



Herring Cove Junior High School

2015-2016 Community Report

Provincial Assessments		
	School (%)	Board (%)
	2015-16	2015-16
<u>Literacy Assessments</u>		
Grade 8 Provincial		
Reading	70%	76%
Writing - Ideas	87%	91%
Writing - Organization	70%	80%
Writing - Language Use	77%	82%
Writing - Conventions	54%	70%
<u>Math Assessments</u>		
Grade 8 Provincial		
Mathematics	84%	63%

This year we finished year 5 of our SSP plan and have been deemed an “Improving School”. Next year we will be moving into our new plan based on the assessment information gathered. Our students participated in Provincial and school based assessments and the information gained through these assessments will help us determine our next steps in improving student achievement in literacy and mathematics. Please note that the results above indicate the percentage of students who “met” and “exceeded” expectations on the assessments. Also note that all percentages used throughout this report are rounded to the nearest whole number. The Reading, Writing and Math 8 Assessments (RMW8) are one component of a variety of assessment evidence used by teachers/schools to describe student achievement in mathematics and literacy.

Our math results for the 15/16 school year have greatly exceeded the Board average, 84% who “met” or “exceeded” expectations, and we are very proud of the efforts our students and teachers have put in. We challenged the students and they exceeded our expectations. This supports the teaching strategies we have put in place and the direction our teachers have taken to improve student success.

Our literacy results for the school year demonstrate that our students’ performance is slightly below the Board’s results in reading, writing ideas and language use. We have seen a significant drop in the area of writing conventions and are currently looking into strategies to improve student success in this area.

These results inform teacher practice and identify areas that require additional focus for instruction. Decisions around teacher professional development are based on this assessment as well as classroom assessment data, teacher observations and anecdotal evidence. The

focus of our weekly Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings is to identify trends, support student achievement and align teaching practices to improve student achievement.

What professional learning did your teachers engage in this year?

This year we have engaged in professional learning around sharing the learning targets (breaking down the outcome into student friendly language), brain based teaching strategies, growth mindset (helping students understand the importance of effort and becoming “smarter”), and culturally responsive teaching (connecting the curriculum to student interests). This is all connected to the work from previous years the teachers have been working on around formative assessment strategies (assessment for learning), self-assessment and connecting learning to students’ lives as ways to continue to improve student engagement and student effort. We were also fortunate to have our ELA teachers engaged in PD with a literacy coordinator, helping them to improve their practices in the classroom. Also, both our math and ELA teachers spent valuable time preparing students for the provincial assessments. They worked with students on practice tests, tips for test taking (how to attack multiple choice questions), and lessons learned from previous assessments.

What changes have you seen in instructional and assessment practices?

As we move into year one of The SSP plan teachers will be analyzing the results of classroom and provincial assessments to inform their teaching practices and make changes to their approach to instruction to better meet the needs of students. As part of our student support plan, teachers will continue to be focused on using a wider variety of teaching and assessment strategies to ensure every student has an opportunity to show what they know and can do in a way that best suits how they learn. We have also been increasing opportunities for students to work and problem solve collaboratively. These efforts have resulted in teachers having more time to conference with individuals and small groups to support their progress more effectively. Teachers have also been using student interests to better connect students to the curriculum and thus get better results. This is an area we continue to want to improve in so that we get students more invested in what they are learning.

How have your school’s professional learning communities contributed to your response?

Our English Language Arts, French Language Arts and Math teachers meet one hour per week as a Professional Learning Community (PLC). This allows time for teachers to plan together, create common assessments, break down learning targets into student friendly language, preparing students for provincial assessments and analyze classroom-based data. They have conversations about grading practices to ensure that they are communicating consistent standards and expectations. Our teachers have indicated how valuable this time to them and the positive impact it has on student achievement.

We have also worked within our family of schools to create opportunities for other teachers to meet as a PLC with their peers. This year, both Learning Centre and resource staff collaborated with colleagues to develop new understandings and share effective practices that support student learning.