



1. **What are you doing well?**

Write your response in narrative form (one to three pages).

2. **What trends do you see in the data?**

Write your response in narrative form (one to three pages).

3. **What challenges do you need to address in order to make the greatest difference in student achievement?**

Write your response in narrative form (several paragraphs to 1 page).

4. **Based on the challenges you identified, what are your goals for student achievement?**

List two key goals—one for literacy and one for mathematics. Based on the evidence, you may also include a third goal (for example, on student engagement, school leadership, or communication).

5. **What strategies and data will you use to achieve each goal?**

For each goal, identify specific strategies and the professional development that your staff will engage in to achieve the goal. Also identify the evidence you will use to monitor your progress toward the goal; when you will collect the evidence; and who will be responsible for collecting it. Use the suggested table format for your response.

6. **How will you involve the SAC, the parents, the students, and the wider community?**

Write your response in narrative form, including both your plans for involving these groups in achieving the goals, and your plans for communicating the school's progress toward those goals (up to one page).

Based on our overall challenges; our goals for student achievement are identified below?

Goal 1:

To improve student achievement in problem solving and communication.

Goal 2:

To improve student achievement in reading comprehension with a focus on critical thinking.

Goal 3:

To positively impact student learning through use of effective assessment practices.

1- What are we doing well?

Mathematics

The self-assessment process has allowed us to conduct a thorough reflection on the effectiveness of our school and examine student achievement in numeracy through a critical lens. This holistic approach through the ten identified categories has given us the opportunity to shift our focus towards learning and has created the collaborative culture to strive for success for each and every student.

At Astral Drive Junior High, professional learning communities have become a critical component that supports student achievement. Math teachers have been provided common PLC time to focus our efforts on student learning, collaboration, and results as a way to support student achievement. These opportunities also provide us with a focus on the strengths and needs of students and challenge us to examine our own practice to better support all students. We are able to discuss best practice for the math classroom, differentiated instruction, different representations of knowledge, and how all students can benefit from improved teaching. PLC's also provide us with the opportunity to align instruction to ensure a common scope, pacing and sequence, which ensures transparency and promotes collaboration. It provides continuity within the mathematics program and ensures curriculum alignment at all grade levels.

It has become common practice that all students begin all math classes with daily mental math activities. The emphasis on mental math helps to focus and engage students with the Math curriculum, but also emphasizes 'real-world' application of Math skills. In embedding mental Math in all classrooms, we have been provided the opportunity to review, extend, re-teach, and reinforce what is currently being learned in class as well as previously learned concepts. This daily use of mental math also allows students to be exposed to a variety of number sense strategies from grade 7 – 9, and promote the importance of basic skill development while providing another opportunity to inform teachers of student progress.

All grade 9 students complete a common assessment in November, March and June. This alignment of the curriculum and its results can be used to help create supports for students not seeing success on these concepts as they progress to the next term. These assessments provide teachers with valuable information to identify struggling students and ensure that students are receiving the necessary supports to be successful with the Math curriculum. Furthermore, students who have already demonstrated mastery of subject material may need enrichment or extension to promote learning and challenge them with new opportunities. In short, these common assessments are formative in nature, and allow us to make informed and appropriate decisions in our programming.

There are currently many opportunities for enrichment in mathematics here at Astral Drive Junior High. We offer Math On competitions, Pascal and Gauss competitions with the University of Waterloo, and Caribou Math competition with Brock University. Our students perform well through these enrichment opportunities and have won regional banners at the Math On competitions for the past three years. Peer tutoring and Homework club are also available at all grade levels as support for students struggling in mathematics.

Math teachers have adopted the use of technology to engage students through visual and participatory instruction. Each classroom is equipped with an LCD projector, and every math classroom is equipped with Mimio technology. Professional Development has served to increase the effectiveness of these additions and teacher practice increasingly employs these supplements to the classroom.

Literacy

At Astral Drive Junior High there is a high degree of collaboration amongst staff. ELA and FLA teachers meet as a PLC each week. During this time we have developed common rubrics for assessing reading and writing and have conducted common scoring sessions using student work at each grade level. In order to do this,

teachers first worked together to develop a common understanding of the curriculum outcomes for both ELA and FLA. We have also recently begun the work of setting expectations and criteria for the different grade levels and programs.

As a result of this collaboration, we now have a deeper knowledge of how the outcomes progress from grades 7 to 9 as well as of the similarities and differences between the ELA and FLA outcomes. Another benefit of this work is that teachers can see the connections between the English and French streams and have begun to co-plan units in order to teach more efficiently and effectively. In this way, our PLC time has allowed us not only to share ideas, but also to reflectively examine our own practice in the interest of supporting the learning of all students.

Formative feedback is essential to student learning. In all language arts classrooms, there are opportunities for students to share their thinking and their work with both the teacher and their peers in order to receive descriptive feedback. ELA and FLA teachers continue to develop their ability to effectively confer with students in order to assess, instruct and plan for the next instructional steps.

Most teachers at Astral Drive routinely embed literacy skills in their subject areas, thereby demonstrating a commitment to improving student achievement in this area. All ELA and FLA teachers explicitly teach reading and writing strategies and provide criteria for what quality looks like so that students understand the learning goal and how to arrive at it.

We also have a system in place for supporting all our students. There are teachers at each grade level who have time in their schedule that is dedicated to helping students who are struggling with the curriculum as a first line of response. Teachers work closely with Student Services to support those students who have been identified as needing additional support. There are also many opportunities for enrichment as teachers encourage students to compete in competitions or to publish their work outside of school.

Student Services

Staff at Astral Drive Junior High recognize that integral to the school-wide goals outlined in the CSI plan, are initiatives which assist our students with building strategies in self-advocacy and resiliency. Good emotional health is linked to a student's success with school. In order for Astral Drive Junior High students to do well with literacy and mathematics goals outlined in our Continuous School Improvement plan, they need to have the coping skills to deal with setbacks and to learn from challenging situations. Research has shown that youth who are resilient (able to bounce back from adversity) are more likely to succeed at school, develop healthy peer relationships and are less likely to develop mental health problems.

Our world is fast paced and constantly changing. This requires our students to cope effectively with change while managing their emotions. Students are expected to think critically, apply problem-solving skills and use a variety of strategies with flexibility and creativity when faced with challenges and obstacles.

In October 2012, all Healthy Living teachers (Grades 7-9) and student support staff were trained in the Friends for Life program in order to assist our students with building strategies in self-advocacy and resiliency. As a pilot project, Grade 7 teachers and student support staff worked in partnership to implement The Friends for Life program into the Healthy Living curriculum for all grade 7 students. The Friends for Life program promotes self-confidence and resiliency when dealing with difficult or anxiety provoking situations and equips youth with coping skills.

Trained staff within the school are continuing to collaborate in the development of a common approach to promoting resiliency as advocated in the Friends for Life Program. Feedback from teachers, students and parents about the Friends program will be used in the Continuous School Improvement process as emotional

health is linked to a student's academic performance. By offering proactive strategies such as the Friends for Life Program in classroom settings, we are attempting to provide supports to more students. In this way, we are addressing the needs of some students who have traditionally needed additional supports offered through school Psychology, Guidance and Resource/Learning Centre.

Further, staff at Astral Drive Junior High recognize that students need to be empowered to make a difference in their school community. Student empowerment is a component of resiliency and leads to student engagement. The Student Services team recognizes that feelings of competency, belonging and empowerment are components of resiliency which affects school achievement. The components of resiliency have been encouraged and embodied in initiatives such as student led assemblies and guest speakers which were chosen based on student interests and school-wide needs. The Student Services Team have responded to information gleaned by student responses in the ELTs 2012 survey with initiatives such as the Kindness games, Friends for Life program, and the Kindness awareness/poster campaign.

Astral Junior High's current school communication plan highlights the importance of student ownership and self-advocacy which will play a role in the implementation of goals in the CSI plan. More specifically, the school plan states:

When a student is a self-advocate they are able to:

- Describe their own strengths and challenges
- set their own goals and create plans to meet them
- know when to ask for help
- make decisions and then take responsibility to deal with the consequences of these decisions

Students at Astral Drive Junior High are expected to take ownership for their learning and ask for the things they need such as an extension on a deadline due to illness or notes from a class missed due to participation on a school team. Similarly, a student is encouraged to ask for the assistive technology that has been identified on an Adaptation form during an assessment if it is not initially provided. Students are also encouraged to follow through with strategies suggested by their teacher such as attending support times offered at lunch or after school, peer tutoring sessions or utilizing a tracker to assist with homework. The Student Services team has focused on assisting students with developing strategies to promote self-advocacy and student ownership for learning. The Student Services team is also working closely with teachers to involve students in the assessment process through student self-assessment of their strengths and challenges. Astral Junior High has a system in place for supporting all students. The Student Services team has been working to assist school staff with developing a common approach to the development of programming based on a comprehensive analysis of a student's strengths and challenges. This has led to effective dialogue when planning and developing specialized programs including individualized program plans and adaptations. Teachers have begun to look at the role of the student in the context of PSP or individualized outcomes and adaptations and critiquing the effectiveness of resources and strategies for enhancing student ownership. Teachers are also beginning to look at opportunities to reinforce learning opportunities across subject areas while coordinating support for students.

Common understandings are assisting with the reporting and evaluation of student progress amongst teachers and to students/parents. By gaining information about a student's strengths and challenges from a variety of sources, including the student themselves, our understanding of who the student is and their unique learning needs are being enhanced. As a result, we have seen an increase in the number of students being brought to the School Planning Team. As well, an increased number of referrals have a comprehensive profile of a student's strengths and challenges which has led to more specific targets when programming and when developing Adaptations and IPP documents. The information we are gaining about our students is helping us to dialogue, plan and differentiate our instruction.

Assessment

As a team, the staff at Astral Drive Junior High has shown significant strength addressing the three big ideas of a Professional Learning Community: a shift from teaching to learning, collaboration, and a focus on results. Mathematics, English, and Student Support teachers effectively use a dedicated hour, embedded in their schedule, to develop common plans, design assessments, analyze data, and engage in best practice dialogue to improve teaching and drive student achievement. Through this collaborative environment, teachers are able to discuss student progress, pace common scope and sequence, initiate timely interventions, and effectively use data to inform, shape, and transform teacher practice.

There is growing clarity around a common practice of assessment and staff members have a solid understanding of assessment *for* learning, assessment *of* learning, and assessment *as* learning. There is common practice in the school around the use of the provincial achievement rubric, and students report that the achievement rubric is clearly explained in the classroom. All staff members have received intensive PD around involving students in the assessment process, co-creating criteria for student success, including multiple methods of assessment through conversations, observations, and products, and providing students with multiple opportunities to meet the outcomes.

Staff members have taken ownership over the Continuous School Improvement process and have become deep and reflective practitioners that help to shape professional learning opportunities, professional growth goals, and school based professional development. In this way staff began to develop "Habits of mind" when it comes to using data/information to inform school improvement, teacher practice and student learning.

2- What are the trends in the data?

Mathematics

Based on the CAT-4 data we can see that students struggle with problem solving and communication. During the indicated 2 school years 2009-2010 and 2010-2011, improvement has been noted (10-20% improvement). Despite these gains, our percentage of students proficient in problem solving remains below 50%, which is well below the competency levels in other areas.

The data from the 2011-2012 ADJH Problem Solving and Communication Assessment confirms that we have properly identified Problem Solving and Communication as an area of need for our students. During last year's assessment, the average score in Communication fell below expectations. Students are experiencing difficulty showing and relating their own understanding of math problem solving questions.

In 2012-2013, teachers collected observational data around students ability to solve problems and communicate their understanding of math problems. On a school level, students were able to understand the assigned problem and identify pertinent information but struggled to communicate, justify their understanding, or complete the requirements necessary to solve the proposed problem. Overall, it appears that all three grade levels struggle with communicating their understanding within the math curriculum.

Literacy

As an integral part of the self-assessment process, a cross-section of language arts and content area teachers examined the data relating to literacy. Both internal and external assessments show that writing is a strength at Astral. For instance, the JHLA results from 2006-2011 improved from 96% to 98% of students in grade nine meeting expectations with a peak of 100% in 2009-10. The CAT.4 showed similar improvement for English program students with 84% scoring at the competent and proficient level in 2009-10 and 87% in 2010-11. It

should be noted that French Immersion students showed a decline from 95% to 79% over the same period. Classroom assessments also indicate that writing is a strength for our students.

Our external reading assessments indicate that, while writing seems to be a strength relative to reading, our students still perform well. However, there has been a decline in student performance in these assessments. JHLA scores ranged from 94% to 91% of students meeting expectations from 2006 to 2011. With the CAT.4, scores remained relatively stable from 2008 to 2010 for both literary and informational texts. Students did not perform as well with media texts, scoring 15% lower than they did with literary and informational texts.

In 2012-13, classroom assessments also support the idea that student performance in writing is stronger than it is in reading. Teachers used common criteria and scored samples commonly to calibrate both their reading and writing assessments at each grade level. The following table shows the breakdown of the results for grades 7-9:

	% of students demonstrating level 4 achievement	% of students demonstrating level 3 achievement	% of students not meeting expectations
Reading (Literal Questions)	66	24	10
Reading (Non-literal)	39	41	19
Writing (Ideas)	55	39	5
Writing (Organization)	48	41	10

When combining the percentage of students who are able to meet expectations, it is clear that reading is an area that requires focus and attention.

On closer analysis it became evident that our students do well when they are asked literal-type questions where the information is “right there.” Our classroom assessments show this to be their strongest area of ability. Additionally, the CAT.4 shows that they do very well when asked to identify the central thought or stated information and their scores on these types of questions are consistently high.

However, both our internal and external assessments underscore the fact that questions that require analysis or critical thinking prove challenging for our students. Our students are able to identify the main ideas of a text but most of them do not go beyond this to deeper comprehension. Teachers in all subject areas confirmed this to be a relative need for students. For this reason we have identified reading comprehension with a focus on critical thinking as our goal.

Student Services

Informal classroom surveys done in 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 indicate that Grade 7 students entering Astral Junior High were reporting that they are feeling anxious and nervous. Parents, teachers and community members on the School Advisory Council have expressed that these students are in need of strategies to identify stressors and to manage and regulate their emotions in a functional way. There are an increasing number of students who are in need of additional supports offered through school Psychology, Guidance and Resource/ Learning Centre as their anxiety and worries are impeding their learning and preventing them from participating fully in the school environment. The Student Services team is addressing student needs around mental health, emotional regulation, resiliency and healthy peer relationships in the classroom, in small group and 1:1 settings.

The 2012 ELT survey also highlighted students preferred learning modalities. Survey results support the math teams desire to move beyond pencil and paper tasks when engaging learners in a way that best addresses

their needs. Survey data can be used to enhance comprehensive profiles of our learners. Identifying strengths and challenges is a component of resiliency and is in keeping with school-wide initiatives in this area.

Internal and external assessments in English Language Arts indicate that students find questions that require analysis or critical thinking to be a challenge. A focus on resiliency skills and strategies for persisting and learning from challenging situations will continue to assist students with achievement of the literacy goal outlined in the CSI plan. Students will continue to be encouraged to identify their strengths and challenges when thinking critically.

Common assessments such as those administered in mathematics are aligned with curriculum outcomes. The results of these assessments are enhancing the comprehensive development of student profiles based on identified strengths and challenges. These assessments are providing teachers with valuable information to identify struggling students and ensure that students are receiving the necessary supports to be successful with the Math curriculum (e.g.-hands on learning opportunities with real-life applications that promote math in the work place). Similarly, students identified as having mastered curriculum are being offered timely opportunities for enrichment (e.g.-Waterloo and Brock University Math competitions). Information from the common assessments is being shared at School Planning and Program planning team meetings as a way to coordinate support and opportunities for identified students.

Assessment

There is increasing direction and clarity around a common practice of assessment. The adoption of the provincial achievement rubric, along with the continued use of PowerSchool has encouraged teachers to promote a systemic and coordinated approach to assessment. All teachers are using PowerSchool and we are seeing more alignment and understanding with the application of the 1-4 rubric. Teachers are realizing that products alone for evaluating students' understanding may not provide all the evidence necessary to give students feedback for next steps in their learning. Teachers see that, when combined, product, observation and conversation provide valuable evidence when making professional judgment for a students' final evaluation.

Students reported that they would like more feedback, clear expectations/what quality work looks like and more discussions to clarify and share their ideas/understanding.

3- What Challenges do we need to address in order to make the greatest difference in student achievement?

Mathematics

Our current practice of delivering common assessments at the end of each term has great potential to direct and guide our instructional and professional practice. The common term assessments should be seen as an opportunity to identify students in need of remediation, as well as identifying students in need of enrichment. As a team, we need to raise expectations of success for all students, and ensure that we have a systematic response to provide additional time and support to struggling students.

In addressing different modalities, we feel as though we need to meet the needs of all students in providing multiple and differentiated ways for students to demonstrate their understanding of the outcomes. We feel as though it is critical to move beyond the 'pencil and paper' tasks and engage all learners in a way that best meets their needs.

Our reviewed data suggests that students have an identified area of need around group work, explaining, and justifying answers with the use of mathematical language. In short, many of our students are experiencing difficulty communicating their understanding of mathematics. An increased focus on problem solving and

communication combined with the opportunities to represent their understanding through different avenues may help to address this need.

Involving students in the assessment process is an identified area of need for our math team. As we synchronize the 1-4 rubric and increase descriptive feedback, we also hope to engage and involve students in the process of self-monitoring, self-assessment and ownership of learning with the math curriculum. There exists opportunities to involve students in the co-creation of rubrics and self-assessment of learning that may help to move students towards reflective and improved outcomes throughout the math curriculum.

Literacy

As the British thinker Max Beerhohm once wrote, the "one real goal of education is to leave a person asking questions." This is the challenge for staff and students at Astral Drive Junior High. How do we encourage students to not simply accept the words they read, but to question and challenge ideas before making an informed decision. To do this, they need to learn to evaluate and analyze what they are reading and viewing; to synthesize by considering how any new information fits or does not fit with what they already know; and to make connections between what they are learning in the different subject areas.

As a staff, we have already begun to work towards this goal. We have started towards a common understanding of what it means to think critically when reading or viewing. We are beginning to involve students in the assessment process by showing them what critical thinking looks like through explicit teaching and the use of exemplars so that they understand it and can self-assess their own abilities. As a staff we are sharing ideas for embedding the process of critical thinking in our everyday classroom activities.

However, there is always room for growth. For example, as ELA and FLA teachers we need to identify quality thinking by collectively selecting exemplars for the different achievement levels at each grade level. We also need to further develop our ability to assess our students' skills and to use this information to plan for instruction. As content teachers, we are looking to expand the opportunities that we give our students to practice critical thinking and to teach the skills relevant to our disciplines. We are fortunate that, as a staff, we have the resources to do this.

Student Services

Problem solving and critical thinking skills refers to the ability to use knowledge, facts and data to effectively solve problems. These skills can be applied across curriculum and are not subject specific. Once skills and strategies necessary for problem solving and critical literacy are identified, teachers can look at how these skills can be addressed and reinforced in their disciplines. A coordinated approach can help students generalize skills across a variety of contexts and subject areas.

Resiliency skills need to be reinforced to assist students with risk taking when problem solving and thinking critically. Students need to be encouraged to dig deeper, and be flexible in their thinking when working on tasks that don't have an immediate answer or "right there" response. Students need to understand that mistakes are part of the learning process and have strategies to deal with setbacks and obstacles.

Further, as also identified by the math team, students are finding group work challenging. This was also noted during some of the Friends for Life Sessions which encourages small group tasks. Students are in need of explicit teaching of skills necessary for working effectively in groups such as active listening, conflict resolution and consensus building, self-understanding and interpersonal understanding.

Although we have a system in place to support all students, our school would benefit from a systematic and tiered model of intervention with actions steps clearly defined. The Student Services Team will be looking at developing a school-wide framework for efficiently allocating resources to improve student outcomes.

Assessment

If we seek higher-order skills, like critical thinking, innovation, creativity problem solving and communication, we will have to assess these skills to know if we are successful and the next step in learning – for both teachers and students. As educators we search to find the simple, turnkey solution to fix it, instead of understanding it and embracing a process that maybe different paths but lead to possible solutions that could be built on as opposed to right or wrong? Developing Habits of Mind as reflective educators\learners we will need to use effective assessment strategies to consider all evidence, continuously ask questions and involve others to explore new and novel ideas.

Making classroom assessment work means reframing the conversation about numbers, grade, ranking and sorting students to assessing learning in the context of our students' futures. It means talking with and listening to learners. It means involving students and parents, giving choices, and sharing control. When it comes to classroom assessment, solutions can only be found in thoughtful, informed conversation as we work together on behalf of students and their learning (Anne Davies – adapted from Making Classroom Assessment Work – pp. 77-78.).

When students are involved in quality classroom assessment, have a voice in their learning, lessons/topics are relevant, have rigor, are challenged and open to student inquiry where they use and build their skills to explore the unknown as opposed to just understanding what we already know, students become engaged, take responsibility for their learning, discipline issues decrease and they become powerful learners. ALL STUDENTS ACHIEVE!

"Building knowledge is an active, creative process in which discoveries and mastery are not the end points of the work teachers and students do. Instead, new knowledge should always launch more, and deeper, and more intriguing questions, puzzles and ideas". (Galileo Educational Network February 25, 2010)

Teachers are working collaboratively to understand the pedagogical practice associated with effective assessment practices. Key components needed for critical thinking, problem solving/communication and student engagement is deep reflection by both teachers and students. This includes ongoing and immediate feedback, knowing what counts as evidence and being open to a variety of ways students can provide evidence of their learning. With student involvement as partners in their learning; co-constructing quality, will provide the skills for students to become self-assessors leading to powerful competent learners.

We have identified several components of effective assessment practices strategies as both professional development targeted and strategies supported by research that are proven practices to achieve our school goals.

An old adage states: "Tell me and I forget, show me and I remember, involve me and I understand." Furthermore, involvement in learning implies possessing skills and attitudes that permit you to seek resolutions to questions and issues while you construct new knowledge.

School wide reflection and understanding about what counts as evidence and how to collect evidence of authentic student learning will bring us closer to understanding and coaching students to be intellectually engaged in their learning. The quality of feedback and an understanding of what good performance looks like will also assist students in self-advocacy, where student's ability for self-assessment will allow them to know both their strengths and challenges as learners.

The staff at Astral Drive Junior High need continued support to ensure that the vision for common assessment strategies and improved methods of communicating student learning are being followed. Greater clarity around the use of a 1-4 rubric will further embed this into teacher practice, and providing meaningful and practical exemplars will promote the necessary shift in teacher practice.

Shifting long-standing teacher practice is a difficult endeavor and teachers need continued support to bring research based assessment strategies into all classrooms. Increased reliance on formative assessments is required to drive student achievement and specific, timely, and descriptive feedback from all staff members will help to improve student learning. There has been intensive professional development on this topic and there has been significant shift in practice. However there is room for growth in this area.

The vision and direction for improved assessment practices and communication of student learning is strong, but requires a transformational shift in teacher practice. This shift is unlikely to occur without continued support, clarity and direction to ensure improved student learning. Teachers need to understand the research behind the new direction, the focus on improved outcomes for students, and the practical strategies to engage the heads, hearts, and feet of all teachers in order to achieve the best possible achievement for all students at Astral Drive Junior High.

Goal 1: To improve student achievement in problem solving and communication

Strategies to achieve the goal:

1. **All teachers** will develop a common understanding of problem solving and communication.
2. **All teachers** will plan to ensure opportunities to apply problem-solving skills/inquiry into their program and assessment practices.
3. **Teachers with Students** will co-construct criteria for problem solving and communication. Teachers will collect and find samples to use with students to show what quality looks like, aid in self- assessment and descriptive feedback
4. **All teachers** will embed multiple ways for students to show understanding of problem solving and communication.
5. **All math teachers and Student Services** will teach problem solving skills using direct instruction, differentiated learning and strategies for all learning styles.
6. **All math teachers** will use level 3 and open-ended questions throughout the program.
7. **Students and teachers** will participate in and organize school-wide, province-wide and national math clubs and competitions to promote problem solving.
8. **Math teachers and Student Services** will monitor student progress of problem solving through grade levels to inform teacher practice and provide remediation/enrichment.

Professional development to support achievement of the goal:

What will staff learn (knowledge, skills, and professional practices)?	How will the learning take place?
1. All teachers will come to a common understanding of problem solving and communication and embed the teaching of these skills where applicable.	Common PLC time. Professional development sessions. Time with Math Coach or through other HRSB Central Office support.
2. Math teachers will co-create formative assessments with a focus on problem solving/communication.	Common PLC time.
3. Math teachers will develop and embed level 3 and open ended questions in assessment practice, evaluate their effectiveness, and reflect on next steps to improve student achievement.	Common PLC time. Professional development sessions. Time with Math Coach or through other HRSB Central Office support.
4. All math teachers will take part in problem-solving workshops and PD sessions.	Common PLC time. Professional development sessions. Time with Math Coach or through other HRSB Central Office support.

Data sources:

What data will you collect?	When will you collect the data?	Who will be responsible for collecting the data?
Minutes from staff meetings of ways teachers have embedded and taught critical thinking, problem solving and communication.	Monthly	CSI Lead team
Ongoing Formative Assessments and periodic reflection and summary of results	Ongoing	Math Teachers
Ongoing classroom assessment data (conversations, observations, products)	Ongoing	Math Teachers
Ongoing conversations and observations from PLC meetings.	Weekly	Math PLC team members.
NS Assessment: Reading, Writing, and Mathematics in Grade 8	Grade 6 and Grade 8	Administration

Goal 2: To improve student achievement in reading comprehension with a focus on critical thinking.

Strategies to achieve the goal:

1. **All teachers** will develop a common understanding of critical thinking and will embed the process of critical thinking in their subject areas.
2. **ELA/FLA teachers** will engage in curriculum alignment to map out the explicit teaching of critical thinking skills that will take place in grades 7 through 9.
3. **All teachers** will further develop their ability to explicitly teach critical thinking.
4. **ELA/FLA teachers** will develop a common assessment rubric for reading and choose exemplars for different levels of achievement (1-4) at each grade level. ELA/FLA teachers will use this assessment information to guide their instruction and student learning.
5. **ELA/FLA teachers** will further develop their ability to use conferring for both assessment and instructional purposes.

Professional development to support achievement of the goal:

What will staff learn (knowledge, skills, and professional practices)?	How will the learning take place?
1. All teachers will develop a common understanding of critical thinking and will embed the process of critical thinking in their subject areas.	Professional development sessions. Time to share ideas during staff meetings.
2. ELA/FLA teachers will engage in curriculum alignment to map out the explicit teaching of critical thinking skills that will take place in grades 7 through 9.	PLC time. Professional development sessions.
3. ELA/FLA and Student Services teachers will further develop their ability to explicitly teach critical thinking.	PLC time. Professional development sessions. Time with Literacy Coach or through other HRSB Central Office support.
4. ELA/FLA teachers will develop a common assessment rubric for reading and choose exemplars for levels of achievement (1-4) at each grade level.	PLC time. Professional development sessions.
5. ELA/FLA teachers will further develop their ability to use assessment information to guide their instruction and student learning.	PLC time. Professional development sessions. Time with Literacy Coach or through other HRSB Central Office support.
6. ELA/FLA teachers will further develop their ability to use conferring for both assessment and instructional purposes.	PLC time. Professional development sessions. Time with Literacy Coach or through other HRSB Central Office support.

Data sources:

What data will you collect?	When will you collect the data?	Who will be responsible for collecting the data?
Minutes from staff meetings of ways teachers have embedded and taught critical thinking, problem solving and communication	Monthly	CSI lead team.
Results of reading assessments assessed using common criteria.	Ongoing, but ELA/FLA teachers will send results to administration for purpose of identifying school-wide trends in September and May.	ELA/FLA teachers
Minutes from PLC meetings recording our progress in using conferring.	Weekly	ELA/FLA PLC team members.
NS Assessment: Reading, Writing, and Mathematics in Grade 8	June	Administration

To Goal 3: To positively impact student learning through use of effective assessment practices.

Strategies to achieve the goal:

1. Develop a common understanding and school wide use of the 1-4 rubric using the DOE Achievement Levels - Primary -12. Teachers will collect and find samples to use with students to show what level 4 quality achievement looks like, aid in self-assessment and descriptive feedback
2. Teachers will involve students in the assessment process.
3. Teachers will develop and use both formative and summative assessment to improve student achievement and guide teacher practice.
4. The school will develop a communication plan to inform parents of effective assessment practices.
5. The school will have a systematic and tiered model of intervention (literacy/math support blocks, school referral process and program planning team: action steps clearly defined).

Professional development to support achievement of the goal:

What will staff learn (knowledge, skills, and professional practices)?	How will the learning take place?
1. Staff will come to a clear and common understanding of a 1-4 rubric using formative assessment and descriptive feedback. Teachers will collect and find samples to use with students to show what quality looks like, aid in self- assessment and descriptive feedback	Sandra Herbst Expert Presenter, Professional Development sessions, Staff meetings, School based PD days
2. Staff will further develop their understanding of how to involve students in their learning through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co construct criteria, identify quality, identify learning targets. • Teach students the skills required to become reflective learners (self/peer/group assessors given descriptive feedback based on criteria/quality to self and others) 	Sandra Herbst Expert Presenter, Professional Development sessions, Staff meetings, School based PD days
3. Teachers will develop and use both formative and summative assessment to improve student achievement and guide teacher practice. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers will increase the use of descriptive feedback to assist student in meeting their learning goals. • Teachers will provide a variety of methods (Observation, Conversation and Product) to collect evidence of student learning to make professional judgment about the next steps in student learning based on strengths and challenges 	Teachers classrooms, sharing, samples collected on line
4. Staff will promote communication with parents and guardians around using effective assessment to improve student learning.	Professional Development sessions, Teacher Leaders at Grade Levels, Staff meetings
5. Staff will learn and use the school-wide model of intervention.	School program planning team weekly meeting and weekly PLC's, School Administration policies/procedures, Board Services, Staff meetings, School based PD days

Data sources:

What data will you collect?	When will you collect the data?	Who will be responsible for collecting the data?
Teacher Gradebooks	Term	Administration
Minutes from staff meetings of ways teachers have	Monthly	Administration

embedded and taught critical thinking, problem solving and communication and effective assessment practices.		
Student Voice Surveys	Yearly	Student leadership team/teachers/Administration
HRSB Getting to Great Student Surveys	Yearly	Administration
HRSB Getting to Great Parent Surveys	Yearly	Administration

6- How will you involve the SAC, the parents, the students, and the wider community?

It was felt right from the onset of creating our goals that it was paramount to keep all interested parties informed and involved in the process. We have been acutely aware of the valuable role the school community will have on the effective implementation of the plan.

One of the first items for us was to ensure CSI was embedded into the agenda of every SAC meeting. Early on, while developing our school profile, we were able to present data to our SAC to help them identify strengths and challenges in each of the ten CSI categories. The information gathered from these conversations was used to further solidify the accuracy of our school profile.

At the February 6th SAC meeting, Administration presented all members with an updated copy of our plan and asked them all to return to the March 6th meeting with any input that could be useful. The members did bring up some important items and we feel this is reflected in the final product of the plan.

Another valuable communication opportunity for parents was on Curriculum Night in September 2012. The CSI plan was a focal point during the Principal's presentation. Parents were given information on where we are hoping to move forward in critical thinking, problem solving and communication, and assessment. Teachers, as well, were directed to ensure these themes were clearly outlined in their own communication plans.

Students were also given a voice through the Executive Leadership Team (ELT). The ELT is a group of grade nine students serving as an advisory committee to the Principal. They met on a regular basis to discuss, among many other things, the CSI plan. The ELT also developed a student-led survey and information from this survey was used as data for our School Profile. Monthly student assemblies (led by the ELT) are held to celebrate students' efforts and successes. At these assemblies they are also reminded of our goals and expectations for becoming a better school.

Other items which provide communication for the school community are newsletters, the Annual Community Report, Grade Six Orientation Night and regular postings on our school website. As the plan is implemented, it is felt all the communication modalities put in place will continue. The SAC, parents, students, and community will remain key players as we monitor our progress and the effectiveness of our plan over the next four years.

The final plan will be presented to the SAC at the May 22nd meeting. At this meeting, Administration will review the goals and highlight key points for all members. The SAC will then offer input or pose questions for clarity. Anything noteworthy coming from this meeting will be updated in the plan to ensure the SAC's voice is present and evident in our goals.

Developing the Budget

Total Allotment: \$ _____

Budget Item	Planned Cost	Actual Cost
Sub days to cover teacher(s) Professional Development		
Total		