school board has an internal auditor who is supervised by the Superintendent of Financial Services and Treasurer, and reports to both the superintendent and the Director of Education.

The Internal Auditor is responsible for planning and conducting audits, preparing reports and recommendations, and undertaking follow-ups. The Internal Auditor may also conduct special investigations and projects, on request of management. The Internal Auditor attends all meetings of the audit committee, prepares reports and presentations. However, the Internal Auditor does not report directly to the audit committee. The Internal Auditor established an annual internal audit plan. Management noted that it will consider maintaining the current internal audit function within the new regional internal audit model.

Recommendations:

- Management should continue finalizing the format of interim financial reporting based on recommendations provided by the Interim Financial Reporting Committee (IFRC).

- The school board should establish approval procedures for interim financial reports and implement formal sign-off of these reports by senior management.

- In accordance with the Ministry's internal audit and audit committee strategy, the Board should include two external advisors in its audit committee.

4.4   Treasury Management

The purpose of reviewing treasury management processes is to assess:

- Whether processes are in place to ensure the optimal use of cash, investments and borrowings within school board;

- Whether sufficient internal controls exist to support cash management, investments and borrowings;

- Opportunities to support continual improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of all processes.

The following table summarizes the leading practices defined for treasury management, and identifies where evidence was found to indicate that the practice was adopted in full. Where the evidence was not present or the practice was not completely adopted at the time of the review, a "No" indicates that an improvement opportunity exists.

Cash and Investment Management

Leading Practices – Treasury Management	Evidence of Adoption?
Existence of an efficient cash management process to maximize interest income, using short-term investments where appropriate and to ensure that the board's debt service costs can be met to maturity.	Yes
Cash management activities consolidated with a single financial institution.	Yes
Management periodically reports to the board on the performance of the investment activity and the approved investment policy in accordance with the *Education Act*.	No
Management periodically compares the school board's banking terms and conditions to those of similar school boards.	Yes

Leading Practices – Treasury Management	Evidence of Adoption?
Management monitors financial risk related to cash/investment management, and has a plan to mitigate associated risks.	Yes

Cash and Investment Management

The financial services department has established formal cash management processes, and set up templates for annual operating and capital cash flow reporting. Currently, operating cash flow reporting is based on the review of payroll, benefits, accounts payable and wire transfer information. There is a dedicated cash flow officer responsible for daily cash flow review and analysis.

The Financial Analyst conducts on-line monthly bank reconciliations and the General Manager Financial Services and Manager Financial Services review and approve bank reconciliations.

Over the past several years the school board issued several debentures to finance its capital projects. Management is closely tracking repayment of each debenture, using the capital cash flow reporting template and the capital liquidity template. The capital cash flow reporting template also allows management to review contractors' draws, disbursements, site expenditures, NPP grants, school renewal revenue, direct capital revenue and Good Places to Learn (GPL), Primary Class Size (PCS) and Prohibitive to Repair (PTR) funding. Management noted that the school board has met all its cash requirements through internal financing and has not relied on external financing sources, such as the use of bank overdrafts or short term bank borrowing. The school board is working with three financial institutions to maximize interest income.

The school board has not established a formal investment policy and follows the Ontario Regulation 471, Eligible Investments. Management provides oral reports to the Board on investment activity during the presentation of audited financial statements. The financial services department prepares an internal annual report on investment activity, which shows the amount, maturity, rate of interest, interest earned and balance for each investment.

Management has established several controls for cash/investment management activities. There is limited controlled access to the financial system. The school board sometimes uses wire transfers. All wire transfers require a written authorization by the Superintendent of Financial Services and General Manager Financial Services. The financial services department has established a request form for cable and interbranch payment. The school board has not yet implemented Electronic Funds Transfers (EFTs). Management noted that EFTs for accounts payable disbursements will be gradually implemented starting February 2010.

The school board's cash management activities are consolidated with one financial institution. The school board has one U.S. dollar account, one Canadian operating account, and one Canadian capital account. There are two accounts for educational development charges (EDC Peel region and EDC Dufferin Region), one reserves account and one trust account, a payroll account, education foundation account, and an awards fund account. Individual school accounts may be set up with different banks due to the limited choice of financial institutions in some areas of the school board. Management has negotiated favourable rates for schools with various financial institutions on behalf of the schools.

The school board obtains comparative information on financial terms from other school boards through OASBO. Management also conducts informal comparisons of financial terms with other school boards. Overall, the existing financial terms are consistent with the banking arrangements of other school boards.

Recommendations:

- Management should establish a policy on investment and provide an annual report to the Board using the internal annual report on investment activity.

4.5   School-Based Funds and Non-Grant Revenue Management

The purpose of reviewing school-based funds and non-grant revenue management processes is to:

- Assess whether procedures are in place to ensure the timely, complete and accurate recording of the different types of school-based and non-grant revenue;

- Assess whether internal controls exist to support appropriate cash handling and cash management;

- Identify opportunities to support continual improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of all processes.

Non-grant revenue management is a smaller functional area for the school board. The school board receives Education Programs – Other (EPO) funding from the Ministry for specific initiatives, which requires it to focus on the non-grant revenue line.

The following table summarizes the leading practices defined for school-based funds and non-grant revenue management, and identifies where evidence was found to indicate that the practice was adopted in full. Where the evidence was not present or the practice was not completely adopted at the time of the review, a "No" indicates that an improvement opportunity exists.

Management of School-Based Funds

Leading Practices – School-based Funds and Non-Grant Revenue Management	Evidence of Adoption?
Management ensures adequate controls are in place to safeguard school-based funds and coordinate the annual reporting of revenues and expenditures from schools and school councils	Yes

Management of Non-Grant Revenue

Leading Practices – School-based Funds and Non-Grant Revenue Management	Evidence of Adoption?
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
Board budget identifies revenue and expenditure for each EPO program. Management monitors activity to ensure compliance with terms and conditions.	Yes

Management of School-Based Funds

The Board has established a new policy for school council funds. The financial services department has developed a number of procedures and standard forms and templates related to the accounting of school council funds. The policy provides clearly defined roles and responsibilities for the principal, chair, treasurer, and designated individuals. The policy covers procedures for banking, receipts and disbursements and identifies financial reporting requirements. The Board has developed the policy using OASBO guidelines on the management of school-based funds.

Management noted that the new policy allowed the school board to improve internal controls in the management of school-based funds. Following the latest audit, the external auditors of the school board has provided unqualified opinion in relation to school-based funds. The financial services staff have provided training and support to school council chairs and treasurers, school administrators and school secretaries on the new policy and requirements. There is a dedicated financial analyst who provides ongoing support and training to school administrators.

School councils control all activities and funds, and approval of the chair, vicechair/treasurer is required for all disbursement cheques. The school council and the principal are responsible for the collection, accounting and deposit of fundraising proceeds. School principals jointly approve (with the school council chair) monthly bank statements, reconciliations and treasurer's reports.

Bank reconciliations for school-based funds and treasurer's reports are prepared monthly and submitted to the financial services department. School councils are required to submit annual reports to the financial services department. School councils also provide annual reports on activities to the superintendent of the family of schools. A dedicated financial analyst is responsible for preparing consolidated school council financial reports, generating annual financial reports for principals and assisting internal and external auditors.

The school board has implemented software to manage cash in schools and all financial transactions are recorded in this system. The Internal Auditor performs periodic audits of school-based funds.

Management of Non-Grant Revenue

The key sources of the school board's non-grant revenue include tuition fees for nonresident students, the lease of facilities (community use and long-term lease), joint use agreements with the City of Mississauga, continuing education programs, and commercial vendors.

The school board has established policies and procedures for the community use of school buildings, grounds, and facilities. The policy states that the fees for community use of facilities are based on the cost recovery basis. The policy contains regulations which provide classification of various types of facilities, general rules and conditions of use, and a fees schedule.

There is a permits department within the facilities department of the school board which reports directly to the Manager of Custodial Operations. Permitting of facilities is centralized and all applications forms are submitted to the permits department. There is a website dedicated to community use which contains general information and application forms.

There are two outreach assistants in the permits department responsible for promoting the community use of schools and working with various community partners. The outreach assistants collect and analyze data on community use for the annual reporting to the Ministry of Education, and monitor use by visiting schools during the year.

Working with its partners, the school board actively promotes the community use of facilities. The school board has established three agreements with the City of Mississauga for the sharing of multi-use facilities.

Leases for child care are negotiated with the involvement of the planning department. There are three umbrella child care organizations which have long-term leases of school board facilities.

The financial services department analyzes information on various sources of nongrant revenue as part of the budget development process. Forecasting for non-grant revenue is based on trends and historical data.

Management has established procedures to record and track the variety of EPO grants received. There is a dedicated grants officer responsible for tracking of EPO grants. The school board has also established a grants review committee, composed of the associate directors, superintendents and senior managers. The committee reviews all matters with respect to EPO grants and non-grant revenue received by the school board, approves the use of all grants outside of the GSN, monitors implementation of all grants approved by the committee, and informs the executive council of the status of grants through the annual budget review process.

The committee meets bi-weekly. There is a formal process which is followed when EPO grants are announced. When grants are announced, the Director sends a notification electronically to the superintendent responsible for this grant, as well as to the Superintendent of Financial Services. The superintendent responsible for the grant completes the grant notification and status form and submits it to the grants office prior to the meeting of the grants review committee. All reports required by terms and conditions of the grant are signed by the Director of Education. The Grants Officer and the General Manager Financial Services determine if a new location code is needed to track specific initiatives. Smaller initiatives are sometimes added to existing locations with unique program codes.

4.6   Supply Chain/Procurement

The purpose of reviewing supply chain/procurement processes is to assess:

- Whether supply chain/procurement policies and practices are in place to ensure that the school board acquires goods and services through an open, fair and transparent process;

- Whether appropriate internal controls exist to support the procurement and related payment process;

- Whether school board processes ensure value for money from all acquired goods and services;

- Opportunities to support continual improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of all processes.

The following table summarizes the leading practices defined for procurement, and identifies where evidence was found to indicate that the practice was adopted in full.

Where the evidence was not present or the practice was not completely adopted at the time of the review, a "No" indicates that an improvement opportunity exists.

Policies and Procedures

Leading Practices – Supply Chain/Procurement	Evidence of Adoption?
Approved procurement policies and practices are clearly communicated to staff with purchasing authority and are periodically reviewed and updated.	Yes
Approved procurement policies clearly outline circumstances under which the board will use competitive versus noncompetitive procurement methods.	Yes
Contract award criteria include elements other than the lowest cost, such as total cost of ownership, value, quality, vendor performance, etc.	Yes
Purchasing managers monitor purchasing activities for compliance with the Board's procurement policies and procedures.	Yes

Participation in Group Purchasing Initiatives

Leading Practices – Supply Chain/Procurement	Evidence of Adoption?
Management evaluate and develop strategies to increase purchasing power and minimize the cost of goods and services procured.	Yes
The school board actively participates in purchasing consortia/cooperatives and/or group buying initiatives.	Yes

Purchasing Levels of Authority

Leading Practices – Supply Chain/Procurement	Evidence of Adoption?
Purchasing authorization levels are commensurate to job roles and responsibilities, and are monitored for compliance by a supervisor or department head.	Yes

Policies and Procedures for PCard/Corporate Card Use

Leading Practices – Supply Chain/Procurement	Evidence of Adoption?
Policies and procedures for the use of PCards and corporate credit cards are documented and communicated to users through regular training and monitoring.	Yes

Accounting for Completeness of Purchase/Payment Cycle

Leading Practices – Supply Chain/Procurement	Evidence of Adoption?
The board's finance department performs three-way matching (purchase order, receipts/invoice and inspection) before invoices are paid.	Yes
Commitment accounting is in place to monitor budget utilization.	Yes
Management has implemented electronic supplier interface for ordering, processing and payment	No

Use of Electronic Funds Transfer

Leading Practices – Supply Chain/Procurement	Evidence of Adoption?
Management maximizes use of electronic funds transfer (EFT) for vendor payments.	No

Policies and Procedures

The school board has established a policy and procedures on purchasing. The Board policy and procedures on purchasing, *Purchasing Acquisitions and Disposal Procedures Manual*, are published on the school board's public website. The purchasing department's internal operational manual provides detailed guidance to department staff on roles, responsibilities, and processes.

The school board has recently revised its policy and procedures on purchasing to bring it in consistency with key requirements of the Supply Chain Guideline. Management noted that the revised policy and procedures will be presented for review and approval to the executive council and the Board in early 2010. Management has established a draft revised code of ethics, which will be applicable for all staff. The draft code of conduct is currently awaiting review and approval by the unions.

The school board has established policies on hospitality and travel expenditure. The financial services department has established several controls to ensure compliance of staff with policies. There is also a policy on trustees' expenditure.

The purchasing procedures clearly outline circumstances under which the school board may use non-competitive procurement methods. The school board may use emergency purchasing when a superintendent verifies that the procurement of goods and services is necessary to prevent, or correct, dangerous or potentially dangerous safety conditions, serious delays, or further damage, or to restore minimum service. The school board may purchase goods and services by negotiation in certain circumstances, which are clearly described in the procedures. For example, purchasing by negotiation

may take place if, due to market conditions, goods or services are in limited or short supply, or two or more identical low bids have been received. It is stated in the purchasing procedures that in a competitive procurement process, the school board will consider all costs, including acquisition, operating and disposal costs rather than basing decisions solely on the lowest bid price.

The purchasing procedures outline purchasing authorization levels, methods of purchasing, competitive bidding thresholds, competitive bid process, prohibitions regarding purchasing, dispute resolution, and disposal of surplus goods and equipment.

The policy states that the school board advertises its competitive tenders over $50,000 by posting advertisements in a newspaper of general circulation, or on the purchasing department website. The school board posts all tenders/ RFP's over $50,000 on the school board's website and the website of the Ontario Public Buyers' Association (OPBA). The school board also advertises in a national newspaper yearly for the acquisition of all goods and services. The school board publishes all bids valued at $100,000 on the OPBA website. As part of ensuring compliance with the Supply Chain Guideline, the school board has registered with MERX and will be posting tenders over $100,000 once the Board approves the Supply Chain Management Policy.

Participation in Group Purchasing Initiatives

The purchasing procedures state that the school board should encourage cooperative purchasing with other school boards or public sector agencies whenever the best interest of the school board is served.

The school board participates in group buying initiatives and purchasing consortia: Catholic School Board Services Association (CSBSA), Peel DSB, Toronto Catholic DSB and Simcoe Catholic DSB, Toronto DSB, Educational Computing Network of Ontario.

The school board has agreements with the provincial government for the purchase of cell phones, library books and health emergency supplies. Currently, the school board is working to establish an arrangement with several school boards for purchase of green technology through the Ministry of the Environment.

The school board is continually looking for opportunities to increase purchasing power and minimize the cost of goods and services procured. The school board participates in the intergovernmental cooperative purchasing group, comprising several municipalities and two school boards, to discuss potential joint purchasing opportunities. The school board is also considering information provided by OECM on new purchasing contacts.

Purchasing Levels of Authority

The purchasing policy and procedures set out approval authority level for purchasing and competitive bidding thresholds as follows:

- $0 - $2,000 – purchases are at the discretion of the authorized originator and a purchase order is issued;

- $2,001 - $15,000 – the Manager of Purchasing, in consultation with the initiating superintendent, principal or manager, obtains at least three verbal quotations and issue a purchase order;

- $15,001 - $50,000 – the Manager of Purchasing, in consultation with the initiating superintendent, principal or manager, obtains at least three written quotations and issue a purchase order;

- Over $50,001 - the Manager of Purchasing, in consultation with initiating superintendent, principal or manager determines the tendering process.

Policies and Procedures for PCard/Corporate Card Use

The school board's purchasing procedures contain general provisions regarding the use of purchasing card (PCards). It is stated in the procedures that PCards are issues to authorized Board employees for the acquisition of low volume, nontendered products and services. There are also formal policy, procedures and guidelines on the use of PCards which are available to staff on the school board's intranet. The guidelines provide information to PCard holders on how to make purchases using PCards, monthly activities, authorization problems, dispute resolution and procedures for lost and stolen cards. The policy and procedures document also contains a standard form for employee acknowledgement of responsibility and obligation, a PCard approval form, and a card change order form.

It is stated in the policy and procedures that the Manager of Purchasing or designate authorizes the school administrator/manager to approve PCards for employees within their departments or areas of responsibility. Superintendents approve PCards for school administrators/managers. The associate directors approve PCards for superintendents.

There are 315 PCards in the system, which are used mostly by trades staff and schools. PCards have transaction limits and a total monthly expenditure limit. School administrators are responsible for collecting expense reports, and all supporting documentation and submitting to the accounting department for processing. Each month the accounting department prepares a report for each school on PCard transactions for review and budget monitoring purposes.

The school board also has about 25 corporate cards for senior staff and staff who travel frequently. Corporate cards use is reviewed by the Superintendent of Financial Services and General Manager Financial Services. The school board also uses gas cards for one provider.

Accounting for Completeness of Purchase/Payment Cycle

The internal purchasing operational manual contains a detailed description of the requisition process using the school board's electronic requisition system. Requisitions are submitted electronically to buyers in the purchasing department, who review requisitions and approve or reject with appropriate explanation for the originator. When the requisition is approved by the buyer, a purchase order is generated in the system and sent to the vendor. If the purchase order does not meet the buyers' authorization level, it is sent to the Purchasing Manager for approval.

All goods are shipped to the requesting site location and recipients send the signed packing slip to the purchasing department. Purchasing department staff review the packing slip, enter the information into the system, match the packing slip with the invoice and the purchase order, and send the invoice for payment to the accounts payable. The financial services department prepares monthly reports on open POs.

The school board has commitment accounting. An encumbrance is created when the PO is generated in the requisition system.

The school board has not implemented an electronic supplier interface for ordering, purchasing, and payment. The school board uses online ordering for an office stationery vendor. Management noted that while the majority of the school board's vendors have e-marketplaces available, they do not have technical capacity to upload invoices directly into the school board's system.

Use of Electronic Funds Transfer for Greater Efficiency

The school board is currently finalizing arrangements with its bank to implement EFTs for payments.

Recommendations:

- Management should continue considering options for implementation of the electronic supplier interface for ordering, processing and payment.

- Management should continue finalizing arrangements for the use of electronic funds transfers (EFT) for payments.

5. School Operations and Facilities Management – Findings and Recommendations

Efficient and effective management of the school board's facilities (particularly schools) is an important factor in student achievement. Along with providing a positive learning environment for students, this function sets and meets standards of cleanliness and maintenance, examines opportunities to increase energy efficiency, and addresses the health, safety, and security requirements of the school board. Management use cost efficient and effective processes in the design and construction of new facilities.

The following is a summary of the assessment of the school board's adoption of leading practices under the processes identified above. All findings are a result of the review of data provided by the school board and on-site fieldwork, which included interviews with all key school operations and facilities management staff, as well as follow-up and confirmation of information.

5.1 Operations and Facilities Organization

The purpose of reviewing the organization of operations and facilities is to assess:

- Whether the board of trustees and management have established policies and procedures that support the key departmental functions and activities, strong internal controls and financial management;

- Whether the department supports the overall goals, priorities and accountability established by the school board in support of student achievement targets and strategies;

- The efficiency and effectiveness of the departmental structure and whether roles and responsibilities support the key functions/activities and the required business practices;

- Opportunities to support continual improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of all processes.

The following table summarizes the leading practices defined for the operations and facilities organization, and identifies where evidence was found to indicate that the practice was adopted in full. Where the evidence was not present or the practice was not completely adopted at the time of the review, a "No" indicates that an improvement opportunity exists.

Development and Reporting of Annual Goals and Priorities

Leading Practices – Operations and Facilities Organization	Evidence of Adoption?
The School Operations and Facilities Management department's goals and priorities are documented in an annual departmental operating plan. They are aligned to the annual board operating plan, accessible by key stakeholders. The plan incorporates measurable targets, specific timelines and identified responsibility.	Yes

Organizational Structure and Accountability

Leading Practices – Operations and Facilities Organization	Evidence of Adoption?
The School Operations and Facilities department has clearly defined organizational units and delineates respective roles and responsibilities. A current organization chart is available to the public.	No
Senior operations and facilities staff have appropriate designations (e.g. P.Eng.) and qualifications.	Yes

Monitoring and Communication of Policies

Leading Practices – Operations and Facilities Organization	Evidence of Adoption?
Management has processes in place to monitor school operations and facilities management policy compliance by all staff and management.	Yes
Management builds staff capacity in understating of school operations and facilities policies and administrative procedures.	Yes
Processes exist to monitor new legislation and regulations and implement necessary changes.	Yes

Development and Reporting of Annual Goals and Priorities

The planning and operations department is responsible for maintenance, custodial operations and planning, and the design and construction of all facilities at the school board. The planning and operations department develops a two-year formal department operating plan, which indicates broadly stated actions for implementation, indicators for

success and timelines. The key actions for implementation identified in the 2008-2010 plan include:

- Design new schools, additions, and renovations that enhance the learning environment and student achievement and provide a safe and comfortable building for staff and students

- Participate in the green school committee to review best practices for design of new schools, and study existing schools to compare energy efficiency and best operating practices for improved operations and incorporation into future design of schools

- Continue existing relationships in joint use facilities and pursue new initiatives with municipal partners; collaborate with child care operators; maintain good community relations by providing community use of schools

- Review and monitor long term capital expenditure and forecast to ensure adequate funding available to finance current and future school construction projects

- Strive for greater efficiency and effectiveness in school design and tendering process

- Regular review of all expenditures to determine relevance towards achieving department goals and needs and adherence to department budgets

- Provide detailed analysis of actual transportation expenditure

- Continue to monitor various factors as input in enrolment projections

Management should consider enhancing the annual plan by formulating actions and goals that are specific and measurable and indicating responsibilities. This would enable the finance department to develop indicators of success and track and report on progress in implementing the goals. Management should also ensure that there is periodic evaluation of progress against the plan and regular reports are provided to the senior administration and the Board.

Management noted that other planning activities undertaken by the planning and operations department include maintenance and long term accommodation planning.

Organizational Structure and Accountability

Currently, the planning and operations department operates under the direction of the Superintendent of Planning and Operations, who reports directly to the Associate

Director of Corporate Services. The functional areas of the planning and operations department are divided into planning, design, construction, physical plant and facilities (security, maintenance and custodial operations) and transportation.

The roles and responsibilities of management staff in the planning and operations department are clearly outlined in their job descriptions, which have been recently formalized by the employee relations department. There are formal job descriptions for all staff of the planning and operations department. Plant staff have appropriate professional designations and experience.

The school board's current organizational chart indicates the structure of the planning and operations department and lines of reporting. The school board's website provides contact details of key department staff, and the organization chart is published on the school board's intranet. Management noted that as result of several recent staff changes within the plant department, the roles and responsibilities of some managers will be modified with the view to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the facilities services delivery.

Monitoring and Communication of Policies

The planning and operations department is responsible for a number of policies and maintains a set of administrative procedures covering pertinent aspects of facilities and operations management. The policies are posted on the school board's website and administrative procedures are available on the school board's intranet. The Freedom of Information Officer within the employee relations department provides support to the Superintendent of Planning and Operations in monitoring compliance with new legislation and regulatory requirements.

Appropriate training is provided to custodial and maintenance staff to address policy issues, and the need for compliance with the various regulatory requirements. Examples of such training include WHMIS and asbestos management. As part of the orientation training for new employees, the plant department provides an overview of key policies and procedures.

The planning and operations department works closely with relevant stakeholders in the development of new policies and administrative procedures. For example, through the planning department, the accommodation review policy was discussed with public stakeholders. The plant department carries out various inspections to ensure compliance with school board policies, and regulatory requirements with regards to health and safety, maintenance, caretaking standards, water and air quality, and other areas. Plant staff also conduct inspections as required by regulatory agencies such as public health units, Ministry of Labour and Ministry of the Environment.

Recommendation:

- Management should finalize establishing the roles and responsibilities of managers within the planning and operations department.

5.2 Custodial and Maintenance Operations

The purpose of reviewing all processes relating to custodial and maintenance operations is to assess:

- Whether custodial and maintenance services are responding effectively and efficiently to maintaining an optimized learning environment;

- Whether the department has the appropriate organizational structure to effectively manage service delivery;

- Whether internal controls effectively manage custodial and maintenance operations and expenditures;

- Opportunities to support continual improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of all processes.

The following table summarizes the leading practices defined for custodial and maintenance operations, and identifies where evidence was found to indicate that the practice was adopted in full. Where the evidence was not present or the practice was not completely adopted at the time of the review, a "No" indicates that an improvement opportunity exists.

The Board's Staffing Model Supports Cleaning Standards and Maintenance Requirements

Leading Practices – Custodial and Maintenance Operations	Evidence of Adoption?
The school board has adopted cleaning standards for schools and has developed a standard set of processes and tools to monitor, manage and report on results.	Yes
The school board has implemented a formal green clean program as part of its overarching Education Environmental Policy.	No
Management's custodial/maintenance allocation model optimizes the use of staff and considers various factors (e.g. square footage, portables, gyms etc).	Yes

Development of Annual/Multi-Year Maintenance Plan

Leading Practices – Custodial and Maintenance Operations	Evidence of Adoption?
Using a consultative process, senior administration develops and communicates a multi-year (three to five years) plan for major maintenance and renewal projects. The plan addresses the board's preventative and deferred maintenance priorities and optimizes the use of available funding (Annual Renewal Grant and Good Places to Learn funding). The plan is approved by the Board and is accessible by the public.	No

Training to Support Skills Development and Safety

Leading Practices – Custodial and Maintenance Operations	Evidence of Adoption?
A monitored annual training plan for staff addresses ongoing skill development and emerging regulatory issues.	Yes

Standardization of Cleaning and Maintenance Supplies

Leading Practices – Custodial and Maintenance Operations	Evidence of Adoption?
Management uses an inventory system to track and control major cleaning and maintenance equipment.	Yes
Management has defined common standards to ensure efficient procurement of supplies in order to minimize costs, promote energy and operating efficiency, and environmental sustainability.	Yes

Project Management, Monitoring and Support Systems

Leading Practices – Custodial and Maintenance Operations	Evidence of Adoption?
An automated (computerized) work-order system and process records, monitors and evaluates projects ensuring the effective use of resources.	Yes
Senior administration regularly evaluates the overall effectiveness and efficiency of its maintenance and custodial service delivery model.	Yes

The Board's Staffing Model Supports Cleaning Standards and Maintenance Requirements

The plant department has developed and documented procedures for the delivery of custodial and maintenance services. The department has established a custodial services manual. The manual provides information on key policies pertinent to custodial

operations, duties, specific procedures for some area, safety procedures, and standard forms.

The section of the custodial operating manual, which outlines duties of custodial and cleaning staff, contains detailed procedures for daily cleaning, general maintenance, mechanical rooms and systems, security, snow removal and waste management. The manual also outlines procedures for dispensing systems, custodial room, equipment, fire alarms, floor finish maintenance, ground maintenance, and work orders.

Management conducts regular inspections of school board facilities to ensure compliance with the established cleanliness and maintenance standards. Two evening and five day custodial supervisors visit all schools on a rotating basis. The supervisors use standard checklists and conduct visual inspections to identify potential cleanliness or maintenance issues. A customized computer-based tool, *Inspection Report*, provides standardized criteria for inspections and is used to capture results of inspections and provide feedback to custodial staff. Occasionally, in response to complaints from school principals, supervisors conduct in-depth inspections. There are no formal reports for school principals, and supervisors meet with principals informally to discuss issues and areas for improvement.

The school board has been increasing the use of green custodial supplies over the past few years. The school board has been using EnviroLogo cleaning chemicals, and is currently considering several green-certified products. Management noted that currently around 20 per cent of custodial supplies are green-certified. One superintendent of education was recently assigned responsibility for the environmental management portfolio, which includes EcoSchools programs and all green initiatives.

Management has established custodial staffing guidelines to assist custodial supervisors in evaluating the staffing needs of each school and utilize resources effectively and efficiently. The approach to custodial staff allocation recognizes the unique characteristics of each school which cannot be met effectively with a standard allocation formula. Following significant budget reductions several years ago, management identified the need to rationalize custodial staffing. Management, in consultation with custodial supervisors, developed a facility survey form, which considered the following factors:

- The required work/cleaning duties to be done in the space

- The frequency in a given time period the required work/cleaning duties are to be completed

- The time it takes to complete each required cleaning duty

- The amount of available time per custodian during the given time period needed to complete the required work, cleaning duties

The facility survey form outlines spaces to be cleaned and the time allocated for each custodian to complete the assigned cleaning duties in that space. It also includes the usage information for classrooms and portables. There is a column for custodial supervisors to add extra time to other factors that may affect the custodian's ability to clean a particular space, such as travel time, daycare rooms, etc. The custodial supervisors are requested to provide explanation for additional time indicated in the form. The self-audit of schools using the facility survey form is a continual process, and adjustments can be made when there are changes in any of the four key staffing factors.

The school board has maintenance staff, and also contracts out some specific maintenance services. There are three maintenance supervisors and approximately 80 maintenance staff who are responsible for various areas: structural maintenance, HVAC and building control staff, and electricians. Management ensures efficient utilization of all maintenance staff by prioritizing tasks.

Development of Annual and Multi-Year Maintenance Plan

Every two years management identifies projects to be implemented within the facility renewal budget. The projects are organized in several categories: principals' requests, accessibility projects, deferred maintenance and outdoor projects. School principals are asked to provide input in several components of the plan, including projects related to health and safety, program and other projects that principals may wish to have completed, including cosmetic improvements. The department also consults with other superintendents to identify priority projects.

Management uses the ReCAPP database to identify projects to be funded by the Good Places to Learn (GPL) funding. Management noted that in the past, the school board allocated the balance of renewal grants to the reserves. However, as schools were growing, the school board was actively using the reserves. Management has also noted that a portion of the maintenance budget is earmarked for accessibility projects. Management does not present the plan to the Board. There is no formal reporting on the implementation of the plan.

Training to Support Skills Development and Safety

The plant department establishes an annual training and development plan for custodial staff. There are three types of training provided by the school board: standard training, enhanced training, and specialty training. Standard training for custodial staff includes orientation training for new employees, basic custodial course and advanced custodial course. The basic custodial course is mandatory and is offered several times a year.

Enhanced training is dedicated to WHMIS, health and safety, lock/down and security procedures. Enhanced training is usually provided during several professional development days. Specialty training addresses various issues and also includes motivational training for custodial staff.

All training activities for custodial staff are recorded in a database.

Standardization of Cleaning and Maintenance Supplies

The plant department purchases, allocates and tracks equipment and custodial supplies. The department has a current inventory of all equipment assigned to each site with the indication of the date of purchase, cost and supplier. As part of the custodial equipment repair contract, a preventative maintenance assessment is completed on all pieces of equipment every two years. The inventory of equipment is updated every three years.

Individual maintenance staff keep their personal equipment in maintenance vehicles. There are several stores of equipment and a central store where maintenance staff can borrow specialized equipment. There is a process in place for keeping track of the use of this equipment. Board-owned equipment borrowed by maintenance staff is tracked with a sign-in/sign-out sheet.

The plant department works closely with the purchasing department to develop standard processes for procurement of custodial supplies. The plant department has established formal guidelines and process maps for purchasing of custodial supplies. Upon completion of the annual budget development process, the Manager of Custodial and Office Services reviews the budget with custodial supervisors, and works with the purchasing department to initiate the procurement of supplies and services. Each year, the Manager of Purchasing prepares and updates an Application for Vendor Clarification, which provides general information on the supplier.

There is a dedicated buyer within the purchasing department responsible for custodial supplies. Each year the Manager, Custodial Services and designated custodial supervisors review with the buyer existing specifications. If the need for new product is identified, the Manager, Custodial Services or designated custodial supervisor develops new specifications, based on researching the market. Once the specifications are agreed upon, and vendor sources are validated, the purchasing department issues a tender. Bids are analyzed by the purchasing department and forwarded to custodial services with recommendations. Potential vendors may be required to provide samples for evaluation, or conduct site visits.

Once the contract is in place, custodial supplies may be either ordered centrally and stored in the warehouse, or requisitioned by custodians. All system contract products are ordered through the order form requisition by custodians at individual schools.

Custodians may select products from the catalogue and submit requisition forms to the supervisor. The supervisor reviews and approves the requisition forms. The requisition is then sent to supplier for processing. All paper, floor care, lighting products are delivered to the central stores warehouse prior to distribution to the schools via the school board's internal courier system. All other custodial supply products are shipped directly to the individual schools under the terms of a system contract. Management tracks the use of custodial supplies at individual schools and follows-up on any significant variances.

Project Management, Monitoring and Supporting Systems

The school board uses software for its work order system. Work orders are submitted by school staff and a paper copy is dispatched to the assigned individual. The plant department closely monitors the completion of work orders. Information on completion is entered manually into the system. Management noted that the school board is considering several options for the implementation of a fully automated work order system.

Recommendation:

- The planning and operations department should consolidate its planning activities and establish a multi-year maintenance and renewal plan that includes the funding available to support it. This would provide the senior administration, the Board and its stakeholders with a clear forecast of the school board's critical needs over the next several years.

5.3   Energy Management

The purpose of reviewing all related energy management processes is to assess:

- Whether adequate planning and communication exist to support the reduction of energy consumption;

- Whether school board structure and processes are in place to ensure that energy is procured for the lowest cost;

- Identify opportunities to support continual improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of all processes.

The following table summarizes the leading practices defined for energy management, and identifies where evidence was found to indicate that the practice was adopted in full. Where the evidence was not present or the practice was not completely adopted at the time of the review, a "No" indicates that an improvement opportunity exists.

Energy Management Plan

Leading Practices – Energy Management	Evidence of Adoption?
In reference to the *Ontario Green Energy Act,2009*, senior administration has established a multi-year energy management plan that incorporates measures to be implemented and the tools to monitor and manage the plan.	No
Procurement practices support the objectives and targets of the energy management plan	No
Successful conservation initiatives are communicated across all schools and with other school boards.	No

Tracking and Reporting Energy Conservation

Leading Practices – Energy Management	Evidence of Adoption?
Management provides formal annual reporting on the conservation savings achieved against the plan.	No
A comprehensive system exists to budget expenditures, track and regulate consumption, and identify opportunities for further savings.	Yes
Billing for all board facilities is consolidated from each utility.	Yes
The Board has established an overarching environmental policy that addresses both environmental education and responsible management practices	No

Energy Management Plan

The school board has not established a formal energy management plan. In the past, a dedicated member of staff in the plant department was responsible for energy management. Due to recent staff changes, the Manager of Maintenance Services is currently responsible for all matters pertaining to energy management.

The school board implemented a project supported by a private sector organization to promote energy conservation. The project took place across about 20 schools and involved students. Management noted that there has been no communication through newsletters or other mechanisms with regards to this initiative.

The school board has implemented building automation systems in most of its schools. Each secondary school has an assigned building operator responsible for making necessary adjustments in controls. Building operators have direct access to the information in the utility bill management system. Plant staff have remote access to all building automation systems.

In purchasing products and services for the school board, management considers energy efficiency of products and equipment. Management noted that the school board analyzes costs and benefits for each significant purchase of energy efficient products, such as lighting.

Tracking and Reporting Energy Conservation

To improve its energy management practices, the school board recently implemented utility bill management software. The software records monthly utility bills, automatically audits them to spot billing, metering or consumption problems and has the capacity to prepare a variety of management and analysis reports. Currently, the consumption data is updated every three months, and historical data for two years has been also input in the system. The school board receives electronic bills from the utilities and billing information is imported into the utility bill management system.

The school board has received energy efficiency funding from the Ministry, and has started conducting audits of facilities based on the analysis of data in the utility bill management system. Energy efficiency audits are conducted by an external consultant. The consultant has also assisted the school board in the establishment of benchmarks or conservation targets which are set in the utility bill management system, and help monitor the performance of each facility. Using the analysis of energy consumption data management conducts periodic workshops with custodial staff and school administrators to discuss energy efficiency issues.

Recommendations:

- Using the results of the energy audits, the school board should establish a multi-year energy management plan that incorporates quantifiable measures and the tools to monitor and manage the plan. In line with the *Green Energy Act, 2009*, energy management planning should include the development of policies, guidelines, goals (conservation targets), and priorities for energy management and resource conservation. The plan should include short-term and long-term opportunities with milestones, roles, responsibilities and budgets with a process for ensuring community support.

- Once the formal energy management plan is established, the school board should ensure that its procurement policies and practices support the objectives and targets of the plan. Management should also consider documenting the energy efficiency requirements in purchasing policies and procedures and/or the environmental policy.

- Management should ensure that successful conservation initiatives are communicated across all schools and with other school boards.

- The school board should develop an environmental policy that would provide framework for the school board's activities in the area of environmental management and education and increase communication opportunities.

5.4 Health, Safety and Security

The purpose of reviewing all the Health, Safety and Security processes is to assess:

- Whether adequate planning and communication exist to support the provision of a safe teaching and learning environment;

- Whether school board structure and processes are in place to implement safety precautions;

- Opportunities to support continual improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of all processes.

The following table summarizes the leading practices defined for health, safety and security, and identifies where evidence was found to indicate that the practice was adopted in full. Where the evidence was not present or the practice was not completely adopted at the time of the review, a "No" indicates that an improvement opportunity exists.

Health, Safety and Security Management

Leading Practices – Health, Safety and Security	Evidence of Adoption?
Develop, implement and monitor an occupational health and safety strategy/plan that reflects the board's occupational health and safety policies and administrative procedures and ensures that the school board is in compliance with associated occupational health and safety statutory requirements.	Yes
Develop, implement and monitor a security strategy/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 of a health strategy/plan that reflects the board's health policies and procedures and ensures the board is in compliance with statutory health requirements.	Yes

Health, Safety and Security Management

The employee relations department is responsible for the school board's occupational health and safety, and health promotion and wellness policies, procedures, and initiatives. There is health and safety unit responsible for occupational health and safety, partnerships with public health units, environmental health and safety and risk

management and insurance matters. The health and safety department includes two staff who hold the Canadian Registered Safety Professionals designation. The health promotion and wellness department is responsible for programs that assist employees to continue to work or return to work in a safe, healthy and timely manner. The health promotion and wellness unit has three registered nurses who are trained in occupational health and safety. The unit is responsible for the disability management program and early return-to-work program.

The employee relations department is working closely with other departments of the school board to ensure compliance with health and safety policies and procedures. In particular, there is a strong link between the health and safety unit of the employee relations department and the planning and operations department. The health and safety department develops and facilitates the health and safety components of training for custodial staff.

The school board has established a health and safety policy that outlines its commitment to provide direction and support to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and provide a safe, healthy environment for the school board's students and employees. Management has established the health and safety manual, which is published on the school board's website.

Management and the Board have an integrated view of staff health and safety and health and safety of students. The health and safety department is working closely with Peel Public Health to implement the healthy schools approach. There is a partnership committee, which includes senior staff of Peel Public Health and staff of the school board and the co-terminus board.

The health promotion and wellness unit of the employee relations department works closely with the health and safety unit and Peel Public Health, to support employees in returning to work and promote healthy lifestyles. The health promotion and wellness unit participates in the joint health and safety committee.

The health and safety department is responsible for the emergency evacuation plan. The school board has established a system-wide Emergency Evacuation Plan and each school has an evacuation plan. The health and safety unit coordinates the school board's procedures related to safety of pupils and staff along with academic superintendents and the plant department. The school board has established guidelines for emergency preparedness in various types of emergency situations.

The school board's Security Officer is responsible for physical security of all buildings leased or owned by the school board. The Security Officer has several professional designations in the area of security management, and relevant experience. The Security Officer is the first point of contact and coordinates response to physical security issues.

The Security Officer is the key liaison of the school board with the law enforcement agencies. The school board has established a school police emergency action response protocol (SPEAR) for responding to threat situations. Police officers have instant access to information about each school, including photos and physical layout, and key information on staff and students.

The school board conducts periodic training for school principals on lockdown procedures. All schools have two lockdown drills a year. There is also in-service training for school board staff regarding procedures for security threats such as bomb threats and fire drills. The Security Officer provides periodic training to school administrators on various student safety issues.

5.5   Capital Plans, Policies and Procedures

The purpose of reviewing capital plans, policies and procedures is to:

- Assess whether school capital assets are being utilized effectively and efficiently;

- Assess how well management is planning for future capital requirements, based on enrolment forecasts and the capacity/maintenance issues of the existing asset base, relative to the funding available from the Ministry (i.e. NPP funding);

- Assess whether management is appropriately prioritizing the maintenance and renewal expenditures in light of the available Ministry funding and multiyear capital programs;

- Identify appropriate controls and transparency within the current planning process;

- Identify opportunities to support continual improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of all processes.

The following table summarizes the leading practices defined for capital plans, policies and procedures, and identifies where evidence was found to indicate that the practice was adopted in full. Where the evidence was not present or the practice was not completely adopted at the time of the review, a "No" indicates that an improvement opportunity exists.

Development of Annual and Multi-Year Capital Plans

Leading Practices – Capital Plans, Policies and Procedures	Evidence of Adoption?
The school board has an approved annual and multi-year capital plan that includes the related funding plan.	Yes
The school board has an approved pupil accommodation review policy.	Yes

On-going Monitoring and Maintenance of Data to Support Capital Planning

Leading Practices – Capital Plans, Policies and Procedures	Evidence of Adoption?
The school board maintains accurate and up-to-date inventories of school capacity and inventories using SFIS.	Yes
An accurate and current assessment of facility conditions is maintained, based on industry standards (using RECAPP methodology).	Yes
Capital forecasts and related funding plans are assessed annually and adjusted to meet current needs and changes to original assumptions such as enrolment projections and capital grants.	Yes

Development of Annual and Multi-Year Capital Plans

The school board has established a long-term accommodation plan, using 15-year enrolment projections prepared by external consultants and analysis by the school board's planning department. The long-term accommodation plan is presented to the executive council and then to the Board for approval. The current capital plan and the liquidity template have been submitted to the Ministry.

The long-term accommodation plan spans 15 years, and is usually updated every two or three years. The plan is reviewed annually to determine whether revisions are required to the capital projects for that year. In identifying schools for potential closures and consolidations, the planning department works with the family of schools superintendents to identify other schools that could accommodate increased capacity. Management presents the accommodation plan update report to the Board's Administration and Finance Committee. The school board has established a staff committee for capital projects. The committee meets regularly to discuss ongoing capital projects.

The school board has established policy and procedures for accommodation reviews (ARC). Over the past several years the school board conducted three accommodation reviews which resulted in closing of three schools. Management is currently revising

ARC procedures to reflect new Ministry guidelines and prepare for the next round of accommodation reviews.

Ongoing Monitoring and Maintenance of Data to Support Capital Planning

There is a dedicated staff member within the plant department responsible for regular updates of SFIS. In the development of the multi-year accommodation plan, management identifies potential school closures, and the planning department uses RECAPP and SFIS data to identify the quality of the schools in the area's current school capacity. RECAPP is updated by the planning and operations department based on completion of work and expenditures under the Good Places to Learn allocations.

5.6   Construction Management

The purpose of reviewing all related construction management processes is to assess and identify:

- Whether processes are in place to ensure that school boards complete construction projects on-time, on-budget and with due regard to economy;

- Opportunities to support continual improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of all processes.

The following table summarizes the leading practices defined for construction management, and also identifies where evidence was found to indicate that the practice was adopted in full. Where the evidence was not present or the practice was not completely adopted at the time of the review, a "No" indicates that an improvement opportunity exists.

Cost Effective Practices in the Design and Construction of Facilities

Leading Practices – Construction Management	Evidence of Adoption?
Management uses cost-effective designs, standard footprints, energy conservation, and economical construction practices to minimize construction and future maintenance and operation costs.	Yes
In constructing, acquiring, operating and managing school facilities, the school board is guided by the principles outlined in the *Ontario Green Energy Act, 2009*	Yes
Senior administration maintains standard policy and/or procedures to rationalize construction projects, including benchmarking against other school board construction costs and design standards (including coterminous boards).	Yes

Monitoring and Reporting on Progress of Construction Projects

Leading Practices – Construction Management	Evidence of Adoption?
An effective management process monitors and controls construction projects and their costs. This includes periodic project status updates and post-construction project evaluation.	Yes

Maintaining Current Approved Professional Service Providers

Leading Practices – Construction Management	Evidence of Adoption?
Senior administration periodically evaluates and updates the approved list of contractors, architects and related professionals no less than once every five years	Yes

Cost-Effective Practices in the Design and Construction of Facilities

The school board has implemented several joint use projects with the City of Mississauga,Town of Caledon and Town of Orangeville, including secondary school/community centre, joint use libraries and fields. The plant department has shared information on key considerations for such projects with other school boards.

The design department is responsible for the development of school designs, documents required for executing the tenders, and support to the Board in the process of selecting consultants. The construction department is responsible for all activities during the construction phase of capital projects, from the approval of the general contractor by the Board to the conclusion of warranty period. Both departments monitor the performance of architects. The construction department also monitors contractors through meeting and site inspections, ensuring adherence to specified standards.

In the past, the school board used repeat designs for new construction projects, but these designs required adjustments with changes in demographics and other factors such as cost effectiveness. The design department has established guidelines and standards to ensure consistency in design. The design department has an information manual for architects which contains all standard project monitoring forms, procedural guidelines, and design standards. These design guidelines outline the process for the design and construction of schools, and are continually updated.

The design department strikes a committee to work with the architect to establish a design for each new capital project. The committee is composed of staff from the planning department, staff from the design department, the superintendent for the school, and the principal (if already hired). After the school board contracts an architect, there are a number of pre-design and design meetings, surveying and geotechnical

activities, and meetings with municipal planning departments, parent council and trustees.

The committee working with the architect develops the design of the project to guide the development of a sketch plan. The sketch plan is approved by the Board. The design department has established a standard project schedule that outlines key design and pre-construction activities, from the approval of architects to the Board approval of the general contractor following a tender. The design department has also established a monthly project report to track all pre-construction phases of the project.

The Manager of Design works with the architects to identify project costs. The first preliminary budget is submitted for review following the approval of the sketch plan by the Board. There are two more reviews of the project budget prior to issuing a tender for general contractors.

Monitoring and Reporting of Progress on Construction Projects

Once general contactors and sub-contractors are selected by the school board, the construction department takes responsibility for monitoring project progress and quality. The construction department provides monthly reports to the Board with progress updates. Board approval is generally required for any major changes in project costs. The construction department conducts bi-monthly meetings with the general contractor and consultants/architects to discuss project costs, progress and timelines. Any change orders are reviewed by the construction manager, the superintendent of planning and operations, and the associate director of corporate services.

Management noted that the school board's construction projects have been completed on time and on budget. The school board has a contingency provision in all approved construction project budgets.

Maintaining Current Approved Professional Service Providers

The school board has established a policy and procedures for the use of architects. It is stated in the policy that the school board should have a list of a maximum of 12 architects approved by the Board. For new projects and repeat designs, staff recommend three architects from the approved list, and the Board selects one architect by a majority secret ballot vote.

The design department conducts prequalification for general contractors and mechanical and electrical sub-contractors as part of preparation of tenders for each capital project.

Appendices

Appendix A: Overview of the Operational Review

Operational Review Objectives

In order to perform an effective and consistent operational review the Ministry has worked with independent consultants to develop a Sector Guide that defines consistent standards and leading practices against which the operational reviews and analysis will be based.
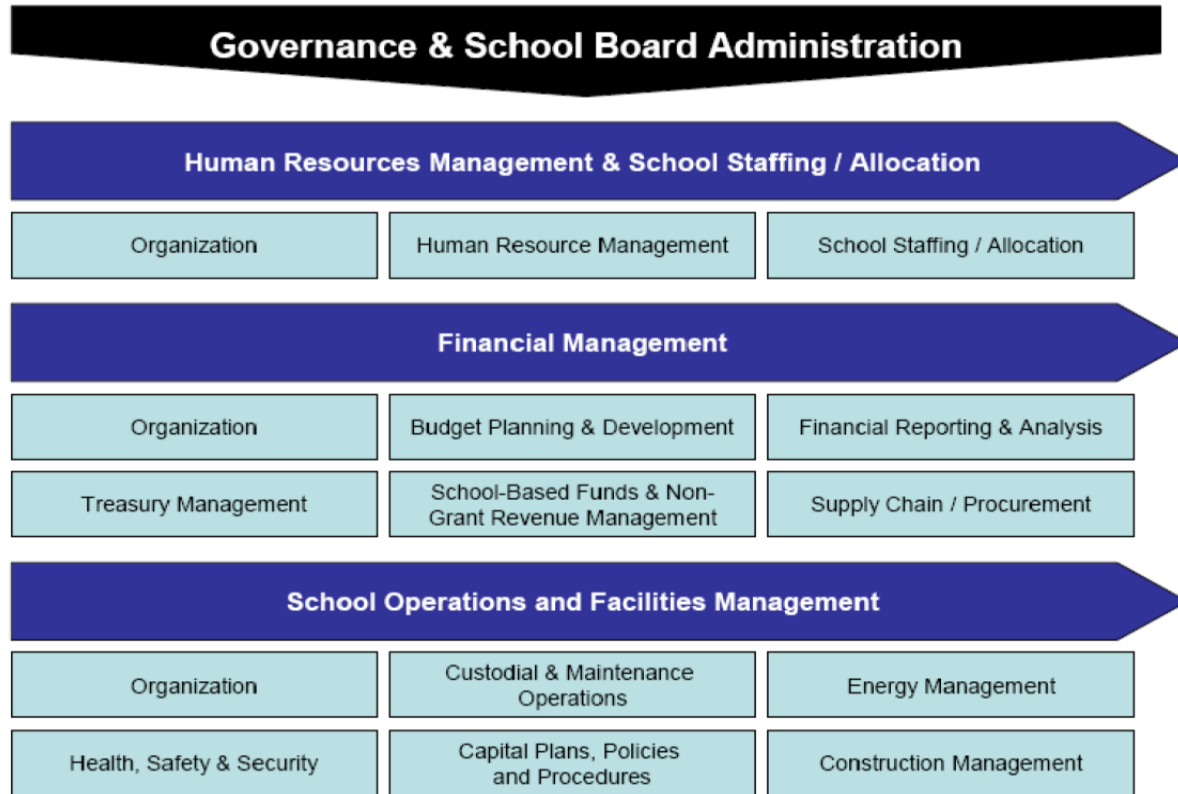
Recognizing the unique characteristics of each DSB, the specific purpose of the Operational Reviews is to:

- Strengthen management capacity in boards, with recommendations that support improvement in non-academic operations;

- Highlight existing successful business practices used by boards, to the sector and to school board communities;

- Leverage "best practices" across the education sector;

- Provide support and assistance to ensure that boards are financially healthy, well managed, and positioned to direct optimum levels of resources to support student success;

- Provide the Ministry with important input on board capacity and capabilities for the ongoing development of policy and funding mechanisms.

Operational Review Summary Scope

The scope of the Operational Review consists of the following functional areas which have been divided into key processes as shown below. The processes represent the end-to-end lifecycle of activities performed by boards under each functional area.

Each of the processes was examined based on its activities and its adoption of sector agreed leading practices, including alignment and support of student achievement strategies.

Governance & School Board Administration

Human Resources Management & School Staffing / Allocation

Organization	Human Resource Management	School Staffing / Allocation

Financial Management

Organization	Budget Planning & Development	Financial Reporting & Analysis
Treasury Management	School-Based Funds & Non-Grant Revenue Management	Supply Chain / Procurement

School Operations and Facilities Management

Organization	Custodial & Maintenance Operations	Energy Management
Health, Safety & Security	Capital Plans, Policies and Procedures	Construction Management

Operational Review Summary Approach

The high level Operational Review approach is shown below. The timing for the end to-end process will vary depending on school board size and complexity.

Observations and assessments are made by the Operational Review Team based on a set of agreed upon leading practices designed for each functional area. The onsite reviews allow the team to validate Ministry and board data, provide a better understanding of the environmental conditions and allow the team to review materials that support the existence of leading practices.
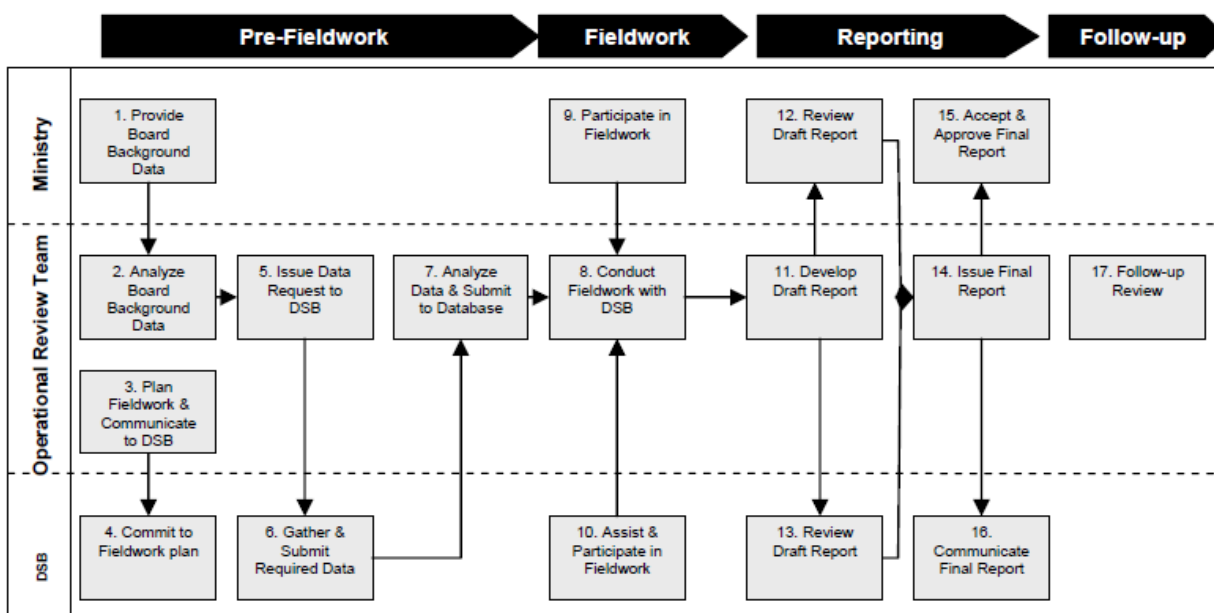
The Table below defines the key phases and activities which comprise the Operational review Methodology.

Phase: Pre-Field Work

Key Activity	Description
Provide Board Background Data	The Ministry collects and maintains significant quantities of board data. The Operational Review team has developed a standardized data request for all school boards to provide background data prior to the review
Analyze Board Background Data	Before the start of the fieldwork, the Operational Review team reviews board background data to understand the financial and operating characteristics. This review identifies specific issues and focus areas.
Plan Fieldwork and Communicate to Board	The Ministry and the Operational Review team develop a review schedule that is communicated to boards before the start of the next review cycle.
Commit to Fieldwork Plan	Boards are required to commit to the Operational Review schedule. The Ministry and the review team will attempt to accommodate scheduling conflicts.
Issue Documentation Request to School Board	Before the start of fieldwork, a request for supporting documentation is generated to gather operating and other information for each focus area. The review team uses this information to enhance its understanding of the school board before the start of field work.

Key Activity	Description
Gather and Submit Required Documentation	Upon receipt of the request for supporting documentation, each board compiles the requested data. Boards have at least three weeks to complete this process prior to the start of the fieldwork.
Analyze Data and Submit to Database	The review team analyzes the data provided by each board and adds the results to a sector-wide database to compare the results for each board.

Phase: Field Work

Key Activity	Description
Conduct Fieldwork with Board	The fieldwork is conducted for each board according to the previously agreed upon review cycle. The time required for fieldwork ranges between five and 10 days, based on the size of the school board.
Participate in Fieldwork	Ministry staff support the review team in the performance of fieldwork, to ensure continuity and knowledge transfer of school board operations.
Assist and Participate in Fieldwork	Board staff participate in the fieldwork. The number of participants involved will vary depending on the size of the board.

Phase: Reporting

| Key Activity	Description
Develop Draft Report	Based on the results of the fieldwork and data analysis, the operational review team writes a draft report. The draft report contains a synopsis of findings and, where appropriate, recommendations for improvement.
Review Draft Report (Ministry)	The Ministry reviews the draft report and provides feedback to the review team.
Review Draft Report (school board)	The review team meets with board senior staff to review and obtain feedback.
Prepare Final Report	The review team incorporates the feedback from the both the Ministry and the board and prepares a final report.
Accept and Approve Final Report	The final report is issued to the Ministry for approval and release.
Communicate Final Report	The Ministry issues a final report to the board.

Phase: Follow up

Key Activity	Description
Follow-up Review	Eight to 12 months after the release of the final report, the review team conducts a follow-up review to determine the extent the board's adoption and implementation of the recommendations.

The Operational Review Team

The Ministry has assembled an Operational Review Team to ensure that these reviews are conducted in an objective manner. The Operational Review Team is designed to leverage the expertise of industry professionals and consulting firms to review specific aspects of each school board.

Management consultants from PricewaterhouseCoopers and Deloitte were hired to complete the Operational Reviews. The Ministry assigned an internal consultant with school board experience to provide the Review Team with valuable insight into school board operations in Ontario. The team has also received guidance and feedback from an Advisory Committee and a Trustee Reference Group convened by the Ministry of Education.
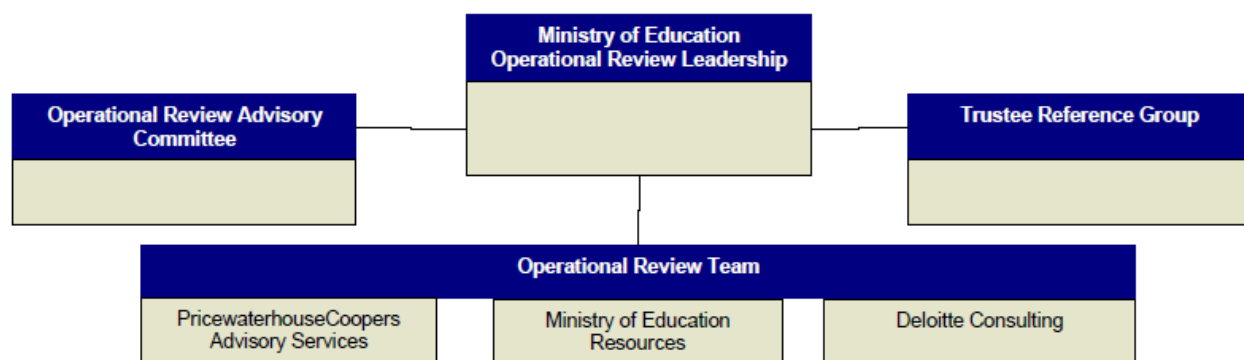
Limitations of this Review

The purpose of this report is to document the results of the Operational Review of Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board. The review has been conducted using the methodology as previously described. The review is not of the nature or scope that constitutes an audit made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards.

Appendix B: Summary of Recommendations

Governance and School Board Administration

No.	Recommendation
1.	The Board should finalize and document its governance model with clear delineation of the division of duties and responsibilities between the board of trustees and the director of education.
2.	The school board should finalize the development of a multi-year strategic plan and continue establishing an annual operating plan, incorporating both academic and non-academic departments. The plan should contain goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely. The annual board wide operating plan should be aligned with the strategic directions, and serve as a framework for annual departmental planning.
3.	The school board should continue aligning its leadership development programs and activities with the Ministry leadership initiatives. It should continue developing a formal Succession and Talent Development Plan, in line with the Leadership Succession Planning and Talent Development - Ministry Expectations and Implementation Continuum.

Human Resources Management and School Staffing/Allocation

No.	Recommendation
4.	Management should finalize its attendance support program, and develop a mechanism to assess and report on the effectiveness of the attendance support process/programs to senior administration and the Board.
5.	Management should continue updating the pay equity plan for all employee groups of the school board.
6.	Management should continue conducting periodic and confidential staff surveys, to improve communication with staff and provide input for professional development plans and HR policies. Management should also consider conducting exit interviews with all staff groups to obtain feedback on HR policies, as well as process and program improvements.
7.	Management should document the staff allocation process in formal policies and procedures.

Financial Management

No.	Recommendation
8.	Management should continue finalizing the format of interim financial reporting based on recommendations provided by the Interim Financial Reporting Committee (IFRC).[1]
9.	The school board should establish approval procedures for interim financial reports and implement formal sign-off of these reports by senior management.

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[1] Ministry of Education Memorandum SB38, September 16, 2009

No.	Recommendation
10.	In accordance with the Ministry's internal audit and audit committee strategy, the Board should include two external advisors in its audit committee.
11.	Management should establish a policy on investment and provide an annual report to the Board using the internal annual report on investment activity.
12.	Management should continue considering options for implementation of the electronic supplier interface for ordering, processing and payment.
13.	Management should continue finalizing arrangements for the use of electronic funds transfers (EFT) for payments.

School Operations and Facilities Management

No.	Recommendation
14.	Management should finalize establishing the roles and responsibilities of managers within the planning and operations department.
15.	The planning and operations department should consolidate its planning activities and establish a multi-year maintenance and renewal plan that includes the funding available to support it. This would provide the senior administration, the Board and its stakeholders with a clear forecast of the school board's critical needs over the next several years.
16.	Using the results of the energy audits, the school board should establish a multi-year energy management plan that incorporates quantifiable measures and the tools to monitor and manage the plan. In line with the Green Energy Act, 2009, energy management planning should include the development of policies, guidelines, goals (conservation targets), and priorities for energy management and resource conservation. The plan should include short-term and long-term opportunities with milestones, roles, responsibilities and budgets with a process for ensuring community support.
17.	Once the formal energy management plan is established, the school board should ensure that its procurement policies and practices support the objectives and targets of the plan. Management should also consider documenting the energy efficiency requirements in purchasing policies and procedures and/or the environmental policy.
18.	Management should ensure that successful conservation initiatives are communicated across all schools and with other school boards.
19.	The school board should develop an environmental policy that would provide framework for the school board's activities in the area of environmental management and education and increase the communication opportunities.