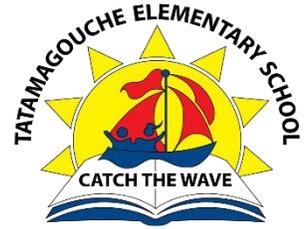


TATAMAGOUCHE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

ANNUAL REPORT

2015-16

Chignecto Central Regional School Board



SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY CONTEXT - WHO WE ARE?

Tatamagouche Elementary School on the current site, celebrated 61 years as a school, this year. Although the school did receive further building additions in 1962 and 1974.

After a previously healthy year, in terms of student intake, this year we saw an even bigger expansion of enrolment with the closure of River John School.

We had a large intake from this area and with additional increases due to natural growth, our numbers increased by nearly 40 students, to 222 by the end of the year.

Particular note should be paid to the grades one and three, which had over 40 children in each grade. We had 10 classes, which meant with all our other teaching specialists in the building, including Physical Education, Music, Program Support, Literacy and Math Mentors, and Early Literacy Support staff, we had a total number of 14.8 full time employees.

It was also pleasing to see the introduction of an Elementary Guidance Counsellor, even though it was for only one day a week. There were nineteen non-teaching employees including an administrative assistant, four full time Educational Assistants, plus a 3 hour EA, one full time day custodian and one evening custodian, lunchtime supervisors, and bus drivers.

Our cafeteria and hot lunch program is run by Cobequid Schools Catering Society, which provides a hot lunch program with a paid worker. Last year saw a growth in our lunch sales which meant we could hire an additional person for 1 hour a day to support this Program.

We are a feeder school to the neighbouring North Colchester High School. Our students come from an area of 200 square kilometers and 80% of our students are bussed to school along 7 bus routes.

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

The current SAC has been in place since 1999. The council has supported our School Improvement and accreditation goals in the past. It includes staff from both Tatamagouche Elementary School and North Colchester High School as well as students, parents and community members.

This year the major topic for discussion continued to be around the new P-12 school for Tatamagouche.

Other topics of discussion centered on individual school reports, fundraising proposals and activities, along with updates on each school's Continuous School Improvement Plan.

This year, the SAC also participated in the discussion groups centered around CCRSB's Long Range Outlook and the role of the SAC within CCRSB.

SAFE AND ORDERLY ENVIRONMENT

At Tatamagouche Elementary School we believe in, and follow a positive behaviour approach that builds a safe and orderly environment; one that fosters a healthy school climate and demonstrates through modeling and consistent reference, positive relationships that teaches how to make safe choices that support all of those in our school community.

We use the language of VIRTUES at TES to help create a total environment of caring and respect. We are filling our school with encouraging words such as “helpful”, “excellent”, “self-disciplined”, “compassionate” and “kind”.

Virtues are qualities of character that are universally valued by all cultures. Values, on the other hand, are culture specific, and differ among families.

We believe that virtues exist in all of us and our job as educators and parents is to encourage and enable children to practice their virtues to bring their life more purpose and harmony. As teachers, we speak the language of virtues, recognize teachable moments to help children learn more about how to use their virtues in different situations, and set clear boundaries to create a safe learning environment.

The author of “The Virtues Project”, Linda Popov, proposes 52 virtues. We focus on one each week, having a virtues message on the morning announcements, and teachers are provided with suggested discussion questions and activities that can be done in class to reinforce the virtue of the week.

At our school, we have blended PEBS and Virtues together to create an approach to discipline that is positive, systematic, and school wide. Expectations are based on virtues, children are encouraged and rewarded for practicing virtues, situations become learning experiences and children are encouraged to make amends.

This year we became a designated Restorative School. Restorative practices are based on Relational Theory, which places people at the centre of restoring and maintaining healthy relationships. By administering this practice in the classroom, children become more accountable to each other and themselves. We believe that the Restorative Approach compliments our Virtues program excellently.

This year also saw the implementation of a school wide “Zones of Regulation” practice. The Zones curriculum provides strategies to teach students to become more aware of, and independent in controlling their emotions and impulses, managing their sensory needs, and improving their ability to problem solve conflicts.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Our main focus for PD this year was working on our Achievement goal of raising performances in answering application and analysis type questions through implementing, more formally, strategies that support Higher Order Thinking Skills in our classrooms.

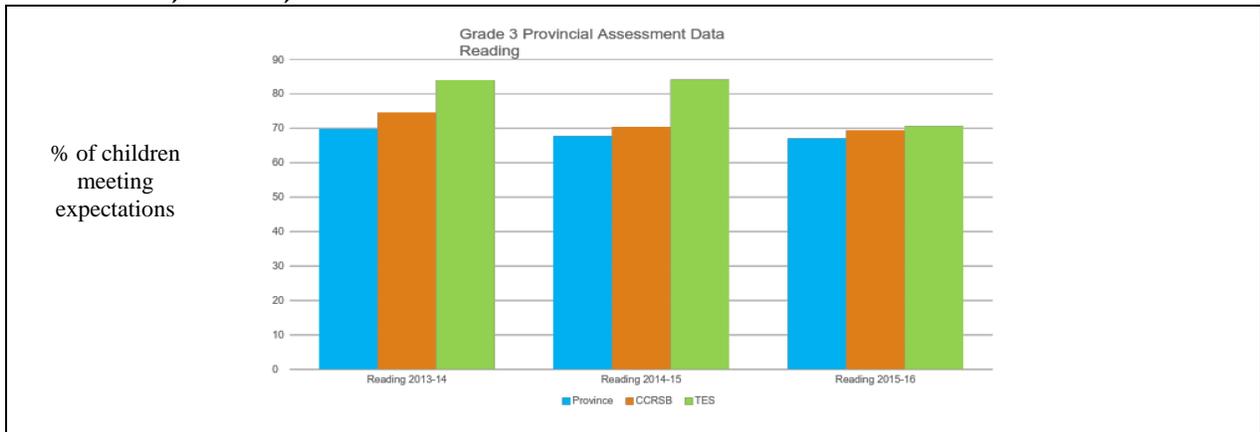
We also had the opportunity to begin planning for the new P-12 school. We included two ‘combined’ PD sessions for all teachers at both the Elementary and High schools. This PD centred around a vision of education in the 21st Century and what that looks like for our community of learners.

We also jointly worked on our second Student Success Planning goal, which focused upon developing a sense of shared vision and ownership of the new school.

All of our teachers also attended conferences and workshops organised by the various Professional Associations including ‘Nova Scotia Teacher’s Association for Literacy and Learning’, ‘Primary Elementary Teachers’ Association’, ‘Association of Science Teachers’ & ‘Association of Teachers of Exceptional Children’.

Teachers were also involved in mentoring support both in ELA and Math usually in an Area of instructional focus that is agreed between the teacher, administration and the mentor.

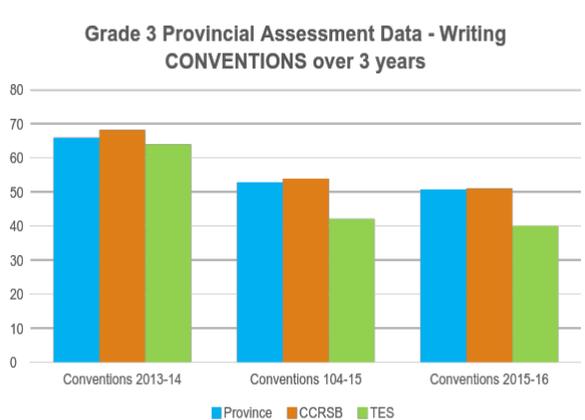
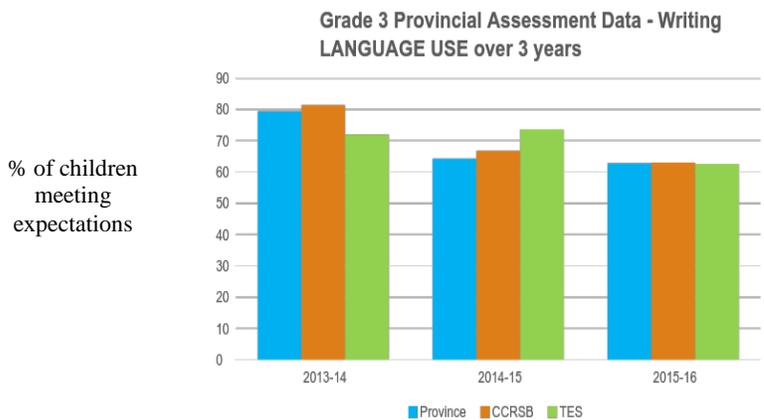
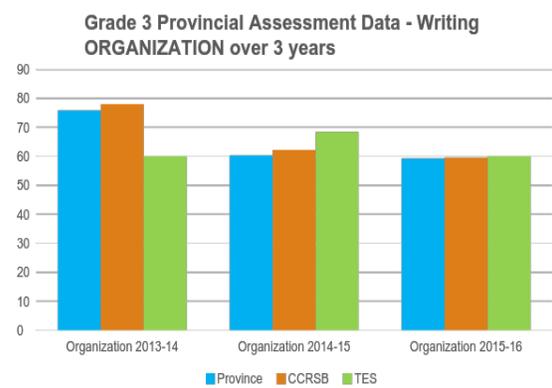
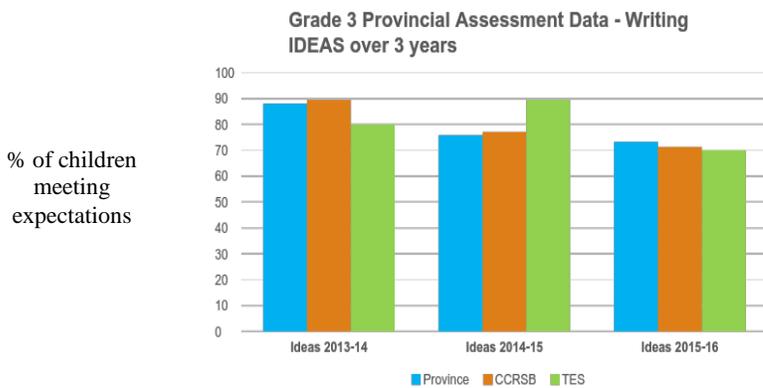
PROVINCIAL, BOARD, SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT AND CLIMATE DATA



For the past three years, at grade 3 level, TES has outperformed or matched the Province and CCRSB in terms of students who have met expected levels in **Reading**.

In grade 3 **Reading**, whilst the Province and CCRSB have remained relatively constant, our 2015-16 results show a comparable drop in % of those who met expectations, but still remain **above** Province and CCRSB.

As a response to these results, we provided a number of those students not meeting with Program Support and Resource time as well as placing an EA in the class to support learners who have more difficulty with their writing.



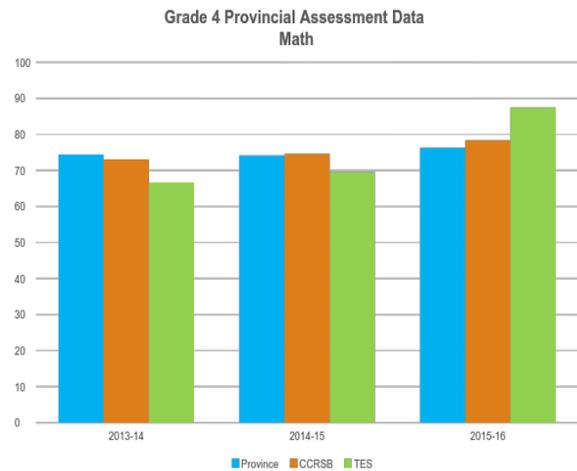
In grade 3, there seems to be a general decline in performances in all four writing components across TES, CCRSB and the Province over the last three years. Although, in 2014-15, TES actually increased its achievement levels in all areas apart from Conventions and managed to achieve higher levels of performance than that across CCRSB and the Province.

This year, TES has matched, relatively consistently, the performance of CCRSB and the Province apart from Conventions. This is an area that will be a focus during instructional time as the new integrated curriculum is implemented across all Elementary grade levels.

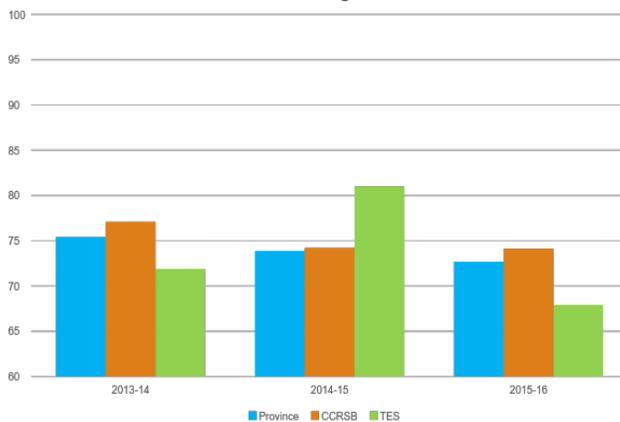
Grade 4 Math

Our grade 4 Math results reflect consistent growth over three years. This year's results show a rise in achievement levels that are significantly higher than both CCRSB and the Province.

% of children meeting expectations



Grade 6 Provincial Assessment Data Reading



% of children meeting expectations

Grade 6 Reading

Reading levels showed greatest increase in 2014-15.

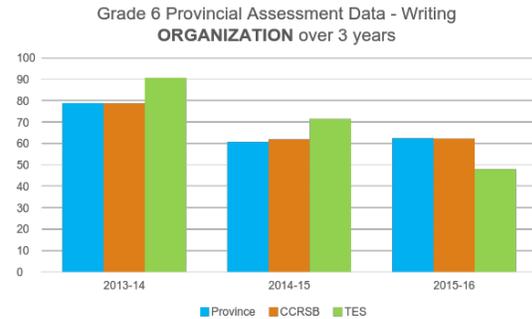
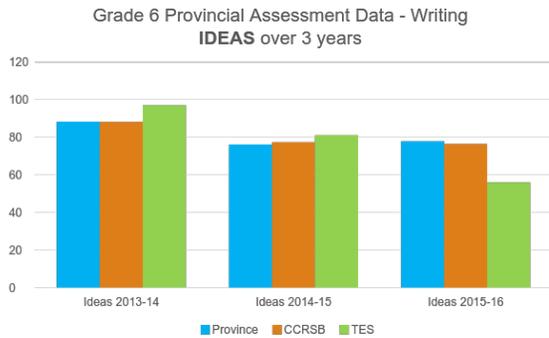
This year, with the larger number of students on IPP's and adaptations, achievement levels did not meet our goal.

However, the reading levels overall for this cohort of students was higher this year than when they did the Grade 3 assessments in 2012-13.

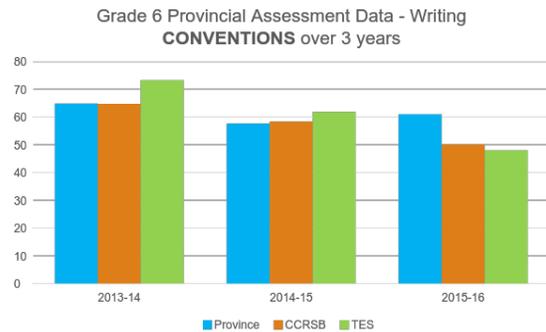
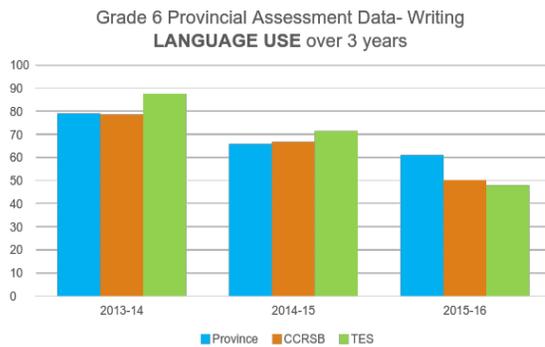
Grade 6 Writing

The three year trend shows a general decline in grade 6 performance in writing. However, it is more accurate to measure performances of the same cohort over a period of time.

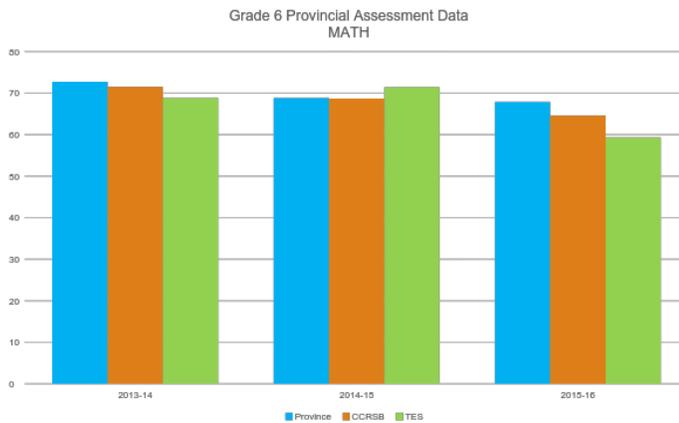
% of children meeting expectations



% of children meeting expectations



% of children meeting expectations



Grade 6 Math

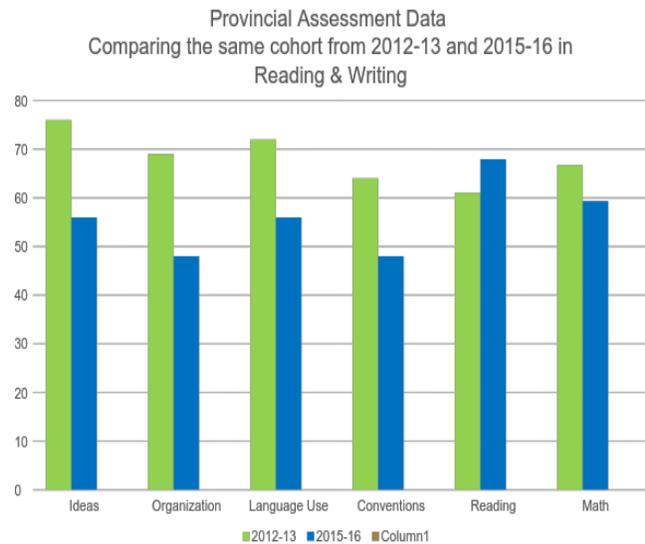
The Math 6 results do show a slight decline over the last three years, but, again, there is a significant number of students on IPP's and adaptations in this cohort.

Comparing grades, however becomes more relevant when comparing the same cohort of students over a period of time.
 A more accurate analysis would be to consider the same cohort when they did the RW3 and the M4 assessments.

Interestingly enough, the Reading results show a significant improvement since 2012-13. This may be due to the intensive supports that were put in place in 2014-15 for a number of students who did not meet grade level the year before.

Results for writing are reflective of the increase in demands placed on grade six students and the difficulties at least six students have with writing, in spite of interventions that have taken place.

% of children meeting expectations



CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT & INSTRUCTION PRACTICES

A large portion of our PD this year related to our Student Success Planning, (SSP) goal of improving on our analysis and application skills. The primary focus was to use Higher Order Thinking Skills, (HOTS), strategies to elicit improved responses in these areas.

Teachers looked at not only devising HOTS and related questioning in the classroom, but also implemented tracking systems to record and monitor student progress. These systems have been incorporated into Power Teacher Gradebook and students are now assessed on these components of their learning.

In addition, teachers have constructed Project Based Learning opportunities as vehicles to develop problem solving based lessons and as a vehicle to implement the streamlined integrated curriculum. By coordinating school wide conversations and a common vocabulary centred around HOTS, students are continually reminded of what these skills are and how they can recognise them before applying those skills.

ADDITIONAL SCHOOL SUPPORTS

Tatamagouche Elementary School prides itself on being supported by many organizations and people within and beyond our community. Our Volunteer Assembly, which celebrates those who participate in the life of our school, requested over 50 volunteers to attend this year.

From the Roots Of Empathy Program to our volunteers in the Library; from those who donate time, food and money to our Breakfast program, to those who look after our Edible School Garden; from all the various volunteers that come into our classrooms to support teachers when invited, we never take this support for granted and we continue to work alongside our community partners in the future.

Our third school musical, Annie, directed by Julia MacIntosh, provided a platform for over fifty of our students to show off their creative talents and with a four-night 'run' with packed audiences it allowed us once again, to come together as a whole community.

Our school RCMP Liaison, Constable Jane MacDonald continues to contribute her support through attendance at Code Blue drills.

Nova Scotia Green Schools are a strong supporter of our recycling project and contribute to "green" initiatives and provide advice when required.

Our Breakfast Program is a daily event, with an average of 40 children enjoying healthy snacks and breakfast that is operated by a number of volunteers. Our school garden is tied into this with produce grown, going into supplement our hot lunch and Breakfast program, where appropriate. We receive support from local businesses and experts to support the growing of our produce. Our long standing relationship with the Roots of Empathy program has established a real connection to our community and allows many of our students, past and present, to have participated in this extremely important Social and Emotional Learning activity. It is hoped that this program is extended to the Junior High level in 2016-17.

We became a Restorative School in 2014-15 and this was expanded to include even more classes this year.

As mentioned earlier, receiving a Guidance Counsellor, one day a week, helped to support our more vulnerable children and with the implementation of the Zones of Regulation practices, many of our children receive a strong level of emotional and psychological support outside and inside of the classroom.

This year saw both our Speech Language Pathologist and Educational Psychologist servicing many of our children effectively. We have a large caseload in our school and we felt this year we have been supported extremely well.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT — HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

We pride ourselves at TES on providing a comprehensive extra-curricular program of events, trips and activities that engage our children in learning opportunities outside of the classroom. Here is a list of many of those activities that were accomplished in 2015-16:

Annie the Musical, trip to see 'The Munsters' Musical, Art Workshop with Joy Laking, Grade 6 swimming at Fox harbor, swimming trips for all grades to Truro, 'Swim Survival' Program for grades 3, Bike Rodeo, School Garden, Keith Mullins – "record an original song" workshops, 'Special Olympics' Assembly presentation, Grade 4 Farm day, Grade 4 Shubenacadie Wildlife Park trip, After-School Program, Art shows at the Creamery, Grade 5 and 6 Basketball Club, Book Fairs, "Stand Up, Speak Out" anti-bullying day, Diversity Rally – 'Let Me Be Me' day, 'Rally Against Racism' day, 'Elders Art Project' with Willow Lodge, Fall Fling, Christmas Festival of Trees, Christmas Concert, Green School's initiative, Legion Visits for Remembrance Day, morning announcements, Office support, student performances at monthly assemblies, 'Roots Of Empathy' program, Running Club, Breakfast Club, Christmas Store, Talent Show, Terry Fox Run, Winter Carnival, Yoga for kids, Grade 5 and 6 girls' Empowerment workshops.

STUDENT SUCCESS PLANNING

As this is the first year of implementation for our Student Success Planning Achievement Goal, there is no comparative evidence to use until the end of the Fall, 2016. However, the data we are using as baseline is shown below.

In the Provincial Assessments, over the last three years, on average, 63% of our grade three students have met expectations in the area of “*Analysis*”, extracted from the Reading component of the assessment, and 65% of our grade six students have achieved this.

In the Math assessments, over the last two years, on average, 70% of grade four students met expectations in the area of “*Analysis*” and 67% met in the area of “*Application*”.

In the Math assessments, over the last two years, on average, 67% of grade four students met expectations in the area of “*Analysis*” and 70% met in the area of “*Application*”.

Goal #1: By January 2018, in mathematics and ELA 85% of students are meeting application and analysis as measured by provincial assessments.

Strategies and Actions Implemented: There is school wide implementation of Higher Order Thinking questions and problem solving approaches incorporated into instructional practices.

Since September, 2015.

- HOTS resources are now available for teachers to access, centrally
- List of common HOTS questions and assessment for ELA & Math have been implemented.
- Tracking of HOTS assessments is now entered into PowerTeacher Grade Book
- Many teacher goals are set around implementing and improving on HOTS
- Math and ELA Mentors have supported most teachers by focussing on HOTS
- Development of a common vocabulary and language using HOTS type questions has been introduced, including the use of classroom posters with clear HOTS components visible.
- Project Based Learning opportunities and strategies have been introduced, more formally, into the classroom

Goal #2: By June 2018, 75% of survey participants felt they had an opportunity to be engaged in the process of developing the New School.

Strategies and Actions Implemented: This goal was only recently defined and, as such, survey data is just being collated as this report went out. We will be able to make comment to this early in the Fall.

A Student Success Planning (SSP). Climate Goal committee was formed out of a combined PD session to look at creating survey questions for the school's stakeholders. These were administered at the end of the year. Results will be presented early in the fall.

The results of these surveys will determine where we focus our efforts in supporting school community involvement over the next eighteen months in relation to the new school planning.