



Annual Report to the Community
September 2013 - June 2014
Bluenose Academy



A note from the Principal

2013-2014 marked the second full year of Bluenose Academy. Previously, all students had attended four smaller schools: Centre Consolidated, Lunenburg Academy, Lunenburg Jr/Sr High and Riverport Elementary, all of which closed over time. Staff, parents and students were on a journey where there were adjustments to new learning environments as well as the need to become accustomed to new systems, procedures and routines .

Bluenose Academy continues to work hard to build and establish itself as a school community. The many conversations, comments, insights, suggestions and input from staff, students and parents have been an important part of our school’s improvement. Our goals of student achievement(75% of students will be meeting expectations on the Grade 3 and 6 Provincial Assessments) and school performance (Bluenose Academy will improve as a Safe and Caring School by 5% as measured in the Tell Them From Me data) have continued to be the focus of our instruction and program. Even though Bluenose Academy has only been open two full years, we continued to build programs and opportunities for students to increase engagement and achievement . We are very pleased with how far we’ve come in such a short time!

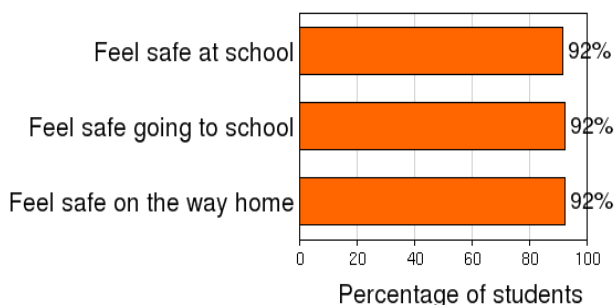


Data and Results

In terms of data regarding school performance, students reported feeling safer at Bluenose Academy in 2014. Students feeling safe at school rose from 88% to 92%. Students who felt safe going to school rose from 88% to 92% and those feeling safe on the way home rose from 86% to 92%. In comparing the Grade 4 students moving into Grade 5, engagement was down for this group last year, however when looking at this year’s data, Gr 5 students moving into Gr 6 now display a higher level of engagement .

According to the 2013-14 provincial assessment data in writing conventions (spelling, punctuation, capitals, grammar, paragraphs), students in Gr. 3 and 8 exceeded our goal (87.3% and 83.6% respectively). Students at the Gr. 6 level are not currently meeting this success rate (55.1%). Providing additional strategies and explicit teaching will help to increase Gr. 6 success rate to 75% on the writing assessment when they participate in Gr. 8. Focus will also be placed on maintaining skills of the Gr. 3 and 8 students in writing.

Students who feel safe attending Bluenose Academy (TTFM 13-14)

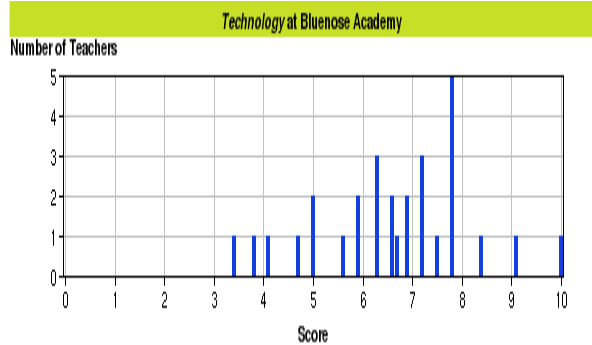


Bluenose Academy Tell Them From Me survey results show that interest and motivation at the Grade 4 to 5 level and 5 to 6 level are down 20 and 23% respectively, but student effort remains at 94%. We know that use of technology is one of eight drivers of student learning. While students at Bluenose Academy have opportunities to use computers, on the TTFM 10 point survey, teachers report only 5.9 in “I help students use computers or other interactive technology to test hypothesis” and only 6.4 in “I help students set goals for learning new

Data and Results

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technology and skills.” Research continues to show a positive correlation between student engagement and technology. Bluenose Academy will participate in the TELP (Technology Engagement Learning Partnership) initiative. Teachers will examine ways to utilize technology in the classroom with the writing process to not only increase student achievement but also student engagement and motivation.



Professional Learning

Bluenose Academy is committed to creating a positive learning environment in which students feel safe and respected while being encouraged to succeed to the best of their abilities. We anticipate that teachers, in their collaborative learning teams will use their embedded time to examine student work in order to meet the goal of 75% success in writing. Furthermore, all teachers will focus on the SELL/EXSELL data where teachers will complete writing rubrics and save writing data and share explicit instructional strategies with next year's teachers.



Room for Improvement

Bluenose Academy will continue to focus on improving by 5% as a safe and caring school community by May, 2015. Staff will continue to add new programs and skills for students. The 2014-15 school year will see the implementation of a new Peer Mediation program (students were trained this year) as well as the extension of Thrive Thursdays, (school and community partnership for elementary students with a “whole child” focus supporting academics, physical fitness and social and emotional growth. We will continue to build upon community partnerships and volunteerism within the school. We will hold Parent Cafés which address the challenges parents face on a daily basis as well as further enhance our Wellness Day events, where our entire student population participates in wellness and safety sessions throughout the day. Staff will also continue to embed comprehensive programs such as “Mind Up” and Friends for Life within the curriculum.

Bluenose Academy will include the Grade 8 provincial assessment results, along with the results from Grade 3 and 6 as we move to improve from 68.2% to 75% of students meeting expectations in Writing Conventions. There will be more emphasis placed on those students currently in Grade 6. Our students in Grade 3 and 8 are currently meeting our target for performance improvement, however Grade 6 provincial data indicates need for improvement. SELL/ExSELL information will be further broken down, as well as rubric spreadsheets for each grade level followed and forwarded to next year teachers for each student. Explicit instruction will be required where forms of writing are modeled, shared and guided to move students toward writing independence.

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