



Progress Report to the Board - November 2017

Message from Roberta Kubik, Superintendent of Schools

One of our ongoing annual goals in the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board is “To enhance race relations, cross cultural understanding and respect for human rights.” Our governing Board and staff are committed to integrating this goal in all we do.

In 2016-2017, priorities under this goal were to increase the percentage of students who self-identify in PowerSchool, to work collaboratively with Programs Consultants to apply the Nova Scotia Bias Evaluation Tool to learning resources, and to continue to enhance culturally-responsive instruction and assessment across the Board. These continue to be our priorities in 2017-2018.

Our work in these priority areas is ongoing and we are making progress. Almost 70 per cent of all AVRSB students have self-identified, and school staff continue to promote self-identification at the beginning of each new semester, during Primary registration and when new students enroll. This information helps staff to know who they are teaching, and allows us to implement evidence-based strategies to address the achievement gap.

In May 2017, Programs consultants and mentors took part in an in-service to review the Nova Scotia Bias Evaluation Tool and learn how to use it, ensuring the resources we use in schools are appropriate and reflective of our communities.

To enhance culturally-responsive instruction and assessment, RCH and Student Services Divisions continue a collaborative learning process. Schools continue to identify annual RCH goals and measure progress, and an RCH Google Classroom is now available to provide access to culturally-responsive instruction resources. Student Services staff and one school administrator have attended the Nova Scotia Educational Leadership Consortium’s module on integrating culturally-responsive instructional and assessment practices in lesson planning. RCH Division staff participated in a full-day session on Restorative Communication.

Peter Cromwell, Board member and African Nova Scotian representative, points out that progress toward our RCH goal is evident in the growth of events like the annual Youth Talent Night. This event continues to draw a packed house of supportive family, friends and community members eager to celebrate the talents of students of African descent and Aboriginal identity. The naming of Cromwell Court, where Bridgetown Regional Community School is located, also points to broader recognition of African Nova Scotians’ influence in our communities. The road name honours Dr. Edith Hope Cromwell, a teacher, school board member and community organizer who paved the way for race equity in education in Nova Scotia by lobbying for African Nova Scotian students of Inglewood to be bused to school in Bridgetown.

Tassa Kennedy, Board member and Mi’kmaq representative, indicates that a higher percentage of students self-identifying their ancestry is a notable achievement in the past year, demonstrating that students feel comfortable sharing their culture, which in turn creates a more responsive learning environment. Mi’kmaq students are proud to see their culture be represented in schools and to share their cultural teachings. Examples of this are hand drums being used in all elementary music classrooms, and entire school populations learning the Mi’kmaq Honor Song to perform at community events. AVRSB is also one of the only school boards in Nova Scotia to have a Mi’kmaq Education Consultant position, which is helping to promote Treaty Education and strong relationships with the three Mi’kmaq communities AVRSB serves.

Inside this report, you will find more detailed information on programs and events that reflect the increasing awareness of cultural respect and understanding in our region. There is always more work to be done, and we continue to make progress toward our RCH goals in AVRSB, thanks to staff of the RCH Division and broader efforts to work together for students.

RCH Division Highlights



Dr. Henry Bishop visited many schools across the region to deliver workshops on the history, significance and rhythms of West African drumming.

RCH Division staff promoted region-wide participation in Orange Shirt Day on September 28, 2017, to recognize the impact of Canada's residential school system on Indigenous people.



The first Regional Administrators Meeting of 2017-2018 was held at Annapolis Valley First Nation, and included a cultural presentation and dreamcatcher workshop.



RCH Division staff professional development has included a day-long session on Restorative Communication in April 2017, and a team-building retreat in May 2017 with a focus on team-building and communication.



Mi'kmaq artist and canoe builder Todd Labrador delivered cultural workshops to 20 NSA program students, and to middle level and high school classrooms in October 2017. Elementary music teachers took part in a workshop with Mr. Labrador in September 2017 on drum teachings, creating bags to properly store classroom hand drums.



RCH Division staff prepared and delivered professional development sessions for the Middle Level Showcase in May, the October Professional Development Day and the High School Showcase in November. Sessions highlighted the SSW and NSA programs, Treaty Education and culturally-responsive practices.



In collaboration with the Delmore "Buddy" Daye Learning Institute and the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency, the RCH Division is delivering Community Information Sessions at Bridgetown Regional Community School, Annapolis West Education Centre, Three Mile Plains District School, Aldershot Elementary School and West Kings District High School in November and December 2017. The sessions highlight the SSW program, supports available for students and families, collaborations between the RCH Division and community, as well as opportunities available to parents/guardians and students to formalize education and training in skilled trades.

Superintendent Roberta Kubik and Mi'kmaq Education Consultant Carrie Gloade attended the Truth and Reconciliation Call to Action Symposium in Membertou in September 2017 to learn more about TRC recommendations around Treaty Education.



In July 2017, Board Members Tassa Kennedy and Jackie Foster and Superintendent Roberta Kubik attended the Canadian School Boards Association Congress 2017 and National Trustee Gathering on Aboriginal Education.

Student Support Worker and Native Student Advisor Programs

Native Student Advisors (NSAs) and Student Support Workers (SSWs) are dedicated to enhancing the learning environment and experiences of Aboriginal and First Nations students and students of African descent.

Throughout the school year, 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 NSAs and SSWs have coordinated in the past year include:

- Annual Youth Talent Night
- Girls' Empowerment Sessions
- Trips to Africville, Yogi Bess Park and the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic
- University and college campus tours
- Participation in Cape Breton University's InBusiness program for Aboriginal students
- Lessons on the history and meaning of Mi'kmaq quill art
- Studying and recreating quilt patterns used for communication in the Underground Railroad, with the goal of presenting quilts to community churches
- Building connections between students and community elders
- Making talking sticks and learning about how they are used
- Creating fused glass art with School Street Glass to explore personal identity
- African drumming workshops with Dr. Henry Bishop
- Supporting a student to participate in Msit No'kmaq Tall Ships Project, a sail training and leadership program



Native Student Advisor Program

Students in Program = 199

**Self-identified students of
Aboriginal descent = 773**

Number of NSAs = 4

Schools served = 13

**Students in program who graduated from
high school, June 2017 = 26**

Annapolis West Area:
Annapolis West Education Centre
Champlain Elementary School
Clark Rutherford Memorial School

Annapolis East Area:
Annapolis East Elementary School
Bridgetown Regional Community School
Lawrencetown Consolidated School
Middleton Regional High School

Central Area:
Cambridge and District Elementary School
Central Kings Rural High School

Eastern Area:
Hantsport School
Horton High School
L.E. Shaw Elementary School
Wolfville School

Student Support Worker Program

Students in Program = 339

**Self-identified students of
African descent = 579**

Number of SSWs = 8

Schools served = 26

**Students in program who graduated from
high school, June 2017 = 34**

Annapolis Area:
Annapolis West Education Centre
Bridgetown Regional Community School
Clark Rutherford Memorial School
Middleton Regional High School

Kings West Area:
Berwick and District School
Kingston and District School
Pine Ridge Middle School
West Kings District High School

Kings Central Area:
Cambridge and District Elementary School
Central Kings Rural High School
Coldbrook and District School

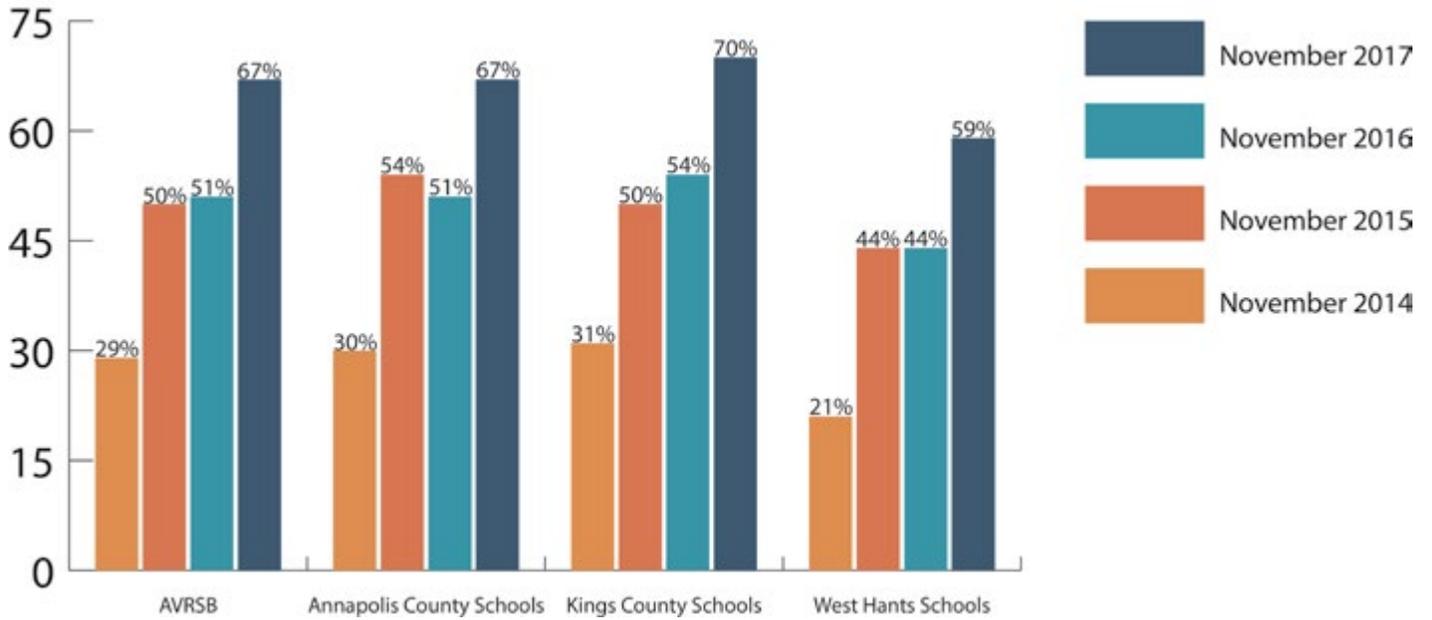
Kings North Area:
Glooscap Elementary School
Northeast Kings Education Centre

Kentville/Aldershot Area:
Aldershot Elementary School
Kings County Academy

West Hants Area:
Avon View High School
West Hants Middle School
Brooklyn District Elementary School
Falmouth District School
Three Mile Plains District School
Windsor Elementary School

Wolfville Area:
Horton High School
Evangeline Middle School
New Minas Elementary School
Port Williams Elementary School
Wolfville School

AVRSB Student Self-Identification Comparison: November 2014 to November 2017

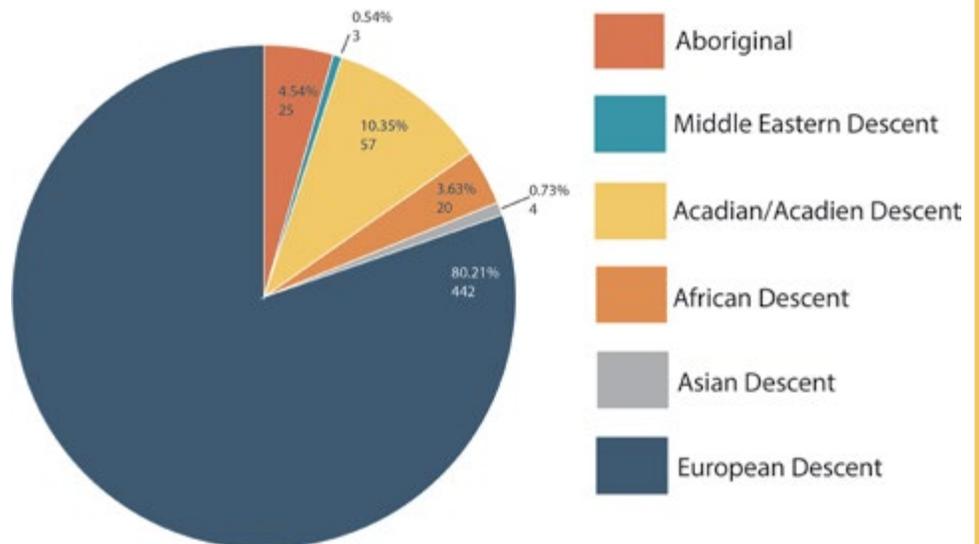


Employment Equity Hires in 2016-2017

4
African Nova Scotian
Teachers

3
First Nation
Teachers

AVRSB Staff Self-Identification as of November 2017



*Based on 551 staff who have chosen to self-identify. "Staff" includes all positions under NSTU, NSGEU and CUPE collective agreements, and Non-Union Terms and Conditions of Employment.

Identified Annual School RCH Goals

Aldershot Elementary School

- Attendance and school engagement focus under Student Success Planning: Safe and Inclusive Schools.
- Develop and enhance a safe, welcoming school climate that respects, celebrates and addresses matters of racial equity and cultural proficiency in an open and transparent manner.

Annapolis East Elementary School

- Review classroom and library resources to ensure resources reflecting all students are available in the school. Once resources are reviewed, begin purchasing required resources.

Annapolis West Education Centre

- Identify and address areas of need to ensure all students, regardless of gender or orientation, feel comfortable, safe and supported during their time at AWEC.

Avon View High School

- Continue the work from previous years where an inservice day was allotted to visit our cultural catchment areas.
- Improve awareness of the culture of each location, the challenges students may have, and how we can support them as a school.

Berwick and District School

- Strive to accurately reflect in images, learning material, symbols, music and the actions of staff and students the diverse cultures and heritages represented in our school and community.
- Students, staff and family community will become better educated around the rights of transgender and gender non-conforming students and the provincial policy of supporting these students.



Berwick and District School students take part in a hands-on lesson about Africville, led by SSW Tristan Sampson.

Bridgetown Regional Community School

- Create a more positive school culture through better communication and increased interaction within the community.
- Develop a positive school culture that values student involvement, student leadership and positive role models through diverse co-curricular, extracurricular and curricular events.

Brooklyn District Elementary School

- Ensure the literature in our classrooms and libraries are inclusive of our whole school population.

Cambridge and District Elementary School

- To maintain a safe, respectful and culturally-responsive learning environment for all students.

Central Kings Rural High School

- Implement culturally-responsive teaching and learning.

Champlain Elementary School

- Participate in Heritage Fair, in addition to providing educational opportunities in the classroom and with the full school.

Coldbrook and District School

- Writing Individual Program Plans and Adaptations in Math and English Language Arts that are culturally-responsive.

Clark Rutherford Memorial School

- Increase African/cultural visuals around the school and in reading libraries.
- Bring in more mentors/elders and positive role models of African and First Nation descent.
- Expand ideals of Truth and Reconciliation (and learning shared history) to include the local history of our African Nova Scotian students; specifically, a staff development day of the history of slavery in our county.
- Inventory our resources with the bias evaluation tool (mentor texts and levelled books)

Dr. Arthur Hines Elementary School

- Define and identify Human Rights, in general, with a focus on the rights of women, in particular. Engage in activities and explicit teaching around this.
- Develop programming with our local health centre that will involve older students working and socializing with local seniors.

Dwight Ross Elementary School

- Continue to teach RCH-related materials to our students so they become

more aware and to promote a cultural focus throughout the year.

Evangeline Middle School

- Continue to work on seamlessly integrating minority and alternative perspectives into all areas of our instruction and school culture.
- Specifically, we will make use of resources that were distributed by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, and will actively look to expand our repertoire of quality presenters to raise the awareness of students, staff and community members.

Falmouth District School

- Culturally-responsive instruction including community and elders in our learning.

Gaspereau Valley Elementary School

- Create an inventory and master list of RCH resources within the school.
- Have professional development focused on First Nation culture.

Glooscap Elementary School

- To match with the streamlined curriculum, develop awareness of Mi'kmaq culture and integrate into Language Arts and Math and gather resources;
- Continue to have conversations regarding LGBTQ+ community;
- Acquire books for our library for staff, students and families.

Hantsport School

- Continue work on increasing success of First Nations students in Math and Language Arts studies through classroom instruction and by using the teacher hired specifically for this;
- Continue to have culturally diverse teaching in classrooms;
- Create more of a presence for African Nova Scotians and people from Acadie in the school.
- Continue the operation of a GSA.

Highbury Education Centre

- To infuse RCH initiatives throughout all programming.
- To highlight recent Mi'kmaq accomplishments within professional, leadership and other initiatives.
- To address appropriate culturally-sensitive language use within our school and programming.

Horton High School

- Continue to look at Mi'kmaq culture with more plans for Mi'kmaq Day and inviting Elders to come to the school to visit classes.

Identified Annual School RCH Goals



Talking sticks made by Hantsport School students in the NSA program

Kings County Academy

- To create a culturally-responsive teaching environment where staff recognize the diverse backgrounds of our school community and celebrate differences.

Kingston and District School

- To deepen awareness and understanding of present-day cultures and issues in Nova Scotia.
- Continue to teach students about Mi'kmaq, African, Acadian, Gael and other cultures in our province.
- Teach students about racism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, and religious discrimination in our province.

L.E. Shaw Elementary School

- Provide learning opportunities for staff and students to be involved in mental wellness initiatives, such as teaching about resilience and a balanced approach to mental wellness and self-regulation.
- Continue to build community relationships with Glooscap First Nation and through our Native Student Advisor's work with students and community.
- Continue to invite members of Glooscap First Nation into the school.
- Work closely with our Native Student Advisor to build relationships with families of self-identified students.
- Track social, academic and behavioural data of self-identified students, and use this data to close the achievement gap.
- Continue to develop cultural proficiency within our classrooms and school.
- Continue to use whole-school assemblies to build upon and celebrate our cultures.

Lawrencetown Consolidated School

- To clearly define culturally-responsive teaching and learning, and implement those strategies in our classrooms.

Lawrencetown Education Centre

- Organize a program at Glooscap Heritage and Cultural Centre.
- Participate in a backcountry trip at Kejimikujik National Park and Blomidon Provincial Park.
- Take part in presenting at Board level for Gaelic Studies 11.

Middleton Regional High School

- Raise the profile of African Heritage and Mi'kmaq History Months through daily announcements and daily curricular inclusion of significant contributions of community members.
- Build stronger relationships between MRHS and local African Nova Scotian and Mi'kmaq Communities.

New Minas Elementary School

- Continue to highlight the need to be responsive to all of our students when programming.
- Continue to promote self-identification.
- Continue to promote respect for differences.
- Continue to seek in-service for staff.

Northeast Kings Education Centre

- Support 13-16 year old male students of African descent;
- Integrate more culturally diverse curriculum into teaching;
- Become a more gender-neutral culture in our language, teaching and school.
- Provide more supports to our students of Aboriginal descent.

Pine Ridge Middle School

- Create a safe and inclusive learning environment where students and staff identities are known, respected and valued.

Port Williams Elementary School

- To provide students and staff with learning experiences of Mi'kmaq, African and Acadian cultures.
- Continue to develop mindfulness practices.

Somerset and District Elementary School

- Provide at least one whole-school event for students that is related to Mi'kmaq culture and history.
- Students will continue to develop a sense of empathy for others and understand the importance of community through participation in service learning activities.
- All students will have access to appropriate programming and services that meet their needs and promote success.
- Continue to focus on anti-bullying strategies and support student development around how we treat each other, respect and responsibilities.

St. Mary's Elementary School

- Implement Treaty Education.
- Implement culturally-relevant pedagogy.

Three Mile Plains District School

- To incorporate more activities, guest speakers and resources in our school to make sure students of African descent are engaged and flourishing academically.

West Hants Education Centre

- To invite culturally-diverse guest speakers (including anti-racism education, sexual harassment and sexual orientation issues, gender equality) to join us at the school and/or lead workshops and seminars with students.
- To investigate and create art pieces representative of a variety of cultures (Visual Arts 11, Mi'kmaq Studies 11).
- To travel to locations in Nova Scotia that reflect the three pillars of inclusive education (locations will be based on courses offered each semester).

West Hants Middle School

- Aim to open our non-gendered washrooms and educate students around the respectful use of these facilities.
- Use professional development sessions to identify students on the outer circle of the school culture and identify ways to help. Schedule appropriate follow-up.
- Continue learning about diverse cultures and beliefs, with a focus on the Muslim faith.

West Kings District High School

- Continuing efforts will be made through professional development opportunities and resources to assist West Kings staff in developing a greater understanding of culturally-responsive approaches to delivery of all curriculum.

Windsor Elementary School

- Conduct formal data collection on the academic achievement of students of African descent.
- Conduct formal data collection on the social/emotional achievement of students of African descent.

Windsor Forks District School

- Provide increased access to support services in the school and community.

Wolfville School

- Use a variety of classroom resources that recognize ethnicity, culture, abilities, language, sexual orientation and many other characteristics.
- Create a classroom and school culture and climate that is welcoming and supportive for all.