

School Growth Plan

May 2009

SCHOOL NAME: Braefoot Elementary

GRADE CONFIGURATION: Kindergarten to Grade 5

ENROLMENT NUMBERS: 240

School Context:

Braefoot School is situated adjacent to the semi-rural Blenkinsop Valley. The immediate area is predominantly single family dwellings. A wide range of ethnic backgrounds are represented in the student population. Approximately 7 % receive ESL support. Next year will be our sixth year as a K-5 school. We have created a K-5 model that encompasses a balanced emphasis on academics, athletics and fine arts. This is evidenced by high standings in test scores, high participation levels in physical activities, and whole school involvement in a wide variety of drama, music, and visual arts programmes. This will continue to be a focus for our staff and students in the 2009-2010 school year. Braefoot School has a mix of highly experienced teaching staff, many of whom have a long history with the school as well as some younger teachers who add a fresh perspective. The parent population has high expectations regarding the quality of education and range of academic and extra-curricular opportunities available to their children. The school is supported by a dedicated Parent Advisory Council. There are a large number of enthusiastic parent volunteers who support classroom teachers with activities in and out of the classroom.

Summary of Progress 2008/09 Goals:

- Following professional development with staff there has been an increase in strategic, purposeful talk during class time.
- Classes are spending a greater percentage of instructional time on oral language.
- Some classes have established criteria for effective speaking and listening.
- Every staff meeting has dedicated in-service time focusing on learning strategies, with a particular emphasis on learning and boys. In addition, many staff member participated in the guided reading sessions for the new reading resources.
- Use of .1 Literacy/Numeracy time has been strategic focusing on school goals.
- Clearly allocating the purchase of resources to be used in reaching school goals, such as reading resources that include a strong oral language component.
- The time spent in writing and representing in Language Arts and Math is aligned with the curriculum.
- At some grades there has been a shift in distribution of performance for writing in the School-wide write, however, it is not universal and there are some anomalies.
- We have maintained the number of students who are exceeding expectations

for writing based on School-wide write data.

- Teachers are working together assessing and marking the School-wide write and developing teaching plans to address learning needs that are observed from assessing student writing.
- 92% of students reported on the 2007-2008 FSA that they feel they are getting better at writing sentences at least some of the time, and 76% report the same most or all of the time.
- Every year we have exceeded previous participation levels in extra-curricular activities.
- Grade 5 students have become more active in leadership opportunities. Opportunities for leadership have been created and offered to students who seek leadership and to those who would not typically seek leadership. There are a couple of examples of students who were struggling with behaviour in the classroom who have had leadership opportunities and turned their academic year around, becoming more engaged learners.
- In the 2007-2008 satisfaction survey 94% of students reported that they feel safe at school at least sometimes, with 83% stating they feel safe most or all the time.
- In the 2007-2008 satisfaction survey 97% of parents reported that their child feels safe at school at least sometimes, with 87% stating their child feels safe most or all the time.
- All staff participated in a monthly book club for Boy Smarts by Barry MacDonald. Report card data for boys who were identified as possibly having difficulty focusing or achieving in class was compared between first and second term. 68% of the identified boys improved by either a grade in language arts or math or in one or more of three student behaviour criteria, 23% dropped in some way, and 13% maintained their marks.

Our Goals 2009/10:

Our goals for 2009/2010 are to ensure that our students are confident, engaged learners. It is our expectation that by creating an environment where students feel valued and supported, where teachers encourage students to always do their best while structuring the environment for students to take ownership of their own learning, we will facilitate student achievement and the development of life long learners.

GOAL #1

GOAL:

By using assessment for learning strategies with a focus in writing we will create confident, skillful learners who make meaningful connections to the concepts, and who take ownership of their learning.

RATIONALE: *(Briefly explain why you selected this goal – include evidence from Appendix 1)*

Research demonstrates that traditional forms of feedback have little or no positive impact on student learning as they do not inform the student of how to improve their work. Indeed, marks and grades could possibly have a negative or regressive impact on learning and achievement, especially for low achieving students who may come to believe they are not capable as they believe they are not good learners.

Butler (1988) demonstrated in a controlled experiment of three groups receiving marks only, comments only, and marks and comments, that the 'comment only' group was the only group that demonstrated gains in achievement. Clarke (2005) however, states that peer- and self-assessment using success criteria generated from student examples is both motivating and even more powerful in improving learning than 'comment only' marking. By inviting students to routinely practice the skills of self-assessment, they will use feedback to become reflective, self-monitoring learners who are able to improve their own performance.

- School-wide Write for Spring 2008 and 2009
- Boy Smarts report card data comparison
- Second term report card data
- FSA Results for 2008 and 2009

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS

We can see from our School-wide write results that there have been some gains in achievement, but they are not consistent. We believe that if we continue on the path of taking a more structured approach to assessment as learning with our students in writing we will improve writing results. Our FSA results indicate that more students are struggling in writing that in the previous year. However, this is a different cohort and not indicative of a trend. Our second term report card data ranges from 65% to 100% in the approaching expectations to Exceeding expectations criteria, and from 45% to 100% in the fully meeting to exceeding expectations range for language arts. We have noted that by implementing a Just Right Reading program that runs out of the Resource Room where struggling readers are given leveled books appropriate to their level to be read during their independent reading time and for home reading, students have been graduating from learning assistance at a faster rate than in previous years.

In addition, our focus on supporting boys who may have difficulty focusing or achieving in class demonstrated that thoughtful changes in practice to support their needs can result in an increase in achievement for the boys in language arts.

ACTIONS:

<p align="center">New or Ongoing Initiatives</p>	<p>How are you or will you monitor and evaluate success? What are your targets?</p>
<p>Staff Professional Development .1 literacy/numeracy time spent with teachers individually and in groups to support implementation of assessment as learning strategies for clear learning intentions, peer and self-assessment, ownership of learning, directed discussion, etc.</p> <p>Focused opportunities during school professional development sessions; featuring regular in-service, role plays and feedback.</p> <p>Explore programs to support the writing process for students such as <i>Six Traits of Writing</i></p>	<p>50% of our .1 literacy/numeracy time is spent partner with teachers e.g. co-creating criteria for peer and self-assessment</p> <p>30% of .1 literacy/numeracy time will be used to develop some of the resources for teachers to use with students.</p> <p>Increase in engagement and ownership of student learning as demonstrated through increased performance in writing in report card, FSA, School-wide Write data</p>
<p>Teacher Roles Clearly state the learning intention for students and use exemplars to help students understand the expectations.</p>	<p>In a random sample of students 80% will be able to answer the question, "What are you expected to learn in this lesson today?"</p>
<p>School Roles We will develop a binder of student writing to help teachers collect exemplars that are meaningful to students.</p> <p>We will begin developing linear examples of student improvement from Not Yet Meeting Expectations to Exceeding Expectations for all grades for the attributes of meaning, style, form and conventions as referents for students.</p> <p>We will create a bulletin board of writing exemplars through the grades for both students and parents to use for assessment of a student's progress.</p> <p>Consult with staff to create a bank of successful assessment as learning strategies for writing.</p> <p>Create a file for the School-wide write and assessments to monitor student progress over time.</p> <p>Recognize and celebrate student written work in writing through the newsletter, web site, regular bulletin board displays and PA announcements.</p>	<p>100% of students will improve performance in at least one of the attributes of meaning, style, form or conventions between the first School-wide Write and the second School-wide Write.</p> <p>Student portfolio of School-wide Write</p>

Student Roles

During the writing process students will be involved in peer and self assessment of their writing, looking for specified attributes.

Students will use the T-chart to look for evidence of meeting criteria.

Students will use the Performance Standards or teacher and student generated criteria in writing to guide student learning.

Grades K to 3 are spending 20 – 40% of instructional time writing and representing in language arts and math.

Grades 4 to 5 are spending 25 – 35% of instructional time writing and representing in language arts and math.

80% of students will improve on their report card marks for language arts (writing) between first and second term.

A random survey of 80% of students will be familiar with the performance criteria for the writing assignment they are working on.

100% of students will report that they are getting better at writing on the 2010 Satisfaction Survey.

GOAL #2

GOAL:

By using assessment for learning strategies with a focus in numeracy we will create confident, skillful learners who make meaningful connections to the concepts, and who take ownership of their learning.

RATIONALE: *(Briefly explain why you selected this goal – include evidence from Appendix 1)*

Assessment *as* Learning strategies could be used so students would be able to direct their own learning and become more effective problem solvers. By applying the principles of peer- and self-assessment together with success criteria and student examples, students direct their own learning by setting clear learning goals based on their understanding of the success criteria.

We know from research that students need to have their basic needs met and they also need to feel good about themselves as learners. “Emotional messages guide the individual’s behavior, including directing its attention and attention drives learning, But even more important to understand is that it is emotion that comes *before* cognitive recognition.” David Sousa, *How the Brain Learns Mathematics*, p. 100. Students are more likely to engage emotionally if they have an understanding of how the concepts relates to their everyday life. In addition, it is our expectation that placing the focus on where you are as a learner and how you can improve through assessment as learning practices, will help address the emotional component of students, especially struggling students who find learning and achieving difficult, and at times, frustrating.

- Satisfaction Survey from 2008
- Boy Smarts report card data comparison
- Second term report card data
- FSA results for 2008 and 2009
- VIDMA results
- Year-end report cards

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS

A comparison of the FSA results from 2008 and 2009 showed 12% not yet meeting expectations in 2008 with 88% meeting or exceeding expectations. Although it is encouraging, it is difficult to say if there is a trend toward improving achievement as it is a different cohort of students. Then in the latest available Satisfaction Survey results, 81% of students indicated that they felt that all of the time or many times they were improving in math. It appears that there has been a general trend toward slightly fewer students reporting that they are improving in math; down from 4 years ago when 85% reported they were improving in math. Our second term report card data indicates that the percentage of students fully meeting or exceeding expectations for numeracy is about 80% or above. In 2009, 100% of students met or exceeded expectation. (Note: We are using second term report card data for the first time due to the new deadline dates for our Growth Plan.)

In addition, our focus on supporting boys who may have difficulty focusing or achieving in class demonstrated that thoughtful changes in practice to support their needs can result in an increase in achievement for the boys in numeracy.

ACTIONS:

<p align="center">New or Ongoing Initiatives</p>	<p>How are you or will you monitor and evaluate success? What are your targets?</p>
<p>Staff Professional Development .1 literacy/numeracy time spent with teachers individually and in groups to support implementation of assessment as learning strategies for clear learning intentions, peer and self-assessment, ownership of learning, directed discussion, etc.</p> <p>Focused opportunities during school professional development sessions; featuring regular in-service, role plays and feedback.</p>	<p>50% of our .1 literacy/numeracy time is spent partner with teachers e.g. co-creating criteria for peer and self-assessment</p> <p>30% of .1 literacy/numeracy time will be used to develop some of the resources for teachers to use with students.</p> <p>Increase in engagement and ownership of student learning as demonstrated through increased performance in numeracy in report card, and FSA results</p>
<p>Teacher Roles Clearly state the learning intention for students before a lesson and summarize the learning after a lesson:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Today I learned: 2. This connects/add to what know about: 3. What I learned today can help me later when: <p>Build confident learners by ensuring that meaning is attached to the concept. E.g. Introduce a lesson about fractions with a question about which piece of pie would they like ... $\frac{1}{3}$, $\frac{1}{5}$ or $\frac{1}{4}$?</p> <p>Build confident math learners by beginning each new concept with many and varied concrete experiences before moving toward the abstract.</p> <p>Begin to present exemplars to students to clarify the learning intention and quality of performance.</p> <p>Use peers to support the learning of others in Math.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer to peer support • Buddy learning between grades • 4 classes will work as buddies to support younger learners in math 	<p>In a sample survey students are able to tell someone what the learning intentions are for the numeracy lesson in any classroom or what they learned that day.</p> <p>In a sample survey, students are able to answer the question, “What I learned today will be helpful when...?”</p> <p>90% of students will report that all of the time or many times they are getting better at math on the satisfaction survey</p> <p>50% of teachers will commit to a lesson series in problem solving with the support of the .1 literacy/numeracy teacher using exemplars to demonstrate the problem solving process and will provide feedback on the experience for them and their students</p> <p>80% of students participating will report that they like working with peers in math in a survey</p>

School Role

Organize a Math Mania night for parents and students to create a common language in September of October.

Math Fun Packs that go home with struggling math learners for extra practice.

50% of families will attend a Math Mania night

Students receiving Math Fun Packs will master the skill or concept.

GOAL #3

GOAL:

Students will demonstrate socially responsible behaviour, in small group activities, whole class activities, daily routines, and personal conduct in accordance with provincial Performance Standards.

RATIONALE: *(Briefly explain why you selected this goal – include evidence from Appendix 1)*

Developing and promoting socially responsible students is a philosophical belief of the Braefoot School community. We believe it is important to create attachment through personal relationships with adults and peers. Through a strong program of participation to develop social responsibility and connectedness, we expect to foster leadership and self-esteem building for all learners. We have consistently observed the benefits of socially responsible behaviour to the global community and to the health and well-being of the individual student.

- Satisfaction Surveys
- Teacher and parent observation/feedback
- Philosophical belief that all children should have the opportunity to experience participation without external rewards or recognition
- Student input
- Office referrals
- Counselling referrals
- Student leadership and charitable activities
- Boy Smarts report card comparison data

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS

In the 2008 Satisfaction Survey 84% of students and 88% of parents reported that the students felt safe at school all the time or many times. Our focus on supporting boys who may have difficulty focusing or achieving in class demonstrated that thoughtful changes in practice to support their needs can result in an increase in achievement.

We have several anecdotal stories of how providing students with the opportunity for leadership and/or participation in school activities has helped them turn their classroom experience around so that they see themselves as learners, resulting in improved academic performance and improved social status among their peers.

ACTIONS:

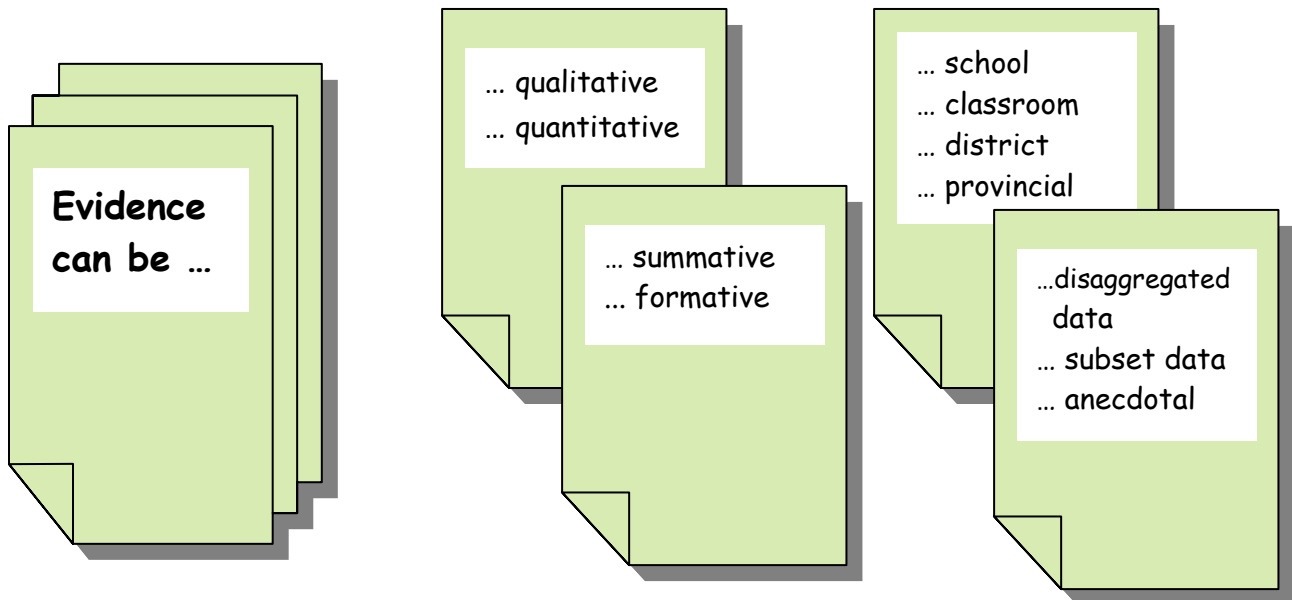
New or Ongoing Initiatives	How are you or will you monitor and evaluate success? What are your targets?
In planning social responsibility activities our philosophy is one of providing a multitude of activities that allow for participation, engagement and service. These activities allow students to gain confidence, demonstrate commitment,	95% of Braefoot students will participate in 10 or more activities representing the social, emotional and cultural environment of the school. A survey will be developed

<p>sportsmanship, and develop personal conduct within a wide range of virtues that contribute to a healthy school community. Activities such as: Walk on Wednesday; patrols, Sox of Essentials; Pennies for Patients; buddy program; lunch monitors; Jump Rope for Heart; peer tutors; 'Garbug' duty; photo displays; ambassadors; World Vision; maturation programs such Care, Second Step and Friends program; Healthy Choices program; positive , inclusive play for all students; BC Fruit and Vegetable program (apple cores and other waste sent to farm animals); recycling programs for batteries and drink containers; daily physical activity; promoting healthy eating within provincial guidelines; NatureScape; Action Schools kits; school sport programs both intra- and intermural teams (opportunities for students to participate in sports as well as opportunities for students to organize and manage games and activities for other students); foster child; sun protection program; recycling program; choir; drama; Wednesday games lead by the Grade 5 students; and an all inclusive talent show that honors students for their willingness to participate and their abilities.</p> <p>The majority of activities involve students of all grades.</p>	<p>to measure this target</p> <p>Grade 4 student and parent satisfaction surveys at 90% or higher for safety, human and social development, as well as school environment</p> <p>Anecdotal stories to support the impact of participation in social responsibility activities</p>
---	---

Appendix 1

EVIDENCE

In this section, please include data/evidence you used to determine your goals. This evidence will support your rationale.



Appendix 1 evidence includes:

- Report card data for second term
- FSA data for Spring 2009
- Satisfaction survey for 2008
- School-wide Write data
- Anecdotal stories
- Boy Smart data – comparison between first and second term report cards for attitude and effort as well as academics for language arts and numeracy

To be developed:

- Survey of student participation in extra-curricular activities
- Yearend report card marks
- Portfolios of School-wide Write samples

Elementary and Middle Schools: Which of the four assessments did you use this year?

Alberta Diagnostic Assessment YES

Benchmarks NO

District Assessment of Reading Team (DART) NO

Oral Reading Assessment (ORCA) NO

Please submit the above data.

1. Strategies to support the success of each student

1. Coordinating the functions of .1 Literacy and Numeracy staffing
2. Network of Performance Based Schools project provides families with resources to support identified math learners
3. Facilitating and implementing assessment based teaching - Alberta Diagnostic Assessment, VIDMA, Y-CAT, Reading Academy Cloze Test, PM Benchmarks, K-2 Math Assessment, Schoolwide Write, Riverdeep Grade level tests, and BC Performance Standards
4. Active use of resources in and from Resource Room: LA/ESL teacher .8 plus assigned teaching assistant who will support students using Riverdeep, Successmaker, Reading Academy and teacher-developed programs
5. Using the Soar to Success Reading Program for Grades 3-5, and Emergent Guided Reading Series for Grade K-5 with support for professional development
6. Facilitating and implementing Power of Ten math thinking and games both in the classroom and at home
7. Maximizing the number of students accessing support in the Resource Room through programs such as "Just Right Books".
8. Maximizing students access to Resource Room computer programs as an independent service
9. Providing parent in-service on math games, Riverdeep and the importance of reading aloud to their children
10. Creating a positive and fun atmosphere in the Resource Room
11. Effective IEP meetings with parents and staff to ensure IEP modifications and adaptations are followed. eg. more time, fewer questions, scribe
12. Identification of students requiring additional support i.e. referral for OT, PT, Speech and for psychological assessments
14. Use of buddy activities to develop skills and self-esteem
14. Purchasing resources for professional learning library and facilitating teacher use with students. Fostering professional development opportunities to support differentiated student learning
16. Identifying students who would benefit from counseling support if issues are present that interfere with learning
17. Developing a school library of "Just Right" books to be used by struggling readers
18. Provide EA time in the resource room to expand services to ESL students, struggling students, and gifted students

2. Strategies to enhance the success of aboriginal learners

1. All of the above strategies in #2
2. Files of Aboriginal students will be duplicated. This extra set will be for a separate and easily accessed file. The purpose is to allow for frequent check-ups for success
3. Create opportunities to foster appreciation of Aboriginal Culture
4. Accessing outside community service organizations such as Surrounded by Cedar
5. Identification of a Champion to promote Aboriginal students' educational goals

3. Communication: *How are you communicating your goals and progress to parents and the wider community?*

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. PAC Meetings2. School Newsletters3. Four parents on SPC4. Parents are part of the implementation of our goals5. Numeracy and literacy bulletin boards viewed by many students and parents.6. Report Cards and School-wide student-led conferences in February7. Numerous photo displays of Braefoot School in action8. Creative and informative bulletin boards of student work in all subjects9. IEP meetings, parent-teacher interviews and teachers always accessible for 1:1 conversations10. Meet the Teacher BBQ11. Teacher generated class newsletters | |
|--|--|

SCHOOL PLANNING COUNCIL:

	X
PRINCIPAL	
	X
REPRESENTATIVE	
	X
REPRESENTATIVE	
	X
REPRESENTATIVE	
	X
REPRESENTATIVE	
DATE	

APPROVAL OF PLAN:

Tom Ferris	X
BOARD CHAIR	
John Gaipman	X
SUPERINTENDENT	
	X
ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT	
DATE	