

Ellenvale Junior High



WWW.ELLENVALE.EDNET.NS.CA

School and Community Context

Ellenvale Junior High (EJH) has been serving this community since 1967. EJH serves over 415 students from Grades 7 to 9. Over the years, our school community has grown to include students from Portland Estates Elementary, Brookhouse Elementary and Alderney Elementary. The staff at Ellenvale work very hard to get to know students in every class.

We are proud to offer late French Immersion starting in Grade 7 as well as an enhanced physical education program that promotes an active lifestyle for all students. The instrumental music program is second to none and our band students work incredibly hard to ensure that they are among the best in the province.

EJH is rich with student diversity. There is ethnic diversity among our students and diversity in our interests; however, we could benefit from greater diversity among the staff.

EJH offers a wide variety of extra-curricular clubs and sports opportunities. Labour of Love, a student group that promotes doing acts of kindness for others and the community is just one such club. For a complete list of what is happening at EJH please see our website at www.ellenvale.ednet.ns.ca.

All members of our school community work hard to ensure a positive and welcoming school environment where student success is the focus. Our staff is dedicated to meeting the needs of all of our learners, and you will see on the last page of this report our plan to improve student achievement.



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Family and Community Involvement

For the past three years, over 90% of parents/guardians surveyed agreed that they feel welcome at our school. We have a small percentage of parents who become involved in school activities, such as trips, band parents association and SAC. While this involvement is greatly appreciated, we are currently working on ways to improve family and community involvement in our school. We will provide more information as we move forward.

Safe and Orderly Environment

Our survey results indicate that 91.9% of students feel safe at Ellenvale Junior High and have rarely been recipients of bullying. We believe much of this is due to the programs that we have in place such as Positive Effective Behavioural Supports (PEBS) and the U Matter program. This year, 53% of our students indicated that they felt their learning was disrupted by other student behaviour issues. Our teachers will contin-

ue to learn about effective classroom management and enforce positive student behaviour.

As part of a Halifax Regional School Board initiative, our lunch program will be offered free to everyone starting September 2009 and more student programs will be run at lunch. Staff will also be providing supervision outside the building, before and after school, to ensure the safety of all students at Ellenvale.

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 8 Board	Reading: 84%	Reading: 81%
Grade 9 Provincial	Reading: 90% Writing: 96%	Reading: 84% Writing: 96%
Math Assessments	School Results: Percentage of students meeting expectations	Board Results: Percentage of students meeting expectations
Grade 8 Board	Mathematics Concepts: 87%	Mathematics Concepts: 72%

At Ellenvale Junior High, we are pleased to report that our students are consistently performing well in reading, as indicated in the HRSB and the Department of Education Literacy assessments. Our students were also performing on par with the overall results for the province in writing. At EJH, one of our main goals is to see improvement in student writing scores and we feel students are making progress this year. Our students are performing well above average in mathematical concepts and numerical estimation. We are pleased to note that there has been improvement in our student's results over the past few years. The teaching staff at EJH will continue to work to improve our results on these board and provincial assessments in the future.

Classroom Assessment

Teachers worked in grade level teams to review student writing samples in November and May to identify areas of strength and areas requiring additional focus. The November results revealed that 73% of our students in English and French Immersion programs (as the assessments were done in ELA), are meeting the criteria for generating and developing ideas. The May results showed improvement with 75% of students meeting the criteria. In addition, the November results revealed that 79% of students are meeting the criteria for mechanics in writing (spelling, grammar, etc.). The May results revealed significant improvement with 85% of students meeting criteria.

Students are expected to communicate their mathematical thinking using models, pictures, symbols and words when solving problems in daily math lessons. Samples of their work were collected during November and May. The November results revealed that 69% of the students were meeting the criteria determined by EJH. The May results showed growth with 74% of the students meeting this criteria.



Student Engagement

We are doing well in keeping our students engaged. At our school we have a variety of clubs and teams in which approximately 80% of our students participate. In addition to their participation in sports and clubs, over 88% of our students feel that their math and language arts school work is challenging yet understandable. Our students also feel confident about their abilities in most subject areas; however we need to continue to improve and challenge students at Ellenvale across all subject areas.

Time to Learn

All schools in the Halifax Regional School Board follow the Time to Learn requirements set by the Department of Education. This means that each course or subject has a required or recommended number of minutes. In the past, students and teachers indicated that student learning was being interrupted too often by school announcements. As a result of this feedback, we have reduced the number of announcements during the school day. The most recent survey showed that only 34% of students and teachers felt that student learning was disrupted by announcements. We will continue to improve in this area so student learning can continue without interruption.

Professional Development

When teachers learn, students learn. Teachers at EJH are actively involved in professional development on an ongoing basis. Our literacy coach helps teachers one and a half days a week and the math coach is available upon teachers' request for extra assistance and to incorporate effective teaching strategies. This year our school-based days with staff focused on differentiation in student learning, revisiting our school plan for improvement and Positive Effective Behaviour Supports (PEBS). Teachers also learned how to have students use technology in the classroom.

Additional School Supports

At EJHS, we have a number of additional school supports to improve student achievement:

- English as a Second Language teachers (ESL)
- speech language pathologist
- Learning Centre teacher
- resource teachers
- junior high support teacher
- severe learning disability teacher
- educational program assistants (EPAs)
- lunch monitors
- guidance counsellor
- math coach
- literacy coach
- school psychologist
- atlantic province special education teacher
- library support specialist
- literacy support teacher.



Planning for Improvement

The school community of Ellenvale Junior High School takes great pride in the successes and accomplishments of our students. There is much to celebrate here at our school! However, we also know there is room for growth. We are dedicated to demonstrating our continued improvement. The Halifax Regional School Board's Planning for Improvement process helps us to identify what our students are doing well, and what areas need further attention and improvement. Our school staff have chosen goals in the areas of literacy, and mathematics. We have discovered from looking at student achievement data that our students could benefit from a focus on writing. We want our students to be better able to organize their thoughts and ideas in written communication. This is an important skill

that will enhance their ability to succeed in any subject. In mathematics, we are focusing our school improvement efforts on students' communicating their thinking and understanding when solving problems. Again, this is a skill that will greatly benefit them in the their future. We proudly present Ellenvale Junior High's school improvement plan for your information. You will find details about what teachers will be focusing on with their students in class and also what teachers will be learning themselves (professional development) in order to make achievement of our school goals a reality for the students at Ellenvale.

School Goals

Literacy Goal

By June 2010, there will be a 10% school-wide improvement in writing proficiency as measured by the Canadian Achievement Test (CAT) scoring guide (content of writing, artistry of communication, control of conventions).

Strategies:

- ensure that all new staff is aware of the Literacy Team.
- create a selection of school-wide common writing prompts and a common writing assessment rubric for expository text.
- ensure that PLCs (teacher team at grade level) are incorporated into teacher's schedules.
- continuation of writing workshops in ELA and FLA.
- implement a Writers' Workshop Approach to teaching writing across the curriculum areas.
- expose students to different types/forms of writing (mentor texts).
- have students and teachers write in various ways.
- students will write daily in language arts /English classes and

weekly in other content areas.

- students will create writing samples twice a year that will be used by teachers to identify strengths and areas requiring more instruction at a school level.
- teachers will teach language arts by explicitly teaching writing lessons, guiding student writing, and enabling

Independent writing practice.
Mathematics Goals

By June 2010, there will be a 10% increase in our student's competencies in mathematical problem solving.

Strategies:

- ensure all new staff know of the math team.
- create an understanding of problem solving among staff, parents and students.
- ensure that PLCs (teachers at same grade level working together) are incorporated into teacher's schedules.
- create common problem solving assessments (one per term) for each grade level and apply common rubric for evaluating.
- teachers will understand and

employ the three part lesson model in classroom instruction.

- ensure that all new staff is aware of the literacy team
- teachers will develop understanding of the use of questioning techniques.
- create math folders for the Grade 7, 8 and 9 students.



Every Student Can Learn. Every School Will Improve.

Contact Information: 88 Belle Vista Drive, Dartmouth, B2W 2X7

Tel: 902-435-8420 Email: ejhs@hrsb.ns.ca Principal: George Gray