



OTTAWA-CARLETON  
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD



2024-2025

**STUDENT LEARNING UPDATE:**

# Preparation of Students for Future Success



This summary focuses on students' preparedness for future success, aligning with the corresponding priority in the Ministry's Student Achievement Plan (SAP). Results that follow highlight key observations from credit accumulation, participation in job skills programs, five-year cohort graduation rates, secondary math and science course enrolment, and student perceptions about being prepared for the next step in their learning.

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To further explore the indicators mentioned above, results are disaggregated by identity-based data using two datasets. One is district-level reporting based on information available for the full population of students in the student information system. The other is for the subset of students who participated (or their parents/caregivers participated) in the Valuing Voices Student Survey.



- Demographic characteristics for which we have population data (based on our student information system) include: Multilingual learners, students with special education needs (excluding gifted), students who identify as Indigenous, and students residing in low-income neighbourhoods.
- For Valuing Voices Survey participants, reporting groups are based on self-reported information in response to survey questions related to Indigenous identity, race, gender identity, disability, and religion. Parents of students in K-6 completed the survey on behalf of their child (2024 response rate of 56%), while students in Grades 7-12 completed their own survey (2024 response rate of 66%). Considerations of the data, such as representativeness of the survey participants compared to the full population, as well as external influential factors, should be acknowledged when interpreting disproportionality.

Detailed tables with disproportionality indices can be found [here](#).

# Credit Accumulation

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Credit accumulation is an important indicator for identifying if a student is on track to graduate with their peers. The Ministry monitors the percentage of students who earn 16 or more credits by the end of Grade 10. At the OCDSB, 82% of students met this criterion in 2023-2024, compared to 78% of students province-wide. According to provincially calculated numbers, this represents no change for the province but a 1% decrease for the OCDSB compared to 2022-2023. To facilitate early intervention, the OCDSB also monitors credit accumulation at the end of Grade 9, at the school and District level, as part of the Board Priority Learning Plan.

**82%** of OCDSB students are deemed to be on track to graduate by the end of Grade 10, compared to 78% of students province-wide.

## Results by Identity

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Differences were observed in credit accumulation based on student identity data. Based on population-level data, students who identify as Indigenous were the least likely to be on track to graduate, followed by students with special education needs (excluding gifted). Multilingual learners, students residing in low-income neighbourhoods, and students who identify as transgender, non-binary and/or gender diverse also fell below the district average. Compared to the previous year, disproportionality indices were smaller for most groups (with the exception of students living in low income neighbourhoods, which slightly widened), indicating progress in narrowing the gaps.

For the subset of students for whom we have Valuing Voices Student Survey responses (64%), we can further explore credit accumulation by identity. This data suggests that students who identify as Indigenous continue to be less likely to have earned 16 credits by the end of Grade 10, as compared to the district average; however, there has been some improvement from the previous school year. The data also shows underrepresentation in credit accumulation for students who identify as Black and those who report various disabilities, as outlined at the end of this report.

# Participation in Job Skills Programs

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Across Ontario, students have the opportunity to participate in job skills programs such as Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM), Dual Credit, and the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP). In 2023-2024, 15% of Grade 11 and 12 students were enrolled in at least one job skills program at the OCDSB ( $n = 2,016$ ). This participation rate reflects only these three programs, and does not capture the broad range of other experiential learning opportunities for OCDSB students (such as Authentic Student Learning Experience, School Within A College, etc.). Staff are currently working on improving how enrolment data related to these programs is captured and shared with the Ministry for improved transparency and validity when making comparisons.

Over 2,000 students participated in a job skills program at the OCDSB last year, with higher participation from some of our historically underserved groups of students.



## Results by Identity

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Students who identify as Indigenous, who identify as transgender, non-binary, and/or gender diverse, and students with special education needs (excluding gifted) had higher participation rates in the job skills programs when compared to the overall Grade 11-12 population. On the other hand, Multilingual learners had a lower participation rate.

Participation rates were further disaggregated by the Valuing Voices Survey data, however, survey responses were available for less than half of the students enrolled in the job skills programs (49%), and therefore results should be interpreted with caution. Disproportionality indices showed higher participation rates for some groups of students, including students who identify as Indigenous, Black, White, gender diverse, and those who reported a disability such as Autism Spectrum Disorder or a Learning Disability. The data also showed lower participation rates for some groups, including those who identify as East Asian, South Asian, Buddhist, and/or Hindu. A detailed table with disproportionalities for all groups is included at the end of this report in Table 2.

# Graduation Rate

The graduation indicator identified in the Ministry's Student Achievement Plan is the percentage of students graduating with an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) within five years of starting Grade 9. This indicator is based on the cohort of students who began Grade 9 in 2018-2019 and tracks their progress until 2022-2023.



Most recent OCDSB graduation rates were 91%, compared to the provincial average of 90%.

Graduation rates are available from the Ministry of Education, and although this data is not replicable due to differences in methodology and access to the records of students who move from the District, the data offers a valuable reference point for comparison. According to the most recent Ministry calculations, five-year graduation rates of OCDSB students who began Grade 9 in the 2018-2019 academic year were 91%, 1% higher than students province-wide.

## % of students graduating with an OSSD within five years of starting Grade 9 (School Year)



*Note: Years 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 are based on the 5-year graduation rates of students who started Grade 9 in 2017-2018 and 2018-2019, respectively.*



Based on our internal data, 93% of students who began Grade 9 in the 2018-2019 academic year, and stayed at the OCDSB, graduated within five years. The vast majority (95%) of those students graduated within four years.

Disaggregation of data was done using identity-based data from the point in time closest to the start of their Grade 9 school year (2018-2019). Disaggregation using District-level data from the student information system indicates that students who identify as Indigenous continue to be proportionately less likely to graduate with an OSSD within five years of starting secondary school, compared with the District average. Identity-based data collected in the 2019 Valuing Voices Student Survey (available for 66% of the 2018-2019 Grade 9 cohort) further demonstrates disproportionately lower graduation rates for students who identify as Indigenous and those with disabilities (see Table 3 for a full breakdown), while East Asian, Southeast Asian, and South Asian students had higher than average graduation rates.

## Enrolment in Grade 11/12 Math and Science Courses

The percentage of unique students taking at least one Grade 11 science, Grade 12 science, or Grade 12 math course (as a proportion of enrolment across all Grade 11 and 12 courses) is taken as an indicator of preparing students for the future. Ministry data shows OCDSB results are stable compared to the previous year and 1% higher than rates seen province-wide.

**59%** of OCDSB students took Grade 11 science, or Grade 12 math or science in 2023-2024.

### % of students taking at least one Gr 11 science or Gr 12 math or science course (School Year)



## Results by Identity

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District-wide identity-based data shows that students who identify as Indigenous and those who identify as transgender, non-binary, and/or gender diverse are underrepresented among those enrolled in Grade 11 and Grade 12 math/science. To a lesser extent, there are also proportionally fewer students with special education needs (excluding gifted), Multilingual learners, and students residing in low-income neighbourhoods enrolled in these courses, as compared to the District average.

For those students who shared additional identity-based information via the Valuing Voices Student Survey (52%), we see underrepresentation of students who identify as Indigenous, Black, Middle Eastern, Muslim, and various disabilities, in Grade 11/12 math/science courses (as reported in Table 4). Conversely, enrolment is disproportionately higher for students who identify as Hindu, Sikh, South Asian, those questioning their gender identity, and/or East Asian.

## Student Perceptions of Preparedness

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To collect perceptual data on students' preparedness for future success, a relevant question was added to the Student Questionnaire for students in Grade 6, 9, and writing the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT). This question asks students if they agree with the statement: "Thinking about my learning at school, I feel prepared for learning in the next semester or next school year." Given that this was the first year in which this question was included, data is not available to monitor change over time. However, we can establish a baseline, examine differences across the grade levels, and compare results to trends seen province-wide. Based on these initial results, the OCDSB sees higher rates of feeling prepared in the older grades, and relatively comparable results with the province.



About two-thirds of students surveyed in the OCDSB reported feeling prepared for the next step in their learning.

### % of students reporting that their learning at school has prepared them for the next step in their learning (EQAO Questionnaire)



## Results by Identity

Although patterns vary across the three groups (Grade 6, 9, and OSSLT), overarching trends tend to show that students who identify as Indigenous and students with special education needs (excluding gifted) reported the lowest preparedness for future learning. Multilingual learners reported higher preparedness for future learning compared to the district average. Based on the Valuing Voices Survey responses, identity-based data was available for 50-71% of the EQAO Questionnaire respondents. This data revealed disproportionalities in preparedness for future learning, in particular for students who identify with a gender included in the diverse composite, and for those who reported a disability such as Autism Spectrum Disorder, Developmental or Learning disabilities, and/or mental health disabilities. See Table 5 at the end of the report for more details.





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