

Ministry of Education

Operational Review Report
York Catholic District School Board

October 2011



reach every student



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Executive Summary

This report details the findings and recommendations of the Operational Review of York Catholic District School Board (the school board) conducted by the Operational Review Team composed of external consultants from Deloitte Inc. and Ministry of Education staff. The Operational Review was conducted over four days beginning April 26, 2011.

Introduction

The Ministry is in the final stages of performing 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 review team found that the school board has implemented many leading practices. Noted strengths include three-way matching, the goals and priorities of the finance department, energy management practices, and the involvement of senior staff in external committees and working groups. A summary of the findings and recommendations for each of the functional areas 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 of Trustees and the Director of Education have appropriate processes for the establishment and regular maintenance of policies and administrative procedures for the efficient and effective operation of the board.
- The Board of Trustees and the Director of Education proactively engage diverse stakeholders on a regular basis and through a variety of communication vehicles.
- Key senior staff from all functional areas are members and participants in sector committees of provincial associations and Ministry workgroups.

The school board's governance model is outlined in the Board's Code of Conduct policy, the communication protocol and the By-law No.1, *Operational By-Law*. Although the Board continues to work diligently to update policies, it has not yet fully incorporated all the key elements of Bill 177 into school board policy. Bill 177, which came into force on December 15, 2009, clarifies the roles and responsibilities of school boards, trustees, Board chairs and directors of education. The school board should review its governance model and update it to reflect the roles and responsibilities mandated by Bill 177.

The current vision statement and components of the Board Improvement Plan (BIP) are key components in strategic planning. The Board has not yet developed a multi-year strategic plan. The Director of Education and the Chair noted that the existing vision document was to be updated and further developed into a full strategic plan at an off-site Board meeting in May 2011. The Board should follow through with the development of a full multi-year strategic plan that incorporates both academic and non-academic goals, and provides a clear direction to all staff on long-term goals. To complement the multi-year strategic plan, the school board should develop a formal annual operating plan to further enhance operational effectiveness and enable the Director of Education to report to the Board on specific outcomes.

The school board has adopted components of a succession and talent development plan to build and sustain leadership capacity across multiple staff functions. The school board should formalize its succession and talent development plans, and expand existing programs to strengthen professional development (PD) for non-academic staff.

Recommendations:

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

- The school board, using a consultative process, should develop and communicate a multi-year strategic plan that provides a framework for annual planning.
- The school board should develop a formal annual operating plan aligned with the Board's multi-year strategic goals. This annual operating plan should cover all aspects of its non-academic operations, including human resources, financial management, and facilities management. This will also enable all departments to track and report progress on their defined priorities and goals throughout the year.
- Senior administration should report to the Board of Trustees annually on the status and outcomes of the school board's strategic plan and the annual operating plan, once it is developed.
- The school board should establish a formal succession plan which includes plans for senior staff in both academic and non-academic functions to help build and sustain leadership capacity.

Human Resource Management and School Staffing/Allocation

The Human Resources (HR) department at the school board demonstrates a good level of operational effectiveness overall. It has implemented many leading practices, including:

- Processes are in place to identify and remove discriminatory biases and systemic barriers in staff recruitment, selection, hiring, mentoring, promotion and succession planning processes. The school board works towards broadening the diversity of recruitment pools.
- The school board maintains appropriate processes and systems to monitor staff attendance on a timely basis.
- Payroll processing is segregated from employee data records, and changes to data are adequately controlled.

The department focuses on transactional, reoccurring activities, such as payroll, and also has a heavy focus on labour relations. The HR department does not have a departmental plan in place. Much of the department's strategic direction is set through informal priority setting, in close collaboration with the Director of Education. A departmental plan should be created and aligned with the school board's strategic and operating plans once they are developed.

Due to the recent third-party review initiated to examine the organizational structure of both HR and Plant department, the current structure of the HR department is unclear to many staff inside and outside the department. Senior administration should work towards clarifying the HR departmental structure, roles, and responsibilities, to ensure the department has clearly defined organizational units. Documentation should clearly delineate the respective roles and responsibilities of staff, while ensuring that this information is communicated to internal staff and external stakeholders.

The school board's recruitment practices have been standardized and continue to evolve through process improvements. However, the Chair of the Board is directly involved in interviewing panels. This does not align with the requirements of Bill 177. Trustees should only express their views on recruitment through the development of Board policies and by-laws. They should not be part of the hiring process, other than for the position of Director of Education.

The school board's *Performance Management* document provides a step-by-step approach to its performance evaluation process. To support this, the school board should develop, communicate and fully implement a standard policy and consistent process governing the formal discipline and dismissal of staff. A progressive discipline policy should be implemented and applied across employee groups.

The school board maintains an electronic management system to monitor staff attendance. All staff groups, excluding custodians, use this system to manage absences. The school board has considered using attendance support program providers, but has not yet engaged a vendor to implement an official attendance support program. The school board should formalize its attendance support process to ensure that there are clearly documented and approved policies and procedures to minimize the cost of absenteeism. It is also recommended that the Director of Education report to the Board on the effectiveness of this attendance support program.

At present, the school board is in the midst of a pay equity review process for all non-union employees, including principals and vice-principals. The school board should continue with the process to ensure that an approved pay equity plan is implemented and periodically reviewed and amended.

The school board is working to improve oversight of the benefits plan system. As such, management should continue to consider hiring a third party to for a compliance audit of the insurance carrier. It should also continue to work with cost containment efforts regarding benefit administration and processes.

HR does not formally survey staff for feedback or measure general attitudes regarding the level of satisfaction with its services. Management does not conduct exit interviews. Practices such as staff surveys and exit interviews can provide management with valuable input for PD and policies that impact future employee relations. The school board should consider pursuing both practices.

The staff allocation process is clearly documented and accounts for a number of factors. It is reported that final allocations are often higher than those determined through the standard staff allocation process, and that additional staff are added based on approval by both the Associate Director (Leading Learning) and the Director of Education. The school board should formalize the processes that govern the development and finalization of the annual staffing plan and allocation process, to reflect the priorities of the Board and Ministry initiatives.

Staffing levels are monitored closely at the school board through the financial management/payroll system. However, there are no formal reports to the Board on

staff allocation. Base line staff allocations are standard and transparent. There should, however, be a clear process for adding staff above and beyond allocations. This process should be formalized, documented and made standard in the case of changes to enrolment or funding changes. These procedures must be documented and transparent so that processes are clear, and accountability can be tied to school board goals.

Recommendations:

- The HR department should consider developing an annual department plan aligned with the school board's operating plan and overall strategic direction. This will enable the department to track and report on the progress of its defined priorities and goals throughout the year.
- Management should communicate a detailed organization chart internally as well as post it to the school board website. The organization chart should clearly indicate the reporting structure of the HR department.
- The HR department should consider providing regularly scheduled HR policy awareness, training, and education sessions to build staff capacity in understanding HR policies and administrative procedures.
- The Director of Education should review the composition of the school board's interview panels, and develop formal hiring policies and procedures to clarify the roles of trustees and school board staff. Trustees should provide strategic policies to govern staffing and recruitment, but should not sit on interview or hiring panels with the exception of hiring the Director of Education.
- Trustees should continue to provide the school board with a policy and priority framework for bargaining. They should not directly participate in labour negotiations.
- Management should consider developing and communicating a formal policy or procedure for the formal discipline and dismissal of all staff, to ensure consistency and transparency.
- Management should continue to develop a comprehensive attendance management program, including policies and procedures to address specific categories of absenteeism. This will provide management with a consistent and structured approach to improve attendance across all employee groups.
- Management should periodically report to the Board and senior management on the effectiveness of its attendance management program, once it is in place.
- Management should implement an approved pay equity plan non-unionized staff, which is reviewed periodically and amended as necessary.
- Management should conduct a compliance audit of the school board's insurance carrier to ensure adherence to the benefit plans terms and conditions. This will ensure accuracy and validity of claims paid.

- Management should conduct periodic and confidential staff surveys to improve communication with staff and provide input for professional development plans and HR policy.
- Management should consider conducting exit interviews with all staff leaving the school board to obtain input on HR policy, as well as process and program improvement.
- The school board should implement policies and procedures that outline the annual staffing plan and allocation process and reflect the priorities of the Board and Ministry initiatives.
- Management should periodically report to the Board on the actual allocation of staff, compared to the original approved allocation plan and budget.
- Formalized procedures should be put in place to enable adjustment of staff allocations for school based staff if estimates for enrolment and funding change after budget approval.

Financial Management

The department produces a number of positive results, through the implementation of these leading practices:

- The finance department's goals and priorities are documented in an annual department plan that is aligned to the annual board operating plan and accessible to key stakeholders. The plan incorporates measurable targets, specific timelines and identified accountability.
- The finance department has clearly defined organizational units and delineates the respective roles and responsibilities. A current organization chart is available.
- The school board's integrated financial information system provides useful, timely and accurate information for management and stakeholders.
- An efficient cash management process maximizes interest income, using short-term investments where appropriate and ensures that the school board's debt service costs can be met to maturity.
- The school board's finance department performs three-way matching (purchase order, receipt/invoice and inspection) before invoices are paid.

The school board considers major budget risks such as declining enrolment and reserves when planning the annual budget. Budget risk mitigation strategies are considered informally through a budget workshop and the Business and Finance Committee. The department should consider consolidating key risks mitigation strategies in a formal risk plan. This risk plan would be documented and presented to senior administration and the Board, as part of the budget development process.

Senior departmental staff provide regular financial reporting to the Board and have implemented recommendations of the Interim Financial Reporting Committee (IFRC). Senior staff should ensure interim financial statements are formally approved by

senior management (including a signature), to ensure the integrity of financial reporting.

The central school board's banking is done with one financial institution; however, school board management has not consolidated cash management activities for the schools with this financial institution. Schools should be encouraged to use the school board's bank where feasible.

The school board does not currently require EFT for vendor payments. However, it has now begun to suggest it as part of all contracts. Management recognizes that additional EFT opportunities should be explored to maximize efficiency within the Finance department, and they are encouraged to do so.

Recommendations:

- Management should consider enhancing the process of reporting on the school board's budget risks using the format suggested in section 4.2 of this report. A formal risk management plan/report, which is reviewed and updated periodically, would include strategies to mitigate the risks of spending beyond budgeted levels.
- The school board should ensure interim financial statements are formally signed off by senior management to ensure the integrity of financial reporting.
- Cash management activities should be consolidated with a single institution.
- Management should continue to explore additional Electronic Fund Transfers (EFT) opportunities to maximize efficiencies.

School Operations and Facilities Management

The plant department has adopted several of the leading practices in its custodial and maintenance operations, including:

- The school board has implemented a formal green clean program as part of its overarching Education Environmental Policy. The green clean program incorporates principles from the Ministry's Green Clean Program Resource Guide.
- Using a consultative process, senior administration develops and communicates a multi-year (three to five years) plan for major maintenance and renewal projects.
- 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.
- The Board has established an overarching environmental policy that addresses both environmental education and responsible management practices.

- Capital forecasts and related funding plans are assessed annually and adjusted to meet current needs and changes to original assumptions such as enrolment projections including the impact of the Full-Day Early Learning Kindergarten Program and capital grants.
- Management uses cost-effective designs, standard footprints, energy conservation and economical construction practices to minimize construction and future maintenance and operation costs.

Training is provided to Plant department staff. Management should work to ensure appropriate Plant training is provided to the broader school board staff group. It is important for Plant staff to contribute to the broader PD agenda of staff to ensure that there is an understanding of facility issues with academic and supervisory staff.

While management reported that there are no pressing concerns with school cleanliness, cleaning checklists are used at schools when cleanliness issues and custodian job performance issues have been flagged. The school board should maintain a permanent quality assurance record of facility cleanliness in order to enforce consistent cleaning standards across the school board. This process will allow the school board to monitor, manage and report on results. This would also support custodial performance evaluation.

Energy consumption is tracked internally and through the Ministry-sponsored Utility Consumption Database. Consumption records are downloaded from the school board's tracking database into the financial management system for billing and financing. The school board receives copies of energy bills from each utility and enters the information manually. While the school board has no control over the process the utility providers use for billing, it should continue to work with them to receive consolidated billing electronically.

Occupational health and safety (OH&S) is the responsibility of the Manager of Health and Safety. OH&S plans have not been centralized into one OH&S plan, and are maintained through multiple plans across different departments. The school board should go beyond its current practices and develop, implement, and monitor an OH&S plan that reflects its policies and administrative procedures on health, safety and wellness. Similarly, the school board is encouraged to consolidate all existing emergency plans in one document that includes a detailed emergency and crisis response plan.

A third party offers a wellness program at the school board. The healthy schools initiative is managed through academic services. Overall, there is not a clearly-articulated health strategy applied consistently across the system. The school board should continue to develop an overarching health strategy, reflecting its policies and procedures to promote overall health and wellness of students and all employee groups.

Recommendations:

- Management should work to build staff capacity in understanding school operations and facilities policies and administrative procedures, through training and professional development.
- The school board should expand the use of standard processes for inspecting and reporting on facility cleaning.
- The school board should continue to work with electricity providers to set up consolidated billing.
- The school board should develop an occupational health and safety plan, to ensure compliance with associated health and safety statutory requirements for both students and all employee groups.
- The school board should develop a security strategy reflecting the security and student safety policies and ensuring compliance with associated statutory security requirements for both students and all employee groups.
- The school board should consider establishing an integrated health plan/strategy to reflect all existing policies and procedures, and to promote health and wellness across the school board. Management should also consider coordinating the development, implementation and monitoring of the plan centrally.

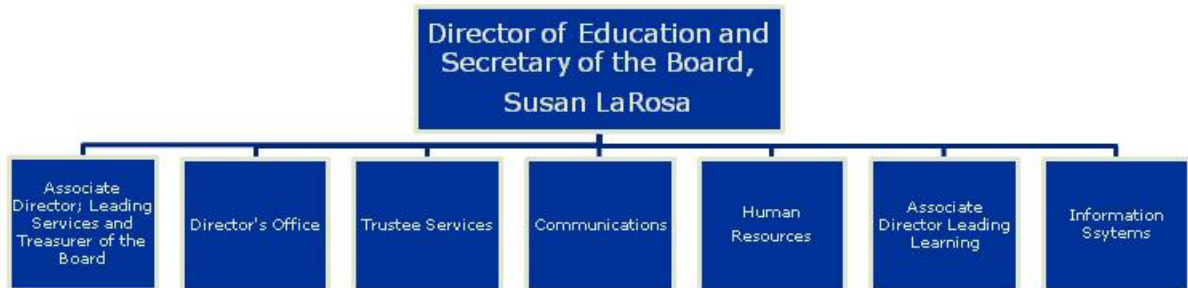
1. Background and Overview

1.1. School Board Profile and Structure

The York Catholic District School Board is committed to one common goal: success for every student. The collective goal of parents, teachers, support staff, administration, and trustees is to support, challenge, and inspire every student to achieve their full potential. Responsible for providing public education to 52,484 students, the school board offers a diverse range of programs in its 98 schools.

Since 2002-03, enrolment has increased by approximately 4,801 students or 10.06 per cent.

The Senior Administration Team at the school board is composed of the Director of Education, supported by senior staff as follows:



1.2. Key Priorities of the School Board

The York Catholic District School Board maintains the following vision/mission statement:

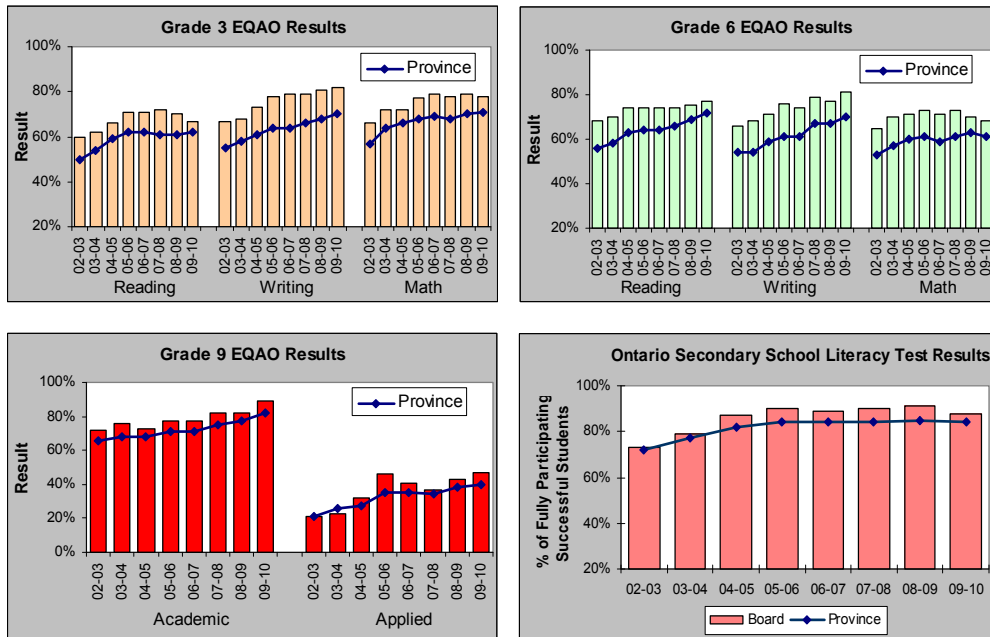
“We are a Catholic Learning Community of collaborative partners, called to serve one another by being committed to and accountable for quality learning by all, with Jesus as our inspiration.

We are committing to continually improving our schools, creating environments where everyone interacts and innovation and improvement are built into our daily activities; where we, as a Catholic Learning Community, can come together to reflect on our best practices, assess our effectiveness and make decisions about what we need to do to become even more effective; where we are all engaged in a common purpose; and where we rely on each other to reach agreed upon goals that we could not achieve independently.”

1.3. Student Achievement

The school board has EQAO results above the provincial average in all measures since 2002-03, with the exception of Grade 9 applied results dipping below the provincial average in 2003-04. The school board met or exceeded the provincial average of the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Results from 2002-03 to the 2009-10 periods.

The following charts show the school board's student EQAO results over the last eight years:



1.4. Fiscal Overview

Since 2004-05, the school board consistently submits budgets, both at Estimates and Revised Estimates, which forecast in-year deficits and a reduction in their accumulated surplus. When the school board's financial statements are submitted, their financial results have consistently been better, with minimal in-year deficits.

The school board has a planned deficit in the 2010-11 Revised Estimates; however, based on the school board's recent Estimates submission for 2011-12, the 2010-11 financial results have improved.

The 2009-10 Financial Statements included a One-Time Capital Debt Support Grant of \$424,180,098 as part of the Provincial Grants – GSN to recognize capital debt as at August 31, 2010 that was supported by existing capital programs. The school board now has a plan in place to finance its capital commitments, mainly through the proceeds of disposition. The school board also follows Ministry approval processes regarding new capital commitments and is tracking its proceeds of disposition for use on new capital projects.

The following tables provide a fiscal overview of the school board:

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York Catholic DSB	2008-09 Financial Statements	2009-10 Financial Statements	2010-11 Revised Estimates
<u>Summary Financial Data</u>			
Revenues:			
Provincial Grants - GSN	324,899,812	771,008,653	355,374,503
Provincial Grants - Other	9,457,894	11,375,627	9,007,962
Local taxation	169,110,846	173,714,426	173,640,072
School Generated Funds	20,913,394	22,196,223	22,115,000
Federal Grants and Fees	-	-	-
Investment Income	4,525,203	4,262,372	2,600,000
Other Revenues	-	-	-
Other Fees and Revenues	13,465,348	15,810,813	4,480,109
Amortization of Deferred Capital Contributions	-	-	26,037,066
Total Revenues	542,372,497	998,368,114	593,254,712
	-	-	-
Expenditures:			
Instruction	401,420,988	420,963,605	439,322,045
Administration	15,089,950	14,896,461	15,003,187
Transportation	16,600,302	16,331,978	17,964,332
School Operations and Maintenance	-	-	51,872,902
Pupil Accomodation	90,842,568	108,112,583	56,665,086
School Generated Funds	20,600,149	22,041,177	22,402,000
Other	645,929	224,087	224,087
Total Expenditures	545,199,886	582,569,891	603,453,639
	-	-	-
Accumulated Surplus (Deficit):			
Annual Surplus / (Deficit)	(2,827,389)	415,798,223	(10,198,927)
Accumulated Surplus / (Deficit) at beginning of year	347,555,361	344,727,972	751,524,948
Change in Accounting Policy - DCC	-	-	(838,306,017)
Accumulated Surplus / Deficit at end of year	344,727,972	760,526,195	(96,979,996)
<u>School Board Accumulated Surplus / (Deficit) and Deferred Revenues</u>			
Details of Accumulated Surplus / (Deficit):			
Unappropriated Reserves Available for Compliance	6,000,779	3,502,932	(1,778,963)
Internally Appropriated Reserves Available for Compliance	22,983,032	1,209,537	3,809,537
Externally Appropriated Reserves - Unavailable for Compliance	315,744,161	755,813,726	(99,010,570)
	344,727,972	760,526,195	(96,979,996)
Deferred Revenues - Operating:			
Legislative Grants	-	22,697	-
Other Ministry of Education Grants	284,962	12,984	417,875
Other Provincial Grants	-	-	-
Third Party Grants	-	-	-
	284,962	35,681	417,875
Deferred Revenues - Capital:			
Legislative Grants	-	-	-
Other Ministry of Education Grants	267,857	-	-
Other Provincial Grants	-	-	-
Third Party Grants	4,276,795	3,798,524	3,610,484
	4,544,652	3,798,524	3,610,484
	4,829,614	3,834,205	4,028,359

1.5. Key School Board Statistics

The following table highlights key statistics for the school board. Note the school board's enrolment has increased since 2002-03.

Summary Board Statistics	2002-03 Actual	2010-11 Revised Estimates
Day School Enrolment:		
Elementary Day School ADE	32,803	34,512
Secondary Day School ADE	14,880	17,972
Total Day School Enrolment	47,683	52,484
Primary Class Size:	2003-04	2010-11
% of Classes 20 or fewer	36%	90%
% of Classes 23 or fewer	67%	100%
Average Class Size - Jr/Inter	26.33	24.96
% of 3/4 Classes 23 & Under	20%	100%
% of Combined Classes	10%	14%
Staffing:		
School Based Teachers	2,746.00	3,435.00
Teacher Assistants	366.00	502.00
Other Student Support	191.00	303.00
School Administration	141.00	182.00
School Clerical	183.00	223.00
School Operations	430.00	507.00
Other Non-Classroom	125.00	150.00
Total Staffing	4,182	5,302
Teacher - Pupil Ratio	1 : 17	1 : 15
FTE Staff per 1,000 Pupils (ADE)	87.7	101.0
(Note: Impacted by Class Size and Special Education)		
Total Salary & Benefits as % of Net Operating Expenditures	70.7%	80.6%
Special Education:		
Special Education Incremental Expenditures	\$34,274,936	\$67,143,568
Special Education Allocation	\$35,112,686	\$63,913,239
Spending above Allocation	-\$837,750	\$3,230,329
School Utilization:		
Number of schools	88	98
Total Enrolment (ADE)	47,683	52,484
School Capacity (Spaces)	47,360	54,470
School Utilization	100.7%	96.4%
Board Area (Km2)	1,787	1,774
Number of Trustees	10	12

2. Governance and School Board Administration – Findings and Recommendations

A school board’s governance model and administrative organizational framework make a significant contribution in helping the Board of Trustees, director, senior administration and diverse community stakeholders support both student achievement strategies and effective 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 multi-year and annual plans (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; and
- 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.

Leading Practices – Governance and School Board Administration	Evidence of Adoption?
Establishment of an Effective Governance Model	
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. The governance model reflects the roles and responsibilities mandated by the <i>Student Achievement and School Board Governance Act</i> , Bill 177.	No

Leading Practices – Governance and School Board Administration	Evidence of Adoption?
Development of the Board’s Strategic Direction and the Annual Operating Plan	
The board of trustees, using a consultative process, develops and communicates a multi-year strategic plan that includes both academic and operational priorities and provides a framework for annual planning.	No
The director of education develops an annual operating plan of the 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. Staff are assigned goals for which they are accountable.	No
The director of education periodically/annually reports to the board of trustees on the status and outcomes of the board strategic plan and annual operating plan.	No
Decision-Making Processes	
The board of trustees and the director of education have appropriate processes in place for decision making.	Yes
The board of trustees and the director of education have appropriate processes for the establishment and regular maintenance of policies and administrative procedures for the efficient and effective operation of the board.	Yes
Organizational Structure and Accountability	
The organizational structure has clearly defined organizational units that delineate roles and responsibilities, minimize administrative costs and ensure effective and efficient operation.	Yes
A departmental organization chart (supplemented with a directory of key staff contact information) is publicly available on the board’s website.	Yes
Succession and Talent Development	
As part of the Ministry’s Ontario Leadership Strategy, the director of education, with support from HR, has established a formal Succession and Talent Development Plan to build and sustain leadership capacity.	No
Stakeholder Engagement	
The board of trustees and the director of education proactively engage diverse stakeholders (both internal and external) on a regular basis and through a variety of communication 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 Ministry workgroups.	Yes

Establishment of an Effective Governance Model

The governance structure of the York Catholic District School Board is supported by 10 elected trustees and two student trustees. The working relationship between the Chair and the Director of Education is close and collegial; they have worked as a team for 13 years. The Director focuses resources on ensuring strong relationships with the Board and external stakeholders.

The school board's governance model is outlined in the Board's Code of Conduct policy, the communication protocol and By-law No.1, *Operational By-Law*. The documents outline some of the separation of accountability for policy from that of operations, including outlining duties for trustees and senior administration within the communications protocol. This distinction has not been carried over or elaborated in the Code of Conduct and By-law No.1. There is not a clear distinction that the Director of Education is responsible for school board operations and procedures, while the Board sets policies and strategic direction. This necessity of this distinction has now been made clear with the introduction of the *Student Achievement and School Board Governance Act, Bill 177*, and should be applied against all policies, processes and procedures.

Three new trustees were elected in the 2010 election and have received in-servicing on all main trustee functions. Trustee training was spread over a number of months to help new trustees come up to speed as new issues arose. A third party presentation on Bill 177 was delivered in February 2011. Student trustees were invited to this training. The Board has not identified any policy that requires immediate attention outside of their ongoing policy review cycle, which has been underway for two years. At the time of the Operational Review, 80 per cent of all Board policies had been reviewed and updated.

The Board works directly with the senior administration team through a committee structure. In addition to the Committee of the Whole, the school board has a number of committees, including:

Standing committees

- Accommodation Committee
- Executive Committee
- Joint Board Consortium
- Labour Relations Committee
- Policy Review Committee
- Surplus Asset Review Committee

Statutory and other board committees

- Audit Committee
- Special Education Advisory Committee
- Board Safe Schools Committee
- Supervised Alternative Learning for Excused Pupils
- York Catholic Parent Involvement Committee
- Elementary Programs Committee
- Joint Board Election Compliance Audit Committee

School board liaison committees

- City of Vaughan
- Town of Markham
- Town of Richmond Hill

The Director's performance review is conducted every two to three years, using a standard performance package. The Board has not completed a self-evaluation of their performance. The Chair suggested that the Board is interested in developing a province-wide performance measurement tool template.

Although the Board works diligently to update policies, it has not yet fully incorporated all the key elements of the Bill 177 into school board policy. Bill 177, which came into force on December 15, 2009, clarifies the roles and responsibilities of school boards, trustees, Board chairs and Directors of Education. The school board should review its governance model and update it to reflect the roles and responsibilities mandated by Bill 177. This would include updating the code of conduct, and revisiting the trustee role in labour negotiations and in hiring for positions other than that of the Director. The Ministry would provide any additional support in this area at the request of the school board.

Development of the Board's Strategic Directions/Plan

The school board last completed a strategic planning process in 1994. Since the plan received some negative public reaction, and the Board has not been willing to undertake another full strategic planning process. In 2006, the school board did undertake a shared visioning exercise with input from the community. The exercise resulted in four student learning outcomes which have helped give direction to the school board and Board. The four outcomes are:

- Catholic Faith Community & Culture
- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Program & Pathways

Although some learning outcomes, the vision statement, and components of the Board Improvement Plan (BIP) are key components of strategic planning, the Board is in the process of finalizing the multi-year strategic plan. The Director and the Chair noted that the existing vision document is to be updated and developed into a full strategic plan. The Board is encouraged to follow through with the development of a full multi-year strategic plan that incorporates both academic and non-academic goals, and provides a clear direction to all staff on long-term goals. As required by Bill 177, the plan should:

- Promote student achievement and well-being
- Ensure effective stewardship of the board's resources
- Deliver effective and appropriate education programs to students

To complement a multi-year strategic plan, the school board should develop a formal annual operating plan to further enhance operational effectiveness and enable the Director of Education to report on specific outcomes. This document will be different and apart from the BIP, and would cover all operations, including human resources, financial management, and facilities management. The operating plan should be aligned to the Board's multi-year strategic plan, highlighting successes and how the school board's strategic direction is being implemented.

The Board receives regular strategic updates from senior administration on school board-wide projects and initiatives. As outlined in the communications protocol, in some cases direct updates are required to come from the site-based administrator or principal. Senior administration should report on the progress and outcomes of both operations and strategic plans annually once they are fully developed.

Decision-Making Process

The Board's process for agenda-setting and decision-making is formalized through the By-law #1, *Operational By-Law*. The by-law outlines the agenda setting process as well as responsibilities. Once approved by the Executive Committee, the Board agenda, along with all supporting materials are sent to trustees no less than 72 hours prior to the Board meeting. Agenda packages are usually sent Friday before Tuesday meetings. Standard agendas are used for both public and *in-camera* meetings.

The Executive Committee of the Board is composed of:

- Chair of the Board
- Vice Chair of the Board
- One or Two Trustees (as appointed in December of each year)
- Director of Education
- Associate Director: Leading Learning
- Associate Director: Leading Services
- Administrative Secretary

There are no amendments to agendas, unless approved by the Chair and Board executive in advance. If time is a consideration, items can be brought to the agenda via the Executive Committee or through the Chair. In meetings, additions to the agendas must be approved unanimously. Unfinished agenda items, if urgent, must be addressed at a Board meeting called within seven days of the meeting during which the item was originally scheduled. Non-urgent matters are expedited to the beginning for the agenda of the next regularly scheduled meeting.

The school board has appropriate processes in place for the establishment and regular review and updating of policies and administrative procedures. The Board's *Meta Policy: Policy Management and Governance* outlines the steps for regular maintenance of policies and procedures. The Meta policy document outlines step-by-step processes for the development of policy. Policy development begins with direction to do so from the Board, followed by completion of staff information forms. Draft policies are reviewed and revised by the Policy Review Committee. Once

approved by the committee they are passed on to the Board for approval. Draft policies are open for public consultation as required. Once approved, all policies are posted on the school board's website. Policy reviews take place cyclically at the school board. Reviews may also take place if requested by any stakeholder in the school community. A request triggers a staff review report to the Policy Review Committee.

Organizational Structure and Accountability

Seven distinct administrative functions report to the Director. These groups are:

- Director's Office
- Trustee Services
- Communications
- Human Resources
- Information Systems
- Associate Director, Leading Services and Treasurer of the Board, responsible for:
 - Business Services
 - Plant Services
 - Administrative Services
 - Environmental & Office Services
- Associate Director, Leading Learning, responsible for:
 - Student Services
 - School Superintendents
 - Curriculum

Contact information for all key senior staff is available on the school board's website. Due to a recent restructuring of several departments, not all job descriptions for senior staff are up-to-date or clearly defined.

Succession and Talent Development

The school board has adopted components of a succession and talent development plan to build and sustain leadership capacity across multiple staff functions. The Director and SBO work to maintain a clear picture of succession planning, but there is no documented tracking or processes to guide succession planning at the senior levels of the school board. Professional development (PD) is part of the school board's talent development efforts, and is managed centrally by one individual on the academic side. Responsibility for PD in non-academic groups is decentralized.

The school board should formalize its succession and talent development plans, and expand existing programs with a focus to strengthen PD for non-academic staff. Current initiatives and future improvements should be consolidated and focused in a single succession and talent development plan. This will help build and sustain leadership capacity across the school board.

Stakeholder Engagement

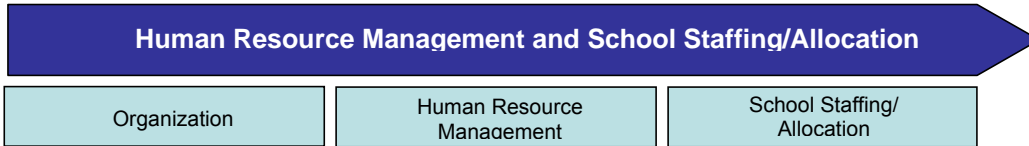
The school board maintains Policy 110 – Communications Protocol: Trustee/Administration. The policy sets out communications expectations and protocol for trustees and senior administration. The policy outlines focused requirements regarding internal communications within the school board and between senior administration and the Board. Trustees connect regularly and work with their different communities and constituents to ensure dialogue.

Members of the senior administrative team and the Board are actively involved in various provincial forums and groups, including membership in the Ontario Association of School Business Officials (OASBO), Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE), and the Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association (OCSOA) among others. Senior staff are also involved in local community groups, and in some cases hold senior director roles in major organizations/associations.

Recommendations:

- The school board should develop a formal governance policy that clearly delineates the division of duties and responsibilities between the Board of Trustees and the Director of Education. The school board's governance model should reflect the roles and responsibilities mandated by the *Student Achievement and School Board Governance Act*, Bill 177.
- The school board, using a consultative process, should develop and communicate a multi-year strategic plan that provides a framework for annual planning.
- The school board should develop a formal annual operating plan aligned with the Board's multi-year strategic goals. This annual operating plan should cover all aspects of its non-academic operations, including human resources, financial management, and facilities management. This will also enable all departments to track and report progress on their defined priorities and goals throughout the year.
- Senior administration should report to the Board of Trustees annually on the status and outcomes of the school board's strategic plan and the annual operating plan, once it is developed.
- The school board should establish a formal succession plan which includes plans for senior staff in both academic and non-academic functions to help build and sustain leadership capacity.

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 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 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.

Leading Practices – Human Resource Organization	Evidence of Adoption?
Development and Reporting of Annual Goals and Priorities	
The HR department's goals and priorities are documented in an annual department plan. They are aligned to the annual board operating plan accessible by key stakeholders. The plan incorporates measurable targets, specific timelines and identified accountability.	No
Organizational Structure and Accountability	
The HR department has clearly defined organizational units and delineates the respective roles and responsibilities. A current organization chart is available to the public.	No
Senior HR staff have appropriate designations (e.g., Certified Human Resource Professional) and/or experience.	Yes
Monitoring and Communication of Policies	
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.	No

Development and Reporting of Annual Goals and Priorities

The HR department does not have a departmental plan in place. Much of the department's strategic direction is set through informal priority-setting, in close collaboration with the Director of Education. The department focuses on transactional, reoccurring activities (such as payroll) and labour relations. The HR department has developed multiple, cross-functional teams to address challenges within the scope of departmental control. These include implementing an e-recruitment program and the consolidation of responsibility for Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) claims into the Occupational Health and Safety Services unit within the HR department.

The department should work to clarify departmental areas of focus and key initiatives. The school board should provide greater clarity regarding the structure of the department, as well as the roles and responsibilities of senior departmental staff.

A recent third party review of the department's organizational structure has been submitted to the Director. At the time of the Operational Review, the report and its recommendations had not been shared with departmental staff and management. Discussions regarding a new departmental structure have occurred only with the senior departmental management, who will carry out the reorganization.

The recommendations from the third-party review should be considered in the development of a departmental plan. The plan should link department priorities with unit and individual performance measures and accountabilities, facilitate clear definition of roles, enable collaboration among team members, and provide a

roadmap for the department. The plan should be aligned with the school board's strategic plan and operating plan once these pieces are developed.

Organizational Structure and Accountability

Senior HR staff have appropriate designations including two Certified Human Resources Professional designations (CHRP's). The department also employs a lawyer and an engineer, and is considering adding a compensation expert.

Due to the recent third-party review, the current structure of the HR department is unclear to many staff, both inside and outside the department. At the time of the Operational Review, the principle change to the structure was the reassignment of the teacher staffing and allocation duties to a Superintendent of Education supported by a team of HR staff. Reporting to the Superintendent of Education is a Manager of Human Resources Teacher Personnel, as well as two HR Coordinators and four staffing officers.

The Superintendent of HR now manages a team including five managers supervising a team of more than 26. The department's managers are:

- Employee Relations Officer/Human Resources Information Systems Manager
- Employee Relations Officer/Privacy Manager
- Manager of Human Resources, Business and Services
- Manager of Human Resources, Teacher Personnel
- Manager, Health and Safety

Senior administration should work towards clarifying the HR departmental structure as well as roles and responsibilities, to ensure the department has clearly defined organizational units. There is uncertainty regarding the possibility of additional changes resulting from the third party review. This should be clarified prior to further communication regarding departmental organizational structure. Documentation should clearly delineate the respective roles and responsibilities of staff, while ensuring that this information is communicated appropriately to both internal staff and external stakeholders.

Monitoring and Communication of Policies

The HR department is responsible for the monitoring and maintenance of policies and procedures including but not limited to:

Policies:

- vacation guidelines
- summer student hiring
- job evaluation guidelines
- course reimbursement
- tuition reimbursement

Administrative procedures:

- compassionate leave

- leave of absence
- lieu time guidelines
- related employment and instructional experience guidelines
- replacement of centrally assigned teachers
- sick leave for academic staff
- teacher evaluations
- teacher recruitment
- travel allowance and other expenses
- change management reporting

Staff training is developed and organized by the school board's Administrator of Leadership Development, who reports to the Associate Director (Leading Learning). The department has provided training for principals and vice-principals. Management reports training is not identified as an area of focus for the department. HR has also provided input into staff training in certain areas, such as return to work and progressive discipline. The school board is encouraged to provide regularly scheduled HR policy awareness, training and education sessions to staff and to more closely align the HR department with the provision of such training.

Recommendations:

- The HR department should consider developing an annual department plan aligned with the school board's operating plan and overall strategic direction. This will enable the department to track and report on the progress of its defined priorities and goals throughout the year.
- Management should communicate a detailed organization chart internally as well as post it to the school board website. The organization chart should clearly indicate the reporting structure of the HR department.
- The HR department should consider providing regularly scheduled HR policy awareness, training, and education sessions to build staff capacity in understanding HR policies and administrative procedures.

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 board's goals;
- 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.

Leading Practices – Human Resource Management	Evidence of Adoption?
Staff Recruitment/Hiring	
Recruitment policies and administrative procedures are reviewed annually, and are aligned with staff planning to support student achievement. Trustees do not sit on hiring panels (exception: hiring the director of education) but provide policies to govern staffing and recruitment.	No
Processes are in place to identify and remove discriminatory biases and systemic barriers in staff recruitment, selection, hiring, mentoring, promotion and succession planning processes. The school board conducts employment system reviews and works towards broadening the diversity of recruitment pools.	Yes
The hiring policies and procedures for the respective staff groups are harmonized and shared with managers throughout the school board.	Yes
Labour Relations	
The Director of Education and the Board of Trustees have established labour/management committees.	Yes
Trustees provide the school board’s policy and priority framework within which bargaining takes place.	No
HR management has established policies and procedures to minimize grievances.	Yes
Employee Performance Evaluation Processes	
HR management has policies and procedures for an employee evaluation/performance system for all staff.	Yes
HR management maintains and communicates formal disciplinary policies and procedures for all staff.	No
The HR department actively supports the professional development activities of the school board.	Yes
Attendance Support Processes/Programs	
The school board maintains appropriate processes and systems to monitor staff attendance on a timely basis.	Yes

Leading Practices – Human Resource Management	Evidence of Adoption?
The school board has an attendance support program that is documented and includes approved policies and procedures for minimizing the cost of absenteeism.	No
Management periodically reports on the effectiveness of attendance support processes/programs to senior management and the board.	No
Management of HR and Payroll Data	
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.	No
Management of School Board's Benefit Plans	
HR management periodically conducts independent compliance audits of the board's insurance carrier to ensure adherence to benefit plan's terms and conditions.	No
Employee data is automatically synchronized between the 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	
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

At the time of the Operational Review, the department was working to implement an e-recruitment tool for school board staff. The existing process has been identified as labour-intensive and paper-driven. The aim is to provide a more efficient and user-friendly process.

The department maintains a yearly teacher recruitment plan that identifies staff areas of focus and interview structures, as well as plans for targeted university job fairs. The recruitment process drives applicants to the online application system through to

interviews and on to the supply teacher list. All hiring is done from the supply teacher pool. Direct recruitment only takes place for teaching positions requiring specialized qualifications.

Although the school board's recruitment practices have been standardized and continue to evolve through process improvements, the direct involvement of the Chair in interviewing panels does not align with the requirements of Bill 177. Trustee involvement on the second interview panel for principals, as well as the interview panel for superintendents, should not be continued. As per Bill 177, trustees should express their views on recruitment through the development of Board policies and by-laws. They should not be part of the hiring process, other than for the position of Director of Education.

The school board maintains processes to identify and remove discriminatory biases and systemic barriers in the recruitment, selection, hiring, mentoring, and promotion of staff. The school board has not yet identified any major challenges or inconsistencies in the diversity of their staff group. The HR department has standardized employee hiring practices across the school board.

Labour Relations

HR management and Senior Administration have established a number of labour-management committees that meet regularly, with terms of reference outlined in collective agreements. The labour-management committees represent the collective bargaining units of the school board. They are:

- Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Labour Management Committee
- Liaison Committee - York Occasional Teachers
- Labour Relations Committee – Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association (OECTA), York Unit

The department works to ensure ongoing communication to minimize grievances. HR maintains open and regular communications with unions. All academic staff grievances are managed personally by the Superintendent of HR. The Superintendent of HR and the Director of Education meet with all union groups regularly. Management also meets with representatives of the principals/vice-principals and other non-unionized employee groups.

The school board's labour negotiations teams vary in composition, depending on the relevant union. As part of negotiation process, trustees are at the table and take part directly in the labour negotiation process. In line with Bill 177, trustees should not have a direct role in labour negotiations. It is recommended that trustees should continue to provide the school board with a policy and priority framework for bargaining. They should not play a direct role in negotiations.

Employee Performance Evaluation Processes

Performance evaluation processes have been developed for all academic and non-academic staff. The school board's *Performance Management* document provides a step-by-step approach to the performance evaluation process. Superintendents must ensure that performance appraisals take place in schools. The paper-based system has yet to be fully adopted by all employees.

Management reports effective discipline procedures in some non-academic groups. However, similar processes are not in place for academic staff. The school board should develop and communicate a standard policy and consistent process governing the formal discipline and dismissal of staff. A progressive discipline policy should be implemented and applied across employee groups.

Professional development (PD) plans are in place for both academic and non-academic staff. PD is not managed centrally. Different PD plans for specific employee groups are managed through different departments. Staff are encouraged by management to undertake PD. Options range from mandatory in-house training to optional opportunities offered externally through universities, colleges or external groups such as the Ontario Association of School Board Officials (OASBO). The superintendent of curriculum manages PD days for academic staff. For each structured learning day developed by school board staff, learning plans and outcomes are established and monitored.

Attendance Support Processes/Programs

The school board maintains an electronic management system to monitor staff attendance. All staff groups, excluding custodians, manage absences through the system. Absences are recorded online or by phone, and codes are used for different reasons of absenteeism. Once absences have been entered, the system automatically dispatches a replacement when required. Custodians are required to contact their area facilities coordinator to advise of their absence. HR enters custodian absenteeism data into the electronic system once it is reported. Management is encouraged to further leverage the system's capabilities by tracking trends and attendance averages.

The school board has considered third party attendance support program providers, but has yet decided to engage a third party to implement an official attendance support program. The school board should formalize the attendance support process to ensure that there are clearly documented and approved policies and procedures for minimizing the cost of absenteeism. It is also recommended that the school board further leverage the attendance system's capabilities and ensures reporting to the Board on the effectiveness of the attendance support program.

Management of HR and Payroll Data

The school board's payroll processing is separate from the employees' data records, and is managed internally within the Finance department. Employee data and

information is kept up-to-date and inputted into the electronic data management system by the school board's HR department. The system notifies payroll of changes and payroll then makes the appropriate adjustments. Only printing of T4s is outsourced. The school board works with other users of the electronic management system to share best practices, and collaborates on system improvements as part of an official user support group. The data management system helps school board staff keep HR records, staff qualifications and documents current. The department synchronizes teacher qualifications with the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) database quarterly.

There is no formal approved pay equity plan in place at the school board for non-unionized staff. As a result of a complaint to the Pay Equity Commission, the school board is in the midst of a pay equity review process for all non-union employees, including principals and vice-principals. The process underway is paper-based, resulting in increased demands on resources. The school board should continue with this process to ensure that an approved pay equity plan is implemented, reviewed, and amended as necessary.

Management of the School Board's Benefit Plans

The school board is working to improve oversight of the benefits plan system. Management is working to more clearly understand existing trends and usage changes within the benefits program. The current benefits provider has been in place since 2001. In 2003, management contracted a third party (through the Catholic School Boards Services Association) to audit benefits plans.

School board management has recently considered the cost-benefit of hiring an external auditor to examine the employee benefit plan, and decided not to pursue a review. Management should continue to consider an external audit, and in turn engage a third party to conduct compliance audits of the school board's insurance carrier, as well as continue to work with cost containment efforts regarding benefit administration and processes. This will help ensure accuracy and validity of claims paid, and ensure ongoing adherence to the benefit plans terms and conditions.

The school board mitigates the plan costs by managing the benefits plans as an administrative services-only (ASO). Benefits plans are managed through HR, with input from supervisors as well as labour-management consultations. Employee data is automatically synchronized between the school board and the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan (OTPP) and the Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement Systems (OMERS).

Monitoring Staff Satisfaction

HR does not annually survey staff for feedback, or measure general attitudes regarding the level of satisfaction with its services. A survey of employees was undertaken (to support the search process) during the last Director of Education search in 1996, and for three consecutive years commencing in 2002. Management conducts exit interviews for support staff. Practices such as staff surveys and exit

interviews can provide management with valuable input for PD and policies that impact future employee relations. The school board should consider fully implementing both practices.

Recommendations:

- The Director of Education should review the composition of the school board's interview panels, and develop formal hiring policies and procedures to clarify the roles of trustees and school board staff. Trustees should provide strategic policies to govern staffing and recruitment, but should not sit on interview or hiring panels with the exception of hiring the Director of Education.
- Trustees should continue to provide the school board with a policy and priority framework for bargaining. They should not directly participate in labour negotiations.
- Management should consider developing and communicating a formal policy or procedure for the formal discipline and dismissal of all staff, to ensure consistency and transparency.
- Management should continue to develop a comprehensive attendance management program, including policies and procedures to address specific categories of absenteeism. This will provide management with a consistent and structured approach to improve attendance across all employee groups.
- Management should periodically report to the Board and senior management on the effectiveness of its attendance management program, once it is in place.
- Management should implement an approved pay equity plan for non-unionized staff, which is reviewed periodically and amended as necessary.
- Management should conduct a compliance audit of the school board's insurance carrier to ensure adherence to the benefit plans terms and conditions. This will ensure accuracy and validity of claims paid.
- Management should conduct periodic and confidential staff surveys to improve communication with staff and provide input for professional development plans and HR policy.
- Management should consider conducting exit interviews with all staff leaving the school board to obtain input on HR policy, as well as process and program improvement.

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 support 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.

Leading Practices – School Staffing/Allocation	Evidence of Adoption?
Processes for Annual Staff Planning and Allocation	
The school board’s 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	
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).	No
Procedures are in place to enable adjustment of staff allocations for school based staff, if estimates for enrolment and funding change after budget approval.	No
Management’s plan for providing student support services and staffing is based on student-needs analysis.	Yes

Processes for Annual Staff Planning and Allocation

The school board's staff allocation model is governed by collective agreements and relevant provincial legislation. The process is clearly documented and takes into account a number of factors, including enrolment projections, student needs, class size caps, alignment with collective agreements, and resource and program needs. The process of enrolment projections is centrally coordinated and extremely accurate. In past years, the student enrolment projections have only been off by nine students across the entire school board.

With the recent reorganization of the HR department, the staff allocation process for the 2011-12 is not yet finalized. However, based on practices used up to 2010-11, the initial step in the staff allocation process is for the planning department to provide HR student enrolment estimates. TCH25 forms are used for detailed elementary actuals, while secondary estimates are done manually and submitted by principals to HR for staffing purposes. Once finalized, system-wide and individual school actuals are analyzed, and aligned with collective agreement staffing requirements. The school board uses different processes to customize staffing allocations by group. The following details staff allocation processes for specific staff groups:

Academic Staff

Classroom teacher requirements are forecasted based on enrolment actuals, primary class size requirements, and collective agreement parameters (e.g. prep time and class size maximums).

Principal and Vice-Principal Staffing

Principal and vice-principal staffing is based on school enrolment and operational needs. These allocations are reviewed annually.

Educational Assistants (EAs)

Allocations are based on special education funding and identified student need. Educational assistant allocations are reviewed by the Director, in consultation with the superintendent of special education. HR tracks the allocation and staffing of EAs carefully throughout the year.

Secretarial Staffing

Secretarial staffing is based on school enrolment and needs. The allocation is reviewed by the Associate Director, Leading Learning and HR.

Custodial Staffing

The allocation of custodial staff is based on square footage, and is included in the collective agreement.

Para-Professional Staff

Staffing allocation is based on special education funding and identified student need.

Non-union Board Staff

Staffing allocation is based on available funding and the needs of each department.

Final allocations require approval of the Associate Director and the Director, and are presented for approval to the Labour Relations Committee. It is reported that final allocations will often be higher than those determined through the process described above, and that additional staff are added based on approval by both the Associate Director and Director. The school board should formalize the processes that govern the development and finalization of the annual staffing plan and allocation process, to reflect the priorities of the Board and Ministry initiatives.

Monitoring and Reporting on Staff Allocation

Staffing levels are monitored closely at the school board, through the financial management/payroll system. Meetings are held every two weeks during the school year to ensure appropriate staffing allocations, updating the TCH25s files to ensure allocation numbers are correct. Staffing reports are presented to SLT and to Business and Finance Committee when financial status reports are presented. Staffing details emerge during budget discussions (estimates and revised estimates). The school board does not budget staffing holdbacks to be added in case of inconsistencies in enrolment projections. Staffing is filled to 100 per cent of enrolment actuals, and in some cases an over-staffing situation can arise if students do not return to a school the following September. The number of staff assigned to a school is based on enrolment projections, but is adjusted depending on the actual enrolment at a school.

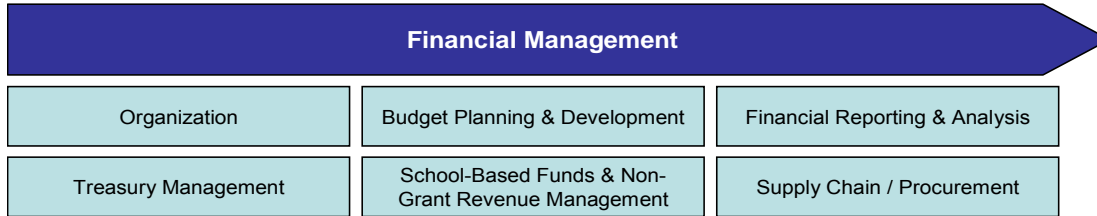
If material staffing adjustments are required, staff members are added by approval of the Director or Associate Director, Leading Learning. These approvals are made simply via an authorizing email from the Director or the Associate Director, Leading Learning. Separately, if individuals are promoted to positions of added responsibility, there is a standard, transparent process followed that includes forms submitted to the Director for approval. Base line staff allocation is standard and transparent; however, there should be a clear process for adding additional staff above and beyond allocations. This process should be formalized, documented and made standard.

Management allocates student support services. Staffing is based on student-needs analysis and funding analysis, ensuring that this process is clearly documented for transparency. In the case of changes to enrolment or funding levels, there are procedures in place to make staffing adjustments. These procedures, however, must be documented and transparent so that processes are clear, and accountability can be tied to school board goals, such as student achievement. This clarity will allow the school board to better understand what staffing changes have been made and why, supporting the high-level strategic plan once it is established. Until the strategic plan is established, management should ensure that the board improvement plan is followed with regards to staffing.

Recommendations:

- The school board should implement policies and procedures that outline the annual staffing plan and allocation process and reflect the priorities of the Board and Ministry initiatives.
- Management should periodically report to the Board on the actual allocation of staff, compared to the original approved allocation plan and budget.
- Formalized procedures should be put in place to enable adjustment of staff allocations for school based staff if estimates for enrolment and funding change after budget approval.

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 its support of the roles and responsibilities for 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.

Leading Practices – Finance Organization	Evidence of Adoption?
Development and Reporting of Annual Goals and Priorities	
The finance department’s goals and priorities are documented in an annual department plan that is aligned to the annual board operating plan accessible by key stakeholders. The plan incorporates measurable targets, specific timelines and identified accountability.	Yes
Organization Structure and Accountability	
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/or experience.	Yes
Monitoring and Communication of Policies	
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 sessions.	Yes

Development and Reporting of Annual Goals and Priorities

The area defined as Finance is divided into two main areas: Business Services, and Budget and Audit Services. Business Services and Budget and Audit Services each develop two key planning documents annually, a broad annual plan as well as a detailed document of goals and initiatives. The annual plan outlines objectives and initiatives, whereas the detailed plan identifies the specific initiatives corresponding to each of the respective service units. The Business Services detailed plan also outlines the ways by which success of each initiative is measured. Departmental management should ensure that the departmental plan is fully aligned with the school board’s strategic plan once it is developed.

Along with Administrative Services, Plant, and Environmental and Office Services, Business Services and Budget and Audit Services report to the Associate Director, (Leading Services) and the Treasurer. The Leading Services Council (LSC) meet weekly for a scheduled three hour meeting to ensure alignment across business services, including addressing schedules, issues coming from Board committees, Ministry directives, and emerging department or cross-departmental issues. Agendas are sent out in advance and minutes of meetings are kept including all action items arising from the meeting. These minutes are kept as an official record and posted on an internal shared drive. The LSC ensures that all committees of the Board are kept up-to-date on matters of specific concern, using a standard template information form sent as required.

Organizational Structure and Accountability

Business Services: The Senior Manager, Business Services & Assistant Treasurer reports to the Associate Director (Leading Services) and the Treasurer and is supported directly by the System Special, Finance and Capital, the Manager of Accounting, Payroll & Benefits as well as the Manager of Purchasing. The department is composed of roughly 23 staff, with well-defined job descriptions, responsibilities, and qualifications. The school board's website provides contact information for the department. Current staff maintain appropriate qualifications, including individuals with Certified General Accountant (CGA) designations, Chartered Accountants (CA) designations, Certified Management Accountants (CMA) designations, as well as SO papers and other college and post secondary training.

Budget and Audit Services: The Senior Manager of Budget and Audit Services reports to the Associate Director, Leading Services & Treasurer as well. The area supports Budget, School Finances and Audit. The department is composed of nine staff members. Job descriptions, areas of responsibility and qualifications are available and kept up-to-date. Key resource staff within the department have qualifications to include CMA, SO papers, and university and college accreditations. Many within the department are continuing advancement with ongoing post secondary designations. Department contact information is available on the Board website.

Monitoring and Communication of Policies

The departments are responsible for policies and administrative procedures, including (but not limited to) the following:

- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable & Cash Receipt
- General Accounting
- Treasury
- Capital & Other
- Tangible Capital Assets
- Purchasing
- Payroll and Benefits
- Central Purchasing Card – Audit Procedures
- School Purchasing Card – Audit Procedures
- Registered Charity Guidelines and Forms
- School-Based Contractors
- Catholic School Council Finances
- Bank Deposit Slip - Catholic School Council
- Catholic School Council Pre-Approved Cheque Requisition
- Catholic School Council Cheque Requisition
- Ledger Template (Catholic School Council)
- Monthly Income and Expenditure Statement (Catholic School Council)
- Catholic School Council Combination of Funds into the School Bank Account
- Annual Catholic School Council Revenue and Expenditure

- Transfers from Catholic School Council Funds
- Catholic School Council Year end summary
- Annual Income & Expenditure Statement for the Year Ended August 31
- Catholic School Council Year-End Reports
- PCard Audit Tracking
- PCard School Audit Report Sample
- School Finance Details
- School Bank Account Analysis
- School Bank Account and Catholic School Council Revenue vs. Expenditures Summary
- Auto Shop Tech Program – Work Order Tracking
- Financial Documentation Recommendations for Auto Tech Program
- School Bank Account Deposit Log Sheet
- Guidelines for Funds Generated in Elementary Schools
- Fundraising Profits
- Use of Fundraising Money
- School-Generated Funds Audits
- School Audit Report Elementary
- School Audit Report Secondary
- CSC Separate Account Audit Report Sample
- School Bank Account/CSC Audit Plan
- School Library Book Fair Process Summary - Finance
- Prepayment of Goods
- Revenue and Expenditures Statement and Backup
- Council/School Gifts to Staff
- School Contributions to Charities
- Guidelines for Funds Generated in Secondary Schools
- Enrolment Audits
- Use of Board Funds for Recognition
- Admissions (responsibility of Admissions Department under the direction of Senior Manager, Administrative Services)

Finance procedures are developed and maintained in line with the school board's Meta Policy, which sets high-level guidance for all Board policies. The department communicates policies through various means, including direct communication with department or broader school board staff. It also uses regular training to communicate policy or procedural changes. The department takes part regularly in monthly school principal meetings, and staff training (such as annual secretary training). It has also done broader staff training, sometimes with the conterminous school board. The department ensures ongoing compliance with all policies listed above, and has ensured close supervision of procurement policies.

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.

Leading Practices – Budget Planning and Development	Evidence of Adoption?
Annual Budget Development Process	
The annual budget development process is documented, transparent, clearly communicated and incorporates input from all key stakeholders including management (with principals), board of trustees and the community, and supports the school board’s strategic and operational plans.	Yes
Management has adopted an integrated (at school board and school levels) approach to enrolment forecasting that drives the budget process.	Yes
Budget development 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	
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

The school board maintains a centrally-led annual budget development process that is consistent year-to-year. The budget process is outlined in school board documents as follows:

January

- Review current year's financial status
- Establish meeting dates for the Allocation of Resources Design Team (ARDT)
- Establish reporting dates to Board

February

- Review enrolment projections
- Review staffing projection
- Review and confirm system priorities
- Review resource pressures and discuss ways to leverage resources
- Discuss proposed new initiatives to be considered
- Complete expenditure input/request forms
- Provide update to ARDT

March

- Present to Board the 'Preliminary Overview'
- Analyze impact of GSN announcements
- Finalize enrolment base for 2010-11
- Summarize expenditure requests
- Compare preliminary revenue and expenses

April

- Align expenditures requests to system priorities
- Present to Board draft of allocation of resources
- Present salary and benefit module
- Present revenue module
- Present to SEAC special education allocation of resources

May

- Review expenditure request to system priorities
- Update staffing information with latest TCH25
- Review revenue and GSN calculations
- Present to Board draft of allocation of resources
- Present options for trustee discussion
- Hold public meetings for input
- Review status of allocation of resource

June

- Finalize 2010-11 operating and capital budget
- Board approve 2010-11 allocation of resources
- Submit GSN through EFIS (Ministry Website)

- Inform budget stakeholders of the results of the Board approved 2010-11 allocation of resources

The budget development process accounts for multiple inputs from stakeholders, and is developed using spreadsheets with input from different departments. The process is documented, transparent, and clearly aligned to the school board's high-level initiatives. Budget planning modules include: revenue, salary, and benefits, among others. The final budget document is presented directly to the Committee of the Whole, since there is no budget subcommittee.

Although the budget development and staffing allocation processes are fairly standard, in-year staffing complement changes and the impact they have on the approved budget could present challenges for the school board. Management should consider developing a risk and opportunity framework to assess the impact of proposed in-year staffing changes. This framework would be linked to the strategic and operating plans of the school board once they are in place.

In support of the budget process, management has adopted an integrated approach to enrolment forecasting. This process, drawn from central school board resources as well as school level input, has historically proven to be very accurate. In recent years enrolment allocations have been incorrect by as little as a fraction of a percentage. The budget development processes also accounts for all required cost and revenue changes. Management projects staffing based on enrolment changes, the Provincial Framework Agreement, new programs, and retirement trends within the Board, and costs accordingly. Management compares staffing costs with other school boards and the Ministry salary grids.

Risk Mitigation and Board Approval

The school board considers major budget risks (such as declining enrolment and reserves, new programs and enrolment changes) when planning the annual budget. Budget risk mitigation strategies are presented to the Senior Leadership Team and the Board. Board members and senior administration discuss risks through a budget workshop and the Business and Finance Committee, Labour Relations Committee and Board meetings. Management uses a balanced budget approach to build the budget. Options are presented with details on how close the financial gap. However, a formalized approved plan has yet to be detailed. While the board has in the past maintained designated reserves for specific purposes, this is no longer available. The department should consider consolidating key risk mitigation strategies in a formal risk plan. This risk plan would be documented and presented to senior administration and the Board, as part of the budget development process.

Suggested enhancements to the budget risks reporting process:

The process of reporting on risk mitigation strategies varies significantly among school 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 which 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, 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 budget risk, identified formally at the beginning of the budget cycle.
- Any new budget risks.

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

Recommendation:

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

4.3. Financial Reporting and Analysis

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

- Assess whether procedures are in place to ensure that management, the Board of Trustees and the Ministry receive timely, accurate and complete financial information of all 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.

Leading Practices – Financial Reporting and Analysis	Evidence of Adoption?
Integrated System for Variance Analysis and Financial Reporting	
The school board’s integrated financial information system provides useful, timely and accurate information for management and stakeholders.	Yes
Interim and Annual Financial Reporting	
Interim financial reports provide sufficient detail (including a comparison of actual to budget and year-to-date comparisons from previous years) for a clear understanding of the status of the current year’s budget and the outlook for the year.	Yes
Senior management is held accountable for the integrity of financial reporting through formal sign-off and approval procedures.	No
Management completes and files all financial reports in accordance with established timelines.	Yes
Audit	
Management maintains an independent internal audit function.	Yes
Internal audit plans are clearly documented. Internal audit report recommendations are followed up and acted upon by management.	Yes
The Board has an audit committee with external members.	Yes
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 uses an integrated financial and management system to record, track, and report financial data by individual budgets. The system is structured so that fund managers (those holding responsibilities for budgets) are able to electronically access the system to monitor their budgets (except for salaries and benefits) in real-time. Budget and Audit Services controls all parent accounts (other than salaries and benefits), oversees all budgets and runs variance reports on individual budget and parent accounts. The system is structured to send warnings to fund managers when budgets are 80 per cent, 90 per cent and 100 per cent spent. Once a budget reaches 100 per cent, it is frozen, providing an additional layer of oversight.

Interim and Annual Financial Reporting

Budget and Audit Services provide regular financial reporting to the Board and have implemented the recommendations of the Ministry's Interim Financial Reporting Committee (IFRC). The department maintains well-established and clearly documented schedules and procedures for reporting and year end-closing. The LSC ensures that financial statements are accurate in all interim and annual reports. Senior staff should also ensure interim financial statements are formally approved by senior management (including a signature), to ensure the integrity of financial reporting. The school board completes and files all financial reports with the Ministry in accordance with established timelines, and monitors financial reports on a regular basis.

Audit

The school board is actively participating in the Ministry's regional audit initiative. The Budget and Audit Services department maintains dedicated internal audit resources. Budget and Audit Services works with all departments to provide support and ensure that controls are in place and Board and Ministry policies are followed. The Budget and Audit Services goals are to:

- Open lines of communication among the department and throughout the Board
- Continue to acquire professional knowledge
- Continue to work with other departments to refine and develop new policies and procedures
- Work towards refining processes, which will result in reduction of suplicate activities
- Continue to participate in Ministry, Board and other association committees

Key priorities for the 2010-11 year include a reexamination of the budget process (to improve reporting and information gathering processes), reviewing school finances to ensure compliance with Ministry reporting requirements, and expansion of the type and number of internal audits performed while supporting the external auditor. The goals and objectives are included in the school board's three-year internal audit plan,

presented to and approved by the LSC. The plan is also shared with the Board's Audit Committee. The yearly internal audit report is presented to the Director.

In line with Ministry directives, the Board maintains an audit committee with external members which meets three times annually. The school board received a significant response to the call for external committee member volunteers. The external members of the audit committee are not voting members. As per current legislation, only trustees are recognized as voting members on school board standing committees. The Board's audit committee meets with the external auditor and the school board's internal audit function. The external auditor's management letter is presented to the committee annually.

Recommendation:

- The school board should ensure interim financial statements are formally signed off by senior management to ensure the integrity of financial reporting.

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.

Leading Practices – Treasury Management	Evidence of Adoption?
Cash and Investment Management	
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 are consolidated with a single financial institution where feasible.	No
Management periodically reports to the board on the performance of the investment activity and any board-approved investment policy.	Yes
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 school board's cash management process is efficient, minimizing idle cash by monitoring cash flows against projections. These cash flows are compared regularly, usually more than three times a week. Similarly, management regularly compares banking terms against Ministry benchmarks. The school board recently renegotiated banking terms through an open tender process. The decision to issue a tender for banking services was made in part due to monitoring rates of other institutions. In negotiating the agreement with the banking provider, the school board negotiated preferential borrowing rates, should they be required.

The central school board's banking is done with one financial institution. School board management has not consolidated cash management activities for the schools with this financial institution. While the school board has made recommendations to schools, encouraging a choice of one of two institutions, schools are free to choose any bank. Schools should be encouraged to use the school board's bank, where feasible.

Investments are made regularly by the school board. Investing is done per the *Education Act*. Management considers a school board investment policy when making investments. Risks related to cash and investment management are managed through staff oversight and practices such as keeping paper and electronic copies of financial agreements. Senior administration reports to the Board annually on investments.

Recommendation:

- Cash management activities should be consolidated with a single institution.

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.

Leading Practices – School-Based Funds and Non-Grant Revenue Management	Evidence of Adoption?
Management of School-Based Funds	
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	
Management ensures adequate controls are in place to safeguard non-grant revenue and coordinate the annual reporting of revenues and expenditures from all sources.	Yes
Board budget identifies revenue for each EPO program. Management monitors expenditures to ensure compliance with terms and conditions.	Yes

Management of School-Based Funds

Management ensures adequate controls and safeguards with school-based funds, and centrally coordinates the annual reporting of revenues and expenditures from

schools. School secretaries are responsible for collecting and depositing school-based funds, and all monies are kept in safes at schools until time of deposit. It is a requirement that deposits be made weekly so to minimize the accrual of cash at school sites. The school board has access to each school's financial records and is able to monitor all bank accounts as well as the transactional data. Finance staff are able to audit accounts if there is concern on a regular basis.

Management of Non-Grant Revenue

Members of the school board staff helped create the OASBO handbook on non-grant revenues. Internal guidelines were developed from this for both elementary and secondary schools. Non-grant revenues are managed through the school board's financial management system. School staff are trained yearly on guidelines and throughout the school year on any material change that could affect in-school responsibilities or practices. Secretaries are trained regarding the management of non-grant revenues in August of each year, and all new principals attend the session. Training is also provided to treasurers of school councils.

Finance provides oversight of non-grant revenues through in-school audits, one annually for secondary schools and two annually for elementary schools. The school board is piloting cashless schools at the secondary level, to help move away from the risk associated and oversight required with non-grant revenues. Continuing Education manages revenue collections internally, and is moving toward a cashless model, collecting fees online using credit cards.

The school board employs an Outreach Coordinator who works closely with municipalities to find common solutions to facility sharing and community use of schools challenges. Some municipalities are now piggybacking on the school board's system to book out public fields. Management suggests the next phase is to add an online payment function for community use of schools.

The school board uses a standard system to organize, prioritize, and track EPO grants. Budget and Audit staff members have the responsibility to oversee all EPOs. Once EPOs are assigned to a budget holder, a fund centre is created. The Budget and Audit staff person responsible for EPOs meets with each budget holder monthly to ensure that EPO funds are being spent as required and helps monitor outcomes to ensure alignment to goals set out by the Ministry. The school board has provided advice and best practices to other school boards on EPO management.

4.6. Supply Chain/Procurement

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

- Whether supply chain/procurement policies and practices comply with the Supply Chain Guideline (SCG) v.1.0 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.

Leading Practices – Supply Chain/Procurement	Evidence of Adoption?
Policies and Procedures	
Approved procurement policies and procedures are clearly communicated to staff with purchasing authority and are periodically reviewed and updated.	Yes
In line with the SCG, approved procurement policies clearly outline circumstances under which the school board will use competitive versus non-competitive 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, and the SCG.	Yes
Participation in Group Purchasing Initiatives	
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	
In line with the SCG, 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	
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, receipt/invoice and inspection) before invoices are paid.	Yes
Commitment accounting is in place to monitor budget utilization.	Yes
Management has implemented electronic supplier interface for ordering, processing and payment.	Yes
Use of Electronic Funds Transfer	
Management maximizes its use of electronic funds transfer (EFT) for vendor payments.	No

Policies and Procedures

The school board has developed a procurement policy and a Purchasing Reference Guideline (including a code of ethics) aligned with the mandatory elements of the Supply Chain Secretariat's Supply Chain Guideline (SCG) 1.0. Policy 802 -Purchase, Lease and Rental of Products and Services, sets out a clear policy statement as well as parameters and the responsibilities of staff relating to purchasing. The supply chain code of ethics is included in the reference guidelines, and is centered on three tenants: personal integrity and professionalism; accountability and transparency; and compliance and continuous improvement. The policy and procedure are communicated with all staff through an internal electronic notice board system and are publicly available on the school board website. The school board has yet to update its purchasing policy to align to the new BPS procurement directive.

The school board's purchasing guidelines clearly state the school board will show no local preference in its purchasing practices. The document also indicates circumstances where the use of non-competitive procurement is acceptable. These circumstances include emergency situations, and situations where only one supplier is able to meet the requirements (single or sole-sourced purchasing). The purchasing department reports that it is undertaking a gap analysis of practices and is doing so using systems such as its internally managed contracts database, Bid Management System (BMS). This online database tracks all competitive bids and makes them publicly available so vendors are able to see which are available and at what stage they are (open and closed). The BMS produces monthly reports for the Leading Services Council as well as reports for the Business and Finance Committee. All POs are centrally controlled and monitored through purchasing. The automated financial system overlays controls, ensuring that spending limits and thresholds are met. In addition to the financial system, department staff provide ongoing oversight of all POs to ensure alignment to the school board's purchasing procedures. The school board maintains clear expense reimbursement guidelines in the *"Purchasing Reference Guide"*. The different requirements for each level include the number and type of signatures required, as well as the required authority.

Participation in Group Purchasing Initiatives

Management uses partnerships to increase purchasing power and minimize the costs of goods and services procured. The school board participates in various purchasing co-operatives and consortia, such as the Catholic School Boards Services Association (CSBSA) and the Ontario Education Collaborative Marketplace (OECM) for products and services such as classroom furniture and mailing equipment. The school board collaborates directly with coterminous school boards for waste management services, consulting services, classroom supplies, and other products and services.

Purchasing Levels of Authority

The school board maintains a detailed “*Purchasing Reference Guide*” that provides clear guidelines for all areas of purchasing and procurement, and includes a purchasing code of ethics. Detailed authorization levels and procedures exist for all areas of purchasing and payment actions. Purchasing-payment cycle procedures include:

- Cheque signing
- Cheque runs
- EFT payments
- Non-EFT electronic payments
- Purchase requisition threshold
- Purchase Orders
- PO invoices
- Payment request without PO
- Expense reimbursement

Purchase requisitions can be entered by authorized staff and require the electronic authorization/signature of a fund manager if they are line items below \$2,500. Line items equal to or above \$2,500 require approval of both the fund manager and superintendent. Different thresholds requirements exist for plant and consulting services. Purchase orders require the following authorizations:

- Below \$25,000, one electronic signature of the purchasing buyer.
- Equal to or greater than \$25,000, two electronic signatures of the purchasing buyer and the Manager of Purchasing Services.
- \$75,000 and above require the electronic signatures of the purchasing buyer, the Manager of Purchasing Services and the Associate Director, Leading Services and Treasurer.

In addition to these, the school board maintains detailed process flow maps for plant department purchase/work requests. All updates to expense policies and purchasing requirements are managed through the Business and Finance Committee and in turn are approved by the Policy Review Committee (where appropriate) and the Board.

Policies and Procedures for PCard/Corporate Card Use

PCards are used by many staff groups at the school board. Each group maintains its own single and monthly transaction limits detailed in the table below:

Title	Single Transaction Limit	Monthly Transaction Limit
Principals & VP Elementary	500	1,000
Principals & VP Secondary	1,000	3,000
Secretaries & Bursars	200	1,000
Department Heads	300	1,000
Teachers	200	500
Librarians Elementary	500	1,000
Librarians Secondary	1,000	2,000
Caretakers Elementary	25	100
Caretakers Secondary	50	200
Sr. Management	2,500	5,000

Corporate credit cards are not used at the school board. Gas purchase cards are used by Plant staff, providing a percentage discount on purchase. Gas cards are negotiated in conjunction with a group of school boards, who take part in the program. All PCard transactions are recorded centrally at the school board. Accounts payable transfers information from PCard accounts into the central electronic financial management system for tracking. Information on PCard spend is maintained at individual school sites for school PCard holders and at the school board office for central staff. Adherence to limits is ensured through two levels of regular PCard audits that take place at the school level and through the central financial management system. PCards are audited throughout the year to ensure adherence to Board Policies.

Accounting for Completeness of Purchase/Payment Cycle

The school board uses an electronic purchase and payment cycle for a high percentage of transactions. Requisitions are entered at school sites into the school board's financial management system at this point, to create an encumbrance on the designated budget line. Once approved by the fund manager, or other supervisory officer depending on the amount, requisitions are sent to the purchasing agent who creates a PO. POs are dispatched electronically by the financial system via e-mail or fax to vendors. Orders are drop-shipped to school sites and receiving information is entered into the electronic financial management system. Once complete receiving information is entered, receipts are closed and filed at the schools or departments available for future audits. Invoices are sent directly to accounts payable and entered into the electronic system and matched automatically. Different terms for each vendor are loaded into the electronic management system and payments are sent out accordingly. The system uses both commitment accounting and an electronic supplier interface.

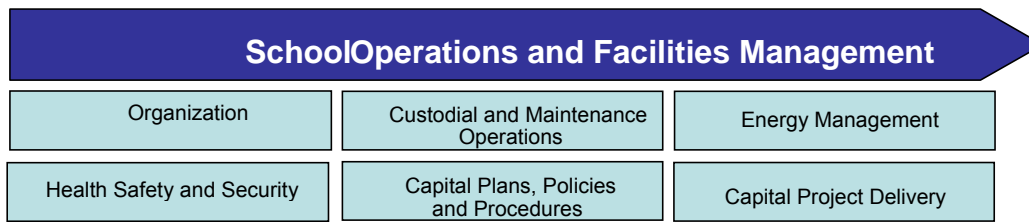
Use of Electronic Funds Transfer for Greater Efficiency

The school board does not require EFT for vendor payments. However, it has begun to mandate EFT as part of all new contracts. Without the 100 per cent mandatory requirement, management reports that 60 to 70 per cent of suppliers do accept EFTs, and that the current dollar amount percentage of vendor payments done via EFTs is above 70 per cent. The Business Services Department continually explores additional EFT opportunities to maximize efficiency within the Finance department.

Recommendation:

- Management should continue to explore additional Electronic Fund Transfers (EFT) opportunities to maximize efficiencies.

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.

Leading Practices – Operations and Facilities Organization	Evidence of Adoption?
Development and Reporting of Annual Goals and Priorities	
The School Operations and Facilities Management department's goals and priorities are documented in an annual department plan. They are aligned to the annual board operating plan accessible by key stakeholders. The plan incorporates measurable targets, specific timelines, and identified accountability.	Yes
Organizational Structure and Accountability	
The School Operations and Facilities department has clearly defined organizational units and delineates the 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 and/or experience.	Yes
Monitoring and Communication of Policies	
Management has processes in place to monitor school operations and facilities management policy compliance by all staff and management.	Yes
Management builds staff capacity in understanding of school operations and facilities policies and administrative procedures.	No
Processes exist to monitor new legislation and regulations and implement necessary changes.	Yes

Development and Reporting of Annual Goals and Priorities

The Plant Department sets yearly operational and capital targets, and ensures alignment to the school board's high-level vision statement. A rolling multi-year annual departmental plan is revisited every four months to ensure ongoing alignment with school board wide priorities. The department's 2010-11 plan guiding principles are:

- Focus department initiatives on alignment with Board vision and student outcomes
- Abide by Board policies, approved procedures and regulations established by Authorities Having Jurisdiction
- Develop initiatives that enable schools/departments to utilize local resources
- Communicate effectively and respond to needs
- Ensure value added
- Be fiscally responsible and maintain necessary internal controls
- Incorporate leading practices
- Seek opportunities to leverage financial, physical and human resources
- Initiatives/activities will be pro-active

- Be responsible in meeting Ministry and Board requirements

Each area of Plant, Construction Services, Facilities Services and Maintenance Services share the following objectives:

- Clean, safe and healthy learning and workplace environment
- Continuous quality improvement
- Effective communication
- Environmentally friendly initiatives

Plant management uses multiple inputs in the development of the annual plan, including maintenance records, third party reports, and evaluations. Using the multiple inputs helps management to develop a clearer picture of system-wide priorities. Departmental management planned to conduct a system survey to gather a deeper understanding of system-wide issues, concerns and areas for improvement, but have not yet had the opportunity to complete this survey. It is recommended that the department move ahead with the survey to strengthen the annual planning process.

Organizational Structure and Accountability

Prior to the Operational Review, the department participated in a review conducted by a third party. At the time of the Operational Review, the Director followed up with further questions for departmental management. However, no findings were shared. It was understood by staff that the department could undergo structural changes as a result of the third-party's report recommendations.

Within the existing organizational structure, the Superintendent of Plant reports to the Associate Director, Leading Services and Treasurer of the Board. Supporting the Superintendent are three Managers: Construction, Facilities and Maintenance Services. The Plant Office Supervisor and Office Assistant also report to the Superintendent.

The department is functionally organized at the managerial level, but structured across different geographic areas at the supervisory level. The maintenance depot is housed centrally at the school board office. Management is considering a secondary maintenance shop in a school site in the southern area of the school board. This change would alleviate traffic pressures of maintenance staff serving that region. The structure of the department is reflected in the school board's publicly available organization chart. Job descriptions exist for all positions in the department. Supervisors and staff are qualified through a mix of experience and training. Department staff hold a number of different degrees and professional certifications, including engineering and architectural degrees, trades tickets, and a broad spectrum of professional experience.

Monitoring and Communication of Policies

The Plant department is responsible for procedures and policies that include:

- General Requirements for the Handling of Asbestos

- Auto Accident Report
- Safe Work Procedures for Automotive Lifts and Other Vehicle Supports
- Batch Summary Steps
- Clean Up of Chemical Spills
- Chemical Spill Reporting Procedure
- Confined Space Entry Procedure
- Contractors Code of Conduct
- Co-op Bids 2010
- Electrical Safety Program
- Elevator Contractor Reports
- Emergency Fire Watch Procedure
- FRP Request Process
- Hot Work Procedure
- Inspection Task List
- Manlift Daily Inspection Sheet
- Multi-Day Work Order Time Log
- Safety Talks 08-06 Lightning
- Scissor Lift Guidelines
- School Enhancement Request
- Shop Team Daily Distribution
- Shop Vehicle Expense Report
- Tag Out / Lock Out
- Truck Inspection
- Use of Contractors
- Vehicle Daily Circle Check
- Yearly Filter Replacement Schedule
- Absence Head Custodian Reporting Procedure
- Application & Invoice Process
- Approved Special Interest Providers
- Permit Cancellation Request
- Cancellation/Refund Process
- Cash Receipt Process
- Damage Report
- Field Agreement
- Fire Emergency Procedures
- Misconduct Report
- Online Payment
- Responsibilities of Permit Holders
- Special Interest Program Status Letter
- Special Interest Guidelines
- Theatre Permit Process
- VISA Authorization
- Weekend Permit Report
- Procedures For Reporting Matrons or Custodians Absence From the Work Place
- Fire Alarm Procedure
- Fire Watch Procedure

- General Safety Rules for Custodians
- Rules of Employment
- Snow Plow Damage Report
- Snow Plow Event Report
- Tap Water Flushing
- Working Alone Procedure

The department provides oversight and monitoring of all departmental policies, with a special focus on financial policy compliance, in particular with regard to procurement processes. Regular meetings take place within the custodial and maintenance supervisory teams. Minutes of meetings are shared with staff through the electronic document sharing system.

Management receives all Ministry memos and is kept current on changes in regulation or sector best practices through sector working groups and industry expert panels. The department tracks all policy and regulatory changes. Internally, department staff are trained for their specific roles and duties, and management takes part in leadership training. Staff training is spread throughout the year, planned with consideration of both busy works periods and common vacation times. Electronic training records are kept for all staff, and are being transferred to the school board's electronic management system. The data transfer process is being managed by HR. The department provides training to department staff. Management should continue to work with HR to ensure required training on Plant systems and procedures is provided to the broader school board staff group. It is important for Plant staff to contribute to the broader PD agenda of staff, to ensure that there is an understanding of facility issues in academic and supervisory staff.

Recommendation:

- Management should work to build staff capacity in understanding school operations and facilities policies and administrative procedures through training and professional development.

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 maintain 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.

Leading Practices – Custodial and Maintenance Operations	Evidence of Adoption?
The Board’s Staffing Model Supports Cleaning Standards and Maintenance Requirements	
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. The school board has developed a guideline/manual for custodial and maintenance services to support these cleaning standards.	No
The school board has implemented a formal green clean program as part of its overarching Education Environmental Policy. The green clean program incorporates principles from the Ministry’s Green Clean Program Resource Guide.	Yes
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	
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, 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.	Yes
Training to Support Skills Development and Safety	
A monitored annual training plan for facilities staff addresses ongoing skill development and emerging regulatory issues.	Yes
Standardization of Cleaning and Maintenance Supplies	
Management uses an inventory system to track and control major cleaning and maintenance equipment.	Yes
Management has defined common standards to ensure efficient procurement of supplies in order to minimize costs, promote energy and operating efficiency, and environmental sustainability.	Yes
Project Management, Monitoring and Support Systems	

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 Staffing Model Supports the Board’s Cleaning Standards and Maintenance Requirements

Management reported that there are no pressing concerns with school cleanliness. While there are cleaning standards in place, there is no permanent quality assurance record maintained of facility cleanliness. Duties and responsibilities of custodial staff are documented. Cleaning checklists are used at schools when cleanliness issues and custodian job performance issues have been flagged. This formal cleanliness review is documented only at sites when performance review is required. Every school is visited twice a month at which time the regular facility inspections take place. There is central tracking of each time supervisors visit a school. Custodial supervisors are encouraged to meet with principals regularly and to formally document the inspection. There is no annual quality assurance report on cleaning inspections. The school board should develop a formal process to record and report on cleaning inspections in order to maintain consistency in facility cleanliness across the school board. Reporting the results of the formal site inspections vis-à-vis the Board standards will allow the custodial supervisors to provide a consistent approach to monitoring and managing the cleaning program. This would also support custodial performance evaluation.

The school board has implemented a green clean program as a part of its overall environmental policy. The school board has developed a set of standard specifications for custodial products, and has recently changed to using 100 per cent green clean supplies. Custodians will use the remainder of non-green supplies prior to switching, but there are very few inventories of cleaning supplies as the department has a just-in-time delivery model. Management is currently preparing a new tender for custodial supplies. Cleaning supplies are ordered online. Custodians submit orders to supervisors, who approve them and give orders to the custodial secretary. Orders are sent to vendors electronically through the school board’s electronic management program.

The caretaker staffing allocation model is based on the collective agreements and a recently signed letter of understanding that sets out a standard for square footage to be used in allocation. Allocation takes into account age of buildings, number of portables, community use of schools, facility population, location of schools, etc. The school board is using split shifts, and when required 12 supply custodians to accommodate the needs of different facilities and staff. Management compares the allocation model to other coterminous as well as broader Toronto boards.

Development of Annual and Multi-Year Maintenance Plan

The Plant Department tracks yearly enhancement projects through the school board project management system. Using information from the system as well as meetings with principals and third party reports, management maintains a five-year rolling maintenance plan. ReCAPP is kept up-to-date and considered when updating the plan. The plan is managed internally using spreadsheets and is presented to the Board Accommodation Committee as well to the LSC. In order to build some flexibility into the system, each maintenance supervisor is given \$25,000 to be used for minor maintenance projects.

Training to Support Skills Development and Safety

The Plant Department has regular training including mandated courses such as WHMIS, fall-arrest and others. Vendors train staff on specific systems or procedures unique to vendor-specific products. Staff are sent on course if required. The Maintenance Department employees are general maintenance positions supporting multiple maintenance functions. The cross-training of the general maintenance positions permits these staff to complete minor repairs, without having to use time of ticketed trade staff. In other cases of cross training within the department, certain positions support one another. For example, the locksmith and carpenters or electricians and HVAC technicians work together on many projects, and have made efforts to learn other trades to support maintenance efforts if required. There is an understanding that certain roles complement one another. The culture permits the cross training which leads to a more fluid and effective maintenance team.

Standardization of Cleaning and Maintenance Supplies

The Maintenance Department uses an internal spreadsheet to track and inventory all major equipment and tools. Major equipment information, includes type and location along with maintenance records and required inspection timelines. Tools are tracked closely, with records showing purchase date, purchaser, serial number, model, make, cost and approval. Maintenance trucks are fully catalogued, managed through a vehicle major tool inventory. These inventories include model and serial numbers of all tools within the maintenance vehicle.

The department has established a standardized, centralized process to ensure efficient procurement of supplies in order to minimize costs, and promote energy and operating efficiency and environmental sustainability. Purchasing controls are set through the budgeting process. Budgets are centrally monitored and managed by the appropriate budget holder, as well as by department management and Finance staff. PCards are used by head custodians and maintenance staff. Environmentally friendly and sustainable products are preferred when the option is available.

Project Management, Monitoring and Supporting Systems

The school board uses a computerized program to track and manage all work orders. The system is separate from the school board-wide financial and project

management system. Information from the work order system can be downloaded into the school board-wide management system. Management is working to improve the work order system to better provide a full picture of costs, including hours, materials and other costs associated with each individual or groups of work orders. Considerations for improvements to the work order system are ongoing, and include using PC tablets or PDAs to facilitate the dispatch of work orders to maintenance staff in the field.

Recommendation:

- The school board should expand the use of standard processes for inspecting and reporting on facility cleaning.

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.

Leading Practices – Energy Management	Evidence of Adoption?
Energy Management Plan	
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.	Yes
Procurement practices support the objectives and targets of the energy management plan.	Yes
Successful conservation initiatives are communicated across all schools and with other school boards.	Yes
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.	Yes
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.	No
The Board has established an overarching environmental policy that addresses both environmental education and responsible management practices.	Yes

Energy Management Plan

The school board's "Energy Conservation Implementation Plan" is a result of energy and environmental management planning that began in 2000. Managed by a team of three from the Environmental & Office Services Department, the conservation plan is the guiding document for the school board. The department has helped achieve milestones such as recently having 10 of the 20 most environmentally friendly schools in Canada come from the school board. The annual planning document includes departmental objectives, energy consumption monitoring guidelines, energy savings targets, conservation practice, conservation projects for the 2010-11 year, procurement guidelines, academic programs, as well as reported results against ongoing project performance. The department is not confined to reducing energy consumption, and also focuses on improving the learning environment using energy conservation techniques.

The school board, through the Environmental & Office Services Department, performs ongoing energy efficiency monitoring and shares results with a broad spectrum of stakeholders. The majority of schools are using smart meters, which permits up-to-the-minute energy usage monitoring. This usage and efficiency savings are shared instantly in all schools, while overall savings are reported to the Board and to other school boards regularly. The public is also able to monitor results online through the school board's online portal. Energy champions at each school help communicate energy savings information.

The department manages all affairs internally, employing three engineers as part of the team. They do contract to a third party to complete energy audits. Environmentally friendly procurement is part of school board policy and is in place. The school board uses a consortium for electricity and natural gas purchases. The department has helped implement many programs and initiatives in schools including EcoSchools, WattWise and Zero Footprint. The school board supports teacher release time for programs such as EcoSchools and plans to have 44 schools participate in the program in 2011-12.

Tracking and Reporting Energy Conservation

Energy conservation is openly communicated to an array of stakeholders. Energy consumption is tracked internally and through the Ministry-sponsored Utility Consumption Database. Consumption records are downloaded from the school board's tracking database into the financial management system for billing and financing. The school board receives copies of energy bills from each utility and enters the information manually.

The school board receives consolidated billing from its natural gas provider for most of its locations. After several requests from the school board, the electricity providers will not provide consolidated billing at this time. The school board should continue to work with the electricity providers to set up consolidated billing. The school board has recently updated its overarching environmental policy addressing both environmental education and environmentally responsible management practices. The school board is able to control each facility centrally and link to curriculum through the academic programs offered and the engagement of energy management champions.

Recommendation:

- The school board should continue to work with electricity providers to set up consolidated billing.

5.4. Health, Safety and Security

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

- Whether planning and communication exist to support the provision of a safe and healthy 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.

Leading Practices – Health, Safety and Security	Evidence of Adoption?
Health, Safety and Security Management	
Develop, implement and monitor an occupational health and safety strategy/plan that reflects the board’s occupational health and safety policies and administrative procedures and ensures the school board is in compliance with associated occupational health and safety statutory requirements.	No
Develop, implement and monitor a security strategy/plan that reflects the board’s security and student safety policies and administrative procedures and ensures the board is in compliance with statutory/policy security requirements.	No
Develop, implement and monitor a health strategy/plan that reflects the board’s health policies, procedures and programs and ensures the school board is in compliance with statutory health requirements.	No

Health, Safety and Security Management

Occupational health and safety (OH&S) is the responsibility of the Manager of Health and Safety. The manager’s duties are wide ranging and integrate all aspects of health, safety and wellness. The school board holds monthly OH&S meetings, with management, teacher, union and other staff groups represented. OH&S plans have not been centralized into one OH&S plan and are maintained through multiple plans across different departments. There is, however, no occupational health and safety plan in effect at the school board.

The school board provides OH&S training for different employee groups. Principals and vice-principals, as the site based administrators, are given in-depth OH&S training and every August receive refresher packages to ensure that they are current on OH&S issues. The school board should go beyond its current practices and develop, implement, and monitor an occupational health and safety plan that reflects its policies and administrative procedures on health, safety and wellness.

The school board maintains aspects of a centralized, detailed safety and fire procedure. Complete monitoring of sites and emergency plans help ensure the school board is prepared for safety events. The school board works to minimize the operational side of security by removing security impediments through building and site design (e.g. removing trees or shrubs that obscure views). A CCTV policy provides clear direction to the use of CCTV cameras in schools, the monitoring of which is done locally at the school and centrally at the Catholic Education Centre. Lock down and crisis response protocols have been developed for all school sites, and the school board has worked with the police department and six fire departments to develop plans. School plans and layouts are available electronically to officers or fire department officials responding to incidents at schools. The school board tracks vandalism through the work order system, and jobs are tagged as vandalism as

appropriate. Safety and security processes and plans are in place. Each school has a security monitoring system (supervised by a third party) that monitors for fire, loss of power and/or heat, and break-ins. A security response firm is engaged to respond to security alarm issues. The school board is encouraged to consolidate all existing emergency plans in one policy document which includes a detailed emergency and crisis response plan.

The school board employs a registered nurse who works together with a third party provider to offer wellness programs. Health and Wellness programs include blood pressure clinics, vaccination clinics, “adopt a hallway” campaigns to reduce slips, trips and falls, and many others. The healthy schools initiative is managed through academic services and supports other wellness programs. Overall, there is not a clearly-articulated health strategy applied consistently across the system. The school board should continue to develop an overarching health strategy, reflecting policies and procedures to promote overall health and wellness of both students and all employee groups.

Recommendations:

- The school board should develop an occupational health and safety plan, to ensure compliance with associated health and safety statutory requirements for both students and all employee groups.
- The school board should develop a security strategy reflecting the security and student safety policies and ensuring compliance with associated statutory security requirements for both students and all employee groups.
- The school board should consider establishing an integrated health plan/strategy to reflect all existing policies and procedures, and to promote health and wellness across the school board. Management should also consider coordinating the development, implementation and monitoring of the plan centrally.

5.5. Capital Plans, Policies and Procedures

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

- Assess whether school capital assets are being utilized effectively and efficiently;
- Assess how well management is planning for future capital requirements, based on enrolment forecasts and the capacity/maintenance issues of the existing asset base, relative to the funding available from the Ministry;
- 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.

Leading Practices – Capital Plans, Policies and Procedures	Evidence of Adoption?
Development of Annual and Multi-Year Capital Plans	
The school board has an approved annual and multi-year capital plan that includes the related funding plan as reflected in the school board’s Capital Wrap-Up Template.	Yes
The school board has an approved pupil accommodation review policy.	Yes
The school board has an approved facility partnership policy.	Yes
On-going Monitoring and Maintenance of Data to Support Capital Planning	
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 including the impact of the Full-Day Early Learning Kindergarten Program and capital grants.	Yes

Development of Annual and Multi-Year Capital Plans

The Plant Department works with the Finance and Administrative Services departments to build and maintain annual and multi-year capital plans. The school board maintains very long lines of sight on capital requirements. This is in part due to very accurate enrolment projection data that has allowed up to 35-year capital planning horizons. As capital plans are updated yearly, they are approved by the Board’s Accommodation Committee. The school board’s long-term accommodation plan was built with input from the senior administration team and the Director, and is fully updated and approved by the Board every five years.

The school board uses consolidation and ongoing community outreach to ensure efficient use of facilities. The board has three multi-use facilities and other multiple share partnership arrangements. The school board has an approved pupil

accommodation review policy, and an approved facility partnership policy that governs the surplus capacity within the board.

Ongoing Monitoring and Maintenance of Data to Support Capital Planning

The school board maintains and updates the SFIS and ReCAPP systems. Managed within Plant and Planning Departments, the systems are used primarily for Ministry reporting, while internally separate tracking systems are more often used to support capital planning. The school board uses the Ministry guidelines to identify Prohibitive to Repair (PTR) schools, using ReCAPP. Capital forecasts and related funding plans are assessed monthly and adjusted to meet current needs and changes with input from stakeholders.

5.6. Capital Project Delivery

The purpose of reviewing all related capital project delivery 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 capital project delivery, 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.

Leading Practices – Capital Project Delivery	Evidence of Adoption?
Cost Effective Practices in the Design and Construction of Facilities	
Management gives full consideration to the use of all available school space in their local communities before proceeding to build, purchase or lease other spaces.	Yes
Management uses cost-effective designs, standard footprints, energy conservation and economical construction practices to minimize construction and future maintenance and operation costs. The school board is guided by the principles outlined in the manual prepared by the Expert Panel on Capital Construction: <i>From Concept to Classroom – Leading Practices Manual for School Construction in Ontario</i> .	Yes
In constructing, acquiring, operating and managing school facilities, the school board is guided by the principles outlined in the <i>Ontario Green Energy Act, 2009</i> .	Yes

Leading Practices – Capital Project Delivery	Evidence of Adoption?
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	
A Project Manager is appointed to oversee all aspects of the project including monitoring the budget and project timelines and ensuring management processes are in place for issues such as change orders and other internal approvals. This includes periodic project status updates and post-construction project evaluation.	Yes
An independent Cost Consultant is retained by the school board to review the design, provide objective costing analysis and advice, and report to the school board on options to ensure that the proposed capital expenditure is within the approved budget, prior to tendering a project.	Yes
Maintaining Current Approved Professional Service Providers	
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

Management gives full consideration to the use of available school space in local communities before proceeding with the construction, purchase, or lease of other spaces. In areas where the school board is facing over-capacity, there are no vacant schools in coterminous school boards. In one case, the school board is using a vacant PTR school to house students while a school is demolished and rebuilt. In some areas, space is at such a premium the school board has worked with school boundaries to try and redistribute students. The school board uses cost-effective processes and designs in their current construction projects. Management uses repeat designs for schools, relying on five or six architects with standard buildings. Designs are chosen to best meet the needs of the school community. In designing and renovating buildings, established standards are applied to the size of facilities (rooms, gyms etc.) and with regards to materials, products, fittings, etc.

Management makes use of cost-effective designs and energy conservation principles, in line with the *Green Energy Act*. Economical energy conservation principles continue to be built into designs of new and retrofitted schools. The school board benchmarks construction costs against Ministry benchmarks and other school boards. Management works to control cost of projects, which can include withdrawing tenders and re-issuing to return more competitive bids.

Monitoring and Reporting of Progress on Construction Projects

Management has an effective process in place to monitor and control construction project costs, in line with Ministry requirements. All construction and renewal projects are managed internally by the department's project manager. Project budgets are set working with the Plant and Finance department templates that build in contingencies. Special contingencies are built into projects, as the cost of technologies (IT hardware, environmental systems) is bound to change from the initial pricing to the point when buildings are ready for installation. Contingencies are updated after the projects revised estimates are finalized.

During two recent large projects, a capital monitoring committee meets once a month to ensure the project is on track and on budget. Changes to construction costs or purchase orders follow the same regulations as per the school board purchasing procedure. An independent cost consultant has been used for recent projects. However, the cost estimates were 20 per cent higher than the cost of vendors. The cost consultant added in itself additional cost and time to the projects. With the Plant Department's internal professional resources, the school board has not found the practice to be beneficial.

Maintaining Current Approved Professional Service Providers

The school board advertises capital tenders through the *Daily Commercial News*. Internal trades persons are not involved with capital projects, and are used only for maintenance. The board pre-qualifies eight to 10 general contractors from those who enter submissions, and those eight to 10 are then invited to bid. The school board also pre-qualifies mechanical/electrical contractors for each project. The school board uses a standard contract, and ensures contracts are aligned with the Canadian Construction Documents Committee (CCDC) contract for construction projects. This includes documentation of due diligence, comprising proof of compliance with Occupational Health and Safety legislation and Workplace Safety and Insurance, bonding status, and verification of required qualification for the design and construction of electrical and mechanical systems.

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.

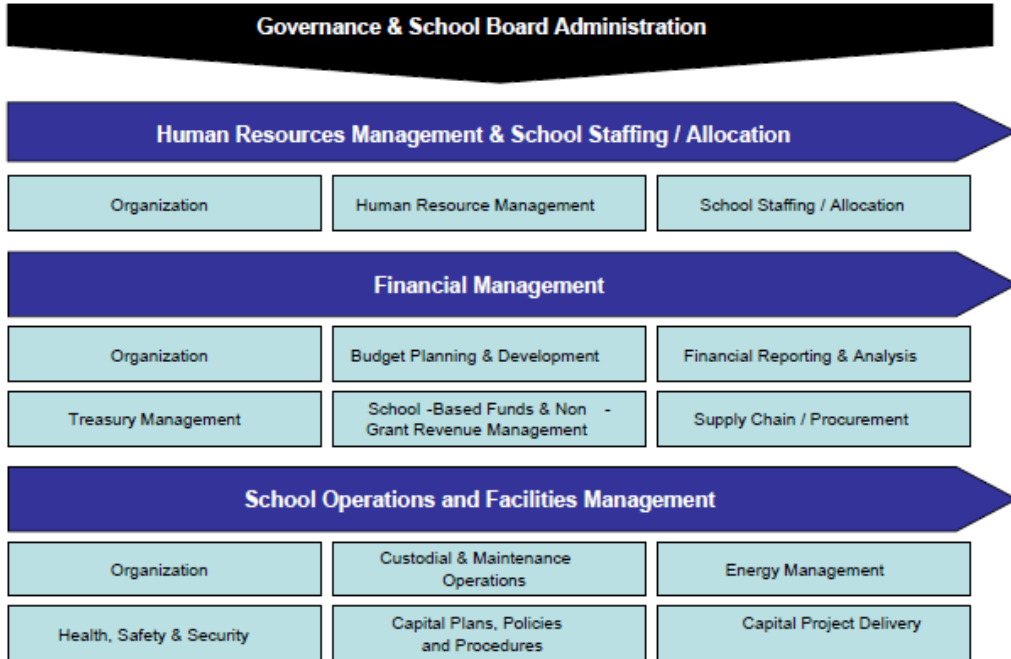
Recognizing the unique characteristics of each DSB, the specific purpose of the Operational Reviews is to:

- 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.

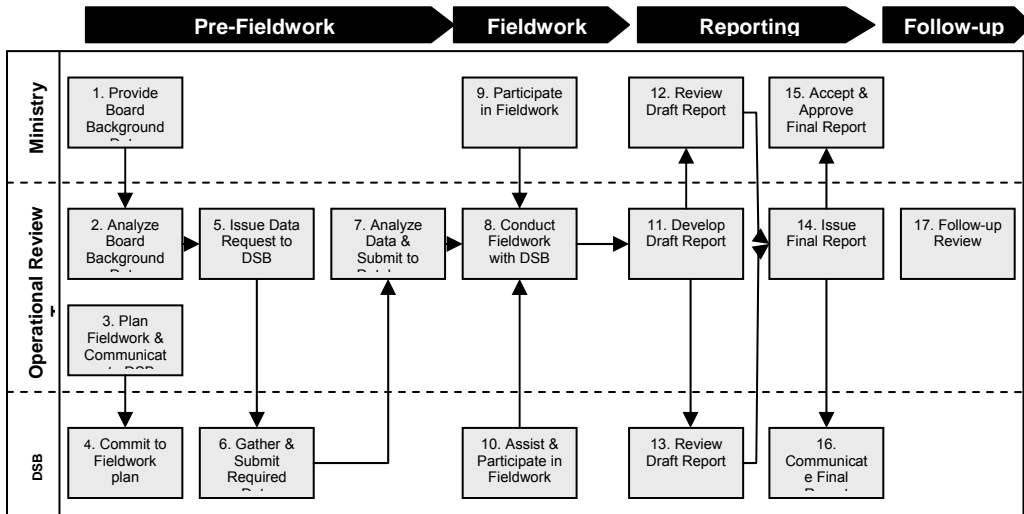
Each of the processes was examined based on its activities and its adoption of sector agreed leading practices, including alignment and support of student achievement strategies.



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.

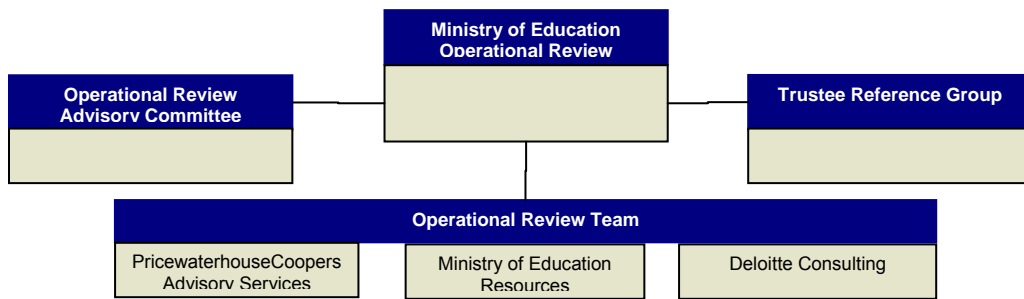
Phase	Key Activity	Description
• Pre-Fieldwork	Provide Board Background Data	The Ministry collects and maintains significant quantities of board data. The Operational Review team has developed a standardized data request for all school boards to provide background data prior to the review
	Analyze Board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

Phase	Key Activity	Description
	Gather and Submit Required Documentation	Upon receipt of the request for supporting documentation, each board compiles the requested data. Boards have at least three weeks to complete this process prior to the start of the fieldwork.
	Analyze Data and Submit to Database	The review team analyzes the data provided by each board and adds the results to a sector-wide database to compare the results for each board.
Fieldwork	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.
Reporting	Develop Draft Report	Based on the results of the fieldwork and data analysis, the operational review team writes a draft report. The draft report contains a synopsis of findings and, where appropriate, recommendations for improvement.
	Review Draft Report (Ministry)	The Ministry reviews the draft report and provides feedback to the review team.
	Review Draft Report (school board)	The review team meets with board senior staff to review and obtain feedback.
	Prepare Final Report	The review team incorporates the feedback from the both the Ministry and the board and prepares a final report.
	Accept and Approve Final Report	The final report is issued to the Ministry for approval and release.
	Communicate Final Report	The Ministry issues a final report to the board.
Follow-up	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 York Catholic District School Board. The review has been conducted using the methodology as previously described. The review is not of the nature or scope that constitutes an audit made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards.

Appendix B: Summary of Recommendations

No.	Recommendation
Governance and School Board Administration	
1.	The school board should develop a formal governance policy that clearly delineates the division of duties and responsibilities between the Board of Trustees and the Director of Education. The school board's governance model should reflect the roles and responsibilities mandated by the <i>Student Achievement and School Board Governance Act</i> , Bill 177.
2.	The school board, using a consultative process, should develop and communicate a multi-year strategic plan that provides a framework for annual planning.
3.	The school board should develop a formal annual operational plan aligned with the Board's multi-year strategic goals. This annual operating plan should cover all aspects of its non-academic operations, including human resources, financial management, and facilities management. This will also enable all departments to track and report progress on their defined priorities and goals throughout the year.
4.	Senior administration should report to the Board of Trustees annually on the status and outcomes of the school board's strategic plan and the annual operating plan, once it is developed.
5.	The school board should establish a formal succession plan which includes plans for senior staff in both academic and non-academic functions to help build and sustain leadership capacity.
Human Resources Management and School Staffing/Allocation	
6.	The HR department should consider developing an annual department plan aligned with the school board's operating plan and overall strategic direction. This will enable the department to track and report on the progress of its defined priorities and goals throughout the year.
7.	Management should communicate a detailed organization chart internally as well as post it to the school board website. The organization chart should clearly indicate the reporting structure of the HR department.
8.	The HR department should consider providing regularly scheduled HR policy awareness, training, and education sessions to build staff capacity in understanding HR policies and administrative procedures.
9.	The Director of Education should review the composition of the school board's interview panels, and develop formal hiring policies and procedures to clarify the roles of trustees and school board staff. Trustees should provide strategic policies to govern staffing and recruitment, but should not sit on interview or hiring panels with the exception of hiring the Director of Education.
10.	Trustees should continue to provide the school board with a policy and priority framework for bargaining. They should not directly participate in labour negotiations.

No.	Recommendation
11.	Management should consider developing and communicating a formal policy or procedure for the formal discipline and dismissal of all staff, to ensure consistency and transparency.
12.	Management should continue to develop a comprehensive attendance management program, including policies and procedures to address specific categories of absenteeism. This will provide management with a consistent and structured approach to improve attendance across all employee groups.
13.	Management should periodically report to the Board and senior management on the effectiveness of its attendance management program, once it is in place.
14.	Management should implement an approved pay equity plan for non-unionized staff, which is reviewed periodically and amended as necessary.
15.	Management should conduct a compliance audit of the school board's insurance carrier to ensure adherence to the benefit plans terms and conditions. This will ensure accuracy and validity of claims paid.
16.	Management should conduct periodic and confidential staff surveys to improve communication with staff and provide input for professional development plans and HR policy.
17.	Management should consider conducting exit interviews with all staff leaving the school board to obtain input on HR policy, as well as process and program improvement.
18.	The school board should implement policies and procedures that outline the annual staffing plan and allocation process and reflect the priorities of the Board and Ministry initiatives.
19.	Management should periodically report to the Board on the actual allocation of staff, compared to the original approved allocation plan and budget.
20.	Formalized procedures should be put in place to enable adjustment of staff allocations for school based staff if estimates for enrolment and funding change after budget approval.
Financial Management	
21.	Management should consider enhancing the process of reporting on the school board's budget risks using the format suggested in section 4.2 of this report. A formal risk management plan/report, which is reviewed and updated periodically, would include strategies to mitigate the risks of spending beyond budgeted levels.
22.	The school board should ensure interim financial statements are formally signed off by senior management to ensure the integrity of financial reporting.
23.	Cash management activities should be consolidated with a single institution.
24.	Management should continue to explore additional Electronic Fund Transfers (EFT) opportunities to maximize efficiencies.

No.	Recommendation
School Operations and Facilities Management	
25.	Management should work to build staff capacity in understanding school operations and facilities policies and administrative procedures through training and professional development.
26.	The school board should expand the use of standard processes for inspecting and reporting on facility cleaning.
27.	The school board should continue to work with electricity providers to set up consolidated billing
28.	The school board should develop an occupational health and safety plan, to ensure compliance with associated health and safety statutory requirements for both students and all employee groups.
29.	The school board should develop a security strategy reflecting the security and student safety policies and ensuring compliance with associated statutory security requirements for both students and all employee groups.
30.	The school board should consider establishing an integrated health plan/strategy to reflect all existing policies and procedures, and to promote health and wellness across the school board. Management should also consider coordinating the development, implementation and monitoring of the plan centrally.