

Education and Early Childhood Development

Annual Report

2016-17





MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

The following report covers the department's annual objectives for April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017 and the goals included in the 2014-17 Strategic Plan.

In the past fiscal year, the mandate for the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development covered early childhood development, regulated child care, the K-12 education system and public libraries. Departmental staff worked towards achieving success on all objectives. The department developed and implemented system changes for regulated child care; supported early childhood learning; enhanced a number of areas of the K-12 education system; and addressed priority K-12 infrastructure requirements. The department also commenced work toward completing a key commitment in The Way Forward to conduct a comprehensive review of the K-12 system through initiating the Premier's Task Force on Improving Educational Outcomes.

My signature below is indicative of my accountability for the results reported.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dale Kirby'.

Honourable Dale Kirby
Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development

Departmental Overview

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development was established under the *Executive Council Act*. It is a category one Provincial Government entity under the *Transparency and Accountability Act* and is responsible for achieving outcomes with respect to provincial early childhood development and the K-12 education system. During 2016-17, the programs and services offered were provided through the department's three branches:

Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education and Early Childhood Development

This branch included the divisions of: the Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation (CDLI); Early Childhood Learning; Evaluation and Research; Family and Child Development; Program Development; School Services; and Student Support Services.

Corporate Services

This branch included the divisions of: Financial Services, which also manages student transportation and teachers' payroll; Policy, Planning and Accountability; and Information Management and Special Projects.

Infrastructure

This branch included the division of Design and Construction.

The main offices of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development are located in the West Block of the Confederation Building in St. John's, with additional services being provided by the Learning Resources Distribution Centre located in Pleasantville, St. John's. Child care services are provided throughout the province in offices located in St. John's, Conception Bay South, Harbour Grace, Whitbourne, Clarenville, Gander, Grand Falls-Windsor, Corner Brook, Stephenville, Happy Valley-Goose Bay and Labrador City.

Additional information on the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development can be found at www.gov.nl.ca/edu.

Staff and Budget

| Branch | Employees | Budget |
|--|------------|----------------------|
| Executive Services ¹ | 10 | \$1,167,000 |
| Corporate Services | 34 | \$5,088,700 |
| K-12 Education and Early Childhood Development | 139 | \$799,457,700 |
| Infrastructure | 14 | \$107,198,700 |
| Total | 197 | \$912,912,100 |

¹ This number includes communications and executive support staff

Staff Distribution

| Location | Employees |
|------------------------|------------|
| Clareville | 2 |
| Corner Brook | 6 |
| Gander | 4 |
| Grand Falls-Windsor | 5 |
| Happy Valley-Goose Bay | 4 |
| Harbour Grace | 3 |
| Labrador City | 1 |
| St. John's Metro Area | 169 |
| Stephenville | 2 |
| Whitbourne | 1 |
| Total | 197 |

Highlights and Partnerships

In addition to working towards the outcomes associated with the issues for the fiscal year 2016-17, outlined in the “Report on Performance” section of this report, the department contributed to significant accomplishments in a number of other areas. Initiatives involve partnership arrangements with key groups, including: school boards, school councils, the Provincial Information and Library Resources Board, regulated child care providers, The Association of Early Childhood Educators Newfoundland and Labrador, and Family and Child Care Connections. Some groups prepare their own annual report based on requirements under the *Transparency and Accountability Act* while others are not subject to formal reporting requirements under provincial legislation. A list of entities reporting to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development is found in the final section of this report.

Public Examinations: Public examinations are based on the provincial curriculum and provide a common standard to assess proficiency in Level III academic language, mathematics, science and social studies courses. They are administered yearly in June, August and November and are scored by an independent scoring panel made up of practicing teachers. Successful completion of at least four public examination courses is required to graduate with academic or honours status. The final mark in each of these courses is based on 50 per cent of the school mark and 50 per cent of the public exam mark. In August and November the final mark is based on this 50/50 shared mark or a 100 per cent public exam mark, whichever is highest.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is responsible for exam development, exam administration (in conjunction with school officials) and reporting summary results to all stakeholders. During the fiscal year there were 18,588 public exams written by 7,727 high school students.

Compared to previous years there is an improvement in most subject areas. It is significant to note that 96.6 per cent of eligible students graduated and 70 per cent of graduating students achieved honours or academic diplomas. This is important, as it enables our young people to pursue a wide range of post-secondary opportunities.

Scholarships: In 2016-17, scholarships were awarded to 201 high school graduates across Newfoundland and Labrador¹. The scholarships ranged in value from \$1,000 to \$2,500 and are intended to help students pursue post-secondary education. Eligibility for scholarships is based on public examination results. The scholarships awarded included:

- The Junior Jubilee Scholarship, valued at \$2,500, was awarded to the student who attained the highest overall marks in the province.
- The Constable W.C. Moss Scholarship, valued at \$1,000, was awarded to the son or daughter of the member of the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary or the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (active, retired or deceased) who, other than the Junior Jubilee winner, achieved the highest marks.
- The Electoral District Scholarships, valued at \$1,000 each, were awarded to the three high school graduates with the highest marks in each electoral district.
- The Centenary of Responsible Government Scholarships, valued at \$1,000 each, were awarded to 55 high school graduates with the highest marks who did not qualify for the Junior Jubilee, Constable W.C. Moss, or the Electoral District Scholarships.

Outstanding Principals: An exemplary school principal in Newfoundland and Labrador was named among The Learning Partnership's Canada's Outstanding

¹ A complete list of the Provincial Government Scholarship winners can be found at <http://www.releases.gov.nl.ca/releases/2016/edu/1117n05.aspx>

Principals for 2017. The Learning Partnership is a national organization devoted to strong public education systems.

Principals are nominated for Canada's Outstanding Principals by their peers, school staff and community members in each province and territory. Nominations are reviewed and final winners selected on a representation-by-population basis by a national selection committee made up of a group of education, community and private sector leaders.

The 2017 recipient of the honour from the Newfoundland and Labrador school system was David Locke of Holy Spirit High School in Conception Bay South. He received his award at a ceremony in Toronto on February 17, 2017.

Semesterisation Pilot Project: Year three of the semesterisation pilot at Holy Heart High School and Heritage Collegiate concluded in June 2016. Graduates from these schools represented the first cohort of students who completed three years of high school during the semesterisation pilot program.

A formative evaluation of the project was conducted throughout the pilot that included data collection, document reviews, key informant interviews, administrator interviews, teacher surveys, student surveys, and parent surveys. Data suggest that students, teachers, and parents are satisfied with the implementation of semesterisation at both schools.

An increased sample size was required to accurately assess the effect of semesterisation on schools in the province. As a result, the pilot will be continued and O'Donel High School in Mount Pearl and Holy Spirit High School in Conception Bay South will join the project as of September 2017.

A school with a semesterised schedule has the following general characteristics:

- two semesters that run from September to late January/early February and late January/early February to June;
- final summative examinations administered at the end of each semester;
- no formal mid-semester examination period; and
- paired linear courses offered throughout the school year.

Semesterisation has been widely recognized throughout North America as an excellent student-centred approach for learning. It provides students more opportunity to complete a greater variety and a greater number of courses each year. The majority of high schools in Canadian provinces, with the exception of Newfoundland and Labrador and Quebec, are semesterised.

School Board Elections: On November 22, 2016, eligible voters across the province cast their votes to elect school board trustees for the NLESD and Conseil scolaire francophone provincial de Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador (CSFP).

The election was the first school board election since the four previous English school boards were consolidated in 2013. Of the 17 regional zones, 12 elected a representative while in four regional zones the representative was acclaimed and in one zone there was no candidate. In accordance with the *Schools Act, 1997*, the Minister responsible for Education and Early Childhood Development appointed a representative for the zone that did not have a candidate.

It was the first election using direct voting to elect school board trustees for CSFP. In previous elections, parents of students in French-first language schools elected school council members for each school who in turn elected trustees to CSFP. In this election, rights holders under Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms who are residents of the province were eligible to vote. There are nine trustees including two from Labrador, two from the central/west region, two from the east region and three at-large. Of the nine trustees, seven were elected and two were acclaimed.

Review of the Provincial Library System: On June 30, 2016, the department commenced a complete organizational and service review of the provincial library system. The purpose of this review was to examine the current state of the library system in the Province and provide recommendations to inform decision-making on the future of the library system in the Province.

A steering committee including members from the Provincial Government and Provincial Information and Library Resources Board lead the review. The review included:

- Provincial stakeholder consultations;
- Analysis of the current service delivery landscape, including locations, types of services offered, usage and service delivery methods;
- Review of the governance structure;
- Review of library service standards, including operating hours, programs and types of services offered; and
- Research of trends and leading practices from other jurisdictions.

During the fiscal year, the department contracted with EY to lead the review and EY completed stakeholder consultations at locations across the province.

Autism Online Training Program: The department partnered with the other Atlantic Provinces to create the online training program, ASD and Behavioural Interventions: An Introduction for School Personnel.

- The program is designed for all educational personnel including teachers, school administrators, student assistants, speech language pathologists, etc.
- The 40 hours of self-paced instruction is offered in both English and French and is made up of 10 e-Learning modules.
- Since 2015 approximately 900 educational personnel completed the program. In 2016-17, 400 educators completed the course.

Mental Health and Addictions: During 2016-17, the department pursued a number of initiatives to address mental health and addictions issues in the school system, including:

- Implementing the second year of a three-year pilot at two schools in the NLESD Western region utilizing the Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS) program. PATHS is a social-emotional learning program for elementary students to reduce aggression and behaviour difficulties. The curriculum teaches skills in five conceptual domains: self-control, emotional understanding, positive self-esteem, relationships, and interpersonal problem solving.
- Integrating social-emotional learning throughout the K-12 curriculum and supporting implementation of the Safe and Caring Schools (SCS) Policy.
- Consulting with key stakeholders with the goal of increasing awareness of mental health and addictions in the high school curriculum.
- Developing a new interim behaviour exceptionality in conjunction with a revised Behaviour Management Plan for programming involving students with complex behaviour needs.
- Drafting a document on Secondary and Tertiary supports best practices to facilitate behaviour programming.
- Coordinating with other government departments to identify and discuss best practices on: child and youth mental health; and enhancing communication and collaboration within government on policy development pertaining to child and youth mental health prevention and early intervention.

Report on Performance

March 31, 2017 concluded the period covering the department's Strategic Plan for 2014-17. In consideration of the mandate and financial resources of the department, four issues were identified as the department's key priorities in its Strategic Plan: Regulated Child Care; Early Childhood Learning; Primary, Elementary and Secondary Education; and K-12 School Infrastructure. This section reports on the goals for each issue, as well as the annual objectives for 2016-17 in support of those goals.

Issue One: Regulated Child Care

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is committed to supporting a system of quality, sufficient and affordable regulated child care as well as strong family resource programs to provide support to families in caring for their children. To assist parents who choose regulated child care in this province, in accessing high quality and affordable services, the department offers a range of programs and services; administers and revises legislation, policies, and standards; and provides additional supports to key partner organizations.

Goal One:

By March 31, 2017, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will have enhanced regulated child care ensuring it is responsive to client needs.

Enhanced standards and policies for child care

Child Care Act – In 2012-13, a comprehensive review of the *Child Care Services Act* commenced, resulting in Royal Assent of the new *Child Care Act* on December 16, 2014. The new Act updates several sections of the previous legislation, including those which require child care services and agencies to be licensed, unless exempt;

establishes the licensing process; appoints inspectors and establishes the powers of inspectors to carry out inspections of child care services and agencies; and establishes the process for issuing violation orders when a child care service or agency violates the Act or the regulations. In order to become more responsive to client needs, the new Act includes changes such as an appeal process and the ability to offer care outside of standard hours. During the 2014-17 timeframe, accompanying regulations, policies and standards were developed and will be available once the Act comes into force on July 31, 2017.

Enhanced child care programs and services

Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Supplement – The ELCC Supplement Program provides financial support directly to eligible centre-based early childhood educators (ECEs), program operators, and regulated family child care providers, on a quarterly basis. Approximately 650-700 supplements are currently paid each quarter. The intent of the initiative is to attract and retain a greater number of qualified individuals to work in regulated child care settings.

In October 2015, the ELCC Supplement was increased to a maximum of \$6,660 for qualified ECEs holding Level I or higher child care services certification and providing child care in regulated family child care homes. The previous maximum rates for eligible early childhood educators in family child care homes were \$2,330 per year for Level I certification and \$4,660 per year for Level II certification or higher. The increases help to attract more qualified early childhood educators and improve the quality of child care. Current rates for the ELCC Supplement are up to maximums of \$6,660 per year for qualified centre-based and family child care ECEs holding Level I or higher certification, and \$10,000 for centre-based operators holding Level II or higher certification. The department continued its review of the supplement into 2016-17, with an increase planned for introduction in 2017-18.

Child Care Inclusion Program – The Child Care Inclusion Program provides additional staff, funded spaces, resources, and support, to assist regulated child care services in

accommodating all children in regular programming. The department conducted a comprehensive review of the program in 2015-16, resulting in a number of enhancements including: broadening available supports; greater accountability practices; policies to support transition from one child care setting to another; and streamlined policies and forms. The department commenced implementation of these enhancements in 2016-17.

Child Care Subsidy Program – The Child Care Subsidy Program helps eligible parents or guardians pay for child care in a licensed child care centre or a regulated family child care home. Some or all of the fees may be covered, depending on family income and the rate charged by the child care service. The approved subsidy is paid directly to the child care service provider on behalf of the family. In 2014-15 a new subsidy rate for toddlers was introduced, increasing from \$30/day to \$33/day, to reflect the higher adult to child ratio required. Current subsidies are up to \$44/day for infants, \$33/day for toddlers, \$30/day for preschoolers and \$14/day for school-age children. In 2016-17, the department commenced revising administrative policies and is currently working on possible program policy revisions.

The Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Directory – In 2015-16, the department launched the ELCC Directory. It is a searchable, interactive database and online map of regulated child care centres and family homes, and family resource centres, in Newfoundland and Labrador. The site also includes information about child care availability and posts violation orders issued to child care centres. The ELCC Directory can be found at www.childcare.gov.nl.ca.

Operating Grant Program – The Operating Grant Program is a voluntary program which provides operational funding to both non-profit and commercial child care centres. Participating centres are required to set their child care fees at provincial daily child care subsidy rates, and not surcharge for any program services, thereby making child care more affordable for families. In 2015-16, the Operating Grant Program increased flexibility by providing up to an additional 15 per cent increase in grant amounts for child

care centres that could demonstrate a financial need. During 2016-17, the department conducted a comprehensive review of the program, including stakeholder consultations and an online survey of all child care centre licensees and operators. Approximately 140 child care licensees and operators were invited to attend a regional or virtual stakeholder engagement session and/or to complete an online survey asking for feedback on the program. Stakeholder engagement sessions were held in person in each region of the province and one virtually with approximately 85 participants in total. There were 60 completed responses to the survey.

2016-17 Objective:

By March 31, 2017, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will have further implemented system changes to improve programs and services.

Discussion of Results

Continued revision of the Child Care Services Subsidy program

During 2016-17, the department continued reviewing the Child Care Services Subsidy program, as well as related administrative policies. Draft revised policies were developed with a reference committee comprised of regional and provincial staff and are in the final stages of development.

Completed review of Early Learning and Child Care Supplement

During 2016-17, the department conducted preliminary consultations to refine the ELCC Supplement policy options and an additional 1.3 million for fiscal years 2017-18 to 2019-20 was approved. The department also prepared a final consultation framework involving a survey and focus groups and will conclude consultations early in 2017-18. It is expected that the initial increase in the Supplement will be available for the April 1 to June 30, 2017 period. The increases planned over three years will fulfill the

commitment in the Minister's Mandate Letter to increase funding from 2017-18 to 2019-20.

Implemented the revised Inclusion Supports Program

During 2016-17, the department commenced implementation of revisions to the program that were approved during the previous fiscal year. Key activities included revising applicable policy manuals, completing internal staff training, and completing train-the-trainer sessions for internal staff to offer external orientations. The revised program was launched in 2016-17.

Issue Summary

During the strategic planning period, the department was successful in enhancing regulated child care. On December 16, 2014, a new *Child Care Act* received Royal Assent and will be proclaimed once stakeholders have had the opportunity to become familiar with associated regulations and policies. The department also reviewed key programming and services under the 10-year child care strategy, *Caring for Our Future: Provincial Strategy for Quality, Sufficient and Affordable Child Care in Newfoundland and Labrador*, including: the Child Care Subsidy program, Early Learning and Child Care Supplement, Child Care Inclusion program, and the Operating Grant program.

Issue Two: Early Childhood Learning

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is committed to supporting healthy child development through the implementation of early childhood learning initiatives, which not only enhance children's early learning, but also support parental/caregiver involvement and strive to offer a seamless transition from early childhood into the K-12 education system. To enhance the quality of early learning opportunities, the department implemented various early learning initiatives during the planning period.

Goal Two:

By March 31, 2017, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will have enhanced early learning opportunities for children.

Enhanced early learning opportunities

Early Childhood Learning (ECL) Framework – During the strategic planning period, the department piloted, evaluated and revised the ECL Framework. The ECL Framework outlines a pedagogical approach to early childhood learning with specific emphasis on play-based learning, the important role of adults in supporting children's early learning, a holistic approach to children's development and learning, and inclusion of children with exceptionalities.

In 2014-15, the ECL Framework was piloted at school sites located throughout the province offering KinderStart and Kindergarten. Kindergarten teachers participating in the KinderStart pilot were provided orientation to the ECL Framework in March 2015. The department also drafted a series of four companion guides. In 2015-16, the department conducted orientation sessions with departmental child care consultants and developed an implementation plan for regulated child care staff, owners and operators. During 2016-17, the department incorporated feedback received from pilot implementation and prepared for a provincial launch.

Early Literacy Programming – Provincial early literacy programming is provided through a partnership between the department and the provincial public libraries.

During 2014-15, several phases of pilot implementation of the Early Literacy Foundations program occurred in specific locations throughout the province. As a result of pilot feedback, the department revised the program guide and identified the Every Child Ready to Read (ECRR©) as an immediate priority. ECRR© is an introductory early literacy program for parents/caregivers that is implemented over several sessions for a total of five hours per program offering. Public libraries commenced professional learning (PL) for library staff to implement ECRR©. In 2014-15, staff at 50 public libraries across the province were trained in ECRR©. Among libraries with trained staff, 42 libraries implemented the program. Training for the remainder of library staff continued into 2015-16 to build capacity for all libraries to provide at least two program offerings per annum (for a total of ten program hours per library). In 2016-17, the department continued its focus on building human resource capacity to offer ECRR© through public libraries.

In 2016-17, the department partnered with Family Resource Centres (FRCs) to offer the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program®. The program brings together parents and young children between birth and age 4 to enjoy songs, rhymes and stories while strengthening the bond between parents and children. Twenty-six FRC staff received training in February 2017 and the program is being piloted at 13 sites.

KinderStart – KinderStart is a school transition program offered in the year prior to Kindergarten entry. The program currently consists of several sessions organized and promoted at the school level for children and their parents/caregivers. The sessions support children's adjustment to the school environment, and provide parents/caregivers with information on how to support their children's learning at home.

In 2014-15, the department commenced Phase I pilot implementation at 26 schools across the province and evaluated progress during bi-monthly check-ins. Phase II pilot implementation commenced in 2015-16 at Phase I pilot schools to address implementation challenges identified during the Phase I pilot. The department identified new approaches to orientation, including use of standard presentations and development of a list of activities to improve parental engagement applicable to the KinderStart session. In 2016-17, the department revised the number of KinderStart sessions, added additional materials to the program guide, and prepared a new parent/caregiver companion guide.

Parent Resource Kits (PRKs) – During 2014-15 to 2016-17, the department continued implementation, evaluation and revision of PRKs for two, four, six, 12, 18, 24 and 36 month olds.

Development and implementation of PRKs is a partnership between the department and Child Health Clinics. PRKs are universally available to all families and their children during child health clinic visits. The kits provide parents/caregivers with a range of early learning resources and developmentally appropriate materials to extend their children's learning and development through everyday activities that they do with their children. Language and literacy development through play-based learning is a priority focus in all PRKs.

A formative evaluation in 2014-15 resulted in a number of changes to the design and contents of two, four, six, 12 and 18 month kits to improve user satisfaction and effectiveness. These changes were implemented in 2015-16.

The 24 and 36 month resource kits were distributed to pilot sites involving child health clinics in 2014-15. Evaluation of pilot implementation commenced in 2015-16.

A more comprehensive review of all PRKs in 2015-16 resulted in a revision in the number of PRKs. The number of implementation periods was reduced from seven to

three to coincide with the two, 12, and 18 month child health clinics. Redesign and implementation of the consolidated PRKs commenced in 2016-17.

Enhanced professional development

During 2014-15, the department implemented a number of professional development initiatives:

- An Early Childhood Learning Summer Institute, entitled Play the Kindergarten Way, was held on August 27 and 28, 2014 in St. John's for primary teachers and early childhood educators.
- An ECL Framework orientation was held for teachers and administrators.
- KinderStart program orientation was held for teachers from 26 participating pilot schools.
- Early Years Evaluation (EYE) assessment training was held for teachers from participating pilot schools for both the Teacher Assessment (27 teachers at 22 schools) and the Direct Assessment (20 teachers at 19 schools) components.

During 2015-16, the department implemented a number of professional development initiatives associated with full-day Kindergarten (FDK), including: hosting a three-day Summer Institute entitled Focus on Full-Day Kindergarten; development of model classrooms; finalizing plans for professional development implementation; and developing and placing PL resources on the department's website.

During 2016-17, the department continued PL for FDK through a variety of initiatives.

Enhanced promotional initiatives

During 2014-15 to 2016-17, the department continued the Power of Play multimedia campaign. The Power of Play campaign commenced during fall 2014 to coincide with the 3rd annual Play and Learn Week in public schools. The multimedia and print advertising campaign highlighted the important role of parents in supporting their children's learning and development and how curriculum outcomes are met through

play-based learning activities. In 2016-17, the department focused on ensuring that primary stakeholders were informed of resources available on the department's website. See <http://www.ed.gov.nl.ca/edu/earlychildhood/power.html>

2016-17 Objective:

By March 31, 2017, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will have continued to implement initiatives in support of early childhood learning.

Discussion of Results

Implemented full-day Kindergarten

Full-day Kindergarten was implemented in September 2016. During 2016-17, the department completed work in key areas required to successfully implement FDK:

- Ensured schools were equipped with the required materials and equipment for FDK by:
 - shipping previously purchased furniture, play-based items and instructional materials to schools; and
 - finalizing the purchase and shipment of remaining furniture, play-based items and instructional materials to schools.
- Continued PL for FDK by:
 - developing a comprehensive PL plan;
 - providing 2.5 days of PL to FDK teachers;
 - commencing PL for newly-hired teachers;
 - providing follow-up PL to FDK teachers to address issues arising after implementation; and
 - developing and distributing professional literature support documents for FDK teachers.

Commenced implementation of Early Childhood Learning Framework

The ECL Framework will be a non-mandatory guide for 'early learning practitioners' who work in a variety of settings with young children including regulated child care services (centre-based and family child care homes) and other early learning settings such as family resource centres, early literacy programs, public libraries, and schools.

The ECL Framework and Companion Guides are undergoing final edits prior to implementation. A multi-year implementation plan is proposed from 2017-18 to 2020-21 commencing with regulated child care in 2017-18 followed by implementation in family resource centres, early literacy programs, and public libraries. An evaluation is proposed for 2020-21.

Implemented revised development schedule for Parent Resource Kits

During the previous fiscal year, distribution of Parent Resource Kits (PRKs) for two, four, six, 12 and 18 month old children was ongoing throughout the province while piloting of PRKs for 24 and 36 month olds was ongoing at select sites. While the PRK initiative has been well received by parents and families, ongoing evaluation of the initiative identified a number of challenges including nurse workload, storage issues at the clinics and the department's warehouse, as well as the cost of packaging and shipping the kits to nearly 100 clinics. The department reviewed all of the resource materials and recommended consolidating the seven original PRKs into three PRKs that coincide with the two, 12 and 18 month universally available child health clinics. Some duplication of printed materials was also identified and eliminated. The consolidation and realignment of the PRKs maintains the focus of resources linked to key developmental periods/milestones that promote optimal development of children within these implementation points. The PRK implementation changes commenced phase-in in March 2017.

Continued pilot implementation of revised KinderStart program guide

Based on experience from Phase I and II implementation over 2014-15 and 2015-16, the department continued with Phase III pilot implementation of the revised KinderStart program guide in 2016-17. The department updated the KinderStart program guide to include:

- additional play-based learning activities for early literacy and numeracy to enhance the home and school connection;
- a list of potential community speakers for each session;
- updated KinderStart presentations for each parent/caregiver topics; and
- a list of activities for each KinderStart session to enhance parental engagement and to reflect the changes in the number of sessions.

In addition, a parent/caregiver KinderStart companion guide was developed for parents and caregivers to provide important information about the KinderStart program, and information about key child development topics and everyday activities.

A KinderStart Program Resource Booklet was developed for parents/caregivers to provide information about:

- KinderStart resources and using these resources with children at home;
- tips and ideas for play-based learning activities for each KinderStart book; and
- play-based learning activities for development of early literacy and numeracy skills through Talk, Play, Read, Write and Sing.

The department forwarded the revised KinderStart program guide and companion guide to NLESD for review. It was subsequently shared with KinderStart pilot schools located throughout the province. The non-pilot schools were also provided the option to use the pilot guides voluntarily to build capacity for provincial implementation.

The department held an orientation session for teachers and administrators of schools involved in Phase III pilot implementation.

Continued pilot implementation of Early Years Evaluation

The department continued Phase III implementation of the Early Years Evaluation – Direct Assessment (EYE-DA) and Early Years Assessment – Teacher Assessment (EYE-TA).

The EYE-DA helps identify children at risk in their development across a number of areas prior to school entry to provide early intervention (through referrals to outside service providers prior to school entry, as required) and plan for the transition to school and supports required when the child starts school. During the year, the department implemented the EYE-DA as a combined Phase III pilot with KinderStart in 21 schools located throughout the province. The department:

- worked with NLESD to identify schools for the pilot Phase III which involved Kindergarten teachers administering KinderStart sessions in the morning and EYE-DA in the afternoon on the days when KinderStart sessions were scheduled; and
- provided participating teachers with training on EYE-DA administration, data entry, and interpretation of findings, as well as an orientation to the revised KinderStart Program Guide.

The EYE-TA provides a systematic framework that kindergarten or grade one teachers can use during the first few months of school to structure their frequent observations and informal assessments. Information from the EYE-TA is often used to identify children who are experiencing difficulty and who may be in need of close monitoring or further assessment. During the year, the department implemented EYE-TA in 19 schools located throughout the province. The department:

- worked with NLESD to identify schools for pilot Phase III which involved assessing learning needs of students upon entry into kindergarten, and the type

and amount of support required in a 'response-to-intervention' (RTI) program; and,

- provided participating teachers with training on EYE-TA administration, data entry, and interpretation of findings.

For both, EYE-TA and EYE- DA, the department provided support to schools and teachers in the form of check-in-conference calls, email access, telephone access, online and print resources.

Issue Summary

During the strategic planning period, the department took significant steps toward enhancing early learning opportunities for children. Key progress included steps toward implementing the ECL Framework, Early Literacy Programming, KinderStart and PRKs. The department also implemented a range of professional development initiatives, evaluated the Early Years Evaluation pilot, and continued to promote early learning to parents and other key groups through the *Power of Play*.

Issue Three: Primary, Elementary and Secondary Education

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is committed to ensuring that every child in Newfoundland and Labrador has access to inclusive educational opportunities in safe and caring environments. Enhancing K-12 programs and services supports the learning needs of students and will help prepare them for future social, educational and career opportunities and prepare them to participate in their community and society.

Goal Three:

By March 31, 2017, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will have enhanced opportunities for the success of students in the K-12 education system.

Enhanced resources and programs

Working Together to Support Student Achievement - During 2014-15, the department commenced piloting *Working Together to Support Student Achievement*, which is a joint initiative of the school districts and the department. Pilot schools, chosen by NLESD throughout all regions of the province, received PL on an inclusive and preventative service delivery framework that focuses on the learning and teaching of reading and writing in primary school. Pilot teachers provided feedback to the department and district on both the framework and the PL. Regional interdisciplinary implementation teams in the district were tasked with the management of PL in the pilot schools.

During 2015-16, the department continued the two year pilot. The thirteen pilot schools continued to implement an inclusive and preventative service delivery framework that focuses on the learning and teaching of reading and writing in primary school and provided feedback to the department and district. Regional interdisciplinary implementation teams in the district were removed from the task of management of PL in the pilot schools and school based PL communities functioned on their own.

The *Working Together to Support Student Achievement* pilot concluded at the end of the 2015-16 school year. NLESD indicated that they required more resources to implement the framework, and did not execute the model beyond the pilot schools. Pilot schools may have continued implementation, but would have done so without formal support from the department or the district. The CSFP implemented the approach to teaching reading and writing across the province. The department provided support to the CSFP for PL and capacity building.

Enhanced curricula

The department is responsible for a process of continual curriculum development to ensure that students in the K-12 system acquire the cognitive and social skills, as well as knowledge in various academic areas, necessary to make optimal economic and social contributions. The department monitors more than 275 course offerings on a continuous basis and selects courses each year for priority review. In any given year the department implements a number of revised curricula and would also be in the process of reviewing other courses. Curriculum review may involve pilot implementation for one or more years. New curriculum is supported by PL and curriculum materials, as appropriate.

During 2014-15, the department implemented seven new curricula: English Language Arts grade 11 (3 courses); grade 2 English Language Arts; grade 6 English Language Arts; grade 8 Art; and grade 9 Art.

During 2015-16, the department implemented the following revised curricula: grade 3 English Language Arts, grade 3 Health, grade 1 Science, grade 4 Religious Education, Français 2202, Occupational Health & Safety 3203, English 3201 and English 3202.

In September 2016, the department contributed to its goal to enhance curriculum through implementation of grade 4 Science (English and French), grade 6 Religious

Education (English and French), grade 5 Religious Education (English and French), and grade 2 Science (English and French).

During 2016-17 the department revised grade 3 Science (English and French), grade 5 Science (English and French), Communications Technology 2104/3104, Clothing and Textiles 1101/3101, and Career Education (Elementary module) for September 2017 implementation.

Students that have experienced an innovative, modern curriculum are equipped with the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary to be successful in Newfoundland and Labrador's 21st century economy.

Enhanced inclusive education practices

During the period covered by the plan, the department continued to implement the Safe and Caring Schools (SCS) policy and other inclusive education practices. The related initiatives provide school-based guidelines and procedures which establish clear, consistent expectations and direction for all members of the school community in order to provide students with a secure environment in which to learn, grow and succeed. Details of work undertaken are discussed below:

Promotions

2014-15 to 2016-17

- The Safe and Caring Schools Graduating Student Awards were provided to 14 students across the province each year. Each award is a \$500 tuition voucher for a post-secondary institution.
- Over this three year period, the department awarded a Safe and Caring Schools Special Project Award to 116 schools, for a total of \$59,000.
- The department supported the Gay Straight Alliance Conference at Corner Brook Regional High School in May 2014 and 2016, as well as at Ascension Collegiate in 2017. The goal of the conference was to create awareness, educate, and

advocate for the rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) students.

2014-15

- A Parent Brochure, which provides an overview of the revised SCS policy, was posted online.
- The We Create Change Tour took place on April 11, 2014. The We Create Change program collects funds to build schools and improve access to education in developing communities around the globe.

2015-16

- The department worked with the SCS itinerants and Egale Canada Human Rights Trust (Egale), a national charity promoting LGBTQ issues, to complete a PL package that will be used to provide LGBTQ awareness training to all teachers across the province. These training sessions will be delivered over a three year period with the first sessions beginning in April 2016.
- The department prepared a Handbook for Parents of Children with Exceptionalities.

2016-17

- The department prepared an online presentation for educators providing an overview of the Guidelines for LGBTQ Inclusive Practices.

Professional Learning

2014-15

- The department provided a PL opportunity for teachers regarding student use of assistive technology.
- PL was provided to all counsellors and educational psychologists across the province.

- A best practices document for educators to support social-emotional learning at the school level was posted online.
- Inclusive Education Initiative (IEI) itinerants (teachers who serve the entire school system) continued to provide PL to schools implementing their first year of the initiative.

2015-16

- Restorative Justice PL was provided for SCS and IEI itinerants
- IEI Itinerants continued to provide PL to schools implementing their first year of the initiative.
- The department created an on-line PL site to support the implementation of K-3 early intervention for reading and writing acquisition.
- The department offered “hands-on” PL to allow departmental and school district staff to learn Review 360 software, a multi-tiered software system to allow the school districts to collect data related to student behaviour. School district staff then offered PL to schools.

2016-17

- The department and NLESD worked with Egale to develop lesson plans for curriculum integration to raise awareness and acceptance of diversity, with a specific focus on LGBTQ youth.
- Restorative Justice PL was provided for SCS and IEI itinerants
- IEI itinerants continued to provide PL to schools implementing their first year of the initiative.

Human Resources

2014-15 to 2016-17

- SCS Itinerants continued to support schools with the implementation of the policy based on school development plans.

- Autism itinerants continued to support district and schools with programming for students with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

2014-15

- Three additional SCS Itinerant units were added to NLESD to accompany the three existing SCS positions.

Policy

2014-15

The department developed the following documents:

- Standards of Practice for Speech Language Pathologists
- Standards of Practice for Guidance Counsellors and Educational Psychologists
- Standards of Practice for Instructional Resource Teachers
- Role of the Program Itinerant - ASD
- Guidelines for Anaphylaxis Management in Schools
- Guidelines for Comprehensive Assessment
- Guidelines for Diabetes Management in Schools
- PL Guide for Guidance Counsellors and Educational Psychologists (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual - 5 Diagnostic Criteria)

2015-16

- Review 360 software was adopted. The data collected through this software are intended to assist schools, districts, and the department to evaluate the implementation of the SCS policy.

2016-17

- Guidelines for LGBTQ Inclusive Practices were released. To accompany the release of these guidelines, the department provided the districts and schools with a facilitator's guide and other supplementary resources.

- Guidelines for LGBTQ Inclusive Practices was made available online (the French version has been translated by Translation Services and is being prepared for posting).
- Inclusive Education Guidelines are being developed as a Procedure of the SCS Policy.
- Restorative Practice Guidelines are being developed as a Procedure of the SCS Policy.

2016-17 Objective:

By March 31, 2017, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will have continued enhancements in select areas of the K-12 education system.

Discussion of Results

Initiated Premier's Task Force

As part of its commitment In the Way Forward to improve educational outcomes for the people of the province, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador initiated the Premier's Task Force on Improving Educational Outcomes.

The Task Force was mandated to review key areas, including: early learning, mathematics, reading, inclusive education, student mental health and wellness, multicultural education, Indigenous education, cooperative education and teacher education and professional development.

The Task Force was composed of a chairperson and three members. Each was selected through the merit-based appointment process, involving a public call for applications and final selection through the Independent Appointments Commission. A public announcement was made on November 8, 2016.

The Task Force will prepare a report for the Provincial Government with recommendations. These recommendations will lead to the development of a comprehensive education action plan to improve the learning experience for students, prepare them for the future and be responsive to the ever-changing educational environment.

It is anticipated that the Task Force will present its final report to the Premier during the next fiscal.

Commenced consultations on improving educational outcomes

Beginning January 30, 2017, the Premier's Task Force on Improving Educational Outcomes commenced engaging with parents, students, educators and other key stakeholders through public consultations. An interactive website informed the public of the task force's mandate and provided information on how to engage the task force during multi-faceted public consultations. Interested parties could pre-register for ten public sessions throughout the province which concluded March 2, 2017. The public could also provide comments/submissions online or engage in a moderated forum until March 20, 2017.

Continued curriculum renewal and implemented revised curricula in select areas

The department is responsible for a process of continual curriculum development to ensure that students in the K-12 system acquire the cognitive and social skills, as well as knowledge in various academic areas, necessary to make optimal economic and social contributions.

In September 2016, the department contributed to its goal to enhance curriculum through implementation of grade 4 Science (English and French), grade 6 Religious Education (English and French), grade 5 Religious Education (English and French), and grade 2 Science (English and French).

During 2016-17, the department revised grade 3 Science (English and French), grade 5 Science (English and French), Communications Technology 2104/3104, Clothing and Textiles 1101/3101, and Career Education (Elementary module) for September 2017 implementation.

During the fiscal year, the department also conducted pilots of grade 4 Health, grade 6 Science, Music 2206, Chemistry 2202, Science 1206, and Physics 2204.

Issue Summary

During the strategic planning period, the department took significant steps toward enhancing opportunities for the success of students in the K-12 education system. The department piloted the *Working Together to Support Student Achievement* initiative which supports students in K-3 with reading and writing acquisition. It also enhanced a wide range of curricula and inclusive education practices. Finally, the department initiated the Premier's Task Force on Improving Educational Outcomes and related consultations.

Issue Four: K-12 School Infrastructure

By improving K-12 school infrastructure, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development creates and maintains high-quality inclusive learning environments. The department continued with the planning and construction of major capital projects including new schools, extensions or redevelopments of existing schools and modular classrooms; and continued with improvements to existing K-12 schools including repairs and maintenance, energy efficiency and upgrades related to FDK. These investments enhance student life by improving the capacity, safety, and quality of the provincial K-12 education system infrastructure. Improved infrastructure benefits students across the education system.

Goal Four:

By March 31, 2017, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will have improved K-12 school infrastructure to ensure students have access to appropriate learning environments.

Implemented priority repair and maintenance projects

During the strategic planning period, government continued to fund repair and maintenance projects at provincial K-12 schools. During this timeframe over \$48 million was spent on repairs and maintenance projects including, among other projects: roof, siding and window replacements; fire and life safety systems; maintenance and upgrades; electrical upgrades; plumbing upgrades, energy retrofits; and other site upgrades.

Continued K-12 major school construction projects

During the strategic planning period, a number of important major capital projects were completed or were in the planning or construction phase, including:

- Completion of three new state-of-the-art schools (St. Teresa's School and Waterford Valley High in St. John's and Octagon Pond Elementary in Paradise).
- Completion of nine extension, renovation or redevelopment projects at Elizabeth Park Elementary in Paradise, Roncalli Elementary in St. John's, Exploits Valley High in Grand Falls-Windsor, Corner Brook Intermediate in Corner Brook, William Gillett Academy in Charlottetown (Labrador), Mary Queen of Peace Elementary in St. John's, St. Francis of Assisi Elementary in Outer Cove, Carbonear Academy in Carbonear and Pasadena Elementary in Pasadena.
- Planning and/or commencement of construction of seven new schools in the communities of Conception Bay South, Torbay, Portugal Cove – St. Philip's, Gander, St. John's (replacement of Virginia Park Elementary), Paradise and Bay Roberts (replacement of Coley's Point Primary); and
- Planning and/or construction of four extension, renovation or redevelopment projects at St. Peter's Junior High and St. Peter's Primary in Mount Pearl, Gander Academy in Gander and Mobile Central High in Mobile.

Continued energy efficiency building initiatives

The department funded energy efficiency audits and/or upgrades at a total of 27 schools throughout the province. The energy audits included reviews of schools, including physical structures and systems as well as energy usage, to identify opportunities for energy savings. Upgrades included air sealing, installation of LED lighting and controls modifications to make schools more energy efficient. Work was completed at a total cost of \$1.3 million.

2016-17 Objective:

By March 31, 2017, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will have continued to address priority infrastructure projects to improve facilities throughout the K-12 education system.

Discussion of Results

Continued with planning and/or construction of K-12 major capital projects

Fiscal 2016-17 saw significant progress in the area of major capital projects for the K-12 school system. A total of \$67.5 million was spent to commence, continue or finalize various major capital projects during the year.

September 2016 saw the opening of Octagon Pond Elementary - the new grades K-6 school in Paradise. The school, which can accommodate approximately 700 students, includes 36 classrooms, a gymnasium, a stage, a learning resource centre, two music rooms, a lunch/multi-purpose room, a commercial kitchen, as well as a play area and soccer field, among other spaces. The building is designed in accordance with the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) green building rating system, incorporating environmentally-friendly features, such as a highly efficient ground sourced terminal heat pump HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning), as well as energy efficient lighting. The project was completed at a total cost of \$22.8 million.

In June 2016, a contract valued at over \$6.9 million, was awarded to Magna Contracting and Management Inc. to complete construction of the new school to replace Virginia Park Elementary in St. John's. The new school is being constructed adjacent to the existing Virginia Park Elementary. It will include 17 classrooms, a gymnasium and stage, a library resource centre, music room, lunch/multi-purpose room, commercial kitchen and a family resource centre, among other spaces. Construction continued throughout the year with the project scheduled to be completed by September 2017.

By the end of the fiscal year, construction was near completion on the new grades 5-7 school under construction in Torbay. The school will include 32 classrooms, a gymnasium, a library resource centre, a science lab, a computer lab, two music rooms, a lunch /multipurpose room, and a commercial kitchen. NLESD is scheduled to move into the school during late April when students are out for the Easter break.

Construction continued throughout the year on other new schools including the new grades 4-6 school in Gander, the new grades K-7 school in Conception Bay South, and the new grades 5-9 school in Portugal Cove – St. Philip's. These projects are all scheduled to be completed by September 2017. In addition, construction continued on the extension and renovation project underway at St. Peter's Junior High in Mount Pearl, which is scheduled to be completed by fall 2017.

Planning continued on other projects throughout the year. In November 2016 a contract was awarded, through a request for proposals, to SNC Lavalin for planning and design of the extension to Mobile Central High. Planning was underway during the remainder of the year. Another request for proposals was issued to obtain a design-build contractor to undertake the extension and renovation of St. Peter's Primary in Mount Pearl. By year-end the review of submitted proposals was underway. Early phases of planning were also finalized for the partial demolition and reconstruction of Gander Academy which will see the school transformed into a grades K-3 school.

Continued with improvements to existing K-12 schools (including: building envelopes; fire and life safety systems; air quality; and energy efficiency)

Continual maintenance is a key component to ensuring that school facilities remain safe and comfortable learning environments for both students and staff. During 2016-17, the department continued to fund improvements such as plumbing, energy management and accessibility upgrades as well as replacement of windows, siding and roofing, among other priority work. Approximately 70 projects were funded province-wide during the year at a total cost of \$12 million. Examples of projects funded during the year include:

- Window replacement at Fortune Bay Academy in St. Bernard's-Jacques Fontaine;
- Boiler replacement at Queen of Peace Middle School in Happy Valley-Goose Bay;

- Building envelope upgrades at MacDonald Drive Junior High in St. John's;
- Installation of mechanical dehumidification at École Notre-Dame du Cap in Cap Saint-Georges; and
- Exterior repairs at École des Grands-Vents in St. John's.

Finalized upgrades, modular classrooms and school expansions related to full-day Kindergarten

All infrastructure upgrades, including renovations as well as construction of modular classrooms and extensions, were completed as scheduled for September 2016 implementation of full-day Kindergarten. A total of 17 modular classrooms were constructed at 12 schools and four schools saw the construction of classroom extensions (Pasadena Elementary, Carbonear Academy, St. Francis of Assisi Elementary and Mary Queen of Peace Elementary). The department also funded various internal renovations at schools across the province, which included the creation of new classrooms and Kindergarten washrooms as well as other minor renovations.

Issue Summary

During April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2017, the department took significant steps toward improved K-12 infrastructure. The department implemented priority repair and maintenance projects, continued K-12 major school construction projects, completed work associated with full-day Kindergarten, and continued energy efficiency building initiatives.

Financial Statements

STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURE AND RELATED REVENUE (UNAUDITED) SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2017^{1, 2, 3}

| Area | Estimates | | |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| | Actual (\$) | Amended (\$) | Original (\$) |
| Executive Services (13.1.1.01 & 13.1.2.01) | | | |
| Executive Services (13.1.1.01 & 13.1.2.01) | 1,215,480 | 1,244,900 | 1,167,000 |
| Total | 1,215,480 | 1,244,900 | 1,167,000 |
| Corporate Services (13.2.1.01 - 13.2.2.01) | | | |
| General Administration (13.2.1.01 - 13.2.1.03) | 3,952,457 | 4,282,500 | 4,609,900 |
| Information Management and Special Projects (13.2.2.01) | 436,075 | 478,800 | 478,800 |
| Total | 4,388,532 | 4,761,300 | 5,088,700 |
| Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education and Early Childhood Development (13.3.1.01 – 13.3.6.01) | | | |
| Financial Assistance (13.3.1.01 - 13.3.1.05) | 712,496,069 | 719,824,100 | 718,964,300 |
| Program Development (13.3.2.01 & 13.3.2.02) | 2,760,480 | 2,590,000 | 2,584,500 |
| Student Support Services (13.3.3.01 - 13.3.3.03) | 1,741,432 | 1,886,200 | 1,629,400 |
| Educational Programs (13.3.4.01 - 13.3.4.03) | 11,903,265 | 13,378,900 | 13,973,500 |
| Child and Family Development (13.3.5.01 – 13.3.5.04) | 39,334,341 | 51,405,600 | 51,583,600 |
| Provincial Information and Library Resources Board (13.3.6.01) | 10,722,400 | 10,722,400 | 10,722,400 |
| Total | 778,957,987 | 799,807,200 | 799,457,700 |
| Total Department | 784,561,999 | 805,813,400 | 805,713,400 |

1. Expenditure and revenue figures included in this document are based on public information provided in the Report on the Program Expenditures and Revenues of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the Year Ended 31 March 2017.

2. Audited financial statements are a requirement at the government level and are made public through the Public Accounts process. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is not required to provide an audited financial statement.

3. During Budget 2017, the school infrastructure branch was transferred to the Department of Transportation and Works. 2016-17 expenditures related to infrastructure are now reflected in the Statement of Expenditure and Related Revenue for the Department of Transportation and Works.

Entities Reporting to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development

Category One Government Entities

Conseil scolaire francophone provincial de Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador

Newfoundland and Labrador English School Board

Provincial Information and Library Resources Board

Category Three Government Entities

Teacher Certification Board of Appeals (inactive)*

Teachers' Certification Committee

Teacher Certification Review Panel

*The Teacher Certification Board of Appeals is a category 3 government entity. In accordance with sections 14 and 15 of the *Teacher Training Act*, the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development may convene a board of appeals to hear two types of appeals where a teacher remains aggrieved by the decision of the Registrar of Teacher Certification and Records following a re-examination of an application; and where a teacher or the teacher certification committee remains aggrieved by a decision of the Teacher Certification Review Panel. During 2016-17, the board was not convened. However, if convened, a board will carry out its duties as per its mandate and will prepare an activity plan and report upon its annual activities in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*.