York *Region*

DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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YORK REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

John McCrae Public School
School Improvement Plan for Student Achievement and Well-Being
2014 - 2015

School Context and Needs Assessment

Data: 715 students, Eco-Certified - Silver; 5th year of FDK, Grade 7 and 8 community classes for the Gifted Learner, 1 Multiple Exceptionality community class

From EQAO data, Fall 2014:

Overall Student achievement:

Grade 3 (of participating students at level 3 or 4)	Reading - 89%
	Writing - 87%
	Math - 85%

Grade 6 (of participating students at level 3 or 4)	Reading - 97%
	Writing - 99%
	Math - 80%

Mathematics:

Grade 3
- Overall Math - 85% at level 3 or 4
- Primary boys increased percentage of students that achieved standard in mathematics from 78% (2013) to 88% (2014); boys have been on a steady increase since 2011-12
- Primary girls have been on a steady decrease since 2011-12; currently only 74% of the girls have achieved the standard
- Primary students by strands: Data Management – up to 71% (2014) from 69%(2013), Number Sense & Numeracy 76%, Measurement 74%, Geometry 73%, Patterning & Algebra 78%
- Average Knowledge and Understanding score as percentage - 78% versus Application - average score 75%, Thinking - 69%

 Grade 6
- Overall Math - 80% at level 3 or 4
- The percentage of Junior boys that met the standard decreased from 79% (2013) to 74% (2014,our goal was to increase)
- No Junior boys that are exceptional (excluding gifted) met the standard
- 10% of our students (in our school in both grade 3 and 6) who met the standard in Grade 3, did not meet the standard in Grade 6
- 13% of the students met the standard in Grade 3 but not Grade 6 (in Grade 3 in our school or other school in Grade 3)
- Junior students by strands (average score):Number Sense and Numeracy 81%; Measurement 66%, Geometry 79% Patterning and Algebra 77%, Data Management 73%
- Junior students (average score): Knowledge and Understanding 83%, Application - 74%, Thinking - 70%

Reading:

<u>Grade 3</u> (of participating students)
- Overall Reading - 89% were at level 3 and 4
- The average score of all primary students on making inferences increased from 59% - 61% and making connections dipped a little at 52%
- 47% like to read most of the time (down from 61% from the previous year)
- Average Explicit reading score as percentage - 72% versus Implicit - average reading score 61%, Making Connections - 52%
- Trend in Grade 3 Reading is that boys are steadily improving and surpassed girls this past year (boys 85%, girls 83%)

<u>Grade 6</u> (of participating students)
- Overall Reading - 97% were at level 3 and 4
- Our 73% of our Junior Gifted learners improved in their raw scores for reading achievement; (out of the 29 Gifted students, 21 had the same score or better this year in EQAO - e.g., 3.1 to 3.5) that is up significantly from last year (47%)
- Explicit - average reading score as percentage - 86% versus Implicit - average reading score 80%, Making Connections - 70%
- 70% like to read most of the time (67% from the previous year)
- 34% of the students who were at level 3 in Grade 3 were at a level 4 in Grade 6
- 83% of those students who were at a level 2 in Grade 3 went to a level 3 in Grade 6

Writing:

- Strong writing according to EQAO
- 43% of the students who were at a level 3 in Grade 3 went to level 4 in Grade 6
- 100% of the students at level 2 in Grade 3 went to a level 3 in Grade 6 (including the one exempted student in Grade 3)
- 62% of the students like to write most of the time and year before was 43%

Student Attitudes Towards Reading, Writing and Mathematics
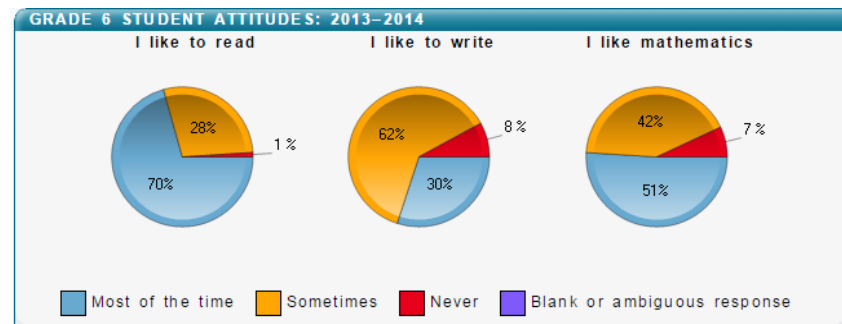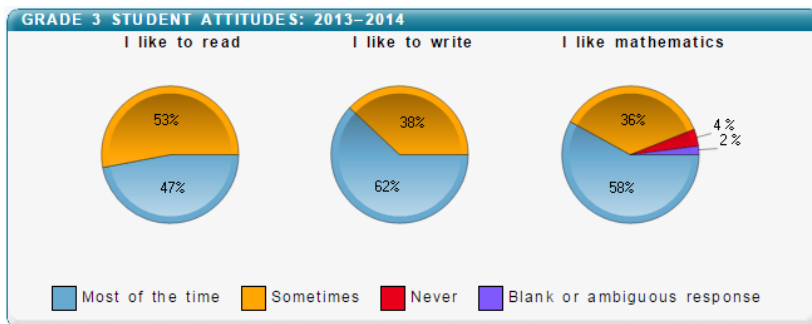
Demographic Data (from Statistics Canada, 2011):

- First Languages spoken – 28% Cantonese, 28% Mandarin, 27% English, 9% Tamil, 2.5% Urdu
- Religions – 37.1% Christian, 12.6% Hindu, 7.3% Muslim, 5.7% Buddhist, 35.7% no religious affiliation or religious identification
- 617 students out of 706, (86.41%) country of origin is Canada - which is 4% higher than the Board (82.72%)
- Children under the age of 6 at home – 24.6%, which is 5% higher than Board (19.9%)
- 29% of John McCrae's students are in JK, SK and Grade 1
- 91% from 2-parent families and 7% from single-parent families, 2% step families or relatives
- 68.1% of parents have post-secondary education, 22% of parents have high school diploma, only 9.7% have less than high school

ELL Trillium Report from John McCrae, Fall, 2014: 300 students (43% of total number of students) considered ELL students, stages 1 to 4

Stage 1	30 students
Stage 2	58 students
Stage 3	88 students
Stage 4	124 students

Parent/Guardian School Climate Survey Report (230 respondents)

- 77% of parents believe staff listen to parents' opinions and suggestions (re staff to parent/parent to staff communication)
- 71% of parents agree that the school takes action when students are discriminated against, harassed or bullied (tied into the communication piece with parents - above)
- 7 of our families noted that race, culture or skin colour was the reason their child did not get the academic support that they needed
- 8 families noted that for those times they felt unwelcome at the school it had to do with race, culture or skin colour
- in 99% of homes, the children have access to a computer
- 100% of the homes have access to the internet
- only 63% of families would know where to go for supports related to Mental Health
- only 59% are satisfied with the information re mental health services, health services, counseling services, settlement workers, and immigration services
- 20% of the students have felt sad or depressed during this school year
- 5% of students are nervous or anxious; 21% are sometimes anxious and nervous

- 22% of students have felt angry this school year
- 19% of the students have felt lonely this school year
- 88% of the students have felt happy all of the time or often
- preferred form of communication about general information from school: 1. email; 2. printed communication; 3. school newsletter; 4. school website
- lowest preference for receiving information from the school was from school council meetings - 2%;
- would prefer to give us input via email; in person; printed communication; parent surveys
- 41% of families would prefer to have the information sent in languages other than English

Live data from Critical Thinking Release Time, April 28, 29, 2014:
Observations teachers brought from students working on critical thinking tasks

Wordle from Critical Thinking Unit Planning Debrief Session:
Patterns that emerged from the observational data taken by teachers while their students were doing rich tasks
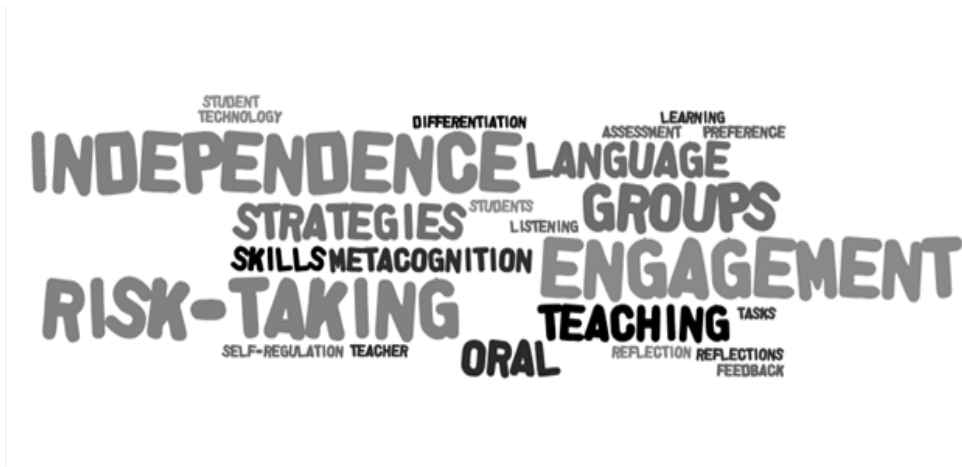
Feedback and Wonderings from Staff after Play-Based Inquiry and Investigation PA Day on Oct. 27, 2014:

· Staff is wanting more information on the use of technology in the classroom (i.e., Twitter – sharing information/communicating with parents, Apple TV, iPads for documenting the learning and using Apps that are available)
· Staff would like more information about the 3-Part Math lessons and how to introduce math games into the program
· Math challenges will be very helpful in creating engagement but will we be able to always cater to a wide range of abilities – staff need PD
· Staff wondering about how to cover the curriculum while focusing on games and inquiry and balancing 'play' with meeting curriculum expectations – PD needed

Learning and Teaching

Theory of Action:

FDK Team: If we identify children with social/emotional challenges and facilitate appropriate play with other children at least three times per week, they will learn to play well with their peers.

Grade 1 & 2 Team: If we create open-ended tasks based on student interest, then students will be better at inferring and thinking critically, independently.

Grade 3 Team: If we teach students to consider the viewpoints of others (e.g., empathy, points of view), then students will be able to use critical thinking skills to engage in independent critical conversations.

Grade 4 & 5 Team: If we explicitly model and teach students to identify a variety of communication techniques and how to recognize appropriate times to apply and prepare for those situations, then students will speak with confidence and purpose in a manner that is appropriate to the situation.

Grade 6 & 7 Team: If we explicitly teach our learning skills (by listing the criteria) with the same time and commitment that we do with character, then we will see an improvement in the "bold words".

Grade 8 Team: If we provide more risk taking/differentiated learning activities within classrooms, we will then influence students to take greater risks in their learning.

French & Music Team: If we explicitly choose activities that are designed to ignite the students' differentiated interests, then the students will actively and willingly engage in focused classroom activities that meet their needs and therefore, we should see an increase in independent thinking and risk-taking from students.

Challenge of Practice:

Our students are very good at demonstrating an understanding of explicitly stated information and ideas from a variety of sources. However, our students are struggling to understand implicitly stated information and ideas through the use of critical thinking skills. In order to help our students to achieve this outcome, staff need greater support to understand and implement how to structure tasks that enable students to do this independently.

Strategy, Plans and Actions:

1. **Critical Thinking Strategy (JMPS) - ongoing from 2013-14**

Building capacity among staff so that in classrooms:
- learning through problem-solving supports students in connecting ideas and developing conceptual understanding;
- there is explicit teaching of concepts, processes and skills within inquiry;
- students are engaged in exploring real-work situation/issues and solving authentic problems;
- self and peer assessment opportunities are used to establish a culture of inquiry;
- critical thinking skills are taught, modeled, practiced and developed;
- metacognition is modelled through the instructional process;
- instruction enables all students to explore the big ideas (i.e. to go beyond discrete facts and skills in order to develop deep conceptual understanding);
- students are provided with regular opportunities for planned purposeful, accountable talk;
- Grade teams work collaboratively to plan units that focus on critical thinking across all subject areas that are authentic, meaningful and innovative.

2. Mathematics strategy (JMPS) -- renewed focus for 2014-15

Building capacity among staff so that in mathematics classrooms:
- learning experiences provide the conditions for students to activate prior knowledge, develop thinking and consolidate learning;
- Inquiry-based instruction engages students in developing deep conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, and strategic competence;
- students engage in mathematics through the process expectations as described in the Ontario Curriculum;
- new learning is built on students' prior mathematical knowledge and understandings;
- tasks are differentiated to meet the diversity of students' learning needs, honouring multiple ways of thinking and are grounded in big ideas within the Ontario Curriculum;
- the learning environment is designed to ensure there is space for collaborative work with equitable access to a variety of tools, learning resources, technology and manipulatives;
- all students and educators form a learning community where mathematics inquiry is framed positively and risk-taking is the norm;
- documentation of students' mathematical thinking, analyses and discussion are used to illustrate different aspects of effective mathematics learning;
- student thinking is visible and reflects the mathematics currently being learned.

Resources:

- BWW pages: Early Years, Inquiry-Based Learning, Mathematics K - 12;
- Making Math Meaningful to Canadian Students, K – 8, by Marian Small (1 per two math teachers)
- Big Ideas from Dr. Small, Grades 4 -8, by Marian Small (1 per two math teachers)
- FOSNOT kits
- "Reasoning with the Rekenrek" Teacher Guide
- Critical Thinking Consortium
- K- 2 connection, an E- Learning site produced by the Ontario Ministry of Education, Early Learning

Professional Learning:

- Teacher leader driven just in time strategies to support Critical Thinking and Differentiation in the classroom
- Grade team work on theories of actions which include determining success criteria, baseline data, on going monitoring and reflection and next steps
- Participation on Early Years Steering Committee
- Critical Theory Network C
- Math teacher partners begin to plan math lessons with Dr. Small's math resources

Targets and Monitoring:

EQAO assessments	Change		EQAO Assessments	Change
Primary Mathematics			**Primary Reading**	
Female students	74% to 78%		Average score for Implicit reading	61% to 68%
Average score for Data Management	71% to 75%		Average score for Making Connections	52% to 60%
Average score for Geometry	73% to 75%		**Junior Reading**	
Average score for Measurement	74% to 75%		Average score for Making Connections	70% to 75%
Average score for thinking	69% to 74%			
Junior Mathematics				
Male students	74% to 78%			
Average score for Data Management	73% to 75%			
Average score for Measurement	66% to 73%			
Average score for Thinking	70% to 74%			

Environment, Engagement, and Well-Being

Theory of Action:

If we building capacity among staff so that learning environments are:
-supportive;
-equitable and inclusive;
-safe, healthy and environmentally responsible;
 then students and staff will be more actively engaged, resilient, self-regulatory, and caring citizens who positively impact our families and local global communities.

Strategy, Plans and Actions:

Differentiation strategy (JMPS) ongoing from 2013-14

Eco Strategy (JMPS) ongoing from 2013-14

- Positive Climate for Learning and Working: refresh the working group and collect current climate data from students in grades 5 - 8

- Refresh In-school team in light of new structures to include YRDSB, Compass and CCAC supports for Mental Health support

- Communicate more effectively to parents and staff the Mental Health supports that are available

Resources:	Professional Learning:
- Symphony Monitoring Data	
- Eco schools	- Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training
- Caring and Safe school in Ontario	- Rainbows Training
- Centre for Addiction and Mental Health -Talking about mental illness: Teacher's resource	- Boomerang lunch programme and Plant Services - Environment and Energy
- Healthy Schools and Workplace Framework	- Digital Citizenship - social media and internet safety and responsible use of

Targets and Monitoring

School and Workplace climate	Change		Engagement	
Girls will feel more comfortable speaking in class	57% to 67%		Boys will find the school work more interesting	63% to 70%
Students feel that they have an adult to talk to in the building	60% to 70%		Boys will find that there are more books and equipment available to help them learn	38% to 50%
Increased sense of inclusivity between the students in our gifted program and those in our mainstream program			On EQAO primary students will indicate they like to read most of the time	47% to 60%
			On EQAO primary students will indicate they like mathematics most of the time	58% to 70%
			On EQAO junior students will indicate they like mathematics	51% to 70%

Equity and Inclusivity

Theory of Action:

If we identify and develop practices that provide students with opportunities to access curriculum, eliminate barriers, create a sense of belonging,
include all families in the school community then we will have a safe, welcoming and inclusive school environment where students, staff, parents and community partners come together as active participants.

Strategy, Plans and Actions:

1. **Use of Assistive Technology so that in all classrooms there are:**
- planned, consistent and effective uses of Assistive Technology by students as an integral part of teaching and learning
- assistive technologies to support the engagement of students
- authentic learning experiences and assessment that incorporate contemporary tools and resources to maximize learning in context
- resources are selected strategically to support instruction

2. **Use of the Multi disciplinary YRDSB teams and SPOC teams to maximize the learning opportunities and sense of inclusion for our exceptional students**

3. **Evolve the school leadership team to focus on Equity that develops and updates strategies to maintain and improve the school climate (decreasing marginalization of families and increasing a sense of inclusion by all families) so that:**
- the tenets of equity and diversity are embedded in the school culture
- all staff have a duty to report incidents of discrimination, harassment and bullying including incidents involving the use of social media
- we establish processes to support new students as they become part of the school community (e.g. student ambassadors welcome new students to the classroom/school)

4. **Parent Communication Strategy (JMPS) for improved parents communication from school to home and home to school includes:**
- a variety of forums and supports are available at the school and in the community (e.g. curriculum evenings, workshops, guest speakers) to deepen parents' understanding of the teaching, learning and assessment processes
- parents have opportunities to expand their own learning (e.g. sessions on parenting skills, internet safety, nutrition)
- ongoing communication and outreach activities increase engagement and build effective school-parent-family relationships
- focus on intentional, positive engagement with parents and the community
- a variety of methods are used to engage parent's support for student learning(e.g. class website, conferences, newsletter)
- information about units of study is shared with parents to support student learning (e.g. big ideas, learning goals, success criteria
- partnerships with parents foster positive attitudes about school and improved academic achievement
- parents are enabled to participate fully in parent/teacher conferences (e.g. translators, babysitting, scheduling)
- relevant and up-to-date information about education transition is provided through parent-teacher-student conversations

Resources:
Inclusive and Community Schools
Student Support Services
BWW pages: Student Support Services, ELL
Multidisciplinary Team

Professional Learning:
Equity Symposiums
Assistive Technology

Targets and Monitoring:

Equity	Change
Classroom teachers are collaborating with SERTs and ELL teachers to support students	
Students with exceptionalities have the SEA equipment as indicated on assessments	
Families feel welcomed	
Students indicate rules being applied in a fair way	
Formation of an Equity Committee to ensure common messaging and common language around equity	
Decrease in number of reported incidents of racism, bullying and cyber-bullying	

Building Leadership Capacity and Succession Planning

Theory of Action:

If we provide collaborative, job-embedded and inquiry-based professional dialogue and learning opportunities then we will deepen content knowledge and refine instruction to support student learning and achievement.

System Strategy, Plans and Actions:

1. JMPS Leadership Team is open to all and supports professional dialogue about big ideas in the curriculum and how to implement instructional practices that lead students to deeper conceptual understanding and the further development of critical thinking.
2. Professional learning is continuous and responsive to student learning needs, identified by a wide range of data and informed by ministry policy, resource documents and board guidelines.
3. A range of current professional learning resources as well as school-level human resources are strategically used to support students in greatest need.
4. System resources are assessed to support professional learning.
5. A collaborative learning environment (e.g., a commitment to continuous improvement), a collective focus on student learning for all and reflective dialogue is evident.

Resources:

- BWW pages: Student Achievement, Assessment for, as and of Learning, Video Resources
- Critical Thinking Consortium http://www.tc2.ca/wp/
- Early Years
- CEC East Administrator Meetings Professional Learning
- Critical Thinking Network C Professional Learning
- JMPS Leadership Team dialogue, discussion and planning re professional learning needs for staff meetings
- EQAO Website - online tools and publications for improving instructional practices and responding to school needs
- Quest Conference

Professional Learning:

- Critical Thinking - refining our common understanding and building a community of critical thinkers
- Inquiry-based learning and play-based learning - continuing to deepen our understanding
- Rounds, Theory of Action work within grade teams

Targets and Monitoring:

Building Leadership Capacity and Succession Planning	Change
Teachers actively participating in job-embedded and inquiry-based learning.	
Reflective dialogue and collective focus on student learning for all (collaborative learning culture) is evident.	
Collaborative planning, design of common assessments and unit plans, use of resources and culminating activities occurs within grade levels.	
Professional learning is inquiry-based and responsive to student assessment data.	