2022-2023
STUDENT LEARNING UPDATE

Ottawa-Carleton DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

PART ONE:
LEARNING OUTCOMES IN CORE ACADEMIC SKILLS
NOVEMBER 2023

PART TWO:
PREPARATION OF STUDENTS FOR FUTURE SUCCESS
FEBRUARY 2024

PART THREE:
STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND WELL-BEING
MAY 2024

REPORTING SCHEDULE: The Student Learning Update will be organized into three reports, using the structure outlined for the Student Achievement Plan from the Ministry of Education. This report contains **Part THREE**.

INTRODUCTION

OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

Student mental health and well-being are inextricably linked to academic achievement. As learning institutions, schools play a critical role in promoting and protecting student well-being and engagement. This report focuses on key metrics, aligned with direction from the Ministry of Education to monitor student engagement and well-being. The data that follows is organized by:

Student Attendance
- Patterns by Identity
- Intersections with Achievement

Student Suspensions
- Review of Recent Report
- Intersections with Achievement

Perceptual data
- School Climate Surveys

To monitor progress and inform ongoing planning to support underserved students, data is further explored by student demographic characteristics from our student information system and Valuing Voices survey. These results are highlighted below and detailed in the appendices attached.
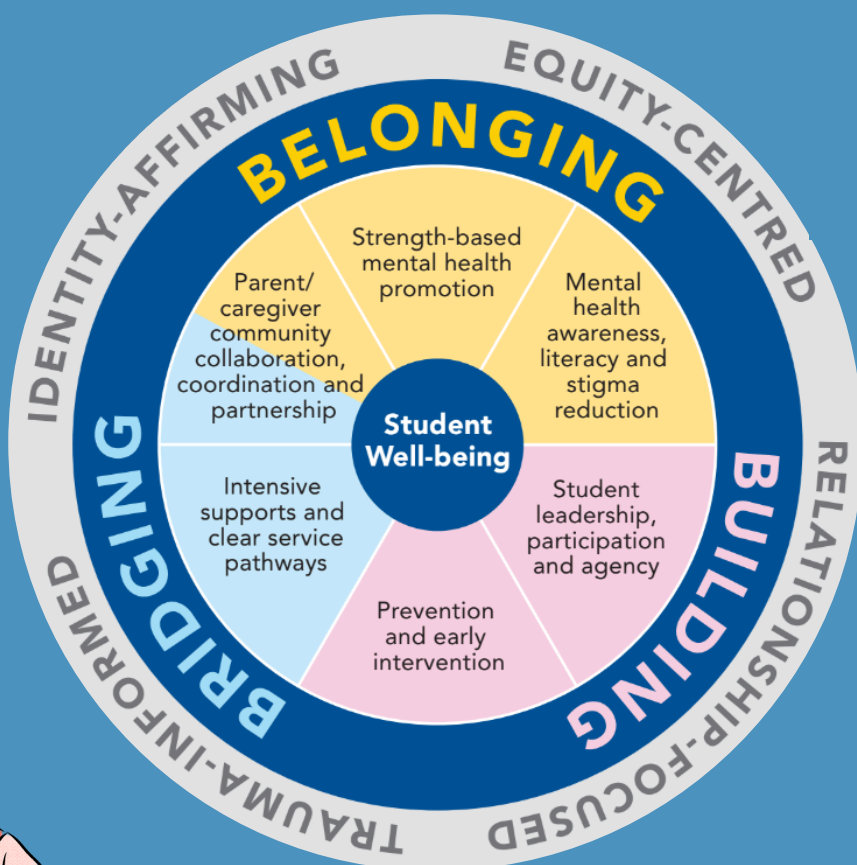
This is the the third and the final report from a series of reports, following learning reports on **Core Academics Skills** and **Preparation of Students for Future Success**. Refer to the links below to access these reports:

🔗 **STUDENT LEARNING - CORE ACADEMIC SKILLS** (PART I)

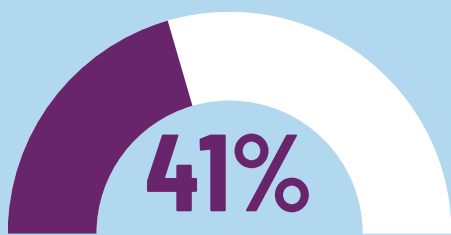🔗 **STUDENT LEARNING - PREPARATION OF STUDENTS FOR FUTURE SUCCESS** (PART II)

This update on student engagement and well-being is timely in that it follows the recent launch of our new mental health and well-being strategy, focused on belonging, building, and bridging:

🔗 **OCDSB MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING STRATEGY**

IDENTITY-AFFIRMING EQUITY-CENTRED RELATIONSHIP-FOCUSED TRAUMA-INFORMED

BELONGING
BUILDING
BRIDGING

Strength-based mental health promotion

Parent/ caregiver community collaboration, coordination and partnership

Mental health awareness, literacy and stigma reduction

Student Well-being

Intensive supports and clear service pathways

Student leadership, participation and agency

Prevention and early intervention

ELEMENTARY ENGAGEMENT (GR.1-8)

STUDENT ATTENDANCE
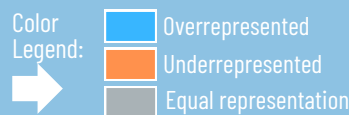
41%

of **41,339** total

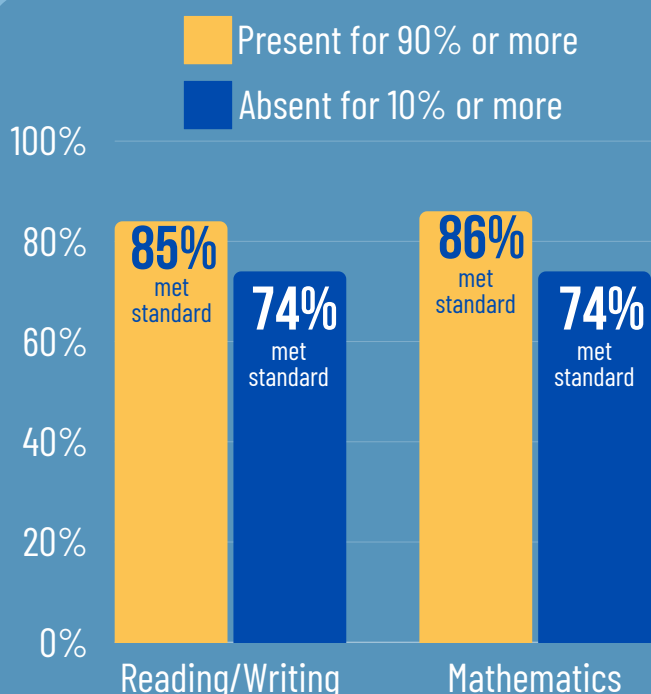41% of students in Grades 1-8, were **absent for 10% or more instructional days** (i.e., 19+ days)
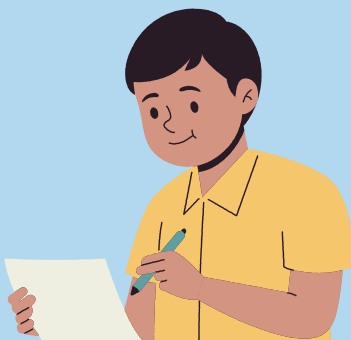
Elementary (Gr.1-8) 2022-2023 Student Absence Rates	N	% Absent for 10%+ days	Dispropor-tionality
ALL ELEMENTARY STUDENTS (GR.1-8)	41,339	41%	
Multilingual Learners (ESL/ELD)	6,863	44%	1.07
Low-SES	14,172	47%	1.15
Female	19,827	41%	0.99
Male	21,339	41%	1.00
Transgender, Non-Binary, Gender Diverse	152	61%	1.49
Gender Not Disclosed	21	52%	1.27
Indigenous	781	60%	1.45
Special Education (excluding gifted)	7,296	50%	1.21

According to the most recent Ministry calculations, 54% of OCDSB elementary students were absent for 10% or more days, **7% higher than the provincial rate** of 47%.

The disaggregation of attendance data allows us to calculate disproportionalities and identify underserved students. The **largest disproportionalities** in attendance data tends to be for students who identify as **transgender, non-binary and gender diverse,** and students who identify as **Indigenous**.

Color Legend:
- Overrepresented
- Underrepresented
- Equal representation

ATTENDANCE AND ACHIEVEMENT

- Present for 90% or more
- Absent for 10% or more

Reading/Writing
- 85% met standard
- 74% met standard

Mathematics
- 86% met standard
- 74% met standard

Grade 1-8 students who attended school for 90% or more instructional days had **higher achievement** outcomes in Reading, Writing and Mathematics, in comparison to those who were absent for 10% (i.e., 19 instructional days) or more. This difference holds when disaggregating **based on identity** (i.e., for students with special education needs, students who identify as Indigenous, multilingual learners, students across the gender variables, and students residing in low-income neighbourhoods).
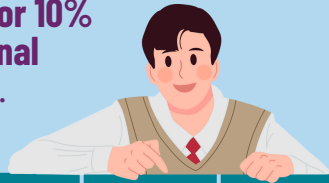
SECONDARY ENGAGEMENT (GR.9-12)

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

49%
of **23,092** total
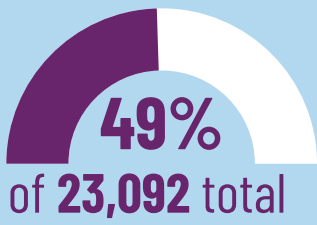
49% of students in Grades 9-12, were **absent for 10% or more instructional days** (i.e., 18+ days).

| Secondary (Gr.9-12) 2022-2023 Absence Rates	N	% Absent for 10%+ days	Dispropor-tionality
ALL SECONDARY STUDENTS (GR.9-12)	23,092	49%	
Multilingual Learners (ESL/ELD)	5,788	51%	1.03
Low-SES	7,425	56%	1.15
Female	11,105	51%	1.04
Male	11,713	47%	0.95
Transgender, Non-Binary, Gender Diverse	239	67%	1.36
Gender Not Disclosed	35	60%	1.22
Indigenous	458	67%	1.36
Special Education (excluding gifted)	5,871	57%	1.15

According to the most recent Ministry calculations, 40% of OCDSB secondary students were absent for 10% or more of classes for a course, **7% lower than the provincial rate** of 47%.

The disaggregation of attendance data revealed disproportionalities in attendance for underserved students. As with elementary, the **largest disproportionalities** were observed for students who identify as **transgender, non-binary** and **gender diverse**, and students who identify as **Indigenous**.

Color Legend:
→ Overrepresented
→ Underrepresented
→ Equal representation
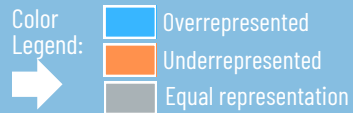
ATTENDANCE AND ACHIEVEMENT

Grade 9-12 students who attended 90% or more of their enrolled classes were **more likely to be on track to graduation**, in comparison to those who were absent for 10% or more. This is observation is true for all groups **based on identity**, but was largest for students who identify as **transgender**, **non-binary**, and **gender diverse**, and students who identify as **Indigenous**.

Present for 90% or more
Absent for 10% or more

100% 80% 60% 40% 20% 0%

93% ON TRACK **75% ON TRACK**

% ON TRACK to graduation
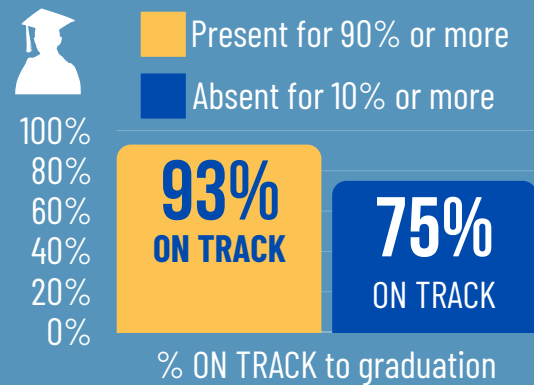
GROUP LEVEL INSIGHTS:
% ON TRACK TO GRADUATION

All Secondary Students (Gr.9-12)
- All students - present for 90% or more: 93%
- All students - absent for 10% or more: 75%

Multilingual Learners (ESL/ELD)
- 89%
- 68%

Low-SES
- 88%
- 65%

Female
- 94%
- 77%

Male
- 92%
- 73%

Transgender, Non-Binary, Gender Diverse
- 92%
- 58%

Gender Not Disclosed
- 71%
- 62%

Indigenous
- 82%
- 50%

Special Education (excluding gifted)
- 82%
- 61%
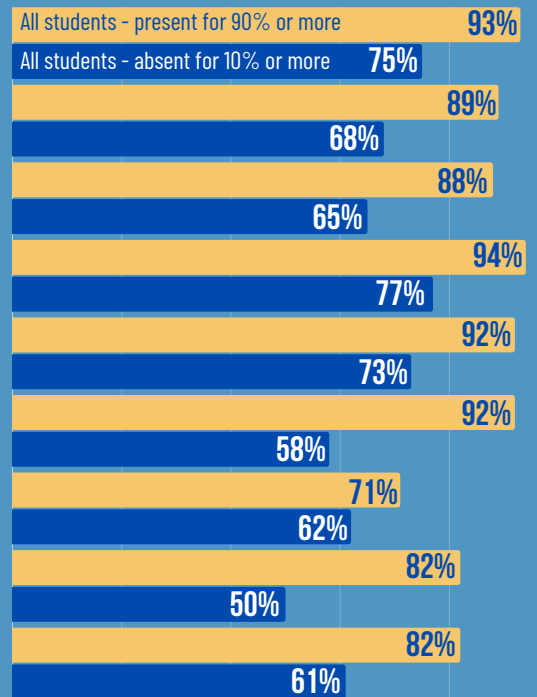
0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

SUSPENSION AND ACHIEVEMENT

ELEMENTARY (G1-8)

Not Suspended (2022/23)
Suspended (2022/23)

Reading/Writing: 80% met standard (Not Suspended), 62% met standard (Suspended)
Mathematics: 81% met standard (Not Suspended), 54% met standard (Suspended)

SECONDARY (G9-12)

85% ON TRACK (Not Suspended), 75% ON TRACK (Suspended)
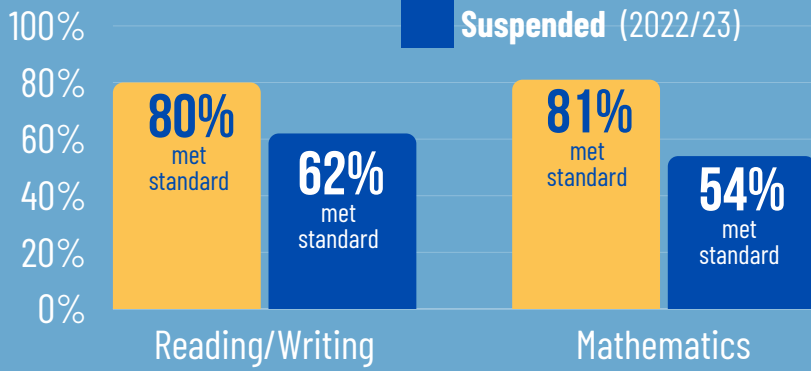
% ON TRACK to graduation
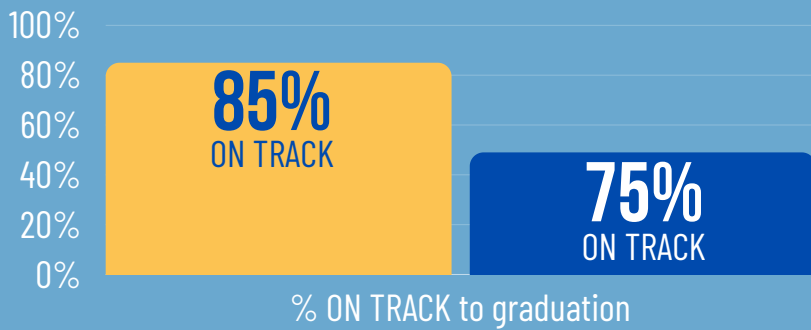
Similar to attendance, suspension rates were related to academic achievement. Students with **at least one suspension** were **less likely** to **meet the provincial standard** or be **on track to graduation**, in comparison to those who had not been suspended in 2022-2023.

This difference holds when disaggregating by **identity-based data.**

Elementary (Gr.1-8) 2022-2023 Achievement by Suspension	Reading and Writing - % Met Standard				Mathematics - % Met Standard			
	N	Suspended*	N	Not Suspended**	N	Suspended	N	Not Suspended
All Elementary Students (District, Gr.1-8)	74,469	80%	1,388	62%	40,467	81%	691	54%
Multilingual Learners (ESL/ELD)	5,576	80%	212	57%	5,576	80%	212	57%
Low-SES	7,125	76%	300	60%	7,125	76%	300	60%
Female	10,925	86%	180	56%	10,925	86%	180	56%
Male	11,198	84%	515	47%	11,198	84%	515	47%
Transgender, Non-Binary, Gender Diverse	230	70%	9	67%	230	70%	9	67%
Gender Not Disclosed	35	66%	0	N/A	35	66%	0	N/A
Indigenous	432	62%	26	62%	432	62%	26	62%
Special Education (excluding gifted)	5,571	71%	300	59%	5,571	71%	300	59%

Secondary (Gr.9-12) 2022-2023 Achievement by Suspension	% On Track			
	N	Suspended	N	Not Suspended
All Secondary Students (District, Gr.9-12)	22,388	85%	704	49%
Multilingual Learners (ESL/ELD)	5,576	80%	212	57%
Low-SES	7,125	76%	300	60%
Female	10,925	86%	180	56%
Male	11,198	84%	515	47%
Transgender, Non-Binary, Gender Diverse	230	70%	9	67%
Gender Not Disclosed	35	66%	0	N/A
Indigenous	432	62%	26	62%
Special Education (excluding gifted)	5,571	71%	300	59%

Color Legend:
➤ Overrepresented
Underrepresented
Equal representation

*Suspended at least once during the academic year.

**Not suspended during the academic year.

SCHOOL CLIMATE SURVEY

The School Climate survey assesses topics across four domains: **Engagement**, **Environment**, **Safety**, and **Well-Being**.

The most recent surveys include the 2022 Student Survey and 2023 Parent/Caregiver and Educator Survey.

Parents/caregivers (2023) tended to report **higher** rates of **favourability** across many topics compared to students (2022). This could indicate improvement in these areas from one year to the next and/or misalignment between parent/caregiver and student perspectives, however there are caveats to consider when making these comparisons such as differences in participant groups.

Topic	Domain	Students (2022) N=39,320	Parents/Caregivers (2023) N=39,320
Top Similarities			
Coping skills	Well-being	**60%** (19,662)	**60%** (3,525)
School Discipline	Environment	**55%** (19,777)	**54%** (3,642)
Opportunities for Involvement	Engagement	**56%** (20,386)	**58%** (3,579)
Top Differences			
General Well-being*	Well-being	**68%** (22,798)	**96%** (5,696)
School Environment	Environment	**56%** (20,167)	**76%** (4,615)

*Although this survey item differed for students (i.e., a composite score) and parents/caregivers (i.e., overall survey item), both metrics capture overall well-being and therefore the large difference in favourability scores is worthy of consideration.

Results from students and parents/caregivers demonstrate that **elementary students** tend to report more **positive experiences** than their intermediate and secondary peers. Consistent with findings in the literature, **intermediate students** tended to have the **least favourable** responses.

School Climate Survey data was collected anonymously, and therefore disaggregation by identity based on other District datasets is not feasible. The survey did, however, include some identity questions which allow for some exploration and disaggregation of the responses.

This exploration showed **less favourable** responses among the following:

- **Gender Identity**: Students self-identifying in another way (other than as Male or Female)
- **LGBTQ2S+**: Students identifying as a member of the LGBTQ2S+ community
- **Indigenous Identity:** Students self-identifying as Indigenous.
- **Race:** Students identifying as Black or Indigenous
- **Disability:** Students reporting having a disability(ies)

% with positive sense of belonging:
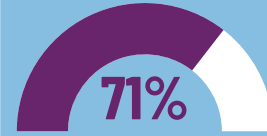
71% Parent/caregivers N=7,349

66% Students N=39,128

% with positive relationships with adults at school:

76% Parent/caregivers N=7,331

67% Students N=38,311

% reporting an ability to learn about and express their identity :

76% Parent/caregivers N=6,258

67% Students N=33,653

% reporting feeling safe at school and on the way to/from school :

78% Parent/caregivers N=6,104

72% Students N=33,952

% reporting strong-moderate well-being (parents/caregivers: reporting the overall well-being of their child, students: a composite score based on multiple questions)

96% Parent/caregivers N=5,909

68% Students N=33,524

NEXT STEPS

In pursuit of fostering a supportive and inclusive educational environment, the OCDSB is implementing a comprehensive array of initiatives spanning various aspects of student engagement and overall well-being. Rooted in a commitment to mental health and well-being, equity, inclusion, and effective data management, following list provides a sampling of relevant initiatives that have been actioned this year:
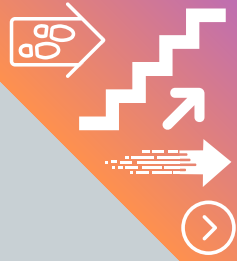
Mental Health and Well-Being

- Implementing the grade 7 and 8 Mental Health Curriculum
- Building awareness of available mental health supports and services
- Collaborating with community partners to strengthen a coherent system of care for child and youth mental health
- Hiring a social worker on the Indigenous Education team
- Increasing the number of Indigenous Student Support Workers
- Coaching and training staff on trauma-informed practices
- Building mentally healthy literacy and coping strategies through programs like Wellness Matters and Kids Have Stress Too

Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity

- Learning about inclusion work and inclusive approaches
- Engaging in a renewal of the Indigenous, Human Rights, and Equity Roadmap
- Increasing educator capacity in identifying and implementing resources for mentally healthy, culturally responsive, and identity-affirming classrooms
- Implementing our newly developed Anti-Hate Toolkit
- Training identity-specific staff in AFFIRM for the 2SLGBTQ+ community

Student Engagement and Support

- Training and implementing learning on restorative practices
- Designing a summer project to create an Ableism module to better understand students with learning disabilities
- Implementing the Safe Schools Action Plan
- Implementing Ministry modules focusing on coping strategies
- Engaging cross-departmentally and with community partners to explore best practices around student attendance and re-engagement

Data Management and Improvement

- Implementing a Human Rights incident tracking system
- Working to improve the form used for recording suspensions
- Implementing Safe Arrivals: an automated student absence management system
- Monitoring the ongoing implementation of Aspen (i.e., the student information system) and potential impacts on how data is recorded and retrieved
- Getting social workers direct access to attendance data
- Forming an Attendance Sub-Committee to improve awareness and training around attendance
- Ongoing collection of identity-based data and perceptual data to better understand disproportionalities in student sense of belonging and well-being.