



**DURHAM CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**
Learning and Living in Faith

Memorandum

To: Board of Trustees
From: Tracy Barill, Director of Education
Date: April 26, 2021
Subject: **COVID-19 Operational and Academic Update**
Origin: Administrative Council

Recommendation

Moved by _____, seconded by _____

“THAT the Durham Catholic District School Board receive and file as information, the COVID-19 Operational and Academic Update dated April 26, 2021.”

Rationale

As the provincial landscape in respect of the COVID-19 pandemic evolves, ongoing communications, guidance and directives from the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour and Durham Public Health continue to be received. To keep the Board of Trustees advised of our current situation and recent developments, staff are providing the following Operational and Academic and Student Services Updates.

Operational Updates

COVID-19 Positive Case Management

As of April 17, 281 confirmed COVID-19 cases have been reported within our school communities. 207 of those cases have been resolved. These cases have resulted in 15 outbreaks being declared by the Durham Region Health Department.

The Durham Region Health Department continues COVID-19 testing at DCDSB schools for high-risk exposed staff and students. Currently the Durham Region Health Department has been using converted transit buses for testing, but these buses will be used for vaccinations and the public health nurses will be testing in designated areas of DCDSB schools, such as gyms.

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Asymptomatic testing continues for staff, students, and their households. This testing is on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays at designated DCDSB and DDSB secondary schools. As of April 16, 1264 DCDSB students have been tested resulting in 9 positive COVID-19 cases.

Vaccinations

Prior to the Spring Break, on April 7, 2021 the Government of Ontario announced that beginning the week of April 12, 2021, eligible education staff would be able to begin to register for appointments to get vaccinated.

The first group of education workers to become eligible under the government's framework are those who support the learning of students with complex special education needs and included Program Support Teachers, Educational Assistants, Custodians, Principals and Vice Principals as well as any other staff members who are required to work from the school during periods of shut down to support access to in-person learning for those students who cannot access adequate programming remotely. Letters of eligibility were provided to 694 staff members.

It has also been indicated by the government that education workers who live and/or work in designated hotspots (identified by postal code) will be next in line to be eligible for vaccination. At the time of writing this report, vaccination appointments are not yet open to this group of individuals. However, educators who work in DCDSB but live in a designated hot spot in Toronto or Peel are able to book appointments.

The following schools are in the designated hot spot zones for Durham Region:

DCDSB School Locations Based on Postal Code

POSTAL CODE	SCHOOL
L1S (SW AJAX)	Archbishop Anthony Meagher CCEC
	Archbishop Denis O'Connor C.H.S.
	St. Bernadette C.S.
	St. Francis de Sales C.S.
	St. James C.S.

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L1T (NE AJAX)	Notre Dame C.S.S.
	St. Andre Bessette C.S.
	St. Catherine of Siena C.S.
	St. Josephine Bakhita C.S.
	St. Jude C.S.
	St. Patrick C.S.
L1Z (E AJAX)	St. Teresa of Calcutta C.S.
L1V (C PICK)	St. Mary C.S.S.
	St. Monica C.S.
	St. Isaac Jogues C.S.
	St. Elizabeth Seton C.S.
L1X (BR PICK)	St. Wilfrid C.S.

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We continue to work with Durham Region Public Health to remain abreast of all developments on the vaccination roll out.

Facilities Services

The Board has continued to receive orders of personal protective equipment (PPE) each month. An order for April has not been submitted due to the lockdown order and the Board having extra PPE available for the limited staff in the buildings. Provincially supplied disinfectant was distributed to custodial staff, who conducted a thorough disinfecting of all spaces during the lockdown. As a recommendation of the Joint Health and Safety Committee, the Board has procured 2500 safety goggles and distributed to all staff as an alternate source of eye protection.

All of the additional custodial staff had been hired to assist with the increased disinfecting and cleaning, however, since September there have been full time vacancies which floater custodians have moved into, which has reduced the additional staff complement, and required the board to conduct additional hiring.

Disinfectant foggers are being used for quick response disinfecting. Hand sanitizer continues to be used as part of Durham Health's good hand hygiene guidelines. Provincial funding for improved heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) changes was provided in September, and a second round of funding was issued at the start of 2021. Measures that have been completed as part of the funding, and some planned measures with the additional funding include:

- upgrading filters to a higher efficiency (MERV13). The first delivery of the filters has gone out to schools in March. Supply of MERV13 filters has been delayed due to global demand for the materials used in the manufacturer;
- the mechanical systems have been programmed to increase the amount of fresh air, and additional HEPA filter air purifiers have been distributed to all elementary classrooms. Extra units are available to be dispatched to secondary schools should there be a mechanical system issue;
- Retro-commissioning of a limited number of schools is scheduled this spring;

The Federal government under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) announced up to \$700 million in the COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure Stream (CVRIS) funding. The funding was time limited and required boards to submit proposals that will protect the health and wellbeing of students, staff and children in schools and co-located childcare facilities for consideration. Eligible projects needed to promote one or all of the following themes:

- promoting occupant health and safety;
- improving facility condition (e.g., optimize air quality and water refilling stations that also improve access to safe drinking water);
- enhancing physical distancing;

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- facilitating distance learning (e.g., network and broadband infrastructure)

The funding had some restrictive timelines that required all projects to have been started by September 30, 2021, and be substantially complete by December 31, 2021, otherwise the boards will be responsible for the entire cost of the project. The board has since been advised that approximately \$7.4million has been approved for capital renewal projects. The following projects will be occurring at various locations across the system:

- Updated Wifi Access points across the system;
- Window replacements;
- HVAC replacements (e.g., Chiller, Boilers; Air handling);
- Bottle filler stations (childcares);
- Sink replacements;
- Accessible doors (childcares);
- Gym partitions;
- Outdoor spaces

Human Resources

Barring any announcements of additional covid related staffing funding for next school year, there will be a number of employees who will be declared redundant to our enrolment needs for September. Staff will be notified according to the corresponding staffing timelines dictated through their respective collective agreements.

Home School Hybrid Learning Model – Quadmester 4

The Home School Hybrid Learning Model continues in Quadmester 4 in our Secondary Schools when in-person learning resumes.

Information Technology

Under the supervision of the Chief Information Officer – Freedom of Information and Privacy, Ronald Rodriguez, the Information Technology team continues to provide timely and effective technical support to our students, parents and staff.

As we transition back to remote learning, we have technology (Chromebooks and iPads with LTE) in stock to support students that require it for online learning.

Academic Services

Remote Learning

All schools pivoted to remote learning on April 19, 2021 to support the enforcement of the province's Stay-at-Home order and additional public health measures.

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Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting

Secondary students will receive their report card for Quadmester 3 on Friday, April 24, 2021.

Students with Special Needs

Program Support Teachers and system-level resource staff will be in contact with families to determine appropriate programming adjustments for their child. Students with special needs will be supported virtually and possibly through remote learning packages where necessary.

In-person learning accommodations will be in place once again for students with the highest special needs starting Wednesday, April 21, 2021. In-person learning will continue to be offered to students with extensive alternative programming, pervasive 1:1 support required throughout the day for safety and the inability to independently access online learning. Students who are placed in our Early Intervention Classrooms, with intensive supports and programming for communication, school-readiness skills, self-regulation and social-emotional development will also continue to attend for in-person learning.