



## Welcome to the 2011-2012 School Year

### A time to build on past successes and embrace new opportunities

As we complete the first month of the 2011-2012 school year, a special welcome is extended to students, families and staff who are new to our system. A new school year is a time to build on past successes and embrace new opportunities.

Our goals for this year focus on improving student achievement, enhancing race relations, cross-cultural understanding and human rights, and promoting safe and healthy schools and worksites. Working together, I am confident we will make progress in each of these areas.

AVRSB's Beginning Readers program is now being offered in all elementary schools in our region. Developed by AVRSB staff, this program has benefited many students in Grades Primary to Two.



Renovations at Evangeline Middle School are now complete, and students at Kings County Academy are enjoying their new school, while Aldershot Elementary School students have relocated to the former KCA during renovations to their school. Official openings for EMS and the new KCA will be planned for the new year.

AVRSB's first SchoolsPlus site is being established at Champlain Elementary School, to serve the Annapolis West Education Centre family of schools. This site will foster greater partnerships and coordination between AVRSB, government departments and community agencies, to better serve children, youth and families.

This year, we will be conducting long-range planning for Central Kings Rural High School and West Kings District High School and their feeder schools, to inform decisions about educational opportunities. We encourage the public to provide input at meetings later in the fall.

Finally, we are pleased to have a Native Student Advisor program in place, to support students of Aboriginal descent.

This program builds on the success of our Student Support Worker program, which serves students of African descent. Both are part of AVRSB's commitment to race relations, cross cultural understanding and human rights.

Our elected Board members and staff are committed to working together to support student success in every school in AVRSB. Although this is a year of budget restraint, we have made every effort to maintain levels of service and a range of programs for students.

Finally, thank you for your role in education. Your participation contributes to a positive educational experience for each child.

Best wishes for a rewarding and successful school year,  
Margo Tait,  
Superintendent of Schools

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## Standing Up for Diversity and Acceptance

Activities part of September 8 "Stand Up Against Bullying" Day



Mrs. Jefferson's Grade 2/3 class at Clark Rutherford Memorial School learned about the negative impact of bullying on September 8. They shared their thoughts in a letter to the editor, published in the September 22 Annapolis Spectator:

**Dear Editor,**

Our class learned many things on Anti-Bullying Day. We found out hurtful words cannot go back in our mouths. This message came from squirting toothpaste into a cup and trying to put it back in with a toothpick. It couldn't be done! We read a story about the invisible bucket. Good feelings go in when someone says something kind and is helpful. Bad feelings make all of the good feelings go out when someone says and does something hurtful to us.

Everyone wants a full bucket. We took a stand for anti-bullying by wearing pink clothes or pink armbands.

We would be happy if bullying did not exist. Be kind to everyone.

Sincerely,  
2/3 Jefferson,  
Clark Rutherford Memorial School



Central Kings Students wore pink t-shirts with the slogan, "CK Says It's Not Okay to Stand By!" to spread the Acceptance and Diversity Day message.

Left: Student Government Leaders heading the Acceptance and Diversity Day walk through Cambridge and Coldbrook.

**"It's not okay to stand by" to bullying and discrimination.**

That's the message students at Central Kings Rural High School took to the street--literally--when students celebrated Acceptance and Diversity Day on Thursday, September 8.

The day's main event was a walk through Cambridge and Coldbrook, with nearly all of the school's 730 students participating. Many donned pink clothing, t-shirts and wristbands with the Acceptance and Diversity Day slogan, "It's not okay to stand by".

Students and staff planned the event together, to set a positive tone for the year by creating a school culture of diversity, respect and acceptance.

"We wanted to start the year by having a discussion about what is happening in students' lives, and how they can approach negative behaviour. We also wanted to do something that promotes healthy active living" teacher-organizer Greg Milne explains. "The idea was to celebrate and promote positive ways we can make the school an accepting place."

After the walk, local MLAs, families and special guests joined students for a celebration BBQ. Afterwards, students returned to class for discussions about acceptance, diversity and bullying, with a special focus on cyberbullying.

The event generated a buzz in the media, with local newspapers, radio and CTV Atlantic's Live at 5 crew on hand to cover the event.



**Pinwheels for Peace**

Hantsport School students have "planted" a colourful peace garden of pinwheels on the school's front lawn, as part of a larger discussion about community, safe and healthy school climate, and the kind of world students want to live in.



Kings County Academy students and staff are helping to lay tiles for a mosaic to be installed in the school's foyer. Designed by Terry Smith-Lamothe, the mosaic features community icons such as Cape Blomidon and apple blossoms.

## Premier and Education Minister Visit AVRSB Schools



Two AVRSB schools have welcomed Nova Scotia's Premier and Minister of Education for recent provincial events.

**Hantsport School students and staff** welcomed Premier Darrell Dexter and Education Minister Ramona Jennex on September 15 for the unveiling of highway signs commemorating local resident William Hall, V.C.

Mr. Hall was the first Nova Scotian, the first Canadian of African descent and only the third Canadian to be awarded the Victoria Cross for his bravery during the Boer War.

In his remarks, the Premier encouraged students to be proud that Hall is part of Hantsport's history. Nearly every student raised their hand when asked if they knew who William Hall was.

Principal Colin Chase said learning about local heroes like Hall is a priority. Artist Ron Lightburn, who illustrated the sign, also participated in the event and donated several of his children's books to the school library.

Education Minister Ramona Jennex visited **Grade 4, 5 and 6 students at Coldbrook and District School** on September 19, to personally deliver books nominated for the Hackmatack Children's Choice 2012 Book Awards.

Principal Jean Corporon and Library Technician Sylvia Jacquard said it was an honour that Coldbrook and District School was chosen to receive this year's Hackmatack books first. Students will vote on their favourite books next April.

Minister Jennex talked with students about the importance of reading. "I know this school values reading, and your teachers love reading," she said. "It's important to read, because your brain is more alive when you're reading."

The event included a reading by Nova Scotian author James Leck. AVRSB Board member Dwight Johnson, Director of Programs and Services Dave Jones and Hackmatack Program Coordinator Kate Watson also participated.

## Students Benefit from K-Rock Music Support

A generous contribution from local radio station K-Rock 89.3 FM is helping students to expand their knowledge and develop a love of music.

K-Rock has donated \$36,000 to be shared among all AVRSB schools on a per-student basis, for the purchase new musical instruments or to repair and refurbish existing instruments. This is the fourth year that K-Rock has made such a contribution to music and band programs in AVRSB, as part of a seven-year commitment.

AVRSB extends sincere appreciation to K-Rock for supporting students and music programs in our region.





**Next Month:**

## Students Get Cooking at DAHES Harvest Festival

In the next issue of In Touch, find out what happens when Grade 6 students at Dr. Arthur Hines Elementary School get cooking with Chef Michael Howell.

As part of the DAHES annual Harvest Festival, students will go from picking fresh food from the school garden to serving a gourmet meal to special guests in under three hours.

The Harvest Festival is October 13, and includes an Open House for the school community. For more information, contact the school at (902) 633-6300 or visit [www.dahes.ednet.ns.ca](http://www.dahes.ednet.ns.ca).

### **We want to hear from you!**

- Send news/events for the October issue by Oct. 10 to [communications@avrsb.ca](mailto:communications@avrsb.ca)
- Tell us what you think about In Touch: <http://www.avrsb.ca/webform/touch-newsletter-survey>

## September 7 Board Meeting Highlights

For complete Board Meeting minutes visit [www.avrsb.ca/content/meeting-information](http://www.avrsb.ca/content/meeting-information).

**Educational Presentation:** Krishinda McBride, Coordinator of Race Relations, Cross Cultural Understanding and Human Rights, presented the RCH Division's focus: Equitable Community Relationships, Equitable Curriculum, and accurate iNSchool information.

**New Policy:** BP 305.25 Sexual Misconduct by Employees Toward Students (full policy at [avrsb.ca](http://avrsb.ca))

**Administrative Teaching Staff Appointments:** Debbie Graves (Coordinator, Employee and Labour Relations, Teaching Group) and Principals: Jean Corporon (Coldbrook and Dist. School), Jeff Newbery (Gaspereau Valley Elem.), Darlene Thomas (Annapolis Royal Reg. Academy), Gregory Fox (Vice Principal, Northeast Kings Education Centre).

**Next Board Meeting:** Wednesday, October 5, 7:00 p.m. at NSCC Kingstec Campus, 236 Belcher St., Kentville.

## Successful Schools for Successful Students Long-Range Planning Process for Central and Western Areas of Kings County

The Annapolis Valley Regional School Board is continuing to develop a long-range plan to ensure the best possible educational environment for students

Based on the results of previous public participation processes in other areas of the region, AVRSB approved a recommendation for a long-range planning process for the areas and schools served by Central Kings Rural High School and West Kings District High School. As part of this process, AVRSB is initiating a structured public consultation process.

Public input meetings will be happening later in the fall. Check [www.avrsb.ca](http://www.avrsb.ca) for announcements on meeting dates, times and locations. We encourage school community members to participate. For more, visit [www.avrsb.ca/content/successful-schools-successful-students](http://www.avrsb.ca/content/successful-schools-successful-students).

## School Reviews Move to Next Step

At the September 7, 2011 Regular Board meeting, members of the Annapolis Valley Regional School Board accepted a recommendation from the Board's Operations Committee to move to the next step in formal school review processes for Annapolis Royal Regional Academy and Newport Station District School. This follows receipt of School Closure Impact Assessment documents. The next step in the formal school review process is the formation of a Study Committee for each school, as outlined in the Ministerial Education Act Regulations of the Nova Scotia Education Act.

To access School Closure Impact Assessment documents and further details on the formal School Review processes, please visit [www.avrsb.ca/content/school-reviews-move-next-step](http://www.avrsb.ca/content/school-reviews-move-next-step).