



## Near North District School Board MYSP Progress Report

Although the data drawn in 2020 by Nanos Research, the Ministry Special Advisors and Ramsay Partners Inc. pertained to historical patterns, the MYSP planning committee considered the data important to ensuring that they planned a positive forward. Direction. NNDSB would be remiss in ignoring previous data. The MYSP committee, NNDSB Trustees and Executive and facilitator Michael Ramsay used the data provided by stakeholders to move forward in a positive way with MYSP planning, making sure to address stakeholder concerns.

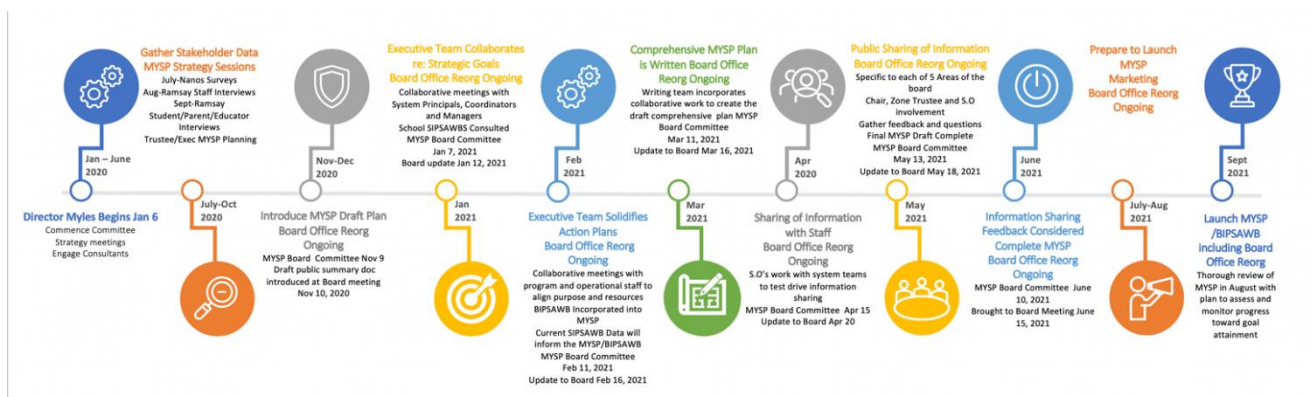
In December 2019, Special Advisors from the Ministry of Education created a report including recommendations for NNDSB to improve upon its practice. It was important to the Board that the advisors hear from our stakeholders. Surveys to parents, community and staff were completed in December 2020. The input from these surveys was used to inform deeper discussions with staff and students. Public meetings were held in North Bay and Parry Sound in January 2020. The Parent/Community Survey garnered 1526 responses. The staff Survey included 494 responses. The special advisors provided recommendations regarding leadership, human resources practice, financial responsibility, governance and public confidence.

In June 2020, the NNDSB retained Nanos Research Inc. to conduct an outreach to stakeholders in order to gauge their views, experiences, and satisfaction level with NNDSB. This research was commissioned by NNDSB in response to recommendations put forth by the 2019 Ombudsman Report and the 2020 Ministry of Education Special Advisors' Report.

On behalf of the Near North District School Board (NNDSB), Nanos conducted one-on-one interviews with 18 stakeholders between April 6 and June 3, 2020. Interviews were conducted in English. Interviews were conducted by telephone or through an online open link survey. Stakeholders included those in the education sector, social services, health and children's services, unions, government (federal/provincial/local), and Indigenous partners. Each interview was a maximum of 30 minutes in length. A total of 18 individuals participated in the research, with an estimated response rate of 20%.

In October 2020 Ramsay Partners Inc. engaged in a series of focus groups which included parents, students, and staff. Within these groups, Ramsay gathered stakeholder voices regarding trends in education and Near North District School Board's current status.

The research findings gathered by the three research partners were utilized for community consultation and informed the development of the five-year strategic plan as mandated by the Education Act. The data gathered informed the creation of the 2021-2026 Multi-Year Strategic Plan. The main themes that emerged in the above extensive research led to the four priorities of excellence in communication, innovation, relationships and teaching and learning. The plan was completed in late April 2021, reviewed in several public sessions from May to June 2021 and officially launched in September 2021.



In April 2022 the MYSP committee released the MYSP survey to determine progress against the baseline data for the Four established priorities. The result of this progress is contained within this report. The 155 respondents, consisted of 88 staff, 53 parents, 9 students and 5 community partners.

# Four Priorities of the MYSP

## Excellence in Communication: Transparency/Accountability

### Baseline Data

#### Nanos Research Inc.

Stakeholders frequently disagree that NNDSB makes transparent decisions and provides sufficient information to the public. In line with the desire for increased communication, stakeholders more often disagree or somewhat disagree that the NNDSB's decision-making is open and transparent and that the NNDSB provides sufficient public information about its decision-making to allow the public to understand its decisions.

#### Special Advisors

Participants expressed a lack of trust due to a history of flawed and inconsistent processes. Participants identified communication as a significant area for improvement within the NNDSB.

#### Ramsay Partners Inc.

Rated less favourably/less true were two characteristics including is well organized (3.7/7.0) and has structured meetings and operates with transparency.

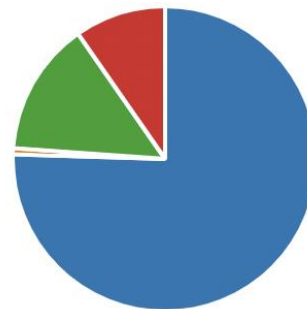
A Board that is accountable and free from corruption was identified as very important with transparency and ethical standards noted as critically important for NNDSB.

It is important to note that the concerns expressed in the three studies made in (2020) echo concerns with governance in the 2013 Wilson Report and 2019 Ombudsman's Report. The three reports strongly recommend correction of Trustee governance practice and Board adherence to parliamentary procedure when conducting Board meetings and trustee meetings held aside from scheduled board meetings, maintaining agendas and records, transparency, and consistency in communication of board procedures and meetings.

### Progress Data

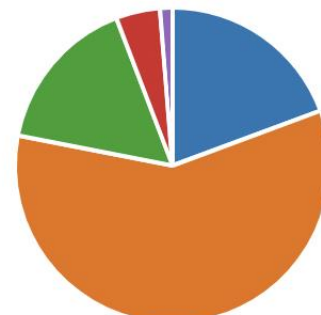
117 respondents replied that communication had increased when asked the following question. Over the past two years, have you found that the volume of communication increased, decreased, stayed the same, unsure,

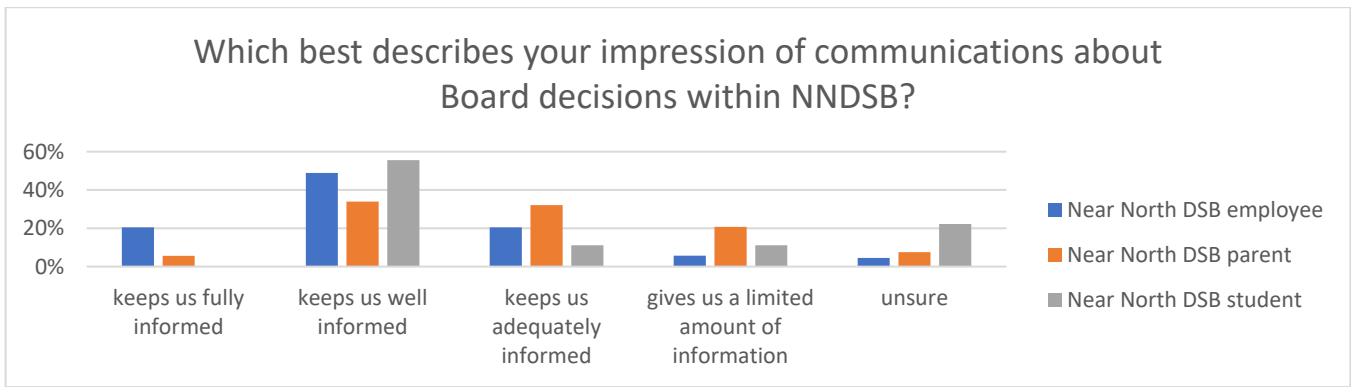
● increased	117
● decreased	1
● stayed the same	22
● unsure	15



The majority of respondents said that they could find most or all of the information they were looking for on the NNDSB Website. It is important to know that 70% of NNDSB parents felt they could find all or most of the information they were looking for. While staff weighed in at 60%, the website is not their only source of information.

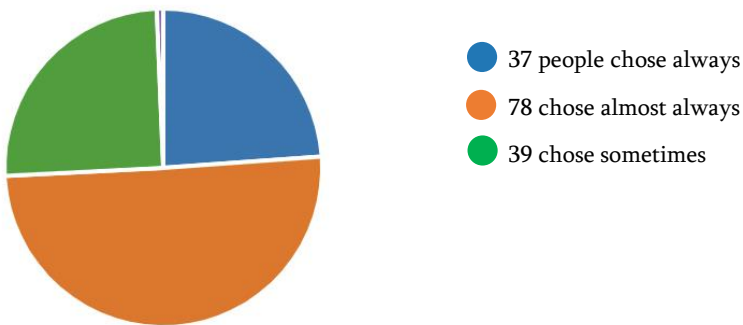
● Yes, all of it	30
● Most information	91
● Some information	25
● Not what I am looking for	7
● Other	2





The greatest number of responses to the above question indicate that NNDSB is keeping students, parents, and staff well informed.

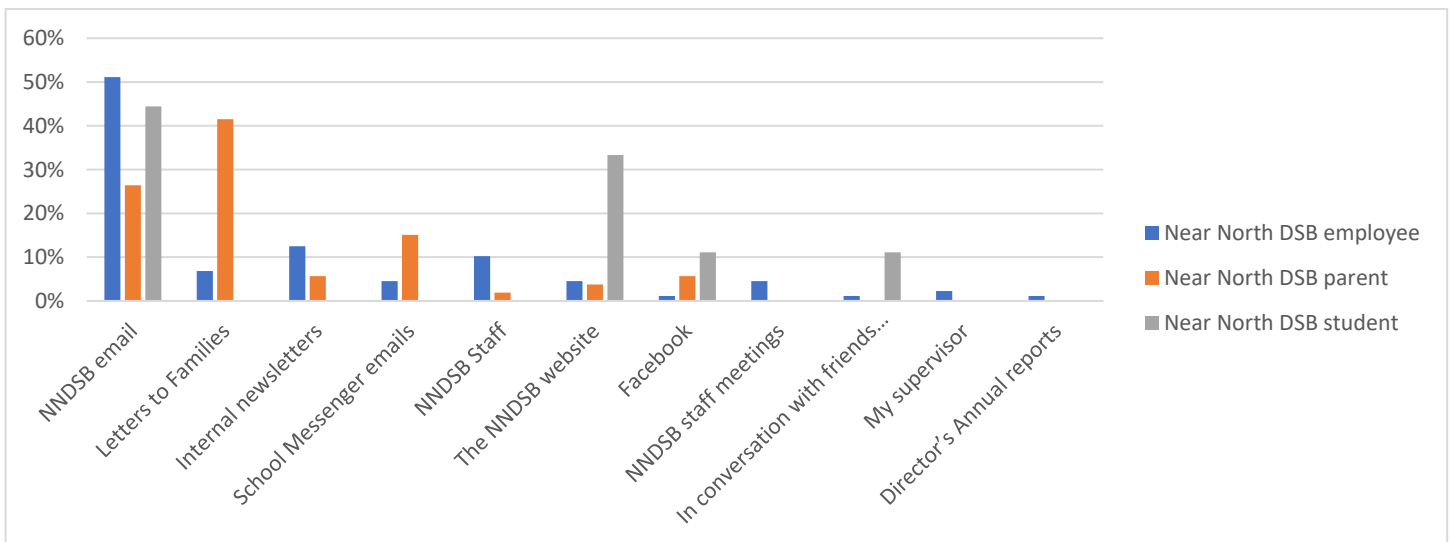
When asked if they could count on information from NNDSB to be accurate and timely:



**93% of respondents said they had the same or more knowledge about NNDSB than in 2020.**

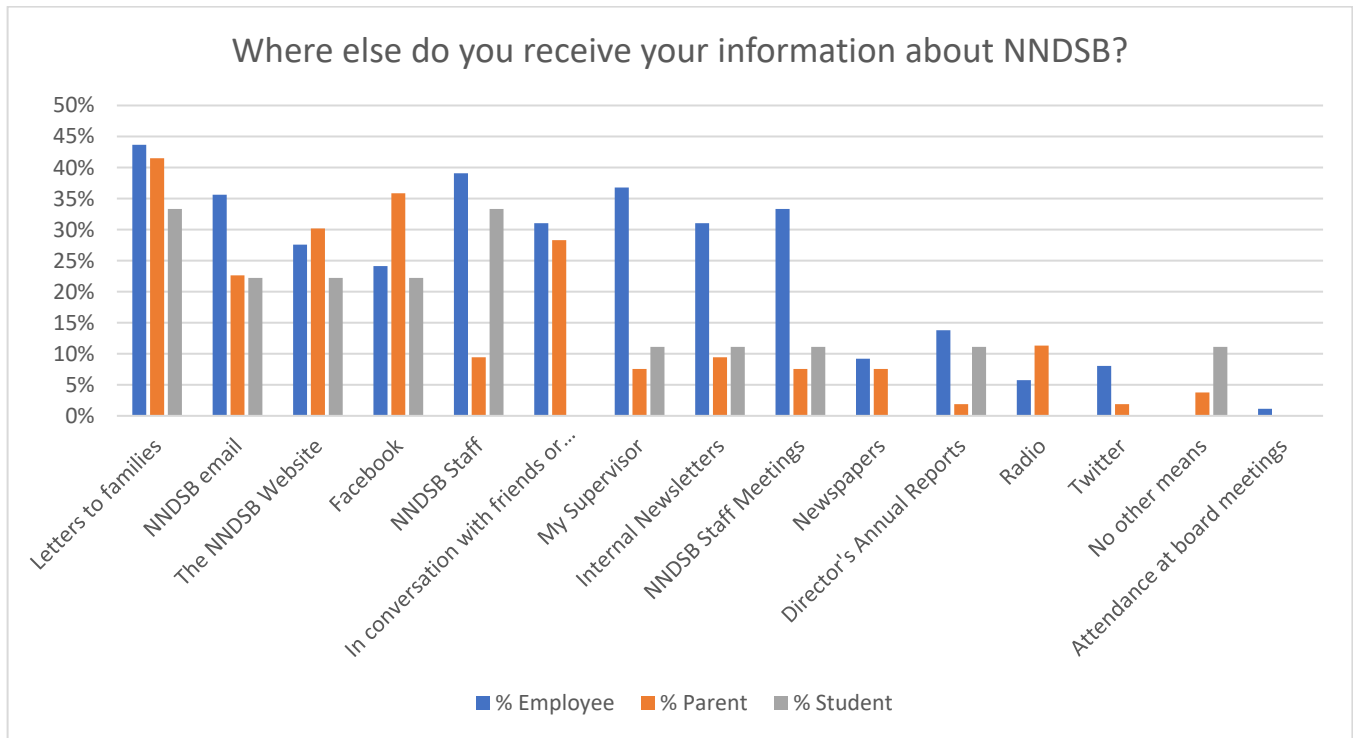
Further information gathered showed that NNDSB's efforts to provide information in varied formats is valued. Generally, respondents read all or mostly all print packages that are received.

When asked where they received the majority of their information, responses were broken down as follows



It is noteworthy that respondents preferred formats that were sent to them over formats where they would need to proactively seek information.

Choices were varied for the second choice: Where else do you gather information, but NNDSB email and Letters to Families remained the top choices.



## Next Steps

The communication and transparency data above shows that we are on the right track and as expected, will need to continue our efforts to build trust in the new NNDSB. As we see above, baseline data from various sources revealed that participants expressed a lack of trust due to a history of flawed and inconsistent processes. It takes time to build this level of trust.

We are pleased with the fact that increased communication was recognized and that there was a significant increase in the perception that NNDSB information can be trusted to be accurate and timely almost always.

- NNDSB will continue to endeavour to provide accurate, timely and relevant information in order to continue to build trust.
- The Letter to families, which was meant to be a temporary initiative has been met with enthusiasm by staff and families. It will continue.
- We will continue to hone the Near North website to ensure that stakeholders are able to find as much information as possible. Several areas of need have been identified and work to build content has begun starting with Literacy and Numeracy information pages.
- Another survey may be relevant to understand what stakeholders consider to be the most vital information they seek and what they are not finding easily on the website.
- Increase trust in our transparency by creating a process to bring more stakeholders to the NNDSB website for important board and school information. We have been able to successfully divide and allocate appropriate materials to the website and Facebook. Next steps are to support understanding of where information will be found, i.e., board decisions are found on the website while good news stories and public events are more likely to be posted only to Facebook.
- How do we create a better flow across platforms?

# Excellence in Innovation

## Baseline Data

### Nanos Research Inc.

Asked for advice related to the COVID-19 situation, stakeholders often mention assisting parents and teachers with online learning, including developing additional online tools and helping to support parents and students wherever possible, as well as ensuring that all students have access to online learning.

### Special Advisors

The Special Advisor’s report does not address innovation.

### Ramsay Partners Inc.

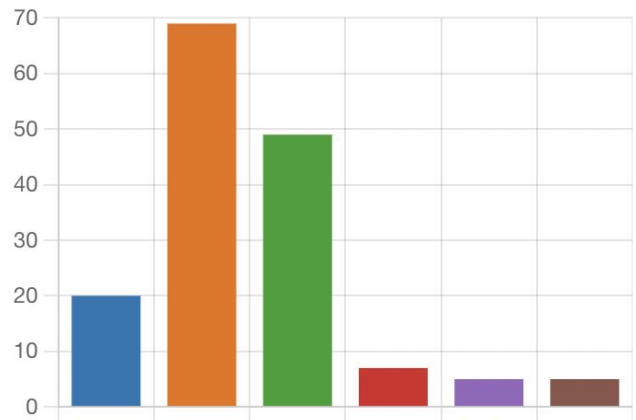
The Board was perceived to be less prepared for a shift to more personalized/individualized learning and changes in the location of education.

Though not specifically noted in the surveyed characteristics of NNDSB, the concept of innovation and being innovative was identified by one stakeholder group as something of importance—now and in future.

## Progress Data

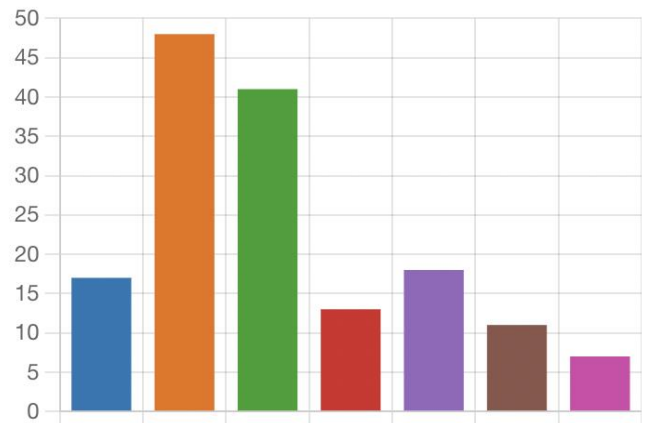
The majority of people agree that NNDSB schools have innovative programs.

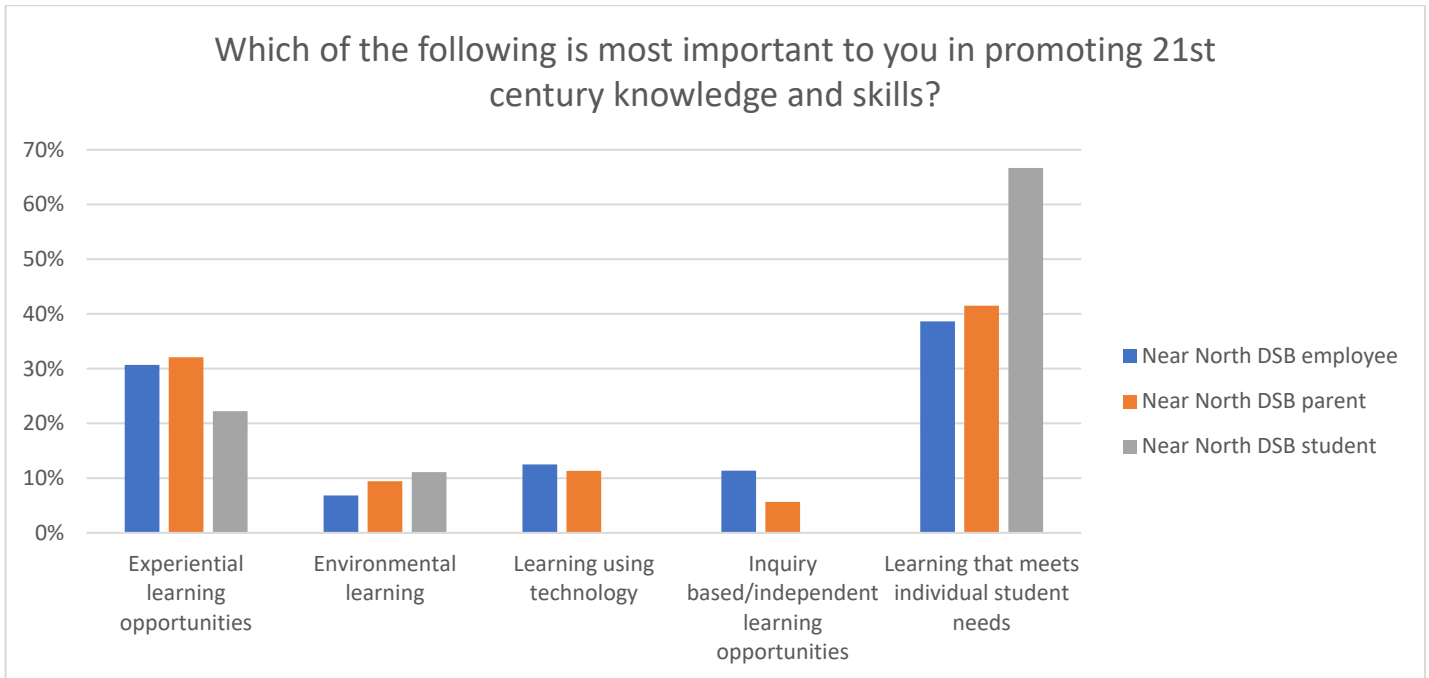
● agree strongly	20
● agree	69
● somewhat agree	49
● somewhat disagree	7
● disagree	5
● unsure	5



Considering the many recent pivots to virtual learning, I believe that NNDSB was able to support teachers and students in innovative ways, respondents were far more likely to agree than to disagree.

● agree strongly	17
● agree	48
● somewhat agree	41
● neutral	13
● somewhat disagree	18
● disagree	11
● strongly disagree	7





It is interesting to note that parents and teachers agreed regarding important methods of promoting 21<sup>st</sup> century learning skills.

Baseline data from Nanos Research 2019 showed that parents and employees did not feel fully prepared to shift to online learning and respondents urged NNDSB to support the multiple shifts. Results in 2022 demonstrate respondent confidence in NNDSB.

### Next Steps

- It is important for NNDSB to increase the promotion of innovative programs available to students.
- NNDSB must continue to investigate innovative options for secondary schools in remote areas where declining school population makes the provision of varied program options for students difficult.
- Continue to provide professional development (PD) that supports the delivery of programming that promotes 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and promote these opportunities when they happen, i.e., mathematics and coding, SHSM experiential, Coop OYAP, and environmental learning.
- Continue to provide PD that promotes, and information that increases understanding of how 21<sup>st</sup> century skills are developed through experiential and inquiry-based learning.
- Provide updates on new programs such as PSW Program to saturate awareness of innovation.

## Excellence in Relationships

### Baseline Data

#### Nanos Research Inc.

A number of stakeholders mention increased communication and outreach to stakeholders as a way to improve their relationship with the NNDSB. A few stakeholders said their relationship with the board is fine and there is no need for improvement.

#### Special Advisors

Participants expressed a lack of trust due to a history of flawed and inconsistent processes.

Staff survey data indicates a very low rating for transparency, openness, and accountability with less than 20% of respondents in agreement. These factors can lead to employees being disengaged and less likely to support the board's strategic goals.

#### Ramsay Partners Inc.

Throughout the interviews, stakeholders mentioned increased communication and stakeholder outreach and consultation as ways to increase transparency and collaboration, as well as advice for the NNDSB to consider in its five-year plan, and ways that NNDSB could improve its relationship with them.

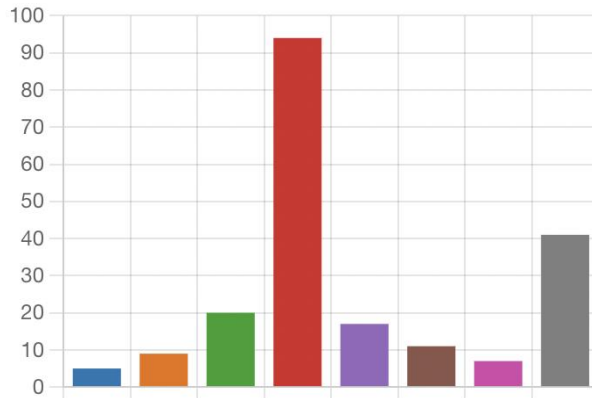
### Progress Data

On a scale of five, ranging from very dissatisfied, to very satisfied, how satisfied are you with your relationship/partnership with NNDSB? NNDSB received four out of five stars

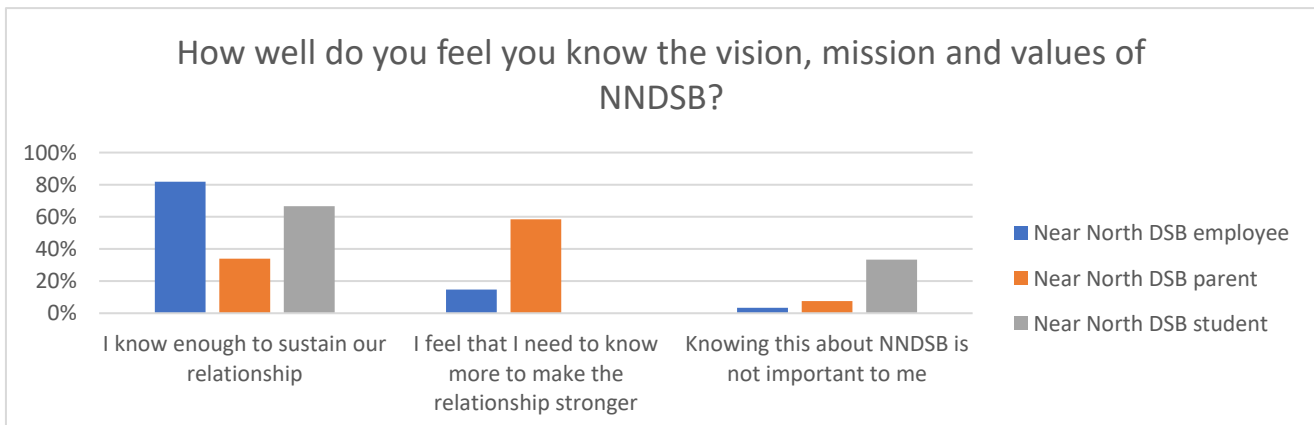


Most respondents choose their school due to its proximity to home.

● I and/or my child was invited	5
● It was recommended	9
● I and/or my child felt welcome	20
● It is close to where I live	94
● Student programs	17
● Referral/ reputation	11
● Positive public image	7
● Other	41

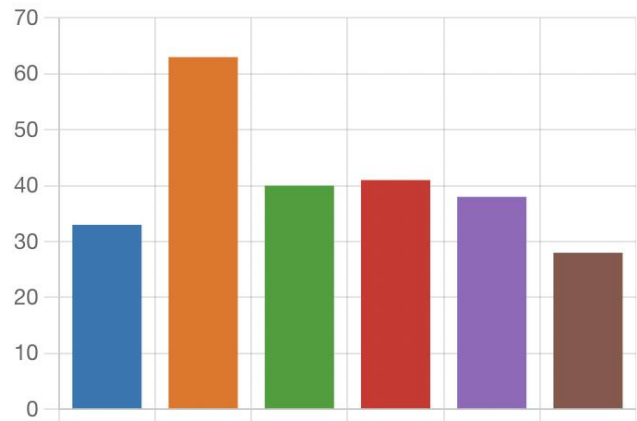


The results of the question below reveal a remarkable improvement over results according to the Special Advisors report which stated, "the staff survey indicated that only 35% of staff felt that the goals/priorities of the NNDSB were clear to them. "



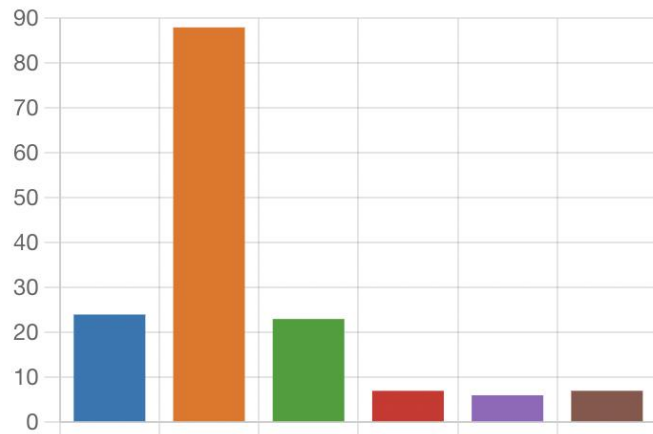
Respondents chose a variety of options as the main benefits of their relationship with NNDSB with involvement in school activities and events as the option chosen most.

- I am able to voice my opinion
- I am able to be involved in school activities and events
- I am able to work collaboratively to mutual benefit
- NNDSB provides support that meets my needs
- The relationship is collaborative
- other



I believe that NNDSB provides an equitable and inclusive environment that champions learning opportunities for all.

- agree strongly 24
- agree 88
- somewhat agree 23
- somewhat disagree 7
- disagree 6
- unsure 7



## Next Steps

- Increase opportunities for stakeholders to feel heard.
- Examine all current partnerships to ensure the reciprocal nature of relationships remains strong or is strengthened.
- Create a common understanding of the difference between partnerships in education and service providers used by educators.
- Increase opportunities for community involvement in schools.

## Excellence in Teaching and Learning

### Baseline Data

#### Nanos Research

Stakeholders rank excellence in teaching and in the learning environment as the most important priority for the NNDSB. Stakeholders also indicated that this is the area in which they have the most confidence. It takes many NNDSB staff, working as a team to ensure that schools are safe and welcoming for your children.

#### Special Advisors

Participants reinforced appreciation for all the extraordinary efforts provided by staff in their schools.

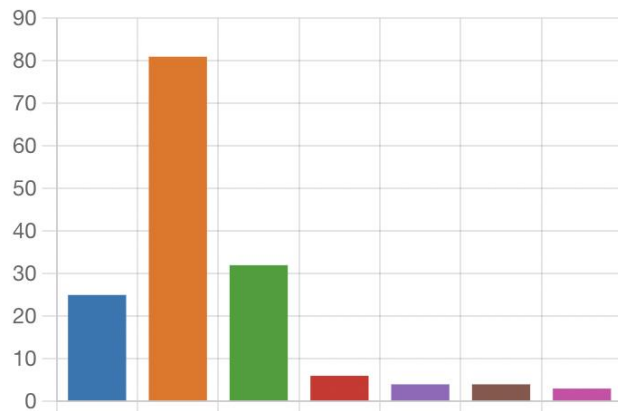
#### Ramsay Partners

All stakeholders emphasized the importance of student success/achievement with some noting that this was already an area of strength that could be elevated even further—there was broad support to continue to be proactive in celebrating the accomplishments of NNDSB schools and students.

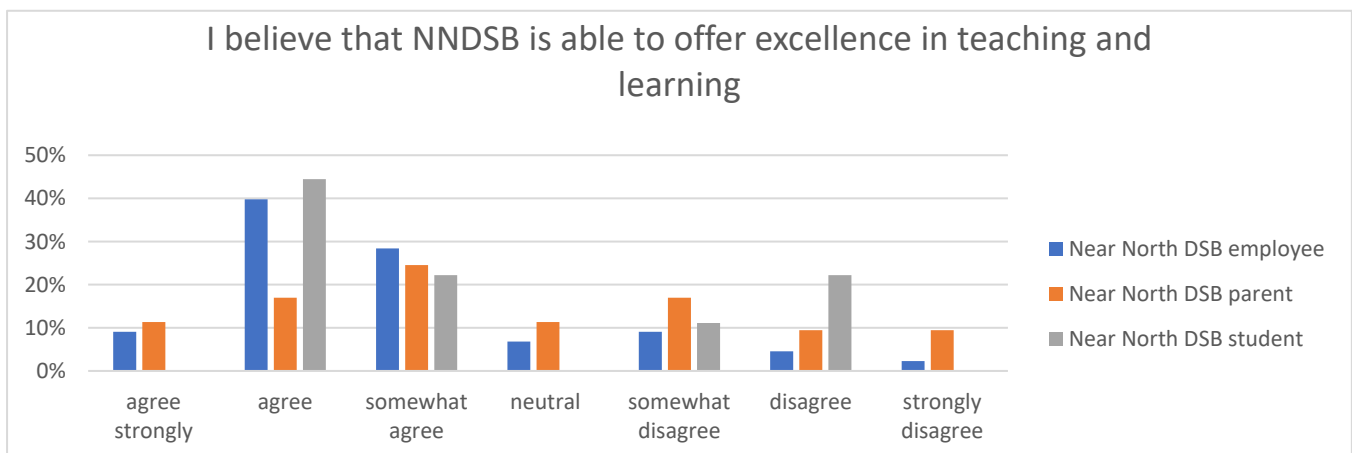
Some participants reflected on different experiences for students due to variable approaches by teachers. There was a call for greater consistency in how content is provided, e.g., all students in all courses having the same experience and communication with teachers when working online. This was broadly viewed as a matter of standards, skills, and resources. As well, there was noted interest to increase support at a 'systems level' to enable and equip teachers—to increase their capacity and capability through professional development.

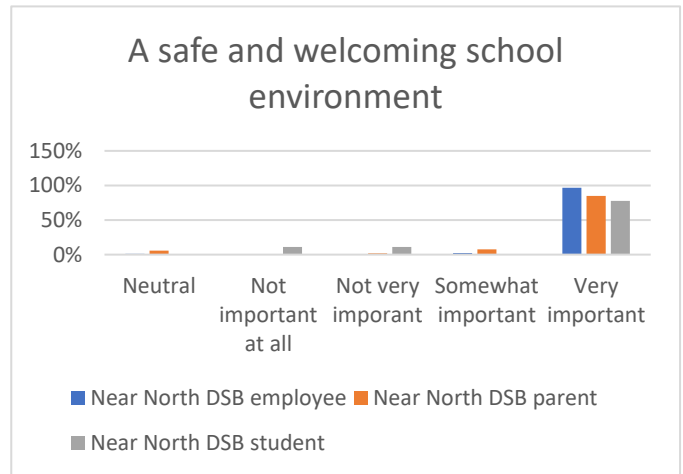
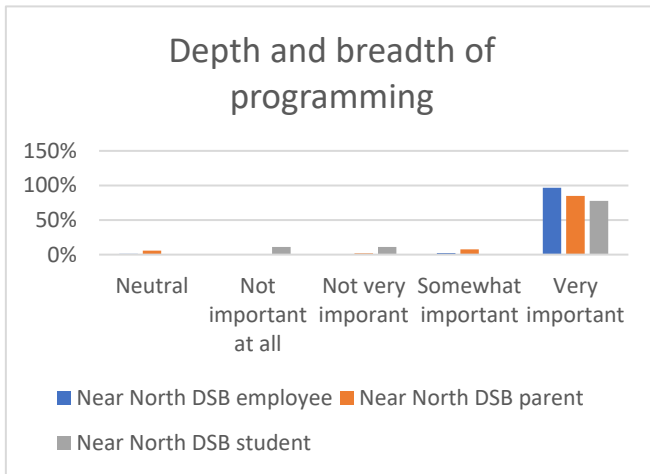
### Progress Data

● agree strongly	25
● agree	81
● somewhat agree	32
● somewhat disagree	6
● disagree	4
● disagree strongly	4
● unsure	3

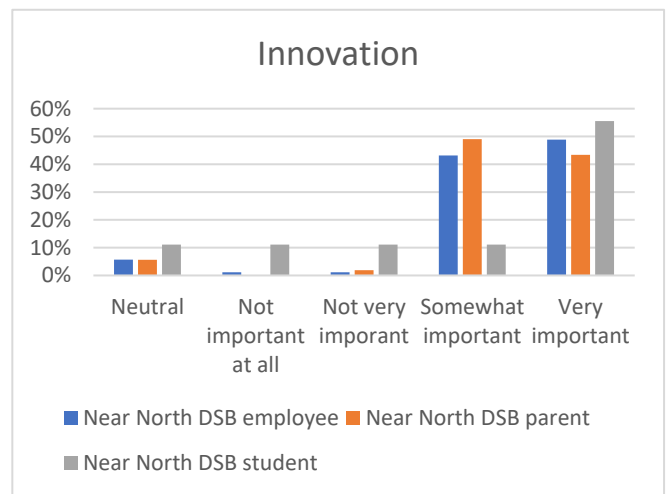
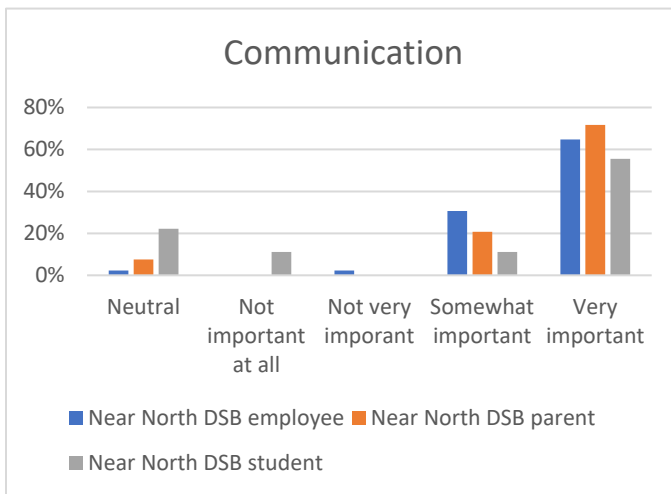


The above chart demonstrates that the majority of stakeholders still agree that NNDSB is able to offer excellence in teaching and learning. The chart below further delineates the respondents. It is clear that there is more work to be done to ensure parent trust in the educational program.





The results on this page demonstrate a balance of what stakeholders deem important in teaching and learning with more emphasis on communication and innovation.



## Next Steps

- Continue the efforts made in 2021/22 to employ common diagnostic resources to increase common responsive teaching practice.
- Increase the use of diagnostic and progress data in MYSP 6-week cycle planning to set higher standards in student achievement, equity, and well-being goals.
- Increase professional development opportunities that explore innovative learning opportunities and universal design for learning approaches.
- Board wide-all school-every teacher introduction of the 6-week cycle process which increases communication, teacher to student, teacher to parent and teacher to teacher.
- Reinforce the expectation for SIPSAWB that include school-based literacy, numeracy, equity, and well-being strategies in all schools that align to MYSP priorities, BIPSAWB, SIPSAWB, DIPSAWB.

# Quantitative Data

The following quantitative data is not an exhaustive list. It is meant to provide stakeholders with a view of some of the most successful initiatives that NNDSB Staff have undertaken in alignment with the specific goals established within the Four Priorities of the Multi-Year Strategic Plan.

## Excellence in Teaching and Learning

Deliver a superior educational experience for all students. Providing educational pathways that promote student choice and meet all learner requirements (trades, employability, post-secondary education, and life skills)

### Goals:

Provide an equitable and inclusive environment that champions learning opportunities for all.

At least four initiatives have emerged over the 2021/22 year

- The SEA- it Special Education digital tracking system was implemented in the fall 2021 and all Differentiated Learning Resource Teachers in 33 schools have been trained on its use.
- 33 schools are now using this system to obtain, maintain and track Special Equipment Amount (SEA) devices for students digitally. This has resulted in a more efficient process to assign technology to appropriate students decreasing deployment time and creating a virtual inventory of SEA technology devices. As devices are assigned, this system automatically links the student to a request for LEARNstyle coaching which has made for a more expedient and effective start to service for students.
- Due to the nature of remote learning, we opened our courses to the entire province through the OeLC PRISM system (provincial system). This also allowed students in remote regions of NNDSB and students across the province to partake in NNDSB courses.

2020-21 school year

31 NNDSB students took e-learning courses with other boards and 41 students from other boards took e-learning courses from the NNDSB.

2020-21 Summer

42 NNDSB students took e-learning courses with other boards and 38 students from other boards took e-learning courses from the NNDSB.

2021-22 school year, 53 NNDSB students took e-learning courses with other boards, and 50 students from other boards took e-learning courses from the NNDSB.

- More than 500 students enrolled in our summer secondary school credit programs. Thirty-three staff were hired, for teaching and new levels of re-engagement support including Mental Health staff, an Indigenous Grad Coach, and a differentiated learning resource teacher (DLRT).

## Create and sustain a dynamic culture that provides a relevant and engaging learning environment that inspires excellence in everyone.

- Approximately 90 students in Grades 1-8 joined this year's Summer Learning Program (SLP). Three coordinators worked with 31 educators including teachers, educational assistants, and child development counsellors to support mental health, well-being, math and literacy knowledge and skill acquisition. SLP ran from July 5-23 for three hours a day.
- The summer learning at the Canadian Ecology Centre was a hit again. Outdoor education and connecting with the land are helpful for the well-being of our youth. Over the duration of the summer, five sessions were held, and more than 140 students received credits in various courses.

## Create opportunities for equitable access to programs and services for students.

Following a second successful summer program designed to mitigate gaps for students due to COVID disruptions, in September 2021, in an effort to provide equitable opportunities for all learners:

- 33 staff were trained to administer Tier 1 and 2 Literacy measures to identify students at risk of not achieving reading outcomes without Tier 2 and 3 supports being available.
- 500 Power up Literacy licences to support school teams in meeting the needs of grade 7 & 8 students who may benefit from additional, targeted literacy learning opportunities. Licenses have been proportionally distributed to schools to support equitable student access.

## Programs and services embrace the culture and diversity of students and all partners.

NNDSB employs 19 staff who support mental wellbeing, language development and cultural programming for Indigenous students at 34 schools.

- In 13 schools NNDSB employs dedicated staff
- 24 Indigenous Studies courses are now offered at the secondary level.
- In April 2022, all secondary schools in the system agreed to an initiative whereby in 2022/2023 all grade 11 English classes will be delivered as NBE classes that celebrate Indigenous culture within the English studies curriculum.

NNDSB has formal Education Service Agreements (ESA) with eight local First Nations. The board values the partnerships and the body of Indigenous knowledge that members of those communities have and are willing to share with NNDSB.

More students demonstrate growth and achieve student learning outcomes with a specific focus on numeracy and literacy.

In 2020-21, more than 750 Near North students successfully completed the OSSLT with an average achievement of 89.4%.

We are proud of the determination of NNDSB students. Although writing the Ontario Secondary School 89.4% Literacy Test (OSSLT) was voluntary in 2020-21 and many boards chose not to challenge the test, students from every NNDSB Secondary School chose to challenge the online test with highly positive results.

All Math Educators, K-12, engaged in learning related to the new Math Curriculum beginning with board-wide virtual PD on Sept. 3, 2020. Over 100 educators participated in a series of virtual/webinar PD mathematics sessions.

Staff will demonstrate excellence in instructional practices and understanding of 21st century competencies: critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity, and innovation.

In April of 2020, following the COVID-19 school closure, the NNDSB program team launched the K-12 Professional Learning Portal (PLP) to ensure staff had access to the latest teaching and learning news, instructional and assessment tools/resources, and technology enabled learning platforms. Professional learning supports include video tutorials, curriculum and assessment resources and links to Ministry services, etc.

Since its inception, the PLP has hosted more than 1,650 unique viewers. (Shows the total number of individual visitors to the site, regardless of how often they've visited. Usage data accounts for user activity for site content such as pages, documents, and news.)

This school year alone the PLP has had 12,989 unique site visits and over 82,000 unique site visits since its launch in April 2020.

Ensure Trustees and staff are supported with progressive human resource and professional development programs.

In 2020-21 Trustees were engaged in 4 ongoing PD events from March until June.

In 2021-22 Trustees were engaged in 5 ongoing PD events from September through March and 8 were made available in April 2022. May and June are yet to be announced.

## Excellence in Innovation

We engage in innovative future-oriented learning experiences that promote excellence in student achievement and well-being.

### Goals:

Build technological capability to meet the requirements of integrated learning solutions.

NNDSB Educational technology teams have engaged in 9 new initiatives since 2020

- secondary report cards were published directly in Edsby and digitally shared with students and parents through the Edsby platform. This was a successful initiative that now consolidates all report card-related tasks for staff in Edsby without needing to access additional applications
- An Edsby report card pilot was completed at the elementary level across three schools and included grades K-8. The pilot was successful, teachers included found the process intuitive and feedback indicated they would prefer to continue using Edsby for completing future report cards.

- A pilot was also completed around using Edsby for scheduling parent-teacher interviews
- A digital school has been created and embedded in our Brightspace LMS providing virtual learning students with access to a variety of locations and has helped maintain a sense of community while connecting to their classes from home.
- A similar digital environment was created for students in the summer learning program to facilitate their access to various online locations.
- In September 2021 staff were introduced to a new tool to promote a positive school climate, equity, and student well-being. The resiliency tool in the NNDSB SharePoint provides the platform for school teams to complete the School Mental Health Ontario's Reflection Tool.
- In September 2021, working with the principal responsible for Safe Schools the SafeArrivals platform was implemented within many of our school offices.
- A fully digital registration process was launched in 2021-22. NNDSB's fully digital system eliminates the need for a visit to the school for registration. Parents and guardians are able to send digital copies of student identification.
- The SEA- it Special Education digital tracking system was implemented in the fall of 2021 and all Differentiated Learning Resource Teachers have been trained on its use. All schools are now using this system to obtain, maintain and track Special Equipment Amount (SEA) devices for students digitally. This has resulted in a more efficient process to assign technology to appropriate students decreasing deployment time and creating a virtual inventory of SEA technology devices. As devices are assigned, this system automatically links the student to a request for LEARNstyle coaching which has made for a more expedient and effective start to service for students.

### Promote the competencies students need to succeed now and in the future: critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity, and innovation.

2020-2022, NNDSB has engaged in two initiatives that increase opportunities for future pathways of learning and attainment of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.

- <https://www.nearnorthschools.ca/skillsatwork/> This interactive site, along with several differentiated virtual platforms allows events to stretch throughout the NNDSB expansive geographic region, widening our footprint and increasing equitable opportunities for all students.
- Skills Catalyst OneNote, for all teachers: a supporting resource accessed by more than 1,000 students in the first six months of release, surpassing our goal of 500. Also contained within this lasting resource is information and materials from our trusted and valued partners YES Employment, Canadore College and the Labour Market Group.

### Optimize learning, including the use of technological innovations and experiential learning opportunities to deepen and transform learning.

SHSM Experiential learning: Initially, in October of 2020, numbers were low as a result of at home learning, reduced ability to group students for assemblies to encourage enrollment as well as limited ability to provide

experiential learning opportunities which typically "grab" student interest in SHSM. Coop was drastically impacted as were hands-on certifications. Mostly, the inability to recruit was impacted. Moving into the 2021-2022 year, leads were able to find niche, virtual certification opportunities, many opportunities for coop presented themselves as things "pivoted" and then as restrictions began to drop, leads' interest, and therefore student interest was renewed.

SHSM Numbers:

October 2020 - 260

January 2021 - 309 - as a concerted effort board-wide at recruitment

October 2022 - 355 - tied programs, supporting leads and change in focus of specific programs

1 New program: SHSM Mining at Northern Secondary School

3 programs tied to existing SHSM in preparation for application to Ministry for new programs

OYAP Participants:

In 2020/21 NNDSB observed a dramatic reduction in OYAP participation numbers due to the provincial/local covid health measures that resulted in the postponement and cancellation of most community-based placement opportunities.

In 2021/22, with the loosening of covid restrictions and the return to in-school instruction, students have been able to return to community placements and benefit from the experiential learning opportunities.

- Our planned participation numbers for 2021-22 is 100 OYAP Participants.

As of April 2022, NNDSB has over 130 OYAP participants registered in the EOIS-APPR. Thus, we have already exceeded our goal. This number is expected to expand to approximately 160 when all the OYAP Participation forms are received for second semester.

In addition, our goal for 2021-22 is to support 6 students to start their apprenticeship pathway through OYAP. Currently, we have a total of 5 "active" registrations with 3 "pending" applications. Thus, we have successfully reached this goal as well.

## Align resources and initiatives to promote learning that meets future trends in education.

NNDSB has initiated three new future-oriented programs across the NNDSB region. This is just the beginning as the pathways team explores options for 2022/23.

- The PSW program delivered currently in North Bay and Parry Sound and projected to begin in Mattawa and Sturgeon Falls in Sept 2022, was sought after for 3 years. Upon the Director's request, research began in 2021. This interest sparked the Ministry of Education to offer NNDSB in October 2021 the opportunity to receive program funding with the stipulation that a program must begin by March of 2022. A high energy team was formed to grab this opportunity to support the community. After an intensive 4 months, the PSW program officially launched on Feb 28, 2022. We are grateful to our partners for this innovative programming.
- NNDSB has signed an MOU in partnership with Northern Ontario Film Studios and Hideaway Pictures Inc. NNDSB will explore opportunities to create programming aimed at student experiential learning of the film industry and con ed programs leading to employment in the film industry in Northern Ontario. The partnership has begun with 2 students scheduled for May 2021 start. Numbers are currently being established for summer 2022 and the fall of 2022/2023.

- Virtual Partnership with InkSmith for Sector Partner Experiences - over 100 students in SHSM took part in learning that promotes critical thinking in mathematics, innovation creativity and entrepreneurship.

## Excellence in Relationships

We build positive relationships with all members of our education community to foster an engaged and inclusive board culture. Together, we model our stated values, we practice acknowledgement of others, and we continuously meet student needs.

### Goals:

Students, families and staff are welcomed, respected, and valued as partners

COVID regulations that precluded parent attendance in schools, caused NNDSB to launch 12 new initiatives to keep families engaged.

- COVID UPDATES Page
- Near North Updates Page for non COVID related events and news
- Launch of Student Voice, a page on the website featuring content created by students
- enhanced social media presence on board and school social media accounts
- In the Works feature that shines a spotlight on different staff groups in the organization
- increased number of proactive communications with staff and families in the form of newsletters, Letters to families, school messenger information and social media sharing
- Virtual school visits /parent nights for students transitioning to new schools
- Virtual welcome to kindergarten nights in elementary schools
- Broadcasting of school sporting and arts events
- Distribution of Journey into learning packages to the homes of new kindergarten students
- Skills at work website for experiential transition activities  
Participation in the “Skills at Work” Pizza Night held on April 27, 2022, saw just over 90 families participate in the evening and received tons of photos of young people, with their family members, enjoying the culinary dishes that they prepared.
- The mental health team provided on-going counselling to students and families who had already connected with the team and accepted new referrals throughout July and August. Youth drop-in wellness hubs operated this summer for youth aged 10-18.

Proactively engage with our staff and parent communities to provide a culture and supportive learning environment that promotes student agency for their education, learning and well-being.

Thanks to an ongoing partnership with the Canadian Centre for Child Protection (C3P), staff, students and parents are benefiting from resources, lessons and presentations that aim to keep kids safe online. Over 75 parents learned the importance of speaking to their children about online content, contact and conduct during a November 2021 presentation. In a January 2022 presentation, over 200 staff learned about emerging online trends and the preventative actions they can take to support healthy student choices. The Keeping Students Safe Policy (PPM 166) makes it mandatory for all school boards in Ontario to create anti-sex trafficking protocols. NNDSB is thankful to C3P for their contributions to our new [Anti-Sex Trafficking Administrative Guideline](#) and for the multitude of student, staff and parent resources that they provide to our communities.

Promote and build connections to foster mutually respectful communication among students, families, staff, and the broader community.

Eight partners come together to form a new advisory group to support the NNDSB community.

The newly established [Equity Advisory Circle](#) has allowed NNDSB to widen our connection to community and stakeholders through our partnerships with the North Bay and District Multi-Cultural Society, [OUTLoud](#), [Children's Aid Society](#) (OACAS), [Ontario Educational Championship Team](#) (OECT), [Métis Nation North Bay](#), Parent Involvement Committee (PIC), Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), and the NNDSB First Nations Advisory Committee. The collaborative alignment of efforts while honouring the collective commitment to inclusion allows a greater impact.

A culture of caring is achieved through a dedication to knowing, honouring, and supporting students and their families, staff, and members of our community.

NNDSB Parent Involvement Committee has arranged for Peg Dawson to present a workshop on May 2 to support parents and educators in understanding how to help children and teens strengthen their executive skills. By April 27, 2022, the post on Facebook has reached 2,172. We are eager to gather data regarding attendance.

Enhance the safety and well-being of students and staff.

34 schools involved in safe schools activities

Creating safe, welcoming, and accepting learning environments in which all NNDSB students can thrive is of utmost importance to NNDSB. To support a consistent approach of safe and accepting practices across the district, the safe schools team created the safe schools' framework. Throughout the year, all schools participate in activities that focus on creating safer schools through citizenship and community, conflict resolution, and bullying awareness. Each of these three domains contains additional subtopics that support and reinforce the main idea

Create opportunities for collaboration and partnerships. Students and all partners feel heard, valued, and supported.

Three new collaborations with established partners

NNDSB was proud to create three new collaborative partnerships with previously established partners for the mutual benefit of the student

- Youth drop-in wellness hubs operated this summer for youth aged 10-18. NNDSB was proud to partner in this with OUTLoud North Bay and the Mary Street Centre in Parry Sound. A virtual group for students aged 7 to 11 was held to teach strategies to cope with anxiety, anger, and impulsivity. Six sessions were held in July and August. The team also offered webinars for students and families beginning July 14, and virtual drop-in sessions for parents. Attendance ranged from four students to 25 students daily.
- As part of our commitment to equity and inclusion in 2020-21, NNDSB embarked on a process to engage community partners through voice and collaboration in the creation of the [Equity Advisory Circle](#). There were three meetings in the inaugural year, which saw us widen our connection to community and stakeholders through our partnerships with the North Bay and District Multi-Cultural Society, [OUTLoud](#), [Children's Aid Society](#) (OACAS), [Ontario Educational Championship Team](#) (OECT), [Métis Nation North Bay](#), Parent Involvement Committee (PIC), Special Education Advisory

Committee (SEAC), and the NNDSB First Nations Advisory Committee. The collaborative alignment of efforts while honouring the collective commitment to inclusion allows a greater impact.

- Skills Catalyst Training, a supporting resource accessed by more than 1,000 students in the first six months of release, surpassing our goal of 500. Also contained within this lasting resource is information and materials from our trusted and valued partners YES Employment, Canadore College and the Labour Market Group.

Six New partnerships were formed

- PSW: Partnerships with long term care facilities across the region to provide PSW training resulted in what is turning out to be a highly successful program with a 95% employment rate for graduating students. NNDSB has partnered with Casselholme in North Bay and Belvedere Heights in Parry Sound in its inaugural year and is now recruiting for North Bay, Parry Sound, West Nipissing General Hospital in Parry Sound and Algonquin Nursing Home in Mattawa.
- NNDSB has signed an MOU in partnership with Northern Ontario Film Studios and Hideaway Pictures Inc. NNDSB will explore opportunities to create programming aimed at student experiential learning of the film industry and con ed programs leading to employment in the film industry in Northern Ontario. The partnership has begun with 2 students scheduled for May 2021 start. Numbers are currently being established for summer 2022 and the fall of 2022/2023.
- Partnering with KOJO Institute using demographic data in relation to equity and math de-streaming Kike Ojo-Thompson, Equity Principal Consultant of the [KOJO Institute](#), engaged educators Kindergarten-Grade12, administrators and system leaders to build a shared understanding of the need for de-streaming. She spoke to the cultural shifts required to help dismantle systemic discrimination and structural inequities as it relates to the de-streaming of curriculum.
- Virtual program partnerships with VRTA (Virtual Robotics Training Academy - out of Parry Sound) - delivered Sector Partner related Experiences to Information Communication Technology and Mining Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) Programs as well as Boot camp for virtual automation using Python coding
- Virtual Partnership with InkSmith for Sector Partner Experiences (SPE)- over 100 students in SHSM Critical thinking in Math and Innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurship.
- Looby Construction - supporting coop opportunities as well as employment for students/graduates

## Excellence in Communication

The Near North District School Board is committed to promoting public confidence and community support in public education. Effective communication provides opportunities to share accurate and reliable information and clarity of goals as we seek to attain the vision, mission and priorities that build stronger relationships.

### Goals

We are committed to promoting public confidence and community support in public education through timely, accurate, effective, and transparent communication of Board

initiatives, vision, and goals.

The 2020-2021 Ombudsman report details how NNDSB has implemented 12 of the 14 recommendations as of December 2020, including the adoption of a new [governance manual](#) that addresses not only the ombudsman's recommendations, but those of a 2013 review, and by the Ministry of Education advisors in 2020. The two outstanding recommendations relate to updating NNDSB's accommodation review policy and will be implemented once the Ministry of Education updates its Pupil Accommodations Review Guideline.

**Provide opportunities for community partners to share information and ideas that build stronger community relationships.**

Opportunities are provided to community partners to share information through 9 advisory committees.: Equity Advisory Circle, First Nations Advisory Committee, Parent Involvement Committee, Special Education Advisory Committee, Supervised Alternative Learning Committee, Transportation Appeals Committee, Parry Sound and Fricker Build committees.

NNDSB has parent councils in 34 schools as well as the Board-wide Parent Information Committee

When asked about their awareness of the following opportunities:

81.9% were aware of the safe schools survey

84.5% were aware of parent council

83.9% were aware of weekly and monthly newsletters

Awareness of opportunities to coach, volunteer in charity events and volunteer work ranged from 49.7 to 63.9%. These opportunities simply take a phone call to your local school.

**We are committed to communication in various modes to ensure all NNDSB communities are aware of emerging events.**

Using analytics (social media and web) to assist in evidence-based decision making we can determine statistics i.e., since September, the board website has had a 48.3 per cent increase in users (a user is a visitor to the site) and that the number of sessions has also increased 34.7 per cent to 1.1 million. The bounce rate has decreased which is an indicator of user engagement; a bounce means the person only visited one page, and then left the site. NNDSB's site saw almost five per cent fewer bounces after only viewing one page, which typically indicates there is content that interests the visitor. The session duration, which is the amount of time a visitor spent on the site increased 14.3 per cent.

20 modes of communication utilized since January 2020

- online advertising – supplementing radio and print ads with digital advertising to maximize distribution
- radio advertisement
- Regular Board Highlights and updates; released to news and archived on the website
- launch of [Student Voice](#), a page on the website featuring content created by students
- Sharing of great student news on board social media and school social media accounts, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram
- [In the Works](#) feature that shines a spotlight on different staff groups in the organization
- increased number of proactive communications with families and media through news releases
- increased number of proactive communications with families through letters to families, also posted and archived on the website
- Individual School based newsletters
- Open invitation to attend Board meetings on the website and minutes archived
- Safe Schools Survey
- MYSP launch information sessions
- MYSP public progress survey

- Director's annual report
- Director's Year in Review
- April MYSP Progress Report
- NNDSB monitored information line
- staff handbook created to assist with communications questions
- implementation of social media terms of use guidelines, infographics, and administrative guidelines for social media for staff
- Director's monthly newsletter to staff

## In conclusion

NNDSB would like to thank those stakeholders who took the time to lend their voices to provide progress data. We value stakeholder involvement in the process.

Data shows that we are on the right track but can increase momentum. It is important to acknowledge that NNDSB staff have managed to progress tremendously despite COVID disruptions to learning. The realities of the effects on learning and indeed the psychological, physical, and social well-being of the student will be emerging and evolving for quite some time. Now more than ever it is important for NNDSB to maintain a focus on the priorities of the multi-year strategic plan in consultation with stakeholders and in particular, the student.

