

Education and Early Childhood Development

ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024

Department of Education and Early Childhood Education Development

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024

Province of New Brunswick
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TRANSMITTAL LETTERS

From the Minister to the Lieutenant-Governor

Her Honour The Honourable Brenda Murphy

Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick

May it please your Honour:

It is my privilege to submit the annual report of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Province of New Brunswick, for the fiscal year April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,



Honourable Claire Johnson
Minister

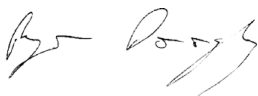
From the Deputy Minister to the Minister

Honourable Claire Johnson
Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development

Madam:

I am pleased to be able to present the annual report describing operations of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development for the fiscal year April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,



Ryan Donaghy
Deputy Minister, Anglophone Sector

From the Deputy Minister to the Minister

Honourable Claire Johnson
Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development

Madam:

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Respectfully submitted,



Julie Beaulieu Mason
Deputy Minister, Francophone Sector

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MINISTER'S MESSAGE

New Brunswick's children and youth are the foundation of our province's future. As Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, I am committed to creating an inclusive and forward-thinking education system, beginning in early childhood through to high school graduation.

Education is one of our government's main priorities. We understand that learning begins at birth and continues long after the last day of high school. We are committed to ensuring that New Brunswick's children and youth receive an education that provides a solid foundation for their future success.

Furthermore, education is one of the strongest predictors of health outcomes. Through access to quality education, we can lay the foundation for a healthier society. A robust public education system empowers individuals and gives everyone a fair chance to learn and thrive. This not only improves food security and access to essential health care—such as vaccines—but also strengthens overall community well-being. When we invest in education, we invest in a healthier, more resilient society for everyone.

During the past year, the Department continued its work to strengthen the public school system, support educators and staff, and maintain learning environments where all young New Brunswickers can thrive and excel.

This report reflects the efforts of staff in our child care centres, schools, school districts, and in the department, who work hard to provide our children and youth with a high-quality education.

As the newly appointed Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, I look forward to working with all education stakeholders – including families, community members, school staff, district education councils, school districts and our partners in early childhood education. Together, we will work to create a brighter future for every student in New Brunswick.



Honourable Claire Johnson
Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development

DEPUTY MINISTER'S MESSAGE

The work that takes place at the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is of utmost importance. We each play a role in preparing young New Brunswickers for a future where they can make a positive impact in the world and on those around them.

Over the 2023-2024 year, we have worked hard to continue building a better education system for our children and youth. Our annual report outlines the progress we have made through government investments in education and child care.

We announced several short and long-term recommendations to improve the anglophone education system in partnership with the New Brunswick Teachers' Association. We have worked on adding support resources to the school system to help with behaviour and attendance, numeracy and literacy skills, and student engagement. Improving our students' experience in classrooms has been at the core of the work we do. We recognize that recruiting teachers and other educational staff is a top priority and directly related to this, and work continue to ensure we could meet the growing enrollment.

We want our youth to be ready for whatever the future will bring. This year, we have made progress in providing experiential learning opportunities to students prior to graduation in different industries across New Brunswick. We know how important it is for our students to get exposed to different career possibilities before deciding on a path, which is why we have also incorporated experiential learning activities at the middle and high school levels.

Our youngest learners are equally important. As our population continues to grow, child care space creation is essential. By March 2026, 3,400 more children will have access to a child care space at a designated child care centre. We are also aware that the quality of early learning in New Brunswick is directly correlated to the level of training of staff, and we will continue to invest in them. While noteworthy strides have been made in this area, we know there is still work to be done for families, early childhood educators and operators, and we look forward to continuing to make improvements in this sector.

All of these accomplishments would not be possible without departmental staff, teachers, support staff, early learning and child care educators and operators and other partners and stakeholders. Thank you for your dedication to our children and their future.

In the year ahead, I look forward to continuing to build a better education system in New Brunswick together.



Ryan Donaghy
Deputy Minister

DEPUTY MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Our education system was marked by transformation and growth in the past year.

Some exceptional achievements were made in various fields, and I am honoured to share the progress attained.

This school year witnessed record growth in the student population. More than 4,200 students have come through our school doors since October 2022, over 2,500 of whom joined the school system in the 2023-2024 academic year.

The massive influx of enrolments has had an impact on all aspects of the education system. We are proud of everyone working with and for our children and youth to deliver a high quality of education in spite of the increased pressure all this brings. In the francophone sector, school staff have redoubled their efforts to suitably adapt our programs and resources, ensure an inclusive environment and support each student in their academic journey. Their dedication is essential to our work and has not gone unnoticed.

This year, an increasing number of students have had access to healthy food at school. We are grateful for our partnership with Food DEPOT Alimentaire and other community partners who have made this possible. It is a well-known fact that children can have trouble learning on an empty stomach. By providing nutritious food in our schools, we are helping to create an environment where every student can reach their full potential. This program has already shown positive results, and we intend to continue in the same vein in the years to come.

Another priority has been to accommodate the constant demand for spaces in early learning centres. Through the Canada – New Brunswick Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, we have worked hard to increase the availability of spaces in early learning centres and improve the quality of services that are provided.

We have altered our process of creating designated spaces through an open call for proposals. So far, this new process has been successful. In fact, 85% of spaces were filled by the end of the 2023-2024 fiscal year. At year-end, 1,815 of the 3,400 spaces to be created were open and we were able to offer these additional subsidized spaces to families across the province.

In addition, the launch of the project to improve access to child care helped to establish close partnerships between government and non-government partners to overcome various obstacles and improve accessibility for families in vulnerable circumstances. In particular, it has created positive educational experiences for four-year-olds, a full year before their formal entry into the school system.

All this has led to more affordable, inclusive and high-quality early childhood services. We are able to provide our youngest learners with the tools they need to be successful from the outset.

We have also launched a number of initiatives that have put our province at the cutting-edge of education. Among these initiatives, the projet de vie et de carrière continues to help students develop skills and meet the goals of their Profil de sortie to enable them to make a positive contribution to their province by the end of their school career. The establishment of trades exploration centres increases students' motivation and commitment to their learning while simultaneously giving them the opportunity to explore the skilled trades.

All of this would not have been possible without the joint work carried out by everyone involved in our educational community.

I would like to express my gratitude to all the teachers in New Brunswick, early childhood education staff, school principals, school and support staff, families, community partners and especially the children and students themselves. Everything we do is for you.

We will continue to invest in quality infrastructure, develop innovative programs and create inclusive learning environments.

Let us continue to give our children the best possible future. Together, we can continue to improve the education system for our children and young people, our families and our province as a whole.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julie Beaulieu Masson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Julie Beaulieu Masson
Deputy Minister

GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Strategy and Operations Management

The Government of New Brunswick (GNB) uses leading business practices to develop, communicate and review strategy. This provides the Public Service with a proven methodology to execute strategy, increase accountability and continuously drive improvement.

Government Priorities

Our vision for 2023-2024 is a vibrant and sustainable New Brunswick. To make progress towards this vision, we must focus on our government's priorities.

- Energize private sector
- Vibrant and sustainable communities
- Affordable, responsive and high-performing government
- Dependable public health care
- World-class education, and
- Environment

HIGHLIGHTS

During the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Education (the Department) focused on these government priorities through:

Early Childhood Development

- Increased the number of approved child care spaces by 526 for children aged 0–5, from 16,418 to 16,944.
- Awarded \$6.9 million in infrastructure agreements to support 61 projects in the creation of 904 new designated spaces.
- Increased Early Childhood Educator (ECE) wage grid for all eligible educators by \$1 per hour, raising the wage gride for level 1 educators at step 3 from \$23.47 to \$24.47, and providing higher wages for inclusion educators with early childhood college training.
- Increased the Market Fee Threshold, which sets the maximum daily cost of services provided to an infant or a preschool child at a designated facility by 8%. This increase took effect April 1, 2023.

Anglophone Sector

- Increased the number of schools engaged in implementing the Positive Behaviour Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework from 10 to 25, resulting in a reduction in student absentee rates from an average of 15.4 per cent in November 2022 to an average of 11.5 per cent in December 2023 across those schools.
- Developed a provincial Building Blocks of Reading Continuum, fully implemented in September 2023, with 98% of kindergarten to grade 2 (K-2) educators trained. This model uses research-based curriculum for teaching, assessing, and providing intervention in reading through a phased progression of foundational skills in five areas of reading (i.e., phonics, phonological awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension).
- Implemented the Early Grades Literacy Assessment (EGLA) tool, aligned with the Building Blocks of Reading Continuum, in September 2023 for all K-2 English Prime and grades 1-3 French Immersion classrooms, enabling intervention for skill gaps and tailored professional learning to support educators.
- Engaged 44,500 students and 3,815 teachers through opportunities organized by six Centres of Excellence (COE) in Energy, Health, Entrepreneurship, Digital Innovation, Skilled Trades and Manufacturing, and Language Learning that are designed to bring Career-Connected Learning experiences to students and teachers. The Language Learning Centre was launched in February 2024, with an initial focus on French language learning.
- Implemented several short-term improvements in the anglophone education system, including:
 - NB Lead, a leadership strategy to offer training and leadership growth for school principals. In addition to networking and release time opportunities, there were 425 attendees for professional learning sessions on leadership.
 - An annual professional learning day has been created to focus on positive learning and working environments.
 - Guidelines for student profiles have been developed to support teachers' awareness of their students' strengths, needs and interests.
 - Dedicated onsite supply teachers were hired to support ongoing replacement needs at schools.

- Administrator workload has been analyzed and recommendations have been made for action in the 2024-25 school year.

Francophone Sector

- Fifteen elementary schools (grades 6 to 8) benefited from the creation of trades exploration centres, aimed at stimulating students' motivation and actively engaging them in the learning process, while also enabling them to discover how to use tools and techniques related to individual skilled trades.
- A fund managed by Place aux compétences provided grants for 1,102 work-experience projects to be established, in line with Objective 1 of the 10-year Education Plan, in New Brunswick's francophone schools, promoting the development of skills and student engagement.
- For the second year in a row, the Access Project has enabled children from vulnerable backgrounds to attend an early learning centre the year before their formal introduction to the school environment. In 2023-2024, 18 children from these communities attended an early learning centre, three more than in 2022-2023. Our many partners assisted these families by removing barriers to their children's attendance, and helping with issues such as child care expenses, food, clothing and transportation, based on their respective needs. The results of the first year (2022-2023), shared in April 2024, show promising results for the additional 15 children participating in the program:
 - 40% of children improved their skills in at least two areas (early years evaluation, direct assessment only).
 - Including ASQ:SE-2 as one of these areas, 50% of children have shown improvement in at least three fields.

Policy, Strategic Planning and Project Management Office

- Developed a new Policy 714 – Preventing and Managing Notifiable Diseases in Schools, effective March 25, 2024, that set the requirements for school districts and schools in New Brunswick to prevent, control and manage the spread of illnesses and diseases.
- Revised Policy 311 - *Information and Communication Technologies Use*, effective September 3, 2024, to update terminology, standards, and processes to ensure that software used at school and within school districts is approved and protects personal information.
- Updated Policy 901 – *Space allocation for designated early learning and child care facilities* was updated in November 2023 and March 2024 to incorporate the open call for proposals, to permit the Department to use the new provincial waitlist when allocating spaces; and adding a Ministerial exemption provision.

Corporate Services

- The signing of a new collective agreement between the province and the New Brunswick Teachers Federation marks a significant milestone, securing better compensation and improved working conditions for teachers. Extensive efforts were made to update the payroll system to reflect the new pay rates and retroactive payments, ensuring timely delivery of the revised compensation to teachers.
- The implementation of the Fusion payroll system in three school districts will modernize payroll operations, enhancing both efficiency and accuracy in managing employee

compensation. Successful collaboration with the project team ensured smooth system integration, setting the stage for improved payroll management across the school districts.

- École Claudette-Bradshaw, a modern kindergarten to grade 5 (K-5) school, officially opened its doors in Moncton, providing state-of-the-art educational facilities for students. The new school is designed to foster a positive and engaging learning experience, equipped with modern classrooms and resources tailored to the needs of young learners.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

The information below outlines some of the department's priorities and how we measured our performance.

Outcome #1 Food Program

Food Security: In fiscal year 2023-2024, the provincial government committed to ensuring that all schools offer a school food program. This program is available to students in need by providing meals to guarantee that no student goes without food.

As a result, government invested \$2 million to implement a school food program.

Why is it important?

The Department recognizes the positive impact of food programs on student learning, both in terms of academic and social outcomes. The effects of school food programs have long-term benefits on development that will follow the child throughout his or her life.

Overall Performance

Target: 295 schools offer a school food program

Actual: 295 schools have a school food program

Initiatives or projects undertaken to achieve the outcome

The objective, with a service agreement with Food DEPOT Alimentaire, was to provide schools without a program with the food resources to offer food to students (42 schools).

Baseline: 93 schools were already being served by Food DEPOT Alimentaire via a pilot project.

Target: With the agreement with Food DEPOT Alimentaire, it was anticipated that a total of 135 schools (93 plus 42) would be served by this organization. As a result, schools were added in all school districts based on the schools that indicated they did not have programs.

Actual: With the services of Food DEPOT Alimentaire, 135 schools were able to order and receive food to offer the benefits of a food program to a total of 48,733 students. In addition, with the \$2 million budget, it was possible to allocate a one-time amount of \$300,000 to school districts for the 2023-2024 year. These funds were to supplement the schools served by community groups, enabling these schools to expand their food program offerings to students or contribute to the sustainability of their school's program.

Outcome #2 Canada-Wide creating and ensuring availability of designated child care spaces

Under the Canada-New Brunswick Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement with the federal government, the Department committed to creating and implementing a strategic plan that targets the creation of 543 new designated child care spaces by March 31, 2024. The focus of this plan is to ensure that families have access to high-quality early learning and child care services they can rely on and that meet their needs in New Brunswick's diverse communities.

Why is it important?

To ensure families have access to high-quality early learning and child care services they can rely on, this priority is focused on:

- Identifying communities with the greatest gaps in child care.
- Focusing on creating designated child care spaces in areas with the greatest need, through an open call for proposal process and providing infrastructure grants.
- Capturing actual child care demands from parents (provincial waitlist).
- Identifying barriers to the creation and viability of new designated spaces

Overall Performance

Opened 428 designated spaces through the call for proposal process. The target of 543 spaces was not achieved by March 31, 2024. The opening dates of some facilities were adjusted to accommodate infrastructure challenges. These spaces are planned to open in 2024-2025.

Initiatives or projects undertaken to achieve the outcome

Baseline: 0 spaces opened (call for proposal process was launched in December 2022)

Actual: create 543 new designated spaces (through the call for proposal)

Actual: opened 428 new designated spaces (through the call for proposal)

Outcome # 3 Building Blocks of Reading

The Department identified a need for renewed curriculum as well as a theory-based course for K-2 English Prime educators to support instructional practice and assessment. Therefore, the Department executed the Building Blocks of Reading initiative.

Why is it important?

Critical elements of effective reading instruction are not only well-understood but also well-documented (Petcher et al., 2020¹; Shanahan, 2020²). Yet, despite the identification of research-based practices in reading instruction, there continues to exist an overwhelming presence of instructional programming and practices that lack an evidence-base (Goodwin, 2020³; Castles et al., 2018⁴). Furthermore, across North America, 60%–80% of learners reach reading proficiency by the end of grade 4, yet there exists strong evidence suggesting most learners who fail to reach reading proficiency could do so through targeted instruction of sequenced and foundational reading skills (Goodwin, 2020; Peng Peng & Goodrich, 2020⁵). In consultation with experts in the field, the

¹ Petscher et al. (2020). How the Science of Reading Informs 21st-Century Education. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 55(S1), 267-282. International Literacy Association.

² Shanahan, T. (2020). What Constitutes a Science of Reading Instruction? *Reading Research Quarterly*, 55(S1), 235-247. International Literacy Association.

³ Goodwin, B. (2020). Cracking the Reading Code. *Research Matters*. Educational Leadership.

⁴ Castles, A. et al. (2018). Ending the Reading Wars: Reading Acquisition From Novice to Expert. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 19(1), 5-51.

⁵ Peng, P. & Goodrich, J. M. (2020). The Cognitive Element Model of Reading Intervention. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 55(S1), S77-S88. International Literacy Association.

Department has made amendments to K-2 English Language Arts curriculum to include measurable skill outcomes in the areas of phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension – which aligns with compelling research evidence in the area literacy skill development. Additionally, the Early Grades Literacy Assessment (EGLA) has been developed to measure foundational reading skills, beginning in K, and will continue until learners reach reading proficiency.

Overall Performance

Curriculum and assessment resources were fully implemented in September 2023, and 98 per cent of K-2 Educators have completed their training on using new curriculum and research-based practice for teaching and assessing reading.

Initiatives or projects undertaken to achieve the outcome

A review of the New Brunswick Language Arts curriculum and supportive resources has been undertaken to ensure alignment to the following research-based practices:

- Targets in reading include system-wide implementation of a reading skill continuum, a standardized assessment tool to monitor progress and guide practice and required course work for educators to grow capacity.
- The nurturing of healthy literate identities.
- Developmental phase progression of sequenced outcomes.
- Explicit and systematic instruction of: phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension.
- Formative and ongoing assessment.
- Targeted instruction and intervention.

Resources and professional learning modules about teaching and assessing reading and writing skills for K-2 educators were developed in 2021. To ensure alignment with literacy approaches and assessment practices for elementary level in English and French, this was done through collaboration with the francophone sector.

Instructional support and release time were provided for all K-2 English Prime and Elementary Resource Teachers (ESTs) from September 2021 to March 2024.

Implemented the Early Grades Literacy Assessment (EGLA) tool, aligned with the Building Blocks of Reading Continuum, in September 2023 for all K-2 English Prime and 1-3 French Immersion classrooms, enabling intervention for skill gaps and tailored professional learning to support educators. EGLA enables system wide progress monitoring to ensure learners are progressing towards intended outcomes.

Targeted support for new language arts curriculum is now expanding to include grades 3-5, and 6-12.

Baseline: 0% September 2021; 87% trained (April 2023); 98% (March 2024)

Target: 100% (Of note: 100% target was not met due to human resource variables. Educators who failed to complete their coursework were identified by school districts as having extraneous circumstances, and school districts are working with those educators to ensure they have supports for completion).

Actual: 98% teachers trained (March 2024)

Outcome # 4 Improvement in the number of grade 12 students who state they are confident in their decisions regarding their transition to post-secondary education or the workforce

The primary goal (Objective 1) of the 10-year Education Plan states that we seek to ensure that students leave school with the skills they need to succeed in their career and life readiness plans. Using this performance measure, we aim to gauge whether grade 12 students feel confident enough to pursue their post-secondary aspirations or enter the workforce. By monitoring this data, we seek to ensure that the initiatives set up in recent years relating to the career and life readiness plans of our student body bear fruit and have a significant impact on students' confidence and preparations for the future. The data we use is analyzed on an annual basis.

Why is this priority important?

We live in a rapidly changing world and the changes we see are getting bigger and bigger. It is therefore critically important to transform the educational experience of students to prepare them for the changing needs of our society. Training students who can lead balanced lives, benefit from lifelong learning and exercise ethical and committed citizenship is essential to building a fair and sustainable world. A successful transition to post-secondary education or the labour market creates a solid foundation for long-term aspirations and personal and professional growth.

How is overall performance?

Results in 2023-2024 dropped to 78.5% compared with 82.8% in 2022-2023. This decline could be attributed to students becoming increasingly aware of various educational pathways and potential careers, including professions that do not exist yet. Hands-on learning initiatives have helped young students discover a whole range of occupational opportunities, including in emerging fields that reflect a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambivalent world. This awareness influences their confidence in their academic and occupational choices, reflecting a positive development despite the decrease in overall results.

What initiatives or projects were undertaken to achieve all these objectives?

- **Career and life readiness plans and exit profile:** The Department has worked alongside francophone school districts to encourage sharing best teaching practices and to provide all the resources needed to support educational staff. Videos on the skills and objectives of the francophone education system, staff feedback and special activities have also been designed to help principals in the support they can give their educational staff.
- **Life-career transition planning:** A pilot project was established in September 2023 to provide learners requiring additional support with focused, individual input to help them complete their career and life readiness plans, in line with their needs.
- **Update on skills programs:** The Essential Skills and Essential Skills for the Labour Market programs are being transformed into the Skills for Success Program and the Skills for Labour Market Success Program. A Skills for Success pilot project was launched in three schools in September 2023.
- **Trades exploration:** The Programme d'apprentissage pour les jeunes du Nouveau-Brunswick (PAJNB) continues to be rolled out across all francophone high schools. A total of 54 students are enrolled in the PAJNB.

References: 2022-2023: 82.8%

Target: 82%

Actual result: 2023-2024: 78.5%

OVERVIEW OF DEPARTMENTAL OPERATIONS

The Department's vision is to ensure classrooms and early learning environments are diverse, through focusing on strategic services to support the learning and development of all children and students. The Department's role is to:

- provide public education from kindergarten through to grade 12;
- support the development of children before they enter school;
- regulate early childhood services in the province; and
- ensure the safety, security, and healthy development of children in regulated early learning and child care and public education settings.

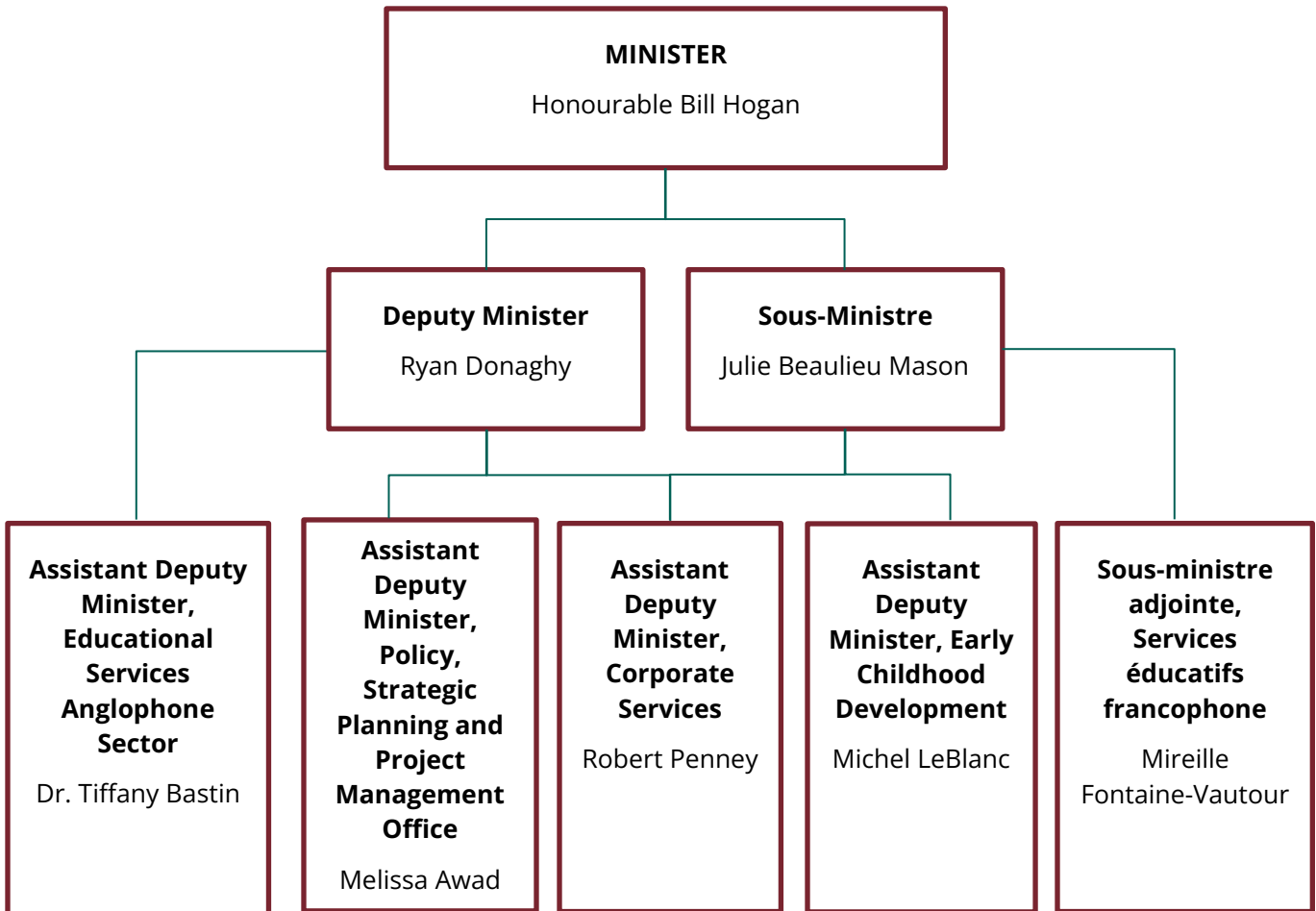
Since 1967, GNB has had sole responsibility for financing public schools and is committed to equal opportunity for all students.

Serving Canada's only officially bilingual province, New Brunswick's education system offers students the opportunity to learn in English and French through two parallel, but separate education systems. Each linguistic sector of the Department is responsible for its curriculum, student services and assessment. The system includes the early childhood sector and the transition into public education.

The public education system has seven school districts – four anglophone and three francophone. District Education Councils (DECs), legislated under *section 36* of the *Education Act*, are responsible for establishing the direction and priorities for their respective school district and for determining how school districts and schools are operated, under the leadership of the superintendent. Each DEC consists of publicly and locally elected members as well as an appointed councillor who is a member of a Mi'kmaq or Wolastoqey First Nation, and an appointed councillor who is a student.

The Department plays a crucial role in regulating the services through legislation and standards and serves as the centre for the coordination of services and as a source of information and resources. Services are tailored to different geographical zones and the official languages of local school districts. While some programs and services are delivered by the department, most early childhood programs are contracted out to community-based organizations or private agencies. These include services like the preschool autism program and the early intervention program for families with children who are at risk of developmental delays. Additionally, the department oversees a network of 844 licensed early learning and child care centres.

High-Level Organizational Chart



DIVISION OVERVIEW AND HIGHLIGHTS

Early Childhood Development Division

The Early Childhood Development Division is responsible for the planning, design and monitoring of all departmental early childhood programs and services.

In New Brunswick, an early child care operator is required to obtain a licence from the Department to offer services to children under the age of 12 as indicated in the *Early Childhood Services Act*. Licensed early learning and child care centres are authorized by the government to provide child care for children ranging from infants to 12 years old, with each center permitted to serve between 7 and 60 children per licence. Licensed early learning and child care homes are authorized to provide care for three to nine children, depending on the ages. An individual or organization can hold more than one licence.

The Department offers three operational funding programs to all licensed facilities:

The **Daycare Assistance Program (DAP)** offers financial support to families to help them pay the daycare cost of early learning and child care for children 0 to 12.

The **Wage Support Program for Early Childhood Educators (WSP-ECE)** provides funding to operators to help increase the wages of qualified educators. The program aims to assist in retaining and recruiting qualified early childhood educators while ensuring that child care remains affordable for families.

The **Inclusion Support Program** provides funding to operators for the salary of an inclusion support worker to assist children with disabilities or complex needs, ensuring they receive one-on-one supervision and can fully participate in the early learning and child care program.

Designation Program

The **Designation program** recognizes early learning and child care facilities that provide services to preschool children and commit to offering affordable, high quality and inclusive early learning and child care spaces to all families. Licensed facilities can apply for this designation under the guidelines of Policy 901 - *Space Allocation for Designated Early Learning and Child care Facilities*. Designated facilities work in collaboration with the Department to offer equitable and affordable access to higher quality early learning and child care services by removing barriers related to family income, children's ability and needs, language, and minority settings.

Three additional operational funding programs are available for designated facilities:

The **Parent Fee Reduction Subsidy** provides funding to operators that covers the difference between the Standard Parent Fee Grid amounts and the operator's fees, which are regulated under the Market Fee Threshold. This applies to all children aged 0-5 years who are enrolled in a designated facility and not yet attending school. The Standard Parent Fee Grid establishes the maximum fees that operators can charge parents in a designated early learning and child care facility for families with children aged 0-5 years who are not yet attending school and are enrolled in a designated facility.

The **Parent Subsidies** provide financial relief to eligible low to middle income families in addition to the reduced daily fees set by the Standard Parent Fee Grid. These subsidies are calculated based on an income-tested sliding scale.

The **Operational Grant** supports operators in meeting the designation requirements to continue to improve quality services to families who benefit from affordable early learning and child care provided in a designated facility.

Key Performance Indicators - Early Learning and Child Care Action Plan 2023–2024

As of March 31, 2024

	Spaces for children aged 0-5	School aged spaces
Anglophone early learning and child care spaces	11,335 1,599 infants, 9,736 preschool age	10,551
Francophone early learning and child care spaces	5,978 926 infants, 5,052 preschool age	6,816
Total	17,313	17,367

- 96 per cent of licensed preschool 0-5 spaces are in designated facilities.
- 573 out of 611 Early Learning and Child Care centres and homes were designated, representing 94% of all eligible facilities.

Enrolment in designated facilities has grown 5% in the past fiscal year with 711 additional spaces occupied in designated facilities.

- 4,354 children were receiving an approved subsidy through the Parent Subsidy Program for child care in Early Learning and Child Care centres and homes. Of those:
 - 2,274 children benefitted from the Daycare Assistance Program.
- The Wage Support Program reached enrolment of 6,104 educators. Of those:
 - 3,727 educators (61%) have an Early Childhood Education (ECE) Certificate/Diploma or equivalent.
 - 2,377 educators (39%) have completed the 90-hour Introduction to Early Childhood Education course or have no formal training.

The occupancy rate of designated facilities has increased by 10% since 2021 and now sits at a provincial average of 84%. Industry standards set viability for early learning and child care facilities between 80-90% occupancy rate.

Anglophone Educational Services Division

The **Anglophone Educational Services Division** is responsible for early learning and development, the establishment of provincial public education standards, programs and services for the K-12 education system. The division collaborates closely with Autism Learning Partnership and Integrated Service Delivery.

In 2023-2024, the division consisted of **Assessment and Analysis Services** which includes responsibility for the Provincial Student Assessment Program, provincial data collection, and measurement and analysis; **System Excellence and Innovation**, which includes responsibility for

leadership development, experiential learning, strategic partnerships, and applied research; **Digital Learning and Design**, which encompasses the Virtual Learning service unit, and the Design Services unit; **Education Support Services**, which includes oversight for support for learning and responsibility for career pathways; **Learning and Achievement**, which includes responsibility for curriculum and instruction and French Second Language programs; **Early Learning and Development**, which includes responsibility for early years (0 to 5) curriculum and professional learning, school age child care curriculum, inclusion and quality improvement, early intervention and early language programs; and the **Office of First Nation Education**, which supports understanding of traditional and contemporary First Nation cultures, histories and contributions.

Highlights

- Released a new high school course containing nine modules, Indigenous Engagement and Leadership Development 120.
- Launched a new middle school course, Wabanaki Languages, to the system in September 2023.
- A professional learning hub was created for Educational Assistants.
- An additional 25 Behaviour Intervention Mentors were added to schools bringing the total to 126.
- In fall of 2023, 114 Academic Support Teachers were added to schools to support literacy and numeracy in K-5.
- The English Language Arts curriculum for K-9 was revised to ensure alignment with research-based practices in reading and writing instruction. K-2 was fully implemented in September 2023.
- The Department has partnered with the Atlantic Canada Holocaust Education Foundation to provide all four anglophone school districts with Holocaust Education exhibit resources. A Holocaust Education K-12 companion document has been developed and made available to educators.
- Eight facilities started piloting a framework of evidence-based practices for promoting healthy social and emotional development in young children, known as the Pyramid Model. An evaluation framework has been established with expected recommendations by March 2025.
- In 2023-2024, Family and Early Childhood Agencies adopted The Family Star Plus®, an evidence-based outcome measurement and goal planning tool that provides valuable insights into a family's needs and progress, and supports a family-centered, collaborative, and holistic approach to case management and service delivery.
- Approximately 55,000 students completed one or more of the 14 provincial assessments administered online in anglophone schools. In addition, over 3,000 students participated in French oral proficiency assessments.

Digital Learning and Design

- The NB Virtual Learning Centre expanded to 65 online courses, including new courses (English Language Arts 10: Extended, Math 9B, Career Connected Experiences 110) and several course refreshes (Law 120, Computer Science 110, Digital Production 120).
- The NB Lead Initiative was established, in collaboration with school districts, University of New Brunswick and the New Brunswick Teachers' Association. with a vision to support current and aspiring leaders in their professional leadership journey.
- In its second year, the New Brunswick Teen Apprenticeship Program expanded to support 128 students with placements in the skilled trades sector.

- For the first time through the Centre of Excellence for Health, professional learning was offered for Educational Assistants, regarding Self Care and The Power of Mindfulness. A total of 1,758 Educational Assistants participated.
- Launched the first Youth Mental Health Symposium, offered by the Centre of Excellence for Health, which attracted 200 students and 30 educators from around the province.

Division des Services éducatifs francophones (Francophone Sector)

The **Division des services éducatifs francophones** sets out the standards for its programs and services and reports on their outcomes. The division is responsible for the development, implementation and evaluation of the education plan, school curricula, the early learning and child care curriculum and learning support services. The division oversees students' learning and coordinates and administers various evaluation programs in schools and early learning and child care facilities. The division anticipates and plans based on immediate and future needs and is also responsible for the francophone education sector's budgetary and administrative planning.

The division assumes responsibility for the development of various educational projects in partnership with other departments and various organizations and agencies at the provincial, regional, national and international levels.

The division exercises its responsibilities in compliance with the established rules of governance, working closely with the District Education Councils (DECs), the school districts, and the Acadian and francophone community.

Highlights

- The launch of an experiential learning guide for students in grades 6 to 12, providing educational staff with the tools they need to implement enriching educational experiences.
- The placement of six teachers who have undergone formal training as specialized assessment and intervention resources (ERSEI) in schools. These teachers can facilitate interventions based on best practices in an inclusive education system. ERSEI teachers form part of collaborative teams at the school and school district levels to remove systemic barriers and ensure students receive timely interventions and access to services.
- Update of the K-2 instructional program, ensuring quality education by organizing time in schools for apprenticeships and incorporating specific periods for physical and artistic education and recreation. This new approach emphasizes flexibility and transdisciplinarity, allowing teachers to choose teaching models that promote the development of skills for a student's Profil de sortie.
- Officially launched two new provincial assessments to measure high school literacy and numeracy skills.
- Funding of 1,102 projects promoting skills development and student engagement through Place aux compétences in all francophone schools in the province.
- Training provided to elementary school staff on students of Indigenous, African and Black heritage.
- Specially-designed instructional cards to accompany six short animated drawings produced by the Ni'gweg Collective, told in Mi'kmaq or Wolastoqiyik, for students in grades 4 to 6.
- Over 4,000 students worked on 89 environmental and climate action projects with Place aux compétences. A total of 185 teachers received environmental and climate change training this fiscal year. Publication of an environmental and climate commitment guide and an eco-citizen

education model to enhance and inspire the integration of environmental education in our schools.

- Establishment of trades exploration centres at the primary level to motivate students and encourage them to actively engage in their education while simultaneously exploring how to use tools and techniques associated with the skilled trades.
- Development of a new introduction to trades course in grade 9.
- Implementation (pilot project) of the new grade 9 numeracy course (curriculum and online course) and development of a numeracy strategic plan (K-12).
- A forum was held to discuss the strategic plan to attract and retain immigrant students and involved several key partners.
- 158 early childhood educators completed the 90-hour basic training in French, including the 0-5-year educational curriculum, literacy, well-being and child development.
- 74 francophone early learning and child care educators enrolled in the work-study and experiential learning cohorts and completed college training: a one-year certificate in Early Childhood Education.
- 77% (122) of the 158 designated francophone early learning and child care centres that were assessed on the educational curriculum application scored more than 85%.
- Pilot project under way with eight early learning and child care centres to examine the pyramid inclusion model to increase educator skills.
- Continuation of the project to provide access to child care for families from vulnerable backgrounds. This has enabled government and non-government partners to work closely together to alleviate obstacles and make early learning and child care centres more accessible to children in the three francophone school districts, up to 12 months before entering the formal school environment.
- Launch of the Étincelles Awards, with ten ceremonies held to celebrate the ten winners (preschool and school).

Integrated Service Delivery (ISD)

The **Integrated Service Delivery (ISD)** branch coordinates efforts among departments and agencies such as Education, Health, Social Development, Public Safety, school districts, Regional Health Authorities, and others. ISD is a collaborative framework that brings together local and regional partners to support at-risk children and youth by improving early assessment and intervention. Implemented in September 2017, the framework and service delivery model aim to improve the ability of the system to respond effectively to the needs of children, youth, and their families. The goal was implemented in September 2017 to enhance the capacity to respond effectively to the needs of children, youth, and their families.

The goal of ISD is to provide timely and integrated service delivery tailored to the strengths, risks, and needs of children and youth. It focuses on educational development, emotional and behavioural functioning, mental health, family relationships, and physical health and wellness to ensure life quality of individuals with multiple needs.

The governance of ISD is being revised to enhance the model. There is ongoing dialogue with First Nations communities to address emotional, behaviour, mental health, and addiction issues. The Department and other departments are collaborating with First Nation Communities to develop First Nations-led Child and Youth Teams who will provide clinical expertise and a two-eye seeing approach that embodies culture and ceremony as part of a child or youth's healing journey.

Highlights

- NB Trauma Conference – Hope Restored – was organized and executed in November 2023 by an interdepartmental working group that resulted in nearly 800 delegates attending from across Canada and internationally.
- Delivered nine virtual sessions under the ISD Provincial Learning Series that provided professional enrichment of global learning to 1,880 youth serving partners.
- Developed a provincial protocol for Violence Threat Risk Assessment to establish community partnerships through a collaborative, multi-disciplinary approach. This protocol supports a human systems and trauma-informed model for managing potential violence and includes a governance framework for its implementation.
- In the fall of 2023, the initial First Nation-led Child and Youth Team initiated service delivery, providing a culturally responsive L'Nu healing approach to Indigenous children and youth in Elsipogtog.

Autism Learning Partnership

The **Autism Learning Partnership / Partenariat d'apprentissage en autisme et Services spécialisés** branch manages the creation, implementation, and operation of various training initiatives including the content development, review, coordination, and facilitation of online training. It addresses a broad range of specialized needs, including autism, visual and hearing impairments (francophone sector), applied behaviour analysis, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, and support and coaching. The branch provides comprehensive support and tailored interventions to families, educational personnel, and early childhood professionals, ensuring accessibility for all. Committed to offering bilingual and evidence-based professional learning and resources, the branch aims to foster development and improve the quality of life for individuals and their communities. Additionally, the team oversees the Preschool Autism Program, including the professional services agreement with VIVA Therapeutic Services.

The team provides to support families, preschool personnel and educational personnel.

Highlights

- Performed the clinical monitoring process to measure the service provider's adherence to the Preschool Autism Program guidelines and provided ongoing clinical support with program oversight and continuous improvement. The provincial overall compliance score is 90%.
- A new profile of the Comprehensive Assessment for Learning and Independence was launched and 101 supervisors within the preschool autism agencies were trained on this new tool.
- For the first time, the autism introductory course was offered to early childhood educators of the francophone sector with 359 participants enrolled since November 2023.
- The *Guide for the transition from the Preschool Autism Program to kindergarten* was implemented across all of Anglophone School District- North schools and five Anglophone School District-South schools.
- Development of three video vignettes for the francophone sector to raise awareness of hearing impairments (communication strategies, auditory fatigues, technological aids, etc.).
- Delivered a training on effective coaching strategies to resource teachers in District scolaire francophone-nord-ouest and District scolaire francophone-nord-est, behaviour mentors in

District scolaire francophone-sud, and district-based coordinators and sensory services teachers from all three francophone school districts.

Key Performance Indicators

- Since September 2018, 1,138, parents/guardians from New Brunswick have been able to access the Anglophone School District and Behavioural Interventions online course.
- In **preschool autism agencies**, all behaviour interventionists are enrolled in the introductory course at the time they are hired; in 2023-2024, 176 of them completed the training. Since 2017, 1,587 preschool autism agency staff have completed the training and 22 supervisors were enrolled in the online advanced training focusing on intervention planning and monitoring.
- In **francophone school districts**, 81 educational personnel completed the introductory course in 2023-2024. 14 new participants completed the training between September 2023 and June 2024. 15 participants have been enrolled for the 2024-2025 school year.
- In **anglophone school districts**, 115 educational personnel completed the introductory course in 2023-2024. 35 participants completed the advanced training during the 2023-2024 school year. 36 participants have been enrolled for the 2024-2025 school year.
- A total of 578 professionals from the anglophone sector and 346 professionals from the francophone sector were given access to the *Functional Skills for Independence* website.
- Three applicants for Board Certified Behaviour Analyst certification training began coursework and supervised fieldwork. They have completed four of ten courses. Three Learning Specialists are providing fieldwork supervision.

Policy, Strategic Planning and Project Management Office

The **Policy, Strategic Planning and Project Management Office Division** is divided into two branches: Policy and Strategic Planning, and Strategic Alignment and Project Management Office.

Policy and Strategic Planning is responsible for providing strategic planning, advice, and research and policy development on early childhood development and public education issues. The branch provides submissions to executive council, legislature support and coordination and the preparation of briefing materials for key government activities. As well, the branch includes Corporate Data Management and Analysis, Teacher Certification, and Internal Audit. Corporate Data Management and Analysis is responsible for collecting and analysing key statistical information, and it develops and implements relevant data gathering instruments to ensure timely and sound information. Teacher Certification is responsible for issuing teacher certificates as well as dealing with all related matters. Internal Audit is responsible for performing policy and financial audits in school districts, as well as with early learning and child care facilities and is the lead on risk management.

The **Strategic Alignment and Project Management Office** leads the adoption of GNB's formal management system within the department, including the development and use of the department's strategy map. The branch undertakes and facilitates various projects using Lean Six Sigma, project and change management methodologies, both at the department's central office and in liaison with school district offices. It serves as a focal point for the development of operational standards, practices, and guidelines, and ensures the alignment of the department's strategy and effort with the GNB accountability reporting process.

Highlights

- Developed a new Policy 714 – *Preventing and Managing Notifiable Diseases in Schools* that set the requirements for school districts and schools in New Brunswick to prevent, control and manage the spread of illnesses and diseases.
- Revised Policy 311 - *Information and Communication Technologies Use* to update terminology, standards and processes to ensure that software used at school and within school districts is approved and protects personal information.
- Policy 901 – *Space allocation for designated early learning and child care facilities* was updated in November 2023 and March 2024 to incorporate the open call for proposals, to permit the department to use the new provincial waitlist when allocating spaces; and adding a Ministerial exemption provision.
- The Division provided support to the Early Childhood Development Division at intergovernmental committee meetings and in negotiating two multilateral agreements and action plans.
- Published the 2023-2024 Summary Statistics identifying statistics on schools, enrolment, classes, educators, professional and non-educational support staff and graduates.
- Published the Early Learning and Child Care Services Annual Statistical Report.
- Supported some of the department’s major strategic plans through project management and facilitation, including:
 - Building a better education system: Near-term recommendations for New Brunswick’s English Prime and French Language learning programs.
 - Building a better education system: An action plan for implementing the long-term recommendations for New Brunswick’s anglophone education system.
 - Giving Our Kids a Head Start (Francophone Sector) (2016-2025).
 - 2021-2023 Canada-New Brunswick Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Action Plan.
- Amendments to Policy 713 – *Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity* were released in June 2023. The amendments outlined the role of the parent in providing content for students under 16 years of age to use their preferred name in the school environment.
- Additional amendments to Policy 713 – *Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity* were made in August 2023 following recommendations made by the Child and Youth Advocate and other stakeholders. The updates clarified that the use of the preferred name for students under 16 years of age without parental consent can be used when a plan is under development to obtain parental consent or when a student is speaking to professionals.

Corporate Services Division

The **Corporate Services Division** is responsible for providing efficient and effective support in the areas of Accounting, Budgeting and Financial Management; Facilities and Pupil Transportation, Human Resources and Information Technology Strategy and Business Solutions.

Here is a summary of key projects and initiatives:

- A total of 18 teachers graduated from the Skilled Trades Education Program for Teachers.
- Université de Moncton’s part-time B.Ed. program was expanded to the anglophone sector.
- Over 600 members joined the New Teacher Learning Community, with the Department offering supply days, conferences, and mentorship.

- The Department participated in recruitment missions, including Destination Acadie and Cap sur le Nouveau-Brunswick.
- Administered a \$110.2 million capital budget for improvements across 295 schools and new infrastructure projects.
- Continued design and construction on four school projects in Fredericton, Moncton, and Saint John.
- Began planning for three new school projects in Shediac, Campbellton, and Saint John.
- Advanced a multi-year ventilation system upgrade program for schools.
- Implemented new annual cybersecurity training for Part 2 employees to safeguard against cyber threats.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Departmental expenditure

Status report by program

Fiscal year ending March 31, 2024 (\$000s)

Expenditures	Budget plus Appropriation Transfers	Supplementary Estimates	Final Budget	Actual*	Variance (Over) Under	Note
Corporate and Other Education Services						
Management Services	13,484	-	13,484	13,900	(416)	
Education Services	57,667	-	57,667	57,025	642	
Support Services	23,060	-	23,060	22,852	208	
Total	94,211	-	94,211	93,777	434	
School Districts	1,432,652	-	1,432,652	1,448,224	(15,572)	1
Early Childhood Development	269,644	-	269,644	238,598	31,046	2
Department Total	1,796,507	-	1,796,507	1,780,599	15,908	

* Figures are drafts and may vary slightly from information to be published in Supplementary Information Volume 2 Public Accounts.

Note 1 – School districts expenditures exceeded budget mainly due to the following: greater than expected enrolment growth, increased costs of implementing the new teachers' collective agreement, increased expenditures related to school district vocational and physical education equipment, increased need to support complex cases and higher rates for staff benefit costs.

Note 2 – The assistance provided under the Canada-Wide agreement assumes a higher level of activity in the early childhood sector than what is being experienced. As most of the assistance is program-based, the volume of participation drives the cost. Also, daycares approved under the capital program (within Canada-Wide) will take some time to complete capital projects necessary to start or expand operations.

SUMMARY OF STAFFING ACTIVITIES

Pursuant to section 4 of the *Civil Service Act*, the Secretary to Treasury Board delegates staffing to each Deputy Head for his or her respective department(s). Please find below a summary of the staffing activity for 2023–2024 for the Department.

NUMBER OF PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES AS OF DEC. 31 OF EACH YEAR		
EMPLOYEE TYPE	2023	2022
Permanent	238	233
Temporary	167	100
TOTAL	405	333

The Department advertised 80 open (public) competitions.

Pursuant to section 15 and section 16 of the *Civil Service Act*, the Department made the following appointments using processes to establish merit other than the competitive process:

APPOINTMENT TYPE	APPOINTMENT DESCRIPTION	SECTION OF THE CIVIL SERVICE ACT	NUMBER
Specialized Professional, Scientific or Technical	An appointment may be made without competition when a position requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a high degree of expertise and training • a high degree of technical skill • recognized experts in their field 	15(1)	0
Equal Employment Opportunity Program	Provides Aboriginals, persons with disabilities and members of a visible minority group with equal access to employment, training and advancement opportunities.	16(1)(a)	0
Department Talent Management Program	Permanent employees identified in corporate and departmental talent pools, who meet the four-point criteria for assessing talent, namely	16(1)(b)	5

APPOINTMENT TYPE	APPOINTMENT DESCRIPTION	SECTION OF THE CIVIL SERVICE ACT	NUMBER
	performance, readiness, willingness and criticalness.		
Lateral transfer	The GNB transfer process facilitates the transfer of employees from within Part 1, 2 (school districts) and 3 (hospital authorities) of the public service.	16(1) or 16(1)(c)	4
Regular appointment of casual/temporary	An individual hired on a casual or temporary basis under section 17 may be appointed without competition to a regular properly classified position within the civil service.	16(1)(d)(i)	8
Regular appointment of students/apprentices	Summer students, university or community college co-op students or apprentices may be appointed without competition to an entry-level position within the civil service.	16(1)(d)(ii)	0

Pursuant to section 33 of the *Civil Service Act*, no complaints alleging favouritism were made to the Deputy Head of Education and Early Childhood Development and no complaints were submitted to the Ombud.

SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION AND LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

BILL #	NAME OF LEGISLATION	DATE OF ROYAL ASSENT	SUMMARY OF CHANGES
N/A			

NAME OF REGULATION	EFFECTIVE DATE	SUMMARY OF CHANGES
N.B. Regulation 2018-11, the <i>Licensing Regulation</i> under the <i>Early Childhood Services Act</i>	May 18, 2023	Amendments to N.B. Regulation 2018-11, the <i>Licensing Regulation</i> to allow infants and preschool aged children to be combined in a mixed age group at the beginning and end of the day to alleviate the high costs associated with infant care and increase the number of licensed infant spaces.

The acts for which the Department was responsible in 2023-2024 may be found at: [Education and Early Childhood Development \(gnb.ca\)](https://www.gnb.ca)

SUMMARY OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACTIVITIES

Introduction

Following the revised *GNB Plan on Official Languages—Official Bilingualism: A Fundamental Value*, the Department is continuing to use its action plan that includes strategic means for each of the four sectors of activity identified (i.e., Language of Service; Language of Work; Development of the Two Official Linguistic Communities; Knowledge of the *Official Languages Act* and other obligations).

The Official Language policy and action plan apply to the department; however, given the linguistic duality within the education system, it does not apply to divisions of the department that have been established based on one or the other of the two Official Languages. This policy does not apply within schools and school district offices.

Focus 1

Ensure access to service of equal quality in English and French throughout the province:

- One of the objectives of the Department continues to be a focus on increasing the level of participation in casual/formal second-language communication at central office.
- Employees at the Department are always encouraged to speak to one another in their second official language to improve their second-language skills. The Department is a strong proponent of second-language training as well as conducting meetings in both official languages, where appropriate.
- The Department continues to work toward ensuring that linguistic profiles are reviewed to validate accuracy. Efforts continue to be made to maintain the linguistic profiles and ensure the department has the capability to offer quality services in both official languages.

Focus 2

An environment and climate that encourages, for all employees, the use of the official language of their choice in their workplace:

- The Department continues to create an environment where employees are free to use their Official Language of choice. Employees are encouraged to participate in meetings by using their language of choice.
- Employee official language preference is contained in the Human Resources Information System and in the employee files.
- All performance reviews are carried out in the employee's official language of choice.
- All seasonal/holiday/employee appreciation activities are held in both official languages. Monthly "huddles" with deputy ministers and all employees continue to provide highlights and news of the department in both official languages. This has been one method used to inform all employees, regardless of which sector they work in, about what is going on in other sectors and branches. These huddles are undertaken in virtual format and continue to be attended by a large number of employees, including those who work remotely or may work in alternate locations other than at head office.

Focus 3

Ensure that new and revised government programs and policies took into account the realities of the province's Official Language communities (promotion of Official Languages):

- Government continues to ensure that official bilingualism is included as a fundamental value of the public service and is clearly included in the Code of Conduct of the employees of the Public Service.

Focus 4

Public service employees will have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the *Act*, policies and regulations, and the province's obligations with respect to official languages.

- Policy and Guidelines on the Language of Service are available to all GNB employees. This includes examples of active offer for services in both Official Languages on voicemail greetings, mailbox set-up, correspondence, electronic services, service in person, etc.;
- Onboarding materials for new employees include a review of the Language of Service Policy and Guidelines (AD-2919) as well as the Language of Work Policy (AD-2920) and Guidelines. A further review of these policies is part of the annual performance review process.
- In partnership with the Department of Intergovernmental Affairs, the community of practice for Official Languages Coordinators and the community of practice for Second Languages Coordinators met and communicated regularly on Official Languages.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL

NEW: Section 1 – Includes the current reporting year (2023-2024) and the previous year (2022-2023).

NAME AND YEAR OF AUDIT AREA WITH LINK TO ONLINE DOCUMENT	RECOMMENDATIONS
	TOTAL
<p>2023 V2 Chapter 3: Pandemic Preparedness and Response – Department of Education and Early Childhood Development https://www.agnb-vgnb.ca/content/dam/agnb-vgnb/pdf/Reports-Rapports/2023V2/Chap3e.pdf Chapter 3, pages 15 to 29</p>	5

IMPLEMENTED RECOMMENDATIONS	ACTIONS TAKEN
<p>3.16 Ensure that a business continuity plan is kept up to date, reflects the specific educational needs for potential long-term emergencies (including pandemics) and is periodically tested according to a predefined schedule.</p>	<p>Agreed. Updated Business Continuity Planning (BCP) began during the spring of 2023 and is currently being updated. This document will continue to evolve to meet circumstances. Updated BCP submitted to Executive Council Office (ECO) July 1, 2023.</p>
<p>3.17 Ensure adequate training is provided to staff identified with key roles and responsibilities in business continuity plans according to a predefined schedule.</p>	<p>Agreed. Training plan currently being developed.</p>
<p>3.38 Ensure consistent, appropriate virtual learning training is provided to school district staff.</p>	<p>Agreed. Financial support for use of virtual tools is now included in onboarding and ongoing professional learning for teachers. Implemented</p>
<p>3.42 Ensure that a communications plan is in place for similar future emergencies, and it should incorporate lessons learned.</p>	<p>Agreed. As part of BCP referenced above.</p>

3.45 Ensure a comprehensive after-action review is completed to identify areas for improvement.	Agreed. ECO is leading a comprehensive after-action review of which the Department will be a part. Underway
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NAME AND YEAR OF AUDIT AREA WITH LINK TO ONLINE DOCUMENT	RECOMMENDATIONS
	TOTAL
2023 V2 Chapter 6: Out-of-Province Travel - Select School Districts https://www.agnb-vgnb.ca/content/dam/agnb-vgnb/pdf/Reports-Rapports/2023V2/Chap6e.pdf Chapter 6, pages 72 to 100	17 6 (ASD-N) 5 (ASD-W) 6 (DSF-S)

IMPLEMENTED RECOMMENDATIONS Anglophone North School District	ACTIONS TAKEN
6.31 ASD-N and DSF-S ensure adequate documentation pertaining to approval to travel, including estimated costs, and appropriate authorization, per policy AD-2801	School district has updated their “Out of Province” travel document to align with policy AD-2801. Staff proposing this type of travel will be advised of updated requirements. Implemented
6.37 Anglophone West School District (ASD-W), ASD-N and DSF-S: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure quantifiable, anticipated benefits are documented and considered as part of the travel approval process • have processes in place to perform post-travel reviews to ensure anticipated benefits were achieved 	School district has updated their “Out of Province” travel document to align with policy AD-2801. Staff proposing this type of travel will be advised of updated requirements. The nature of post-travel reviews will vary depending on the nature of the travel; the importance of ensuring expected benefits are achieved is acknowledged. Implemented
6.39 ASD-W, ASD-N and DSF-S document a cost-benefit analysis of in-person versus virtual attendance for out-of-province travel. Factors such	School district has updated their “Out of Province” travel document to align with policy AD-2801.

<p>as cost and overall benefit to the Province should be considered.</p>	<p>School district added Virtual Option checkbox. Implemented</p> <p>Superintendent will evaluate the cost-benefit option, and how this may be implemented. The degree to which benefits are quantifiable will vary depending on the nature of the conference/training.</p> <p>Each application is reviewed by Superintendent prior to approval. Preference is given to Virtual Conference when there is that option. Implemented</p>
<p>6.41 ASD-W, ASD-N, and DSF-S establish documented approval processes for out-of-Province and international travel by Superintendents, including cost estimates and anticipated benefits. Actual benefits of travel should also be documented.</p>	<p>School district has updated their “Out of Province” travel document to align with policy AD-2801. Superintendent will complete the same travel form as all other staff. Implemented</p>
<p>6.45 ASD-W, ASD-N, and DSF-S, as part of the approval process for out-of-Province and international travel, document evidence of having ensured availability of travel budget dollars, including having considered overall school district budget pressures.</p>	<p>The availability of funds is considered prior to approving travel, however the step to document budget availability will be added as part of the approval process going forward. This includes consideration for allocated travel budgets and the overall projected state of the school district budget.</p> <p>Funds for travel/conference are now allocated in the budget for travel in the spring of the previous budget year. Implemented</p>
<p>6.47 ASD-W, ASD-N, and DSF-S ensure financial performance reporting (budget-actual) is made readily available to the public.</p>	<p>Financial reporting to the DEC takes place during meetings which are open to the public and media. Information is recorded in meeting minutes which are posted to the ASD-N website.</p> <p>The school district will evaluate the appropriateness of current practices and will make a determination on potential changes.</p>

	<p>Current practice of reporting to DEC and sharing on website was deemed the best way for the public to be informed.</p> <p>Implemented</p>
<p>IMPLEMENTED RECOMMENDATIONS Anglophone West School District</p>	<p>ACTIONS TAKEN</p>
<p>6.37 ASD-W, ASD-N and DSF-S:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure quantifiable, anticipated benefits are documented and considered as part of the travel approval process • have processes in place to perform post-travel reviews to ensure anticipated benefits were achieved 	<p>Revise our current practice and update the official AD2801 forms to allow for more clarity and confirm a pre/post travel process.</p> <p>Implemented</p>
<p>6.39 ASD-W, ASD-N and DSF-S document a cost-benefit analysis of in-person versus virtual attendance for out-of-province travel. Factors such as cost and overall benefit to the Province should be considered.</p>	<p>Include on revised form a place to identify if a virtual option is available, describing the opportunity, and allow for the approving authority to analyze the cost-benefit for virtual vs. in-person prior to granting approval.</p> <p>Implemented</p>
<p>6.41 ASD-W, ASD-N, and DSF-S establish documented approval processes for out-of-Province and international travel by Superintendents, including cost estimates and anticipated benefits. Actual benefits of travel should also be documented.</p>	<p>Continue to follow our present process, supplemented by cost estimates and benefits of travel being documented on the revised form. Approval sign-off for the Superintendent shall be two signatures; the Director of Human Resources and the Director of Finance and Administration.</p> <p>Implemented</p>
<p>6.45 ASD-W, ASD-N, and DSF-S, as part of the approval process for out-of-Province and international travel, document evidence of having ensured availability of travel budget dollars, including having considered overall school district budget pressures.</p>	<p>Establish a travel budget for the 2024-2025 fiscal period for out-of-province travel as part of the operating budget provided by the Department. Tracking shall occur through this budget.</p> <p>Implemented</p>
<p>6.47 ASD-W, ASD-N, and DSF-S ensure financial performance reporting (budget-actual) is made readily available to the public.</p>	<p>Create a descriptive paragraph in a visible location on our website that will link the public to the final fiscal results that are already being published on our website (posted annually as</p>

	<p>part of the June district Education Council meeting).</p> <p>Implemented</p>
<p>IMPLEMENTED RECOMMENDATIONS</p> <p>Francophone sud school district</p>	<p>ACTIONS TAKEN</p>
<p>6.31 ASD-N and DSF-S ensure adequate documentation pertaining to approval to travel, including estimated costs, and appropriate authorization, per policy AD-2801</p>	<p>An online form will be available to document and obtain approval in one location.</p> <p>Implemented</p>
<p>6.37 ASD-W, ASD-N and DSF-S:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure quantifiable, anticipated benefits are documented and considered as part of the travel approval process have processes in place to perform post-travel reviews to ensure anticipated benefits were achieved 	<p>An online form will be available to document and obtain approval in one location.</p> <p>Implemented</p>
<p>6.39 ASD-W, ASD-N and DSF-S document a cost-benefit analysis of in-person versus virtual attendance for out-of-province travel. Factors such as cost and overall benefit to the Province should be considered.</p>	<p>This is already being done but it will be documented on the new online form.</p> <p>Implemented</p>
<p>6.41 ASD-W, ASD-N, and DSF-S establish documented approval processes for out-of-Province and international travel by Superintendents, including cost estimates and anticipated benefits. Actual benefits of travel should also be documented.</p>	<p>Same process as 6.31 but will be approved by the DEC Chair.</p> <p>Implemented</p>
<p>6.45 ASD-W, ASD-N, and DSF-S, as part of the approval process for out-of-Province and international travel, document evidence of having ensured availability of travel budget dollars, including having considered overall school district budget pressures.</p>	<p>Training budgets are set in advance on an annual basis and it is from these budgets that decisions are made on whether or not to allow participation in training.</p> <p>Implemented</p>
<p>6.47 ASD-W, ASD-N, and DSF-S ensure financial performance reporting (budget-actual) is made readily available to the public.</p>	<p>This information is already available in public documents of the District Education Council on the DSF-S website.</p> <p>Implemented</p>

Section 2 – Includes the reporting periods for years three (2021-2022), four (2020-2021) and five (2019-2020).

NAME AND YEAR OF AUDIT AREA WITH LINK TO ONLINE DOCUMENT	RECOMMENDATIONS	
	TOTAL	IMPLEMENTED
2021-2022 N/A	N/A	N/A
2020 Financial Audit Results (including payroll and Gestion systems) Recommendations re. teachers' payroll system (Gestion and EPAY)	2	2
2020 V1 Chapter 2: School Infrastructure Planning https://agnb-vgnb.ca/content/dam/agnb-vgnb/pdf/Reports-Rapports/2020V1/Chap2e.pdf Chapter 2, pages 13 to 89	14	10 implemented 3 underway 1 N/A
2019-2020 N/A	N/A	N/A

REPORT ON THE *PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE ACT*

As provided under section 18(1) of the *Public Interest Disclosure Act*, the chief executive shall prepare a report of any disclosures of wrongdoing that have been made to a supervisor or designated officer of the portion of the public service for which the chief executive officer is responsible. The Department received no disclosure of wrongdoing in the 2023-2024 fiscal year.

APPENDIX A

Grade 12 Exit Survey—Anglophone Sector

How do you feel about each of the following statements?	*2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
My learning is interrupted by the behaviour problems of other students.	Not available	28.2%	32.4%	39.3%	38.9%
My school is a place where I felt like I belonged.	Not available	64.8%	63.2%	62.5%	66.0%
Students are generally well-behaved outside of the classroom (e.g., in the hallways, on the bus, on school property).	Not available	66.4%	54.1%	46.0%	43.6%
Discipline is managed effectively at my school.	Not available	67.8%	61.3%	58.6%	60.3%
Students are generally well-behaved in class.	Not available	87.5%	81.6%	76.2%	75.0%
I felt respected at my school.	Not available	78.1%	76.9%	75.4%	77.1%
I enjoyed my school experience.	Not available	69.1%	68.9%	68.3%	72.0%
If I had a problem, there was an adult I could talk to at my school.	Not available	81.5%	78.9%	80.8%	83.2%
I feel safe at my school.	Not available	85.4%	82.3%	81.9%	80.5%

*The Anglophone Sector survey was not carried out for the 2019-2020 school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic and closure of schools.

Grade 12 Exit Survey—Francophone Sector

How do you feel about each of the following statements?	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
My learning is interrupted by the behaviour problems of other students.	37.2%	34.3%	36.7%	42.5%	42.5%
My school is a place where I feel I belong.	73.2%	71.4%	74.9%	70.3%	73.2%
Students are generally well-behaved outside of the classroom (e.g., in the hallways, on the bus, on school property).	71.9%	82.5%	71.4%	70.0%	67.2%
Discipline is managed effectively.	74.9%	81.4%	79.1%	76.4%	74.4%

Students are generally well-behaved in class.	86.6%	91.7%	90.6%	86.3%	85.3%
I felt respected.	85.2%	86.8%	87.9%	84.4%	82.0%
I enjoyed my school experience.	78.4%	79.2%	78.8%	76.8%	78.2%
An adult was available to listen to me if I had a problem.	85.4%	84.5%	85.3%	86.4%	85.7%
It is a safe environment.	89.7%	89.1%	90.6%	89.5%	87.4%

APPENDIX B

OFFICE OF TEACHER CERTIFICATION 2023-2024 STATISTICS

Teaching Certificates Issued			
CERTIFICATE LEVEL	FEE	MALE/FEMALE DISTRIBUTION	TOTAL
Certificate IV	\$70.00	16/94	110
Certificate V	\$70.00	101/365	466
Certificate VI	\$70.00	52/196	248
Interim Certificate IV	\$120.00	13/31	44
Interim Certificate V	\$120.00	7/21	28
Interim Certificate VI	\$120.00	3/4	7
Total			903
Principal's Certificate	\$60.00	21/70	91

Other Documents Issued by Teacher Certification	
Letters of Professional Standing	248
Work Experience Recognition Letters	483

Suspension and Revocation of Teaching Certificates	
Revocation	2
Suspension	0

APPENDIX C

Provincial assessment data (anglophone) 2023-2024

Most provincial assessments are conducted in April/May and results are provided to schools prior to the end of the school year.

ASSESSMENT	STUDENTS AT APPROPRIATE OR ABOVE (%)	CHANGE FROM 2022-2023 (PERCENTAGE POINT CHANGE)	TARGET 2025-2026 (%)
Grade 4 English Reading	55.6	-1.0	90
Grade 4 Scientific Literacy	73.9	-1.0	90
Grade 5 Mathematics	53.3	3.1	90
Grade 5 French Immersion Reading	74.9	1.5	90
Grade 6 English Reading	76.0	6.7	90
Grade 6 Scientific Literacy	75.6	3.1	90
Grade 7 Mathematics	48.0	4.4	90
Grade 7 French Second Language Reading			
- Post-Intensive French Reading	49.3	22.4	90
- Early French Immersion (Grade 1)	67.6	0.7	
- Late French Immersion (Grade 6)	62.1	4.2	
Grade 8 Scientific Literacy	75.1	7.9	90
Grade 9 English Language Proficiency	82.2	1.9	90
Grade 10 French Second Language Reading			
- Post-Intensive French Reading	44.6	-8.1	90
- Early French Immersion (Grade 3)	70.7	-7.9	
- Late French Immersion (Grade 6)	54.1	-8.4	

ASSESSMENT	STUDENTS AT APPROPRIATE OR ABOVE (%)	CHANGE FROM 2022-2023 (PERCENTAGE POINT CHANGE)	TARGET 2025-2026 (%)
<i>Percentage at Intermediate or higher oral proficiency</i> Grade 6 French Second Language Oral Proficiency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Post-Intensive French Reading - Early French Immersion (Grade 1) - Late French Immersion (Grade 6) 	1.7 38.1 2.1	Change from most recent administration (2021-22) +1.1 +0.8 +2.1	70
Grade 12 French Second Language Oral Proficiency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Post-Intensive French - Early French Immersion (Grade 3) - Late French Immersion (Grade 6) 	9.9 97.0 93.7	-11.7 -2.2 -6.3	90

Note: Grades 6 and 10 FSL Oral Proficiency assessments are administered in alternating years. The comparison year for the grade 6 results is 2021–2022, for grade 10 it is 2020–2021.

Note: Grade 10 results for 2022-23 could not be released as a technological difficulty was encountered during the administration period.

Students in the grade 6 Post-Intensive French and Late French Immersion programs are not expected to reach the Intermediate level of proficiency at this grade. The results are presented this way to facilitate comparison with the grade 10 and 12 results.

Results for the grade 12 Oral Proficiency assessments represent only those students who met the program participation requirements according to Policy 309 – *French Second Language Programs*.

APPENDIX D

Results of provincial assessments 2023-2024 (francophone)

The Early Childhood Assessment – Teacher Observation includes two observations: The pre-test carried out in the fall and the post-test carried out in May.

Early childhood assessment - Teacher observation				
School Year	Children who have been assessed	Children at TAL 2 or 3 post-evaluation*	Children at TAL 1 post-evaluation	% of children having passed ELE-TO
2020-2021	2079	484	1595	76.7
2021-2022	2135	565	1570	73.5
2022-2023	2205	580	1625	73.7
2023-2024	2182	490	1692	77.5

* These children are considered to be at risk.
 TAL – teaching adapted by level
 ELE-TO – Early Learning Evaluation – Teacher Observation

The following assessments were all administered in the spring of 2024.

SUCCESS RATE (%)							
Provincial Evaluations	2019	2020/2021	2022	2023	2024	Variation 2022 to 2023	Targets 2025-2026
Reading 2	74.8		61.6	60.2	61.5	+1.3	90
Reading 3	62.5		63.2	68.8	70.1	+1.3	90
Mathematics 3	81.0		63.6	63.2	68.2	+5.0	85
Writing 4	76.0*		70.2	60.0	68.3	+8.3	85
Mathematics 6	71.9		54.1	68.2	62.4	-5.8	85
Reading 7	66.6*		69.3	75.2	73.8	-1.4	85
Writing 7	69.0*		52.9	62.5	62.8	+0.3	85
Mathematics 8	73.7		53.3	52.3	53.0	+0.7	85
Sciences and technology 8				60.3*	59.7	-0.6	85

* First administration

For most assessments, we noted a slight improvement compared with 2023 results. However, several primary assessment results remain relatively weak compared with pre-COVID results. This is particularly the case in mathematics, especially in grades 3 and 8, where pass rates are still more than 12 percentage points below those of 2019.

The Reading and Writing Skills Test and Numeracy Skills Test are administered online annually. Passing both tests is a graduation requirement. Students who fail either of those tests may retake them in grade 11 and grade 12, if applicable.

Success rate (%)					
Provincial Evaluations		2023	2024	Variation 2023 to 2024	Targets 2025-2026
Reading and Writing Skills Test	Grade 10	75.7*	74.2	-1.5	85
	Grade 11		58.1		65
	Cohort 2025		82.2		90
Numeracy Skills Test	Grade 10	79.3*	79.7	+0.4	85
	Grade 11		62.9		65
	Cohort 2025		82.6		90
* First					

Within the regular program cohort that will be graduating in June 2025, the percentage of students in grade 10 or 11 who passed the Reading and Writing Skills Test requirements is 82.2% and for the Numeracy Skills Test, 82.6%.