

# School Report 2006-2007



## Topsail Elementary School

P.O. Box 13121  
Stn. Topsail  
Conception Bay South, NL  
A1W 2K1

### Eastern School District Vision Statement:

To challenge and develop the learning and achievement capabilities of each student in a safe, caring and socially just learning environment.

## Message from the Administration

Topsail Elementary School is pleased to present its annual School Development Report. Since the school opened it has consistently reported on student progress. This annual report outlines our students' achievements, programs and services, and provides an update of our stage in the School Development Plan.

We hope that you read the report carefully, note our strengths and weaknesses, and work with us to enhance the learning environment at Topsail Elementary School. We welcome your comments and encourage you to contact the school with your suggestions. Thank you for your continued support and cooperation.

Please note: Our administration team went through some changes this year. Mrs. Mary Purchase was our principal until April. At that time, she accepted a position as Senior Education Officer with the Eastern School District. Mrs. B. Martin, the former Assistant Principal, was appointed Principal. Mr. R. Deveaux accepted the Assistant Principal position for the remainder of the school year.

**Brenda Martin**  
Principal

**Roger Deveaux**  
Assistant Principal

## Message from the School Council

On behalf of the School Council of Topsail Elementary School, I invite you to read and reflect upon the achievements of our school for the past academic year. This past year has been a rewarding year for our school community. Our school has been involved in various exciting initiatives. I encourage you to read our report and discuss with the school's administrative team any suggestions or comments.

Our school council focus this year was on planning around the decisions of the Eastern School District to reconfigure the grades at Topsail Elementary and our feeder schools for Junior and Senior High. The council worked with the staff at Eastern School District, the student's parents and the administration of both Topsail Elementary and Villa Nova Junior High to ensure a smooth transition of our students.

Each year, the parents of Topsail Elementary School support the school with a fee in lieu of fundraising. This fee supports teachers in classroom based initiatives. We thank you for your response to our fee in lieu of fundraising.

Dave Steinhauer  
Chair

## Our School

Topsail Elementary School is part of the Eastern School District which has 122 schools. Topsail Elementary includes grades kindergarten to five with a current enrolment of 618 students. Our school serves the community of Topsail in Conception Bay South and the wider community of Eastern Conception Bay South for the Early French Immersion Program.

## Our Staff and Classes

Our school has a total of 35.91 educational staff, which includes 25 classroom teachers, and 5 special services personnel. We have a guidance counselor, a .75 learning resource teacher, 2.66 specialist teachers in the areas of music and physical education as well as the support of 2 student assistants. In addition to the staff based at the school, we have access to District Office Staff including: a speech-language pathologist; a school psychologist; itinerant teachers for students with visual impairments, hearing impairments and learning disabilities. The school also has the services of secretarial, maintenance and cafeteria personnel.

## Special Services

Presently at Topsail Elementary School, we have the services of 5 Special Education teachers and two student assistants. These individuals served 99 special education students over the school year.

Our aim is to meet the identified needs of all students requiring special education support. In consultation with all involved, an individualized support services plan is designed. This program builds on the strengths of the students and meets their individual needs through program and evaluation modifications and/or adaptations.

## Class Size

2006-2007		
Grade	Number of Students	Number of Groups
Kindergarten – English	58	4
K - French Immersion	32	2
Grade One English	64	3
Grade One French Immersion	35	2
Grade Two English	71	3
Grade Two French Immersion	31	2
Grade Three English	85	3
Grade Three French Immersion	25	1
Grade Four English	74	3
Grade Four French Immersion	27	1
Grade Five English	90	3
Grade Five French Immersion	26	1

## What Programs are offered at our school?

### Regular Curriculum

All our school programs are based upon a curriculum which is prescribed by the Department of Education. This curriculum identifies learning outcomes for students in the different subject areas. The outcomes for each level provide teachers and parents with specific direction as to what students are expected to know, understand and be able to do as a result of instruction at the various grade levels.

In addition to regular classroom programming, Topsail Elementary School also had the services of specialist teachers in the areas of guidance, resource based learning, music and physical education.

### Guidance/Counselling Services

Guidance programming at Topsail Elementary is preventative and developmental in nature, focusing primarily on the healthy growth of all children in the school community. Guidance addresses the students' developmental needs in the areas of self development, social development, career and cognitive development. The Guidance program is delivered to the student body through a team approach involving all staff members.

At the beginning of each school year, there is a focus in all classes on the rights and responsibilities of all members of Topsail Elementary to maintain a peaceful and respectful environment and to maximize students' full academic and social potential. All problem solving that occurs between children is anchored back to the themes included in the rights and responsibilities of students and staff at Topsail. This is reinforced throughout the school year with classroom presentations, when needed, by the guidance counselor, the administration, the teachers and the use of guest speakers such as Constable Nixon who spoke to the Grade 4 and 5's about bullying prevention.

The guidance program offers a direct service to students in the area of counseling, problem solving, conflict resolution, social skills and comprehensive assessments. Some of the services offered through the guidance program during the past year include:

- Consultation to students and parents in a broad area of needs such as special education, discipline, parenting, personal issues and homework.
- Providing comprehensive assessments to students to determine their strengths and needs to ensure appropriate programming.
- Lunch time drop in group. This provides students with an alternate setting to their classroom if they find unstructured time challenging.
- Maintaining a Resource Center for parents and teachers so they can be given information on specific issues as they relate to their children/students.
- Grade 4 and 5 Transition Day. This is an annual activity which gives the students a chance to have a tour of their new school and to meet their new teachers for grades five and six.
- Tutoring for Tuition. This is a provincially sponsored program that trains high school students to provide tutoring services for students in Grades K-12. This year there were 34 students who received tutoring services in both the English and French Immersion streams.
- Roots of Empathy Program.
- Community liaison to facilitate referrals and meetings with outside agencies such as the Janeway, Community Health Services and other agencies as needed.

## Learning Resource Center

This year the Resource Centre organized a variety of events to promote reading and literacy. During the month of December, we held a read-aloud for various grade levels during lunch hour. Children were encouraged to come to the Resource Centre for a read aloud. In January, Topsail Elementary School celebrated Family Literacy Week. During this week a variety of activities were initiated to encourage families to spend special time together completing literacy activities such as Literacy Bingo that was completed at home. Also, Ms. Smith coordinated lunch time readings for students to expose them to a number of different genres of books. Also, the Resource Centre hosted a Scholastic Book Fair in the winter. This was an extremely successful event in promoting literacy in our school. The book fair ended with a family day that encouraged students and parents to come to the school and peruse the books together and read to each other. In addition to

promoting literacy, the book fair also provides funds for the school to continue to build their collection of books to keep students motivated and interested in reading.

In addition to promoting a love of reading throughout the school community, the Resource Centre teacher collaborates with homeroom teachers to design units of work in accordance with curriculum outcomes. These units access both the LRC and the computer lab. It may take anywhere from 2-6 weeks to implement these units. The following units were completed this year:

Kindergarten	Snowmen
Grade One	Penguins
Grade Two	Dinosaurs
Grade Three	Bats/Landforms/Martin Luther King
Grade Four	Australia
Grade Five	Vikings

The Resource Centre is also used for book exchange. There are three ways that library books may be circulated among the students.

- Student selection using library passes. The library is open each morning at 8:25-8:50am and 10:25-11:40am for students to select/exchange their book.
- Student selection during weekly class visits. Each class is designated one 40 minute period for book exchange during a 7 day cycle.
- Teacher selection. Teachers may take out library books for students to use in their classrooms.

We encourage students to visit the Resource Centre to read, select or exchange a book. Students appreciate the opportunity to make their own selections as frequently as possible. This process encourages increased reading, independence and pride.

## Music

Topsail Elementary School offers a Music program that involves all the students from Kindergarten to Grade Five. The program centers on the Kodaly Method and students are active participants in rhythmic activity and solfege based singing. Students are exposed to orff and rhythm instruments, note and rhythmic reading, music games and choral speech and singing. All students study composers, transitional music, families of instruments and various musical genres.

Topsail Elementary School has a strong recorder program which is introduced at the Grade Three level. Students are given opportunities to demonstrate their skills in group ensembles and individual performances. Students are able to become active participants in Primary Choir (Grades 2 and 3) and Elementary Choir (Grades 4 and 5). These choirs are non-select groups which perform in concerts, assemblies and choral festivals.

In addition, emphasis is placed on developing confidence, self-esteem and the ability to work as a team. To support these goals all students at every grade level (K-5) are involved throughout the year in musical productions. Throughout the 2007 academic

year, Topsail Elementary School has staged five musicals, giving all students the experience of performing in public.

We are extremely fortunate this year to have the services of an itinerant teacher for Instrumental Music. Mr. Robert Lee is our instrumental music teacher. The Topsail Elementary Band Program is a co-curricular instrumental program open to Grade 5 students. Interested students receive small and large group instruction in brass, woodwind, percussion or bass guitar. Students work as an ensemble to make music and experience exciting performance opportunities in school concerts and assemblies!

## Physical Education

The Physical Education program at Topsail Elementary provides a wide variety of movement experiences which develop individual physical abilities and promote positive attitudes towards active living, fair play and personal achievement. Involvement in the skills program is intended to improve fitness levels, enhance self-esteem and provide the basic skills necessary for active recreation and peer socialization. At the primary level, these outcomes are realized by participating in a variety of low organized cooperative games and activities that are designed to provide the maximum amount of fun, as well as serving as an educational tool.

The elementary program attempts to build on the skills and attitudes promoted at the primary level, with greater emphasis on skills appropriate for participation in a variety of team sports such as soccer, basketball, volleyball and floor hockey, as well as individual sports such as badminton and skating.

Extra-curricular activities such as the Intramural Program and the after-school basketball program provide additional opportunities for Grade Four and Five students to develop individual skills and team concepts. The Physical Education Program is closely linked to the school development initiatives and generally supports the goals of active living.

In line with our school goal of Personal Well Being in the School Community our school participated in a number of initiatives this past school year. This past year the School Development Team sponsored weekly activities where all members of the school community participated in physical activity at the classroom level and/or a school wide walk through the neighbourhood. Our primary and elementary students participated in a five week skating session at the CBS arena. In addition, students were encouraged to bring water bottles to school and to play outside whenever the weather permitted.

## How well do our Students Achieve the Outcomes in Language Arts and Math?

Our school's current data is a summary of school, district and provincial results on the provincial assessment. This data has indicated that our primary results (overall) for June, 2007 were above the district and provincial averages for most areas. In Language Arts, we are pleased that Demand Writing, Informational Text and Speaking were areas of strength while Visual Literacy and Poetry were identified as areas of need for our school.

Math scores in number operations and number concepts were above the district. Shape and Space were identified as areas of need. Our action teams will complete further analysis of the data received.

The following chart indicates the percentage of students who scored adequate or better in our school compared to our district and the province in Primary Language Arts and Math.

Primary English Language Arts Provincial Assessment - June 2007 Topsail Elementary Level 3, 4 and 5 Combined						
	Demand Writing*	Reading			Listening	Speaking*
		Poetic	Informational	Visual		
School	81.6	50.6	78.3	32.0	70.2	100.0
District	75.9	67.1	76.8	45.7	64.7	86.5
Province	74.5	65.8	74.4	42.6	64.1	85.7

\*only a representative sample of students were selected to complete these portions of the test.

Primary Mathematics Provincial Assessment - June 2007 Topsail Elementary Level 3, 4 and 5 Combined								
	Number Operations				Number Concepts		Shape and Space	
	Reasoning	Communication	Connections & Representing	Problem Solving	Number Sense	Place Value	Measurement	Geometry
School	48.6	44.1	39.8	61.2	56.0	56.9	43.1	41.7
District	44.2	38.2	36.1	51.7	53.5	52.0	44.9	44.9
Province	43.6	37.5	36.3	51.9	53.9	52.2	45.1	46.9

## School Development Plan

Topsail Elementary School is in its second year of School Development following the new provincial model. During the 2005-2006 school year, the school staff participated in Professional Development Days to develop the vision and value statements that will guide our school through the next three to five years. In the spring of 2006, we began the Internal School Review. Parents may recall that we surveyed a sample of parents, teachers and students to help us identify our strengths and areas of focus. In January of 2007, a professional development day was held to complete the Internal School Review.

The Internal Review focused on criteria established by the Department of Education to guide schools through their Internal Review process. The Internal Review is a process of gathering information in four areas of the school environment: school organization, leadership, teaching and learning, and climate and culture. Information was gathered, recorded, and analyzed by reviewing the school's actions and practices: student academic and achievement data; student, parent and teacher survey results in order to develop an overall picture of the school's areas of strengths and challenges. It is through the identified challenges that the school will identify the goals for the next three years.

While moving forward with the Provincial Model for School Development to build consensus around the new goals, our school continued to focus on our two school wide goals of Active Healthy Living and Mathematical Literacy during this school year.

The school development team had planned on using a professional development day in June to review the challenges that were identified from the Internal Review and form two new goals to meet the challenges identified in the review process. However, the team decided that the development of the school's new goals would be more appropriate to delay until the fall because of the unusual challenges facing the school in the last two months of the school year. Instead, our action teams were utilized to ensure that all the needs identified by the reconfiguration of the school were met. We also utilized our teams to assist in minimizing any disruption in the students' learning. The reconfiguration of the school presented a one-time, short term set of unique challenges that needed to be addressed immediately in order to maintain the overall smooth operation of the school.

During the 2006-2007 school year, Topsail Elementary went through a period of transition which resulted in the school changing from a K - 5 school to a K-4. In order to ensure a smooth and successful transition process for the parents, students, teachers, and the school board, a number of meetings, consultations and planning sessions were held. In addition to the transition planning for the grade 4's and 5's, there were a number of challenges in transitioning Topsail Elementary from a K to 5 school to a K to 4. These challenges involved the reassignment of some classrooms and changes to the physical layout of others to ensure the proper space was available for all remaining students.

Thus, in conclusion, the two new goals will be developed in the fall of the 2007-2008 school year based on the critical issues identified in the Internal Review Process. Below,

is a list of the two goals that the school was working on over the last year and the actions that were taken throughout the year to meet those goals.

Goal: To create an active healthy school environment		
Actions	Time Lines	Desired Outcomes
All students participate in Terry Fox Walk for cancer research	Fall 2006	To engage all students in physical activity.
To participate in Healthy Students/Healthy Schools Commotion	September 29, 2006	To engage all students in physical activity.
To plan a sports day to provide a celebration like atmosphere around active living	Spring of 2007	To motivate families to take part in more outdoor sports for the fun it provides.
Celebrates International Dance Day	Spring of 2007	To expose students to non-traditional physical activities
To provide students with gym equipment during recess and lunch to encourage more activities	All year	To increase the number of kids involved in physical activities during recess and lunch play times.
To celebrate individual and team successes throughout the school	Make announcements to celebrate successes as they are shared with the school	To reinforce the physical activity the students engage in outside the school.
To plan a weekly school wide physical activity (Fit Go/Walk through the neighbourhood).	Every Friday afternoon	To engage all students in physical activity.

Goal: Students will demonstrate and communicate mathematical reasoning with respect to number concepts.		
Actions	Timelines	Desired Outcomes
To discuss teachers expectation of one mathematic concept at each grade level	Spring of 2007	For teachers to have a better understanding of the expectations at the grade level below and above them
Analyze the Primary Math CRT and determine areas of strength and weakness	Fall 2006	Identify an area of focus in the curriculum.
At grade level collaboratively plan a unit with emphasis on practices	November Inservice	To discuss and reflect on how we should teach and assess to better inform our

to engage learners and instructional assessment tasks.		instruction.
Implement the collaboratively planned unit	January	To gain further insight to better inform instruction as to where students are in relation to selected outcomes.
Work with Susan Ryan to discuss indicators of achievement	February	To discuss and reflect on how we should teach and assess to better inform our instruction.
Share indicators of achievement and assessment tasks at grade level and area level.	February – June	To gain further insight to better inform instruction as to where students are in relation to selected outcomes.
Throughout the school year at grade levels we will share articles on mathematical literacy. We have purchased various mathematical teacher resources and will devote Professional Development Days to this goal.		

## School Council

Our School Council met regularly throughout the year. The School Council Chairperson for 2006-2007 was David Steinhauer. Other council members included: Brenda Martin - Teacher Representative, Heather Squires – Teacher Representative, Loretta Crisby-Whittle - Parent Representative, Jackie Taylor-Myles – Parent Representative, Kerry Murray – Parent Representative, Lori Evoy – Community Representative and Mary D. Purchase - Principal. Contact Information and Minutes of School Council Meetings are available at the School Office.

The Site Development committee is a sub-committee of School Council. Late fall and early spring of this year, site visits were completed to evaluate possible areas for future improvements. Our current focus is to develop a quiet outdoor space for the students and the area selected is behind the school just outside the Resource Center. The development of this project should be completed by the fall of 2007.

Each year the Site Development Committee sponsors an annual clean up day in late May or early June.

