OUR MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Community Information Session

Meeting:	Community Information Session
Date:	Nov 2, 2021 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
Attendees:	288 participants at peak, including facilitators & staff
Format (Zoom):	Opening Presentation Question & Answer Period Next Steps

Report prepared by Maximum City

TCDSB Panelists:	*Gina Iuliano Marrello* – Superintendent, Project Lead *Adrian Della Mora* – Associate Director of Academic Affairs and the COO *Cristina Fernandes* – Executive Superintendent, Achievement, Innovation & Well-Being *Steve Camacho* – Executive Superintendent, Technology, Data & Strategic Transformation *Michael Caccamo* – Superintendent, Nurturing our Catholic Community, Safe Schools and Continuing Education *Brandy Doan* – Research Associate, Educational Research Department
Presentation & Facilitation:	*Josh Fullan*, *Eleanor Rae*, and *Meredith Gillespie* (Maximum City) *Shazia Vlahos* – Chief of Communications & Government Relations (TCDSB)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of the Consultation & Development Phase of the TCDSB Multi-Year Strategic Plan, an open Community Information Session was held via Zoom on November 2, 2021. This session was an opportunity to provide the TCDSB community at large with a progress update on the MYSP development process, and to share and solicit feedback on the identified priority areas for the new MYSP. The session began with an informational presentation by the project team, followed by a question and answer period with staff.

The most common types of questions and comments focused on two areas:

- How students will be supported in each of the priority areas.
- How the MYSP will be implemented, monitored, and communicated.

The meeting was attended by nearly 300 participants. As expected with a large audience, in addition to questions and comments related to the above subject areas, many questions came up that were outside the scope of the MYSP, such as questions about French Immersion or the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test. These and other program-specific questions were directed to the appropriate superintendent or staff member. Other areas of interest for participants included learning strategies for in-person and virtual learning, the importance of centering Catholic values in the MYSP, and how technology will adapt to the outcomes and experiences of the pandemic.

An overview of comments and questions from participants is organized by theme and priority area below.
A detailed list of the questions can be found in Appendix A.

WHAT WE HEARD	
THEME:	**OVERVIEW & PARTICIPANT QUOTE:**
Process Questions	Participants were interested in how the MYSP would be measured and implemented. Questions focused on monitoring progress, receiving feedback, and accountability, including how the MYSP would be finalized and communicated to stakeholders. Other questions sought more detail on how consulted groups, such as the Archdiocese, had been included in or selected for the process thus far._"What does success look like? How will we assess, measure, and monitor progress?"_
Priority Areas – Overall	Participants generally approved of the priority areas and the draft diagram presented, noting how the areas were interrelated. Questions focused on how student supports would be identified and implemented within each priority area, and how the priority areas would affect budgets and financial planning. Participants expressed an interest in incorporating Board governance into the priority areas. Other comments wanted to see teacher excellence and retention, and 21st century skills for students, included in the priorities or explicitly referenced in the MYSP._"I like the priority areas and the diagram which clearly states that all are interrelated."_
Catholicity	Participants expressed the importance of centering Catholic values throughout the MYSP._"Whatever plans are being developed or implemented, please do not derail from the core values of the Church."_
Learning	Participants recommended identifying a subset of priorities within the priority area of Learning, in order to better support students and address challenges coming out of the pandemic. These priorities included a focus on how learning strategies for in-person and virtual learning will adapt, and how to improve support for students who may require alternative learning models. Some questions and comments also spoke to the connection between teacher excellence and learning outcomes, discussing the need for teacher support and specific teaching skill sets._"With all of the disruption in schooling during COVID, what is the specific plan and/or steps to support students to ensure students achieve their full potential?"_
Well-being	Participants recommended identifying a subset of priorities within the priority area of Well-being, with a focus on student supports (in general and in the context of the pandemic), and the social determinants of health._"What are the main determinants of health and what would be considered a priority for our students?"_
Equity	Participants recommended identifying a subset of priorities within the priority area of Equity. Participants expressed a need to understand and elaborate on the content of this priority area, for example how to prepare teachers for serving students equitably, and the importance of equitable access to programs and technology._"How are teachers in the classroom supposed to model and encourage equity?"_

APPENDIX A: Detailed Summary of Questions and Comments

All MYSP-related questions and comments have been shared with the development team as part of this report. Responses from TCDSB representatives that were provided during the meeting are included (*in italics*) below.

Process Questions

1. Once you get to the fourth phase, after feedback and tweaks have been made, when are these plans implemented in schools?

2. Will there be an opportunity to make changes to the priority areas or are the priority areas finalized?

3. How did we choose who provided feedback in the first phase and who participated in the focus groups?

4. As part of the planning phase have previous options that have been successful or not successful been included in the planning?

5. Have we engaged with the Archdiocese of Toronto?

6. Can the diagram be shared with the CSPC?
   The diagram is available on the TCDSB MYSP website.

7. Who makes the final decision about the priority areas before it is presented to the Board of Trustees?
   The central staff team will be developing the MYSP by consulting with Board departments, in addition to the public, to ensure it reflects all stakeholder views. The draft MYSP will be submitted to the Board in January.

8. What does success look like? How will we assess, measure, and monitor progress?
   What are the school board's KPIs for measuring progress and success and can that be shared with stakeholders?
   This work is being done now and will be communicated in Phase Four.

9. Can we see the organizational chart of who is on the MYSP project team?

10. How does the school board ensure consistency in the implementation of its MYSP and action plans in schools and classrooms? What is the feedback mechanism(s) and how frequently are reviews executed or planned?
    How can we ensure accountability to school communities and students?

11. How do we ensure we do not miss important communication from the Board?

12. How is this MYSP different from the previous version? What are the main changes and why were they made?

13. The MYSP needs to be grounded in reality (e.g. changes on the ground and within communities). To make the MYSP stronger and of value, please let us know how it will link back to the challenges the Board faces and actionable initiatives in the short and medium term.

APPENDIX A: Detailed Summary of Questions and Comments (*continued*)

Priority Areas (Overall)

1. I like the priority areas and the diagram which clearly states that are all interrelated. Can you tell me more about the relationship between the priority areas of equity and well-being?

2. How is the financial plan or budget impacted if there are changes to the priority areas?
   TCDSB's budget planning cycle takes place each year, beginning in January/December. This ensures the budget aligns with the MYSP development process, and MYSP priorities can be reflected in the budget as needed.

3. I would want to see board governance as a priority area. How are you going to decide which boards you will look at to determine best practices? What's the process to determine the best practices in board governance?
   We conducted a significant environmental scan of school boards across the GTA and Ontario, including reviews of their current and previous strategic planning. Board governance may fit into a more specific action plan that could feed into one of the identified priority areas.

4. The talent acquisition piece was an explicit part of the previous plan. How does the talent management and retention of teachers fit into this plan? Schools are reliant on quality and permanent teachers. (e.g. French immersion teachers)
   In the MYSP, service excellence and the quality of Catholic education will be critical. TCDSB values staff employment, contribution, and the vocational aspect of what teachers bring to the system, and this will be reflected in the MYSP. We will continue to invest in recruitment and use talent acquisition specialists.

5. I like the diagram. It makes sense.

6. Your priorities are spot on. But these remain aspirations without a framework.

7. What is the focus on the future? Are we going to be left behind again?

Priority Area: Catholicity (& Faith Formation)

1. Whatever plans are being developed or implemented, please do not derail from the core values of the Church. I am sure this is one of the key factors when parents choose the TCDSB.

2. The term 'Catholicity' could be changed to 'Catholic Values.'

3. Can we have mandatory renewal of Catholic faith teaching for teachers?

Priority Area: Learning

1. Have there been any gaps identified in the priority areas and how will they be supported in the new MYSP?
   Addressing learning gaps is part of the focus of the MYSP – identifying areas of learning where students need support. We are reviewing the assets students already have, and continue to work with our administrators and staff to help students grow. We recognize the need to support students in a holistic way in order to build their capacity and understanding, and ultimately succeed in meeting their Catholic Graduate Expectations.

APPENDIX A: Detailed Summary of Questions and Comments (*continued*)

Priority Area: Learning (*continued*)

2. Given that there has been encouragement of students to return to in-person learning, will there be a consideration of virtual learning? How will virtual learning be reflected in the MYSP as part of 21st century learning?
   As secondary schools will continue to rely on this learning model, virtual learning is currently being considered in the MYSP.

3. What is the board learning from the pandemic regarding what we need to focus on in terms of a technology roadmap in specific support of our students and the professional development of teachers?
   Over the course of the pandemic, TCDSB recognized the need for access to technology and made significant investments in this area, including the distribution of 22,000 devices to students directly. We will continue to invest in this area, and as has been past practice, will ensure TCDSB's Information and Technology Plan is aligned with the MYSP.

4. Could you please elaborate on "a culture of high expectations" in Learning? I would like to see more focus on academic excellence.

5. With all of the disruption in schooling during COVID, what is the specific plan and/or steps to support students to ensure students achieve their full potential?

6. How does the board plan to support the increase in needs for students with special needs (e.g. autism)?

7. I like the language around catering to the students' specific needs.

8. I feel like learning and addressing needs relates to the skillset of the teacher. The teachers should be aware of all the children in the classroom and find out ways to have all students participate in learning.

Priority Area: Well-being

1. What are the main determinants of health and what would be considered a priority for our students?
   TCDSB recognizes the importance of healthy learning and living, and that we need to prioritize the health needs of all of our learners today more than ever. The MYSP will prioritize the Special Education and Mental Health and Well-being Plans, ensuring that we take into consideration the whole person, both staff and students.

2. The Board needs to address the mental health and Individual Education Plan (IEP) resource bucket issues because there are kids that are not engaged in school because they're not being reached. Equity is not being given to kids who need it. We need more than words, how will these ideas be implemented in the schools directly so that students get the mental health support they need?
   TCDSB has been actively working to provide supports for learning, and also for students' well-being. Mental health is applicable in both the Learning and Equity priority areas that are part of the MYSP.

APPENDIX A: Detailed Summary of Questions and Comments (*continued*)
Priority Area: Well-being (*continued*)
3. Social skills and human connection suffered during COVID and I hope the Board will invest in restoring these skills and connections in a creative way for those learning both in-person or online. I suggest a survey to be sent to students (especially high school students) to find out how COVID impacted them, and ask for their input and ideas to recreate these social connections. These elements are part of their holistic learning and healthy development.
Priority Area: Equity
1. How can we ensure equitable access to extended programming? (e.g. bussing issues)
2. Confusion around the supporting text in the Equity priority area. The two phrases of anti-oppressive and anti-racist are confusing to me. Is there a past discussion that those pieces are referring to?   Equity seems like the most difficult principle of the three priority areas to unpack. It is either equity through self-regulation, or fairness in distribution of opportunity, or some limited resource being equally shared. The example however starts with "anti-" with two examples of equity failure. Perhaps that needs more flushing out and should be turned inward? I think Equity can be flushed out better.
3. How are teachers in the classroom supposed to model and encourage equity, and how will they be prepared to serve students equitably?
Did we miss anything? Get in touch: josh@maximumcity.ca