



District School Board
Ontario North East

Director's Annual Report

2023 - 2024



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We respectfully acknowledge that we are situated on the traditional territories of the Cree, Ojibway, Oji-Cree, Algonquin peoples and the Métis who have settled in this area. We are grateful to live and learn on this land and commit to actions towards truth and reconciliation.



Message from the Board Chair and Director of Education

We are pleased to present the 2023-2024 Director's Annual Report, highlighting the accomplishments and ongoing efforts of District School Board Ontario North East (DSB1). The 2023-2024 school year has been one of significant progress, and we are incredibly proud of the strides made in several key areas, as highlighted by the stories that follow.

A key area of success is the improvement in student attendance, which remains a top priority for us. We know that regular attendance is essential for student success, and we are grateful for the continued partnership with our dedicated staff and families in fostering a learning environment that supports this goal. Together, we are ensuring that students are present, engaged, and thriving.

As we reflect on the past year, we are pleased to report that DSB1 has achieved two of the three annual goals set in relation to the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan. These milestones are a testament to our collective commitment to student success, equity, and well-being. As we enter the final year of this plan's implementation, we look forward to building on this momentum, setting new goals, and ensuring that our work aligns with the needs of our students and communities.

In addition to these achievements, the Board of Trustees is pleased to have approved a balanced budget for the coming year, reinforcing our commitment to fiscal responsibility while maintaining our focus on serving students to help them achieve their full potential.

Thank you for your continued trust and support as we work together to inspire and empower all learners to achieve personal excellence.

Steve Meunier, Chair



Lesleigh Dye, Director



Board of Trustees



Steve Meunier,
Chair



Cindy Pye-Reasbeck,
Vice-Chair



Dennis Draves,
Trustee



Howard Archibald,
Indigenous Trustee



Jonathan Byer,
Trustee



Crystal Hewey,
Trustee



Bob Brush,
Trustee



Brian Peever,
Trustee



Rosemary Pochopsky,
Trustee



Douglas Walsh,
Trustee



Larry Wiwchar,
Trustee

Student Trustees



Avery Beerman,
*Indigenous
Student Trustee,
Roland Michener
Secondary School*



Hayden Bedard,
*Student Trustee,
Timmins High &
Vocational School*



Alexandra Gauthier,
*Student Trustee,
Iroquois Falls
Secondary School*

Administrative Council



Lesleigh Dye,
*Director of
Education*



Lisa Edwards,
*Superintendent
of Business and
Finance*



Al McLean,
*Superintendent
of Education*



Chad Mowbray,
*Superintendent
of Education*



Steven Pladzyk,
*Superintendent of
Education*

VISION
We empower all learners to achieve personal excellence.

MISSION
Together, we inspire innovation and a passion for learning.

Culture

Student Senate

The 2023-2024 DSB1 Student Trustees Avery Beerman, Hayden Bedard, and Alexandra Gauthier demonstrated tremendous leadership throughout the school year.

Under their leadership, the Student Senate recruited engaged students from each secondary school. During their term, Student Senators focused on supporting food security initiatives in schools and communities as well as establishing clothing closets in each secondary school across the district.

These initiatives, aimed at supporting their peers, have gained much traction in schools.

Student Trustee Bedard shared: "I am truly proud of the strides that the Student Senate was able to make this year. I trust that the succeeding student trustees will have no issues in continuing the momentum of this wonderful year in the Student Senate. I thank my senators, co-trustees, and everyone at District School Board Ontario North East for making my two terms as a Student Trustee exciting, compelling, and informative."

Mental Health Strategy

In DSB1, we recognize the pivotal role of mental health in empowering all learners to achieve personal excellence. Our 2024-

2027 Mental Health & Well-being strategy builds on the success and progress achieved with the previous strategy. The strategy reflects DSB1's commitment to ensuring that the needs of learners, families, staff, and our communities are considered as we continue to foster mentally healthy schools.

The Strategy is aligned seamlessly with our 2021-2025 Strategic Plan, embodying our core values of Equity, Culture, and Innovation. The vision of the Mental Health Strategy is clear: to cultivate learning environments that prioritize mental health, offer preventive measures, and ensure accessible pathways to care.

Grounded in a Multi-Tiered System of Support, the Mental Health Strategy provides a continuum of services tailored to meet diverse needs. It encompasses various elements, including student leadership, stigma reduction, and early intervention. It offers a robust framework of resources and programs to support mental wellness across our schools.

As we move forward, we remain committed to providing students with consistent access to high-quality mental health information and services. View a full copy of our strategy on our board website: <http://www.dsb1.ca/MentalHealthStrategy>

Attendance Matters

Over the past two years, DSB1 has focused on the Attendance Matters Campaign. This campaign brings together research-informed strategies that improve student attendance and intentional collaboration between schools and families.

The significant successes in this area can be attributed to the commitment of DSB1 staff and partnership with families in encouraging and supporting students to come to school on a regular basis.

DSB1 is incredibly proud of the improvements over the course of the 2023-2024 school year. While the board is not yet back to pre-pandemic attendance rates, significant improvements have continued to be made. For 2023-2024, the overall attendance rate was **87.5%**, up from **86.96%** in 2022-2023.

The number of students who are coming to school more consistently has also increased. In the past two years, students who miss 10% or more of the school year has decreased by 16%. DSB1 continues to focus on this work to exceed pre-pandemic attendance rates.



The most significant gains have been with Kindergarten students. Over the past two years, students who miss 10% or more of the school year has reduced by **28%**. The significance of regular attendance in Kindergarten for students' future successes cannot be understated. These foundational years set the stage for attendance habits and overall success.

DSB1 would like to sincerely thank all staff, families and students for being partners in this important work.



Innovation

Strong Partnerships with Families

DSB1 is proud to build strong partnerships with families, fostering each student's overall well-being and academic achievements.

Engagement in creating the Student Achievement Plan (SAP) was a significant example of the strength of that partnership.

The SAP template was developed by the Ontario Ministry of Education and includes goals and measures that all school boards across Ontario must use to track student achievement, engagement, and well-being.

To develop a locally informed SAP, DSB1 surveyed families in the fall of 2023 and again in the spring of 2024.



612 families responded to the first survey. Through this engagement, DSB1 was able to determine that families' three priorities for their students are:

1. *Academics*
2. *Mental Health and Well-Being*
3. *Career Readiness and Employment*

307 families responded to the second survey, which measured their perceived level of support in literacy, numeracy, wellness, and career readiness.

DSB1 gathered suggestions for specific actions to support learners in various areas in both surveys. For example, families requested options for tutoring to support learners with mathematics. Based on this feedback, a tutoring program was implemented and continues for the 2024-2025 school year. Families also requested ideas for how they can support learners with language and mathematics at home. DSB1 initiated a social media campaign where we shared ways to assist learners with mathematics at home. Families have also requested more information about job readiness programs like Dual Credits, Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program, Specialist High Skills Major and Co-operative Education. Information about these programs has been shared via social media, and some schools are hosting "SHSM Expo Nights" to showcase these opportunities for students.

DSB1's Learning and Teaching team continues to utilize this data to create the DSB1 SAP, inform programming, resource allocation and upcoming campaigns.

DSB1 is thankful for the ongoing partnership with families in supporting each student towards their future success.

Ventilation Upgrade Project

DSB1 is proud to invest in learning and working spaces across the district. The board initiated a significant ventilation upgrade project at Timiskaming District Secondary School (TDSS) in the spring of 2023, which will be completed by November 2025.

The scope of the project includes:

- *Removing of old ductwork and exhaust fans*
- *Reinforcing the roof structure to allow for the new rooftop units*
- *Installing new ductwork*
- *Adding bulkheads and new suspended ceiling as required*
- *Installing electrical and gas lines as required*
- *Upgrading building automation*

The new equipment will consist of eight energy recovery ventilators, duct heaters for the weight and change rooms, and a make-up air unit servicing the second-floor science lab.

These ventilation upgrades will improve indoor air quality by constantly circulating fresh air and removing pollutants, creating a healthy and comfortable environment for all students and staff at the school.



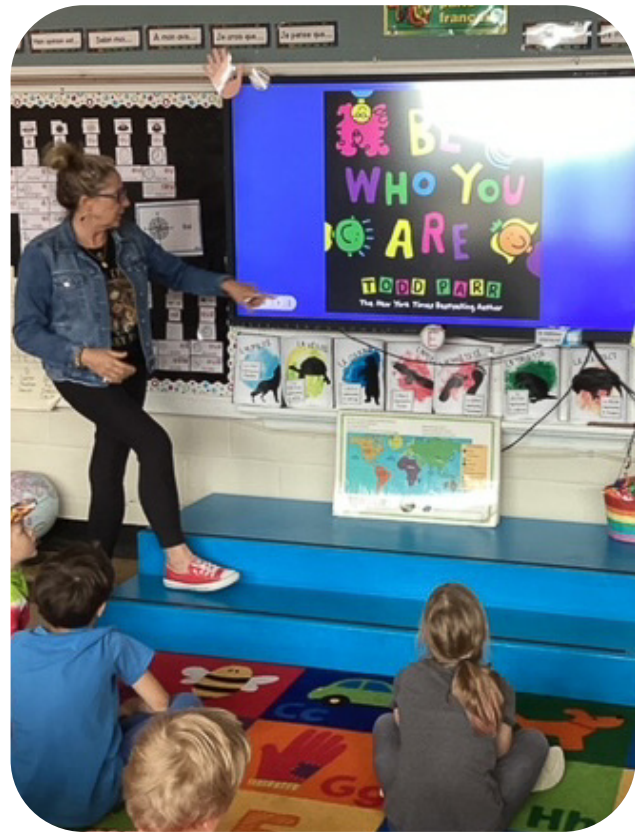
Migration of Mental Health and Well-Being Modules

The Mental Health Department and Information Services collaborated on an innovative project to continue to offer high-quality care to students while responding to some of the challenges related to coordinating care. The two departments embarked on a mission to enrich the services provided by adding a referral and intervention module to the existing Student Information System (SIS). This new module was tailored for school-based mental health professionals.

Months of diligent planning and development led to a seamless integration within the SIS, empowering school-based mental health professionals with a unified tool to manage student referrals and interventions effortlessly.

With intuitive design and robust functionality, the module transformed their workflows. Now, school-based mental health professionals can initiate referrals, track progress, and communicate seamlessly, all within the familiar student information system environment. This module facilitates measurement-based care and empowers professionals to utilize data-driven insights for personalized interventions.

This project represents the transformative potential of innovation and collaboration in advancing educational technology, enhancing the well-being of students and professionals alike.



Equity

Science of Reading

DSB1 is dedicated to fostering reading success for all students. A proactive approach focused on early intervention and supporting students in becoming proficient readers was implemented.

With the implementation of the structured literacy approach, every Kindergarten through Grade 2 student has been provided with personalized, systematic and explicit instruction through early reading programs, decodable books and tiered intervention support.

One crucial aspect of early reading development is phonological awareness, the ability to recognize and manipulate the sounds of language. DSB1 invested in supportive resources, such as The Heggerty (English) and Pratique Phonémique programs (French). These are designed to bolster this fundamental skill, equipping students in Kindergarten through Grade 2 with tools to identify and manipulate individual sounds, syllables, and words.

Concurrently, phonics instruction, facilitated by the UFLI (English) and I Can Read In French (French) programs, play a vital role in helping students decode and understand written language. These structured lessons introduce letter-sound correspondences and decoding strategies to foster a deep understanding of the relationships between letters and sounds. By building these skills, students learn to decode unfamiliar words with confidence.

Early reading intervention teachers, and classroom teachers, are using diagnostic data and progress monitoring to provide targeted reading interventions. This comprehensive approach ensures that every student receives the necessary support to achieve reading success.

In DSB1, our structured literacy programs, tiered intervention support, and the use of decodable books equip all students with essential reading skills. **Through systematic and explicit instruction, we ensure every student has the foundation for reading success.**



Crisis Prevention Institute Training

DSB1 is committed to ensuring a safe, healthy learning and work environment for all students and staff. During the 2023-2024 school year, a new training model was adopted to support Nonviolent Crisis Intervention, provided by the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI).

Four staff members became certified trainers for the organization. These certified instructors were responsible for conducting ongoing training of school support teams using CPI courses and materials.

CPI provides an effective framework for preventing, de-escalating, and safely responding to crisis behaviour. This evidence-based program introduces how to apply knowledge of the brain and behaviour to understand distress behaviour and reasons for distress.

Participants learn to analyze the risks of behaviour, and how to mitigate that risk using verbal de-escalation strategies, and safety interventions, as the last resort. Trained staff also gain tools to help manage their own emotions and responses to crisis behaviour.

They gain the skills and confidence to safely recognize and respond to challenging situations and help prevent future incidents.

Integration of Indigenous Perspectives into Curriculum

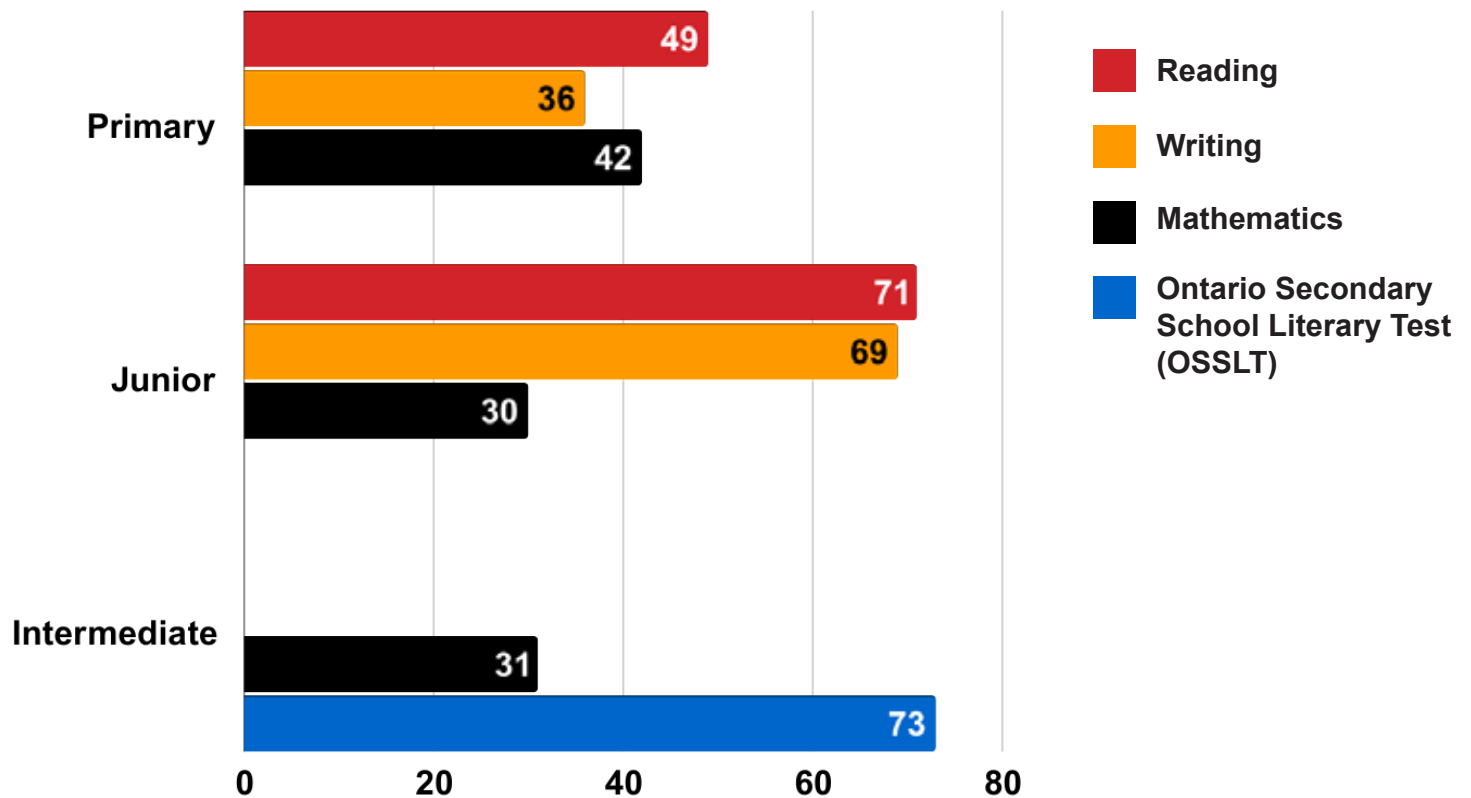
A focus for DSB1 educators has been to integrate Indigenous culture, perspectives, and history into curriculum. By recognizing and honouring Indigenous knowledge and experiences, classrooms in DSB1 have become a vehicle to help heal past injustices and promote a more inclusive and equitable society built on understanding and collaboration.

Indigenous perspectives were integrated into the science classes across DSB1. This allowed students to develop a more inclusive and holistic understanding of the world around them, including the interconnectedness of all living things and the importance of environmental stewardship.

Students across DSB1 worked collaboratively with community partners, Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers to gain valuable access to authentic teachings of Indigenous traditions and practices, connected to the curriculum. These connections allow students to receive accurate transmission of Indigenous knowledge but also to create meaningful opportunities for intergenerational learning and relationship-building within the community.

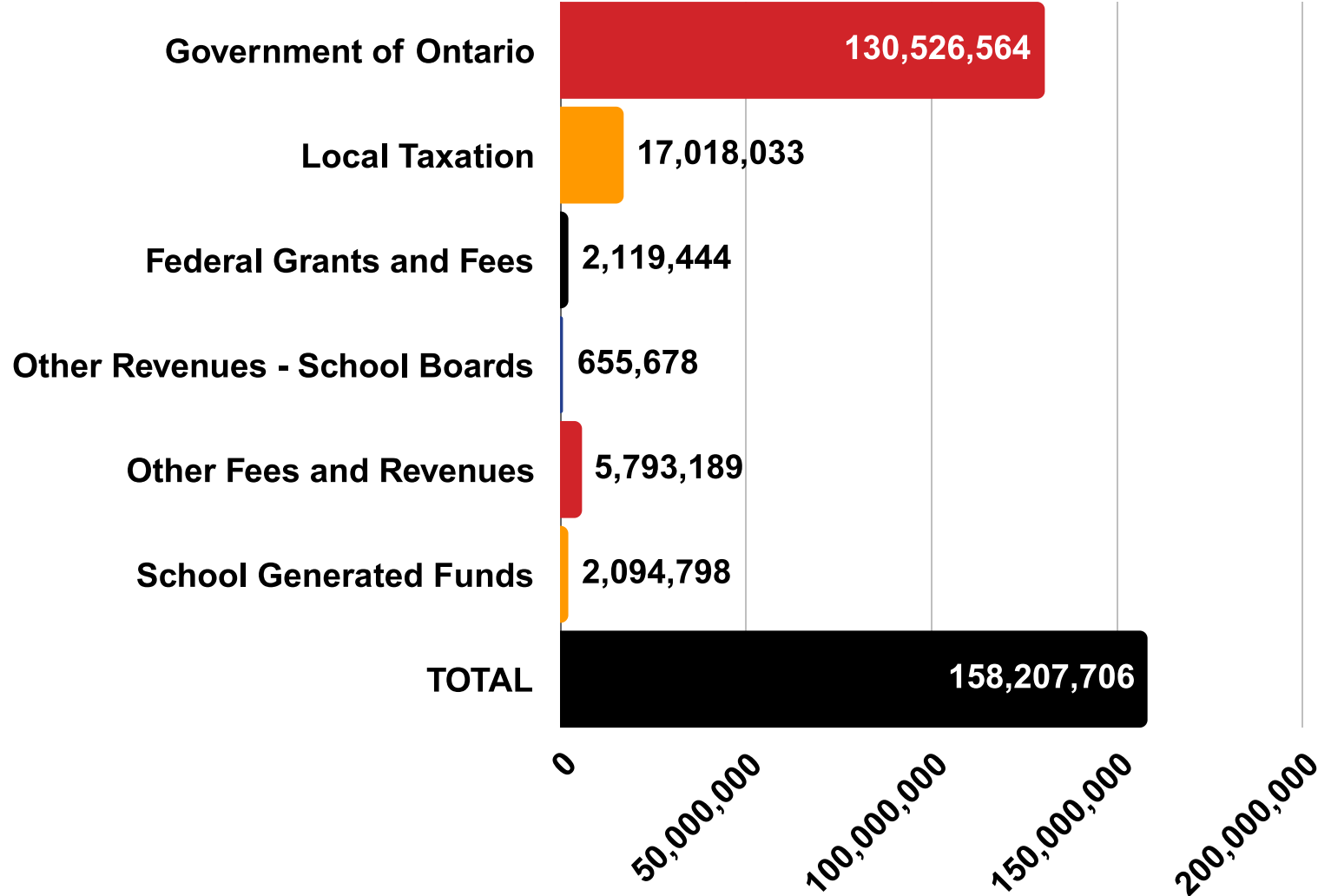
2023-2024 EQAO Results

The results below indicate the percentage of fully participating students who met or exceeded provincial standard (level 3 or 4).

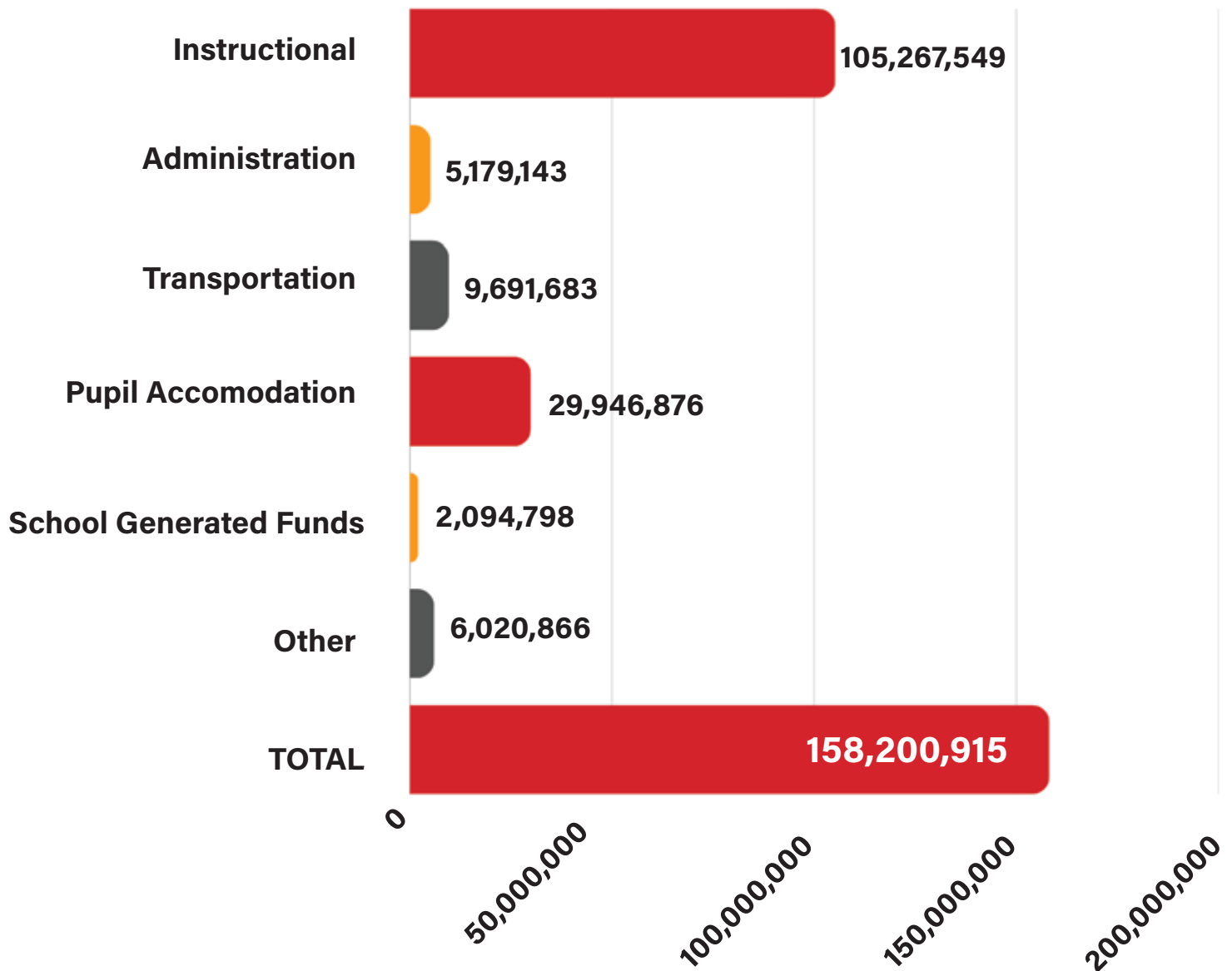


Budget

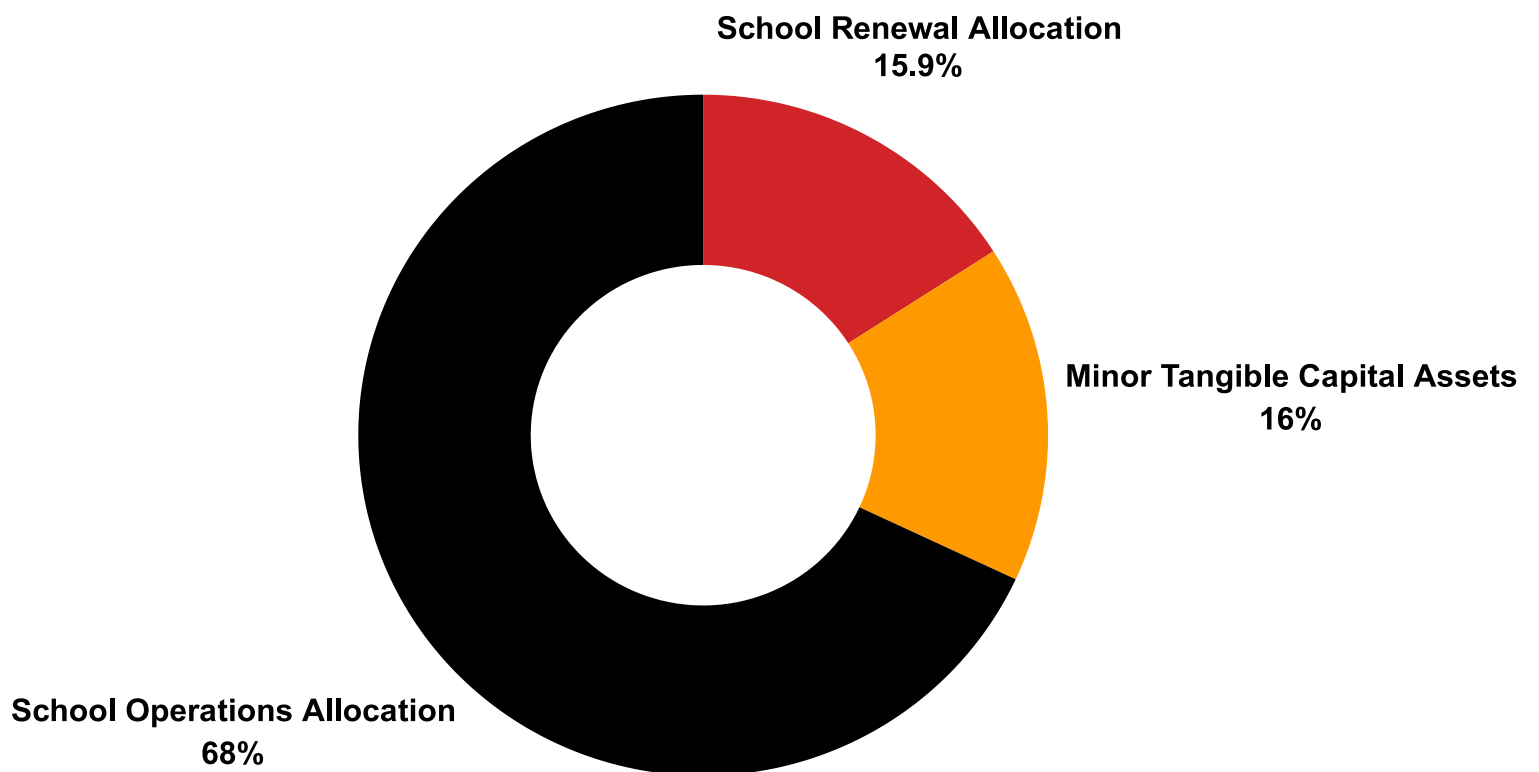
REVENUE



EXPENSES



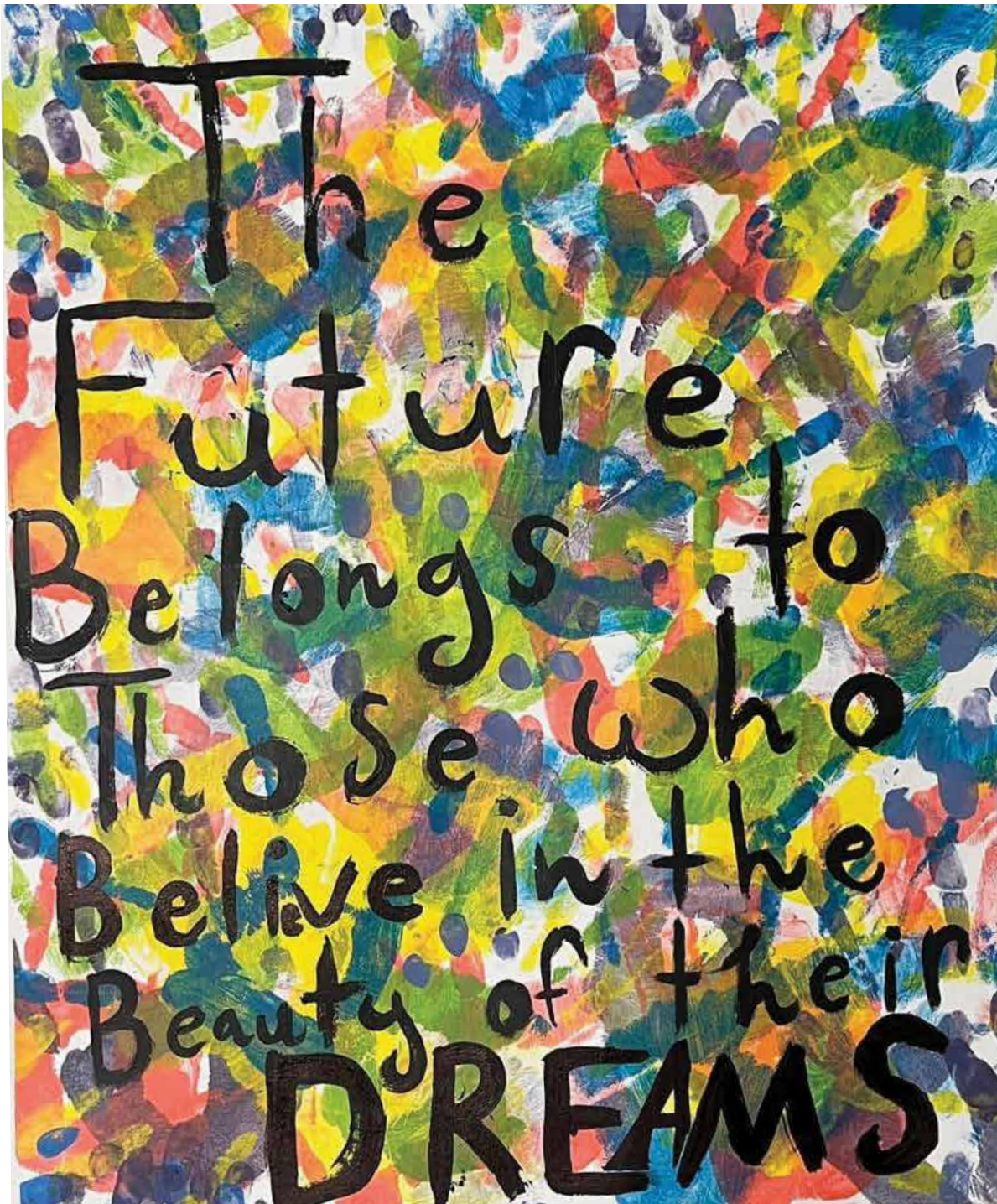
CAPITAL ALLOCATION



Capital Allocation	
School Operations Allocation	13,822,303
School Renewal Allocation	3,234,106
Minor Tangible Capital Assets	3,256,771
TOTAL	20,313,180



District School Board
Ontario North East



Artwork by a DSB1 student
Quote by Eleanor Roosevelt