



WHEN CHILDREN SUCCEED FALL 2022 REPORT

October 11, 2022

WHEN CHILDREN SUCCEED, WE BREAK THE CYCLE

A BLUEPRINT FOR SUCCESS IN NEW BRUNSWICK SCHOOLS

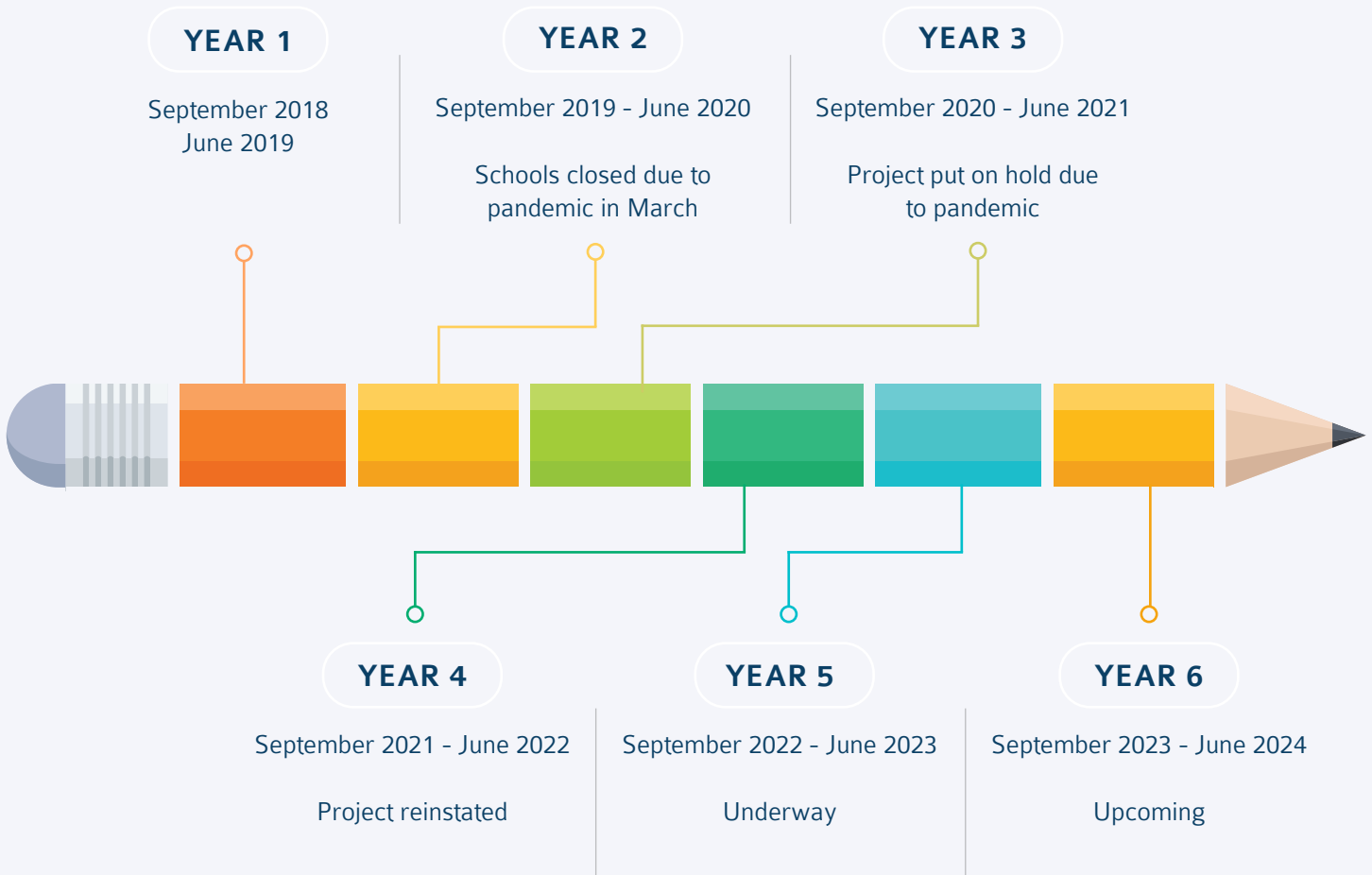
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

When Children Succeed is a multi-year demonstration project, led by the Anglophone South School District (ASD-S), BCAP and Living SJ – to provide K-2 students in seven elementary schools serving Saint John’s low-income neighbourhoods with additional teachers and resources. These resources are designed to help these vulnerable children overcome learning barriers caused by

poverty, achieve district-standard literacy and numeracy benchmarks, and close the achievement gap that currently exists between them and their more fortunate peers.

With strong results already in the books, When Children Succeed will provide a blueprint to improve education outcomes and end generational poverty province-wide.

WHEN CHILDREN SUCCEED PROJECT TIMELINE



PROJECT BACKGROUND

The project was initiated in Sept 2018 and operated for 1.5 school years before the pandemic hit. Early results were very promising.

Throughout the pandemic, K-2 classes continued to have additional staff in place to reduce class size for COVID-19 protocols, but continuation of the project was not possible.

The project was officially restarted in Sept 2021, using the final tranche of funds raised for the project, with a new cohort of K-2 students. Learnings from the project's previous years were applied to strengthen the project, a new teaching model for literacy was implemented, and a full revamp of the evaluation process was undertaken and implemented. The results by the end of the school year were impressive, despite many disruptions caused by continued COVID-19 impacts.

In June 2022, the New Brunswick Government announced it would fully fund the project for the next two school years to demonstrate its full three-year impact for K-2 students—and to close their achievement gap by Grade 3.



When Children Succeed provides students with the opportunity to have very small directed instruction, it allows teachers to work together in tandem, and it allows for really data-driven decision making for student learning."

*Colleen Sullivan, Principal,
Glenn Falls Elementary*



PROJECT CONTEXT

Poverty creates numerous barriers for children that can affect them for life. In the City of Saint John, one in four children live in poverty. That said, poverty is not evenly distributed. In some neighbourhoods, child poverty rates are very high and generational poverty has taken hold. The schools that serve these neighbourhoods need more help to ensure their students succeed.

Participating Schools/Childhood Poverty Rate (Stats Canada 2016)

- Hazen White St. Francis – 94.2%
- Saint John the Baptist King Edward – 65.9%
- Prince Charles – 64.9%
- Centennial – 58.0%
- Princess Elizabeth - 49.8%
- Glen Falls – 44.0%
- Seaside Park - 32.6%

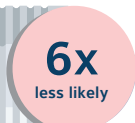
Research shows that a significant percentage of low socio-economic-status children enter kindergarten 1-2 years behind, cannot read proficiently by grade 4, and enter grade 12 four years behind their peers.

High-performing education systems strive for every child’s educational success and invest in closing the achievement gap for children who need more help. This is best done in the early years of education, setting children up for success in their most formative years. The results produce lifetime benefits for the children and an impressive return on investment.

KEY PROJECT STRATEGIES

1. Provide K-2 students with intensive individualized supports to acquire basic skills and a strong foundation leading to progressive education success.
2. Equip schools with additional educators and professional resources to help the students catch up to their peer group and meet education benchmarks by Grade 3.
3. Strengthen the students’ social skills and academic skills, particularly oral language, literacy, and numeracy.
4. Engage parents, build trust, and involve them in their child’s education success.
5. Apply best teaching practices and evaluation methods (quantitative and qualitative).
6. Help staff work as a team to continuously learn from the project (and one another) and improve student outcomes.

Any child not reading at grade level by the end of Grade 3 is **six times less likely** to graduate.



} Behind in Grade 3 behind for life.

High school dropouts are **2.5 times more likely** to be unemployed.



} Improving graduation rates is the most affordable way to grow our workforce.

Poverty costs the province of New Brunswick **\$2 billion/year**.



} The high cost of poverty is unsustainable with an aging population of taxpayers.

RESULTS AND LEARNINGS

RESULTS – LITERACY

When Children Succeed tracks achievements in literacy with two pillars of the Building Blocks of Reading: phonics and phonological awareness.

It is pertinent to note that a control group, called “Pilot” schools, were added to the research. These are elementary schools within our district who are using the same pedagogical approach to literacy and numeracy, but do not have the added educational resources that come with the WCS project. Comparing results from the WCS project schools and the Pilot schools demonstrates how successful WCS truly is.

KEY FINDING #1:

Significant progress was made in all grades.

The graphs below show the progress made in phonics for each grade, in each of the seven project schools. Highlighted in red is the movement from the beginning to the end of the school year. The goal for a kindergarten student would be to reach 1.0 by the end of the school year, for a Grade 1 student to reach 2.0, and for a Grade 2 student to reach 3.0.

KEY FINDING #2:

Schools involved in WCS **surpassed** the Pilot schools (control groups) that use the same methods for teaching and data collection, but without the additional educational resources – resulting in more individualized support – offered by When Children Succeed.

KEY FINDING #3:

On average, the lower-income neighbourhood schools (or those with higher rates of child poverty) saw bigger progress leaps than those with higher household income (on the spectrum of Hazen White to Seaside Park).



PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS – GRADE LEVEL EQUIVALENCY

WCS schools	Pilot schools
KINDERGARTEN	KINDERGARTEN
September: 0.13	September: 0.29
June: 1.55	June: 0.83

Grade K students in WCS schools performed **46% better** than K students in Pilot schools.

Grade K
GOAL =
1.0

GRADE 1	GRADE 1
September: 0.99	September: 1.23
June: 2.68	June: 1.88

Grade 1 students in WCS schools performed **30% better** than Grade 1 students in Pilot schools.

Grade 1
GOAL =
2.0

GRADE 2	GRADE 2
September: 1.10	September: 1:35
June: 2.71	June: 2.51

Grade 2 students in WCS schools performed **4% better** than Grade 2 students in Pilot schools.

Grade 2
GOAL =
3.0

QUICK PHONICS SCREENER – GRADE LEVEL EQUIVALENCY

WCS schools	Pilot schools
KINDERGARTEN	KINDERGARTEN
September: 0.03	September: 0.15
June: 0.84	June: 0.74

Grade K students in WCS schools performed **12% better** than K students in Pilot schools.

Grade K
GOAL =
1.0

GRADE 1	GRADE 1
September: 0.50	September: 0.49
June: 1.96	June: 1.59

Grade 1 students in WCS schools performed **19% better** than Grade 1 students in Pilot schools.

Grade 1
GOAL =
2.0

GRADE 2	GRADE 2
September: 1.00	September: 1:22
June: 2.68	June: 2.66

Grade 2 students in WCS schools performed **0.75% better** than Grade 2 students in Pilot schools.

Grade 2
GOAL =
3.0



RESULTS – NUMERACY

These following results indicate significant growth toward mastery of grade-level outcomes. This is particularly significant given the unique pandemic-related challenges faced throughout the school year.

KEY FINDING #4: It was anticipated that numeracy achievement would dip slightly in term 2 followed by a rebound in term 3. This was indeed the case for most outcomes across K-2.

KEY FINDING #5: These results indicate student readiness to proceed to the next grade confidently and with the skills needed to engage in new learning.

NUMERACY BENCHMARKS (AVERAGED) % GRADE LEVEL EQUIVALENCY

WCS schools	Pilot schools	Grade K GOAL =
KINDERGARTEN June: 88.475%	KINDERGARTEN June: 95%	100%
Grade K students in WCS schools performed 6.9% worse than K students in Pilot schools.		
GRADE 1	GRADE 1	Grade 1 GOAL =
June: 79.066%	June: 75.5%	100%
Grade 1 students in WCS schools performed 4.5% better than Grade 1 students in Pilot schools.		
GRADE 2	GRADE 2	Grade 2 GOAL =
June: 71.697%	June: 76.714%	100%
Grade 2 students in WCS schools performed 6.5% worse than Grade 2 students in Pilot schools.		



No kids get lost when you have that opportunity to really connect with students. The teachers and parents can be real partners when it comes to the child’s education.”
Nick Shepard, Parent

LEARNING – ABSENTEEISM

Although the WCS project doesn’t include a KPI target for absenteeism, attendance is a very significant contributor to a child’s ability to close the achievement gap before grade 3.

KEY FINDING #6: COVID-related attendance disruptions are having a big impact on our classrooms, with up to 30% increases in 2021/22 chronic absenteeism rates.

KEY FINDING #7: Pre-COVID, WCS schools experienced chronic absenteeism rates 23% higher than district rates. In the 2021/22 school year, it was 20% higher.

GRADES K-2 (AVERAGED) % CHRONICALLY ABSENT

WCS schools (K-2) PRE-COVID: 30.66% 2021/2022: 50.60%	WCS schools experienced a 19.94% increase in chronic absenteeism this year, and experience chronic absenteeism rates consistently 20% higher than those experienced in ASD-S or Pilot schools overall.
PILOT schools (K-2) PRE-COVID: 7.33% 2021/2022: 38%	PILOT school students experienced a 30.67% increase in chronic absenteeism rates this year.
ASD-S schools (K-2) PRE-COVID: 7.33% 2021/2022: 34.33%	ASD-S students experienced a 27% increase in chronic absenteeism rates this year.

OTHER KEY LEARNINGS

The WCS project proved to be a wealth of information and learnings. So much so, that we were able to pivot and recalibrate on a few fronts, based on what we discovered as the months unfolded.

Below are just a few of these learnings.

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- Prior to the pandemic, teachers in WCS classrooms reported an **increase in student engagement**, positive behaviours, social skills, confidence, and overall attitude.
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- Prior to the pandemic, the project schools reported that **parent engagement and satisfaction had increased**. A parent survey revealed that 97% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they felt welcome at their school – the survey had a 60% return rate.
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- WCS teachers** universally reported an increase in job satisfaction, and an increase in their confidence in their ability to help these children succeed.
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- The pandemic underscored the profound instability Internet access and lack of availability of technological tools appropriate for online learning amongst WCS families. **The digital divide is a complex problem**, and one that will not easily be solved.
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- During the first two years of the project, we saw a decrease in cases of **chronic absenteeism** amongst WCS students. This is another complex problem, that can only be solved using a multi-agency approach that engages the family, Social Development, community groups, and others.
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- Regular and repeated **contact and communications** with all project partners was a critical component for success. Setting expectations and driving toward that goal with all stakeholders is very important. We should not take our eye off the ball over the next two years.
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- The **importance of consistency** of teaching staff, as well as pedagogical approach was clearly evident throughout the project.
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- The critical importance of **accurate, consistent and strategically relevant data** that is easy to collect and evaluate in a classroom setting was underscored throughout the project - leading to the development of a new data collection rubric for the current year and following two years of study.
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- WCS project teachers, administrators and specialists were all eager to share their recipes for success and strategies for overcoming barriers with our stakeholders, and we quickly worked with them to institute team meetings to share these learnings on a weekly basis, so other classrooms could benefit. **Best practices sharing** became a key component of the project's success.



THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

THANK YOU

Thank you to Government for recognizing the value of this project and its potential to improve the lives of children who live in poverty. Thanks to a two-year funding commitment from the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour (PETL), WCS will continue through a partnership between two government departments: Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour (PETL) and Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD). This commitment will see the project complete a full three-year cycle (K, 1, 2), providing a complete set of data for full evaluation.

Thank you to the School District and EECD staff for your outstanding leadership, and for designing the data collection and evaluation rubric that will see the project through the completion of the three year cycle.

Thank you to all our community investors for believing in this project. You saw the benefit of this kind of intervention and guidance, and we will continue to work toward seeing this model implemented permanently for these Saint John students, and for others like them throughout the province.

When Children Succeed truly demonstrates how Government, Business, and Community can work together to tackle big problems.

Visit www.bcapi.ca
for more information about this project,
as well as access to reports and results.
Thank you for being a part of this important project.
Monica Chaperlin - BCAP Coordinator

506 633 5588 | chaperlin.monica@jdirving.com
Business Community Anti-Poverty Initiative
P.O. Box 5777, Saint John, NB E2L 4M3
Charitable #: 881866529 RR0001

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