

# 2014–15 Annual Report *on the* Strategic Plan

Vision 2018: Fulfilling the Promise of Preparation



HOWARD  
COUNTY  
PUBLIC  
SCHOOL  
SYSTEM

Published May 2016

# FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



**Renee A. Foose, Ed.D.**  
Superintendent

*Vision 2018: Fulfilling the Promise of Preparation* defines a world-class educational program that gives each child a sound foundation in the skills and knowledge that lead to lifelong prosperity. It is a road map for our system for providing the inspiring and challenging instructional program that every Howard County student deserves and our community expects.

Today's students are preparing for a highly complex world, and must develop a foundation of knowledge and skills that is deep and diverse. Students are supported in this process by the coordinated efforts of teachers and other staff members, families and community, and a well-run school system. Our strategic plan articulates four broad goals with 22 associated outcomes and 103 strategies for realizing our shared vision. This report documents the advancements our system made during the 2014–2015 school year and highlights notable progress and initiatives that are leading our students and system toward a brighter future.

These advancements were made with the collective commitment of our staff, students, families, and community partners. I look forward to our continued collaboration throughout our evolution into a world-class school system that gives every Howard County student the best possible start.

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## TABLE of CONTENTS

HCPSS at a Glance.....	4
Introduction.....	5-6

### Goal 1 STUDENTS

Overview .....	7-10
Rigor and Acceleration .....	11-22
Engagement.....	23-31
Performance.....	30-44
Well-being .....	30-31, 45-49

### Goal 2 STAFF

Overview .....	50-52
Collaboration .....	53
Engagement.....	54-59
Performance.....	60-61
Well-being .....	62-65

### Goal 3 FAMILIES AND THE COMMUNITY

Overview .....	66-69
Collaboration .....	70-75
Engagement.....	76-79
Well-being .....	80-81

### Goal 4 ORGANIZATION

Overview .....	82-84
Organizational Well-being .....	85-91
Organizational Performance.....	92-105

# HCPSS AT A GLANCE



## OUR MISSION

We cultivate a vibrant learning community that prepares students to thrive in a dynamic world.

## OUR VISION

Every student is inspired to learn and empowered to excel.

**Goal 1** – Every student achieves academic excellence in an inspiring, engaging, and supportive environment.

**Goal 2** – Every staff member is engaged, supported, and successful.

**Goal 3** – Families and the community are engaged and supported as partners in education.

**Goal 4** – Schools are supported by world-class organizational practices.

## OUR SYSTEM (FY16)

### 76 Schools

- 41 elementary schools
- 20 middle schools
- 12 high schools
- 3 education centers

### Total Enrollment (FY16) – 53,637\*

- Pre-K: 1,233
- Elementary (PreK–5): 24,245
- Middle (6–8): 12,715
- High (9–12): 16,574
- Special School: 103

\*Official count does not include Pre-K

### Per Pupil Expenditure (FY16)

\$80.56 per day/\$14,500 per year

### Operating Budget (FY16)

\$776.3 million

## OUR CLASSROOMS (FY16)

Ratio of computers to students: 1:2

Classrooms with Internet access: 100%

## OUR STAFF\*\* (FY16)

Teachers 4,134  
Total Staff 8,074

\*\*as of Nov. 2015

71.1% of teachers hold a master's degree or above

## OUR STUDENTS

### Race/Ethnicity\*\*\* (FY16)

American Indian/Alaskan	0.2%
Asian	20.3%
Black/African American	22.5%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.1%
Hispanic/Latino	9.9%
White	40.8%
Two or more races	6.2%

\*\*\* as of Nov. 2015

### Students Receiving Special Services (FY15)

Free/Reduced-price Lunch	20.6%
Ltd. English Proficient	≤5.0%
Special Education	8.5%

### Attendance Rate (FY15)

Elementary:	96%
Middle:	96%
High:	96%

### Graduation Rate: 93.5%\*\*\*\* (FY15)

\*\*\*\*4-year adjusted cohort

### ESOL Program (FY16)

Nearly 3,000 students participate in the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program, representing 80 different languages and 106 countries.

### Gifted and Talented Program (FY16)

Percentage of students who have participated in a variety of Gifted and Talented Education program offerings:

K to Grade 5	50%
Grades 6–8	53%
Grades 9–12	62%

### Documented Decisions/Class of 2015

Attend a 4-year college	69%
Attend a 2-year college	24%
Attend trade or technical school	≤5%
Enter employment	≤5%
Military	≤5%

### National Merit Finalists

Class of 2015 – 49 students

Note: FY represents the school year, i.e., July 1–June 30, throughout this report.



## INTRODUCTION

The Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) launched a new five-year strategic plan, *Vision 2018: Fulfilling the Promise of Preparation* (Vision 2018), in July 2013. This report details the progress made during the 2014–15 school year (FY15), which is the system’s second year in implementing the plan.

HCPSS has long been ranked among the best public school systems in the state and nation. Vision 2018 is a roadmap for building upon the school system’s strengths to deliver a truly world-class education to every student. It prioritizes and aligns all system efforts to provide an inspirational, empowering educational experience that prepares every student to thrive in college, career, and throughout life. Vision 2018 reflects the hopes and dreams of more than 2,400 stakeholders—parents, students, staff, and community members—who took part in its development.

Vision 2018 also reflects the recommendations of many of the most talented experts in the education field. HCPSS contracted with the Harvard University Center for Education Policy Research to conduct extensive research on student achievement, with particular emphasis on the factors associated with long-standing achievement gaps.

The system also partnered with Gallup, a leading research organization, to assess levels of engagement, hope, and well-being among both students and staff members. These factors have been shown to greatly influence staff effectiveness and student achievement.

Students are at the center of the strategic plan, but it takes a holistic view to encompass all of the elements that make up the school system: students, staff, families, community, and organization. Systemwide goals, outcomes, and aligned strategies are defined for each of these areas, with measures of success marking progress on the road to world class.

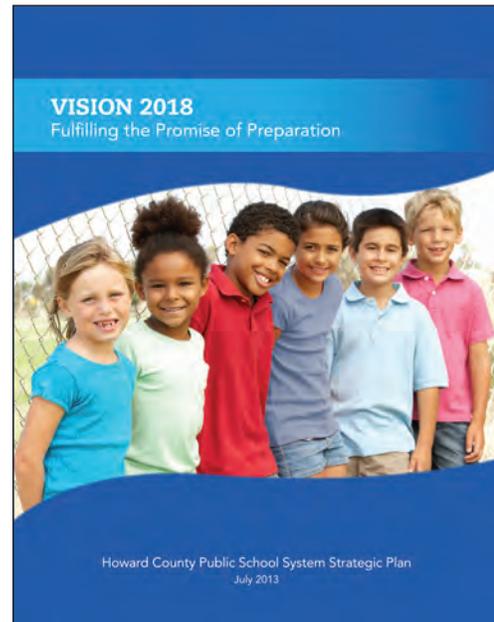
The ultimate success of Vision 2018 lies in its effectiveness in driving decisions at all levels and in every school and department. Each initiative and budgetary decision supports outcomes and strategies defined in the plan.

HCPSS adopted zero-based budgeting (ZBB) at the outset of the FY15 budget planning process to facilitate the alignment of expenditures and staffing decisions to strategic goals. Zero-based budgets start from a “zero base” to build a budget on system priorities, rather than history, and on actual needs for the upcoming year. The

budget is then balanced, given funding constraints, in a flexible process that enables leaders to identify and choose among alternative ways to allocate limited resources. ZBB fuels operational efficiencies throughout the organization, and the resulting savings are redirected to fulfill the priorities of Vision 2018.

The ZBB process delivered \$10.4 million in savings for the FY15 budget cycle. These savings will continue to increase in subsequent years as Vision 2018 performance measures are incorporated into the budget planning and review process.

This report is organized into four sections, one for each of the goals in Vision 2018: Students, Staff, Families and Community, and Organization. Each section includes an overview of first year progress within that goal area, an outline of the outcomes and key performance measures within the goal, and individual reports on each of the key performance measures. Each performance measure report identifies the specific Vision 2018 strategy or strategies to which it is aligned, describes the measure and its value, and summarizes progress to date. The report is not meant to be a comprehensive accounting of all of the progress made within every school and office. Rather, it details high impact, system-level initiatives that are moving us closer to realizing Vision 2018.



[www.hcpss.org/vision](http://www.hcpss.org/vision)



# GOAL 1: Students

Every student achieves academic excellence in an inspiring, engaging, and supportive environment.

FOCUS AREA	OUTCOMES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
RIGOR AND ACCELERATION	<p>1.1 The instructional program is rigorous, globally-relevant, and aligned with international and/or nationally recognized college and career readiness standards.</p> <p>1.2 Students have equitable access to a rigorous instructional program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Curriculum alignment to national/international standards, p. 11</li> <li>Career and Technology Education (CTE) program participation and performance, p. 13</li> <li>World language program expansion, p. 15</li> <li>Reading developmental levels, K–2, p. 17</li> <li>Gifted and Talented (GT) program participation, p. 18</li> <li>Advanced Placement (AP) course participation and AP exam participation and performance, p. 21</li> </ul>
ENGAGEMENT	<p>1.3 Technology is leveraged so that students have access to learning experiences that meet their needs and interests.</p> <p>1.4 Students are engaged in the learning process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Digital education expansion, p. 23</li> <li>Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) implementation, p. 25</li> <li>Graduation and dropout rates, p. 27</li> <li>Student hope, engagement, and well-being, p. 30</li> </ul>
PERFORMANCE	<p>1.5 Students meet or exceed rigorous performance standards.</p> <p>1.6 Meaningful measures of student outcomes are in place.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kindergarten readiness, p. 32</li> <li>Reading and mathematics formative assessment implementation, Grades 1–8, p. 34</li> <li>Science Maryland School Assessment (MSA), Grades 5 and 8, p. 35</li> <li>PARCC Assessments, p. 37</li> <li>High school state assessments, p. 38</li> <li>PSAT participation and performance, p. 39</li> <li>International benchmark assessment, p. 41</li> <li>College entrance exam participation and performance, p. 43</li> </ul>
WELL-BEING	<p>1.7 Schools support the social and emotional safety and well-being of all students.</p> <p>1.8 Schools support student well-being and the development of balanced lifestyles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance rate, p. 45</li> <li>Suspension rate, p. 46</li> <li>Crisis response, p. 48</li> <li>Nutrition and physical activity, p. 49</li> </ul>



## Goal 1 Overview

### Every student achieves academic excellence in an inspiring, engaging, and supportive environment.

The HCPSS educational program incorporates instructional rigor and equitable access within a learning environment that engages and nurtures the whole child. The Goal 1 outcomes and strategies are designed to provide a well-rounded educational program that maintains rigorous expectations for learning while also addressing students' social, emotional, and physical needs. HCPSS is achieving excellence by providing students with learning experiences that are relevant to their lives, promoting critical thinking and creative problem solving within a collaborative culture, and preparing students to thrive in the world beyond the classroom.

Significant progress has been made in this goal area. HCPSS students continue to excel in standard measures of student achievement, while innovative efforts are underway to enhance the learning experiences for all students.

HCPSS is strengthening the instructional program to ensure students are leaving our school system with the skills they need to excel in college and/or career. The curriculum is continually revised and updated to elevate essential core competencies: critical thinking and problem solving; collaboration; agility and adaptability; initiative and entrepreneurial spirit; effective speaking and writing

skills; the ability to analyze, not just retrieve information; and curiosity and imagination.

English language arts and mathematics curricula are fully aligned to the Maryland College and Career Ready standards, and the science curriculum is now aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards. These standards define the critical skills that students must master in each grade in order to succeed in college and careers in the global economy and throughout life.

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) is a consortium of states developing assessments to measure student achievement in English Language Arts / Literacy and Mathematics for grades 3-8 and high school. The PARCC tests are designed to match the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards and assess whether students are meeting grade-level expectations. The new assessments replace the Maryland School Assessments (MSA) in English and mathematics in grades 3-8, and replace the High School Assessments (HSA) in Algebra I and English 10. Built-in accessibility features help all students demonstrate what they know and expand access for students with disabilities.

In addition to monitoring student performance on standardized tests, HCPSS has partnered with Gallup to measure and improve levels of engagement among employees and students and understand how strengths-based leadership and learning complement these efforts. Studies conducted by Gallup and other leading researchers indicate that the level of engagement in learning, hope for the future, and sense of well-being are powerful predictors of student achievement and long-term success. When students are actively engaged in their learning, they achieve at higher levels and are more likely to thrive in their lives beyond HCPSS.

This is the last year the Gallup Student Poll will measure well-being. While student well-being remains very important, the metrics associated with this concept are less actionable than hope and engagement. Instead, two new measures will be added for the 2015 survey—entrepreneurial aspiration and career/financial literacy. The impetus for adding the new measures comes from a need to better understand whether students are prepared for the future and a desire to help educators create a learning environment that strengthens engagement, creates hope for the future, fosters talent, and prepares students to meaningfully participate in our nation’s economy.

The system opened Thomas Viaduct Middle School in fall 2014. This is a 21st century instructional environment designed to facilitate creative, interactive indoor and outdoor learning experiences to inspire and engage students. Classrooms infuse art, music, and technology throughout all subject areas and each child has the opportunity to excel by leveraging his/her individual strengths and interests.

A new model for elementary education was initially launched in two pilot schools, then fully implemented in six schools during the 2014–15 school year. Two additional schools were added in fall 2015. The elementary model has five key components aimed at closing achievement gaps and enhancing learning for all students: daily world language instruction for students in pre-K through Grade 5, a departmentalized curriculum that enables teachers to teach instructional blocks in their strongest academic subjects, full-day preschool, strengths-based leadership and learning for all staff and students, and an in-school Telehealth program. The Telehealth program uses video cameras and remote-access medical devices to connect doctors, school nurses, and parents online in real time in order to treat minor injuries and help students feel better sooner, stay in class, and focus more fully on learning.

This year was the launch of the Canvas Learning Management System (LMS), a cloud-based learning platform that teachers, students, and parents can access



on any device at any time. The LMS connects digital tools, documents, videos, applications (apps), and websites for each classroom into one place with a single login. It provides teachers with a platform to collaborate, hold online class discussions, communicate with students and parents, maintain a calendar, submit and grade assignments online, and maintain a gradebook. Curriculum communities connect teachers with curriculum materials, content-related events and announcements. The LMS is tightly integrated with the Student Information System and a number of educational applications. By the end of the 2016–17 school year, the LMS will be integrated with many additional educational tools and applications, including a student data warehouse, mobile apps, custom dashboards, and measurement tools to enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and digital capabilities for teachers, staff, and school administrators.

Synergy, the new Student Information System (SIS), was implemented in August 2015. This system manages student registration, grade recording and reporting, attendance and discipline records, program management, and scheduling. Synergy generates and provides the data necessary for state and federal reporting and is the student data source system for many applications. Key features include the conversion of a decade of data into the new system, integration with the Canvas LMS, and professional learning for thousands of users.

Naviance is a web-based platform used to identify colleges and careers that align with each student’s interests and goals. During 2014–15, Naviance was fully implemented

in all high and middle schools and Homewood Center. Using data captured in Naviance, students applied to 890 different colleges, 18,927 transcripts were requested and sent to colleges, and \$16.5 million in scholarships were offered to HCPSS students.

Digital Education is expanding learning options for students and professional learning for staff by providing equitable access to instructional and professional learning resources. This program aims to maximize the achievement of every student based on their demonstrated strengths, needs, interests and long-term goals. By removing barriers based on time, location, pace, and delivery, instruction is provided in ways that parallel how students and their families access information and operate in the larger world. For example, Chinese language courses are now available to students in high schools throughout the school system, through synchronous video, with a single teacher at one location who communicates in real-time with students in remote classrooms. Additionally, blended learning balances coursework that is delivered online through the Canvas LMS with content that is elaborated on through face-to-face instruction. Digital Education provides equitable access to course participation, and prepares students to be successful in college and careers in a digitally connected world.

An Early College STEM program at Oakland Mills High School is designed for students who are interested in the fields of science, technology, engineering, or mathematics and in earning a college degree. Successful students will earn their high school diplomas and an associate degree within one year of graduating from high school. This provides an advance start on a career or a faster path to a bachelor's degree. The demand for highly trained STEM professionals has been sharply increasing, and these skills are in demand by businesses and organizations of all sizes.

In 2014, HCPSS was the first Maryland school system to participate in the OECD Test of Schools, a new international benchmark based upon the well-known Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), which ranks academic performance for 15-year old students in many countries. Participation allows individual high schools to compare their students' performance against peers in Korea, Finland, and other world leaders in education, and helps to ensure that the HCPSS curriculum is aligned to top-level international, as well as national, benchmarks. The results for the first year showed that most HCPSS high schools are performing as well as, or better than, the world's leading nations in educational achievement.



Every HCPSS student explored computer science by writing code and sampling other activities during a weeklong Hour of Code campaign. The program is sponsored by Code.org and encourages interest in computer science and programming. Additionally, teachers receive professional learning to strengthen their knowledge and skills.

Classes in each high school and Homewood Center participated in the Watershed Report Card project, a collaborative effort between HCPSS and the Howard County Conservancy that is supported by a \$30,000 grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust. Biology students in Grades 9–10 participated in a yearlong study of Howard County streams and watersheds. Students worked much like professional scientists to develop researchable questions, collect and analyze data, collaborate, and communicate their findings, while gaining a deeper understanding of important science concepts. The project culminated in a Watershed Report Card, presented by student representatives to county leaders and the Superintendent during a Watershed Summit hosted by the Howard County Conservancy.

Progress on key Goal 1 measures during FY15 is detailed on the following pages.

# GOAL 1: Students

## Focus Area: RIGOR AND ACCELERATION

Outcome 1.1: The instructional program is rigorous, globally-relevant, and aligned with international and/or nationally recognized college and career readiness standards.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

- 1.1.1: Implement curriculum that meets or exceeds national and/or international standards in all relevant content areas.

### Description and Value

The HCPSS curriculum is written by Howard County teachers and is designed to provide students a deep understanding of the essential knowledge and critical skills that give them a leading edge in tomorrow's global environment. The curriculum challenges students to think strategically, solve problems, innovate, collaborate, communicate effectively, and achieve goals. The rigorous instructional program engages students through relevant, real-world classroom experiences.

The HCPSS curriculum emphasizes application of essential content and skills at each level, so students build the skills and confidence to tackle more advanced concepts. Instruction is linked across content areas—for example, science and social studies curriculum incorporates reading, math, and writing skills. Classroom lessons are reinforced through hands-on activities and real-world experiences. Content is made meaningful to students through thought-provoking, invigorating, and interactive instruction.

### Progress

Alignment of the HCPSS curriculum to the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards (MDCCRS) is now complete for English/language arts, mathematics, and disciplinary literacy, which emphasizes literacy instruction within each of the content areas. These standards resulted

from a state-led effort coordinated by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers. The Standards were developed in collaboration with teachers, school administrators, and subject experts to provide a clear and consistent framework to prepare our students for college and the workforce.

Professional learning has been provided throughout the transition process to support teachers in mastering the differences in content and instructional methods associated with the new curriculum.

Alignment of the science curriculum to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) is underway. These standards describe performance expectations that foster a deeper understanding of how students learn and how scientists work. The NGSS include both the scientific concepts that students should learn, as well as the scientific practices they should engage in to enhance learning. The NGSS provide a rich opportunity to immerse students in complex, relevant, and authentic problem solving that is connected across grade levels and disciplines.

The NGSS were adopted in Maryland in 2013, and parallels the MDCCRS in many respects. The statewide focus has been to align curriculum to NGSS over time to enhance sound decisions and benefit from the lessons learned during transition to the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards. The HCPSS focus has been to provide ongoing professional learning for teachers that will facilitate effective NGSS implementation.

The other curricular areas are aligned to state, national, and/or international standards as well. These standards and the status of their implementation are detailed in Table 1-A, on the following page.

Table 1-A

Curricular Areas	Grades	Standards	Source	Year Standards Adopted or Revised by MSDE	Implementation status
Digital Education	9–12	QualityMatters Online Course Review Rubric	MarylandOnline	2013	In progress
Engineering and Technology Education	6–12	Engineering by Design (EbD) Curriculum Standards	EbD	2005	Complete
Engineering and Technology Education	6–12	Technological Literacy Standards	International Technology and Engineering Educators Association	2005	Complete
English/Language Arts, Disciplinary Literacy, Mathematics	K–12*	Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards	National Governor's Association	2010	Complete
ESOL	K–12	English Language Development Standards	World-class Instructional Design and Assessment	2011	Complete
Fine Arts	Pre-K–8	Maryland Fine Arts Standards	MSDE	2008	Complete
Fine Arts	9–12	Maryland Essential Learner Outcomes	MSDE	2000	Complete
Fine Arts	K–12	National Standards for Arts Education	Consortium of National Arts Education Associations	1994	Complete
Gifted and Talented	Pre-K–12	Pre-K–Grade 12 Gifted Programming Standards	National Association for Gifted Children	2012	Complete
Health Education	K–12*	National Health Education Standards	Joint Committee on National Health Education Standards	2007	Complete
Instructional Technology, Library Media, All HCPSS Curricular Areas	Pre-K–12	International Society for Technology in Education Standards	International Society for Technology in Education	In progress	In progress
Library Media	Pre-K–12	Maryland Library Media State Curriculum	American Association of School Librarians	2010	Complete
Library Media	Pre-K–12	Standards for 21st Century Learners	American Association of School Librarians	2007	Complete
Physical Education	K–12*	National Physical Education Standards	Society of Health and Physical Educators	2013	Complete
Science (including Engineering)	K–12*	Maryland College- and Career-Ready Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)	Achieve Inc., National Science Teachers Association, and American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the lead States (including Maryland)	2013	In progress
Social Studies	K–12*	College, Career, and Civic Life Framework for Social Studies State Standards	National Council for Social Studies	2014	In progress
World Languages	Pre-K–12	WIDA Standards	American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages	2013	Complete

\* National standards have been written K-12 but Maryland has written/is writing for Pre-K also.

\*\*Developed in collaboration with educators from the Silicon Valley Mathematics Initiative and the Charles A. Dana Center at the University of Texas at Austin

# GOAL 1: Students

## Focus Area: RIGOR AND ACCELERATION

Outcome 1.1: The instructional program is rigorous, globally-relevant, and aligned with international and/or nationally recognized college and career readiness standards.



**Performance Measure:**  
Career and Technology Education program participation and performance

### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

- 1.1.7: Expand opportunities for students to explore and prepare for specialized careers.

### Description and Value

The HCPSS Career and Technology Education (CTE) program prepares students for a wide range of careers. These careers require varying levels of education, from high school diplomas to four-year college degrees and



beyond. CTE programs provide career-focused learning through hands-on classroom assignments, site-based work experiences, and student organizations. Many CTE programs offer students the opportunity to earn industry certifications. These certifications demonstrate a student's technical skill in their chosen career field and give students an advantage in the employment market. HCPSS also has agreements with a number of colleges to award credit to students who complete a CTE program and enroll in the related college program. HCPSS is increasing the number of CTE programs that offer students transcribed college credit at affiliated institutions.

### Progress

MSDE issues annually the Maryland CTE Report Card with detailed information on the performance of the state and its 24 school systems. The information is designed to help measure the progress the state, its school systems, and community colleges are making toward improving achievement for CTE students. Within this report card, the HCPSS Program Quality Index provides data specific to our programs.

The data collection process has been refined to ensure accuracy. Enrollment figures are reflective of the actual numbers of students who participate in CTE programs. The data collection process for information regarding technical skills attainment continues to evolve. As the data collection

Table 1-B

Enrollment Trends by CTE Clusters			
	FY13	FY14	FY15
Arts, Media, and Communication	84	97	124
Business Management and Finance	957	991	1,045
Construction and Development	26	19	25
Consumer Services, Hospitality, and Tourism	1,146	1,170	1,199
Health and Biosciences	210	235	270
Human Resource Services	498	489	551
Information Technology	691	725	908
Manufacturing, Engineering, and Technology	854	945	1,404
Transportation Technology	125	110	101
Career Research and Development	648	627	748
<b>Totals</b>	<b>5,239</b>	<b>5,408</b>	<b>6,375</b>

process improves, the accuracy of data reported will better reflect the number of students who are earning industry recognized certifications.

The goal in moving forward with CTE programs is to maintain the current level of enrollment by focusing on the quality of each student's experience and increasing the number of students who earn an industry certification.



Table 1-C

Career and Technology Education Technical Skills Attainment				
Career Academy Program	Certification	Percentage of students who earned certification in one or more areas		
		FY13	FY14	FY15
Academy of Health Professions with pathways in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clinical Research in Allied Health</li> <li>Certified Nursing Assistant</li> <li>Emergency Medical Technician</li> </ul>	All pathways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First Aid and CPR</li> <li>Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPPA)</li> <li>Blood and Airborne Pathogens</li> </ul>	100%	100%	100%
	Certified Nursing Assistant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)</li> </ul>	93%	100%	100%
Automotive Technology	ASE (Automotive Service Excellence) Student Certification: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brakes</li> <li>Engine Repair</li> <li>Electrical Systems</li> <li>Steering and Suspension</li> </ul>	56%	57%	50%
Child Development	Maryland Child Care Credential – Level 3	100%	100%	100%
Construction Management	National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER)	100%	100%	100%
Culinary Science /Hotel and Restaurant Management	National Restaurant Association ProStart ServSafe	66%	84%	77%
Teacher Academy of Maryland	ParaPro Maryland Child Care Credential – Level 3	100%	94%	100%
Visual Communications (Graphic Design)	PrintED	39%	30%	70%

# GOAL 1: Students

## Focus Area: RIGOR AND ACCELERATION

Outcome 1.1: The instructional program is rigorous, globally-relevant, and aligned with international and/or nationally recognized college and career readiness standards.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

- 1.1.6: Develop robust world language instruction and international learning opportunities throughout K–12.

### Description and Value

Research demonstrates that learning a second language supports students' intellectual growth and academic achievement. Students learn to think more flexibly, sharpen their listening and memory skills, and appreciate other cultures as they gain fluency in a world language.

The scope of the HCPSS world languages program is expanding well beyond the traditional model, in which students accumulated content and grammar skills, but usually did not develop beyond a novice proficiency level. Today, our system goal is that all students gain an

intermediate, or higher, level of proficiency. Intermediate level speakers are able to create meaning with the language when talking about familiar topics in daily life. They can ask and answer simple questions, handle a straightforward survival situation, and conduct a simple conversation with a native speaker.

### Progress

HCPSS introduced world language instruction at the elementary level during FY12, through a pilot program at two schools. The program introduced K–5 students to Chinese and Spanish, twice weekly. This instruction followed the traditional model, giving students an introduction to the language and culture.

The Pre-K–5 World-Readiness through Language Development (WoRLD) program was launched at Ducketts Lane Elementary School during FY14. Students in Grades K–2 received instruction in Spanish every day for 30 minutes. The WoRLD program was expanded with the introduction of the HCPSS Elementary School Model at six elementary schools, including Ducketts Lane, during FY15. The model includes 30 minutes of daily world language instruction in an immersion setting in Grades Pre-K–5. With this approach, students begin early to develop strong world language skills, and continue to gain proficiency in middle and high school. The two elementary schools



with the traditional Chinese/Spanish program will shift to the Pre-K–5 WoRLD model in FY16. Sixth grade world languages will be added to five middle schools in FY16 to provide continuity for students exiting the elementary program.

World languages are offered at all middle and high schools. Spanish and French instruction are available in Grades 7–8 at all 20 middle schools. Chinese, Spanish, and French are offered in Grades 6–8 at Mount View and Murray Hill middle schools.

Many Grade 3–8 students learn Chinese in an immersion setting at an annual enrichment summer camp. The HCPSS StarTalk Chinese Language Camp introduces the language as students explore familiar topics and Chinese culture. Instruction is conducted in Chinese with little or no English.

Language choices vary widely at the high school level, based on student interest. Table 1-D illustrates the number of high schools offering each language. For the first time, during FY14, world languages were offered at the Homewood Center.

Table 1-D

Number of High Schools Offering World Languages			
Language	FY13	FY14	FY15
American Sign Language	4	4	2
Chinese	6	5	5
French	12	12	12
German	10	9	9
Italian	4	4	4
Latin	6	6	6
Russian	1	1	0
Spanish	12	13	13

Intermediate level proficiency, which indicates the ability to effectively understand and initiate simple verbal or written interactions in the language, generally requires at least four years of language study. While 66 percent of high school students and 63 percent of middle school students are enrolled in a world language course, approximately 27 percent of students end their study before reaching intermediate level proficiency. Table 1-E illustrates the percentage of students currently enrolled at each level.

Table 1-E

Secondary Language Enrollment by Proficiency Level			
Level	Percentage of MS and HS students enrolled in World Language		
	FY13	FY14	FY15
Level 1: Novice-mid proficiency	53%*	46%	47%
Level 2: Novice-high	20%	24%	23%
Level 3: Intermediate-low	14%	17%	17%
Levels 4+: Intermediate-mid	11%	12%	13%

\*6th grade world language instruction was offered in all schools in 2013

During FY15, the Office of World Languages conducted placement testing of 177 eighth grade heritage speakers of Spanish. The placement test included listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. The purpose of the testing is to encourage students to leverage the power of the language proficiency they bring to accelerate to higher levels of language study, including Advanced Placement. Table 1-F illustrates the result of the Heritage Speakers of Spanish placement testing during FY14 and FY15.

Table 1-F

Recommended placements of heritage speakers of Spanish based on test results		
Level	FY14	FY15
Spanish 1	18%	4%
Spanish 2/2 Honors	28%	33%
Spanish 3/3 Honors	50%	48%
Spanish 4+	4%	15%

**Other World Language Accomplishments:**

During FY15, 1,300 high school world language students participated in national world language exams, 340 of whom received top recognitions and honors.

Nearly 800 high school world language students are members of national world language honor societies for Chinese, French, German, Italian, Latin, and Spanish.

In FY14, approximately 1,600 elementary school students received world language instruction. That number increased to over 4,600 during FY15, for students in Pre-K through Grade 5.

# GOAL 1: Students

## Focus Area: RIGOR AND ACCELERATION

Outcome 1.1: The instructional program is rigorous, globally-relevant, and aligned with international and/or nationally recognized college and career readiness standards.

Outcome 1.2: Students have equitable access to a rigorous instructional program.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

- 1.1.1: Implement curriculum that meets or exceeds national and/or international standards in all relevant content areas.
- 1.2.1: Provide equitable access to rigorous coursework Pre-K–12, including Gifted and Talented, Advanced Placement, and world language.
- 1.2.2: Strengthen programs and initiatives that focus on eliminating achievement gaps.

### Description and Value

The Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark System is used to assess students individually in kindergarten through Grade 2. This standardized assessment identifies each student's reading level in the areas of decoding, fluency, and comprehension. Student progress is monitored at least three times per year using the assessment system. Through this reading assessment, the teacher identifies the student's instructional and independent reading level. The goal of this assessment program is to provide continuous feedback on students' text-reading development, including accuracy, oral reading fluency, and comprehension.

The HCPSS has been using this benchmark system since 2008. This system seamlessly links assessment to instruction along the continuum of literacy learning. This comprehensive system for one-on-one assessment reliably and systematically matches students' instructional and independent reading abilities to the Fountas and Pinnell Text Level Gradient. Teachers assess students individually three times per year. The data they gather from these assessments determines students' independent and instructional reading levels, helps to determine reading placement and groups students for instruction,



aids teachers in selecting text that will be appropriate for students' instruction, and assesses the outcomes of teaching. Additionally, these assessments are used to monitor student growth and assist in identifying students in need of intervention or acceleration. Students are regrouped throughout the year so that they are always learning at an appropriate level of challenge.

HCPSS expects each school to continually increase the percentage of students meeting these HCPSS College and Career Readiness Benchmarks:

- All kindergarten students will master the objectives on the Reading Behavior Checklist for the Emergent Level by the end of the school year. (Benchmark Level C)
- All Grade 1 students will master the objectives on the Reading Behavior Checklist for the Early 2 Developmental Level by the end of the school year. (Benchmark Level I)
- All Grade 2 students will master the objectives on the Reading Behavior Checklist for the Fluent Developmental Level by the end of the school year. (Benchmark Level M)

### Progress

Historically, these data have been collected and used within schools, but never collected and analyzed centrally. Beginning in FY15, these data are also being collected centrally at the beginning and end of kindergarten, Grade 1, and Grade 2, and will help us to understand and monitor reading acquisition and fluency and adjust programs appropriately in the coming years.

# GOAL 1: Students

GOAL 1

## Focus Area: RIGOR AND ACCELERATION

Outcome 1.1: The instructional program is rigorous, globally-relevant, and aligned with international and/or nationally recognized college and career readiness standards.

Outcome 1.2: Students have equitable access to a rigorous instructional program.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies

- 1.1.2: Embed multiple opportunities for acceleration into the instructional program.
- 1.1.3: Provide learning experiences that promote depth of knowledge.
- 1.1.4: Embed the development of creativity, innovation, problem-solving, and critical thinking into the instructional program.
- 1.2.1: Provide equitable access to rigorous coursework Pre-K–12, including Gifted and Talented, Advanced Placement, and world language.

### Description and Value

The Gifted and Talented (GT) Program supports Goal 1 through its comprehensive programming in Grades K–12. The program’s talent development focus enables students to launch their own talent trajectories as they discover and build upon their individual strengths and interests. The GT Program promotes student engagement through enrichment, rigorous coursework, and opportunities to solve real-world problems and conduct original research.

The GT Program is a K–12 schoolwide enrichment model that provides students with multiple opportunities to participate in program offerings. The model includes the following components:

- **Kindergarten Talent Development** – Talent development program where GT teachers work collaboratively with kindergarten teachers to implement lessons designed to evoke core attributes of gifted behaviors. A research-based data collection tool is used to assess the natural abilities of young learners to provide targeted enrichment and interventions.

- **Instructional Seminars** – Talent development offerings that extend student interests beyond general exploratory experiences. Skill development might include written, oral, and visual communication skills; critical and creative thinking skills; research skills; technology skills; and skills in visual and performing arts. These seminars are interest-based and available to all students.
- **Curriculum Extension Units** – Thematic units that extend the curriculum to provide additional rigor and challenge to engage students in advanced-level thinking, questioning, and research. Students are invited to participate by classroom teachers based on a wide range of data and parent input.
- **Gifted and Talented Research Investigations** – As individuals or in small groups, students work with the GT resource teacher to discover and document real-world problems and create original solutions. This option is interest-based and available to all students who can propose a real problem in need of investigation.
- **Gifted and Talented Content Classes** – An accelerated and enriched program is provided for identified students who may participate in one or more GT classes. These classes replace the general education classes in each subject area and are taught on a daily basis by designated content area teachers. The placement process for GT content classes



considers multiple data points, including formal and informal input from teachers and parents, a nationally normed ability test (CogAT), and achievement data, such as Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment results, classroom grades, student work samples, and state test results.

HCPSS expects all schools to make continuous progress toward meeting these HCPSS College and Career Readiness Benchmarks:

- At least 30 percent of students in Grades 2–5 participate in an instructional seminar or curriculum extension unit. This expectation is for students overall, students receiving Free and Reduced-price Meals (FARM) services, and students within each race/ethnicity.
- At least 20 percent of students in Grades 4–5 participate in GT mathematics. This expectation is for students overall, students receiving FARM services, and students within each race/ethnicity.
- At least 30 percent of students in Grades 6–8 participate in one or more GT classes. This expectation is for students overall, students receiving FARM services, and students within each race/ethnicity.

### Progress

In FY15, 36 percent of students were enrolled in a GT Instructional Seminar, which is 2 percentage points less than the previous school year. Enrollment decreased for

all racial/ethnic groups. Decreases in G/T Instructional Seminar participation reflect a increased focus placed on G/T Curriculum Extension Unit participation for FY15. (Figure 1-1)

In FY15, 35.9 percent of students in Grades 2–5 were enrolled in a GT Curriculum Extension Unit, 1.9 percentage points greater than the previous year. Enrollment increased for nearly all student groups, with the greatest increases among students receiving FARM services and students identified as Black/African American (4.7 and 3.9 percentage point increases, respectively). (Figure 1-2)

In FY15, 33.0 percent of students in Grades 4–5 were enrolled in GT mathematics, 1 percentage point greater than the previous year. Enrollment increased for most racial/ethnic groups, with the greatest increases among students identified as White and Asian (2.0 and 1.5 percentage point increases, respectively). (Figure 1-3)

In FY15, 32.8 percent of students in Grades 6–8 were enrolled in GT Mathematics, 1.8 percentage points greater than the previous year. Enrollment increased for most racial/ethnic groups, with the greatest increases among students identified as Asian and Hispanic (3.8 and 2.6 percentage point increases, respectively). Enrollment was 0.6 percentage points greater than the previous school year for students receiving FARM services. (Figure 1-4)

FY15 FY14 FY13

Figure 1-1

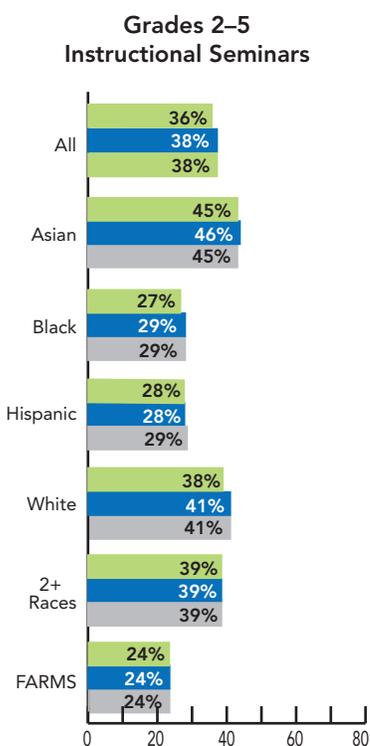


Figure 1-2

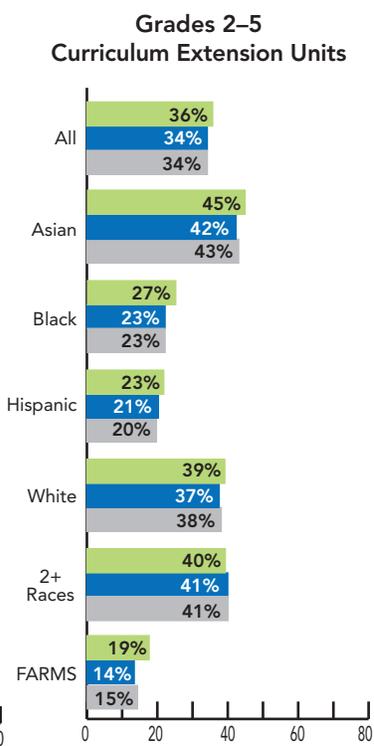


Figure 1-3

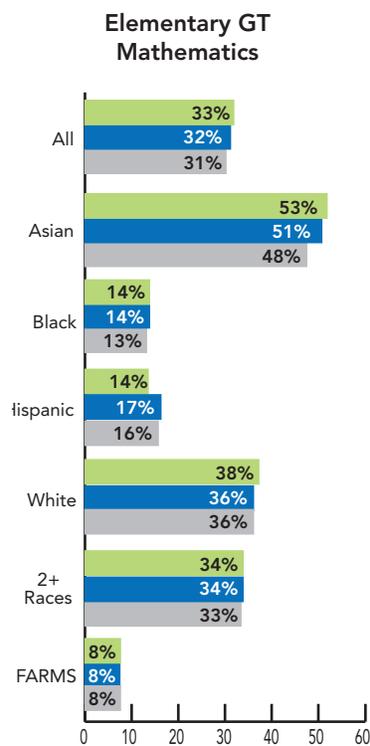
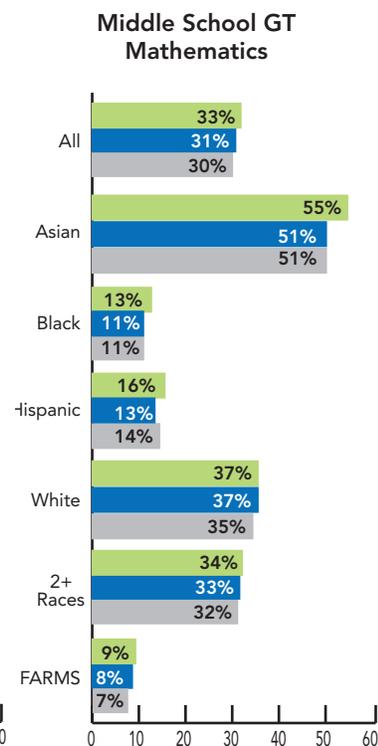


Figure 1-4



The 2013 Instructional Seminar and Curriculum Extension Unit data above has been revised from the May 2014 Progress Report because those statistics counted students more than once based upon participation in multiple offerings.

Figure 1-5

**Middle School  
GT English/Language Arts**

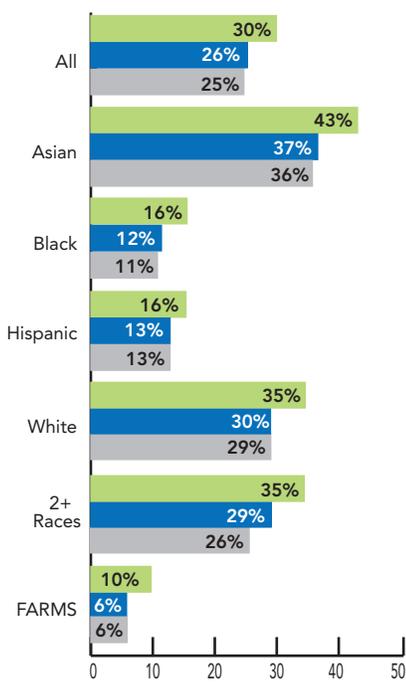


Figure 1-6

**Middle School  
GT Science**

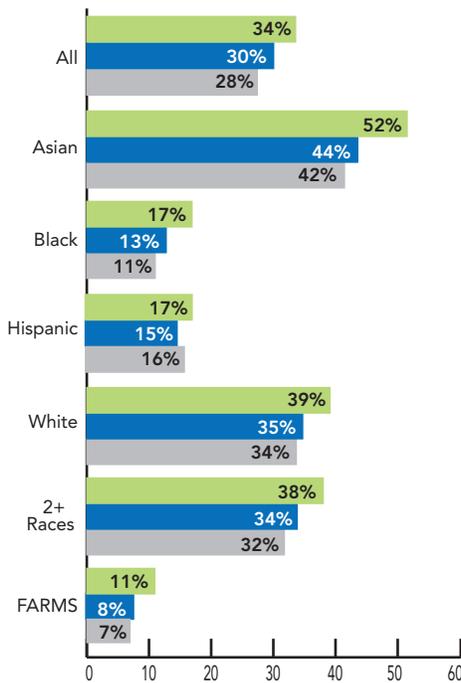
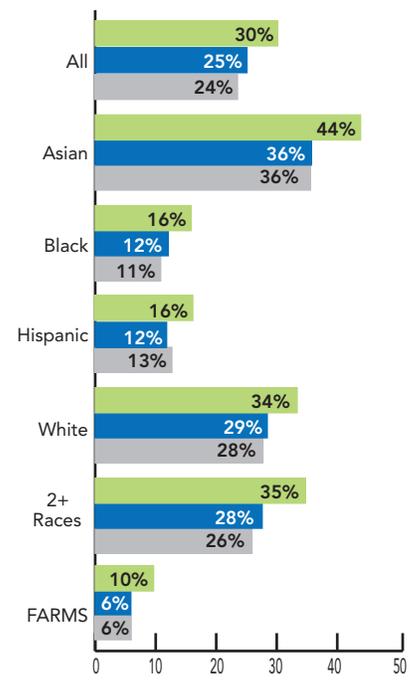


Figure 1-7

**Middle School  
GT Social Studies**



■ FY15 ■ FY14 ■ FY13

In FY15, 30.3 percent of students in Grades 6–8 were enrolled in GT English/language arts, 4.3 percentage points greater than the previous year. Enrollment increased for all racial/ethnic groups, with the greatest increases among students identified as Asian and Two or More Races

(6.0 and 5.4 percentage point increases, respectively). Enrollment was 3.9 percentage points greater than the previous school year for students receiving FARM services. (Figure 1-5)



In FY15, 34.1 percent of students in Grades 6–8 were enrolled in GT Science, 4.1 percentage points greater than the previous year. Enrollment increased for all racial/ethnic groups, with the greatest increases among students identified as Asian and Two or More Races (8 and 4.1 percentage point increases, respectively). Enrollment was 3.1 percentage points greater than the previous school year for students receiving FARM services. (Figure 1-6)

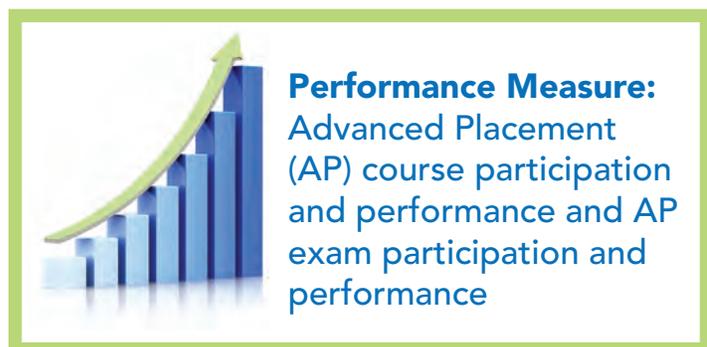
In FY15, 30.4 percent of students in Grades 6–8 were enrolled in GT Social Studies, 5.4 percentage points greater than the previous year. Enrollment increased for all racial/ethnic groups, with the greatest increases among students identified as Asian and Two or More Races (8.4 and 7.3 percentage point increases, respectively). Enrollment was 3.7 percentage points greater than the previous school year for students receiving FARM services. (Figure 1-7)

# GOAL 1: Students

## Focus Area: RIGOR AND ACCELERATION

Outcome 1.1: The instructional program is rigorous, globally-relevant, and aligned with international and/or nationally recognized college and career readiness standards.

Outcome 1.2: Students have equitable access to a rigorous instructional program.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

- 1.1.2: Embed multiple opportunities for acceleration into the instructional program.
- 1.1.3: Provide learning experiences that promote depth of knowledge.
- 1.1.4: Embed the development of creativity, innovation, problem-solving, and critical thinking into the instructional program.
- 1.2.1: Provide equitable access to rigorous coursework Pre-K–12, including Gifted and Talented, Advanced Placement, and world language.

### Description and Value

HCPSS offers 33 AP courses and 35 exams in the areas of art, computer science, English, mathematics, music, science, social studies, and world language. AP courses enable high school students to experience rigorous college-level work in a variety of content areas. The corresponding exams, administered by the College Board, rate a student's mastery of the content on a scale of 1 to 5. Scores of 3 or higher can earn students college credit and/or placement into advanced courses in college.

As part of the HCPSS focus on college and career readiness, every sophomore and junior in HCPSS takes the PSAT in the fall of each school year. Schools then use the PSAT AP Potential index to identify students with the knowledge and skills to succeed in AP courses. In addition, schools hold information nights for parents and students about the AP program offerings. Teachers also "talent-spot" students and personally invite them to take AP courses.

HCPSS provides funding for school-based testing coordinators to facilitate AP tests each year. In addition,

the system coordinates the distribution of fee waivers to families in financial need and provides funding to support professional development.

AP course participation is highly correlated with college readiness. Research indicates that course rigor in high school is the most powerful predictor of postsecondary success. Students who took at least one AP course nearly doubled their likelihood of graduating from college.

HCPSS expects that all high schools will continually increase the percentage of students meeting these HCPSS College and Career Readiness Benchmarks:

- All students will participate in at least one AP course by the end of Grade 12.
- All students will earn a 3 or higher on one or more AP exams by the end of Grade 12.



### Progress

HCPSS students continue to outperform their public school peers across the state and nation on AP exams. In FY15, 80.8 percent of AP exams taken by HCPSS students earned scores of 3 or higher, in comparison to public schools in Maryland (61.1 percent) and the United States (55.9 percent). (Table 1-G)

Table 1-G

AP Exams Taken and Performance for Public School Students in HCPSS, Maryland, and the Nation						
	# AP Exams Taken		# AP Exams 3 or Higher		% AP Exams 3 or Higher	
	FY14	FY15	FY14	FY15	FY14	FY15
HCPSS	9,450	9,920	7,648	8,017	80.9	80.8
Maryland	108,826	107,717	66,325	65,828	60.9	61.1
Nation	3,567,207	3,826,645	2,039,795	2,140,859	57.2	55.9

The number of HCPSS students taking exams as well as the total number of AP exams taken increased from FY14 to FY15. In FY15, 4,481 students took a total of 9,920 exams. (Table 1-H)

Table 1-H

Number of AP Exam Test Takers, AP Exams Taken, AP Exams with a Score of 3 or Higher, and Percentage of AP Exams with a Score of 3 or Higher								
Student Group	# Test Takers		# AP Exams Taken		# AP Exams 3 or higher		% AP Exams 3 or higher	
	FY14	FY15	FY14	FY15	FY14	FY15	FY14	FY15
All	4,287	4,481	9,464	9,920	7,704	8,017	81.4	80.8
Asian	1,108	1,235	2,877	3,233	2,378	2,659	82.7	82.2
Black	378	418	682	766	474	499	69.5	65.1
Hispanic	191	239	352	445	259	349	73.6	78.4
White	2,351	2,315	4,975	4,893	4,128	4,035	83.0	82.5
2+ Races	249	265	549	569	439	461	80.0	81.0

Note: Results for HCPSS American Indian or Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander students are included with All Students, but are not reported separately. AP exam results are based on data reported by the College Board as of October 2015 for all students who were part of the official MSDE end-of-year attendance file.



Among 2015 graduates, 68.4 percent took at least one AP course while in high school, 2.8 percentage points greater than the previous graduating class. More than half (54.1 percent) of the 2015 graduates took at least one AP exam, an increase of 1.4 percentage points compared to the previous year. A higher percentage of the Class of 2015 received a score of 3 or higher on at least one AP exam compared to the Class of 2014—an increase of 1.0 percentage points from 44.7 percent in FY14 to 45.7 percent in FY15. (Table 1-I).

Table 1-I

HCPSS AP Course/Exam Participation and AP Exam Score of 3 or Higher														
Student Group	# Graduates		# Took AP Course		% Took AP Course		# Took AP Exam		% Took AP Exam		# AP Score 3 or higher		% AP Score 3 or higher	
	FY14	FY15	FY14	FY15	FY14	FY15	FY14	FY15	FY14	FY15	FY14	FY15	FY14	FY15
All	3,870	3,866	2,538	2,644	65.6	68.4	2,039	2,090	52.7	54.1	1,728	1,768	44.7	45.7
Male	1,960	1,942	1,174	1,230	59.9	63.3	930	967	47.4	49.8	791	821	40.4	42.3
Female	1,910	1,924	1,364	1,414	71.4	73.5	1,109	1,123	58.1	58.4	937	947	49.1	49.2
Asian	613	647	516	561	84.2	86.7	450	500	73.4	77.3	391	443	63.8	68.5
Black	756	774	319	344	42.2	44.4	210	204	27.8	26.4	144	144	19.0	18.6
Hispanic	290	303	147	180	50.7	59.4	93	125	32.1	41.3	72	106	24.8	35.0
White	1,976	1,876	1,410	1,370	71.4	73.0	1,171	1,105	59.3	58.9	1,027	946	52.0	50.4
2+ Races	220	253	136	184	61.8	72.7	108	152	49.1	60.1	88	125	40.0	49.4
FARMS	570	602	210	269	36.8	44.7	126	168	22.1	27.9	86	124	15.1	20.6
LEP	22	28	*	5	≤5.0	17.9	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Spec Ed	177	207	13	19	7.3	9.2	*	*	≤5.0	≤5.0	*	*	≤5.0	≤5.0

Note: Results for American Indian and Pacific Islander students are included with all students but are not reported separately due to small number of students in these groups.\* indicates zero or fewer than 10 graduates; or if the category is either ≤5 or ≥95, the corresponding counts have been suppressed to protect student confidentiality. Number of graduates is based on the end of year attendance file and includes only diploma graduates. Total does not include special schools.

# GOAL 1: Students

## Focus Area: ENGAGEMENT

Outcome 1.3: Technology is leveraged so that students have access to learning experiences that meet their needs and interests.

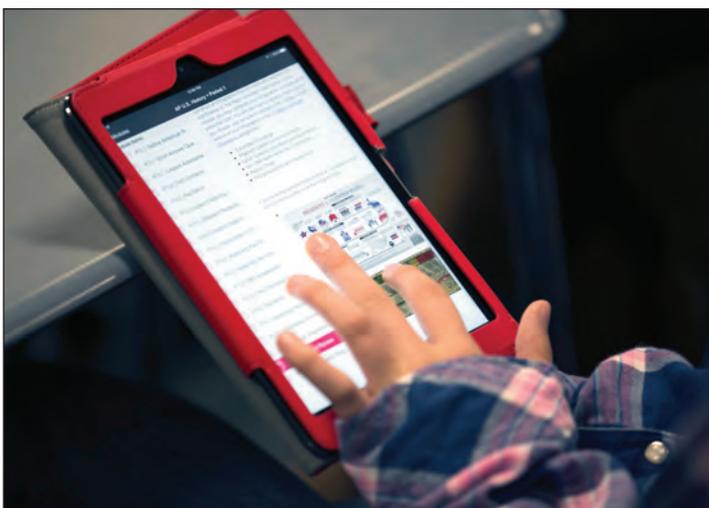


### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

- 1.3.3: Provide convenient options for learning through flexible scheduling, digital education, and 24/7 access to online resources.

### Description and Value

HCPSS introduced the digital education program in FY13, with the first course offerings in summer of 2013. The goals of the HCPSS digital education program include expanding options for earning credits, providing collaborative environments that enhance learning, and creating convenient options for learning.



### Progress

In FY15, digital education provided expanded access to courses during and outside of the school day. Increases in both original credit and credit recovery courses were seen across all schools. Additionally, synchronous video instruction expanded to include advanced mathematics, social studies, and world languages. Student enrollments in alternative programs also increased. Homewood Center provided access to world language instruction as well as courses for students to recover credits. The Home and Hospital Teaching Program increased the number of students served and provided a model for students to transition from their online course back to in-school instruction. Blended courses (combination of face-to-face and online instruction) were successfully piloted in the spring and ten blended courses supplemented the Comprehensive Summer School program.

Key milestones included the following:

- Original credit course enrollments increased 68 percent; 406 students completed courses that were not otherwise accessible.
- 189 students completed credit recovery courses, recovered credits toward earning a diploma.
- 10 blended course options were taken by 205 students as a supplement to Comprehensive Summer School.
- 134 students are participating in synchronous video course instruction during the current school year.
- 42 teachers have participated in blended and online course facilitation professional learning.
- Standardized course review process was used to update Catalog of Approved High School Course catalog.

Table 1-J, on the following page, details the number of students enrolled in digital education courses over the last three years.

Table 1-J

Digital Education Program Enrollment			
	Blended Credit Recovery	Blended Original Credit	Online Original Credit
Summer 2013	21 students	76 students	13 students
Summer 2014	29 students	135 students	7 students
Summer 2015	52 students	205 students	12 students
FY14	172 students	59 students	40 students
FY15	137 students	96 students	93 students



# GOAL 1: Students

## Focus Area: ENGAGEMENT

Outcome 1.3: Technology is leveraged so that students have access to learning experiences that meet their needs and interests.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies

- 1.3.2: Provide relevant technologies, including collaborative online environments, that enhance learning.
- 1.3.3: Provide convenient options for learning through flexible scheduling, digital education, and 24/7 access to online resources.

### Description and Value

HCPSS is committed to providing students and staff with a learning environment in which every student has access to experiences and instruction designed around discovery, connectivity, and exploration. Furthermore, HCPSS is committed to immersing students in the creation of knowledge and empowering students to collaborate, communicate, and innovate. Providing increased access to technology is an initial step in transforming classrooms and providing a more personalized and student-centered approach to teaching and learning. Technology will be used to enhance learning, personal productivity, collaboration, and access to instructional resources.

Beginning in the fall of 2013, a pilot group of students and staff at Long Reach (LRHS), River Hill (RHHS), and Mt. Hebron (MHHS) high schools were permitted to use personal devices for HCPSS-approved activities and connect to the Internet for approved instructional activities. At the start of FY14, all high schools and Thomas Viaduct Middle School (TVMS) were permitted to use their personal devices during teacher directed instructional lessons.

Professional learning focused on pedagogical applications for the teachers. Professional development for teachers in schools participating in the Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) pilot were offered professional learning options in the following ways:



- Face-to-face during Program Implementation Planning time
- Before/After school sessions
- Self-paced modules (<http://hcpssoitpl.weebly.com>) for hours toward credit
- Monthly point of contact professional learning time
- Tech and Learning Gatherings

### Progress

A total of 58 teachers from these schools participated in the initial pilot (14 from LRHS, 33 from MHHS, 11 from RHHS). Teachers participated in a variety of professional learning opportunities to learn how to implement and use the new resources available as a result of BYOD. During the 2014–15 school year, staff Points of Contact (POC's) were appointed at all high schools and TVMS to participate in professional learning to support the integration of digital devices in instruction. As a result, students are becoming more actively engaged in the learning process rather than just passively receiving or reporting information. Students are beginning to suggest activities that best meet their learning needs. Students are also taking part in the professional learning opportunities in which they are becoming the "teachers" and sharing "how to" tutorials on various applications.



**Benefits of BYOD**

The following benefits were identified by student and teacher participants in the BYOD pilot schools.

- Increased student autonomy
- Increased student engagement
- Responsible student technology use
- Fewer behavior issues
- Meets students’ need
- No impact on network speed
- Responsive technical support
- Fewer missed assignments/easier to complete makeup work
- Fewer printed materials

Figure 1-8 details the number of devices used in each high school.

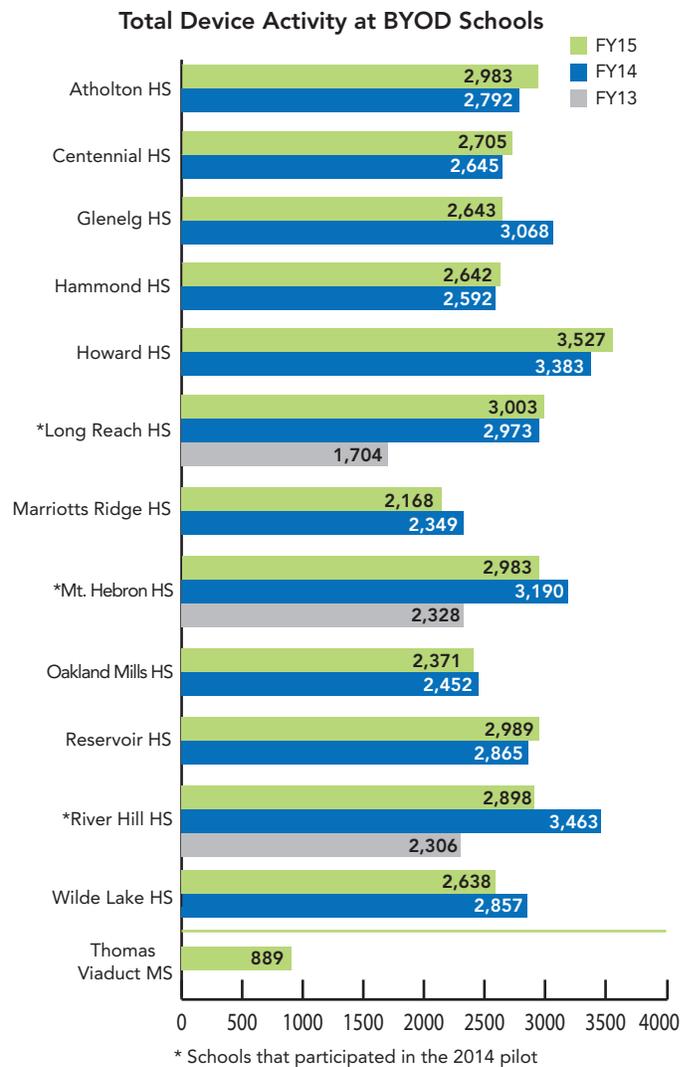
The HCPSS Research and Program Evaluation office conducted student, teacher, and administrator focus groups and reported the following findings from the pilot. Similar data will be collected and analyzed for FY15.

**Impact on Instruction**

The following strategies were identified by student and teacher participants in how devices are being used in the classroom.

- Student polling
- Electronic assignment submission
- Conduct research
- Flipped classroom
- Electronic note cards
- Directing students to web-based resources
- Educational apps
- Online instruction
- Back-up to school provided devices
- Video creation/editing/viewing
- Social networking

Figure 1-8



# GOAL 1: Students

## Focus Area: ENGAGEMENT

Outcome 1.3: Technology is leveraged so that students have access to learning experiences that meet their needs and interests.

Outcome 1.4: Students are engaged in the learning process.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

- 1.3.1: Expand options for earning credits, including credit for external courses, technical training and certifications, internships, and externships.
- 1.4.1: Actively involve students in decision-making about their learning experiences, including courses of study and enrichment opportunities.
- 1.4.2: Actively involve students in long- and short-term goal setting and monitoring of their own performance.
- 1.4.3: Provide personalized education experiences.
- 1.4.5: Provide effective interventions that are tied to the curriculum and have clearly defined exit criteria once standards have been met.



### Description and Value

Federal law requires that Maryland use adjusted cohort graduation rates for accountability purposes. The adjusted cohort graduation rate accounts for all students who entered Grade 9 together.

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) uses both a four-year and a five-year rate in their accountability programs. The four-year cohort graduation rate is the percentage of students who enter Grade 9 and graduate within four years, including the summer following their fourth year of high school. The five-year cohort graduation rate is the percentage of students who enter Grade 9 and graduate within five years.

The adjusted cohort graduation rate is derived from the number of students who graduate with a regular high school diploma, divided by the number of students who form the adjusted cohort from the graduating class. For any given cohort, students who are entering Grade 9 for the first time form a cohort that is then adjusted by adding any students who transfer into the cohort during subsequent years and subtracting any students who transfer out, immigrate to another country, or leave the cohort during that same period.

MSDE adopted the following standards for their accountability model:

- Four-year cohort graduation rate: 81.5 percent
- Five-year cohort graduation rate: 84.4 percent
- 2020 four- and five-year cohort graduation rate goal: 95 percent

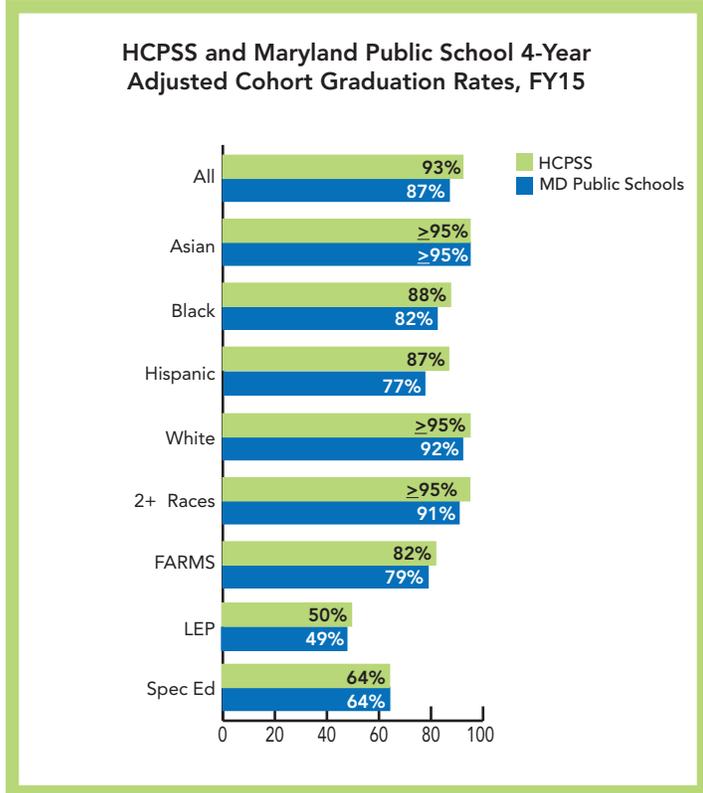
MSDE defines the four-year adjusted cohort dropout rate as the number of students who leave school, for any reason other than death, within the four-year period, divided by the number of students who form the adjusted cohort. The dropout rates are reported publicly, but they are not a stand-alone measure in Maryland's School Progress Index.

**Progress**

**Graduation Rate**

The FY15 four-year graduation rate for students in HCPSS was 93.47 percent, compared to 87 percent of public school students across the state. HCPSS graduation rates were higher than the state average for all racial/ethnic groups, as well as students receiving free and reduced-price meals (FARM) and LEP (limited English proficiency) services. (Figure 1-9).

Figure 1-9



The HCPSS Class of 2015 also graduated at higher rates than the two previous classes. The graduation rates for the classes of 2013 and 2014 were 93.25 and 92.85 percent, respectively. (Table 1-K)

Table 1-K

HCPSS Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rates by Race/Ethnicity and Student Service Group, FY13-FY15						
Student Group	Graduation Rate			Number of Students in Cohort		
	Class of 2013	Class of 2014	Class of 2015	Class of 2013	Class of 2014	Class of 2015
All	93.25	92.85	93.47	4,355	4,184	4,107
Asian	≥95.0	≥95.0	≥95.0	676	639	649
Black	87.50	87.11	87.94	840	861	871
Hispanic	85.76	86.94	86.89	323	337	351
White	≥95.0	≥95.0	≥95.0	2,240	2,085	1,953
2+Races	92.83	91.67	95.19	265	240	270
FARMS	80.77	80.26	81.96	676	704	682
LEP	43.55	35.00	50.00	62	60	36
Spec Ed	68.36	60.15	63.87	275	261	310

Note: Percents ≥95 have been suppressed. Results for American Indian and Pacific Islander students are included with all students but are not reported separately.

The five-year adjusted cohort graduation rate has increased overall and for most student groups in the three most recent years. (Table 1-L)

Table 1-L

HCPSS Five-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rates by Race/Ethnicity and Student Service Group, FY12-FY14						
Student Group	Graduation Rate			Number of Students in Cohort		
	Class of 2012	Class of 2013	Class of 2014	Class of 2012	Class of 2013	Class of 2014
All	92.07	94.40	94.51	4,172	4,356	4,186
Asian	≥95.0	≥95.0	≥95.0	598	677	637
Black	87.54	90.24	90.28	891	840	864
Hispanic	83.74	87.62	89.91	326	323	337
White	93.80	≥95.0	≥95.0	2,129	2,240	2,087
2+Races	≥95.0	93.96	92.89	213	265	239
FARMS	81.41	84.44	84.41	640	675	712
LEP	55.42	51.67	50.88	83	60	57
Spec Ed	60.18	74.28	68.48	226	276	257

Note: Percents ≤3 have been suppressed. Results for American Indian and Pacific Islander students are included with all students but are not reported separately.

### Dropout Rate

The HCPSS dropout rate for FY15 was 3.65 percent, a notable decline from 4.04 percent for the prior year, and comparing favorably to 8.08 percent statewide. Dropout rates are lower in HCPSS than across the state for every racial/ethnic group and for students receiving FARM and special education services. (Figure 1-10)

HCPSS dropout rates decreased from FY13 to FY15. Of note, the HCPSS dropout rate among Black/African American students is 6.66 percent, compared to 11 percent statewide. The HCPSS dropout rate among Hispanic students is 9.4 percent, compared to 15 percent statewide. (1-M)

Figure 1-10

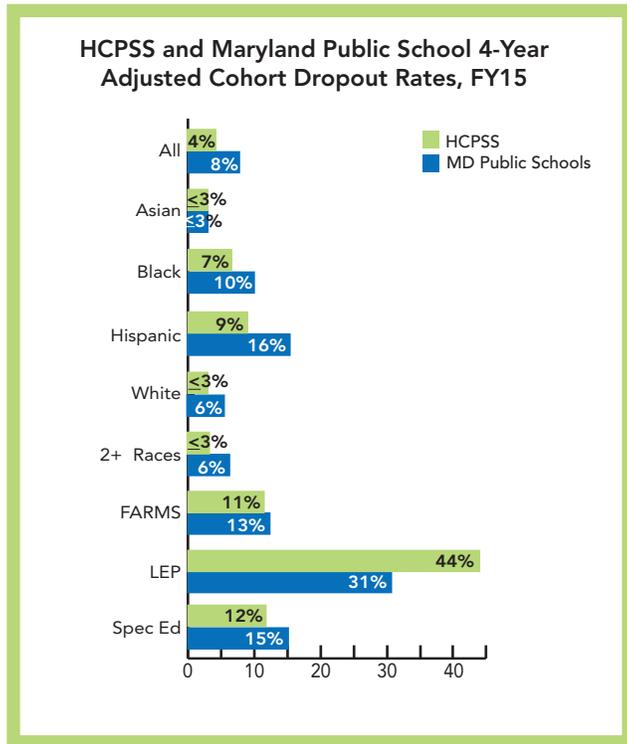


Table 1-M

HCPSS Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Dropout Rates by Race/Ethnicity and Student Service Group, FY13–15						
Student Group	Dropout Rate			Number of Students in Cohort		
	Class of 2013	Class of 2014	Class of 2015	Class of 2013	Class of 2014	Class of 2015
All	4.29	4.04	3.65	4,355	4,184	4,107
Asian	≤3.00	≤3.00	≤3.00	676	639	649
Black	7.74	6.97	6.66	840	861	871
Hispanic	8.98	9.20	9.40	323	337	351
White	≤3.00	≤3.00	≤3.00	2,240	2,085	1,953
2+ Races	4.53	4.58	≤3.00	265	240	270
FARMS	13.46	12.22	11.44	676	704	682
LEP	37.10	35.00	44.44	62	60	36
Spec Ed	10.55	13.79	11.61	275	261	310

Note: Percents ≤3 have been suppressed. Results for American Indian and Pacific Islander students are included with all students but are not reported separately.



# GOAL 1: Students

GOAL 1

## Focus Areas: ENGAGEMENT, PERFORMANCE, AND WELL-BEING

Outcome 1.4: Students are engaged in the learning process.

Outcome 1.6: Meaningful measures of student outcomes are in place.

Outcome 1.8: Schools support student well-being and the development of balanced lifestyles.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies

- 1.4.1: Actively involve students in decision-making about their learning experiences, including courses of study and enrichment opportunities.
- 1.4.2: Actively involve students in long- and short-term goal setting and monitoring of their own performance.
- 1.4.3: Provide personalized education experiences.
- 1.6.5: Measure student hope, well-being, engagement, and perceptions of school climate.
- 1.8.1: Provide opportunities for students to discover and build upon their strengths and interests.

### Description and Value

Research documents that student achievement in reading and mathematics increases when students are engaged in learning. Student engagement is defined as involvement in and enthusiasm for school. Gallup's research-based model of student success shows that academic success is interlinked and is a direct function of levels of hope, well-being, and engagement. This research also shows that when students identify and build upon their strengths, their levels of hope, well-being, engagement, and achievement increase.

During FY14, HCPSS launched a partnership with Gallup to measure and improve levels of engagement among employees and students.

The Gallup Student Poll is administered once a year to students in Grades 5 through 12. The online poll is administered each fall at no cost to schools across the nation. The survey takes approximately 10 minutes to complete. Students are asked 20 core questions in the



areas of hope, engagement, and well-being. Hope drives effort in academic achievement, credits earned, and retention of students of all ages. Engagement reflects how well students are known and how often they get to do what they do best. Well-being demonstrates how students are doing today and predicts their success in the future.

Gallup researchers targeted these three variables because they met the following criteria:

- They can be reliably measured.
- They have a meaningful relationship with or impact on educational outcomes.
- They can be influenced and can be enhanced through deliberate action.
- They are not measured directly by another large-scale survey.

### Progress

In FY15, more than half of the HCPSS students surveyed (55 percent) are classified as "hopeful"; these students possess numerous ideas and abundant energy for the future. Based on their survey responses, the rest are classified as either "stuck" (32 percent) or "discouraged" (12 percent).

Figure 1-11

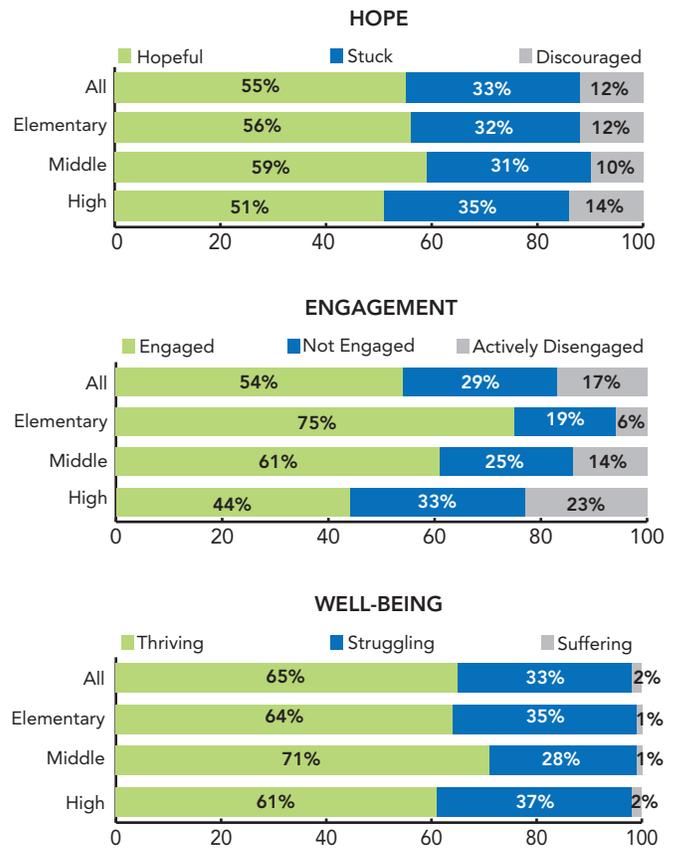


Fifty-four percent of HCPSS students are classified as engaged. Engaged students are highly involved with and enthusiastic about school. These students arrive at school prepared and eager to learn; they're likely to promote learning readiness in those around them. Students who are not engaged (29 percent) are often just going through the motions at school. These students, while not overtly negative, may blend into the landscape and may not be maximizing their own potential. Students who are actively disengaged (17 percent) are likely to undermine the teaching and learning process for themselves and others.

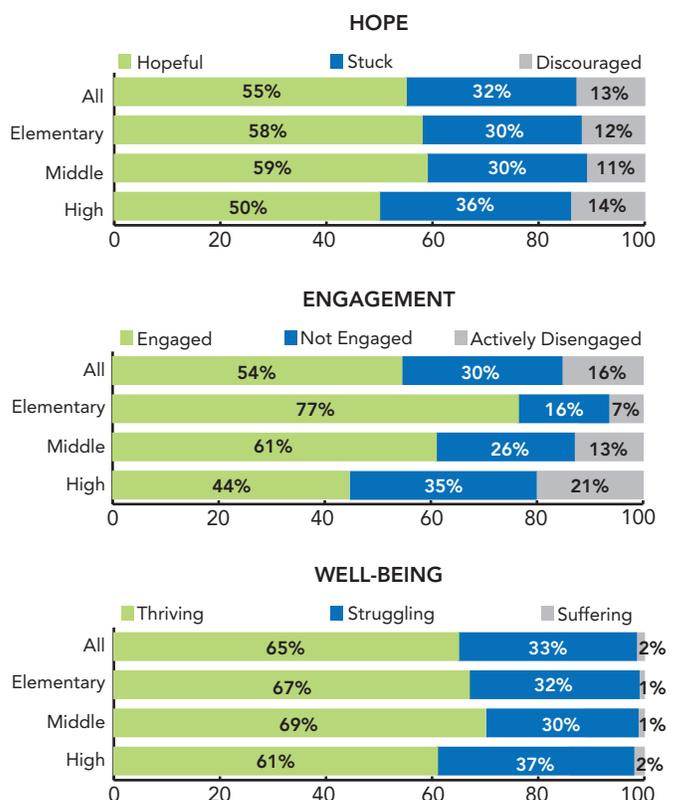
Nearly two-thirds (65 percent) of students are thriving; they think about their present and future life in positive terms, and they tend to be in good health and have strong social support. Just over one-third of students are classified as struggling or suffering.

HCPSS is using these results to increase intentional efforts focused on student engagement. The data provide each school a clear picture of student perceptions. The school system is invested in increasing the levels of hope, engagement, and well-being among our students.

**FY15 Gallup Student Poll Results, Grades 5-12**



**FY14 Gallup Student Poll Results, Grades 5-12**



# GOAL 1: Students

GOAL 1

## Focus Area: PERFORMANCE

Outcome 1.5: Students meet or exceed rigorous performance standards.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies

- 1.5.1: Continuously monitor individual student achievement and personalize instruction to provide the appropriate level of challenge.
- 1.5.2: Continuously monitor student achievement across grade levels, content areas, and schools for every racial/ethnic group, as well as for students receiving free/reduced-price meals, special education, and English language learner services.
- 1.5.3: Provide targeted supports and acceleration programs to close specific achievement gaps within and among content areas and schools.

### Description and Value

The Ready for Kindergarten (R4) Comprehensive Early Childhood Assessment System is a framework that provides structure for instruction, assessment, professional development, communication, and collaboration among all early childhood stakeholders across the state. The state of Maryland is in the process of transitioning from the Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR) to the R4K. The R4K is built upon developmental trajectories in multiple domains of learning. It is a standardized assessment consisting of observational and direct performance items, and is more rigorous than the MMSR as it has been aligned to current standards.

The first phase of this change is the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) component, which was first administered in the fall of 2014. It is a summative assessment that reports on four domains of learning: language and literacy, mathematics, social foundations, and physical well-being and motor development. During the first two months of school, kindergarten teachers closely monitor and observe all students, and gather data using given indicators. The data is submitted electronically



at the beginning of November. The data is immediately available to teachers to use for instructional planning and intervention planning purposes. It is also disaggregated and analyzed by MSDE and shared with local jurisdictions.

The second phase of the new system is the Early Learning Assessment (ELA), which has just been finalized by MSDE, and the Training of Trainers has begun. This portion of the assessment system is formative in nature and will ultimately be used in both public and private programs for 3- and 4-year-olds. HCPSS intends to begin piloting this assessment in prekindergarten classrooms in winter of 2015. HCPSS works closely with early care and education providers (e.g., child care centers, nursery schools, family child care providers, Head Start), other agencies, and families, to ensure that early learning standards and best practices are communicated consistently. Work done with the birth-to-five community is crucial to the success of children entering kindergarten.

### Progress

In FY15, 57 percent of students entering kindergarten in HCPSS were fully ready, compared with 47 percent of students entering kindergarten across Maryland. This data is baseline data for Howard County and the state of Maryland.

Figure 1-12 HCPSS Kindergarten Readiness by Domain, FY15

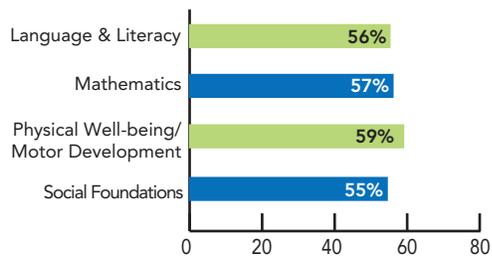


Figure 1-14

HCPSS Kindergarten Readiness by Student Group, FY15

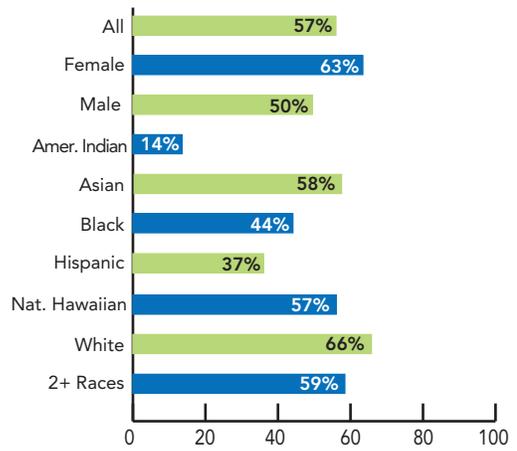
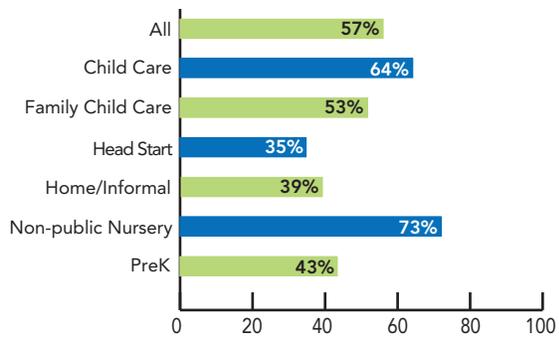


Figure 1-13 HCPSS Kindergarten Readiness by Prior Care, FY15

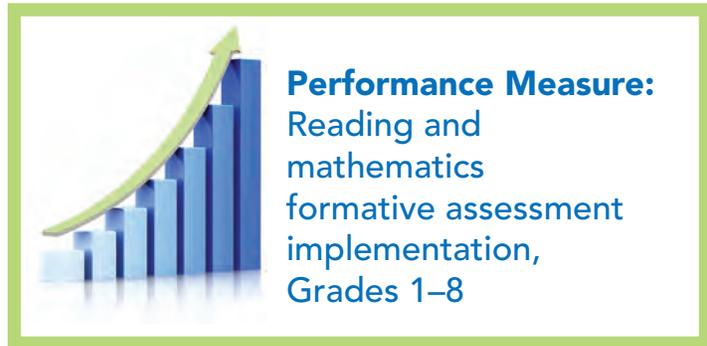


# GOAL 1: Students

GOAL 1

## Focus Area: PERFORMANCE

Outcome 1.6: Meaningful measures of student outcomes are in place.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies

- 1.6.1: Implement objective and transparent reporting practices that reflect academic learning and provide useful feedback on academic progress.
- 1.6.2: Implement assessments (formative and summative) that account for growth, and provide timely, meaningful information to help teachers adjust instruction.
- 1.6.3: Implement academic measures that can be benchmarked nationally and internationally.
- 1.6.6: Measure progress over time on student assessments.

### Description and Value

The Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), developed by the Northwest Evaluation Association, is a norm-referenced assessment designed to measure student growth.

MAP is a computer-adaptive assessment, meaning that the test adapts to each individual student's responses. As students answer questions correctly, the questions become more difficult. When a student misses a question, the next question is easier. This testing format allows for students at every achievement level to have a personalized testing experience.

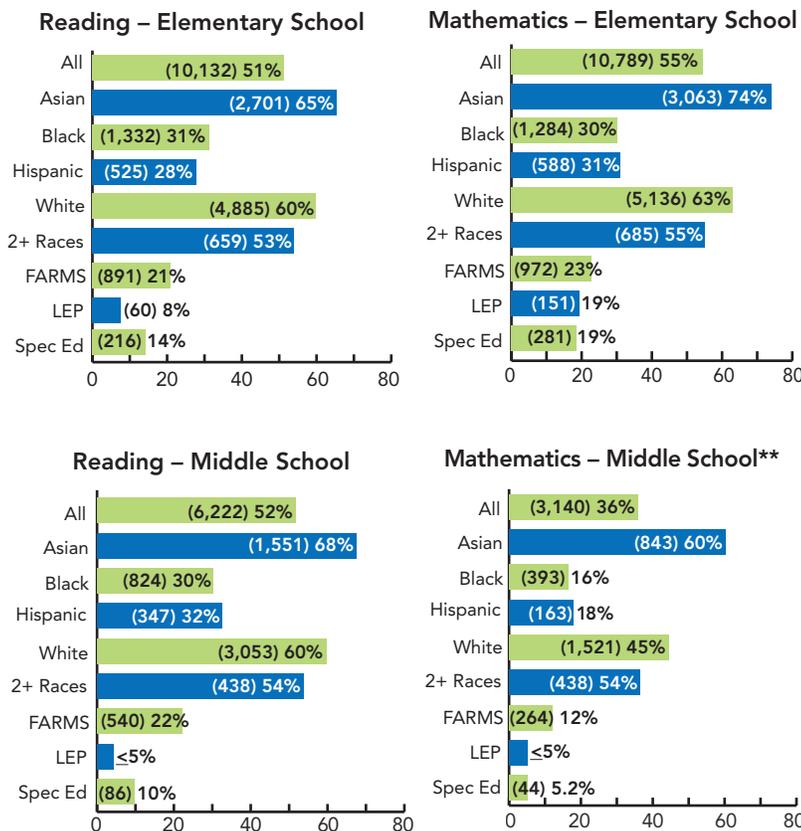
MAP items are aligned to the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards and are anticipated to be predictive of how students might perform on the PARCC (Partnership for the Assessment for Readiness in College and Careers) assessments in reading and mathematics. Student scores can be used to compare against grade-level peers across the district, as well as nationally. Change in an individual student's score from one administration to the next is one tangible way that student growth is made evident to parents, educators, and students.

### Progress

In FY13, MAP was administered as a first-year pilot in six elementary schools, 10 middle schools, and the Homewood Center. The pilot was expanded in FY14 and was administered in 18 elementary schools, all 19 middle schools, and the Homewood Center. In FY15, MAP was fully implemented in all elementary and middle schools, and is administered to students 2–3 times per year. Baseline data for FY15 is provided in Figure 1-15. Scores are reported in Rasch Units (RIT), on a scale that measures student achievement and growth. The RIT scores have the same meaning, regardless of grade. Students taking algebra or higher-level mathematics in middle school are exempt from taking the mathematics MAP.

Figure 1-15

Number and Percent of Students Who Met HCPSS RIT Benchmark on MAP, 2015\*



\* The HCPSS RIT Benchmark is an achievement level that predicts college and career readiness. Results include only students who took the MAP and were in the official EOY attendance file. Excludes Certificate students and first-year ESOL 1 & 2 students. To protect student privacy, numerators corresponding to percentages greater than or equal to 95 and less than or equal to 5 are suppressed.

\*\*Students enrolled in Algebra or higher math courses no longer take the MAP Mathematics.

# GOAL 1: Students

## Focus Area: PERFORMANCE

Outcome 1.5: Students meet or exceed rigorous performance standards.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

- 1.5.1: Continuously monitor individual student achievement and personalize instruction to provide the appropriate level of challenge.
- 1.5.2: Continuously monitor student achievement across grade levels, content areas, and schools for every racial/ethnic group, as well as for students receiving free/reduced-price meals, special education, and English language learner services.

### Description and Value

In 2013, the Maryland State Board of Education adopted the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and schools are currently in the process of fully integrating the new standards. The Science MSA currently assesses students on the previous standards, which may impact a student's performance on the assessment. The MSA is a state-mandated testing program designed to comply with the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). The Science MSA was administered for the first time during FY08 and is administered annually to students in Grades 5 and 8. MSA results are reported as scaled scores and banded in three proficiency levels: basic, proficient, and advanced.

### Progress

#### Grade 5

In FY15, 76.2 percent of Grade 5 HCPSS students scored at the proficient or advanced level in science compared to 63.3 percent of Grade 5 students statewide. Overall, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced on the Science MSA declined from FY13 to FY15 by 2.9 percentage points.

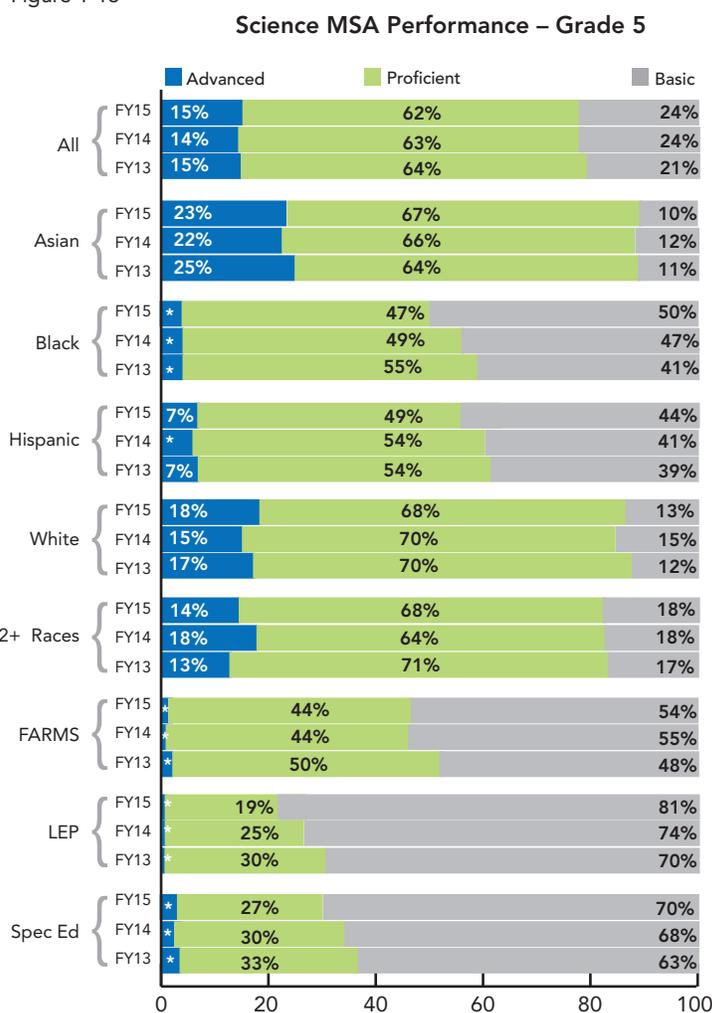
The percentage of Grade 5 test takers scoring proficient or advanced in science increased from FY13 to FY15 for Asian students (1.2 percentage points). The performance gap in

science between the highest performing (Asian) and the lowest performing racial/ethnic student group (Black/African American) was 39.2 percentage points (Figure 1-16).

#### Grade 8

In FY15, 82.5 percent of Grade 8 HCPSS students scored at the proficient or advanced level in science compared to 68.1 percent of students statewide. Overall, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced on the Science MSA declined from FY13 to FY15 by 4.8 percentage points.

Figure 1-16

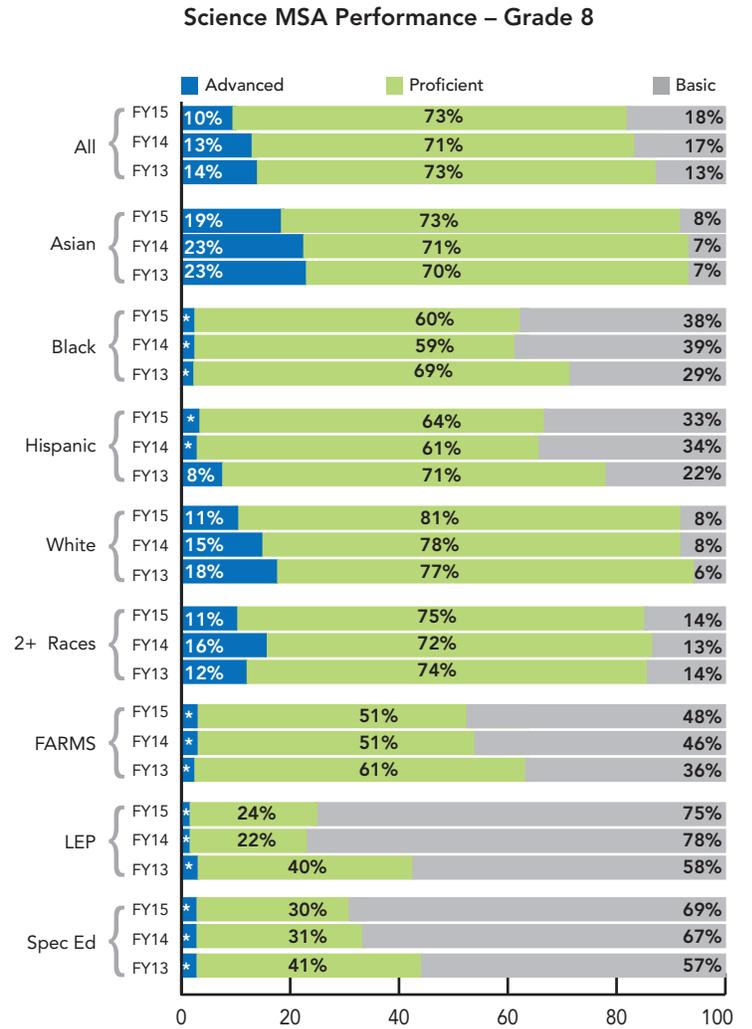


Totals may not add up to 100% due to rounding.  
\* indicates ≤5%.



The performance gap in science between the highest performing (Asian) and the lowest performing racial/ethnic student group (Black/African American) was 30.2 percentage points. (Figure 1-17).

Figure 1-17



Totals may not add up to 100% due to rounding.  
\* indicates ≤5%.

# GOAL 1: Students

## Focus Area: PERFORMANCE

Outcome 1.5: Students meet or exceed rigorous performance standards.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

- 1.5.1: Continuously monitor individual student achievement and personalize instruction to provide the appropriate level of challenge.
- 1.5.2: Continuously monitor student achievement across grade levels, content areas, and schools for every racial/ethnic group, as well as for students receiving free/reduced-price meals, special education, and English language learner services.

### Description and Value

Beginning in FY15, students took the PARCC, a new assessment test designed by the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers. PARCC is a group of states, including Maryland, working together to develop new student assessments aligned with new curriculum standards. Thus, HCPSS began to implement the PARCC assessments in FY15, replacing the reading and mathematics Maryland School Assessments (MSA) in English and mathematics in Grades 3 through 8, and the High School Assessments (HSA) in Algebra I, Algebra II and English 10. The science MSA will continue to be given to students in Grades 5 and 8.

The PARCC tests are designed to match the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards and to provide a better assessment of whether students are meeting grade-level expectations and are on track for college or a career by the time they graduate from high school. In contrast to other assessments, taking the PARCC is an extension to regular instruction, because students experience engaging, real-life texts and solve meaningful problems based on high-quality classroom work. PARCC provides information about students' academic achievement: what they are doing well and where improvement is needed. In addition, built-in accessibility features help all students do their best and expand access for students with disabilities.

The PARCC consortium categorized student scores into five performance levels:

- Level 1: Did not meet expectations
- Level 2: Partially met expectations
- Level 3: Approached expectations
- Level 4: Met expectations
- Level 5: Exceeded expectations

Students performing at levels 4 and 5 are considered to be on track for college and career readiness. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has not determined the cut scores required for passing the PARCC assessments for high school graduation.

### Progress

In FY15, for all HCPSS students overall, 51.9 percent of students in Grades 3-8 met or exceeded expectations to be on track for college and career readiness on the English/Language Arts (ELA) PARCC assessment, and 45.4 percent on the mathematics assessment. This compared to 38.9 percent of test takers in Maryland for ELA, and 29 percent for mathematics.

In FY15, for HCPSS students overall, 45.9 percent met or exceeded expectations to be on track for college and career readiness on the Algebra I PARCC assessment compared to 31.2 percent of all test takers in Maryland. Higher percentages of Black/African American and Hispanic students met the Algebra I college or career readiness expectation in the HCPSS compared to the state average.

In FY15, for HCPSS students overall, 45.2 percent met or exceeded expectations to be on track for college and career readiness on the English 10 PARCC assessment compared to 39.7 percent of all test takers in Maryland.

# GOAL 1: Students

GOAL 1

## Focus Area: PERFORMANCE

Outcome 1.5: Students meet or exceed rigorous performance standards.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies

- 1.5.1: Continuously monitor individual student achievement and personalize instruction to provide the appropriate level of challenge.
- 1.5.2: Continuously monitor student achievement across grade levels, content areas, and schools for every racial/ethnic group, as well as for students receiving free/reduced-price meals, special education, and English language learner services.
- 1.5.3: Provide targeted supports and acceleration programs to close specific achievement gaps within and among content areas and schools.

### Description and Value

The High School Assessment (HSA) is a state-mandated testing program that includes end-of-course assessments in biology and government. Students are required to pass the HSA or meet an approved alternative pathway in order to graduate from high school. FY14 was the final year for the HSAs in algebra and English 10, which were replaced by PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) assessments for students entering Grade 9 in FY15.

### Progress

In FY15, the HSA pass rates for first-time test takers were 92.5 percent for biology and 94.1 percent for government. The Maryland State Department of Education has not yet determined the cut scores for passing the Algebra and English 10 PARCC assessments for graduation.

Figure 1-18 Algebra PARCC, FY15, Levels 4 & 5\*

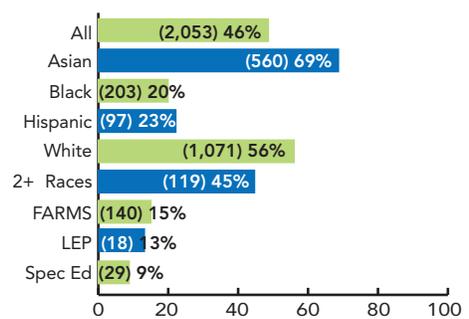
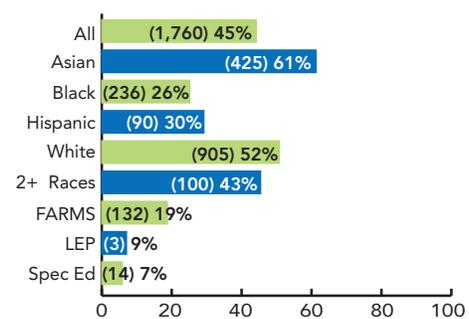


Figure 1-19 English PARCC, FY15, Levels 4 & 5\*



\*Students performing at levels 4 and 5 are considered to be on track for college and career readiness.

Figure 1-20 Biology HSA, FY15

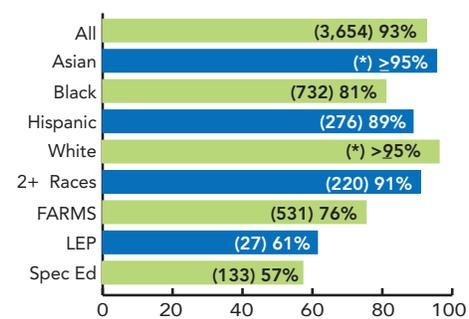
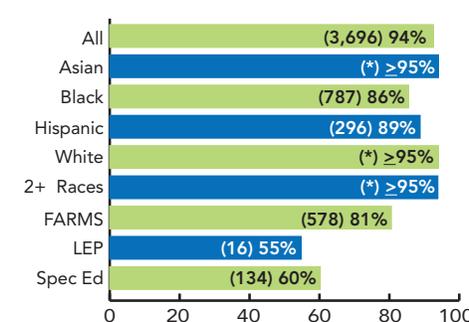


Figure 1-21 Government HSA, FY15



\*(\*) indicates no students or fewer than 10 students in category, or \*(\*) indicates the percentage for the category is either ≤5 or ≥95 and the corresponding counts have been suppressed.

# GOAL 1: Students

## Focus Area: PERFORMANCE

Outcome 1.6: Meaningful measures of student outcomes are in place.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies

- 1.6.3: Implement academic measures that can be benchmarked nationally and internationally.
- 1.6.4: Create clearly articulated, vertical pathways beginning in kindergarten using academic success expectations from both college and career outcome data to provide parents and students with information on progress toward college/career readiness.

### Description and Value

HCPSS covers the cost to administer the PSAT to all Grade 10 and 11 students. The PSAT is a standardized test that measures critical reading, mathematics, and writing skills. Scores on each of the three sections range from 20 to 80, and the composite score ranges from 60 to 240.

Benefits of the PSAT include the following:

- PSAT results can be used by school staff to identify students who may be ready for the rigor of advanced placement coursework.
- The PSAT testing experience can serve as valuable practice for the SAT college entrance exam.
- PSAT is a qualifier for the competitive National Merit Scholarship program.

HCPSS has adopted the College Board PSAT benchmark scores of 145 or higher in Grade 10 and 152 or higher in Grade 11, which indicate that students are on track to be college ready by the time they graduate from high school.

### Progress

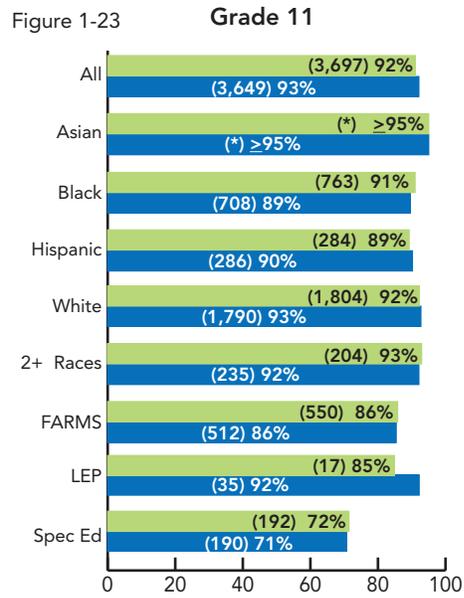
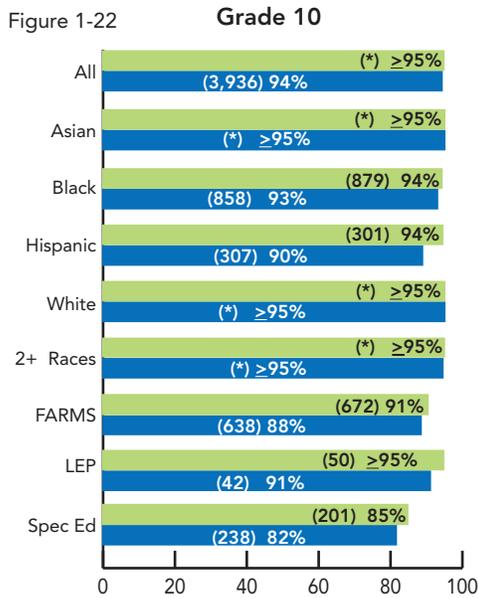
More than 95 percent of Grade 10 students took the PSAT in FY15. The average score was 137.9, compared to 123.8 in Maryland public schools and 125.63 nationwide. More than 41 percent of Grade 10 students met or exceeded the composite score benchmark of 145. (Figure 1-22, Figure 1-24)

More than 92 percent of Grade 11 students took the PSAT in FY15. The average score was 150.4, compared to 138.7 in Maryland public schools and 140.8 nationwide. Nearly 48 percent of Grade 11 students met or exceeded the composite score benchmark of 152. (Figure 1-23, Figure 1-25)

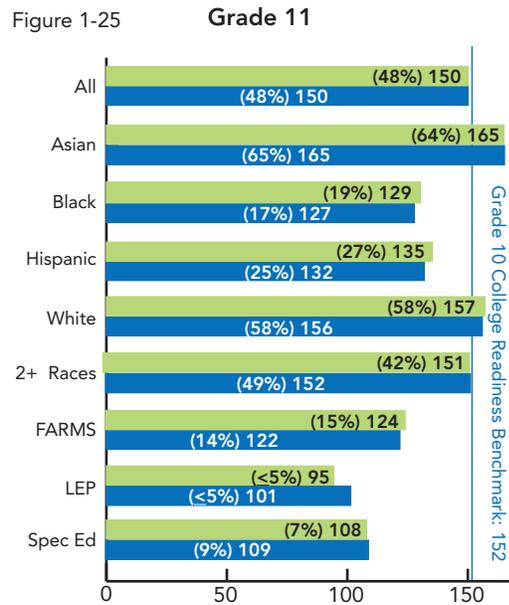
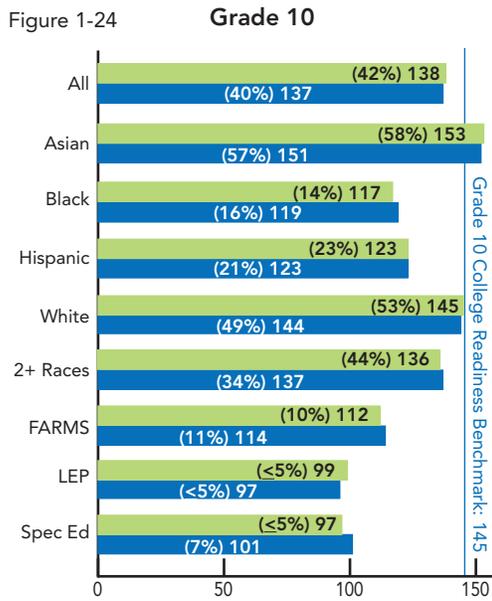


### Number and Percent of Students Who Participated in the PSAT

FY15  
FY14



### Average Score and Percent of PSAT Test-takers meeting Benchmark



\*\* indicates no students or fewer than 10 students in category, or \*\*\* indicates the percentage for the category is either ≤5 or ≥95 and the corresponding counts have been suppressed.

# GOAL 1: Students

## Focus Area: PERFORMANCE

Outcome 1.6: Meaningful measures of student outcomes are in place.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

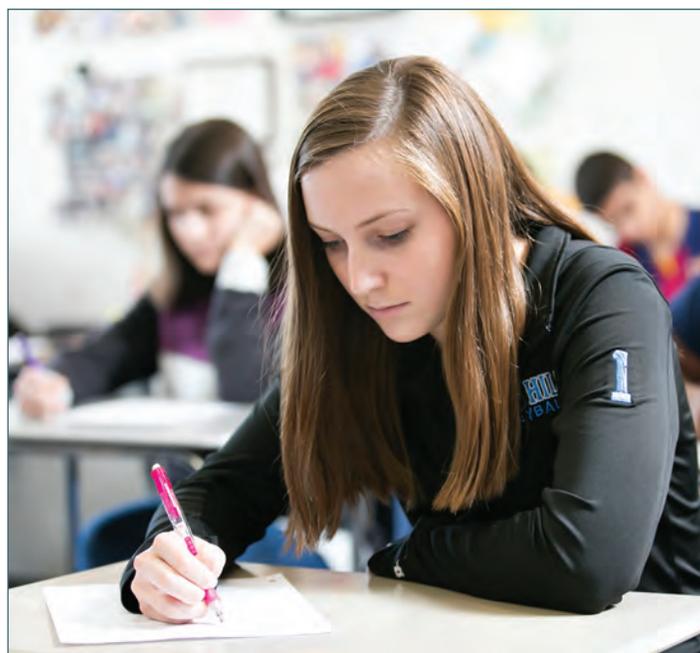
- 1.6.3: Implement academic measures that can be benchmarked nationally and internationally.

### Description and Value

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is the only international education assessment to measure the knowledge and skills of 15-year-olds, an age at which students in most countries are nearing the end of their compulsory schooling.

This assessment was launched in 1997 by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in response to member countries' demands for regular and reliable data on the knowledge and skills of their students and the performance of their education systems. To date, PISA has been administered in over 70 countries and economies — in 2000, 2003, 2006, 2009, and 2012. The next PISA administration is scheduled for 2015. On the 2012 PISA test, the United States ranked 26th in mathematics, 21st in science, and 17th in reading.

In 2012, OECD piloted the OECD Test for Schools, which enables individual schools to compare the performance of a sample of their 15-year-olds to the aggregate results of countries and economies that participated in the most recent PISA administration. This test is a school-level, internationally benchmarked tool that measures reading, math, and science knowledge and skills of 15-year-olds. It also measures key competencies such as critical thinking and problem solving as students are expected to apply their mastery of rigorous reading, math, and science content. The OECD Test for Schools was piloted in 105 American high schools in 2012. In 2013, it became available to all U.S. high schools.



### Progress

In February 2014, the HCPSS administered the OECD Test for Schools to a random sampling of 15-year-olds in each of our high schools. HCPSS high schools were among 285 U.S. schools, from 119 districts across 27 states, taking part in the test. Composite results are provided for each school and district; results for individual students are not recorded.

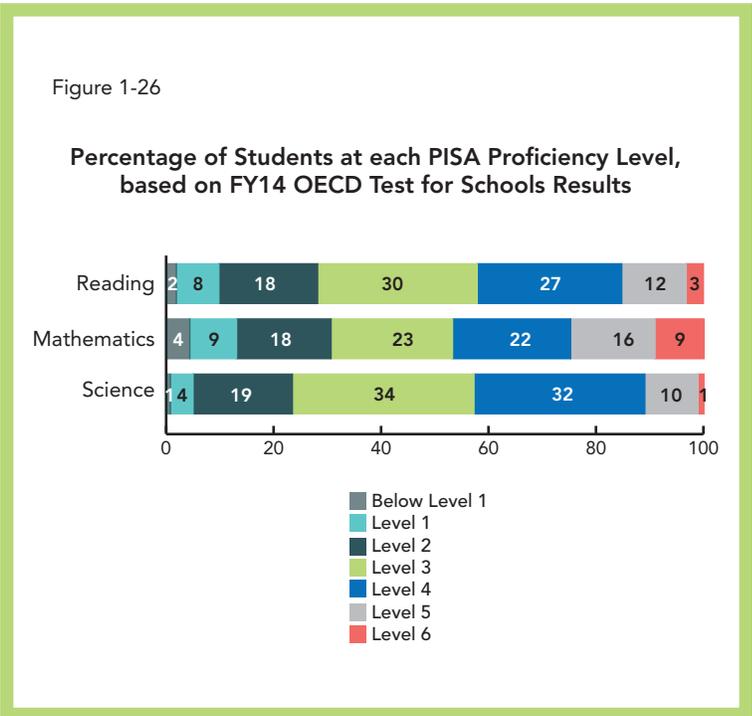
Most HCPSS high schools are performing as well as, or better than, the world's leading nations in educational performance, according to the results of the first OECD Test for Schools administered in Howard County as compared to the 2012 PISA test international results. Results in reading show that 11 HCPSS schools ranked above the United States' mean on the 2012 PISA test. Globally, seven of the HCPSS high schools' mean reading performances were within the top ten PISA national/regional means. In math, ten HCPSS schools ranked above the U.S. average, and eight of the schools delivered performance that was within the top ten international economies' overall PISA math averages. In science, all 12 HCPSS high schools scored above the U.S. overall mean, and seven schools' means ranked within the top five international economies' overall PISA science mean performances.



Students can be grouped into six levels of proficiency on the OECD Test for Schools. Students below Level 1 do not have the skills necessary to enter the labor market. Level 2 is an important threshold, as PISA considers it to be a baseline level of proficiency at which students begin to demonstrate the competencies that enable them to participate effectively and productively in life as successful students, workers, and citizens. At the upper end of performance, Levels 5 and 6 are the highest levels of proficiency in PISA and are considered to be “world-class” and highly competitive. Figure 1-26 displays the distribution of HCPSS students who took the OECD Test for Schools across the six PISA proficiency levels for reading, mathematics, and science.

Learning engagement and school culture are closely associated with academic performance, and the test includes a survey to gauge students’ perceptions in these areas. HCPSS administrators are making use of both the achievement metrics and survey data to refine strategies for enhancing the rigor of the instructional program and to increase students’ engagement in learning. Both strategies are key priorities of Vision 2018, the HCPSS strategic plan.

HCPSS administers the OECD test for schools on a two-year cycle, with the next testing scheduled to take place in February 2016.



# GOAL 1: Students

## Focus Area: PERFORMANCE

Outcome 1.6: Meaningful measures of student outcomes are in place.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies

- 1.6.3: Implement academic measures that can be benchmarked nationally and internationally.
- 1.6.4: Create clearly articulated, vertical pathways beginning in kindergarten using academic success expectations from both college and career outcome data to provide parents and students with information on progress toward college/career readiness.

### Description and Value

The SAT and ACT are the two most widely used college entrance exams in the United States. The SAT is taken more frequently in Howard County than the ACT.

The SAT is a standardized test designed to measure high school level knowledge in three sections: critical reading, writing, and mathematics. Each section is scored on a scale that ranges from 200 to 800. The maximum total of 2400, the composite score, is comprised of scores from all three sections. Most students take the SAT during their junior or senior year of high school, and almost all colleges and universities consider the SAT, in addition to other student information, when making admission decisions.

The ACT assesses high school students' general education development and their ability to complete college-level work in four

skill areas: English, mathematics, reading, and science. The score range for each of the four tests is 1 to 36. The composite score is the average of the four test scores earned during a single test administration, rounded to the nearest whole number. ACT results are accepted by all four-year colleges and universities in the U.S.

Many community colleges accept an SAT mean score of 550 on each subtest for entry into credit-bearing courses. HCPSS has defined college readiness as attaining an SAT score of 1650 or higher or an ACT score of 24 or higher.

HCPSS expects each high school to continually increase the percentage of students meeting these HCPSS College and Career Readiness Benchmarks:

- At least 80 percent of graduates will take the SAT or ACT by the end of Grade 12. This expectation is for students overall, students receiving FARM services, and students within each race/ethnicity student group with five or more students.
- At least 30 percent of SAT/ACT test takers earn a 1650 or higher on the SAT or a 24 or higher on the ACT by the end of Grade 12.



Figure 1-27

**Participation in a College Preparation Test (SAT and/or ACT) by June Graduates**

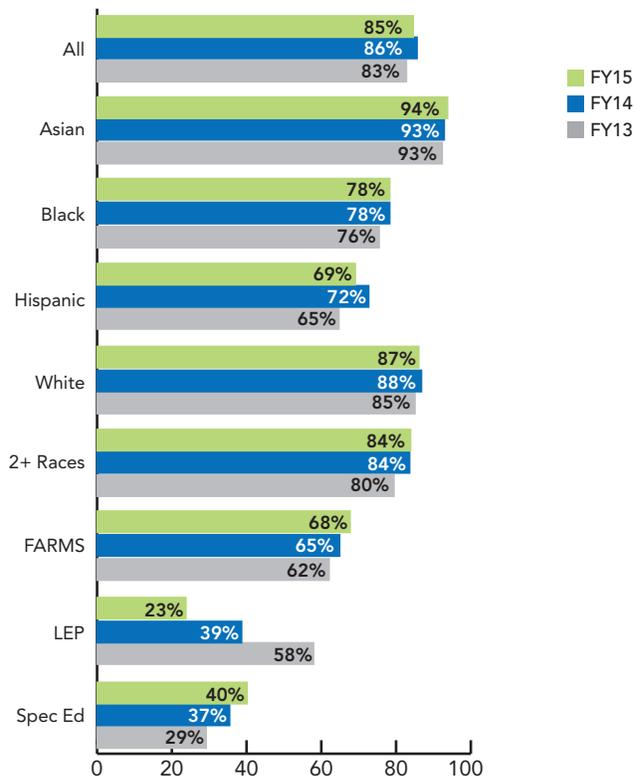
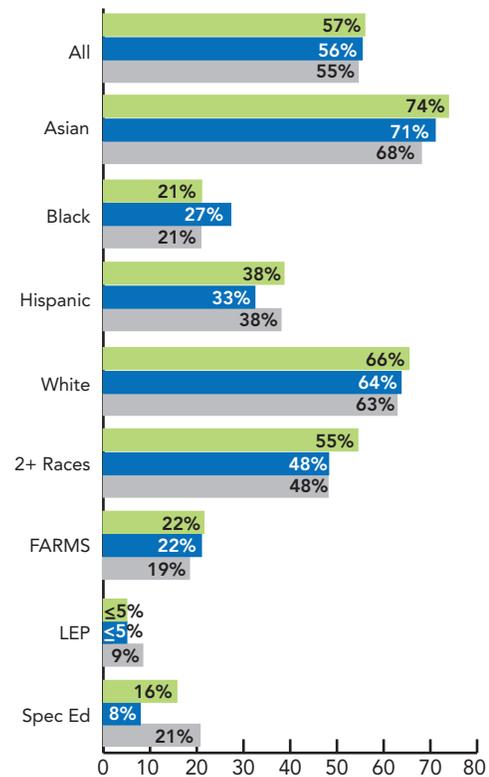


Figure 1-28

**Performance on a College Preparation Test  
Percentage of June Graduates scoring 1650+ on SAT or 24+ on ACT**



**Progress**

HCPSS continues to outperform the state and nation on the SAT according to the data for the graduating class of 2015. Among graduating HCPSS seniors, 82.3 percent took the SAT during high school. The average SAT score for HCPSS graduates in the class of 2015 was 1656, 222 points greater than the average for all Maryland schools (434) and 94 points greater than the average for all schools nationwide (1462).

The FY15 HCPSS mean SAT combined score of 1656 is 3 points greater than the mean SAT combined score of 1653 in FY13. The mean SAT combined score for 2015 graduates who received FARM services was 13 points higher than their peers in 2013.

Historically, most students in Howard County have opted to take the SAT. However, in recent years, many Howard County students are taking both assessments. Nearly 32

percent of HCPSS graduates in the class of 2015 took the ACT, an increase of 6.5 percentage points over the 2013 graduating class. The HCPSS average ACT composite score continues to be greater than the national and state averages. The average ACT composite score in FY15 was 21.0 nationally, 22.7 in Maryland, and 24.6 in HCPSS.

Nearly 85 percent of 2015 HCPSS graduates took either the SAT or ACT (Figure 1-27). Over 56 percent of 2015 HCPSS high school graduates were deemed college ready according to the SAT/ACT indicator. Since FY13, an increasing trend in the percentage of graduates who received FARM services who met SAT/ACT college readiness criteria is observed (Figure 1-28).

# GOAL 1: Students

## Focus Area: WELL-BEING

Outcome 1.7: Schools support the social and emotional safety and well-being of all students.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

- 1.7.2: Model and reinforce civility and appropriate positive behavior.

### Alignment and Impact

Creating a safe, engaging, and supportive environment has proven to help increase attendance in schools and decrease overall absenteeism. All schools within HCPSS include objectives and strategies as part of their School Improvement Plan that address student attendance rates. School staffs monitor student attendance at the school level and for individual students. Lowering individual student absences has an overall impact on maintaining or exceeding the 94 percent attendance rate for the school and student groups.

In order to maintain the 94 percent rate for all student groups, Student Services Teams, including the Pupil Personnel Worker, regularly monitor attendance data. Students who are identified as having attendance concerns (e.g., 15 to 20 percent absence rate each month) receive targeted interventions, such as Check In/Check Out (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports), school counselor involvement, letters home, and/or conferences with parents/guardians.

### Progress

At the elementary, middle, and high school levels, student attendance rates exceeded the 94 percent standard for students overall and for each racial/ethnic student group, over the three-year span, FY13–15. Students in elementary and middle school receiving FARM services, LEP services, or special education services also met the 94 percent standard over the three-year span. Students receiving FARM services or special education services at the high

school level did not meet the 94 percent standard over the three year span. High school students receiving LEP services met or exceeded the 94 percent standard for FY13 and 14; however, they did not meet the standard for FY 15. (Table 1-N)

Table 1-N

HCPSS Elementary School Attendance			
	FY13	FY14	FY15
<b>All</b>	<b>≥95.0</b>	<b>≥95.0</b>	<b>≥95.0</b>
Asian	≥95.0	≥95.0	≥95.0
Black	≥95.0	≥95.0	≥95.0
Hispanic	≥95.0	≥95.0	≥95.0
White	≥95.0	≥95.0	≥95.0
2+ Races	≥95.0	≥95.0	≥95.0
FARMS	≥95.0	≥95.0	94.8
LEP	≥95.0	≥95.0	≥95.0
Special Education	≥95.0	≥95.0	94.7
Middle School Attendance			
	FY13	FY14	FY15
<b>All</b>	<b>≥95.0</b>	<b>≥95.0</b>	<b>≥95.0</b>
Asian	≥95.0	≥95.0	≥95.0
Black	≥95.0	≥95.0	≥95.0
Hispanic	≥95.0	≥95.0	≥95.0
White	≥95.0	≥95.0	≥95.0
2+ Races	≥95.0	≥95.0	≥95.0
FARMS	94.9	94.8	94.2
LEP	≥95.0	≥95.0	≥95.0
Special Education	94.6	94.5	94.1
High School Attendance			
	FY13	FY14	FY15
<b>All</b>	<b>≥95.0</b>	<b>≥95.0</b>	<b>≥95.0</b>
Asian	≥95.0	≥95.0	≥95.0
Black	94.8	≥95.0	≥95.0
Hispanic	94.5	94.5	94.4
White	≥95.0	≥95.0	≥95.0
2+ Races	94.9	≥95.0	≥95.0
FARMS	93.1	93.6	93.5
LEP	≥95.0	94.1	93.8
Special Education	92.9	93.9	93.4

# GOAL 1: Students

GOAL 1

## Focus Area: WELL-BEING

Outcome 1.7: Schools support the social and emotional safety and well-being of all students.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

- 1.7.2: Model and reinforce civility and appropriate positive behavior.

#### Suspension

To comply with federal requirements, HCPSS is following the guidance set forth by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) in the reporting of out-of-school suspension rates. The changes were designed to maximize the information provided to the public while also protecting the privacy of small identifiable groups of students. Thus, any suspension rates less than or equal to 3.0 percent are reported as  $\leq 3.0$  percent. As a result, no figure shows any value less than 3.0 percent, even when the suspension rates may have been lower for any student group.

COMAR regulation (13A.08.01.21) requires local school systems to report instances of disproportionality to MSDE beginning in FY16 to determine whether there is a disproportionate impact on minority students or a discrepant impact on special education students.

#### Description and Value

Creating a safe, engaging, and supportive environment helps decrease student behaviors that may lead to suspension. Equally important is that every student has access to a rigorous curriculum, which is accomplished through regular attendance and participation. HCPSS has implemented multiple strategies that support regular attendance and work toward the reduction of suspensions. Specifically, schools have implemented Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Restorative Practices, Bullying Prevention, Character Education, and other methods to improve overall school climate and ultimately have an effect on decreasing suspensions. School teams systemically address suspension rates and regularly

review suspensions for individuals and groups of students. Additionally, HCPSS is committed to eliminating all disproportionate suspension rates for Black/African American students, Hispanic students, and students receiving special education and FARM services.

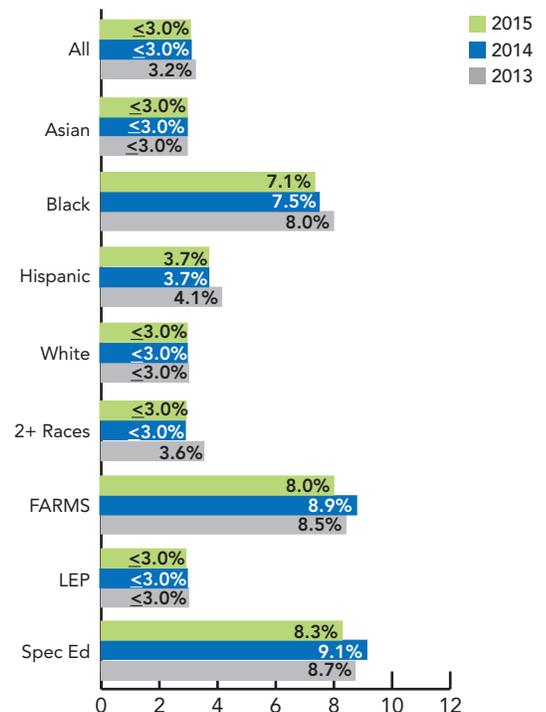
#### Progress

In FY15,  $\leq 3.0$  percent of HCPSS students K–12 were suspended compared to 4.0 percent of students statewide. Overall, the percentage of HCPSS students being suspended decreased from FY13 to FY15 by 0.2 percentage point. (Figure 1-29)

In FY15, the race/ethnicity student groups with the highest suspension rates were Black/African American and Hispanic (7.1 and 3.7 percent, respectively). Students receiving FARM services and students receiving special education services had the highest suspension rates for students receiving special services (8.0 and 8.3 percent, respectively).

Figure 1-29

#### Suspension Rate for All HCPSS Students, FY13–FY15



The percentage of HCPSS K–12 students suspended decreased or remained the same, from FY13 to FY15 for each racial/ethnic student group and for students receiving FARM services and special education services.

The largest decrease in suspension rates was 0.9 percentage point for Black/African American students.

**Elementary School**

In FY15, ≤3.0 percent of elementary school students were suspended. Overall, the percentage of elementary school students being suspended remained the same from FY13 to FY15. The percentage of elementary school students suspended from FY14 to FY15 indicate decreases for the Black/African American group, students receiving FARM services, and special education services by 0.3, 0.9, and 0.8, respectively. (Figure 1-30)

**Middle School**

In FY15, 4.7 percent of middle school students were suspended, a slight increase from FY14. Overall, the percentage of middle school students being suspended decreased slightly from FY13 to FY15 by 0.5 percentage points. The percentage of middle school students suspended in all student groups, with the exception of Hispanic students — 7.2 in FY13 and 7.3 in FY15 —

decreased from FY13 to FY15. The highest reduction was 2.0 percentage points for students receiving special education services. (Figure 1-31)

**High School**

In FY15, 3.7 percent of high school students were suspended. Overall, the percentage of high school students being suspended decreased from FY13 to FY15 by 1.0 percentage point.

In FY15, the racial/ethnic student groups with the highest suspension rates were Black/African American and Hispanic (8.7 and 5.5 percent, respectively). Students receiving FARM services and special education services had the highest suspension rates, 11.0 and 11.0 percent, respectively. The percentage of high school students suspended decreased from FY13 to FY15 for each race/ethnicity student group. The largest reduction was with the Black/African American student group, declining by 1.8 percentage points from FY13 to FY15. The percentage of students suspended who receive FARM services and special education services decreased slightly, 0.8 and 0.2 percentage points, respectively. Declines for suspended students receiving FARMS and LEP services from FY14 to FY15 are noted, 1.8 and 2.3 respectively. (Figure 1-32)

HCPSS Suspension Rates by Level, FY13–FY15

Figure 1-30

Elementary School Students

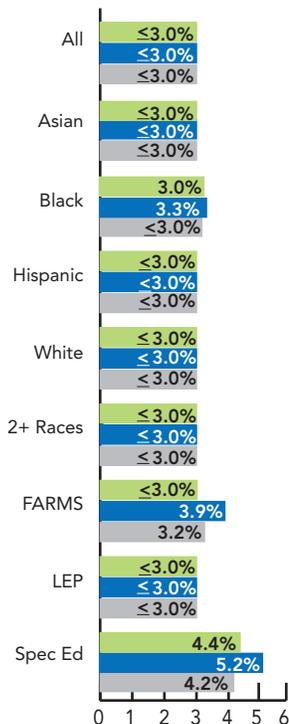


Figure 1-31

Middle School Students

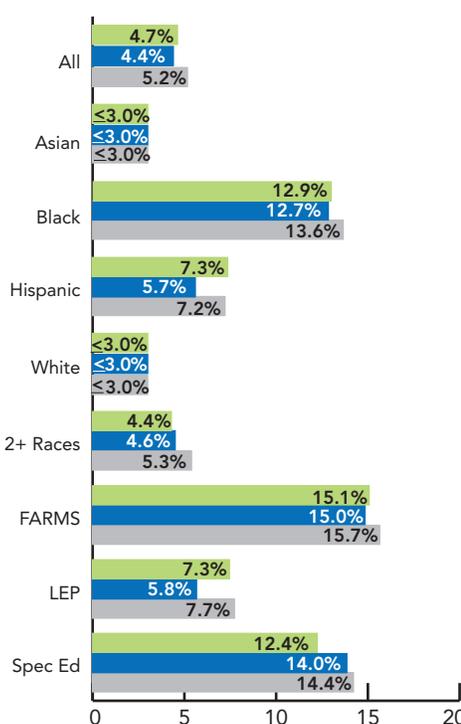
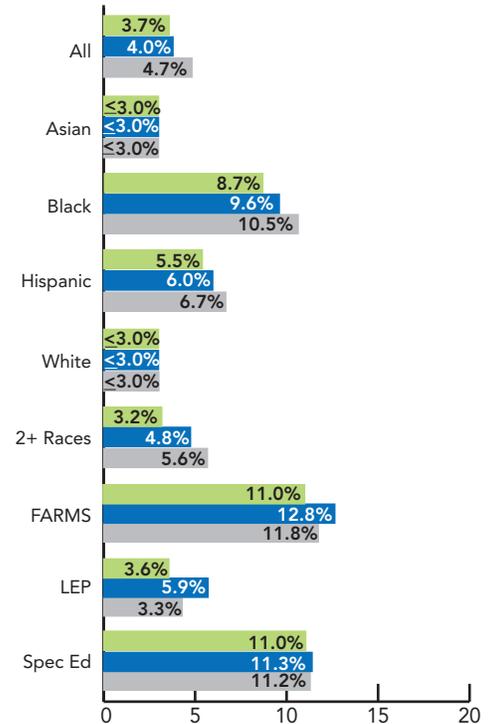


Figure 1-32

High School Students



# GOAL 1: Students

GOAL 1

## Focus Area: WELL-BEING

Outcome 1.7: Schools support the social and emotional safety and well-being of all students.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies

- 1.7.3: Provide developmentally appropriate instruction on social and emotional safety and well-being, respect for peers, empathy, and personal strengths.
- 1.7.4: Collaborate with the community and county government to provide easily accessible, appropriate mental health services and supports for students in Pre-K through Grade 12.
- 1.7.6: Strengthen professional learning in safeguarding students' social and emotional safety and well-being.
- 1.7.7: Strengthen staff collaboration to support students' social and emotional safety and well-being.

### Description and Value

The HCPSS Crisis Intervention Teams provide holistic and thoughtfully planned crisis preparation and response for students, staff, families, and the community. There are two levels of crisis teams in the county. School-based crisis teams provide crisis intervention under the leadership of the principal and student services team. The HCPSS Cluster Crisis Team is a district-level response team available to provide assistance to school-based staff as needed. This assistance varies from crisis to crisis and can include consultation and/or direct support.

In FY15, there were 53 crisis events. The Cluster Crisis Team leadership provided consultation for 66 schools and direct support at 20 schools. One crisis event, the Baltimore City riots, impacted the school system and community at large, with a range of responses required across the school system.

In addition to providing consultation and direct supports, the HCPSS Crisis Intervention Team leadership group plans and delivers crisis trainings for school-based staff. Every year, school-based crisis teams have the opportunity to attend up to three trainings designed to help teams prepare for possible crisis responses. The members of the Cluster Crisis Team receive two additional days of training in crisis intervention. These trainings play a crucial role in helping prepare school staff for supporting the safety and emotional well-being of the students and mitigating the impact of crises on school communities.

### Progress

Qualitative feedback from community members, Student Services Advisory Committee members, Mental Health Task Force members, Anti-Bully Task Force members, staff, and parents has been resoundingly positive. Comments about crisis responses include:

- Appreciation from Grassroots, Mental Health Authority, and Howard County Health Department for resource sharing.
- Multiple thank you letters from principals following crisis responses in their buildings.
- Appreciations of guidance and support from Student Services team members at impacted schools.
- Positive feedback from school staff attending crisis trainings, with frequent requests for more trainings and/or for more members of their teams to attend.

# GOAL 1: Students

## Focus Area: WELL-BEING

Outcome 1.8: Schools support student well-being and the development of balanced lifestyles.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies

- 1.8.4: Promote physical activity as a part of every child's daily routine.
- 1.8.5: Expand healthy options for all food and beverages provided to students.

### Description and Value

Research demonstrates a strong connection between health and wellness and student achievement. Students need nourishing foods and physical activity in order to grow, learn, and thrive. HCPSS strives to ensure a safe and healthy learning environment for all students, and to help students develop the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to adopt and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

### Progress

Policy 9090 Wellness Through Nutrition and Physical Activity, was revised effective July 1, 2014 to further incorporate nutrition education, physical activity, and a variety of healthy food and beverage choices into the school day.

The new policy includes the following provisions:

- Breakfast available in all schools.
- Recess may not be taken away as punishment.
- Food/beverages will not be offered as a reward or withheld as a punishment.
- HCPSS has adopted the IOM nutritional standards to ensure that students have access to nutritious food and beverages for school meals as well as snack and a la carte items purchased in school cafeterias. HCPSS is among the first school systems nationally to have adopted these standards.

- Vending machines – allowed at high school level only; after school day ends. All selections must comply with Institute of Medicine (IOM) Nutritional Standards.
- All food and beverages sold or given to students, including a la carte and snack/dessert items, will comply with the IOM Nutrition Standards.
- Professional development will be provided to teachers to help them learn “brain break” strategies to get students up and moving throughout the day; this has been proven to improve learning.
- A principal may permit food and/or beverages in conjunction with a special celebration no more than 12 times per year after the end of the last lunch period. Such events may not replace the food service provided that day by the Food and Nutrition Service. The foods and beverages served will be prepared commercially in licensed facilities. Schools are encouraged to develop alternatives to the use of food for celebrations.
- No candy, soda, or artificially flavored drinks that do not contain pure fruit juices will be sold or given without charge to students during the school day.
- Concession sellers are encouraged to offer healthier options, and to consider fundraisers that do not involve food and beverages.

During FY15, the policy implementation procedures were revised to allow all schools to hold an annual celebration that is exempt from following the IOM Nutrition Standards.

Several additional areas have been identified for possible changes. These will require long-term study and collaboration before final decision and implementation.

- Recess time: Additional time at elementary level, and designated time at middle school level. Currently, elementary students have 30 minutes of recess per day, not combined with lunch. Middle school recess is combined with lunch period; students can choose to go to recess after they finish eating; there is no separate recess period.
- Additional time spent in physical education instruction
- Intramural sports.
- After-school food sales, including at After-Proms held in schools.

# GOAL 2: Staff

Every staff member is engaged, supported, and successful.



GOAL 2

FOCUS AREA	OUTCOMES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
COLLABORATION	2.1 Staff members experience a culture of trust, transparency, and collaboration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff HUB implementation, p. 53</li> </ul>
ENGAGEMENT	2.2 Staff members have access to learning experiences that support their professional growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highly effective leaders, p. 54</li> <li>• Staff with advanced degrees and National Board Certification, p. 56</li> <li>• Culturally proficient staff, p. 58</li> </ul>
PERFORMANCE	2.3 Staff members are held accountable for and supported in meeting standards-based performance expectations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom teachers and principals rated effective or highly effective, p. 60</li> </ul>
WELL-BEING	2.4 HCPSS supports staff members' health and well-being.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff engagement, p. 62</li> <li>• Employee wellness program participation, p. 64</li> </ul>



## Goal 2 Overview

### Every staff member is engaged, supported, and successful.

Our system's core mission is to cultivate a vibrant learning community that prepares students to thrive in a dynamic world. This mission can only be realized if the adults in our school system have a high level of engagement in their careers, and are supported professionally and personally. The outcomes and strategies under Goal 2 are designed to help staff members thrive and grow in a collaborative, supportive, and respectful environment with clearly established performance expectations. Significant progress was made in this goal area throughout the 2014–15 school year.

Research shows that employees who report high levels of satisfaction and personal reward in work that leverages their strengths typically demonstrate significantly higher levels of effectiveness. To this end, HCPSS entered a partnership with Gallup, Inc., in 2013 to measure and increase levels of engagement among staff and students. In fact, Howard County is the only school system in Maryland using both Gallup staff and student surveys to focus on engagement and strengths development as a catalyst for student achievement. The staff engagement initiative was designed to help each employee grow professionally by building upon their strengths.

Results of the Fall 2015 Gallup engagement survey indicated positive trends in staff engagement levels. The staff survey results showed a marked increase in the proportion of employees who are fully engaged in their work, with an increase of 6 percentage points over the

2014 survey, and 12 percentage points over 2013. Teacher engagement was up 8 percentage points over last year. The survey drew responses from 88 percent of system employees, an increase of 4 percentage points over the 2014 survey.

School and system leaders have taken the Clifton StrengthsFinder Assessment to deepen their understanding of their own strengths and the role that strengths play in maximizing leadership potential and building highly effective teams. Staff in schools and offices throughout the system use the results of the annual staff engagement surveys to identify opportunities for growth and improvement.

HCPSS partnered with McDaniel College to launch Teachers for Tomorrow (T4T), an innovative program to develop a more diverse county workforce, lift students from poverty, and help to eliminate gaps in learning achievement. Full scholarships enable low-income students with strong academic potential to attend McDaniel, with a commitment to work in HCPSS schools for three years.

Each winter, HCPSS welcomes a delegation of South Korean science teachers who visit classrooms to study best practices in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) instruction. Both the Korean and HCPSS teachers apply insights from the cross-cultural experience to their own teaching.

HCPSS established a focused process to build a pipeline of school leaders, by identifying and nurturing teachers who show leadership strengths and potential. During FY15, Superintendent Renee A. Foose offered the first in an ongoing series of three-hour leadership case study analysis sessions for teachers aspiring to be school based leaders. The sessions use an innovative approach to case study analysis that incorporates decision-making, data analysis, and problem-solving.

HCPSS encourages and supports teachers in achieving National Board Certification (NBC), the highest-level credential in the educational profession. Twelve HCPSS teachers earned certification or recertification this year, bringing the total number of HCPSS board-certified teachers to 148 — one of the highest levels of participation among state districts.

HCPSS staff recognition programs honor outstanding achievements. Several employees received a 2015 Crystal Flame Award for their dedication and innovative work in support of the four goals of Vision 2018. The system is also extremely proud that the 2014 Howard County Teacher of the Year was named 2015 Maryland Teacher of the Year, and the 2015 county Teacher of the Year was selected a state teacher of the year finalist.

The high caliber of HCPSS staff is also evident in the numerous awards and recognitions earned each year from industry and community organizations. Each year, *The Washington Post* recognizes a school-based administrator and a classroom teacher with awards for outstanding educators. Other awards earned by HCPSS staff during the 2014–15 school year include:

- National Society of High School Scholars Claes Nobel Educator of the Year
- National Federation of State High School Associations' Coaches Association National Coach of the Year
- Grammy Music Educator of the Year semifinalist
- Maryland State Athletic Director of the Year
- Maryland School Counselor Association Middle School Counselor of the Year
- Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals National Distinguished Principal
- Maryland Council of Teachers of Mathematics Middle School Mathematics Teacher Award
- Maryland Council of Teachers of Mathematics Beginning Mathematics Teacher Award
- Maryland State Advisory Council on Gifted and Talented Education Outstanding Educator in Gifted and Talented Education—Teacher as Leader Award
- ARC of Maryland and the ARC of Howard County Excellence in Schools Award



- Baltimore Ravens High School Coach of the Year
- Howard County Arts Council Outstanding Arts Educator
- Howard County Music Educator of the Year
- HCPSS Language Teacher of the Year

The Commit to Be Fit wellness program, launched in 2011, delivers significant annual returns in employee well-being while helping to contain rising health care costs. The prevention-oriented program is focused on encouraging healthy habits through a combination of rewards and positive reinforcement. A comprehensive data and reporting system tracks participation and return on investment. HCPSS was recognized by the American Heart Association for its commitment to workplace wellness.

Hundreds of employees, retirees, and their families attended the second annual HCPSS Health and Wellness Expo, featuring wellness activities and demonstrations, free health screenings, and vendor exhibits. Last year's event featured a presentation by acclaimed neurologist Dr. Majid Fotuhi.

Let's GoHoCo, the HCPSS community annual 5K and 1 mile Fun Run, brings together HCPSS employees, students, families, and community members each fall for a celebration of health and wellbeing. The first event held in October 2014 drew more than 2,500 participants, and more than 3,200 took part in October 2015.

Progress on key Goal 2 measures is detailed on the following pages.

# GOAL 2: Staff

## Focus Area: COLLABORATION

Outcome 2.1: Staff members experience a culture of trust, transparency, and collaboration.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies

- 2.1.1: Build structures for cross-functional collaboration among offices and schools.
- 2.1.3: Build structures for vertical and horizontal collaboration among schools.
- 2.1.6: Provide timely, relevant, and easily accessible information.

### Description and Value

Staff Hub, organized by communities, provides a venue for engaging staff in collaboration with colleagues and the delivery of timely and relevant information.

Employees are organized into communities by job code. Employees may self-select additional communities based on other roles and interests. Once logged in, employees see only 4–5 communities on their user dashboard, simplifying the number of locations a staff member has to visit.

All employees are members of the Staff News and Employee Engagement and Well-being communities. The two communities are used to push system-level priority information, enabling consistent messages to be delivered across employee groups and buildings. The past practices of posting similar content in various locations and multiple times are no longer needed. Both practices were found to be inefficient and diluted overall messaging.

Employees can customize their Staff Hub experience by designating how they wish to consume new information. Several options are available for notification of new information including a daily email digest, individual emails, and Staff Hub dashboard notifications.



Staff Hub is integrated with our account system, allowing staff to utilize the same credentials as many other HCPSS online services. Staff Hub's open source framework has been modified to create an integrated link-set that allows staff to efficiently navigate, without additional logins where possible, to other HCPSS online systems.

Mobile devices access Staff Hub without the need for an application. The site is responsive to any screen size and repositions items to allow for the best mobile viewing experience.

### Progress

- **100%** of all staff receive Staff Hub notifications
- **98** communities built
- **6,500** unique visitors weekly
- **18,000–21,000** page views per day
- **12,398** staff members and temporary employees receive communications
- **3.5 million** emails sent

# GOAL 2: Staff

## Focus Area: ENGAGEMENT

Outcome 2.2: Staff members have access to learning experiences that support their professional growth.



GOAL 2

### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies

- 2.2.1: Provide professional learning for staff members to enhance interpersonal and leadership skills, deepen job-specific knowledge, and grow in their professional practice.
- 2.2.2: Provide expanded options for professional learning through flexible scheduling, online opportunities, and 24/7 access to online support resources.
- 2.1.5: Provide professional learning to foster effective communication, respect, and collaboration in a diverse environment.

### Description and Value

HCPSS invests in developing highly effective leaders through the professional learning opportunities offered by the Office of Leadership Development. Guided by the vision that every leader is highly effective and engaged, the mission of the Office of Leadership Development is to recruit, develop, and retain world-class leaders through customized professional learning experiences.

Customized professional learning experiences, based on leadership standards, are available to teachers, instructional team leaders, administrators, paraprofessionals, and central office staff. Initiatives serve each level along the continuum of: Aspiring Leader, Emerging Leader, and Practicing Leader (Table 2-A.) Professional learning opportunities enhance leadership skills, knowledge, and attitudes in the context of Vision 2018 and provide job-embedded and systemic instructional leadership development as well as growth experiences focused on the 2013 Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Table 2-A

Level	Description of Leadership Level	Leadership Initiative
Aspiring	Staff seeking a leadership position, but not currently in a leadership position.	School-based Aspiring Leaders program, Leadership Case Study Analysis, Cultural Proficiency – Levels I and II
Emerging	Staff in the beginning years of their leadership position.	ITL* Orientation, ITL Leadership Cohorts, Emerging Leaders CPD**, Cultural Proficiency – Levels I and II
Practicing	Staff with several years of experience in their leadership position.	Leadership Fellows, Coaching, Leadership I and II, Cultural Proficiency Level III

\*ITL – Instructional Team Leader

\*\* CPD – Continuing Professional Development

Organizational support includes customized site-based experiences supporting teams with communication skills and conflict resolution, and intense experiences that build skills and visioning through mentoring, coaching, and collaborative support. The system provides customized supports for offices to build the leadership capacity within departments, offices, and schools. A recent example includes using Gallup’s StrengthsFinder with principals, assistant principals, and the Division of Operations to support staff engagement.

While our leadership development initiatives directly elevate the level of professionalism of staff, these initiatives also affect the well-being of the organization as a whole, supporting Outcome 4.2: HCPSS hires and retains a talented, effective, and diverse workforce.



## Professional Learning for Leaders

### Leadership Fellows

Leadership Fellows is a year-long professional learning opportunity. Working within a professional learning community, participants in the program engage in transformative experiences that support the development of their potential as a system leader. Fellows are challenged to utilize their new skills and knowledge to develop collaborative and innovative solutions that address school system needs. (Table 2-B)

Table 2-B

Participation in Leadership Development Professional Learning			
Program	FY13	FY14	FY15
Leadership Fellows	13	20	20
Emerging Leaders CPD*	13	14	10
Customized supports for schools/office	48	331	396

\* CPD – Continuing Professional Development

HCPSS has begun a focused process to build a pipeline of school leaders, by identifying and nurturing teachers who show leadership strengths and potential. During FY15, Superintendent Renee A. Foose offered the first in an ongoing series of three-hour leadership case study analysis sessions for teachers aspiring to be school based leaders.

### Instructional Team Leaders

Instructional Team Leaders (ITLs) are provided leadership growth opportunities, which include three-day cohorts designed to enhance the ITL's leadership skills and provide job-embedded leadership development and growth experiences. Also, newly appointed ITLs participate in a two-day orientation that supports the new ITL in developing an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the Instructional Team Leader. (Figure 2-1, Table 2-C)

Figure 2-1



### Emerging Leaders Continuing Professional Development

– The six-month course is designed to provide all candidates in the Assistant Principal Pool with an opportunity to enhance their leadership skills in preparation for appointment as an assistant principal, and provide professional learning to support their understanding of the 2013 Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching.

**Coaching** – This high-leverage skill/strategy is woven throughout professional learning for leaders. It is designed to increase leaders' effectiveness in using a collaborative observation process with teachers and foster coach-like behaviors between and among leaders. A focus group of system leaders provided input on the structure of coaching classes and future opportunities to better customize offerings. New principals and Leadership Fellows are provided professional coaches as part of their development.



## Progress

The system continues to expand opportunities to develop highly effective leaders at every level. In addition to the data represented here, data from the Gallup student and staff surveys informs leadership development, including implementation of the new principal evaluation. (Table 2-C)

Table 2-C

Survey Data from Instructional Team Leader Professional Learning Series, FY15		
Statement	Agree	Strongly Agree
I felt engaged, supported, and successful.	14%	86%
I had access to learning experiences that support my professional growth.	18%	82%
I enhanced my leadership as part of a professional learning community.	25%	75%

# GOAL 2: Staff

## Focus Area: ENGAGEMENT

Outcome 2.2: Staff members have access to learning experiences that support their professional growth.



GOAL 2

### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies

- 2.2.1: Provide professional learning for staff members to enhance interpersonal and leadership skills, deepen job-specific knowledge, and grow in their professional practice.
- 2.2.3: Collaborate with universities and other external entities to provide professional learning opportunities with experts in their fields.
- 2.2.4: Continue to enhance professional growth through professional learning communities.

### Description and Value

The Annotated Code of Maryland requires all HCPSS licensed education personnel to maintain competent practice through career-long engagement with their content area, research, best practices, and expert opinion (Education Article § 2-205, 2-303(g) and 6-701-6-705). HCPSS supports this professional learning through participation in the National Board Certification (NBC) program and university partnerships.

Based on Five Core Propositions, National Board Standards define the specific knowledge and expertise that teachers in different subject areas and developmental levels use to frame their practice. Each year, HCPSS and the Maryland State Department of Education work together to provide support and financing for candidates selected by HCPSS to be part of the NBC Cohort, thereby providing opportunities to enhance professional growth through professional learning communities. The support process begins with information sessions, a two-day summer cohort orientation, and biweekly cohort support sessions, as well as renewal and retake support sessions.



The National Board process demands that teachers engage in a reflective analysis of their practice demonstrating mastery of content, ability to design learning experiences that advance student learning, use of assessments to inform instructional decision making, and cultivating meaningful partnerships with colleagues, parents, and the community. Teachers engaging in this structured process expand and refine their teaching practice toward improving student achievement.

In addition to National Board Certification, the Partnerships for Leadership Development Program collaborates with universities and other external entities to provide high-quality professional learning opportunities aligned with school system goals. These programs equip employees with the knowledge and skills needed to build the instructional leadership capacity of the system in a format reflecting a high-functioning professional learning community.

HCPSS currently has active university partnerships with the following institutions of higher education: Concordia University; Johns Hopkins University; Kaplan University; Loyola University of Maryland; McDaniel College; Morgan State University; National University; Notre Dame of Maryland University; Stevenson University; Towson University; University of Maryland, Baltimore County; University of Maryland, College Park; University of Phoenix; Walden University; and Washington Adventist University.

These institutions offer a variety of programs leading to degrees in curriculum, instruction, school administration, special education, and STEM, among others. The number of university partnerships has grown over the past several years, offering teachers and leaders opportunities to grow in their professional practice and prepare for leadership roles within the system.

Employees who participate in a university cohort program may be eligible to receive tuition reimbursement in accordance with their respective negotiated agreement, and many programs are offered at reduced rates. Classes are offered in the traditional format, online, or a combination of the two at convenient locations in Howard County. Student, university, and stakeholder feedback is solicited on a regular basis to improve course offerings and maintain alignment with district needs.

## Progress

The majority of professional staff have master's degrees, as illustrated in Table 2-D below.

Table 2-D

Professional Staff* by Education Level Comparison		
Degree	October 2014	October 2015
High school diploma	36	33
Less than 2 years of college	37	39
2 years of college	25	26
Bachelor's degree	787	881
Bachelor's with Master's equivalent	627	634
Master's degree	3,269	3,614
Master's degree plus 30 semester hours	638	716
Doctorate degree	78	86
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,497</b>	<b>6,029</b>

\*Professional staff include teachers, school-based administrators, central office administrators, and other certificated, management and technical staff.

At present, the HCPSS has 148 teachers who have achieved National Board Certification in 21 different certification areas. This year, nine teachers achieved initial certification and three teachers successfully renewed certification for an additional ten years. This achievement rate places the HCPSS fifth in the state for total number of teachers certified. The district is currently supporting 40 teachers (two cohorts) who will begin to complete the process in 2018.

Table 2-E shows the current top five areas of NBC teacher certification in HCPSS. Table 2-F depicts the participation and success rate of cohort participants.

Table 2-E

Top 5 Areas for NBC Certification in HCPSS	
Generalist/Middle Childhood	22
English Language Arts/Adolescence and Young Adulthood	17
Generalist/Early Childhood	12
Exceptional Needs Specialist/Early Childhood through Young Adulthood	10
Mathematics/Early Adolescence	10
Library Media/Early Childhood through Young Adulthood	10

Table 2-F

Participation in NBC Cohorts		
	# Cohort Participants	# Achieved NBC status*
FY15	8	9
FY14	18	9
FY13	25	18

\*Number achieved reflects cohort participants and those who submit independently including teachers who pursue certification multiple times.

Table 2-G depicts the participation and completion rate of degrees pursued within the Partnerships for Leadership Development Program. Table 2-H depicts the number of cohort programs offered, by year, in the HCPSS.

Table 2-G

Participation in University Cohort Programs*						
Degree	FY13		FY14		FY15	
	Number of Cohort Participants	Number Completing Program	Number of Cohort Participants	Number Completing Program	Number of Cohort Participants	Number Completing Program
Bachelor	10	*	10	0	9	5
Master	257	63	284	46	263	68
Certificate	63	35	126	74	109	62
Doctorate	11	1	10	0	10	4

\* Due to the nature of program sequencing, participants were in the midst of program requirements.

Table 2-H

Number of Cohort Programs Offered			
Degree	FY13	FY14	FY15
Bachelor	1	1	1
Master	16	17	16
Certificate	18	18	17
Doctorate	4	4	4

# GOAL 2: Staff

## Focus Area: ENGAGEMENT

Outcome 2.2: Staff members have access to learning experiences that support their professional growth.



GOAL 2

### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies

- 2.2.1: Provide professional learning for staff members to enhance interpersonal and leadership skills, deepen job-specific knowledge, and grow in their professional practice.
- 2.2.4: Continue to enhance professional growth through professional learning communities.

### Description and Value

Maryland's Education that is Multicultural regulation (COMAR 13.A.04.05) emphasizes issues of equity, high expectations, cultural competence, and access to opportunity. The regulation requires the HCPSS to address these issues through curriculum, instruction, and staff development. Furthermore, the need for educational leaders to promote social justice and safeguard the values of democracy, equity, and diversity is explicitly articulated within national leadership standards (ISLLC Standard 5). To these ends, the HCPSS is committed to developing cultural proficiency as a way of being.

Cultural proficiency is a cross-cutting theme that supports all focus areas in the HCPSS strategic plan: collaboration, engagement, performance, and well-being. It is also a process of professional learning and continuous improvement that facilitates the development of culturally competent staff, practices, and policies.

HCPSS continues to offer three levels of professional learning seminars to support staff, schools, offices, and community partners with developing their cultural proficiency. This program is aligned with international standards for high-quality professional learning, and it increases participants' cultural competence, a factor that influences student success, according to the 2010 program evaluation.

- Level One – Awareness: Supports participants in developing their awareness of the need for cultural competence and proficiency, the tools of cultural proficiency, and effective communication strategies.
- Level Two – Application: Supports participants in using the tools of cultural proficiency to improve practices and policies.
- Level Three – Facilitation: Supports schools and offices in building capacity to facilitate cultural proficiency.

In addition to 2.2.1 and 2.2.4, all seminars support these Vision 2018 strategies:

- 1.7.5: Ensure students have access to culturally proficient staff members who support them and help them solve problems.
- 1.7.6: Strengthen professional learning in safeguarding students' social and emotional safety and well-being.
- 1.7.8: Strengthen staff collaboration to support students' social and emotional safety and well-being.
- 2.1.5: Provide professional learning to foster effective communication, respect, and collaboration in a diverse environment.
- 2.4.1: Strengthen and broaden services to support staff wellness.

A variety of programs implemented within the Division of Human Resources and Development also integrate cultural proficiency with all other professional and organizational development services, including teacher induction and leadership development.

Achievement of Vision 2018 requires cultural competence. HCPSS continues to use five standards of cultural competence to gauge the extent to which staff, practices, and policies increase equitable student outcomes and leverage diversity to improve outcomes for all. HCPSS has used these standards to develop rubrics that serve as tools for continuous improvement of practices and policies.

### Progress

Because of its effectiveness, HCPSS has continued to focus on increasing staff participation (Table 2-I) in its three levels of professional learning in order to develop the collective mindset of cultural proficiency as a way of being.

Table 2-I

Number of Participants in Cultural Proficiency Professional Learning (Levels 1–3)	
FY15	2,287
FY14	2,083
FY13	1,978

Through surveys, participants have indicated a high level of satisfaction with their seminar experiences. (Table 2-J)

Table 2-J

FY15 Participant Satisfaction			
Outcome	Strategies	Mean	Mode
		Six-point scale 6=highly effective 0=not effective	
Enhance professional growth through this professional learning community.	2.2.4	5.59	6
Build capacity to foster trust, respect, and collaboration in diverse environments.	2.1.5	5.59	6
Enhance interpersonal and leadership skills, deepen job-specific knowledge, and grow in professional practice.	1.7.7, 2.2.1	5.47	6
Develop as a culturally proficient professional.	1.7.5, 1.7.6	5.57	6
Support staff health and well-being.	2.4.1	5.34	6

This year, the HCPSS led 43 continuous improvement projects that used the tools of cultural proficiency. Staff leading these projects represented various schools and centrally-based offices, and they spanned nine focus areas (Table 2-K). All documented improvements, including descriptions and results, are available through Canvas. Table 2-L represents a sample of the 43 projects from this year.

Table 2-K

Focus Area	Number of Projects
Assessment	2
Co-teaching	1
Curriculum and Instruction	8
Family and Community Involvement and Engagement	3
Positive Behavior Supports (PBS)	1
Professional Development	4
School Environment	11
Student Transitions	6
Work Environment	7

Table 2-L

Project	Focus Area	Standard of Cultural Competence	Vision 2018
Continuous Improvement in Specialized Transportation	Student Transitions	Institutionalizing Cultural Knowledge	1.2, 4.4, 4.5
Engaging with Staff Transitions: Induction as a Dynamic, Strength-based Process	Work Environment	Managing the Dynamics of Difference	2.2
Amplifying the Student Voice for Equity in Curriculum and Instruction	Curriculum and Instruction	Assessing Cultural Knowledge	1.6.5
Creating a Culturally Competent Classroom	Curriculum and Instruction	Assessing Cultural Knowledge	1.4.1, 1.4.3
Improving Staff Engagement Through Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS)	School Environment	Adapting to Diversity	2.4
Beyond Legal Compliance: Communicating with Families and Colleagues	Family and Community Involvement and Engagement	Valuing Diversity	2.2.1, 3.1.5, 4.4.4
Engaging Heritage Spanish Learners	Professional Development	Managing the Dynamics of Difference	1.1.6, 1.2.1
Engaging Teachers and Students in Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Goal Setting – Reading Focus	Assessment	Adapting to Diversity	1.4, 1.6, 2.2
Fostering Culturally Competent G/T Talent Spotting Practices	Student Transitions	Assessing Cultural Knowledge	1.2.1, 1.2.3, 1.2.4

GOAL 2

Additionally, over the past year, the district has:

- Graduated the first cohort and launched the second of the HCPSS/McDaniel College graduate certificate program, Excellence and Equity in Education.
- Completed the first one-year cycle of the superintendent’s Cultural Proficiency and Equity Advisory Committee. Recommendations included scaling cultural proficiency, establishing site-based liaisons, and amplifying student voice within school and systemic improvement processes.
- Established social media presence through Twitter: @HoCoCPro. Follow us!
- Created the role of Cultural Proficiency Liaison to scale and build leadership capacity for cultural proficiency in the HCPSS.
- Offered Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses designed to support educators with developing their cultural proficiency.
- Increased accessibility of resources through Canvas in alignment with Strategy 2.2.2 of Vision 2018.

# GOAL 2: Staff

## Focus Area: PERFORMANCE

Outcome 2.3: Staff members are held accountable for and supported in meeting standards-based performance expectations.



**Performance Measure:**  
Classroom teachers and principals rated effective or highly effective

GOAL 2

### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

- 2.3.1: Implement a robust evaluation system that aligns performance expectations to system goals for all employees.

### Description and Value

Under the guidance of four mandates—the Education Reform Act of 2010, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act Flexibility Waiver, COMAR Title 13A.07.09, and the Maryland Race to the Top Grant Application—HCPSS has developed, piloted, and implemented a new evaluation system for teachers and principals. HCPSS evaluators utilize the revised processes to assess the progress of teachers and principals with respect to professional practice goals and student growth objectives.

The new HCPSS teacher and principal evaluation models promote professional learning and accountability strategies aimed to align performance expectations with system goals. Developed by a team of 120 educators, school administrators, central office leaders, and bargaining unit representation, the teacher evaluation system was piloted by teachers and administrators at 10 schools during FY13 and implemented systemwide since.

### Teacher Evaluation

In alignment with MSDE guidelines, 50 percent of a teacher’s evaluation is based on performance in the four areas of professional practice with components grounded in the 2013 Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching (Domain 1: Planning and Preparation; Domain 2: Classroom Environment; Domain 3: Instruction; Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities) and 50 percent is based on progress toward achievement of teacher-generated Student Learning Objectives (Domain 5: Student Growth).

Another feature of the evaluation model is the use of the electronic Teachescape Reflect Tool to align and standardize the evaluation process and to document the evaluation of teacher performance. In an effort to provide a professional learning program and transition services that support employees in meeting performance expectations (Strategy 2.3.3), the Office of Professional and Organizational Development offered systemic, school-based, and online professional learning opportunities, electronic and print resources, as well as customized, individualized support.

Customized support for non-tenured teachers as part of the HCPSS Comprehensive Teacher Induction Program (Strategy 2.3.2) is offered in the following ways: central and school-based professional learning workshops focused on the 2013 Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching and new teacher support sessions. Novice teachers, beginning in FY13, receive the support of an Instructional Mentor. Mentors meet with first-year teachers to provide resources, non-evaluative classroom observations and constructive feedback, assistance with planning, student data-analysis, and other forms of support.

### Principal Evaluation

In alignment with MSDE guidelines, 50 percent of a principal’s evaluation is based on performance in the eight outcomes of professional practice with components grounded in The Maryland Instructional Leadership Framework and an additional four components that consider a principal’s skills in communication, management, and ethics. The remaining 50 percent is based on the locally developed outcome of student growth as principals monitor school improvement toward performance targets and progress towards achievement of teacher-generated Student Learning Objectives.

An additional feature of the evaluation model is the development of the principal evaluation tools as part of the electronic Teachscape Reflect Tool. This enhancement to the evaluation model helps to align and standardize the evaluation process and to document the evaluation of principal performance.

The Office of School Administration has supported administrators in meeting performance expectations (Strategy 2.3.3). In collaboration with Professional and Organizational Development, the directors in School Administration offer leadership meetings, webinars, and online professional learning modules, which include the Danielson assessment for every administrator.

Customized support for first-year principals as part leadership development and principal induction (Strategies 2.2.1 and 2.3.2) is offered in the following ways: monthly New Principal Professional Learning Community, an International Coaching Federation Coach, and individualized support from School Administration directors. New principals are provided with supports such as resources, non-evaluative problem-solving, collaboration and constructive feedback, assistance with school improvement planning, student data-analysis, and exploration/explanation of job-embedded responsibilities.

## Progress

Table 2-M shows the distribution of teacher performance ratings for FY15. Table 2-N shows the distribution of principal performance ratings from FY15.

Table 2-M

Teacher Effectiveness Ratings by Level						
Level and Number of Teachers	Ineffective		Effective		Highly Effective	
	FY14	FY15	FY14	FY15	FY14	FY15
Elementary	*	2.8%	14%	6.9%	86%	90.4%
Middle	1%	1.9%	21%	12.9%	79%	85.2%
High	1%	1.9%	16%	9.9%	83%	88.2%
Combination	*	12.6%	*	8.4%	98%	78.9%
TOTAL	1%	2.6%	16%	9.1%	83%	88.4%

Note: \*159 of included teachers have incomplete evaluations; of this group, 106 of the incomplete evaluations resulted in ratings of "Ineffective," and 52 resulted in ratings of "Effective"

Table 2-N

Principal Effectiveness Ratings by Level						
Level and Number of Principals	Ineffective		Effective		Highly Effective	
	FY14	FY15	FY14	FY15	FY14	FY15
Elementary	*	*	*	*	92%	97%
Middle	*	*	*	*	83%	90%
High	*	*	*	*	100%	100%
TOTAL	*	*	9%	*	91%	95%

Note: \* indicates data is suppressed because fewer than five individuals are included in this category

Data with respect to supports provided to staff transitioning to the new evaluation system is indicated in Tables 2-O and 2-P. Table 2-Q shows the number of new principals by level. Table 2-R shows the supports given to new principals.

Table 2-O

Participation in Teacher Evaluation Professional Learning Sessions		
Session Title	FY14	FY15
Danielson Framework for Teaching Overview Course	222	31
Framework in Action Level 1 (1st-year teachers) FY 15	195	307
Framework in Action Level 2 (2nd-year teachers) FY 15	75	73
Danielson Training for NEW CIA* Leaders and School-based Program Support Staff (3-day series) FY15	89	40
Teachscape Classroom Observer Training	258	95
Focus on the Framework Sessions: School-based Modules Facilitated by Teacher Development Liaisons	1,048	1,654

\* Curriculum, Instruction and Administration

Table 2-P

Instructional Mentoring Supports			
	FY13	FY14	FY15
Mentees	189	172	168
Mentors	88	99	86
Visits	1,574	1,631	1,582
Observations	570	554	495

Table 2-Q

New Principals by Level		
	FY14	FY15
Elementary	7	4
Middle	6	1
High	2	0

Table 2-R

New Principal Supports		
	FY14	FY15
Meetings	quarterly	quarterly
School visits	1 or more per quarter	1 or more per quarter
Coaching calls	20 per principal	20 per principal

# GOAL 2: Staff

## Focus Area: WELL-BEING

Outcome 2.4: HCPSS supports staff members' health and well-being.



GOAL 2

### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

- 2.4.1: Strengthen and broaden services to support staff wellness.

### Description and Value

As HCPSS strives to be a world-class school system, the development of highly talented teachers and leaders who explicitly emphasize engagement to support student growth and achievement are essential. Vision 2018 emphasizes student and staff engagement and well-being as critical to student achievement. It is because of this focus that HCPSS launched a partnership with Gallup to measure and improve levels of engagement among employees and students.

Gallup research demonstrates a close relationship between teacher and student engagement. They have identified three ways to accelerate employee engagement: 1) select the right people, 2) develop employee strengths, and 3) enhance employees' well-being.

More specifically, their research demonstrates positive correlations between principal leadership and student achievement as well as teacher engagement and student achievement.

### Leadership and Student Achievement

District and school leaders build the critical supports that lead to high student achievement results. Leaders articulate the vision and mission of the school district, highlight the connections between practice and performance, and support an environment for continuous improvement. Effective leaders develop collaborative teams, nurture safe and caring school environments, recognize success, encourage innovation, ensure equitable resource allocation, and create systems to promote partnerships with parents and the community.

The relationship between leadership strengths and engagement is an important connection. Every principal, as well as designated central office leaders, took the Gallup Strengths Finder Survey and received follow-up coaching to better understand their strengths and leadership actions. In the survey, 34 themes are measured, and five are identified as individual signature themes. Leaders are encouraged to look at the strengths of their leadership teams and to use the varied strengths that exist on each team to accomplish the many tasks that are essential to school and school system success.



### Teacher Engagement and Student Achievement

Engaged teachers are committed to their work. They are passionate about student learning, content instruction, and achievement. In schools where leaders have effectively fostered a culture of learning and a climate of engagement, there is high value on expectations, professional practice, and relationships. Factors include shared decision-making, collaborative planning and learning, and an environment of trust.

In order to be successful, teachers need to understand expectations, responsibilities, and targets. In order to achieve results, teachers are guided by vision, values, and a mission that have been translated into actionable steps. Engagement can be improved with leadership actions that influence school climate.



### Gallup Staff Engagement Survey (Q12)

The Gallup Q12 is a survey designed to measure employee engagement. Researchers found that there were 12 key expectations, that when satisfied, form the foundation of strong feelings of engagement. More than 1.5 million employees from many countries have participated in the Q12 instrument. Comparisons of engagement scores reveal that those organizations with high Q12 scores exhibit better productivity, lower absenteeism, lower turnover, fewer safety incidents, and other indicators of superior performance.

#### Q12 Survey Questions

1. I know what is expected of me at work.
2. I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right.
3. At work, I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.
4. In the last seven days, I have received recognition or praise for doing good work.
5. My supervisor, or someone at work, seems to care about me as a person.
6. There is someone at work who encourages my development.
7. At work, my opinions seem to count.
8. The mission or purpose of my organization makes me feel my job is important.
9. My associates or fellow employees are committed to doing quality work.
10. I have a best friend at work.
11. In the last six months, someone at work has talked to me about my progress.
12. This last year, I have had opportunities at work to learn and grow.

The engagement index divides people into one of three categories: engaged, not engaged, and actively disengaged.

**Engaged** employees work with passion and feel a profound connection to their company. They are deeply committed to the success of their organization and emotionally connected to its mission and goals. They drive innovation and move the organization forward. These employees have most of their performance-related workplace needs met.

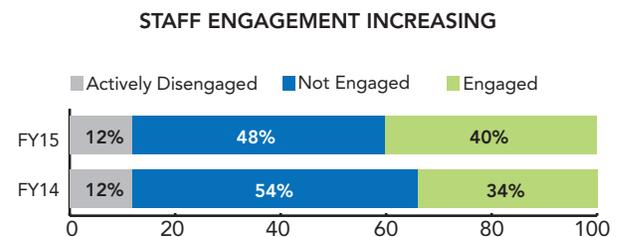
**Not Engaged** employees are less emotionally connected to their work and less compelled to put forth extra effort. They are more likely to miss workdays and more likely to leave. These employees have some of their performance-related workplace needs met but have many needs unmet.

**Actively Disengaged** employees are physically present but psychologically absent. They are unhappy with their work situation and insist on sharing that unhappiness with their colleagues. These employees have most of their performance-related workplace needs unmet.

### Progress

Because hope, well-being, and engagement are positively correlated with increased student achievement, HCPSS is working with Gallup to monitor these factors. The Gallup employee engagement survey was administered in FY15 and 6,712 HCPSS employees responded (84 percent response rate). The staff engagement results indicate that 40 percent of our staff is engaged, which was greater than the national average (30 percent) and 6 percentage points greater than our FY14 results (34 percent). (Figure 2-2)

Figure 2-2



The HCPSS grand mean\* in staff engagement was 3.87. The engagement items were on a 5-point scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree). The grand mean on an additional item on staff engagement "how satisfied are you with your organization as a place to work?" was 3.78.

\*The grand mean is the average score of all staff who took the Gallup employee engagement survey.

# GOAL 2: Staff

## Focus Area: WELL-BEING

Outcome 2.4: HCPSS supports staff members' health and well-being.



GOAL 2

### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

- 2.4.1: Strengthen and broaden services to support staff wellness.

### Description and Value

HCPSS launched the Commit To Be Fit Employee Wellness Program in 2012 to support the health and wellness of all staff members by offering education, tools and resources, and a healthy activity program to achieve improved health and wellness.

The HCPSS values its employees and recognizes the importance of supporting their health and wellness. Launching a comprehensive employee wellness program is an initiative by the Board to ensure that employees are offered high quality benefit programs that are affordable to both employees and the system and are sustainable in the future. Rising health care costs have required continuous cost containment efforts such as implementing a comprehensive employee wellness program that benefits employees and supports our cost containment measures.

The overall health and wellness of employees is a key driver of health care costs. While health care costs are not avoidable, preventable illness makes up approximately 80 percent of the burden of illness and 90 percent of all health care costs. Chronic and lifestyle related conditions account for 75 percent of U.S. health care costs. Increased research and data on workplace wellness programs indicate there are very real benefits to implementing such programs. Employers whose employees live more healthy lifestyles have reduced use of sick leave, improved work performance, decreased health care costs, increased productivity, and reduced overall costs. Given these facts, the Board supported management in the development

and implementation of a comprehensive employee wellness program.

Employers whose employees live more healthy lifestyles have reduced use of sick leave, improved work performance, decreased health care costs, increased productivity, and reduced overall costs. The Commit To Be Fit Employee Wellness Program also supports Goal 4, Outcome 4.5 and 4.6, in effectively managing rising health care costs. The Commit To Be Fit Employee Wellness Program is comprised of several components, some of which are highlighted below.

The Virgin Pulse Healthy Activity program allows employees to monitor activity levels and earn rewards for achieving and increasing fitness levels. Activity tracking devices, include Virgin Pulse Max, Fitbit, Polar, and Misfit and tracking apps, include Virgin Pulse, Moves, and Endomondo allow employees to report physical activity and track Commit To Be Fit Employee Wellness Program participation through an online homepage. Health zones at each school and facility location allow for monitoring and reporting body mass index and blood pressure. An incentive platform offers financial rewards for participation, and reporting tools aggregate verified data for program assessment.



In addition to the Virgin Pulse Healthy Activity Program, fitness classes are held throughout the year at convenient locations throughout the system. Four monthly presentations are held on a variety of health and wellness related topics such as nutrition, financial fitness, stress management, and general health and wellness. These presentations are offered at various times throughout the day to accommodate both regular daytime and second shift employees. New programs—The Biggest Loser competition (now called “Encouraging Your Health Journey”) and weekly Mindful Meditation sessions—have also gained popularity this year.

The Commit To Be Fit Employee Wellness Program has partnered with Weight Watchers to offer employees onsite, monthly Weight Watchers meetings. An annual Health and Wellness Expo is held that includes hundreds of health and wellness vendors and service providers, affording over 3,000 employees, retirees, and their family members the opportunity to participate in a day of learning, health screenings, educational workshops, and fitness sessions. Flu shots were offered to HCPSS employees in October of 2014 and over 1,900 employees were immunized in five flu clinics held around the county.



### Progress

Since its launch, participation in the Commit To Be Fit Employee Wellness Program has been strong, with a majority of employees enrolled in the program, and with growing levels of participation. (Table 2-S)

Employee participation in the Commit to Be Fit Wellness Program has increased each year since its inception in FY12.

Table 2-S

Employee Wellness Commit to Be Fit Program Participation			
	FY13	FY14	FY15
Employees enrolled	80%	87%	88%
Actively earning Health Miles	72%	73%	74%
Participants at or above recommended daily activity levels	76%	81%	81%
Average daily steps	8,225	9,086	10,498
Fitness class participation	700	847	988
Health and financial fitness workshop participation	500	939	984
Weight Watchers participation	400	292	294

# GOAL 3: Families and the Community

Families and the community are engaged and supported as partners in education.



GOAL 3

FOCUS AREA	OUTCOMES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
COLLABORATION	<p>3.1 HCPSS collaborates with family and community partners to engender a culture of trust, transparency, and mutual respect.</p> <p>3.2 HCPSS is strengthened through partnerships.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholder participation on policy development/revision committees, p. 70</li> <li>School Improvement Team and Parent Teacher Association participation, p. 71</li> <li>HCPSS advisory groups participation, p. 73</li> <li>Number and type of partnerships, p. 74</li> </ul>
ENGAGEMENT	<p>3.3 HCPSS engages families and the community through relevant, timely, accessible, and audience-focused communications.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social media usage, p. 76</li> <li>HCPSS website usage, p. 77</li> <li>HCPSS News usage, p. 78</li> <li>Visual Communications usage, p. 79</li> </ul>
WELL-BEING	<p>3.4 HCPSS supports the well-being of students and families.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targeted family outreach, p. 80</li> </ul>



## Goal 3 Overview

### Families and the community are engaged and supported as partners in education.

A world-class system cultivates the full participation, support and resources of families and community partners. HCPSS considers the dedication of its families and an involved community among the system's greatest assets. The focus of Goal 3 is to build upon these strong relationships.

Parent involvement has proven to be a leading factor in educational success. The system has made significant progress in this area through initiatives to empower parents with relevant information and provide a forum for addressing issues relating to their child and school.

Parents and families are essential participants in each school community. Members of Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) at each school collaborate with teachers and school leaders to provide enrichment programs that are valuable additions to the curriculum. The PTA Council of Howard County (PTACHC) includes representatives from each school PTA, who work together to share ideas and resources and influence school policy and procedures.

At the system level, many parents and other community members serve on policy, curriculum, and other advisory committees. Each participant brings unique perspective and expertise that offers valuable insight for informing school and system procedures and priorities.

Each new and revised Board Policy convenes a committee of stakeholders representing diverse backgrounds and interests. The Community Advisory Council (CAC) serves as a channel for concerns, advice and information from the public to reach the Board of Education. Curriculum Advisory Committees make recommendations about instructional content for specific subject areas, including science, language, math, fine arts, social studies, and elementary education.

Other committees focus on the needs of specific student groups. The Special Education Community Advisory Committee (SECAC) works collaboratively with the HCPSS Department of Special Education to identify priorities and goals designed to improve the achievement and outcomes of students with disabilities in our county. The Gifted and Talented (GT) Education Program Advisory Committee supports the school system in serving advanced level learners.



Sessions are held throughout the year to educate parents and community members about school system programs and initiatives. Several sessions were held during the 2014–15 school year on topics relating to college and career success, including PSAT, financial aid, NCAA eligibility, Career Academies, and the new network security early college program. Other sessions included workshops on preparing for kindergarten, wellness champions participation, and futures planning.

The HCPSS Gifted and Talented (G/T) Education Program, in conjunction with the G/T Advisory Steering Committee, annually sponsors a series of G/T Parent Academies on topics of interest to parents of advanced-level learners. During FY15, the sessions included a G/T Program Overview, Building Resiliency in Advanced-Level Learners, and the G/T Educator Recognition Program. The Hispanic Achievement Program also offers Spanish language workshops and a Parent Academy to help parents access resources and effectively partner in the education of their children.

Targeted sessions are also offered that give specialized support to students and families. These include Saturday Math Academies offered through the Black Student Achievement Program, Spanish language workshops and a parent academy offered through the Hispanic Achievement program, and a six-week International Parent Leadership Program for international parents

Participants at education forums, jointly sponsored with the African-American Round Table, gain insight into avenues to advanced opportunity for all Howard County students. The first session focused on achievement gap elimination and college and career readiness for every student. The second focused on HCPSS curriculum and ways that parents and community supporters can foster academic success. Focusing on parent engagement, the third featured keynote speaker UMBC president Dr. Freeman Hrabowski. These events engage parents and the community to ensure equity in educational opportunity in collaboration with HCPSS leaders and staff.



Community organizations play a critical role in the school system. More than 1,100 local businesses, government agencies, and non-profit organizations partner with HCPSS schools and offices to help students prepare for success. Partnership activities broaden students' experiences, enrich classroom lessons, and help children discover their strengths and interests. Many partnership programs assist struggling students in mastering essential skills; others add an enhanced dimension to the instructional program and provide real world experiences through internships and other opportunities.

Several new and upgraded communication tools introduced during FY15 enhance access to important school system information, engage the community in discussion about system initiatives, and enable parents to take a more active role in their child's education.

A major upgrade to school and system websites provides state-of-the-art functionality with user-friendly organization, enhanced navigation, streamlined mobile access, and a fresh, dynamic look. Last year, [www.hcpss.org](http://www.hcpss.org) received more than 1.2 million visits from parents, staff, students, and community members, an increase of



43 percent over the prior year. The site was one of just two Maryland school system websites to earn Sunshine Review’s Sunny Award, which recognizes an outstanding level of transparency among state and local government websites.

A mobile application delivers HCPSS news, upcoming events, school menus, documents and minutes from Board of Education meetings, and direct connections to all system social media resources. This free HCPSS app is available on iTunes and Google Play.

A major upgrade to the HCPSS News communication system provides faster delivery of email and text alerts to keep parents, staff, and community members up to date on news and events. It delivers real-time information on bus schedule changes, weather-related closings, and emergency information.

HCPSS Insight, a live video series, features HCPSS experts responding to questions submitted by community and staff members via Twitter or email. Sessions offered in FY15 focused on the Proposed Operating Budget and PARCC testing. The sessions provide a convenient forum for learning about and providing input on issues of critical importance to families and other stakeholders.

Let’s GoHoCo, the HCPSS community 5K and 1 mile Fun Run, brings together HCPSS employees, students, families, and community members each fall for a celebration of health and wellbeing. The first event held in October 2014 drew more than 2,500 participants, and more than 3,200 took part in October 2015.

Progress on key Goal 3 measures is detailed on the following pages.



GOAL 3

# GOAL 3: Families and the Community

## Focus Area: COLLABORATION

Outcome 3.1: HCPSS collaborates with family and community partners to engender a culture of trust, transparency, and mutual respect.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

- 3.1.3: Consistently include representatives from stakeholder groups in planning processes to inform school system actions and decisions.

### Description and Value

HCPSS Policy 2020 Policy Development and Adoption establishes processes by which policies are developed, implemented, reviewed, and updated.

Included in the development/revision process is a protocol of inviting HCPSS stakeholder groups to serve on a development/revision committee. These groups include but are not limited to:

- American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)
- Community Advisory Council (CAC)
- Cultural Proficiency and Equity Advisory Committee (CPEAC)
- Howard County Administrators Association (HCAA)
- Howard County Association of Student Councils (HCASC)
- Howard County Education Association (HCEA)
- PTA Council of Howard County (PTACHC)
- General Citizens

In FY16, HCPSS initiated use of an online form for citizens to respond to the HCPSS invitation to serve on a policy development/ revision committee as the General Citizens representative.

Direct communication with stakeholder groups' leadership and use of communication tools to

obtain committee members and communicate to the community are:

- Press releases for local media.
- Notification in system newsletters and social media.
- Letters inviting stakeholders to participate on committees.
- Presentations to explain process to stakeholder organizations.
- Schedules of committee meetings via email.
- Telephone and email.
- HCPSS website and BoardDocs used to provide current policies as well as the status of policies under consideration for development or review.

Committee members may utilize remote access tools, to participate in policy development meetings, such as conference calls, Facetime, and Blackboard Collaborate Webinar, to participate in policy/development meetings.

### Progress

Participation on Policy Development/Revision Committees for FY15 is represented in the chart below:

Table 3-A

Stakeholder Representation on Policy Development/Revision Committees, FY15												
Policy	Central Office Staff	School-based Staff	AFSCME	CAC	CPEAC	HCAA	HCEA	HSCASC	PTACHC	General Citizens	Other Stakeholders	Total Members
3030 Research Involving Employees and Students	5	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	11
5220 School Bus Contracts and School Bus Personnel	5	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	7
7010 Confidentiality of Personnel Records and Files	10	3	1	2	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	20
8030 Graduation Requirements (held over from FY14)	7	3	0	3	0	1	0	2	0	1	2	19
8120 Testing: State and Local Responsibilities and Protocols	10	7	0	3	1	1	1	1	2	1	0	27
8200 Digital Education	4	5	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	2	20
9050 Student Records and Confidentiality	10	3	0	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	20

All stakeholders listed in Policy 2020 Policy Development and Adoption were invited to have representation on all the committees.

# GOAL 3: Families and the Community

## Focus Area: COLLABORATION

Outcome 3.1: HCPSS collaborates with family and community partners to engender a culture of trust, transparency, and mutual respect.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies

- 3.1.3: Consistently include representatives from stakeholder groups in planning processes to inform school system actions and decisions.
- 3.1.4: Engage parents in the school improvement process.

### Description and Value

#### School Improvement Teams

School Improvement Teams (SIT) develop plans that serve as the blueprint for actions and processes needed to support rigorous instruction and achievement so that all students are college and career ready. In order to ensure that all members of a school community are aware of the School Improvement Plan goals and objectives, parent and community participation is essential.

In partnership with the school administration, these teams develop comprehensive plans for continuous improvement.

#### Parent Teacher Associations (PTA)

The mission of the National PTA states: “The overall purpose of PTA is to make every child’s potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.”

Within every school community, the PTA addresses issues that are important to the effective operation of the school. Benefits of the PTA include:

- Leveraging volunteer power.
- Improving communication.
- Monitoring measurable results.
- Boosting school programs.
- Supporting children’s hope, well-being, and engagement.

### Progress

A number of schools have representatives from the community as members of School Improvement Teams. Table 3-B illustrates the number of parent and community members involved at each level.

Table 3-B

Number of SIT Members by School Level, FY15		
Level	Parent Members	Community Members
Elementary	89	7
Middle	35	2
High	38	7

All HCPSS schools have active PTA organizations. Table 3-C illustrates the number of PTA members at each school. In addition, each school is represented on the countywide PTA Council of Howard County.

Table 3-C

Number of PTA Members by School

Elementary	FY13	FY14	FY15
Atholton	320	220	220
Bellows Spring	350	280	316
Bollman Bridge	350	350	350
Bryant Woods	169	169	169
Bushy Park	640	350	350
Centennial Lane	598	508	515
Clarksville	428	428	453
Clemens Crossing	375	325	300
Cradlerock	320	320	185
Dayton Oaks	334	357	404
Deep Run	294	294	294
Ducketts Lane	----	243	243
Elkridge	378	378	378
Forest Ridge	355	320	330
Fulton	503	612	564
Gorman Crossing	273	273	273
Guilford	250	250	250
Hammond	375	346	337
Hollifield Station	335	335	335
Ilchester	500	500	500
Jeffers Hill	209	209	180
Laurel Woods	170	170	280
Lisbon	351	177	177
Longfellow	130	130	134
Manor Woods	435	322	376
Northfield	307	400	302
Phelps Luck	325	325	325
Pointers Run	588	588	620
Rockburn	337	337	337
Running Brook	112	188	188
St. John's Lane	600	600	600
Stevens Forest	160	180	180
Swansfield	242	191	244
Talbott Springs	250	250	250
Thunder Hill	250	250	250
Triadelphia Ridge	210	210	483
Veterans	467	467	467
Waterloo	382	385	385
Waverly	425	543	496
West Friendship	246	246	252
Worthington	350	350	350

Middle	FY13	FY14	FY15
Bonnie Branch	300	300	300
Burleigh Manor	525	511	570
Clarksville	785	785	401
Dunloggin	250	250	230
Elkridge Landing	125	120	120
Ellicott Mills	321	304	334
Folly Quarter	483	396	403
Glenwood	439	535	551
Hammond	286	220	250
Harper's Choice	480	480	480
Lake Elkhorn	128	90	104
Lime Kiln	450	450	450
Mayfield Woods	259	259	259
Mount View	560	560	560
Murray Hill	260	260	260
Oakland Mills	140	140	140
Patapsco	350	350	350
Patuxent Valley	312	312	167
Thomas Viaduct	---	---	137
Wilde Lake	288	344	305

High	FY13	FY14	FY15
Atholton	560	548	586
Centennial	753	1,054	1,054
Glenelg	559	559	613
Hammond	401	401	400
Howard	687	713	713
Long Reach	416	416	339
Marriotts Ridge	757	750	700
Mt. Hebron	837	837	728
Oakland Mills	287	237	174
Reservoir	660	660	660
River Hill	956	789	1,044
Wilde Lake	437	437	427

Special School	FY13	FY14	FY15
Cedar Lane	162	175	118

GOAL 3



# GOAL 3: Families and the Community

## Focus Area: COLLABORATION

Outcome 3.1: HCPSS collaborates with family and community partners to engender a culture of trust, transparency, and mutual respect.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

- 3.1.3: Consistently include representatives from stakeholder groups in planning processes to inform school system actions and decisions.

The Board of Education and the Superintendent believe that schools are strengthened when families and communities are actively engaged as partners in education. In support of this goal, HCPSS provides multiple opportunities for responsible community participation that supports two-way communication on new and ongoing initiatives.

Advisory committees provide an avenue for stakeholder feedback to inform, influence, and recommend policies and programs, including engagement in the school improvement process to support student achievement. Generally, such committees are derived from a written charter and may be ongoing or established for a special purpose on a short-term basis. On occasion and when appropriate, these committees present information to the Board and Superintendent.

The Community Advisory Council (CAC) serves as a channel for concerns, advice and information from the public to reach the Board of Education. CAC members include parents, including representatives from school PTAs and the PTA Council of Howard County; students, including representatives from the Howard County Association of Student Councils (HCASC); Central Office staff; and an at large community representative.

Curriculum Advisory Committees make recommendations about instructional content for specific subject areas, including science, language, mathematics, fine arts, social studies, early childhood, and elementary education, as well as and specific career academies. Other committees advise on gifted and talented education, special education, school health, school planning, and technology.

These committees comprise parent, student, staff and community members as well as representatives from diverse industries, organizations, and government agencies, who share their unique expertise, backgrounds, and perspectives to inform school and system procedures and priorities.

The Office of Career and Technology Education (CTE) offers a variety of programs that are designed to prepare students to be successful in the career field of their choosing. Advisory committees for each career area ensure that the programs offered by the HCPSS reflect the most up-to-date information and provide the academic background and hands-on experience necessary for success beyond high school.

CTE advisory committee members are local business and economic development leaders, and state and local government members, who provide their professional experience and expertise to the committee. Parents, current and former students, central office staff, administrators, and teachers also serve on the committees.

The individual CTE advisory committees are established for specific areas of focus, include accounting and marketing, automotive technology, career research and development, child development, computer science, construction management and architectural design, hospitality and tourism, cybersecurity and networking, homeland security and emergency management, visual communications and animation, among others.

# GOAL 3: Families and the Community

## Focus Area: COLLABORATION

Outcome 3.2: HCPSS is strengthened through partnerships.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

- 3.2.1: Develop and leverage partnerships to meet strategic goals.

### Description and Value

HCPSS partners with businesses and organizations to prepare students to succeed in an increasingly complex and global environment. Partners have been instrumental to the school system's success for nearly 30 years, and continue to play a critical role in the implementation of the HCPSS strategic plan, *Vision 2018, Fulfilling the Promise of Preparation*.

The Partnerships Office embraces Goal 3 of the Vision 2018 plan—to engage and support the community as partners in education. This goal recognizes that HCPSS is strengthened by maximizing the participation, support, and resources of community partners. The Partnerships Office collaborates with businesses, government agencies, educational institutions, and community organizations to develop and leverage partnerships to meet Vision 2018 strategic plan goals; provides structure and guidance to partnership agreements; and offers training and tools to assist school system personnel in developing effective, dynamic relationships.

Partnership activities support Vision 2018 by broadening students' experiences, enriching classroom lessons, and helping children discover strengths and new interests. In many cases, partnership programs assist struggling students as they gain mastery in basic skills; in other cases, they spark a commitment to lifelong wellness or open a window to an unexpected career path.

The goals of the Partnership program are to:

- Ensure that partnership activities support the four goals of Vision 2018.
- Provide structure to partnership agreements to ensure consistency and sustainability.
- Acknowledge the various ways partners impact HCPSS students, staff, and the community.
- Publish an annual report and offer celebration for existing partnerships, and publicity for partnership activities.

### Partnership Highlights

Community partnerships benefit students from kindergarten through high school by expanding learning beyond the classroom.



The Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory (APL), one of the school system's founding partners, has offered hands-on opportunities and guidance to students for 27 years. In 2014–15, approximately 360 APL staff members volunteered their time to work with 750 Howard County students through a wide range of time-honored programs. APL's STEM programs include the following:

- ASPIRE High School Mentoring
- College Prep Program
- Girls Who Code
- Girl Power
- Maryland MESA
- Python Programming
- Robotics Programs



The Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services partners with HCPSS to conduct hands-only CPR training for students and staff; automated external defibrillator training for staff; and instruction and clinical experiences for Emergency Medical Technician Career Academy students. Fire and Rescue staff members conducted training sessions for over 8,000 students and staff during FY15.



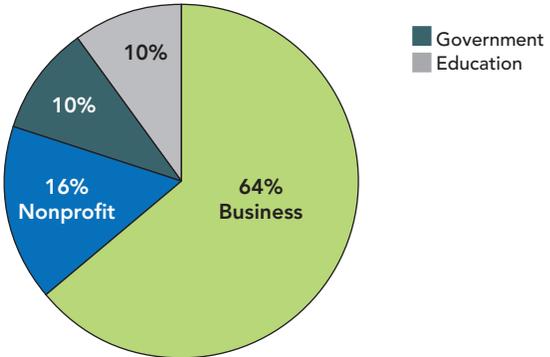
The Bright Minds Foundation is an independent, nonprofit foundation that enhances educational opportunities for HCPSS students. Its Computers for Students program provides computers, software, and training to bridge the gap for the growing number of Howard County students who lack access to technology at home. The Foundation has given out nearly 1000 computers or netbooks to HCPSS families. Bright Minds also awards grants to HCPSS teachers for innovative instructional projects that build students' 21st century skills in STEM and other areas.



Atholton High School students visit BGE to learn about STEM-based careers through Junior Achievement of Central Maryland's JA Job Shadow program. JA Job Shadow prepares students to be entrepreneurial thinkers and encourages them to develop personal strategies to pursue lifelong learning and career opportunities. During FY15, over 7,000 HCPSS students participated in a Junior Achievement program such as JA in a Day, JA Finance Park Virtual and JA Career Success.

Figure 3-1

**Types of Partnerships**



**Progress**

The HCPSS Partnerships Office directed and aligned community resources to support and promote strategic HCPSS programs and initiatives in FY 2015 by:

- Facilitating 1,126 HCPSS partnerships
- Creating 41 new partnership agreements
- Highlighting how partners support the values reflected in Vision 2018 in the HCPSS Educational Partnerships 2014-2015 Annual Report ([www.hcpss.org/f/aboutus/partnership/ar-partner201415.pdf](http://www.hcpss.org/f/aboutus/partnership/ar-partner201415.pdf)); more than 3,500 copies distributed countywide
- Serving as HCPSS representative on 16 community Boards of Directors and committees
- Supporting HCPSS staff who worked with 420 businesses and organizations that provided high school intern placements for one or multiple students per site.

# GOAL 3: Families and the Community

## Focus Area: ENGAGEMENT

Outcome 3.3: HCPSS engages families and the community through relevant, timely, accessible, and audience-focused communications.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies

- 3.3.1: Provide timely, relevant, and easily accessible information on the HCPSS website.
- 3.3.2: Tailor communications to user needs.
- 3.3.3: Increase opportunities for two-way communication.

### Description and Value

HCPSS utilizes various social media to enhance stakeholder communications in alignment with Goal 3. The school system's use of social media supports Outcome 3.3, which states that HCPSS engages families and the community through relevant, timely, accessible, and audience-focused communications. Specifically, it supports strategy 3.3.2: tailor communications to user needs, and strategy 3.3.3: increase opportunities for two-way communication.

The HCPSS Communications Department manages several district level social media accounts including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. The Superintendent also uses Twitter to increase transparency. The department also maintains account credentials for Twitter accounts that were set up for each school to use. Professional development resources and training are offered to school-based administrators on best practices and responsible use of existing and emerging social media.

Social media posts include the following topics:

- Emergency notifications.
- HCPSS news and information.
- HCPSS employment information.
- Upcoming events.
- Open-ended questions to parents regarding curriculum, school activities, and other topics of interest.
- Photos of events and activities.

- Notices about information relevant to stakeholders, including job fairs, internship information, scholarships, etc.
- Educational posts related to federal holidays and other special occasions, such as Black History Month, code.org week, etc.

### Progress

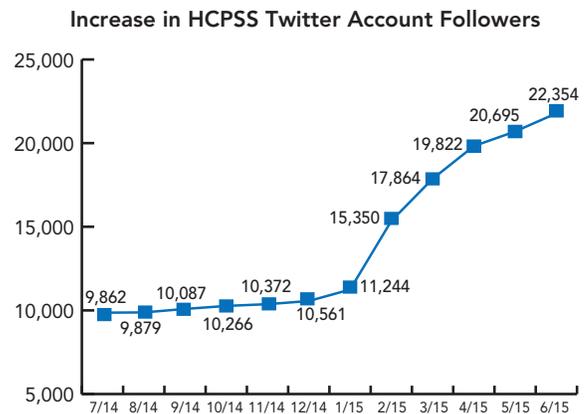
#### Facebook

The school system posts an average of 3-4 times per day. Total "likes" to the HCPSS page rose from 6,883 on July 1, 2014 to 11,859 by June 30, 2015. Facebook analytics show the posts that receive the most likes or comments are those responding to weather-related messaging and posts that share articles ranking the school system or county.

#### Twitter

The HCPSS twitter account has seen a steady increase in the number of followers, 22,354, as of June 30, 2015, as shown in Figure 3-2 below.

Figure 3-2



The Superintendent's twitter following increased by 1,000 in FY15, to 3,723.

Twitter analytics show the tweets that receive the most retweets or favorites are those regarding weather-related messaging. Additionally, Twitter analytics show that tweets from the Superintendent account that includes pictures of students receive higher rates of engagement than other tweets.

#### Instagram

In 2014, HCPSS launched an Instagram account mainly focusing posts on student life. Total followers rose from 24 at the onset to 400 by June 30, 2015.

# GOAL 3: Families and the Community

## Focus Area: ENGAGEMENT

Outcome 3.3: HCPSS engages families and the community through relevant, timely, accessible, and audience-focused communications.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

- 3.3.1: Provide timely, relevant, and easily accessible information on the HCPSS website.

### Description and Value

HCPSS takes a multi-media approach to providing families and the community with relevant, timely, accessible, and audience-focused communications. In addition to system and school websites, these media include cable TV, social media, print communications, and email alerts through HCPSS News Service. (Outcome 3.3)

Continuing the site work started in February 2013, several significant upgrades have been made to the main and school websites to increase utility and ease of use.

Upgrades include:

- Finished migrating all HCPSS schools and education centers to a modern, mobile-friendly publishing platform focused on news and events.
- Introduction of native iOS and Android mobile applications, powered by school site data, to provide a single place for parents to subscribe to multiple schools news and events.
- Further refined the primary HCPSS website to focus on consolidating content, maintaining performance and improving publishing speed.
- Improved our Google Search appliance to continue providing a more relevant and robust search experience.

Before the end of the 2015 school year, the school system moved all 12 high schools, and two education center school sites to a more agile, mobile friendly web platform in alignment with the elementary and middle school web sites. The sites have been designed to be easy to update,

to prioritize news and resources for parents, and to link to critical information on the main website, increasing the consistency of messaging throughout the school system.

### Progress

Between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015, the HCPSS website had:

- 4.38 million visits from 1.3 million unique visitors.
- 8.7 million page views.

Twenty-eight percent of visits are from new visitors, and 72 percent are from returning visitors.

Fifty percent of traffic used a mobile phone or tablet to access the site.

Sixty percent of traffic starts with a search from google.com.

During the announcement of our weather-related closings and delayed openings this winter, 80-90 percent of our traffic came from families using mobile devices in the late evenings and early mornings.

On an average day, the website has approximately 25,000 pageviews. During the weather timeline above, the highest day of pageviews was 153,000.

Our HCPSS mobile application for iOS and Android devices was downloaded 8,500 times.

### Increase in Social Media Referrals

Utilizing HCPSS social media presence continues to lead to an increase in traffic to the main HCPSS website. Referrals are visitors brought to the site by clicking on links shared on social media accounts. Social media generated more than 95,000 referrals over the course of the year, and are now the fourth highest source of traffic to the site.

# GOAL 3: Families and the Community

## Focus Area: ENGAGEMENT

Outcome 3.3: HCPSS engages families and the community through relevant, timely, accessible, and audience-focused communications.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

- 3.3.2: Tailor communications to user needs.

### Description and Value

Ensuring HCPSS families and the community are kept up to date with the most relevant, easy to access information is a top priority for the school system. One way HCPSS

connects with stakeholders is via email alerts through HCPSS News service. It is used centrally to disseminate pertinent messages to all HCPSS families. Individual schools use the HCPSS News service to share school-related information with families.

In October 2014, HCPSS changed HCPSS News providers, allowing HCPSS to auto-enroll parents and guardians based on data submitted through the emergency card process. This change in strategy now provides a broader reach for school and system-wide communications, improved relevancy targeting of messages to specific recipients and reduced account maintenance required for parents.

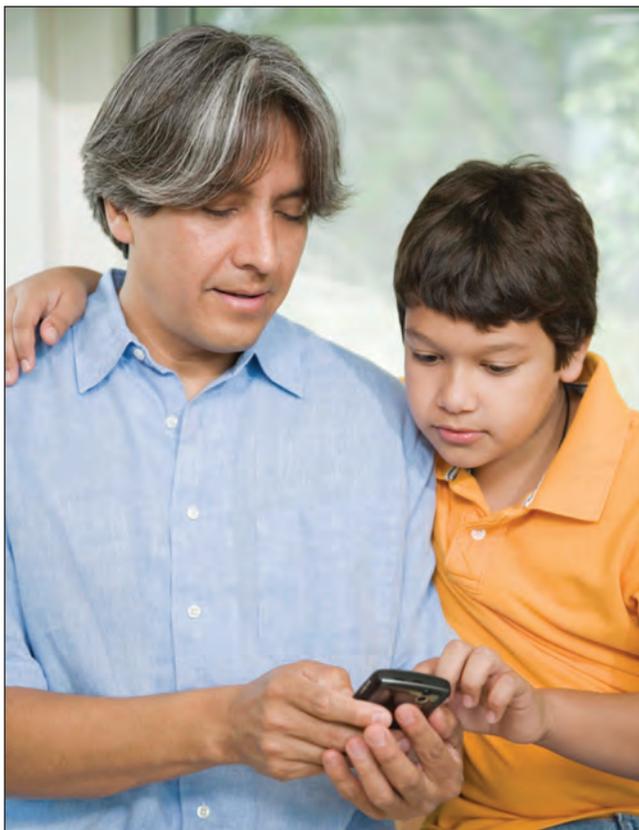
HCPSS News is one of several media employed by HCPSS to engage families and the community through relevant, timely, accessible, and audience-focused communications (Outcome 3.3).

### Progress

To understand our updated usage of HCPSS News, this report depicts a shift in our analytics strategy to focusing on prioritizing the reach of our messages over the solely depicting the number of broadcasts. Our analytics now include both the number of broadcasts sent via the service, showing a high usage by school and district staff, and the total reach to subscribers, highlighted by number of targeted recipients and the total volume of messages that are being sent from the service.

After transitioning to our new messaging vendor in October 2014, schools and central office have sent over 9,000 broadcasts to families and the community. Those specific broadcasts targeted over 92,000 recipients (HCPSS parents, staff and community) to deliver over 16 million targeted emails and 2.7 million targeted emergency SMS messages.

During our busy weather months, immediate parent and community notifications are essential and HCPSS sent 24 emergency text broadcasts related to school closings and/or delays. In total, those broadcasts translated to 726,000 text messages being sent across our subscriber base.



# GOAL 3: Families and the Community

## Focus Area: ENGAGEMENT

Outcome 3.3: HCPSS engages families and the community through relevant, timely, accessible, and audience-focused communications.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

- 3.3.2: Tailor communications to user needs.

### Description and Value

HCPSS uses a variety of multimedia- and video-based productions to provide dynamic visual communications to inform families, community members, employees, and other stakeholders about school system events and current issues in an engaging, easily-accessible format.

Video operations support student, staff and parent engagement; digital instruction; professional learning; and operational efficiency initiatives of the HCPSS strategic plan. Video and high quality photography is also incorporated into web, email, and social media communications, in order to provide a dynamic user



experience that is consistent with the image of a world-class educational institution.

HCPSS multimedia, TV, and video productions offer a dynamic medium for a full spectrum of system communications. These include live broadcast and on-demand viewing of Board meetings, studio-based events, community forums, and high school commencements; videobased instruction; educational programming; in-depth programs about educational initiatives and school programs; short features about school system news; and community events.

Viewership of live and on-demand, video-based communications has been rapidly increasing, as illustrated in Table 3-D.

Table 3-D

Video Communications Reach (Views per distribution channel)			
Channel	FY13	FY14	FY15
Granicus: BOE meetings (live and on-demand)	N/A	29,606	14,049
Livestream: Events (live and on-demand)	N/A	7,006	23,810
Vimeo: Short-form video (web, social media, email)	N/A	2,862	25,253
YouTube: Long-form videos (web, social media, email)	4,515	52,084	32,458
<b>Total Views</b>	<b>4,515</b>	<b>91,558</b>	<b>95,570</b>

# GOAL 3: Families and the Community

## Focus Area: WELL-BEING

Outcome 3.4: HCPSS supports the well-being of students and families.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies

- 3.4.1: Develop intentional strategies to connect directly with families who need additional supports.
- 3.4.2 Partner with government and community organizations to enhance services that support the well-being of students and families.

### Description and Value

HCPSS has several programs in place that offer targeted parent support in addition to their core services that benefit students directly.

- The Black Student Achievement Program (BSAP), Saturday Math Academy, is designed to accelerate academic achievement in mathematics for students on all levels. Parents have opportunities to attend sessions to learn about the mathematics curriculum and resources to support learning at home.
- The International Parent Leadership Program (IPLP) increases leadership capacity of international parents to step into leadership roles in schools and communities as advocates on behalf of the system's nearly 6,000 international students. The six-week program helps international parents understand the framework of the U.S. educational system and the structure and functions of HCPSS.
- International Student and Family Services offers interpretation and translation services during registration, conferences, back-to-school nights, and at other times throughout the school year, as needed.
- The Hispanic Achievement Program offers Spanish-language workshops and a Parent Academy to help parents access resources and effectively partner in the education of their children.



- HCPSS collaborates with community partners to foster parent and community involvement in student learning and achievement.
- HCPSS Student Services Pupil Personnel workers provide academic and social-emotional support to parents and students experiencing homelessness who reside at Grassroots homeless shelter.
- Pupil Personnel workers mentor and support each HCPSS student experiencing homelessness.

### Progress

During FY15, seven parent information sessions were held during the BSAP Saturday Math Academy at Oakland Mills High School, with an average of 58 parents attending each session. The sessions are designed to inform parents about current mathematics related topics and countywide initiatives. They also provide opportunities for parents to network with other parents, HCPSS staff, and community members. During FY16, HCPSS is partnering with the African American Community Roundtable to increase the number and type of community programs offered.

HCPSS enrolls nearly 1,000 new international students every year and continues to work to bridge the language gap. Parents are invited to participate in the IPLP program so they can be informed partners in the education of their children. Over 200 parents have graduated from the IPLP



since its inception in FY06. HCPSS provides interpreters and regularly adds to the library of translated documents to serve these families.

Table 3-E

International Office Services			
	FY13	FY14	FY15
Interpreter Requests	8,597	10,239	9,384
Students Served	2,888	3,296	3,320
Documents Translated	836	662	688
International Student Registrations	1,031	926	846

A growing number of parents access workshops offered in Spanish through the Hispanic Achievement Program.

Table 3-F

Number of Parents Attending Programs in Spanish			
	FY13	FY14	FY15
College and Career Ready Workshops	383	415	517
Parent Academy Graduates (cumulative)	202	246	284

HCPSS collaborates with community partners to foster parent and community involvement in student learning and achievement. The Community-based Learning Center After School Enrichment Programs are operated in collaboration with the Columbia Housing Corporation, Howard County Housing, the NAACP, the University of Maryland-Extension, and other local sororities and fraternities.

During FY15, 27 family nights were offered at seven sites. Parents were engaged in the academic process, learned strategies for healthy eating, and networked with representatives from community organizations.

Table 3-G

BSAP Community-based Learning Centers Programs			
	FY13	FY14	FY15
Elementary Students	111	121	132
Family Nights	75 parents	68 families	71 families

# GOAL 4: Organization

Schools are supported by world-class organizational practices.



FOCUS AREA	OUTCOMES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
<b>ORGANIZATIONAL WELL-BEING</b>	<p>4.1 All facilities are safe and secure.</p> <p>4.2 HCPSS hires and retains a talented, effective, and diverse workforce.</p> <p>4.3 Resource and staffing allocations are aligned with strategic priorities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School entry security features, p. 85</li> <li>• Frequency of modified/lost duty days, p. 85</li> <li>• Miles between preventable accidents, p. 85</li> <li>• Number of new hires, p. 87</li> <li>• Staff diversity, p. 87</li> <li>• Number of applicants for staff vacancies, p. 89</li> <li>• Staff retention rate, p. 91</li> </ul>
<b>PERFORMANCE</b>	<p>4.4 Technology is leveraged to optimize operational efficiency and effectiveness.</p> <p>4.5 A culture of performance management drives and aligns decisions and operations throughout schools and offices.</p> <p>4.6 Decisions are informed by relevant data in all operational areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zero-based budgeting implementation, p. 92</li> <li>• Computer access, connectivity, and speed, p. 94</li> <li>• Electronic payment usage, p. 97</li> <li>• Point of sale system usage, p. 98</li> <li>• Facilities management satisfaction, p. 99</li> <li>• Carbon footprint reduction, p. 101</li> <li>• Operations and maintenance satisfaction, p. 102</li> <li>• HVAC satisfaction, p. 102</li> <li>• Continuous Improvement Program, p. 103</li> </ul>

GOAL 4



## Goal 4 Overview

### Schools are supported by world-class organizational practices.

A world-class system is fueled by efficient and effective organizational practices, and a culture that supports innovation and progress. The outcomes and strategies under Goal 4 align all system resources, activities, and investments with organizational goals. As these strategies are implemented, the principles of continuous improvement, efficiency, and data-informed decision making are transforming the HCPSS organizational culture.

HCPSS adopted zero-based budgeting (ZBB) at the beginning of the FY15 operating budget planning cycle. Zero-based budgets evaluate all proposed annual expenditures on the basis of strategic priorities. The process is more flexible and transparent, and helps to identify cost-savings opportunities. The ZBB process delivered \$10.4 million in savings for the FY15 budget alone, and is expected to continue to drive cost savings and efficiencies in subsequent years.

Community members are an important part of the budgeting process. Two new avenues for community input on the budget were introduced during FY15. The first annual Citizen's Budget Guide provided important information about the HCPSS budgeting process, including factors influencing budget projections, operating revenue, and expenditures, in a brief, easy to read format. A searchable online version was added in the current year. HCPSS Insight, a live video series, features HCPSS experts responding to questions submitted by community and staff members via Twitter or email. HCPSS Insight was launched

in early 2015 with a session on the FY16 Proposed Operating Budget, which drew hundreds of participants and viewers during and after the event.

HCPSS received three prestigious industry awards during FY15 for its financial management. The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) presented its Distinguished Budget Presentation Award in recognition of excellence in budget preparation and presentation. The system also received a Meritorious Budget Award and Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO), in recognition of the HCPSS Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. HCPSS was one of only six agencies in Maryland and just 25 school districts nationally to receive the 2015 Annual Achievement of Excellence in Procurement Award from the National Procurement Institute Inc. The awards reflect the quality and value of the system's financial, budgetary, and procurement planning and operations, as well as high levels of accessibility and transparency for the public.

HCPSS has the highest broadband capacity of any school system in the state, and one of the highest in the nation, through the Inter-County Broadband Network (ICBN) provided in partnership with Howard County Government. Bandwidth capacity was increased in FY15, providing each HCPSS high school 5 gigabytes per second of capacity, 50 times more than the 100 megabits that were previously provided through a commercial carrier.

Middle schools have 3 gigabytes per second of capacity – 30 times the previous capability – and elementary schools have 10 times better capability with 1 gigabyte per second of capacity.

The extra bandwidth expanded digital learning options through high definition video, remote learning, online testing, and many other initiatives in support of Vision 2018.

Energy conservation and sustainability measures have been embraced by both students and staff throughout the system. A new Sustainability policy, effective July 1, 2014, emphasizes sustainable practices that create a healthy environment, develop environmental literacy, and strengthen operations.

HCPSS earned a U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools District Sustainability award in April 2015. Howard County was among just nine districts nationally and was the only Maryland system to win the annual award, which recognizes districts that save energy, reduce costs, feature environmentally sustainable learning spaces, protect health, foster wellness, and offer environmental education.

Forty-five HCPSS schools have been certified as Green Schools by the Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education, in recognition of a two-year, school-wide effort that encompasses curriculum and instruction, best management practices, and community involvement in environmental education.

Thomas Viaduct Middle School, Howard County's 20th middle school, welcomed its first students in August 2014. A true 21st century learning facility, TVMS provides outdoor learning areas, science laboratories and other specialized learning spaces designed to engage and inspire learning. High speed Internet access links classrooms to the wider world, and a "green" design emphasizes day-lighting and exterior views. The school serves as a pilot location for educational initiatives, such as Bring Your Own Device, at the middle school level.

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards guide all HCPSS construction planning, and every new construction or renovation project is designed to achieve LEED eligibility. LEED is an internationally recognized green building certification system developed by the U.S. Green Building Council. Recent renovation projects at Northfield and Thunder Hill elementary schools achieved LEED Silver certification, and the new Thomas Viaduct Middle School is also LEED Silver. Ducketts Lane Elementary, which opened in August 2014, earned the system's first LEED Gold designation.

A replacement Wilde Lake Middle School began construction in late FY15 in preparation for an August 2018 opening. It will be the first net-zero energy school in Maryland, and is expected to earn LEED Gold or Platinum certification.

HCPSS ranks among the most sought-after school systems in the region, not only for students and parents, but also for potential teachers. Nearly 12,300 applications were submitted for 432 teacher position openings during FY15. The large pool of applicants allows the school system to choose the most qualified professionals. Nearly 60 percent of the new teachers hired are experienced educators, and more than 73 percent have advanced degrees.

Lean Six Sigma and other continuous improvement methodologies are widely used by manufacturing and other industries to improve safety, efficiency, and profitability. HCPSS uses this same approach to redesign processes to improve consistency and efficiency and reduce waste. More than 150 staff members, representing every functional area, have completed the Lean Six Sigma Green Belt course, which is aligned with American Society for Quality curriculum. A new "flipped" course was introduced to allow participants to access class materials at their own pace online, and attend shorter sessions to complete hands-on instruction.

The process has yielded impressive results. Successful continuous improvement projects completed this year spanned both instructional and operations functions, and related to cyber incident, continuing professional development, school construction, science lab, digital learning, and warehouse functions. More than 20 Lean Six Sigma continuous improvement projects are currently underway in operational areas throughout the system.

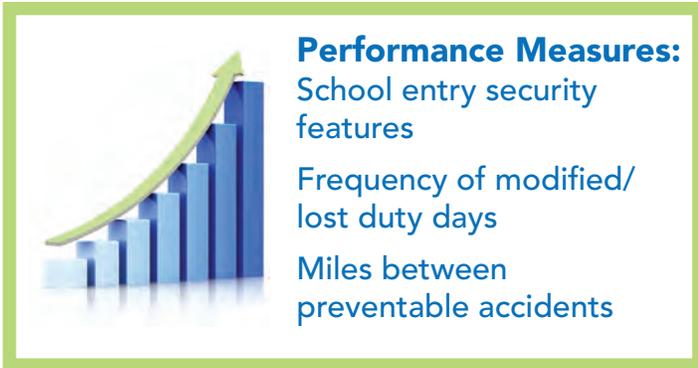
Dr. Renee A. Foose was among a select group of superintendents nationwide chosen to lead a White House ConnectED Initiative for transforming teaching and learning through the use of technology. Dr. Foose shared promising approaches with other educational leaders at the White House ConnectED to the Future Convening in November 2014.

HCPSS launched a series of more robust and user-friendly information systems. HCPSS Connect provides access to a variety of student information and classroom instructional tools relating to student progress. HCPSS Connect consists of the Canvas Learning System, which gives parents access to class information and assignments, and the Synergy Student Information System, which allows teachers, administrators and parents to access student information.

# GOAL 4: Organization

## Focus Area: ORGANIZATIONAL WELL-BEING

Outcome 4.1: All facilities are safe and secure.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies

- 4.1.1: Strengthen security and safety practices and ensure consistency across the school system.
- 4.1.2: Strengthen and standardize emergency response protocols and training.
- 4.1.3: Utilize national/international standards in risk management.

### Description and Value

Student safety and well-being is a top priority for HCPSS and the entire community. HCPSS has long taken a proactive approach to ensuring the safety of schools and system workplaces, and has many measures in place to ensure a secure instructional environment.

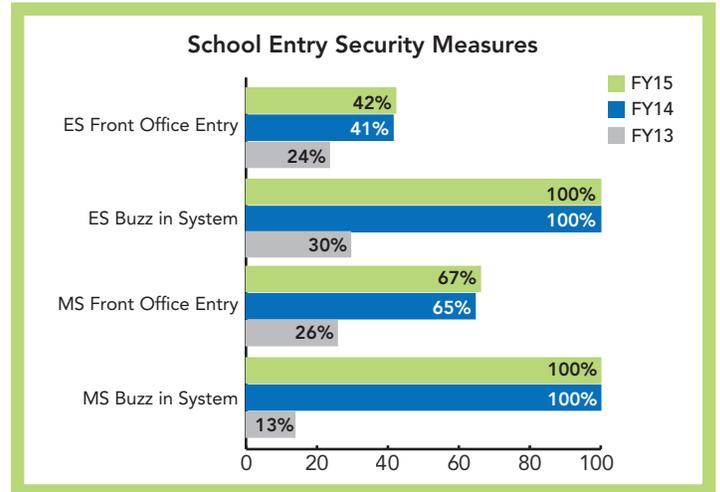
### Progress

A Joint Task Force on School Safety, comprising HCPSS and county government representatives, was convened early in 2013 to recommend specific school security improvements. Many of the recommendations have been implemented and are proving effective in preventing and managing security incidents. The school system also hired an emergency management and safety specialist as recommended by the task force.

School access control features were given priority status among the recommendations because school entry represents the source of many security breaches nationwide. Protocols for allowing access have been reinforced at all schools, and physical security features have been installed in all elementary and middle schools. The progress of this effort is illustrated in Figure 4-1, which depicts the percentage of schools where buzz-in systems and/or controlled entry through the administrative office have been established.

The elimination of workplace hazards in both schools and offices is also a priority. Results from the enhanced facility

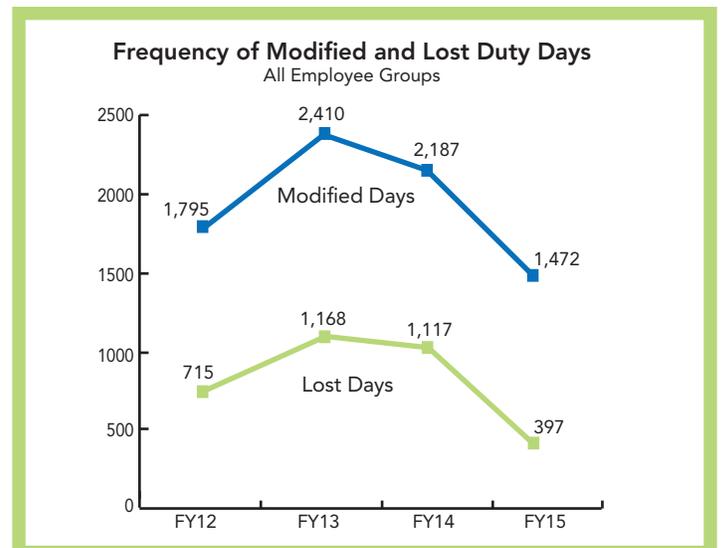
Figure 4-1



inspection program from the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE), and other external and internal inspections, identify trends and prompt preventive measures.

The school system experiences lost work days when an employee sustains a work related injury that prevents them from performing essential job tasks. Lost days, or days away from work, contribute to workers' compensation costs and impact the efficacy of the school system. To minimize this impact, a modified duty program, which permits the employee to return to work, was introduced. Figure 4-2 illustrates the number of days lost or away from work days and those that would have been lost if not for a modified duty program.

Figure 4-2





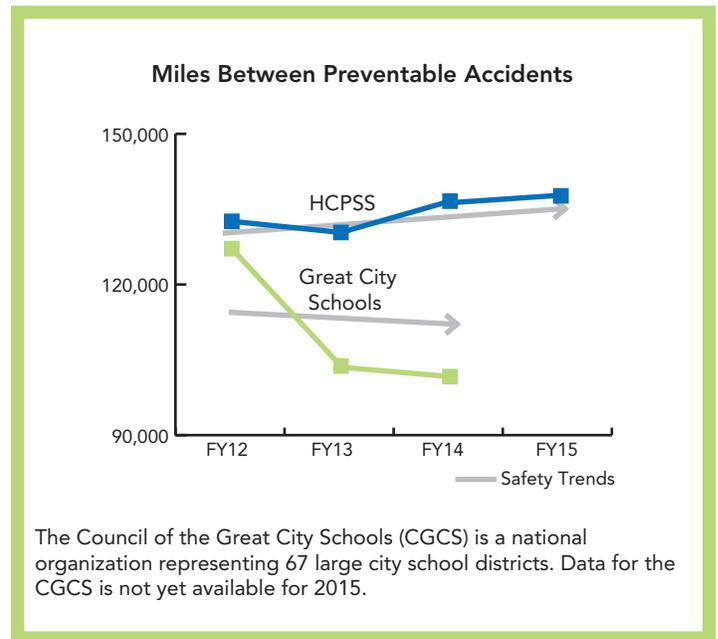
The school day for many students starts and ends on the school bus. HCPSS follows National Safety Council defensive driving principles to ensure safe delivery of each student to and from school. The relative incidence of school bus accidents has decreased, despite the increase in student enrollment and in total miles driven. This trend, measured by the number of miles between preventable accidents, is shown in Figure 4-3. HCPSS ranks above the median average among large school systems in performance for this measure, which serves as a key performance indicator within the Council of the Great City Schools annual report.

GOAL 4

As of January 2016, nearly all 453 school buses assigned to daily routes had digital on-board cameras installed; replacement buses will have cameras installed before they are added to the fleet for FY17. The installation of the camera systems underscores efforts to support the safety and well-being of students in Vision 2018 by reducing bullying, improving customer service, and supporting the recommendations of the Joint Task Force on School Security Report.

During the annual summer safety training, the Pupil Transportation Office partnered with the Howard County Fire and Rescue Department to provide CPR training for all school bus drivers and attendants. This effort led to over 600 additional service providers with tools to administer

Figure 4-3



first aid. Drivers and attendants also received training in special education compliance laws and competency training in wheelchair and car seat securement equipment.

# GOAL 4: Organization

## Focus Area: ORGANIZATIONAL WELL-BEING

Outcome 4.2: HCPSS hires and retains a talented, effective, and diverse workforce.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

- 4.2.1: Align hiring and staffing practices to recruit, support, and retain exceptional professional and support personnel with diverse cultural and experiential backgrounds.



### Description and Value

Among the HCPSS workforce, 23.8 percent identify as racial/ethnic minorities. Among teachers, 15.2 percent identify as racial/ethnic minorities.

The Office of Human Resources continues to refine its recruiting strategies in order to provide a more targeted recruitment process. Along with the local Teacher Comprehensive Job Fair, staff attend 35 strategically selected recruiting events, as well as major education consortia in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New York. Recruiting events held at colleges and universities within Maryland, Washington, D.C., and seven other states have been selected based on interview and hiring data. Of the 35 events, 9 are at historically black colleges and universities. In addition, HCPSS collaborates with Howard Community College to attend job fairs and Education Career Events. The HCPSS recruiters who attend these events are diverse in gender and ethnicity, as well as curriculum areas and grade levels taught.

In addition to attending recruitment events sponsored by higher education institutions, eleven Preliminary Interview dates are offered by HCPSS.

Because of the relative lack of teacher candidates trained by Maryland institutions of higher education and a nationwide shortage, the competition for minority candidates and critical shortage content areas is intense. Along with offering open contracts, another strategy used by the Office of Human Resources to address the shortage of minority candidates is “growing our own” teachers.

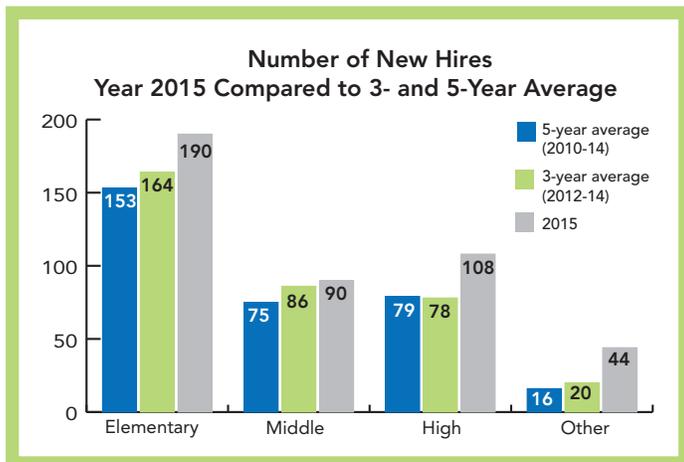
For the FY15 reporting period, 75 HCPSS graduates and 28 HCPSS paraeducators were hired as classroom teachers. Furthermore, 67 Professional Development Schools (PDS) interns and 14 student teachers trained in HCPSS schools were also hired into classroom teaching positions. Of these hires, five had been both a PDS intern and a student teacher. PDS interns and student teachers trained in HCPSS schools bring knowledge of current initiatives and best instructional practices into specific content areas. HCPSS conducts outreach to current HCPSS students through the Future Educator’s Associations and the Delta Scholars/Alpha Achievers student groups.



## Progress

Figure 4-4 shows that in 2015, hiring at each level increased compared to the 3- and 5-year averages.

Figure 4-4



\*Includes elementary classroom teachers and all related arts, countywide services, media specialists, guidance counselors, psychologists, therapists, and teacher trainers at the elementary level; excludes nurses.

\*\*Other (Homewood School, County Diagnostic Center, and Cedar Lane School) represents multiple level assignments; excludes nurses

The number of employees that identify as non-White increased for each racial/ethnic minority group from 2014 to 2015. (Table 4-A)

Table 4-A

Number of Employees by Race and Ethnicity Comparison				
Race	October 2014	October 2015	Difference	Increase
American Indian/Alaska Native	23	26	3	13.0%
Asian	280	308	28	10.0%
Black or African American	1,315	1,457	142	10.8%
Hispanic	200	226	26	13.0%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	6	7	1	16.7%
Two or More Races	72	75	3	4.2%
White	6,186	6,738	552	8.9%
Total	8,082	8,837	755	9.3%

For the period from October 16, 2014, to October 15, 2015, HCPSS hired 432 classroom teachers and related service providers (e.g. speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, counselors, etc.). More than 51 percent of the classroom teachers were employed to teach in critical shortage content areas.

Of the total number of new teachers hired, 14.1 percent self-identified as members of a racial minority. The breakdown per racial/ethnic minority group is as follows: 45.9 percent Black or African American; 23.0 percent Hispanic; 24.6 percent Asian; and 6.5 percent two or more races, American Indian or Alaska Native, or Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander categories.

Overall diversity of teachers is 15.2 percent. (Table 4-B)

Table 4-B

Diversity of Teachers, 2015								
	American Indian/Alaska Native	Asian	Black or African American	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	White	Hispanic	Two or More Races	Total
Classroom Teachers	16	135	425	3	3,744	99	-	4,422
Other Instructional Personnel	0	13	83	1	734	23	6	860
Total	16	148	508	4	4,478	122	6	5,282
Percent	0.3%	2.8%	9.6%	0.1%	84.8%	2.3%	0.1%	100%

# GOAL 4: Organization

## Focus Area: ORGANIZATIONAL WELL-BEING

Outcome 4.2: HCPSS hires and retains a talented, effective and diverse workforce.



### Progress

#### Teacher Candidate Selection

During the 2015 hiring period from October 16, 2014 to October 15, 2015, 432 classroom teachers and related service providers (e.g. speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, counselors, etc.) were hired from an applicant pool of 12,295. The national teacher shortage continues to make it challenging to recruit highly qualified teachers in critical shortage content areas. An analysis of the candidate pool reveals that 48 percent of applicants were seeking positions in non-critical content areas, and 52 percent applied for positions in critical shortage content areas.

### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies

- 4.2.1: Align hiring and staffing practices to recruit, support, and retain exceptional professional and support personnel with diverse cultural and experiential backgrounds.
- 4.2.2: Structure pay scales and benefits packages competitively for each specialized area.
- 4.2.4: Provide multiple pathways for professional growth and advancement.

### Description and Value

Recruiting and hiring the very best teachers and staff remains a top priority and a tremendous challenge, especially in critical shortage content areas. The Office of Human Resources works collaboratively with the Division of Curriculum, Instruction, and Administration to comply with federal, state, and local guidelines associated with No Child Left Behind, Race to the Top, and teacher certification requirements.

The Office of Human Resources plays a key role in the Superintendent's strategic plan to transform our school system to world-class. Human Resources staff members are committed to using data to inform decisions around recruiting, hiring, and retention of staff. Consequently, it is important that all new initiatives are evaluated for their effectiveness. Staff solicits feedback to evaluate current processes and procedures and to identify areas for improvement.



To fill vacancies from the most highly qualified pool of candidates, the timing of teacher recruiting and hiring is of critical importance. There are several factors to consider in the process. Tenured teachers in Maryland public school systems must abide by a July 15 resignation deadline; non-tenured teachers are held to a May 1 resignation deadline. Consequently, every effort is made to confirm vacancies in HCPSS schools as early as possible in order to select from the largest pool of qualified applicants. When vacancies are identified in early or late spring, involuntarily transferred (surplus) teachers and teachers returning from leave are placed promptly. Once placements are complete, the best possible applicants can be hired from the largest, most qualified pool of candidates.

### Certificated, Management, and Technical Candidate Selection

There were 138 administrative positions (principal, assistant principal, central office certificated, cluster and float nurse, athletic and activities manager, administrative management, and technical/non-supervisory AMT) posted for the reporting period October 16, 2014, to October 15, 2015. Of the 3,557 applicants, 1,576 met the minimum qualifications. It should be noted that applicant pools are utilized for assistant principal, cluster nurse, and athletics and activities manager positions, enabling the system to quickly fill vacancies with qualified applicants.

The Office of Professional and Organizational Development continues in its effort to build leadership capacity in HCPSS through targeted initiatives including Coaching Academies, Leadership Fellows, and New Leader Support Programs. In addition, the Office of School Administration uses the Leadership Intern Program to provide opportunities for teachers to gain skills as school-based administrators. Since its inception, 29 Leadership Interns have been promoted to assistant principal or central office positions, a clear indicator of the program's success.



GOAL 4

### Teacher Vacancies

Table 4-C

Number of Applicants for Teacher Vacancies				
2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
6,595	7,123	6,867*	7,189	12,295
*Data for 2013 only available from 12/1/12–10/14/13 when the Applitrack employment application was implemented.				

**Number of applicants for administrative positions:** (principal, assistant principal, central office certificated, cluster and float nurse, athletic and activities manager, administrative management, and technical/non-supervisory AMT.)

- Positions Posted – 138
- Total Applicants – 3,557
- Total Applicants Meeting Minimum Qualifications – 1,576 (10/16/14–10/15/15)

**Number of Applicants for Support Services positions:**

- Positions Posted – 202
- Total Applicants – 21,207
- Total Qualified Applicants – 7,176 (10/16/14–10/15/15)

### Advanced Degrees and Experience

Classroom teachers and related service providers (e.g. speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, counselors, etc.) continue to be hired across a full spectrum of experience levels. During the 2015 reporting period, 60 percent of classroom teachers hired were experienced educators. First-year teachers who are new to the profession continue to represent the largest number of new hires, which was 40 percent of all teachers hired. Of these new hires, 76 (48 percent) were student teachers or PDS interns in Howard County.

Of the 6,029 professional employees, 73.2 percent have advanced degrees (master's or greater). Eligibility for professional certification is a key factor in determining highly qualified status under the Federal No Child Left Behind Act. For the reporting period of October 16, 2014 to October 15, 2015, 92.4 percent of core academic subject classes were taught by highly qualified teachers. The number of conditionally certified teachers was 50.

# GOAL 4: Organization

## Focus Area: ORGANIZATIONAL WELL-BEING

Outcome 4.2: HCPSS hires and retains a talented, effective, and diverse workforce.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

- 4.2.1: Align hiring and staffing practices to recruit, support, and retain exceptional professional and support personnel with diverse cultural and experiential backgrounds.

### Description and Value

Hiring and retaining staff is essential to fulfilling the school system’s mission. The Office of Human Resources supports schools and employees through the management of employee information, which includes personnel records, educational background, certification, and licensure. In an effort to retain exceptional professional and support personnel, the Office of Human Resources provides comprehensive employee services to meet the needs of the HCPSS workforce, schools, and offices.

### Progress

The HCPSS staff retention rate was 91.3 percent in 2015 with an overall turnover rate of 8.7 percent. These rates reflect 766 separations out of 8,837 employees during the 2015 reporting period. Resignations are analyzed by both the reason and the period of the year when the resignation occurred. Of the 766 separations, 395 were due to the early retirement incentive offered to eligible employees. Other resignation reasons include work in another state, local jurisdiction, government, business, armed services or higher education, home responsibility, moved, personal illness, marriage, personal, and dissatisfaction with job.

Leaves of absence refer to extended leaves, such as childrearing or professional leave, for which Board of Education approval is required, and a vacancy is declared. Leaves of absence do not include short-term leaves, such as illness or maternity. Substitute teachers are used to fill short-term leaves of absence. The vast majority of leaves of absence were taken for childrearing. Childrearing leave may be granted for up to three years for the birth or adoption of a child. Employees returning from childrearing leave are placed in a similar position upon return from leave.

The date of separation for certificated positions is important because it is directly related to the supply of highly qualified, available applicants. Vacancies created during the school year are filled from a limited pool of applicants, while vacancies occurring from May 1 to July 15 are filled from the largest pool of highly qualified applicants. (Table 4-D)

Table 4-D

2015 Employee Separations							
Position	Resign	Retire	Death	Resign from Leave of Absence	Non-renewal	Termination	Total
Central and School-based Administrators	5	31	–	3	–	–	39
Teachers	117	194	1	122	4	3	441
Other Professional Personnel	10	16	–	1	–	–	27
Paraeducators	39	54	1	20	–	–	114
Other Support Personnel	31	–	–	6	–	–	37
Total	202	295	2	152	4	3	658
Percent	30.7%	44.8%	0.3%	23.1%	0.6%	0.5%	100%

# GOAL 4: Organization

## Focus Area: ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Outcome 4.3: Resource and staffing allocations are aligned with strategic priorities.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

- 4.3.1: Implement a zero-based budgeting process to invest in strategic priorities.

### Description and Value

Zero-based budgeting (ZBB) is a technique used for developing an annual budget that complements the budget planning and review process. Zero-based budgeting allows top-level strategic goals to be implemented in the budgeting process by tying them to specific functional areas of the organization. Due to its flexibility, this method of budgeting allows department heads to identify alternative ways to use limited resources through a systematic review.

A zero-based budget starts from a “zero base” and every function within an organization is analyzed for its needs and costs; all expenses must be justified. The budget is built based on the needs for the upcoming year, regardless of whether the new proposed budget is higher or lower than the previous one. Once developed, the budget is balanced given funding constraints.

Zero-based budgeting is a method of budgeting in which all expenses must be justified and every function within an organization is analyzed for its needs and costs. The purpose of the ZBB analysis is to assess a particular program’s activities against its statutory responsibilities, purpose, cost to provide services, and desired performance outcomes.

Some of the advantages of ZBB are that it:

- Facilitates efficient allocation of resources, as it is based on needs and benefits rather than history.
- Drives managers to find cost effective ways to improve operations.

- Increases staff motivation by providing greater initiative and responsibility in decision-making.
- Increases communication and coordination within the organization.
- Identifies and eliminates wasteful and obsolete operations.
- Requires programs to identify their purpose and their relationship to strategic goals.
- Helps in identifying areas of wasteful expenditure, and if desired, can also be used for suggesting alternative courses of action.

### Progress

The zero-based budget development, review, and analysis process requires collaboration among HCPSS staff, the Budget Office, the Superintendent’s Executive Team, and Cabinet. This new process was rolled out in stages to allow time for training staff on the necessary tasks. The following are the steps in the HCPSS ZBB process performance that managers have completed for each budget program:

1. *Identification of key activities of the program and the alignment of each activity with the strategic plan, Vision 2018: Fulfilling the Promise of Preparation.*  
The question answered in this step is: what does this program do and how does it support achieving the goals and outcomes in Vision 2018?
2. *Identification of the resources required to conduct the key activities of this program.*  
Having identified what the program does and how it supports the strategic plan, this step identifies in detail the staffing, contracted services, supplies and materials, equipment, and other resources necessary to carry out each key activity. Performance managers build the request from zero and justify each resource for each key activity including any proposed program enhancements and/or new program initiatives.
3. *Preparation of a summary of the program’s key activities.*  
The program summary provides information on the program’s purpose, an overview description of the program, and specific program goal(s), outcomes, and strategies as they align to *Vision 2018: Fulfilling the Promise of Preparation.*



In the third year of ZBB, efforts continued to allocate resources most efficiently and effectively. Savings through redirected resources yielded \$3.0 million in ZBB savings which was applied to non-salary increases aligned with Vision 2018. Projected FY 2017 ERP savings, totaling \$1.2 million, are directed to offset salary increases.

In reviewing key activities and program alignment with Vision 2018, 35.2 requested positions totaling \$2.1 million and \$1.3 million of new initiative requests were excluded from this budget, saving an additional \$3.4 million. In total, the ZBB process yielded a reduction of approximately \$7.6 million.

During FY15, the Office of Budget and Finance facilitated the implementation of an Early

Retirement Plan, a cost-containment measure that provides tenured staff with the opportunity to retire early. The savings from this implementation are currently being analyzed and will be reported in the FY17 budget.

A cloud-based budget development software was implemented and utilized in developing the FY16 budget. MyBudgetFile.com, which specializes in K–12 education budget development, streamlines and automates the process of communicating with all performance managers and allows for the analysis of “what if” scenarios. The software has greatly reduced the number of manual processes in budget development.

The Budget office was awarded both the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Distinguished Budget Presentation Award and the Association of School Business Officials (ASBO) Meritorious Budget Award for the FY15 budget, the first zero-based budget produced by the HCPSS. For FY16, ASBO has granted the Meritorious Budget Award for the second year, and GFOA is expected to grant the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for FY16, as well. These awards are peer-reviewed and evaluated based on industry best practices, and act as a performance measure for Budget.

While great progress was made in the first two years, much work remains to be done. Staff have embraced Vision 2018 and understand the importance of aligning resources to support the strategic plan. Staff support of zero-based budgeting has led to the current success and will continue to drive even greater results in the future.

#### 4. Development and use of program performance measures.

Having determined that a program is conducting activities that support the strategic plan and budgeting only the required resources to carry out these activities, the final step in zero-based budgeting is measuring the results of these activities. This step evaluates the success of each key activity.

In FY15, the first year of implementation, staff efforts focused on completing the first three steps of the ZBB process. Step 4, Development of Program Performance Measures, began during FY15, allowing reporting on program performance measures in the FY16 budget.

As a part of the FY16 budget process, each performance manager developed performance measures and/or identified accomplishments to be included in the FY16 budget. Performance managers continue to work on their measures with reporting of progress in future budgets.

The FY17 budget process is underway and performance managers continue to refine performance measures in order to provide reports in the FY17 budget.

Through the ZBB process, some staffing formulas were refined and staffing will be adjusted through natural attrition, which results in savings.

Teacher and school paraprofessional assignments were analyzed to ensure more classrooms are staffed at capacity and staff are utilized effectively.

# GOAL 4: Organization

## Focus Area: ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Outcome 4.4: Technology is leveraged to optimize operational efficiency and effectiveness.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies

- 4.4.1: Utilize technology tools that are intuitive, efficient, effective across platforms, and requirements-driven in a standardized environment.
- 4.4.2: Streamline and automate organizational processes in alignment with industry best practices.
- 4.4.3: Create single entry technology portals that provide integrated services responsive to user needs.
- 4.4.4: Integrate technology resources to eliminate redundancy and improve efficiency.

### Description and Value

HCPSS is committed to leveraging technology innovations for efficient operations and effective teaching and learning practices. HCPSS has several technology initiatives underway to expand computer access, connectivity, and speed.

### Progress

#### Computer Access

During FY15, HCPSS deployed 7,753 new computing devices. These computing devices were added for the following new and existing positions and programs: general purpose mobile labs (4,260), technology teacher mobile labs (1,590), New Teacher Orientation (480), Library Media (96), Career Center (205), ARL Academies (184), paraeducators (1,001), English as a Second Language (87), World Language (150), and Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) testing (1,920). In addition, 2,520 new computing devices were added for Title I schools. The following Table 4-E graphically displays this information.

Table 4-E

Number of Computing Devices			
	FY13	FY14	FY15
New Computers	5,860	8,147	7,753
Replacement Plan Computers	6,429	—	4,590
Existing Computers	22,468	31,604	36,369
Total	34,757	39,751	48,712

The majority of these computers are used by students as shown in Tables 4-F.

Table 4-F

Number of Assigned Computers			
	FY13	FY14	FY15
Staff assigned	5,502*	8,518	14,911
Student assigned	29,255	31,233	33,801
Total	34,757	39,751	48,712

\*FY13 staff assigned data includes teachers only

Tables 4-G and 4-H show how student computers used for instruction are divided among elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools as well as by the computer type (laptop, desktop, tablet).

Table 4-G

Number of Instructional Computers per Level			
	FY13	FY14	FY15
Elementary	11,287	12,552	13,816
Middle	8,817	9,380	10,160
High	9,151	9,301	9,825
Total	29,255	31,233	33,801

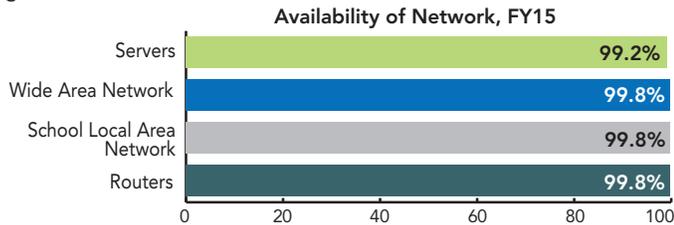
Table 4-H

Number of Instructional Computers in Schools by Type			
	FY13	FY14	FY15
Laptops	18,044	17,851	19,616
Desktops	9,955	10,432	9,585
Tablets	1,256	2,950	4,600
Total	29,255	31,233	33,801

### Network Availability

Network availability refers to the percentage of time the HCPSS network is available for use. For all network components, the percentage availability was equal to or greater than 99.2 percent in FY15, as shown in Figure 4-5 below.

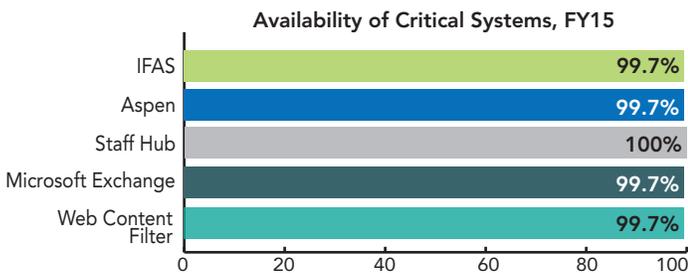
Figure 4-5



### Systems Availability

System availability refers to the percentage of time a system is available for use. For all HCPSS critical systems, the percentage availability was equal to or greater than 99.7 percent in FY15, as shown in Figure 4-6 below.

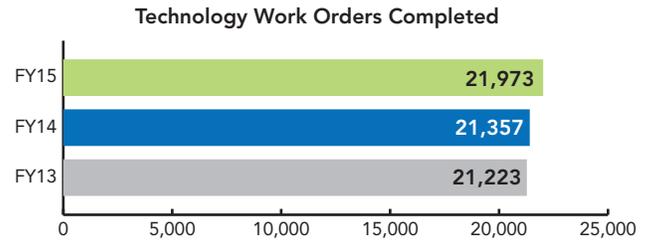
Figure 4-6



### Customer Service

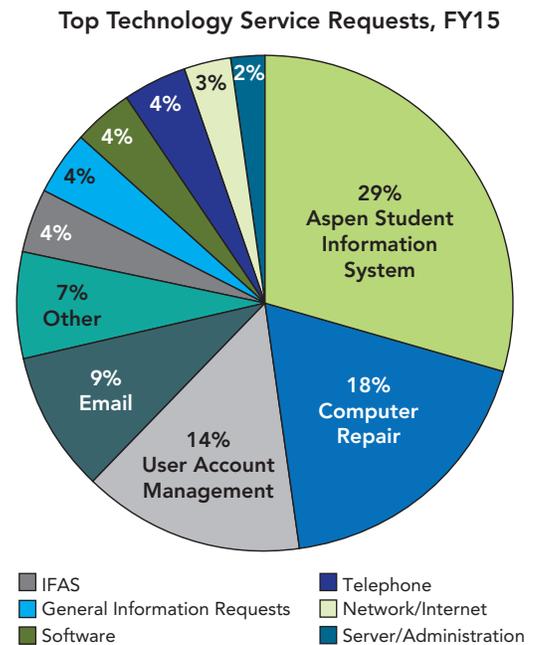
Customer service is paramount to ensuring that all technology equipment and services are reliable and available for use. Technology work orders are tracked in the Web Help Desk ticketing system. The number of work orders completed by Technology Department employees has increased in the past three years. In FY15, the Technology Department handled 3 percent more Web Help Desk tickets than the previous year, as shown in Figure 4-7.

Figure 4-7



In FY15, the top technology service requests were attributed to: Aspen Student Information System (29%), Computer Repair (18%), User Account Management (14%), Other (7%), Email (9%), IFAS (4%), General Information Requests (4%), Software (4%), Telephone (4%), Network/Internet (3%) and Server Administration (2%) and as shown in Figure 4-8.

Figure 4-8

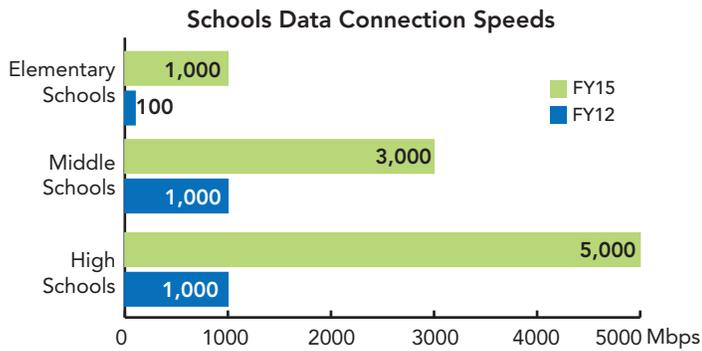


**Connectivity and Internet Access**

Wide Area Network (WAN) access service provides data connectivity for all HCPSS schools and Administrative locations. WAN speeds are trending upward from increased use of instructional web site and services in the Cloud and Bring Your Own Device (BYOD).

The State Educational Technology Directors Association (SETDA) has published recommendations to address K–12 educational infrastructure needs. Their recommendation for WAN service is at least 1000 megabits per second (Mbps) per 1000 students and staff. Figure 4-9 shows how the Technology Department increased WAN speeds to exceed the SETDA recommendation with all elementary schools at 1000 Mbps, middle schools at 3000 Mbps and high schools at 5000 Mbps.

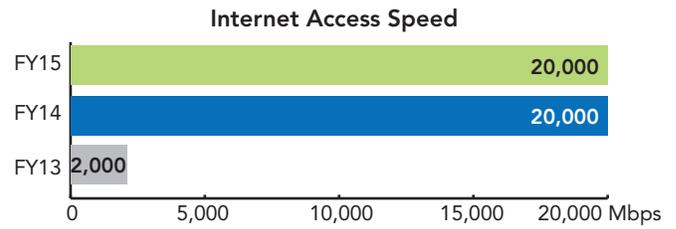
Figure 4-9



Internet access speeds are trending upward due to increased use of instructional websites and services in the Cloud and Bring Your Own Device.

The State Educational Technology Directors Association recommendation for Internet access is at least 100 megabits per second (Mbps) per 1,000 students and staff. As shown in Figure 4-10, the Technology Department increased Internet access service available to all HCPSS students and staff from 2 gigabits per second (Gbps) to 20 Gbps, which is well above the SETDA recommendation.

Figure 4-10



# GOAL 4: Organization

## Focus Area: ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Outcome 4.4: Technology is leveraged to optimize operational efficiency and effectiveness.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

- 4.4.2: Streamline and automate organizational processes in alignment with industry best practices.

### Description and Value

HCPSS is completing its first year of applying automation technologies to the accounts payable (AP) function, which is still largely reliant on costly and inefficient paper-based processes.

Electronic payment programs streamline the AP process by improving process efficiency and increasing control over payables. Improvements to process efficiency through the use of electronic payments are derived through:

- Eliminating checks as a payment method.
- Reducing time associated with check issuance and reconciliation.
- Enabling timely and accurate payments to vendors and suppliers.
- Helping reduce costs associated with late payments and payment errors.

Improving process efficiency and control over payables through electronic payments delivers other benefits including reduced processing time, more timely payments, streamlined reporting, and automated reconciliation process.

Vendors electing to participate in electronic payments derive the following benefits:

- Faster payment and settlement: compared to checks, electronic payments result in faster payment and transaction settlement for suppliers.
- Funds availability: with E-Payables, funds are virtually available when the transaction is processed.
- Process streamlining: just as E-Payables streamlines the accounts payable process, the accounts receivable function is improved as electronic receipt of payments helps reduce or eliminate labor-intensive processes, such as traditional paper-based invoicing. The transmission of valuable remittance data can also be integrated with accounts receivable systems.

### Progress

The Accounting Office has partnered with Bank of America to enroll a significant number of vendors in electronic payments. In addition, payments of employees expense reimbursements have been converted to direct deposit. HCPSS continues to convert vendors to electronic payments, with a current total of 249 vendors paid electronically, an increase of 10% over the first year. Electronic payments have reduced the number of checks issued by 3,607 over the prior year, totaling \$2.1 million.

Accounting has also implemented the Online School Payments (OSP) system, which allows schools to collect funds electronically for various activities. This system reduces the amount of cash and check deposits processed by school staff and allows parents and students the ability to pay from the convenience of the Internet. Currently 51 schools are using OSP and have collected \$202,971 in payments.

# GOAL 4: Organization

## Focus Area: ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Outcome 4.4: Technology is leveraged to optimize operational efficiency and effectiveness.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies

- 4.4.2: Streamline and automate organizational processes in alignment with industry best practices.
- 4.4.3: Create single entry technology portals that provide integrated services responsive to user needs.

### Description and Value

HCPSS implemented a Point of Sale (POS) System to automate the collection of money from students for the purchase of breakfast, lunch, and/or a la carte foods in school cafeterias. The system was phased in from September through November 2013, and is now used in all schools.

The POS system greatly improves convenience to parents and students. Parents can set up and fund an online account using a credit card or electronic check, which allows students to make cafeteria purchases using a PIN. Parents and students can also place money on the account at the terminal in the school cafeteria.

The system integrates with the Food and Nutrition Service financial system, streamlining reporting and data collection.

### Progress

The POS system has streamlined the operational and financial accountability of the food service program for students, families, and the Food and Nutrition Service office staff. Since its installation, students and cafeteria staff have become comfortable with the process, resulting in improved efficiency of the serving lines and allowing students more time to enjoy their meals. The system has also provided a convenient and secure way for parents to pre-pay for their children's meals.

The system's easy-to-use tools and reports have also resulted in quick, well-informed decisions about the food



and nutrition service program by seamlessly tying everything together in the food service operation.

The success of the POS system is indicated by level of participation, measured by

the percentage of students who make cafeteria purchases using the online account, total meals served, and average daily participation as indicated below.

The system has also delivered a 50 percent reduction in the time required for cafeteria managers and Food and Nutrition Service Central office staff to fulfill Maryland State Department of Education reporting requirements.

In addition, the system has also reduced cash handling errors and fraud, improved accounts receivable management, customized displays and reports, supported more payment options, streamlined end-of-day reporting, eliminated charge errors, and automated tracking of types of meals served.

Figure 4-11

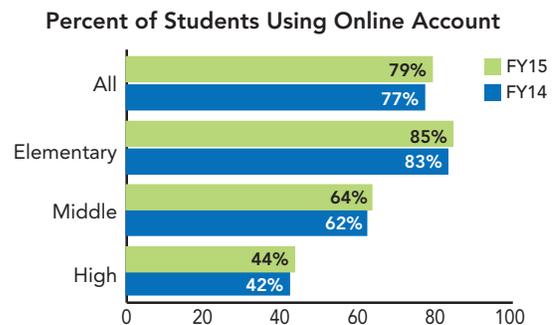


Table 4-1

Meals Served Daily, Annually			
	FY13	FY14	FY15
Average Meals Served Daily	18,898	19,276	20,278
Total Meals Served Annually	3,779,651	3,800,153	4,051,295

# GOAL 4: Organization

## Focus Area: ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Outcome 4.5: A culture of performance management drives and aligns decisions and operations throughout schools and offices.

Outcome 4.6: Decisions are informed by relevant data in all operational areas.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies

- 4.5.1: Refine central services to streamline operations, optimize efficiency and effectiveness, and facilitate collaboration.
- 4.5.2: Utilize consistent performance management practices to plan, evaluate, and refine initiatives.
- 4.6.3: Routinely benchmark with comparison organizations to analyze current practices and identify best practices.

### Description and Value

Data collection and analysis are essential to establishing a culture of performance management that drives and aligns decisions and operations throughout schools and offices. The Department of Facilities, Planning and Management uses multiple sources of data to drive improvements, including stakeholder surveys, internal reports, and research-based best practices.

The Executive Director of Facilities Planning and Management meets with each principal annually to assess the performance of the department in meeting needs identified by our primary customer, the schools. Satisfaction levels are quantified for each attribute that was identified by principals as a priority during the baseline survey year (FY07). The survey results are shared throughout the Facilities department to help incorporate lessons learned and identify areas needing improvement.

Survey results are coupled with data gathered from the work order database, then compared to international and national best practices, as described by the International Facilities Management Association and the Association of

Physical Plant Administration. The data is used to inform practice refinements that are implemented by members of the Facilities team.

The use of these data to drive improvements is illustrated in our approach to school renovations. The single largest area of concern identified in the initial survey was lack of consistency of temperatures throughout the buildings. This finding drove multiple continuous improvement cycles within the HVAC shop in Building Services and fundamentally changed the way we have planned and executed school renovations.

### Progress

The facilities survey provides data to drive continuous improvement in our facilities management process.



Principals are asked to rate the quality of services using a five-point scale:

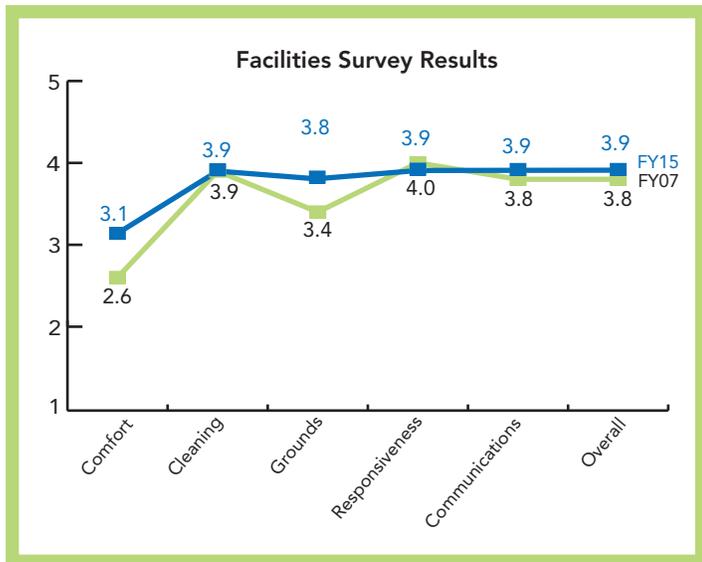
1. Unsatisfactory: All areas need improvement
2. Marginal: Some aspects are okay but overall needs improvement
3. Satisfactory: Everything met basic standards
4. Excellent: Great job but could be better
5. Outstanding: Superior in every respect

The areas rated include:

- Comfort level of building (temperature and function)
- Cleanliness of building
- Appearance and maintenance of grounds
- Responsiveness to issues
- Communications between school and external staff
- Overall level of service
- Transportation

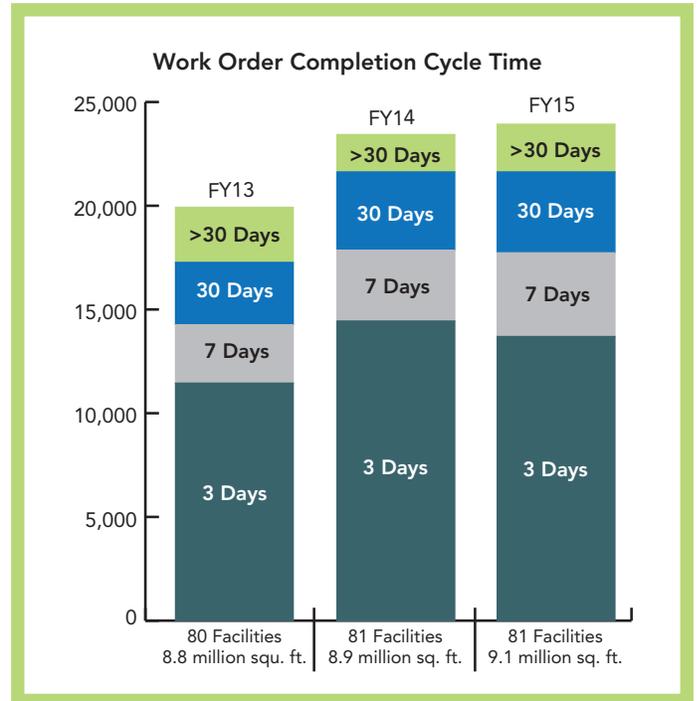
In FY15, all areas were rated between Satisfactory and Outstanding, on average.

Figure 4-12



To further understand and improve upon performance within the department, work order data is analyzed. The department has a goal of addressing all mission critical work requests within 24 hours. Any routine work request that is not completed within 7 days requires feedback to the customer with a plan for addressing and resolving the issue. In FY15, 57 percent of work orders were completed in 3 days or less.

Figure 4-13

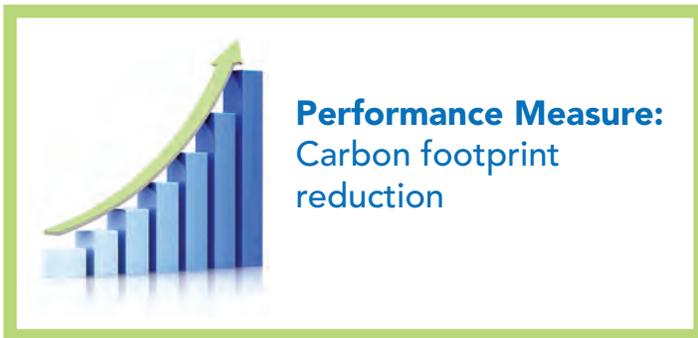


The school system recently added two new schools and several large additions, increasing the overall square footage that Facilities staff must maintain. As work order requests have increased, staffing levels within Facilities, Planning and Management have decreased, which negatively impacts work order completion cycle time.

# GOAL 4: Organization

## Focus Area: ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Outcome 4.5: A culture of performance management drives and aligns decisions and operations throughout schools and offices.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

- 4.5.2: Utilize consistent performance management practices to plan, evaluate, and refine initiatives.

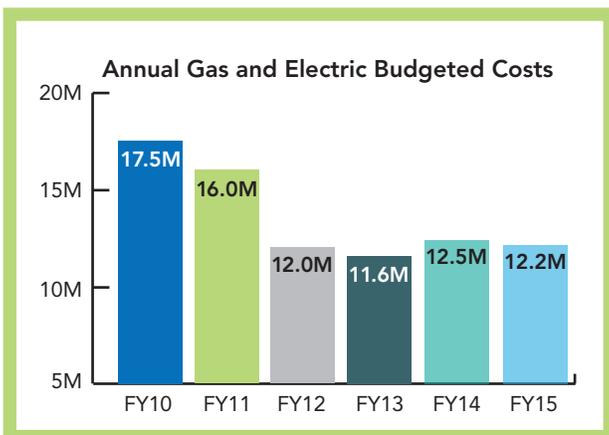
### Description and Value

HCPSS embraces sustainable practices as both a teaching tool and cost-saving strategy. The approach has now been formalized by the approval of Policy 6080 Sustainability, which states that the Board of Education believes that environmental, economic, and social sustainability within the school system is the responsibility of all individuals as well as the collective organization.

### Progress

Average energy use per square foot within the school system has dropped by 8.3 percent since 2010, despite increasing student enrollment and building usage. These savings can be attributed to both behavior change and technology improvements.

Figure 4-14



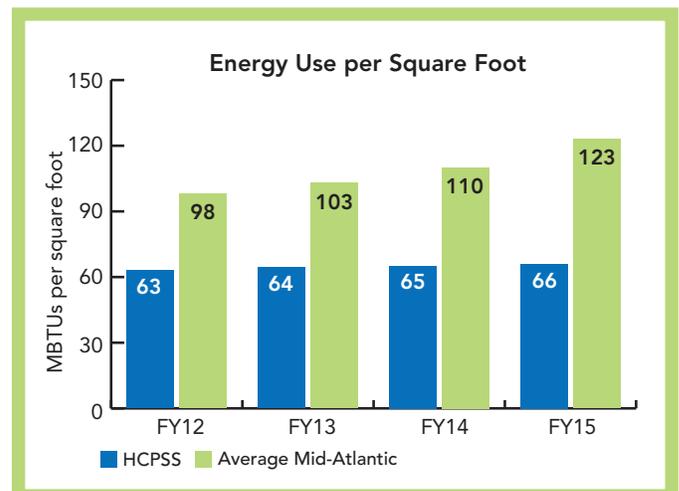
As of June 2015, 45 schools (62%) had achieved Maryland Association of Outdoor Educators Green School certification, and Dunloggin Middle School was one of the first U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon schools.

The departments of School Construction and School Facilities have aggressively implemented energy saving strategies over the last decade. Accomplishments have included LEED certification of eight buildings, award of BG&E rebates in excess of \$1.3M, and improved learning environments. The Wilde Lake Middle School replacement project is planned to be one of the first net zero energy schools in Maryland.

The Office of Custodial Services is a leader in the implementation of green cleaning strategies and was recognized with the 2012 American Schools and Universities Grand Award for Green Cleaning.

Utility costs must be minimized to allow diversion of funding to other strategic priorities. Figure 4-14 demonstrates that the FY14 actual gas and electric costs were \$5.3M below the FY10 budgeted costs. Figure 4-15 demonstrates that HCPSS energy use is significantly lower than average energy use for the mid-Atlantic region. In addition, over the last five years we have been approved for over \$2.9M in BG&E rebates and \$500,000 of incentives related to our participation in a Peak Load Management Program, dollars which have all been returned to the general fund. We continue to aggressively pursue technology improvements that have high payback to the system, including a LED relamp of all high school lighting with less than a year payback.

Figure 4-15



# GOAL 4: Organization

## Focus Area: ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Outcome 4.5: A culture of performance management drives and aligns decisions and operations throughout schools and offices.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

- 4.5.2: Utilize consistent performance management practices to plan, evaluate, and refine initiatives.

### Description and Value

It is common for school buildings to remain in operation for 50 years or more. Our oldest building, West Friendship Elementary School, is now 90 years old. In order to support student engagement, buildings and their surroundings should be clean, comfortable, and provide the right tools for education. The collective efforts of the Facilities Department are designed to achieve these goals.



Over the last several years, the Facilities Department has embraced the adoption of Lean principles. Their success in improving a variety of processes led to the establishment of the HCPSS Continuous Improvement Office. While multiple offices have conducted workshops leading to improvement, the clearest example of how improving an operational practice leads to reduced costs and improved customer satisfaction can be found in the HVAC Shop in Building Services.

### Progress

The HVAC Shop's most recent improvement efforts centered on the rearrangement of the HVAC office floor plan and visual improvements. The new layout created an open space area that is more conducive to open communication between technicians and supervisors. Better communication increases productivity and helps create a more engaging environment for employees.

Building Services continues to work with BG&E to utilize various initiatives and rebate programs. Over the last five years, we have realized \$2.9 million in rebates.

# GOAL 4: Organization

## Focus Area: ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Outcome 4.5: A culture of performance management drives and aligns decisions and operations throughout schools and offices.

Outcome 4.6: Decisions are informed by relevant data in all operational areas.



### Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies

- 4.5.1: Refine central services to streamline operations, optimize efficiency and effectiveness, and facilitate collaboration.
- 4.5.2: Utilize consistent performance management practices to plan, evaluate, and refine initiatives.
- 4.5.3: Implement continuous improvement practices, including quality control and process management in every school and division.
- 4.6.3: Routinely benchmark with comparison organizations to analyze current practices and identify best practices.
- 4.6.6: Implement consistent data protocols in every school and office.

### Description and Value

HCPSS implemented a continuous improvement program in 2013 to support world-class business practices that promote effective and efficient use of school system resources. This program is directly aligned to Outcome 4.5: A culture of performance management drives and aligns decisions and operations throughout schools and offices; and Outcome 4.6: Decisions are informed by relevant data in all operational areas.

The Continuous Improvement Program is designed to meet the following charge:

- Mentor projects that employ Lean strategies to make our critical processes more efficient.
- Support strategic alignment of systemwide activities to achieve world-class organizational practices.
- Educate staff to deploy Lean methods and create a continuous improvement culture.



Lean Six Sigma and continuous improvement methodology focus on analyzing processes and redesigning them to be more efficient, more consistent, and less wasteful. Industry has been using this approach for decades to become safer, faster, and more profitable. HCPSS is now using this same approach to create better processes for our students, staff, and community.

Two critical elements are leadership support and employee involvement. With strong leadership support, continuous improvement becomes a part of our culture. Small, daily improvements can add up to significant gains. Leadership fosters this culture by providing resources and encouraging staff to explore potential ideas while setting an expectation for progress. Progress requires the participation of the entire staff with collaboration across departments at every level.

Respect for People: a foundation of Lean Six Sigma is listening to people—both the people who perform the work and the customers who are served. Lean Six Sigma re-engineers the process to be robust so that work can be completed by different people precisely and consistently. The Lean approach ensures the process is resilient enough to prevent mistakes from occurring among the many people performing the tasks.



### The DMAIC Approach

DMAIC (Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve, Control) is an acronym for the 5-phased process that Lean Six Sigma follows. The Define phase details the problem, the stakeholders, and the objective. The Measure phase determines how the progress will be measured, maps the process, and creates a baseline. Basing our actions on data, conclusions result from the statistics rather than assumptions. In the Analyze phase, the various influencing factors of a process are researched, root causes are isolated, and any waste within the process is identified. During the Improve phase, the solutions are piloted and potential risks are mitigated. Finally, in the Control phase, the improvements are scaled to the full process and mechanisms are established to sustain the accomplishments. Using this approach provides a solid recipe for problem solving that yields lasting results.

### Progress

The true benefit of a Lean Six Sigma program is applying the methods in our school system’s critical processes, identifying wasteful and redundant activities, and re-engineering the process to reduce mistakes. Currently,

there are over 20 continuous improvement projects throughout our organization in several of our departments.

HCPSS led several continuous improvement projects this year using the Lean Six Sigma methodology and implemented change in many areas including Accountability, Assessments, Benefits, Building Services, Bus Contractor, Communications, Custodial, Digital Education, English Speakers of Other Languages, Facilities, Finance, Grounds Maintenance, Human Resources, Maintenance, Office of Instructional Technology, Partnership Office, Professional Development, Policy, Print Shop, Research and Program Evaluation, School Planning, Strategic Planning, Technology, Transportation, TV Services, and World Languages.

Within HCPSS, over 150 district employees have completed the intensive 5-day Lean Six Sigma Green Belt course. Staff learn about a broad range of Lean tools that can be applied in many situations. The course is aligned with the American Society of Quality curriculum and HCPSS offers a certification for staff members who apply these methods in multiple projects.

*Value Stream Maps:* Value stream maps graphically display the process and identify wasteful activities. This year, HCPSS staff generated numerous value stream maps of critical processes to document our activities and analyze how our work organizations can improve.

*Kaizen:* Kaizen is a Japanese term that means continuous improvement, or literally “Change for the Better.” Kaizen events are intensive, cross-functional sessions which focus on problem resolution and implementing rapid improvement. This year we have hosted four of these events with several more scheduled.



GOAL 4



**Successes:** Here are some of the many projects and processes that have been mentored by the Continuous Improvement Office this year:

- Lean Six Sigma Green Belt Online Course
- Cyber Incident Process
- Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Process
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Credit Application Process
- School Construction – CM & AE Roles & Contracting
- Middle School Science Lab 5S
- Digital Learning Design
- Warehouse School Swap

### Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

Standard Operating Procedures are a “best practice” tool designed to document the regular and recurring workplace activities with the aim of completing specific operations correctly each time and consistently by all staff members who perform them.

This SOP initiative began in the Operations Division and has been also been initiated by the Accountability and Human Resources Divisions. The format of the SOP form resulted from researching 12 educational and business organizations as well as internal, cross-division coordination to develop a standard format. In Operations, eighty-six (86) SOPs were completed by the end of June 2015 and reside in a system document repository.

In addition to the procedural steps, each SOP includes: policy and strategic plan alignment; purpose; scope; responsibilities; risks (including fiscal, continuity of operations, health, safety, and security); definitions; internal and external references; relevant tools (such

as process maps); and future process plans and considerations. Documenting our standard operating procedures provides a common language and understanding around our critical processes for our current staff, as well as an invaluable training tool for our future employees.

### Lean Six Sigma Green Belt Online Course

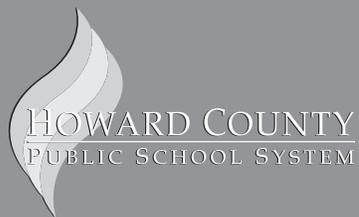
The HCPSS Lean Six Sigma Green Belt (LSS GB) course has been accessed by over 150 staff members in multiple departments and locations. For our instructional staff, taking a 4-day course is a challenge. Teachers would have to arrange substitutes if they want to take the course during the school year and it is extremely difficult for school-based staff to be away from their workplace during the school year. Some members of our instructional staff and administrators have taken the course during the summer, but this is not always convenient with vacation schedules.

With this in mind, the Continuous Improvement department launched an online LSS GB course delivery for our staff. In education, “flipped classroom” is a concept where students receive lecture information outside of the classroom and use class time for discussion, exercises and reinforcing concepts. The LSS GB course is now offered using this hybrid model where our staff can receive CPD credits and review the material at their own pace, then sign up for shorter sessions held after school to complete the hands-on concepts taught in this program.

In creating this hybrid course, we invited our green belts (staff members who had taken the LSS GB course previously) to receive project credit for certification by developing the course modules. Twenty green belts reviewed course transcripts from previous sessions and also researched their assigned subjects on their own. The LSS GB course was created in Canvas, the HCPSS learning management system, where it can be accessed easily by staff for both taking the course, and later for reference and review of the modules when they are ready to use the tools. A standard template was followed to ensure quality, but the course also benefits from many different methods and perspectives in the delivery of the information. Participants enjoy different presentation approaches as they experience the modules, which are explained in relevant and understandable narratives by their own peers. In addition to voice-overs and presentations, these course developers found articles and videos to further explain the concepts, making the new course a rich learning experience for those who are taking it in a self-paced setting.



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