



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (PUBLIC)
Report No. 15-133

8 December 2015

Indices for Measuring Progress on the 2015-2019 Strategic Plan Objectives

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PURPOSE:

1. This report outlines the processes and proposed measures which will be used to examine progress on the 2015-2019 strategic plan objectives.

CONTEXT:

2. The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board adopted a four-year strategic plan in June 2015. The plan was built on five key objectives, aimed to support the District in achieving its key responsibilities of student achievement and student well-being. The objectives were formed out of a district-wide consultation and capture the voices the students, parents, and staff. To measure progress on each of these objectives, a variety of measures and the anticipated outcomes have been identified and are detailed in Appendix A.

At this time, an initial review of each of the objectives has been undertaken and strategies have been identified regarding how data will be collected to provide evidence of progress being made. Consideration has also been given to how future reporting can be optimized through alignment between the objectives and existing reports. Additionally, timelines have been established for updates on each of the key objectives.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS:

3. Reflecting on Measurement

The outset of a new strategic plan creates a valuable opportunity to reflect on the measurement process and to refine our strategies for gathering/using evidence. This involves critical thinking about measurement tools currently in place, and requires careful consideration of *what* is being measured and *why*. This also involves acknowledging the advantages and disadvantages of quantitative and qualitative evidence, and the importance of integrating the two types of data. This deep thinking about measurement, in relation to the 2015-2019 strategic plan, has evolved by reflecting on our past accomplishments, looking at other successful boards/organizations, by turning to relevant literature, and by having rich conversations during senior staff planning sessions. The resulting approach will lead to purposeful planning for measuring progress on the new strategic plan.

4. Optimizing Existing Reporting

Although the 2015-2019 strategic plan is new, the District's attention to student learning is not. The Annual Student Achievement Report (ASAR), which speaks to the learning objective, was in place before the formalization of the strategic plan. The ASAR is produced every fall with a comprehensive account of various aspects of student achievement, including data on EQAO results, pass rates, graduation rates, etc. It details progress made in terms of student learning for the previous year; therefore, to optimize reporting, we will align the ASAR with reporting on the Learning Objective.

Although in some cases new tools would be useful for measuring progress on the strategic objectives, many pertinent measures are already established (e.g., EQAO Reporting Tool, Tell Them From Me, Digital Data Collection Tool). To optimize existing reporting, our first step is to think critically about the existing data collection tools and consider ways refine their use. By improving the quality of the implementation standards for these existing tools, we will be able to capitalize on the richness of data they have to offer.

5. Schedule of Reporting Annually by Topic

Annually, the progress on each strategic objective will be formally evaluated and results will be shared with stakeholders in a measurement report. These reports will be distributed throughout the year so that each report will be on one objective and the timing of that report will be aligned with the scheduled release of relevant data, and so that the committee has the opportunity for fulsome discussion of

each objective independently. The planned schedule of annual reporting on each objective is:

- Equity in January
- Well-being in May
- Stewardship in June
- Engagement in October
- Learning in November

6. Annual Progress Report

In addition to the reports on each of the individual objectives, an annual report on overall progress will also be produced. This overarching report will include a graphic overview of the progress made on each of the five strategic objectives and will include an executive summary based on key findings from the separate reports. This report will be brought to committee in September of each year, to allow for reflection on the year passed and future planning for the year ahead.

7. Financial Reporting

An important aspect of stewardship is effective financial monitoring and reporting. The district has an established financial planning and reporting cycle. For example, financial statements are provided annually to the Board in November and interim updates are provided in January, April, and June. In addition, the district has an audit committee which includes internal and external members who play an important financial and risk management monitoring function. This work will continue as part of our regular reporting cycle.

Similarly, the annual budget process is an important mechanism for the Board to align the allocation of resources with its strategic priorities. Efforts to further align budget recommendations with strategic priorities have been ongoing and will continue.

8. Format of the Appendix

Appendix A contains five introductory measurement reports; one for each of the five strategic priorities. The predominant goal of each report is to outline the variables/data which will be used to measure progress on the 2015-2019 strategic plan objectives. For each objective, there will be information provided on anticipated outcomes, the background (including the approach to the objective in recent years and additional information which puts it into context), key work being done, a list of specific measures for assessing progress, limitations/challenges with the measures identified, and next steps.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

9. The district has staff resources allocated to the function of monitoring and measuring the strategic plan and supporting the implementation of key strategic priorities. As such, the district is able to undertake the measurement functions in house and within established departmental budgets.

COMMUNICATION/CONSULTATION ISSUES:

10. The consultation process used to develop the new strategic plan was an excellent opportunity to see the impact of the plan from the perspective of stakeholders. As part of the work on moving forward, we will continue to regularly share information with our community on our district goals and strategic priorities. A more detailed report on engagement in relation to our new strategic priorities will be forthcoming to the Board.

STRATEGIC LINKS:

11. The measures outlined in this report will be used in the direct assessment of progress made in each of the strategic plan objectives. In some cases, existing annual reports align with the objectives and in others new reports will be developed. This report indicates that data which will be used and sets the expectation for future reports which will be brought forward to provide updates on progress.

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

12. The following questions are provided to support the discussion of this item by the Committee:
 - Has the definition provided for each objective improved our understanding of the vision for the strategic plan?
 - Will the measures identified allow for a valid assessment of progress on each of the strategic objectives?
 - How can we best integrate quantitative and qualitative evidence to fully illustrate progress being made?
 - Do the proposed timelines for the individual objective reports meet the needs to the organization?
 - How will the data collected via these measurement tools inform our next steps?

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APPENDICES

Appendices A – Measurement strategies for each strategic objective

Learning Objective

By 2019, the District will improve the achievement of students in all educational pathways.

“A culture which develops creative, confident and engaged learners who model the Characteristics and Skills expressed in our Exit Outcomes for graduates”

What impact do we hope to have?

The learning objective focuses directly on improving the achievement of all students. While we can measure progress based on achievement results, our objective is actually much broader – it expresses our commitment to encouraging creativity and developing confidence in students to help them become more engaged in their learning.

The anticipated outcomes of the learning objective are:

- Increases in academic achievement for all students (e.g., provincial assessments, pass rates, students at or above Level 3)
- An increase in the graduation rate to be on track for 90% by 2020; and
- Improvement of the Exit Outcomes Skills and Characteristics for all students;

What work is planned to help achieve this impact?

The following key work on this objective is planned for the 2015-2016 school year:

- Enhance continuum of practice for Kindergarten and primary programs;
- Enhance numeracy through balanced math framework and diagnostic tools for numeracy;
- Implement Exit Outcomes/Social Skills self-assessment rubric;
- Complete Secondary School Review including school configurations, Specialist High Skills Major, Digital Learning, International Baccalaureate/Gifted, French Second Language, Community Hub;
- Implement Special Education Geographic Model in Learning Disability and Gifted review; and
- Increase parents' participation in School Learning Plans and develop measures.

How will we measure progress?

A variety of measures have been identified to assess progress on the learning objective:

- (i) Provincial assessment scores over time and in relation to the provincial average;
- (ii) Pass rates and trends over time;
- (iii) Credit accumulation;
- (iv) Graduation and Annual Certification Rates;
- (v) Responses to the Exit Outcomes self-assessment rubric; and
- (vi) Perceptual data from the EQAO student questionnaire, District Reviews, and SLP reflective summaries.

Why were these measures chosen? What are the pros and cons?

Achievement is measured and reported on each year in the Annual Student Achievement Report (ASAR). The ASAR incorporates information from international, national, and provincial

assessments, as well as local sources of data (i.e., pass rates, credit accumulation, and graduation/certification rates). The ASAR is divided into three main sections that reflect student achievement in the areas of literacy (K-12), numeracy (K-12), and pathways to success (7-12). This information, as provided in the ASAR, is used annually to measure progress and thus we have chosen to optimize reporting by providing updates on this objective alongside/within the ASAR.

Provincial assessment data is a source for assessing student learning because it provides reliable data on student achievement in math and literacy at three time points and allows for comparisons between the board and province as well as from one cohort to another. However, the 2014-2015 data was limited due to a labour disruption at the time of EQAO administration. Precise baseline data for 2014-2015 is unavailable for all EQAO assessments except the OSSLT; however, data from the previous years can be used to approximate student achievement on EQAO.

The ASAR also reports on student achievement by using graduation and certification rate data. The OCDSB maintains its target of a 90% graduation rate by, or in advance of, 2020. This statistic is based on the percentage of students obtaining an Ontario Secondary School Diplomas (OSSD) within 5 years of commencing secondary school. This measure, as established by the Ministry of Education, does not include students who leave the district, who take more than 5 years to complete the OSSD, or students who are pursuing other successful outcomes such as an Ontario Secondary School Certificate (OSSC) or Certificate of Accomplishment (COA). To measure success rates for all students, the district developed an Annual Certification Rate (ACR) which measures students who have earned an OSSD, OSSC, or COA. This is a more inclusive measure of student success and better reflects the many pathways available to our students. The ACR does not replace the graduation rate but rather provides an additional measurement tool for assessing student learning.

We can also define student achievement in terms of students' development of important skills and characteristics. The OCDSB has identified the characteristics and skills that students need to succeed after graduation; these are known as our Exit Outcomes. The characteristics desired for students are that they be resilient, globally aware, collaborative, innovative/creative, and goal-oriented. The identified skills are for students to be critical thinkers, effective communicators, academically diverse, digitally fluent, and ethical decision-makers. The OCDSB is currently working with experts in developing a self-assessment rubric for students to assess their own skills and characteristics against those identified in the Exit Outcomes. Student responses to this rubric will be immensely informative in helping shape our understanding of where students are in terms of the development of these outcomes. A limitation, however, which is inherent in self-report measures, is the potential bias in participant responses. For example, there is risk of selection bias (i.e., those who opt to assess their characteristics and skills are qualitatively different from those who do not), as well as social desirability bias (i.e., students respond in a way that they think will be viewed positively by others). These biases can risk the generalizability and the validity of the results, and therefore conclusions drawn from the Exit Outcomes data must be done so with these limitations in mind. As this measure is still under development, the data may not be available for use until year two of the plan, but once available will provide a unique perspective to progress on student learning that would not otherwise be observable.

Students own perceptions of their learning are an important complementary data source. This can be measured using student survey data from the EQAO student questionnaire (e.g., agreement with statements such as 'I am a good writer') as well as the *Our School* survey (formerly known as *Tell Them From Me*; e.g., questions about how skilled and how challenged students feel). Teacher, principal, and vice principal reflections on learning can also be taken into account by turning to the reflective summaries of the School Learning Plan. School administrator reflections (principals and vice principals) on learning are also observed through the District Review process. Once again, although these measures can be limited by the biases associated with self-report data, they provide valuable insight in terms of progress on the learning objective.

What are our next steps?

Data recently presented in the ASAR for 2014-2015 will provide baseline data for the learning objective. Over the course of the 2015-2016 school year, key work will be carried out to support achievement for all students, including identified groups: gender; English Language Learners; students with special education needs; First Nations, Metis, and Inuit students; as well as students living in low income neighbourhoods. During the year, the OCDSB will begin implementation of the Exit Outcomes self-assessment rubric, which will provide valuable data in the assessment of progress for the learning objective. Data will also be gathered from the established indices of student achievement, as typically reported in the ASAR (e.g., EQAO scores, pass rates, etc.). An update on progress made over the year will be presented in November 2016, alongside/within the ASAR for the 2015-2016 school year.

Equity Objective

By 2019, the District will reduce barriers to learning to improve equity of access and opportunity for all students.

“A culture that continually balances equity of opportunity and access for all”

What impact do we do we hope to have?

The OCDSB student population is diverse; our come from diverse backgrounds including social and economic conditions, ethnicity, place of origin, religion/creed, gender, gender identification, orientation, etc. Previous research, both in academia and at the district-level, has suggested that students belonging to identified groups may face barriers to learning. In working toward the equity objective, supports are in place (and under constant development) for all students, with a particular focus on supporting those who have been identified as being more likely to experience barriers to learning.

The anticipated outcomes of the equity objective are:

- To improve the achievement of all students and reduce achievement gaps of identified groups, including: (i) gender; (ii) English Language Learners; (iii) students with special education needs; (iv) First Nations, Metis, and Inuit students; and (v) students with low SES backgrounds;
- Improved access for diverse learners to all programs; and
- Accessibility requirements being met in all OCDSB schools.

What work is planned to help achieve this impact?

The following key work on this objective is planned for the 2015-2016 school year:

- Implement socio-economic status index;
- Implement Gender Identity Guidelines;
- Enhance supports for English Language Learners including secondary itinerant teachers, STEP assessments, and accommodations for learners;
- Implementation of First Nation, Metis, and Inuit Strategy;
- Partnership with National Centre for Truth & Reconciliation; and
- Review student outcomes based on resource allocation.

How will we measure progress?

A variety of measures have been identified to assess progress on the equity objective:

- (i) EQAO scores of identified groups relative to all students;
- (ii) Assessments for measuring performance of students with special education needs (e.g., PM Benchmarks, CANS-B, DP-3 Parent/Caregiver checklist, ELNOT, etc.);
- (iii) Changes made to existing programs to increase opportunity for all; and
- (iv) Implementation of accessibility requirements.

Why were these measures chosen? What are the pros and cons?

Student achievement data is an important measure of learning. Differences in achievement results for groups of students who are at risk of underperforming compared to their peers can be an indicator of equity issues. A reduction in the achievement gaps for these groups of students is an indication of progress on the equity objective. Using an equity lens, we cannot simply look for an increase in the achievement results of these groups of students, rather that increase has to narrow the gap that exists between the group and the entire student population. In using this data, however, we assume that the data for the identified group is an accurate representation for that particular student population. It is important to acknowledge that there are likely students within that specific population who are unidentified by the OCDSB, and are therefore not included in the analysis. This serves as a reminder of the importance of providing supports to all students, to ensure that even those students who may face unidentified barriers to learning are receiving equal opportunities.

As mentioned above, the ASAR reports on data specific to students with special education needs. Targeted work in special education seeks to ensure equity of opportunity for these students, many of whom are in specialized programs. Bi-annually, Learning Support Services (LSS) analyzes data from carefully selected assessment tools to examine outcomes for each of the specialized programs offered at the OCDSB. These results are presented on a yearly basis in the report: Performance Measures for the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board Learning Support Services. This report speaks to gains being made to better serve students with special education needs, and speaks to progress toward equity of opportunity for all students. Due to the range of programs, the outcome indicators differ depending on the program, and expectations of performance differ depending on the student profiles. This affects the ability to compare the results program to program, and year to year.

The equity objective maintains a focus on equity of *opportunity*. Gains made on this objective can also be assessed by examining steps taken to make programs more accessible to all students. Progress on this objective will involve expansion of boundaries or redistribution of programs to allow for better opportunity of access for all students.

Another barrier which some students face is difficulty with accessibility. To ensure equal opportunity for all students, OCDSB schools must be fully accessible. Updates on progress made to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to accessibility (physical, attitudinal, architectural, information or communication, technological, a policy or practice) are reported on each year in the Annual Accessibility Report. Within this report, various accessibility requirements, their deadlines, and the current status of meeting the requirements in the OCDSB are presented. Success in meeting, or exceeding, these requirements by or in advance of the deadline serves as evidence for improving equity of opportunity for not only students but also staff and visitors to schools.

What are our next steps?

Moving forward, our next steps will involve continued work toward the 'Closing the Gap' district-wide theme and the preparation of an annual report detailing progress on the equity objective. This report will review baseline data and early progress for the equity objective and will be presented in January 2016. It will include the relevant information from the ASAR for 2014-2015 which indicates where

achievement gaps exist for identified groups. Data will also be gathered from the most recent report on Performance Measures for the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board Learning Support Services and from the Annual Accessibility Report. Key work will be ongoing to ensure continual progress on this objective.

Well-Being Objective

By 2019, the District will enhance the use of resources and supports to improve the well-being of all learners and staff.

“A culture which supports and respects the well-being of every individual in safe and caring learning and working environments”

What impact do we hope to have?

Well-being is multi-faceted and encompasses physical and mental health, a positive sense of self and belonging, and the skills to make positive and healthy choices. In Ontario, school districts are responsible for supporting the achievement and the well-being of students. In collaboration with community partners, we are developing and delivering systems of care to ensure positive outcomes for all.

The anticipated outcomes of the well-being objective are:

- An improvement of student and staff socio-emotional, cognitive, and physical well-being;
- Enhancement to school climates; and
- An improvement in mental health resources and supports.

What work is planned to help achieve this impact?

The following key work on this objective is planned for the 2015-2016 school year:

- Provide training on resiliency, anxiety, and self-regulation;
- Implement Concussion management procedure;
- Review recommendations from Stringer inquiry;
- Implement revised Framework for Student Well-Being;
- Develop School Plans for Student Well-Being ; and
- Undertake school climate surveys.

How will we measure progress?

A variety of measures have been identified to assess progress on the well-being objective:

- (i) *Our School* survey data for both staff (this year) and students (next year);
- (ii) EQAO Student Questionnaire data;
- (iii) Digital Data Collection Tool data (number of contacts, assessments, etc.);
- (iv) Absent rates of students and staff; and
- (v) Exit Outcome self-assessment data (creativity and resiliency).

Why were these measures chosen? What are the pros and cons?

The Framework for Student Well-being is was designed to guide for schools and the District to support the three dimensions of well-being – socio-emotional, cognitive, and physical – which, in turn, support student learning and achievement. Within the framework, these three dimensions are broken down by characteristics, goals, evidence, sample measures, and sample strategies. The sample strategies provide suggestions to enhance supports and improve well-being, and the sample

measures can be used to gather evidence for the impact of these supports. A review of these thoughtfully-selected measures guided the identification of key data to be used when assessing progress on the well-being objective.

The Framework for Student Well-Being establishes *Tell Them From Me* (TTFM), now *Our School*, as a source of evidence for measuring socio-emotional, cognitive, and physical well-being. This measure has proven to be informative in previous years, and will yield even richer data with a focus on improving the quality of implementation. The survey questions ask students about their sense of belonging, relationships, expectations for success, physical activity, etc. Responses to these questions provide valuable insight into all three dimensions of student well-being, will allow us to track well-being over time, and will allow for an investigation of areas needing additional support. The student version has been used in the past and therefore baseline data is available, however a staff version has not yet been conducted. As a result, data on staff well-being is limited. This year, a staff version of this survey will be administered to learn more about the current status of staff well-being, among other staff-related issues. The data from this survey will serve as a baseline for measuring future progress on staff well-being and, in part, progress on the well-being objective.

Another tool identified in the Framework for Student Well-being is the EQAO Student Questionnaire. Once again, this is an established measure for which we can work towards improving our use of the data made available through this tool. This questionnaire asks students about their physical activity and their perceived ability in various academic areas. Students' responses to these questions serve as evidence of their physical and cognitive well-being, and can be used to examine trends from year to year. A noteworthy limitation of data is that it is based on specific questions regarding students' beliefs and/or behaviour. For example, while the EQAO Questionnaire yields insight into students' perceptions of themselves as being 'good' at a particular subject, this single questionnaire item is insufficient for making claims about students' perceptions of their ability more generally. Therefore, it is important to consider questionnaire data in the context of other data available when measuring well-being as a broader construct.

Evidence of support for well-being is also available through information collected by Learning Support Services (Psychologists, Speech Language Pathologists, and Social Workers). The Digital Data Collection Tool is a computerized tracking system for gathering systematic information about the range and type of services provided to students. Data is collected on an ongoing basis to inform stakeholders about the outputs and outcomes of various programs/services. Through this process, information is available in terms of advancements in student well-being, including mental health supports, and findings with respect to program strengths/weakness can be used to inform next steps. The tool does not, however, track qualitative differences. For example, a 5-minute student check-in with a school Psychologist would be recorded in the same manner as an hour long session. Therefore, while the quantitative details are informative, it is important to keep in mind that the numbers recorded do not convey all of the relevant details.

Absenteeism records can also be used as an indication of the well-being of students and staff. Although negative well-being is not expected to be the cause of occasional absences, it may be the

cause of absences in higher numbers. Therefore an examination of the distribution of absences across students and staff will be useful in our assessment of well-being. Records which include details surrounding the absence will also prove useful as they will allow us to disaggregate by the reason for the absence (e.g., professional activity participation vs. sick day). Although outcome data such as absents yield data that would speak to changes in well-being, other factors may also influence these outcomes. Given the inability to control for confounding variables in order to isolate a clear and direct measure of student well-being, no single measure can provide conclusive evidence of success on the well-being objective. Rather, a variety of measures must be taken together to determine whether progress is being made.

Lastly, evidence of student well-being can be garnered from data that is also used for assessing student learning. The Exit Outcomes self-assessment rubric (discussed in the Learning Objective) contains items relevant to well-being, such as resiliency and creativity. Student scores on these items will be informative in our measurement of characteristics related to well-being. Despite the limitations associated with self-report measures, this tool provides valuable insight on how students see themselves on these dimensions.

What are our next steps?

As mentioned above, key work is being conducted to make progress on the well-being objective. To assess this progress, we have proposed a variety of assessment tools. Next steps will involve the administration of a staff survey and analysis of the responses. The limited data available for the 2014-2015 EQAO Student Questionnaire will also be analyzed, and information will be gathered via the Digital Data Collection Tool. Additional data, such as that collected through external research projects, may also be useful for measuring gains on this objective. Although the tools described above are those planned for use in measuring progress, we will also be open to new strategies as they unfold. An update with evidence of progress on the well-being objective will be presented in May 2016.

Stewardship Objective

By 2019, the District will optimize learning conditions for all students through the *responsible and sustainable management of resources.*

“A culture that practices ethical decision-making, and social, economic and environmental sustainability”

What impact do we hope to have?

A culture of stewardship is achieved through ethical decision-making, responsible planning, and careful management of resources. As a society, we have become increasingly aware of the critical need for these practices and the introduction of a stewardship objective in the 2015-2019 Strategic Plan demonstrates the OCDSB's commitment to this philosophy. Although this is the first year for which stewardship was formally identified as a priority in the district's strategic plan, work towards building a culture of stewardship has been underway for quite some time.

The anticipated outcomes of the stewardship objective are:

- Increased sense of social responsibility both corporately and in student development;
- Optimization of resources;
- Responsible budgetary practices; and
- Improvement of eco-friendly practices/initiatives.

What work is planned to help achieve this impact?

The following key work on this objective is planned for the 2015-2016 school year:

- Update accommodation review policy (PARG);
- Develop multi-year plan, accommodation reviews;
- Develop District Needs Analysis;
- Develop school design standards;
- Balance budget with revenues and align with strategic priorities;
- Provide training to enhance administrative leadership (supervision, absenteeism, public accountability standards);
- Increase eco-schools participation; and
- Reduce energy consumption.

How will we measure progress?

The following measures have been identified to assess progress on the stewardship objective:

- (v) Exit Outcome self-assessments data (global awareness and ethical decision-making);
- (vi) Funds raised for charitable causes;
- (vii) Dollars spent relative to those allocated in the annual budget;
- (viii) Total community-use permit hours;
- (ix) Number of eco-schools;
- (x) Waste diversion and energy consumption; and
- (xi) Difference between school enrollment capacity and actual enrollment.

Why were these measures chosen? What are the pros and cons?

Stewardship can be applied to social, economic, and environmental responsibilities. Social stewardship, or responsible and caring citizenship, at the OCDSB is demonstrated through our commitment to character development and citizenship as well as the work being done to improve access to learning environments and to optimize the use of resources. This work is done to promote social justice, equity, and diversity. Gains in social stewardship can be seen in terms of improvements in ethical decision-making and global awareness; however, such improvements can be difficult to measure. Although limited to students own perceptions, the Exit Outcomes self-assessment rubric contains carefully crafted items addressing these traits. Additional evidence of social stewardship can be measured in the form of charitable giving, which is an indicator of the number and nature of charitable causes support and the dollars raised. Charitable giving can be tracked over time to monitor yearly increases. There are challenges with using charitable fundraising as a measure, given the number of other variables which can come into play. These factors may affect charitable dollars raised, or where directed, but may not necessarily indicate a lack of progress on the stewardship objective.

Economic stewardship is demonstrated through sound financial management. This involves ensuring that the board budget is developed in a thoughtful and responsible manner, balancing expenditures against revenues, and is aligned with the overall strategic objectives. Evidence of progress can be demonstrated by reducing the variance between funds budgeted and funds spent. More importantly, a sound financial plan that supports the long term goals of the organization is key. Often, there is overlap between social and economic stewardship, such as optimizing the use of school space to benefit community relations (social) and to off-set costs (economic).

Finally, environmental stewardship encompasses a range of activities carried out to improve ecological sustainability. This includes modeling of eco-friendly behaviours, initiatives for increasing environmental awareness, and changes in the operation of district facilities and staff and student behaviours. Examples include our efforts to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, generate solar electricity, and work with the City of Ottawa on a variety of fronts to encourage a more sustainable city. Environmental stewardship can be measured based on things like the number of eco-schools, school paper usage, number of plastic bottles eliminated the through installation of water fill stations, consumption of energy in both schools and administration buildings, etc. A challenge, however, is that for some cases, the outcomes being quantified and combined are not necessarily of the same unit. For example, to measure environmental stewardship we will look at the number of eco-schools but it will be important to consider the initiatives the schools took part in, the level of commitment they require, and the potential impact they will have.

For all three types of stewardship (social, economic, and environmental) there is a responsibility to improve practices not only for the direct benefits, but also for modelling such practices for students. As mentioned above, overlap among the types of stewardship is common. This is illustrated in our goal to optimize the use of resources, which has social, economic, and environmental benefits. One way in which we can measure this progress is by calculating the difference between school enrollment capacity and actual enrollment, and monitoring change over time.

What are our next steps?

With introduction of stewardship as a key objective in the 2015-2019 Strategic Plan, next steps will involve the implementation of formalized strategies for making progress in this domain. Constant monitoring of resource use and management will be required to yield positive outcomes at each point of assessment. Over the course of the year, key work will be done to continue improving sustainable practices at the OCDSB and an update on progress will be presented in June/July once updated data on energy consumption for the district is available.

Engagement Objective

By 2019, the District will increase opportunities for engagement with and among our students, staff, families and broader community.

“A culture which actively encourages involvement in public education to support positive outcomes”

What impact do we hope to have?

Engagement is the foundation of collaboration and is essential to building trust in public education. The OCDSB has a long history of involving stakeholders in meetings, consultations, and decision-making processes. The inclusion of engagement as an objective in our new strategic plan is an expressions of our commitment to a culture which values and encourages involvement in public education to support positive outcomes. Through this objective, we are starting to shift how we interact with and support our clients, stakeholders, and community partners in the interest of student learning and well-being, and in public education generally.

The anticipated outcomes of the engagement objective are:

- An increase in opportunities for engagement *with* stakeholders (i.e., students, staff, families, and the broader community);
- An increase in opportunities for engagement *among* stakeholders;
- Increases in participation rates for cyclical surveys; and
- Further building of community trust.

What work is planned to help achieve this impact?

The following key work on this objective is planned for the 2015-2016 school year:

- Develop parent conference;
- Implement new school website templates;
- Investigate parent portal;
- Develop parent complaints resolution process;
- Undertake employee engagement survey;
- Implement community hub policy; and
- Undertake advisory committee review.

How will we measure progress?

A variety of measures have been identified to assess progress on the engagement objective:

- (i) Data from the EQAO Student Questionnaire;
- (ii) Data from the *Our School* surveys;
- (iii) Parent, student, and staff participation rates in the *Our School* surveys;
- (iv) Number of visits to school/board websites and to the parent portal; and
- (v) Participation in school and district events.

Why were these measures chosen? What are the pros and cons?

An important component of the engagement objective is that it seeks to increase opportunities for engagement with and *among* our students, staff, families, and the broader community. Interaction among these groups is a different kind of engagement than that with the board itself, and as such it is essential for consideration when taking a comprehensive look at progress on the engagement objective. Data on this type of engagement is available through established surveys/questionnaires. Student responses to the EQAO Questionnaire (e.g., how often they and a parent/guardian talk about school activities, read together, look at school agenda, etc.) provide valuable data on parental engagement. Although this data is restricted to the child's report and may be based on their individual perception, it provides a unique perspective on parent engagement from the eyes of the student as it occurs within the home (which would not be otherwise observable). Other data which yields valuable insight is the *Our School* survey data which provides perspective from both parents and students. Although this data is not currently available from the perspective of teachers and other school-based staff, a staff version of this survey is planned for use this year.

The OCDSB often engages the community by eliciting participation in specific events, initiatives, projects, consultations, etc. An increase in the number of these opportunities, as well as actual participation, is an indicator of progress on the engagement objective. Such events could include school-based events and activities as well as district initiatives, such as the speaker series, school council training day, and the newly-established parent conference. Surveys which request parent participation include the *Our School* survey as well as consultations of various issues (changes to programs, etc.). In addition to parent participation, it will be valuable to examine the response of students, staff, and the broader community when there are calls for participation in surveys/consultations. Although an increase in participation in these engagement opportunities provide insight on stakeholder investment, this data is limited for assessing progress over time. To validly assess progress, participation must be comparable by tracking the same event/initiative over time. In other words, participation in a consultation on a particular issue cannot be compared to that on a different issue at a later date because the topics may differentially apply to individual groups, receive more or less media attention, result in varying levels of impact, etc. Therefore, comparisons of participation are limited to cyclical measures. Fortunately, such measures are already established (e.g., *Our Schools* surveys) or baseline data will be collected this first year of the strategic plan (e.g., participation in the parent conference).

Lastly, the OCDSB engages families by providing tools which can be used to obtain information. Such tools include school and board websites and the parent portal. The number of visits indicates some activity on the part of stakeholders, however it is unknown what motivates these visits and this data can be easily skewed by circumstances such as labour disputes or high profile program changes. Although these tools do not allow for dialogue between families and the OCDSB, the number of uses/'hits' can serve as an indication of stakeholder engagement.

What are our next steps?

The next step for the engagement objective is for staff to provide a detailed report on the newly-established direction and focus for the engagement strategy. The goal of this report is encourage conversation about engagement and a shift in our thinking. Following this report, key work will be carried out and data will be collected on participation/response to various engagement opportunities. An update on progress following the first year of the new strategic plan will be brought forward in October of 2016.