

Renfrew County Catholic District School Board Director's Annual Report 2014–2015



Message from the Director of Education

I am pleased to present this Annual Report outlining the activities and accomplishments of the Renfrew County Catholic District School Board in 2014–2015. We have much to celebrate.

We made great strides in the past year, as we passed the midway point of our multi-year Strategic Plan, both in achieving our goals and aligning with Ontario Ministry of Education priorities—to increase student achievement, ensure equity, promote well-being and enhance public confidence.

Our theme was based on that part of our Vision Statement that states: *“In a spirit of freedom, affirmation and celebration today, we strive to integrate the Catholic faith tradition in a critical analysis of the arts, media and technology.”*

Mindful of that theme, we continued to seek opportunities to engage students in meaningful opportunities to learn and grow in our faith-based education system. We focused on strengthening individual

student achievement through innovation, collaboration, and enhanced professional practice and resources.

In the past year’s results from the annual Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) standardized tests, our students continued to score very high levels of performance in reading, writing and mathematics.

Our curriculum focused on our mathematics strategy, inclusive learning for all students to reach their potential and increasing technology to meet the needs of the 21st-century learner.

We also focused on student safety and health and continued our equity and inclusive education strategy with PINK week events that promoted Peacefulness, Inclusivity, Nobility and Kindness, as well as activities throughout the year.

There were many other highlights over the past year including Destination Imagination and our ongoing partnership with the Shaw Woods Outdoor Education Centre.

We completed the five-year rollout of Full-Day Kindergarten and the extended French as a second language program was expanded to four schools.

Technological upgrades included board-wide wireless internet and the purchase of mobile devices for classrooms.

Capital projects included additions and retrofits to meet the needs of the full-day kindergarten program, and upgrades to improve student safety, functionality and efficiency or to accommodate daycare programs in partnership with community organizations.

I want to thank all who contributed to last year’s success—from trustees to administration, teachers and staff—as well as parents, families, parishes, religious and clergy, and our partners in the broader community.

Michele Arbour
Director of Education



Our Mission Statement: *Inspired by our rich heritage and challenged by the struggles of our past, we are an inclusive Catholic educational community called to express our mission as Church to pass on the Good News of Jesus Christ, to make it relevant in the world today, and to be the hope for the future.*

ABOUT US

RCCDSB's vital statistics

Number of students: Approximately 4,600

Schools and facilities:

- 18 Elementary Schools
- 2 Secondary Schools
- 2 Alternative Secondary Sites
- 1 Young Parent Support Program
- 2 Section 23 Valleycrest Classrooms

Communities

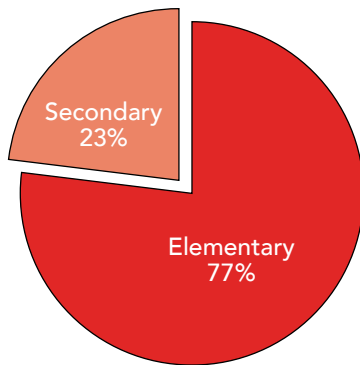
Our district covers a wide, mostly rural geographical area of more than 7,851 square kilometres from Deep River in the north to Arnprior in the south to Pembroke in the east and Barry's Bay in the west.

Employees

- Approximately 600 permanent staff
- Approximately 600 occasional staff

Annual expenditures: \$62.3 Million

Our student population



Our enrolment as of October 31, 2015, totals 4,571 students:

	Students	%	FTE
Elementary	3,542	77%	3,542.00
Secondary	1,029	23%	1,016.00
Total	4,571	100%	4,558.00

By the numbers

The proportion of English as a second language learners in our diverse population is not large enough to report their achievements separately.

The number of self-identified First Nation, Aboriginal, Métis and Inuit students accounts for 4.9% of our board's population and includes students in all three Aboriginal groups: First Nation, Métis, and Inuit.

Full Day Kindergarten

As of the 2014– 2015 school year, we have achieved full implementation of the Full Day Kindergarten program across our board.

Kindergarten report card

- 350 Junior Kindergarten students
- 362 Senior Kindergarten students
- 26 Early Childhood Educators who work alongside a Kindergarten teacher
- 35 Kindergarten teachers across our system

Secondary quick facts:

By the end of their second year of high school, 76% of secondary students had completed 16 credits.

Primary class size report

All Ministry of Education targets have been achieved.

100% Primary Classes 23 and under	100.0%	Achieved
100% of Grade 3/4 Combined Classes 23 and under	100.0%	Achieved
Average Junior/Intermediate (grades 4–8) Class Size	23.14	Achieved
90% Primary Classes (JK–3) 20 and under	91%	Achieved



JOURNEY TO CHRISTIAN MATURITY

As a faith-based educational community, the RCCDSB aims to provide a healthy, nurturing, secure and respectful environment for all of our students and staff to learn and develop to our full potential within the Catholic faith.

Fuelling our journey

Conferences bring people together to share information and better understand the challenges and opportunities at hand.

Two inspiring first-time events accomplished this and much more as they engaged participants in achieving strategic priorities of our Board and enhanced relationships among home, school, parish and the extended community.

SEAC Symposium "Transitions: The Road to Independence"

The first-ever RCCDSB SEAC symposium highlighted lessons learned and approaches for parents and educators of special needs children.

OAPCE Conference "Poor No More"

The 76th Annual Ontario Association for Parents in Catholic Education (OAPCE) conference and AGM co-hosted by our Board, focused on issues around poverty, social justice, and raising resilient children who are equipped to improve the world around them.

Leadership team

In the RCCDSB community of schools, we care, we learn and we work together to make our world a better place!



Trustees: Standing: **Andy Bray**, Arnprior, McNab/Braeside Township, Greater Madawaska Township; **Shawnasea O'Connor**, Student Representative, St. Joseph's High School, Renfrew; **Marlene Borutski**, Killaloe, Hagarty & Richards Township, Brudenell, Lyndoch & Raglan Township, Madawaska Valley Township; **Anne Haley**, Renfrew, Horton Township, Whitewater Region Township; **Judy Ellis**, First Nations Trustee; and **Bob Schreader**, Pembroke. Seated: **David Howard**, Deep River, Laurentian Hills, Head, Clara & Maria Township, Petawawa; and **Bob Michaud**, Chair, Laurentian Valley Township, North Algona Wilberforce Township, Admaston/Bromley Township, Bonnechere Valley Township. Missing: **Stephanie Rea**, Student Representative, Bishop Smith Catholic High School.

Christian Community Day

RCCDSB staff met for Church in the morning and each school's staff went out for lunch together to various restaurants around Pembroke before meeting back at Bishop Smith Catholic High School for the afternoon sessions with our guest speaker, and continued building a sense of community within the RCCDSB.



The Living Rosary during Catholic Education Week at Our Lady of Fatima Catholic School in Renfrew



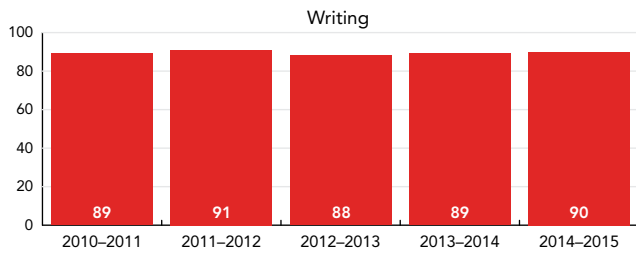
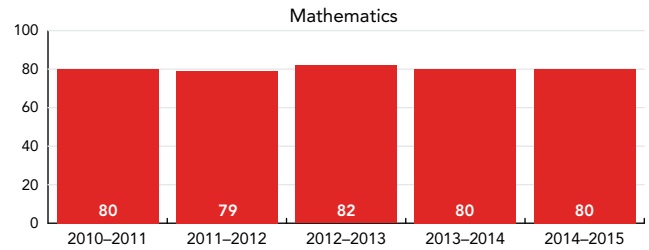
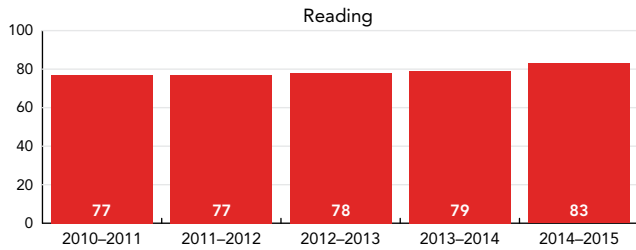
Administrative team: **Peter Adam**, Superintendent of Educational Services; **Jaimie Perry**, Superintendent of Educational Services; **Michele Arbour**, Director of Education; **Mélanie Leclair**, Manager of Human Resources Services; **Mary Lynn Schauer**, Superintendent of Business Services; and **Mark Searson**, Superintendent of Educational Services.

Strategic multi-year plan

The plan can be found at: <http://rccdsb.edu.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Strategic-Plan-2012-2017-FINAL-DRAFT-January-9-2013.pdf>

EQAO STANDARDIZED TEST RESULTS

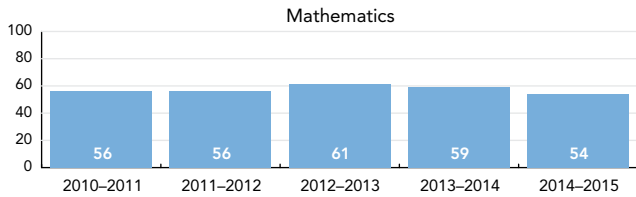
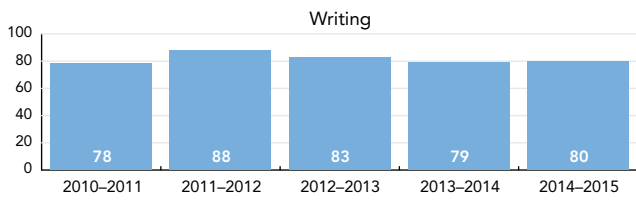
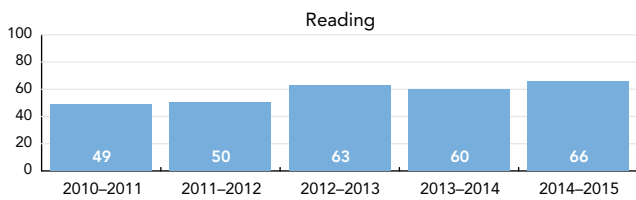
Grade 3



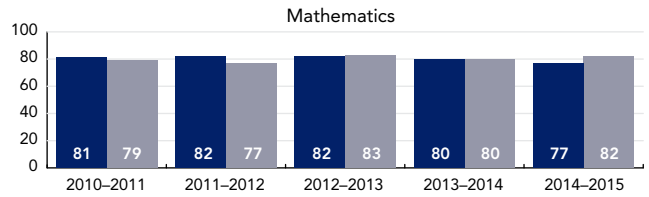
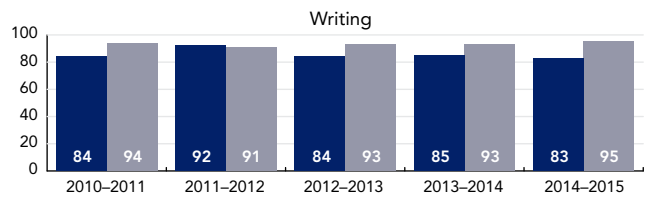
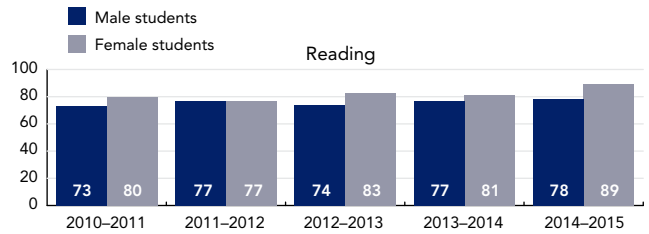
■ Highest English-Language Board Level results
■ Lowest English-Language Board Level results
■ RCCDSB

* Numbers indicate the percentage of pupils who achieved the provincial standard of level 3 or higher on the assessment

Special Education results



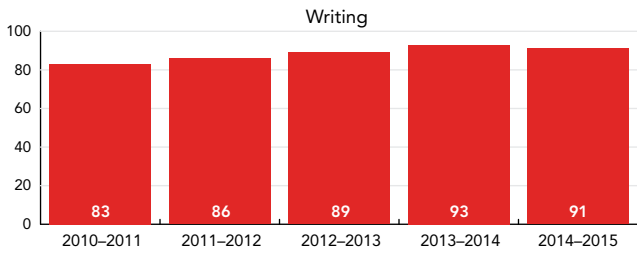
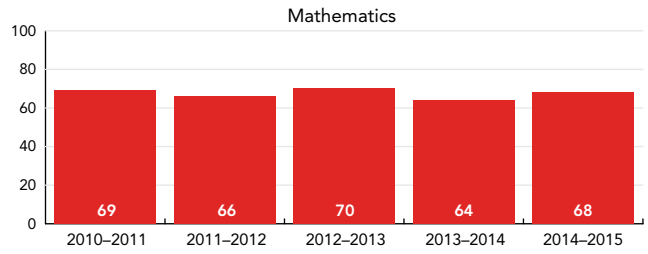
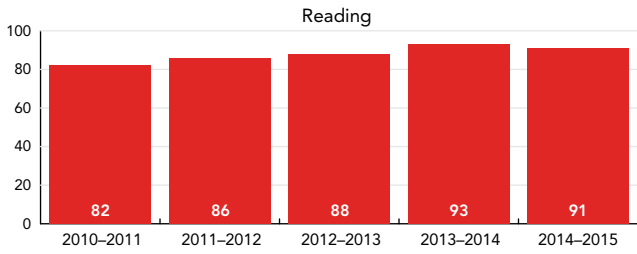
Results by Gender



HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR YEAR

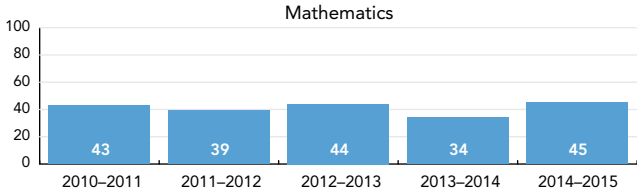
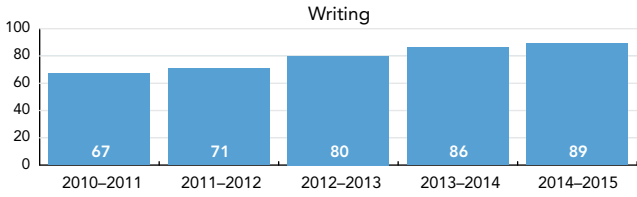
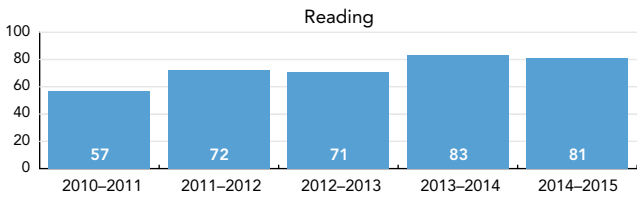


Grade 6



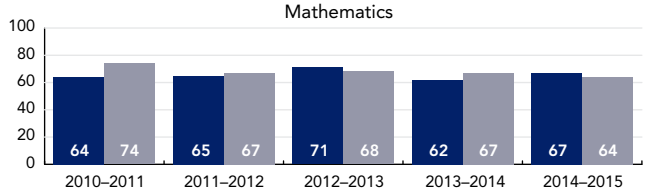
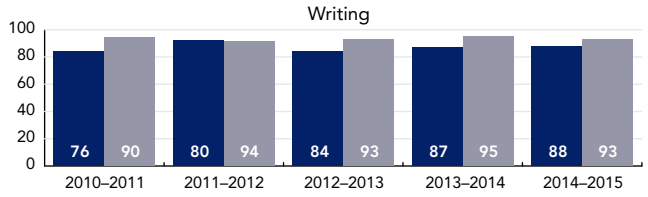
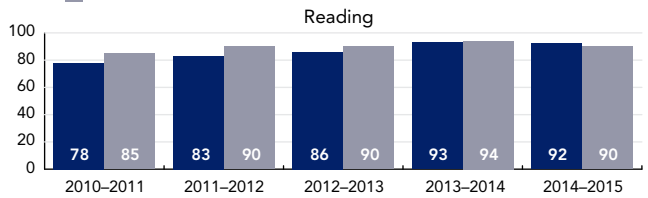
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Special Education results



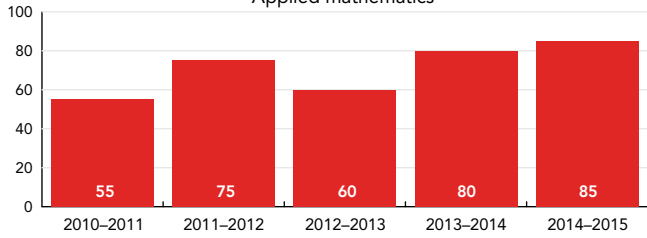
Results by Gender

- Male students
- Female students

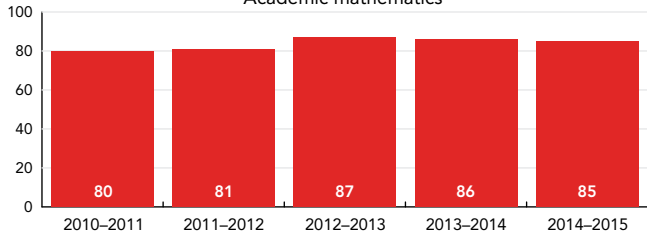


Grade 9

Applied mathematics

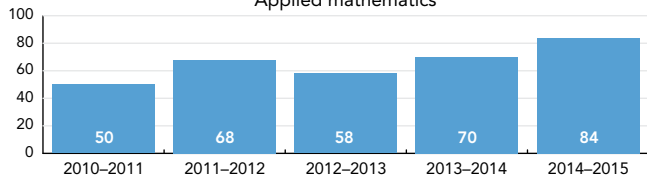


Academic mathematics

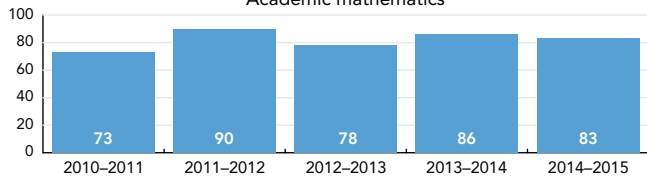


Special Education results

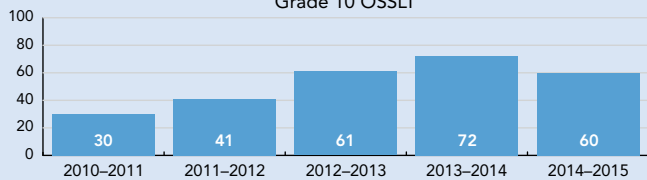
Applied mathematics



Academic mathematics



Grade 10 OSSLT



Grade 10

OSSLT

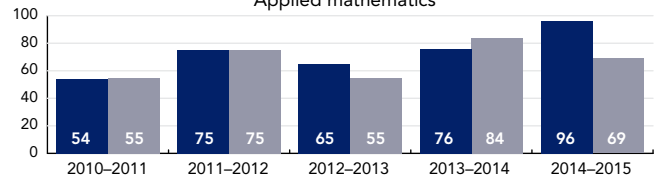


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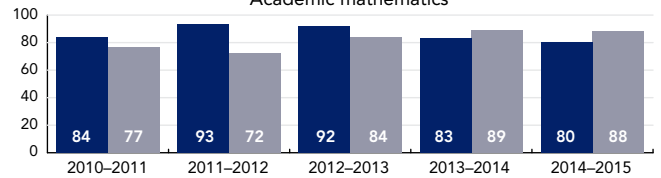
Results by Gender

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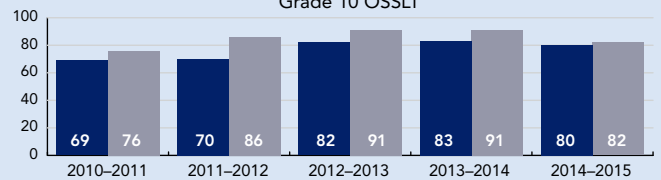
Applied mathematics



Academic mathematics



Grade 10 OSSLT



JOURNEY TO LIFE-LONG LEARNING

During the 2014–2015 school year, our Board continued to focus on strengthening individual student achievement within a safe, supportive and faith-based learning environment. Student engagement and learning was enhanced through:

- Innovation, collaboration and enhanced professional practice
- Availability of learning materials and resources
- Updated and renewed facilities.

Projects were focused on:

- Mathematics strategy
- Inclusive learning for all students to reach their potential
- Increased technological capabilities to meet the needs of the 21st century learner.
- Initiatives to train teachers in effectively and confidently integrating technology into the teaching and the learning in their classrooms. This was aided by the purchase of mobile devices for classrooms.

Academic achievements

The RCCDSB is pleased that the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) standardized test results show our students continue to demonstrate very high levels of performance in reading, writing and mathematics. EQAO results are a testament to the ongoing hard work of our students, the support of their parents, the dedication of their teachers and the effectiveness of the initiatives that were implemented.

Student achievement in mathematics will continue to be a key focus in 2015–2016. Some initiatives to improve our outcomes will include:

- Eastern Ontario Staff Development Network (EOSDN) Math project
- Collaborative Inquiry and Learning in Mathematics (CILM) building on the use of manipulatives
- Instructional and assessment strategies to increase success through Special Education Resource Teachers (SERTS)
- Primary Math professional development days with Marian Small

Program highlights

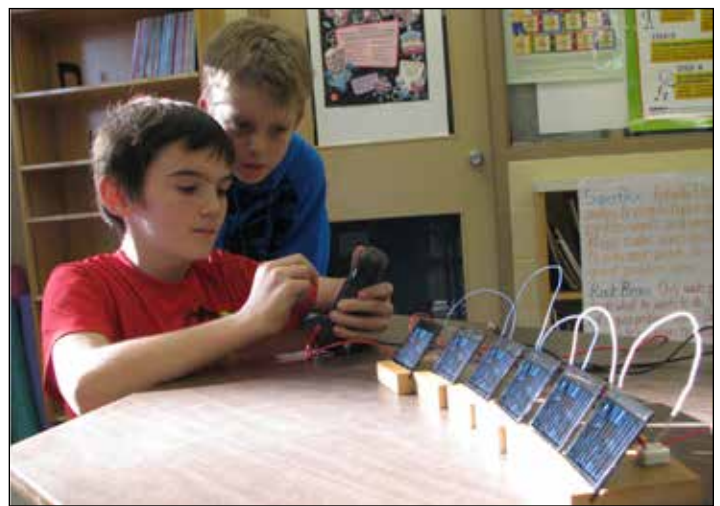
Destination Imagination: DI continued to engage students across our Board in 21st Century creative learning, problem solving and teamwork. RCCDSB teams earned great results at the regional, provincial and global competition levels.

Outdoor education: Students had access to curriculum-based outdoor education at the Shaw Woods Outdoor Education Centre, with ample opportunities to explore and learn about nature and become stewards of the environment. More than 1,300 of our students visited the centre and participated in programs covering the ecology, culture and economy of this unique Ottawa Valley forest. Many students took part in a special forestry day at the centre and witnessed demonstrations of 19th century logging. A springtime maple syrup demonstration—with a chance to taste fresh maple syrup produced in the centre's new sugar shack—was a popular event!

Advanced learner program: During April and May, 134 students in grades 4 to 8, representing 11 schools took part in a series of science and technology workshops designed for the advanced learner. Topics ranged from robotics, 3D animation, pond study, and space science to electronics with activities designed to support our board's technology initiatives including Google Drive, iPads and Apple TV.

HILA science camps: Science Lighthouse provided hands-on science workshops designed to support the curriculum. Topics ranged from kites to photovoltaics. Renewable energy was one of the most popular workshops.

Students built miniature, working solar arrays to learn about photovoltaics. The model arrays function using the same science and engineering that created the large arrays on our solar schools.



Summer School

Many students strengthened their literacy and numeracy skills in fun ways at RCCDSB summer school offered across the county.

Grade 4 students in all of our schools were once again invited to take part in a summer camp program at Bishop Smith Catholic High School and St. Joseph's High School. The day camps provided music instruction, science, sports and other creative activities.

Music Program

The music program in the RCCDSB contributes to the academic, spiritual, emotional and social growth for our students as well as a rich culture of our school communities.

Through participation in events such as Music Monday, Kiwanis Music Festival, Christmas Concerts, and choirs, students are given opportunities to make connections to home, school and parish.

IMPROVING OUR OUTCOMES

Specific measures for students/schools

Targeted professional development and supports from our program team and external resources include:

- EQAO sessions related to specific needs
- Collaboration with the Ministry on our annual Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement
- Enhanced e-learning opportunities
- Robust summer school program.

Programs for students unable to attend regular school

- St. Joseph's High School – "Room 307", where students can work on specific tasks supported by a teacher in a less-structured setting
- Alternate school sites for both our high schools, including partnership in the Renfrew County Youth Services Hub, for youth who are at risk and need an alternative to regular classroom learning
- Columbus House Young Parent Support Program
- Partnership with Addiction Treatment Services (ATS) to provide on-site counselling availability at each of our high schools to keep students in school
- Safe Schools Coordinator who is actively involved and liaises with the school and student in cases of suspension, especially long-term suspension.

Special education accomplishments

- Continuing our "Road to Independence" training for Educational Assistants to enhance student independence and success.



Notable accomplishments

Student, parent and community engagement

The Parent Involvement Committee, along with our Trustees, Director of Education and Superintendents travelled across the county to meet with our principals and school councils. These sessions enhanced communication between our parents and our Board in support of student achievement and well-being. It was an incredible opportunity to share our stories and witness the home, school, parish and community connections.

Student safety & health

- Day-long retreats for students. Students spent a faith-filled day doing leadership and team building activities and talking about issues like friendship, acceptance, inclusion and mental health. Children reflected on their own behaviour and thought about how actions affect others, talked about what Jesus expects of each one of us and how important it is to remember we are all gifts of God who deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. Students also had an opportunity to share conflicts and problems among their peer group and were offered support in finding solutions.
- Safe Schools. Presentations to intermediate classes on cyber-bullying and internet safety increased awareness of the dangers of online experiences and what students can do to safeguard themselves.

Equity & Inclusive Education Strategy

- PINK week continued to flourish in RCCDSB in 2014–2015. Schools participated in activities to promote Peacefulness, Inclusivity, Nobility and Kindness. The focus for the week was "Reverencing the Dignity of All" with a special connection to the 'Who I Am' EOCCC project. Many wonderful visuals were created across the board and many students demonstrated leadership by doing skits or supporting younger students in their understanding of what bullying is and how we can support one another to create more positive and loving climates.
- The 'Who **I AM**' project is about LOVE. Where there is LOVE, there is no bullying. Participants began the week with a school-wide Prayer Service where administrators were invited to express gratitude and offer a gift of words to someone on their staff. This was a moving way to kick off the week and an inspiration for others to do the same.



Destination Imagination

DI continues to engage students across our Board in creative learning, problem solving and teamwork, and culminate in positive results at the regional, provincial and global competition levels.



Extended French as a second language

Second language learning helps students to communicate in both official languages, and has been shown to have many other benefits—improving overall literacy skills and providing significant cognitive and academic benefits, as well as enhancing students' self-esteem and self-confidence. The RCCDSB expanded the program to four schools:

- St. Joseph's, Arnprior
- Our Lady of Lourdes, Pembroke
- St. Francis of Assisi, Petawawa
- Our Lady of Sorrows, Petawawa

Programs and Pathways

• Dual Credits

Through the dual credit program students have the opportunity to earn high school credits while studying at a local college or taking apprenticeship training to gain experience and get a head start on future careers.



Dual Credit students in the Baking and Pastry course at Algonquin College in the Ottawa Valley.

• SHSM

The most recent Ministry report from 2013/14 shows that our Specialty High Skills Major footprint was 21% (percentage of RCCDSB grade 12 students) while the provincial average was 12%. SHSMs allow students to focus on a career path that matches their skills and interests while earning credits and valuable industry certifications.

Aboriginal Education

The RCCDSB is committed to closing the gaps and infusing First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) culture in a natural way, working with the Ministry of Education and the Aboriginal Education Office (AEO) to more completely implement the First Nation, Metis and Inuit Policy Framework.

Through consultation with the Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee, the Board focused on four key strategies in implementing the Framework:

1. Voluntary confidential self-identification
 - New self-ID brochures for each school along with new posters promoting self-ID.
2. Closing the gaps
 - A detailed report was provided to each school, principal and senior administration focusing on FNMI results in EQAO testing last year. Teachers utilized the results for planning.

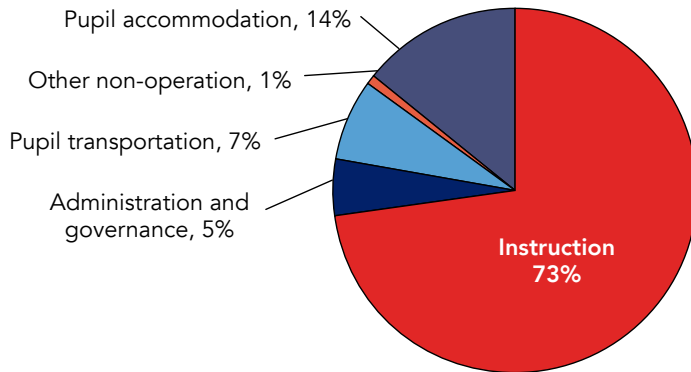
3. Supporting students
 - Each school received the new Grade 5 Many Gifts Social Studies Program, which specifically teaches about FNMI presence in Canada.
 - Students were given the opportunity to share their culture with other communities by means of singing, dancing and drumming presentations.
4. Supporting educators
 - Each school was provided with excellent resources developed by the Eastern Ontario Catholic Curriculum Corporation (EOCCC) on FNMI culture. Teachers reviewed these resources in order to infuse the activities into their delivery of the curriculum.

I AM... First Nation	
	I AM... Inuit
I AM... Métis	
Voluntary Aboriginal Self-Identification Parents/ Guardians of Aboriginal students and students who are 18 years and older, have the right to voluntarily and confidentially self-identify their Aboriginal Ancestry.	

STEWARDSHIP AND SUSTAINABILITY

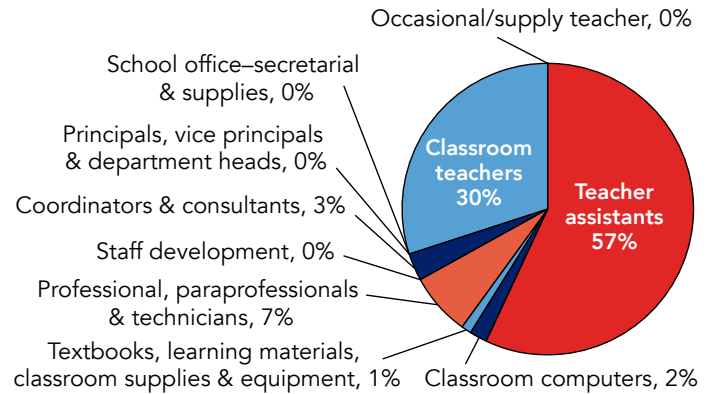
2015–2016 budget

Expenditure by category



Total: \$62,331,780

Special Education Expenditures



Total: \$8,289,915

2014–2015 highlights

Programs

- completed the five-year rollout of Full-Day Kindergarten (FDK)
- continued funding for Special Education programs

Physical resources

- expansion of four classrooms at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School in Petawawa
- retrofit at St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School in Renfrew to accommodate a licensed child care
- upgrades at Our Lady of Grace, Westmeath, and St. Joseph's Catholic School, Arnprior
- 21st-century learning commons, and Specialist High Skills Major wing at Bishop Smith Catholic High School in Pembroke
- lighting upgrade and kindergarten renovation at George Vanier, Combermere



Technology

- \$50,000 invested in increasing the wireless platform within schools
- \$90,000 to purchase mobile devices for classrooms, including both tablet and laptop technologies

Shared resources

- a new mobile App for the Board provides information about schools, buses and various Board programs to students and families using a mobile phone or social media.

Operational efficiency

- continued focus on streamlining business processes through electronic fund transfers and online payment for parents
- implementation of an electronic work order system for Plant Services to improve workflow, communication, priorities and status updates
- review and update board policies and procedures

