IT Strategic Renewal

November, 2011

Dear school and system leaders,

   In our continuing efforts to answer the question "What would it look like if the best happened?", we are providing an update on the IT Strategic Renewal Plan.

✦ Classroom roll-out for Grade 7 Teachers staffing changes

- Approximately 30 additional grade 7 classes were added in this school year. These new grade 7 teachers will be provided with a new laptop computer.
- The additional grade 7 classes will be provided with a display projector and WiFi coverage for the classroom.
- Over 100 new teachers have been assigned to grade 6/7, grade 7 and grade 7/8 classes in this school year 2011-2012. For those who are new to teaching grade 7, three designated days of job-embedded Professional Development will be provided before the end of 2011. The first day will concentrate on the use of the laptop and management of the netbooks. The additional two days will have a numeracy focus.
- In 2012, all grade 7 teachers will receive two additional days of Professional Development, with a focus on literacy.
- All Professional development will be supported by two members each from AICT, Mathematics, Literacy and Technical Services.

✦ Continuing the roll-out to Grade 8 classes and teachers informed by an academic focus on numeracy and aligned with BLIP/SLIP SMART goals.

- A new laptop computer will be provided to the grade 8 teacher and supported with four designated days of job-embedded Professional Development over the school year. The first day will concentrate on the use of the laptop and management of the netbooks and the remaining three days will focus on numeracy.   This will occur in 2012 with detailed plans to follow.
- The Grade 8 classes will be provided with a display projector, Wi-Fi coverage for the classroom and 3 netbook computers. The Grade 8 classes will share the use of the existing mobile cart with netbooks provided last year for the Grade 7 classes.

⬥ Wi-Fi Networking in Secondary Schools

- WiFi networking is being expanded to provide full WiFi access in all Secondary School main buildings. This installation is scheduled to be completed by May 2012.

⬥ Wi-Fi Networking in Portables

- As part of the on-going Portable Classroom replacement program, computer networking was installed in portable classrooms this past summer for those schools receiving a full replacement or first placement of portable classrooms.   WiFi networking will continue to be provided in portables as funds become available.

⬥ Replacement of computers for Guidance Teachers

- Guidance Teachers were provided with a laptop computer and professional development on the use of the new computer hardware and software.

⬥ Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) on the TCDSB-Guest Wi-Fi Network

- The TCDSB Wi-Fi network is being expanded to provide additional WiFi coverage within the schools. Along with this expansion, the TCDSB-Guest WiFi network is being launched along with the Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) initiative. This technology enables staff and students to connect onto the TCDSB-Guest WiFi network with their TCDSB user logon and using their personal electronic device (i.e., computer, Smartphone, etc.) to access resources on the Internet.

⬥ **Wide Area Network (WAN) -** This will lay the network infrastructure foundation for added functionalities and savings through consolidation. The TCDSB continues to work jointly with TDSB and the City of Toronto on this multi-year project with target completion in 2013-2014.

⬥ **Enterprise Portal** implementation – Go Live in 2012 with new Internet, Intranet and websites for our 201 school communities providing training and support in a staged approach.

⬥ **Server consolidation and desktop image refresh in our secondary schools -** These servers, which are over 7 years old and long past retirement, are being upgraded and consolidated. The desktop image which is in need of a refresh will be considered in future plans.

⬥ **Moving toward a vision of the school library as a "learning commons":** Equitable access to print and on-line resources is essential as we move forward in supporting students to develop 21st century fluencies of literacy, numeracy, technology, creativity, innovation and collaboration. A search has begun for a centralized, web-based library system that will support our school communities in accessing and sharing resources.

- **TCDSB on Twitter:** @TCDSB was launched at the November 24, 2011 Board Meeting as the Board's official Twitter channel to keep its followers informed on breaking news, key issues, news bulletins, alerts, school closures or cancellation of bus service, and to invite feedback on specific issues.

- **Desire 2 Learn** - In conjunction with eLearning Ontario, the TCDSB is beginning the rollout of Desire 2 Learn (the Provincial **L**earning **M**anagement **S**ystem) to teachers for use in Blended Learning. Teachers currently trained on D2L have been invited to use the LMS with their regular classrooms, and Blended Learning will also be embedded in the Grade 7 and 8 professional development sessions.

- **Homework Help** - In conjunction with eLearning Ontario the TCDSB has started the process of enrolling our Grades 7 to 10 Math Students in Homework Help. Homework Help is free, real-time math tutoring by certified Ontario teachers and can be accessed through https://homeworkhelp.ilc.org/. Key areas of the site include Tutor Chat Rooms, Listen & Learn presentations with certified teachers, Interactive Tutorials, and Best Sessions. Students have access to both guided and independent learning in a unique environment that combines technology and personal interaction.

- **Special Services** is providing over 100 SMART Boards and laptops to our Elementary and Secondary DD/ME programs along with Wi-Fi coverage for those classrooms. SMART Board in-services for the Special Education teachers will be provided by the AICT Team.

- **E-Learning initiatives**. The Ministry of Education has provided funding for a full-time eLearning coordinator to support Ministry provided digital resources, Homework Help, Blended Learning, Day School eLearning and Continuing Education eLearning.