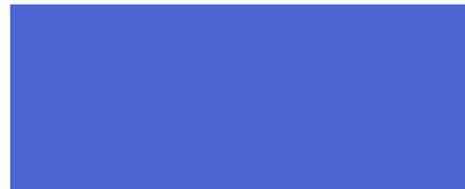




2023-2024

Director's Annual Report

DRAFT



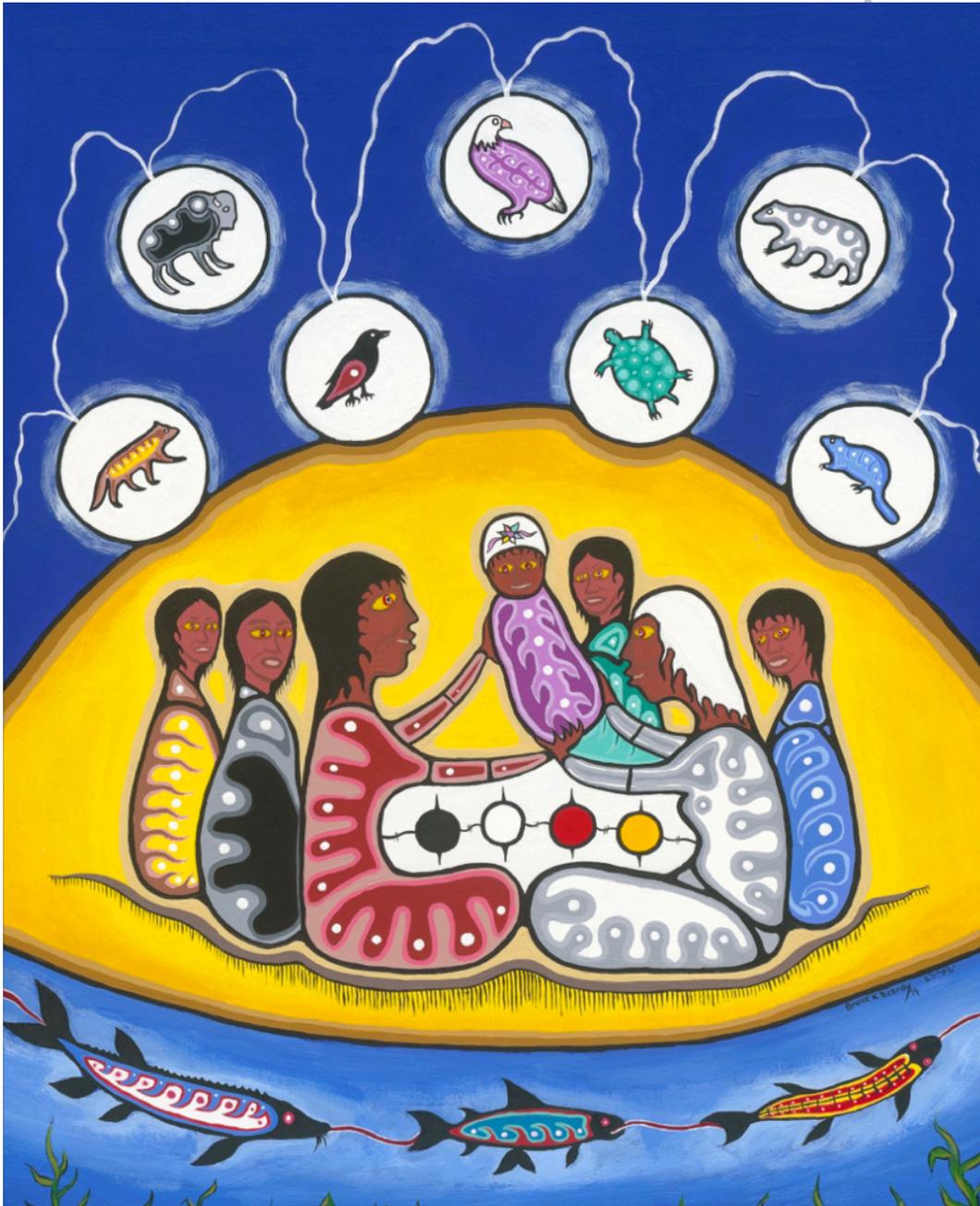
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Biindigen, Mii gwi Anishinabek wewenankenmaaminak dependajig maa kiing.
"We acknowledge in a good way, the original people of the land here".
We value the cultures, histories, and relationships with the Indigenous Peoples of Turtle Island
(North America).

We seek to build student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect and to identify teacher training needs relating to the above.

[Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action, 2015](#)



INTEGRITY

Near North District School Board (NNDSB) is responsible for the public education of approximately 10,000 learners from across the geographic regions of the Almaguin Highlands, North Bay, Mattawa, West Nipissing, and Parry Sound. The board serves a wide variety of communities within a 17,020 square km area and operates 27 elementary schools, six secondary schools, and a variety of alternative and continuing education programs and services.

ABOVE: Bruce Beardy OjiCree Artist

Respect: Honesty, reliability and moral action are embodied in the ethical standard of Integrity. Continual reflection assists members in exercising integrity in their professional commitments and responsibilities.

From Ontario College of Teachers: Ethical Standards



Message from the Chair of the Board of Trustees and the Director of Education

2023-24 marked the third year of the Near North District School Board (NNDSB) 2021-2026 Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSF). We feel tremendous pride in the strategic plan. All NNDSB staff continue to focus on the 4 priorities of excellence in teaching and learning, excellence in innovation, excellence in relationships and excellence in communication. The Director of Education, the trustees, and executive team have set ambitious objectives to guide NNDSB efforts as we strive for success for all.

Global changes affected the business of education on a large scale in 2023-24. NNDSB staff have managed issues like staff shortages, rising costs, and attendance challenges with grit and resilience and have focused their efforts on the core purpose of student achievement, equity and well-being. Classes and extracurricular activities were vibrant and engaging as all staff focused on creating appropriate environments and opportunities that inspired curiosity and a love of learning.

In the 2023-2024 school year, NNDSB focussed on student achievement, prioritizing hands-on learning and skills development in reading, writing and mathematics. NNDSB worked toward improved focus on a kindergarten to Grade 12 education system that prepares students to succeed in life. We strive to ensure that NNDSB students graduate with a competitive advantage by providing a variety of modern curricula, specialized and experiential learning to prepare them for the jobs of the future.

We are encouraged by the strides that have been made in the third year of the Multi-Year Strategic plan and are happy to share some of these successes in the following report.

Handwritten signature of Ashley St. Pierre in black ink.

Ashley St. Pierre
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Handwritten signature of Craig Myles in black ink.

Craig Myles
Director of Education



Executive Summary

This report outlines the progress made toward achieving key priorities of the Near North District School Board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYS). Contained herein, is information on progress toward meeting the NNDSB MYS priorities of excellence in teaching and learning, excellence in relationships, excellence in communication, and excellence in innovation. The report also addresses the Ministry Student Achievement Plan Priorities of achievement of learning outcomes in core academic skills, preparation of students for future success and student engagement and well-being. Near North District School Board priorities align with Ministry of Education priorities.

In the 2023-2024 school year, NNDSB continued to build on learning recovery and address the lingering gaps created by COVID. It marked a year of increased data collection and responsive action as we strived to meet the unique needs of all learners in a safe and inclusive learning environment. Safe schools and mental wellness initiatives continued to be a top priority as we endeavoured to address the ripple effects of the pandemic.

Educators continued to implement literacy and mathematics diagnostics to understand students' strengths and needs in gaining core learning skills. Diagnostic examination alongside student profiles helped staff to set and put into action goals that support equitable access to learning and strive toward student achievement and well-being. The results of these efforts are found in this report. EQAO literacy and numeracy data is shared and should be understood as one aspect of learning that is considered in a wholesome picture of student learning drawn from standardised tests, report card data, qualitative and quantitative evidence and educator professional judgement.

The report shares how Near North District School Board literacy initiatives align with the [Ontario Human Rights Commission \(OHRC\) Right to Read Report](#) and initiatives of the NNDSB Math Achievement Action Plan. It also shares the provincially recognized NNDSB summer learning programs that deliver continual learning, gap closing in literacy, mathematics and science, and ensures smoother transitions to the new school year through transition programming and reach ahead secondary school credits.

NNDSB has also received much recognition for continued innovation like vaping pilots and cell phone policies. Relationships are strong and support the longevity of innovative programs like the PSW and Hockey Skills Canada programs. Relationships with Indigenous partners across the region continue to nurture cultural understanding through a variety of collaborative opportunities. Partnership with other ministries supported the building of new opportunities such as those in technological education in line with the Ministry of Education focus on increased technological exposure.

The above mentioned are just some of the highlights of the year. You are invited to learn more in the following review.

The 2021-2026 Multi-Year Strategic Plan

Multi-Year Strategic Plan Executive Summary

The 2021-2026 Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP) is the result of more than 16 months of consultation and planning in the year 2020-21. All stakeholders contributed their voices to identify key priorities for Near North District School Board.

[Nanos Research](#), Ramsay Partners Inc. and Ministry Special Advisors Wayne Joudrie and Wally Easton engaged with the public in various ways to garner public opinion. This input, combined with board and industry data, helped us to develop goals that align with the four strategic priorities of the plan.

The board was then launched into months of collaborative planning that resulted in the creation of new ways to plan and align all goals to the same trajectory of student achievement and well-being. The process began with the [Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement and Well-being](#) (BIPSAWB) that focused on key objectives which fall under the overarching priorities as set by the Ministry of Education, which guide us to maintain strategies for the themes of literacy, numeracy, human rights, equity and inclusion, and student pathways. The 2021-26 BIPSAWB is aligned to the four priorities of the MYSP. [Excellence in Teaching and Learning](#) which includes our goals for literacy, numeracy, student achievement and pathways and well-being. [Excellence in Innovation](#) which ensures that teaching and learning promotes 21st century skills and that the board engages in practice that innovates in a way that makes us more efficient. [Excellence in Building Relationships](#) which ensures that we create a safe and welcoming environment for all stakeholders in which our students' well-being is safeguarded in wrap-around supports. [Excellence in Communication](#), whereby all stakeholders are aware of the strategies we put into place in order to ensure success for all.

The Board improvement planning, and alignment process led to the design of school and board improvement planning methods that allow for ongoing monitoring and assessment of achievement in reaching our core purpose of student achievement and well-being.

Next Steps

The MYSP and the corresponding Student Achievement Plan (SAP) were launched again to staff during the first week of September 2023-24. Staff became more comfortable with how the SAP guides school planning and is responsive to individual school needs and School Improvement Plans (SIP). Staff continue to deepen their understanding of the alignment of goals to the four priorities of the MYSP. They work diligently to create department and school strategic improvement plans that align with the key priorities of the 2021-2026 Multi-Year Strategic Plan and meet stakeholder needs. Alignment to key goals and priorities are assessed on an on-going basis through the school effectiveness process. Monthly department meetings and consultations will continue to contribute to preliminary planning for the 2026-2031 MYSP.

The MYSP, Board and School plans are Living Documents

It is important to note that while the Multi-Year Strategic plan and the corresponding board and school achievement plans and department plans guide and facilitate an understanding of common objectives. Plans must also be responsive to emerging board and school-based learning needs. Trends in the school, board-wide data, and priorities set by the Ministry of Education all inform our actions. Thus, plans must be living documents that are subject to adjustment based on the continual triangulation of data in the interest of success for all. In other words, it is important for the Board to be responsive to the needs of the system and willing to adjust the MYSP and board and school plans to accommodate emerging needs and trends. All board, school and department plans have evolved since 2021, but align to the strategic priorities as stated in the Near North District School Board 2021-2026 Multi-Year Strategic plan. We look forward to a future of success for all.

Creating a strong MYSP requires careful planning at every step in the process. A thoughtful and robust plan reflects what has been learned from the past, not what has been done in the past. It provides a solid framework for shared ownership and meaningful impact.

Multi-Year Strategic Planning: A Guide for School Board Trustees, Ministry of Education



Vision

We strive to ensure all members of our educational community contribute to a thriving and inclusive culture of student achievement and well-being.

Mission

To provide opportunities that empower all learners to develop their potential by providing diverse pathways which lead students to become model citizens who achieve life goals and contribute to the betterment of society.

Values

We value respectful and welcoming teaching and learning environments that support diverse learning needs and promote achievement and well-being for all.

We value the teachings and principles of Indigenous cultures

We value equity in our diverse educational community and are accountable to the success and well-being of all.

We value community partnerships that support us.

We value your confidence in us and strive to maintain it through the delivery of excellent educational opportunities for all.

Priorities



Excellence in Teaching and Learning

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).



Excellence in Innovation

Excellence in Innovation

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



Excellence in Relationships

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, practice acknowledgement of others, and continuously meet student needs.



Excellence in Communication

Excellence in Communication

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.



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).

Student Achievement Plan (SAP)

Launching the Student Achievement Plan:

On July 28, 2023, the Ministry of Education released a memorandum communicating key regulatory and policy reforms in support of Bill 98, [Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act, 2023](#), including a new regulation that established provincial priorities for student achievement:

- **Achievement of Learning Outcomes in Core Academic Skills**
- **Preparation of Students for Future Success**
- **Student Engagement and Well-Being**

As part of the July memorandum, the ministry released a [Student Achievement Plan framework](#), which is aligned with the above student achievement priorities. The framework sets out goals and performance indicators for school boards to measure student achievement, develop action plans and monitor their progress on levelling up student outcomes. Furthermore, this mandate has required all districts to include the provincial priorities into their multi-year plans, with goals and indicators to focus their improvement planning processes.

The board planning process includes two ministry templates:

1. [Student Achievement Plan Tool](#); designed to guide school boards through a data-driven planning process.
2. [Student Achievement Plan Public Reporting Template](#); to be posted on the board's website.

School boards are required to publicly report on progress toward the provincial priorities and provide information to parents in the first two months and last two months of each school year to discuss the priorities and progress toward them.

Phase 1: Building Coherence and Alignment

The Near North District School Board has integrated the Student Achievement Plan priorities and indicators into system and school improvement planning processes, including iterative 6-week cycles of inquiry. School Achievement Action Plans mirror system improvement planning processes and priorities, effectively aligning the MYSP, SAP, School Effectiveness Framework (SEF) and School Improvement Plan (SIP) strategic actions and monitoring structures. Newly developed school and system planning resources include:

- **MYSP/SAP 6-week Cycle – Student Achievement Scope and Sequence (September 2023)**
- **School achievement planning templates (September 2023)**
- **SAP Cycle 2, Cycle 4 and Cycle 6 - School/System Internal Monitoring Templates (December 2023)**
- **SEF Activity 4 – Listening Campaign aligned with Student Achievement Priorities (SEF School Summaries).**
- **MYSP Planning and Reflection Templates (May 2024)**

Phase 2: Initial Baseline & Public Reporting Template

In accordance with the Education Act (Subsection 169.1(4)), school boards are required to publish Student Achievement Plans each school year alongside multi-year plans on the board website. To support school boards in meeting this requirement, school boards must use the [Student Achievement Plan Public Reporting Template](#) to publicly report on progress made in relation to the provincial student achievement priorities.

Following consultation with a cross-section of staff and board committees, additional indicators and measures were included on the SAP plan to further inform NND SB communities about the NND SB MYSP objectives, regional context, and local student and staff needs.

System staff have reviewed the baseline indicators and measures and added supplementary information as required. Furthermore, staff have defined actions, policies, programs and/or strategies that will be implemented in the next three years to improve student outcomes and respond to identified trends. Where obvious synergies exist, staff have worked to align the Student Achievement Action Plan with specific initiatives that they are implementing, i.e. the Math Achievement Action Plan, School Effectiveness Framework, and Board Action Plan for Indigenous Education.

[Central staff published a PDF version](#) of the completed template to the NNDSB website on April 2, 2024. A copy of the public reporting template and a link to where it is publicly posted was subsequently emailed to the Ministry of Education Regional Office.

Phase 3: Engagement and Consultation

April-June 2024, Near North District School Board staff engaged with a broad range of student and staff groups, board committees, parents, and community organizations. These engagements have focused on the Student Achievement Plan and actions to support and improve student achievement and well-being. Engagements included the NNDSB Parent Involvement Committee, Indigenous Education Council, Special Education Advisory Committee, Equity Advisory Circle, MYSP Committee, as well as Indigenous Youth Circle.

Date:	Focus:
April 22 nd	Indigenous Education Circle – Special Meeting/SAP
May 1 st	Parent Involvement Committee - Engagement
May 14 th	Mental Health and Well-Being: Working Group, Attendance
May 23 rd	Special Education Advisory Council - Engagement
May 29 th	Parent Involvement Sub-Committee – SAC Engagement Planning for 2024-25
May 29 th	Indigenous Youth Circle – Engagement & Working Group
June 6 th	Core Academic Skills Literacy - Working Group
June 13 th	Special Education and Equity – Working Group
June 14 th	Indigenous Education – Working Group
June 18 th	Mathematics – SAP/MAAP/MYSP Alignment
June 19 th	Equity Advisory Circle - Engagement
June 19 th	MYSP Committee – Public Engagement, SAP Alignment
June 20 th	Mental Health: Working Group, SAP
June 24 th	Future Success: Working Group, SHSM, Specialized Programs

Moving into the Fall of 2024, community engagement will expand to include School Councils and will further support student achievement through responsive planning, reflection, and meaning making. Student Senate and the Indigenous Youth Circle will continue to invite students to access and engage students in this process.

Phase 4: Consolidation

Staff have utilized the MYSP Planning and Reflection Templates to consolidate student achievement planning priorities, actions and measures in a coherent template that align the MYSP and Provincial priorities.

NNDSB completed and posted the initial [Student Achievement Plan Tool](#) on June 30th. The completed tool allows the ministry to gather insights into how school boards across the province engage in their planning process to level up student achievement.

Teacher Learning and Innovation Fund for Teachers (LIFT/TLIA)

In October 2023, all teachers were invited to submit applications to access TLIA funding. The application process enabled teachers to design projects that reflected unique school contexts, student/staff learning needs, and alignment with Ministry identified priorities. 24 projects were identified. 18 of the projects identified a focus on approaches to literacy instruction and intervention. Four projects focused on high impact teacher practices in mathematics.

All 24 TLIA projects reported enhancements in teacher practices, behaviours and attitudes. Project and system monitoring surveys indicated growth in teacher use and confidence using new reading assessments. The TLIA projects offered qualitative measures of growth, including comments from project participants. Examples of teacher statements include, "...hearing from other educators that are very successfully implementing structured literacy and using some of their approaches, and the time to discuss and look at what structured literacy looks like in our classrooms are all aspects of the project that really enriched our programming." Most teachers felt more comfortable utilizing recommended literacy resources to support struggling students as per needs identified in pre-LIFT surveys.

TLIA projects were supported by central staff associated with the inquiry focus/ministry priority acting as "critical friends" and providing expertise and guidance to the TLIA team. Participating TLIA teams produced a variety of artifacts that have been shared within and across schools. Each TLIA Team completed a "learning story" that also included measures of impact. TLIA projects have inspired a renewed focus on classroom embedded, authentic teacher inquiry aligned with key school, district and provincial priorities. TLIA project funding was supplemented with additional sources of funding to grow the scope and spread of this highly effective professional learning model.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION PRIORITY: Achievement of Learning Outcomes in Core Academic Skills

Literacy

Specialized Literacy Teachers and System Staff:

The K-12 Teaching and Learning Team, and specifically the Literacy Team, has made significant strides in enhancing literacy outcomes across K-12 through evidence-based strategies and interventions. The department focused on improving core academic skills in literacy through targeted goals and measures aligned with the Ministry of Education. This report highlights the accomplishments, strategic actions, and data-driven successes during the 2023-24 academic year.



School-Based Literacy Facilitators

Since 2022-23, NNDSB has prioritized funding to sustain four full-time, school-based literacy facilitators. These roles have been instrumental in facilitating classroom embedded professional learning related to evidence-based systematic and explicit approaches to literacy instruction and intervention. Working under the supervision of the Student Achievement and Well-being Principals, School-Based Literacy Facilitators have been assigned to schools in response to local contexts and student needs. As instructional leaders, the School-Based Literacy Facilitators have enabled deep collaborative learning and implementation of evidence-based approaches to literacy instruction and intervention.

Since 2022, a central literacy team has worked collaboratively to support key priorities, actions, and performance measures related to the NNDSB Literacy Plan. Key objectives include:

- **Engage staff in professional learning** that will align classroom instruction with researched/evidence-based practices – to grow educators' capacity to provide systematic and explicit literacy instruction.
- **Initiate strategic investments in literacy resources and learning materials** – to facilitate research informed, evidence-based practices and differentiated literacy learning across the K-12 continuum.
- **Provide evidence-based assessment tools** that help educators identify risk early – to identify and implement universal screening tools to determine which students may experience reading difficulties.
- **Implement timely and effective literacy intervention programs** – to ensure timely and tiered approaches to literacy intervention are available to meet the needs of students at risk.

School Based Literacy Facilitators support all models of professional learning, from developing and delivering System PD to facilitating data analysis sessions with principals and vice-principals to working alongside educators to support their literacy instruction and assessment. School Effectiveness Framework data collection on the value of this role and this team is very positive.

Key actions and outcomes include:

Enhanced Literacy Instruction

- System-wide professional development (PD): Continued professional learning through structured programs, including workshops and classroom-embedded supports, helped educators improve their instruction methods in both English and French classrooms. This effort focused on [Structured Literacy](#) practices.
- Evidence-based instruction: Collaborative efforts with literacy experts like [Lyn Stone](#) supported writing challenges and structured literacy activities, reinforcing high-impact teaching practices.
- Monthly literacy intervention sessions were held with Elementary Literacy Intervention Teachers who also participated in 3 working groups that met over the course of the year. The work with this group was balanced between explicit literacy instruction to expand educator knowledge and supporting challenges teachers faced in their literacy intervention programming.
- Secondary school English subject council meetings were held four times over the course of the 2023-24 school year. Representatives from each secondary school participated in this learning community. The topics of these sessions were responsive to the identified priorities of the school.

Improved Literacy Assessment and Data Collection

- School Based Literacy Facilitators have effectively supported educators in implementing the [Acadience Reading Assessments](#). Furthermore, they have worked alongside classroom teachers and school teams to make meaning of the data and respond to evolving student literacy learning needs.

Targeted Reading Interventions

- **Tiered Support Systems:** Literacy intervention programs targeted K-10 students, ensuring they received tiered interventions aligned with their individual learning needs. Special attention was given to students with special education needs, with 59.8% of those students passing the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT), compared to 78.5% of students without special education needs.

Multilingual Learner (MLL) Support

- NNDSB established structures to assist MLL students, helping them access grade-level content through language support. Collaboration with community resources like [the North Bay and District Multicultural Centre](#) enhanced family integration into the school community.

Literacy Intervention:

- In 2023-24, NNDSB received new funding to hire additional teachers with specialized expertise in evidence-based systematic and explicit instruction focused on foundational reading skills to support students in kindergarten to Grade 3.

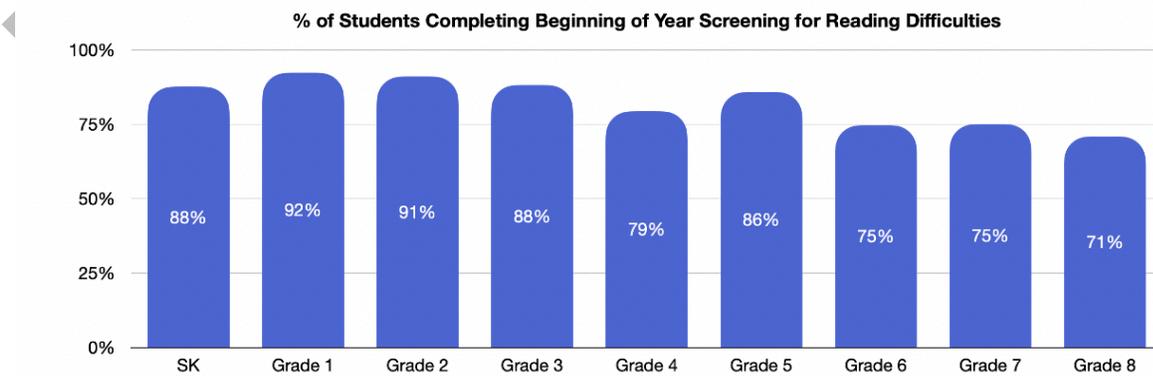
The role of these specialized teachers was to:

- Work one-on-one or in small groups with students in kindergarten to Grade 3, including but not limited to students with special education needs, who require additional support in reading as identified through early reading screening and/or other reading assessment data, using early intervention strategies
- Provide supports including direct Tier 2 and Tier 3 reading intervention, and additional supports as required by the school or board on reading and literacy-related initiatives
- Share resources and effective practices with classroom teachers
- Work with classroom teachers to use the results of classroom assessment to continuously inform instruction
- Collaborate with classroom educators to identify students' strengths and needs and determine appropriate interventions when applicable, including consulting and collaborating with special education teachers, and/or speech language pathologists.

Measures of Success:

Acadience Reading composite score is a combination of multiple measures which indicate an overall estimate of a student's reading proficiency.

- The district increased the literacy intervention staffing allocation from 5.0 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) to 7.6 FTE in 2023-24.
- 293 students were supported with direct Tier 2 and Tier 3 reading intervention programming during the 2023-24 school year.
- 2343 Grade K-6 students had a beginning of year Reading Composite Score "below/well-below" benchmark, meaning they required strategic or intensive support. 1809 (77.2%) of K-6 students' reading composite score improved by the end of the year demonstrating growth in foundational reading skills.
- 279 Grade 7-8 students had a beginning of year Reading Composite Score "below/well-below" benchmark, meaning they required intensive support. 204 Grade (86%) of Grade 7-8 students' reading composite score improved by the end of the year.

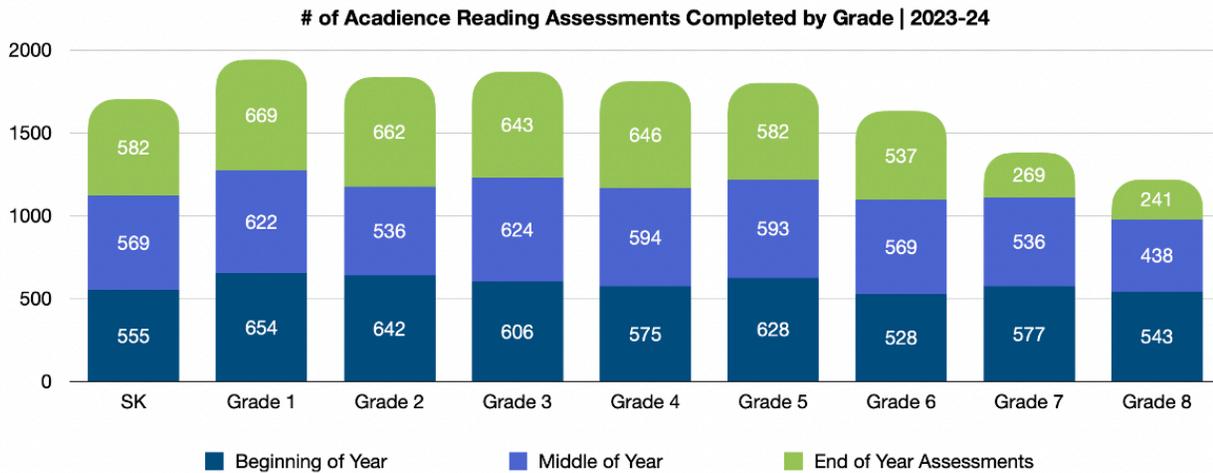


Reading Assessments and Screening Tools:

Near North District School Board purchased and broadly implemented the [Acadience Reading Assessment](#). Acadience Reading is a ministry-approved, evidence-based early reading screening tool, to be used to administer ministry-mandated early reading screening for all students in Year 2 of Kindergarten, Grade 1, and Grade 2. The successful implementation of this tool has helped to ensure the early identification of students who required further support in reading. The timing and frequency of early reading screening, as well as other implementation requirements was done in compliance with direction and/or policy issued by the Ministry of Education in relation to early reading screening.

Measures of Success:

- **Acadience Reading Assessments:** A total of 13,668 assessments were completed in the 2023-24 academic year, marking an increase from the previous year (6,514 assessments in 2022-23). These assessments identified students at risk of reading difficulties from SK-Grade 8.
- **Early Reading Screening:** The percentage of SK-Grade 2 students screened for reading difficulties rose to 91% in 2023-24 from 85% in the previous year.
- **Data-Driven Instruction:** Teachers used data from screening tools to inform next steps, improving individualized student support. 86% of students in grades 4-8 were screened for reading difficulties, informing multi-tiered intervention and instruction.



Mathematics



100%
of responding teachers
feel their math content
knowledge has grown

Math Instructional Resources that Support Teacher and Student Confidence and Competence in Mathematics:

In consultation with classroom teachers, NNDSB made significant investments in math learning resources (digital and physical) to support the continued implementation of the new Grade 1- 8 math curriculum and the de-streamed grade 9 math curriculum. The digital math tools are aligned with the Ontario curriculum and help teachers to facilitate adaptive, differentiated, and responsive learning opportunities for students. An emphasis was placed on implementation in Grades 3, 6, 7, 8 and 9. The Program Team developed an awareness of the tools with all grade K-10 educators in the Spring. During the April 28th PD Day, educators across the system participated in a vendor facilitated webinar to introduce the newly acquired innovative digital math tool, [Knowledgehook](#).

Math Instructional Resources:

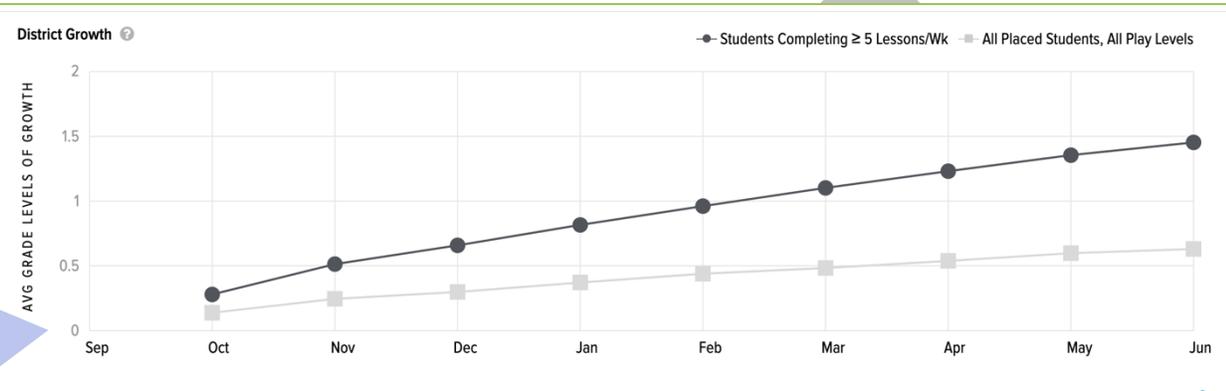
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MathUP:

[MathUP](#) is a comprehensive, online instructional resource to support rigorous and cohesive math programming while helping build teachers' knowledge and understanding of mathematics content and pedagogy. With a focus on building consistency from grade to grade and increasing each teacher's confidence in making instructional decisions. MathUP also addresses all expectations in the Ontario mathematics curriculum. *All Grade 3-8 classrooms now have access to MathUp (There are currently 185 active licences across 31 schools).* 83% of teachers using MathUp report that their planning and teaching for number sense has become more precise by using this tool in their classrooms.

DreamBox Learning:

All students in Grades 1-3 classrooms continue to have access to [DreamBox Learning](#). DreamBox is a digital math program that combines a fun and engaging math learning environment with curriculum focused outcomes. DreamBox lessons are interactive experiences that promote active learning and independent critical thinking. Lessons respond to each student's strategies and decisions in the moment. Because DreamBox dynamically adapts lessons and learning paths based on the needs of each learner, students always have just the right level of support when and where they need it. Students are encouraged to continue their learning with this resource at home. To access DBL at home, students simply need to [login to Clever](#) (using their NNDSB username and password). [Click here](#) to access additional information to support the use of DreamBox Learning at home. **Students in Grades 1-3 who consistently completed DreamBox lessons from October 2023 to June 2024 experienced between 0.5 and 1.3 levels of growth. Every month of the school year is .1 of growth. That means 0.5 is 5 months of growth and 1.4 is 14 months of growth.**



Math Learning at Home

The Near North District School board's [Mathematics for Families](#) site was launched during the 2023-24 school year for families and caregivers to find resources and information to support their children's experiences with mathematics at home.

“By demonstrating a positive attitude towards mathematics, and by speaking positively and often about mathematics, parents can show their children that mathematics is enjoyable, worthwhile, and valuable.” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2020).

On the [Mathematics for Families](#) site, families will find links to digital tools, games, and resources such as DreamBox Learning, Desmos, Mathigon, and TVO Learn. Families are also supported to access TVO Learn Mathify, which provides free online math tutoring for Ontario students in Grades 4-12.

Throughout the 2023-24 school year several Math events for families were held by NNDSB staff to support families across the district, including “Family Math Nights” and a central “Virtual Math Night”. These sessions hosted over 150 elementary students and their families as they took part in fun and engaging math activities and built a strong home and school connection.

EQAO

We are pleased to see that the gains made in 2022-23 by first-time eligible students on the Ontario secondary school literacy test and the Grade 6 math assessment remained largely intact. Staff continue to support all students in developing foundational literacy and math skills. Newly implemented diagnostic reading assessments will continue to help to ensure that students with reading difficulties are identified early, and the appropriate interventions are put in place.

In the 2023-24 school year, 91 per cent of NNDSB's kindergarten to Grade 2 students were screened for reading difficulties. As a system, we continue to deepen our understanding of how to effectively use this student data to inform instruction and programming decisions. We have seen incredible gains in educator capacity to provide targeted reading instruction and interventions that address screening data,

To help more students succeed in reading and writing, the province has modernized the language curriculum with an emphasis on ensuring students at an early age can master basic literacy skills. The new [Elementary Language](#) curriculum includes a focus on foundational instruction to support reading and writing, critical thinking and digital media literacy skills.

It's important to note that many students who have not yet met the provincial level in this standardised test, have made gains in learning that are substantial in achieving competency in literacy skills.

NNDSB results: reading and writing

Grades 3 and 6: While results vary by school, the overall trends showed stability in Grade 3 reading and writing achievement when compared to 2022-23. Ninety-eight per cent of NNDSB's Grade 3 students and 97% of Grade 6 students participated in the EQAO assessments.

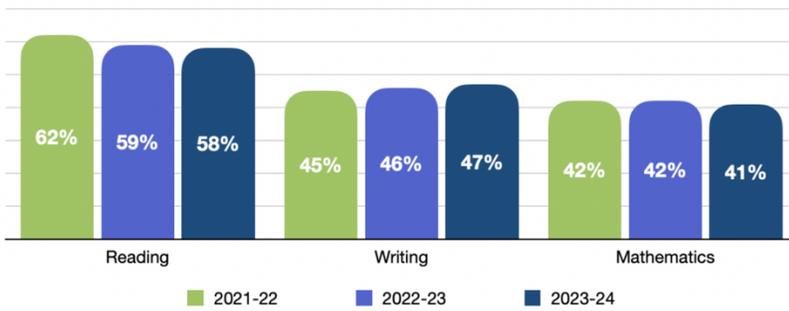
- **Grade 3:** 58 per cent of Grade 3 students met the provincial standard in reading; 47 per cent of Grade 3 students met the provincial standard in writing.
- **Grade 6:** 73 per cent of Grade 6 students met the provincial standard in reading; 69 per cent of Grade 6 students met the provincial standard in writing.
- **OSSLT:** 90 per cent of first-time eligible students participated in the OSSLT and 77 per cent of first-time eligible students who wrote the assessment were successful.

NNDSB results: mathematics

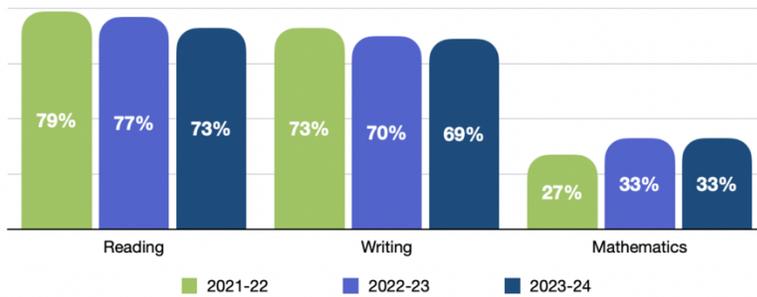
Key actions implemented across NNDSB have started strengthening students' mathematics skills and are encouraging positive attitudes toward mathematics in many of our schools. Tailored and innovative professional learning strategies are growing teacher's math content knowledge and promoting the use of quality, evidence-based instructional and assessment strategies.

- **Grades 3:** 41 per cent of students met the provincial standard in the Grade 3 EQAO mathematics assessments.
- **Grades 6:** 33 per cent of students met the provincial standard in the Grade 6 EQAO mathematics assessments.
- **Grade 9:** 28 per cent of students who wrote the Grade 9 de-streamed math test met the provincial standard in 2023-24.

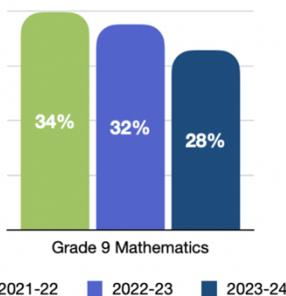
Grade 3 | EQAO Assessments



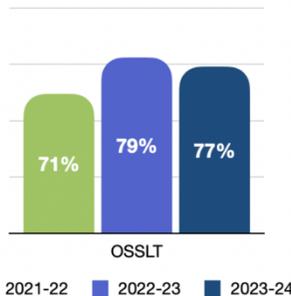
Grade 6 | EQAO Assessments



Grade 9 | Assessment of Mathematics



Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test



De-streamed Curriculum

The Ontario Ministry of Education has removed Academic and Applied courses in Grade 9 and implemented de-streamed courses. De-streaming is intended to help ensure that students have as many opportunities as possible to make informed choices about their future. Ontario students and parents have indicated that they consider course type selection in Grade 8 to be too early. By de-streaming Grade 9, students and families have an additional year of secondary school to explore curriculum and decide on a particular pathway keeping course options open. This supports all students while preparing them for senior secondary courses that allow them to pursue post-secondary pathways of their choice.



Staffing to Support De-Streaming and Transition to High School

All NNDSB secondary schools received a “De-Streaming Supports” staffing allocation to provide early supports to prepare students in Grades 7 and 8 to transition to a de-streamed Grade 9, support students in their de-streamed Grade 9 program, and continue to support students after they have transitioned to Grade 10. The allocation is proportional to student enrollment, with larger schools receiving a larger allocation. While school teams had the discretion to design the de-streaming supports in response to student needs, most began with a classroom embedded model in which De-Streaming Supports Teachers developed rapport with students and administered formal and informal diagnostic assessments. The classroom context and diagnostic assessment data helped determine individual or small group tutoring activities during the school day. Focus areas included literacy, mathematics and foundational learning skills. Each school developed a De-Streaming Support plan and submitted an end of year report. Four schools receiving the allocation were 7-12 schools, which further enabled cross-panel transition supports.

Professional Development for De-Streamed Grade 9 Educators

Near North District School Board was pleased to welcome [Garfield Gini-Newman](#) an associate professor at OISE/University of Toronto and a senior national consultant with The Critical Thinking Consortium to support a full day workshop for Grade 9 teachers. Garfield has worked with thousands of teachers across grades and subjects, helping them to frame learning around engaging students through provocative activities and authentic assessments. This full day in-person workshop enabled Grade 9 educators to develop classroom approaches to nurture quality thinking through critical inquiry with a specific focus on assessment. Activities explored intentional design and development of a thinking classroom that fosters increased levels of student engagement.

926

intermediate students accessed De-streaming Support Teachers to receive small-group and individual tutoring support in Math or English/Language.

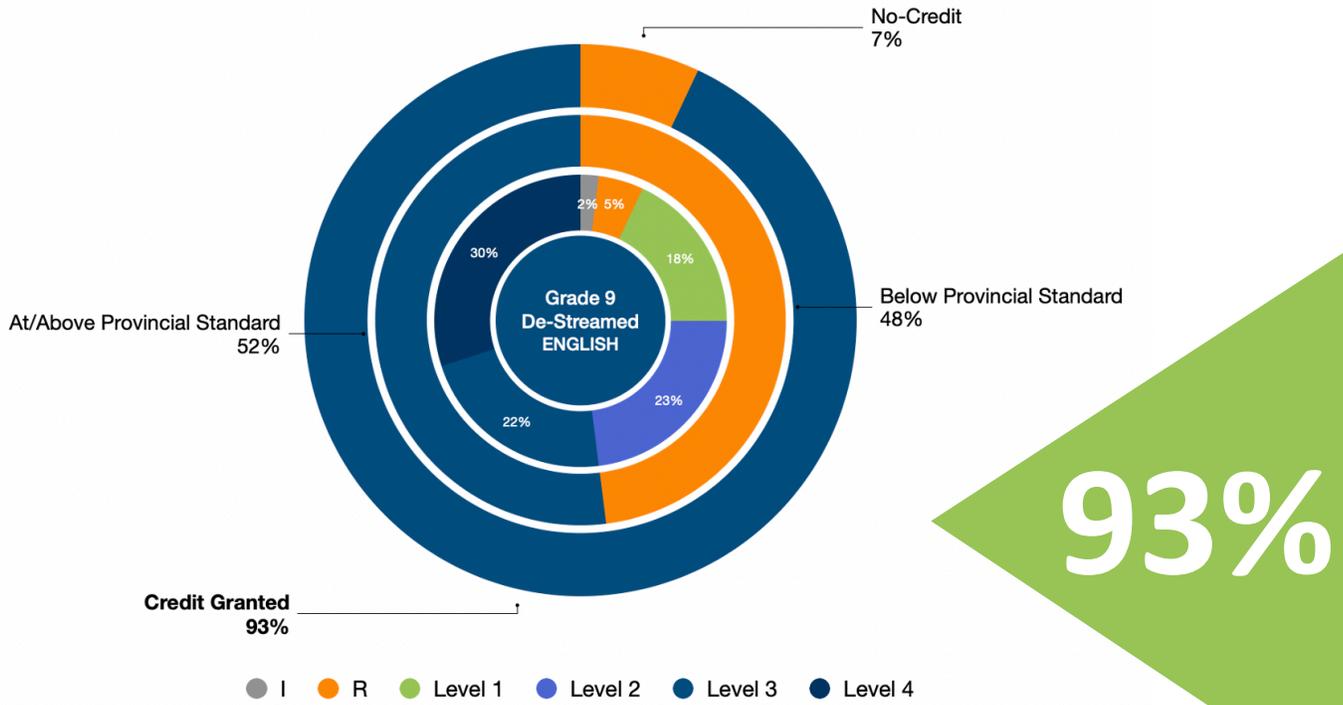
Measures of Success:

During the 2023-24 school year, 926 intermediate students accessed De-streaming Support Teachers to receive small-group and individual tutoring support in Math or English/Language. Teacher feedback indicated a balanced model including both classroom-embedded supports as well as focused intervention, was effective in growing student efficacy and academic success.

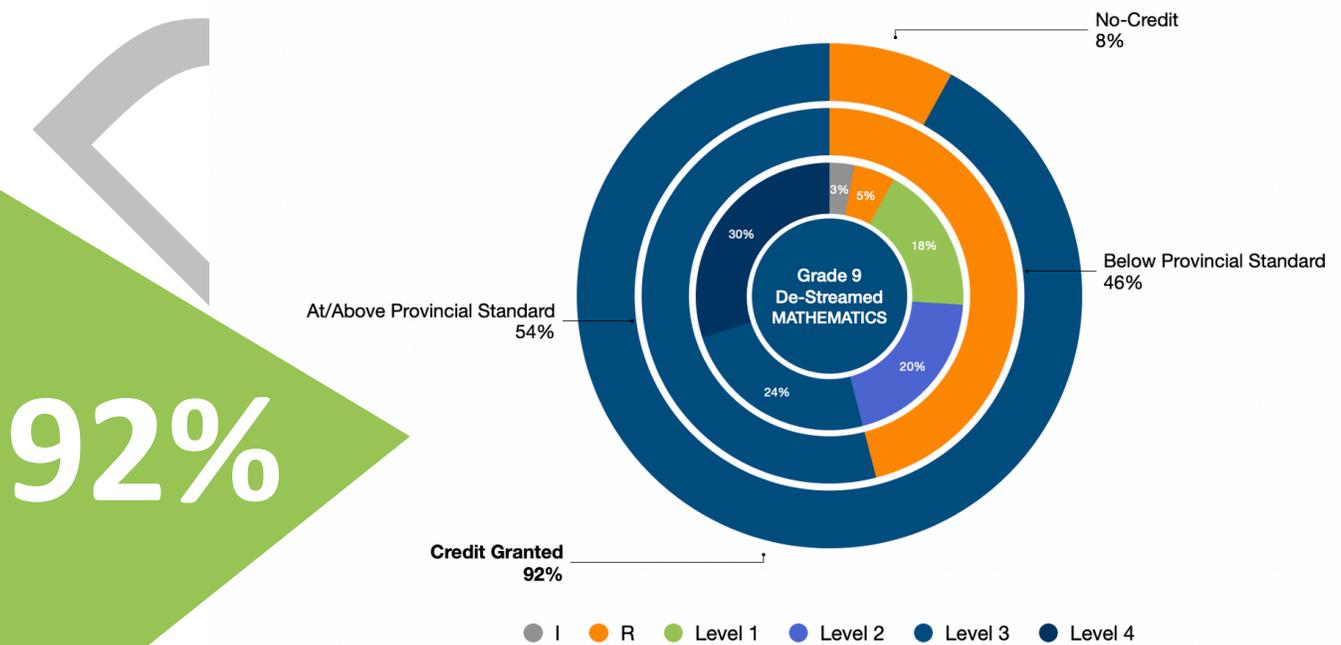
A focus on classroom embedded approaches early in the semester allowed staff to foster relationships with students and establish routine access to de-streaming supports, including tutoring. Student surveys, attendance, report card data and diagnostic assessments allowed De-Streaming Support Teachers to determine the impact of their actions.

Furthermore, De-Streaming Support Teachers indicated that a focus on foundational language skills helped students experience success. Staff utilized [CORE](#) Multiple Measures – [MAZE](#) and vocabulary diagnostics to inform instruction and interventions for students in de-streamed grade 9 English. Furthermore, the Acadience Reading assessments were used to identify lagging literacy skills for student in grade 8, align appropriate interventions and assist with transition support planning.

93% of all Grade 9 students enrolled in de-streamed English earned the credit.



92% of all Grade 9 students enrolled in De-Streamed Math earned the credit.



Early Years

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION PRIORITY: Preparation of Students for Future Success

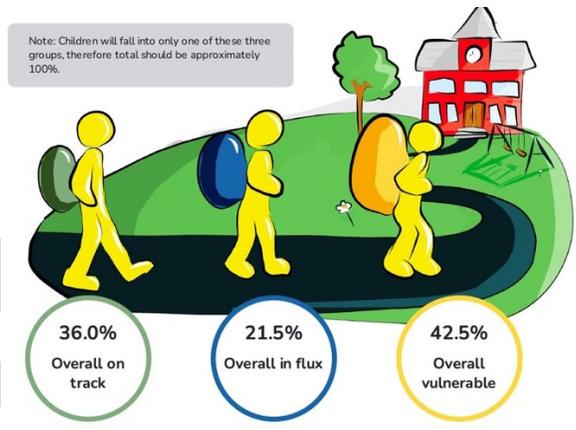
NNDSB recognizes the important role that kindergarten plays in the development of positive relationships and school experiences. As such, many initiatives are created and prioritized exclusively for kindergarten teams and are supported by the system-based Early Years Team.

Focus on 3 Key Areas Brought Forth by Early Development Instrument (EDI) Data

During the 2023/2024 school year, NNDSB teachers participated in the 6th EDI cycle. The EDI is used to measure children's ability to meet age-appropriate developmental expectations in 5 domains: Physical Health & Well-Being; Social Competence; Emotional Maturity; Language & Cognitive Development; and Communication Skills & General Knowledge. It also allows us to know whether children are doing better, worse, or about the same as in the past. Last year, NNDSB reported on 567 year 2 students.

Vulnerable describes the children whose scores fall below the 10th percentile cut-off of the Ontario baseline population on any of the five domains. In 2023-24, 42.5% of NNDSB students were vulnerable in at least 1 domain. That's 241 of our year 2 students. Furthermore, 20.5% of NNDSB students were found to be vulnerable in 2 or more domains.

That's 117 year 2 students. After carefully reviewing the data, the Early Years team identified three key areas where NNDSB students demonstrated the greatest vulnerability. This data determines areas of need upon which to focus during the 2024/2025 school year: communication skills, prosocial and helping behaviours, and gross and fine motor skills. *Note the province is in year 6 of this data collection. The data below shows NNDSB cycle 6 data compared to Ontario's cycle 6 data*



Communication Skills and General Knowledge

Children who have excellent or very good communication skills; can communicate easily and effectively, can participate in story-telling or imaginative play, articulates clearly, show adequate general knowledge, and are proficient in their native language.	Near North DSB	31.0%	26.3%	42.7%
	Ontario Cycle VI	26.6%	25.2%	48.1%

Emotional Maturity

Children who often show most of the helping behaviours: helping someone hurt, sick or upset, offering to help spontaneously, invite bystanders to join in.	Near North DSB	29.3%	34.0%	34.6%
	Ontario Cycle VI	30.0%	33.1%	35.6%

Physical Health and Well-being

Children who have an excellent ability to physically tackle the school day and have excellent or good Gross & fine motor skills.	Near North DSB	28.9%	25.6%	45.5%
	Ontario Cycle VI	20.3%	20.3%	59.4%

Parent Communication and Collaboration via Journey into Learning

To foster increased parent communication and collaboration, the Early Years Team designed and launched the Journey into Learning (JIL) initiative in 2021. The initiative supports teachers in further developing the communication between home and school.

In June 2024, the Early Years team held two well-attended virtual meetings to discuss the EDI results: the first with administrators, and the second with Early Learning Kindergarten teams. During those meetings, discussions focused on how educators can support struggling students in the classroom. Ideas discussed included showcasing Classroom Support Centre items and their uses, utilizing the Journey into Learning Guide and Kit to support skill development both at school and home, and creating an EDSBY Group for sharing resources and ideas. Additionally, a working group will be formed to develop and post a list of ready-to-use websites, songs, and activities in the EDSBY Group. Lastly, a section in the Early Years Newsletter will be dedicated to highlighting activities, such as bead necklace making for fine motor skills, to support struggling students.

Special Education

Helping to Ensure Equitable Outcomes: Supporting Students with Complex Needs

Some students have complex learning needs, such as those who have been exposed to trauma and present with challenging behaviour and/or mental health considerations. [Learning for All](#) indicates that each student has his or her own unique patterns of learning. Successful instructional practices, interventions and supports are founded on evidence-based research and informed by the expertise and experience of caring educators and outside-agency support personnel.

The NNDSB Special Education Team works alongside school teams in support of students with complex needs and helps to ensure that NNDSB educators have access to knowledge and the resources to provide appropriate programming and supports to students with complex needs.



Implementation of strategies that are informed by [Applied Behaviour Analysis](#) (ABA), [Behaviour Management System](#) (BMS) and [Collaborative Problem Solving](#) (CPS) are essential for students with challenging behaviours. Equitable access to behaviour programs/supports, understanding approaches and specific strategies for students are necessary to address students' needs, build skills and ensure equitable access to education. To support this work in our schools, staff with knowledge of and expertise in behaviour continue to work across our system of schools. This includes:

- A central behaviour team and a mental health team providing expertise to teachers enabling them to work effectively with students with significantly challenging behaviours and mental health needs.
- 2 mobile team teachers providing intensive 6-week support with a focus on early primary settings in the North and East/West Regions.



The NNDSB Special Education Team uses a consultation intake model, in which urgent student needs are considered and central staff are assigned. Regular, collaborative behaviour team meetings help ensure that services are allocated where they are needed most, and in a timely manner. In addition, the Behaviour, Mental Health and Safe Schools Teams work in coordination through the Multidisciplinary Team procedure to process complex school-based referrals and ensure that a variety of considerations are made to support students with the highest level of behaviour and mental health concerns.

In the 2023-24 school year, 28 cases were referred to the Multi-Disciplinary Team and 10 schools received Mobile Team support within various classrooms. We continue to build effective and strong relationships with in-school educators and community partners.

Implementation of Best Practices to Support Students with Learning Disabilities in Math

During the 2023-24 school year, The Special Education Department was able to engage in focused work to support students with learning disabilities and significant difficulties in mathematics. The team's Math Lead Teacher provided direct support to educator teams, and consultation and co-learning opportunities with various NNDSB educators. Professional learning communities were cultivated that included key members of both the special education department and school-based teams.

Together, various educators, such as classroom teachers, [Differentiated Learning Resource Teachers](#) (DLRTs) and administrators, and the special education department identified and implemented key researched resources to support specific students with learning disabilities in math, trained and enhanced communication to school teams around math programming and implemented specific accommodations and modifications to students' individualized math programs. Evidence-based resources, such as [Knowledgehook](#) and [MathUP](#) were used to provide targeted intervention to students in need.



Assistive Technology:

Students with a learning disability continue to make up more than half of the identified students in the Near North District School Board. With access to appropriate technology, programs and strategies and alongside knowledgeable and supportive educators, students with learning disabilities can achieve high levels of educational success.

When students with special learning needs are provided with technology, they also need to have the knowledge and skills with the appropriate programs and apps to use the technology effectively. Teachers also need to understand the tech programs students with LD need – and which programs are appropriate to address particular areas of student need.

NNDSB has partnered with [LEARNstyle](#), a Canadian company that specializes in coaching and support for learning technology in schools, since the Fall of 2020. LEARNstyle implements a structured program of instruction and supports for students with learning disabilities to build their skills and independence with assistive technology tools. Educators, including DLRT, classroom teachers, and parents/guardians can attend virtual coaching sessions to enable them to learn about and continue important support after coaching sessions are

Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

Over the course of ten monthly meetings during the 2023-24 school year, NNDSB SEAC received financial and budget reports from the Superintendent of Business with a focus on Special Education. They also received the following informational sessions:

- Presentation on NNDSB Suspension, Expulsion and Exclusion Data.
- A Summary of the NNDSB Behaviour Team Support Model.
- Presentation by Partnering for Change Occupational Services.
- Information on PPM 8 "Identification of and Program Planning for Students with Disabilities".
- Presentation on Multi-tiered System of Support for Reading Success.
- Information on Interventions and Programming for Special Education Students.
- Presentation on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder by Anishinabek Nation.
- Information on NNDSB Sensory Spaces for Students.
- Presentation on Assistive Technology by LEARNstyle.
- Presentation on Special Education Mathematics Interventions and Programming.

NNDSB SEAC is annually required to update the Board's Special Education Plan. This was completed in May. As well, SEAC regularly receives notifications of all Ministry of Education announcements related to Special Education, along with any staffing updates and changes in the Special Education Department. At the May meeting, SEAC members were invited to receive information regarding NNDSB's Student Achievement Plan and were provided an opportunity to provide feedback through a consultative process. NNDSB SEAC consistently works in support of exceptional students by participating in educational matters relating to special education, by making informed recommendations with respect to the development and delivery of special education programs and services and by promoting parent and community collaboration.



Summer School Highlights

Intentional Planning and Growth

Enrollment in 2024 summer programming showed an increase over summer 2023 numbers. In 2024, the NNDSB summer school program provided over 1100 students an opportunity to reengage in learning. Most of these students were from NNDSB, with a growing number enrolled from across the province. The summer programming in 2024 was themed "Intentional Planning and Growth".

Over 800 students engaged in the e-learning component. This was an increase of 200 students over the previous year. This represents a third year of growth in the number of secondary e-learning students, with NNDSB pulling in students from across the province. In person K-12 programming had over 300 students registered in a variety of programs including new opportunities in physical education and the 2nd year, in the return of the Theatre Outreach on Stage Program.

Student achievement and well-being were well supported throughout the summer with the hiring of over 60 staff members. Staff included: Intermediate and Secondary teachers, two Educational Assistants, two Differentiated Learning Resource Teachers (DLRT), an Indigenous Grad Coach, and access to a Childhood Development Counsellor (CDC) who provided teachers with wellness materials for the students with whom they connected and was available for support when a student was in need. The support staff worked together often as a student success team to identify and help students to be successful in their endeavors.

Summer Transition to School Program

In close partnership with [One Kids Place](#) (OKP, NNDSB continued the [Transition to School \(TTS\) Program](#). The TTS program helps young, future students develop school-readiness, social communication, daily independent living, and self-esteem skills. TTS at One Kids Place helps with management of impulsivity, self-regulation, self-awareness, and emotions. NNDSB staff are hired to work in conjunction with staff at One Kid's Place and student readiness is communicated back to families and school board special education staff. NNDSB staff worked closely with OKP staff to build cohesive relationships in the students' best interests. This helps to create a unified plan that helps guide them into their next education transition.



Grade 1-6 Summer Learning Program (SLP)

Social Emotional Learning

The grades 1-6 Summer Learning Program (SLP) aligns with the NNDSB strategic plan of building equity and well-being, in terms of working to provide a safe and welcoming environment that celebrates all learners. The SLP partnered with the school mental health team by hiring two Social Emotional Learning coaches (SEL). The SEL coaches worked closely with students who had specific difficulties with self-regulation and attention, self-awareness, perseverance and social skills development. SEL coaches also supported staff members with suggestions to redirect students to engage with peers.

Mathematics and Literacy

Four educator teams in four regions of the board created a fun and welcoming environment for all students and families. They demonstrated an enthusiasm for learning and for meeting new people. Everyone strived to model respect for each other and allowed space for social-emotional learning and growth in mathematics and literacy.

Given the high ratio of staff to students, small group instruction was maximized daily to ensure students were receiving intentional and explicit instruction in literacy and mathematics. Pre-summer learning data was collected by the students' home schools prior to commencement. Staff at all sites used this data to determine specific starting points and areas where instruction would best benefit students. Writing tasks were designed to be supportive of the explicit instruction provided while also being inspirational and offering choices for topics honoring student voice. The program also consisted of explicit instruction in foundational literacy skills such as phonemic awareness, alphabetic knowledge, handwriting, decoding and encoding, multisyllabic word reading, vocabulary and fluency. In mathematics, explicit instruction focused on number sense, multiplication, division, fractions, estimation and coding.

Science Learning

Three synchronous, virtual workshops with Science North in Sudbury were scheduled for each site for students in grades 3-6. The students were guided through three stages of planning and coding related to financial literacy. Students in grades 1-2 were provided with coding instruction by our staff.

Secondary School E-Learning

Students from across Ontario chose NNDSB e-learning high school credit courses this summer, with offerings in curriculum areas like English, Math, and Civics/Careers in both French Immersion and English. NNDSB hosted over 800 students, a 30% increase from last year and a 330% increase from the previous year. Students registered through the Ontario E-Learning Consortium [PRISM](#) system. This allows NNDSB to run courses that can not only accommodate NNDSB students but accommodate students from other school boards who may not have the availability locally.

Secondary School Focused In-Person Credits

NNDSB held three focused credits. Two sports focused physical education courses (basketball and volleyball), and TOROS integrated arts course.

Phys-ed: Volleyball focus – Focused on volleyball skills and gameplay, this course helped students make many gains in game play, individual abilities, and team play. Students were also able to gain certifications in coaching and refereeing, giving them the ability to help grow the sport, and support refereeing in the community.

Phys-ed: Basketball focus – NNDSB offered the Basketball focused reach-ahead course for a second year. Focused on basketball skills and gameplay, this intensive course aided in dribbling and shot skills, improved players abilities to view and understand what is happening on the court, and when to make specific moves to change the flow of the play. Students gained skills in team and individual play and learned how to train effectively.

Theater Outreach on Stage (TOROS): This year the program grew to over 50 students from North Bay and the surrounding area. Students were involved in creating a hilarious, well-detailed, professional production of *The Addams Family- A New Musical Comedy*. We again had many new students join and embrace the performance arts for the first time and some students from previous years. These students developed new skills, connections, and memories. Experienced students became leaders and role models for the younger cast and crew. Each night, over 300 people experience the show.

Partner Programs

Co-operative Education

Summer learning 2024 saw over 100 students accessing the summer co-operative education one and two credit courses. This number is less than last year. This decrease may be attributed to the availability of an increased number of co-op opportunities during the regular school year. We are grateful to our many Coop partners.

Canadian Ecology Centre Secondary Credits

The NNDSB 30+year partnership with the [Canadian Ecology Centre](#) (CEC) continued, with over 100 students from across the province immersing themselves in nature at the CEC taking [secondary school credit courses](#). Throughout the summer, students also ventured on many field trips that related to their studies.



The PADDLE Program (Providing Adults with Developmental Disabilities Lifelong Experiences)

The PADDLE program provides enriching experiences designed to foster growth, creativity, and social connection for the participants. Participants engage in a variety of activities in-house such as gardening, fitness, cooking, social skills, visual art, music, and more. They practice these skills during multiple weekly outings such as: shopping, the farmers market, and going to restaurants. The dedicated staff provides support and encouragement catered to each individual. The Paddle program enhances and strengthens independence, builds self-esteem, and celebrates the unique contributions of each individual.

Arbour House Classroom

This program is offered for the most vulnerable youth. An NNDSB teacher collaborates with Arbour House staff to deliver an effective program focused on math, language, and Phys-ed. The staff not only help students with their education, but also help them grow confidence and the ability to trust teachers and other authoritative figures so students can have success in the real world.

Hands Day Treatment Classroom

NNDSB also continued to support the Hands Day Treatment Classroom. This program provides family-based, specialized mental health treatment and transition support for youth aged 12-18 years. Youth are referred to this voluntary program for an individualized education experience with the goal of facilitating a more gradual and structured return to the community school. Coordinated, individualized support is provided to transition youth to their home school and to appropriate mental health services in their community. Youth who participate in this program also participate in group therapy and skills streaming. The program is approximately 4 weeks in length and services both elementary and secondary students. There is a child and youth worker always present in the classroom.

Discovering Pathways

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION PRIORITY: Preparation of Students for Future Success

Transitions and Pathways

In the 2023-24 school year, the Pathways and Transitions team were able to once again offer unique training and experiences to support relevant skill development for employment. OYAP, SHSM and Experiential Learning supported formal Working at Heights training through Daniel Peat, an in-house trainer. Daniel provided training to cooperative education classes throughout the region in NNDSB Secondary schools. This training allows students access to different employment sectors and services as well as hands-on learning opportunities to suit all types of learners.

The [Skills at Work](#) webpage continues to showcase, register, and celebrate experiential learning in many different facets. During the pandemic, the Skills at Work page not only supported students learning from home, but also allowed parents, teachers, and administrators to learn about opportunities in the board, register, and ask questions about the exciting events offered throughout the region.

Specialist High Skills Major Programs

Graduation rates, provincially soar to 96% for students engaged in Specialist High Skills Major programs. With a rich diversity of learning and lead teachers on the ground, students benefit across the region from experiential and focused learning, hands-on skills, and passionate teacher leadership. In the 2023–2024-year, engagement in the [Specialist High Skills Major](#) programs increased to 406 students enrolled at the end of June, 2024. [Red Seal rates](#) have been maintained with steady positive results. Significant growth has occurred in Trade-based SHSM programs, supporting initiatives to increase interest in the skilled-trades as well as provide students with sector-related learning and certification opportunities. [SHSM Engineering/Construction](#) Leads at West Ferris once again successfully applied for Ministry expansion funding, earning \$15 000 to increase robotics equipment and parts used in certification and course learning opportunities. A more flexible set of requirements to the SHSM mandatory course load, will allow for more students to see themselves as successful in their chosen pathway, as they will have more opportunities for real life experiences. The changes to the pathway expectations can be found at <https://www.ontario.ca/page/specialist-high-skills-major>.

Parry Sound High School (PSHS) celebrated their [Hospitality and Tourism SHSM](#) program at an Alumni Dinner, hosted by students in the program at PSHS. The evening was well attended and brought community partners together. The highlight for this program this year would be the attendance of the students in the Hospitality Program who entered the Ontario Skills Competition. This year 2 of the students in this program received accolades at the Provincial event winning a gold and a silver medal for Restaurant Service.

The [Sport and Nutrition SHSM](#) at Chippewa Secondary School provided students with opportunities to learn more about their own personal health and well-being. Under the mentorship of the teacher leads in the program, the students experienced the power of Sport not only from the angle of the athlete, but in the leadership opportunities they were provided while working with other youth in the community. Community connections with Canadore and Nipissing athletes continue to be established through Sector-Partnered Experiences (SPE) with local educational institutions, their students and professors. Another SHSM in Sport and Nutrition also emerged at West Ferris Secondary School, to provide a seamless transition for those involved in the Near North Sports program (offered to grade 9-10 students) who would like to continue their educational journey in sport.

The [Arts and Culture SHSM](#) programs at Almaguin Highlands Secondary School, Parry Sound High School, Chippewa Secondary School and West Ferris Secondary School, welcomed community members to sit in the audience at the music, theatre and dance performances or stroll through student galleries set up in the various schools to take in the art installations. Chippewa and West Ferris students also took part in an opportunity to see the performance and fine arts world through individual trips to New York City. Each group had different experiences, but these made for memories and learning that the students who were part of these travel excursions will never forget.

Leads across the region in Technological Education programs associated with Mining and Manufacturing SHSM Programs were successful in grant applications through the Career-Ready with CTMA: Expanding Opportunities program. Almaguin Highlands as well as West Ferris Secondary both received monies to purchase sector-level equipment so that students will have sector-specific experience through their high school learning.



96%
Grad rate in SHSM Programs

96%
Graduation Rate in SHSM Programs Provincially

Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program

The [Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program](#) (OYAP) continues to work with local community employment and academic partners to deliver authentic and engaging learning opportunities for our students and their families. In 2022-23, students in Grades 4-12+ participated in a variety of virtual hands-on initiatives designed to inspire young learners to recognize their own unique talents and interests and draw tangible connections to real life applications and potentially a career in the skilled trades. Classroom experiences included: [Mining Matters](#), Paddle Build, OYAP-PAJO Dragsters and [Provincial Picnic Table Event](#), OYAP-PAJO [Miniature Handbot Initiative](#), the [Skilled Trades and Tech Truck Tour](#) and various [Skills Ontario](#) competitions.

Data provided by the Ministry of Labour, Integration, Training, and Skills Development (MLITSD), reveals that NNDSB continually has a larger percentage of Grade 11 &12 students enrolled in OYAP than the Provincial average. Additionally, over the past couple of years, the percentage of NNDSB female students participating in OYAP (tracked over 14 trades) has exceeded the Provincial average.

Dual Credit

[Dual credit](#) programs allow eligible students in high school to take college or apprenticeship courses that count towards their Ontario Secondary School Diploma or a postsecondary certificate, diploma, degree, or a Certificate of Apprenticeship.

The primary focus of Dual Credit programs is students facing challenges in earning their secondary school diploma. This includes disengaged and underachieving students under the age of 21 who have the potential to succeed at college but who are at risk of not graduating from high school, and students who have left high school before graduating, including students participating in boards' re-engagement initiatives. It has grown to be a valuable option for Level 1 Apprenticeship and SHSM students as well and is a popular Secondary mainstream offering.

There were 113 NNDSB students enrolled in the Dual Credit program in the 2023-2024 school year.

Taking part in Dual Credit Programs gives students skills and experiences that will make college and career choices less complicated and more exciting as they get started on a pathway to success.



Orange – North Bay Blue – Parry Sound

Personal Support Worker Program

The NNDSB PSW program remains a shining star, which continues to develop and grow within NNDSB communities. The development of the [Adult PSW Living Classroom Program](#) in 2021-22 provided a strong foundation for the expansion and sustainability of the Long Term Care programs in Parry Sound at [Belvedere Heights](#) and in North Bay at [Cassellhome](#). The program created in partnership with Long Term Care Providers in all regions has gained the NNDSB National recognition with the Pathways Coordinator invited to share NNDSB success with the Living Classroom program at the Continuing Education School Board Administrators [\(CESBA\) conference](#) and the [Long Term Care Provincial Conference](#) (OLTCC) Over the past year, the dynamic nurse teachers of the program, have taken part in Professional Development in various areas of the province, and it continues to be evident that the northern community is something special, and that both Parry Sound and North Bay greatly benefit from having this program. After a provincial assessment during the 2023/2024 year, the NNDSB PSW program received a Certificate of Quality Assurance that the leaders and the students of this program are very proud of.

Session	Parry Sound	North Bay
Fall/Winter Session Initial Enrollment 2023	23	13
Fall/Winter Session Completion 2023	12	11
Employed at Program Completion January 2024	12	6
Spring/Summer Initial Enrollment 2024	18	14
Spring/Summer Completion 2024	9	10
Employed at Program Completion August 2024	8	7

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION PRIORITY: Student Engagement and Well-Being



NNDSB schools prioritize student achievement and well-being through a variety of safe schools' initiatives. We know that when students feel safe, welcomed, and included, they are better able to engage in academics and form positive, healthy relationships. All students continue to be supported through the Safe Schools Framework, which prioritizes community and citizenship, conflict resolution, and bullying awareness and prevention. These framework pillars build staff and student capacity to enact preventative measures and responsive actions that ensure safe learning environments for all schools.

School Climate Survey

As per the Ministry of Education, school boards must administer voluntary school climate surveys to their students, parents and staff at least once every two years.

These anonymous surveys help schools:

- assess perceptions of safety
- make informed planning decisions about programs to help prevent bullying and promote safe and inclusive schools
- determine the effectiveness of programs on an ongoing basis
- build and sustain positive school climates

The 2023-2024 student survey was broken down into 9 sub-headings:

- 1) My Participation at School
- 2) My Relationships with Peers
- 3) My Relationships with Adults
- 4) My Learning Environment
- 5) My Physical Safety
- 6) My Emotional Safety
- 7) Transportation
- 8) Bullying, Discrimination and Cyberbullying
- 9) My Coping and Emotional Skills

Each sub-heading included a set of related questions and utilized the same rating scale: Strongly Disagree; Disagree; Neither Agree nor Disagree; Agree; or Strongly Agree.

We were pleased with the positive participation rate (Table below) and are thankful to everyone who took the time to complete the School Climate Survey.

Number of Participants	
Students Grades 4-6	1765
Students Grades 7-8	975
Students Grades 9-12	1258
Staff	299
Parents	557



This year the data was input into [PowerBI](#), a software program that allows NNDSB to apply various filters such as student grade, specific schools, or to review various regions of the board. These filters can be applied with the click of a button, allowing us to better understand the data and to determine next steps. School-teams will use their site-specific data to establish areas of strength and areas of focus for the next two years.

At a district level, we are making connections to the themes under each of the 9 survey sub-headings across Grades 4 – 12. These themes in turn are reflected through our Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP), the Ministry of Education's Student Achievement Plan (SAP), as well as other identified provincial and local priorities. You will find data related to these themes on the following page.

NNDSB Climate Survey

● Strongly disagree ● Disagree ● Neither agree nor disagree ● Agree ● Strongly agree

My Participation at School:

I feel like I am part of the school community.

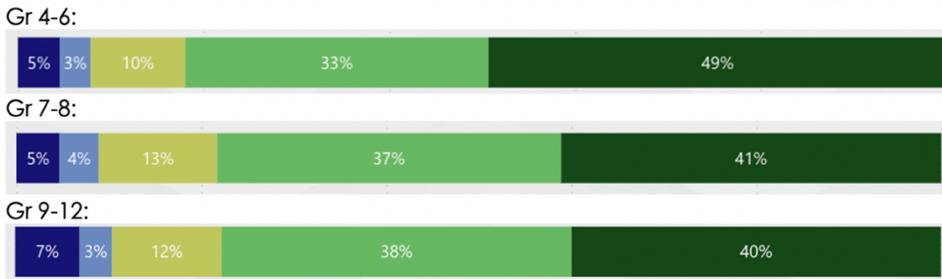
Creating an inclusive environment where everyone feels welcomed and included is the cornerstone of a positive school climate. This is achieved when all students feel like they belong. 72% of NNDSB Grades 4-6 students agree or strongly agree that they have an opportunity to actively participate in their school's community. As students age, we see this number decrease. Creating an even larger variety of clubs, teams, and initiatives for our secondary student population will be an area



My Relationships with Adults:

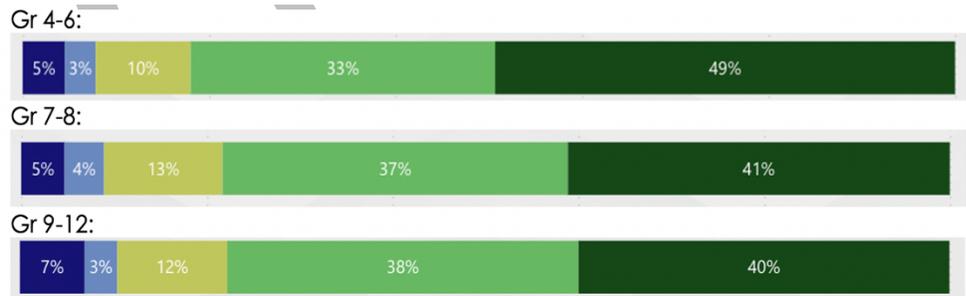
Teachers and other adults who work at my school care about the students.

NNDSB MYSP focus on Excellence in Relationships is demonstrated through this overwhelmingly positive data which indicates that across the grades our students feel that they are cared for and cared about by the teachers and adults in their schools. NNDSB has always known how much our teachers and staff care about students, but it's rewarding to know that the students feel it too!



We know that students are most likely to succeed when they have a strong support network that contains both educators, parents and community members. This data illustrates that the majority of our students have someone at home (a parent, caregiver, relative, or family friend) who is encouraging them to work hard in school. NNDSB is thankful to each of our school communities for their dedication to our students and their success.

I have someone at home who encourages me to work hard at school.



Our teachers expect us to work hard.



NNDSB teachers expect students to work hard because we know our students are capable, intelligent people who can have a positive impact on their communities, now and in the future!

The NNDSB MYSP focus on Excellence in Teaching and Learning is illustrated through this extremely positive data which indicates that across the grades our students know that their teachers expect them to achieve. We continue to bring student achievement to the forefront of every conversation and initiative while ensuring resource allocation and alignment is in support of increased skills in core academics. Our teachers expect students to work hard because we know our students are capable, intelligent people who can have a positive impact on their communities, now and in the future!



**My Emotional Safety:
I feel like my identity is welcomed at school.**

Gr 4-6:



Gr 7-8:



Gr 9-12:



NNDSB has undertaken many initiatives over the past few years, with the support of the Equity and Well-being Principal, the Indigenous Education Department, and the Safe Schools Team, to decrease racist, discriminatory or derogatory words and actions at NNDSB schools. Students learn best when they feel welcomed. The data indicates that the majority of NNDSB students feel this way. Staff continue efforts to ensure that all students feel welcomed.

As mentioned above, the information gathered from the School Climate Surveys will be used at the school and district level to set goals and measure progress towards ensuring accepting, safe, and inclusive learning environments. Staff will dive deeper into the Staff and Parent responses and share that data with associated departments and committees. The Safe Schools Team looks forward to identifying specific actions that can be taken to create welcoming, inclusive and safe learning spaces and educational experiences for all NNDSB students.

Safe Schools Area of Focus: Community VTRA Protocols

The NNDSB Safe Schools Team has been proud to participate in the Community [Violent Threat Risk Assessment](#) (VTRA) Working Group, alongside the NNDSB Mental Health Lead, in pursuit of creating a community-based protocol that helps us determine how to support students who show signs of worrisome behaviour, threats or violence.

An effective community VTRA protocol allows for timely collaboration between multi-disciplinary partners to surround and help individuals and families at risk. The protocol is engaged when a student/youth is identified as engaging in threat-making or violent behaviour, and after consulting the VTRA risk assessment to determine if the behaviour meets the threshold for intervention.

Where it does meet the threshold for intervention, effective and appropriate information sharing regarding the youth allows community partners to develop an immediate intervention and long-term case management plan. Community partners include organizations that support children and family services, such as [HANDS](#) and [Children's Aid Society](#) (CAS). It also includes police partners, such as the [North Bay Police Services](#).

The NNDSB MSYP visions states that we strive to ensure all members of our educational community contribute to a thriving and inclusive culture of student achievement and well-being. The Community VTRA Protocol gives us a planning pathway so that we can support students who may be struggling with mental health, aggression and/or self-regulation.

Northwest Police Protocol

Near North, alongside coterminous boards, North Bay Police Services (NBPS), and the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), completed a review and update for the [Northwest Police Protocol](#). This updated document, which guides principals' work in tandem with police partners, reflects changes related to emergency preparedness plans including lockdowns.

Emergency preparedness is a key factor in creating safe school environments. Although we hope to never have to enact our lockdown drill or bomb threat procedures, we know that well-trained staff and well-prepared students can make the difference in these situations.

The new protocol puts an emphasis on best practices that are simultaneously supportive of students. It considers the ever-evolving world of technology, for example, by providing guidance on the use of student cell phones during a lockdown. It also reflects the learning that police partners have had due to bomb threats in other parts of the province.

Thanks to the guidance provided by police partners, we have been able to create a new protocol that retains the highest standards for emergency preparedness while considering the best practices that have surfaced as a result of incidents across North America.

Healthy Schools



Student Nutrition Program

During the 2023/24 school year, with the support of [Northern Fruit and Vegetable Program](#), and [Community Living North Bay](#), Student Nutrition Program and the [Rotary Clubs of North Bay](#) and [Parry Sound](#) work to share healthy food options with students and families. From May to June 2024, NNDSB students in grades 5-8 completed the Health Unit's Northern Fruit and Vegetable Survey. Their participation in this evaluation helps secure continued funding from the Ministry for the NFVP, which includes fruit and vegetable deliveries to schools, food gift cards, and financial support for NNDSB to sustain the program.

The Healthy Schools Team continues to collaborate with Community Living and the Health Unit, Henvey Inlet First Nation, Magnetawan First Nation, President's Choice Children's Charity, District of Parry Sound, Salvation Army Bagged Lunches, Steel Workers Union, district Rotary Clubs, Tim Horton's Smile Cookies Campaigns, Toonies for Tummies and Individual Parent Councils to ensure the sustainability of student nutrition programs in NNDSB schools.

Chippewa Intermediate students are seen to the left, using their new dough machine to make muffins, cookies, whole wheat bread, whole wheat English muffins, and other food for students. They have 4 classes in the kitchen, working to prepare food for nutrition programs. On average they make approximately 1200 oatmeal cookies, 500 muffins, 500 English muffins, 300 breakfast sandwiches, and 40 loaves of bread per month for the breakfast program. Similar programs occur in all secondary schools.



Safe Cycling with Near North District School Board

The Safe Cycling partnership between NNDSB and the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit, [Ride Smart](#), [The Miller Group](#) and Ontario Provincial Police continued in 2023-24. The purpose of the program is to create a cycling culture within each community. Using components from the Physical Education curriculum, and the [Ontario Physical Health and Education Association](#) (OPHEA), our teachers safely instruct students using the [Ride Smart](#) program. The program prepares students for safe use of bicycles, including which type of bike is safe for a variety of roadways, emergency braking, hand signals and shoulder checks. In addition to learning how to cycle safely, students learn how active transportation can reduce their carbon footprint. The program provides students with the knowledge and confidence to cycle and research indicates that physical activity supports healthy brain development, which can lead to improved learning, academic outcomes and improved mental health.



Outdoor Ways of Learning and Sharing (OWLS), OWLS Mentorship and Forest Practitioner Training

NNDSB remains committed to supporting educators in delivering quality experiential outdoor learning. The OWLS program was developed in partnership with the [Canadian Ecology Center](#). The program supports students' self-regulation, mental health, and well-being. The Outdoor Ways of Learning and Sharing mentorship program has now been offered for several years to an increased number of educators in schools in the NNDSB region. In addition, an increasing number of educators have engaged in [Forest and Nature Practitioner certification training](#). These initiatives allow NNDSB teachers to learn about or improve their outdoor educational pedagogy and learn how to use the school yard for outdoor education.

Supporting mentally Healthy Schools through Capacity Building



To support the mental health strategy priority of evidence-informed tiered mental health programming, additional training for the entire mental health team included [Healthy Relationships Plus Program](#), a program that equips students 12 – 18 with the skills they need to build healthy relationships and to help themselves and their peers reduce risky behaviours, [Rainbows For All Children](#), to support grieving students, [Small Talk](#), a training to support suicide intervention in students under the age of 12, and training in the legal requirements for school counsellors surrounding capacity, consent, documentation, confidentiality, mandatory reporting, and negligence. In alignment with the mental health

strategy's mission to embed culturally responsive services in our programming, all members of the mental health team participated in 2 days of [cultural mindfulness](#) training with George Couchie of Nipissing First Nation, to develop an understanding of Indigenous history and culture.

Through a collaboration with Laurentian University, a small group of mental health professionals were trained in [Holistic Arts Program](#) (HAP) that was piloted in 3 schools. The regulated mental health professionals (Mental Health Clinicians and BRISC) were trained in [Early Assessment Risk Level](#) (EARL), as assessment of criminal/antisocial involvement for children under the age of 12.

[School Mental Health Ontario](#) (SMHO) resources were utilized to support school staff in developing skills to support student well-being. All Educational Assistants were trained in [Prepare, Prevent, Respond: Suicide Prevention/Life Promotion Literacy](#) for School Staff. All principals were trained in Emotion Coaching, a strategy to support students experiencing strong emotions at school.

In response to [PPM 169](#) – Student Mental Health, all principals and grade 7/8 teachers were provided with information to implement the new mandatory 7/8 Mental Health Literacy modules. Caregivers were sent information via social media and letters home regarding these new modules.

In support of our priority of clear and timely communication, the Mental Health staff SharePoint (internal website) was launched for all board staff in January 2024. This site contains all information related to supporting student mental health and well-being in the board. The Student Well-Being Newsletter was launched in January 2024 in collaboration with the Well-being and Equity and Library Services departments to highlight the work that schools and students are making in this area as well as the services available to support student well-being.

Mental Health Support Leads to Significant Educator Training

26 students received Summer Mental Health Clinician support in 2024.

The provision of summer mental health funding that extended to October 1st allowed us to invest in evidence-informed training to increase the capacity of staff to support student well-being. [MindUp](#) training and program resources were provided to 60 elementary teachers.

In September 2023, the Mental Health Program launched a redesign of the referral process with the addition of on-going Pre-Referral Meetings at elementary schools to determine the most appropriate service pathway through a collaborative process between the mental health professionals and the school staff. Principals, vice-principals, Differentiated Learning Resource Teachers (DLRTs), and mental health staff were surveyed in June with 91% indicating that it was helpful to determine the appropriate mental health service for students and 85% indicating that it was an effective use of time.



Excellence in Innovation

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

Innovative Teaching

Experiential Learning: Hockey Skills Programs

Hockey Programs in the Parry Sound, Seguin/Humphrey and Mattawa regions excelled in their seasons of training and leadership with community and board support. Through consultation with the Experiential Learning team, coaches, teachers and administrators were able to set-up a successful method of program delivery that embraces students who may not always be able to participate in hockey, delivered outside the school day. Near North's Hockey Skills Programs embrace students who are eager, ready, and able to play by supporting their engagement and finding creative solutions to barriers of access.

Students in the program expanded their scope of understanding and the importance of the role of diversity in hockey through a program they participated in that was offered by the Hockey Hall of Fame through a virtual session. All three hockey programs in the board participated, as well as some SHSM Sports and Near North Sports students. "The Hockey Hall of Fame [Diversity in Hockey Program](#), an interactive, virtual classroom program, designed for students in grades 7 to 12, is intended to pay homage to the pioneers of hockey who confronted discrimination through perseverance. It allowed students of all communities to develop a sense of connection by reflecting on these stories of under-represented players. The DIHP's goal is to provide students with the tools and knowledge needed to become active allies in promoting a more inclusive environment for all. Students will learn about the ways in which diversity is intertwined within hockey history and how it enriches our society. By reflecting on the past, students connect to creating a more equitable future."

(<https://www.hhof.com/visit/educationprograms.html>)



Innovation through Environmental Education

Professional Resources: Environment, Energy, and Climate Action

The Recent SharePoint (staff website) update has allowed for the creation of a comprehensive bank of resources for staff when engaging in environmental education initiatives. The NNDSB Library and Resource team, supported by Educational Technology leads began to build the bank in 2024. The bank includes resources such as [eco schools](#), [Take me Outside](#), [The Canadian Ecology Center School and Youth Programs](#), [Waste Diversion Education](#), and a variety of educational videos. Teachers can also stay informed about pathways in environmental education that are available as viable student pathways.

Eco Schools

The [ecoschools](#) platform is a certification-based program whereby students help to co-construct their sustainable and eco-centered goals to earn points. Points accumulate throughout the year to position students in May to apply for certification as an ecoSchool. Schools can earn a participation, bronze, silver, gold or platinum standing, based on the points and actions they achieve. Schools engaged in projects like pollinator gardens, repurposing and innovative recycling, waste-free Lunch, environmental literacy, earth day, the great gulp, switch off lights and Devices, tree Planting and maintenance reducing harmful single-use plastics and more. In 2023-24, schools entered thoughtful, holistic eco plans into the platform, engaging all classes in sustainable efforts. Plans for each school included actions to stop and appreciate their green spaces, taking thoughtful and conscientious action to conserve materials and energy as well enhancing student well-being through access to outdoor learning.



Outdoor Education Adventures

Through application to the Outdoor Education fund, students from many different regions were able to participate in outdoor learning adventures, related to the curriculum. Thoughtful leads and administrators carefully curated applications to show their dedication to the maximum use of community partnerships, local areas and features as well as learning in nature for wellness and transition supports. This yearly fund grants schools with the ability to see, explore and wonder in the natural beauty of the Near North.



Innovation Through Technology

STEM and Coding

STEM and coding were the focus of many classroom-embedded educational technology supports throughout the year across a variety of schools. Students had the opportunity to learn about coding and experience it through hands-on activities that included [Spheros](#), drones, [bee-bots](#) and [Lego Spike Prime](#). Students learned to solve problems using the coding skills they acquired and developed valuable competencies. These skills were applied to other subject areas and used beyond the classroom walls. Two junior grades at Sunset Park Public School participated in a sustained coding initiative with Lego Spike Prime robots. Working together, students built robots and became proficient at coding them to complete a variety of challenges and hands-on STEM activities.

Science and Numeracy Supports

[TVO Mathify](#) continues to be promoted and supported for students in grades 4–12. Mathify is a 1:1 online math tutoring opportunity available 7 days a week with Ontario certified teachers in a secure online environment. Students access this resource during the day or in the evenings to help understand math concepts.

[Gizmos](#) is an online resource for interactive math and science simulations available for grades 7–10. Students work through engaging simulations and activities to reinforce topics taught in class and conceptualize a variety of concepts in math and science.

Math Instructional Resources:

In consultation with classroom teachers, NNSB has made significant investments in math learning resources (digital and physical) to support the continued implementation of the new Grade 1-8 math curriculum and the de-streamed grade 9 math curriculum. Near North District School Board continues to offer [DreamBox](#) Math Learning to all students in grades 1-3. DreamBox digital math program that combines a fun and engaging math learning environment with curriculum focused outcomes continues to be a favoured resource for staff and students.

The Pearson Mathology resources (digital and physical) have been purchased to support educators in developing critical math content knowledge for teaching and effective pedagogical approaches for math learning. [Mathology](#) has offered a common reference point for teachers and principals resulting in increased understanding of the content of the [new curriculum](#), high-impact instructional and assessment strategies, equitable and culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy in math, and differentiated support for students who may face barriers to achievement in math.



Brightspace LMS

Approximately 30 new secondary course packages were released this year in the LMS, providing teachers with up-to-date digital resources to support eLearning and blended learning environments. These course packages have been developed by TVO and were made available in our virtual learning environment. To provide easy access to these course packages for educators, all TVO courses have been setup in the new "Discover" tool which allows teachers to preview content and import it into their own courses where it can be further customized. Brightspace also launched a content authoring package that provides opportunities for teachers to create engaging content experiences for students. Professional development and support resources were provided to help teachers leverage existing workflows and create dynamic content and media experiences to help improve comprehension and promote engagement through [Brightspace LMS](#).

eLearning

In 2023-24, NNDSB continued its partnership with the [Ontario eLearning Consortium](#) (OeLC) which is a collective of 55 publicly funded Ontario member boards. Students have an opportunity to learn [asynchronously](#) in a virtual environment through the Ministry-funded Brightspace LMS and complete their online learning graduation requirement. Being part of the OeLC allows NNDSB to offer increased course options for students as eLearning classes are shared with member boards across the province. Students can take courses that they wouldn't have access to in their home school and they have flexibility with where the class sits in their timetable. In 2023-2024 NNDSB's eLearning program saw some restructuring to support equitable access to a variety of eLearning courses. NNDSB eLearning course offerings were determined by students through their course selection process in [Xello](#). These courses were equitably distributed across NNDSB's high schools and offered to in-board as well as out-of-board students. In 2023-2024, 764 NNDSB students were accepted into an eLearning course with another school or school board. 536 out-of-board students were accepted into NNDSB's eLearning offerings.



[Click here for the Parent Portal](#)



NNDSB Parent/Guardian Accounts

To support parents and guardians with increased engagement in their child's learning and access to NNDSB-specific resources, Near North parent accounts continue to be promoted and configured across the board. Attendance was introduced this year in [Edsby](#) and parents can now view attendance information and submit planned absences to the office via this tool. Staff have also been equipped with tools to support parents in real-time if issues surface.

Power BI

In 2023-24 Power BI was used to develop useful data dashboards and graphical representations of data to help inform central staff, administration in schools, and guidance counsellors. Reports include data on graduation requirements, eLearning student and course information, as well as secondary and elementary student achievement. These dynamic dashboards facilitate data-driven decision-making and enhance the ability to track and improve student performance across various metrics.

SharePoint Communication:

NNDSB continues to use SharePoint to communicate among staff, streamlining collaboration and ensuring that important information is readily accessible. This platform enables staff to share resources, access professional development, and stay updated on important announcements and updates. The Staff Portal news feed offers a collection of posts from various department sites which supports efficient and effective internal communication. In 2023-24 the SharePoint site received a complete update and redesign to stay current and encourage regular use of resources.

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.

Partnerships



Partnership with North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit Featured in 2024 at Public Health Think Tank

In connection with Opeha's [Vaccination Talks Toolkit](#), in January 2024, Opeha hosted a Think Tank on enhancing school board and public health collaboration in service of student well-being. Opeha asked interest holders from three regions to tell them about the "magic ingredients" behind the success of their school board and public health collaborations. Near North District School Board was asked to share some of the ways in which they have collaborated with [North Bay Parry Sound District Health](#)

[Unit \(NPSDHU\)](#). NNDSB shared the multi-faceted vaping reduction program for secondary schools, a concussion policy including medical paperwork recognized by all local health professionals, the safe cycling program in service of active transportation for grades 7 and 8, and a sharps safety program for custodians as just some of the initiatives the partnership has worked on together.



NNDSB PSW Program Fulfilling Community Need

Through re-engagement programming, Near North District School Board has been able to re-engage adults into the NNDSB community-minded Personal Support Worker Program. Running three classes of graduates in the 2023-2024 year, 89% of NNDSB students were hired upon graduation, or even before, while still completing their placement requirements (graduation pending). In addition to the success of the Personal Support Worker Program, in 2023-24, NNDSB is proud of the following success rates.

- 100% employment rate in Parry Sound
- 90% employment rate in North Bay
- 95% employment rate for all programs
- 95% retention rate overall

Partnership with Battalion hockey team to launch anti bullying campaign Expanded

NNDSB partnered with the Battalion Hockey team for a second year in 2023-24. The North Bay Battalion players worked with NNDSB to create a video, lesson and activity that highlights the importance of using personal positive character traits to combat Bullying. The video supports teachers in launching the conversation with their students that helps students identify what their individual traits are, how those traits can be used to help others, and how those traits help them to achieve their goals. This initiative was launched alongside a variety of other activities as part of the NNDSB annual Bullying Awareness and Prevention week. The partnership has grown with the Battalion Team hosting Hockey Skills programs and partnership opportunities for Indigenous students.





Ministry Partnerships

In conjunction with a variety of valued community partners including [School College Work Initiative \(SCWI\)](#) and the [Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training & Skills Development \(MLITSD\)](#). The goal of one initiative was for educators to be better informed and positioned to promote the apprenticeship and skilled trades pathway as a viable and valuable career option for all students. 49 Guidance Counsellors and Intermediate Teachers in the North and East region of our district participated in exciting full-day workshops on April 27th and 28th, 2023.

Career Ready Applications Through Canadian Tooling & Machining Association Partnership

In April, 2023, Near North District School Board submitted and was approved for an application to participate in the "[Career-Ready with CTMA: Expanding Opportunities](#)" program managed by [Canadian Tooling & Machining Association \(CTMA\)](#), in partnership with the [Ontario Council for Technology Education \(OCTE\)](#) and funded in part by the Ontario's Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development (MLITSD) through the Skills Development Fund.

Almaguin Secondary School and West Ferris Secondary School were each approved for up to \$90 000 for machine shop modernization, bringing their program equipment up to sector-standards. The intention of the updates is to modernize student experience with industry-standard equipment, techniques, and training so that they can gain an appreciation and realistic experience for machining and tooling as a lucrative trades opportunity.

These program upgrades will impact up to 170 students per year at Almaguin Secondary and up to 120 students at West Ferris Secondary. Students will have the ability to learn, grow and build passion for sector-relevant machining techniques through this funding and equipment. NNSDB was one of 28 boards and were 2 of 47 schools approved for this funding.

In 2024, shops received upgrades and new equipment arrived.

Canadian Tooling and Machining Association (CTMA)

Leads from across the region in Technological Education programs that are connected to the Mining and Manufacturing SHSM programs, were successful in securing a third year of funding through their grant applications through the [Career-Ready CTMA: Expanding Opportunities](#) programs. This will promote and support the Ontario Ministry requirement that all students must complete a technology course in grade 10.

Coop Partnerships Support Specialist High Skills Major Success

Growth that is evident within technological sector enrollment in Specialist High Skills Majors (SHSM) is supported within the community connections through the expanding Cooperative Education opportunities that the SHSM provides. Introducing students to the workforce is an integral part of the SHSM program, and the relationships that have been developed in NNSDB communities continue to show the power of our youth and the potential for retaining students beyond high school in the NNSDB district.

Theatre Outreach on Stage TOROS Production and Community Partner collaboration

With a focused objective to continue to build upon the foundation that was set with the return of TOROS in the summer of 2023, this summer's production of *The Addams Family* did not disappoint. In August 2024, over 2000 members of the community filled the seats of the West Ferris Theatre over 4 nights and were transported to a magical place full of singing and dancing and lots of laughter. The updated theatre performance space at West Ferris Secondary School has proven to be an excellent home for TOROS to continue its legacy.

Developing supportive community partnerships this year with the YMCA and sponsors Rona, Toyota, Cementation and Redpath was a highlight to the program support in our community.

The 'outreach' aspect of the program had the cast and crew promoting their skill set around the community at various events and venues throughout the city. The program participants benefited from the mentorship of TOROS alumni, and skilled, collaborative partners with incredible theatre expertise. NNSDB looks forward to the continued growth of this one-of-a-kind program and sharing it with the community for many years to come.

Partnerships with the Mining Industry Provide Experiential Learning for Guidance Counsellors and Intermediate Teachers

On November 29th, 2023, a group of 8 educators travelled to The Côté Gold Project located in the Chester and Yeo Townships, District of Sudbury, in northeastern Ontario. Educators benefitted from a tour of the facility, including the operations room, staff camp, open pit mine and mill. Throughout the experience, staff learned about pathways into the mining sector and the diverse employment opportunities that exist for students across the Near North region. The mine tour was facilitated by Canadian Ecology Centre, the Ontario Mining Association, and the [IAmGold](#) Corporation.



Innovative professional learning opportunities supported by local OYAP-PAJO, Canadore, the Ministry of Education and Skills Ontario.

On April 25th, 2024, Secondary School Guidance Teachers participated in Explore the Trades - North Bay! Educators participated in a collaborative project-based learning opportunity that provided authentic hands-on experiences in three construction-based trades: carpentry, electrical, and plumbing.

On May 7th, Guidance Teachers and other school staff participated in the Trades Conference for Guidance Educators - Toronto! The Ministry of Education collaborated with [Skills Ontario](#) to bring a Trades Conference for Guidance Educators in support of Experiential Professional Learning in the Skilled Trades.



First Nations Advisory Circle (FNAC) Education Service Agreements

In 2023-2024, NNDSB met regularly with the 8 partnering First Nations to review and update the Educational Service Agreement. Through a collaborative and consultative approach, NNDSB and the First Nations Advisory Circle completed a final draft of the agreement for 2024-2029.

Initiatives made possible through Partnership Grants

With Wasausking First Nation through a Niigaan Gaiizhaami (NG) Partnership Grant, the west schools receive cultural programming and language support from Cultural Advisor Lisa Ross one full day a week at each location.

In partnership with Dokis First Nation, another NG grant was utilized in the following ways:

- To support drumming groups at Woodland PS and Silver Birches P.S. A former Indigenous Student Trustee led the group at Woodland from October to April.
- [Jacob Dayfox](#) and [Thalia Sarazin](#) led drumming at Chippewa and West Ferris Secondary Schools throughout the school year.
- West Ferris Indigenous Centre, now known as "Nabaachwewin," received two medicine wheel tables. These new additions create a more welcoming and culturally meaningful space for Indigenous students. Both students and staff have shared positive feedback.
- Northern Secondary school hosted local artist Lily Armstrong on several occasions, where she held beading workshops.
- Local Indigenous author and former NNDSB [Kelsey Borgford](#) presented her new children's book at several elementary schools in the north



Equity



Equity Advisory Circle

Complimenting the ongoing work of the [First Nations Advisory Circle](#) (FNAC), as part of our continued commitment to equity and inclusion in 2022-23, NNSDB continued to engage community partners through voice and collaboration with the Equity Advisory Circle which was created in 2020. A key focus of their work was to build a network and connect people to engage in collaboration, providing opportunities to learn from each other and to share ongoing progress. The Equity Advisory Circle came together for four meetings during the 2023-24 school year. Members of the Equity Advisory Council NNSDB community members shared in goal setting to support equity in our communities. The advisory circle also participated in professional development together. In 2023-2024 professional development was focused on supporting all student identities, responding to discrimination and racism and school achievement planning.

Community Partnerships

The Equity Team strengthened relationships with stakeholders and community partners [Children's Aid Society](#) (CAS) and the [International Day of Elimination of Racial Discrimination](#), [OUTloud](#), [North Bay Multi-Cultural Centre](#), [Ontario Educational Championship Team](#) (OECT).

Culturally Responsive and Relevant Pedagogy (CRRP) Calendar

Culturally responsive pedagogy and teaching recognizes that all students learn differently and that these differences may be connected to background, language, family structure and social or cultural identity. NNSDB schools should be places where students not only learn about diversity but also experience it. Students should see themselves and their classmates reflected in their studies. [The CRRP Calendar](#) supports the acknowledgment of special days of awareness such as National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, Gender Equality Week, Franco-Ontarian Day and many more. An electronic version of the calendar is shared on the Near North DSB website on the Equity page under Equity and Inclusive Education. The CRRP Calendar is also shared monthly, electronically with all staff. Each month a list of resources to support the days of awareness for the month. Are included Hard copies of the CRRP Calendar are also shared with all Near North schools and board departments.



From NNDSB Equity Action Plan: Alignment to PPM 119, Ontario's Education Equity Action Plan



- NNDSB believes that student well-being is fundamental to student success: that all students should be supported to build knowledge and skills associated with the four domains of well-being; social, emotional, physical, and cognitive using a whole child approach.
- We are committed to knowing our learners: we need to deepen understanding of the learning profiles of our students, build on diverse identities, backgrounds, and learning strengths to facilitate the best conditions for learning.
- “Our schools should be places where students not only learn about diversity but also experience it. Students should see themselves and their classmates reflected in their studies. Students and families should expect their interactions with their school community to leave them feeling accepted for who they are.” [Ontario's Education Equity Action Plan](#).

Equity Coaches

2023-2024 marked the second year for the new role of Equity Coaches in Near North schools. The role of Equity Coach was created in September 2022 to support the learning of students, staff and families in all areas related to equity, diversity and inclusion. Equity Coaches receive professional development throughout the entire school year focused on Human Rights, Responding to Discrimination and Accepting Students with all Identities.

In 2023-2024 all Equity Coaches received resources to enhance their knowledge and learning. Resources included texts of their choice including Coaching for Equity, Street Data and Deep Diversity. An Equity Coach Edsby group was created to share resources, collaborate and ask questions and seek support. Equity Coaches provide regular updates at monthly staff meetings to support the CRRP days of significance for each month, support the organization of school assemblies and clubs and share resources with students, staff and families regularly.

Near North Student Well-Being Newsletter

In January 2024, the Near North Student Well-Being Newsletter was launched by the Near North Well-Being Team along with the Near North Student Senate and Indigenous Youth Circle. Each edition provides monthly updates from NNDSB Student Senators and Indigenous Youth Circle. The Newsletter highlights important events taking place in NNDSB schools and communities that focus on student well-being and a variety of student well-being resources. The newsletter is shared with all staff at the beginning of each month and can also be found on the homepage of the NNDSB website, Staff Portal and Near North Edsby Feed.

Near North Responding to Discrimination Tools

In February 2024, the Equity Team created and shared the new Near North Responding to Discrimination Tools. The tools were created in a collaborative effort by System Principals of Equity and Student Well-Being, Indigenous Education and Safe Schools to support all students, staff and families to respond to acts of discrimination, racism or bullying in an appropriate manner. All staff received training about how to use the tools effectively. Posters were distributed to all schools with a QR code, phone number and email to report acts of discrimination or bullying.



“Our schools should be places where students not only learn about diversity but also experience it. Students should see themselves and their classmates reflected in their studies. Students and families should expect their interactions with their school community to leave them feeling accepted for who they are.”

(Ontario's Education Equity Action Plan)



Indigenous Education

Equitable Outcomes

Working towards equitable outcomes for Indigenous students is a key priority for Near North District Schools. We are committed to ensuring that Indigenous students have every opportunity for success. The focus is on supporting Indigenous student well-being, transitions and pathways, parent, and community engagement, and system and educator capacity.

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

Indigenous Trustee

The Indigenous trustee is an appointed position on the Board by the First Nations' Chiefs to represent the interests and concerns of the First Nations that have a working relationship with NNDSB, especially matters concerning Indigenous students. Since NNDSB schools are situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinabek, all board events start with a Land Acknowledgement. Near North District School Board values, the cultures, histories, and relationships with the Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island (North America), therefore having an Indigenous trustee at the table continues the good work that has been done and moves further towards authentic acknowledgement & considering our acts of truth and reconciliation.

Indigenous Youth Circle (IYC), Student Trustee and Student Voice

IYC continues to develop and grow in their leadership. In 2023-2024, meetings were held in person and rotated among the 6 participating secondary schools. IYC has continued to be involved in schools and community, often taking on planning for and participating in key days of recognition. The most notable during this year have been:

IYC Gives Back:

Northern Necessities Drive: In collaboration with the OPP, the North Bay Friendship Centre and the ONR, IYC members from Northern SS, West Ferris SS and Chippewa SS held a very successful necessities drive for northern Indigenous communities. Thousands of diapers along with a large quantity of clothing, formula and more were collected and shipped north.

North Bay Battalion Indigenous Youth Hockey Game:

NNDSB alongside local First Nations in conjunction with the North Bay Battalion hosted the third annual Indigenous Youth Day. This year's theme: Proud to be Me! focused on being proud to be Indigenous. Funds were raised to purchase 2100 tickets for Indigenous youth and families. NNDSB also contributed an amazing Proud to be Me! Video showcasing Indigenous student pride.

City Wide Powwow:

A four-board collaboration, (NNDSB, NPCDSB, CPNE, Nipissing First Nation), spearheaded by George Couchie, with full support from North Bay Mayor Peter Chirico, the event will take place at Memorial Gardens (rain or shine) on May 30th. School board agreed to have Aanmitaagzi, led by studio director Sid Bobb, to organize the powwow. School boards agreed to focus on students in grades 4 and 5 to attend the City-Wide powwow.

Learning Round Dances and Powwows:

Following last year's success of Learning Powwows at 3 north high schools (Northern SS, Chippewa SS and West Ferris SS), and with feedback from IYC, the Indigenous Education team, in collaboration with Aanmitaagzi will host 3 Learning Round Dances alongside the Learning Powwows. These cultural activities are not only for all the intermediate and secondary students at these secondary schools but serve as a transition activity for incoming students from the respective feeder schools.

Grade 7/8 Transition

Meeting presentations on the available supports and spaces for Indigenous students and introducing them to IYC.

IYC Retreat.

The students and graduation coaches were graciously hosted by Nipissing University's Enji-giigdoyang: Office of Indigenous Initiatives. Twenty- two students and six staff spent a full day engaging in conversation, learning and activities, as well as a tour of the University. Students and staff stayed overnight at one of the residences and woke bright and early for a Sunrise Ceremony led by Elder Lorraine Liberty as well as breakfast organized by the Enji staff.

Seven Stones – Adult Indigenous Alternative Learning

For 2023-24, the school, through a Supervised Alternative Learning Center model, 7 Stones opened 10 seats to students 16 and 17 years of age. Six students were enrolled in the SAL program throughout the year. The adult program saw 26 students enrolled throughout the year, of which over 30 credits were earned, and three graduates received their OSSD. At 7 Stones, students participate regularly in cultural activities as part of their learning. Over this year, they have learned to make moccasins, gauntlet mitts, beading techniques (earrings, lanyards and on moccasins and mitts.) When the weather permits, the students attend North Bay Indigenous Friendship Center (NBIFC) lands for teaching and land-based activities.

SUPPORTING STUDENTS
We work towards equitable outcomes for Indigenous students. We will increase student success and wellbeing through a variety of intentional and meaningful culturally responsive and relevant initiatives. We utilize data and voice to determine who, how, why, and what supports and barriers need to be considered when striving toward specific goals.

Graduation Coaches

For the 2023-24 school year, the decision was made to increase the graduation coach allocation by 0.5 each at Chippewa Secondary School and West Ferris Intermediate Secondary School. Although central allocated time to Indigenous Language teachers has allowed for Chippewa and West Ferris to have students in grade 7 and 8 to join the centre during these times of coverage, second semester, a pilot project was funded with BAP budget to have a dedicated 0.4 grade 7/8 graduation coach position.

Graduation coaches have reported the following results for Indigenous Students:

- 80-100% Capacity daily
- Access for support ranges from academic, cultural and social emotional.
- All potential graduates are either in line to graduate or have a plan to return for year 5.
- Credit recovery, grade 7/8 access, parent engagement and increase in Self-Identification have been listed as successes.



Indigenous Student Support Services

For 2023-24, NNDSB has been able to provide a 1.0 Indigenous Support and Transition Worker (ISTW) position in the West at Parry Sound Secondary School and 1.0 (ISTW) position in the north for elementary students (this year the focus schools have been Silver Birches and Woodland, based on Indigenous student population and student support need- i.e.: attendance, well-being, achievement).

At Parry Sound High School, the position works under the direction of the grad coach in the Hive. Typically, this involves, bringing students to and from the Centre to access support, connecting with mental health supports, listening ear, Indigenous student advocacy, and caring-adult connections.

At Silver Birches and Woodland, the ISTW has supported cultural activities at each school, supported student attendance plans, student transition/placement plans, Jordan's Principle applications alongside families and communities, as well as the Nipissing University Biidaabin after school and tutoring programs.

Capacity Building

Dedicated Professional Development Sessions and Funding

Indigenous Studies Teachers:

As part of our second year of implementation of the grade 11 Understanding Contemporary Issues: First Nations, Métis and Inuit Voices (NBE), we used teacher feedback via a 2022-23 end of year survey to direct academic and resource support. NBE teachers met for a full day on August 31 where Cultural Consultant [Kelly Brownbill](#) worked with teachers on accessing and delivering the content from a non-Indigenous stance, on confronting White fragility, and developing community with other teachers.

The Indigenous lead met a second time virtually with semester one teacher at the September 29 PD Day, where they developed individual and collective goals which resulted in the establishment of Professional Learning Communities that met on a regular cycle throughout the year as well as via an NBE resource SharePoint site.

At the April 8th PD Day, Indigenous Studies teachers participated in a panel discussion, names Tea Talk, with George Couchie, Daniel Stevens and Kelly Brownbill for 1.5 hours.

Indigenous Language Educators:

- August 29th Full day collaboration and planning
- November 10th: Jessica Shonias spent an entire day with all Indigenous language teachers, in-person at Almaguin Highland Secondary School. Jessica's workshop engaged educators actively on their lesson development and implementation.
- March 28-April 1- 4 language teachers attended the Anishnabemowin Teg Conference in Sault St Marie Michigan.
- Indigenous Language Teachers gathered for a full day in-person at Almaguin Highlands to share their learning from the Anishnabemowin Teg Conference, engaging lesson activities and resources.
- April 17th: Indigenous Language Teachers participated in a one-day workshop in Wasauksing First Nation on "Compassion Fatigue, Intersectionality and Communication Styles & Strategies" with Bo Yih Thom.

Secondary Panel:

- All secondary teachers and Principals spent a half day with Dr. Pamela Toulouse on November 24. Her presentation **Hockey? Potato Chips? Skin Grafting? Indigenous Gifts and Stories in Secondary Classrooms** This highly interactive workshop engaged participants with primary and secondary resources that are authentic and respectful to Indigenous peoples. Participants were guided in how to meaningfully utilize/include Indigenous resources in their high school classrooms or within their school improvement plans.
- Parry Sound High School on the afternoon of the November 24th PD Day, received Indigenous Trauma Informed Training from Wasauksing First Nation Social Services Director Shane Tabobondung.
- George Couchie provided cultural competence training to all staff and students at FJ McElligott in Mattawa on October 26th.

Leadership Learning:

- Dr. Pamela Toulouse presented for a half day to NNDSB Administrators and Managers on Authentic Indigenization.
- Several administrators participated in a 5-part video study of CBC's [Bones of Crows](#).



SUPPORTING EDUCATORS:

We work to support and engage with educators to increase their knowledge, understanding and awareness of Indigenous culture, world view, historical and contemporary issues and perspectives. Through anti-racism, human rights, equity, and culturally responsive pedagogies – educators will honour identity, which in turn will enhance student success and well-being.

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.

Using analytics for social media and web, the communications team have determined a steady growth in users of the Near North District School Board [website](#). The number of sessions has also increased. The session duration, which is the amount of time a visitor spent on the site increased as well. The board continues to provide timely information and reports through a variety of means, many of which are archived on the board website at nearnorthschools.ca

Public confidence: number of positive news stories

NNDSB was featured in the local and national news with over 161 positive news stories from Sept 2023 to June 2024. This is an average of 13 positive stories per month. This is an increase of 20 stories in a nine-month period or three additional stories per month.

The top three news releases that resulted in publication in multiple media outlets were:

- Recognition of the NNDSB Literacy team and NNDSB Language teachers for their work.
- The Trustee proposed Living Consciously course.
- The Indigenous Youth Circle "Essentials Drive".

Media recognition of NNDSB grew tremendously with media interest about NNDSB's vape detector pilot project and the willingness of the Principal of Safe Schools to participate in multiple media interviews for media outlets from across the country to speak about the pilot project. The principal overseeing Literacy was interviewed about the tremendous efforts of the NNDSB Literacy team. This kind of exposure led to the September 2024 CBC broadcast live from an NNDSB secondary school.

The top performing social media post was the Aug. 30 post about upcoming changes to personal devices and vaping: 34,207 impressions (number of times the post was on a screen), 29,766 post reach (number of people who saw the post at least once; this is estimated; different from impressions which may include multiple views by the same people), 12,462 post engagement (number of times people engaged through reactions, comments, shares and clicks), 1,678 reactions, 659 comments, 771 photo views, 21 link clicks, 330 shares

The year's second top performing post covered the new playground at MacTier Public School. The involvement of a large number of community members, the Shania Twain and Mitch Marner Foundations in this highly collaborative initiative garnered much interest.

In the period from Sept. 1, 2023-Aug. 31-2024 our Meta results show an 8.8 per cent increase in conversations started (37 accounts that messaged your business for the first time or after a period of inactivity) and a 191.7 per cent increase in new contacts (35 accounts that messaged your business for the first time).

20 modes of communication have been regularly utilised throughout the 2023-24 year

- 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
- Proactive communications with families and media through news release
- Proactive communications with families through letter to families, also posted and archived on the website
- Individual school-based newsletters
- Open Invitation to attend Board meetings on website and minutes archived
- Safe Schools Survey
- MYSP information sessions
- MYSP public progress survey
- Director's Annual Report
- Director's Year in Review
- Mid and end of year MYSP Progress Report
- NNDSB monitored information line
- Staff handbook to assist with communications questions
- Implementation of staff social media terms of use guidelines, infographics, and administrative guidelines for social media
- Director's monthly newsletter to staff

Communication Protocols in place to improve Communication

Communication protocols for parents found [here](#), the protocol for the general public found [here](#), and the staff protocol found on the staff SharePoint site ensure timely and accurate communication, avoid a backlog and or mixed messaging and build trust.

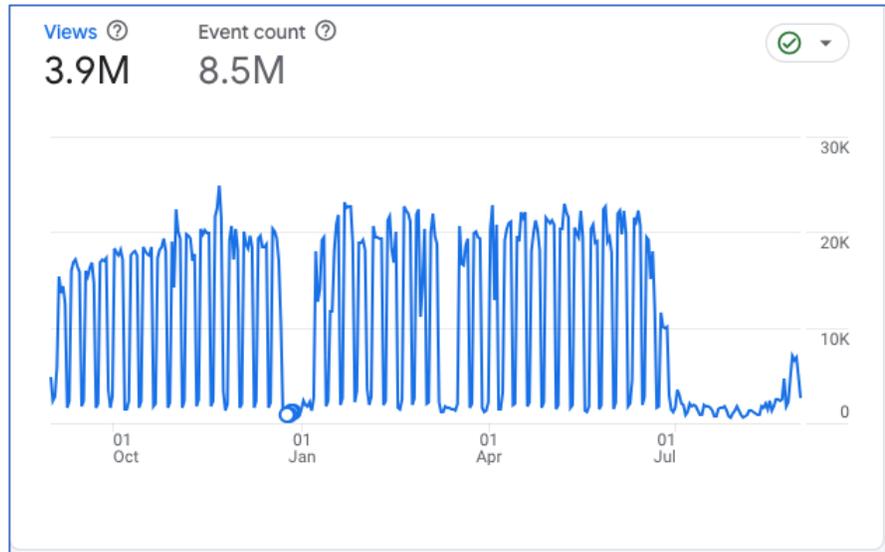
Continued transparent practice

Agendas and reports for Board are posted for information prior to each meeting. Minutes are posted after they are approved by trustees at subsequent meetings of the Board. This information is posted regularly [here](#). Committee updates and news releases for capital projects are posted regularly and can be found [here](#).

NNDSB Website Sept.1, 2023 – Aug. 31, 2024

Total page views for the Sept. to August period numbered 3,881,317.

2,647,606 page views were of the nearnorthschools.ca landing page. The next highest page was Learning at Home with 504,270 page views followed by the Shared News page with 313,559 page views.



3.9
Million views

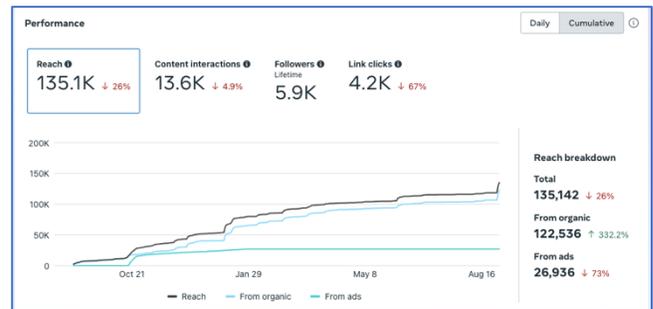
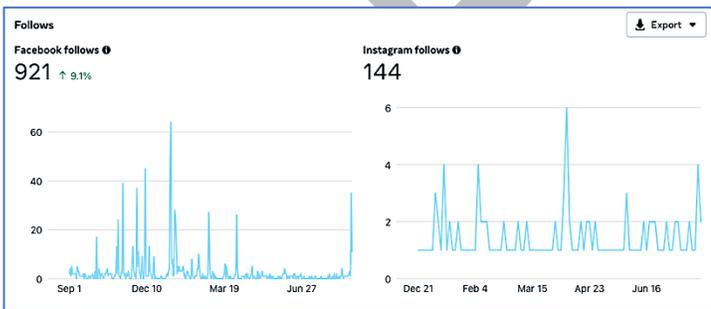
	Total	3,881,317	583,016	6.66	1m 49s	8,505,8
		100% of total	100% of total	Avg 0%	Avg 0%	100% of tc
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1 Near North District School Board – Reaching Every Student	2,647,606	336,216	7.87	2m 17s	5,947,3
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2 Learning at Home – Near North District School Board	504,270	214,497	2.35	48s	1,073,0
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3 NNDSB Shared News – Near North District School Board	313,559	46,964	6.68	0s	475,8
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4 Edsby Parents – Near North District School Board	50,981	15,159	3.36	20s	115,0
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	5 Transportation – Near North District School Board	43,180	21,332	2.02	35s	118,1
<input type="checkbox"/>	6 Employment Opportunities – Near North District School Board	40,804	20,442	2.00	40s	103,8
<input type="checkbox"/>	7 School Year Calendar – Near North District School Board	36,524	21,163	1.73	37s	95,9
<input type="checkbox"/>	8 Edsby Student Login – Near North District School Board	24,529	9,308	2.64	13s	62,5
<input type="checkbox"/>	9 Xello – Near North District School Board	19,769	9,310	2.12	29s	40,2
<input type="checkbox"/>	10 Find Your School – Near North District School Board	13,463	8,137	1.65	50s	32,2

Facebook and Instagram followers Sept. 1, 2023 - Aug. 31, 2024

Facebook followers grew during the 2023-2024 school year, by 9.1% or 921 for a total of 5,890 followers. Instagram gained 144 new followers over the September to August period.

Facebook and Instagram reach

Page reach (the amount of people who saw content from our social media platform) for Facebook decreased overall compared to the previous year due to fewer paid advertisements. Organic Facebook and Instagram reach increased by 332.2% bringing total reach for the period to 135,000 views.



Finance

2023-2024 Budget

Trustees of Near North District School Board (NNDSB) approved the 2023-2024 budget, as recommended by the finance committee. The Board received a presentation of the compliant budget, which had a deficit for compliance purposes of (\$914,337) and revenue and expenses for compliance purposes of \$170.5 million and \$171.4 million respectively.

The budget process is managed through the lens of the board's [Multi-Year Strategic Plan](#) (MYSF) ensuring that NNDSB is managed efficiently and is financially sustainable year over year.

There were a number of cost pressures in the 2023-24 budget, including a new transportation funding formula, changes to the Indigenous Education allocation, and the expiry of the COVID-19 recovery fund. Staff recommended a budget deficit, as there was reduced flexibility within the grant allocations to cover the transportation deficit, while still maintaining sufficient staffing levels to support student achievement and well-being. In 2022-23, the transportation deficit was \$1.3 million; in 2023-24 it increased to \$1.65 million.

The transportation deficit had a significant impact on the board's financial position. We note the diligent work of Nipissing Parry Sound Student Transportation Services (NPSSTS) staff and member boards to understand and implement the new funding formula, and determine where services could be reviewed and costs adjusted to more closely reflect the funding benchmarks determined by the Ministry of Education

Other significant costs to NNDSB were supply costs to cover absences, and the costs of maintaining facilities, due to rising utility and supply prices.

	2023-2024 Budget	2022-2023 Budget	\$ Budget Change from 2022-2023
Revenues			
Provincial legislative grants	151,826,439	149,960,654	1,865,785
Provincial grants - other	789,784	859,048	-69,264
Federal grants and fees	3,075,185	2,650,788	424,397
Other fees and revenues	546,667	172,440	374,227
Other revenues - school boards	803,039	618,708	184,331
Investment income	75,000	0	75,000
School generated funds	1,905,950	1,944,846	-38,896
Amortization of deferred capital contributions	13,359,110	12,112,501	1,246,609
Total Revenue	172,381,174	168,318,985	4,062,189

	2023-2024 Budget	2022-2023 Budget	\$ Budget Change from 2022-2023
Expenses			
Instruction	119,015,903	118,073,333	942,570
Administration	4,479,688	4,483,703	-4,015
Student transportation	15,024,133	13,913,994	1,110,139
Pupil accommodation	30,601,248	28,445,766	2,155,482
Other	2,518,243	1,449,091	1,069,152
School generated funds	1,984,676	1,890,168	94,508
Total Expenses	173,623,891	168,256,055	5,367,836

Finance Operations

Not unlike many other organizations the Finance Department was faced with managing several challenges, both internal and external, during the 2023-2024 school year. Position vacancies along with external compliancy and implementation requirements drove much of the work in the department. Staff remained resilient and collaborative to ensure continued regular operations and implementation of new requirements.

Regular collaboration and on-going dialogue between the Finance Department and system programming staff has enhanced the reporting accuracy and tracking of external and enveloped funds while maximizing the use of these of funds to meet programming requirements. The partnership is built on a mutual understanding of the need to fulfill student achievement and well-being needs while exercising internal financial controls and stewardship of resources. This relationship will continue to flourish with the implementation of the Financial Analyst position. The Financial Analyst will work closely with programming staff on administering program specific funding to build and improve on the foundation established for managing these funds.

Given the current staffing environment, as well as to promote succession planning, cross training and accessibility for others in the department to complete tasks and duties in the absence of co-workers, process documentation has begun in a basic format. Progress and enhancements to the documentation will continue to be added during the coming year(s).

Opportunities for Improving efficiencies and reduction of paper usage continue to be seized where opportunities present themselves. For many years the Board has encouraged payments being made through Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT), however it is still just presented an option offered to suppliers/vendors and not a forced method of payment. Currently the Board does pay numerous invoices by EFT, there were however still a significant number of cheques produced. Recently it has been noted that there has been an increased up take by suppliers/vendors opting for the EFT payment method. Payments made by EFT greatly improve the efficiency of operations as it reduces manual processing time of preparing the cheques for mailing, as well as saves on mailing costs, cheque stock and toner.

Capital Projects and Planning

Capital Projects - 2023-2024



2023-2024 – Parry Sound JK-12 Build

The new build of the JK12 school in Parry Sound is progressing well with a completion percentage of 55% as of the end of August 2024. This project is phased at 4 stages - partial demolition of the existing school which was completed summer of 2023, the construction builds currently underway, and the following phases of interior finishing, demolition of the remaining sections of the school and finally the parking lots and yard landscaping scheduled for late spring 2025.

The project is considered on schedule as of September 2024. A considerable amount of work was completed over the summer months this year, which supports the NNDSB's intention to have students and staff in the new facility for September 2025.

To the Left: Architects Renditions of new Parry Sound JK-12 School

School Condition and Renewal Projects

Working in tandem, the Capital Planning and Facilities and Operations departments tendered twenty-seven capital projects totalling \$12 million (~\$9.4 million in school condition improvements, and ~\$2.6 million in school renewal projects). Projects included: creation of additional instructional spaces; needed structural repairs (roofing and masonry); energy conservation projects (electrical service upgrades, heating plant upgrades, window replacements, steel cladding and insulation), access control and security upgrades (keycard entry systems, security cameras, and fencing), site improvements (bus loops and parking lots), as well as design work for accessibility projects and site improvements to be tendered during the 24/25 School Year. The majority of projects have been completed, with larger energy conservation projects (electrical service upgrades and window replacements) continuing throughout the 24/25 School Year.

Data Quality and Database Updates – Incident/Injury Data

The Facilities and Operations department continues to make progress on achievement of one of its MYSP goals, data driven decision making. Updates were made over the 23/24 School Year to the incident and injury reporting module in eBASE, specifically to how the system tags data for further reporting and statistical analysis. This data helps the department's Health and Safety and MSJHSC's initiatives by identifying the most significant risks and highlight where further support or corrective actions are required.

2023-2024 Professional Development Day

The Facilities and Operations professional development day for all departmental staff, hosted at Almaguin Highlands Secondary School, was once again a success. This year's focus was on Health and Wellness with presentations and training by the departmental management team, the [North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit](#), [CUPE Local 1165](#), and [School Boards Co-operative Inc.](#)

With all staff in attendance, the Manager of Facilities and Operations conducted a year-in-review of the Facilities and Operations departmental goals outlined in their department (6-week cycle) Improvement Plan. Discussions were had regarding progress made over the 2023-2024 school year, and action items for the 2024-2025 school year. A town hall was also held to gather feedback from the department as a whole to steer the department's MYSP goals for 2024-2025.

In order to combat identified health and safety risks and on-going concerns, the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit was able to support by providing sharps handling and naloxone training to all department staff. In an effort to support our staff in the on-going mental health and stress crisis and help curb day-to-day departmental absences, the School Boards Co-operative Inc was able to support by providing their "Building Resiliency" training course. Topics included: understanding resiliency; recognizing stressors and automatic stress responses; a resiliency self-test; strategies to build resilience; and mental fitness tips from startling minds. It was an incredibly engaging course, with lots of open discussion, and great feedback received from all staff in attendance.

2023-2024

was another productive year for the Near North District School Board. Faced with the global staffing crisis, NNDSB staff showed flexibility and grit in the interest of student achievement, equity and wellbeing. Innovative tools and pedagogies were employed in response to baseline data that determined student strengths and needs. Staff will be responding to the ripple effects of pandemic gaps in learning for several years to come through the use of innovative teaching and learning and culturally responsive instruction that engages and inspires a renewed love of learning.

Board departments continue to work smarter as they set and work toward goals for efficiency and security in NNDSB operations. The Finance Department worked through a necessary deficit that allowed for sufficient staffing levels to support student achievement and well-being.

Public confidence grows as numerous positive stories are shared in the news and on a growing variety of media. Communication practice is transparent with a variety of ongoing reports available to ensure all stakeholders and rightsholders feel confident in the progress we continue to make as we strive toward the mission, vision, and values of the NNDSB Multi-year Strategic Plan.



NNDSB MISSION

To provide opportunities that empower all learners to develop their potential by providing diverse pathways which lead students to become model citizens who achieve life goals and contribute to the betterment of society.