

# Annual Learning and Operating Plan 2021-22



## Mid-Term Update

March 2022

## Director's Message



**JoAnna Roberto, Ph.D.**  
**DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION,  
SECRETARY OF THE BOARD**

I am very pleased to present this Mid-Term Update on behalf of the Grand Erie District School Board.

In 2021, we launched a new Multi-Year Strategic Plan grounded in a vision to Learn, Lead and Inspire. We also established goals in our Annual Learning and Operating Plan. These goals are a direct reflection of what we value, and are connected to building a culture of Learning, Well-Being and Belonging.

Our shared mission and vision is the shining star to look and strive towards. Today, the light of optimism is even brighter as we feel we are emerging from the pandemic. We can focus even more strongly on learning and supporting the well-being and belonging of students with fewer of the uncertainties and impositions of the past two years.

We are putting into place purposeful practices in a quest to be better. We're building a house of learning, leading and inspiration, and each day, each week, adding new layers of bricks to that house.

This update represents the bricks we've put in place to date and provides a glimpse of what the finished house will look like. It shows we are making strong progress towards delivering on our goals.

Our Trustees, Senior Team, educators and support staff have all contributed to the progress we're making. My sincerest thanks to all of you for the contributions you have made. I hope you gain new inspiration from this report, and new enthusiasm to continue to work together to add more bricks to this house.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "JoAnna Roberto".

# Multi-Year Strategic Plan 2021-26



## Our Vision

**Learn**

**Lead**

**Inspire**

## Our Mission

Together, we build a culture of **learning**, **well-being** and **belonging** to inspire each learner.

## Our Collective Priorities

### Learning

We build a culture of learning to nurture curiosity and opportunity for each learner.

### Well-being

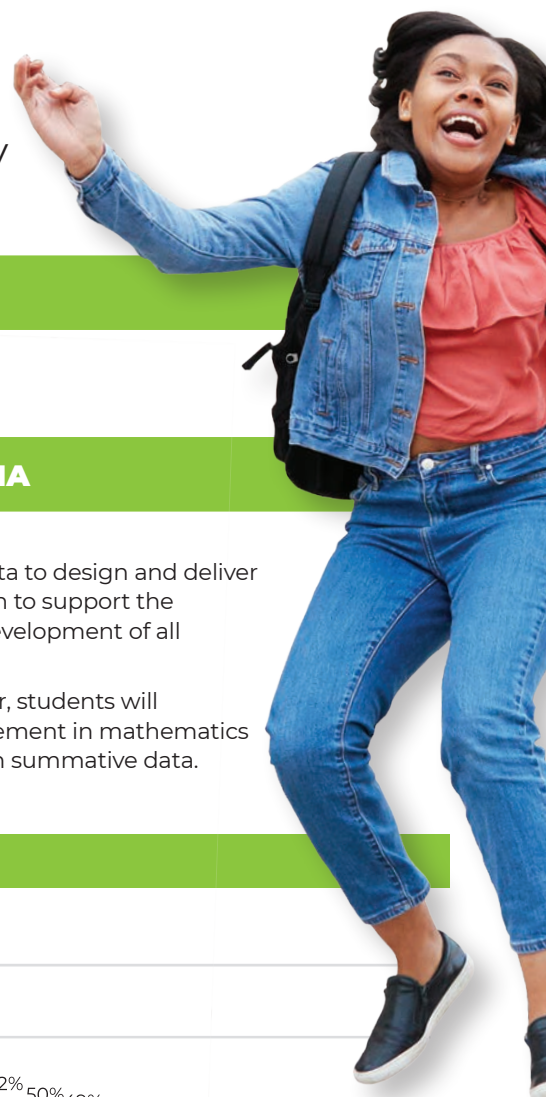
We build a culture of well-being to support the cognitive, social, emotional and physical needs of each learner.

### Belonging

We build a culture of belonging to support an equitable, inclusive and responsive environment for each learner.

## Learning

**Priority:** We build a culture of **learning** where curiosity and opportunities are nurtured for each learner.



### GOAL MATHEMATICS

**Increase mathematics learning outcomes for all students.**

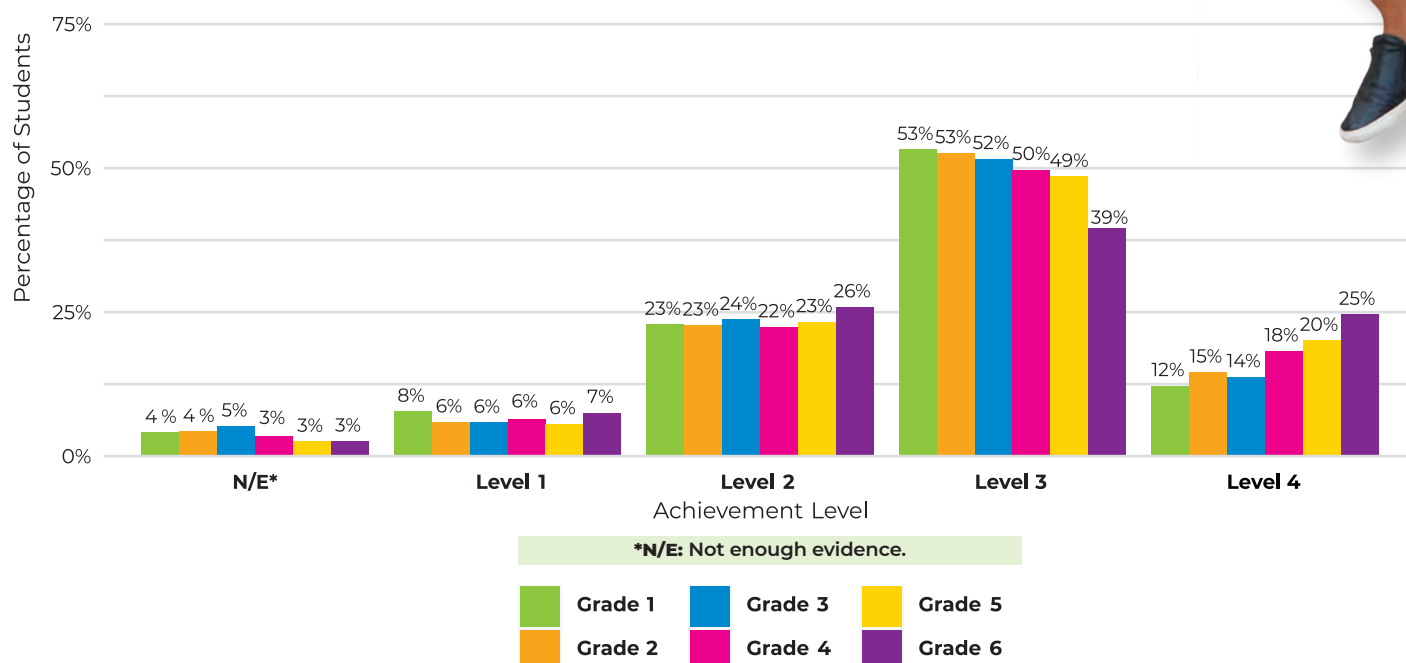
#### STRATEGIES IN ACTION

- Provide professional learning pertaining to assessment for learning strategies and responsive instruction to effectively implement the Ontario Mathematics curriculum.
- Provide coaching to support the implementation of effective instruction and assessment strategies to develop students' mathematical skills.

#### SUCCESS CRITERIA

- Educators will use data to design and deliver responsive instruction to support the mathematical skill development of all students.
- By the end of the year, students will demonstrate improvement in mathematics as evidenced through summative data.

#### Term 1 Mathematics



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### PROGRESS MATHEMATICS

- Assigned an instructional coach to all schools to support educators in their mathematics instruction.
- Continued to develop Grand Erie's Long Range Math Plan digital resource for elementary educators.
- Engaged 10 schools in professional learning with Dr. Alex Lawson to build their understanding of the early numeracy skill development continuum and their capacity to implement responsive instruction.
- Delivered professional learning with Dr. Chris Suurtamm to secondary educators on the expectations in the de-streamed math curriculum and responsive instruction to support a de-streamed class.
- Gathered data from feedback surveys, assessments and school visits for input regarding professional development impact on educator and administrator practice.

>100



1+2=?

educators participating in Math Advanced Qualifications courses

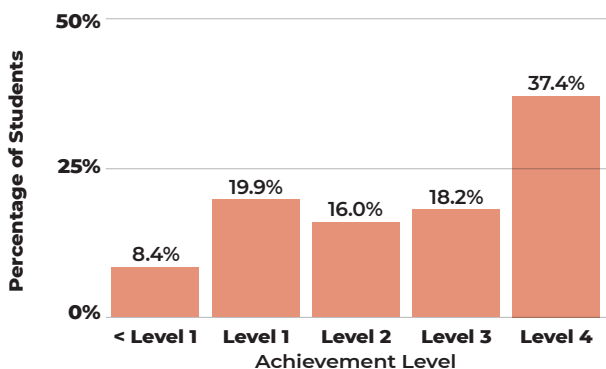
657



educators engaged in the Math Long Range plan virtual professional learning environment.

#### Grade 9 Mathematics (MTH 1W)

Percentage of students at achievement levels



“ We are learning about how to engage students with rich math tasks that promote collaboration, communication, and deep thinking beyond the basic question-answer model of teaching. ”

MATH AQ PARTICIPANT



## Learning

**Priority:** We build a culture of **learning** where curiosity and opportunities are nurtured for each learner.

### GOAL LITERACY

**Increase the overall reading proficiency of all students (with a focus on grades 1-3).**

#### STRATEGIES IN ACTION

- Provide professional learning pertaining to the effective use of the Benchmark Assessment System (BAS) to identify student instructional and independent reading levels.
- Provide coaching to support the implementation of effective instruction and assessment strategies to develop students' reading skills (with a focus on grades 1-3).

#### SUCCESS CRITERIA

- Educators will use data to design and deliver responsive instruction resulting in improved the reading skills of all students.
- By the end of the year, students will demonstrate improvement in reading as evidenced through summative data (with a focus on grades 1-3).



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### PROGRESS LITERACY

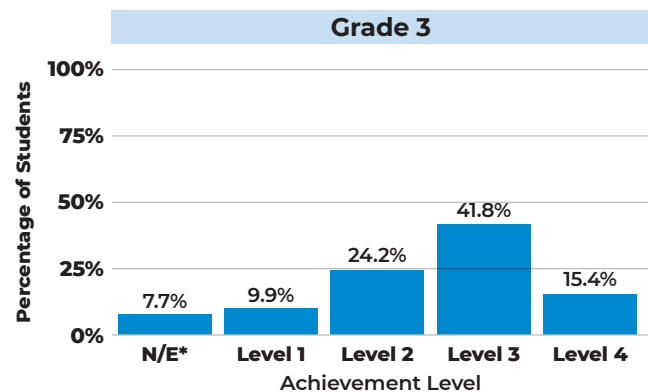
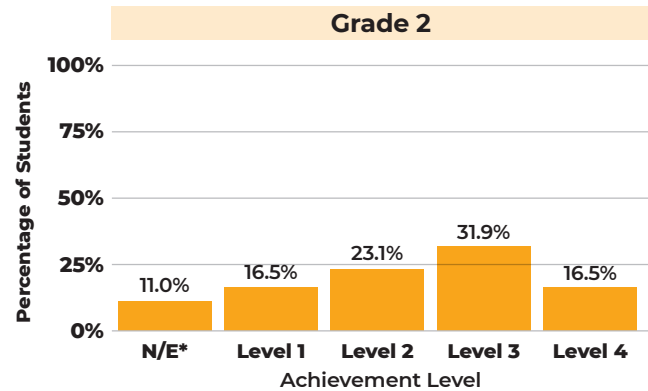
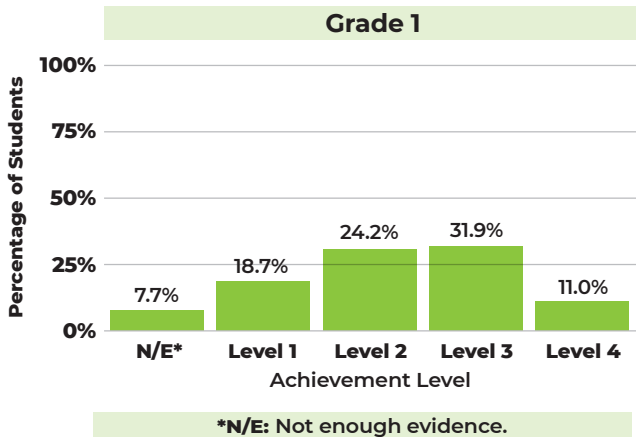
- Distributed benchmark assessment kits to all elementary schools.
- Provided all schools with access to an Elementary Literacy Instructional Coach.
- Responded to school/educator requests for professional learning through four Literacy Coaches.
- Created a virtual elementary Professional Learning Environment to support just-in-time professional learning on key literacy instruction and assessment topics.

# 330



educators engaged in the Elementary Program virtual professional learning environment.

### Term 1 Reading



## Learning

**Priority:** We build a culture of **learning** where curiosity and opportunities are nurtured for each learner.

### GOAL GRADUATION

**Prepare every student for their post-secondary destination (apprenticeship, community, college, university, workplace).**

#### STRATEGIES IN ACTION

- Provide professional learning pertaining to culturally relevant, responsive and sustaining pedagogy and the effective use of data related to key indicators to support students' readiness for their chosen postsecondary destination.
- Develop a centrally-designed tool for use by school teams to track key indicators for each cohort (e.g. mark distribution, attendance, engagement, credit accumulation, community hours, literacy requirement), and use the data to develop supports for individual students to successfully reach their chosen post-secondary destination.

#### SUCCESS CRITERIA

- Educators will implement responsive pedagogy to support each learner and identify and implement strategies to support students in attaining the formal requirements for entrance to their chosen post-secondary destination.
- School teams regularly gather data to track student progress towards their chosen post-secondary destination.
- All students make a successful transition to their post-secondary destination, resulting in increased 4- and 5-year graduation rates (Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) and Ontario Secondary School Certificate (OSSC) and a decrease in number of early leavers.





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### PROGRESS GRADUATION

- Allocated 16 additional sections to secondary schools to ensure one fulltime student success teacher at every secondary school.
- Facilitated central Student Success team meetings to support and monitor school student support plans and build capacity of Student Success teachers.
- Virtual Pathways Presentation series delivered to 185 grade 8, 9 and 10 classes with local partners to explore workplace, apprenticeship, college and university opportunities.

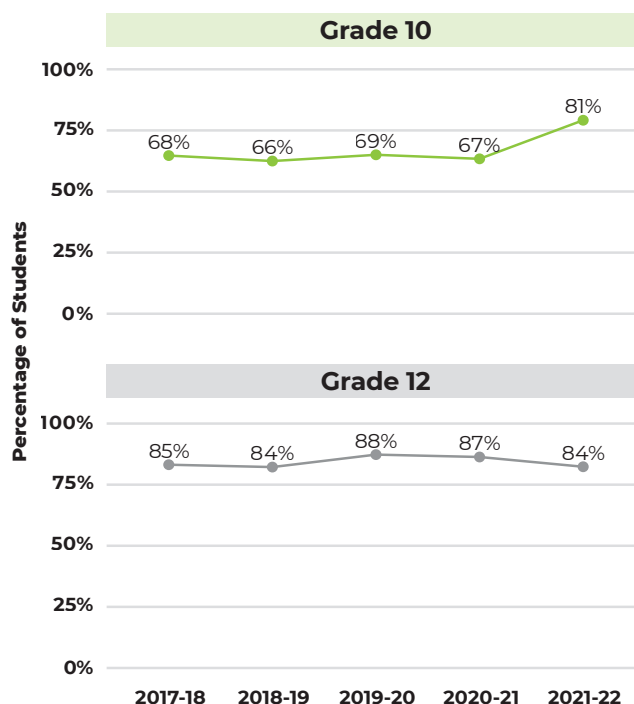
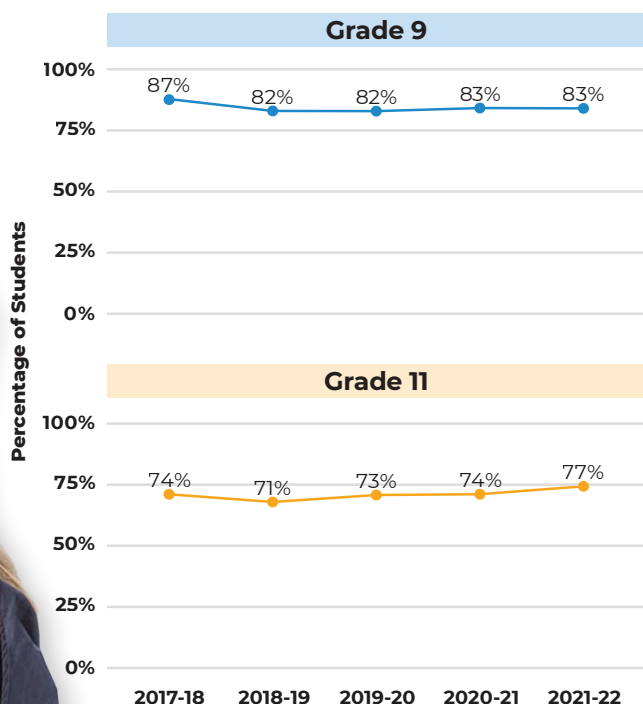
**428** students enrolled in Specialist High Skills Major programs.



**362** students in Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Programs (up ~30%).

### Students on Track After Semester 1

**Grade 9:** 4 Credits | **Grade 10:** 12 Credits | **Grade 11:** 18 Credits | **Grade 12:** 24 Credits



## Well-Being

**Priority:** We build a culture of **well-being** to support the cognitive, social, emotional and physical needs of each learner.

### GOAL MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

**Increase the knowledge and skills of staff to better support learners in developing the capacity to tend to their own well-being.**

#### STRATEGIES IN ACTION

- Professional learning focused on the School Mental Health Ontario Aligned and Integrated Model (AIM) to establish welcoming and inclusive school environments that promote student mental health, mental health literacy, and an understanding of social-emotional learning.
- Combine research and the development of a baseline data set to inform effective practices to implement targeted support and interventions for all students.
- Differentiated, job-embedded coaching supports and system professional development from Child & Youth Workers will be part of In-School Teams, staff meetings and professional learning opportunities to support a tiered approach to wellness.
- Child & Youth Workers will provide tier one social-emotional and wellness resources for staff.

#### SUCCESS CRITERIA

- Improved outcomes based on the understanding of social-emotional learning, mental health literacy and stress management and community and hospital pathways to care.
- A positive trend demonstrating students' increased capacity to tend to their own well-being.
- Members of the school team will demonstrate their learning about the tiered approach to wellness as evidenced by their participation in In-School Teams and their access to resources.



### PROGRESS

### MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

- Improved communication between Grand Erie and McMaster Children's Hospital.
- Improved collaboration with lead community mental health agencies through monthly meetings.
- Delivered professional learning in 15 elementary schools in Dr. Shanker Self Reg Schools, Developmental Assets and/or Third Path.
- Delivered professional learning by Dr. Lewis on Non-suicidal Self-Injurious Behaviors to Administrators, Guidance Counsellors, Learning Resource Teachers and support staff.
- Delivered professional learning by Dr. Clinton on Adolescence Development and Mental Health to secondary staff.
- Reduced stigma and increased help-seeking behaviours by organizing activities and resources for events like Bell Let's Talk and Pink Shirt Day.
- Promoted mental health literacy, self-care and stress management through bulletin boards, drop-ins and wellness rooms at the secondary level.
- Aligned the Child & Youth Worker and Social Worker roles to support mental health promotion, prevention and intervention.

# 33

targeted mental health prevention groups at schools

# 530



classrooms received social-emotional learning, mental health literacy and/or stress management

# 355

referrals for mental health interventions



# Belonging

**Priority:** We build a culture of **belonging** to support an equitable, inclusive and responsive environment for each learner.

## GOAL SAFE AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS

Create multiple experiences where all learners feel a sense of belonging at school and are engaged in their learning.

### STRATEGIES IN ACTION

- Invite a greater diversity of community voices to increase capacity and deepen understanding at the Board and school level in the areas of culturally responsive learning, anti-racism, anti-oppression, equity and human rights matters, and the removal of systemic barriers.
- Deliver staff census survey and analyze and act on staff census survey.
- Implement effective practices to support leader learning in implementing practices and responses to student behaviour that are trauma informed and reflect an anti-racist, anti-oppressive, equity and human rights lens.
- Provide system-level professional development for staff in areas of anti-racist, anti-oppressive, equity and human rights matters, enhancing belonging and culturally relevant pedagogy to meet the diverse needs of all learners.
- Enhance the Equity Champion program by placing trained individuals at the school level to provide timely and relevant support, capacity enhancement and resource sharing.

### SUCCESS CRITERIA

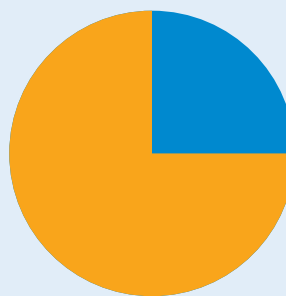
- An Equity Advisory Committee will be created representing Indigenous, Black, South Asian, racialized, Two Spirit, LGBTQ+ and other historically marginalized students and families with a mandate to develop an Equity Action Plan for the fall of 2022 reflective of lived experience.
- Reduction in suspensions of students from historically marginalized groups and an increase in use of alternative practices (e.g., restorative).
- All Staff will participate in professional learning resulting in an increase of educator confidence and capacity to identify and respond to issues of equity and inclusion.
- 100% of schools will have Equity Champions to report and highlight work done to support student and educator learning.





### PROGRESS SAFE AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS

- Created an Equity Advisory Group with representation from equity-deserving communities to help eliminate barriers and support an Equity Action Plan.
- Fostered broader awareness of equity issues through professional development highlighting Sikhism, anti-Black racism, Safer Spaces, and UnLearn.
- Shared Black History Month resources system-wide, deployed in various formats in schools.
- Deployed resources to support a sense of belonging for staff and students in response to current events.
- Contextualized student census data with school staff.
- Created an Alternatives to Suspension working group to mitigate disproportionate discipline impact on marginalized students.
- Received feedback from staff, community and student focus groups on equity issues.



**75%**  
of schools  
engaged  
with Equity  
Champions



**8**  
equity focus  
groups  
delivered



# Belonging

**Priority:** We build a culture of **belonging** to support an equitable, inclusive and responsive environment for each learner.

## GOAL INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

Deepen our system commitment to reconciliation and improve education achievement outcomes for all First Nations, Métis and Inuit students.

### STRATEGIES IN ACTION

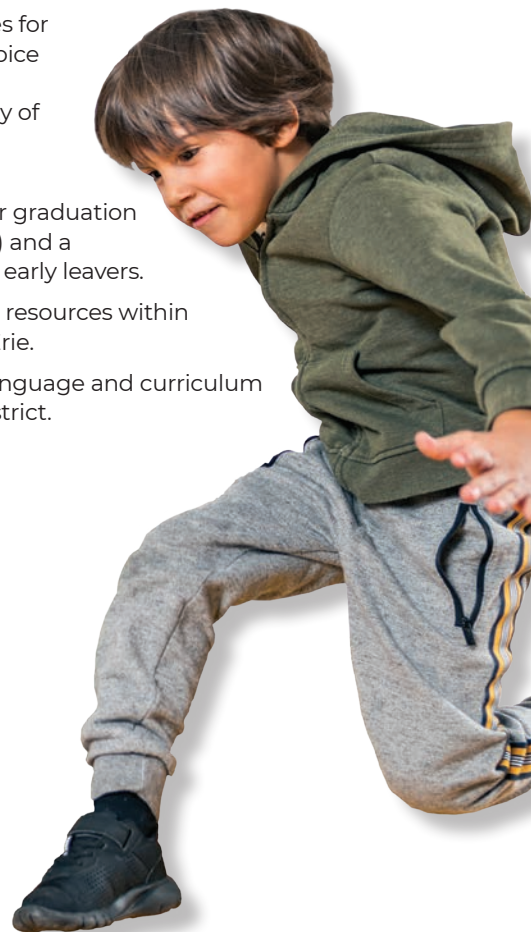
- Professional development to actively engage in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.
- Promote and participate in reconciliation community engagement opportunities.
- Engage in authentic learning with Indigenous peoples, communities, and perspectives.
- Deliver Indigenous courses that allow students to see themselves in their own learning (language, culture etc.).

### SUCCESS CRITERIA

- Increased participation in First Nations, Métis and Inuit Additional Qualification courses and in reconciliation events and cultural competency training.
- Increased opportunities for staff and students to voice their experiences and perspectives in a variety of communication and learning platforms.
- Increased 4- and 5-year graduation rates (OSSD and OSSC) and a decrease in number of early leavers.
- Increase of Indigenous resources within schools across Grand Erie.
- Increase Indigenous language and curriculum offerings across the district.

“Challenged by constant reminders to myself to reflect and acknowledge any biases I may have had. Surprised by how much I still need to learn. Excited because I have this opportunity!”

CULTURAL COMPETENCY TRAINING PARTICIPANT



### PROGRESS INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

- System-wide participation in Orange Shirt Day.
- Delivered locally developed cultural kits and web-based resources to all schools to support learning and engagement related to Reconciliation.
- Hired fourth Cultural Mentor in secondary schools.
- Hired additional Itinerant Elementary Engagement teacher.
- Continued Cultural Competency training for Administrators – five sessions delivered.
- Joined the Kaniehake Advisory Circle to certify authentic language speakers' perspectives.
- Implemented Six Nations/Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation 2021-22 Transition plan.

# 4

**Cultural Mentors  
working across  
secondary schools**



# >45



**candidates in First  
Nation, Métis, and  
Inuit perspectives  
Additional  
Qualifications course**

# 119

**iPads delivered  
for Indigenous  
language  
support**



# Support Services

Connected to all priorities: **Learning**, **Well-being** and **Belonging**.

## GOAL COMMUNICATIONS

Enhance Grand Erie's position in its communities as a learning, leading and inspiring organization.

### STRATEGIES IN ACTION

- Drive stakeholder engagement in Vision and consistently connect communications to the Vision.
- Focus on data-driven decision-making tools and opportunities.
- Support effectiveness of communication with all communities.

### SUCCESS CRITERIA

- Schools, departments and communities embrace our Vision and Mission.
- Streamlined communication across all channels with appropriate volume, focus and timing.
- Communications channels are simple, targeted and understood.

## PROGRESS COMMUNICATIONS

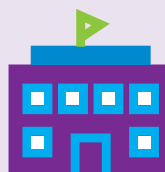
- Launched Strategic Plan to all staff, schools and departments. Parent and School Council presentations.
- Demonstrated staff and school engagement in Strategic Plan through observational data on social media platforms.
- Rebranded through website, new Leader publication and launched video.
- Issued regular COVID-19 communication to school communities, staff, trustees and the public.
- Launched new weekly staff newsletter.
- Invested in translations for key outreach documents and marketing.
- Investing in communications solutions to support brand, provide actionable data.

# 3,600



staff  
engaged  
in new  
Strategic  
Plan

# 100%



of schools  
connected to  
Strategic Plan  
through physical  
and digital  
promotion







### GOAL BUSINESS SERVICES

Develop flexible resource allocation strategies to provide equitable enhancements to learning environments resulting in positive classroom cultures that foster individual and collective well-being.

#### STRATEGIES IN ACTION

- Financial supports will be redirected where possible to promote and enhance well-being in school learning environments for staff and students.

#### SUCCESS CRITERIA

- Enhanced learning conditions for students and staff as a result of additional school-based projects supported by the Business department in consultation with Superintendents of Family Schools.

### PROGRESS BUSINESS SERVICES

- Supported strong business process through detailed financial reports and guidance for Superintendents and Managers to track potential areas of saving and potential pressures.
- Supported funding flexibility into 2021-22 revised budget leading to significant additional investments.
- Invested in special education support, additional sections in secondary, new central positions, school admin support and more.

**\$1.5m**



**in operating surplus for 2020-21**

**\$2.2m**



**in deferred revenues**

# Support Services

Connected to all priorities: **Learning**, **Well-being** and **Belonging**.

## GOAL FACILITY SERVICES

Establish physical and environmental standards across the system to increase the overall sense of belonging for all staff and students.

### STRATEGIES IN ACTION

- Establish a working group comprised of members from Facilities, school leaders, educators, students, Information Technology Services, Business Services, Curriculum and Special Education, Mental Health and Well-being.
- Develop standards and utilize best practices across sectors (data) to support the re-design standards for Grand Erie Schools. The focus would include main entrances, classrooms, gymnasiums, lighting, flooring and colours.

### SUCCESS CRITERIA

- The development of an articulate framework that will enable schools to have a voice in the selection of their own design elements that are reflective of unique cultures and perspectives in each school community.
- Standards will be established in a menu-style format available to all schools.
- At least one school will undergo a major renovation by the fall of 2022 based on the standards established.

## PROGRESS FACILITY SERVICES

- Created Classroom Modernization Committee and identified top priority (front entrances).
- Identified and engaged interior designer.
- Identified Seneca Public School for pilot and input, and collected feedback from school administrator and school council.



**Pride of Place  
funding for schools  
increased to \$2m**



# Annual Learning and Operating Plan 2021-22

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### GOAL HUMAN RESOURCES

Revise and improve the employment and promotion policies, procedures and practices resulting in a workforce that reflects, understands and responds to our diverse population.

#### STRATEGIES IN ACTION

- Review and enhance recruitment practices to reflect the importance of lived experiences and enable the hiring of Indigenous staff as well as staff representatives of diverse communities. This will include the implementation of demographic questionnaires at the point of hire.
- Provide professional learning to those who hire staff, so that the hiring processes are fair, equitable and inclusive.

#### SUCCESS CRITERIA

- All hiring managers will be trained in fair, equitable and inclusive hiring practices.
- Human Resources will develop a bank of equitable and inclusive interview questions, accessible to hiring managers.
- Equity and Inclusive recruitment and selection practices will be embedded throughout the hiring and onboarding process.
- Develop a baseline of quantitative data related to diverse backgrounds of new hires to Grand Erie.

### PROGRESS HUMAN RESOURCES

- Hired staff to support Indigenous education and reengagement with the Mennonite student community.
- Confirmed KPMG as the consultant to support hiring review and completed initial kick off meeting.
- Updated job posting branding and communication to encourage applicants of diverse backgrounds.
- Completed bargaining with ETFO Occasional Teachers for greater flexibility hiring for diversity.
- Updated Occasional Teacher Evaluation process to support anti-discriminatory and culturally relevant teaching practices.
- Reviewed workforce census data and developing a point of hire survey.
- Sourced materials for development of bias-free interview training.

493



educators and  
education support  
staff hired 2021-22

\$150K



received  
in funding for  
hiring/recruitment  
review

## Support Services

Connected to all priorities: **Learning**, **Well-being** and **Belonging**.

### GOAL

### INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

Embed technology opportunities for staff and students through professional learning and enhanced technology tools.

#### STRATEGIES IN ACTION

- Educators will use technology resources, engage in professional learning and implement instructional strategies to support the learning styles of their students.
- Provide technology modernization tools that will optimize administrative functions and effective learning practices.

#### SUCCESS CRITERIA

- Educator feedback based on professional learning opportunities will indicate how technology resources optimizes effective educator/student interaction, engagement, pedagogy and differentiation to support learning style of students.
- Successful implementation of a phased-in rollout of digital tools to improve efficiency and increase security to support educators and student learning as measured by regular usage.
  - Safe Arrival Absence Tracking Tool
  - Online Field Trip Application
  - Device Refresh
  - Cyber Security
  - Data Literacy -Compass for Success, a data analysis tool





### PROGRESS

### INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

- Developed network of 82 “Digital Contacts” across all schools to inform technology decision-making.
- Delivered technology-related professional learning to Digital Contacts, virtual educators, classroom educators, Student Success and Transition teams.
- Implemented Apple collaborative inquiry projects in Special Education with 10 teams across the district.
- Deployed new technology to Special Education Self Contained Classes and Turning Point classes.
- Provided 15 iPhones to the Multilingual Learners team to support translation for students.
- Provided new coding resources to New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) educators.
- Deployed 2,800 new laptops to selected teachers and classrooms as part of the 3-year refresh cycle for technology.
- Digitized employee records.
- Launched phishing education software and awareness campaign.
- Rolled out cybersecurity training and tools.

# 361

educators  
accessing new  
coding resources  
developed

</php>



# 3

schools piloted  
Safe Arrival app

# 54

coding kits  
delivered to 40  
elementary,  
14 secondary  
schools



# 75%

of staff feel very  
prepared to use  
problem-solving  
tools to support  
critical thinking



# 85%

of staff feel very  
prepared to build  
foundational  
skills around  
using technology  
for learning and  
teaching



# Support Services

Connected to all priorities: **Learning**, **Well-being** and **Belonging**.

## GOAL LEADERSHIP

Identify future leaders, actively develop new leaders and responsively support current leaders.

### STRATEGIES IN ACTION

- Differentiated, job-embedded coaching supports and system professional development for Grand Erie Staff throughout the organization.

### SUCCESS CRITERIA

- Future and new leaders will develop the knowledge and skills that will enable them to pursue leadership opportunities with confidence.
- Current leaders will create the conditions to support the successful implementation of the strategic goals in the areas of learning, well-being, belonging.

## PROGRESS LEADERSHIP

- Launched new leadership development program – #LeadGEDSB – for any employee interested in exploring leadership.
- Implemented new coaching supports.
- Developed leadership program and pathways webpage on the Staff Portal.
- Implemented School Improvement Learning Plan in 100% of schools.
- Reinvigorated New Administration Program.
- Trained Executive Assistants in Minute Training and Policy/Procedure Revisions.
- Delivering Monthly FOS meetings focussed on administrator and senior team work to Learn, Lead, Inspire.

- Reviewing, analysing and interpreting data for school/system trends to assess and address most urgent student needs
- Reviewing, analysing and interpreting data for school/system trends to assess and address most urgent student needs.
- Fostering academic press in the context of the pandemic.
- Focussing on developing the essential components of effective school improvement planning.
- Supporting coherence and alignment with the Multi-Year Strategic Plan in all schools.
- Developing a deeper understanding of the role of the math lead learner.

22

#LeadGEDSB  
participants



>50



administrators  
participating in  
New Administration  
Program



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**Learn**



**Lead**



**Inspire**



## **Grand Erie District School Board**

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