

2020-2021



SUPERIOR NORTH CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Annual Director's Report



"Together We Educate Heart, Mind *and* Soul."

2020-2021

Message from the Director of Education

Our overarching approach for the 2020-2021 year was to welcome our students back and meet them at their own emotional and academic starting point. After the Covid disruption all of us experienced it was important for our students to return in the 2021 school year to a more stable, caring environment without the stress of feeling they had to 'catch up'. Instead we moved forward using the skills gained during remote learning to our students' advantage while keeping in mind that every child came back with different academic needs. The use of technology, as a tool for teaching and learning, which is highlighted in our [Multi-Year Strategic Plan](#), and our equitable approach to teaching reflects our commitment to a student first stance. Their challenges were met with flexibility and adaptability.

In the first term of 2021, we continued to align our actions in accordance with our strategic plan. For example, Indigenous education is a priority due to the high enrolment of Indigenous students and our stance on justice. Cultural awareness and appreciation of Indigenous culture and addressing calls to action such as, purposeful and sustained integration of Indigenous history and perspectives and supporting native language programming are reflected in our curriculum opportunities and professional development. Being involved with our Indigenous partners to plan and attend meaningful cultural celebrations and create long lasting relationships is important to us. We also continue our focus on innovation and technology as we prepare our students for the future. Our classrooms are equipped with the latest technology and we use creative methodologies to keep our students engaged while learning.

I will conclude by stating our vision and values as a Catholic school board. They are, to inspire spiritual growth within an inclusive and respectful environment and to graduate students who have the knowledge, skills and confidence to affect change.

Thank you to our staff, parents, trustees and all involved in keeping our students at the center of all we do.

Sincerely,

Maria Vasanelli
Director of Education



"Together We Educate Heart, Mind and Soul."

The Superior North Catholic District School Board is a separate school board that has nine Catholic elementary schools in the communities of Longlac, Geraldton, Nakina, Red Rock, Nipigon, Schreiber, Terrace Bay, Marathon and Manitowadge with a student population of 655 students - JK to Grade 8. Additionally, the Board has a JK to Grade 8 Remote Learning Program that is available to students across all of our communities.

Superior North Catholic District School Board has 173 Permanent Employees and 145 Casual Employees who are dedicated to supporting each student in achieving excellence in academics, arts, athletics and well being.



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Superior North Catholic District School Board continues to prioritize faith and justice through investing in human and digital resources to support Catholicity, faith formation and religious and family life education. Each school has a faith ambassador who works closely in collaboration with the principal to champion Catholic culture and education as well as collaborations between the school and local parish. The annual Faith Day professional development day was reimaged and rolled out in a virtual model, with schools and board staff participating in both a system-wide virtual Mass and reflection led by chaplain Father Terry Sawchuk and school-level discussions and plannings to set directions and goals for staff and student faith development. The faith ambassador program and the annual Faith Day professional development day are coordinated by the Board's newly established *Catholicity and Special Projects Lead* who also provides ongoing support to educators and administrators through *ad hoc* meetings and the *SNCDSB Halo*: a biweekly newsletter containing links to virtual resources, reflections, prayer services, liturgical celebrations, information about saints and other important aspects of Catholic culture.

FAITH
AND
JUSTICE



EQUITY AND INCLUSION

The Superior North Catholic District School Board values the presence of God in each person and provides an inclusive Catholic culture that instills compassion, hope, integrity, faithfulness, respect and self-worth.

SNCDSB follows the Institute for Catholic Education guidelines and recommendations. The Board remains committed to identifying and addressing systemic inequities and barriers affecting indigenous, racial, and ethnocultural communities in the planning and delivery of programs and services.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The Catholic Parent Involvement Committee (CPIC) met several times during the school year to discuss how to support parent engagement in our schools, especially with the restrictions in schools as a result of COVID-19. It was important to the CPIC committee to continue to support parent involvement as a way to impact student achievement and well-being. Presentations were made at each meeting from the various members of the System Support Team, including Student Achievement, Mental Health, Attendance, Indigenous Education, and Technology Enabled Learning.

The Committee approved three Pro Grant Applications for the 2020-2021 school year from Our Lady of Lourdes School, Holy Saviour School, and St. Hilary School. Our Lady of Lourdes held an information session on the value of gardening with your children and provided vegetable garden starter kits for families, with the goal being for parents to connect and collaborate with other parents, as well as to get them actively engaged in learning opportunities with their children. Holy Saviour School engaged families, students and community partners in learning about science where educators prepared a science experiment package and delivered them to families to take part in an interactive science experiment. St. Hilary School families received a package with a math based board game that they could play as a family along with an age-appropriate/reading level appropriate book, with the hope that it would allow students to engage with their parents while also reinforcing the math and literacy concepts that were taught during the year.

Schools also worked collaboratively to ensure that parents were actively involved throughout the course of the school year, especially as parents were unable to attend the school year due to COVID-19. Each school began the year with their first ever virtual Open House, which also included a virtual presentation by our System Support Team. Christmas Concerts were also provided to each family in a virtual format so that families could still celebrate the holiday season with Christmas performances. Virtual prayer services occurred in schools, as well as several virtual parent engagement sessions throughout the course of the year by each school community.



ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Student success and achievement continued to be at the forefront of all professional development and decisions through the 2020-21 school year. Through the use of virtual platforms and Professional Learning Communities, student learning needs continued to inform educator planning, monitoring and learning.

LITERACY

Improving literacy achievement for all students is a goal identified in the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement and Well-being. We continue to support the development of literacy skills for all students through the use of Google Read and Write and accessibility features like speech-to-text and text-to-speech on student Chromebooks and/or iPads. Assistive technology empowers students to access their abilities and show what they know. Students were supported throughout the year in using speech-to-text to support their writing and text-to-speech to support their reading.

As well, in an effort to support student learning and achievement in anticipation of gaps developed as a result of COVID-19, the board has invested in the Lexia program for all students K-8 in most schools. Lexia is an adaptive, blended learning model that supplements the balanced literacy program and will help students to master foundational reading skills through constant assessment that will guarantee reading success.

MATH

In September 2020, the Ontario Ministry of Education released a New Mathematics Curriculum for Grades 1 through 8. In response to new curriculum training needs, the Math Team facilitated eight Professional Development (PD) days throughout the school year to ensure proper implementation and understanding of key changes and new expectations.

The first PD Day, titled "Exploring Ontario's New Mathematics Curriculum," took place on August 31. All education staff were given a virtual tour of the new Ministry website. Key resources were highlighted like the Curriculum Context, Strand Overviews, Key Changes document, Long Range Plans, High Impact Strategies document, and Assessment/Evaluation information.

In January and February, the Math Team delivered six targeted sessions for Kindergarten to Grade 8 teachers. This model was very successful and allowed for in-depth professional learning around grade-specific curriculum changes such as Social Emotional Learning skills, mathematical modelling, and financial literacy. The Math Team was very fortunate to secure coding expert Lisa Anne Floyd who hosted grade-specific workshops that addressed the new coding expectations and terminology. Lisa Anne also modelled teaching strategies through ready-to-use coding programs and resources to assist educators with coding in their classrooms. TVO Outreach also provided a presentation on Ontario Ministry of Education funded resources like TVO Kids, TVO Learn, TVO Mathify and mPower (STEM game-based learning)

Additionally, the Math Team created a hands-on PD Day for educational assistants to build support staff knowledge and understanding of the new curriculum and manipulatives. This learning opportunity provided our EA's a unique advantage allowing them to better support students and teachers as well as build their own comfort with key concepts and skills.



MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Fostering and promoting positive mental health remains a priority as we understand this can impact our ability to achieve personal academic achievement and excellence. Our school staff have worked diligently and tirelessly to provide our students with a mentally safe, accepting, and supportive environment that promotes positive well-being and a sense of belonging, all while ensuring other necessary conditions were in place. The pandemic has not been easy, but we have risen to the challenge and embraced new opportunities.

Engaging and innovative approaches were used by our board's, Mental Health and Well-being team as they continued to create space to share and learn through board-wide virtual programming (i.e., create your own calming space) and challenges (i.e., give a Shout Out to someone to show you care). Our Positive Behaviour Support Workers (PBSW's), alongside our Teachers, Support Staff, and Principals, worked elbow to elbow with our vulnerable students to ensure effective practices and programming was in place. Students, wherever possible, have been actively engaged in the planning and implementation process. Whether it's on or off-line, our PBSW's have shown the ability to adapt to any situation or student need that arises.

Collaboration and strong relationships with our coterminous Boards (Superior Greenstone District School Board, Conseil scolaire de district catholique des Aurores boréales) and community partners (i.e., North of Superior Counselling Programs, Dilico, Mental Health and Addiction Nurses, etc.) have continued to be critical in our ability to meet student needs. Dilico Anishinabek Family Care Mental Health Services have been providing programming that aligns with the social and emotional learning being taught within our classrooms. A partnership was also formed with Boreal Offerings Yoga. We were able to provide our classrooms with the opportunity to attend virtual yoga sessions at different points in their days and weeks.

Professional Development (PD) opportunities were provided to all staff in the areas of awareness, promotion, understanding, and intervening, however needed to promote and support student mental health and well-being. Examples of PD provided were pathway presentations from all our core Mental Health service partners, which occurred prior to students entering our schools, as well as supporting our system (all SNCDSB Principals were trained in the 2019-2020 academic year) in taking the Mental Health Literacy Course, developed by School Mental Health Ontario.

Fostering relationships and promoting safety remained a focus throughout the entire school year. Lots of efforts were made in developing a training plan for the 2020-2021 school year as well. We were able to establish partnerships with the following organizations to provide PD next year: LivingWorks (Start, SAFETalk, and ASIST training), Superior Strategies (Mental Health First Aid First Nations), and the Canadian Centre for Child Protection (Kids in the Know Training).

STUDENT DIGITAL PATHWAYS AND PORTFOLIOS

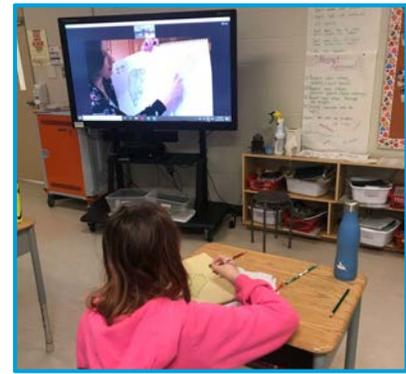
Each student developed their own digital portfolio to curate evidence and reflect on their learning over the 2020-21 school year. The Ministry of Education has licensed D2L's Brightspace as a safe and secure tool to save their learning journey in a digital format. Students from Kindergarten to Grade 8 were easily able to access their digital portfolio through the SNCDSB Hub. Since the tool is licenced through the Ministry of Education, students can also access their digital portfolio when they graduate from SNCDSB, as their portfolio is connected to their Ontario Education Number.

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



Experiential Learning remained a key strategic priority to enhance students learning through authentic hands-on learning experiences. Student engagement was enhanced through connecting curriculum through active participation, application and reflection in local and global environments through on-site, virtual and blended learning experiences. In the 2020-2021 school year, there were over 25 proposals for project funding by educators across the school district to explore experiential learning opportunities with their students.

Developing a process and implementing tools to support virtual learning forged many relationships to leverage community learning partners. Offering board-wide events virtually was a new way of delivering learning opportunities this year. Thankfully, the technology infrastructure installed throughout the school board allowed students and educators to participate in board-wide events using digital tools. Students were able to learn from community partners to deliver learning across the school board: Superior Science, Lisa Anne Floyd, Google Canada CS First, Cobblestone Collective, Boreal Offerings Yoga, Rebekah's Fine Art, Magnus Theatre, Skills Ontario, Let's Talk Science, Exploring by the Seat of your Pants, D2L, Ministry of Education and Xello, to name a few learning partners.



SUMMER LEARNING

From July 5th to July 23rd, the Superior North Catholic District School Board delivered a Summer Learning Program to students from Kindergarten through Grade 8. There were 27 students registered in this Remote Learning Program, with 16 students in the Primary class (Kindergarten to Grade 3) and 11 students in the Junior/Intermediate class (Grade 4 to Grade 8).

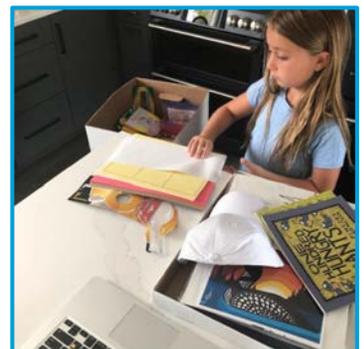
This program was planned and led by two of our System Support Team Leads who both ensured that the two teachers and two educational assistants were provided with Student Learning Profiles for each student registered, hands on experiential learning materials and instructional supplies, as well as the engagement of Learning partners to effectively run a successful virtual program.

Discovery Boxes were delivered to each student's home, before the start of the program, to ensure that all students had the materials they needed to engage in all learning experiences and tasks fully.

The focus of the Primary Classroom was Literacy, Numeracy and Healthy Living, while the Junior/Intermediate focus was primarily on STEM Learning. Both classrooms and Leads also worked closely with local Indigenous groups (Dilico) and resource supports, to ensure programming supported all students in Indigenous education and that all students saw themselves reflected within their environment.

Eleven students from across the system continued to receive virtual TinyEYE Speech & Language services or Occupational Therapy services throughout the summer to ensure continuity of service provision.

Superior North Catholic District School Board partnered with Learnstyle and Simcoe County Catholic to provide the following Technology Camps for students with Special Education needs: Coding and Robotics for Students With ASD and AT Literacy - Find Your Own Superpowers.



EARLY YEARS

Our Kindergarten classrooms continue to be where our youngest learners begin their exciting educational journey. Despite the restrictions of COVID-19, our Kindergarten classrooms continued to offer caring and engaging learning environments that allowed students to observe, investigate and question through guided exploration and play. Our Kindergarten programs and educators further developed their Outdoor Education spaces to ensure that students engaged in learning experiences that helped them to develop an understanding and appreciation of nature. This year students and educators worked together to further enhance the Kindergarten program by offering wonderful rich learning experiences utilizing our incredible school communities and easily accessible outdoor environments.

When schools were closed in April and students moved to a Distance Learning model, all Kindergarten educators continued to engage with one another and school communities to share learning experiences and opportunities that were being used to engage their students and their families online, both synchronously and asynchronously. This collaboration ensured that opportunities were still planned and facilitated to virtually welcome our newly registered students and their families to Kindergarten sessions. All schools also celebrated the Graduation from the Kindergarten program with all students and families in a variety of ways, which included picture lawn signs, virtual ceremonies and celebration baskets delivered to individual homes by the teacher and principal.

In partnership with Superior Greenstone District School Board and Brass Bell, we collaborated in a three-week virtual series for parents supporting the transition to Kindergarten. Many families from across the region registered for this series and in May 2021, we hosted the first Kindergarten...Here We Come virtual session. These sessions all included presentations from local and regional community providers, as well as school and system staff.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

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

The Empower program has now been implemented into all schools within the system. Our results for the first completed program groups indicated that all students using Empower had positive results in their reading performance, showing clear and sometimes remarkable improvement in their reading skills and abilities. Most students significantly demonstrated increased self-confidence in reading as their reading scores increased several grade levels as a result of Empower. Parents have shared with our Learning for All teachers and the schools how Empower has positively impacted their child. The following is one testimonial statement from a parent on the impact of Empower:

“When my child began the Empower program in Grade 3, he struggled to name all of the letters of the alphabet consistently. He could recognize some sounds. Through the Empower program, he has developed the ability to read text fluently. Before the program started, we were worried that he would never be able to read. He avoided all activities related to reading. He was almost angry when asked to take part because of his frustration. We believe that the Empower program has been life-changing for our child.

He now reads as part of his daily life and understands what he is reading. He is proud of his reading and is confident in his abilities. Our child will have every opportunity to achieve what he wants in life because of this program. We can not recommend this program enough. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.”

When schools were closed in April and students moved to Remote Learning, all Learning for All teachers continued to engage in collaborative learning conversations to share learning experiences and opportunities that were being used to engage their most vulnerable students and their families online. Students from our schools continued to engage in Special Education services, including virtual Empower lessons and small group or individual literacy/numeracy interventions. Learning for All teachers continued to engage our regional service providers to schedule remote therapy sessions. Transitions for students to Kindergarten or High School with Special Education needs continued to be offered virtually. In many of our schools, our most vulnerable students, who were unable to learn effectively in the Remote Learning model, were welcomed back to school daily to engage in learning opportunities alongside the Educational Assistant assigned to them.

INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

SNCDSB participates in several committees and programs, such as the Indigenous Education Advisory Committee (IEAC), a school board committee, the Anishinaabemowin language revitalization program with the Anishinaabemowin Boodawe Committee and working in partnership with Anishinabek Education System - Kinoomaadziwin Education Body. The goal is for knowledge sharing, collaboration and issue resolution as well as increasing the participation of Indigenous parents/guardians.

SNCDSB offers Native Language in 8 out of its 9 schools. We understand the importance of learning language, especially starting at an early age, and offer Anishinaabemowin (Ojibwe) to students from Kindergarten to Grade 8.

INDIGENOUS
EDUCATION



Students and educators continue to be supported through the purchasing of resources such as the Take Action for Reconciliation series (both in book form and digital versions), a full day system wide Indigenous Education Professional Development Day in April 2021, pre-planned activities throughout the school year (such as resources and support for Orange Shirt Day - Every Child Matters, Treaties Recognition Week, Louis Riel Day, Indigenous Veterans Day, Gichigiwedin Winter Games and many other important events) as well as support from the Indigenous Education Lead. Principals and Senior Team also continued their learning on Cultural Awareness and Appreciation from Superior Strategies, which focused on local history, culture, relationship building and community engagement.

We are committed to continue working with these committees, communities, organizations and all of our families and stakeholders towards Truth and Reconciliation.





TECHNOLOGY ENABLED LEARNING AND DIGITAL LITERACY

Technology continued to support students to extend their learning beyond their classroom and paper and pencil tasks. It allowed our students to continue to access and enrich learning in creative and collaborative ways. In 2021, SNCDSB invested in a Lü Interactive Playground for each school. The Lü Interactive Playground supports students to develop confidence, empathy, self-esteem and interpersonal skills through gamification available through Lü. Students across our district are enjoying the lights, sounds and interactive platform during their physical education class and in their math, literacy, social studies and health curriculums. Our Lü Interactive Playgrounds are also supporting all students in engaging in physical activity.

Digital Literacy was enhanced for all students and educators through live, interactive workshops facilitated by learning partners. Cobblestone Collective and Michelle Armstrong continue to support projects that have allowed educators to gain Google Certification. A play and pause series was also organized for students to learn how to use Google software platforms that are used in the classroom. Through these sessions, participants learned how to use digital tools to demonstrate their learning and share their creativity through active participation.



BLENDED LEARNING

The Superior North Catholic District School Board continued to prioritize blended learning by investing in the infrastructure to support both students and educators. Each student and educator was again provided with their own device to use as a learning tool. Each classroom is equipped with a large interactive monitor with its own camera and microphone. These technology tools support our commitment to 21st-century learning skills such as collaboration and communication as well as access to equitable education. Geography is no longer a barrier, as students and staff are able to participate in workshops and learn from experts from across the school district and the world. Beyond the hardware devices provided are software tools that support students learning in the classroom and remotely. Google Enterprise, the SNCDSB Hub and GoGuardian are some software tools that continue to enhance students' learning and educators' instruction. Google Apps for Education also allow students to collaborate digitally in real time. The SNCDSB Hub is supported by the Ministry of Education and a priority for Technology Enabled Learning. Our Hub is a landing page of curated digital resources that are safe and secure. Finally, GoGuardian is a Chromebook management tool that allows educators to guide students through learning tasks and fosters digital citizenship skills.

The 2020-2021 academic year also saw the creation of a remote, virtual learning program in order to promote continued engagement and achievement among students whose families chose to have them learn at home, in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic. SNCDSB provided a fully staffed, online learning environment for students, while still maintaining their connection to their in-person schools. Students used Google Apps for Education including Google Classroom and Google Meets to engage in live, synchronous instruction with teachers and with peers across the district and participated in virtual field trips, online activities and guest speakers through organizations such as Explore by the Seat of Your Pants, the Toronto Zoo and Skills Ontario in addition to engaging with local artists and tradespeople. Digital resources and manipulatives ensured that students had equitable access to learning tools, standardized assessments and learning materials.



PLANT & OPERATIONS

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, all air handling equipment in the Superior North Catholic District School Board schools had ultraviolet filters installed. The air passing over these filters removes 99.9% of the COVID virus, if present in the air.

Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School

- Painting of hallways and classrooms
- Gaga Ball Pit installed outside
- New dimmable LED lighting installed throughout the school
- New flooring installed in hallways and two classrooms
- New shingles installed on the roof
- New communication and lockdown system installed

St. Joseph Catholic School

- New dimmable LED lighting installed throughout the school
- Gaga Ball Pit installed outside
- Office area has been rearranged to improve traffic flow
- New communication and lockdown system installed
- New fire alarm system installed

St. Edward Catholic School

- New dimmable LED lighting installed throughout the school
- New flooring installed in five classrooms
- New communication and lockdown system installed
- New playground equipment installed

St. Hilary Catholic School

- New communication and lockdown system installed
- New fire alarm system installed
- Ventilation improvement completed

Holy Angels Catholic School

- New LED dimmable lighting installed throughout the school
- All classrooms painted
- New HVAC air handling system installed in the gym
- Gaga Ball Pit installed outside
- New communication and lockdown system installed
- New fire alarm system installed
- New front walkway installed

St. Martin Catholic School

- Parking area in front of the school paved
- New communication and lockdown system installed

Holy Saviour Catholic School

- Turf soccer field installed
- Gaga Ball Pit installed outside
- Outdoor learning center created
- All classrooms painted
- Ventilation upgrades made to the office, library and old daycare areas
- Safety upgrades made to the exit area of the parking lot
- New communication and lockdown system installed

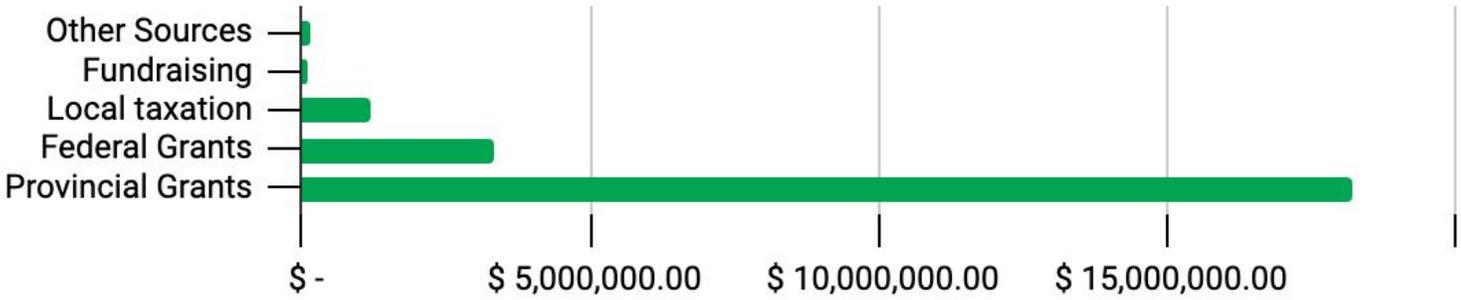
Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic School

- All classrooms painted
- Gaga Ball Pit installed outside
- New dimmable LED lighting installed throughout the school.
- New flooring installed in the entrances and offices
- All inclusive washroom installed
- Exterior entrance and exterior signage upgraded
- Partial roof replacement
- JK/SK playground equipment replaced with artificial turf around the area
- New communication and lockdown system installed
- New fire alarm system installed

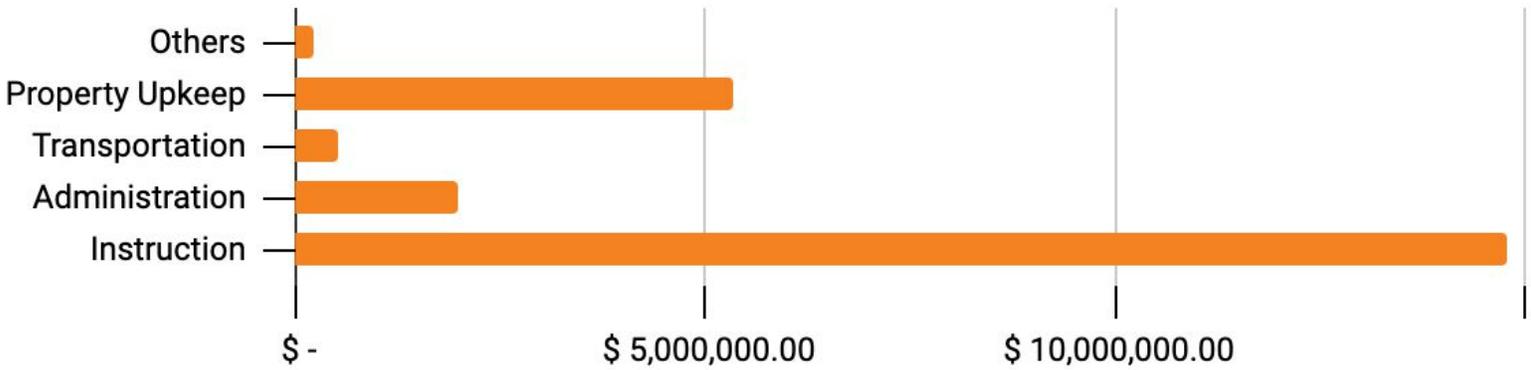


FINANCIALS

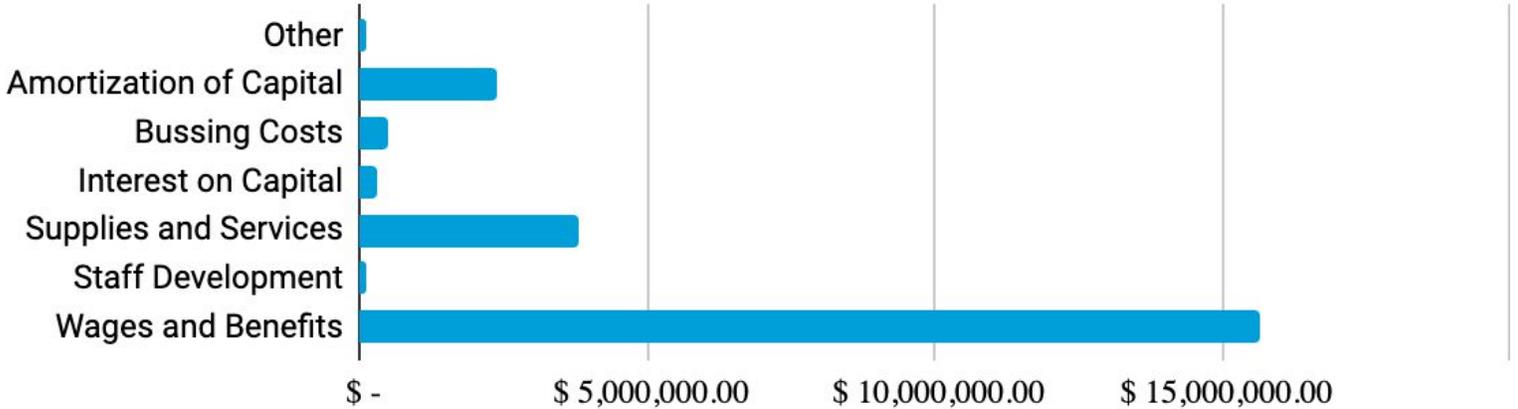
Funding Sources 2020-21

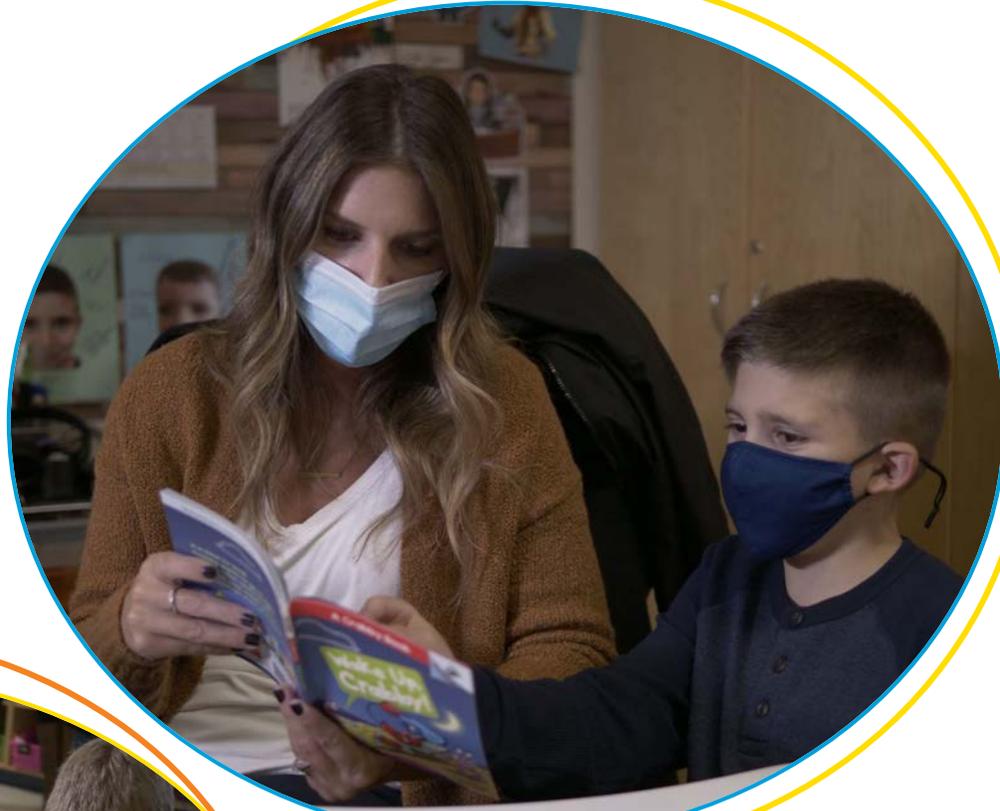


Expenses by Area 2020-21



Expenses by Type 2020-21





Find out more about the
Superior North Catholic District School Board

www.sncdsb.on.ca

