

# Holland Road Elementary



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## School and Community Context

Holland Road Elementary is an excellent school with wonderful children and supportive families. It is a rural learning centre serving the lovely communities of Lake Fletcher, Wellington and Fall River. With an enrollment of 333 students and 25 staff members, Holland Road is a school where students are inspired to thrive and achieve in a nurturing, stimulating and challenging atmosphere which uses school and community resources.

Holland Road School is often characterized as a very calm and welcoming learning environment. Students at our school are highly motivated with very good performance results on all the board and Department of Education assessments. In the process of promoting student achievement, teachers are constantly looking for ways to respond to student needs and ensuring that the school and classroom environ-

ments are inviting, safe, peaceful and respectful. Holland Road School also provides curriculum opportunities for grades primary to 6 in physical education, music, as well as core french for Grades 4 to 6.

The students of Holland Road School are active and participate in a wide variety of extracurricular activities related to physical fitness and health, choir and drama. Students are also committed to the recycling program, acting as peer helpers and participating in our leadership program. Furthermore, Holland Road School has strong community involvement and very dedicated volunteers. The school community consistently supports charities in the form of fund raisers, food drives and donations.



## 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

Holland Road School has positive relations with the community. There is a committed School Advisory Council, a dedicated Parent Teacher Association and an enthusiastic Fine Arts Committee. Many social events are planned throughout the school year with the purpose of bringing families together. Our school also has a devoted group of volunteers who assist in the library and the classrooms. Survey data shows that parents feel welcomed by the staff and have good relationships with their child's teacher.

## Safe and Orderly Environment

Holland Road School promotes academic achievement, responds to the needs of all students and is an inviting, safe, peaceful and respectful environment. The 2008-2009 student, teacher and parent surveys indicate that most students are not bullied or treated differently because of culture or race, and almost all students feel that their teachers cared about them. Teachers feel that students treat them with respect and

that learning is rarely interrupted by student discipline, by activities or by visitors at the classroom door. Likewise, a majority of parents have never witnessed discrimination at school and feel that the staff treats their child with respect. Parents and staff work together to promote positive behaviour and 100% of parents say they have never been treated differently due to culture or race.

## 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 HRSB Literacy Reading	English Program Accuracy: 92% English Program Fluency: 86%	English Program Accuracy: 74% English Program Fluency: 67%
Grade 3 DOE Literacy	Reading: 95% Writing (Information) : 88% Writing (Narrative) : 98%	Reading: 80% Writing (Information) : 80% Writing (Narrative) : 87%
Grade 5 HRSB Literacy	English Program Reading: 94%	English Program Reading: 82%
Grade 6 DOE Literacy	Reading: 93% Writing: 98%	Reading: 88% Writing: 94%
Mathematics Assessments	School Results: Percentage of students meeting expectations	Board Results: Percentage of students meeting expectations
*Grade 2 HRSB Mathematics	98%	95%
*Grade 3 DOE Mathematics (June 2008)	93%	71%
*Grade 5 HRSB Mathematics	94%	84%

The vision of the Halifax Regional School Board focuses on student achievement in the areas of literacy and mathematics. In literacy, data indicates that the students of Holland Road School are making very good progress in most areas of the Language Arts program. Much of the success in literacy at Holland Road School is due to the support of the Program Department of the Halifax Regional School Board and the training that has been provided in curriculum, instruction and assessment.

In the area of mathematics, assessment data indicates that the students of Holland Road School demonstrate strengths and improvement in many of the strands of mathematics. Teachers appreciate the role of mathematics in today's world and place value on math in situations arising in everyday experiences. Throughout all grades there has been tremendous growth and improvement with regard to patterns, geometry and measurement, and data analysis and probability.

## Classroom Assessment

Classroom assessment data, relating to our literacy and math goals, will be used to improve instruction and provide meaningful feedback about student progress. Assessment results are used to determine areas of strength and areas of challenge in literacy and mathematics learning.

To accomplish our goal in Literacy, common classroom assessment data will be collected to determine how students are progressing with reading comprehension. Tools for assessment include running / reading records, anecdotal notes, individual and small group conferences, oral reading records and observational checklists.

In mathematics, common classroom assessment data will be collected to help students improve their operational sense and to demonstrate their understanding in a variety of ways. Assessment in Grades Primary to 3 will focus on addition/subtraction, while Grades 4 to 6 will focus on multiplication/division. To record students' abilities, teachers will use checklists and anecdotal reports. Teachers will also use rubrics to outline the criteria for success, to assess performance and for students to self-assess their work.

Classroom practices promote a positive climate and attitude toward skill development. Assessment results are used to support learning and to inform parents of the progress of their child.



## Student Engagement

Holland Road School is a positive and vibrant learning environment. The teachers are friendly and enthusiastic and the students want to be successful because they like what they are learning and want good grades. Students also have lots of opportunities to work with others and learn by doing. Their learning is illustrated and displayed in the classrooms and hallways. The staff at Holland Road School is very helpful and understands that instruction needs to vary to accommodate the abilities and learning styles of each child. There is a true sense of pride at Holland Road School which is reflected in the energy and enthusiasm of the students, parents and staff.

## Time to Learn

Holland Road is a school on the move to improve! The staff works hard to follow the guidelines for recommended instructional time, especially in mathematics and literacy. Working together to maximize instructional time is key to improved student achievement. All teachers are participating in professional learning communities with the purpose of developing common curricular materials, common assessment tools and sharing ideas for daily lessons. Also, school administration is constantly looking for ways to minimize interruptions to learning and to schedule time for teachers to meet to discuss instructional strategies and student learning.

## Professional Development

To enhance student learning through high quality teaching, it is important that teachers participate in ongoing professional development. At Holland Road School, staff members are encouraged to participate in professional development sessions, especially those relating to mathematics, literacy and assistive technology.

Based on the school goals that are mentioned on the final page of this report, teachers set professional growth goals. Using our literacy and math coaches to support professional learning communities, teachers develop common assessments at grade levels as well as a continuum of reading comprehension outcomes from grade to grade.

In mathematics our staff will participate in school-wide professional development focusing on the progression of operations, mental math, operational sense and developing common assessment tools and rubrics.

## Additional School Supports

To meet the needs of all students it is important to have additional supports in place to improve student achievement. At our school, we are very fortunate to have highly skilled resource teachers and an experienced learning centre teacher. These specialists work closely with staff to address the special needs of students and to develop adaptations and individual program plans when necessary. Reading Recovery is another wonderful support that is offered to Grade 1 students who require assistance with their reading and understanding. We also have dedicated volunteers who help students with their reading, writing and math. Student Services at the Halifax Regional School Board is supportive and helpful in providing resource materials, books and assistive technology. We also have a police liaison officer to deliver programs relating to ice, bike and internet safety, drug awareness and other issues that may impact our community.



# Planning for Improvement

According to our school improvement plan Holland Road Elementary School has a positive and safe learning environment in which a majority of students are highly motivated and show very good performance results on all the Board and Department of Education assessments. Survey results also indicate that Holland Road School has teachers who believe that all students can be successful and are committed to improvement in student achievement. Furthermore, and very importantly, Holland Road School has strong community involvement and extremely dedicated volunteers.

Assessment and evaluation will be key components in the Holland Road School improvement plan and will be a very important strategy in the implementation of the lit-

eracy and math goals. Using assessment results to inform instruction and student learning is essential for improved student achievement. To ensure that there is ongoing assessment of learning, the challenge will be to work collaboratively to develop and use common assessment tools across classes, as well as ensuring that students and parents understand the teachers' expectations for learning.

To promote academic success it is extremely important that teachers develop students' critical thinking, goal setting skills and a sense of personal responsibility for learning.

## School Goals

Holland Road School has been involved in the Planning for Improvement process and participated in a variety of professional learning community activities. These Professional Learning Communities proved to be very successful, producing data relating to the strengths and challenges of our school. Our school has a positive learning environment with many strong characteristics, however, there are some areas that require improvement. To support student learning our staff has identified some areas for improvement which will help to make the greatest difference in student achievement.

In literacy, reading comprehension is the main area of concern. Improvement is also required in the development of better reading habits and in being more proficient when viewing environmental print and informational text.

In mathematics, the assessment data suggests that the main area of improvement will focus on operational sense. Attention will also be given to building confidence, interest and curiosity in doing mathematics.

### Literacy Goal

In literacy, students will improve their reading comprehension skills with a focus on both fiction and non-fiction.

#### Strategies:

- Teachers will develop a common understanding of how effective readers use strategies to get meaning from text.
- Teachers will develop and implement common assessment tools such as running records, oral reading records and rubrics for assessing and evaluating comprehension of fiction and non-fiction texts.
- Teachers will identify best practices such as modeling and mini-lessons, to deliver explicit instruction in reading comprehension.
- Teachers will identify and explore appropriate technological applications to support reading comprehension.
- Curriculum outcomes will be used to identify materials and resources.

### Mathematics Goal

In Mathematics, students will improve their operational sense and demonstrate their understanding through a variety of representations. Grades Primary to 3 will focus on addition and subtraction, while grades 4 to 6 will focus on multiplication and division.

#### Strategies:

- Teachers will develop a common understanding of operational outcomes across grade levels.
- Teachers will develop a common understanding of mental math across grade levels.
- Teachers will develop and implement common assessment tools and analyze the data to track the development of operational sense.
- Teachers will identify best practices, such as the 3-part lesson model, to support the development of problem-solving strategies.
- Teachers will identify, explore and implement the effective use of the five methods used to represent knowledge.



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

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