

HWDSB

Program Committee

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Room 340-D

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board

20 Education Court, P.O. Box 2558

Hamilton, ON L8N 3L1

AGENDA: 5:00 pm

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of the Agenda
3. Student Learning & Achievement Report
4. Notice of Motion – Communicating with Parents/Guardians/Caregivers of Students with Special Needs
5. Adjournment

curiosity • creativity • possibility

Executive Summary

Topic: Student Learning and Achievement Report

Context

HWDSB's Board of Trustees have approved new Strategic Directions for 2016-20 and staff has developed an Annual Plan for 2017-18. The five priorities are positive culture and well-being, *student learning and achievement*, effective communication, school renewal and partnerships.

Mission: We empower students to learn and grown to their full potential in a diverse world.

Commitment: We are committed to learning, equity, engagement and innovation

Priority: [Student Learning and Achievement](#) *We will improve student learning and achievement through effective instructional strategies.*

Summary

The following report includes:

- The review of the 2016-17 implementation of the HWDSB Annual Plan, Student Learning and Achievement, and the current implementation of the 2017-18 HWDSB Annual Plan
- Appendix A: High Priority Schools Plan
- Appendix B: Examples of impact of the 2016-17 Annual Plan

HWDSB strives to provide students with the best opportunity to learn and grow so they may graduate. The five-year graduation rate for students that started grade 9 in HWDSB continues to improve each year. Graduation rates for the 2012-13 cohort (i.e. graduating by August 2017) will be published by the Ministry of Education next Spring. Based on system level information it is felt that we are on track to meet our 2016-17 target of 82% of students graduating within five years.

In 2016-17 approximately two-thirds of Grade 1 students were reading at or above the provincial standard (B-) by June. While this rate was below the target of 75% it was encouraging to note that there was significant improvement between the first and final report cards. The 2017-18 plan continues to focus on the development of a strong reading foundation in the early years. This is being supported through dedicated Reading Specialists that will work exclusively in Kindergarten and Grade 1 classrooms. The system will also benefit from a significant focus on High Priority Schools where fewer students are reading by the end of grade 1 compared to other schools.

Once again in 2016-17 the mathematics achievement results for the Primary and Junior grades (grades 3 and 6) continued to lag behind the province by a significant amount. However, the gap was less pronounced by grade 9 with nearly four out of five students demonstrating performance rates at or above the provincial standard, similar to 2015-16. The 2017-18 plan includes a review and implementation of the Renewed Math Strategy as well as learning through work undertaken in High Priority Schools.

In August 2017, Executive Council approved the 2017-18 Annual Plan for *Student Learning and Achievement* with goals to have all students reading by the end of grade 1; all students improving in mathematics and all students graduating.

curiosity • creativity • possibility



HWDSB Annual Plan Report

Name of Report: Student Learning and Achievement Report

Date: November 2017

Priority: Student Learning and Achievement

Goal #1: All students reading by the end of Grade 1.

Strategy: Leverage effective instructional practices on comprehensive literacy and interventions in all Kindergarten to grade 8 classes.

*If daily, dedicated, evidence-based comprehensive literacy strategies are utilized **then** most students will be able to read at standard and demonstrate improved learning and achievement.*

Throughout the 2016-17 school year all schools were expected to have dedicated daily literacy blocks (100-120 minutes) timetabled for Grades 1-8 and that literacy be infused throughout the day in kindergarten. There was a focus on the implementation of comprehensive literacy strategies as described in research-informed resources such as the Ministry of Education's [A Guide to Effective Instruction in Reading, K-3](#). Guided reading, using appropriate levelled-reading resources were evident along with other early reading instructional approaches and interventions that develop the necessary foundational skills like letter/sound recognition. Specific interventions such as [Empower Reading](#) continued to be implemented to support those students experiencing challenges with reading beyond Grade 1.

Superintendents of Student Achievement monitored the strategy through school visits (approximately every 4-6 weeks). Progress results (June Report Card grades) indicate that implementation of the strategy, as a whole, was not on-track. Most students were not on track for reading at standard (approximately 61% of grade 1 students) and there was considerable variability with respect to the implementation of comprehensive literacy strategies in the primary grades. This would suggest a need for a different and more intensified approach to support this strategy.

Strategy: Invest in people through professional learning opportunities on comprehensive literacy strategies.

*If there are multiple, differentiated opportunities for professional learning **then** educators will be able to further develop their ability to implement evidence-based comprehensive literacy strategies.*

A variety of job-embedded, after-school and online professional learning opportunities and resources were made available on the various elements of comprehensive literacy. The strategy recognizes that a 'one-size-fits-all' approach is inconsistent with the understanding that staff are at various points in their own learning with respect to supporting students in becoming proficient readers and communicators. Learning Services staff including Early Years, Special Education, Speech & Language, ELL, FSL, and Psychological Services provided an interdisciplinary approach to this learning. Specific training to Learning Resource Teachers continued to be provided for the delivery of the Empower Reading program.

Superintendents monitored the strategy through participation rates and school visits. Implementation of the strategy, as a whole, was on-track.

curiosity • creativity • possibility

Strategy: Refine our measures of students' reading comprehension over time.

*If reading comprehension levels are monitored for all students on a regular basis **then** gaps in student learning can be identified and addressed in a timely manner.*

Baseline reading levels for students, K to grade 8 were established, using a variety of assessment strategies through teachers' professional judgement by the PA Day in the Fall. This informed the improvement strategies and targets as reported in each school's annual plan. As part of the continuous learning and improvement process, progress through educator generated evidence as well as achievement levels on report cards was reviewed regularly.

Superintendents of Student Achievement monitored the strategy through school visits (approximately every 4-6 weeks). Progress results (June Report Card grades) indicated that implementation of the strategy, as a whole, was not on-track. This suggests a need for additional support and a revised approach to assist educators, principals and support staff in the use of assessment information on reading progress and the early identification of gaps in learning.

Staff were **not on target** to have at least 75% of Grade 1 students achieving a B (provincial standard) or higher on their June 2017 report card. Approximately 62% of Grade 1 students achieved a B or higher.

Goal #2: Improvement in Mathematics.

Strategy: Leverage effective instructional practices on comprehensive math strategies in all grades.

*If daily, dedicated, evidence-based comprehensive math strategies are utilized **then** most students will be able to do math at standard and demonstrate improved learning and achievement.*

Elementary

Throughout the 2016-17 school year grades 1-8 classes had a scheduled math block of at least 60 minutes per day (300 minutes over 5 days in some instances). The focus during the math block was on using strategies informed through research such as those provided in the province's [Renewed Math Strategy](#). There was evidence that the development of mathematical concepts in the early years was embedded as part of the inquiry-based experience in kindergarten. Throughout the elementary grades, conceptual and procedural areas of math continued to be developed with a particular focus on questions that are open-ended.

Secondary

The identification and narrowing of skill gaps for students in grades 9 and 10, especially for those students enrolled in applied-level courses was the focus for the 2016-17 school year. Teacher classroom assessments were used to inform the areas requiring greatest attention. It became evident throughout the year that the mathematical processes involved in problem solving and communicating about mathematical thinking were the two key areas.

Superintendents of Student Achievement monitored the strategy through school visits (approximately every 4-6 weeks). While interim progress results (Term 1/Semester 1 Report Card grades) suggested that the implementation of the strategy, as a whole, was on-track, final progress results (EQAO Primary/Junior/Grade 9) indicated that it was not. Although EQAO math results were quite strong for Grade 9 Academic (80%) and overall, cohorts improved in Grade 9 Applied (>30% improved from Grade 6 to Grade 9), results for Primary (Grade 3, 48%) and Junior (Grade 6, 39%) were once again substantially low.

Strategy: Invest in people through professional learning opportunities on math concepts, assessment, and instruction.

*If there are differentiated opportunities for professional learning **then** teachers and principals will improve their understanding of math concepts, assessment and instruction.*

A component of the province's Renewed Math Strategy this past year was the identification of schools requiring additional or intensive support based on the previous years' performance on EQAO math assessments. For HWDSB this included (14 additional and 11 intensive – elementary; 8 additional and 3 intensive -secondary). Intensive support schools received direct assistance from a Math Facilitator including professional learning for principals and vice-principals on math-specific instructional leadership strategies. Additional support schools received an increased number of days for educator learning as well as opportunities for principal and vice-principal coaching.

In addition to job-embedded, school-based learning, school teams and dedicated professional activity day opportunities focused on math continued during the 2016-17 school year for elementary and secondary staff. Where appropriate, math specific examples formed part of the professional learning for staff involved with the 21st Century Learning initiatives (1:1 and/or class kits).

Superintendents of Student Achievement monitored the strategy through participation rates and school visits. Implementation of the strategy, as a whole, was on-track.

Strategy: Refine our measures of students' math progress over time.

*If the understanding of math concepts is monitored for all students on a regular basis **then** gaps in student learning can be identified and addressed in a timely manner*

The identification of students' strengths and gaps in learning begins with the establishment of a baseline at the outset of the school year or semester and monitored regularly. Overall, it was found that this occurred using a variety of diagnostic assessments based on teachers' professional judgement. Similar to reading, this information informed the improvement strategies and targets reported through each school's annual plan. As part of the continuous learning and improvement process, progress through educator generated evidence as well as achievement levels on report cards was reviewed regularly.

Superintendents of Student Achievement monitored the strategy through school visits (approximately every 4-6 weeks). While interim progress results (Term 1/Semester 1 Report Card grades) indicated that implementation of the strategy, as a whole, was on-track, final results (EQAO Primary/Junior/Grade 9) indicated that it was not.

Staff were **not on target*** to have at least 65% of students achieving at or above provincial standard as measured by 2016-17 EQAO (total number of students in Grades 3, 6 and 9). Approximately 50% of students achieved at or above the provincial standard on the 2016-17 EQAO assessment of mathematics.

***NOTE:** The forecast on the stated target in April was based on interim report card data from Term 1, February 2017 for grades 3 and 6 using the number sense and numeration strand grade. Final grades were used for grade 9 students completing math in the first semester. The assumption made at the time was that report card grades would approximate EQAO achievement results.

Goal #3: All students graduating.

Strategy: Leverage effective instructional practices to provide diverse opportunities to meet the needs of all students.

*If a variety of opportunities are provided for students to participate in 21st century learning **then** student achievement will increase and more students will graduate*

The focus for 2016-17 was on establishing practices that blend teaching and learning approaches between the physical and digital worlds. In addition to existing initiatives, as outlined in the Board's [21st Century Learning Report](#), 1:1 devices for all grade 9 students and classroom kits for grades 4 to 6 were provided as part of a broader strategy to support student learning and engagement.

Efforts were made to provide expanded experiential/co-operative education opportunities across secondary schools. Superintendents of Student Achievement monitored the strategy through participation rates and school visits. Implementation of the strategy, as a whole, was on-track.

Strategy: Invest in people through professional learning on improved learning environments, relationships, and learning opportunities.

*If deep learning strategies are implemented **then** most students will have greater learning opportunities and will be more likely to graduate.*

Elementary and secondary staff, including principals/vice-principals were provided with a variety of opportunities to deepen their understanding about teaching and assessment practices using digital resources and inquiry-based learning. This included a continued focus on developing and enhancing literacy and math skills.

Learning Services staff provided multiple resources and professional learning opportunities for those working with students in the transition years from elementary to secondary (grades 7 to 9). This helped to promote student engagement, programming and outreach support and to assist with connecting each student with at least one staff member. In addition, a student success/transitions network was formed within each family of schools.

Superintendents of Student Achievement monitored the strategy through participation rates and school visits. Implementation of the strategy, as a whole, was on-track.

Strategy: Refine our measures of students' progress towards graduation over time.

*If student graduation progress is monitored for all students on a regular basis **then** gaps in student learning can be identified and addressed in a timely manner*

Realizing an increase in the graduation rate over time requires diligent oversight of student progress. Building on the success of the previous year's approach, secondary school teams of educators and administrators used system provided data along with school-based information to closely monitor and support the progress of students towards graduation. This work focused on those students in their fifth year (2012-13 cohort). Individually-tailored efforts including re-engagement and programming supports were utilized.

A pilot initiative, expanding on the success of the work with fifth year students, looked at understanding and defining some of the early indicators of challenges often experienced by students that struggle to graduate.

Superintendents of Student Achievement monitored the strategy through school visits (approximately every 4-6 weeks). Interim and Final progress results (credit accumulation, community hours and literacy requirements) indicated that implementation of the strategy, as a whole, was on-track.

Staff are **on target**** to have at least 82% of the 2012-2013 cohort (staying in HWDSB) graduate within 5 years (by August 2017).

****NOTE:** Reporting on the stated target will occur in Spring 2018 following the release of the province's graduation information for the 2016-17 school year.

2017-18 Annual Plan

Goal #1: All students reading by the end of Grade 1.

Strategy: Review and implement the Early Reading Strategy

If we review the components of our approach to Early Literacy for focus, precision, alignment and clarity then we will create an Early Reading Strategy that supports effective instruction and intervention.

A precise and clearly defined Early Reading Strategy will support a system understanding of effective early reading approaches including how they are delivered and by whom. This work will be guided by a framework developed by a multidisciplinary team that provides the foundation for the teaching and learning of reading. The *Early Reading Strategy Committee* will complete the development of the formal Strategy by February, 2018. Working groups will support the development of early reading focused professional learning including how to monitor and measure student progress with greater precision.

A key component of the Early Reading Strategy is the establishment of the Reading Specialist role. The Reading Specialist works directly with children (K and Grade 1) and staff, inside and outside of all K and Grade 1 classrooms, to support reading acquisition and to respond to student learning needs, by the end of Grade 1. All schools with K and Grade 1 classrooms have an assigned Reading Specialist (0.25 to 1.0 FTE depending on need). The Reading Specialist works with children within classrooms, co-delivering with classroom educators, appropriate strategies and/or interventions (which connect to approaches being used by the educators in the classroom). They also work directly with educators and other system staff, to support professional learning using a repertoire of evidence-based instructional strategies and assessment practices. There is a strong commitment to support the professional learning of Reading Specialists, in response to the needs in schools. During the first four months of the school year, Reading Specialists will have one-out-of-every-five instructional days dedicated to deepening their own learning.

Digital tools will be developed to support the gathering and use of student information related to reading by the end of grade one. Specifically, two key assessment screens (K and Grade 1) will be created this year to allow for the collection and use at the classroom, school and system-level. Additional tool development in the future will be informed by the work of Reading Specialists and school teams as they monitor student progress and determine next steps for learning.

Superintendents of Student Achievement, including Program and Equity, will monitor progress through school visits (every 2 weeks for High Priority Schools, every 4-6 weeks for others). Progress will also be monitored through a review of the assessment screens and report cards (Grade 1).

Strategy: Intensive focus on early reading in High Priority Schools

If we have enhanced support for reading in High Priority Schools then we will better understand and address the literacy learning needs of children in these schools

A key element of the first year action plan for High Priority Schools includes the provision of a dedicated Reading Specialist (0.75 to 1.0 FTE). In addition, all Kindergarten classrooms in High Priority Schools will have a Designated Early Childhood Educator to support learning and development. Overall, High Priority

Schools will have smaller Kindergarten classrooms. This intensive support should allow for increased opportunity to work with students, particular those struggling, and to learn more about their needs.

Superintendents of Student Achievement will visit these schools with a greater frequency (every two weeks) in order to learn more about their needs and to monitor progress in this area.

Strategy: Implement effective comprehensive literacy practices and interventions through the continuous learning and improvement process.

*If we focus on effective comprehensive literacy in Grades 2 to 8 **then** reading outcomes for students will be maintained or improved.*

Comprehensive literacy programming seeks to provide students with opportunities to develop age and developmentally appropriate reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing and representing skills. Building on the foundation of the early reading strategy, students are expected to continue to read at their grade level throughout elementary school and into secondary school. For students not reading at grade level, supports and programming will be provided. Key Ministry of Education resources that serve to inform the continuous learning and improvement process for literacy include: [Paying Attention to Literacy K-12](#); [The Guide to Effective Reading Instruction 4-6](#); [The Guide to Effective Writing Instruction 4-6](#); and [Adolescent Literacy Guide](#).

Professional learning opportunities through the Program Department will be provided to support the implementation of these evidence-informed practices. In addition, The New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP) supports new teachers with a mentor and learning specific to the implementation of a comprehensive literacy program in the elementary grades. Once again this year, HWDSB is offering an Ontario College of Teachers accredited Additional Qualification course in reading (Reading Part I).

Superintendents of Student Achievement, including Program, will monitor progress through school visits (every 2 weeks for High Priority Schools and every 4-6 weeks for others). Progress will also be monitored through a review of report card grades for reading and writing (Grades 2-8).

Staff are **on target** to have at least 75% of Grade 1 students achieving a B (provincial standard) or higher on their June 2018 report card.

Goal #2: Improvement in Mathematics

Strategy: Review and implement the Renewed Math Strategy (RMS).

*If we implement a revised RMS that narrows the focus on two key areas of staff learning and improved instructional practice (operational sense and quantity relationships), **then** staff will implement strategies to develop and enhance student learning in these two areas.*

A clearly articulated and focused Renewed Math Strategy (RMS) will enable system-wide implementation of effective mathematics teaching and improved student outcomes. Working collaboratively with the support of the Ministry of Education's team, the HWDSB Renewed Math Strategy is revised to focus on two key areas for improved staff understanding, instructional practice and student learning: (1) Operational Sense and (2) Quantity Relationships. Operational Sense focuses on knowing how and when to use mathematical operations such as addition or multiplication. Quantity relationships focuses on an understanding of numbers and what quantity represents (i.e. whole number, fraction, decimals and integers).

Implementation of the RMS will include 60 minutes of daily uninterrupted math learning in elementary classrooms. Effective practice within the math block includes tasks that develop both conceptual and procedural understanding. For instance, students are provided opportunities to understand what "volume" is conceptually as well as opportunities to practice the procedure and calculate volume using the proper formulae.

The professional learning plan for the HWDSB-RMS features learning opportunities for principals/vice-principals, teachers and parents. Monthly learning sessions for administrators will be designed to build an understanding of the instructional practices supporting the development of operational sense and quantity relationships. In secondary schools, math learning teams of administrators and teachers will focus on improving student achievement in grade nine and ten applied mathematics classes. HWDSB is offering two, Ontario College of Teachers additional qualification courses in mathematics, (Mathematics Part I, Part II) to build professional knowledge and improve teaching practice. As well, after-school professional learning opportunities will be provided for teaching staff on a variety of topics.

Superintendents of Student Achievement, including Program, will monitor the progress through school visits and review of the school annual plan data, targets, student learning needs, staff learning needs and professional learning plans.

Strategy: Intensive focus on mathematics in High Priority Schools.

*If we have enhanced support for mathematics in High Priority Schools **then** we will better understand and address the mathematics learning needs of children in these schools*

All but two High Priority Schools have been identified as "intense" or "increased" by the Ministry of Education through the RMS process. Intense schools have been assigned a math facilitator to work directly in classrooms with staff to implement the HWDSB-RMS. Increased schools can access the facilitator to support their work within the continuous learning and improvement process. The administrators of high priority schools are provided monthly professional learning to deepen their understanding of operational sense and quantity relationships, as well as effective instructional practices.

Superintendents of Student Achievement will visit these schools with a greater frequency (every two weeks) in order to learn more about their needs and to monitor progress in this area.

Strategy: Implement effective comprehensive mathematics practices and interventions through the continuous learning and improvement process.

*If schools engage in collaborative inquiry regarding student learning needs and skill gaps in operational sense and quantity relationships, **then** those needs and gaps will be addressed in the classroom and student achievement will improve.*

Implementation of the RMS is embedded in the Continuous Learning and Improvement (CLI) process where teaching staff:

- review student work and data to identify learning needs and skills gaps;
- engage in professional learning to understand the instructional practices to address the learning needs and gaps;
- implement the instructional practices;
- assess the impact of the instructional practices; and,
- reflect on their learning, student learning, and plan for their next step.

Professional learning in schools is tied to the educator learning needs as identified through the CLI process. Professional learning for elementary school teams will be provided ahead of the December Professional Activity Day, which, as directed by the Ministry of Education will focus on further developing staff understanding in mathematics.

Superintendents of Student Achievement, including Program, will monitor the progress through school visits and review of the school annual plan data, targets, student learning needs, staff learning needs and professional learning plans.

Staff are **on target** to have at least 65% of students achieving at or above provincial standard as measured by 2017-18 EQAO (total number of students in Grades 3, 6 and 9).

Goal #3: All Students Graduating

Strategy: Refine our measures of students' progress towards graduation over time.

*If we identify the key indicators of successful progress towards graduation, **then** we will be able to intervene to support all students graduating.*

With precise measures of student progress towards graduation, school and system staff support students more effectively and analyze current strategies for practices that support or introduce barriers to graduation. The current practice of SOSAs tracking the credit accumulation, community hours and Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test progress of students in their fourth and fifth year has had a positive impact.

To build on and enhance this effective practice, a Student Information (Data) Strategy is currently under development. This strategy aims to create consistent practices and protocols for using data to identify, intervene and track student progress towards graduation. Identifying a data analytics tool to support refining the measures of student progress towards graduation is a key element of the proposed strategy, as well as identifying the learning needed by staff to enhance their data analysis skills and to learn how to use the data analytics tool effectively.

In addition, the student information strategy will aim to define the indicators of being “on track” towards graduation in the earlier years of secondary school (i.e. grades 9 through 11). Indicators may be factors such as credit accumulation, achievement results, and attendance. With a definition of “on track” in place, schools will be able to provide programming and interventions to support students in closing the achievement gaps.

Superintendents of Student Achievement, including Program, will continue to monitor students in year 4 and year 5, during their visits to secondary schools; however, as the work of the Student Information Strategy progresses, the monitoring process may include the data analytics tool and additional indicators of progress towards graduation.

Strategy: Identify, monitor and provide differentiated support for in-risk students.

*If we provide differentiated supports for in-risk students, **then** they are more likely to graduate.*

The HWDSB serves a diverse community of learners with different strengths, needs, interests and post-secondary goals; therefore, it is vital to provide differentiated support to ensure that all HWDSB learners can graduate.

Each secondary school closely monitors the achievement of their students and identifies students they consider to be in-risk, which typically means students who are not finding academic success, struggling with their well-being, or struggling to attend school daily. Depending on the circumstance, school staff identifies the best strategy to meet the student's need. Academic needs may be met through in-school alternative education, a timetable or course change; additional support through Learning Resource; or, extra help, extended deadlines, etc. from their teacher. Community partners are often a valuable resource in supporting well-being needs. The John Howard Society, Alternatives for Youth, and the YMCA Settlement Workers are examples of partners who can support student well-being needs or connect the student to other service providers.

Secondary schools will also act proactively and collaborate with their associate schools to know the incoming grade nine students and create as smooth a transition as possible. Typically, there are a series of transition meetings where the strengths, needs and interests of students are reviewed, and plans can be made for differentiated support. Supports in the transition process may include: purposeful timetabling, scheduling daily time in learning resource, identifying a caring adult, and linking students to extra-curriculars.

Monthly Student Success Meetings for secondary student services staff and administrators, led by the Principal of Student Success, builds capacity in effective practices for identifying, monitoring and supporting in-risk students. These meetings also provide opportunities for staff to become aware of Ministry initiatives, system programs, and community partners and the services they can provide to schools.

Superintendents of Student Achievement, including Program, will monitor the progress of this strategy during school visits using the school's Taking Stock report, which details the number of in-risk students in the school and the supports in place.

Strategy: Implement effective instructional practices and interventions through the continuous learning and improvement process.

*If we identify and address student learning needs and skill gaps, **then** student achievement will improve resulting in increased numbers of students graduating.*

The Continuous Learning and Improvement (CLI) process uses examples of student learning to assist staff in identifying student learning needs and skill gaps, as well as the actions needed to address those gaps and needs. This strategy is tightly connected to the previous two strategies; with precise measures and a variety of data sets at their disposal, schools can identify student needs and skills gaps and differentiate their support for all students, with a focus on students at-risk of not graduating.

In our secondary schools, the CLI process drives departmental improvement plans, which in turn are scaled-up to create the school annual plan. Each department (Humanities, Science, etc.) explores their data and student learning to identify their departmental improvement efforts for the year. With 1:1 iPads for all grade nine and ten students, significant professional learning regarding the use of technology to accelerate student learning and address learning gaps is occurring at the system and school level. Professional development in the schools is tied to the educator learning needs identified through the CLI process.

As well, HWDSB provides a number of in-school and system programs to support student learning needs and skill gaps. In schools, credit recovery programs are utilized to assist students in earning unsuccessful credits, for example. A partnership with the John Howard Society provides child and youth workers, in five schools, to support students with well-being needs outside the scope of HWDSB staff. At the system level, programs such as Supporting Hamilton's Aboriginal Education (SHAE) or the Young and Expectant Parent Program (YEPP) support students towards graduation based on their current needs and/or interest. In addition, the Dual Credit Program is a partnership with Mohawk College that enables students to earn credits towards graduation while also earning credits towards a college diploma.

Superintendents of Student Achievement, including Program, will monitor the progress through school visits and review of the school annual plan data, targets, student learning needs, staff learning needs and professional learning plans.

Staff are **on target***** to have at least 83% of the 2013-2014 cohort (staying in HWDSB) graduate within 5 years (by August 2018).

Appendix A - High Priority Schools

Prior to 2017-18 HWDSB identified elementary school needs as High, Moderate or Low. These needs were based on a staff-developed index (Learning Opportunities Index – LOI). The LOI is a mathematical model that calculates "risk" or learning opportunity by several variables within a given neighbourhood:

- The number of low income households (2006 was the last reliable Census);
- The rate of unemployment;
- How many of those households are lone-parent/caregiver homes;
- Recent immigration rates;
- Low education rates amongst parents/caregivers (e.g., no high school diploma)

Historically, one of the primary system responses to High- and Moderate-needs schools was focused on staffing. High-Needs schools would yield a lower student-teacher ratio in the junior and intermediate grades, followed by moderate-needs and low-needs schools often had larger class sizes as a result.

In Winter 2017, Executive Council (EC) indicated a shift in this approach as part of the implementation of the Board Annual Plan based on the new Strategic Priorities. In an effort to allocate resources in a more equitable manner while maintaining a differentiated approach for those with the greatest need, EC decided to establish a priority list of elementary schools (High Priority Schools). For the purposes of staffing and resource allocations, it was decided that all other elementary schools would be treated the same (i.e. collapse 'moderate' and 'low'-needs categories).

The factors considered when designating High Priority Schools included:

- Prior designation as a high or moderate needs school;
- Low student achievement (grade 1 reading, primary/junior EQAO);
- Early Development Instrument (EDI) scores;
- Census data (2006);
- Superintendent of Student Achievement data collected through school visits.

Based on these criteria twenty (20) schools were identified as High Priority Schools. At the time it was acknowledged that a revision to the LOI, especially the census data, would be required so as to better utilize current demographic information. This proposed LOI model would follow similar mathematical properties as the existing LOI but the 'risk' or 'learning opportunity' would be based within a school population for increased accuracy.

The proposed revised LOI, to be developed throughout 2017-18, would include:

- 2016 Census data;
- Updated immigration, unemployment and education rates;
- Predictive internal population data of students such as the EDI to gauge vulnerabilities across five domains (physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, cognitive and language ability, and communication/general knowledge ability). Thus, a high proportion of students with multiple vulnerabilities across several domains would indicate higher learning opportunities for the elementary school. Once these student populations have been identified tracking progress over time will be possible.
- Testing and simulation of the model by exploring with different variable weights to ensure that the LOI is isolating the best fit of the model.

The initial Action Plan for High Priority Schools focusses on four (4) key areas:

- School leadership
- Resources
- Learning
- Community Partnerships

School Leadership

It is well documented in school improvement studies that school leadership contributes significantly to better student outcomes. With this in mind the first task of the High Priority School's action plan was to review the school leadership fit for each school. This included a review of Superintendent of Student Achievement (SOSA) school visit notes; consideration of School Council leadership profiles as well as Principal/Vice-Principal self-identified preferences. EC then undertook a systematic approach to match Principals and Vice-Principals with each High Priority School. Administrative changes were announced in Spring 2017 to allow for transition time prior to the start of the new school year.

Resources

In addition to differentiated classroom staffing, similar to student-teacher ratios used in the previous High Needs School model, High Priority Schools were allocated other key resources. These resources include:

- 0.75-1.0 FTE Reading Specialist for all High Priority Schools;
- Consideration for a Vice-Principal allocation (0.5 FTE);
- Additional Learning Resource Teacher allocation;
- Additional Office Assistants;
- Two educator (teacher and DECE) Kindergarten classes;
- Kindergarten average class size of 26;
- Bi-weekly SOSA visits (Learning);
- Public Health Nurses (Community Partner)

Learning

A key element of the first year of the action plan is to learn more about High Priority Schools with respect to the variables that may impact student outcomes. In order to do so it was decided that each SOSA would have responsibility for a minimum of three (3) High Priority Schools thereby allowing learning from school visits to be shared within a SOSA networked learning community. SOSAs together with other members of the Learning Services team meet weekly to discuss their observations, and develop strategies collaboratively. A significant investment in the time spent by SOSAs in High Priority Schools (bi-weekly for 30-60 minutes) is a major departure from the way school visits have been undertaken to-date.

An adapted version of Professor Ken Leithwood's Strong Districts rubric (characteristics and school conditions), led by the E-Best team, will be utilized to measure key variables at two points in the school year (Fall and Spring). For comparative purposes this inventory will be undertaken by SOSAs together with principals/vice-principals with both High Priority and non-high priority schools within each Family of Schools.

Community Partners

As directed by Trustees, the High Priority Schools plan will include a Community Steering Committee. This will be coordinated through an existing relationships with Hamilton Public Health (HPH). Several planning meetings have been held in the late Spring and early Fall with HPH. The next step will include a formal data-sharing agreement and the expansion of the committee to include other community partners.

The inclusion of community partners signals a strong commitment to learning as much as possible about the social determinants at play within High Priority Schools, determinants that may contribute significantly to student outcomes. Learning more about such variables will assist in developing the next phase of the plan focussed on professional learning and supports.

High Priority Schools

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Family of Schools 1 | Elizabeth Bagshaw, Lake Avenue, Sir Isaac Brock, Sir Wilfrid Laurier |
| Family of Schools 2 | Central, Pauline Johnson, Westwood |
| Family of Schools 3 | Hillcrest, Parkdale, W.H. Ballard, Viscount Montgomery |
| Family of Schools 4 | Bennetto, Dr. J.E. Davey, Hess Street, Prince of Wales, Queen Mary, Queen Victoria |
| Family of Schools 5 | Adelaide Hoodless, Cathy Wever, Memorial (City) |

Action Plan

| | Focus | Expected Outcome |
|------------------------|--------------|--|
| Year 1, 2017-18 | Learning | Using the inventory tool, develop a better understanding about the variables impacting student learning and achievement in High Priority Schools compared to other schools in the board. |



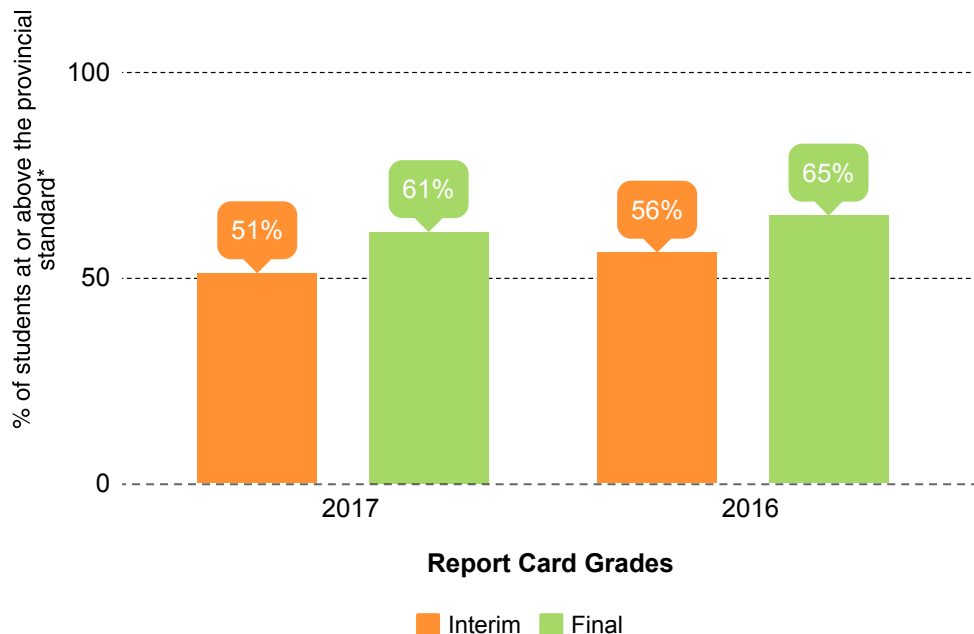
ALL STUDENTS READING BY THE END OF GRADE ONE

TARGET: At least 75 per cent of Grade 1 students achieving a B (provincial standard) or higher on their June 2017 report card.

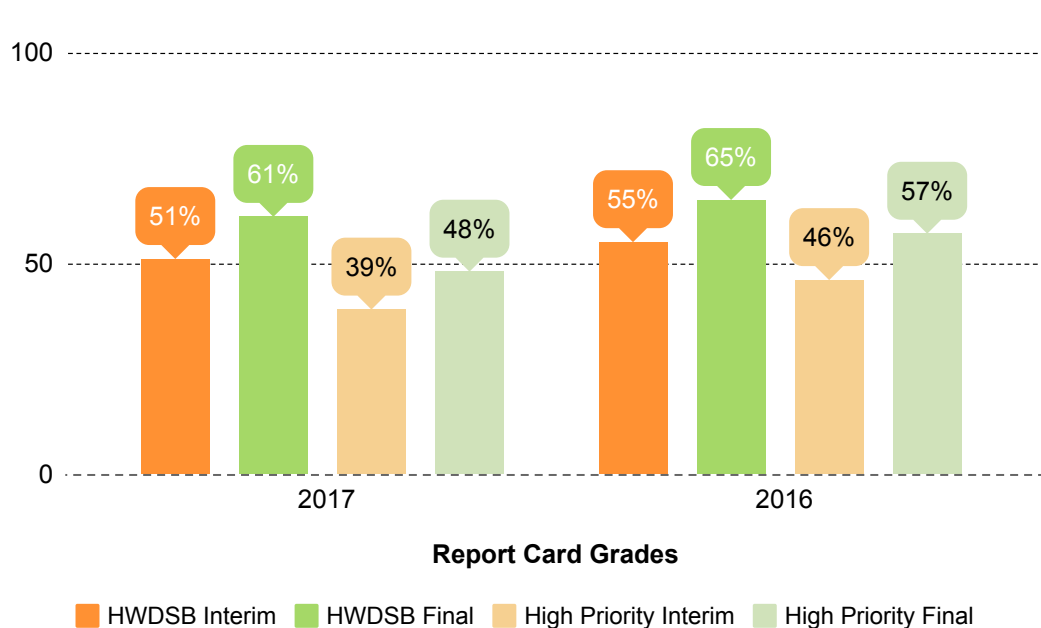
Key Points

More students are reading at standard by the final report card compared to the interim. This is consistent for English Language Learners. While students with special needs continue to make progress, less achieve at standard at each reporting point.

Grade 1 Reading Achievement



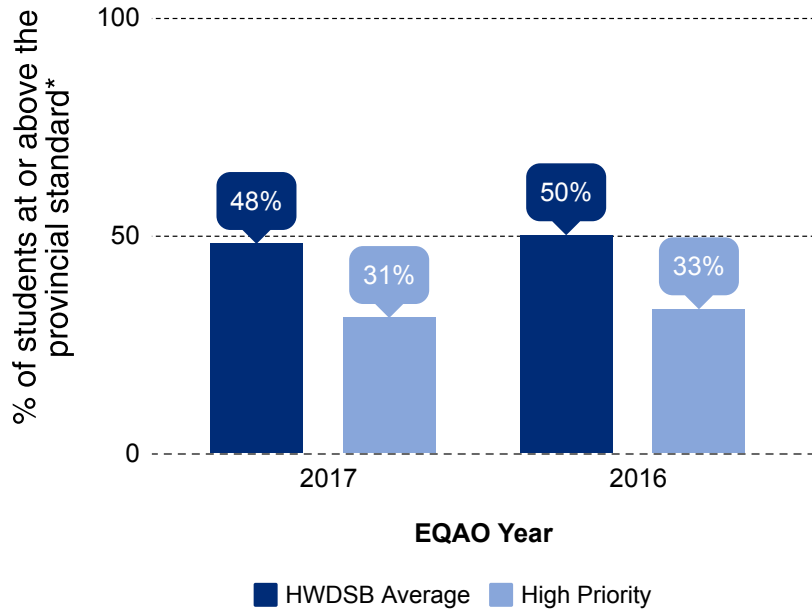
Grade 1 Reading - High Priority Schools



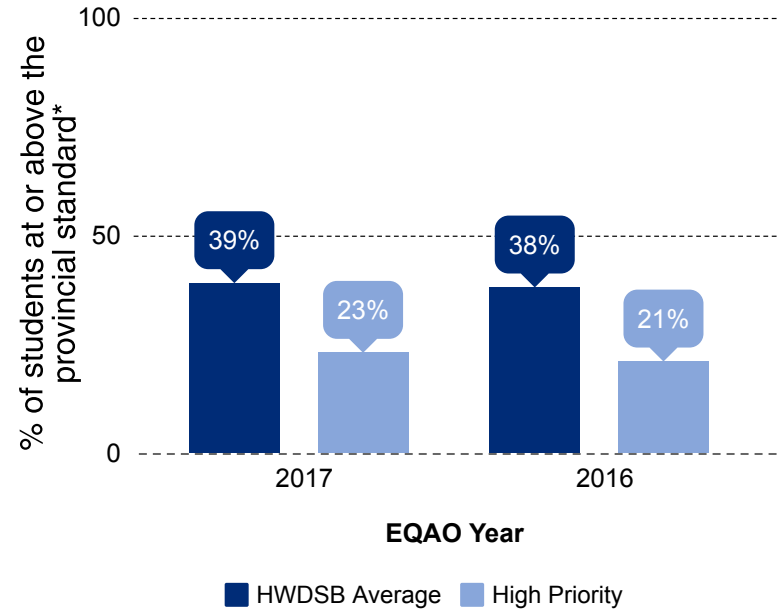
* Provincial Standard is "B-" or above

Achievement of High Priority Schools on EQAO

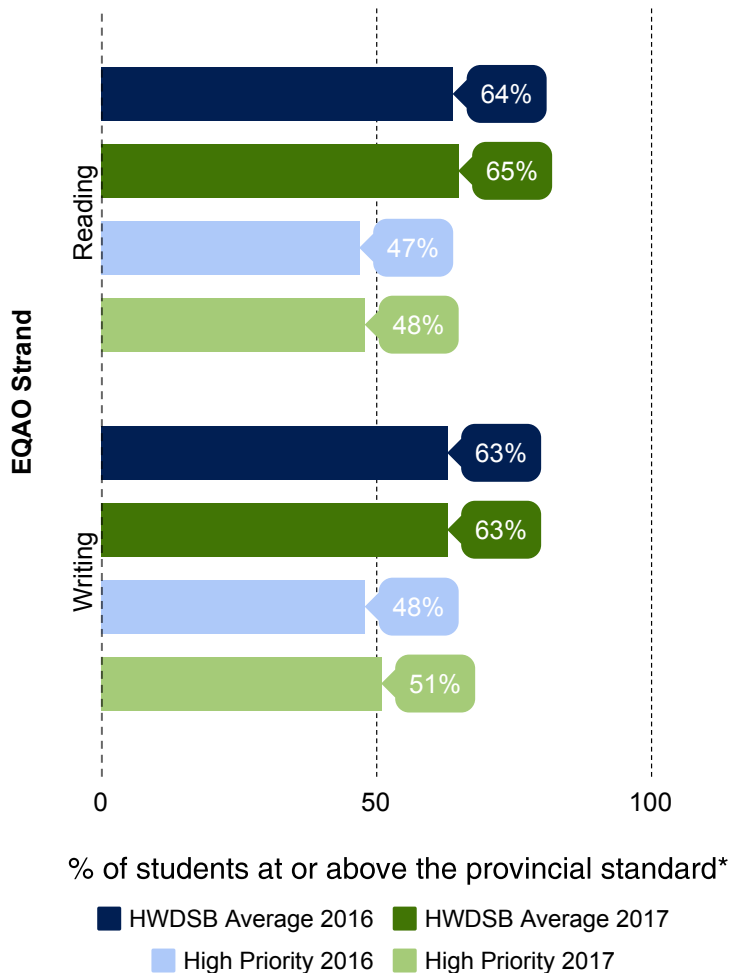
Grades 3 - Math Achievement



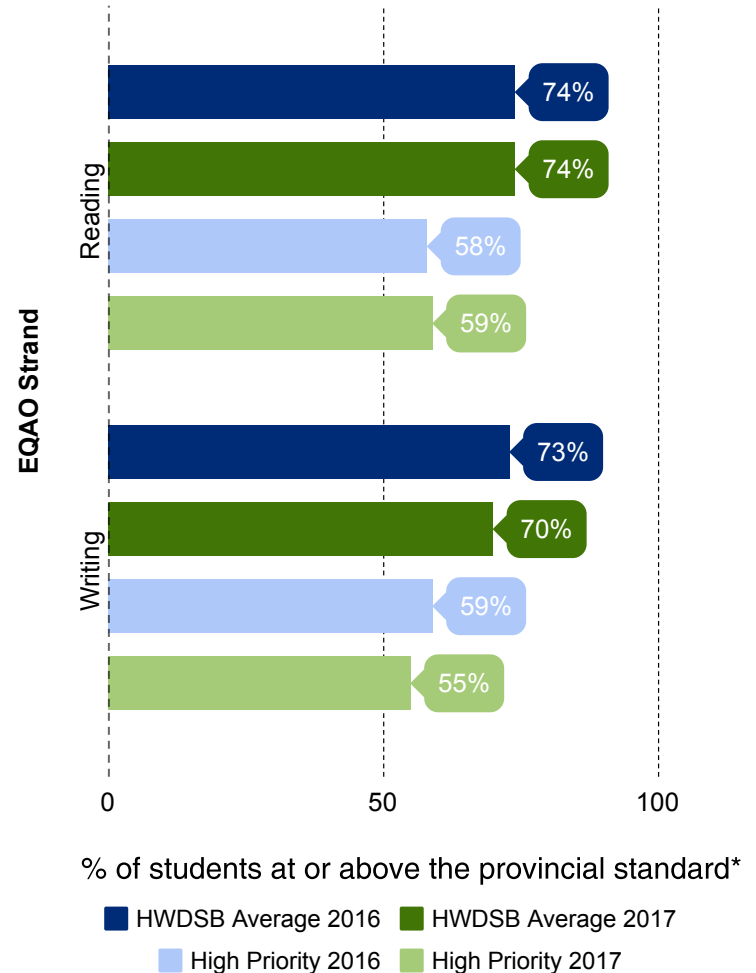
Grades 6 - Math Achievement



Grades 3 - Literacy Achievement



Grades 6 - Literacy Achievement



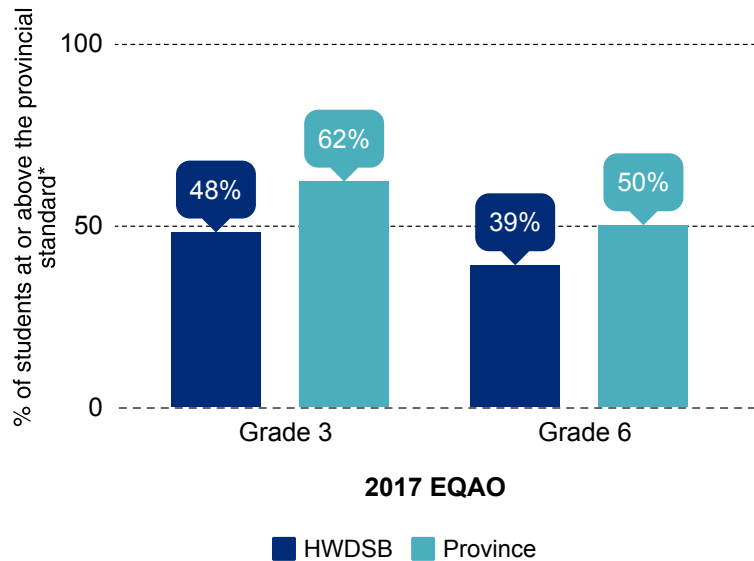
* Provincial Standard is a Level 3



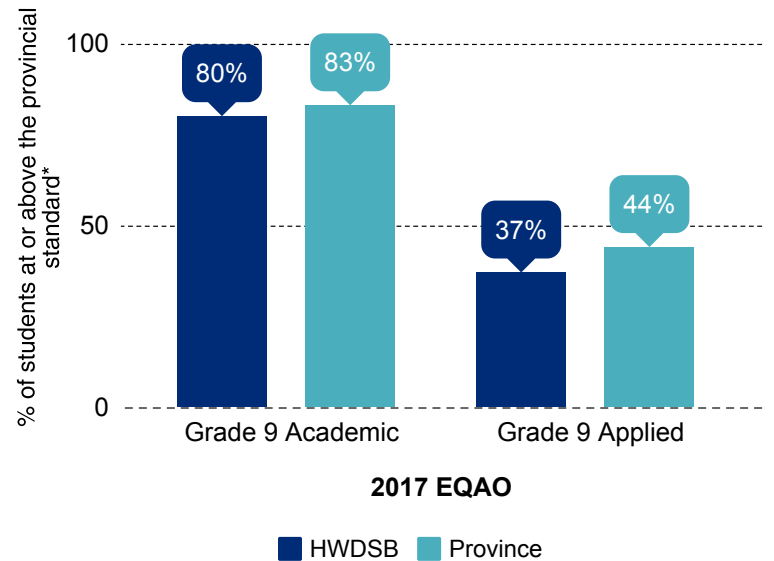
ALL STUDENTS IMPROVING IN MATHEMATICS

TARGET: At least 65 per cent of students achieving at or above provincial standard as measured by 2016-17 EQAO (total number of students in grades 3, 6 and 9).

Grades 3 & 6 - Math Achievement



Grade 9 - Math Achievement



**Students Achieving at or above Standard
(grades 3, 6 and 9 math)**

**Total Number of Students
(grades 3, 6 and 9)**

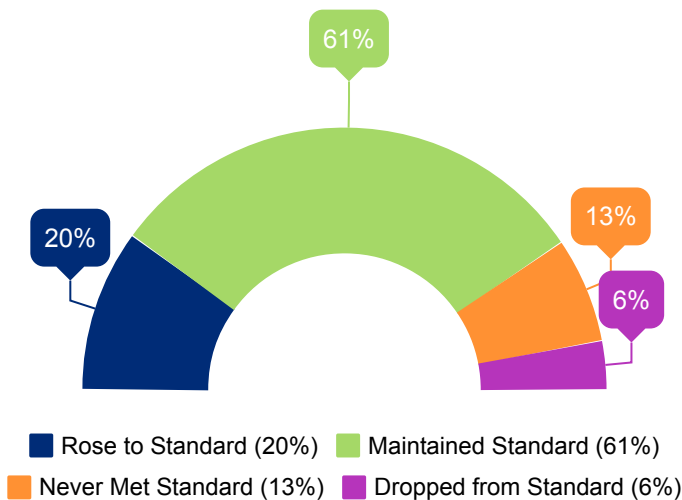
= 50%

Key Points

Achievement patterns in math for English Language Learners and for students with special needs are consistent with those found in Grade 1 Reading.

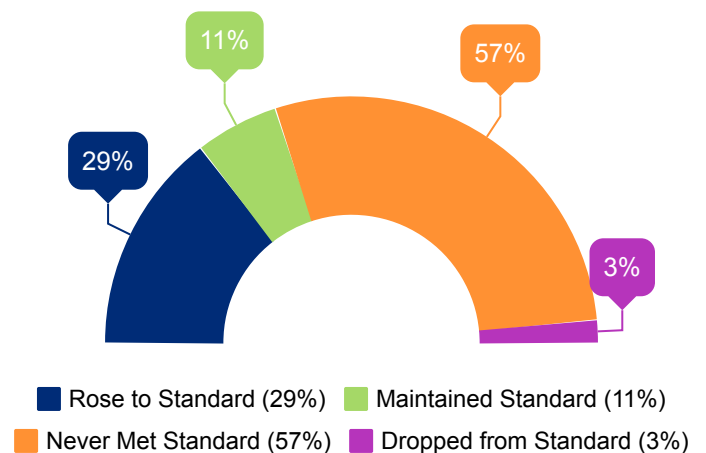
Cohort Achievement - ACADEMIC

Grade 6 (2014) to Grade 9 (2017)



Cohort Achievement - APPLIED

Grade 6 (2014) to Grade 9 (2017)



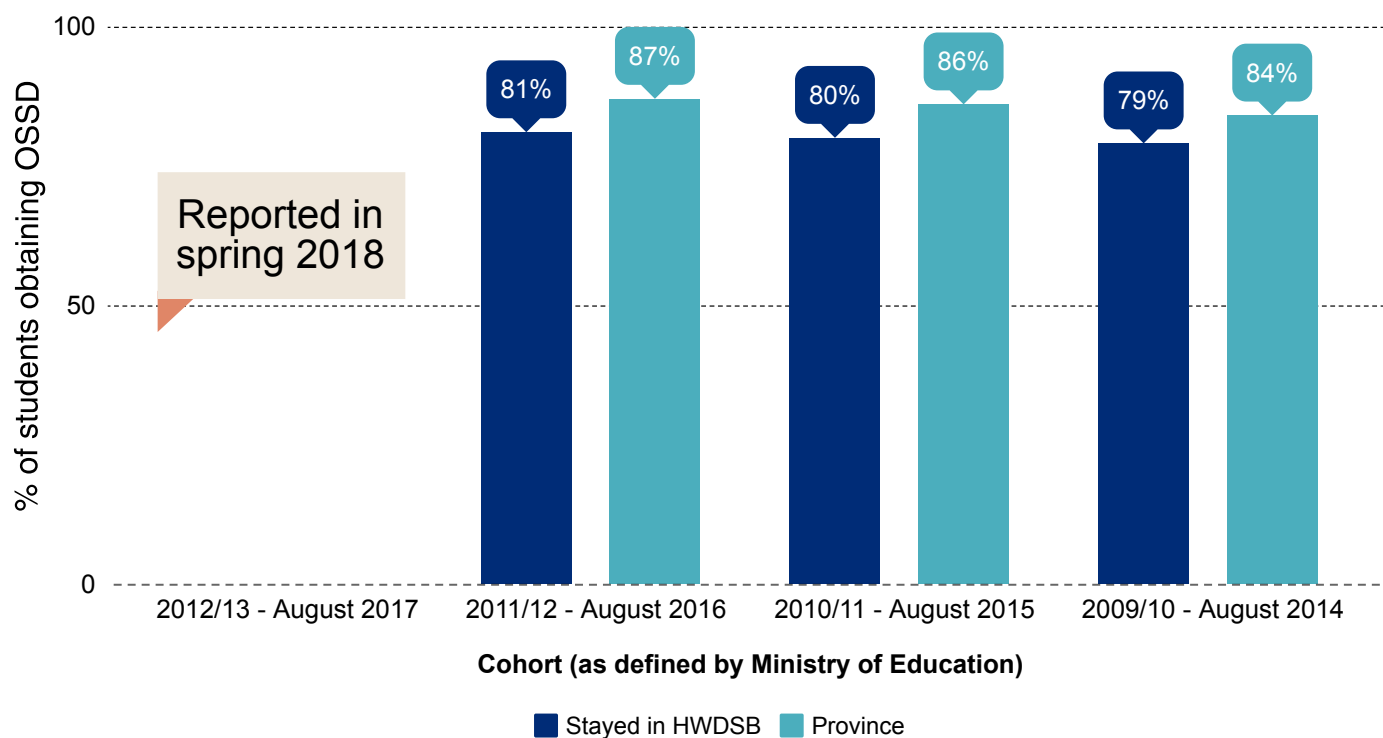
* Provincial Standard is a Level 3



ALL STUDENTS GRADUATING

TARGET: At least 82 per cent of the 2012/13 cohort (staying in HWDSB) will graduate within five years (by August 2017).

Graduation Rate - 5 Year



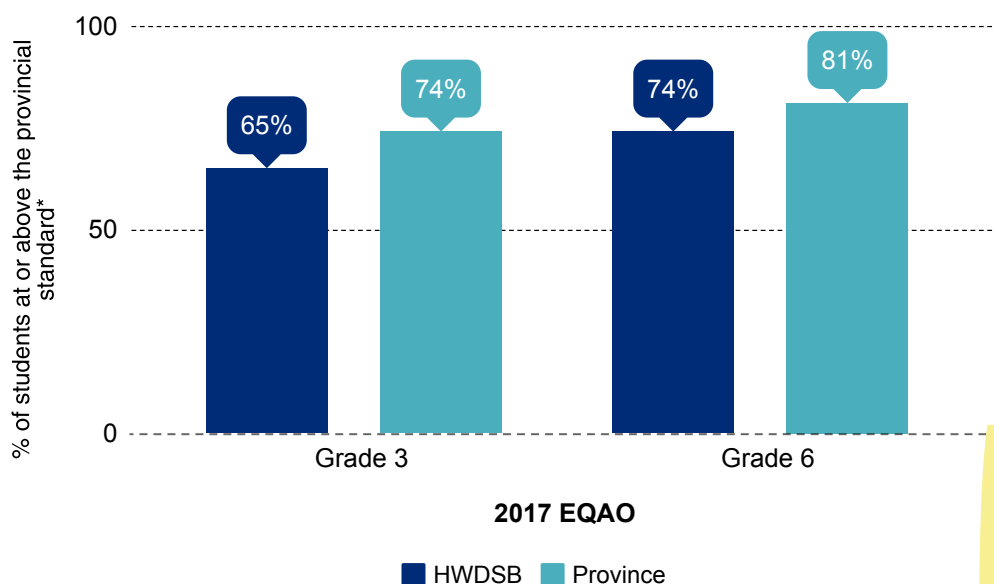
Key Points

Each year the Ministry of Education releases graduation rates in the Spring. The most recent graduation rate shows how many students starting grade 9 in 2011/2012 and staying in HWDSB graduated within 5 years.



OTHER 2016-17 EQAO RESULTS

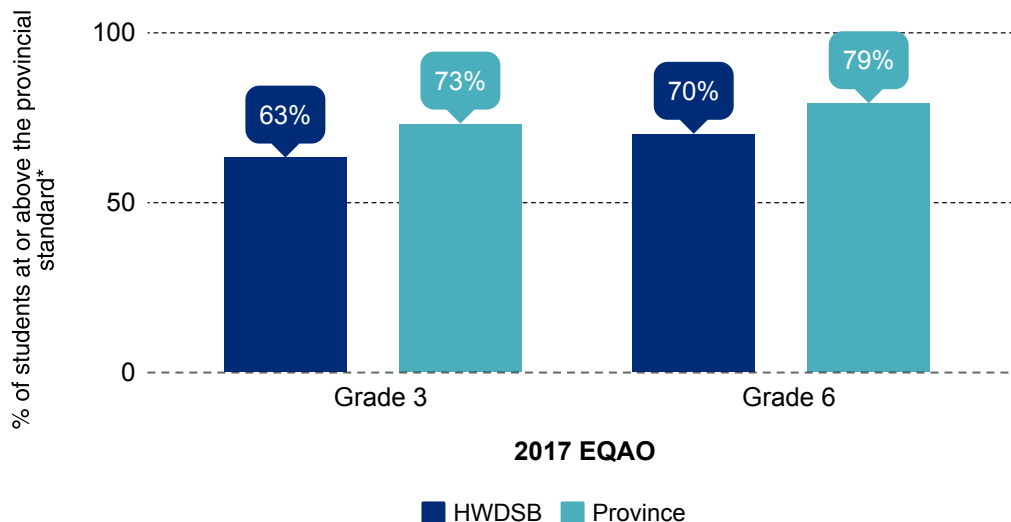
Grade 3 & 6 - Reading Achievement



Key Points

Achievement patterns for English Language Learners and for students with special needs are consistent with those found in Grade 1 Reading.

Grade 3 & 6 - Writing Achievement

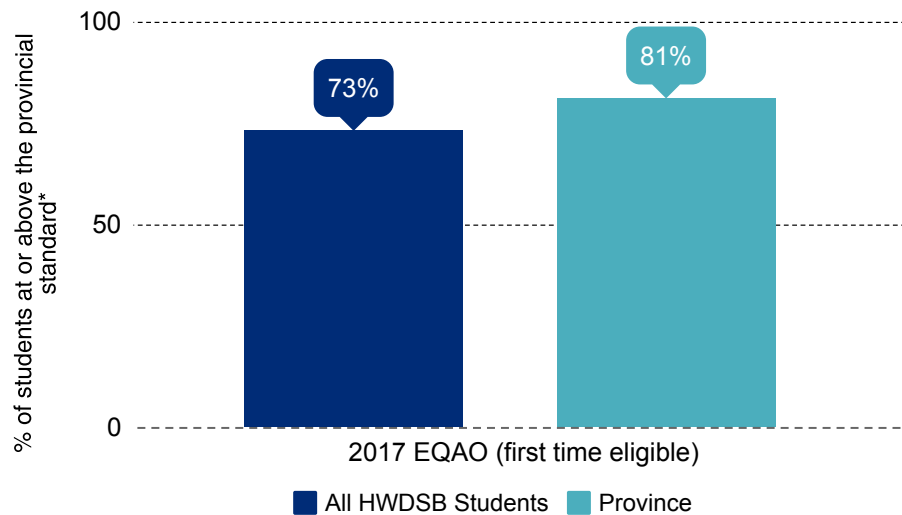


* Provincial Standard is Level 3



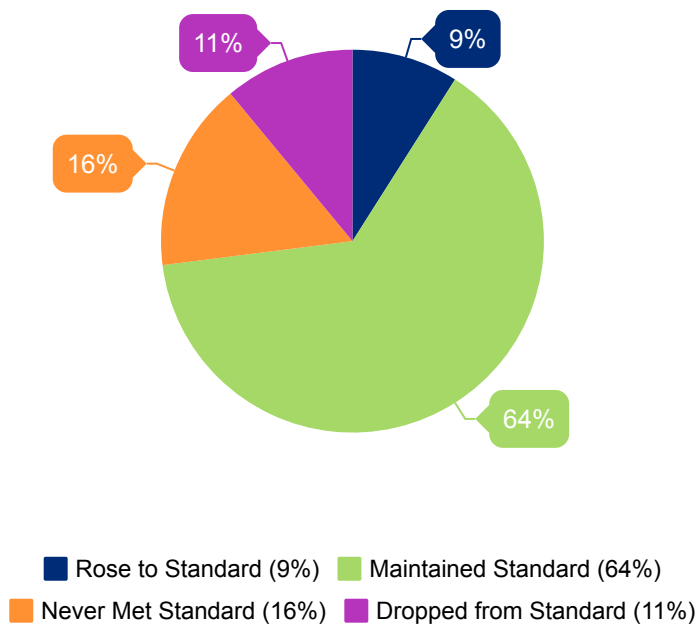
OTHER 2016-17 EQAO RESULTS

OSSLT



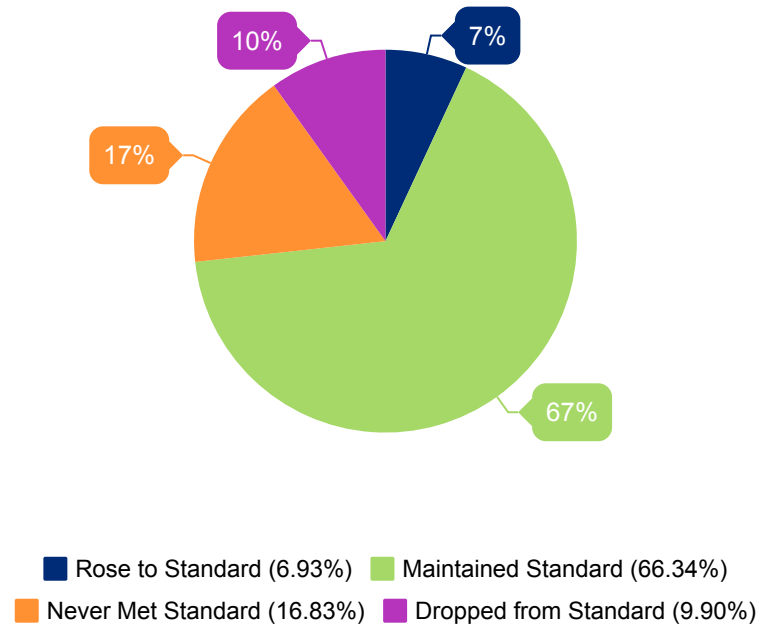
Cohort Achievement - WRITING

Grade 6 (2013) to OSSLT (2017)



Cohort Achievement - READING

Grade 6 (2013) to OSSLT (2017)



* Provincial Standard is a Score of 300

Notice of Motion: Communicating with Parents/Guardians/Caregivers of Students with Special Needs

Presented by: Trustee Bingham

Whereas, the Student Learning and Achievement strategic direction set by the board includes all students reading by the end of grade 1, improving in mathematics and graduating and;

Whereas HWDSB values the lived experiences of parents/guardians/caregivers of students with special needs and;

Whereas, the Board has set Effective Communication as a strategic direction and is committed to improving our communication through comprehensive strategies.

Be it Resolved, that staff explore opportunities to enhance two-way communication with parents/guardians/caregivers of students with special needs in order to improve service and programming.