



DECEMBER · KESIKEWIKU'S · DECEMBRE · 2023



REGIONAL UPDATE

Monthly Newsletter of the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education



Holiday Visit at the Black Loyalist Heritage Centre

Hillcrest Academy's Primary Dyer, Primary Smith, and P/1 Firth classes recently visited the Black Loyalist Heritage Centre (BLHC) in Shelburne.

Educational content and crafts were led by the primary teachers with help from Akaya (SRHS student volunteer), Priti (teacher volunteer who is from India) and the African Nova Scotian support worker for Hillcrest Academy, Amanda.

The group made educational and meaningful ornaments using Kente Cloth and the Seven Principles of Kwanzaa, in both Swahili and English, as well as a second ornament with wood rounds and pictures. The ornaments were then added to the trees on display at the BLHC.

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Ideas for Education

Math Specialist Pilot Program

Earlier this year, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development asked teachers for input through Ideas for Education. Now, based on feedback collected from that survey, a variety of those *Ideas for Education* are being put into action. One of the pilot projects being implemented in TCRCE is the Math Specialist Pilot.

Two retired teachers, who were formerly Math Mentors within TCRCE, have been contracted to provide additional math support. To begin this pilot, two Math Specialists are currently providing support at Hillcrest Academy and Digby Elementary School. These two schools were chosen based on numeracy data and as we move throughout the school year, the Math Specialists will provide support at other schools where the data indicates the greatest need.

What does a Math Specialist do?

A Math Specialist collaborates with two classroom teachers during a six-week cycle. They work shoulder to shoulder to co-create and co-teach lessons that are engaging and focus on best practices with regards to mathematics to improve student achievement.

What is the purpose of the pilot?

The purpose of the pilot is to strengthen and support best practices at the elementary level by focusing on planning and reflection on instructional practices in mathematics.



Math Specialist, Deborah Hubbard working with Digby Elementary students, placing value and representing numbers in multiple ways.



TCRCE Math Specialist Rena Balcom, working with grade 5 students at Hillcrest Academy. Students are having fun while learning, playing Oh No 99!

How is the pilot going?

Rena Balcom is in her 38th year of teaching, having taught mostly upper elementary and spending the last five years as a math coach. Rena is now working as a Math Specialist alongside teachers at **Hillcrest Academy**. Part of Rena's role in this pilot is co-planning, supporting lessons within the classroom, and assisting in identifying and implementing strategies to improve math instructions.

Deborah Hubbard has been a teacher for 35 years and has taught math at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. She retired from her role as a math support teacher this past June, and is now working a Math Specialist at **Digby Elementary School**. Deborah models, co-plans, and assists teachers in class to help identify their students' strengths and challenges during their instructional math block.

“This role as Math Specialist has been very rewarding for me. The benefits to teachers and students are numerous. It provides opportunities for teachers to improve their knowledge and practices to provide a differentiated and Culturally Responsive Math period.”
- Deborah Hubbard

“I see the program benefitting both teachers and students in expanding the instructional approaches and routines to maximize learning during the mathematics block.” - Rena Balcom

Reading Levels

WHAT DO THE LETTERS ON A BAG OF BOOKS MEAN?

If you have elementary-aged children, you are likely familiar with the bag of books. Each bag of books is associated with a reading level and they are sent home with students to practice their reading. The English reading levels are organized by letters, and French levels, by numbers. But what do these letters and numbers mean for your student?

We've compiled the chart below to illustrate the target reading levels for grades by dates. Please take a moment and find where your child fits. For example, in November, an English student in grade 2 has a target reading level of J.

What can you do as a parent/guardian if your child doesn't yet meet the associated reading level? The first recommendation is to connect with your child's teacher directly. They can provide you with information on your child's reading level along with tips to help improve reading at home.



English Reading Levels:

Grade	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June
P	DT	DT	DT/A	A	A	A/B	B	C	C	C/D
1	C/D	D	D/E	E	E/F	F	G	G	H	I
2	I	I	J	J	J	K	K	L	L	L
3	L	L	M	M	N	O	O	O/P	P	P
4	P	P	P/Q	Q	Q	Q/R	R	R	R/S	S
5	S	S	S/T	T	T	T/U	U	U	U/V	V
6	V	V/W	W	W	W/X	X	X/Y	Y	Y/Z	Z

French Reading Levels:

Level	December	March	June
M	1	1-2	3-4
1	5-6	7-8	9-10
2	11-12	13-14	15-16
3	17-18	19-20	21-22
4	23-24	24-25	25-26
5	26-27	28-29	29-30
6		30+	

Recent Reading Data from Grades P-6

Student Group	October 2023	November 2023	Overall Growth
All P-6 TCRCE Students	1481 / 54.5%*	1705 / 62.8%	224 / 8.3%
African Descent	111 / 54.1%	128 / 62.4%	17 / 8.3%
Indigenous Descent	140 / 50.9%	154 / 56.0%	14 / 5.1%
English Program	1220 / 54.4%	1406 / 62.7%	186 / 8.3%
Immersion Program	261 / 55.4%	299 / 63.5%	38 / 8.1%

*Total number of students & the % reading at grade level or above.

What does this data mean?

- Reading progress is collected every six weeks with our short-cycle data analysis. Through this short-cycle planning and data analysis, educators and support staff are able to identify strengths along with areas for growth.
- The numbers above represent the most up to date reading data for TCRCE students in grades primary to six.
- There is demonstrated growth in each area, including our disaggregated data for African Descent and Indigenous, as well as across English and French students.
- Our teachers and administrators will continue to focus on ensuring all readers across grades primary to six are successful and are providing evidence-based next steps and supports for all our students.

BACHELOR OF EDUCATION

Interested in teaching but unable to attend university on campus?


- TCRCE & StFX expression of interest in off-campus BEd Program
 - Continue working while enrolled
 - 3-year course mostly evenings & weekends
 - More info: www.tcrce.ca/stfx




How to Contact TCRCE


School-Related Inquiries/Concerns?


1. The first point of contact should always be the child's teacher.
2. If the inquiry/concern is unresolved, families should always contact the school administration.
3. If the inquiry/concern is still unresolved, families are asked to contact TCRCE and will then be put in touch with the appropriate person.

 902-749-5818


 info@tcrce.ca


General Inquiries

 902-749-5696


 contact@tcrce.ca


Transportation

 902-749-5663


 bussing@tcrce.ca


Pre-Primary Program

 902-749-5678

 preprimary@tcrce.ca

School Closure/Weather

 1-888-833-5287

 weather@tcrce.ca