

Pathways to Education



BUILDING A GRADUATION NATION

Pathways to Education Canada Results Summary

Spring 2011

PATHWAYS TO EDUCATION

YEAR-END PROGRAM RESULTS 2009-10

Pathways to Education helps youth in low-income communities graduate from high school and successfully transition to post-secondary education or training. By providing a comprehensive set of academic, social and financial supports, Pathways is addressing the major barriers that can prevent full participation in education. The results of the Pathways program have been ground-breaking, reducing dropout rates by over 70 per cent and increasing participation in post-secondary education by over 300 per cent.

Key metrics such as dropout rates, high school graduation, and post-secondary participation rates are available only at the end of the student's high school career. As such, Pathways also tracks some intervening variables – metrics which are related to high school success, but which are more timely and give us indications of likely success while students are still in secondary school. These metrics – attendance and credit accumulation – have been demonstrated to be key indicators of high school graduation.

In 2010, The Boston Consulting Group conducted a value assessment that builds on their 2007 report on the analysis of the long-term effects of the program on the first three cohorts, and preliminary results across all of the news sites. The 2010 report confirmed the predictive value of credit accumulation and absenteeism and, importantly, confirmed that all of the second generation Pathways programs are on track to produce the outstanding results that have been reported for Regent Park.

All of these data are intended to answer the important question of the effectiveness of Pathways in supporting increased student success. Therefore, from the outset, we have ensured that there are important points of comparison with students from the same communities prior to the program, with peers in the same main schools as Pathways students, and with the school board averages.

Data collection of student achievement is an ongoing process. Partnership agreements with participating school boards enable Pathways Canada to obtain (with consent) student information pertaining to credit accumulation and attendance.

We are delighted to report that the data continues to show - clearly and strongly - Pathways' significant effectiveness in:

- Reducing the proportion of young people who are most academically at risk overall;
- Reducing the dropout rate in Regent Park;
- Increasing the proportion of students graduating from high school; and,
- Increasing the proportion of students continuing to post-secondary education programs.

Once again, the results from 2009-10 show that Pathways continues to produce important (and statistically significant) results when comparing each Pathways cohort to the historical cohorts from the community prior to the program.

STUDENT ENROLMENT

Enrolment rates continue to be encouraging, confirming the large degree of community support in each program location. The enrolment rate describes the percentage of students participating in Pathways in each community (i.e. the number of participating students from amongst the number of students eligible to participate in the defined community). The numbers of eligible students living in the community are determined from data received from the community feeder schools.

Overall, there has been an increase in the proportion of eligible students enrolled in the Pathways program in each community.

The following table outlines the number of students along with the enrolment rate in each community. Enrolment rates tend to increase over time as the Pathways program becomes more entrenched in the community and as the relationships with schools and school boards deepen. Differences in communities also have an impact on the enrolment rates. Average enrolment for the five mature programs (those with students in their final year of high school) is 92%.

ENROLMENT BY COMMUNITY

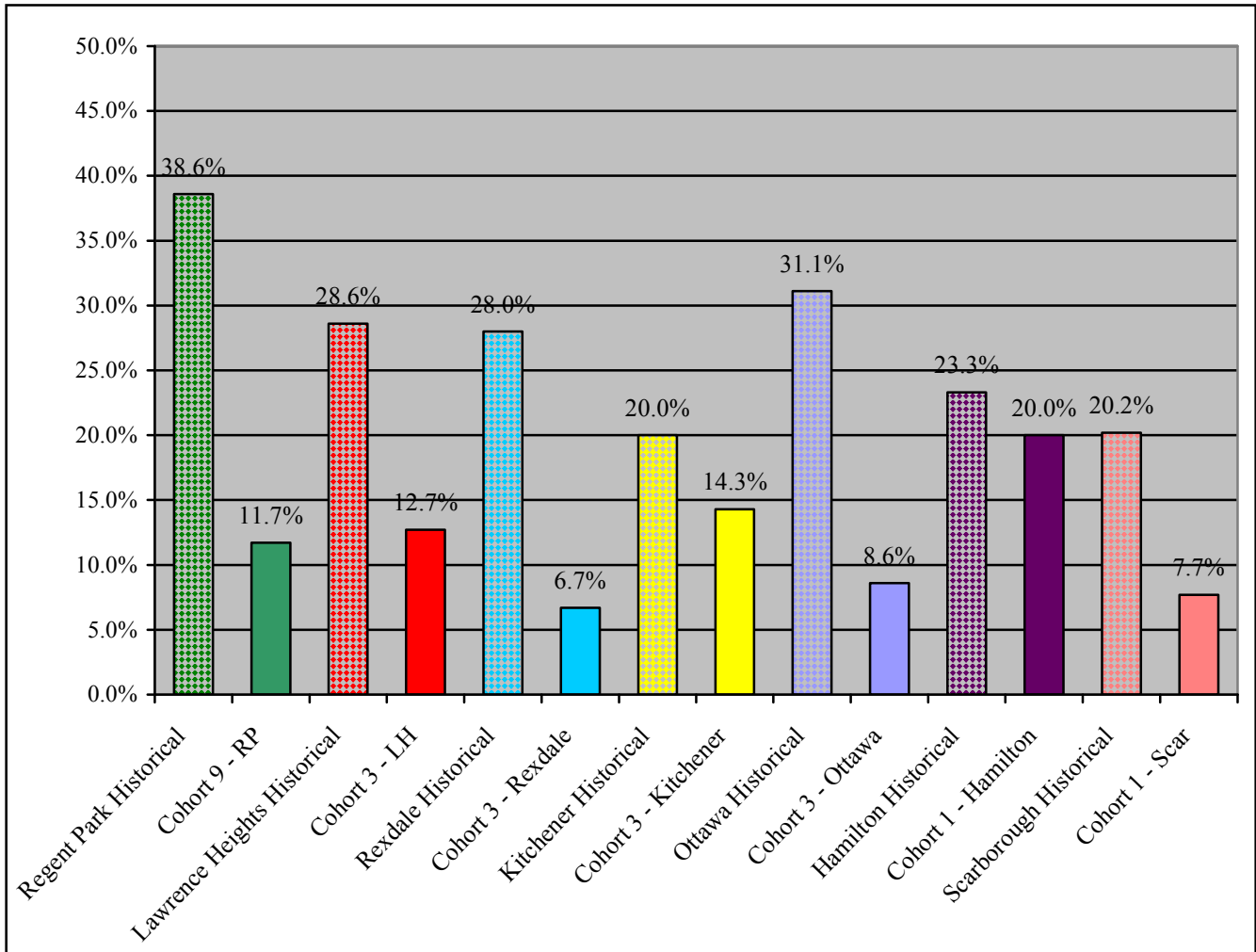
Year Program Started	Name of Community	# of Students 2007/08	# of Students 2008/09	# of Students 2009/2010	# of Students 2010/2011	Enrolment Rate Oct. 09/10	Enrolment Rate Mar. 10/11
2001	Regent Park*	850	852	861	936	93%	98%
2007	Kitchener*	100	265	387	542	91%	88%
2007	Lawrence Heights*	66	173	312	361	92%	89%
2007	Ottawa*	77	150	297	324	84%	80%
2007	Rexdale*	72	165	280	404	85%	88%
2007	Verdun	91	116	171	244	67%	69%
2009	Hamilton	n/a	n/a	80	133	60%	71%
2009	Scarborough	n/a	n/a	83	162	73%	75%
2010	Kingston	n/a	n/a	n/a	60	n/a	56%
2010	Winnipeg	n/a	n/a	n/a	90	n/a	78%
2010	Halifax	n/a	n/a	n/a	57	n/a	70%
	Total	1165	1605	2300	3313		

***Mature programs – Average enrolment rate is 92%**

CREDIT ACCUMULATION

Credit accumulation is a key predictor of the likelihood of a student's graduation from high school. The graphs below illustrate the performance of Pathways students in Grade 9, a school year that is critical in setting the stage for success in high school.

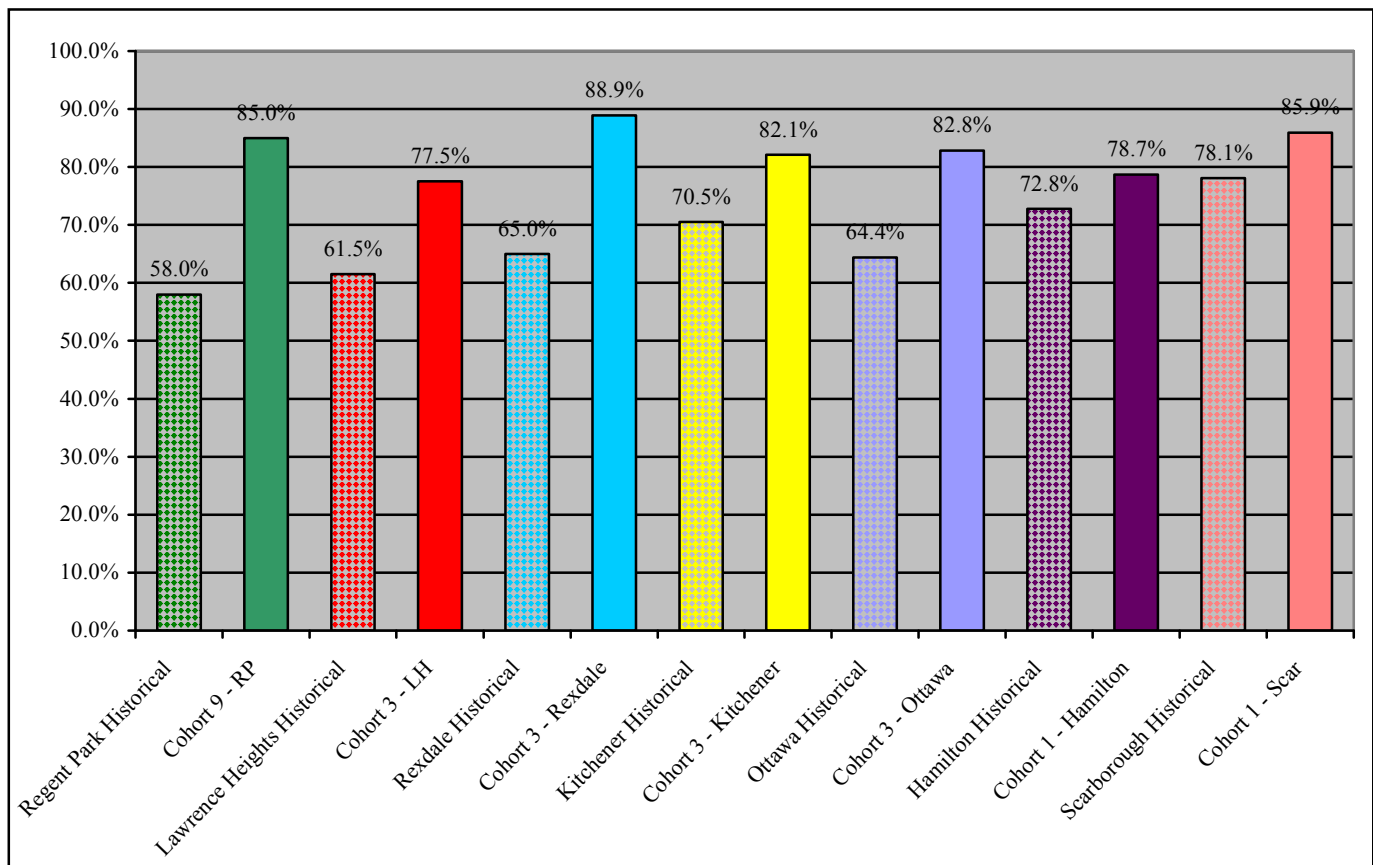
Fewer Grade 9 students are struggling (5 or fewer credits)



Overall, the percentage of struggling students (those well below expected credit accumulation) has declined in every Pathways site. Monitoring success in Grade 9 is especially important; the Boston Consulting Group, in their analysis of the Pathways program, reported that positive outcomes in Grade 9 Pathways students tend to be replicated in the subsequent high school years.

CREDIT ACCUMULATION (con't)

Increases in number of Grade nine students doing well (7+ credits)



Pathways also measures increases in the proportion of students achieving their expected credits. The graph above illustrates how the percentage of students achieving grade-appropriate credit accumulation increased for every cohort in every site.

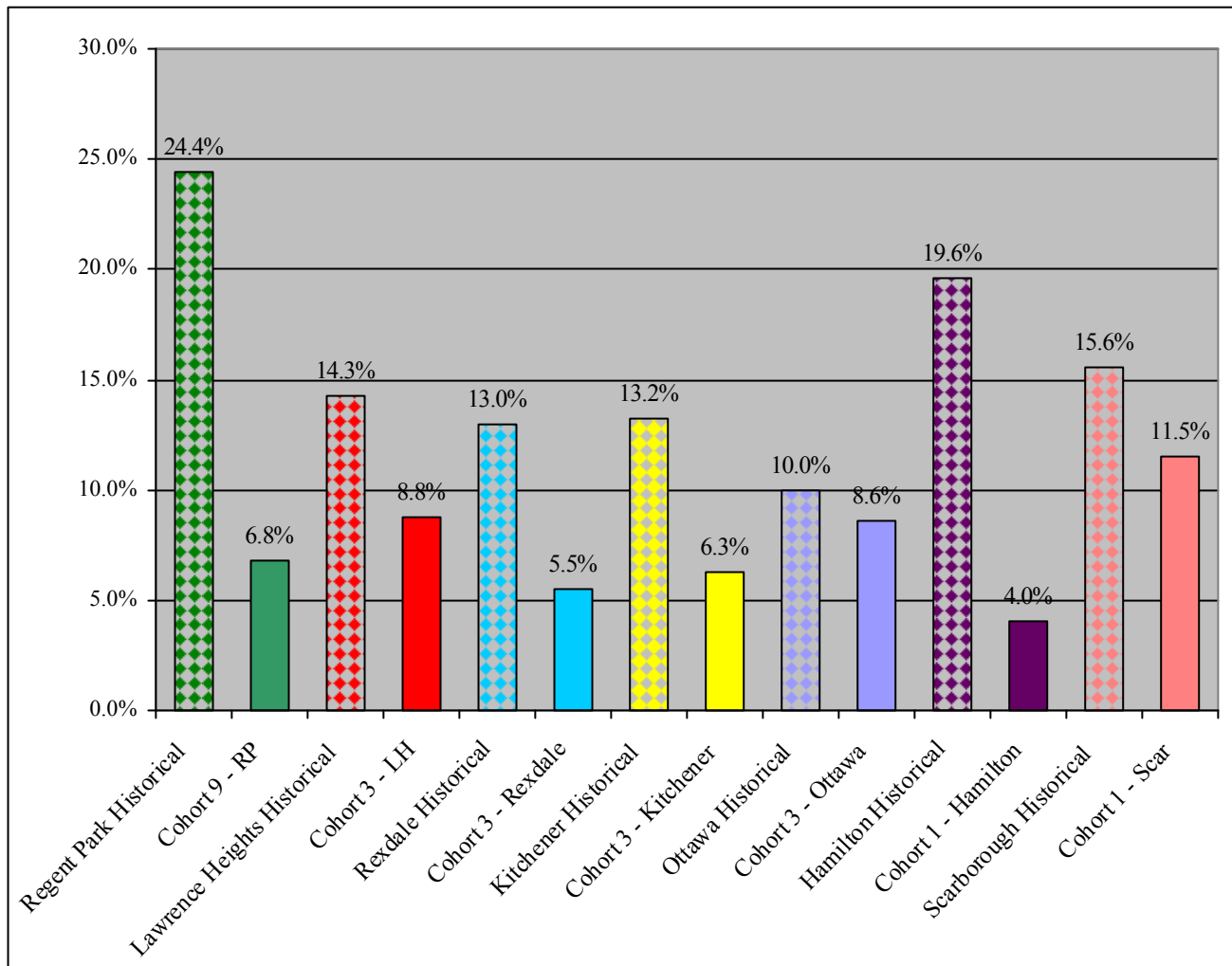
- Ontario 'Generation 2' sites (Ottawa, Rexdale, Lawrence Heights, Kitchener) are demonstrating very strong trends replicating the successful outcomes of Regent Park;
- The 'Generation 3' sites (Hamilton and Scarborough) are also following with the same positive trend in performance in their first year of the program.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is another important predictor of student success in high school. A high rate of absenteeism is an indicator of the likelihood of a student's premature departure from high school.

Pathways measures the attendance rates in order to identify and help those students that are at greater risk of dropping out.

Fewer Grade 9 students have poor attendance (absent 15% or more)



Overall, the Pathways program improved attendance for all grades of students in all sites.

The graph above illustrates how the rate of 'high absenteeism,' defined as being absent 15% or more of the time, has decreased for Grade 9 students across all Pathways program sites. Our research confirms that this trend is also true for the Grade 10's and 11's and is positively correlated with the reduction in 'struggling' students that has been documented in each site.

RESULTS FOR PATHWAYS VERDUN (MONTREAL)

Pathways Verdun is the site of the first Pathways program in Quebec; the program was launched in 2005, as part of our second generation of sites. The provincial education system in which this site operates is unique and impacts program delivery when compared to Pathways in Ontario:

- French language program;
- In Quebec, high school begins with Secondary 1 (comparable to Grade 7) and continues for five years through completion of Secondary 5; and,
- After high school, students continue on to CEGEP either for a 2-year pre-university program or directly into post-secondary programs similar to community college programming in Ontario.

Pathways Verdun performs the same kind of rigorous measurement on program outcomes as do all sites, although in the Quebec system students do not accumulate “credits” that are comparable to the Ontario education system. Pathways Verdun tracks student progress through reports cards and attendance.

- For the first cohort in their first year of the program, the percentage of students showing good attendance (or low absenteeism) patterns is 62 %, which is comparable to other Pathways programs (i.e. Kitchener at 58%; Lawrence Heights at 55%; Rexdale at 72%)
- For the second cohort in their first year of the program, the percentage of students showing good attendance (or low absenteeism) patterns is 59% (compared to Kitchener at 59%; LH at 62%; Rexdale at 72%)

DROPOUT AND GRADUATION RATES

The overall dropout rate across the first five cohorts of Pathways students is an impressive 11.1%. This accomplishment reflects an 80% reduction when compared to the 56% dropout rate that was reported by the Toronto District School Board prior to Pathways being implemented.

Very low dropout rates are reflective of the fact that students are staying in school, and in Pathways, beyond five years; in some cases this is done to attain more credits or improve grades.

Five-year and six-plus year graduation rates remain at, or above, the city (TDSB) average: with five-year rates at 68%; and six-year rates at 79%.

These graduation rates remain far above the pre-Pathways rates for the community:

Four-year: 36%-51% compared to 25% prior to Pathways

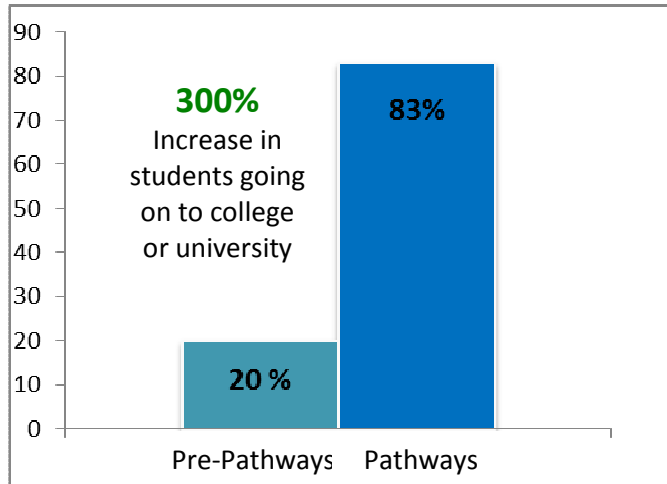
Five-year: 60%-72% compared to 43% prior to Pathways

Six-year+: 75%-83% compared to 50% prior to Pathways

An analysis performed for the first time last year is particularly noteworthy and shows that the graduation and dropout rates for those Pathways students who struggled most in Grade 9 are considerably better than the TDSB average for such students (34% of these Pathways students graduated vs. 13% of these students City-wide; 64% City-wide dropped out vs. 27% of Pathways struggling students). Far larger proportions of Pathways students are remaining in school.

POST SECONDARY PARTICIPATION

The proportion of graduates moving on to college and university remains high. From the first three graduating classes, 83% of the students are in, or have graduated from, post-secondary programs. This represents growth of 300% when compared to post-secondary attendance rates of 20% prior to the implementation of the Pathways program.



NEW RESEARCH UNDERWAY

To better understand the forces at play in the lives of “struggling” students, Pathways initiated a research project in January 2011 looking at the factors and forces in the lives of these students. Results from this research will provide valuable insight into how Pathways can better serve the unique needs of these students and support their success.

- With funding from the federal government, qualitative sociologist Kevin Gosine from Brock University is heading a research team to better understand the characteristics and features of struggling students, high-achieving students and their SPSWs;
- Study will identify potential risk factors that reside in their family lives, the community, the school and with their peers;
- Next phase is of research will reach out to the 300 or so students who have left the Pathways program over the past 10 years to document their current situation, and better understand the reasons for their early departure from high school and/or the program.