

# MONTHLY UPDATE

From the AVRCE Regional Executive Director of Education



**Annapolis Valley**  
Regional Centre for Education

## 4 AT THE DOOR plus one more!

1.



2.



3.



4.



...plus one  
more!



### ACHIEVING SUCCESS THROUGH POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

When students have positive relationships with staff at their school, they are more engaged in learning and more likely to achieve academic success. This is why you might see posters about "4 at the door plus one more" appearing in schools starting this month. Inside, learn how this approach encourages positive connections every school day.

### WHAT'S INSIDE

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- Has your family moved recently? Be sure to let your school office know
- Exam survival guide: Effective studying strategies

### COMING UP

- January 27: National Family Literacy Day
- January 27-30: High school exams
- January 31: No school for students (high school marking day, elementary/middle level inservice day)
- February: African Heritage Month
- February 4-13: High school report cards are sent home

HAPPY NEW YEAR • BONNE ANNÉE • PUSU'L PUNA'NE

# WELCOME TO 2020



Welcome back to all students, staff and families. I hope everyone had a smooth transition back to school earlier this month following the Winter Break. I want to thank the many school community members who supported special events for students in December. Food bank drives, school-wide turkey dinners, concerts, classroom celebrations and many other special events were made possible thanks to the strong community spirit that we are so fortunate to have here in the Annapolis Valley. Your contributions helped to make a special time of year memorable for our students.

Over the Winter Break, our Property Services staff were equipping many schools with water dispensers, following a Provincial announcement on December 19. In accordance with new Health Canada guidelines for acceptable levels of lead in drinking water, all schools will be tested for lead. However, testing may only occur during warmer weather. We will resume testing in May; until then, bottled water will continue to be provided at schools where testing has taken place and alternate water is required, as well as at schools that have not yet been tested. To help reduce waste, we encourage students to bring a reusable water bottle or cup to school.

I was pleased to attend a Kings County municipal council meeting on January 13, along with our Director of Finance, Jeanne Saulnier. We provided the mayor and councillors with an overview of our school enrollments, class sizes, budget and System Improvement Plan goals, targets and actions. Schools are integral parts of our communities, and I appreciate the opportunity to share information and work together with our municipal partners.

This month, I am visiting schools along with our department directors, to meet with every principal across our region. These principal consultations are an opportunity to receive feedback on budgets and staffing, and to learn more about the strengths and challenges of each school community. These discussions help us to address school needs, and to tap into the innovative ideas and practices of our school-based staff.

Starting this month, we encourage families to contact their local school as soon as possible if they have a child who will be eligible for Primary or Pre-Primary in September 2020 (please see below for details). The Pre-Primary program will be fully implemented across the province next fall; every AVRCE school with elementary grades will offer Pre-Primary, and transportation will be available to all Pre-Primary sites. By contacting the school early to register for Primary or Pre-Primary, our staff are better able to plan for September, and this ensures your family can be part of any upcoming Primary or Pre-Primary orientation sessions at your school later in the spring.

Sincerely,

Dave Jones

Regional Executive Director of Education



@DaveJones\_AVRCE · #WorkingTogetherforStudents · #AVRCEProud

## PRIMARY & PRE-PRIMARY REGISTRATION

**Primary registration and orientation** sessions take place at schools between January and May. Please contact your local school as soon as possible for details.

To be eligible for Primary, a child must turn 5 years old on or before December 31, 2020. Please bring their birth certificate or passport to register.

**Families can register for Pre-Primary** at any time, however we encourage families to get in touch with their local school as soon as possible to receive Pre-Primary Open House dates and information.

Children can attend Pre-Primary if they turn 4 years old on or before December 31, 2020, and they have not attended a Pre-Primary program before.

To find your local school, call our Transportation Division (902-538-4600 or 1-800-850-3887), or search your address online by clicking on the "Catchment Search" button at [www.avrce.ca/our-schools](http://www.avrce.ca/our-schools).

## FRENCH LANGUAGE PROGRAM INFORMATION SESSIONS

Schools offering specialized French Language programs are offering information sessions for families soon. Please contact the schools below for more information:

### Regional Early French Immersion (Grade Primary entry)

- Kingston and District School, February 6 @ 6:00 pm
- New Minas Elementary School, February 4 @ 7:00 pm
- Kings County Academy, February 10 @ 6:30 pm

### Regional Late French Immersion (Grade 7 entry)

- West Hants Middle School, February 24 @ 6:30 pm

### Intensive French (Grade 6 entry)

- Pine Ridge Middle School, February 12 @ 6:00 pm

### Integrated French (Grade 7 entry)

- West Hants Middle School, February 24 @ 6:30 pm
- Annapolis West Education Centre, February 11 @ 7:00 pm

For school contact information, visit [www.avrce.ca/our-schools](http://www.avrce.ca/our-schools).



## CHOOSING A **PATHWAY**

There are many pathways students can choose for a successful future. School staff are available to work together with you to help make sure students know their options, have opportunities to explore different choices available, and select the right courses get them where they want to go. January is the perfect time to start thinking about the path ahead.

Would bilingualism be an asset for your child? **Specialized French Language programs** are available at select schools beginning in grade Primary (Early Immersion) or grade 7 (Late Immersion). Integrated French is another option, beginning in grade 7, in which students can take two courses per year where the language of instruction is French. Families considering specialized French Language Programs can contact their school or attend an upcoming information session (see details on page 2).

At the high school level, numerous pathways and options to “test drive” careers are available to match a student’s interests, strengths and plans. Students are welcome to talk with a school counsellor or their teachers anytime for help in choosing courses and charting a course for the future.

**Options and Opportunities (O2)** helps students explore numerous educational and career avenues, including university, community college, private colleges, apprenticeship or direct entry to the workforce. The program responds to students’ learning needs and offers a certificate upon completion.

**Career Access** is a three-year program for students seeking an option to the traditional high school completion program, and who are likely entering the workforce after graduation. The high school curriculum is adapted through individual program plans, class sizes are limited, and students participate in a work experience component that provides up to three credits toward graduation.

**Skilled Trades Education** is a suite of courses available at schools with a Skilled Trades Centre (currently Annapolis West Education Centre, Bridgetown Regional High School, Central Kings Rural High School and Avon View High School). Students are introduced to the skills and requirements for a career in the trades. They also learn about pre-apprentice post-secondary programs, and direct-entry apprenticeships.

**Advanced Placement (AP)** is a program of university-level courses available to grade 11 and 12 students across the region. Courses are taught online by AVRCE teachers, with hands-on components, like labs, taking place in person. AP courses are academically challenging and can sometimes be used toward university course credits. A similar program, AP Capstone, is available at Northeast Kings Education Centre.

**The International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program** is available at Horton High School. This academically challenging program is taught over two years, and available to students in grades 11 and 12. Students study six courses, covering languages, social studies, sciences and mathematics. There are also core requirements around independent research, theory of knowledge and service learning.

For more information, visit:

French Language Programs:  
[www.avrce.ca/french-language-programs](http://www.avrce.ca/french-language-programs)

Community-Based Learning (O2, Skilled Trades, etc.):  
[www.ednet.ns.ca/cbl/](http://www.ednet.ns.ca/cbl/)

Advanced Placement:  
<http://avrcevap.myavrce.ca/>

IB Diploma Program:  
<https://hortonib.com/diploma-program/>



## 4 **AT THE DOOR** ...plus **ONE** more!

Over the next few weeks, you may see posters popping up around AVRCE schools about “four at the door plus one more.” This is part of a relational theory approach to supporting student success by strengthening positive relationships between students and staff.

When students have positive relationships with staff at their school, they are more engaged in learning and more likely to achieve academic success.

The steps in “four at the door plus one more” are:

**1. Greet students as they arrive to class, using the student’s preferred name.**



**2. Within the student’s comfort level, establish eye contact.**



**3. Offer a friendly form of appropriate, non-verbal contact, like a high-five, fist-bump, handshake, etc.**



**4. Connect on a personal level with a meaningful comment or question.**



...plus **ONE** more!  
After welcoming a student to class using the four steps above, the student is directed to an activity that engages them while the teacher/staff member continues greeting other students. This is an opportunity to help students recall and retain previous concepts, and to get them ready to participate in class.

This approach helps to create a welcoming environment, builds feelings of acceptance and community, fosters a sense of belonging, decreases disruptive behaviours and reduces everyone’s stress levels, leading to an overall positive impact on academic outcomes.

This strategy connects to one of the well-being goals of our System Improvement Plan, which aims to see all students grow in their sense of identity, belonging and personal empowerment in a relational, supportive and student-centred environment.












Students, families and AVRCE staff all play a part in school bus safety.

The **Provincial School Code of Conduct** applies on the school bus, just the same as in school. Everyone on the bus is expected to:

- Be respectful of the bus driver, other passengers and your surroundings
- Use appropriate language and volume levels
- Behave in a safe, considerate manner

Here are the expectations when riding the bus, so everyone has a safe trip:


-  Listen to the bus driver and follow their instructions.
-  Arrive at your bus stop five minutes before your scheduled pick-up time; the bus driver is not able to wait.
-  When walking to and from your bus stop, walk on the sidewalk. If there is no sidewalk, walk on the shoulder of the road facing traffic so oncoming motorists can see you.
-  If you must cross the road in front of the school bus, walk 3 metres (10 feet) in front of the bus so you can see the bus driver and they can see you. Stop, look and listen, and watch for the bus driver to signal it is safe to cross.
-  When the bus is moving, always stay seated and keep the centre aisle clear.
-  Do not eat or drink on the bus.
-  If applicable, sit in your assigned seat.
-  For safety, do not put your hands, feet or head outside the window.
-  Do not throw things inside the bus or out the windows.



Has your family moved recently?

If your family has moved to a new address recently, be sure to let your school office know! It is important to have correct contact information not only in case of emergency, but our Transportation staff are currently working on bus routes for next year. Keeping your information up-to-date makes busing work better for everyone.

Get in touch with AVRCE

121 Orchard Street  
Berwick, NS B0P 1E0  
902.538.4600/1.800.850.3887  
[www.avrce.ca](http://www.avrce.ca)   
@AVRCE\_NS  
Media Contact: 902.538.4614

Questions or Concerns?

If you have a question or concern about something at your child's school, we want to work with you to resolve it.

Please start by speaking with your child's teacher. Then, follow up with the principal if needed. If more action is required, contact AVRCE at 902.538.4617.

For more information, visit [www.avrce.ca/parentguardian-concerns](http://www.avrce.ca/parentguardian-concerns).

## EXAM SURVIVAL GUIDE: EFFECTIVE STUDYING STRATEGIES

With exams approaching later this month, families can help students make their studying time more productive by encouraging effective studying strategies like these:



**1. PLAN YOUR STUDY TIME:** Schedule time to study and try for the same time every day. Shorter daily sessions are better for memory than longer sessions. Break it up and choose a few different tasks (review notes, do practice questions, read, etc.). Set goals for what you want to accomplish.



**2. PREPARE YOUR STUDY SPACE:** Choose a comfortable space and have all your books and materials available. Maximize your memory by limiting distractions and interruptions. Turn off phones and social media!



**3. READ TO REMEMBER, NOT JUST FINISH:** Before you start, read chapter summaries and end-of-chapter questions. Review glossaries or word lists, and scan headings, text boxes, graphs etc. for important highlights. Don't plow through to the end; break reading into shorter sections. Stop at the end of each section to verbally summarize and make notes.



**4. TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF!** Be sure to get adequate sleep, exercise, healthy food and some down time, too. If you get stuck while studying, a mental and physical break helps your brain to reset so you can get back on task.

For more studying tips, visit [www.educationcorner.com/study-skills.html](http://www.educationcorner.com/study-skills.html) or check out *Study Smarter, Not Harder* by Kevin Paul.