



FEBRUARY · APUKNAJIT · FÉVRIER · 2021



# REGIONAL UPDATE

Monthly Newsletter of the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education

## NEWS & FEATURES

Hosting an International Student

**PAGE 2**

Message from the Regional Executive Director

**PAGE 3**

Photos from African Heritage Month

**PAGE 4**

Data Walls - Diving Back In

**PAGE 5**

Celebrating our African Nova Scotian Student Support Workers

**PAGE 6**

Student Counsellor Features

**PAGE 7**

Primary Registration & Teen Readers' Choice Awards

**PAGE 8**

Minister's Entrepreneurship Award of Excellence

**PAGE 9**



## Celebrating African Heritage Month

In recognition of African Heritage Month, the Pan-African flag was raised at Yarmouth Town Hall. Joining Mayor Pam Mood and Deputy Mayor Steve Berry, were Marjorie Deion, Student Support Worker at Yarmouth Elementary School along with some of her students.

This tri-color flag consists of three equal horizontal bands colored red, black, and green. Red: the blood that unites all people of Black African ancestry, and shed for liberation; Black: for the people whose existence as a nation, though not a nation-state, is affirmed by the existence of the flag; and Green: the abundant and vibrant natural wealth of Africa, the Motherland.



*Patty & Tony Dorrian with their international student, Mehmet.*

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"When you open your home to the program, you open your home to the world. We have built so many lasting and positive memories with our kids."

- Tony Dorrian, NSISP  
Host Parent

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## Bring the World Home - Host an International Student

Each year, international students come to TCRCE as part of the Nova Scotia International Student Program (NSISP). This year, only students who were in the province prior to the current travel restrictions were permitted. While there is still some uncertainty around what the 2021-22 school year will look like for international students, we remain hopeful that we will soon welcome students and are recruiting host families.

### Wondering what's it like to host an international student?

Meet Tony Dorrian who, together with his wife, Patty, have been hosting students for seven years.

#### Why did you want to get involved with NSISP?

We had heard great things about the program and we made the decision to open our home (and hearts) to expand our family in this unique way. We love to travel and enjoy learning about other cultures and this presented an opportunity for culture to come to us.

#### What has been your experience as a host family?

We feel that these young ambassadors have enriched our lives so much. It is such an honour to welcome them and introduce them to new life experiences as they pursue their education here in Nova Scotia. We feel such a sense of family with them and keep in touch with them when they return home.

Patty and I seek out authentic cultural experiences when we travel, and we have been so fortunate to be invited to travel and spend time with several of our international kids and their families in their home. We have been to Italy and Vietnam, and we will never forget the warmth and hospitality we have experienced with our extended international families. Likewise, we have had kids and their families come and visit us as well! We feel we have family throughout the world now.

#### Why would you recommend hosting?

We would highly recommend others to experience the NSISP host family program. You will learn as much as your host kids do. When you open your home to the program, you open your home to the world. We have built so many lasting and positive memories with our kids. We stay in touch with them and love hearing about their milestones and accomplishments.

The program support team is also great. They do their best to support and assist you in all aspects of the hosting process. They also have excellent programming so you can network and meet other host families and their kids as well.

Interested in hosting? Visit [www.tcrce.ca/nsisp](http://www.tcrce.ca/nsisp).







## A Message from the Regional Executive Director

In this month's report, you will see a number of highlights of the celebrations and learnings from around our region in recognition of African Heritage Month. Throughout February, and all year long, we make it a priority to include African Nova Scotian history in all areas of education.

This year's African Heritage Month theme, Black History Matters: Listen, Learn, Share and Act, recognizes the important legacy of people of African descent and the long-standing history in the development of Canada. The theme brings focus and increased awareness of racialized issues of a community that has overcome great adversity for inclusion.

It further calls on us to listen, learn, share and act to make society a better place.

This would typically be a time when a number of schools would welcome special guests into their classrooms. As we know, events now look different due to the pandemic, however we are thankful for the celebrations that were permitted. Many schools created displays showcasing the culture, legacy, achievements, and contributions of people of African descent and a number of classes welcomed guests virtually from all over the world.

We are now well into the second semester and our schools have once again settled back into their routines and continue to focus on achievement. As you'll see on page 5, we have re-introduced our data walls. This initiative started in the 2019-20 school year but was stalled when schools closed in March. Now, our schools are diving back into the implementation and review of this important school by school tracking tool. Data walls will continue to play a crucial role in how we develop regional support and assessing our impact.

Until next month,

Dr. Chris Boulter  
Regional Executive Director of Education  
Twitter: @drboulter

"As we know, events now look different due to the pandemic, however we are thankful for the celebrations that were permitted."

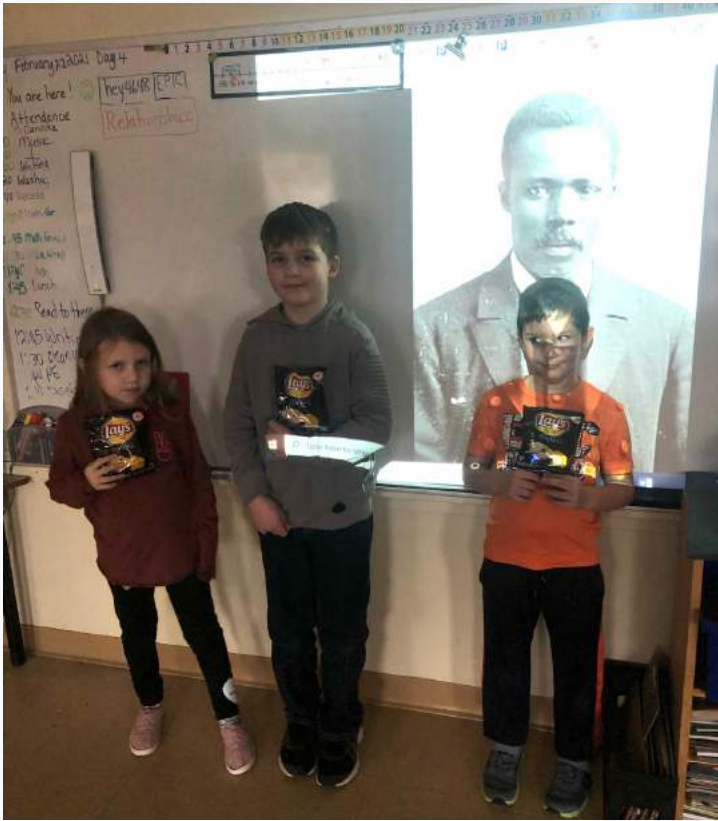
-Dr. Chris Boulter



*Pictured above: an impressive display at Hillcrest Academy to celebrate African Heritage Month.*

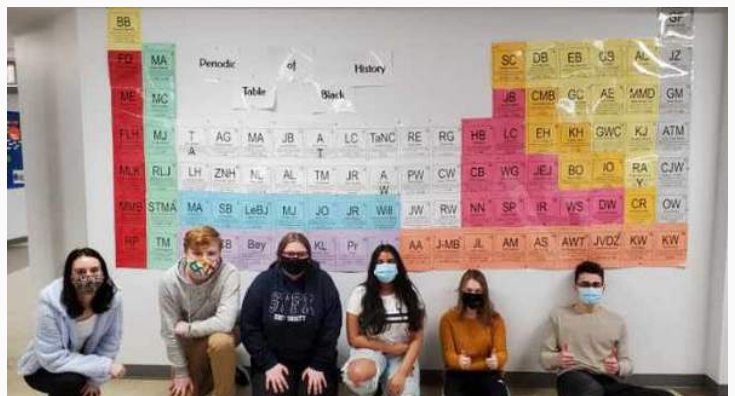


# Celebrating African Heritage Month



Ms. Stark's grade 2 class at Digby Elementary School made their own Kente cloth. Each student got to pick colours that meant something to them and then painted designs on two pieces of paper. They wove the papers together to make their own Kente cloth designs! (Pictured above).

Pictured left: Students at Carleton Consolidated Elementary School learn about George Crum and his tasty invention (potato chips).



Pictured above: Mrs. Hiltz's Chemistry 12 and IB Chemistry 12 classes (Yarmouth Consolidated Memorial High School) created a real-life Periodic Table of Canadian Black History. To visit the interactive version please click the following link: <https://cbhtable.com/table>.

Grade 5/6 students of Ms. Turner at Hillcrest Academy worked together to create this art piece (left).



The math data wall at Yarmouth Consolidated Memorial High School last year.

## Data Walls - Diving Back In

Last school year we told you about the data walls being created throughout the Tri-Country Regional Centre of Education with the intent to monitor individual student progress. In elementary schools, students' reading levels were the focus while secondary schools tracked a variety of student achievement and well-being factors. Our schools jumped on board with the creation of the data walls and were beginning to see the tool's success, when schools closed in March 2020, due to COVID-19.

Now that first term is over, and students and staff have settled into teaching and learning in a pandemic, our data walls are once again beginning to take shape.

Jared Purdy is TCRCE's Director of Programs & Student Services and explains that data walls are a visual way for teachers to track individual student success. They can then start targeting intervention based on the results.

The collection of data isn't new for schools, Purdy says schools already collect this information and now data walls change the way it is reviewed.

"Data walls give us incite to answer the question, *how are the students doing?*" he says. "It's about all of us looking at the wall and thinking that each individual student belongs to us all, and not just one teacher. It's also about collective efficacy and assessing where supports go."

"It's about all of us looking at the wall and thinking that each individual student belongs to us all, and not just one teacher."

- Jared Purdy, TCRCE  
Director of Programs &  
Student Services

"We can look at the data, determine what supports are currently provided to the school, what might be needed and how to provide that support," says Purdy.

Purdy says the next step is to ensure data walls get back up and running at all schools, just as it was pre-pandemic.

"Each of our elementary data walls are again tracking reading levels, and now we will focus on getting all our secondary schools back on track. We have seen the benefit of the data walls and having a means to visually measure achievement and next steps will remain a priority."



Jared Purdy recently spent some time working on the regional data wall.





# Celebrating

OUR AFRICAN NOVA SCOTIAN  
STUDENT SUPPORT WORKERS



"My role at DRHS is just as diverse as my students. I go into classrooms and attend meetings to support student success. I also help with cultural events and support teachers with finding relevant material to enhance a lesson plan. My favourite part of the job is that I get to be whatever my students need in the moment. "

- **Ginger Miller-LeBlanc**, African Nova Scotian  
Student Support Worker at  
Digby Regional High School



"My role is to support our African Nova Scotian learners and their parents, to ensure our learners are getting a fair and equal education and that they have the opportunity to participate in school activities. One of the things I enjoy about being an SSW is knowing that when I arrive at school, there's going to be students who are so happy to see me and I get the opportunity to start their day off on a positive note. They really enjoy seeing someone from the community that looks like them, who they can come to with any concerns."

- **Todd Simms**, African Nova Scotian  
Student Support Worker at  
Digby Elementary School



## Celebrating Canadian School Counselling Week 2021



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"I have the privilege to work with some amazing youth, who demonstrate great resilience, strength and courage."

**-Amy Bishara-Gillis**

*Amy Bishara-Gillis is a School Counsellor at Yarmouth Consolidated Memorial High School.*



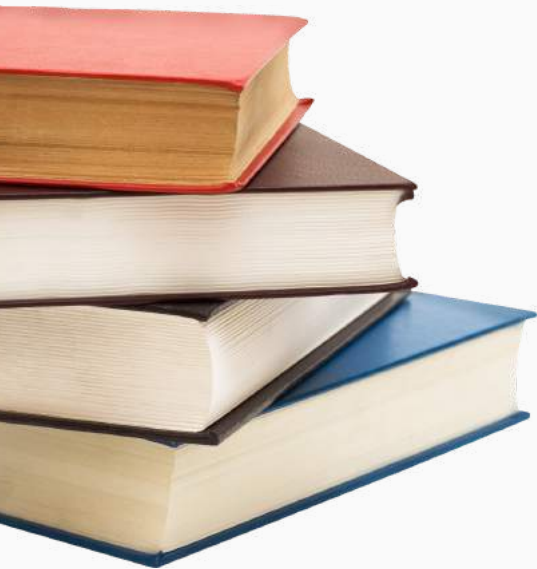
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"I enjoy many aspects of my job, but I really like having the opportunity to see students grow and change from when they arrive in grade 7 to their graduation in grade 12."

**-Amanda Rankin**

*Amanda is a School Counsellor at Shelburne Regional High School.*





## TCRCE's Teen Readers' Choice Awards

TCRCE is kicking off it's first ever Teen Readers' Choice Awards. This is a student driven book award for grades 7-12.

There are ten Young Adult fictions novels being recommended for students to read with a range of topics and reading levels. Students can read as many or as few novels as they want. Then, students vote for the winning book. There are also prizes up for grabs for participants.

Which book will win?  
The students get to choose!

More details and the book choices here:  
<https://sites.google.com/gnspes.ca/tcrce-teen-readers-choice/home>

### Pre-Primary Registration Now Open

Now accepting registrations for  
Pre-Primary and new Primary to  
Grade 12 students.

Please register by April 30, 2021

Register online:  
[www.tcrce.ca/registration](http://www.tcrce.ca/registration)



**Tri-County**  
Regional Centre for Education





# Attention Students Grades 6 to 12 with a Business Idea

## Minister's Entrepreneurship Award of Excellence

NOVA SCOTIA



Have you ever thought about starting your own business? The Minister's Entrepreneurship Award of Excellence is your chance to show your entrepreneurial spirit and get real-world experience pitching your idea and making it a reality.

You can show entrepreneurship in different ways. Your idea could be for a product or service you could offer in your community, a way to solve a social or environmental problem you've noticed, or an invention or app that could make people's lives easier.

The 3 winning students will each receive **\$1,000** to help launch their idea or start their business. They'll also be provided with an opportunity to further their work on their entrepreneurial venture.

The award is open to students in grades 6–12 at a public school in Nova Scotia in the 2020–2021 school year.

Complete the online application by **March 10, 2021**.

**APPLY HERE: <https://novascotia.ca/entrepreneuraward/>**

## BACHELOR OF EDUCATION

Interested in teaching but unable  
to attend university on campus?

- TCRCE & StFX off-campus B.Ed. Program
  - Continue working while enrolled
  - 3-year course on evenings & weekends
- Applications now open: [www.tcrce.ca/stfx](http://www.tcrce.ca/stfx)



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