

## Ecole Beechville Lakeside Timberlea Junior School



### Provincial Assessments

There were no provincial assessments in Grades Primary to Two during the 2015-16 school year.

For the past three years, BLT Jr. has committed its efforts to implementing its school improvement plan. Our staff is cohesive and dedicated in its vision to close the learning gap for all our students. We are committed to working together on our two school goals moving our school closer to the end result of reading with stronger comprehension and knowing what and how to apply number sense to our everyday math.

Although we are pleased to report that we are seeing improvement in both of these areas, we recognize that we cannot slow our efforts and that we must stay the course. We must continue to push forward so that all of our students grow as learners and reach their full potential. Our school plan has focused on two high impact areas: reading comprehension and number sense.

#### **Let's begin with reading comprehension:**

Our teachers regularly engage in collaborative conversations about their students and how to best support them in their learning. Teachers work regularly in PLCs (Professional Learning Communities) to review student work samples, assessment data and to plan student instruction on a weekly basis. In addition to large group instruction, explicit lessons are presented to individual or small groups of students to target specific areas. The Workshop Model of teaching literacy provides teachers with numerous opportunities to conference with students, providing them with timely and useful feedback they need to improve. During conferencing, teachers are asking students deeper level thinking questions; ones that will strengthen their reading comprehension. This way, students read with a deeper understanding and ultimately, become more confident readers as they share in depth connections, make predictions and pose though provoking 'I wonder' questions. School-based data shows that our students are able to respond to deeper thinking questions and to support their answers when reading 'Just Right' books.

The 'Getting to Great Survey' results show that our staff is implementing this model of teaching on a daily basis. They make sure to work with small groups or individual students to teach mini-lessons targeting specific areas of need and have ensured more 'sharing' time both in Language Arts and Math. Sharing time improves student's ability to understand what they are reading.

Teachers use both formative and summative assessments to track their students' learning and to plan next steps. They have regular 'check-ins' with students so they can gauge what students can or cannot do at a certain point and then determine next steps to support them. They also use the information they gather to plan targeted lessons for students, allowing students more opportunities to learn at their own pace.

Although the Grade Two Literacy Assessment (HRSB) has not been administered for the past two years, we do collect reading data both in Term 1 and in Term 3 of the school year.

Our students continue to make good strides with their reading in both the English and French Immersion programs. June data showed that the majority of our Primary students (81%) were reading fluently and with solid comprehension at the expected year end benchmark. (79%) of Grade One students and (86%) of Grade Two students met year end benchmarks. Of the remaining students who did not yet meet the benchmarks, many were approaching expectations. Although we celebrate successes, this is a work in progress; one which is ongoing and will continue in the years to come!

This year we continued working towards becoming a more culturally responsive school. Through professional development and work in Professional Learning Communities, we are getting better at recognizing what it means to be a culturally responsive school. Through our actions in and out of the classroom, we are striving to implement a curriculum that is more relevant and meaningful to our students. We continue to build even stronger home-school connections in the hopes of learning more about our students, their families and ourselves.

### **And now, Mathematics:**

Teachers continue to work together in PLCs to develop a common understanding of the grade level expectations around number sense. With the introduction of a new curriculum, we have been learning to integrate all subjects into Math and Language Arts. Teachers appreciate the fact that there are fewer outcomes to cover, giving more time to in depth exploration of these concepts. Ultimately, this should result in students developing a strong sense of 'Number'.

Teacher Teams created common math assessments for each grade level. They identified a series of outcomes that were relevant to their grade levels and identified indicators of success (things that students should be able to know, show and do). Grade levels administered common assessments, analyzed the data and identified areas of strength and challenge. We noted that the majority of students can model and represent a given number to 20 using a variety of manipulatives and pictorials. Teachers indicated students are stronger at representing and modeling numbers using concrete materials. Teachers have built in more 'sharing' time into their daily lessons and they are seeing heightened understanding with their students. Students are better able to explain their thinking in math and are feeling more confident about doing so. Next year, we will continue our work on understanding and setting student learning targets. Developing math language across grade levels as well as more practice with partitioning will also be a focus.

Our school takes great pride in our students' success. We believe that our students are brilliant. Our students can learn. Our students will learn. We strive to build a learning community where both students and staff are supported in their learning journeys. Although we have seen growth with both reading comprehension and number sense, we are committed to closing the achievement gap for all students. And so we move forward.....