



Monthly Update



Kings County Academy marked the end of African Heritage Month with an assembly featuring community leader Geraldine Browning. Ms. Browning, shown here with students Naomi Fagan, Ava Cox and Kailie Goddard, spoke about the origins of African Heritage Month and this year's theme, *Our History is Your History*. Each class researched a famous African Nova Scotian figure and created a piece of this mural. During the assembly, an adapted version of George Elliott Clarke's poem, *Roll Call*, was read, highlighting each person featured in the mural. The mural project and assembly were organized by Student Support Worker Tristan Sampson and KCA teachers Deann Batherson, Kerri Ann Hale and Rosslyn Gillan.

Coming Up in March and Early April

- March 8: International Women's Day
- March 18-22: Spring Break
- March 26- Elementary Reporting Period:
- April 11: Report Cards Sent Home, Parent-Teacher Conferences
- March 21: International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
- March 27: Concours d'art oratoire (French Public Speaking Competition)
- April 1-4: Annapolis Valley Regional Science Fair

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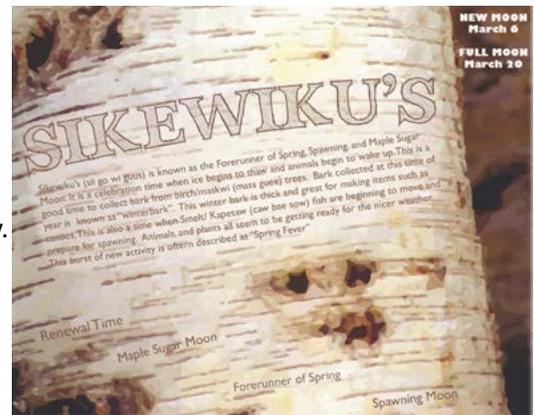
March News

March has arrived like a lion! While we are weathering the end of winter, the signs of spring are starting to show. As shown in the poster by Carrie Gloade, Mi'kmaq Education Consultant, March is Sikewiku's in the Mi'kmaq calendar. It is the forerunner of spring, a time of renewal, and month of the maple sugar moon.

Looking back on February, African Heritage Month was recognized across the region. Schools hosted community leaders, artists and performers. Special displays were created to highlight student learning around the cultural, historic, economic, scientific and social contributions of African Nova Scotians and people of African Descent. The African Youth Talent Show on February 20 drew a full house again this year, to celebrate student skills and talents.

Capping off African Heritage Month was the Soul Gala on March 2, highlighting the Student Support Worker Program and Africentricity in the Annapolis Valley. The Soul Gala launched the inaugural Viola Desmond Awards, honouring AVRCE staff and schools, and notable Canadians of African Descent. The first AVRCE honourees are Bridgetown Regional Community School and Student Support Worker Lawrence Parker, for leadership in promoting Africentricity and dedication to community partnerships. There will also be a Viola Desmond Award bursary, to be awarded to a graduating female student of African Descent.

In other news, middle and high schools have recently sent home information from the provincial Ministers of Education and Early Childhood



Development and Justice, regarding the Intimate Images and Cyber-Protection Act. Educating students about digital citizenship and responsible online behaviour--including laws around cyberbullying and sharing intimate images--is a priority in our region. For more information, please visit <https://novascotia.ca/cyberscan/>.

Primary and Pre-Primary registration is ongoing at schools. Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact their local school as soon as possible to register.



African Heritage Month Highlights (clockwise from top): Wolfville School's Coltrane Hughes and Lawrence Parker at the Soul Gala; Mr. Parker and Mrs. Frampton's Talent Show Choir; AHM display at Bridgetown Regional Community School; Port Williams Students present George Elliott Clarke's "Roll Call"; AHM display at Cambridge and District Elementary; Aldershot Elementary students learned about Dr. Martin Luther King through art and reading.



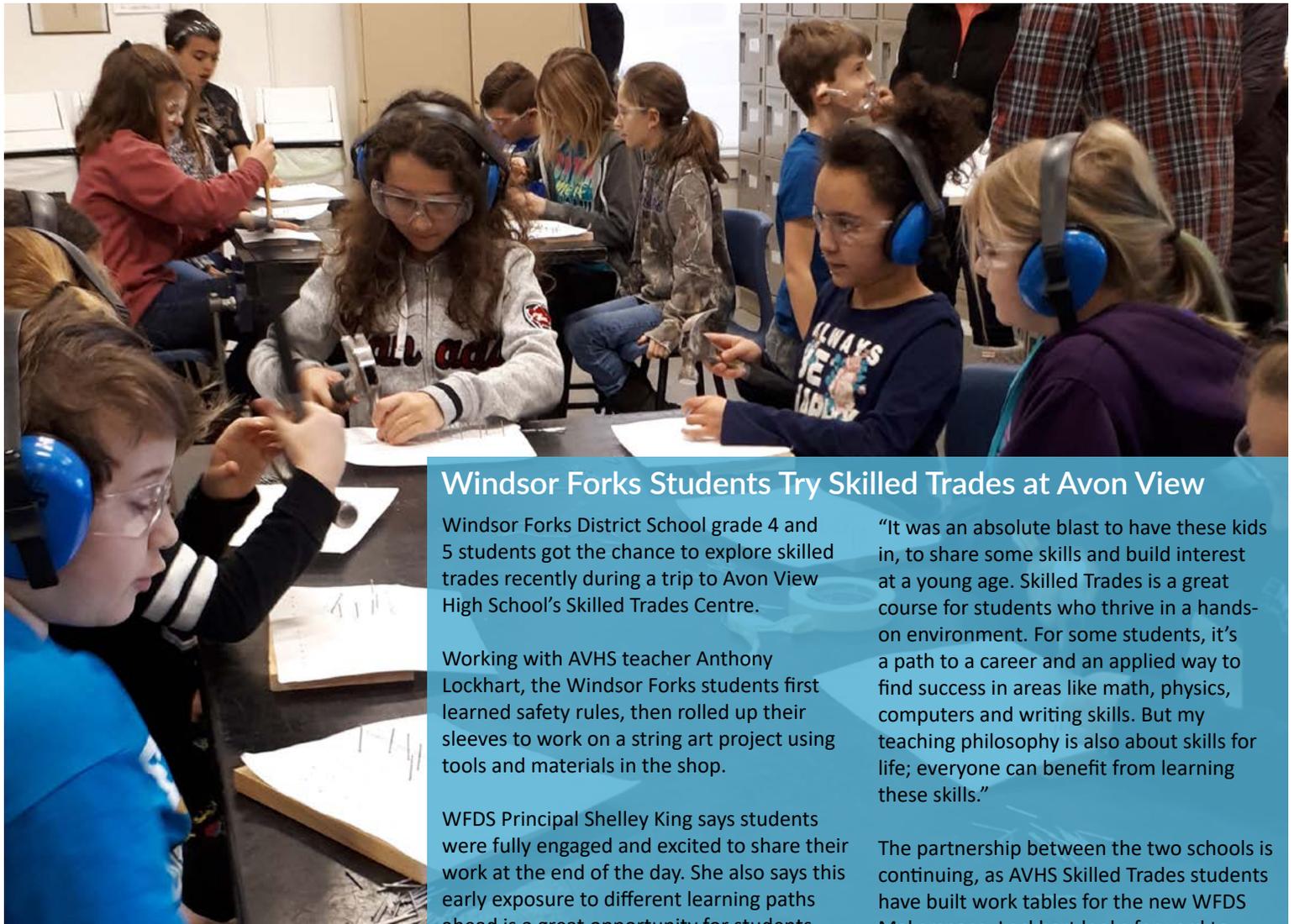
Parent/Guardian Questions or Concerns?

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.



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Windsor Forks Students Try Skilled Trades at Avon View

Windsor Forks District School grade 4 and 5 students got the chance to explore skilled trades recently during a trip to Avon View High School's Skilled Trades Centre.

Working with AVHS teacher Anthony Lockhart, the Windsor Forks students first learned safety rules, then rolled up their sleeves to work on a string art project using tools and materials in the shop.

WFDS Principal Shelley King says students were fully engaged and excited to share their work at the end of the day. She also says this early exposure to different learning paths ahead is a great opportunity for students.

"It was motivating for some students, to find out Skilled Trades is something they can look forward to in high school. It gives them a chance to see this as an opportunity ahead in school and what the potentials are down the road."

For his part, Lockhart sees first hand the impact that exposure to Skilled Trades can have on student engagement.

"It was an absolute blast to have these kids in, to share some skills and build interest at a young age. Skilled Trades is a great course for students who thrive in a hands-on environment. For some students, it's a path to a career and an applied way to find success in areas like math, physics, computers and writing skills. But my teaching philosophy is also about skills for life; everyone can benefit from learning these skills."

The partnership between the two schools is continuing, as AVHS Skilled Trades students have built work tables for the new WFDS Makerspace. Lockhart looks forward to having his students sharing their skills through future Makerspace projects.

Across AVRCE, there are Skilled Trades Centres at four high schools: Avon View, Annapolis West Education Centre, Bridgetown Regional Community School and a newly-opened centre at Central Kings Rural High School. Skilled Trades 10 is also offered at Northeast Kings Education Centre and West Kings District High School.



LEC Hosts Successful Snowshoeing Events

Lawrencetown Education Centre students and staff recently held two successful snowshoeing events.

The Big Chill, held on February 23, is a fundraiser that supports the school's curriculum-connected projects. The Snowshoe Challenge, held on March 6, is an event for high school girls. This year, teams from LEC, Annapolis West Education Centre, Middleton Regional High School and West Kings District High School took part in the Snowshoe Challenge.

With support from staff, LEC students are involved in all aspects of planning and running these events, from preparing and mapping the course, to serving as field marshals and staffing checkpoints and safety stations. Great work, and an awesome example of experiential learning!



Farm to School at NMES

Volunteers at New Minas Elementary recently provided students with fresh salads as part of the Farm to School initiative, a program in Kings County schools that aims to expose student to nutritious food and its lifelong health benefits.

Wondering Which Way to Go?

Ask Your Parent Navigator!



AVRCE's Parent Navigator, Tammy Ring, helps guide families to supports and services. As part of the Student Services team, she works collaboratively with schools, SchoolsPlus and community agencies to ensure families are aware of, and know how to access, services available in education, justice, health, community services, and more.

The Parent Navigator position is new this year, created as a result of provincial funding for inclusive education supports to help ensure students have the tools and supports to succeed in school.

The Parent Navigator is a resource for parents/guardians who:

- Want the support and knowledge of someone who understands what resources are available and how to access them.
- Have questions about their child's academic, emotional and/or social well-being
- Want help understanding and connecting to services and systems to get their child the most appropriate help and support.

"One of my first goals has been to learn about the unique culture of each school and our communities across the valley," Tammy explains. "I have been able to get a feel for the student populations we serve, which helps me understand parent/guardian needs. My other focus has been connecting with service providers and community agencies to build partnerships so I can connect families with the right services or programs, to help address their specific situation."

If you're wondering which way to go, ask your Parent Navigator! Contact Tammy Ring by calling 902-844-2816, emailing tammy.ring@avrce.ca, or by speaking with your school administrator.

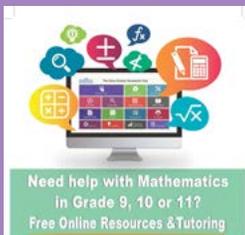


NS Homework Hub: Free Math Help for Grade 9-12 Students

The Nova Scotia Homework Hub offers resources and free tutoring for students enrolled in grade 9, 10, or 11 mathematics courses. Students can access a 1:1 session with a tutor via an online whiteboard or by phone. They can also access learning resources such as video lessons, practice exercises, quizzes with instant feedback, digital versions of select mathematics textbooks, and a scientific and graphing calculator.

Students enrolled in grade 12 mathematics courses also have access to online tutoring through the Nova Scotia Homework Hub.

Tutoring help is available from 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., Sunday to Thursday. To access the Nova Scotia Homework Hub, log in to your gnsps.ca account, or call 1-844-243-9428. For a video overview of the Nova Scotia Homework Hub, visit <https://dvl.ednet.ns.ca/videos/what-nova-scotia-homework-hub>



New Mural at Northeast Kings Education Centre Helping to Create a Welcoming, Respectful Environment

Working with Mi'kmaq artist Lorne Julien, a group of NKEC students has helped to create a mural depicting the seven sacred teachings—Respect, Courage, Humility, Wisdom, Honesty, Truth and Love.

Principal Kevin Veinot explains that art is a key part of making the school a welcoming place.

"Some of our school goals are to foster a culture of respect, and to build relationships with students of African descent and Indigenous ancestry. Creating this artwork is part of creating a family feel within a large school, making it a welcoming environment. As soon as you walk in the door, you see the cultures in our school being represented, and the seven sacred teachings are the values we try to instill here every day."

Ten students, including four students who self-identify as having Aboriginal ancestry, worked with Mr. Julien to create the mural over the December holidays. A dedication plaque was unveiled in late February with a smudging ceremony. In addition to the mural, Mr. Julien has created a painting called "Family: Safe Place" for the school lobby, and has shared his knowledge and art with students in Mi'kmaq Studies 10 classes. These projects were supported by ArtsSmarts Nova Scotia and the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia.