

BELLINGHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT
Bellingham, Washington

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Dr. Greg Baker, Superintendent

DATE: May 12, 2023

SUBJECT: Ends 1.0, 2.0, and 3.0 Monitoring Report 2022-23

I am pleased to submit this year's final Ends monitoring report to the school district's board of directors. This report includes a representation of our progress this year in Ends 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0, and provides a broad overview of district efforts to help our students make progress toward the 17 identified outcomes in The Bellingham Promise.

Every year we reconsider our methodology of reporting on the broad array of outcomes in Ends 1, 2 and 3. In prior year reports, our method has often combined qualitative and quantitative sources of information relevant for each of the 17 Bellingham Promise outcomes. Examples have at times been elaborated in brief stories, sometimes comprising multiple paragraphs, drawing on Promise stories published throughout the year, as well as stories gleaned from observations and dialogue with staff about the work in the school district. For this year's report, we continue this effort to combine qualitative and quantitative sources, adding more numerous but briefer examples gathered from across elementary, middle and high schools. This builds on the approach begun last year, including examples in the form of a bulleted list under each *Promise* outcome. In some cases, links to original sources are included, and we have worked to improve the readability and succinctness of the material presented. We believe this approach builds on changes we made to the report structure last year, which were met with a positive reception and feedback from the board in review.

The report details evidence on Ends 1.0, Ends 2.0 and Ends 3.0 (included below) and is organized into four sections. Section 1 reports on progress toward the mission and vision of The *Bellingham Promise*. Section 2 includes data and analysis focused on the Knowledge outcomes from the *Promise*. Section 3 focuses on data that help to tell the story of our students' experience with each of the Character and Action outcomes and incorporates some recent findings from our spring survey of students. Section 4 closes with a summary reflection. By way of reminder, here is the language of the Ends 1, 2 and 3 policy:

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. All will be exceptional in their 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: Outcomes Focused on Knowledge

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

- Readers and writers,
- Scientists and mathematicians,
- Historians and global thinkers,
- Artists and performers,
- Artisans and technicians,
- Multilingual readers and speakers, and
- Skilled users of technology and information.

Ends 3.0: Outcomes Focused on Character and Action

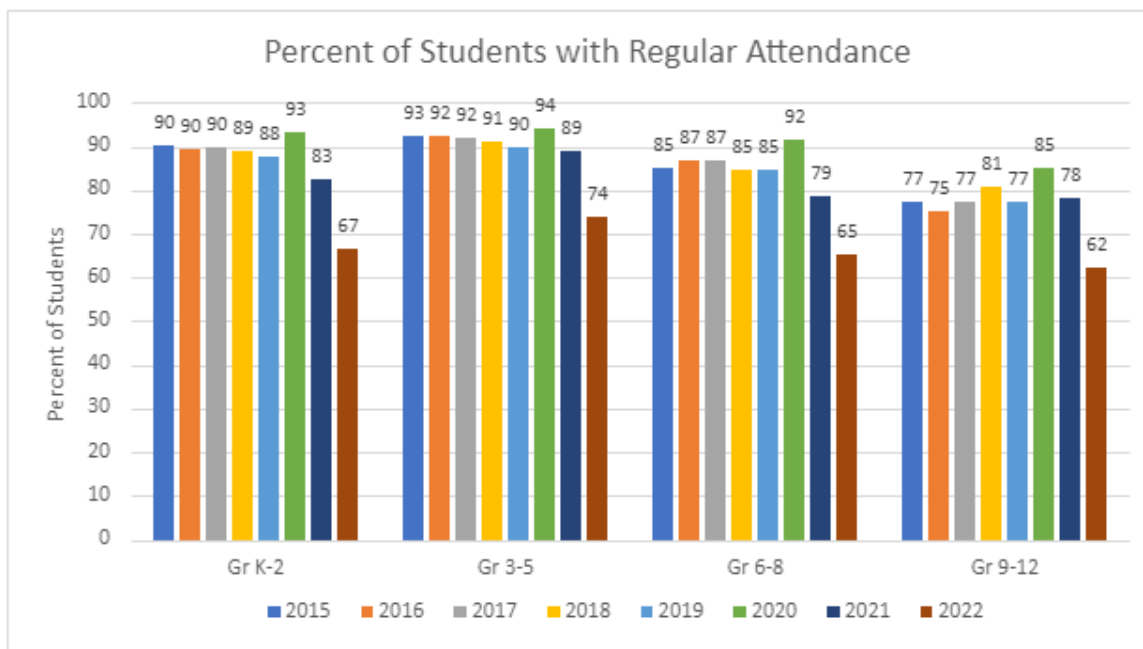
Bellingham Public Schools is committed to developing students and graduates who:

- Display Character
 - Leaders, collaborators and team players
 - Dependable and responsible people
 - Confident individuals who continually challenge themselves
 - Respectful and compassionate humans
 - Honest and ethical citizens who act with integrity
- Take Action
 - Healthy active individuals
 - Critical thinkers and problem solvers
 - Effective communicators
 - Innovators and creators
 - Well-rounded community members engaged in the broader world

I. Ends 1.0: Focus on *The Bellingham Promise* Vision and Mission

The vision and mission of *The Bellingham Promise* continue to serve as foundational statements of belief, commitment and guidance for the work of our school system. The vision of the Promise calls us to empower our students and as we have previously reported, graduation is the ultimate representation of empowerment of the students we serve. Given this, Bellingham students' overall graduation rates continue to be a primary focus. Bellingham students' graduation rates exceeded the State in terms of overall graduation percentages and four-year rates held at 82% for the most recent cohort. Extended graduation rate trends for Bellingham students into the sixth and seventh year of high school continue to improve. Seven-year rates for students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and for students identified as low income hit new highs this year. The rate for students with IEPs hit 90 percent with the most recent seven-year cohort; the rate for students identified as low income hit 88 percent with the most recent cohort in the seventh year. Reflecting on the 11-year trend in rising graduation rates, it is encouraging to remember that graduation rates have improved for every one of the groups we track, and in many cases this growth shows 25, 30 or even as high as 40 percent improvement in graduation rates during this period.

We are still recovering as a school system post-COVID. Our overall attendance rates are lagging in the wake of the pandemic. The percentage of students with regular attendance -- meaning students who average fewer than two absences a month -- declined significantly in all grade levels. The chart below provides a visual representation of the rate drop. Reasons for this drop



are not fully known, but we conjecture they are due at least in part to lingering COVID/health fears and increased anxiety and mental health concerns among our students. Our efforts to stay the course with mental health and physical health supports for students and families, such as additional mental health therapists, nurses and health room assistants, that were added during the pandemic remain of high importance for our school district.

We also noted that the pandemic took a toll on students' achievement levels. Proficiency rates in all areas tested by the state's Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA) declined in 2022, compared to prior years. This is consistent with the national and statewide data as discussed in an earlier Ends report this year. However, despite the overall drop, scores tended to increase in the ascending grade levels; test score averages in grade 10 tend to be higher than in the earlier grades, and this is consistent with the kinds of trends we have observed previously with the SBA data tracked over multiple years. This gives us hope that with time and effort our test results will show that students are returning to previous or higher levels of achievement.

Despite these challenges coming out of COVID, we remain committed to the vision and mission of the Promise ensuring that all the children we serve will be exceptional in their 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. Specific efforts to support the learning of all students are alive and well with our work on inclusion across P-12. Our Promise K expanded to a full school year and included the four-year-olds who have previously been served in a developmental preschool setting. This proved to be challenging work but satisfying to see so many success stories emerging from within the Promise K classrooms this spring. Sehome High

School's work as a part of the University of Washington Haring Center network of inclusion demonstration sites has received hundreds of visitors from around the state and country to observe their approach to co-teaching (see more about Sehome's story here: <https://ippdemosites.org/demonstration-sites/high-schools/>). In the early spring, as well, we initiated a district-wide standing committee on inclusion that will support this work across the schools at all levels. We have embraced the staffing challenges and the task of figuring out how to sustain this work, even through a period of declining budgetary resources. This is incredibly intense work for staff and involves changing systems as well as reimagining teaching practices. We believe in our teachers and their abilities; in exploring and learning instructional strategies for greater inclusion in elementary, middle and high schools, we see examples all over the system where teachers are learning new ways to provide support (emotional, behavioral and academic) to students with disabilities and are observing strong and supportive peer interactions.

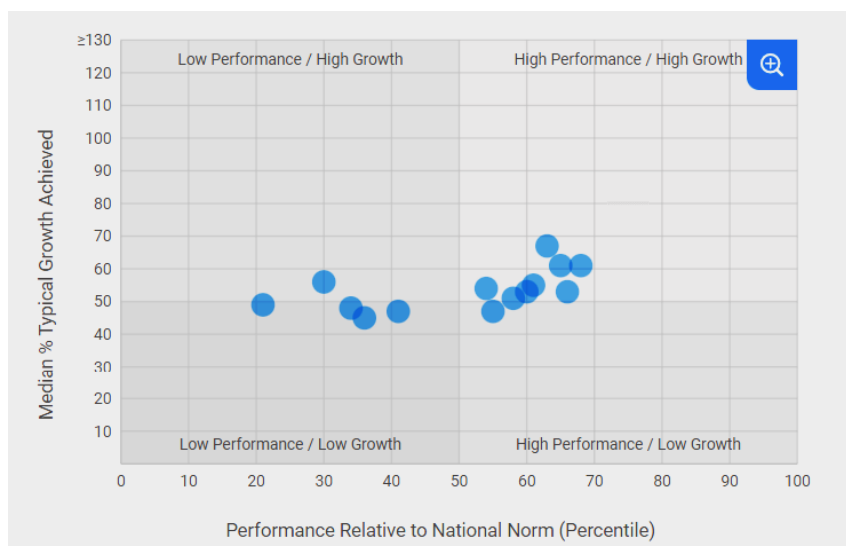
II. Ends 2.0: Knowledge Outcomes

Ends 2.0 focuses on seven outcomes centered on achievement and growth. Below we offer some brief examples of our work toward these seven outcomes. We have included many brief examples of ways schools have taken action to support and improve student learning, and ways our overall program is supporting learning in the knowledge outcomes. The descriptions below highlight specific people and places across our whole system of schools, and in some cases links to further details.

Readers and Writers

- A team led by Director of Teaching and Learning Jenny Lawrence has met throughout the year with middle level English-language arts (ELA) teachers to support alignment in curriculum and instruction. By year end, the team will have guiding documents to help support vertical alignment within grade level teams at buildings and alignment across the four middle schools.
- Tier 2 and tier 3 intervention documents have been created to support the child study team (CST) process in literacy. Child study teams are groups that meet to support students who are experiencing learning challenges of various kinds. The intervention documents synthesize our existing resources to support aligned intervention support district wide. Literacy specialists Melissa Peterson (Roosevelt) and Rayna Brandon (Alderwood) have created this document using existing intervention resources.
- i-Ready data on student growth in reading revealed most elementary schools' students scored above the median in terms of expected student growth over the period from fall 2022 to winter 2023. Nine of 14 schools exhibited higher than average growth, and eight of those nine also exhibited higher overall performance. Graphic below arrays the schools (each of the 14 schools represented by a blue dot):

i-Ready Student Growth in Reading Shown by School From Fall to Winter for School Year 2022-23



- Monthly book club at Squalicum High School has students meeting during lunch to discuss books they are reading and share themes, building a great community for students.
- Kulshan Middle School eighth graders wrote mock congress bills in Social Studies. Students had voice and choice over their topic and stance. They used a variety of online resources to state their evidence, claims and reasoning. Each student presented their bill in front of the student Senate and the student House. Bills are voted on and passed.
- Writing celebrations were held this year at Northern Heights, Sunnyland, Birchwood and Silver Beach elementaries, where students shared their writing and invited families in to listen, read and engage.
- Professional development on i-Ready resources we implemented last year, in grades K-5 created and delivered literacy assessment tables for each grade level outlining assessment resources and guidance in each of the pillars of literacy aligned to the science of reading.
- Increased and intentional co-planning with data for students by elementary general education classroom, multi-lingual learner and Title I teachers has led to both an increase in students' decoding skills and connection/ transfer to grade level content.

Scientists and Mathematicians

- Tier 2 and tier 3 intervention documents were created to support the CST process in mathematics. These documents synthesize our existing resources to support aligned intervention support district wide. Sarah Dewitt (Alderwood) and Kaylee Nelson (Birchwood) have worked together to create this document using the Bridges (math curriculum) intervention resources.
- Emphasis on intermediate grades (3-5) using Bridges math pre/post assessments as a guide for student learning, and parent communication throughout math units.
- Desmos mathematics curriculum in combination with the use of vertical white boards builds a solid foundation for math instruction in the middle schools. See more of the story at: <https://promise.bellinghamschools.org/2023/03/27/middle-school-math-building-students-ready-for-high-school-math-career-college/>.

- High school math teachers and students continue to use vertical whiteboards to demonstrate their learning and to collaborate with each other to investigate math topics.
- The addition of the Data Science and Game Theory classes have brought new and innovative ways of thinking for students in mathematics.
- Bellingham High School science teachers are investing significant time with new pilot curriculum materials in science; they are leading the way with regular engagement in collaboration to improve the new curriculum. Units of study are guided by a thematic approach and students engage in study through investigation.
- Birchwood Elementary first graders held a “weather fair” to showcase their learning about various aspects of weather.
- Happy Valley kindergarteners learned 'salmon science' this year. They took the lead on learning the salmon life cycle and taking care of salmon in the tank at school, supported by community partner, *Salmon in Schools*. This group supports the salmon tanks and release program in a local stream and is in all schools. In addition, community partner Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association supports *Students for Salmon* in fourth grade classes.

Historians and Global Thinkers

- International Baccalaureate (IB) units of inquiry have worked to bring multiple perspectives by incorporating Since Time Immemorial (STI) curricular resources on tribal history provided by the State of Washington.
- Deep work is underway, for example, at Happy Valley Elementary with Lummi and Nooksack tribal members involving the STI curriculum. Tribal members involved included: Jason La Clair, Allied Arts; Rena Priest, Poet Laureate; Sandra Bur and family; and Children of the Setting Sun productions. Kirsten Jensen, instructional coach at Happy Valley, supported this work with the Happy Valley staff.
- Ethnic Studies course development and implementation by high school teacher and instructional coach Joe Wooding has been highly successful in attracting students.
- Bellingham High School social studies teachers completed field trips to the City of Bellingham Mayor’s office, and to the Holocaust Museum in Seattle.
- In eighth grade English language arts at Kulshan Middle School, students conducted a research project about race and bias in connection to the book *Stamped* by Kendi and Reynolds. The students worked up possible research topics and methods. Examples: How does race and bias show up in TV shows and music? What is redlining and does it still exist today?
- Fairhaven eighth grade students in Social Studies attended Law Day at the Whatcom County courthouse.
- Fifth grade exhibitions at International Baccalaureate schools involve students writing their own key concepts and lines of inquiry. Northern Heights students showcased their expedition work this spring led by fifth grade teachers Staci Shrum and Tawni Eisenhart.
- Roosevelt second graders explored the history of Bellingham and Washington state. Students researched and created a timeline of events including the impact of different cultural groups on our community. This also included learning about the meaning of the City of Bellingham’s flag and the different indigenous nations (i.e., Coast Salish peoples) history on this land. Students invited their families in, led the adults through their learning and raised their individual flags in the library for all to see. Following the flag raising,

different classrooms came to the library and the creator of the flags shared what the flag represented to them.

Artists and Performers

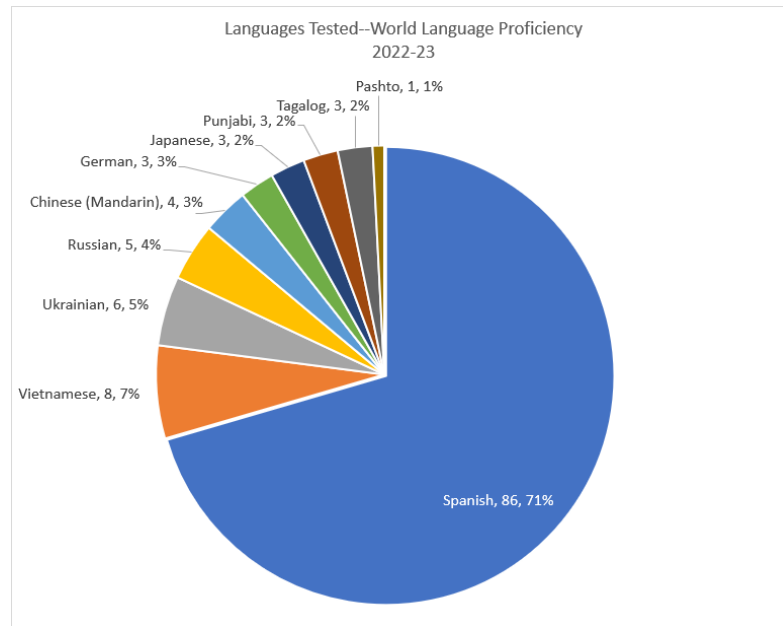
- Student participation in high school visual and performing arts courses for 2022-23 compared favorably with pre-pandemic 2018-19. Enrollment is almost back up to previous rates, with 66% of students enrolled in at least one arts, music or drama course.
- High school plays and musical productions back in full swing this year (see note below in Artisans and Technicians).
- An art marathon occurred at Squalicum High School. Student artists gathered for an evening of creation. In STORM (advisory) classes on the first days of school, each student and staff created a single chain link. Those were then connected together into one long line to represent unity and strength as a STORM family.
- Options High School drama club included student written and directed bi-annual productions this year.
- For the first time Shuksan sent band, orchestra and choir club to the regional competitions and all three groups received Superior ratings. Appreciation for teachers Jason Parker and Jenny Rothnie's influence and support of Shuksan musicians.
- Also at Shuksan, art students learned about the legendary American artist Alma Thomas and used her artwork as inspiration for their colorful animal paintings. SMS art teacher Carolyn Heywood timed this art project to coincide with Black History Month in February and Women's History Month in March, thereby highlighting the impressive career and life of this trailblazing art teacher and artist. See more of the story at: <https://promise.bellinghamschools.org/2023/05/02/shuksan-student-artists-inspired-by-the-work-of-alma-thomas/>.
- Fairhaven Middle School students put on a production of Alice in Wonderland this spring; Fairhaven choir took top honors at a recent competition.
- Second grade classes at Wade King Elementary performed three operettas for families. They sang, made costumes and acted out stories.
- The Bellingham Public Schools Foundation (BPSF) gave a grant to Columbia Elementary to facilitate learning with the aforementioned Jason LaClaire, a Lummi/Nooksack artist. Students learned about Coast Salish Art and made connections to their IB units of study. Students at Happy Valley and Cordata worked with Mr. La Clair to learn Coast Salish art design.
- Happy Valley Elementary put on a musical with 150 kids from grades 3-5. This year, the show was *Newsies*. Facilitated by music teacher, Katie Tully.
- Fifth graders have access to high quality art instruction through a partnership with Allied Arts that connects classroom teachers with local artists. Projects this year include a focus on puppetry.
- Fifth graders also continue to access strings instruction for one grading period each year (semester or trimester), where they are introduced to violin, viola or cello by a certificated music specialist. This experience opens new windows into performing arts and instrumental music before students make the transition to middle school.
- Elementary music teachers at multiple Bellingham schools had students participate in the elementary choir festival with San Juan Music Educators Association.

Artisans and Technicians

- Staging productions in the schools supported students' learning in dramatic arts, costume design, music and theater tech. Shows this year included Little Shop of Horrors (SQHS), Firebringer (SHS), Scapino (BHS) and Newsies (Happy Valley) as well as dramatic productions Clue (BHS), She Kills Monsters (SQHS) and The Servant of Two Masters (SHS).
- Bellingham Family Partnership Program (BFPP) has a theater and tech class with 40 students. They are working on a production of Willy Wonka. Students are working on not only performing but also design and construction of all of the sets, costumes and props. It is currently a fourth through eighth grade class at BFPP.
- Eighth grade Fairhaven Middle School students designed and built adaptive equipment for fellow students with mobility challenges as part of their STEM classes. Specific equipment included a special locker and a band saw.
- More robust fine arts class offerings at the high school level continue to draw greater numbers of students and include ceramics, robotics, painting, drawing, theater, music and culinary.
- Our district hosted a Youth Employment and Local College Fair for district high school students on May 11, 2023 at Bellingham High School. More than 50 community partners shared opportunities including part-time, full-time and seasonal employment, apprenticeships, service learning and educational experiences from a variety of industries. See more information at <https://bellingshamschools.org/news/youth-employment-and-local-college-fair-may-11/>.

Multilingual Readers and Speakers

- In 2022-23, 48% of high school students (1984 of 4154) are currently enrolled in world language courses. World language courses offered in at least one of our high schools include American Sign Language, Chinese, German, Japanese, French and Spanish. AP courses are available in French, German and Spanish.
- 122 students tested for world language credit for proficiency and 309 high school credits were earned by students this year. Students tested in 10 languages and 42 students qualified to earn the Seal of Biliteracy in spring of 2023. See graphic below with specific languages noted:



- Dual Language Program Planning Task Force has continued to meet and plan for future program recommendations through small group committee work focused on developing aspects of a dual language plan. Agendas and minutes for this group can be found [here](#).
- Poetry Out Loud (POL) through English Language Arts classes at Squalicum High School. English teachers have had class competitions and encouraged students to enter the school-wide POL competition; this is a school wide poetry reciting competition that advances winners to regional, state-wide, and national competition. Multilingual Learner (MLL) students exhibit vulnerability in reading their poems.
- Shuksan Middle School highlighted Spanish teacher Amy Holtorf and MLL specialist Erin Sebby for their efforts to grow the Spanish program and engage students in learning language. Efforts included support and encouragement for Shuksan's MLL students in honoring their home language(s).
- Cordata Elementary implemented coteaching strategies that have their MLL specialist, partnering with general education classrooms to grow literacy and language. One example is a poetry unit that involved multiple intermediate classrooms. Students produced poems that were published in and out of school, with one student winning a poetry contest in the region.
- Cordata was awarded a \$10,000 grant to support family and community outreach through a variety of school events throughout the year focused on increasing engagement and belonging as a community. Connections to multilingual students/families included family nights at two locations, one of which was Villa Santa Fe Apartments.
- Bellingham Family Partnership Program supported a Spanish class co-taught by a certificated teacher and office assistant who is Spanish speaking. Student led family engagement included "how to" cooking videos and a school-wide fiesta with activities and food all in Spanish.
- Parkview Elementary students worked hard to learn to communicate with a new family who speaks Ukrainian using Google Translate; two third graders decided to learn Ukrainian, and have taught themselves several words/phrases, to communicate with their Ukrainian speaking classmate.

Skilled Users of Technology and Information

- Technology levy funds continue to support many aspects of our program including funding part of instructional coaches, library media specialists and assistants, as well as ensuring regular updates to student technology resources including our 1:1 computer program.
- Technology Students of America (club) chapters operate in our secondary schools.
- Career and Technical courses continue to expand and attract higher numbers and more diverse groups of students. Courses highlighted in feedback this year:
 - Digital Art led by Bellingham High School teacher, Amanda Korthius.
 - Engineering Tech / Manufacturing led by Sehome High School Kevin Criez.
 - Applied Tech reported observations of students excited to test their bridge construction.
 - Tech Crew, Manufacturing and Broadcast Journalism highlighted at BHS.
 - Broadcast Journalism class brings weekly video announcements to the Sehome community. Video Productions/Broadcast Journalism students at SHS live stream and project assemblies, concerts, community events and athletics.
- Bellingham Virtual Learning continues to support students who choose to do all or part of their schooling experience in an online setting.

III. Ends 3.0 – Character and Action Outcomes

This section of the report delves into the character and action outcomes from The Bellingham Promise. Some sections that follow incorporate students' self-perception data related to several character and action outcomes, drawing on data from our annual Qualtrics survey. We have also included examples of the ways our schools, staff members and community partners demonstrated and exemplified various outcomes noted here.

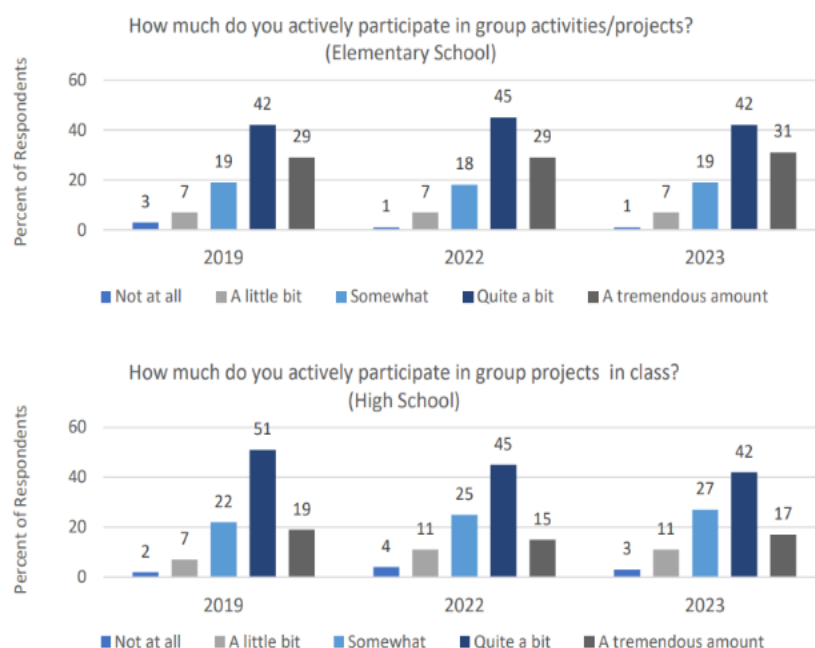
Leaders, Collaborators and Team Players

- Promise K and developmental preschool inclusionary practices for 4-yr-olds. Students with IEPs being included for the first time have opportunities to participate in learning and challenge themselves alongside peers without IEPs. Students have the opportunity to interact with a wide variety of peers bringing different strengths.
- Students stepped up to be videotaped to speak to the district's Instructional Materials Committee members about books being recommended for adoption, including *Stamped for Kids* and *Stamped* by Kendi and Reynolds. Students took leadership in expressing why, from their perspectives, these books are important for inclusion in our schools.
- 2023 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Student Leadership Summit led by Director of Teaching and Learning Janis Velasquez-Farmer.
- BHS students created and hosted a district-wide multi-cultural night (April 2023).
- Young Multiracial Society (YMS) Club put on the Ebony Gala, a celebration of Black History Month at Sehome High School. YMS, Latinx club and Diversity in Action club also put on the Latinx Heritage Night as a celebration of the Latinx community at SHS.
- Many elementary schools create leadership opportunities through assigning student jobs, where students take the lead as recess coaches, video announcers, speakers at assemblies, coordinators of recycling and other jobs around the school.
- Cordata Elementary is launching a student leadership team that is focused on service and social justice topics. Students will implement service project(s) in the closing months of the

school year and act as ambassadors for their school during a variety of events. The effort is to foster an increase in both students of color and boys in visible, school-wide leadership positions; students challenging themselves to speak in front of the school, lead the Pledge of Allegiance and Land Acknowledgement.

- Annual student survey results this spring on questions gauging students' levels of active participation in group activities or projects remained about on par compared with data from 2022 and slightly lower compared with pre-pandemic 2019. See comparison chart embedded below.

Leaders, Collaborators and Team Players



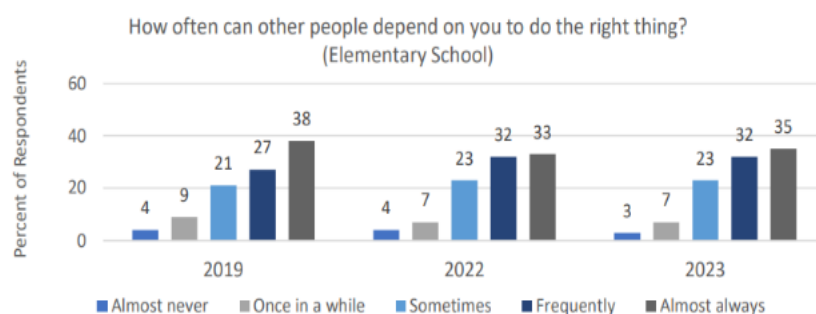
Dependable and Responsible People

- Dependable and responsible characteristics are included throughout the International Baccalaureate framework using the attributes of the Primary Years' Programme, operating in a majority of Bellingham's elementary schools.
- Teacher Academy continues to produce students who work alongside teachers in learning the craft of teaching. Assignments occur in elementary schools located near high school campuses.
- Student-led enterprises in the high schools foster dependability and responsibility; enterprises include yearbook, student supported broadcast of high school graduation, and student store operation.
- Efforts to prepare students for life beyond graduation include our students' work on High School and Beyond Plans. To learn more about student plans and how they work, read: <https://bellingshamschools.org/families/academics/high-school-and-beyond-plan/>.
- Shuksan Middle School eighth-grade students filled out job applications for local service learning projects, received letters of recommendation and are applying their talents and interests throughout Whatcom County for several weeks in May. Students are pursuing their

passions and supporting community partners, from Western Washington University to local elementary schools, garden spots and parks, showing dependable and responsible traits through their work ethic.

- Joint District-Bellingham Education Association committee on student conduct continues to meet to align practices in supporting student behavior across the 22 schools. More about this group's work, along with agendas and minutes from meetings this year can be viewed [here](#).
- Annual student survey results this spring including questions about dependability and responsibility skewed slightly more positive compared with data from 2022 and 2019. See comparison chart embedded below.

Dependable and Responsible People

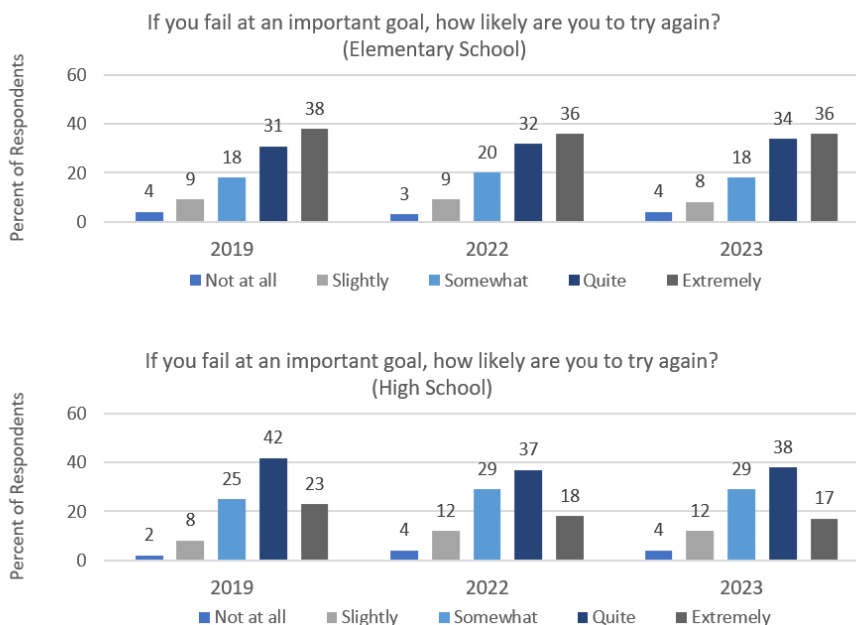


Confident Individuals Who Continually Challenge Themselves

- Earlier we mentioned the expansion to year-long Promise K and developmental preschool inclusionary practices for 4-yr-olds. Students being included for the first time have opportunities to participate in learning and challenging themselves. Students have the opportunity to interact with the full contingent of their same-age peers.
- Career and Technical Education courses Construction Academy, Cosmetology and Aerospace Manufacturing are high interest and high challenge; these double block courses (comprising two periods in a high schooler's schedule) are specific to vocational outcomes.
- Two culinary elective classes in our high schools (Introduction to Culinary Arts and Nutrition and Wellness) are teaching cooking skills as well as developing the confidence of students who participate. These courses are taught by high school family and consumer science teachers Jessica Ortega-Mendez at BHS, Michael Bechkowiak at SHS and Brian Young at SQHS. Read more at <https://promise.bellinghamschools.org/2023/02/24/culinary-electives-teach-cooking-skills-and-important-life-lessons-along-the-way/>.
- High percentage of middle and high school students turn out for sports (38%), and these numbers have returned to nearly pre-pandemic levels. These activities often involve late afternoon practices and afternoon or evening games. See elaboration below in Healthy, Active Individuals.
- All ninth graders with an IEP at Sehome High School attended school in a general education setting for over 75% of their day. Co-teaching models are enabling students with IEPs to receive instruction in the general education setting with support from a certificated special educator and a general education content area teacher.

- Squalicum High School staff professional development; learning exhibitions professional development model where colleagues shared their specific work on inclusive instructional strategies. Sessions occurred on two “purple Fridays” this year.
- Shuksan staff have been focusing on the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework to offer equitable opportunities for every student in a culturally responsive way. In doing that, staff members are helping students acknowledge themselves as expert learners and teachers.
- Annual student survey results this spring on questions about persevering through failure show similar trends seen in 2022. See comparison chart embedded below.

Confident Individuals Who Continually Challenge Themselves



Respectful and Compassionate Humans

- Six ASB leadership students from each comprehensive high school attended the same AWSP Leadership camp at Cispus Learning Center which supports them collaborating together during the school year to support all high schools. The schools will follow this model again in summer of 2023 for the 23-24 school year.
- School-based “drives” (food items, personal hygiene items, etc.) encourage students to take action to gather personal care items for our district Family Resource Center. Many schools participate, including Lowell, Silver Beach, Parkview, Happy Valley and Columbia.
- Environmental Clubs operating in our high schools encourage respect for the environment and compassion for other humans on the planet.
- Unified Sports continues to thrive in our district. Allies and players work together in practice and games to find success and joy through participation in sports.
- Student leaders at Squalicum HS offer ninth and tenth grade “fun nights”; this provides a safe, fun place for students to gather, play, engage and connect.
- GRADs program continues to thrive in our high schools; childcare needs for both students and staff members are met through the program. Teen parents learn parenting skills in a supportive, caring environment.

- Roots of Empathy started at several elementary schools to help students develop compassion for others. Monthly visits with babies, families and facilitators created the space for students to observe, reflect and connect to their own world.
- As schools work towards greater inclusionary practices, we are seeing a variety of ways that students are creating belonging for all. Students are developing an understanding of neurodiversity and how they can be a positive peer support to others.
- Cordata Elementary is focusing on the theme of “you belong and you are loved” in daily rituals, in promotion of Cordata, and imbedded in schoolwide activities.
- Carl Cozier instructional coach Monica Savory led a student leadership team. One of the tasks was planning a way to give back to the community, which led to a donation drive to the Humane Society. The spring student leadership team worked with Whatcom Million Trees to remove ivy.

Honest and Ethical Individuals Who Act with Integrity

- A diverse group of students came together to form the Anti-Discrimination Task Force at Sehome High School to focus on school culture, especially as it relates to sexual assault, racism, homophobia, transphobia, anti-Semitism and ableism.
- Schools supported by our counselors and mental health providers have embraced trauma-informed practices and continue to implement restorative practices to resolve conflicts.

Healthy, Active Individuals

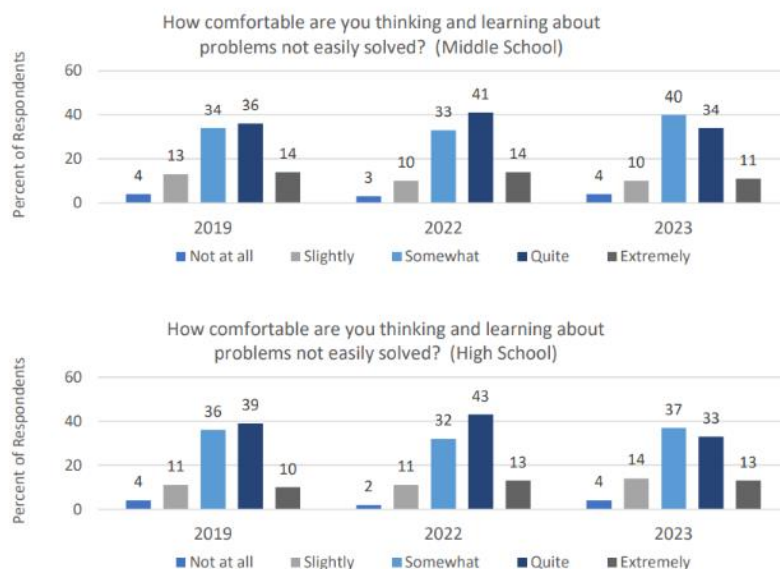
- The percentage of students engaged in school sports is back up to pre-pandemic rates; 2022-23 participation rate is 38% (1596 out of 4154) and 2018-19 was 37% (1504 out of 4096).
- High school physical education classes offer a wide variety of classes that encourage participation and activity. These include Yoga, Walking & Hiking, International Games and Lifetime Activities.
- Comprehensive Sexual Health Education including new state-mandated lessons in grades four through high school is underway.
- The Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) oversees athletics and fine arts for schools statewide and its most prestigious annual award is the Scholastic Cup in recognition of academic, athletic and sportsmanship excellence. Sehome High School (2nd), Bellingham High School (4th) and Squalicum High School (5th) placed in the [top five of the statewide Scholastic Cup standings among nearly 70 peer schools in the 2A classification](#) during the 2021-2022 academic year, a testament to all-around dedication and performance of student-athletes, coaches, staff and the school district.
- Unified sports for college aged students - Unified basketball for Community Transition students this year involved Western Washington University students and took place in the Whatcom Community College (WCC) gym for the first time. We are working towards involving more WCC students as well.
- Several schools are partnering with Animals as Natural Therapy to support students' mental health and give them experiences in nature.
- Peer Centered Outreach club at Sehome High School put on an assembly, lunch time events and education through PowerPoint slides on the hallway screens to discuss healthy relationships, boundaries and consent.

- Students at Squalicum High School created a documentary focused on mental health and shared it with peers during advisory classes. Supported by our district's association with Compass Health and services.
- Options High School highlighted inclusive PE offerings including Strength and Conditioning and Basketball Club.

Critical Thinkers and Problem-Solvers

- Expert Learner Platform was launched in grades 3-5 for students identified as highly capable. Students can log on to the Teams platform and extend their learning in subjects curated for them by Sheila Clark, literacy specialist at Happy Valley. Subjects include math, science, reading, writing, the arts and coding. Students can work independently or in a small group, extending their learning in the area of their choosing, meeting their highly capable needs.
- In 8th grade math at Kulshan Middle School, the special education resource teacher, Krisula Reardon, pushes into the 8th grade Math classes and co-teaches the lessons with the general education math teachers Brandon Adams and Heather Kinkade. Together, they make the notes pages for students and create accommodations for students who need different levels of support. While observing these math lessons, you can see that all students have the same grade level math standard and all students are meeting the standard, regardless of their disability. All students glue their notes page into their math journal daily and refer to these notes for formative and summative check points.
- Annual student survey results this spring on questions regarding students' comfort with thinking and learning about problems not easily solved suggest students feel slightly less comfortable in 2023, compared with prior years' data. See comparison chart embedded below.

Critical Thinkers and Problem Solvers



Effective Communicators

- Many organizations allied with the Career and Technical Education program support state leadership career-based competitions for public speaking to employment areas of business

marketing and health services. These include clubs offered in our schools such as Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA), Health Occupation Student Association (HOSA), Washington Career and Technical Sports Medicine Association (WCTSMA) and Technology Student Association (TSA). These organizations support students who are exploring career opportunities in a variety of areas. Each organization has a regional and state competition where students perform in a variety of events, many are public speaking and include presentations of their work.

- We hear reports from across the schools that students who are meeting one another in unified classes as a part of our efforts in inclusion are engaging in new ways with one another socially.
- Bellingham High School highlighted the new school-wide newspaper known as the “Bayhawk Bearer.”
- Kulshan Middle School students in seventh grade are using a model text from a picture book author to write their own picture book based on a social justice theme. They create the book digitally and then voice over reading of the book aloud to the audience. The book links are then shared with local elementary schools to be used in their classrooms.
- Whatcom Middle School created school-specific learner attributes this year that have a monthly focus including one month focused on being communicators. WMS staff and students highlight these attributes in monthly assemblies.
- Elementary schools empower students to take on communication roles within the building like daily announcements, school assemblies and working across grade levels in buddy classrooms.

Innovators and Creators

- District-wide robotics competitions with all four high schools represented; competitions take place all year long with a culminating competition in March. Robotics courses for CTE credit feed student interest in this area.
- Options High School highlighted excitement over the [School-Based Health Center Task Force](#) recommendation to eventually implement a center at Options.
- Whatcom Middle School art teacher Mark Heimer coordinated the Whatcom Art Club to have students create art out of recycled materials. Students create amazing sculptures comprised of materials that hold microplastics.
- Parkview Elementary’s instructional coach, Kate Mills, facilitated several Maker Space Family Nights for families to use science, tech, engineering, art and math to create things.

Well-rounded Community Members Engaged with the Broader World

- Latinx students from all four high schools have created a Baile Folklórico (Folkloric dance) group to help bring more recognition to the Spanish culture and share it with our Bellingham community. The group is called “Herencia Latina” Baile Folklórico (Latinx Heritage Folkloric Dance). Baile Folklórico is a traditional Spanish cultural dance that emphasizes rural folk culture and incorporates traditional dress/attire worn during these dances. Over 25 students are participating in Baile Folklórico as an after-school program. Participation has been rapidly growing since it started just over six months ago. Students are engaged and get the opportunity to experience their culture in a school setting to feel part of a community.

- Bellingham middle school students are engaged in 44 clubs and high school students in 81 clubs or ASB sponsored activities that reveal the diversity of interests and connections to the broader world (see attached list as Appendix A).
- Bellingham High School conducted a carbon audit of the school building with the student environmental club, led by club advisor and teacher Joe Balsiger.
- Whatcom Middle School student environmental justice club with Sam Stoner doing some native plant restoration work.
- Bellingham High School government teacher, Jen Reidel, worked with a group of high school senior students to enroll voters. The effort, an advisory class campaign, registered 75 high school seniors as voters. Similarly, a group of senior Sehome students led a voting drive to pre-register students to vote when they turn 18.
- The first-ever district-sponsored Kwanzaa information night and cultural celebration for students and families was planned by Dr. Velasquez-Farmer and team and held this spring.
- Sehome High School planned and sponsored a series of Community Academy meetings this year. Students worked with Assistant Principal Bethany Barrett to plan the community learning event series at SHS. The initial panels included law enforcement and mental health professionals. A second Academy is planned for May 16, 2023, with a focus on supporting youth mental health.
- Sehome student Sophia Rey is a city council intern with the City of Bellingham, a direct connection to the civic engagement she has had throughout her time in high school.
- Options HS highlights 60-plus community-based (off-site) learning experiences happening during the school day in all subject areas this year. Emphasis is on multiple career/college pathways with community partners.
- Fairhaven Middle School students are engaged in community-based service projects in seventh grade; eighth grade exit project has community component, as well. For example, a Fairhaven student is working downtown at Base Camp twice per week.
- Kulshan seventh grade students researched the history of hydroelectric dams in Washington state. They learned about a variety of stakeholders (tribes, construction companies, towns that receive electricity, etc.) and then presented the information they have learned in a method of their choice (written essay, poster, Sway or We Video).
- Seven eighth grade Shuksan students started an Environmental Club with the support of eighth-grade teacher, Mindy Galbraith, and they have partnered with A1 Construction to build bird houses and garden beds. Students are learning about the sustainability efforts local businesses and our schools are making to better our planet and have written a proposal for a more advanced recycling station located around Shuksan.
- Bellingham Family Partnership Program (BFPP) was awarded a Re-imagined Education grant through OSPI. BFPP is using those funds for an excursion-based class that has one day of instruction on-site and the second day includes excursions to various community agencies and sites. Students have studied energy, waste management, habitat restoration, First Nations and treaty enforced stewardship. The main focus of the course, however, has been social emotional learning and elevating the role of students in the BFPP community.

IV. Summary Concluding Statement and A Look Ahead

The Promise outcomes we aim for are broad; often evidence emerges in little bits and stories from across the system, as well as in the big picture data reporting work that we do annually. Our focus in this report this year has been to try to accomplish the task of offering both a breadth of

examples from across schools and levels, at the same time keeping these examples relatively brief. Let us know how this report is received, and we'll look forward to your feedback about how to continue to refine our reporting process.

In summary, with COVID in the rear-view mirror, our attention has turned to returning the district to more normal operation. While the attendance data presented earlier is concerning, we are seeing students returning in greater numbers to sports and activities; we see students engaged in musical theater; we see teachers and students collaborating to support connections to the broader community and world. Our extended graduation rates continue to rise, and efforts to improve inclusive learning opportunities for all students are being implemented, including more robust efforts to include all students in the general education classroom and ensure all needs are met.

We believe that this Bellingham Promise 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 *Promise* Ends to ensure they remain relevant and inspire meaningful work throughout the organization and community.

APPENDIX A – MS and HS Clubs/Activities

Middle School Clubs (44)	High School ASB-Sponsored Activities (6)	
Anime/Manga Club	Band	Orchestra
Anti-Bullying	Choir	LINK Crew
Art Club	Color Guard	Sports Medicine
ASB		
Aviation Ground School		
Badminton	High School Clubs (75)	
Basketball	Animal Welfare	Irish Club
BEATS	Animanga	Japanese Club
Bike Club	AP Physics	Juggling Club
Buddy Reading Club	Art Club	Key Club
Choir	ASL	Knowledge Bowl Team
Crocheting Club	Birding	La Chispa
Debate	Book Club	Lacrosse
Diversity in Action Club	Calculus	Lemon
Drama	Chef	Lighthouse Club
Dungeons & Dragons	Chess	Lunch Rock Band
Environmental Justice	Choreography	Mariners Maniacs
Future Problem Solvers	Club de Lectura	Math Team
Games Club	Compost	Multicultural
GSA	Computational Linguistics	National Honor Society
Improv	Cooking Club	Peer Centered Outreach
Juggling Club	Costume, Hair, and Makeup	Philosophy
Library Squad	Crochet for Community	Pottery
Makerspace	Culinary Club	QSA
Multicultural Club	Debate	Robotics/Engineering
Music	DECA	Role Playing Games
New Lunch Groups	DIA	Rotary Interact
Plastic Art Monster	Disk Golf	Rugby
Pokemon	Drama/Improv Club	Science Olympiad Team
Prevention Team	Dungeons and Dragons	Sewing
QSA	Engineering	Spanish
Robotics	Environmental Club	Stage Production

Rock Band Club
ROTR
Running Club
Sixth Grade Book
Social Action Club
Stranger Things
The Feminist Club

TSA

Tunes Club
Woodworking
Yearbook
Young Authors

E-Sports
FBLA
FCCLA
Film Making
French
German
Girl Up

GSA

Health Alliance
Hiking
Hispanic Honor Society
HOSA

T.E.C.
Teen Court
Tri-M Music Honor Society
Twilight Book
Ultimate Frisbee
Unified Robotics
United Diversity
Video Game/Design/E-
Sports
Volunteer Club
Woodworking Club
Young Multiracial Society