



# REGIONAL UPDATE

October 2024

## OCTOBER IS MI'KMAW HISTORY MONTH



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, are participants from the ceremony at **North Queens Community School**. They paused to honour those impacted by residential schools, had tough conversations about our share history and took time to remember.

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# A Message from the Regional Executive Director

We are now into the second month of the school year, and by this time, we hope that everyone has settled into their routines, ready to embrace the exciting opportunities and challenges ahead.

This year, our priorities remain focused on student achievement and well-being. We are committed to providing the best possible education and support to help our students reach their full potential. Regular attendance is crucial for academic success, and we encourage families to prioritize consistent attendance to ensure that students do not miss out on valuable learning experiences.

October is Mi'kmaq History Month, a time to celebrate and learn about the rich history, culture, and contributions of the Mi'kmaq people. The goal of Mi'kmaq History Month is to promote and encourage educational and cultural activities during the month of October, however, we believe that this education is important all year round. Mi'kmaq history and culture is woven throughout the curriculum and we are dedicated to continuing to foster understanding and respect for our shared history.

Communication between home and school is key to our students' success. Please feel free to reach out to teachers and staff with any questions or concerns. We are here to partner with you in your child's education.

Thank you for your continued support and collaboration. Let's make this school year a memorable and successful one!

Warm regards,

Angela Gladwin

SSRCE Regional Executive Director





# Ideas for Education

The purpose of [Ideas for Education](#) is to listen to and empower staff on the front line, who have good ideas that will improve teaching and learning in Nova Scotia. In 2023-2024 a number of projects were piloted in SSRCE schools. In addition to being well received, the projects also showed early benefits for students and teachers. These pilots have been renewed for 2024-2025 and we are pleased to share these updates.

## **Child & Youth Care Practitioner (CYCP) –**

### **North Queens Community School**

CYCPs are trained to provide trauma-informed care, behaviour support and programming for vulnerable students. The CYCP Pilot is assigned to support an elementary school.

For 2024-2025, SSRCE will be piloting this project at North Queens Community School. The CYCP provides added flexibility in terms of programming for students, which can include community-based learning opportunities.



*North Queens Community School*

## **Elementary Math Specialist: Bayview Community School**



*Jenna Kilfoil - Math Specialist at Bayview Community School*

The elementary math specialist works with teachers and students to improve student enjoyment and achievement in math, and reduce stress for teachers.

The SSRCE will be continuing this pilot at Bayview Community School. Jenna Kilfoil, who has been an elementary teacher for 13 years, is the math specialist for this project. Jenna is looking forward to continuing to build on the positive growth started last year. She will be teaching grade 3 mathematics, and supporting grades 4-6 teachers and students. This designated math position allows for more focused planning and reflection on mathematics instruction. Students have consistent access to an experienced and skilled math teacher, and collaboration within the school will benefit students and help teachers to feel supported. Ultimately, math achievement data will show more significant student growth at the grades 3, 4, and 5 levels.

## **Teacher Mentors**



*Elizabeth Bridreau-Clark - Teacher Mentor*

Experienced teachers mentor new or subject-matter teachers.

Elizabeth Bridreau-Clark (Liz) will be continuing to mentor new teachers in the SSRCE. She began this role last year, and students were engaged and had increased success in achievement and confidence. Teachers were appreciative of the pilot project and how it allowed them to have support based on their specific needs as a new teacher. Liz is looking forward to continuing this role for 2024-2025. Liz is a retired teacher with 32 years of experience teaching English Language Arts at various grade levels. Liz was a Literacy Mentor earlier in her career and a Literacy Coach before retiring.

As a teacher-mentor, Liz will be supporting teachers who are new to elementary literacy within the last two years.

# Public Engagement Sessions – Save the Date



We are excited to continue the 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, Student Well-Being, and Capital Planning.

This school year, SSRCE will host three Public Engagement sessions. **Please save the date for the first session on November 20th.** More details will be shared as the date approaches.

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## Homework Hub

Homework Hub offers free bilingual tutoring in mathematics for students in grades 4-12.

Tutors for grades 4-6 are available Monday - Wednesday from 5:30-7:30. Tutors for grades 7-12 are available Sunday - Thursday from 5:30-9:30. Access to textbooks, videos, practice questions, and vocabulary review is available 24/7.

To access, click on the Homework Hub icon from the GNSPES Launch Page. For more information please visit the Homework Hub website [here](#).

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## Parent/Guardian Questions or Concerns?

1. **For curriculum or classroom-related questions**, start with your child's teacher. If required, follow up with the school principal.
2. **For questions about the pre-primary program**, start with your child's Lead Early Childhood Educator. If required, follow up with the school principal.
3. **For questions about programs and services available from community partners at a school**, and how to access these supports, please contact SchoolsPlus (Shannon Vincent at 902-523-1451).
4. **For questions related to busing, bus stops, and or/bus routes**, please contact SSRCE Transportation at 902-541-8252 or [busdispatch@ssrce.ca](mailto:busdispatch@ssrce.ca)
5. **For school closure/weather inquiries**, contact 902-523-5368 or [weather@ssrce.ca](mailto:weather@ssrce.ca).
6. **For general inquiries**, please contact the SSRCE office, where someone will be happy to connect you with the appropriate staff member. Email [receptionist@ssrce.ca](mailto:receptionist@ssrce.ca) or 902-543-2468.



# COLLABORATIVE LEARNING TIME

## *What is Collaborative Learning Time?*

A professional learning community, or CLT, is a group of educators who meet regularly to share expertise, look at student data, work collaboratively to improve teaching practices, and support the academic performance and well-being of students. There are seven CLT days in SSRCE this school year. On CLT days, students are dismissed two hours early. To ensure your child doesn't miss any instructional time, all other school days have been extended by a few minutes each day.

## *What have educators been working on so far?*

All schools throughout the region have been working on supporting students, meeting them where they are and maintaining high expectations for all. Elementary schools are starting that work through their Collaborative Learning Teams (CLT), where at this time of the year, they are reviewing baseline assessment information in the areas of reading, writing and math. This information will help guide the development of systems that support all students.

Middle and High Schools are focusing on Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) to provide students with targeted instruction that meets their individual needs. For example, Liverpool Regional High School has been working with students to collect baseline data around student well-being and academics. Bridgewater Junior High School has been working on increasing writing skills for all students. Students have been tasked with producing a writing sample that the school team collaboratively assesses to help drive instruction and support.

Through the collection of student work and the collaborative approach taken by all our staff, we as a region have a better understanding of where our students are and how to best support them moving forward. We revisit this on a regular basis through short cycles and we look forward to moving students as they expand their skills.



*BJHS staff work collaboratively to grade student writing samples during CLT time.*

## Upcoming Dates to Remember



- Friday, Oct. 11, 2024 - PD Day. No classes all schools.
- Monday, Oct. 14, 2024 - Thanksgiving Day. No classes all schools.
- Friday, Oct. 25, 2024 - Conference Day. No classes all schools.
- Wednesday, Nov. 6, 2024 - CLT Day (two-hour early dismissal).
- Monday, Nov. 11, 2024 – Remembrance Day. No classes all schools.



# SCHOOL SNAPSHOTS

## *Orange Shirt Day*



Schools throughout SSRCE participated in Orange Shirt Day on September 27<sup>th</sup>. Students had opportunities to learn, reflect, and ask important questions around the Residential School System in Nova Scotia. (Bridgewater Junior High School pictured above, left and Petite Rivière Elementary School, right).



## *Terry Fox Events*

Terry Fox events took place throughout September at a number of SSRCE schools. A group of students from **Bluenose Academy**, pictured above, left, kick off the event with a walk through the Town of Lunenburg. Pictured right, are students from **Hebbville Academy** participating in their school event. Thank you to everyone who donated to Terry Fox runs and walks.

# SCHOOL SNAPSHOTS



**Liverpool Regional High School** Communication Tech 11 students recently toured QCCR. As a result of their visit, some of the students made a plan to return to the studio and learn how to create podcasts.



**Bayview Community School's** pre-primary class recently enjoyed checking out the scarecrows throughout Mahone Bay.



**Big Tancook Elementary School** students work on a science unit, using magnifying glasses to observe rocks and illustrate the details.



**North Queens Community School** acknowledged Pink Day with conversations about bullying, tolerance and inclusion. Their focus word for this year's Pink Day was "acceptance" and they worked together to put on this display!



# SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

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 16 SSRCE schools in phase one of the school lunch program. Families will soon be able to order affordable lunches through an online pay-what-you-can system that lets them confidentially pay what they are able.

The ordering window opens for SSRCE schools on October 18, with the first lunch scheduled to be served on October 28. Parents/guardians will be emailed ordering instructions as we get close to ordering window.

For a list of schools included in phase one and more info on the program, please visit:

<http://www.NSLunch.ca>.



## Provincial SAC Conference



Photo credit: Communications Nova Scotia

On September 27<sup>th</sup>, more than 800 School Advisory Council (SAC) members, principals, and regional and department staff at 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 SSRCE representatives who were in attendance.





Nova Scotia  
International Student  
Program

# BECOME A HOST FAMILY

Open your home and heart to an international student



**IMPORTANT UPDATE: COMPENSATION INCREASE STARTING SEPTEMBER 2024**

**\$825**/mth  
PER STUDENT  
(Tax Free)

**\$925**/mth  
if you can accommodate a  
vegetarian or lactose free diet

**\$1025**/mth  
if you can accommodate a  
vegan or celiac diet

REFER A NEW HOST FAMILY AND RECEIVE **\$100** UPON SUCCESSFUL STUDENT PLACEMENT  
*Just give us their name and contact details, and we will reach out to them.*



Nova Scotia  
International Student  
Program

**Homestay Families:**

- Must be able to provide food for three meals a day
- Must be willing to submit a Criminal Record and Child Abuse Registry Check
- Must have a private bedroom for the student in their house
- Receive a monthly remuneration

For more information on the referral initiative or on the homestay program please speak with your local homestay coordinator or visit [ssrce.ca/host](http://ssrce.ca/host)

# DRIVE THE FUTURE

Now Hiring Bus Drivers!



South Shore  
Regional Centre for Education



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS • TRAINING PROVIDED • WORK/LIFE BALANCE  
COMPETITIVE WAGES & VACATION PAY. PAID SICK LEAVE, BENEFITS & PENSION FOR PERMANENT EMPLOYEES.

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[dcrouse@ssrce.ca](mailto:dcrouse@ssrce.ca)  
902-541-8248