

Astral Drive Elementary Planning For Improvement 2008-2009

Question #1: What is the school doing well?

Astral Drive Elementary prides itself in creating a student-centered positive learning environment accentuating academic success. We are a dual-track school, as our enrollment is almost equally divided between both English and French registration. Our school promotes a mutual reciprocity and respect for different languages and cultures. A collaborative work environment has been adopted amongst French Immersion and English program teachers. The willingness of staff to share materials and resources has not only enhanced teacher learning, but our student population has benefited as well. The commitment of our administration to continuous improvement has ensured that resources are consistently updated. Staff is also encouraged to participate in professional development opportunities, such as FAB and BELLE, in order to improve teaching practices, competence and confidence. PLC groups meet at Grade level where student improvement through curriculum alignment and common assessment are the topics for discussion.

Our school has consistently focused on improving student achievement in the areas of Literacy and Mathematics. With the support and guidance of our Math Mentor, there has been a greater emphasis on improving and developing teaching strategies to support student learning. Through this infusion of PD, we have become more skilled in the various uses of math manipulatives and have updated our resources accordingly in the classroom. The school community's firm belief in striving for improved achievement in math outcomes has resulted in fundraising efforts directed to acquire new math materials.

As we focus on ways to improve student accomplishment, we have made efforts to ensure fewer interruptions during instruction time and have worked towards minimizing transition times. We are in the initial stages of implementing Reader's and Writer's Workshops in all classrooms, which will allow for more structured and efficient curriculum delivery. The positive, safe learning environment created at Astral Drive Elementary has resulted in a high level of student engagement. Communication between home and school fosters a committed partnership in support of students' learning. Also, due to the high expectations and the value that the community places on learning, there is a strong level of parental support.

The leadership in the school is also very proficient. Our administration is a highly effective team that communicates well with staff, parents, students and the community. The administration is very strong in implementing and supporting all HRSB and DOE policies and regulations. Administrators organize and interpret assessment data so that teachers are able to utilize and understand the data to inform teaching practices. Professional Development is shared with other staff members through Learning Cafes and Lunch PD. The implementation of these newly learned skills is evident in classroom practices.

A positive school climate is evident due to dedicated teacher teams (PLCs) and the collaborative nature of the staff. Teachers, in our school, feel empowered to make decisions about student learning and to take on leadership roles. Staff takes on many other leadership roles within the school, such as the delivery of musical productions, intramural activities, homework clubs, etc. Academic leadership is also promoted throughout our school as many teachers seek outside PD opportunities, as well as participate in graduate level courses. Continuous efforts are made to ensure that classrooms are structured to promote a positive learning environment for all students.

Question #2: What trends do you see in the data?

Over the past years, our overall school survey data has remained relatively consistent. Parent, teacher and student survey scores have remained high in the area of student learning indicating our community satisfaction with student progress.

Parent Survey: I am satisfied with the schools efforts to meet my child's academic needs	
2004-05	83% agree/strongly agree
2005-06	80% agree/strongly agree
2006-07	85% agree/strongly agree
2007-08	88% agree/strongly agree

However, results from the student survey in regards to writing have gone down over the past three years.

Student Survey: I like to write. Indicator 8, #24		Student Survey: I am good at writing Indicator 8, #28	
2004-05	79% agree	2004-05	56% agree
2005-06	57% agree	2005-06	66% agree
2006-07	55% agree	2006-07	61% agree
2007-08	50% agree	2007-08	58% agree

Over the past four years report 100% of our teachers report that Astral Drive Elementary is a safe place to learn, work and visit (see Appendix 1, Indicator 4, question #35). Also over the past four years 100% of our teachers report they set high expectations for student learning (see Appendix 1, Indicator 4, question #36).

The data from Grade 6 ELA assessments over the last three years, indicates that our students have consistently met the reading and writing outcomes (95%) with the exception of 2005-2006, where 13% of students did not meet these outcomes in writing (see Appendix 2).

School-wide common writing assessments were administered during the 2006-07 school year (see Appendix 3). The focus of the assessments was on organization, matters of correctness, and ideas (OMI). The results from the data indicate that our students continue to require further development in the area of writing strategies.

The results from the Grade 2 Literacy Assessments indicate that students in both English and French Immersion require further development in the areas of fluency and accuracy (see Appendix 4). We also need to focus our instruction on active questioning as well as supporting the questioning with personal understanding.

The following trends have been observed in our data for Math. The results from the HRSB Grade 2 CAT 3 assessment administered in the Spring of 2007 indicate, that our students are only 20 percent proficient in the area of adding whole numbers while only a mere seven percent efficient in the area of subtracting whole numbers (see Appendix 5). According to the grade 5 Math CAT 3 assessment 2007-08, only 8% of our students demonstrate proficiency in multiplying whole numbers, only 5% are proficient in adding and subtracting whole numbers and 0% of our students are proficient in both dividing whole numbers and estimating (see Appendix 6).

The Grade 3 EEMLA assessment tested a total of 76 students. 24 students demonstrated areas of weakness in the Basic Facts, which equates to 32% (see Appendix 7). Conversations with teachers and anecdotal report card comments also indicate a need for proficiency in the area of basic facts.

Question #3 What improvements will make the greatest difference to increasing student achievement?

We have determined a number of improvements that will increase our student achievement based on the trends in our data. Math and writing have been identified as important areas of focus in which we can improve our student achievement.

As a staff, we have recognized that it is essential to designate time in our schedule to devote to Mental Math and Writer’s workshops. We are committed to schedule Grade level PLC’s weekly.

We will focus, as a staff, on the way we assess student learning through professional learning communities, the development of common assessments, learning cafes and other professional development opportunities.

Student achievement can be increased by concentrating on teacher assessment strategies, as well as, teaching self-assessment strategies to our students. We believe it is of utmost importance, to encourage independent learners.

We recognize the need for common assessment at grade level to direct our instruction and monitor student growth.

Question # 4 Of the challenges the school identifies, which ones will be targeted as areas for improvement?

Of the challenges that our school has identified, we have chosen to target the areas of writing, mathematics and student goal setting.

Question # 5 What does the school plan to do, having determined the areas of Improvement?

Goal 1: Student achievement in writing will improve by focusing on organization, matters of correctness and ideas (OMI)

- Strategies:
- A. Implementation of PLC’s focused on writing.
 - B. Within PLC’s, teachers will develop and administer a common assessment tool for writing at each grade level (OMI) and will analyze data to inform instructional practices.
 - C. Purchase resources to support the literacy goal.
 - D. Teachers will implement instructional strategies through modeling, mini-lessons, Writers Workshop, etc, including a focus on OMI appropriate to their grade level.

<i>Professional learning to support Achievement of Goal</i>	
<i>Staff will engage in the following learning activities:</i>	<i>Staff will learn the following from engagement in the professional learning activities: (knowledge, skills and professional practices).</i>
Staff will be given time to collaborate within the PLC structure.	Sharing of Professional Development information during PLC’s (specifically FAB and BELLE strategies).

Teachers will participate in Learning Cafes.	Teachers will learn assessment and evaluation strategies to support writing in the classroom. Teachers will have an opportunity to share professional readings and best practices.
Teachers will work collaboratively with our Literacy coordinator.	Teachers will learn strategies from the modeling of mini-lessons. Teaching will benefit from coaching and best practices.
In school PD will focus on writing.	Teachers will learn new strategies and teaching practices and have opportunities to view exemplars
Staff will share knowledge of PD sessions (i.e. BELLE, FAB).	Teachers will learn how to set up writing centers and will have the opportunity to pass on resources acquired at the PD sessions. Our Literacy Coordinator will work with staff that has not attended FAB and Belle to develop the Writer's Workshop model in the classroom.

Strategy 1-A: Implementation of PLC's focused on writing.

Sequence of Actions	Timelines		Responsibility	Resources needed	Budget
	Begin	Complete			
Create timetables in which teachers of the same grade level have common prep times (where possible).	Sept 08	Sept 08	Administration		
Teachers and Administration will designate 2 staff meetings (PLC) per month	Sept 08	Ongoing	Teachers Administration		

Strategy 1-B: Within PLC's, teachers will develop and administer a common assessment tool for writing at each grade level (OMI) and will analyze data to inform instructional practices.

Sequence of Actions	Timelines		Responsibility	Resources needed	Budget
	Begin	Complete			
Teachers will participate in PD on developing grade level rubrics and administering common assessment.	<i>Nov 08</i>	Nov 08 PD- Ongoing	Teachers	-Curriculum documents -Assessment materials -AAC resources -Board personnel	
Administer, collect and analyze the data at grade level.	<i>Feb 09</i>	Feb 09	Teachers Administration	Sub Days for PLC's	
Teachers will re-administer the common assessment.	<i>May 09</i>	May 09	Teachers		
Collect and analyze the data from rubrics.	<i>May 09</i>	May 09	Teachers Administration	Sub Days for PLC's	
Teachers will share professional readings and best practices regarding assessment through PLC's and Learning Cafes	Sept 08	Ongoing	Administration Staff	-Assessment in the Classroom -Alberta Assessment Consortium materials/ resources -PLC time/days	\$350 for café \$630 for PLC

Strategy 1- C: Purchase resources to support the literacy goal.

Sequence of Actions	Timelines		Responsibility	Resources needed	Budget
	Begin	Complete			
Inventory literacy resources currently in classrooms.	<i>Dec 08</i>	Feb 09	Teachers Support Staff Literacy coordinator		
Required materials, in consultation with the Literacy coordinator, will be purchased and introduced to staff by our Literacy coordinator.	<i>Mar 09 (Book Bureau) & throughout the year as needed</i>	Ongoing	Teachers Literacy coordinator Administration		ALR
Bias-free materials will be available to meet the diverse, cultural, social and academic needs of our students.			Staff	Bias Evaluation Instrument	

Strategy 1-D: Teachers will implement instructional strategies through modeling, mini-lessons, Writers Workshop, etc, including a focus on OMI appropriate to their grade level.

Sequence of Actions	Timelines		Responsibility	Resources needed	Budget
	Begin	Complete			
Teachers will designate “time to write”.	Sept 08	Ongoing	Administration Teachers	Scheduling	
Daily writing activities supported by weekly mini-lessons.	Feb 09	Ongoing	Literacy Coordinator Teachers	Write Traits Mini-lessons Lucy Calkin’s Kit	
The Literacy coordinator will provide support in the form of mini in-services, co-teaching, workshops and individual support focused on writing strategies.	Sep 08	June 09	Literacy coordinator and Staff		
The Literacy coordinator will share and model writing mini-lessons for Writing Blitzes.	Nov 08	Ongoing	Literacy Coordinator		
Teachers will implement lessons from Write Traits and Lucy Calkin’s Kit.	Sep 08	Ongoing	Teachers	Write Traits Lucy Calkin’s Kit	

Goal: 2
Students will demonstrate an improved understanding of computational procedures applicable to their grade level.

Strategies:

- A. Implementation of PLC's with a focus on Mathematics.
- B. Develop and administer a common assessment tool to assess strategy development and understanding of computational procedures and analyze the data to inform instructional practices.
- C. During Mental Math, teachers will reinforce basic facts, mental computation and computational estimation, as appropriate.
- D. Teachers will focus their instruction on teaching operations using a variety of representations to elicit efficient procedures from students.

Professional learning to support Achievement of Goal	
<i>Staff will engage in the following learning activities:</i>	<i>Staff will learn the following from engagement in the professional learning activities: (knowledge, skills and professional practices)</i>
Staff will be given time to collaborate.	Sharing of Professional Development information during PLC's.
Teachers will work collaboratively with our Math Coordinator.	Teachers will learn strategies from the modeling of mini-lessons. Teaching will benefit from coaching and best practices.
In-school PD will focus on math.	Teachers will learn new strategies and teaching practices to support the students' acquisition of Basic Fact knowledge and the practice of using a variety of representations.

Strategy 2-A: Implementation of PLC's with a focus on Mathematics.

Sequence of Actions	Timelines		Responsibility	Resources needed	Budget
	Begin	Complete			
In creating timetables for 2008/09, administration will strive to include preparation time at grade levels.	June 08	Sept 08	Administration		
Teachers and Administration will designate 2 staff meetings (PLC) per month.	Sept 08	Ongoing	Teachers Administration		

Strategy 2-B: Develop and administer a common assessment tool to assess strategy development and understanding of computational procedures and analyze the data to inform instructional practices.

Sequence of Actions	Timelines		Responsibility	Resources needed	Budget
	Begin	Complete			
Develop a common grade level assessment tool for mental math and basic facts to be used in Sept 2009 to obtain a baseline.	Jan 09	Feb 09	Math Mentor Teachers	In-service time with Math Mentor	
Administer, collect and analyze the data from the common assessment and use data to inform our instruction.	<i>Sep 09 (primary FI), Mar 2010</i>	Sep 09, Mar 2010	Teachers Administration		
Teachers will re-administer the common assessment at the end of the year.	<i>May 2010</i>	May 2010	Grade level Teachers		
Collect and analyze data from common assessment and use data to inform our instruction.	<i>May 2010</i>	May 2010	Teachers Administration		

Strategy 2-C: During Mental Math, teachers will reinforce basic facts, mental computation and computational estimation, as appropriate.

Sequence of Actions	Timelines		Responsibility	Resources needed	Budget
	Begin	Complete			
Teachers will work towards a common understanding of best practices for teaching: basic facts, mental computation, computational estimation.	Feb 08	Ongoing	-School Math Leader -Math Mentor	Math Mentor	
Teachers will participate in PD on creating a common understanding of best practices for teaching: basic facts, mental computation, computational estimation.	Feb 08	Ongoing	-School Math Leader -Math Mentor	Math Mentor	
Develop a mental math yearly plan from grades 1-6 using the mental math progression map.	Sept 08 School based in-service day	October 08	Math Mentor Grade level teachers	Progression map Mental math grade level booklets Math Mentor	
Teachers meet at grade levels to develop mental math strategy checklists.	Sep 08	Ongoing	Math Mentor Grade level teachers		

Strategy 2-D: Teachers will focus their instruction on teaching operations using a variety of representations to elicit efficient procedures from students.

Sequence of Actions	Timelines		Responsibility	Resources needed	Budget
	Begin	Complete			
Math Mentor will provide leadership in the form of mini PD sessions, modeling, workshops, individual support and co-teaching.	Sept 08	Ongoing	Math Mentor	Math Mentor	
Teachers will plan, co-teach, and debrief operation lessons and a variety of representations with the math support person.	Sep 08	Ongoing	Teachers Math Support Person Math Mentor	Van de Walle grade levels Teaching Student- Centered Mathematics	

Goal 3:

Students will show improvement in their ability to be responsible for their own learning by creating academic goals to support the development of independent learning habits.

Strategies

- A. Students will develop an appropriate academic goal through modeling, teacher instruction and descriptive feedback.
- B. Teachers and students will collaboratively set criteria for assessing student work.
- C. Teachers will provide students with opportunities for peer and self assessment.

Professional learning to support Achievement of Goal	
<i>Staff will engage in the following learning activities:</i>	<i>Staff will learn the following from engagement in the professional learning activities: (knowledge, skills, and professional practices)</i>
School-based PD will focus on assessment as learning.	Teachers will learn how to involve students in their own assessment.
Teachers will participate in Learning Cafes.	Teachers will learn the various aspects of assessment (assessment as, of and for learning).

Strategy 3-A : Students will develop an appropriate academic goal through modeling, teacher instruction and descriptive feedback.

Sequence of Actions	Timelines		Responsibility	Resources needed	Budget
	Begin	Complete			
Teachers will discuss, model and show examples of various academic goals. Each student will develop and reflect on an academic goal each term.	Sep 08	Ongoing	Teachers Student	Various Exemplars	
Teachers will participate in PD focused on descriptive feedback.	Feb 08 Apr 22&23 Summit	Ongoing	Administration will contact HRSB staff for PD		
Teachers will give descriptive feedback when assessing students' work.	Feb 08	Ongoing	Teachers		
PFI Team will	Oct 08	Ongoing	Administration/ PFI		

consult with the SAC regarding how to invite parent involvement in reflecting upon their child's academic goal.			Team SAC Parents		
Students will reflect on the implementation of their academic goal.	Nov 08	Beginning of each term	Teachers Students		
Teachers will develop a common checklist to monitor progress of students' goals.	Fall 08		Administration Teachers		

Strategy 3-B : Teachers and students will collaboratively set criteria for assessing student work.

Sequence of Actions	Timelines		Responsibility	Resources needed	Budget
	Begin	Complete			
Teachers will teach self-assessment strategies.	Oct 08	Ongoing	Teachers		
Teachers and students will be involved in writing rubrics together.	Sep 08	Ongoing	Teachers Students	Various Exemp lars	

Strategy 3-C: Teachers will provide students with opportunities for peer and self assessment.

Sequence of Actions	Timelines		Responsibility	Resources needed	Budget
	Begin	Complete			
Teachers will provide students with opportunities to practice peer and self-assessment and to provide descriptive feedback to their peers and themselves.	Oct 08	Ongoing	Teachers		

Question # 6. How will we know what is being done is making a difference for student achievement?

Writing Goal: Student achievement in writing will improve by focusing on organization, matters of correctness and ideas (OMI)

<i>Data sources used to monitor progress</i>	<i>Timeframe(s) for data collection</i>	<i>Responsibility for data collection- who will be collecting</i>
Collection of common student writing assessments to have as a baseline	October	Teachers
Collection of common student writing assessments	February, May	Teachers
Grade 4 CAT 3 Literacy Assessment Data	April 2008	HRSB/ Administration
Grade 3 ELLA Assessment Data	Winter 2009	DOE/ Administration
Grade 6 ELA Assessment	Winter 2009	DOE/ Administration

Math Goal: Students will demonstrate an improved understanding of computational procedures applicable to their grade level.

<i>Data sources used to monitor progress</i>	<i>Timeframe(s) for data collection</i>	<i>Responsibility for data collection- who will be collecting</i>
Use a common grade level assessment tool for mental math and basic facts to obtain a baseline.	Winter 2009 and ongoing throughout year (Fall 2008, development of the common assessment tool).	Classroom Teacher with Math Mentor
Use a common assessment tool for the end of the year for mental math and basic facts.	Spring 2009	Classroom Teacher with help of Math Mentor
Grade 5 CAT 3 HRSB testing	Oct 2007	HRSB/ Administration
Grade 3 EEMLA DOE testing	June 2008	DOE/ Administration
Grade 2 CAT 3 HRSB testing	May 2008	HRSB/ Administration

Assessment Goal: Students will show improvement in their ability to be responsible for their own learning by creating academic goals to support the development of independent learning habits.

<i>Data sources used to monitor progress</i>	<i>Timeframe(s) for data collection</i>	<i>Responsibility for data collection- who will be collecting</i>
Parent HRSB survey results.	October 2008 -100% of teachers say that they give feedback to their students regularly about their work	Teachers
Teacher survey/checklist on student goal setting.	End of each reporting period	Teachers

Question # 7 How will we involve the SAC, the parents, students and community?

Once our plan is in place, we will communicate our PFI plan to the parents through our monthly newsletter, school and HRSB websites and regular SAC meetings. Information regarding our goals will be shared with parents on Curriculum night. A binder with our PFI plan will be available in the school office for SAC and community. The SAC have been apprised and will continue to oversee our PFI plan.

Students will have the opportunity to participate in an assembly to review our school goals. This approach will help model for students, the importance of goal setting and as a result, influence the achievement of their personal academic goals. Our school’s PFI goals will be posted in every classroom. Students’ academic goals will go home to inform parents of their academic focus for each term.