

Oyster Pond Academy

2015-2016

Community Report

Provincial Assessments		
	School (%) 2015-16	Board (%) 2015-16
<u>Literacy Assessments</u>		
Grade 3 Provincial		
Reading	68%	69%
Writing - Ideas	75%	76%
Writing - Organization	64%	62%
Writing - Language Use	64%	66%
Writing - Conventions	50%	52%
Grade 6 Provincial		
Reading	67%	76%
Writing - Ideas	76%	82%
Writing - Organization	67%	68%
Writing - Language Use	67%	72%
Writing - Conventions	56%	65%
Grade 8 Provincial		
Reading	83%	76%
Writing - Ideas	93%	91%
Writing - Organization	88%	80%
Writing - Language Use	90%	82%
Writing - Conventions	76%	70%
<u>Math Assessments</u>		
Grade 4 Provincial		
Mathematics	67%	78%
Grade 6 Provincial		
Mathematics	67%	72%
Grade 8 Provincial		
Mathematics	67%	63%

Oyster Pond Academy (OPA) is in Year 2 of a five-year cycle of the Student Success Plan (SSP). When teachers learn, students learn. Teachers at OPA have engaged in a variety of professional development (PD) at the board, provincial, national and international level. The OPA administration is supportive of such undertakings and provides the means by which teacher learning can occur. During the 2015-2016 year, school-based PD focused on increasing student engagement through purposeful, intentional and reflective lesson planning with particular focus on goal setting and the integration of high yield instructional strategies. In addition, focus on daily lesson/learning goals and success criteria has helped the students and teachers gauge where students are in the learning process and achievement of the lesson/learning goal, and has provided a framework of support for students as they work to achieve the daily learning goal.

Staff has progressed to various levels in their implementation of this model and united in their focus to bring about best practice in our classrooms. As a result of their work, staff has observed an increase in

student engagement. Teacher learning continues through site –based Professional Learning Communities (PLC). Hour long PLC’s provide our math and language arts teachers at each grade level with opportunities to focus on strategies to improve planning, instruction and assessment practices.

With this in mind, central to teacher professional discussions, professional learning and daily lesson planning were four essential questions:

- What do we want students to know or learn? (Learning Target/Goal)
- How does my classroom instruction need to change in order to meet students’ needs?
- How will we know when students have learned it? (Success Criteria & Assessment)
- How will we respond when students experience difficulty or when they have already learned it?

Because of teachers’ attention to these four critical/essential questions and because of teacher collaboration in their respective Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), teachers were able to focus on strategies to improve student learning, to pause and reflect on classroom post-observation feedback which has given way to a deeper culture of inquiry within the school. It was through this work, along with PLC time for literacy and numeracy that we were able to develop common and shared approaches and common language in an effort to align practice. This work informs our direction and enables us to identify and address what we need to do next in service of our students. Through purposeful reflection of daily teaching practice, teachers will be able to determine how to move forward in the SSP process.

As stated, Oyster Pond Academy (OPA) is in its second year of the Student Success Plan (SSP) process. During the 2014-2015 school year, the first year of the SSP, our Literacy and Math goals were developed based on the challenges observed through school-based and provincial assessments.

Literacy Goal - *Students will strengthen literacy skills and improve reading comprehension with a focus on critical thinking.*

Math Goal - *Students will demonstrate improvement in their ability to problem solve and communicate their understanding.*

This year (2015-2016) most teachers are making great use of two research-based and well established instructional approaches - the Reader’s/Writer’s Workshop Model in Language Arts and the Three Part Lesson in Mathematics, to support their daily instructional practices. The focus within these approaches has been on questioning/wondering and making connections. This year is the first for the new math curriculum in grades 7-9, the second year of the new math curriculum in grades 4-6, and the third year of the new curriculum for P-2. The P-2 curricula have also been streamlined this year to focus more heavily on Language Arts and Math.

Through ongoing professional development teachers have engaged in collaborative learning on research-based strategies for increasing student achievement. With a heavy emphasis on daily learning goals and success criteria development, teachers at OPA have engaged students by providing specific, achievable targets so that students know what they are to be learning in each class and can determine for themselves how well they have met daily learning goals. Teachers have also focused on strategies for providing students with timely, effective, and personalized feedback. These elements have been combined within a framework of detailed lesson planning including questions, prompts, goals, and success criteria for each lesson.

Teachers have developed new common assessments and rubrics based on our SSP Literacy and Math goals. Much of the initial planning of these common assessments occurred within Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) of Language Arts and Mathematics teachers. They were then reviewed by the larger group of classroom, resource, and learning centre teachers across all grade levels during professional development days and staff meetings. These large group consultations have allowed the staff to develop a

broader understanding of the progression of language, strategies, and expectations for Literacy and Mathematics from Primary to Grade 9.

Students at various levels have had input into the development of the rubrics describing success criteria for each SSP goal and for common assessments at each level. Students will be able to use these rubrics throughout the upcoming school years to help them see how they are developing their reading comprehension, critical thinking and problem solving skills.

Our work and focus over the past two years has overall yielded positive results.

Literacy:

The results achieved by students who wrote the RW8 Literacy Assessment in 2015-2016 were positive. Overall in reading, 83% of students who participated in the assessment met expectations, where the HRSB average was 76% of students meeting the outcomes. In writing, 88% and 93% of our students were successful in organizing and communicating their ideas in writing respectively, while 90% of students used clear language in that writing. With respect to writing conventions, such as spelling and punctuation, 76% met expectations as compared to the HRSB average of 70%.

Like their grade eight counterparts, the results achieved by our grade three students who wrote the 2015-2016 RW3 Literacy Assessment, were positive. Our students were either on par with or slightly above the HRSB results in each category. While the results are good, there is still room for improvement.

The results achieved by students who wrote the 2015-2016 RW6 Literacy Assessment were either on par or slightly under the HRSB results in each category. Writing conventions remains a clear challenge for our students at 56% as compared to the HRSB average of 65%.

Math

Our grade four and grade six results on the mathematics portion of the provincial assessment indicate that 67% met expectation which was 11% and 5%, respectively, lower than the HRSB average. We will analyze the data to determine where our students encountered difficulty and look to make the necessary adjustments to close the gaps in student learning.

Sixty-seven percent (67%) of our grade eight students met and slightly exceeded the HRSB average of 63%.

In both literacy and math, there is still work to be done, however, overall, our results were positive and an improvement from the 2014-2015 provincial assessment results. The results indicate that the professional learning and professional discussions teachers are engaged in are yielding positive results. We will continue to share resources, and to look for strategies to meet the various needs of our diverse learners.