

BELLINGHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT
Bellingham, Washington

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Dr. Greg Baker, Superintendent

DATE: May 18, 2017

SUBJECT: Ends 1.0, 2.0, and 3.0 Monitoring Report 2016-17

I am pleased to submit this Ends monitoring report to the school district's board of directors. This report includes a representation of our work this year in Ends 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0. As with last year's report, we have embedded opportunities for board review of examples that highlight different *Promise* outcomes observed throughout regular 2016-17 meetings, school visits and linkages. We have also relied on the archive of examples of the district's work in each of the outcome areas that are highlighted on the *Promise* website, as well as embedding quantitative data elements where appropriate and available. With this approach, our staff has once again generated a final report that offers a brief definition and a quality example or two of individual student or group activity in each outcome area, but does not recount every possible example. The report attempts to paint a balanced picture for the board, showing examples of where we know we have strengths, but also highlighting areas that we need to continue to grow to make our school system work better for students. The report closes with a look ahead, and outlines some future work for focus.

By way of reminder, this Ends monitoring report is intended to serve as both an analytic and evaluative tool that allows us to:

- Demonstrate a reasonable interpretation of Ends 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0, focusing specifically on evidence of progress;
- Identify areas where our interpretation does not align with our mission and outcomes;
- Use evidence of various kinds to demonstrate progress toward achievement of these Ends; and
- Review our Ends to ensure they remain relevant and inspire meaningful work throughout the organization and community.

Brief Summary of the Report Highlights

- The vision and mission of the *Bellingham Promise* are alive in district communications and practices.
- The district's four- and five-year graduation rates are up significantly over the past six years.

- Bellingham students’ performance on SBAC generally outperforms the state in both ELA and Math. The data suggest we have more work to do in literacy, particularly with supporting young students to read proficiently by grade 3.
- We’ve experienced a successful third year in the work to implement the new PreK-12 math curriculum materials adoption. Evidence of curriculum use is prevalent across the system.
- A curriculum and materials recommendation for middle school social studies grades 6-8 is in preparation. Materials open for public review now.
- We’ve seen a dramatic increase in high school course offerings for students in science, technology, art, drama, music and career and technical education with the implementation of the new 4x8 schedule.
- Improvements are needed in terms of access to advanced STEM courses and music courses for our subpopulations of Hispanic, bilingual, low income and students with IEPs.
- We are currently examining the state of instruction in physical and health education through the Developing Healthy & Active subcommittee. We will use what is learned to plan deeper programmatic work around social-emotional learning for the 2017-18 school year.
- The data suggest we need to continue to support students’ higher engagement in physical activity, and improve our proportion of students eligible for free and/or reduced price meals in extracurricular opportunities.
- We began the 1:1 staff pilot in three schools that will springboard new instructional practices and uses of technology in the classroom, building teachers’ skills in the integration of technologies in the content areas.
- The data suggest need for continued work to improve chronic student absences.
- The data suggest more work is needed around social emotional learning, and how this translates into helping students develop as respectful and compassionate humans. This will be a major focus for system work moving forward.
- The “94” project gave us new insights into the trials of students who struggle and don’t graduate on time or drop out of school. More intentional mining of the post-high school experience of Bellingham graduates can help inform actions in the system.

Introduction

The report details evidence on Ends 1.0, Ends 2.0 and Ends 3.0. To review, the Ends policies are as follows:

Ends 1.0: Strategic Vision and Mission

Vision: We, as a community, make a collective commitment to Bellingham’s children. We will empower every child to discover and develop a passion, contribute to their community, and achieve a fulfilling and productive life.

Mission: We collectively commit that our students are cared for and respected, and that they will graduate from our schools prepared for success in the global community. Each will be exceptional in his or her own way, with strong character, a passion for learning, and ready for the widest range of educational and vocational options to support a diversity of life choices.

Ends 2.0: Academic Achievement

Bellingham Public Schools is committed to developing students and graduates who are:

- Readers and writers
- Scientists and mathematicians

- Historians and global thinkers
- Artists, performers and trades people
- Healthy, active individuals
- Multilingual readers and speakers
- Skilled users of technology and information.

Ends 3.0: Skills and Attributes

Bellingham Public Schools is committed to developing students and graduates who are:

- Critical thinkers and problem-solvers
- Effective communicators
- Leaders, collaborators and team players
- Dependable and responsible workers
- Innovators and creators
- Confident individuals who continuously challenge themselves
- Respectful and compassionate humans
- Honest and ethical citizens who act with integrity
- Well-rounded community members engaged with the broader world.

In the paragraphs that follow, the report details the sources of evidence used, how that evidence was compiled and analyzed, and provides examples culled from that analysis to highlight the school district’s work on Ends 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0 in separate sections. The report concludes with a reflection on progress to date and some suggested guidance for how the school district should respond in the future to what was learned through this process about identified needs in specific outcome areas.

Data Sources and Analytic Process

Data sources supporting this year’s report include examples of outcomes noted in regular school board business meetings, board linkages, board visits to schools, Promise website stories, as well as information from other individual accounts that came through emails or direct observation. We also have relied on additional quantitative data sources available via the Healthy Youth Survey which is the statewide survey given every other year starting in 6th grade and the Panorama school culture and climate surveys being given at many of our schools.

Ends 1.0: Definition and Examples of the *Bellingham Promise* Vision and Mission

The vision that guides the *Bellingham Promise* specifies that as a community, we will empower every child to discover and develop a passion, contribute to their community and achieve a fulfilling and productive life. The mission statement in the *Promise* notes that we “collectively commit that our students are cared for and respected and that they will graduate prepared for success in the global community.” We also have taken a stand that initially was viewed by some as controversial stating that as part of our mission “all children should be loved” in the Bellingham schools.

So where and how do we see that the vision and mission are being enacted in our work as a school district and community? First, it is evident in listening to conversations around the district throughout the year, including those conversations that occur in board meeting settings, that the *Bellingham Promise* is alive and well as a central source of guidance for our work in the school district. While the nature of this evidence is largely anecdotal, it is not uncommon to hear references to the *Promise* in our daily work – in schools, in community meetings, from staff

members, from parents, from community members and from members of our administrative team. Our community reads and references our work; one piece of evidence of this connection is the fact that the *Promise* website has received over 28,000 unique page views this year to date. The document continues to provide a touchstone for our work and, as opposed to many strategic plans that get vetted, written and put in a notebook, the two pages that hold the key tenets of the *Promise* have become part of the lexicon of our district.

What results from these conversations about the *Promise*? We believe one big picture view of how this “word of mouth” phenomenon impacts our district is represented in the quality of the applicants desiring positions with our district. Accounts from our Human Resources department suggest that we have attracted some of the strongest pools of applicants in recent memory this hiring season. This includes applicants who are outstanding veteran teachers and leaders from surrounding districts who tell us they are drawn to the vision and mission of our district. For example, our recent elementary principal hires included two highly skilled veteran leaders who have both built successful track records as principals in other districts in our region, but who deliberately sought to come here to work in our system. We see this trend as evidence that our district’s vision and mission are known, embraced and compelling to others both here in Bellingham and across the region.

When we collaboratively developed the *Bellingham Promise* in 2012, one of the biggest tensions was whether we believe and act upon that idea that all children should be loved. Five years later, these words have turned into incredible actions in our schools, on our buses, playgrounds and out in our community. Research strongly supports that when students feel loved, supported and connected to staff or a positive adult role model, student achievement and many other desired outcomes for students vastly improve. Therefore, this spring we’ve put out what we are calling the “Loving Our Kids Challenge.” We’ve asked for any of our staff who are willing to share to tell their students they love them, capture the moment(s) with a video or photo, and share it with us before the school year ends. We plan to choose some to share at our all staff back-to-school event on August 22, 2017 and will be pleased to share these results with the board as they emerge.

Finally, with regard to our vision and mission to graduate students prepared for success, we were pleased to note that our overall graduation rates rose once again this year. As noted in an earlier Ends report, Bellingham students’ overall five-year graduation rate is up 10% over the past six years, increasing from 79% in 2010 to 89% in 2015. Relative to the three high-performing comparable districts we gauge our progress against (Olympia, Shoreline and Bellevue), Bellingham’s graduation rates have closed the gap with rates in those systems significantly over this time period. In 2010, our nearest high-performing comparable district from this group was graduating students at a rate 10% above ours. Fast forward to 2015 and our five-year rate is now approaching that of Shoreline (2% difference) and is within 5% of Olympia. In terms of the big picture, the data suggests that our graduation rates have increased substantially over the past six years, and now position us well above the median of the fifty comparable districts in our larger comparison group, and much nearer our three high-performing comparable peer districts.

A true mark of “prepared for success” is how well graduates do as they enter into the next set of opportunities post-high school. We are also pleased that the data on Bellingham graduates’ persistence in post-secondary education opportunities (noted in an earlier report) appears to be quite strong. That said, we know that when we tease out the specific graduation rates of our

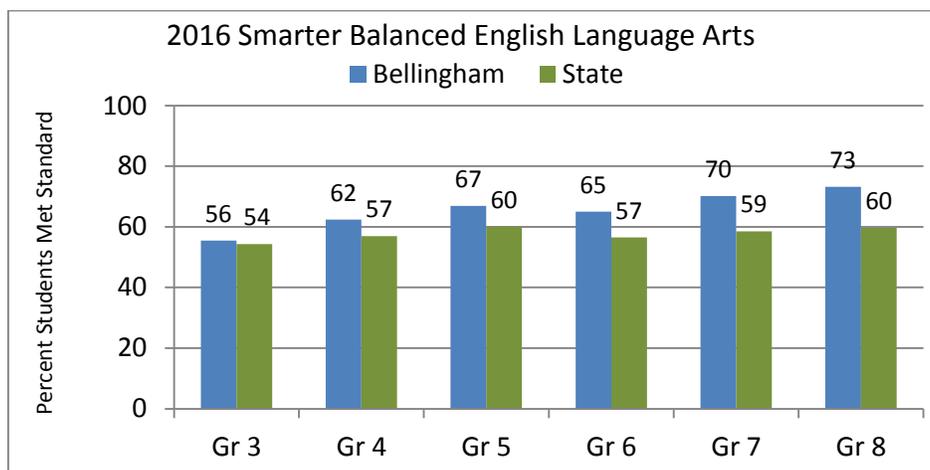
identified subgroups there is much more work to be done. Issues of language, race and disability are all factors that can impede students' paths to graduation, and compounding all of these challenges is the factor of poverty. Students who come to us eligible for free and/or reduced price meals are far less likely than their non-eligible peers to graduate successfully from our schools. We can do more for our students challenged by poverty to help ensure their successful completion of high school in our district. And, it will continue to take the village -- the entire Bellingham community -- to comprehensively address these issues.

Ends 2.0: Examples

Ends 2.0 focuses on seven outcomes centered on achievement. In the sections that follow, we offer an example or two of our work toward each of these outcomes. Many sections conclude with a link to specific pages on the *Promise* website, where we continue to archive many examples of student success across the district.

- **Readers and Writers**

Efforts to support student learning in the areas of reading and writing continues to be at the heart of our academic work as a school district. As the graphic below reveals, our students outperformed the state on the Smarter Balanced ELA test once again this year, with the gap between the state and our scores widening as the grade levels ascend. That said, we have



continuing work to do, particularly with our earliest readers. Initial data that is returning on the spring 2017 third grade SBAC scores suggests that we still have many students who are not achieving grade level proficiency on this exam in third grade, and in fact it appears that our third grade scores may drop from the 2016 mark. We are wondering what factors may be contributing to this phenomenon. The test calls for students to have a fairly high level of proficiency with computer skills, as it is given on a computer. For many of our third graders, these skills are new to them as they approach the test-taking experience. The test is also text heavy, and because most of our students take the test on laptop computers, we're wondering if the need for additional computer navigation skills may be an issue for some students. We also have made an intentional shift to privilege professional development for teachers in the area of mathematics,

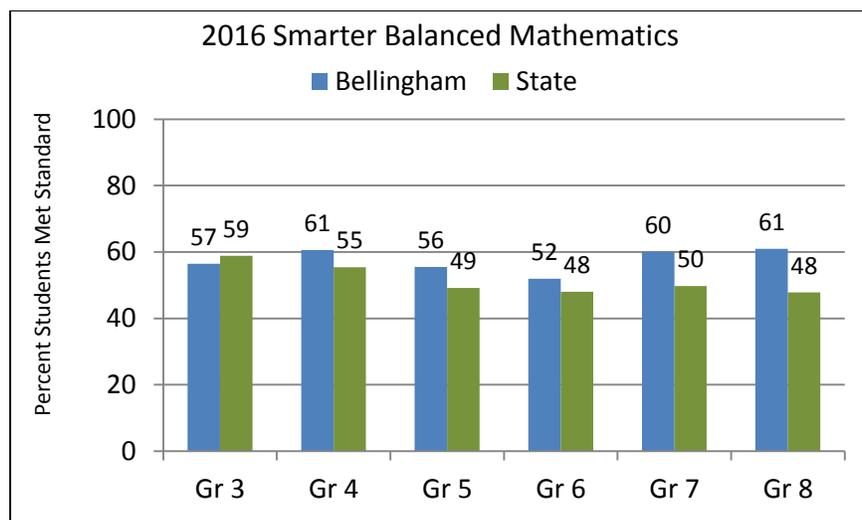
given our new math adoption, and we're wondering how to make sure we maintain the strong focus on literacy teaching that we had prior to the math adoption.

In terms of new interventions in the area of literacy, we doubled the participation of students in the summer Promise Academy, and results continue to suggest that intervention is helpful not only for keeping students from experiencing a summer learning loss, but also in moving a number of students up to standard over the course of the summer. We will once again run Promise Academy in the summer of 2017, and continue to keep our focus on improving literacy achievement during the school year.

- **Scientists and Mathematicians**

Our efforts to support learning in math and science continued in various ways this year. Much work is underway across the district as our teachers have continued through the third year of implementation of our Pre-K through Algebra 2 curriculum adoption in mathematics, building their knowledge and skills through a series of professional development experiences at each grade level. The implementation of a new curriculum requires a deep commitment by our staff to learning as they go. The curricula we adopted ask different things of teachers and students, and this change takes time, so continuing the learning and staying at the wheel of implementation is crucial.

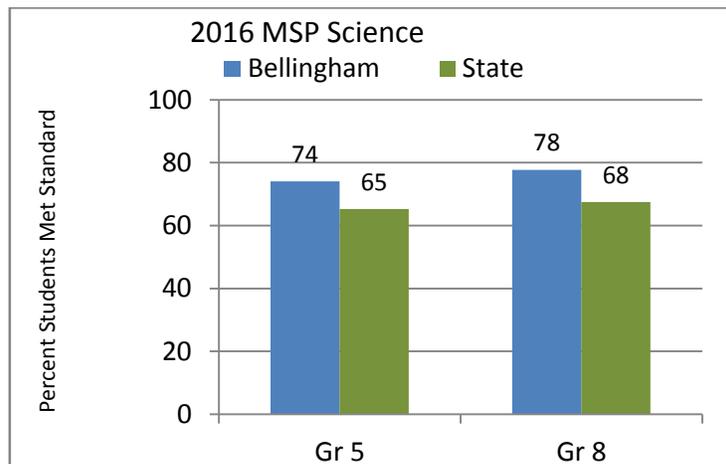
Mathematics achievement as measured by the Smarter Balanced state assessment suggests that our Bellingham students achieved at levels above the state in all grade levels except for grade 3. As noted in an earlier report, some slight dips in year-over-year performance were noted in the area of math. Given that this data represents the performance of students who experienced the



new math curriculum adoption during the middle of their experience in our district, it is not unexpected to see a performance dip. We would anticipate that, as grade levels who have experienced the full continuum of the updated math curriculum that is specifically designed to align with the standards that underpin the Smarter Balanced test, we would expect to see math scores pick back up and hopefully ascend. We also know from our earlier report this year that

student growth percentiles in the area of math showed that Bellingham students at the grade levels we analyzed grew their math achievement at a higher rate than some of our comparable high performing districts.

Science achievement outpaced the state at both grades 5 and 8 again this year, as measured by the MSP test in science (see the graphic below). These results are consistent with trends we've observed in prior years on the science MSP. We also had some notable individual student, team



and staff accomplishments in the areas of math and science this year. Geneva principal Steve Ruthford was selected to serve as a faculty member on the Washington State Leadership and Assistance for Science Education Reform (LASER) STEM education leadership institute during the last part of June. This week-long residential experience is an event designed to prepare schools, school districts or regional teams to develop STEM-focused efforts. With the adoption of the 2013 Washington State Science Learning Standards educators statewide need support to make the changes implicit in WSSLS. We are fortunate to have Steve representing our district in that important work.

In addition, two Bellingham Public Schools students took honors at the Washington State Science and Engineering Fair (WSSEF) held in Bremerton this spring. Shuksan Middle School sixth grader Celeste Fisher took first place in her division for her project, “Visuals of Subatomic Particles.” Her younger brother and Northern Heights Elementary student Mason Fisher took first place for the second grade division for his project called, “Friction on my RC car.” Celeste also competed in the Whatcom County Science Fair, earning third place overall. See more on their story at:

<http://promise.bellinghamschools.org/2017/04/26/students-receive-honors-washington-state-science-engineering-fair/>

We were also represented at regional competitions in the areas of math and science. For example, Sehome’s Science Olympiad took more than 200 students to the regional competition at Seattle Central Community College on March 4. Every science teacher at Sehome attended as well as alumni, parents and retired science teachers. Sehome High School qualified two teams

(about 30 students) to move on to the state tournament. Sehome senior Jackson Schroyer participated in the electric vehicle, hovercraft, hydrogeology and experimental design events in the regional competition and will advance to state. He has participated in Science Olympiad for three years. Schroyer noted, "It's the best club at Sehome and a great experience for all involved." See more about this story at:

<http://promise.bellinghamschools.org/2017/03/22/sehome-goes-to-science-olympiad/>

Our students also represented their schools well in the recent Whatcom County Math Championship. Teams from Kulshan, Fairhaven, Whatcom, Silver Beach, Happy Valley and Wade King all placed, including first place finishes from Kulshan's 8th grade team, Fairhaven's 7th and 6th grade teams and Wade King's 4th grade team.

In addition, individual Bellingham students swept the first place awards, including Sam Coble, first place 8th grade (Kulshan); Kieran Murphy, first place 7th grade (Fairhaven); Ryan Ching, first place 6th grade (Fairhaven); James Murphy, first place 5th grade (Wade King); and Ethan Kuzin, first place 4th grade (Wade King.) Read more about this effort at:

<https://promise.bellinghamschools.org/2017/02/27/2017-whatcom-county-math-championship-results/>

Finally, with the advent of the new high school 4x8 schedule, our science teachers have been engaged in planning and developing exciting new high school course offerings in the area of science. The 4x8 schedule should allow students more opportunities to pursue passion areas, and for those students with a high interest in science or science-related careers, new course opportunities in Ocean Science, Astronomy and Forensics are available as elective options. As students registered this spring, we've noticed high interest in these new course opportunities, and multiple sections of these courses will be offered across the schools next fall.

- **Historians and Global Thinkers**

Our efforts in history and social studies education built on the beginning curriculum and materials review and alignment process that began in 2015-16. The most acute curricular needs in the area of social studies have been at the secondary level, and over the course of the spring of 2017, we convened a committee of middle school teachers who are in the process of formulating a proposal for adoption of new curriculum materials for middle school grades 6-8. Materials under consideration are currently available for public review, and pending that review a recommendation will be forwarded from the committee.

Course planning and development work is also underway at the high school level in preparation for the new 4x8 schedule; the expanded high school schedule will support new courses in the area of history and social studies. Across the district this coming fall, new sections of AP Micro/Macro Economics, as well as a new course in Criminology will be offered as part of our expansion in this area. Both of these courses have been of high interest to students during registration processes this spring.

Other efforts showcase individual students' accomplishments in this *Promise* outcome area. Four Bellingham Public Schools students were selected as National Geographic State Bee

semifinalists and competed in the 2017 Washington Geographic State Bee. The Geography Bee is sponsored by the National Geographic Society to encourage the study of geography. It is open to all students in grades 4 to 8 under the age of 15. The first place prize in the national competition is a \$25,000 college scholarship. The semifinalists were Christian Schwarz, a Happy Valley Elementary fifth grader; Lucy Bankowski, a Lowell Elementary fifth grader; Diane Park, a Fairhaven seventh grader; and Nigel Naylor, a Whatcom eighth grader. The state Geography Bee was held Friday, March 31 at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma.

<https://promise.bellinghamschools.org/2017/05/09/students-compete-national-geographic-state-bee/>

Our district also hosted a group of visiting Chinese educators this year, a continuation of ongoing cultural exchange between China and our district that enhances global-mindedness. Since 2012, Bellingham Public Schools has participated in the Chinese Bridge Delegation, sponsored by and funded by the College Board and the Confucius Institute. Every year, district administrators join other teams from across the U.S. to learn about Chinese culture and explore developing relationships with Chinese schools that enhance global perspectives and understanding. The visiting group of ten Chinese educators received a summary about educational systems in the United States and the state of Washington from some of our Directors of Teaching and Learning, including our instructional framework and teacher evaluation system, professional development model, and our early childhood approach. They spent the majority of their time in Bellingham visiting our schools, including touching base with our teachers of Mandarin. Students and staff had an opportunity to showcase work, unique school initiatives and strong instructional practices. Students served as leaders and school ambassadors taking the delegation on tours and sharing information about their schools. Several of our musical groups had the opportunity to perform. Teachers and students were able to interact with the visitors, learning about schools in China, and were exposed to native Chinese language conversation. The visiting Chinese teachers taught lessons in two of our schools about Chinese New Year and Spring Festival. Students learned about the historical legend on which the Spring Festival holiday is based and created Chinese paper cuts. See more about the visit at:

<https://promise.bellinghamschools.org/2017/04/20/chinese-delegation-visits-district/>

- **Artists, Performers and Trades People**

Our focus on the arts, music and career and technical (CTE) programs continued this year, with the further expansion of program offerings, and many opportunities for students to showcase their talents. New courses in CTE, music and art are a highlight of the new high school 4x8 schedule. In the area of career and technical education, our high school schedule now includes a 9th grade class focused specifically on developing technology literacy offered at all schools. This effort will support the 1:1 computing effort that is underway across our schools. Other new CTE offerings include the expansion of sports medicine, woodworking and a new program in aerospace manufacturing that will be offered in the new Options high school facility. New art courses include opportunities in jewelry making, drawing and painting. Music offerings will expand to include guitar at all the schools.

Many of our students excelled in these areas this year. For example, a number of Bellingham music students qualified for the National Association for Music Educators (Northwest

Division) Conference. High school musicians submitted audition recordings in the fall 2016 and a select few were accepted into the All-Northwest ensembles that included students from the entire Northwest region of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, Wyoming.

Students chosen for this honor included the following. From Bellingham High School: Chris Hayner, bassoon; Luke Springer, trumpet; Elena Bauer, french horn; Zach Murdzia, oboe; Ben Axlund, voice; Olivia Brice, voice; Abigail Chase, voice; Aaron McInnis, voice; Jarred Main, voice. From Sehome High School: Mary From, Violin; Linnea Devange, voice; Marshall Lynch, voice; Damien Bashaw, voice; Melanie McCoy, voice; Elsie Dank, voice; and Ben Legan, voice. From Squalicum High School: Izzy Buri, voice; Kenji Maeda, voice; Sarah Maeda, voice; Tristan Wine, voice; and Mehar Singh, voice. Read more about this honor at:

<https://promise.bellinghamschools.org/2017/02/03/high-school-singersmusicians-head-to-all-state-conference-in-february-2017/>

Art students' accomplished work has also been on display this spring. The halls of the district office are currently decked out with art pieces from students across our schools as a part of the Children's Art Walk sponsored annually by Allied Arts of Whatcom County. In addition, artwork from all Bellingham high schools is on display at the Jansen Art Center in Lynden from May 4 to 26 as part of the *Promising Futures: Whatcom County High School Student Art* showcase. High school art teachers request pieces of art from students to display and there are only a limited number of spots available. About 48 pieces of art created by our students were selected for the show. The exhibit includes drawings, paintings, ceramics and digital art. Read more at:

<https://promise.bellinghamschools.org/2017/05/09/students-display-work-promising-futures-art-show/>

We also continue to look at issues of equity and access in our music, art, drama and CTE programs. Consistent with the trends we observed last year, equitable access to CTE courses is strong. The composition index below shows the relative composition of CTE courses by the subgroups we track. A score of "1.0" indicates a perfectly proportionate relationship of the course enrollment rates compared with overall enrollment by subgroup. Students within the identified subgroups are accessing CTE courses at a rate that is almost exactly proportional.

High School Students Enrolled in Career/Technology Education Courses, 2015-16

Student Sub Groups

ETHNICITY / RACE	Students	Proportions		Composition Index			
Hispanic		15.36%	15.82%	0.0000	1.03	3.0000	Mild
White		68.04%	66.2%	0.0000	0.97	3.0000	Mild

PROGRAM	Students	Proportions		Composition Index			
Bilingual Education		4.64%	4.52%	0.0000	0.97	3.0000	Mild
Free/Reduced Lunch		38.77%	37.7%	0.0000	0.97	3.0000	Mild
Special Education		12.64%	12.56%	0.0000	0.99	3.0000	Good

While these data paint a positive overall picture, we dug a little deeper to inquire about the participation rates of students in our identified subgroups who are enrolled in CTE and advanced science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) courses. These include courses such as AP Biology, AP Calculus, AP Physics, Engineering Tech, Manufacturing Tech and the like. This picture tells a somewhat different story that includes the fact that female students are underrepresented, as well as students in all four identified subgroup populations. The data displayed below show, for example, that female students' proportionality index in these advanced courses stands at a rate of .78 and, conversely, males are overrepresented. Similarly, Hispanic students are proportionally underrepresented (.77), as are bilingual students (.65), students eligible for free and/or reduced price meals (.74) and students on IEPs (.59). So, while the picture overall in CTE courses looks mostly proportionally balanced, we identified the fact that students in our examined subgroups are underrepresented in advanced courses in the STEM areas.

High School Students Enrolled in CTE and Advanced STEM Courses, 2015-16

Student Sub Groups

SEX	Students	Proportions		Composition Index			
SEX	Female	48.72%	38.13%	0,0000	0.78	3,0000	Significant
	Male	51.27%	61.86%	0,0000	1.21	3,0000	Significant

ETHNICITY / RACE	Students	Proportions		Composition Index			
ETHNICITY / RACE	Hispanic	15.29%	11.72%	0,0000	0.77	3,0000	Significant
	White	68.35%	71.4%	0,0000	1.04	3,0000	Mild

PROGRAM	Students	Proportions		Composition Index			
PROGRAM	Bilingual Education	4.68%	3.05%	0,0000	0.65	3,0000	Significant
	Free/Reduced Lunch	37.57%	27.74%	0,0000	0.74	3,0000	Significant
	Special Education	12.31%	7.24%	0,0000	0.59	3,0000	Severe

Proportional representation of identified student subgroups in art and drama courses improved this year over last. The data below reveal, for example, that Hispanic students, bilingual students and students eligible for free and/or reduced price meals were proportionally well-represented in art and drama courses for 2016. The proportionality index for bilingual students rose from .79 a year ago to 1.12 this year; for students eligible for free and/or reduced price meals, the index rose from .88 to .92. Students receiving special education services were slightly underrepresented, but participation levels were more equitable than in the prior year. Proportionality index for this group rose from .83 last year to .87 this year.

High School Students Enrolled in Arts and Drama Courses, 2015-16

Student Sub Groups

ETHNICITY / RACE	Students	Proportions		Composition Index			
Hispanic		15.36%	15.52%	0.0000	1.01	3.0000	Good
White		68.04%	69.28%	0.0000	1.02	3.0000	Good

PROGRAM	Students	Proportions		Composition Index			
Bilingual Education		4.64%	5.2%	0.0000	1.12	3.0000	Mild
Free/Reduced Lunch		38.77%	35.68%	0.0000	0.92	3.0000	Mild
Special Education		12.64%	10.96%	0.0000	0.87	3.0000	Mild

Music courses continue to be the area where our identified student subgroups are out of line in terms of proportional representation. This picture got worse not better in year-over-year comparisons. We see declines in the proportional representation of students from all four identified sub-groups this year compared with last. The proportion of Hispanic students enrolled in music courses dropped from .63 in 2015 to .56 in this year's data. Bilingual, free and/or reduced priced meals and special education populations all declined slightly as well. Bilingual students' participation was the most out of line proportionally; only 12 bilingual students participated in music courses out of a population of 181 this past year.

High School Students Enrolled in Music Courses, 2015-16

Student Sub Groups

ETHNICITY / RACE	Students	Proportions		Composition Index			
Hispanic		15.36%	8.63%	0.0000	0.56	3.0000	Severe
White		68.04%	73.97%	0.0000	1.09	3.0000	Mild

PROGRAM	Students	Proportions		Composition Index			
Bilingual Education		4.64%	1.64%	0.0000	0.35	3.0000	Severe
Free/Reduced Lunch		38.77%	26.3%	0.0000	0.68	3.0000	Significant
Special Education		12.64%	6.98%	0.0000	0.55	3.0000	Severe

We continue to work on this picture, and our hope and intention is that the inclusion of a guitar option at all high schools will heighten the proportional representation of our students' participation in this important area of the curriculum.

- **Healthy, Active Individuals**

Our work continues in expanding various aspects of our programs related to supporting health and fitness. This broad-based effort includes elements of what students learn and do during school related to health and fitness, what students eat at school, what opportunities they have for fitness-related activities after school, and what supports our teachers' abilities to teach well in the area of health and fitness. The Healthy and Active Individuals Advisory group continues to work on ways to improve access to health and wellness opportunities for students. Out of this process, we anticipate a set of recommendations for next steps regarding the development of curriculum and instruction, as well as extracurricular opportunities related to this content area. A number of our elementary schools have switched to a "recess before lunch" approach to ensure that students have adequate time to eat without rushing out to the playground. Our food service effort around the development of a central kitchen that will provide "scratch" cooking for our students is ramping up with the hiring of Patrick Durgan as Executive Chef and Director of Food Services. We also continue to look at how our nursing support services are staffed, and have a budget proposal in the works to improve the ratio of nurses to students in our schools.

As a part of our data gathering, analysis and reporting this year, we've once again relied on some aspects of the Healthy Youth Survey (HYS) that is given every other year in our system. As a reminder, the HYS is a collaborative effort of the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Department of Health, the Department of Social and Health Services Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery, and the Liquor and Cannabis Board. It provides important information about youth in Washington that can be used to identify trends in the patterns of behavior over time. Students in grades 6, 8, 10 and 12 answer questions about safety and violence, physical activity and diet, alcohol, tobacco and other drug use, and related risk and protective factors.

Last year, we included data from this survey on 8th and 10th graders due to our belief that the validity and reliability of the data was most robust in those two grade levels. We have once again included data on the percentage of students participating in afterschool activities adding the comparison of the 2016 information with other years dating back to 2008. Page 1 of Appendix A shows a continuation of the trend of more Bellingham students in grades 8 and 10 engaged in three or more days of afterschool activity than the state average. These data trended down slightly, however, in year-over-year comparisons between 2014 and 2016. Of greater concern, perhaps, are the percentages of students who met the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDCP) recommendations for physical activity (page 2 of Appendix A). This data shows a year-over-year drop at grade 10 of Bellingham students engaged in the recommended levels of physical activity each week (7 days per week; 60 minutes per day), no change at grade 8, and that at both grade levels these percentages are below the state averages for physical activity. One note on this data – the CDCP recommendations are for students to be active to the point of raising their heart rates for 60 mins every day—7 days per week. Our data on Bellingham students is arrayed in such a way that this could be interpreted to suggest that students who don't meet this mark are participating in no physical activity. However, that is not the case. Currently about two-thirds of Bellingham students surveyed are active at this level at least four days per week.

We also looked again at the data on high school participation rates in athletics and contrasted participation against representative levels of students enrolled in free and reduced price meal programs (page 3 of Appendix A arrays the 2015 and 2016 trends). The 2016 data continue to show similar trends to last year's results revealing that student participation in high school athletics disproportionately does not include students eligible for free/reduced price meals. We recognize that poverty is a major overriding negative factor for so many student outcomes. Our hope and intention is that these participation rates will rise in the next survey, and this will be a good test of our theory that reducing financial costs associated with participation in sports programs is a barrier for many students and families.

Finally, on a more positive note, interesting projects are occurring in the area of food education across our schools. With many of our schools now engaged with a school garden project on site, the opportunities to connect to the curriculum and to the lunchroom table are plentiful. Schools are also actively looking for opportunities to connect students in the community around these issues. For example, with a series of classroom "seed-to-table" projects and a trip to Bellewood Acres, Birchwood Elementary students learned first-hand about the numerous challenges in producing apples, from selecting the best apple to grow in our region to how to provide water for the entire orchard, and how to naturally treat apples for sunburns and insects. The students watched the process involved in the sorting of apples and found out that if any apples are not suited for the supermarket, they end up as food for the local cow farm next door. The fifth graders also taste-tested different varieties of apples on their farm field trip. Fifth grade teacher Carolyn Hinshaw explained the numerous lessons embedded in the field trip. "Students learned about how many decisions the orchard owners make to produce apples and to sell them," she says. On the science side of the curriculum, Hinshaw says that the students learned how the "whole environment is used to produce apples. From the sun's energy used to grow them, to the water which provides irrigation, and the planting of other plants that help attract bees the science lessons are many." Director of Wellness Jessica Sankey says one can't underestimate the importance of these kinds of food-related learning experiences. She noted, "Learning who grows our food, how food grows, and seeing where it grows connects each of us to our community, the environment, and helps us make healthy choices for our own bodies." See more about this story at:

<https://promise.bellinghamschools.org/2017/01/13/seed-to-table-curriculum-at-birchwood-elementary/>

- **Multilingual Readers and Speakers**

We continue to work to grow opportunities for world language learning in our elementary schools. This corresponds in part to schools that continue to pursue the International Baccalaureate program. Carl Cozier elementary was recently authorized as an IB program, and both Birchwood and Alderwood elementary schools are in the candidacy process for that program. In addition, with the expansion of the high school schedule, American Sign Language will be offered now at all three comprehensive high schools, and Squalicum has expanded Spanish offerings in the direction of a course taught in Spanish on Latin American culture. Middle school continues to be our biggest area of challenge with regard to language opportunities for students, as the course schedule we are operating under forces students to, at least in some cases, choose language as an elective offering and not participate in other parts of

the elective program. Our hope is to expand the middle school schedule in a way similar to the work this year with the high schools, and we are actively exploring ways to accomplish that task as soon as possible.

In last year's report, we described a new state law that would allow students to earn a "Seal of Biliteracy" in their native languages. That new law has produced great new opportunities for students' native language proficiency to be recognized, valued and granted credit. Eighty-seven students from the Class of 2016 at Bellingham, Sehome and Squalicum high schools were the first to receive this honor in the school district. Students who speak English at home and learned Spanish, French or German in the classroom earned the seal by scoring high on the AP test for that language. (These three languages are the only ones offered at the AP level, but school officials are looking to expand this list.) Students who came to the schools speaking a world language at home took an exam to demonstrate their proficiency. In the Class of 2016, these languages included Chinese, Punjabi, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Thai and Vietnamese. Washington state was an early adopter of the Seal of Biliteracy, which has become a national movement intended to promote language learning for the benefits it provides to our increasingly globalized economy and to students' cognitive development. According to the OSPI website, over 40% of Washington state jobs are tied to international trade, giving students who enter the workforce proficient in other languages in addition to English a competitive edge in the workforce. Read more about the Seal here:

<https://promise.bellinghamschools.org/2017/01/25/grads-can-tout-language-skills-transcript-diploma/>

- **Skilled Users of Technology and Information**

We continue to push forward with the major system-wide work of implementation of the 1:1 student technology initiative. Three pilot schools (Kulshan, Squalicum and Options) began as pilot sites this year with staff professional development. Under the leadership of Director of Teaching and Learning Bill Palmer and Executive Director of Educational Technology Kurt Gazow, we have hired educational technology coaches for each site, staff members have begun to receive their devices and have started the process of integrating more technology into their classroom practices. Students will receive their devices at the three pilot schools this coming fall. Our next wave of 1:1 program schools (all of the remaining high schools, middle schools, and Roosevelt and Carl Cozier elementary schools) have identified tech coaches who will begin this summer with staff development support as they head into their staff learning year with the new technology.

The expansion of CTE experiences happening for students across the district enriches access to various technologies. Of particular interest, the new program being developed in aerospace technology will begin at the new Options High School this fall, and will draw students from across the district. Career and Technical Education Director Jeff Tetrick indicates that the new course will feature topics including aerodynamics, astronautics, space-life sciences, and systems engineering, and will prepare students to apply basic engineering principles and technical skills to the identification and resolution of production problems in the manufacture of products emphasizing skills related to the aerospace industry. Robotics opportunities also continue to be of high interest and high value for students. The Sehome "Seamonsters" robotics team produced

a video as a submission for an award opportunity with FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) that showcases the robotics programs at our Bellingham high schools. See the video here:

<https://promise.bellinghamschools.org/2017/05/01/sehome-seamonsters-produce-video-program/>

Ends 3.0: Data and Examples

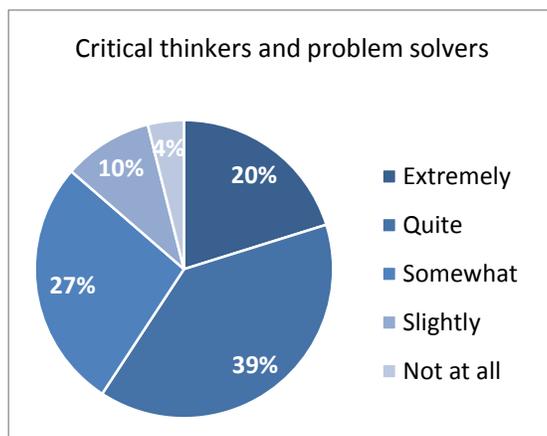
Ends 3.0 focuses on nine outcomes centered on skills and attributes that we seek to foster in our students and graduates. For our report last spring (2016), we included Panorama survey data from those schools that administered the survey and we used that pilot group to refine a list of questions for elementary and secondary students that help to shed light on some of the Ends 3.0 outcomes. We have once again incorporated data from the Panorama student survey, which was given this year in eight of our schools, including seven elementary schools and one middle school. We used feedback on the survey questions from last year to round out the questions we asked in relation to each of the Promise outcomes in this area, so that each outcome area is referenced by multiple questions. The version of the questions is similar at the elementary and secondary level, but worded slightly differently to accommodate for younger readers. On Page 4 of Appendix A, this additional data is arrayed by *Promise* outcomes, and shows the mean score for all students surveyed (5-point scale). Page 5 of the data set arrays the “percent favorable” scores by school, and shows the range of high to low school percentiles. It is important to recognize that, given our stance that the survey was optional for schools once again this year, this data represents a slice of our district, not the entire district. Our intention is that a finalized version of this survey will be utilized in all of the schools beginning next year.

- **Critical Thinkers and Problem-Solvers**

The Panorama data we analyzed in the area of critical thinkers and problem solvers includes responses from a compilation of the eight questions listed below. The questions marked with a “Y” under ES were asked of elementary school students (overall n=677); questions marked with a “Y” under MS were asked of middle school students (overall n=157). The percent favorable

Critical thinkers and problem solvers	ES	MS	% fav
Before starting a difficult project, how often do you think about the best way to do it?	Y		61.0
Before you start on a challenging project, how often do you think about the best way to approach the project?		Y	56.0
How comfortable are you thinking and learning about problems that are not quickly solved?		Y	42.0
How comfortable are you working on problems that take a long time to solve?	Y		49.0
How confident are you that that you know how to determine when information is trustworthy?		Y	47.0
How sure are you that you can figure out when information is useful?	Y		65.0
Overall, how well can you figure out how to learn things?	Y		72.0
When learning more about a complicated topic, how likely are you to change your opinion when you need to?		Y	48.0

column indicates the percentages of students within the populations who answered in the top two categories out of five (5=extremely or always; 4=quite or almost always). The graphic below shows the composite picture of the aggregated data for all respondents for all questions asked.



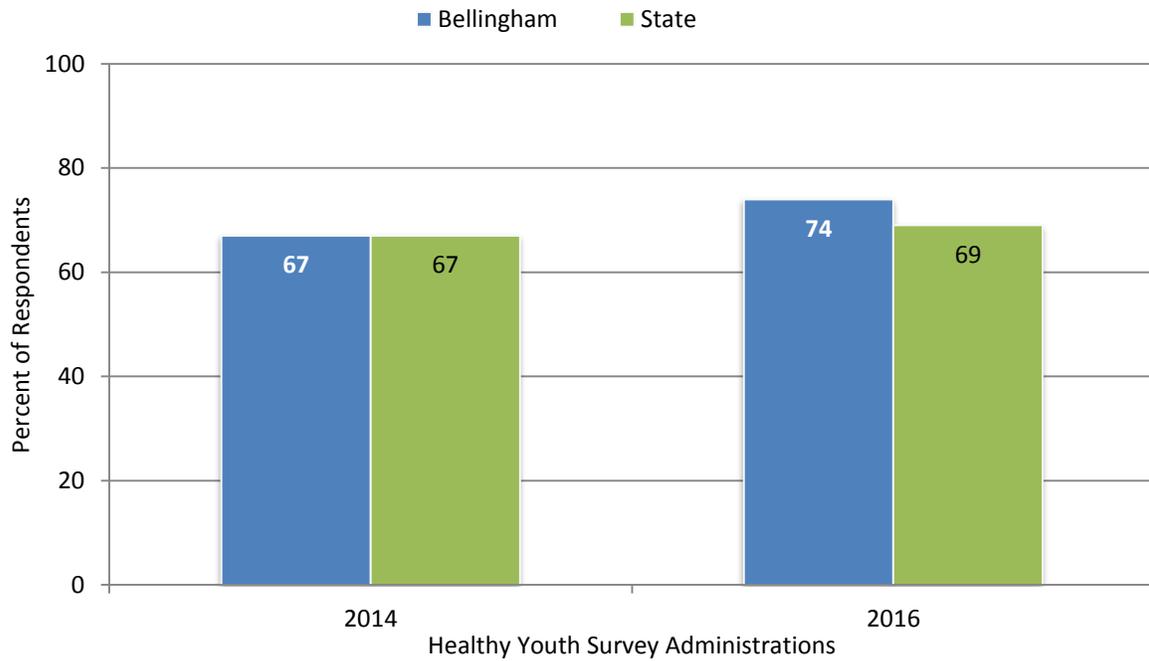
The overall picture suggests a majority of students responded favorably to these questions. The high water mark was elementary students’ response to the question “overall how well can you figure out how to learn things?” (72% favorable) and the low water mark was middle school students’ response to the question “how comfortable are you with thinking and learning about problems that are not quickly solved?” (42% favorable). While the overall percentages are positive, we hope and intend to see these percentages rise over time. With a consistent version of the survey in place, we’ll be able to start to include comparisons year-over-year.

In addition, the Healthy Youth Survey, referenced earlier, includes some items that provide an additional window into how students perceive themselves as problem solvers. In the 2014 survey (data we used to develop last year’s report), these questions were collected under the heading of “problem solving skills”; the 2016 survey asked the same questions, but grouped the responses under the heading of “social emotional skills.” Our read of these is that they still pertain to problem solving, so we are including the data once again in this year’s report. Questions on the survey that relate to problem solving skills included:

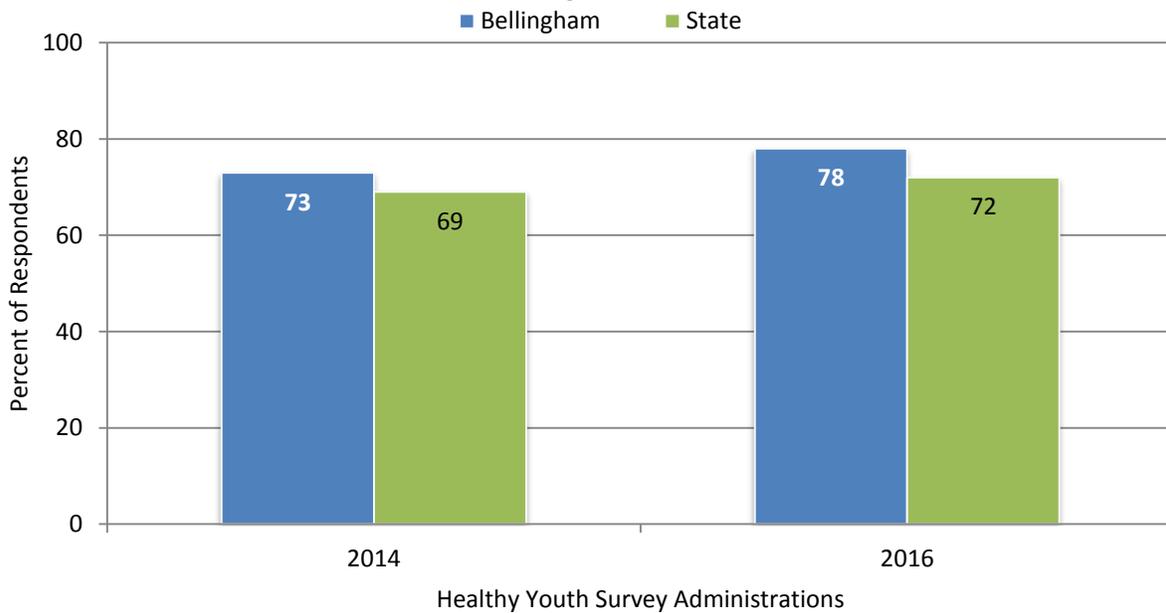
1. I know how to disagree without starting a fight or argument.
2. When I have problems at school, I am good at finding ways to solve them.
3. When I make a decision, I think about what might happen afterward.
4. I get along well with students who are different from me.

Below we array the responses from both 8th and 10th graders, and compare this year’s aggregated responses with those from 2014. As is apparent from the responses, both 8th and 10th grade student responses improved in terms of percent answering favorably from 2014 to 2016.

Problem Solving Behavior: Percent Favorable Among Grade 8 Students in Bellingham and Washington State



Problem Solving Behavior: Percent Favorable in Grade 10 in Bellingham and Washington State



Results suggest that a strong majority of our students responded positively to these prompts, that those responses were at or above state averages by comparison, and that positive responses improved in the year-over-year comparisons.

There are good examples of ways that teachers are engaging Bellingham students in critical thinking and problem-solving across our district. For example, more than 150 Kulshan Middle School seventh graders, their families and caregivers recently gathered together in the Kulshan Commons to share and promote Social Action Projects, designed as a culminating project for their first semester social studies class by teachers Matt Macleod, Minh Nguyen and student teacher Brooke Stromme. The teachers engaged their students in project-based learning; working in small groups, the students selected issues that resonated with them, completed an inquiry cycle, and devised a way to share the project and to even take action in our Bellingham community.

Project-based learning strategies promote classrooms with individualized learning based on interest, student passion and strengths of students. For the Kulshan project, student groups selected important local, national and global issues that included homelessness, youth depression and anxiety, animal rights and abuse and refugees. Some of the most significant outcomes of this project were developing students' critical thinking and problem solving skills as they presented real-world social issues to their peers and families and discussed how they took action. These actions ranged from promoting local organizations that support the social issue, writing letters to local elected officials, creating YouTube informational videos and touring animal shelters to learn about the issues from 'experts' in the field. Social studies teacher Minh Nguyen believes this project helped students "understand, engage and think in solution-oriented ways about problems in our community." See more about this activity at:

<https://promise.bellinghamschools.org/2017/03/28/kulshan-students-share-social-action-projects/>

- **Effective Communicators**

Our work to develop students as effective communicators was on display during several of the board visits to schools this year. At Parkview elementary, for example, a small group of students shared their work as leaders at the school showcasing a schoolwide program to involve students in leadership opportunities. At Shuksan middle school, we were led through a restorative circle process by a small group of students, trained as peer mediators, whose role is to facilitate communication between and among students who have experienced conflict. At Sunnyland elementary, students shared their experiences with the "Leader in Me" program that the school has adopted, and how they practice and live out the habits in their daily lives at the school. Similarly, at Silver Beach elementary, another school that has adopted "Leader in Me", the board visit was completely student-led, from the kids that greeted us at the door, to the presentation and interaction with school board members and the rest of the audience. While these examples are anecdotal in nature, they demonstrate the value that our schools place on developing students' communication and presentation skills.

At the high school level, examples of how we're creating opportunities for students to develop as effective communicators include efforts at student-created media of various kinds and associated activities that hone communication skills. This includes the video and audio production of daily school announcements that engages students in learning and practicing broadcasting skills, school newspapers, blogs, opportunities as student leaders or ambassadors who emcee school assemblies or host guests. We also have a thriving afterschool debate opportunity, the Bellingham United Debate Club, that represents all three comprehensive high schools. In March, teams turned in a powerful showing at the State debate tournament, with a joint Sehome

High/Bellingham High Public Forum team making it all the way to the semi-finals in a 32 team field, Another Sehome team engaged in the Policy debate portion of the tournament beat a nationally-ranked Ingraham HS team in the quarter finals, before losing to the ultimate state champion from Interlake HS (Bellevue) in the semi-finals.

As we are deep into the planning and implementation of the 1:1 computing environment for students, we are also developing approaches to teaching students about the safe and responsible use of technology for communication purposes. This work includes efforts to decrease and ultimately work to eliminate online bullying that can occur through social media platforms, and guidance for families in how to help their students become responsible users of technology.

- **Leaders, Collaborators and Team Players**

We once again examined Panorama student survey responses to a set of questions about leadership and collaboration. These questions were expanded in this year’s survey aiming to give a more robust picture of outcomes in this area. See the questions below. The questions marked with a “Y” under ES were asked of elementary school students (overall n=677); questions marked with a “Y” under MS were asked of middle school students (overall n=157).

Leaders collaborators and team players	ES	MS	% favorable
How comfortable are you taking a leadership role in your school?	Y	Y	53.6
How much do you actively engage with group projects in class?		Y	58.0
How much do you actively participate when doing a group project in class?	Y		78.0
In your classes, how eager are you to participate?		Y	35.0
In your classes, how excited are you to participate?	Y		62.0
When working on group projects, how much do other's ideas help lead to success?	Y	Y	65.8

The percent favorable column indicates the percentages of students within the populations who answered in the top two categories out of five (5=extremely or always; 4=quite or almost always). The graphic below shows the composite picture of the aggregated data for all respondents for all questions asked. Again, these data show an overall favorable picture regarding students’ self-perceptions about themselves as leaders and collaborators. The weakest response came from the middle school student group at 35% favorable on the question “in your classes, how eager are you to participate?” Given that middle school can be a time of great change for many students in their physiological development, which can bring concerns about not being singled out as overly “eager” in social settings, it is perhaps not surprising to see this result.



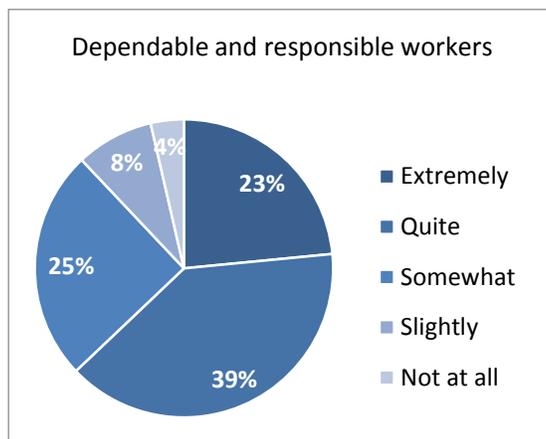
- **Dependable and Responsible Workers**

We continue to use attendance data as one gauge on the development of students’ dependability and responsibility. Page 6 of Appendix A compares the percentages of Bellingham students who are chronically absent (defined as missing more than ten percent of school days for any reason, excused or unexcused) with the percentages across Washington State over the past four years. While Bellingham students overall are, on average, more chronically absent compared to Washington State generally, we were pleased to see some small drops in the data on identified subgroups. Chronic absences dropped slightly in year-over-year comparisons for our Hispanic students, ELL students and students identified for special education. This continues to be an area of focus, and we’ve undertaken some new work to provide “nudge” letters to families whose students miss too much school. The idea of a nudge letter is to send a communication to families that juxtaposes the individual student’s attendance data against the overall attendance trend data at the school and/or in the school district. Other systems have found this strategy to be successful in helping to elevate awareness of chronic attendance issues for families and to decrease same over time. We’ve also instituted a community truancy board in Bellingham this year, led by Director of Teaching and Learning Keith Schacht, to create the opportunity for periodic review and rulings on the most egregious truancy cases.

We also mined the Panorama survey data to determine if we could glean any insights about students’ development as dependable and responsible workers. The 2016 survey featured an enlarged set of questions, rounding out our measure. Questions included the following:

Dependable and responsible workers	ES	MS	% favorable
How focused are you on the activities in your classes?	Y	Y	64.6
How often can other people depend on you to do the right thing?	Y	Y	66.7
When you are working on a project that matters a lot to you, how focused can you stay when there are lots of distractions?	Y	Y	57.6

The percent favorable column indicates the percentages of students within the populations who answered in the top two categories out of five (5=extremely or always; 4=quite or almost always). Responses were generally quite positive, and the graphic below shows the composite picture of the aggregated data for all respondents for all questions asked. Almost 88% of responses fell into the top three categories of “extremely, quite or somewhat”.



- **Innovators and Creators**

Our district has continued to grow the Bellingham Family Partnership Program (BFPP) over the past two years as a vehicle for supporting and engaging with families choosing to homeschool their children from around the region. The program has been well-received by that segment of our community and interest and participation continues to increase. One of the opportunities afforded to families through the BFPP is a “Genius Hour” class for students in grades kindergarten through 3rd grade. One of the parents of a student reflected on the impact of that program in fostering creativity and innovative thinking. In a note to BFPP Principal Kate Baehr, the parent wrote a reflection on the impact of “Genius Hour” for her student, stating, “...The class focuses on the process people use to become creators, innovators and uniquely intelligent....The magic is palpable. As a new family to BFPP, our daughter is excited about her first experience with a project based class emphasizing presentation, critical thinking and the twists and turns of the mental process. She's selected a special project close to her heart- a farm stand that will open this spring. Her six new chicks are already getting their adult feathers and we're taste testing our dried apples and fruit leather products with her classmates. Her and her Dad are excited about constructing the stand and we're exploring concepts like naming a company, logos and marketing. (The instructor) has leapt out of the box by teaching children the art of failing- trial and error- without giving up. A class with less defined curriculum could be more of challenge. But (the instructor's) enthusiasm and willingness to hold space for children's big ideas is something to marvel at. I wish someone had taught me how to fail (with intelligence) when I was 5.” We are pleased to see the successful progress in the BFPP as a part of our strategy to innovate as a district and extend our reach to those families who otherwise would not be engaged with the public schools.

In preparation for the opening of the new Options High School, staff are in their third year of a pedagogical transition to project based learning. After visiting numerous project based learning schools around the nation, attending deeper learning conferences, learning from consultants specializing in project and problem based learning, this year the team focused on PBL implementation. This new learning has moved teachers closer to understanding the needs of at-risk youth who are being presented with a new way of pursuing learning and connecting it to their world.

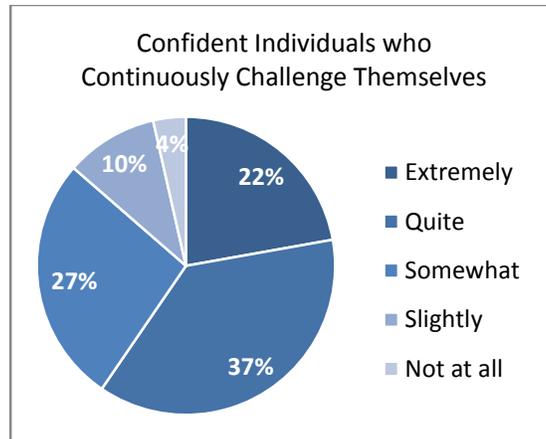
A core value of project based learning is collaboration. Coupled with the PBL work, the staff engaged in new learning around the integration of new technologies into instruction, including programs like Microsoft OneNote. Staff have worked together with district instructional coaches to learn about how to use personal laptop devices and the OneNote program to support and enhance collaboration between students and teachers. The strong desire at Options High School is to facilitate a learning culture that puts students in situations where they are asked to work with others, investigate and learn deeply about an issue or problem that has meaning to them, and then ultimately exhibit their learning publicly within our school or our community. We believe that this new pedagogy of teaching and learning will better prepare students for life in the 21st century.

- **Confident Individuals Who Continuously Challenge Themselves**

The data from the Panorama survey also shed some light on how students perceive themselves in relation to challenge. Questions included in this year’s survey are listed below. Overall student

Confident Individuals who Continuously Challenge Themselves	ES	MS	% favorable
How confident are you that you can learn all the material presented in your classes?		Y	58.0
How sure are you that you can learn all the topics taught in your class?	Y		61.0
If you fail at an important goal, how likely are you to try again?	Y		69.0
If you fail to reach an important goal, how likely are you to try again?		Y	69.0
When you get stuck while learning something new, how likely are you to try a different strategy?		Y	49.0
When you get stuck while learning something new, how likely are you to try to learn it in a different way?	Y		49.0

perceptions ranged from around 50% to almost 70% answering in the top two favorable categories. The graphic below shows the overall breakdown of the data, aggregated for all students who responded. 86% of respondents answered at the level of “somewhat” or higher.



We saw a number of great examples of students rising to a high challenge this year, including a story about a group of ELL students in Algebra. To graduate from high school in Bellingham — or any other public school in the state, for that matter — students must pass three years of math. In Bellingham, the high school math curriculum starts with Algebra I. Learning about coefficients, exponential functions and polynomials is like learning a new language. For students who are learning English at the same time they are taking Algebra I, this challenge is particularly acute. According to state data, only 19 percent of ELL students passed the Algebra I end of course exam in 2015-16. That compares with the 60 percent of non-ELL students who passed in 2015-16.

Over the past three years, Bellingham has had an influx of ELL students with an additional disadvantage: They have significant gaps in the education they received in their home countries. Educators have another acronym for this group: SIFEs or students with interrupted formal education. A majority of these recent arrivals are from Central America. Political conflict, lack of access and poverty are among the reasons these students stopped going to school. Many of them were in the waves of unaccompanied minors arriving at the U.S. border from Central America, starting in 2014.

Incoming SIFE students are enrolled at the school appropriate for their age, even if they come in with a fourth-grade education, a first-grade education or — in some cases — no formal schooling whatsoever. Some of these newcomers struggled with adding and multiplying on entrance exams, yet Bellingham high schools don't offer a math course below Algebra I.

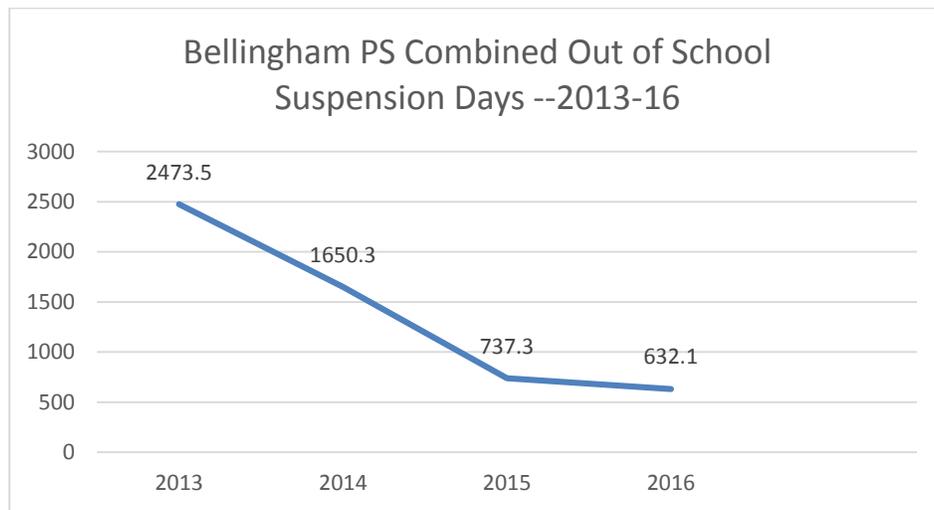
With about two dozen students in this predicament entering the 2015-16 year, staff members devised a solution. The students were placed in math classes tailored for them and taught by ELL specialist Lindsay MacDonald, who divided her time between Bellingham and Squalicum high schools. Students took the “pre-algebra” class as an elective because it couldn't count as a math credit toward graduation. This year, 2016-17, those students from the original cohort who remained in Bellingham schools are enrolled in regular Algebra I classes with non-ELL students at Bellingham and Squalicum. These students, now totaling 22, also take four additional periods per week of math, taught by MacDonald with support from volunteer Betsy Rocks and ELL instructional aide Chesed Reyes. This extra class gives the students more time to practice the concepts they are learning from math teachers. Entering spring break, 20 out of the 22 students were passing Algebra I, MacDonald said. While a student's standing in a class in March doesn't

correlate exactly with how they would do on a state EOC exam, the current 91 percent passing rate is a clear success. See more at the following link:

<http://promise.bellinghamschools.org/2017/04/25/ell-students-thrive-algebra-class/>

- **Respectful and Compassionate Humans**

Opportunities to reinforce respect and compassion are present in various ways in our work. The efforts around restorative practices in discipline in our school district have resulted in a dramatic reduction of suspensions over the past few years. That trend continued once again this year.



As the graph above reveals, out of school suspensions are down from nearly 2500 total days four years ago to just over 630 days last school year. We continue to work hard to keep students in school and to work for restorative outcomes in discipline situations.

Schools also look for ways to connect with the community around projects that promote empathy, respect and compassion. One of the ways this plays out in multiple locations in our district is around supporting access to adequate food for students and families. The Shuksan Middle school dinner program is continuing to offer meals to children and families at little or no cost four nights a week. Cordata Elementary school added to the effort already underway for the past few years at Alderwood Elementary and is hosting the Food Pantry program from the Bellingham Food Bank at the school once a week for families to take advantage of food donations. In a similar vein, fifth graders at Silver Beach Elementary School led a campaign to collect food donations for the Bellingham Food Bank in the month of December 2016. The leadership group called *Helping Hawks* created advertisements and presented in classrooms. As donations were received, students collected and weighed the food. By the end of the food drive the students had collected more than 1,000 pounds of food. The food was delivered to the Bellingham Food Bank on Dec. 15, just in time for the holidays. “Silver Beach’s mission is to inspire learning and leadership in every child,” said Principal Nicole Talley. “Our goals with student outreach projects such as this align to The *Bellingham Promise* outcomes in inspiring students to be leaders, collaborators, team players, respectful and compassionate human beings who are engaged community members making a difference in the world.” The project is a

natural connection from the school’s work with the Leader in Me program that was the focus for a board visit this year. Read more about this effort at:

<https://promise.bellinghamschools.org/2017/01/11/silver-beach-students-give-donations-food-bank/>

Panorama survey data on this outcome reflects a mixed picture. Questions included in the survey this year and the percent favorable responses by level were as follows:

Respectful and compassionate humans	ES	MS	% favorable
At your school, how much does the behavior of other students hurt or help your learning?	Y	Y	41.9
How much do you try to understand how other people feel and think?	Y	Y	79.0
How much respect do students at your school show you?	Y		61.0
How much respect do students in your school show you?		Y	34.0
How often are people disrespectful to others at your school?	Y	Y	32.5

On the positive side, elementary and middle school students responded very favorably to the question “How much do you try to understand how other people feel and think,” suggesting most of our students bring a perspective of empathy and understanding to their interpersonal interactions with others. On the negative side, the responses that were cause for some concern were the two questions asked about “how much respect do students in your school show you?” and “how often are people disrespectful to others at your school?” Only about a third of students responded favorably in each case. As a part of our work moving forward into next year, we are building a concerted effort around the development of social-emotional learning that we believe will be important in helping to address these data trends.

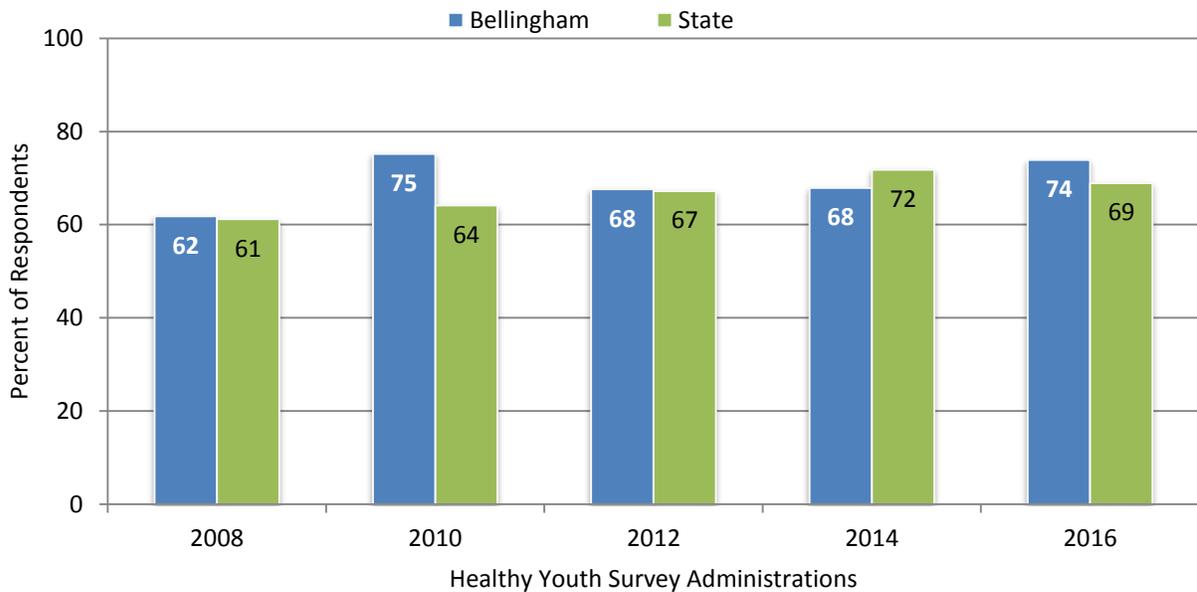
- **Honest and Ethical Citizens Who Act with Integrity**

For data on this *Promise* outcome, we turn once again to the Healthy Youth Survey data, and a protective factor scale that reports on the percentage of students who agree with statements that predict the ability to resist other problem behaviors. Similar to last year’s report, responses from four such items were aggregated into one data point that we’ve labeled “Belief in the Moral Order”. The items students responded to, specifically, were:

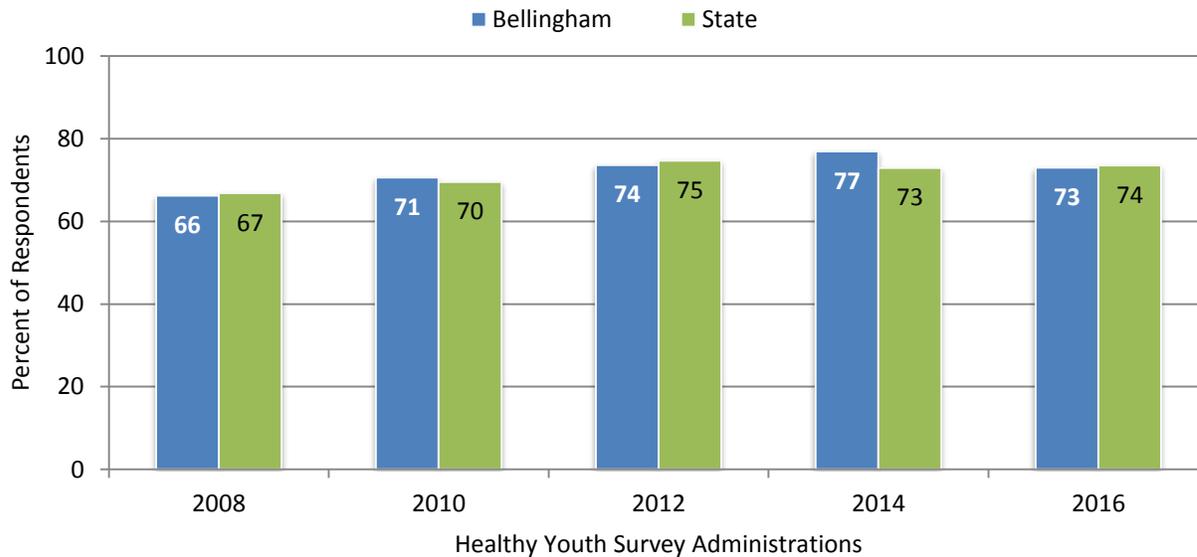
1. I think it is okay to take something without asking as long as you get away with it.
2. I think sometimes it’s okay to cheat at school.
3. It is all right to beat up people if they start the fight.
4. It is important to be honest with your parents, even if they become upset or you get punished.

The graphs below show responses from eighth and tenth graders in Bellingham and Washington State over the past five administrations of the Healthy Youth survey. Percentages reflect students who answered in the positive direction (depending on the way the question was framed, this was either a strongly agree/agree response, as with question #4 above, or a strongly disagree/disagree response, as with questions #1, 2 and 3 above).

Belief in the Moral Order: Grade 8 in Bellingham and Washington State



Belief in the Moral Order: Grade 10 in Bellingham and Washington State



As is apparent from the data arrays, positive responses from our 8th grade students in the 2016 survey were higher in year-over-year comparisons with that from 2014. Data from 10th grade students, conversely, dropped slightly. However, both groups continued to score above 70% in the positive direction.

- **Well-Rounded Community Members Engaged with the Broader World.**

One way we can gauge the extent to which we are realizing the goal of developing graduates who are well-rounded community members engaged with the broader world is to pay attention to

what they do once they leave us and to seek their feedback on what their education in Bellingham prepared them to do out in the world. While we know we can do more to step up data gathering efforts in this direction, some examples follow below.

Two Sehome High seniors, Emma Clark and Zoe Dietrick, were highlighted in a Promise story this spring for awards they received that will create amazing new opportunities for them as they leave our system. Clark received the Smart Choices scholarship as the top female student athlete in the state from the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA). The WIAA scholarship is worth \$5,000 toward the higher education institution of her choice. She will attend Stanford University this fall where she plans to study elementary education and English as a second language. Dietrick has been awarded the competitive, all-expenses paid, 3-week long National Youth Science Camp slot for which only the top two graduating seniors from each state are accepted. She is headed to Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine in the fall where she will study chemistry. Both students described in great detail the influence of Bellingham teachers on their career and educational trajectories. Clark talked at length about how her desire to pursue a career in education was sparked by her experience as a fourth and fifth grader in Happy Valley teacher Tara Vodopich's classroom. Dietrick described in detail how support from her Sehome AP Chemistry teacher Amy Hankinson spurred her decision to apply for the National Youth Science Camp opportunity, and ultimately to pursue her education in science at Bowdoin. Read the whole story [here](http://promise.bellinghamschools.org/2017/05/12/mariner-seniors-head-to-graduation-and-beyond-with-recognition/).

<http://promise.bellinghamschools.org/2017/05/12/mariner-seniors-head-to-graduation-and-beyond-with-recognition/>

In an earlier Ends report, we examined post-high school engagement trends for our students with IEPs. This subgroup tends to be our most challenged in terms of being at risk to not graduate on time or within the five-year window. Paying attention to what happens for these students as they leave our doors and go out into the broader world provides important information that can continue to help make our programs more effective. We were once again pleased to note that our district graduates with IEPs continue to realize better outcomes than similar students in Washington state overall, including more graduates going on to higher education and fewer graduates not engaged in either school or employment of some kind. This is also true for district non-graduates with IEPs. We also compared post-school outcomes for our Bellingham students on IEPs with those from our three high-performing comparable districts, as well as with state averages. These data revealed that Bellingham students graduating with IEPs in 2015 attended higher education at a rate second only to those in Bellevue. This trend was true as well for our non-graduates on IEPs from the 2015 cohort.

Finally, the effort this year to engage the leadership team around an exploration into the stories of the 94 students who did not complete high school in 2015 in our district has created momentum and insight into the ways in which we can better support students on the journey to high school graduation. "The 94 Project" as we've come to call it brought up close the realities of kids who fail out or drop out of our schools. Some of these reasons are unfortunately quite predictable and well-known – the influence of drug addiction in the home, difficulties with the law, issues of poverty and homelessness, or issues of abuse or neglect. These are community level challenges faced by students and families; while we can't solve these issues on our own, we have a stake in the solutions, and partnerships with other agencies that touch kids and families

are key to continuing to make progress. Other factors that push kids away, however, lie much more within our direct purview -- issues of engagement, community, support, challenge and love. A continued direction for us moving into the 2017-18 school year will be to engage more graduates and non-graduates in learning their stories as they leave the Bellingham schools. Intentional, consistent deep sampling of some percentage of kids as they leave us will help create a more robust picture of how our system helped or hindered their progress as they head out into the broader world.

Areas of Focus for 2017-18 and Beyond: What Have We Learned?

In reviewing evidence connected to Ends 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0, we see again this year that there are a lot of positive outcomes occurring for children and young people in the Bellingham Public Schools. Our *Promise* is alive and well, and becoming more and more of a regular focus for the work done across the district, in schools, and in individual classrooms. That said, it is important to step back and assess areas that may be in particular need of greater effort and attention for the district next year and on into the future. Looking forward, areas we noted above include:

- **Dependable and Responsible Workers** – Dig further into what is underneath the rise in chronic absences and develop a greater focus within schools and our community for getting chronically absent kids to school on much more regular basis.
- **Respectful and Compassionate Humans** – Support the continuation of work begun this year to develop our district’s approach to students’ social emotional learning and connect this strongly to the professional learning for teachers and other staff. This will be a significant new district effort for 2017-18.
- **Healthy, Active Individuals**—Take stock of current state of instruction in health education and use what is learned to plan deeper programmatic work for the 2017-18 school year. Improve health-related outcomes for students. Begin efforts around staff wellness.
- **Skilled Users of Technology**—Implement the student technology 1:1 roll out in three schools next year, and continue to provide professional development to those schools as well as support the staff learning year in the next wave of 1:1 schools.
- **Well rounded Community Members Engaged with the Broader World.** Develop a more intentional sampling strategy to learn more deeply those stories of students as they leave our system.

Concluding Statement

We believe that this Ends 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0 monitoring report, in combination with the ongoing exploration of outcomes that occurred during the course of board meetings, school visits and linkages this year, serves as evidence of a reasonable interpretation of these Ends and is supported by data that demonstrates progress toward achievement of these Ends. Further, we hope this report serves as a useful tool in support of the school board’s ability to regularly review our ends to ensure they remain relevant and inspire meaningful work throughout the organization and community.