

OCTOBER · WIKEWIKU'S · OCTOBRE 2024



# REGIONAL UPDATE

Monthly Newsletter of the Tri-County Regional Centre for Education



Each year, September 30 marks the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. The day honours the children who never returned home and survivors of residential schools, as well as their families and communities. Our schools marked the day with various ceremonies, assemblies, and lessons. Pictured above, is a class from **Carleton Consolidated Elementary School**.

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@TCRCE\_NS



## Spotlight on Schools



*These Lockport Regional High grade 8 students recently had their first lab and biscuits were on the menu.*



*Thank you to Nadège Mallet, a nurse from Yarmouth Hospital, who visited the 1/2-d'Entremont class at Meadowfields Community School. The students learned about what it's like to be a nurse and the importance of helping others.*



*Thank you Digby Fire Dept. who visited Digby Elementary School during Fire Prevention Week to teach students about fire safety.*



*Earlier this month, the Barrington Municipal High School O2 class visited the Cat Ferry in Yarmouth. Students learned about the jobs associated with the ferry service and tourism industry. The group also learned about the navigational tools and toured the engine room, where they were impressed to learn how the 48,000 horsepower jet propulsion system works.*



# Ideas for Education

This school year, we are continuing a number of the Ideas for Education pilots. Here are updates on some of our programs.

## Math Specialists

Elementary math specialists are assigned to work with teachers and students to improve student enjoyment and achievement in math, while reducing stress for teachers.

Trudy Comeau (Math specialist) is supporting secondary math in Digby County and retired teacher and former Math Mentor, Deb Hubbard, is providing math support to the teachers at Weymouth Consolidated.

What took place during September?

At Weymouth Consolidated School, planning was the focus in September. Together with the teacher, the math specialist developed a daily math routine to guide instruction and create consistency in the classroom. Using the curriculum guide, they planned engaging, interactive activities to address Unit 1 outcomes. To meet the needs of a combined grade classroom, the educators implemented counting collections and math stations, ensuring that both grades' outcomes were covered. Additionally, the specialists and classroom teacher worked on long-term planning and modeling small group instruction to enhance personalized learning.



*A student at Weymouth Consolidated School works on a math board.*

## Teacher Mentor

In this pilot, experienced teachers mentor new teachers.

Stephanie Reashore is currently supporting in Shelburne county and working with teachers at Forest Ridge Academy.

In the photo to the left, Stephanie Reashore works with Lauren Greenough. They have been working on establishing routines and procedures for a combined grade 5/6 classroom.



*Mentor, Stephanie Reashore works with new teacher, Lauren Greenough.*



*A student builds and works through problem solving in the Learning Centre.*

## Teacher Mentor - Learning Centre

Wanda Fuller has been working with three new Learning Centre teachers this fall. Since the beginning of the school year, they are making great progress with some very specific challenges and are seeing success on task activities. Here are some items the teacher mentor and learning centre teachers are working on together:

- Creating caseloads, case management plans, and programming.
- Working on level A assessments and observations. Accessing TIENET, setting up and taking student planning team minutes, and teacher support team notes.
- Creating, writing, reviewing, and working through individual program plans to ensure they are attainable and measurable.
- Setting up and supporting classroom teachers in developing appropriate and manageable adaptations, setting goals, finding appropriate work for in-class activities, and setting up schedules for individual students with built-in active and quiet sensory.

## An example of how it's already making a difference

A student who previously spent their days fully self-directed (with little to no teacher-directed academic time), is now able to follow a routine (on most days). This has been accomplished by identifying strengths, areas of need, and assessing knowledge of the outcomes at the student's present grade level. Included now on a daily basis, is word work, reading, math, social emotional regulation, and more.

The student's teachers say they have seen more on-task and academic success in the first three weeks of school than they saw all last year.

# Public Engagement Sessions - Save the Date

We are pleased to share that we will be continuing our public engagement sessions that began last school year.

These sessions, that will strengthen the voices of local families, will provide an update on the following topics: student achievement and well-being, safe and inclusive schools, school lunch program, and communication.

**Please save the date for the first virtual session on Tuesday, October 29 at 6:30 p.m.**

More details and a link to the session will be shared as the date approaches.



## SELF-IDENTIFICATION MATTERS



Every student has an identity. Help us recognize and honour what makes each of us unique by self-identifying.

All parents/guardians and/or students are encouraged to self-identify. By doing so, we gain a greater awareness of the diversity of our student population and can better meet the educational needs of our students.

### How can a student self-identify?

It's quick and easy to self-identify. Just visit our website [here](#) and complete the short form. Want to learn more about why self-identification matters? This [video](#) explains the many benefits. We thank you for taking a few minutes to help us understand our students and community.



# Orange Shirt Day & Mi'kmaw History Month

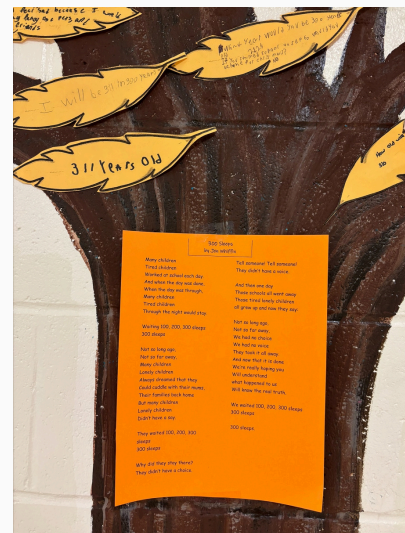


Students at Islands Consolidated School wore orange in recognition of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Students also created an anonymous handprint banner to recognize that Every Child Matters (pictured above).

Earlier this month, Plymouth School was honoured to participate in a Mini Harvest Feast at Wasogopa'q First Nation. Students participated in a variety of activities and enjoyed a delicious meal (pictured left).



Several art classes at Maple Grove Education Centre participated in a special Truth & Reconciliation Art project called the Quilt of Belonging. Students designed their own quilt block with the theme of Orange Shirt Day & the Every Child Matters message in mind.



Clark's Harbour Elementary School, grade six math students read the poem 300 Sleeps by Jen Whiffin. Then, they were given the task of converting 300 sleeps to a variety of units of time and experiences. Each student was then asked to reflect on how they would feel spending that much time away in a strange place and wrote their thoughts on these leaves to display.

# School Lunch Program Launches

The Nova Scotia School Lunch Program is a provincial lunch program that offers public school students across Nova Scotia nutritious lunch every school day.

There are 15 TCRCE schools in phase one of the school lunch program. Families in those schools can now order affordable lunches through an online pay-what-you-can system that lets them confidentially pay what they are able.

The School Lunch Program offers a rotating menu of 40 lunches, offering families a choice between two options every school day.

For a list of schools included in phase one and more info on the program, please visit:  
<http://www.NSLunch.ca>.





*On October 1st, Taco Tuesday kicked off the School Lunch Program in the first five TCRCE schools! The pay-what-you-can Nova Scotia School Lunch Program is now available in all 15 TCRCE included in phase one of the initiative.*



## How to Contact TCRCE

### School-Related Inquiries/Concerns?



1. The first point of contact should always be the child's teacher or Early Childhood Educator (ECE) for pre-primary children.
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](mailto:info@tcrce.ca)



### General Inquiries

 902-749-5696  
 [contact@tcrce.ca](mailto:contact@tcrce.ca)



### Transportation

 902-749-5663  
 [bussing@tcrce.ca](mailto:bussing@tcrce.ca)

### Pre-Primary Program

 902-749-5818  
 [preprimary@tcrce.ca](mailto:preprimary@tcrce.ca)

### School Closure/Weather

 1-888-833-5287  
 [weather@tcrce.ca](mailto:weather@tcrce.ca)



# Provincial Assessment Results

Each year, several public school students across Nova Scotia complete provincial assessments to evaluate student performance in various subjects and grade levels. These assessments are designed to provide reliable and accurate data to inform educational strategies and improve student learning outcomes.

Here are the key assessments administered:

- Nova Scotia Assessment: Literacy and Mathematics in Grade 3 (LM3)
- Nova Scotia Assessment: Reading, Writing, and Mathematics in Grade 6 (RWM6)
- Nova Scotia Assessment: Reading, Writing, and Mathematics in Grade 8 (RWM8)

Below are TCRCE's results from the 2023-24 school year. We are seeing continual growth in the grade three and six results and growth over the last two years in the grade eight data. These areas will continue to be a focus for our education teams, with a goal to increase results.

| LITERACY & MATH GRADE 3 | 21/22 | 22/23 | 23/24 | +/- (2 YEAR) | READING, WRITING & MATH GRADE 6 | 21/22 | 22/23 | 23/24 | +/- (2 YEAR) |
|-------------------------|-------|-------|-------|--------------|---------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|--------------|
| READING                 | 50%   | 56%   | 61%   | +11%         | READING                         | 61%   | 61%   | 68%   | +7%          |
| WRITING                 | 19%   | 25%   | 28%   | +9%          | WRITING                         | 37%   | 42%   | 48%   | +11%         |
| MATH                    | 55%   | 65%   | 66%   | +11%         | MATH                            | 50%   | 55%   | 63%   | +13%         |

| READING, WRITING & MATH GRADE 8 | 21/22 | 22/23 | 23/24 | +/- (2 YEAR) |
|---------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|--------------|
| READING                         | 56%   | 58%   | 57%   | +1%          |
| WRITING                         | 54%   | 56%   | 61%   | +7%          |
| MATH                            | 32%   | 44%   | 37%   | +5%          |

## Summary of Short-Cycle Data

| PRIMARY TO GRADE 6 READING DATA (SCHOOL-BASED) | BASELINE (OCT) MEETING EXPECTATIONS | YEAR-END (JUNE) MEETING EXPECTATIONS | +/- (OCT - JUNE)       |
|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 21/22  | -----                               | -----                                | -----                  |
| 22/23  | 1,397 STUDENTS/<br>49.4%            | 1,561 STUDENTS/<br>55.6%             | 164 STUDENTS/<br>+6.2% |
| 23/24  | 1,481 STUDENTS/<br>54.5%            | 1,713 STUDENTS/<br>63.4%             | 232 STUDENTS/<br>+8.9% |

Provincial assessments are just one way we collect data to tell us how our students are doing. Short-cycle planning provides TCRCE staff with regular info on our student achievement levels. The chart to the left shows reading short-cycle data from grade six. This information is another example of how we plan to best meet the needs of our students.

### What is short-cycle planning?

Short cycle planning focuses on a flexible approach to learning that allows adjustments to teaching strategies to take place based on ongoing assessment of student progress. Short cycles occur multiple times throughout a school year and each cycle can last up to 90 days.

# Provincial School Advisory Council Conference

On September 27th, more than 800 School Advisory Council (SAC) members, principals, and regional and provincial staff attended the first ever province-wide SAC Conference.

Presenters and attendees shared best practices and strategies for SACs to make their voices heard in education policy and decision making.

Breakout sessions included how to maximize SAC funding to support student achievement and well-being, overviews of curriculum and inclusive education supports, and understanding how policies are developed. There were also full group sessions on school safety and the new Nova Scotia School Lunch Program.

We thank all TCRCE representatives who were in attendance.



## SAC Innovation Fund

Did you know the SAC Innovation Fund provides grants up to \$10,000 to SACs? The Innovation Fund supports innovative ideas to support student achievement and well-being and address real problems experienced by students and schools. This funding is intended to provide an opportunity to test an idea, which if shown to be successful, could be expanded to other schools.

This year, three TCRCE projects were selected. For more information on the Innovation Fund click [here](#).

### **Forest Ridge Academy - A Sensory Journey: A Mi'kmaq poqtamga'sit**

Through engagement with a local Mi'kmaq artist the school community has planned an indoor and outdoor sensory path to support student engagement informed by local culture. This project will begin to implement this vision.

### **Digby Regional High School - Virtual Reality: The Future of Inclusive Education**

The school will acquire a Virtual Reality headset which will be introduced to teachers as an educational tool that can support exploration and learning.

### **Plymouth School - Outdoor Learning & Recreation Enhancement: Concrete Slab Grant for Upper Playground Utilizing Active Smarter Kids (ASK) Program**

A concrete slab will be installed that will support implementation of the ASK Program and use of the area by students during recreational time, Physical Education and by other members of the community after hours.