

# East St. Margaret's Elementary



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## School and Community Context

East St. Margaret's Consolidated School (ESM) is located in Indian Harbour, serving all communities from Glen Margaret to West Dover. Recently, a number of new students from out of area have been registered at our school. East St. Margaret's opened in the fall of 1958, and was originally an elementary and middle school serving up to Grade 8.

During the 2009-2010 school year, ESM offered programming to 58 students from grades primary to six. East St. Margaret's offers an English public school program that includes core French for grades 4 to 6, physical education and music for all grades, along with instrumental music (band) for grades 5/6.

ESM is a leader in the promotion of healthy living and balanced lifestyles. Our breakfast program is held in high regard by our students, and by related external agencies and groups. ESM also offers numerous

extra curricular programs and clubs including green team, outdoor education, swimming, skating and ice hockey. There are additional activities for students in all grades including citizenship and the arts. For the last four years, ESM has hosted the Goddard Peace Summit, an initiative to promote peaceful leadership within local elementary schools. It has been held in remembrance of Nichola Goddard - the first Canadian female killed in active duty.

Our school is a focal point in the community. The community supports our school programs and events through donations, fundraising and volunteering. Social events at ESM are highly attended and the community has pride in the school. Visitors to East St. Margaret's frequently refer to the personal, open and positive atmosphere at the school.



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## Family and Community Involvement

Our current survey data reports an increase in the belief that our families feel welcome at our school {100%}. When they are able to help with school activities and events, 100% of parents feel appreciated by our school. According to the survey, 100% of our parents feel that they have a good relationship with their child's teacher, and that the school welcomes parent and community involvement. Community appreciation is a priority for our staff. This results in a high level of parental participation in school functions.

## Safe and Orderly Environment

Our survey results over the past year indicated that the learning environment at East St. Margaret's continues to be a safe, inviting, and respectful place for our students. The data demonstrates 100% of families responding to the survey, felt that ESM is a safe place for their children's education. Student responses indicate that 100% of students felt that they are safe, respected, and cared for. 100% of our staff agree with this

statement. Positive Effective Behavioural Supports (PEBS) has been in place at East St. Margaret's for the past five years, and has provided staff with a structure and philosophy that lends itself well to the climate of ESM. Positive behaviours are rewarded with Bright Lights, prize draws, and regular praise.

## Provincial and Board Assessment Results

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 results below indicate the percentage of students who met expectations on the assessments. Also note that all percentages used throughout this report are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Literacy Assessments	School (%)		Board (%)
	Baseline	2009-10	2009-10
<b>Grade 3 Provincial</b>			
Reading	100%	100%	75%
Writing (Information/Non-fiction)	100%	100%	86%
Writing (Narrative/Fiction)	100%	100%	77%
<b>Grade 5 Board</b>			
Reading	88%	75%	82%
Writing-Ideas	83%	83%	64%
Writing-Organization/Correctness	58%	58%	60%
<b>Grade 6 Provincial</b>			
Reading	75%	86%	87%
Writing	92%	100%	92%
Math Assessments	School (%)		Board (%)
	Baseline	2009-10	2009-10
<b>Grade 5 Board</b>			
Communicating Math Thinking	58%	58%	51%
Mathematics Concepts	75%	92%	83%
Problem Solving	50%	50%	53%

At ESM, we are pleased to report that our students have consistently performed very well in all testing by the HRSB and the DOE. Although all external assessment results are not displayed in the chart provided, generally our results have been higher than HRSB and DOE assessment completed this year. The results from the 2009-10 Grade 2 HRSB Literacy Assessments are 14.1% higher than HRSB results. 100% of our Grade 2 students met the expectations for Reading. This was an increase of 25% from the 2008-09 results. The Grade 2 HRSB Math assessment results indicated that all students were competent or proficient in all areas. For the second straight year, the Grade 3 ELLA {Literacy} results indicated 100% of Grade 3 students met expectations in Reading, Writing, and Listening. The June 2009 EEMLA-Math/Literacy result showed 100% of Gr. 3 students met expectations. In the Grade 5 HRSB - CAT 4 assessment {Literacy and Math} we identified a number of areas requiring additional support. The Grade 6 ELA-Literacy results have shown solid improvement in many areas targeted through yearly assessments.

## Classroom Assessment

Our classroom teachers use many forms of in-school assessment, to inform them of student progress. These include daily observations, student work samples such as journals, rubrics, student conferencing, summative assessments, peer and self assessments, reading records, and group work to name a few. These classroom assessments allow a teacher to target areas for continued intervention.

As part of our assessment process within the school, our teachers work together as a Professional Learning Community to ensure there is consistency throughout the school. Grade level assessment meetings are held throughout the school year, to create and mark common assessments. Teachers also track student progress throughout the school years to inform them of student needs and achievement.

Common assessment scores gathered from each class, throughout the school year, are used to direct the Planning For Improvement process here at East St. Margaret's. During this school year, we have gathered a baseline of information relating to our school PFI goals. This information will be used for comparison over the next three years to chart our progress in the areas identified in our school improvement plan.

### Focus on Literacy:

In this second year of the Accreditation process, we have gathered data on student achievement in writing, in the areas of ideas and organization. Our classroom assessments show that 93% of our students have met or exceeded the expectations for writing, in the areas outlined in our Literacy goal.

### Focus on Mathematics:

In Math, our school assessments have focused on student achievement in Problem Solving and Communication. The accumulated scores show that 85% of our students have met or exceeded the expectations in the areas of Problem Solving and Communication, as it relates to operational outcomes.



## Student Engagement

ESM staff feel that they are successful in the area of student engagement in the learning process. This is shown in the data from the Getting to Great survey results, and also in the positive school climate. Our school wide assessment data shows that our students are doing well in all areas. The high degree of student engagement is reflected in the survey where 100% of our Grade 3-6 students reported that they had many chances to work in groups, learn by doing things, and try their best to get good grades. 87.5% of students felt that they like coming to school every day. 100% of students reported that they felt they were successful in Reading, Writing, Math, and at sharing their ideas.

## Time to Learn

East St. Margaret's Elementary, along with all schools within the HRSB, follow the Time To Learn policy set by the Department of Education. ESM classroom schedules reflect the proper time allotments for each subject area outlined in the Time To Learn document. 90% of teachers responding to the survey, felt that learning was rarely interrupted due to announcements. 100% of ESM teachers reported that learning is rarely interrupted due to student discipline, extracurricular activities, and visitors at the door. Success in this area, supports the high degree of student engagement.

## Professional Development

At East St. Margaret's Elementary, the staff engages in ongoing professional development to ensure they maintain current best practice in instruction and assessment. On a weekly basis, the staff meet with the Literacy Coach who models exemplary lessons and teaching strategies. On a monthly basis, the Literacy Coach presents new materials and instructional strategies during lunchtime or after school cafes. Our Literacy Coach will often lead sessions during regularly scheduled P.D. days. Throughout the school year, the staff at ESM have taken part in additional P.D. days which were held off site. Staff members have been inserviced for Health, Science, PEBS, Technology Integration, PRIME Math Assessment, RCH, and Social Studies. Many staff members have attended summer institutes for Technology, Math, or Literacy. In this way, our school community is well served by a competent, current and prepared staff.

## Additional School Supports

At East St. Margaret's Elementary, we have a number of added school supports to insure positive student achievement.

- ~ Literacy Coach
- ~ Reading Recovery Specialist
- ~ Resource Specialist
- ~ Speech-Language Pathologist
- ~ School Psychologist
- ~ Autism Specialist
- ~ Math Consultant
- ~ EPA support
- ~ Library Support Technician
- ~ HRSB Technology Specialist
- ~ Lunch Monitors
- ~ RCMP Liason Officer
- ~ Public Health Nurse
- ~ Volunteers
- ~ SAC
- ~ Home and School Assoc.
- ~ Community Financial Support



## Planning for Improvement

The staff of East St. Margaret's Elementary has worked hard to create a positive school environment focused on student achievement. The staff enthusiastically supports the belief that "Every student can learn, and every school will improve." As a small rural school, the staff are able to regularly share resources, teaching strategies, and information on student progress. As a Professional Learning Community, staff members meet regularly to plan instructional and assessment strategies, score assessments, and target areas needing continued improvement. In this way staff members are able to identify those students who do not meet curriculum expectations through regular programming. With a newly developed student performance tracking system, we were able to create a school profile of

those needing specific and individual interventions. With the assistance of our school planning team, we are able to identify strategies needed to allow every student to learn. This is the direction Program Specialists within the HRSB have identified as the next necessary step needed to move the PFI process to the next level of success. We regularly use classroom, HRSB, and Department of Ed. assessment results to plan instructional strategies, and also to provide timely and meaningful feedback to parents and students. Based on the feedback from the SAC and from data collected from surveys, parents are very pleased with the education their children are receiving in all subject areas. Survey results show that 100% of parents are very satisfied with the school's efforts to meet their child's academic needs.

## School Goals

**Literacy Goal:** Our students will demonstrate improvements in writing in the areas of ideas and organization. According to all current assessment data, Literacy is an area of strength for ESM. Our in-school data shows that 88% of students met or exceeded expectations in generating ideas in writing, and organizing thoughts in the writing process. Staff have followed through on all strategies outlined in the school improvement plan developed last year. This included, developing rubrics to assess writing pieces, develop and fine tune writing techniques within the Writer's Workshop model, utilize student/teacher conferences, use exemplars of student writing, and finally use peer conferencing to evaluate and improve student writing pieces. The Grade 5 CAT-4 Writing Assessment showed very positive results for our school performance. 83% of our Grade 5 students demonstrated they were competent or proficient in the area of writing content {ideas}. This result was 18% higher than HRSB results. In the area of organization of writing, ESM students were on par with all students in the HRSB. In Sept. 2010, ESM

staff will add a second Literacy goal to address student needs in the area of conventions/matters of correctness in writing.

**Mathematics Goal - 2009-2010:**

Students will demonstrate improvement within the expected grade level operational outcomes {addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division} in the areas of problem solving and communication. All school data supports the conclusion that our students have shown growth in the targeted area, and also that our goal warrants further work and data collection. Our in-school assessments show that 85% of all students met expectations in problem-solving and communication. The 2009 Grade 2 Cat - 4 assessments indicate that 100% of students were competent or proficient in number sense, addition and subtraction of whole numbers, and in estimation and number operations. These results show an increase from HRSB Grade 2 Cat - 4 results from 2008. 100% of Grade 3 students writing the EEMLA (Early Mathematical Literacy Assessment) met expectations. The Grade 5 Cat - 4 HRSB assessment indicated that in the area

of estimation and computation with addition and subtraction of whole numbers, 63% of students were competent or proficient. 45% of students were competent in the multiplication and division of whole numbers, leaving 55% of students scoring low. This latter score serves as the rationale for a new school goal in Math: Students will demonstrate improvement in estimation and computation in the multiplication and division of whole numbers. The Grade 5 Cat - 4 Mathematics assessment indicates that ESM students scored at 50% competent or proficient in problem-solving, slightly below HRSB results. In the area of communication, ESM scored at 58% competent or proficient, 7% above HRSB results. Teachers will soon restructure in-school Math assessments using current Math resources along with our provincial curriculum guide. Next year, teachers will focus on unit planning, and best practices in order to help students master basic facts. Mental Math strategies are incorporated into daily planning, along with 3-part lesson plans to effectively deliver instruction and develop mathematical thinking.



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

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