



## Introducing the TCDSB Enterprise Portal

The Toronto Catholic District School Board is pleased to be moving forward with the development of an Enterprise Portal (EP) for the entire system in an effort to improve collaboration, streamline workflow, reduce duplication of effort, increase efficiency and ultimately to provide a more positive experience for all visitors to the TCDSB public website as well as the internal Intranet.

The Deloitte and Touche Operational Review of TCDSB pointed to the need for the Board to look at optimization of Information and Communication Technology. The input received from TCDSB parents, staff and stakeholders during the recent budget consultation also pointed to optimization of technology as a priority.

### **What is a portal?**

A portal is a web-based point of entry to an organization's collection of information, resources and tools. Members of a portal have access to resources based on their credentials and role (as staff, parent, student etc.). Consider how you enter a large office building, check in with security, and proceed to access physical resources such as meeting rooms, documents and tools. In much the same way, you will have access to digital resources when logging into an organization's portal. Your login will provide you with access to the resources you need, all in a self-service environment.

### **What does self-service mean?**

In a portal self-service environment an end-user will not only be able to find relevant information, but will also be able to selectively share information with others and complete transactions that are built into the portal (e.g., completion of benefit and other types of forms). The data in the transactions will be instantly available to the appropriate departments, without the need to transcribe it. This will save time, and reduce duplication of effort and transcription errors.

### **Why a portal?**

Our learning and working communities are becoming increasingly creative and complex. User groups are accustomed to working in digital environments that provide opportunities to connect and collaborate, and have growing expectations about timely access to digital information and processes. Portal technology will integrate our applications, processes and resources in a single environment that can be maintained by individuals across the system (de-centralized control).

### **How does a portal enhance our work practices?**

From a user perspective, the portal will provide a clean and straightforward interface that will allow individuals to quickly access up-to-date and relevant information online, with the ability to customize the type of information that they wish to receive. It will also eliminate the clutter of information sent out in so many different formats.

No matter what your role within the TCDSB community, the portal will provide one-stop, self-service shopping for the information and data you need to perform your role.

From an administrative perspective, the portal will allow community publishers to customize and publish materials quickly and efficiently. Administrators, managers, resource teams school and support staff do not need to be experts in web design or web maintenance to publish information and timely communications.

A portal will integrate electronic communications such as monthly calendars, newsletters, photographs and memos easily without having to worry about the format of the various files.

Rather than recreating the same data in multiple areas (such as enrolment figures), information that appears in several areas can be drawn from one single source, making it easier to keep information up to date and accurate.

The portal is an environmentally friendly Green initiative which will reduce the amount of paper consumed within the Board for communications such as newsletters to the home, Director's Bulletins, pay statements, and other forms and reports.

In summary, portal technology will combine communications, collaboration, document management, structured data from HR, student, financial and facilities applications, calendars, news and events into one simple web interface that will engage all our users, whether they are school staff, parents or students.

**How will a portal enhance the learning experience?**

Discussions will continue among the various stakeholders—students, parents, staff (teaching and non-teaching) and trustees about the possibilities. The portal will facilitate collaboration and communication among teachers, parents and students.

**How will staff, parents and stakeholders stay informed about the portal?**

Schools will be provided with clear, easy to understand messaging about the portal project, and will be encouraged to include this information in their end-of-the-year newsletters. Further messaging will be provided at key points during the development process. Parents/stakeholders will also be able to access regular updates through the board's website at [www.tcdsb.org](http://www.tcdsb.org).

**Status Report:**

To date, focus meetings have been held with various key stakeholders: teachers, principals, parents, students, school secretaries, and administrative staff. Input from these focus groups is being used to inform the development of the portal and to identify any potential problem areas as we move forward.

An advisory committee has been initiated, which includes membership from among various employee groups including TECT, TSU, TOTL, CUPE, and Trustees, administrative staff, school principals and vice-principals, the Archdiocese of Toronto and Special Services. This committee is meeting at regular intervals to help guide the process.

Information about the progress of this project is available on the Board's internal network through SharePoint at <http://sharepoint01/EP>.

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