

Director's Annual Report 2022-2023

**Creating
Confident
Learners**

**Engaging
Communities**

**Demonstrating
Ethical
Stewardship**



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A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION



This is a substantial review of the GECDSB's work in the 2022-23 school year. Having taken over as Director of Education from Erin Kelly in September of 2023, I have a greater understanding of the effort and the challenges inherent in leading an organization of this scope. I am grateful for the work that Director Kelly did in guiding the achievement of the board.

It is with great pride that I submit this annual report on my predecessor's behalf and conscientiously commit to continue the work in alignment with our strategic priorities. I have assumed the initiative to diligently follow the established vision and mission in a climate of collaboration and understanding, with student success and well-being at the core.

I encourage you to invest the time to review this document and witness how we are building tomorrow together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Vicki Houston', written over a light blue background.

Vicki Houston
Director of Education



SENIOR TEAM



Vicki Houston
Director Of Education



Shelley Armstrong
Superintendent of
Business



Todd Awender
Superintendent of Education
School Design and Information Technology



Joe Bell
Superintendent of Education
Student Well-being



Chris Boulay
Superintendent of
Human Resources



Kari Bryant
Superintendent of Education
Elementary Staffing



Shelly Duben
Superintendent of Education
Student Success and
Alternative Education



Dr. Clara Howitt
Superintendent of Education
Justice, Inclusion, Equity and Diversity



Chris Mills
Superintendent of Education
Special Education



Raquel Roberts
Superintendent of Education
Curriculum/Program



Ros Salvador
Human Rights and Equity
System Advisor



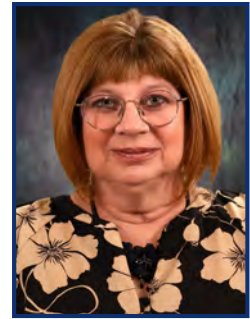
2022-2023 BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Gale Hatfield
Chairperson of the Board



Nancy Armstrong
Trustee - Leamington and Pelee Island



Connie Buckler
Trustee - Lakeshore and Tecumseh



Julia Burgess
Trustee - Essex and Kingsville



Sarah Cipkar
Trustee - Wards 3, 4 and 10



Cathy Cooke
Vice-Chairperson of the Board



Ron Le Clair
Trustee - Amherstburg and Lasalle



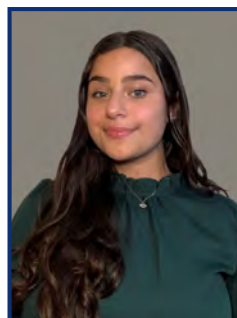
Kim McKinley
Trustee - Wards 1, 2 and 9



Christie Nelson
Trustee - Wards 3, 4 and 10



Linda Qin
Trustee - Wards 1, 2 and 9



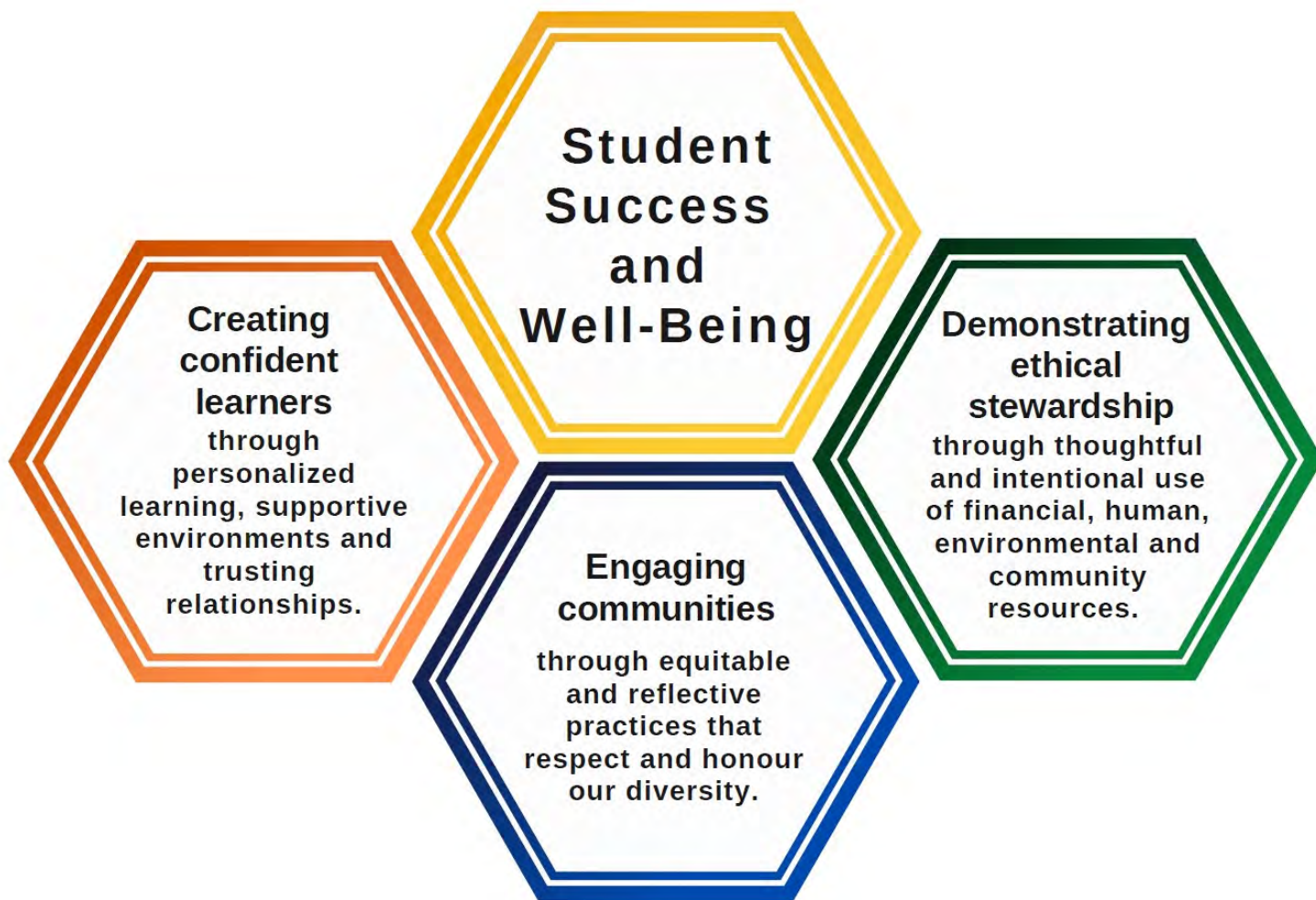
Ayah Khanafer
Student Trustee - City of Windsor



Paige Hawkins
Student Trustee - Essex County



STRATEGIC PLAN



Vision

Building tomorrow together

Mission

Leading excellence in public education by creating confident learners, engaging diverse communities and demonstrating ethical stewardship

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



We acknowledge

that we are on land and surrounded by water,
originally inhabited by Indigenous Peoples who have
travelled this area since time immemorial.

This territory is within the lands honoured by the Wampum Treaties;
agreements between the Anishinaabe (Ah-nish-e-naa-bay),
Haudenosaunee (Hoe-den-oh-show-nee),
Lenni Lenape (Len-eh Le-naw-pay) and allied Nations
to peacefully share and care for the resources
around the Great Lakes.

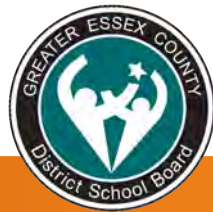
Specifically, we would like to acknowledge the presence of the
Huron/Wendat (Wen-dat) Peoples and the

Three Fires Confederacy

Ojibwe (Oh-jib-way), Odawa (Oh-dah-wah),
Potawatomi (Paw-taw-watt-oh-me).

We are dedicated to honouring Indigenous history and culture
while remaining committed to moving forward respectfully
with all First Nations, Inuit and Métis.





CREATING CONFIDENT LEARNERS

through personalized learning, supportive environments and trusting relationships.

SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAMS

Creating
Confident
Learners

The GECDsB offers a variety of summer learning programs for students from Grade 2 through to high school. These camps and programs help students to learn new things through active, inquiry-based activities. Grade 8 students practice their academic and social skills prior to the transition from elementary to secondary school. Some highlights from our 2023 summer learning programs are included below.

CAMP WONDER, MIGIZI AND LINGO

81%

of marker students demonstrated growth in developing skills to decode unfamiliar words when reading, to identify syllables, and to segment familiar and unfamiliar words when listening. The average growth was 7%.

80%

of marker students demonstrated growth in developing language comprehension skills, using background knowledge, vocabulary and literacy knowledge. The average growth was 10%.

There was a focus on Grade 1 and 2 subtraction expectations related to decomposing, counting back, separating, comparing and relating addition and subtraction. 78% of the marker students demonstrated growth in using mental math strategies and relationships between numbers to solve subtraction problems involving whole numbers. The average growth was 13%.

CAMP DISCOVERY

93%

of students improved their skills based on the Quick Spelling Survey pre and post-tests. The average growth was 8%. Students also improved their skills based on the Quick Phonics Screener pre and post-tests. The average growth was 11%.

87%

of students rated their Academic Self-Efficacy as moderate or high.

CAMP MERVEILLE

At Camp Merveille there was a focus on word recognition for grade 2 and 3 students.

97%

of the marker students demonstrated growth in developing skills to decode unfamiliar words when reading and developing skills to identify syllables and segment familiar and unfamiliar words when listening—the average growth was 13%.



SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAMS

Creating
Confident
Learners

CAMP MKEKA AND CAMP NIA

86%

of parents indicated that the camp significantly boosted their child's self-esteem and self-image.

96%

of students expressed a strong sense of belonging at camp.

100%

- of the students shared that they thoroughly enjoyed the learning experiences and the activities.
- of the students enrolled in the camp because they desire a sense of community and a deeper exploration of their Black history.
- of the parents/guardians expressed their intention to re-enroll their child in this program.
- of the parents/guardians appreciated that their child had the opportunity to learn about their history, as well as the provision of free programming and lunches, which contributed to their child's sense of belonging.
- of the staff reported that the field trips and guest speakers were effective in helping students grasp the material and stimulate their critical thinking.

Most students highlighted that one enduring takeaway from the program was gaining a deeper understanding of their cultural heritage.

"I joined because I knew I had to learn more about my culture. I didn't have much of my Black family members around me growing up." -- Camp Nia student, Grade 10

REACHING AHEAD



July 2023 marked the 9th successful summer for the Reaching Ahead program. Students across 14 sections earned their first full secondary school credit in GLD20 – Discovering the Workplace.

- **349** students enrolled in June 2023
- **321** credits were issued to the students in August 2023.

The fully in-person course offering allowed students to:

- meet new friends.
- learn to navigate around their secondary school.
- learn about the benefits of volunteering and finding a part-time job.



OPEN MINDS PROGRAM

Creating
Confident
Learners



A student-centred, holistic approach is the foundation of the GECSB Open Minds team. Members believe that all First Nations, Inuit and Métis students are entitled to an equal chance to thrive, and they have the resources as well as the motivation to achieve their goals.

While data and analytics play a role in the Open Minds program – the approach is elemental, establishing relationships, identifying and removing barriers to success and improving families' confidence in their children's education.

There is a focus on math and literacy but within the context of FNMI cultures and lived experiences. Art is used to make connections and develop story-telling skills along with language courses in Oneida and Ojibway. This year students participated in lacrosse workshops at the University of Windsor, introductions to skilled trades and creating a mural at Lakeshore Discovery School during Indigenous History Month. Along with the families and the community, there were painting and cultural nights and the Winter Round Dance.

The Open Minds team was also helpful this year in strengthening understanding and knowledge throughout the Board supporting Every Child Matters and Treaties Recognition education for all students as well as the expansion of Indigenous literature in classrooms and libraries.



STUDENT WELL-BEING PILOT PROGRAM

Creating
Confident
Learners

Creating the best possible conditions for learning and teaching can often be as natural and simple as respiration.

Following her appointment, in April of 2022, Special Assignment Teacher for Student Well-being Jodi Nolin spent the past school year breathing new life into classrooms across the Board.

The original visits in the Mindful Classroom pilot project were designed to introduce Mindfulness to students throughout the board and to gather data on how to enhance and improve delivery of the program for the greatest effect. One vital statistic collected was that more than half the students -regardless of grade level – said that they have difficulty sleeping at night. Eighty-five percent liked the information they received and found it interesting.

The focus became, in the first full year, on building capacity in the system to regulate attention and emotions. To create truly healthy learning environments, the lessons of mindfulness had to be reinforced. They also needed to become more inclusive, equitable and diverse, as well as sensitive to previous trauma.

The pilot also demonstrated that there was a need and a demand for the program among staff and how it can support teachers in their classrooms.

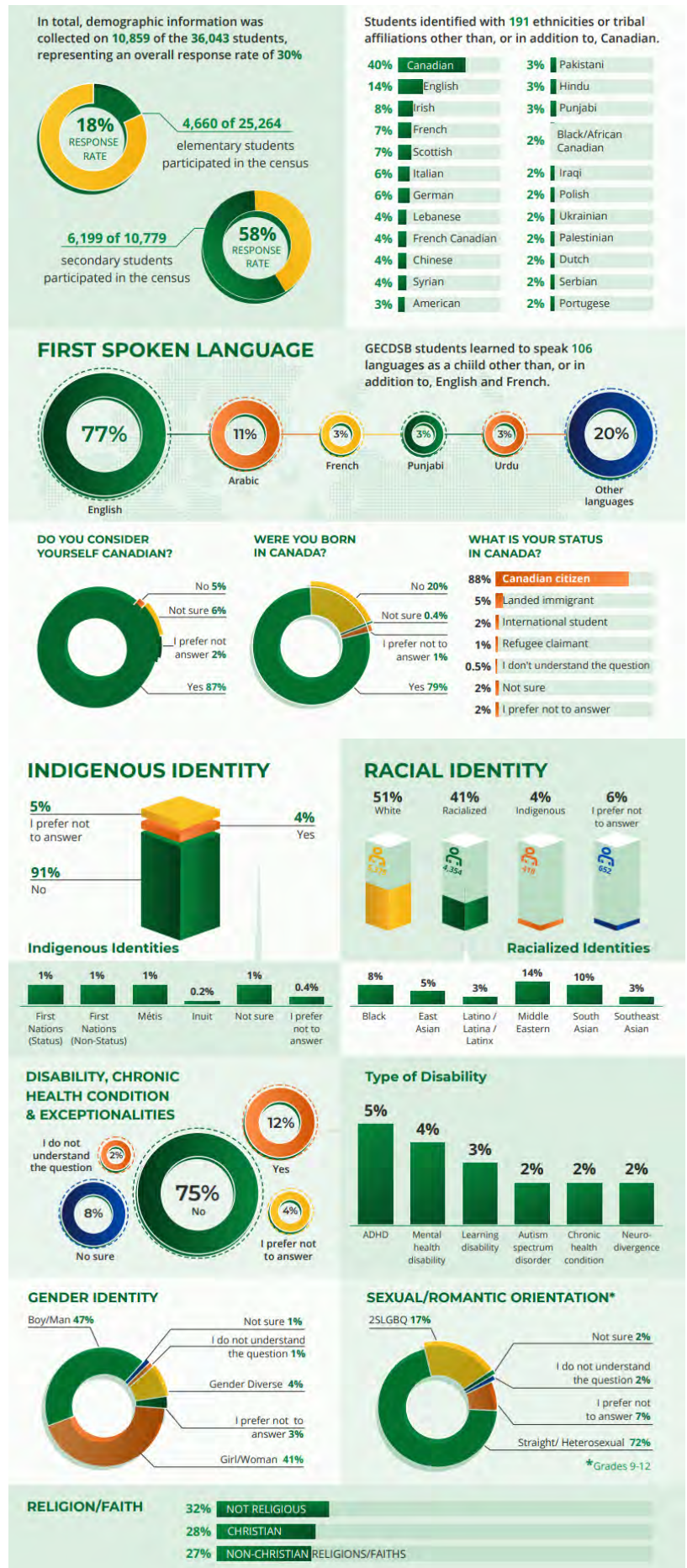


2022-2023 STUDENT CENSUS

The GECD SB conducted its first [Student Census](#) in April and May 2023 to understand the unique experiences of the student population with the goal of reducing inequities among students and better serving their varied needs.

The Board partnered with Turner Consulting Group to develop and administer the Student Census and to analyze the findings.

This first report summarizes the data on the diversity of the student population. It will be followed by additional reports that analyze the academic achievement and school experiences of students from specific demographic groups.



EMPLOYMENT SYSTEMS REVIEW

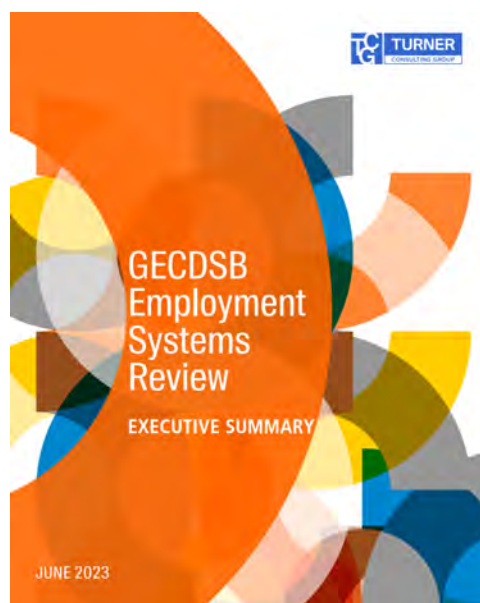
Creating
Confident
Learners

The GECDSB is committed to creating and maintaining a diverse workforce and inclusive work environment. We want to have a workplace where each of us can contribute to and benefit from the success of the organization.

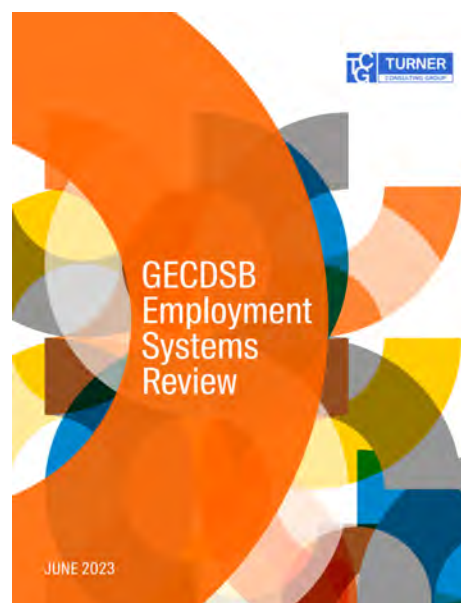
In order to help us achieve this goal, we hired Turner Consulting Group to conduct an Employment Systems Review, including virtual focus groups, in November and December of 2022. Over 3,000 individuals shared their perspectives and experiences as employees of our board, resulting in the identification of several key issues and gaps. The report outlines the following key priorities:

- Diversify the workforce at all levels
- Create more equitable policies and practices
- Create a more inclusive and welcoming work environment
- Strengthen the organization's equity infrastructure

While identifying these key priorities is an important first step, we recognize that the thoughtful and well-coordinated, long-term implementation of the recommendations will result in lasting change within our organization. An action plan is being developed and will be shared with staff and the community upon its completion.



[Executive Summary:
Employment Systems Review](#)



[Employment Systems Review](#)

HEALTH AND SAFETY WEEK

Creating
Confident
Learners

To some, occupational health and safety is a sombre subject, but it had its moment in the sun during a celebration at W.F. Herman Academy. The special day was proclaimed in order to raise awareness about the importance of physical and mental health and safety in the workplace.

The GECDSD's enthusiastic Health and Safety Officer, Tim Lauzon, addressed the gathering of students, staff, senior administration, Trustees and special guests, "This event provides us with the opportunity to further promote workplace health and safety through education, safety and health rights, responsibilities and prevention measures."

Education is the key to health and safety awareness, particularly for young people. 13,000 GECDSD secondary students completed Ontario's "Worker Health and Safety Awareness in 4 Steps" training.

Special guest speaker, Dr. Joel Moody, Chief Prevention Officer for the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Skilled Trades explained his roles and restated the Ministry's commitment to ensuring that all Ontarians feel safe at work and return home healthy and whole. "Everyone that we know has a responsibility and a role about keeping themselves and their workplaces healthy and safe. For example, workers have a duty to report and employers have a duty to address these problems. We at the Ministry will ensure that this happens. As a young worker...you have to ask. Do not be afraid to question what you are doing when you are on the job."

W.F. Herman Academy secondary students spoke about their experience incorporating Health and Safety training in their work and school experiences. Denese, Gauge and Zoey elaborated on the training they have received on the job and emphasized the importance of the Worker Health and Safety Awareness in 4 Steps training, particularly when it comes to advocating for themselves and their safety at work.

On April 28th the GECDSD honoured the Workers Day of Mourning by hosting a flag-lowering ceremony at Riverside Secondary School, remembering those who have lost their lives, suffered accidents, injuries or illness on the job, or experienced a work-related tragedy. All Board facilities lowered their flags to half-mast to observe the Day of Mourning.



INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS PROGRAM

Creating
Confident
Learners



In the 2022-23 school year, the GECDSB welcomed 158 K-12 students from 20 different countries, including; China, Japan, France, Spain, Vietnam, Brazil, Italy, Hong Kong, and Australia. When students select the GECDSB to continue their education, they find a rewarding and enriching experience. Our International program helps foster cultural immersion, languages, academic and personal growth.

Student Testimonials

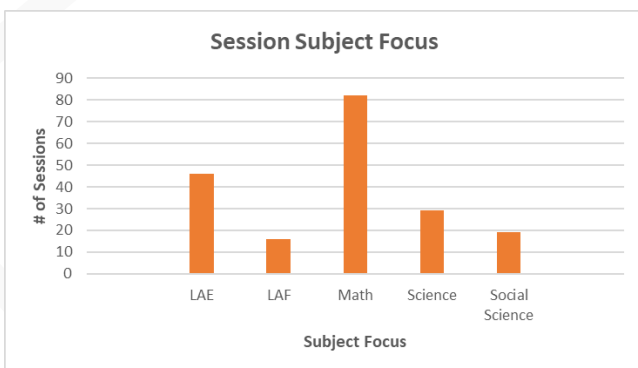


"Canadian high school is really different from Spanish educational system. Personally, what I like the most is projects and interactive activities that are promoted in the classroom"

"My school is so nice. There are many nice students which like to make friends with me. Teachers always care about my studies."

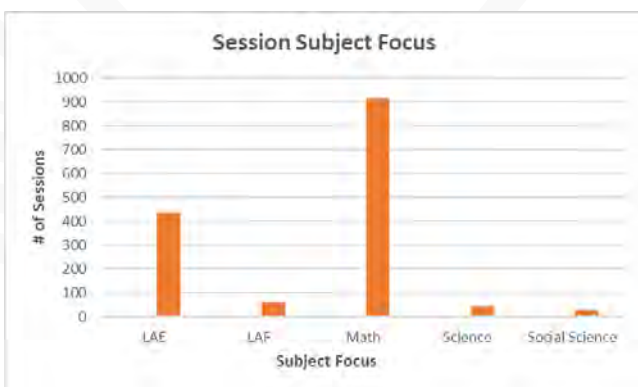
HOMEWORK HELP

Once again the board offered homework help to our students. The program ran from November 20th to March 31st. A virtual and In-school program focused on math, literacy, french, geography, social studies and history.



Virtual Tutoring

- Grades 4-8
- Number of Tutors – 6
- Number of sessions - 176
- Number of Students (at least 1 session) – 97

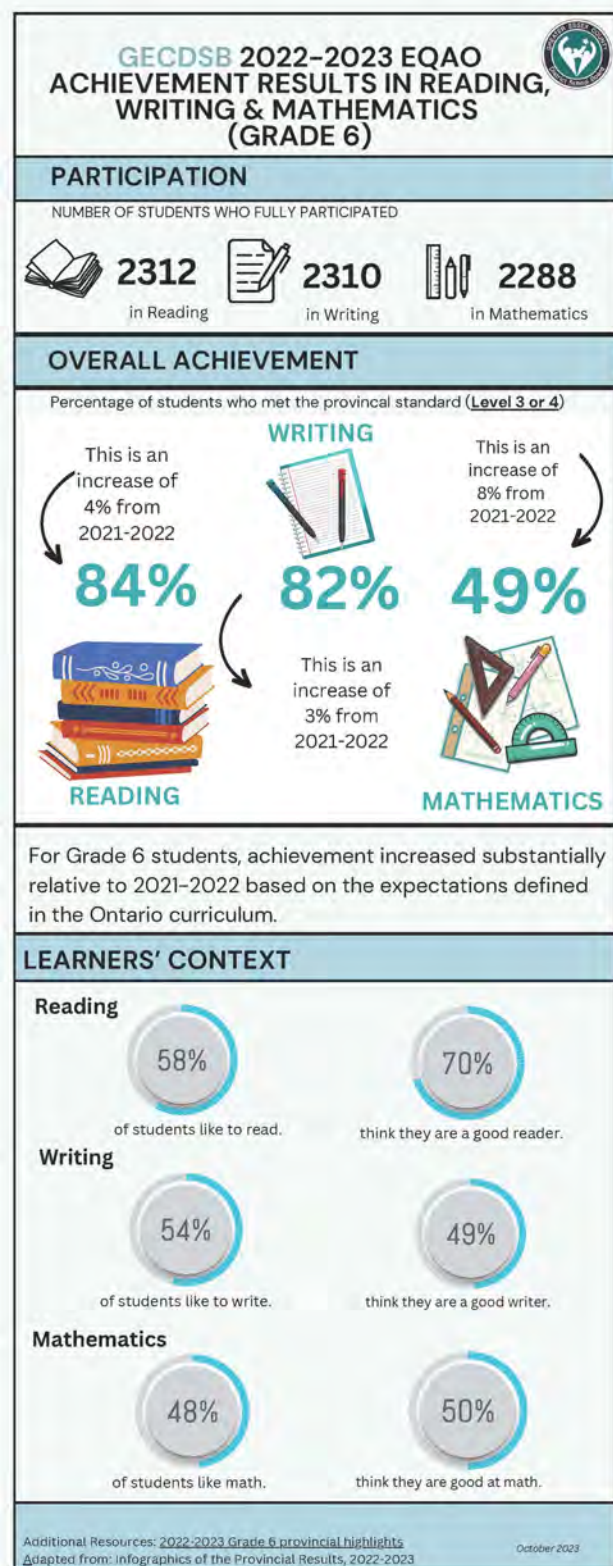
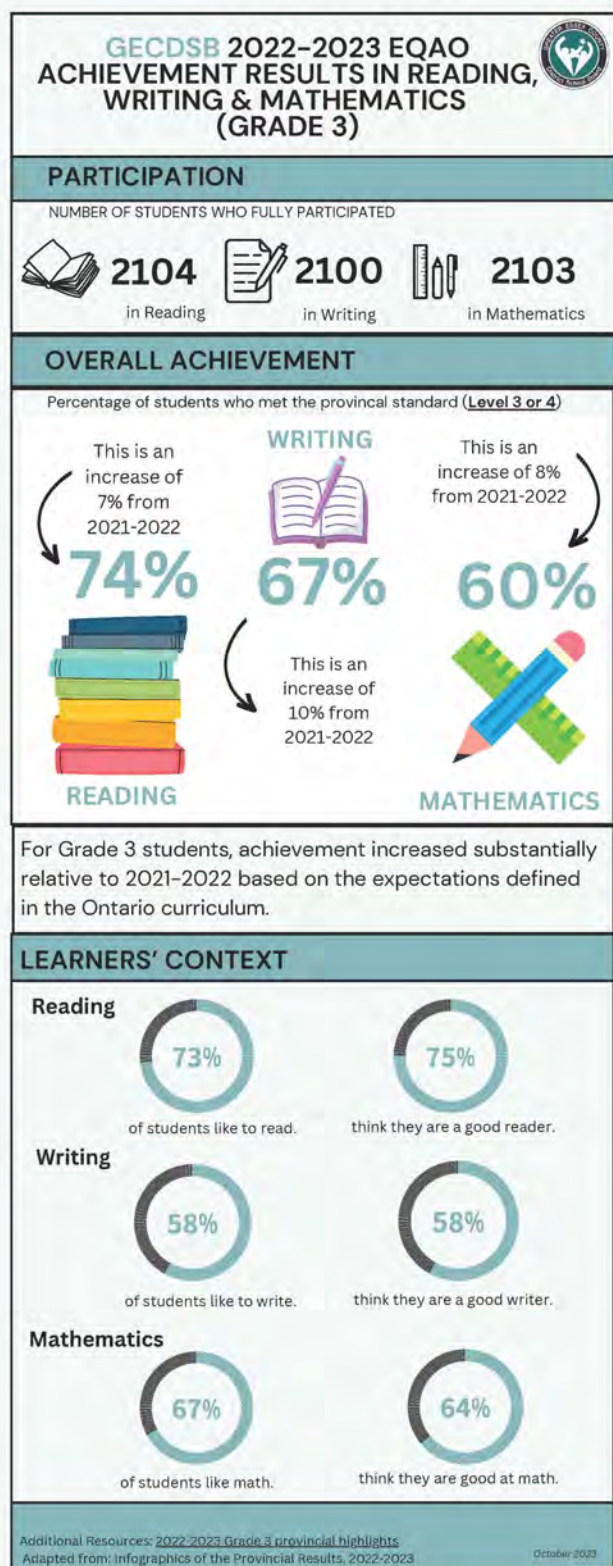


In-School Tutoring

- Grades 4-8
- Number of Schools – 14
- Number of Tutors – 16
- Number of Students (at least 1 session) – 188

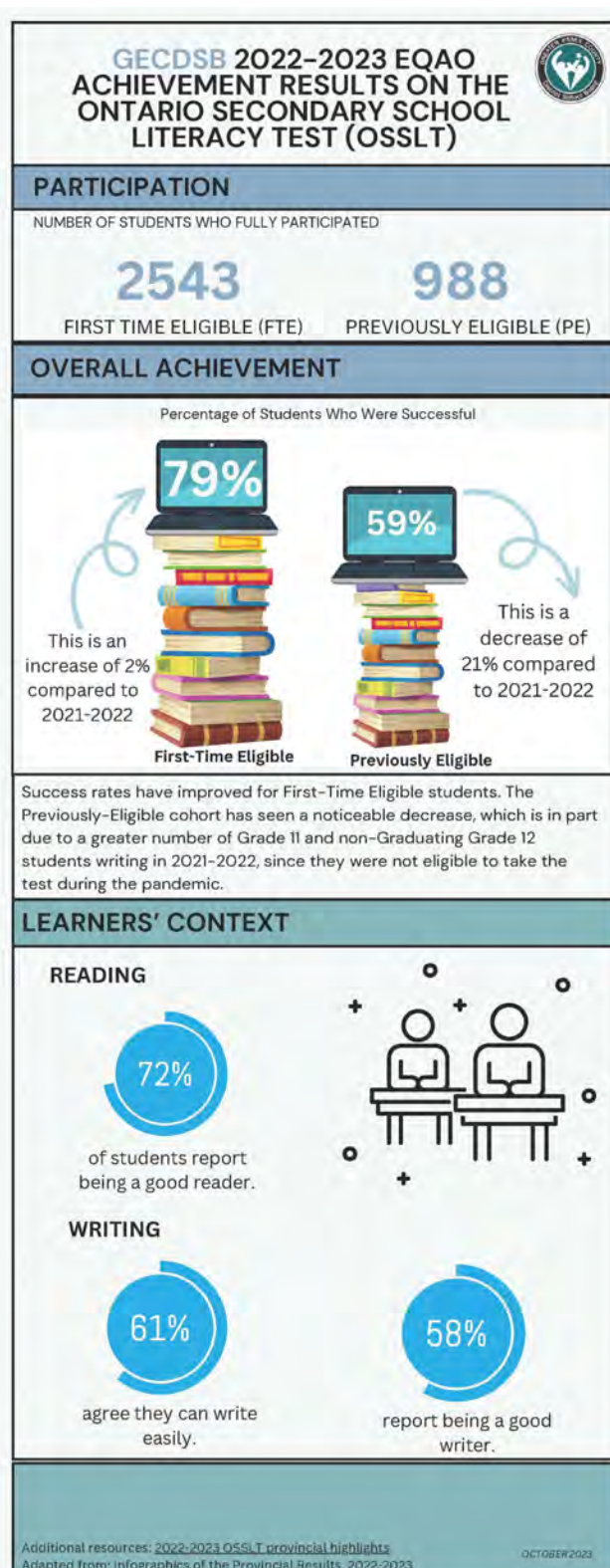
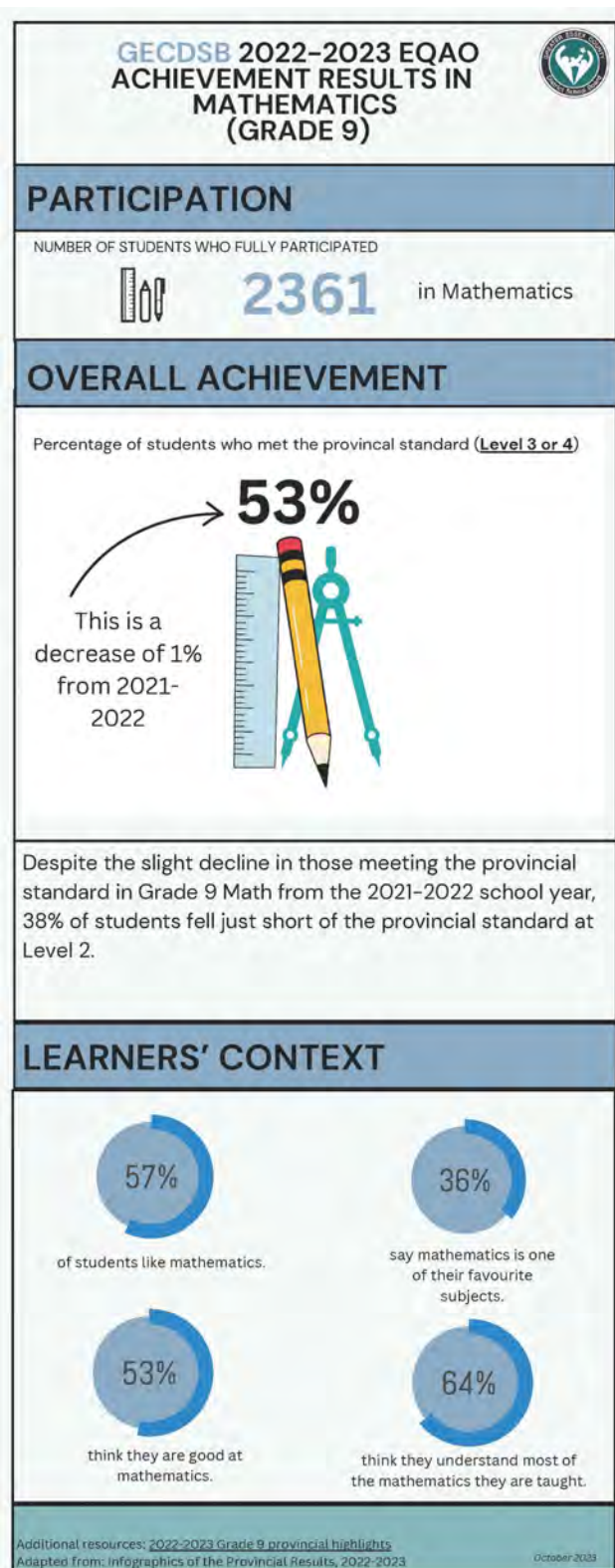
2022-2023 GECDSB EQAO RESULTS

Creating
Confident
Learners



2022-2023 GECDSB EQAO RESULTS

Creating
Confident
Learners





ENGAGING COMMUNITIES

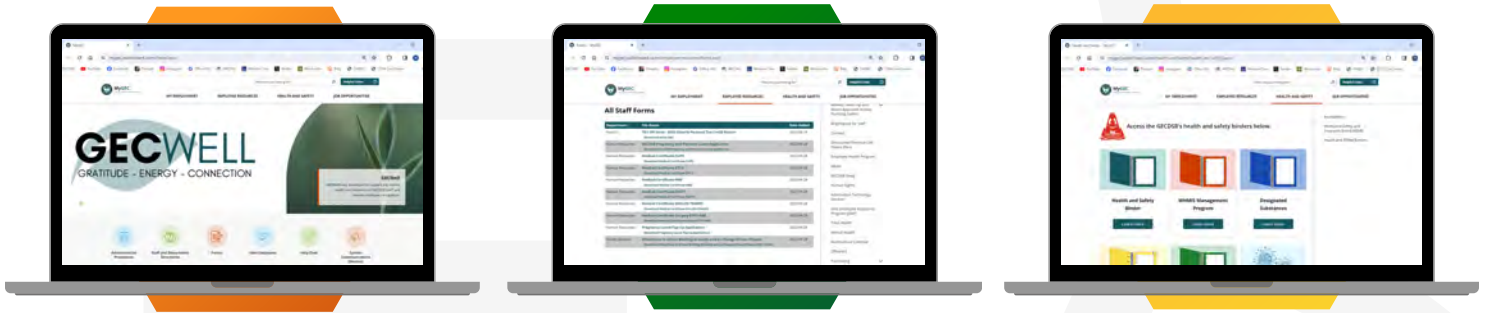
through equitable and reflective practices
that respect and honour our diversity.

COMMUNICATIONS



The GECDSB continues to elevate our approach to communication with staff, students, families and the community.

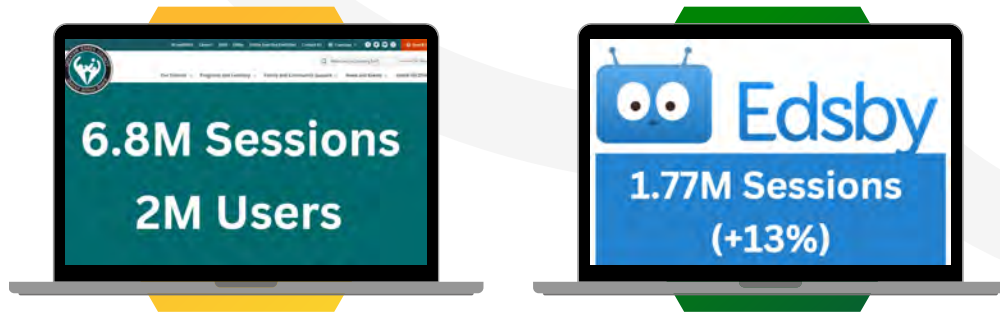
In early 2023 the board launched MyGEC, a new approach to the staff intranet. Staff can visit MyGEC to access forms, administrative procedures, employee resources, wellness materials, internal job opportunities and more.



We continue to use social media as a reliable communication vehicle and are seeing continued growth and engagement across most channels.



Edsby and our new board and school websites are also key aspects of our communication strategy. Both platforms have seen continued year-over-year growth.



DISMANTLING ANTI-BLACK RACISM

Engaging
Communities

The GECDsB's Dismantling Anti-Black Racism Strategy was introduced on May 19th, 2022. The following principles guided the development of the strategy and have continued to guide its implementation over the past year:

1. Anti-Black racism is a systemic problem in education.
2. Poor education outcomes reflect systemic biases, not ability.
3. Black parents and communities must be engaged as partners in their child's education.
4. Urgent change is needed.
5. Ideology and culture need to change, not only behaviours.
6. The Board will adopt a learning mindset when implementing this strategy.
7. The measures of progress for Black students and staff will be outcomes, not activities.
8. Accountability and transparency.



2022-2023 Implementation Highlights

All Supervisory Officers and school-based administrators participated in duty to accommodate training as well as training focused on Human Rights, Privilege, Truth and Reconciliation, and anti-Black racism/ bias in education.

Culturally Responsive and Relevant Pedagogy (CRRP) training was designed and delivered to all secondary English teachers and English Department Heads.

Review of Literature Kits, Book Rooms, English Literacy Kits and Library Review

In March 2023, letters were provided to parents/guardians and students as to GECDsB's commitment to fostering learning environments free from harassment and discrimination, and the process for reporting.

The n-word directive was provided to staff in the Fall of 2022 on a professional development day.

A student census was administered in the spring of 2023.

Black Student Advisory Committee (BSAC) was formed.

The Black, African and/or Caribbean Tutoring Support Program was created.

Black Graduation Coach and Create Your Future Program support continued in 2022-2023.

Camp Nia and Camp Mkeka summer camps for Black students took place for the second year.

The Black Employee Network (BEN) was created.

The Employment Systems Review was administered.

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE



Providing supports for thousands of GECDsB students with Special Needs is an immense responsibility, carried out, primarily by our Special Education Department. But they are assisted by a motivated group of volunteers helping to improve the interests and well-being of children who are exceptional.

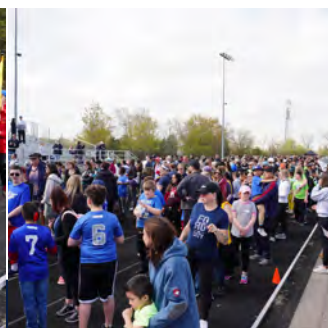
The Special Education Advisory Committee is comprised of representatives from a variety of community networks and associations in the region. They are complemented by board personnel including the Superintendent of Special Education, principals, the Supervisor of Psychological Services and Trustees.

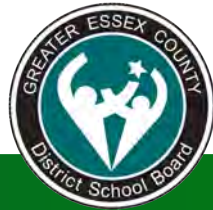
During the 2022-23 school year the volunteer delegates were from Community Living Essex County, Autism Ontario, Windsor Council of Home and School Associations, Learning Disabilities Association of Windsor-Essex, the Indigenous community, Windsor-Essex Down Syndrome Association and the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Ontario Network of Expertise.

Advocacy is one important aspect of members' roles but they also learned, through reports, this year about what is happening throughout the Board. Programs and initiatives such as the introduction of Symphony Math, the results of the Special Education Survey and a review of the Board's Special Education Plan were reviewed by the committee and feedback was offered.

Community members on SEAC also share information regarding the activities of their own organizations, to the benefit of all.

Name	Organization
Nancy Armstrong	GECDsB Trustee
Kim McKinley	GECDsB Trustee
Chris Mills	Superintendent of Special Education Services
Kristie Sweet	Supervising Principal of Special Education Services
Marc Crundwell	Supervisor of Psychological Services
Michelle Lowes	OPC Elementary Representative
Theresa Williams	OPC Secondary Representative
Louise Cervini	Indigenous Representative
Joanna Conrad	Windsor-Essex Down Syndrome Association
Martha Vukov	Community Living Windsor-Essex County
Sarah Yang	Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder/Ontario Network of Expertise
Mary-Ann Fuduric	Learning Disabilities Association of Windsor-Essex County
Tim McCarthy	Autism Ontario
Bette Turner	Trustee - Home and School Association





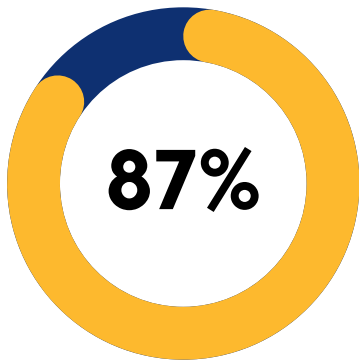
DEMONSTRATING ETHICAL STEWARDSHIP

through thoughtful and intentional use of financial,
human, environmental and community resources.

2022-2023 BUDGET



The GECD SB passed a balanced budget that supported operational and capital initiatives. The preparation of the 2022-23 budget was the responsibility of Senior Administration. It was prepared in compliance with applicable legislation, Canadian generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) established by the Public Sector Accounting Board (PSAB) of the Chartered Professional Accountants (CPA) of Canada as well as internal policies and procedures.



Operating Budget \$490,194,755

- \$401,912,529 Staff (Instructions, Administration, Governance)
- \$15,236,322 Transportation
- \$68,259,459 School Operations/Maintenance
- \$4,786,445 Other Non-Operating



Capital Budget \$72,049,062

- \$32,270,676 Capital Priorities - New Construction
- \$24,826,954 School Condition Improvement (SCI)
- \$5,486,610 Capital Projects - Renewal
- \$3,048,200 Child Care (including retrofitting school space)
- \$2,100,000 COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure Stream
- \$2,057,061 Minor Capital (Information Technology)
- \$1,280,072 Full Day Kindergarten (FDK)
- \$622,798 EarlyON Child and Family Centre
- \$217,585 Short-Term Interest on Capital
- \$139,106 Temporary Accommodations - Portables

Total Budget

\$562,243,817

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

Ethical
Stewardship

This Climate Action Plan was developed by the Greater Essex County District School Board to align with our local municipalities and assist in achieving our local and federal greenhouse gas reduction targets. Through the lens of demonstrating ethical stewardship, we acknowledge our duty to act and mitigate our individual contribution to global warming and ensure our larger community can adapt to expected future climate change. As a school board whose primary mission is to support and prepare youth for the future, we have a responsibility to teach and model sustainable practices, not only for our student body, but for our community as well.

The Climate Action Plan was developed in collaboration with IEAC, GECPIC, Student Senate, the Climate Action Committee and other external stakeholders.

[Read the
2023 Climate Action Plan](#)

OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL HIGHLIGHTS

- 9 Waste Audits were completed at Begley, Leamington Secondary, Prince Edward, Centennial Central, Lakeshore Discovery, Belle River Public School, Hugh Beaton, Walkerville and King Edward.
- Building upgrades, capital investment and water sampling has decreased daily flush schools to two locations compared to 7 locations in the previous school year.
- Completed 9 Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessments to prepare for the future sale or future use planning of our schools.
- Completed 4 Phase 2 Environmental Site Assessments to better understand the scope of potential environmental concerns on sites, to prepare for future sale or future use planning.
- Released first Board-wide environmental training on Brightspace to educate staff on aspects of the state of waste minimization in our schools.

141

Respect for
Wildlife Classroom
Visits

346

Class Presentations
and Labs

35

Recycling
Refresher Visits

300+

Students involved in
Eco-club and Lunch
Monitor Training

THE GROUND, ENGAGE, EXPRESS PROJECT (GEE)

Ethical Stewardship



2022-2023 marked the second year of the successful GEE (Ground, Engage, Express) Project.

The second year of the project supported United Way's Cradle to Career and On Track to Success programs as well as the GECDsB's Climate Action Plan and Board Improvement and Equity Plan.

Students who participated in the program took part in meaningful community service experiences, sustainable activism and civic engagement. In addition to earning hours toward their OSSD community involvement requirement, they also developed life skills such as gardening, cooking, sanding and painting through experiential learning.

Students helped to beautify a community space at an urban school in West Windsor using sustainable practices such as upcycling materials to create art and building tables. The students benefitted from lessons on literacy, earth and biological sciences, including gardening, pollination, butterfly ecosystems, health, and wellness.

The students involved took enjoyment from completing various projects and walked away feeling empowered to control their own circumstances. The program also fostered a sense of belonging by reinforcing the students' role in the community and exposing them to new networks of staff, community members and peers.

"I had no idea community service hours could be a fun thing to do!"
– GEE Project student



SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION

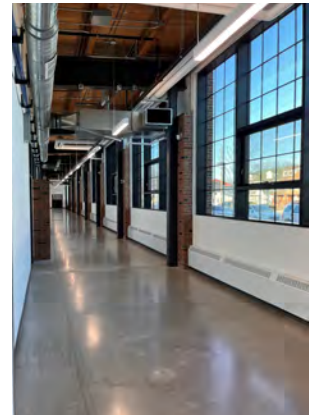
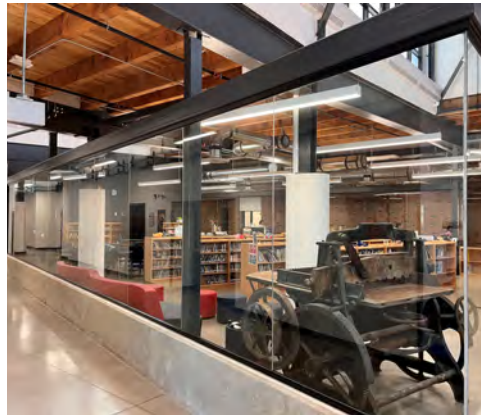


We had occasion to celebrate continued achievements in school construction and renovation in 2022-23. Mutually satisfying and beneficial relationships with the Ministry of Education and the Government of Ontario has allowed us to fulfil our objective to provide the best possible learning and working environments for students and staff.

In September, 2022 we opened North Star High School in Amherstburg, which replaced General Amherst High School and Western Secondary School. An investment of \$24.3 million, first announced in 2016, created 820 student spaces. That includes a fully accessible cafeteria and contemporary shops, which maintaining the tradition of skilled trades education established at both predecessor schools.



James L. Dunn Public School in Windsor also opened its doors to students and staff for the first time in September. This unique structure for 645 students combines the historic International Card Company factory building with contemporary school design. The entire cost of the project was \$15.23 million.



SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION

Eastview Horizon Public School, on Windsor's east side was progressing well. The new school community, bringing together the former Eastwood and Parkview schools was formed in September at the Eastwood site while they awaited completion of the new building on Stillmeadow Road. Near the end of the school year, following substantial completion, students and staff walked over to get introduced to their new home.



Approval of a brand new school in Lakeshore for 580 students was granted in 2021 and we found an appropriate piece of land for the building south of Highway 22 and east of Rourke Line Road. The design phase is underway and no completion date has yet been established.



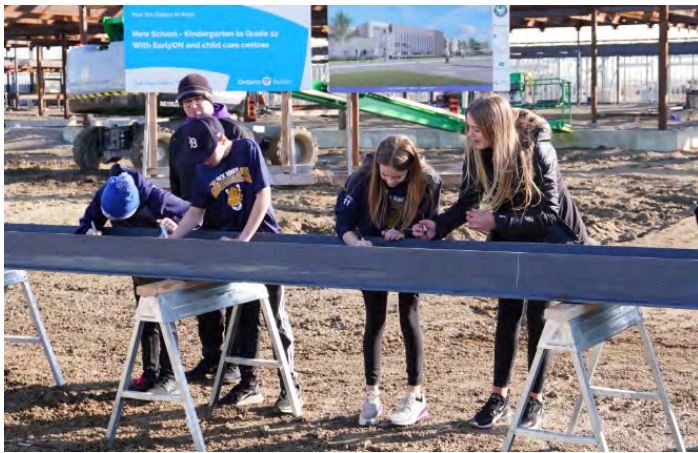
This year we also received a grant to build an addition to Legacy Oak Trail Public School in LaSalle, which first opened in 2021.



Meanwhile, as new buildings are erected throughout the district, there continues to be a lot of renovation and renewal of our older schools. In particular, millions of dollars is being invested in classic architecture at Kennedy and Walkerville collegiate institutes.

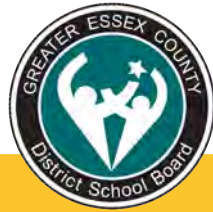
SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION

Construction also continued at sites in Kingsville and Tecumseh. Both buildings are expected to open for students and staff in September of 2024. The new K-12 school in Kingsville will combine the Jack Miner PS, Kingsville PS and the Kingsville District High School communities. In February students, staff and local dignitaries were invited to the work site to sign the final steel beam before it was raised to the roof and the structure closed in.



In March, we also staged a Celebration of Construction for the K-8 school on Tecumseh Road, which will accommodate 650 students when it opens. The cost of that project is \$22.5 million





GOOD NEWS AT THE GECDSB



ONTARIO ELEARNING CONSORTIUM RECOGNIZES GECDSB'S PETER PHINNEY

The Ontario eLearning Consortium is made up of 55 school boards across the province. The OeLC hosted their Field Operations meeting last week in Ottawa, where they presented the GECDSB's Technology Enabled Learning and Teaching Contact, Peter Phinney, with an award for Technological Development in eLearning.

The OeLC had the following to say regarding Peter's work on the D2L platform, "Peter's incredible development work with the Brightspace API (Application Programming Interface) is worthy of a nomination alone. It is the generous sharing of his knowledge and support with other OeLC boards that makes Peter so deserving of this recognition. He sees a way to make things better for eLearning educators within the Brightspace VLE (Virtual Learning Environment), acts on it, and then shares his developments. Amazing!

He has developed many API tools and widgets to create smooth and efficient workflows for online learning, and willingly shares his work with other boards. In addition, he has spent much of his own time providing support to numerous boards to deploy these APIs in their own VLE. This work has resulted in streamlined processes and procedures that help to support student learning in multiple boards across the province."



CHEF ADELINA DEBLASIS ACCEPTS THE NATIONAL CHEF OF THE YEAR AWARD

Chef Adelina DeBlasis has accepted the National Chef of the Year award from the Culinary Federation of Canada. Ms. DeBlasis is a secondary teacher at P.A.S.S. Secondary School and is an instrumental part of the Community Kitchen Program.



Founded in 1963, the Culinary Federation is a Canadian association of professional chefs and cooks who recognize three Regional Chefs of the Year and one National Chef of the Year annually. Adelina is only the 2nd person from Windsor to win National Chef of the Year (Hans Bueschkens won in 1974) and she is the 3rd female chef to win since 1965.

In order to be considered for this prestigious recognition Adelina was nominated and won the Chef of the Year for the Culinary Federation Central Region (Ontario) in April 2023. From there she and two other chefs from across Canada were eligible for the National Chef of the Year. This recognition is based on an individual's outstanding culinary skills, culinary contributions across Canada, dedication, and professionalism. It is the highest single achievement within Canada in the culinary sector. She was knighted with the Ceremonial Steel; only one of two in the world. The other is in Germany.

Adelina is also a member of the Canadian Culinary Olympic Team. As the Support Manager for Olympic Culinary Team Canada, she supports the team in training and prepping for competition as well as maintaining financials, fundraising initiatives, administration, public and social media relations and coordinating travel for practices, competition and events.

The team will be competing in the Culinary Olympics in Stuttgart, Germany in February of 2024.





BUTCH RICKEARD RECEIVES PRIME MINISTER'S AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

For 2 decades Phillip Rickeard (Butch as he's better known) has been an innovator, leader, mentor and inspiration. He is now, also, a recipient of the Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence.

Butch is being recognized for his "work and dedication to empowering students to be contributing members of their communities." He's somewhat of a paradox – a history teacher who has used the latest technology and information gathering to engage his students and enhance their learning about the past.

But it's not a high-tech free-for-all. Butch encourages quality work with credible sources promoting ethical and objective use of technology.

The Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence celebrate "remarkable achievements...and their commitment to preparing students for a digital and innovation-based economy." Butch has recently transitioned from being a Department Head at Leamington District Secondary School, with involvement in the International Baccalaureate Programme, to a position at the Public Alternative Secondary School (PASS). He works with young adults, ages 17-21, who have become disengaged and disenchanted with traditional learning helping them earn their Ontario Secondary School Diplomas.

Butch has been an advocate of student success and skill development for his entire teaching career emphasizing achievement through the development of individual character and community service.



KENNEDY AND MASSEY MUSLIM STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS RAISE FUNDS FOR UNITED WAY

Charity is one of the Muslim principles during the holy month of Ramadan. In 2022 students from Vincent Massey's Muslim Student Association (MSA) raised \$5,500 for the Windsor Downtown Mission. In 2023, the group partnered with the MSA from W.C. Kennedy Collegiate Institute to expand the initiative and continue to spread good will, giving back to the Windsor-Essex community.

KCI secondary teacher, Abdul Merhi, noted that Kennedy students were inspired by the work being done by the Massey MSA and were motivated to join them in their efforts. The group selected United Way as the recipient of their donation for 2023, ensuring the funds were supporting young people and education in our community.

Merhi elaborated on the students' efforts, "Both MSAs came together throughout the year to plan what this fundraiser would look like and what the message behind it would be. The overall focal point of the fundraiser is to point out that Ramadan is not only focused on fasting, but to give back to those in need. Students made sure that this was the driving force behind the fundraiser this year. As students got together, they planned out how they would send this message to their schools, how they would send that message to staff and how they would get administrative support to do all of it. Thankfully it's been very successful."

MSA members from Kennedy and Massey presented a cheque for \$6,500 to the United Way. United Way CEO Lorraine Goddard expressed the organization's gratitude for the students' efforts. "We're really very grateful for this generous donation from the MSA. These dollars are going to support our students in the On Track to Success program who are linked to our Cradle to Careers strategy which is really about supporting kids from the time they are born until the start of their career." Congratulations to Nabeeha, Safa, Shahad, Ahdi, Hadi, Afnan, Ayah and all members of the Muslim Student Associations at both Kennedy and Massey for their extensive fundraising efforts and ongoing dedication to our community.



NEW COMMUNITY MURAL BY MOSES LUNHAM ON DISPLAY AT LAKESHORE DISCOVERY

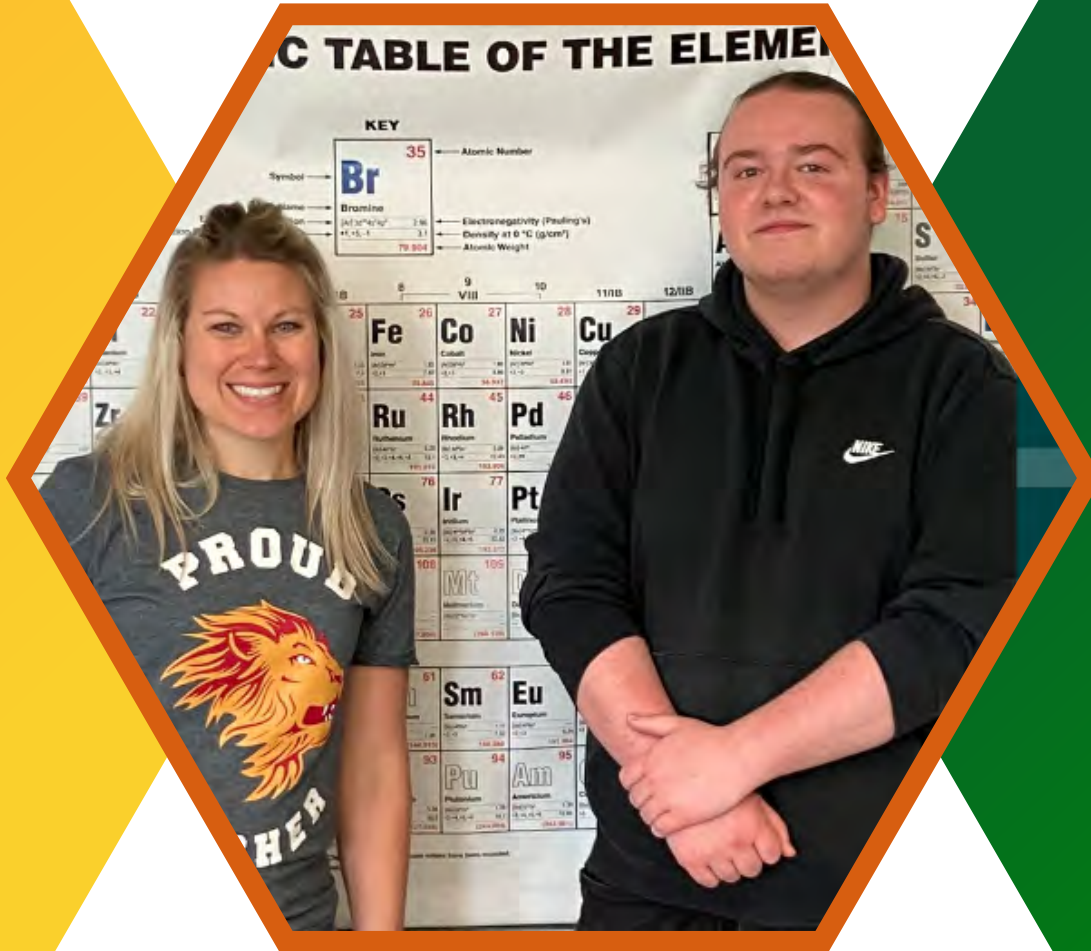
Under the guidance of renowned artist Moses Lunham, the Lakeshore Discovery school community came together for a community art project in May 2023.

Prior to any paint on canvas, participants met virtually to discuss the importance of community, belonging, inclusion and the place that everyone has at Lakeshore Discovery. Each class then came up with words that they would like to see reflected in the image. The suggestions were added to a word cloud and given to Mr. Lunham to inspire the mural that he created. More than 1,000 students, staff and community members contributed to the completed piece.

In June Moses was invited to join the students and staff to unveil the completed scene and share his thoughts on the process. "We spent a lot of time planning for this. One of the most important things was having students involved in the process. The visual was inspired by the word cloud, which included terms like community, kindness, respect for the environment and family."

One of the primary components of the painting revolves around "respect". Moses stated that it was challenging to incorporate the word, visually, into the mural but ultimately it was very important. "In my culture, when you think about respect, you're honouring all of creation. We all have that within us as something we can offer and being respectful is expressed through our actions. This painting is meant to illustrate that."

The mural is now on display in the main hallway at Lakeshore Discovery. Moses Lunham is Ojibway from Kettle and Stony Point First Nation and regularly joins classrooms throughout the GECDSB, teaching them to paint pieces that represent Indigenous strength and contributions.



LEAMINGTON DISTRICT SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENT ACCEPTS \$100,000 SCHULICH LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP

Academic excellence, leadership skills and an impressive work ethic have paid off for Leamington District Secondary School senior Matthew Kenney.

Matthew is among a select number of Canadian high school students to be awarded a \$100,000.00 Schulich Leadership scholarship and will be pursuing a B.Sc. in Chemical & Physical Sciences at McMaster University, after which he plans to pursue a doctorate degree. This is the first time a student at LDSS has been awarded this scholarship.

Matthew has demonstrated exceptional leadership in the school and community on issues related to environmental sustainability and food security and has focused his research on the impacts of chemical pollutants on the Great Lakes ecosystem. He graduated from the I.B. Programme with a 96% Grade 12 average.

The Greater Essex County District School Board, I.B. Coordinator Lisa Jeffery, LDSS Chemistry teacher Julia Dueckman and the entire LDSS staff and community are immensely proud of Matthew for this incredible accomplishment.



Syed Omer Asim Art Showcase at the GECD SB

Syed Omer Asim was 8 months old when his parents first noticed his fascination with colours. By fifteen months Omer was drawing shapes and mixing beautiful colour combinations, and between the ages of five and eleven he was drawing clear figures with recognizable facial features. Diagnosed with autism at the age of four, Omer has relied on his incredible artwork as a form of self-expression and communication.

He is now a 16-year-old Grade 11 student in the Skills To Enhance Personal Success (S.T.E.P.S) program at Belle River District High School. After recognizing his outstanding artistic ability, his parents hired a dedicated art teacher to refine his potential and his talent has flourished. Omer's paintings often feature elements of nature, human beings and various animals.

According to Omer's parents, "Naturally, his verbal expression is severely limited, but his access to the imaginative realm is limitless. His creative, artistic and God-given gift affords him an opportunity to visualise the incredible quintessence of beauty displayed in colour. Omer is unable to make independent decisions; as parents, we are honoured to be responsible for promoting his passion, architectural intelligence, and radiant skill."

Omer has won the 2018 Fit Week Poster Contest, the 2019 Lakeshore Mayor Arts Award, the Canada Day Art Competition and the 2018 Earth Day Poster Contest. The GECD SB was thrilled to display a collection of Omer's work in the lobby and throughout the administration offices last spring. It is exciting for us to be able to showcase the incredible talent that exists in GECD SB schools. To follow Omer's journey, he can be found on Instagram.





GLENWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL AUTHORIZED TO OFFER PYP OF THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE!

Former Principal Sue Awender, Principal Terri Barrette, Vice-Principal Jillian Authier and I.B. Coordinator Darryl Dinham have led the staff and students of Glenwood through the rigorous process to become an International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme World School.

For Glenwood students, staff and community guests this was an accomplishment worth celebrating. "We are proud to announce the authorization of Glenwood Public School as an International Baccalaureate World School, Primary Years Programme," Principal Barrette announced to the assembly. "Our staff and students, with the support of our families, have worked diligently over the last few years implementing the I.B. standards and practices. This was a beautiful celebration to recognize those efforts, and we are excited to continue our I.B. learning journey."

According to I.B., these programs aim "...to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world." I.B. students are encouraged to think critically and solve complex problems, drive their own learning, become more culturally aware and engage with people in an increasingly globalized, rapidly changing world.

Glenwood is proud to be the GECDSB's first authorized PYP world school in the city of Windsor. Go Griffins!

CHAMPIONS FOR EDUCATION AND OUTSTANDING SERVICE

2023 Outstanding Service Awards

Each year, Outstanding Service Awards are presented to 10 GECD SB staff members who have been nominated by their colleagues. The citation that is read at the ceremony is based on what was submitted in the nomination and is meant to depict the outstanding nature of the employee’s service to their school, the students, fellow staff members and the community at large.

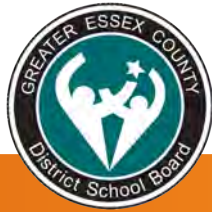
Name	Role	Name	Role
Arlette Repko	Elementary Teacher	John Dumouchelle	Custodian
Dana DiVincenzo	Special Education Coordinator	Karen Durham	Secretary
Debbie McAiney	Guidance Counsellor	Kathy Freeman	Early Intervention Instructional Coach
Janet Spiers	Social Worker	Lisa Fraba	Elementary Teacher
Jocelyn Bowman	Secretary	Maha Dannawey	Early Childhood Educator

2023 Champions for Education

The Champions for Education Awards are presented to individuals or organizations who provide support to our schools, students, staff or programs. This could be for a significant, short-term contribution or one over a longer period of time. Regardless, it is altruism that enriches our learning environments and positively impacts students.

Name	Organization	Name	Organization
Andy Paling	RCC Greenhouse Volunteer	Logan Kane	Local 494 Carpenter’s Union
Danielle Richer and Paul Finlayson	Bellewood Public School Volunteers	Mark Pellow	BASF
Dave Santing	Windsor Professional Automotive Repair Association	Pure Flavor	
Essex County Black Historical Research Society		Windsor Symphony Orchestra	
Paul DiGiovanni	Integrity Tool and Mold Inc.		





Thank you!