



2015-16 Community Report for Sambro Elementary School

Provincial Assessments		
	School (%) 2015-16	Board (%) 2015-16
<u>Literacy Assessments</u>		
Grade 3 Provincial		
Reading	72%	69%
Writing - Ideas	83%	76%
Writing - Organization	72%	62%
Writing - Language Use	61%	66%
Writing - Conventions	56%	52%
Grade 6 Provincial		
Reading	62%	76%
Writing - Ideas	92%	82%
Writing - Organization	62%	68%
Writing - Language Use	62%	72%
Writing - Conventions	46%	65%
<u>Math Assessments</u>		
Grade 4 Provincial		
Mathematics	88%	78%
Grade 6 Provincial		
Mathematics	64%	72%

Five years ago, staff and students at Sambro Ketch Harbour Elementary school were in year one of Continuous School Improvement (now referred to as Student Success Planning or SSP). As part of the HRSB commitment to ensure every school and every child are improving, we set out to develop some school-wide goals based upon student achievement in Mathematics and English Language Arts. We collected and analyzed data and determined that there were two areas in need of improvement: student achievement in reading comprehension and Mathematics problem solving and Communication. Over the next four years, the staff worked together in Professional Learning Communities, Network Learning Communities and as a whole staff to collect and analyze data, plan interventions and coach our students toward greater success. Teachers have worked together, with administration and math and literacy coaches to increase their own understanding and to develop strategies to help our students reach their potential. We have reviewed relevant literature and resources, tracked student progress and increased our response to data in an effort to support all levels of learners. Using information from a variety of sources, teachers have used best practices to implement next steps in our Student Success Planning.

In each of the past five years we have made progress toward achieving these goals. Teachers engaged in concentrated work and professional dialogue around how our students were performing in relation to benchmarks and what steps, interventions and changes to instruction could help students achieve greatest success. We have faced,

debated and reflected on some difficult discussions including recognizing that our students should and can be doing a lot better than the analysis of data is telling us. This intentional inquiry led us down the road of thinking about and/or rethinking some of the belief systems we subconsciously held related to student achievement, parental involvement with learning and our role and responsibility in moving students forward. As a school site, we have improved student data tracking and have aligned procedures to ensure consistent and reliable data is collected. We have participated in common marking sessions within our PLCs to ensure expectations are consistent (and common) across the grades. We have spent time learning together, about the importance of setting learning targets and ensuring students know what they are working on and why. We have dialogued extensively about incorporating more opportunities for students to become intentionally involved as active goal-setters and self-assessors. We have explored strategies for strategic teacher questioning and ways to provide clear and concise feedback to students so students know where they are performing in relation to the learning targets. We are having richer conversations in PLCS focused on interventions, strategies, next steps in instruction, etc., all focused on a common theme: improved student achievement in our goal areas.

As a result of this work, we have targeted our focus toward providing the supports necessary to ensure that every single one of our students are making progress in our goal areas. We have talked extensively about the fact that a high number of our students seemed to fall within the “approaching expectations” zone (we call this the yellow zone). We have identified, documented and tracked strategies, interventions, changes to instruction and/or support for all of these students, and our data indicates a definite increase in the number of students moving from approaching to meeting expectations on our common assessments.

This year, year five of our plan, has been a year of refining our techniques, reviewing our growth as a school, and collecting data to answer the question, “Have we successfully shown growth in the areas of reading comprehension and Mathematics problem solving and communication?” The answer, without question, is YES! Staff has participated in the SSP school review process in which we collected, analyzed and presented the data from the past five years. We are proud to be able to state, without a doubt, that student achievement has increased, our teachers are more knowledgeable, and our school is improving.

Next year we will begin the process anew. We will collect and analyze data, select new areas for growth, and set goals to improve the achievement of every single child in our school. We are excited to embark on this new challenge!

Focus on Mathematics:

Over the past five years, we have had the pleasure of watching our mathematics scores steadily increase. For example, in the 2013-2014 school year only 50% of our students were at or above expectations for the Provincial grade 4 Math assessment. This year, 88% of our students are at or above expectations. As you will notice in the data above, that is 10% greater than average HRSB results.

The grade six data above presents as below HRSB average achievement however,

when this same cohort of students were assessed in grade 4, only 57% were meeting expectations, and now 64% are meeting expectations. Although there is still room for growth, we consider this to be evidence of progress for this group of students. There have also been interventions and supports put in place for every student who has not yet met the expectations.

Provincial level data, by itself, does not provide the context for a school's improvement journey; it is merely one piece of the puzzle. Our school is engaged in collecting and analyzing classroom data specific to many areas. We do this formally two times a year and compare the results. We also track student achievement, progress and interventions on a weekly/monthly basis to see if what we are doing is making a difference for struggling students. One snapshot in time does not tell you what is going on in your building. It can point to possible trends and raise flags for further investigation but data collected from this source must be measured alongside of the bulk of evidence that the school collects every day. We are happy to report that not only does provincial level data note improvement, school level data collected on students' ability to problem solve and communicate their understanding has steadily improved over time and there has been significant improvements noted in our most recent data presented at this year's school review process.

Focus on Literacy:

SKHES has demonstrated steady overall improvements in reading over the past five years. In 2012-2013, only 47% of our grade three students met expectations in reading, and now 72% of them do. That is higher than the HRSB average. As in Mathematics, our grade six students are performing slightly below the HRSB average, but again cohort has made progress over time and this is shown in both provincial testing and school-based data.

School data also collected on all of our students' ability answer a variety of comprehension questions demonstrated improvement from the beginning to the end of this year. We believe these results demonstrate the commitment to improving student learning in this area. We do have a lot more work to do, especially in moving those students "approaching the expectations" to where they need to be, and the information we receive from our ongoing assessments (as well as other sources) helps us to identify specific individual strengths and challenges. Using the data, we work as a team to map out next steps to improve student achievement. All students "not meeting expectations" are identified and receive an intervention plan which may include parent meetings, home and school support including in school and after school sessions and follow through for the remainder of the school year. Progress is tracked for these students and a high number of them become successful in closing the gap. The purpose of collecting school data, whether it is external or internal, is to use it to inform instruction and support next steps in the learning process for all students.

