



Tri-County

Regional Centre for Education

Business Plan

Tri-County Regional Centre for Education
2021-22

Date Prepared: September 27, 2021

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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PLANNING CONTEXT

The Tri-County Regional Centre for Education (TCRCE) operates 22 schools serving approximately 5700 students and employing approximately 1100 teachers and support staff. The TCRCE includes Shelburne, Yarmouth, and Digby Counties, serving suburban and rural populations. The student enrollment in the TCRCE decreased slightly from 2019-20 to 2020-21. This was mainly a result of International students not being in the system, due to the pandemic.

The TCRCE works in partnership with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) to provide programming and services from pre-primary to grade 12. The regional centre strives to address current and emerging student needs.

This business plan covers the period April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021. While the budget covers that time frame, most, if not all, of the business plan priorities and initiatives are intended to fall within the next school year, September 2021 to June 2022.

In planning for 2021-2022, the Regional Executive Director of Education and Senior Staff applied the beliefs of the System Improvement Plan originally adopted in October 2019. These beliefs are:

- **Well-being:** When educators establish strong, individual relationships with students, students will feel an increased sense of belonging in TCRCE schools.
- **Literacy:** When educators grow in providing precise and individualized literacy instruction for students, students will demonstrate significant improvement in their reading and writing.
- **Mathematics:** When educators grow in their Mathematical instruction, students will demonstrate significant improvement in their mathematical knowledge and problem-solving skills.

The System Improvement Plan complements school-based Student Success Plans and focuses efforts on the high leverage strategy of collective professionalism to meet the needs of all students. The objective is to address inequities and grow in areas of mathematics, literacy and well-being. This process aligns with the work of other Regional Centres for Education, the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial and EECD, which provides provincial coherence and alignment in public education.

The TCRCE continues to see growth and success in many areas of its operations while managing within the current fiscal reality of the province. The priorities outlined in this Business Plan (Section 4.0) have been developed to build on this success while aligning with the recommendations defined in the above.

As with the previous year, it is again noted that the business plan was developed during the COVID-19 pandemic. The unpredictable impact of this pandemic on the operation of the TCRCE and our schools could result in subsequent changes to the priorities outlined in this plan.

2.0 MISSION

Students' well-being will be enhanced and their academic achievement will improve when educators grow and improve in meeting the individual needs of learners. There are specific, culturally responsive strategies educators can implement to improve their practices towards this end.

3.0 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Tri-County Regional Centre for Education has a Regional Executive Director who oversees four areas which report to him: Programs and Student Services, Operations, Human Resources, and Finance.

Programs and Student Services: Programs and Student Services is responsible for all aspects of educational services to students and teachers of the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education.

The main functions of the Programs and Student Services Department include:

1. Administration of all matters related to educational programs and/or curriculum as defined in the Public School Program for Nova Scotia
2. Providing leadership to implement, monitor, and evaluate curriculum that is consistent with Department of Education and Early Childhood Development guidelines
3. Developing and coordinating a comprehensive professional development and in-service program for all educational administrators and teaching staff

Operations Department: The Operations Department is responsible for the provision and operation of safe and efficient facilities and fleet for the students and staff of the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education along with Technology Infrastructure.

The main functions of the Operations Department include:

1. Facilities Management, including community access
2. Capital Construction and additions and alterations
3. Transportation of students
4. Principal support in the area of operations
5. Technology/Infrastructure

Human Resources Department: The Human Resources Department of the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education is responsible for all aspects pertaining to Human Resource administration, Labour Relations, and Occupational Health and Safety. The Department provides strategic advice and direction in support of education service delivery.

The main functions of the Human Resources Department include:

1. Human Resources planning
2. Staffing/recruitment
3. Staff supervision
4. Compensation management
5. Employee relations
6. Labour relations
7. Occupational health and safety
8. Benefits administration

Finance Department: The Finance Department is responsible for the overall leadership and management of the finance function.

The main functions of the Finance Department include:

1. Providing payroll and accounting services
2. Financial planning, budgeting, and forecasting
3. Procurement of goods and services
4. Financial statements, contracts, insurance issues, and employee pension plan accounts
5. Banking, cash management, and trust accounts
6. Developing new Centre policies, and reviewing existing ones, pertaining to finance
7. Taxation and charitable donations
8. School-based funds

4.0 PRIORITIES

Link to TCRCE System Improvement Plan:

<https://www.tcrce.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Nov-2019-TCRCE-System-Improvement-Plan.pdf>

1. Grow in student achievement and well-being

The TCRCE System Improvement Plan continues to anchor the work of the TCRCE. The 2021-22 school year will see continued focus on well-being and student achievement in literacy and mathematics. As part of this work, TCRCE will:

- Implement a pilot for a new, provincial Teacher Growth and Evaluation process for 4 schools while continuing the existing professional growth and appraisal process for the remaining schools

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- Continue to grow our Learning Management System, leading to effective implementation of professional development related to instructional practices/expectations
- Fully implement school-based literacy data walls in elementary schools to ensure instruction is responsive to student need and implement a regional data wall as part of providing responsive supports to schools

2. Create safe, inclusive environments

In addition to the TCRCE System Improvement Plan (which primarily focuses on student well-being), TCRCE will also be taking steps to create safe, inclusive environments for staff. As part of this work, TCRCE will:

- Implement initiatives in response to First Voice work within TCRCE. This involves seeking direct feedback from students of African and Indigenous Ancestry about their experience in TCRCE schools and responding with strategic actions
- Implement specific initiatives in response to the provincial Inclusive Education Policy
- Respond to a region-wide, staff wellness survey by implementing initiatives related to staff wellness
- Continue work related to accessibility through participation in provincial committees

3. Grow in organizational processes

As part of effectively managing our organization in a way that ensures optimal use of public resources, TCRCE will grow our practices related to implementing controls throughout the system. As part of this work, TCRCE will:

- Implement *SchoolCash Online*, which is an online payment system enabling our community to more easily pay for school-related items
- Implement a structured employee verification process for credentials and security
- Implement HVAC (ventilation) upgrades to numerous locations
- Implement card access across all TCRCE buildings

5.0 ANNUAL REPORT OF ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2020-21

The priority of the business plan is to support TCRCE’s System Improvement Plan. The System Improvement Plan focuses on raising the bar and closing the gap through growth in student achievement and well-being. An equity lens permeates all work in TCRCE.

Priorities identified in 2020-21	Achievements
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<p>1. Implement the Inclusive Education Policy at the regional level</p>	<p>Professional Development provided to all Principals focusing on Guiding Principles and Policy Directives with action plan for school-based implementation.</p> <p>Locally developed Inclusive Education professional development (PD) available on LMS (Learning Management System). All staff completed this on PD day.</p> <p>Locally developed TCRCE Instructional Expectations, which are driven by and complement the Inclusive Education Policy.</p> <p>Inclusive Education Policy implementation was a component on TCRCE Regional Data Wall.</p>
<p>2. Align our existing System Improvement Plan to complement the Inclusive Education Policy</p>	<p>Inclusion of more direct language related to the Inclusive Education Policy within the System Improvement Plan.</p> <p>Directly tied Inclusive Education to school-based expectations on Student Success Planning, which is where the System Improvement Plan is operationalized.</p>
<p>3. Focus on equity throughout the system</p>	<p>Worked to amend Equity hiring policy and the exploration of best practices with HR.</p> <p>Created the TCRCE Responding to Racism and Racialized Language Document.</p> <p>Creation of Student Support Worker Action Plan addressing feedback from ANS Student Support Workers.</p>
<p>4. Form a joint accessibility advisory committee in accordance with the NS Accessibility Act</p>	<p>TCRCE participated in a provincial Accessibility Planning Working Group. The mandate of the group is to lead the development of an accessibility plan for all RCEs and the CSAP. It will also lead the planning and recruitment of a joint accessibility advisory committee. The deliverable is to have a three-year accessibility plan that outlines actions and timelines on how RCEs and CSAP will identify and remove accessibility barriers.</p>

5. Develop an accessibility plan	This was (and continues to be) a joint effort between TCRCE and the provincial advisory group. The plan will be in place by April 2023.
6. Begin implementing regional elements of our accessibility plan	Implementation will follow the plan, which will be finalized as of April 2023.
7. Continue initiatives/actions related to well-being and equity	<p>TCRCE completed a Staff Wellness Survey at all employment levels. This data is being used to create an action plan to improve wellness across the region.</p> <p>Ongoing work focused on first-voice experience/Ancestral Roots. This involved ground-level connection to African Nova Scotian students and committee-work at the regional level.</p> <p>Anti-Racism/Discrimination Journey Check-In with all Administrators with school-based implementation plan.</p>
8. Continue initiatives/actions related to growth in Literacy	<p>Locally developed and implemented TCRCE Literacy website focusing on instructional best practices, resources, videos, photos, etc.</p> <p>Implementation of an intensive Grade 1/2 Literacy Project focused on students currently reading below grade-level.</p> <p>All elementary schools refocused on school-based Data Walls, focusing on accurate records of reading progress.</p>
9. Continue initiatives/actions related to growth in Mathematics	<p>Locally developed Grade 3 & 4 regional assessments implemented to determine current levels and identify areas of growth.</p> <p>Professional development at all grade levels focused on intervention strategies including recognizing and identifying individual student need during Mathematics instruction, and in implementing focused strategies to support students' individual growth in Math.</p> <p>Teachers of Mathematics completed 'Mathematics Planning' on the TCRCE LMS (Learning Management System).</p>

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<p>10. Participate in the development and implementation of new provincial policies and initiatives</p>	<p>Implemented the provincial Inclusive Education policy.</p> <p>Implemented the new provincial Transportation Policy.</p> <p>Implemented the provincial Fraud policy.</p>
<p>11. Continue to implement recommendations from the Fraud Risk Assessment completed in Spring of 2020 to better strengthen controls and reduce fraud risk exposure including identifying new risk</p>	<p>Recommendations were received and the work is ongoing.</p>

6.0 FINANCE AND OPERATIONS*Key financial indicators*

Key Financial Indicators			
	2019-20 Actual	2020-21 Actual	2021-22 Budget
Revenue			
Province of Nova Scotia	\$73,648,049	\$79,326,720	\$76,599,288
Government of Canada	388,531	378,677	390,000
Municipal Contributions	11,762,386	12,029,408	12,299,878
Other Revenues	2,625,484	665,478	2,287,250
School Generated/Based funds	2,477,151	1,178,102	2,500,000
Total Revenue	\$90,901,601	\$93,578,385	\$94,076,416
Expenditures			
Office of the Regional Executive Director	\$563,503	\$642,312	\$639,781
Financial Services	612,188	634,539	681,919
Human Resource Services	504,026	599,245	689,643
School Administration or School Services	67,904,671	68,403,531	70,526,323
Pre-Primary Programming	2,025,244	2,670,271	3,060,430
Operational Services	16,758,142	18,353,724	15,978,320
School Generated/ Based Funds	2,469,619	1,535,633	2,500,000
Total Expenditures	\$90,837,373	\$92,839,255	\$94,076,416
Annual Operating Surplus (Deficit)	\$64,228	\$739,130	
Opening Accumulated Surplus (Deficit)	\$2,449,369	\$2,513,597	\$3,252,727
Closing Accumulated Surplus (Deficit)	\$2,513,597	\$3,252,727	\$3,252,727

7.0 KEY FACTS

Key Fact Category		
Students	September 30, 2019	September 30, 2020
Total Number of Students	5842	5679
Average Class Size P-2	17.6	16.0
Average Class Size 3-6	19.0	19.4
Average Class Size 7-9	18.9	17.4
Average Class Size 10-12	15.0	15.2
Total Number of Classes & Sections	1368	1389
Staff (FTEs)	September 30, 2019	September 30, 2020
School based educators & Administration	490.47	494.26
School Based Non-Teaching Support	246.34	263.72
Programming Support	21.0	21.0
Non-Teaching Programming Support	5.0	6.0
Transportation	92.85	105.75
Property Services	69.41	79.65
Administration	18.0	18.0
Technology Support	8.0	8.0
Other Programs	10.10	10.34
Technology	September 30, 2019	September 30, 2020
Students/Instructional Computer	1.6:1	1.2:1
Computers & Devices/Technician	750:1	880:1
Property Services	2019	2020
Total School Sq. Ft.*	1,099,413	1,160,381
Sq. Ft./Student*	188.19	204.33
Private Operator Sq. Ft.*	0	0
Operating Costs**	8,623,972	10,526,595
Operating Cost/Sq. Ft.**	\$7.84	\$9.07
Transportation	2019	2020
Total Buses on Regular Routes*	80	83
Total Spare Buses Operated*	13	14
Total Students Transported*	5,493	4943

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Total Student Transportation Cost**	5,315,940	5,635,700
Total Cost/Student Transported**	\$1,004.16	1140.16
Total number of bus runs daily*	300	306
Average number of students/bus run*	41	44
Cost/Unit – Contracted**	4,183.34	4362.87
Cost/Unit – RCE**	\$66,750	67,915.00
Total number of KM students transported*	2,176,390	2,346,987
Total number of KM buses traveled*	2,602,640	2,106,490

* As of June 30

**As of March 31

Definitions and Calculations:**Students (all based on Sept 30th statistics):**

Total Number of Students: Sept. 30th Total Enrolment (funded & unfunded)

Average Class Size P-2

Average Class Size 3-6

Average Class Size 7-9

Average Class Size 10-12

Total Number of Classes & Sections

Staff:

School based Educators and Administrators: Includes Teachers (including resource Teachers, Principals and Vice Principals), School Admin staff, Guidance, Psychologists, etc.

School based Non-Teaching Support: Includes Education or Teaching Assistants, School Secretaries, etc.

Programming Support: School Administration Supervisors, Coordinators of school programming and school services

Non- Teaching Programming Support: Secretaries, administration assistants and those positions not captured in programming support

Transportation: Bus Drivers, Mechanics, and other related administration staff

Property Services: Custodians, Maintenance and Trades staff

Administration: Superintendents, Finance Staff, Human Resources Staff, Operations Staff, and other related administration positions

Technology Support: Supervisors of School Technology, Networking Specialists, and other related IT support positions

Other Programs: FTEs connected to programs including, but not limited to, international services programs, before & after school programs, etc.

Technology:

Student/Instructional Computer: Ratio of Number of Students: Computers

Computers & Devices/Technician: Total Computers & Devices across RCE/CSAP/Technical Support FTEs

Property Service:

Total School Sq. Ft.: Total square footage of all schools operated by RCEs/CSAP (schools, P3,) excluding RCE office, bus garages, maintenance buildings.

Sq. Ft. /Student: Total square footage from above divided by Sept. 30th unaudited student count

Private Operator Sq. Ft.: Total square footage of all P3 schools excluding net/net lease P3s

Operating Costs: Custodial, maintenance and utility costs for the previous fiscal year actuals. Includes repairs and maintenance expenses funded in the annual profile sheet, does not include any major capital expenditures (TCA) funded by the RCE/CSAP or by the department (TCA Major or repair funding over \$150K)

Operating Costs/Sq. Ft.: Total op cost/Sq. Ft. of all schools maintained by RCE/CSAP including net/net P3s

Transportation:

Total Buses on Regular Routes: Total units operated on a daily basis by RCE

Total Spare Buses Operated: Total number of spare buses

Total Students Transported: All students transported – includes courtesy bused and privately conveyed

Total Student Transportation Cost: Actual from previous year

Total Cost/Student Transported: Total transportation audited actuals/total students transported

Total number of bus runs daily: Total of all regularly scheduled bus runs/day

Average number of students/bus run: Average of all students/number of daily bus runs

Cost/Unit – Contracted buses: Total transportation contract cost/all buses

Cost/Unit - RCE: Total transportation cost/all buses

Total number of KM students were transported: Total KM of all regular bus run driven while transporting students on regular runs in a school year

Total number of KM buses traveled: Total KM of all regular bus runs, extra and co-curricular trips and transport of buses to and from the various stops during the school year