

Tracking Pathways in Mathematics Achievement: EQAO Cohort Results from 2021–2022 to 2024–2025

Mathematics Priority Schools

Research Brief

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This research brief is a companion to the EQAO research report “Tracking Pathways in Mathematics Achievement: EQAO Cohort Results from 2021–2022 to 2024–2025.”

Starting in 2022–2023, the Ontario Ministry of Education launched the Math Achievement Action Plan, a province-wide strategy to improve teaching and learning of mathematics throughout Ontario. Every school board received funding for a board math lead, and a Ministry-based Math Action Team was deployed to support school boards and their math leads. In addition, the Ministry identified Ontario’s mathematics priority schools (hereafter referred to as “priority schools”)—the lowest-performing 20 percent of schools based on their performance on the mathematics component of the Grades 3 and 6 EQAO assessments and on the Grade 9 EQAO mathematics assessment. To improve mathematics instruction and learning at these priority schools, the Ministry provides funding to their school boards for math facilitators to train mathematics teachers in Grades 3, 6 and 9 classrooms (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2023, 2024).

This brief explores students’ pathways in mathematics achievement based on whether they were attending a priority school or a non-priority school. The Ontario Ministry of Education provided EQAO with the 2021–2022 lists of priority schools for Grades 3, 6 and 9.¹ As such, in this brief, “priority schools” are schools who appear on these lists, and “non-priority schools” are those not appearing on any of these lists.

To further contextualize the findings, the brief also compares the current cohort findings to historical cohort data (for both the Grade 3 to Grade 6 cohort and the Grade 6 to Grade 9 cohort).

Cohort trends (2021–2022 to 2024–2025)

All students from English-language and French-language school boards in Ontario were included² in the analysis if the students were provided an achievement level for the mathematics component of the primary- (Grade 3) or junior-division (Grade 6) assessments in 2021–2022 and for the Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics in 2024–2025. The same inclusion criteria were applied to the historical cohort data to ensure comparability of findings.

- In the Grade 3 to Grade 6 cohort dataset of 115 912 students, in Grade 3 (2021–2022), 24% of students were attending priority schools,³ and 76% of students were attending non-priority schools.^{4, 5}
- In the Grade 6 to Grade 9 cohort dataset of 113 033 students, in Grade 6 (2021–2022), 21% of students were attending priority schools,⁶ and 79% of students were attending non-priority schools. In Grade 9 (2024–2025), 12% of students were attending priority schools,⁷ and 88% of students were attending non-priority schools.^{8, 9}

Students attending priority schools make gains but struggle to catch up on an early disadvantage

Students attending priority schools in Grade 3 had a lower chance than students attending non-priority schools of continuing to meet the provincial standard in Grade 6, and a lower chance of rising to meet the provincial standard in Grade 6. The same trends were observed for students between Grade 6 and Grade 9. Here are some observations (see Figure 1 and Figure 2):

- Among Grade 3 students who met the provincial standard in 2021–2022, 69% of students attending priority schools and 77% of students attending non-priority schools still met the provincial standard in Grade 6 (2024–2025). In addition, 17% of students attending priority schools and 21% of students attending non-priority schools who did not meet the provincial standard in Grade 3 (2021–2022) rose to meet the provincial standard in Grade 6 (2024–2025).¹⁰
- Among Grade 6 students who met the provincial standard in 2021–2022, 85% of students attending priority schools and 90% of students attending non-priority schools still met the provincial standard in Grade 9 (2024–2025). In addition, 27% of students attending priority schools and 36% of students attending non-priority schools who did not meet the provincial standard in Grade 6 (2021–2022) rose to meet the provincial standard in Grade 9 (2024–2025).¹¹

Figure 1. Pathways of student achievement from Grade 3 (2021–2022) to Grade 6 (2024–2025), by attendance at a priority school / non-priority school in Grade 3

Students attending priority schools

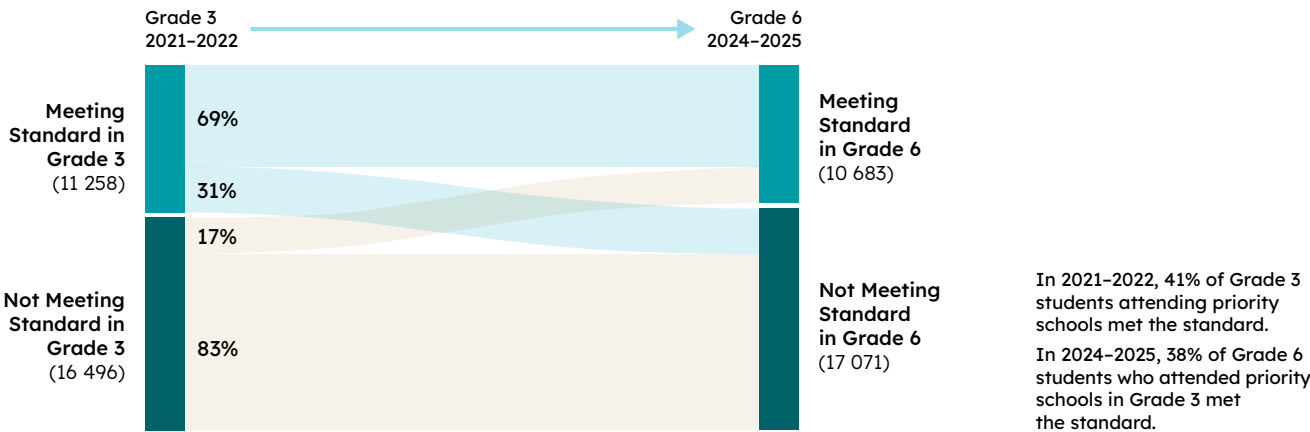


Figure 1. Pathways of student achievement from Grade 3 (2021–2022) to Grade 6 (2024–2025), by attendance at a priority school / non-priority school in Grade 3 (continued)

Students attending non-priority schools

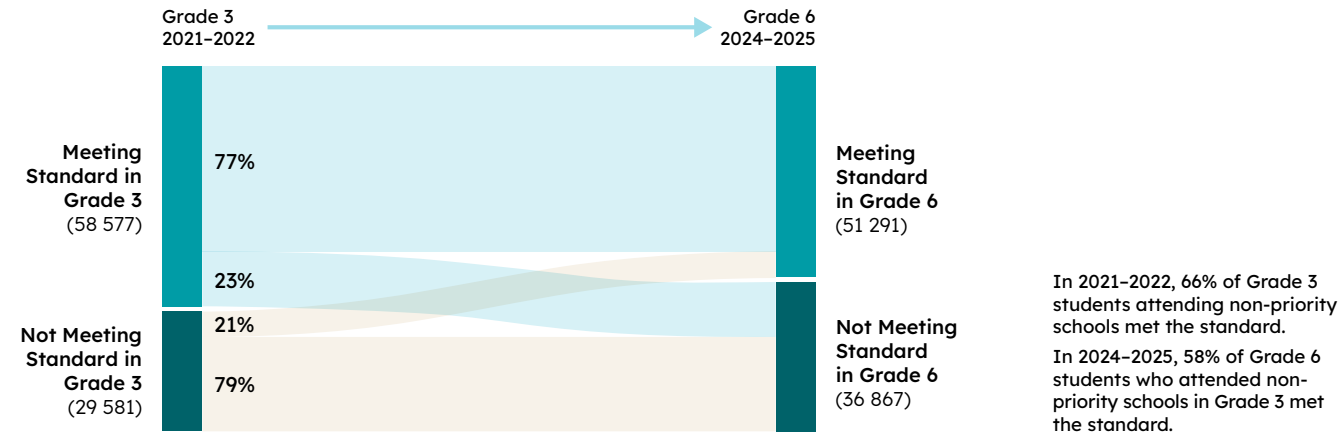
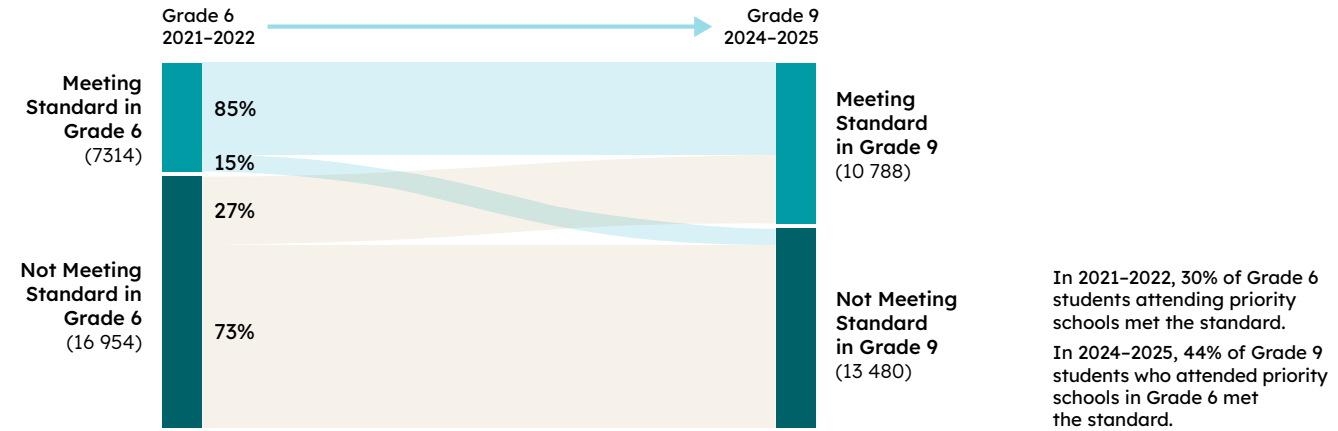
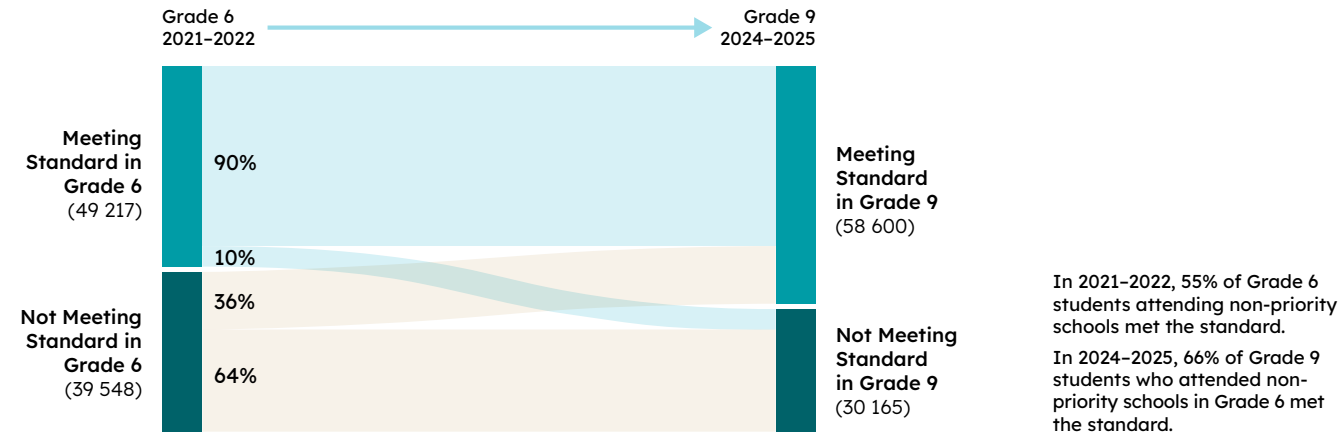


Figure 2. Pathways of student achievement from Grade 6 (2021–2022) to Grade 9 (2024–2025), by attendance at a priority school / non-priority school in Grade 6

Students attending priority schools



Students attending non-priority schools



However, due to the very large difference in Grade 3 (2021–2022) achievement between students attending priority and non-priority schools, even the lower rate of gains observed above resulted in a narrowing achievement gap over time. For example, in Grade 3 in 2021–2022, 41% of students attending priority schools met the provincial standard compared to 66% of students attending non-priority schools. This was an achievement gap of 25 percentage points that favoured students attending non-priority schools. In Grade 6 in 2024–2025, 38% of students attending priority schools (in Grade 3) met the provincial standard compared to 58% of students attending non-priority schools (in Grade 3). This was an achievement gap of 20 percentage points that favoured students attending non-priority schools (in Grade 3).¹²

The achievement gap also narrowed in the older cohort, but to a lesser extent. Specifically, in Grade 6 in 2021–2022, 30% of students attending priority schools met the provincial standard compared to 55% of students attending non-priority schools. This was an achievement gap of 25 percentage points that favoured students attending non-priority schools. In Grade 9 in 2024–2025, 44% of students attending priority schools met the provincial standard compared to 66% of students attending non-priority schools. This was an achievement gap of 22 percentage points that favoured students attending non-priority schools.¹³

In summary, students who were attending priority schools (in 2021–2022) started off less likely to meet curriculum expectations but made some gains by 2024–2025. However, in 2024–2025, students attending priority schools (in 2021–2022) remained less likely than students attending non-priority schools to meet curriculum expectations. Note, however, that without existing supports, achievement for students attending priority schools could be lower. Monitoring the progress of students attending priority schools across multiple cohorts may be a useful indicator of the effectiveness of interventions to further improve learning supports.

Historical perspective (2015–2016 to 2018–2019)

To determine whether the trends seen in the 2021–2022 to 2024–2025 cohort are typical, we repeated the same analyses for the previous cohort (2015–2016 to 2018–2019). In 2021–2022, EQAO results indicated some learning loss due to COVID-19-related school closures, with students in priority schools more affected than students in non-priority schools. However, over the next few years, all students were expected to regain some ground due to receiving consistent classroom instruction again. As this learning recovery occurred at the same time as priority schools were receiving extra resources for mathematics, the impact of the extra resources cannot be clearly separated from the learning recovery period. However, the comparison provides a late-2010s benchmark for expected “business-as-usual” gains and losses.

In addition, due to the implementation of de-streaming for the Grade 9 mathematics course in 2021–2022, it is not possible to directly compare Grade 6 to Grade 9 pathways for the two time periods. However, the historical perspective may still be useful when reflecting on recent trends.

- In the Grade 3 (2015–2016) to Grade 6 (2018–2019) cohort dataset of 122 680 students,¹⁴ in Grade 3 (2015–2016), 23% of students were attending what are now categorized as priority schools, and 77% of students were attending what are now categorized as non-priority schools.^{15, 16, 17}
- In the Grade 6 (2015–2016) to Grade 9 (2018–2019) cohort dataset of 113 343 students,¹⁸ in Grade 6 (2015–2016), 20% of students were attending what are now categorized as priority schools, and 80% of students were attending what are now categorized as non-priority schools.^{19, 20, 21}

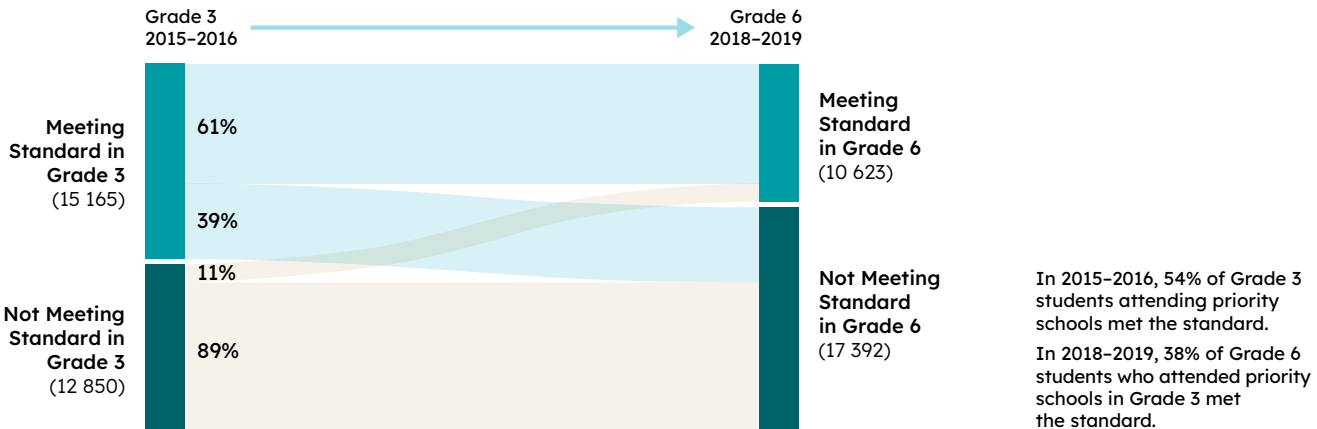
Students attending priority schools in 2021–2022 made greater gains than students attending priority schools in 2015–2016

In the 2015–2016 to 2018–2019 cohort, students attending priority schools in Grade 3 had a lower chance than students attending non-priority schools of continuing to meet the provincial standard in Grade 6, and a lower chance of rising to meet the provincial standard in Grade 6. Similar trends were also observed for students between Grade 6 and Grade 9. Here are some observations (see Figure 3 and Figure 4):

- Among Grade 3 students who met the provincial standard in 2015–2016, 61% of students attending priority schools and 74% of students attending non-priority schools still met the provincial standard in Grade 6 (2018–2019). In addition, 11% of students attending priority schools and 17% of students attending non-priority schools who did not meet the provincial standard in Grade 3 (2015–2016) rose to meet the provincial standard in Grade 6 (2018–2019).²²
- Among Grade 6 students who met the provincial standard in 2015–2016, 83% of students attending priority schools and 91% of students attending non-priority schools met the academic provincial standard in Grade 9 (2018–2019). In addition, 30% of students attending priority schools and 41% of students attending non-priority schools who did not meet the provincial standard in Grade 6 (2015–2016) rose to meet the academic provincial standard in Grade 9 (2018–2019).²³

Figure 3. Pathways of student achievement from Grade 3 (2015–2016) to Grade 6 (2018–2019), by attendance at a priority school / non-priority school in Grade 3

Students attending priority schools



Students attending non-priority schools

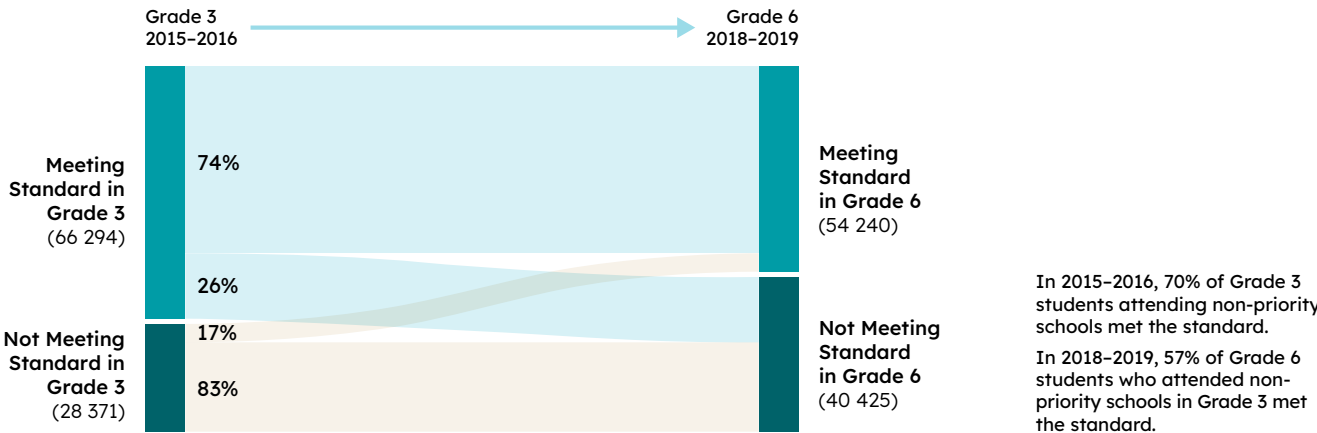
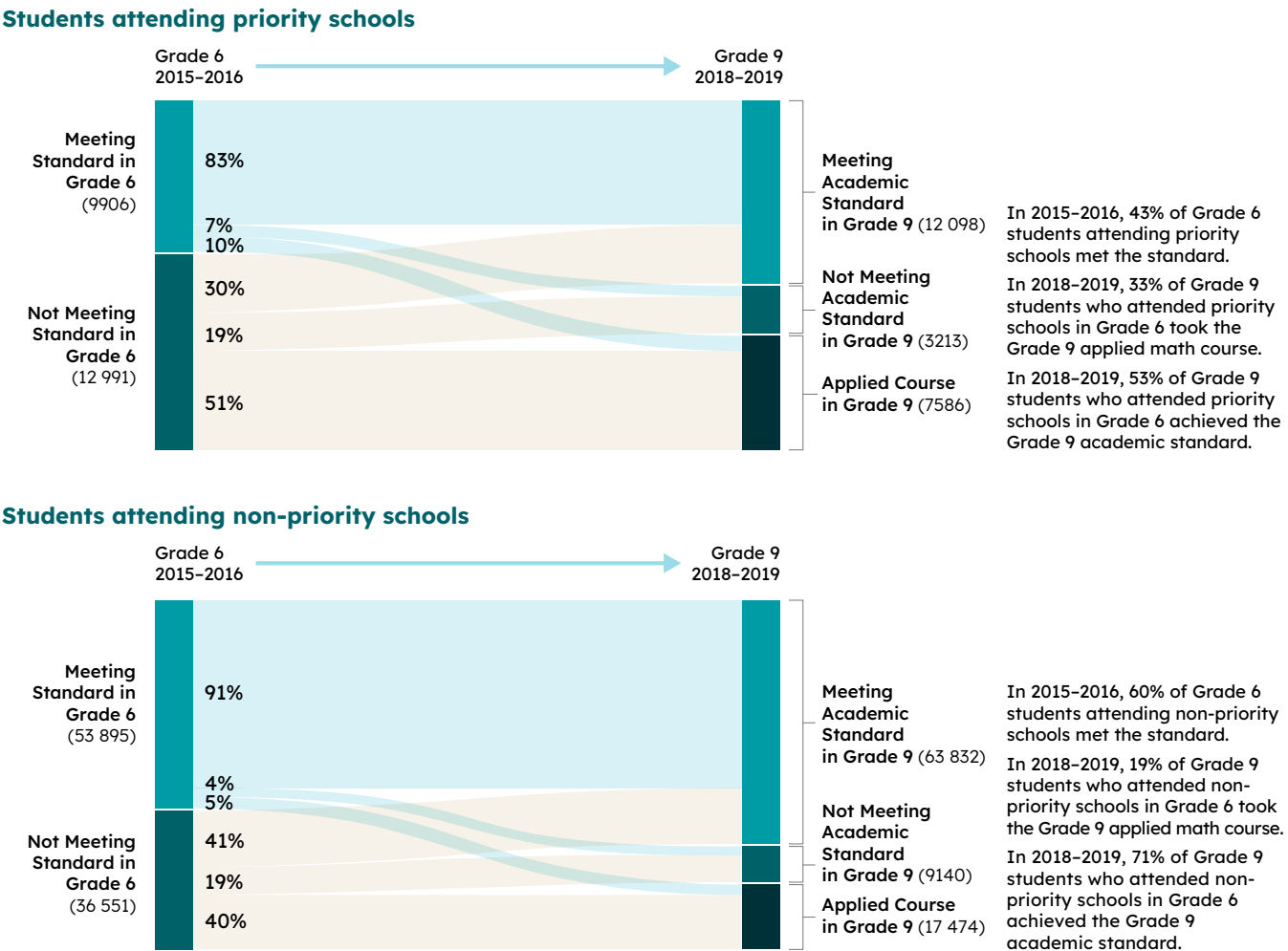


Figure 4. Pathways of student achievement from Grade 6 (2015–2016) to Grade 9 (2018–2019), by attendance at a priority school / non-priority school in Grade 6



In contrast to the 2021–2022 to 2024–2025 cohort, Grade 3 students attending priority or non-priority schools in 2015–2016 showed a widening achievement gap over time. For example, in Grade 3 in 2015–2016, 54% of students attending priority schools met the provincial standard compared to 70% of students attending non-priority schools. This was an achievement gap of 16 percentage points that favoured students attending non-priority schools. In Grade 6 in 2018–2019, 38% of students attending priority schools (in Grade 3) met the provincial standard compared to 57% of students attending non-priority schools (in Grade 3). This was an achievement gap of 19 percentage points that favoured students attending non-priority schools (in Grade 3).²⁴

Likewise, the achievement gap remained steady for Grade 6 students attending priority and non-priority schools in 2015–2016 and did not decrease. For example, in Grade 6 in 2015–2016, 43% of students attending priority schools met the provincial standard compared to 60% of students attending non-priority schools. This was an achievement gap of 17 percentage points that favoured students attending non-priority schools. In Grade 9 in 2018–2019, 53% of students attending priority schools met the academic provincial standard compared to 71% of students attending non-priority schools. This was an achievement gap of 18 percentage points that favoured students attending non-priority schools.²⁵

Policy and instructional planning implications

The key policy question that this research brief can inform is whether a priority-school designation (and the associated additional teacher-development resources) results in greater gains for students attending such schools. The results of this cohort analysis suggest that as a group, students attending priority schools in 2021–2022 subsequently made more progress in mathematics (as measured by EQAO assessments) than their 2015–2016 counterparts at the same schools (which are now categorized as priority schools). However, improvements in instruction and learning are mixed in with learning recovery after COVID-19-related closures and the implementation of the de-streamed Grade 9 mathematics course. Research also emphasizes that development of strong teaching skills requires multiple years of practice and reflection under the mentorship of skilled practitioners (Ma, 2010; Martin et al., 2014; Tynjälä et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2025). Therefore, another year of assessment data may yield clearer outcomes, as teaching staff at priority schools begin to benefit from consecutive years of skills development in mathematics teaching.

Overall, the results of this analysis indicate the importance of building strong foundations in mathematics, avoiding the development of learning gaps, and addressing gaps promptly when they arise. Students attending elementary priority schools (whether in 2015–2016 or 2021–2022) were less likely to meet the provincial standard in Grade 3, and this disadvantage was seen to follow students in their mathematics studies in later grades. That is, we argue that the difference in learning outcomes at Grade 6 primarily reflects gaps in foundational mathematics learning that arose between kindergarten and Grade 3 and were not resolved in Grades 4, 5 or 6.

Each stage of mathematics learning builds on the last, making early understanding critical. Therefore, students who have gaps in their mathematics understanding from the kindergarten and primary-division curricula often struggle or are unable to engage with the junior-division mathematics curriculum (Fuchs et al., 2021). As a result, the most instructionally efficient way to ensure success in the junior-division mathematics curriculum is to prevent skills gaps from emerging in kindergarten and the primary grades. The next critical step is to ensure both that learning gaps are closed during the junior grades and that students keep up with new concepts and skills introduced during that stage.

This finding about avoiding the development of, but where necessary effectively addressing, learning gaps applies equally forcefully to achievement in the intermediate grades and Grade 9. Students who meet the provincial standard in Grade 6 are highly likely to meet the provincial standard in Grade 9. The most efficient solution for improving Grade 9 achievement is to ensure that students meet the provincial standard in Grade 6. However, where catch-up interventions are required, Grades 7 and 8 present critical opportunities to close earlier learning gaps, which often date back to the kindergarten and primary curricula. Thus, it can be considered wise to focus teacher development resources not only on Grade 9 but also on Grade 7 and Grade 8 feeder schools, to minimize the achievement gap for students attending priority schools.

Notes

- ¹ The lists of priority schools change somewhat each school year. Many schools remain on the list consistently. However, in theory, a school may have been on the list in 2021–2022 but removed from the list in 2022–2023 and added back on in 2024–2025.
- ² As trends were similar across English-language and French-language school boards, results are reported for all students as a combined group. Results are reported separately in the endnotes. This research brief used students' board membership in 2021–2022 to help boards in both viewing student-group trajectories and also in planning support for student groups who may need it. (Some students moved between boards, including between French- and English-language boards, over time.) Note that provincial cohort reporting for 2021–2022 to 2024–2025 used students' board membership in 2024–2025. In 2021–2022 in Grade 3, 108 247 students were in English-language boards. By Grade 6 (2024–2025), 0.11% (n = 123) of these students were in French-language boards. In 2021–2022 in Grade 3, 7665 students were in French-language boards. By Grade 6 (2024–2025), 5.39% (n = 413) of these students were in English-language boards. In 2021–2022 in Grade 6, 105 818 students were in English-language boards. By Grade 9 (2024–2025), 0.12% (n = 132) of these students were in French-language boards. In 2021–2022 in Grade 6, 7215 students were in French-language boards. By Grade 9 (2024–2025), 19% (n = 1352) of these students were in English-language boards. In 2015–2016 in Grade 3, 114 917 students were in English-language boards. By Grade 6 (2018–2019), 0.16% (n = 181) of these students were in French-language boards. In 2015–2016 in Grade 3, 7763 students were in French-language boards. By Grade 6 (2018–2019), 5.15% (n = 400) of these students were in English-language boards. In 2015–2016 in Grade 6, 106 747 students were in English-language boards. By Grade 9 (2018–2019), 0.15% (n = 162) of these students were in French-language boards. In 2015–2016 in Grade 6, 6596 students were in French-language boards. By Grade 9 (2018–2019), 17.81% (n = 1175) of these students were in English-language boards.
- ³ "Priority schools" refers to any school appearing on any priority list (Grade 3, Grade 6 or Grade 9). Therefore, students in elementary school might have been attending a school that appeared on the Grade 3 list, the Grade 6 list or both the Grade 3 and Grade 6 lists.
- ⁴ There is some movement of students among schools between Grade 3 and Grade 6. Movement can be due to various reasons, including individual family circumstances and choices, program availability (e.g., later French immersion programs beginning in Grade 4) and sometimes because a school offers programming only to Grade 5 or lower, and all students transferred to other schools. At the primary-division assessment, 27 754 students were attending priority schools, and 88 158 students were attending non-priority schools. In Grade 6, 17% of students who had been attending priority schools at the primary-division assessment were now attending non-priority schools. Four percent of students who had been attending non-priority schools at the primary-division assessment were now attending priority schools. English-language boards: At the primary-division assessment, 26 416 students were attending priority schools, and 81 831 students were attending non-priority schools. In Grade 6, 17% of students who had been attending priority schools at the primary-division assessment were now attending non-priority schools. Four percent of students who had been attending non-priority schools at the primary-division assessment were now attending priority schools. French-language boards: At the primary-division assessment, 1338 students were attending priority schools, and 6327 students were attending non-priority schools. In Grade 6, 12% of students who had been attending priority schools at the primary-division assessment were now attending non-priority schools. Three percent of students who had been attending non-priority schools at the primary-division assessment were now attending priority schools.
- ⁵ English-language boards: In the Grade 3 to Grade 6 cohort of 108 247 students, in Grade 3 (2021–2022), 24% of students were attending priority schools, and 76% of students were attending non-priority schools. French-language boards: In the Grade 3 to Grade 6 cohort of 7665 students, in Grade 3 (2021–2022), 17% of students were attending priority schools, and 83% of students were attending non-priority schools.
- ⁶ Again, the students were in Grade 6, but the school itself may have been tagged as a Grade 3 or a Grade 6 priority school, or both.
- ⁷ Again, the students were in Grade 6, but the school itself may have been tagged as a Grade 3 or a Grade 6 priority school, or both.
- ⁸ Between Grade 6 and Grade 9, all students moved to at least one new school, because in Ontario, high school begins in Grade 9. High schools in Ontario receive students from multiple elementary schools and sometimes have overlapping catchment areas, so the transition patterns are complex. However, some elementary schools offer programming only up to Grade 6, and students at these schools would have transferred to other schools for Grade 7 and Grade 8. At the junior-division assessment, 24 268 students were attending priority schools, and 88 765 students were attending non-priority schools. In Grade 9, 73% of students who had been attending priority elementary schools at the junior-division assessment were now attending non-priority secondary schools. Eight percent of students who had been attending non-priority elementary schools at the junior-division assessment were now attending priority secondary schools. English-language boards: At the junior-division assessment, 23 055 students were attending priority schools, and 82 763 students were attending non-priority schools. In Grade 9, 72% of students who had been attending priority elementary schools at the junior-division assessment were now attending non-priority secondary schools. Eight percent of students who had been attending non-priority elementary schools at the junior-division assessment were now attending priority secondary schools. French-language boards: At the junior-division assessment, 1213 students were attending priority schools, and 6002 students were attending non-priority schools. In Grade 9, 84% of students who had been attending priority elementary schools at the junior-division assessment were now attending non-priority secondary schools. Six percent of students who had been attending non-priority elementary schools at the junior-division assessment were now attending priority secondary schools.
- ⁹ English-language boards: In the Grade 6 to Grade 9 cohort of 105 818 students, in Grade 6 (2021–2022), 22% of students were attending priority schools, and 78% of students were attending non-priority schools. French-language boards: In the Grade 6 to Grade 9 cohort of 7215 students, in Grade 6 (2021–2022), 17% of students were attending priority schools, and 83% of students were attending non-priority schools.
- ¹⁰ English-language boards: Among Grade 3 students who met the provincial standard in 2021–2022, 69% of students attending priority schools and 77% of students attending non-priority schools still met the provincial standard in Grade 6 (2024–2025). In addition, 17% of students attending priority schools and 20% of students attending non-priority schools who did not meet the provincial standard in Grade 3 (2021–2022) rose to meet the provincial standard in Grade 6 (2024–2025). French-language boards: Among Grade 3 students who met the provincial standard in 2021–2022, 75% of students attending priority schools and 80% of students attending non-priority schools still met the provincial standard in Grade 6 (2024–2025). In addition, 25% of students attending priority schools and 27% of students attending non-priority schools who did not meet the provincial standard in Grade 3 (2021–2022) rose to meet the provincial standard in Grade 6 (2024–2025).

- ¹¹ English-language boards: Among Grade 6 students who met the provincial standard in 2021–2022, 85% of students attending priority schools and 90% of students attending non-priority schools still met the provincial standard in Grade 9 (2024–2025). In addition, 26% of students attending priority schools and 35% of students attending non-priority schools who did not meet the provincial standard in Grade 6 (2021–2022) rose to meet the provincial standard in Grade 9 (2024–2025). French-language boards: Among Grade 6 students who met the provincial standard in 2021–2022, 92% of students attending priority schools and 91% of students attending non-priority schools still met the provincial standard in Grade 9 (2024–2025). In addition, 38% of students attending priority schools and 43% of students attending non-priority schools who did not meet the provincial standard in Grade 6 (2021–2022) rose to meet the provincial standard in Grade 9 (2024–2025).
- ¹² English-language boards: In Grade 3 in 2021–2022, 40% of students attending priority schools met the provincial standard compared to 66% of students attending non-priority schools. In Grade 6 in 2024–2025, 38% of students attending priority schools (in Grade 3) met the provincial standard compared to 58% of students attending non-priority schools (in Grade 3). French-language boards: In Grade 3 in 2021–2022, 45% of students attending priority schools met the provincial standard compared to 72% of students attending non-priority schools. In Grade 6 in 2024–2025, 48% of students attending priority schools (in Grade 3) met the provincial standard compared to 65% of students attending non-priority schools (in Grade 3).
- ¹³ English-language boards: In Grade 6 in 2021–2022, 30% of students attending priority schools met the provincial standard compared to 55% of students attending non-priority schools. In Grade 9 in 2024–2025, 44% of students attending priority schools (in Grade 3) met the provincial standard compared to 66% of students attending non-priority schools (in Grade 3). French-language boards: In Grade 6 in 2021–2022, 27% of students attending priority schools met the provincial standard compared to 57% of students attending non-priority schools. In Grade 9 in 2024–2025, 52% of students attending priority schools (in Grade 3) met the provincial standard compared to 71% of students attending non-priority schools (in Grade 3).
- ¹⁴ Previous provincial reporting for this cohort included 126 747 students because before 2020, all students were included in reporting, even if they were exempted or absent. After 2020, only fully participating students (i.e., students who attempt the assessment and receive an achievement level) are included in reporting. To ensure comparability across cohorts, this research brief included only fully participating students in the historical analysis.
- ¹⁵ As with the 2021–2022 to 2024–2025 cohort, there was some movement among schools between Grade 3 and Grade 6. Movement would have been due to the same reasons. At the primary-division assessment, 28 015 students were attending priority schools, and 94 665 students were attending non-priority schools. In Grade 6, 20% of students who had been attending priority schools at the primary-division assessment were now attending non-priority schools. Five percent of students who had been attending non-priority schools at the primary-division assessment were now attending priority schools. English-language boards: At the primary-division assessment, 26 639 students were attending priority schools, and 88 278 students were attending non-priority schools. In Grade 6, 20% of students who had been attending priority schools at the primary-division assessment were now attending non-priority schools. Five percent of students who had been attending non-priority schools at the primary-division assessment were now attending priority schools. French-language boards: At the primary-division assessment, 1376 students were attending priority schools, and 6387 students were attending non-priority schools. In Grade 6, 13% of students who had been attending priority schools at the primary-division assessment were now attending non-priority schools. Four percent of students who had been attending non-priority schools at the primary-division assessment were now attending priority schools.
- ¹⁶ English-language boards: In the Grade 3 to Grade 6 cohort of 114 917 students, in Grade 3 (2015–2016), 23% of students were attending priority schools, and 77% of students were attending non-priority schools. French-language boards: In the Grade 3 to Grade 6 cohort of 7763 students, in Grade 3 (2015–2016), 18% of students were attending priority schools, and 82% of students were attending non-priority schools.
- ¹⁷ It is worth noting that some schools may have been newly established, reorganized (e.g., changed from a K–5 school to a K–8 school, or changed from an English-only school to offering a French Immersion program) or had their catchment area boundaries altered between 2015–2016 and 2024–2025. (As of the writing of this brief in 2025, school closures have been temporarily prohibited by the government since 2017). Such changes could alter the composition of students attending schools in a neighbourhood. However, changes are unlikely to be large enough to change the percentages reported in this brief.
- ¹⁸ Previous provincial reporting for this cohort included 114 082 students because before 2020, all students were included in reporting even if they were exempted or absent. After 2020, only fully participating students (i.e., students who attempt the assessment and receive an achievement level) are included in reporting. To ensure comparability across cohorts, this research brief included only fully participating students in the historical analysis.
- ¹⁹ As with the 2021–2022 to 2024–2025 cohort, between Grade 6 and Grade 9, all students moved to at least one new school, because in Ontario, high school begins in Grade 9. At the junior-division assessment, 22 897 students were attending priority schools, and 90 446 students were attending non-priority schools. In Grade 9, 74% of students who had been attending priority elementary schools at the junior-division assessment were now attending non-priority secondary schools. Eight percent of students who had been attending non-priority elementary schools at the junior-division assessment were now attending priority secondary schools. English-language boards: At the junior-division assessment, 21 713 students were attending priority schools, and 85 034 students were attending non-priority schools. In Grade 9, 74% of students who had been attending priority elementary schools at the junior-division assessment were now attending non-priority secondary schools. Eight percent of students who had been attending non-priority elementary schools at the junior-division assessment were now attending priority secondary schools. French-language boards: At the junior-division assessment, 1184 students were attending priority schools, and 5412 students were attending non-priority schools. In Grade 9, 79% of students who had been attending priority elementary schools at the junior-division assessment were now attending non-priority secondary schools. Seven percent of students who had been attending non-priority elementary schools at the junior-division assessment were now attending priority secondary schools.
- ²⁰ English-language boards: In the Grade 6 to Grade 9 cohort of 106 747 students, in Grade 6 (2015–2016), 20% of students were attending priority schools, and 80% of students were attending non-priority schools. French-language boards: In the Grade 6 to Grade 9 cohort of 6596 students, in Grade 6 (2015–2016), 18% of students were attending priority schools, and 82% of students were attending non-priority schools.
- ²¹ It is worth noting that some schools may have been newly established, reorganized (e.g., changed from a K–5 school to a K–8 school, or introduced a new specialist program at a secondary school) or had their catchment area boundaries altered between 2015–2016 and 2024–2025. (As of the writing of this brief in 2025, school closures have been temporarily prohibited by the government since 2017). Such changes could alter the composition of students attending schools in a neighbourhood. However, changes are unlikely to be large enough to change the percentages reported in this brief.

- ²² English-language boards: Among Grade 3 students who met the provincial standard in 2015–2016, 59% of students attending priority schools and 73% of students attending non-priority schools still met the provincial standard in Grade 6 (2018–2019). In addition, 10% of students attending priority schools and 16% of students attending non-priority schools who did not meet the provincial standard in Grade 3 (2015–2016) rose to meet the provincial standard in Grade 6 (2018–2019). French-language boards: Among Grade 3 students who met the provincial standard in 2015–2016, 85% of students attending priority schools and 93% of students attending non-priority schools still met the provincial standard in Grade 6 (2018–2019). In addition, 38% of students attending priority schools and 47% of students attending non-priority schools who did not meet the provincial standard in Grade 3 (2015–2016) rose to meet the provincial standard in Grade 6 (2018–2019). **Important note:** Until and including 2018–2019, the French- and English-language mathematics assessments were based on different mathematics curricula, so although it is possible to compare the percentages of students meeting the provincial standard between the two systems, it is not possible to say that what the students knew was comparable between the two systems. From 2021–2022 onward, the French- and English-language mathematics assessments have been based on the same mathematics curricula, and learning outcomes are fully comparable.
- ²³ English-language boards: Among Grade 6 students who met the provincial standard in 2015–2016, 85% of students attending priority schools and 92% of students attending non-priority schools met the academic provincial standard in Grade 9 (2018–2019). In addition, 30% of students attending priority schools and 41% of students attending non-priority schools who did not meet the provincial standard in Grade 6 (2015–2016) rose to meet the academic provincial standard in Grade 9 (2018–2019). French-language boards: Among Grade 6 students who met the provincial standard in 2015–2016, 69% of students attending priority schools and 80% of students attending non-priority schools met the academic provincial standard in Grade 9 (2018–2019). In addition, 10% of students attending priority schools and 15% of students attending non-priority schools who did not meet the provincial standard in Grade 6 (2015–2016) rose to meet the academic provincial standard in Grade 9 (2018–2019).
- ²⁴ English-language boards: In Grade 3 in 2015–2016, 53% of students attending priority schools met the provincial standard compared to 69% of students attending non-priority schools. In Grade 6 in 2018–2019, 36% of students attending priority schools (in Grade 3) met the provincial standard compared to 55% of students attending non-priority schools (in Grade 3). French-language boards: In Grade 3 in 2015–2016, 73% of students attending priority schools met the provincial standard compared to 80% of students attending non-priority schools. In Grade 6 in 2018–2019, 72% of students attending priority schools (in Grade 3) met the provincial standard compared to 84% of students attending non-priority schools (in Grade 3).
- ²⁵ English-language boards: In Grade 6 in 2015–2016, 41% of students attending priority schools met the provincial standard compared to 58% of students attending non-priority schools. In Grade 9 in 2018–2019, 52% of students attending priority schools (in Grade 3) met the academic provincial standard compared to 70% of students attending non-priority schools (in Grade 3). French-language boards: In Grade 6 in 2015–2016, 86% of students attending priority schools met the provincial standard compared to 89% of students attending non-priority schools. In Grade 9 in 2018–2019, 61% of students attending priority schools (in Grade 3) met the academic provincial standard compared to 73% of students attending non-priority schools (in Grade 3).

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