2026

CEO'S ANNUAL REPORT











Committed to the success of *every* student

Lakehead Public Schools

Land Acknowledgment

Lakehead District School Board is located on the traditional territory of the Ojibwe people of Fort William First Nation, signatory to the Robinson Superior Treaty of 1850. We acknowledge all of the First Nations, Metis and Inuit who reside in this territory and across our Nation; we are committed to moving forward in the spirit of reconciliation and respect for all Canadians.

Table of Contents

Message From The CEO/Chair

Strategic Plan

Indigenous Framework

Stats At A Glance

BELONG

SUCCEED

RECONCILE

Board of Trustees

Senior Administration

Message from the CEO and board Chair

As we reflect on the 2025–2026 school year at the Lakehead District School Board, our commitment to helping every student feel a sense of belonging, achieve their potential, and develop the skills and confidence needed for future success shines through.

Guided by our strategic priorities of Belong, Succeed, and Reconcile, we continue to strengthen learning opportunities that recognize the diverse strengths, identities, and needs of our students. Through high-quality classroom instruction, arts and culinary programming, French-language learning, technology integration, and experiential education, students are encouraged to explore their interests, discover their talents, and connect learning to real-world opportunities.

Supporting student achievement remains central to our work. Educators and school leaders use assessment data, evidence-informed practices, targeted interventions, and professional learning to strengthen literacy and mathematics outcomes. Pathways through skilled trades, apprenticeships, dual credits, summer learning, and specialized programs help students prepare for meaningful futures.

Equally important is the well-being of our school communities. We continue to prioritize safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environments through mental health supports, bullying prevention, health and safety initiatives, and programs that promote equity, human rights, and reconciliation. By listening to student voices and working alongside families, Indigenous partners, and community organizations, we strive to ensure every learner feels valued, connected, and supported.

Our progress reflects the dedication of our staff, the engagement of our students and families, and the strength of our community partnerships. As we look ahead, LDSB will continue to build on these achievements, respond to emerging needs, and pursue opportunities for continuous improvement.

Together, we are creating learning environments where every student can belong, succeed, and thrive.





Sherri-Lynne Pharand
Chief Executive Officer

Ron Oikonen
Trustee Chair

Mission, Vision, and Values

Lakehead District School Board's mission, vision, and values were developed in collaboration with our valued stakeholders both inside our organization and within the broader community. Our mission, vision, and values shape all of our actions and decisions across the school system.

Our Vision:

We provide equitable and inclusive educational environments where everyone belongs and succeeds

Our Mission:

Lakehead Public Schools is committed to the success of *every* student.

Our Values:

Belonging
Empathy
Integrity
Respect

Our Commitment to Reconciliation

We commit to the following four principles of reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities throughout every aspect of Lakehead Public Schools:

Relationality
Relevancy
Respect
Responsibility

Our Principles

Lakehead Public Schools strives to embody the following three principles:

Belong

We provide environments where everyone belongs.

Succeed

We hold high expectations for all learners.

Reconcile

We commit to a spirit and journey of reconciliation.

Lakehead Public Schools

2025-2029 Education Strategic Plan







Belong

We provide educational environments where everyone belongs.

- Advance equitable opportunities and support for students and staff facing systemic barriers.
- Cultivate safe learning and work environments where everyone feels seen, valued, and connected.
- Provide clear and consistent communication channels for students, staff, families, and community partners.
- Support the mental health, resilience, and well-being of students and staff.

Succeed

We hold high expectations for all learners.

- Recognize the potential and needs of all learners by providing them with the supports to succeed.
- Develop transferable skills such as critical thinking and citizenship to prepare students for future success in a changing world.
- Build digital literacy and guide safe online behaviour for students.
- Provide experiential, land-based, and authentic learning opportunities for students.
- Deliver meaningful professional development that aligns with school and learner needs.
- Provide opportunities for students to play an active role in their educational experience and school life.

Reconcile

We commit to a spirit and journey of reconciliation.

- Support and sustain partnerships with Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Carriers, and Indigenous communities.
- Weave Indigenous perspectives and practices into teaching and learning for all students and staff, guided by the Indigenous Education Framework and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action.
- Grow dedicated and welcoming spaces for Indigenous cultural practices.
- Provide land-based and experiential learning opportunities to connect students with the natural environment.
- Deliver professional development for staff in culturally safe and responsive pedagogy.

Lakehead Public Schools commits to the adoption of an Indigenous Education Framework that fully commits to the spirit of Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, which seeks to:

- empower acts of reconciliation throughout all spheres of Canadian society,
- address the ongoing impact of colonialism on Indigenous Communities,
- engage the oppression and marginalization of Indigenous communities in Canadian society, and;
- provide culturally competent pedagogies in all aspects of education in Canada.

This Framework prioritizes the incorporation of Indigenous education throughout Lakehead Public Schools and is embodied throughout all facets of the Strategic Plan. It commits to a spirit of reconciliation, a journey requiring constant focus, energy, and commitment to collectivity and inclusion while confronting the historical and present marginalization of Indigenous peoples.

Lakehead Public Schools therefore believes that for reconciliation to be possible, Indigenous and non-Indigenous relationships must be guided by the following principles:

Relevancy
Education must be relevant and support students in building a healthy mental, physical, emotional and spiritual well-being, and prepare them to work, live, and help build Indigenous and Canadian societies. This means that Indigenous success means the success of every learner.

Respect
Respect is the key to learning, found through commitments to wisdom, love, bravery, honesty, humility, and truth. Due to longstanding misunderstandings, violence, and policies and practices in Canadian society, values of patience, listening, and generosity must guide Indigenous and non-Indigenous relationships as well as connections with the earth, water, and sky.

Relationality
The world is a relational place, with Indigenous knowledge based in the study of how living beings share gifts and build positive, sustainable relationships. These are best understood in the expressions, ceremonies, pedagogies, languages, and stories within Indigenous cultures and communities.

Responsibility
The creation of healthy and meaningful relationships between Indigenous communities and Canadians is a responsibility of all peoples. In essence, everyone and everything has a role and place in this world and are important, contributing members to a full and cyclical universe.



Lakehead Public Schools

INDIGENOUS EDUCATION FRAMEWORK



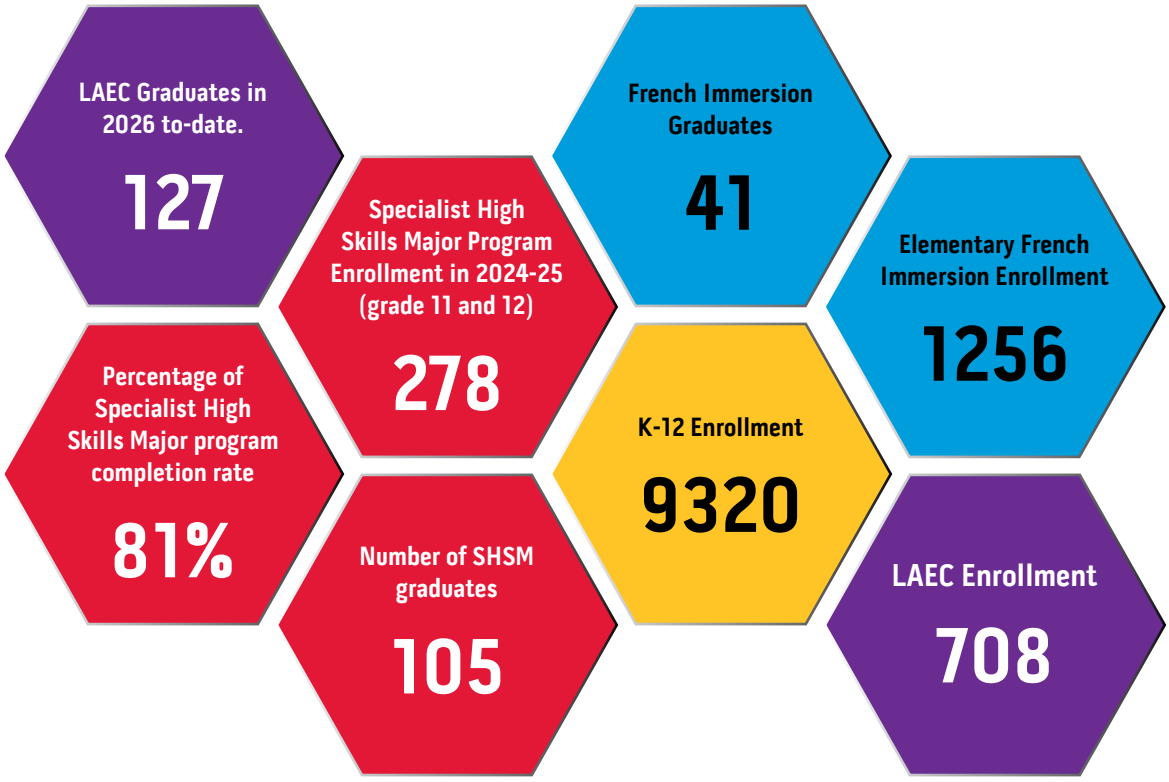
Relationality

Relevancy

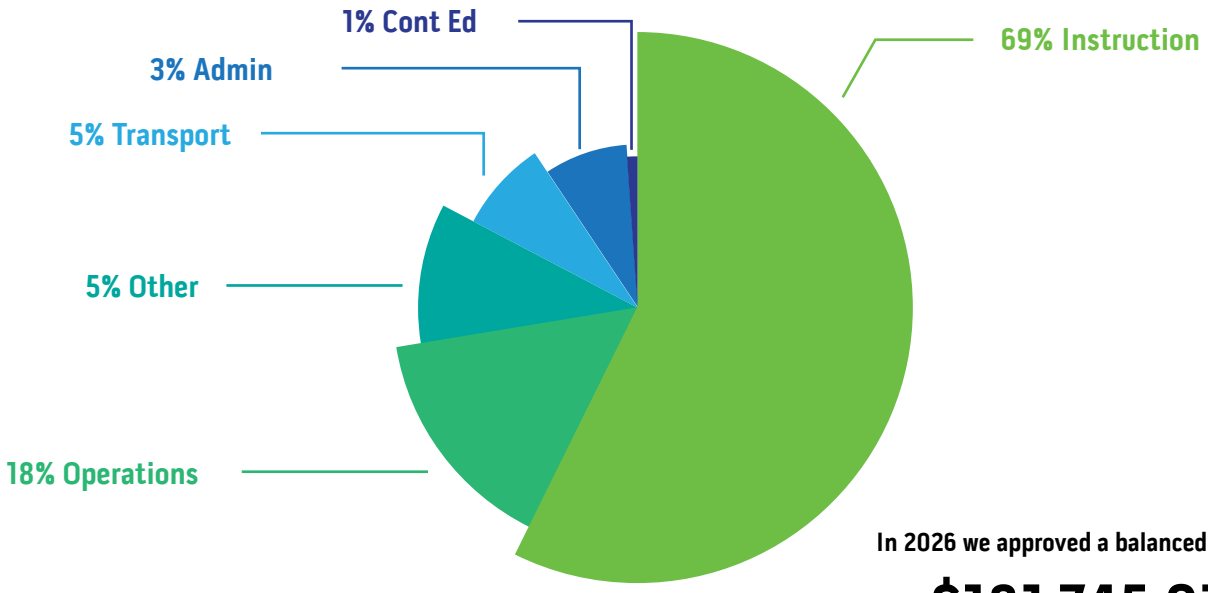
Respect

Responsibility

Statistics at a Glance



Operating Expenses



In 2026 we approved a balanced budget of

$181,745,016

BELONG



We provide environments where everyone belongs.

- **Advance equitable opportunities and support for students and staff facing systemic barriers.**
- **Cultivate safe learning and work environments where everyone feels seen, valued, and connected.**
- **Provide clear and consistent communication channels for students, staff, families, and community partners.**
- **Support the mental health, resilience, and well-being of students and staff.**

MENTAL HEALTH

During the 2025–2026 school year, the Board continued to implement its Mental Health and Addictions Strategy, focusing on prevention, early intervention, staff learning, and access to appropriate supports. This work was guided by collaboration with students, families, Indigenous partners, and community mental health service providers.

A multi-tiered approach ensured that supports were available to meet a range of student needs. Mental health promotion and prevention programming was offered across all grades, with additional substance use prevention initiatives at the secondary level. Students also accessed classroom presentations, small-group interventions, and individual counselling from registered social workers, with referrals to community services when needed.

Partnerships remained central to this work. Through collaboration with local mental health networks, health-care providers, and community organizations, the Board continued to strengthen pathways to care and coordinate supports for students and families. The implementation of Greenspace Mental Health also supported more consistent assessment and monitoring of student progress.

Building staff capacity was another key priority. Professional learning, mental health literacy resources, and the Wellness Champion initiative helped educators strengthen their understanding of student mental health and identify when additional support may be needed. The Board also continued preparing educators to deliver mandatory mental health literacy learning and classroom-based social-emotional learning.

We will continue to strengthen community partnerships, expand prevention initiatives, support consistent mental health learning, and improve access to timely services. Through this ongoing work, the Board strives to create safe, inclusive school environments where every student can thrive.

STUDENT CLIMATE SURVEY

We are creating safe, welcoming, and inclusive schools where every student feels valued, supported, and connected. The 2025–2026 school climate survey, completed in partnership with COMPASS, the University of Waterloo, and the Thunder Bay District Health Unit, provides valuable insight into students' experiences and helps guide our efforts to strengthen belonging and prevent bullying.

The survey also reinforces the importance of supporting students' overall well-being. Mental health, food security, sleep, physical activity, and school engagement all influence students' readiness to learn and their sense of belonging.

Moving forward, LDSB will continue to strengthen bullying prevention, improve access to trusted adults, promote inclusive school environments, and work with community partners to support student well-being. By listening to student voices and using survey data to guide decisions, we can build on existing strengths and ensure every student has the opportunity to feel safe, connected, and ready to succeed.

SAFE SCHOOLS

Throughout the 2025–2026 school year, the Board continued to strengthen school safety through facility improvements, staff training, student learning, and bullying prevention initiatives. Enhancements included additional security cameras, controlled-entry systems, and improved tools for monitoring safety procedures. Emergency preparedness was also supported through updated communication systems and readily accessible emergency information.

Staff participated in mandatory health and safety training, including concussion awareness, allergy and asthma management, workplace violence prevention, accessibility, and child protection. Age-appropriate lessons aligned with Erin's Law were introduced across classrooms to help students develop an understanding of personal safety and recognize when to seek support.

Student well-being remained a key focus. Students in Grades 7 to 10 participated in a presentation exploring the impact of artificial intelligence and technology on mental health, relationships, and learning. Schools also marked Pink Day through assemblies, classroom activities, and student-led initiatives promoting kindness, empathy, and positive peer relationships. In partnership with the Day of Pink Foundation, students and staff also had the opportunity to learn from Martin Boyce, a survivor of the Stonewall Riots and an advocate for 2SLGBTQIA+ rights.

Through the Safe and Accepting Schools Committee, the Board continues to bring together staff and system leaders to identify opportunities for improvement and strengthen practices across schools.

LDSB will continue to build on these efforts through ongoing staff learning, proactive safety measures, bullying prevention, and collaboration with families and community partners. Together, we are working to ensure every school is a place where everyone feels safe, supported, and welcome.







SUMMER LEARNING

Lakehead District School Board's Summer Learning Programs provide students with opportunities to strengthen academic skills, build confidence, develop friendships, and prepare for the year ahead. Through engaging, hands-on experiences and strong community partnerships, these programs support student achievement, well-being, and a sense of belonging.

During summer 2026, 210 elementary students participated in daily literacy and numeracy learning, with French Immersion camps offering additional opportunities to develop French language skills. Kindergarten programming also helped students build independence, confidence, and familiarity with school routines.

Secondary students benefited from a variety of credit-earning and experiential learning opportunities. Fifty-six First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students entering Grade 9 earned a reach-ahead credit while building relationships and becoming familiar with their new schools. Fifteen students from Armstrong and Whitesand First Nation earned a credit through experiential learning and career exploration, while four students explored culinary arts and gained practical skills in a professional kitchen.

The Focus on Youth program partnered with Roots to Harvest to provide 12 students with paid employment and co-operative education opportunities through the Urban Farm Project. Together, students earned 24 credits while developing valuable workplace and life skills. Across summer programming, students earned 74 co-operative education credits and 174 e-learning credits.

Student well-being was also a priority. Mental health summer programs supported 50 students through activities focused on emotional regulation, coping strategies, and positive relationships. Student Support Professionals worked alongside educators to ensure students received individualized support.

We will continue to offer responsive summer learning opportunities, as funding allows, to strengthen foundational skills, support credit accumulation, explore future pathways, and help every student feel prepared to succeed.



ATTENDANCE

We recognize that regular school attendance plays an important role in student achievement, engagement, and well-being. Through the Board Student Achievement Plan and Board priorities, LDSB aims to increase by 10% the number of students in Grades 1–8 who attend school at least 90% of the time.

While improvements in elementary attendance are emerging, continued focus is needed across all grades. Missing school regularly can affect learning, relationships, and students' sense of belonging. The Board recognizes that attendance challenges often stem from barriers such as physical and mental health concerns, transportation, childcare, and family circumstances.

Schools are working proactively with students and families to understand these challenges and provide support. Staff regularly review attendance data to identify concerns early and develop strategies that encourage students to reconnect with school. These include building positive relationships with families, offering engaging and culturally responsive learning experiences, partnering with community organizations, and providing flexible learning pathways and credit recovery opportunities.

Programs such as land-based learning, the Indigenous Skilled Trades program, Hockey Academies, and Specialist High Skills Major opportunities help students connect learning to their interests and future goals.

Improving attendance is a shared responsibility. By working together to create safe, welcoming, and inclusive learning environments, LDSB aims to help every student feel connected, supported, and ready to succeed.


How to read a
Read the pictures!
Aluna B
CAT CITY
SCHOOL
BUS
Pete the Cat
Rocking in My School Shoes

HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUITY AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Through its equity and inclusion initiatives, the Board continues to identify and address barriers that may affect the success and participation of students, staff, families, and community members.

The Equity and Inclusive Education Advisory Committee provides guidance and helps identify opportunities to strengthen inclusive practices across the system. During the 2025–2026 school year, LDSB continued implementing its 2024–2027 Equity Action Plan, focusing on leadership, workplace culture, classroom practices, and the use of data to support informed decision-making. The Board remains on track to meet its goals for the second year of the plan.



Several initiatives highlighted this work. In partnership with Harmony Movement Canada, LDSB hosted Northwestern Ontario's first Racial Justice and Solidarity Conference for Service Providers, welcoming more than 120 community professionals. Students also participated in an equity, diversity, and inclusion workshop, encouraging them to lead initiatives that celebrate diversity and promote belonging in their schools.

The Board partnered with the Day of Pink Foundation to host school presentations and a public event featuring Martin Boyce, a Stonewall Riots participant and advocate for 2SLGBTQIA+ rights. LDSB also continued addressing anti-Black racism through policy updates and an action plan informed by recommendations from the Ontario Human Rights Commission.



Looking ahead, the Board will continue implementing its Equity Action Plan, supporting student leadership, providing professional learning, and preparing for its 2028–2031 plan. Through ongoing collaboration and meaningful action, LDSB remains committed to building equitable learning and working environments where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

STUDENT SUCCESS

We are helping students explore their interests, develop practical skills, and prepare for life beyond high school. Through hands-on learning and strong community partnerships, students can discover pathways that connect their education to future careers, apprenticeships, and post-secondary opportunities.

Programs such as the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP), Specialist High Skills Majors (SHSM), and Dual Credits give students opportunities to gain industry-recognized certifications, workplace experience, and college credits while completing their high school diploma.

During the 2024–2025 school year, approximately 149 students participated in OYAP, with five securing registered apprenticeship agreements. SHSM programs achieved a 90% completion rate, exceeding the provincial average of 79%. Enrolment continues to grow, with 286 students working toward their SHSM designation in 2025–2026, a 42% increase over three years. Dual credit opportunities also supported student success, with 75 students participating in team-taught courses and another 54 accessing Confederation College's College Now program.

Career fairs, college visits, Skills Ontario competitions, and skilled trades events further help students connect classroom learning with real-world opportunities and make informed decisions about their futures.

In September 2026, we introduced two new SHSM programs; Health and Wellness at Westgate Collegiate and Vocational Institute and Information and Communications Technology at Superior Collegiate and Vocational Institute.

Through these opportunities, LDSB continues to support student achievement, engagement, and belonging while helping every learner build the skills and confidence needed to pursue a meaningful future.









ELEMENTARY CULINARY PROGRAM

Lakehead Public Schools' Elementary Culinary Program at Kingsway Park and Hammarskjold has been helping Grade 7 and 8 students build valuable life skills for 10 years. Reaching approximately 1,400 students annually, this hands-on program combines cooking with practical learning in mathematics, financial literacy, teamwork, problem-solving, and critical thinking.

Students prepare a variety of affordable, culturally diverse recipes while learning about nutrition, food safety, kitchen hygiene, and safe knife handling. Grade 8 students can earn provincially recognized Safe Food Handler certification, with a pass rate exceeding 95%.

The program provides meaningful opportunities to apply classroom learning in real-life situations. Students practise measurement, fractions, reading comprehension, and budgeting while exploring new foods, flavours, and cultural traditions. When available, French-language activities also connect students with French culture through food and celebrations such as Carnaval.

Teachers use observations, reflections, and hands-on activities to assess students' learning skills and growth. One of the most rewarding outcomes is seeing students build confidence, take on leadership roles, and discover strengths they may not demonstrate in a traditional classroom. Students also apply their skills by supporting school food programs and fundraising activities.

Community partnerships with the Thunder Bay District Health Unit, Roots Community Food Centre, and Thunder Bay Food Rescue help enrich the learning experience.

As the program continues to grow, challenges include rising food costs, increased class numbers, and accommodating diverse dietary needs. Moving forward, the focus remains on providing engaging, inclusive experiences that help students develop practical skills, confidence, and a lasting appreciation for food and cooking.



ARTS

We recognize the potential and diverse needs of all learners by providing opportunities and supports for success. Arts education in dance, drama, media arts, music, and visual arts fosters creativity, self-awareness, confidence, identity, and well-being, as highlighted in the Ontario Arts Curriculum.

LDSB remains committed to delivering high-quality arts programming and professional learning opportunities that enhance student achievement and support teacher development.

Through partnerships with the Thunder Bay Symphony Orchestra, the Thunder Bay Art Gallery, and community organizations, LDSB provides engaging, creative learning experiences for students and teachers across all areas of the arts.

Elementary students participate in arts-based learning supported by community partnerships, while classroom teachers receive support in integrating drama, dance, and visual arts across the curriculum.

All three LDSB secondary schools offer a broad range of arts programming, including band, strings, guitar, vocal music, drama, dance, and visual arts. These opportunities allow students to explore their interests, develop their talents, and personalize their high school experience.

With comprehensive arts programming and community collaboration, LDSB supports student creativity, engagement, and achievement while helping learners develop the skills, confidence, and well-being needed for success in school and beyond.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Throughout 2025-2026, Lakehead District School Board continued to strengthen inclusive and responsive programming for students with special education needs, with a focus on early intervention, successful transitions, and supports that respond to increasingly complex student needs. The Board continued to build innovative programs such as Bright Beginnings, supporting young learners with school readiness, self-regulation, communication and social-emotional development, and expanded the Bridges model to provide more intensive supports for students experiencing significant challenges within their home schools. Through Care and Treatment Education Programs (CTEP), strengthened community partnerships, and targeted transition planning, the Board continued to create more coordinated pathways for students requiring specialized mental health, behavioural, developmental and educational supports. At the same time, professional learning for administrators focused on autism, assessment, legal responsibilities, individualized programming and ensuring that student strengths and needs meaningfully inform instruction and Individual Education Plans. Strong partnerships with families, community agencies and the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) remained central to this work, helping ensure that student and family voice continues to inform planning and that students with special education needs are supported, valued and provided meaningful opportunities to thrive in their schools and communities.



ADULT EDUCATION

The Lakehead Adult Education Centre currently has 486 adult learners registered for the 2026–2027 school year, with two learners having earned their Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) to date. Through partnerships across Northwestern Ontario and beyond, LAEC provides flexible learning opportunities, including in-person and virtual instruction, independent study and e-learning, distance education, co-operative education, credit-based English as a Second Language (ESL), Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR), summer programming, and after-school and home instruction supports.

Key programming and partnerships include:

- Thunder Bay Correctional Centre: 97 learners registered for Semester 1, with 35 graduates in 2025–2026. Current offerings include hairstyling and aesthetics, experiential foods, visual arts, and workplace and post-secondary preparation.
- Thunder Bay Jail: 26 learners registered for 2026–2027, building on a successful 2025–2026 year in which 123 learners participated and two earned their OSSD.
- ESL Programming: 113 learners participated in 2025–2026, with 27 currently registered.
- Reach Ahead: 60 Grade 8 students registered to earn a Grade 9 Exploring Family Studies credit.
- Home Instruction Supports: 16 students registered for 2026–2027, following 13 credits earned by 10 students in the program's inaugural year.
- Community Partnerships: Collaborations with RFDA and Fresh Start, offered with EarlyON and TBDSSAB, provide credit opportunities, employment preparation, parenting skills, childcare, and wraparound supports.
- Summer Programming: 608 learners registered in e-learning in 2025–2026, resulting in 424 credits, alongside 74 co-operative education credits.





HEALTH AND SAFETY

We continue to prioritize the health, safety, and well-being of students and staff.

To help prevent injuries and keep staff safe, LDSB continued to provide in-person and online training, coordinate equipment inspections and testing, and support timely incident reporting. Five First Aid courses were offered, with 91 employees completing training. Five staff members also completed Joint Health and Safety Committee certification, and employees completed 21,112 online training courses throughout the year.

Workplace violence prevention remains an important focus. The Board continues to strengthen reporting processes, improve communication tools and safety signage, provide personal protective equipment where appropriate, and offer training in prevention, de-escalation, and response.

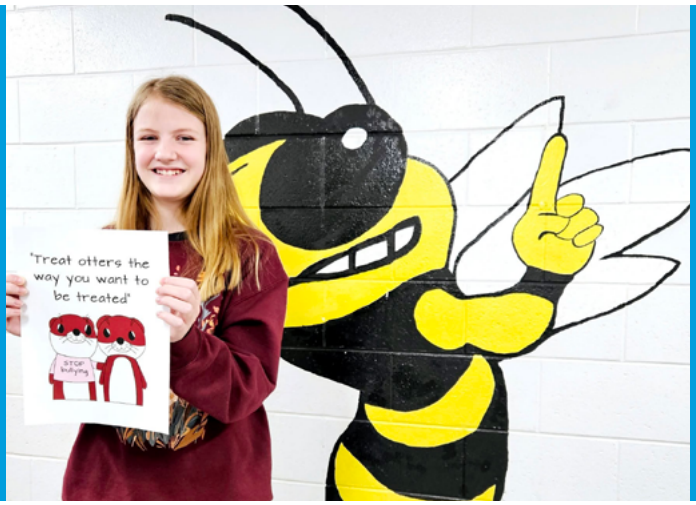
Through ongoing training, proactive risk management, and regular monitoring, LDSB is working to reduce workplace risks, support staff, and maintain safe, inclusive, and respectful environments in all schools and facilities.

SUCCEED

We hold high expectations for all learners.

- Recognize the potential and needs of all learners by providing them with the supports to succeed.
- Develop transferable skills such as critical thinking and citizenship to prepare students for future success in a changing world.
- Build digital literacy and guide safe online behaviour for students.
- Provide experiential, landbased, and authentic learning opportunities for students.
- Deliver meaningful professional development that aligns with school and learner needs.
- Provide opportunities for students to play an active role in their educational experience and school life.





MATH ACHIEVEMENT ACTION PLAN

We continue to focus on improving mathematics achievement for all students through the Ministry of Education's Math Achievement Action Plan (MAAP). Now in its third year, the plan uses student data to guide decisions, identify learning needs, and ensure support reaches the students and schools that need it most.

Throughout the 2025–2026 school year, math facilitators and intervention teachers worked alongside educators and students, with a particular focus on Grades 3, 6, and 9. Math facilitators supported teachers in strengthening classroom instruction, using effective teaching strategies, and making informed decisions based on student progress. Intervention teachers provided targeted, evidence-based support to students in Grades 6 to 8 who needed additional help building essential math skills.

School administrators also received support through professional learning, monthly school visits, classroom observations, and opportunities to review student achievement data. This collaborative approach helped staff identify learning gaps, select appropriate resources, and adjust instruction to better meet student needs.

Data collection and analysis remain central to the plan. Information from classrooms and schools helps guide decisions at every level, from Board-wide priorities to individual student supports. Early results continue to show positive trends in mathematics achievement.

LDSB will use this year's findings to shape the 2026–2027 Math Achievement Action Plan, building on successful strategies and identifying areas for continued growth. Through ongoing collaboration, targeted interventions, and data-informed teaching, the Board remains committed to helping every student strengthen their math skills and achieve success.

NEW TEACHER INDUCTION PROGRAM

We are helping new teachers feel supported, build confidence, and develop the skills they need to succeed in the classroom. The New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) provides new educators with mentoring, professional learning, and guidance during their early years of teaching.

The program includes school and Board orientation, support from experienced teacher mentors, and professional development tailored to individual needs. Learning opportunities focus on practical classroom strategies, including literacy and numeracy instruction, assessment, classroom management, special education, Indigenous education, and inclusive teaching practices.

Currently, 17 new permanent elementary teachers and 19 secondary permanent and long-term occasional teachers are participating in NTIP. An additional 31 elementary long-term occasional and occasional teachers are taking part in voluntary after-school learning sessions.

In 2026, the elementary program continues to offer collaborative learning opportunities that connect new teachers with colleagues and system experts. The secondary program emphasizes classroom observation, mentorship, and professional conversations that help teachers reflect on and strengthen their instructional practices.

These experiences allow new teachers to share ideas, learn from experienced colleagues, and build effective strategies that meet the diverse needs of their students. The program also supports teachers in completing the required performance appraisals and induction requirements.

Moving forward, LDSB will continue to provide meaningful mentorship and professional learning aligned with the Board's priorities of Belong, Succeed, and Reconcile. By investing in new teachers, the Board is strengthening classroom practice and helping create welcoming, inclusive learning environments where both educators and students can thrive.











FRENCH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Lakehead Public Schools (LPS) is committed to providing engaging, inclusive French as a Second Language (FSL) programs that help students build language skills, confidence, and an appreciation for French language and culture. This work supports the Board's Education Strategic Plan by promoting student achievement, belonging, and respect for cultural and linguistic diversity.

Core French is offered in all elementary and secondary schools, while French Immersion is available in three elementary schools and one secondary school. These pathways help students continue developing their French skills as they prepare for future opportunities in apprenticeship, college, university, or the workplace.

Funding through the Canada-Ontario Agreement supports four key areas: educator professional learning, experiential student opportunities, Board-developed initiatives, and DELF certification. During the 2025–2026 school year, funding supported teacher coaching and professional development, additional student success periods at Hammarskjold High School, classroom resources, and targeted support for early reading and French-language proficiency.

Students also participated in cultural learning opportunities, including Mani Musicale and Festival Bonjour, helping them practise French in meaningful, real-world settings. Additional initiatives included Grade 8 DELF certification opportunities for French Immersion students, early reading supports, and access to Idéllo's digital learning resources. Two French Immersion summer camps will further enrich students' learning experiences.

Moving forward, LPS will continue to monitor student achievement and well-being, strengthen partnerships with provincial and regional organizations, and provide educators with professional learning opportunities.

Through these efforts, LPS will continue to build strong French-language programs that support student success, encourage cultural understanding, and provide meaningful learning opportunities for all students.



TECHNOLOGY

We continue to invest in technology to support student achievement, improve communication, and prepare students for an increasingly digital world. Through the Information Technology Plan, staff, administrators, and system leaders work together to ensure technology meets the changing needs of schools and classrooms.

This past year, Edsby was introduced in all elementary schools to support communication with families and capture evidence of student learning. Partnerships through the Ontario eLearning Consortium expanded course options, with 811 students participating in eLearning as of January 2026. Literacy supports also continued to grow through Lexia and the expanded use of Acadience Language Screener from Senior Kindergarten to Grade 8.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is creating new opportunities for teaching, learning, and administrative efficiency. LDSB developed AI guidelines focused on privacy, accessibility, integrity, and responsible use, while providing training to help staff and administrators use these tools effectively.

Cybersecurity remains a key priority as online threats continue to increase. Recent efforts include security testing, improved protective software, and collaboration with provincial partners to strengthen monitoring and incident response.

Technology investments also continued through ministry funding and a Microsoft grant, supporting the purchase of student and staff laptops. Planning for future device replacement and sustainable funding remains important.

Looking ahead, LDSB will continue strengthening cybersecurity, supporting staff learning, improving the use of instructional technology, and implementing responsible AI practices. These efforts will help ensure students and educators have access to the tools, skills, and support needed for success in learning, work, and life.

KINGFISHER

Outdoor experiential learning, and the Kingfisher Outdoor Education Centre provides students with opportunities to extend learning beyond the classroom. Aligned with the Board's Strategic Plan and Indigenous Education Framework, Kingfisher emphasizes belonging, respect, responsibility, and relevance, ensuring programs are accessible to all students.

Programming serves Grades 1–12 and includes activities such as canoeing, orienteering, hiking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, climate change studies, and environmental science. Students engage in team-building, leadership development, and problem-solving activities, with specialized opportunities for Indigenous students, Special Education learners, international students, and those in alternative education programs. Overnight trips enhance personal growth, critical thinking, and collaboration skills.

Kingfisher hosts approximately 3,000 students annually, with 150 day trips and 35 overnight trips. Community partnerships with Indigenous Knowledge Keepers, local colleges, universities, and the Ministry of Natural Resources enrich student experiences, connecting learners to Indigenous histories, cultures, and the natural environment.

The Centre maintains accessible infrastructure, including cabins, instructional buildings, science and kitchen facilities, and supports student safety and well-being. LDSB remains committed to providing high-quality, curriculum-linked outdoor education experiences that foster environmental literacy, personal growth, and meaningful connections for all students. New for the 2026-27 school year is an all terrain wheelchair purchased through a $10,000 Tbaytel for Good Community Fund Grant.

CHILD CARE EXPANSION

After the success of our pilot program for two schools as part of Lakehead Public Schools Child Care, we announced a program expansion for the 2026-27 school year. Along with Five Mile and Goreham and Ware, before-and-after care is now available at Crestview, Elsie MacGill and McKenzie. This reflects our continued commitment to improving access to high-quality, school-based child care for families in our community.

Lakehead Public Schools
CHILD CARE





LEADERSHIP

We recognize that strong leadership plays an important role in student achievement and in creating safe, caring, and inclusive learning environments. The Board is committed to supporting current and aspiring leaders by providing opportunities to build their skills, confidence, and leadership capacity.

During the 2025–2026 school year, leadership development focused on meeting the individual needs of principals, vice-principals, and teachers, with an emphasis on instructional leadership and improving student achievement. Learning opportunities were shaped by staff feedback to ensure they were relevant, practical, and aligned with Board priorities.

With support from Morden Cormier Education Solutions, administrators participated in group learning and individualized mentoring, particularly for new vice-principals. Additional opportunities included data sessions, Leading Student Achievement teams, Leadership Learning Teams, and other system-wide initiatives that support collaboration and professional growth.

Teachers also had opportunities to develop their leadership skills by taking on roles such as teacher-in-charge, leading professional learning within their schools, and contributing to Board-level initiatives. These experiences help build leadership capacity throughout the system while strengthening classroom instruction and student learning.

LDSB will continue to provide targeted mentoring for administrators new to their roles, expand leadership learning opportunities, and use staff feedback to guide future planning. A continued focus on instructional leadership will help ensure leadership development remains connected to student achievement and well-being.

By investing in current and future leaders, LDSB is building a strong foundation for succession planning, effective school leadership, and positive outcomes for students and staff.


GAP





EDGE

Lakehead Public Schools' Elementary Hockey Program and LPS Edge Hockey Academy provide students with meaningful opportunities to learn, grow, and connect through sport. These programs support the Board's strategic priorities of Belong, Succeed, and Reconcile by fostering inclusive environments where students develop confidence, teamwork, leadership, and a strong sense of school connection.

During the 2025–2026 school year, approximately 250 students participated in the Elementary Hockey Program across nine schools. Twelve schools also came together for two year-end mini-tournaments, celebrating student learning, sportsmanship, and community connections.

At the secondary level, the LPS Edge Hockey Academy operates at Hammarskjold High School and Westgate Collegiate and Vocational Institute. Students combine academic learning with on-ice training, fitness, and leadership development while earning high school credits. The program is strengthened through partnerships with community organizations, including the Thunder Bay Kings, Thunder Bay Queens, and Lakehead University Thunderwolves.

The academies are making a positive difference in student engagement, attendance, physical activity, and school belonging. At Hammarskjold, Grade 9 students achieved a 100% course credit completion rate, while students at Westgate are progressing toward earning their two credits. The programs also help ease the transition to secondary school and provide students with opportunities to build lasting friendships and develop new skills.

The Board will explore opportunities to expand programming, including an Edge Ahead pathway for Grade 7 and 8 students, which began in the 2026-27 school year. Through continued collaboration with school and community partners, these programs will build on their success in helping students feel connected, stay engaged, and thrive both on and off the ice.

We also announced to creation of the LPS Superior Volleyball Academy. Starting in the 2026-27 school year, the academy is for student athletes in Grades 9 and 10 who are committed to developing their volleyball skills while achieving academic success. It's a co educational, skills based program that integrates volleyball training directly into the school day. Students enrolled in the academy will earn two high school credits through physical education while participating in a structured program designed to support both athletic and academic growth. In addition to volleyball skill development, the academy emphasizes teamwork, leadership, discipline, and personal development—qualities that support success both in school and beyond.



STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Lakehead District School Board (LDSB) remains focused on helping every student feel a sense of belonging, achieve their potential, and learn in ways that support equity and reconciliation. Literacy and mathematics continue to be key priorities, with student achievement data helping educators identify strengths, address learning gaps, and provide the right support.

Mid-year results for 2025–2026 showed encouraging progress at the secondary level. Grade 9 students achieved pass rates of 90% in mathematics and 96% in English. In Grade 10, pass rates ranged from 85% to 96% across English and mathematics courses. Additionally, 89% of Grade 9 students earned eight or more credits, while 71% of Grade 10 students earned 12 or more credits toward graduation.

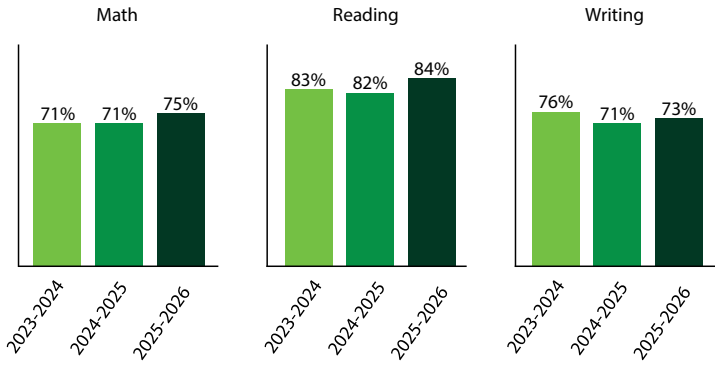
Lakehead Public Schools was one of only three English public school boards in Ontario to see improvements across all measures in our 2026-26 EQAO results.

Our Grade 3 students achieved above the provincial average in reading, writing and mathematics, with Lakehead ranking third among English public boards in both reading and mathematics and fourth in writing. Grade 6 students also performed above the provincial average in all three areas. At the secondary level, Grade 9 mathematics increased by 3.4 percentage points, and OSSLT success rose by 6.6 percentage points to 86.2 per cent—above the provincial rate.

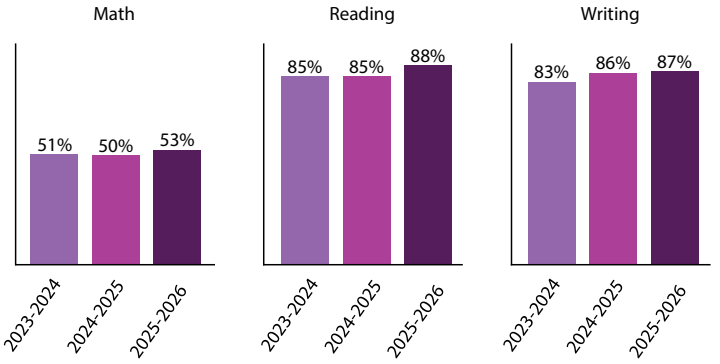
Across the system, literacy and math coaches, intervention teachers, and school staff continue to work together to strengthen instruction and provide targeted support. Looking ahead, LDSB will build on this work through ongoing professional learning, regular data reviews, and evidence-based teaching strategies.

By working together and responding to student needs, we remain committed to helping every learner build the skills, confidence, and knowledge needed for future success.

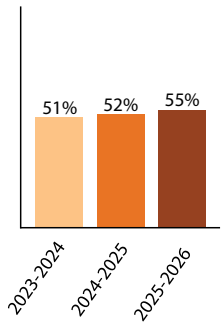
Grade 3 EQAO: Results Rel. at Board Level Over Time



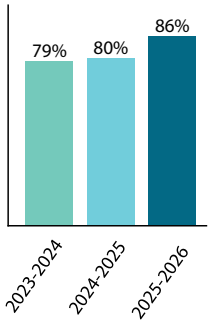
Grade 6 EQAO: Results Rel. at Board Level Over Time



Grade 9 EQAO: Results Rel. at Board Level Over Time



Grade 10 OSSLT: Literacy Results Over Time





RECONCILE

We commit to a spirit and journey of reconciliation.

- Support and sustain partnerships with Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Carriers, and Indigenous communities.
- Weave Indigenous perspectives and practices into teaching and learning for all students and staff, guided by the Indigenous Education Framework and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action.
- Grow dedicated and welcoming spaces for Indigenous cultural practices.
- Provide land-based and experiential learning opportunities to connect students with the natural environment.
- Deliver professional development for staff in culturally safe and responsive pedagogy.





INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

We are creating inclusive learning environments where First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students feel valued, connected, and supported in their success. Working alongside Indigenous students, families, and community partners, the Board continues to advance reconciliation through meaningful relationships, culturally responsive learning, and a focus on student achievement and well-being.

Guided by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action, LDSB's work focuses on supporting students, building educator capacity, increasing awareness, and strengthening Indigenous education planning.

Students benefit from a range of programs and supports, including Indigenous Student Support Workers in elementary schools, graduation coaches across all secondary schools, and the Kendomang Zhagodenamnon Lodge program, offered in partnership with the Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre. Transition supports, skilled trades opportunities, student leadership initiatives, and targeted literacy and mathematics interventions help students build confidence and plan for their futures.

Land-based learning continues to provide meaningful opportunities for students to connect with the land, culture, identity, and Indigenous ways of knowing. The Board also supports Indigenous language learning through Ojibwe language courses and ongoing Anishinaabemowin revitalization initiatives.

Educators and trustees continue to participate in



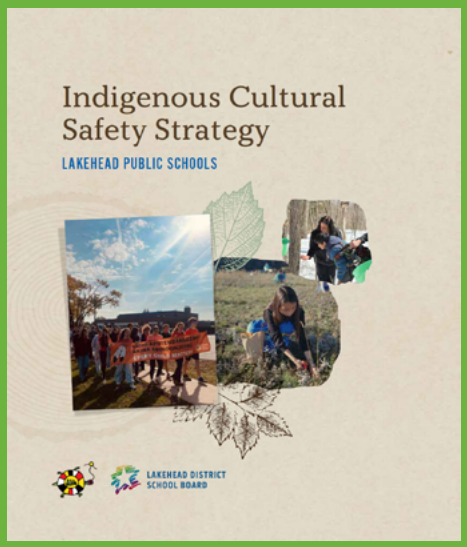




INDIGENOUS CULTURAL SAFETY STRATEGY

This past year, we introduced the Indigenous Cultural Safety Strategy. The Indigenous Cultural Safety Strategy is a living document that is embedded within the Lakehead Public Schools Indigenous Framework. Together, they embody the four branches of RELEVANCY, RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, AND RELATIONALITY. This strategy is not a one-time plan, but a long-term commitment that will continue to grow and adapt as we listen, learn, and act together.

Grounded in the teaching that growth is cyclical, like the rings of a tree, we will return regularly to reflect on our actions, gather feedback, and strengthen our commitments over time. This ongoing reflection and sharing ensures the strategy remains meaningful, responsive, and rooted in relationship. Indigenous cultural safety cannot be achieved through isolated actions. Each priority is interconnected, like the rings of a tree, the teachings of the circle, and the balance of the medicine wheel. Together, they guide how we learn, relate, and create spaces of belonging.





LAND-BASED LEAD

In response to student voice, a Land-Based Learning Lead role was created to work alongside secondary science and geography teachers, as well as elementary and secondary students at the Kingfisher Outdoor Education Centre. This role supports immersive, curriculum-connected experiences grounded in a land-based lens and Two-Eyed Seeing. Learning is rooted in seasonal cycles, guided by the 13 Moons and the Mashkiki Mikinaak framework. The land is positioned as the primary teacher, with programming enriched through collaboration with Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and language speakers.









BOARD OF TRUSTEES



RON OIKONEN
Chair



DONICA LEBLANC
Vice Chair



PATRICIA JOHANSEN
Trustee



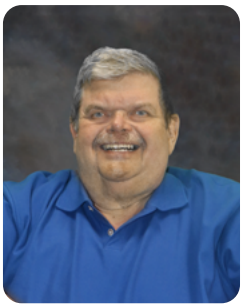
RYAN SITCH
Trustee



TRUDY TUCHENHAGEN
Trustee



GARY CHRISTIAN
Trustee



GEORGE SAARINEN
Trustee



ELLEN CHAMBERS
Trustee



SCOTTIE WEMIGWANS
Indigenous Trustee



CAMERON PRICE
Indigenous Student Trustee



BREANNA BRUCE
Student Trustee

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION



SHERRI-LYNNE PHARAND
Chief Executive Officer



PATTI-JO PESOLA-BRUNTON
Superintendent of Education
Math Lead



HEATHER HARRIS
Superintendent of Education



MICHELLE PROBIZANSKI
Superintendent of Education



JANE LOWER
Superintendent of Education



KIRSTI ALAKSA
Superintendent of Business



MAGGIE FREDRICKSON
Superintendent of Education











Lakehead Public Schools

You belong here