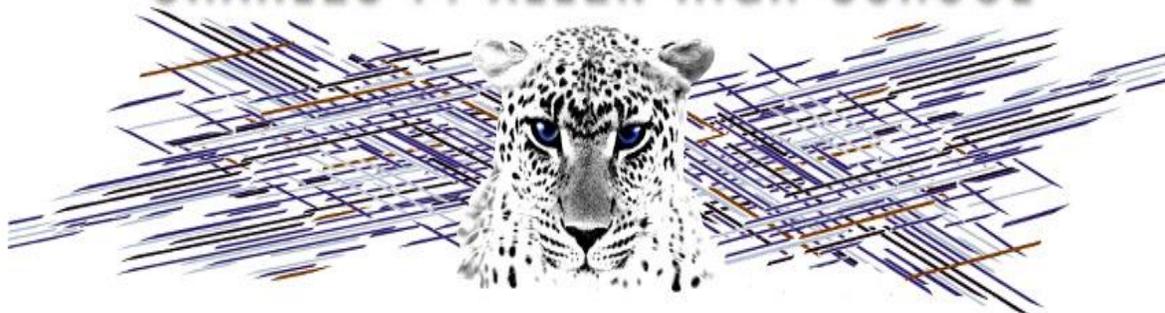


CHARLES P. ALLEN HIGH SCHOOL

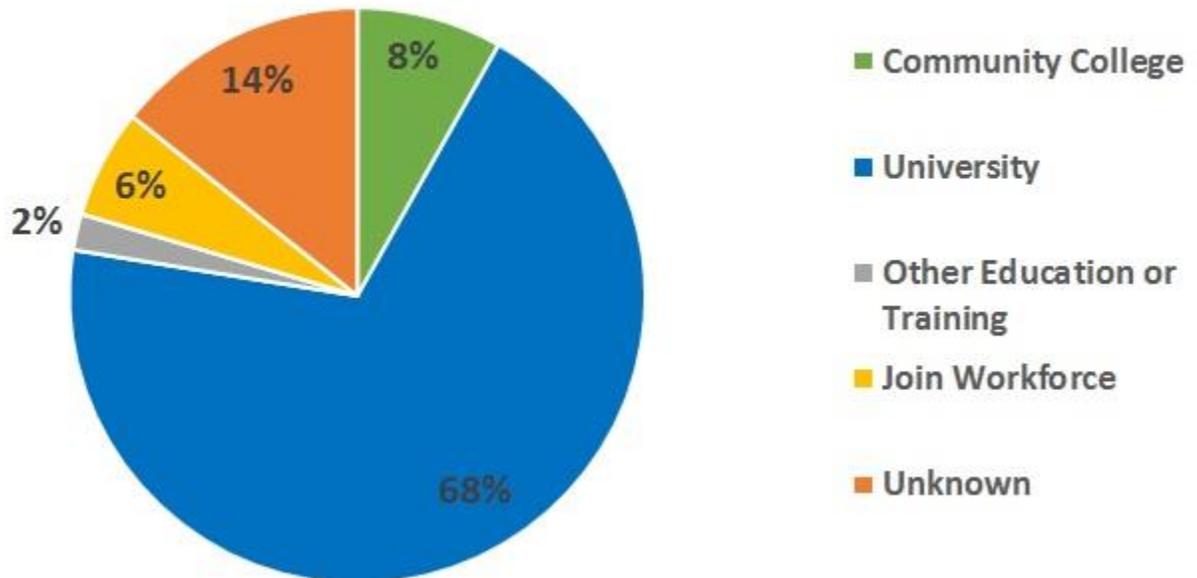


2015-16 Community Report

Provincial Assessments		
	School (%) 2015-16	Board (%) 2015-16
<u>Literacy Assessments</u>		
Grade 10 Provincial		
Reading	85%	78%
Writing - Ideas	79%	69%
Writing - Organization	78%	65%
Writing - Language Use	77%	65%
Writing - Conventions	70%	60%
<u>Math Assessments</u>		
Grade 10 Provincial		
Mathematics	80%	72%
Mathematics At Work	53%	54%

Graduation Rates	
School Year	Rate
2015-16	96%
Destination after High School	Rate
Community College	8%
University	68%
Other Education or Training	2%
Join Workforce	6%
Unknown	14%

Post Graduation Rates



This past year has been an exciting one at Charles P. Allen High School (CPA). We had our first graduating class of students from the new CPA on Innovation Drive. We successfully completed our 5 Year Continuous School Improvement Plan and presented our hard work over the past five years to a panel of educators.

Our literacy goal was: *Students will develop their critical thinking skills.*

- Teachers will continue to teach the skills of annotation for the purpose of identifying information.
- Teachers will provide opportunities for students to self-assess their critical thinking skills. We will use Exit Passes on tests/assignments to get student feedback about their developing critical thinking skills.
- Teachers will continue to make use of the school's new technology to enhance the explicit teaching of critical thinking.

Our mathematics goal was: *Students will develop their mathematical critical thinking skills with a focus on improving achievement on analysis questions.*

- With a common understanding developed through Professional Learning Communities (PLC) collaboration, teachers will explicitly teach and regularly embed the process of critical thinking as it relates to solving analysis questions. (Example strategies: model / think aloud / annotations)
- Teachers will provide opportunities for students to self-asses their critical thinking skills. We will use Exit Passes on test/assignments to get student feedback about their developing critical thinking skills.
- Teachers will continue to make use of the school's new technology to enhance the explicit teaching of critical thinking.

We are looking forward to beginning the process of Student Support Planning (SSP) again in September as we set out on choosing new goals and a focus for our school.

In the CPA Languages Department, we understand that language arts skills are critical for all students. Studying the art of language and literature affords opportunities for students to engage with a variety of texts in a variety of ways and provides opportunities to practice the skills necessary to communicate clearly and persuasively and to read and understand complex information.

The Turning Points Essay Competition is sponsored by the Learning Partnership, a Canadian non-profit group dedicated to enhancing public education for students and communities. The competition provides students with an opportunity to develop effective writing skills and reflect on experiences that have impacted their character and personal process of development. In 2014, teachers received training and supporting resources to implement the Turning Points program as part of an existing memoir unit in English 10 at CPA. In our first year where students opted to self-submit their own original writing, CPA students swept the grade 9/10 division podium and both honorable mention prizes for the Atlantic Region. This year, students in two English 10 classes began the term with the memoir unit, and eight students submitted their final projects for this unit to the competition. For the second straight year, CPA students swept the podium and both honorable mention prizes for the Atlantic Region in the grade 9/10 division. The Turning Points winners are honoured at a regional ceremony, hosted in CPA's cafetorium. First, second and third place winners receive a monetary prize and see their winning memoirs / personal essays published in a national anthology. It is an honour to be part of this process and hear the real life stories of youth dealing with transitions, adversity and triumph in their young lives. It is also a joy to see students celebrated by their peers and community for academic excellence, and to see learning and writing affirmed and valued by youth and their families. These are just a sampling of the wonderful opportunities afforded to students in the Languages Department this year - can't wait to see what wonderful things we have in store for the fall.

This year the mathematics department was busy continuing the practices put into place towards implementing the mathematics goal for CPA's Continuous School Improvement Plan. Members of the math department included in their professional growth plans, daily lesson learning targets where students were well aware of the expectations for each class. A few classes even went so far as to have a target placed near the exit so that students could indicate if they grasped the learning outcome for the class on the way out the door! This practice of self-reflection on the part of the students will be something that we will look at as an entire department in the future. Thanks to our innovated math teachers for bringing forward this insightful practice to enable students to share their understandings so we can address their needs and our practice.

Students at CPA were recognized by the University of Waterloo for their outstanding performance on the annual Math Competitions. Additionally, two grade 11 CPA teams of mathematicians participated in the Nova Scotia Provincial Math League Final.

CPA math teachers have participated in a number of professional development (PD) opportunities this year - ranging from International Baccalaureate (IB) training; the provincial October conference (hosted by the CPA Math Department) and the annual National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) conference. Together, staff and students have had a successful year.

Science teachers at CPA continue to implement the strategies of critical thinking and technology integration in their daily lessons, activities and lab experiences. Science teachers, working as PLCs, continue to be innovative in the design of discovery-based science labs that allow for the application of critical thinking skills to the exploration, discovery and consolidation of scientific concepts. 'Probeware' for data-logging is routinely used at all levels of scientific inquiry. Science teachers continue to find new ways to provide students with opportunities for self-assessment and reflection. Self-assessment increases student confidence and provides teachers and students with immediate / timely feedback to direct the focus of teaching and learning. Science classes are becoming more student-centred, hands-on and dynamic.

The Social Studies department is constantly exposing students to critical thought. The use of historical, geographical, sociological, economical and legal thought provokes students to challenge their inherent assumptions on a topic through written and verbal presentation of knowledge. Students are constantly exposed to the different ways of thinking and processing thought. From knowledge to creativity, the ideal mix of courses in the Social Studies department is especially suited to meet the goals of critical thinking and the development of essential questions in CPA's Continuous School Improvement plan.

One key aspect of exposing students to ideas that develop their critical thinking skills is to invite community members in to discuss a multitude of topics that range from business concepts to global issues. Some examples of speakers that have presented to student in their business and liberal arts classes include:

- Jennifer Cleator - Credit Counseling Services of Atlantic Canada - Budgeting & Credit Card Debt
- Brian Himmelman - Himmelman & Associates - Investments, financial future, planning for education savings, and retirement
- Philip Riteman - Holocaust survivor
- Jocelyn Downie - Ethics Professor Dalhousie University on the Parliamentary Committee concerning the End of Life legislation
- Jennifer Ammouri - Chartered Accountant Inc.
- Chief Morley Googoo - Regional Chief for Newfoundland and Nova Scotia Assembly of First Nations - Public Health portfolio
- Roger Lewis - Ethnology Curator Nova Scotia Museum - Focus on the Mi'kmaq First Nation
- Election Debate - Joanne Hussey (NDP), Mike McGinnis (Conservative), Geoff Regan (Liberal), Richard Zurawski (Green) - In conjunction with *Student Vote*
- Sunali Swaminathan - Ivey Business School at Western University
- Bidyut Talukdar - Economics Department Saint Mary's University
- Vincent Chandler - Economics Department Saint Mary's University
- Ryan MacLeod - Halifax Partnership - Economist & Project Development Specialist
- Gwynne Dyer - Independent Canadian journalist, syndicated columnist and military historian

We have had a busy year in the Fine Arts and Technology department with numerous initiatives, PD opportunities and special projects. The Fine Arts teachers worked in a PLC to revisit assessment practices to improve feedback for students. They devised a set of Achievements Zones, each with a percentage mark band and specific, yet generalized across curriculum, criteria. The department piloted this initiative and continued to meet and discuss how well it worked. Generally students liked the zoning by having the opportunity to self-identify which zone they were currently performing in and what they would like their final zone destination to be. Visual Arts teachers participated in a full day workshop at Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) for Art Educators from around the province. The in-service dealt directly with portfolio expectations at the postsecondary level, while exploring programs NSCAD currently offers for students. This was an informative experience which will allow us to continue to structure a meaningful and engaging Visual Arts Program.

Members in the Fine Arts department attended Level 2 IB training for Theory of Knowledge and Visual Arts. IB Educators from across North America gathered to discuss structure, strategies and assessment of this IB Core and Visual Arts Program. It was an excellent and insightful educational experience which will directly benefit our IB students.

Students in the Fine Arts Department conceptualized and created one-of-a-kind fused glass art pieces as gifts at the Learning Partnership's Halifax Champions of Public Education Luncheon. The 45 fused glass pieces were created by transforming voice recorded messages about leadership into visual representations of sound waves. The pieces were then fused and formed in a specialized glass fusing kiln. Each piece was carefully packaged in custom designed boxes for the worthy recipients.

Grade 10 Visual Arts students from the CPA Fine Arts Department worked on a joint project with students from Prospect Road Elementary called The Monster Engine. Primary / Grade One students produced images of “monsters” which were sent to our students. Our students used the original as inspiration for an advanced version which focused on colour, texture and form, while maintaining the spirit of the original. These updated versions were sent back to Prospect Road for the original artist to enjoy - it was an amazing experience for all involved!

Theatre 12 performed for the Northwood Seniors Residence and the Drama 11 class performed for the city of Halifax Daycare. The students and community enjoyed sharing the experience and learned a great deal from each other. Theatre 12 students also raised funds and awareness for Feed Nova Scotia through their Dessert Dinner Theatre fundraiser in January. Drama students from grades 10-12 attended the Nova Scotia High School Drama Festival in May. The students and teachers had the opportunity to attend a number of workshops in a variety of theatre disciplines. It was an exceptional learning and personal growth opportunity for everyone involved.

A team of 11 CPA Technology Education students worked tirelessly once a week outside class time to build an underwater ROV (remotely operated vehicle) to compete in this year’s MATE (Marine Advanced Technology Education) Regional ROV Competition held on April 22nd. During the build process the students wrote and designed their own code to run the six motors and temperature / depth sensors and 3D Printed specific components as they needed them - this fully engaged all their engineering and electrical skills. The hard work paid off for this talented group when they were victorious at the Regional Competition which won them the right to be one of two teams that represented Canada at the 2016 MATE International Competition in Houston, Texas at the North American Space Agency (NASA).

The Student Services Department has been busy this year. Students in the Learning Centre (LC) continued to work on problem-solving and critical thinking through functional tasks. Students focused on answering questions and reflecting on their learning. LC teachers and support staff continued to work on teaching through the use of questions and enabling students to learn to do by experiencing. Students were encouraged to attend activities during and after school to participate in learning opportunities including work experience placements, bus training, community walks, grocery shopping, volunteerism, school clubs and school functions. Some of the students participated in a partnership program with Autism Nova Scotia *Transition Readiness and Autism Community Employment* (TRAACE) in which they learned skills to help gain and keep employment in the future. Students in the LC were also responsible for organizing and cooking for the breakfast program.

The CPA resource department supported students using the in-class model again this year. This model affords many students the opportunity to access the support of having another teacher in the classroom along with the classroom teacher. Through PLC time the student services department developed a comprehensive resource for the student transition process. This resource contains information about postsecondary options, employment programs, housing, and recreation opportunities for students beyond high school. The resource created, as well as the opportunity to go out into the community and gather further information, will be valuable in working with parents and students as we navigate the transition planning process.

CPA High School prides itself on providing opportunities for innovation, creativity and academic rigor. Over the past five years, the Languages Department, in keeping with our Continuous School Improvement Plan, worked very hard to institute instructional practices and literacy strategies designed to inspire critical thinking and increase engagement. The 2015-16 Nova Scotia Provincial Exam (NSE) results tell us that comparatively, our efforts are paying off.

Students at CPA consistently score above the Halifax Regional School Board (HRSB) average in all four categories of writing. Despite being pleased with our overall results, the Languages Department thoroughly understands that there is room for improvement in all areas. We continue to work diligently in PLCs designing

curriculum that inspires and informs while analyzing data to sharpen our focus to explicitly address challenges.

Over the past five years, the Languages Department has made it their mission to encourage reading both inside and outside of the classroom. Every grade 10 student in the public school program (PSP) is exposed to a semester long project known as *The Independent Reading Portfolio*. This initiative gives students the opportunity to select their own novels and utilize these books to demonstrate an understanding of literary concepts and apply a variety of reading strategies. The aim of this unit is to produce better readers and instill a love of books in an arena that provides endless possibilities for engagement.

CPA students who participated in the grade 10 provincial English exam in the 2015-16 school year, scored higher than the HRSB average in reading with 85.2% attaining a *level 3 or above* compared to a HRSB average of only 12.5%. Once again, despite our above average performance, the goal of the English department is to look more closely at the data to determine areas in reading that require a stronger and dedicated focus; and to incorporate instructional practices that will enhance the performance of all students.

Our provincial Math 10 and Math 10 at Work exam results indicate that while we are proud of our accomplishments, there is always room for improvement. The NSE results for our Math 10 students are consistent with the results from 2015 and, once again, the passing rate is appreciably higher than that of HRSB as a whole with 81% of our students achieving this target. Our Math 10 at Work results are comparable to the results from HRSB with 53% of our students achieving a passing grade. We have made note that this outcome is much lower than our 2015 results. As a school community we are continually "Striving for Excellence", thus we will be addressing the deficits in our NSE results with a determined effort towards improvement. To this end, as a department, we have come together to discuss our strengths and challenges as it relates to our students, our practice and our assessment results. We will continue to work together towards the improvement of all our students.