

Chapter 52

Regina Public and Regina Separate School Divisions— Physical Safety of Students

1.0 MAIN POINTS

The Education Act, 1995 (Act) delegates responsibility for student safety to school divisions. This chapter reports on the status at September 21, 2015 of 17 recommendations we made in our 2013 audit of the processes of Regina School Division No. 4 and Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 81 to provide for the physical safety of students at school.

Regina School Division No. 4 (Regina Public) had implemented recommendations related to safety manuals for science labs and shops, emergency kits, and safety training for staff. It had progressed on recommendations relating to accessibility of safety components (e.g., eyewash stations), signage, and physical security. It needs to develop requirements for air quality testing, and enable its Board to monitor the performance of its safety initiatives.

Regina Roman Catholic School Division No. 81 (Regina Separate) had implemented our recommendation regarding review and sign-off of emergency response plans. It had progressed on recommendations relating to new safety manuals, improved emergency kits and other safety components, and on reviewing physical security. It needs to define the number of first aid trained staff required in each school, provide guidance for placement of safety items (e.g., first aid kits), develop requirements for air quality testing, and enable its Board to monitor the performance of its safety initiatives.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Our *2013 Report – Volume 1*, Chapter 13 reported that for the period March 1, 2012 to February 28, 2013, Regina Public and Regina Separate had, other than for the following, effective processes to provide for the physical safety of students at school. They needed processes to:

- › Assess the level of physical security required for schools
- › Set requirements for safety training to ensure an adequate number of staff are trained in the event of an emergency situation
- › Develop requirements for air quality testing to be conducted when construction takes place during the school year
- › Develop and implement safety manuals for science and practical and applied arts programs and ensure safety equipment is functioning and accessible
- › Conduct assessments of appropriate locations for placement of safety-related signage and items, and provide guidance for maintaining consistent emergency response kits in schools
- › Develop and report on student safety performance measures



In addition, Regina Separate needed processes to ensure schools' emergency response plans were comprehensive and consistent. We made eight recommendations directed to Regina Public and nine recommendations directed to Regina Separate.

This chapter reports the results of our assessment of each division's progress in implementing our recommendations. To conduct this review engagement, we followed the standards for assurance engagements published in the *CPA Canada Handbook – Assurance*. To evaluate the school divisions' progress in implementing our recommendations, we used the relevant criteria from the original audit. Management of the school divisions agreed with the criteria in the original audit.

To perform our follow up on our recommendations we discussed actions taken with management, reviewed relevant documentation, and observed whether actions had been implemented in selected schools.

3.0 STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS—REGINA SCHOOL DIVISION NO. 4

This section sets out each recommendation, including the date on which the Standing Committee on Public Accounts agreed with the recommendation, the status of the recommendation at September 21, 2015, and Regina Public's actions up to that date. We found that Regina Public had implemented three recommendations, made progress on three recommendations, and had not yet addressed two recommendations.

3.1 Key Safety Measures Implemented

We recommended that Regina School Division No. 4 develop and implement safety manuals to be used by schools to guide safety and maintenance for all science labs and shop areas in its practical and applied arts programs. (2013 Report – Volume 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement June 18, 2015)

Status – Implemented

Regina Public contracted a third party to conduct shop safety audits and provide a shop safety handbook. The third party also adapted *Safety in the K-12 Science Classroom* to create science safety manuals for elementary schools and for high schools. The Division gave the manuals to schools for use in the 2015-16 school year.

We recommended that Regina School Division No. 4 review its practices for emergency response kits and provide guidance to schools on the required contents of kits. (2013 Report – Volume 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement June 18, 2015)

Status – Implemented

Regina Public developed an emergency response kit checklist and provided it to schools. It has made principals responsible for maintaining the emergency response kits and ensuring that they are regularly inspected. During our visits to selected schools, we observed compliance with the checklist.

We recommended that Regina School Division No. 4 set expectations for safety training that school staff are required to take including defining the number of first aid trained staff required in each school. (2013 Report – Volume 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement June 18, 2015)

Status – Implemented

Regina Public has implemented guidance for schools; it expects schools to have at least three staff members trained in first aid present in a school building at all times. The Division also tracks which staff members have received specific safety training (e.g., Workplace Hazardous Materials Information Systems Training). Division management advised that the Division plans to review this information with principals on an annual basis.

3.2 Improved Physical Security and Student Safety Initiatives Underway

We recommended that Regina School Division No. 4 develop processes to keep safety components (e.g., eyewash stations, emergency exits) accessible in science labs and shop areas. (2013 Report – Volume 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement June 18, 2015)

Status – Partially Implemented

Regina Public management worked with schools to form a working group with practical and applied arts teachers. This working group was tasked with determining requirements and developing guidelines. Regina Public hired a third party to do a safety audit; the audit determined many of the shops needed a standard eyewash station. In February 2014, the Division started replacing eyewash stations and emergency eyewash kits. Division management advised that the Division expected to complete installation of eyewash stations in all shops by the end of 2015.

We recommended that Regina School Division No. 4 determine the appropriate location for placement of safety-related signage and safety items such as fire extinguishers and first aid kits in school. (2013 Report – Volume 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement June 18, 2015)

Status – Partially Implemented



Regina Public worked with a contractor and schools to provide signage regarding general safety, first aid, and defibrillator machines. It determined the best locations for this signage and safety equipment. However, we observed examples of inadequate and inconsistent signage in the schools we visited (e.g., inadequate signage and location for first aid kit).

We recommended that Regina School Division No. 4 assess the level of physical security required for each school in the division. (2013 Report – Volume 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement June 18, 2015)

Status – Partially Implemented

Regina Public worked with principals to assess physical security risks at their schools. The Division determined that it should install video surveillance at all schools to help mitigate this risk. The Division was in process of purchasing video surveillance systems for its schools.

3.3 Requirements for Air Quality Testing Needed

We recommended that Regina School Division No. 4 develop requirements for air quality testing to be conducted when construction takes place during the year. (2013 Report – Volume 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement June 18, 2015)

Status – Not Implemented

The Education Act, 1995 delegates to boards of school divisions responsibility for providing and maintaining school accommodation,¹ and for maintaining “satisfactory standards of comfort, safety and sanitation” for students.² As indicated in our 2013 audit, it is important to maintain air quality during construction to ensure no harmful contaminants are released and that the air is safe for students and staff. During that audit, we found examples of construction impacting air quality. At September 21, 2015, while Regina Public had processes to assess air quality, it had not set a requirement to test air quality when construction takes place during the school year. We noted the Division planned certain construction to take place during the school year.

3.4 Better Processes to Monitor Student Safety Needed

We recommended that Regina School Division No. 4 develop performance measures and targets related to student safety and report on these measures and targets periodically to its Board. (2013 Report – Volume 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement June 18, 2015)

Status – Not Implemented

¹ *The Education Act, 1995*, section 85(1)(d).

² *Ibid.*, section 85(1)(w).

Regina Public does not give its Board information on the success of its student safety initiatives; it had not developed performance measures or targets to facilitate assessing and reporting on student safety. Developing measures and targets related to student safety, and reporting on these to its Board, would allow the Division to monitor the performance of its safety initiatives.

4.0 STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS—REGINA SEPARATE SCHOOL DIVISION NO. 81

This section sets out each recommendation including the date on which the Standing Committee on Public Accounts agreed to the recommendation, the status of the recommendation at September 21, 2015, and the Regina Separate's actions up to that date. We found that Regina Separate has implemented one recommendation, made progress on four recommendations, and has not yet addressed four recommendations.

4.1 Emergency Response Plans in Place

We recommended that Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 81 formally document its annual review and sign-off of emergency response plans. (2013 Report – Volume 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement June 18, 2015)

Status – Implemented

Regina Separate provided school principals with emergency response plan templates; it expected principals to adapt these for each school. Schools submitted completed plans to the Division head office for review and approval.

4.2 New Safety Manuals, Improved Emergency Kits and Safety Components, and Reviews of Physical Security Underway

We recommended that Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 81 develop and implement safety manuals to be used by schools to guide safety and maintenance for all science labs and shop areas in its practical and applied arts programs. (2013 Report – Volume 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement June 18, 2015)

Status – Partially implemented

Regina Separate contracted a third party to provide practical and applied arts shops and science labs with safety manuals. The Division expects the third party to complete these manuals in fall 2015.



We recommended that Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 81 review its practices for emergency response kits and provide guidance to schools on the required contents of kits. (2013 Report – Volume 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement June 18, 2015)

Status – Partially Implemented

Regina Separate provides school administrators with emergency response guides. These guides include a section called “Emergency Evacuation Kits” that lists materials that schools are to include in the kits. However, in our examination at selected schools, we observed some inconsistency in schools following these guidelines.

We recommended that Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 81 develop processes to keep safety components (e.g., eyewash stations, emergency exits) accessible in science labs and shop areas. (2013 Report – Volume 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement June 18, 2015)

Status – Partially Implemented

Regina Separate reviewed practical and applied arts safety at each of the Division’s high schools. It identified safety gaps, and provided recommendations to the Division’s management to address the issues. Division management accepted these recommendations and plans to follow up the status of their implementation in the fall of 2015. Division management also advised that the Division is planning to complete a review of science labs.

We recommended that Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 81 assess the level of physical security required for each school in the division. (2013 Report – Volume 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement June 18, 2015)

Status – Partially Implemented

Regina Separate has developed a draft security template to help assess the level of physical security required for each school. The Division expects schools to use the template to determine the level of security required for their school. At September 21, 2015, the Regina Separate had not provided the template to schools.

4.3 Key Improvements to Secure Student Safety Needed

We recommended that Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 81 define the number of first aid trained staff required in each school. (2013 Report – Volume 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement June 18, 2015)

Status – Not Implemented

In setting requirements for first aid trained staff, *The Occupation Health and Safety Regulations, 1993* considers the number of employees in a school, rather than the entire number of people in the school, including students. As indicated in our 2013 audit, we are of the view that the Regina Separate must consider students as well as employees in defining the number of first aid trained staff. Regina Separate had not defined the number of first aid staff required in each school.

We recommended that Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 81 determine the appropriate location for placement of safety-related signage and safety items such as fire extinguishers and first aid kits in schools. (2013 Report – Volume 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement June 18, 2015)

Status – Not Implemented

Regina Separate division management advised that the Division has not provided guidance on signage for first aid kits or other safety equipment.

We recommended that Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 81 develop requirements for air quality testing to be conducted when construction takes place during the school year. (2013 Report – Volume 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement June 18, 2015)

Status – Not Implemented

The Education Act, 1995 delegates to boards of school divisions responsibility for providing and maintaining school accommodation,³ and for maintaining “satisfactory standards of comfort, safety and sanitation” for students.⁴ As indicated in our 2013 audit, it is important to maintain air quality during construction to ensure no harmful contaminants are released and that the air is safe for students and staff. At September 21, 2015, while Regina Separate had processes to assess air quality, it has not set a requirement to test air quality when construction takes place during the school year. We noted the Division planned certain construction to take place during the school year.

³ *The Education Act, 2015*, section 85(1)(d).

⁴ *Ibid.*, section 85(1)(w).



4.4 Better Processes to Monitor Student Safety Needed

We recommended that Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 81 develop performance measures and targets related to student safety and report on these measures and targets periodically to its Board. (2013 Report – Volume 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement June 18, 2015)

Status – Not Implemented

Regina Separate provides reports to its Board that describe the Division's policies regarding student safety and state that certain guidelines are in place. However, it had not developed performance measures or targets to facilitate assessing and reporting on student safety. Developing measures and targets related to student safety, and reporting on these to its Board, would allow the Division to monitor the performance of its safety initiatives.