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Nova Central School District

Strategic Plan 2008-2011



June 30, 2008

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

Dear Minister Burke:

On behalf of Nova Central School Board, I am submitting our 2008-2011 Strategic Plan. This has been prepared in accordance with our board's requirements as a category one government entity under the *Transparency and Accountability Act*.

We believe that the strategic issues we will focus on over the next three years will help ensure that we are providing a quality educational experience for all students in Central Newfoundland, and supporting the strategic directions of the Department of Education.

We look forward to working with our district and school staff in the implementation of these goals and objectives.

My signature below indicates our board of trustees' accountability for the implementation of this plan and the achievement of the goals and objectives contained within.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Thomas Kendell".

Thomas Kendell, Chair

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PLAN AT A GLANCE

Vision

The vision of Nova Central School Board is of a community of learners achieving their highest potential in a safe and caring environment.

Mission

By June 30, 2011, the Nova Central School Board has increased the number of students graduating with academic/honours certificates by five percent in order to improve students' access to potential post-secondary opportunities requiring a high school academic certificate.

Goals

Issue 1: Student Achievement

Goal: By June 30, 2011, Nova Central School Board will have improved student achievement at the intermediate level.

Objective 1:

By June 30, 2009, Nova Central School Board will have developed a plan to improve student achievement at the intermediate level.

Objective 2:

By June 30, 2010, Nova Central School Board will have piloted a plan to improve student achievement at the intermediate level at a select number of schools.

Objective 3:

By June 30, 2011, Nova Central School Board will have implemented a plan to improve student achievement at the intermediate level throughout the district.

Issue 2: Professional Development

Goal: By June 30, 2011, Nova Central School Board will have enhanced professional development to support student academic achievement, district leadership and employee growth.

Objective 1:

By June 30, 2009, Nova Central School Board will have established a long-term professional development plan for teaching staff, support staff and managers/administrators.

Objective 2:

By June 30, 2010, Nova Central School Board will have begun to implement a professional development plan for all teaching staff.

Objective 3:

By June 30, 2011, Nova Central School Board will have implemented a professional development plan for all employees in the district

Issue 3: Effective Use of Instructional Time

Goal: By June 30, 2011, Nova Central School Board will have improved the use of instructional time for all students.

Objective 1:

By June 30, 2009, Nova Central School Board will have researched district practices and best practices regarding use of instructional time, and developed guidelines for district schools to maximize use of instructional time.

Objective 2:

By June 30, 2010, Nova Central School Board will have implemented a strategy to ensure effective use of instructional time for students in grades 7 to 12.

Objective 3:

By June 30, 2011, Nova Central School Board will have implemented a strategy to ensure effective use of instructional time for students in grades Kindergarten to 6.

Issue 4: Enhanced Supports for Skilled Trades Programming

Goal: By June 30, 2011, Nova Central School Board will have increased the number of skilled trades programs available in high schools.

Objective 1:

By June 30, 2009, Nova Central School Board will have established nine new skilled trades programs in district high schools.

Objective 2:

By June 30, 2010, Nova Central School Board will have established two additional new skilled trades programs in district high schools.

Objective 3:

By June 30, 2011, Nova Central School Board will have established two additional new skilled trades programs in district high schools.

O V E R V I E W

Geography

Nova Central School District takes in a sizeable geographic area in Central Newfoundland, ranging from just east of Terra Nova Park to the Baie Verte Junction. The district includes the schools:

- Gander and east to Charlottetown
- in the Lewisporte - Twillingate area
- Grand Falls-Windsor west including Buchans and Green Bay area
- on the Baie Verte Peninsula
- on the Connaigre Peninsula.

The head office for the district is in Gander and a regional office is located in Grand Falls-Windsor. The district also has six bus depots and a maintenance depot.

Board of Trustees

Nova Central School District is governed by a board of trustees consisting of fifteen members, elected or appointed to represent eleven different areas throughout Central Newfoundland.

Divisions

Nova Central School District is managed by a Director of Education and has three operational divisions:

1. Finance and Administration (including technology, maintenance and student transportation)
2. Human Resources
3. Programs (including student support services).

Schools

As of September 2008, the Nova Central School District will include 66 schools located in 50 communities (with the closure of Deckwood Primary in June 2008). The projected enrollment for 2008-09 is 12,572 students. The district has a distinctly rural population, with school sizes ranging from six students (Bayview Primary) to almost 900 students (Gander Academy).

During the 2007-08 school year, the Nova Central School District had 12 urban schools with an enrolment of 4,585 students (35.3%) and 55 rural schools with an enrolment of 8,413 (64.7%). Many rural schools are centralized and serve several communities. There are 16 schools with populations of fifty or fewer students. Eight schools are located on islands accessible only by ferries.

There are 26 schools with grades Kindergarten to 12 in Nova Central School District. Multi-age instruction occurs in many schools. The size and rural nature of our district impacts all services including student programming, maintenance and human resources. Service delivery as well as the recruitment and retention of teaching and support staff can be challenging when school sites, students and staff are spread over such a large, rural area.

Human Resources

Nova Central School District has approximately 2000 full-time, part-time and casual employees. They include:

- Teachers
- Program specialists
- Student assistants
- School administrators
- Administrative staff
- Maintenance/custodial/cleaning staff
- Bus drivers
- Mechanics.

Budget

For the school year 2008-09, the Nova Central School Board has approved a budget of \$113,729,337.00. This includes:

- Curriculum delivery and programming
- Salaries
- Student transportation
- Fixed costs such as electricity, fuel, phone service, municipal service fees and so on
- Administration
- Operations and maintenance
- Capital expenditures.

MANDATE

Nova Central School Board is responsible for the implementation of educational services and curriculum as prescribed by the Department of Education, primarily through the *Schools Act, 1997*. The district provides prescribed pre-Kindergarten programs and Kindergarten to grade 12 school programs to students within its jurisdiction.

Please see Appendix A for a more complete description of the mandate of school boards.

LINES OF BUSINESS

The Nova Central School District has two lines of business:

1. Programs and Services (Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12)

One year prior to school entry children are offered an opportunity to become oriented to the Kindergarten environment via the KinderStart Program. The itinerant teacher for the deaf and hard of hearing and the itinerant teacher for the blind and visually impaired provide pre-school intervention to qualified children.

Department of Education prescribed programs are offered based on the core requirements within the Pathways framework. The board offers other Department of Education approved programs based on management criteria and the resource capacity of the district. Pathway Four courses are approved by the school administrator.

Personal and career guidance and counseling are available in all schools.

Extra and/or co-curricular programs and activities are available to varying degrees in all schools.

2. Transportation

The Nova Central School Board is responsible for transporting students to and from schools in compliance with Department of Education regulations.

VALUES

The core values explain the character of the organization promoted throughout the Nova Central School District. The Board of Trustees has confirmed the following values for the coming three years.

CORE VALUES

- Accountability:** Each person fulfills commitments in accordance with defined criteria.
- Caring:** Each person is concerned for the well being of others.
- Courage:** Each person takes risks by initiating and accepting change.
- Fairness:** Each person provides equitable opportunities for all.
- Honesty:** Each person's actions matches his/her words.
- Openness:** Each person is free to voice his/her opinions in the appropriate forum.
- Perseverance:** Each person pursues options until goals are achieved.
- Respect:** Each person acknowledges and considers the opinions of others.

CLIENTS

The primary clients of Nova Central School Board are the children and youth who are students in our district, and their families

VISION

The vision of the Nova Central School Board is of a community of learners achieving their highest potential in a safe and caring environment.

MISSION

In order to develop the mission, the board participated in an external environmental scan with school council chairs. The Director of Education facilitated an internal environmental scan with school administrators and senior executive personnel. It was determined that it is essential for the mission to focus on the opportunities available to students graduating high school. The following mission reflects these concerns, and was also developed in consideration of the strategic directions of government as communicated by the Minister of Education.

By June 30, 2011, the Nova Central School Board has increased the number of students graduating with academic/honours certificates by five percent (5%) in order to improve students' access to potential post-secondary opportunities requiring a high school academic certificate.

Measure: Increase in percentage (%) of certificates to improve access

Indicators: Comparison of the percentage of June 2006 academic/honours graduates to the June 2011 percentage of academic/honours graduates.

S T R A T E G I C I S S U E S

In Nova Central School Board's 2006-2008 Strategic Plan, four strategic issues were identified:

1. Communications
2. Bylaws, Constitution and Governance Policies
3. Restructuring
4. Student Achievement.

As a result of the 2006-08 Plan, the following were developed and approved:

- Communications Plan
- Bylaws, Constitution and Governance Policies
- Revised Restructuring Plan

In addition, the board began implementation of a plan to increase the number of students graduating with an academic or honours certificate, in accordance with its Mission. The work resulting from these plans and policies is ongoing.

The four strategic issues identified for 2008-2011 are a continuation of the board's focus on improving student academic achievement through:

- Implementation of resources at the intermediate level
- Supporting professional development and training
- Ensuring effective use of instructional time
- Enhancing our skilled trades program.

Goals

Issue 1: Student Academic Achievement

Nova Central School Board recognizes that student success results from a combination of factors, including safe, healthy, supportive learning environments. Since it was established in 2004, the board has implemented a number of resources at the primary-elementary level to improve student performance, as well as interventions at the high school level to help ensure that students can successfully complete academic Mathematics and English courses.

However, it is also recognized that students' choices and performance at the intermediate level have a direct impact on their ability to complete an academic program in high school, and the options available to them upon high school completion. The need to focus on the intermediate learning environment was raised by school administrators, teachers and the programs division staff.

Research shows that the learning needs of intermediate students are complex and that they require specific resources, supports and teaching strategies.

Through this strategic plan, the board will focus on the intermediate student and work to improve student performance in Grades 7-8-9. This goal also supports the strategic direction communicated by the Minister of Education of "Improved educational programs and environments respond to constantly evolving demographics."

Goal: By June 30, 2011, Nova Central School Board will have improved student achievement at the intermediate level.

Measure: Implementation of plan

Indicators:

- Improved Criterion Reference Testing (CRT) results for grade 9 students between June 2008 and June 2011
- Increased resources and supports for students in grades 7 - 9
- Increased training in teaching strategies for teachers at the intermediate level

Objective 1:

By June 30, 2009, Nova Central School Board will have developed a plan to improve student achievement at the intermediate level.

Measure: Approved plan

Indicators:

- Established intermediate programs working group
- Established baseline data
- Developed plan
- Board approved plan.

Objective 2:

By June 30, 2010, Nova Central School Board will have piloted a plan to improve student achievement at the intermediate level at a select number of schools.

Objective 3:

By June 30, 2011, Nova Central School Board will have implemented a plan to improve student achievement at the intermediate level throughout the district.

Issue 2: Professional Development

Comprehensive professional development and training can support student academic achievement, improve the leadership capacity in the district and contribute to employee growth and satisfaction. Nova Central School Board recognizes the importance of providing quality professional development and training in specific areas such as:

- Orientation to the organization and to positions for new employees
- All aspects of curriculum
- Teaching strategies for the primary-elementary; intermediate and high school students
- Multi-age instruction
- Mandatory training (eg. Occupational Health and Safety)
- Legislation, policies and procedures
- Technology.

Furthermore, professional development was a theme identified by school council representatives and staff in the environmental scans conducted for the strategic plan.

Goal: By June 30, 2011, Nova Central School District will have enhanced professional development to support student academic achievement, district leadership and employee growth.

Measure: Enhanced professional development

Indicators:

- Developed professional development plan for teaching staff, support staff and managers/administrators
- Board approved plan
- Increased professional development resources.

Objective 1:

By June 30, 2009, Nova Central School Board will have established a long-term professional development plan for teaching staff, support staff and managers/administrators.

Measure: Professional development plan

Indicators:

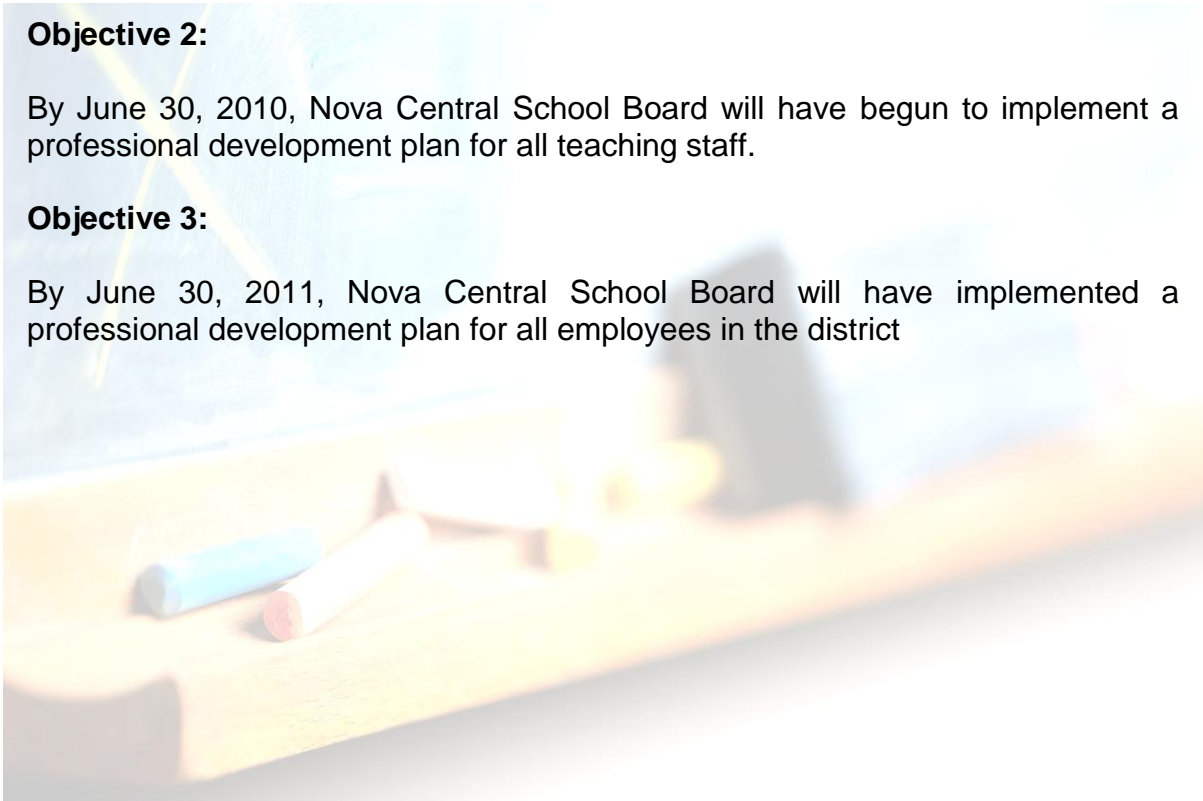
- Reviewed existing district practices
- Identified priority areas for professional development
- Developed professional development plan.

Objective 2:

By June 30, 2010, Nova Central School Board will have begun to implement a professional development plan for all teaching staff.

Objective 3:

By June 30, 2011, Nova Central School Board will have implemented a professional development plan for all employees in the district



Issue 3: Effective Use of Instructional Time

Schools are the primary delivery agents for a broad range of educational services and programs intended to ensure that a student's cognitive, social and physical development is supported. In many cases, schools partner with other agencies to provide such services and programs. However, there are incredible demands placed on schools and class time during the school year, from many different sources. Nova Central School Board recognizes the importance of providing a holistic learning environment for all students. However, it also wants to ensure that curriculum outcomes are covered and that instructional time is maximized.

The Board of Trustees and the Programs Division have identified this issue as a priority for 2008-11.

Goal: By June 30, 2011, Nova Central School Board will have improved the use of instructional time for all students.

Measure: Enhanced use of instructional time

Indicators:

- Completed background report on district practices and best practices
- Improved guidelines for district schools on instructional time
- Implemented strategy for effective use of instructional time in grades 7-12
- Implemented strategy for effective use of instructional time in grades Kindergarten to 6.

Objective 1:

By June 30, 2009, Nova Central School Board will have researched district practices and best practices regarding use of instructional time, and developed guidelines for district schools to maximize use of instructional time.

Measure: Guidelines for use of instructional time

Indicators:

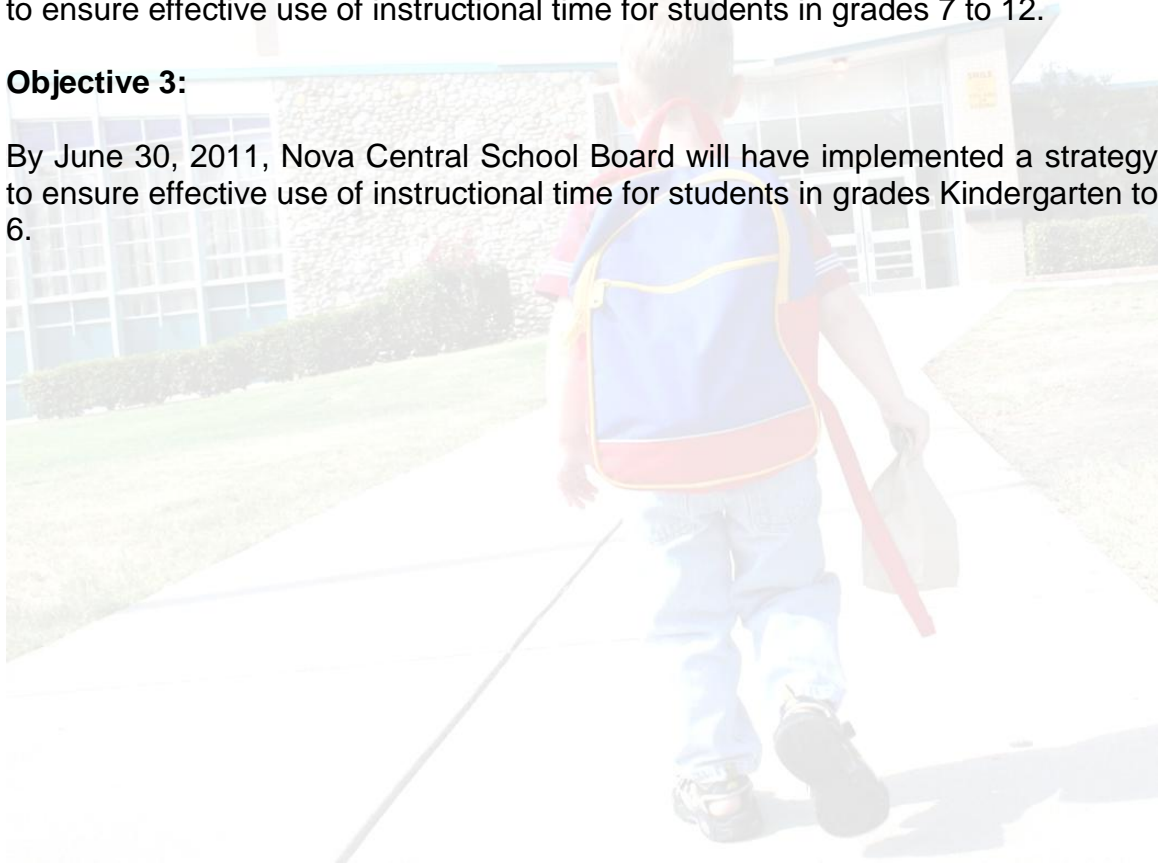
- Completed background report on district practices and best practices
- Completed guidelines for district schools on instructional time.

Objective 2:

By June 30, 2010, Nova Central School Board will have implemented a strategy to ensure effective use of instructional time for students in grades 7 to 12.

Objective 3:

By June 30, 2011, Nova Central School Board will have implemented a strategy to ensure effective use of instructional time for students in grades Kindergarten to 6.



Issue 4: Enhanced Supports for Skilled Trades Programming

The Department of Education has committed to providing the equipment to pilot and implement a skilled trades program in high schools across the province. Nova Central School Board recognizes the importance of offering a varied curriculum at the high school level and affording students the opportunity to experience different possibilities for career choices. The board intends to ensure that the opportunities for implementation of skilled trades programs in the district are maximized and that the required infrastructure is established where possible. Skilled trades programs introduce students to the technological design process and production using computer hardware and software, as well as practical application of construction design methods.

Feedback on the skilled trades pilot project has been very positive, and school council representatives and school staff members expressed significant interest in the program during consultations for the Board's Strategic Plan. This goal also reflects the strategic direction of the Department of Education to support a qualified and skilled workforce to meet the province's skilled labour demands.

Goal: By June 30, 2011, Nova Central School Board will have increased the number of skilled trades programs available in high schools.

Measure: Increased number of skilled trades programs

Indicators:

- Increased number of skilled trades programs in June 2011 compared with the number in June 2008
- Increased teacher training and resources for skilled trades.

Objective 1:

By June 30, 2009, Nova Central School Board will have established nine new skilled trades programs in district high schools.

Measure: Increased number of skilled trades programs

Indicators:

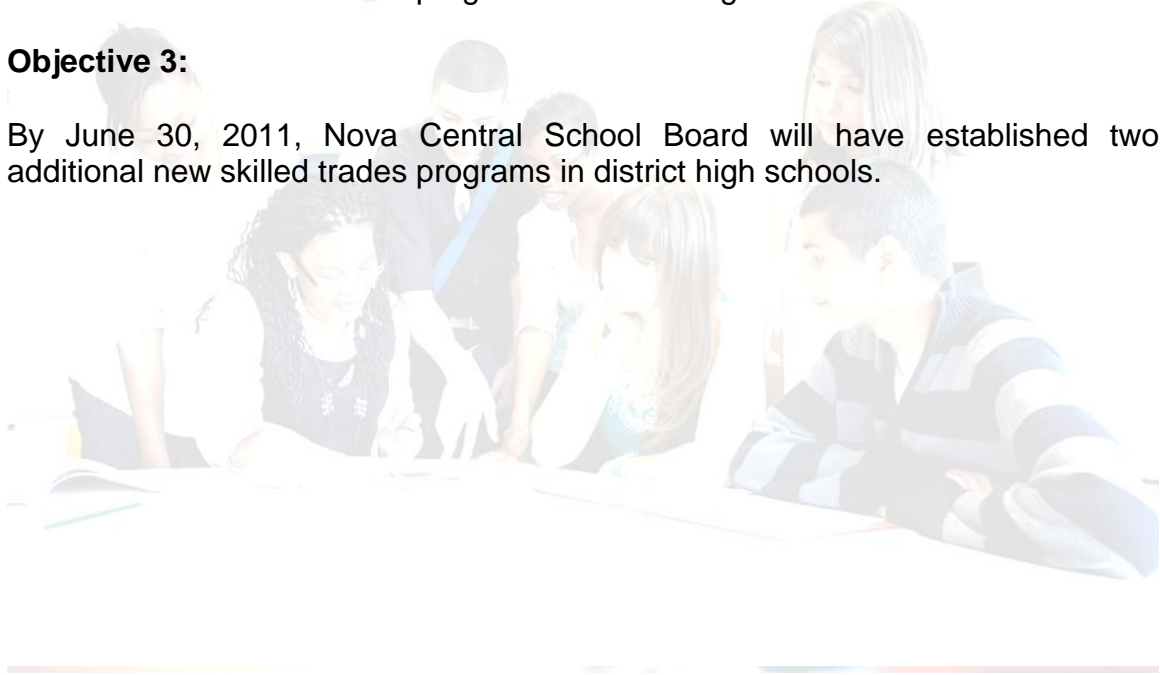
- Increased number of skilled trades programs in June 2009 compared with the number in June 2008
- Increased teacher training and resources for skilled trades.

Objective 2:

By June 30, 2010, Nova Central School Board will have established two additional new skilled trades programs in district high schools.

Objective 3:

By June 30, 2011, Nova Central School Board will have established two additional new skilled trades programs in district high schools.



S U M M A R Y

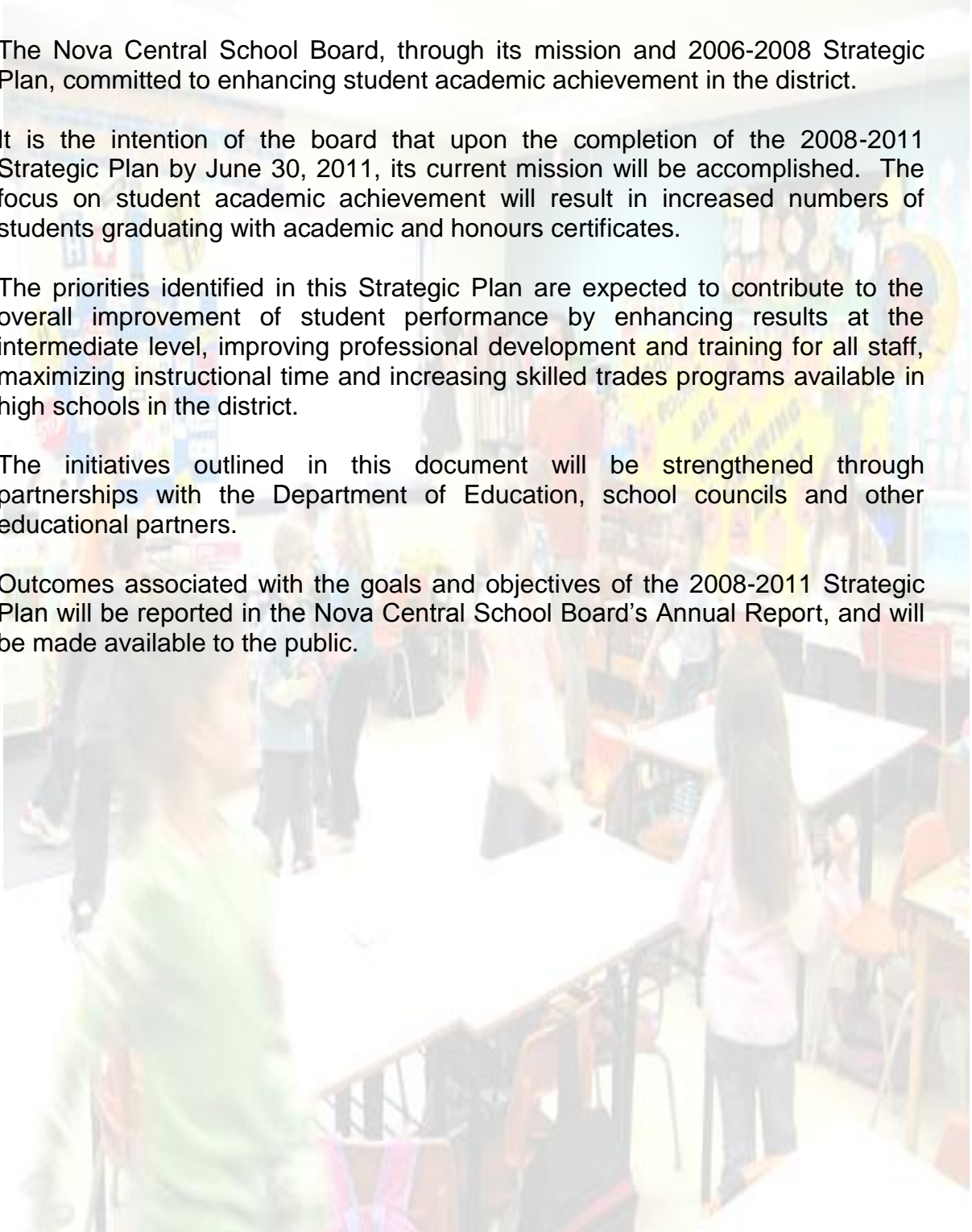
The Nova Central School Board, through its mission and 2006-2008 Strategic Plan, committed to enhancing student academic achievement in the district.

It is the intention of the board that upon the completion of the 2008-2011 Strategic Plan by June 30, 2011, its current mission will be accomplished. The focus on student academic achievement will result in increased numbers of students graduating with academic and honours certificates.

The priorities identified in this Strategic Plan are expected to contribute to the overall improvement of student performance by enhancing results at the intermediate level, improving professional development and training for all staff, maximizing instructional time and increasing skilled trades programs available in high schools in the district.

The initiatives outlined in this document will be strengthened through partnerships with the Department of Education, school councils and other educational partners.

Outcomes associated with the goals and objectives of the 2008-2011 Strategic Plan will be reported in the Nova Central School Board's Annual Report, and will be made available to the public.



School Board Mandate (Legislation: *Schools Act, 1997*)

Duties of boards

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 engaged in carrying students to and from school are

- (i) 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 (1)(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.

Strategic Directions (Department of Education)

The strategic directions presented below do not represent all of the directions pertinent to the Minister of Education. For a complete list of all applicable strategic directions, please refer to the Department of Education 2008-11 Strategic Plan.

Title: Primary, Elementary and Secondary Education				
Strategic Direction: Improved educational programs and environments respond to constantly evolving demographics.				
	This direction is/was	Addressed in the:		
Systemic Intervention	Applicable to other Entities Reporting to the Minister	Nova Central School Board's Strategic Plan	Operational Plan	Applicable Divisional Work Plans
Safety and tolerance			✓	
Curriculum		✓		
Technology			✓	
Learning Supports		✓		
Infrastructure			✓	
Achievement		✓		
Library Resources	✓			

Title: Skilled Trades				
Strategic Direction: A qualified and skilled workforce meets the province's skilled labour demands				
	This direction is/was	Addressed in the:		
Systemic Intervention	Applicable to other Entities Reporting to the Minister	Nova Central School Board's Strategic Plan	Operational Plan	Applicable Divisional Work Plans
Recommendations of the Skills Task Force	✓			
Post-secondary programs	✓			
Women's participation	✓			
Apprenticeship opportunities	✓			
Youth participation		✓		

