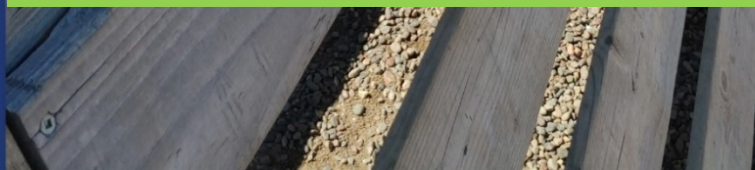




NSCECE Annual Report 2022-2023




nscece
NOVA SCOTIA COLLEGE OF
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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Board Chair Message

The Nova Scotia College of Early Childhood Education (NSCECE) is poised for the future. This past year the team has taken steps that demonstrate growth, determination and leadership, all of which are laying the foundation for NSCECE to continue to evolve.

This will be guided by the strategic plan, which was a true organizational effort. In the plan you can see the passion and dedication of the team at NSCECE and their commitment to the early childhood education sector. They are leaders who are helping to shape our future leaders.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to share our gratitude and thanks to everyone at NSCECE. To those at our child care centres, the team at the College and all our students, we see your dedication to growing the early childhood education sector. You are the ones who will continue to move NSCECE forward.

Alana Andrews
Chair, Board of Directors





Setting our course!

CEO's Message

Hi everyone.

The Early Years sector is undergoing massive transformational change driven by the CWELCCA. This past year, as the direction for the sector became more clear, NSCECE focused on “setting our course” and starting our journey!

The management team drove the development of a new strategic plan with input from employees, board members, and regulators. Our mission and vision were updated, and four major strategic objectives were defined. To operationalize the strategic plan, 46 initiatives were identified and will be completed over the next three to four years. This will ensure we are well positioned to take advantage of the seismic forces reshaping our sector and help us to achieve our new mission of “giving children the best start in life through innovative, responsive, and inclusive education”.

As part of the province’s goal of creating 9,500 new child care spaces, we opened the beautiful new Island Trails Child Care Centre in Port Hawkesbury with capacity for 44 children, and we expect to open more child care centres in the coming year! After the roller coaster of COVID, staffing levels stabilized this year across all of our centres and we added more infant spaces. At the same time, to help maintain our lab school emphasis on best practices for child care, we launched our “what is a lab school?” project and focused on increasing pedagogical documentation.

The college continued to grow and innovate. We enrolled over 400 students throughout the year and had 200 attending classes at once (our highest numbers ever) in eight simultaneous programs. In November we held a double convocation ceremony for 115 graduates, again our largest ever, and kept program completion rates high at 84%. We began teaching a new hybrid modality which included the first asynchronous ECE courses at a private college in Atlantic Canada! We also launched a new pilot program called Pathway designed specifically for newcomers and a new accelerated five-month ECA program. DEECD funded large numbers of PLAR and Pathway seats and continued to reach out to us, reflecting a strong and growing partnership with this critical regulator and driver of change in the sector.

The EYCDC redesigned their web site, developed new on demand PD content, and supported the development of the new Culturally Responsive Practice modules which received excellent reviews after delivery to nearly 850

participants. In addition to curating a collection of materials to explore the four founding cultures of NS, our resource centre had 46% more onsite visits and 8% more loans of books and materials.

At the Board, we thanked Melanie and Kate for their years of impactful support to NSCECE, and welcomed Jason, Julia, Margaret, and Laura.

We also managed to squeeze in some fun with a couple of employee events: one at HaliMac in December and another at Bowlarama in April. Both events were posted, including photos, on our new intranet named by our employees as “The Staff Portal”.

Of course, none of these many accomplishments would be possible without our amazing team of employees who bring their best to NSCECE every day. To all of you I say thank you for your commitment and passion for this work! I’d also like to thank DEECD and DAE for their continued support of NSCECE. Finally, a big thank you to our volunteer board of directors who always ask great questions and who share our commitment to early childhood education.

Our course is set. Our journey continues. Let’s keep learning and growing together and giving children the best possible start in life!

Joe Malek
President & CEO



Lab Schools and Child Care Centres

This year was very exciting and busy for all! We worked on expansions of our current operations, staying on top of the changes within the DEECD and our professional development. Our BIG news is the opening of Island Trails Child Care Centre in Port Hawkesbury in June 2023.

Enrolment

Our child care centres are licensed with the province for the following age groups:

Child Care Centre	Total Licensed Capacity	Age Groups Served	Break Down of Classrooms	Number of Educators Required
Akerley	56	3 months – 5 years	10 Infants 30 Toddlers 16 Preschool	13
Leeds Street	43	3 months – 5 years	10 Infants 17 Toddlers 16 Preschool	12
Mawio'mi	47	3 months – 5 years	10 Infants 15 Toddlers 16 Preschool	12
Island Trails	44	3 months – 5 years	10 Infants 18 Toddlers 16 Preschool	11

Last year we focused quite a bit on our enrolment. It was still fluctuating slightly as we recovered from the pandemic. This year our waiting lists are well over 1,000 families across our four locations. In order to help to alleviate this somewhat, we were able to expand to full infant capacity moving up from 8 infant spaces to 10 infant spaces. This meant we also had to hire an additional educator for those infant programs. This also meant that the quality of our infant programs has increased with a smaller child to adult ratio – life is smoother in the infant rooms!

Our waiting lists continue to increase as the implementation of the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement mandates our families monthly rates trend down to meet an average target of \$10.00/day. This gradual decrease is making child care more affordable for families but unfortunately, we aren't able to meet the demand with our current operations. Our current locations aren't able to provide the spaces necessary which is why we decided to move forward with opening a new child care centre.

Our lab schools hiring is regulated for ECE Level 2 and 3 Classifications. With our new child care centre we have some flexibility where we have the ability to hire Level 1, 2 and 3 Classified ECEs along with untrained (non-ECEs).

Students

As lab schools we value the opportunity to mentor students. This past year we continued to mentor a variety of ECE and ECA students from local colleges and universities. We have worked with ISANS to mentor a student at one of our locations and we were also happy to have the opportunity to welcome high school co-op students. We will start mentoring students at our new child care centre within the next year. We're allowing our team to grow and develop there first.

Educators

Our educators have different educational backgrounds and have completed their post-secondary educations at a variety of different institutions. Below is a breakdown of where our educators have completed their post-secondary education. These numbers also include current employees at Island Trails who are upgrading their current classification levels with us.

Post Secondary Institution	Current Employees
NSCECE	21
St. Joseph's	3
MSVU	6
NSCC	5
NSCECE/MSVU	2
NSCC/MSVU	1
CBBC	2
CDS Teacher's College	1
Jane Norman	1
NSCECE ECE Student	1
NSCECE ECA Student	2
Outside of Nova Scotia	7

We were so excited to open Island Trails Child Care Centre in Port Hawkesbury! Last year we asked for input from our educators and support staff regarding what the new child care centre design layout should include, what toys/supplies/equipment/materials are required for classrooms, outdoor playgrounds and the kitchen. We even had a poll to help us select a name for our newest location, and we couldn't be happier with Island Trails as the name!

The recruitment process for Island Trails was vigorous. We sometimes struggled to find the right people for the child care centre and understood this would most likely be a challenge moving forward as there is a smaller pool of qualified people to hire from based on geography and smaller population than the HRM. We got creative on our hiring efforts by placing ads through the community's local radio station, NS Works office, reaching out to our licensing officials, the local Chamber of Commerce, online agencies such as Indeed, our own job board, a large road sign, and offering a recruitment bonus to our own employees, and used an employment agency to help us recruit and hire the Centre Director and subsequent educators. The team is still growing but we couldn't be prouder of who we've hired thus far.



Program Development

As educators of NSCECE it is important to us and vital to our organization to continue to be involved in committees both internally and in the community.

We've had some of the college students visit our programs and in turn we've taken some vignettes of our educators and children in action to share with the students in class. We are working with one of the college faculty to enhance documentation through the use of sketch notebooks – something that's taught in curriculum. The connection between the lab schools and college is essential.

Apart from our internal committees such as the lab school advisory committee and inclusion coordinators committee, we find ourselves working within our greater communities in a variety of ways. This year we had the opportunity to become part of the Non-Profit Centre Directors group once again. This gives us the opportunity to not only gain information from other early learning and child care programs but also to share our knowledge and expertise.

We've ensured that our voices were heard within the DEECD by following through with the surveys they sent out, by taking part in online information sessions and asking questions, taking part in bi-monthly meetings to share our concerns and ask questions regarding our unique operations as lab schools, and sharing surveys with families when asked of us to ensure our families' voices are heard as well.

The DEECD has offered grants to supplement our programs and we've taken advantage of those to purchase new toys, equipment, and classroom furnishings. We're still working through these grants to ensure the items purchased are reflective of a child led curriculum.

We took time to revise our emergency evacuation plans for each location in the aftermath of the provincial hurricanes, forest fires, and flooding. We wanted to ensure that we keep the safety of the children we care for and ourselves at a high priority.

Professional Development

Our teams have taken a variety of professional development over the past 12 months in order to keep their skills and knowledge relevant. We had two of our educators complete the Advanced Practitioner Program pilot which is no easy feat since people from all across the province applied to take part. The professional development we engaged in included everything from outdoor learning, university courses working towards Level 3 classification, equity/diversity/inclusion, racial justice, accessibility, understanding mental health in children, building blocks for inclusion, reflective practices, gender identity and expression in early childhood, culturally responsive practice, compassion fatigue, safe food handling, and so much more.

A couple of us met with faculty of the college to discuss how we utilize technology for documentation and what it looks like in the classroom. One of our team met with our Storypark representative, the online communication platform we use with families, for a research session on addition of accident reports, attendance and IPPs to assist in making our technology even more user friendly.

As part of our quest to be fully involved in the Pyramid Model, two of our educators have reached first fidelity. This training focuses on the social emotional development of children. We are implementing this practice across the three lab schools with the support of coaches from NSECDIS (Nova Scotia Early Childhood Development Intervention Services).

We all sat down together one Saturday morning in January to brainstorm on 'what is a lab school?'. We took the time to reflect on our current practices and where we see ourselves moving forward professionally. This meant we are focusing on best practices, implementing and developing theories regarding the care and

education of young children, ensuring we are mentoring our student educators effectively, and planning for professional development to help us raise our own bar of quality.

Special Events, Community Partnerships & Newsworthy Items

This year a couple of our educators welcomed babies into their families. We feel privileged to be considered part of their extended families and we were thrilled to help celebrate the arrival of these precious bundles of joy!

Each year we are lucky enough to be involved in some great partnerships within our child care centres, campus communities, neighbourhood communities, various people within the DEECD and other regulatory bodies along with partners in outside agencies we are involved with.

In October we got together to discuss strategic planning for the organization.

In November of 2022 Nova Scotia implemented their ECE wage scale. This was a change to the hourly wage of many of our educators. This is another step in the province's Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement. We are still awaiting the provincial announcement for ECE benefits and pension plans.

Our summer camps were successful once again this year with the offering in Halifax and Dartmouth for the second year in a row.

We ensured that our teams were recognized and showed appreciation for the jobs they do on June 9th for ECE Appreciation Day. In April we took time away from work to bond together and strengthen our team through an afternoon of bowling. This was great fun and made us feel appreciated as members of NSCECE. We tried to get together again during the summer, but the weather did not cooperate, so we decided to postpone until winter 2024.

Closing

Our 2022-2023 year has been another jam-packed year! We've had our share of ups and downs and as per normal, we move forward with smiles on our faces, lessons learned and ready to take on new challenges.

One of our biggest accomplishments was opening Island Trails and building the team. Many people from within the organization assisted in this project where we took an old credit union building and turned it into a modern beautiful child care centre. The hard work that went into this venture has been well worth the effort and we are excited to watch the program grow in terms of children enrolled and more educators hired.

We're starting to see the results of the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement come to fruition. Not only did we open Island Trails, but we expanded the infant spaces in our three lab schools. We've started to reduce the family fees for child care spaces and saw the implementation of the ECE wage scale.

As Nova Scotian educators we have rallied together to help those less fortunate not only in our immediate communities but across the province. When Mother Nature ravaged parts of the province displacing families and destroying some child care centres, we stepped in. When there was an ask for food and clothing to help throughout the year, we were there. We will continue to be there, it's in our nature to help.

We have goals that we're working towards for the upcoming year, and we're excited to move forward onto new adventures within our teams and the organization as a whole. We do this with the strong teams that we've built together. Focusing on each other's strengths, communication, dedication and collaboration helps to keep us motivated. Collectively we have made some great accomplishments and we're excited about the upcoming opportunities that lie ahead.

Lee Anne Eveline

Director, Early Learning and Child Care Programs

Early Years Community Development Centre (EYCDC)

Collaboration with DEECD & Culturally Responsive Practice (CRP)

EYCDC is one of the eight Support Sites, and it has an inherent partnership relationship with the DEECD. This year, we reached a new level of cooperation. The EYCDC proposed and received funding for development and delivery of the new foundational professional development (PD) modules that support the Nova Scotia's Early Learning Curriculum Framework. The three new trainings are currently being developed: a Land-Based Learning Module, and the CRP for Leaders which support Culturally Responsive Practice; and an asynchronous Infant Quality Care Module which supports the Infant Quality Care Grant.

We continue delivering Culturally Responsive Practice (CRP) training and the NS Early Learning Curriculum Framework Modules for the early years sector as well Pre-primary programs. The EYCDC coordinated delivery of the CRP training to over 750 educators working in six Regional Centres for Education that will be delivered in the Fall of 2023. In addition, we had 91 participants taking CRP training and 176 participants taking NS Early Learning Curriculum Framework Modules from the licenced child care sector and family home daycares.



**Culturally Responsive Practice
in Nova Scotia's Early Learning
and Child Care Settings**

Lending Library and Cultural Collections

To bring Culturally Responsive Practice to life and to meet multiple requests for cultural and age-appropriate materials, we started creating the four (4) multi-layered collections for the historical cultures of Nova Scotia: Acadian & Francophone, African Nova Scotian, Gaelic, and Mi'kmaw. We are working with the respective communities who advise us on the materials in each collection, which contains books for adults with historical references, books for children, music, cultural artifacts, and hands-on activities. We were able to secure funding from the Department of Gaelic Affairs to sponsor the Gaelic Collection.



The lending Library with its updated selection of open-ended materials remains an important resource for our ECE students, instructors, and the ECE community. We had 858 visits and 946 items borrowed between August 2022 and July 2023, up from 589 and 878, respectively, last year.

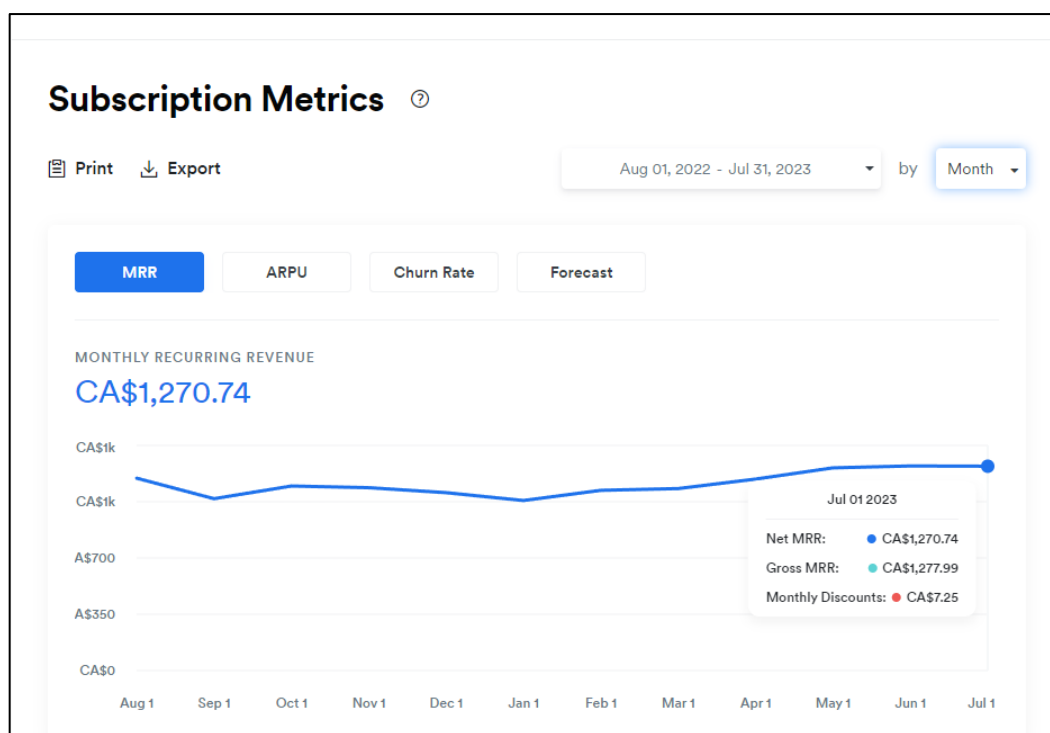
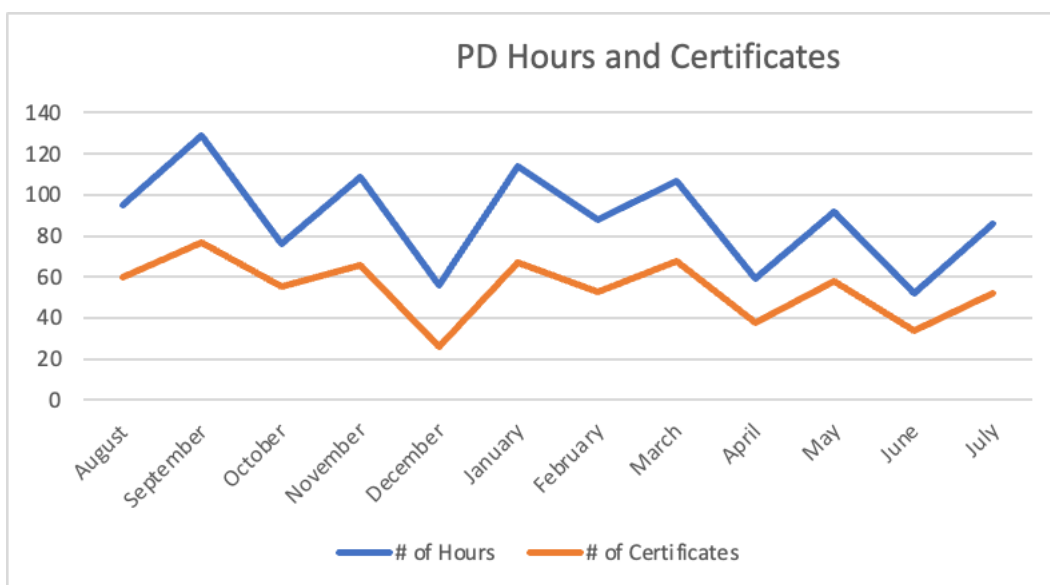
New Website and Newsletter

We have redesigned the EYCDC website to make it more convenient to find information about our services and resources. In addition to the user-friendly architecture and modern design, we added a page for independent consultants to be invited for centre-based workshops. This allowed us to increase the number of custom contracts and provide PD opportunities for specific topics such as Loose Parts for Outdoors, Team Building, and Image of a Child. The topics were selected by the child care centres and family home daycare agencies based on their current learning needs. In total, we had 5 centre-based PD sessions for which we issued 80 certificates.

We also added our EYCDC Newsletter to the website to feature our current and upcoming PD offerings.

Online PD Seminars

We continue developing our online PD seminars. Finding a new tech partner for filming and using in-house expertise for uploading seminars online made them more cost-efficient (saving up to 60% of the initial cost). We have added a new seminar on Gardening with Young Children and looking forward to adding more hands-on content. Our recurring monthly revenue tied to the subscription remains steady around \$1200 and we issued 654 on demand PD certificates for the total of 1063 PD hours, as well as 57 certificates for Reflective Seminars, which indicates ongoing interest in maintaining membership.



Olha Khaperska

Manager, EYCDC Professional Development Services

College Programs

When I think about the year in review, I am inspired, excited, and proud. We have initiated two new programs this year (Pathway and Hybrid), and seen the successful completion of our pilot onsite accelerated program. Together, our teaching team are the best support system for our students. I am continually impressed by the dedication, passion, and compassion shown by our teaching team. We have hired 3 new instructors, and, over the year, we saw a total of 18 instructors teach across all nine cohorts. It is wonderful to see instructors problem solve within and between cohorts, learn from one another, and share ideas. Our instructors are empowered to work together to support students and each other. I observe each instructor at least once per course per term, offering feedback and support so they get feedback on what they are doing well and where they could try new things to improve their practice. Each time I join class, I am excited to see instructors who care about the subject and care even more about their students. Our mission of providing innovative, responsive, and inclusive education is at the forefront of the work we are doing in classrooms online, onsite, and asynchronous.

We were charting new territory with our asynchronous program, though with plenty of support and guidance. When we began, we had a little knowledge, a lot of excitement, and our trademark insistence that we would do an asynchronous program “the NSCECE way”, with student experience at the forefront of our programming and decision making. Our skilled and thoughtful faculty developed eight asynchronous courses. Along the way we learned that:

- PowerPoint Record allows more flexibility and time than Loom. We generally try to make the recordings “bite sized” so that students do not lose interest, but PowerPoint allows presenters as much time as needed, whereas Loom was only allowing a set number of minutes.
- Asynchronous programming takes a lot of time, careful planning, and consideration. We changed our contract structure so developers were paid 1.5x per hour for the course (e.g., for a 60 hour course, they are paid 90 hours of preparation). We found that, in some cases, course development was easier if the instructor had taught the course before and was familiar with content, mistakes, flow, and common questions.
- “You can lead a horse to water but you can’t make them drink”. We have been creating engaging, interesting, relevant, practical content in our asynchronous courses. Unfortunately, some students have not been reviewing the content and still attempting tests/assignments.
- We learned that our students really struggle with self-paced learning. We are seeing a significant dip in grades with several students failing (though many of those students were eligible for a Supplemental Evaluation). It reinforces our choice that, though students are asking, we will not move our threshold of no more than 50% asynchronous in any program.
- Our courses are really applied, hands-on, and engaging! We committed to asynchronous courses being 30% recorded content from the course, but often our developers are struggling to fill all the hours. This tells us that we spend a lot of time in synchronous classes engaged in dialogue, answering questions, running through case studies, or participating in hands-on learning experiences.

As Practicum Coordinator, Kayla continues to be an incredible asset to our team and secures over a hundred placements each year for traditional practicum students. We also hired a Practicum Instructor this spring, Brenda, who has been an immense help to Kayla and has taken on the role with passion and excitement. They have seen many obstacles over the past year and have calmly worked to find solutions each time. Specifically, students placed at centres that burned down and/or who were temporarily evacuated during the forest fires. They managed to find new placements for students and support extensions. Earlier in the year, prior to the fires, every online and onsite student was placed in a pre-primary placement when the HRCE Pre-Primary strike happened. Again, with calm and grace, Kayla and Brenda worked together to re-place every student. We continue to struggle to find Practicum Advisors, particularly in rural areas, but post job openings regularly.

This year, more than ever, we have had a diverse variety of programs to meet the needs of all our students.

- Our Pathways pilot program began this year with 23 students, all newcomers to Canada. They have been enthusiastic, supportive, and eager to learn and practice. Their instructors all report remarkable levels of engagement, including in office hours. They share their rich, diverse experiences in classes weekly and build meaningful relationships with their peers and their instructors.
- We graduated students from our pilot onsite, 13-month program, and welcomed another cohort into a 13-month onsite program. Kelsey and Krista continued to be our full-time instructors in this program. We also welcomed three students into the program in January in an attempt to bolster admissions. They have fit seamlessly into the program and will finish in January 2024.
- We graduated one cohort and welcomed another into the 16-month online accelerated program.
- We welcomed two hybrid cohorts, who are studying 50% asynchronously. The inaugural cohort had a significant attrition rate once they obtained their level 1 classification, which we had not anticipated. We have since changed the schedule so that students are only eligible for level 1 classification in the second quarter. We hope that this will encourage students to stay in the program longer and finish their diploma to obtain level 2 classification.
- Our PLAR program continues to be popular, fast-paced, and challenging. We have been very intentional in having one dedicated PLAR Facilitator (Jane) who supports students with their PLAR'ed courses.
- We offered an 8-month, and piloted a 5-month ECA program, with classes running 3 nights per week. Students seemed pleased overall with the shortened time frame so that they could be eligible for level 1 classification.

We continue to work together with community partners to offer our students the best learning experiences. In classes, we welcomed guest speakers from ISANS, Hearing and Speech Nova Scotia, IWK, Autism Nova Scotia, CNIB, ECEs from the community and from our lab schools, and several families. We partnered regularly with our lab schools, through the Lab School Advisory Committee and our “What is a Lab School” session.

Overall, our programs are running well, and we are learning a lot. We continuously reflect on how to be better and offer more meaningful experiences to our students.

Emily Martinello

Manager, Program Development and Delivery



Registrar

The academic year of 2022-2023 was a successful year for NSCECE, with a total of **406 students** enrolled, which is an increase of **180 students** from the previous year. The ECA and new Hybrid-ECE programs continue to be popular among students. The onsite ECE program had **46 students**, while the remaining **360 students** opted for online courses. These numbers indicate high satisfaction with the education provided by NSCECE and the growing desire for online learning.

Enrollment Ending July 31, 2023

The following programs were operating during the past fiscal year. While some are complete, others are still in progress.

Program	Start Year	Program Status	# Completed	# Enrolled	Percentage Graduated
Accelerated 1	2021	Completed	17	19	89%
Online	2021	Completed	23	28	82%
PLAR 1	2022	Completed	98	118	83%
ECA 1	2022	Completed	23	27	85%
Sub Total			161	192	84%
Accelerated 2	2022	In Progress	19	27	NA
Online	2022	In Progress	19	26	NA
Hybrid 1	2022	In Progress	19	36	NA
PLAR 2	2023	In Progress	30	35	NA
ECA 2	2023	In Progress	28	30	NA
Pathways	2023	In Progress	23	26	NA
Hybrid 2	2023	In Progress	33	34	NA
Sub Total			171	214	NA
TOTAL			332	406	NA

Enrollment Trends

The number of international students recruited for 2022-2023 year is three. Many international students struggled to get a Study Visa in time and are not as keen without the possibility of the Federal Graduate Work Permit.

Four \$1,000 entrance scholarships were awarded in the 2022 - 2023 academic year to diploma students and four \$250 scholarships were awarded to ECA students.

Administrative Functions

Functions	# of Requests	Change from Previous Year
Student Loan Confirmations	61	+9 new Hybrid program is eligible for a Part Time loan
Contracts	238	+12
Amended Contract Requests	22	-6 fewer school closures
Transcript Requests	264	+142 increase in student body and those who want Level 1 Classification before they finish the ECE pgm
Supplemental Evaluation Requests	22	+7 but consistent with a larger student body
Probation Letters	16	+9 but consistent with a larger student body
Level 2 Appeals	1	No change
Dismissal Letters	11	+4 but consistent with a larger student body
ECA Certificates Granted	23	Consistent with 2022 number
ECE Diplomas Granted	138	+103 3 cohorts completed, compared to 1 in 2022

Graduations

ECE Graduation: November 20, 2022

This event was held at the Atlantica Hotel. There were two ceremonies, the largest by far in the history of NSCECE. This group of graduates was a compilation from the Online and PLAR cohorts. There were 98 PLAR graduates and 17 Onsite graduates. Graduation Address was delivered by Moashella Shortte, Author, Mentor, and Afrocentric ECE Educator Coordinator.

ECE Graduation: May 7, 2023

This event was also held at the Atlantica Hotel, there was one ceremony for our Online Cohort, there were 23 graduates. Graduation Address was delivered by Jessica Landry, NSCECE Leeds Street Director.

Early Childhood Assistant program completed on: May 26, 2023

There were 23 graduates.

Total number of graduates in the ECE and ECA programs for 2022-2023

138 (ECEs) and 23 (ECAs)

Community Collaborations

NS Student Loan Assistant Office

NSCECE connected with the NS Student Loan Assistance Office to obtain a part time student loan program for students in the Hybrid Programs. While the part time loan program is only available up to \$10,000.00, it does provide support until those students who are working in the field and can then access Continuing Education funds.

NSCECE had a compliance visit from Student Loan Officers in June. It was an opportunity to share information and have a better understanding of the requirements from NSSL and DAE.

NS student loan repayment rate for 2020/21 was 100%, up from 85.5% in 2019/20. The National average is 92.6% as presented from the Student Assistance Office Loan Repayment Division. The Canda Study Grant had increased significantly during the Covid years and so this covered the tuition for NSCECE students who had taken out a loan.

**Janet Boutilier,
Registrar**

Student Success

Student Success is an integral service within NSCECE, providing support via in-person, online meetings, phone calls, and emails.

Service Usage

Total number of appointments in 2022 - 2023: 527 (up from 498 last year)

Student Success averaged over 40 appointments/month. Academic advising and assignment assistance continued to be essential to support the students to succeed in the program they attend. Students met with Student Success either in-person, online via Brightspace or Teams, or by phone.

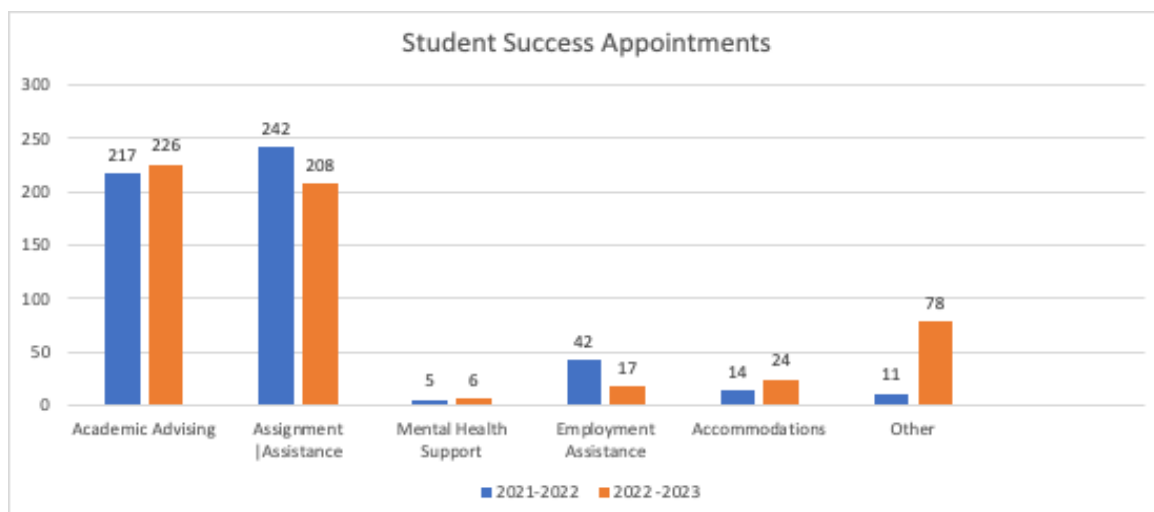
Academic advising appointments discuss adjustments to being in the program, time management, plagiarism, probation, course failures, extensions, personal issues that may affect students learning, medical concerns, and learning disability support among others. Assignment assistance appointments are online or in person. The content, citations, and references are reviewed, and feedback is provided by email or in person. Students are encouraged to submit assignments for review to assist with content and reducing plagiarism.

Student Success met regularly with the instructors, Practicum Coordinator, and the Manager of Program Development and Delivery to discuss student successes and concerns.

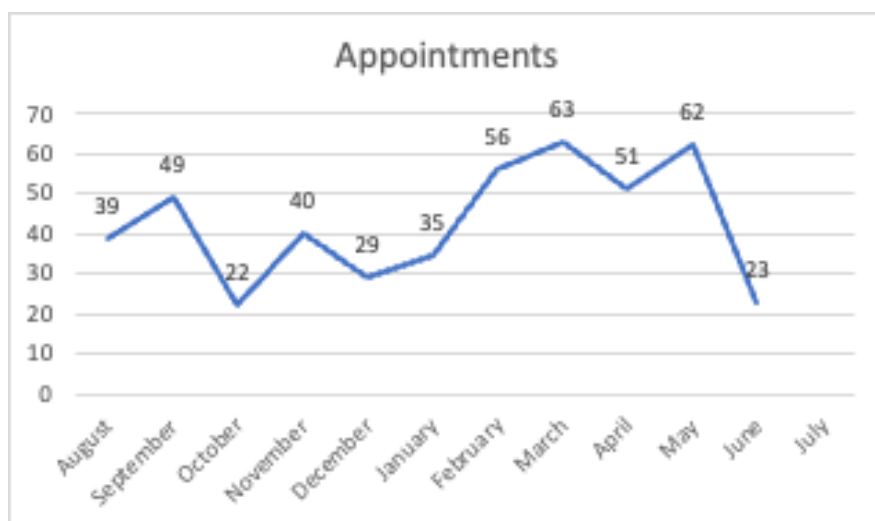
The students have many life experiences, including work, school, and family/friends that may affect their mental health and well-being. The student counselor has been beneficial to many of the students and continues to play an important role in Student Success.

Student Success Appointments

Student Success completed 527 appointments, delivering 558 services. The chart below indicates the services provided by type. Academic Advising and Assignment Assistance continue to be a strong connection with Student Success. The Other category consists of exemption requests, information regarding programs, student loans, accessing tests online, or computer issues. There was an increase in this area due to exemption requests for the Pathway and PLAR programs.



The chart below indicates the number of appointments per month. March and May were peak months due to an increase in Academic Advising and an increase in assignments and support given.



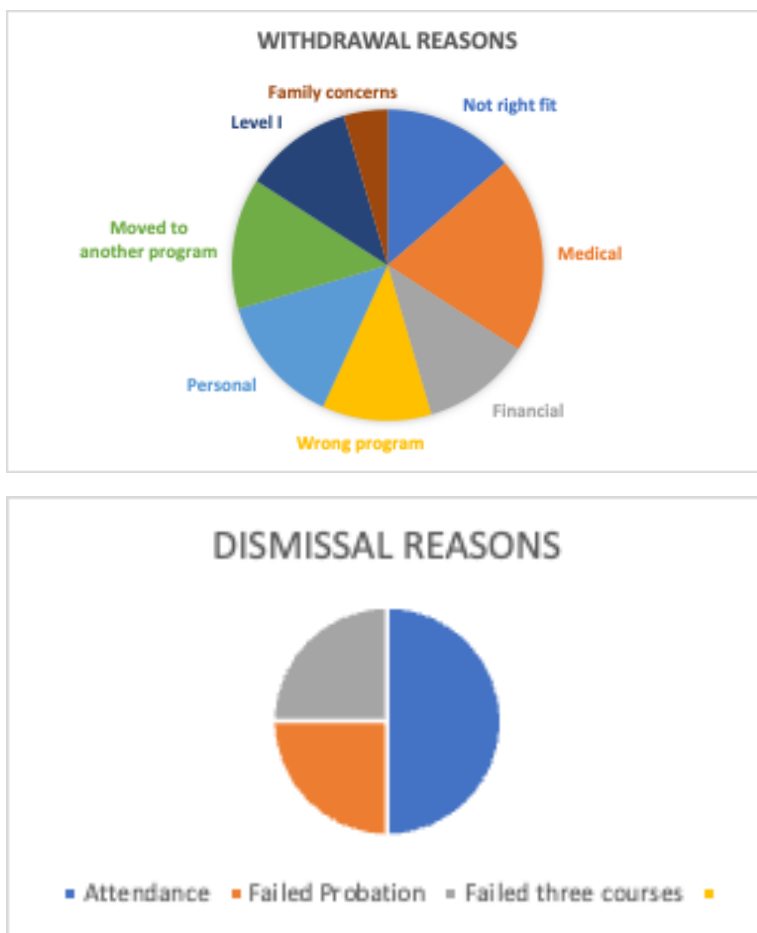
Withdrawals

Withdrawals are initiated by the student for various personal reasons. College dismissals are due to failure of courses, practicum, or attendance. There was a significant withdrawal of students from the November Hybrid program. Several left the program once they had completed the necessary courses and practicum to receive their Level I classification.

The table below indicates the numbers and reasons for the withdrawals.

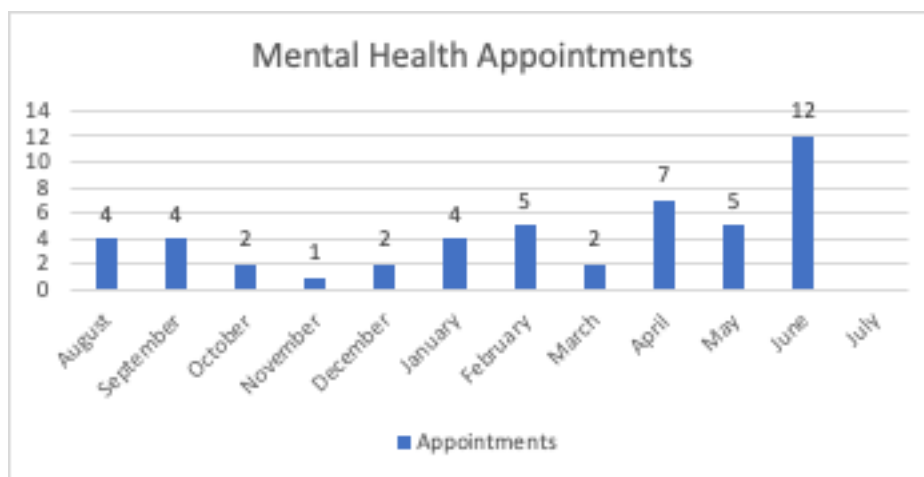
Program	Withdrawal	Dismissal
Online 2021	1	1
ECE diploma 2022	3	4
ECE Acc. 2022	6	2
ECA/Oct/23	3	1
ECA/April/23	1	1
Hybrid/Nov/22	17	
PLAR/Jan/23	2	2
Pathways	2	1
TOTAL	35	17

The charts below indicate the reason students withdrew or were dismissed from their program. During 2022 - 2023, students were able to state more than one reason for withdrawing from a program.



Student Counsellor – Mental Health Support

The student counsellor has provided much-needed mental health support to the students. Students appreciated being seen quickly and confidentially to address their emotional needs. This service will continue for the next year. There was an increase in services in June due to the counsellor being unavailable during July.



Staffing

There were staff changes in Student Success in 2022 -23. Sarah Halverson was employed at the College from November 2021 to August 2022. Nora Gilbey became permanent full-time Student Success Manager. Javad Kiani was hired in February 2023 to work with the Pathway students originally and is also available for the PLAR students. Student Success continued to provide services and support to all the students during the staff transitions.

Nora Gilbey

Manager, Student Success



Online Learning & IT

This report provides an overview of the activities and initiatives undertaken by the Online Learning and IT department last year (August 2022 to July 2023). NSCECE has been working on several projects to ensure the Online Learning and IT infrastructure is robust, secure, and efficient. Here are some of the key highlights:

New security rules and procedures: We developed new security rules and procedures to ensure the IT infrastructure is secure and protected from cyber threats. This is an ongoing project, and we are committed to implementing the new rules and procedures effectively.

Review of apps and systems in use: We conducted a comprehensive study of all our apps and systems to ensure that they are up-to-date and meet the needs of the students and faculty. The review has helped identify areas for improvement and optimization. For example, by using a Brightspace API, we reduced the time to create a course by over 30%.

Implementation of unused features in existing systems: We implemented unused application features to improve their functionality and efficiency. This is an ongoing project, and we are committed to implementing the features effectively.

Hardware inventory: We conducted a hardware inventory to ensure that all hardware is accounted for and in good working condition. This will help us plan for future upgrades and replacements.

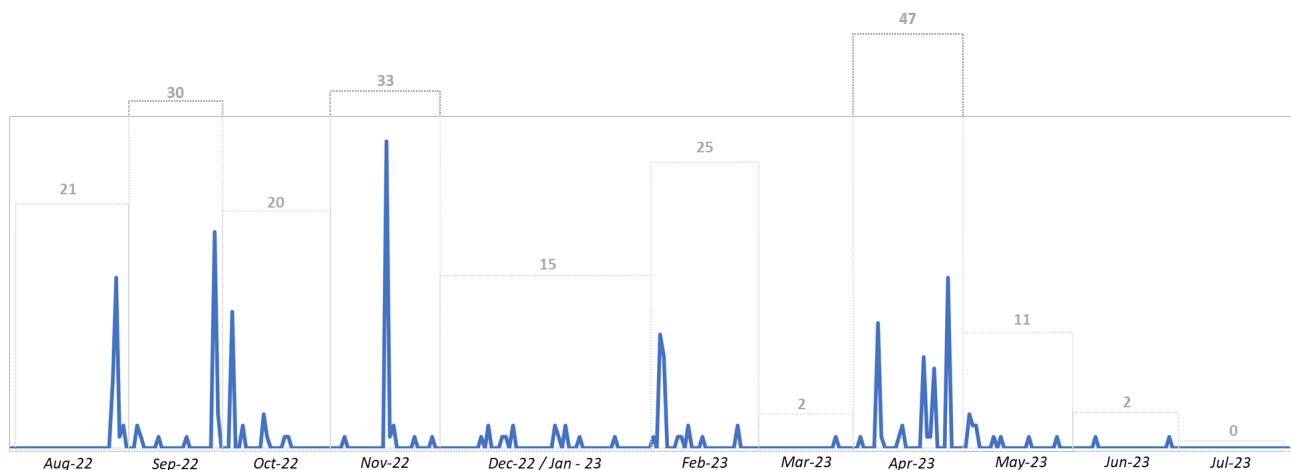
Cleaning inactive users and growing the number of licenses: NSCECE started removing inactive users to ensure that the licenses are available for active users. This has helped increase the number of licenses at our disposal, which will help meet the growing demand for IT services.

Testing of new apps for developing interactive content: The college began testing a new app for creating interactive content. This is an exciting project that will help enhance the learning experience for the students.

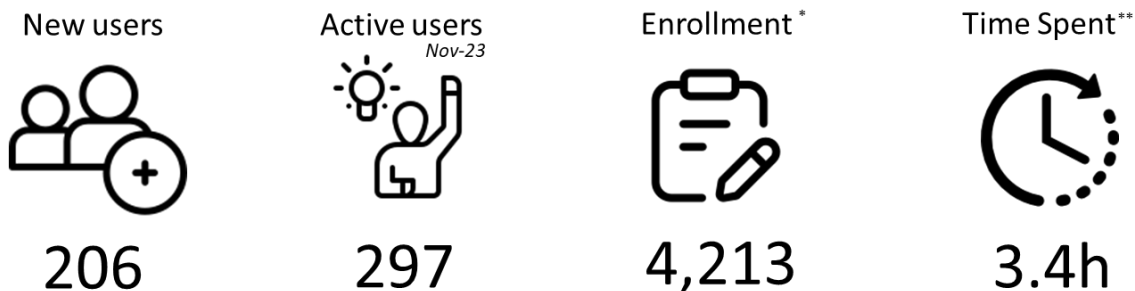
500+ support calls: The IT team received an estimated 500 support calls in the last six months. We started logging the support calls over the last two months and have been working hard to resolve issues and provide timely student and faculty support.

Brightspace, our learning management system: Brightspace is an online learning system that allows instructors and students to access course materials, assignments, grades, calendars, and more for their classes. Brightspace can be used for both synchronous and asynchronous learning, meaning that students can learn simultaneously or at different times, depending on the course design and schedule. Brightspace is provided by D2L, a Canadian company specializing in education technology and is used by many schools, colleges, and universities worldwide. Here are some ways we're using that system to deliver our content.

New Users per Day



New Users per day from Aug-22 to Jul-23. The plot is broken down into months/periods, and the number on each column is the number of unique users in a particular period.



* One enrollment is when a student is enrolled in a course.

** Average time spent by a student every time they access the platform.

Turnitin and the use of artificial intelligence tools: Turnitin is an app that helps instructors and students check the originality and quality of their written work. This last year, we were introduced to a new Turnitin tool with an AI score. The AI score is a new feature that Turnitin added to detect if some parts of the text were generated by artificial intelligence (AI) tools, such as ChatGPT1. AI tools are computer programs that can write sentences that look like they were written by humans, but they may not make sense or be accurate. It's worth mentioning that the AI score is not always accurate, so it should not be used as the only way to judge the text. Instructors and students must also use their knowledge and judgment to evaluate the text. The AI score is just a tool to help them identify possible AI-generated text and investigate it further.

College Website Traffic: Throughout our ongoing ad campaigns, we have increased interest in accessing our college website. Additionally, we have added new programs. Here are some of our website statistics:

Monthly Views

Total*



Unique**



Last Year

21k

16k

Last 6 months

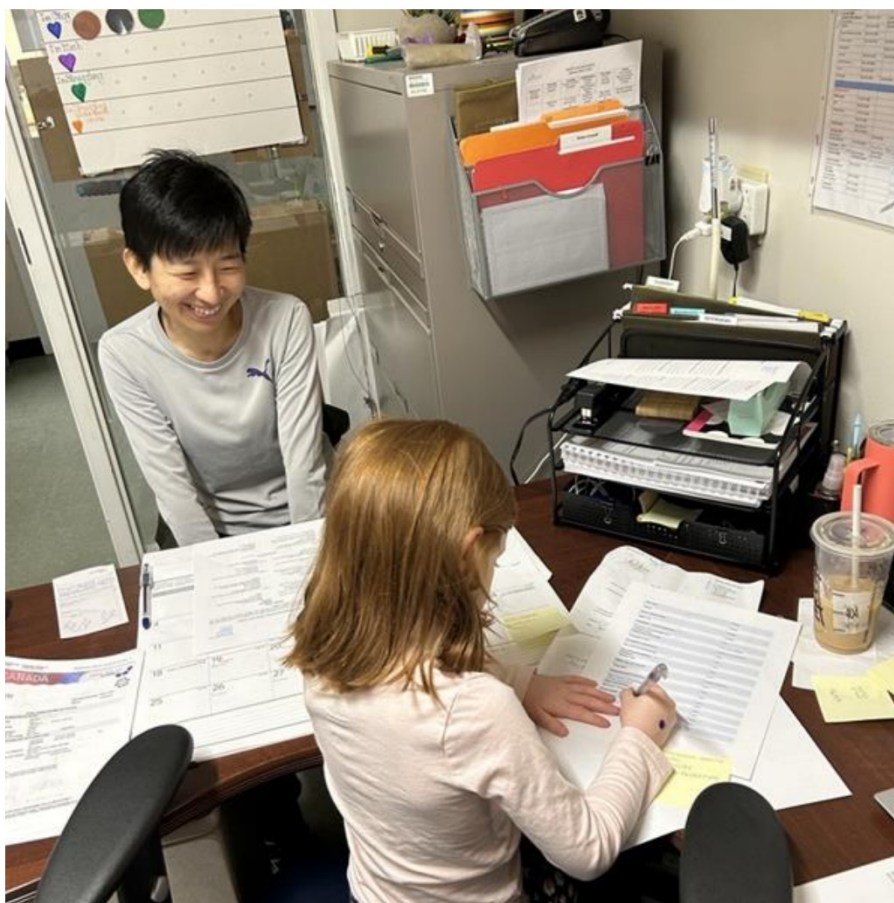
37k

29k

* Average number of total page access each month to nscece.com and its dependents

** Average number of unique individuals who accessed our pages each month

Reynaldo Junior
Manager, Online Learning & IT Services



Corporate Services

Financials

The 2022/23 fiscal year finished with \$305K net income, \$202K ahead of the budgeted NI of \$103K. Included in this was \$34K unrealized gains on marketable securities and \$37K investment income. At our childcare centres, variances included: funding model and wage scale changes as part of CWELCC agreement, increased infant enrollment at the lab schools, as well as an addition of a fourth center. At the college, program enrollment numbers were under budget. Other variances included additional spending in advertising and promotion as well as wages after compensation review and an addition to the team with our new Accountant. EYCDC was ahead of plan as their online professional development subscription model performed ahead of budget. EYCDC also reintroduced in person workshops as the sector is starting to see a slight demand shift back to in person. This has been a successful year for NSCECE and has allowed a significant contribution to our operating reserve.

	College	Leeds	Akerely	Mawio'mi	Island Trails	EYCDC	Investment Income	Gains on Securities	Total Excess
Revenues	\$1,813,195	\$729,291	\$909,669	\$772,138	\$144,646	\$213,851	\$37,263	\$34,361	\$4,654,414
Expenses	\$1,775,946	\$690,153	\$778,283	\$735,286	\$181,166	\$187,937			\$4,348,771
Net Income	\$37,249	\$39,138	\$131,386	\$36,852	-\$36,520	\$25,914	\$37,263	\$34,361	\$305,643
Budgeted	\$101,619	-\$23,111	\$31,398	-\$13,706	\$0	\$6,043			\$102,243
Variance	-\$64,370	\$62,249	\$99,988	\$50,558	-\$36,520	\$19,871	\$37,263	\$34,361	\$203,400

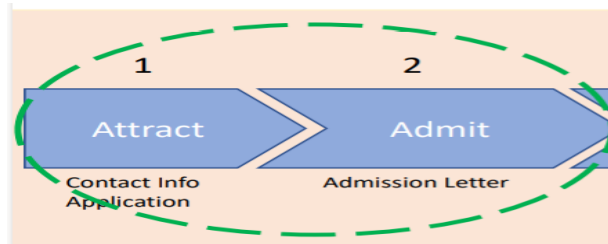
Operating Reserve Fund Investments

The NSCECE Board of Directors has a fiduciary responsibility to protect the organization's assets and ensure that operations and activities use those assets to further NSCECE's mission. A prudent way to serve as fiduciaries of NSCECE's assets is to invest the organization's cash into investments. Our Operating Reserve Fund Policy was created and in August 2022, the fund investment begun. This year's returns were as follows:

Class	Description	Net Amount Invested	Book Value	% (MV) Total	Market Value
Cash & Equivalent Section					
	LOUISBOURG MONEY MARKET FUND		10,136	0.8	10,160
Total Cash & Equivalent Section			10,136	0.8	10,160
Fixed Income Section					
	LOUISBOURG CORPORATE BOND FUND	238,196	243,062	19.06	241,883
	LOUISBOURG CANADIAN BOND FUND	535,941	543,427	42.09	534,226
Total Fixed Income Section		774,137	786,489	61.15	776,109
Total Equities Section					
	LOUISBOURG DIVIDEND FUND	166,737	176,258	14.94	189,682
	LOUISBOURG QUANTITATIVE CANADIAN EQUITY FUND	17,864	17,865	1.47	18,696
	LOUISBOURG CANADIAN SMALL CAP FUND	17,568	19,385	1.54	19,492
	LOUISBOURG US EQUITY FUND	119,098	125,292	11.05	140,197
	LOUISBOURG INTERNATIONAL EQUITY FUND	95,278	99,526	9.06	114,975
Total Equities Section		416,545	438,325	38.06	483,042
Grand Total		1,190,682	1,234,950	100.01	1,269,311

Marketing

During our work on our Strategic Plan the “attract and admit” phase of the customer journey was identified as the most critical stage of the journey for the success of NSCECE. To deliver the most convenient admissions and enrollment experience for our customers was the focus of our marketing work. Emphasis was on improving the user experience and navigation redesign including a complete overhaul of the student application portal, updating our prospect nurturing plan, and reforming our communications.



Recruitment and Admissions

We implemented a 2-phase acceptance approach with phase 1 being a Conditional Acceptance, and phase 2 being an Official Acceptance. Receiving a conditional acceptance builds retention and a sense of commitment in our prospects and allows us to nurture the prospect through steps to official acceptance.

Community Outreach

A primary goal for the year 2022-23 was to build upon community outreach and re-connect with local organizations and partners. We had a very successful year achieving this goal and expect to see the full impact in the medium term with increased numbers of applications. Our work included the following:

AARAO Career Fairs in NS: Participated in the Aarao tour to high schools around the province to recruit students for upcoming programs. We dropped off guidance counsellor packages, and posters, and networked with students, teachers and counsellors to spread awareness about NSCECE and the ECE career. This was where we made our initial connection to 02 programs.

Employment Offices- NS Works: We worked to develop relationships with NS Works by scheduling meetings, sending emails and distributing flyers. We referred Onsite applicants to the Skills Development Program which resulted in three students enrolling in our Onsite Program.

“Play Day” Waterfront/Community Event: NSCECE partnered with Build Nova Scotia and the Halifax Waterfront to host two play events for children, families and ECEs. This was an opportunity to recruit, spread awareness and have NSCECE out in the public for a fun community event.

APTEC- Career Fairs: We attended two Career Fairs in partnership with APTEC and NS Works. At these events we meet potential students, network, and make connections with other organizations who may refer their clients to us.

Classroom Presentations: We had two classroom presentations last year. This helps us to spread awareness about ECE as a career. We recruited one grade 11 student to the Onsite Program for 2024.

Other:

We used the Childcare Directory to share information with ECE Owner/Operators and Directors throughout the province which strengthened some relationships with owners and directors. We also held a Director Information Session.

We scheduled a meeting with Nova Scotia immigration to guide us on the IGID Program to help us support and educate international applicants.

We hosted monthly Information Sessions.

We hosted two Open Houses.

We attended bi-weekly meetings with DEECD to identify and reduce barriers for potential students.



Human Resources

We have introduced a consistent onboarding plan throughout each line of business to ensure that each new employee receives the same onboarding experience. This includes an in person meeting with Director of Corporate Services to do orientation as well as learn about NSCECE structure and values. We have also improved employee retention rates by 19% this past year. In response to this turnover, we implemented an exit interview to further collect data to be used to make improvements and further reductions.

Information Technology and Operational Efficiency

Our new Manager of Online Learning and IT joined the team in March 2023. He manages all aspects of NSCECE's online learning platform and ensures all IT related tools, applications, and processes are in place to support end users (our staff and students).

Expansion

Our fourth center, located in Port Hawkesbury, finished construction and opened in June 2023 to welcome 44 new families into care. The project was completed on budget and within weeks of proposed schedule. The second location in Halifax was described as an outlier from a cost per child perspective and was not approved for funding. DEECD has asked up to continue our search and to think outside the box when thinking about alternate locations.

Funding

We proposed to DEECD that they extend funding of the PLAR program to an additional 30 student cohort. This supports the province and DEECD's objectives of providing our province with a greater number of highly qualified ECEs and supports the growth of our Early Learning and Childcare sector. It also allows ECEs to upskill quickly while preserving the quality of their education and keeping workers employed at their centres as they upgrade their credentials. We proposed and were approved for funding of a Pathway Pilot program for newcomers to Canada in partnership with ISANS.

Premises

The recent growth of our programs has meant that NSCECE has had to grow our staff complement as well. We have completed renovations to create 2 new spaces for our Accountant and Student Success Advisor.

Jessica Warner
Director, Corporate Services

Financial Statements 2022-23

Balance Sheet

Balance Sheet 2021, 2022, 2023				
		2023	2022	2021
Assets				
Current				
	Cash	\$2,390,568	\$2,225,175	\$733,285
	Marketable Securities	\$1,269,311	\$0	\$0
	Accounts Receivable	\$818,817	\$105,012	\$136,657
	Inventory	\$3,562	\$3,562	\$3,562
	Prepaid Expense	\$40,291	\$5,761	\$21,894
		\$4,522,549	\$2,339,510	\$895,398
	Long Term Investments	\$0	\$877,339	\$871,769
	Restricted Investments	\$84,727	\$82,416	\$82,006
	Capital Assets	\$973,694	\$106,840	\$36,580
		\$5,580,970	\$3,406,105	\$1,885,753
Liabilities and Net Assets				
Current				
	Accounts Payable and accrued liabilities	\$576,069	\$174,429	\$120,134
	Deferred Revenue (College)	\$2,027,078	\$1,402,866	\$395,969
	Deferred Revenue (Childcare)	\$119,747	\$139,776	\$166,122
		\$2,722,894	\$1,717,071	\$682,225
	Deferred Capital Contributions	\$890,795	\$27,396	\$0
		\$3,613,689	\$1,744,467	\$682,225
Net Assets				
	Unrestricted net assets	\$1,869,581	\$1,565,727	\$1,108,932
	Externally restricted net assets	\$84,727	\$82,938	\$81,536
	Internally restricted net assets	\$12,973	\$12,973	\$13,060
		\$1,967,281	\$1,661,638	\$1,203,528
		\$5,580,970	\$3,406,105	\$1,885,753

Income Statement

Income Statement 2021, 2022, 2023				
		2023	2022	2021
Revenues				
	College	\$1,813,195	\$2,027,625	\$1,418,800
	Leeds Street	\$729,291	\$579,423	\$559,085
	Akerley	\$909,669	\$703,091	\$657,656
	Mawiomi	\$772,138	\$576,188	\$591,922
	Island Trails	\$144,646	\$0	\$0
	Early Years	\$213,851	\$209,303	\$400,781
	Investment	\$37,263	\$5,980	\$2,285
Other Income	Gains on Securities	\$34,361	\$0	\$0
	Total	\$4,654,414	\$4,101,610	\$3,630,529
Expenditures				
	College	\$1,775,946	\$1,655,747	\$1,341,310
	Leeds Street	\$690,153	\$554,275	\$572,637
	Akerley	\$778,283	\$647,741	\$647,251
	Mawiomi	\$735,286	\$579,412	\$595,897
	Island Trails	\$181,166	\$0	\$0
	Early Years	\$187,937	\$206,239	\$393,987
	Total	\$4,348,771	\$3,643,414	\$3,551,082
Excess of Revenues over Expenditures		\$305,643	\$458,196	\$79,447
Contingency as % of revenue		6.57%	11.17%	2.19%