The Student Support Worker Program

The Student Support Workers are dedicated to enhancing the learning environment and experiences of African Nova Scotian Students within the Cape Breton Victoria Regional School Board.

In December of 1994, the Black Learners Advisory Committee (BLAC) released a report entitled BLAC Report on Education: Redressing Inequity - Empowering Black Learners. In June of 1995, the Ministers Report made forty-six recommendations that were contained in the report and were accepted by the Nova Scotia Government.

Recommendation 5B was to provide a support worker in the school to whom Black learners can go to for assistance. Thus the Student Support Worker Program was established throughout the province.

The Student Support Worker Program is under the Race Relations, Cross Cultural Understanding and Human Rights (RCH) Division of the Cape Breton Victoria Regional School Board. Student Support Workers work with the support of the school principals and staff, under the direction of the RCH Coordinator. They work as part of a team, which includes students, parents, principals, teachers, support staff and community agencies.

Student Support Workers In Action:
Providing support on a personal basis with identified students (parents when appropriate) in a variety of settings.

- Liaison between students, staff, parents/guardians, and community.
- Being familiar with the histories and circumstances of students.
- Identifying the availability of external educational support initiatives (such as tutoring programs, special scholarships, and cultural activities, etc.).
- Exploring with students appropriate course selection, as well as post secondary career and education options.
- Encouraging daily attendance and punctuality of students.
- Providing assistance to staff and students to help make the school reflective of cultural diversity and a welcoming place.

The Student Support Worker Program is designed to:
• provide positive role models.
• monitor the academic progress of students, and, in cooperation with school staff, establish a method for tracking that progress and relaying appropriate information to the home.
• assist in developing a learning environment and atmosphere that is conducive to learning for all students.
• work with system staff and appropriate external educational organizations for stay-in school strategies and academic success.
• record student disciplinary difficulties in order to take action in an attempt to avoid the need for suspension or expulsion.
  In the case of suspension, ensure steps are taken to minimize its impact on academic performance.
• establish, as necessary, personal contact with parents/guardians through visits to the home or by telephone.