

ST. CLAIR CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

**REPORT TO BOARD OF TRUSTEES**
September 29, 2020

Deb Crawford, Director of Education

SUBJECT: #SeptemberReady Project**PREPARED BY:** Amy Janssens, Associate Director – Corporate Services & Treasurer

BACKGROUND:

The #SeptemberReady Project began in June 2020. The project charter outlined the scope of the project, the resources required and the timelines to completion. This project focused on preparing for the safe and effective re-opening of schools, with the first week of September as the targeted school re-opening date.

An Incident Management System (IMS) team was tasked to complete the work outlined in the project charter. The IMS team included: a Project Sponsor, an Incident Manager (Project Coordinator), a Communications Liaison, a Scribe and four section leads supporting the work in Academic Operations, Administration and Finance, Planning and Logistics. In addition, six Principals supported the work of the Academic Operations section of this project and many other staff across the Board provided support throughout the summer. These dedicated individuals took a thoughtful approach to the completion of the work to re-open schools in a safe and effective manner.

The project began with an environmental scan of all available information including, research and literature review of resources and a stakeholder survey to identify hazards and risks. The stakeholders involved in this initial work were instrumental to helping the team set the pathway forward.

The IMS Team examined, assessed, ranked and assigned the risks into six key areas of focus. The six key areas of focus were: Health and Safety, Mental Wellness, Communications, Staff Workload, Transportation and Planning.

The team set out on a path to create guidance and protocols to mitigate the potential risks. The local Medical Officers of Health and public health officials supported the Board on all questions of a clinical or medical nature and these partners continue to support the Board upon school re-opening. Throughout this labour-intensive segment of the project, team members worked with contacts in other jurisdictions and neighbouring school boards where appropriate.

The #SeptemberReady Project was officially completed by September 5, 2020. As part of the wrap-up, a tabletop exercise was performed to test the plans, identifying any gaps, omissions or adjustments. The project work resulted in an extensive guidebook and plans for use by school administrators. The guidebook is considered to be a live document that can be adapted and adjusted as necessary. In an update to the Board on September 16, 2020, the Board of Trustees received a presentation explaining the project work in detail attached as Appendix A.

REPORT:
#SeptemberReady Project

The Board continues to address ongoing issues and challenges upon the re-opening of schools. Using the knowledge and tools gained throughout the project the Board has created an Incident Management Team and an Executive Incident Team. These teams will be called upon by the Director of Education as required. Using a similar approach to the #SeptemberReady Project the IMS team includes staff to support academic operations, logistics, planning, finance/administration, and communications in the event of an incident.

The Board would like to thank the IMS team members, Board staff, many stakeholders who provided feedback, the Medical Officers of Health, our partners at public health and our coterminous Board colleagues. The work throughout the summer was intensive and challenging. The #SeptemberReady Project was completed successfully with the work and support of many individuals who gave up summer days to ensure the safe and effective re-opening of our schools.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the St. Clair Catholic District School Board receive the report: *#SeptemberReady Project* for information.

Appendix "A"

St. Clair Catholic District School Board

September *Ready* 2020

Update to the Board of Trustees September 16, 2020

"Together we can do great things."
Mother Teresa



1

Project Charter for September Ready

- Scope of the project
- Resources
- Time

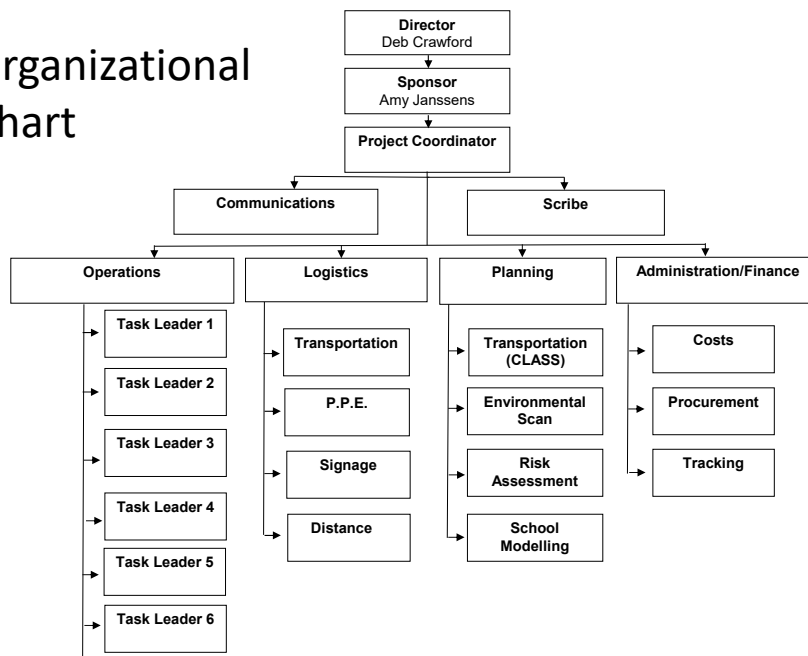
2

Team Building - IMS

- IMS – Incident Management System
- Incident Manager, (a Project Coordinator), was supported by a Communications/Liaison section and a Scribe
- Four business sections reporting to the Project Coordinator;
 - Operations (Academic)
 - Administration/Finance
 - Planning
 - Logistics

3

Organizational Chart



4

Environmental Scan

- Research/literature review conducted by Planning Section
- Review of Ministry direction
- Stakeholder survey of hazards and risks conducted by Incident Management lead

5

TEAMS/SKYPE Survey 4 Questions

- Q1 What are you most concerned about regarding school safety in September?
- Q2 What does St. Clair CDSB need to focus on in coming months?
- Q3 How can we communicate most effectively over the summer?
- Q4 What are the three issues you consider most challenging?

6

Risk Assessment and Analysis

- ❑ After identifying all significant hazards, risk analysis was undertaken
- ❑ Risks were examined, assessed, ranked and assigned to six “bundles”
- ❑ These “bundled” risks were then assigned to the Academic Operations section
- ❑ Academic Operations was led by a senior principal
- ❑ Six experienced task leaders each were assigned to a specific “bundle of risks”

7

Academic Operations

- ❑ Development of protocols to mitigate the potential risk identified through process
- ❑ Deferral to MOHs and public health officials on all questions of a clinical or medical nature. No arbitrary methods were advised by the September Ready team, we relied entirely on our two MOHs and the respective health units in CK and Lambton County.
- ❑ Throughout this labour-intensive segment of the project, team members worked with contacts in other jurisdictions, neighbouring school boards, to borrow best practices where appropriate
- ❑ Our staff worked closely with our coterminous colleagues as well, with regular meetings of Directors and MOHs to sort out the issues of a clinical nature

8

Assignment of Bundles

- Six bundles of risk identified through the research, identification and analysis;
 1. Health and Safety
 2. Mental Wellness
 3. Communications
 4. Staff workload
 5. Transportation
 6. Planning

9

Health and Safety

- Movement of students
- Itinerant staff
- Resource sharing
- Handling outbreaks
- Cleaning
- Special programs
- Personal Protective Equipment (P.P.E.)

10

Mental Wellness

- Student supports and programming
- Stress reduction
- Safe routines
- Negative behaviours
- Learning Gaps
- Fear reduction
- Staff supports

11

Communications

- Community confidence
- Parents
- Students
- Staff
- EDSBY, Web, Media
- Email and texts
- Social media

12

Staff Workload

- Face to face vs. Distance Learning
- Staff supported
- Workload equity
- Cleaning protocols
- Public perception
- Absenteeism
- Labour relations

13

Transportation

- Safety
- Vehicles and drivers
- Schedules
- Boundaries
- Personal protective equipment (P.P.E.)
- Cleaning
- Student illness

14

Planning

- Public Health
- Medical Officers of Health
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Health
- Child Care
- Community use
- CKLASS (Kent Orr, GM)

15

Parking Lot

- Assemblies, grads, special events
- Staff meetings, virtual or face to face?
- Personal liability/illness and injuries
- Dealing with parents who send ill children to school
- Extracurricular activity
- Student privacy/cyber security
- Assessment and evaluation
- PD days and scheduling

16

Crisis Communications Key Elements

- Health and Safety** for Students and Staff
- Effective communications** with staff, students, parents, guardians, the public and the media
- We care** about the community
- Mental and physical wellness** for all concerned

17

Internal and External Communications

- Media planning including our reiterated key messages and information
- Comms requiring both transmission and reception of information
- Internal draft weekly to keep Director advised of project progress
- Daily brief to Project Sponsor (Associate Director)
- Use of all media, e.g. television, radio, print, social media, etc
- Monitoring news reports from across Ontario
- Understanding the difference between crisis and corporate comms
- Internal comms to staff over the summer

18

FAQ Development

- In conjunction with coterminous boards, responses to FAQs were created
- Parental, guardian, and other stakeholder input
- Close liaison with public health messaging, MOHs input
- Development of training notes for staff and students
- Tracking Ministry of Education advisories and notes
- Providing the Chair and Trustees with updated information
- Regular advisories from the Director

19

Stakeholder relationships

- Liaising with stakeholders intentionally, i.e. coterminous boards, medical officers of health, health units in both Chatham-Kent and Lambton Co., CKCLASS
- Early connection and regular meeting cycle established early in the project
- Commitment to all individuals, working through meetings virtually throughout
- Establishing a trusting environment, mutually respectful and thoughtful
- Director managed strong LR connections, along with the Executive SOs, Comms, leading the organization while remaining highly responsive to union leadership

20

Project Management and IMS

- Gantt Chart and dashboard clarity
- Tracking progress and maintaining responsibility/accountability
- Venn diagrams and risk management intersection
- Relationship between logistics, procurement, planning and operations
- Establishment of scheduling milestones reflected in the Gantt chart

21

Producing Three Plans (or more)

- Direction from the Minister to prepare three alternative service delivery models
- Traditional, hybrid and distance models required differing plans
- CKLASS and the transportation of students on buses posed rural/urban challenges
- Our Project team focused on the hybrid model, but thought and effort was required on all three models, depending on provincial decision makers
- Academic Operations team members were urged to re-imagine, revise and revisit past models as well considering innovation

22

A Week Away From September Ready

- ❑ Plans approved by the Ministry of Education for SCCDSB to move ahead with a graduated return to school over the first weeks of September
- ❑ Elementary schools will be coming back in the traditional and conventional model of all-day classes
- ❑ Both Secondary Schools, (St. Patrick's Sarnia and Ursuline College Chatham) will be operating in an quadmester model

23

Secondary School Quadmester Model

In the adaptive/hybrid model, the traditional semester is split into a quadmester model, offering two courses rather than the traditional four courses. One course will be offered per day for five consecutive days. Following that, one course will be offered per day for the next five consecutive days. This will help to minimize student to student and teacher contact, as students will stay with one cohort for an entire week.

24

September Ready Tabletop Exercise

- The September *Ready* project is complete last week
- As part of the wrap-up, a tabletop exercise was performed
- This exercise is aimed at testing the plans but not the people involved
- Any gaps, omissions or adjustments might present themselves via exercise
- The guidebook and plans, are live documents that can be adapted and adjusted should it be necessary
- With the project terminating last week, the ongoing issues and challenges move back to routine board operations and protocols

25

Next Steps

- Moving from project management to standard school board operations
- Ongoing monitoring of environment; pandemic shifts, community response, etc
- Liaison with Ministry of Education, public health units, MOHs
- Readiness to change from hybrid to distance model of service delivery

26

Next Steps

- ❑ The Senior team is considering the work of the #SeptemberReady IMS team and the possibilities of how to support incidents going forward with the knowledge we have gained
- ❑ The #SeptemberReady IMS Project Coordinator has been retained temporarily to assist with the following items as needed
 - Mentorship of staff for Incident Management as requested
 - Engagement and establishment of terms of communication with Municipal Emergency Management Contacts and transition of this responsibility to Board staff as assigned
 - Continued engagement with Public Health Units and transition of this responsibility to Board staff as assigned

27

Questions and Comments

- ❑ For information regarding September *Ready*, please feel free to contact Amy Janssens, Project Sponsor, at amy.janssens@st-clair.net
- ❑ For all other information, contact Todd Lozon, SCCDSB Communications, at todd.lozon@st-clair.net

28