

School Report 2009 – 2010



Topsail Elementary School

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Eastern School District

Vision

The Eastern School District empowering all students to achieve and succeed.

Eastern School District

Message from the Director of Education

Since Eastern School District's inception in September, 2004 many changes have occurred. Our efforts have now moved beyond structural reform and reorganization to developing our schools as caring, professional and purposeful places of learning and excellence. The School District has engaged in a process designed to accomplish this. Our strategic plan identifies the mission of our District to enhance achievement and success for all students within a healthy, active, safe, caring and socially just learning environment.

On behalf of Eastern School District, I acknowledge the many efforts of our teachers, administrators, support staff, parents and community representatives, particularly through School Councils. I encourage you to review this document and to converse with your school representatives. It is in this conversation that the school's goals and expectations come to life, in an atmosphere of support and accountability. When a community is better informed about its school, participation and ownership increases. The value of this report lies not only in what it says, but also in what it does.

I wish to congratulate each school for their commitment to achieving success as evidenced by this Annual School Report. Keep up the good work!

FORD RICE, B.A., B.Ed., M.Ed.
C.E.O./DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

Message from Principal

The 2009-2010 school year was a busy one at Topsail Elementary. The staff was actively engaged in promoting and completing the second year objectives of our three year School Development plan, while working diligently to ensure a safe and healthy environment for our students as we worked through the H1N1 outbreak. Many of our initiatives involved building on the existing ones and moving them further along.

Topsail Elementary School is fortunate to have a dedicated staff, a student body engaged in learning and a community of parents and volunteers who are committed to our children and their education. This support enables us to move forward with initiatives and stay current with our resources which enrich student learning and prepare them for their future.

Florence Norris
Principal

Roger Deveaux
Assistant-Principal

Message from School Council Chair

On behalf of the School Council of Topsail Elementary School, I invite you to read the 2009-2010 School Report. The School Report is a great way to learn about what is happening at the school.

School Council has worked hard to ensure our students get the most out of school. To aide in these efforts the council supported two major fundraisers this year. These included the sale of fish nuggets at Christmas which raised \$6000.00. The second fundraiser was an Active Lap-a-thon, which tied in to our Healthy Living Goal. This raised \$9800.00. These funds enhanced and improved student life at the school and helped our teachers' classroom based initiatives and technology support. Thank you for your contributions.

The School Council worked closely with the school's administrative team and the Eastern School District to help make your child's school experience a positive and successful one. We appreciate all input from both parents and the community.

David Steinhauer
Chair

Topsail's Mission Statement

The Topsail Elementary community is committed to fostering student learning in all academic areas, with a focus on language arts, mathematics and technology, while nurturing a safe and caring environment.

Our School Community

Topsail Elementary is part of the Eastern School District which has 122 schools. Our school community has an enrollment of 465 students and we offer programs from Kindergarten to Grade Four in both English and French Immersion.

Topsail Elementary has a total of 30.2 teaching units, which includes 23.5 regular teaching units, 3.5 special services units and additional specialists in the areas of music, physical education, guidance and learning resources. We also have twelve hours of student assistant support. In addition, we have itinerant supports from the Eastern School District in the areas of speech language pathology, hearing impairment, visual impairment, educational psychology and English as a Second Language.

Programs Provided

Our school offers the provincially prescribed curriculum in English and French Immersion from Kindergarten to Grade 4.

Students with identified exceptionalities are provided services by an Instructional Support teacher or a Pervasive Needs teacher. We are using the Inclusive model to support our students.

Guidance/Counseling Services

Guidance programming at Topsail Elementary is preventative and developmental in nature, and focused primarily on the healthy growth of all children in the school community. Guidance addressed the students' developmental needs in the areas of self development, social development, career and cognitive development. The Guidance program was delivered to the student body through a team approach involving all staff members. As well, the guidance program offered an important communication link for parents to many community supports that students and families could avail.

Learning Resources

The main focus of the Resource Centre is to promote reading and literacy among the school community. The students at Topsail have been engaged in various activities over the year, such as buddy reading, read-alouds, celebrating Family Literacy Day and were exposed to various genres of literature. Topsail Elementary also hosted a Scholastic Book Fair each February. In addition to promoting literacy, the book fair provided funds for the school to continue to build and replenish its collection of books in order to keep the students current with materials being provided.

The teacher-librarian collaborated with the classroom teachers to design units of work in accordance with curriculum outcomes. These units accessed both the Resource Centre and the Computer Lab.

At Topsail students were encouraged to visit the Resource Centre to read, select and exchange books. This book selection process assisted in increased reading, independence and pride.

Music

Topsail Elementary School has a strong music program that involved all students from Kindergarten to Grade 4. Students demonstrated their skills in group ensembles and through individual performances. Emphasis was placed on developing confidence, self-esteem and the ability to work as a team. All students were provided with an opportunity to perform a musical production throughout the year. These musicals had an environmental learning focus which supported the environmental program at the school.

Students in Grades 2, 3 and 4 participated in choirs that performed at various sites throughout the year.

Our students enjoyed the performance of *Donna and Andy*, award winning performers and recording artists who performed at our school.

Physical Education

The Physical Education program at Topsail Elementary provided a wide variety of movement experiences which developed individual physical abilities and promoted positive attitudes towards active living, fair play and personal achievement. Involvement in the skills program was intended to improve fitness levels, enhance self-esteem and provide the basic skills necessary for active recreation and peer socialization.

During the Olympics, the students conducted their own Olympics during gym classes and intramurals. The event was concluded with closing ceremonies where each class represented a

different country. We were fortunate to have the Olympic Torch brought in for this event by one of our parents who carried the torch for a leg of the trip.

Our students also supported the Special Olympics when the torch was moving through the area.

Technology

An important focus this year was on technology in the school as this continued to be a goal of our School Development. Teachers received after school instructional sessions as well as full day professional development to ensure they had the skills to be current and connect the curriculum outcomes to technology information. Our fundraising efforts went to support technology. Our computer lab continued to be upgraded with equipment and programs. Our school installed five more interactive white boards into classrooms this year and two more were ordered for the next school year.

Math and Literacy Days

The school held a Math Day during the school year where all the students rotated through a series of math activities and games to help promote math as being fun and interactive. Classrooms were set up with different math games and activities and students rotated through the different classrooms.

The students participated in a Visual Literacy Show and Tell Day this year. The language Arts Committee organized the event to support our goal of improved visual literacy throughout the school.

Oratorical

The entire student population participated in an oratorical contest. The children in Grades K-2 participated in this event in their classrooms in a non-competitive manner. The students in grades 3-4 participated in their classrooms. The top three winners in each class then went on to a speak-off event in the school. The event was very successful and promoted the speaking component of our Language Arts.

Key Highlights/Special Projects

Healthy Living

Our school continued to promote Healthy and Active Living through a variety of activities. Grade 3 and 4 students took part in regular lunchtime intramurals. Students joined cross-country running teams and take part in the provincial runs. The entire school participated in a weekly walk, when weather permitted. During the winter months the students in Kindergarten – Grade 3 participated in skating while our Grade 4 students enjoyed swimming sessions. Friday was Fruit Day. Students were encouraged to bring a fruit as their snacks on that day.

Our students all participated in a sports day at the end of the school year. The focus for this event was to engage students in activities that were fun and physical while promoting good sportsmanship and fair play.

Environmental Awareness Initiatives

Topsail Elementary recognized Earth Day as an important day in trying to find local solutions within our schools and homes to help improve the state of the environment. Students were involved in many activities throughout the course of the week to raise awareness about our environment. The students were very proud of their efforts in making the environment a clean, greener place.

Kindergarten students were involved in a weekly composting program.

Our Grade 2 classes partnered with Botanical Gardens to do vermi-composting (composting with worms), an activity they thoroughly enjoyed.

A weekly recycling program was started during this school year to complement the daily recycling that took place at recess and lunch times. Students were encouraged to bring recycling from home every Friday morning. Parents, teachers and students supported this activity on a weekly basis. Teachers reinforced the program by providing students with information on recycling and the benefits to the environment. MMSB also supported the initiative and matched the money we received through the weekly recycling events.

Topsail had its annual spring clean up day in June in conjunction with the Town of CBS's Tidy Towns clean up day. Students, parents, teachers and employees from the town of Conception Bay South spend a wonderful day cleaning the school grounds and surrounding wooded area.

Envirofest

Our school community partnered with NL Power to host envirofest at Topsail Elementary. Over 800 people attended the event that included special guests from all levels of government and 25 environmental booths with information and prizes for students and parents. NL Power donated \$5000.00 worth of trees to *Alex's Way*. Parents, staff, the Town of CBS and many businesses in the community contributed soil, chain saws, back hoes and hours and hours of labor so that we could upgrade this area of our school to make it accessible to our students as an outdoor learning environment. The children and staff were thrilled with this new, improved area.

Arts Smarts

All our students from Kindergarten to grade 4 were involved in an Arts Smarts project. A visual artist worked with the students to create representatives of living things. The students created amazing works of art which were displayed during our envirofest.

Social Awareness Initiatives

Social Justice is one of the core values of the Eastern School District. The students at Topsail, supported by the community, were actively involved in the following worthwhile causes:

Terry Fox Walk:

Our students raised \$850.00 to support the Terry Fox Cancer Foundation.

Hats for Haiti:

The students raised \$1300.00 which was matched by the federal Government, for a total of \$2600.00 to support the international relief effort for Haiti.

Shave for the Brave:

Twenty-seven people, including twenty-three students in grades K-4 shaved their heads to raise money and to support a student who had recently lost his mom to cancer. The school raised \$5000.00 to support cancer research, and even more importantly, reached out to each other.

PROVINCIAL WIDE ASSESSMENTS

PRIMARY LANGUAGE ARTS ASSESSMENT

Grade 1: Percentage of Students Performing At or Above Provincial Benchmark

07-08		08-09		09-10	
School	Province	School	Province	School	Province
NA	63.5%	71.7%	65.0%	58.5%	62.1%

Grade 2: Percentage of Students Performing At or Above Provincial Benchmark

07-08		08-09		09-10	
School	Province	School	Province	School	Province
68.7%	68.9%	77.6%	72.4%	84.4%	71.3%

CRITERION REFERENCE TESTS

Grade 3 Language Arts								
	06-07		07-08		08-09		09-10	
	School	Province	School	Province	School	Province	School	Province
Multiple Choice:								
Reading	90.7%	89.7%	91.6%	88.5%	86.4%	88.3%	90.6%	92.1%
Listening	93.3%	93.3%	90.0%	85.0%	95.8%	95.4%	79.6%	80.9%
Constructed Response: Percentage of students achieving Level 3 or above								
Demand Writing	81.6%	74.5%	83.3%	72.6%	75.4%	74.9%	63.6%	73.9%
Poetic	50.6%	65.8%	60.3%	56.1%	55.0%	68.8%	69.4%	71.5%
Informational	78.3%	74.4%	75.4%	70.8%	60.3%	55.1%	54.8%	63.6%
Listening	70.2%	64.1%	83.9%	70.2%	78.0%	70.5%	61.8%	59.9%

Grade 3 Mathematics								
	06-07		07-08		08-09		09-10	
	School	Province	School	Province	School	Province	School	Province
Multiple Choice:								
Number Operations	77.0%	77.0%	79.0%	76.0%	84.9%	85.0%	70.0%	76.0%
Number Concepts	75.0%	71.3%	81.3%	76.3%	79.6%	73.5%	76.4%	77.3%
Constructed Response: Percentage of students performing at Level 3 or above								
Reasoning	48.6%	43.6%	48.5%	65.7%	62.6%	54.3%	60.9%	62.1%
Communication	44.1%	37.5%	52.1%	59.8%	60.4%	54.2%	59.8%	61.6%
Connections & Representations	39.8%	36.3%	60.2%	61.3%	78.0%	69.0%	68.5%	68.2%
Problem Solving	61.2%	51.9%	75.5%	76.2%	73.6%	68.8%	74.7%	68.3%

School Development Plan

The 2009-2010 school year was the second of our three year school development plan. The School Development Plan was developed as a result of internal and external reviews to identify the main areas for our school to focus on. Academic performance, safe and caring schools and technology were the three goals that were established. Below you will find these goals, an overview of the 3 year plan to achieve each of the goals listed and an evaluation of the 2009-2010 school objectives for meeting these goals.

Evaluation of Goals:

Evaluation of our goals is an ongoing process. Our school has established action teams for each of our goals. The teams meet regularly to discuss the plan and to move the objectives toward fruition. The action teams provided in-service to the staff and evaluated the indicators of success to ensure our objectives were being met. The indicators of success were consistently checked, with others added and adjusted, where needed.

Goal 1: To promote and maintain a safe, caring and collaborative environment by 2011.

Goal 2: To Increase Understanding and Integration of Technology Across the Curriculum by 2011

Goal 3: To improve student learning and achievement in Language Arts and Mathematics by 2011

Goal 1: To promote and maintain a safe, caring and collaborative environment by 2011.

Year	Objectives	Objectives	Objectives
2008-09	<i>The School community will identify and promote the importance of healthy lifestyle choices.</i>	<i>Students will increase their awareness of respect for self, others, environment and learning.</i>	<i>To identify and recognize the components of teacher wellness.</i>
2009-10	<i>The School community will practice and model a healthy lifestyle.</i>	<i>Teachers and students will practice and model respect for self, others, environment and learning.</i>	<i>To learn and engage in strategies that support teacher wellness.</i>
2010-11	<i>The School community will demonstrate and maintain an improved healthy lifestyle.</i>	<i>Students will consistently demonstrate respect for self, others, environment and learning.</i>	<i>To consistently promote teacher wellness practices.</i>

School Development Plan for Goal 1 in Year two of the three year plan.

Goal 1: To promote and maintain a safe, caring and collaborative environment by 2011.		
Objective 1.1: The school community will practice and model a healthy lifestyle choices.	Objective 1.2: Teachers and students will practice and model respect for self, others, environment and learning.	Objective 3. To learn and engage in strategies that support teacher wellness.
Indicators of Success: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scheduled monthly checks and tallys of how many students have healthy snacks for recess. - Tracking of number of students participating in scheduled activities. 	Indicators of Success <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor, through teacher tracking, the level of targeted behaviours in the school environment. - Monitor effectiveness of PBS - Monitor level of student reports of disrespectful acts against them and track types of disrespectful acts. 	Indicators of Success <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Record concerns raised at teacher and administrative meetings. - Number of teachers participating in Yoga and teacher sports.

<p>Strategies:</p> <p>1.1.1 To increase communication on healthy living choices to parents and children through newsletters, calendars, websites and curriculum.</p> <p>1.1.2 To educate and promote healthy lunch choices in the school community.</p> <p>1.1.3 To have designated target food days for healthy snacks.</p> <p>1.1.4 To engage in school wide exercise and extracurricular activities (i.e. skating/swimming, intramurals, Fitgo, Weekly Walks)</p> <p>1.1.5 To involve community partners in healthy choices.</p> <p>1.1.6 Incorporate “Alex’s Way” in curriculum areas. (i.e.: Language Arts, Science, Health, Art, Phys. Ed.)</p>	<p>Strategies:</p> <p>1.2.1 To have specific lessons on respect through announcements on the P.A.</p> <p>1.2.2 To have a specific focus behaviour for the week.</p> <p>1.2.3 To promote a clean up day at school.</p> <p>1.2.4 To have teachers identify what challenges are in our control and which are not in the school environment.</p> <p>1.2.5 Incorporate PBS Model</p> <p>1.2.6 To promote and continue recycling program at school</p>	<p>Strategies:</p> <p>1.3.1 Continued use of buddy system/school based support system.</p> <p>1.3.2 To have teachers identify what challenges are in our control and which are not in the school environment.</p> <p>1.3.3 School organized physical activities. (i.e.: Teachers vs. Teachers and Teachers vs. Students. Yoga)</p>
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Evaluation of Goal One:

1. Fruity Fridays continued throughout the school year. The percentage of students bringing fruits each month increased.
2. All students and staff participated in a school wide lap-a-thon.
3. Our weekly recycling program grew and received exceptional support from the community.
4. Alex’s Way was upgraded to become an outdoor classroom. Five thousand dollars worth of trees were donated by NL Power, as well as countless hours of labor from parents, community volunteers, town council. Over 800 people attended the reopening of Alex’s Way.
5. A daily announcement about behaviors of the week.
6. Teachers developed the behavior Matrix and expectations using the PBS model.

Goal 2: To Increase Understanding and Integration of Technology Across the Curriculum by 2011

Year	Objectives	Objectives
<i>2008-09</i>	To make effective use of technology education in the school.	To provide opportunities for teachers to utilize various forms of technology across the curriculum.
<i>2009-10</i>	To increase the effective use of technology education in all classrooms	To provide opportunities for teachers and students to utilize various forms of technology across the curriculum.
<i>2010-11</i>	To consistently make effective use of technology education in all classrooms	To provide opportunities for teachers, students and parents to utilize various forms of technology across the curriculum.

School Development Plan 2009-2010 in year two of the three year plan.

Goal 2: To Increase Understanding and Integration of Technology Across the Curriculum by 2011.		
Objective 2.1: To increase the effective use of technology education in all classrooms	Objective 2.2: To provide opportunities for teachers and students to utilize various forms of technology across the curriculum.	
Indicators of Success: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The completed inventory list of technology resources previously owned and newly acquired. - Increase in acquired resources. - Increase use of in class computers computer lab and smart board sign-out. 	Indicators of Success <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The number of Technology PD opportunities in which our teachers are engaged - The level of usage of smart boards technology by teachers and students - The increased number of requests for technology support. 	

<p>Strategies:</p> <p>2.1.1 To update regularly an inventory list of technology resources (apparatus and texts) that are available within the school</p> <p>2.1.2 To continue to acquire needed resources, such as smartboards, for classrooms.</p> <p>2.1.3 Provide mini tutorials for staff.</p> <p>2.1.4 To continue to update classroom computers</p> <p>2.1.5.</p>	<p>Strategies:</p> <p>2.2.1 To continue to identify teacher needs in technology education</p> <p>2.2.2 To identify lead teachers having expertise in a variety of technological areas</p> <p>2.2.3 To provide in-service based on teacher needs</p> <p>2.2.4 To provide a variety of technology PD opportunities for teachers (large and small groups)</p>	
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Evaluation of Goal 2 (Technology)

1. Teachers have significantly increased the number of times they bring students to the computer labs on their own and lead the lesson on technology.
2. Teachers used homework pages regularly.
3. Teachers compiled class lists of emails to communicate with parents.
4. First Class is now a recognized means of communication and information sharing.
5. Synervoice has been used successfully throughout the school year.
6. We now have seven whiteboards being used consistently and there is a demand for them in all classrooms.
7. The level of comfort with teachers has greatly improved.

Goal 3: To improve student learning and achievement in Language Arts and Mathematics by 2011 (3 year plan)

Year	Objectives	Objectives	Objectives
2008-09	To increase an awareness of Mathematical Language.	To provide opportunities for teachers to share strategies for teaching visual literacy and create a collection of various forms of visual text.	To establish teacher consistency using the Language Arts and Mathematical rubric.
2009-10	Students will improve their ability to explain their mathematical thinking in oral and written form	Increase student achievement in Visual Literacy.	To increase teacher consistency using the Language Arts and Mathematical rubric.
2010-11	Students will improve their problem solving and mental math strategies.	Students will demonstrate their ability to read, write, and respond personally and critically to various forms text.	To maintain teacher consistency using the Language Arts and Mathematical rubric.

Goal 3: School Development Plan 2009-2010 in year two of the three year plan.

Goal 3: To improve student learning and achievement in Language Arts and Mathematics by 2011		
Objective 3.1: Students will improve their ability to explain their mathematical thinking in oral and written form.	Objective 3.2: Increase student achievement in Visual Literacy	Objective 3.3: To establish teacher consistency using the Language Arts and Mathematical rubric.
Indicators of Success: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased use of mathematical language in school environment. - Review of CRT results 	Indicators of Success <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complied forms of visual text for each grade levels. - Complied forms availed of by grade level teachers. - Increased comfort level for teachers. - CRT results in Visual Literacy. - Students respond critically to a variety of visual text(e.g.: posters, CD cover, webpage, maps, graphs, ...etc) 	Indicators of Success <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consistent use of rubric throughout the school.

<p>Strategies:</p> <p>3.1.1 Create a list of mathematical problems used throughout the grade levels.</p> <p>3.1.2 School wide math Day</p> <p>3.1.3</p> <p>3.1.4 Communicate problem of the week to parents</p> <p>3.1.5 Create a math bulletin board of monthly problems</p>	<p>Strategies:</p> <p>3.2.1 To establish a clear understanding of what visual literacy is.</p> <p>3.2.2 Compile various forms of visual text to be used at each grade level.</p> <p>3.2.3 Incorporate visual literacy in show and tell.</p> <p>3.2.4 Schedule at each grade level and activity related to visual literacy.</p>	<p>Strategies:</p> <p>3.3.1 To provide each teacher with a user friendly version of each rubric.</p> <p>3.3.2 To practice collaboratively at grade level using student samples.</p> <p>3.3.3 To practice collaboratively between grade levels using student samples.</p> <p>3.3.4 Provide teachers with PD in the use of math rubrics</p> <p>3.3.5 Access Numeracy Support Teacher as a resource</p>
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Evaluation of Goal 3:

The results of our Criterion Referenced Assessments indicate that our focus on problem solving was successful. Our school did better this year than we have in the past and achieved higher than the province in this area. However, the results of the other subtests were disappointing. As a school, we will review our Math and Language Arts goals for this year to ensure that the students at our school perform to their optimal level.

The Staff of Topsail Elementary are pleased with our achievements during the 2009-2010 school year. Our technology program has continued to grow, allowing our students to have the skills and equipment necessary to flourish in this technological society. The Positive Behavioral Supports Program is very effective in providing our students a learning environment that is safe, respectful and socially just. The academic needs of the school are being supported on a daily basis to improve those areas and there continues to be ongoing work to maintain the areas of strength. Our goals are established with our school vision in mind – to provide a co-operative, respectful and healthy environment that empowers all to achieve optimal learning.