HWDSB

Program Committee
Wednesday, March 3, 2021
Virtual Meeting – will be posted online the following day
Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board
20 Education Court, P.O. Box 2558
Hamilton, ON L8N 3L1

AGENDA: 5:30-8:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order

2. Approval of the Agenda

3. Student Learning and Achievement Annual Plan 2021-22 and Update

4. Adjournment

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	HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD	**HWDSB Annual Plan Report**

TO: PROGRAM COMMITTEE

FROM: Manny Figueiredo, Director of Education

DATE: March 3, 2021

PREPARED BY: Peter Sovran, Associate Director, Learning Services
Bill Torrens, Superintendent of Student Achievement-Program

RE: Student Learning and Achievement Annual Plan 2021-22 and Student Learning and Achievement Update

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Action   Monitoring **X**

Background

The 2021-22 Annual Plan for Student Learning and Achievement focuses on improving graduation outcomes and reading achievement, with an imperative to close gaps for students historically underserved. As noted in the Positive Culture and Well-being Annual Plan Program Committee Report (February 1, 2021), students historically underserved by education systems self-identify as Indigenous, Black, Racialized, Two-Spirit and LGBTQIA+, and students requiring special education supports/services.

- **Goal #1: Improving the graduation outcome for all students and closing the gap for those historically underserved.**
- *Goal #2: Improving the reading achievement of all students and closing the gap for those historically underserved.*

Each goal has a target and three strategies:
1. Investing in People
2. Leveraging Effective Practices
3. Refining Measures of Progress

The following report includes:
1) An overview of the annual plan for Student Learning and Achievement for 2021-22 and,
2) A COVID-19 pandemic update on student achievement, Term 1,   elementary schools and Semester 1, secondary schools, for 2020-21.

2021-22 Annual Plan

Goal #1: Improving the graduation outcome for all students and closing the gap for those historically underserved.

Target: At least 80 per cent of students within each cohort making progress towards graduation/graduating*.

*Graduation includes obtaining an Ontario Secondary School Diploma, Certificate of Achievement and/or Certificate of Accomplishment.

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> **Strategy 1: Investing in People.** *Provide differentiated professional learning on culturally responsive and relevant pedagogy, blended learning and personalized learning with a particular focus on engaging learners that are historically underserved.*
>
> *If there are multiple, differentiated opportunities for professional learning, then educators will further refine their expertise in knowing their learning, knowing their learner, and responding to their learner.*

The professional learning plan for the graduation goal will focus on how to support educators in integrating Culturally Responsive and Relevant Pedagogy (CRRP)/Indigenous Cultural Safety (ICS), blended learning, and personalized learning into their daily teaching practices. In all of these areas, professional learning aims to deepen staff knowledge and skill in understanding the curriculum, assessment practices, and instructional practices. Staff will continue to describe effective programming through the Knowing the Learning, Knowing the Learner, and Responding to the Learning framework.

Professional learning regarding program pathways for principals/vice-principals, student services teachers, and student success teachers is on-going. This learning develops an understanding of the programming available to students and encourages them to make personalized pathways decision based on their interests and aspirations. In the spring of 2021, professional learning to support the de-streaming of grade nine applied and academic math classes will be provided to principals/vice-principals and teachers assigned to grade nine math courses.

The Specialized Services Division provides professional learning on supporting students requiring special education services. Staff have designed and developed self-registering courses on the HUB such as Educator Resources for Students of Low Incidence and Specialized Services: Curriculum Mapping & Program Planning on topics such as Centre for Success Tier One regarding how to use specific-technology tools in the classroom. Providing professional development on the Individual Education Plan (IEP) writing is on-going work for Specialized Services. Virtual platforms including [Learning4Success Website,](#) [Speech and Language website](#) and the [Centre for Success website](#) provide a number of resources to educators seeking to personalize programming.

At this time, the enhanced public health measures require that all professional learning be delivered via the board standardized digital platforms, MS Teams and The HUB, rather than in person. Adjustments to this approach will be made as the public health circumstances change.

Please see *Appendix A: Professional Learning 2020-21* for a listing of the professional learning connected to CRRP/ICS, blended learning, and personalized learning provided since the summer of 2020.

Executive Council monitors this strategy through learning session feedback

> **Strategy 2: Leveraging Effective Practices**: *Implement instructional, assessment and engagement practices focused on improving the outcomes for all students in grades 7 to 12.*
>
> *If educators utilize daily, dedicated, evidence-based student success and instructional strategies, then students will have a better opportunity to demonstrate improved learning and achievement.*

Culturally Responsive and Relevant Pedagogy (CRRP)/Indigenous Cultural Safety (ICS), Blended Learning, and Personalized learning foster long-term student success because they are essential elements of a modern learning environment and support the development of the 21st century competencies and digital skills students need to be successful in their post-secondary destination, be it the apprenticeship, college, community, university, or the workplace.

There are high expectations for all learners in the classroom and educators communicate the expectation that all learners can achieve at high levels. When an educator is practicing a culturally relevant and responsive approach where all students can achieve to a high level, they change what happens in the classroom to respond the learners. They are not inviting students into what exists but making a new and better space for everyone. In a culturally responsive classroom, learning materials reflect the interests, cultures, identities, lived experiences of the students. The classroom environment celebrates and honours each student's unique identity which contributes to an inclusive environment supportive of learning. In a classroom in which the educator takes a CRRP/ICS approach, "Learning experiences are

designed to be relevant and authentic, enabling students to see themselves in the daily learning of the classroom" [Culturally Responsive Pedagogy: Towards Equity and Inclusion in Ontario Schools](#) (2013).

The HUB, supplemented with MS Teams, is the HWDSB standard blended learning platform. Effective blended learning practices include "flipping the classroom" by posting learning materials and activities prior to a face-to-face lesson to build background knowledge and then applying that knowledge in the face-to-face classroom. Other blended learning practices include using apps, such as Brightspace Portfolio, to document student learning and provide feedback, as well as having students demonstrate their learning in new ways, such as podcasts or videos instead of tests or essays.

Providing effective blended learning requires navigating different digital platforms; using digital tools to communicate; and demonstrating learning, as well as developing digital skills to complete these tasks. Blended learning fosters student success by making learning available to all learners whenever they are connected to the internet with a digital device. It supports the development of key digital skills (e.g., data management, digital security, and word processing) and fosters 21st century competences (e.g., students to collaborate and communicate with peers both synchronously and asynchronously to complete learning tasks).

Personalization is based on ongoing assessment throughout instructional cycles. Personalization begins with the creation of a class, as well as individual, learner profile that details strengths, interests and areas of growth. Based on the information in the profiles, teachers plan for all students using differentiated instruction and universal design for learning to provide personalized programming to meet the needs of all students. Personalization also provides students with choice regarding what they learn and how they learn it. Inquiry learning and the play-based model in kindergarten are both personalized learning practices, and eLearning is a personalization strategy that enables a student to access a course that may not be available at their school and to complete the course work at a time of their choosing.

Programs such as Specialist High Skills Majors and Co-operative Education are examples of personalization because they enable students to pursue experiential learning in workplaces where they may see themselves pursuing a career. Personalization also ensures that students are encouraged to explore all pathways and select one that represents their interests and ambitions rather than being stereotyped due to their identity and perceived ability. To remove barriers to success, a personalized intervention and support plan is developed and implemented for students identified as at-risk of not graduating.

De-streaming
De-streaming is an important equity measure that seeks to ensure pathways decisions for students are personalized and based on students' interests and aspirations. De-streaming ends the practice of "streaming" that places some students into pathways or programs based on potential bias or perceptions of their ability. Preparations for the de-streaming of grade nine Mathematics have begun with the striking of an internal steering committee to provide direction and staff voice into the process. The steering committee has adopted the three Ministry goals for de-streaming as HWDSB goals. They are: 1) Cultural Shifts to Identify and Dismantle Systemic Discrimination and Structural Inequities; 2) Increased Educator Capacity for effective, culturally responsive instruction, assessment and evaluation in de-streamed, multi-level classrooms; and 3) Increased Student Engagement, Achievement and Well-Being.

Next steps for the steering committee include creating an action plan for each goal with a working group leading the work of meeting the goal. The work of preparing educators to provide de-streamed programming, as well as engaging students, parents/guardians/caregivers, community, and staff to help inform the work of de-streaming, will be embedded within the action plan.

Combined CRRP/ICS, blended learning, and personalized learning are a powerful set of practices that help to support "HWDSB graduates acquire the competencies and digital skills needed to successfully pursue a post-secondary pathway (apprenticeship, college, community, university, or the workplace) and find success in an ever-changing economy and society" (HWDSB 21st Century Learning Strategy). These practices should close gaps for historically underserved students.

Executive Council will monitor this strategy through school and classroom visit observation data.

> **Strategy 3: Refining Measures of Progress.** *Develop and implement the tools required to monitor the progress students make towards graduation on a regular basis, from Grade 7 onwards at the classroom, school and system levels.*
>
> *If educators identify, intervene, and monitor the progress students at-risk of not graduating, the number of students graduating will increase.*

Starting in spring, 2021 new processes to measure the progress of students towards graduation, from grade seven onwards, will be undertaken. It is imperative that these measures are inclusive, that they honour the multiple pathways students may choose, and that they are developed collaboratively with students and families.

Executive Council will monitor this strategy through the work of the Student Data Strategy Committee.

Goal #2: Improving the reading achievement of all students and closing the gap for those historically underserved.

Target: *At least 75 per cent of students within each cohort on track as an effective reader.*

> **Strategy 1: Investing in People:** *Provide differentiated professional learning on comprehensive literacy instruction, assessment, and interventions with a particular focus on engaging learners that are historically underserved.*
>
> *If educators implement effective reading instruction and assessment practices daily, then students will have a greater opportunity to become proficient readers.*

Implementing effective literacy practices based on research and key resources, such as the *Guide to Effective Instruction in Reading, 1-3* and the *Guides for Effective Literacy Instruction, Grades 4-6,* will be the learning focus in 2021-22. As with the Early Reading Strategy, staff will develop classroom resources and assessment tools, as well as provide professional learning. Learning on implementing CRRP/ICS in Reading programming will also be provided. Please see *Appendix A: Professional Learning 2020-21* for additional details on professional learning regarding the improving reading goal.

Executive Council will monitor this strategy through learning session feedback.

> **Strategy 2: Leveraging Effective Practices**: *Implement effective reading instruction and assessment practices from Kindergarten to Grade 6.*
>
> *If educators implement effective reading instruction and assessment practices daily, then students will have a greater opportunity to become proficient readers.*

From kindergarten to grade six, effective reading instruction occurs within the context of a comprehensive literacy program. A comprehensive literacy program provides opportunities for modelled, shared and guided instruction, as well as independent practice of reading and writing skills. Students have success when educators have a strong knowledge of a wide range of teaching practices, what constitutes evidence of student learning, and how to respond to student learning needs appropriately.

Currently, all HWDSB grade one to grade six classrooms have a 100-minute literacy block. Classrooms, be they physical or virtual, support the needs of all learners through diverse and multilingual learning materials. Within these spaces, on-going assessment of student progress, measured by resources such as The Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), *The Phonological Screener* and *The Milestones*, occurs regularly to enable educators to focus instruction on student learning need. Educators structure their literacy block to provide opportunities for modelled, shared and guided instruction, as well as independent practice of reading and writing skills.

The focus in kindergarten to grade three is on the development of reading acquisition skills, such as phonological awareness, vocabulary and fluency. The emphasis shifts in later grades to use the reading skills developed to learn by

reading as the students encounter increasingly diverse and complex texts. This shift from learning to read to reading to learn requires students to develop their reading comprehension through critical thinking, inferencing, and word study.

Executive Council will monitor this strategy through school and classroom visit observation data.

> **Strategy 3: Refining Measures of Progress.** *Develop and implement the tools required to regularly monitor the progress students make towards becoming proficient readers from Kindergarten to Grade 6 at the classroom, school and system levels.*
>
> *If educators utilize tools that identify student progress and monitor reading comprehension levels for all students on a regular basis, then gaps in student learning can be identified and addressed in a timely manner.*

Work will begin in spring 2021 to develop and implement new monitoring tools and processes to measure the progress of students towards becoming proficient readers. These will build on existing tools such the *Phonological Screener* and *Milestones* resources used in kindergarten and grade one. Similar to the improving graduation goal, these measures must be inclusive and developed collaboratively.

Executive Council monitors this strategy through the work of the Student Data Strategy Committee.

COVID-19 (pandemic) UPDATE on Student Learning and Achievement (Semester 1/Term 1)

Improving Graduation Outcomes
Credit attainment improved from 84% at November mid-term to 91% at the end of semester one, a 7 point improvement[1]. Staff used the November 27 professional activity day to review student data and plan for student success, adjusting instructional and assessment strategies accordingly. The student success days, implemented when final exams were cancelled, enabled students to complete tasks, assessments, and assignments to demonstrate their achievement of the overall expectations in their courses. Student success days will continue to replace exams in June of 2021. See *Appendix B: Student Learning and Achievement Update* for additional credit attainment data.

Building on the learning from semester one, a number of refinements to programming within the rotational model have been made to increase student achievement and engagement. There is an expectation that all students in a morning class are connected as a whole class for at least 30 minutes daily. Attendance is taken at the start of the class daily. Taken together, connected time and daily attendance encourages engagement and achievement. While the lesson structure will differ based on the subject, all students know that they need to be in-class (in person or remotely) each morning and that there is a connected component to learning. Educators can ensure that the students are aware of their learning activities for the day and remind students of how to seek support if needed. Schools are also encouraged, if possible, to create a single cohort that attends daily in tier three programs and interventions (e.g., ALPHA, and Self-contained special education classes) if the class is smaller than 16 students.

In the afternoon courses, the adjustments include a focus on the "big ideas" in the overall expectations for each course. This strategy requires educators to identify and emphasize the learning that is essential to success within the subject. Typically, educators will reduce the number of tasks and require students to complete fewer tasks and assessments to demonstrate their learning. This adjustment does not decrease rigour; it decreases the number of times a student needs to demonstrate their achievement of an overall expectation.

Looking ahead towards the rest of semester two and into the summer, additional attention will be paid to grade nine students. Knowing the importance of earning all eight credits by the end of grade nine, a variety of student success strategies will be used to support students at-risk of not earning their credits, including credit recovery, credit rescue, and summer school.

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[1] The credit attainment rate represents the percentage of total classes passed.

<u>Improving Reading Achievement</u>

The February 2021 term one report card data for Reading shows that 61% of grade one students and 68% of grade two students earned a B in Reading. This is the highest rate of success for grade one students in term one since the start of the Early Reading Strategy. Having an established set of literacy practices and monitoring strategies (including the 100-minute literacy block, small group instruction, assessment tools, and reading trackers) contributed to student success in Reading. The additional support for grade two classrooms from Reading Specialists to begin the year also contributed to student success.

Staff will study and monitor the early reading success in the Remote Learning Program. Remote Learning educators have had access to digital assessment tools and literacy resources through the fall. Professional learning focused on small group instruction, guided reading, and assessment in a remote classroom. Reading Specialists are working with Remote educators weekly to support effective programming and assessment based on students' needs. Unlike in their physical schools, currently, Reading Specialists are not providing direct instruction to students.

Please see *Appendix B: Student Learning and Achievement Data* for more information.

Appendix A: Professional Learning 2020-21

<u>**Professional Learning Supporting the Improving Graduation Goal in 2020-21**</u>
Since the summer of 2020, professional learning that models and supports implementation of CRRP/ICS, blended learning, and personalized learning has been available to staff. Using a blended learning model, Learning Services provides live learning sessions on MS Teams that explores and deepen staff understanding of the self-directed, self-paced learning courses available on The HUB. The Program Division has released several courses on CRRP, blended learning, and personalized learning with follow-up live sessions including:

- *Knowing our Learners Through Culturally Responsive Pedagogy* supports educators to develop a deeper understanding of Culturally Responsive and Relevant Pedagogy(CRRP) in order to embed CRRP in a virtual or blended classroom;
- *Equity in Blended Learning* explores ways to make blended learning as inclusive as possible through the framework of Content, Process and Product;
- *Knowing our Learners in a Blended Learning Model* explores ways to get to know our students in a blended learning model, considering both pedagogy and practice and ways to know our learners, leveraging the Hub and MS Teams;
- *Student Engagement* outlines the key student engagement practices and explores how remote educators can create and maintain classrooms where students feel valued, share a sense of ownership, and engage in meaningful learning through differentiation, community building; and co-developing online routines and expectations;
- *HUB How-To 2020 (E-Learning and Blended Learning in the HUB)* builds teacher capacity in teaching eLearning or developing their blended learning delivery via The HUB;
- *Communicating and Collaborating through MS Teams* explains the basic navigation of Microsoft Teams, how to set up a class, how to post content for asynchronous learning, and how to host meetings for synchronous or blended learning opportunities.

<u>**Professional Learning Supporting the Improving Reading Goal in 2020-21**</u>
The professional learning provided thus far in 2020-21 has moved beyond a kindergarten to grade one scope. Grade two educators are a new audience for Reading Specialists, in 2020-21. Reading Specialists started the 2020-21 school year in grade two classrooms to support educators in implementing early reading practice, determining student needs, and co-planning interventions for students who did not earn a B in reading in June 2020. Reading Specialists used September and October to co-plan, co-teach, and co-assess with grade two classroom teachers as job-embedded learning. Beginning in November, they returned to their traditional role with kindergarten and grade one educators—co-teaching, co-planning, and co-assessing. However, with the development *of Milestones for Reading in Grades Two and Three*, Reading Specialists will continue to provide some learning to their colleagues in grades two and three.

Phonics instruction within a comprehensive literacy program is the professional learning focus in 2020-21 for kindergarten to grade one. As mentioned, a number of resources have been developed to support this learning, including:

- *Phonics Instruction Guide: Kindergarten to Grade One—English (*a guide to how to develop phonics-the correlation of sounds to letters and words); and,
- *Phonics Instruction Guide: Kindergarten to Grade One —French Immersion (*a similar guide focused on developing phonics skills in French).

Once again, Reading Specialists, kindergarten and grade one educators, principals and vice-principals receive role-specific professional learning regarding the Early Reading Strategy. The learning plan begins with Reading Specialists building a strong knowledge base in reading pedagogy and in facilitating professional learning. In turn, they facilitate the learning of classroom educators.

Additionally, to respond to the need to work remotely, Reading Specialists and Program Consultants have co-created self-directed self-paced HUB courses to support the Early Reading Strategy. Typically, each HUB course is delivered through a blended approach where the course content is supplemented with a live professional learning session, via MS Teams, that builds on and deepens the understanding of the course content. Early Reading Strategy professional learning courses include:

- *Let's Read Together* curates all of the Early Reading Strategy documents and other reading resources;
- *Knowing our Learners Through Culturally Responsive Pedagogy* helps educators to develop a deeper understanding of Culturally Responsive and Relevant Pedagogy (CRRP) in order to embed CRRP in a virtual or blended classroom;

- *Guided Reading and Writing: Small Group Instruction for K-8 (English and French)* provides best practice for small group instruction in reading and writing, how to implement guided reading and writing both in the physical classroom (with safety protocols) and remote learning environment, how to assess students to inform small group instruction, and implementation strategies both online and in-person;
- *Supporting the 5 Essential Components of Reading Instruction through Blended Learning in French Immersion* explains how to plan and deliver instruction in five essential components of reading within a blended learning context using MS Teams and complimentary applications such as Flipgrid, Sway and Choice Boards within a French Immersion context.

Reading Specialists will continue to learn and share effective practices in teaching reading remotely. The focus will be on how to develop and deliver a comprehensive literacy program, remotely, that supports students in acquiring developmentally appropriate literacy skills.

Appendix B: Student Learning and Achievement Data

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2020-21 Student Learning and Achievement Update

ALL STUDENTS GRADUATING
TARGET: At least 80 per cent of students within each cohort making progress towards graduation/graduating.

Secondary Success Rates at Semester 1

Legend: ■ Final ■ Midterm

Year	Final	Midterm
2020-21	91%	84%
2019-20	93%	90%
2018-19	93%	91%

Success Rate (% Courses Taken with Passing Mark)

Credit Accumulation after Semester 1*

Legend: ■ 2020-21 S1 ■ 2019-20 S1 ■ 2018-19 S1

Grade	2020-21 S1	2019-20 S1	2018-19 S1
Grade 9 (≥4 credits)	81%	86%	88%
Grade 10 (≥12 credits)	75%	76%	74%
Grade 11 (≥19 credits)	77%	76%	77%
Grade 12 (≥26 credits)	76%	77%	77%
Grade 12+ (Yr 5) (≥26 credits)	70%	71%	72%

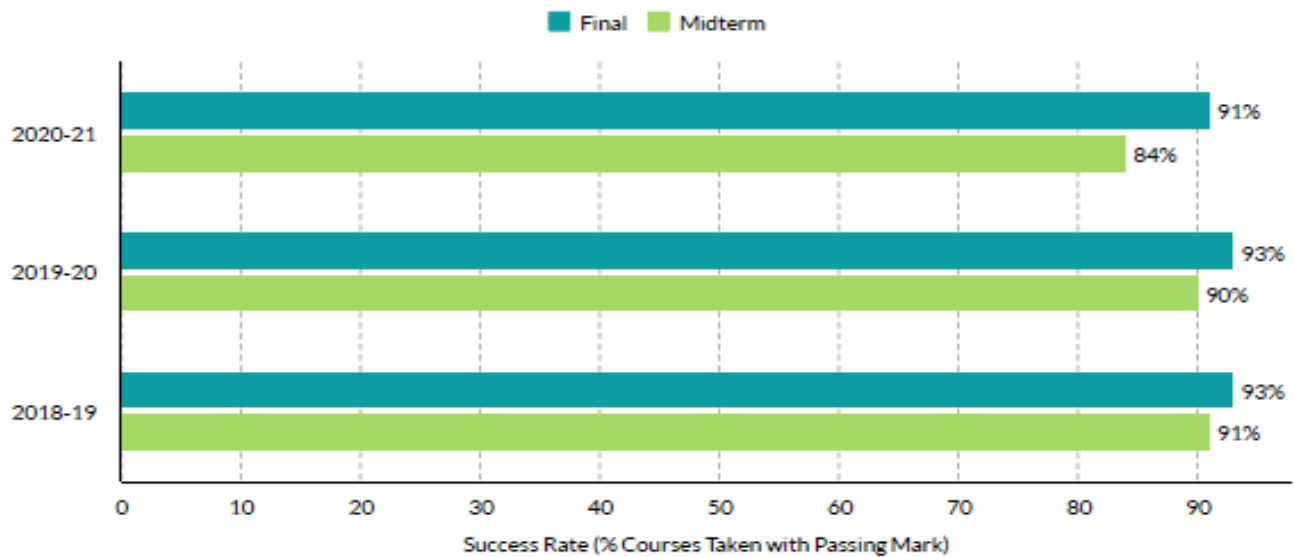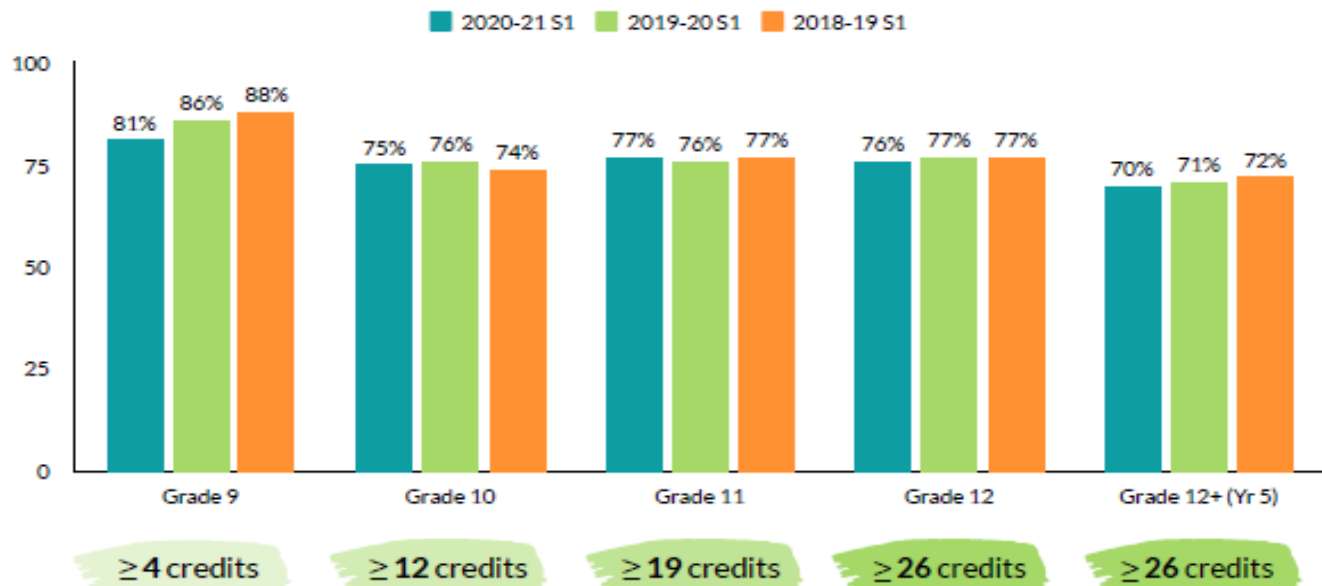*Based on data of students active on the last day of semester 1.

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2020-21 Student Learning and Achievement Update

ALL STUDENTS GRADUATING
TARGET: At least 80 per cent of students within each cohort making progress towards graduation/graduating.

Graduation Rate - 5 Year

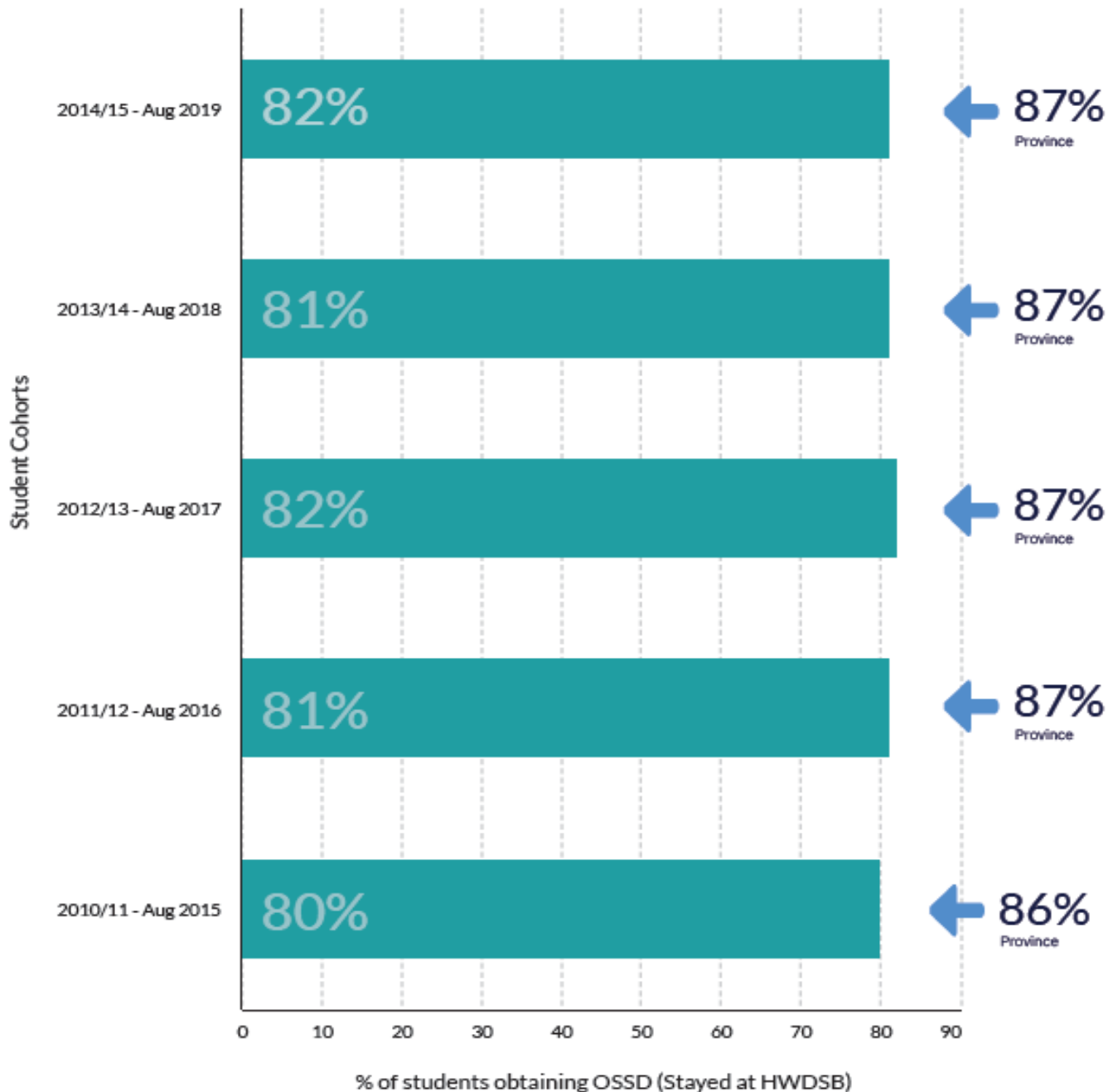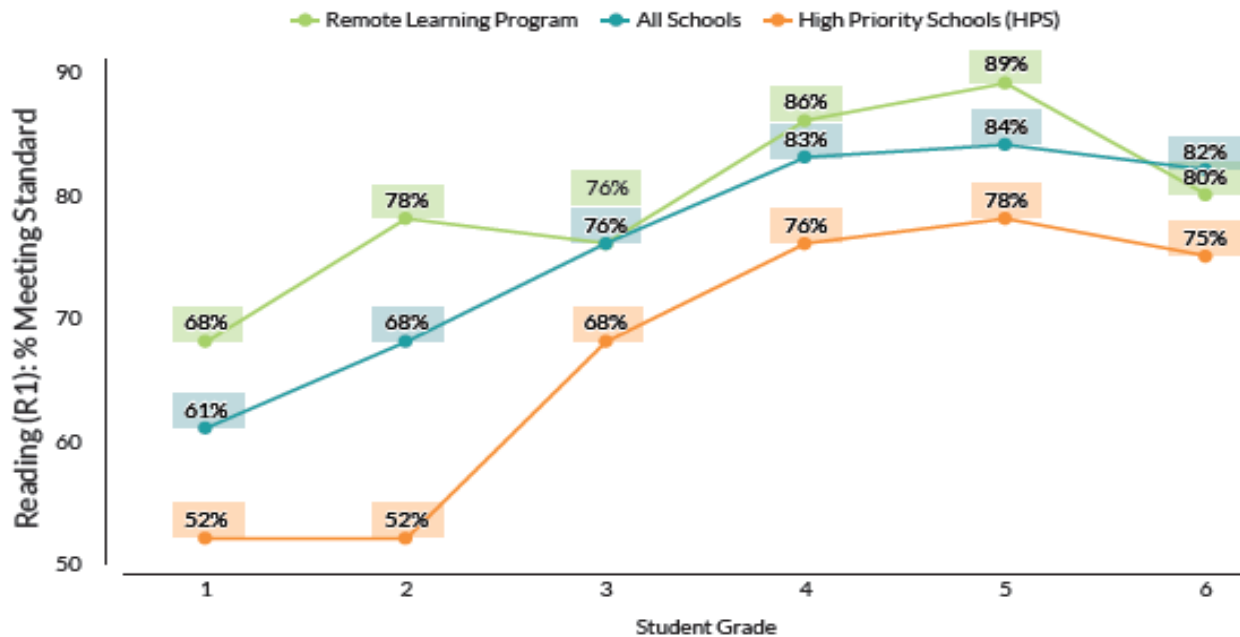| Student Cohorts	% of students obtaining OSSD (Stayed at HWDSB)	Province
2014/15 - Aug 2019	82%	← 87%
2013/14 - Aug 2018	81%	← 87%
2012/13 - Aug 2017	82%	← 87%
2011/12 - Aug 2016	81%	← 87%
2010/11 - Aug 2015	80%	← 86%

% of students obtaining OSSD (Stayed at HWDSB)

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[2] The graduation data for the 2015-16 Cohort, those students who graduated within 5 years at the August 2020, should be available later in the spring.

HWDSB

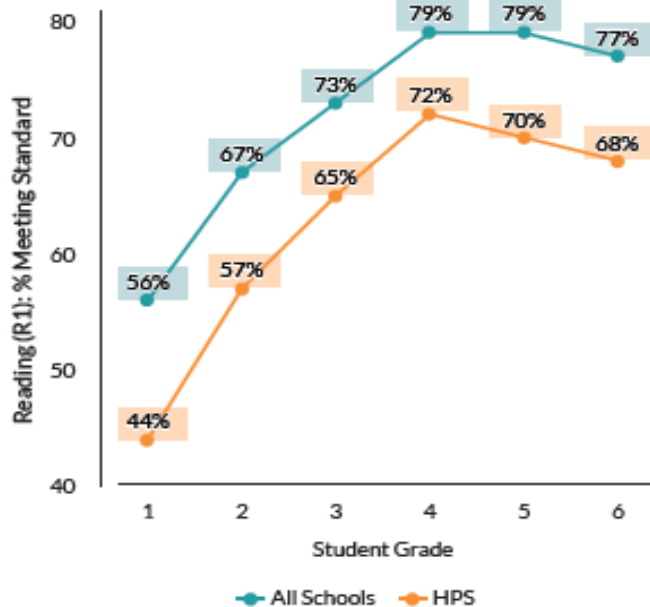## 2020-21 Student Learning and Achievement Update

ALL STUDENTS READING
TARGET: At least 75 per cent of students within each cohort on track as an effective reader.

2020-21: Grades 1-6 Reading at Report 1
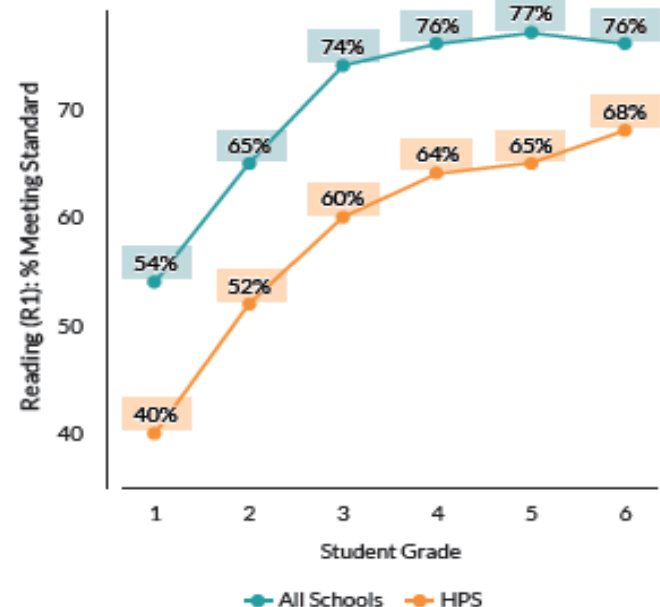
Legend: Remote Learning Program — All Schools — High Priority Schools (HPS)

Reading (R1): % Meeting Standard vs. Student Grade

Remote Learning Program: 68% (1), 78% (2), 76% (3), 86% (4), 89% (5), 80% (6)
All Schools: 61% (1), 68% (2), 76% (3), 83% (4), 84% (5), 82% (6)
High Priority Schools (HPS): 52% (1), 52% (2), 68% (3), 76% (4), 78% (5), 75% (6)

2018-19: Gr. 1-6 Reading at R1

Reading (R1): % Meeting Standard vs. Student Grade

All Schools: 56% (1), 67% (2), 73% (3), 79% (4), 79% (5), 77% (6)
HPS: 44% (1), 57% (2), 65% (3), 72% (4), 70% (5), 68% (6)

Legend: All Schools — HPS

2017-18: Gr. 1-6 Reading at R1

Reading (R1): % Meeting Standard vs. Student Grade

All Schools: 54% (1), 65% (2), 74% (3), 76% (4), 77% (5), 76% (6)
HPS: 40% (1), 52% (2), 60% (3), 64% (4), 65% (5), 68% (6)

Legend: All Schools — HPS

The provincial standard is a Level 3, which is at least a B- (Grades 1-6).

[3]

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[3] Please note that the 2019-20 term one reading data is not available due to job action.