



**Annapolis Valley**  
Regional Centre for Education

June  
2019  
Nipniku's

# Monthly Update

*from the AVRCE Regional Executive Director of Education*



Across the region, schools are celebrating diversity, pride, positivity and human rights. Aldershot Elementary School held Diversity Days in May, focusing on acceptance and celebrating differences and uniqueness through a visit with “Cowboy” Harrison on Autism acceptance, a concert with Shoulder to Shoulder sharing a message of inclusion, and events to wear rainbow colours. Middleton Regional High School’s GSA raised the Pride flag on May 17, in honour of the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia. At Annapolis West Education Centre, students in Ms. Hiscock’s Sociology 12 class painted a rainbow crosswalk with help from the school community, the culmination of a semester-long effort to promote positivity and a sense of belonging at the school.

## Coming Up in June

- June 18-24 High School Exam Period
- June 21 National Indigenous Peoples Day
- June 26 High School Marking Day
- June 27 Elementary, Middle Level & High School Marking Day
- June 27 Canadian Multiculturalism Day
- June 28 Last Day of School, Report Cards Sent Home

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# June Highlights



June is an exciting month, filled with special end-of-year activities, celebrating all that our students have achieved throughout the year.

While activities in schools are drawing to a close this month, we are actively preparing for the upcoming school year. Staffing processes are nearing completion and our budget is being finalized. Staff and parents/guardians can expect to receive an email from my office over the summer, with highlights and links to our annual operating budget document.

Overall, I can let you know that although student enrollment has trended downward over the last several years, our student-teacher ratios continue to improve. In the upcoming year, class caps will continue to be maintained, and many new inclusive education positions will have a positive impact.

A team of regional and school staff has been working throughout the spring on our regional student success plan, focusing on goals for math, literacy, and student well-being. This important work will continue in the new school year.

A key part of this plan, and in our work at all levels, is raising the bar and closing the gap. This means increasing our students' academic performance and closing achievement gaps in general, but particularly for historically marginalized groups. We know we need to do more to support the success of Mi'kmaq students and students of African descent, and to address systemic factors that impact their achievement.

Our Coordinator of African Canadian Education Services and Coordinator of Mi'kmaq Education Services join our regional leadership team to ensure these voices are heard as we work together for students.

We are increasing collaboration and connections between regional staff and schools. We have formed a Principals' Advisory Committee (PAC), including school principals and our regional leadership team. The PAC focuses on strategies for instruction, leadership and achieving student success, and will continue meeting in the new school year.

I would like to welcome Pat Murphy as Director of Programs and Services. Pat has been acting in this role for several months, and brings a wealth of experience in teaching, school administration and student services to this role.

I am pleased to report we now have 23 School Advisory Councils (SACs). I thank parents/guardians and staff for their commitment to our students. Please read more about SACs below.

I had the opportunity to visit a number of schools this month, and I look forward to visiting more schools to connect with students and staff as they celebrate the end of the school year.

I wish to offer sincere congratulations to our graduating students on reaching an important milestone in your educational journey. Whether your next steps include post-secondary education, taking time to travel, or exploring a career, I wish you the best and encourage you to be open to learning in whatever you pursue.

To our students returning in the fall, I commend you for working hard to learn and develop new skills this year. Enjoy a well-deserved summer break, and we look forward to welcoming you back to school in September.

On behalf of everyone in AVRCE, thank you for a great year, and enjoy a safe and happy summer.

Sincerely,

Dave Jones

Regional Executive Director of Education



@DaveJones\_AVRCE



## SAC Regional Meetings

Three regional School Advisory Council (SAC) meetings were held recently, bringing together parents and guardians, school staff, community members to network, ask questions of each other, and to discuss the role of SACs. These meetings were also an opportunity to finalize the SAC formation process for many schools. As a result, there are now 23 SACs in our region, increasing from six that were previously established.

During the meeting Dave Jones expressed his thanks for each attendee's commitment to working together for students. He also provided an overview of Programs, Services and Operations functions, as well as budgeting and staffing processes.

In Fall 2019, we look forward to bringing SACs together for a region-wide meeting.

## Parent/Guardian Questions or Concerns?

If you are a parent/guardian and 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. The next step is to follow up with the principal, if needed. If more action is required, contact AVRCE at 902.538.4617. For more information, please visit [www.avrce.ca/parentguardian-concerns](http://www.avrce.ca/parentguardian-concerns).



## Get in Touch with AVRCE

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@AVRCE\_NS



## Keep the Learning Going All Summer!

Summertime is a great time to reinforce learning and build on the skills students have developed during the school year. There are lots of opportunities for learning over the summer, for all ages:

*Set aside time for your child to read each day.* Fifteen to 30 minutes a day is all it takes!

To find new things to read, the Annapolis Valley Regional Library has branches across our region, where you can access books, magazines, e-books and more for free.

*Increase reading comprehension.* Ask questions about what your child is reading, or what you are reading together. Ask for details, more than just yes/no answers.

*Learn new words.* Help your child expand their vocabulary by teaching them words related to their environment and experiences. Once you find new words, use them often!

*Use everyday situations to strengthen math skills.* Math is everywhere: counting, looking for patterns, measuring distance or estimating volume. Turn real life situations into a chance to solve a problem.

*Encourage writing and creative thinking.* Get your child to text, email or write a letter to a family member or friend, keep a journal about their summer or their future adventures, and explore topics that are new or not typical for your child.

*Focus on specific skills.* What behaviours would you like to encourage? What could your child be doing for themselves that you may be doing for them? Summer is a perfect time to grow your child's ability for independence and strengthen their "people skills."

## Students Explore Skilled Trades & Technology Careers

At the end of May, over 1000 AVRCE middle level and high school students attended the Skills Canada National Competition in Halifax, exploring skilled trades and technologies career options through competitions and hands-on demonstrations. In early June, grade 7 and 8 students from several schools learned about construction careers when the Nova Scotia Construction Sector Council's *Mobile Construction Experience* came on site to Berwick and District School.



## Face aux Questions Quiz Competition Puts Students' French Skills to the Test

Over 400 students took part in Face aux Questions (FaQ) on May 6 and 7 at Central Kings Rural High School. For over 30 years, this annual French language trivia competition has given students in French Immersion, Core French and Integrated French the chance to challenge their French language skills in an exciting and fun way. This year, teams from several schools competed in 126 matches with over 4,100 general knowledge questions.

Congratulations to all FaQ participants, and to the winners in each category! Thank you to the organizers, teachers and families for supporting student achievement in French language studies.

### Français de base

7<sup>e</sup> année – Coldbrook 2

8<sup>e</sup> année – MRHS 1

9<sup>e</sup>/10<sup>e</sup> année – Horton 10

### Français intégré

7<sup>e</sup> intégré – MRHS 1

8<sup>e</sup> intégré – MRHS 1

9<sup>e</sup>/10<sup>e</sup> intégré – BRCS 10

11<sup>e</sup>/12<sup>e</sup> intégré – BRCS 12

### Immersion Précoce et Tardive

7<sup>e</sup> année Précoce – EMS 2

8<sup>e</sup> année Précoce – EMS 2

9<sup>e</sup>/10<sup>e</sup> Précoce – NKEC 10

10<sup>e</sup>/11<sup>e</sup>/12<sup>e</sup>

Précoce et Tardive – NKEC 12 Précoce

## We Are Hiring!

We are hiring for casual and spare positions including Educational Assistants, Early Childhood Educators and Janitors. Visit [www.avrce.ca/jobs](http://www.avrce.ca/jobs) for more information and to apply. Watch our website for information on our Job Fair happening July 10 at AVRCE Regional Office.



Teaching positions will be posted between June 14 and 21. To apply for teaching positions, including substitute teaching, visit [www.avrce.ca/jobs](http://www.avrce.ca/jobs).

## Your Parent Navigator is Available All Summer

- Are you new to the area and want help getting connected to your community?
- Is your child starting school or entering a new school and you have questions?
- Do you want to learn about fun activities or supports available over the summer?



Your Parent Navigator, Tammy Ring, is here to help guide you to supports and services. You can reach her at 902-844-2816 or [tammy.ring@avrce.ca](mailto:tammy.ring@avrce.ca) throughout the summer months.



# Check your child's school bus stop information before September

It's quick and easy to do online using BusPlanner Web Parent Portal

There can be changes to bus routes and timing from year to year, so it's important to check your school bus information over the summer *even if you haven't moved or your child is staying at the same school*. Be sure to note your child's student ID on their report card so you can log in to BusPlanner Web Parent Portal anytime.

### Changing schools or grades?

If your child is moving from elementary to middle school, or middle to high school, finalized school bus information will be available after August 15.

### Has your home address changed?

If you have moved recently, let your school office know your new address. Over the summer, you can update your address with our Transportation staff.

### To reach our Transportation staff over the summer:

Email [transportation@avrce.ca](mailto:transportation@avrce.ca) or call 902-538-4641 (toll free 1-800-850-3887).

1. Go to <https://transportation.avrce.ca/>

2. Click on "Parent Portal"

3. Enter your child's information:

- Student ID (a 10-digit number starting with 3. Find it on a report card here)
- Date of birth
- Street number (if your address is 123 Main Street, enter only the numbers 123 with no spaces before or after the numbers)
- School your child will attend in September



4. Select the box that says "I'm not a robot," follow the instructions provided, then sign in.

## Students Recognized for Leadership in Creating Safe, Inclusive Schools and Communities

Three AVRCE students are among the 2019 recipients of the Lieutenant Governor's Respectful Citizenship Award, in recognition of their leadership and commitment to creating safe and inclusive spaces in schools and communities. They received the award in May from the Honourable Arthur J. LeBlanc, Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, and Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development Zach Churchill.



**Grace Garagan and Emma Johnson from Central Kings Rural High School** have done outstanding work in addressing mental health stigma and raising awareness about mental health.

They have worked diligently to create an awareness campaign that promotes positive mental health, and have added to the overall positive culture of CKRHS.



**Oliver Baker is a grade 8 Kings County Academy student.** He arrives at school at 7:00 am daily to help set up and serve food for the breakfast program. As an environmental activist, his "10 in 10 Project" shows that it takes only 10 minutes to pick up 10 pieces of plastic garbage to protect our watershed. His project has spread across Nova Scotia and the Eastern United States. Oliver has been a WE Day Atlantic speaker, and is always looking for ways to help others and our world.

## Students Create "What If?" Ideas for a Better World

"What could or would you change to make our world a better place within our local communities, or looking at the world as a global citizen?"

This is the question that inspired Northeast Kings Education Centre students of 6 Johnson and 6 Bunin. Each student created a painting and a sentence to reflect their own "What If?" idea for a better world.



What if every child in the world were healthy and had a home with warmth, happiness and family?

What if racism stopped and people were all treated the same?

What if people showed their pride and they said they are gay, lesbian, trans or bi?

What if people stopped smoking so they could live a healthier life?