

Harold T. Barrett Junior High

2015-16 Community Report

Provincial Assessments		
	School (%) 2015-16	Board (%) 2015-16
<u>Literacy Assessments</u>		
Grade 8 Provincial		
Reading	69%	76%
Writing - Ideas	91%	91%
Writing - Organization	80%	80%
Writing - Language Use	76%	82%
Writing - Conventions	66%	70%
<u>Math Assessments</u>		
Grade 8 Provincial		
Mathematics	49%	63%

The results from the grade eight provincial assessment in literacy show that we are aligned with the HRSB results in both reading and writing. Based on this assessment, as well as school-based assessments, students continue to demonstrate strength in writing, particularly in developing their ideas and organization. English and French Language Arts (ELA and FLA) teachers will continue to focus on the conventions of writing to support and further improve the writing process.

The results from the math assessment indicate that we are still below the school board average. Despite this, we have seen a significant shift from students performing at level one (below expectations) to a level two (approaching expectations). We have also noted an increase of students performing at a level two (approaching expectations) to a level three (meeting expectations). This, along with school-based assessments, suggests that we are beginning to close that gap in mathematics, as we continue our focus on improving our students' ability to communicate their mathematical thinking.

This year, we are entering year one of our Student Success Planning (SSP). In order to gauge our priorities for the next five years, our SSP lead team, School Advisory Council, and school staff have combed through Provincial and Board assessment data, school-based data, and surveys to identify our strengths and challenges with regard to literacy and numeracy. Teachers also completed a self-assessment that looked at instructional and assessment practices. This information will help us establish our literacy and numeracy goals, along with the strategies that will support achievement of these goals.

During the 2015/16 school year our professional development focused on improving our instructional practices in questioning, feedback, and formative assessment, through the implementation of daily lesson targets and success criteria. A lesson goal explicitly states what it is the students will learn that class, while success criteria provides the standards or benchmarks that need to be met in order to reach the goal. This shifts the classroom focus from the activity, to the learning.

So, what does this look like in the classroom? Teachers communicate the lesson target to the class in student friendly language and conduct frequent check-ins throughout the class to see where the student's understanding is in relation to the target. Here is an example of a learning target that our students would see in a typical class; *"By the end of this class, I will be able to describe qualitatively the difference between mass and weight"*.

Educational researcher John Hattie states, "With a clear goal in mind, students are more likely to actively

seek and listen to feedback". This principle sums up what we are trying to achieve: students *engaging in* and *taking ownership* of their own learning. This work has had a significant impact on our instructional practices and subsequently student achievement. One teacher shared, "I now see learning targets and success criteria as the foundation of my practice – daily lessons, planning and assessment".

We recognize at HTB that fostering a positive school climate is closely tied to academic success. In order to improve in this area, we have adopted a restorative approach (RA), where relational principles are applied to our daily practice. This essentially means that relationships matter and how we organize these relationships within our classrooms and school are important. To address this, we asked ourselves the question, "How can we adjust our current practices to incorporate more of the "*relational principles*", so students experience a more restorative approach?" During professional development, teachers took part in a restorative analysis workshop, to help us gain an understanding of how RA impacts all facets of school life. This activity leveraged what we were already doing well and highlighted where we can improve.

Teachers will continue to use data to drive their instructional practices to focus on areas in need of improvement, as well as to celebrate success. We look forward to reporting back to the community in the spring to highlight the gains that we have made.