Progress Report
on the Strategic Plan

Vision 2018: Fulfilling the Promise of Preparation

HOWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

May 2014

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Renee A. Foose, Ed.D.
Superintendent

The Howard County Public School System launched a five-year strategic plan, *Vision 2018: Fulfilling the Promise of Preparation*, on July 1, 2013. This 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 living in a highly complex world. To prepare for their future, they 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 first Progress Report documents the advancements our system has made in the ten months since the strategic plan went into effect.

These advancements are due to the collective commitment of our staff, students, families, and community partners. I look forward with excitement as we continue together on the next stage of our journey to world-class.

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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

76 Schools
41 elementary schools
20 middle schools *(1 under construction)*
12 high schools
 3 education centers

Total Enrollment – 51,681*
Elementary (Pre-K–5) – 24,445
Middle (6–8) – 11,890
High (9–12) – 16,378
Special School – 93
*Official count does not include PreK

Per Pupil Expenditure FY 2014
$78.38 per day/$14,108 per year

Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2014
$729.1 million

OUR CLASSROOMS

Ratio of computers to students: 1:2.5
Classrooms with Internet access: 100%

OUR STAFF**

Teachers	4,737
Administrators	222
Classified/Support	2,695
Other Professionals	353
Total Staff	8,007

**as of May 2014

69.5% of teachers hold a master's degree or above

OUR STUDENTS

Race/Ethnicity*
American Indian/Alaskan	0.2%
Asian	18.4%
Black/African American	21.6%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.1%
Hispanic/Latino	9.1%
White	44.4%
Two or more races	6.3%

*** as of November 2013

Students Receiving Special Services 2012–13
Free/Reduced-price Lunch	18.9%
Ltd. English Proficient	$\leq$5.0%
Special Education	8.6%

Attendance Rate 2012–13
Elementary:	96%
Middle:	96%
High:	95%

Graduation Rate: 93.3%****
****4-year adjusted cohort

ESOL Program
Over 2,100 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
Percentage of students who have participated in a variety of Gifted and Talented Education program offerings:
K to Grade 5	46%
Grades 6–8	46%
Grades 9–12	46%

Documented Decisions/Class of 2013
Attend a 4-year college	67%
Attend a 2-year college	25%
Attend trade or technical school	$\leq$5%
Enter employment	$\leq$5%
Military	$\leq$5%
Other or unreported plans	$\leq$5%

National Merit Finalists
Class of 2013 – 44 students

This report details the progress made within the Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) in the ten months since the July 1, 2013 launch of our strategic plan, Vision 2018: Fulfilling the Promise of Preparation (Vision 2018), which is available online at www.hcpss.org/vision. The report also provides updates on work aligned to Vision 2018 that was underway during the 2012–13 school year and earlier.
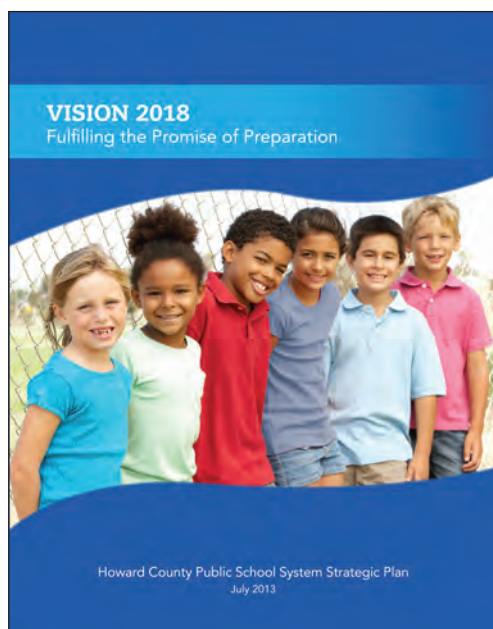
HCPSS enjoys a long-standing tradition of being among the best public school systems in the state and nation. Vision 2018 is a roadmap for building upon the school system's strengths to deliver a truly world-class education to every student. It prioritizes and aligns all system efforts to provide an 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 educational 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 have been defined for each of these four areas, with measures of success to mark 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) to facilitate the alignment of planned 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. Once developed, the budget is 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.

VISION 2018
Fulfilling the Promise of Preparation

Howard County Public School System Strategic Plan
July 2013

www.hcpss.org/vision

The ZBB process was implemented for the first time in preparing the FY15 budget, and delivered $3.4 million in savings for this budget cycle alone. In subsequent years, results on the Vision 2018 performance measures will be incorporated into the budget planning and review process, to complete the alignment of budgetary decisions with the strategic plan.

This report is organized into four sections, one for each of the goals in Vision 2018: Students, Staff, Families and Community, Organization. Each section includes an overview of progress made 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 includes the specific Vision 2018 strategy or strategies to which it is aligned, a description of what it is and why it's of value, as well as a summary of 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 system-level high impact 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	1.1 The instructional program is rigorous, globally-relevant, and aligned with international and/or nationally recognized college and career readiness standards. 1.2 Students have equitable access to a rigorous instructional program.	• 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
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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. The outcomes and strategies in this goal area are designed to ensure rigorous expectations for learning while fulfilling students' social, emotional and physical needs.

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.

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. Those 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.

HCPSS has measured student engagement levels for the last two years. This data confirms 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.

Thus, an important aspect of Goal 1 involves 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 model more closely reflects the world beyond the classroom.

In moving toward Vision 2018, the curriculum will 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, not only to retrieve, but also to analyze information; and curiosity and imagination. These skills are critically important to success in college, in careers in the global economy, and throughout life.

HCPSS is improving the instructional program to make sure all students are gaining the skills and knowledge that will lead to college and career readiness. English language and mathematics curricula have been fully aligned to the new Common Core state 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.

Programming improvements to nurture the intellectual, social, and emotional growth of each child are well underway. The system's newest elementary school, Ducketts Lane Elementary, is a true 21st century instructional environment, designed to facilitate creative, interactive indoor and outdoor learning experiences that inspire and engage students. Several cutting edge learning elements launched at this school have been incorporated into a new model for elementary education that brings the principles of Vision 2018 to life for young learners. These include daily world language instruction in the primary grades, departmentalization, and improved classroom technology. The new model, which will also include expanded pre-K, strengths development for students and staff, and enhanced wellness services, will be implemented in five schools during the 2014-15 school year: Bryant Woods, Phelps Luck, Running Brook, Stevens Forest, and Talbott Springs.

At the high school level, students ready for advanced-level mathematics that go beyond the typical high school curriculum are studying differential equations through a new Digital Education initiative. A single teacher instructs and interacts remotely with participating students in schools across the system using advanced technology and streaming media. The course is among the first in a comprehensive HCPSS initiative to 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 system is also moving away from placing too much emphasis on high-stakes student assessments, and moving instead toward high-value testing, which provides meaningful feedback that can be used to improve instruction. We are putting in place a systematic progression of measures of student achievement, starting in kindergarten and continuing through Grade 12, which will allow teachers and parents to monitor how closely a student is on track for success upon graduation.

All 12 high schools took part in the OECD Test of Schools in October 2013. HCPSS is the first Maryland school system to participate. The test is a new international benchmark based upon the well-known PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment), which ranks academic performance for 15-year-old students in many countries. The results, available next year, will show how well each high school ranks globally in reading, math, and science instruction, and help ensure that HCPSS curriculum is aligned to top-level international, as well as national, benchmarks.

HCPSS is going to implement a more robust and user-friendly student information system and data warehouse, which will provide more comprehensive, accurate, and meaningful student data. These advanced systems will give teachers real-time feedback to enhance instruction, and allow detailed analysis of student progress and growth. The new systems will also provide a much more user-friendly and accessible interface for parents.

A new Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) initiative allows students and staff to use their personal devices for HCPSS sanctioned activities and connect to the Internet for instructional activities. In the fall of 2013, a BYOD pilot was implemented at several high schools, allowing staff and students to evaluate the program's potential. Ultimately, the system envisions a 1:1 device environment for students in Grades 3–12 to enhance learning, personal productivity, collaboration, and access to instructional resources.

Often, an innovating learning opportunity is introduced at a specific school or schools, or through special enrichment programs available to interested students.

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 will conduct one of these experiments, designed by a Murray Hill Middle School student, which was among just 15 selected among 1,344 student proposals submitted nationally. The project is an example of the exploratory learning experiences that typify the next-generation science curriculum. The program is in its second year at HCPSS and involves three different middle schools each year. In 2012, a team of Lime Kiln Middle School eighth graders submitted the winning project for the 2013 space flight.

A new financial center, complete with a NYSE 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.

A new School Wellness Center opened in December 2013 at Bollman Bridge Elementary School (BBES). This is Howard County's first in-school health center, provided through a partnership with the Howard County Health Department. Similar to a doctor's office, but located inside the school, the Wellness Center offers preventive and primary health care and mental health services for all BBES students during school hours. Onsite wellness centers have been associated with higher levels of student achievement, and can be especially valuable for children who lack access to health care.

Progress on key measures 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.

Performance Measure: Curriculum alignment to national/international 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 thorough grounding in essential knowledge and skills that will 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 mastery of essential 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
HCPSS is in the final stages of implementing the Common Core State Standards in 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 Associate 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 development has been ongoing throughout the transition process to support teachers in mastering the differences in content and instructional methods associated with the new curriculum.

The Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) describe performance expectations that leverage a deeper understanding of how students learn and how scientists do their work to provide clearer descriptions of outcomes for all students. NGSS includes both the scientific concepts that students should learn, as well as the scientific practices they should engage in to enhance learning. NGSS provides a rich opportunity to immerse students in complex, relevant, and authentic problem solving that is connected across grade levels and disciplines.

NGSS parallels the Common Core in many respects. It was adopted in Maryland in 2013; thus, alignment with HCPSS science curriculum is in the early stages. The statewide focus has been to align curriculum to NGSS gradually to enhance sound decisions and benefit from the lessons learned during transition to the Common Core. The HCPSS focus has been to provide the thorough 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*	Common Core State Standards	National Governor's Association	2010	In progress
ESOL	K-12	English Language Development Standards	World Class Instructional Design and Assessment	2011	In progress
Fine Arts	PreK-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	PreK-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	PreK-12	International Society for Technology in Education Standards (ISTE)	International Society for Technology in Education	In progress	In progress
Library Media	PreK-12	Maryland Library Media State Curriculum	American Association of School Librarians	2010	Complete
Library Media	PreK-12	Standards for 21st Century Learners	American Association of School Librarians	In progress	In progress
Physical Education	K-12*	National Physical Education Standards	Society of Health and Physical Educators	2013	In progress
Science (including engineering)	K-12*	Next Generation Science Standards	National Research Council, National Science Teachers Association, and American Association for the Advancement of Science	2013	In progress
Social Studies	K-12*	College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards	National Council for Social Studies	In progress	In progress
World Languages	PreK-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
^Maryland's NGSS implementation will include standards backmapped to Pre-K.

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 (CTE) 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 diploma to four-year college degrees. 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 provide students an advantage in the employment market. HCPSS also has agreements with a number of colleges to give 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 transcripted college credit at affiliated institutions.

Progress

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) annually issues the Maryland Career and Technology Education 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 Attainment continues to evolve. As the data collection process improves, the accuracy of data reported will better

Table 1-B

Enrollment Trends by CTE Clusters			
	2011	2012	2013
Arts, Media and Communication	106	96	84
Business Management and Finance	864	1,122	957
Construction and Development	17	22	26
Consumer Services, Hospitality and Tourism	502	1373	1,146
Health and Biosciences	165	188	210
Human Resource Services	464	548	498
Information Technology	610	611	691
Manufacturing, Engineering, and Technology	847	579	854
Transportation Technology	100	105	125
Career Research and Development (CRD)	663	715	648
Totals	**4,338**	**5,359**	**5,239**

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

HS Graduation Rate for CTE Concentrators*			
	2011	2012	2013
CTE Concentrators	98.7%	99.9%	99.5%

*Concentrator – any student enrolled in a course at the Concentrator Course level for a CTE Completer program (post 50% of the program sequence)

Table 1-D

CTE Technical Skills Attainment 2013		
Career Academy Program	Certification	Percentage of students who earned certification
Academy of Health Professions with pathways in: • Clinical Research in Allied Health • Certified Nursing Assistant • Emergency Medical Technician	All pathways: • First Aid and CPR • HIPPA • Blood and Airborne Pathogens	100%
	Certified Nursing Assistant: • Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)	93%
Automotive Technology	ASE Student Certification: • Brakes • Engine Repair • Electrical Systems • Steering and Suspension	56%
Child Development	Maryland Child Care Credential – Level 3	100%
Cybersecurity Networking	• CompTIA Security + CompTIA A+ • Cisco Certified Entry Networking Technician (CCENT) • Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA)	11%
Construction Management	• National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER)	100%
Culinary Science / Hotel and Restaurant Management	• National Restaurant Association ProStart • ServSafe	66%
Teacher Academy of Maryland	• ParaPro • Maryland Child Care Credential – Level 3	100%
Visual Communications (Graphic Design)	• PrintED	39%

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: World Language program expansion

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 gives children a boost in 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.

Our system goal is that every student graduate with intermediate level proficiency in at least one world language.

Progress

HCPSS introduced world language instruction at the elementary level through a pilot program during the 2011–12 school year. Students in kindergarten through Grade 5 at two elementary schools received a semester of Chinese and a semester of Spanish for 30 minutes twice a week.

The system's newest elementary school, Ducketts Lane Elementary, is a true 21st century instructional environment, incorporating several advanced learning initiatives, including Spanish language instruction beginning in the earliest grades.

HCPSS is preparing to launch a new model for elementary education in five schools during the 2014–15 school year, with several innovative components that include world language instruction for all students beginning in Pre-K. Children will receive 20–30 minutes of Spanish

language instruction each day, leading to intermediate level language proficiency by the end of Grade 5. Once proven and refined in the model schools, the model will be extended throughout other schools in the system.

World languages are offered at all middle and high schools. Spanish and French language instruction is available in Grades 7–8 at all 19 middle schools. Chinese, Spanish, and French are offered in Grades 6–8 at Mount View and Murray Hill middle schools, as a continuation of the elementary world language pilot program in which many students at these schools participated.

Many Grade 3–8 students learn the Chinese language in an immersion setting at an annual enrichment summer camp. Searching the Seas introduces the language as students explore marine topics and Chinese fantasy literature. 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-E illustrates the number of schools offering each language.

Table 1-E

Secondary Language Offerings, 2013–14		
Language	Number of middle schools offering	Number of high schools offering
ASL	0	4
Chinese	2	5
French	19	12
German	0	9
Italian	0	4
Latin	0	6
Russian	0	1
Spanish	19	13

Table 1-F

Secondary Language Enrollment by Proficiency Level	
Level	Percentage of MS and HS students enrolled in World Language, 2013–14
Level 1: Novice-mid proficiency	47%
Level 2: Novice-high	24%
Level 3: Intermediate-low	17%
Levels 4+: Intermediate-mid	12%

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 60 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-F illustrates the percentage of students currently enrolled in each level.

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:
Reading developmental levels, K–2

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 the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System since 2008. The Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment 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 the 2014–15 school year, these data will also be 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.

Performance Measure:
Gifted and Talented (GT)
Program participation

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 of Vision 2018: Fulfilling the Promise of Preparation 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. They use a research-based data collection tool 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 open to all students.

- **Curriculum Extension Units** – Thematic units that extend the essential curriculum to provide additional rigor and challenge and 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. They should have demonstrated the ability to master essential skills in language arts and preparedness for additional rigor.

- **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 open 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 GT content area teachers. School-based teams determine recommendations for placement in GT content classes. The placement process takes place using multiple data points, including a nationally normed ability test (CogAT), and achievement data such as MAP assessment results, classroom grades, writing samples, and state test results.

HCPSS expects all schools to continually increase the percentage of students 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 Meal Services (FARMS), 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 FARMS, 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 2012-13, 50.0 percent of students were enrolled in a GT Instructional Seminar, which is 13.5 percentage points greater than the previous school year. Enrollment increased for all racial/ethnic groups, with the greatest increases among students identified as Asian and Two or More Races (25.0 and 15.4 percentage point increases, respectively). Enrollment was 8.5 percentage points greater than the previous school year for students receiving FARMS. (Figure 1-1)

In 2012-13, 59.7 percent of students in Grades 2-5 were enrolled in a GT Curriculum Extension Unit, 25.5 percentage points greater than the previous year. Enrollment increased for all racial/ethnic groups, with the greatest increases among students identified as Asian and Two or More Races (32.6 and 30.5 percentage point increases, respectively). Enrollment was 8.9 percentage points greater than the previous school year for students receiving FARMS. (Figure 1-2)

In 2012-13, 31.3 percent of students in Grades 4-5 were enrolled in GT Mathematics, 2.8 percentage points greater than the previous year. Enrollment increased for all racial/ethnic groups, with the greatest increases among students identified as Asian and Black/African American (3.9 and 3.2 percentage point increases, respectively). Enrollment was
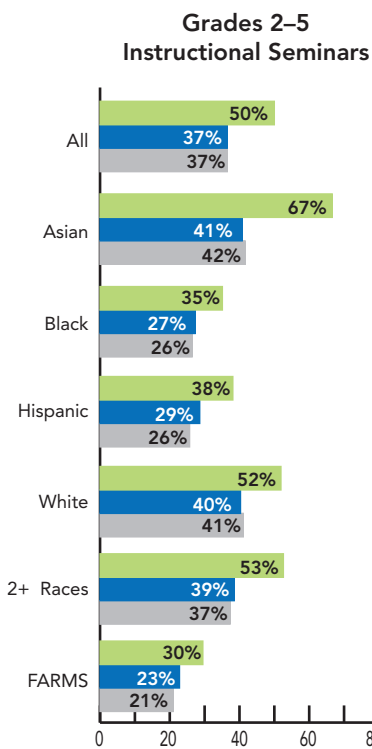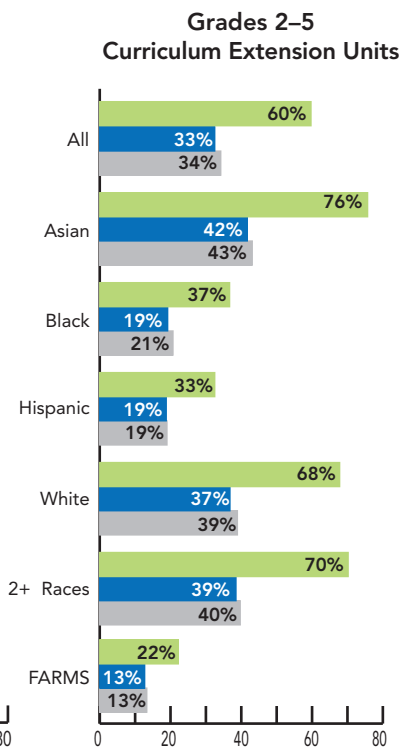
Figure 1-1

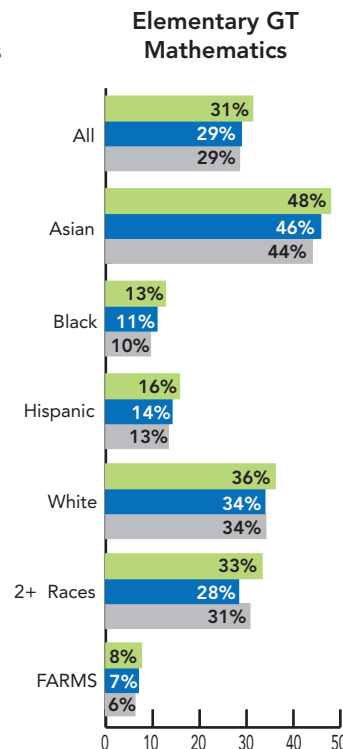### Grades 2–5 Instructional Seminars

Figure 1-2

Grades 2–5 Curriculum Extension Units

Figure 1-3

Elementary GT Mathematics

Figure 1-4

Middle School GT Mathematics

2011   2012   2013

Figure 1-5

Middle School GT English/Language Arts

Group	2011	2012	2013
All	21%	23%	25%
Asian	29%	33%	37%
Black	9%	10%	11%
Hispanic	12%	12%	13%
White	26%	28%	29%
2+ Races	26%	28%	27%
FARMS	4%	5%	6%

Figure 1-6

Middle School GT Science

Group	2011	2012	2013
All	25%	27%	29%
Asian	36%	40%	43%
Black	9%	10%	11%
Hispanic	13%	14%	16%
White	30%	32%	34%
2+ Races	26%	32%	32%
FARMS	5%	6%	8%

Figure 1-7

Middle School GT Social Studies

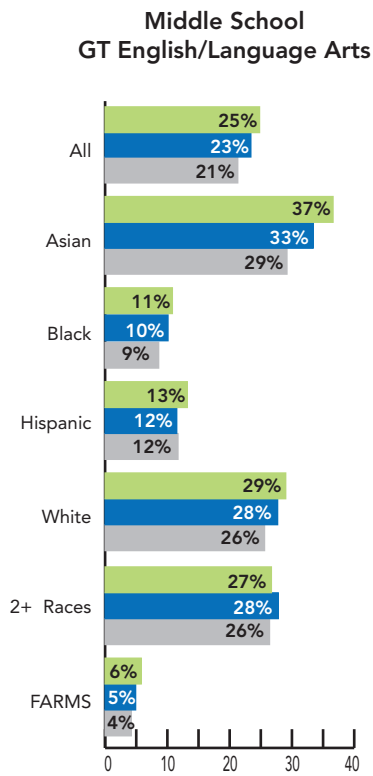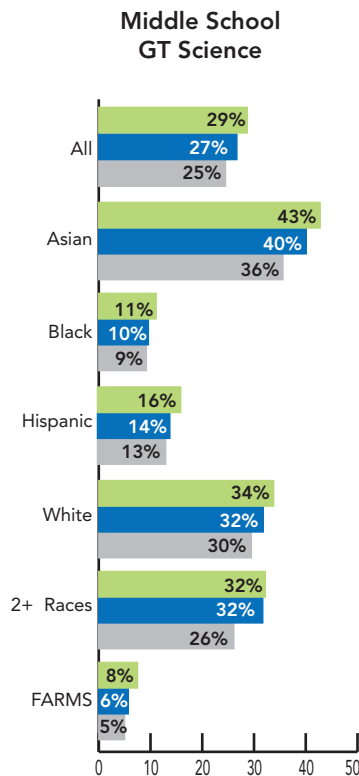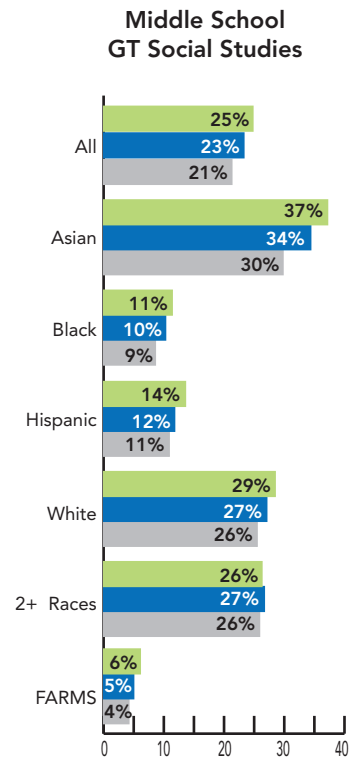| Group	2011	2012	2013
All	21%	23%	25%
Asian	30%	34%	37%
Black	9%	10%	11%
Hispanic	11%	12%	14%
White	26%	27%	29%
2+ Races	26%	27%	26%
FARMS	4%	5%	6%

■ 2011 ■ 2012 ■ 2013

1.4 percentage points greater than the previous school year for students receiving FARMS. (Figure 1-3)

In 2012-13, 30.1 percent of students in Grades 6-8 were enrolled in GT Mathematics, 3.1 percentage points greater than the previous year. Enrollment increased for all racial/ethnic groups, with the greatest increases among students identified as Asian and Two or More Races (8.2 and 5.0 percentage point increases, respectively). Enrollment was 1.4 percentage points greater than the previous school year for students receiving FARMS. (Figure 1- 4)

In 2012-13, 24.8 percent of students in Grades 6-8 were enrolled in GT English/Language Arts, 3.5 percentage points greater than the previous year. Enrollment increased for all racial/ethnic groups, with the greatest increases among students identified as Asian and White (7.4 and 3.4 percentage point increases, respectively). Enrollment was 1.6 percentage points greater than the previous school year for students receiving FARMS. (Figure 1-5)

In 2012-13, 28.7 percent of students in Grades 6-8 were enrolled in GT Science, 4.2 percentage points greater than the previous year. Enrollment increased for all racial/ethnic groups, with the greatest increases among students identified as Asian and Two or More Races (7.2 and 6.0 percentage point increases, respectively). Enrollment was 2.6 percentage points greater than the previous school year for students receiving FARMS. (Figure 1-6)

In 2012-13, 24.8 percent of students in Grades 6-8 were enrolled in GT Social Studies, 3.5 percentage points greater than the previous year. Enrollment increased for all racial/ethnic groups, with the greatest increases among students identified as Asian and White (7.4 and 3.0 percentage point increases, respectively). Enrollment was 1.9 percentage points greater than the previous school year for students receiving FARMS. (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 30 AP courses and 32 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 continues to outperform their public school peers across the state and nation on AP exams. In 2013, 81.6 percent of AP exams taken by HCPSS students earned scores of 3 or higher, in comparison to public schools in Maryland (60.4 percent) and the United States (57.0 percent). (Table 1-G)

Table 1-G

AP Exams Taken and Performance for Public School Students in HCPSS, Maryland, and the Nation, 2013			
	# AP Exams Taken in 2013	# AP Exams 3 or Higher	% AP Exams 3 or Higher
HCPSS	9,200	7,506	81.6
Maryland	108,038	65,278	60.4
Nation	3,355,934	1,913,723	57.0

The number of HCPSS students taking exams as well as the total number of AP exams taken increased from 2012 to 2013. In 2013, 4,249 students took a total of 9,200 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								
	# Test Takers		# AP Exams Taken		# AP Exams 3 or higher		% AP Exams 3 or higher	
Student Group	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013
All	3,831	4,249	8,183	9,200	6,709	7,506	82.0	81.6
Asian	952	1,080	2,428	2,685	1,997	2,198	82.2	81.9
Black	317	347	574	639	404	438	70.4	68.5
Hispanic	194	193	373	412	271	307	72.7	74.5
White	2,166	2,377	4,381	4,957	3,680	4,144	84.0	83.6
2+ Races	188	238	408	484	344	404	84.3	83.5

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 November 2013.

Among 2013 graduates, 65 percent took at least one AP course while in high school, 5.1 percentage points greater than the previous graduating class. Of note, the percent of Hispanic graduates in 2013 who took at least one AP course in high school was 13 percentage points higher than among students in the graduating class of 2012. The percent of 2013 graduates who had received FARMS and took at least one AP course in high school was also 13 percentage points higher than the graduating class of 2012. (Table 1-I).

Table 1-I

HCPSS AP Course/Exam Participation and AP Exam Score of 3 or Higher														
	# Graduates		# Took AP Course		% Took AP Course		# Took AP Exam		% Took AP Exam		# AP Score 3 or higher		% AP Score 3 or higher	
Student Group	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013
All	3,805	4,069	2,263	2,628	59.5	64.6	1,768	2,037	46.5	50.1	1,518	1,715	39.9	42.1
Male	1,952	2,086	1,082	1,259	55.4	60.4	810	955	41.5	45.8	693	810	35.5	38.8
Female	1,853	1,983	1,181	1,369	63.7	69.0	958	1,082	51.7	54.6	825	905	44.5	45.6
Asian	575	639	441	532	76.7	83.3	367	460	63.8	72.0	328	399	57.0	62.4
Black	764	739	260	291	34.0	39.4	171	176	22.4	23.8	126	129	16.5	17.5
Hispanic	266	288	116	163	43.6	56.6	96	126	36.1	43.8	78	95	29.3	33.0
White	1,984	2,148	1,314	1,488	66.2	69.3	1,030	1,167	51.9	54.3	899	1,004	45.3	46.7
2+ Races	200	241	124	145	62.0	60.2	98	102	49.0	42.3	84	85	42.0	35.3
Non-FARMS	3,308	3,504	2,131	2,404	64.4	68.6	1,676	1,891	50.7	54.0	1,454	1,614	44.0	46.1
FARMS	497	565	132	224	26.6	39.6	92	146	18.5	25.8	64	101	12.9	17.9
LEP	54	38	12	7	22.2	18.4	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Spec Ed	143	203	15	21	10.5	10.3	10	12	7.0	5.9	9	10	6.3	≤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.

Performance Measure:
Digital education expansion
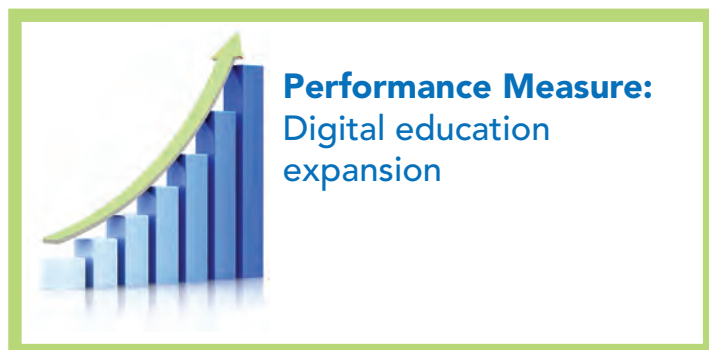
Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy
- 1.3.3: Provide convenient options for learning through flexible scheduling, digital education, and 24/7 access to online resources.

Description and Value
HCPSS began to develop a digital education program during the 2012–13 school year. 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 the 2013–14 school year, 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 school year 2013–14.

Table 1-J

Digital Education Program Enrollment		
Summer 2013		
Blended Credit Recovery – 21 Students • English 9 • English 11 • Geometry • Modern World History • US History	**Blended Original Credit – 76 Students** • English 9 • Physics (GT) • US History • Foundations of Technology • Earth/Space Science (GT)	**Online Original Credit – 13 Students** • Calculus AB (AP) • Pre-Calculus • English 12 • Spanish I • French 1 • Spanish IV (AP) • Latin I • US History
2013-14 School Year		
Blended Credit Recovery – 173 Students • Algebra I • Geometry • Algebra II • Modern World History • English 9 • PreCalculus • English 10 • American Government • English 11 • US History • English 12	**Blended Original Credit – 59 Students** • Differential Equations • Foundations of Technology	**Online Original Credit – 39 Students** • Computer Science (AP) • Geometry • Computer Science • German I (Honors) • Journalism • English 9 – Honors • Latin I • English 10 • Modern World History • English 11 • Pre-Calculus • English 12 • Spanish I • English (AP) • Spanish II • French I • Spanish IV (AP) • French II • 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.

Performance Measure:
Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) implementation

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.

Professional learning focused on pedagogical applications for the teachers. Professional development for teachers in schools participating in the 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
- Professional Learning Community for BYOD on Edmodo (http://hcpss.edmodo.com)
- BYOD 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.

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

Table 1-K details the types of devices used in each of the pilot schools.

Table 1-K

Device Activity at BYOD High Schools by Device Type								
	Long Reach		Mt. Hebron		River Hill		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
iPhone	653	38.32	996	42.66	902	39.12	2,551	40.2
Android	456	26.76	557	23.85	349	15.13	1,362	21.47
iPod	180	10.56	227	9.72	151	6.55	558	8.79
OS X	102	5.99	101	4.33	261	11.32	464	7.31
Win 7	118	6.92	168	7.19	239	10.36	525	8.27
iPad	72	4.23	108	4.63	151	6.55	331	5.22
Windows Device	42	2.46	76	3.26	102	4.42	220	3.47
Other	6	0.35	6	0.26	9	0.39	21	0.33
Unknown	75	4.4	89	3.81	142	6.16	306	4.82
Total # of Devices	1704		2335		2306		6345	

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.

Performance Measure:
Graduation and dropout rates

Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

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

Description and Value

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

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

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

MSDE adopted the following standards for their accountability model:

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

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 2013 four-year graduation rate for students in HCPSS was 93 percent, compared to 85 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 FARMS and special education services. (Figure 1-8).

Figure 1-8

2013 HCPSS and Maryland Public School 4-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rates
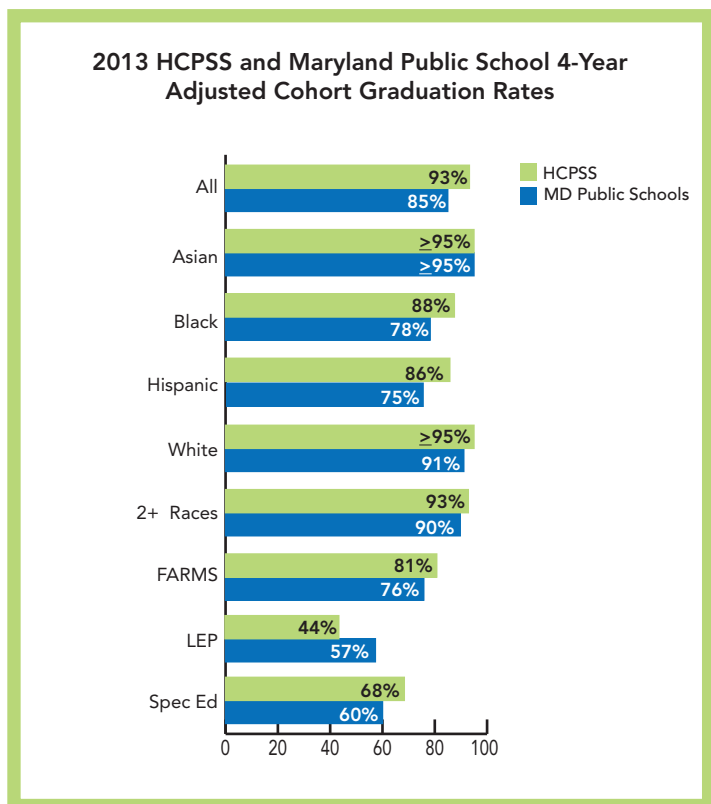
The HCPSS Class of 2013 also graduated at higher rates than the two previous classes. The graduation rates for the classes of 2011 and 2012 were 91 and 90 percent, respectively. (Table 1-L)

Table 1-L

HCPSS Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rates by Race/Ethnicity and Student Service Group, 2011–13						
Student Group	Graduation Rate			Number of Students in Cohort		
	Class of 2011	Class of 2012	Class of 2013	Class of 2011	Class of 2012	Class of 2013
All	90.64	90.39	93.25	4,250	4,172	4,355
Asian	93.39	94.81	≥95.0	575	597	676
Black	80.95	83.63	87.50	824	892	840
Hispanic	78.76	80.37	85.76	306	326	323
White	94.80	93.14	≥95.0	2,325	2,128	2,240
2+Races	92.49	93.90	92.83	213	213	265
FARMS	74.28	74.73	80.77	591	645	676
LEP	35.23	46.59	43.55	88	88	62
Spec Ed	58.08	50.22	68.36	260	225	275

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-M)

Table 1-M

HCPSS Five-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rates by Race/Ethnicity and Student Service Group, 2011–12			
Student Group	Graduation Rate		Number of Students in Cohort
	Class of 2011	Class of 2012	Class of 2011	Class of 2012
All	92.73	92.07	4,250	4,172
Asian	≥95.0	≥95.0	575	597
Black	85.80	87.54	824	892
Hispanic	82.85	83.74	306	326
White	≥95.0	93.80	2,325	2,128
2+Races	93.90	≥95.0	213	213
FARMS	80.57	81.41	591	645
LEP	51.81	55.42	88	88
Spec Ed	70.59	60.18	260	225

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 4.3 percent, compared to 9.4 percent statewide. Dropout rates are lower in HCPSS than across the state for every racial/ethnic group and for students receiving FARMS and special education services. (Figure 1-9)

HCPSS dropout rates have decreased from 2011 to 2013. Of note, the HCPSS dropout rate among Black/African American students is 8 percent, compared to 12 percent statewide; and the HCPSS dropout rate among Hispanic students is 9 percent, compared to 16 percent statewide. (1-N)
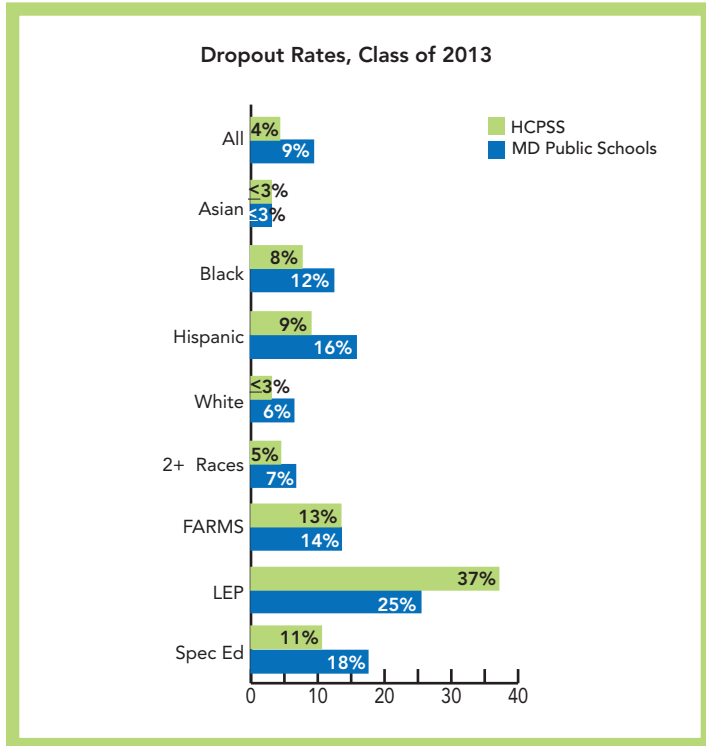
Figure 1-9

Dropout Rates, Class of 2013

- All — HCPSS 4%, MD Public Schools 9%
- Asian — HCPSS ≤3%, MD Public Schools ≤3%
- Black — HCPSS 8%, MD Public Schools 12%
- Hispanic — HCPSS 9%, MD Public Schools 16%
- White — HCPSS ≤3%, MD Public Schools 6%
- 2+ Races — HCPSS 5%, MD Public Schools 7%
- FARMS — HCPSS 13%, MD Public Schools 14%
- LEP — HCPSS 37%, MD Public Schools 25%
- Spec Ed — HCPSS 11%, MD Public Schools 18%

Legend: HCPSS, MD Public Schools

Table 1-N

Student Group	Graduation Rate			Number of Students in Cohort		
	Class of 2011	Class of 2012	Class of 2013	Class of 2011	Class of 2012	Class of 2013
All	5.93	6.02	4.29	4,250	4,172	4,355
Asian	3.65	≤3.00	≤3.00	575	597	676
Black	11.65	9.75	7.74	824	892	840
Hispanic	15.36	11.96	8.98	306	326	323
White	3.40	4.65	≤3.00	2,325	2,128	2,240
2+Races	4.23	3.76	4.53	213	213	265
FARMS	15.40	14.57	13.46	591	645	676
LEP	39.77	29.55	37.10	88	88	62
Spec Ed	12.31	16.00	10.55	260	225	275

HCPSS Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Dropout Rates by Race/Ethnicity and Student Service Group, 2011–13

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

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.

Performance Measure: Student hope, engagement, and well-being

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 the 2013–14 school year, the 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).

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
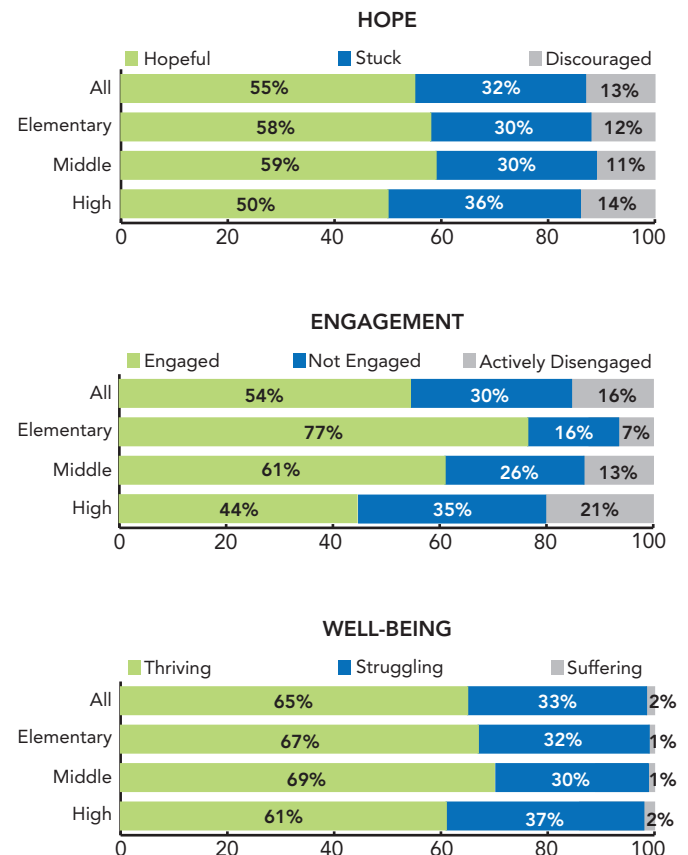
are not engaged (30 percent) are often just going through the motions at school. These students, while not overtly negative, may blend into the landscape and may not be maximizing their own potential. Students who are actively disengaged (16 percent) are likely to undermine the teaching and learning 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.

Figure 1-10

2013 Gallup Student Poll Results - Grades 5-12

HOPE

Legend: Hopeful | Stuck | Discouraged

	Hopeful	Stuck	Discouraged
All	55%	32%	13%
Elementary	58%	30%	12%
Middle	59%	30%	11%
High	50%	36%	14%

ENGAGEMENT

Legend: Engaged | Not Engaged | Actively Disengaged

	Engaged	Not Engaged	Actively Disengaged
All	54%	30%	16%
Elementary	77%	16%	7%
Middle	61%	26%	13%
High	44%	35%	21%

WELL-BEING

Legend: Thriving | Struggling | Suffering

	Thriving	Struggling	Suffering
All	65%	33%	2%
Elementary	67%	32%	1%
Middle	69%	30%	1%
High	61%	37%	2%

GOAL 1: Students

Focus Area: PERFORMANCE
Outcome 1.5 Students meet or exceed rigorous performance standards.

Performance Measure:
Kindergarten readiness

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.

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 assessment component of the MMSR addresses seven domains of learning: Language and Literacy, Mathematical Thinking, Scientific Thinking, Social Studies, Fine Arts, Physical Development and Health, and Personal/Social Development. During the first two months of school, kindergarten teachers closely monitor and observe all students, and gather data using given indicators. This data is submitted electronically during a specified time period in

November and then disaggregated by MSDE to be shared with local jurisdictions in March.

The MMSR is undergoing a revision and a new Early Childhood Comprehensive Assessment System will be in place for the 2014–15 school year. The underlying philosophy will remain unchanged.

Progress
In 2012–13, 89 percent of students entering kindergarten in the HCPSS were fully ready, compared with 82 percent of students entering kindergarten across Maryland. Howard County experienced a 23 percentage point gain in school readiness from school year 2002 to school year 2013 and a three percentage point gain from 2010–11 to 2012–13 (Figure 1-11).

Figure 1-11

Percentage of Children Ready for School

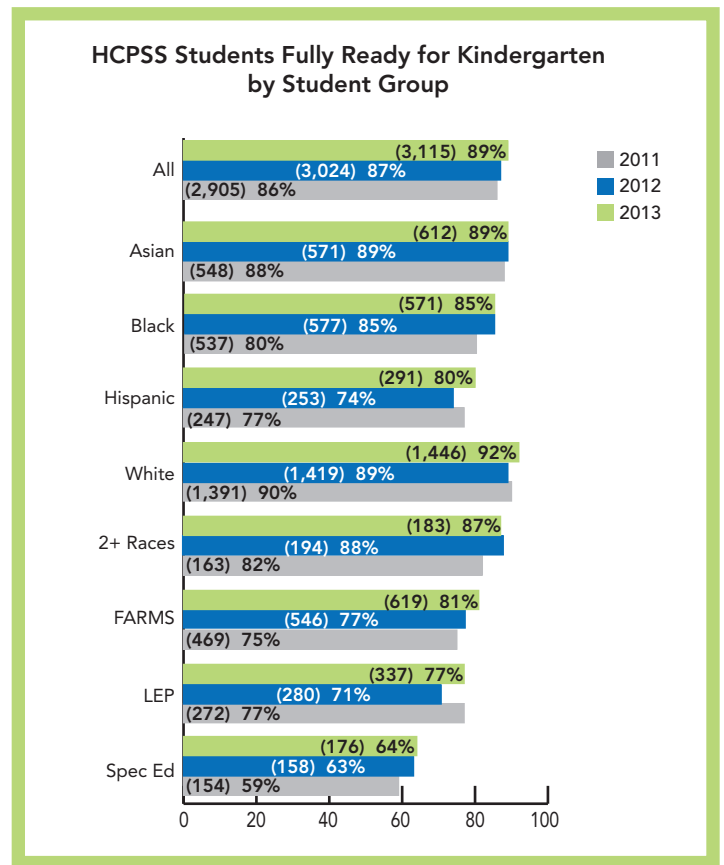Legend: Full, Approaching, Developing, Trendline
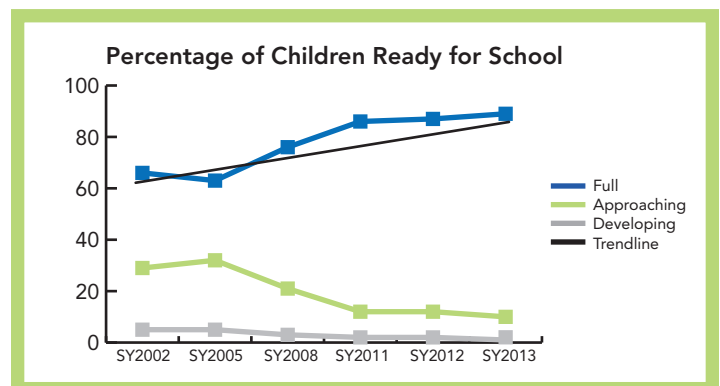
All student groups in the HCPSS have exhibited increases in school readiness since 2010–11 (Figure 1-12). In 2012–13, 85 percent of Black/African American students were fully school-ready, an increase of five percentage points since 2010–11. The percentage of HCPSS Hispanic students who were fully school-ready rose three percentage points from 2010–11 to 80 percent in 2012–13, narrowing the school readiness gap between Hispanic and White students to 12 percentage points.

The number of entering students receiving services continues to increase, as does their school readiness level. Students who receive FARMS services have shown an increase in school readiness since 2010–11, with 81 percent fully ready in 2012–13. The number of students receiving FARMS services in the HCPSS continues to increase, with 150 more students entering kindergarten receiving these services than two years ago.

The number of students entering kindergarten eligible for ESOL services increased by more than 23 percent (from 272 to 337 students) from 2010–11 to 2012–13. In 2012–13, 77 percent of students eligible for ESOL services were fully ready.

Students receiving special education services were ready for school at higher rates with 64 percent being fully ready in 2012–13 compared to 59 percent in 2010–11.

Figure 1-12

HCPSS Students Fully Ready for Kindergarten by Student Group

Legend: 2011, 2012, 2013

Group	2013	2012	2011
All	(3,115) 89%	(3,024) 87%	(2,905) 86%
Asian	(612) 89%	(571) 89%	(548) 88%
Black	(571) 85%	(577) 85%	(537) 80%
Hispanic	(291) 80%	(253) 74%	(247) 77%
White	(1,446) 92%	(1,419) 89%	(1,391) 90%
2+ Races	(183) 87%	(194) 88%	(163) 82%
FARMS	(619) 81%	(546) 77%	(469) 75%
LEP	(337) 77%	(280) 71%	(272) 77%
Spec Ed	(176) 64%	(158) 63%	(154) 59%

GOAL 1: Students

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

Performance Measure:
Reading and mathematics formative assessment implementation, Grades 1–8
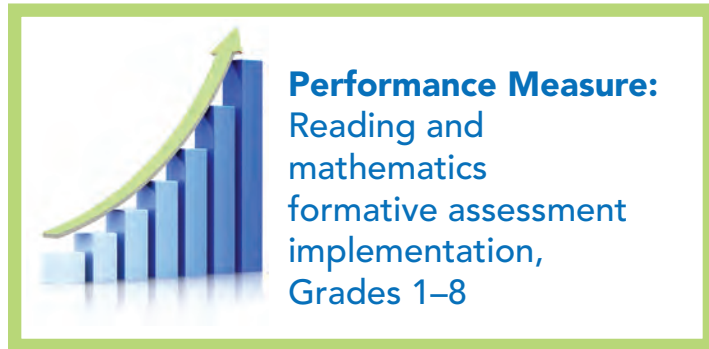
Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies
- 1.6.1: Implement objective and transparent reporting practices that reflect academic learning and provide useful feedback on academic progress.
- 1.6.2: Implement assessments (formative and summative) that account for growth, and provide timely, meaningful information 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 (NWEA), 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 Common Core State Standards in Maryland and are anticipated to be predictive of how students might perform on the upcoming 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.
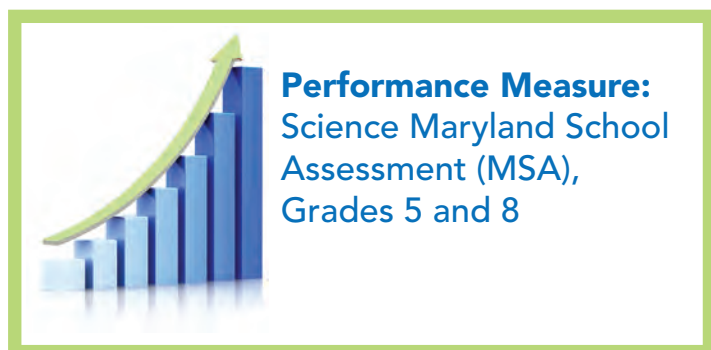
Progress
In the 2012–13 school year, MAP was administered as a first-year pilot in 6 elementary schools, 10 middle schools, and the Homewood Center. The pilot was expanded in 2013–14 and was administered in 18 elementary schools, all 19 middle schools, and the Homewood Center. Full implementation of MAP in all elementary schools, middle schools, and the Homewood Center will occur in 2014–15. MAP is administered to students three times a year, fall, winter, and spring. Students taking Algebra or higher at the middle school level are exempt from taking the mathematics MAP.

Baseline results for MAP will be available once it is in full implementation in 2014–15.

GOAL 1: Students

Focus Area: PERFORMANCE
Outcome 1.5 Students meet or exceed rigorous performance standards.

Performance Measure:
Science Maryland School Assessment (MSA), Grades 5 and 8

for students overall, Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic, and students identified as Two or More Races. Black/African American students and students identified as Two or More Races showed the greatest increases (7.6 and 6.6 percentage points, respectively). Students eligible for FARM and ESOL services also experienced gains (8.0 and 3.9 percentage points, respectively). The performance gap in science between the highest performing (Asian) and the lowest performing student group (Black/African American) was 30.0 percentage points (Figure 1-13).

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 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 the 2007–08 school year 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.
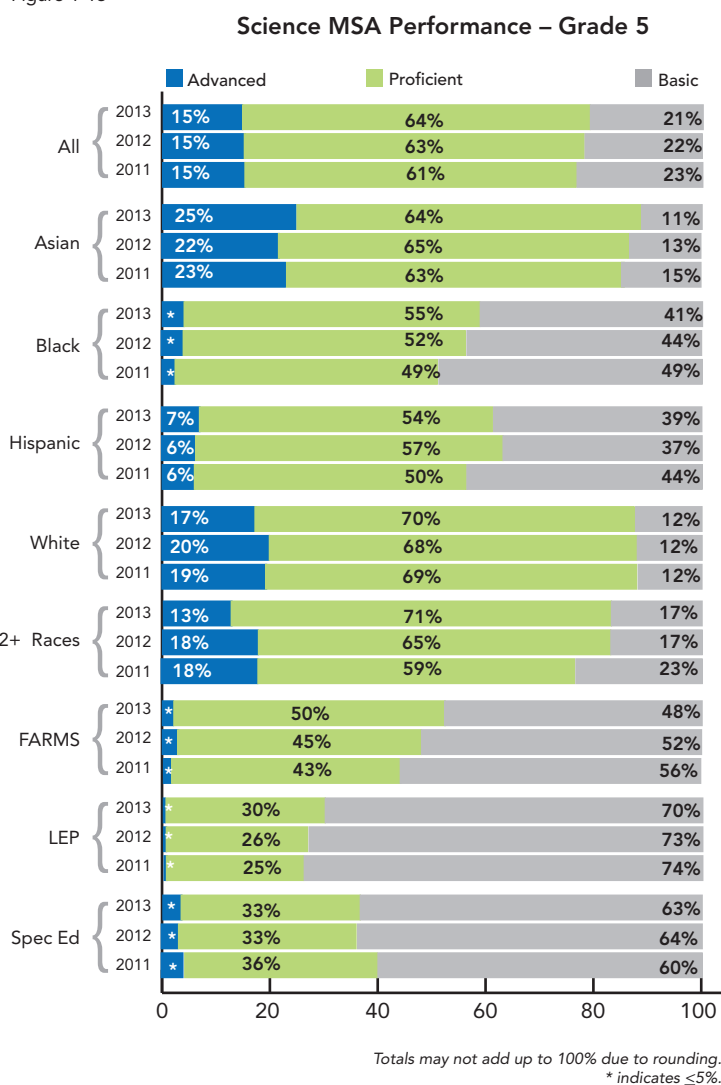
Progress
Grade 5
In 2012–13, 79.1 percent of Grade 5 HCPSS students scored at the proficient or advanced level in science compared to 67.0 percent of Grade 5 students statewide. Overall, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced on the Science MSA increased from 2010–11 to 2012–13 by 2.4 percentage points.

The percentage of Grade 5 test takers scoring proficient or advanced in Science increased from 2010–11 to 2012–13

Figure 1-13

Science MSA Performance – Grade 5

		Advanced	Proficient	Basic
All	2013	15%	64%	21%
	2012	15%	63%	22%
	2011	15%	61%	23%
Asian	2013	25%	64%	11%
	2012	22%	65%	13%
	2011	23%	63%	15%
Black	2013	*	55%	41%
	2012	*	52%	44%
	2011	*	49%	49%
Hispanic	2013	7%	54%	39%
	2012	6%	57%	37%
	2011	6%	50%	44%
White	2013	17%	70%	12%
	2012	20%	68%	12%
	2011	19%	69%	12%
2+ Races	2013	13%	71%	17%
	2012	18%	65%	17%
	2011	18%	59%	23%
FARMS	2013	*	50%	48%
	2012	*	45%	52%
	2011	*	43%	56%
LEP	2013	*	30%	70%
	2012	*	26%	73%
	2011	*	25%	74%
Spec Ed	2013	*	33%	63%
	2012	*	33%	64%
	2011	*	36%	60%

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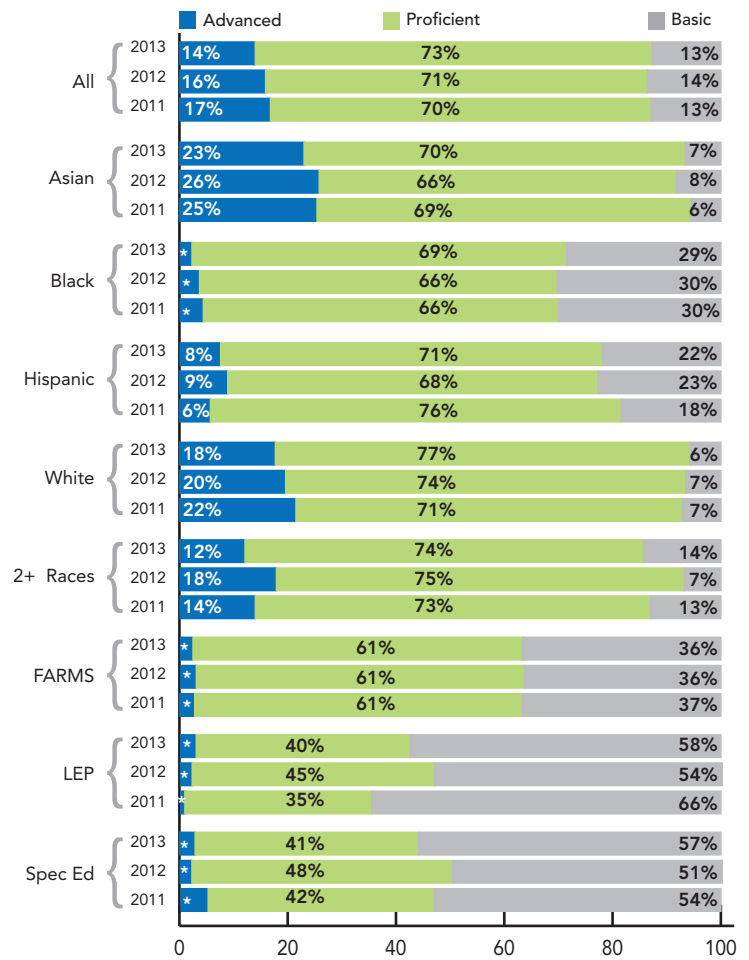** indicates ≤5%.*

Grade 8

In 2012–13, 87.3 percent of Grade 8 HCPSS students scored at the proficient or advanced level in science compared to 71.4 percent of students statewide. Overall the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced on the Science MSA increased from 2010–11 to 2012–13 by 0.2 percentage points.

The percentage of Grade 8 test takers scoring proficient or advanced in science increased from 2010–11 to 2012–13 for students overall, Black/African American, and White. Black/African American and White showed the greatest increases (1.5 and 1.4 percentage points, respectively). Students eligible for FARM and ESOL services also experienced gains (0.5 and 7.6 percentage points, respectively). The performance gap in science between the highest performing (White) and the lowest performing student group (Black/African American) was 22.8 percentage points. (Figure 1-14).

Figure 1-14

Science MSA Performance – Grade 8

Group	Year	Advanced	Proficient	Basic
All	2013	14%	73%	13%
	2012	16%	71%	14%
	2011	17%	70%	13%
Asian	2013	23%	70%	7%
	2012	26%	66%	8%
	2011	25%	69%	6%
Black	2013	*	69%	29%
	2012	*	66%	30%
	2011	*	66%	30%
Hispanic	2013	8%	71%	22%
	2012	9%	68%	23%
	2011	6%	76%	18%
White	2013	18%	77%	6%
	2012	20%	74%	7%
	2011	22%	71%	7%
2+ Races	2013	12%	74%	14%
	2012	18%	75%	7%
	2011	14%	73%	13%
FARMS	2013	*	61%	36%
	2012	*	61%	36%
	2011	*	61%	37%
LEP	2013	*	40%	58%
	2012	*	45%	54%
	2011	*	35%	66%
Spec Ed	2013	*	41%	57%
	2012	*	48%	51%
	2011	*	42%	54%

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.

Performance Measure:
Reading and mathematics state assessments, Grades 3-8

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 2014-15. 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 Common Core standards and as the state discontinued the Modified MSA.

PARCC is a multi-state consortium designing assessments aligned to the Common Core. Maryland will implement the PARCC assessments in 2014-15, replacing the reading and mathematics MSAs in Grades 3-8.
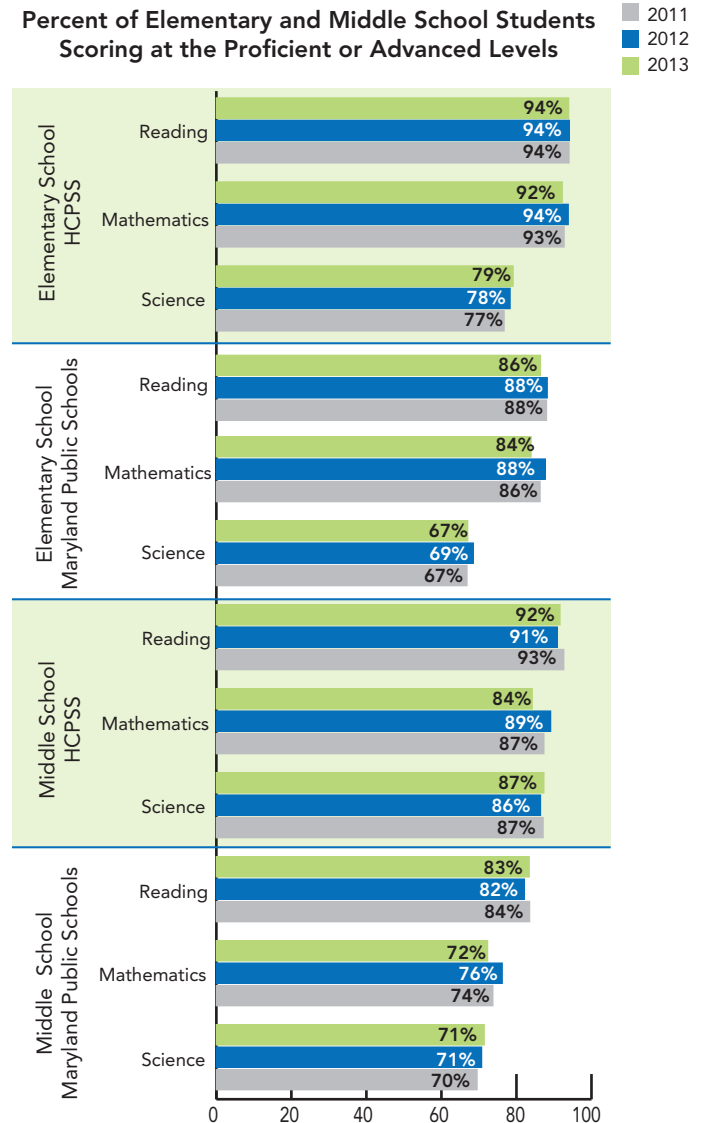
Progress
Elementary Reading MSA scores increased 12.1 percentage points from 2002–03 to 2012–13. In 2012–13, 93.9 percent of HCPSS elementary students scored at the proficient or advanced level in reading compared to 86.4 percent statewide. Elementary math scores increased 11.3 percentage points from 2002–03 to 2012–13. In 2012–13, 92.2 percent of HCPSS elementary students scored at the proficient or advanced level in math compared to 83.9 percent statewide. (Figure 1-15)

Middle school Reading MSA scores increased 10.9 percentage points from 2002-03 to 2012–13. In 2012–13, 91.6 percent of HCPSS middle school students scored at the proficient or advanced level in reading compared to 83.4 percent statewide. Middle school Mathematics MSA scores increased 21.4 percentage points from 2002–03 to 2012–13. In 2012–13, 84.2 percent of HCPSS middle school students scored at the proficient or advanced level in mathematics compared to 72.3 percent statewide. (Figure 1-15)

Figure 1-15

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

Legend: 2011 (gray), 2012 (blue), 2013 (green)

Elementary School HCPSS

	2013	2012	2011
Reading	94%	94%	94%
Mathematics	92%	94%	93%
Science	79%	78%	77%

Elementary School Maryland Public Schools

	2013	2012	2011
Reading	86%	88%	88%
Mathematics	84%	88%	86%
Science	67%	69%	67%

Middle School HCPSS

	2013	2012	2011
Reading	92%	91%	93%
Mathematics	84%	89%	87%
Science	87%	86%	87%

Middle School Maryland Public Schools

	2013	2012	2011
Reading	83%	82%	84%
Mathematics	72%	76%	74%
Science	71%	71%	70%

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

Figure 1-16

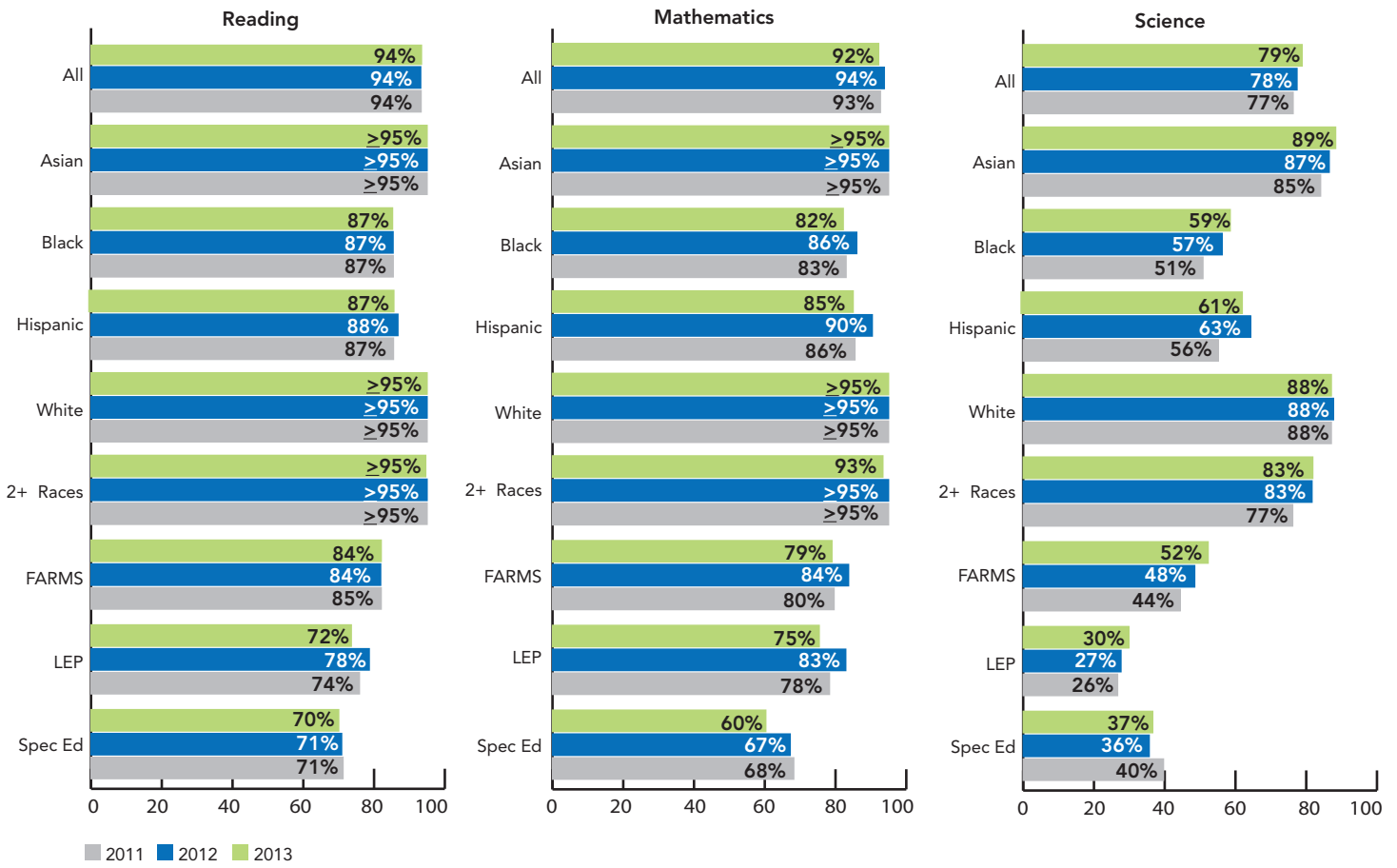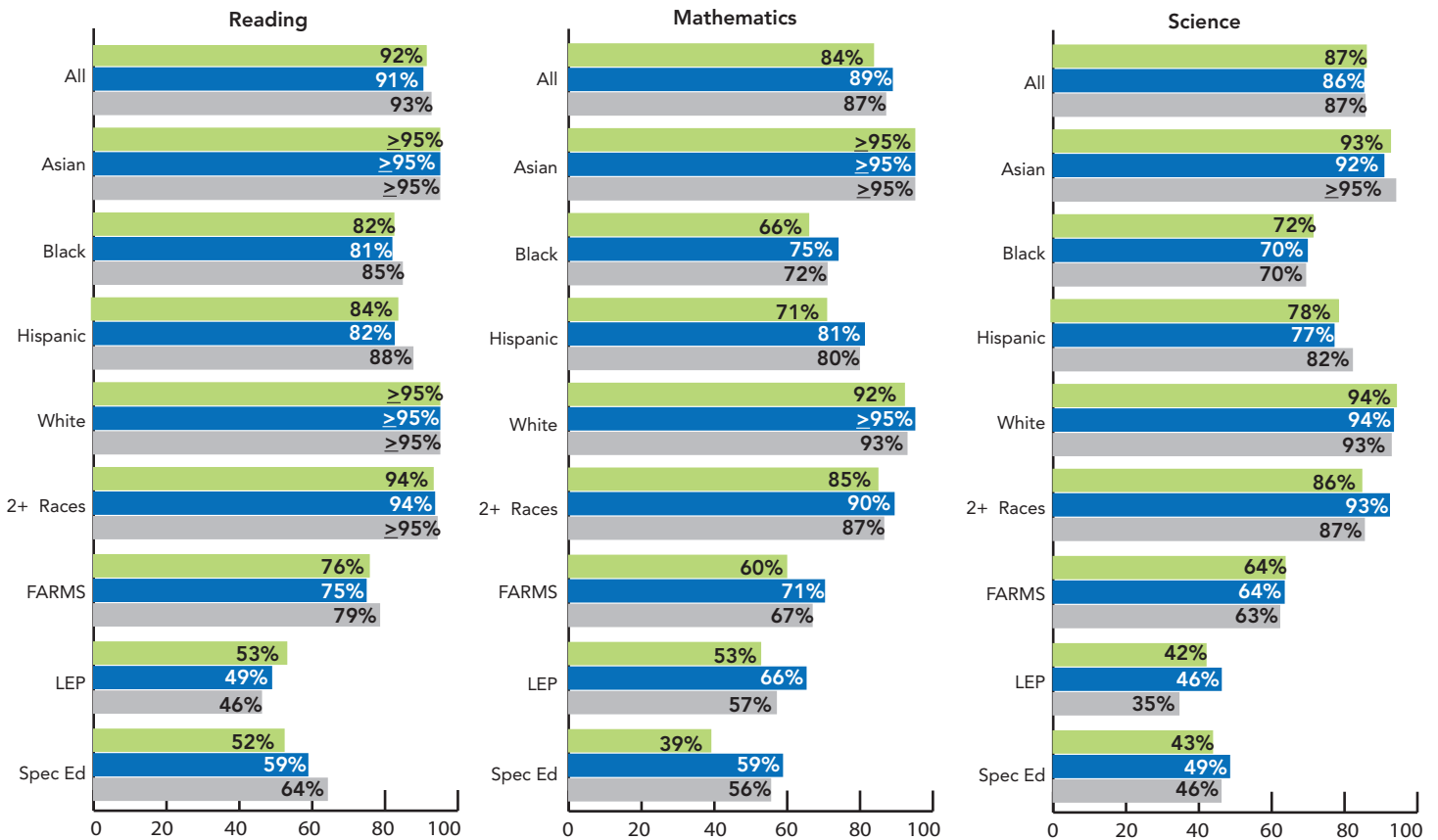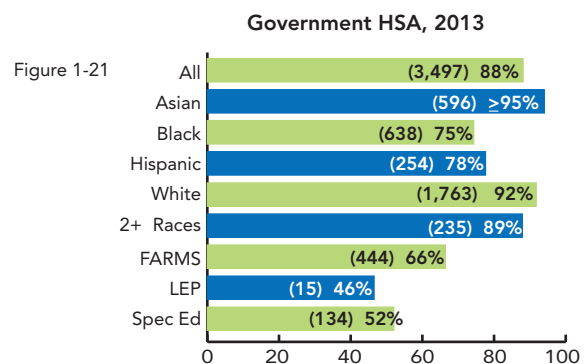## Percent of Elementary School Students Scoring at the Proficient or Advanced Levels

Group	Reading 2013	Reading 2012	Reading 2011	Mathematics 2013	Mathematics 2012	Mathematics 2011	Science 2013	Science 2012	Science 2011
All	94%	94%	94%	92%	94%	93%	79%	78%	77%
Asian	>95%	>95%	>95%	>95%	>95%	>95%	89%	87%	85%
Black	87%	87%	87%	82%	86%	83%	59%	57%	51%
Hispanic	87%	88%	87%	85%	90%	86%	61%	63%	56%
White	>95%	>95%	>95%	>95%	>95%	>95%	88%	88%	88%
2+ Races	>95%	>95%	>95%	93%	>95%	>95%	83%	83%	77%
FARMS	84%	84%	85%	79%	84%	80%	52%	48%	44%
LEP	72%	78%	74%	75%	83%	78%	30%	27%	26%
Spec Ed	70%	71%	71%	60%	67%	68%	37%	36%	40%

■ 2011 ■ 2012 ■ 2013

Figure 1-17

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

Group	Reading 2013	Reading 2012	Reading 2011	Mathematics 2013	Mathematics 2012	Mathematics 2011	Science 2013	Science 2012	Science 2011
All	92%	91%	93%	84%	89%	87%	87%	86%	87%
Asian	>95%	>95%	>95%	>95%	>95%	>95%	93%	92%	>95%
Black	82%	81%	85%	66%	75%	72%	72%	70%	70%
Hispanic	84%	82%	88%	71%	81%	80%	78%	77%	82%
White	>95%	>95%	>95%	92%	>95%	93%	94%	94%	93%
2+ Races	94%	94%	>95%	85%	90%	87%	86%	93%	87%
FARMS	76%	75%	79%	60%	71%	67%	64%	64%	63%
LEP	53%	49%	46%	53%	66%	57%	42%	46%	35%
Spec Ed	52%	59%	64%	39%	59%	56%	43%	49%	46%

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.

Performance Measure:
High school state assessments
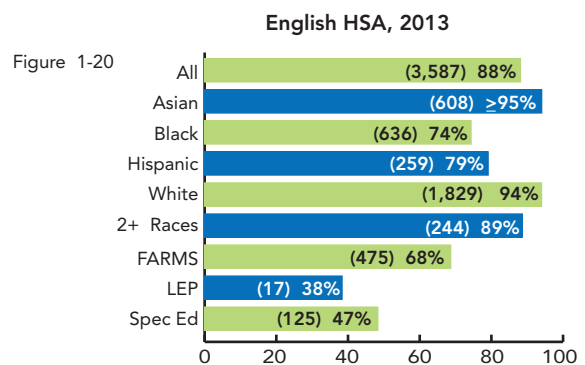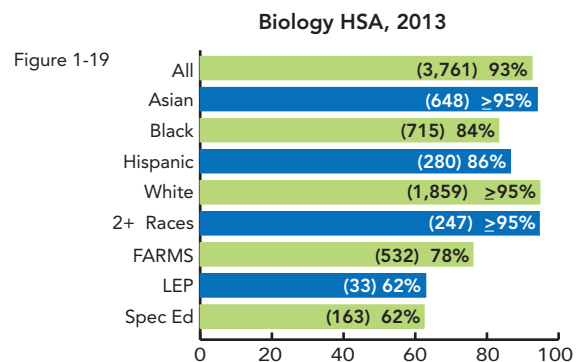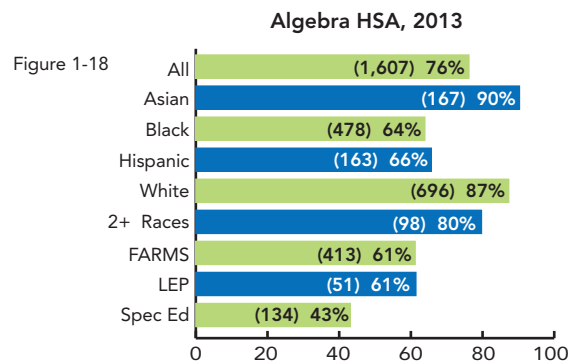
Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies
- 1.5.1: Continuously monitor individual student achievement and personalize instruction to provide the appropriate level of challenge.
- 1.5.2: Continuously monitor student achievement across grade levels, content areas, and schools for every racial/ethnic group, as well 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. 2013-14 was the final year for the HSAs in Algebra and English, which will be replaced by PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) assessments for students entering Grade 9 in 2014-15.

Progress
In 2012-13, the pass rates for first-time test takers were 76.2 for Algebra, 93.1 for Biology, 88.3 for English, and 87.5 for Government.

Algebra HSA, 2013

Figure 1-18

Group	Value
All	(1,607) 76%
Asian	(167) 90%
Black	(478) 64%
Hispanic	(163) 66%
White	(696) 87%
2+ Races	(98) 80%
FARMS	(413) 61%
LEP	(51) 61%
Spec Ed	(134) 43%

Biology HSA, 2013

Figure 1-19

Group	Value
All	(3,761) 93%
Asian	(648) ≥95%
Black	(715) 84%
Hispanic	(280) 86%
White	(1,859) ≥95%
2+ Races	(247) ≥95%
FARMS	(532) 78%
LEP	(33) 62%
Spec Ed	(163) 62%

English HSA, 2013

Figure 1-20

Group	Value
All	(3,587) 88%
Asian	(608) ≥95%
Black	(636) 74%
Hispanic	(259) 79%
White	(1,829) 94%
2+ Races	(244) 89%
FARMS	(475) 68%
LEP	(17) 38%
Spec Ed	(125) 47%

Government HSA, 2013

Figure 1-21

Group	Value
All	(3,497) 88%
Asian	(596) ≥95%
Black	(638) 75%
Hispanic	(254) 78%
White	(1,763) 92%
2+ Races	(235) 89%
FARMS	(444) 66%
LEP	(15) 46%
Spec Ed	(134) 52%

GOAL 1: Students

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

Performance Measure: PSAT participation and performance

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 2013-14. 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 1-22, Figure 1-24)

More than 92 percent of Grade 11 students took the PSAT in 2013-14. 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 1-23, Figure 1-25)

Number and Percent of Students
Who Participated in the PSAT

■ 2013
■ 2014

Figure 1-22 — Grade 10

Group	2014	2013
All	(3,936) 94%	(3,847) ≥95%
Asian	(616) ≥95%	(618) ≥95%
Black	(858) 92%	(779) 92%
Hispanic	(307) 90%	(305) 93%
White	(1,924) ≥95%	(1,878) ≥95%
2+ Races	(218) ≥95%	(256) 93%
FARMS	(638) 88%	(610) 90%
LEP	(42) 91%	(41) 91%
Spec Ed	(238) 75%	(226) 83%

(x-axis: 0, 20, 40, 60, 80, 100)

Figure 1-23 — Grade 11

Group	2014	2013
All	(3,649) 93%	(3,656) 91%
Asian	(616) ≥95%	(596) ≥95%
Black	(707) 89%	(692) 87%
Hispanic	(288) 90%	(271) 89%
White	(1,789) 93%	(1,883) 92%
2+ Races	(235) 92%	(200) 91%
FARMS	(503) 86%	(496) 85%
LEP	(38) 93%	(32) 91%
Spec Ed	(195) 71%	(171) 66%

(x-axis: 0, 20, 40, 60, 80, 100)

Average Score and Percent of
PSAT Test-takers meeting Benchmark

Figure 1-24 — Grade 10

Group	2014	2013
All	(40%) 138	(41%) 139
Asian	(57%) 151	(57%) 152
Black	(16%) 119	(15%) 119
Hispanic	(21%) 123	(20%) 124
White	(49%) 144	(49%) 145
2+ Races	(34%) 137	(40%) 140
FARMS	(11%) 114	(11%) 114
LEP	(<5%) 101	(<5%) 98
Spec Ed	(6%) 102	(7%) 102

(x-axis: 0, 50, 100, 150)

Grade 10 College Readiness Benchmark: 145

Figure 1-25 — Grade 11

Group	2014	2013
All	(48%) 150	(47%) 150
Asian	(65%) 165	(61%) 163
Black	(17%) 127	(20%) 130
Hispanic	(25%) 132	(25%) 133
White	(58%) 156	(56%) 157
2+ Races	(49%) 152	(43%) 148
FARMS	(13%) 122	(15%) 124
LEP	(<5%) 101	(<5%) 108
Spec Ed	(9%) 109	(<5%) 109

(x-axis: 0, 50, 100, 150)

Grade 10 College Readiness Benchmark: 152

GOAL 1: Students

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

Performance Measure:
International benchmark assessment

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. The baseline results and analysis of the OECD will be available in subsequent years.

GOAL 1: Students

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

Performance Measure: College entrance exam participation and performance

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 US.

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 1-26

Figure 1-27

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

Legend: ■ 2012 ■ 2013

	2013	2012
All	83%	82%
Asian	93%	91%
Black	76%	73%
Hispanic	65%	68%
White	85%	85%
2+ Races	79%	81%
FARMS	62%	61%
LEP	58%	54%
Spec Ed	29%	34%
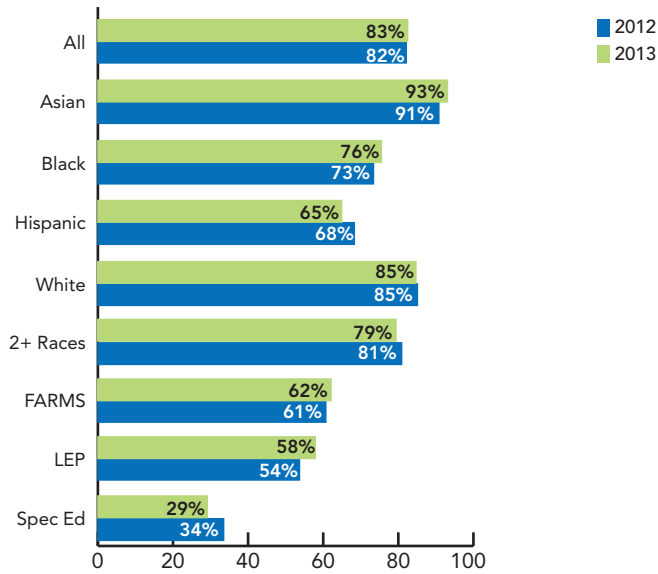
Performance on a College Preparation Test
Percentage of June Graduates scoring 1650+ on SAT or 24+ on ACT

	2013	2012
All	55%	52%
Asian	68%	65%
Black	21%	20%
Hispanic	38%	35%
White	64%	60%
2+ Races	48%	52%
FARMS	19%	17%
LEP	≤5%	≤5%
Spec Ed	21%	17%
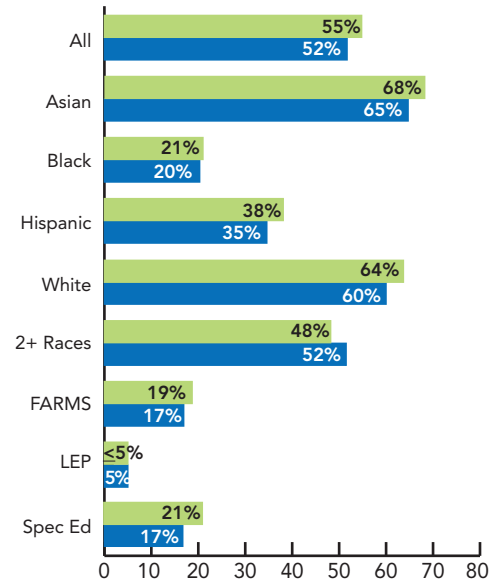
Progress

HCPSS continues to outperform the state and nation on the SAT according to the data for the graduating class of 2013. Among graduating HCPSS seniors, 80 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 2013 was 1653, 170 points greater than the average for all Maryland schools (1483) and 155 points greater than the average for all schools nationwide (1498).

The 2013 HCPSS mean SAT combined score of 1653 is 21 points greater than the mean SAT combined score of 1632 in 2012. Of note, the mean SAT combined score for the 2013 Black/African American graduates and Hispanic graduates were 26 and 32 points higher, respectively, than that of their peers in the graduating class of 2012. The mean SAT combined score for 2013 graduates who received FARM services was 34 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. Twenty-three percent of HCPSS graduates in the class of 2013 took the ACT, an increase of three 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 2013 was 20.9 nationally, 22.3 in Maryland, and 24.2 in HCPSS.

Over 82 percent of 2013 HCPSS graduates took either the SAT or ACT (Figure 1-26). Almost 55 percent of 2013 HCPSS high school graduates were deemed college ready according to the SAT/ACT indicator. There was a slight increase in Black/African American and Hispanic graduates (0.7 percentage points and 3.5 percentage points, respectively) who met SAT/ACT college readiness criteria (Figure 1-27).

GOAL 1: Students

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

Performance Measure:
Attendance rate

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 2011 to 2013, by a total of 0.7 percentage points. Students receiving special education services at the high school level did not meet the standard and remained relatively flat at 92.9 percent from 2011 to 2013. (Table 1-O)

Table 1-O

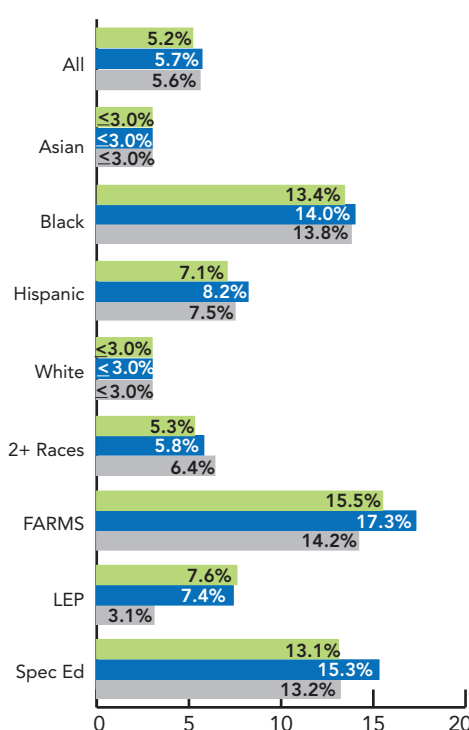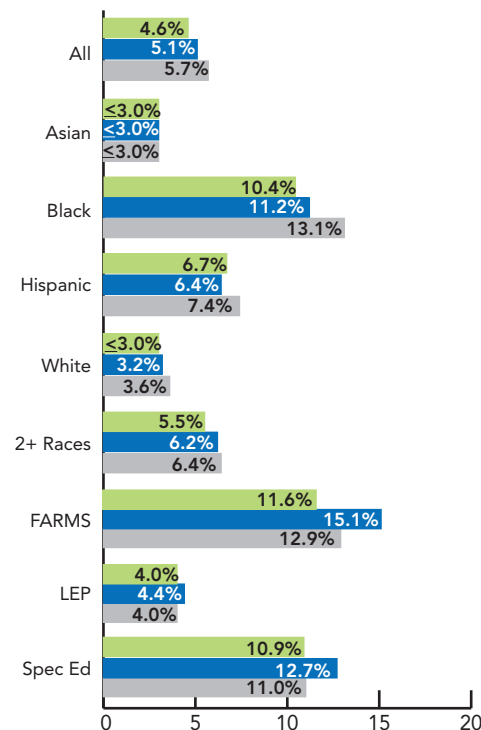| HCPSS Elementary School Attendance			
	2011	2012	2013
All	**≥ 95.0**	**> 95.0**	**> 95.0**
Asian	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0
Black	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0
Hispanic	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0
White	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0
2+ Races	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0
FARMS	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0
LEP	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0
Special Education	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0
Middle School Attendance			
	2011	2012	2013
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	94.2	94.9	94.9
LEP	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0
Special Education	94.3	94.5	94.6
High School Attendance			
	2011	2012	2013
All	**≥ 95.0**	**≥ 95.0**	**≥ 95.0**
Asian	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0
Black	94.3	94.6	94.8
Hispanic	94.2	94.5	94.5
White	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0
2+ Races	≥ 95.0	≥ 95.0	94.9
FARMS	92.4	92.7	93.1
LEP	94.2	94.8	≥ 95.0
Special Education	92.9	93.0	92.9

GOAL 1: Students

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

Performance Measure:
Suspension rate

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.

New COMAR regulations (13A.08.01.21) require local school systems to report instances of disproportionality to MSDE beginning in 2015–16.

Description and Value
Creating a safe, engaging, and supportive environment has shown to help 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 PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports), 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.

Progress
In the 2012–13 school year, 3.2 percent of HCPSS students K–12 were suspended compared to 6.2 percent of students statewide. Overall, the percentage of HCPSS students being suspended decreased from 2010–11 to 2012–13 by 0.4 percentage points. (Figure 1-28)

In the 2012–13 school year, the race/ethnicity student groups with the highest suspension rates were Black/African American and Hispanic (7.9 and 4.1 percent, respectively). Students receiving FARM services and students receiving special education services had the highest suspension rates for students receiving special services (8.4 and 8.1 percent, respectively).

Figure 1-28

Suspension Rate for All HCPSS Students, 2011–2013

Legend: 2011, 2012, 2013

Group	2013	2012	2011
All	3.2%	3.5%	3.6%
Asian	≤3.0%	≤3.0%	≤3.0%
Black	7.9%	8.4%	8.9%
Hispanic	4.1%	4.2%	4.5%
White	≤3.0%	≤3.0%	≤3.0%
2+ Races	3.6%	3.8%	3.8%
FARMS	8.4%	10.1%	8.5%
LEP	≤3.0%	≤3.0%	≤3.0%
Spec Ed	8.1%	9.4%	7.9%
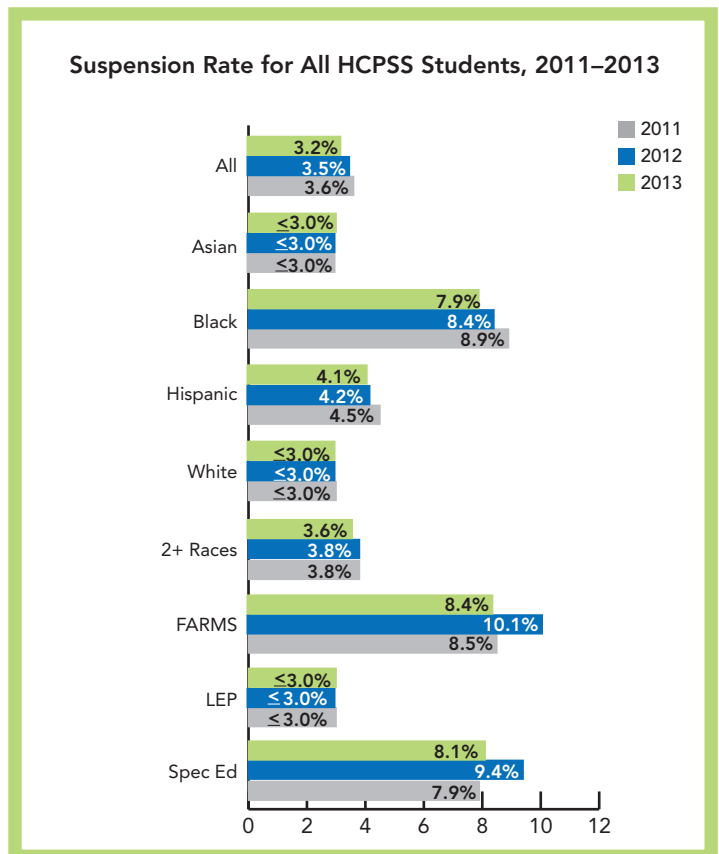
The percentage of HCPSS students K–12 suspended decreased from 2010–11 to 2012–13 for each race/ethnicity student group and for students receiving FARM services. The largest decrease in suspension rate was for students in the Black/African American group with a reduction of 1.0 percentage point.

Elementary School
In 2012–13, less than 3.0 percent of elementary school students were suspended. Overall, the percentage of elementary school students being suspended remained the same from 2010–11 to 2012–13.

The percentage of elementary school students suspended decreased from 2010–11 to 2012–13 for Asian and Hispanic students (0.1 percentage point reduction for each). The percentage remained the same for Black/African American students at 3.0 percent. (Figure 1-29)

Middle School
In the 2012–13 school year, 5.2 percent of middle school students were suspended. Overall, the percentage of middle school students being suspended decreased from 2010–11 to 2012–13 by 0.4 percentage points.

The percentage of middle school students suspended decreased from 2010–11 to 2012–13 for each race/ethnicity student group with the reduction ranging from 0.4 to 1.1 percentage points. The percentage of students suspended who receive special education services declined by 0.1 percentage point. (Figure 1-30)

High School
In the 2012–13 school year, 4.6 percent of high school students were suspended. Overall, the percentage of high school students being suspended decreased from 2010–11 to 2012–13 by 1.1 percentage points.

In 2012–13, the race/ethnicity student groups with the highest suspension rates were Black/African American and Hispanic (10.4 and 6.7 percent, respectively). Students receiving FARM services and special education services had the highest suspension rates within the special services student groups (11.6 and 10.9 percent, respectively).

The percentage of high school students suspended decreased from 2010–11 to 2012–13 for each race/ethnicity student group. The largest reduction was with the Black/African American student group, declining by 2.7 percentage points. The percentage of students suspended who receive FARM services and special education services declined (1.3 to 0.1 percentage points, respectively). (Figure 1-31)

HCPSS Suspension Rates by Level, 2011–2013

Legend: ■ 2011 ■ 2012 ■ 2013

Figure 1-29

Elementary School Students

Group	2013	2012	2011
All	≤3.0%	≤3.0%	≤3.0%
Asian	≤3.0%	≤3.0%	≤3.0%
Black	≤3.0%	3.2%	≤3.0%
Hispanic	≤3.0%	≤3.0%	≤3.0%
White	≤3.0%	≤3.0%	≤3.0%
2+ Races	≤3.0%	≤3.0%	≤3.0%
FARMS	3.1%	3.8%	≤3.0%
LEP	≤3.0%	≤3.0%	≤3.0%
Spec Ed	3.6%	4.0%	≤3.0%
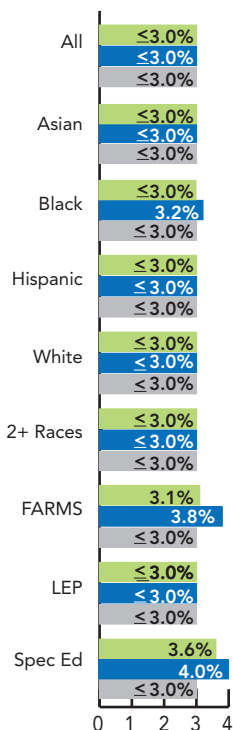
Figure 1-30

Middle School Students

Group	2013	2012	2011
All	5.2%	5.7%	5.6%
Asian	≤3.0%	≤3.0%	≤3.0%
Black	13.4%	14.0%	13.8%
Hispanic	7.1%	8.2%	7.5%
White	≤3.0%	≤3.0%	≤3.0%
2+ Races	5.3%	5.8%	6.4%
FARMS	15.5%	17.3%	14.2%
LEP	7.6%	7.4%	3.1%
Spec Ed	13.1%	15.3%	13.2%

Figure 1-31

High School Students

Group	2013	2012	2011
All	4.6%	5.1%	5.7%
Asian	≤3.0%	≤3.0%	≤3.0%
Black	10.4%	11.2%	13.1%
Hispanic	6.7%	6.4%	7.4%
White	≤3.0%	3.2%	3.6%
2+ Races	5.5%	6.2%	6.4%
FARMS	11.6%	15.1%	12.9%
LEP	4.0%	4.4%	4.0%
Spec Ed	10.9%	12.7%	11.0%

GOAL 1: Students

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

Performance Measure:
Crisis Response

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 the 2012–13 school year, 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, CT school shooting, impacted the school system and community at large. A comprehensive crisis response was provided to the school system and larger community.

To date in the 2013–14 school year, there have been 46 crisis situations impacting 61 schools. 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. Fifteen 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 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 for the letters to the parent community about the shooting.
- Ultimate support provided to the principal and student services staff at a time of need.
- Thank you to student services team members for guidance and support.
- Thanks and appreciation for resources posted on the HCPSS website after Newtown and Columbia Mall shootings.
- Appreciation from teachers about being provided frequently asked questions after a crisis event.
- 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.

Performance Measure: Nutrition and physical activity

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 will go into effect July 1, 2014; however, HCPSS began implementation of these standards early in the 2013–14 school year.

The following initiatives were put in place in schools following 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 will go into effect as of July 1, 2014:

- HCPSS has adopted the Institute of Medicine (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 (need to consider in context of all 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.

FOCUS AREA	OUTCOMES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
COLLABORATION	**2.1** Staff members experience a culture of trust, transparency, and collaboration	• Staff HUB implementation, p. 53
ENGAGEMENT	**2.2** Staff members have access to learning experiences that support their professional growth.	• Highly effective leaders, p. 54 • Staff with advanced degrees and National Board Certification, p. 56 • Culturally proficient staff, p. 58
PERFORMANCE	**2.3** Staff members are held accountable for and supported in meeting standards-based performance expectations.	• Classroom teachers and principals rated effective or highly effective, p. 60
WELL-BEING	**2.4** HCPSS supports staff members' health and well-being.	• Staff engagement, p. 62 • Employee wellness program participation, p. 64

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

Our 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 are supported professionally and personally, and prepared for and engaged in their careers. 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 underway are designed 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.

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 piloted in 2012-13 and implemented throughout the school system in 2013-14. 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 2013 Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching to measure professional practice, which accounts for 50 percent of the evaluation. The other 50 percent is a combination of state-mandated assessment results and teacher-generated Student Learning Objectives to measure student growth. The principal evaluation measures professional practice, communication, management, 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. Our professional learning programs are designed to foster growth, develop strengths, skills, knowledge and cultural proficiency, and leverage our strengths and diversity to ultimately improve the learning experiences of our students.

HCPSS encourages and supports teachers in achieving National Board Certification. Nineteen teachers earned the distinction this year, bringing the total number of board-certified teachers to 138 – 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 partnerships with colleagues, parents, and the community.

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. A new Support Services Job Fair provides an efficient venue for interested applicants to explore a variety of opportunities while expediting the pre-screening process. A new electronic, paperless voluntary teacher transfer request process vastly improves convenience and efficiency while reducing cycle time and cost.

The Commit to Be Fit wellness program, launched in 2011, continues to deliver 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.

GOAL 2: Staff

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

Performance Measure:
Staff Hub usage

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 the 2013–14 school year, HCPSS took a new approach to staff communication. The 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 role utilizing IFAS job codes. Employees may self-select additional communities based on other roles and interests. Once logged in, employees see only 4–5 communities on their user dashboard, simplifying the number of locations a staff member has to visit.

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

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

The Hub is integrated with our account system, allowing staff to utilize the same credentials as many other HCPSS online services. The 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 the Hub without the need for an Application. The Bootstrap based theming of the site is responsive to any screen size and repositions items to allow for the best mobile viewing experience. Maintaining one responsive theme is more cost effective than maintaining a primary theme and development/updates of an Application.

Progress

Figure 2-1

Reducing Information Locations

455 — Prior System
61 — Staff Hub
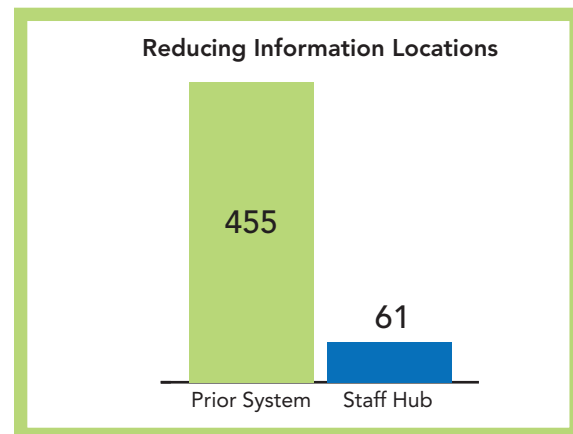
90% of all staff have logged in

89 community moderators trained

61 communities built

7,302 unique visitors

20,000 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.

Performance Measure:
Highly effective leaders

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.

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 Danielson Framework for Teaching. Organizational support includes customized site-based experiences supporting teams with communication skills and dealing with conflict resolution, and intense experiences that build skills and visioning

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

Professional Learning for Leaders
Leadership Fellows (Table 2-B) – 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.

Instructional Team Leaders (ITLs)
(Figure 2-2 and Table 2-C) – 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.

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 using the 2013 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.

Progress

Leadership Development has continued to support succession planning in HCPSS by expanding and broadening opportunities for leaders so that all leaders are supported, engaged, and successful (Table 2-B, Table 2-C, Figure 2-2).

Table 2-B

Participation in Leadership Development Professional Learning			
Program	2011	2012	2013
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

Figure 2-2

Instructional Team Leaders Professional Learning Series

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%

The system continues to expand opportunities to develop highly effective leaders at every level. Data from the Gallup student and staff surveys supports leadership development, including implementation of the new principal evaluation.

GOAL 2: Staff

Focus Area: ENGAGEMENT

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

Performance Measure: Staff with advanced degrees and National Board Certification

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). The HCPSS supports this professional learning through participation in the National Board Certification (NBC) program and the Partnership for Leadership Development.

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, the HCPSS and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) work together to provide support and financing for candidates whom HCPSS selects 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, the HCPSS encourages staff to grow professionally by earning advanced degrees. The Partnerships for Leadership Development Program collaborates with universities and other external entities to provide high-quality professional learning opportunities aligned with school system goals led by experts in their fields. These programs are designed to 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.

The HCPSS currently has active university partnerships with the following institutions of higher education: Coppin State University, Howard Community College, Johns Hopkins University, Kaplan University, Loyola University,

McDaniel College, Morgan State University, National University, Notre Dame of Maryland 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; moreover, 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 2012	Difference
High school diploma	26	27	-1
Fewer than high school diploma	13	12	1
Fewer than 2 years of college	35	35	0
2 years of college	22	21	1
Bachelor's degree	770	741	29
Bachelor's with Master's equivalent	654	692	-38
Master's degree	3,199	3,096	103
Master's degree plus 30 semester hours	624	618	6
Doctor's degree	77	78	-1
Total	5,420	5,320	100

At present, the HCPSS has 138 teachers who have achieved National Board Certification in 21 different certification areas, ranking fifth in the state for total number of certified teachers. This year, 18 teachers achieved initial certification and one teacher successfully renewed certification for an additional ten years. The district is currently supporting 14 teachers who will complete the process in the spring of 2014.
Table 2-E shows the current top 5 areas of certification in

HCPSS; Table 2-F depicts the participation and success rate of cohort participants.

Table 2-E

Top 5 Areas for Certification in HCPSS	
Generalist/Middle Childhood	16
English Language Arts/Adolescence and Young Adulthood	14
Generalist/Early Childhood	12
Exceptional Needs Specialist/Early Childhood through Young Adulthood	10
Mathematics/Early Adolescence	10
Library Media/Early Childhood through Young Adulthood	8

Table 2-F

Participation in NBC Cohorts		
	# Cohort Participants	# Achieved NBC status*
2011	29	17
2012	9	14
2013	25	18
2014	14	TBD

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

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

Table 2-G

Participation in University Cohort Programs*						
	2011		2012		2013	
Degree	Number of Cohort Participants	Number Completing Program	Number of Cohort Participants	Number Completing Program	Number of Cohort Participants	Number Completing Program
Bachelor	—	—	—	—	10	—
Master	236	74	198	49	257	63
Certificate	139	45	104	82	63	35
Doctorate	12	—	9	—	11	1

* 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 Offered Cohort Programs			
Degree	2011	2012	2013
Bachelor	0	0	1
Master	11	15	16
Certificate	9	8	18
Doctorate	1	3	4

GOAL 2: Staff

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

Performance Measure:
Culturally proficient staff

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 and 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.

The HCPSS integrates cultural proficiency tools and processes with Teacher Induction and Leadership Development. In fall 2013, the district launched its first HCPSS/McDaniel College graduate certificate cohort program, Excellence and Equity in Education. The system also provides customized Cultural Proficiency professional learning experiences in the form of in-service seminars and continuing professional development (CPD) courses. Every experience (i.e., seminar, course) aligns with research-based standards for professional learning. This section focuses on outcome 2.2: Staff members have access

to learning experiences that support their professional growth. While the cultural proficiency initiative directly impacts staff, its overall purpose is to support a positive school culture for students, staff, and families. Our cultural proficiency initiative is aligned with these additional Vision 2018 strategies:

- 1.7.5: Ensure students have access to culturally proficient professional 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.
- 1.7.7: 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.

Program evaluation (2010) has shown that HCPSS professional learning experiences result in statistically significant increases in a participant's cultural competence (Table 2-I).

Table 2-I

2010 Cultural Proficiency Seminars: Staff Cultural Competence Self Assessment (Means relative to 5-point Likert Scale)				
Standard of Cultural Competence	**Pre-Test Mean**	**Post-Test Mean**	**Change**	**Effect Size**
Assess Culture	4.04	4.56	+0.52*	0.475
Value Diversity	4.09	4.60	+0.51*	0.676
Manage Dynamics of Difference	4.17	4.61	+0.43*	0.535
Adapt to Diversity	3.74	4.21	+0.47*	0.377
Institutionalize Cultural Knowledge	3.75	4.27	+0.52*	0.577
Complete Instrument	3.96	4.46	+0.50	0.652

The HCPSS uses 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. Achievement of Vision 2018 requires cultural competence.

Table 2-J

Participation in Structured Cultural Proficiency Professional Learning Experiences			
	Level 1 Awareness	Level 2 Application	Level 3 Facilitation	Total
2012	163	27	11	211
2013	105	39	20	164
2014	179	25	10	219

Progress

Because of its effectiveness, HCPSS has continued to focus on maximizing staff participation in structured professional learning experiences (Table 2-J). The district measures the effectiveness of supporting Vision 2018 outcomes (Table 2-K) after each experience.

Table 2-K

2014 Participant Satisfaction*			
Outcome	Strategies	Mean	Mode
		6-point scale 6=highly effective 0=not effective	
Enhance professional growth through this professional learning community.	2.2.4	5.79	6
Build capacity to foster trust, respect, and collaboration in diverse environments.	2.1.5	5.42	6
Enhance interpersonal and leadership skills, deepen job-specific knowledge, and grow in professional practice.	1.7.7, 2.2.1	5.47	6
Develop as a culturally proficient professional.	1.7.5, 1.7.6	5.36	6
Support staff health and well-being.	2.4.1	5.55	6

*As of 2/5/14

The HCPSS continues to create rubrics to guide continuous improvement efforts (Strategy 4.5.3). The district has also started documenting and promoting organizational processes, practices, and services that staff has implemented, aligned with standards of cultural competence, and improved through the use of cultural proficiency as a continuous improvement process. Available through the HCPSS Staff Hub, documented improvements include descriptions of their results. Sample results of such culturally competent and proficient improvements are provided on Figures 2-3 through 2-5. The HCPSS is holding institutes, courses, and seminars to promote broadened implementation of these types of leadership actions that improve equitable student outcomes.

An elementary school focused on cultural proficiency to improve the work environment, using the job satisfaction school survey to gauge results. (Figure 2-3)

Figure 2-3

Overall School Morale

- 2013: 93%
- 2010: 80%
- 2008: 62%
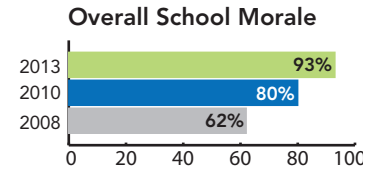
Transition to Kindergarten Workgroup implemented culturally competent practices, using Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR) data to track success. (Figure 2-4)

Figure 2-4

(2002 / 2013)

- All Students: 66% / 89%
- Special Ed: 26% / 64%
- Low income: 24% / 82%
- Asian: 72% / 89%
- Black: 48% / 85%
- Hispanic: 52% / 80%
- White: 69% / 92%
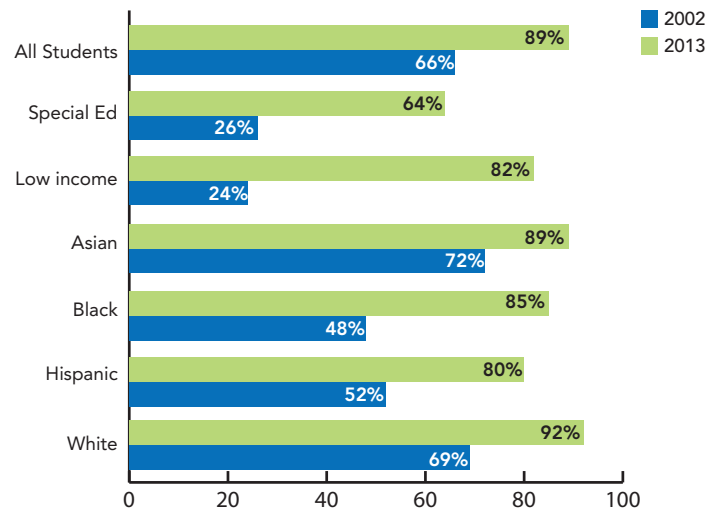
A high school implemented culturally competent practices to address school environment issues. (Figure 2-5)

Figure 2-5

(2011-12 / 2012-13)

- Office Referrals: 100% / 43%
- Suspensions: 100% / 89%
- Dropouts: 100% / 34%
- Attendance: 87% / 100%
- Staff Climate: 70% / 100%
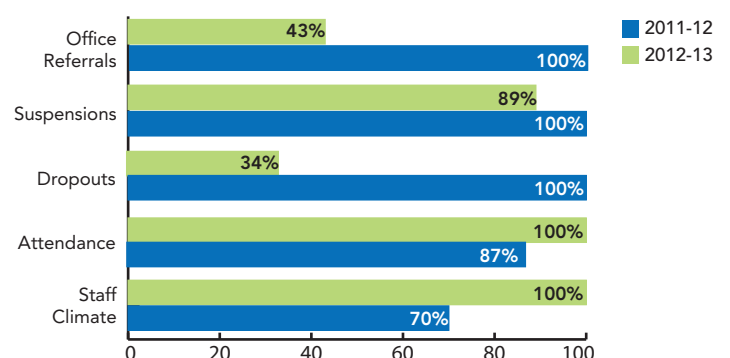
GOAL 2

GOAL 2: Staff

Focus Area: PERFORMANCE

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

Performance Measure:
Classroom teachers and principals rated effective or highly effective
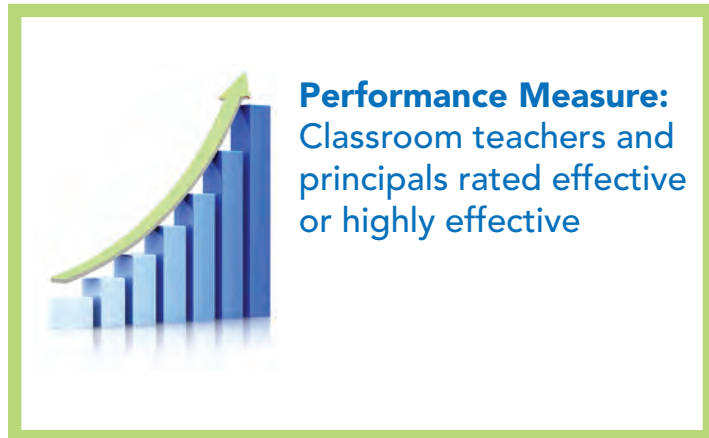
Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy

- 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 (ESEA) 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 will utilize the revised processes to assess the progress of teachers and principals with respect to professional practice goals and student growth objectives. Under the requirements of COMAR 13A.07.01, each local school system shall establish and maintain a comprehensive induction program for all new teachers.

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 the 2012–13 school year and implemented systemwide during the 2013–14 school year.

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 Danielson Framework for Teaching and new teacher support sessions. Novice teachers, beginning in school year 2012–13, 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.

In an effort to provide professional learning for teacher evaluation, with principals as evaluators, as well as for principal evaluation, 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 have offered leadership meetings, webinars, and online professional learning modules, which have included 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, beginning in the 2013–14 school year, receive the support of a Principal on Special Assignment who meets with first-year principals to provide resources, non-evaluative problem-solving, collaboration and constructive feedback, assistance with school improvement planning, student data-analysis, and exploration/explanation of job-embedded responsibilities.

Progress

Previously, the final evaluation of a teacher or principal was deemed to be satisfactory or unsatisfactory. Table 2-L shows the distribution of teacher performance ratings from 2011–13. Table 2-M shows the distribution of principal performance ratings from 2011–13.

Table 2-L

Teacher Overall Satisfactory Ratings						
	2011		2012		2013	
Rating*	S	U	S	U	S	U
Number	4,601	26	4,439	31	4,655	23
Percentage	99.46	0.56	99.31	.69	99.51	.49

* S=Satisfactory U=Unsatisfactory

Table 2-M

Principal Overall Satisfactory Ratings						
	2011		2012		2013	
Rating*	S	U	S	U	S	U
Number	75	0	75	0	75	0
Percentage	100	0	100	0	100	0

* S=Satisfactory U=Unsatisfactory

Data on the number of teachers and principals rated effective/highly effective under the new system is not available as the school year and evaluation cycle is not yet over.

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-N

Participation in Teacher Evaluation Professional Learning Sessions	
Session Title	Attendance
Danielson Training for CIA Leaders (3-day series) 2012–13 (Leader 1 and 2)	350
Danielson Framework for Teaching Overview, Summer 2013	222
Danielson Training for school-based program support staff, May 2013	112
Framework in Action Level 1 (1st year teachers) 2013–14	195
Framework in Action Level 2 (2nd year teachers) 2013–14	75
Danielson Training for NEW CIA Leaders and school-based program support staff (3-day series) 2013–14	89
Teachscape Classroom Observer Training	258
Teachscape Reflect Live Tool Webinars (6 sessions 2013–14)	150
Reflect Support Sessions	58
Focus on the Framework Sessions: School-based modules facilitated by Teacher Development Liaisons	1,048

Table 2-O

Instructional Mentoring Supports		
	2012–13	2013–14*
Mentees	189	172
Mentors	88	99
Visits	1,574	698
Observations	570	237

Data collected as of 2/7/14

Table 2-P

New Principal Supports	
	2013–14*
Elementary	7
Middle	6
High	2
New Principal meetings	7
School visits	At least 1 per semester
Coaching calls	20 per new principal

Data collected as of 2/7/14

GOAL 2: Staff

Focus Area: WELL-BEING
Outcome 2.4 HCPSS supports staff members' health and well-being.

Performance Measure:
Staff engagement

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, thirty-four 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.

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 will be 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 and 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.

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 have participated in the Q12 instrument. Comparisons of engagement scores reveal that those with high Q12 scores exhibit better productivity, lower absenteeism, lower turnover, fewer safety incidents, and other indicators of superior performance.

Q12 Survey Questions

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

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

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

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

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

Progress

Because hope, well-being, and engagement are positively correlated with increased student achievement, HCPSS is working with Gallup to monitor these factors. The Gallup employee engagement survey, which includes 12 questions, was administered in October 2013 and 6,620 HCPSS employees responded (84 percent response rate). The staff engagement results indicate that 34 percent of our staff is engaged which was slightly greater than the national average (30 percent). The HCPSS grand mean in staff engagement was 3.79. 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.

GOAL 2: Staff

Focus Area: WELL-BEING
Outcome 2.4 HCPSS supports staff members' health and well-being.

Performance Measure:
Employee wellness program participation

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 is the latest initiative by the Board to ensure that employees are offered high quality benefit programs that are affordable to both employees and the system, and are sustainable in the future. Rising health care costs have required continuous cost containment efforts such as converting fully insured plans to self-insured plans; routinely conducting competitive bids on all contracts   to ensure competitive pricing; modifying plan co-pays and employee share; utilizing a prescription benefit manager; and conducting audits of dependent eligibility, claims, and subrogation. While these actions were successful in containing health costs, efforts must continue. 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. While all health care costs are not avoidable, preventable illness makes up approximately 80 percent of the burden of illness and 90 percent of all health care costs. Chronic and lifestyle related conditions

account for 75 percent of U.S. health care costs. Increased research and data on workplace wellness programs indicate there are very real benefits to implementing such programs. 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. Given these facts, 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.

The Virgin Pulse Healthy Activity program allows employees to monitor activity levels and earn rewards for achieving and increasing fitness levels. By partnering with Virgin Pulse, HCPSS was able to provide employees with pedometers, an online homepage to report physical activity and track Commit To Be Fit Employee Wellness Program participation, health zones at each school and facility location for monitoring and reporting their body mass index (BMI) and blood pressure, an incentive platform to reward participation, and reporting tools to 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 which 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-Q

Employee Wellness Program Participation		
	2012	2013
Employees enrolled	77%	80%
Actively earning Health Miles	67%	72%
Participants at or above recommended daily activity levels	74%	76%
Average daily steps	7,980	8,225
Fitness class participation	700	700
Health and financial fitness workshop participation	400	500
Weight Watchers participation	270	400

GOAL 3: Families and the Community

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

FOCUS AREA	OUTCOMES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
COLLABORATION	3.1 HCPSS collaborates with family and community partners to engender a culture of trust, transparency, and mutual respect. 3.2 HCPSS is strengthened through partnerships.	• Stakeholder participation on policy development/revision committees, p. 69 • School Improvement Team (SIT) and Parent Teacher Association (PTA) participation, p. 70 • HCPSS advisory groups participation, p. 72 • Number and type of partnerships, p. 75
ENGAGEMENT	3.3 HCPSS engages families and the community through relevant, timely, accessible, and audience-focused communications.	• Social media usage, p. 77 • HCPSS website usage, p. 79 • HCPSS News usage, p. 80
WELL-BEING	3.4 HCPSS supports the well-being of students and families.	• Targeted family outreach, p. 81

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 as among the system's greatest assets. The focus of Goal 3 is to build upon these strong relationships. Outcomes and strategies are designed to more fully engage parents as partners in their child's education, and to strengthen ties with community organizations.

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 full seat at the table in issues relating to their child and school.

A new HCPSS social media presence was launched at the start of the current school year. Facebook and Twitter pages for the system, and a Superintendent's Twitter account, draw a rapidly growing audience. Several schools and program offices have launched individual Twitter and Facebook pages as well. Social media allow for more constant and interactive communication with parents and community members. The new sites follow recent approval of Board policy allowing the use of social media to enhance education and communications.

The HCPSS website serves as the window to the school system for more than 10,000 daily site visitors. The website provides an overview of system news and initiatives, organizational information for central offices and schools, curriculum content, and parent resources. The website 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.

The site is being redesigned and refined to provide a more user-friendly, intuitive, and dynamic user experience.

GOAL 3

Individual websites for each school serve as a primary source of information for parents. New infrastructure for these sites is also in development. When complete, the new sites will offer a uniform user experience, enhance mobile access, streamline updates and maintenance, and integrate more seamlessly to systemwide information.

Hundreds of parents, students, staff, and community members met with the Superintendent during a series of Listen and Learn sessions held throughout the 2012-13 school year. Participants shared their experiences, hopes, and aspirations for the school system and learned about Dr. Foose's vision for teaching and learning in Howard County schools. This stakeholder input informed and enriched the development of Vision 2018.

Four curriculum information sessions were held this year to introduce the new HCPSS Math 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.

Participants at two education forums held with the African-American Round Table gained insight into avenues to advanced opportunity for all Howard County students. The first session focused on the state of academic achievement in Howard County public schools, covering strategies for eliminating achievement gaps, state reforms, and college and career readiness for every student. The second focused on HCPSS curriculum, its alignment to Common Core standards, and ways that parents and community supporters can foster academic success.

Parents and other community members are encouraged to serve on policy, curriculum, and other advisory committees. Each participant's unique perspective and expertise represents valuable insight for informing school and system procedures and priorities. This year, more than 120 stakeholders representing a diverse range of interests have taken an active role on advisory committees for eight new and revised Board policies.

A seven-week International Parent Leadership Program (IPLP) 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 program since 2006.

Community organizations also play a critical role in the

educational program. More than 1,100 local businesses, government agencies, and non-profit organizations currently partner with HCPSS schools and offices to enhance the educational experience and help students prepare for success. For more than 25 years, educational partners have committed human or financial resources and other support to benefit schools and students.

A wide variety of 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.

HCPSS is committed to fostering a culture of collaboration, trust, and shared responsibility among all of its stakeholders. Several outcomes and strategies in Vision 2018 support this guiding principle, with a number of programs and initiatives already in place.

HCPSS strives to provide open and transparent financial reporting to ensure public accountability. A detailed Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) is published annually. A condensed and simplified version, the Popular Annual Financial Report, provides Howard County citizens a more accessible, user-friendly overview of the system's financial performance. Both versions are easily accessible on the HCPSS website, and have earned the Government Finance Officer Association's highest standards of recognition for excellence in financial reporting for several consecutive years.

The system also welcomes senior citizens, grandparents, and retirees in the community to participate in school activities and provide input to system priorities and policy. The Golden Opportunities initiative was launched in 2010 to share volunteer, advocacy, and committee opportunities and school system news with senior community members. Hundreds of participants learn about opportunities for involvement and enjoy free and discounted admission to school events each year.

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.

Performance Measure: Stakeholder participation on policy development/revision committees

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, monitored, evaluated, 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)
- Equity Council
- 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.

Communication tools used to obtain committee members and communicate to the community in support of Strategy 3.1.2 are:

- Press releases written by the Policy Office for the Office of Communications
- Press releases in Parent Newsletter
- Letters inviting stakeholders to participate on committees
- Offers to present and explain process to stakeholder organizations
- Provision of committee meeting schedules via email
- Email
- Telephone
- 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 2013–14 is represented in the chart, below:

Table 3-A

Stakeholder Representation for 2013–14								
	Policy Number							
Stakeholder Group	1040	4070	6080	8030	8100	8110	9020	9260
Central Office Staff	5	3	9	7	4	4	8	4
School-based Staff	3	0	2	4	5	5	5	4
AFSCME	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
CAC	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
HCAA	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
HCEA	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
Equity Council	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HCASC	2	1	2	2	2	1	2	2
PTACHC	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
General Citizens	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
Other Stakeholders	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	3
Total Members	17	8	19	17	15	13	19	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.

Performance Measure:
School Improvement Team (SIT) and Parent Teacher Association (PTA) participation

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 (SIT)
School Improvement Teams 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 the 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

Table 3-C

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.

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

Table 3-B

Number of SIT Members by School Level		
Level	Parent Members	Community Members
Elementary	81	12
Middle	41	22
High	39	3

Number of PTA Members by School

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

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

High	# PTA
Atholton	548
Centennial	1,054
Glenelg	559
Hammond	401
Howard	713
Long Reach	416
Marriotts Ridge	750
Mt. Hebron	837
Oakland Mills	237
Reservoir	660
River Hill	789
Wilde Lake	437

Special School	# PTA
Cedar Lane	175

GOAL 3

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

Performance Measure: HCPSS advisory groups participation

Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy
• 3.1.3: Consistently include representatives from stakeholder groups in planning process to inform school system actions and decision.

The Board of Education and the Superintendent believe that schools are strengthened when families and communities are actively engaged and supported as partners in education. In support of this goal, the Board and the Superintendent are committed to providing 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.

Table 3-D

HCPSS Advisory Committees to the Board of Education, 2013–14																
Legend √ = required and represented X = required and not represented • = required and partially represented	Board of Education	Chamber of Commerce	Community Advisory Council	PTA, PTACHC, or Parent	HCASC and/or student reps	Central office and/or specific program rep(s)	Economic Development Authority	HCEA rep or member	HCAA rep or member	AFSCME rep or member	HCEA rep or member	Special Education Community Advisory Committee	Superintendent's Advisory Council for Business/Educational Partnerships	Superintendent's Facilities and School Planning Advisory Committee	Technology Advisory Committee	Community member at large
Community Advisory Council				√	√	√										√
Operating Budget Review Committee	√	√	√	√			X	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	

Table 3-E

HCPSS Advisory Committees to the Superintendent, 2013–14	Central office and/or specific program rep(s)	Administrator	Teachers/School rep(s)	PTA, PTACHC, or parents	Business members	Community members	Local government	Community Advisory Council	HCASC and/or student reps	HCEA rep or member	HCAA rep or member	Pediatrician/medical rep/ Health Department	Higher Education rep	State government	Special Education rep	Experts in respective field
Legend √ = required and represented X = required and not represented • = required and partially represented																
Academic Calendar Committee	√	√	√	•		√		√	√	√	√					
Attendance Area Adjustment Committee			√			√										
Bridges over Howard County	√	√			√	√							√		√	
BSAP Saturday Math Council	√		√			√										
BSAP Student Council	√					√			√							
Department of Student, Family, and Community Services Advisory	√		√	√	√	√										
Early Childhood Advisory	√	√	√	X	√	√	√					X	√	√		√
Elementary Curricular Advisory		√	√	√	√											
ESOL Advisory	_Not active at this time – change in leadership_															
Facilities Planning Advisory	√	√		X	X	√	√		X	√	√					√
Fine Arts Advisory Council	√		√	√	√	√			√							
Gifted and Talented Advisory	√	√	√	√	√	√			X							
Human Resources Advisory	√	√	√			√				√			√			
Interscholastic Athletics Advisory	√	√	√			√			•				√			√
Instructional Materials Criteria and Review		√	√			√			√							
Library Media Advisory			√			√			X							
Mathematics Advisory	√		√		√				√							
School Health Council	√		√				√		√			√		√		
School Naming		√		√		√										√
Science Advisory	√								X				√			√
Secondary Language Arts Advisory	•	•	√	√	√	√		√	X				√		X	
Social Studies Advisory	√	√	√	√	√	√							√			√
Special Education Community Advisory	√	X		√	X	X	√		X			√	X		•	√
Student Services Advisory						√							√	X		√
Student Walking Route						√	√									√
Technology Advisory	√				√	√										
Textbook Selection	√		√													
World Language Advisory	_Not active at this time – change in leadership_															

Table 3-F

Career and Technology Education Advisory Committee, 2013–14 (within the Advisory Committees to the Superintendent)											
Legend √ = required and represented X = required and not represented • = required and partially represented	Local business industry	Workforce/business and economic development members	State and local government	Chamber of Commerce	Organized labor	Parents	Former students	Current students	Central office staff	Administrators	Teachers
Academy of Finance	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Accounting and Marketing	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Automotive Technology	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Career Research and Development	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Child Development/Teacher	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Computer Science	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Construction Management and Architectural Design	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Consumer Services, Hospitality, and Tourism	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Cybersecurity and Networking	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Health Professional and Biotechnology	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Homeland Security and Emergency Management	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Project Lead the Way /Systems and Project Engineering	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Visual Communications and Animation	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√

GOAL 3

GOAL 3: Families and the Community

Focus Area: COLLABORATION
Outcome 3.2 HCPSS is strengthened through partnerships.

Performance Measure: Number and type of 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 more than 25 years, and continue to play a critical role as the HCPSS implements its strategic plan, Vision 2018.

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 hidden strengths and new interests. In many cases, partnership programs assist struggling students as they gain mastery in basic skills; in others, 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, with signing ceremonies and press releases for new partnerships, an annual report and celebration for existing partnerships, and publicity for partnership activities.

Partnership Highlights
The Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory (APL) partnership offers hands-on opportunities and guidance to students. Each year, APL staff members volunteer their time to work with approximately 2,000 Howard County students through the following STEM programs:

- ASPIRE High School Mentoring
- College Prep Program
- Girl Power
- Groovy Science Show
- Maryland MESA
- APL/NASA Education and Public Outreach
- Python Programming
- Robotics Programs

GOAL 3

More than 800 HCPSS students have participated in the APL intern program, ASPIRE (APL Student Program to Inspire, Relate, and Enrich). APL mentors guide students to complete an independent research project related to computer science, applied physics, or biomedical engineering and research.

A wide variety of businesses and organizations collaborate with the HCPSS to provide targeted supports and programs to help accelerate achievement and close gaps. Several non-profit organizations, including Conexiones; the NAACP, Howard County Branch; The Council of Elders of the Black Community of Howard County and fraternities and sororities, join with Howard County schools to serve as student mentors and role models, often inspiring their protégés to reach for higher goals. Students are encouraged to enroll in advanced placement classes, conduct advanced research projects, perform community service, and attend college.

Several community organizations partner with HCPSS to help students understand and appreciate the value of healthy food choices. With Days of Taste, a program of the American Institute of Wine and Food, elementary school students discover the benefits and pleasures of fresh food by working with local chefs and farmers. Students evaluate diverse foods to learn the elements of taste and nutrition, visit a farm to discover how food is grown and transported from farm to grocery to home, and combine fresh seasonal vegetables and fruits to make a salad.

HCPSS partner Prepare for Success, a program of the Community Action Council of Howard County, helps to ensure that Howard County students are well equipped with necessary school supplies. The organization raises funds to purchase backpacks, collects donations of school supplies, and then provides backpacks filled with necessary school supplies to elementary, middle, and high school students at the start of and during the school year.

Figure 3-1

Type of Partnerships

- 7% Education
- 8% Government
- 13% Nonprofit
- 72% Business
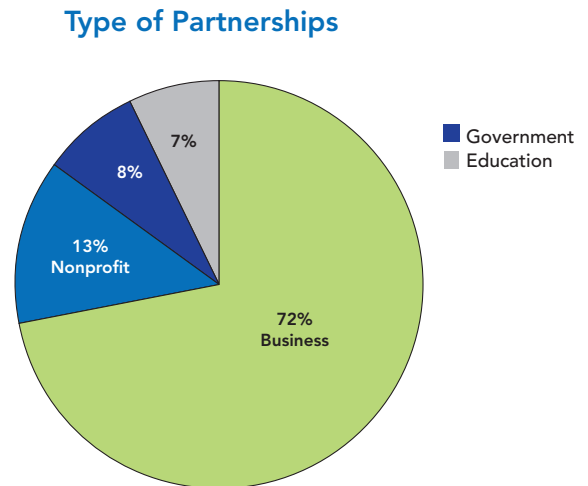
Progress

The HCPSS Partnerships Office directed and aligned community resources to support and promote strategic HCPSS programs and initiatives in FY 2013 by:

- Facilitating 1,123 HCPSS partnerships
- Creating 22 new partnership agreements
- Highlighting how partners support the four focus areas of Vision 2018 in the *HCPSS Educational Partnerships, 2012–2013 Annual Report* (www.hcpss.org/aboutus/partnership/ar_partner201213.pdf); more than 3,300 copies distributed countywide
- Issuing 17 press releases
- Submitting 20 partnership pictures and articles to the local media
- Hosting 300 attendees at the Annual HCPSS Partnerships Celebration to recognize partners

GOAL 3

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.

Performance Measure:
Social media usage

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 launched the use of social media on July 1, 2013, with implementation of a revised Policy 8080 Responsible Use of Technology and Social Media. While social media is being used to enhance instruction in alignment with Outcome 1.3, and business operations in alignment with Outcome 4.4, this section focuses on how social media is being leveraged to enhance stakeholder communications in alignment with Goal 3, which focuses on family and community engagement.

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 social media policy 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 began to use Twitter to increase transparency. Twitter accounts 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 trainings are being offered to school system

personnel on best practices and responsible use of existing and emerging social media.

Progress
The HCPSS Facebook page was launched on August 15, 2013. The school system posts between 1 and 6 times each day, covering 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

GOAL 3

Facebook analytics show that the majority of people who have chosen to "like" our page (known as "fans") are on Facebook from 8 a.m.–11 p.m., with the most traffic from 8–9 p.m. Our page is visited most frequently on Saturdays, Sundays, and Mondays.

Total likes rose to 5,100 by February 2014, as shown in Figure 3-2.

Figure 3-2

Total Likes on Facebook

Our Facebook page is used primarily by women aged 35-44, as indicated in the table below.

Table 3-G

HCPSS Facebook Users		
Age range	Women	Men
13–17	1%	0.8%
18–24	2%	1%
25–34	16%	2%
35–44	38%	6%
45–54	20%	4%
55–64	4%	0.7%
65+	2%	0.3%

Howard County Public School System
December 11, 2013

HCASC–HCPSS Leadership Lunch 2013 (16 photos)
Howard County Association of Student Councils members from schools around the county attended an annual Leadership Luncheon on Dec. 5. Attendees had the opportunity to network with HCPSS leaders and Board of Education members, and discussed items such as characteristics of great teachers and the HCPSS cell phone policy.

Like · Comment · Share   4   2

The majority of comments on the page are from mothers voicing their opinions about whether to open or close schools when inclement weather is expected.

The number of people who saw any activity from our page including posts, posts by other people, mentions, and check-ins is nearly 20,000, as indicated in the table below.

Figure 3-3

Number of HCPSS Facebook Users

GOAL 3

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.

Performance Measure:
HCPSS website usage

Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy
- 3.3.1: Provide timely, relevant, and easily accessible information on the HCPSS website.

Description and Value
HCPSS has a multi-media approach to communicating with families. The school system uses the public website, cable TV, social media, print communications, and email alerts through HCPSS News Service to communicate information with families. The HCPSS website is used to communicate messages relevant to all HCPSS families and community members.

The HCPSS website 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). Strategy 3.3.1 calls for providing timely, relevant, and easily accessible information on the HCPSS website.

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

In the spring of 2014, the school system will move the main website from its current technology to a more agile, mobile-friendly platform. The site will be designed to link critical information into school websites, thus increasing the consistency of messaging throughout the school system.

Progress
While baseline data will be collected for the 2013–14 school year and reported in future annual reports, this report provides a snapshot of usage since upgrades began and analytics were applied to the website in February 2013.

Analytics for the Past Year
Between February 18, 2013, and February 28, 2014, the HCPSS website has had:
- 4.4 million visits from 1.2 million unique visitors.
- 8.9 million page views.

Thirty percent of our visits are from new visitors, and 70 percent are from returning visitors. One-third of our traffic used a mobile phone or tablet to access the site. Half of our traffic starts with a search from google.com.

Analytics for the Current School Year
During the 2013–14 school year (8/26/2013–2/18/2014), the HCPSS website has had:
- 2.8 million visits from 800,000 unique visitors.
- 5.3 million page views.

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.

Increase in Social Media Referrals
It is also interesting to note that the launch of our systemic social media presence has increased traffic on our main website.   Before the social media policy was put into place (between February 18, 2013, and June 30, 2013), HCPSS had 4,000 referrals to the HCPSS website via social networks. Since the social media policy went into effect on July 1, 2013, we have had 26,514 referrals representing a 650 percent increase.

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.

Performance Measure:
HCPSS News usage

Table 3-H

Messages Sent through HCPSS News Service

	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14*
Elementary	4,436	4,960	3,081
Middle	2,002	1,992	1,304
High	2,273	2,229	1,470
Systemwide	72	83	57

July 1, 2013 through February 6, 2014

Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy
• 3.3.2: Tailor communications to user needs.

Description and Value
HCPSS has a multi-media approach to communicating with families. The school system uses the public website, Cable TV, social media, print communications, and email alerts through HCPSS News Service to communicate information with families. The HCPSS News Service is used by individual schools to share school-related information with families; and it is used centrally to communicate messages relevant to all HCPSS families.

All families are encouraged to sign up for HCPSS News Service so that they can receive timely, relevant information on computers or mobile devices. Tracking usage of this service helps us to understand how many of our families are receiving critical messages through this media.

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 February 6, 2014, schools and central office have sent 24,286 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.

Each broadcast message is sent to subscriber lists that total anywhere between targeted lists of 23 subscribers to the full base of 51,288 subscribers. In 2013–14, the average size of a subscriber list is 750 recipients among elementary schools, 900 recipients among middle schools, and 1800 recipients among high schools.

During the 2013–14 school year, HCPSS has also begun to text emergency messages. Through February 6, 2014, the system sent out 11 emergency messages related to school closings and/or delays to 31,000 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

Performance Measure:
Targeted family
outreach

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 math support to students. While students are learning, parents can attend sessions to learn about the math curriculum and resources to support learning at home.
- The International Parent Leadership Program (IPLP) introduces parents to school system 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 a 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. The Community-based Learning Centers, for example, are operated in collaboration with Columbia Housing Corporation, Howard County Housing, and Recreation and Parks. These centers hold family nights to engage families in the academic process and provide a strategies for parents to support students at home.

Progress
In 2013–14, there were 10 parent information sessions held during Saturday Math Academies at one location. These sessions are typically well-attended and enrollment has increased significantly from 349 parents in 2010–11 to 596 parents in 2013–14.

As our international population expands, HCPSS is providing services to more families. The IPLP had 17 participants from eight countries in 2013–14. Nearly 200 participants have graduated from the IPLP since 2006. Student registrations, translation and interpretation services also have increased.

Table 3-I

International Office Services

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
# Families Served	1,853	2,394	2,888
# Interpreter Requests	6,297	7,752	8,597
# Documents Translated	809	752	836
# Student Registrations	1,075	1,082	1,031

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

Table 3-J

Parent Programs in Spanish

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
College and Career Ready Workshops*	342	361	383
Parent Academy in Spanish	153	202	249

In 2013–14, the Community-based Learning Centers held 11 sessions at six locations. Families received and discussed information about academic expectations, assessments, and community programs.

Table 3-K

Enrollment

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Elementary	92 students	115 students	111 students	118 students
Family Nights	42 students	61 parents	75 parents	90 students

GOAL 4: Organization
Schools are supported by world-class organizational practices.

FOCUS AREA	OUTCOMES	PERFORMANCE MEASURES
ORGANIZATIONAL WELL-BEING	**4.1** All facilities are safe and secure. **4.2** HCPSS hires and retains a talented, effective, and diverse workforce. **4.3** Resource and staffing allocations are aligned with strategic priorities.	• 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
PERFORMANCE	**4.4** Technology is leveraged to optimize operational efficiency and effectiveness. **4.5** A culture of performance management drives and aligns decisions and operations throughout schools and offices. **4.6** Decisions are informed by relevant data in all operational areas.	• 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 will be embedded throughout the HCPSS organizational culture.

HCPSS engaged the Harvard University Center for Education Policy Research in 2013 to conduct an in depth assessment of organizational strengths and challenges and the effectiveness of existing performance management processes. The study revealed many strengths, citing the enthusiasm of staff members that are highly committed to their roles and to the district; a culture of continuous improvement, especially at the school level; and an increasing desire to use student performance data to drive instruction and decisions.

The report also noted a culture of complacency, resulting from the system's historical success and high performance, which can mask significant challenges and inhibit progress.

The Harvard team recommended the establishment of performance targets, objective measures, and systemwide organizational goals for central office operations, to augment the performance expectations that have long been in place for schools. These recommendations informed many of the outcomes, strategies, and performance measures in Vision 2018.

Other recommendations related to the system's budgeting process. While the existing process was efficiently implemented, budget decisions were typically incremental and perpetuated existing practice. Fully embracing Vision 2018 required a process reconfiguration to align all budget decisions to the specific goals and targets articulated in the strategic plan. As a result, the system adopted zero-based budgeting (ZBB) in 2013 to prepare the FY2015 budget.

Zero-based budgets evaluate all proposed annual expenditures on the basis of strategic priorities rather than history. The process is more flexible and transparent and helps to identify cost-savings opportunities. The emphasis on key activities, goals, and alignment to the strategic plan, make it far easier to assess the impact of each program and initiative on the system's overall success. The ZBB process delivered $3.4 million in savings in the FY2015 budget alone.

The Harvard study also found that multiple, isolated data systems lacked consistency and ease of access, and hindered the effective use of information for continuous improvement. These findings, and a comprehensive

GOAL 4

information technology data audit which followed, informed the requirements for an advanced Data Warehouse and Student Information System that is currently in development.

In the aftermath of the Sandy Hook school tragedy, the Superintendent and County Executive convened a Joint Task Force on School Safety charged with reviewing current safety practices and recommending improvements. Hundreds of parents, students, teachers, business owners, and others took part in two School Safety Focus Groups, sharing feedback and ideas for ensuring that each school is a safe and nurturing learning environment. The task force released a comprehensive report and plan, including specific near- and long-term recommendations.

Digital camera systems have been installed on nearly half of the HCPSS school buses, and plans are in place to equip all buses with the cameras over the next few years. The new cameras support the recommendations of the Joint Task Force on School Safety and supplement current processes for addressing complaints of bullying behavior. 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.

The Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education (MAEOE) has recognized nearly two-thirds of HCPSS schools as Green Schools. Each certified Green School meets criteria in curriculum and instruction, best management practices, and community involvement in environmental education.

LEED standards guide all HCPSS construction planning, and every new construction or renovation project is designed to achieve LEED eligibility. LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) 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 LEED Gold certification is expected for the new Ducketts Lane Elementary School.

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. Dozens of staff have already 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 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. In another project, a manual teacher transfer request process has been automated, vastly improving reliability and shortening process time, and saving countless hours and thousands of pounds of paper per year.

GOAL 4: Organization

Focus Area: ORGANIZATIONAL WELL-BEING
Outcome 4.1 All facilities are safe and secure.

Performance Measures:
School entry security features

Frequency of modified/lost duty days

Miles between preventable accidents

Figure 4-1

School Entry Security Measures
% Complete as of 12/13/13

- ES Front Office Entry: 34%
- ES Buzz in: 100%
- MS Front Office Entry: 1%
- MS Buzz in: 3%
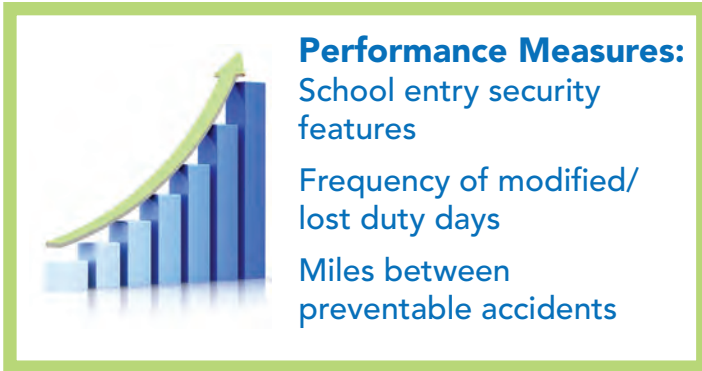
Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies
- 4.1.1: Strengthen security and safety practices and ensure consistency across the school system.
- 4.1.2: Strengthen and standardize emergency response protocols and training.
- 4.1.3: Utilize national/international standards in risk management.

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 positive instructional environment.

Progress
The school tragedy in Connecticut, and escalating reports of violence at other schools, prompted a reevaluation of HCPSS security practices. 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 already been put in place and have proven effective in preventing and managing security incidents. Other, longer-term actions are also in process.

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 will be installed in all elementary and middle schools. The progress of this effort is illustrated in Figure 4-1, which depicts the percent of schools where buzz-in systems and/or controlled entry through the administrative office have been established.
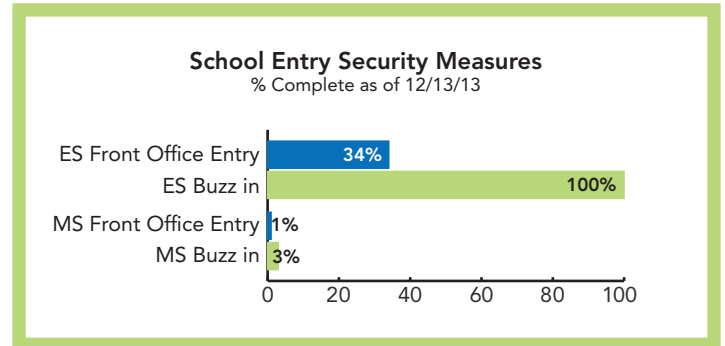
The elimination of workplace hazards in both schools and offices is also a priority. Results from the enhanced facility inspection program from the Maryland Association of Boards of Educations, and other external and internal inspections, identify trends and prompt preventive measures. Figure 4-2 illustrates the decrease in incident rate and days away from work per 100 full-time employees. The severity of these incidents is significantly below the median for Maryland MABE insurance pool members.

Figure 4-2

Frequency of Modified and Lost Duty Days
All Employee Groups

Modified Days: FY 2010: 2,356; FY 2011: 1,503; FY 2012: 1,781

Lost Days: FY 2010: 1,843; FY 2011: 704; FY 2012: 649

GOAL 4
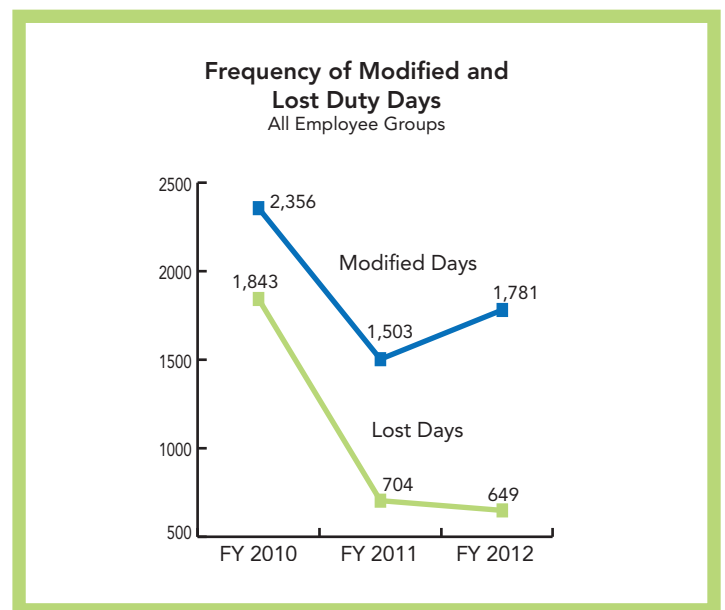
The school day for many students starts and ends on the school bus. HCPSS follows National Safety Council defensive driving principles to ensure safe delivery of each student to and from school. The relative incidence of school bus accidents has decreased, despite the increase in student enrollment and 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 other large systems in performance for this measure, which serves as a key performance indicator within the Council of the Great City Schools annual report.

New digital on-board cameras were installed on 211 school buses in 2013, and plans are in place to install cameras on all buses over the next few years. The cameras supplement the existing processes that school administrators use to investigate and respond promptly and effectively to reports of bullying.

Figure 4-3
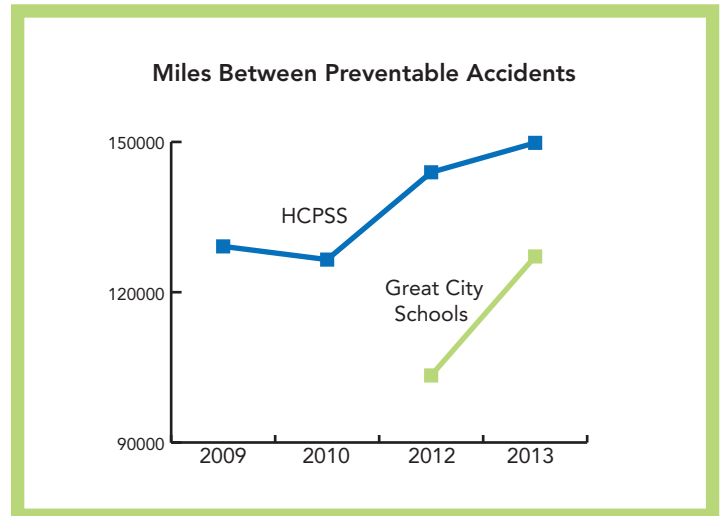
Miles Between Preventable Accidents

HCPSS

Great City Schools

GOAL 4: Organization

Focus Area: ORGANIZATIONAL WELL-BEING
Outcome 4.2 HCPSS hires and retains a talented, effective, and diverse workforce.

Performance Measures:
Number of new hires

Staff diversity

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, 22.9 percent are racial/ethnic minorities. Among teachers, 16.4 percent identify as racial/ethnic minorities.

The Office of Human Resources has changed its recruiting strategies in order to provide a more targeted recruitment process. Along with the local Teacher Comprehensive Job Fair, staff attend 28 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 DC, and seven other states have been selected based on interview and hiring data. Of the 28 events, 10 are at historically black colleges and universities (HBCU), and two are at universities that have a high percentage of Hispanic students. The HCPSS recruiters that attend these events are diverse in their gender, ethnicity, curriculum areas, and grade levels.

In addition to attending recruitment events sponsored by higher education institutions, the HCPSS offers eleven Preliminary Interview dates at the Department of Education.

Due to 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 2013 reporting period, 89 HCPSS graduates and 19 HCPSS paraeducators were hired as classroom teachers. Furthermore, 79 Professional Development Schools (PDS) interns and six student teachers who were trained in Howard County schools were also hired into classroom teaching positions. PDS interns and student teachers trained in Howard County schools bring knowledge of current initiatives and best instructional practices into specific content areas. Looking toward the future, HCPSS is collaborating with Howard Community College (HCC) to attend job fairs and Education Career Events. Outreach to current HCPSS students through the Future Educator's Associations and the Delta Scholars/Alpha Achievers student groups is also being conducted.

Progress

The percentage of employees that identify as non-White increased 1.3 percent from 2012 to 2013. (Table 4-A)

Table 4-A

Number of Employees by Race and Ethnicity Comparison				
Race	October 2012	October 2013	Difference	Increase
American Indian/ Alaska Native	24	26	2	8.3%
Asian	251	265	13	5.6%
Black or African American	1,271	1,279	8	0.6%
Hispanic	163	177	14	8.6%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	4	5	1	25.0%
Two or More Races	76	72	-4	-5.3%
White	6,092	6,156	58	1.1%
Total	7,881	7,980	92	1.3%

For the period from October 1, 2012, to October 15, 2013, HCPSS hired 357 new professional school-based staff. More than 49 percent of these teachers were employed to teach in critical shortage content areas.

Seventeen percent of the total number of new teachers hired self-identified as members of a racial minority. Sixty-four percent were African American, 23 percent were Asian, 15 percent were Hispanic, and 7 percent indicated two or more racial categories.

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

Figure 4-4 shows that in 2013, hiring at the elementary and middle school levels has increased compared to their 3- and 5-year averages. High school hires have decreased below their 3- and 5-year averages.

Figure 4-4

Number of New Hires
Year 2013 Compared to 3- and 5-Year Average
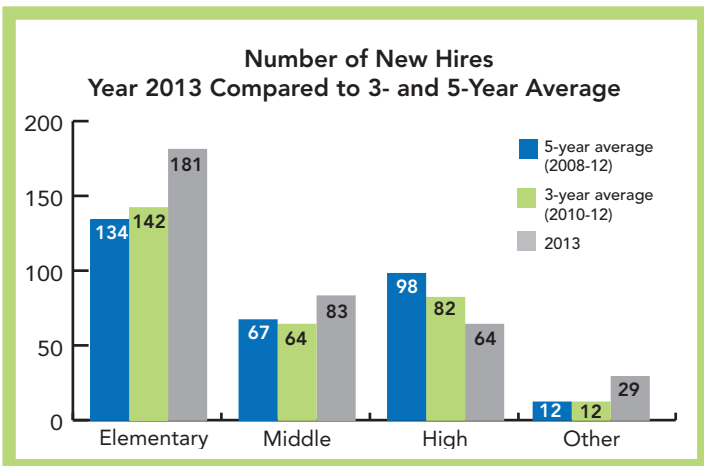
Includes elementary classroom teachers and all related arts, countywide services, media specialists, guidance counselors, psychologists, therapists, and teacher trainers at the elementary level; excludes nurses.

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

Table 4-B

Diversity of Classroom Teachers						
2013	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	2+	Total
Teacher	114	388	67	3,234	47	3,867
Other Instructional Personnel	2	19	4	119		145
Total	116	407	71	3,353	47	4,012
Percentage of Total Staff	2.9%	10.1%	1.8%	83.6%	1.2%	100%

GOAL 4

GOAL 4: Organization

Focus Area: ORGANIZATIONAL WELL-BEING
Outcome 4.2 HCPSS hires and retains a talented, effective and diverse workforce.

Performance Measure:
Number of applicants
for staff vacancies

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 and Instruction and the Office of School 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 will solicit feedback to evaluate our current processes and procedures and to identify areas for improvement.

Professional School-Based Staff Candidate Selection
The Applitrack online employment application was implemented on December 1, 2012. During the 2013 hiring period from December 1, 2012, to October 15, 2013, 357 professional school-based staff were hired from

an applicant pool of 6,867. 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.

Progress
Certificated, Management, and Technical Candidate Selection
There were 67 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 1, 2012, to October 15, 2013. Of the 2,989 pool applicants received, 1,298 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 utilizes the Leadership Intern Program to provide opportunities for teachers to gain skills as school-based administrators. Since its inception, 21 Leadership Interns have been promoted to assistant principal, a clear indicator of the program's success.

GOAL 4

Teacher Vacancies

Table 4-C

Number of Applicants for Teacher Vacancies				
2009	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**
7,601	8,043	6,595	7,123	6,867*

Data for 2013 only available from 12/2012–10/2013

(12/1/2012 through 10/14/2013 when the Applitrack employment application 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 – 67
- Total Applicants – 2,989
- Total Applicants Meeting Minimum Qualifications – 1,298 *(12/1/2012–10/15/2013)*

Number of Applicants for Support Services positions:

- Positions Posted – 282
- Total Applicants – 31,769
- Total Qualified Applicants – 9,505
  (12/1/2012–10/15/2013)

Advanced Degrees and Experience

New professional school-based staff continue to be hired across a full spectrum of experience levels. During the 2013 reporting period, 43 percent of school-based professionals hired were experienced educators. First-year teachers who are new to the profession continue to represent the largest number of new hires, which is 57 percent of all teachers hired. Of these new hires, 85 (42 percent) were student teachers or PDS interns in Howard County.

Of the 5,420 professional employees, 71.95 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 (NCLB). For the reporting period October 1, 2012, to October 15, 2013, 94.2 percent of core academic subject classes were taught by highly qualified teachers. The number of conditionally certified teachers was 34. This was a decrease of 10 teachers compared to the prior reporting period.

GOAL 4: Organization

Focus Area: ORGANIZATIONAL WELL-BEING
Outcome 4.2 HCPSS hires and retains a talented, effective, and diverse workforce.

Performance Measure:
Staff retention rate

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. On August 26, 2013, schools opened with 100 percent of classroom vacancies filled.

Progress
The HCPSS staff retention rate was 93.26 percent in 2013 with an overall turnover rate of 6.74 percent. These rates reflect 531 separations out of 7,881 employees during the 2013 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 dissatisfied 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 figures 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.

It should be noted that 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

Position	Resign	Retire	Death	Resign from Leave of Absence	Non-renewal	Termination	Total
Central and School-based Administrators	4	19					23
Teachers	86	85	2	79			252
Other Professional Personnel	21	35		18			74
Paraeducators	58	28					86
Other Support Personnel	44	37				15	96
Total	213	204	2	97	0	15	531
Percentage of Total Staff	40%	38%	0%	18%	0%	3%	100%

GOAL 4: Organization

Focus Area: ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE
Outcome 4.3 Resource and staffing allocations are aligned with strategic priorities.

Performance Measure: Zero-based budgeting implementation

Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy
• 4.3.1: Implement a zero-based budgeting process to invest in strategic priorities.

Description and Value
HCPSS implemented zero-based budgeting with the FY 2015 budget cycle in support of the strategic plan, Vision 2018 in alignment with Strategy 4.3.1, Implement a zero-based budgeting process to invest in strategic priorities.

Zero-based budgeting (ZBB) is a technique used for developing annual budgets that complement 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 utilize 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 the HCPSS staff, the Budget Office, and the Superintendent's Executive Team. 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 program 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. Program 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

GOAL 4

strategies as they align to Vision 2018: Fulfilling the Promise of Preparation. Key performance measures and results will be included upon development.

4. *Development 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.

Despite limited time to fully implement ZBB in FY 2015, first year ZBB results were impressive with significant change achieved. The most impressive accomplishments were establishing a new budget process that supports the strategic plan and aligning all system activities with the strategic plan.

Staff efforts have been focused on completing the first three steps of the ZBB process. Step 4, Development of Program Performance Measures, is underway and will be completed during FY 2015, allowing reporting on program performance measures in the FY 2016 budget.

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

analyzed to ensure more classrooms are staffed at capacity and staff are utilized effectively.

Custodial assignments were also reviewed to allocate these resources most efficiently and effectively. Savings through redirecting existing resources yielded $3.4 million in ZBB savings and 40 positions to redirect to new initiatives aligned with Vision 2018.

In reviewing key activities and program alignment with Vision 2018, 115.6 position requests were not included in the budget request, reducing the proposed budget by an additional $5.4 million. New initiative requests were prioritized based upon their contribution to outcomes in Vision 2018 and another $1.5 million was reduced in this process. In total, the ZBB process yielded a reduction in the budget request of approximately $10.4 million.

While great progress was made in the first year, 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 led to the first-year success and will drive even greater results in the future.

GOAL 4

GOAL 4: Organization

Focus Area: ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

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

Performance Measure:
Computer access, connectivity, and speed
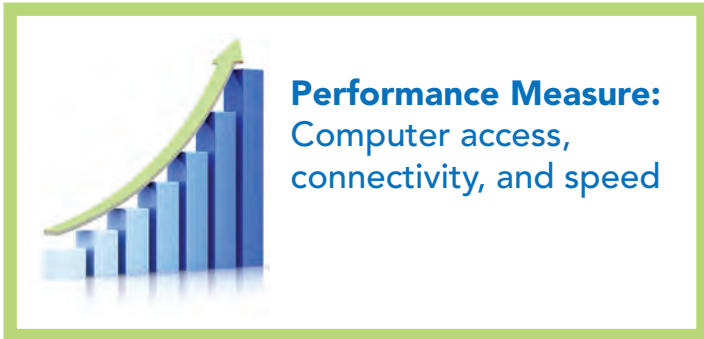
Aligned Vision 2018 Strategies

- 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, 2012, to June 30, 2013 the Technology Department deployed 12,289 new computers. Of these computers, 5,860 were added to implement new programs such as Measure of Academic Progress testing, Middle School Technology Education (Tech Ed) and System 44 Reading. Another 6,429 of these computers replaced existing devices that were end-of-life and could no longer support existing programs such as High School (HS) Tech Ed. The following Figure graphically displays this information.

Figure 4-5

Number of Computing Devices

- 5,860 new computers
- 6,429 replacement computers
- 19,964 existing computers
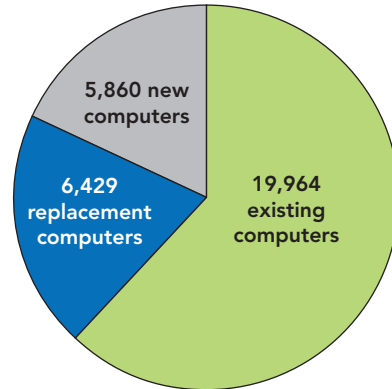
The majority of these computers are used by students as shown in Figure 4-6.

Figure 4-6

Number of Student versus Teacher Assigned Devices

- 5,502 teacher-assigned devices
- 23,757 student-assigned devices
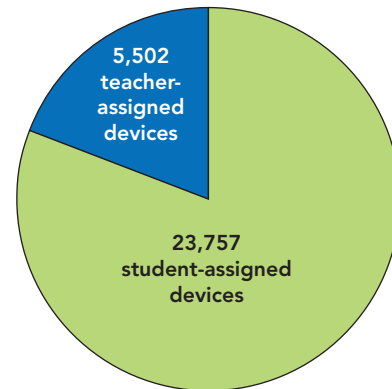
Table 4-E and Figure 4-7 show how student computers used for instruction are divided among elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools as well as by the computer type (laptop, desktop, tablet).

Table 4-E

Number of Instructional Computers per Level	
Elementary	11,287
Middle	8,817
High	9,151

Figure 4-7

Number of Instructional Computers in Schools by Type

- 9,955 Desktops
- 18,044 Laptops
- 1,256 Tablets

Figure 4-8

Number of Minutes Downtime over 12 Months

- Exchange: 46
- FirstClass: 2,444
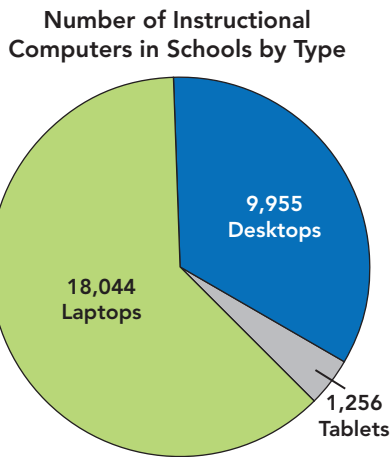
Connectivity and Speed

During the same period, network bandwidth utilization increased an average of 100 percent from approximately 7MB to 15MB. In order to accommodate this increase, the Technology Department is in the process of upgrading all network links and equipment to be completed no later than August 15, 2014.

From July 1, 2013, to October 31, 2013, the HCPSS wireless networks connected a total of 21,662 additional personal technology devices. Like the previous wireline statistics, this represents an increase of over 100 percent for wireless connections. We expect this trend to continue with Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) and other wireless initiatives and have upgraded the existing wireless equipment and its management system accordingly.

From May 8, 2012, to June 30, 2012, the FirstClass CLC system experienced 603 system failures for a total downtime of 2,444 minutes. The vendor was non-responsive to the issues and it was decided to migrate from this system to the industry leader in email systems, Microsoft Exchange.

This change in communication methodology has enabled the HCPSS to leverage best-in-breed products and reduce the number of user account credentials our stakeholders needed to remember and manage. In addition, select students are provided HCPSS-supported email at no additional cost to HCPSS under the current Maryland Education Enterprise Consortium contract.

From March 1, 2013, to March 1, 2014, the Microsoft Exchange system experienced one system failure for a total downtime of 46 minutes. This is greater than 99.995 percent system availability as compared to the 99.535 percent availability for FirstClass.
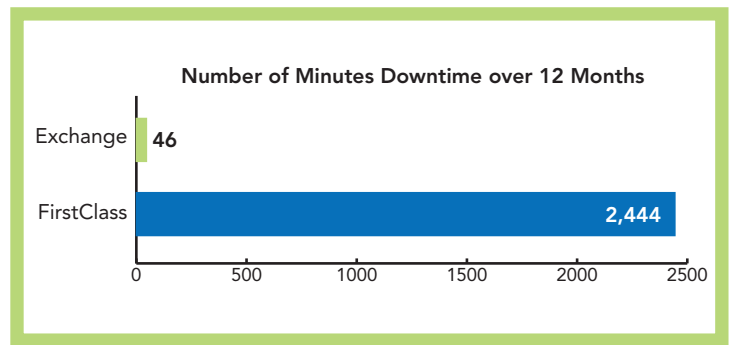
Customer service is paramount to ensuring that all technology equipment and services are reliable and available for use. The Technology Department handled 4,552 more Web Help Desk tickets in FY 2013 as compared to FY 2012, a 23 percent increase.

Figure 4-9

Increasing Customer Service

- FY 2012: 19,163
- FY 2013: 23,715
- FY 2014 (Forecasted): 25,548
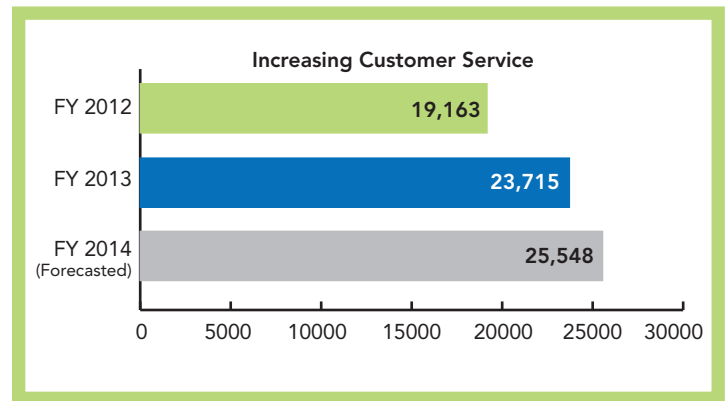
By analyzing web help desk tickets by type (see Figure 4-10), the Technology Department can focus on preventative action to improve its customer service.

Number of Web Help Desk Tickets by Type

Figure 4-10

- 36% Help Desk
- 30% Computer Technicians
- 8% CLC
- 7% Server Admin
- 6% Unassigned
- 4%
- 3%
- 3%
- Telecom Services
- Data Center
- Staging
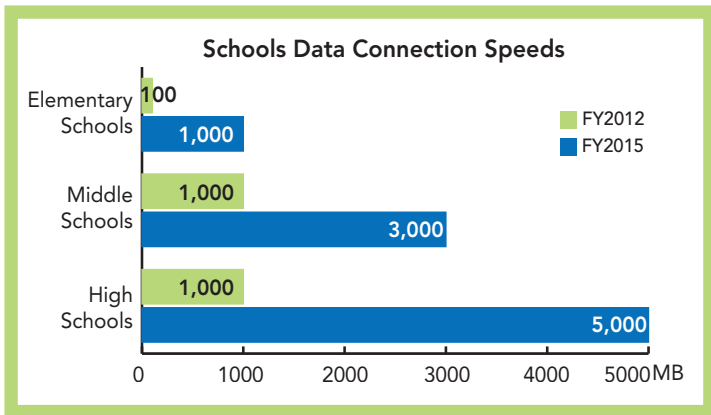- AV Services - 2%
- Other - 1%
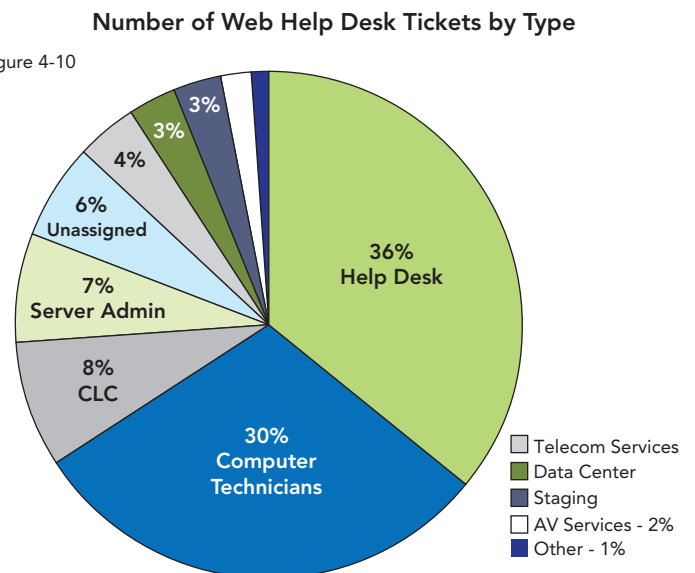
Connectivity and Speed

In the last three years, all HCPSS facilities were enabled for fully wireless network capability and security measures were improved to support the updated technology policies, Board Policy 8080 Responsible Use of Technology and Social Media and Board Policy 3040 Technology Security.

As a result of Policy 8080, students, staff, and the public are now able to use their personal technology devices within HCPSS facilities. This enabled more students to obtain access to online resources and to be able to enjoy a more personalized learning experience. Staff are now able to utilize the right tool for the right task resulting in a better overall working experience.

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.

In addition, internet access speeds to the World Wide Web will increase from two 1,000 MB circuits to two 10,000 MB circuits. These two circuits will be split between the central office and Dorsey Road data centers. This will result in increased reliability for the ever increasing online applications used by students and employees.

Figure 4-12
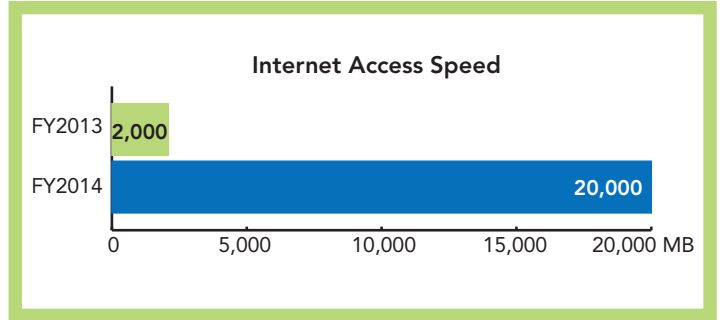
Internet Access Speed

FY2013	2,000
FY2014	20,000

Figure 4-11

Schools Data Connection Speeds

	FY2012	FY2015
Elementary Schools	100	1,000
Middle Schools	1,000	3,000
High Schools	1,000	5,000

GOAL 4

GOAL 4: Organization

Focus Area: ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE
Outcome 4.4 Technology is leveraged to optimize operational efficiency and effectiveness.

Performance Measure: Electronic payment usage

Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy
• 4.4.2: Streamline and automate organizational processes in alignment with industry best practices.

Description and Value
HCPSS has joined innovative organizations in applying automation technologies to the accounts payable (AP) function, which is still largely reliant on costly and inefficient paper-based processes.

Accounts payable automation is being driven in part by increased adoption of electronic payment methods. While HCPSS has paid some vendors electronically for a number of years, the process has been labor intensive preventing expansion of these payment processes to all vendors. However, new technologies have allowed the Accounting Office to implement electronic payments (E-Payables).

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: processing time for purchase, payment and reconciliation is reduced as the overall accounts payable process becomes more efficient.
• More Timely Payments: more timely payments can result in cost savings through more competitive pricing in bids or early payment discounts.
• Streamlined Reporting: electronic payment data reporting improves information flow by reducing the need for manual inputs while increasing reporting accuracy and improving process efficiency.
• Automated Reconciliation Process: the reconciliation process is improved as payment data passed with electronic transactions is automatically matched with purchase data, eliminating the need for manual inputs.

Vendors electing to participate in E-Payables derive the following benefits:
• Faster Payment and Settlement: as compared with checks, E-Payables payment results 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, with the assistance of Bank of America, has enrolled a significant number of vendors in E-Payables. In addition, all employees who submit for expense reimbursement will automatically be converted to payment via direct deposit if they are already set up for direct deposit of their salary. E-Payables is currently in a pilot stage and will be rolled out to all vendors by June 1, 2014. Within the first year, the HCPSS expects to convert more than 70 percent of the vendor list to electronic payments.

GOAL 4

GOAL 4: Organization

Focus Area: ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE
Outcome 4.4 Technology is leveraged to optimize operational efficiency and effectiveness.

Performance Measure:
Point of sale system usage

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 streamlines the financial accountability of the food service program for students, families, and the Food and Nutrition Service office staff. Since its introduction, students and cafeteria staff have become comfortable with the process, resulting in greater efficiency and accuracy in meal service.

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, 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.

Percentage of Students using Online Account, 2013–14

83% of elementary school students

62% of middle school students

42% of high school students

77% of all students

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.

Performance Measure: Facilities management satisfaction

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

In establishing a culture of performance management that drives and aligns decisions and operations throughout schools and offices, data collection and analysis are essential. Multiple sources of data are used to drive improvements, as is the case with the Facilities division. In this example, stakeholder surveys, internal reports, and research-based best practices are all used to drive improvements.

Principals respond annually to a survey to assess the performance of the Facilities division in meeting needs identified by the schools. Attributes quantified are based on needs communicated by our schools during the baseline survey year (FY 2007).

Results are shared with the organization to help incorporate lessons learned and identify areas needing improvement. The results are then triangulated with data gathered from our work order database, and practices are refined in alignment with international and national best practices, as described by the International Facilities Management Association (IFMA) and the Association of Physical Plant Administration (APPA).

The use of these data to drive improvements can be 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.

The Chief Facilities Officer personally surveys each principal annually to assess the performance of the Facilities organization in meeting needs identified by our primary customer, the schools. Attributes quantified are based on needs communicated by our schools during the baseline survey year.

Results are shared with the organization to help incorporate lessons learned and identify areas needing improvement.

GOAL 4

Progress

The facilities survey provides data to drive continuous improvement in our facilities management. 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 FY 2013, all areas were rated between Satisfactory and Outstanding, on average.
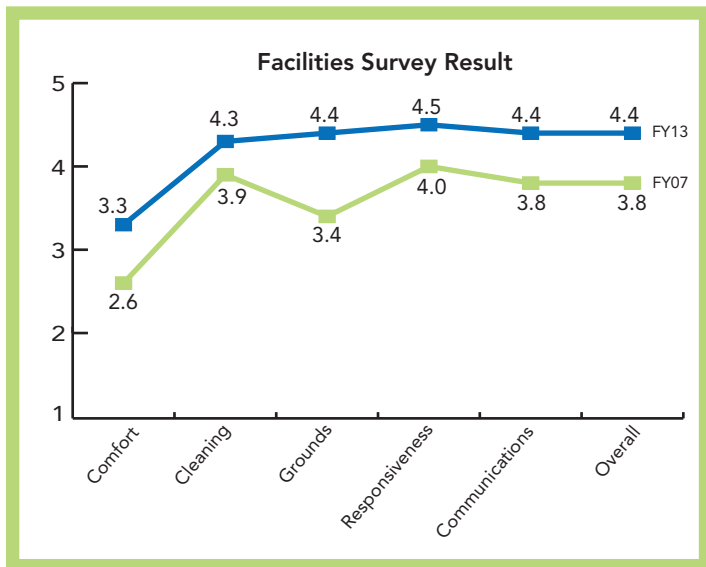
To further understand and improve upon performance within the Facilities division, work order data are analyzed. The division has a goal of addressing all mission critical work requests within 24 hours. Any routine work request that is not completed within 5 days requires feedback to the customer with a plan for addressing and resolving the issue. In FY 2013, 75 percent of work orders were completed in 3 days or less.

Figure 4-14

Work Order Completion Cycle Time FY 2013
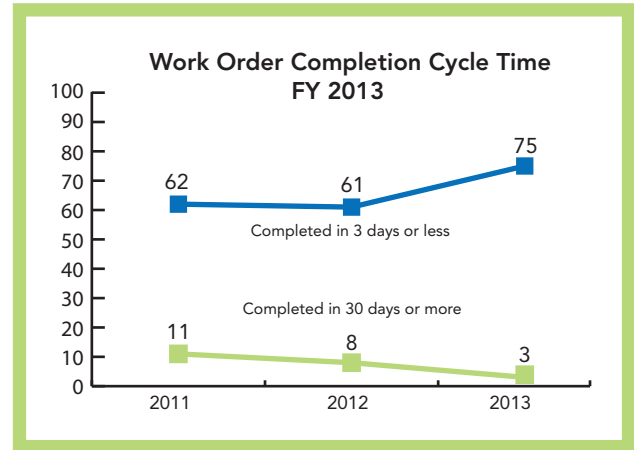
HCPSS facilities processes are also benchmarked against national best practices. Both service levels provided and cost are assessed against similar service providers. Figure 4-15 shows that in FY 2013, maintenance workers per building square foot were benchmarked against International Facilities Management Association (IFMA) and Association of Physical Plant Administration (APPA) best practices, and HCPSS exceeded the standards of both organizations.
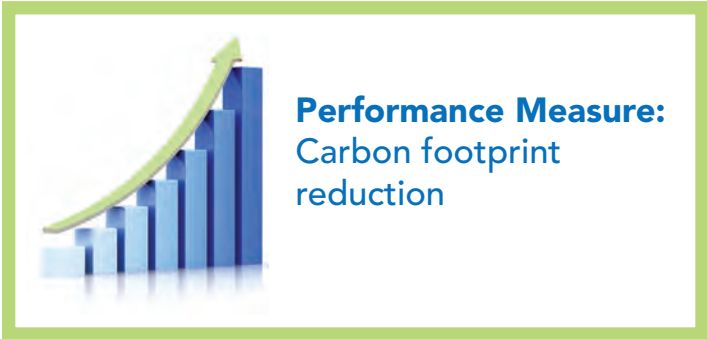
Figure 4-13
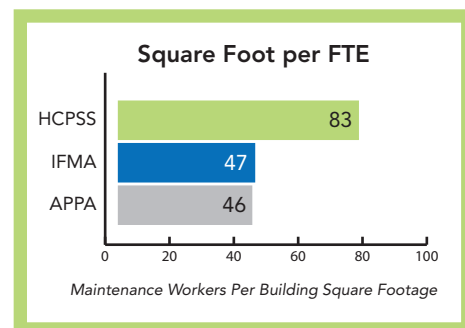
Facilities Survey Result

Figure 4-15

Square Foot per FTE

Maintenance Workers Per Building Square Footage

GOAL 4

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.

Performance Measure:
Carbon footprint reduction

Aligned Vision 2018 Strategy
- 4.5.2: Utilize consistent performance management practices to plan, evaluate, and refine initiatives.

### Description and Value
HCPSS has embraced sustainable practices as both a teaching tool and cost-saving strategy for many years. 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 4-16 demonstrates that despite increasing student enrollment and building usage, the average energy use per square foot within the school system has dropped by about 12 percent since 2008. These savings can be
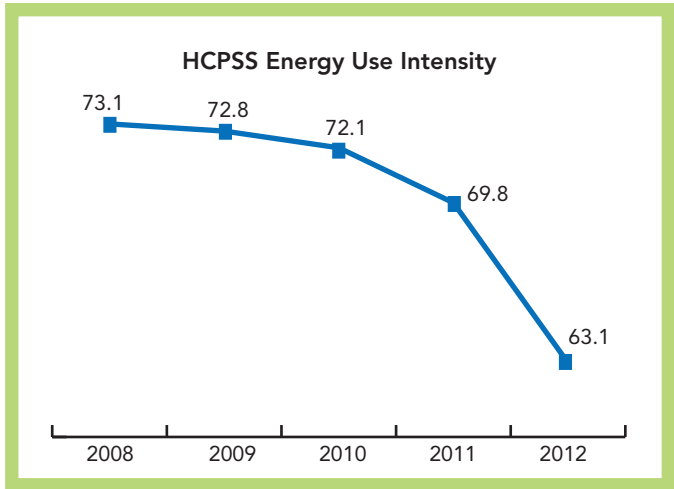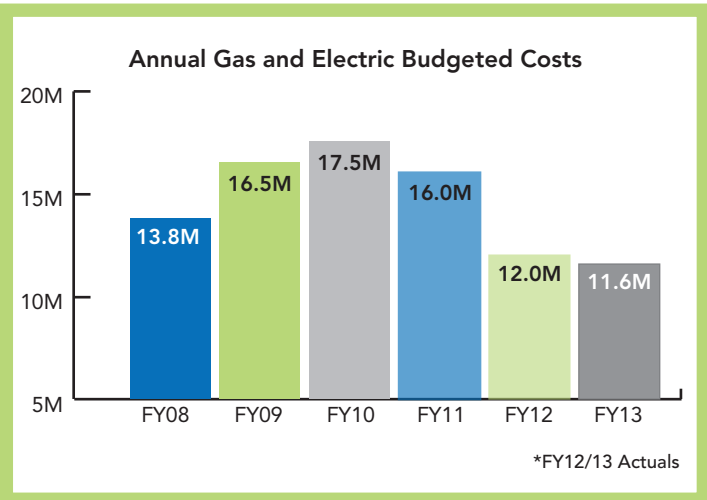
attributed to both behavior change and technology improvements. In 2013, 43 schools had achieved Maryland Association of Outdoor Educators Green School certification, and Dunloggin Middle School was one of the first US Department of Education Green Ribbon schools.

The departments of School Construction and School Facilities have aggressively implemented energy saving strategies over the last decade. Accomplishments have included LEED certification of six buildings, award of BG&E rebates in excess of $1.1M, 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 has been 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 4-17 demonstrates that the FY 2013 actual gas and electric costs were $5.9M below the FY 2010 budgeted costs. In addition, over the last three years we have been approved for over $1.1M 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 are continuing to aggressively pursue technology improvements which have high payback to the system.

Figure 4-16

HCPSS Energy Use Intensity

2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
73.1	72.8	72.1	69.8	63.1

Figure 4-17

Annual Gas and Electric Budgeted Costs

FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13
13.8M	16.5M	17.5M	16.0M	12.0M	11.6M

*FY12/13 Actuals

GOAL 4

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.

Performance Measures:
Operations and maintenance satisfaction

HVAC satisfaction

Figure 4-18

HVAC Comfort
Chief Facilities Officer Survey

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, with our oldest building, West Friendship Elementary School 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 division are designed to achieve these goals.

Over the last five years, the Facilities organization has embraced the adoption of Lean principles and 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 which focuses solely on comprehensive reviews of building equipment and control systems, work normally done by experienced contractors. For the seven schools completed in 2011 and 2012, the actual energy savings for 2013 exceeded $150K, with an additional $105K in rebates received from BG&E for completing that work with in-house employees.

Table 4-F

Percent Maintenance Work Requests Completed				
School	Start Date	Finish Date	MMBTU Savings %	Avoided
Folly Quarter MS	April 2011	September 2011	28.6	$56,400
Fulton ES	May 2011	September 2011	0.5	$3,800
Veterans ES	October 2011	December 2011	11.5	$23,200
Bushy Park ES	December 2011	January 2012	0.9	$1,000
Long Reach HS	January 2012	May 2012	8.0	$28,500
Hammond HS	September 2012	November 2012	4.6	$12,100
River Hill HS	June 2012	November 2012	7.0	$26,300
Average			8.5	$22,000

GOAL 4

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.

Performance Measure:
Continuous
Improvement Program

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 to explore potential ideas and setting an expectation for progress. Progress cannot be achieved solely around a conference table or in a cubicle. It requires the participation of the entire staff and collaboration across departments at every level.

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

The Howard County Public School System 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 which 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.

GOAL 4

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.

Progress

HCPSS led several continuous improvement projects over the past five years using the Lean Six Sigma methodology and implemented change in many areas such as use of Facilities, Maintenance, Custodial, Technology, Transportation, and Human Resources. In March 2013, the district formalized their Lean journey by adding a Continuous Improvement Coordinator position to mentor projects and lead professional development in the area of continuous improvement. Several departments have chartered improvement projects which are aligned to the Vision 2018 strategic plan. Within HCPSS, 69 district employees have completed the intensive 5-day Lean Six Sigma Green Belt course. Staff learn about a broad range of Lean tools which can be applied in many situations. The course is aligned with the American Society of Quality (ASQ) curriculum and HCPSS offers a certification for staff members who apply these methods in multiple projects.

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 including Technology, Communications, Human Resources, Facilities, and Accountability.

Value Stream Maps: Value stream maps graphically display the process and identify wasteful (or "non-value-added") activities. This year, HCPSS staff have generated 14 value stream maps of critical processes to analyze our activities and determine how our work centers 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 five of these events with several more scheduled.

Successes: Here are some highlights from three of the many Lean Six Sigma projects currently active in the school system:

- **Bridge Plans**
  Districtwide, there are approximately 300 Bridge Plan Projects submitted by students for scoring each year. Communication surrounding Bridge Plan

Project expectations lacked clarity and resulted in late submittals, missing elements, and other minor discrepancies preventing compliance with MSDE. These issues required time-consuming follow up actions for the Assessment Office and school personnel as well as potentially delaying scoring or scheduling an adequate number of reviewers to evaluate the projects. Staff interviewed numerous stakeholders and developed a thorough training program to address the questions and errors around this process. Additionally, they developed a mechanism for monitoring project success and identifying where further training might be necessary. The result of this project has been a 75 percent reduction in paperwork errors and rework. The feedback from the school-based staff has been resoundingly positive—there is less frustration, more clarity, and greater time savings.

- **Technology for New Teachers**
  The process for issuing newly-hired teachers access to their technology accounts and their laptops was inconsistent, taking anywhere from 1 week to 5 weeks in some rare cases. New teachers could not immediately access Aspen or their email, two critical applications necessary to carry out their duties. In a pilot this year, the Technology and Human Resources departments changed the process for issuing technology and 210 newly-hired teachers received their laptops and accounts on the day they reported for New Teacher Orientation. This project is continuing in order to extend this improvement to teachers and staff hired outside of the summer hiring window.

- **Online Transfer Requests**
  Each year, teachers desiring a transfer submit up to 40 pages of transfer forms to multiple schools where they would like to transfer. The mail room and warehouse process an estimated 250–300 mail bins annually within a three-week period to move these Voluntary Transfer Forms.

  This year, transfer forms will be submitted electronically. The anticipated results will extend systemwide:
  - Hours of labor saved from having to sort these in the Mail Room
  - Hours of labor saved by Warehouse Staff moving these through the school system
  - Pages of printing saved on our district copiers print count
  - Hours of labor saved by school-based support staff who were previously tracking and managing the receipt of these forms
  - Hours saved in HR labor having to sort these forms on the receiving end
  - Miles saved by teachers who would hand-deliver their forms to Central Office
  - Reams of paper printed to fill these bins

Why now? HCPSS is evolving with many changes. Our staff is working to implement many new programs as well as Vision 2018. Lean Six Sigma is a tool to achieve those goals. Taking a moment to slow down and analyze our process can result in faster, more efficient progress. These efficiencies translate into more time and resources for our core focus—our students.

School districts have seen astounding results in many areas: energy management, graduation rates, technology support, print services, transportation, hiring processes, payroll, warehouse, logistics, scheduling, food services, textbook acquisition, and discipline. Virtually any work we perform can be examined as a process.

The DMAIC Approach

Define

Measure

Analyze

Improve

Control

The DMAIC Approach
DMAIC 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 which yields lasting results.

GOAL 4

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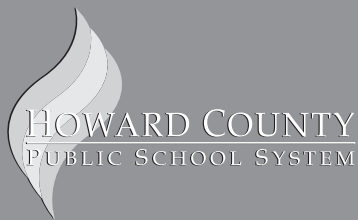
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