



Keewatin
Patricia
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

DIRECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT — 2017 —

New Prospect Public School—Dryden, Ontario
Photo credit: Ty Peacock Photography



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

2017, as a calendar year that bridges two school years (2016/17 and 2017/18), will arguably represent the twelve month span that contained more changes and reorganization in the Keewatin-Patricia District School Board since "Amalgamation" in 1997/98. In and of itself, the twenty years between that time and today also represent so much additional change that the majority of our staff in the KPDSB do not remember those years of amalgamating the Red Lake, Kenora and Dryden Boards of Education; meaning that only a minority of us do. This new majority also represents a new type of employee; representative of a new generation full of aspirations and fresh ideas, an unwillingness to accept the status quo, simply because "that is how we have always done things." As the Director of Education, I could not be more pleased and encourage this continued challenging of historical practices that have existed simply on account of legacy.

As 2017 winds down, I can share that the "KPDSB System Restructuring and Reorganization Plan", as it pertains to academic changes, is virtually complete after three years of planning and execution. On the operational side I can also share that we have undergone the most significant changes as well since amalgamation. Over 50% of school administrators were part of a school or system reassignment in 2017; and we had half of the Senior Administration Team retire, meaning new members to the Board's executive administration. We said good bye and thanked Dean Carrie, Susanne Bastable and Scott Urquhart...and we welcomed Richard Findlay and Tania Sterling as external faces to the organization as Supervisory Officers. We invited them to challenge existing practices within their various roles, bringing an outside perspective to us and as we approach 2018, as the DOE I can confirm "it is good".

However, change has not been easy, that I will accept. But change is inevitable and actually unstoppable and so as we enter 2018, we should all accept more changes to come. I have offered to the entire system that 2018 will be, and so will subsequent years be, a time of "Reconciliation" and consolidation of our work; Reconciliation with our partners and communities, with our students and their families; with our schools and with culture. 2017 will be remembered as the year we entered into monumental agreements with the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN), and Windigo Tribal Councils; with individual First Nations and with agency partners who share in our vision of leading Northern Ontario with an eye to levelling the field for all Northern

Children. Partners such as the Kenora District Services Board (KDSB), Lac Seul First Nation, Municipality of Sioux Lookout and FIREFLY among others, are critical to the success and aspirations of our kids; they are also critical to the success of the KPDSB.

The KPDSB also continued its annual celebratory achievements by being recognized in a June full-length weekend edition of the Toronto Globe and Mail with its "Four Directions Graduation Coach" programs, now in four of our secondary schools. We received national attention on making changes to the start times of our high schools and the harmonization of our schedules that were designed to benefit our kids. We shared our work with Indigenous partners and communities participating in a keynote panel at the National Youth Justice Congress in Toronto in November as over 1000 participants rose and gave a standing ovation when we were done. We made progress on our new high school and even changed its name relying on the voice of youth who will call Sioux North High School their "alma mater" someday. We watched one of our Principals, Tracey Benoit be called to sit on the Minister's Principal Advisory Reference Group; and speaking of the Minister, for the second time in three years we hosted both the Minister of Education, Mitzie Hunter, who visited and met privately with staff and administration working on the front lines, as did the Deputy Minister, Bruce Rodrigues, who flew into Red Lake in June. No question I am missing other notable achievements, but the message is clear; KPDSB is lauded and admired for who we are, and perhaps more importantly what we represent. We have also been busy. That I suspect will also not change.

As we prepare to enter 2018, marking the end of my fifth year as the proud Director of Education, I offer to all of our students, staff, families, elders and community partners... that we have much to feel good about. But we also know that our challenges will not stop, and that the needs of Northern Children continue to be more complex and more intensive than many of us have ever bore witness to. Earlier this fall in a candid conversation with Premier of Ontario, Kathleen Wynne, where we were discussing the needs of the North and its young people, the conversation inevitably steered towards the adults who serve in the interests of Northwestern Ontario's kids. She wanted to know what kind of people we needed? My answer was unequivocal and emphatic: "We don't just need good teachers, we need the best teachers; we need the very best people in the North. And those people are here right now." On behalf of the Keewatin-Patricia District School Board, as its Director of Education, it is with much humility that I submit this Director's Annual Report to our staff, communities and stakeholders; the very same best people I referenced earlier this fall.

As a postscript, and starting with the 2016 Director's Annual Report, I wish to acknowledge the lives of our young people who have left us too soon, and the memories with which we now share. Their names appear on the back page of this 2017 Director's Annual Report; they cannot ever be forgotten. Their lives a constant reminder of why we must never give up on kids.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sean Monteith
Director of Education
Keewatin-Patricia District School Board



KPDSB EFFICACY

Efficacy continues to drive the work within the KPDSB. Decision-making processes and all discussions leading to those decisions, are evaluated through our vision statement, where “Putting Kids First” is always the uncompromising standard we accept, and will only ever accept. In an effort to maintain the commitment of valuing the voices of all staff of the KPDSB, the “Efficacy Working Group” (EWG) in 2017 created a Terms of Reference and reached out to staff who were not represented in the group. This included the addition of representatives from Custodial and Maintenance, Information Technology, and Human Resources employee groups; the EWG also committed to bringing the voice of Education Assistants into the work of Efficacy. Staff Efficacy representatives continue to visit bi-weekly Senior Administration meetings, as well as the monthly regular Board meetings. These opportunities are meant to bring a level of transparency and openness into decisions that are made at the senior level, and where they are encouraged to participate in system-level discussions and decision-making.

ACADEMIC SUCCESS FOR ALL

As a public board of education, we are a learning organization that is committed to ensuring that our students and staff have access to the latest research-based learning, professional development, and training opportunities. We are also committed to removing barriers so that all learners have access to quality education, and a range of opportunities to grow and succeed now and in the future.

We value having equitable and inclusive school cultures and contemporary learning environments to come to every day. That is why we work alongside community agencies, Elders and Indigenous education partners to design recreational, mental health and well-being programs, as well as rich, innovative and culturally relevant learning and training opportunities for students and staff.

In the KPDSB, we welcome all learners. We not only share the belief that everyone can grow and succeed; we are committed to making decisions that are in the best interests of students. We strive to know the needs of the learners and adults we serve every day through relationships. That is why our number one goal of our Board’s improvement plan is focused on students.

This past year consisted of many changes to the infra-structural Human Resources framework of the Board. By the conclusion of the 2016–2017 school year, a variety of roles and responsibilities had been restructured to bring coherence and Efficacy to all areas of the Board, including the hiring of two new Superintendents. The 2017–2018 school year now brings a theme of, “Reconciliation” to the work of the Efficacy Working Group, and to the work of the Board. With the effort and commitment to continue to value input from the front-line school staff, “Director Visits” to each of our schools in the Board during the school year have provided an opportunity to share this vision and theme for the work of this school year.

Now into year five of our Efficacy work, the KPDSB has successfully embraced an agenda of Efficacy and looks to those who work directly with students to dictate the next steps and the future goals to maintain a flattened organization, to promote and model servant-leadership, and to put our students first with each decision we make in the KPDSB.

ENGAGED, HEALTHY, AND SUCCESSFUL STUDENTS

For students to grow, succeed, and graduate, we need them to be physically and emotionally ready, and actively engaged in their learning. This begins with getting to know them, and using teaching and assessment strategies based on their interests, strengths and needs. Our educators advocate for and provide additional supports and intervention to ensure that all learners grow and develop to their full potential.

We want students to experience a wide range of learning opportunities to discover the things they enjoy doing and might even consider as a pathway down the road. We use a variety of print, electronic and human resources to create hands on, experiential, and virtual teaching and learning opportunities that deepen learning in our K-12, and Adult Education programs. We also offer students choice in how to learn by providing a variety of ways and opportunities to show what they know and can do based on ongoing quality feedback for improvement.

Our students need to see themselves in the curriculum and in the resources that they use in the classroom too, and where the learning materials don't exist yet, some teachers are having students conduct primary research to create localized content for the region! In a first-hand way, students learn about the importance of digital citizenship and social responsibility online. This helps highlight how what they are learning is relevant in the real world and brings purpose to their education.

ENGAGED AND SUPPORTED STAFF

Specialized central staff members are available to help ensure that our educators and leaders have what they need to plan, instruct, assess, and lead in schools. Team members offer targeted programming support to reach individual student, school, and Board improvement goals.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) connect a teacher's personal professional area of inquiry to the school and Board improvement goals. In 2017, literacy support is including Oral Language, Writing, as well as Reading instruction and assessment strategies. Building on the success of last year's math support model, we are running regional K-6 and 7-10 Math Hubs that focus on curriculum and instruction needs for educators to network together in those specific grade groupings. Teams of teachers are also enjoying the Math Leadership and Learning Networks (M2LN) hosted by the Ministry of Education. Principals and Vice-Principals engage in regular PLCs too. As well, ongoing, hands-on case management, sound assessment and instructional support help ensure every student sees success and has a meaningful connection to school and learning. Educators and leaders regularly share and analyze student, school, regional, and district data to inform and drive decision making together.

Modern technologies are changing the way our Board and school offices run too. To support the learning needs of our employees on the operational side of our organization, we are pleased to be offering one-on-one and small group technology training across the region.



CULTURE OF INCLUSION, INNOVATION, AND CREATIVITY IN OUR SCHOOLS AND WORKPLACES

Student experiences at school play a fundamental role in social, emotional and academic development, and influence a person's life choices and chances. The classroom and school setting is of the utmost importance to fostering identity. In KP, we focus on 'Kids First' meaning that the development of self and identity matters as K12 and adult learners develop and become actively responsible local, community, and global citizens.

To foster global competencies and transferable skills we are developing a Learning Technologies Strategic Plan. We want to build on the great innovation already in place, and make new emerging technologies like computer coding, makerspaces and augmented reality available system-wide. We are proud of our dynamic K-12, Cooperative Learning, Alternative and Adult Education programs and work hard to ensure there is something for everyone to try and excel at given the proper opportunity and support.





PRINCIPAL/ VICE-PRINCIPAL PROFESSIONAL LEARNING TEAMS (PLT)

Our Principal and Vice-Principals' Professional Learning Team is committed to and focused on effective instruction and directly impacting the learning of every student. In January 2017, the Principals and Vice-Principals were given complete autonomy to plan their professional development learning days. With this new efficacious approach, the planning team explicitly sought input from administrators to clearly identify learning needs based on school, teacher and student learning needs. Ongoing feedback continues to be embedded throughout each learning session which

informs and drives planning and establishes clear learning goals for following professional learning days.

Principal and Vice-Principal professional development focuses on deepening learning by offering choice and developing coherence by utilizing KPDSB expertise. Administrators, Special Assignments Teachers and classroom teachers have shared best practices to develop capacity. These passionate educators shared their expertise by modelling and providing authentic learning experiences that deepen collective understanding of effective learning and teaching. In order to further enhance learning and leadership, 21C skills such as collaboration, critical thinking and integration of Google Drive are incorporated. Opportunities to consolidate thinking and learning are embedded, including integrating consolidation walking meetings and honouring our KPDSB Daily Physical Activity initiative. Ongoing focus on School Improvement Planning (SIP) is maintained by deliberate continual reflection and revision of the KPDSB SIP Success Criteria.



WHO WE ARE

We are a progressive and proud public school board that serves the communities of beautiful Northwestern Ontario. We have schools in the communities of Kenora, Sioux Narrows, Vermilion Bay, Ear Falls, Red Lake, Dryden, Sioux Lookout, Ignace, Pickle Lake, Savant Lake and Upsala as well as serving the educational needs of many neighbouring and far north First Nation communities.

Students in a KPDSB school always come first and programming options are continually expanding to meet the needs of a diverse student population. Many of the programs offered are the first of their kind in an Ontario school, a testament to the innovation of our staff and their dedication to our students.

VISION STATEMENT

All stakeholders create a culture of learning so that students come first.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Plan Goal #1

Ensure increased individual student achievement by providing programs and resources designed to meet the needs of the whole child.

Strategic Plan Goal #2

Meet the needs of all our at-risk students.

Strategic Plan Goal #3

Demonstrate and communicate that the Keewatin-Patricia District School Board is a 21st Century Leading and Learning Organization.

To view our entire 2013-2018 Strategic Plan, please visit www.kpdsb.on.ca.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Keewatin-Patricia District School Board accepts all students and is committed to providing an excellent education that prepares each student to be a successful individual and a responsible member of society.

VALUES

- Students Come First
- Excellence
- High Standards
- Celebrate Success
- Partnerships
- Integrity
- Inclusiveness
- 21st Century Learning
- Leadership
- Communications
- Innovation
- Teamwork
- Focus on the Whole Child
- Respectful Treatment of People

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION



Sean Monteith
Director of Education



Caryl Hron
Superintendent of Education



Joan Kantola
Superintendent of Education



Tania Sterling
Superintendent of Education



Richard Findlay
Superintendent of Business



Kathleen O'Flaherty
Assistant Superintendent of Business

BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Dave Penney
Chair



Cecile Marcino
Vice-Chair



Lesley Barnes



Desta Buswa



Roger Griffiths



Michelle Guitard



Jennifer Kitowski



Gerald Kleist



Barb Gauthier



George Seaton



David Wilkinson



Justine Duncalfe
Student Trustee



KENORA AREA

Beaver Brae Secondary School, Kenora
Evergreen Public School, Kenora
Keewatin Public School, Keewatin
King George VI Public School, Kenora
Valleyview Public School, Kenora
Sioux Narrows Public School, Sioux Narrows

DRYDEN AREA

Dryden High School, Dryden
Lillian Berg Public School, Vermilion Bay
New Prospect Public School, Dryden
Open Roads Public School, Dryden

RED LAKE AREA

Red Lake District High School, Red Lake
Ear Falls Public School, Ear Falls
Golden Learning Centre Public School, Balmertown
Red Lake-Madsen Public School, Red Lake

SIOUX LOOKOUT AREA

Queen Elizabeth District High School, Sioux Lookout
Sioux Mountain Public School, Sioux Lookout

IGNACE AREA

Ignace Public School, Ignace

PICKLE LAKE AREA

Crolancia Public School, Pickle Lake

SAVANT LAKE AREA

Savant Lake Public School, Savant Lake

UPSALA AREA

Upsala Public School, Upsala



MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS

The 2017 school year started with a continued commitment to supporting student and staff mental health in the KPDSB. As outlined in our Mental Health Strategic Plan, the areas of focus continue to include building organizational mental health and well-being structures, increasing mental health literacy, and changing classroom climate. The list below highlights a few of the main 2017/2018 action items:

STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH FOCUS GROUPS

In partnership with Jack.org, Beaver Brae Secondary School (Kenora), Dryden High School, Ignace Public School, Red Lake District High School and Queen Elizabeth District High School (Sioux Lookout) have created student mental health focus groups. These groups are student lead, with a focus on creating action plans with events for the year that promote positive mental health within the school environment.

PARENT RESOURCES

A main priority for the 2017-2018 school year includes parent engagement, as well as increasing access to parent friendly resources. Resources for parents have been uploaded to our website (www.kpdsb.on.ca), as well as provided to parents during parent/teacher interviews and community sessions if requested. Updates to individual schools' Parent Councils and the Parent Involvement Council (PIC) will be provided in early 2018, and active recruitment for parent representation on our Collective Awareness, Advocacy and Learning of Mental Well-Being (CAALM) committee is underway.

MENTAL HEALTH CHAMPIONS

Mental Health Champions were identified at each of our KPDSB schools. These Champions promote work related to mental health and trauma informed practice, by sharing resources, supports and updates with their co-workers throughout the school year to help increase mental health literacy and capacity across the system.

KPDSB WEBSITE UPDATES

The mental health and staff resources tabs on our Board website have been updated to provide additional information for students, parents and staff. Stakeholders are encouraged to take a look for information on mental health, trauma informed practice, and crisis support.

DAILY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY INITIATIVE (DPA)

After a successful first year of the program, we continued our efforts to meet the needs of staff through offering a supported initiative towards encouraging daily physical activity to promote well-being. We had an overwhelming amount of staff sign on to complete 30 minutes a day of physical activity, five days a week, in exchange for one paid day off work per staff member. This year many teachers offered this initiative alongside the provincial student DPA launch. Many classrooms are busy for 20 minutes every day using moderate to vigorous activity to increase student engagement and to support literacy and numeracy in our elementary classrooms. Students report that the dance, outdoor hiking, and classroom activities allow them to improve concentration and learning during a busy academic day. The Northwestern Health Unit is our partner in this popular and important program that encourages our KPDSB family to seek a lifetime of health and wellness.

Strong partnerships between the KPDSB and community agencies continue to support student mental health and well-being, including FIREFLY, CAMH, NWHU, Kenora Chiefs, Sioux Lookout Youth Poverty Reduction Strategy Project, O.P.P., SickKids, NAN/KO, LHIN, and local district hospitals' community programs.

21C LEARNING

Recognizing that our students will live and work in complex, highly digitalized environments has continued to guide our work as a 21C Culture of Learning organization. These environments, which are continually evolving and changing, are impacted by technology that is transforming day to day life. Recognizing this shift and the demands it will have on our students has spurred our continued work with technology-enabled instruction and assessment.

At KP, educators and administrators implement instruction and assessment practices that effectively integrate technology, while at the same time remain mindful of personal interests, strengths and future goals. Collaboration, critical thinking and creativity are supported and developed as teachers strive to provide equitable and diverse opportunities. An awareness of the whole child fosters cultures of learning that promote self-efficacy and independence in our learners. To facilitate this learning framework, educators participate in professional learning communities. Teachers, regardless of geographical location and teaching assignment are increasingly connected with their KP colleagues. This refines and broadens the strategies and approaches used to ensure students come first.

As the province prepares to revamp learning skills into transferable life skills, KPDSB stands at the ready. Critical thinking, self-directed learning and collaboration are 21C skills in our foundation. We will maintain and build on these, while at the same time engage students in learning that spurs innovation, entrepreneurship and global citizenship. Through this, our students will understand local and global perspectives, make informed decisions and see themselves in a globally connected learning space. Students are increasingly more apt to advocate for their learning while at the same time partnering with their peers to collaborate on real-world problems.

Being a 21st Century Leading and Learning organization in Ontario has required us to map our own course. Nevertheless, we have done this with the mindset that our students will achieve what they are capable of because we've given our educators the time and tools to support KPDSB kids.



INDIGENOUS STUDENT SUPPORT & SUCCESS

INDIGENOUS LEARNING IN RESPONSE TO INDIGENOUS STUDENT NEEDS

The focus on Indigenous learners' needs in the Keewatin-Patricia District School Board has seen an increase in academic success of Indigenous students. This was evident In June 2017 as graduation rates across the Board saw a significant increase of Indigenous students graduating from high school.

Major events in KP in 2017 involved a continued focus on the academic mandate to support student success through engagement strategies, community collaboration, and supporting teachers and Senior Administration. There were facilitated professional development sessions and in-class training for teachers on Indigenous teaching and learning strategies for greater engagement and participation by Indigenous students.

Some highlights of our work this year include:

- Lillian Berg Public School (Vermilion Bay) Grade 6 students worked together to identify a welcoming, supportive and safe community. The teacher and students debriefed the critical thinking strategies that helped them to problem solve, which are the same strategies elders use to deconstruct teachings.



- King George VI Public School (Kenora) devoted part of their professional development day to greater awareness of cultural diversity and learning, including a hands-on opportunity to build critical thinking strategies with Indigenous students. Collaboration with communities provides opportunity so that students are better prepared for the transition to a provincial school and the community is able to share the successes and challenges of their students.
- Shoal Lake 40 elders continue to support and guide teachers to ensure there is curriculum that is culturally relevant, local and accurate. The elder role also ensures learning is in a culturally safe environment for all students.
- For National Treaties Recognition Week, an elder led a presentation of Treaties to five of our high schools, which included implementing traditional protocols at each school.
- Elders continue to be involved in our Indigenous Education Advisory Council by conducting ceremonial opening at the beginning and end to every school year.
- There is collaboration with the KP Mental Health Steering Committee by sharing Indigenous perspectives on mental health and well-being. Many topics relevant to student well-being are discussed, including guidance to providing support when a student requests smudging.
- 2017 provided an opportunity for Indigenous Student Voices Forums at five high schools. The forums help schools plan for greater support to meet the needs of Indigenous students. In the past, schools have implemented many of the recommendations from the student voices report.
- We continue to incorporate Indigenous story-telling, and teaching Lake of the Woods traditional drumming and songs to Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in Grade 7 and 8 at Beaver Brae Secondary School (Kenora) in response to Indigenous students requesting more culture in the school. Equally important is the participation and learning from non-Indigenous students. Every student who completes the semester demonstrates their ability to sing the veterans songs and required drumming skills.

Most important, is the pride Indigenous student have of their culture and the respect shown from our non-Indigenous students to the Anishinaabe ways of knowing and being.

WRAP AROUND SUPPORTS

We were fortunate in the KPDSB to have received enhancement “wrap around” funding from the Ministry of Education for the school years 2016-2018. To meet the growing demands of rehabilitation needs of students across the KPDSB, we hired an additional Speech-Language Pathologist and Applied Behaviour Specialist and two Clinical Counsellors in partnership with FIREFLY, our local Children’s Mental Health Agency. It is apparent that the implementation of these additional supports has offset significant system pressures and our ability to provide direct service to students with rehabilitation and mental health needs.

As a result, the KPDSB has been able to reduce the length of their waitlists to provide more timely and direct internal and indirect external services. The quality and efficiency of the services that we provide authentically support our stance that “Kids Come First”.

SIOUX NORTH HIGH SCHOOL

We reached another milestone in April 2017 with the naming of our new high school in Sioux Lookout. Following a year of community consultations and public surveys, the students on the naming committee came up with the name “Sioux North High School”.

Actual construction of the school is well under way. The walls have been erected, roof work has begun, and the interior is now protected from the weather.

The school’s expected completion and occupancy date of September 2018 is still on track. Both students and staff are looking forward to starting the 2018-19 school year at the new high school.



SIoux NORTH HIGH SCHOOL QUICK FACTS

PUPIL PLACES **513**

BUILDING FOOTPRINT **6,003m²**

COST **\$30 Million**

EXPECTED OCCUPANCY DATE **September 2018**

LOCATION **Adjacent to Sioux Mountain Public School**

PARTNERS

- Ontario Ministry of Education
- Municipality of Sioux Lookout
- Confederation College
- FIREFLY
- Sioux Hudson Entertainment Series
- Other Community Groups

ARCHITECT CONSULTANTS

- Evans Bertrand Hill Wheeler
- TBT Engineering Ltd.

PRIMARY CONTRACTORS

- Everstrong Construction Limited
- M.C. Lough Electric Inc.
- G.T. Plumbing & Heating



KINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS

SUPPORTING OUR YOUNGEST LEARNERS

In the Keewatin-Patricia District School Board, our students' needs come first and each Kindergarten program provides a learning environment in which four- and five-year-olds establish a strong foundation of inquiry, critical thinking, and literacy and numeracy skills to begin their path as lifelong learners in our system.

Students in our Full-Day Kindergarten classrooms are engaged as learners, immersed in the latest technology, and cared for by dedicated, caring, compassionate and loving professionals.

We currently offer 31 Kindergarten programs within our 16 elementary schools, with 568 students experiencing the joy and wonder of learning. The learning in our classrooms is strength-based and student-driven. Our Kindergarten Teams consist of a qualified primary teacher and Early Childhood Educator who foster children's natural curiosity, often allowing students to direct the learning in their areas of interest, using authentic, hands-on learning opportunities. The combination of the teacher's expertise in pedagogy, along with the Early Childhood Educator's foundation in early child development, allows for each team to meet the diverse needs of the whole child. Our geographic location provides our youngest learners with many opportunities to explore the natural environment as an extension of the classroom.

We also offer French Immersion Kindergarten programs at Valleyview Public School in Kenora and New Prospect Public School in Dryden. Programming begins in the first year of Kindergarten, where children are fully immersed in a French speaking environment to support language acquisition along with their inquiry-based learning. The programs' popularity continues to grow, and families in the program tell us they are extremely happy they chose a KPDSB French Immersion education for their children.



SPECIALIZED PROGRAMMING

BRINGING CHOICES TO FAMILIES IN THE NORTHWEST

HOCKEY CANADA SKILLS ACADEMIES

The KPDSB Hockey Canada Skills Academy (HCSA) continues to show that it is a viable and progressive option for students to improve their academic and athletic engagement, while simultaneously building leadership and hockey skills. The program is currently operating at both secondary and elementary levels with universal success. Enrolment in the program remains strong, and has shown no signs of waning. The program has grown every year; this attests to the ability of the program to sustain growth into the future. One of the reasons for this sustained growth is that the hockey academy has proven that it can help students improve their skills in hockey while simultaneously leading to increased student engagement and academic success.



The Hockey Canada Skills Academy continues to focus on the “whole student” by building leadership skills and fostering academic prowess in addition to core hockey skills. One of the most important aspects of this program is that we have developed partnerships that help us remove barriers and ensure that every student has the ability to participate in the program. Our partnership with the Canadian Tire Jumpstart program ensures that no youth encounters financial obstacles which would preclude participation in the hockey program. We also have earned accreditation from Hockey Canada, which enables the HCSA to lean on Hockey Canada for additional support and guidance. Through these local and national partnerships, we can ensure that the program meets the needs of a wide range of students—from those who are seeing their first ice time ever to those who have aspirations to playing competitive hockey at the highest level.

Anecdotal discussions with KPDSB stakeholders (including parents, administrators, teachers, coaches, and students) show that there is a strong correlation between participation in the KPDSB HCSA and increased engagement and academic success at school. As a result of this verifiable increase in student achievement, academic success, and classroom attendance, we foresee a strong future for the HCSA program at the KPDSB.

FRENCH IMMERSION AND FRENCH LANGUAGE PROGRAMMING

During the 2013-2014 school year, we began implementation of a Framework for French as a Second Language, Kindergarten to Grade 12. This framework was developed by the Ministry of Education to help school boards and schools in Ontario maximize opportunities for students to reach their full potential in French as a Second Language (FSL). Goals were set that included improved student achievement, an increase in retention of students in FSL programs at the secondary level, and a reduction of the turnover rate in FSL teachers, particularly in small communities of the Board. By the end of the 2016-2017 school year, the Board experienced significant growth in all three areas.

The first goal of the FSL Plan was to increase the percentage of Grade 9 Core French students achieving Level 3 or above in either Academic or Applied French as a Second Language programs, from 75% to 82%. The KPDSB was able to surpass our goal for improved student achievement, where 84% of our students in Grade 9 French classes achieved Level 3 or above in either Academic or Applied programs. This correlates with changes in teacher practice, including a shift from textbook/worksheet-based exercises to an action-oriented approach in teaching, one that was richer and more authentic, which then led to increased student engagement.

The second goal was to increase the percentage of Grade 9 Core French students who continue to study FSL in Grade 10, from 11% to 17%. We were able to surpass our goal for increasing the percentage of Grade 9 Core French students who continue to study FSL in Grade 10 to 21%.

We also offer an opportunity for our Grade 12 FSL students to challenge the Diplôme d'études en langue française, or DELF for short. This is a certification of French-language abilities for non-native speakers of French administered by the International Centre for French Studies for France's Ministry of Education and is recognized worldwide. Over the past few years, we have had many of our students successfully receive certification which has been invaluable to support their future prospects of post-secondary education or employment.

The final goal in our plan was to increase engagement and motivation among core French teachers in hope of keeping educators in their current position. Teachers participated in face-to-face sessions as well as web-based virtual learning sessions. Our FSL teachers received state of the art professional learning that is on par with the province, through opportunities and learning experiences that have been provided over the past three years.

FSL programming in the Keewatin-Patricia District School Board has expanded quite rapidly since the development of our three-year plan. We have seen continued success in the creation and expansion of our French Immersion and Extended French programming and look forward to the future of French Language programming in the KPDSB.



FOUR DIRECTIONS

Our Four Directions First Nations, Metis and Inuit (FNMI) Graduation Coach approach began in June of 2014 at Dryden High School in order to address significant achievement and well-being gaps experienced by Indigenous students. Four Directions programs now run in four of our secondary schools: Dryden High School, Beaver Brae Secondary School (Kenora), Queen Elizabeth District High School (Sioux Lookout) and Red Lake District High School.

The Four Directions program works to support the whole student in order to guide the student through to graduation and transition into post-secondary life (university, college, trade, workforce etc.). FNMI Graduation Coaches work to increase a student's network of support within the school and the community at large, while being a navigator for families to engage as partners with the school in their child's educational journey.

Since implementation, we have seen an increase in self-identification among FNMI students. Academic achievement gaps are closing with credit accumulation amongst Grade 9 students on par with their non-Indigenous counterparts. Students previously disengaged from school have re-entered and their voice has helped the school to better respond to their learning and well-being needs. Four Directions has impacted the greater school community by supporting students whose barriers previously limited their active participation in school community endeavours. There has been a demonstrated improvement in student participation in athletics, arts groups, outdoor education, school dances, and ever growing attendance at school feasts and parent teacher interviews.

The Four Directions program is leading edge in the learning of how to best provide educational supports for Indigenous students. This is changing the way that we serve students in the province and has grown beyond the KPDSB and changed the discussions that occur not just in secondary schools, but in elementary transitions and with

our post-secondary learning partners. We are thrilled to announce that we will see our first Four Directions graduating class this June in Dryden, followed by many more in the upcoming years across KPDSB. We have become leaders in the region and province with supporting our FNMI learners and Four Directions is continuing to expand across the province with the leadership of our KPDSB team.

SUMMER LEARNING

Since 2010, the Keewatin-Patricia District School Board has offered a Summer Learning Program to provide additional opportunities for students to gain both literacy and numeracy skills, as well as minimize summer learning loss. The program has also played a vital role in building student confidence, while increasing parent engagement in their child's learning.

This summer, 100 students from Kindergarten to Grade 3 participated in Summer Learning Programs in Ear Falls, Kenora, and Dryden. The programs provide a blend of literacy and numeracy instruction, with a goal of minimizing loss of skill through the two-month summer break. By the end of the program, 100 percent of students maintained or increased their reading level throughout the three week program. In addition, 55 percent of these students increased their reading level by one level or more.

Teachers integrated a variety of authentic contexts for the literacy and numeracy instruction. These included incorporating FNMI perspectives and teachings, healthy and active living, and community connections through field trips and special guests.

New to Summer Learning Programs in the Keewatin-Patricia District School Board this year was the integration of Robotics. The Robotics resources provided students with opportunities to develop 21st Century learning skills, including innovation, collaboration, and resilience. Program participants were highly engaged in these learning activities, which teachers used as a springboard for oral

and written language, as well as numeracy. The LEGO Robotics materials and 3D printers, purchased through this enhanced funding, will remain in the host schools to be used as instructional resources through the school year.

Mentors for the program were recent Grade 12 KPDSB graduates who plan to study Computer Science, Science, or Engineering at the post-secondary level. This helped to connect K-3 learners with high school students in their home communities, establishing the continuum of a K-12 learning stream for our students, as well as for K-3 learners to begin considering potential career paths.

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

Specialist High Skills Major: We offer Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) programs at five of our secondary schools. The program is also now part of the Ontario Highly Skilled Workforce initiative. In the fall of 2017, we had 217 students developing their skills in twelve SHSM sectors with a focus on helping those students achieve industry standard certifications.

Dual Credits: We partner with Confederation College to offer students combined credits where students earn a high school and college credit. 24 Dual Credit courses are offered at five sites, including summer school. Next year we will also offer a night school Dual Credit course. Six of the dual credit courses are specifically targeted to at risk youth, to support their high school completion and encourage entry to college.

Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program: 43 of our students participated in the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) in 2017. The program helps build awareness of and encourages students to consider apprenticeships as a post-secondary destination. Some of the activities in 2017 include:

- **Women in Trades:** Over 40 students from our Cosmetology, sciences, food, and Outdoor Education programs were given the opportunity to experience hands on learning through a trip to Thunder Bay where they were able to visit Confederation College and meet one-on-one with mentors working in a variety of industries. Some of the mentors were successful alumni from our schools who volunteered to be available to meet with students. Our students benefitted from being able to ask their mentors career choice questions while our staff were able to network with industry professional and colleagues.
- **Skills Ontario Competitions:** 14 students from the KPDSB traveled to Thunder Bay in early April to compete in the Skills Ontario Qualifying Competitions at Confederation College in Thunder Bay. Students from Beaver Brae Secondary School (Kenora), Dryden High School and Queen Elizabeth District High School (Sioux Lookout) represented our Board and their schools by demonstrating their skills in culinary, small engines, carpentry, video production, and welding. 10 of our 14 students qualified to move on to the provincial level. This created lots of excitement and support for trades in the schools and resulted in recognition at school academic and awards nights focused on trades and apprenticeship opportunities.

Night School: In the spring of 2017 we initiated night school courses for 32 students at Beaver Brae Secondary School in Kenora. An expansion in the fall of 2017 included students at Queen Elizabeth District High School (Sioux Lookout) and Dryden High School. Programs were expanded in the fall of 2017 in key areas to support student success including night school Cooperative Education programming. Projected enrolment is estimated to be over 125 students for the upcoming round of night school course offerings.

Summer School: Summer school was extremely successful in 2017 with 549 students registered Board wide, including at risk students. Our Reach Ahead programs for new Grade 9 students have provided a foundation for learning which has improved overall Grade 9 success rates.



TORONTO GLOBE AND MAIL FEATURES FOUR DIRECTIONS GRADUATION COACH PROGRAMS

Our schools once again received national attention for innovative programming, this time for our Four Directions programs in our secondary schools.

In May 2017, The Globe and Mail Education Reporter, Caroline Alphonso, visited our schools in Dryden and Sioux Lookout and followed the story of one of our students, Marleah Atlookan, who despite the challenges she has faced and continues to face, is succeeding at school thanks to the support of her Four Directions Graduation Coach at Dryden High School, Kieran McMonagle. The report was an in-depth look into Marleah's life and the program that is helping her overcome some of the obstacles she faces daily. We want to thank Marleah for sharing her story and Caroline for visiting our schools and programs.

We currently offer the Four Directions program at Dryden High School, Beaver Brae Secondary School (Kenora), Queen Elizabeth District High School (Sioux Lookout), and Red Lake District High School (as of September 2017).

Please visit The Globe and Mail's website to view the article, titled 'In Northern Ontario, an Indigenous Pupil Finds Hope for Success with a Coach in her Corner' and accompanying video.



Notable Achievements



NATIONAL YOUTH & JUSTICE CONGRESS

Our staff were invited back to the National Youth and Justice Congress in Toronto in October 2017 following presentations in 2016.

Two teams of KPDSB staff were involved, including our Director of Education, Sean Monteith, and Dryden High School's Four Directions Graduation Coach, Kieran McMonagle, as a part of a keynote panel titled 'Reconciliation: the Path Forward', as well as Mike Dean and Nicole Downey from Keewatin Public School's Transitions North classroom and Holly Szumowski, Principal of Crolancia Public School, titled 'Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders as a Mobilizer in Education Change: Protective Factors for Youth with FASD'.

The presentations were incredibly well received including a standing ovation from the 1000+ audience in attendance at the keynote presentation. Feedback from participants at the Congress was extremely positive and we look forward to participating in future years.

BEAVER BRAE'S TRACEY BENOIT APPOINTED TO MINISTER OF EDUCATION'S PRINCIPAL REFERENCE GROUP

In October 2017, Tracey Benoit, Principal of Beaver Brae Secondary School in Kenora, was appointed to the Minister of Education's Principal Reference Group (MPRG). She will join the MPRG for the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 school years where she will be an active participant representing the needs of students in the North, including sharing her insights, feedback and recommendations for education in Ontario directly with the Minister of Education.

Tracey has joined 19 other principals and vice-principals from across Ontario on the MPRG.

MITZIE HUNTER, MINISTER OF EDUCATION, VISITS SIOUX LOOKOUT

Sioux Mountain Public School in Sioux Lookout welcomed Minister of Education, Mitzie Hunter to the area in January 2017.

Minister Hunter toured Kindergarten classrooms at Sioux Mountain Public School, where the staff and students of the Full-Day Kindergarten program were excited to welcome her. The Minister also participated in a closed-door meeting with KPDSB staff, agency partners, and First Nation leadership representatives around the unique challenges of helping and supporting Northern Children.

Following her visit, Minister Hunter stated "I am inspired by the educators and school leaders working hard on behalf of students, and I am so appreciative of this visit to learn more about their unique circumstances and challenges. We need to work together through the many complexities affecting our students here in the North."



KENORA'S BEAVER BRAE BRONCO CHEERLEADERS WIN BRONZE AT WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Beaver Brae Broncos Cheer Team, under the leadership of Head Coach Deb Allan, travelled to Florida in February 2017 to compete in the Junior Varsity Division after winning their bid to the High School World Cheerleading Championships in February 2016. The Broncos were also invited by the International Cheer Union to enter a second event at the world championships called Game Day, making them the first international team to compete in the event.

We were incredibly proud to learn that not only did the Beaver Brae Broncos Cheer Team win a bronze medal in the World Junior Varsity Non Tumbling finals, their placing helped earn the Canadian teams a silver in the Nations Cup. The Broncos also placed seventh overall in the U.S. Nationals Game Day event in the Junior Varsity division earning the Bronco Cheerleaders a Silver Nations Ranking!





STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

NISHNAWBE ASKI NATION PARTNERSHIP

In May 2017, we took the unprecedented step of partnering with Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) and signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to enhance educational services and opportunities for students and staff. The signing of the MOU ensures we are putting the interests of children ahead of mandates, policies, and bureaucracy. The historic MOU represents an invested commitment and partnership to support NAN and KPDSB students and staff. The agreement was signed in Timmins, Ontario during the NAN Chiefs Spring Assembly. The signing of the MOU is an important step to help NAN students reach their full learning potential, and at opportunities comparable to the general student population in Ontario.

During the signing, NAN Deputy Grand Chief Derek Fox stated "Nishnawbe Aski Nation students, whether attending First Nation or provincial schools deserve education opportunities that will enable them to follow their dreams. For far too long, First Nations students have fallen through the large divide between these two systems. By working together we can ensure that we are focused on student success. We appreciate the Keewatin-Patricia District School Board's commitment to improve education outcomes and we look forward to strengthening our relationship."

Priority areas of the MOU include:

- **Student Support Services:** Development and implementation of strategies to support student safety and well-being measures, including mental health, student transition and orientation programs, parent engagement initiatives, support mechanisms for students living away from home, student retention strategies, involvement in extra-curricular activities, and the development of a First Nation student anti-addiction education program.
- **Curriculum:** Strategies to enhance the inclusion and integration of First Nation history, culture, perspectives and language within the provincial curriculum as appropriate.



Nishnawbe Aski Nation

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- **Professional Development:** Strategies to support staff in meeting the holistic learning needs of First Nation students, development of strategies to facilitate cross-cultural training and professional development for educators in the provincial education system.
- **Communication:** Identification of mechanisms to improve communication between provincially funded schools and First Nation schools.
- **Human Resources:** Explore options to facilitate increasing the number of First Nation staff, including the participation of elders, in provincial schools.
- **Parental Participation:** Strategies to facilitate improved parental communication with, and involvement in, the provincially funded schools their children attend.

We look forward to continuing this work for many years to come in partnership with Nishnawbe Aski Nation as we work together to 'level the field' for all Northern Children.

ADULT EDUCATION: SEVEN GENERATIONS EDUCATION INSTITUTE PARTNERSHIP

2017 has been a year of learning and leadership in Adult Education in KPDSB. We have completed an environmental scan of the learning needs of adults in the region west of Thunder Bay. The surveys, interviews, and focus groups with students, community partners, and service providers has built confidence in the importance of continuing to partner to meet the needs of adult learners in Northwestern Ontario.

Currently entering the sixth year of our partnership, the Seven Generations Education Institute and KPDSB are committed to improving access to innovative and high

quality curriculum resources for all Indigenous and non-Indigenous adult learners throughout Northwestern Ontario. The partnership currently provides secondary school programming to students from across Northwestern Ontario, including the territories of Treaty #3 and Treaty #9, at sites located in the municipalities of Sioux Lookout, Red Lake, Ignace, Pickle Lake, Kenora, and Dryden.

Credit courses are delivered through an enhanced self-study model, with students having the opportunity to work in class with a qualified teacher/tutor, at home, or online through Google Classroom. Additionally, many agencies and organizations help to provide access and support to our adult students, including the Red Lake Literacy Association, local Friendship Centres, and the Kenora District Services Board.

Students registering with the Adult Education program are taken through an individualized critical pathway process to determine what coursework is required to satisfy OSSD requirements. Students are recognized and credited for their prior learning, skills, and life experience through the Mature PLAR process. Each student's educational pathway is tailored specifically to that individual before coursework, including upgrading, is implemented. During the 2016 – 2017 school year 42 adults in their home communities reached their goal of obtaining an Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

Innovations for 2018 include increased opportunity for adult cooperative education courses, two adult education Dual Credit pilot programs through a partnership with Confederation College, and workforce/education roundtables to plan pathways matching labour needs to learning needs in our region.

CANADIAN TIRE JUMPSTART

Many students across our Board area have benefited directly from our partnership with Jumpstart over the past four years, allowing them to participate in our extremely successful Hockey Canada Skills Academy program, as well as swimming programs, dance, basketball, and martial arts programming.

By providing equipment, resources and transportation, students and children with special needs have shown a direct link to improved attendance, self-esteem, and confidence.

We know that if we can get the kids into the school, we can make a difference, and with that an opportunity for children to see value in their lives, and ultimately, to graduate. We are extremely proud of our partnership with Jumpstart and all that we have been able to accomplish together for our students.



CHILDCARE PARTNERSHIP



The Ministry of Education has provided \$3.6 million to the Keewatin-Patricia District School Board in partnership with the Kenora District Services Board to retrofit our elementary schools to provide Child Care Programs and Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres (OEYCFC).

We will be retrofitting five schools over the next several years with a completion date of 2020. In Phase One (2017-2018 school year) Open Roads Public School in Dryden will have a newly renovated kitchen to support school and child care food programs. In addition, the existing child care program will have some renovations to its existing room. New Prospect Public School in Dryden will also receive renovations to the current child care program rooms, along with a newly renovated playground to support both Toddlers and Preschool children.

In Phase Two, Sioux Mountain Public School in Sioux Lookout will undergo renovations to support the addition of another child care program to the school, as well the renovations to the current child care program and OEYCFC program rooms. Our Board and school staff, as well as child care providers, are currently working on a plan to renovate the school for these programs, and work should begin in the spring of 2018.

In Phase Three of the project, Evergreen Public School and Keewatin Public School in Kenora will undergo renovations to support the addition of a Toddler Program at Evergreen Public School and a Preschool Program at Keewatin Public School. As part of the 'Students Come First' vision to support children in our Board, it has been our goal to provide the best services for our families by providing Child Care Programs and OEYCFC in our elementary schools.

NORTHWESTERN HEALTH UNIT

We continue our partnership with the Northwestern Health Unit (NWHU) to support the success and well-being of every student and child, as well as staff and families, in our school communities.



The NWHU assists us through providing input into school improvement plans, especially in the area of health and physical education, as well as policy development, workplace health, nutrition programs, a wide range of preventive health services for students, and professional development opportunities for our staff. We continue to support initiatives like the Healthy Kids Community Challenge to increase fruit and vegetable consumption. Several communities ran programming that offers students cooking programs, a healthier school policy on food at school events, and the promotion of school garden spaces. Water filling stations and promotion encouraging healthier drinks allowed many schools to offer infused water stations at sporting and school events. We are already seeing the value that this formalized partnership is having in our schools and communities and look forward to continuing to build on our work with the NWHU.



KPDSB REMEMBERS

We wish to acknowledge the lives of these young people, our students, who we lost this past year. Their names appear on this last page of our 2017 Director's Annual Report; they cannot ever be forgotten.

Jolynn Winter

Lucas Petiquan

Nikolas Ho

Dorothy Owen

Deandra Anderson

Marcus Turtle

Ignace Public School

Red Lake District High School

Dryden High School

Queen Elizabeth District High School

Sioux Mountain Public School

Queen Elizabeth District High School

