



Monthly Update

from the AVRCE Acting Regional Executive Director of Education

It is a pleasure to welcome new and returning students, families and staff to the 2018-2019 school year. With a new school year comes new challenges and opportunities. For students, it's a fresh start for a year of learning, growth, new friendships and discovering potential. For staff, it's a chance to strengthen meaningful connections with members of our school communities and renew our collective focus on ensuring students have every opportunity to experience success.

Following the report of the provincial Commission on Inclusive Education in the spring of 2018, we will continue to work with families, partner agencies and the province to enhance equity and inclusion in our schools. This fall, we are adding several positions to provide student and classroom supports, as well as positions to complement our team of specialist teachers. This includes six Educational Assistants (EAs) added to our 2018-2019 EA allocations, four Child and Youth Care Practitioners, three Program Planning Specialists focused on Autism, Resource and Behaviour, and three Behaviour Support Resource Teachers. We will also welcome an additional Speech Language Pathologist, School Psychologist and Parent Navigator. Our Student Health Partnership Nurse position will now be a full-time position.

Also stemming from the Commission on Inclusive Education report, West Hants Education Centre will introduce a Middle Level Experiential Program during September. This will be the second experiential middle level alternative education program available in our region, after the program at Lawrencetown Education Centre. The Middle Level program will be supported by one Teacher and one Student Outreach Worker position at WHEC.

More broadly, we continue to enhance race relations, cross cultural understanding and human rights as part of our commitment to equity and inclusion. We are in the process of hiring a Regional Coordinator of Mi'kmaw Services/Education, who will work with our Coordinator of RCH, four Native Student Advisors and the Consultant of Mi'kmaq Education to enhance support to students and advance the ongoing implementation of Treaty Education.

The provincial Pre-Primary program has also expanded in our region this year. This early learning program has grown from four initial sites in 2017-2018, to now serving families in 13 school catchment areas. More details on these new sites are inside this report.

Over the past two months, there has been a lot going on in AVRCE even though schools were closed for the summer. For example, we welcomed Lesley MacDonald to the position of Director of Human Resources on August 1. Through her previous experience as AVRCE Coordinator of Human Resources, Lesley brings a wealth of experience and knowledge in HR best practices and AVRCE policies. I look forward to working more closely with Lesley in the year ahead as the landscape of public education evolves.

I invite you to read more inside this Monthly Report, to learn about the many summer activities that have been taking place in AVRCE, as well as upcoming initiatives for September.

All the best as we enter the new school year.

Dave Jones
Acting Regional Executive Director of Education

Coming Up This Month

September 5
First day for students at most schools

September 6
First day for students at KCA, PRMS, HEC and LEC

September 13
Provincial Stand Up to Bullying Day
(Pink Shirt Day)

September 18
Regional Shutdown Day:
Culturally Responsive Pedagogy
staff professional development

September 28
Orange Shirt Day observed in AVRCE



Falmouth District School teacher Lisa Fry hosted one of several classroom Open Houses, organized by Programs staff to give teachers a venue to share ideas.

40 Teachers are part of the Year 1 New Teacher Support Program (NTSP) this year. Starting with orientation on August 29, participants receive mentorship and professional development throughout the year to support teaching best practices. There are also 22 Year 2 NTSP participants continuing in the program in 2018-2019.



Pre-Primary Opens at Nine New Sites; Program Now Available to Families at 13 Sites in AVRCE

Nine new Pre-Primary Program sites in our region have welcomed families and four-year-old children eager to learn and play.

New sites at Aldershot Elementary, Bridgetown Regional Community School, Cambridge and District Elementary, Champlain Elementary, Coldbrook and District, Kings County Academy, Lawrencetown Consolidated, L.E. Shaw Elementary and Port Williams Elementary were announced in March 2018 by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

The KCA PrePrimary Program is unique in Nova Scotia, as a pilot partnership with an off-site service provider. This program will be located in Kentville's Centre Square.

These new locations join Clark Rutherford Memorial School, Dr. Arthur Hines School, St. Mary's Elementary and Three Mile Plains District School in offering this provincial, play-based early learning program.

Orientation sessions at eight of our nine new sites took place on September 4, to help families transition to Pre-Primary by meeting their Early Childhood Educators and exploring their program site.

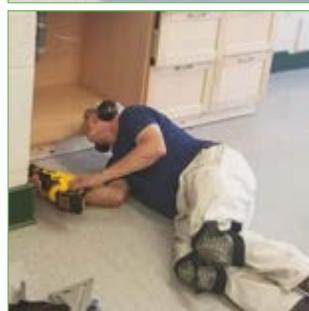
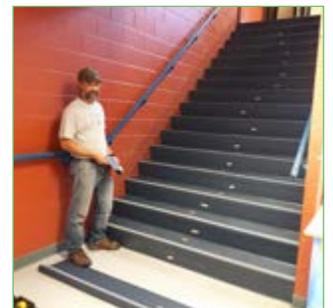


Summer Upgrades, Repairs and Maintenance

Every summer, the Property Services and Information Technology Divisions go into overdrive, completing important upgrades, cleaning, maintenance and repair projects in schools, often working around the schedules of day camps and community groups.

Property Services staff have been carrying out numerous projects, including preparing Pre-Primary learning spaces, roofing, building system upgrades, heating and plumbing work, extensive painting and, of course, deep cleaning every surface! Information Technology staff have been upgrading network systems and classroom technology.

Thanks to our staff, students and staff have returned to refreshed, efficient, clean and healthy schools this fall!





Culturally Responsive Pedagogy Training, September 18

On Tuesday, September 18, all Teachers, Educational Assistants, Student Support Workers, Native Student Advisors, School Secretaries, SchoolsPlus, Pre-Primary, APSEA and Regional Support Staff will receive culturally-responsive pedagogy training with Dr. Sharroky Hollie.

Cultural responsiveness involves careful acknowledgement, respect and understanding of difference and its complexities. This can involve critical examination and transformation of institutional structures that perpetuate patterns of marginalization, and understanding how socio-cultural structures impact students' experiences and opportunities. This training promises to impact our day-to-day interactions with students by encouraging staff to develop in-depth knowledge of our students and how they learn, and to adapt our practices so students see themselves and their experiences reflected in daily learning.



Orange Shirt Day, Friday, September 28

Orange Shirt Day is an annual recognition of the impact of Canada's residential school system on Indigenous people. This includes the impact of the Shubenacadie Indian Residential School in Nova Scotia from 1930 to 1967.

Nationally, Orange Shirt Day takes place on September 30, while local events honouring residential school survivors may be held on alternate dates.

In AVRCE, everyone is encouraged to wear orange shirts, pins or accessories on Friday, September 28. Please share your photos of orange shirt day activities in schools with @AVRCE_NS on Twitter, or by email to communications@avrce.ca. We look forward to highlighting this in our school communities.

For more information, contact Carrie Gloade, Mi'kmaq Education Consultant, at carrie.gloade@avrce.ca, and visit www.orangeshirtday.org.

Professional Learning Through Summer Institutes, Classroom Open Houses

Over the summer, the AVRCE Programs team organized and facilitated numerous Summer Institutes. These professional learning opportunities for teachers covered a wide range of topics including balanced literacy, project-based learning, loose parts play, hands-on strategies for mathematics, guided reading, teaching diverse learners, and teaching methods to support students with Autism. Overall, 335 registrations were received for 25 Summer Institutes.

In addition, 16 teachers opened up their classrooms for Open Houses, welcoming 36 participants to share grade level-specific teaching strategies and classroom set-up tips with their peers.



Wear Pink to Celebrate Safe and Inclusive Schools on Thursday, September 13



Stand Up to Bullying Day—aka "Pink Shirt Day"—takes place on Thursday, September 13. Wear pink to show your support for safe and inclusive schools.

Share snapshots on Twitter with @AVRCE_NS or by emailing communications@avrce.ca, to help show how your school is a welcoming place for everyone on this special day, and all year long.