

Halifax Regional School Board Comprehensive Business Continuity Program

Purpose

To provide the Governing Board a report for information on the creation of a comprehensive Business Continuity Management Program.

Background

The November 2015 Auditor General Report included a number of recommendations, among them Recommendation 3.6 which states, “The Halifax Regional School Board should develop a comprehensive business continuity management program. This program and documented plans within it, should be evaluated and tested on a periodic basis.”

Business Continuity Planning can be defined as, planning for the resumption and recovery of critical business functions and services under disruptive conditions.

The Auditor General’s office specifically identified a concern that we address the following aspects of business continuity planning: Governance, Emergency Response Plan, Incident Management Plan, Business Continuity Plan, Support Teams, Communications Plan and Recovery Plans.

At the February 22 Regular Board meeting the Governing Board moved that the Superintendent provide a report at the March 2017 Regular Board Meeting, with regards to HRSB Business Continuity Management Program as per Recommendation 3.6 of the Auditor General 2015 report.

Content

The province has committed to providing support to government departments and agencies in their efforts to create comprehensive business continuity plans (CBCP). Board staff have attended workshops with personnel from the provincial departments of Internal Services and Justice to assist in creation of a standardized comprehensive business continuity program for school boards. Senior Staff have dedicated time to become familiar with the CBCP process, including several members becoming certified in Incident Command System 100 training. To date the HRSB critical business functions have been identified and a risk analysis has been performed on each function which will inform mitigation strategies and business continuity plan development.

The CBCP will address the concerns of the Auditor General’s office. There were seven specific areas the Auditor General’s office identified.

Governance –A Business Continuity Management Charter has been drafted that clearly articulates leadership roles and responsibilities, expectations for training, document management, oversight and communication.

Emergency Response Plans –Emergency Response Plans are in place for every school that prioritizes personal safety and includes alternative locations in the event of an emergency. A draft Emergency Response Plan for central office is being prepared for review by senior staff.

Incident Management Plan – Priorities are always, 1) personal safety, 2) asset and environment protection and 3) business recovery. Roles and responsibilities of incident management teams have been defined for each board department and are connected to Incident Command Posts and Emergency Operations Centers. Incident management plans will include emergency response, business continuity, business recovery and communications.

Business Continuity Plans – Through the identification of critical business functions and risk analysis staff has identified which services are deemed critical and need to be maintained or have priority in their restoration in the event of a serious disruption. Strategies, including identifying key resources and personnel, are being developed to maintain or recover these services when business continuity is evoked.

Support Teams – A business continuity management team is established as a central command support. Each department has established departmental business continuity teams which are able to address individual department needs depending on the nature of any particular disruption.

Communications Plan – Communications plans are created to disseminate information internally or externally as part of all incident management plans. Inquiry response plans are also contemplated both centrally and incident site based.

Recovery Plans – guidance on key steps and resources to recover and restore essential services are included in resource workarounds contemplating the loss of buildings, loss of information technology and services, loss of people (ex. Pandemic).

Funding Details

N/A

Timeline

N/A

Appendices

N/A

Recommendations

The Governing Board accept the Business Continuity Program report for information.

Communications

AUDIENCE	RESPONSIBLE	TIMELINE

Contact

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