

York Catholic board earmarks \$21 million for reopening

The Board of Trustees of the York Catholic District School Board (YCDSB) approved a list of new investments, which total close to \$21 million to support the safe reopening of schools this month. These investments are a combination of \$9 million in accumulated surplus from the Board's reserve funds, and \$11.6 million in new funding from the Ministry of Education. Highlights of new YCDSB investments include: \$8.54 million to hire additional teachers (minimum of 76 full-time educators) to help alleviate class size pressures; \$2.7 million to improve ventilation and air quality, and purchase High Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filtration units; \$2 million to hire additional lunchtime supervisors to support and improve student health and safety; \$1.5 million to address transportation-related service adjustments; \$1.5 million to purchase additional personal protective equipment (PPE); \$1.8 million to increase resources and capacity of remote learning, including the upgrading of the school broadband networks (\$500,000) and adding dedicated principals and administrators to support remote learning (\$1.3 million); \$1.3 million to hire additional custodial staff to support increased and enhanced cleaning; \$400,000 to ensure adequate supply of technology devices for students; \$360,000 to support enhanced cleaning and PPE for transportation; \$330,000 to support special education; \$300,000 to address and support the mental health and well-being of students and staff; \$200,000 to support health and safety training. This critical investment of almost \$21 million was approved with the health, safety and mental well-being of our students, families and staff at the forefront of all our minds, said Maria Marchese, chair of the Board of Trustees. As we prepared for the upcoming school year, our Board was determined to explore additional ways to support the safe reopening of our schools. We are pleased to invest \$9 million from our board's reserve funds, along with the \$11.6 million we received from the Ministry of Education. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I would like to thank the Ministry of Education for their continued support through this additional funding. These additional investments will provide families with the confidence to know that we remain committed to supporting student success in a safe, caring and faith-filled environment. We are extremely grateful to the Board of Trustees for approving this investment to support the safe reopening of our schools in September. I would also like to thank our dedicated staff team for their work in putting our comprehensive school re-entry plan together. Whether students are returning to in-person face to face instruction or participating in remote learning, we are confident that we are doing all that we can to create a safe environment for students to learn and grow, said Mary Battista, interim director of education. For more information on the YCDSB's school re-entry plan, please visit www.ycdsb.ca/reopening. The York Catholic District School Board is one of the top-performing school boards in Ontario. It delivers educational programming to approximately 53,000 students in 101 schools throughout York Region. For more information, visit www.ycdsb.ca or follow us on Twitter at @YCDSB.