

# 2023-2024 Director's Annual Report

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G R E A T E R   E S S E X   C O U N T Y  
D I S T R I C T   S C H O O L   B O A R D

# A great place to be



The Greater Essex County District School Board is pleased to present the 2023-2024 Annual Director's Report. This interactive PDF offers an engaging overview of last school year's successes and updates, with clickable sections in the Table of Contents to guide you directly to areas of interest. You'll also find links to explore deeper insights, reports, and recent news and events on our website. We invite you to explore the report in a way that works best for you.

To view previous annual reports, visit [Director's Annual Reports at publicboard.ca](https://www.publicboard.ca)



## We acknowledge

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

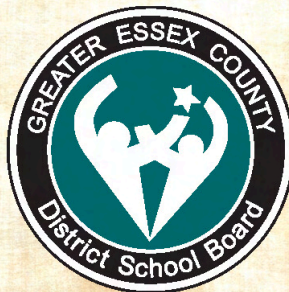
This territory is within the lands honoured by the Wampum Treaties;  
agreements between the Anishinaabe (Ah-nish-e-naa-bay),  
Haudenosaunee (Hoe-den-oh-show-nee),  
Lenni Lenape (Len-eh Le-naw-pay) and allied Nations  
to peacefully share and care for the resources  
around the Great Lakes.

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.



# Director's Message

Dear Greater Essex County District School Board Community,

As I reflect on the past year, I am filled with gratitude and pride in the incredible accomplishments of our students, staff, and community. It has been a year of both challenges and opportunities, and I am honoured to have led this district through a time of growth and transformation.

The 2023-2024 school year marked a new chapter for us all, but it is built on a solid foundation of collaboration, innovation, and resilience. Throughout this year, we have worked tirelessly to ensure that our students thrive, not just academically but socially and emotionally as well. Our commitment to equity and inclusion remains steadfast, and we continue to address systemic barriers to create a learning environment where every student feels valued and supported.

One of the key highlights of the 2023-2024 year has been our continued focus on student well-being and mental health, which has become increasingly essential in today's world. We have expanded programs, such as summer learning and mental health supports, to ensure that students have the resources they need to succeed both inside and outside the classroom.

As we move forward, our Strategic Priorities remain our guiding light, helping us focus on student achievement, equity, and well-being. I encourage you to explore this annual report and witness the remarkable progress we have made together as a community. From our commitment to dismantling anti-Black racism to enhancing learning opportunities, we are building tomorrow with purpose and passion.

Thank you for your unwavering support, your partnership, and your dedication to making our district a place where all students can flourish.

Sincerely,



**Vicki Houston**  
Director of Education



# Senior Administration

The Greater Essex County District School Board's (GECDSB) Director of Education, Vicki Houston, is supported by a group of 9 Superintendents. Click below to view current senior administration portfolios.



**Shelley Armstrong**  
Superintendent  
of Business & Treasurer



**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  
Professional Learning -  
Justice, Inclusion, Equity  
and Diversity



**Chris Mills**  
Superintendent of Education  
Special Education



**Raquel Roberts**  
Superintendent of Education  
Professional Learning -  
Curriculum/Program

# Board of Trustees

The Greater Essex County District School Board (GECDSB) is governed by a dedicated group of 10 Trustees, elected every four years through the municipal election process.

The current Board of Trustees, elected in October 2022, is supported by two Student Trustees, elected annually by the Student Senate. One Student Trustee represents the Board's City secondary school population, and the other represents the County secondary school population.

Together, they work to ensure the success and well-being of all students. Our Chairperson, Gale Hatfield, leads the Board with a commitment to excellence in public education.



Learn more about our [Trustees](#)



**Gale Hatfield**  
Chairperson  
of the Board

Windsor Wards 5, 6, 7 & 8



**Nancy Armstrong**  
Leamington  
and Pelee Island



**Connie Buckler**  
Lakeshore  
and Tecumseh



**Julia Burgess**  
Town of Essex  
& Town of Kingsville



**Sarah Cipkar**  
Wards 3, 4, 10



**Cathy Cooke**  
Windsor Wards  
5, 6, 7 and 8



**Linda Qin**  
Windsor Wards 1, 2 & 3



**Ron Le Clair**  
Town of Amherstburg  
& Town of LaSalle



**Kim McKinley**  
Windsor Wards  
1, 2 & 9



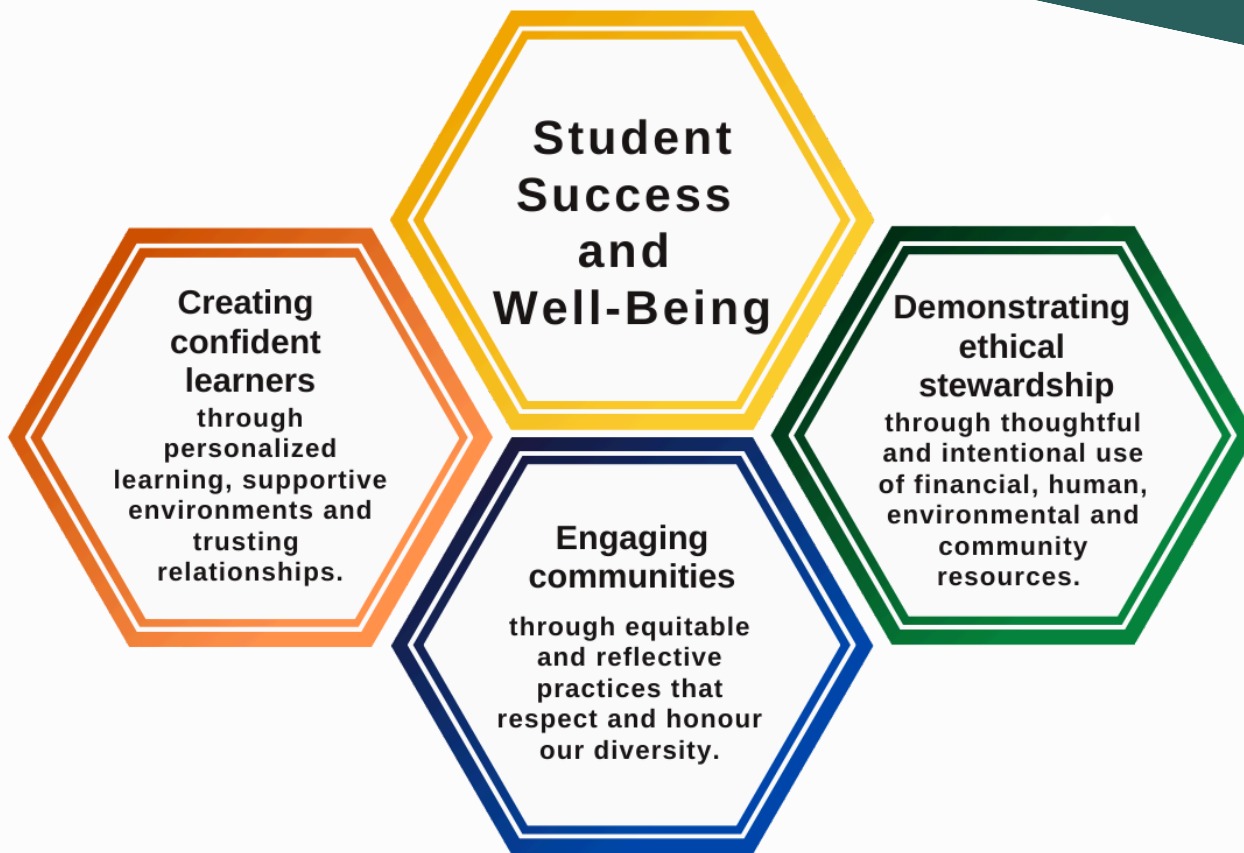
**Christie Nelson**  
Wards 3, 4, 10



**Chiara Trakilovic**  
Student Trustee  
County Representative



**Tianyu Lin**  
Student Trustee  
City Representative



## Our Commitment: Building Tomorrow Together

At the Greater Essex County District School Board, we are guided by a shared vision of “Building Tomorrow Together” and a mission of “Leading excellence in public education by creating confident learners, engaging diverse communities, and demonstrating ethical stewardship.”

These guiding principles are the foundation of everything we do, ensuring that every student has the opportunity to succeed and thrive. Our work is centered around three key pillars: Creating Confident Learners, Engaging Communities, and Demonstrating Ethical Stewardship.

Throughout this Director’s Annual Report, we will highlight specific examples of how these strategic priorities are being put into action across our schools and programs. From fostering student success to enhancing community engagement, these priorities shape our efforts to create a brighter future for all.



The Greater Essex County District School Board is a vibrant and diverse community, serving 36,807 students across 75 schools.

Our staff, which includes over 5,000 dedicated educators and support personnel, work tirelessly to ensure every student has the opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed.

With a steadfast commitment to excellence, we are proud to lead the way in public education, providing innovative programs, inclusive learning environments, and a focus on the holistic development of each student.

## Windsor-Essex

### Student Enrollment:



**24,528**  
in Elementary

**11,357**  
in Secondary

**770**  
in  
Adult Education

**152**  
International  
Students



**5,000+ Employees**



- 53 Elementary Schools
- 15 Secondary Schools
- 4 Agency Schools
- 1 Newcomer Reception Centre





# CREATING CONFIDENT LEARNERS

through personalized learning, supportive environments and trusting relationships.



## Summer Learning Programs

The Greater Essex County District School Board (GECDSB) proudly offers a three-week day camp every July for students, providing diverse and innovative learning opportunities. Each year, the program evolves to meet the needs of students while fostering growth through active, inquiry-based activities.

Although the specific goals of each camp may vary, the overarching aim remained consistent: to develop students' mindsets and encourage them to explore new concepts. Camps emphasize daily movement, mindfulness, Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) learning, while also offering enriching cultural and community-focused experiences.

Highlights of the GECDSB's 2024 summer learning programs include:

- **Camp Wonder:** The original camp in the series, focused on building literacy and numeracy skills for students in Grades 2 and 3.
- **Camp Migizi and Camp Merveille:**
  - Camp Migizi offered First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students opportunities to celebrate Indigenous languages, cultures, and traditions.
  - Camp Merveille serves French Immersion students, helping them explore and celebrate the French language and culture.
- **Camp Lingo:**
  - For ESL and English Language Learner (ELL) students in Grades 3 to 6, focused on developing English literacy and numeracy skills, with some students also participating in Camp Wonder.
- **Camp Mkeka and Camp Nia:**
  - Camp Mkeka supported Black students in Grades 1 to 6, while Camp Nia is designed for Black students in Grades 7 to 12. Both camps integrate a Black-affirming curriculum to promote literacy, numeracy, and cultural pride while addressing anti-Black racism.

Each day, mornings were dedicated to small-group instruction, where teachers work closely with students to enhance literacy and math skills taught throughout the school year. Afternoons are filled with hands-on sessions in physical education, coding, and STEAM activities, encouraging creativity and exploration.

Parents were also invited to play an active role in their child's learning, fostering a collaborative approach to support student success. These programs not only prepare students for the upcoming school year but also inspired curiosity, built confidence, and nurtured a lifelong love for learning.





## Summer Learning Programs

### Reaching Ahead



Are you interested in getting a head start to your high school experience?

### Reaching Ahead

Summer Learning Program for Students Starting High School in September.

**July 3rd to July 26th, 2024**

8:30 AM - 12:30 PM followed by 2 hours of asynchronous learning at home.

- Learn valuable skills
- Learn about pathways through and beyond high school
- Make new friends
- Create a plan to get community service hours
- Earn your first credit

Contact: **Brianne MacLaren-Ross**  
(519) 255-3200 ext. 10405  
brianne.maclaren-ross@publicboard.ca

Belle River DHS  
 Essex DHS  
 Kingsville DHS  
 Campbell PS (Kennedy Students)  
 Leamington Secondary

North Star HS  
 Riverside Secondary  
 Sandwich Secondary  
 Southwood PS (Massey Students)  
 Tecumseh Vista Academy

Westview Freedom Academy  
 Walkerville  
 W.F. Herman Academy

Entering its ninth summer in July 2024, the Reaching Ahead program supported hundreds of students in making a successful transition from Grade 8 to Grade 9, equipping them with valuable skills and confidence. The program provided students with the opportunity to make new friends, earn their first high school credit, explore pathways through and beyond high school, and create a plan to complete their community service hours.

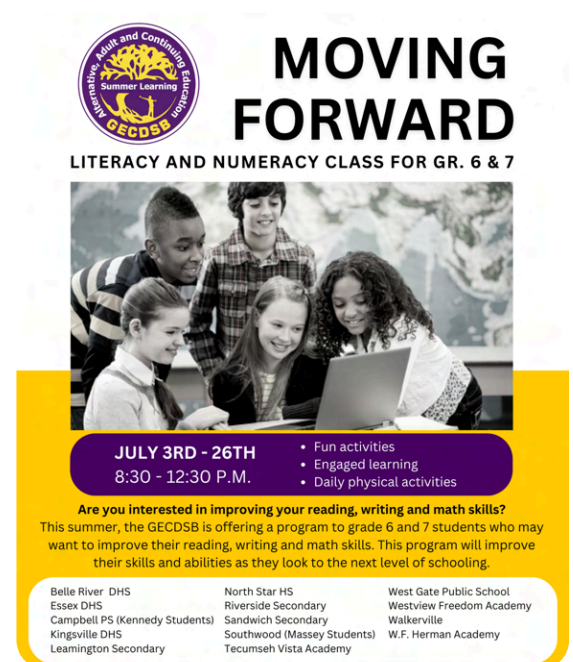
Reaching Ahead also introduced students to the world of work, what to expect in high school, and ways to get involved in their community. By successfully completing the program, students earned their first full high school credit, giving them a strong foundation for their secondary school journey.

### Moving Forward: Preparing Students for Success

This past summer, the Greater Essex County District School Board proudly offered the Moving Forward program, designed to support Grade 6 and Grade 7 students in building essential skills for the upcoming school year. The program focused on strengthening reading, writing, and math skills while fostering personal growth and confidence.

Through the Moving Forward program, students had the opportunity to:

- Enhance their literacy and numeracy skills through engaging and hands-on learning activities.
- Develop stronger communication skills by working collaboratively with peers and teachers.
- Build confidence in using technology as a tool for learning.
- Practice social skills that supported their overall well-being and readiness for the next grade.



## MOVING FORWARD

LITERACY AND NUMERACY CLASS FOR GR. 6 & 7

**JULY 3RD - 26TH**  
8:30 - 12:30 P.M.

- Fun activities
- Engaged learning
- Daily physical activities

Are you interested in improving your reading, writing and math skills? This summer, the GECDSB is offering a program to grade 6 and 7 students who may want to improve their reading, writing and math skills. This program will improve their skills and abilities as they look to the next level of schooling.

Belle River DHS  
 Essex DHS  
 Campbell PS (Kennedy Students)  
 Kingsville DHS  
 Leamington Secondary

North Star HS  
 Riverside Secondary  
 Sandwich Secondary  
 Southwood (Massey Students)  
 Tecumseh Vista Academy

West Gate Public School  
 Westview Freedom Academy  
 Walkerville  
 W.F. Herman Academy

The program ensured students felt prepared, confident, and excited to start the new school year. By focusing on both academic and social development, the Moving Forward program set the foundation for long-term success in school and beyond.

## 2023-2024 Census Portraits

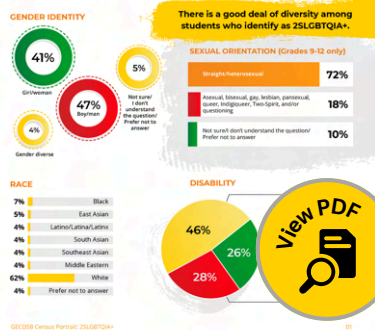
As required by the Ministry of Education and the Anti-Racism Act, 2017, the Greater Essex County District School Board conducted its first Student Census in the 2023-2024 school year. The analysis of the data will help the Board understand the experiences of students who have been historically underserved by the education system and put programs in place to support closing any gaps in academic achievement and well-being.

Of the almost 36,000 students in the GECSDB in 2023-2024, parents/guardians completed the Student Census for 18% of students in JK-Grade 8, while 58% of students in Grades 9-12 completed the Student Census.



As required by the Ministry of Education and the Anti-Racism Act, the Greater Essex County District School Board (GECSDB) conducted its first Student Census in the 2023-2024 school year. The analysis of the data will help the Board understand the experiences of students who have been historically underserved by the education system and put programs in place to close any gaps in academic achievement and well-being.

The data shows that about 20% of all GECSDB students who completed the Census identify as 2SLGBTQIA+, i.e., as gender diverse or with a sexual orientation other than straight/heterosexual (for secondary students only).

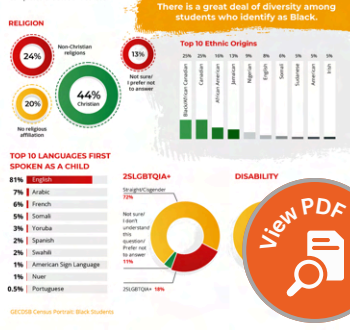


GECSDB Census Portrait: 2SLGBTQIA+



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The data shows that 1% (102) of all GECSDB students who completed the Census identify as Black. 30% of these students were born outside of Canada.

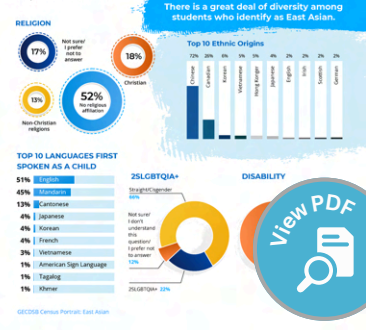


GECSDB Census Portrait: Black Students



As required by the Ministry of Education and the Anti-Racism Act, the Greater Essex County District School Board (GECSDB) conducted its first Student Census in the 2023-2024 school year. The analysis of the data will help the Board understand the experiences of students who have been historically underserved by the education system and put programs in place to close any gaps in academic achievement and well-being.

The data shows that 5% (527) of all GECSDB students who completed the Census identify as East Asian. 38% of these students were born outside of Canada.

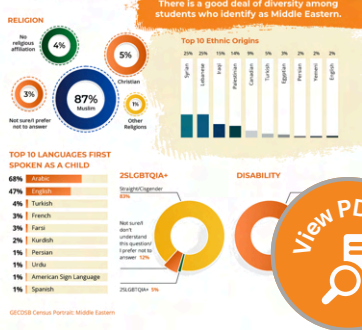


GECSDB Census Portrait: East Asian



As required by the Ministry of Education and the Anti-Racism Act, the Greater Essex County District School Board (GECSDB) conducted its first Student Census in the 2023-2024 school year. The analysis of the data will help the Board understand the experiences of students who have been historically underserved by the education system and put programs in place to close any gaps in academic achievement and well-being.

The data shows that 14% (1,466) of all GECSDB students who completed the Census identify as Middle Eastern. 51% of these students were born outside of Canada.

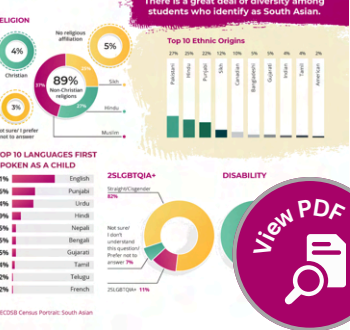


GECSDB Census Portrait: Middle Eastern



As required by the Ministry of Education and the Anti-Racism Act, the Greater Essex County District School Board (GECSDB) conducted its first Student Census in the 2023-2024 school year. The analysis of the data will help the Board understand the experiences of students who have been historically underserved by the education system and put programs in place to close any gaps in academic achievement and well-being.

The data shows that 19% (1,081) of all GECSDB students who completed the Census identify as South Asian. 39% of these students were born outside of Canada.

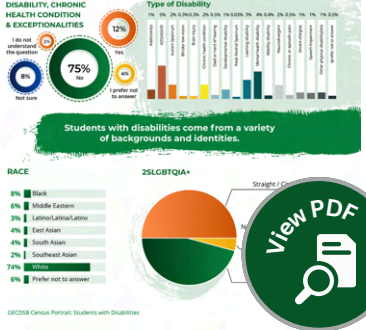


GECSDB Census Portrait: South Asian



As required by the Ministry of Education and the Anti-Racism Act, the Greater Essex County District School Board (GECSDB) conducted its first Student Census in the 2023-2024 school year. The analysis of the data will help the Board understand the experiences of students who have been historically underserved by the education system and put programs in place to close any gaps in academic achievement and well-being.

The data shows that 12% (1,204) of all GECSDB students who completed the Census have a disability, chronic health condition, or exceptionalities.



GECSDB Census Portrait: Students with Disabilities

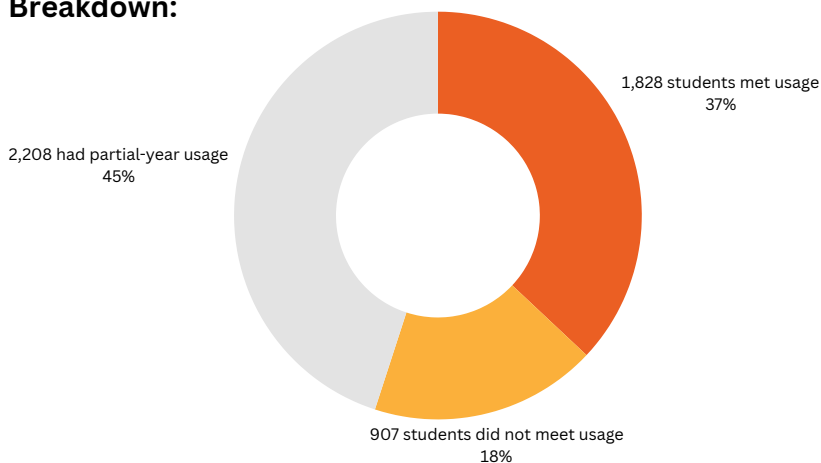
## Lexia

The Lexia® Core5® Reading program (Core5) is an adaptive blended learning tool designed to improve literacy for students of all abilities, targeting six critical areas of reading. The program spans 21 levels, addressing skills from Pre-K through 5th grade, and helps students meet their grade-level benchmarks by working at their own pace.

Core5 uses real-time performance data to recommend tailored weekly usage times (20-80 minutes) and teacher-led lessons, aiming to ensure students transition from learning to read to reading to learn effectively.

A report evaluated the progress of 4,943 students from the Greater Essex County District School Board who used Core5 during the 2023-2024 school year at 66 sites, covering data from July 31, 2023, to June 29, 2024. The report highlighted program usage, progress, and outcomes.

### Breakdown:



### Categories:

- **Met Usage:** Students used Core5 for at least 20 weeks and met weekly usage targets  $\geq 50\%$ .
- **Did Not Meet Usage:** Used Core5 for  $\geq 20$  weeks but didn't meet weekly targets.
- **Partial Year Use:** Used Core5 for  $< 20$  weeks.

### Grade-Level Progress:

#### All Students:

- 63% of students advanced at least one grade level in Core5.
- Students starting below grade level reduced significantly, with 53% achieving grade-level or above skills.

#### Students Meeting Usage:

- 83% advanced at least one grade level.
- Significant reductions in students working far below grade level.

### Skill Level Breakdown:

#### Beginning of Year:

- 72% of students started below grade-level skills.

#### End of Year:

- 66% of students who began below grade level advanced at least one grade level.
- 19% overall improvement in students achieving grade-level or higher skills.

### Grade-Level Highlights:

#### Progress across all grades showed similar trends:

- Students working at/above grade level increased.
- Those far below grade level decreased substantially.

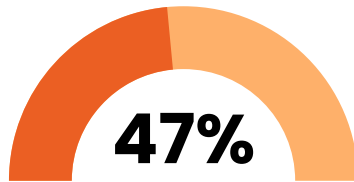


## PowerUp

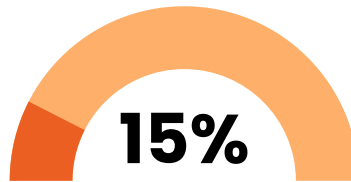
The Greater Essex County District School Board PowerUp Usage Report summarizes the usage and progress of students using the Lexia PowerUp Literacy program during the 2023-2024 school year. Below are the key highlights:

### Overview

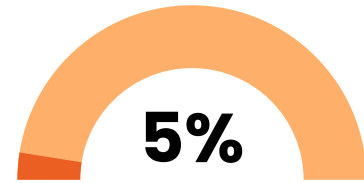
- Program Purpose: Lexia PowerUp Literacy is designed for grades 6-12 to improve fundamental literacy skills and build comprehension, grammar, and word study abilities.
- Participants: 403 students across 53 sites.
- Timeframe: August 1, 2023 - June 27, 2024.



**Meeting Usage:**  
Students who met weekly targets for at least 20 weeks



**Not Meeting Usage:**  
Students with 20+ weeks of use but did not meet weekly target



**Partial Year Usage:**  
Students who used the program less than 20 weeks



### Average Weekly Time per Strand:

- Word Study: 18 minutes
- Grammar: 16 minutes
- Comprehension: 15 minutes



### Unit Completion:

Average units completed:

- Word Study: 55
- Grammar: 21
- Comprehension: 64



### Skill Progress:

- Meeting usage students showed significantly more progress in all strands.



### Zone Progress

- Students advance through Foundational, Intermediate, and Advanced zones, which represent increasing literacy proficiency.
- 67% of students who met usage targets moved up at least two zones during the year.

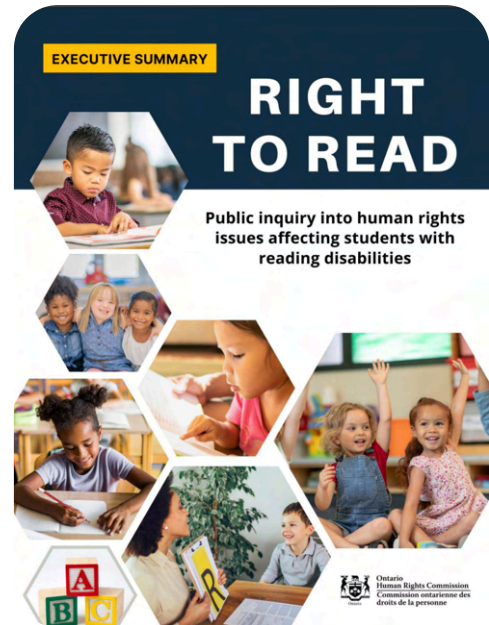
The report emphasizes the importance of consistent usage for achieving substantial literacy gains. Students who consistently met their usage targets demonstrated the most progress across all strands.

## Acadience

Acadience Reading was chosen based on the Ontario Human Rights Commission's "Right to Read" inquiry and Policy/Program Memorandum 168, mandating early reading screening from Senior Kindergarten to Grade 2 starting in September 2024.

In 2022 and 2023, the GECDSB proactively piloted the Acadience reading screener in selected schools based on previous work in French Immersion and the findings of the Right to Read report.

A key factor in the decision was that Acadience Reading/Acadience Reading Français is the only approved early reading screener available in both English and French. This choice ensures that students in both English and French Immersion programs have access to universal screening, while also providing educators with data to inform instruction.



- Training began in 2022 and expanded through 2024, involving various educators and Early Reading Intervention teachers.
- Early screening will begin in September 2024, targeting Grades 2, 1, and Senior Kindergarten.
- Focused interventions are planned based on student data, with additional cycles after Winter 2025 assessments.
- Continued capacity building for educators to leverage data and improve student reading outcomes.

## In the News



A huge congrats goes out to Ryley Dubek from Riverside Secondary School.

Ryley won Gold in the Secondary level Skills Canada - Ontario Auto Body Competition



Grade 12 student, David Kim, at Leamington District Secondary School, received the Hellmuth scholarship from Huron University College at Western University. The Scholarship will cover tuition and fees for up to four years.



[Am800](#)

## Math Achievement Action Plan

The GECD SB Math Achievement Action Plan was developed in response to the Ministry of Education's 2023 Math Strategy. School Boards must develop their plans, focusing on three Key areas:

- Ensure fidelity of curriculum implementation, including using proven strategies that support academic achievement.
- Engage in ongoing learning on mathematics content knowledge for teaching.
- Know the mathematics learner and ensure mathematical tasks, interventions, and supports are relevant and responsive.



The Ministry provided funding support for the hiring of staff related to these priorities and helped to identify the 24 elementary and 3 secondary schools for grades 3, 6 & 9. Priority schools were a key focus for 2023-2024. Teachers, Principals and School Math Facilitators are working collaboratively to develop, implement, and monitor a plan using the Ministry provided Framework.

The board was able to purchase digital math tools that were used to support student learning at school and home. Professional development for educators was provided. The Math Facilitators conducted a math screener with all grade 3 and 6 students in priority classrooms in the fall, winter and spring. Secondary School Math Facilitators conducted a diagnostic assessment and math confidence survey with all grade 9 students in priority classrooms at the beginning and end of each semester.

## Final Report: Math Screeners



- In grade 3, 12% of students in priority schools scored at or above level 3 on the Spring Math Facilitator screener. This represents a decrease of 2% when compared to the Winter screener results.
- In grade 6, 13% of students in priority schools scored at or above level 3 on the Spring Math Facilitator screener. This represents an increase of 2% when compared to the Winter screener results.
- In grade 9, 32% of students in priority schools semester 2 scored at or above level 3 on their EQAO assessment. This represents an increase of 2% when compared to the semester 2 screener results created by the Math Facilitators and given at the beginning of the semester.



## Employment Systems Review

### The purpose of an Employment Systems Review (ESR)

An ESR is a comprehensive review of written and unwritten, formal and informal employment policies, practices, and procedures that identifies and makes recommendations for the removal of systemic/institutional, cultural, and attitudinal barriers to equitable policies and practices, a diverse workforce, and an inclusive work environment. An ESR provides an organization with information on what is working well and what requires improvement so that it can build on its strengths and remove the identified barriers.

In June of 2023 the GECDsB released the Employment Systems Review. From the report four priorities have been identified and we continue to work through the recommendations included in the report.

- **Priority 1:** Diversify the workforce at all levels
- **Priority 2:** Create more equitable policies and practices
- **Priority 3:** Create a more inclusive and welcoming work environment
- **Priority 4:** Strengthen the organization's equity infrastructure.

Below are some of the completed, initiated, and ongoing action items from the recommendations for the 2023-2024. [Read the full report.](#)



### PRIORITY 1: DIVERSIFY THE WORKFORCE AT ALL LEVELS

**Recommendation 14:** It is recommended that the GECDsB develop a program with the University of Windsor to encourage students from diverse backgrounds to become teachers.

- Actions initiated and on-going: Members of the Senior Team (a number of Supervisory Officers and the Director) are working with the University of Windsor, meeting with Faculty of Education - Dean and Associate Dean, quarterly. In addition to this, members of the Senior Team are also collaborating with a working subcommittee on goals as outlined in the Dismantling Anti-Black Racism Strategy on creating pathways for students who identify as Black to pursue careers as teachers.

**Recommendation 81:** It is recommended that the GECDsB's equity statement be revised to encourage applications from the groups that experience persistent and systemic discrimination in employment, namely Indigenous peoples from North America (or Turtle Island), racialized people, persons with disabilities, 2SLGBTQIA+, and women.

- Action completed: The GECDsB equity statement has been revised as per the recommendation.

## Employment Systems Review

### PRIORITY 2: CREATE MORE EQUITABLE POLICIES AND PRACTICES

**Recommendation 45:** It is recommended that the Attendance Support Administrative Procedure expand the definition of innocent absences to include those related to disabilities and other Code-protected grounds, and that it specify the Board's legal obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code and the AODA to provide accommodation, short of undue hardship, to support employees to regularly attend work.

- Action initiated: The process to review and revise the Administrative Procedure has been initiated and will be completed shortly.

**Recommendation 76:** It is recommended that the GECDsB use its policy review process as an opportunity to review all policies through an equity lens, including incorporating gender-neutral language in all policies.

- Actions ongoing: Cyclical reviews of policies, regulations and administrative procedures are being completed through an equity lens.



### PRIORITY 3: CREATE A MORE INCLUSIVE AND WELCOMING WORK ENVIRONMENT

**Recommendation 2:** It is recommended that all Supervisory Officers learn about equity in leadership and receive individual coaching to support their ongoing development and deepen their ability to lead the Board's equity efforts and embed equity into all that the Board does.

- Actions initiated and ongoing: The Director and Supervisory Officers completed multi-session modules regarding dismantling oppression, racism, discrimination (Jean Samuel); January 2024-June 2024; Supervisory Officers and Director also attended a virtual learning session with Njeri Damali Sojourner-Campbell (legal counsel with Hicks Morley) on Competing Rights Framework.

**Recommendation 30:** It is recommended that the Board continue to offer safe spaces for Indigenous, Black, and racialized teachers when Board-wide equity-related professional learning is offered.

- Actions continuing: This is current practice and it will continue.



## Employment Systems Review

### PRIORITY 4: STRENGTHEN THE ORGANIZATION'S EQUITY INFRASTRUCTURE

**Recommendation 77:** It is recommended that vacancy control policies and processes be put in place to ensure that new employees are hired into funded positions with job descriptions, that approvals have been given by Human Resources to initiate a hiring process, and that HR be involved throughout the entire hiring process to ensure a fair and equitable process that is consistent with GECSB policies.

- Actions initiated: Work is ongoing as members of the Senior Team reviews its own processes to comply with budget and Ministry funding allocations; work has been done to align hiring with system priorities and Ministry funding.





## Co-op, SHSM, OYAP and Dual-Credit

At the Greater Essex County District School Board, we believe every student deserves an education that aligns with their passions, talents, and career aspirations. That's why we offer a wide range of innovative programs designed to engage learners, develop real-world skills, and create pathways to success.

Whether students aspire to excel in a skilled trade, pursue post-secondary education, or enter the workforce with confidence, our programs provide the tools and opportunities needed to turn those dreams into reality.

The **Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)** is a school-to-work transition initiative that allows students to gain hands-on experience in the skilled trades while earning cooperative education credits. Through OYAP, students have the opportunity to become registered apprentices and work toward certification as journeypersons in skilled trades, all while completing their secondary school diploma.

Participation in OYAP continues to grow annually across the GECDSB. Specifically, our Enhanced OYAP programs have seen an increase in student involvement, growing from 117 students in 2019-2020 to 163 students in 2023-2024. To further support this growth, we actively promote OYAP and co-op opportunities by hosting information sessions for parents, students, and educators (both elementary and secondary), raising awareness about the advantages and opportunities these programs provide.

One of our notable partnerships is with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 773. This partnership includes a centralized placement that enables students to participate in a 4-credit co-operative education experience with the local electrical union hall. This collaboration marks a milestone as it is the first time IBEW Local 773 has accepted co-op students, paving the way for future growth and opportunities for students pursuing careers in the electrical trade.

Additionally, in 2024, Riverside Secondary School (RSS) became a Canadian Welding Bureau (CWB) testing centre. This accreditation allows any GECDSB student to complete welding certification testing at RSS. Over the past five years, RSS has helped more than 30 students achieve certification as welders through our partnership with the Local 700 Ironworkers union.



## Co-op, SHSM, OYAP and Dual-Credit

The **Specialist High Skill Major (SHSM)** program is a specialized high school program that allows students to earn their Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) and focus their learning on a specific economic sector at the same time. Students develop skills for their future careers, graduate high school with industry certifications and training and earn an SHSM seal on their high school diploma.

In the GECDSB, we continue to grow this program and have increased the number of SHSM programs in our secondary schools each year for the past 5 years. In 2024-2025, we have 77 SHSM programs which will benefit approximately 1,800 students across the board. Every GECDSB school offers SHSM programs. Programs are offered in a variety of sectors including: Art and Culture; Aviation and Aerospace; Business; Construction; Cosmetology; Environment; Health and Wellness; Hospitality and Tourism; Information and Communication Technology; Manufacturing; Non-Profit, Education and Childcare; and Transportation.



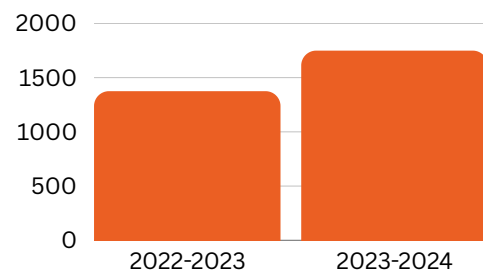
### Advantages of SHSM:

- Students will gain valuable skills from their co-op placements, training certifications, and through experiential learning field trips
- There is NO COST for students to participate in this program
- Students get a red embossed SHSM seal on their OSSD and special recognition at graduation
- Post-Secondary Scholarships are available for SHSM graduates who attend St. Clair College (\$1,500) or University of Windsor (\$1,000)

### Number of SHSM Students

Year	GECDSB Completion Rate	Provincial Completion Rate	Percentage
2022-2023	<b>76.8%</b>	<b>68.6%</b>	<b>8.2%</b> above provincial completion rate
2023-2024	<b>87.6%</b>	<b>71.9%</b>	<b>15.7%</b> above provincial completion rate

### SHSM Student Enrollment



**27% Increase Year over Year**

## Co-op, SHSM, OYAP and Dual-Credit

### John Freeman Walls Homestead



On July 23rd, students from the Enhanced Construction Program (ECP) embarked on a remarkable field trip to the John Freeman Walls Underground Railroad Museum. As part of the summer school program, students had the opportunity of a lifetime to touch and make history by revitalizing the deck at the historic John Freeman Walls Homestead.

The ECP students' project at the John Freeman Walls Homestead is more than just a construction task; it is an educational experience that connects them with history. With support from the Local 494 Carpenters Union, SHSM, and Milwaukee Tool, the students rebuilt an existing deck at the homestead. This project allowed them to apply their skills in a real-world setting while learning about the historical significance of their work from the descendants of John Freeman Walls.

The collaborative effort at the homestead will continue beyond this summer. Any unfinished work will be picked up by a new group of students in September, ensuring the project's completion and allowing more students to benefit from this unique educational opportunity.

#### View Media Coverage



[Am800](#)



[CTV News Windsor](#)



[CBC](#)



[Lakeshore News](#)



## Co-op, SHSM, OYAP and Dual-Credit

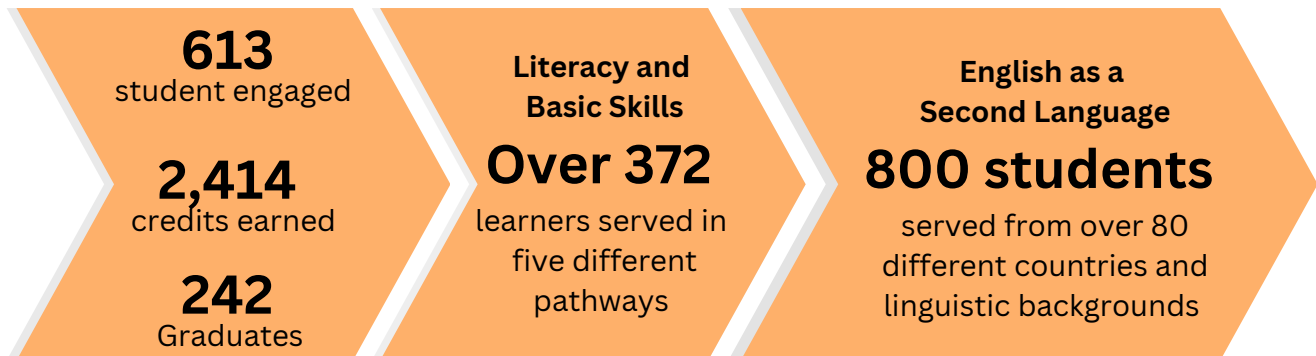
### Experiential Learning Opportunities

The Student Success Team takes great pride in providing a wide range of experiential learning opportunities through specialized programs, as well as events, initiatives, and resources available to elementary and secondary students. Below are just a few examples of the impactful events and programs offered:

- **Windsor Express Career Fair:** Launched in 2024, this new event brought together over 400 students, 35 staff members, and 15 community partners to explore career opportunities in Business and Health & Wellness.
- **Robotics Showcase:** Students from 10 secondary schools attended this event, which highlighted the benefits of integrating robotics into school programs. Participants experienced demonstrations from the board's 4 Robotics Teams and the Lego League Team, while touring STEM and robotics-related programs at St. Clair College. Concurrently, 20 elementary teachers participated in professional development focused on job skills programs and the advantages of teaching robotics.
- **Level Up! Skilled Trades Career Fair:** Over 2,400 GECD SB students explored skilled trades as a career pathway during this highly attended event.
- **Culinary Day at St. Clair College:** Students from all 5 Hospitality and Tourism SHSM programs applied math skills to calculate the per kilogram savings of purchasing and butchering a whole chicken. Students then performed the butchering themselves, blending practical math and culinary skills.
- **Manufacturing Day:** This event offered students in Manufacturing and Careers classes the chance to tour local manufacturing facilities, gaining insight into careers in the trades and seeing the industry in action.
- **FNMI-Specific Events:** Tailored programming for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) students included:
  - A day at the Carpenters' Union Hall, where the Enhanced Construction Program (ECP) is hosted.
  - A Skilled Trades Career Fair in partnership with Skills Ontario.
  - A Skilled Trades Day featuring hands-on activities in plumbing, welding, roofing, and sheet metal fabrication.
  - Attendance at Dream Day in Toronto through Build a Dream.
- **Jill of All Trades:** Female-identifying students from 8 secondary schools participated in activities across the construction, industrial, and motive power sectors, encouraging gender diversity in skilled trades.
- **Trades Explorer March Break Skills Kits:** Designed for Grade 7 students, these kits included all materials, instructions, and informational flyers for hands-on activities in 4 sectors: Horticulture, Electrical, Mechanical, and Hospitality. Approximately 127 kits were distributed during March Break.
- **Grade 7 Outreach:** During Semester 2 of 2023-2024, Grade 7 classes participated in an experiential learning session at the Local 494 Union Hall. Students learned about various skilled trades sectors and the specialized programs offered by the GECD SB. Over 600 students engaged in hands-on activities during these sessions.

## Alternative, Adult and Continuing Education

Alternative, Adult and Continuing Education endeavours to provide flexible and responsive classes to learning in elementary schools, high schools and beyond, in a welcoming and supportive environment. With 18 unique programs operating out of 14 sites around Windsor and Essex-County we are bringing more learning to more students than ever before.



## Literacy and Basic Skills

In the 2023/2024 fiscal year, our program exceeded its Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training, and Skills Development contract targets, serving 322 Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) learners and 50 Skills for Success learners. Our program runs annually from September to June, offering both day and evening classes in flexible formats, including in-person and hybrid learning options.



Each site provides programming across five pathways:

1. School Completion (with a special emphasis on Prior Learning Assessment Recognition (PLAR) preparation)
2. Employment
3. Apprenticeship
4. Post-Secondary Preparation
5. Independence

Our learners often come through referrals from various GECD SB departments, including:

- Adult and Continuing Education guidance,
- Adult English as a Second Language (AESL),
- Public Alternative Secondary School (PASS),
- School within a College (SWAC).

Additionally, we offer specialized training programs, such as Soft Skills Certification and Math Refresher courses, designed for pre-apprentices in partnership with Women's Enterprise Skills of Windsor (WEST) and Liuna 625.

Strong partnerships with organizations like the City of Windsor for employment services and the Tri-County Literacy Network further enhance our ability to deliver impactful literacy programming in the community.



**P.A.S.S. student Haylie Hanchar was awarded the GECD SB Skilled Trades Bursary of \$1,000**

# 2023-2024 EQAO Results

## Grade 3

### Participation

Number of students who fully participated.

**2,066**

in Reading

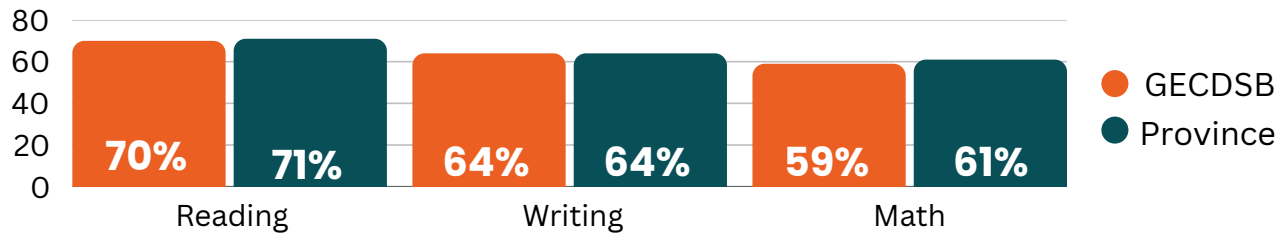
**2,056**

in Writing

**2,063**

in Mathematics

### Overall Achievement



### Learner's Context



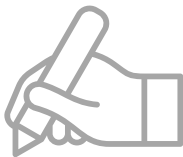
**Reading**



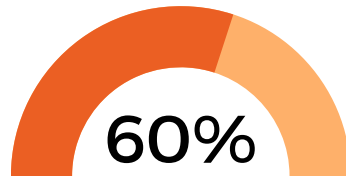
of students like to read.



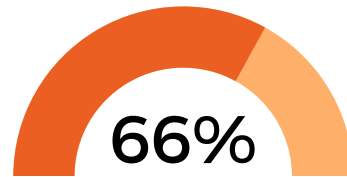
of students say that being a good reader is important to them.



**Writing**



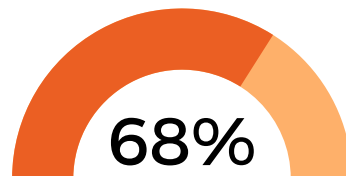
of students like to write.



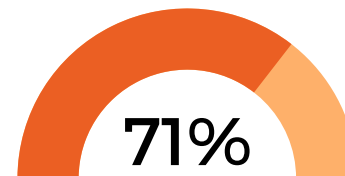
of students say that being a good writer is important to them.



**Mathematics**



of students like math.



of students say that being good at math is important to them.



## 2023-2024 EQAO Results Grade 6

### Participation

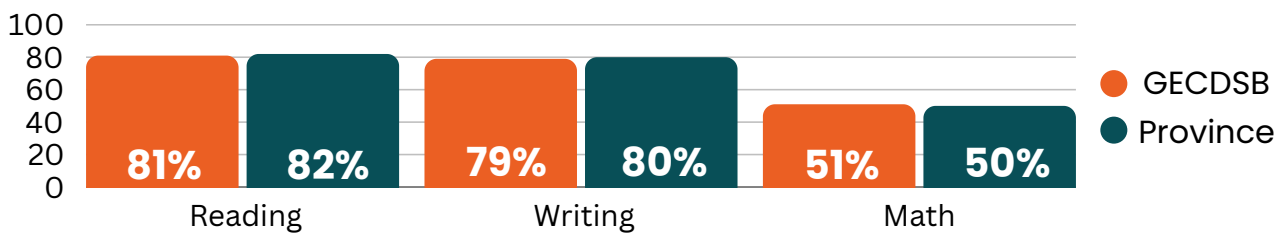
Number of students who fully participated.

**2,385**  
in Reading

**2,385**  
in Writing

**2,046**  
in Mathematics

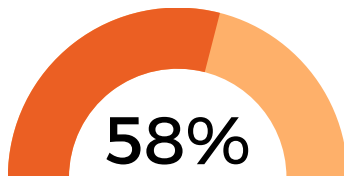
### Overall Achievement



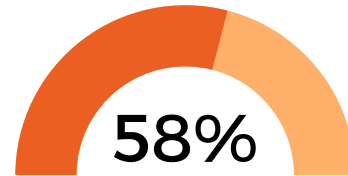
### Learner's Context



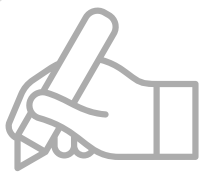
#### Reading



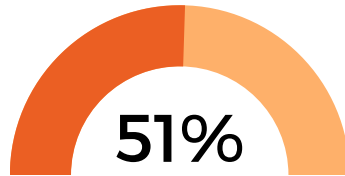
of students like to read.



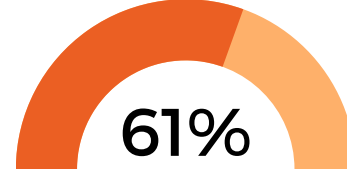
of students say that being a good reader is important to them.



#### Writing



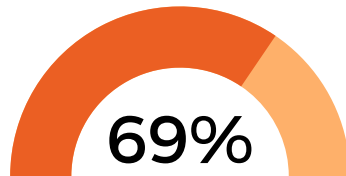
of students like to write.



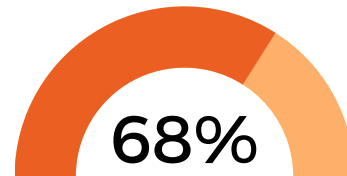
of students say that being a good writer is important to them.



#### Mathematics



of students like math.



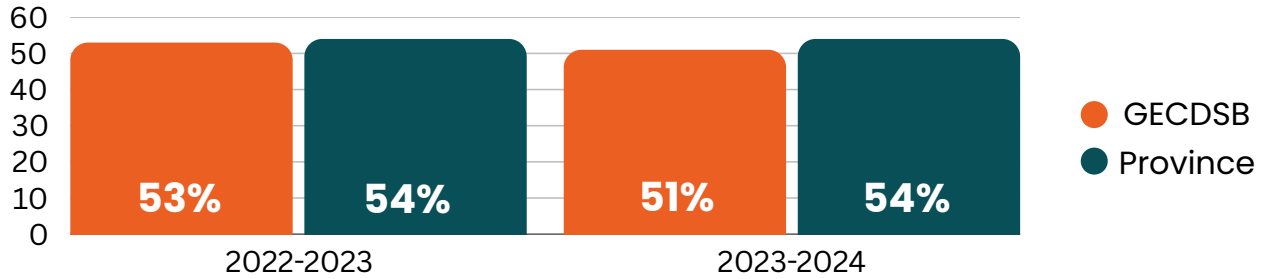
of students say that being good at math is important to them.

## 2023-2024 EQAO Results Grade 9 Mathematics

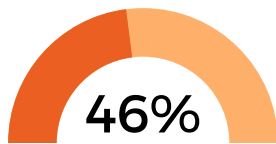
### Participation

**2,341** number of students who fully participated in mathematics

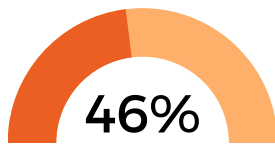
### Overall Achievement



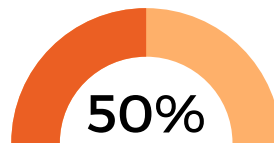
### Learner's Context



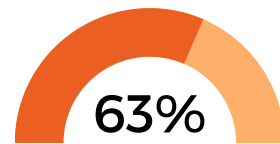
of students say they like math.



of students agree that they can answer difficult math questions.



of students think they are good at mathematics.



agree that they can understand most of the mathematics they are taught.



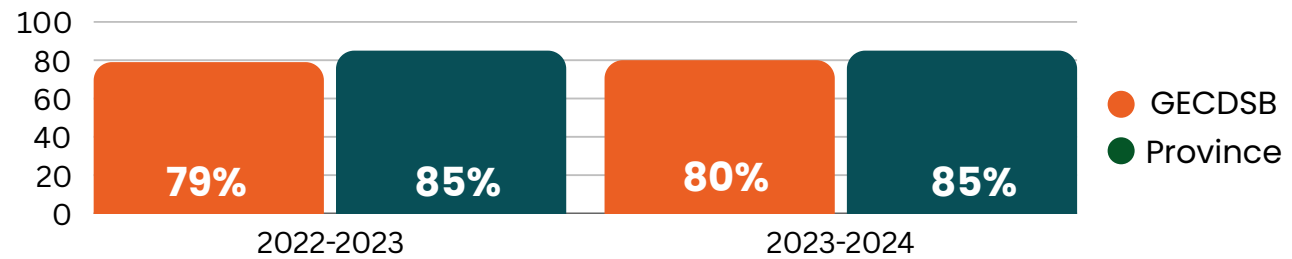
## 2023-2024 EQAO Results Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT)

### Participation

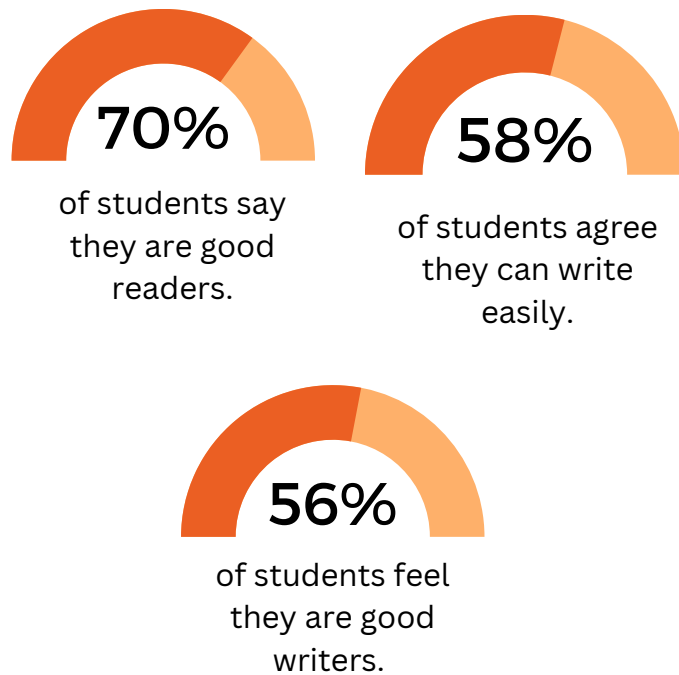
Number of students who fully participated



### Overall Achievement



### Learner's Context





## Champions for Education

One of the GECDSD Strategic Priorities is to engage communities in partnerships that respond to the needs of our learners and enhance student achievement. The Champions for Education Award supports this priority.

Generous individuals and organizations in our communities devote thousands of hours and donate financial and in-kind contributions that make a real difference to our students. The Champions for Education Award recognizes outstanding achievement and exceptional records of commitment by individuals and organizations in support of our students and our school communities.

We hosted the red carpet event at Walkerville Collegiate Institute Theatre. Walkerville students provided music and controlled the lighting and sound equipment.

## 2024 Recipients



**Build a Dream**



**Jim Walker and the Fedex Group**



**Kava Cafe & Bakery**



**United Way**



**Mucci Farms**



**Katie Campeau and the Clinical Nursing Students University of Windsor**



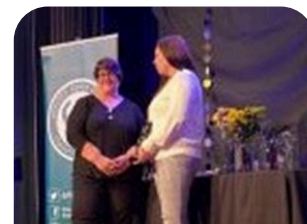
**Taryn Riley-Webb and Giant Tiger Store 257**



**Vicki Young**



**VON-Ontario Student Nutrition Program**



**Wendy's Leamington**

## Student Senate



The Greater Essex County District School Board's Student Senate is committed to student engagement by providing a framework for student voice and student leadership. Student Senate functions as a forum for discussion and consultation on matters important to students.

 Follow GECDSB Student Senate on [Instagram](#)

## Student of the Month



Each month, secondary schools submit nominations to Student Senate which then selects a Student of the Month.

The Student of the Month is invited to be recognized at a GECDSB Board Meeting and is awarded a token of congratulations by Student Trustees.



**September**  
Zoe Toews



**October**  
Melina Zsargo



**November**  
Hudson Trudeau



**December**  
Ozegho Aliu



**January**  
Kamora Buzek



**February**  
Nolan Papineau



**March**  
Marissa Bocchini



**April**  
Joel Stockwell



**May**  
Kai Qin



**June**  
Yugraj Dhillon





# ENGAGING COMMUNITIES

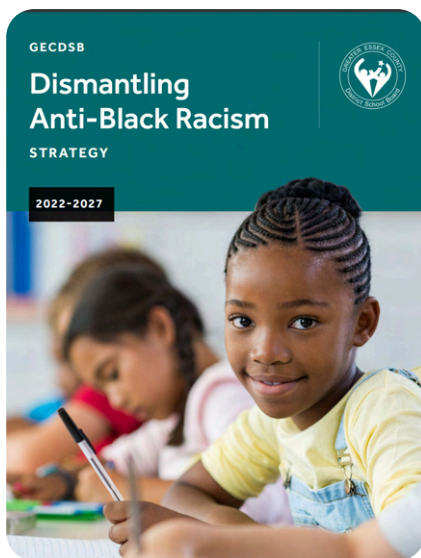
through equitable and reflective practices that respect and honour our diversity.



## Dismantling Anti-Black Racism Strategy

The GECDSB remains deeply committed to providing a learning and working environment that actively promotes and supports the dignity, worth, and human rights of all. The work in justice, inclusion, equity, and diversity also stems from a fundamental principle that every student should have the opportunity to succeed socially, emotionally, and academically, including students of all backgrounds, identities, and personal circumstances. The focus of improving student achievement and the focus on equity are inextricably interconnected.

The GECDSB believes that contemporary schools should be places where students unlearn racism and other forms of oppression and not only learn about diversity but also experience it. Students should have the opportunity to see themselves and their classmates reflected in their studies with a focus on dismantling racism and other forms of oppression and building inclusive values, cultural and social awareness, and sensitivity. Our focus is to eliminate all forms of discrimination and systemic barriers in our school communities. We have refocused our work to bring added resources, policies, practices, and processes to the forefront to accelerate our progress towards meeting our goals.



The GECDSB believe Black students and staff have a right to learning and working environments that not only protect them from anti-Black racism and other forms of oppression, but also affirm their identities, foster their strengths, and contribute to their overall well-being. With the support of Turner Consulting and a very dedicated team of individuals that comprise the Dismantling Anti-Black Racism Steering Committee, the five-year plan was launched in the spring of 2022. June 2023 marked the end of the second year of implementation. Attached you will find the status of priorities selected for year two of the implementation plan.

**[View the final reports from 2023-2024 that were presented to the Board of Trustees](#)**



## Black Joy and Black Excellence Student Symposium



On Thursday, March 21st, the Greater Essex County District School Board hosted a powerful student symposium exploring the question:

### What does Black Joy and Black Excellence mean to Black students in our schools?

The event featured inspiring presentations and performances, including a lineup of dynamic speakers such as artist Mbonisi Zikhall Zomkhonto, Mike Akpata, Kiana Porter, Brandon McBride, and Shantelle Browning-Morgan.

Attendees were also treated to an electrifying performance by the Black Kids in Action dancers and an engaging panel discussion with current and former GECDSB students.

Students across the board came together to celebrate their culture, connect with peers, and find inspiration in the music, speakers, and shared stories.

## GSA Conference

The GECDSB Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) held its 12th annual conference in May 2024, with separate dates for City and County Schools. The event brought together over 300 2SLGBTQIA+ students, allies, and educators each day to share experiences, build community, and foster understanding across all gender identities and sexual orientations. Featuring five workshops, community partner representatives, kiosks, crafts, and networking opportunities, the conference created a safe and inclusive space for all attendees.

Students shared their feedback on the event, highlighting its impact and importance.

"Having our voice heard, being able to share thoughts and ideas without judgement"

"People were not afraid to be themselves"

"How many community supports are out there"

"The feeling that we're not alone and the realization you can be who you are"

"All that still needs to happen for advocacy, for equality"



## Open Minds

The Academic Support for Indigenous Students program is a literacy and numeracy remediation program that targets specific elementary student needs based on diagnostic assessment.

Each group of students has program goals that they work towards throughout the sessions. The program focuses on each student's strengths to help them reach their academic potential. A significant factor is that we are using a relationship-based approach in which to aid us in achieving each of our student goals.

Schools that we serve: F.W. Begley, Prince Edward, King Edward, Ford City, West Gate, Marlborough, Forest Glade, and Hetherington in grades kindergarten to grade 6.

With a total of 88 students;

- 18 students receiving literacy support
- 17 students receiving math support
- 53 students are receiving support in both.

Along with the learning, many activities took place. On June 6th, students had an opportunity to participate in strawberry sewing and beading, beaded lanyards, Three Sisters Planting and Indigenous Learning Gathering.



## Graduation Coach for Indigenous Students

Our Graduation Coach plays a pivotal role in identifying and removing barriers, enabling Indigenous students to engage fully in their education and achieve their academic goals. By developing personalized strategies and setting clear milestones. The Graduation Coach assists students in earning credits, graduating, and transitioning smoothly into their chosen post-secondary pathways.

In the recent academic year, this dedicated support contributed to the graduation of 53 Indigenous students, with 8 of them receiving the Every Child Matters Scholarship, reflecting their outstanding achievements and commitment to their education.





## Miracle Park League

Students from the Greater Essex County District School Board (GECDSB) participated in the inaugural All-Star Miracle League Day at Amherstburg's Miracle Diamond (Libro Park) on May 27th, with additional games held on May 28th and June 10th. The event, fully funded by a \$40,000 Breaking Barriers Grant for Adapted Baseball awarded to the GECDSB in 2023-2024, provided an inclusive and joyful experience for approximately 670 students from GAINS and STEPS classrooms, who joined leadership classes for a day at the Miracle League Field in Riverside and Amherstburg.

The event was made possible through a partnership with the Toronto Blue Jays' Jays Care Foundation, which included the school board in their Affiliate School Program. Leadership students from four high schools—Massey, Sandwich, Riverside, and North Star—played a pivotal role, with 120 students organizing all activities after undergoing adaptive physical education training with Jays Care staff to ensure a meaningful experience for all participants.

The grant covered all costs, including the facility, bussing, lunch, snacks, and equipment, making the event accessible to everyone. Families were also invited to take part, enhancing the sense of community and support. The leadership and collaboration demonstrated by students and partners exemplified the event's commitment to inclusivity and engagement.



### "All-Star Miracle Days" held at Miracle League diamond in Amherstburg



The special education department with the Greater Essex County District School Board (GECDSB) staged its own Miracle League games in Amherstburg.

The third and final day for an "All-Star Miracle Day" was last Monday with the first two days being May 27-28. All games were played on the Miracle League of Amherstburg's diamond at the Libro Centre.

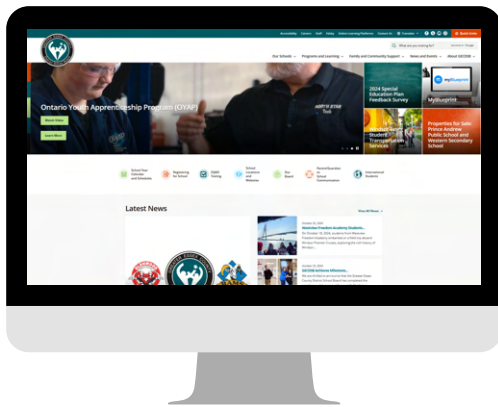


Amherstburg River Town Times

## Communications

### Evolving Communications to Support Our Community

The Greater Essex County District School Board has continually enhanced its communication strategies to meet the needs of families, parents/guardians/caretakers, ensuring seamless access to information and support. By prioritizing intuitive digital experiences aligned with in-person interactions, we aim to foster a more connected and informed community.



6,894,898  
Website Sessions

2,174,452  
Website Users

### Key Highlights:

- **New School Websites:** Launched new school websites for Beacon Heights Public School and Erie Migration District School (Elementary and Secondary).
- **Enhanced News Sharing:** Increased use of the news feed to spotlight good news stories and community achievements.
- **Optimized School Directory:** Simplified navigation for quick and efficient access to essential information.
- **Summer Website Audit:** Completed a comprehensive cleanup to ensure consistent messaging across all pages.
- **Integrated Branding:** Unified communication across digital channels, including websites, Edsby, School Messenger, and social media.
- **Proactive and Reactive Support:** Provided resources for principals and schools to share updates swiftly, coupled with support for reactive communication protocols.
- **AODA Compliance:** Ensured accessibility across websites and shared materials to support diverse user needs.



The Greater Essex County District School Board utilizes Edsby to enhance communication and engagement across all schools, from kindergarten to Grade 12. This cloud-based platform provides families with real-time access to student attendance, schedules, classroom activities, and school news, fostering stronger connections between families, teachers, and school communities.

## Communications

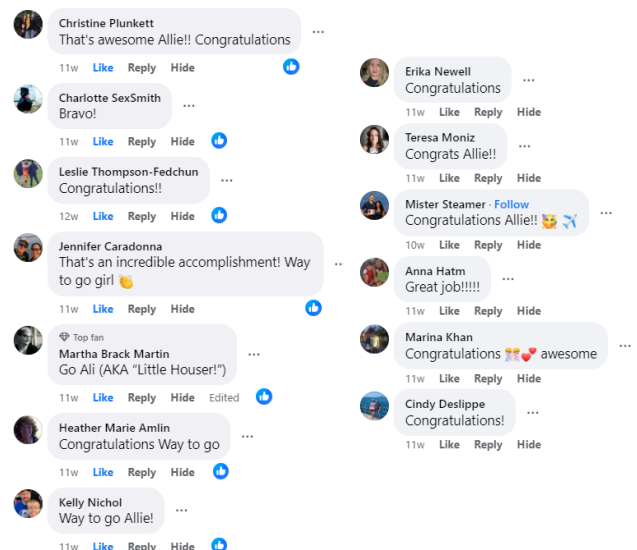
### Connecting with Families and Celebrating Success

The Greater Essex County District School Board has strategically adapted its social media approach to align with where families seek information. Whether staying updated on school board news, learning about bus cancellations, or celebrating student achievements, our social media platforms provide timely and engaging content tailored to our community's needs.

	Facebook	Instagram	X (Formerly Twitter)	LinkedIn	Total
Reach	377,000	18,300	507,700	35,037	938,037
Audience	10,840	2,021	8,839	3,741	25,441

### Key Highlights:

- Audience Growth: A 10% increase in followers across platforms reflects our focus on expanding reach and engagement.
- Platform Optimization: Greater emphasis on Instagram and Facebook to match user trends, while reducing X (Formerly Twitter) usage due to content uncertainty and shifting user behavior.
- Good News Stories: Social media has become an extension of website news, sharing student achievements and community highlights. Posts such as Allie Houser's milestone solo flight on July 26th captured widespread attention, reaching 60,707 users with 631 interactions, including 41 supportive comments.
- Community Partnerships: Leveraging our follower base to share helpful resources like scholarships, health information, and extracurricular opportunities.
- Celebrating Success: Families and communities consistently show enthusiasm for celebrating student and school achievements, fostering a sense of pride and connection.





## The GEE Project

Last July, the GEE Project took place at the Mason Educational Centre for high school students to continue beautification projects at an urban outdoor community space in the city's west end. Centered around its three core principles—Ground, Engage, and Express—the Project aims to foster a space for growth and a sense of belonging while empowering youth to discover the agency needed to create positive change from within. By the end of the program, participants were inspired by their potential and their role in civic engagement through sustainable activism. Activities involved maintaining the community gardens and creating various art installations using recycled materials displayed throughout the school grounds.

One of this year's standout projects involved mounting discarded plastic bottle caps that were transformed into an impressive monarch butterfly mural next to the GEE Pollinator Garden building on what had been created the year before. Over 20 applicants registered for the program, and participants accumulated most of their required community service hours in a meaningful and rewarding experience that left an indelible impression on the community.





## Ontario Student Nutrition Program

The importance of student nutrition programs was highlighted when David Maxwell Public School received an Award for Excellence from the Ontario Student Nutrition Program.

Maxwell's incredible student leaders discussed why the nutrition programs are valuable, what can be improved, the difficulties that many families have with the cost of food and what their favourite (and least favourite!) foods are. The student leaders suggested providing packages of nutritious food that can be taken home over holiday breaks and even customizing these packages based on the food that is in season.

Representatives from the Ontario Student Nutrition Program were particularly interested in feedback from the students about the snacks that are provided. One student stated, "I think the items that we have now do work well for our school. I notice that when we have the snack bins in the morning, they empty quickly because there are a lot of people relying on those snacks."

Roseville Public School was also selected by the We Are One Lunch Program to receive a daily nutritious lunch at no cost to families between February 20th and March 29th!

Throughout the month the Director and all Superintendents took the time to stop by Roseville to serve lunch and spend some time with students. One student shared why she thinks the program will make an impact at Roseville, "**It will help us students focus more on learning when our needs are being met every day.**"



The GECSB is continually grateful for our partnership with OSNP and all of our other community partners and volunteers who help to make nutrition programs possible in our schools.



[CTV News Windsor](http://www.ctvnews.com/windsor)



## The Strings Project

The Greater Essex County District School Board was the first school board to initiate the Strings Project in collaboration with the Windsor Symphony Orchestra. The Strings Project is based on the Venezuelan initiative El Sistema (The System), which was founded in the 1970s. There are currently hundreds of chapters worldwide.

This program is hosted at Marlborough and Frank W. Begley Public Schools with a total of 32 Grade 3 students and it has now expanded to include 26 Grade 4 students who are continuing their instruction from the previous year.

Members of the Windsor Symphony participate in the after-school program for 75 minutes on numerous days per week. Students are given half- or quarter-size violins and instruction by Windsor Symphony Orchestra players.



**Windsor Star**





## Hack the Holidays with John McGivney Children's Centre

Grade 11 and 12 Robotics students from Belle River District High School participated in an exciting partnership with John McGivney Children's Centre.

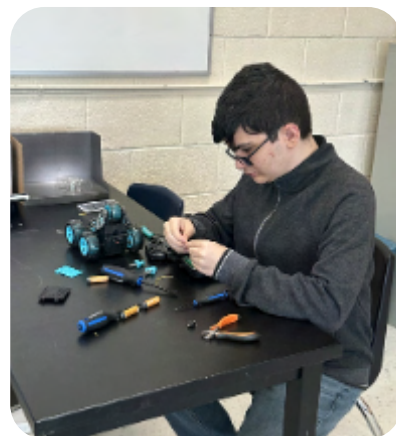
On November 23rd, 2023 the students were given a variety of brand-new electronic toys to choose from and shown how the toys can be reconfigured to make them more accessible for children with exceptionalities. Their teacher, Heather St. Pierre, along with Special Education Coordinator Lana Brodes, and John McGivney's Education Coordinator Kelsey Smith, led the students in a lesson on how to add "switches" to the toys, changing their functionality and making electronic elements such as sounds or movements easier to activate.

Many of the students integrated an audio jack directly into the toy and added a much larger, easier-to-press button externally. Their capabilities and ingenuity were extremely impressive to witness. Kelsey noted, "They are rather simple adaptations, but the difficulty is finding the location where the element can be added and ensuring that it will work. When you pull apart different toys, they all have different mechanisms on the inside so it can take a while to find what will trigger the toy to do the function you want such as walking, moving wings or even the eyes. The students did a great job at it and the toys, triggers and circuit boards are all very different."

In addition to the toys that the students updated, families from the John McGivney Children's Centre and Greater Essex County District School Board were invited to an event called "Hack the Holidays" on December 9, 2023. Parents were led by the JMCC and GECDsB on the creation of accessibility switches that could be applied to toys for their children.

Thirty parents/grandparents/guardians were guided through the "how to's" of building a switch by Kelsey Smith. Participants were supported in safe wire cutting, stripping and soldering from Lana Brode and Bill Fetter (Teacher Consultant with GECDsB). Upon completion of their switch, they selected a free pre-adapted toy from the students at Belle River District High School. Complimentary gift wrapping was completed by Jennifer Newton, Special Education Coordinator with the GECDsB.

This exciting partnership was made possible by the Neil Squire Society, Makers Making Change and the Optimist Club of Kingsville.



## Chef Adelina DeBlasis Takes Home Silver and Gold

Chef Adelina DeBlasis can now add Culinary Olympian to her growing resume. Last year, Adelina accepted the National Chef of the Year award from the Culinary Federation of Canada and she has recently returned from the IKA Culinary Olympics in Stuttgart with Canada's Culinary Olympic Teams. She is also a teacher at P.A.S.S. Secondary School and is an instrumental part of the Community Kitchen Program.

The National Culinary Canadian team was ranked 6th overall in the world and was awarded a gold medal and a silver medal at the prestigious event. Their gold medal win for Restaurant of Nations required them to serve 110 guests a three-course meal, while their silver medal came from their Chefs Table service – a seven-course meal for fourteen people.

Adelina shared the following about her journey, **“I started with the National Management team in 2020. Four years of dedication and perseverance for all team management and team members from being away from home, practicing, fundraising, the sacrifices from our family and work time, it was not easy for any of us and our families! But everything was so worth it. 4 years of effort have finally paid off! The wishes were made, and the dream came true!”**

The GECDSDS extends our congratulations to Adelina and the entire National Culinary Canadian Team!



### The Community Kitchen: A Space for Learning and Giving Back

The Community Kitchen, located at 6955 Cantelon Drive in Windsor at the Unemployed Help Centre, is a state-of-the-art facility where students and community members come together to learn, connect, and support those in need. In partnership with VON, this incredible space prepares over 40,000 meals annually for the Meals on Wheels Program.

Students working in the Community Kitchen earn high school credits while gaining hands-on culinary experience under the guidance of award-winning chefs. Flexible placements are available, offering 2-4 credits through morning, afternoon, or full-day sessions. The Community Kitchen is more than just a learning environment—it's a hub of community care and collaboration.





## Good News across the GECDSB



### A Chili Cookoff to Remember

The GECDSB Administration Building staff enjoyed a competitive (and delicious) Chili Cookoff! Volunteers prepared various chili recipes for everyone to sample and vote on. The event got even more exciting when Oliver from Ford City Public School entered his own chili recipe as a contender!



### Day of Champions

Hundreds of young student-athletes were running, jumping and throwing in the GECDSB Special Olympics Day of Champions on Thursday, May 2nd and Friday, May 3rd at Sandwich Secondary School



### Tecumseh Vista's Pink Day Supports Cancer Awareness

Tecumseh Vista Academy's Pink Day united the school community in support of cancer awareness. Organized by Ms. Weissenboeck's Leadership class, funds raised went to the Windsor Regional Cancer Center and the Fight Like Mason Foundation.



### Historic Plaque from 1953 Finds New Home at Kingsville Military Museum

Essex / Kingsville Trustee Julia Burgess presented members of the Kingsville Military Museum with a plaque that has hung at Kingsville District High School since 1953. The 2-foot square, brass marker honoured the final members of the Kingsville School District School.

Scan the QR code to read the latest news from GECDSB or visit [publicboard.ca](http://publicboard.ca)





## Good News across the GECD SB



### **Soaring to New Heights: Sandwich Secondary Student Takes First Solo Flight**

Congratulations to Allie Houser, a Sandwich Secondary School student who achieved a major milestone by completing her first solo flight on July 26th!



### **Robotics Showcase**

As students across Windsor-Essex received a close-up look at robots designed by high school teams, teachers received an education of their own on ways to better incorporate robotics, coding, and STEM into their classrooms.



### **19th Annual Student Digital Photography Exhibition**

Primary (Gr. K-3), Junior (4-6), Intermediate (7-9), and Senior (10-12) students were invited to submit photos in three themed categories: colour (nature), black and white (technology) or digitally enhanced (portrait or individual). All entered photos were on display at the Gibson Gallery (140 Richmond St, Amherstburg, ON) from May 23rd - June 1st.



### **7-year-old Pokémon prodigy heading to Hawaii for world championship tournament**

Brantley Meharg, a student at Amherstburg Public School in Mrs. Garneau's grade 2 classroom is heading to Hawaii for the 2024 Pokémon World Championships.

Scan the QR code to read the latest news from GECD SB or visit [publicboard.ca](http://publicboard.ca)





# DEMONSTRATING ETHICAL STEWARSHIP

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

## 2023-2024 Budget

The Board embraces the rich diversity of its students, staff, and communities and commits itself to equitable access, treatment, and outcomes for all. The budget is developed with the commitment to the democratic values of fairness, equity, inclusion, and respect for all, and the Board understands that greater equity means greater student success.

### Operating Budget \$509,157,212

Staff (Instructional, Administration, Governance)	\$414,709,929
Transportation	\$17,073,438
School Operations/Maintenance	\$72,590,885
Other Non-Operating	\$4,782,960

### Capital Budget \$80,367,885

Capital Priorities	\$44,266,506
School Condition Improvement	\$20,372,809
Capital Projects - Renewal	\$5,120,260
Child Care (Including Retrofitting School Space)	\$5,470,969
Minor Capital	\$2,011,544
Full Day Kindergarten	\$300,000
EarlyOn Child and Family Centre	\$550,000
Short-Term Interest on Capital	\$2,018,103
Temporary Accommodations	\$257,694



**Total Budget \$589,525,097**



## School Construction

School Construction approved and ongoing for the 2023-2024 school year.

### Erie Migration District School K-12



- Grant: \$59,900,000 (approximately)
- Pupil Spaces: 1,045 elementary students and 753 secondary students
- Architect: Architecttura Inc.
- General Contractor: Fortis Construction
- Construction Began: April 2022
- Final Completion: September 2024

### Beacon Heights Public School



- Grant: \$22,500,000
- Pupil Spaces: 651
- Architect: J.P. Thomson
- General Contractor: Fortis Group
- Construction Began: March 2023
- Final Completion: September 2024

### Roseland Public School- Addition



- Grant: \$3,913,731
- Pupil Spaces: 184 (8 Classrooms)
- Architect: Architecttura Inc.
- General Contractor: T.B.D.
- Construction Begins: March 2025
- Occupancy: September 2026

## School Construction

### Northwood Public School - Addition



- Grant: \$4.9 Million
- Pupil Spaces: 184 (8 classrooms)
- Architect: Cornerstone Architecture
- General Contractor: Titan Contracting
- Construction Begins: July 2024
- Final Completion: September 2025

### Legacy Oak Trail Public School - Addition



- Grant: 4, 000, 000
- Pupil Spaces: 167 (5 classrooms and 2 full-day kindergarten)
- Architect: Cornerstone WalterFedy
- General Contractor: Front Construction
- Construction Begins: July 2023
- Final Completion: September 2024

### Glenwood Public School - Addition



- Grant: \$3,707,933
- Pupil Spaces: 184 (8 Classrooms)
- Architect: Architecttura Inc.
- General Contractor: T.B.D.
- Construction Begins: March 2025
- Occupancy: September 2026

## School Construction

### Queen Elizabeth Public School - Addition



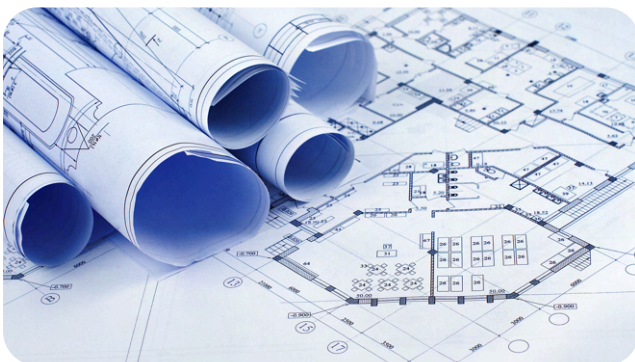
- Grant: \$8,147,057
- Pupil Spaces: 78
- Architect: Architecttura Inc.
- General Contractor: Alliance General Contracting
- Construction Begins: July 2024
- Occupancy: September 2025

### New School in Lakeshore



- Grant: \$13.02 million
- Pupil Spaces: 582
- Location: East of Rourke Line Road and north of Girard Drive
- Architect: Architecttura Inc.
- General Contractor: T.B.D.
- Final Completion: T.B.D.

### Forest Glade Public School- Renovation



\*Note: This project is not funded through Capital Priority but will be supported via School Condition Funding.

- Grant: N/A – Approx construction cost \$16,000,000
- Pupil Spaces: TBD
- Architect: Archon
- General Contractor: TBD
- Construction Begins: January 2025
- Occupancy: September 2026



## Waste Audits

The Climate Action Committee's BIG focus for schools this year was waste minimization.

Last year as we began to navigate through the process of developing our Climate Action Plan, teachers, students, and other staff continually said that recycling was one of the largest pain points in the school and that the amount of confusion around processes stretched system wide. In one year of having discussions with Principals, a few Eco Clubs re-starting, a few morning announcements, and LOTS of presentations by our two Environmental Stewardship Teachers, we have drastically been able to move the needle.

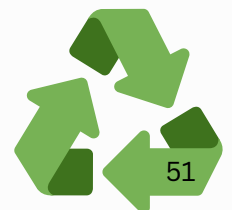
The board completed waste audits in ten of our buildings to comply with O. Reg 102/94 (waste audits and waste reduction work plans) and to examine how effectively we are running our recycling programs (O. Reg 103/94 industrial, commercial, and institutional source separation programs). The information from these 10 audits was compiled to determine, through proportional representation, how we are performing across all our buildings.

Based on the average of the ten reports completed this year each staff member and student who accesses our sites daily is disposing of roughly 100 pounds of waste each year, which is the weight of a small refrigerator.

### How?

To conduct the audit, the evening before the afternoon custodians collect and label all garbage and recycling in the building based on the functional area that it came from and place it in the audit location. Custodians would label the collected waste, examples would be "washroom garbage," "office blue bin." On the morning of the audit our external auditors arrive and bag by bag, they weigh and sort the contents which generates a whole bunch of information about our habits.

With the help of the Climate Action Committee, they will continue to educate all individuals and find ways to reduce our in-school waste.



## Student Eco Achievements

Ben Margerison was honoured with an Essex Region Conservation Award for his commitment to protecting our local ecosystems as part of the Leamington District Secondary School's EcoTeam. He works to maintain the school's pollinator gardens, recruits volunteers for tree planting events with ERCA, and helps to educate his peers about environmental issues such as climate change and biodiversity loss.



## EcoSchools Certification

The GECD SB has 19 EcoSchools this year. This includes 4 Platinum, 9 Gold, 1 Silver, and 5 Participant schools as of June 10, 2024.



**84% of schools** have been certified for 5+ years



**382 Students** were part of an EcoTeam



**217 actions** were completed by our schools



**11,242 hours** of outdoor learning took place

Clean Water and Sanitation	Affordable and Clean Energy	Sustainable Cities and Communities	Responsible Consumption and Production	Climate Action
<b>408</b> students	<b>17</b> classroom	<b>258</b> students	<b>2,608</b> kg of waste	<b>2.5</b> Tons of CO <sub>2</sub> e
participated in the Great Gulp (per school)	had their energy efficiency optimized (per school)	used active and sustainable transport (per school)	was diverted from landfill (per school)	was sequestered from school ground greening activities (per school)



