

# Annual Report to the Community

September 2013 – June 2014

## North Queens Community School

### A note from the Principal

North Queens is a community-based group of schools which value parental involvement in school life, strong student-teacher relationships, academic and extra-curricular achievement, and fairness and respect. It prides itself in being a family of schools that welcomes students in an atmosphere that is friendly and supportive.

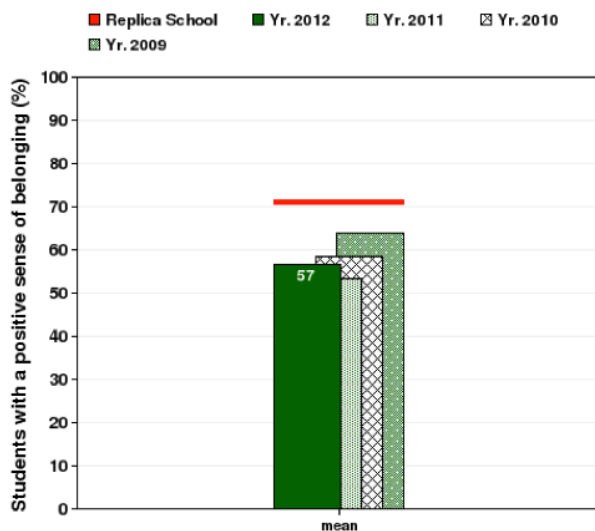


This year, our *Students for Justice* did a great job building awareness in our school of issues that affect our own community, as well as across Canada and the World. Students had the opportunity to attend *We Day* in Halifax featuring motivational speakers and celebrity guests speaking about how one person can make a difference in the world we live in. Our students have been involved in cultural activities, speaker presentations and experiences such as attending a Halifax Rainmen game at the Halifax Metro Centre, hosting Will Njikou as guest speaker and a Mi'kmaq cultural day where students were involved in various activities. In addition to these experiences, we are also fortunate to have staff, community and parental support for athletics programming all year long. The final highlight of the school year was hosting the NSSAF Division 4 Senior Girls Slo Pitch provincials at Harmony Ball field.

~ Jennifer Spencer-Weare

### Data and Results

North Queens School: Students with a positive sense of belonging



Our students participate in the *Tell Them From Me* survey each year. The survey results provide our staff with leading indicators about student engagement and wellness. The TTFM report also identifies aspects from the most current research that contribute to creating a positive classroom and school learning climate and thus affect student engagement and learning achievement. The graph (to the left), show the range of responses from students over a period of four years about their positive sense of belonging at school. We also have results for individual grade levels that indicate we are below the Canadian norm. Therefore, one of our goals is to increase students' positive sense of belonging within the school.

## Continuous School Improvement

As a result of identifying “sense of belonging” as an area for improvement, our teachers have been involved in various types of professional development opportunities. Our elementary teachers focused on becoming familiar with the *MindUp* curriculum by participating in conferences during the summer months. *MindUp* teaches students to self-regulate their behavior and mindfully engage in focused concentration required for academic success. Teachers have also been continually upgrading their knowledge and use of technology as they work helping students learn and succeed through the use of well-matched technology.

## Professional Learning

An embedded collaborative learning time model has been adopted in our school district to enhance professional learning for teachers. During the past year’s embedded time, NQCS teachers have focused on improving school climate, creating school wide academic “games” and planned Inquiry Based Learning (IBL) modules to further engage students at school. Inquiry-based learning is increasing in popularity as a middle level initiative across our board to increase student engagement. Our teachers are also examining the advantages of implementing a new *Mindfulness* curriculum.

## School Goals

Our first goal stated was created as a result of various teachers’ feedback regarding assessment.

*By June 2016, teachers in all curriculum areas, at all grade levels, will increase the number of formative assessments that they are using in their classes, as they develop a balanced assessment program, that will better inform them of student learning.*

Our second goal was created after careful examination of the Tell Them From Me survey results.

*By June 2016, students in grades 4-12 will indicate an improvement when reporting that they have a more ‘positive sense of belonging’ to the school, on the ‘Tell Them From Me’ survey.*



**North Queens Community School**

40 West Caledonia Rd

Caledonia, Nova Scotia

**www. [http:// http://nqcs.ednet.ns.ca/](http://http://nqcs.ednet.ns.ca/)**

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(902) 682-3500