



2018  
2019  
Annual  
Report  
to the  
Community



**Annapolis Valley**  
Regional Centre for Education

*Working Together for Students*

*Three Mile Plains District School grade 2/3  
students share sweat lodge models they made in  
honour of National Indigenous Peoples Day.*

# 2018-2019: Raising the Bar, Closing the Gap

Welcome to the Annapolis Valley Regional Centre for Education's Annual Report to the Community, looking back on highlights of the 2018-2019 school year. This has been a year of tremendous progress, with increased provincial investment in education and inclusive supports, helping us to promote the success and well-being of all students.

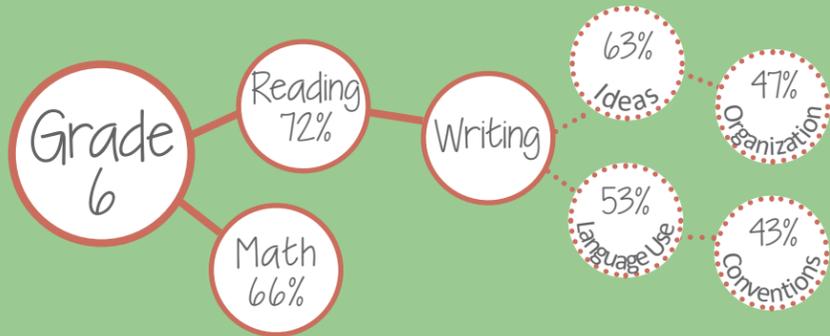
We continue to be guided by our vision of **Working Together for Students**. Through the collaboration of staff, families, school communities and partner agencies, we are raising the bar of student achievement, and closing the achievement gap by identifying barriers to success for historically marginalized groups. Overall, we are focusing on student achievement in literacy and math, and further enhancing student well-being.

Our ongoing aim is to create a supportive, student-centred environment with a focus on equity where each student succeeds and all educational partners are respected and valued. We do this by putting students first, respecting diversity, focusing on learning, fostering a positive environment and valuing collaboration, partnerships and cooperation. Thank you for being part of AVRCE, and for working with us to help students succeed.

## Student Achievement

In October 2018, grade 6 students completed provincial assessments.

These results reflect end-of-grade 5 expectations for curriculum outcomes in literacy and mathematics. The numbers below show the percentage of AVRCE grade 6 students **meeting provincial expectations in math, reading and writing**.



We continue to support students to meet all expectations in mathematics and literacy. Assessment results are a snapshot of student learning at a point in time, and are one piece of the bigger student achievement picture. Teachers and school administrators analyze results to see how their students are performing, and to focus classroom instruction where students may need additional support to succeed. At a regional and provincial level, assessment data guides education decision-making. Results from the Grade 3 and 8 provincial assessments, completed in May 2019, will be shared in Fall 2019 in our *Monthly Update from the Regional Executive Director*.

## New Leader Building on AVRCE Strengths

In April, Dave Jones was named the new Regional Executive Director of Education for AVRCE. He brings 27 years of teaching and regional leadership experience to the role. Building on the great work happening in our region, his focus is collaboration, inclusive leadership and using evidence to spark outside-the-box thinking that enhances student success and well-being.



## CKRHS Skilled Trades Centre

A new Skilled Trades Centre opened at Central Kings Rural High School in September, enabling more students to develop hands-on skills and explore trades and technologies career paths. This is the fourth Skilled Trades Centre in AVRCE; six of our eight high schools offer skilled trades programming.

## HEADSTRONG Changing Mental Health Narrative

In November, the HEADSTRONG summit, presented by SchoolsPlus and community partners, empowered high school students to lead mental health awareness campaigns in their schools, with the goal of reducing stigma and promoting wellness.



## Pre-Primary

Nine new Pre-Primary Program sites opened in September 2018, welcoming families and four-year-old children eager to learn and play. With the addition of these sites, a total of 13 schools offered the Pre-Primary Program this year, including a unique pilot partnership with an off-site service provider for the Kings County Academy catchment area.

New this year, families living outside of Pre-Primary school catchment areas could apply for out-of-catchment spaces. Another eight Pre-Primary sites will open in September 2019, for a total of 21 sites.

## More SACs Increase Community Voice

Throughout 2018-2019, we have been actively working with school communities to establish new School Advisory Councils (SACs) and revitalize support for existing ones. There are now 23 SACs in our region, increasing from six previously established.

## More Positions Supporting Inclusive Education, Classroom Conditions, Pre-Primary and SchoolsPlus

Many new inclusive education positions were added to our region in 2018-2019, thanks to a province-wide \$15 million investment in student supports. Additional provincial investments will bring over 15 more inclusive education positions to our region in September 2019. These positions increase our existing complement of inclusive education supports, benefiting students and schools:

- An additional Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) position **reduced the average number of schools SLPs serve from five to four, improving service delivery**;
- Program Planning Specialists can now **respond faster to student needs**, meeting with school staff as needs arise and remaining at a school to help implement and adjust individual student plans.
- West Hants Education Centre introduced a **Middle Level Experiential Program**, offering alternate paths to school success for students who struggle in a traditional classroom environment. In September 2019, an additional teaching position will enhance the existing Middle Level Experiential Program at Lawrencetown Education Centre.

Additional Inclusive Education Positions	Added in 2018-2019	Coming in 2019-2020
Educational Assistants	6.0 FTEs	2.0 FTEs
Child and Youth Care Practitioners	4.0 FTEs	3.0 FTEs
Program Planning Specialists: Autism, Resource, Behaviour	3.0 FTE	1.0 FTE
Resource Teachers	3.0 FTEs	1.0 FTE
Parent Navigator	1.0 FTE	
School Psychologist	1.0 FTE	1.0 FTE
Speech Language Pathologist	1.0 FTE	
Student Health Partnership Nurse		0.5 FTE
Middle Level Experiential Programs	2.0 FTE	1.0 FTE
Native Student Advisors		2.0 FTEs
Pre-Primary Inclusion Coaches		1.0 FTE
Guidance Counsellors		1.0 FTE
SchoolsPlus Student Outreach Workers	2.0 FTE	1.0 FTE
SchoolsPlus Facilitators		1.0 FTE

\* FTE = Full-time equivalent position

Also in 2018-2019:

- 11 new FTE high school teaching positions** resulted from investments by the Council to Improve Classroom Conditions.
- Increased government support for Pre-Primary Programs added **eight Lead Early Childhood Educator positions and 11.5 Early Childhood Educator positions**.



## Race Relations, Cross Cultural Understanding and Human Rights

At all levels, promoting and enhancing race relations, cross cultural understanding and respect for human rights is part of our work: Support to students and classrooms through the Student Support Worker (SSW) and Native Student Advisor (NSA) Programs; promoting well-being and creating safe, inclusive spaces for all students through GSAs (Gay-Straight/Gender-Sexuality Alliances) and Diversity Clubs in every school; and employment equity in all Human Resources practices.

**SSW Program**

362 students in program\*

26 schools served

30 graduates in June 2019

**NSA Program**

255 students in program\*

12 schools served

26 graduates in June 2019

\*as of November 2018

SSWs and NSAs work with students, families, communities and school staff to offer support, provide cultural learning opportunities and create a positive schooling experience for students in these programs. Some of the initiatives SSWs and NSAs coordinated include an annual Youth Talent Night, trips to historic cultural sites, exploring identity through art, drumming groups, workshops with elders and cultural leaders, and college/university campus visits. A new event this year was the Soul Gala on March 2, highlighting the SSW Program and Africentricity in the Annapolis Valley.

**Self-Identification**

57% of all students self-identified this year, helping us to better know the communities we serve and plan evidence-based approaches to closing the achievement gap.

**Curriculum**

Number of schools offering:

- African Canadian Studies 12 - 7
- English 12 African Heritage - 2
- Mi'kmaq Studies 11 - 10
- Gaelic Studies 11 - 1
- Citizenship 9 - 8

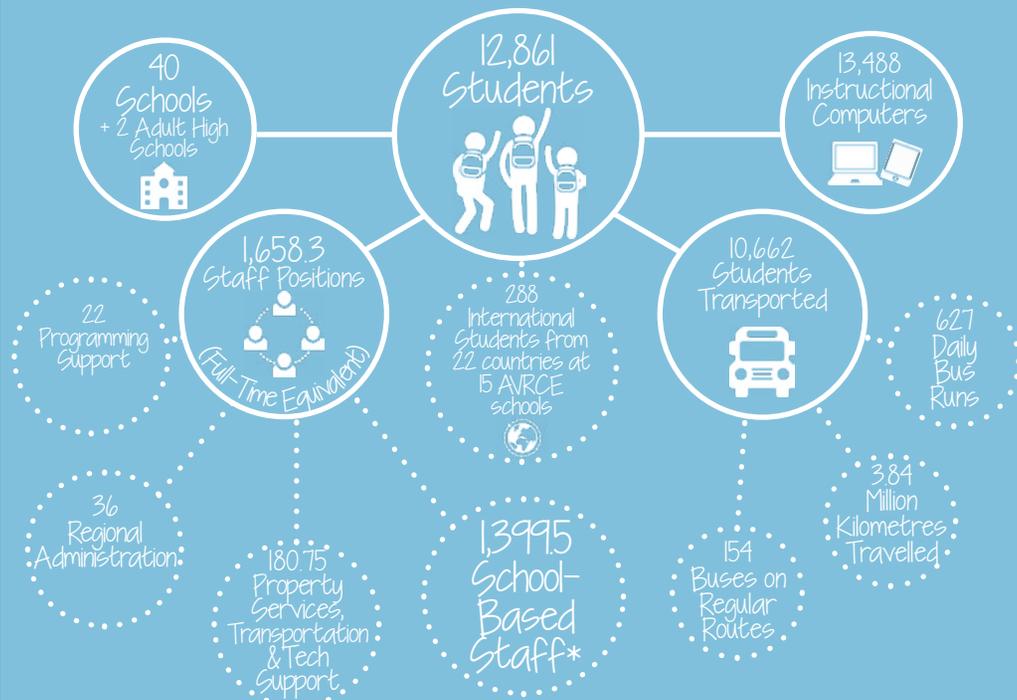
## Professional Development

In September, all school and regional office staff received Culturally Responsive Pedagogy training with Dr. Sharroky Hollie. This training highlights the importance validating and affirming cultural elements in all aspects of our work to engage students and create a sense of belonging at school.

In May, the Elementary Showcase brought together staff who support grade P-5 students for a day of workshops on literacy, mathematics, inclusion, technology, culture and more, plus a keynote on leadership, creativity and innovation by noted Canadian educator George Couros.



# 2018-2019 By the Numbers



\*School-based staff includes classroom teachers, resource teachers, school administrators, guidance counsellors, school psychologists, speech-language pathologists, educational assistants, school secretaries, library technicians, student support workers, native student advisors, early childhood educators, student supervisors, student outreach workers and literacy support workers.

## Class Caps

Provincial class size guidelines help ensure good student-to-teacher ratios. Our average class sizes were below all class caps.



## Pilot Program Increasing Exposure to ICT Careers

AVRCE is part of a pilot program to promote careers in information and communication technologies (ICT) in Nova Scotia. The Opening Doors project, announced in December 2018, is a partnership of Digital Nova Scotia, The Discovery Centre, Salesforce.org, AVRCE, the Halifax Regional Centre for Education and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. The program is training and informing teachers about ICT sector career paths available to students, and supporting student-focused ICT career events.

## Operating Budget

In 2018-2019, over 80 per cent of our annual operating budget was focused directly on students and schools. View our complete operating budget at [www.avrce.ca/financial-information](http://www.avrce.ca/financial-information).

Revenue	
Province of Nova Scotia	\$127,063,878
Government of Canada	\$933,997
Municipal Contributions	\$22,749,253
School Generated Funds	\$3,954,121
Other Revenues	\$4,740,823
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$159,442,072</b>
Expenditures	
Board Governance (for former Board business)	\$3,206
Regional Management	\$4,644,268
School Management	\$15,683,776
Instruction	\$80,549,368
Student Support	\$25,285,540
Adult Education	\$392,442
Property Services	\$13,377,744
Student Transportation	\$9,722,199
Other Programs	\$5,002,747
School Generated Funds	\$4,169,836
Interest Expense	\$410,276
Amortization Expense	\$153,323
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$159,394,725</b>
<b>Annual Surplus</b>	<b>\$47,347</b>