



Chignecto Central
Regional Centre for Education

2023-2024

BUSINESS PLAN



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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PLANNING CONTEXT

Chignecto Central Regional Centre for Education (CCRCE) administers educational programs, supports, and services within the boundaries of Colchester County, Cumberland County, Pictou County, and the Municipality of East Hants. Our 65 schools provide excellent educational programming to approximately 20,000 students in grades Primary to 12, including international students and pre-primary programs.

CCRCE's Business Plan aligns with our System Improvement Plan, the system's response to supporting schools' collective efforts to ensure well-being and academic success for all students. We achieve this by providing an inclusive and culturally relevant approach as outlined in the Inclusive Education Policy.

The 2023-24 budget focuses on key initiatives that will directly and positively impact the priorities identified in the 2023-24 Business Plan. It should be noted that while the Business Plan follows the fiscal year of April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024, many priorities and initiatives continue throughout the instructional year from September 2023 to June 2024.

In addition to our System Improvement Plan, further considerations for the Business Plan are as follows:

- The EECD Business Plan 2023-24
- The Inclusive Education Policy of Nova Scotia.
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action

The 2022-23 Annual Report of Achievements section in the *2023-24 Business Plan* provides data and evidence of the region's successful implementation of learning practices. Our approach to school improvement continues to be based on building a culture where educators are inquiring, collaborating and responding in a timely manner to ensure all students succeed. The approach also follows the improvement framework via the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's Student Success Planning process.

2.0 MISSION

VISION

Each student contributes meaningfully as a global citizen and thrives in an ever changing world.

MISSION

We create engaging learning experiences in inclusive environments that support each student's well-being and social emotional development.



VALUES

Relationships
Diversity & Inclusion
Collaboration
Growth & Innovation
Responsibility



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3.0 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

REGIONAL LEADERSHIP

Chignecto Central Regional Centre for Education is led by the Regional Executive Director of Education (RED). The RED reports directly to the Deputy Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development and works with a Senior Management Team at the regional level to ensure there are efficient and effective operations at our central office and in all of our public schools.

The Senior Management Team is comprised of:

1. Regional Executive Director
2. Director of Programs and Student Services
3. Director of Financial Services
4. Director of Human Resources
5. Director of Operational Services
6. Director of School Administration
7. Family of Schools Supervisors (4)
8. Coordinator of African Canadian Services and Education
9. Coordinator of Mi'kmaw Services and Education
10. Communications Manager
11. Executive Assistant to the Regional Executive Director

Core functions of the Office of the Regional Executive Director include:

- Performance of all duties of the RED as prescribed under the *Education Act* and Regulations.
- Leadership of the Senior Management Team and provision for the supervision of all activities related to the core functions in all departments.
- Delegation of duties and assigning responsibilities within the organizational structure and maintaining appropriate accountability and evaluation processes for all operations and services.
- Establishment of annual priorities and objectives to address issues of planning, strategic leadership, staff development, risk management, strategic decision-making, and resources management.
- Coordination of effective system communications.
- Coordination of the regional planning processes.

PROGRAMS AND STUDENT SERVICES

The Programs and Student Services Department is responsible for the development and delivery of programs and related services through an inclusive model of education. This model incorporates a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) and addresses students' academic, social-emotional, cultural and behavioural needs in an integrated way. This is the primary mandate of the Region and its schools.

The Programs and Student Services Department is committed to providing exceptional learning opportunities for all students through effective instruction and assessment processes by classroom teachers, supported by knowledgeable and responsive instructional leaders and program support staff. This is accomplished within a positive, safe, culturally responsive learning environment where diversity is celebrated and strong relationships are cultivated.

The major functions of the Programs and Student Services Department include:

- Implementation of curricula, programs, and related services.
- Development and implementation of programs and support services for students with special needs.
- Implementation of French Second Language curricula and programs.
- Implementation of the Pre-Primary Program
- Supporting Professional Learning Communities in all CCRCE schools and departments.
- Technology integration.
- Development and implementation of comprehensive guidance and counselling services.
- Development and implementation of student equity initiatives and support services.
- Development and implementation of school community partnerships.
- Coordination and communication of student evidence of well-being and achievement to inform best practice and support continuous system and school improvement.
- Approval of relevant research and research projects.

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

The School Administration Department works collaboratively with the Department of Programs and Student Services to fulfill the mandate of Education Services. This Department oversees the work of the Family of Schools Supervisors and is responsible for:

- Leadership and operational management of the Family of Schools Supervisors and schools.
- Professional development and succession planning in support of school-based administrators.
- Providing system supports to ensure effective Professional Learning Community practices in all CCRCE schools.
- Implementation of all school related policies and procedures (ministerial, provincial and CCRCE).
- Support of School Advisory Councils (*Nova Scotia School Advisory Council Handbook, 2018*).
- Provision of leadership and support to the Student Success Planning Process and preparation of school annual reports.
- Data analysis in support of Student Success Planning, as well as achievement of the System Improvement Plan.
- In collaboration with Human Resources Services and Programs and Student Services, allocation of teaching and administrative staff, educational assistants, student support workers, student support staff, and library services staff.
- The annual appraisal of all school-based staff through a Professional Growth and Appraisal Process.
- Management of the Information Technology Division and the Information Economy Initiative Extension, including coordination of technology acquisition, allocation, maintenance; and coordination of cyber-security initiatives in CCRCE.
- Coordination of the International Student Program.
- Lead the development of effective partnerships with community agencies.

HUMAN RESOURCES SERVICES

The Human Resources Services Department is responsible for all aspects of human resources and labour relations. The Human Resources Services Department provides employment structures, strategic advice and administrative services to support the goals of the System Improvement Plan, Business Plan and the Vision, Mission and Values of CCRCE.

The major functions of the Human Resources Services Department include:

- Leading and supporting the recruitment, screening, hiring and retention of employees in order to meet the staffing needs of CCRCE.
- Administration of wages and benefits for all employees, including data entry and records preparation, management, and maintenance.
- Developing and managing the implementation of an effective employee growth and appraisal program.
- Development and implementation of effective retention and recognition structures.
- Development, implementation, and administration of a comprehensive employee assistance and support program available to all employees.
- Development, implementation and management of an employee health program that supports employee wellness through, attendance support and disability management of injuries, illness, accommodations, and return to work plans.
- Ensuring employees are appropriately held accountable for conduct using restorative approaches, as appropriate.
- Representation of the Regional Centre in collective bargaining and/or negotiation processes.
- Administration and interpretation of collective agreements, terms and conditions of employment and employment contracts for all employees.
- Representation of the Regional Centre on all labour relations matters including, but not limited to, Centre and union meetings, union queries and concerns, grievances, and arbitrations.
- Enhancing the provision of human resources communications, services, and records management through web-based technology.
- As appropriate, effectively advocating on behalf of the Regional Centre to various external stakeholders with respect to human resource issues impacting the Regional Centre.



OPERATIONAL SERVICES

The Operational Services Division supports a safe and healthy student-centered learning environment through its three departments: Student Transportation, Property Services and Health & Safety.

The Transportation Department is responsible for the provision of a safe and reliable student transportation system. The major functions of this division include:

- Development and coordination of transportation routes and schedules for safe, daily transportation of students to and from school, including appropriate arrangements for students with special needs based on provincial transportation requirements.
- Coordinate and provide extra and co-curricular bus services for schools.
- Oversight of the provision of private contracted student conveyance services.
- Administration of routine bus service and maintenance according to all provincial motor vehicle carrier requirements.

The Property Services Department is responsible for the operation of efficient, safe, and healthy facilities and grounds for students, staff, and the community. The major functions of the Property Services Division include:

- Coordination of daily custodial cleaning of facilities to ensure healthy and safe building environments.
- Planning of routine, preventative, and responsive maintenance related to facilities and grounds.
- Performance of all facilities work required by regulatory bodies, standards, guidelines, and codes.
- Administration of capital planning and construction projects aimed at promoting building longevity through renovation, repair, and expansion of our facilities.
- Primary representation with major multi-year “Addition and Alteration” projects and new school construction with the Departments of Education and Early Childhood Development and Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

The Health and Safety Department assists in the provision of a safe, secure, and healthy working/learning environment. The major functions of this division include:

- Leading the collective efforts of all staff in creating and maintaining clean, safe buildings, grounds, and vehicles.
- Supporting schools and the Regional Centre in the development of appropriate health, safety, fire safety, emergency management and security practices, policies, and procedures.
- Assist all CCRCE Divisions in the planning and performing of all health and safety work required by regulatory bodies, standards, guidelines, and codes.

FINANCIAL SERVICES

The Financial Services Department provides leadership and management of the finance functions of CCRCE.

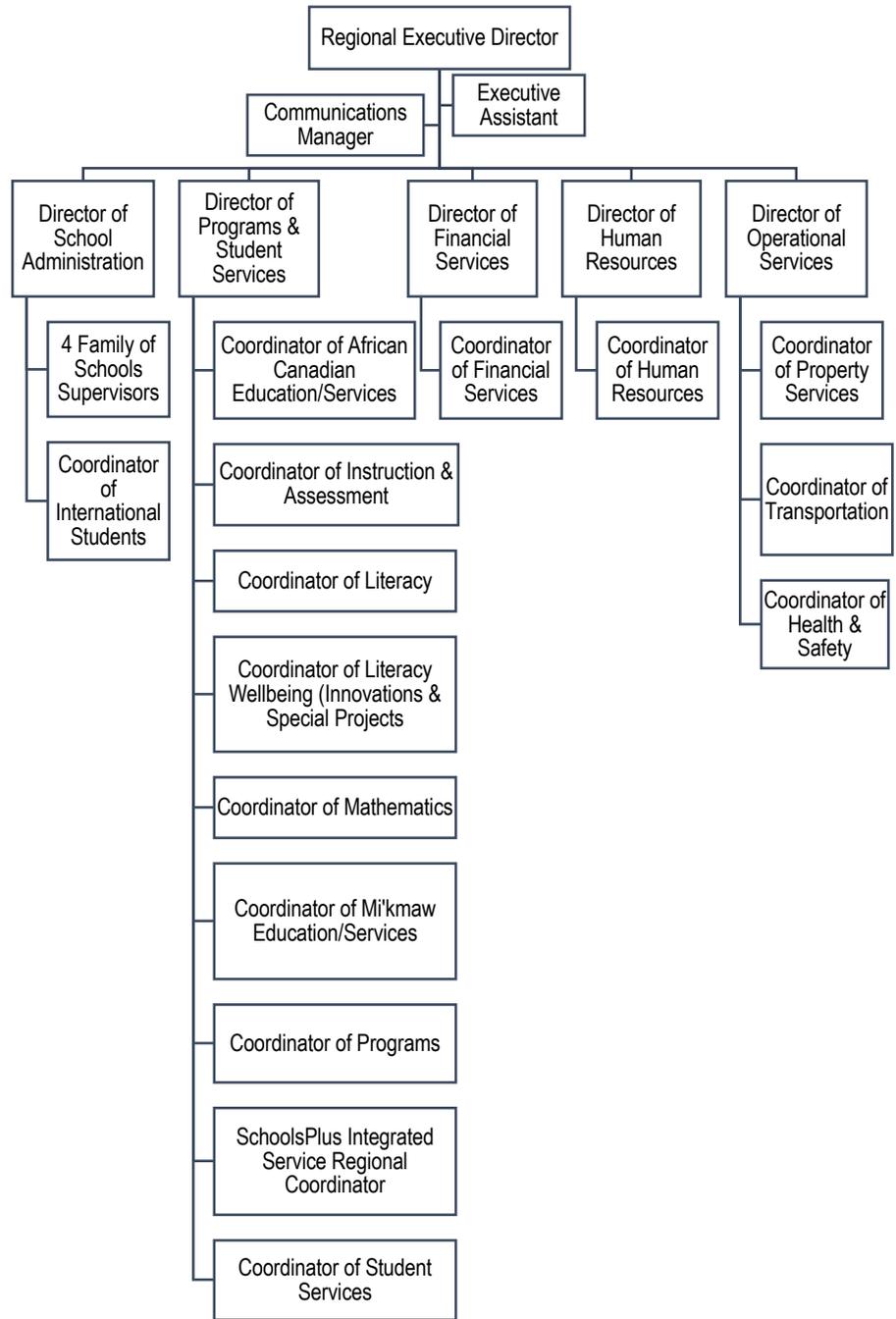
The Financial Services Department is responsible for providing essential support services in the areas of fiscal planning, budgeting, and financial management.

The major functions of the Financial Services Department include:

- Provision of leadership in financial planning, investment, and budgeting.
- Preparation of all financial reporting and forecasting, including continual monitoring of revenues and expenditures.
- Coordination and preparation of the annual budget.
- Coordination of the annual audit of the Regional Centre's financial records and internal control systems.
- Provision of general accounting services.
- Administration of policy and procedures for procurement.
- Administration of purchasing, accounts payable, revenue management, cash management, accounts receivable, charitable donations, school financial management audit services, and payroll services.
- Provision of financial advice to the Regional Executive Director and Senior Management.
- Co-ordination of risk management activities.



Chignecto Central Regional Centre for Education’s Organizational Chart



4.0 PRIORITIES 2023-24

CCRCE's focus on student achievement and well-being is detailed in the updated [2023-26 System Improvement Plan](#). The overarching System Goal is:

At the end of the 2025-26 school year, we will have strengthened and solidified Tier 1 practice for all students under the Inclusive Education Policy, within a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS).

The [System Improvement Plan](#) provides grade specific areas of focus for Math, Literacy and Well-Being and specific priorities over the three-year implementation timeline.

Strengthening an Inclusive Education System

- Develop and implement an Inclusive Education Scan with a focus on high schools.

Broadening our Skills

- Develop a Regional Leadership Development Program for Educators.
- Re-establish an Employee Engagement Focus including employee recognition, retention and feedback.
- Develop strategies for all CCRCE staff to recognize, acknowledge and respond to racism and discrimination.

Safe Learning Environments

- Strengthen our crisis response for schools by deepening our relationship with police partners, including participating together in threat risk assessment training
- Fortify CCRCE's Cyber Security by establishing a dedicated regional Cyber Security Team and ensuring all employees complete Cyber Awareness Training.
 - Establish a CCRCE Cyber Security Team to respond to identified priorities of the Cyber Security Strengthening Project.
 - Ensure all CCRCE Employees complete Cyber Awareness Training.

Improving Services

- Modernize our Student Transportation service delivery model.

5.0 ANNUAL REPORT OF ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2022-23

The 2022-23 CCRCE Business Plan focused the system's attention on three goals:

1. Create Safe and Inclusive Environments
2. Improve Student Well-Being and Achievement
3. Enhance Organization Processes and Controls

The following chart outlines achievements and supporting evidence within each priority of the three goals:

Goal 1: Create Safe and Inclusive Environments	
<p>Priorities:</p> <p>Develop the cultural competence of all staff to be able to positively interact and communicate with students, families and staff from cultures different than their own.</p>	<p>Achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starting in October, five self-directed professional learning modules were released throughout the school year, focused on decolonizing employee's thinking through many perspectives. In May, an additional opportunity was provided to allow staff to ask follow-up questions and feedback for future learning modules. • Themes covered were decolonizing staff thinking around: Remembrance Day, inclusion, African Heritage month, the concept of poverty, honouring students voice, and building meaningful relationships.
<p>Priorities:</p> <p>Work closely with members of the Sipekne'katik community and Mi'kmaw Services of EECD to design and conduct an equity scan in Nova Family schools.</p>	<p>Achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCRCE developed an Equity in Action team, which met regularly with members of the Sipekne'katik community and Mi'kmaw Services of EECD to determine action steps for CCRCE schools. From these conversations, CCRCE has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Purchased and distributed smudge kits to all schools to be available to Mi'kmaw and Indigenous learners as a concrete way for them to engage and be their authentic selves within their schools. ○ Purchased and distributed Mi'kmaw flags for all 64 schools as a means for students to see themselves reflected in the schools.



<p>Priorities:</p> <p>Expand the range of culturally inclusive learning spaces, including outdoor classrooms.</p>	<p>Achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Our Property Services team conducted consultations with schools and regional staff members to work collaboratively to design and create inclusive spaces for all eligible sites (all sites with Grade 5 and younger). ● Community involvement occurred, where possible, to incorporate culturally appropriate features.
<p>Priorities:</p> <p>Finalize the accessibility plan in partnership with other RCEs and CSAP.</p>	<p>Achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The draft Nova Scotia Education Joint Accessibility Plan was completed and shared for feedback. The Accessibility Advisory Committee conducted an online ThoughtExchange and focus groups to compile stakeholders insights. ● The Joint Accessibility Plan is now being edited to reflect discoveries and insights before being forwarded to the NS Department of Education and Early Childhood Development for approval.
<p>Priorities:</p> <p>Collaboratively develop a provincial employee self-identification process in partnership with other RCEs and CSAP.</p>	<p>Achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Request for Proposal process in progress to hire consulting firm to lead the development of the employee survey.



Goal 2: Improve Student Well-Being and Achievement	
<p>Priorities:</p> <p>Improve the facility rental process by developing a regional system which will allow School Administration to focus on instructional leadership.</p>	<p>Achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Property Services team collected input from stakeholders who regularly interact with the Facility Rental process, including schools, Principals' Advisory Committee, Regional Staff members, and Community groups.• The team researched and investigated options for the online workflow system.• Currently, the team is developing a pilot approach to allow time for testing and ongoing improvements on a manageable scale.
<p>Priorities:</p> <p>Ensure adherence to established nutritional guidelines for all food served in schools.</p>	<p>Achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regional staff worked collaboratively with the Principal Advisory Committee to review adherence to the School Food and Nutrition Policy. Additional emails followed the meeting to all principals, which included standards, expectations, and resources related to the School Food and Nutrition Policy.• In March, five schools launched a school salad bar pilot in partnership with the NS Department of Agriculture. The initiative allows students to have access to fresh food options, student choice, and educational opportunities for food literacy.
<p>Priorities:</p> <p>Redesign the allocation of resources to more effectively respond to student needs.</p>	<p>Achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A newly developed Integrated Literacy Team created a Regional Implementation Plan to rollout a structured literacy approach within CCRCE. The implementation included dedicated strategic professional development for regional literacy staff to align the approach across the region.• To lead and support the implementation, a new Special Projects Literacy Coordinator and 2 consultants were hired.• Coaches were allocated to schools to align with strategic supports and in response to achievement data. Allocations were coordinated collaboratively with input from FoSS.

Goal 3: Enhance Organization Processes and Controls	
<p>Priorities:</p> <p>Implementation of CCRCE’s regional website and 65 school websites, improving accuracy and clarity of information for our students, families and school communities while minimizing cyber security risks.</p>	<p>Achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Regional Public CCRCE website launched on August 15, 2022. ● 97% of schools have launched their new school websites on the new platform, Intrado School Messenger, as of March 31, 2023. ● The new website platform has improved the ability to share emergency messages across school websites, as well as created a consistent look and feel for CCRCE’s schools’ online presence.
<p>Priorities:</p> <p>Development of a staff intranet site to provide one location for all staff related information, including an employee onboarding program to improve employee orientation, engagement and effectiveness.</p>	<p>Achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff discovery sessions were conducted with regional departments and divisions to uncover targeted information for intranet design and organization. ● The staff intranet has been built on CCRCE’s SharePoint site. Content migration is underway, as well as the development of new information, processes, and documents to address gaps that were discovered during previous staff sessions.
<p>Priorities:</p> <p>Provide clarity to families by completing an update to school catchment areas and corresponding transportation routes.</p>	<p>Achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Created an online engagement for families and community members to help develop clear elementary catchments and boundaries for West Pictou Consolidated, Scotsburn Elementary, and Salt Springs Elementary. New boundaries and grade reconfigurations were developed using the input and feedback, including the opportunity to add Pre-Primary to West Pictou Consolidated.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Numerous Transportation routes were reviewed and updated to improve the efficiency of the runs and align with the Nova Scotia Student Transportation Policy.
<p>Priorities:</p> <p>Formalize an employee onboarding program to improve employee orientation, engagement and effectiveness.</p>	<p>Achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A review of the new hire employee journey was conducted, which identified opportunities to improve the employee experience. A welcome booklet, which describes CCRCE culture, was created and is now provided to all new hires with their employee paperwork at the time of hire.• All employees, including casuals and substitutes, have been set up with CCRCE technology accounts (e.g., email accounts) to enable additional future onboarding on the staff intranet.

6.0 FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

Key Financial Indicators			
	2022-23 Budget	2022-23 Actual	2023-24 Budget
Revenue			
Province of Nova Scotia	237,092,053	243,448,974	240,455,010
Government of Canada	2,199,808	2,394,985	2,232,883
Municipal Contributions	33,096,252	33,096,240	35,389,831
School Generated Funds	4,500,000	3,954,058	4,500,000
Regional Operations	3,384,064	4,714,613	4,009,018
Total Revenue	280,272,177	287,608,870	286,586,742
Expenditures			
Office of Regional Executive Director	847,785	681,701	855,137
Financial Services	2,563,402	2,396,598	2,676,631
Human Resource Services	2,035,658	1,663,419	2,064,435
School Services	204,216,512	202,944,071	206,097,858
Programs	13,646,388	13,407,491	14,570,002
Operational Services	44,087,432	47,177,734	47,069,422
Other Programs	8,375,000	8,090,645	8,753,257
School Generated Funds	4,500,000	3,719,052	4,500,000
Total Expenditures	280,272,177	280,080,711	286,586,742
Annual Operating Surplus	-	7,528,159	-
Opening Accumulated Surplus	17,298,649	17,298,649	24,826,808
Closing Accumulated Surplus	17,298,649	24,826,808	24,826,808



7.0 KEY FACTS

Key Fact Category	September 30, 2021	September 30, 2022
Students	September 30, 2021	September 30, 2022
Primary to Grade 12	18,978	19,414
Pre Primary	1,001	1,033
Total Number of Students	19,979	20,447
Average Class Size P-2	19	19
Average Class Size 3-6	23	23
Average Class Size 7-9	19	20
Average Class Size 10-12	18	19
Total Number of Classes & Sections	1711	1762
Staff (FTEs)	September 30, 2021	September 30, 2022
School Based Educators & Administration	1534.07	1559.53
School Based Non-Teaching Support	643.48	645.36
Programming Support	34.9	34.0
Non-Teaching Programming Support	48	52
Transportation	227.92	227.45
Property Services	218.77	224.84
Administration	48.27	48.84
Technology Support	27.6	28
Other Programs	3.5	3.5
Technology	September 30, 2021	September 30, 2022
Students/Instructional Computer	1.3	1.2
Computers & Devices/Technician	1973	1742
Property Services	2021-22	2022-23
Total School Sq. Ft.*	3,505,583	3,505,583
Sq. Ft./Student*	175.46	171.45
Private Operator Sq. Ft.*	0	0
Operating Costs**	29,179,941	29,974,656
Operating Cost/Sq. Ft.**	8.32	8.55
Transportation	2021-22	2022-23
Total Buses on Regular Routes*	210	204
Total Spare Buses Operated*	104	98
Total Students Transported*	15,876	16,212
Total Student Transportation Cost**	13,280,321	14,919,205
Total Cost/Student Transported**	836.5	920.26
Total Number of Bus Runs Daily*	806	796
Average Number of students/bus run*	19.7	20.4
Cost/Unit – Contracted**	0	0
Cost/Unit – RCE**	63,240	73,133
Total Number of KM Students Transported*	2,760,338	2,759,458
Total Number of KM buses Traveled*	3,881,687	3,880,726

**As of June 30*

***As of March 31*

Definitions and Calculations:***Students (all based on Sept 30th statistics):***

Total Number of Students: Sept. 30th Total Enrolment (funded & unfunded)
 Average Class Size P-2
 Average Class Size 3-6
 Average Class Size 7-9
 Total Number of Classes & Sections 10-12

Staff:

School-based Educators and Administrators: Includes Teachers (including Resource Teachers, Principals and Vice Principals), School Admin staff, Guidance, Psychologists, etc.
 School-based Non-Teaching Support: Includes Education or Teaching Assistants, School Secretaries, etc.
 Programming Support: School Administration Supervisors, Coordinators of School Programming and School Services
 Non- Teaching Programming Support: Secretaries, Administration Assistants and those positions not captured in programming support
 Transportation: Bus Drivers, Mechanics, and other related administration staff
 Property Services: Custodians, Maintenance and Trades staff
 Administration: Regional Executive Director, Finance Staff, Human Resources Staff, Operations Staff, and other related administration positions
 Technology Support: Supervisors of School Technology, Networking Specialists, and other related IT support positions
 Other Programs: FTEs connected to programs including, but not limited to, International Students programs, Before & After school programs, etc.

Technology:

Student/Instructional Computer: Ratio of Number of Students: Computers
 Computers & Devices/Technician: Total Computers & Devices across RCE/CSAP/Technical Support FTEs

Property Service:

Total School Sq. Ft.: Total square footage of all schools operated by RCEs/CSAP (schools, P3,) excluding RCE office, bus garages, maintenance buildings
 Sq. Ft. /Student: Total square footage from above divided by Sept. 30th unaudited student count
 Private Operator Sq. Ft.: Total square footage of all P3 schools excluding net/net lease P3s
 Operating Costs: Custodial, maintenance and utility costs for the previous fiscal year actuals. Includes repairs and maintenance expenses funded in the annual profile sheet, does not include any major capital expenditures (TCA) funded by the RCE/CSAP or by the department (TCA Major or repair funding over \$150K)
 Operating Costs/Sq. Ft.: Total op cost/Sq. Ft. of all schools maintained by RCE/CSAP including net/net P3s

Transportation:

Total Buses on Regular Routes: Total units operated on a daily basis by RCE
 Total Spare Buses Operated: Total number of spare buses
 Total Students Transported: All students transported – includes courtesy bused and privately conveyed
 Total Student Transportation Cost: Actual from previous year
 Total Cost/Student Transported: Total transportation audited actuals/total students transported
 Total number of bus runs daily: Total of all regularly scheduled bus runs/day
 Average number of students/bus run: Average of all students/number of daily bus runs
 Cost/Unit – Contracted buses: Total transportation contract cost/all buses
 Cost/Unit - RCE: Total transportation cost/all buses
 Total number of KM students were transported: Total KM of all regular bus run driven while transporting students on regular runs in a school year
 Total number of KM buses traveled: Total KM of all regular bus runs, extra and co-curricular trips and transport of buses to and from the various stops during the school year



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