

# Portland Estates Elementary



WWW.PORTLANDESTATES.EDNET.NS.CA

## School and Community Context

Portland Estates Elementary School (PEES) is a P-3 school built in 2000. Scotia Learning owns and operates the building. Our school offers programs from Grade Primary through to Grade 6. In 2003, the Halifax Regional School Board created a Boundary Review Policy in which the intent was to specifically determine the boundary streets for PEES. Since 2004 the population has decreased from 431 students with a projection of 365 for the school year 2009-2010.

PEES fosters an inclusive, safe, enriched academic and social environment for students and staff which enables them to reach full personal potential, both socially and academically in their journey as life long learners. Our school community is a very active, supportive community. We have very high attendance at school sponsored events and an active Parent Teacher Organization.

Portland Estates School is rich in

diversity and opportunity. Within our community, we have several nationalities represented among our students. As well, our school offers several musical and physical educational opportunities along with the Power Play Program which is a voluntary student program based on asset development provided to grades 5 and 6 classes.

At PEES, we believe that a strong link between home and school is critical to a child's education. Our school staff work very hard to provide many avenues to communicate about their child's learning. Decisions about student learning and achievement are predicated in the best interest of our students.



## Contents

School & Community Context . . . . .	1
Family & Community Involvement . . . . .	1
Safe & Orderly Environment . . . . .	1
Assessment Results . . . . .	2
Student Engagement . . . . .	3
Professional Development . . . . .	3
Time to Learn . . . . .	3
Additional School Supports . . . . .	3
Planning for Improvement . . . . .	4

## Family and Community Involvement

For the past few years, parents/guardians surveyed agreed they feel welcome at our school. This year our survey indicated 99% of our parents felt that our school invites parent/guardian and community involvement. This year, we held a very successful multicultural workshop which included presenters from our community sharing traditions and cultural information.

## Safe and Orderly Environment

Our survey results for 2008 indicate our students, parents and staff feel that our school is a place where safety, caring and respect are paramount components of our school climate. We are proud to report that survey results from students, parents and staff indicate an average of 97% feel PEES is a safe place to learn. Our Positive Effective Behavioural Supports (PEBS) program, Peer Mediation program, Power Play Program

and on going support from staff are indicators of the high success level in this area. Our student survey results indicate over 90% of our students feel that as a school we create an atmosphere of "belonging" and respect for individuals. A very high number of students (93%) felt that they were not treated differently because of their culture or race. Most (96%) felt that their teacher really cared about them.

## 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: 85% English Reading Fluently: 89%	English Reading Accurately: 74% English Reading Fluently: 67%
Grade 3 Provincial	Reading: 91% Writing (Information/Non-fiction) : 80% Writing (Narrative/Fiction) : 94%	Reading: 81% Writing (Information/Non-fiction) : 82% Writing (Narrative/Fiction) : 82%
Grade 5 Board	Reading: 94%	Reading: 81%
Grade 6 Provincial	Reading: 94% Writing: 98%	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: 86%	Mathematics Concepts: 71%
Grade 5 Board	Mathematics Concepts: 98%	Mathematics Concepts: 84%

We are pleased to report that our students have consistently scored above the board percentages in the areas of accuracy and fluency of reading. In the area of mathematics our grades 2, 3 and 5 classes scored above the board average. However, in the DOE Grade 3 Literacy test our students scored 80% in writing information, slightly below the board average. Staff will be analyzing this data to better support our students in this category as administered on the Grade 3 DOE Assessment.

## Classroom Assessment

### Focus on Writing

Throughout the year, teachers have been concentrating on developing voice in student writing. During the school year, teachers worked together, with our Literacy Coordinator, to develop strategies with a focus on effective teaching practices to support students in the development of voice. Achievement was evidenced through three rubric assessments throughout the year. Our initial school wide average was 2.76 out of a possible 5 on a common Write Traits (writing program name) rubric. By second term, it had increased to a score of 3.61. Third term we saw an even greater increase, with the final school wide average increasing to 4.06 out of a possible score of 5. We are very pleased with the improvement in student achievement in the area of voice in our students' writing.

### Focus on Math

Throughout the year, teachers have been concentrating on developing math problem solving skills as students become more knowledgeable about using math language to explain their math reasoning. During the fall, PEES held an open house for parents which 144 parents attended. The open house was a great success. Classroom center activities were developed according to GCO's and SCO's (Department of Education Curriculum Outcomes). During the year, student manipulative materials were upgraded and purchased to ensure each student had their own set of materials required for math learning. Teachers have been developing assessment rubrics to garner an understanding of best practices to assess math problem solving/making connections using the 5 representations (pictorial, symbolic, context, concrete, verbal).



## Student Engagement

Students are actively engaged as learners at PEES. Over 85% of our students felt they were good in math with 96% of our students feeling that they are good in reading. In our survey, 88% of our parents felt that teachers helped support their child's learning at home. Of our students surveyed, 98% liked going to school on most days. We are so pleased that our students are active, engaged learners who feel confident about their abilities in literacy and mathematics. We are very proud of our students!

## 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. This year, 36% of our teaching staff felt that the school day was interrupted due to announcements over the PA. Therefore, next year we will begin morning announcements at 8:55 with 0 Canada following and we will only use the announcement systems when necessary.

## Professional Development

When teachers learn, students learn. Teachers at PEES are actively involved in professional development activities on an ongoing basis. Our literacy and math coaches are actively involved in teacher learning to support improvement in effective teaching strategies. Professional development activities include: Lunch and Learn sessions, training in Positive Effective Behaviour Programs (PEBS), professional learning community (PLC's) by grade level teams, after school day sessions and conferences. In conjunction with the HRSB Teacher Evaluation Policy, all teachers must develop an Individual Professional Growth Plan. Our staff is consistently engaged in professional learning activities that improve student achievement and their own learning.

## Additional School Supports

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

- Learning Centre teacher
- resource teachers
- English as a Second Language teacher
- speech language pathologist
- school psychologist
- educational program assistants
- math coach
- literacy coach
- library support specialists
- lunch monitors
- Reading Recovery teacher



# Planning for Improvement

During the 2006-2007 school year, Portland Estates staff created their Planning for Improvement document. In May of 2007, an External Review team consisting of administrators from other provincial school boards approved our Plan. In 2010, this plan will be reviewed for Accreditation approval through the Department of Education.

Our Planning for Improvement Report committed to the following three goals:

**Goal 1. Literacy:** To improve student achievement in writing by focusing on organization, voice and conventions at each level increasing the number of students showing improvements on the school based common grade level assessment by 2010.

**Goal 2. Math:** By June 2010, student achievement will

increase on our school grade level common assessment in the areas of communication, problem solving/reasoning and making connections.

**Goal 3.** By June 2010, our school will show an increase in awareness and acceptance of cultural diversity.

We have a lot to celebrate at our school. To date, we are pleased to report that we have achieved our goals and we have seen significant improvement in our students' writing and math communication skills. As well, we have provided many more educational opportunities for our school community to share their cultural heritage.

## School Goals

### Math Goal

By 2010, student achievement will increase on school grade level common math assessments in the areas of communication, problem solving/reasoning and making connections.

#### Strategies:

- Develop a school based grade level common math Language assessment
- Students will explain their thinking and demonstrate their ability to problem solve by using common math language/vocabulary orally through use of multiple representations and manipulatives.
- As students become more able to problem solve in math they will demonstrate their understanding in a variety of ways (multiple representations).

### Literacy Goal

To improve student achievement in writing by focusing on organization, voice and conventions at each grade level, showing an increase in the number of students scoring at least 3 on a 5 point rubric on a school based

common grade level assessment by June 2010.

#### Strategies:

- Develop a school based writing assessment package focusing on voice, for each level that can be used to establish baseline data.
- Highlight student writing in our school.
- Modeling the characteristics of good writing using voice.

### Cultural (School Performance) Goal

By June 2010, our school will show an increase in awareness and acceptance of cultural diversity.

#### Strategies:

- Create a school wide workshop involving parents from different countries, organizations and local historians.
- Administer a school wide survey to students about their understanding of their own heritage



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

Contact Information: 45 Portland Hills Drive, Dartmouth, B2W 6L5

Tel: 902-433-7100 Email: portland@hrsb.ns.ca Principal: Lloyd Caldwell