



Board Meeting Highlights

November 22, 2024

Board approves the 2023-2024 Annual Education Results Report

Northland School Division
2023-2024 Annual Education Results Report



The Board of Trustees has approved, in principle, the 2023-2024 Annual Education Results Report. This report highlights significant progress in key areas of student achievement and satisfaction. Superintendent of Schools/CEO Cal Johnson and Deputy Superintendent Scott Meunier presented the following key highlights:

- **Increased High School Completion Rates:** Page 16 of the report reveals that the percentage of Northland students completing high school within three years of entering Grade 10 has doubled compared to the previous three-year average. This significant improvement is attributed to several key initiatives, including:
 - CTS Weeks: Students engage in short, focused learning sprints in a variety of career and technology courses tailored to their interests, earning high school credits while exploring meaningful career paths.
 - Expanded Online School High School Offerings: Courses like Physics 20/30, Forensics 25/35, Technology CTS, and CALM offer additional pathways to graduation for students across the Division.
 - Locally Developed Courses (LDCs): The number of LDC offerings has grown from fewer than 20 to 88, providing more opportunities for students to pursue customized learning.
 - Dual Credit Partnerships: Northland's partnerships with MacEwan University, Olds College, and Northern Lakes College give students the chance to earn college credits while completing their high school education.
- **Rising Satisfaction from Parents and Guardians:** On page 34, the report also shows a two percent (2%) increase in overall satisfaction from parents and guardians regarding access to support and services, surpassing the previous three-year average. This marks a continued improvement in services for Northland students and their families.

To view the entire Annual Education Results Report, click on the website link <https://www.nsd61.ca/download/475508>.

Tri-Annual Report #1 for 2024-2025 presented to the Board



Superintendent of Schools/CEO Cal Johnson presented the first Tri-Annual Report for the 2024-2025 school year, providing an update on the progress made across Northland School Division's four priorities.



Connections Supporting Reconciliation

- Truth and Reconciliation Week: Northland schools and staff participated in activities such as round dances, community walks, and cultural events to honor residential school survivors. These efforts are part of the division's ongoing commitment to reconciliation.
- CTS Days: High school students from across the division engaged in hands-on learning, earning credits while exploring career paths. Schools such as Grouard Northland, Mistassiniy, and Paddle Prairie School offered diverse opportunities including carpentry, coding, mechanics, and cultural camps.

Holistic Learning

- Literacy Strategies at St. Theresa School: Principal Shelley Stevenson and Vice-Principal Dawn Power shared successful literacy strategies, including collaborative planning and targeted interventions, which have positively impacted student success.
- Hands-on Learning Activities: From Kindergarten sight-word bingo at J.F. Dion School to diorama-making at Mistassiniy School, Northland students are integrating literacy, numeracy, and creativity into their learning experiences.
- Northland Games: Students from across the province gathered at Anzac and Bill Woodward Schools for traditional games and track and field events, showcasing physical and cultural learning.

Excellent People Supporting Students

- School Leadership Development: Principals and leaders participated in workshops to bring the 2024-2027 Education Plan to life, with a focus on strengthening community connections and integrating holistic learning practices into daily routines.

Responsible Resourcing

- New Mistassiniy School: The grand opening of this state-of-the-art facility included specialized spaces for culinary arts, mechanics, and carpentry, and showcases a design reflecting the region's cultural heritage.
- Dual Credit Opportunities: Northland students will have the opportunity to enroll in dual credit programs starting in Semester Two, offering hands-on experience in fields such as education, thanks to funding from Alberta Education.

To view the entire Tri-Annual Report click on the website link <https://www.nsd61.ca/download/476943>.

Board approves the 2024-2025 Fall Budget Update

The Board approved the 2024-2025 Fall Budget Update as presented, with no transfer of accumulated operating surplus to reserves. The update, presented by Secretary-Treasurer Douglas Aird, forecasts a deficit, with the division planning to use its reserves to cover the shortfall. A significant portion of the operating budget is directed to schools, focusing on key priorities such as recruiting additional Education Assistants to support students.

Northland School Division continues to allocate \$2.1 million annually to operate School Food Services, reflecting its commitment to providing meals to students. The total budget includes \$265,000 from the province's nutrition grant and \$65,000 from the Breakfast Club of Canada, which supports breakfast services at 10 schools.

The Board has recently highlighted funding for School Food Services during two key events. Vice-Chair Robin Guild discussed the program with the Lieutenant Governor, emphasizing the importance of sustaining this program. Additionally, at the MLA Breakfast hosted by the Alberta School Boards Association, the Board was advised to write a letter to the federal government to seek financial support for the program.

Board Chair Highlights - Board and Administration met with Minister of Mental Health and Addiction



In the latest edition of the Board Chair Highlights, Tanya Fayant shared details about a recent meeting with Dan Williams, Minister of Mental Health and Addiction and MLA for Peace River. The meeting focused on priorities affecting student well-being and educational access. As a result of these discussions, Minister Williams committed to advocating for a replacement school in Paddle Prairie to address critical infrastructure challenges.

To enhance mental health support for students, Northland School Division has scheduled meetings with CASA, an organization specializing in children's mental health. These discussions aim to explore the implementation of CASA classrooms within the division. These specialized classrooms would provide therapeutic and educational support tailored to students facing significant mental health challenges.

Superintendent's Highlights - Two new councils and division-wide professional learning event



In the latest Superintendent's Highlights, Cal Johnson shared some exciting new initiatives: the Superintendent's Elder and Knowledge Keeper Advisory Council and the Superintendent's Youth Council. Both councils are designed to strengthen connections between the division, its students, and the communities it serves. The Elder

and Knowledge Keeper Advisory Council will help weave more First Nations and Métis culture, language, and perspectives into the student learning experience. The Youth Council will provide students with a platform to share ideas and contribute to decisions impacting their education. The first meeting for both councils is December.

The highlights also included details about Division Professional Learning Days, which took place on October 24th and 25th. On the first day, staff dove into Collaborative Response, guided by Kurtis Hewson and the team at Jigsaw Learning. Through a mix of introductions, group discussions, and collaborative planning, staff worked in school groups to strengthen their strategies for supporting every student.

Day two, themed “A Day of Engagement,” offered a dynamic lineup of short CTS/Locally Developed courses. Staff and community members led hands-on sessions covering fine arts, technology, cultural and traditional arts, literacy, wellness, industrial arts, and pathways to graduation. This diverse programming offered something valuable for everyone.

Visit <https://www.nsd61.ca/governance/board-meetings> to view upcoming Regular Board Meeting dates and Board-related documents.

Note: These writings do not constitute the official record of the Northland School Division. They are, however, provided as general information relating to the action taken at board meetings. For further information, please call 780-624-2060 or 1-800- 362-1360.