



2015-16 Community Report for Eastern Shore District High School

Provincial Assessments		
	School (%) 2015-16	Board (%) 2015-16
Literacy Assessments		
Grade 10 Provincial		
Reading	74%	78%
Writing - Ideas	57%	69%
Writing - Organization	54%	65%
Writing - Language Use	53%	65%
Writing - Conventions	50%	60%
Math Assessments		
Grade 10 Provincial		
Mathematics	85%	72%
Mathematics At Work	66%	54%

Graduation Rates	
School Year	Rate
2015-16	94%
Destination after High School	Rate
Community College	33%
University	29%
Other Education or Training	
Join Workforce	25%
Unknown	5%

In 2015-16 Eastern Shore District High is working on three main goals; a math goal, a literacy goal and a wellness goal.

Math Goal: Students will demonstrate improvement in the area of problem solving.

Teachers at ESDH worked on incorporating more problem solving type questions, which are mathematical questions that are open to multiple ways of finding solutions, into students' daily work. We tried to not focus on a "problem solving day" but make this part of the regular routine of our classroom practices and expectations. We wanted our students to understand that working on these types of questions are valued in our mathematics classrooms at ESDH. Students were encouraged to participate in the mathematical community where discussion and problem solving are valued. This became the norm in our mathematics classrooms. Through all of these changes, we have seen growth in our students' willingness and ability to attempt rich problem solving type questions.

Students are now able to see value in trying other strategies when working through problems. They understand that they may need to try for a solution more than once. The math teachers are seeing students being more successful with these problem solving type questions on our formative and summative assessments since we have been focusing on this goal. We are also seeing an increased level of confidence in our students which aids with the problem solving process and hopefully

transferring to real-life scenarios. Problem solving is the ultimate goal in mathematics. All of the skills students learn through their school career build to collect in their tool box. The more skill they bring and the more problem solving experiences they have while in school, the better they will be at problem solving later in life.

Literacy Goal: Students will demonstrate improved reading comprehension of non-fiction text.

English teachers met with students to gather information on how students were progressing in using text features as a means of improving their reading comprehension. The results showed that students increased their working knowledge and application of text features in supporting their non-fiction reading for understanding. The results will support strategic mini-lessons next year in the areas where review was identified as being needed.

Professional development was had by all staff to further understand learning challenges that many students face to varying degrees. This was an experiential workshop model. The professional development allowed staff to experience a learning disability and to reflect on what they can do in the classroom to better support all learners.

Teachers continued their work in Professional Learning Communities to deepen their understanding of curriculum and supports for students. Students were identified earlier this year to take advantage of academic support opportunities. Many students responded well to this intervention that quickly helped many get back on track with their studies. English Teachers will be analyzing classroom based and provincial assessment data to plan next steps in instruction and targeted interventions for students.

Wellness Goal: Staff at Eastern Shore District High will work towards improving our school by creating a safe, tolerant environment that gives students choices of activities and coping strategies to keep them engaged in school life.

September professional development for teachers focused on engaging our students through the use of Google Apps for Education. Teachers quickly saw the benefits of GAfE and students adjusted very quickly to using the technology. With two class sets of Chromebooks and some additional available for small group use, students saw an increase in technology access in their classrooms at ESDH. Teachers developed "Google Classrooms" and student feedback has been positive.

Staff were also introduced to the concept of brain-based learning where active learning and active transitions better prepare the brain for learning. They experienced a few examples of how content area and traditional discussion forums can take on an active twist that actually better stimulates the brain for learning.

Another focus of our staff professional development was around having a better understanding of learning challenges and disabilities. Staff worked through learning stations that had them experience what it was like to work through the challenges a student with learning disabilities may face. Staff also participated in a professional development session where they explored methods of how changes can be made to support various learning styles within the classroom setting. This supported our wellness goal by helping staff to better understand our students who deal with those learning challenges daily. By instilling understanding and empathy, staff can better respond to our students and help them achieve learning successes.

During professional development, staff were reminded of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. This was used as a reminder that students (and all people) require basic needs to be in place prior to reaching personal achievement and successes in life. This reminded all staff of the importance of such things as our breakfast program, extra-curricular activities, a caring and respectful community, social justice clubs, academic interventions, guidance interventions, and wellness supports just to name a few. This reminder approach will continue to be infused in our decision making at ESDH.

The staff of ESDH was also very committed to offering lots of extra-curricular activities to our students. There were celebrations of student involvement with the first "Anchor Awards" that was a delightful evening of entertainment and student recognition. The Athletic Awards was another opportunity to celebrate student involvement in sports. When students are committed to an extra-curricular activity, they make a deeper connection to their school and are exposed to opportunities of personal growth, positive risk-taking and social interactions with their peers. The same positive attributes are connected to our varsity teams that offer as much choice as possible to our students. Teams and individuals are recognized at the Athletic Banquet in June.

Our Curriculum Night in February included a recognition event that invited students to a celebration of achievement. Students were recognized for Subject Awards of Excellence, as well as Subject Citizenship Awards recognized within each class. A new award, the Schooner Award, celebrated students whose Learner Profile was commendable in all categories meaning that students were bringing their best practices in support of their own learning. Perfect Attendance was also awarded to further recognize the value of their commitment each and every day. By this recognition of our students, feedback from both parents and students was a sense of pride for being noticed for the hard work and their achievement. These recognition awards will continue to be a part of our Curriculum Nights.

Our Teen Health Centre was also a flurry of activity throughout the year, offering numerous supports to students. There were various pro-active lunchtime events that brought students together. Some highlights to note: prom dress exchange, Waffle Wednesdays, Community Pride March and Mental Health Awareness Week. The new Teen Health area has also been a positive boost with it being a great space for students to meet and a confidential area to support those in need of other services and support from our Teen Health Coordinator.

For exam preparations, students had the opportunity to do yoga, partake in lunchtime art and coloring, cuddle with a therapy dog and/or had access be active in the gym or outside. All of these prove to be good examples to students on what they can do to alleviate stresses which often become more apparent over the exam weeks.

Aside from a focus on wellness, staff intervened with students and families in accessing school and community supports as necessary. Many teachers were involved in a follow-up Professional Development Go-To-Teacher training. Here, teachers learned about brain based research that shows connections between student achievement and daily coping strategies. It also reinforced the importance and value of teachers being included in the quest for better mental health in our youth by being trauma informed and providing validation to students' concerns.

Provincial Assessments

We are now in our second year of analyzing the Nova Scotia English 10 exam results. Prior to these

results, we referred to Grade 12 provincial exams to guide our school improvement focus. Eastern Shore District High School's grade 10 English exam reading scores approach the board average, which is a marked improvement over past similar comparisons. This suggests that our strategic effort in improving reading through the Student Success Plan literacy goal of augmenting student non-fiction reading comprehension is now paying off.

In contrast, our writing scores are approximately 10% lower than the board average. As this data is limited historically, we are unsure if this trend will persist or is an indication of a larger issue. As lower than average writing skills are being identified as a challenge for our school, it is likely this will become a focus for future improvement goals commencing in September of 2017 through the new Student Support Plan initiative.

This past June our Mathematics 10 Students wrote their Nova Scotia Mathematics 10 Exam. The preliminary results show that 85% of these students are meeting or exceeding the expected outcomes for Mathematics 10. The results from the previous year, 2014-2015 were 76% of students were meeting or exceeding the outcomes. We are pleased to note an increase in the number of students who are being very successful with the mathematics curriculum. Once again, the percentage of student at Eastern Shore District High School has exceeded the Board average.

The Mathematics at Work 10 Students also wrote the Nova Scotia Mathethatics at Work 10 Exam. Math at Work 10 is a semestered course so this exam would have been written in January and in June with two different sets of students enrolled in this course. 66% of student in Math at Work 10 are meeting or exceeding the outcomes for this course. This is slightly down from the previous year with a result of 73% of students who were meeting or exceeding the outcomes. Once again, our students were performing better than the board average. These results do not differentiate between the semesters for these results.

Graduation Rates

Our graduation rate increased to 94% from the previous year's 90%. Various interventions are available for consideration in supporting students in reaching their goal of graduation. Career exploration will continue to be a guidance focus for our school. Comprehensive guidance around career and post-secondary options along with Co-op11 & 12 courses further support students in exploring next steps in transitioning after graduation. Students can also explore skilled trades through various hands-on courses throughout their high school experience.