Annual Report to the Community

September 2015 – June 2016

North Queens Community School

A note from the Administrative Team…

It has been quite the year at NQCS! Students have had the chance to experience a variety of presentations and trips as well as their regular academic programming. Students have worked hard, participated in activities and collaborated with the staff in working towards our school improvement goals.

Teachers have worked on two goals (see reverse) during embedded time. Groups have worked with students at all grade levels to learn more about what it is they need to have a better sense of belonging at NQCS. The older students want an area to "chill" and to spend more time with their teachers. The younger students want to meet the whole staff, to participate in more sports and do more random acts of kindness. Other groups have focused on student engagement in academics to improve their sense of belonging. Some specialist teachers have travelled to other schools to get support and hear their perspective on how they improve their teaching practice.

At the end of this year, we say goodbye to Mrs. Lambe who has taken a guidance counselor position at New Germany. Mrs. Monahan will be our new guidance counselor. Ms. Beck will be moving on to a job somewhere else in the SSRSB. Mr. Bird and Mrs. Wamboldt are both taking the year off and Mrs. Rafuse is off on maternity leave. Mrs. Weare is stepping down as principal for the 2016/17 school year and will be teaching Grade 2/3 for two days a week.

Thank you all for your support this year!

Provincial and Board Assessment Results

Information gained through assessments help teachers determine their next steps in improving student achievement in literacy and mathematics. The percentages listed show how many NQCS students are working at grade level.

Assessments	School Results	Board Results
Grade 3 Reading (Provincial Assessment)	73%	64%
Grade 3 Writing (Provincial Assessment)	41%	60%
Grade 6 Reading (Provincial Assessment)	73%	63%
Grade 6 Writing (Provincial Assessment)	57%	60%
Grade 8 Reading (Provincial Assessment)	63%	68%
Board's SELL/EXSELL Reading Assessment (All grades combined)	82%	74%
Board's SELL/EXSELL Writing Assessment (All grades combined)	60%	71%
Grade 4 Mathematics (Provincial Assessment)	70%	75%
Grade 6 Mathematics (Provincial Assessment)	53%	63%
Grade 8 Mathematics (Provincial Assessment)	63%	46%
NSE 10 Reading	53%	73%
NSE 10 Writing	48%	63%
NSE Mathematics 10	20%	50%
NSE Mathematics at Work 10	50%	46%
Tell Them From Me Survey Grades 4 to 6 (2015-2016)	**School Results**	**Canadian Norm**
Positive Sense of Belonging	73%	86%
Try Hard to Succeed at School	88%	91%

Continuous School Improvement and Professional Learning

Our Primary to Grade 3 teachers attended two district-wide professional learning days on September and November on the theme of the new grades Primary to 3 streamlined curriculum that came into effect in 2015-2016. Topics included curriculum integration, culturally responsive practices, guided groups for math and reporting progress. Teachers also directed their own professional learning during the 2015-2016 school year.

Our grades 4 to 6 teachers also attended a district-wide professional learning day in May on the theme of the new grades 4 to 6 streamlined curriculum that is to be in effect for the 2016-2017 school year. A streamlined curriculum is one that focuses on essential outcomes in literacy and mathematics with modifications to the timetable so that students can experience more quality instruction in both areas than in previous years.

In the 2014-2015 school year, Nova Scotia Examinations (NSE's) for grade 10 English, Mathematics, and Mathematics at Work were administered to all students enrolled in these courses. As this was the first official year for the administration of these exams, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development released provincial, board, and school results. The board's baseline results for NSE's for Mathematics 10 and Mathematics at Work 10 were not very good with 50% and 46% respectively. Although NQCS students scored slightly better on the Mathematics at Work 10 assessment compared to the rest of the board, our results for Mathematics 10 were not satisfactory at all. The first round of results for mathematics in grade 10 has prompted education personnel at the board level to lead a year-long professional development initiative for grade 10 math teachers. Several times during the year, grade 10 math teachers met at the board office to help them develop greater clarity around expectations for students at different points throughout the year. They also implemented district-wide common assessments to consistently gather information on where students are at in their learning and to respond with support in a timely manner.

School Goals

Goal 1: By June of 2016, all students will demonstrate improvement in their use of assessment for learning to monitor their learning.
Strategies: Teachers will…

- Communicate to students the outcomes they are aiming for before they begin work on a task.
- Provide individual and class feedback to students that informs them how to improve.
- Guide students in self and peer assessment of their work in ways that can improve their learning.
- Provide opportunities for students to make use of feedback from the teacher and their peers to improve specific pieces of work.

Goal 2: By June of 2016, students in grades 4 to 12 will improve in their 'positive sense of belonging' at school, as reported on the 'Tell Them From Me' survey.
Strategies: Teachers will…

- Be visible and interact with students in hallways, between classes and during breaks to ensure students are safe, responsible and respectful.
- Re-introduce PEBS initiatives to motivate positive student behavior and involvement.
- At the elementary level, implement MindUp strategies to improve social and emotional well-being
- Work with students to create a physical sense of belonging in the classroom and the building overall.