



HYDE PARK DAY SCHOOL

2024 Hyde Park Day School Transition Study Parent Report

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Hyde Park Day School Transition Study 2024

Background

Since 2004, Hyde Park Day School (HPDS) has conducted annual interviews with the parents of students who recently transitioned out of the school. Since 2019, Justkul Inc. (Justkul) has been hired to provide this research. The team at Justkul specializes in providing research through surveys and interviews, and many members of the Justkul team have conducted Hyde Park Day School transition interviews and managed the project for over a decade, ensuring the continuity of these results.

As in the previous studies, the objective of this project was to assess parents' satisfaction with HPDS and with the transition process. In the summer and fall of 2024, over a period of four months, Justkul completed interviews with parents of 27 (67.5%) of the 40 students who transitioned out of HPDS following the 2022-2023 academic year. This report will summarize their ratings and comments in the context of previous years' responses to the same questions. We are very grateful to the parents who took the time to share their insights and perspectives with us.

This report includes the following sections:

- Choice of Hyde Park Day School
- General Evaluation of Hyde Park Day School
- Learning at Hyde Park Day School
- Areas of Most Progress
- Transition
- Accommodations and Services
- Use of Assistive Technology
- Impact of the Learning Disability
- Success Attributes

Choice of HPDS

Parents answered an open-ended question about why they decided their child needed a change and another about why they chose HPDS in particular. Both questions were coded in the analysis stage of the project, and the results of the two questions were merged to provide a picture of why students chose HPDS. (Parents could provide multiple reasons for their choices.)

Parents cited a wide variety of factors when discussing why they decided to remove their children from their original school and send them to Hyde Park Day School instead. The most frequently mentioned factors for making this change were that the prior school was insufficient (n=15, 55.6% of parents), that the student was struggling academically (n=10, 37.0%) and that the student had dyslexia (n=8; 29.6%). Nine respondents (33.3%) mentioned a neuropsychological evaluation or mentioned ADD or ADHD, and six (22.2%) mentioned poor reading skills. One each mentioned an older sibling's experience and anxiety. Some examples:

"She couldn't read. Her standardized test scores were in the third percentile. She was anxious because she couldn't access the curriculum. The neuropsych had recommended HPDS."

"We had a night that [the child], who usually loves school and had always gone to the same district, cried and said she didn't want to go to school anymore and said the teacher hates

her...there was a concerning lack of understanding of what she needed... and then we got a neuropsych evaluation and found out her diagnosis.”

“The people at her previous school, if kids are struggling, they do suggest Hyde Park Day School...That school is really a miracle-working place... before Hyde Park Day, she'd feel embarrassed and nervous, and now at school she doesn't even sweat it. She'll help people. She gets it. She's not one of the people who don't get it.”

“[The previous school] didn't honor the IEP. We came back with the attorney and got our own data. In the 3 years the school had him he got worse and not better, so we asked to have him moved to a school that could handle dyslexia.”

“He is profoundly dyslexic, and needed help with that, his ADHD, and confidence. He had no confidence in school.”

As for why HPDS was chosen in particular, eight respondents (29.6%) indicated that HPDS had been recommended (either by an expert, the prior school, a friend, or another parent), seven each (25.9%) mentioned that HPDS was the best solution for their needs or mentioned location, four (14.8%) indicated that HPDS was their only option, and two had “other” reasons (7.4%) one of which was simply the impression that the school was trustworthy, and the other was a connection to HPDS through a parent’s employment. Totals add up to more than 27, because the question allowed for multiple reasons from each participant.

“The older one went to HPDS, and the younger one went to public school in the 3rd grade, until COVID. If COVID hadn't hit, he probably would've stayed in the public school, but with COVID, nothing worked anymore. I don't know if he'd be at his current rigorous public school if he hadn't gone to HPDS.”

“In our backyard, no other school was focusing on language-based disabilities. Other schools took kids with social emotional issues whereas this child has none, and we wanted him to be put in a language disability-focused program.”

“The neuropsych had recommended HPDS. Hyde Park is amazing. They are very clear about who they serve, and this child fit that profile, and she got the intense and individualized support that changed her life.”

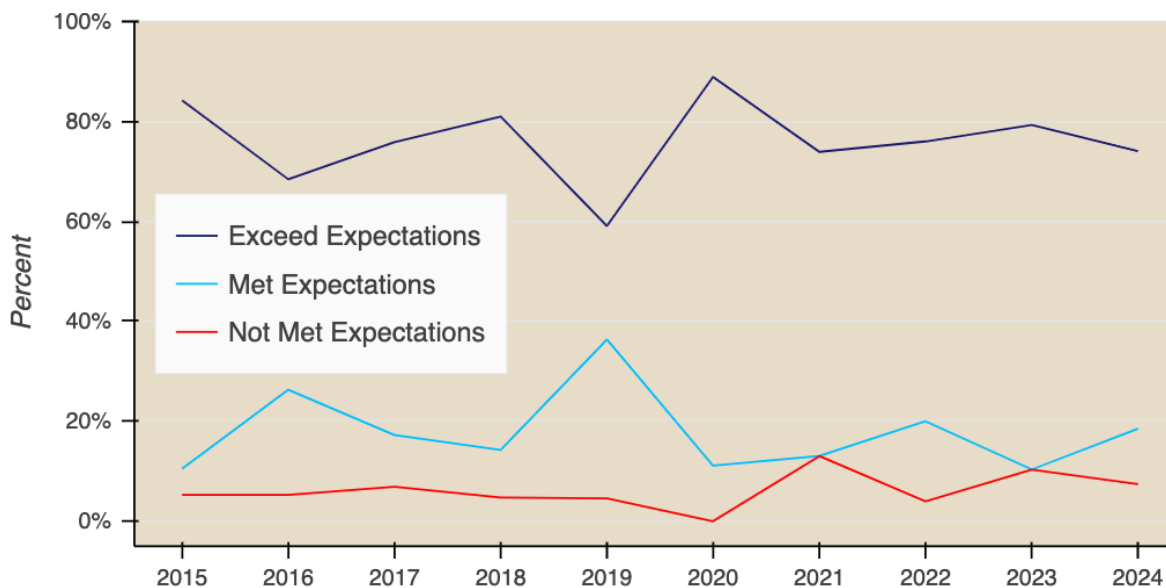
“Proximity, and it was known to us as the best place for kids with dyslexia in the entire city and surrounding region.”

“They came highly recommended. We didn't look at any other program.”

General Evaluation of HPDS

A. Relative to Expectations

Parents were asked to rate how well Hyde Park Day School had met their expectations, using a five-point scale from “Far exceeded expectations” through “Failed to meet expectations.” Twenty-five (92.6%) respondents said that HPDS met or exceeded their expectations, with 74.1% (n=20) of parents reporting that HPDS had exceeded their expectations either slightly or by far, as seen below.



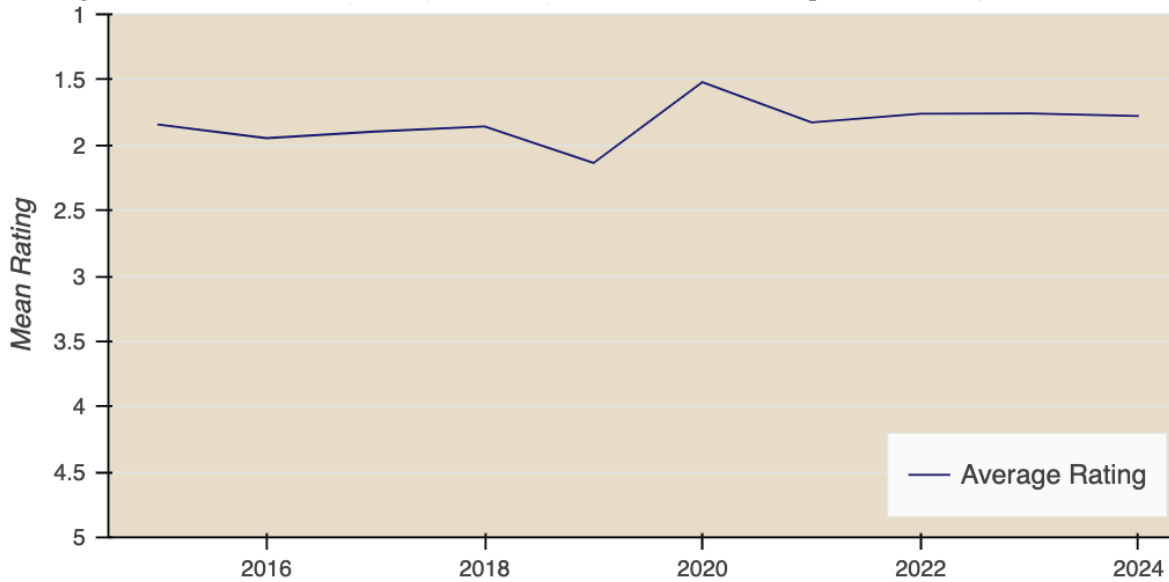
Overall expectations, percentages, 2015-2024.

Five respondents (18.5%) indicated that HPDS had only met their expectations, and two (7.4%) indicated that HPDS had not met their expectations.

The respondents whose expectations had not been met had different reasons for giving that rating. One mentioned feeling misled about the purpose of the school resulting in less academic rigor, and one mentioned social issues with respect to race.

“The school was primarily represented as a school for speech and language disabilities, but over time it appeared that the support needs were greater than just those challenges. The academic program was made more remedial in order to support those kids. It became a different school than what we were led to believe. Our daughter wasn't pushed academically.”

The average scores can be seen below. (Lower numbers indicate a more positive score.)

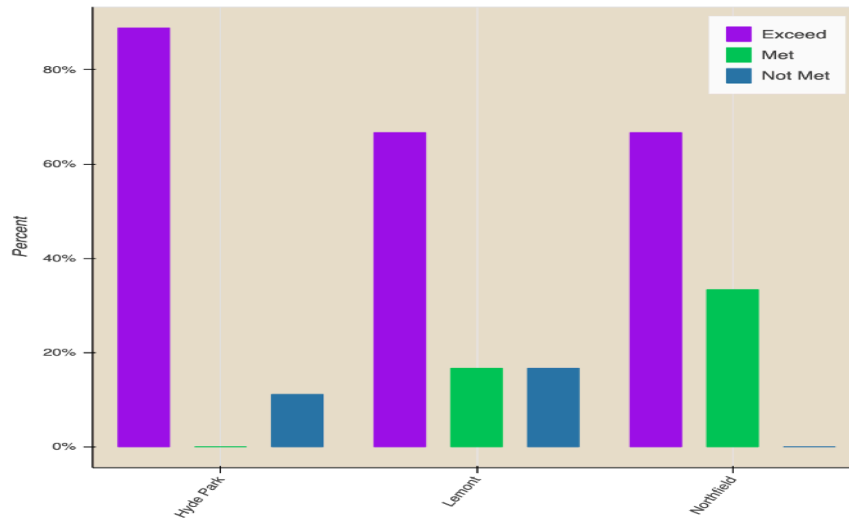


*Average expectation ratings, 2015-2024.
(Lower values represent higher ratings.)*

When looking at the mean rating, there was very little overall change from the prior year; when we look at individual expectation percentages, we can see there was a slight decrease in parents for whom HPDS had not met expectations (n=2, 7.4%), as discussed above.

It is worth noting that “meeting expectations” relies, in part, on a prior understanding of the expected situation, which can temper future results. Thus, parents who had high expectations going into HPDS may provide lower ratings than parents who were surprised by their child’s progress.

As in last year, there was some variation in how well a school met expectations by location, as shown in below.



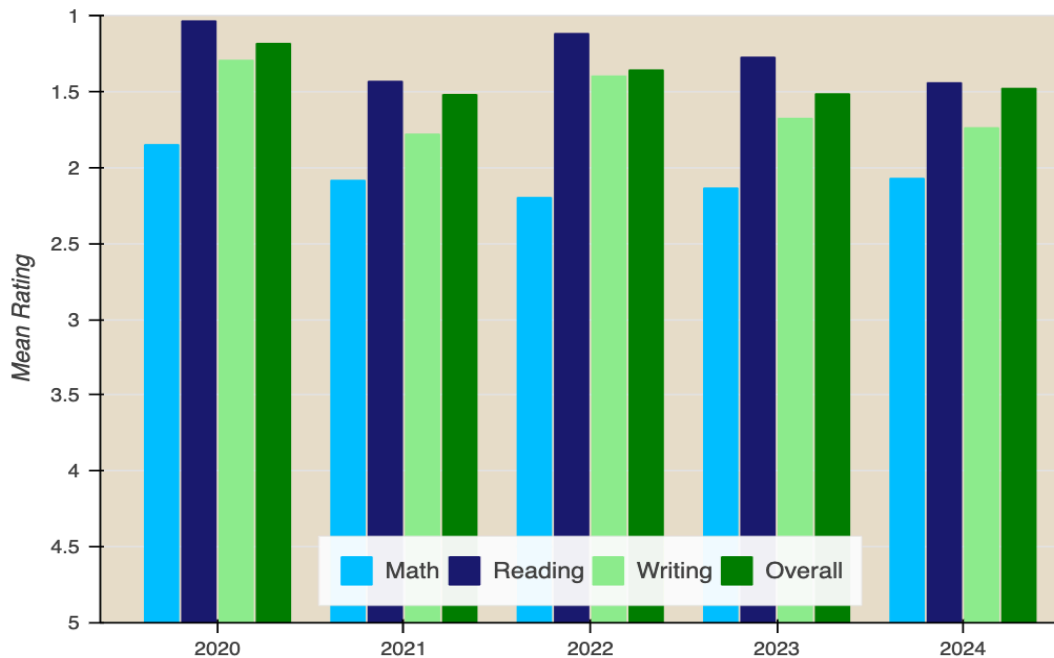
Expectation ratings by location, percentages, 2024.

Hyde Park led the three locations in the percentage of respondents indicating the school had exceeded their expectations: 88.9% (8 out of 9) of Hyde Park students indicated that the school had exceeded expectations, compared to 92.9% (n=13) in 2023. Lemont’s ability to exceed expectations decreased from 83.3% to 66.7%. Northfield’s 66.7% (n=8) shows an increase from the prior year’s 55.6% (n=5). Hyde Park and Lemont each had only one parent who indicated that the school did not meet expectations.

Learning at Hyde Park Day School

Parents were asked to rate the different elements of Hyde Park Day School’s academic program on a scale from “1 = Excellent” to “5 = Poor.” They rated instruction in reading, writing, and math and were also asked to give an overall rating for the school’s academic instruction.

As in prior years, all academic programs were rated between above-average and excellent; see. (In the scale used for these questions, lower numbers indicate more positive scores.)

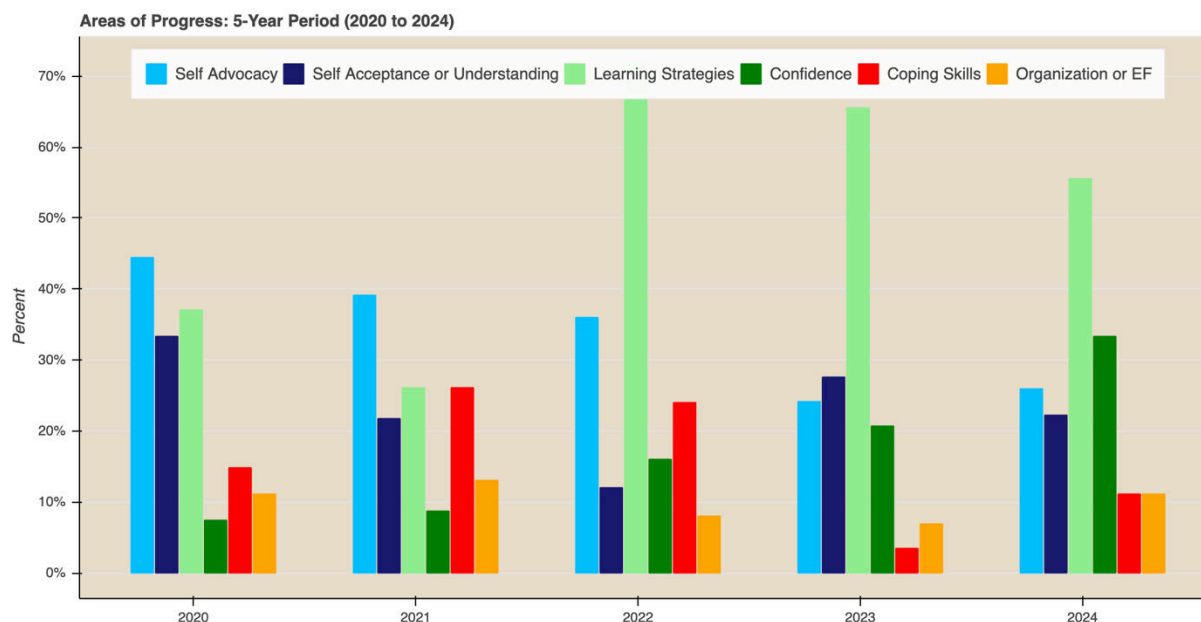


*Average instruction ratings, 2020-2024.
(Lower values represent higher ratings.)*

Similar to last year, parents gave their highest ratings to HPDS’ reading instruction (mean rating=1.44) and were least satisfied with math instruction (mean rating=2.07), with writing instruction in the middle (mean rating=1.74). The overall instructional mean rating for 2024 was 1.44. This year, math scores were second best since the year 2020.

Areas of Most Progress

An open-ended question asked parents to consider everything their child had learned at HPDS and to explain what had been most helpful. The responses were then coded and grouped into general themes below. (Each parent could cite multiple areas of progress, so the percentages given below will sum to more than 100%.)



Areas of most progress, percentages, 2020-2024.

Parents were most likely (n=15, 55.6%) to mention learning strategies, a small decrease in this percentage over last year. To a smaller extent, parents this year were also likely to mention confidence (n=9, 33.3%), self-advocacy (n=7, 25.9%) and self-acceptance or understanding (n=6, 22.2%). Self-confidence has steadily increased since a low point in 2020 after 2019's high of 31.8%. It seems plausible that the decrease in self-confidence from 2019 to 2020 was due to the onset of the COVID pandemic, and it has been steadily improving thereafter. Three parents each mentioned organization or executive functioning skills and coping skills (11.1% each).

Learning strategies:

"How to read and how to work around her learning disability, using assistive tech and self-advocacy."

"Being able to write and read. The Wilson Program was very important in getting her to read and write."

"He learned how to approach organizing compositional writing and how to approach gathering info from a body of writing."

Self-advocacy:

"The nature of her learning challenges and the ability to advocate for herself in spite of those challenges."

"The main thing was self-advocacy."

Self-acceptance and understanding:

"Learning that she's not the only one that had to go there...Feeling comfortable in your learning ability."

"He gained a good understanding of his learning disability and learned that it can be an asset. They do a really good job with that."

Confidence:

"What type of learner he was, and what his strengths were and how to use them to become a better learner and student. He realized how many strengths he had."

"It's a combination of confidence and how the teacher built him up. He had a journey from the other schools, so it was getting to the point of him being able to trust that he's smart, that he learns differently."

"That he could be successful and achieve as he is."

Organization and executive functioning skills:

"Another crucial thing was executive function challenges, and they were prepared to teach him the habits and practices that he needs to know to manage the things he needs to do as a student and an adult."

Coping skills:

"How to deal with his emotions."

"She learned that school could be a positive environment."

Transition

A. Transition Schools

Of the 27 parents responding, 15 (55.6%) sent their children to private school after they left HPDS, and 12 (44.4%) to public school, which was similar to last year's 58.6% in private school (n=17) and 41.4% in public school (n=12), except that there were two fewer private school students. As last year, Hyde Park was the location that sent the highest percentage of students (within the pool of survey respondents) to private school, with 77.8% (n=7) of Hyde Park students going to private school and 22.2% (n=2) going to public school. In contrast, four Northfield students (33.3% of Northfield students within the pool of survey respondents) went to private school, with the remaining eight (66.7%) going to public school, and four Lemont students (66.7% of Lemont students within the pool of survey respondents) went to private school, with the remaining two (33.3%) going to public school.

Multiple parents sent their children to Wolcott College Prep (n=5, 18.5%). Two (7.4%) chose Wilmette Junior High, and the rest of the schools chosen were mentioned by only one respondent (3.7%) each. (See Appendix A for the complete list of transition schools.)

This list again changed considerably over last year; Wolcott had two more students than in 2023, the Cove School only had one compared to last year's three, and New Trier and Mount Carmel don't appear on this year's list at all, though they each had two students in 2023.

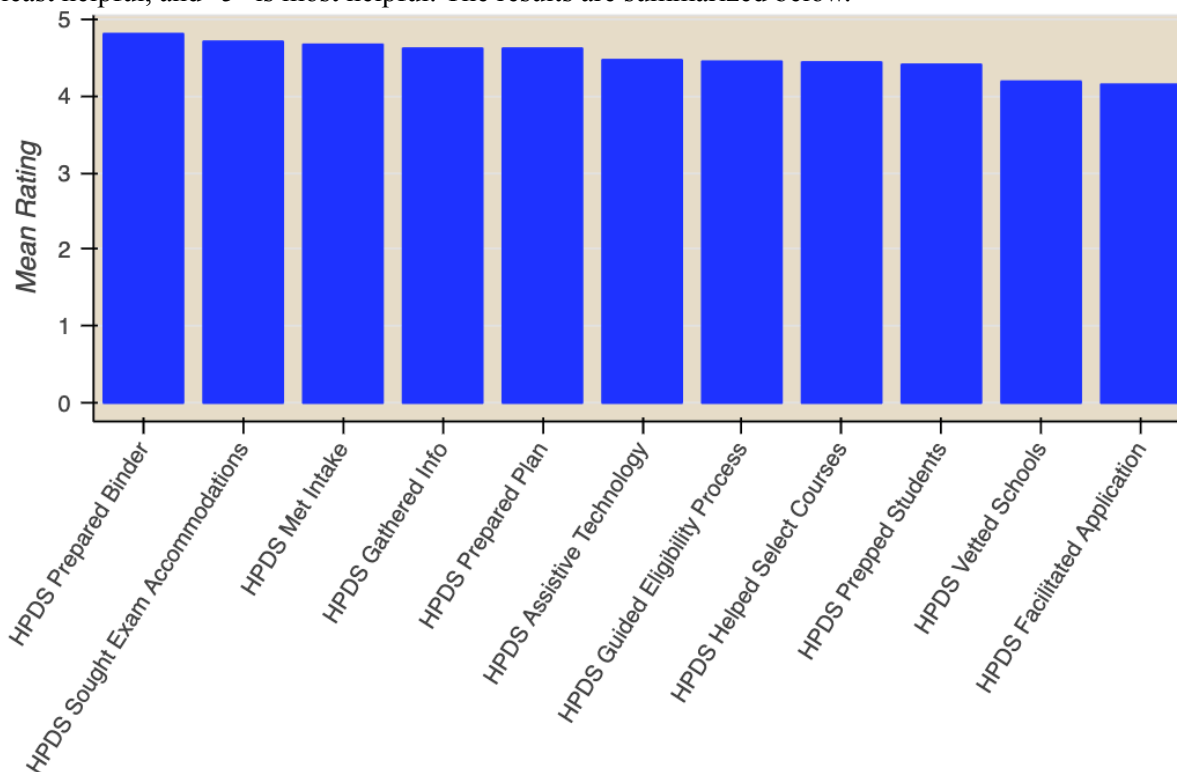
Wolcott College Preparatory remains popular as a transfer school, mentioned by five respondents this year and by three last year.

The Transition Process

When the time comes for a student to leave, Hyde Park Day School provides a range of services designed to help parents select an appropriate transition school and to ensure that the transition school knows what will be needed in order to continue supporting the student academically. This is a comprehensive effort, and Hyde Park Day School continues to seek ways to improve transition-related activities.

We asked three preliminary questions about the transition process: whether someone from HPDS had attended a child's IEP/staffing meeting, whether parents had found the transition plan helpful, and whether parents had shared the transition plan with the transition school. Of the 27 respondents, 13 (48.2%) indicated that HPDS had attended the child's staffing, 20 (74.1%) of respondents found the transition plan helpful, and 18 (66.7%) shared the transition plan with the school.

Respondents also scored the usefulness of 11 different transition components on a 1 to 5 scale, where "1" is least helpful, and "5" is most helpful. The results are summarized below.



*Average transitions component ratings, 2024.
(Higher values indicate higher ratings.)*

As seen above, all of the 11 components received a positive score (mean > 3.00), and all components earned scores above 4.00, indicating that parents generally found all components helpful. HPDS earned its highest scores in preparing the transition binder (mean = 4.81), seeking exam accommodations (mean = 4.71) and meeting the intake school (mean = 4.67). HPDS earned the lowest scores for facilitating applications (mean = 4.15), vetting schools (mean = 4.19), and prepping students for shadow days or interviews (mean = 4.41).

All factors except for seeking exam accommodations were seen as applicable to nearly half or more of the respondents, with two of the 11 components being rated by over 90% of respondents (26 times). The three least-commonly rated components were HPDS sought exam accommodations (n=7, 25.9%), HPDS facilitated the application process (n=13, 48.2%) and HPDS vetted schools (n=16, 59.3%).

Ways HPDS Can Improve Transition Process

After asking respondents to rate components of the transition process, we asked respondents what HPDS could do to improve. A common response was “nothing,” with parents using this question as an opportunity to praise HPDS:

“I really think they did a wonderful job, so I couldn’t have asked for anything more.”

“Nothing. It was perfect. It was excellent. It exceeded my expectations. The fact that their transition specialist met with the high school was amazing. They sat there and spoke their language to help us through. It was magnificent. I’ve never experienced anything like that from an institution before.”

“Our transition wasn’t like others’ because it was so abrupt, but they really came through and his teacher came to the meetings to help to make sure that the middle school had everything in place for him, so I feel like they were fantastic. I’m grateful for all that they did.”

Some parents provided recommendations regarding specific factors that could have contributed further to their children’s success in the transition process.

“I would love it if HPDS invited back the families who have left more. They do it once or twice a year, but there were only four or five parents. I wish it were almost a speed dating thing they could do to get parents who have left to come back so the parents still there could talk to them. We were so desperate for information about what life is like on the other side. The more they can do the better. There was a family who had left HPDS for [current school]. Abby said they’d lost touch with the family, but I was desperate to hunt the family down to talk to them. The more alumni events they could have had, the better. I would be willing to come back and talk to the parents and give them the pros and cons. However I can help.”

“They did a lot. Maybe a mid-year and end-of-year check-in with the school in the year after transition.”

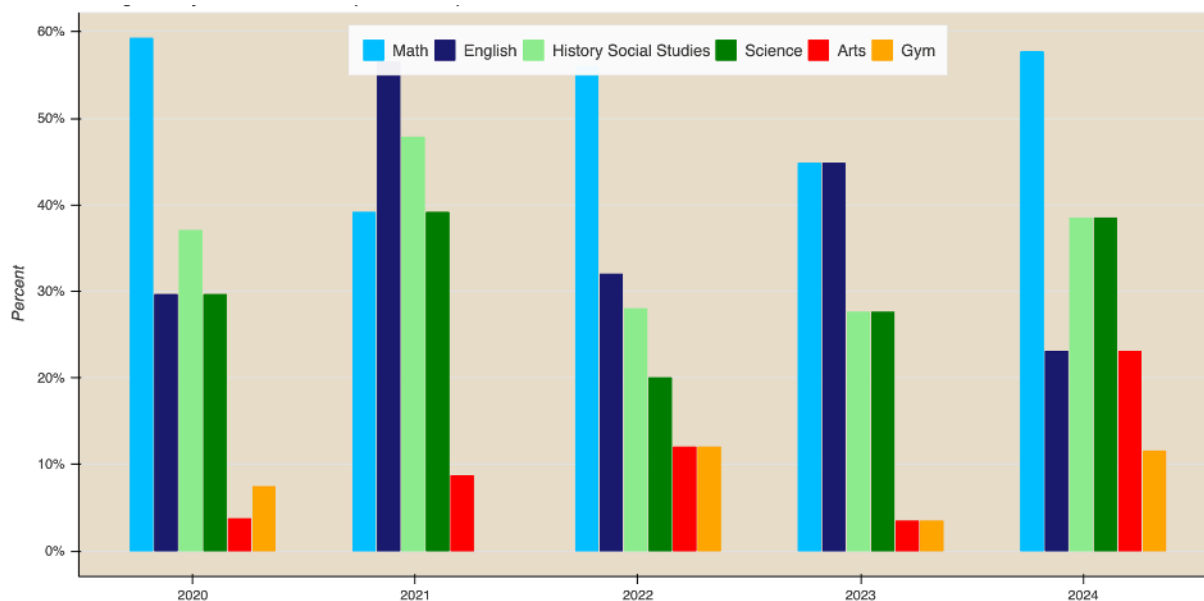
Parents suggested that giving the students letter grades or a clearer understanding of how “traditional” schooling might feel would have been helpful to them.

"[When] she got to her high school she was very motivated by the grade system. I was surprised...but it was actually good for her... I think the grades might motivate the kids to stay on task. At some point it's going to come for them. They're going to go to college and take tests, it's the real world."

Experiences at the Transition School

Strongest Subjects

Parents were asked essay questions about what they thought were their child's strongest subjects in school. The results were coded and summarized below.



Strongest subjects, percentages, 2020-2024.

Math continued to be most likely to be named as a strength, with the percentage increasing from 44.8% to 57.7% (n=15). Following math was an equal number of science and history or social studies (n=10, 38.5%), and six people, or 23.1%, each answered arts and English, the latter being understood to subsume reading, writing and literature. Gym was indicated as a strongest subject by three respondents (11.5%). Note that parents were permitted multiple responses, so numbers do not sum to 100%.

Parents were also asked to what they would attribute their child's strength in their best subjects. More than half of parents (14 out of 27, 52%) gave at least two reasons for why a subject was their child's strongest, so percentages do not add up to 100%.

Thirteen respondents (48.1%) attributed their children's strength in these fields at least in part to their innate abilities:

"She is good at sign language, because she is a very tactile learner."

"She's a real visual kinesthetic learner. The way her brain is wired, the way she visualizes and sees things, those things come naturally to her."

Nine respondents (33.3%) attributed their children's success at least in part to their interest in or enjoyment of the subject:

"She actually likes to read."

"He's really curious, interested in the subject matter."

Eight respondents (29.6%) attributed their children's strength in these fields at least in part to their teacher:

"I think they did a nice job of following her accommodations, meaning she had the ability to have things read to her frequently. She had a strong co-teacher in there."

"She gets a math tutor and that helps. It tends to be less language-based."

Four respondents (14.8%) mentioned HPDS:

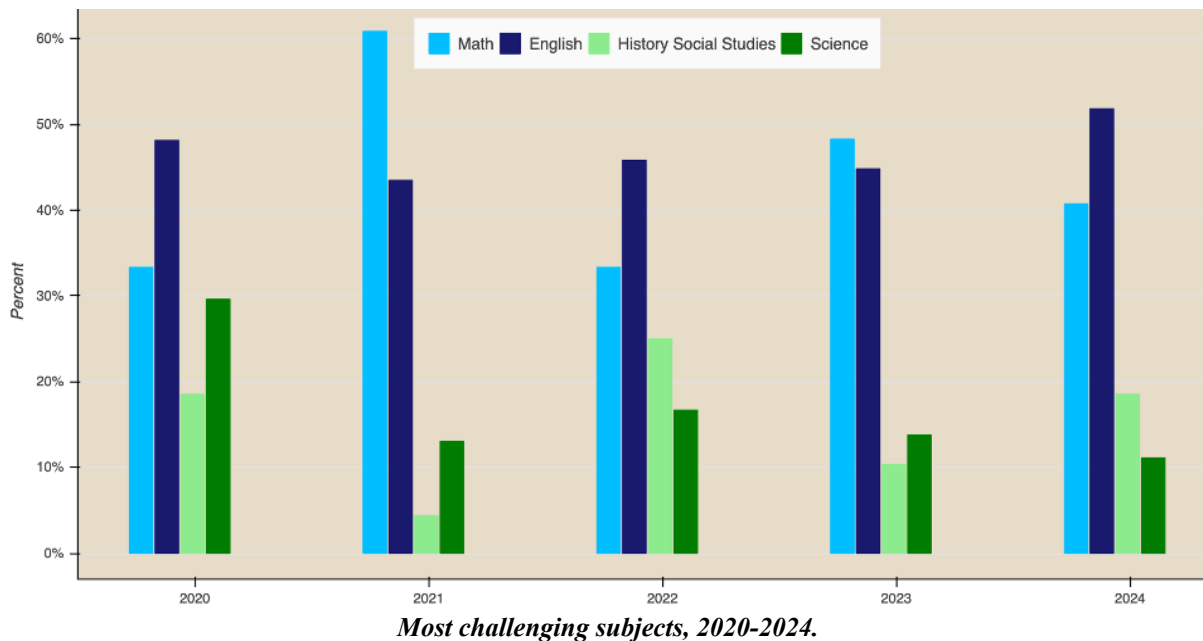
"The foundations she got at Hyde Park Day of being more comfortable with reading and she studies hard. Hyde Park Day School got her going where they found out the way her brain works and got her to start using it that way."

"Hyde Park was actually harder than his high school, so it's really just review for him. He's always enjoyed history. Graphic design was a new class that he took by accident, and he loved it and did well."

"Organizational and educational skills he learned at Hyde Park. His adaptive learning has been helpful. Half the time he doesn't even realize he's using strategies he's learned."

Most Challenging Subjects

To turn to the most-challenging subjects, parents were most likely to name English, defined as writing, reading or language arts, with 51.9% (n=14) of respondents naming a subject in this space. It is noteworthy that last year the number of students for whom English was most challenging was roughly the same number as those for whom it was the strongest subject. This year, however, there were more than twice as many (51.9%, n=14) who found English to be the most challenging subject versus a strongest subject (20.7%, n = 6). This was followed by math, (n=11, 40.7% of respondents), history / social studies (n=5, 18.5%) and science (n=3, 11.2%). These results are summarized below.



Eighteen respondents (66.7%) mentioned a learning difference as a direct factor in their children's difficulties:

"They are starting to get into language-based word problems. Language-based speech challenges."

"Because he has dyscalculia. It's a learning curve. His working memory is bad."

5 respondents (18.5%) each said the subject was too hard for their child:

"She doesn't enjoy it as much. She's becoming a teenager and thinks, 'What do I care what happened in ancient Greek times?'"

Three respondents (11.1%) mentioned that the subject had been deprioritized at HPDS or that their child had been unprepared for a difference in teaching style:

"At Hyde Park they're on you to make sure you do your assignment. At public school, if you don't do it, you get an F. There was an adjustment to getting his own homework done and that improved throughout the year. That was the big adjustment."

Homework and Homework Help

Parents were asked to estimate how much time their child spends on homework each night, and what kind of help they need. (This set of questions involves homework help given at home; other kinds of help, such as tutoring or professional homework-help services, are discussed in the section on "assistance" below.)

Parents' estimates of the amount of time their children spent on homework ranged from zero to two hours, with a mean of 53 minutes, which is similar to the prior year (2023), when the range was from zero to 2.5 hours, with a mean of 54 minutes. Means for both years were more than in 2022 (mean = 49 minutes) and less than in 2021 (mean = 68 minutes).

This year, as with last, private school children spent more time on homework than public school students: one hour and ten minutes on average for private school students and only 33 minutes on average for public school students. This widens the gap between the two groups of students, with a 36-minute gap this year versus only a 16-minute difference last year (2023).

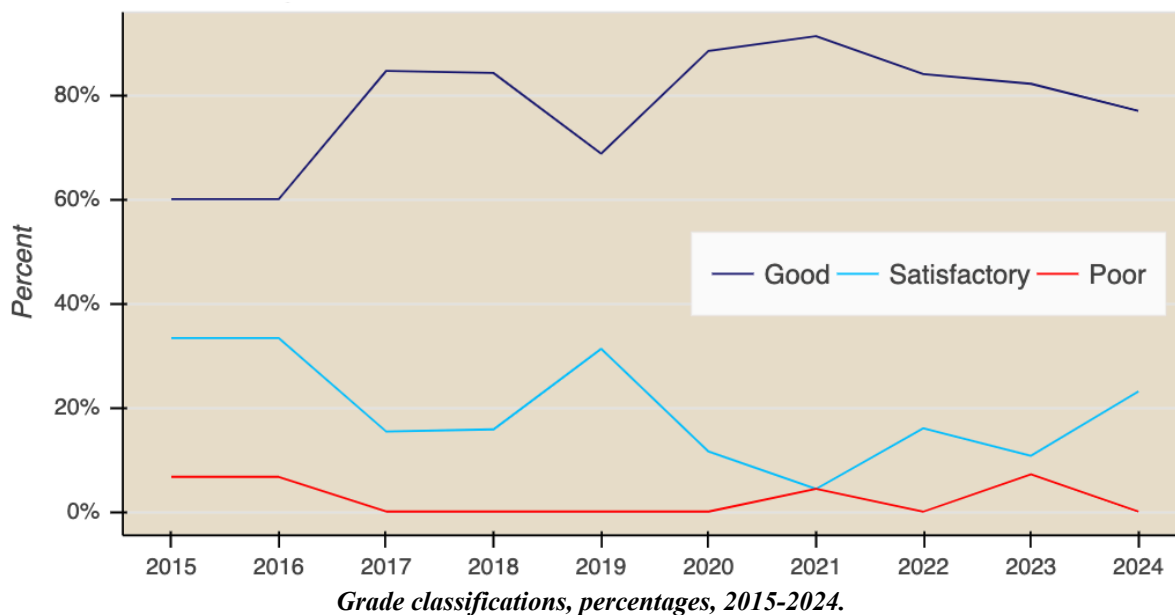
As with the past two years, the average ages of public-school students versus private school students are nearly identical (10.0 years old for public school students vs. 10.2 years old for private school students) and therefore likely do not account for the differences in time spent on homework.

Parents were also asked to estimate what percentage of time their child required help with homework, and results ranged from 0% to 100%, with a mean of 20.1%, similar to last year's 22.2%. Like last year, public school students received more help than private school students this year (21.1% average public vs. 18.8% average private).

Sixteen respondents indicated that their children needed help with homework (59.3% of the sample). Four parents mentioned they helped with issues related to time management or general homework management (14.8%). Two (7.4%) mentioned they helped their children study or review for tests, and one mentioned providing help with reading. One respondent homeschooled their child and described all their schoolwork as homework, for which the parent occasionally "acts as scribe." Parents were able to provide multiple reasons.

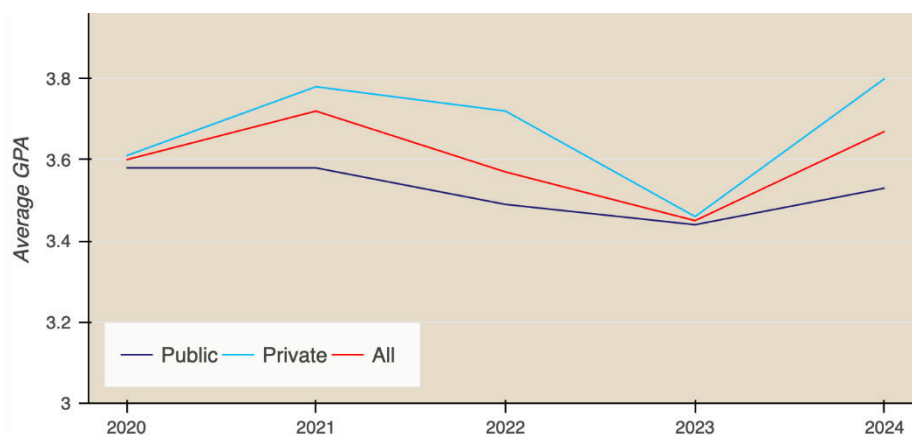
Grades and Honors

We asked parents to describe their children's report cards, estimating what letter grades the children got, and in what subject(s). The results of grades over the last 10 years are shown below:



Using parents' detailed estimates of the number of As, Bs, Cs, Ds and Fs their child received and a 0.0 to 4.0 scale, it is possible to compute the approximate grade point average for each child by multiplying

these values. The results are shown below. The results show an increase in grades compared to the prior year.¹



Change in average GPA, public and private schools, 2020-2024.

All grades coalesced around 3.45 in 2023, but the transition from 2023 to 2024 showed steady improvement.

Accommodations and Services

Part of Hyde Park Day School's mission is to give students and parents an understanding of the tools, techniques and supports that can foster the students' lifelong success. This knowledge can then be used, when working with a transition school, to construct the most appropriate educational program for the student.

As part of our study of the transition process, we attempt to document the amounts and kinds of professional assistance (inside and outside of schools) that former Hyde Park students are receiving. We also ask about the teaching strategies, accommodations, curriculum modifications, and assistance that schools use when designing curricula and classroom interventions. Responses to these items were considered as a group and re-coded as necessary, because parents are not always clear on the distinctions between these types of instructional adaptations. Some would, for example, name an accommodation when asked if their child received any curriculum modifications.

Teaching Strategies

One option schools have for assisting students is for teachers to develop individualized teaching strategies designed to address students' learning disabilities. The survey contains one question that addresses teaching strategies specifically, but parents also mentioned teaching strategies in other contexts. In

¹ All these values are recalculated each year, as an attempt is made to code non-numerical responses based on the average number of grades reported by the average respondent, and this value changes from year to year. E.g. if a respondent indicated, "All Bs," without specifying the individual number of classes, we used the sample average of 6 reported classes per respondent * 3.0. Data before 2023 was re-coded using this methodology in order to facilitate comparisons. Hence, results may differ slightly from prior reports.

addition, parents often mentioned modifications or accommodations, topics addressed in subsequent sections.

Five respondents (18.5%) indicated that their school applied at least one type of specific teaching strategy to help their child overcome a learning challenge. Specific strategies mentioned included:

- Student identifies his own “learning goal” for a class and is evaluated based on that goal
- Visual cues and creating keys that the teacher will reference during math class
- Emphasis on color coding and visual cues
- More hands-on learning.

Twenty-two (81.5%) parents did not mention any specific strategies. In general, however, of the four related categories of strategies, accommodations, curriculum modifications and assistance, strategy is the most difficult category for parents to understand, so additional strategies may have been used, especially in schools that have highly-individualized learning programs, like Wolcott.

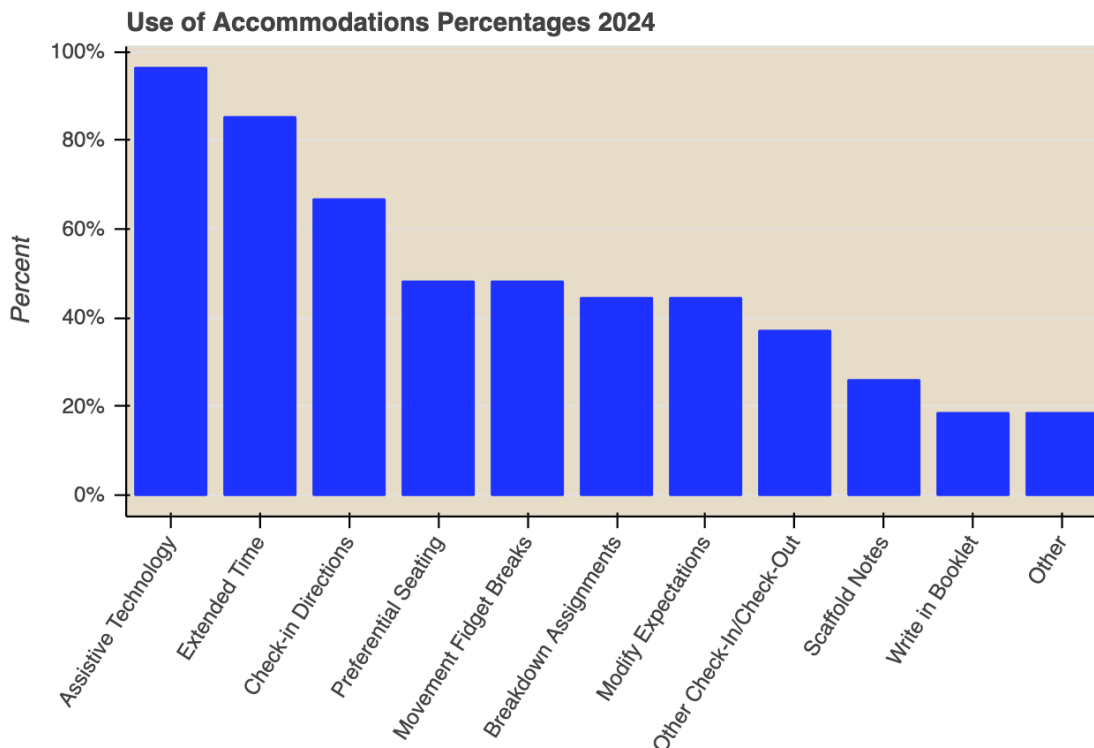
Curriculum Modifications

Modifications involve actual changes in the curriculum or in the academic expectations placed on students. Only 11 parents mentioned any modifications at all, with multiple parents mentioning that the school’s curriculum is already individualized at schools like Wolcott. Seven modifications were mentioned this year.

As in prior years, the main modification that was mentioned by a substantial number of parents was the waiving or postponement of a foreign-language requirement, which was cited by four (14.8%) respondents. Two parents (7.4%) indicated an elective was waived, and one each (3.7%) indicated that a class schedule was modified, classes were leveled, a bespoke homeschool curriculum was used, and a student’s course preferences were honored.

Accommodations

We asked parents about 10 specific accommodations that students might have used after the transition. The top three accommodations mentioned this year were assistive technology, mentioned by 26 (96.3%) respondents, extended time (n=23, 85.2%) and check-in for directions (n=18, 66.7%). The accommodations are summarized *II* below.



Use of accommodations, percentages, 2024.

Overall, students took advantage of an average of 5.3 accommodations, with a range from 1 to 9. Unlike last year, public-school students used more accommodations than private-school students (mean=5.7 and 5.0, respectively). In the “other” category, respondents mentioned “can go to the bathroom at any time,” “extra study guides,” “test read [outloud],” and “took practice PSAT on a computer.”

It is worth noting that the number of accommodations received by students at Wolcott School, The Cove, and The Gow School may be higher than indicated here. One parent whose child was at Wolcott, for example, said “The entire school is oriented towards kids like him.” Because accommodations were standard for all children at specialized schools like Wolcott, The Cove, The Gow School, or, at certain other schools, provided even to children without learning differences, it can be difficult for parents to determine precisely how many accommodations their children received. Hence, actual values of strategies, curriculum modifications, accommodations and assistance may be marginally higher than those reported here.

Assistance In and Out of School

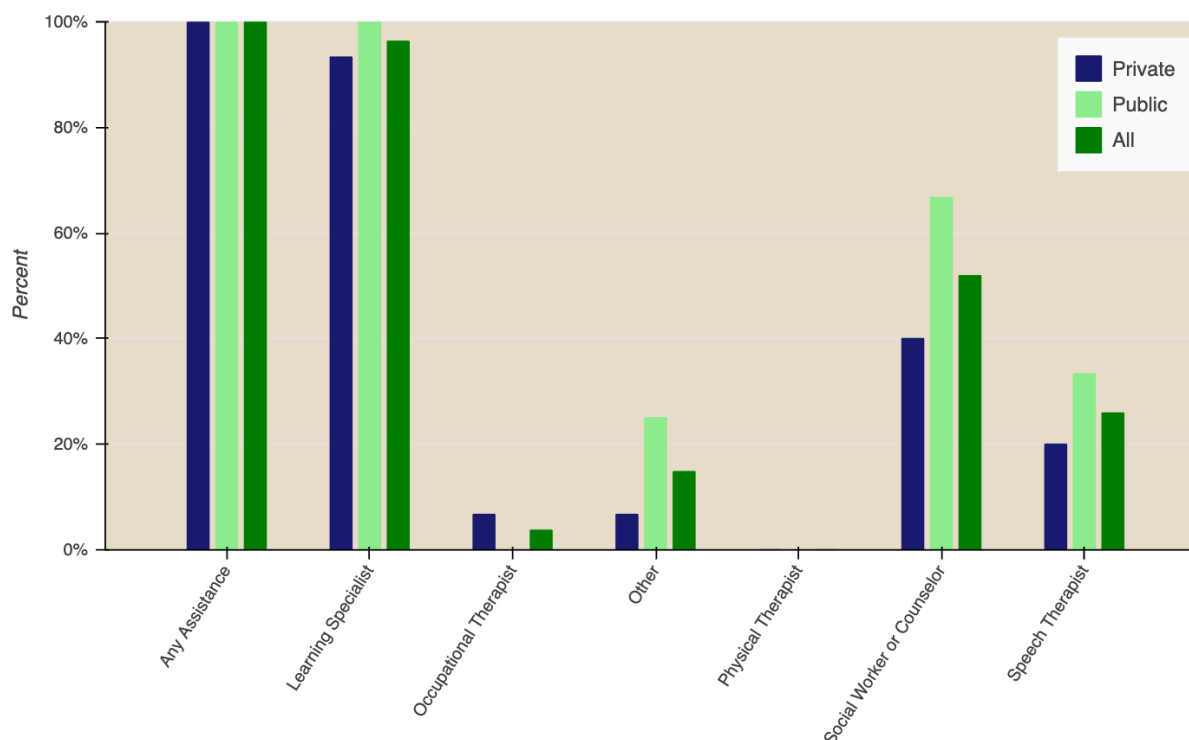
100% (n=27) of respondents reported that their child received some type of assistance, with 26 parents (96.6%) specifying in-school assistance, and 12 (44.4%) specifying outside-of-school assistance. Students received an average of 1.7 services in school and an average of 0.6 services outside of school, resulting in an overall average of 2.3 services in school and out of school.

We asked about five different types of assistance that might be offered to a student: access to a learning specialist, speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and meetings with a social worker/counselor. Twenty-six students (96.3%) met with a learning specialist or tutor, with 24 receiving this assistance in school and seven students receiving this assistance outside of school (note that a student may receive the same assistance both in and out of school, so the total does not add up to 27).

Turning to the type of assistance with the second highest counts, 14 students (51.9%) received assistance from a social worker or counselor, with 10 students receiving this assistance only in school, two receiving it only outside of school and two receiving it both inside and outside of school. The next most-common service received was speech therapy, with seven students (25.9%) receiving this assistance: five students received this only in school, and two received this assistance outside of school, one of whom receiving it both in and out of school. Only one student (3.7%) received support from an occupational therapist, receiving it both in and out of school, and none received physical therapy. Finally, four students (14.8%) received other types of support: one mentioned a case manager, therapy and summer school in Algebra, one mentioned a co-taught English class, and two mentioned an executive functioning coach.

As for the frequency and duration of assistance, the values showed significant variation, running from intermittent help a few times a year to 17.5 hours a week. These values are likely lower bounds, as there typically are a variety of other types of assistance that students receive that parents do not mention, as they are unrelated to their child's learning disability. In addition, some parents found it difficult to quantify assistance at schools like Wolcott, The Cove School, or The Gow School because of the individualized nature of the instruction at those schools.

As can be seen below, the students at public and private schools tended to use learning specialists at very similar percentages, with public school students more often mentioning social worker/counselors and speech therapists, and more private school students mentioning occupational therapists. Unlike one last year, no parents mentioned a physical therapist.



Assistance percentages, public and private schools, 2024.

Public school parents continue to report a higher usage of assistance than private school students overall. However, one must also consider that parents of students at private schools like Wolcott, The Cove, and The Gow School are likely underreporting the amount of assistance, due to the specialized nature of instruction at those institutions.

Use of Assistive Technology

For many years, Hyde Park Day School has made a significant effort to fully integrate assistive technology into the instructional repertoire of the school. We have kept the contents of the Transitions Study coordinated with the suite of assistive technologies, learning programs, and electronic devices in current use at the school, and are therefore able to track the continued use of these items by students after they leave HPDS.

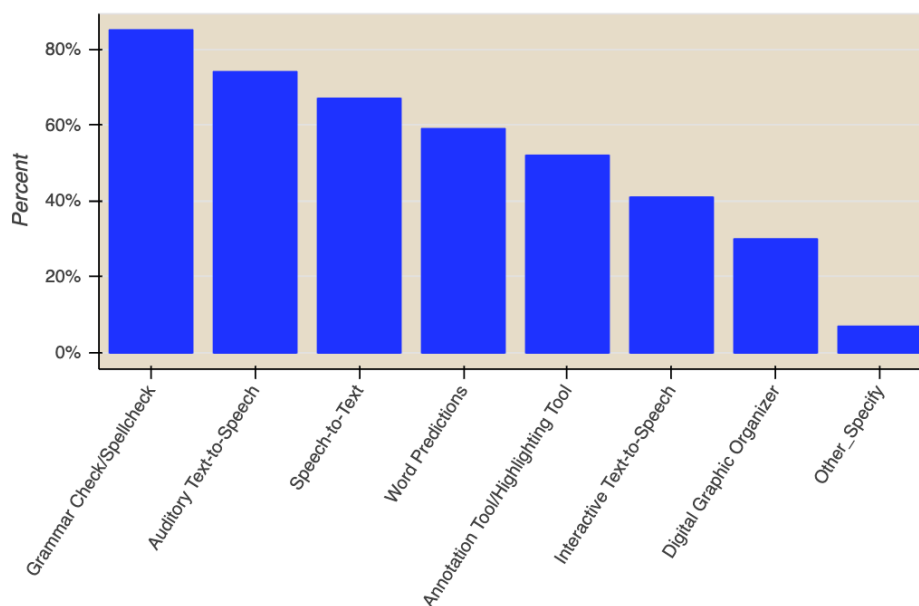
“Assistive technology” refers to a set of functions and utilities that can help students access the curriculum and complete their schoolwork. We asked parents whether their child had used any of eight different types of assistive technology during the previous school year: text-to-speech text that the student interacts with, text-to-speech auditory, speech-to-text, word predictions, digital graphic organizers, spelling/grammar check and annotation and highlighting tools.²

Of these, word prediction, speech-to-text and spelling/grammar check primarily assist with writing, annotation and highlighting tools are mainly used for reading and studying and text-to-speech tools can be utilized in both activities. Graphic organizers can provide procedural or conceptual scaffolding for both

² Note that this list is slightly different from the list used before 2022, because auditory text-to-speech was separated from speech-to-text to remove a potential ambiguity, and annotating and highlighting tools were simplified into a single category.

reading and writing. Several of these, such as spellcheck and word prediction, have emerged into general usage, while others, like graphic organizers, are used by smaller and more specific populations.

Usage of assistive technologies are shown below. Because parents are often less tech-savvy than students, and because parents may not have it within their power or desire to monitor the particular programs their children are using to do their schoolwork, and because some of these devices have entered into general usage, these percentages should be considered lower bounds for the likely levels of use among our transitioned students.



Technology used, percentages, 2024.

Grammar/spellcheck was the most commonly used assistive technology (n=23, 85.0%), followed by auditory speech-to-text (n=20, 74%) speech-to-text (n=18, 67.0%) and word predictions (n=16, 59.0%). These were followed by annotation/highlighting tools (n=14, 52.0%) interactive text-to-speech (n=11, 41.0%), digital graphic organizer (n=8, 30.0%), and Other (n=2, 7.0%), which included a calculator and one respondent who didn't know specifics.

Impact of the Learning Disability

Parents were asked two open-ended questions: “What impact, if any, does the diagnosis of a learning disability or receiving tutoring or remediation have on your child socially?,” and then the same question again with a focus on how it impacts them emotionally.

Regarding social impact, 55.6% of respondents (n=15) reported that their child's LD diagnosis had had little or no impact on them socially. Many of those parents credited the fact their school was oriented towards students with learning disabilities, and therefore they were among peers.

One mentioned positive impact:

“Honestly, I think he sees it as empowering.”

Eight mentioned mostly negative impact, with many responses referring to the student wanting to be “like other kids.” Some of the negative impact stemmed from diagnoses beyond language-based disabilities, which was difficult for parents to separate:

“He'd prefer to be called normal like other kids. He does avoid using assistive technology in front of other kids.”

“He doesn't want to talk about it. I don't know if he feels shame about it or just wants to be a regular kid. He didn't like going to HPDS because he wasn't a regular kid. When he was younger in private or public school, he would hide in plain sight. He didn't want anyone to know that he was having a struggle.”

“For him, it is just a fact of how his life has always been. His L.D. doesn't affect him socially. It's his actual diagnosis that affects him. He doesn't mind that he's at his current school and that other kids might be at a mainstream school. Social is hard for him and he has so few actual friends so it's hard to say. It's probably a huge factor but it's in his head.”

Three responses were mixed, with two referring to specific social environments that are better than others, as well as challenges that improved over time, and building resilience to negative comments:

“She thinks it looks bad on her socially. There are some kids here that aren't the nicest. Socially she is well received. When she's removed from the class she gets a couple of comments and she says, “Well I'm dyslexic.” I would not say it's negatively impacted. There are intermittent comments she's had to learn to overcome.”

“Back in the day she was having problems, because she was just struggling. Now she just has really good people around her and chooses really good friends.”

To turn to emotional impact, 33.3% (n=9) of respondents reported that their child's LD diagnosis had had little or no impact on them emotionally, but the majority 66.7% (n=18) indicated the diagnosis did have an impact.

One respondent (3.7% of all parents) mentioned their children's lack of confidence:

“She's less confident.”

However, four respondents (14.8% of all parents) mentioned an increase in their child's confidence, resilience, or emotional acceptance:

“Hyde Park, if anything, improved her emotional acceptance of having the disability, working on advocating for herself. Emotionally I think she's probably in a better place because of Hyde Park.”

“Resilience. He takes it as part of this life now. He was lucky that he was aware of it pretty young, and we were at Hyde Park at a young age.”

“Before Hyde Park Day School, it made her less confident, but I don't think she's affected by that anymore.”

Five respondents (18.5% of all parents) mentioned their child's frustration or exhaustion:

"She gets frustrated. She tries to fly below the radar. It can cause her to snap at peers and get upset sometimes."

"It depends on the situation. He can get angry and frustrated, but I think that's normal. He doesn't have a behavioral issue."

"It can make her a little impulsive and fiery. It's very typical of teenagers to feel lots of emotions. I would say hers are stronger."

Four respondents (14.8% of all parents) mentioned sadness, feeling "down" about the diagnosis, or negative impact:

"He gets down about it, but he's an upbeat kid, so he just gets past it."

"I think it still bothers him a lot, sometimes he still has hard moments and puts himself down for it. He feels like if he didn't have it things would be different. He doesn't want the extra time sometimes."

Two respondents (7.4% of all parents) mentioned anxiety:

"He's a pretty confident person. If you asked him if he did well in school he would say yes. He has such a hard time expressing that I can't wrap it up into a thought. He has anxiety, but it comes out in different ways. It's very quiet. He knows that he is different, so emotionally that has an impact on how he feels. This is a deep question for me."

Success Attributes

As part of our assessment of students' current emotional well-being, we asked parents to rate their children on 30 items relating to the success attributes that are taught as part of HPDS's social work curriculum. Each item used a 5-point scale, with higher numbers indicating that the child possesses that attribute to a greater degree. The items are grouped into six different success attributes—self-awareness, use of support systems, goal setting, perseverance, proactivity, and emotional coping skills—with each item addressing a different aspect of a particular attribute.

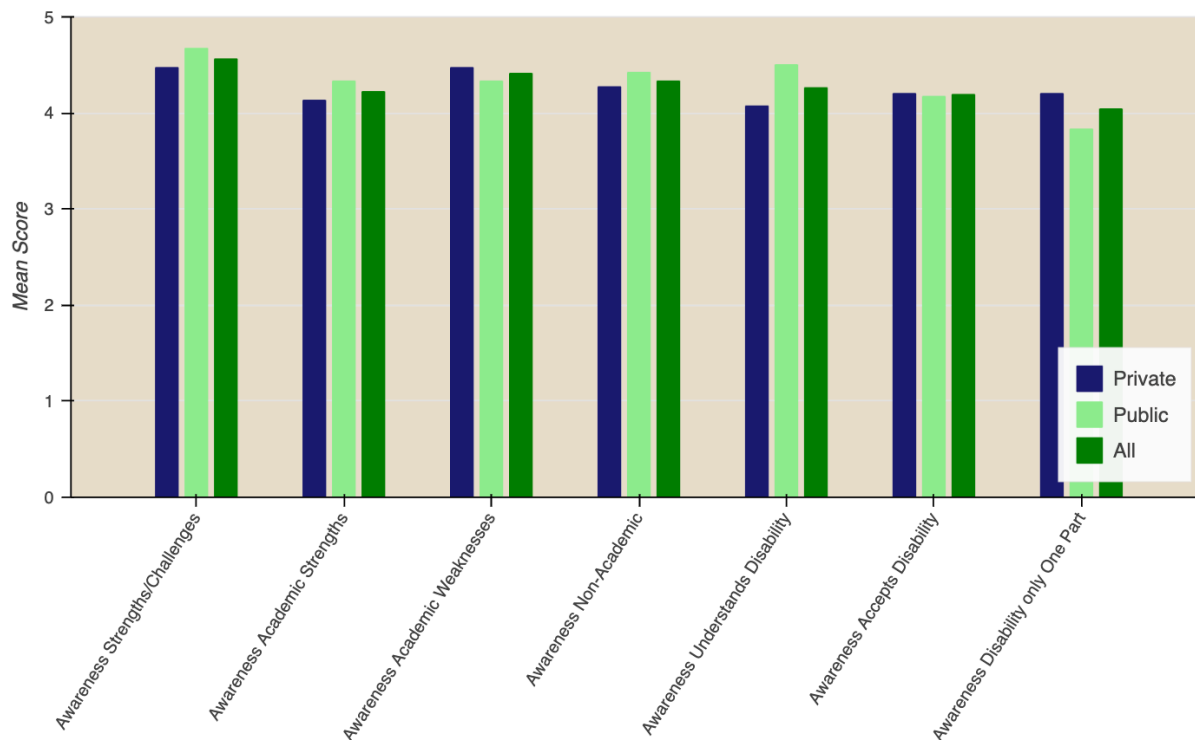
It should be noted that, depending on the context, scoring highly on some factors could actually be understood as negative, such as if a student has an excessive awareness of her/his weaknesses.

A first general conclusion of these success attributes is that, as in prior years, they were overwhelmingly positive. For instance, if we define a positive mean value as anything that scores a 3 or above, all questions elicited positive responses on average, and this holds true even if we look at public schools and all but one value for private schools separately. This means that 98.9% (89 of 90 — 29 private school, 30 public school and 30 overall) of the success attribute values we track across overall, public and private schools were positive values.

A second general conclusion is that scores are generally continuing the upward trend we saw in 2023. 75.6% (68 of 90) of these metrics were higher this year than last. 20.0% (18 of 90) were down, and no overall score stayed the same. Some of these are within rounding errors, and therefore not likely significant, but the extent of the overall trend does suggest improvement.

- **Awareness Factors** were higher on all overall scores in 2024.
 - Private school students scored lower on only one factor: awareness of academic strengths (4.13 this year vs. 4.24 last year). In all other awareness factors, private school students scored higher in 2024.
 - Public school students scored higher on all factors except two for which they scored the same as in 2023: acceptance of their disability (4.17) and seeing their disability as only one part of themselves (3.83). In all other awareness factors, public school students scored higher year over year.
- **Use of Support Systems** scores were higher on all factors overall except for “recognizes triggers” (3.52 this year vs. 3.59 last year).
 - Private school students scored lower on recognizing triggers (3.53 this year vs. 3.88 last year) and scored higher on every other support system metric.
 - Public school students scored higher on every metric except for “understands the benefit of using support systems,” which stayed the same (4.0).
- **Goal-Setting** was higher than 2023 on all but all except students being able to track their progress toward their goals (3.22 versus 3.62 in 2023).
 - Private school students scored lower on all three—setting realistic goals (3.53 vs. 3.59 last year), developing plans (3.00 vs. 3.29 last year) and tracking goals (2.93 vs. 3.59 last year).
 - Public school students were higher on all but the extent to which they tracked goals (3.58 versus 3.67 in 2023).
- **Perseverance Factors** were higher overall on all three metrics—persisting through obstacles (3.63 vs. 3.55 last year), persisting through difficulties (3.96 vs. 3.86 last year), persists towards purposes (3.93 vs. 3.76).
 - Private school students scored higher on only one, persisting through obstacles (3.87 vs. 3.58 last year). They scored lower on persisting towards a purpose (2.93 this year vs. 3.58 last year) and persisting through difficulties (3.73 vs. 3.82 last year).
 - Public school students scored higher on all three—persisting towards a purpose (4.17 vs. 3.58), persisting through difficulties (4.08 vs. 3.92 last year) and persisting through obstacles (4.00 vs. 3.58 last year).
- **Proactivity Factor** scores were higher on all but one overall metric in 2024: participating in classroom activities (4.26 this year vs. 4.32 last year).
 - Private school students scored higher on three metrics: participating in classroom activities (4.47 vs 4.38 last year), making decisions and acting on them (4.27 vs 4.06 last year) and taking responsibility for actions (3.73 this year vs. 3.71 last year).
 - Public school students scored lower on only one metric: participating in classroom activities (4.00 this year vs. 4.25 last year) and earned the same value for taking responsibility for their actions (3.93).
- **Emotional coping skills** scores were higher on every metric in 2024 except for one: using strategies to reduce stress, which was 3.26 this year compared to 3.41 last year.
 - Private school students were lower on identifying stress triggers (3.93 vs 3.94 in 2023) and using strategies to reduce stress (3.00 this year vs. 3.53 in 2023), and had the same mean rating for recognizing the onset of stress (3.53) for both years.
 - Public school students were higher on all emotional coping skills metrics.

Thirdly, when we compare public schools to private schools in the 2024 study, private schools scored higher on only 30% (9 out of 30) of the mean success factors this year, which is significantly lower than the 66.7% (20 of 30) in 2023. The last time this breakdown was similar was in 2021, when public schools scored higher on 65.5% of mean values (19 of 29).³



Success factors: self-awareness, public and private schools, 2024.
(Higher values indicate higher scores.)

³ The questions concerning participation in classroom activities and social activities were separated in 2022, whereas they were combined in prior years.

Appendix A. Schools Attended After Hyde Park Day School

Below are the schools that parents reported their child initially transitioning to for the 2023-2024 school year.

School Name	Reported Transition School Count
Wolcott College Prep in Chicago	5
Wilmette Junior High	2
The British International School	1
Jones College Prep High School	1
The Gow School in New York	1
Baker Demonstration School	1
Old Saint Mary's	1
Barrington High School	1
Minooka Community High School	1
Glenbrook Elementary	1
Eagle Hill in Massachusetts	1
Haven Middle School in Evanston	1
Francis Parker	1
Willowbrook High School	1
Union Point Academy	1
New Trier Township High School	1
Sherwood Elementary	1
Springman	1
The Cove School in Northbrook	1
Elk Grove High School	1
The Liberty School	1
DePaul College Prep	1
South Middle School in Arlington Heights	1

Transitions Schools, 2024.

This list again changed considerably over last year; the Cove School had a single student versus last year's three. New Trier High School appears a single time versus last year's two students, and there are no Mount Carmel High School students this year whereas there was one in 2023.

Wolcott College Preparatory remains popular as a transfer school, mentioned by five respondents this year and by three last year.