

FAITH  
AND  
JUSTICE

TEACHING  
EXCELLENCE



SUPERIOR NORTH CATHOLIC  
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Superior North Catholic District School Board

# DIRECTOR'S REPORT

2021-2022

INDIGENOUS  
EDUCATION

FOCUS  
ON THE  
FUTURE

# DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

The Superior North Catholic District School Board's Annual Report provides an overview of our multi-year strategic plan. Our plan is founded on four priorities; Faith & Justice, Academic Excellence, Indigenous Education and Focus on the Future.

The last few years have been challenging from a global perspective. We've endured a pandemic that has caused many people instability, emotional distress, and economic disparity. Throughout this time, we have tried to focus on the well-being of our students, staff, and communities, taking time to accommodate, listen, and provide our students with the best educational experience they deserve.

Despite the challenges, our students and staff showed determination, motivation, and patience. We learned that when we unite as a school, as a Board, and as a community, we can continue to make progress at all levels. Innovative strategies and the latest technology helped us advance our programming and delivery for students and training for staff.

As a Catholic school system, our faith and values in approaching these difficult times were necessary. Giving to those less fortunate through charity events, students creating greeting cards and visiting elderly long-term care homes, preparing gift-filled shoeboxes for children in need around the world and organizing food drives for local food banks were our way of showing compassion. In 2022 we were fortunate to have students in schools and a more normalized schedule whereby we could offer in-person events and be back together in community.

The following report summarizes our 2021-22 highlights and successes. I want to thank our trustees, senior and executive teams, school staff, students, and parents for their commitment to our Board. Much gratitude to you all.



Together We Educate  
Heart Mind and Soul.



To inspire spiritual growth  
within an inclusive and  
respectful environment.



To graduate students who  
have the knowledge, skills and  
confidence to affect change.

# AT A GLANCE

Superior North Catholic District School Board (SNCD SB) is one of the smallest and most northern school boards in Ontario, located north of Lake Superior. The kindergarten to grade 8 school board spans over 14,000 square kilometres and requires 5 hours to drive from border to border.



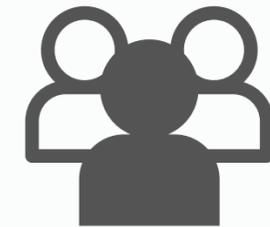
Number of elementary schools: **8**



Number of students: **676**



Total number of permanent employees: **211**



Total number of casual employees: **111**



The Superior North Catholic District School Board's newly designed website was launched in September 2021.

This new website aims to give our visitors an easier way to learn about our board and schools. We wanted to make the new website faster, easier to navigate, and more user-friendly.

Amongst the new features, the site contains integrated social media buttons for Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to foster improved communication with our school communities. We constantly update our content with helpful information, announcements and good news stories!



Visit us at [www.sncdsb.on.ca](http://www.sncdsb.on.ca)

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

2020-2024

**FAITH  
AND  
JUSTICE**

**TEACHING  
EXCELLENCE**

**INDIGENOUS  
EDUCATION**

**FOCUS  
ON THE  
FUTURE**



# RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Superior North Catholic District School Board continues to prioritize faith and justice through investing in human and digital resources to support Catholicity, faith formation and religious and family life education. Each school's faith team, consisting of a volunteer faith ambassador and school administration, continues to work together to champion Catholic culture and education and promote collaborations between the school, the local parish and the broader Catholic educational community. The school faith team is provided with resources and a discretionary budget to meet the needs of their individual religious education programs and community of faith. Our Faith Day professional development day again provided an opportunity for staff faith development and a renewal of our commitment to Catholic education. Faith Day, the faith ambassador program and the annual celebrations and observances of Catholic Education Week are supported by the Board's Catholicity and Special Projects Lead, who provides ongoing support to educators and administrators virtually and in-person through ad hoc meetings and the SNCDSB Halo. The SNCDSB Halo is a digital resource provided to staff, trustees and local clergy according to the liturgical calendar that provides links to virtual resources, reflections, and prayer services, as well as information about saints, feasts, and other important aspects of Catholic culture to compliment our religious education programming.



**FAITH  
AND  
JUSTICE**



# SOCIAL JUSTICE / EQUITY & INCLUSION

FAITH  
AND  
JUSTICE

The Superior North Catholic District School Board follows the Institute for Catholic Education guidelines and recommendations. The Board remains committed to recognizing and dealing with any systemic inequities and barriers affecting Indigenous, racial, and ethnocultural communities in the planning and delivery of any programs and services.



Schools raised the Pride flag in June to show our commitment to belonging and supportive environments founded on Catholic principles of dignity, inclusion and respect.

Our organization values the presence of God in every individual and provides an inclusive Catholic culture that instills compassion, hope, integrity, faithfulness, respect and self-worth.



## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The Catholic Parent Involvement Committee (CPIC) met four times during the school year to collaborate on supporting parent engagement in our schools, especially with school restrictions due to ongoing COVID restrictions. It was essential for the CPIC committee to continue supporting parent involvement to impact student achievement and well-being. Presentations were made at each meeting from various members of the System Support Team, including Mental Health, Attendance, and Technology Enabled Learning, as well as our community service providers, including Children's Centre Thunder Bay.

The Committee approved two Pro Grant Applications for the 2021-2022 school year from Holy Saviour School and St. Hilary School. Holy Saviour School engaged families, students and community partners in a project designed to share the school's outdoor learning spaces and build community among the parents, guardians, teachers, students and community members. A Community Night was planned where all were welcomed to explore the outdoor learning spaces where many aspects of the outdoor learning were celebrated in an effort to build a stronger community. St. Hilary School School Council created a STEM learning event to have parents engage with their children in hands-on learning activities that included "Imagineering" stations to learn about design, building, prototyping and engineering. Families were then provided with a home activity kit that the family would be able to build and use at home.

Each Catholic Parent Involvement Committee receives support from the Ministry of Education for Parent Engagement at a Board level. This year the committee collaborated to determine that to engage all 444 families in the school board, CPIC would create a Parent Engagement Bag for every family. These bags were intentionally made to include learning games for Literacy, Math and Fine Motor skills, as well as books that would further support family bonding and well-being. Each bag also included CPIC, Attendance, Mental Health and Board info. These bags were distributed to each family during Catholic Education week or school-based Family Engagement events in the spring.





# ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE



## MATH

### **Building Capacity of Assessment Practices and Gap Closing**

Starting the 2021 school year, the Math Team primarily focused on providing educators with professional development and support focused on Gap Closing in Mathematics and Digital Math tools. After two years of interrupted learning, the math team wanted to stress the importance of using diagnostics tools and baseline data to help determine the next steps in students' learning.

From September to the end of November, Lena Stahl and Karly Baker supported teachers in the administration, assessment and data entry of Prime Numbers and Operations Diagnostic tools. As a team, they worked on collecting data to upload into the Village Database. The Board can now analyze this data and school staff to help guide BIPSA/ SIPSA goal setting.

As the year progressed, the Math Team guided principals, teachers, and support staff to the Math Drive folder to find support for Gap closing. Staff was guided to find curriculum continuums, long-range plans/scopes and sequences, resource correlation guides and purposeful learning materials. These files help alleviate some stress that staff endured when trying to figure out what key skills and content needed to be revised before moving forward.

The Math team worked closely with all teachers in the Board to support them and the students in their Math planning and teaching.



## TECHNOLOGY ENABLED LEARNING TEACHER & MATH TEAM COLLABORATIONS

The Math and Technology Enabled Learning Teacher (TELT) teams collaborated on several opportunities this year. In December, Sarah Clowes, Lena Stahl, and Karly Baker promoted Canada Learning Code week by hosting many self-guided, virtual, and modelled learning opportunities to teach coding. Some of the workshops they offered had primary students reading and altering existing code with Scratch Jr. Other activities had junior students describing how changes to the code affect the outcomes of a Micro-Bit. Lastly, the intermediate students worked on writing code in Lynx when forming a digital Christmas Card. By the Math Team and TELT working together as two teams, they were able to increase visits to more classes to offer in-person training over a shorter period.

The collaborations continued with Experience Learning Projects (old and new) and Learning and Innovation Fund for Teachers (LIFT) projects. Karly and Lena implemented a six-part woodworking project with our Northern schools St. Joseph and Our Lady of Fatima. Students planned, blueprinted, modelled, budgeted, built and more when custom-created storage boxes and birdhouses. These cross-curricular projects exposed students to curriculum expectations from Number Sense, Spatial Sense and Financial Literacy. Sarah took time out of her busy schedule to help with safety on the building day.



TEACHING  
EXCELLENCE

# EARLY YEARS

Our Kindergarten classrooms continue to be where our youngest learners begin their exciting educational journey. Despite various restrictions this past school year, our Kindergarten classrooms continued to offer caring and engaging learning environments that allowed students to observe, investigate and question through guided exploration and play.

Our Kindergarten programs and educators continued to develop their Outdoor Education spaces to ensure that students engaged in learning experiences that helped them to develop an understanding and appreciation of nature and the world around them. The opportunity to explore the boreal forest is right beside so many of our physical school buildings. It allows educators and students wonderful rich learning experiences that only serve to enhance the Kindergarten curriculum.

Each school was excited to offer face-to-face Welcome to Kindergarten information sessions for parents and students to visit the school, meet their educators and engage in their classroom and school learning environments in the evening. These evenings allow families and students to tour the school and familiarize themselves with the school community in a safe and very calm way, as everyone was already dismissed for the day. Students were invited to “attend” school at various times throughout the spring months to experience the Kindergarten program further and develop relationships with their peers and educators in the school community.



# EQAO SUPPORT

After two years with no provincial testing, it was announced that EQAO assessments for Grades 3 and Grade 6 would resume. The Math Team took on a new endeavour over the 2021-22 school year by offering bi-weekly EQAO sessions for all grade 3-6 classrooms within SNCDSB. The overall focus of these sessions was to support educators by providing resources, essential information and a long-range plan for preparing students for EQAO. They helped students create a growth mindset toward their own math abilities and test writing skills. All sessions were offered virtually. Lena Stahl worked with the grade 3 & 4 classes. Karly Baker worked with the grade 5 & 6 classes.

Karly offered her 13 sessions over three parts (Term 1, Term 2 and Getting Test Ready). She exposed students to a variety of learning opportunities. The grade 5 & 6 classes either followed along as a class or signed in on Zoom as an individual. Karly's main focus was to expose students to knowledge and understanding, application and thinking situations around mathematics skills most predominant in grade 4-6 curriculum or from past EQAO assessments. Teachers and students ended each session with various takeaway resources that could easily be used for guided or independent learning.

A follow-up survey was distributed to all teachers and students who participated in the bi-weekly EQAO sessions. Some feedback that was shared by a teacher was they enjoyed discussing and hearing different math strategies. Another teacher shared that their students enjoyed the interaction and the games. Many students wrote, "EQAO sessions are fun!" The Math Team also asked for feedback on what to change for future planning. Things we will consider for next year are longer lessons with less content so students can have more time to practice with the Math Lead available. Overall, the session was successful and will continue in the future.

# SPECIAL EDUCATION

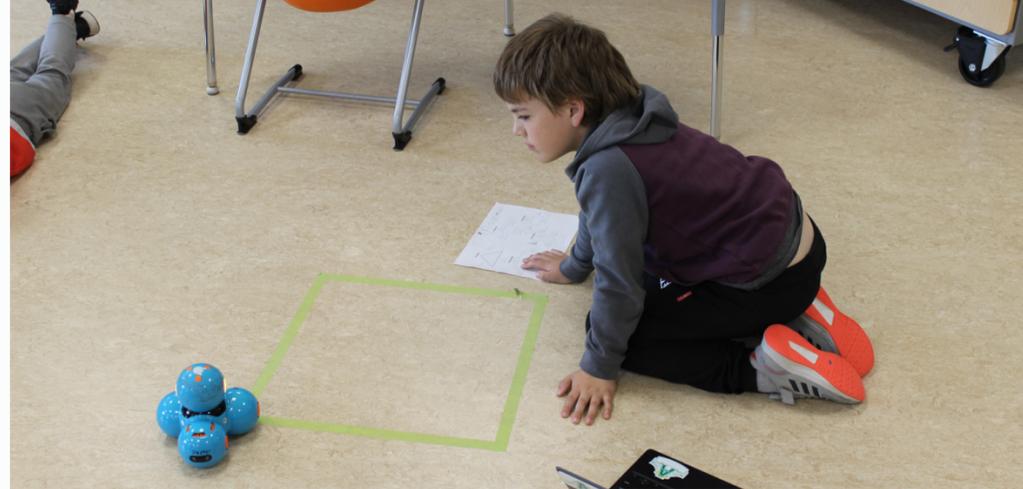
At Superior North Catholic District School Board, our approach to Special Education programs and services is based on meeting students' needs within the most supportive environment. We actively promote the goal of inclusive education. Inclusion means that students with special needs fully participate in the life of the school community alongside their peers. Our educators work closely with one another and parents to provide the appropriate support for each child.



The evidence-based Empower Reading program is an early intervention program developed by Sick Kids Hospital to assist children and adolescents with difficulties in reading and spelling to become independent and flexible learners. SNCDSB has been offering this valuable program to our most at-risk readers and continued to offer and deliver Empower Reading throughout the pandemic. All students engaging in Empower significantly demonstrated increased self-confidence in reading as their reading scores increased by several grade levels due to this program. Support for struggling learners follows a tiered intervention approach which ensures a process is in place for in-school special education teams to monitor and assess student progress through school-based programming and/or interventions. This monitoring ensures that appropriate support and programming is done first in-school, followed by the next step, which may include referrals for board-level support through focussed interventions, therapy and/or assessment provided by fee for service providers or agency partnerships.

Moving forward, an area of focus will be the Ontario Human Rights Commission's (OHRC) Right to Read Inquiry and the further development of a structured literacy approach to instruction. We will begin the process of developing a multi-year early identification plan that will ensure that standardized, evidence-based screening measures are used for all students from Kindergarten to Grade 2 to ensure that the appropriate supports are in place and/or implementation of interventions occurs in response to the data collected.

TEACHING  
EXCELLENCE



## EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Superior North Catholic District School Board continued to integrate robotics, coding and critical thinking skills across our district as 15 classrooms signed up to participate in the FIRST LEGO League program. FIRST LEGO League allows students to learn through hands-on STEM experiences using Lego and Lego Robotics and be challenged to solve problems collaboratively, thus developing their 21st-century learning competencies.

Additionally, many Experiential Learning Projects were happening again across the eight Superior North Catholic District School Board schools this past year. These projects supported an inquiry-based pedagogical approach to learning that provided students with opportunities to co-construct their learning through hands-on learning experiences in the skilled trades, arts, entertainment and photography. Each experiential learning project supported students' pathways to success – knowing themselves, exploring opportunities, making decisions and setting goals for their future.

Experiential learning also provides 'reach-ahead' opportunities for students to ponder and consider their future pathways. For example, students in our Grades 5-8 classrooms also participated in presentations hosted by Amy Fodchuck, Recruitment Officer from Confederation College. Through these interactive presentations, students learned about some of the many programs and extracurricular activities available at the College. Amy also shared information about Dual Credit and Specialist High Skills Major learning opportunities and how they benefit post-secondary education students.

Informing students about pathway opportunities provides context for learning in our elementary schools. Through experiential learning opportunities, our students gain powerful insights and understanding into who they are, exploring what future opportunities exist for them and what planning and support they need to reach their goals.





# STUDENT DIGITAL PATHWAYS AND PORTFOLIOS

Over the 2021-2022 school year, schools have continued to work on the implementation phase of student digital portfolios across our system. Digital portfolios provide tools for our students to track, document and share their development of knowledge and skills throughout their learning journey. To support the implementation of digital portfolios, the Ministry of Education has licenced D2L's Brightspace Portfolio as the tool for all publicly funded schools in Ontario. Students' digital portfolios become attached to their Ontario Education Number (OEN) and will follow students each year they attend school anywhere in Ontario from Kindergarten to Grade 12. The tool also has a feature to share the portfolio with parents/guardians connected to students in Powerschool, the board's student information system (SIS). This feature will be available in the 2023 school year.

Xello, a tool that supports students in discovering their pathway to success, continued to be implemented in our Grades 5 - 8 classrooms. This digital tool has assessments that direct students to see their strengths, interests, opportunities and potential careers that connect to who they are based on their learning style and personality assessment. Through Xello, our students continue to explore careers and postsecondary institutions that offer programs to support their career of choice and help them inform their future pathway plans and decisions.



# SNCD SB

## *Mental Health & Well-being*

As we all know, the Covid-19 Pandemic has elevated mental health needs across the province and globally. The SNCD SB continues to work diligently to prioritize the mental health and well-being of our students, families, and communities.

We know that continuous professional development is required to foster and ensure our students are safe. "Suicide is one of the most significant public health issues facing the world today. It has existed throughout history, across all cultures and time periods. People's reasons for thinking about suicide are as complex and varied as those individuals themselves." (LivingWorks website). The SNCD SB purchased potentially life-saving training through LivingWorks to provide our school staff with the necessary training in suicide awareness and intervention. All staff working within our schools completed the Start Course, which is a 90-minute online course that provides people with awareness about suicide during our first dedicated professional development days of the academic year. In March 2022, the SNCD SB provided in-person ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) training that empowered our entire district, with 17 members of our communities being trained.

TEACHING  
EXCELLENCE



Another important training opportunity is the partnership created between the SNCDSB and the Canadian Centre for Child Protection. The Canadian Centre for Child Protection is an organization empowering and enhancing school boards' ability to keep children safe across the country. The Kids in the Know program is a Kindergarten to Grade 8 evidence-based program that provides educators with tools and a curriculum to help teach students valuable skills that will keep them safe from harm inside and outside of school. All of our schools have newly purchased kits for every classroom as well as all educators teaching grades 1-8 were trained in using the resources from experts from the Canadian Centre for Child Protection. In addition to this important training for staff, the SNCDSB partnered with Kenora Catholic District School Board to offer a virtual one-hour session provided by the Canadian Centre for Child Protection to parents throughout our regions geared toward parents and caregivers and focused on online safety.

Engaging students in authentic learning opportunities that promote self-regulation, problem-solving, executive functioning and more continue to be a priority for our Mental Health and Well-being team. Positive Behaviour Support Workers work elbow to elbow with our staff and students to ensure evidence-based programming is implemented throughout the board. Social Emotional Learning programming, such as the Zones of Regulation, the Second Step Program, and School Mental Health Ontario resources, are commonly utilized in our classrooms. In addition to offering programming, the Mental Health and Well-being team supported developing and implementing student success plans to ensure all students reach their fullest potential.

Access to mental health services and navigating the ever-changing and complex system can be difficult in the best of times, especially during and following a global pandemic. For these reasons and more, the SNCDSB embarked on a partnership with Children's Centre Thunder Bay. This partnership allowed our board to contract a master's level social worker two days per week to provide virtual mental health services to our students referred for counselling. In the 2021-2022 academic year, this contract serviced approximately 14 students from February to June of 2022. We are excited for this opportunity to grow for our students and families to continue to benefit from.

# SUMMER LEARNING

During the period of July 4th to July 22nd, SNCDSB delivered a Summer Learning Program to students from Kindergarten through Grade 8. There were 25 students registered, with a Primary/Junior class (Kindergarten - Grade 4) and a Junior/Intermediate class (Grade 4 - Grade 8).

The Summer Learning program was led by Sarah Clowes and Lindsay Costa, who ensured that the two teachers and two educational assistants had student learning profiles for each student, instructional supplies and the engagement of learning partners to run a successful virtual program effectively. The focus of both programs was Literacy, Numeracy and Healthy Living. Both classrooms and leads worked closely with local indigenous groups (Dilico), educators (Native as a Second Language teachers), and resources suggested to ensure programming supported all students in Indigenous education and all students saw themselves reflected within their environment. Discovery boxes, which included hands-on experiential learning materials and instructional supplies, were delivered to each student's home before the start of the program to ensure that all students had the materials they needed to engage in all learning experiences and tasks fully. As well, consistent attendance was recognized and celebrated on a weekly basis to encourage students to attend daily.

Six students from across the system also continued to receive Tiny Eye Speech & Language service or Occupational Therapy services throughout the summer to ensure continuity of service provision.



# INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

SNCDSB continues participating in several committees and programs to support our commitment to Indigenous Education. These include the SNCDSB Indigenous Education Advisory Committee (IEAC); working towards an Engagement Framework with the Anishinabek Education System - Kinoomaadziwin Education Body; and supporting the Anishinaabemowin language revitalization program with the Anishinaabemowin Boodawe Committee, in partnership with Superior Greenstone District School Board to build language speakers in our region.



SNCDSB continues to offer Native Language in seven of our eight schools. SNCDSB understands the importance of learning language, especially starting at an early age and offers Anishinaabemowin (Ojibwe) to students from Kindergarten to Grade 8.

Students and educators also continue to be supported in embedding Indigenous content into classroom instruction through the purchasing of resources, such as the **Take Action for Reconciliation** series (both in book form and digital versions), Ojibwe Language digital resource development and collaboration, and a full day system-wide Indigenous Education Professional Development Day. This Professional Development day in November 2021 allowed all staff to extend their cultural awareness and appreciation training from Superior Strategies. Additionally, pre-planned activities throughout the school year (such as resources and support for National Day of Truth & Reconciliation, Treaties Recognition Week, Louis Riel Day, Indigenous Veterans Day, and Gichigiwedon (Winter Games), with support from the Indigenous Education Lead, support educator capacity building and student learning. Cultural teachings also resumed in our schools in the later part of the year once Covid allowed. We saw Elders and Knowledge Keepers share teachings about medicines and ribbon skirts and shirts and even supported student opportunities to create their own. Principals and Senior Team continued relationship building and community engagement by inviting community partners, Elders and Knowledge Keepers from local First Nation communities into our schools.



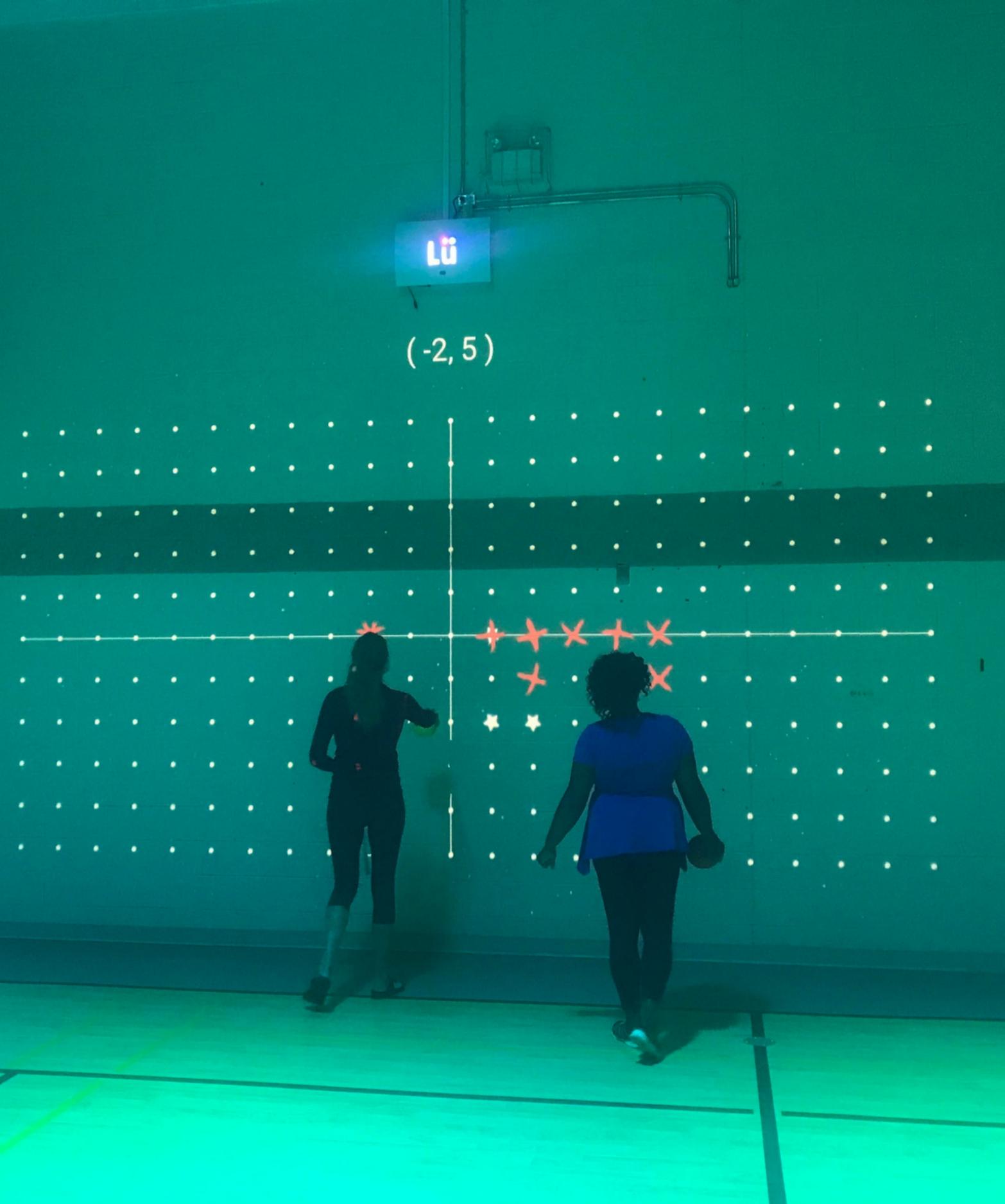


Our commitment to working collaboratively with all of our committees, communities, organizations and parents/families remains fundamental to enhancing student learning and engagement and supports everyone in walking a path toward reconciliation together!

**INDIGENOUS  
EDUCATION**

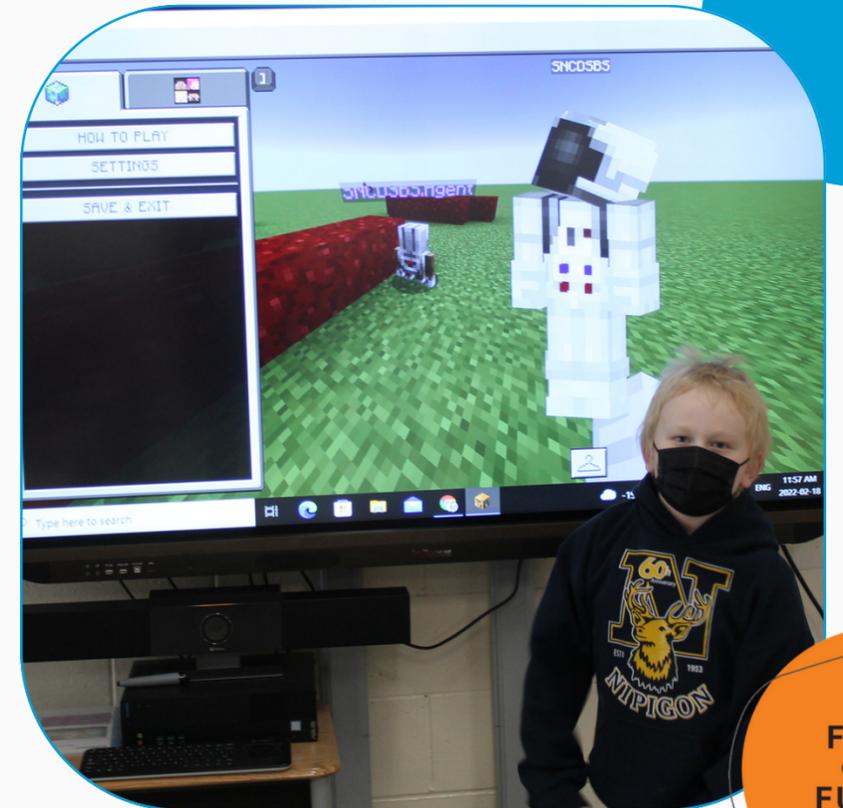
## TECHNOLOGY ENABLED LEARNING

One of the primary goals for September was to launch the Lü Interactive Playground in our four schools that had their systems installed during the summer. To support this implementation, school staff participated in training in September that was supported by our System Improvement Team. The Lü system continues to have a great uptake in schools during physical education, mathematics and daily physical activity. Our Technology Enabled Learning Teacher has been demonstrating and supporting school educators to learn the different games and applications available through our Lü Community subscription. Lü Community extends the use of the Lü Interactive Playground across all subject areas and allows for collaboration across the globe, as educators from all over the world upload and share their resources. Seeing the high level of student engagement and excitement while using the Lü Interactive Playground is exciting.



## BLENDED LEARNING

The Superior North Catholic District School Board continues to prioritize blended learning by maintaining our investment in digital infrastructure to support both students and educators. Each student and educator was again provided with their device to use as a learning tool –a Chromebook for each student in Grades 1-8 and an iPad for each student in Junior and Senior Kindergarten. Each classroom is equipped with a large interactive monitor with its own camera and microphone. These technology investments support our commitment to 21st-century learning skills such as communication and collaboration and making education accessible and equitable. Our expansive geography is no longer a factor, as students and staff continue to participate in learning opportunities from experts across the school district and the world. Beyond our commitment to hardware devices, our Education Technology Committee continues to seek out software tools that support student learning and engagement. Google Enterprise, the SNCDSB Hub and GoGuardian are some software tools that continue to enhance students' learning and educators' instruction. Google Apps for Education also allows students to collaborate digitally in real time. The SNCDSB Hub is supported by the Ministry of Education and is a priority for Technology Enabled and Blended Learning. Our Hub is a landing page of curated digital resources that are safe and secure. Finally, GoGuardian is a Chromebook management tool that allows our educators to facilitate students through learning tasks while fostering digital citizenship.



**FOCUS  
ON THE  
FUTURE**

## **CYBER SECURITY**

The Superior North Catholic District School Board Information Technology Team has worked with a Regional Information Security Analyst to help keep on top of the current cyber security threats, trends and information. The technologists have introduced training to ensure staff are aware of how they may become a target and keep us safe while using technology.



## **APPLY TO EDUCATION JOB POSTING PLATFORM**

The 2021-2022 school year brought the implementation of an online job posting platform with Apply to Education to expand the qualified applicant demographic to assist with recruiting qualified staff and staffing shortages.

## **eBASE**

The Human Resource and Information Technology team completed the implementation of First Aid Certification and automatic expiry date notification on the online eBASE platform. This platform provides instant and accurate certification and compliance records reporting.

Implementation of Occupational Health and Safety Part 1 & 2 Certification and expiry date tracking on the online platform eBASE, which provides instant and accurate reporting of certification and compliance records, was completed during the 2021-2022 school year.

## **RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND DIGITIZATION**

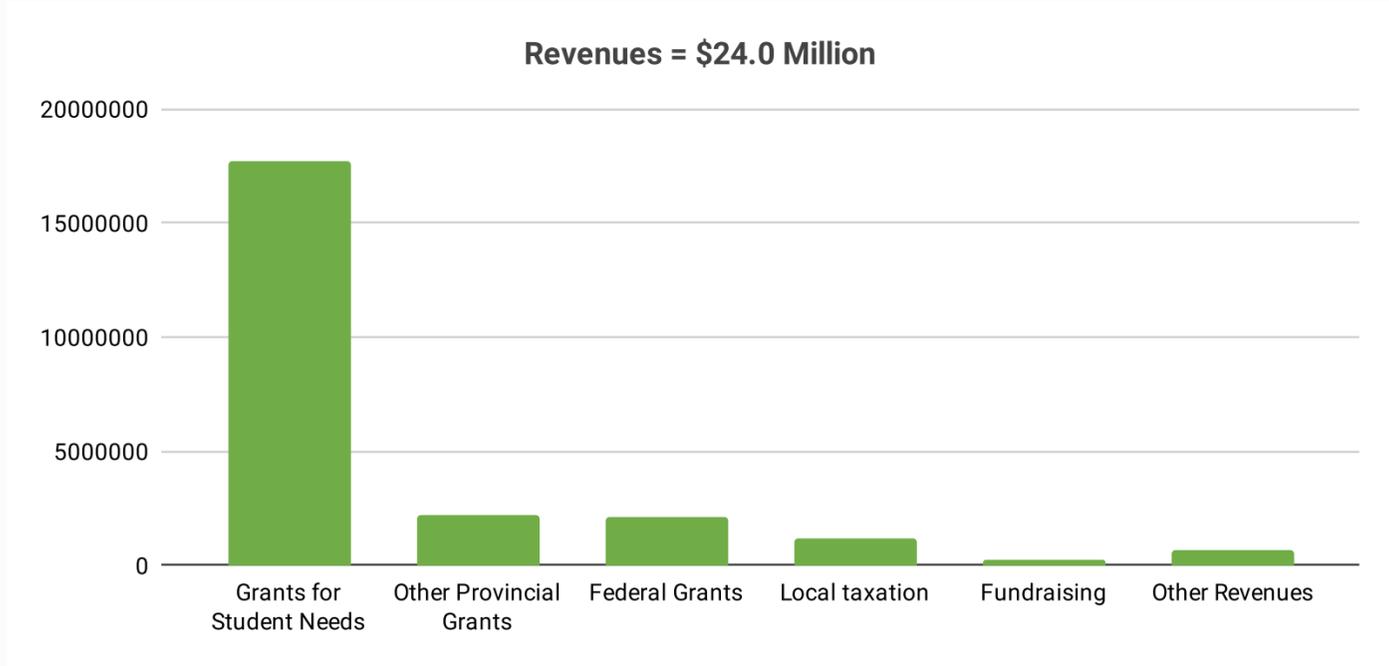
A two-year document scanning project for Records Management and Digitization was completed using the Summer Student Experience Grant. All records and files in the Human Resources and Board Archives were scanned and digitized. Digitizing documents enables information and processes to be easily accessible and secured for all departments.

# BUDGET AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

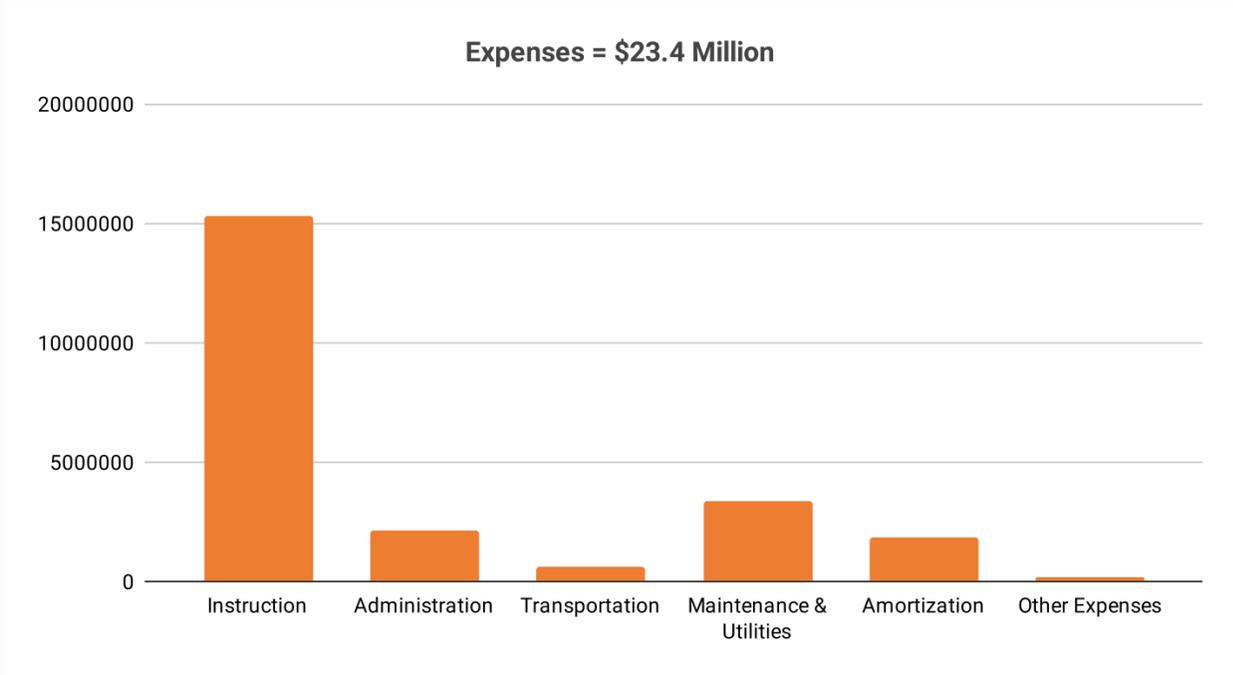
The Superior North Catholic District School Board Finance Department is responsible for managing the annual budget, purchasing, and business and corporate services. Finance also works closely with individual schools to maximize budgets and resources.

The Board's 2021-2022 Financial Statements outline operating revenues of \$24.0 million, expenses of \$23.4 million and total capital spending in the amount of \$4.1 million from supported and unsupported funding.

## WHERE DID OUR FUNDS COME FROM?



## WHERE DID WE SPEND OUR FUNDS?



# PLANT AND OPERATIONS

The Board continues to make ventilation improvements in our schools, as well as playground replacements, roofing replacements, flooring, doors and washroom upgrades.



We are planning an addition to St. Hilary Catholic School in Red Rock. The addition will be 214 square meters adding two additional classes and administrative areas. We are incredibly grateful that the Ministry of Education is supporting us with this much-needed expansion to the school.





# SUPERIOR NORTH CATHOLIC

DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

