

**Ministry of Education**

**Operational Review Report  
Halton Catholic District School Board**

**December 2010**

## Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Introduction .....	1
Governance and School Board Administration .....	1
Recommendations: .....	3
Human Resource Management and School Staffing/Allocation .....	3
Recommendations: .....	5
Financial Management .....	5
Recommendations: .....	7
School Operations and Facilities Management .....	7
Recommendations: .....	9
<b>1. Background and Overview .....</b>	<b>12</b>
1.1 School Board Profile and Structure .....	12
1.2 Key Priorities of the School Board .....	12
1.3 Student Achievement .....	12
1.4 Fiscal Overview .....	13
1.5 Key Statistics: Halton Catholic District School Board .....	14
<b>2. Governance and School Board Administration – Findings and Recommendations .....</b>	<b>17</b>
Establishment of an Effective Governance Model .....	19
Development of the Board’s Strategic Directions/Plan .....	20
Decision-Making Process .....	22
Organizational Structure and Accountability .....	23
Succession and Talent Development .....	23
Stakeholder Engagement .....	25
Recommendations: .....	25
<b>3. Human Resource Management and School Staffing/Allocation – Findings and Recommendations .....</b>	<b>27</b>
3.1 Human Resource Organization .....	27
Development and Reporting of Annual Goals and Priorities .....	28
Organizational Structure and Accountability .....	29
Monitoring and Communication of Policies .....	29
3.2 Human Resource Management .....	30

	Staff Recruitment/Hiring .....	32
	Labour Relations.....	33
	Employee Performance Evaluation Processes .....	33
	Attendance Management Processes/Programs.....	35
	Management of HR and Payroll Data .....	36
	Management of the School Board’s Benefit Plans .....	36
	Monitoring Staff Satisfaction .....	37
	Recommendation:.....	38
3.3	School Staffing/Allocation .....	38
	Processes for Annual Staff Planning and Allocation .....	39
	Monitoring and Reporting on Staff Allocation.....	40
<b>4.</b>	<b>Financial Management – Findings and Recommendations.....</b>	<b>41</b>
4.1	Finance Organization.....	41
	Development and Reporting of Annual Goals and Priorities .....	42
	Organizational Structure and Accountability .....	43
	Monitoring and Communication of Policies .....	43
4.2	Budget Planning and Development.....	44
	Annual Budget Development Process .....	45
	Risk Mitigation and Board Approval .....	46
	Recommendation:.....	47
4.3	Financial Reporting and Analysis.....	47
	Integrated System for Variance Analysis and Financial Reporting .....	48
	Interim and Annual Financial Reporting .....	49
	Audit.....	50
	Recommendations: .....	50
4.4	Treasury Management.....	50
	Cash and Investment Management .....	51
	Recommendation:.....	52
4.5	School-Based Funds and Non-Grant Revenue Management.....	52
	Management of School-Based Funds.....	53
	Management of Non-Grant Revenue .....	54
4.6	Supply Chain/Procurement .....	54
	Policies and Procedures .....	56

Participation in Group Purchasing Initiatives.....	57
Purchasing Levels of Authority .....	58
Policies and Procedures for PCard/Corporate Card Use .....	58
Accounting for Completeness of Purchase/Payment Cycle .....	59
Use of Electronic Funds Transfer for Greater Efficiency .....	59
Recommendation:.....	60

**5. School Operations and Facilities Management – Findings and Recommendations ..... 61**

5.1	Operations and Facilities Organization .....	61
	Development and Reporting of Annual Goals and Priorities .....	62
	Organizational Structure and Accountability .....	63
	Monitoring and Communication of Policies .....	64
	Recommendation:.....	65
5.2	Custodial and Maintenance Operations .....	65
	The Board’s Staffing Model Supports the Board’s Cleaning Standards and Maintenance Requirements .....	67
	Development of Annual and Multi-Year Maintenance Plan.....	68
	Training to Support Skills Development and Safety .....	69
	Standardization of Cleaning and Maintenance Supplies.....	69
	Project Management, Monitoring and Supporting Systems .....	69
	Recommendations: .....	70
5.3	Energy Management.....	70
	Energy Management Plan .....	71
	Tracking and Reporting Energy Conservation .....	72
	Recommendations: .....	73
5.4	Health, Safety and Security .....	74
	Health, Safety and Security Management.....	74
	Recommendation:.....	76
5.5	Capital Plans, Policies and Procedures .....	76
	Development of Annual and Multi-Year Capital Plans .....	77
	Ongoing Monitoring and Maintenance of Data to Support Capital Planning .....	78
5.6	Construction Management.....	79

Cost-Effective Practices in the Design and Construction of Facilities .....	80
Monitoring and Reporting of Progress on Construction Projects .....	80
Maintaining Current Approved Professional Service Providers .....	81
<b>Appendix .....</b>	<b>82</b>
Appendix A: Overview of the Operational Review .....	82
Operational Review Objectives .....	82
Operational Review Summary Scope .....	82
Operational Review Summary Approach .....	83
The Operational Review Team .....	86
Limitations of this Review .....	86
Appendix B: Summary of Recommendations .....	87

## **Executive Summary**

This report details the findings and recommendations of the Operational Review of Halton Catholic District School Board (the school board or HCDSB) 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 June 21, 2010.

### **Introduction**

The Ministry plans to perform Operational Reviews of the 72 district school boards across the province. 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.

The school board's student achievement results at the secondary and elementary levels demonstrate improvement in all areas since 2002-03 and are above provincial average in most cases. From an operations perspective, the review team found that the school board has adopted many of the leading practices. Noted strengths include a positive working relationship between the Board and school board administration, a formal attendance support program, supply chain management policies and practices, and a focus on timely maintenance and cleaning of school board facilities.

A summary of the findings and recommendations for 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 has adopted a number of leading practices in governance and school board administration, including:

- renewal of its strategic planning process in 2009 (with five areas of focus) after completion of the previous strategic plan.
- a current organizational chart, posted on the school board website, which also provides a directory of staff in each department.
- a variety of formal mechanisms for communication and stakeholder engagement. The Administrator Communication Services is responsible for supporting the Director in stakeholder and media relations.

The review team notes that the school board would benefit from expanding or enhancing its activities in several areas.

The school board has established a *Governance of Policy* document, which outlines at a high level the role of the Board in providing direction to the Director of Education for the establishment of policy. There is a general understanding among the trustees and school board staff that the Director of Education is responsible for operations, and that the Board sets policies and strategic direction. However, the delineation of the roles and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees, the Director of Education, and senior management has not been clearly documented.

The school board's renewed strategic planning process covers academic and nonacademic areas, and aims to establish a framework for annual operating planning. The school board's 2009-2010 system priorities plan includes broadly-stated objectives under each strategic area of priority. However, the plan does not establish specific and measurable objectives, indicators of success, or timelines.

The Board's policy on *Governance of Policy* broadly outlines the process to develop new policies and amend existing policies. The school board has identified 16 policies which require annual review. Management noted that other policies are reviewed on a three-year cycle, as deemed appropriate by the Policy Committee, which includes senior staff and administrators.

The Board recently established a formal Policy Committee composed of trustees and resourced by senior staff. In addition, each individual service department reviews its own policies as required. During the year, management provides periodic updates to the Board on the status of review and development of policies and procedures. At the beginning of the year, management recommends policies for review by the Board throughout the year.

The Board policy on *Governance of Policy* does not indicate the policy review cycle. All Board policies are posted on the school board's website and indicate the date of adoption and the date of last amendments. However, there is no indication of the last review date. The school board should clearly indicate the review cycle in the policy on

Governance of Policy, and include the date of the last review in all Board policies. This would ensure that all policies are reviewed according to the established cycle.

Management noted that succession and talent development strategies and initiatives have been one of the focal areas for the school board over the last two years. The school board has implemented several initiatives to support succession and talent development. On the academic side, the *Staff Development Framework* established in 2009 contains elements of leadership development. Within the school board administration, there is informal mentoring and support for staff pursuing leadership opportunities. Management noted that the action plan for the upcoming year includes the development of a leadership program for administrative staff of the school board. However, at present, the school board does not have a formal succession plan for key academic and non-academic positions.

### **Recommendations:**

- The school board should clearly delineate the division of duties and responsibilities between the board of trustees and the Director of Education. The roles and responsibilities of the Director of Education and the Board of Trustees should be documented in the Board's policies.
- Management should further enhance the school board's annual operating planning process by formalizing goals/priorities, incorporating both academic and non-academic departments. The annual operating plan should be aligned with the Board's multi-year strategic plan and contain goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely.
- The school board should continue to align its leadership development programs and activities with the Ministry's leadership initiatives. It should develop a formal succession and talent development plan for key management positions in all academic and non-academic areas.

### **Human Resource Management and School Staffing/Allocation**

The HR department has implemented many leading practices, including:

- The HR department establishes an annual operating plan for the department. The plan is aligned with the Director's annual goals and includes goals, actions plans, and target dates.
- The HR department has established an organization chart, which is posted on the school board's website. The website also provides contact information for key staff of the HR department.



- Each November, management assesses the school board's recruitment needs and identifies appropriate recruitment activities.
- The school board has established a policy on hiring and promotion which outlines the general principles for hiring of all staff groups.
- The school board has established a performance appraisal process for all staff groups.
- Management has established a guide on progressive discipline for managers. The disciplinary procedures are consistent with the requirements in the collective agreements on discipline and dismissal.
- The school board has implemented a formal attendance support program and established operating procedures.
- The school board conducted an independent compliance audit of its benefits carrier several years ago. Management plans to conduct a compliance audit within the next several years. The school board's benefits carrier has also conducted voluntary audits.
- The school board has conducted various surveys of employees on specific issues, such as professional development needs.
- Over the past few years, the school board has conducted voluntary exit interviews. Management recently began formal tracking and analysis of exit interviews.
- To facilitate the allocation process for teaching staff, the school board has established two Staff Allocation Committees for elementary and secondary panels. The school board has established policy and high-level procedures for both Staff Allocation Committees.

The school board has established the Pay Equity Committee which involves many employee groups. The committee monitors pay equity in existing positions and evaluates new positions. However, pay equity plans have not been updated for all employee groups. In particular, management noted that one unionized group, English as a Second Language/Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (ESL/LINC), is currently completing the development of a pay equity agreement which is expected to be posted in the 2010-11 school year.

**Recommendations:**

- The school board should finalize the establishment of the pay equity agreement for the ESL/LINC group.

**Financial Management**

The Financial Services department has implemented many of the leading practices, including:

- The Financial Services department establishes an annual operating plan for the department. This plan is part of the broader plan for the entire Business Services department of the school board. The plan is aligned with the Director's annual goals, and includes goals, action plans, and target dates.
- Each year, management presents the Budget Estimates Schedule and the Board's Budget Objectives for the upcoming fiscal year to the Board. The schedule is used throughout the budget development cycle, to inform the Board on progress in each step of the process.
- Finance staff use online banking for cash monitoring. The Supervisor of Accounting Services is responsible for preparing monthly bank reconciliations, which are approved by the Manager of Budget and Accounting Services.
- The school board maintains a positive relationship with the current banking institution, and receives competitive rates. Management noted that it intends to issue a tender for banking services in the near future.
- The school board has established procedures for school generated funds using the School Generated Funds Guidelines developed by the Ontario Association of School Business Officials (OASBO). The school board has also established a policy on fundraising activities.
- The school board has implemented specialized software to support the management of school cash.
- The school board has established policy and procedures for purchasing, which are posted on the school board's website and intranet. The school board's purchasing procedures have been revised to ensure consistency with the Supply Chain Guideline, and include a purchasing code of ethics.
- The purchasing procedure provides authorization levels that are commensurate with job roles and responsibilities.

- The school board's purchasing procedure outlines procedures for the school board's participation in cooperative purchasing initiatives. The school board is also benefiting from contracts established by the Ontario Government.
- The school board's procedures on the use of PCards are included in the purchasing procedures.
- The school board's purchasing procedure outlines the purchase requisitioning/purchase order process and the segregation of duties.

The review team notes that the school board would benefit from expanding or enhancing its activities in several areas.

Management incorporates all identified risks in the budget estimates, and shares the information on identified fiscal challenges with the Board during the budget development process. However, there is no documented risk management plan that would include risks that could impact the budget, an assessment of each risk and proposed mitigation strategies.

In May 2010, the Board established a motion to establish an Audit Committee. Currently, the external auditors report to the Board. There is no internal audit function at the school board. Management noted that the school board is awaiting progress in the implementation of the Ministry initiative on regional internal audit services.

Management provides periodic reports to the Board on the status of the regional internal audit services initiative.

Management noted that any surplus funds from the operating account, capital account and reserve funds are invested in term deposits, such as Bankers Acceptance Notes. The school board has not established a formal policy on investment activity. The school board plans to develop an investment report to be brought forward at the time when the school board's 2009-10 Financial Statements are provided to the Board of Trustees. Monthly budget reports provided to the Board contain information on earned interest. The school board also plans to develop a Statement of Investment Policies and Goals, as part of the Borrowing Resolution and Cheque Signing Authorities Report.

The school board has been working to implement Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) for all its vendors. Management noted that the school board has purchased new software to support EFTs, and is integrating the new software with the school board's financial system. EFTs for most payments will be implemented by the end of 2010.

## Recommendations:

- Management should consider enhancing the process of reporting on the school board's budget risks using the format suggested in section 4.2 of this report. A formal risk management plan/report, which is reviewed and updated periodically, would include strategies to mitigate the risks of spending beyond budgeted levels.
- Management should proceed with its intention to establish an internal audit function, giving consideration to the emerging Ministry direction to establish regional models for internal audit across the school board sector.
- Once the school board establishes an internal audit function, it should ensure any internal audit plans are clearly documented and that internal audit report recommendations are acted upon by management.
- The school board should proceed with its intention to establish an audit committee that includes external advisors in accordance with emerging Ministry direction.
- The school board should establish an investment policy. Management should periodically report to the Board on the performance of the investment activity in accordance with the investment policy.
- The school board should finalize the implementation of EFTs for all its vendors.

## School Operations and Facilities Management

The Facility Management Services department has implemented some of the leading practices, including:

- The custodial allocation model is based on the workload associated with specific cleaning tasks, and is used to set clear expectations for custodians on their tasks and duties.
- The Board has recently established the Environmental Stewardship policy and appointed an Environmental Sustainability Officer.
- The Facility Management Services department establishes a list of major maintenance projects for the year, which is brought to the Board for approval. The Facility department provides an annual report at the end of the summer, updating the trustees on progress of projects.
- The Facility Management Services department works in cooperation with the HR department to deliver training for custodial and maintenance staff. HR is

responsible for providing legislatively required training, such as WHMIS. Staff also receive some training from external vendors on specific products and equipment usage.

- The Facility Management Services department has a small inventory of major cleaning and maintenance equipment, such as vehicles and floor cleaners. Vendors are responsible for tracking and managing maintenance activities for large cleaning equipment.
- The Facility Management Services department uses a computerized work order system.
- The school board has a formal occupational health and safety policy, as well as several policies and guidelines related to health, safety and security, including policies on safe schools, fire and evacuation, risk management / first aid, anaphylaxis, bullying prevention and intervention, and school security.
- The school board maintains a list of ongoing capital, renewal and major maintenance projects. The school board engages external consultants to collect data, conduct capital needs forecasts, and develop the formal capital plan.
- The school board has investigated partnership opportunities with municipalities. The school board and the municipalities have established a community schools consultation committee to conduct joint planning and forecasting for new growth areas.
- The school board has developed a standard footprint for the design of new school construction for both elementary and secondary schools. This design is modified and adjusted for each specific construction project.
- For each construction project, the school board appoints a project manager.
- The school board has a list of pre-approved architects which is updated every five years. The school board also pre-qualifies general contractors for each project.

The review team notes that the school board would benefit from expanding its activities in several areas.

Each year, the Facility Management Services department identifies a number of broadly stated goals, which are aligned with the Director's annual system goals. However, the goals are not specific and measurable, and are not supported by indicators of success, timelines, and accountabilities.

The Board has recently established the Environmental Stewardship policy. This policy includes a broad statement that the school board will procure, whenever possible, products that are environmentally friendly. The school board participated as one of the pilot boards in the Green Clean project sponsored by the Ministry of Education. Although the school board has made significant progress in implementing green cleaning, there are several aspects of the initiative that are yet to be formalized in line with the Ministry's Green Clean Program Resource Guide.

To establish the annual list of maintenance priorities, the Facility Management Services department maintains a multi-year list of expected replacements and upgrades. The list is developed based on input from the RECAPP database, roof inspection reports, and estimated replacement timelines for other buildings. However, the school board has not established a formal multi-year maintenance plan to align identified preventative and deferred maintenance priorities and optimize the use of funds.

The school board's Environmental Stewardship policy sets out principles for an energy management plan. The school board has also implemented many energy management initiatives over the past number of years. The school board uses an external firm to collect and evaluate annual energy consumption and water utilization.

The Facility Management Services department tracks energy utilization on a monthly basis, and provides formal annual reports to senior management and trustees on energy utilization. Management reported that the Facility Management Services department has kept the utilities budget in line with the energy consumption from the baseline year. Any savings from energy consumption are used by the department to fund other energy management projects. However, the school board has not established a formal energy management plan with specific reduction targets and mechanisms to monitor and report on progress.

The school board has not communicated its successful energy conservation initiatives across the system and to other school boards. However, plans call for the recently appointed Environmental Sustainability Officer, to facilitate sharing of this information.

The school board ensures compliance with statutory requirements for occupational and student health and safety. Although the school board has a number of initiatives in place to support compliance with statutory health requirements, there is no comprehensive documented health strategy that would address promotion of overall health and wellness of both students and all employee groups.

### **Recommendations:**

- The Facility Management Services department should enhance its annual operating planning by establishing specific and measurable goals and indicators of success. For each goal and initiative, the department should also identify

implementation timelines and accountability of specific department staff. This would enable management to monitor and periodically report on progress in implementing the plan.

- The school board should use the Ministry's Green Clean Program Resource Guide to formalize its green clean program.
- Using a consultative process, management should formalize a multi-year plan for major maintenance and renewal projects. The plan should address the school board's preventative and deferred maintenance priorities and optimize the use of available funding (Annual Renewal Grant and Good Places to Learn funding). The plan should be approved by the Board.
- Using energy consumption data, the school board should establish a multiyear 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 continue to 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 procurement policies and procedures and/or the environmental policy.
- Management should provide formal annual reporting on the conservation savings achieved against the plan.
- Successful energy conservation initiatives currently implemented by the school board should be communicated across all schools and with other school boards, to enhance recognition of energy management across the system. The Environmental Sustainability Officer could facilitate such sharing of information through regular publications and reports using the school board's website and other media.
- As part of the energy management planning, the school board should establish a comprehensive system to budget expenditures, track and regulate consumption, and identify opportunities for further savings.
- The school board should identify opportunities for consolidated billing from utilities.

- The school board should consider establishing an integrated health plan/strategy that would reflect the existing policies and procedures regarding the health of both students and employee groups and aim to promote health and wellness across the school board. Management should also consider coordinating the development, implementation and monitoring of the plan centrally.



## 1. Background and Overview

### 1.1 School Board Profile and Structure

The Halton Catholic District School Board provides educational services to approximately 27,448 students in 40 elementary and 10 secondary schools.

The school board’s enrolment has increased (from 2002-03 to 2009-10 school year) by 3,079 students, or by about 12.6% per cent.

The school board’s Administrative Council is as follows:

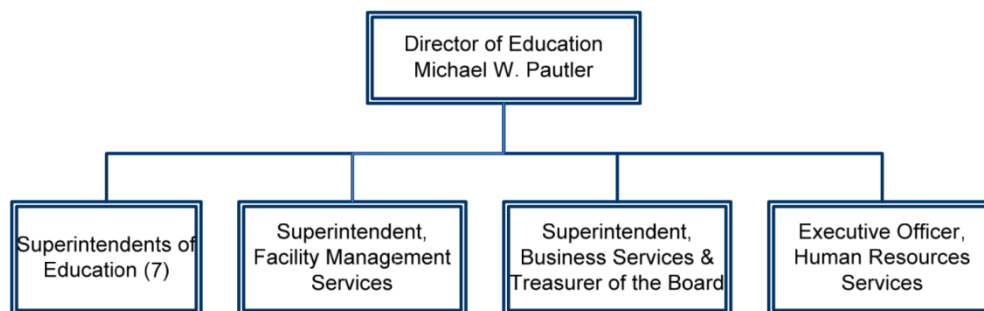


Figure 1: Halton Catholic District School Board Administrative Council

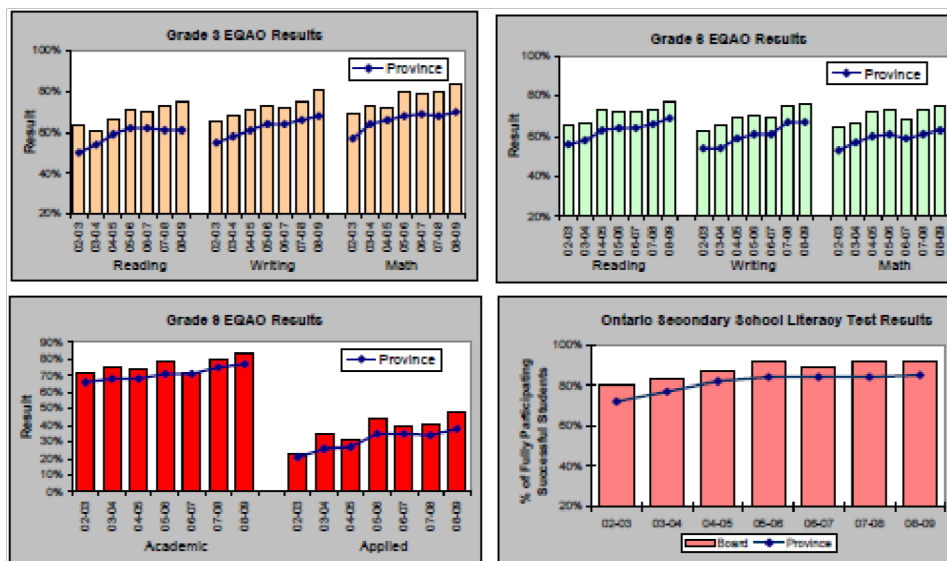
### 1.2 Key Priorities of the School Board

The school board established its Vision in 2009:

*“The Halton Catholic District School Board is a model learning community, widely recognized as distinctively Catholic, providing exceptional education while nurturing the call to love and to serve as a people of faith, living out God’s plan.”*

### 1.3 Student Achievement

Since 2002-03, the school board has shown improvement in all areas assessed through the EQAO process. Grade 3 EQAO results in reading, writing and math have been steadily improving since 2006-07, and are significantly above the provincial average. Grade 6 results in reading have been improving since 2005-06. Grade 6 results in writing and math have also been steadily improving since 2006-07. Grade 6 results in all areas have been consistently above the provincial average. Grade 9 academic and applied results have been steadily improving since 2006-07, and are above the provincial average. The following charts demonstrate the school board’s EQAO results over the last seven years.



## 1.4 Fiscal Overview

Over the past several years the school board has achieved a balanced budget. The 2009-10 revised estimates also indicate a balanced budget.

### Summary Financial Data (Revenues)

Revenues	2007-08 Financial Statements	2008-09 Financial Statements	2009-10 Revised Estimates
Legislative Grants	\$155,865,321	\$166,555,967	\$181,369,490
Local taxation	\$77,355,044	\$80,615,965	\$80,635,000
Board Revenues	\$6,245,742	\$6,518,120	\$4,916,759
Other Operating & capital Grants	\$3,079,508	\$3,908,798	\$5,672,751
<b>Total Revenues (Schedule 9)</b>	<b>\$242,545,615</b>	<b>\$257,598,850</b>	<b>\$272,594,000</b>

### Summary Financial Data (Expenditure)

Expenditures	2007-08 Financial Statements	2008-09 Financial Statements	2009-10 Revised Estimates
Operating expenditures	\$219,535,633	\$235,012,907	\$250,007,801
Capital expenditures - Before transfers from reserves	\$22,904,606	\$23,666,735	\$25,890,319
Transfer to (from) Reserves	\$105,373	-\$1,080,792	-\$3,304,117
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$242,545,612</b>	<b>\$257,598,850</b>	<b>\$272,594,003</b>

Expenditures	2007-08 Financial Statements	2008-09 Financial Statements	2009-10 Revised Estimates
In-year Surplus (Deficit)	\$0	\$0	\$0

### School Board Reserves and Deferred Revenues

School Board Reserve and Deferred Revenues	2007-08 Financial Statements	2008-09 Financial Statements	2009-10 Revised Estimates
Reserve for Working Funds	\$729,676	\$863,731	\$598,291
School Activities	\$0	\$1,174,145	\$0
Miscellaneous	\$1,460,352	\$1,883,747	\$1,095,700
Pupil Accomodation Debt Reserve	\$30,800,440	\$28,508,005	\$27,471,517
<b>Total Reserve Funds (Schedule 5)</b>	<b>\$32,990,468</b>	<b>\$32,429,628</b>	<b>\$29,165,508</b>
Reserve for Classroom Expenditures	\$1,239,419	\$1,239,419	\$574,133
Proceeds of Dispositions Reserve- Other	\$8,231,788	\$8,247,224	\$13,259,934
Energy Efficient School - Operating	\$0	\$74,593	\$0
Energy Efficient School - Capital	\$0	\$349,246	\$0
<b>Total Deferred Revenues (Schedule 5.1)</b>	<b>\$9,471,207</b>	<b>\$9,910,482</b>	<b>\$13,834,067</b>
<b>Total Board Reserves and Deferred Revenues</b>	<b>\$42,461,675</b>	<b>\$42,340,110</b>	<b>\$42,999,575</b>

## 1.5 Key Statistics: Halton Catholic District School Board

The following table highlights key statistics for the school board.

### Summary Board Statistics

Day School Enrolment	2002-03 Actual	2009-10 Revised Estimates
Elementary Day School ADE	16,836	17,815
Secondary Day School ADE	7,533	9,633
<b>Total Day School Enrolment</b>	<b>24,369</b>	<b>27,448</b>

## Primary Class Size

Primary Class Size	2003-04	2009-10
% of Classes Less Than 20	17%	90%
% of Classes Less Than 23	54%	100%
Average Class Size - Jr/Inter	25.79	25.33
% of 3/4 Classes 23 & Under	20%	100%
% of Combined Classes	9%	15%

## Staffing

Staffing	2003-04	2009-10
School Based Teachers	1,376	1,725
Teacher Assistants	231	363
Other Student Support	130	138
School Administration	80	95
School Clerical	97	110
School Operations	147	159
Other Non-Classroom	59	91
<b>Total Staffing</b>	<b>2,120</b>	<b>2,681</b>
<b>Teacher - Pupil Ratio</b>	<b>1:18</b>	<b>1:16</b>
<b>FTE Staff per 1,000 Pupils (ADE)<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>87.0</b>	<b>97.7</b>
<b>Total Salary &amp; Benefits as % of Net Operating Expenditures</b>	<b>63.0%</b>	<b>79.5%</b>

## Special Education

Special Education	2003-04	2009-10
Special Education Incremental Expenditures	\$16,441,738	\$32,211,074
Special Education Allocation	\$17,975,491	\$28,258,460
<b>Spending above Allocation (Reserve)</b>	<b>-\$1,533,753</b>	<b>\$3,952,614</b>

<sup>1</sup> Note: Impacted by Class Size and Special Education

## School Utilization

<b>School Utilization</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2009-10</b>
Number of schools	45	50
Total Enrolment (ADE)	24,369	27,448
School Capacity (Spaces)	23,757	26,770
<b>School Utilization</b>	<b>102.6%</b>	<b>102.5%</b>
<b>Board Area (Km<sup>2</sup>)</b>	<b>973</b>	<b>973</b>
<b>Number of Trustees</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>

## 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 both 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 fieldwork, 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, e-mail, 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 has established the policy on Governance of Policy, which outlines the Board’s role in giving direction to staff. There is a general understanding among the trustees and school board staff that the school board administration is responsible for operations, and the Board sets policies and strategic direction. However, the delineation of the roles and responsibilities of the Board, the Director of Education and senior management has not been clearly documented.

The Director and the Chair of the Board noted that there is a positive working relationship between the Director and the Board. Prior to the new strategic planning process, the school board hired an external consultant to work with trustees to develop a formal governance model. The Director has also informally discussed the provisions of the new Student Achievement and School Board Governance Act (Bill 177) and its



implications for the school board. The current focus of the Board includes updating by-laws and developing a governance policy and code of conduct for trustees.

The Board is composed of nine trustees with varying experience. There is open communication between the senior administration and the Board. The senior administration ensures that trustees have sufficient understanding of various issues to make informed decisions. Management prepares comprehensive information packages for Board meetings. Minutes of all Board meetings, along with full reports prepared by management, are published on the school board's website.

The Board is developing a formal performance appraisal process for the Director of Education, using a sub-committee supported by an external consultant. There is a plan to conduct annual performance appraisals of the Director. The Director's performance appraisal will be based on the school board's strategic plan.

### **Development of the Board's Strategic Directions/Plan**

After completing the previous strategic plan in 2009, the school board began to renew its strategic planning process. The process began with the approval of the renewed Vision by the Board. Management then provided the Board with several reports on the Strategic Planning Renewal Process, which outlined the phases in the development of a plan, mechanisms for communication and community engagement, and key approaches.

The five-year Strategic Planning Renewal Process will move through three distinct phases over the course of five school years. In 2009-2010 (Phase One) the school board focused on communicating the strategic planning process to stakeholders, establishing a Strategic Planning and Renewal Steering Committee, data gathering, and developing the goals, strategies, expected outcomes, and measurable indicators under the four areas of Strategic Priority. These include:

- Strengthening the distinctively Catholic character of our schools and programmes
- Enhancing school effectiveness and improving student achievement
- Building capacity with all educational partners
- Improving levels of service and support to schools.

During Phase Two in 2010-2011, the school board will focus on the initial implementation of the initiatives detailed within the strategic plan. During Phase Three (2011-2014), the school board will continue implementation and monitoring of programs toward full implementation of the strategic plan, and ongoing assessment of effectiveness and impact of initiatives.

The strategic planning renewal process involves various stakeholders. The process is guided by the Strategic Planning Review Process (SPRP) Steering Committee which includes the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board. All trustees provide ongoing input, review and approval. Senior Staff provide guidance to the SPRP Steering Committee, and chair four sub-committees. Numerous local level activities engage parents and students, Catholic school councils, the Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC), clergy, bargaining unit representatives, and other community partners in the strategic planning process. Various stakeholders also participate in focus groups and surveys.

The school board has used a wide range of data to develop the new strategic plan, such as the *State of the System Survey* results, *360° Administrative Survey* results, student achievement data and *Halton Youth Survey* and *Halton Social Profile* to name a few.

One of the key components of the strategic planning process is the establishment of the *Results Based Accountability (RBA)* framework, which would govern the identification of expected outcomes, performance indicators, data collection instruments to obtain indicator data and periodic collection and analysis of data for internal decision making and public reporting.

Management communicates the progress in the development of the strategic plan to the system and external stakeholders. Management has prepared the *Guide for Leaders, Fulfilling the Promise*, which outlines the key stages and elements of the process. Key reports related to the strategic renewal process are published on the school board's website.

The school board's renewed strategic planning process covers academic and nonacademic areas, and aims to establish a framework for the annual operating planning by the school board. The school board establishes annual system priorities.

The 2009-2010 system priorities plan includes broadly stated objectives under each strategic area of priority. However, the plan does not establish specific and measurable objectives, indicators of success, and timelines. Management noted that the development of an annual operating plan for the school board (along with departmental operating plans) is one of the priorities linked to the establishment of the strategic plan. The Director provides interim reports on progress in implementing of system priorities to the Board.

The school board develops an annual Board Improvement Plan, aligned with the Ministry's school effectiveness framework. The plan includes specific targets for student achievement. The school board has also established a detailed Special Education Plan. The Director prepares an Annual Report which addresses student achievement results and some aspects of school board operations such as capital projects, key revenues and expenditures, transportation services, and information technology. The Annual Report is posted in the News Section on the school board's website for a period of time

following the presentation to the Board. Management should consider posting annual reports from the past several years on the school board's website.

## Decision-Making Process

The Board's procedural by-laws follow Robert's Rules of Order. The school board has a formal process for setting the agenda for Board meetings. During weekly Administrative Council meetings, members of senior staff and the Director of Education review the list of agenda items, *Upcoming Agenda Items for Board Meetings*. Some of the agenda items are identified from action items arising from previous Board meetings, or notices of motions. There are also some items which are identified as a result of long-term planning.

Eleven days prior to the Board meeting, management drafts an agenda, using the *Upcoming Agenda Items for Board Meetings*. The draft agendas and any completed reports in relation to the agenda are included in the Administrative Council Agenda package. Nine days prior to the meeting senior management and the Director of Education review the draft agenda and reports during the Administrative Council meeting. Seven days prior to the Board meeting the Director meets with the Chair and Vice Chair to review the draft agenda and accompanying reports. The draft agenda is sent via email to trustees with a copy to the senior management team and administrative assistants. At least six days prior to the Board meetings, the Director reviews all reports and finalizes the agenda. Five days before the Board meeting, the finalized agenda and reports are sent to trustees by courier.

The Board has established several committees. The statutory committees of the Board include the Student Discipline Committee, Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), Supervised Alternative Learning for Excused Pupils (SALEP), and the Catholic Parent Involvement Committee. There is one *ad hoc* committee – the School Uniform Committee. The standing committees for the Board include the Employee Assistance Program Committee, Salary Advisory Committee, and the Capital Projects Committee. The Board plans to establish a statutory Audit Committee and a standing Policy Committee.

The Board's policy on *Governance of Policy* broadly outlines the process to develop new policies and amend existing policies. New policies are drafted by superintendents with relevant responsibility, and provided to senior staff for input and feedback. The draft policy is presented to the board of trustees for the first reading followed by submission to the system stakeholders for input and feedback. Stakeholders' input is reflected in consultation with the senior staff. The Board discusses the draft policy in the second and third reading and adopts the final policy. When changes or updates are required in existing policies, superintendents with relevant policy responsibility revise

policies and draft amendments. Senior staff of the school board provide feedback for the revised policy which is then presented to the Board for approval.

The school board has identified 16 policies which require annual review, such as policies on occupational health and safety, child abuse and protection of students, safe schools and employee code of conduct. Management noted that other policies are reviewed on a three-year cycle, as appropriate by the Policy Committee that includes members of senior staff and administrators. The Board recently established a formal Policy Committee that is composed of trustees and resourced by members of senior staff. Individual service departments review their own policies as required. Policies related to risk management are reviewed by the Risk Management Lead and the Curriculum Department. All Board policies are posted on the school board's website and indicate the date of adoption and the date of last amendments. However, there is no indication of the last review date. During the year, management provides periodic updates to the Board on status of review and development of policies and procedures. The update contains a chart that outlines the status of existing policies and procedures which are in need of revisions and areas where new policies are required. At the beginning of the year, management recommends policies for review by the Board during the year. The school board should indicate the review cycle in the policy on *Governance of Policy*.

## **Organizational Structure and Accountability**

The school board's administration includes Business Services, Facility Management Services, Human Resources Services, and Academic Services (comprising school services, curriculum services, school effectiveness, staff development and special education services). All services report directly to the Director of Education. The school board is revising its organizational structure in academic services to implement a K-12 approach within the family of schools structure.

The senior administration team is represented by the Administrative Council, which is composed of the Director of Education, all superintendents and the Executive Officer of Human Resources Services.

The school board has an up-to-date organizational chart, which is posted on its website. The school board's website also provides a directory of staff in each department.

## **Succession and Talent Development**

Management noted that succession and talent development strategies and initiatives are one of the focal areas for the school board over the last two years. The school board has implemented several initiatives to support succession and talent development. On the academic side, the *Staff Development Framework* that was established in 2009, contains elements of leadership development. In May 2010, the

school board established a document, *The Leadership Journey*, which has since been revised. *The Leadership Journey* outlines the components of the school board's Leadership Strategy:

- The Catholic Leadership Framework
- Profile of a Catholic Leader in the Halton Catholic District School Board
- Catholic Leadership Self-Assessment Tool
- Portfolios for Catholic Leaders
- Adult Faith Formation
- Introduction to Leadership
- Who Me, a Leader?
- Teacher in Charge Workshop
- Preparing for the Role of Vice Principal
- Catholic Leadership Development Program – Academic
- Professional Development for Current Leaders
- Mentoring and Coaching for Newly Appointed School Leaders
- Vice Principals' Catholic Learning Community Sessions
- Experienced Principals' Development Sessions
- Grassroots Program
- Exploring the Supervisory Officer Role

In spring 2010, management provided an update to the Board on Board Succession and Talent Development Plan / Leadership Strategy as outlined in the *Leadership Journey* document. The school board has also established a Succession and Talent Development Working Group to examine the school board's current practices in succession and talent development.

Currently, the school board does not have a formal succession plan for key management positions in both academic and non-academic areas. Management has identified several key goals and actions for the school board's talent development and

leadership strategy, including data collection, communication, identification of skills and competencies, professional learning for leaders, leadership selection processes and implementation of the principal and vice-principal performance appraisal.

Within the school board administration, there is informal mentoring and support to staff interested in pursuing leadership opportunities. Management noted that the action plan for the upcoming year includes the development of a leadership program for administrative staff of the school board. The school board would benefit from the establishment of a formal succession plan for all key management positions.

## Stakeholder Engagement

The school board has a variety of formal mechanisms for communication and stakeholder engagement. The Administrator of Communication Services is responsible for supporting the Director in stakeholder and media relations. The Administrator is supported by the Communication Services Clerk and the Communication Services Officer.

Management noted that the strategic renewal process has improved communication with the school board's external and internal stakeholders.

The school board issues several newsletters and reports, such as the *Community Connection*, *Catholic Board News*, *Celebrating Success*, and *Director's Annual Report*. All minutes of Board meetings including complete reports, and briefs are posted on the school board's website. The school board also engages with the external stakeholders through various committees and school councils. For example, the Friends and Advocates for Catholic Education Committee (FACE) includes parish and parent community members. It is mandated to engage the Catholic community in promoting and protecting the Catholic school system.

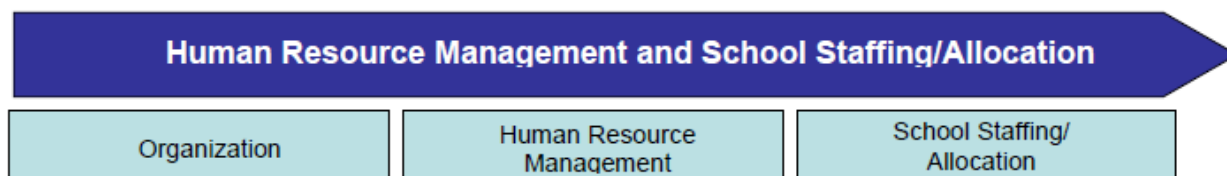
The school board's senior staff participate in various sector committees of provincial associations and Ministry workgroups such as Board of Directors of the Catholic School Board Services Association (CSBSA), Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE), Council of Senior Business Officials executive (COSBO), Early Learning Program Regional Steering Committee, Expert Panel on Capital Standards, Provincial Reporting Entity Workgroup, Board of Directors of the Education Computing Network of Ontario (ECNO).

## Recommendations:

- The school board should clearly delineate the division of duties and responsibilities between the board of trustees and the Director of Education. The roles and responsibilities of the Director of Education and the Board of Trustees should be documented in the Board's policies.

- Management should further enhance the school board's annual operating planning process by formalizing goals/priorities, incorporating both academic and non-academic departments. The annual operating plan should be aligned with the Board's multi-year strategic plan and contain goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely.
- The school board should continue to align its leadership development programs and activities with the Ministry's leadership initiatives. It should develop a formal succession and talent development plan for key management positions in all academic and non-academic areas.

### 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 fieldwork, 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 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 – 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 responsibilities.	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 HR department establishes an annual operating plan for the department. The plan is aligned with the Director's annual goals, and includes goals, action plans and target dates. The 2009-2010 plan contains the following key departmental goals:

- Preparation for Ministry Operational Review
- Implementation and monitoring of Provincial Discussion Tables (PDT) Agreements for all unionized employee groups
- Implementation of Employee Self Serve Portal
- Implementation of Electronic Secondary SAC (staff allocation committee) database

- Recruitment Needs Review (teaching and non-teaching)
- Non Union Job Evaluation Review
- Review Human Resources Services role in the development of the Board's Strategic Plan
- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) – Customer Service Standards training
- Ministry of Labour Initiative – Slips, Trips and Falls Training.

During the year, the department provides regular updates to the Administrative Council on progress in implementing the plan.

### **Organizational Structure and Accountability**

The HR department has established an organization chart, which is published on the school board's website. The website also provides contact information for key staff of the HR department. Management recently briefed trustees on the organizational structure and key functions of the HR department.

There are three key functions within the HR department, including the support services function, teacher personnel function, and labour relations function. The school board's health and safety function is also part of the HR department.

There are formal job descriptions for all staff of the HR department. The department has also provided assistance in the development of formal job descriptions for all administrative staff of the school board.

Senior HR staff have appropriate designations: the Executive Officer has Supervisory Officer qualifications and holds a CHRP designation, the HR Administrator for Support staff has a CHRP designation and several other HR staff hold CHRP qualifications or are in the process of completing the qualification requirements.

### **Monitoring and Communication of Policies**

The HR department is responsible for implementing Board policies on hiring and recruitment, performance appraisal, health and safety, and various support programs available to staff. All policies are posted on the school board's website. The HR department procedures, which support the implementation of Board policies, are posted on the school board's intranet.

All staff of the school board have access to the HR procedures on the school board's intranet. The board's intranet also hosts various memoranda, guidelines and forms as

well as information on health and safety, HR programs and initiatives, job descriptions, e-learning resources and collective agreements.

The HR department communicates new policies and procedures or changes to existing policies and procedures through memoranda, during in-service for principals and vice-principals, orientation for new staff, presentations for leadership candidates and HR departmental staff meetings. The HR department has implemented many centralized processes, which enable HR staff to monitor compliance with the existing policies and procedures.

### 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 processes/programs exist that include employee supportive policies and procedures to minimize the cost of absenteeism.	Yes
Management periodically reports on the effectiveness of the attendance management processes/programs to senior management and the board.	Yes

## 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.	Yes
Confidential exit interviews are performed for all staff who resign, take early retirement or transfer.	Yes

### Staff Recruitment/Hiring

Each November, management assesses the school board’s teacher recruitment needs to determine appropriate recruitment activities. From December through February, the school board’s recruitment team, composed of HR staff, visits universities to provide presentations, distribute the school board’s recruitment DVD, and staff a booth during career fairs. The school board also uses the student placement program as a source of recruitment.

The school board posts employment opportunities on the school board’s website and *Apply to Education*. The recruitment DVD and the school board’s website contain general information on the application process.

The HR department’s recruitment request form ensures accountability in the hiring process and supports the HR department’s centralized approach to hiring.

The school board has established several policies and procedures for hiring including *Hiring and Promotions Policy* and *Criminal Reference Check Policy*. The Hiring and Promotions policy sets the general principles and requirements for hiring of all staff groups. The HR department has also established a formal procedure for reference checks.

Management follows standard practices in the hiring process. The HR department has established standard interview questions, a scoring form and an evaluation matrix for all hiring. In addition, a formal procedure outlines the hiring process for non-academic personnel.

The school board commences the interview process for teachers in March. The HR department has a centralized interviewing process, and invites elementary and secondary school administrators to participate. The HR department provides training for interview teams to ensure consistency in questions and scoring. The interview questions are developed using the Catholic Leadership Framework. The HR department receives and checks all references centrally. Management noted that most of hiring for teaching positions is based on the occasional teachers' list, with those being selected having completed successful long term occasional teaching assignments

The hiring process for support staff is also centrally managed by the HR department. A representative from the HR department meets with the hiring department to identify needs. A representative from the HR department takes part in all hiring interviews. The Executive Officer of HR approves all recommendations to hire.

## **Labour Relations**

In general, the school board has open communication with the unions and employee groups, as a result of both formal and informal practices. The school board has established labour/management committees for all bargaining units. The committees address matters of mutual concern, share information, and discuss Board policies, procedures and practices.

The school board maintains a timely and effective approach in responding to labour issues. Management noted that it strives to maintain a positive relationship with the unions and address most potential grievances informally. Management provides periodic reports to the Board and the Director of Education on the status of various grievances.

## **Employee Performance Evaluation Processes**

The school board has established a performance appraisal process for all staff groups. A formal performance appraisal process for school principals and vice- principals was

implemented for the 2009-10 school year, in accordance with Ministry of Education guidelines.

In line with the Ministry's *Supporting Teaching Excellence* document, the school board evaluates its experienced teachers on a five-year cycle. New teachers are reviewed during the first and second year as part of the New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP). The HR department tracks the completion and status of teachers' performance appraisal, using the HR information system. The HR department sends out reminders to school principals on appraisals that are due to be completed. They also provide training to school principals on teacher performance appraisals. There is a DVD that is used to train school administrators who conduct performance appraisals. The HR department reports notations to the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) for new teachers who have completed NTIP two times a year.

The school board has established *Guidelines for Performance Plan and Appraisals*, which establish that the school board requires regular, periodic performance reviews of each professional staff member. The performance review process is conducted by the appropriate supervisor at least every three years, or at least twice a year for employees on probation. A performance review may also be conducted at any time upon the employee's or supervisor's request.

Management has established a guide on progressive discipline that includes disciplinary procedures consistent with the collective agreements. The HR department is involved in all aspects of a disciplinary action. Trustees, the Director and representatives of the senior management team are involved in the dismissal process for teachers. For other staff groups, decisions regarding dismissal are made by the HR department and the Director of Education, with consultation from the unions as appropriate.

The HR department supports the professional development of HR staff and other staff groups, when appropriate. For example, the HR department supports planning of professional development for teaching staff which is the responsibility of the academic superintendents. The HR department helps identify suitable times for training, leads training for occasional teachers, and organizes training on topics which are relevant to all staff of the school board. The department is also involved in providing staff training for specific HR-related topics. For other staff groups, HR supports various departments in planning and organizing professional development events. The HR department also provides regular training on health and safety issues, including mandatory training required by legislation. The mandatory training is tracked in the HR information system. Some training completed by employees is reflected in the employee's record in the employee self-serve system.

The HR department is working with the unions to identify professional development priorities for various employee groups. The department has also conducted periodic surveys to collect staff input in professional development planning.

### **Attendance Management Processes/Programs**

An effective attendance support system combines policies, procedures and information systems to record and analyze trends in absenteeism, and dedicates 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 management program.

Currently, the school board uses a software system to track attendance and dispatch supply staff. All employees of the school board have direct access to the system, and enter their absence information directly. Using the system, management prepares a trend analysis report to the Board and the senior administration team three times a year. Management noted that the use of the attendance tracking software for dispatch of supply staff has improved the efficiency in replacing absent staff. Occasional staff can book their time on line. The system also shows all available jobs over a month so that occasional staff can book their time in advance. The HR department also generates periodic reports on the activity of occasional staff.

The school board has a formal attendance support program and established operating procedure, which is posted on the school board's intranet. Using the attendance tracking information, management generates a list of employees with high absenteeism, and identifies cases when formal attendance support may be required. The HR department determines the number of absences on an annual basis based on the average of the group and patterned absences. These cases are discussed with the unions through labour/management meetings. Employees are notified of any upcoming attendance support meeting via telephone or email. After each attendance support meeting, the employee receives a follow up correspondence stating the details of the meeting and the outcome. The HR department has template letters for various stages of the attendance support program. Culpable absenteeism is addressed through the Board's progressive discipline procedure.

The Board has a full time Claims Management Officer who handles all work place accommodation and early and safe return to work programs. The school board has established a formal policy on employee assistance. The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Committee is chaired by a trustee of the Board and is composed of representatives from each employee group, the Director, the Executive Officer of HR and Senior Administrator of HR Services. The committee meets approximately three times each school year to review the usage of the EAP and determine needs for the next school year. The school board has established a Wellness Committee, which is



chaired by the HR department and includes representatives from all employee groups. The committee meets four or five times per year and facilitates various wellness-related activities at the school board.

### **Management of HR and Payroll Data**

The payroll function is part of the Finance department. HR department staff enter information and changes in personal information in the information system. Payroll staff run periodic reports that indicate any changes in personal files. Payroll staff have access to the HR system, but cannot make any changes to personal information. The payroll function makes relevant changes in the payroll system.

The school board outsources processing of payroll to a third party provider. All employees of the school board are enrolled in direct deposit for payroll. The school board has also implemented electronic pay slips, with online access for employees. Over the past year, management has been gradually implementing electronic timesheets using its HR system. The initiative started with staff in the continuing education department, and will be next rolled out for facilities staff.

There is a requirement for all new hires to provide their Qualifications Council of Ontario (QECO) rating and other documentation outlining relevant professional experience or previous experience at other school boards. The HR department requires a revised QECO rating to change a position classification.

The HR department undertakes synchronization of data with the OCT three times a year.

The school board has established a Pay Equity Committee with various employee groups, and monitors the maintenance of pay equity in existing positions and evaluates new positions. The school board has a gender-neutral tool for evaluating jobs. Unionized jobs are evaluated by the Joint Job Evaluation Committee. The school board has updated the pay equity plans for most employee groups. Management noted that one unionized group, ESL/LINC, is currently completing the development of a pay equity agreement which is expected to be posted in the 201011 school year.

### **Management of the School Board's Benefit Plans**

The school board conducted an independent compliance audit of its benefits carrier several years ago. Management plans to conduct a compliance audit within the next few years. The school board's benefits carrier has also conducted voluntary audits.

The school board meets with its benefits carrier and third party benefit consultant to review specific issues and emerging trends. The school board's benefit consultant prepares an annual review for management to identify trends and control costs.

The school board's benefit plans are managed on the Administrative Service Only (ASO) arrangement. Management increases staff awareness of the benefit plans' terms and conditions by communicating benefit plans *Fact Sheets* to staff periodically. The examples fact sheets' topics include drug dispensing fees and guidance on orthotic services and costs.

Management meets with union representatives, the benefits provider and benefit consultant three times a year to review long-term disability claims and the progress of pending claims. As part of annual reviews, benefit consultants provide comparison of cost of benefit plans per employee at other school boards.

The school board last tendered for its benefits provider two years ago, and renewed the contract with the existing carrier.

The school board has established a PDT benefit committee with each unionized employee group, which consider options for using PDT funding. The school board's benefits consultant presented information on various options to the committee. Management noted that as a result of the PDT, there were a number of significant changes in the benefit plans. Prior to the PDT benefit plans, all employee groups were consistent. Subsequent to the PDT process, employees groups have been determining the structure of their benefit plans within the available funding.

The school board has implemented an employee assistance program (EAP) which is coordinated through the Employee Assistance Program Committee, chaired by a trustee and composed of representatives from all employee groups and unions. The EAP program is communicated to staff through many different mechanisms, including online publications and brochures.

The school board's benefits consultant provides support to the work of the Wellness Committee. There is a wellness champion at each site. Under the auspices of the Wellness Committee, the school board provides seminars and organizes various initiatives for school board employees including regular fitness classes for employees, newsletter and wellness fairs at different locations across the board. There is also a wellness website within the internal staff portal.

### **Monitoring Staff Satisfaction**

The school board has conducted various surveys of employees on specific issues such as professional development needs. Several years ago the school board also conducted the State of the System survey. The Director's Office has also conducted a 360° Survey.

Management noted that the school board has implemented programs for staff recognition, including long-term service recognition, facilities staff appreciation day, Educational Assistants appreciation day, and recognition events for retiring staff.

The school board conducts voluntary exit interviews, and has established standard questions which can be used for an interview or a written response. The school board has been conducting exit interviews for several years. However, the interviews have only been formally tracked and analyzed recently.

**Recommendation:**

- The school board should continue to finalize the establishment of the pay equity agreement for the ESL/LINC group.

**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

Each year, the school board follows a standard process for teacher staff allocation. The staff allocation process is driven by collective agreements. The process begins with the review of staffing for the current year, which is used as a baseline for allocation. This base allocation is adjusted, using formulas to ensure compliance with various parameters.

To facilitate the allocation process for teaching staff, the school board has established two Staff Allocation Committees for elementary and secondary panels. The school board has an established policy and high-level procedures for both Staff Allocation Committees. Each committee comprises the relevant academic superintendent, HR staff, OECTA representatives and representatives of the principals' association. The committees consider and discuss the staffing model and needs of individual schools, using the detailed information on enrolment and requirements of collective agreements prepared by the HR department. Each school prepares reports on staffing needs for consideration by the central Board Allocation Staffing Committees in October, February, March and June of every year.

For allocation of other staff groups, management uses formulas which are reviewed twice per year. Management has established formal administrative procedures for the allocation of clerical staff at elementary and secondary schools, and library technicians at elementary schools.

The Special Education Committee is responsible for allocation of education assistants. Once the preliminary allocation is established by the Committee, the Manager of Education Assistants meets with the Senior HR Administrator for Support Staff to discuss the final allocation.

## **Monitoring and Reporting on Staff Allocation**

The HR department prepares regular internal reports on staff allocation that compare planned allocation with actual in FTE terms. Superintendents of Education also receive periodic reports on staff allocation in the areas of their responsibility, and are responsible for monitoring of compliance with the established staffing model. During the year, staffing allocation is reviewed by the Administrative Council at budget submission, during revised budget estimates, and in February when the staff allocation process for the new academic year begins.

Management provides information on staff allocation to the Board at the beginning of the budget cycle and at revised estimates. However, this information is presented at a high level in terms of budget costs associated with staffing. Management noted that the HR department has developed a new reporting template for staff allocation, which will be provided to the Director of Education and academic superintendents. The internal staffing reports prepared by the HR department contain information which the Interim Financial Reporting Committee recommended be included in the interim financial report to be presented to the Board. Management should consider enhancing interim financial reports to the Board with this information.

## 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 board 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 Financial Services department establishes an annual operating plan for the department. This plan is part of the broader plan for the Business Services department. The plan is aligned with the Director’s annual goals and includes goals, actions plans and target dates. The 2009-2010 plan contains the following key departmental goals:

- Timely and accurate completion of all five Ministry financial reporting cycles

- Adoption of the first two principles of the Broader Public Sector Supply Chain Guidelines
- Establishment of an Audit Committee and an Internal Audit function
- Revision of the Trustee Expenses Policy
- Implementation of the Worktech Fixed Asset Computer Program
- Conversion of all eligible suppliers to EFT payments.

During the year, the Business Services department provides updates to the Administrative Council and the Board of Trustees on these items, as appropriate.

### **Organizational Structure and Accountability**

The Business Services department's organization chart is published on the school board's website. The organization chart provides the structure and lines of reporting within the Financial Services department. The website also provides contact information for the senior managers and key staff within the Business Services department.

There are three key functions within the Financial Services department: payroll services, budget and accounting services, and purchasing services. There are formal job descriptions for all staff of the Financial Services department.

Senior financial services staff have appropriate designations. All senior staff of the Financial Services department have relevant professional experience, including school board experience at this board and other school boards within Ontario.

### **Monitoring and Communication of Policies**

The Business Services department is responsible for implementing Board policies on purchasing, employee and trustee expenses, purchasing card distribution and usage, and school fund-raising activities. Key policies and procedures are posted on the school board's website. All policies and procedures are also posted on the school board's intranet.

The Business Services department uses various mechanisms to build staff capacity in understanding policies and procedures related to business services, including financial services. Any changes in policies and procedures are communicated to relevant staff through email. The Business Services department issues memoranda to appropriate staff on financial matters. The memoranda are also posted on the school board's intranet. Each September, the Business Services department conducts training sessions for new administrators or administrators who require an update on the use of the school board's financial system. The manual on the financial system tailored to the



school board is available online to all staff. *Ad hoc* training on the use of the financial system is also provided to staff when requested.

Subsequent to external audits of schools, finance staff follows up with school administrators regarding recommendations identified in the management letter. The Financial Services department has implemented many centralized processes, which enable Financial Services staff to monitor compliance with the existing policies and procedures.

## 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.	No
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

Each year, management presents the Budget Estimates Schedule and the Board's Budget Objectives for the upcoming fiscal year to the Board. The budget estimates schedule provides the Board with timelines for the steps in the development and approval of the estimates. The schedule is used throughout the budget development cycle to inform the Board on progress in each step of the process. The Budget Objectives summary clearly demonstrates the link between the budget development process and the school board's plans.

It is noted in the 2010-2011 Board's Budget Objectives Document that the Strategic Plan is being developed. In future years, once the plan is finalized, every effort will be made to closely align the elements of the Strategic Plan with the budget setting process. In the meantime, budget planning is guided by four priority areas identified in the Strategic Planning and Renewal Process, and will provide guidance during budget deliberations.

The budget planning process begins in January, with the establishment of enrolment projections. In February, the Board has the first budget planning meeting, focused on the budget development plan and priorities. In March-April, the Financial Services department prepares reports on non-salary and non-benefits budget which analyze historical data. These reports are provided to departments along with a budget input package. If departments identify the need to increase their budgets from the previous year, a budget increase form is completed and presented to the Administrative Council for consideration, along with budget requests for new initiatives. The Financial Services department is responsible for consolidating departmental budget submissions and tracking budget versions. The department uses an Excel spreadsheet for budget development. Historical budget information is maintained in the school board's financial system.

In May, management provides preliminary budget estimates to the Board including grant revenue calculations. Also in May there are several meetings of the Administrative

Council to review budget estimates as they get established. At this time management provides a presentation to SEAC on special education budget and a GSN update.

In early June, management provides presentations to the Board on other elements of the budget, including Other Operating Expenses and New Initiatives and Capital Expenses. By mid-June the Board receives the Budget Estimates Draft Report.

Subsequent to the presentation to the Board, the Administrative Council reviews Final Budget Estimates. The Budget Estimates Final Report is presented for Board approval by the end of June. Management noted that over the past two budget development cycles, budget information has been presented to trustees in parts, to ensure that the trustees have sufficient time for consideration and feedback. Management received positive feedback from trustees on this approach.

### **Risk Mitigation and Board Approval**

Management incorporates all identified risks in the budget estimates. It shares the information on identified budget risks and fiscal challenges (such as the fluctuation in the cost of utilities and insurance costs) with the Board during the budget development process. Management noted that, overall, it takes a prudent approach to developing budget estimates, underpinned by conservative enrolment projections.

As part of the budget development process there is no documented risk management plan that includes potential risks that could impact the budget, an assessment of identified risks and proposed mitigation strategies.

The process of reporting on risk mitigation strategies varies significantly among boards. An enhanced process would include formal documentation of the following elements:

At the beginning of the budget cycle:

- Identification of significant expenditures not explicitly included in the budget, but that may arise due to unforeseen circumstances.
- Assessment of the probability of occurrence for each budget risk, as well as a quantification of the impact to the budget should the risk materialize.
- Proposed mitigation strategies to minimize the probability of occurrence for each risk, as well as contingency measures that management will undertake should the risk materialize.

Throughout the budget cycle:

- Periodic reporting of material budget variances that may negatively impact the financial outcome of the board - this may be communicated through the interim financial reports.
- An update on the probability of occurrence, quantification and impact of each of budget risk identified formally at the beginning of the budget cycle.
- Any new budget risks not previously identified.

The level of detail of the budget risk mitigation plan will depend on the preferences of management and the Board. At a minimum, it should include a summary outlining the above elements in table format. The documentation of such information on a periodic and ongoing basis would give reviewers a better understanding of the school board's budget risks.

**Recommendation:**

- Management should consider enhancing the process of reporting on the school board's budget risks using the format suggested in section 4.2 of this report. A formal risk management plan/report, which is reviewed and updated periodically, would include strategies to mitigate the risks of spending beyond budgeted levels.

### **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.	Yes
Senior management is held accountable for the integrity of financial reporting through formal sign-off and approval procedures.	Yes
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.	No
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 school board uses all modules of the system, including financial reporting, general ledger, accounts payable, accounts receivable, and purchasing. A separate system used for payroll is fully integrated with Human Resources. It also interfaces with the financial system.

The Manager of Budget and Accounting Services is responsible for approving budget transfer requests and establishing new general ledger account codes in the financial system.

## Interim and Annual Financial Reporting

The Financial Services department prepares monthly financial reports for the Board. Management noted that there is no monthly reporting from September to November. However, in December, the Revised Estimates report provided to the Board has detailed information on the first quarter. For over 10 months of the school year, management prepares eight interim financial reports for the Board. The interim financial reports provide an analysis of historical budget information to assess if expenditures are consistent with historical trends. The report also contains revenue and expenditure highlights and a summary explanation of significant variances. Management is using the recommendations of the Interim Financial Reporting Committee, and have incorporated information on staffing costs and enrolment into the interim financial reports, where appropriate.

The Financial Services department has established a staffing report format which provides information on changes in FTEs. It is planned to include this format of reporting into the interim financial reporting for trustees. During the year, management also provides reports on reserves and EPO grants to the Board. There is also monthly reporting on capital projects which contains information on funding, costs and debenture financing.

There are a number of aspects within the guidelines provided in the IFRC report to support stronger interim financial reporting to trustees. In particular, management should further consider the following:

- Establish a reporting cycle at the beginning of the year with trustees
- Provide only three in-year reports, with consistency in format and indicators in each report
- Include non-financial indicators (enrollment and staffing – FTE).

All superintendents have direct access to the budget information in the school board's financial system. This enables senior managers and their administrative assistants to monitor their budgets continuously.

All interim financial reports are presented to the Administrative Council prior to presentation to the Board. The reports are approved by the Director and the Superintendent of Business as formally indicated in the report.

The school board is compliant with established timelines for submitting its budget, revised estimates, and financial statements to the Ministry.

## Audit

In the past, the Board had an Internal Systemic Audit Committee. In May 2010, the Board established a motion to establish an audit committee, in accordance with the Ministry of Education's proposed terms and mandate outlined in a memo to OCSTA and Directors of Education on March 5, 2010. The memo sought to obtain input from school boards to develop a regulation on audit committees, in line with the provisions of the Student Achievement and School Board Governance Act adopted in December 2009. Currently, the external auditors report to the Board. The Board does not conduct *in-camera* meetings with external auditors to review the auditor's reports. Following the external audit, auditors prepare a management letter with audit findings and recommendations. Management provides a formal response to the management letter.

There is no internal audit function at the school board. Management noted that the school board is awaiting progress in the implementation of the Ministry initiative on regional internal audit services. Management provides periodic reports to the Board on the status of the regional internal audit services initiative.

### Recommendations:

- Management should proceed with its intention to establish an internal audit function, giving consideration to the emerging Ministry direction to establish regional models for internal audit across the school board sector.
- Once the school board establishes an internal audit function, it should ensure any internal audit plans are clearly documented and that internal audit report recommendations are acted upon by management.
- The school board should proceed with its intention to establish an audit committee that includes external advisors in accordance with emerging Ministry direction.

## 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 any board-approved investment policy.	No
Management periodically compares the school board’s banking terms and conditions to those of similar school boards.	Yes
Management monitors financial risk related to cash/investment management and has a plan to mitigate associated risks.	Yes

### Cash and Investment Management

Management noted that any surplus funds from the operating account, capital account and reserve funds are invested in term deposits, such as Bankers Acceptance Notes. The school board receives quotes on investment rates from three financial institutions. Surplus funds are invested only if a short-term investment opportunity provides a higher rate of return than the school board’s main bank account.

The school board has not established a formal policy on investment activity. Management noted that the school board plans to develop an investment report to be brought forward at the time when the school board’s 2009-10 Financial Statements are provided to the Board of Trustees. Monthly budget reports provided to the Board contain information on interest earned. The school board also plans to develop a Statement of Investment Policies and Goals as part of the Borrowing Resolution and Cheque Signing Authorities Report.

Finance staff use on-line banking for cash monitoring. The Supervisor of Accounting Services is responsible for preparing monthly bank reconciliations, which are approved by the Manager of Budget and Accounting Services. The school board uses manual cheques, and has procedures to ensure appropriate authorizations. There is an internal formal procedure on cheque requisitioning.



The school board maintains a positive relationship with its current banking institution and receives competitive rates. The school board maintains a general operating account, a capital operating account, four reserve accounts, and nine trust/award accounts. Management conducts periodic comparisons with banking terms of other school boards through the OASBO survey. The school board has maintained the relationship with its current banking institution for over 30 years. Management intends to issue a tender for banking services in the near future.

The finance staff updates the capital liquidity template each time a capital project is requested to ensure debt commitments can be met. The school board has established three sinking funds, and the Financial Services department maintains detailed schedules for debenture payment.

The school board monitors and mitigates the financial risk related to cash and investment management in several ways. It uses wire transfers occasionally, mostly for debenture payments. All wire transfers require authorization of the Manager, Budget and Accounting Services, and are signed off by the Superintendent of Business. The school board has procedures in place for back-up of electronic data.

**Recommendation:**

- The school board should establish an investment policy. Management should periodically report to the Board on the performance of the investment activity in accordance with the investment policy.

#### **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 funds 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 school board has established procedures for school-generated funds, using the School Generated Funds Guidelines developed by OASBO. It has also established a policy on fundraising activities. The school board has implemented specialized software to support management of school cash. The software processes cash receipts and bank deposit information. Currently, five schools are implementing a pilot project for software to support cashless schools. Each school has one bank account for school-based funds.

The Financial Services department provides quarterly reports to the Administrative Council on school-based funds. School administration staff prepare monthly bank reconciliations for school-based funds. Business Services staff ensure that all school-based funds bank accounts are reconciled monthly and on a timely basis. Quarterly reports contain information on most recent bank reconciliations and deposits made by schools. There is a requirement for schools to provide year-end reporting on school based funds.

The Financial Service department provides support to school administrators in managing school-based funds. The Information Technology department supports school staff in using the specialized school cash software. Each year-end the Financial Services department issues a letter to principals outlining key requirements for school-based funds.

The school board's external auditors audit schools on a rotating basis. The auditors provide recommendations and comparisons between audited schools.

### **Management of Non-Grant Revenue**

The main sources of non-grant revenue for the school board are: permit revenue from community use of schools, cafeteria and vending contracts, interest revenue, tuition fees for visa students, Education Programs - Other (EPO) grants announced by the Ministry, and funding for the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program.

The school board has established policy and procedures on the community use of schools, including reciprocal arrangements with municipalities. The arrangements are consistent with those established by the coterminous board. Management noted that the agreements cover all community use of school board's facilities. As part of the reciprocal agreement, the school board has streamlined, one-stop shopping for community use of its facilities.

All approved EPO programs are assigned unique accounts. Management noted that the Revised Budget Estimates include all known EPO grants. During the year, Senior Management reviews and reports on programs funded from EPO grants. The Financial Services department prepares final year end reconciliations for the programs. Formal tracking of these programs is done by the Manager of Budget and Accounting Services in conjunction with the Financial Analyst.

## **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 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 supply chain/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 supply chain/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 school 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.	Yes

## 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 policy and procedures for purchasing, which are included in the Purchasing Procedures Manual and published on the school board's website and intranet. The school board's purchasing procedures have been revised to ensure consistency with the Broader Public Sector Supply Chain Guideline. The revised procedures include a purchasing code of ethics. The broader code of ethics for all employees of the school board is being revised and will be submitted to the Board in the fall of 2010.

It is indicated in the purchasing procedures that purchase of goods and services is the responsibility of the Purchasing Services department. The procedures indicate some exceptions, such as purchasing of utilities, insurance, investments, personnel services, and contracts for construction, alterations and renovations. The Purchasing department is composed of the Manager, Purchasing Services, Purchasing Officer and a Purchasing Clerk. The purchasing procedures outline the requisitioning and purchase order process, including the role of the Purchasing Services department in the

monitoring of compliance and the processes. The use of the school board's financial system for purchasing helps ensure compliance with the purchasing procedures. All purchase requisitions are reviewed by the Purchasing Services department for account code verification.

The purchasing procedures stipulate that all goods and services are purchased at the lowest possible cost, giving consideration to the guidelines of price, availability, service, quality and delivery. It is also stated that the school board should take every efforts to competitively procure, whenever possible, environmentally appropriate and ecologically sound products.

The current purchasing procedures also outline circumstances under which the school board may use non-competitive procurement methods such as single sourcing, emergency purchases or sole sourcing.

The purchasing procedure contains provisions that all competitive purchasing will be publicly advertised on an electronic tendering media site, Biddingo. The school board also advertises tenders on the school board's website.

The school board has established an expense policy for employees and trustees. The school board has also developed an electronic system for mileage claims which is available to all staff and trustees on the internal staff portal. Using the system, employees and trustees submit their mileage claim requests and receive payment approvals. There are pre-determined distances between common travel points at the school board. Management noted that the system helped reduce cheques for payment of claims and inconsistencies in mileage claims.

### **Participation in Group Purchasing Initiatives**

The school board's purchasing procedures outline methods for the school board's participation in cooperative purchasing initiatives. The school board supports the ongoing cooperative purchasing initiatives pursued by the Halton Co-operative Purchasing Group. The school board has been an active member of the Halton Cooperative Purchasing Group since 1977. The membership of the Halton Cooperative Purchasing Group (HCPG) consists of the Regional Municipality of Halton, the Cities and Townships, the School Boards, the Libraries and the Hydro Electric Commissions within the Region of Halton. The school board takes part in the Catholic School Board Services Association (CSBSA) group purchasing initiatives, and has actively participated in debenture issues through the Ontario School Boards Financing Corporation (OSBFC).

The school board utilizes the contracts and Vendor of Record (VOR) arrangements established by the Ontario Government, such as the VOR for cellular phones. The school board participates in a cooperative arrangement for the purchase of paper with

18 other Ontario school boards.. There are also agreements with individual school boards, such as the Toronto Catholic District School Board and the coterminous board, for the purchasing of specific goods and services.

### **Purchasing Levels of Authority**

The purchasing procedure provides levels of signing authority for purchase orders as follows:

- Up to \$25,000 – Purchasing Officer
- Up to \$50,000 – Manager , Purchasing Services
- Up to \$100,000 – Senior Administrator, Financial Services
- Over \$100,000 – Superintendent of Business Services or Director of Education.

The purchasing procedures also set out the authorization levels for signing of contracts and leases as follows:

- Up to \$50,000 – Manager, Purchasing Services
- Up to \$100,000 – Senior Administrator, Financial Services
- Over 100,000 - Superintendent of Business Services or Director of Education.

### **Policies and Procedures for PCard/Corporate Card Use**

The school board's procedures guiding the use of purchasing cards (PCards) are included in the purchasing procedures. PCards are used to provide a convenient method of procuring and paying for low value goods and services by simplifying the procurement process, reducing paperwork, reducing vendor payment time, and empowering school/department staff. There are three cards per school, which are kept in the school's office. School principals are accountable for the use of school PCards. Overall there are approximately 250 PCards in circulation, with most cards having a single transaction limit of \$1,000.

The PCard program is administered by the Manager of Purchasing Services, through the Purchasing Services department. The Purchasing Services department maintains a master list of all PCards with the name of the cardholder and site cards and the monetary limits of each card. All requests for PCards and all changes and other documentation relating to the cards are submitted to the Manager of Purchasing Services for review.

The procedure requires that a monthly statement be forwarded directly to each individual cardholder/site by the financial institution, the individual/site should match the charges on the statement with the appropriate receipt/invoice and record the details on the VISA log sheet showing the budget code to be charged and the HST breakdown. The VISA log sheet is approved by the immediate supervisor. The completed and approved log sheet is submitted to the Supervisor of Accounting Services for processing.

### **Accounting for Completeness of Purchase/Payment Cycle**

The school board's purchasing procedure outlines the purchase requisitioning/purchase order process and the segregation of duties. Purchase requisitions are initiated by various schools/departments. Purchase Requisitions and Purchase Orders are processed through the school board's financial system and provide full information, including the account code to be charged, for the item being requested and forwarded to the Purchasing Services department. Incomplete requisitions are electronically returned to the originator for proper completion.

The completed requisition is forwarded to the Purchasing Services department for account code verification. All capital requisitions require the Superintendent written approval prior to submission to the Manager of Purchasing Services. Upon approval, the requisition is forwarded to the Purchasing Department for processing.

Purchase orders are processed through the financial system electronically. Individual schools/departments receiving the goods/services enter the receipt information in the system to authorize the order was physically received, correct and complete. The Accounts Payable department authorizes release of payment to the supplier after goods receipts have been completed in the financial system. The Accounts Payable department matches each invoice to the purchase order, and receipt confirmation from the school or department is entered in the financial system.

The school board uses commitment accounting. The encumbrance is created when a requisition is approved. The purchasing procedure requires that before initiating the purchase, the requisitioner should confirm that appropriate approved funds are available to complete the purchase. The school board's financial system indicates an over-budget situation to the individual approving a requisition.

### **Use of Electronic Funds Transfer for Greater Efficiency**

Currently, the school board's transportation services vendors receive payments using Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Management has been planning to implement EFTs for all school boards' vendors over the past several years. However, the school board's financial system did not support EFTs. The school board has purchased new software

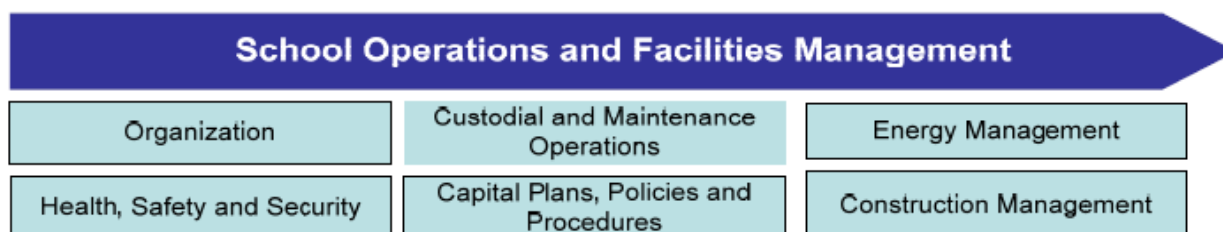


to support EFTs, and is integrating it with the school board's financial system. It is planned that EFTs for most payments will be implemented by the end of 2010.

**Recommendation:**

- The school board should finalize the implementation of EFTs for all its vendors.

## 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.	No

### 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.	Yes
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 understanding 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 Facility Management Services department establishes annual goals which are aligned with the Director’s annual system goals. For 2009-2010, the Facility Management Services department identified at a high-level a number of departmental initiatives, including:

- A variety of energy conservation initiatives
- Waste reduction program
- Implementation of school based budgeting
- Establishment of the Family of Schools Manager Model
- Update of ReCAPP and SFIS.

The Facility Management Services department has identified goals, indicators of success, timelines and accountabilities for each initiative. However, this aspect of planning has not been formally documented.

In late summer, the Facility Management Services department prepares a report on construction and maintenance activities and completed projects, as well as a summary annual report. The report is usually provided to the Board at its first meeting in September.

The Facility Management Services department informally gathers feedback about departmental activities and services through regular family of schools meetings with principals. The department also documents and tracks complaints and requests.

### **Organizational Structure and Accountability**

The Facility Management Services department has a current organization chart outlining the positions within the department. The school board's administration organization chart (which is published on the website) indicates the structure of reporting of the Superintendent of Facility Management Services. The website also provides the list of key staff within the Facility Management Services department and their contact details.

The Superintendent of Facility Management Services is supported by the Senior Administrator, who supervises five facility managers. Four of these facility managers are assigned to two families of schools. The facility managers are responsible for all facility-related activities at all schools within their family of schools. Each facility manager also works collaboratively with the respective family of school Superintendent of Education.

On a weekly rotating basis, each facility manager is responsible for the management and supervision of the evening custodial shifts for all schools. The fifth facility manager acts as the central manager, and covers two families of schools during the day shift for the facility manager working the evening shift. In addition, the central manager duties include the supervision of the Board's Administration Centre, and the Continuing Education and Adult Learning Centres.

Approximately every five years, the facility managers are rotated to take on responsibility for a new family of schools. Each of the four facility managers assigned to families of schools is supported by one maintenance staff trained in general trades. The managers also work with various outside contractors to provide maintenance services to the schools.

Management noted that this “one stop” service organizational model for custodial and maintenance to schools was adopted for two reasons. First, to provide the principal with one contact for all facility needs at the school, and second, to enhance communication and coordination between the maintenance, custodial and the capital aspects of the Facility Management Services department. The department team includes the Environmental Sustainability Officer, the Community Use of Schools Liaison Supervisor and the Energy/HVAC Monitoring office. Facility Management Services department meets as a team every two weeks to ensure information sharing and work assignment alignment for the department staff.

The Superintendent of Facility Management Services is a professional engineer and the Senior Administrator is an engineering technologist. The other positions within the Facility Management Services department do not require specific professional qualifications or designations. Many of the facility manager positions were filled by promoting experienced custodial or maintenance staff.

### **Monitoring and Communication of Policies**

The Facility Management Services department is responsible for policies and procedures related to school facilities, security, school accommodation, and community use of schools. The Human Resources Services department is responsible for providing training and ensuring compliance to health and safety policies. All formal policies and procedures are posted on the school board’s website.

The Facility Management Services department centrally monitors the condition of school facilities and tracks regulatory requirements, such as water testing and log books. Many of the required periodic inspections such as fire extinguishers, elevators or large equipment are conducted by external contractors. Any legislative changes are generally received by either the Superintendent of Business or the Director, and are then forwarded to the Superintendent of Facility Management Services. Any changes in policies and procedures are communicated to staff via memoranda, and all policies and procedures are sent electronically. The Superintendent of Facility Management Services and the Senior Administrator attend family of school meetings where they can inform principals on facility-related items.

Staff within the Facility Management Services department are members of two provincial associations. The Operations, Maintenance and Construction Committee (OMC) of the Ontario Association of School Board Officers (OASBO) and the Plant

Operations/Health & Safety Committee of the Ontario Catholic School Business Officials' Association (OCSBOA). These two committees provide professional development opportunities and networking with colleagues in other school boards.

**Recommendation:**

- The Facility Management Services department should enhance its annual operating planning by establishing and formally documenting specific and measurable goals and indicators of success. For each goal and initiative the department should also identify implementation timelines and accountability of specific department staff. This would enable management to monitor and periodically report on progress in implementing the plan.

**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

<b>Leading Practices – Custodial and Maintenance Operations</b>	<b>Evidence of Adoption?</b>
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**

<b>Leading Practices – Custodial and Maintenance Operations</b>	<b>Evidence of Adoption?</b>
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 accessible by the public.	No

## **Training to Support Skills Development and Safety**

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

## **Standardization of Cleaning and Maintenance Supplies**

<b>Leading Practices – Custodial and Maintenance Operations</b>	<b>Evidence of Adoption?</b>
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 to minimize costs, promote energy and operating efficiency, and environmental sustainability.	Yes

## **Project Management, Monitoring and Support Systems**

<b>Leading Practices – Custodial and Maintenance Operations</b>	<b>Evidence of Adoption?</b>
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 the Board's Cleaning Standards and Maintenance Requirements**

The custodial staffing allocation model (which is based on the workload associated with specific cleaning tasks) is used to set clear expectations for custodians on their tasks and duties. Facility managers are responsible for conducting informal spot checks and addressing any complaints that arise within their assigned families of schools. Custodial staff on the modified work program are rotated across schools as needed, to supplement the cleaning schedule.

The custodial staffing allocation model used by the Facility Management Services department was derived using the Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) standards and research done by a custodial workload consultant. Management collaboratively worked with its CUPE custodial union to establish its custodial allocation model. The custodial allocation model uses a workload approach based on the amount of time required to complete specific cleaning activities and the frequency with which each activity should occur. The model looks at the unique needs of each school, and considers the types of activities required for different types of spaces within the school facility. Management noted that the model provides a fair and equitable process for the allocation of custodial activities across custodial shifts, and is updated when there are changes to the school facilities. Each custodial position has a process map outlining specific activities and tasks. The model includes both the weekly cleaning routines during the school year and a summer cleaning schedule.

The Board's recently established Environmental Stewardship Policy includes a broad statement that the school board will procure, whenever possible, products that are environmentally friendly. The Facility Management Services department began using green products several years ago. Currently, all cleaning products used by the school board are green-certified. The Facility Management Services department regularly tests new green products and requests input from its CUPE custodial staff and other stakeholders before products are adopted broadly by the school board. In addition, the school board participated as one of the pilot boards in the Green Clean project sponsored by the Ministry of Education. Although the school board has made significant progress in implementing green cleaning, there are several aspects of the initiative that are yet to be formalized in line with the Ministry's Green Clean Program Resource Guide. The Guide recommends a 10-step Green Clean Implementation Plan. In particular, management should consider the following:

- Green clean policy statement – the policy statement as part of the school board's overarching Environmental Education Policy should include a clear commitment to implementing a green clean program across all schools, positive endorsement of green clean practices, an outline of roles and responsibilities and an evaluation mechanism for the program.



- Development of tools to support implementation – a Green Clean Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) Manual should set out the school board’s expectations for green clean operational procedures in schools.
- Communications strategy – a communication strategy will help educate stakeholders (building occupants, custodians, vendors) on the benefits of the program and their role in supporting the program.
- Measuring and monitoring progress – over the first year of implementation, a review of the initiative should be conducted every three to six months. After the first year, a review should be conducted on an annual basis.

In 2009 the school board established an Environmental Sustainability Officer position within the Facility Management Services department. This position was created to lead environmental initiatives, and provide a link between facility management services and environmental initiatives implemented as part of the curriculum. There are recycling and compost programs in every school, and several schools are conducting waste reduction initiatives.

### **Development of Annual and Multi-Year Maintenance Plan**

The Facility Management Services department establishes a list of major maintenance projects for the year for Board approval. The Facility Management Services department provides an annual report at the end of the summer updating the trustees on progress of projects. In addition, a reconciliation report on the actual project expenditures, compared to the approved budget, is prepared. Management provides an annual report on the Good Places to Learn and Facility Renewal Projects and Budget Reconciliation to the Board. The list includes required maintenance and routine maintenance requests. The list is developed based on input from the RECAPP database, roof inspection reports and estimated replacement timelines for other building components. The maintenance requests are received on an ongoing basis from school principals. The Facility Management Services department aims to group a number of projects at each school for the same year to create cost savings opportunities and mitigate disruptions to the school. The plan also considers any upcoming major renovations.

To establish the annual list of priorities, the Facility Management Services department maintains a multi-year list of expected replacements and upgrades. However, the school board has not established a formal multi-year maintenance plan. Such a plan would align the identified preventative and deferred maintenance priorities and optimize the use of available funding. This plan would then be presented to the board.

In 1993, the school board conducted a review of its school facilities, and established a Capital Upgrade Plan that included significant upgrades to the existing schools. The school board compared the existing school facilities to the features and requirements of

new schools to identify the capital needs of its older school facilities. Following the review, the school board invested in a number of upgrades to the existing facilities over the next several years. This provided expanded and new program facilities for students at the older schools similar to those being included in new schools.

### **Training to Support Skills Development and Safety**

The Facility Management Services department works in cooperation with the HR department to deliver training. HR is responsible for providing mandated training, such as WHMIS.

All new custodians are provided with an orientation and training on standard cleaning requirements. In the past, the department leveraged experienced custodians to share their skills and train new staff. The Facility Management Services department offers one to two professional development days per year to staff. These sessions are developed in consultation with the union. The Facility Management Services department has also started one-hour learning community sessions in each family of schools to share information and concerns, resolve issues and build a sense of collegiality among the custodians. In addition, vendors are requested to provide training on some specific products and proper usage of equipment.

### **Standardization of Cleaning and Maintenance Supplies**

The Facility Management Services department has a small amount of major cleaning and maintenance equipment, such as vehicles and floor cleaners. Vehicles are assigned to a specific staff member. A log is maintained to track maintenance of each vehicle. Vendors are responsible for tracking and managing maintenance activities for large cleaning equipment.

The Facility Management Services department uses standardized cleaning products across all schools. All purchases must be made centrally by day custodians through the Purchasing department from an established list of acceptable products. Facility managers are required to approve all purchases. Facility managers can track the amount of usage and conduct comparative analysis across schools. Management checks purchases on a regular basis, and compares schools of similar size and population. The school board's Environmental Stewardship Policy includes the commitment to purchasing environmentally friendly products, where possible.

### **Project Management, Monitoring and Supporting Systems**

The Facility Management Services department uses a computerized work order system. Work orders can be submitted by facility managers, principals and custodians. The facility managers receive and prioritize work orders for their schools and determine whether the work order is assigned to the school board's maintenance staff or requires

an outside contractor. Principals can track the status and progress of work orders in the system.

Purchase orders and costs associated with maintenance work performed by outside contractors are monitored and tracked by the facility managers. The cost of maintenance work performed by the school board's maintenance staff is linked and tracked to the material supply budget.

The school board's custodial staff are mostly unionized, with the exception of custodians at three elementary and three secondary schools, the Adult Learning Centres, and Board Administration offices. The school board maintains 15 floater custodians to cover absences. The Central Facility Manager assigns these custodians based on the absences reported in the school boards' absence tracking system.

The school board continually reviews the cost effectiveness of contracting facilities services, such as grounds maintenance, equipment inspections and snow removal. In addition, the Facility Management Services department maintains four multi-skilled maintenance staff to address some of the general work orders, and utilizes external contractors to conduct the remaining maintenance and repairs. The four maintenance staff are also unionized.

### **Recommendations:**

- The school board should use the Ministry's Green Clean Program Resource Guide to formalize its green clean program.
- Using a consultative process, management should formalize a multi-year plan for major maintenance and renewal projects. The plan should address the school board's preventative and deferred maintenance priorities and optimize the use of available funding (Annual Renewal Grant and Good Places to Learn funding). The plan should be approved by the Board.

## **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 <i>Ontario Green Energy Act, 2009</i> , 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.	No
Billing for all board facilities is consolidated from each utility.	No
The Board has established an overarching environmental policy that addresses both environmental education and responsible management practices.	Yes

### Energy Management Plan

The school board’s Environmental Stewardship Policy sets out the principles for an energy management plan. The school board has not established a formal energy management plan with specific reduction targets. However, the Facility Management Services department has implemented many energy management initiatives over the past number of years. A multi-year energy management plan would allow the school board to formally document initiatives already underway, and monitor the progress and success of each, which could be communicated later on to its stakeholders.

The school board uses an outside firm to collect and evaluate annual energy consumption and water utilization. In-depth reviews and adjustments of the building

maintenance systems are conducted for schools where the utilization is higher relative to a base line utilization measured 15 years ago. This data is also used internally to identify and address any unexplained anomalies in utilization. The Facility Management Services department also actively encourages energy conservation by users within the buildings. The facilities management reported that the overall school board utilization has decreased despite significant growth since the mid-90s. The school board has conducted comparisons with other school boards with assistance from its external energy consultants.

Management reported that the Facility Management Services department has kept the utilities budget in line with the energy consumption from the baseline year. Any savings from energy consumption are used by the department to fund other energy management projects.

The school board is part of the Halton Regional Consortium for purchasing gas with other local public sector organizations. In addition, the school board previously participated in the Catholic School Board Services Association for the purchase of electricity. The school board's purchasing policy and procedures stipulate that the school board should take every effort to competitively procure, whenever possible, environmentally appropriate and ecologically sound products. Energy efficiency is taken into consideration in purchasing decisions as appropriate. In the absence of a formal energy management plan, procurement practices are not formally linked to energy conservation objectives and targets.

A key component of the new Environmental Sustainability Officer role is to link the Facility Management Services department energy initiatives with classroom learning and curriculum. Currently, each school has a monitor installed in the lobby that displays environmental messages and shows real-time utilization statistics of utility consumption within the school. Students and staff can also access this data online. Data from the air monitoring systems is also available to staff for use in the science curriculum.

### **Tracking and Reporting Energy Conservation**

The Facility Management Services department tracks energy utilization on a monthly basis. The department prepares detailed reports for internal use. The detailed reports are not provided to the senior administration and the Board.

The school board has started providing data for the Ministry sponsored Utility Consumption Database (UCD) as part of the first wave. Energy consumption at the school level is tracked by the school board with assistance from external energy consultants. However, specific reduction targets have not been set for the school board or for individual school facilities. The school board receives separate bills for each facility from the utility providers.

The Facility Management Services department has conducted comprehensive energy projects at specific facilities, with a focus on retrofits at each facility rather than across the entire system. As part of the retrofit projects, the Facility Management Services department has implemented energy efficient components, such as low-flow toilets and retrofit lighting. The school board has also started installing meters to monitor and track daily energy usage in real time.

The school board has two staff responsible for scheduling and monitoring building maintenance systems, and who control heating, air conditioning, ventilation and water supply at each school facility. Standard thermostat set points are centrally controlled and monitored.

### **Recommendations:**

- Using the energy consumption data, 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 continue to 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 procurement policies and procedures and/or the environmental policy.
- Management should provide formal annual reporting on the conservation savings achieved against the plan.
- Successful energy conservation initiatives currently implemented by the school board should be communicated across all schools and with other school boards, to enhance recognition of energy management across the system. The Environmental Sustainability Officer could facilitate such sharing of information through regular publications and reports.
- As part of the energy management planning, the school board should establish a comprehensive system to budget expenditures, track and regulate consumption, and identify opportunities for further savings.
- The school board should identify opportunities for consolidated billing from utilities.

## 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 of 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 of 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.	No

### Health, Safety and Security Management

The school board has a formal occupational health and safety policy, which falls under the responsibility of the HR department. In addition, there are several policies and guidelines related to health, safety and security, including individual policies on safe schools, fire and evacuation, risk management / first aid, anaphylaxis, bullying prevention and intervention, and school security. This occupational health and safety policy is supported by a documented health and safety program.

The school board has site-based joint occupational health and safety committees which contain local representatives from employee groups and management. These committees meet four times per year. These committees are monitored by the Health and Safety Officer in the HR department who is responsible for overseeing the health and safety program. The health and safety program includes health and safety procedures, terms of reference for the operation of the joint health and safety committee at each site, protocol for reporting any health and safety issues or investigating incidents. The school board is responsible for the tracking and monitoring of workplace inspections. The Health and Safety Officer is responsible for conducting monthly workplace inspections and providing reports to senior management. The Board approves the Health and Safety Policy annually. The HR department provides all staff with training relating to occupational health and safety as well as the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) training.

The school board has implemented several initiatives related to security and student safety. The school board implemented cameras and card access readers at all elementary schools several years ago. It is in the process of installing security cameras at all of its secondary schools. Also, an external alarm company is contracted to respond to alarms after regular hours. All cameras can be viewed centrally at the school board office as well as locally at each school.

Each school has its own emergency response plan that implements a series of alert codes and is responsible for conducting periodic lockdown tests and fire drills. The School Services department is responsible for coordinating these plans and drills. Each school is assigned liaison officers from the Halton Police Service who support the emergency response activities. The school board has a board and police emergency procedures/communication procedure that outlines the school board's communication protocol to respond to an emergency, including informing trustees. The school services department is also responsible for implementing safe school programs at each school.

Each school has a plan to address response and contingency measures in the event of a pandemic. The school board has a detailed first aid protocol and trained first aid providers at every location. Training is also provided to staff on treating anaphylaxis, in accordance with Sabrina's Law. The HR department works in coordination with the Facility Management Services Department to ensure that staff are trained and/or take refresher courses as required. Air quality is monitored through building automation systems installed at every school.

Although the school board has a number of initiatives in place to support compliance with statutory health requirements, there is no comprehensive documented health strategy that would address promotion of overall health and wellness of both students and all employee groups. A health strategy document could contain the following elements:



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

#### **Recommendation:**

- The school board should consider establishing an integrated health plan/strategy that would reflect the existing policies and procedures regarding the health of both students and employee groups and aim to promote health and wellness across the school board. Management should also consider coordinating the development, implementation and monitoring of the plan centrally.

### **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 maintains a list of ongoing capital, renewal, and major maintenance projects. The Facility Management Services department coordinates its projects with the school board’s planning staff. The school board engages external consultants to collect data, conduct capital needs forecasts, and develop the formal capital plan. The school board’s Long-Term capital Plan (which was approved in 2009) provides enrolment projections for the years 2010 to 2023 for all of the school board’s elementary and secondary schools and their respective planning areas. The plan is used to identify new capital project initiatives and boundary study initiatives resulting from these new projects. In addition, the plan also identifies areas where enrolment pressures may occur and the need to conduct associated boundary studies. The Finance department uses the Ministry’s Capital Liquidity Template to track debt commitments.

The Facility Management Services department annually reviews the school board's student accommodation capacity, and identifies trends, the potential for expansion or boundary adjustments for the current year and for the future five-year period. The Facility Management Services department uses the reports provided by the external consultants to support their annual review process. The department tracks the classroom usage and projected need for portable classrooms. The Facility Management Services department works closely with the School Services department to ensure that the classroom allocations are appropriate and, where possible, to reduce the use of portable classrooms. Non-utilized classrooms are used for special academic programs, storage or other purposes, such as community use. The school board coordinates capital renovation projects with other maintenance projects for the same facility.

The school board's enrolment has remained generally consistent over the past several years. As a result, the school board has not faced significant under or over capacity issues. The Superintendent of Facility Management Services is responsible for coordinating the accommodation review process, and chairs accommodation review committees. Management provides annual reports to the trustees on capital needs, expected accommodation reviews, and boundary adjustments. The school board has a school boundary review policy and a school accommodation review policy consistent with the Ministry's Pupil Accommodation Review Guidelines.

### **Ongoing Monitoring and Maintenance of Data to Support Capital Planning**

The Facilities Senior Administrator is responsible for updating SFIS continually, in coordination with the school board's Planner. The Facility Management Services department maintains a log of all renewal projects and this is performed annually. This information is provided to an external consultant who updates the RECAPP database. The information in RECAPP is used for the longer term planning of maintenance and renewal projects. The school board has also kept the Facility Condition Index (FCI) up-to-date. FCI is automatically done by ReCAPP when ReCAPP is updated.

The Facility Management Services department annually reviews the student accommodation capacity requirements. The Finance department also reviews the capital plan and the capital liquidity template to ensure that large capital projects can be financed. The school board has assessed several schools as potentially prohibitive to repair (PTR) projects. The school board prepared and submitted business cases to the Ministry for PTR funding, which was received to partially fund one school capital project.

## 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 gives full consideration to the use of available school space in their local communities before proceeding to build, purchase or lease other spaces.	Yes
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 <i>Ontario Green Energy Act, 2009</i> .	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 is located in a region of population growth, and does not have a large capacity of available space across its facilities. The school board has investigated partnership opportunities with municipalities. The school board and the municipalities have established a community schools consultation committee to conduct joint planning and forecasting for new growth areas. To qualify for growth board funding, business cases for new construction projects must show that the school board has considered partnership opportunities.

The school board has developed a standard footprint for the design of new school construction, for both elementary and secondary schools. This standards design has been used for several of years and has continually been updated and improved. This design provides a starting point, and is modified and adjusted for each specific construction project. The school board also has the School Site and Facilities Criteria policy that outlines specific requirements for the selection of new school construction sites. The Facility Management Services department outlines the construction process and construction material standards for the architects and sub-trades. Once an architect has been selected, design sketches, project budgets and plans are presented to the Board for approval.

The school board aims to establish design standards similar to LEED standards. The school board has piloted different green technologies in past construction projects, such as a grey water system, a green roof, and a heat recovery system. These investments are monitored to determine effectiveness and efficiency to assist with making informed decisions in future construction projects. The Facility Management Services department informally compares construction costs with other school boards.

## Monitoring and Reporting of Progress on Construction Projects

Since the school board is located in a growth area, there have been a number of new construction projects and additions over the past several years. The school board uses both lump sum and construction management methods to manage construction projects, depending on the project. Management noted that the construction management method provides greater transparency and better control over the construction timeline, but places a higher risk on the school board. This approach requires knowledgeable school board staff with the necessary skill set, and an

experienced architect. The school board is responsible for tendering the general contract, as well as each sub-trade, through a pre-qualification process.

The Facility Management Services department manages projects with assistance from a project manager. The general contractor provides a single monthly invoice to the architect and the school board, which includes the breakdown for each sub-trade. Invoices are reviewed by the architect and the project manager. Payment certificates require the approval of the Superintendent of Facility Management Services. The school board checks all liens before paying the general contractor invoices. Change orders are dealt with individually, in consultation with the architect and the general contractor, and require the approval by the Superintendent of Facility Management Services.

A high-level presentation is provided to the Board each month, and posted on the school board's website to keep community stakeholders informed on progress on construction projects. The project schedules are tracked in project spreadsheets.

### **Maintaining Current Approved Professional Service Providers**

The school board has a list of pre-approved architects, which is updated every five years. The school board also pre-qualifies general contractors for each project.

## Appendix

### Appendix A: Overview of the Operational Review

#### Operational Review Objectives

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.

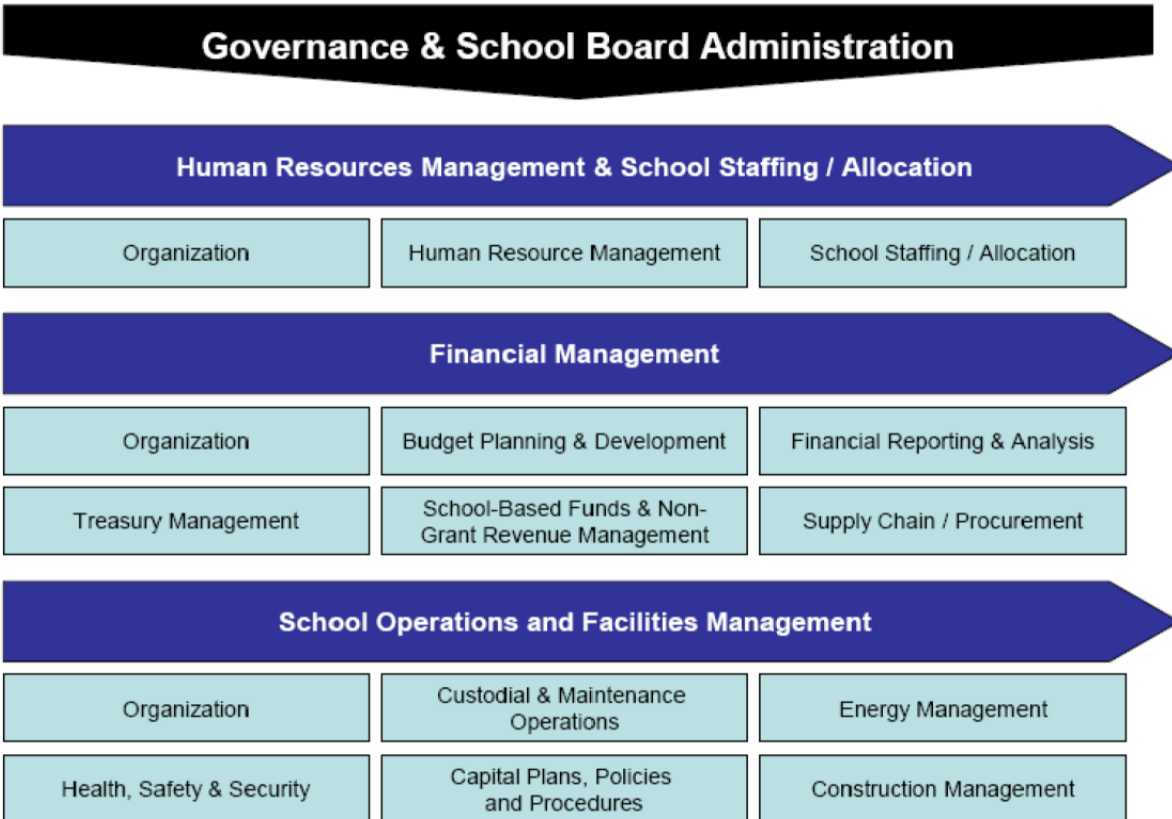
Recognizing the unique characteristics of each DSB, the specific purpose of the Operational Reviews is to:

- 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.

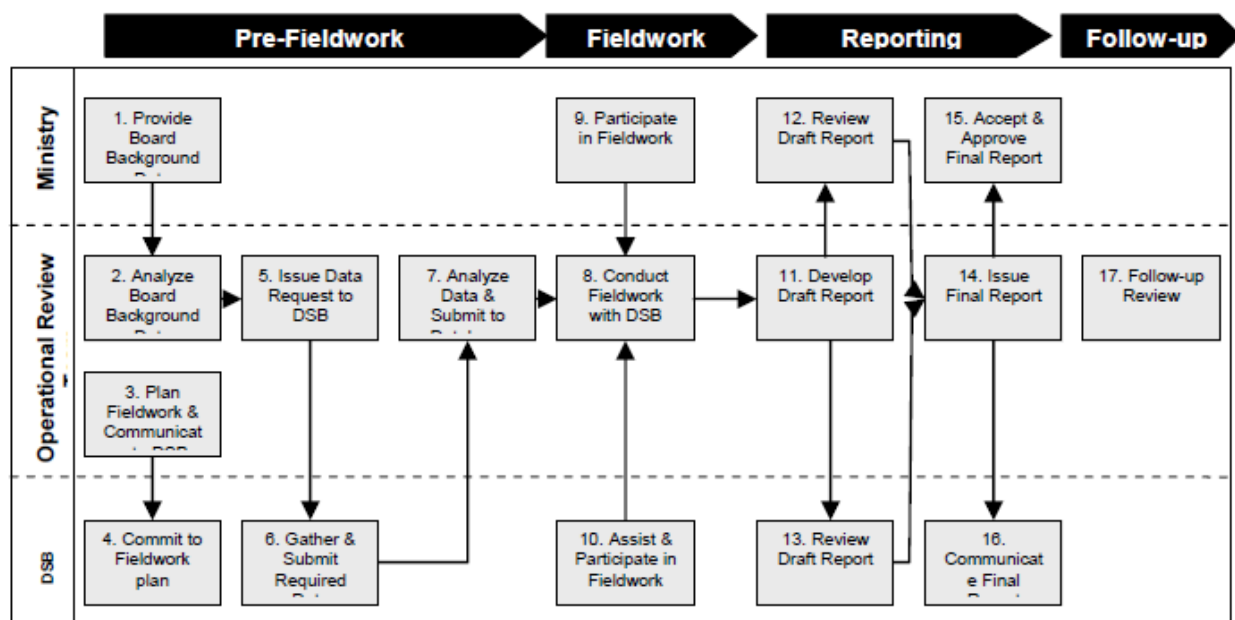


### Operational Review Summary Approach

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-Fieldwork**

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.
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.

Key Activity	Description
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 Fieldwork

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.

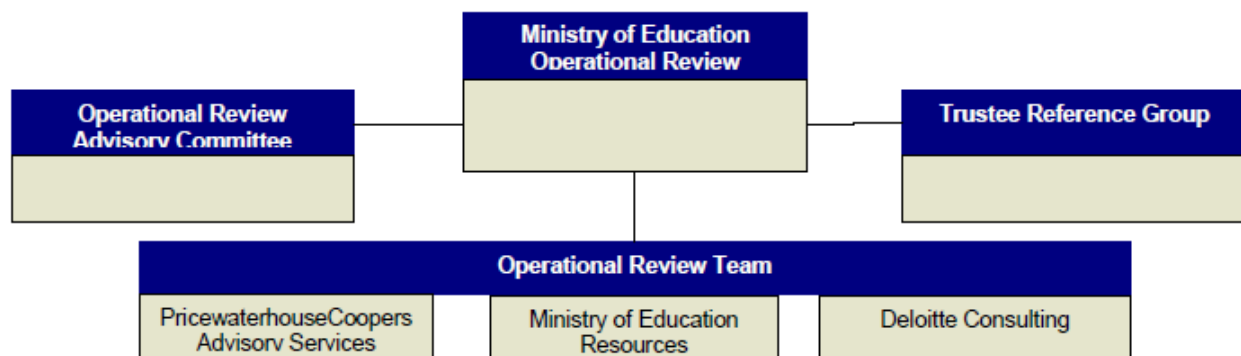
## Phase Follow-up

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 the Halton 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 school board should clearly delineate the division of duties and responsibilities between the board of trustees and the Director of Education. The roles and responsibilities of the Director of Education and the Board of Trustees should be documented in the Board's policies.
2.	Management should further enhance the school board's annual operating planning process by formalizing goals/priorities, incorporating both academic and non-academic departments. The annual operating plan should be aligned with the Board's multi-year strategic plan and contain goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely.
3.	The school board should continue to align its leadership development programs and activities with the Ministry's leadership initiatives. It should develop a formal succession and talent development plan for key management positions in all academic and non-academic areas.

### Human Resources Management and School Staffing/Allocation

No.	Recommendation
4.	The school board should finalize the establishment of the pay equity agreement for the ESL/LINC group.

### Financial Management

No.	Recommendation
5.	Management should consider enhancing the process of reporting on the school board's budget risks using the format suggested in section 4.2 of this report. A formal risk management plan/report, which is reviewed and updated periodically, would include strategies to mitigate the risks of spending beyond budgeted levels.
6.	Management should proceed with its intention to establish an internal audit function, giving consideration to the emerging Ministry direction to establish regional models for internal audit across the school board sector.
7.	Once the school board establishes an internal audit function, it should ensure any internal audit plans are clearly documented and that internal audit report recommendations are acted upon by management.
8.	The school board should proceed with its intention to establish an audit committee that includes external advisors in accordance with emerging Ministry direction.
9.	The school board should establish an investment policy. Management should periodically report to the Board on the performance of the investment activity in accordance with the investment policy.
10.	The school board should finalize the implementation of EFTs with all its vendors.

## School Operations and Facilities Management

No.	Recommendation
11.	The Facility Management Services department should enhance its annual operating planning by establishing specific and measurable goals and indicators of success. For each goal and initiative, the department should also identify implementation timelines and accountability of specific department staff. This would enable management to monitor and periodically report on progress in implementing the plan.
12.	The school board should use the Ministry's Green Clean Program Resource Guide to formalize its green clean program.
13.	Using a consultative process, management should formalize a multi-year plan for major maintenance and renewal projects. The plan should address the school board's preventative and deferred maintenance priorities and optimize the use of available funding (Annual Renewal Grant and Good Places to Learn funding). The plan should be approved by the Board.
14.	Using energy consumption data, 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.
15.	Once the formal energy management plan is established, the school board should continue to 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 procurement policies and procedures and/or the environmental policy.
16.	Management should provide formal annual reporting on the conservation savings achieved against the plan.
17.	Successful energy conservation initiatives currently implemented by the school board should be communicated across all schools and with other school boards, to enhance recognition of energy management across the system. The Environmental Sustainability Officer could facilitate such sharing of information through regular publications and reports using the school board's website and other media.
18.	As part of the energy management planning, the school board should establish a comprehensive system to budget expenditures, track and regulate consumption, and identify opportunities for further savings.
19.	The school board should identify opportunities for consolidated billing from utilities.
20.	The school board should consider establishing an integrated health plan/strategy that would reflect the existing policies and procedures regarding the health of both students and employee groups and aim to promote health and wellness across the school board. Management should also consider coordinating the development, implementation and monitoring of the plan centrally.