

LeMarchant-St. Thomas Elementary



[HTTP://LEMARCHANT.EDNET.NS.CA](http://lemarchant.ednet.ns.ca)

School and Community Context

The two schools of LeMarchant and St. Thomas Aquinas (LMST) have served the community since 1923. Over the past eight decades the schools have seen several different configurations and an amalgamation to what is today known as Ecole LeMarchant-St. Thomas Elementary School. We offer programming to 333 students from Primary to Grade 6 and are proud to offer both English and French Immersion. Our Primary and Grade 1 classes are housed in the LeMarchant building while the grades 2-6 are in the St. Thomas building. Over the past 8 years our school has experienced growth and our enrollment has steadily increased. Two-thirds of our students are enrolled in the French Immersion program, with ten French classes and five English classes.



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Family and Community Involvement

Ninety-two percent of parents indicate that they feel welcomed at LMST, while 91% feel that they have a good relationship with their child's teacher. Ninety-nine percent feel that LMST promotes parent/guardian and community involvement. Our school has an extremely active Home and School Association which supports supplemental resources to the classroom, to our physical education program, as well as to our fine arts program. In addition, the Home and School supports numerous social activities.

Safe and Orderly Environment

Our 2008-09 survey results indicate that the majority of our students feel safe at school. We are proud to report that 98% of our students, parents and teachers feel that LMST is a safe and inviting learning environment. We believe that this is due to the many programs that we currently offer that promote good behaviour such as our Positive Effective Behaviour Supports (PEBS), leadership club, and student leadership initia-

tives. We also believe that our strong curriculum delivery and differentiated instructional practices create clear expectations in the learning environment. Ninety-seven percent of parents feel that the school staff treat their child with respect. Eighty-six percent of parents who responded have indicated that they work together with school staff to encourage their child's positive and appropriate behaviour.

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: 73% FI Reading Accurately: 66% FI Reading Fluently: 55%	English Reading Accurately: 74% English Reading Fluently: 67% FI Reading Accurately: 46% FI Reading Fluently: 46%
Grade 3 Provincial	Reading: 100% Writing (Information/Non-fiction) : 100% Writing (Narrative/Fiction) : 94%	Reading: 81% Writing (Information/Non-fiction) : 82% Writing (Narrative/Fiction) : 82%
Grade 5 Board	Reading: 100%	Reading: 81%
Grade 6 Provincial	Reading: 94% 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: 98%	Mathematics Concepts: 95%
Grade 3 Provincial	Mathematics Concepts: 97%	Mathematics Concepts: 71%
Grade 5 Board	Mathematics Concepts: 100%	Mathematics Concepts: 84%

At Ecole LeMarchant-St. Thomas Elementary School we are pleased to report that our students have consistently performed well in reading in the HRSB and Department of Education literacy assessments. For example, ninety-four percent of our Grade 6 students have met the criteria for reading and writing, while 100% of our Grade 5 students have met the criteria in English program reading. We are very pleased to report that all our Grade 3 students performed above the board average in reading and writing. Our Grade 2 students performed above the board average in early French Immersion program accuracy, while these same students performed slightly below board average in English program accuracy. We continue to focus on literacy strategies and practice at LMST.

We are additionally pleased to report that at every level of assessment (grades 2, 3, 5) LMST students are performing above board level average, with 100% of Grade 5 students meeting the expectations. As in literacy, teachers at LMST continue to pursue professional development opportunities in the area of mathematical strategies.

Classroom Assessment

Focus on critical reading

To support our PFI goal teachers worked in grade-level teams in conjunction with the literacy coach to explore and develop critical reading activities, assessments and best practice strategies such as predicting, retelling, inferring, synthesizing, and analyzing text. Eighty-nine percent of Grade 6 students can read and understand text at or above grade level.

Focus on mathematics problem solving

Students are demonstrating their problem solving skills using models, pictures, symbols, and words in daily math activities. Each term samples were collected using a common assessment particular to each grade level. For example, results reveal that 92% percent of Grade 5 students were meeting or exceeding the criteria in October; these same students were meeting or exceeding the criteria at 97% in term two, showing growth in this area.



Student Engagement

Students at LMST are engaged in their school life. Ninety-six percent of students indicated that they try their best in school because they want to get good grades. Ninety-six percent have confidence in themselves as readers and 82% felt they were good at writing. Eighty-two percent of students feel they are good at math, while 94% feel they are learning about living in a healthy way at school. Teachers continue to encourage students to share their ideas in math and language arts. We have a variety of extracurricular clubs and teams in which 99% of students participate.

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 in each grade level has a required or recommended number of minutes. Timetables are structured to allow for blocks of time to support math and literacy initiatives and teachers hand in their class timetables to administration to ensure the number of minutes for each subject area is met. Specialist times, which involve students in the Annex coming to the main building, are scheduled so as to address minimum interruption. Fifty percent of teachers felt that student learning is interrupted by various activities.

Professional Development

When teachers learn, students learn. Teachers at LMST are actively engaged in professional development on an ongoing basis. Our literacy coach is based at the school 25% of the time; she is instrumental in incorporating effective teaching strategies and in providing teachers with best practice strategies around literacy. Our math leader has provided several workshops and has worked with teachers on our PFI goal of problem solving. This year our school-based PD days focused on our school's Planning for Improvement goals, as well as on the implementation of our Positive Effective Behaviour Supports (PEBS) program, and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). In addition, teachers at LMST are continuously involved in professional development workshops and conferences throughout the year offered by the HRSB, as well as externally. These opportunities provide teachers with the most up to date strategies and practices in the education field in a variety of subject areas.

Additional School Supports

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

- French resource
- English resource
- school planning team
- program planning team
- literacy coach
- Reading Recovery
- math leader
- speech language pathologist
- school psychologist
- behaviour specialist
- severe learning disability support
- school health nurse
- library support specialist
- full-time secretary
- English as a Second Language
- social worker



Planning for Improvement

The school community of LeMarchant-St. Thomas takes great pride in our students' success. There is much to celebrate here at our school and 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 has 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 critical reading. This is an important skill that will affect their ability to succeed in any subject area in school and in life. In mathematics, we are focusing our school improvement efforts on our students' abilities to

understand and communicate their thinking when solving problems. Again, this is a skill that will benefit them no matter what their future holds.

We proudly present LeMarchant-St. Thomas' school improvement plan for your information. We are currently completing our second year of a five year Planning for Improvement strategy. You will find details about what teachers will be focusing on with their students in class and what teachers will be learning themselves (professional development) in order to make achievement of our school goals a reality for the students of LeMarchant-St. Thomas.

School Goals

Mathematics Goal

Students will improve their communication skills to demonstrate their mathematical understanding when problem solving.

Strategies:

- students will communicate their mathematical thinking using models, pictures, symbols and words to solve problems in daily math lessons.
- students will use rubrics that have been developed by their teachers to assess their communication skills while they are problem solving.
- teachers will collect samples of student work throughout the year to assess progress in problem solving.
- students will complete three or more sample problem solving tasks in math during the year that will be assessed for problem solving strengths and areas needing improvement.
- teachers will engage in ongoing professional development in best teaching practices in problem solving.

Literacy Goal

Our students will demonstrate achievement with fluency, accuracy and comprehension so that they are able to read, comprehend, and communicate critically their understanding of a variety of texts.

Strategies:

- students will read daily.
- teachers will engage in ongoing professional development in best teaching practices in critical reading.
- teachers will access HRSB literacy coach.
- students will use a rubric that has been developed by/with their language arts teachers to assess their skills in critical reading appropriate for their grade level.
- teachers will explicitly teach critical reading strategies such as predicting, inferring, retelling, questioning and synthesizing.
- teachers working in grade level teams will review students' written responses to critical reading activities.



Every Student Can Learn. Every School Will Improve.

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