

# Astral Drive Elementary



[HTTP://ASTRAL.EDNET.NS.CA](http://astral.ednet.ns.ca)

## School and Community Context

Astral Drive Elementary School (ADES) is a dual track school offering programming in English and French Immersion in grades primary to six, with a population of 480 students. This year we have 21 classrooms, 9 French Immersion classes and 12 English program classes. We are primarily a walking school with a few mandatory bus students.

The number of students registering for French Immersion has increased over the past two years with two French Immersion primary classes. Due to a grandfather clause, students from Caldwell Road Elementary attend our school for the French Immersion Program as well. We also have a number of out of area students attending our French Immersion program.

We have a Grade 6 band, an instrumental music program, choir, musicals, extended Phys. Ed. and an extensive intramural program. We

also have a variety of clubs, teams, and activities. The school is used for community events including sports, recreation, and cultural events. At Astral Drive Elementary School we work hard to make our school a safe and welcoming environment. Our initiatives include implementation of our Positive Effective Behavioural Supports (PEBS) program, a school-wide Focus on Bullying program, and most recently the implementation of the Second Step program.

To ensure the success of our students we work hard to meet their diverse learning needs through a variety of Professional Development (PD) opportunities and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) at grade level as well as across the grades.

Although we are a large staff we are proud of our cohesive team efforts as well as our dedication to our Professional Learning Communities.

## Safe and Orderly Environment

According to our School's Planning for Improvement Survey, 97.4% of parent respondents feel that our school is a safe place for their child to learn. We regularly promote safety throughout our school. Since the implementation of PEBS, there is an increased level of respect for self, others, learning, and the environment. Star Awards and school assemblies are used to acknowledge positive behaviours.

Safety is also emphasized through our Peer Mediation Program along with the Focus on Bullying and Second Step programs. We strive to improve traffic safety and flow with the assistance of outside agencies. We effectively monitor our playgrounds, hallways, entrances, and other public areas to ensure student safety. Our security cameras and sign-in policy enhance the security efforts at our school.



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## Family and Community Involvement

At Astral Drive Elementary 97.3% of parents feel the school welcomes their involvement. We encourage parental and community involvement through a wide variety of school events such as; PTO, SAC, Spring Fair, etc. We also provide opportunities for our parents and guardians to be involved in supporting their child's learning through our Family Literacy Night, Parent Math Night, and Curriculum Information Night. According to our HRSB survey, 95.2% of parents feel they are welcome at this school.

## Provincial and Board Assessment Results

Halifax Regional School Board (HRSB) students participated in provincial and board-wide assessments. The information gained through these assessments will help us determine our next steps in improving student achievement in literacy and mathematics. Please note that the percentages used throughout this report are rounded to the nearest whole number.

\* French Immersion students completed the assessment in French.

Literacy Assessments	School Results: Percentage of students meeting expectations	Board Results: Percentage of students meeting expectations
Grade 2 Board	English Reading Accurately: 73% English Reading Fluently: 70% FI Reading Accurately: 51% FI Reading Fluently: 46%	English Reading Accurately: 74% English Reading Fluently: 67% FI Reading Accurately: 46% FI Reading Fluently: 46%
Grade 3 Provincial	Reading: 82% Writing (Information/Non-fiction) : 82% Writing (Narrative/Fiction) : 82%	Reading: 81% Writing (Information/Non-fiction) : 82% Writing (Narrative/Fiction) : 82%
Grade 5 Board	Reading: 83%	Reading: 81%
Grade 6 Provincial	Reading: 97% Writing: 94%	Reading: 88% Writing: 94%
Math Assessments	School Results: Percentage of students meeting expectations	Board Results: Percentage of students meeting expectations
Grade 2 Board	Mathematics Concepts: 97%	Mathematics Concepts: 95%
Grade 3 Provincial	Mathematics Concepts: 81%	Mathematics Concepts: 71%
Grade 5 Board	Mathematics Concepts: 95%	Mathematics Concepts: 84%

The students at Astral Drive Elementary are performing well in both the Halifax Regional School Board (HRSB) and Department of Education (DOE) literacy and mathematics assessments. In mathematics, the Grade 2s are performing slightly above the board average, while our Grade 3s and fives are performing well above the board average. In literacy, our school compares with the board level scores in both reading and writing. By Grade 6 our students are performing above average in reading and are on par with their writing results. However, the Grade 2 HRSB literacy results show that our Early French Immersion students require additional support with reading accuracy and fluency. To help these students we are currently assessing our teaching practices in order to meet their diverse learning needs.

## Classroom Assessment

Our staff give each student a variety of opportunities to demonstrate curriculum outcomes. They use the skills and knowledge gained from PD opportunities to improve their classroom practices to ensure student achievement.

### Focus on writing:

As part of our school plan for improvement teachers worked as a team using common assessments to review student writing. Our data shows that our students met the criteria for organization and ideas, but require additional support for matters of correctness. We will continue to work on this goal next year to improve writing skills and further develop student ability to revise and edit work independently.

### Focus on Math:

This year, teachers met and worked with our math coach, to develop a common assessment, to be administered in September 2010 in order to collect baseline data. In order to support the goals for mental math and computational strategies, we implemented PLCs and had several Professional Development (PD) sessions with our math coach.

The parents of ADES (94%) are satisfied with the school's efforts to meet their child's academic needs.



## Student Engagement

At ADES we keep our students engaged in their learning and school activities. We offer a variety of clubs, teams, and extra curricular activities. Our data shows that 65.8% of our students participate in school activities. Our students are challenged academically and their social development is continually enriched. Our data also shows that 91.6% of parents feel that their child likes going to school most of the time and they also feel that their child is challenged to work to their full potential. 96.5% of our students feel confident in their abilities in most areas and want to achieve academic success.

## Time to Learn

The Department of Education establishes requirements for Time to Learn which all schools in the province follow. Each subject has a required or recommended number of instructional minutes per day which is reflected in our classroom timetables. Teachers work hard to keep the students focused and on task. Teachers adjust their practices to accommodate a range of student abilities and backgrounds. They are also committed to reducing the number of interruptions that may occur each day; such as announcements and student discipline issues. Teachers have been trained in PEBS to improve student focus on learning.

## Professional Development

Teachers at ADES value and engage in professional development which enhances student learning. Our teachers (93%) feel that school wide professional development supports the work they do with our school's PFI plan. Our math and literacy coaches help teachers plan effective teaching strategies and assessments. This year our school based professional development focused on our School Improvement Plan to support students in successfully achieving the math, literacy, and independent learning goals. Teachers work together in various groupings Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to share best practices, knowledge and strategies, in order to develop and deliver curriculum.

## Additional School Supports

At ADES we have a number of additional school supports to improve student achievement.

- English as a Second Language teacher
- speech language pathologist
- Learning Centre teacher
- English and French resource teachers
- bilingual literacy coach
- reading RecoveryTeacher
- educational program assistants (EPAs)
- lunch monitors
- math coach
- bilingual math leader
- enhanced physical education
- secretary
- school psychologist
- RCMP liaison officer
- public health nurse
- library support specialist
- extensive volunteers



# Planning for Improvement

The school community of ADES takes great pride in our students' successes and accomplishments. There is much to celebrate at Astral Drive Elementary! We know that we can always do better. We are very committed to taking the necessary steps to improve in all areas of learning. The HRSB's Planning for Improvement process helps us to identify what our students are doing well, and what areas need further attention and improvement.

Our staff has chosen goals in the areas of literacy, math and goal setting for independent learning. We have discovered from looking at our data on student achievement, that our students benefit from a focus on writing. We want our students to improve their ability to generate, organize, and communicate their ideas in written communication. These

are important skills that will enhance their potential to succeed across the curriculum. In mathematics, we are focusing our school improvement efforts on improving our students' understanding of computational procedures, and to reinforce basic facts and computational estimation during mental math activities.

Astral Drive Elementary's School Improvement Plan outlines below what teachers will be focusing on with their students. It also explains what teachers will be learning, through professional development, in order to make achievement of our school goals a reality for the students of ADES.

## School Goals

### Literacy Goal

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

#### Strategies:

- implementation of PLCs focused on writing
- within PLCs, teachers will develop and administer a common assessment tool for writing at each grade level (OMI) and will analyze data to inform instructional practices
- purchase resources to support the literacy goal
- teachers will implement instructional strategies through modeling, mini-lessons, Writers
- workshop, including a focus on OMI appropriate to their grade level.

### Mathematics Goal

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

#### Strategies:

- implementation of PLCs with a

focus on mathematics

- develop and administer a common assessment tool to assess strategy development and understanding of computational procedures. We will analyze the data to inform instructional practices
- during mental math, teachers will reinforce basic facts, mental computation, and computational estimation, as appropriate
- teachers will focus their instruction on teaching operations using a variety of representations to elicit efficient procedures from students

### Independent Learning 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.

#### Strategies:

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

- Teachers and students will collaboratively set criteria for assessing student work.
- Teachers will provide students with opportunities for peer and self assessment.



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

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