



Cape Breton-Victoria
Regional Centre for Education



ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT

June 2024

2024-25 Accountability Report

Version: FINAL

Issue Date: June 28, 2024

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Cape Breton-Victoria Regional Centre for Education is responsible for the administration of the public school system within the boundaries of Cape Breton and Victoria Counties. The Centre oversees the operation of 38 school sites providing services to 13,101 students. In addition, the Centre oversees support operations in the areas of building maintenance, transportation, and central administration incidental to the efficient delivery of program services.

One of the major initiatives underway is the [Regional Improvement Plan](#) 2024-25. Improving student achievement and well-being are and continue to be the focus for all professional learning and daily operations at the Cape Breton Victoria Regional Centre for Education. Our staff is committed to supporting schools to provide high quality learning opportunities that foster academic achievement, personal development and well-being, and citizenship within a culturally responsive setting.

In addition to our Regional Improvement Plan, further considerations for the Business Plan are as follows:

- [The EECD Business Plan 2024-25](#)
- The recommendations from [Students First: The Commission on Inclusive Education Report](#) and the resulting [Inclusive Education Policy of Nova Scotia](#)
- [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action](#)

2.0 MISSION STATEMENT

CBVRCE's Mission Statement is as follows: *We aim to inspire success, confidence and hope in each student to enable them to achieve their full potential.*

3.0 ANNUAL REPORT OF ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2023-24

Focus on Equity

To ensure a high-quality, culturally and linguistically responsive and equitable education to support the well-being of students and staff CBVRCE will:

Provide culturally responsive learning opportunities, resources and environments for all students and staff to ensure achievement.

- CBVRCE Equity in Action Team began work with Mi'kmaw Services Branch to move forward in reconcili-action
- Three Braids modules delivered to principals, vice principals, and other programs and student services staff including literacy and mathematics teams, counselors, and the French language programs teachers
- Culturally Responsive PD and after-school Treaty Education provided for CBVRCE staff.
- Smudging kits provided to schools across the region, including providing education and supporting safe spaces for students and staff.
- Through nine regional SAC meetings, provided opportunity for school community engagement, including opportunity for student voice on culturally relevant topics and equity in education.
- Provided specific support in mathematics/science to African NS and Indigenous students
- Honoured our largest group to date (36) of African NS graduates
- 78 translating devices were distributed to newcomer students to assist them with language in the classrooms. Most of these devices are iPads.

Continue to diversify our workforce to more closely reflect the student population we serve.

- Completed a self-identification survey of staff to gain baseline data as to how closely we currently reflect our current identified student population.
- Early hire offers were extended to new B. Ed students from diverse backgrounds.
- Additional African NS and Indigenous staff hired to support the students in our system

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<i>Implement accessibility plan for built environment, access to education and employment.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local working group established to report on progress on the recommendations from the provincial joint accessibility plan. Report template has been adopted by other RCEs. Report on achievements to be submitted to provincial group annually.
Focus on Leadership To ensure leaders are well prepared to support a high-quality, culturally and linguistically responsive and equitable education CBVRCE will:	
<i>Support administrators as instructional leaders who promote continual professional learning and growth mindset in schools with the new Leadership Standards.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued professional development for teachers and administrators on implementation of provincial inclusive education and assessment policies, including a focus on the Equitable Grading Practices Progressions. Regular family of school's meetings, principals' meetings, and vice-principals' meetings all centred around leadership standards and alignment with provincial policies.
<i>Guide administration in SSP planning and use of data to support continuous school improvement.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular reporting of reading levels and diagnostic and cumulative data collected in mathematics to inform SSP planning. Ongoing monitoring of SSP cycles and reflection. Increased participation rate in Student Success Survey to 78.3%
<i>Lead and implement training and strategies for safe, positive school and workplace culture and occupational health and safety.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Violent Threat Risk Assessment Level 1 training provided for school-based administrators, senior leadership, school counselors, and community partners such as Child and Family Well Being, Cape Breton Regional Police, Island Community Justice Society, and RCMP. Level 2 scheduled for August. Low Arousal training Continued growth of <i>Guys Work</i> Program to educate more facilitators and include more schools

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<i>Support the leadership team as we all address student attendance, well-being and achievement.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided training on diversity and inclusion for Operations staff to show how diversity, equity and inclusion can improve workplace culture by understanding how the world drives our behaviour. • Provide schools with support and resource guides for attendance tracker usage. • Regional SAC meeting agendas set to source feedback and suggestions for support of school community for enhancing student attendance, well-being, and achievement. • The CBVRCE's Guide to Instructional Leadership Success was developed with input from principals and subsequently shared with school administrators with review of implementation plan for 2024-2025.
<i>Work with all schools to incorporate best business practices that will enhance efficiency and time management for school administration staff.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly principals' meetings were conducted to support administrators with incorporating best businesses practices to enhance efficiencies. • Professional development opportunities were provided to support administrators in this area. • One on one sessions were facilitated to address individual needs of administrators.
<i>Support administrators and supervisors in performance appraisals that promotes student success through use of the Teacher Appraisal System.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrators are utilizing the CLEVR system to supervise and support teachers' performance appraisals.
<i>Provide opportunities for leaders to collaborate and problem solve, both with each other and with regional staff.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have not achieved this goal and will provide more time and focus on it in the 2024/25 school year. • Family of Schools meetings offer school leaders opportunities to collaborate on concerns and challenges relevant to their own local contexts and communities.
Focus on Provincial Alignment To ensure coherence and alignment provincially, CBVRCE will:	
<i>Continue to implement recommendations from</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance continues to work with all departments and schools with our fraud risk assessment as a focus point. Monthly reports are

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<i>the Fraud Risk Assessment to better strengthen controls and reduce fraud risk exposure.</i>	generated to determine anomalies, and staff are trained to identify errors/omissions. School audits are conducted throughout the year, with the focus on internal controls and training is provided when there are changes in staffing as required. Follow-up audits are conducted when required.
<i>Provide Fraud Risk training for all staff developed by the province and aligned for all RCEs/CSAP.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fraud training material was provided by the province. This was tweaked to align specifically with school-based and non-school based staff. Training was provided early April to school administration staff and then revisited in fall to roll out to all other staff.
<i>Implement Cyber security recommendations for business continuity and develop training programs for all staff for increased Cyber security awareness.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CBVRCE, as well as the other 6 RCEs and the CSAP, have undergone several assessments to determine our Cyber Security Maturity level. Several areas were identified as requiring improvement. • Additionally, it was determined that there was a lack of formal policy, procedure and governance. A provincial committee has been formed and representatives from each of the regions have been meeting regularly to develop appropriate documentation for these areas. • Locally, CBVRCE has formed a Cyber Security committee. This committee will meet regularly to develop an Incident Response posture, Incident Response plan, Disaster Recovery Plan and Business Continuity Plan. This committee will also review draft policies and procedures developed by the Provincial Committee for local adoption / implementation. • The CBVRCE IT Department has implemented a Cyber Security Awareness Training Program for employees. • Overall cyber security awareness has improved as a result.
<i>Complete standard facility condition assessments process for all school buildings to determine on-going maintenance and capital requirements.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facility Condition Assessments were completed for all schools in the summer/fall of 2023. These reports were used to determine capital planning and funding for the 2024 year to expedite funding for early design and tendering.

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<p><i>Work with our representative colleagues from all regions to develop common policies which reflect provincial alignment.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After collaboration with all RCEs, launched and implemented the provincial Workplace Impairment Policy • Re-developed the Respectful Workplace Policies from all regions into a consolidated, common policy currently awaiting approval with an anticipated launch in fall of 2024 • Continued work with the NS Education Common Services Bureau regarding common implementation of the NS Education Compensation Framework
<p>Focus on Well-being/Success In addition to the implementation of the Regional Improvement Plan Report 2023-2024, CBVRCE will:</p>	
<p><i>Consistently examine resources to ensure the most efficient and effective services are provided to students and families.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided professional development on NS Bias Evaluation Instrument, Guidance for Selecting Short-Term Resources Tool, Knowing the Signals – A Guide for Selecting Learning Resources that Value Black Students’ Lives and Mi’kmaw Ways of Being and Knowing to ensure resources provided to schools and families are culturally safe and align with the Inclusive Education Policy. • A Newcomer Social Worker was hired to support our increasing international population. This role provides comprehensive support to teachers by assisting newcomer students and their families. • CBVRCE Physical Education and Healthy Living Consultant, attended Leadership meetings and seven SAC meetings to speak about the new provincial Physical Activity Framework and share examples of equipment that could be used to support a culture of movement and increased engagement for learning within our schools.
<p><i>Work with schools to improve student attendance at all levels.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe Arrival program implemented for 26 schools. • Promotion of attendance tracker use through school administrators. • Student attendance support workers support student and families.

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<p><i>Improve reading and writing for all students.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Directed Strategy Development pilot at middle schools to support student writing. • Comprehensive professional development supporting holistic reading and writing development through Six Pillars of Effective Reading Instruction. • FSL writing assessment pilot for grades 7 & 8, Late French Immersion teachers. • Regular monitoring of reading levels gr. 1-5
<p><i>Improve mathematics achievement (numbers sense) for all students.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot program for math specialist at elementary school • SSP data tracking on pre- and post- diagnostic assessments and cumulative assessments in mathematics, scheduled throughout the yearly plan and supported by math coaches and interventionists in schools • Detailed analysis of item description reports in Math 3, 6, 8, & 10. • Comprehensive math PD provided, with a focus on grade 4 & 7 teachers and HS department heads

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4.0 KEY FACTS

Key Fact Category		
Students	September 30, 2022	September 30, 2023
Pre-Primary	677	666
Primary to Grade 12	12,102	12,435
Total Number of Students	12,779	13,101
Average Class Size P-2	20.6	20.4
Average Class Size 3-6	23.3	23.3
Average Class Size 7-9	20.4	20.1
Average Class Size 10-12	20.8	21.6
Total Number of Sections 10 - 12	10 to 12 = 1026 7 to 9 = 1285 P to 6 = 276	10 to 12 = 1018 7 to 9 = 1278 P to 6 = 293
Staff (FTEs)	September 30, 2022	September 30, 2023
School based educators & Administration	996.5	1009.5
School Based Non-Teaching Support	570.4	570.4
Programming Support	8	9
Non-Teaching Programming Support	64	64
Transportation	116.5	116.5
Property Services	194	194
Administration	51.25	54
Technology Support	11	11
Other Programs	18	18
Technology	September 30, 2022	September 30, 2023

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Students/Instructional Computer	0.98	1.18
Computers & Devices/Technician	1554	1712
Property Services	2022	2023
Total School Sq. Ft.*	2,353,366	2,353,366
Sq. Ft./Student*	194	180
Private Operator Sq. Ft.*	0	0
Operating Costs**	\$22,662,644	\$27,056,375
Operating Cost/Sq. Ft.**	\$9.63	\$11.50
Transportation	2022	2023
Total Buses on Regular Routes*	85	83
Total Spare Buses Operated*	23	20
Total Students Transported*	7,058	7,435
Total Student Transportation Cost**	\$7,046,485	\$7,852,580
Total Cost/Student Transported**	\$988	\$1056
Total number of bus runs daily*	362 (151 am/211 pm)	362 (151 am/211 pm)
Average number of students/bus run*	46am & 34pm	45
Cost/Unit – Contracted**	0	0
Cost/Unit – RCE**	\$65,245	\$76,238

* As of March 31st, for everything but student count, Sept 30th is used for enrolment numbers.

Definitions and Calculations:

Students (all based on Sept 30th statistics):

- Total Number of Students: Sept. 30th Total Enrolment (funded & unfunded)
- Average Class Size P-2
- Average Class Size 3-6
- Average Class Size 7-9
- Average Class Size 10-12

- Total Number of Classes & Sections

Staff:

- School based Educators and Administrators: Includes Teachers (including resource Teachers, Principals and Vice Principals), School Admin staff, Guidance, Psychologists, School based Non-Teaching Support: Includes Education or Teaching Assistants, School Secretaries, etc.
- Programming Support: School Administration Supervisors, Coordinators of school programming and school services
- Non- Teaching Programming Support: Secretaries, administration assistants and those positions not captured in programming support
- Transportation: Bus Drivers, Mechanics, and other related administration staff
- Property Services: Custodians, Maintenance and Trades staff
- Administration: Superintendents, Finance Staff, Human Resources Staff, Operations Staff, and other related administration positions
- Technology Support: Supervisors of School Technology, Networking Specialists, and other related IT support positions
- Other Programs: FTEs connected to programs including, but not limited to, international services programs, before & after school programs, etc.

Technology:

- Student/Instructional Computer: Ratio of Number of Students: Computers
- Computers & Devices/Technician: Total Computers & Devices across RCE/CSAP/Technical Support FTEs

Property Service:

- Total School Sq. Ft.: Total square footage of all schools operated by RCEs/CSAP (schools, P3,) excluding RCE office, bus garages, maintenance buildings.
- Sq. Ft. /Student: Total square footage from above divided by Sept. 30th unaudited student count
- Private Operator Sq. Ft.: Total square footage of all P3 schools excluding net/net lease P3s
- Operating Costs: Custodial, maintenance and utility costs for the previous fiscal year actuals. Includes repairs and maintenance expenses funded in the annual profile sheet, does not include any major capital expenditures (TCA) funded by the RCE/CSAP or by the department (TCA Major or repair funding over \$150K)
- Operating Costs/Sq. Ft.: Total op cost/Sq. Ft. of all schools maintained by RCE/CSAP including net/net P3s

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Transportation:

- Total Buses on Regular Routes: Total units operated on a daily basis by RCE
- Total Spare Buses Operated: Total number of spare buses
- Total Students Transported: All students transported – includes courtesy bused and privately conveyed
- Total Student Transportation Cost: Actual from previous year
- Total Cost/Student Transported: Total transportation audited actuals/total students transported
- Total number of bus runs daily: Total of all regularly scheduled bus runs/day
- Average number of students/bus run: Average of all students/number of daily bus runs
- Cost/Unit – Contracted buses: Total transportation contract cost/all buses
- Cost/Unit - RCE: Total transportation cost/all buses
- Total number of KM students were transported: Total KM of all regular bus run driven while transporting students on regular runs in a school year
- Total number of KM buses traveled: Total KM of all regular bus runs, extra and co-curricular trips and transport of buses to and from the various stops during the school year

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5.0 FINANCIAL SUMMARY AND VARIANCE REPORT

Key Financial Indicators			
	2023-24 Budget	2023-24 Actuals	2023-24 Variance
Revenue			
Province of Nova Scotia	\$159,771,021	\$166,999,373	\$7,123,456
Government of Canada	1,965,868	1,852,709	(113,159)
Municipal Contributions	19,207,042	19,207,042	0
Regional Centre Revenues	1,840,716	6,299,493	4,563,672
School Generated/Based Funds	3,500,000	4,115,014	615,014
Total Revenue	\$186,284,647	\$198,473,631	\$12,188,985
Expenditures			
Office of the Regional Executive Director	\$685,599	\$667,366	(\$20,357)
Financial Services	2,097,371	2,218,503	121,132
Human Resource Services	1,230,824	1,237,045	(3,748)
School Administration & Services	5,025,179	5,142,553	117,374
Programs	145,776,781	148,805,697	3,028,916
Operational Services	27,968,893	36,334,911	8,366,017
School Generated/Based Funds	3,500,000	4,061,793	561,793
Total Expenditures	\$186,284,647	\$198,467,868	\$12,183,222
Annual Operating Surplus (Deficit)		\$5,763	\$5,763
Opening Accumulated Surplus (Deficit)		8,348,830	
Closing Accumulated Surplus (Deficit)		\$8,354,593	

Variance Explanation:

The increase in revenues/expenditures stem from various items. It includes various grants throughout the year that are received after budget approval. These grants have no bottom-line financial impact but do increase the revenues/expenditures accordingly.

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The main variance that has caused the most significant revenue/expenditure impact is due to collective agreement bargaining that was not ratified prior to finalizing the 23/24 budget. Therefore, salary/benefit pressures were not captured in time for budget approval. This pressure caused current 23/24 wage pressures and prior year retros. This was offset by the department and caused no bottom-line financial impact.

There were other operational expenditures such as heating fuel, electricity, snow removal, etc. that caused expenditures to exceed budget. We were able to offset those pressures internally through various cost savings.