



# Director's Annual Report 2022

Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow



## Our Mission

*To provide a quality education for every student in a safe, accepting, and caring environment.*

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# Messages

## Chair's Message



Jane Thomson, Chair

It is with great pride that I share greetings and words of acknowledgement on behalf of the Board of Trustees. In the wake of two unprecedented years in public education, 2022 saw a gradual return to pre-pandemic learning and working routines. We are thankful to our exceptional staff at all levels of the system for the professionalism and expertise they have continued to bring to their roles for the benefit of all students. It is also important to recognize the careful and relentless level of attention paid by many individuals to maintaining health and safety in our schools and facilities. In addition to staff efforts, the support of parents/guardians and other education and community partners has been instrumental to student success during these times. This report is a clear demonstration of how our students and staff were afforded many opportunities over the past year to shine once again in their physical learning spaces. There is much to celebrate.

## Director's Message

I am proud to share my report recapping some of the key highlights of the past year in Bluewater District School Board. As it would be an impossible task to capture every success story and initiative, I want to acknowledge ALL the hard work that has occurred through the efforts of our stakeholder groups. Our students, staff, trustees, parents/guardians, partners, volunteers, and others in our communities continue to contribute in vital and significant ways to the health, safety, and success of our learning environments. This report is a celebration of their passion and achievements, which I hope will provide you with a broad overview of our momentum in each priority area of the [Multi-Year Strategic Plan](#). This year, our focus has spanned mental health, Indigenous learning and awareness, increased support for literacy and numeracy, the skilled trades, diversity and equity, and investments in school renewal and child care. Please join me as we take a few moments to revisit the progress in these different areas made in 2022.



Lori Wilder, Director of Education

## Student Trustees' Message



Rose Kewageshig, Student Trustee

The newly sworn in 2022-23 Student Senate is capitalizing on the positive momentum established by last year's proactive group of student senators. Our goals are focused on new ways to engage the student voice and resources to support students in the areas of mental health, substance abuse, the environment, post-secondary pathway education, violence, and bullying. We look forward to collaborative opportunities with board staff and community partners, whom we are inviting as guests to our monthly meetings. By utilizing social media through our Instagram page, [@bwdsb.student.senate](#), we are also excited at the possibilities for extending our reach and connection to Bluewater students.



Eve Snobelen, Student Trustee

# Quick Facts

## Schools



40 elementary  
9 secondary

## Students



18,000 approximate  
full time equivalent

## Staff



3,000 approximate  
permanent and casual

## Coverage Area



8,673 square kilometres within  
Bruce and Grey counties

Bluewater District School Board is located on the traditional land of the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, which is represented by the communities of Saugeen First Nation and Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation

## Specialist High Skills Major



33 programs offered

## English Language Learners



880 students

## Indigenous Education



822 students participated in and completed 96 unique Indigenous classroom and co-op courses

2 schools offered Ojibway as a second language

## French Immersion



10 elementary schools  
(2 are French only)

6 secondary schools

# Priority 1

# Safe Supportive Learning Community

## Strategic Goals:

- work together to support wellness
- foster the strengths, contributions, and overall health of students and staff

## Summer Transition Support for Students with Special Education Needs

Summer transition support funding for students with special education needs enabled staff to provide opportunities with the return to school for the 2022-23 school year. Students were able to re-establish routines and familiarity with the school environment, close gaps in learning and skills development, and/or facilitate a smooth transition back to the classroom during the two weeks prior to school beginning. School teams used the funds to support individual or group tours and visits, small group lessons, the completion of assessments, 'welcome' phone calls, the development of resources and supporting documents, transition meetings with students and parents/caregivers, and staff training.

## Employee and Family Assistance Program

The Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) is available to support the personal well-being of all permanent staff. Posters about the program and electronic resources were distributed to all Bluewater District School Board worksites at various times throughout the year. The EFAP enables immediate and confidential assistance to staff by providing coaching and professional counselling services in the areas of finance, legal, family, career, health, nutrition, and naturopathic.

## Mental Health Service Delivery Model

Through continued investments by the Ministry of Education in mental health services in schools, Bluewater District School Board expanded the mental health team for the 2022-23 school year. The team now includes a clinical manager, a mental health lead, seven mental health workers, four child and youth workers, and three student support attendance counsellors.





## Student Wellness

Bluewater District School Board continued to utilize a three-tiered, differentiated support model to reach all students:

### Tier 1 Services– Promotion and Prevention

This is the foundational daily work school-based staff do to welcome and include students, to understand them, and to build knowledge of mental health. Between January and June 2022, visits by the board's mental health team to 12 schools enabled tier-one intervention to 22 individual classes (458 students) in junior kindergarten to Grade 5, totaling 131 unique classroom visits. To ensure all school staff can recognize and provide support when a student is struggling, the 'Bluewater District School Board Guide to Mental Health Services' was developed. Mental health resources and information also continued to be a highlight on the [board website](#). System distribution of daily activities supported Mental Health Week, and staff proactively promoted resources from School Mental Health Ontario, Kids Help Phone, Wellness and Emotional Support (WES) for Youth Online, and Canadian Mental Health Association. Training and support for school teams included behaviour management systems, autism spectrum disorder, and applied behaviour analysis to promote safety and inclusivity. Regular meetings with Grey Bruce Health Unit staff supported planning and the safe implementation of initiatives for a sense of normalcy during the pandemic.

### Tier 2 Services – Targeted Prevention

Schools equip students with the knowledge and skills to care for their own mental health, and provide high-quality services and interventions for those experiencing mild to moderate mental health issues.

The mental health team continued to facilitate school-based consultations with stakeholders, and shared support model case conferences for youth and their parents/guardians. Mental health consultations for students in junior kindergarten to Grade 6 included system navigation, planning, education, and working with those supporting the student. An additional mental health worker was hired to increase the availability of therapeutic supports with an increased focus on earlier intervention for elementary students. Grade 7 and 8 classrooms were supported with presentations on stress and anxiety, discussions on pandemic-related experiences of grief and loss, and a mental health booklet of activities to promote wellness. To ensure differentiated and identity-affirming mental health supports for all students, access to service was improved and barriers to support were decreased. A [self-referral link](#) for students is still available on the board website. Staff continue to value ongoing training in leading evidence-based therapeutic modalities, such as Brief Interventions for School Clinicians, Brief Digital Interventions, cognitive behavioural therapy, social-emotional learning, grief interventions, and motivational interviewing.

### Tier 3 Services – Intensive Intervention and Assessment

School-based services are the first available supports for students with a mental health concern to seek help. Strong partnerships ensure students access appropriate community and health services for ongoing care while at school. Staff have continued to strengthen ongoing mental health community partnerships with Keystone Child, Youth and Family Services, Mental Health and Addiction Nurses, CHOICES (Canadian Mental Health Association), Family Health Teams, Southwest Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre, and Ontario Telehealth Network psychiatric consultation services, among others.



# Priority 2

# Quality Instruction

## Strategic Goals:

- provide relevant learning experiences that foster critical and forward thinking, innovation, creativity, and problem solving
- use evidence informed instructional methods to support competency in literacy and numeracy

## Investment in 1:1 Laptops for Secondary Students

To further support online learning, a greater need for technology among families, and new secondary online credit requirements, Bluewater District School Board announced a [1:1 laptop allocation investment](#) for all Grade 9 to 12 students. In February 2022, Grade 9 to 11 students began receiving individual laptops, while incoming Grade 9 students were equipped with laptops at the start of secondary school in September.

## DELFL Assessment

A total of 87 Grade 12 students enrolled in French as a Second Language courses registered to participate in a series of written, reading, listening, and oral assessments as part of Diplôme d'Étude de Langue Française (DELFL) testing.

## Right to Read/Science of Reading

With the release of the Ontario Human Rights Commission's [Right to Read report](#) in February, Bluewater District School Board has continued to prioritize the science of reading. The recent hiring of primary literacy coaches has enabled a focus on supporting early years teachers in developing a reading program in their classrooms based on scientific, evidence-based reading assessment and instruction.

## Improving Achievement in Mathematics

An area of focus of the past year was the successful implementation of the new Grade 9 de-streamed mathematics course. All kindergarten to Grade 9 classrooms now have access to MathUP Classroom, a professional learning resource for teachers that provides students with a variety of ways to learn and practice mathematical concepts and skills, including games and number talks. Student-centered coaching and a job-embedded professional learning model are key components of the board's 2022-23 mathematics plan. The goal is to ensure inclusive learning environments for students to develop increased number sense and become flexible and adaptive problem solvers.





## Expanding Dual Credits and Skilled Trades Opportunities

The Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) in collaboration with experiential learning and student success staff continued to develop hands-on, career specific learning opportunities to students through the School College Work Initiative. In addition to a longstanding partnership with Georgian College, Bluewater District School Board joined forces with Fanshawe College for the first time to offer additional dual credits, allowing students to earn both a secondary credit towards their diploma and a college credit.

In semester two, OYAP introduced the new Level One Millwright program. Along with the recently established Level One Carpentry program, these students represent over 40 new apprentices in Grey and Bruce counties in the construction and industrial sectors. Carpentry, millwright, and cook program graduates were celebrated at [ceremonies](#) in June.

Owen Sound District Secondary School students participated in the 2022 Skills Ontario Competition on April 22 through [construction and carpentry challenges](#) held at the school. One of the student groups was awarded a gold medal standing, while another was awarded silver.

Four new Specialist High Skills Major programs were introduced this year, including Sports and Software Technology at Owen Sound District Secondary School, and Construction, as well as Health and Wellness, at Peninsula Shores District School.

## Summer Learning

A variety of elementary and secondary [summer programs](#) were offered. These included face-to-face opportunities for Grade 7 to 10 students, and a chance to gain eLearning credits through the Ontario eLearning Consortium for those in Grade 11 and 12.

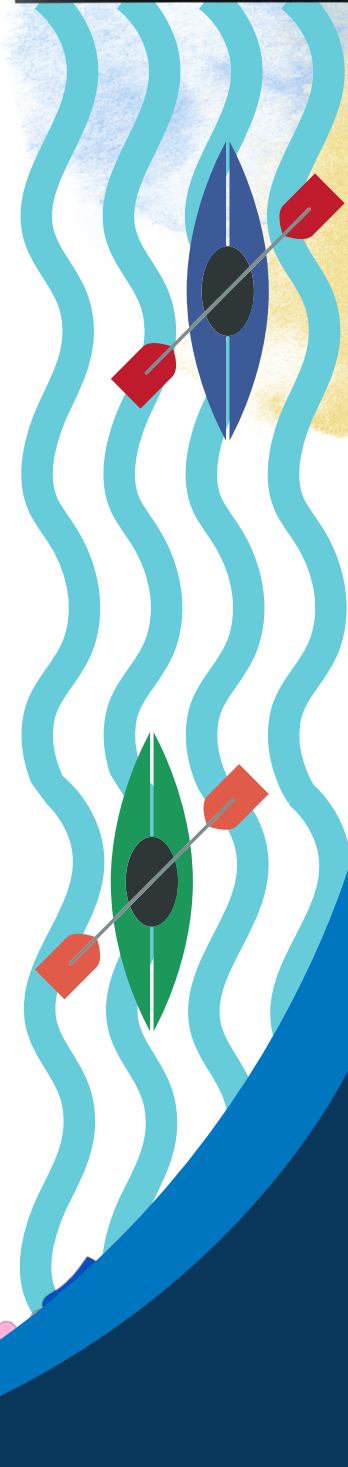
Grade 8 students planning to start secondary school in September were able to complete a reach-ahead credit in Grade 9 English or mathematics.

Secondary students earned a total of 441 credits (307 new credits, 33 credits recovered, 16 reach-ahead credits, 85 co-operative education credits).

Three-week summer learning programs, with a focus on building literacy and numeracy skills in primary and junior grades, were offered in four schools.

The new [Landing Success](#) program was offered at Saugeen First Nation to 15 Grade 8 students who self-identify as Indigenous. A reach-ahead secondary outdoor education course, students engaged in hands-on, land-based learning through local field trips and interactive activities.

Over 100 teachers had an opportunity to attend seven voluntary summer professional learning sessions hosted by other Bluewater District School Board teachers. Learning focused on effective instructional strategies to support early literacy, reading, mathematics, and assessing French primary literacy.



# Priority 3

# Community Engagement

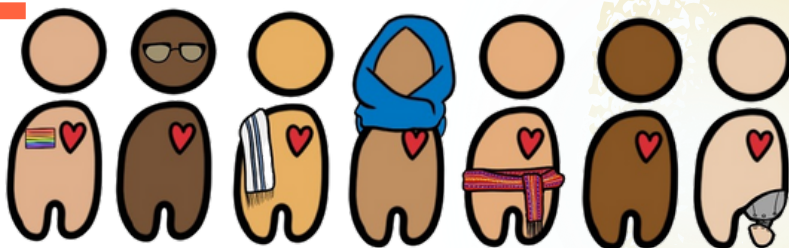
## Strategic Goals:

- use effective communication skills (e.g., listening, speaking, observing, and empathizing) to engage families and community to support students and enhance learning
- actively seek input from students, staff, families, and community on matters of achievement and well-being

## Student Demographic Census

Junior kindergarten to Grade 12 students were invited to participate in Bluewater District School Board's voluntary student census from April 19 to May 6, 2022. The Student Demographic Census 2022 – "Your Voice Matters!" included a questionnaire designed to inform the board's ongoing important work in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusive education. The findings are assisting staff to better understand student populations and school communities, identify and eliminate barriers to student success, inclusion, and well-being, and establish effective programs and reallocate resources to where they are needed most. To promote board-wide engagement in the census, a logo and slogan contest open to all Grade 4 to 12 students was held during the fall with almost 70 submissions received. In the end, the logo design by Peninsula Shores District School student Molly Solomon was selected, along with the slogan by Emerson Lantz of Egremont Community School.

*Your Voice Matters!*



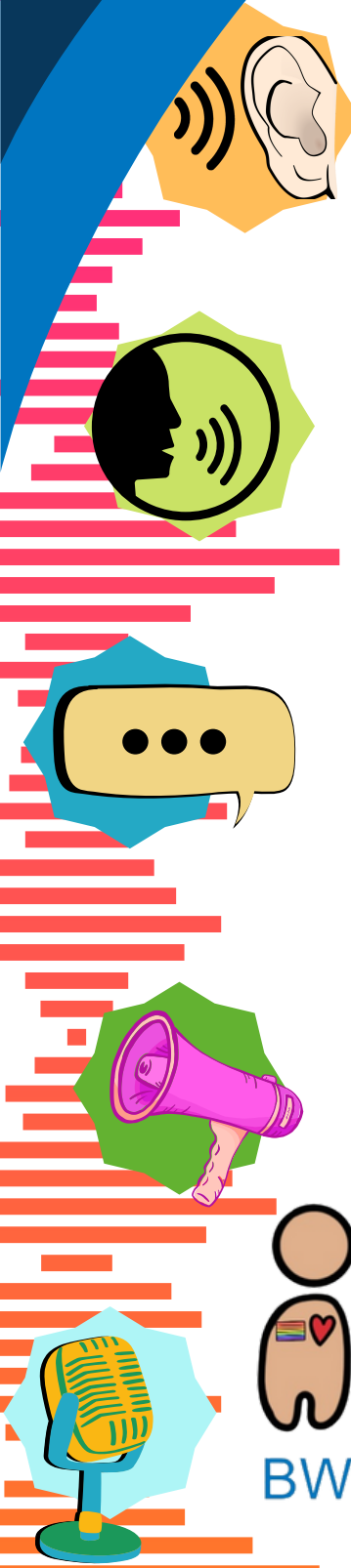
BWDSB Student Census 2022

## Parent Involvement Committee

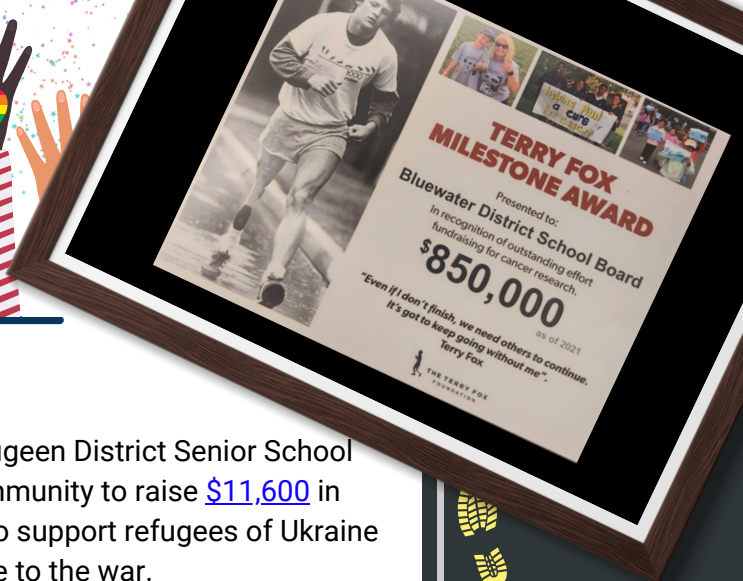
Bluewater District School Board's Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) continued to contribute to the cost of a ThoughtExchange license for soliciting feedback from stakeholders. The committee also supported the purchase of mental health and well-being resources for students.

## Parent Portal

Based on community feedback in 2021-22, a parent portal will be developed to provide parents/guardians with quick and convenient access to the information they need to support their children's education. Further information will be shared, including an estimated launch date, as the solution is developed further.







## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusive Education Advisory Committee

The newly established Diversity, Equity, and Inclusive Education Advisory Committee included student, staff, parent, and trustee representation. Efforts will continue to promote important topics such as Gender Sexuality Alliance clubs, Indigenous education, and diversity, equity, and inclusive education through the board's public facing websites and in other areas.



## Engaging Communities

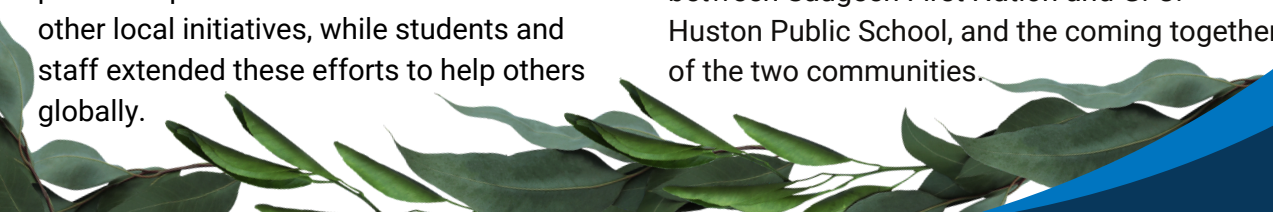
Bluewater District School Board was recognized with a [milestone plaque](#) from the Terry Fox Foundation for fundraising efforts surpassing \$850,000 since the foundation's inception. This accomplishment is directly attributed to the amazing work of our schools in partnership with their communities during the year, to collectively raise approximately \$60,000 through Terry Fox School Run events in support of cancer research.

Schools also leveraged community partnerships to coordinate food drives and other local initiatives, while students and staff extended these efforts to help others globally.

For example, Saugeen District Senior School engaged the community to raise [\\$11,600](#) in only three days to support refugees of Ukraine forced to flee due to the war.

At Alexandra Community School, students and staff worked with the City of Owen Sound and engaged other community partners to unveil the school's new [Thoughtful Space](#) to symbolize walking the 'Good Path' in life. Student drummers helped to formalize the ceremony by performing with a [drum](#) that had been created by G. C. Huston Public School students and gifted to Alexandra Community School in the spirit of peace and friendship. Seven trees were planted along the boulevard behind the school with each containing a stone and plaque at its base representing one of the Seven Grandfather Teachings. The area also included a newly installed bench and coloured handprints from every student in the school painted on the tarmac, along with the slogan, "Every Child Matters".

The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on September 30 was marked by a symbolic walk across the new [Truth and Reconciliation crosswalk](#) in front of G. C. Huston Public School. Saugeen First Nation dignitaries, elders, and residential school survivors attended the ceremony, along with Town of Saugeen Shores and Bluewater District School Board officials, media, students, and staff. The crosswalk is a joint effort by Saugeen Shores Town Council and Bluewater District School Board to recognize the close relationship between Saugeen First Nation and G. C. Huston Public School, and the coming together of the two communities.



# Priority 4

# Stewardship of Resources

## Strategic Goals:

- align human and financial resources to maximize operational efficiencies and manage risk
- cultivate leadership to facilitate succession planning
- ensure transparency
- encourage partnerships
- support and promote, where possible, the implementation of environmental procedures, practices, and programs that are consistent with a healthy, safe, and sustainable environment

## Child Care Investments

In January 2022, an [investment of \\$600,000](#) through the provincial government's Early Years Capital Program was announced to create 39 child care spaces at St. Edmunds Public School in Tobermory. With completion on track for early 2023, the project will include one toddler room and one preschool room to support families on the Bruce Peninsula.

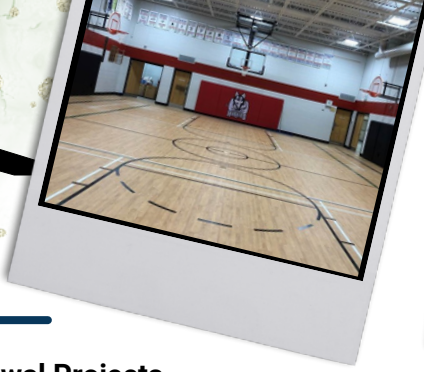
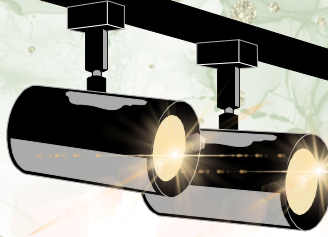
In April 2022, an investment of \$3.2M through the province's Early Years Capital Program and School Condition Improvement funding was committed to construct a two-room child care centre and a two-room EarlyON Child and Family Centre at Egremont Community School in Holstein. Occupancy is planned for the summer of 2023.

Meanwhile on May 30, child care partners and young children were excited to gain access to a new stand-alone child care building on the site of Spruce Ridge Community School in Durham. The recently completed 4,000 square foot facility, which was funded through the Ministry of Education's Early Years Capital Program in 2018, includes 15 toddler spaces and 24 preschool spaces.

## New Builds

Based on updated enrolment projections and trends, along with new development data in the Markdale area, board staff requested that the Ministry of Education consider increasing the project scope of the replacement build for Beavercrest Community School. The request includes modifying the original plans for a 236-pupil school to a revised capacity of 328 pupil spaces, which would better accommodate current and future students.





### Ventilation in Schools

To support health and safety, efforts continued to focus on ventilation in schools through funding to enhance inspections, maintenance, and operations of existing systems and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) units. As of August 2022, 393 portable high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filtration units had been deployed in all ministry mandated spaces, and developmental learning classrooms where students could not consistently wear masks. The units supplement the excellent mechanical air ventilation and filtration systems in our schools.

### Community Planning and Partnerships

Bluewater District School Board hosted the annual Community Planning and Partnerships meeting in a virtual format on April 12, 2022 with 40 attendees, including representation from local upper and lower tier municipalities, community organizations, and the public. Board staff provided a [presentation](#) outlining opportunities for partnership, the current status of unused school space, upcoming projects, business case submissions, and long term capital planning. Organizations were also able to share their own information and planning details that may lead to further dialogue for the exploration of potential partnerships.



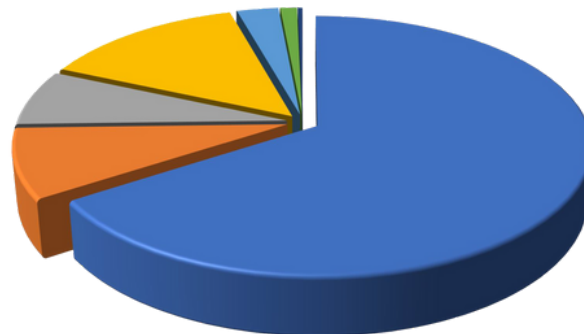
### School Renewal Projects

An investment of more than [\\$11 million](#) through the Ministry of Education’s Capital Priorities, School Renewal, and School Condition Improvement funding initiatives resulted in [enhancements](#) at several Bluewater District School Board schools over the summer. The work included parking lot upgrades, asphalt playground resurfacing, and the installation of light-emitting diode (LED) lighting, among other improvements.

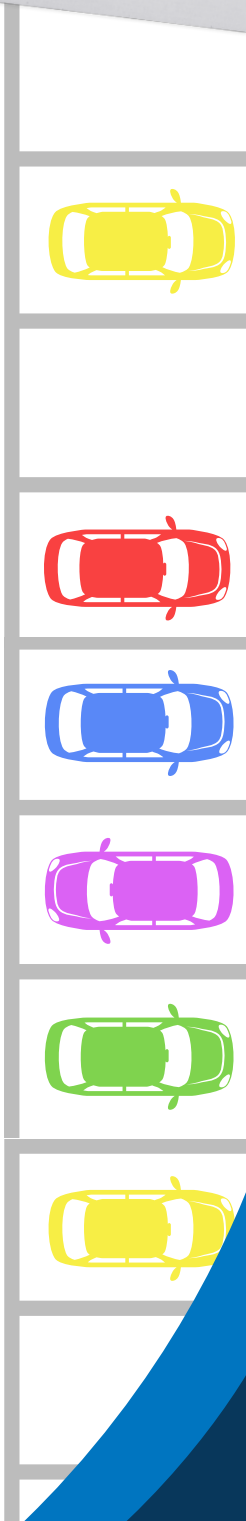
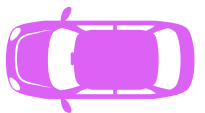
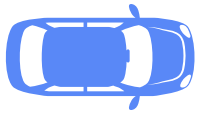
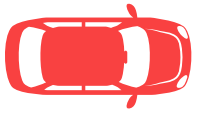
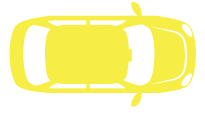
### Budget

At the final Regular Meeting of the Board on June 21, trustees approved the [2022-23 budget](#) in the amount of \$241,114,663 in revenues, \$236,965,727 in expenses, and \$4,148,936 in reserve contributions. A [budget public consultation survey](#) was conducted in February to help determine priorities, which included enhancements to student programs and services, technology, organizational culture, increased classroom resources and supports, and class sizes.

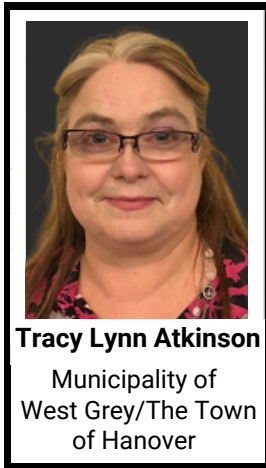
### Distribution of Expenses



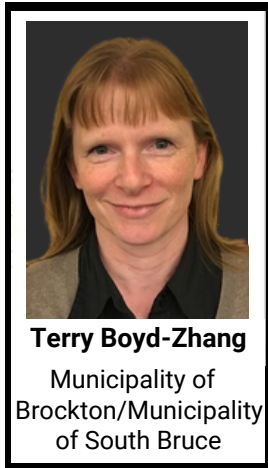
- 67% - Classroom
- 8% - School Office, Administrators, and System Teachers
- 7% - Transportation
- 14% - Plant/Operations
- 3% - Administration
- 1% - Interest on Debt
- 0% - Other



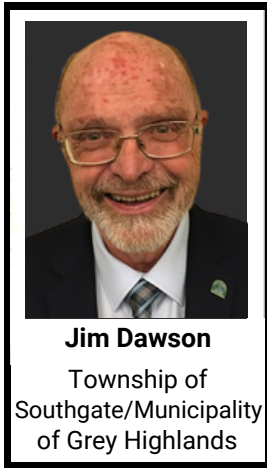
# Board of Trustees



**Tracy Lynn Atkinson**  
Municipality of West Grey/The Town of Hanover



**Terry Boyd-Zhang**  
Municipality of Brockton/Municipality of South Bruce



**Jim Dawson**  
Township of Southgate/Municipality of Grey Highlands



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**Chair**  
**Jane Thomson**  
Town of South Bruce Peninsula/Municipality of Northern Bruce

## Administrative Council



**Top Row** (left to right): Melissa McEwen, Superintendent of Education; Andrea Tang, Superintendent of Education; Rob Cummings, Superintendent of Business Services and Treasurer  
**Bottom Row** (left to right): Lori Wilder, Director of Education; Lauren Penner Lipsett, Superintendent of Education; Keith Lefebvre, Superintendent of Education

## Student Senate



**Top Row** (left to right): Molly Solomon, PSDS; Sophia Hepburn, PSDS; Rose Kewageshig, SDSS; Lauren McKibbon, OSDSS; Chelby Morris, SDSS; Eve Snobelen, KDSS  
**Bottom Row** (left to right): Marshall Wilson, GBCS; Cole Hamill, BPDS; Ethan Enns, JDSS; Jaykob Thompson, GHSS  
**Absent:** Emma Snyder, WDCCS