



Creating an Inclusive Environment:

AVRSB Honoured to Receive *Lieutenant Governor's Persons with Disabilities Employer Partnership Award*

Thanks to a nomination from Community INC, AVRSB was one of 10 Nova Scotia employers to receive the *Lieutenant Governor's Persons with Disabilities Employer Partnership Award* on November 30 in Halifax.

The award is administered by the Collaborative Partnership Network, to recognize businesses that have made commitments and contributions to creating inclusive workplaces for persons with disabilities.

The award nomination was initiated by Community INC, a non-profit community based organization working to promote inclusion of persons with disabilities in our region.

AVRSB's nomination was based on the leadership of two supervisors: Derek Mack, Assistant Custodial Foreman, and Susan Connell,



From left: Susan Connell, Beth Easson (Community INC), Margo Tait, Derek Mack and Phil Ward (Community INC). Photo by Mike Dembeck, provided by the Collaborative Partnership Network.

Vice Principal of Annapolis East Elementary School. In the nomination, Connell and Mack's dedication to supporting inclusion and creating positive awareness among staff was noted.

Superintendent of Schools Margo Tait joined Mack and Connell at the award ceremony, and thanked Community INC for recognizing AVRSB.

"It is a great honour to receive this award. Supporting employment for individuals with disabilities is part of our philosophy and culture of inclusion. We strive to work closely with an individual to match skills

and strengths with an appropriate position. We are grateful to the staff of Community INC for nominating AVRSB and, more importantly, for their partnership and guidance in helping us to create a more inclusive environment."

IN THIS Issue

- 2 - Grade 7 Students Turn Wolfville School Into "We School"
- 3 - KCA Playground a Reality Thanks to Community Support
- 4 - Board Meeting Highlights

Wolfville Students Show "We" Can Do It!



Grade 7 students are turning Wolfville School into a *We School* as part of their Social Studies curriculum. Becoming a *We School* involves committing to a local and an international cause—in this case, the Wolfville Area Food Bank and fundraising for clean water for families in Sierra Leone.

Starting in October, the students organized a successful school-wide food drive. They collected more than 1,350 food items and learned how the food bank works.

On November 30, the group organized a "Vow of Silence" day, to raise awareness about children around the world who have no voice or rights. Nearly 150 students in Grades 3 to 8 sported "I AM SILENT" buttons that day (photo above), raising over \$1,200 for clean water projects in Sierra Leone.

We Schools in Action is part of a Canadian program that includes *We Day* and *Free The Children* campaigns. The goal is to inspire youth interest and action in social justice initiatives.



Students in Shelley Muttart's Grade 3 class at Windsor Forks District School created these unique sculptures, "framed" in a CD jewel case. These works of art are a great example of how ordinary items can be reused for a new purpose. Many of the student artists will be taking their works home as gifts to family, while a few samples will be on display at AVRSB's Regional Office.

Regional Office Staff Continue "Christmas Angel" Gift Program



A number of AVRSB Regional Office staff have participated in a "Christmas Angel" gift-giving program again this year, providing 53 children and youth of all ages with gifts of books, toys, clothing and games. Some of the participating staff are pictured above.

Organizer Karen Sotvedt says this is at least the seventh year staff have supported children and families prior to December holidays.

She says one county in AVRSB is selected each year on a rotating basis. This year, the Department of Community Services in Kings County will distribute the gifts.

On December 3, Northeast Kings Education Centre students *literally* stuffed the school's minibus with food bank donations collected from the community. Great work!

Thanks to Community Support, New Playground for KCA and Community a Reality



Highbury Education Centre students lift a roof onto the new playground serving KCA and community.

The students were among many community volunteers and supporters who made the playground a reality.

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of many community organizations, volunteer groups and individuals, the new, accessible community playground adjacent to Kings County Academy (KCA) is opening as of Wednesday, December 14!

For many months, school community volunteers with the KCA Playground Committee worked diligently to raise funds for an additional play area beyond the existing playground on school property. The Town of Kentville was on board with the project early, providing land near the school and financial support.

Once the fundraising goal was met, the committee rallied the support of the school community to assemble the equipment. Many individuals and groups—including Highbury Education Centre students completing a component of the physical education curriculum—helped build the structure with guidance from Town of Kentville staff, while numerous local businesses and community groups kept volunteers going with donations of lunches and refreshments.

KCA students and the community as a whole can now enjoy this playground equipment. Congratulations and thank you to all who made it happen!



Options and Opportunities (O2) visual arts students from Avon View High School had an opportunity to create a "Lego timeline" mural for the Discovery Centre in Halifax. Teacher Kelly Harnish says the students had a great time applying their artistic skills.

LCS Hosts 24th Annual Breakfast With Santa

For the 24th year in a row, the school community of Lawrencetown Consolidated School (LCS) enjoyed Breakfast with Santa at LCS. Principal Karen Baker says the event is a fundraiser for the school, with a "focus on community, families and home and school coming together for a fun-filled morning."



This year's event took place on December 3. More than 400 breakfasts were served and event proceeds totalled over \$6,000. The event was possible thanks to the efforts of 60 volunteers and 150 item donors for the ticket auction. The highlight of the morning, of course, was a special visitor from the North Pole!



In November, numerous school administrators, Board Members and Regional Office staff took part in the third annual Kings County Race Relations and Anti-Discrimination Committee Celebration of Multiculturalism and Inclusion.

This celebration of diversity offered participants opportunities to experience various cultural traditions through art, music, dance and cuisine. Among the musical performers was singer/songwriter—and student—Liz Furniss. Dr. Wanda Thomas Bernard delivered the keynote address.

Pictured above, AVRSB Coordinator of Race Relations, Cross Cultural Understanding and Human Rights Krishinda McBride (second from right) and NKEC Principal Kevin Veinot (third from right) follow a Maritime Centre for African Dance instructor. Dr. Wanda Thomas Bernard appears fourth from right.

We want to hear from you!

Send news/events for the January issue by Jan. 13 to communications@avrsb.ca

December Board Meeting Highlights

For complete Board Meeting minutes visit www.avrsb.ca/content/meeting-information.

Province's New Approach to Capital Planning: All Nova Scotia school boards will be asked to provide updated school construction and renovation priorities. Projects for the current year will not be affected. These changes will ultimately benefit AVRSB, with a transition period ahead as details on the new approach emerge.

Bridgetown P-12 Study Accepted: Study committee submitted report on program and facility requirements and issues related to possible merge of BRES and BRHS into a single P-12 school.

Next Board Meeting: January 4, 2012, 7:00 p.m. at AVRSB Regional Office, Berwick (Storm date January 11, 2012).

RCH Annual Progress Report: Efforts throughout the year to address issues of poverty, gender, sexual orientation and race relations were noted, as well as efforts to encourage student self-identification. Coordinator of RCH Krishinda McBride was acknowledged for her work in data collection to show program success in this priority area.

2011-2012 Committee Memberships: Complete committee membership available at www.avrsb.ca/content/board-committees.

Annual Plan and Budget Process Timeline Approved for 2012-2013: Reviewed to ensure Board is achieving its mandate in a timely manner.

Horton High School Student 10 Millionth Enrolled in PowerSchool



On December 1, Horton High School Grade 11 student Bhreagh Bauer became the 10 millionth student enrolled in PowerSchool.

Minister of Education Ramona Jennex and representatives of Pearson, the company responsible for PowerSchool, visited Horton High School to congratulate Bauer and mark this milestone.

This year marks the first year all AVRSB schools have used PowerSchool, a student information system and part of the province's inSchool initiative. Having all schools across the region use a single information system improves efficiency, increases opportunities for timely sharing of data, and provides a broader, richer perspective on student data.

Horton High School is one of several AVRSB schools that have used PowerSchool for the past year, and is now reaping the benefits. In the coming year, AVRSB will pilot the student services portal, TIENET, and it is expected that all parents/guardians will have access to student information via the "Parent Portal" of PowerSchool by the fall of 2012.