

**Ministry of Education**

**Operational Review Report  
Catholic District School  
Board of Eastern Ontario**

**May 2010**

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## **Executive Summary**

This report details the findings and recommendations of the Operational Review of Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario (the school board or CDSBEO) conducted by the Operational Review Team composed of external consultants from PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP and Ministry of Education staff. The Operational Review was conducted over three days beginning February 2, 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 many areas since 2002-03. From an operations perspective, the review team found that the school board has adopted many of the leading practices. Noted strengths include an effective working relationship between the Board and school board administration, open communication with the unions, new purchasing policies and procedures consistent with the Supply Chain Guidelines, and a focus on sufficient and timely maintenance 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 many leading practices in governance and school board administration, including:

- The Board has established the *Governance Manual* and the *General Board Operational and Procedural By-laws*, which document the Board's governance model and outline the role and responsibilities of the Board and the Director of Education.
- The Board has established four strategic pillars and supporting priorities: Catholic Community, Culture and Caring; Literacy; Numeracy; and Pathways.
- The Director reports to the Board on progress against the strategic priorities twice a year, in December at the Board's inaugural meeting and at the end of the school year in June through the Director's Annual report.
- The school board proactively engages system stakeholders using various mechanisms. The Director and supervisory and executive officers actively participate in many regional and province-wide sector committees and associations and in a number of Ministry workgroups.

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

The school board's long-term planning process is providing a solid foundation for the future development of an annual school board operating plan. In 2008-09, the school board created a goal package which identified a plan of action related to specific goals. This package could be modified to include performance targets, strategies, indicators of success, timelines and assigned responsibility related to the strategic directions.

Each business and academic department of the school board develops a profile that describes its areas of responsibility and a set of goals for the coming year. The department profiles are updated annually. Using the approach for the annual update of the profiles, the departments should establish departmental annual operating plans aligned to the school board's annual operating plan.

The Board has established a policy on setting its policies. Comprising all trustees, the Policy Committee of the Board is responsible for reviewing existing policies and setting new policies for the school board. An update is initiated when issues are identified in the existing policy, or when regulatory changes occur. The school board has not established a review cycle for policies.

The senior administration has an up-to-date organization chart that outlines the departmental structure and respective roles of the various units. The organizational chart is not published on the public website. Available contact information for every department and senior staff is published on the website.

The school board has implemented several initiatives to support succession and talent development. The existing succession planning and leadership initiatives are mainly focused on academic leadership positions at the school board. Within the school board administration, there is informal mentoring and support to staff interested in pursuing senior management positions. The school board has not established a formal succession plan.

### **Recommendations:**

- Using its multi-year strategic plan as a framework, the school board should develop an annual board-wide operating plan. The annual operating plan should be aligned with the strategic plan, incorporate both academic and non-academic departments, and contain goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely.
- The school board should establish a formal policy review schedule to ensure that all policies are reviewed periodically.
- Management should publish the organizational chart of the school board administration on the school board's website.
- The school board should continue to align its leadership development programs and activities with the Ministry leadership initiatives. It should develop a formal Succession and Talent Development Plan, in line with the Leadership Succession Planning and Talent Development Ministry Expectations and Implementation Continuum.

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

The HR department has implemented a number of the leading practices:

- The HR department's structure and lines of reporting are provided in a current department organization chart.
- The school board's open communication with the unions is the result of both formal and informal practices. To address collective bargaining issues, the school board has established labour management committees for all bargaining units.
- The school board maintains a timely and effective approach for responding to issues. HR staff provide advice and support to school principals in addressing potential grievances.
- The department actively supports the professional development of HR staff and other staff groups, when appropriate.



- The Finance department works closely with the HR department in managing of HR and payroll data. Management maintains appropriate control mechanisms to ensure the segregation and integrity of personnel and payroll data.
- 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.
- Management periodically reports on the actual allocation of staff, comparing it to the original approved allocation plan and budget.

The HR department identifies annual goals and priorities through an informal process. In 2008, the HR department established a departmental profile which outlines the key areas of responsibility of the department, and sets broad directions and the vision of the HR department for 2008 to 2010. However, the department does not have an annual operation plan, with specific and measurable goals, responsibilities and timelines to support in-year monitoring of progress, and management reporting.

The HR department follows standard practices for hiring of all staff groups. The HR department provided memoranda to the executive council outlining hiring procedures for various staff groups. There is a formal administrative procedure for hiring of occasional teachers. There are no formal policies and procedures guiding the hiring process for all staff groups.

The school board has implemented a formal performance appraisal process for some staff groups.

Management applies progressive discipline procedures when addressing disciplinary issues among staff. However, the school board has not created formal disciplinary policies and procedures for all staff groups, which would delineate issues in job performance from behavioural issues.

The school board has identified the development of an attendance support program as a current priority for human resources management. Currently, the HR department uses a computerized attendance tracking system.

The school board contracts external benefits consultants to regularly review the existing benefit plan and negotiate new plans. The school board has not conducted independent compliance audits of its benefit plan. Management recently asked the consultant to provide a proposal for conducting a compliance audit of the benefit plan.

Management has not conducted confidential staff satisfaction surveys to obtain feedback on the priorities of the school board or general attitudes. The HR department does not conduct exit interviews.

Each year, the school board follows standard practices for staff planning and allocation. However, the school board does not have a formal written policy and procedures for staff planning and allocation.

**Recommendations:**

- The HR department's annual planning should build on the information contained in the department profile to create an annual departmental operating plan. The plan should reflect specific and measurable targets and indicators, and assign responsibilities and timelines for key activities.
- Management should enhance the staffing process by reviewing and formalizing its administrative procedures. By building on the information shared with Executive Council through memoranda, the department should document hiring procedures for all staff groups with clearly defined roles and processes. The procedures should be communicated to managers throughout the school board.
- The HR department should build on the guidelines provided for Teacher Performance Appraisal and New Teacher Induction Program, and continue developing formal procedures for performance appraisal of all staff groups at the school board.
- Management should finalize establishing a comprehensive attendance support program.
- Once the formal attendance support program is established, management should develop a mechanism to assess and report on the effectiveness of the attendance support process/programs to senior administration and the Board.
- The school board should document and communicate formal disciplinary policies and procedures for all staff.
- Management should conduct independent compliance audits of the school board's insurance carrier to ensure adherence to the benefit plan's terms and conditions.
- Management should document policies and procedures which govern the development of an annual staffing plan and allocation process.
- Management should conduct periodic and confidential staff surveys, to improve communications with staff and provide input for professional development plans and HR policy.

- Management should consider conducting exit interviews to obtain input for HR policy as well as process and program improvement.

## Financial Management

The Finance department has implemented many of the leading practices:

- Each year the Finance department establishes a critical path document for the budget development process. The proposed critical path timelines are presented to the executive council by the Associate Director. The timelines and milestones in the budget development process are also communicated to the Board.
- The Finance department has set up a cash flow template for cash flow forecasting. The Finance department also uses online banking to monitor the school board's accounts.
- With the exception of capital financing, the school board's cash management activities are consolidated with one financial institution,
- Management encourages (but does not require) schools to use the school board's financial institution.
- The Board has established guidelines on school-generated funds using the OASBO template. The Finance department provides training and support to schools in management of school-based funds.
- Management has established procedures to record and track the various EPO grants received.
- The school board has recently revised its policy and procedures on purchasing to ensure consistency with key requirements of the Supply Chain Guideline. The code of ethics is incorporated in the revised policy and procedures.
- The school board participates in group buying initiatives and purchasing consortia, and is continually looking for opportunities to increase purchasing power and minimize the cost of goods and services.
- The school board's administrative procedures for travel and hospitality expenditures contain provisions regarding the use of corporate cards.
- The purchasing policy and procedures set out the general requisitioning procedures. There is a three-way matching process in place before invoices are paid.

- The school board uses Electronic Funds Transfers (EFTs) and electronic cheques for all payments to vendors.

The Finance department establishes the departmental profile, which is updated each year. The profile outlines the key responsibilities and activities of the department and its goals for the forthcoming year. It sets out the vision of the Finance department. The 2009-2010 Finance department profile contains a number of specific tasks and broad directions. However, the department does not establish an annual operation plan, which contains specific and measurable goals, responsibilities and timelines to support in-year monitoring of progress and management reporting.

Throughout the budget development process, specific budget pressures are identified by management and incorporated into the budget. However, management does not formally document budget risks and mitigation strategies in a report that summarizes the nature, probability of occurrence, potential impact, and proposed mitigation strategies for the risks.

Management prepares several types of interim financial reporting, including monthly reports to the Board. Currently, the Finance department is updating the reporting template, using the recommendations of the Interim Financial Reporting Committee (IFRC). The Finance department has developed a draft reporting template for presentation to the Board for approval. The Associate Director reviews the financial reports prior to submitting them to the Board. However, there is no formal sign-off of interim financial reports by the Associate Director of Education and the Director of Education.

The Board does not have an audit committee. All audit issues are addressed by the Committee of the Whole.

The Finance department has established a draft investment policy, which has been approved by the administrative procedures committee of the Board and has been published for system consultation.

The school board uses online ordering for an office stationery vendor. The school board has also begun emailing Purchase Orders to some vendors which support this technology. In addition, several vendors provide the board with electronic accounts payable upload files that are interfaced with the Accounts Payable system to generate payment. The school board has not implemented an electronic supplier interface for ordering, purchasing, and payment.

## Recommendations:

- The Finance department's annual planning should build on the information contained in the profile, and establish specific and measurable targets and indicators and assign responsibilities and timelines for key activities.
- 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. The documentation of such information on a periodic and ongoing basis would give reviewers a better understanding of the school board's budget risks.
- Management should finalize the development of interim financial reporting template and provide periodic reports to the Board.
- The school board should establish approval procedures for interim financial statements, and implement a formal sign-off process of these statements by senior management.
- Management should establish an internal audit function giving due consideration to the new Ministry's direction on internal audit.
- When 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 followed up and acted upon by management.
- Management and the board of trustees should consider establishing an audit committee that includes external advisors in accordance with the Ministry's emerging direction on internal audit.
- The school board should finalize its investment policy and procedures. Management should periodically report to the Board on the performance of the investment activity, in accordance with the investment policy.
- Management should continue identifying opportunities for implementation of the electronic supplier interface for ordering, processing, and payment.

## School Operations and Facilities Management

The Plant and Maintenance department has implemented many leading practices:

- The Plant and Maintenance department has established a custodial manual with cleaning standards. There is a process to monitor compliance with the standards.

- The department has established a facility inspection logbook and manual, with procedures for daily and monthly inspection, testing and operation of building devices and fire protection systems.
- The Plant and Maintenance department establishes an annual and multi-year renewal plan.
- The Plant and Maintenance department facilitates training for custodial and maintenance staff to support ongoing skills development, build awareness of regulatory changes, and ensure work place safety.
- The Plant and Maintenance department maintains an up-to-date inventory of major custodial and maintenance equipment.
- The Plant and Maintenance department uses the “just in time” approach to ordering supplies. Each year the Plant and Maintenance department analyzes usage of custodial supplies by location, and conducts comparisons of usage per square foot.
- The school board has implemented an electronic work order system
- The accounting department tracks energy consumption data by facility. The plant and maintenance department conducts comparisons across facilities based on square footage.
- The health and safety department is responsible for obtaining, coordinating and tracking all the health and safety needs of the school board employees.
- The school board has established the emergency preparedness committee and a system-wide emergency preparedness plan.
- The school board has established a multi-year capital plan, which was last formally updated in 2008 and submitted to the Ministry through the SFIS website.
- The school board has completed the capital liquidity template in 2009 with support and assistance from the Ministry.
- The Board has established an accommodation review policy.
- Management ensures SFIS and RECAPP data is accurate by conducting regular updates.

- Management uses cost-effective designs, standard footprints, and economical construction practices to minimize construction and future maintenance and operation costs.

The Plant and Maintenance department identifies annual goals and priorities through an informal process. In 2008, the Plant and Maintenance department established a department profile which outlines the key responsibilities and activities of the department. It sets out the vision of the Plant and Maintenance department and annual goals for the coming year. However, the department does not establish an annual operation plan, which contains specific and measurable goals, responsibilities and timelines to support in-year monitoring of progress and management reporting.

Using results of an effectiveness and readiness survey conducted at two elementary and secondary schools, the school board has implemented green-certified cleaning products. Management recently provided a report to the Board on green cleaning products and practices. The school board has not implemented a formal green clean program as part of its overarching Education Environmental Policy.

The health and safety department is responsible for all employee health and safety, health and safety training, and risk management. Programs related to student health and safety are coordinated by the academic departments of the school board.

The school board has implemented a number of energy management initiatives, and is completing energy audits of all school board facilities. The Plant and Maintenance department has been identifying energy efficiency priorities and implementing energy efficiency measures in major retrofits and construction since 2001. Management noted that energy efficiency initiatives are conducted on an *ad hoc* basis.

### **Recommendations:**

- The Plant and Maintenance department's annual planning should build on the information contained in the department profile, establish specific and measurable targets and indicators, and assign responsibilities and timelines for key activities.
- The school board should review the Ministry's *Green Clean Program Resource Guide* and use the guide to develop a formal green clean program as part of its overarching Education Environmental Policy.
- Using the results of the energy audits, 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 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.
- 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.
- Once the energy management plan is established, management should provide formal annual reporting on the energy conservation savings achieved against the plan
- The school board should develop an overarching environmental policy that would provide framework for its activities in the area of environmental education and responsible management practices.
- The school board should consider establishing an integrated health plan/strategy that would reflect the existing policies and procedures regarding health and safety of school board employees and students. Management should also consider establishing a central coordinating role for the development, implementation, and monitoring of the plan.



# 1. Background and Overview

## 1.1 School Board Profile and Structure

The Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario provides educational services to approximately 13,549 students in 37 elementary and 10 secondary schools.

From 2002-03 to the 2009-10 fiscal year, the school board's enrolment has decreased by 348 students, or about 2.5 per cent. This trend is expected to continue over the next several years.

The school board's Executive Council is as follows:

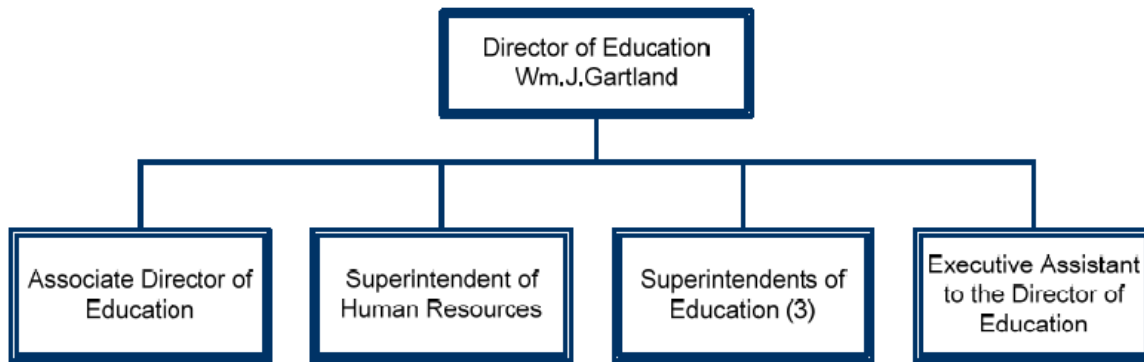


Figure 1: Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario Executive Council

## 1.2 Key Priorities of the School Board

The school board's mission statement is:

"We proclaim our Catholic faith by:

- Nurturing and celebrating the hearts, minds, bodies and souls of our students.
- Learning through faith, living with hope, loving in Christ.
- Teaching wisdom, teaching love...creating a world in God's Image..."

The school board has established four strategic priority areas:

- Catholic Community, Culture and Caring
- Literacy
- Numeracy

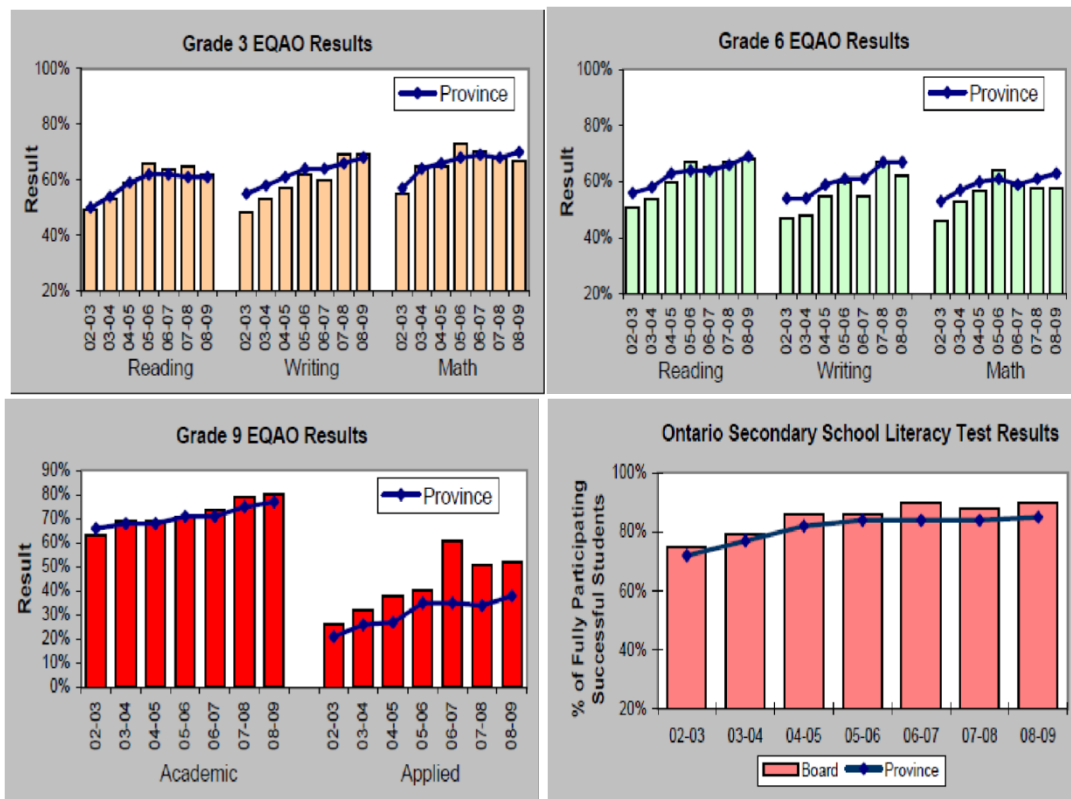
- Pathways

### 1.3 Student Achievement

Since 2002-03, the school board has shown improvement in many areas assessed through the EQAO process. Grade 3 EQAO results in reading and writing have been improving since 2002-2003, and are at the provincial average. Grade 3 results in math have been declining since 2005-06 and are currently below the provincial average. Grade 6 results in writing have improved significantly in 2006-07. The results have declined in 2008-09 and are below the provincial average. Grade 6 results in reading have been increasing since 2002-03 and have been steadily improving after a drop in 2006-07. Grade 6 results in math have been increasing since 2002-03 and have been steadily improving after a drop in 2006-07.

Grade 9 academic results have been steadily improving since 2002-03, and remain above the provincial average. Grade 9 applied results have declined since 2006-07 but remain significantly above the provincial average.

The following charts demonstrate the school board's EQAO results over the last six years.



## 1.4 Fiscal Overview

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

### Summary Financial Data (Revenues)

Revenues	2007-08 Financial Statements	2008-09 Financial Statements	2009-10 Revised Estimates
Legislative Grants	\$116,863,005	\$124,634,215	\$127,949,902
Local taxation	\$19,831,234	\$20,088,455	\$20,062,447
Board Revenues	\$1,008,234	\$764,907	\$418,140
Other Operating & capital Grants	\$2,121,963	\$2,118,423	\$421,366
<b>Total Revenues (Schedule 9)</b>	<b>\$139,824,436</b>	<b>\$147,606,000</b>	<b>\$148,851,855</b>

### Summary Financial Data (Expenditure)

Expenditures:	2007-08 Financial Statements	2008-09 Financial Statements	2009-10 Revised Estimates
Operating expenditures	\$130,665,854	\$137,682,168	\$140,904,062
Capital expenditures - Before transfers from reserves	\$8,144,261	\$8,272,068	\$8,513,165
Transfer to (from) Reserves	\$568,269	\$1,651,764	-\$161,040
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$139,378,384</b>	<b>\$147,606,000</b>	<b>\$149,256,187</b>
<b>In-year Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>\$ 446,052</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>-\$404,332</b>

### School Board Reserves and Deferred Revenues

School Board Reserves and Deferred Revenues	2005-06 Financial Statements	2006-07 Financial Statements	2007-08 Revised Estimates
Reserve for Working Funds	\$601,748	\$1,496,394	\$1,496,394
WSIB	\$296,467	\$296,467	\$296,467

<b>School Board Reserves and Deferred Revenues</b>	<b>2005-06 Financial Statements</b>	<b>2006-07 Financial Statements</b>	<b>2007-08 Revised Estimates</b>
Student Success	\$18,011	\$104,261	\$104,261
Textbooks/School Budgets	\$2,212	\$161,040	\$0
Assistive Technology	\$33,585	\$89,451	\$89,451
ED Support PD/Capital Project Reserves	\$0	\$515,140	\$515,140
Assessment	\$58,966	\$0	\$0
Pupil Accommodation Debt Reserve	\$297,982	\$173,094	\$173,094
<b>Total Reserve Funds (Schedule 5)</b>	<b>\$1,308,971</b>	<b>\$2,835,847</b>	<b>\$2,674,807</b>
Improved Access for Special Education Reserve	\$6,200	\$0	\$0
Proceeds of Dispositions Reserve-School Buildings	\$309,942	\$0	\$154,971
Proceeds of Dispositions Reserve-Other	\$0	\$154,971	\$0
Energy Efficient School - Operating	\$0	\$210,745	\$210,745
Energy Efficient School - Capital	\$0	\$1,958,855	\$1,958,855
<b>Total Deferred Revenues (Schedule 5.1)</b>	<b>\$316,142</b>	<b>\$2,324,571</b>	<b>\$2,324,571</b>
<b>Total Board Reserves and Deferred Revenues</b>	<b>\$1,625,113</b>	<b>\$5,160,418</b>	<b>\$4,999,378</b>

## 1.5 Key Statistics: Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario

The following table highlights key statistics for the school board.

### Day School Enrolment

Day School Enrolment	2002-03 Actual	2009-10 Rev.Estimates
Elementary Day School ADE	10,080	8,820
Secondary Day School ADE	3,862	4,680
<b>Total Day School Enrolment</b>	<b>13,942</b>	<b>13,500</b>

### Primary Class Size

Primary Class Size	2003-04	2009-10
% of Classes Less Than 20	31%	100%
% of Classes Less Than 23	66%	100%
Average Class Size - Jr/Inter	25.08	24.60
% of 3/4 Classes 23 & Under	33%	100%
% of Combined Classes	28%	38%

### Staffing

Staffing	2003-04	2009-10
School Based Teachers	822	895
Teacher Assistants	156	187
Other Student Support	45	78
School Administration	53	53
School Clerical	61	73
School Operations	110	114
Other Non-Classroom	52	53
<b>Total Staffing</b>	<b>1,300</b>	<b>1,452</b>
<b>Teacher - Pupil Ratio</b>	<b>1:17</b>	<b>1:15</b>
<b>FTE Staff per 1,000 Pupils (ADE)<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>93.2</b>	<b>107.6</b>

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

<b>Staffing</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2009-10</b>
<b>Total Salary &amp; Benefits as % of Net Operating Expenditures</b>	<b>76.0%</b>	<b>82.5%</b>

## Special Education

<b>Special Education</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2009-10</b>
Special Education Incremental Expenditures	\$11,550,424	\$19,060,245
Special Education Allocation	\$11,737,944	\$18,423,610
Spending above Allocation (Reserve)	-\$187,520	\$636,635

## School Utilization

<b>School Utilization</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2009-10</b>
Number of schools	51	49
Total Enrolment (ADE)	13,942	13,500
School Capacity (Spaces)	12,508	12,820
<b>School Utilization</b>	<b>111.5%</b>	<b>105.3%</b>
<b>Board Area (Km<sup>2</sup>)</b>	<b>12,165</b>	<b>12,165</b>
<b>Number of Trustees</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</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.	Yes

## 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.	No



## 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.	No

## Succession and Talent Development

Leading Practices – Governance and School Board Administration	Evidence of Adoption?
As part of the Ministry's <i>Ontario Leadership Strategy</i> , 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 Board has adopted a governance model identified as a modified Carver model. This model delineates the roles and responsibilities of the board of trustees and senior administration.

The Board has created a *Governance Manual* which stipulates that it will govern with a style that emphasizes strategic leadership, outward vision, encouragement of a diversity of views, a clear distinction of Board and Director of Education roles and proactive collective decision-making, with a focus on the future and student achievement. To facilitate adoption of this direction, the Board has *General Board Operational and*

*Procedural By-laws.* The by-laws reflect the vision and mission of the Board, and outline the protocols on how the board of trustees will conduct its business.

The Board should continue to review both documents within the context of the Student Achievement and School Board Governance Act. These amendments to the Education Act clarify what is expected from school boards, trustees, board chairs and directors of education to support improved student achievement.

The standing committees of the Board include:

- Policy Committee
- Transportation Committee
- Teacher Negotiations Committee
- CUPE Negotiations Committee
- Occasional Teachers' Negotiations Committee
- Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC).

The Board and senior administration have a positive working relationship, and there is openness and trust between trustees and school board administration. The Board has a clear understanding of the role of the Director as the sole employee of the school board with the responsibility for day-to-day operations.

The Director and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board maintain open lines of communication, and share information in an open and transparent manner. The Director, Chair and Vice-Chair have regular formal and informal meetings to discuss matters of the school board.

The Board does not have a formal self-evaluation process, but trustees have informal discussions on improvements in the Board's performance.

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

The *Governance Manual* defines the guiding principles and system goals for the Board. These include faith, community, partnership, persons, excellence, justice, stewardship, equity, collaboration, excellence and accountability, holism, and lifelong learning.

The Board has established four strategic pillars and supporting priorities: Catholic Community, Culture and Caring; Literacy; Numeracy; and Pathways. The school board has engaged an external consultant from the Ontario Institute for the Studies in

Education (OISE) to support senior administration in communicating and implementing these strategic priorities.

The school board has incorporated the strategic priorities into the 2009-10 Board Improvement Plan (BIP), which contains the current year and multi-year goals focused on student achievement. The BIP is reviewed annually.

The strategic directions, or four pillars, have been shared with school administrators and posted in the school offices. The pillars have also been shared with the parent involvement committee and school councils. The plan is published on the school board's website.

The school board's enhanced long-term planning process is providing a solid foundation for the future development of an annual school board operating plan. In 2008-09, the school board created a plan of action related to specific goals. This goal package could be modified to include performance targets, strategies, indicators of success, timelines and assigned responsibility related to the strategic directions.

In addition, Senior Administration is responsible for developing and prioritizing goals for departmental improvement. Currently, each business and academic department develops a profile that describes their areas of responsibility and a set of goals for the forthcoming year. The department profiles are updated annually. Using the approach for the annual update of the profiles, the departments should establish annual department operating plans aligned to the annual school board operating plan.

The Director reports to the Board on progress against the strategic priorities three times a year. In December, the Director presents the Annual report at the Board's inaugural meeting. The Director's report on the progress of the school board against the strategic pillars is presented to the Board in September and June. The Director also presents departmental profiles to the Board in September.

## Decision-Making Process

The Board by-laws include protocols for conducting activities of the Board. The by-laws include rules of order, the setting of agendas for meetings, motions, voting, and protocols for decision-making. The Board *Governance Manual* clearly distinguishes items that require Board approval from those that are in the purview of the senior administration.

The Director, Chair, and Vice-Chair establish the agenda for Board meetings. Agenda items can include *in-camera* items, reports or items identified by the Director, the Chair or trustees requesting specific information. For items that require Board approval, the item is added to the Board meeting agenda, and senior administration prepare information and a recommendation for action. The Director shares information openly

with the Board, and keeps trustees informed about all emerging issues at the school board.

The Board has established a policy on setting its policies. The Policy Committee of the Board consists of all trustees, and is responsible for reviewing and creating policies for the school board. Senior administration prepares a draft policy, which is reviewed and discussed by the committee and finalized through iterative reviews by the committee. The policy is then sent to relevant stakeholder groups, such as the committee of principals, parent involvement committee, SEAC, and the unions for their input.

This input is incorporated, and the committee approves a final version of the policy. The school board establishes working committees to prepare and/or review administrative procedures for the day to day operations of the Board. These working committees research and prepare draft procedures. Draft procedures are presented to the Administrative Procedures Committee, which reviews them for consistency. The Administrative Procedures Committee comprises the Director of Education, principals and vice-principals and the executive Assistant to the Director of Education. The Director, in consultation with the Executive Council, approves the administrative procedures.

When the Board identifies the need for a new policy, senior administration develops a draft policy based on research and reviews of policies of other school boards. The school board has not established a review cycle for policies. An update to an existing policy is initiated only when issues are identified in the existing policy or due to regulatory changes. The Director is responsible for identifying regulatory changes that require a change in policies, and communicating this to the trustees.

## **Organizational Structure and Accountability**

The school board's senior administration is represented by the executive council, which consists of the Director, the Associate Director, the Superintendent of Human Resources, and three superintendents of education. All supervisory officers report to the Director. The superintendents of education are responsible for families of schools and specific program areas. The Superintendent of Human Resources has responsibility for the HR department and a family of schools.

The Associate Director is responsible for the business services departments, including finance, plant and maintenance, transportation, and information technology. The Associate Director and Superintendent of Human Resources work collaboratively on specific administrative activities, such as contract negotiations.

The senior administration has an up-to-date organization chart that outlines the roles and organizational units. The school board has yet to publish its organizational chart on the public website, although it has made contact information available for every

department and senior staff. The organization chart is published on the school board's internal website.

## Succession and Talent Development

The school board has implemented several initiatives to support succession and talent development. Its leadership committee includes a superintendent of education and a number of principals from across the system. The committee's mandate is to provide leadership opportunities through the *Aspiring Leaders* series and mentoring for new administrators.

The school board participates in the Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network with the regional school boards and Queen's University. The network provides Supervisory Officer's Qualifications Program (SOQP) certification and offers professional development and collegial networking for administrators and teachers in member boards. The Director of Education is currently an instructor on SOQP. The school board has a number of principals who are qualified SO candidates. These principals are provided with leadership opportunities by being appointed to central principal positions, or as principals in schools that need improvement in performance.

The school board also offers a principal's training course jointly with the Catholic Principal Council of Ontario. The school board has identified a number of qualified candidates for principal and vice-principal positions. Due to the large geographic area of the school board, each vacancy is advertised.

Within the school board administration there is informal mentoring and support to staff interested in pursuing senior management positions. The school board has not established a formal succession plan.

## Stakeholder Engagement

The school board has a variety of formal mechanisms for communication and stakeholder engagement, including a communications department responsible for publications. The Board publishes a monthly report to parents, *Trustees News*, which provides an update on its business. This report is circulated to students along with school newsletters, and is distributed to local parishes. The school board also publishes the *Board Meeting Highlights* to identify key highlights from each meeting.

The senior administration publishes a newspaper, *CDSBEO Messenger*, which is mailed to parishes, libraries, and communities, and sent home with each student. The school board provides comprehensive information packages for the parents of incoming kindergarten students. At the beginning of each school year, the Chair of the Board broadcasts a welcome message via telephone to the home of each student.

Issues of an operational nature that are brought to trustees' attention are directed to the Director or the respective superintendent of education. Senior administration keeps trustees informed of actions taken in response to the issue.

The Director or the Chair acts as the school board spokesperson, depending on the nature of the issue. In communicating with the stakeholders, the Chair and the Director always work closely together to ensure a consistent message.

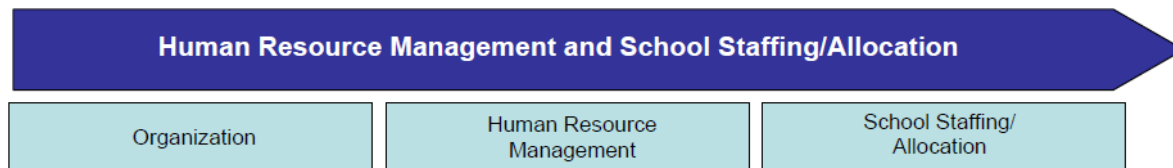
The school board actively develops a network of community partners in education related to religion, curriculum, special education, and student achievement. The school board views these partnerships as an integral way to support student needs and provide comprehensive educational opportunities to students. Senior administration considers the priorities of partnership programs and synergies with community partners in establishing the school board's priorities and goals.

The Director and supervisory officers take part in a number of regional and provincial committees. The Director serves on a number of professional committees, such as ECCODE, Eastern Ontario Regional Education Council (REC), Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association (OCSOA), Supervisory Officers Qualification Program (SOQP) and Support Workers Advisory Groups (SWAG). The Associate Director services on the American School Business Officials, Ontario Association of School Business Officials (OASBO), OCSBOA and committees of the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association (OCSTA). Superintendents serve on professional committees such as OCSOA, regional education committees and local community committees.

## **Recommendations:**

- Using its multi-year strategic plan as a framework, the school board should develop an annual board-wide operating plan. The annual operating plan should be aligned with the strategic plan, incorporate both academic and non-academic departments, and contain goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely.
- The school board should establish a formal policy review schedule to ensure that all policies are reviewed periodically.
- Management should publish the organizational chart of the school board administration on the school board's website.
- The school board should continue to align its leadership development programs and activities with the Ministry leadership initiatives. It should develop a formal Succession and Talent Development Plan in line with the Leadership Succession Planning and Talent Development Ministry Expectations and Implementation Continuum.

### 3. Human Resource Management and School Staffing/Allocation – Findings and Recommendations



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

The following is a summary of our assessment of the school board’s adoption of the leading practices under the processes identified above. All findings are a result of a review of the data provided by the school board and on-site 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.	No

## 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 identifies annual goals and priorities through an informal process. In addition, each year the department identifies one key initiative which supports the priorities identified in the school board's annual goals.

In 2008, the HR department established a departmental profile which outlines the key areas of responsibility of the department, and sets out the vision of the HR department for 2008 to 2010 and broad directions:

- Working with other departments to facilitate paperless environment – enhanced use of the *Apply to Education* website for hiring



- Continue to improve communication with all school board personnel – implement the software which provides instant access for all school board staff to their personnel files
- Develop a comprehensive attendance support program
- Implement a board-wide principal/vice-principal performance appraisal process.

The Superintendent of HR ensures information on HR initiatives is shared with senior administration through informal reports and responses to specific requests from the Board. In addition, the HR managers meet weekly with the Superintendent to discuss specific initiatives and progress in implementation.

### **Organizational Structure and Accountability**

The Superintendent of HR provides leadership for the department. There are two positions reporting to the Superintendent. The Coordinator of Employee Services is responsible for staffing, employee relations, employee benefits, and staff development for non-academic staff. The Coordinator of Human Resources – Teaching is responsible for staffing and employee relations for academic staff.

The Superintendent reports to the Director of Education and collaborates with the Associate Director on matters affecting payroll, employee benefits and employee/union relations. The department plays a key role in providing services to the academic staff of the school board, by ensuring qualified professionals are supporting the school board's goal of student success.

The HR department has an up to date organizational chart and has documented all positions in formal job descriptions. The directory of key department staff is provided on the school board's website.

HR staff members are qualified as per job specifications, based on their experience and qualifications. There are some aspects of HR work where formal HR training and designations/certifications could add value to the department. Currently, one member of HR staff is working towards the Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP) certification.

## Monitoring and Communication of Policies

The HR department is responsible for implementing Board policies pertaining to hiring and recruitment, administration and management of all employee benefit plans, pensions and employees' compensation. All policies are published on the school board's website.

The HR department provides in-service for school principals on specific topics related to the HR policies and procedures. The HR department staff also attend regular central and regional meetings of principals to discuss various HR topics and respond to principals' questions. The HR department has implemented many centralized processes which enable HR staff to monitor compliance with the existing policies and procedures. Management noted that the unions are aware of all policies and procedures, monitor compliance, and work with the school board to resolve issues.

### Recommendation:

- The HR department's annual planning should build on the information contained in the department profile to create an annual departmental operating plan. The plan should reflect specific and measurable targets and indicators, and assign responsibilities and timelines for key activities.

## 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.	No

## 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.	No
HR management maintains and communicates formal disciplinary policies and procedures for all staff.	No
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.	No
Management periodically reports on the effectiveness of the attendance management processes/programs to senior management and the board.	No

## Management of HR and Payroll Data

Leading Practices – Human Resource Management	Evidence of Adoption?
Payroll processing is segregated from employee data records and changes to data are adequately controlled.	Yes
HR records are current, including the formal tracking of teacher qualifications and experience.	Yes
HR management has implemented an approved pay equity plan, which is reviewed periodically and amended as necessary.	Yes

## 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.	No
Employee data is automatically synchronized between the school board and external carriers (i.e. OTPP, OMERS and the board's benefit provider(s)).	Yes
Policies and procedures ensure the board's benefit plans are managed appropriately.	Yes

## Monitoring Staff Satisfaction

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

## Staff Recruitment/Hiring

Management of the HR department noted that due to the increasing number of applications from qualified teachers, the school board has reduced its recruitment activities over the past several years. The department has reduced the number of job fairs it attends, and relies more on local newspaper advertisements, *Apply to Education*, and the school board's website to attract applicants.

The HR department has standard processes for hiring of all staff groups. The HR department provided memoranda to the executive council which outline hiring procedures for various staff groups. There is a formal administrative procedure for hiring occasional teachers.

For teacher positions the department facilitates the staffing process by approving all postings, participating in interviews, approving the recommendations to hire, and conducting the reference and criminal background checks. Staffing of administrator positions is generally supported through coordination of the postings and establishment of short-list candidates. The interview and actual selection of a principal or vice-principal is conducted by the superintendents.

Similar to other school boards, the school board experiences some difficulties recruiting specialist teachers, such as French-language or other qualifications. To address this challenge, the HR department pre-hires French teachers in April and May in preparation for the upcoming school year.

The HR department plays an active role in staffing support staff positions. It approves the posting of permanent and temporary positions, reviews resumes, participates in interviews, and conducts reference checks and criminal background checks. In hiring union staff, the HR department follows provisions of collective agreements.

## Labour Relations

In general, the school board has open communication with the unions, as a result of both formal and informal practices. To address collective bargaining issues, the school board has established labour management committees for all bargaining units.

The school board has established labour/management committees with all employee groups within Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE): labour management cooperation committee, custodial committee, secretarial committee, educational assistant/student support worker committee, professional development committee. Management noted that the school board has a positive working relationship with CUPE.

The school board has established several committees with Ontario Elementary Catholic Teachers Association (OECTA) including the labour management committee, joint board staffing committee, and joint professional development committee. The labour management committee meets as necessary, or at request of either party. Management noted that it is working closely with OECTA to maintain a positive working relationship and address potential grievances informally.

The HR department provides periodic reports to the executive council on outstanding grievances, and discusses the potential impact of grievances with the Board.

The trustees have been directly involved in the negotiations process, with the Chair of the Board acting as the Chief Negotiator.

The school board maintains a timely and effective approach in response to labour issues. HR staff provide advice and support to school principals in addressing potential grievances.

### **Employee Performance Evaluation Processes**

The school board has implemented a formal performance appraisal process for some staff groups. Although the school board has created tools (forms and templates) to support performance appraisal of some staff groups, there are no formal policies and procedures. The school board has established a performance appraisal process for all newly hired non-teaching non-union staff. There is a standard *Employee Performance Appraisal* form, which assists managers and supervisors in reviewing employee performance under a number of competencies:

- Work Review – Responsibilities and Duties
- Job-Related Factors
- Interpersonal Skills
- Attendance Review
- Goals for Next Review

- Achievement of Previously Set Goals
- Employer comments
- Employees Comments and Career and Development Goals.

The review is conducted annually, and used for decisions regarding approval of salary increments.

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 uses customized software to track teacher performance appraisals, and notify principals on appraisals due to be completed at the beginning of each year.

The Director's contract outlines an annual performance evaluation process. Each year the trustees meet with the Director to discuss performance and identify next steps. The trustees' comments are summarized by the Chair into a letter that is provided to the Director and included in the Director's personal file.

For CUPE staff, there is an informal performance evaluation process which involves observations and informal discussions. Management recognizes the need to establish a formal performance appraisal process for CUPE staff. Supervisors follow a gradual process in addressing performance issues among CUPE staff. CUPE staff may be provided with a letter which contains suggestions for improvement and support in resolving issues.

Management applies progressive discipline procedures in addressing issues among staff. The school board has not established formal disciplinary policies and procedures for all staff, which would delineate issues in job performance from behavioural issues.

The HR department supports the professional development of HR staff and other staff groups, when appropriate. The HR department is working with the unions to identify professional development priorities for union staff.

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

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

The school board has identified the development of an attendance support program as a current priority for human resources management. The HR department uses a computerized attendance tracking system. Absences data is entered into the system at the school level, and bi-weekly reports are submitted to the HR department. The HR department provides periodic reports on absences statistics to the Executive Council. The HR department provided monthly reports on absence of teaching and non-teaching staff to superintendents. Twice a year, all employees of the school board receive a statement of absences.

The HR department has recently revised rules for doctor's notes provided in connection with sick days. The HR department has established a standard form that must be completed by the doctor.

As a first step in the development of an attendance support program, the school board has begun working with an external consultant to analyze attendance data. The consultants have recently provided their first report.

Currently, supervisors/school principals are responsible for monitoring of absences. Using the absences data, supervisors/principals conduct informal discussions with staff with attendance issues. For union staff, after 12 non-consecutive absences, the supervisor may call a non-disciplinary meeting with the employee, union representatives, and the HR department, to review the accuracy of absence reports, identify issues, and offer support.

The Long Term Disability plan, which is available to teachers and non-teaching staff, facilitates an early intervention program, when employees have over 20 days of absence. Management reported that the program has been effective, and the long-term disability costs have not increased over the past three years.

While the school board implements return-to-work practices, the policies and procedures have not been documented. Employees returning from an absence from long term disability work with their nurse case manager, who prepares a return to work plan with suggested accommodations. The nurse case manager and employee meet with the principal/supervisor, union representative, and the Coordinator of Employee Services, to ensure the return to work is successful. The school board also has an employee assistance program available to all employees.

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

The payroll function is part of the finance department. The finance department works closely with the HR department in managing of HR and payroll data. Management maintains appropriate control mechanisms to ensure the segregation and integrity of personnel and payroll data. When HR staff enter new data in the system, an automated message is sent to the payroll area.



The HR department collects QECO certificates as part of the new hire process to determine level. It is the responsibility of each teacher to provide notice to HR that they are taking additional courses. Teachers are required to submit request to QECO to have qualifications evaluated, and then submit the QECO certificate to the HR department for the position to be reclassified. The HR department synchronizes data with the Ontario College of Teachers on a case by case basis for all new teachers. The Coordinator of HR – Teaching is responsible for position synchronizing data with the OCT.

The school board has current pay equity plans for all staff groups. The plans for union groups are reviewed annually in consultation with the unions.

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

The finance department and HR department have distinct roles in managing benefit plans.

The school board contracts external benefits consultants to regularly review the existing benefit plan, and negotiate new plans. The school board recently went to tender for the benefit consultants. The benefit carriers for all benefits (except life and long term disability) have remained unchanged since the time of amalgamation. Management uses comparative market information from benefit consultants to ensure that the benefit plans are competitive.

The school board has not conducted independent compliance audits of its benefit plans. Management has recently requested the consultant to provide a proposal for conducting a compliance audit of the benefit plan.

Data transfer among benefits, payroll and OMERS is automated and synchronized through using “e-access”. The Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan (OTPP) information is submitted via the Teacher Information Management system (TIM) every two weeks.

### **Monitoring Staff Satisfaction**

Management has not conducted confidential staff satisfaction surveys to obtain feedback on the priorities of the school board or general attitudes. The HR department does not conduct exit interviews.

### **Recommendations:**

- Management should enhance the staffing process by reviewing and formalizing its administrative procedures. By building on the information shared with Executive Council through memoranda, the department should document hiring procedures for all staff groups with clearly defined roles and processes. The procedures should be communicated to managers throughout the school board.

- The HR department should build on the guidelines provided for Teacher Performance Appraisal and New Teacher Induction Program and continue developing formal procedures for performance appraisal of all staff groups at the school board.
- Management should finalize establishing a comprehensive attendance support program.
- Once the formal attendance support program is established, management should develop a mechanism to assess and report on the effectiveness of the attendance support process/programs to senior administration and the Board.
- The school board should document and communicate formal disciplinary policies and procedures for all staff.
- Management should conduct independent compliance audits of the school board's insurance carrier to ensure adherence to the benefit plan's terms and conditions.
- Management should conduct periodic and confidential staff surveys, to improve communications with staff and provide input for professional development plans and HR policy.
- Management should consider conducting exit interviews to obtain input for HR policy as well as process and program improvement.

### 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 standard practices for staff planning and allocation. However, the school board does not have a formal written policy and procedures for staff planning and allocation. The HR department works closely with the finance department in conducting staff allocation, with the finance department leading the staff planning and allocation process. Once a final allocation is defined by the finance department, the HR department completes the staffing plan according to a model established by the school board.

The allocation model for elementary teachers is based on the provisions of collective bargaining agreements, primary class size requirements, and enrolment projections. The school board uses a software system to support staff allocation at the elementary level. Enrolment projects are gathered from school principals in February, and are reviewed by superintendents prior to being input in the staff allocation software. Special education staffing allocation is based on needs identified by the special education

department. Using the allocation model generated by the system, the HR department develops a working sheet for each school, which indicates specific teachers and their status, such as maternity leaves. These working sheets are reviewed by superintendents to identify staff surplus and shortage.

The allocation model for secondary teachers is driven by the following factors: classroom/preparation time, Student Success, secondary programming, library and guidance services, e-learning and enrolment projections. The model also includes consideration for small secondary schools. Special education staffing allocation is based on needs identified by the special education department. The school board uses a spreadsheet to generate staff allocation model for secondary teaching staff.

School by school teacher staffing sheets prepared by the HR department are approved by the executive council for incorporation into the school board's budget. The staffing allocation is approved by the Board as part of the budget development process. Following the budget process, the executive council reviews refinements to the staffing allocation models due to enrolment or funding changes.

Allocation of school principals follows a historical pattern which assigns one principal to each school. There is a principal in each school. Allocation of vice principals is based on enrolment.

The special education department identifies the staff allocation for special education teaching and non-teaching staff based on student needs. In planning for the upcoming school year, the special education department meets with school administration review student files and determine an appropriate level of special education staffing at each school.

The allocation model for non-teaching school staff is based on grant regulations and the provisions of collective bargaining agreements.

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

As part of the staff allocation process, management ensures compliance with key Ministry and school board policy directives, such as class size, prep time, collective agreement requirements and other board parameters. The board of trustees is not directly involved in the development or monitoring of staff allocations.

Enrolment projections are reviewed carefully during the first two weeks in September, to determine if staffing allocation adjustments are required. All required teacher staffing adjustments are presented to the executive council for review and approval prior to being implemented. Once actual enrolments have been confirmed for October 31, any significant variances from September enrolment numbers are reviewed by the executive council, to determine if further teacher staffing adjustments are necessary.

HR will only post relative positions where there are vacancies according to the level in the staffing allocation model.

Management periodically reports on the actual allocation of staff, compared to the original approved allocation plan and budget. Management provides reports to the executive council, which approves any variances in the original staff allocation. Management prepares variance reports for the entire school board, as well as for individual schools.

**Recommendation:**

- Management should document policies and procedures which govern the development of an annual staffing plan and allocation process.

## 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.	No

### 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

Annual planning for the business services department of the school board is conducted through periodic meetings of the Associate Director with managers of the finance, IT, transportation and plant departments. The meetings are conducted off site four times a year to review and discuss Board goals and ways in which business services can contribute to the achievement of these goals. During the meetings, department managers identify and discuss priorities, challenges and solutions.

Management noted that the periodic planning meetings provide a professional development opportunity for managers as well as an opportunity for informal performance evaluation. The periodic meetings with the Associate Director provide a good opportunity to identify linkages and synergies between business services departments, and ensure that the departments work collaboratively.

In addition to the periodic meetings with managers of business services departments, the Associate Director conducts regular meetings with managers individually, to prioritize departmental activities and discuss emerging issues.

Based on the information from the periodic business services management meetings, the finance department identifies annual goals and priorities informally. The Manager of Finance meets individually with each supervisor to identify priorities, upcoming initiatives, new legislation, and timelines. The identified priorities, which may be implemented within one year or several years, are included in the annual priorities for the department.

The finance department establishes the departmental profile which is updated each year. The profile outlines the key responsibilities and activities of the department and the goals for the forthcoming year. It sets out the vision of the finance department. The 2009-2010 finance department profile contains a number of specific tasks and broad directions:

- Implement capital asset software and reporting
- Adopt and implement a new financial reporting model
- Adopt new legislated balanced budget requirements and financial compliance model
- Continue to implement vendor e-payment
- Continue to implement the emailing of accounts receivable invoices and statements
- Develop internal audit capacity
- Continue to work in close collaboration with the Human Resources department
- Complete the emailing implementation of the payroll pay slip and T4
- Prepare purchasing manual to support purchasing procedures



- Tender waste management services and review and update cellular telephone services
- Participate actively in the Seaway Valley Purchasing Cooperative
- Monitor the work of the Ontario Collaborative Marketplace

The priorities included in the annual department profile are communicated to the department staff, the Associate Director, and the Director of Education. At the end of the year, the Manager of Finance reports to the Associate Director on the achievements against the priorities.

Management noted that during each Board meeting, the Director includes at least two presentations on specific school board activities. Most of these presentations are dedicated to student achievement. However, periodically there are presentations on the new business initiatives of the school board. For example, the Director's presentation on new business initiatives provided to the Board in 2009 highlighted transition to the new PSAB accounting requirements; revision of procurement policies and procedures to comply with the Supply Chain Guideline; implementation of initiatives funded with green schools energy efficient schools and renewable energy funding; implementation of new accountability measures for capital projects.

### **Organizational Structure and Accountability**

The business department is responsible for the finance function of the school board. The Manager of Finance manages the day-to-day operations of the finance department, and reports directly to the Associate Director of Education. The finance department also includes the Supervisor of Purchasing and the Supervisor of Payroll.

The business department has an organization chart which is posted on the school board's intranet. The school board's website provides contact information for key staff in the business department.

There are formal job descriptions for all finance staff. Finance staff have appropriate professional designations and experience.

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

The finance department has established formal policies and procedures pertaining to fiscal management, including purchasing, staff expenses, school budgets and schoolbased funds. These policies and procedures are posted on the school board's internal website. Each school has a copy of the manual with finance-related policies and procedures. The finance department is currently reviewing its administrative procedures

on purchasing, and is working to develop new administrative procedures for investment of surplus funds.

The finance department monitors compliance with policies and procedures by implementing controls. For example, the accounts payable staff are trained to monitor expense claim to identify any potential non-compliance with Board policies and administrative procedures.

The finance department provides formal training sessions on financial policies and procedures for school principals and vice-principals during monthly meetings. All changes in policies and administrative procedures are communicated to relevant staff. For new policies or significantly modified policies and administrative procedures, the finance department conducts formal training and awareness sessions.

Management should consider publishing policies on the school board's website.

#### **Recommendation:**

- The Finance department's annual planning should build on the information contained in the profile, and establish specific and measurable targets and indicators and assign responsibilities and timelines for key activities.

## **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 the finance department establishes a critical path document for the budget development process. The proposed critical path timelines are presented to the executive council by the Associate Director. The timelines and milestones in the budget development process are also communicated to the Board.

The budget development process begins in February when enrolment information is collected from principals. In March-April, management reports to the Board on enrolment projections and GSN enhancements. During March, the finance department establishes staff allocations and the HR department prepares first draft of teacher staffing for each school.

In March, all departments are given the opportunity to indicate any requests for changes in department budgets. The executive council considers and makes decisions on such requests. The finance department provides a standard template to several departments including plant/operations, transportation, HR, and IT. The template includes the prior year's budget and actuals. Management noted that the annual budget is developed

based on historical data. The finance department keeps records of the historical actual, and compares them to the new budgeted and revised amounts. Management also examines areas of overspending to identify root causes and opportunities to implement reductions.

In the beginning of April, the executive council has initial budget discussions. During April, the finance department estimates school board revenues and expenditures and establishes final staffing levels. During this period there are several meeting of the executive council to discuss budget issues. In May, the executive council reviews estimated deficit and develops budget reduction. In June, the final budget is presented to the Board for approval.

The budget is developed using an Excel spreadsheet. The Manager of Finance and one more member of finance staff have access to the spreadsheet.

Throughout the budget development process from March to June, management provides presentations to the board of trustees. Generally, the draft budget is presented to the Board in sections or groups of expenditures. Management has been using this format of draft budget presentation over the past several years. The trustees provided positive feedback on this approach, and commented that presenting the budget in smaller sections allows the Board to focus on specific budget issues and have informed discussions.

The finance department is responsible for establishing long-term enrolment projections. The school board contracts an external consultant to provide 15 year enrolment forecasts. This consultant also provides assistance on accommodation strategies. Enrolment projections are compared to the previous year as well as comparisons throughout the year relative to the initial projections to determine any trends or significant changes.

Management noted that currently the school board does not directly engage external stakeholders to provide input in the budget development process. However, the school board obtains some public input through meetings of various committees which involve community representatives such of the transportation committee and SEAC.

The Manager of Finance participates in monthly OASBO finance group meetings, to gather information about Ministry updates and current and anticipated initiatives. During these meetings, the Manager of Finance collects feedback and information on finance issues from peer school boards.

## Risk Mitigation and Board Approval

Management is aware of key areas of budget risks for the school board, such as the retirement gratuities, snow removal, utilities, outstanding grievances and fuel costs. Throughout the budget development process, specific budget pressures are identified by management and incorporated into the budget. However, management does not formally document budget risks and mitigation strategies in a report that summarizes the nature, probability of occurrence, potential impact and proposed mitigation strategies for the risks. There is no contingency built in the budget.

The school board maintains reserves for working funds to deal with future budget pressures. Reserve funds are earmarked for specific purposes, and their use requires Board approval. As part of the financial statements process, management indicates to Trustees transfer amounts in or out of specific reserves.

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 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 the 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. The documentation of such information on a periodic and ongoing basis would give reviewers a better understanding of the school board's budget risks.

### 4.3 Financial Reporting and Analysis

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

- Assess whether procedures are in place to ensure that management, the board of trustees and the Ministry receives timely, accurate and complete financial information of all school board activities;
- Identify opportunities to support continual improvement in the effectiveness and efficiencies of all processes;

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

#### Integrated System for Variance Analysis and Financial Reporting

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

#### Interim and Annual Financial Reporting

Leading Practices – Financial Reporting and Analysis	Evidence of Adoption?
Interim financial reports provide sufficient detail (including a comparison of actual to budget and to appropriate benchmarks and with appropriate variance explanations) for a clear understanding of the status of the current year's budget and the outlook for the year.	No

<b>Leading Practices – Financial Reporting and Analysis</b>	<b>Evidence of Adoption?</b>
Senior management is held accountable for the integrity of financial reporting through formal sign-off and approval procedures.	No
Management completes and files all financial reports in accordance with established timelines.	Yes

## Audit

<b>Leading Practices – Financial Reporting and Analysis</b>	<b>Evidence of Adoption?</b>
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 financial system includes the following modules: accounting, absence tracking, purchasing, financial reporting, accounts payable, capital assets, payroll, and HR.

The school board takes part in the user group which was set up with other school boards using the same financial system. The group conducts periodic meetings with vendors to provide feedback and discuss emerging issues.

All budget holders have online access to financial reporting information and the purchasing module. The finance department provides training for school secretaries on the use of the financial system for generating financial reports for budget holders. The Manager of Finance authorizes new GL accounts.

## Interim and Annual Financial Reporting

Management prepares several types of interim financial reporting. The finance department provides monthly reports to the Board. The reports provide year-to-date expenditures and encumbrances. The monthly report also indicates the remaining budget and percent spent.

Currently, the finance department is in the process of updating the reporting template using the recommendations of the Interim Financial Reporting Committee (IFRC). In line with the IFRC recommendations management also intends to provide interim reports to the Board three times a year. The finance department has developed a draft reporting template which will be presented to the Board for approval.

The finance department prepares a more detailed monthly report for the Associate Director. The report contains the details that the Associate Director may need to respond to trustees' questions and identify sources of significant variances.

The finance department prepares financial reports for all superintendents and department managers at least monthly. The reports are provided in a format that allows the user to manipulate data for further analysis. In addition, all departments may generate financial reports on as needed basis using the financial system. The Associate Director receives a copy of all departmental reports. The departmental reports prepared by the finance department contain an area for comments regarding variances.

Generally, budget holders are accountable for operating within the established budget. The finance department discusses any significant variances with budget holders and identifies root causes and mitigation strategies.

There is no formal sign-off of interim financial reports by the Associate Director of Education and the Director of Education. However, the Associate Director reviews the financial reports prior to submitting them to the Board.

## **Audit**

The Board does not have an audit committee. All audit issues are addressed by the Committee of the Whole. The external auditors report to the Board. Auditors meet with the Director, Associate Director and Manager of Finance to review the findings and discuss the management letter prior to meeting with 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 formal response to the management letter. The school board last tendered external audit services in 2007. The current five year term expires in 2012.

Finance staff conduct periodic internal audits of schools focused on school-based funds. However, 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.



In December 2009, the Ontario legislature passed the Student Achievement and School Board Governance Act. These amendments to the Education Act clarify what is expected from school boards, trustees, board chairs, and directors of education to support improved student achievement. The amendments also promote good governance practices and sound financial management, by establishing audit committees. Now that the legislation has passed, the ministry intends to bring forward a regulation on audit committees specifying the composition and requirements of these committees.

### **Recommendations:**

- Management should finalize the development of interim financial reporting template and provide periodic reports to the Board.
- The school board should establish approval procedures for interim financial statements, and implement a formal sign-off process of these statements by senior management.
- Management should establish an internal audit function giving due consideration to the new Ministry's direction on internal audit.
- When 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 followed up and acted upon by management.
- Management and the board of trustees should consider establishing an audit committee that includes external advisors in accordance with the Ministry's emerging direction on internal audit.

## **4.4 Treasury Management**

The purpose of reviewing treasury management processes is to assess:

- Whether processes are in place to ensure the optimal use of cash, investments and borrowings within school board;
- Whether sufficient internal controls exist to support cash management, investments and borrowings;
- Opportunities to support continual improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of all processes.

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

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

### Cash and Investment Management

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

### Cash and Investment Management

The finance department has set up a cash flow template to be used for cash flow forecasting. The finance department also uses online banking to monitor the school board's accounts.

The Finance Officer conducts monthly bank reconciliations, and the Manager of Finance reviews and approves the statements. There is segregation of duties between the Finance Officer who performs bank reconciliations and staff who are responsible for bank deposits. The Finance Clerk is responsible for the Accounts Receivable function including bank deposits. The Finance Officer prepares bank reconciliations. Both staff report directly to the Manager of Finance.

The school board's cash management activities are consolidated with one financial institution, except capital financing. The school board has one general bank account and one treasury account.

Management encourages but does not require schools to use the school board's financial institution. Management recognizes that some schools may not have convenient access to this financial institution due to their location. Schools are allowed to have up to three accounts – a main operating account and two optional accounts; one trust account for revenues for games of chance, and one for the school council. Management noted that it has been encouraging schools to combine school council and general school accounts.

Management noted that the school board has negotiated favourable interest rates on the current account, and is not currently undertaking short-term investments due to the favourable rates. Management monitors the investment rates daily through on-line access to bank accounts. The school board has been using the services of its current financial institution since amalgamation. The school board has conducted comparisons of financial terms with other school boards through the OASBO Finance committee, which conducts surveys to compare terms and conditions. Overall, the existing financial terms are consistent with banking arrangements of other school boards. Based on analysis and comparison of banking terms and conditions, management does not intend to tender its banking services. However, the school board is continuously negotiating with its current financial institution to ensure that services are competitive.

The finance department has established a draft investment policy, which has been approved by the administrative procedures committee of the Board, and has been published for system consultation. The finance department provides information on interest revenues as part of financial reporting to the Board.

Management has established many controls in cash/investment management activities such as review of cheque runs and accounts payable. The school board rarely uses wire transfers.

The school board uses Electronic Funds Transfers (EFTs) as much as possible, and continues to work with vendors to enhance the use of EFTs. Vendors who do not have EFT arrangements are paid with electronic cheques.

The school board has a rigorous process for reconciling school taxes. The finance department has established a tracking template which is used for tracking Ministry tax rates and Municipality rates and matching based on the Municipal Property assessment Corporation (MPAC) categories. The original estimates prepared by the school board are signed off by the municipalities at the beginning of the year. The template is monitored by the Finance Officer throughout the year, and compared as payments are received. The school board requests the municipalities to sign off again at the end of the year.

The school board maintains three sinking funds for repayment of debt. One of the funds is to mature in 2010. The Manager of Finance is responsible for tracking the sinking funds and defining and making annual contributions to ensure that there are sufficient funds at the time of debt maturity.

### **Recommendation:**

- The school board should finalize its investment policy and procedures. 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

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

## Management of School-Based Funds

The Board has guidelines on school-generated funds, based on the OASBO template. The guidelines provide key procedures for banking, receipts and disbursements, investments, reconciliations. Each year, the finance department also provides each school with a school-generated funds binder. The binder is used by school secretaries and principals to file all documentation regarding school-generated funds, including Catholic School Council funds. If a school has several bank accounts, a binder is maintained for each account. The guidelines also contain some standard forms and templates.

The school board has implemented software to manage cash in schools. There is a dedicated member of finance staff who is responsible for providing support on management of school-based funds.

The guidelines mandate that all staff collecting money must complete a funds-received form, which is submitted along with funds to the school secretary. The school secretary verifies the amount of money received and records it in the school banking software. School principals provide approval for expenditure of all school-related funds. All Catholic School Council expenditures must be approved by the Council Chair/Treasurer. The guidelines allow schools to make short-term investments of funds in line with the Regulation 471/97 of the Education Act.

The school secretary conducts monthly bank reconciliations in the school banking program. The principal reviews and signs-off on the monthly bank reconciliation.

The Finance Officer has access to all school accounts to ensure appropriate management and record keeping. In July of each year, schools are required to submit a copy of the July bank statement, and a signed copy of the principals' declaration for all school and Catholic School Council bank accounts, as part of the annual external audit procedures. The finance department also undertakes periodic internal audit reviews of school-based funds.

For new school administrators or secretaries, the finance department provides one-on-one training on management of school-based funds. The finance department also provides training to secretaries on using the school banking software. The finance officer can provide remote assistance on the use of the software to school secretaries.

## Management of Non-Grant Revenue

The key sources of the school board's non-grant revenue include investment revenue, long-term lease of facilities, and continuing education. However, the amount of these revenues is relatively small to the school board's total revenue.

The school board has a community relations policy, and a community use of school procedure posted on the website. The finance department of the school board is responsible for managing the community use of facilities. Community use of schools is not a significant source of revenue for the school board, since most community users are non-profit organizations. The community use of facilities procedures contain a fee schedule for other types of users. Permits are issued at the school level, and the school board is examining options for implementation of an online permit system.

There is a coordinator who is responsible for reporting and monitoring on the community use of schools and continuing education programs, and compliance with established policies and procedures.

Management has established procedures to record and track the various EPO grants received. Once a signed contract is received, the finance area sets up a separate code for each program in the financial system. The monthly financial report prepared for departments contain information on EPO grants.

The finance department has also established a tracking template which indicates responsibilities and reporting requirements. The finance department prepares periodic reports for program staff responsible for EPO grants. The Manager of Finance and the Associate Director review all reports to verify expenditures before they are sent to the Director to be submitted to the Ministry.

## 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.	No

## Use of Electronic Funds Transfer

Leading Practices – Supply Chain/Procurement	Evidence of Adoption?
Management maximizes use of electronic funds transfer (EFT) for vendor payments.	Yes

## Policies and Procedures

The school board has recently revised its policy and procedures on purchasing, to ensure consistency with key requirements of the Supply Chain Guideline. The code of ethics is incorporated in the revised policy and procedures.

The revised policy and procedures will be presented to the executive council. However, the purchasing department has started implementing new and revised procedures for the most recent tenders. Management intends to communicate the new policy and procedures to principals and vice-principals during monthly meetings.

In addition to the purchasing functions within the finance departments, the plant and IT departments of the school board have specific purchasing responsibilities, such as tendering for specific goods and services. These departments work closely with the purchasing department, and comply with the established purchasing policies and



procedures. The purchasing department has communicated the revised policy and procedures to the plant and IT department.

The school board has established procedures for hospitality and travel expenditure. These procedures also cover the use of corporate credit cards. The procedures apply to all school board staff and trustees.

The current purchasing procedures (published on the school board's intranet) clearly outline the circumstances under which the school board may use non-competitive procurement methods. It is stated in the procedures that competitive bidding requirements may be waived for purchases of library books, textbooks and publications, goods or services available only from a single source, urgent or emergency goods or services with the approval of the Director or designate. The procedures allow noncompetitive purchasing of goods and services under \$300, when it is neither practical nor possible to obtain quotations and purchases for pilot or special projects.

The existing procedures do not clearly state contract award criteria, including elements other than the lowest cost, such as total cost of ownership, value, quality, vendor performance, etc. Contract award criteria are established and included in competitive tender documentation for each tender. It is stated in the administrative procedures that if service, quality and overall cost are considered equal, priority for the order will be given to the supplier whose place of business is within the counties of the school board, and second to the supplier whose place of business is within Ontario.

The current purchasing procedures outline purchasing authorization levels for purchases over \$300, including procedures for remote purchasing locations (plant and IT), code of ethics, and methods of purchasing.

The school board advertises its tenders on Biddingo or MERX. The plant and maintenance department may additionally advertise its tenders on its website.

The purchasing department monitors compliance with purchasing policies and procedures and communicates the procedures to the system through periodic reminders and updates. Currently, management is working to improve control over purchasing using school-generated funds, to ensure such purchases are compliant with the established procedures. The revised purchasing procedure requires that all purchases over \$5,000 made using school-generated funds require a PO.

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

The purchasing procedures state that the school board will participate in cooperative purchasing agencies (school boards or government agencies) whenever it is in its best interest. Currently, the school board participates in an established VOR arrangement for cell phones.

The school board participates in group buying initiatives and purchasing consortia, including the St. Lawrence Seaway Purchasing Cooperative, the Catholic School Boards Services Association, and the Ontario Education Services Corporation. There are also several joint purchasing initiatives with the co-terminous board.

The school board is continually looking for opportunities to increase purchasing power and minimize the cost of goods and services. The school board is also closely monitoring OECM activities, and management periodically provides updates to the Board.

### **Purchasing Levels of Authority**

The purchasing procedures set out approval authority level for purchasing as follows:

- Associate Director of Education reviews all purchases over \$25,000 and approves all purchases over \$50,000
- Supervisor of Purchasing - \$0 - \$50,000

The ICT department manages purchases of all items/material required in the day-to-day operation of the department, such as hardware/software and exterior telephone equipment. The plant and maintenance department manages purchases of all items/material required in the day-to-day repair/operation of the maintenance function, including grass cutting, snow removal, roof repairs, and painting. The plant and maintenance department is also responsible for purchases related to large value construction projects. For remote purchasing locations, the levels of authority have been established as follows:

- Associate Director of Education reviews all purchases over \$25,000 and approves all purchases over \$50,000;
- Supervisor of ICT and Supervisor of Plant and Maintenance - \$0 - \$25,000
- Manager of ICT and Manager of Plant and Maintenance - \$0 - \$50,000

Large value construction projects are publicly tendered, using a pre-qualification process as required. The board of trustees approves the award of the contract and budget for the project. The Associate Director of Education signs all documents pertaining to construction projects.

The school board has established the following competitive bidding thresholds:

- \$300 and under – competitive quotes are not required. Purchases are made by phone, fax, email, purchase order

- \$300 – \$1,000 – a verbal quote is required or catalogue pricing is used
- \$1,001 – \$50,000 – three written quotes are required. Purchases are administered by the purchasing department.
- \$50,000 – \$100,000 – the Procurement Officer in conjunction with the originator of the request considers the following procurement methods
- Over \$50,000 – the purchasing department administers tenders.

All purchases over \$300 require a purchase order.

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

The school board's administrative procedures for travel and hospitality expenditures cover the use of corporate cards. The corporate cards are used mainly for travel-related expenses. There are approximately 10 cards in total. Management is currently planning to extend the use of corporate cards to maintenance staff for the purchase of gasoline for school board-owned vehicles.

The purchasing procedures require that school board staff use system contracts whenever possible. The existing system contracts cover a wide range of supplies and allow delivery on the next business day. Each year, the purchasing department reviews purchases of various supplies to determine volume and identify goods that need to be added.

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

The purchasing policy and procedures set out the general requisitioning procedures. Requisitions can be made by requestors at schools and departments, using the financial system. All requisitions are approved according to the established purchasing levels of authority. Schools and department are responsible for the receipt of goods and entering receipt information into the system. The Accounts Payable department matches the receipt information with the PO and invoice. Any discrepancies are investigated by the Purchasing Supervisor.

The school board has commitment accounting. Expenditures are encumbered when a PO is processed. The finance department and superintendents monitor budget compliance through monthly reporting. Schools generate their own monthly reports on expenditures. The finance department works closely with superintendents to support schools in meeting their established budgets. In some cases, superintendents may request the finance department to introduce additional restrictions that would require school expenditure to be approved by the superintendent, in addition to the principal's approval.

The school board has not implemented an electronic supplier interface for ordering, purchasing, and payment. The school board uses online ordering for an office stationery vendor. The school board has begun emailing Purchase Orders to some vendors that are able to support this technology. In addition, several vendors provide the board with electronic accounts payable upload files that are interfaced with the Accounts Payable system to generate payment. Management noted that this approach provides significant time savings for the Account Payable staff.

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

The school board uses electronic cheques and EFTs for all payments.

### **Recommendation:**

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

## 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 understating of school operations and facilities policies and administrative procedures.	Yes
Processes exist to monitor new legislation and regulations and implement necessary changes.	Yes

## Development and Reporting of Annual Goals and Priorities

The Plant and Maintenance department is responsible for maintenance, custodial services, school operations, school and building grounds, and construction projects within the school board.

The Plant and Maintenance department identifies annual goals and priorities through an informal process. In 2008, the Plant and Maintenance department established a department profile which outlines its key responsibilities and activities. It sets out the vision of the Plant and Maintenance department and annual goals for the forthcoming year. The department has identified the following key goals for 2009-2010:

- Assess condition of key facilities and equipment to support maintenance priorities
- Organize and schedule preventative maintenance programs
- Monitor the work order system to ensure efficiency and effectiveness
- Continue to provide training and improve communication with maintenance employees
- Continue to manage and implement standard equipment where it is practical and promote greater efficiency in the use of supplies
- Minimize the use of non-green products and create a healthy workplace for all building occupants
- Update the ReCAPP database.

The annual goals of the department are reviewed each year to identify achievements against goals. The Manager of Plant and Maintenance is responsible for monitoring legislative changes and policy initiatives, to ensure that these changes are reflected in the departmental annual plan.

There are monthly meetings of plant and maintenance department staff, to discuss departmental activities, communicate information from senior management, discuss progress on initiatives, and review policies and procedures. The meetings also provide an opportunity for the monthly health and safety talk. The agenda for staff meetings is prepared and sent out in advance. Minutes of the monthly meeting indicate staff responsibilities for various tasks and projects and timelines, which are reviewed during the next meeting. The Manager of Plant and Maintenance tracks tasks that have been assigned to supervisors during monthly meetings.

The plant and maintenance department maintains open communication with principals. Supervisors receive direct feedback from school principals on various issues. The

Manager of Plant and Maintenance maintains a list of outstanding issues and tracks them until they are resolved.

### **Organizational Structure and Accountability**

The plant and maintenance department is part of the business department of the school board. The Manager of Plant and Maintenance reports directly to the Associate Director. The Manager oversees two regional supervisors of plant and maintenance, two regional supervisors of plant operations, the Facilities Coordinator, and the Special Projects Coordinator. Supervisors of plant and maintenance supervise 12 maintenance staff, as well as a number of maintenance services contractors. Supervisors of plant operation supervise 98 custodial staff and 24 casual staff.

The Plant and Maintenance organizational chart shows the structure of the department and lines of reporting. The areas of responsibilities for the Manager and Supervisors of the department are outlined in the job descriptions, which are currently being reviewed and updated. The management staff of the Plant and Maintenance department are qualified as per job specifications, and have relevant professional experience.

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

The Plant and Maintenance department has established procedures related to health and safety, security, and the management of hazardous materials. The Manager of Plant and Maintenance is responsible for communicating new policies and procedures to the department staff. This communication usually takes place during monthly staff meetings.

The department has established manuals of policies and procedures that are available in every regional office and published online. There is an intranet of the Plant and Maintenance department that contains current information including regulations, procedures, legislative requirements, ReCAPP data, and construction drawings. This intranet is also used as a discussion board by the supervisory team to post items. The Plant and Maintenance department monitors compliance with policies by conducting various inspections and establishing routine procedures and log books.

### **Recommendation:**

- The Plant and Maintenance department's annual planning should build on the information contained in the department profile, establish specific and measurable targets and indicators, and assign responsibilities and timelines for key activities.



## 5.2 Custodial and Maintenance Operations

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

- Whether custodial and maintenance services are responding effectively and efficiently to maintaining an optimized learning environment;
- Whether the department has the appropriate organizational structure to effectively manage service delivery;
- Whether internal controls effectively manage custodial and maintenance operations and expenditures;
- Opportunities to support continual improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of all processes.

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

### The Board’s Staffing Model Supports Cleaning Standards and Maintenance Requirements

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

### Development of Annual/Multi-Year Maintenance Plan

Leading Practices – Custodial and Maintenance Operations	Evidence of Adoption?
Using a consultative process, senior administration develops and communicates a multi-year (three to five years) plan for major maintenance and renewal projects. The plan addresses the board’s preventative and deferred maintenance priorities and	Yes

Leading Practices – Custodial and Maintenance Operations	Evidence of Adoption?
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.	

## Training to Support Skills Development and Safety

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

## Standardization of Cleaning and Maintenance Supplies

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

## Project Management, Monitoring and Support Systems

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

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

The Plant and Maintenance department has established a custodial manual with cleaning standards. The manual includes rules and regulations, responsibilities and duties, schedule of duties and summer cleaning. Supervisors visit schools at least once every two weeks to inspect cleanliness and facility condition. Inspections may be conducted when triggered by specific issues or complaints. The department has established an inspection form which is completed by supervisors. Significant issues identified as result of inspections are discussed with the Manager of Plant and

Maintenance to identify solutions. Management communicates the outcomes of followup actions to principals.

The department has a facility inspection logbook and manual with procedures for daily and monthly inspection, testing and operation of building devices, and fire protection systems. The daily inspection forms are completed by custodians. Plant Operation Supervisors, Facilities Planning Coordinator and Manager of Plant and Maintenance conduct periodic spot checks of inspection logs to ensure that daily and monthly inspections are completed. Issues identified in the daily inspection logs are communicated to supervisors, through the work order system if repairs are required, or to principals if issues are related to health and safety.

The school board has implemented green-certified products as a result of an effectiveness and readiness survey of two elementary and secondary schools. The school board also uses green-certified paper towels, hand soap and sanitizers. Management has recently provided a report to the Board on green cleaning products and practices.

The Manager of Plant and Maintenance, Plant Operations Supervisors, and/or the Facilities Coordinator as required attend EcoSchool meetings with schools, to promote partnership and create synergies between plant operations and schools' environmental activities.

The custodial allocation model is based on the facility's area, and accounts for stairs, access to elevator, and type of classrooms. The assignment may be adjusted to ensure that the distribution of workload is appropriate. Management discusses custodial staff allocations with the labour union. The formula was established using comparisons with other school boards.

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

The Plant and Maintenance department establishes an annual and multi-year renewal plan. The multi-year plan spans five years and is based on RECAP data, and energy efficiency priorities. Plant and Maintenance staff also conduct meetings with principals to review renewal needs identified at school level. Management noted that the plan is a living document and is updated throughout the year.

Each year the plan and maintenance management team meets to discuss budget priorities and renewal priorities. The existing list of proposed renewal projects is discussed and prioritized to be within the funding allocation. In these discussions, management considers principals' requests as well. The final list of renewal projects for the year is provided to the Associate Director, who presents the list to the executive council for review. Following the review by the executive council, superintendents review the annual list with their schools. The plan is finalized and reviewed again by the

Manager of Plant and Maintenance and Manager of Finance to ensure that budgets are appropriate. The final list of approved projects is sent to school principals.

In the development of a multi-year maintenance plan, management accounts for cosmetic upgrades. There is a five-year paint refresh cycle for corridors and washrooms and seven or eight year cycle for classrooms if there is available budget to support this program.

The Plant and Maintenance department monitors progress in implementation of the annual renewal plan. There is a form which is completed weekly to update the Manager of Plant and Maintenance on the progress of each project to ensure that projects are on track to be completed by the beginning of the school year.

Each August, management provides a presentation to the Board on completed renewal projects.

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

The Plant and Maintenance department facilitates training for custodial and maintenance staff, to support ongoing skills development, build awareness of regulatory changes, and ensure work safety. The Plant and Maintenance department provides training for new employees and casual staff during a full-day orientation program. The orientation programme is followed up by one to two weeks of hands-on training through job shadowing and mentoring. Additional practical training may be provided to new employees who do not have previous custodial services experience.

The department conducts one PD day a year dedicated to issues identified through the facilities inspection process, and any current issues such as blood-borne pathogens and H1N1 epidemic.

Management identifies training needs of custodial and maintenance staff, such as training on regulatory requirements including Workplace Hazardous Material Information System (WHMIS), training on the custodial manual, or specific ergonomics training. The Health and Safety department identifies training needs related to health and safety such as specific equipment training, asbestos management, and other items identified by Ministry of Labour.

The Plant and Maintenance department maintains a training checklist to track frequency of training and required refresh training for maintenance and custodial staff.

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

The Plant and Maintenance department maintains an up-to-date inventory of major custodial and maintenance equipment. The custodial inventory list specifies an

inventory for each school, by type of cleaning equipment, tools, and the general condition for each of them. The maintenance equipment lists are compiled for each region and indicate type of equipment and quantity. The inventory lists are updated annually. The department also tracks 13 maintenance vehicles, including their annual mileage.

The Plant and Maintenance department uses the “just in time” approach to ordering supplies. There are two small storage closets at two locations with emergency supplies. The custodians-in-charge use standard forms to order supplies. All staff are required to use existing system contracts for ordering of supplies. Supervisors track usage of supplies throughout the year. Each year, the plant and maintenance department analyzes usage of custodial supplies by location, and compares usage per square foot. Supervisors are responsible for tracking the maintenance and custodial budgets and keeping expenditures within the annual budget allocation.

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

The school board has implemented an electronic work order system. Management noted that the current system does not provide sufficient analysis and reporting functionality. The Plant and Maintenance department is currently considering other electronic work order systems.

All school-based custodial staff have access to the work order system through a controlled log-in from any school computer. Work orders are submitted to supervisors, who assign them to appropriate maintenance staff to complete.

Maintenance staff reviews their assigned work orders, update the status and close work orders when they are complete. School principals have access to the work order system to review the outstanding items for their school. Supervisors track repetitive work orders to identify items to be added to the renewal projects list.

### **Recommendation:**

- The school board should review the Ministry’s Green Clean Program Resource Guide and use the guide to develop a formal green clean program as part of its overarching Education Environmental Policy.

## **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.	Yes
Billing for all board facilities is consolidated from each utility.	Yes
The Board has established an overarching environmental policy that addresses both environmental education and responsible management practices.	No

## Energy Management Plan

The school board has implemented a number of energy management initiatives. The Plant and Maintenance department has been identifying energy efficiency priorities and implementing energy efficiency measures in major retrofits and construction since 2001. Management noted that currently energy efficiency initiatives are conducted on an *ad hoc* basis.

The school board recently engaged an external consultant to conduct energy audits of all facilities. The consultant has completed energy audits of two schools, and is currently finalizing the report with results for all schools. Management intends to assess the findings from the audit report and use the available GPL funding to identify priority projects

The Plant and Maintenance department provides communication to school principals about energy conservation measures, such as reducing use of small appliances and shutting off lights. The Plant and Maintenance department sends energy efficiency memos to school principals several times a year.

Using the results of the energy audits and energy consumption data, management intends to establish a formal energy management plan with quantitative targets. The executive council is informed about progress in the development of an energy management plan.

## Tracking and Reporting Energy Conservation

The accounting department tracks energy consumption data by facility. The Manager of Plant and Maintenance receives quarterly updates and compares with previous reports to identify anomalies and inconsistencies. The Plant and Maintenance department conducts comparisons across facilities, based on square footage.

The school board has provided the data for the Utilities Consumption database, and awaits implementation of the database to further improve monitoring and analysis of consumption data. The school board has worked with utility providers to identify opportunities for live data tracking.

Twelve facilities of the school board have a centrally-controlled building automation system. Management noted that a number of other facilities do not have the potential to implement building automation systems, due to limitations of the existing equipment. In addition, 14 schools are powered through Hydro Quebec. This poses several challenges for energy management planning, including a lack of incentives.

The school board receives consolidated utility bills from providers which provide services as part of the existing consortia. A number of schools receive individual utility bills.

## Recommendations:

- Using the results of the energy audits, 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 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.
- 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.
- Once the energy management plan is established, management should provide formal annual reporting on the energy conservation savings achieved against the plan
- The school board should develop an overarching environmental policy that would provide framework for its activities in the area of environmental education and responsible management practices.

## 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 health and safety department is responsible for obtaining, coordinating, and tracking all the health and safety needs of the school board employees. The department comprises the Occupational Health and Safety Coordinator and the Health and Safety Officer.

The health and safety department is responsible for all employee health and safety, health and safety training, and risk management. The health and safety department is also responsible for monitoring of air quality.

The department identifies occupational health and safety training needs, and develops and delivers training for various staff groups. The department issues quarterly health and safety newsletters. The department also established a schedule for monthly safety talks, which are required to be held by supervisors and managers with staff. The health and safety department works closely with the plant and maintenance department to identify training needs of custodial and maintenance staff and plan and deliver training. The department also provides input in the development of orientation documentation for new employees by the HR department.

A joint occupational health and safety committee meets quarterly to review policies, procedures, and serious incidents, and make recommendations. The committee reviews and analyzes data on incidents and works with health and safety staff to identify ways to

reduce risks. The committee's meeting minutes and recommendations are provided to the Board.

The health and safety department performs an analysis on accident/incident data and identifies trends. Identified high risk areas are used to inform the health and safety training program for school board employees.

The school board has established an emergency preparedness committee and a system-wide emergency preparedness plan. Management has developed a reference document for school principals, which contains alert codes and procedures for various types of emergency situations. Management maintains a database to track fire and lockdown drills across schools.

### **Recommendation:**

- The school board should consider establishing an integrated health plan/strategy that would reflect the existing policies and procedures regarding health and safety of school board employees and students. Management should also consider establishing a central coordinating role for the development, implementation and monitoring of the plan.

## **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 multi-year 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’s multi-year capital plan was last formally updated in 2008 and submitted to the Ministry through the SFIS website. Management noted that the current multi-year capital plan is close to completion, and will be revised using the updated longterm enrolment projections and emerging accommodation needs. The current capital projects which were identified in 2008 are published on the school board’s website.

The Plant and Maintenance department, the finance department and the Associate Director are responsible for capital planning. Managers of plant and maintenance and finance work together to ensure SFIS is kept up to date and ensure timely reporting to the Ministry. The Associate Director has overall responsibility for the capital plan.

The school board completed the capital liquidity template in 2009, with support and assistance from the Ministry. The school board was eligible for and received a debt commitment grant from the Ministry.

The Board has established an accommodation review policy. Management recognizes that the policy needs to be updated in line with the new Ministry guidelines. The accommodation reviews are conducted by third party consultants. The school board has not conducted any recent accommodation reviews. However, the school board is planning to begin a new round of accommodation reviews.

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

The SFIS database is updated at least once a year, usually in September. If there are any significant changes the database may be updated more frequently.

The ReCAPP database is updated as projects are completed. ReCAPP data is used for the development of a multi-year and annual renewal plan. The Facilities Coordinator is responsible for SFIS and ReCAPP updates.

## **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**

<b>Leading Practices – Construction Management</b>	<b>Evidence of Adoption?</b>
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

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

## Cost-Effective Practices in the Design and Construction of Facilities

The school board has several growth areas, and is currently implementing two construction projects: an addition of 22 classrooms, and an addition of 12 classrooms. The school board has also just completed three prohibitive to repair (PTR) projects.

Before the decisions are made about new construction projects or portables, management examines SFIS information to determine if existing school space can be better used to meet the accommodation needs. In under-utilized schools, management promotes long-term leases such as day care.

The school board has one school where some facilities such as cafeteria, classrooms, and auditorium are shared with the co-terminous board. The school board has one agreement with a municipality for the joint use of a soccer field. Management noted that the school board is continuously examining potential opportunities for joint use of facilities.

In the construction of new facilities, the school board reuses the design where practical. The school board has used repeat designs for five elementary schools and three secondary schools. Management noted that the use of repeat designs allowed the school board to obtain substantial discounts from architects.

While the school board involves future users in the development of designs, budget constraints determine the scope of modifications, and are communicated early in the design development process to all stakeholders.

The budget estimates for each construction project are initially made by the plant and maintenance department, and reviewed by the finance department. The plant and operations department develops a draft design. Using the draft design, the school board requests expressions of interest from architects. The draft footprint is developed and then discussed with the architects and the Ministry. While community stakeholders are invited to discuss the proposed footprint, and suggest modifications and improvements, the initial footprint is usually maintained. The community consultation involves school principal, superintendent, and parent council. Within the department, the mechanical systems included in draft designs are discussed with maintenance teams. The design plans are approved by the Board.

Management noted that it is sometimes difficult for the school board to meet the Ministry benchmarks, due to higher fees charged by contractors in many areas of the school board.

The Plant and Maintenance department has a list of material standards which is provided to each architect. Management is aware of the provisions of the Green Energy Act, and makes every effort to integrate energy efficient design features in construction plans for new facilities.

The school board has compared construction costs with other school boards, through the operations, maintenance and construction committee of OASBO. The school board also undertakes informal comparisons of constructions costs with the co-terminous board.

Management noted that the target budget is the key consideration in the implementation of construction projects. The schools board engages external consultants to conduct cost assessments to ensure that target budgets are appropriate. Occasionally, management may revise the design to meet the project target budget.

### **Monitoring and Reporting of Progress on Construction Projects**

The Project Coordinator is responsible for project management of all construction projects. The Manager of Plant and Maintenance also visits construction sites regularly,

to monitor progress and discuss any issues. Management builds a contingency in budgets for construction projects

The Manager of Plant and Maintenance is responsible for review and approval of change orders. The Manager of Finance receives all approved change orders and invoices for approval, and uses this information to monitor project expenditures. Management is currently developing an administrative procedure for review and approval of change orders.

The Project Coordinator prepares monthly reports on project progress, which are submitted to the Manager of Plant and Maintenance and the Associate Director. In addition, the Manager of Plant and Maintenance meets with the Project Coordinator every two weeks to review any current and potential issues and change orders.

Progress payments are approved by the architect and the Project Coordinator, and are checked and finally approved by the Manager of Plant and Maintenance. Progress payments are also reviewed by the Manager of Finance, and payments exceeding \$50,000 are submitted for approval by the Associate Director. Large payments are also presented as information items to the Board.

Management provides periodic reports on progress of construction projects to the Board.

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

The school board issue requests for expression of interest for each new capital project. Management noted that due to the varying size of construction projects, it would be difficult for the school board to establish a pool of pre-approved contractors. The school board establishes a review committee which reviews all expressions of interest. Management is planning to establish a pool of specialized maintenance contractors.

## Appendices

### 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:

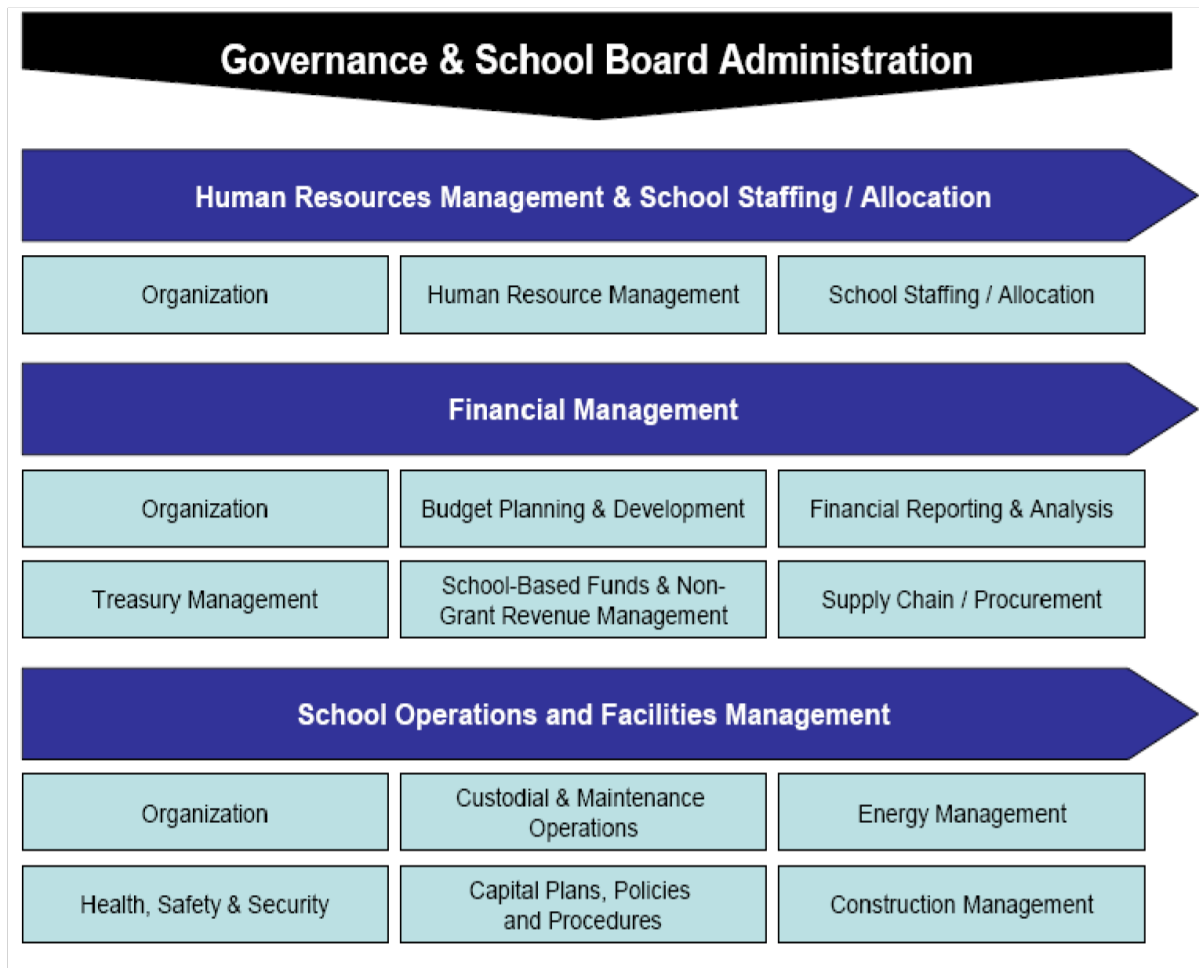
- Strengthen management capacity in boards, with recommendations that support improvement in non-academic operations;
- Highlight existing successful business practices used by boards, to the sector and to school board communities;
- Leverage “best practices” across the education sector;
- Provide support 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.

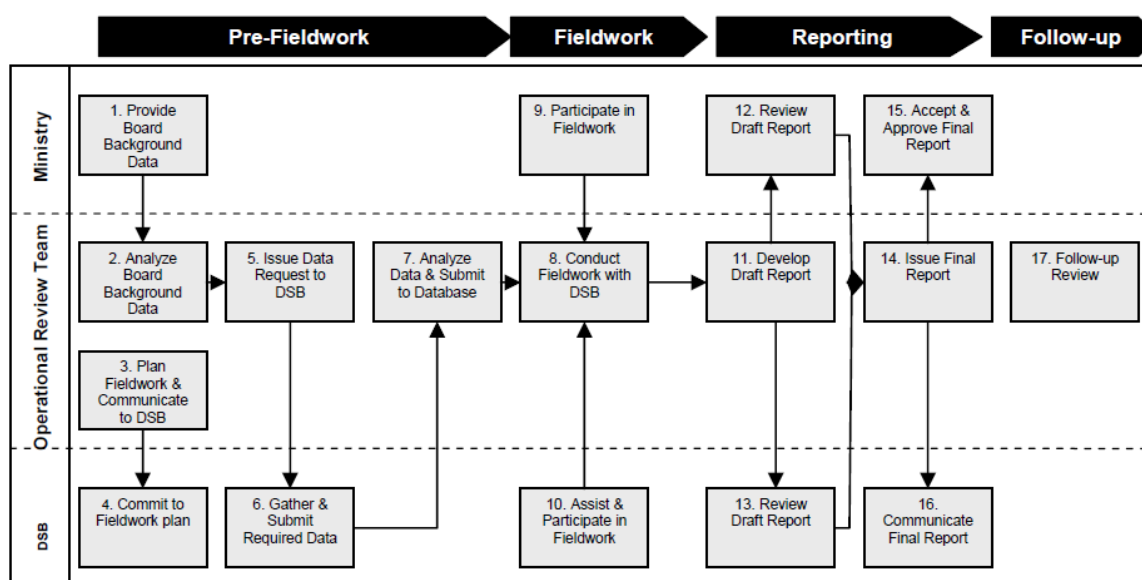




### Operational Review Summary Approach

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

Key Activity	Description
	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.
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.

Key Activity	Description
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.

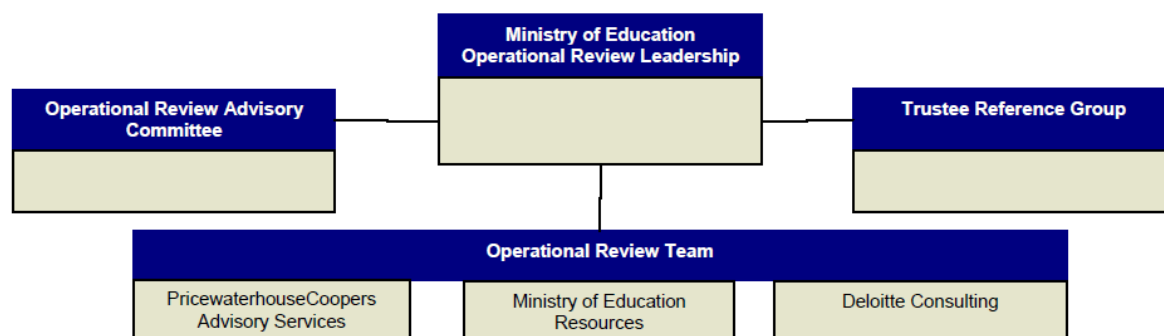
### Phase: Follow-up

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 Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario. 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.	Using its multi-year strategic plan as a framework, the school board should develop an annual board-wide operating plan. The annual operating plan should be aligned with the strategic plan, incorporate both academic and nonacademic departments, and contain goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely.
2.	The school board should establish a formal policy review schedule to ensure that all policies are reviewed periodically.
3.	Management should publish the organizational chart of the school board administration on the school board's website.
4.	The school board should continue to align its leadership development programs and activities with the Ministry leadership initiatives. It should develop a formal Succession and Talent Development Plan in line with the Leadership Succession Planning and Talent Development Ministry Expectations and Implementation Continuum.

### Human Resources Management and School Staffing/Allocation

No.	Recommendation
5.	The HR department's annual planning should build on the information contained in the department profile to create an annual departmental operating plan. The plan should reflect specific and measurable targets and indicators, and assign responsibilities and timelines for key activities.
6.	Management should enhance the staffing process by reviewing and formalizing its administrative procedures. By building on the information shared with Executive Council through memoranda, the department should document hiring procedures for all staff groups with clearly defined roles and processes. The procedures should be communicated to managers throughout the school board.
7.	The HR department should build on the guidelines provided for Teacher Performance Appraisal and New Teacher Induction Program and continue developing formal procedures for performance appraisal of all staff groups at the school board.
8.	Management should finalize establishing a comprehensive attendance support program.
9.	Once the formal attendance support program is established, management should develop a mechanism to assess and report on the effectiveness of the attendance support process/programs to senior administration and the Board.
10.	The school board should document and communicate formal disciplinary policies and procedures for all staff.
11.	Management should conduct independent compliance audits of the school board's insurance carrier to ensure adherence to the benefit plan's terms and conditions.

No.	Recommendation
12.	Management should document policies and procedures which govern the development of an annual staffing plan and allocation process.
13.	Management should conduct periodic and confidential staff surveys, to improve communications with staff and provide input for professional development plans and HR policy.
14.	Management should consider conducting exit interviews to obtain input for HR policy as well as process and program improvement.

## Financial Management

No.	Recommendation
15.	The Finance department's annual planning should build on the information contained in the profile and establish specific and measurable targets and indicators and assign responsibilities and timelines.
16.	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. The documentation of such information on a periodic and ongoing basis would give reviewers a better understanding of the school board's budget risks.
17.	Management should finalize the development of interim financial reporting template and provide periodic reports to the Board.
18.	The school board should establish approval procedures for interim financial statements, and implement a formal sign-off process of these statements by senior management.
19.	Management should establish an internal audit function giving due consideration to the new Ministry's direction on internal audit.
20.	When 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 followed up and acted upon by management.
21.	Management and the board of trustees should consider establishing an audit committee that includes external advisors in accordance with the Ministry's emerging direction on internal audit.
22.	The school board should finalize its investment policy and procedures. Management should periodically report to the Board on the performance of the investment activity in accordance with the investment policy.
23.	Management should continue identifying opportunities for implementation of the electronic supplier interface for ordering, processing, and payment.

## School Operations and Facilities Management

No.	Recommendation
24.	The Plant and Maintenance department's annual planning should build on the information contained in the department profile, establish specific and measurable targets and indicators, and assign responsibilities and timelines for key activities.
25.	The school board should review the Ministry's Green Clean Program Resource Guide and use the guide to develop a formal green clean program as part of its overarching Education Environmental Policy.
26.	Using the results of the energy audits, the school board should establish a multi-year energy management plan that incorporates quantifiable measures and the tools to monitor and manage the plan. In line with the Green Energy Act, 2009, energy management planning should include the development of policies, guidelines, goals (conservation targets), and priorities for energy management and resource conservation. The plan should include short-term and long-term opportunities with milestones, roles, responsibilities and budgets with a process for ensuring community support.
27.	Once the formal energy management plan is established, the school board should ensure that its procurement policies and practices support the objectives and targets of the plan. Management should also consider documenting the energy efficiency requirements in procurement policies and procedures and/or the environmental policy.
28.	Successful energy conservation initiatives currently implemented by the school board should be communicated across all schools and with other school boards
29.	Once the energy management plan is established, management should provide formal annual reporting on the energy conservation savings achieved against the plan.
30.	The school board should develop an overarching environmental policy that would provide framework for its activities in the area of environmental education and responsible management practices.
31.	The school board should consider establishing an integrated health plan/strategy that would reflect the existing policies and procedures regarding health and safety of school board employees and students. Management should also consider establishing a central coordinating role for the development, implementation and monitoring of the plan.