



Prince Andrew High School

2014 – 2015 Community Report

Provincial Assessments		
	School (%) 2014-15	Board (%) 2014-15
<u>Literacy Assessments</u>		
Grade 10 Provincial		
Reading	73%	79%
Writing - Ideas	71%	72%
Writing - Organization	70%	65%
Writing - Language Use	65%	66%
Writing - Conventions	69%	65%
<u>Math Assessments</u>		
Grade 10 Provincial		
Mathematics	62%	69%
Mathematics At Work	36%	51%

Graduation Rates	
School Year	Rate
2014-2015	97%
Destination after High School	
	Rate
Community College	20%
University	51%
Other Education or Training	4%
Join Work Force	12%
Unknown	11%

Mathematics Goal:

Students will improve in the area of communicating their understanding of mathematical concepts and processes.

Literacy Goal:

Students will improve their ability to communicate their understanding effectively through the writing process.

Our staff has focused their work this year on two main strategies that support our school goals in numeracy and literacy:

- a) To establish a classroom culture where students take risks to communicate their learning.
- b) To implement best instructional practices with respect to fostering more effective student communication

From various sources of data we have explored at our school site, we have been able to make some conclusions as to both our forward progress of teacher practice, as well as student achievement. Teachers have indicated they have a greater appreciation for the positive impact that a safe learning environment and positive classroom culture can have on student learning and communication. Teachers in PLCs stated that by more actively listening to student responses during questioning, and by being genuinely interested in the responses, has helped make connections with students, and their students became more willing to take risks and offer their voice to conversation.

Teachers also indicated that they have been exploring the use of technology in the classroom as a way to promote student communication, and to help the students feel safe in communicating their understanding in class. Teachers have been implementing new websites and APPS that help teachers gather formative assessment data. The goal in using this technology is to ultimately improve student engagement in class, and to provide a new medium in which teachers can ask students to demonstrate understanding in a risk-free, 21st century style learning experience.

Many teachers have described the impact of working towards establishing a risk-free classroom culture as an experience of “increased awareness.” These teachers have indicated that they have worked hard on maintaining awareness, on a daily basis, of what it looks like to take risks when communicating learning, and how that may look different from one student to the next. They provided various means by which students could communicate their understanding of a concept(s), and paid greater attention to which of these methods worked best for individual students. The teachers stated that working on the implementation of this strategy has promoted changes in pedagogy and practice. We have definitely seen the benefit in student engagement and thus more students taking risks in the classroom. There has been a notable increase in the implementation of 21st century learning tools and experiences for their students as a result of this process.

Teachers have also commented on how they have adjusted/modified their assessment practices in order to help establish a safe, more motivating learning environment for their students. These teachers have started creating classroom-based assessments that more accurately meet their students’ needs and readiness levels. Teachers indicated that this more “student-centered” approach to assessment and learning has created a higher level of student engagement within the classroom. Students are feeling as though classroom activities and assessments that they have been provided are now designed specifically for them, and they can relate to them much better. Teachers indicated that this strategy for improving the culture in the classroom has helped them form

stronger connections with their students and that the students are now more eager and willing to take risks.

Finally, teachers have also indicated that they have come together and focused their work on improving student communication by providing increased opportunities for students to “write” in class and on assessments. They have started giving their students more opportunities to improve their work based on teacher and peer feedback. They have worked on improving the clarity and understanding of expectations for assessments, revising rubrics to ensure students are clearly made aware of the expectations and criteria for success, and teachers are having more conversations with students to help them better understand concepts prior to submitting their work.

Provincial Assessments

This is the first year that the results of the Nova Scotia Examinations have been reported to schools since the exams began two years ago. We can now use these results as a baseline to determine areas of strength and areas of challenge. Writing is one of our current school wide improvement goals and we are close to the board average in each of the categories. We will continue to focus on improving our students’ strengths in writing in order to continue to grow our student’s abilities. One of our challenges is that is we focus on writing that our focus on reading may diminish. Our school team will look at where our challenges in reading are and ensure that we focus on increasing our efforts in this area as well. We know that we also have work to do in mathematics. Our students can represent what they know and can do in the classroom setting where they have multiplies ways of showing their knowledge, but they sometimes struggle translating this knowledge in a more formal structured examination format. Our teachers will focus not only on improving on the students’ knowledge and understanding of the outcomes in mathematics but how to represent that knowledge on province wide standardized assessments as well.

Our data team is also using the data gained from these provincial assessments to identify and support students in areas that may have been challenging for them as they move into grade 11 and 12 courses so that by graduation they are better prepared for their post-secondary journey.

Graduation Rates

Over the past few years the graduation rate at our school has continued to decline. This was identified as a real area of concern for our school improvement team. In consultation with our School Advisory Council we made this an area of priority. As a school we adopted many of the strategies in the HRSB High School Interventions Framework, including bi-weekly meetings to identify and track grade 12 students who needed support as well as offering additional supports through credit recovery and credit insurance. These interventions were school wide and made a huge impact. We were able to raise our graduation rate from 80% in the previous year to 97% for the 2014 2015 school year, a raise of 17% in one year. We have turned a challenge into a success.