

# Auburn Drive High



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## School and Community Context

Auburn Drive High School is located in a new subdivision in Cole Harbour and draws its students from both the rural heritage of historic Halifax County and the modern suburban growth of Dartmouth. Auburn was built in 1994 to reduce the numbers in the overcrowded school of Cole Harbour High just a stones throw away.

Auburn continues to be a leader in terms of academic excellence, continues to shine in formal competition in the many sports the school offers, and is constantly being upgraded in new technology to meet the demands of our changing society. Feeder schools for Auburn Drive are Graham Creighton and Astral Drive Junior High Schools.

The school's present enrollment is 1150, but on average, the school usually houses approximately 1100 students. Auburn has a staff of 70 personnel. Auburn offers French

Immersion, Co-Op and O2 program and has received permission to offer the Advanced Placement program (AP). Our school offers a wide range of extra-curricular programs including athletics, intramurals, Fine Arts, numerous clubs such as Gay Straight Alliance, Photography, Music/Band, Free the Children, Eight Sense For Africa, Student Council, Safe Grad, Dance Club, Step-Up, Student Diversity group, Youth of Today, Reach For The Top, Applied Broadcast Journalism, ROV club.

Auburn offers a vibrant Youth Health Centre, under the leadership of Sharyn Chapman. Auburn is proud of its International Students' program where approximately 20 international students from Columbia, Brazil, Germany, Korea, Japan and Mexico come to our school and immerse with our student population for a rewarding educational experience.



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## Family and Community Involvement

Parents/guardians are involved in many ways at Auburn. These include: Parent/Teacher conferences, dances (chaperones), Curriculum Nights, Meet and Greets, SAC meetings, sporting events, Fine Arts activities, Parents as Career Coaches seminars, volunteering, Drama plays, Band/Music/Art Concerts, yearly academic awards luncheon, volunteer coaches, team liaisons, student performed dinner theatres and various student assemblies.

## Safe and Orderly Environment

HRSB survey results indicated that students, staff and parents say that Auburn is proactive in ensuring a safe school. Teachers and students regularly review and practice the School Safe Plan. Recent HRSB Survey results indicate that staff feels the school is a positive learning environment. Parents felt positively that the school is a safe place to work and visit. Students feel they are treated the same in classes and that they do

learn the school rules, collectively, early in the year. A Positive Effective Behavioural Support (PEBS) matrix of expected behavior has been developed and implemented throughout the school. Four areas of focus for PEBS include: Respect for: Self, Others, Learning and the Environment. PEBS supports staff/students in helping to reduce discipline issues, class interruptions and improve student achievement.

## 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%	86%	83%
Grade 12 DOE Nova Scotia Exam: Advanced Mathematics	65%	62%	93%	93%
Grade 12 DOE Nova Scotia Exam: English	95%	94%	97%	97%
Grade 12 DOE Nova Scotia Exam: English Communications	89%	88%	100%	95%

## Classroom Assessment

Teachers regularly assess student work utilizing rubrics, quizzes, probes, tests, labs, portfolios, assignments etc. Teachers use a software program called Markbook to tally marks. Teachers meet regularly (twice a month formally and numerous times informally) to review curriculum outcomes, discuss and analyze student achievement, collaborate on developing common teaching strategies and common assessments for our students.

This year the focus in Literacy has been on reading comprehension. Staff worked on literacy strategies across curriculum, provided student support through course recovery, mentorship, remediation and developed common assessments within the same courses taught by staff. This focus has been developed and supported with the assistance of our literacy coach, and the English department staff. Students were given a pre-test at the beginning of the year, strategies were implemented in response to these results and a follow up post-test was given to students to assess achievement. Results of the school pre-test and subsequent post-test indicated increased achievement in reading comprehension. With increased strategies focusing on reading comprehension during 1st semester 2008 - 2009, Ninety-six percent (96%) of students enrolled in English Language Arts course achieved the credit. Reading comprehension will continue to be a school focus in the 2009-10 school year.

The focus in mathematics at Auburn during 2008-09 was implementing instructional strategies, basic skill development and providing time to collect data on student strengths and challenges in math. Teachers developed common teaching strategies and assessments, and gave students in math courses a pre- and post-test to analyze strengths and weaknesses of students' mathematical ability and to inform teaching practice. The data results collected indicate a weakness in the topic of quadratics across grades 10 - 12. The math focus during 2009 - 2010 year will be on improving student math comprehension and the use and function of quadratics in every math course. During the first semester of the 2008 - 2009 school year, ninety-one percent (91%) of students enrolled in mathematics courses successfully achieved the credit.



## Student Engagement

Many activities are available for students of Auburn to support student engagement in their school. These include: French/English Dinner Theatres, Reach For The Top, Robotics Club, Art Club, Art/MusicFests, ABJ, “Thursday Live”, athletic teams, intramural programs, “Fitness Fridays”, Student Council, Law Conference, Youth of Today, six dances per year, Grade 12 social, coffee houses, fashion shows, Gay/Straight Alliance (GSA), photography club, Prom/SafeGrad, Christmas Daddies Telethon, Free the Children and Eights Sense for Africa club fundraisers, local food bank drives, guest speakers and an Eco group.

## Time to Learn

Auburn operates on a two semester system (September - January and February - June). Students take four courses each semester in grades 10 /11 and three in each semester in Grade 12. The school operates on a four day cycle with four 75 minute classes a day. Minimum interruptions during the day is a school focus. O’Canada and daily announcements occur just before lunch break utilizing the class TV’s as medium available in each course. The applied broadcast and journalism students are responsible for the reading of all announcements. These announcements are placed on the school website.

## Professional Development

Auburn staff participated in Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NVC) training. Teachers attended Professional Development (PD) sessions on Literacy Support rollouts, Writers in Action, marking Grade 12 exams, Information Economy Initiatives Extension (IEIE) technology rollouts, reading strategies, assessments and teaching strategies, reviewing software such as Autograph and LCD usage, assessment development and analysis of data of student achievement. Auburn has seven departments who meet formally twice a month as a Professional Learning Community (PLC) and many times informally. Staff share work on lesson planning, classroom instructional techniques and development of common assessments. Auburn has a School Planning Team (SPT) and individual program planing teams. In 2009 -10 school year staff PD will be focused on training in technology integration across the curriculum, Non-violent Crisis Intervention, Cultural Competence, Safe Schools, literacy and math strategies and improving culture and climate.

## Additional School Supports

Auburn has various people supporting students including a student services department consisting of a registrar, administrative assistant, two guidance counsellors, three resource teachers, two learning centre teachers, African Nova Scotian Student Support Worker, Literacy coach, Math coach, English Second Language (ESL) teacher and a school psychologist. Auburn staff offers regular extra help, and extra support classes after school.

Auburn utilizes a Learning Success Grant to provide a course recovery program, direct remediation and classroom support for students. The school holds regular blood donor clinics with a partnership with Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) Blood services. The Options and Opportunities Cooperative program has made partnerships with many businesses in HRM providing work term experiences for students complementing classroom instruction.

## Graduation Rates

School Year	Rate
2008-2009	94.5%
Destination after high school	Rate
Community College	23%
University	54%
Other education or training	5%
Join work force	4%
Unknown	15%

# Planning for Improvement

Auburn Drive's Plan For Improvement was reviewed extensively during the 2007-08 school year. Staff reviewed HRSB survey results completing a thorough self assessment on the strengths and challenges of the school. Over the next four months staff narrowed their focus and developed goals that would have the greatest impact on student achievement. Data indicated that staff choose goals involving math, literacy and school culture and climate. Math results from individual courses and Grade 9 Math Provincial testing results indicated strengthening of basic skills. In reviewing data from all courses and the Grade 9 Junior High Literacy Assessment (JHLA) provincial results, reading comprehension was identified as the school focus. Due to issues arising from student interactions and

discipline, the school felt a third focus should be on school culture and climate. In May 2008 an HRSB Peer Review Team reviewed the school plan, made recommendations for changes and approved the plan for implementation in September 2008. To support positive student involvement, staff initiated various activities. These include: Fitness Fridays, mural painting, a celebration and "Teal Town" wall, continued the work of the Diversity Committee, Thursday Live presentations, concerts, plays, athletics supporters, staff training in NVCI, increased LCD projectors for classes, regular staff PD, student council activities, school trips, guest speakers, fundraising events, various clubs, after school late bus, exam exemptions, and ABJ announcements.

## School Goals

### Literacy Goal

To Improve Reading Comprehension.

#### Strategies:

- In all departments, with the aid of the literacy coordinator, staff will implement a variety of instructional practises to teach students to comprehend text.
- Develop and implement common rubrics in the English department to focus on reading comprehension.
- Analyze these results to inform teaching practices.
- Meet regularly in PLC's to address the needs of struggling learners.
- Share progress at Department head meetings and staff meetings.

### Mathematics Goal

Improve students' ability to solve problems, which vary from the basic math computation to more complex problems employing technology.

#### Strategies:

- Create and implement pre and post tests for each Math course.
- Analyze these results to inform ongoing teaching practices.

- Meet regularly in PLCs to discuss student progress and plan future strategies targeting problem solving.
- Meet regularly in PLCs to address the needs of struggling learners.
- Share progress at Department head meetings and staff meetings.

### School Climate Goal

To create a more positive school climate.

#### Strategies:

- Devote time to review, clarify and exercise the school plan for isolation, fire drills, and other emergency situations.
- Collect and analyze PEBS data to target problem areas for a supervision plan.
- The implementation of a peer mediation program within the school.
- To continue to implement the PEBS approach to discipline with a focus on developing strategies for "red-zone" students.
- Provide opportunities for staff and students to engage in activities that promote a healthy

lifestyle.

- Review, update, and implement school code of conduct and discipline plan.
- Formation of a diversity committee focused on developing positive relationships among members of the school community.
- Build positive relationships between students and staff by implementing strategies developed through PD.



**Every Student Can Learn. Every School Will Improve.**

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