

2015-16 Community Report

Provincial Assessments		
	School (%) 2015-16	Board (%) 2015-16
<u>Literacy Assessments</u>		
Grade 10 Provincial		
Reading	86%	78%
Writing - Ideas	77%	69%
Writing - Organization	73%	65%
Writing - Language Use	74%	65%
Writing - Conventions	72%	60%
<u>Math Assessments</u>		
Grade 10 Provincial		
Mathematics	80%	72%
Mathematics At Work	73%	54%

Graduation Rates	
School Year	Rate
2015-16	96%
Destination after High School	Rate
Community College	6%
University	61%
Other Education or Training	4%
Join Workforce	2%
Unknown	20%

Our school developed two goals to drive our Student Success Plan to improve student achievement.

Goal 1:

Teachers will implement formative assessment strategies, as measured by administrative walkthroughs, teacher professional growth plans, PLC notes, teacher surveys, student surveys and student focus groups.

Our first SSP goal was to continue to strive to aid all teachers in finding ways to create additional formative assessments that are more reflective of the way students learn. Some courses offered are much more conducive to doing so than others, so collaboratively we have attempted to find the best ways to implement this assessment strategy across all curriculums. It is something that we continually talk about and strive to be better at. With regular Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and professional development activities that support our goals, teachers have continually worked to ensure that conversation, concrete classroom examples and lessons are shared in the area of formative assessment. One of the driving forces of school improvement at Citadel High is the work that teachers are doing in their PLCs. Teachers at our school meet weekly, although many PLCs go above and beyond this time and work collaboratively to:

- Inform each teacher of individual students who need intervention because they are struggling to learn or who need enrichment because they are already proficient
- Inform students of next-steps they must take in their learning
- Inform each member of the team of his or her individual strengths and weaknesses in teaching particular skills, so each member can provide or solicit help from colleagues on the team

- Inform the team of areas in which many students are struggling so that the team can develop and implement better strategies for teaching those areas
- Utilize formative assessment practice to help shape future lesson deliverance and monitor student proficiencies.
- Working more closely within our teams is something that we continue to do to truly close gaps of understanding for students and their families.
- Utilize qualitative data collections collaboratively to help shape and develop lessons and assessments.
- Identify useful quantitative data that can be used to better understand how we are progressing within our school goals.

Some of the ways that our teachers have adapted their practice in order to help students become better communicators are:

- Several departments participated in Professional Development sessions on Google Apps for Education where they learned about and worked with Google Forms, Google Classroom, Google Sites and Google Sheets.
- Our teachers have explored ways to encourage students to learn from and correct their errors using formative assessments. These strategies have included written feedback, oral conversations, formal and informal observations, whole class and small group mini sessions as well as reattempt opportunities.

Our professional development sessions have been teacher led which promotes collegiality and support in this area. The concepts of formative assessment have been easier to incorporate in some literacy based courses like ELA and Social Studies. Teachers regularly incorporate new strategies and share those respectively We will continue to work next year to support a deeper understanding of formative assessment in other subject areas like Math and Science. With dialogue and support through PLCs, teachers have worked to embrace and support new ways of doing things and as a result it has led to more creative ways to support and engage disengaged students here at Citadel.

The notion of continuing to grow through new ways to assess will also work very well in the way we work with, understand and educate our African Nova Scotian and Aboriginal Students. Citadel continues to work on closing these gaps. We are in the process of beginning a mentorship program which would allow us to utilize adults from our community to pair up with students so that a connection can be created that allows students to see the relationship between their course and their goals.

Goal 2: Cultural Proficiency

To improve the cultural proficiency of staff as measured by administrative walkthrough observations, teacher professional growth plans, teacher surveys, student surveys, student focus group conversations and Professional Learning Community conversations.

This year Citadel began a transition that is more reflective of the students we serve and the realities they face. Early in the year we decided to look at Community based initiatives and find ways to support students differently. One teacher in particular decided to spearhead the Parker Street Food Bank Christmas drive by assembling all of the boxes that go to needy families and getting as many students as possible to donate what they could. This was a hugely successful event from a cultural understanding of students we serve each that may not always have the means.

Our PD this year focused on a team approach with teachers spearheading PD based on our SSP plan which includes becoming more aware of the cultural landscape of our school. With all schools having multiple cultures, we supported students of poverty (Food bank), completed a mental health first aid kit session, spent a PD day in 5 important places in the North End Community. (Hope Blooms, North Branch Library, Parker St. Food Bank and the George Dixon Centre). Teachers reported that this was one of the more successful professional development days we have had. We also spent time learning about additional cultures with the arrival of Syrian newcomers. We

added mosque to our weekly routine and held a Ramadan celebration with students and giveaways for new families. This proved to be a very important learning curve for all teachers and students at Citadel.

Alongside of this included adding gender neutral washroom signs around our building, PD on the LGBTQ community, and the startup of boys club and girls club here at Citadel once a week to focus on real issues for teenagers. Having teachers partake in a Mental Health First Aid Kit PD session that allows us to continue to be first responders and the important adult for students in our building. Differentiated instruction, strong resource teams, African Nova Scotian and Aboriginal support workers as well as a Youth Health Centre, YMCA worker for new immigrants, EAL support and International student support all round out a strong community based school with built in mechanisms to support students.

With deepened understanding of our clientele comes a better way to address issues that arise. Knowing our neighborhoods, parents and families allow for positive dialogue and problem solving. As a result we had a very successful year in lowered suspension rates, and more opportunities to infuse restorative practices and to resolve conflicts. Students have been excellent when this has taken place in regards to understanding what is expected and how to act when additional issues arise. It has allowed better communication and supports from homes as a result.

Although we are not a school that is “there” yet, we are on our way. With initiatives that involve Big Picture Learning which will allow us to effectively hold onto students that continue to fall through the cracks, we believe we will be in a position to move this school into a very new and exciting direction along with all of the other programs we offer.

The goal is to always “give students a chance at the end of grade 12 to enter into a program, college, university or work force that gives them success”. With so many routes available to students to find success, we have to continue to aid this process, adding more numbers to successful programs and promoting them accordingly in our building.