

Progress on Engagement

Appendix B- Report 19-096: Final Measurement Report of the Strategic Plan 2015-2019

Summary of Progress

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

Strategies and Actions

Strategy #1-Develop tools to support parent involvement in learning and well-being

- Updated District and School websites to enhance communication;
- Encouraged use of parent, staff, and student portals;
- Continued use of Keeping You Connected Newsletter;
- Developed an OCDSB app;
- Obtained a license agreement for a platform for interactive engagement.


Strategy #2- Develop strategies to enhance communication and dialogue with and among staff, students, families and community partners to improve the delivery of public education

- Hosted annual Parent Conference and regular Speaker Series;
- Continued targeted engagement of at-risk populations;
- Implemented orientation program for new Board and Director;
- Undertook consultation and developed new strategic plan;
- Supported initiatives funded through the Ministry of Education's Parents Reaching Out Grant;
- Engaged in professional collaboration with federations;
- Developed and implemented a Complaint Resolution Policy.


Evidence of Progress




Participation in Strategic Planning consultation
6,441 participated
10,296 thoughts
178,131 stars



Parent participation:
33% increase in attendance
from 2017



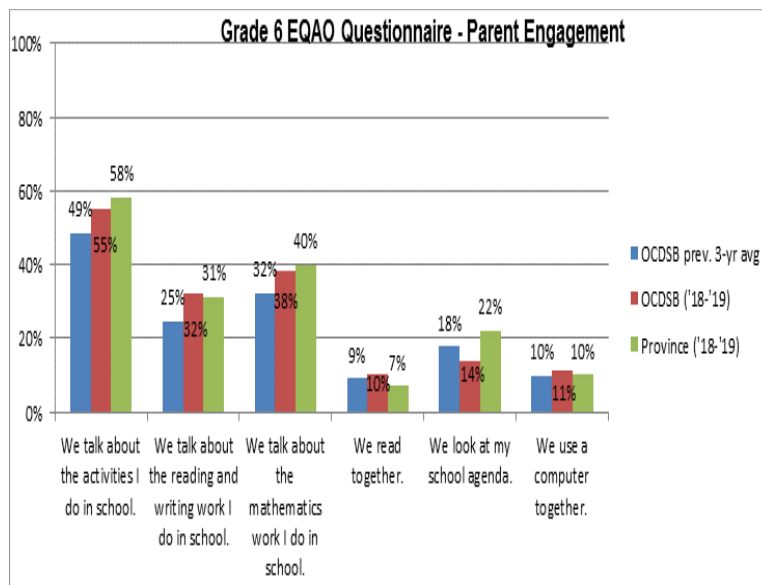
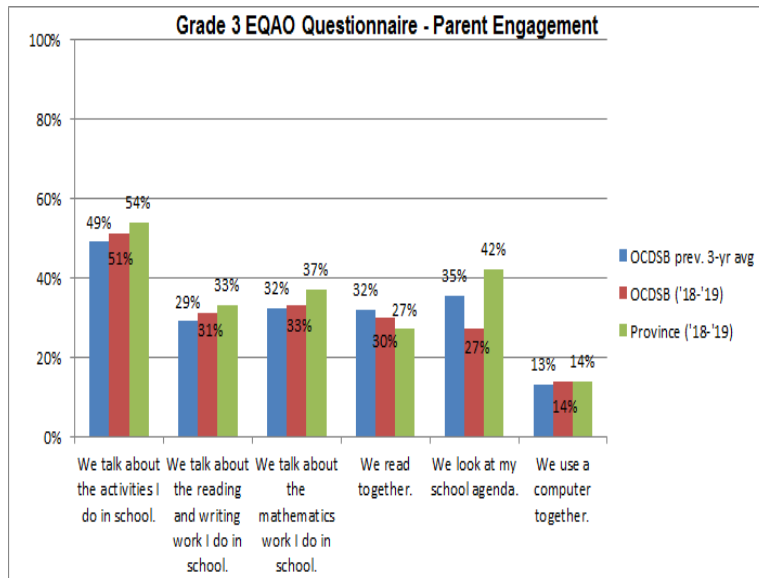
Social Media presence
23.4K Twitter followers



OSSD certification through
Youth Services Bureau
support increased from 3 to
11 students
(2015-2019)

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Observations

Significant progress has been made in the area of engagement, as can be observed in the levels of engagement through social media, EQAO scores, parent conference, and parent involvement in setting the direction of the Board through the strategic planning process. Additionally, higher levels of engagement have translated in improvements in the achievements of 'at risk' youth.

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The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board promotes “a culture which actively encourages involvement in public education to support positive outcomes”. The engagement objective states: “By 2019, the District will increase opportunities for engagement with and among our students, staff, families and broader community”. This report outlines the actions, initiatives, programs and projects that helped to advance engagement at the OCDSB over the past year. For the purposes of this report, progress on the Engagement objective is organized according to the strategies outlined in the strategic plan.

Strategy #1 Develop tools to support parent involvement in learning and well-being

Expand Functionality of Parent and Staff Portals

The district invested heavily in the communications infrastructure to support engagement. This investment included the redesign of information and infrastructure of the district and school websites, and the development of a staff, student and parent portal.

Social Media Presence

The growth in technology use has changed the way in which the District engages with the parent community and has introduced further opportunities for interactive communication. The OCDSB has District accounts for Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube, and schools manage additional social media platforms for their individual communities. The District has used social media, YouTube specifically, as a tool for improving parent access to Board meetings. In February 2017, the OCDSB began using YouTube as a platform for livestreaming meetings so that parents and community members can watch anytime, from any location, removing the barriers associated with physical attendance at Board meetings. The table below shows current activity level through social media tools and the District website.

Table 1. Social media and website activity as of October 1, 2019

<i>Twitter</i>	<i>Facebook</i>	<i>LinkedIn</i>	<i>YouTube</i>	<i>OCDSB Website</i>
23.4K Followers	9,626 Followers	8,206 Followers	469 Subscribers	5,325,235 page views

Parent Engagement Matrix

Each fall, school teams develop strategies to support student learning and well-being through School Learning Plans (SLPs). SLPs are an important tool for schools, as school staff aim to focus their work and areas of growth, plan for monitoring progress, and communicate the plan to their community. To optimize the use of SLPs, the OCDSB has been encouraging student and parent engagement in this process. A parent engagement matrix was designed in 2018-2019. Further work needs to be done to complete and implement this tool.

Strategy #2 Develop strategies to enhance communication and dialogue with and among staff, students, families and community partners to improve the delivery of public education.

This strategy is focused on giving stakeholders a voice and really listening to what they have to say. By enhancing communication with and among stakeholders, the OCDSB gains perspective and is better able to serve our students. The OCDSB has undertaken a variety of projects to better engage stakeholders, including:

- Initiatives funded through the Ministry of Education's Parents Reaching Out Grant (PRO):
 - Speaker Series
 - Parent Conference
- Use of an online chat platform during meetings;
- Analysis of survey data to inform practice; and
- Targeted engagement of 'at-risk' populations:
 - Indigenous students/families
 - The LGBTQ+ community
 - English Language Learners
 - Youth who are homeless/at risk of homelessness.

Speaker Series

The OCDSB Speaker Series offers free presentations to the community and seeks to provide parents and educators with access to leading ideas in education. The series is sponsored by the District's Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) and supported through the PRO grant funding. Last year, parents who attended the Speaker Series had the opportunity to learn more about technology and teen years, how to support the mental health of students with autism, how to become an unstoppable oneself, the legalization of cannabis, and concussion. By hosting these events for the community, the OCDSB provides families and educators the opportunity to learn collaboratively in support of student learning and well-being.

Parent Conference

The OCDSB's annual Parent Conference is a highly-valued opportunity for parents and educators to learn together. The conference was initiated in 2015-2016 by the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC), with the support of the OCDSB, Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC), and the Ministry of Education's PRO Grant. To ensure equity of access for all parents, the OCDSB offers free registration, child care, parking, and refreshments at this annual event. Since 2016-2017, the conference has been held in conjunction with School Council Training Day.

The 2018-2019 conference was a successful event, attracting over 200 parents, an increase from the 2017-2018 attendance of 150 persons. The conference gave parents the opportunity to interact with trustees as well as board staff, including the Director and superintendents.

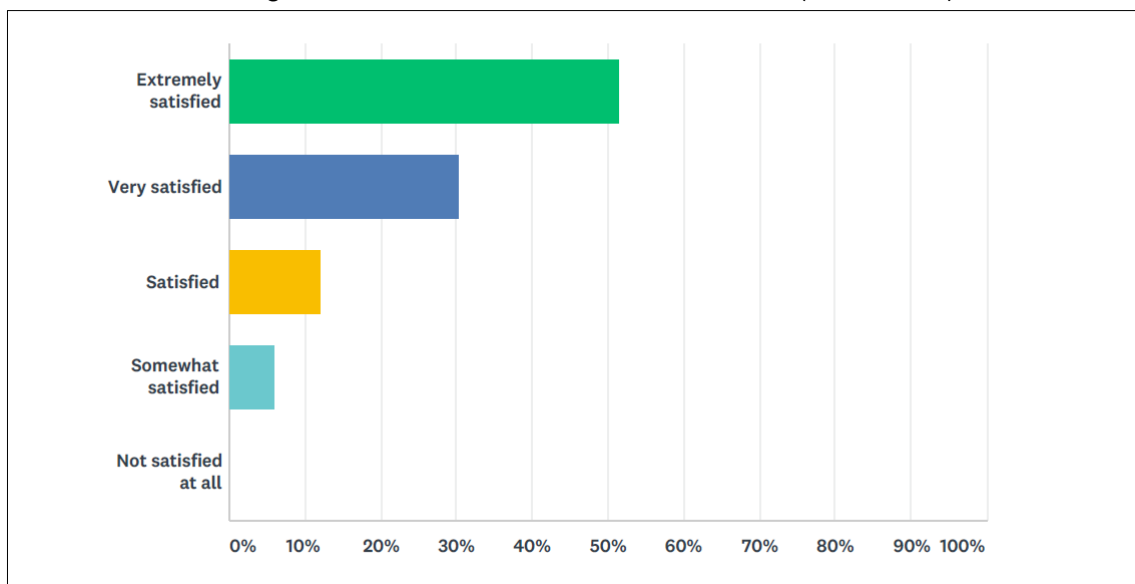
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Feedback was very positive with respondents to the post-conference survey reporting that (see Figure 3 below):

- the conference was 'very' or 'extremely organized' (85%);
- the keynote speaker was 'very' or 'extremely engaging' (79%);
- the information provided by the keynote speaker was 'very' or 'extremely useful' (76%);
- the workshops they attended were 'very' or 'extremely engaging' (66%);
- they found it useful having various partners with information booths available (68%); and
- overall, they were 'very' or 'extremely satisfied' with the conference (82%).

Figure 3. Feedback on Parent Conference (2018-2019)



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Orientation Program for New Board and Director

A number of sessions were held, beginning in November 2018, to support the orientation of the new board and Director of Education. The orientation covered the areas of the governance and executive frameworks, Board and Committee meetings, preparing for the inaugural Board meeting, review of consultation results and development of the new strategic plan, academic staffing, and collective bargaining/labour negotiations process. During the month of December 2018, the new Director had the opportunity to job-shadow the outgoing director before assuming full duties in January 2019.

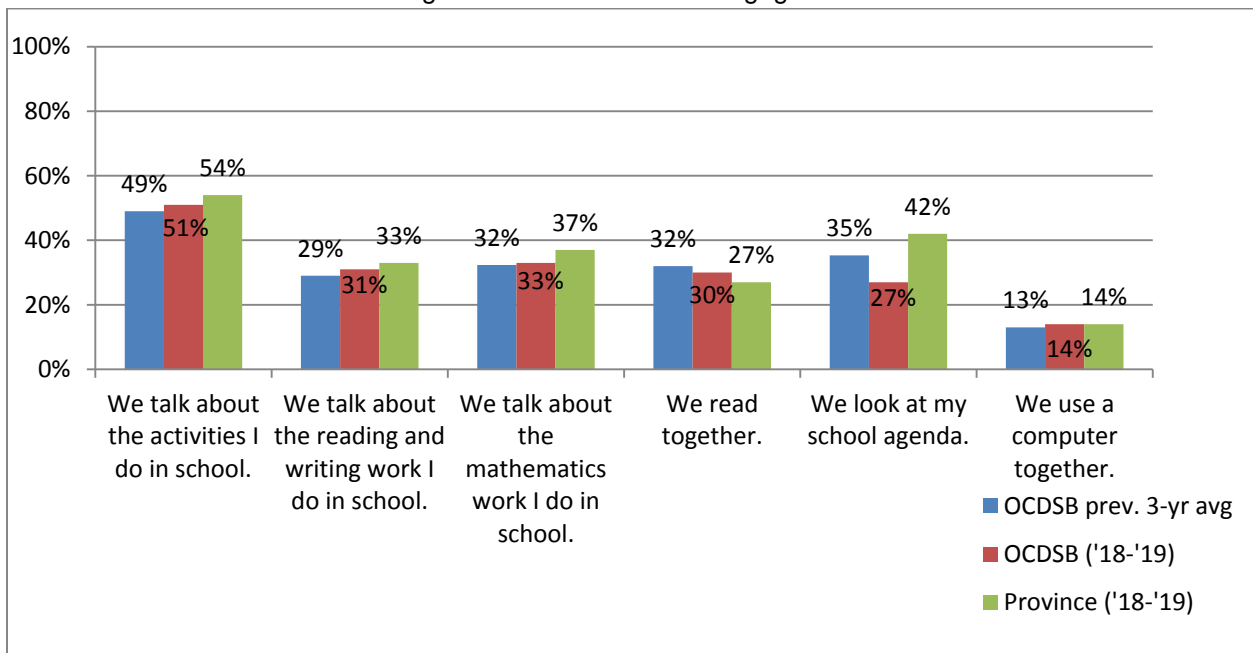
EQAO Questionnaire Data

The EQAO Questionnaire is administered to students every year, and provides useful insight on the supports that grade 3 and 6 students receive from their parents at home. The graphs below depict the proportion of students who responded 'every day or almost every day' to various statements about parent engagement in comparison to the average across the three previous years as well as the provincial average from last year (2018-2019).

OCDSB students tend to report reading with their parents more often than students province-wide. However, responses to the other items demonstrate that OCDSB reports of engagement tend to be lower than the province. Comparisons to the average across the last three years suggest that engagement is either increasing or fairly stable in most areas. The one area where there has been a notable decline for both grades is: "We look at my school agenda".

Parent Engagement- Grade 3 & 6

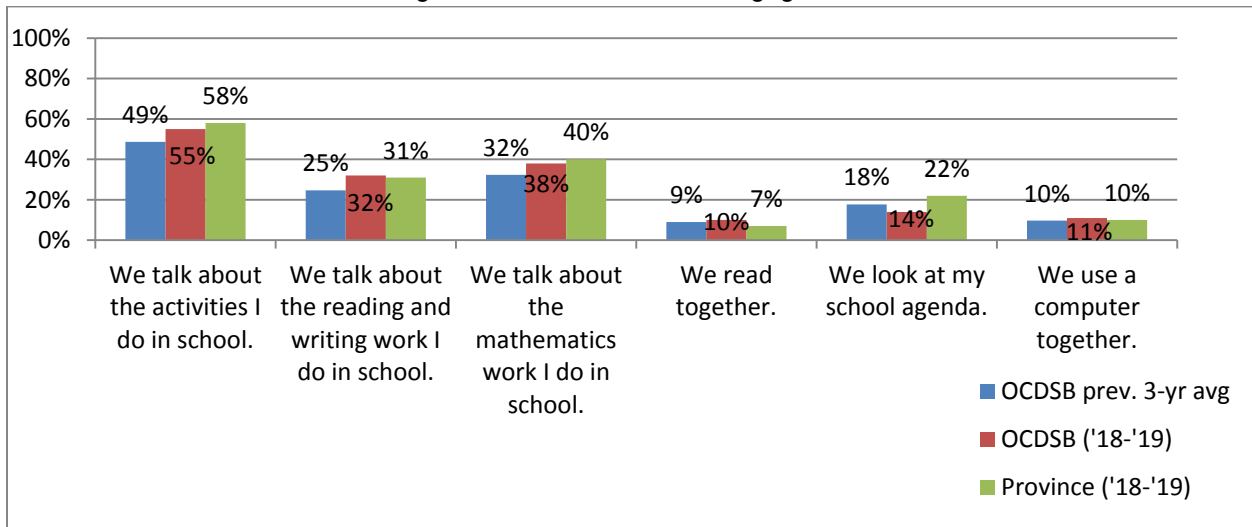
Figure 4. Grade 3- Parent Engagement



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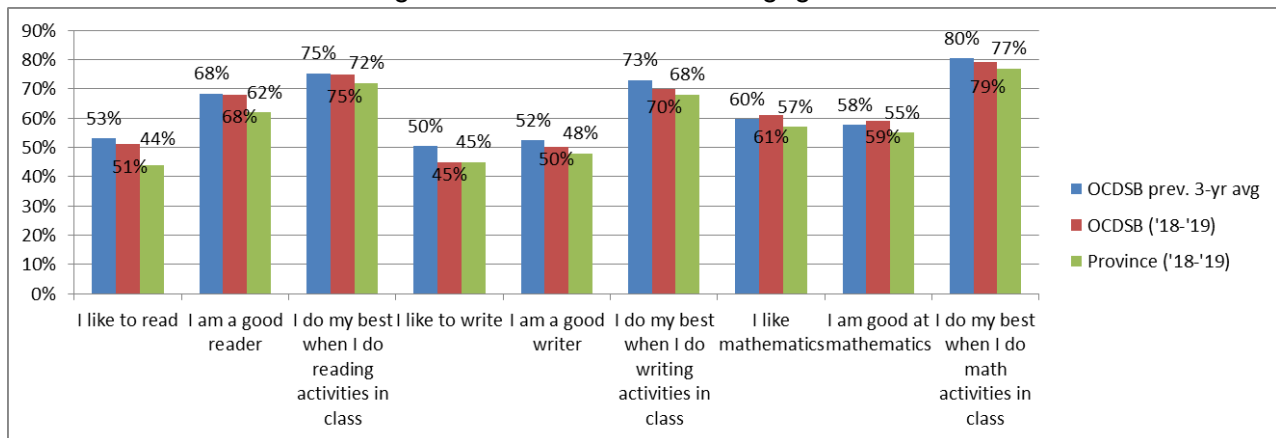
Figure 5. Grade 6 – Parent Engagement



The EQAO Questionnaire also asks questions about student engagement, particularly around reading, writing, and mathematics. The graphs below show the proportion of OCDSB students who responded ‘most of the time’ to each item on the EQAO Questionnaire last year (2018-2019) in comparison to the average across the three previous years as well as the provincial average. The results demonstrate that OCDSB students tend to be more engaged than their provincial counterparts, especially in Grade 9 academic mathematics.

Student Engagement –Grade 3, 6 &9

Figure 6. Grade 3- Student Engagement



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Figure 7. Grade 6- Student Engagement

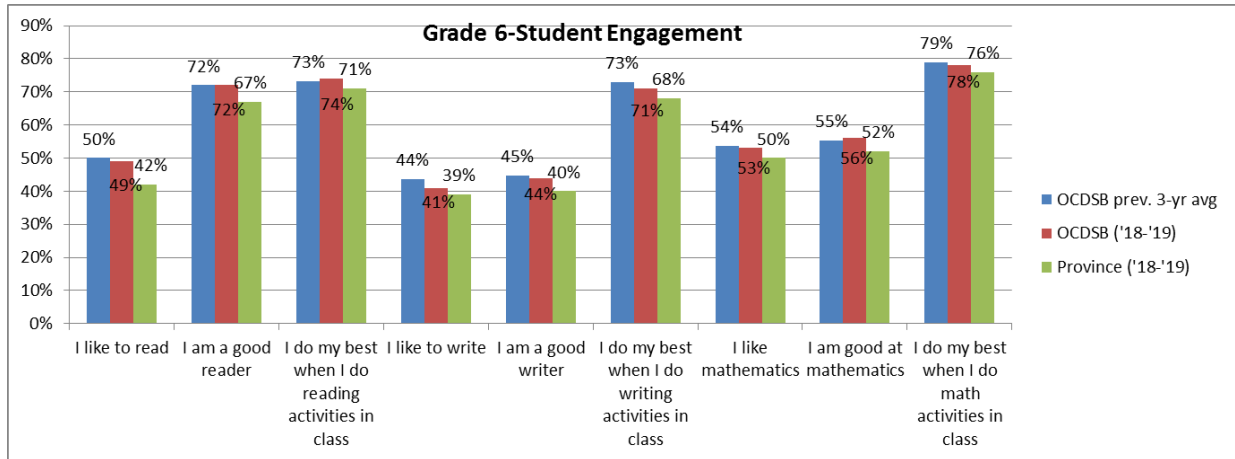
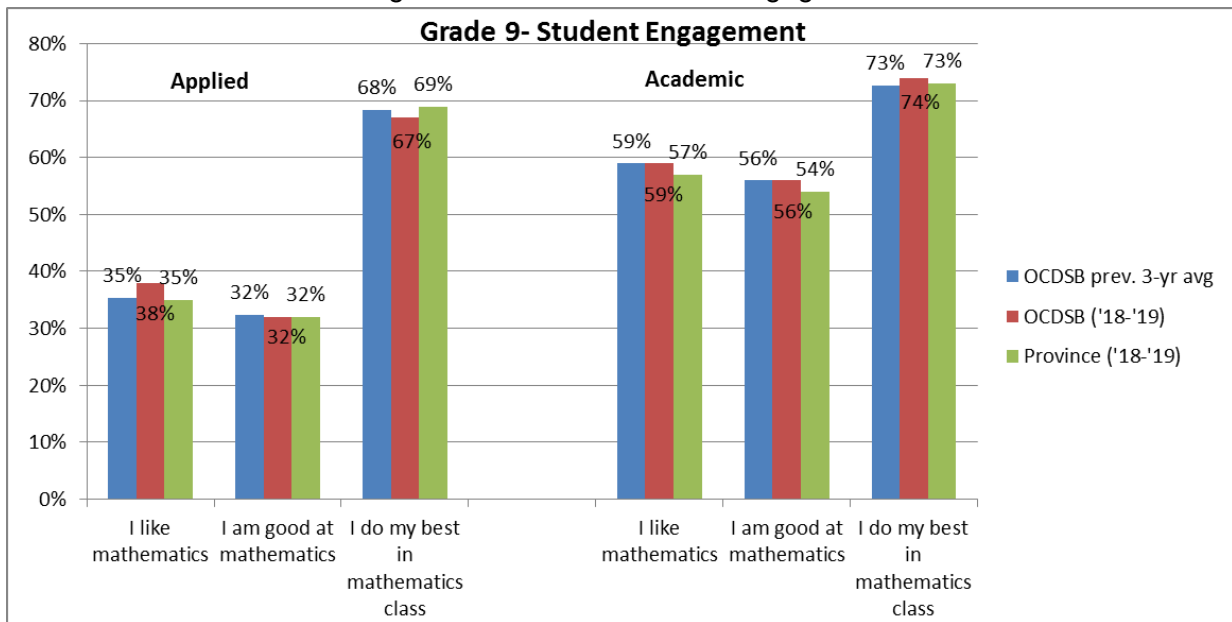


Figure 8. Grade 9 - Student Engagement



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Consultation on Strategic Plan 2019-2023

The Strategic Planning consultation process entailed four (4) stages of engagement as follows:

- i. Pre-consultation (October/November 2018)
- ii. Idea Exchange (November/December 2018)
- iii. Developing Strategies and Action (January 2019)
- iv. Feedback on Draft Plan (May 2019)

These stages are explained in the diagram below:

Figure 9. Strategic Planning Consultation Process



i. Pre-Consultation:

The pre-consultation stage provided an opportunity for the district to get feedback from its most engaged stakeholders about strategies to help to increase participation in the consultation process. In particular, these sessions provided strategies to engage members of school communities who were traditionally less engaged. During the pre-consultation stage, from October to November 2018, staff met with members of the Advisory Committee on Equity (ACE), Student Senate, Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils, (OCASC), Multicultural Liaison Officers, and the Federations.

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ii. *Thoughtexchange Participation:*

The online consultation was open from November 21, 2018 to December 17, 2018. To allow for conversations by panel and by groups, 14 exchanges were created. There were four exchanges for elementary parents, four exchanges for secondary parents, one exchange for students in Grade 7-8, one exchange for students in Grade 9-12, one for elementary staff, one for secondary staff, one for District and centrally assigned, and one for community members. The diagram below shows the participation details from the exchange.

Figure 10. Participation numbers from the Strategic Planning exchange



iii. *Strategies and Action*

In January 2019, the OCDSB hosted forums with the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC), members of the advisory committees, with Student Senate, with members of various community organizations¹, and with parents at Cairine Wilson High School². These sessions were designed to gather strategies and actions for implementing the top ideas/themes which emerged during the exchange.

iv. *Feedback on Draft Strategic Plan*

Feedback on the Draft Strategic Plan was collected in May 2019. Figure 11 and 12 show the participation levels of different group, and overall views of groups on the direction of the plan.

¹ Participating organizations at OCDBS community strategies and action session included: OLIP, Crime Prevention Ottawa, Huntley Community Association, Pinecrest Queensway Community Health Centre, Growing Up Great, Tungasuvvingatinit, Ottawa Public Health, Ottawa Network of Education, and Children's Village.

² The parent forum at Sir Robert Borden High School was cancelled due to inclement winter weather.

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Figure 11. Participation levels by respondent category

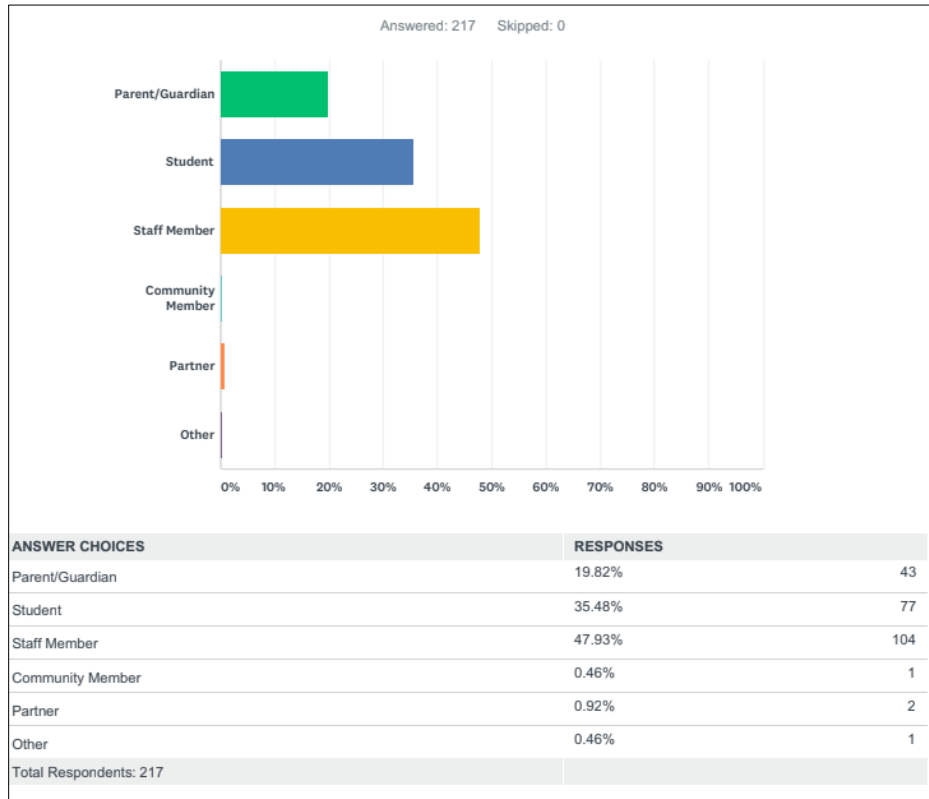
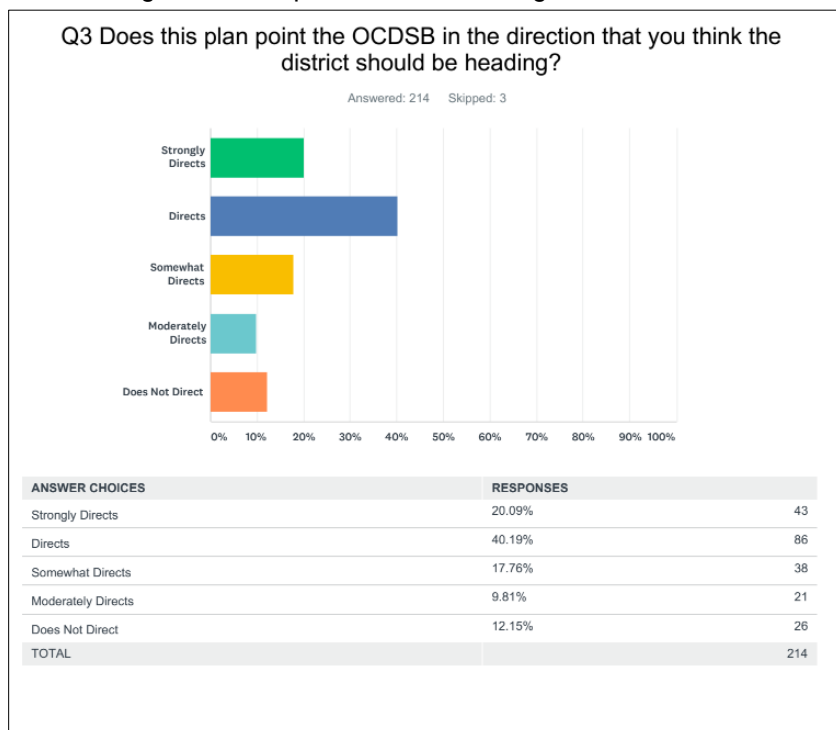


Figure 12. Responses to the Strategic Plan direction



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Engaging Indigenous Students/Families

In the 2017-2018 school year, the Indigenous Student Success and Re-Engagement Coordinator (ISSRC) engaged in a range of activities as captured in Table 2 below:

Table 2. 2017-2018 Activities of the Indigenous Student Success and Re-engagement Coordinator (ISSRC)

<i>Number of...</i>	
Schools supported (K-12)	30
Students worked with/supported	353
Facilitated student circles	60
Parent/guardian meetings	77
School staff meetings	191

Additionally, the ISSRC provided intensive and ongoing support to students and staff at Gloucester High school to assist in the transition of students from Rideau High School, and with Ottawa Technical Secondary School which has one of the highest representations of self-identified Indigenous students in our District. During the 2017-2018 school year, the ISSRC made referrals to several community agencies and established a waiting list as he was unable to keep up with the increasing demand. *A stated outcome of the ISSRC role* is that it has made a difference with students and staff by building relationships and fostering a culture of trust that is evident in the increasing number of students and educators who seek to engage with the ISSRC and who seek support from the ISSRC to further their learning as a school community. This reality reinforces our need to explore options to increase staffing in order to provide greater support for students and educators.

The *Indigenous Youth Symposium in March 2018* provided the opportunity for attendees to listen to Indigenous student voices and learn their need to:

- have opportunities to get together;
- have opportunities to lead;
- have opportunities to celebrate who they are;
- have the opportunity to share their stories;
- know someone is listening to them;
- know that there will be action on their concerns;
- know that they are not alone;
- have more and better Indigenous content in their learning;
- stop being called on as experts in Indigenous Education;
- stop feeling unsafe in school; and
- learn from Elders and Knowledge Keepers.

These learnings were shared with educators through professional learning opportunities and applied to the planning for our work in supporting Indigenous student well-being and achievement and in efforts to close learning gaps. The learnings were also used as the

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foundation for the enhancement and/or creation of various experiences and student led initiatives including:

- the Indigenous Leadership Camp;
- the Gloucester High School Pow Wow, Mamawii Together;
- the OCDSB Date with Diversity; and
- Indigenous students led learning at the OCDSB Rainbow Youth Forum.

The feedback also provided insight to teachers around:

- the importance of seeing Indigenous students in the curriculum; and
- sharing their stories and experiences.

This learning reinforced the need to further empower Indigenous students as leaders and difference makers in the OCDSB.

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Community Engagement with Youth Ottawa to Support 2SLGBTQ+ Students and other Racialized Students



The mural hangs on a dramatic black background on a Glebe Collegiate staircase.

Photo: Hot Shoe Productions

Working in collaboration with Youth Ottawa, students at Glebe Collegiate Grade 11 Gender Studies class worked for eight (8) months to create a mural depicting key moments in the history of LGBTQ2S+ people. Students of the Rainbow Alliance Club decided that a mural in the main stairway would encourage an inclusive and caring space for students for years to come.



Social Changemakers at Merivale High School



Youth Ottawa worked with *Merivale Changemakers Club* to create a project around the theme of social justice. They designed a large-scale “Representation Matters” art mural on the wall of their recently amalgamated high school. Community artist Hasina Kamanzi worked alongside students, and the mural will feature student-designed images of Black, racialized, Indigenous, LGBTQ+, multiple-abled, multi-faith, trans and gender diverse students.

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Engaging with At-Risk Youth and Youth who are Homeless

Youth who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness tend to be a disengaged population and so the OCDSB has been working directly with Youth Services Bureau to engage this community. Schools provide a support network for homeless youth that can have an incredible impact. At Youth Services Bureau, students are provided with flexible opportunities to complete courses, volunteer hours, the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT), earn an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) or certificate, and apply to post-secondary education. Table 3 captures data on student achievement over the 2015-2019 period.

Table 3. Student Performance (YSB/OCDSB partnership)

Number of...	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
Students registered in school	48	52	102	78	65
Credits earned	34	92.5	151	86	114.5
OSSDs granted	4	3	4	4	11
Students who logged volunteer hours	3	6	9	5	15
Successful OSSLT completions	3	3	6	3	1

Engaging English Language Learners

One of the ways that the OCDSB works to engage English Language Learners (ELLs) is through the translation of communication materials. Changes to the District's website supported this work through its new translation capacity. In 2018-2019, throughout the consultation process for the new strategic plan, actions were taken to address the language barrier to participation. For example, the Thoughtexchange interactive insight platform offered a google translate feature to enable greater participation of persons who may have been previously disengaged due to a language barrier.

Reflections

An examination of EQAO assessment results showed the level of parent engagement increased in the District especially at the grade 6 level. In grade 9 academic mathematics, OCDSB students showed high levels of engagement, above their provincial counterparts. Staff and community partners played a key role in engaging with students particularly in the areas of affirming student identity, building student voice, and engaging with 'at risk' students to improve academic performance.

Continued parent and student engagement is important to future work done in the District. Strengthening of stakeholders' voice and supports builds inclusion in the decision making, and validates ideas and perspectives, thereby creating a greater sense of belonging.