

2013-14 Annual Report *on the* Strategic Plan

Vision 2018: Fulfilling the Promise of Preparation



HOWARD
COUNTY
PUBLIC
SCHOOL
SYSTEM

Published May 2015

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



Renee A. Foose, Ed.D.
Superintendent

The launch of *Vision 2018: Fulfilling the Promise of Preparation*, in July 2013 ushered in a new era for the Howard County Public School System. This strategic plan defines a world-class educational program that gives each child a sound foundation in the skills and knowledge that lead to lifelong prosperity.

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 organization. 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 has made in the first full year of plan implementation, and highlights notable progress and initiatives that are leading our students and system toward a brighter future.

These advancements are because of 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.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Renee A. Foose".

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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 (FY15)

76 Schools
 41 elementary schools
 20 middle schools
 12 high schools
 3 education centers

Total Enrollment (FY15) – 52,511*
 Elementary (Pre-K–5) – 24,842
 Middle (6–8) – 12,276
 High (9–12) – 16,438
 Special School – 99

*Official count does not include Pre-K

Per Pupil Expenditure (FY15)
 \$81.94 per day/\$14,570 per year

Operating Budget (FY15)
 \$758.8 million

OUR CLASSROOMS (FY15)

Ratio of computers to students: 1:1.8
Classrooms with Internet access: 100%

OUR STAFF** (FY15)

Teachers 4,073
 Total Staff 8,136.2

**as of Dec. 2014

70.4% of teachers hold a master's degree or above

OUR STUDENTS

Race/Ethnicity*** (FY15)

American Indian/Alaskan	0.2%
Asian	19.3%
Black/African American	21.8%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.1%
Hispanic/Latino	9.4%
White	42.7%
Two or more races	6.2%

*** as of Nov. 2014

Students Receiving Special Services (FY14)

Free/Reduced-price Lunch	19.4%
Ltd. English Proficient	≤5.0%
Special Education	8.5%

Attendance Rate (FY14)

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

Graduation Rate: 92.9%**** (FY14)

****4-year adjusted cohort

ESOL Program (FY15)

Over 2,200 students participate in the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program, representing 61 different languages (primarily Spanish and Korean) and 72 countries.

Gifted and Talented Program (FY15)

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

K to Grade 5	45%
Grades 6–8	50%
Grades 9–12	60%

Documented Decisions/Class of 2014

Attend a 4-year college	67%
Attend a 2-year college	26%
Attend trade or technical school	≤5%
Enter employment	≤5%
Military	≤5%
Other or unreported plans	≤5%

National Merit Finalists

Class of 2014 – 36 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 FY14, which is the system's first full 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 by sharing input through a series of Listen and Learn sessions with the Superintendent, strategic planning focus groups, meetings with government and community leaders, and online surveys.

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 has 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.

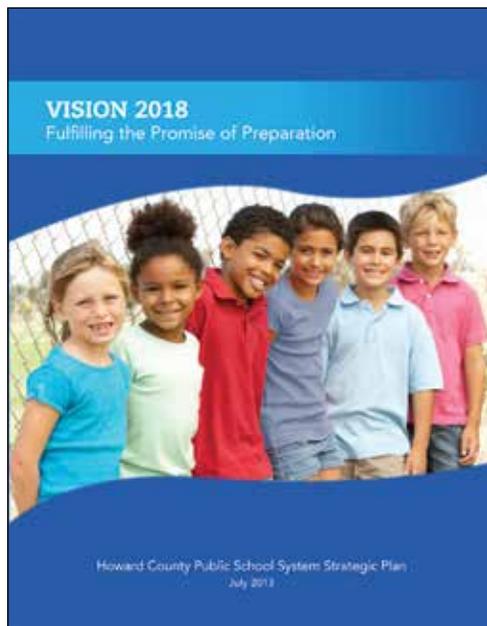
Students are at the center of the strategic plan, but it takes a holistic view to encompass all of the elements that make up the school system: students, staff, families and community, and organization. Systemwide goals, outcomes, and aligned strategies are defined for each of these four areas, with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

The ultimate success of Vision 2018 depends upon its effectiveness in driving decisions at all levels and in every school and department. Each initiative and budgetary decision must support 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 based 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 \$3.4 million in savings for the FY15 budget cycle. These savings are expected to increase in subsequent years as Vision 2018 performance measures are incorporated into the budget planning and review process.



www.hcpss.org/vision

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.

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"> Curriculum alignment to national/international standards, p. 11 Career and Technology Education (CTE) program participation and performance, p. 13 World language program expansion, p. 15 Reading developmental levels, K–2, p. 17 Gifted and Talented (GT) program participation, p. 18 Advanced Placement (AP) course participation and AP exam participation and performance, p. 21
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"> Digital education expansion, p. 23 Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) implementation, p. 25 Graduation and dropout rates, p. 27 Student hope, engagement, and well-being, p. 30
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"> Kindergarten readiness, p. 32 Reading and mathematics formative assessment implementation, Grades 1–8, p. 34 Science Maryland School Assessment (MSA), Grades 5 and 8, p. 35 Reading and mathematics state assessments, Grades 3–8, p. 37 High school state assessments, p. 39 PSAT participation and performance, p. 40 International benchmark assessment, p. 42 College entrance exam participation and performance, p. 44
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"> Attendance rate, p. 46 Suspension rate, p. 47 Crisis response, p. 49 Nutrition and physical activity, p. 50



Goal 1 Overview

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

The HCPSS educational program emphasizes instructional rigor in an environment that nurtures the whole child.

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 students' long-term success. As indicators, these prove even more reliable than student test scores. Students who feel positive about school, believe in themselves, and have hope for their future, are far better situated to achieve in class and to thrive later in life.

Gallup's research also demonstrates that students grow steadily more disengaged in learning as they progress in grade levels—with elementary most engaged, and high school least engaged. Boys are generally less engaged by traditional educational methods than are girls. The results of HCPSS student engagement surveys conducted over the last two years are consistent with this national trend.

The Goal 1 outcomes and strategies are designed to provide a well-rounded educational program that maintains rigorous expectations for learning but also addresses students' social, emotional, and physical needs. Our system is transforming the culture of learning to a culture of innovation, where students take an active role

in their education and learn by discovery and through teamwork, collaboration, and real-world learning experiences. This new model more closely reflects the world beyond the classroom and adapts instruction to the way most students learn best.

Significant progress has been made in this goal area. HCPSS students continue to excel in standard measures of student achievement, while reforms are underway to enhance the student experience.

HCPSS is improving the instructional program to ensure all students are gaining the skills and knowledge that will lead to college and career readiness. The curriculum is continually revised and updated to place greater emphasis on 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 have been aligned to the Maryland College and Career Ready standards, and the alignment of the science curriculum to the Next Generation Science Standards is in process. These standards are based on the input of the most

knowledgeable educators and subject matter experts from across the country. They define the critical skills that students must master in each grade to stay on track to succeed in college and careers in the global economy and throughout life.

Programming improvements to nurture the intellectual, social, and emotional growth of each child are well underway. Since fall 2013, the system has opened two new schools: Ducketts Lane Elementary and Thomas Viaduct Middle. These are true 21st century instructional environments, designed to facilitate creative, interactive indoor and outdoor learning experiences to inspire and engage students.

A model for elementary education was implemented in six schools during FY15. The model brings the principles of Vision 2018 to life for young learners, through daily world language instruction in the primary grades, a departmentalized curriculum, expanded pre-Kindergarten, and strengths development for students and staff.



The model also includes an innovative in-school Telehealth program that uses video cameras and remote-access medical devices to connect doctors, school nurses, and parents online in real time to treat minor injuries and ailments. Students stay in school, and feel better sooner, so they can focus on learning.

HCPSS is among the first public school systems to adopt Institute of Medicine Nutritional Standards as part of its recently revised Wellness through Nutrition and Physical Activity Policy. Other provisions include breakfast in all schools, "brain breaks" throughout the instructional day, and healthier options for school meals and snacks. The

policy was ranked among the best in the nation by the Yale University Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity.

At the high school level, a new Digital Education initiative opens options for students ready for advanced-level or specialized learning experiences that go beyond the typical high school curriculum. For example, a class in differential equations is taught remotely by a single teacher, who instructs and interacts remotely with participating students in schools across the system using advanced technology and streaming media. The course is just one of a number of new online and blended course offerings that expand digital education options for all HCPSS students. These programs provide flexibility, accommodate different learning styles, and allow much broader access to specialized course material.

The Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) initiative, piloted in FY14 and implemented in all high schools and one middle school in FY15, allows students to use their personal devices for HCPSS sanctioned activities and connect to the Internet for instructional activities. BYOD will be extended to all middle schools in FY16. The program is designed to enhance learning, personal productivity, collaboration, and access to instructional resources.

An early college program offered in partnership with Howard Community College opens pathways for many more students to career opportunities in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math). Participating high school students earn half of the credits needed toward an associate's degree in a STEM discipline by the time they graduate. The first phase of the program is a Network Security pathway, which will be followed by additional pathways in following years.

In early 2014, HCPSS was the first Maryland school system to participate in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (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 first year results showed that most HCPSS high schools are performing as well as, or better than, the world's leading nations in educational achievement.

Data show that Gifted and Talented (GT), Advanced Placement (AP), and other higher level learning experiences give students the skills that are associated with college readiness. HCPSS is widening the pipeline of students who take part in these programs, starting in elementary school. Every student is tested for GT participation and every high school student is encouraged to take at least one AP course.



Often, an innovative learning opportunity is introduced at a specific school or schools, or through special enrichment programs available to interested students. A new pre-AP/vertical articulation program being piloted at Thomas Viaduct Middle School helps prepare students for success in high school AP.

Students at several HCPSS middle schools learn about forces and motion in science classes, then work in teams to design research proposals for microgravity experiments. Astronauts on the International Space Station conducted one of these experiments, designed by a Murray Hill Middle School student, during their orbit in spring 2014. This experiment was among just 15 selected from 1,344 student proposals submitted nationally. The project is an example of the exploratory learning experiences that typify the next-generation science curriculum.

A financial center, complete with a New York Stock Exchange electronic stock ticker, allows Academy of Finance students at the Applications and Research Laboratory to experience live market conditions and gain hands-on practice in investing and portfolio management. High school students who take part in the Academy of Finance and other HCPSS career academies gain a head start toward success in college and a rewarding career through advanced-level instruction, industry exposure, interaction with field professionals, and practical application.

In a project supported by the Howard County Conservancy and the Chesapeake Bay Trust, high school biology classes created a watershed report card to assist county legislators in considering environmental policy. After collecting and analyzing samples from sites throughout the county, students presented their report to county representatives and environmental experts.



Every HCPSS student explored computer science by writing code and sampling other activities during a weeklong Hour of Code campaign. The program is an international effort sponsored by code.org to encourage interest in computer science and programming. Last year, more than 15 million students participated worldwide.

Progress on key Goal 1 measures during FY14 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.

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*	Next Generation Science Standards	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	World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages	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.

During the last three to five years, the data collection process has been refined to ensure accuracy. Enrollment figures are now reflective of the actual numbers of students who participate in CTE programs. The data collection process for information regarding technical skills

Table 1-B

Enrollment Trends by CTE Clusters			
	FY12	FY13	FY14
Arts, Media, and Communication	96	84	97
Business Management and Finance	1,122	957	991
Construction and Development	22	26	19
Consumer Services, Hospitality, and Tourism	1373	1,146	1,170
Health and Biosciences	188	210	235
Human Resource Services	548	498	489
Information Technology	611	691	725
Manufacturing, Engineering, and Technology	579	854	945
Transportation Technology	105	125	110
Career Research and Development	715	648	627
Totals	5,359	5,239	5,408

attainment continues to evolve. As the data collection 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		
		FY12	FY13	FY14
Academy of Health Professions with pathways in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clinical Research in Allied Health Certified Nursing Assistant Emergency Medical Technician 	All pathways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Aid and CPR Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPPA) Blood and Airborne Pathogens 	100%	100%	100%
	Certified Nursing Assistant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) 	100%	93%	100%
Automotive Technology	ASE (Automotive Service Excellence) Student Certification: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brakes Engine Repair Electrical Systems Steering and Suspension 	30%	56%	81%
Child Development	Maryland Child Care Credential – Level 3	100%	100%	100%
Cybersecurity Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CompTIA Security + CompTIA A+, or Cisco Certified Entry Networking Technician (CCENT), or Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA) 	N/A	11%	19%
Construction Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) 	100%	100%	100%
Culinary Science /Hotel and Restaurant Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Restaurant Association ProStart ServSafe 	N/A	66%	84%
Teacher Academy of Maryland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ParaPro Maryland Child Care Credential – Level 3 	100%	100%	94%
Visual Communications (Graphic Design)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PrintED 	30%	39%	30%

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 new HCPSS model for elementary education 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 K–5, and 20 minutes of similar instruction in Pre-K. 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 are being offered at Homewood.

Table 1-D

Number of High Schools Offering World Languages			
Language	FY12	FY13	FY14
American Sign Language	3	4	4
Chinese	6	6	5
French	12	12	12
German	10	10	9
Italian	4	4	4
Latin	6	6	6
Russian	2	1	1
Spanish	12	12	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 62 percent of middle school students are enrolled in a world language course, approximately 40 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		
	FY12	FY13	FY14
Level 1: Novice-mid proficiency	45%	53%*	46%
Level 2: Novice-high	25%	20%	24%
Level 3: Intermediate-low	17%	14%	17%
Levels 4+: Intermediate-mid	13%	11%	12%

*6th grade world languages was offered in all schools in 2013

During FY14, the Office of World Languages conducted placement testing of just under 200 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.

Table 1-F

Recommended placements of heritage speakers of Spanish based on test results, FY14	
Level	Percentage
Spanish 1	17.6%
Spanish 2/2 Honors	27.7%
Spanish 3/3 Honors	50.3%
Spanish 4+	4.4%

Other World Language Accomplishments:

During FY14, nearly 600 high school world language students participated in national world language exams, 49 of whom received top recognitions and honors.

More than 1,000 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 has 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

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 essential 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 class. This expectation is for students overall, students receiving FARM services, and students within each race/ethnicity.

Progress

In FY14, 38.2 percent of students were enrolled in a GT Instructional Seminar, which is 0.6 percentage points greater than the previous school year. Enrollment increased for most racial/ethnic groups, with the greatest increases among students identified as Asian and Black/African American (1 and 0.9 percentage point increases, respectively). (Figure 1-1)

In FY14, 34 percent of students in Grades 2–5 were enrolled in a GT Curriculum Extension Unit. Enrollment increased for most racial/ethnic groups, with the greatest increases among students identified as Black/African American and Hispanic (0.7 and 1.4 percentage point increases, respectively). (Figure 1-2)

In FY14, 31.8 percent of students in Grades 4–5 were enrolled in GT mathematics, 0.5 percentage points greater than the previous year. Enrollment increased for most racial/ethnic groups, with the greatest increases among students identified as Asian, Black/African American, and Hispanic (2.6, 0.8, and 0.8 percentage point increases, respectively). (Figure 1-3)

In FY14, 31.4 percent of students in Grades 6–8 were enrolled in GT Mathematics, 1.3 percentage points greater than the previous year. Enrollment increased for most racial/ethnic groups, with the greatest increases among

FY14 FY13 FY12

Figure 1-1

Grades 2–5 Instructional Seminars

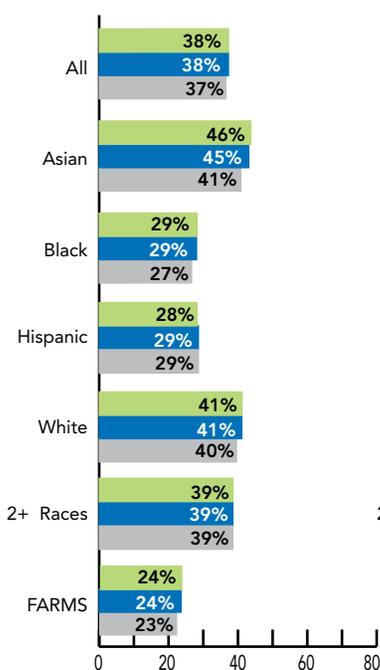


Figure 1-2

Grades 2–5 Curriculum Extension Units

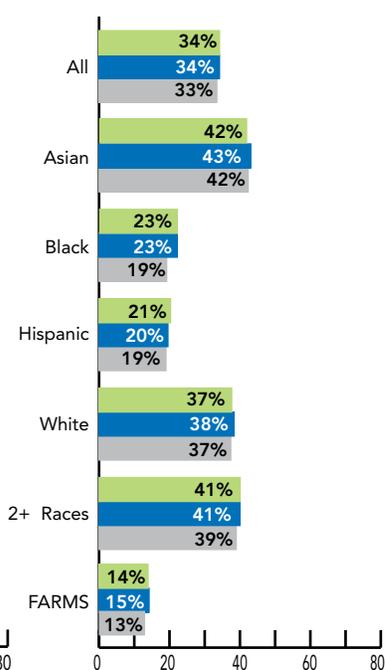


Figure 1-3

Elementary GT Mathematics

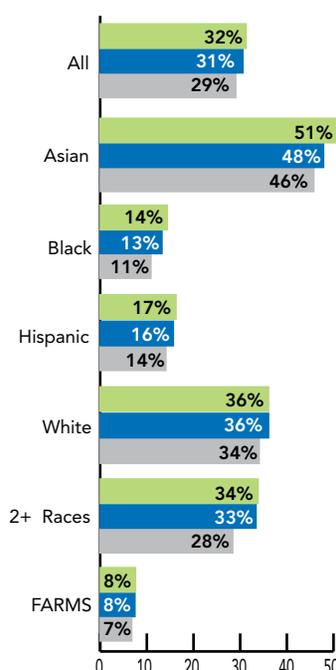
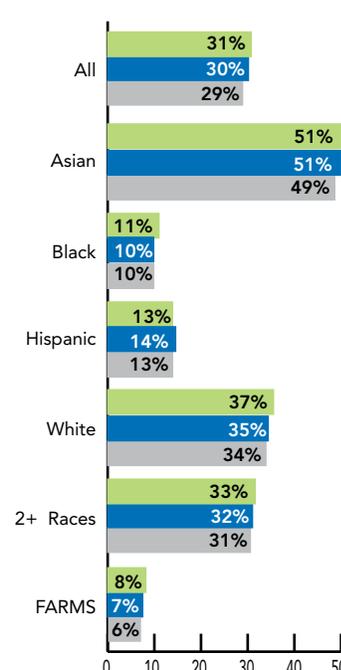


Figure 1-4

Middle School GT Mathematics



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

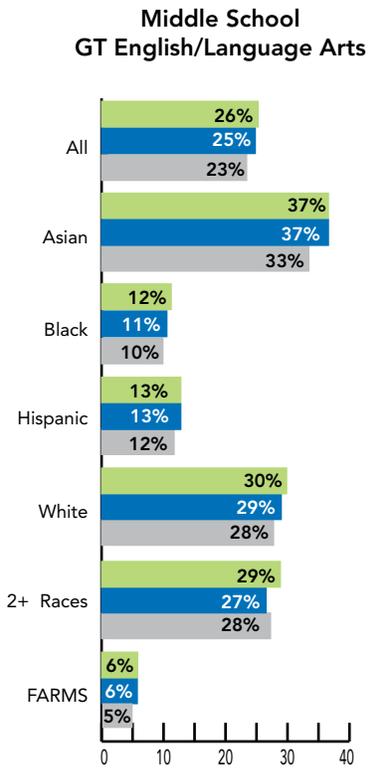


Figure 1-6

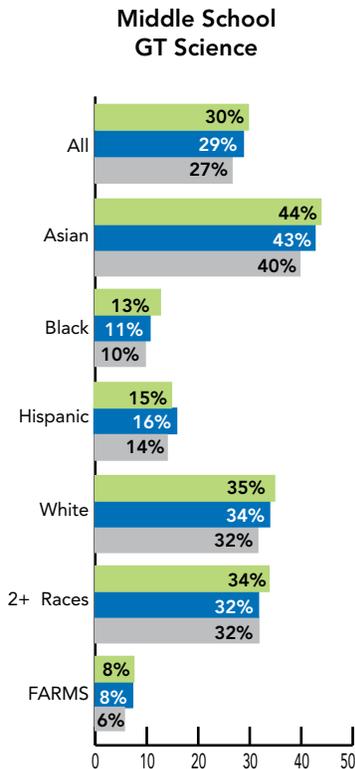
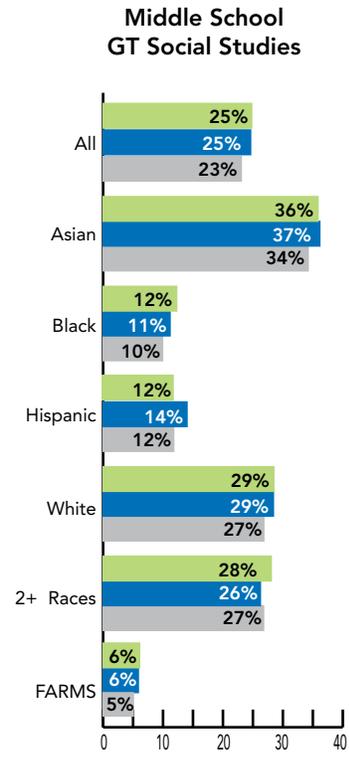


Figure 1-7



FY14 FY13 FY12

students identified as White and Two or More Races (2.2 and 1.4 percentage point increases, respectively). Enrollment was 0.4 percentage points greater than the previous school year for students receiving FARM services. (Figure 1-4)

In FY14, 25.6 percent of students in Grades 6–8 were enrolled in GT English/language arts, 0.8 percentage points greater than the previous year. Enrollment increased for most racial/ethnic groups, with the greatest increases among students identified as Black/African American and Two or More Races (1.0 and 2.6 percentage point increases, respectively). Enrollment was 0.3 percentage points greater than the previous school year for students receiving FARM services. (Figure 1-5)

In FY14, 29.6 percent of students in Grades 6–8 were enrolled in GT Science, 0.9 percentage points greater than the previous year. Enrollment increased for most racial/ethnic groups, with the greatest increases among students identified as Black/African American and Two or More Races (1.6 and 1.5 percentage point increases, respectively). Enrollment was 0.9 percentage point greater than the previous school year for students receiving FARM services. (Figure 1-6)

In FY14, 24.9 percent of students in Grades 6–8 were enrolled in GT Social Studies, 0.1 percentage points greater than the previous year. Enrollment increased for most racial/ethnic groups, with the greatest increases among students identified as Black/African American and Two or More Races (0.8 and 1.8 percentage point increases, respectively). (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.



Performance Measure:
Advanced Placement (AP) course participation and performance and AP exam participation and performance

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 32 AP courses and 34 exams in the areas of art, computer science, English, mathematics, 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 FY14, 80.9 percent of AP exams taken by HCPSS students earned scores of 3 or higher, in comparison to public schools in Maryland (60.9 percent) and the United States (57.2 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	
	FY13	FY14	FY13	FY14	FY13	FY14
HCPSS	9,200	9,450	7,506	7,648	81.6	80.9
Maryland	108,038	108,826	65,278	66,325	60.4	60.9
Nation	3,355,934	3,567,207	1,913,723	2,039,795	57.0	57.2

The number of HCPSS students taking exams as well as the total number of AP exams taken increased from FY13 to FY14. In FY14, 4,286 students took a total of 9,450 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	
	FY13	FY14	FY13	FY14	FY13	FY14	FY13	FY14
All	4,249	4,286	9,200	9,450	7,506	7,648	81.6	80.9
Asian	1,080	1,108	2,685	2,875	2,198	2,352	81.9	81.8
Black	347	376	639	678	438	467	68.5	68.9
Hispanic	193	191	412	351	307	256	74.5	72.9
White	2,377	2,352	4,957	4,969	4,144	4,112	83.6	82.8
2+ Races	238	249	484	548	404	435	83.5	79.4

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 2014.

Among 2014 graduates, 60.5 percent took at least one AP course while in high school, 0.6 percentage points greater than the previous graduating class. More than half (52.7 percent) of the 2014 graduates took at least one AP exam, an increase of 3.0 percentage points compared to the previous year. A higher percentage of the Class of 2014 received a score of 3 or higher on at least one AP exam compared to the Class of 2013—an increase of 2.5 percentage points from 41.9 percent in FY13 to 44.4 percent in FY14. (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	
	FY13	FY14	FY13	FY14	FY13	FY14	FY13	FY14	FY13	FY14	FY13	FY14	FY13	FY14
All	4,097	3,870	2,456	2,342	59.9	60.5	2,037	2,038	49.7	52.7	1,715	1,720	41.9	44.4
Male	2,107	1,960	1,182	1,085	56.1	55.4	955	930	45.3	47.4	810	787	38.4	40.2
Female	1,990	1,910	1,274	1,257	64.0	65.8	1,082	1,108	54.4	58.0	905	933	45.5	48.8
Asian	640	613	515	502	80.5	81.9	460	450	71.9	73.4	399	387	62.3	63.1
Black	756	756	265	273	35.1	36.1	176	210	23.3	27.8	129	143	17.1	18.9
Hispanic	291	290	136	128	46.7	44.1	126	93	43.3	32.1	95	72	32.6	24.8
White	2,154	1,976	1,397	1,304	64.9	66.0	1,167	1,170	54.2	59.2	1,004	1,025	46.6	51.9
2+ Races	243	220	134	127	55.1	57.7	102	108	42.0	49.1	85	87	35.0	39.5
FARMS	578	570	193	180	33.4	31.6	146	126	25.3	22.1	101	85	17.5	14.9
LEP	38	23	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Spec Ed	213	177	18	*	8.5	*	12	*	5.6	*	*	*	≤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 began to develop a digital education program during FY13. Courses were offered beginning in summer school 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 FY14, digital education provided increased access to original credit and credit recovery courses during the school day, offered additional original credit courses outside of the school day, and refined the use of current online and blended learning for summer school, credit recovery, and home and hospital instruction. Additionally, synchronous video was used to increase access to an advanced mathematics course previously available face-to-face at one high school.

Key milestones included the following:

- Synchronous video provided access to a Differential Equations course to 52 off-site students in eight high schools.
- Original credit course enrollments increased by 41 percent. 187 students are currently enrolled or have completed courses that were not otherwise accessible.
- Credit recovery course enrollments increased by 56 percent. 194 students are currently enrolled or have recovered credits toward earning a diploma.
- Summer school added four additional blended courses, including review, original, and GT options.
- Data-enhanced instruction allowed teachers to view each student's progress, and to see where students were having difficulty understanding concepts.
- Coordinated resources and technology through web-/ video-conferencing, eText, and online communities increased access to instruction outside of the traditional classroom.
- Standardized course review process aligned blended and online courses with local, state, industry, and national standards.

Table 1-J details the number of students enrolled in each of the digital education courses offered in summer school 2013 and FY14.

Table 1-J

Digital Education Program Enrollment		
Summer 2013		
Blended Credit Recovery – 21 Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English 9 English 11 Geometry Modern World History U.S. History 	Blended Original Credit – 76 Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English 9 Physics (GT) U.S. History Foundations of Technology Earth/Space Science (GT) 	Online Original Credit – 13 Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Calculus AB (AP) English 12 French 1 Latin I Pre-Calculus Spanish I Spanish IV (AP) U.S. History
FY14		
Blended Credit Recovery – 173 Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Algebra I Algebra II English 9 English 10 English 11 English 12 Geometry Modern World History Pre-Calculus American Government U.S. History 	Blended Original Credit – 59 Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differential Equations Foundations of Technology 	Online Original Credit – 39 Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Computer Science (AP) Computer Science (Honors) English 9 – Honors English 10 English 11 English 12 English (AP) French I French II Geometry German I Journalism Latin I Modern World History Pre-Calculus Spanish I Spanish II Spanish IV (AP) U.S. History



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

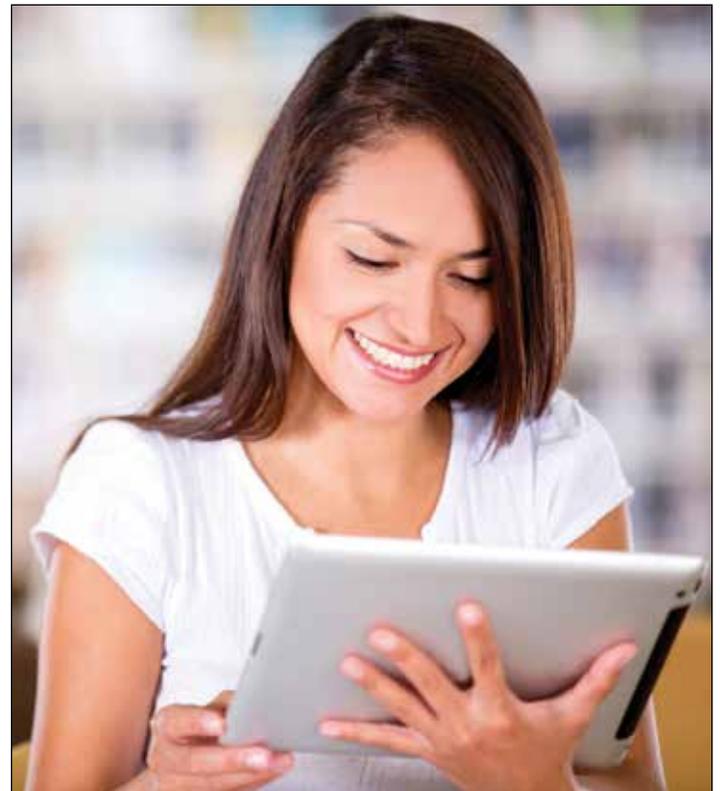
- 1.3.2: Provide relevant technologies, including collaborative online environments, that enhance learning.
- 1.3.3: Provide convenient options for learning through flexible scheduling, digital education, and 24/7 access to online resources.

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. 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.



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

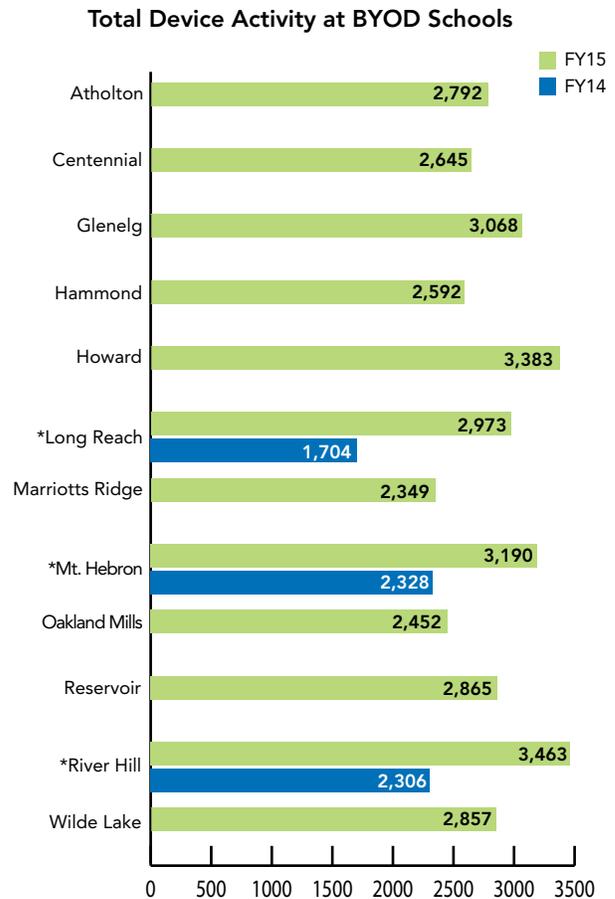
Benefits of BYOD

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.

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.



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.

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.



MSDE adopted the following standards for their accountability model:

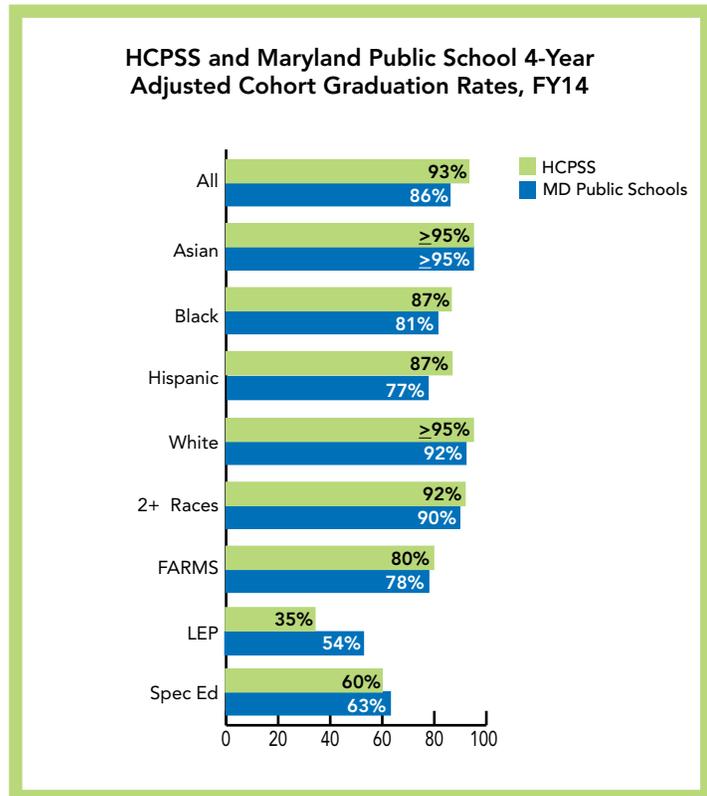
- Four-year cohort graduation rate: 81.5 percent
- Five-year cohort graduation rate: 84.4 percent
- 2020 four- and five-year cohort graduation rate goal: 95 percent

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 FY14 four-year graduation rate for students in HCPSS was 93 percent, compared to 86 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 FARM and special education services. (Figure 1-9).

Figure 1-9



The HCPSS Class of 2014 also graduated at higher rates than the two previous classes. The graduation rates for the classes of 2011 and 2012 were 91 and 90 percent, respectively. (Table 1-K)

Table 1-K

HCPSS Four-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	90.39	93.25	92.85	4,172	4,355	4,184
Asian	94.81	≥95.0	≥95.0	597	676	639
Black	83.63	87.50	87.11	892	840	861
Hispanic	80.37	85.76	86.94	326	323	337
White	93.14	≥95.0	≥95.0	2,128	2,240	2,085
2+ Races	93.90	92.83	91.67	213	265	240
FARMS	74.73	80.77	80.26	645	676	704
LEP	46.59	43.55	35.00	88	62	60
Spec Ed	50.22	68.36	60.15	225	275	261

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 remained relatively steady for the two most recent years. (Table 1-L)

Table 1-L

HCPSS Five-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rates by Race/Ethnicity and Student Service Group, FY12–FY13				
Student Group	Graduation Rate		Number of Students in Cohort	
	Class of 2012	Class of 2013	Class of 2012	Class of 2013
All	92.07	94.40	4,172	4,356
Asian	≥95.0	≥95.0	597	677
Black	87.54	90.24	892	840
Hispanic	83.74	87.62	326	323
White	93.80	≥95.0	2,128	2,240
2+ Races	≥95.0	93.96	213	265
FARMS	81.41	84.44	645	675
LEP	55.42	51.67	88	60
Spec Ed	60.18	74.28	225	276

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 was 4 percent, compared to 8 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 FY12 to FY14. Of note, the HCPSS dropout rate among Black/African American students is 7 percent, compared to 11 percent statewide. The HCPSS dropout rate among Hispanic students is 9 percent, compared to 15 percent statewide. (1-M)

Figure 1-10

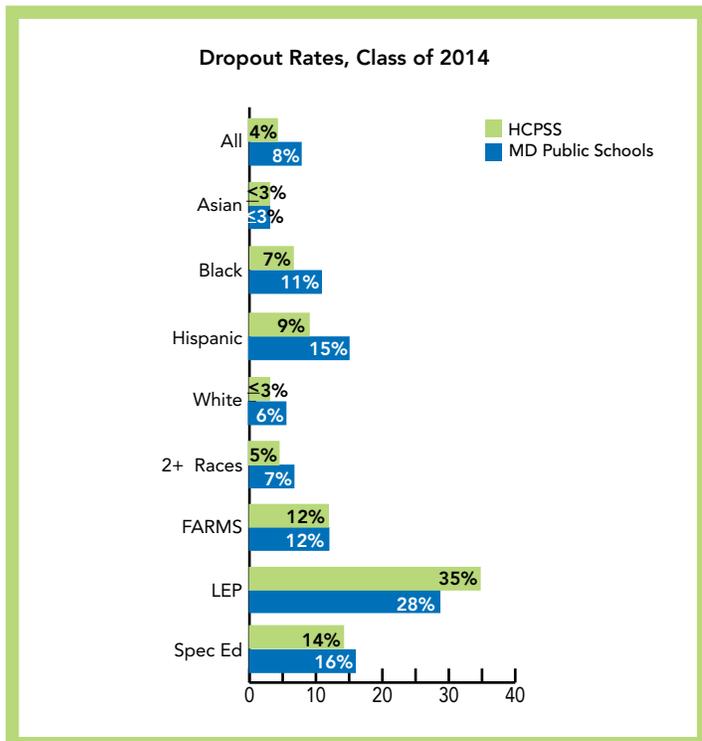


Table 1-M

HCPSS Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Dropout Rates by Race/Ethnicity and Student Service Group, 2012-14						
Student Group	Dropout 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	6.02	4.29	4.04	4,172	4,355	4,184
Asian	≤3.00	≤3.00	≤3.00	597	676	639
Black	9.75	7.74	6.97	892	840	827
Hispanic	11.96	8.98	9.20	326	323	314
White	4.65	≤3.00	≤3.00	2,128	2,240	2,357
2+ Races	3.76	4.53	4.58	213	265	163
FARMS	14.57	13.46	12.22	645	676	704
LEP	29.55	37.10	35.00	88	62	60
Spec Ed	16.00	10.55	13.79	225	275	261

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.

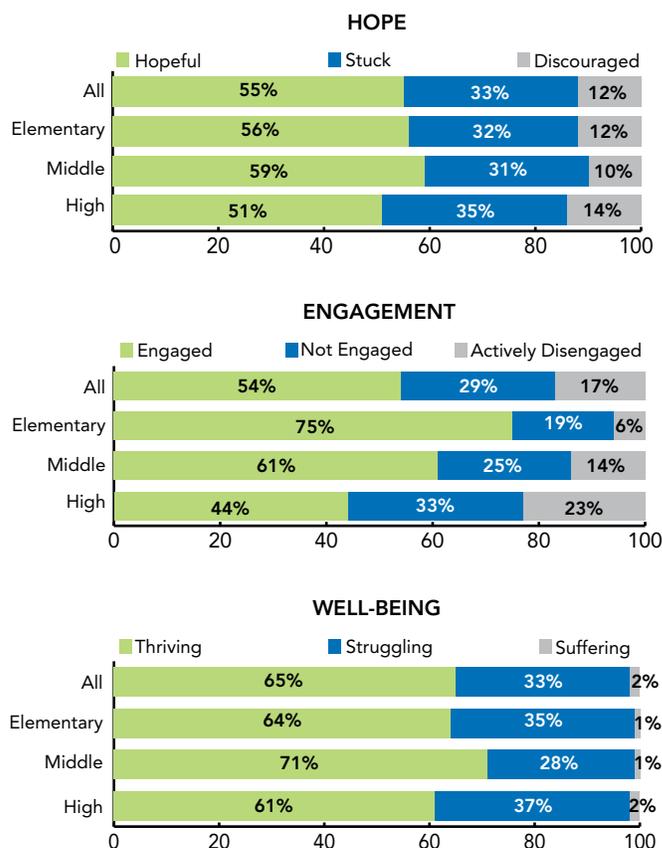
Progress

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" (13 percent).



Figure 1-11

FY14 Gallup Student Poll Results, Grades 5–12

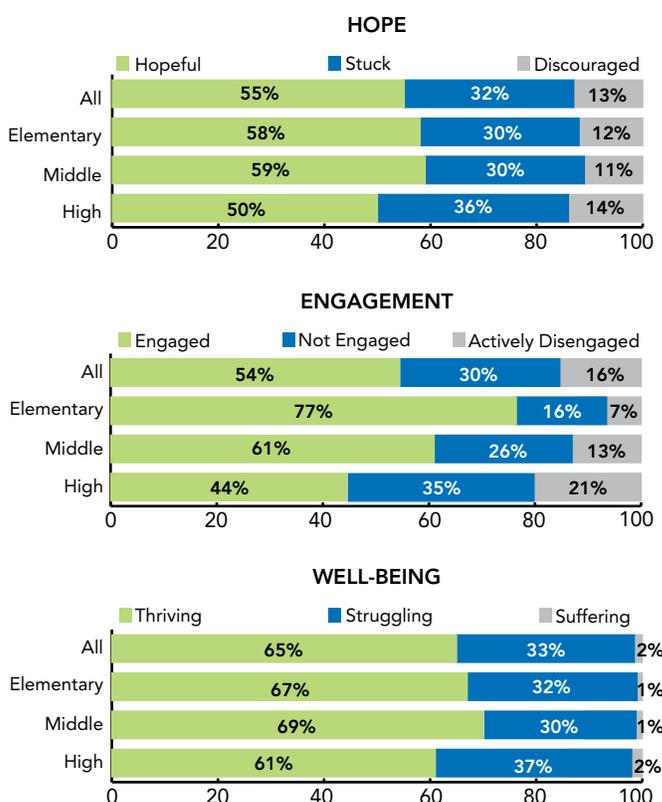


Fifty-four percent of HCPSS students are classified as engaged. Engaged students are highly involved with and enthusiastic about school. These students arrive at school prepared and eager to learn; they're likely to promote learning readiness in those around them. Students who are not engaged (30 percent) 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 (16 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 baseline 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.

FY13 Gallup Student Poll Results, Grades 5–12



GOAL 1: Students

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 Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR) is a framework that provides the structure for instruction, assessment, professional development, communication, and collaboration among all early childhood stakeholders across the state. During FY15, it is being used in both public and private programs for 3- and 4-year-olds.

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.

The state of Maryland is currently transitioning from MMSR to R4K (Ready for Kindergarten): Early Childhood Comprehensive Assessment System. The first part of this change was the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) component, which was administered in the fall of 2014. It will report 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 monitored and observed all students, and gathered data using given indicators. This data was submitted electronically during a specified time period in November to go through a standards setting process with MSDE, Johns Hopkins Center for Technology in Education, and West Ed. The data will then be disaggregated and analyzed and shared with local jurisdictions.

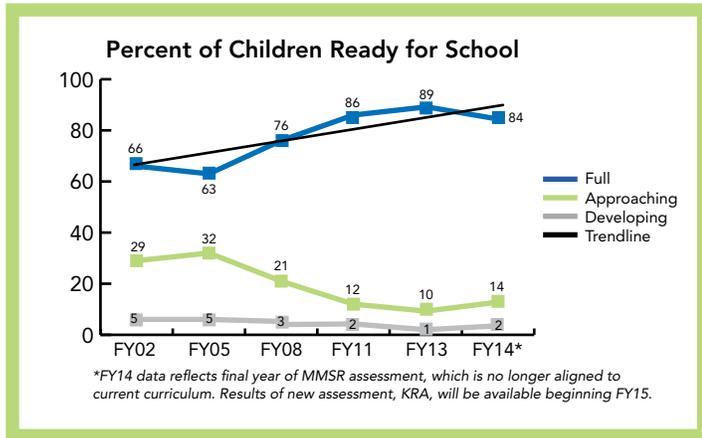
Progress

In FY13, 84 percent of students entering kindergarten in HCPSS were fully ready, compared with 83 percent of students entering kindergarten across Maryland. Howard County experienced an 18 percentage point gain in school readiness from FY02 to FY14. (See Figure 1-12)

All student groups in HCPSS have exhibited increases in school readiness since FY11 (Figure 1-13). In FY14, 79 percent of Black/African American students were fully school-ready, a 31 percentage point gain from FY02. The percentage of HCPSS Hispanic students who were fully school-ready rose 24 percentage points from FY02 to 76 percent in FY14, narrowing the school readiness gap between Hispanic and White students to 10 percentage points.

The number of entering students receiving services continues to increase, as does their school readiness level. Students who receive FARM services have shown an

Figure 1-12

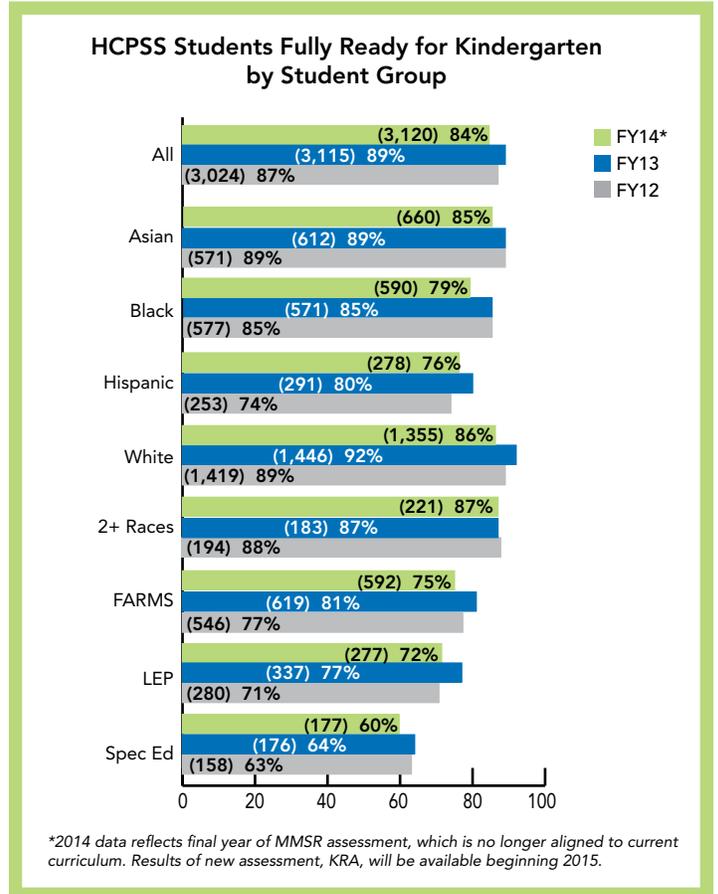


increase in school readiness since FY11, with 75 percent fully ready in FY14. The number of HCPSS students receiving FARM services continues to increase. In FY14, 794 children were from low-income households, representing a 4 percent one-year increase.

The number of students entering kindergarten eligible for ESOL services increased by more than 23 percent (from 337 to 383 students) from FY13 to FY14. In FY14, 72 percent of students eligible for ESOL services were fully ready.

Students receiving special education services were ready for school at higher rates with 60 percent being fully ready in FY14. The readiness gap between children with disabilities and their peers has decreased from 43 percentage points in FY02 to 26 percentage points in FY14.

Figure 1-13

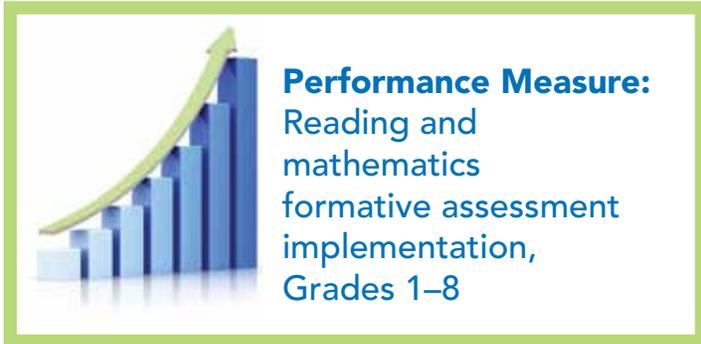


GOAL 1: Students

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. MAP is administered to students either two or three times a year: fall, winter, and spring. Students taking algebra or higher-level mathematics in middle school are exempt from taking the mathematics MAP.

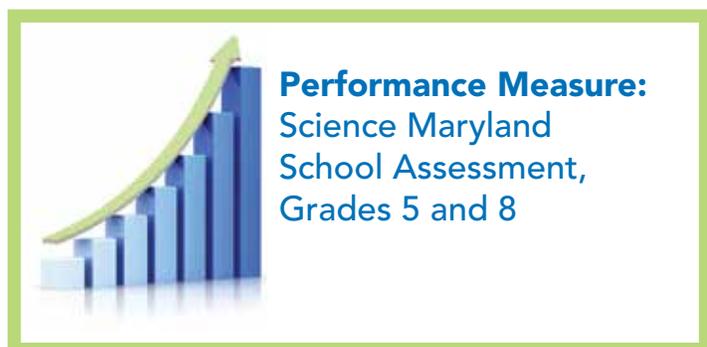
Baseline results for MAP will be available once it is in full implementation in FY15.



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

The Science Maryland School Assessment (MSA) is aligned with the Maryland State Curriculum in Science. 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 FY14, 76 percent of Grade 5 HCPSS students scored at the proficient or advanced level in science compared to 64.2 percent of Grade 5 students statewide. Overall, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced on the Science MSA declined from FY12 to FY14 by 2.3 percentage points.

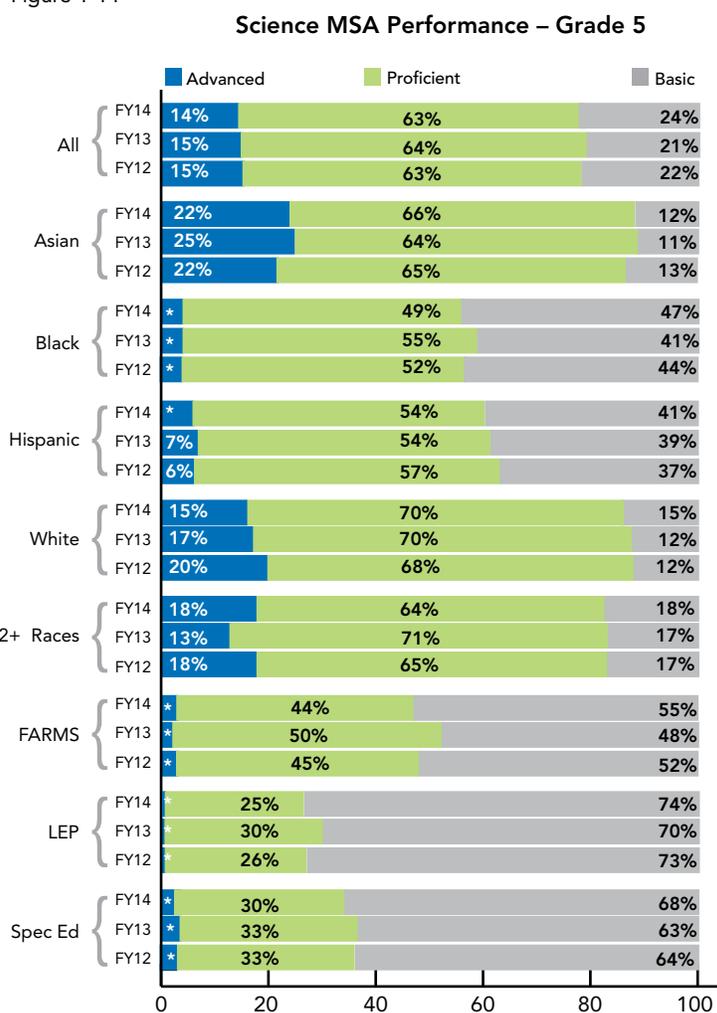
The percentage of Grade 5 test takers scoring proficient or advanced in science increased from FY12 to FY14 for Asian students (1.1 percentage points). The performance gap in science between the highest performing (Asian) and the

lowest performing student group (Black/African American) was 34.9 percentage points (Figure 1-14).

Grade 8

In FY14, 83.1 percent of Grade 8 HCPSS students scored at the proficient or advanced level in science compared to 69.4 percent of students statewide. Overall, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced on the Science MSA declined from FY12 to FY14 by 3.3 percentage points.

Figure 1-14

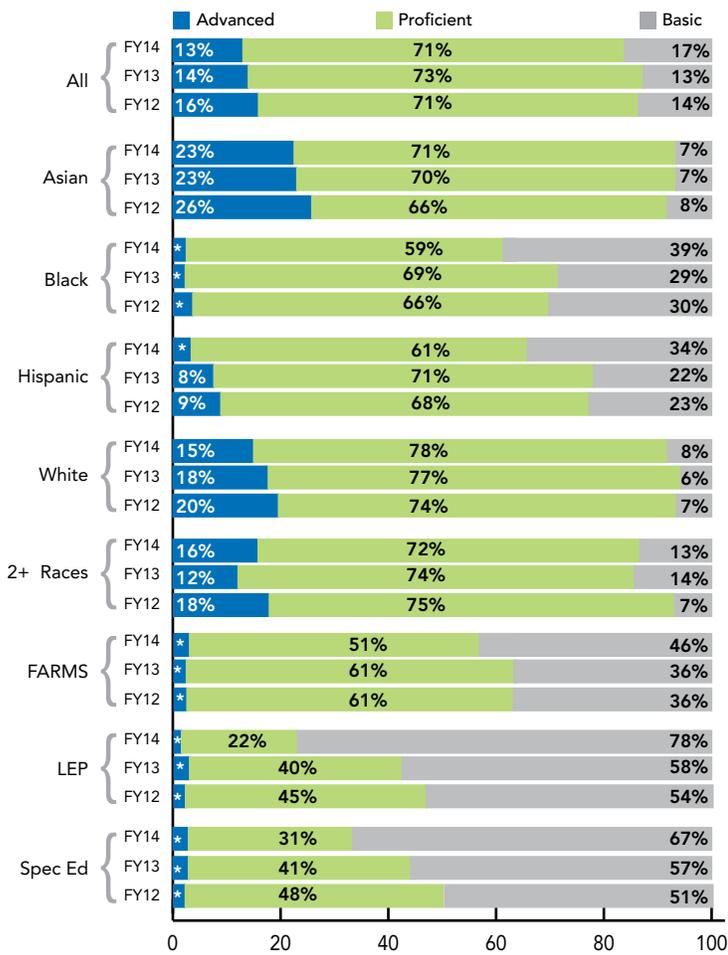


Totals may not add up to 100% due to rounding.
* indicates ≤5%.

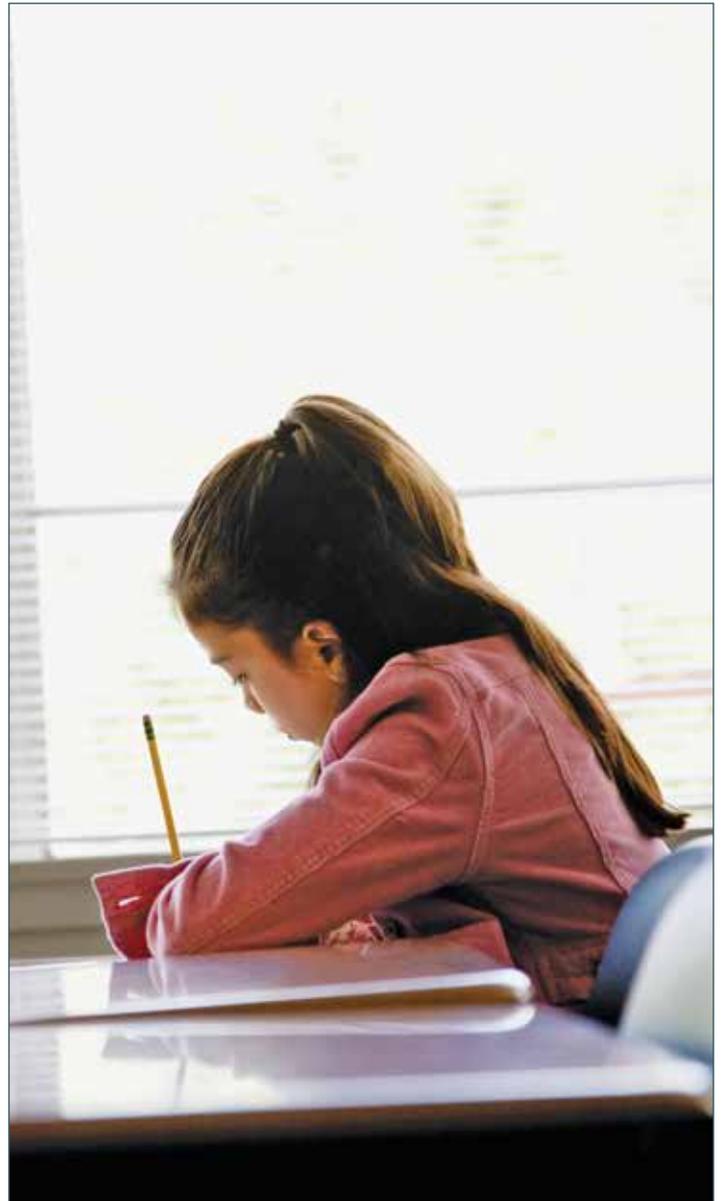
The percentage of Grade 8 test takers scoring proficient or advanced in science increased from FY12 to FY14 for Asian students (1.6 percentage points). The performance gap in science between the highest performing (Asian) and the lowest performing student group (Black/African American) was 32.5 percentage points. (Figure 1-15).

Figure 1-15

Science MSA Performance – Grade 8



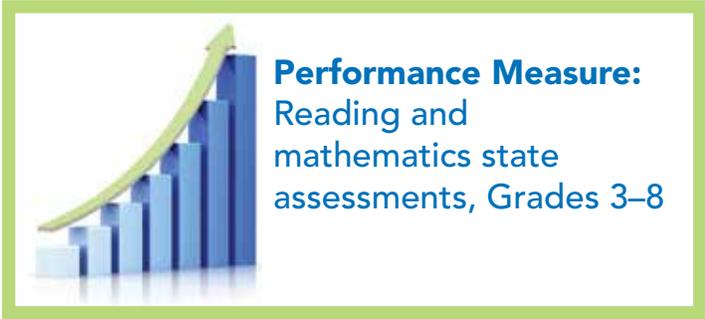
Totals may not add up to 100% due to rounding.
* indicates ≤5%.



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

The Maryland School Assessment (MSA) is a state-mandated testing program aligned to the Maryland State Curriculum that includes end-of-course assessments for students in Grades 3–8. The reading and mathematics tests will be replaced by the new Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) tests in FY15. After a 10-year upward data trend, MSA scores began to decline throughout the state in 2013 as districts transitioned to new curriculum aligned to the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards standards and as the state discontinued the Modified MSA.

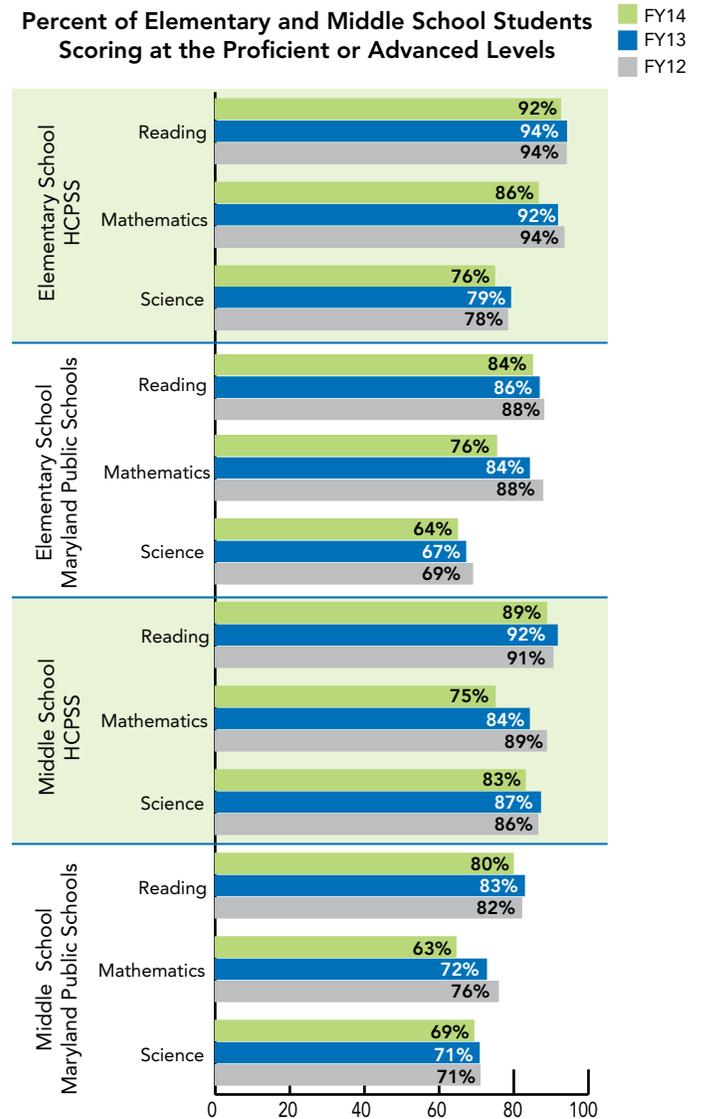
PARCC is a multi-state consortium designing assessments aligned to the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards. Maryland will implement the PARCC assessments in FY15, replacing the reading and mathematics MSAs in Grades 3–8.

Progress

Elementary Reading MSA scores increased 10.4 percentage points from FY03 to FY14. In FY14, 92.2 percent of HCPSS elementary students scored at the proficient or advanced level in reading compared to 84.3 percent statewide. Elementary math scores increased 4.8 percentage points from FY03 to FY14. In FY14, 85.7 percent of HCPSS elementary students scored at the proficient or advanced level in math compared to 75.8 percent statewide. (Figure 1-16)

Middle school Reading MSA scores increased 8.1 percentage points from FY03 to FY14. In FY14, 88.8 percent of HCPSS middle school students scored at the proficient or advanced level in reading compared to 79.6 percent statewide. Middle school Mathematics MSA scores increased 12.2 percentage points from FY03 to FY14. In FY14, 75.1 percent of HCPSS middle school students scored at the proficient or advanced level in mathematics compared to 63.1 percent statewide. (Figure 1-16)

Figure 1-16



MSDE did not administer the Reading and Mathematics Mod-MSA in 2013.

Figure 1-17

Percent of Elementary School Students Scoring at the Proficient or Advanced Levels

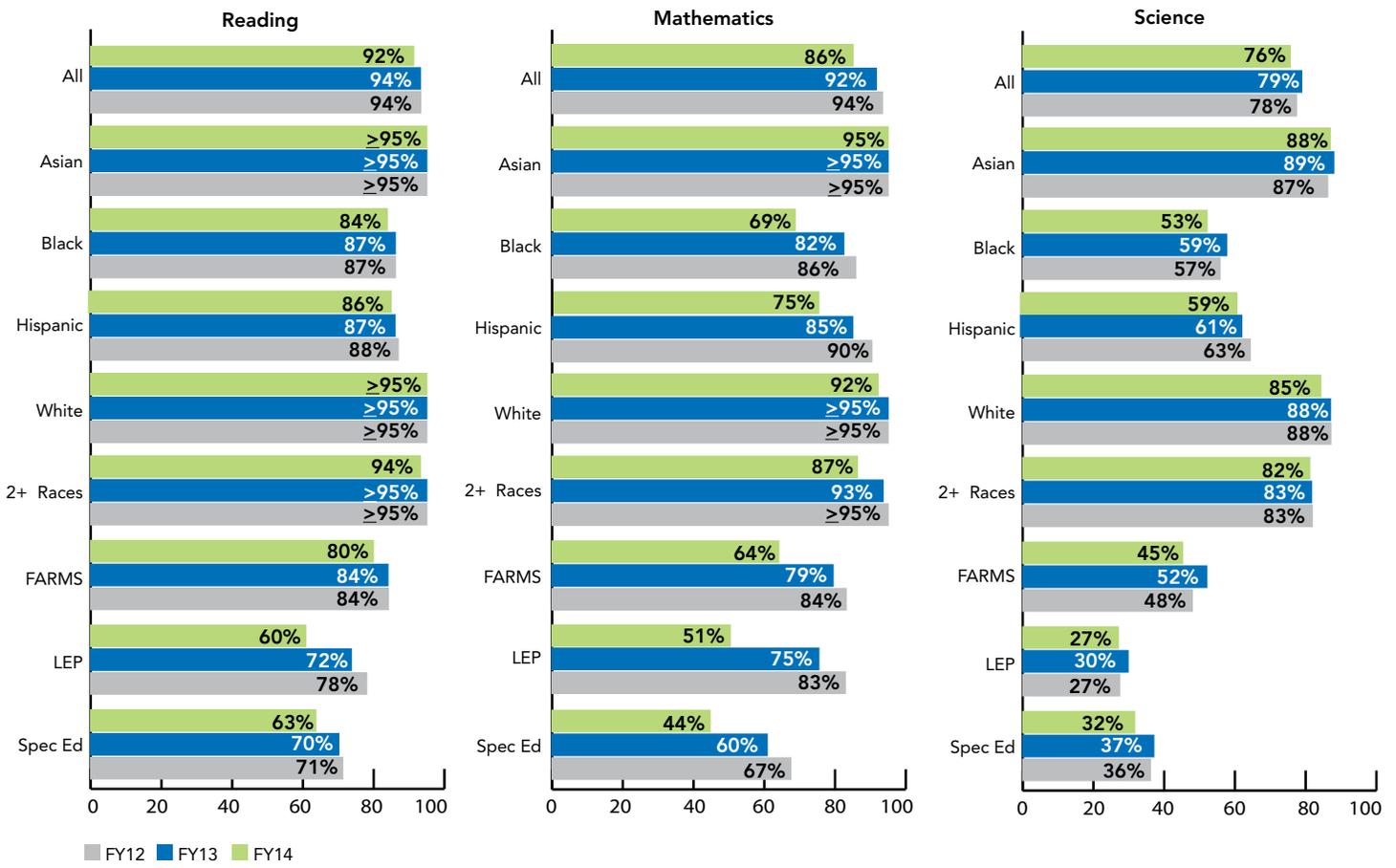
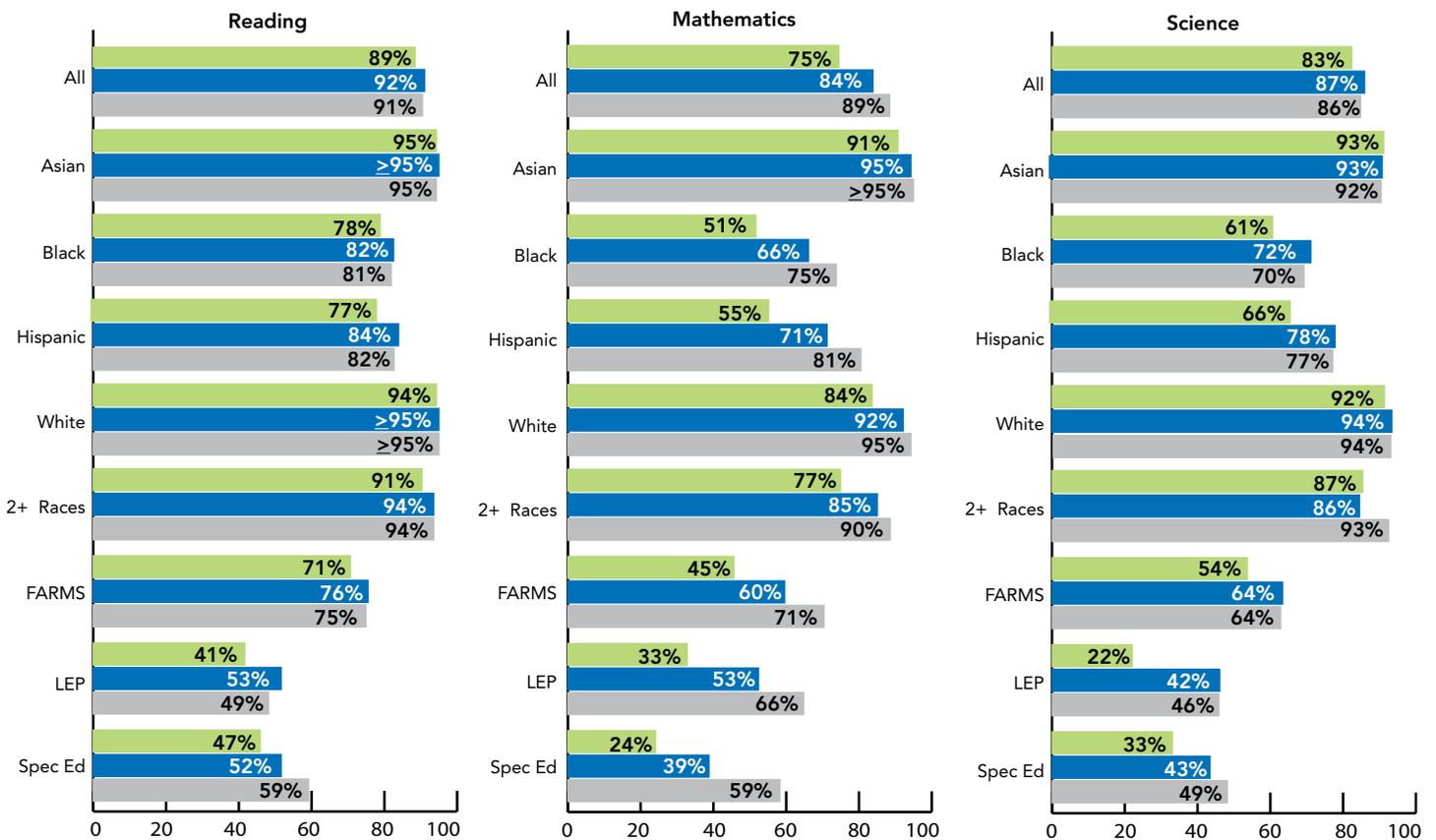


Figure 1-18

Percent of Middle School Students Scoring at the Proficient or Advanced Levels



Note: Change is calculated from unrounded proficiency rates. MSDE did not administer the Reading and Math Mod-MSA in 2013. Beginning in 2010, Reading and Math Mod-MSA assessments were administered to eligible students receiving special education services in Grades 3, 4, and 5 and are included in 2010–2012 statistics.

GOAL 1: Students

Focus Area: PERFORMANCE

Outcome 1.5: Students meet or exceed rigorous performance standards.



Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies

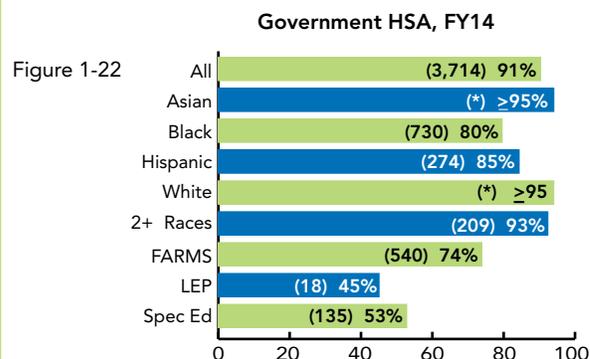
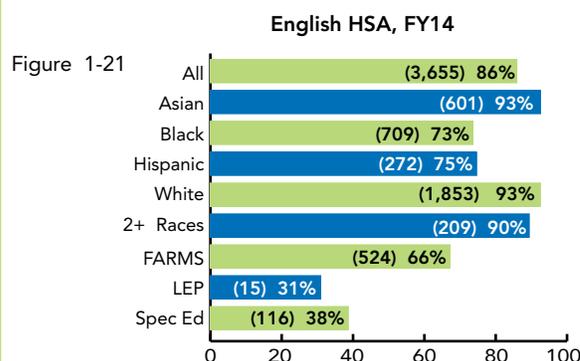
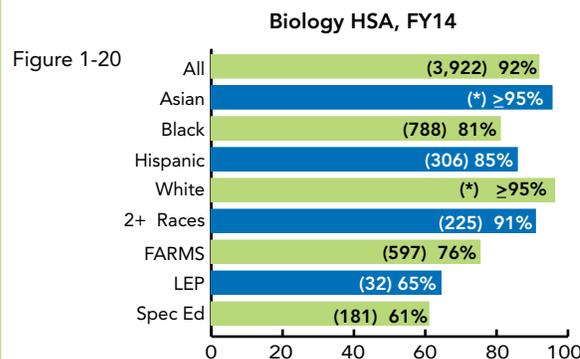
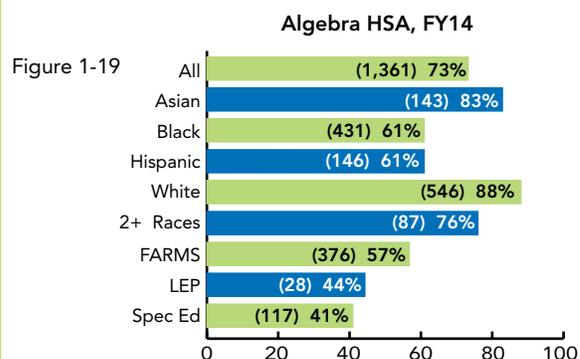
- 1.5.1: Continuously monitor individual student achievement and personalize instruction to provide the appropriate level of challenge.
- 1.5.2: Continuously monitor student achievement across grade levels, content areas, and schools for every racial/ethnic group, as well as for students receiving free/reduced-price 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, algebra, English 10, 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 will be replaced by PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) assessments for students entering Grade 9 in FY15.

Progress

In FY14, the pass rates for first-time test takers were 72.9 for algebra, 91.9 for biology, 86.5 for English, and 90.5 for government.



*** 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

GOAL 1

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.

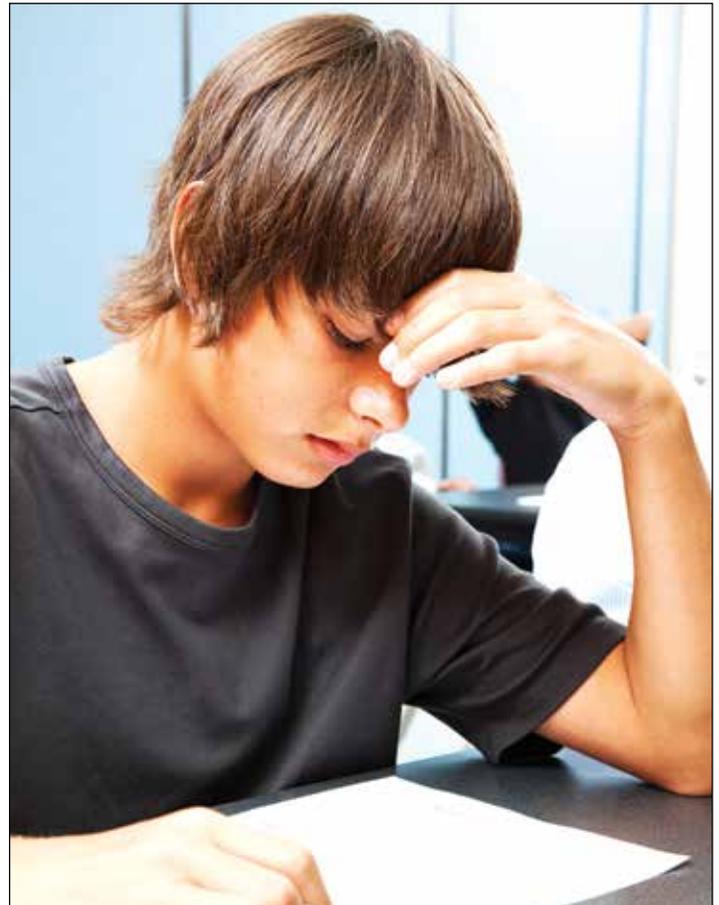
Description and Value

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 94 percent of Grade 10 students took the PSAT in FY14. The average score was 137.5, compared to 123.8 in Maryland public schools and 125.3 nationwide. Nearly 40 percent of Grade 10 students met or exceeded the composite score benchmark of 145. (Figure 1-23, Figure 1-25)

More than 92 percent of Grade 11 students took the PSAT in FY14. The average score was 149.5, compared to 138.3 in Maryland public schools and 139.7 nationwide. Nearly 48 percent of Grade 11 students met or exceeded the composite score benchmark of 152. (Figure 1-24, Figure 1-26)

Number and Percent of Students Who Participated in the PSAT

FY14
FY13

Figure 1-23

Grade 10

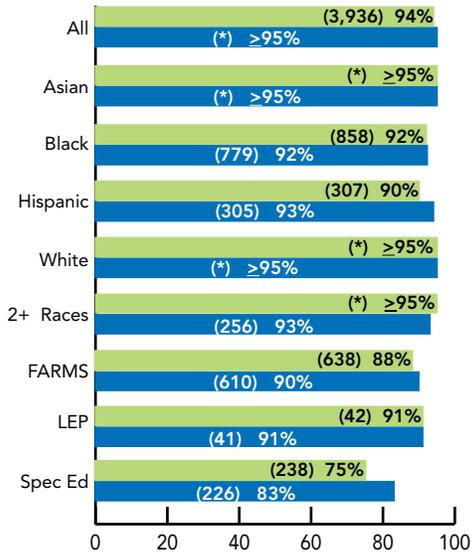
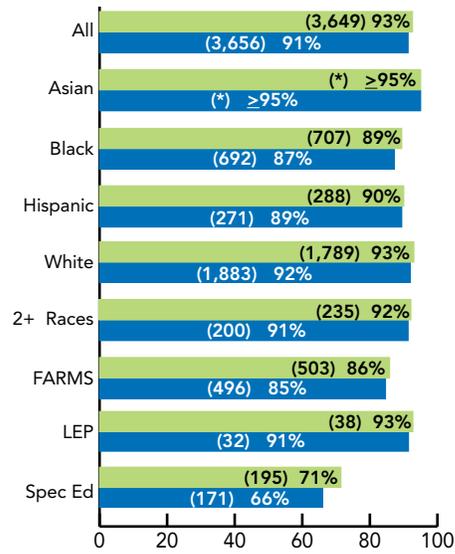


Figure 1-24

Grade 11



Average Score and Percent of PSAT Test-takers meeting Benchmark

Figure 1-25

Grade 10

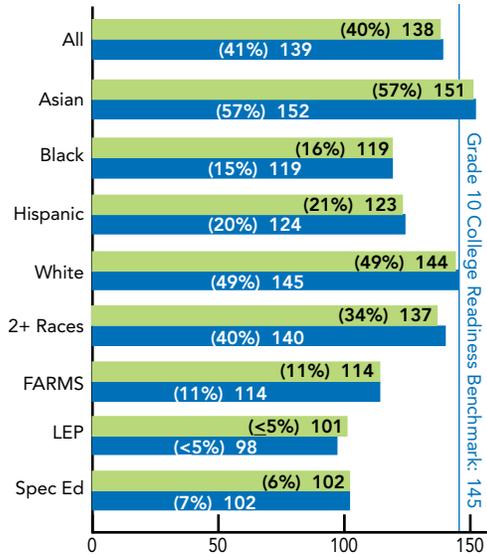
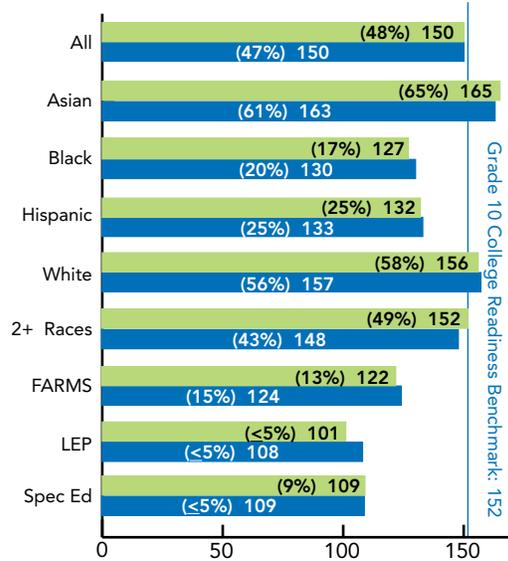


Figure 1-26

Grade 11



** 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

GOAL 1

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.

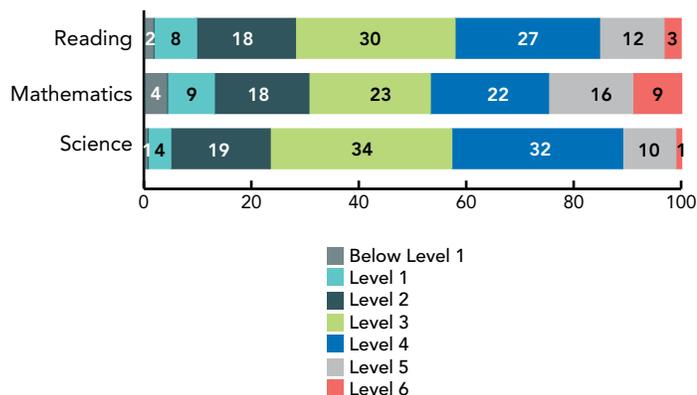
Students can be grouped into six levels of proficiency on the OECD Test for Schools. Students below Level 1 do not have the skills necessary to enter the labor market. Level 2 is an important threshold, as PISA considers it to be a baseline level of proficiency at which students begin to demonstrate 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 1-27 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 already 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.



Figure 1-27

Percentage of Students at each PISA Proficiency Level, based on FY14 OECD Test for Schools Results



GOAL 1: Students

GOAL 1

Focus Area: PERFORMANCE

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



Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies

- 1.6.3: 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.

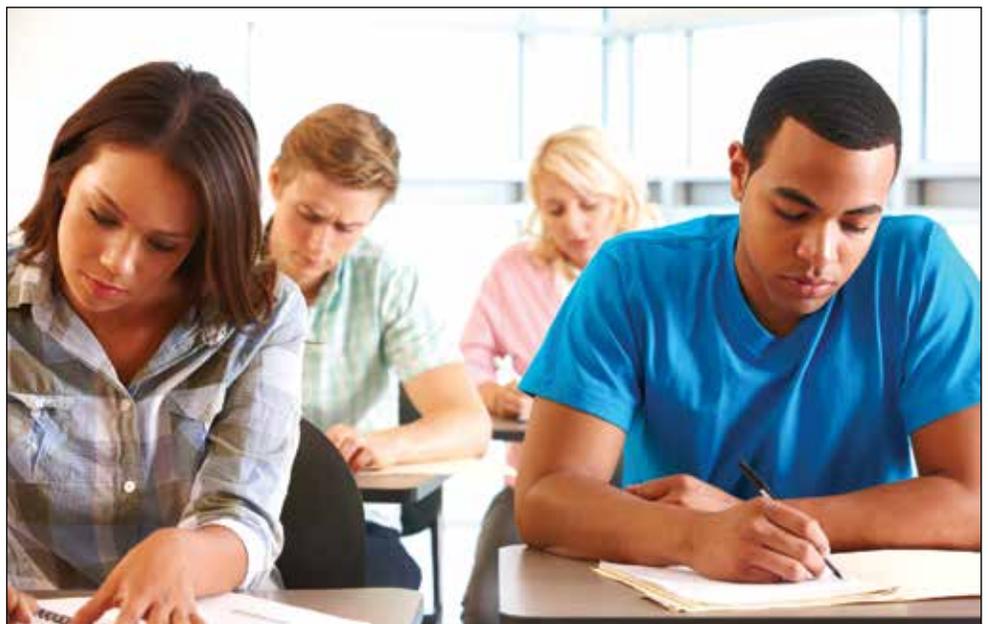


Figure 1-28

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

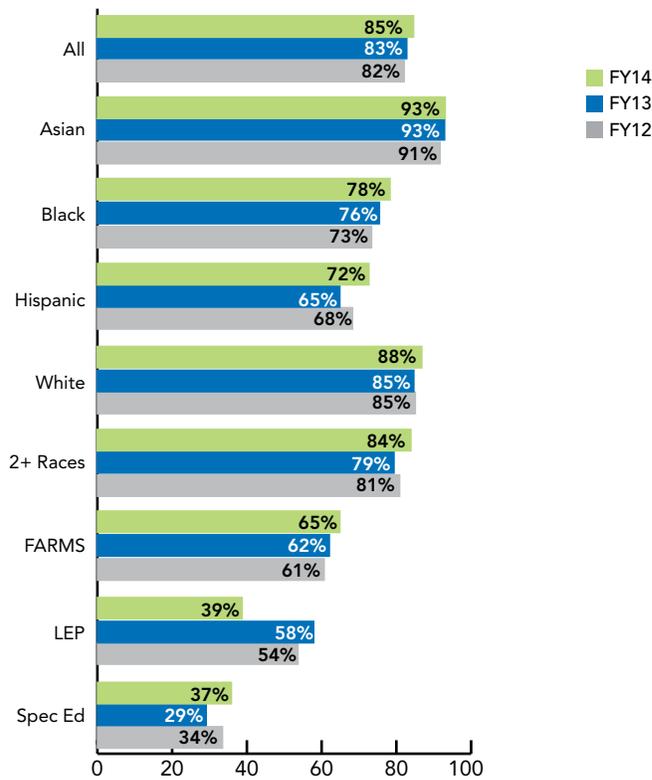
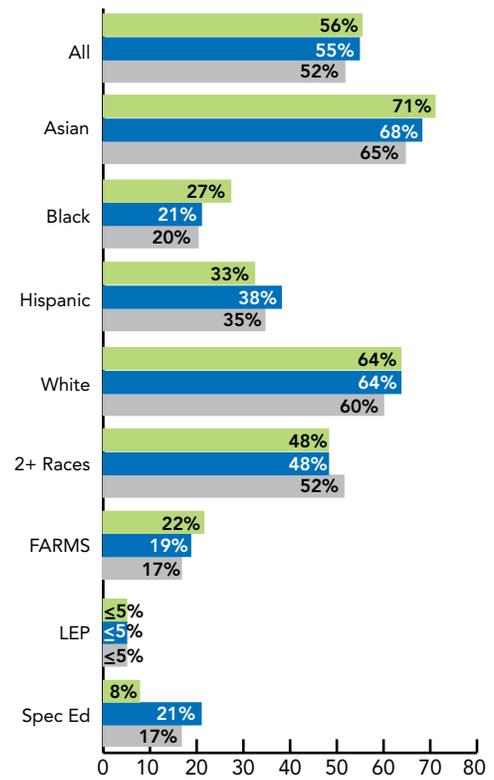


Figure 1-29

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 2014. Among graduating HCPSS seniors, 83.4 percent took the SAT during high school, compared to 69 percent of public school graduates in Maryland and 43 percent of public school graduates nationally. The average SAT score for HCPSS graduates in the class of 2014 was 1657, 189 points greater than the average for all Maryland schools (1468) and 160 points greater than the average for all schools nationwide (1497).

The FY14 HCPSS mean SAT combined score of 1657 is 25 points greater than the mean SAT combined score of 1632 in FY12. Of note, the mean SAT combined score for the 2014 Black/African American graduates was 53 points higher than that of their peers in the graduating class of 2012. The mean SAT combined score for 2014 graduates who received FARM services was 57 points higher than their peers in 2012.

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 27 percent of HCPSS graduates in the class of 2014 took the ACT, an increase of 5.8 percentage points over the 2012 graduating class. The HCPSS average ACT composite score continues to be greater than the national and state averages. The average ACT composite score in FY14 was 21.0 nationally, 27.6 in Maryland, and 24.6 in HCPSS.

Over 85 percent of 2014 HCPSS graduates took either the SAT or ACT (Figure 1-28). Almost 56 percent of 2014 HCPSS high school graduates were deemed college ready according to the SAT/ACT indicator. From FY13 to FY14, there was an increase in Black/African American graduates (6.4 percentage points) who met SAT/ACT college readiness criteria (Figure 1-29).

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.

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, for each race/ethnicity student group, and for students receiving ESOL services across all three years. Students in elementary and middle school receiving special education services and FARM services also met the 94 percent standard across each of the three years. Students receiving FARM services at the high school level

did not meet the 94 percent standard, but increased in each of the three years from FY12 to FY14, by a total of 0.9 percentage points. Students receiving special education services at the high school level did not meet the standard; however, there was a 1.0 increase from FY13 to FY14. (Table 1-N)

Table 1-N

HCPSS Elementary School Attendance			
	FY12	FY13	FY14
All	≥ 95.0	> 95.0	> 95.0
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	≥ 95.0
LEP	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0
Special Education	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0
Middle School Attendance			
	FY12	FY13	FY14
All	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0
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	94.9	94.8
LEP	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0
Special Education	94.5	94.6	94.5
High School Attendance			
	FY12	FY13	FY14
All	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0
Asian	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0
Black	94.6	94.8	≥ 95.0
Hispanic	94.5	94.5	94.5
White	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0
2+ Races	≥ 95.0	94.9	≥ 95.0
FARMS	92.7	93.1	93.6
LEP	94.8	≥ 95.0	94.1
Special Education	93.0	92.9	93.9

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.

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 ≤ 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. Suspensions for individual and groups of students are regularly reviewed by school teams, and all schools include objectives and

strategies as part of their School Improvement Plans to systemically address suspension rates. 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. During FY15, the HCPSS Code of Conduct Workgroup will make recommendations to address disproportionate suspensions for African American students and students receiving FARM and Special Education services.

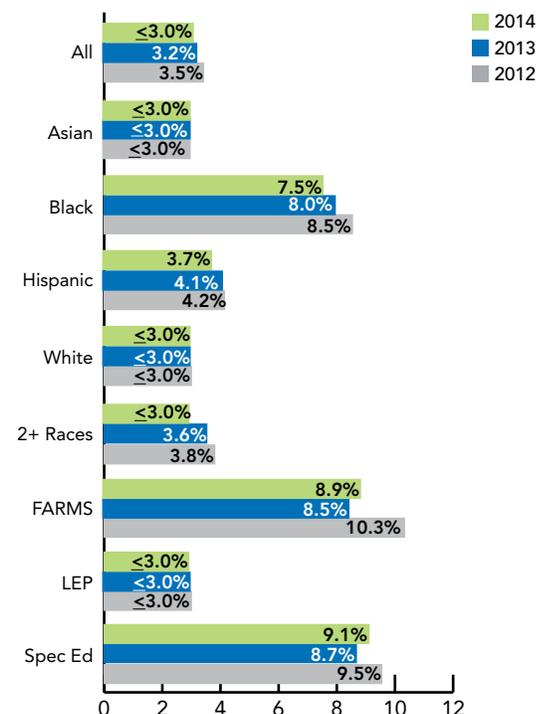
Progress

In FY14, ≤ 3.0 percent of HCPSS students K–12 were suspended compared to 4.5 percent of students statewide. Overall, the percentage of HCPSS students being suspended decreased from FY12 to FY14 by 0.5 percentage point. (Figure 1-30)

In FY14, the race/ethnicity student groups with the highest suspension rates were Black/African American and Hispanic (7.5 and 3.7 percent, respectively). Students receiving FARM services and students receiving special

Figure 1-30

Suspension Rate for All HCPSS Students, 2012–2014



education services had the highest suspension rates for students receiving special services (8.9 and 9.1 percent, respectively).

The percentage of HCPSS K–12 students suspended decreased from FY12 to FY14 for each race/ethnicity student group and for students receiving FARM services. The largest decrease in suspension rates was a reduction of 1.0 percentage point for students in the Black/African American group and 1.4 percentage points for students receiving FARM services.

Elementary School

In FY14, ≤3.0 percent of elementary school students were suspended. Overall, the percentage of elementary school students being suspended remained the same from FY12 to FY14. The percentage of elementary school students suspended from FY12 to FY14 indicate small increases for the Black/African American group, and students receiving FARM services. Students receiving special education services showed a 1.2 increase from FY12 to FY14. (Figure 1-31)

Middle School

In FY14, 4.4 percent of middle school students were suspended. Overall, the percentage of middle school students being suspended decreased from FY12 to FY14 by 1.4 percentage points. The percentage of middle school students suspended decreased from FY12 to FY14 for each race/ethnicity student group with the reduction

ranging from 1.2 to 2.5 percentage points. The percentage of students suspended who receive special education services and FARM services declined by 1.4 percentage points and 2.6 percentage points, respectively. (Figure 1-32)

High School

In FY14, 4.0 percent of high school students were suspended. Overall, the percentage of high school students being suspended decreased from FY12 to FY14 by 1.1 percentage points.

In FY14, the race/ethnicity student groups with the highest suspension rates were Black/African American and Hispanic (9.6 and 6.0 percent, respectively). Students receiving FARM services and special education services had the highest suspension rates within the special services student groups (12.8 and 11.3 percent, respectively). The percentage of high school students suspended decreased from FY12 to FY14 for each race/ethnicity student group. The largest reduction was with the Black/African American student group, declining by 1.7 percentage points from FY12 to FY14. The percentage of students suspended who receive FARM services and special education services declined (2.6 and 1.5 percentage points, respectively). (Figure 1-33)

HCPSS Suspension Rates by Level, FY12–FY14

FY14
FY13
FY12

Figure 1-31

Elementary School Students

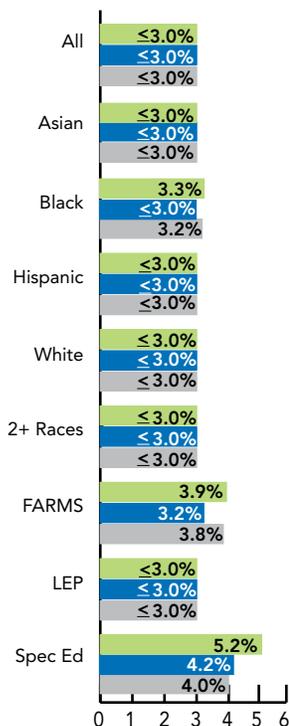


Figure 1-32

Middle School Students

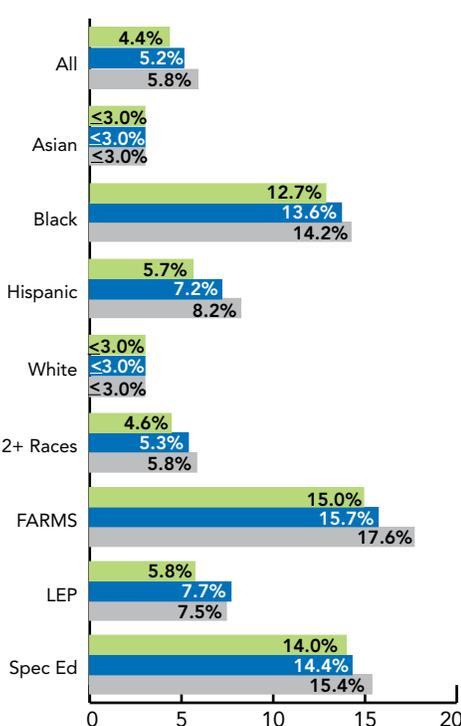
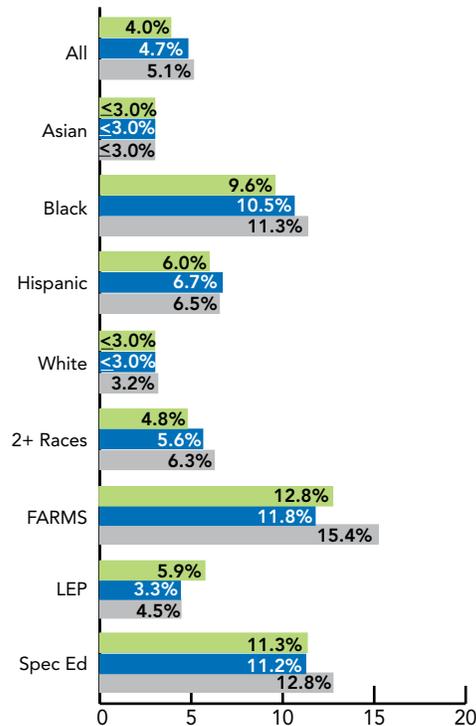


Figure 1-33

High School Students



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 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 FY13, there were 58 crisis events. The Cluster Crisis Team leadership provided consultation for 78 schools and direct support at 18 schools. One crisis event, the Newtown, Connecticut school shooting, impacted the school system and community at large. A comprehensive crisis response was provided to the school system and larger community.

A total of 55 crisis situations that impacted 73 schools occurred during FY14. Two additional events impacted the school system and community at large, the Navy Yard and Columbia Mall shootings. The Cluster Crisis Team leadership consulted with schools for each of these crisis situations. Eighteen schools required the need for direct support from the HCPSS Cluster Crisis Team to supplement the efforts of school-based teams.

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.
- Thank you to student services team members at our school for guidance and support.
- A principal shared: "The gentle direction of the Crisis Team allowed our staff to proceed with confidence in the midst of our own shock and grief ... whatever was necessary to support us through the day."
- Appreciation from teachers about being provided frequently asked questions after a crisis event.
- Thanks and appreciation for resources posted on the HCPSS website after New Town and Columbia Mall shootings.
- 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 in April 2014 to further incorporate nutrition education, physical activity, and a variety of healthy food and beverage choices into the school day. The policy went into effect July 1, 2014; however, HCPSS began implementation of these standards early in FY14.

The following initiatives were put in place in schools in May 2013:

- 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.
- Vending machines – allowed at high school level only; after school day ends. All selections must comply with Institute of Medicine (IOM) Nutritional Standards.

The following provisions of the new policy went into effect as of July 1, 2014:

- 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.
- 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.
- School celebrations involving food and beverages may be permitted by the principal no more than once per month after the end of the last lunch period, and must comply with IOM Nutrition Standards.
- 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.

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"> • Staff HUB implementation, p. 54
ENGAGEMENT	2.2 Staff members have access to learning experiences that support their professional growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly effective leaders, p. 55 • Staff with advanced degrees and National Board Certification, p. 57 • Culturally proficient staff, p. 59
PERFORMANCE	2.3 Staff members are held accountable for and supported in meeting standards-based performance expectations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom teachers and principals rated effective or highly effective, p. 61
WELL-BEING	2.4 HCPSS supports staff members' health and well-being.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff engagement, p. 63 • Employee wellness program participation, p. 65



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 has been made in this goal area since the launch of Vision 2018.

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, several initiatives are underway to increase staff engagement and collaboration. HCPSS is working with Gallup, Inc., to measure and increase levels of staff engagement, and to help each employee grow professionally by building upon their strengths.

Results of the 2014 Gallup engagement survey indicate positive trends in staff engagement levels. The survey drew responses from more than 84 percent of system employees, far above the national average of 30–40 percent. Results show that 40 percent of HCPSS staff members are fully engaged in their work, a one-year increase of six percentage points.

HCPSS also put into place a new communication tool, the Staff Hub, which connects staff to other members of their professional communities and eases access to critical resources and information.

New teacher and principal evaluation models were implemented throughout the school system in FY14. The models were developed by multi-stakeholder workgroups in response to state and federal requirements to incorporate student growth into the evaluation processes. The HCPSS teacher evaluation model uses the Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching to measure professional practice, which accounts for 50 percent of the evaluation. The other 50 percent is based upon teacher-generated Student Learning Objectives to measure student growth. The principal evaluation measures professional practice, communication, management, and ethics, as well as student growth.

Staff are encouraged to take part in professional learning opportunities that help them to grow in their practice. HCPSS offers innovative face-to-face, hybrid, and self-paced courses, workshops, and seminars so that staff can learn in ways that are conducive to their learning styles and job-embedded needs. Professional learning programs foster growth, develop strengths, skills, knowledge and cultural proficiency, to ultimately improve student learning.

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 encourages and supports teachers in achieving National Board Certification. Thirty-one teachers have earned the distinction since FY14, bringing the total number of board-certified teachers to 148—one of the highest participation rates in Maryland. National Board Certification is an advanced teaching credential achieved through a rigorous, peer-reviewed process. Successful candidates must demonstrate subject matter expertise, the ability to design effective learning experiences, and develop partnerships with colleagues, parents, and the community.

In order to enhance communication, every educator received an iPad this year and participated in training. The new technology supports these essential members of the instructional team, who work daily with students and directly impact academic success.

HCPSS is also working to ensure that human resources processes are efficient, effective, and welcoming for staff and prospective staff. Each new employee is personally welcomed to the system and introduced to school system procedures through a new, comprehensive onboarding process.

The HCPSS annual staff recognition program honors outstanding achievements by talented staff. Eleven



employees received a 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 Maryland Teacher of the Year.

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 2013-2014 school year include:

- Grammy Music Educator of the Year Semifinalist
- Howard County Arts Council Outstanding Arts Educator award
- Howard County Human Rights Commission Human Rights Award
- Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals National Distinguished Principal
- Maryland Council for Social Studies Outstanding New Teacher of the Year
- Maryland Council of Teachers of Mathematics Mathematics Educator of the Year and Teacher of the Year
- Maryland School Counselor Association Counselor of the Year
- Maryland Science for the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching Finalist
- National Federation of State High School Coaches Association National Coach of the Year
- Naviance Excellence in Leadership award
- The Arc Maryland 2014 School Inclusion Award

Years of service awards recognize employees at five year milestone employment anniversaries beginning at 15 years. Finally, an annual HCPSS-sponsored retirement reception honors and celebrates all school system retirees.

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. The program is extremely popular, with many staff members throughout the system opting to wear pedometers that track their steps, participate in individual and team competitions, and earn rewards for their active lifestyle choices. A comprehensive data and reporting system tracks participation and return on investment.

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.



GOAL 2

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

In FY14, HCPSS took a new approach to staff communication. 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. (Figure 2-1)

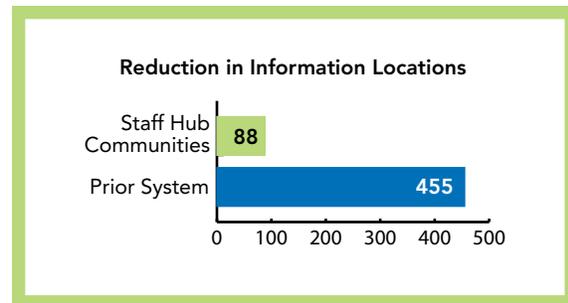
Employees can customize their Staff Hub experience by designating how they wish to consume new information. Several options are available for notification of new information including a daily email digest, individual emails, and Staff Hub dashboard notifications.

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

Figure 2-1



90% of all staff logged in
88 communities built
6,500 unique visitors weekly
24,000–32,000 page views per day

GOAL 2: Staff

Focus Area: ENGAGEMENT

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



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 Leadership Development Program. The goal of the Leadership Development Program is to align professional learning with Vision 2018 by providing customized leadership development experiences across all offices, programs, and departments, developing culturally proficient leaders, and implementing a succession planning process.

The program, based on leadership standards, serves teachers, instructional team leaders, administrators, paraprofessionals, and central office staff. Initiatives within the program serve each level along the continuum of: Aspiring leader, Emerging leader, and Practicing leader (Table 2-A.) Programs 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, Coaching, Cultural Proficiency Level I and II
Emerging	Staff in the beginning years of their leadership position.	ITL Orientation, ITL Leadership Cohorts, Emerging Leaders CPD, Coaching, Cultural Proficiency Level II and III
Practicing	Staff with several years of experience in their leadership position.	Leadership Fellows, Coaching, New Leader II, Leadership I and II, Cultural Proficiency III

* 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. Some recent examples include providing facilitation of the Howard County community forums for the School Safety Task Force as well as the redistricting for Thomas Viaduct Middle School.

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.



GOAL 2

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	FY2	FY13	FY14
Leadership Fellows	16	13	20
New Leader II	12	15	27
Emerging Leaders CPD	0	13	14
Customized supports for schools/office	75	48	331



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. New principals and Leadership Fellows are provided professional coaches as part of their development.

Instructional Team Leaders (ITLs)

Team leaders 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 2-2, Table 2-C)

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)

Figure 2-2

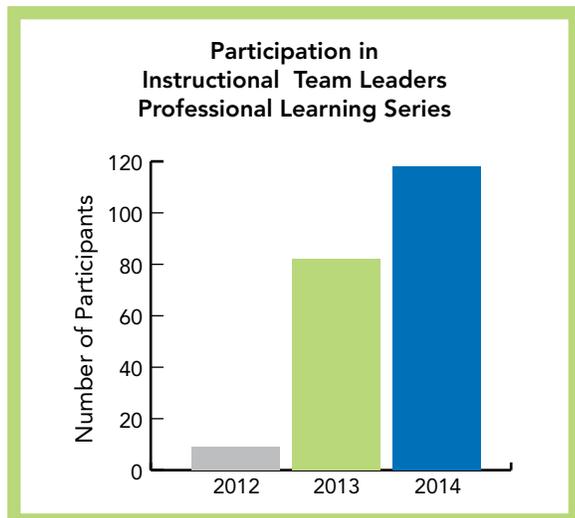


Table 2-C

Survey data from ITL Leadership Professional Learning Series		
Question	Agree	Strongly Agree
I felt engaged, supported, and successful.	5%	95%
I had access to learning experiences that support my professional growth.	0%	100%
I enhanced my leadership as part of a professional learning community.	5%	95%

GOAL 2: Staff

Focus Area: ENGAGEMENT

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



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 monthly 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, HCPSS encourages staff to grow professionally by earning advanced degrees. HCPSS 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: Howard Community College; Johns Hopkins University; Kaplan University; Loyola University; McDaniel College; Morgan State University; National University; Notre Dame of Maryland University; Stevenson University; Towson

University; University of Maryland, College Park; University of Maryland, Baltimore County; 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 2013	October 2014
High school diploma	30	36
Less than 2 years of college	36	37
2 years of college	22	25
Bachelor's degree	774	787
Bachelor's with Master's equivalent	654	627
Master's degree	3,202	3,269
Master's degree plus 30 semester hours	624	638
Doctorate degree	78	78
Total	5,420	5,497

*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. The district is currently supporting eight teachers who will complete the process in the spring of 2017.

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	19
English Language Arts/Adolescence and Young Adulthood	16
Generalist/Early Childhood	12
Exceptional Needs Specialist/Early Childhood through Young Adulthood	10
Mathematics/Early Adolescence	10
Library Media/Early Childhood through Young Adulthood	9

Table 2-F

Participation in NBC Cohorts		
	# Cohort Participants	# Achieved NBC status*
FY14	18	9
FY13	25	18
FY12	9	14

*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 our university partnership 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	FY12		FY13		FY14	
	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
Master	198	94	257	63	284	46
Certificate	104	82	63	35	126	74
Doctorate	9	—	11	1	10	0

* For instances where no data is displayed, there was either no offered cohort or, due to the nature of program sequencing, participants were in the midst of program requirements.

Table 2-H

Number of Cohort Programs Offered			
Degree	FY12	FY13	FY14
Bachelor	0	1	1
Master	15	16	17
Certificate	8	18	18
Doctorate	3	4	4

GOAL 2: Staff

Focus Area: ENGAGEMENT

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



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. To this end, 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.

The HCPSS also integrates 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 2-1) 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 Cultural Proficiency Participants (Levels 1–3)	
FY14	2,083
FY13	1,978
FY12	1,815

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

Table 2-J

FY14 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	5.47	6
Build capacity to foster trust, respect, and collaboration in diverse environments.	2.1.5	5.47	6
Enhance interpersonal and leadership skills, deepen job-specific knowledge, and grow in professional practice.	1.7.7, 2.2.1	5.38	6
Develop as a culturally proficient professional.	1.7.5, 1.7.6	5.40	6
Support staff health and well-being.	2.4.1	5.16	6

*As of 2/5/14

This year, the HCPSS led 44 continuous improvement projects that used the tools of cultural proficiency. Staff leading these projects represented 16 different schools and 10 different centrally-based offices. All documented improvements, including descriptions and results, are available through the HCPSS Staff Hub. Table 2-K represents a sample of the 44 projects from this year.

Table 2-K

Project	Focus Area	Standard of Cultural Competence	Vision 2018
Diversifying Materials for Elementary Read-Alouds	Curriculum and Instruction	Valuing Diversity	1.7
Improving Math Vocabulary Development for English Language Learners	Curriculum and Instruction	Adapting to Diversity	1.2.4
Narrowing Opportunity Gaps for the SAT	Assessment and Accountability	Managing Dynamics of Difference	1.22
Expanding Access for Advanced Placement	Assessment and Accountability	Assessing Culture	1.5
Engaging Diverse Families Through Audience-Focused Communications	Family and Community Involvement and Engagement	Valuing Diversity	3.3
Optimizing Multicultural Student Body to Value Diversity	School Environment	Assessing Culture	1.7, 1.8
Improving Parent Communication for Students Transitioning into Primary Learner Program	Student Transitions	Assessing Culture	3.4.1
Supporting Families New to the Community	School Environment	Assessing Culture	3.1.1
Improving Professional Development for Custodial Staff	Professional Development	Assessing Culture	2.2, 4.4

Additionally, over the past year, the district has:

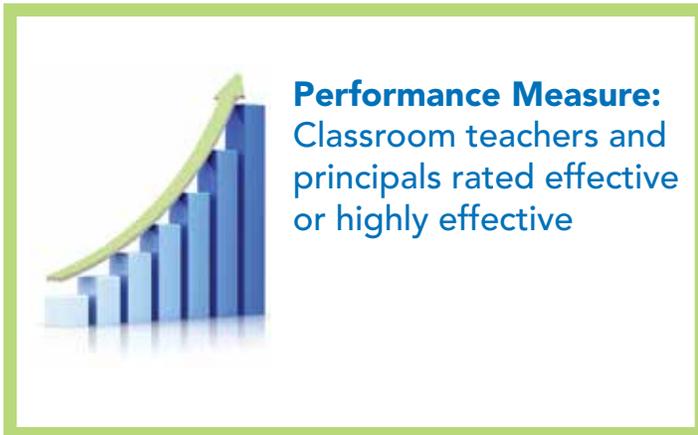
- Launched the first two cohorts of the HCPSS/McDaniel College graduate certificate program, Excellence and Equity in Education.
- Established the superintendent’s Cultural Proficiency and Equity Advisory Committee.
- Offered Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses designed to support educators with developing their cultural proficiency.

GOAL 2

GOAL 2: Staff

Focus Area: PERFORMANCE

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



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 newly implemented 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 during FY14.

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 new feature of the evaluation model is the use of the electronic Teachscape 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 anticipated 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 will help 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 of HCPSS leadership development (Strategies 2.2.1 and 2.3.2) is offered in the following ways: monthly New Principal Professional Learning Community, professional coaching, and individualized support from School Administration directors. New principals receive the support of a principal on Special Assignment who provides resources, non-evaluative problem-solving, collaboration and constructive feedback, assistance with school improvement planning, student data-analysis, and exploration/explanation of job-embedded responsibilities. They also receive support from an International Coach Federation coach.

Progress

Table 2-L shows the distribution of teacher performance ratings for FY14. Table 2-M shows the distribution of principal performance ratings from FY14.

Table 2-L

Teacher Effectiveness Ratings by Level, FY14						
Level and Number of Teachers	Ineffective		Effective		Highly Effective	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Elementary (2,039)	*	*	294	14%	1,744	86%
Middle (896)	8	1%	184	21%	704	79%
High (1,185)	13	1%	194	16%	978	83%
Combination (46)	*	*	*	*	45	98%
TOTAL (4,166)	22	1%	673	16%	3,471	83%

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

Table 2-M

Principal Effectiveness Ratings by Level, FY14						
Level and Number of Principals	Ineffective		Effective		Highly Effective	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Elementary	*	*	*	*	35	92%
Middle	*	*	*	*	15	83%
High	*	*	*	*	14	100%
TOTAL	*	*	6	9%	64	91%

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-N and 2-O. Table 2-P shows the number of new principals by level. Table 2-Q shows the supports given to new principals.

Table 2-N

Participation in Teacher Evaluation Professional Learning Sessions	
Session Title	Attendance
Danielson Framework for Teaching Overview, Summer 2013	222
Framework in Action Level 1 (1st year teachers) FY14	195
Framework in Action Level 2 (2nd year teachers) FY14	75
Danielson Training for NEW CIA* Leaders and school-based program support staff (3-day series) FY14	89
Teachscape Classroom Observer Training	258
Teachscape Reflect Live Tool Webinars (6 sessions FY14)	150
Reflect Support Sessions	58
Focus on the Framework Sessions: School-based modules facilitated by Teacher Development Liaisons	1,048

* Curriculum, Instruction and Administration

Table 2-O

Instructional Mentoring Supports		
	FY13	FY14
Mentees	189	172
Mentors	88	99
Visits	1,574	1,631
Observations	570	554

Table 2-P

New Principals by Level, FY14	
Elementary	7
Middle	6
High	2

Table 2-Q

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

GOAL 2: Staff

Focus Area: WELL-BEING

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



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.

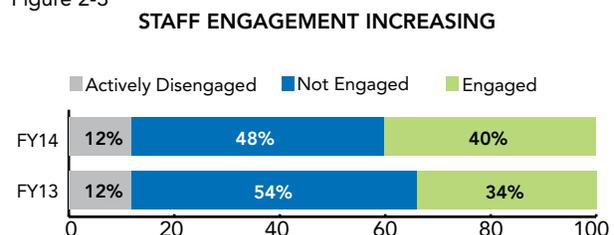


Actively Disengaged employees are physically present but psychologically absent. They are unhappy with their work situation and insist on sharing that unhappiness with their colleagues. These employees have most of their performance-related workplace needs unmet.

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 October 2014 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 2013 results (34 percent). (Figure 2-3)

Figure 2-3



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.

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.

GOAL 2: Staff

Focus Area: WELL-BEING

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



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.

HCPSS values its employees and recognizes the importance of supporting their health and wellness. Launching a comprehensive employee wellness program ensures that employees are offered high quality benefit programs that are affordable to both employees and the system, and are sustainable in the future. Implementing a comprehensive employee wellness program benefits employees and supports our cost containment measures.

The overall health and wellness of employees is a key driver of health care costs. 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 real benefits to implementing such programs. Research on employee wellness programs has shown that employers who invest in a comprehensive employee wellness program can expect, over the long term, to achieve an average return of over \$3 in reduced health care costs for every dollar invested into the program. When savings from improved productivity are factored in, the total return increases to over \$5 for every dollar invested into the 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 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. Monthly presentations are held on a variety of health and wellness related topics such as nutrition, financial fitness, and stress management. These presentations are offered at various times throughout the day to accommodate both regular daytime and second shift employees.

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.



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-R)

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

Table 2-R

Employee Wellness Commit to Be Fit Program Participation			
	FY12	FY13	FY14
Employees enrolled	77%	80%	87%
Actively earning Health Miles	67%	72%	73%
Participants at or above recommended daily activity levels	74%	76%	81%
Average daily steps	7,980	8,225	9,086
Fitness class participation	700	700	847
Health and financial fitness workshop participation	400	500	939
Weight Watchers participation	270	400	292

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"> Stakeholder participation on policy development/revision committees, p. 71 School Improvement Team and Parent Teacher Association participation, p. 72 HCPSS advisory groups participation, p. 74 Number and type of partnerships, p. 75
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"> Social media usage, p. 77 HCPSS website usage, p. 78 HCPSS News usage, p. 79
WELL-BEING	<p>3.4 HCPSS supports the well-being of students and families.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Targeted family outreach, p. 80



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.

Four curriculum information sessions introduced parents and community members to the new HCPSS mathematics and English curriculum, how it aligns to the Common Core standards, and ways that parents can help their children at home. Feedback from the hundreds of participants was overwhelmingly positive. Parents also have access to detailed information about curriculum at each grade level and subject area, including many useful enrichment resources and tips, through a newly enhanced curriculum section of the HCPSS website.

The Howard County Public School System's 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, these 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.

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.

A seven-week International Parent Leadership Program introduces international parents to school and system procedures, encourages involvement in the school community, and fosters leadership roles on behalf of the system's nearly 6,000 international students. Nearly 200 participants representing many different countries have graduated from the annual program since 2006.

Community organizations also 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 over the past year 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 new HCPSS social media presence was launched at the start of FY14, following approval of Board policy allowing the use of social media. Social media allow for more constant and interactive communication with parents and community members. Facebook and Twitter pages for the system, and a Superintendent's Twitter account, draw thousands of followers. Many schools and program offices have launched individual Twitter and Facebook pages as well.





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 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 new 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 Connect, a new live video series, features HCPSS experts responding to questions submitted by community and staff members via Twitter or email. Initial session topics focused on the FY16 Proposed Operating Budget and PARCC testing, and drew thousands of viewers during and after the event.



Let's Go HoCo, the first annual HCPSS 5K run/walk and one-mile fun run, drew more than 2,500 participants in October 2014. The race brings together staff, students, families, and the community to promote health and wellness.

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

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)
- 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

Other stakeholder groups with expertise in a policy topic are invited to participate on the policy/development revision committee. This includes central office staff, school-based staff, as well as other community stakeholder groups.

Also included is a standardized process to select a citizen to represent the General Citizens stakeholder group.

Direct communication with stakeholder groups' leadership and use of communication tools to obtain committee members and communicate to the community in support of Strategy 3.1.2 are:

- Press releases for local media.
- Press releases in Parent Newsletter.
- Letters inviting stakeholders to participate on committees.
- Presentations to explain process to stakeholder organizations.
- Schedules of committee meetings via email.
- Telephone.
- Email.
- HCPSS Pony Mail.
- Website and BoardDocs used to provide current policies as well as the status of policies under consideration for development or review.

Progress

Participation on Policy Development/Revision Committees for FY14 is represented in the chart below:

Table 3-A

Stakeholder Representation on Policy Development/Revision Committees, FY14											
Policy	Central Office Staff	School-based Staff	AFSCME	CAC	HCAA	HCEA	HSCASC	PTACHC	General Citizens	Other Stakeholders	Total Members
1040 Safe and Supportive Schools	5	3	0	1	1	1	2	0	1	3	17
4070 Fund Balance	3	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	8
6080 Sustainability	9	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	0	19
8030 Graduation Requirements	7	4	0	1	1	0	2	0	1	1	17
8100 Field Trips, Domestic	4	5	0	1	1	1	2	0	1	0	15
8110 Student International Educational Travel	4	5	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	13
9020 Students' Rights and Responsibilities	8	5	0	1	1	1	2	0	1	0	19
9200 Student Discipline	7	7	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	3	23
9260 Student Search and Seizure	4	4	0	1	1	0	2	0	1	3	17

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

Most 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, FY14		
Level	Parent Members	Community Members
Elementary	81	12
Middle	41	22
High	39	3

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

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

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

Special School	FY13	FY14
Cedar Lane	162	175



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.
- Offer recognition and appreciation to partnering organizations, through signing ceremonies and press releases for new partnerships.
- 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.



With the University of Maryland Extension, Howard County Master Gardeners' Our Environment in Our Hands program, fourth grade students apply creativity, innovation, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills to explore and analyze how the simple choices they make directly affect the local environment and the health of the Chesapeake Bay.

HCPSS partner McDonald's at Maple Lawn is one of many businesses supporting the structured, supervised work program that HCPSS provides for high school students with mild to moderate disabilities. Teachers work closely

with students and employers to ensure satisfactory performance on the job as students develop the skills, habits, and confidence needed to work independently.



perspective include the Howard County Chinese School, Chinese Language School of Columbia, Kaur Foundation, Conexiones, CHAI (Counselors Helping (South) Asians/Indians), and the African Art Museum of Maryland.



GOAL 3

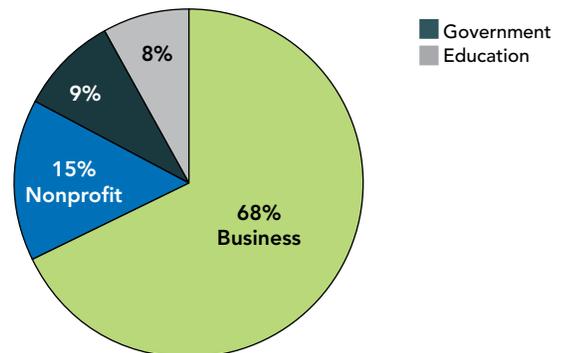
HCPSS works with a variety of community organizations to increase student academic and personal achievement. A-OK Mentoring-Tutoring, African American Community Roundtable, The Council of Elders of the Black Community of Howard County, Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, Howard County Autism Society, local fraternities and sororities, and many others support and help HCPSS strengthen programs that focus on eliminating the achievement gap.



With a student population representing 72 countries and speaking 61 different languages, HCPSS looks for ways to learn about the issues affecting students and families of many cultures. Partners offering a cultural

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 FY14 by:

- Facilitating 1,089 HCPSS partnerships.
- Creating 32 new partnership agreements.
- Highlighting how partners support the four focus areas of Vision 2018 in the HCPSS Educational Partnerships 2013–2014 Annual Report (www.hcpss.org/f/aboutus/partnership/ar-partner201314.pdf); more than 3,000 copies distributed countywide.
- Issuing 22 press releases.
- Submitting 44 partnership pictures to the local media.
- Serving as HCPSS representative on 14 community Boards of Directors and committees.

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.

Shortly after the policy covering social media went into effect in July 2013, HCPSS launched a Facebook page and upgraded our Twitter account from one that was used for emergency communications only to one that is now used to share school system news. The Superintendent also uses Twitter to increase transparency. Twitter accounts also were set up as an option for each school to use. As this is a new frontier for the school system, professional development resources and training are being offered to school system personnel 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.

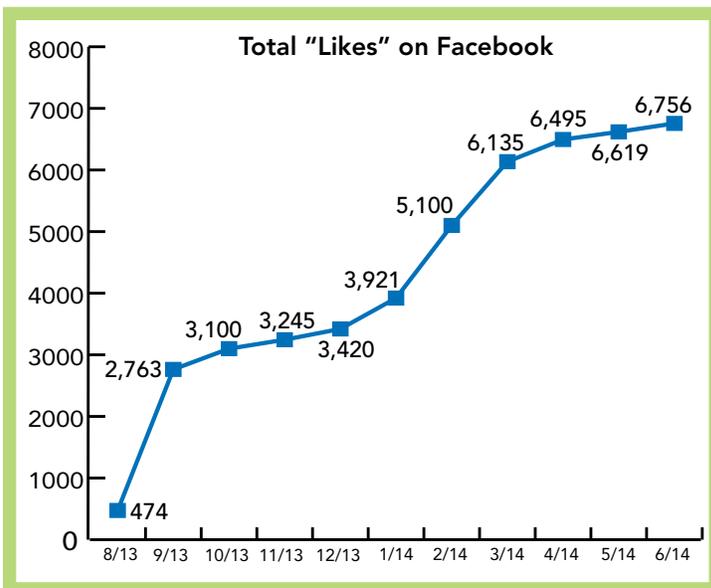
- Upcoming events.
- Open-ended questions to parents regarding curriculum, school activities, and other topics of interest.
- Photos of events and activities.
- Notices about job fairs, internship information, scholarships, etc.
- Educational posts related to federal holidays and other special occasions such as Black History Month.

Progress

Facebook

The HCPSS Facebook page was launched on August 15, 2013. The school system posts between 1–6 times each day. Total "likes" rose to 6,756 by June 30, 2014, as shown in Figure 3-2 below.

Figure 3-2



Twitter

The main HCPSS Twitter account and Superintendent Twitter account have seen steady increases in the number of followers, 9,882 and 2,256 respectively, as of June 30, 2014.

Twitter analytics show that the tweets that receive the most retweets or favorites are responding to 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.

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)

Beginning in February 2013, several significant upgrades have been made to the main website to increase utility and ease of use. Upgrades include:

- Prioritization of relevant information by reducing unused content on the site by 60 percent.
- Improvement of the speed of our site from 4–7 seconds per page load to under half a second.
- Introduction of Google Analytics to gather detailed site usage statistics.
- Introduction of a Google Search appliance that provides a more relevant and robust search experience.
- Introduction of mobile friendly design patterns to support visitors using a diverse set of devices.

Before the end of the 2014 school year, the school system moved all 41 elementary schools, 20 middle schools and two education center school sites to a more agile, mobile friendly web platform. 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, 2013 and June 30, 2014, the HCPSS website had:

- 4.68 million visits from 1.3 million unique visitors.
- 9.17 million page views.

Twenty-six percent of visits are from new visitors, and 74 percent are from returning visitors.

Forty-three percent of traffic used a mobile phone or tablet to access the site.

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

Due to the increased number of weather-related closings and delayed openings this winter, 45 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 30,000 pageviews. During the weather timeline above, the highest day of pageviews was 156,000.

Increase in Social Media Referrals

The launch of the coordinated HCPSS social media presence has led to an increase in traffic to the main HCPSS website. Before the school system's social media policy went into effect, the system experienced less than 1,000 referrals to the website per month. Referrals are visitors brought to the site by clicking on links shared on social media accounts. Since the social media policy went into effect on July 1, 2013, referrals generated through HCPSS social media channels have increased to more than 15,000 per month, and are now the fifth 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.

From July 1, 2013 through October 2014, families were encouraged to sign up for HCPSS News Service to receive timely, relevant information on computers or



mobile devices. In October, HCPSS changed HCPSS News providers, allowing HCPSS to auto-enroll parents and guardians based on data submitted through the Emergency Card process.

HCPSS News Service 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 usage of HCPSS News, this report includes data on both the volume of messages that are being sent and the number of families that are accessing the service.

From July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2014, schools and central office have sent 29,081 broadcast messages to families and the community. Over the past three school years, the number of messages sent has steadily increased at schools and central office.

Table 3-D

Messages Sent through HCPSS News Service			
	FY12	FY13	FY14
Elementary	4,436	4,960	5,713
Middle	2,002	1,992	2,252
High	2,273	2,229	2,604
Systemwide	72	83	103

During FY14, HCPSS began to text emergency messages to parents and sent 27 emergency messages related to school closings and/or delays to 33,141 text message subscribers.

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 Saturday Math Academy provides mathematics support to students. While students are learning, parents can attend sessions to learn about the mathematics curriculum and resources to support learning at home.
- The International Parent Leadership Program (IPLP) introduces parents to HCPSS policies and procedures and encourages them to get involved in their school communities.
- 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 FY14, 10 Parent Information Sessions were held during the BSAP Saturday Math Academy at Oakland Mills High School, with an average of 75 parents attending each session. The sessions are designed to inform parents about current mathematics related topics and countywide initiatives and provide an informal setting for parents to network with other parents, HCPSS staff, and community members. During FY15, 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			
	FY12	FY13	FY14
Interpreter Requests	7,752	8,597	10,239
Students Served	2,394	2,888	3,296
Documents Translated	752	836	662
International Student Registrations	1,082	1,031	926

HCPSS also is seeing a growing number of parents access workshops offered in Spanish.

Table 3-F

Number of Parents Attending Programs in Spanish			
	FY12	FY13	FY14
College and Career Ready Workshops	361	383	415
Parent Academy Graduates (cumulative)	153	202	246

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 FY14 school, 11 family nights were offered at six 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			
	FY12	FY13	FY14
Elementary Students	115	111	121
Family Nights	61 parents	75 parents	68 families

GOAL 4: Organization

Schools are supported by world-class organizational practices.



GOAL 4

FOCUS AREA	OUTCOMES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
<p>ORGANIZATIONAL WELL-BEING</p>	<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"> • School entry security features, p. 85 • Frequency of modified/lost duty days, p. 85 • Miles between preventable accidents, p. 85 • Number of new hires, p. 87 • Staff diversity, p. 87 • Number of applicants for staff vacancies, p. 89 • Staff retention rate, p. 91
<p>PERFORMANCE</p>	<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"> • Zero-based budgeting implementation, p. 92 • Computer access, connectivity, and speed, p. 94 • Electronic payment usage, p. 97 • Point of sale system usage, p. 98 • Facilities management satisfaction, p. 99 • Carbon footprint reduction, p. 101 • Operations and maintenance satisfaction, p. 102 • HVAC satisfaction, p. 102 • Continuous Improvement Program, p. 103



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.

Zero-based budgeting (ZBB) was implemented during FY14 for FY15 operating budget planning. 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 \$3.4 million in savings for the FY15 budget alone, and is expected to deliver a total of \$5.3 million for the FY16 budget.

Community members are an important part of the budgeting process. Two new channels for community input on the budget were introduced for this year's budget cycle. A new Citizen's Budget Guide provides important information about the HCPSS budgeting process, including factors that influence FY16 budget projections, operating revenue, and expenditures, in a brief, easy to read format. HCPSS Connect, a new live video series, features HCPSS experts responding to questions submitted by community and staff members via Twitter or email. The FY16 Proposed Operating Budget was the subject of the first session, and

drew hundreds of participants and viewers during and after the event.

HCPSS received prestigious industry awards for its budgeting from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada and Association of School Business Officials International. The awards reflect the value of the system's zero-based budgets in planning, financial management, and operations, as well as its accessibility and transparency for the public.

A number of infrastructure improvements support the system's commitment to the safety and well-being of students and staff. New advanced Visitor Information Systems have been installed in every elementary and middle school. Digital camera systems have been installed on nearly half of HCPSS school buses, and plans are in place to equip all buses with the cameras over the next few years.

Forty-two schools now have access to far greater data capacity through the Inter-County Broadband Network (ICBN). The extra bandwidth expands digital learning options through high definition video, remote learning, online testing, and many other initiatives in support of Vision 2018. All remaining schools will join the ICBN during FY16.

Dr. Renee A. Foose is one of 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 a White House ConnectED to the Future Convening in 2014.

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.



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. The new Ducketts Lane Elementary School is Howard County's first LEED Gold certified school building.

Lean Six Sigma and other continuous improvement methodologies are widely used by manufacturing and other industries to improve safety, efficiency, and profitability. HCPSS is now using this same approach to redesign processes to improve consistency and efficiency and reduce waste. Staff members throughout the school system have been trained in the methodology, and Lean Six Sigma programs are underway across every operational area.

The process has already yielded impressive results. For example, a successful Heating, Ventilation, and Air-Conditioning (HVAC) Lean project delivers more than \$22,000 in annual energy savings per building, and

has significantly improved comfort levels and reduced maintenance calls at many schools by more than 50 percent. Other projects streamlined the teacher transfer request and hiring processes, significantly reducing process time and improving reliability. A world language application more effectively places students in the level of language instruction most appropriate to their proficiency level.

HCPSS is preparing to launch a series of more robust and user-friendly information systems early in FY16. These will include new learning management and student information systems and a data warehouse, which will provide more comprehensive and meaningful student data to give teachers real-time feedback to enhance instruction and allow detailed analysis of student progress and growth. The student information system will also offer a much more user-friendly and accessible interface for parents. In addition, a new human capital system will be implemented early in FY16 to streamline many business processes.

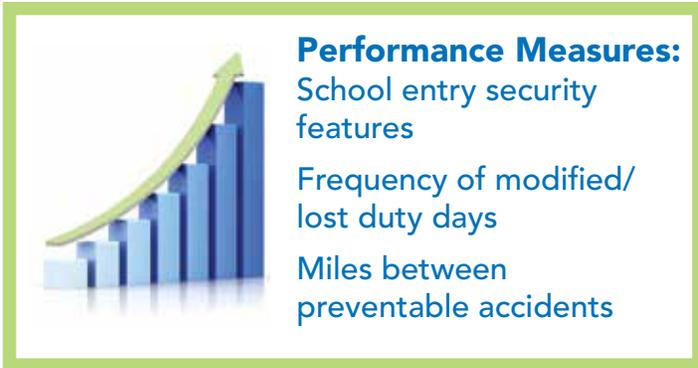


Progress on key Goal 4 measures is detailed on the following pages.

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

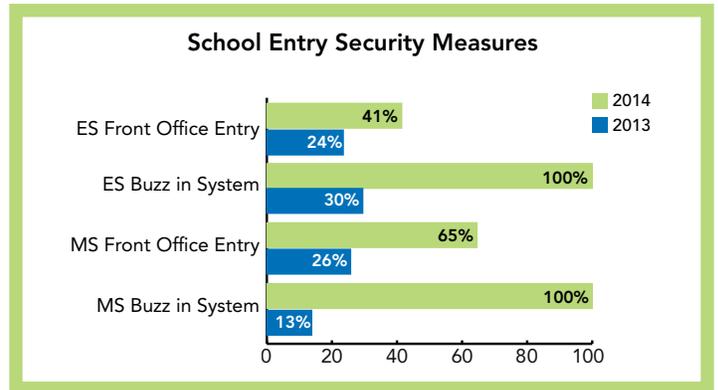
Student safety and well-being is a top priority for HCPSS and the entire community. HCPSS has long taken a proactive approach to ensuring the safety of schools and system workplaces, and has many measures in place to ensure a secure instructional environment.

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.

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.

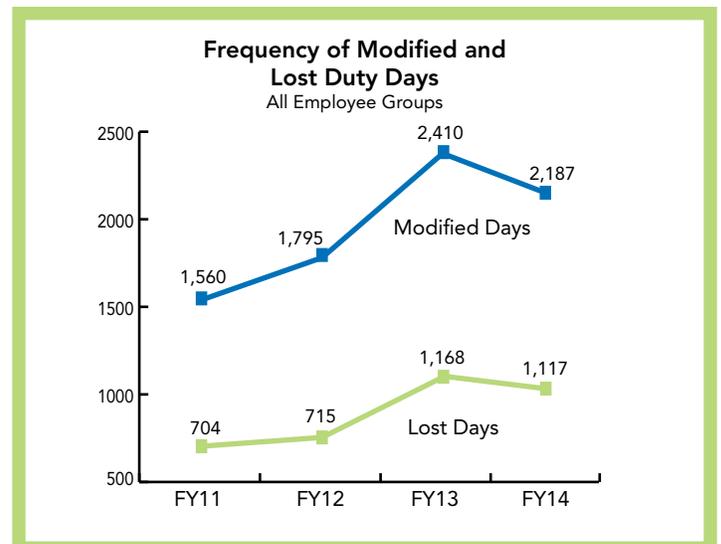
Figure 4-1



The elimination of workplace hazards in both schools and offices is also a priority. Results from the enhanced facility inspection program from the Maryland Association of Boards of Educations (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 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



GOAL 4

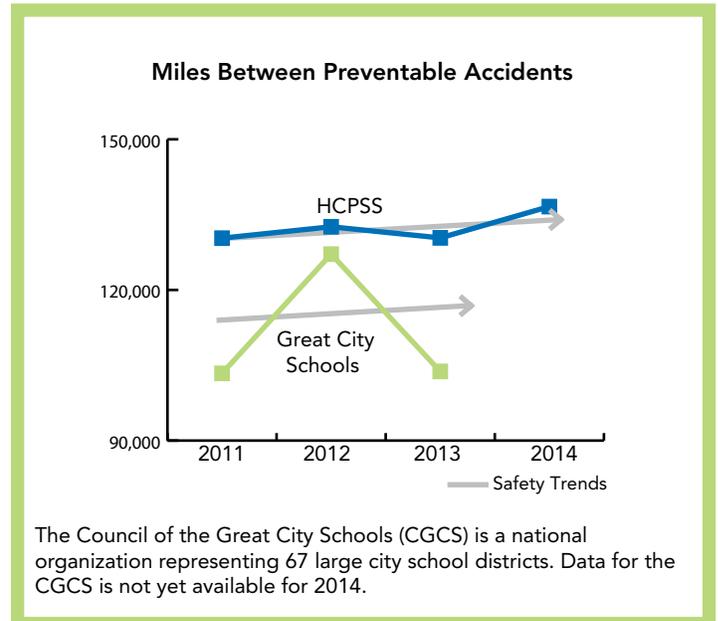


The school day for many students starts and ends on the school bus. HCPSS follows National Safety Council defensive driving principles to ensure safe delivery of each student to and from school. The relative incidence of school bus accidents has decreased, despite the increase in student enrollment and 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

New digital on-board cameras are in the process of being installed on 240 school buses. By the beginning of FY16, all 453 route buses will be equipped with a camera system. Based on a survey of school administrators, the new cameras have assisted with investigations 60 percent of the time and has deterred negative behavior 54.1 percent of the time. The installation of the camera systems underscores efforts to support the safety and well-being of students outlined in Vision 2018 by reducing bullying, improving customer service, and supporting the recommendations of the Joint Task Force on School Security Report.

Figure 4-3



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, 23.5 percent identify as racial/ethnic minorities. Among teachers, 16.4 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 34 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 34 events, 10 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.

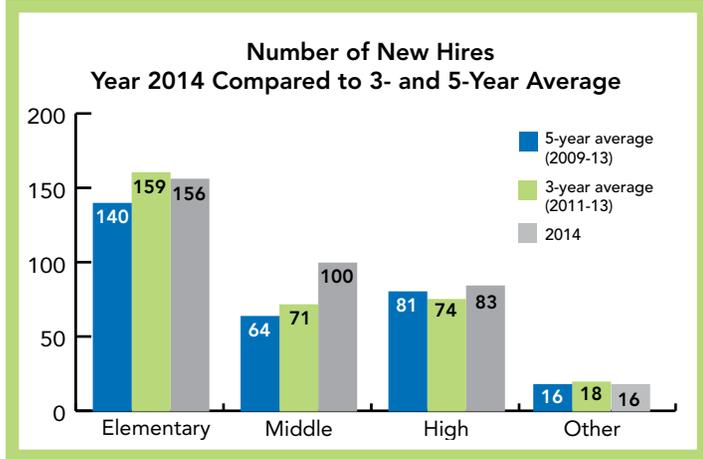
Because of the relative lack of teacher candidates trained by Maryland institutions of higher education and a nationwide shortage, the competition for minority candidates and critical shortage content areas is intense. Along with offering open contracts, another strategy used by the Office of Human Resources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

For the FY14 reporting period, 80 HCPSS graduates and 31 HCPSS paraeducators were hired as classroom teachers. Furthermore, 79 Professional Development Schools (PDS) interns and five student teachers trained in HCPSS schools were also hired into classroom teaching positions. 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 2014, hiring at the middle and high school levels has increased compared to their 3- and 5-year averages. Elementary school hires have decreased below the 3-year average and increased compared to the 5-year average.

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 3.9 percent from 2013 to 2014. (Table 4-A)

Table 4-A

Number of Employees by Race and Ethnicity Comparison				
Race	October 2013	October 2014	Difference	Increase
American Indian/Alaska Native	26	23	(3)	-11.5%
Asian	265	280	15	5.7%
Black or African American	1,279	1,315	36	2.8%
Hispanic	177	200	23	13%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	5	6	1	20%
Two or More Races	72	72	0	0%
White	6,156	6,186	30	0.5%
Total	7,980	8,082	102	1.3%

For the period from October 16, 2013, to October 15, 2014, HCPSS hired 355 classroom teachers and related service providers (e.g. speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, counselors, etc.). More than 58 percent of the classroom teachers were employed to teach in critical shortage content areas.

Twenty-two percent of the total number of new teachers hired self-identified as members of a racial minority. Fifty percent were Black or African American, 29.5 percent were Hispanic, 14 percent were Asian, and 6.5 percent indicated two or more races, American Indian or Alaska Native, or Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander categories.

Overall diversity of teachers is 16.4 percent. (Table 4-B)

Table 4-B

Diversity of Teachers, 2014								
	American Indian/Alaska Native	Asian	Black or African American	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	White	Hispanic	Two or More Races	Total
Classroom Teachers	14	120	396	2	3,408	83	50	4,073
Other Instructional Personnel		2	20		113	4		139
Total	14	122	416	2	3,521	87	50	4,212
Percent	0.3%	2.9%	9.9%	0%	83.6%	2.1%	1.2%	100%

GOAL 4: Organization

Focus Area: ORGANIZATIONAL WELL-BEING

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



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.

Progress

Teacher Candidate Selection

During the 2014 hiring period from October 16, 2013 to October 15, 2014, 355 classroom teachers and related service providers (e.g. speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, counselors, etc.) were hired from



an applicant pool of 7,189. 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 67 percent of applicants were seeking positions in non-critical content areas, while only 33 percent applied for positions in critical shortage content areas.

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 113 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, 2013, to October 15, 2014. Of the 4,905 applicants, 1,760 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, 26 Leadership Interns have been promoted to assistant principal, a clear indicator of the program's success.

Teacher Vacancies

Table 4-C

Number of Applicants for Teacher Vacancies				
2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
8,043	6,595	7,123	6,867*	7,189
*Data for 2013 only available from 12/1/12–10/14/13 when the Appltrack 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 – 113
- Total Applicants – 4,905
- Total Applicants Meeting Minimum Qualifications – 1,760 (10/16/13–10/15/14)

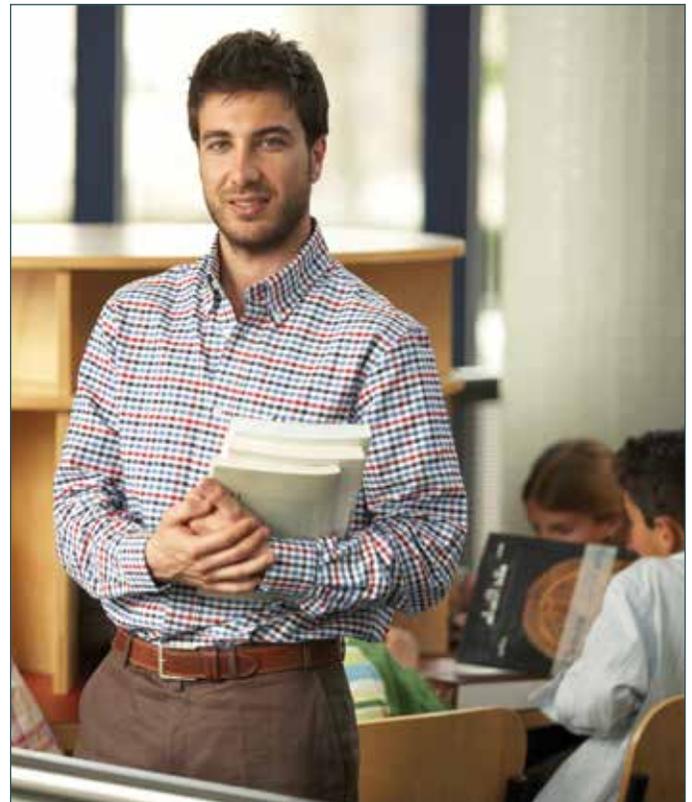
Number of Applicants for Support Services positions:

- Positions Posted – 283
- Total Applicants – 33,426
- Total Qualified Applicants – 10,768 (10/16/13–10/15/14)

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 2014 reporting period, 54.9 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 45.1 percent of all teachers hired. Of these new hires, 84 (52 percent) were student teachers or PDS interns in Howard County.

Of the 5,508 professional employees, 72.3 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, 2013 to October 15, 2014, 93.5 percent of core academic subject classes were taught by highly qualified teachers. The number of conditionally certified teachers was 55.



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 93.66 percent in 2014 with an overall turnover rate of 6.34 percent. These rates reflect 513 separations out of 8,082 employees during the 2014 reporting period. Resignations are analyzed by both the reason and the period of the year when the resignation occurred. Some 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

2014 Employee Separations							
Position	Resign	Retire	Death	Resign from Leave of Absence	Non-renewal	Termination	Total
Central and School-based Administrators	5	14	-	-	-	-	19
Teachers	133	111	2	31	2	-	279
Other Professional Personnel	22	15	-	2	-	-	39
Paraeducators	56	15	1	1	-	2	75
Other Support Personnel	47	42	3	1	-	8	101
Total	263	197	6	35	2	10	513
Percent	51.3%	38.4%	1.2%	6.8%	0.4%	1.9%	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.*



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.

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.

In FY16, savings through redirecting existing resources yielded \$2.6 million in ZBB savings and 84 positions to redirect to teaching positions for enrollment growth and new initiatives aligned with Vision 2018.

In reviewing key activities and program alignment with Vision 2018, 87 position requests were not included in the budget request, reducing the proposed budget by an additional \$4.9 million. New initiative requests were prioritized based upon their contribution to outcomes in Vision 2018 and another \$2.6 million was reduced in this process. In total, the ZBB process yielded a reduction in the budget request of approximately \$10.1 million.

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 Distinguished Budget Presentation Award and the Association of School Business Officials Meritorious Budget Award for the FY15 budget, the first zero-based budget produced by the HCPSS. 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.

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

From July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014, HCPSS deployed 8,147 new computing devices. The Technology Department deployed 6,137 computing devices for the following new and existing programs: the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) testing (5,460), technology teacher mobile labs (30), new teacher laptops (117), and tablets for Grade 6 and 7 students at Elkridge Landing Middle School (530). In addition, 2,010 new computing devices were added for Title I schools. Table 4-E graphically displays this information.

Table 4-E

Number of Computing Devices		
	FY13	FY14
New Computers	5,860	8,147
Replacement Plan Computers (school-based)	6,429	—
Existing Computers	22,468	31,604
Total	34,757	39,751

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

Table 4-F

Number of Assigned Computers		
	FY13	FY14
Staff assigned	5,502*	8,518
Student assigned	29,255	31,233
Total	34,757	39,751

*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
Elementary	11,287	12,552
Middle	8,817	9,380
High	9,151	9,301
Total	29,255	31,233

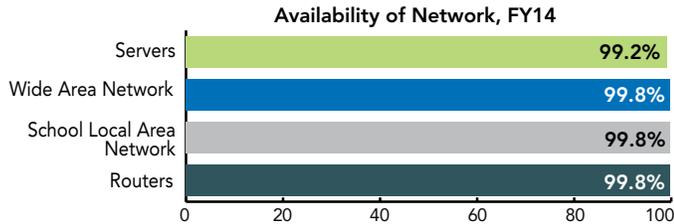
Table 4-H

Number of Instructional Computers in Schools by Type		
	FY13	FY14
Laptops	18,044	17,851
Desktops	9,955	10,432
Tablets	1,256	2,950
Total	29,255	31,233

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 FY14, as shown in Figure 4-5 below.

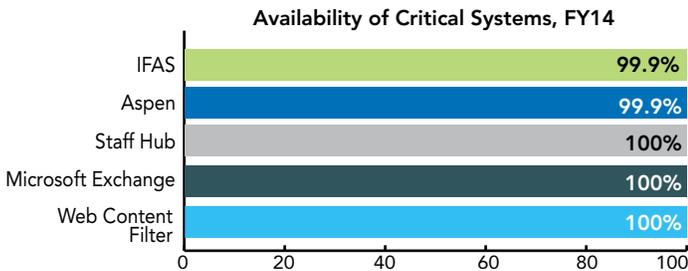
Figure 4-5



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 99.9 percent in FY14, as shown in Figure 4-6 below.

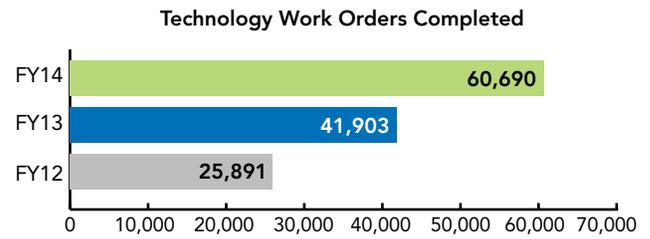
Figure 4-6



Customer Service

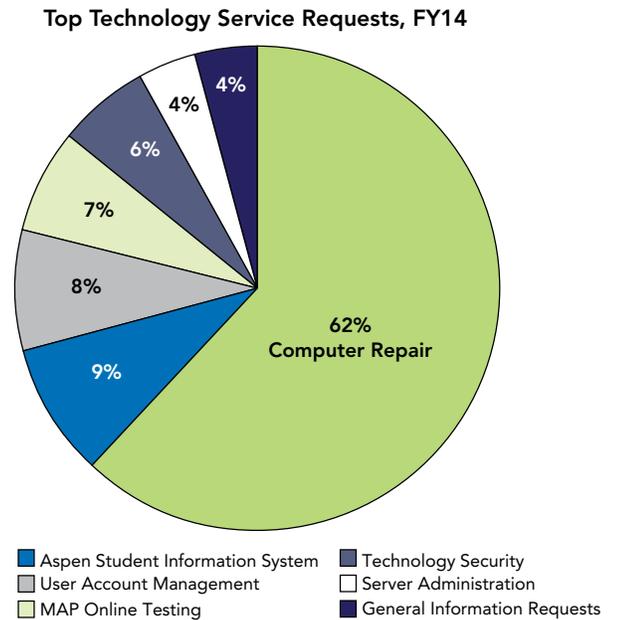
Customer service is paramount to ensuring that all technology equipment and services are reliable and available for use. Technology work orders are tracked in the Web Help Desk ticketing system. The number of work orders completed by Technology Department employees has drastically increased in the past three years. In FY14, the Technology Department handled 45 percent more web help desk tickets than the previous year, as shown in Figure 4-7.

Figure 4-7



In FY14, the top seven technology service requests were attributed to computer repair (62 percent), Aspen Student Information System (9 percent), User account management (8 percent), MAP On-Line Testing (7 percent), Technology Security (6 percent), Server Administration (4 percent), and general information requests (4 percent), as shown below in Figure 4-8.

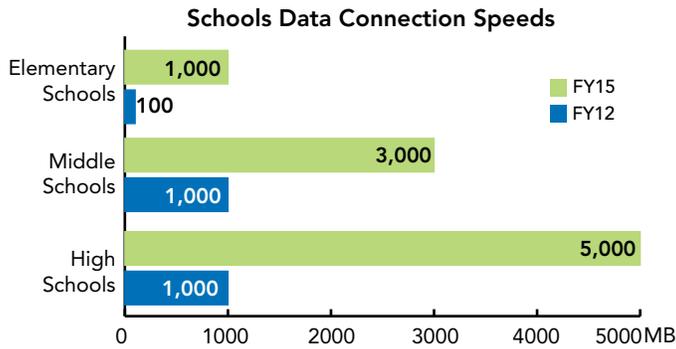
Figure 4-8



Connectivity and Internet Access

In the fall of 2013, the Technology Department issued requests for proposals to increase the speed and reliability of data connectivity and internet access at all HCPSS locations. In March 2014, the Board approved Technology Department recommendations to increase all elementary schools data connections from 100 MB to 1,000 MB, all middle schools from 1,000 Mbps to 3,000 Mbps, and all high schools from 1,000MB to 5,000 MB. These upgrades will be completed by July 2015 and are intended to increase network bandwidth available to higher speed data applications for all students and employees.

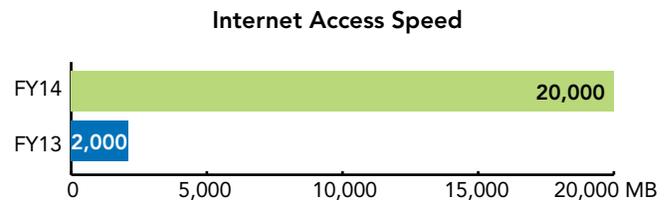
Figure 4-9



Internet access speed is 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 (SETDA) published recommendations to address K–12 educational infrastructure needs. For FY14, their 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 reimbursement have been converted to direct deposit. Within the first year, HCPSS converted more than 230 vendors to electronic payments resulting in issuance of 5,210 fewer checks totaling \$11 million, a 45 percent decrease in paper check processing.

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. In the first five months of implementation, 31 schools have begun using OSP and have collected \$105,154 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.

Figure 4-11

Percent of Students Using Online Account FY14

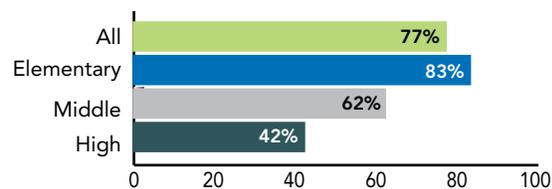


Table 4-1

Meals Served Daily, Annually		
	FY13	FY14
Average Meals Served Daily	18,898	19,276
Total Meals Served Annually	3,779,651	3,800,153

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:

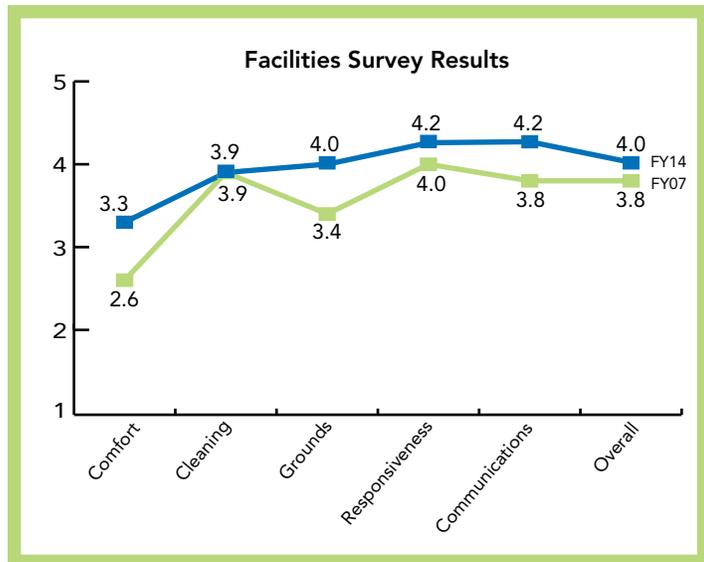
1. Unsatisfactory: All areas need improvement
2. Marginal: Some aspects are okay but overall needs improvement
3. Satisfactory: Everything met basic standards
4. Excellent: Great job but could be better
5. Outstanding: Superior in every respect

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

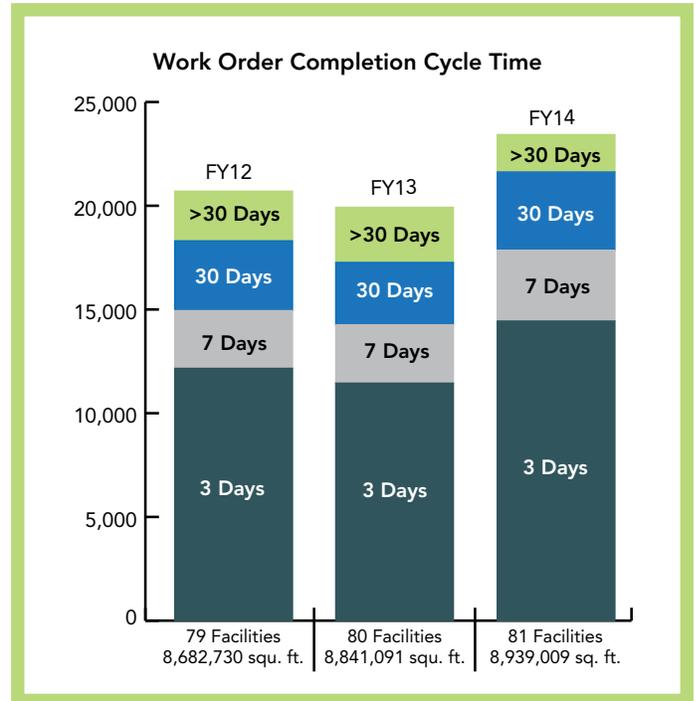
In FY14, all areas were rated between Satisfactory and Outstanding, on average.

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 5 days requires feedback to the customer with a plan for addressing and resolving the issue. In FY14, 59 percent of work orders were completed in 3 days or less.

Figure 4-13

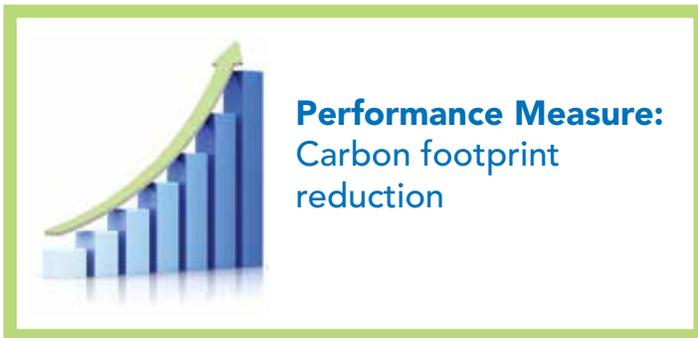


The school system recently added two new schools and several large additions, increasing the overall square footage that Facilities staff must maintain. As work order requests have increased, staffing levels within Facilities, Planning and Management have decreased, which negatively impacts work order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

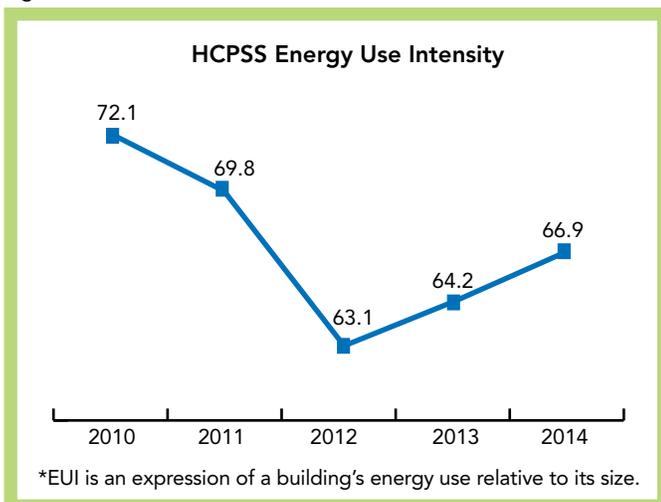
Description and Value

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

Figure 4-14 demonstrates that, despite increasing student enrollment and building usage, the average energy use per square foot within the school system has dropped by 5.2 percent since 2010. These savings can be attributed to both behavior change and technology

Figure 4-14



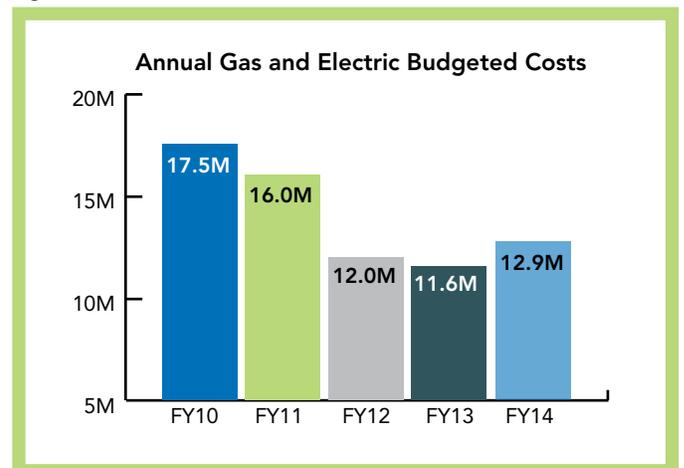
improvements. As of June 2014, 49 schools had achieved Maryland Association of Outdoor Educators Green School certification, and Dunloggin Middle School was one of the first U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon schools.

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 4-15 demonstrates that the FY14 actual gas and electric costs were \$4.6M below the FY10 budgeted costs. In addition, over the last four years we have been approved for over \$1.3M in BG&E rebates and several hundred thousand dollars of incentives related to our participation in an energy curtailment 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.

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 approaching 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 five 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 most recent HVAC Shop improvement efforts centered on increased preventive maintenance efforts, which have resulted in improved consistency in comfort levels at schools, and helping to create a more engaging learning environment.

HVAC Shop improvement efforts included the formation of a retro commissioning team that focuses solely on comprehensive reviews of building equipment and control systems. Additionally, \$133K in rebates were received from BG&E for completing the work with in-house employees.



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. Rather than point fingers at a person who is doing a job incorrectly, the Lean approach ensures the process is resilient enough to prevent mistakes from ever occurring.



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 100 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 which means "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.

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

- Field trip approval process
- Teacher hiring process
- Engagement and strengths implementation plan
- Grants process
- Reading Specialists Read 180 product evaluation design and pilot selection
- Research applications process
- Survey process
- School testing coordinator process
- Online assessment troubleshooting process
- Bus contractor scorecards
- Bus stop analysis
- Website content management project
- World languages heritage speaker assessment process
- MAP testing dashboard
- Vehicle repair process data management process
- Audit resolution process and tracking mechanism
- Request for proposal process for selection of the Student Information System, Data Warehouse and Learning Management System
- iPad maintenance process
- Print Shop electronic submission pilot
- Systemwide Project Charters and Project Portfolio Management
- Performance measures establishment for Budget Accounts
- Warehouse continuous improvement plan
- Crystal Flame Award submission and selection process improvements



Teacher Hiring Process

When our enrollment estimates for the following school year are established in February, our staffing needs are adjusted and some teachers are identified for involuntary transfer. Data shows that around 30 percent of our teachers, who were originally told they would need to transfer, are later granted first right of refusal to a position in their original building because openings were later identified. The value stream map pictured above was created to show our teacher hiring and placement process. The HCPSS Manager of Certificated, Management, and Technical Recruiting and Hiring, is shown here explaining the process to a cross-functional group gathered to brainstorm improvements.

This kaizen event highlighted where we can improve our identification and placement of future openings in order to reposition our teachers and hire new teachers earlier in the season. We also identified improvements in our automated application system and re-vamped our process for hiring paraprofessionals into a pool process, eliminating multiple screening of the same applicants. Additionally, we redesigned our staffing sheets to better communicate between administration, Human Resources, and school-based teams about positions in real time rather than through a process of multiple revisions. Other improvements included communications with our internal and external applicants, and changes to leverage our automated application system to more effectively drive the application process.

World Languages Heritage Speaker Assessment Process

Many of our students are proficient speakers of multiple languages. We are expanding our World Language program in middle schools and some elementary schools. Rather than expect heritage speakers to start at beginning level classes, this program is assessing them

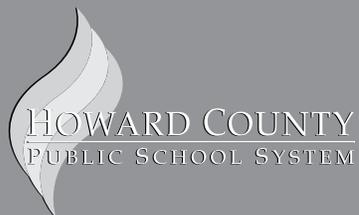
for appropriate placement in higher level courses. These higher level courses set them on a path for honors level classes, potential Advanced Placement credit, and success in higher level courses.

Starting with our heritage Spanish speakers, a staff member from the World Language office is assessing and recommending which students are more appropriately placed in more challenging Spanish courses. Using some of the Lean tools taught in our Lean Six Sigma Green Belt course, this office is improving the assessment process (now in its second year) in order to identify more heritage speakers and also to make testing more efficient to enable future expansion into more languages.





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