

Citadel High



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School and Community Context

Citadel High opened its doors in September 2007 with an enrollment of 1392 students in grades 10-12 and over 100 teaching, administrative and support staff. Although our enrollment is projected to decline, it remains higher than anticipated at this time.

We serve peninsular Halifax and its diverse communities. We offer a broad-based academic program including Options and Opportunities, French Immersion, International Baccalaureate, English as a Second Language, and Co-operative Education. Over thirty extracurricular and co-curricular programs in the arts, science and technology, as well as a very strong athletic program, add to the richness of our curricular programs.

We are proud of the many staff and student-led initiatives in our school. Our school has partnered with over 70 organizations at the lo-

cal and international level. One of our major initiatives has been the Legacy Campaign to complete our theatre. When complete, the theatre will not only enhance the programs at Citadel High, it will also serve the broader community.

In our second year, we continue to build our school identity with positive school climate and culture as our focus. We celebrate our diversity through assemblies and workshops for our students and staff. In May, we hosted a special conference day for our Grade 10 students entitled Celebrating Citadel. Our Youth Health Centre actively promotes a healthy school environment through a variety of initiatives including smoking cessation programs, a breakfast program and health promoting sessions in partnership with Capital Health.



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Family and Community Involvement

Our newsletter, our website, School Messenger, George, Mark-book, and parent/teacher and curriculum nights keep our community informed. Our first Planning for Improvement survey revealed that 86% of our parents/guardians surveyed feel welcomed at our school. The survey also shows 79% stated that our school invites parent/ community involvement. Our goal is to communicate events well before they happen to the parents and families of the communities we serve.

Safe and Orderly Environment

In our recent PFI survey, 87% of parents/guardians surveyed felt that Citadel High is a safe school. As a first year Positive Effective Behavioural Supports (PEBS) school, students and staff were made aware of behavioural expectations and worked towards creating an atmosphere of respect. Surveys show 90% of student respondents said that they treat teachers with respect, however, only 30% of staff stated that

they are always treated with respect by all students. In addition, 57% of our students surveyed said their learning was interrupted due to student discipline issues. Our students and staff will benefit from working together on conflict resolution and a continued focus on creating a positive school climate and culture for all members of our school community where student success remains the goal.

Provincial Assessment Results

Nova Scotia examinations (NSE) in Mathematics 12, Advanced Mathematics 12, English 12 and English/Communications 12 are designed and administered by the Nova Scotia Department of Education. These examinations are administered at the end of each semester in January and June. As with all provincial examinations, the pass mark is 50 percent. The examination counts as 30 percent of the students' final course mark. Classroom assessment makes up the other 70 percent. Please note that the percentages used throughout this report are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Assessment	School Results: Percentage of students who had an exam mark of 50% or above	Board Results: Percentage of students who had an exam mark of 50% or above	School Results: Percentage of students who had a course mark of 50% or above	Board Results: Percentage of students who had a course mark of 50% or above
Grade 12 DOE Nova Scotia Exam: Mathematics	50%	45%	88%	83%
Grade 12 DOE Nova Scotia Exam: Advanced Mathematics	69%	62%	89%	93%
Grade 12 DOE Nova Scotia Exam: English	88%	94%	97%	97%
Grade 12 DOE Nova Scotia Exam: English Communications	86%	88%	100%	95%

International Baccalaureate (IB) Programme
Percentage of students enrolled in IB programme that achieved IB diploma. 92%

In 2009, 36 Grade 12s graduated with an IB Diploma having average scores of 33 points out of a possible 42. Their average grades were on par with or above International averages in all subject areas. This is an excellent result for our first IB class. We begin 2009-2010 with over 130 Grade 11 and 12 students enrolled in IB courses and 115 in Grade 10 pre IB courses. 25% of our staff are involved in delivering the IB Program and an additional 15 teachers will receive IB curriculum training this fall. The success of our program is primarily due to the diligent hard work of our students, the high caliber of teaching and the support of the HRSB and DOE. Moving forward we see our goals and challenges to include growth in the Arts and developing a Creativity/Action/Service (CAS) program with a strong community service component.

Classroom Assessment

As a newly amalgamated school, we are working together to develop a common understanding of best practices. During our professional development day in the fall of 2008, teachers reviewed the Principles of Learning and the new Assessment, Evaluation and Communication of Student Learning Policy. Teachers have worked in common subject area teams to create common course outlines, common assessments and common rubrics. We have begun to create 4 column course outlines in all subject areas. Outlines include course outcomes, assessment methods used to demonstrate the meeting of outcomes, the value of these assessments, the range of learning activities and the time frame to be spent in each outcome area. During the last professional development day in the spring of 2009, teachers marked student assessment samples together to ensure a common understanding of the criteria for success at each rubric level.

A review of our first three semesters has revealed a gender gap in student achievement. Females are outperforming males in most courses. We are looking at reasons why this is happening and ways to close the achievement gap. Conversations on high standards and high expectations for all students have taken hold.

Our literacy coach assessed our Grade 10 students in the following areas: connections, questioning, main idea, text features, opinion, making an inference, and vocabulary. These results were shared with Grade 10 English teachers to provide support in literacy and to improve student learning.

Our Plan for Communicating Student Learning has been developed, posted on our website and will be made available to parents/guardians on Curriculum Night.



Student Engagement

Our students participate in many facets of school life. In athletics, the arts, clubs, and activities, students create connections with one another and the broader school community.

Surveys show 91% of student respondents gave a higher confidence rating in their ability to learn in English and 73% of student respondents gave this rating for math. Students indicate a high level of engagement in activity-based courses. Improving student confidence in math through appropriate course placement and increasing activity-based learning opportunities in all classes are goals.

Time to Learn

All schools in the HRSB follow the Time to Learn requirements set by the Department of Education. Our Planning for Improvement survey results indicate that 46% of student survey respondents and 54% of teacher survey respondents felt that learning was interrupted by students talking to one another during class time. The second most cited learning interruption is announcements over the PA. Although we restrict daily announcements to a specific time in the daily schedule, it is clear that improvement is needed to ensure the least possible interruption to the Time to Learn requirements.

Professional Development

Our school is technologically well equipped. Teachers have been actively engaged in professional development to learn how to integrate technology into their teaching practice. Several of our teachers have created Moodle sites for their courses and all staff have web pages.

Our literacy and math coaches have been working with members of our staff to incorporate effective teaching practices. Our school-based professional development days have focused on literacy strategies across the curriculum and on subject area common assessment practices.

Based on our school focus to create a positive school climate and culture, we have held two movie evenings for staff to talk about race relations, cross cultural understanding and human rights as well as to help our teachers be more culturally responsive in their teaching practices. Our PEBS committee has also made presentations and received feedback from staff at staff meetings.

Additional School Supports

Citadel High students and staff are fortunate to have a number of additional school supports to help student achievement. These supports include:

- attendance engagement
- co-op coordinator
- credit recovery program
- educational program assistants
- English as a Second Language
- Grade 10 assignment recovery
- IB coordinator
- Learning Centre teachers
- library support specialist
- literacy coach
- math coach
- coordinator o2
- resource teachers
- school counsellors
- psychologist
- social workers
- speech language pathologist
- student support workers
- teacher librarian

Graduation Rates

School Year	Rate
2008-2009	86.2%
Destination after high school	Rate
Community College	12%
University	61%
Other education or training	4%
Join work force	5%
Unknown	19%

Planning for Improvement

We take great pride in our students' success and accomplishments. Our first PFI surveys were completed in the spring of 2009. There is much to celebrate at our school; however, we know that there is always room for improvement. Survey shows 97% of our student respondents reported that they try in school because they want to get good grades and 93% of teacher respondents report that they believe that all students can learn successfully in their classes, 98.5% state that they embed literacy skills in their subject area, and 90% say the same for math skills. Survey indicates 85% of our parent respondents believe that Citadel High school has high academic standards, 82% say that their children like going to school and 83% are satisfied with our efforts to meet their child's academic needs.

We had the opportunity to incorporate an open-ended question for students on our PFI survey. Our question was: "In our second year, tell us one thing that is working well and one thing that could be improved." Our Students' Council Executive reviewed and categorized these results which will be used in creating our plan for improvement. Our staff reviewed the school self assessment framework in preparation for the beginning of the accreditation process in the fall of 2009. In anticipation of this five year plan, we chose to focus on the continued development of a positive school climate and culture and the creation of common curriculum and assessment among teachers of similar subject areas.

School Goals

As a first year Positive Effective Behavioural Supports (PEBS) school, we have focused on the celebration of positive behaviours on a weekly basis through draws on video announcements and presented year end certificates to students who continually contributed to a positive environment. We saw a decrease in office referrals for both "in school" and "out of school" suspensions over the previous year.

Administration held periodic lunch meetings with students for feedback on what was working well and what could be improved. Two representative student groups were surveyed on school climate and school culture and the results were shared with staff. Two student assemblies were held with a focus on positive relationships.

All departments worked on improving course outlines to ensure that the taught curriculum and the assessed curriculum were aligned. Teachers also reflected on the levels of questions and the multiple intelligences that they were incorporating into their assessments.

Departments created rubrics that

were used across grade levels to evaluate major summative assessments. In cases where departmental rubrics were not possible, course based rubrics were created. During the professional development day in May, teachers of common courses marked a common assignment together using the rubric. Their discussions and comparison of marks helped develop a common standard and understanding of each rubric level. Students will come to understand the standards and expectations across the curriculum.

Our teacher librarian provided EBSCO research training and our literacy coach created a school-based literacy assessment of all of our Grade 10 students. This data, as well as last year's Junior High Literacy Assessment results, were used by our English teachers to provide support in literacy and to improve student learning.

Two teachers staffed a room to assist Grade 10 students with assignment completion and one teacher volunteered to run a credit recovery program to enable students to graduate who would otherwise not do so.

For the past two years, we have

used an Attendance Grant to hire a teacher to support students with attendance concerns. As part of our continued focus on improving student learning, we have reviewed first semester attendance results which clearly show a direct link between student attendance and student achievement.

The following table shows the correlation between the percentage of students who failed one or more courses and their absentee rate. It clearly demonstrates that the chances of failing a subject increase dramatically with absenteeism.

Absences..Grade 12.....11.....10	
0-12.....18%...17%.....28%	
12-20.....14%... 21%..... 35%	
20 or more.....68%... 62%..... 37%	

We believe that the value of the Grade 10 No Zeros room is reflected in the reduced percentage of Grade 10 failures who missed 20 or more classes.

Over the past two years, we believe that we have laid the foundation for Citadel High to fully and successfully engage the Planning for Improvement process in September 2009.



Every Student Can Learn. Every School Will Improve.

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