

# Annual Report to the Community

September 2013 - June 2014

## Bridgewater Elementary School



### A note from the Principal

Bridgewater Elementary is a P-6 school with approximately 460 students who mainly reside in the town of Bridgewater. We have a very dedicated staff and a very supportive family/volunteer group. With tremendous support and keen student interest, we are very fortunate to offer a wide variety of extra curricular programming including: Drama, choir, chime choir, student voices, numerous sports teams, activity clubs such: robotics, chess club, French club, gardening club, peer helpers, green team and many more.

Unique to our school, is the that we offer a middle French Immersion program which begins at the grade 4 level and continues on into our high school. Bridgewater Elementary has been very active and deliberate in making the necessary school improvements to make our school a great place to learn. Both our SAC and Home and School play a very active role in this process and we are very fortunate to have these two great committees. It is our hope, that with the support and voice of our staff, students, parents and the community, we will plan accordingly and implement strategies that will support our goals for improvement. David O'Quinn



Graduates from the DARE program

### Data and Results

#### Writing

##### 2011-12 Writing Average Comparison

| Grade Level | BES Average | SSRSB Average | Change |
|-------------|-------------|---------------|--------|
| Grade 1     | 59%         | 65%           | (-6%)  |
| Grade 2     | 63%         | 67%           | (-4%)  |
| Grade 3     | 70%         | 71%           | (-1%)  |
| Grade 4     | 66%         | 69%           | (-3%)  |
| Grade 5     | 65%         | 66%           | (-1%)  |
| Grade 6     | 70%         | 73%           | (-3%)  |

Overall Decrease (2011) \*\*Average (-3%) per grade

In 2011-2012, the overall writing average for BES Grade 1-6 students was 3% less than the SSRSB average. This gave us our first goal for improvement.

#### Sense of Belonging

In 2013, the percentage of grade 4-6 students having a positive sense of belonging was 78%. This is lower than the Canadian average of 85%. Although the level was higher than the Canadian average at the grade 4 level it was lower for both grades 5 and 6 dropping the overall average below the Canadian average. As a school we felt that is was a second area that could be improved.

### Professional Learning

Over the past year, staff at BES were involved in Professional Learning aimed at supporting our two school improvement goals. Stephen Jamieson, our school district's literacy mentor, helped teachers familiarize themselves with a school-wide writing map to plan their year. Teachers were also involved in a Restorative Approach workshop and learned how to use circles to give students a voice and support their learning. Embedded Time was invaluable in affording time for professional development to happen. Teachers have been working together in teams to share practices, knowledge and skills to help improve writing, math and to support students emotionally and socially.

## Continuous School Improvement

Continuous School Improvement is a process whereby a school team identifies areas of focus for a set amount of time to improve student development and student learning. The choice of focus for a particular school must originate from data indicating a specific need for change in order to elicit positive change. The time line set to achieve set goals must keep everyone true to the target goal but must also be flexible as teaching and learning is always shifting. BES used data from the Tell Them From Me surveys, provincial tests and from the school board's SELL/ExSELL data to choose goals for our students. We set a timeline of June 2015 for both goals; Improving Students' Sense of Belonging and Student Writing.

Having students re-do the Tell Them From Me survey this year, and looking at our year-end SELL/ExSELL writing assessments was an indicator that we are improving in both areas. We have learned that students report to have a higher sense of belonging then they had in 2013. We might contribute this increase to the strategies that were put in place to support this goal. In terms of our writing focus, we look forward to beginning in September with the writing map in place to organize writing instruction for Grades P-6 for the school year. We will also be looking at further strategies to support student writing. Our full school improvement plan is available on our

### School Goals

In order to identify two goals for improvement we had to look at a number of pieces of data. The Tell Them From Me surveys gave us insight to what the students were experiencing in terms of social and emotional successes and struggles at school. Provincial Assessment Data provided us with a base of where students stood in terms of academics in relation to students across the province. Our SELL/EXCELL data provided us with data in terms of reading and writing at each of the grade levels.

From the Tell them from Me data collected, it was apparent that students at BES were below the average in terms of having a positive sense of belonging. As the Canadian average was 85%, BES was a few percentages lower at 78%. This indicated to us that we needed to make sure that all of our students were experiencing a positive sense of belonging at our school and we would plan strategies to support this goal. Those strategies included: 1. providing PD opportunities for teachers to develop further skills and knowledge in providing supports to students in hopes of increasing their sense of belonging. 2. Implement activities and opportunities to create a shared BES Identity that includes all students and staff. 3. Create opportunities for students to explore possible interests that may increase their sense of belonging at BES.

Using the SELL/EXCELL data results of 2011 it became apparent that students in our school on average were 3% less in terms of writing. In order to lesson this gap, we decided to implement the following strategies until 2015: 1. Provide PD opportunities for teachers to develop further skills in providing activities to students to enhance their writing. 2. Create opportunities to celebrate writing both in the classroom and as a school. 3. Create a P-6 writing map that would support teachers in planning their Language Arts units at each of the grade level. We look forward to working with students, parents and community in making BES a great place to learn.



**Bridgewater Elementary School**

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