



MEASURING PROGRESS ON WELL-BEING Report No. 18-085

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (PUBLIC)

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The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board identified well-being as one of five priority areas for the 2015-2019 strategic plan. In the plan, well-being is described as “a culture which supports and respects the well-being of every individual in safe and caring learning and working environments.” The objective states: **By 2019, the District will enhance the use of resources and supports to improve the well-being of all learners and staff.** The strategies identified to support this objective are:

- “Build capacity to improve mental health supports”;
- “Increase opportunities to support and encourage creative expression, physical health and physical literacy”; and
- “Develop and implement the well-being framework and School Well-being Plans to enhance school climate.”

The OCDSB’s Framework for Student Well-being (K-12) discusses the OCDSB’s vision, organized under three dimensions of well-being:

- Physical (safety, physical activity, nutrition, and healthy choices and perspective);
- Cognitive (engagement, sense of meaning and purpose, and self-efficacy); and
- Socio-emotional (sense of belonging and relationship skills).



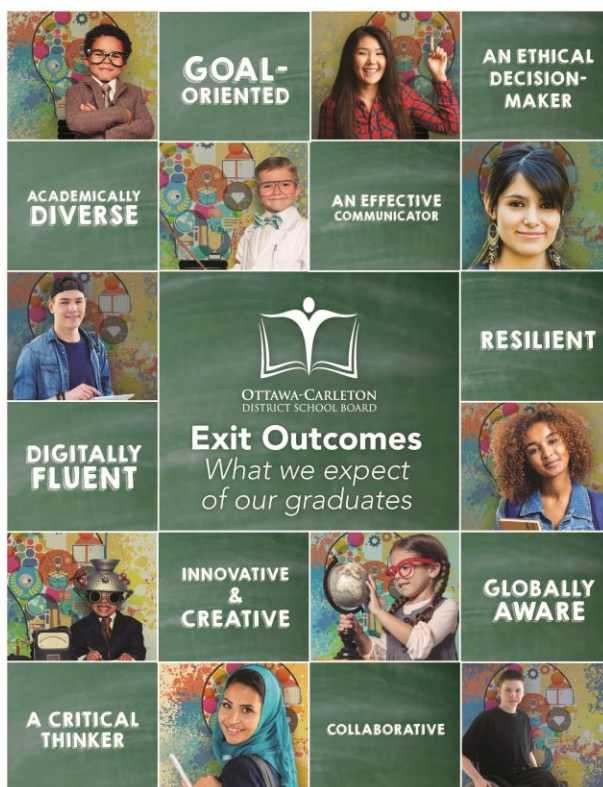
- OCDSB Framework for Student Well-being, 2015, p. 1

Consistent with this focus, the Ministry of Education has been increasingly prioritizing well-being as an area of need for Ontario School Boards, and is continuing this trend with additional staff investments (guidance and mental health workers) this year. The Ministry defines well-being as a positive sense of self, spirit and belonging that we feel when our cognitive, emotional, social and physical needs are being met.



- *Ontario’s Well-being Strategy for Education: Discussion Document, 2016, p. 3*

These broad domains are designed to be comprehensive in nature, which aligns with the OCDSB’s approach for student success. This approach is also reflected in the OCDSB’s Exit Outcomes – the competencies we instill in our students in order for them to be successful in life.



- *OCDSB Exit Outcomes: What we expect of our graduates, 2018, p. 1*

A comprehensive approach to student success and well-being makes measurement and reporting challenging. For the purpose of this report, the OCDBS’s progress on the well-being objective will be presented in three sections: 1) measures of overall student well-being; 2) a summary of evidence specifically linked to the strategies as identified in the strategic plan; and 3) indicators of staff well-being, which has a direct impact on the well-being of our students.

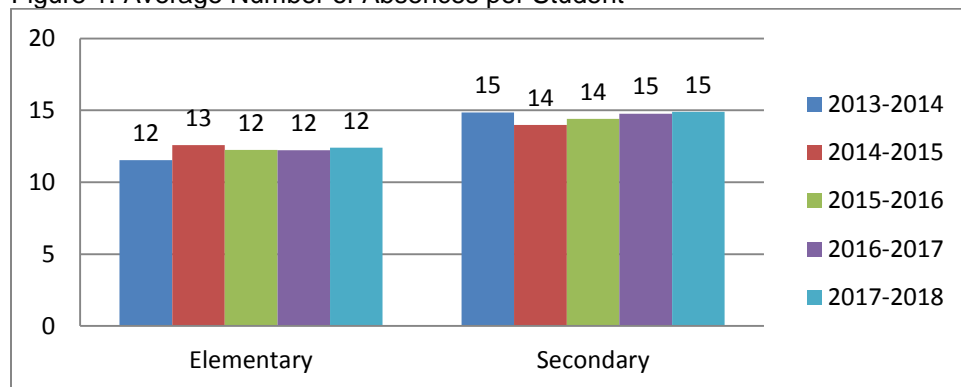
Measures of Overall Student Well-being

To measure student well-being more broadly, three key measures have been identified: absence rates, suspension rates, and student reports of self-efficacy. These indicators vary based on multiple aspects of well-being and while they do not necessarily connect to specific strategies identified in the strategic plan, they are important metrics for assessing our progress in this area.

Absenteeism

Absenteeism is a useful index for measuring student well-being. Days away from school are often taken in response to feeling unwell, either mentally or physically. As such, changes in absenteeism over time can serve as evidence of trends in overall well-being. Certain limitations, however, must be kept in mind given that not all absences are indicative of negative well-being (e.g., a student missing school to attend a family function) and that schools differ in their practices for coding absences. For the purpose of this report, the numbers reported include only students coded as ‘absent’, not ‘excused’. As presented in the figure below, student absence rates suggest that both elementary and secondary absences have remained relatively stable in recent years.

Figure 1. Average Number of Absences per Student

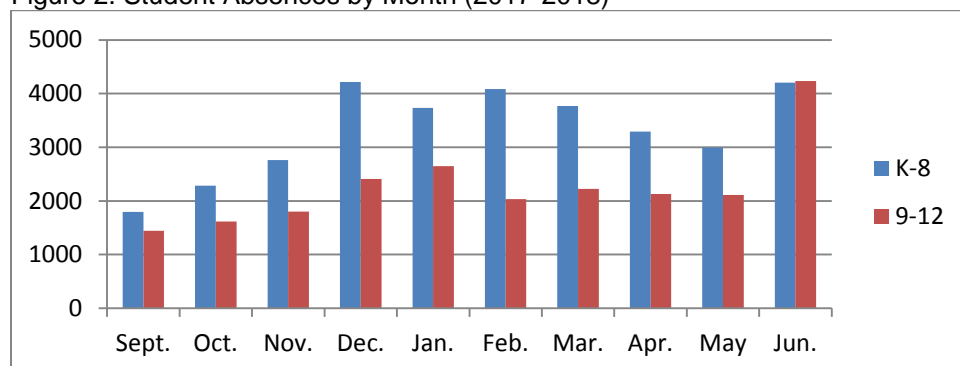


Note. Numbers are based on full day absences and do not include Continuing Education. Data labels are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Student absenteeism was further explored by disaggregating the data for students who were frequently absent. Approximately 47% of students were identified as being absent for 11 days or more in 2017-2018 (using the same criterion identified for the Employee Attendance Management Program); these students accounted for 81% of all absences. To further explore the absenteeism data, student absences were disaggregated by month, as can be seen in the figure below. Note that the data presented is based on the average number of student absences, across the District, on a given day that

month. This was done in order to take into account differences based on the number of school days in a given month. Interesting trends emerge for both the elementary and secondary panel, with absence rates being lower in September-October but increasing later in the year, with a decrease again in the spring (perhaps following a restful break) and increases again in June just prior to summer vacation. These findings will be explored in more detail to target work in this area in support of student well-being.

Figure 2. Student Absences by Month (2017-2018)



Note. Numbers are based on the average number of absences per day, across the District, for the month indicated.

Suspension Rates

Student suspension data provides useful information on rates of unacceptable/unsafe behaviour. Work to reduce student suspensions aims to address the underlying reasons for the behaviour. Prevention and early intervention strategies include: addiction and counselling services; Itinerant Educational Assistant (IEA) support; Safe and Accepting School Teams; School Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plans; evidence-based bullying, violence and harm reduction programs; Restorative Practices Training; Collaborative Problem Solving; and many others. Despite these supports, the OCDSB saw an increase in suspensions in 2016-2017 for the first time since 2013.

The table below provides a five-year historical overview of enrolment and suspension data, disaggregated for the elementary and secondary panels. In total, 3,340 suspensions were issued - 1,943 at the elementary level and 1,397 at the secondary level. This represents an overall increase of 13.2% from the previous year. Further details on suspension information, including data specific to identified groups, can be found in Memo 18-078, 2016-2017 Student Suspension Report. The data detailed in the memo identifies groups of students who are disproportionately suspended, as well as the types of suspensions issued and the reasons for them.

Table 1. OCDSB Student Suspensions

	2014	2015	2016	2017	% $\Delta_{14/15}$	% $\Delta_{15/16}$	% $\Delta_{16/17}$
Number of Suspensions							
<i>Elementary</i>	1,597	1,613	1,635	1,943	1.0%	1.4%	18.8%
<i>Secondary</i>	1,686	1,573	1,315	1,397	-6.7%	-16.4%	6.2%
Total	3,283	3,186	2,950	3,340	-2.9%	-7.4%	13.2%

	2014	2015	2016	2017	% $\Delta_{14/15}$	% $\Delta_{15/16}$	% $\Delta_{16/17}$
Number of Students Suspended							
<i>Elementary</i>	944	936	942	1,086	-0.8%	0.6%	15.3%
<i>Secondary</i>	1,025	983	880	937	-4.1%	-10.5%	6.5%
Total	1,969	1,919	1,822	2,023	-2.5%	-5.1%	11.0%
Number of Students Enrolled							
<i>Elementary</i>	48,126	48,176	47,685	48,702	0.1%	-1.0%	2.1%
<i>Secondary</i>	24,252	23,978	23,886	23,790	-1.1%	-0.4%	-0.4%
Total	72,378	72,154	71,571	72,492	-0.3%	-0.8%	1.3%

Student Self-Efficacy

In the EQAO Contextual Questionnaire, students respond to questions about self-efficacy: “I’m a good reader”; “I’m a good writer”; and “I’m good at mathematics”. Results from 2016-2017 demonstrate that responses to these questions have been quite stable over time, with the proportion of students responding ‘most of the time’ (in response to each question) fluctuating within 3% from the previous three-year average. There are, however, differences across the grades and subjects. This data provides useful insights to the cognitive well-being of OCDSB students. The results are presented in the figures below, with the proportion of students who responded ‘most of the time’ depicted in the middle bar, with the previous three-year average to the left and the provincial average to the right.

Figure 3. I’m a good reader - EQAO Questionnaire

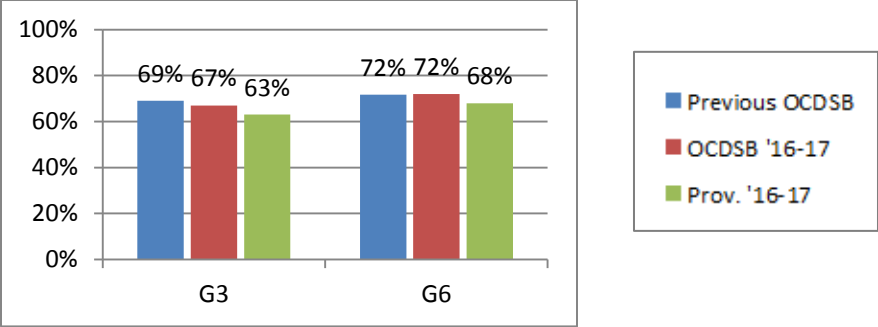


Figure 4. I’m a good writer – EQAO Questionnaire

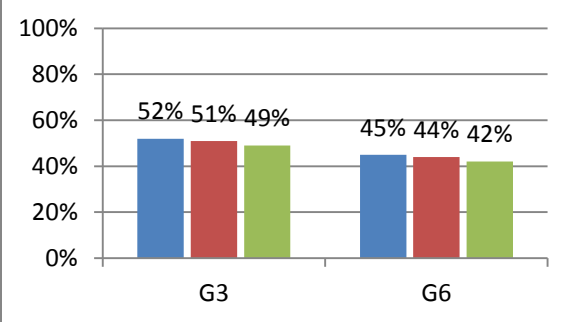
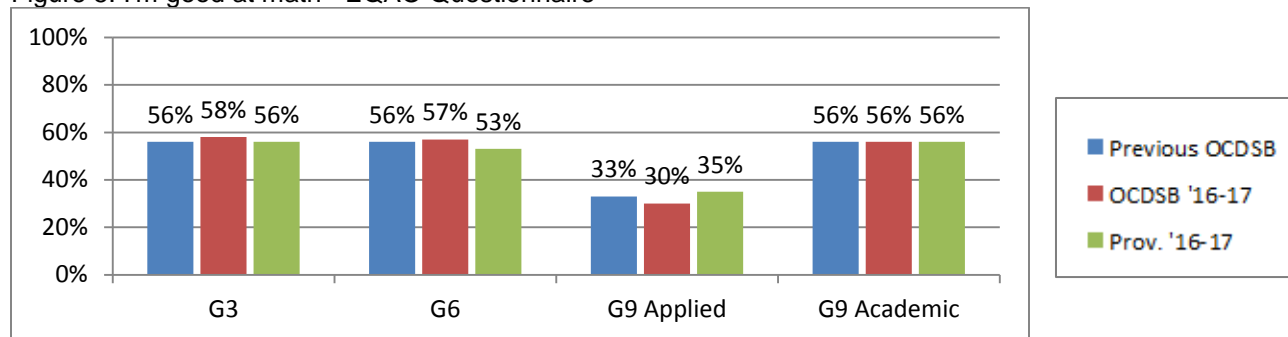


Figure 5. I'm good at math - EQAO Questionnaire



Overall, students appear to be most confident in reading and least confident in writing. Compared to the previous 3-year average, confidence in the elementary panel has decreased in reading and writing, but increased in math. In grade 9, students reported being less confident in applied math while reports from students in academic math remained the same. Compared to the province, OCDSB students are more confident in reading, writing, and math in grades 3 and 6. They are less confident in grade 9 applied math, while equal in grade 9 academic.

Consistent with previous years, there is a need to address the response pattern of students in grade 9 applied math. These students are less confident, both compared to their peers in academic math and compared to the provincial average of students in applied math. Furthermore, the decrease this year widened both of those gaps.

We know that how students feel about themselves is related to their academic achievement. For this reason, the reports of confidence in applied math are particularly concerning, especially when considering the difference in achievement between those in applied and academic math (a difference of 49%). The figure below presents the cognitive well-being data in the context of achievement data. Data was organized by subject and by grade, and responses about a given subject (reading, writing, math) were graphed based on whether or not students met the provincial standard for that subject. Overall, those who met the standard on a particular assessment reported that they felt good at that subject 15-46% more than their peers who did not meet the standard. Although this data does not suggest causality, it does highlight the importance of mindset and can be used to inform future work around setting expectations.

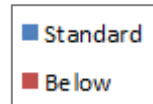
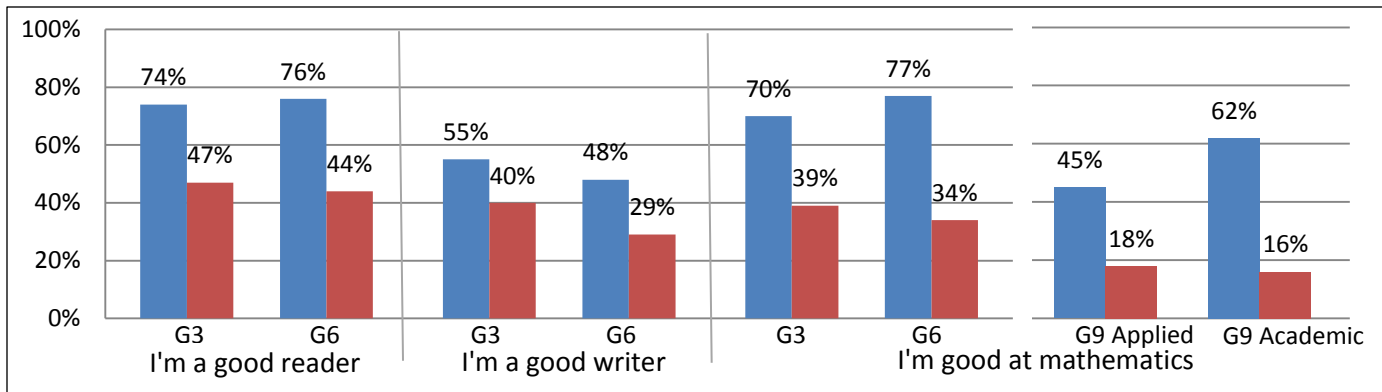


Figure 6. EQAO Self-Efficacy Questions by Achievement



Strategy #1: Build capacity to improve mental health supports

To make progress on the well-being objective, the OCDSB has been working to build capacity to improve mental health supports. During the 2016-2017 school year, this was achieved through staff training, primarily on suicide prevention and Tier 1 supports (i.e., supports that are good for all students). Although this training was impacted by the shortage of occasional teachers and subsequent restrictions on professional development, after-school sessions were successful in building staff capacity in mental health. Staff training included:

- ASIST – a two-day course designed to help caregivers recognize and estimate risk, and intervene to prevent the immediate risk of suicide (100 trained);
- SafeTALK – a three-hour workshop that prepares staff to identify people with thoughts of suicide and connect them to suicide first aid resources (150 trained);
- Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS) – three-day training for staff interested in becoming proficient in using the CPS model to better understand and support children and adolescents with behavioral challenges (97 trained); in addition, a 3-hour introduction to CPS was provided to all principals and vice-principals;
- Compassion Fatigue – a session was offered to all elementary principals at their professional development activity in the Spring, and offered at staff meetings in a number of schools;
- Violence/Threat Risk Assessment – two-day training focused on identifying worrisome and threatening behavior, using a multi-disciplinary team to assess level of risk and implement effective intervention strategies to mitigate safety concerns (86 trained);
- Promoting Positive Student Behaviour – two half-day sessions for all principals and vice-principals, with topics including attachment, self-regulation, and debriefing; and
- Self-Regulation – three modules focused on educator self-regulation, understanding self-regulation, and classroom strategies to promote self-regulation (delivered in more than 30 schools during staff meetings).

In addition to building staff capacity to improve mental health supports, the OCDSB has been working to build student capacity. To do so, a team of Social Emotional Learning Teachers (SELTs) has been established to support students in developing self-regulation skills and managing their environment. Furthermore, "emotions kits" were created and sent to every elementary school to provide resources for staff to help

children identify and understand their emotions. Students were also supported through various programs, some of which include:

- Sources of Strength;

Sources of Strength is a peer-to-peer resiliency program running in 19 OCDSB secondary schools. Peer leaders, together with their adult advisors, develop campaigns to encourage help-seeking behaviour and support students to develop their personal strengths. Last year, 113 students (across 2 school boards, one being the OCDSB) participated in an evaluation of the Sources of Strength program. The evaluation found that:

- 94% of participants reported that if they were really upset and needed help, they believe a counselor or an adult at school could help them;
- 87% of participants said they know of adults who could help a friend who is thinking of suicide; and
- 77% of participants said they would talk to a counsellor or an adult if they themselves were struggling.

Given the positive feedback on this program, continued implementation is planned for this year.

- Kindergarten Pilot Project: Cross-sectoral collaboration between the OCDSB and Crossroads Children's Mental Health Centre (CCMHC);

The Kindergarten Pilot Project was the implementation of a program based on Attachment Theory and Collaborative Problem Solving in an OCDSB school for 2017-2018. The overarching goal of the initiative was to build staff and parent capacity in these approaches, while working with kindergarten children to ensure the successful entry into the school system. The initiative involved providing ongoing supports during the academic year to improve student achievement and well-being.

A small-scale evaluation of the project suggests several positive outcomes. Interviews with four educators suggest an improved understanding of both Attachment Theory and Collaborative Problem Solving. Furthermore, educators reported being able to use this knowledge to change how they think and interact with kindergarten students. They also reported a reduction in work-related stress and felt supported by the other kindergarten educators on their team. Participants enjoyed being a part of a collaborative, cohesive team that shared a similar philosophy and practices when working with kindergarten students.

The evaluation also involved an interview with the principal of the participating school. The principal indicated that students experienced more pro-social interactions with other children and with their educators. During the pilot project, there were: no classroom evacuations; no instances where a child was sent home due to behaviour; no requests for students to do partial days; and no instances where a student was sent to the principal's office for misbehaviour.

Lastly, the evaluation of the project suggests the potential for an increase in parents' capacity to address self-regulation and to build secure attachment through CPS and a variety of attachment techniques. Five out of five parents reported improvement in the quality of their relationship with their child. In addition, all five parents reported a shift in their philosophy about why their children misbehave: showing closer alignment to the philosophy that "kids do well if they can". The OCDSB is continuing with the pilot project this year, with one goal to develop of a set of best practice guidelines to be shared across the district.

- Kids Have Stress Too;

The Kids Have Stress Too program is designed to help young people develop stress-management skills. The program was implemented on a pilot basis in 2017-2018 in five OCDSB schools (four secondary and one elementary). Over an 8-week period, students took part in weekly session facilitated by an Itinerant Education Assistant (IEA) and/or classroom teachers. The sessions aimed to help students understand what "normal" stress levels are, and when to seek help for stress they may be experiencing in or out of school. Although implemented as a pilot last year, there are plans to expand the program for 2018-2019.

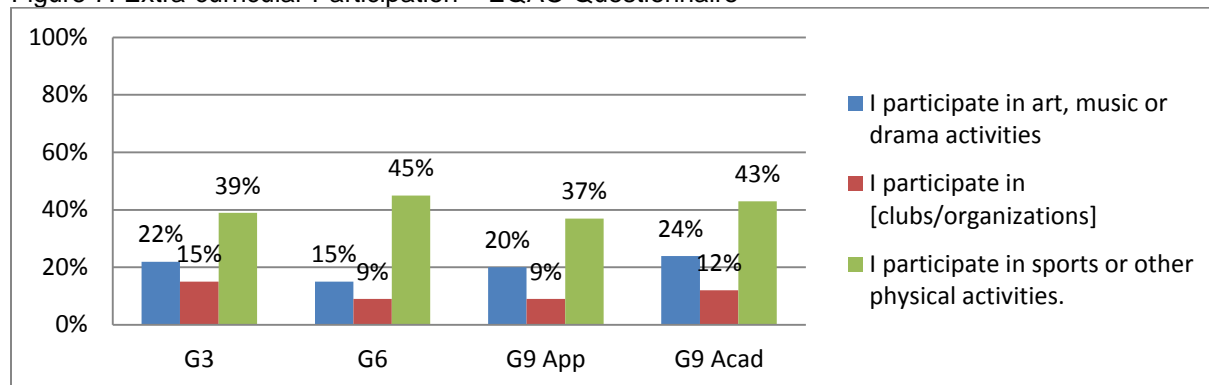
- Healthy Transitions;

The Healthy Transitions program is run by Ottawa Public Health to promote resilience and mental health in young adolescents at school. During four classroom sessions, facilitators focused on coping and mental health promotion skills. In 2017-2018, 105 classes participated: 76 of which were grade 7 classes; 9 were grade 7/8 classes; and 20 were grade 8 classes. Currently, the program is being adapted so that it can also be offered to grade 6 classes this year.

Strategy #2: Increase opportunities to support and encourage creative expression, physical health and physical literacy

This strategy for promoting student well-being links to both the arts and physical education. Extracurricular activities have a positive impact on student well-being, and therefore data collected on an annual basis through the EQAO student questionnaire is useful in helping us monitor progress on this objective. The figure below highlights the proportion of students who responded most of the time (every day or almost every day) in response to questions about extra-curricular participation in the 2016-2017 school year.

Figure 7. Extra-curricular Participation – EQAO Questionnaire



Student participation in extra-curricular activities is most commonly in the form of sports or other physical activities, followed by participation in art, music or drama. The trends over time are fairly consistent, particularly with regards to participation in art, music, or drama (within 2% compared to last year) and clubs/organizations (within 1% compared to last year). There was slightly more variation for physical activity (-3% to 5%), although when compared to the average across the past three years, numbers are more stable: there were increases in grade 6 (1%), grade 9 applied math (4%), and grade 9 academic math (2%); while grade 3 demonstrated a decrease (-2%).

Last year’s measurement report on well-being highlighted gender differences in extra-curricular participation, with males participating in physical activities at a much higher rate than their female counterparts, and females participating in arts, music, or drama at a higher rate. This difference was explored again this year to find minimal change from last year: boys participate in sports 11-22% more than girls, while girls participate in arts, music, or drama, 7-12% more. These findings indicate that boys and girls may be engaged in different kinds of activities, which have different benefits for well-being. This is important in planning our future work, as it highlights the need for differentiated strategies in these areas.

Figure 8. Physical Activity by Gender

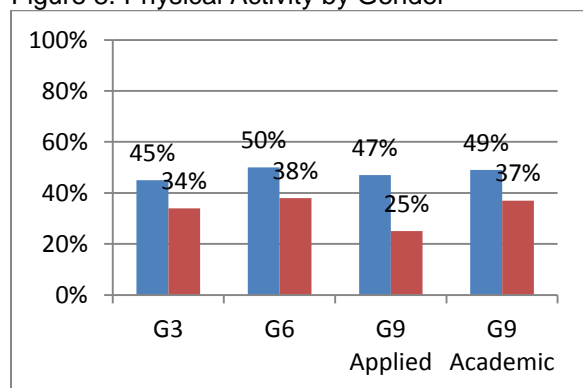
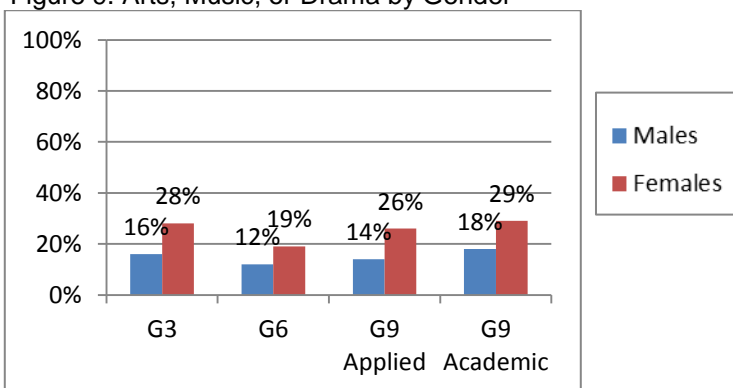


Figure 9. Arts, Music, or Drama by Gender



Additional data on the physical activity of OCDSB students is collected through the Student School Climate Survey. Results from the survey, administered in Spring 2017, show that students in grade 4-6 responded similarly to their Canadian peers with

regards to hours spent doing moderate physical activity. For intense physical activity, OCDSB students reported almost a half hour more per day. For grades 7-12, OCDSB students reported less moderate physical activity than their Canadian counterparts, with equal reports of intense physical activity. For both panels and both activity levels, results were consistent with the previous administration of the survey. When disaggregated by gender, we see additional evidence (although less pronounced) that boys are more physically active than girls in the OCDSB; this is also the case at the national level.

Figure 10. OurSCHOOL Grade 4-6 Responses: Hours/Day of Moderate Physical Activity

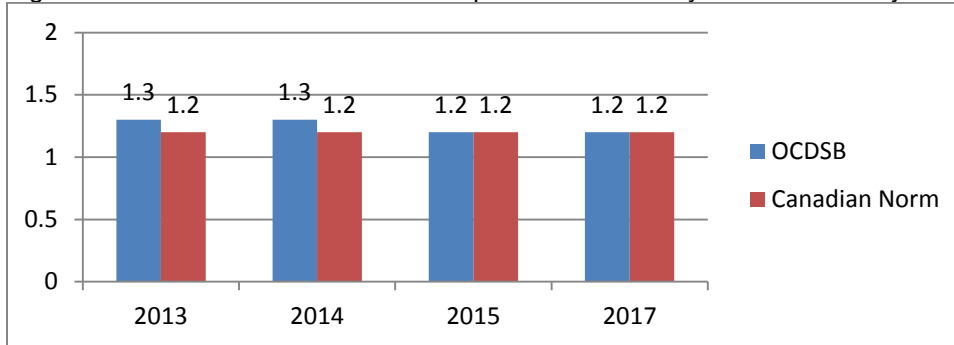


Figure 11. OurSCHOOL Grade 4-6 Responses: Hours/Day of Intense Physical Activity

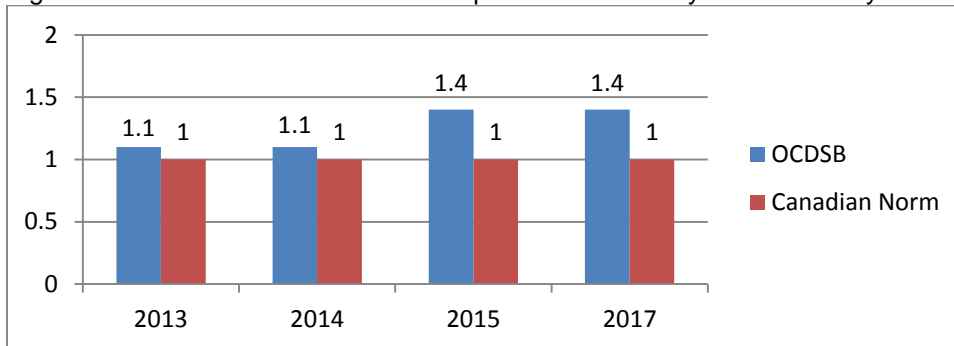


Figure 12. OurSCHOOL Grade 7-12 Responses: Hours/Day of Moderate Physical Activity

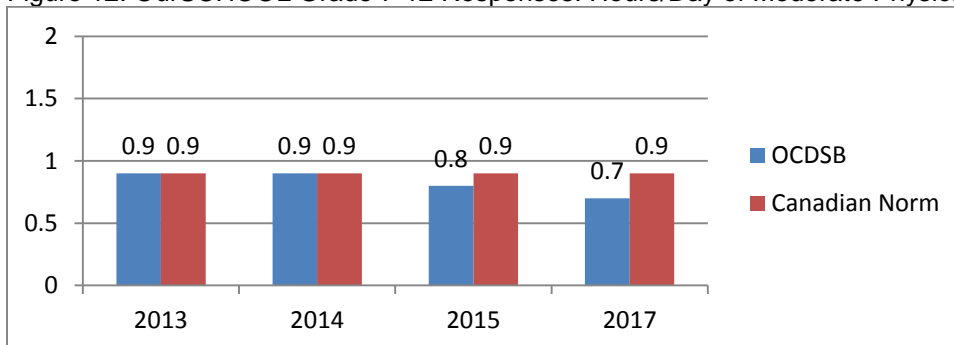
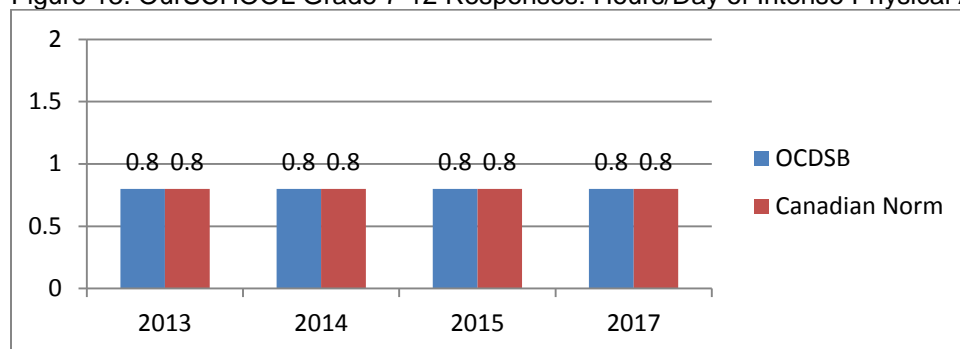


Figure 13. OurSCHOOL Grade 7-12 Responses: Hours/Day of Intense Physical Activity



One of the ways in which we are supporting well-being through physical activity is through the implementation of Daily Physical Activity (DPA). DPA is an initiative through the Ministry of Education that requires all elementary students to participate in moderate to vigorous activity for a minimum of 20 minutes every day. The implementation of this initiative was challenging province-wide, given competing priorities, space and time constraints, and teacher readiness. Despite these challenges, the OCDSB has continued to make DPA a District priority and has worked to address barriers with supports provided by Curriculum Services.

In Spring 2018, the OCDSB administered a survey to K-8 schools to gather insight on the implementation of DPA. Results from this survey (n = 61 schools) show that 82% of participating principals responded “often” or “always” to the statement “students are active 20 minutes/day during instructional time”. Note that this instructional time often included Physical Education classes, on the days it was scheduled. The survey found that outcomes reported from DPA implementation were highly beneficial, with reports of a positive/very positive impact on:

Table 2. Principal Feedback on DPA

Dimension	% of schools
Students’ physical well-being	92%
Students’ emotional well-being	93%
Students’ social well-being	87%
Students’ academic outcomes	82%
Student conduct	87%
Students’ physical activity habits	90%
Promoting inclusion of all ability levels in physical activity	87%

It is important to keep in mind that this data is based on the principal perceptions, and is subject to the biases associated with subjective reporting. That said, the outcomes reported are very positive. As such, continued support for the full implementation of DPA is an important strategy for the OCDSB as we make progress on the well-being objective.

At the secondary level, physical well-being can be evidenced by enrolment in Health and Physical Education courses. As reported last year, we continue to see changes in the type of physical education courses students are selecting over time. Although the Healthy Active Living Education course is mandatory in grade 9, it is optional for students in grades 10-12 and therefore enrolment trends over time are informative of physical well-being. As presented in the figure below, fewer students are electing to take this course over time. In contrast, more students are opting to take Healthy Living and Personal Fitness. These enrolment patterns inform our thinking about the ways in which students are electing to engage in physical education and can be used for future planning of physical education at the secondary level.

Figure 14. Number of students enrolled in Healthy Active Living Education

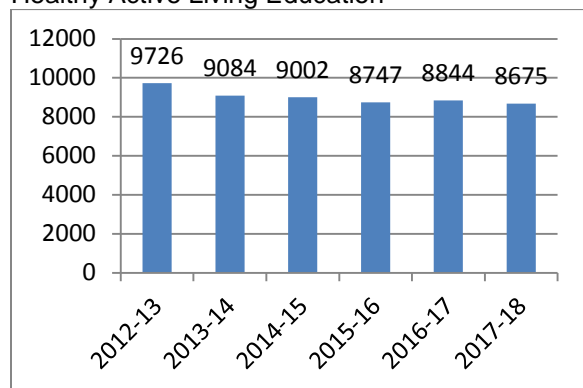
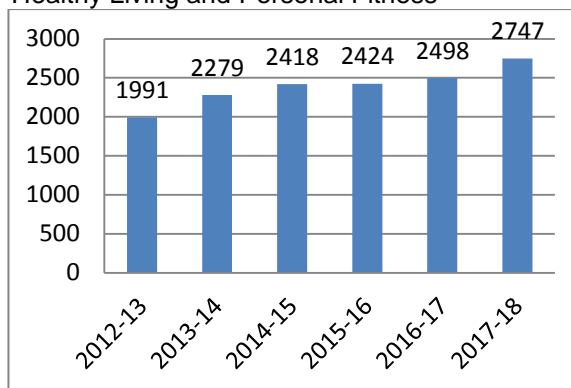


Figure 15. Number of students enrolled in Healthy Living and Personal Fitness



Enrolment in these courses can further inform our work by examining the data disaggregated by males and females. As with other physical activity data, we see a greater number of males electing physical education courses. Enrolment in Healthy Active Living is fairly well distributed between males and females (54% and 46%, respectively), which may be somewhat balanced out due to the mandatory enrolment at grade 9. We see a more disproportionality for the elective Healthy Living and Personal Fitness (61% males vs. 39% females).

Strategy #3: Develop and implement the well-being framework and School Well-being Plans to enhance school climate

The Framework for Student Well-being (developed January 2014; revised May 2015) is a useful resource for guiding schools as they develop annual School Well-being Plans. OCDSB schools are required to develop a Well-being Plan each year, share the plan with their school community, and continually monitor implementation throughout the year. In the 2017-2018, 84% of schools submitted their Well-being Plans to their superintendent of instruction (n = 124). With the implementation of School Well-being Plans identified as a key strategy for the well-being objective, working to ensure every school submits a Well-being Plan will be an important next step.

School Well-being Plans (n = 90) were included in a qualitative analysis of common themes and trends that were emerging across the District. The plans identified commonalities amongst the following learning needs and strategies/practices:

- Student Learning Needs:
 - Belonging
 - Resilience
 - Self-regulation
 - Socio-emotional learning
- Evidence-based Strategies:
 - Character Education
 - Collaborative Problem Solving
 - Growth Mindset
 - Mindfulness
 - Anti-bullying programs
 - Zones of Regulation
 - Students as mentors for younger peers in periods of transition (LINK, WEB)
- Educator Learning Needs:
 - Equity
 - Growth Mindset
 - Mindfulness
 - Restorative practices
 - Self-regulation
- Professional Practices:
 - Collaboration
 - Inquiry-based learning
 - Making student thinking visible
 - Role playing
 - Feedback
 - Productive failure
 - Listening

One of the ways in which we measure progress in well-being is through school climate surveys. These surveys are voluntary online questionnaires, which are used by school boards to collect anonymous and reliable data about school climate. At the OCDSB, school climate surveys are administered annually, with parents and students completing the surveys in alternating years. A student survey was conducted in Spring 2017 and a parent survey in Spring 2018, both of which provided valuable data on student well-being.

School Climate Student Survey

In April-May 2017, the OCDSB surveyed students about school climate and received 36,890 responses (13,405 from grade 4 to 6 students; 23,485 from grade 7 to 12 students). These responses, alongside results from the previous student surveys¹ and the Canadian norms, can be used to measure progress on well-being.

In the survey, students were asked about their sense of belonging at school. Ratings of belonging are based on whether they feel accepted and valued by their peers and others at school. These ratings decreased slightly since previous years, with the proportion of grade 4-6 students being below the Canadian norm and grade 7-12 students equal to the norm.

¹ Response rates were as follows: 36,076 in 2013; 35,852 in 2014; 28,114 in 2015; and 36,890 in 2017.

Figure 16. Grade 4-6 Responses: Positive Sense of Belonging

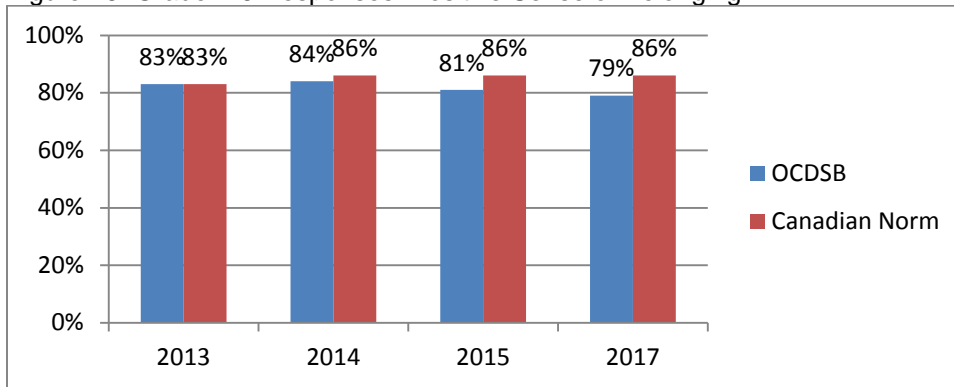
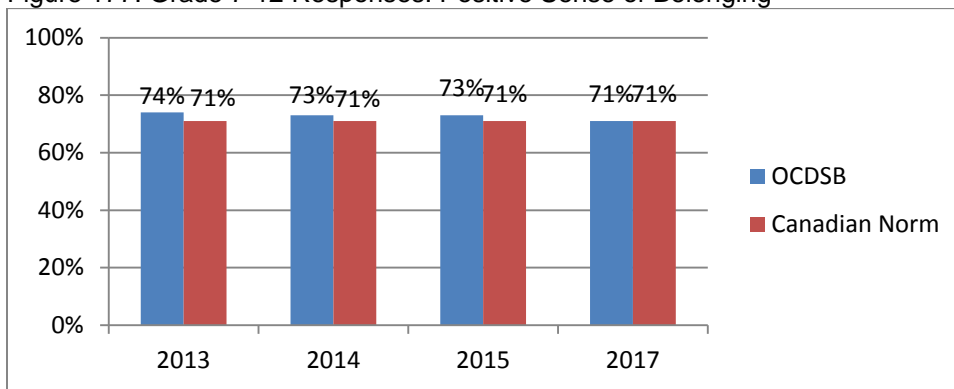


Figure 177. Grade 7-12 Responses: Positive Sense of Belonging



Students' ratings of positive relationships are based on whether they report having friends at school they can trust and who encourage them to make positive choices. For both panels, OCDSB students reported positive relationships more frequently than the Canadian norm. Although grade 4-6 student reports are down from last year, there was increase compared to previous years. Grade 7-12 students have remained stable over time.

Figure 18. Grade 4-6 Responses: Positive Relationships

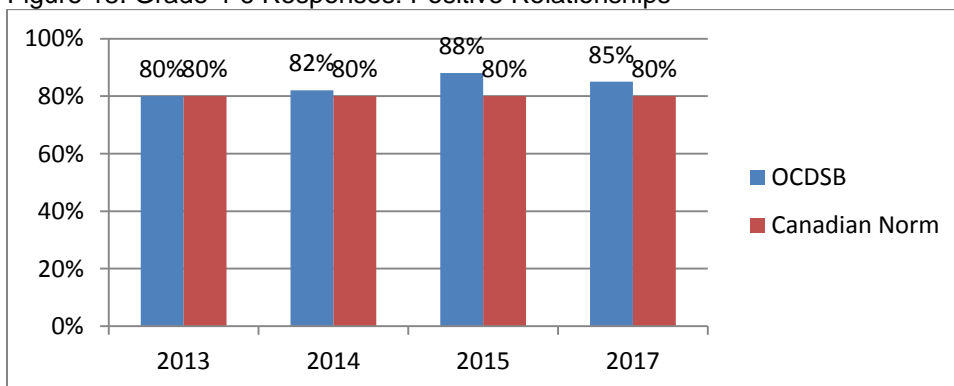
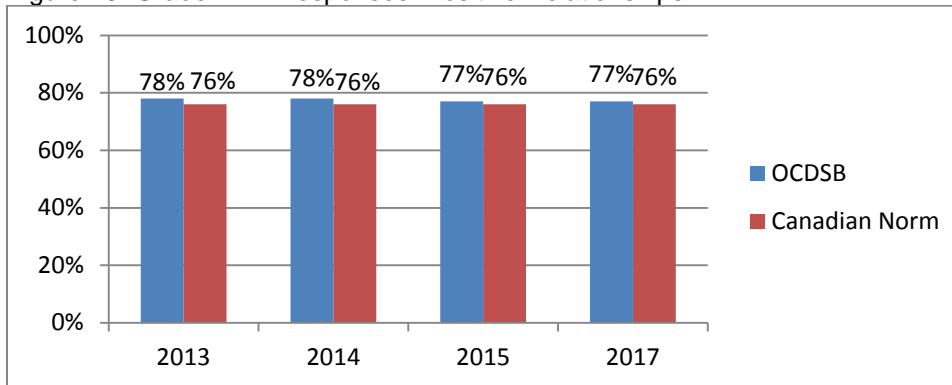


Figure 19. Grade 7-12 Responses: Positive Relationships



Students were also asked a series of questions about whether they feel teachers are responsive to their needs and encourage independence with a democratic approach. Based on their responses, we see an increase in reports of positive teacher-student relationships for students in grade 4-6, while students in grade 7-12 have remained fairly consistent in their responses over time. Although students in grade 4-6 remain below the Canadian norm, this gap is closing. Reports from students in grade 7-12 are equal to their Canadian peers.

Figure 20. Grade 4-6 Responses: Positive Teacher-Student Relations

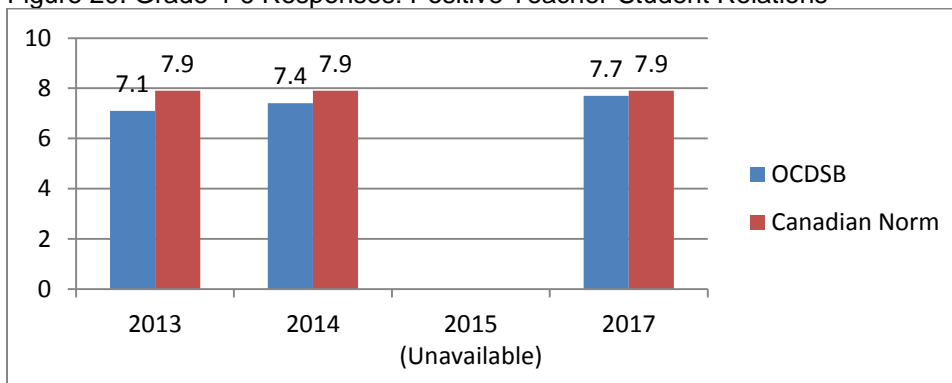
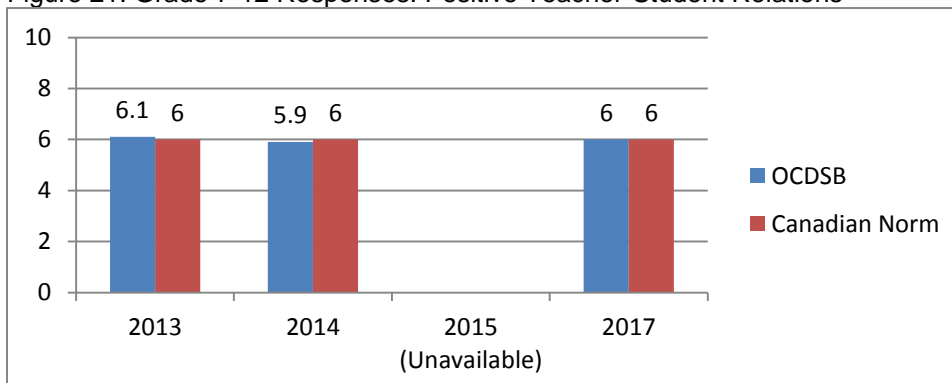


Figure 21. Grade 7-12 Responses: Positive Teacher-Student Relations



Students also reported their perceptions of their learning climate. This was determined in response to questions about whether there are clear rules and expectations for classroom behaviour and whether teachers maintain high expectations that they expect to be followed. The survey results show that student perceptions of the learning climate decreased for grade 4-6, with results lower than those reported for the Canadian norm. Ratings have been relatively consistent over time for grades 7-12, and are equal to the Canadian norm.

Figure 22. Grade 4-6 Responses: Positive Learning Climate

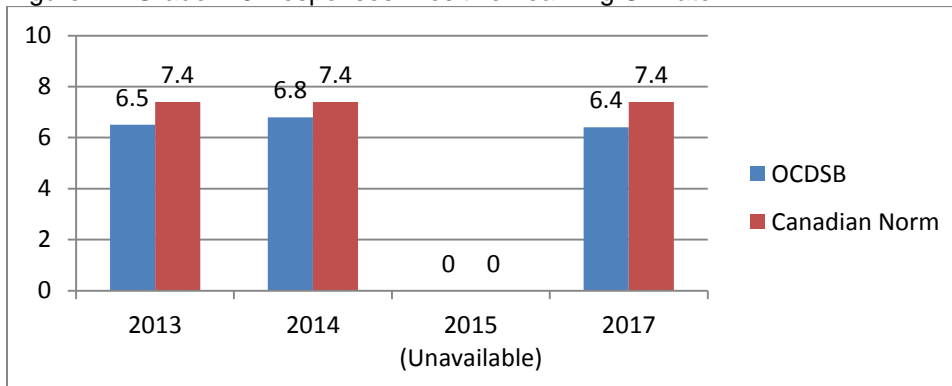
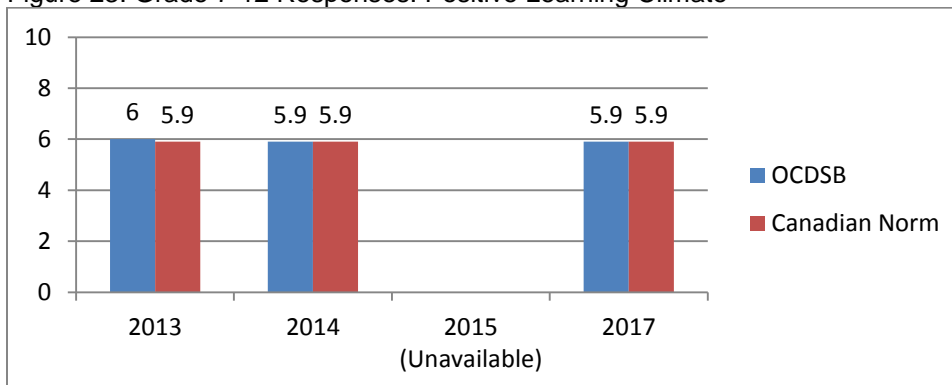


Figure 23. Grade 7-12 Responses: Positive Learning Climate



Student reports of expectations for success are based on whether they feel that school staff emphasize academic skills and hold high expectations for all students to succeed. Results for both panels have been relatively stable over time. Students in grade 4-6 are rating expectations for success at a lower level than their Canadian peers, while students in grade 7-12 are on par with the norm.

Figure 24. Grade 4-6 Responses: Expectations for Success

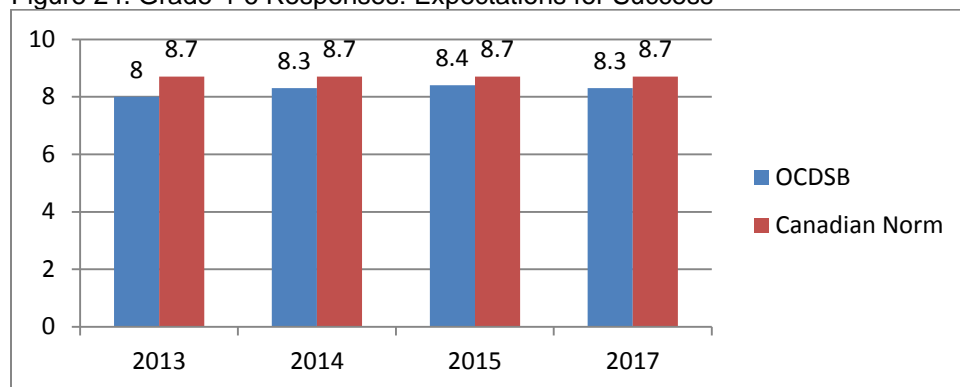
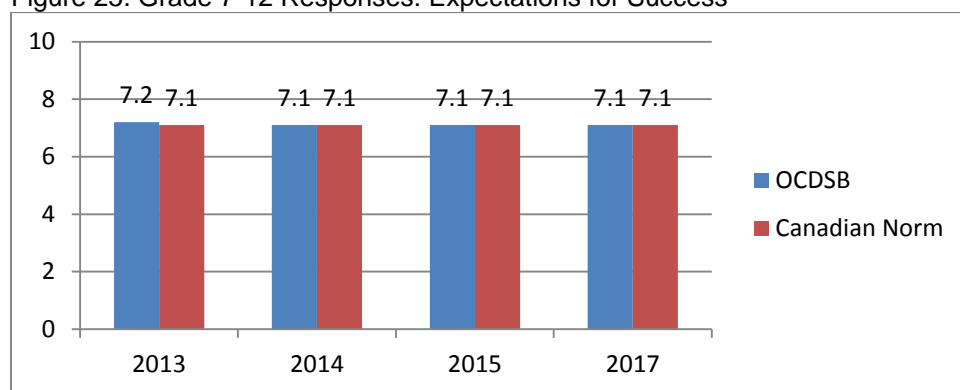


Figure 25. Grade 7-12 Responses: Expectations for Success



Overall, responses from the Student School Climate Survey provide useful information about student well-being at the OCDSB. Generally, trends have been fairly consistent over time and are comparable to Canadian counterparts. The results, however, do not reflect the improvements in well-being that the OCDSB is working to achieve. Moving forward, the continued investments in well-being will strive to increase student ratings of things such as sense of belonging, positive relationships, learning climate, and expectations for success.

School Climate Parent Survey

In April-May 2018, the OCDSB surveyed parents/guardians about school climate and received 7,642 responses. Parents/guardians were asked a series of questions about their child's school experience, and their responses are presented on a 10-point scale, with 0 indicating strong disagreement, 10 indicating strong agreement, and 5 being neutral. These responses, alongside results from the previous parent surveys¹, can be used to measure progress on well-being. Canadian norms are not available for the Parent Survey.

As presented in the figures below, 2018 ratings about inclusivity ranged from 6.2 to 6.6, while ratings for school supports ranged from 6.4 to 7.3. Parent/ guardian perceptions of inclusivity have remained quite stable; however, ratings for school supports have

¹ Response rates were as follows: 5112 in 2014; 8843 in 2016; and 7642 in 2018.

decreased. The most noteworthy decreases over time have in response to the items “Teachers take account of my child’s needs, abilities, and interests” and “Teachers show an interest in my child’s learning”.

Figure 26. Parent Views on Inclusivity at School

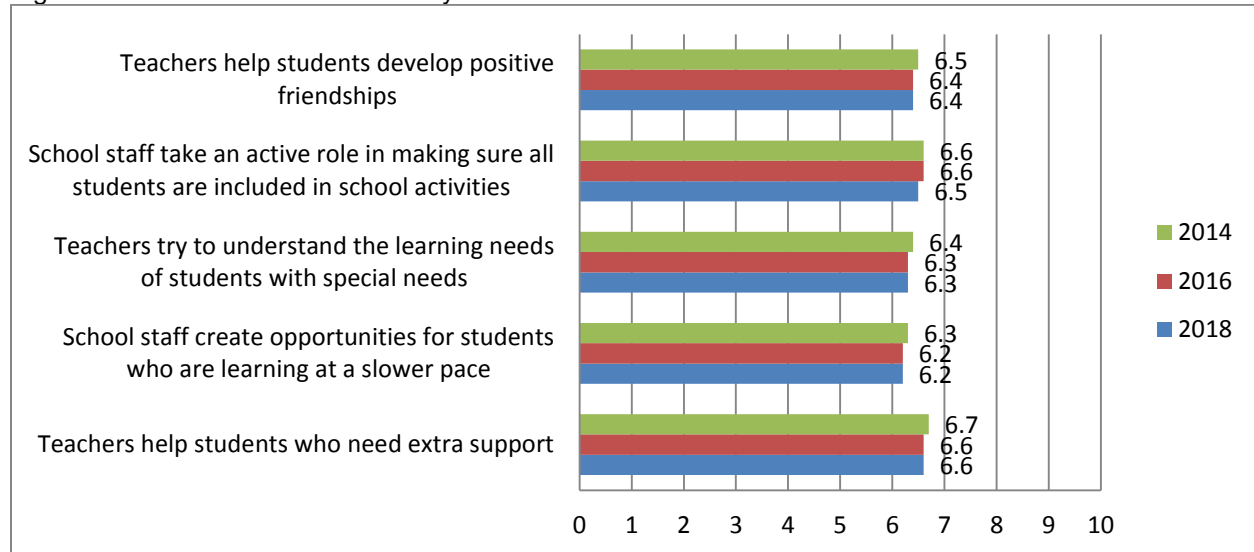
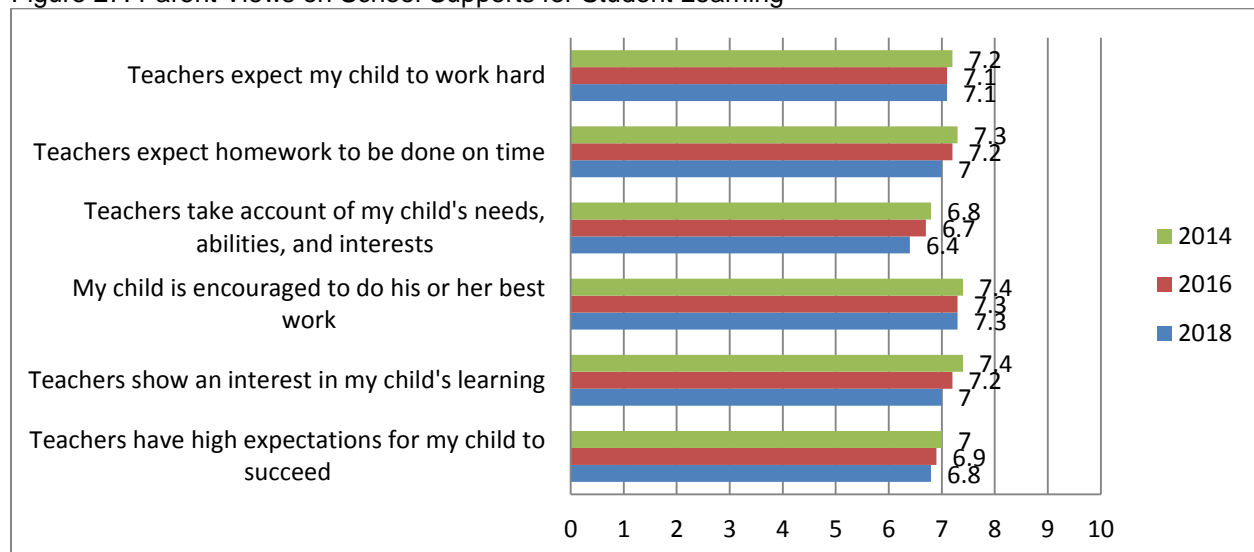


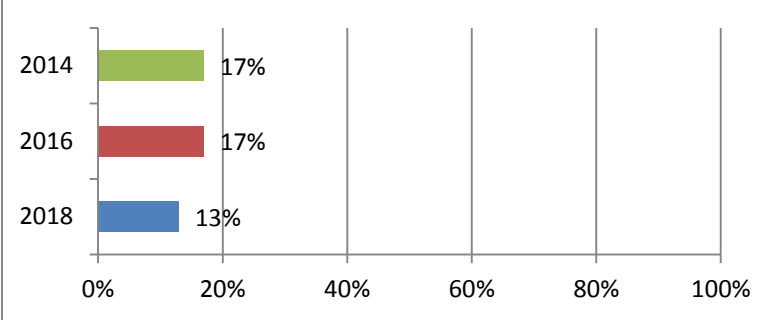
Figure 27. Parent Views on School Supports for Student Learning



Among the survey items on inclusivity, the highest level of agreement was for the item “Teachers help students who need extra support”. The lowest level of agreement was for: “School staff create opportunities for students who are learning at a slower pace”. Among the questions on supports at school, the item where parents’ indicated the highest of agreement was “My child is encouraged to do his or her best work.” The item with the lowest level of agreement was: “Teachers take account of my child’s needs, abilities and interests”.

The parent survey showed positive results with regards to bullying. In each survey administration, parents are asked if their child was a victim of moderate to severe bullying in the last 30 days/4 weeks. Results from the 2018 survey show a 4% decrease as compared to previous years, as shown in the figure below. Among the types of bullying reported, social and verbal are the most prevalent.

Figure 28. Parent Reports of Moderate-Severe Bullying



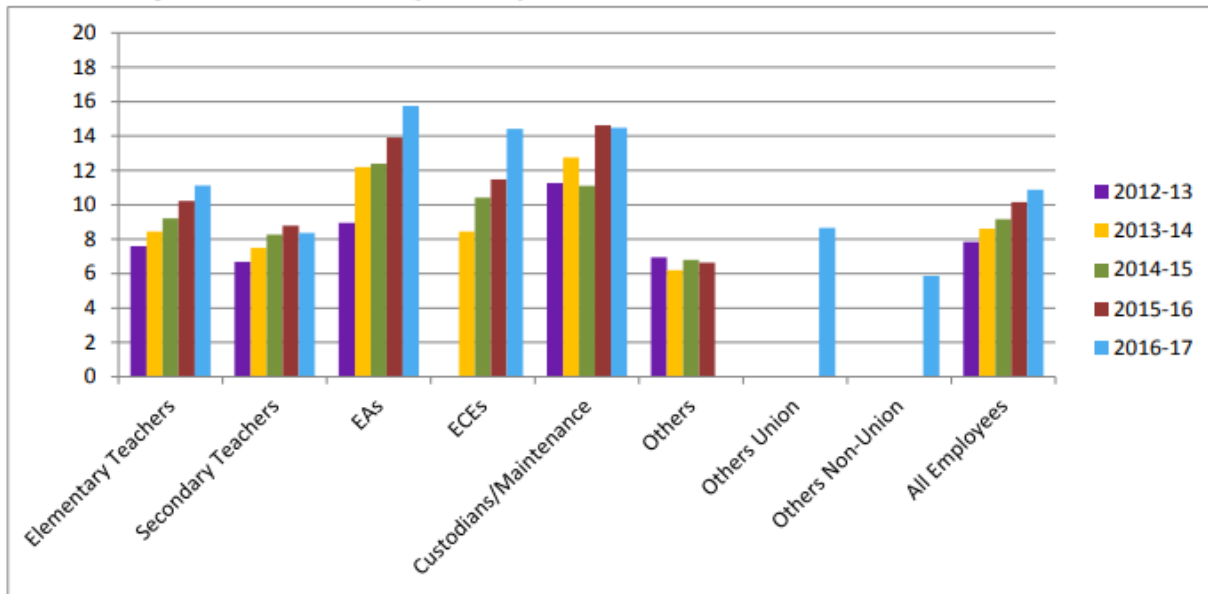
Staff Well-being

The OCDSB well-being objective aims to improve the well-being of students and staff. Much of the work discussed above, such as staff capacity building, has a positive impact on both of these groups. For example, through discussion with federation representatives, one of the major stressors identified as having an adverse impact on staff well-being was the increased incidence of aggressive behaviours, particularly among primary learners. In response, staff development for administrators and other staff was focused on strategies for promoting positive student behavior and mitigating and responding to aggressive behaviour. In addition to the professional development specifically identified in the previous section, administrators participated in carousels that provided information on supporting staff through appropriate debriefs and the important role administrators can play in creating a positive school climate for both students and staff.

Absenteeism – Employee Sick Leave Usage

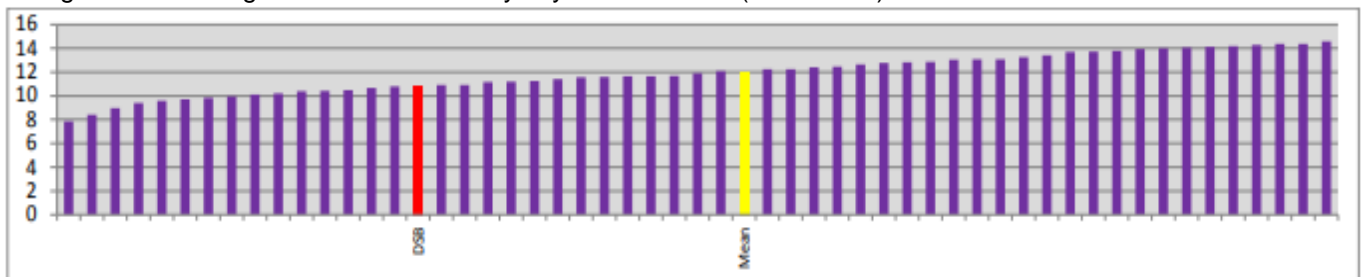
As was the case for student well-being, an indicator of staff well-being is absenteeism. The School Boards’ Cooperative Inc. 2018 Absence Study reveals an increase in employee sick leave used over the past five years. OCDSB employees’ average number of sick days has increased from 7.85 in 2012-2013 to 10.87 in 2016-2017. The steady climb in sick leave usage is consistent across almost all employees groups, as shown in the figure below.

Figure 29. Average Number of Sick Days by Employee Group¹.



The SBCI Absence Study included 54 school boards in Ontario that, as a whole, experienced an increase in sick leave usage at a rate similar to the OCDSB. That said, the average number of sick days for OCDSB employees is lower than 70% of other boards included in the analysis.

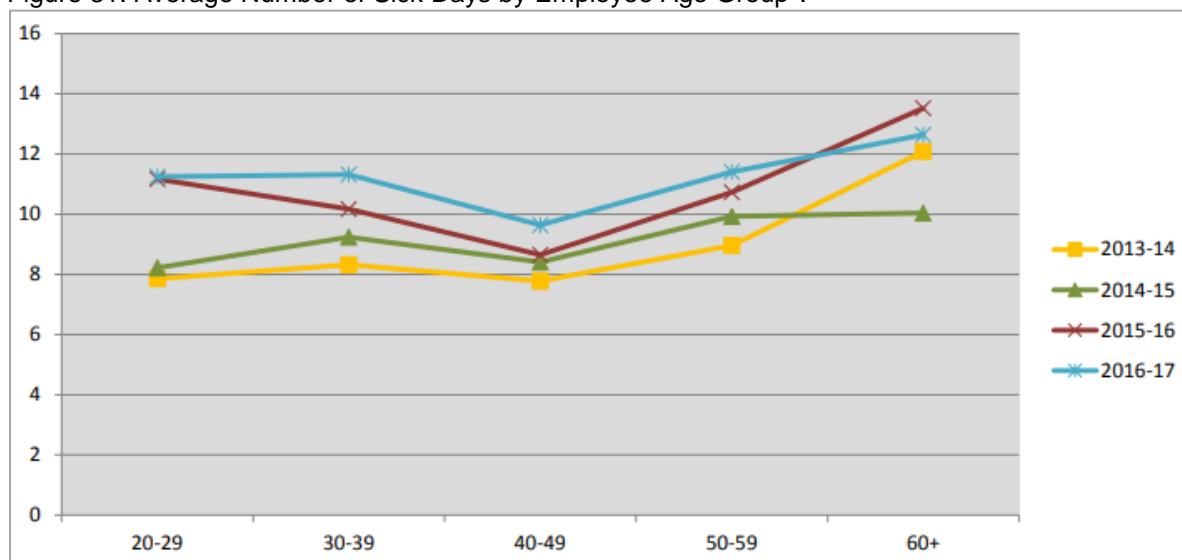
Figure 30. Average Number of Sick Days by School Board (2016-2017).



In further exploration of employee sick leave data, absences can be disaggregated by age. An examination of the data by employee age group suggests that there were increases in sick leave usage for OCDSB employees over 30 and under the age of 60. Those at the younger (age 20-29) and older (60+) ends of the age range had similar to or less absenteeism compared to last year, despite being the groups last year with the largest increases. It is important to note is that these groups have relatively smaller populations and therefore variability from year to year is to be expected.

¹ School Boards' Co-operative Inc. (SBCI) 2018 Absence Study.

Figure 31. Average Number of Sick Days by Employee Age Group¹.



In response to increases in staff absenteeism, the OCDSB has taken a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach to promoting healthy and engaging workplaces. This approach includes an attendance support program to identify and support employees with recurring (non-culpable) absences; a disability management program that includes early intervention and return to work strategies; and an employee wellness program that fosters a healthy and safe workplace, promotes healthy lifestyle practices and mitigates workplace factors that contribute to employee ill health.

Employee Wellness and Disability Management

The Employee Wellness and Disability Management Division of Human Resources promotes staff well-being by providing supports to OCDSB employees, through case management of individual employees. These individualized supports include monitoring access to paid sick leave, assisting with long-term disability applications, facilitating and supporting return to work as soon as possible and developing individual accommodation plans. The Division also manages supports for disability cases and Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) claims. WSIB coordinators work collaboratively with Occupational Health and Safety to identify trends and inform health and safety prevention programs. Additionally, the Division manages and oversees the district's Employee and Family Assistance Program, which provides valuable resources and services such as information on confidential assistance for work, health, and life concerns and information on coping with grief or with change in the workplace, and the Short term Childcare Program. Employee uptake on the supports provided through this division is quite high, as shown in the table below.

¹ School Boards' Co-operative Inc. (SBCI) 2018 Absence Study.

Table 3. Employee Wellness Services and Supports

Service facilitated	# of times accessed		
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Morneau Shepell's services (e.g., fitness coaching, retirement planning, health and benefits consulting, workplace learning, etc.)	1000	1046	1035
Short-Term Childcare Service	439	462	323
Direct Support provided	# of cases/claims		
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Short and long-term disability cases	1024	1105	1275
WSIB claims	1017	1061	996

Note. Reports of services facilitated for 2017-2018 are based on data from July 2018, and WSIB claims are based on data from May 2018; total counts for the year are being finalized.

Given the high level of support provided, and the increasing volume of cases, the OCDSB expanded the disability management team in September 2017 to include one additional Disability Management Coordinator and one additional WSIB Claims Administrator. The additional staff complement this year helped to alleviate the large caseloads being managed by current staff who provide support to employees of the District in times of personal illness or injury towards recovery and return to work. The additional supports also provide opportunities for staff to shift focus from individual employee intervention and supports to a more proactive approach to wellness.

Training in Healthy Workplaces

Work to support staff well-being has been underway with the OCDSB's participation in the Workplace Mental Health Leadership™ certificate program. This program, offered through Queens University and Morneau Shepell, showcases organizational leadership and commitment to a mentally healthy workplace through best practices and innovative solutions. As of March 2018, 120 OCDSB supervisors have participated in this training, which includes modules designed to increase:

- Awareness of the importance of a mentally healthy workplace;
- Accountability for a safe and healthy workplace;
- Recognition of the factors that influence a mentally healthy workplace; and
- Capacity to respond to potential health issues, improving the likelihood of a better outcome.

Additionally, two OCDSB staff members from Human Resources participated through the fall and winter in a series of workshops funded by Ottawa Public Health in partnership with Workplace Safety & Prevention Services (WSPS). The program, called Investing in Healthy Minds at Work, is supported by funding from the Ministry of Labour (MOL), Funding in Action. The goal of the program is to provide participating organizations, including broader public sector organizations, with practical knowledge on how to create an action plan to implement the Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace Standard. This voluntary standard aims to promote mental health and prevent psychological harm at work.

Engaging and Healthy Workplace Committee

To further support staff well-being and engagement, the OCDSB has established an Engaging and Healthy Workplace Committee. The committee has representation from all employee groups and relevant central departments. The committee's mandate includes developing action plans to promote healthy and engaging workplaces across the District, making recommendations to Director's Executive Council with regard to specific initiatives, and guiding the implementation of the Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace Standard. The Committee's work has been informed by the perspectives and input of various groups on their members' workplace experiences. Through a variety of strategies, the committee will:

- Promote safe, healthy and supportive working conditions and environments so all OCDSB employees can work and live well; and
- Improve employee health and wellness by identifying and addressing factors related to the work environment, individual health practices, organizational culture, and social responsibility.

This year the Committee participated in a presentation from Ottawa Public Health with respect to their workplace wellness initiatives and supports to Ottawa employers, including implementation of the Standard. The Committee identified priority areas of focus moving forward, informed by the perspectives of the Committee members and their knowledge of the conditions that have impacted employee wellness in the workplace.

Summary of Key Findings & Next Steps

From the evidence described above, there are some key findings which are instrumental in guiding the next steps for work in this area:

Measures of Overall Student Well-being

- Approximately 47% of students were identified as being absent for 11 days or more. Student absenteeism is an area which merits further investigation/disaggregation so that supports can be targeted as needed.
- The OCDSB invested in a number of prevention and intervention strategies to reduce student suspensions; however, there were increases in suspensions at both the elementary and secondary levels in 2016-2017. Important work moving forward will be the continued monitoring of trends in student suspension data and solicitation of parent and student voice regarding school climate and safety to help promote a safe and welcoming learning environment.
- Student confidence in grade 9 applied math has decreased and, as a result, the gap between students in applied and academic math has widened. The importance of self-efficacy is highlighted with the group differences between students who are and are not meeting the provincial standard on the EQAO assessments.

Strategy #1: Build capacity to improve mental health supports

- In 2017-2018, staff training focused primarily on suicide prevention and Tier 1 supports, with sessions on Collaborative Problem Solving, Promoting Positive

Student Behavior, and Self-Regulation, among others. This year, Learning Support Services plans to increase professional development opportunities with additional funds received from the Ministry of Education. The focus of this training will be on social-emotional learning, attachment, and self-regulation.

- Last year, there were efforts to build student capacity through various programs. Given the positive feedback on the Sources of Strength Program and the Kindergarten Pilot Project, these programs are continuing this year.
- Another key piece of work for this year will be finalizing the OCDSB's 3-year Mental Health & Addiction Strategy (2018-2021). This will focus and guide our work in mental health.

Strategy #2: Increase opportunities to support and encourage creative expression, physical health and physical literacy

- The trends in extra-curricular participation have been fairly consistent over time. There is strong evidence for gender differences, with boys being more physically active and girls being more likely to participate in arts, music, or drama.
- Data from the Student School Climate Survey allows for comparisons to the Canadian norm. This data shows that grade 4-6 OCDSB students tend to report more intense physical activity than their Canadian counterparts, while grade 7-12 OCDSB students report less moderate physical activity (with other results being similar). These findings, which highlight group differences in extra-curricular activities, and physical activity in particular, demonstrate the need for differentiated strategies when supporting student well-being.
- A school survey on the implementation of Daily Physical Activity found that 82% of OCDSB elementary students are active for at least 20 minutes every day, during instructional time, with positive outcomes reported from school principals.

Strategy #3: Develop and implement the well-being framework and School Well-being Plans to enhance school climate

- In 2017-2018, 84% of schools submitted a School Well-being Plan to their superintendent. Given that School Well-being Plans are a key strategy for making progress on this objective, work to ensure every school submits a Well-being Plan will be an important next step.
- Results from the most recent Student School Climate Survey show that, in general, trends have been stable over time. Moving forward, the OCDSB is working to provide supports that will increase student ratings of school climate.
- The most recent Parent School Climate Survey found that while parent/guardian perceptions of inclusivity have remained consistent over time, ratings for school supports have decreased. Parent reports of bullying have shown a promising trend, with a 4% decrease in the number of victims of moderate-severe bullying. This is evidence of success of the work in bullying prevention and intervention.

Staff Well-being

- The OCDSB provides a large number of services and supports to staff, and this volume has increased each year for the past few years. To address this growing

need, two additional staff members have been added to the disability management team.

- Employee sick leave use continues to be on the rise, which has been evidenced province-wide. Although sick leave usage is less frequent at the OCDSB than 70% of the other Districts included in the SBCI Absence Study, the rising trend is still a concern which needs to be addressed. The OCDSB is taking a multi-faceted approach to promote a healthy and engaging workplace, in an effort to ultimately reduce employee sick time.
- Staff training in mental health has been a priority for the OCDSB, with 120 supervisors training through the Workplace Mental Health Leadership certificate program (Queens University and Morneau Shepell) and two Human Resources staff members participating in the Investing in Healthy Minds at Work program (Ottawa Public Health).
- The establishment of the Engaging and Healthy Workplace Committee was a key piece of work done in support of staff well-being at the OCDSB last year. Moving forward, this committee will play an important role in providing advice and working collaboratively on staff well-being and engagement.

Guiding Questions

The following questions are provided to support the discussion of this item by the Committee:

- How does the evidence presented help us assess our progress on the well-being objective?
- What aspects of well-being need prioritization during this final year of the 2015-2019 strategic plan?
- How will the evidence presented help shape the vision for the development of the next strategic plan?
- How does the work discussed relate to the work under the other strategic objectives?

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Director of Education and
Secretary of the Board