

REALITY CHECK



LEARNING (JK-12 EDUCATION)¹

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Giving a high school diploma to a student is about giving a life of better opportunities. Research tells us that a high school graduate will be healthier, will access health care less, will have better earning power and better job opportunities (high school drop-outs are nearly 3x more likely to be unemployed), will have a significantly less chance of ever being incarcerated and will live longer. Student success at graduating from high school can have a positive or a negative impact on a community's social, economic and civic health.

DID YOU KNOW?

IN 2015-16 OVER 200 YOUTH & ADULTS RE-ENGAGED IN EDUCATION

IN 2015 ETIENNE BRULE HAD THE HIGHEST # OF GRADUATES IN ONTARIO

WHAT ARE THE TRENDS?

Academic achievement, as measured by EQAO (Education Quality and Accountability Office), is below the provincial average across the Northeast Region which includes Sault Ste. Marie, Sudbury, Timmins and North Bay.

While there are pockets of positive outcomes, our students' achievement is being impacted by significant challenges with respect to poverty, mental health, substance use and abuse, attendance, special needs (our percentage of students with special needs is above the provincial average), teen pregnancy, nutrition (our children have a lower consumption of fruits and vegetables than the provincial average), obesity rates and increasing suicide attempts. While steady progress is being made in literacy rates, math achievement has been declining both locally and provincially.

The Early Development Instrument (EDI) is used across Canada and internationally to measure children's ability to meet age appropriate developmental expectations.

EDI data for Sault Ste. Marie indicates that many children are entering the school system in Sault Ste. Marie below their counterparts in three out of five areas tested:

- 1) Physical Health and Well-Being
- 2) Social Competence
- 3) Emotional Maturity

Research has also proven that a student not reading at grade level by the end of Grade 3 is 4x less likely to graduate from high school and 6x less likely to graduate if the student is from a low-income family. Research makes a clear connection between literacy rates, high school drop-out rates and crime.

WHAT'S NEW?

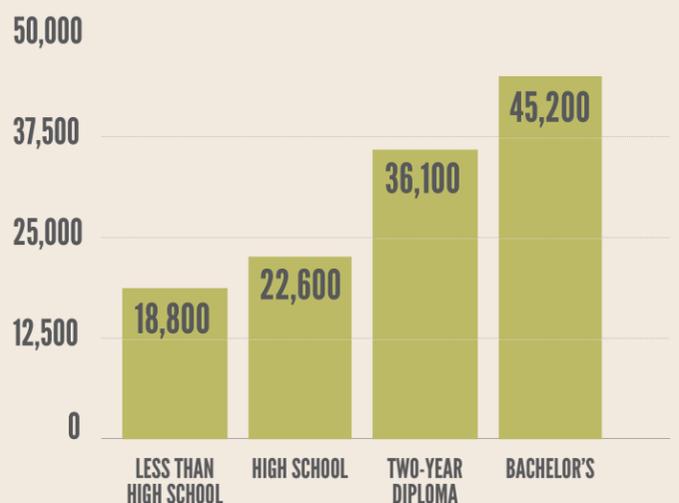
- School Boards are using a variety of diagnostic tools to identify students' areas of needs and to target interventions, however, students' needs (apart from academic needs) are increasing
- Some progress is being made in closing the achievement gap for boys, Aboriginal students and students with special needs
- Data sharing agreements with a few First Nation partners are supporting targeted, collaborative efforts to enhance achievement
- Ministry funding allows School Boards to "re-engage" youth and adults who have left the school system to return and complete their diploma; in 2015-2016, well over 200 learners re-engaged
- The Etienne Brule Learning Centre is home of the Urban Aboriginal Alternative High School and has a strong partnership with the Indigenous Friendship Centre; in its 13th year of operation, it has graduated over 100 students and granted more than 1400 credits; in June 2015, the Indigenous Friendship Centre advised this school had the highest number of graduates in Ontario
- Every School Board in Ontario has been funded to have a Mental Health Lead who works to educate staff about supporting students with mental health needs and who works closely with community agencies to coordinate services, establish protocols and evaluate needs; the collaboration of partners resulted in the establishment of the Algoma Model (www.algomamodel.ca) which outlines available services
- An offshoot of the Algoma Model, the Algoma Leadership Table regularly brings together community leaders to enhance coordination and collaboration of services and to advocate for positive student mental health

WHAT ELSE SHOULD WE BE DOING?

- School Boards, with Ministry funding, are creating focused plans to improve achievement in mathematics while maintaining a focus on literacy achievement
- The Ministry of Education has launched a province-wide focus on "Student Well-being" and School Boards will be engaging in projects and initiatives to support students
- School Boards will continue to work in partnership with community agencies to make efficient use of resources and to seek collaboration opportunities that will ultimately support student achievement
- Equity with respect to technology access and use will continue to be priority
- Early learning and early literacy intervention will continue to be a priority
- Continue to seek ways to engage parents and community members in students' academic achievement

INTERESTING FACTS:

EXPECTED INCOME BY EDUCATION LEVEL:



¹ All information from the Algoma District School Board