

Strategic Plan 2008-2011



*Helping Each
Student Achieve*





OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

Chairperson: Milton Peach, B.A., B.A.(Ed)
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September 29, 2008

Honourable Joan Burke
Minister of Education
Department of Education
P. O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL
A1B 4J6

Dear Ms. Burke:

On behalf of the entire elected Board, it is my pleasure to present to you the Eastern School Board's Strategic Plan 2008-2011. The Strategic Plan 2008-2011 was prepared under the direction of the Board and in accordance with responsibilities mandated in the Provincial Government's Transparency and Accountability Act. This strategic plan represents a culmination of the Board's dedication to academic excellence and to providing safe and caring learning environments for all students under its jurisdiction. These two strategic goals, among others outlined in the plan, serve as a focal point for all Board initiatives during the 2008-2011 timeframe.

As a Board we are committed to achieving the goals of our Strategic Plan and look forward to working with you and your Department to help these goals reach fruition.

My signature below is indicative of the Board's accountability for the preparation of this plan and the achievement of the specific goals and objectives listed in the strategic issues section.

Sincerely,

MILTON PEACH
Chair

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1.0 Plan at a Glance

Vision

The Eastern School District empowering all students to achieve and succeed.

Mission

By 2011, the Eastern School District will have enhanced achievement and success for all students within a healthy, active, safe, caring, and socially-just learning environment.

A Theoretical Construct



Strategic Issues, Goals, and Objectives

Strategic Issue 1	Student achievement and success.
Goal 1	By June, 2011, Eastern School District will have supported student achievement and success through high quality learning opportunities.
Objective 1	By June, 2009, Eastern School District will have supported increased professional development opportunities for teaching personnel.
Objective 2	By June, 2010, Eastern School District will have provided opportunities for all support staff to engage in system-supported professional development.
Objective 3	By June, 2011, Eastern School District will have supported the needs of diverse learners through the promotion of high quality instructional and assessment practices in our classrooms.
Strategic Issue 2	Healthy and active, safe and caring, and socially-just learning environments.
Goal 1	By June, 2011, Eastern School District will have developed a wellness action plan for all staff and students.
Objective 1	By June, 2009, Eastern School District will have taken initial steps toward the promotion of wellness of all staff and students.
Objective 2	By June, 2010, Eastern School District will have developed an action plan policy to promote healthy and active living.
Objective 3	By June, 2011, Eastern School District will have implemented its action plan.
Goal 2	By June, 2011, the Eastern School District will have enhanced safety, a culture of caring and socially just learning environments for all throughout the District.
Objective 1	By June, 2009, Eastern School District will have initiated actions to support enhanced safety, a culture of caring and socially just learning environments.
Objective 2	By June, 2010, the Eastern School District will have developed and implemented select policies and initiatives to support enhanced safety, a culture of caring and socially just learning environments.
Objective 3	By June, 2011, the Eastern School District will have completed the actions identified to support enhanced safety, a culture of caring and socially just learning environments.
Strategic Issue 3	Organizational effectiveness and efficiency.
Goal 1	By June, 2011, Eastern School District will have increased effectiveness and efficiency within its jurisdiction.
Objective 1	By June, 2009, Eastern School District will have taken select initial steps toward increased effectiveness and efficiency.
Objective 2	By June, 2010, Eastern School District will have will have taken further steps toward increased effectiveness and efficiency.
Objective 3	By June, 2011, Eastern School District will have will have implemented identified strategies toward increased effectiveness and efficiency.

2.0 Overview

The Eastern School District is one of five school districts in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. It operates in Eastern Newfoundland from Terra Nova National Park to St. John's, including the Bonavista, Burin, and Avalon Peninsulas, providing education services to approximately 41,830 K-12 students. Within this area, there are employees in a total of 127 facilities: 122 (67 urban / 55 rural) schools, three regional offices, one District Office, and one bus depot.

There are four operational divisions within the District – Programs, Human Resources, Finance and Administration, and Rural Education/Corporate Services. The District is governed by a 15 member Board of Trustees that represent 15 zonal divisions of the Board. The CEO/Director of Education is responsible to the Board for taking such actions as are considered necessary to ensure compliance with the Schools Act (1997) and regulations there-under, as well as the Constitution, By-laws, directives and policies of the Board and all other statutory and regulatory requirements.

Eastern School District performs its duties, responsibilities, and role within the framework provided by the following:

- The Schools Act (1997)
- The Financial Administration Act.
- The Public Service Collective Bargaining Act.
- The Transparency and Accountability Act.
- The Public Tendering Act.
- The Occupational Health and Safety Act.
- The Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act.
- The Life Safety Code.
- NLTA, NAPE, and CUPE Collective Agreements.

District Dimensions

Students	41,830
Employees	4300
Teachers and Administrators	3000
Student Assistants	356
Support Staff	800
Replacement Staff (Call-ins)	147

Capital

Number of Schools Administered	122
Facility Capacity (Square Footage)	5.2 Million square feet
Value of Capital Assets	\$ 1.1 Billion

Board-Owned Bussing	
Size of Bus Fleet	55 units
Operational Budget (Bussing)	\$2,943,100
Contracted Bussing	
Number of units	400
Annual Budget	\$16,000,000
Special Transportation	
Contracts	120 routes
Annual Budget	\$2,000,000
District Budget	
Operating Budget	\$ 280,000,000
Capital Budget (yearly average)	more than \$5,000,000

3.0 Mandate

Eastern School Board is responsible for all aspects of K-12 education within its district boundaries. The mandate of the Eastern School Board is derived from Sections 75 and 76 of the *Schools Act, (1997)*. Please refer to Appendix One for the board's complete mandate.

4.0 Lines of Business

The Eastern School Board has three main lines of business. They are:

1. Curriculum, Programs, and International Education

Responsibilities include providing for the full range of curriculum implementation; student assessment and evaluation; student placement, distance learning; supporting the core program with programs designed to improve the teaching and learning process; and teacher professional development. The board also develops and provides support for school development. The Board actively supports and promotes secondary initiatives to attract international students and develop international partnerships.

2. Student Support Services

Responsibilities include the implementation, administration, and monitoring of programs and services to students with special needs. This includes implementation of provincial policy on Individual Student Support Services Plans (ISSP) as well as the Pathways to Graduation Program.

3. Corporate Services and Financial Administration

The Board has responsibility for compliance with provincial financial legislation and regulations; acquisition of materials, equipment, and services; school construction in conjunction with the Department of Education; properties and facilities management; transportation management; support staff payroll; collaborating with the Department of Education on teacher payroll; information technology; and school finance.

5.0 Values (What are they and why are they important?)

Core values are the soul of a District. They are what the District and its schools stand for, what they hold dear, what they believe in. Core values inform both mission and vision and as such are indispensable to strategic planning. Core values are often expressed in a group of several statements that begin with phrases such as “we believe,” “we care about,” “we value”, or “we commit to.” We cannot get people to “buy into” our values. We can only seek people who are predisposed to share them.

The core values of the Eastern School District are the fundamental principles that guide behaviour and decision making. The values of the Eastern School District are student- centered, as it is the students of the Province that the District is serving.

Student Centred: Each person will work to ensure that the success of all students is maintained as our highest priority.

Quality Service:	Each person provides timely responses to stakeholder requests and needs.
Respect:	Each person will ensure a safe, welcoming, inclusive environment that nurtures student achievement and responds to stakeholder needs in a caring, thoughtful, and considerate manner.
Innovation:	Each person will encourage and embrace new ways that challenge traditional methods to ensure that our students and staff are exposed to leading edge/state-of-the-art inspiring/stimulating programs and technology.
Accountability:	Each person will act in a socially, legally, and fiscally responsible manner.
Openness:	Each person will work to ensure a transparent decision-making process and develop effective communications among students, staff, family, and the community.
Integrity:	Each person will be open, honest, and ethical by sharing information with a commitment to being open and transparent with all stakeholders.
Social Justice:	Each person will ensure that the principles of social justice are applied in all decision making, policies, and practices.

6.0 Primary Clients

The Eastern School Board has two groups of primary clients; children/students and families/parents.

7.0 Vision (What is it, and why do we need it?)

The vision is a statement that identifies the horizon towards which the district is moving. A vision is a “noun statement” that reflects a mental image of an anticipated future that the organization wishes to move towards. Vision is an image or description of the school community you aspire to become in the future. It answers the question “If we successfully concluded all of our work, what would the Eastern School District resemble in the eyes of our primary clients?”

Vision: *The Eastern School District empowering all students to achieve and succeed.*

8.0 Mission (What is it and how does it relate to vision?)

The mission statement normally identifies the priority focus area of the board over two planning cycles. It represents the key longer-term result that the board will be working towards as we move forward on the strategic directions of the Minister of Education. The statement also identifies the measures and indicators that will assist both the board and public in monitoring and evaluating success. A Mission Statement was originally developed for the board’s 2006-08 Strategic Plan covering the period 2006 to 2011. Since that time, extensive consultation has taken place. As such, the board felt it appropriate to develop a new mission, in light of the significant stakeholder input received, for the 2008-11 period. Readers will be able to assess progress with respect to the previous Mission in the board’s Annual Reports for 2006-07 and 2007-08. This new Mission reflects the board’s current focus on enhanced student achievement and success, in accordance with the Minister’s strategic direction, and can be articulated as follows:

Mission: *By 2011, the Eastern School District will have enhanced achievement and success for all students within a healthy, active, safe, caring, and socially-just learning environment.*

Measure 1: Enhanced achievement

Indicators: Improved learning opportunities
Enhanced promotion of wellness
Enhanced safety

Measure 2: Enhanced success

Indicators: Increased awareness of social-justice
Increased organizational effectiveness
Increased organizational efficiency

9.0 Strategic Issues

In consideration of the Board's mandate under sections 75 and 76 of the *School's Act (1997)*, the Minister of Education's strategic directions included in Appendix Two, and the financial resources of the Board, the following areas have been identified as strategic issues for the next three years.

Strategic Issue One: Student achievement and success.

The core of any school or District is clearly the student. All efforts of the District are devoted to supporting students. Student academic "achievement" is determined primarily through criteria such as marks, promotion/graduation rates, and scholarships. While no plan can *guarantee* an increase in student marks, this plan lays out the basis for student academic achievement by ensuring all of our staff, teaching and non-teaching, receive professional development. This in turn enables the creation of an optimal learning community which will facilitate student achievement. "Success" is a less measurable, but farther reaching goal. The promotion of high quality instruction and assessment helps ensure that students reach their potential, which defines success for a district. Despite the size of the District, it is committed to the success of each child.

Strategic Issue Two: Healthy and active, safe and caring, and socially-just learning environments.

Strategic issue two moves from the student to the environment, and acts as a synthesis for many of the explicit critical issues identified by stakeholders. Physical well being of staff and students is promoted by "healthy and active", and acknowledges that personal physical well-being is a necessary component to academic success. "Safe and caring" recognizes that students need to be nurtured in a safe environment in order to focus on learning. Finally, "socially-just" acknowledges that there are many social issues underlying, and affected by, decisions made by the Eastern School District. A focus on social justice aligns the District with the provincial Poverty Reduction Strategy, as well as promoting ethical decision making. Healthy schools facilities will be addressed as part of Strategic Issue Three: Organizational effectiveness and efficiency.

Strategic Issue Three: Organizational effectiveness and efficiency.

Strategic Issue Three recognizes that the Eastern School District is a large corporate body, and by optimizing its processes, the District can greatly contribute to learning and teaching. This starts with "who does what" and "who reports to whom". Explicit identification of these elements ensures focused efforts and assists stakeholders in addressing concerns with the appropriate person. Geography and declining enrolment were consistently ranked high amongst stakeholder concerns, yet each is beyond the control of the District. However, the issues to which they refer – strategies for rural education, recruitment and retention, and communication are all within the realm of District control and influence. Finally, we are amongst the largest landlords in the province – controlling in excess of 5 million square feet of building space. Management of this infrastructure and a plan to assess and address building envelope issues while encompassing many operational issues is a key strategic area for the District.

Strategic Issue 1	Student Achievement and Success
Goal 1	By June, 2011, Eastern School District will have supported student achievement and success through high quality learning opportunities.
Performance Measure:	<p>Student achievement and success.</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhanced the identification and promotion of best practices concerning learning and teaching, assessment and leadership. 2. Increased participation in skilled trades programs. 3. Identified gender-based issues affecting enrolment and achievement. 4. Enhanced internal (school-based) assessment data. 5. Increased provincial assessment results. 6. Conducted quality of life surveys (students, parents, and teachers). 7. Enhanced learning environments for all staff.
Objective 1	<p>By June, 2009, Eastern School District will have supported increased professional development opportunities for <i>teaching</i> personnel.</p> <p>Performance measure: Increased opportunities for professional development.</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhanced variety and quality of professional development opportunities and established benchmarks. 2. Established an action plan to better match individual teacher learning and growth plans to district level professional development opportunities. 3. Established district level participation in school-based professional development in select schools. 4. Identified and promoted best practices concerning the Professional Learning Community model.
Objective 2	By June, 2010, Eastern School District will have provided opportunities for all <i>support staff</i> to engage in system-supported professional development.
Objective 3	By June, 2011, Eastern School District will have supported the needs of diverse learners through the promotion of high quality instructional and assessment practices in our classrooms.

Strategic Issue 2	Healthy and active, safe and caring, and socially-just learning environments.
Goal 1	By June, 2011, Eastern School District will have developed a wellness action plan for all staff and students.
Performance Measure:	<p>Promotion the wellness of all staff and students.</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhanced healthy and active living programs and initiatives. 2. Developed and/or reviewed policies concerning healthy and active living. 3. Monitored sick leave statistics for staff and developed an action plan. 4. Monitored attendance data for students, established benchmarks and developed a promotional campaign to support increased attendance. 5. Enhanced occupational health and safety initiatives.
Objective 1	<p>By June, 2009, Eastern School District will have taken initial steps toward the promotion of wellness of all staff and students.</p> <p>Performance measure: Initial steps</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conducted survey 2. Developed and/or reviewed select policies. 3. Gathered information on staff sick leave statistics. 4. Gathered information on student attendance trends at the intermediate and high school levels.
Objective 2	By June, 2010, Eastern School District will developed an action plan to promote healthy and active living.
Objective 3	By June, 2011, Eastern School District will have implemented its action plan.

Goal 2	By June, 2011, the Eastern School District will have enhanced safety, a culture of caring and socially just learning environments for all throughout the District.
Performance Measure:	Enhanced safety, a culture of caring and socially just learning environments. Indicators: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased programs and initiatives to enhance safety. 2. Enhanced policies and practices that support a culture of caring. 3. Enhanced policies and practices that support a socially just learning environment.
Objective 1	By June, 2009, Eastern School District will have initiated actions to support enhanced safety, a culture of caring and socially just learning environments. Performance measures: Enhanced safety, a culture of caring and socially just learning environments Indicators: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developed a district framework to guide measured and consistent responses to inappropriate behaviour. 2. Reviewed District suspension practices. 3. Implemented a Safe and Caring Schools Handbook. 4. Developed District policy and protocols concerning building security. 5. Monitored the frequency of, and responses to, security breaches including electronic breaches. 6. Initiated awareness of social-justice issues throughout the District.
Objective 2	By June, 2010, the Eastern School District will have developed and implemented select policies and initiatives to support enhanced safety, a culture of caring and socially just learning environments.
Objective 3	By June, 2011, the Eastern School District will have completed the actions identified to support enhanced safety, a culture of caring and socially just learning environments.

Strategic Issue 3	Organizational effectiveness and efficiency.
Goal 1	By June, 2011, Eastern School District will have increased effectiveness and efficiency within its jurisdiction.
Performance Measure:	<p>Increased effectiveness and efficiency.</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Defined and communicated organizational roles to stakeholders. 2. Connected the District strategic plan to school level operations to ensure consistency of practice. 3. Developed a strategy for rural education. 4. Reviewed all facilities in relation to program delivery based upon multiple criteria. 5. Developed a Facilities Review Plan. 6. Developed a staff recruitment and retention strategy. 7. Assessed and worked with partners to address facility issues. 8. Collected appropriate data to assist in the identification of trends and issues.
Objective 1	<p>By June, 2009, Eastern School District will have taken select initial steps toward increased effectiveness and efficiency.</p> <p>Performance measure: Documented organizational structure.</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepared a new organizational chart. 2. Developed position descriptions for select senior management roles. 3. Developed a plan to communicate staff roles and responsibilities. 4. Connected the District strategic plan to select school development plans. 5. Assessed and worked with partners to address building envelop issues.
Objective 2	By June, 2010, Eastern School District will have taken further steps toward increased effectiveness and efficiency.
Objective 3	By June, 2011, Eastern School District will have implemented identified strategies toward increased effectiveness and efficiency.

10.0 Appendix One - Mandate

Taken from the *Schools Act, 1997*,

Duties of the Board - Section 75

(1) A board shall

- (a) organize and administer primary, elementary and secondary education within the district;
- (b) provide for the instruction of students either by the establishment of a program in its schools or by making an arrangement with another board or with another educational body in Canada;
- (c) determine policy for the effective operation of primary, elementary and secondary schools in the district;
- (d) ensure that policies and guidelines issued by the minister relating to special education for students are followed in schools under its jurisdiction;
- (e) ensure adequate supervision of all students enrolled in its schools during the period for which the board is responsible for those students;
- (f) develop a policy on employment equity and a plan for implementing the policy;
- (g) appoint and dismiss employees;
- (h) appoint and assign duties of teachers;
- (i) adopt personnel policies which shall follow the personnel administration procedures of the government of the province, with the necessary changes, unless other policies are approved, in writing, by the minister;
- (j) formulate policies for evaluating employees;
- (k) arrange for the bonding of the assistant director of finance and administration and other persons employed by the board whose duties include the collecting, receiving or depositing of money belonging to the board;
- (l) purchase or otherwise acquire, subject to the prior written approval of the minister, real property that it requires;
- (m) ensure that those programs or courses of study, including courses in religious education, and the materials prescribed or approved by the minister are followed in the schools under its control;
- (n) ensure that each school within its district maintains adequate program and performance standards;
- (o) establish policies for student evaluation and student promotion;
- (p) establish priorities for school construction, maintenance and repair and make recommendations to the minister;
- (q) make known to the public and enlist the support of the public for board policies and programs;
- (r) transmit to the minister all records and returns required by this Act and other reports and returns that the minister may require;
- (s) where the board considers it necessary, arrange for a system of transportation of students to and from schools;
- (t) where arrangements are made by it for the transportation of students, ensure that all vehicles

- (l) engaged in carrying students to and from school are in good mechanical condition,
 - (ii) have adequate liability insurance, and
 - (iii) that an appropriate bus safety program is offered to students who are transported by bus;
 - (u) insure and keep insured all its buildings and equipment and obtain insurance indemnifying it against liability in respect of a claim for damages or personal injury;
 - (v) admit, at all reasonable times and subject to the terms of an agreement between it and the Memorial University of Newfoundland, a student enrolled in the Faculty of Education or School of Physical Education and Athletics at that University to a school under its control for the purpose of observation and the practice of teaching;
 - (w) admit, at all reasonable times and subject to the terms of an agreement between it and a college or institute, a student enrolled in a training program for student assistants, to a school under its control for the purpose of observation and activities associated with a work term;
 - (x) organize and administer a school in an institution, where directed to do so by the minister;
 - (y) comply with a policy directive of the minister; and
 - (z) immediately inform the minister in writing of a vacancy in the position of director or assistant director.
- (2) Notwithstanding paragraph (l)(g), an emergency supply shall not be employed or appointed to teach without the permission of the minister.
- (3) A board shall be responsible to the minister for the expenditure of public funds, the conduct of programs of instruction, and evaluation required by the minister and for the maintenance of adequate program and performance standards in schools in the district.

Powers of boards –Section 76

(1) A board may

- (a) employ persons that the board considers necessary for its operations and to carry out its objects;
- (b) enter into agreements for the purpose of carrying out its functions under this Act;
- (c) permit a school building under its control to be used outside of school hours, where this does not interfere with the regular conduct of the school;
- (d) assess a person or group a fee for use of a school under paragraph;
- (e) require a student, believed by a teacher to be suffering from a communicable disease or a physical or mental condition which might endanger an employee of the board or other students, to be examined by a medical practitioner or other professional person appointed or approved by the board and, upon the recommendation of the medical practitioner or that other professional person, exclude that student from school until a certificate acceptable to the board is obtained from a medical practitioner or that other professional person permitting that student to return to school, but an exclusion or extension of an exclusion shall be reviewed by the board within 25 school days;
- (f) by notice, in writing, require an employee or other person to undergo a physical examination by a medical practitioner appointed or approved by the board or a

psychological examination by 2 medical practitioners or 2 psychologists registered under the Psychologists Act and to submit a certificate acceptable to the board signed by the medical practitioners or psychologists setting out the conclusions regarding the physical or mental health of that employee or person;

- (g) summarily dismiss an employee or other person who within 14 days from the date of receiving a notice under paragraph (f) has not made a reasonable attempt to obtain the examination;
 - (h) where a certificate submitted to a board under paragraph (f) shows that an employee or other person's physical or mental health would be injurious to an employee of the board or the students, direct the employee or other person to take sick leave or other earned leave or, where he or she has no sick leave or other earned leave or the sick leave or other earned leave is exhausted, require the employee or other person to take unpaid leave;
 - (i) suspend from work, with or without pay, an employee or other person who is charged with an offence that in the opinion of the board would make that employee or other person unsuitable to perform his or her duties;
 - (j) provide, subject to the written permission of the parent of the student concerned and in conjunction with the appropriate officials responsible for traffic control in the area, a system of school patrols in which a student may assist in the control of motor vehicle traffic on highways or elsewhere so far as the traffic may affect a student going to or from the school;
 - (k) raise money, subject to the prior written approval of the minister, upon its corporate credit and for the purpose of the board;
 - (l) sell or lease property for the purpose of the board, subject to the prior written approval of the minister;
 - (m) levy a fee for the transportation of students; and
 - (n) become a member of a provincial association of school boards and pay a required membership fee.
- (2) Notwithstanding section 75 or subsection (1) of this section, a board may close a school only after the parents of students affected have been given an opportunity to make representations to the board.

11.0 Appendix Two – Strategic Directions

Title: Primary, Elementary and Secondary Education

Strategic Direction: Improved educational programs and environments respond to constantly evolving demographics.

This outcome supports the policy direction of government. It requires systemic intervention by the department and its entities in the areas of:

Components of Strategic Direction	Being Addressed by Other Entities Reporting to the Minister	This Direction is addressed:		
		in the board's strategic plan	in the board's operational plan	in the branch/divisional work plans of the board
1. Safety and tolerance		X		
2. Curriculum				X
3. Technology		X		
4. Learning supports		X		
5. Infrastructure		X		
6. Achievement		X		
7. Library resources	X			

Readers should note that the Strategic Direction above applies to the Eastern School Board. For a complete list of the Strategic Directions communicated by the Minister of Education on March 19, 2008, please refer to the Department of Education Strategic Plan 2008-11.